

IASIL JAPAN Newsletter

2013 No. 1

International Association for the Study of Irish Literatures

April 2013

Message from the New President

Yoko Sato

It is my great honour to take on the responsibility of the high office of President of IASIL Japan. I remember the days when I served as Secretary of IASIL Japan from 1997 to 1999. During those three years as Secretary, I learned that our academic activities such as the annual international conference and the publication of the research journal would never have been made possible without the voluntary hard work of members of our society as well as the generous support from the Embassy of Ireland in Japan.

As a new President, I will do my very best, and I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude for our dedicated former staff of IASIL Japan from 2009 to 2012, Professor Masami Nakao, President, Professor Kazuhiro Doki, Secretary, Ms. Sachiyo Yamada, Treasurer, Professor Beverley Curran, Editor of the *Journal of Irish Studies*, not to mention the excellent Executive Committee and Editorial Board. At the same time I would like to ask for your kind support for our new office staff, Professor Kumiko Yamada, Secretary, Professor Yoko Kubo, Treasurer, and Professor Masaya Shimokusu, Editor of the *Journal of Irish Studies*.

I look forward to working with you all, and I do hope that our society will continue to be able to offer you an inspiring space for exchanging fresh ideas, sharing academic experiences and promoting our precious friendships. On Sunday, 17 March, I saw the lively and charming St. Patrick's Parade marching along the streets of Harajuku, Tokyo, in which many Japanese people as well as Irish people got together to celebrate St. Patrick's Day. I was very much impressed when I knew this year's parade was organized to make our "connections," or "*kizuna*" stronger, especially with victims of the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake.

I look forward to seeing you all at our 2013 IASIL Japan conference in Kyoto, whose main theme will be "Connections: Ireland in the World".

1. New Secretary and Treasurer

The new IASIL Japan secretariat has assumed office in January 2013 and will serve for the next three years. Kumiko Yamada is the new Secretary, and Yoko Kubo is the new Treasurer. The IASIL Japan office is located at the address below. Please inform the office of any change in your contact information, including email address, or affiliation.

IASIL Japan c/o Prof. Kumiko Yamada
College of Intercultural Communication, Rikkyo University
3-34-1 Nishi-Ikebukuro, Toshima-ku, Tokyo 171-8501, Japan
Tel: +81-(0)3-3985-4229 E-mail: <secretary@iasil.jp>

2. Payment of annual fees

Please find enclosed the 2013 Membership Fee remittance sheet payable to Japan Post Bank.

You may choose to pay to the IASIL Japan account at the Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi below.

If you have not paid the membership fee below for any of the past three years, a separate sheet indicating the unpaid year is enclosed, so we ask you to add that amount to the 2013 fee.

Membership with JIS	¥7,000	Couple membership with JIS	¥10,000
Membership with JIS & IUR	¥10,000	Couple membership with JIS & IUR	¥13,000

If you live abroad, please transfer your membership fee to the following account.

Bank Name: Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ, LTD.

SWIFT CODE: BOTKJPJT

Branch Name: Kichijoji Branch (Branch No. 220)

Branch Address: 1-15-2 Kichijoji-Honcho, Musashino-shi, Tokyo 180-0004, Japan

Tel: +81- (0)422-22-3731

Beneficiary's Name: IASIL Japan Treasurer Yoko Kubo

Beneficiary's Account No.: 0248851

The membership fee does not include the transfer charge, so we ask you to make sure that the exact amount will reach us. Please add the overseas postal charge to mail you the copies of *Journal of Irish Studies* and *Irish University Review* for which you have paid, following the table below.

International postal rates for <i>Journal of Irish Studies</i> & <i>Irish University Review</i>	Asia	Oceania, North America, Central America, Europe, Middle East	South America, Africa
JIS	¥ 750	¥ 1,000	¥ 1,300
JIS & IUR	¥ 1,500	¥ 2,000	¥ 2,600

3. IASIL Election 2013

The IASIL Japan Executive Committee has sent the nomination of the following members to represent Japan at the IASIL Executive Committee for 2013-2016.

Vice-chairperson: Yoko Sato

Representatives: Andrew Fitzsimons, Naoko Toraiwa, Kumiko Yamada

4. IASIL Conference 2013, "Urban Cultures" (Queens University, Belfast), 22-26 July

Please refer to the new IASIL website, which at present you do not need to login to browse, or the more comprehensive conference website at Queen's University, Belfast.

