



Canadian Association for Irish Studies

Association canadienne d'études irlandaises

Newsletter

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Fall 2009

MESSAGE FROM NEW PRESIDENT



I take up the position of President of the Canadian Association for Irish Studies/ Association canadienne d'études irlandaises with mixed feelings of trepidation and hopefulness. The former feeling stems

from a recognition of the achievements and accomplishments of past presidents, both distant and recent, and a realisation that I must follow in their footsteps. In particular, it is my fate to succeed Danine Farquharson who has been a dynamic and exemplary President over the last five years. If my election signals a generational change — backwards, alas! — I would like to think that finally I appreciate, after many years shirking leadership roles, that someone like myself

who makes his living working within an Irish Studies programme has a responsibility to Irish Studies in Canada and to encourage a new generation of scholars to become active in the field. It helps to know too that I can seek counsel from colleagues, such as Danine, other members of the CAIS Executive and outgoing Secretary-Treasurer, Peggy Regan (to whom we owe thanks for her work over a number of years). I am relying on them to keep me on the straight and narrow.

My sense of hopefulness flows from developments in the last year in the broad field that is Irish Studies in Canada. CAIS/ACEI members continue to make an impressive contribution to scholarship. Naming names is not always recommended but two instances sum up for me the range and quality of work being done by scholars in Canada at present. In both cases, it involved recognition by a fellow-body, the American Conference for Irish Studies. David A.

CAIS/ACEI EXECUTIVE OFFICERS & CONTACTS

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Julia M. Wright (until 2010) Canada Research Chair in European Studies, Dalhousie University

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CJIS Editor: Jerry White University of Alberta

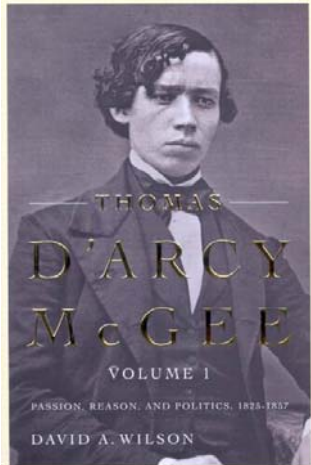
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Wilson (University of Toronto) was a joint winner of the James S. Donnelly, Sr. Prize for Books on History and Social Sciences for his biography, *Thomas D'Arcy McGee. Volume 1. Passion, Reason, and Politics, 1825-1857*; and Willeen

G. Keough (Simon Fraser University) has received an Honourable Mention in the Donald Murphy Prize for Distinguished First Book-competition for *The Slender Thread. Irish Women on the Southern Avalon, 1750-1860*.

Another promising sign is the decision by Concordia University to establish the School of Canadian Irish Studies. We congratulate Michael Kenneally and his colleagues on their success and we in CAIS/ACEI look forward to visiting Montreal in 2011 when the School will be hosting our annual conference.

Furthermore, as part of the ongoing collaboration between Library and Archives Canada and the National Archives of Ireland, LAC held its second Irish Studies Symposium in Ottawa in November 2008. Not least amongst the benefits of the Symposium was the additional opportunity — usually limited to the annual CAIS/ACEI conference — that many of us had to meet with colleagues from across Canada and also from Ireland. *The Shamrock and the Maple Leaf*, the on-line LAC publication (www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/ireland/index-e.html) contains a wealth of material from the two symposia and from LAC's Irish collection.

The Ireland Canada University Foundation (www.icuf.ie) has been doing sterling work over the last number of years strengthening academic links by providing short-term

opportunities for young Irish and Canadian scholars to undertake research projects in Canada and Ireland respectively. A remarkable development over the last months has been the decision by the Government of Ireland to establish and fund a three-pronged scheme for the teaching of Irish in Canada: the Foreign language Teaching Assistantship Programme; the Irish language Scholar Award; and the Canadian Student Irish language Award. We congratulate the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, and Minister Éamon Ó Cuív, for launching this scheme and commend the Ireland Canada University Foundation for its initiative in seeking the Department's support.

