



The Aisling Society of Sydney

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Aisling Society of Sydney will be held on Wednesday 24th February, 1993 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. Our President, Mr Philip Lee, has now held office for three years, so, under our Constitution, a new President will have to be elected. Annual Subscriptions (\$25) may be paid at the Meeting preferably by cheque. The Aisling Society again 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 1993 ST. PATRICK'S DAY DINNER will be held on Friday, 19th March at Holiday Inn-Menzies, Carrington Street, Sydney. The 1993 MID-YEAR LUNCHEON will be held on Sunday, 25th July at St. John's College within the University of Sydney.

The 1993 St. Patrick's Day Parade is to be held on Sunday, 14th March commencing at noon. Last year's Parade was of particularly high standard, and the 1993 organisers promise that this year the Parade will be even better. It is hoped that the Aisling Society's decorated utility will again take part in the Parade.

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1992

The 1992 Annual General Meeting was held on Wednesday, 26th February. An Election of Office-Bearers resulted as follows:

PRESIDENT
VICE-PRESIDENTS

HON. SECRETARY
HON. TREASURER
LIBRARIAN
PUBLICITY OFFICER
COUNCILLORS

HON. AUDITOR

MR PHILIP LEE
MRS ANNE STEVENS, MR PETER GRAY, MRS MARY LEE
MRS JOAN WARD
MISS MAUREEN McLOUGHLIN
MR JOHN RYAN
MR KINGSLEY AIKINS
MR JOHN SHERIDAN, MRS EVE ROSS, MR DAVID VAUGHAN, MRS MAREE FARRELL, MRS MARY DYNAN. One nomination for Council was not filled until the April Meeting when MRS TRUDI O'NEIL was elected.
MR BRENDAN O'CONNELL

Again I would like to express my sincere thanks to Mrs Eve Ross who acts in an unofficial capacity as Minutes Secretary, and to Father Michael O'Sullivan who each year provides me with the envelope address labels. Their 'helping hands' are much appreciated.

At the close of 1992 The Aisling Society had 103 Financial members, 5 Hon. Life members and 4 Hon. Members for 1992 only. New members welcomed to the Society in 1992 were Ms Elizabeth Garven, Mr Larry Gorman, Dr Dermot O'Driscoll and Ms Bernadette Sheridan. An

advertisement in 'The Irish Echo' in October brought several inquiries. Any follow-up on these will be known in 1993.

Before commencing the formal business of the April Ordinary Meeting, President Philip Lee paid a very moving tribute to those members who had died since the beginning of 1992. These were Mr John Alymer, Mrs Joan Kiernan, Mr Tom Farrell and Mr Stan Arneil. At the conclusion of Philip's panegyric members observed a minute's silence in their honour. Since then during the year we have mourned the passing of Mr Paul Corcoran, loved son of David and Colleen, Mr Bill Gough, and Foundation member Dr Kit Hyndes. May eternal rest be granted unto them all. On a happy note we offered sincere felicitations to Mr Kingsley Aikins on his marriage to Miss Claire McDonough. The happy couple have now gone to live in New York where Kingsley has been appointed to the prestigious post of Director of the American-Ireland Fund.

In 1992 Prizes of \$150 each were offered to students from the University of NSW, Macquarie University, the University of Sydney, the University of Wollongong, the University of Western Sydney and the Australian Catholic University. Names of the 1992 Prize-winners will be given to members when available.

The Aisling Society of Sydney is closely linked with the Celtic Studies Foundation which was established 10 years ago in 1983 within the University of Sydney. Early in 1992 it was decided that The Aisling Society would donate \$1,000 to help the Foundation with its plans for the establishment of a Chair of Celtic Studies at Sydney University. Dr Aideen Cremin wrote expressing most grateful thanks for this gift. The first Australian Celtic Conference was held at the University from the 5th to the 9th July. This Conference which had our Society as one of its sponsors attracted over 80 overseas delegates and was an outstanding success.

