



The Aisling Society of Sydney

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Aisling Society of Sydney will be held on Wednesday 27th February, 1991 at 8.00pm on the 3rd floor of The N.S.W. Leagues' Club, 165 Phillip Street, Sydney. All members are invited to be present at this Meeting at which an Election of Office-Bearers will be held. Annual Subscriptions (\$25) may be paid at the Meeting preferably by cheque. The Aisling Society expresses its deep gratitude to The N.S.W. Leagues' Club for again in 1991 giving us the free use of the Conference Floor for our Meetings.

Please note in your diaries that our ST. PATRICK'S DAY DINNER will be held this year on Saturday, 23rd March at Menzies Hotel, Carrington Street, Sydney. Invitations will be posted to members prior to the A.G.M. so that replies can be sent back in good time.

The St. Patrick's Day Parade is to be held on Sunday, 17th March and will follow the same route as in previous years. The Aisling Society of Sydney will have a decorated vehicle in the Parade. In 1990 our member, Mrs Maria Farrell drove a decorated small utility truck on the platform of which little children in Irish costume danced. This was very pleasing to watch and we are grateful to Maria for offering to drive again this year.

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1990

The 1990 Annual General Meeting was held on Wednesday, 28th February. An Election of Office-Bearers resulted as follows:

PRESIDENT
VICE-PRESIDENTS

HON. SECRETARY
HON. TREASURER
PUBLICITY OFFICER
COUNCILLORS

HON. AUDITOR

MR PHILIP LEE
MR PETER GRAY, MRS ANNE STEVENS,
MRS MARY LEE
MRS JOAN WARD
MISS MAUREEN McLOUGHLIN
MISS DOROTHY PAYTEN
MR JOHN RYAN, MR JOHN
SHERIDAN, MRS EVE ROSS, MRS EILEEN
KELLY, MRS ETHNA McCAULEY, MRS
MARGARET SCHELLER
MR BRENDAN O'CONNELL

During 1990 a change was made to our Constitution extending the maximum Term of Office of the President from two to three years.

Though not listed as an official position the work of Eve Ross as Minutes Secretary has been a tremendous help to me in the carrying out of my secretarial duties. Another very important help to me has been the generous supply of envelope labels complete with the names and addresses of members kindly provided by Rev. Father Michael O'Sullivan. My most sincere thanks to Father Michael and Eve.

At the close of 1990 the Aisling Society had 112 Financial Members, 6 Hon. Life Members and 3 Hon. Members for 1990 only. New members welcomed to the Society in 1990 were Miss Michelle Gazzard, Mr Bill Gough, Mrs Mae Gilmartin-Gannon, Miss Mary Moloney, Judge J.

L. O'Meally and Mrs Patricia Sheary. In January 1990 the death occurred of Mr Jack Harris, who with his wife, Kathleen, was a Foundation Member of the Aisling Society. During all these years both were faithful attenders at our Meetings, until Kath's death in 1983. We then learned that she had left us a legacy of \$1,000 to use as we saw fit. In the year before his death Jack gave the Society \$100 for the purchase of books for the Library. Sincere sympathy was extended to the Harris family from the Aisling Society whose members certainly appreciate the devoted work of pioneers such as Kath and Jack Harris. Deep sympathy was also extended to Mrs Gladys Furlong on the death of her husband, John. Both Gladys and John were faithful Aisling members. On a happy note : our immediate Past President, Peter Gray, and his wife, Jan, are now the proud parents of a baby daughter, Isobel. This happy event makes me, of course, a very delighted Great-Aunt!

In 1990 the Aisling Society decided to increase from \$100 to \$150 the value of the Prizes awarded to the University of Sydney, The University of New South Wales, Macquarie University and the University of Wollongong. Council has also approved the provision of a similar Prize to the University of Western Sydney which began operation on 1st January, 1989. This University has 3 network members, - Hawkesbury, Nepean and Macarthur. We are waiting for further information from these institutions before deciding what form the Prize will take. 1990 Prize-Winners already announced are : The University of New South Wales : Ms C. D. Traynor; Macquarie University : Miss Natalie Gouda. There are no names yet from Sydney or Wollongong Universities.

The Aisling Society of Sydney maintains its strong link with the Celtic Studies Foundation established in 1983 at The University of Sydney to provide teaching of and research into Celtic Studies with the ultimate aim of creating a Chair of Celtic Studies. Our Vice-President, Mrs Mary Lee, is President of the Foundation, and its Director, Dr Aileen Cremin, is also an Aisling member. The Celtic Studies Foundation has now raised over \$42,000 and is aiming to increase this amount to \$200,000 over the next two years to fund a lectureship. The Annual Subscription is \$50 for membership of the Foundation. Anyone wishing to join the Foundation should send this amount to Celtic Studies, A17, University of Sydney, 2000.