< <http://www.iasil.org/2013/03/iasil-belfast-2013-final-cfp/>>, < <http://www.qub.ac.uk/sites/iasil2013/>>

The final deadline has been extended to **Friday 19 April 2013**.

We hope to meet many participants from Japan in Belfast!

5. *Journal of Irish Studies*

The deadline for submission to *Journal of Irish Studies* Vol. XXVIII is **25 April 2013**.

Contributors should send articles for consideration together with a short biographical note to: Masaya Shimokusu, Editor, as an MS Word attachment to: <mshimoku@mail.doshisha.ac.jp>. The articles sent to the former editor, Beverley Curran, will be transferred to the current editor. Besides the article itself, please send details of the author's affiliation, full postal and e-mail addresses and telephone and fax numbers. More information is found on the back-cover of JIS Vol. XXVII as well as in our website.

The editor suggests that the papers submitted by those whose mother tongue is not English should be checked by native speakers of English before submission.

The editorial board is considering the change of the referencing system of the journal. After peer-reviewed, contributors may be asked to modify their articles. For further details, please contact the editor.

6. Plan for IASIL Japan 2013 Conference, "Connections: Ireland in the World"

The following plan was confirmed at the Executive Committee Meeting held on March 9.

Date: October 12-13

Venue: Kyoto Notre Dame University

Guest: 1) Gerard Fanning (poet)

2) To be decided.

Symposium 1: "Odd [Wo]Men Out: Contemporary Poetry and Ireland"

Chair: Andrew Fitzsimons (Gakushuin University)

Discussant: Gerard Fanning

Panelists: Under negotiation by the chair

Symposium 2: "Immigration" (preliminary title)

Chair: Fuyuji Tanigawa (Konan Women's University)

Panelists: Under negotiation by the chair

Call for papers: Please send an abstract to the Secretary by the end of May.

7. Obituaries

In Memory: Dennis O'Driscoll (1954-2012)

The sad news of the poet Dennis O'Driscoll passing so young struck us early this year. It was only two and half years ago that he fascinated us as our guest at the 2010 conference of IASIL Japan. During his stay and throughout his mail correspondence preceding and after it, he impressed us as someone who was always considerate, polite, and sensible. He enjoyed his trip with his wife, the poet Julie O'Callaghan, and of course we enjoyed his talk, their readings, and, more than anything else, their company.

Born in Thurles, Co. Tipperary, in 1954, Dennis started working in the Revenue Commissions at the age of sixteen. It was in 1982 that he published his first book of poems, *Kist*. After that, he published eight other highly acclaimed collections of poems, including *Weather Permitting* (1999), *New and Selected Poems* (2004), *Reality Check* (2007), and most recently, *Dear Life* (2012). Dennis's poems, often based on scenes from daily life, are observant, witty, and insightful.

In 2008 he published a monumental book of interviews with the poet Seamus Heaney, *Stepping Stones*, which the latter describes as a book he 'needed to write but one that, without Dennis as interviewer, might never have got written'.¹ It was a great achievement made only possible through a dialogue between two poets respecting and trusting each other.

May his soul rest in peace, and our deepest condolences go to Julie and the family.

Masami Nakao

Robert Welch obituary

It was with great sadness that we heard of the death of Professor Robert Welch, a former Chairman of IASIL, on 3rd February 2013. Robert Welch, who died of cancer aged 65, was a distinguished writer and scholar. He taught at the University of Ulster at Coleraine for a long time, and

¹ Seamus Heaney, 'My Hero: Denis O'Driscoll', *The Guardian*, 3 January 2013.

served as head of the English department and dean of arts.

Personally I met Bob Welch for the first time about thirty years ago at the late Professor Norman Jeffares's home, a half-hour train ride from Edinburgh. He was then Secretary of IASIL, with Derry Jeffares as President. And this meeting of ours led to the organization of IASIL-Japan a few years later. Bob was a guest speaker at a conference of IASIL-Japan held at an early stage of the association. I enjoyed listening to Bob talking, with a bit of a Corkish accent, in the car from Narita Airport to the Washington Hotel in Shinjuku. He was such an energetic person.

Robert Welch was particularly well-known for his enchanting and reliable edition of The Oxford Companion to Irish Literature. The photograph of Robert Welch presenting a copy to his old friend Seamus Heaney in The Irish Times (March 23, 1996) remains vividly in my memory. Seamus Heaney was the guest of honour at the official launch of the book, and made a warm and witty speech.

We would like to express our deepest sympathies to his family and friends.

Ken'ichi Matsumura



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