

IASIL Japan Newsletter

2015 No. 2

The Japan Branch of the International Association for the Study of Irish Literatures

September 2015

1. IASIL Japan Conference 2015, Prefectural University of Hiroshima

IASIL Japan Conference 2015 will meet on Saturday 3 and Sunday 4 October at Prefectural University of Hiroshima with the theme of "Commemorations: Marking Time in Ireland". Please find enclosed the programme, the abstracts, as well as the reply postcard, which we ask you to fill in and return to us. The poster of the conference is downloadable at the IASIL Japan website. Students and guests are welcome to attend. We hope to meet you all there, and that you will find time to visit Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park in this year of commemorations.

The reply postcard must reach Professor Yoko Kubo, treasurer, no later than 19 September 2015.

About the Guest Speakers

Patrick Crotty is Professor of Scottish and Irish Literature at the University of Aberdeen and a regular reviewer for the *Times Literary Supplement*. He served as Director of the Yeats International Summer School from 2006-2008. In addition to editing *The Penguin Book of Irish Poetry* (2010), with a preface by Seamus Heaney, Professor Crotty contributed some sixty translations to the anthology. In the *Financial Times* Roy Foster described the book: 'Much more than an anthology, this is an alternative history of Ireland, in poems that burn into the mind – the newly minted no less than the canonical.' Recent publications include essays on Seamus Heaney, Hugh MacDiarmid and W. B. Yeats, and review articles on Edwin Morgan and Sorley MacLean.

Moya Cannon was born in Co. Donegal, spent most of her adult life in Galway and now lives in Dublin. She is a winner of the Brendan Behan Award and the O Shaughnessy Award. Her previous collections of poems are *Oar* (1990), *The Parchment Boat* (1997), *Carrying the Songs* (2007) and *Hands* (2011), which was nominated for the Irish Times / Poetry Now Award. Her poems reflect preoccupations with landscape and seascape, with archaeology, with music, with language itself and with our visceral attachment to the beauty of the earth. Her forthcoming collection, *Keats Lives* is due from Carcanet Press in 2015. She enjoys working with musicians and has collaborated with The Con Tempo String Quartet as well as with harper Kathleen Loughnane and traditional singers Mairéad and Tríona Ní Dhomhnaill, amongst others.

2. Election of New Executive Committee Members

The ballot sheets were opened on 6 June by the secretariat with Hiroko Mikami and Masami Nakao serving as Election Officers. The results will be announced at the Annual General Meeting on 4 October during the conference at Prefectural University of Hiroshima.

3. Payment of annual membership fees

If you have not already paid your membership fees for 2015, please do so by the end of September, as the journals will be distributed to paid-up members at the conference. This of course applies to non-paid fees for past years as well. Payment details are available at the IASIL Japan website.

4. Report of IASIL 2015, University of York, UK

On July 20-24, 2015, the annual conference of the IASIL was hosted by the University of York, England. Themed ‘Reconciliations,’ the five-day event which took place in the beautiful medieval city of York comprised of enthralling plenary sessions, panels, and social programmes.

The four thought-provoking plenary talks were given by Dr Máire Ní Mhaonaigh, Professors James Chandler, Eve Patten, and Hugh Haughton. Unanimously praised by the audience was Professor Patten’s lecture which explored the ideological connections between Irish and English literary figures active in the 1930s in terms of affinity rather than conflicting views. The lectures were fleshed out by a variety of fascinating individual papers. Delegates from Japan who read their papers (along with more than 120 other speakers) include Professors Kumiko Yamada, Iain Twiddy, Naoko Toraiwa, Eishiro Ito, Tetsuya Suzuki, Yoko Sato, as well as two Ph.D. candidates So Onose and myself.

The intensive academic programme of the week was partly offset on the third day when the whole afternoon was devoted to social programmes including a literary excursion to Shandy Hall and a book launch by Bernard O’Donoghue in King’s Manor Refectory, concluding with a traditional music session, a prerequisite for every Irish gathering. The conference banquet in the historic Merchant Adventurer’s Hall, which I sadly had to miss, was also reportedly rewarding.

A form of reconciliation was also to be seen in the three panels mostly conducted in the Irish language set up this year. The significance of Irish language literature was emphasised by papers both in Irish and English, justifying the idea that lay behind the renaming of the organisation from the ‘Anglo-centric’ International Association for the Study of Anglo-Irish Literature (IASAIL) to its more inclusive current name in 1998. It is hoped that the reconciliatory atmosphere that was prevalent throughout the conference will be carried on to next year when the annual gathering takes place under the heading ‘Change’ from 25 to 29 July at the University of Cork, Ireland.

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5. IASIL Annual Conference, 25-29 July 2016

The IASIL conference will be hosted by University College Cork, Ireland, next year with the theme of "Change".



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