At our 1990 St. Patrick's Day Dinner the Aisling Society was pleased to welcome the new Irish Ambassador to Australia, Mr Martin Burke and Mrs Mary Burke. Miss Cindy O'Hagan, 2nd Secretary at the Embassy, has now returned to Dublin. Cindy's place has been taken by Mr Sean O'Riain, a Tipperary man of great scholarship, whom we hope to welcome to one of our Meetings in 1991.

In September, 1990, a Flower Festival similar to one in 1987 was held in St. Mary's Cathedral. The Aisling Society was again asked by the organising committee to be responsible for the decoration of the Altar of the Irish Saints. This was a very big task as up to thirty letters had to be written and at least as many phone calls made before \$1,500 was subscribed from the Irish community in Sydney. This money was given to our Vice-President, Mrs Anne Stevens who single-handedly planned the decoration of the Altar and then carried it out magnificently.

The Appeal made annually by our Vice-President, Mrs Anne Stevens in aid of the Michael Collins Foundation was again well-supported by members in 1990 and the sum of \$516 has now been forwarded to Dublin. Anne has asked me to express her sincere thanks to all who contributed to the Appeal.

During 1990 our Honorary Life Member, Professor Patrick O'Farrell, was the recipient of the prestigious Ernest Scott Prize for his great book, *The Irish in Australia*, which members will remember won the N.S.W's Premier's Literary Award in 1987. Professor O'Farrell's new book, *"Vanished Kingdoms : Irish in Australia and New Zealand - a Personal Excursion"* was published in October, 1990, also with most favourable reviews. Another of our members, Mr Gerard Windsor, well-known author of several works of fiction, also had a new book *"Family Lore"* published in 1990. This book was described by one critic as one of the best works of fiction of the year. Sincere congratulations to both of these fine writers.

Congratulations also to the newspaper "The Irish Exile" whose publisher, Seamus Maher, is one of our members. This fine paper with its extensive coverage of not only Irish news, but also pictures and stories of Irish-Australian events throughout Australia, deserves the support of all of us. Annual Subscription is \$22 to P.O. Box 97 Enmore, 2042.

The fine long-running Sunday radio programme, "Irish Heritage", which can be heard each Sunday from 7.30 to 9 am is well-directed by Aisling member, Mrs Nancy O'Donnell and her husband, Neil. To show our appreciation of this excellent programme where Aisling affairs are given free and important publicity, the Society has made a donation of \$100.

In 1990 six Ordinary Meetings and three Social Functions were held. Speakers at the Meetings were:

APRIL: Mrs Mary Lee, Vice-President of The Aisling Society, whose topic was "The History of Dublin Castle", a very well-researched and informative Talk much appreciated by members.

MAY: Mrs Margaret Ward, Irish-born author and historian, who talked to us about her recently published book "Maud Gonne: Ireland's St. Joan of Arc". This was a fascinating story which members were delighted to hear.

JUNE: Dr Aideen Cremin, Director of The Celtic Studies Foundation within The University of Sydney. This Talk, entitled "Genesis of The Book of Kells: What was old? What was new?", was beautifully complemented with "slides" which graphically enhanced what was a most engrossing Talk.

AUGUST: Professor Patrick O'Farrell, Professor of History at The University of New South Wales. The Aisling Society is proud to have Patrick O'Farrell as an Honorary Life Member. This Talk was an introduction for us to the new book "Vanished Kingdoms: Irish in Australia and New Zealand - a Personal Excursion". It was an enthralling story of deep interest to those privileged to hear it. 35 members later availed themselves of a generously discounted price to purchase this outstanding book.

SEPTEMBER: Mr Kingsley Aikins, Irish Trade Representative in Australia. Kingsley is also an Aisling member and very popular with members as a speaker. The title of this Talk was "Europe 1992: What's it all about, and what does it mean for Australia?" This title might have suggested a rather serious and formal paper, but with Kingsley's wit and style it was lively and most interesting.

OCTOBER: This Talk was prepared and delivered at very short notice by our President, Mr Philip Lee, when the scheduled speaker was unable to attend. The Talk was entitled "Brian O'Nolan - Flann O'Brien - Myles na Gopaleen - Man or Legend?" Philip's Talk was a brilliant exposition of the life of this remarkable Irishman which members thoroughly enjoyed and which they were very sorry to see come to a finish.

SOCIAL FUNCTIONS IN 1990:

ST. PATRICK'S DAY DINNER: This function was held on Saturday, 17th March at Menzies Hotel, a venue which proved very popular with members in 1989. There was a fine attendance of ninety-one guests who were please to welcome to their midst His Excellency, Mr Martin Burke and Mrs Burke from the Irish Embassy, Canberra. Mr Burke read the Message from the President of Ireland, Dr Patrick Hillery, and also proposed the Toast : The Day We Celebrate. The Guest Speaker for the occasion was Mr Gerard Bourke, a descendant of Sir Richard Bourke, an early Irish-born Governor of New South Wales. The story of the Governor's estates in Limerick was an interesting and frequently an amusing one. As on past

occasions pleasant background music was provided by Mr Philip Butterss and his group, and by Miss Stephanie Holmes who also played the music for the singing of the Irish and Australian Anthems, a traditional prelude to the Dinner.

