

Annual Report of the Aisling Society of Sydney

1966.

The annual general meeting of the Aisling Society of Sydney was held in the Library of the Irish National Association Cultural Centre, 64 Devonshire Street, Sydney, on Wednesday, 23rd February 1966, at 8.00 p.m. Election of officers for 1966 resulted as follows:

President	Miss Mary M. Hegarty
Vice Presidents	Rev. F.X. O'Brien, S.J. Mr. James A. Meagher Mr. Vincent Pike
Hon. Secretary	Miss Carmel O'Connor
Assistant Sec.	Miss Moya Bishop
Hon. Treasurer	Rev. Michael J. O'Sullivan
Council	Mrs. Pat Longstaff Miss Gwen Gilligan Mrs. Irene Maher Rev. Patrick O'Rourke Mr. William J.A. McSweeney Mr. Philip Lee Dr. Plunkett Sweeney Mr. Brendan O'Connell

The Annual Report and Hon. Treasurer's Statement were taken as read all present having copies, and adopted. A film "Honeymoon in Ireland" was then shown.

St. Patrick's Day was celebrated by 96 members and friends at a dinner held at the "Alexis", Kingsford. The President, Miss Mary M. Hegarty, read a message from President de Valera in honour of the fiftieth anniversary of the 1916 Rising. Rev. F.X. O'Brien, S.J. vividly recalled that Easter, and Mrs. Mary Lee read beautifully some poems in tribute. The musical programme arranged by Mrs. Pat Longstaff delighted all.

In April Rev. Michael O'Sullivan gave a most lucid talk on "The Six Days of the Easter Rising", and in May Francis Evers told us of the Dublin Drama Festival of 1965. Dr. C.J. Duffy addressed the June meeting on "Ireland in the Archives". In the same month Mrs. Irene Maher arranged a theatre party for the first night of "Shadow of a Gunman".

The Sydney Ceili Band led by Sean Gilroy, gave us an evening in July of traditional Irish music. In August Senator Professor James Dooge spoke on "Educational Changes in Ireland",

and in October Dr. Patrick J. O'Farrell on "History : a problem for contemporary Ireland".

Our September meeting took the form of a social evening to meet Miss Joan Bergin of Dublin. Aisling Council also arranged two other social functions, a cocktail party for His Excellency Dr. Eoin MacWhite, and Mr. Con Denvir, Vice-President of the Irish Exporters' Association, in September; and a dinner to honour Dr. Patrick J. O'Farrell in October.

In November the annual harbour picnic was very well-attended (98) and enjoyed by all. Our Christmas party was a social evening, not well-attended (35).

Aisling members rejoiced with our recent President, Rev. F.X. O'Brien, S.J., on his departure for a holiday in Ireland after nearly half a century of absence, and welcomed him back in November. We are glad to welcome twelve new members to the Aisling in 1966 : Rev. Fathers M.B. Crehan and Brendan Shiel, Mr. Patrick Cullen, Miss Adine Finn, Miss Mary Gallagher, Mr. Paddy Guerin, Miss May Hannigan, Mr. Dan Minogue, M.P., Mrs. Mary O'Brien, Miss Mary O'Brien, Miss Lucy Reilly, and Mr. Jerry Tansey.

With deep regret we record the deaths of the Hon. Ray S. Maher, late distinguished Speaker of the House, and Mr. Bill Baggott, whose knowledge of Irish history and thoughtful contributions to debate made him a valued member and councillor.

We end by thanking all speakers at our meetings and members of the Ceili Band; and, for his unfailing interest and help, His Excellency Dr. Eoin MacWhite, Ambassador of Ireland.

Signed on behalf of the Council,

Carmel O'Connor, Hon. Secretary.