



Irish Texts Society

Summer 2020

As we reach the midpoint of the year, we want to take the opportunity to update you on the latest ITS news and to honour two dear friends and members of the of Society Council — Michael J. Burns, who sadly passed away late last year, and Seán Hutton, who retired from the Council after many years of dedicated service.

Upcoming Publication of *In Tres Troí (The Third Troy)*

The next volume in the Irish Texts Society's Main Series is Brent Miles' edition of *In Tres Troí 'The Third Troy'*. It is hoped to launch this publication online in the near future. Further information will be sent to members in due course.

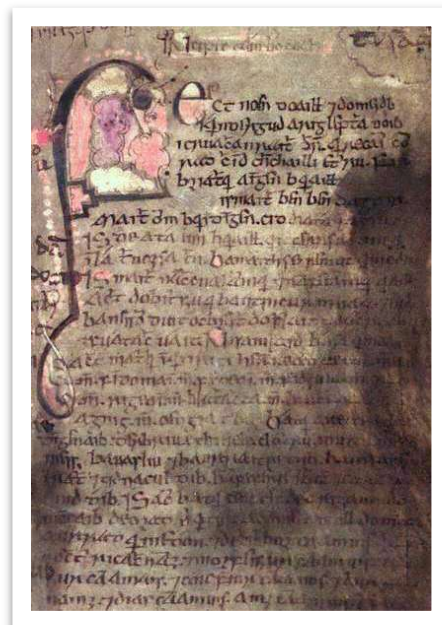


Postponement of Twenty-Second Annual Irish Texts Society Seminar - Gabháltais Shéarluis Mhóir

The chosen subject for this year's seminar was Gabháltais Shéarluis Mhóir (The 'Conquests of Charlemagne'). It was due to be held in University College Cork on Saturday 7 November 2020. Due to the current Covid-19 pandemic, the Council of the Society has reluctantly decided to postpone the seminar for a year. It will now take place in University College Cork in **November 2021**. We look forward to gathering once with our friends and colleagues on that occasion.

Proceedings of the Twenty-First Annual Irish Texts Society Seminar: *Táin Bó Cúailnge from the Book of Leinster*

In November of last year, the Society held a very successful seminar which focused on volume 49 of the Main Series: *Táin Bó Cúailnge from the Book of Leinster*, which was edited by Cecile O’Rahilly and which was first published in 1969. This volume is exceptional within the history of the Irish Texts Society in that it was simultaneously published by the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies.



Talks were presented on various aspects of the Book of Leinster *Táin* and it is intended that the proceedings of this seminar will be published — as is the tradition — in November of this year under the editorship of John Carey. Contents will include:

- Brian Ó Catháin, ‘Cecile O’Rahilly: Editor of *Táin Bó Cúailnge*’
- Ann Dooley, ‘A Hero for Our Time: *Táin* Recensions I and II Reconsidered’
- Greg Toner, ‘Reading the *Táin* from Back to Front’
- Christina Cleary, ‘Critical Notes and Signs in the Book of Leinster *Táin Bó Cúailnge*’
- Darach Ó Scolaí, ‘The *Táin*: From Old Irish to Modern Irish’.

In Memoriam Michael J. Burns (Hon. Treasurer, ITS)

It was with great sadness that we learned of the death of Mr Michael Burns, Hon. Treasurer of the ITS, on the 19th November 2019. Originally from Sneem in Co. Kerry, Michael became a member of Council of the Irish Texts Society when he was a young Irish bank official based in London. Michael subsequently went on to great achievements in the banking world, eventually retiring from Head Office in Dublin and during the course of this busy professional career he was appointed Hon. Treasurer of the ITS in 1988. When he came to this role, funding for



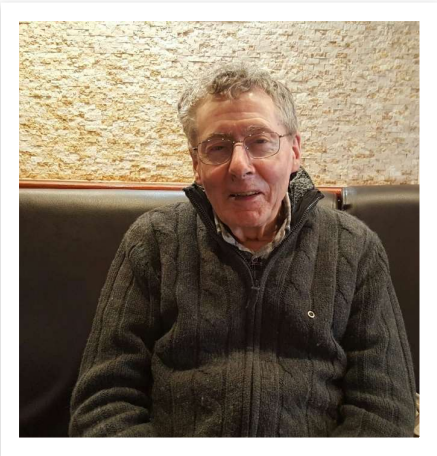
the Society was precarious and many of its publications were no longer available. Under Michael’s stewardship, the Society went from strength to strength: all its volumes are now in print and a number of them are selling extremely well; it can boast of a Subsidiary Series (and other ancillary publications) alongside its Main Series; and, in conjunction with the Departments of Irish at UCC, it holds an annual seminar, the proceedings of which are subsequently published.

It is acknowledged by all members of Council that a great deal of this change of fortune was due to the energy and sagacity of Michael Burns. Modestly, he himself used to attribute our relative prosperity to a fellow Kerryman, Patrick S. Dinneen, and the still buoyant sales of his Dictionary. The truth is, however, that it was Michael who balanced our books year in year out, monitoring our sales through ÁIS, keeping a weather-eye out for dwindling numbers so as to have an immediate reprint as required, and so as to ensure a constant cash-flow, which, according to Michael, is what good business is all about.

Michael bore his final illness with great dignity and his death is a great loss to the Society. We extend our deepest sympathies to his wife Deirdre, his children Niamh, Aengus, Elva, Aoife, Aidan and Mide, his beloved grandchildren and to his extended family and friends.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam uasal.

Seán Hutton (Hon. Secretary, ITS)



Seán Hutton retired in 2019 as Hon. Secretary of the ITS, a position he held since 1992 having been appointed as member of Council in 1989. He was born in Dublin in November 1940 and was educated in Carlow and Dublin, and was awarded a degree in History from University College Dublin. He subsequently took up a research scholarship in the University of Hull. He worked as a history teacher in Yorkshire for 20 years before moving to London when appointed Executive Director of the British Association for Irish Studies in 1988. Between 1994 and 2019, Seán worked for the Irish in Britain (formerly the Federation of Irish Societies), initially as Development Officer and from 2006 onwards as Policy Officer.

Seán has been one of the guiding lights of the ITS since 1992, not only recording its minutes for posterity but identifying many new departures that the Society might usefully adopt. He is also a poet of great renown, one of a remarkable band of Irishmen in exile who, as it were in Joycean style, ‘honestly and bluntly’ discuss poetically the country of their birth. Seán’s poetry has been published in many journals, including *Broadsheet*, *Feasta*, and *Inti*, before being brought together in four collections of his own, beginning in 1980 with *Go Cathair na Traoi*. He has received several awards, including prizes at the Oireachtas, and the Seán Ó Ríordáin prize, which he received in 1985.

Seán is also one of the leading lights in the Irish Literary Society and he — along with his great friend Michael Burns — ensured that the Irish Texts Society retained its strong London connections. We wish Seán health and happiness in his well-deserved retirement from the duties as Hon. Secretary of the Irish Texts Society.

Sonas oraibh go léir,
The Irish Texts Society