THE MID-YEAR LUNCHEON: For this pleasant annual function the venue was Curzon Hall at Marsfield where members seem particularly to enjoy the semi-rural setting. Fifty-one members and their friends enjoyed a very fine luncheon, and were then entertained with a Talk by Mr Colin Wisdom from Macquarie University. This was entitled "The Anglo-Irish Ascendancy" and gave us a scholar's impressions of this aspect of 18th century Ireland.

THE CHRISTMAS PARTY: This informal get-together to wish each other the compliments of the Season proved very popular with the fifty two members and their friends who attended. The function was held at City Tattersalls Club, a most convenient mid-city venue, where the service of both food and drinks was very good indeed. It was a very pleasant way for the Aisling Society to wind down for 1990.

I would like to finish this Report by wishing all the members of The Aisling Society every happiness in the year ahead. This wish is especially for those members who for a variety of reasons are not able to come to the monthly meetings. The attendance at our meetings has increased dramatically over the past few years and we should all make every effort to see that this level is maintained. It must surely be much more encouraging for a speaker to see up to fifty people present rather than a meagre twenty or so. If any member has any ideas as to how we might improve the make-up of the Society's yearly Programme or would like to suggest a Speaker for one of our Meetings then the Council of the Society would be very happy to hear from you. Fond good wishes for the year ahead.


Honorary Secretary

THE AISLING SOCIETY OF SYDNEY
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INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT
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FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st. DECEMBER, 1990

1989

1990

RECEIPTS

2360.00	SUBSCRIPTIONS RECEIVED	2755.00
656.24	INTEREST RECEIVED	850.20
5050.00	ST PATRICK'S NIGHT DINNER	4400.00
3080.00	MID YEAR DINNER	3200.00
882.50	CHRISTMAS PARTY	1300.00
183.10	SUPPERS	270.80
--	DONATIONS RECEIVED	24.00
--	SALE OF BOOKS	821.50
--	FLORAL FESTIVAL CONTRIBUTIONS	1430.00
40.00	SALE AISLING CARDS	--
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12251.84	TOTAL RECEIPTS	15051.50

LESS EXPENDITURE:

100.00	AISLING PRIZE U.N.S.W.	150.00
100.00	AISLING PRIZE - MACQUARIE UNIV.	150.00
100.00	AISLING PRIZE UNIVERSITY SYDNEY	100.00
4701.50	COST - ST.PATRICK'S NIGHT DINNER	4482.90
3067.00	COST OF MID YEAR DINNER	2855.00
1047.04	COST OF CHRISTMAS PARTY	1150.00
12.65	BANK CHARGES	19.35
--	COST OF BOOKS	848.00
--	DONATION	100.00
--	FLORAL FESTIVAL COSTS	1502.74
287.89	GIFTS FOR GUEST SPEAKERS	245.98
250.00	HONORARIA	250.00
41.75	IN MEMORIAM	30.00
56.35	MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES	15.75
679.06	POSTAGE AND TELEPHONE	662.65
457.18	PRINTING & STATIONERY	369.57
525.00	SUPPERS	525.00
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11425.42		13456.94
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826.42	SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR	\$1594.56
5337.62	ADD SURPLUS FROM PREVIOUS YEAR	6164.04
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6164.04	BALANCE C/OE TO NEXT YEAR	\$7758.60
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THE AISLING SOCIETY OF SYDNEY

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BALANCE SHEET

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AS AT 31st. DECEMBER, 1990

1989

1990

ACCUMULATED FUND

6164.04 BALANCE OF FUND - END OF YEAR

7758.60

CURRENT LIABILITIES

60.00 SUBSCRIPTIONS IN ADVANCE

25.00

6224.04 TOTAL FUNDS EMPLOYED
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\$7783.60
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THESE FUNDS ARE REPRESENTED BY:-

FIXED ASSETS

207.00 FILING CABINET at cost

207.00

100.00 LIBRARY at cost

110.00

307.00

317.00

CURRENT ASSETS

1007.34 BANK ACCOUNT

1339.55

4609.70 DEPOSITS - INTEREST BEARING

5827.05

300.00 PREPAYMENTS

300.00

5917.04

7466.60

6224.04 TOTAL ASSETS
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\$7783.60
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HON. TREASURER: MAUREEN MCLOUGHLIN F.N.I.A.

AUDITORS REPORT:

THE ABOVE BALANCE SHEET AND THE ACCOMPANYING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1990 ARE IN MY OPINION CORRECT STATEMENTS ACCORDING TO THE BOOKS.

BRENDAN P. O'CONNELL F.C.A., F.C.P.A.
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT

B. O'Connell