

an Aisling



The Aisling Society of Sydney

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Aisling Society of Sydney will be held on Wednesday 26th February, 1992 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 giving us the free use of the Conference Floor for our Meetings.

Please note in your diaries that our 1992 ST. PATRICK'S DAY DINNER will be held on Friday, 20th 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, 15th March commencing at noon. It will follow the same route as in previous years. In 1991 Aisling Councillor, Mrs Maree Farrell, drove her husband's decorated small utility truck on the platform of which little children in Irish costume danced. This was very pleasing to watch and Council is very grateful to Maree for offering to drive again this year.

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1991

The 1991 Annual General Meeting was held on Wednesday, 27th February. An Election of Office-Bearers resulted as follows:

PRESIDENT
VICE-PRESIDENTS

HON. SECRETARY
HON. TREASURER
HON. LIBRARIAN
HON. PUBLICITY OFFICER
COUNCILLORS

HON. AUDITOR

MR PHILIP LEE
MR PETER GRAY, MRS ANNE STEVENS,
MRS MARY LEE
MRS JOAN WARD
MISS MAUREEN McLOUGHLIN
Mr JOHN RYAN
MISS DOROTHY PAYTEN
MR JOHN SHERIDAN, MRS EVE ROSS,
MR KINGSLEY AIKINS, MRS
MARGARET SCHELLER, MR DAVID
VAUGHAN, MRS MAREE FARRELL
MR BRENDAN O'CONNELL

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

At the close of 1991 The Aisling Society had 101 Financial Members, 6 Hon. Life Members and 2 Hon. Members for 1991 only. New members welcomed to the Society in 1991 were Mrs Moira Hughes and Miss Kathleen Hughes, and Mrs Marie McMullen. The slight drop in membership in 1991 (112 - 101) is of some concern. It would be a fine idea if each present member tried to interest a friend or acquaintance in The Aisling Society. Members may also think of other people whom they feel might be interested. If so I would be delighted to be given a name and address, or phone number to contact.

In June 1991 the death occurred of Mr Tom Ahern who with his wife, Josie, was a longtime member of the Aisling Society. Older members will well remember how Tom used to entertain us with his robust singing of traditional Irish songs at the St. Patrick's Day Dinner. Sincere sympathy was extended to Josie and many members were present at the Requiem Mass. Another Requiem Mass attended by several of our members was that offered for the eternal repose of the soul of Miss Sheila Hayes. Sheila was a Foundation Member of the Society and the sister of Mrs Patricia Longstaff whom many members will remember as another fine singer who also often entertained us at social functions. On these occasions Sheila was her sister's fine accompanist. May both Sheila and Tom rest in peace.

In 1991 Prizes of \$150 each were awarded to students from the University of Sydney, The University of New South Wales and Macquarie University. The names of these students will be given to members as they become available. The first award to the University of Wollongong is hopefully to be made this year and details are still not finalised for a Prize to a student at the University of Western Sydney.

The Aisling Society of Sydney maintains its strong link with the Celtic Studies Foundation established in 1983 at The University of Sydney 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 annual subscription for membership of the Foundation is \$50. Anyone wishing to join should send this amount to Celtic Studies, A17, University of Sydney, 2006. At the Annual Awards Dinner in October six Aisling members were the fortunate recipients of Celtic Honours, - Mrs Mary Lee, Mr Pat Daly, Mr Malcolm Broun, Dr Aileen Cremin, Mr Duncan MacLeod and Mrs Joan Ward. My particular Honour is a Welsh one, - Cyfaill y Celtiaid, - meaning Friend of the Celt.

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 1991 and the sum of \$630 has now been forwarded to Dublin. Anne has asked me to express her sincere thanks to all who contributed to the Appeal.