Other events during 1992 in which Aisling Society members participated were:

- (a) The State Visit to Australia of Mrs Mary Robinson, President of Ireland. President Robinson charmed us all with her bright and vivid personality, her obvious interest in Australia and its links with Ireland, as well as her untiring efforts to meet as many ordinary Australians as possible. The Aisling Society was represented at many of the functions arranged to welcome President Robinson - at the State Dinner, the Ambassador's Reception, the gathering in the Prince Alfred Park as well as some of the formal celebrations in Canberra. A very joyful occasion!
- (b) The Irish Film Festival, 12th to 20th March. This was organised by Mr Kingsley Aikins and was well patronised by Aisling members.
- (c) A Benefit Evening for Mrs Maree Farrell organised by Mr Pat Daly at his Guildford Irish Heritage Club. This was very well attended and was a great success.
- (d) The Bloomsday celebrations on 16th June. Many of our members were at the all-day Readings at the State Library where our President was one of the readers - the opinion was expressed by some careful listeners that Philip's reading was the best!

The 7th Irish-Australian Conference is to be held from 12th to 15th July, 1993 at The University of Queensland and Griffith University. In addition to the usual broad themes of the previous Irish-Australian Conferences, the 7th gathering would welcome papers dealing with contemporary issues in Irish studies. Details from the Secretary: Mary Kooyman, Roome 425 Department of History, University of Queensland, 4072.

The Appeal made by our Vice-President, Mrs Anne Stevens in support of The Michael Collins Foundation was again well received by Aisling members. In November Anne sent a cheque for

\$634 to the Dublin headquarters of the Appeal, and she has asked me to give her sincere thanks to those who so generously contributed.

In 1992 six Ordinary Meetings and three Social Functions were held. Speakers at the Meetings were:

- APRIL: MRS MARY O'CONNELL. Mary gave us a splendid Talk on "Poets of the 1916 Easter Rising". A feeling for the tragedy surrounding this event was created by the symbolic lighting of a candelabrum, and was strengthened by her fine reading of some of the memorable poems of these poets and visionaries.
- MAY: FATHER PATRICK CODD, O.S.A. This Talk, entitled "The Early Irish Augustinians in Australia", was scholarly and of great interest. Stan Arneil's book published after his death is "Out Where The Dead Men Lie", and is a very comprehensive and enthralling account of the Augustinian presence in Australia from 1838 to 1992.
- JUNE: MR ALISTAIR J. TAYLOR. Alistair was the 1991 winner of the Aisling prize at the University of Sydney and he spoke to us on the topic of his thesis, "The Effect Of The Tudor Conquest On Gaelic Ireland". This very well-researched and interesting Talk dealt with a period in Irish history often overshadowed by events immediately preceding and more importantly following it. It filled a history gap for many of us.
- AUGUST: A/PROFESSOR PORTIA ROBINSON. Portia's Talk had the intriguing title "In the beginning An Irish Australian Identity". This fascinating Talk pinpointed for us the way in which the early Irish arrivals in Australia helped - even from the earliest days of the settlement - to shape our current national identity.
- SEPTEMBER: MR KINGSLEY AIKINS. This Talk, with its eyebrow-raising title "Ireland 1900 - 1992: Poor Performance from a Talented People?" drew the largest attendance at a 1992 Meeting. Kingsley had his audience engrossed with his sometimes unpalatable pessimistic views of Ireland as it currently stands. However he finished on an optimistic note founded on the increasingly high percentage of well-educated citizens, the flourishing of the arts, and the positive influence of the current President.
- OCTOBER: MR PHILIP LEE. It was fitting that the final Talk for 1992 be given by our outgoing President. Philip's Talks, Votes of Thanks, and general witty, informative contributions to the Meetings he has chaired for the last three years have given members so much pleasure. This Talk was entitled "John Hubert Plunkett" and was a memorable one. It very efficiently added to the knowledge of many listeners concerning Australian pioneers in our political and social history. Philip's scholarly Talk ensured that those privileged to hear it would never be at a loss to understand why the prestigious "John Plunkett Centre for Ethics" at St. Vincent's Hospital was so named. An extra bonus for those present at this Meeting was the presence of Dr Bernardette Tobin, a Director of The John Plunkett Centre, who explained its goals and working agenda.

Members should bear in mind that all Talks are on tape, and may be borrowed from the Secretary.

SOCIAL FUNCTIONS IN 1992:

ST. PATRICK'S DAY DINNER: This very pleasant function was held on Friday, 20th March at Holiday Inn-Menzies, Carrington Street, Sydney. There was an excellent attendance of 120 members and their guests who thoroughly enjoyed a truly memorable evening. The Second Secretary from The Embassy of Ireland, Mr Sean O'Riain, read the Message from the President of Ireland and then proposed the Toast "The Day We Celebrate". We were then treated to a very fine Address - "The Story of the Eureka Stockade" - by his Honour Judge John O'Meally. This was the highlight of the evening, and Mr Kingsley Aikins well expressed our thanks and appreciation for it.