For the academic year 2009-10, six ICUF Irish language Teaching Assistants have been appointed to universities in Canada (University of Toronto; Concordia; Memorial, Newfoundland; St. Thomas University, Fredericton; St. Francis Xavier, Antigonish, Nova Scotia; and Saint Mary's University, Halifax), while Concordia has chosen to avail itself of this coming year's Scholar Award and a Saint Mary's student has been off in the Conamara Gaeltacht. I hope that this scheme will be renewed and expanded, as regards its geographic distribution across Canada, in the coming years despite budget cutbacks in Ireland. I say this not just as one who for almost the first time in over twenty years will not be teaching introductory-level Irish (what freedom!) but as one who believes that this innovative scheme will allow Irish Studies' units which have had limited Irish language offerings to build in a language component while permitting programmes such as the one at Saint Mary's University to focus on increasing students' access to Irish as a living language. The exposure to Irish will benefit our students' understanding of the richness and the complexity of the Irish experience both past and present. There is the potential for further development too, such as

collaboration between CAIS/ACEI and ICUF. One would hope that it would be possible to invite all the ICUF Irish language Teaching Assistants and Scholars to future CAIS/ ACEI conferences.

Talking about conferences, Saint Mary's University's Irish Studies Programme will be hosting the Association's next conference in May 2010 (see Call for Papers in this newsletter). We will post regular updates about the conference on the CAIS/ACEI web site (www.irishstudies.ca) and include registration details in the next newsletter. I hope to see many of you in Halifax.

In the meantime, please feel free to contact myself, our new Secretary-Treasurer, Sandra Murdock, or other members of the Executive on any matter relating to CAIS/ACEI.

Pádraig Ó Siadhail

Michele Holmgren of Mount Royal for organizing and hosting a truly enjoyable event.

We were "Into the West" literally and thematically, with academic sessions such as "Western Frontiers," "Staging the West in Contemporary Ireland" and "Constructing an Irish West in North America." There were over two dozen academic presentations, including papers by CAIS/ACEI veterans, Jerry White (University of Alberta), Maureen Hawkins (University of Lethbridge), David A. Wilson (University of Toronto), Christine St. Peter (University of Victoria), Sean Farrell (Northern Illinois University) and Julia Wright (Dalhousie University), plus papers by upcoming scholars in the field in Canada such as David Messer (Queen's University, Kingston) and Rebecca Graff-McRae (Memorial University, Newfoundland). We

CAIS/ACEI Do you want an electronic Newsletter?

We are seeking feedback from our membership about moving from our current hard copy newsletter that is mailed out twice a year to an electronic newsletter delivered to your e-mail address. Such a change would allow the Association to reduce significantly its printing and mailing costs and make a modest contribution to the cause of the responsible use of natural resources and a clean environment.

With your support, we would launch our e-newsletter in 2010 — while ensuring that those members who prefer to receive a hard copy of the newsletter continue to receive it by regular mail.

We welcome your comments on this issue.

CAIS/ACEI Annual Conference 2009 Report

CAIS/ACEI's recent annual conference, held at Mount Royal College, Calgary, June 3-6, was memorable for the warm welcome and the hospitality given to all who attended, the high quality of the conference's academic programme and its lively and entertaining cultural and social components. Our Association owes a debt of gratitude to

were also delighted to welcome scholars from Britain, France and the United States as well as Lesa Ní Mhunchaile from Mary Immaculate College in Limerick. Professor Ann Saddlemyer, the renowned scholar, delivered the keynote address entitled "Uncompromising J. M. Synge" while the Belfast novelist and screenwriter, Ronan Bennett, read from his work and spoke about the background to his novels.

