

AISLING SOCIETY OF SYDNEY

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President:

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ANNUAL REPORT

1970 1971

The Annual General Meeting of the Aisling Society of Sydney was held in the Library of the Irish National Association Cultural Centre, on Wednesday, 24th February, 1971 at 8.00 p.m. Election of officers for 1971 resulted as follows:

1972
PRESIDENT : Mr. Brendan O'Connell *FR. M. O'SULLIVAN*
VICE-PRESIDENTS : Mr. James A. Meagher (Life Vice-President)
Rev. F.X. O'Brien, S.J. (Life Vice-President)
Mr. Vincent Pike
Rev. ~~Michael J. O'Sullivan~~ *MR. B. O'CONNELL*
HONORARY SECRETARY : Miss Mary M. Hegarty
ASST. SECRETARY : Mrs. Ann Feely
HON. TREASURER : Miss Maureen McLoughlin
COUNCIL : Rev. Patrick O'Rourke, P.P.
Miss Gwen Gilligan
~~Mr. Philip Lee~~ *Mr. W. Gough*
~~Mr. Wm. J. A. McSweeney~~
~~Mr. Eamon Fitzgerald~~
Miss Carmel O'Connor
MR. PATRICK DOYLE

The Annual Report and Hon. Treasurer's Statement were taken as read, all present having copies, and adopted. A very happy hour was then spent by members in listening to Miss Glenys Casson, who gave with each song a sketch of its place in Irish life and history.

Our seventeenth St. Patrick's Day Dinner at the Hotel Australia was most successful. One hundred members and friends were present, our host Mr. Brendan O'Connell, President of Aisling, our guest of honour Mr. Eamon Fitzgerald of Aer Lingus. Mr. Fitzgerald in proposing "The Day We Celebrate" spoke of modern Ireland and its links with Australia. Rev. Michael J. O'Sullivan, proposing "The Aisling" gave a delightful short talk on the surnames of many present. Mrs. Ann Feely arranged the very enjoyable musical program.

In April Rev. Michael J. O'Sullivan gave a talk on "Irish Family Names" expanding with a wealth of interesting detail his sketch on St. Patrick's Day. In May Dr. Joyce Sweeney described her recent tour of Ireland, ranging from the medieval banquet at Bunratty Castle to the Synge centenary celebrations in Dublin. She particularly praised her C.I.E. tour.

Dr. Margaret Bermingham spoke in June on "University College, Galway" where she was a student and also a staff member. Her description of the only university in the world where teaching is in Irish was very interesting, and illustrated by fine colour slides. "The life and times of President Eamon de Valera" was the subject of a talk by Dr. Clement Semmler at our July meeting. His scholarly detached and admiring talk led to animated discussion.

Our August meeting took the form of a ceili of music, singing and recitation from Sean Gilroy and other talented members of his Irish Musicians' Club. In September, 30 members formed a theatre party to "Home is the Hero" by Walter Macken, produced by the Irish Musicians' Club. In October about 30 members enjoyed a coach and launch trip to Berowra Waters and Palm Beach.

His Excellency Mr. Gerard Woods, Ambassador of Ireland, and Mrs. Woods were guests of honour at our Christmas party at the Wentworth Hotel. 75 members and friends were happy to meet them, and enjoyed a delightful party.

Welcome new members this year have been : Miss Marie Day, Mr. Tom Elliott, Miss Mercy Flatley, Miss Margaret Hannan, Mrs. Mollie McMillan, Miss Kathleen Nolan, Mrs. Patriciz Noonan, Mr. Michael Sexton, and Mrs. Joan Taylor.

We offer felicitations to Dr. Margaret Bermingham and Mr. Michael Maher on their marriage.

This year we said goodbye to Miss Eileen Butler (resigned, pressure of other activities); Mr. Bill McSweeney (gone to live in Perth, sadly missed on the Council); Miss Kathleen Reavey (in Ireland, teaching, recently married there - felicitations); Mrs. Pat Vasey (in Ireland, teaching in Newry).

We record with regret the death in February, 1971 of His Honour Judge Gregory Bede Thomas. Judge Thomas was a founding member of the Aisling Society, and a Vice-President for years. As our Vice-President he showed the same foresight, learning, and energy as he did as a judge, as a founding Councillor of the University of New South Wales and in several other fields. May he rest in peace.

We end by thanking all speakers and artists who have made our meetings instructive and enjoyable.

Signed on behalf of the Council,

MARY M. HEGARTY.

Hon. Secretary.