Other events during 1991 in which Aisling Society members participated were:

- (a) The Bloomsday celebration on 20th June. Our Councillor, Mr Kingsley Aikins, is active in the organisation of this event, and several Aisling members took part in the day-long readings at the State Library. A donation of \$200 was made to the organising committee.
- (b) The "Ireland Over Here" Conference held in Canberra on 5th and 6th October. This two-day seminar was basically aimed at family historians and genealogists in the hope that those attending would be inspired to follow up the information given to them and discover their family history. Tapes of the lectures are available from Friends of the National Library of Australia, P.O. Box E202, Queen Victoria Terrace, ACT 2601 or telephone 06-262-1698.
- (c) The commemoration of the arrival in Sydney in September, 1791 of the "Queen" - the ship which brought the first Irish convicts to Australia. There was a flag-raising ceremony at the Signal Station at South Head and our President, Mr Philip Lee, took an active part in this ceremony.

In 1991 six Ordinary Meetings and two Social Functions were held. Speakers at the Meetings were:

APRIL: Dr Lynette Olson, Senior Lecturer in History (Celtic Studies Division) at Sydney University. Dr Olson's topic was "The Tradition of our Predecessors": the early church in Celtic lands". This was a fascinating and

most scholarly Talk based on the six perceived points of difference between the early Celtic churches and the contemporary church based in Rome.

- MAY: Dr Sean O'Riain, 2nd Secretary at The Embassy of Ireland, Canberra. Dr O'Riain, who is a recognised world authority on the Irish language, took as his topic "The Irish language, its history and development." The Society is indebted to Dr O'Riain for this outstanding address.
- JUNE: Mrs Mary Dynan, Aisling member and Administrator in the Catholic Education Head Office. Mrs Dynan's Talk was entitled "Songs and Stories of Ireland in a County Antrim Childhood". This was a most delightful evening much enjoyed by all present. Mary, born in County Antrim, wove a wonderful spell for us as she described in poems, songs (sung very charmingly) and writings how life had been for her in the years of her childhood.
- AUGUST: Rev. Father Michael O'Sullivan, P. P. Father Michael is certainly one of our most popular speakers and a larger than usual attendance was richly rewarded with this Talk. It was entitled "'Poems in the Irish Language' - the songs which helped keep alive the spirit of freedom in the hearts of the people". The Talk was well illustrated with recordings of Irish songs and poems, and with 'slides' of the words complete with the original translations.
- SEPTEMBER: Dr Frank Molloy, Senior Lecturer in English, Charles Sturt University, Riverina - Wagga Wagga. Dr Molloy also chose a "poetry" theme for his Talk entitled "The Irish in Colonial Australian Poetry". This most entertaining Talk traced the transition from the poems which either came to Australia from Ireland or which looked back to it, to poems with Australian themes that looked forward to an integrated future.
- OCTOBER: Mr Vincent Pike, Life Vice-President of The Aisling Society. This final Talk of the year was a truly memorable one. Vincent traced the life and times of "Henry Bournes Higgins - a great Irishman and a great Australian". With his own long and notable legal background, Vincent was able to show us very vividly the life of this truly outstanding legislator and lawyer of early colonial Australia who still had a passionate devotion to the land of his birth.

SOCIAL FUNCTIONS IN 1991:

ST. PATRICK'S DAY DINNER: This function was held on Saturday, 23rd March, 1991 at Holiday Inn - Menzies Hotel, Carrington Street, Sydney. With one of the best attendances for years - 108 members and their guests - patrons enjoyed a memorable evening of pleasant company, fine food and drink, and a most interesting and entertaining after-dinner Address by Aisling member and author, Mr Gerard Windsor. Mr Ray Bassett, First Secretary at the Embassy of Ireland, Canberra, who represented His Excellency Mr Martin Burke, Irish Ambassador to Australia, proposed the Toast, "The Day We Celebrate" and later read to us the St. Patrick's Day Message sent to Irish Embassies each year from the President of Ireland. Music for the evening was provided by Marcia Capelle, the very well-known singer and Irish harpist, and also by Stephanie Holmes who has played so well for us on several previous occasions. During the evening one of our members, Mr Pat Daly, made a most generous donation of \$2,000 to the Society - the money to be used "as the Aisling Society members think best." Our sincere thanks to Pat and Cathy.