Each year CAIS/ACEI presents The Joseph McGann Award for best student papers at its conference. This year's winner is

Annie Moore (University of California at Irvine) for her presentation, “West/Left/Death: Muldoon’s ‘Cauliflowers’ as suicide-by-sestina.” Heather Macdougall (Concordia University) received an Honourable Mention for her paper “Blurring linguistic boundaries: bilingualism and humour in the works of Daniel O’Hara.” Both Annie and Heather received book prizes, presented by CAIS, as well as one year’s membership in CAIS/ACEI generously funded by Professor Maurice Elliott, a past president of the Association.

As customary, the conference featured evening cultural events. John Countryman (Berry College), Charlotte Headrick (Oregon State University) and Erin Dubyak (Berry College) gave a dramatic reading of Paula Meehan’s new play, *Threehander*, on the Thursday. The following evening we had the opportunity to sample readings and music by Alberta artists, including Ken Rivard, Richard Harrison, Yvonne Trainer and Sid Marty. The conference concluded on the Saturday evening with a banquet at Rotary House at the Stampede Grounds with entertainment provided by CAIS’s own multi-talented crew including David Wilson on tin whistle, Sean Farrell on piano, Michele Holmgren on banjo and Tanguy Phillipe (Université de Rennes) on guitar.

We appreciate all the effort that our colleague, Michele Holmgren, put into organizing the Conference. Throughout, Michele was the epitome of good humour and sartorial splendour. She readily acknowledged the support that she received from her colleagues at Mount Royal College, including her President, Dr. David Marshall, who sponsored and attended the opening reception, the Dean of Arts, Manuel Mertin, the Associate Dean of Arts, Sabrina Reed, the Chair of the English Department, Lee Easton, and David Hyttenrauch, President of the Faculty Association, as well as the staff of Mount Royal College Bookstore whose

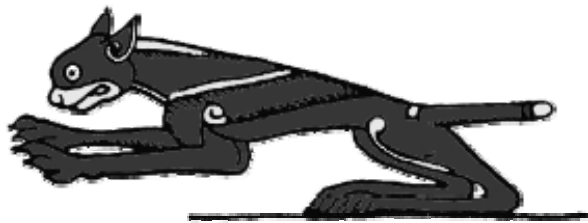
special book room featured works by conference presenters. In addition, we acknowledge the contribution of those CAIS members who were actively involved in overseeing various aspects of the conference, such as its academic programme: Sean Farrell and Jean Talman and — we missed your physical presence in Calgary though you certainly made your mark — Simon Jolivet, Danine Farquharson and Brian Rainey.

Canadian Journal for Irish Studies Revue canadienne d’études irlandaises

Jerry White has stepped down as editor of CJIS/ RCEI after five busy years during which he produced five volumes of the journal. During his spell as editor, Jerry sought to expand the range of essays published by CJIS/RCEI. Of particular note is the coverage that he gave to Irish language material, with a recent number (Volume 34, Number 1, Spring 2008) devoted to the work and career of Máirtín Ó Cadhain, the most important prose writer in Irish in the 20th century. Other special issues included “Irish-Canadian Connections” (31, 1, Spring 2005); “Women’s Irish-Canadian Connections” (32, 1, Spring 2006) and “Ireland and Newfoundland” (34, 2, Fall 2008) as well as regular general topic issues. Moreover, Jerry secured multi-year funding for the journal from SSHRC, funding that has been renewed recently for another three years. CAIS/ ACEI and all interested in Irish Studies in Canada and internationally owe a debt of gratitude to Jerry White for his major contribution to the development of the journal as a forum for the discussion and dissemination of research relating to Ireland and its culture, for ensuring the journal’s financial stability, and for increasing access to CJIS/RCEI when it becomes shortly part of the newly expanded digital ‘Ireland Collection’ on JSTOR. We would also like to thank the University of

Alberta that provided a home for the journal during Jerry's term as editor.

CAIS/ACEI is pleased to announce that Rhona Richman Kenneally will take on the editorship of the journal for a five-year period commencing in May 2010. Rhona is an Associate Professor in the Department of Design and Computation Arts at Concordia University, Montreal. She is also a member of the Advisory Council of Concordia's School of Canadian Irish Studies. CAIS/ ACEI extends its congratulations to Rhona on her appointment as editor and looks forward to working with her when the journal moves to Concordia next year.



