

ANNUAL REPORT

of

..... THE AISLING SOCIETY OF SYDNEY

1959

The 1958 Annual Meeting of the Aisling Society of Sydney was held at History House, 8 Young Street, Sydney on Thursday, 6th November 1958, over 60 members being present, the President, Mr. James A. Meagher, in the chair. The election of an executive for 1959 resulted as follows :

PRESIDENT	-	Rev. Fr. N.M. McNally
VICE-PRESIDENTS	-	Mr. Brian J. McGrath His Hon. Judge G.J. O'Sullivan Mr. James A. Meagher
HON. SECRETARY	-	Miss Mary M. Hegarty
HON. TREASURER	-	Miss Ena Sullivan
ASST. SECRETARY	-	Miss Eithne Bridgland
LIBRARIAN	-	Mr. Denis Kevans
PUBLICITY OFFICER	-	Mr. G.B. Thomas
COUNCIL	-	Miss Isobel Bradley Mrs. Fedra Hearne Mr. William Baggott Mr. Alex Mitchell Mr. Vincent Pike

The Annual Report and Treasurer's Statement were taken as read (copies handed round), and adopted.

On this occasion also Rev. Fr. V. Jennings, M.A., gave a group of three brief talks on Galway of to-day which were very interesting and followed by animated comment.

Our fourth Christmas Party was held in the Ulster Room of the I.N.A. Cultural Centre, in an atmosphere of gaiety and goodwill on Wednesday, 17th December, 1958.

Mr. James A. Meagher proposed the toast of "Ireland at Home and Abroad", and Rev. Fr. N. McNally compered a pleasant musical programme.

St. Patrick's Day was celebrated by about 85 members and friends at the Hotel Metropole with a buffet dinner and programme of entertainment which included a play-reading of "The Rising of the Moon".

In April Mr. Andy Flanagan, noted sports commentator, gave a talk "A Sportsman Looks at Ireland". Miss Margaret Wortley (Mrs. Noel Nickson) gave a delightful programme of songs at our June Meeting. In July a showing of films kindly lent by the Irish Embassy was enjoyed by all.

Mr. James A. Meagher in August gave a penetrating and diverting account of George Moore, Irish novelist. In September Dr. W. Leonard discoursed with easy learning on the Irish saints Killian, Gall, and Virgil. In October His Hon. Judge W.J. Dignam spoke on the Ireland he knew, his talk being of special interest on constitutional points.

A harbour excursion was arranged for Sunday, 8th November. It was a radiantly fine day (most of it) and 82 members and friends enjoyed exploring up and down the harbour under the learned and lively guidance of our President, Rev. Fr. N. McNally.

During the year Council Meetings have been regularly held. In June members of Council joined with other friends of Hon. Ray Maher, M.L.A., their newly-elected Speaker of the House, in giving a dinner in his honour at Tattersall's Club. Mr. James A. Meagher and Miss Mary M. Hegarty represented the Council at a dinner given by the Irish National Association to Mr. W.B. Butler, Irish Charge d 'Affaires, on the occasion of a trade display at the I.N.A. Centre. This Society owes thanks to Mr. Butler for his interest over the past two years and wishes him well in his new post in Argentina.

To the different speakers and artists who have contributed to our programmes of the past year the offer sincere thanks. To Council member Mr. Martin King, now a noviciate member of the Christian Brothers, all will join in sending warmest good wishes for his future.

With deep regret we record the death of Mr. Brian J. McGrath, a moving spirit in the forming of this Society, and its first president, in whose legal office ideas were transformed into a constitution and a programme. His knowledge of Irish affairs was unrivalled in Sydney, as was his collection of Irish books. Brian McGrath's integrity, his learning lightly carried, his gentle and sincere manner will be remembered with affection by many friends.

Mrs. Mary Noonan's sudden death robbed us of another fine member, a lady whose life was devoted to cheerful work for various causes - Irish ones coming first.

New members to the number of 12 have joined the Aisling Society this year. We welcome them sincerely, and would like to hear from them, and from all members suggestions for suitable functions for 1960. It will be noted for instance that this year (having regard to the adverse balance shown on the Treasurer's Statement for social functions) we are not proposing to have a Christmas Party. Members might wish to express an opinion about this?

With best wishes to all members for a Happy Christmas and holiday Season,

On behalf of the President and Council,

MARY M. HEGARTY,

Hon. Secretary.