THE CHRISTMAS PARTY: This was a very pleasant evening at The N.S.W. Leagues' Club on Thursday, 12th December. Fifty members and their friends gathered to wish each other the compliments of the season, and to enjoy the excellent service provided by the Club. For background music we had two tapes with a fine variety of Irish music put together by our

Councillor, Mr John Sheridan. John, unfortunately was not well enough to be at the Party and has since had a short trip to hospital. Very best wishes to John for 1992.

THE MID-YEAR LUNCHEON which had been arranged for Sunday, 21st July at Curzon Hall had to be cancelled through lack of support. This was very disappointing and embarrassing as a Guest Speaker had been invited and had agreed to give a Talk. In 1992 it is proposed to hold this function in the Brennan Hall at St. John's College within Sydney University. Members are asked to make a note now of the date for this Luncheon: Sunday, 12th July, at 12.30 for 1 pm.

I would like to finish this Report by wishing all the members of The Aisling Society much happiness and good health in the year ahead. This wish is especially for those members who would like to come to the Meetings but for various reasons are unable to do so. I would like to thank again most sincerely all Aisling members for the presentation which was made to me at the St. Patrick's Day Dinner. The beautiful Waterford vase will be treasured always and will be a constant reminder to me of my dear Aisling friends.

Joan Ward, C.Y.C.

Honorary Secretary

THE AISLING SOCIETY OF SYDNEY

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31ST DECEMBER, 1991.

1990

ACCUMULATED FUND

7,759	Balance of Fund - End of Year	9,629.78
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CURRENT LIABILITIES

25	Subscriptions in advance	100.00
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<u>7,784</u>	<u>TOTAL FUNDS EMPLOYED</u>	<u>9,729.78</u>
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THESE FUNDS ARE REPRESENTED BY:

FIXED ASSETS

207	Filing Cabinet at cost	207.00	
110	Library at cost	110.00	
<u>317</u>			317.00

CURRENT ASSETS

1,340	Bank Account	1,112.78	
5,827	Deposits - Interest Bearing	8,000.00	
300	Prepayments	300.00	
<u>7,467</u>			<u>9,412.78</u>
<u>\$7,784</u>	<u>TOTAL ASSETS</u>		<u>\$9,729.78</u>
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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 31st, 1991 are in my opinion correct statements according to the books.



Brendan P. O'Connell F.C.A.
Chartered Accountant

THE AISLING SOCIETY OF SYDNEY
INCOME & EXPENDITURE STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 1991

1990

<u>INCOME</u>		
2,755	Subscriptions Received	2,525.00
850	Interest Received	580.93
4,400	St. Patricks Night Dinner	5,100.00
3,200	Mid year dinner	-
1,300	Christmas Party	1,300.00
271	Suppers	198.60
24	Donations Received	2,000.00
822	Sale of Books	-
-	Sale of Aisling Cards	26.00
1,430	Floral Festival	-
<u>15,052</u>	<u>TOTAL INCOME</u>	<u>11,730.53</u>
<u>LESS EXPENDITURE:</u>		
150	Aisling Prize - Uni. N.S.W.	150.00
150	Aisling Prize - Macquarie University	150.00
100	Aisling Prize - Sydney University	-
848	Cost of Books	-
4,483	Cost of St.Patrick's Night Dinner	5,394.00
2,855	Cost of Mid Year Dinner	150.00
1,150	Cost of Christmas Party	896.80
19	Bank Charges	21.33
100	Donation	200.00
1,503	Floral Festival	-
246	Gifts to Guest Speakers	594.50
-	Entertaing Guest Speakers	245.00
250	Honoraria	250.00
30	In Memoriam	10.00
663	Postage & Telephone	685.73
369	Printing & Stationery	538.09
525	Suppers	525.00
16	Miscellaneous Expenses	7.90
-	Flowers	41.00
<u>13,457</u>		<u>9,859.35</u>
1,595	<u>SURPLUS FOR YEAR</u>	<u>1,871.18</u>
6,164	Add: Surplus from Previous year	<u>7,758.60</u>
<u>\$7,759</u>	<u>BALANCE C/FWD TO NEXT YEAR</u>	<u>\$9,629.78</u>
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