Ireland and its Discontents

Success and Failure in Modern Ireland

Canadian Association for Irish Studies/
Association canadienne d'études irlandaises
Annual Conference, Saint Mary's University,
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada
19-22 May 2010

"Anyone who is failing at one thing," psychoanalyst Adam Phillips has suggested, "is always succeeding at another." We invite proposals for papers interrogating the relationship between success and failure in modern and contemporary Ireland, as reflected in its politics, its economic policies, its literature, and its popular culture. The Celtic Tiger is one obvious recent example of a 'success' narrative that was intimately linked to a series of failures on the part of Irish society to safeguard its more vulnerable communities. With the recent publication of

the Ryan report, to cite another example, it is clear that the success of the Catholic Church in exerting its power over Ireland's educational and reformatory institutions came at the price of a failure to guarantee the safety and welfare of Ireland's youth. By the same token, it might be argued that Fianna Fáil's longtime political success depended on the failure to engage with the 'National Question,' i.e., Partition and Northern Ireland. Success and failure, as manifested in language revival policies, in gender-related issues, in the lives of prominent public figures, and the reality and perceptions of the Irish diaspora, including the Irish in Canada, are also topics worthy of consideration.

We welcome papers that address other topics and proposals for special panels.

Please send proposals including contact information (250 words) by e-mail to:

Pádraig Ó Siadhail, D'Arcy McGee Chair
of Irish Studies, Saint Mary's University,
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, B3H 3C3
(padraig.osiadhail@smu.ca) by 15 January
2010.

Call for Nominations

Nominations are being sought for two **Members-At-Large**

After long and valuable service on the CAIS executive, Ann Brennan and Julia Wright are ending their terms. Nominations are requested to fill two **Members-at-Large** positions for the term 2010-2013. If you wish to nominate a CAIS member, please fill out the form included in this newsletter.

Many thanks to Ann and Julia for their hard work and dedication to CAIS. A nominations Committee consisting of Maureen Hawkins and Michele Holmgren has been struck.

Nominations must be made according to the following requirements of the Constitution:

1. Nominations should be in writing and should include the consent of the

nominee and a brief (50 words) *curriculum vitae*.

- Both the nominator and the nominee must be members in good standing for at least one year prior to the date of nomination.

If no more than one nomination is received for each position, then each person so nominated will be declared elected by acclamation. Otherwise, ballots will be mailed with respect to the positions not so acclaimed and results will be announced at the Annual General Meeting in 2010.

Nomination form (p. 8) and other documents required must be received by email or by post, postmarked no later than January 31, 2010.

Send to:

CAIS Nominations
c/o Maureen Hawkins,
English Department
B810E University Hall
University of Lethbridge
4401 University Drive
Lethbridge, Alberta T1K 3M4
hawkms@uleth.ca

OR

CAIS Nominations
c/o Michele Holmgren
English Department
Mount Royal College
4825 Mount Royal Gate SW
Calgary, AB, Canada T3E 6K6
mholmgren@mtroyal.ca



It's (always) that time

If you have been dilatory, distracted, distraught or otherwise disengaged, please take a moment to renew your membership in CAIS/ACEI now.

Two issues of the Journal and two issues of the Newsletter each year.

	one year membership	three year membership
Regular	\$75	\$200
Family (two or more at the same address)	\$110	\$300
Students	\$35	\$90
Seniors	\$75	\$200

It's easy, go to the website and complete the form and send your cheque to:

Sandra Murdock,
CAIS/ACEI Secretary-Treasurer,
Department of Anthropology
Memorial University of Newfoundland
St John's, NL
A1C 5S7

<http://www.irishstudies.ca/join-cais/>

IRISH AND SCOTS ENCOUNTERS WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES Toronto and Guelph 10-12 June 2010

The expansion of the British and American empires during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries created the greatest mass migration in human history. Irish and Scots migrants were major participants in this process. Their experiences have traditionally been framed in terms of push-pull factors, of exile, struggle, opportunity, and acculturation. But there is another side to the story; as the Irish and Scots spread throughout the world, they interacted extensively with indigenous cultures and peoples. In many areas, these encounters led to the displacement and destruction of indigenous peoples, while at other times and places they generated a wider range of

experiences with opportunities for mutual cooperation and cultural exchange. At the same time, the Scots and Irish existed in an ambivalent, tense, and sometimes hostile relationship to England.