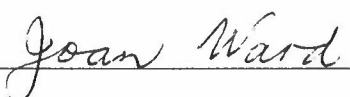
THE MID-YEAR LUNCHEON: After the unfortunate cancellation of the 1991 Luncheon it was very pleasing for the President to welcome 56 members and their friends to St. John's College on Sunday, 12th July. After a fine meal in the lovely Brennan Hall before a blazing log fire, Mr Greg Sheridan, Foreign Editor of The Australian newspaper, entertained us with a most enjoyable Talk about a recent visit he had made to Ireland. Witty, informative and highly entertaining, Greg's Talk was a treat for all to sit back and savour.

THE CHRISTMAS PARTY: This final function of the year was held on the 16th December at The N.S.W. Leagues' Club. Forty members and their friends enjoyed a most pleasant evening, being well-catered for with fine food and drink by the Club. Guests chatted to each other and listened to a background of traditional Christmas music - it was a congenial finale to 1992.

This new year it is hoped that at least a beginning will be made to the task of putting the material in our archives - Minute Books, Annual Reports, copies of Talks, etc - into some form where they will be permanently preserved. Council has discussed various ways in which this might be done: however,

constructive suggestions are also invited from members.

I would like now to conclude this Report on the past year's activities by wishing all members - those who come to the Meetings and those who for special reason are unable to do so - much happiness and contentment in 1993.


Honorary Secretary

THE AISLING SOCIETY OF SYDNEY
INCOME & EXPENDITURE STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 1992

1991

INCOME

2,525	Subscriptions Received	2,595.00	
581	Interest Received	877.90	
5,100	St. Patrick's Night Dinner	5,950.00	
-	Mid Year Dinner	2,475.00	
1,300	Christmas Party	1,000.00	
198	Suppers	270.80	
2,000	Donations Received	225.00	
26	Sale of Aisling Cards	50.00	
11,730	<u>Total Income</u>		13,443.70

LESS EXPENDITURE:

-	Advertising	140.00	
150	Aisling Prize - Uni. N.S.W.	150.00	
150	Aisling Prize - Macquarie University	150.00	
-	Aisling Prize - Sydney University 1991/1992	300.00	
5,394	Cost of St. Patrick's Night Dinner	6,589.00	
150	Cost of Mid Year Dinner	2,052.00	
897	Cost of Christmas Party	847.70	
21	Bank Charges	19.37	
200	Donation	1,250.00	
594	Gifts to Guest Speakers	273.70	
245	Entertaining Guest Speakers	104.30	
250	Honoraria	250.00	
10	In Memoriam	90.00	
686	Postage & Telephone	760.30	
538	Printing & Stationery	432.67	
525	Suppers	525.00	
8	Miscellaneous Expenses	9.95	
41	Flowers	121.00	
9,859			14,064.99
1,871	<u>SURPLUS (DEFICIT) FOR YEAR</u>		(621.29)
7,759	<u>ADD: SURPLUS FROM PREVIOUS YEAR</u>		9,629.78
\$9,630	<u>BALANCE C/FWD TO NEXT YEAR</u>		\$9,008.49
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THE AISLING SOCIETY OF SYDNEY

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31ST DECEMBER, 1992.

1991

ACCUMULATED FUND

9,630	Balance of Fund - End of Year	9,008.49
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CURRENT LIABILITIES

100	Subscriptions in Advance	75.00
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9,730	<u>TOTAL FUNDS EMPLOYED</u>	<u>9,083.49</u>
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THESE FUNDS ARE REPRESENTED BY:

FIXED ASSETS

207	Filing cabinet at cost	207.00
110	Library at cost	137.50
-	Answering Machine at cost	98.00
317		<u>442.50</u>

CURRENT ASSETS

1,113	Bank Account	340.99
8,000	Deposits - Interest Bearing	8,000.00
300	Prepayments	300.00
		<u>8,640.99</u>

<u>\$9,730</u>	<u>TOTAL ASSETS</u>	<u>\$9,083.49</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 31st December 1992 are in my opinion correct statements according to the books.



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