

AMASC IRELAND



Society of the Sacred Heart Alumnae

Spring 2023

Message from the Chair

9 March 2023

Dear Alumnae,

I write this on a grey, wet March morning in Dublin with Met Éireann having issued two status orange warnings for snow and ice covering eight counties along with Connaught and Leinster over the next 24 hours – however, I urge you to turn the page for brighter days that are in store for our Alumnae.

As ever, Fedelma Tierney writes about long spring days, and we are fortunate to be invited to her garden on 11 May next which she has so kindly opened to us. This Woodland Walk in Castletown, Glebe Rectory Garden will be on behalf of the Benevolent Fund. This will be our first outing as a group for over three years so please do come and as you can see transport has been provided. An intriguing book review by Roslyn Nicholson reminds us of the visit to Mount Anville in 1985 of the then Crown Prince Akhito and Crown Princess Michiko of Japan; the now Empress Emerita Michiko was educated in Japan by several Irish rscj Sisters in Tokyo.

Also, the annual visit to Joigny will now take place after some four years – so Bon Voyage to our group of 14 travellers.

AMASC was banking with Ulster Bank and arising from the withdrawal of that Bank we have had to move our banking to Bank of Ireland. We have received all our standing orders up to mid-February for which we are extremely grateful. Therefore, enclosed with this Newsletter is a form seeking details to set-up standing orders not only for the balance of this calendar year but also for next year so that we can set up standing orders for the early part of next year (that is for those who pay in the early part of the year). We are extremely grateful to all our members who pay by standing order as we need the funds to publish and print our Newsletter along with postage and to assist with all our other activities during the year. We also have to contribute towards the very valuable administrative assistance provided by the MAPPA office. We cannot function without your ongoing and valuable support. I also have to acknowledge with thanks the generous time-consuming work of our committee and volunteers. We would ask everybody to please complete the form as we would like to have up-to-date addresses, mobile phone numbers and also email addresses so that we can keep everybody up-to-date with all our activities.

Best wishes
Frances Meenan



ACTION NEEDED! - CHANGE OF BANK

Dear Friends,

You will see from the 2023 Subscription Form enclosed with this Spring Newsletter that we have changed bank, from the Ulster Bank to the Bank of Ireland. This has been a long process but we are pleased to now be up and running with the new account. We respectfully ask those who normally pay by Standing Order to please fill in the new form and return it to the office as soon as convenient. Paying by Standing Order is an easy way to ensure that you are always affiliated to AMASC and we would encourage members to avail of this facility. Happily the fee is unchanged at €30.00 per annum. Many thanks.

Bank Details:

IBAN: IE63 BOFI 9010 2842 0976 21

AMASC Annual Subscription

The Annual Subscription of €30 is now due.
Payment by cheque/postal order or standing order to:

Past Pupils' Office, Mount Anville House, Mount Anville Road, Dublin 14.

Please check with Julie that you are up to date with your payments on (01) 2783362 or pastpupilsoffice@mountanville.ie

Black Dragonfly by Jean Pasley Balestier Press 2021

As many of you will remember there is a special link between the Sacred Heart order and Japan which brought the Crown Prince Akihito and his wife Michiko to be welcomed to Mount Anville during their visit to Ireland in 1985.



2017 was the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Ireland and Japan with many celebrations including a special focus on writer Lafcadio Hearn. There was a stunning exhibition 'The Open Mind of Patrick Lafcadio Hearn' in 2015 (curated by Simon O'Connor) at the Little Museum of Dublin and a Japanese Memorial Garden was opened in Tramore.

Jane Pasley is an Irish writer and film-maker who lived in Japan for a number of years. This well-researched novel brings Lafcadio's story to a wider audience.

Though born on the Greek island of Lefkada in 1850 he was raised by an aunt in Ireland before being dispatched on a one-way ticket to America at the age of 19. While at boarding school in England he had lost the use of one eye in a schoolyard accident. Based at first in Cincinnati and later in New Orleans, he forged a career in journalism, beginning with murder reports and moving on to travel writing.

A two-year spell in Martinique whetted his appetite for new horizons, so with some trepidation he accepted an assignment in Japan in 1890, just as the country was opening up to a wider world after two hundred years of isolation. During the final two decades of his life he witnessed the modernisation of Japanese society and culture which resulted in his reputation as the key recorder of those transitional years. With some knowledge of the language he gathered and re-told folk tales, ghost stories and legends in addition to his social commentaries. In ways it was a similar role to that of Yeats and Lady Gregory in those years. All three knew the value of writing these things down before they were lost to living memory.

Settling in Japan, he married Setsuko, the daughter of a Japanese samurai warrior, and eventually had four children. Jane Pasley evokes the otherworldly atmosphere of life in Japan in those years and I found this an engaging book. The character of Lafcadio is

well developed with glimpses into his own background, battles with his own demons from the past, his career and family relationships. The writing style is paced with dialogue and the use of the mechanism of personal letters, which helps make it an easy read, while his own writings and descriptions enhance the text. The author too has a gift of evocative description.