In what ways did their own experiences of colonialism affect their attitudes towards indigenous peoples?

To what extent were they agents or critics of imperialism and how were these inter-actions reflected in literature, music and the arts?

How did the Irish, Scots and indigenous peoples shape their political, social, religious, and economic relations with one another?

And how were Scots, Irish and indigenous peoples' understandings of the world transformed as a result of these encounters?

These are some of the issues that will be addressed in this international conference to be held in Toronto and Guelph 10-12 June 2010. It is being jointly organized by the Celtic Studies Program, St. Michael's College, University of Toronto; the Scottish Studies Program, Guelph University; and the University of Aberdeen's AHRC Centre for Irish and Scottish Studies.

Proposals of no more than 300 words should be sent to David A. Wilson by 28 February 2010. [david.wilson@utoronto.ca]

CELTS IN THE AMERICAS

Saint Francis Xavier University, Nova Scotia, 29 June – 2 July, 2011

The Celts in the Americas conference will be held 29 June – 2 July, 2011 at Saint Francis Xavier University in Nova Scotia, hosted by the Celtic Studies Department of St FX and the Centre for Cape Breton Studies at Cape Breton University. The conference will offer an opportunity to share scholarship about the history, culture, and literature of Celtic-speaking peoples in North and South America. We invite submissions for 20 minute talks which discuss various aspects of the experiences and literatures of the communities speaking Breton, Cornish, Welsh, Irish, Manx or Scottish Gaelic, in the Americas, including:

- The history of the migrations of Celtic-speaking communities
- Examinations of Celtic literatures and folklore of the Americas
- Social movements and organisations formed by and for Celtic immigrant communities
- Developments in the folklife of Celtic immigrant communities
- Issues of linguistic and cultural maintenance and sustainability for Celtic immigrant communities
- Assessments of the history or current state of the field of Celtic Studies in the Americas
- New sources of information about Celtic-speaking peoples
- Preservation of and access to archival cultural resources, esp. digitization projects

The final day of the conference will be devoted to examining the interactions between Celtic peoples and non-Celtic peoples in the Americas, with a special emphasis on indigenous peoples and

peoples of African descent. Suggested topics include:

- The development of the idea of Other and racialism
- Indigenous peoples, Imperial frontiers, and cultural invasion
- Mutual reflections of Others in literature (Celtic, indigenous, and Afro-centric)
- Mutual cultural, folkloric, and linguistic influences and exchanges
- Mutual influences in movements for civil, cultural, and linguistic rights

Presentations may be offered in English, French, or any of the Celtic languages; a short summary abstract in both English and French will be required before the conference for dissemination to conference attendees. A selection of papers from the conference is expected to be published.

Please submit your name, institutional affiliation, paper title, and abstract (between 150 and 300 words) by 5 December 2010 via email to: mnewton@stfx.ca
Further details about the conference will be made available on the St FX Celtic Studies Department website: <http://www.stfx.ca/academic/celtic-studies/>

Important Notice to All Members: Call for Nominations
Nominations are being sought for two **Members-At-Large**

Date: _____

To: CAIS Nominations Committee

From:

Re: nomination for a Member-at-Large position on CAIS executive.

Dear Nominations Committee:

I hereby nominate _____ for the position of Member at Large on the CAIS executive.

Details of the nominee are (attach another sheet if necessary):

Signature of Nominee, indicating consent

Signature of Nominating Member