The Black Dragonfly appears at a key moment in the story during a chat with his aging samurai father-in-law who reminds him of the brevity of life, the hint being that it is time to commit to staying in Japan and having a family. The black hued wings of the once blue dragonfly indicate that it is now aging after many times of mating. The colour wears off during those encounters, leaving dark patches.

In his final years he sets himself the challenge of climbing Mount Fuji in the company of an old friend, which is perhaps something of a Camino de Santiago in spirit. His wife teases him with the warning that he must climb the mountain with a pure heart so as not to anger the goddess, whose name is The Princess Who Causes the Flowers to Blossom Brightly.

On consulting the traditional Japanese calendar I see that March is the month of 'New Life' in Japan and the Peach trees begin to bloom just before St Patrick's Day. What better time to explore new horizons with this story?

Roslyn Nicholson née Crozier Shaw



AMASC AGM

You are all invited to **Afternoon Tea** in the Sophie Barat Residence at 3pm on

Saturday 15th April 2023

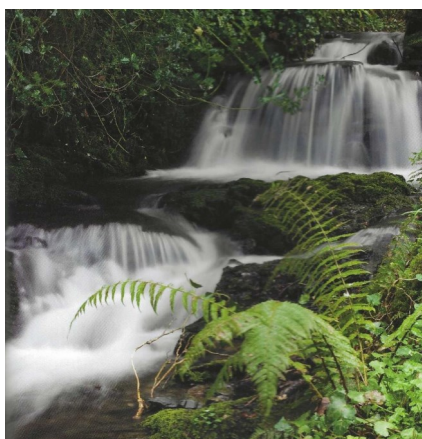
The AGM will be held at 4pm and Mass will follow at 5pm
All welcome!

MONTHLY FILM CLUB

The Monthly Film Club meets on the third Wednesday of each month at 2pm (approximately) in the Odeon Cinema, Stillorgan.

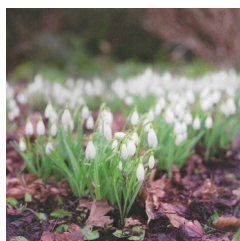
All are Welcome! Watch the eZine for details of selected film.

SPRING AWAKENING BY THE STREAM



With a spring in my step, I set out to enjoy that “stretch” in the evening before descending dusk to see what’s a stirring along the streamside. Tumbling from the heights of the Arra hills, the Glashabridawn rushes through steep banks into the garden on its way to join Lough Derg a couple of miles or so away. Foaming white and noisy, it is framed by a vibrant tapestry of native fern, moss and ivy.

The burgeoning noses of *gunnera manicata*, feet entrenched in the water’s edge are ready to burst into leaf in the lea of the cool grey stone of the bridge.



In dappled sunshine I greet the nodding snowdrops emerging from Winter’s dry leaves. The marbled leaves of *Arum Italicum* gives its best all Winter and Spring and is a lovely reminder of a good gardening friend. Green shoots of bluebells are springing up amidst a colony of shuttlecock ferns – *matteuccia struthiopteris* – still in their winter slumber. Sitting down on a slate bench, I engage more closely with my waterside surroundings. A dipper, recognizable by his white bib, flies low over the water in search of food. Around my feet, I observe the rounded ever green leaves of the cardamine showing their white flowers. It is called *pachyphragma macrophylla* and makes a pretty edging by the path. Helen Dillon gave it to me and in turn I like to share it with my friends. Spring is already heralded by the tall pink flowers of the umbrella plant, *peltiphyllum peltatum*. The leaves come later. Low growing azaleas, hostas and primula look promising.

Upwards and onwards I go beneath the massive pinky trunks of *Rhododendron Cynthia* into the sound of dashing water reaching a crescendo as the stream falls dramatically into a dense thicket of holly, cascading and disappearing into a wild woodland of my neighbour. Opening a weathered wicket gate, I follow the path into the wilder part of the garden to admire a *camellia* with red blooms, a *magnolia wilsonii* and my favourite, yellow *azalea lutea*, which will flower in May in the midst of a drift of the common dog violets. The stream comes into the light again, this time quieter and calmer, to become pool-like in a watering hole where the donkeys like to drink. It continues on through neighbouring fields and woods, merging with other mountainy streams to eventually reach Lough Derg.

Fedelma Tierney née Hanly

Woodland Walk in Castletown Glebe Rectory Garden

Thursday 11th of May 2023

Meet at 9.15am Sophie Barat Residence

Cost: €50 per person (for transport)

Fedelma Tierney (née Hanly), past pupil of Mount Anville, invites us for a Woodland Walk in Castletown Glebe, Portroe, Co. Tipperary on Thursday 11th May. This mature rectory garden is set in dramatic scenery beneath the Arra hills with views across Lough Derg to the Clare hills. We will depart from the car park in the Sophie Barat Residence at 9.15am by coach and head to Portroe for a pub lunch. We will then go over to the beautiful garden and spend time there. We should arrive back in the Sophie Barat Residence at about 6pm.

A collection for the Benevolent Fund will be made.

Further details from Fedelma Tierney at

Fedelmatierney@gmail.com or 087 9166015.

If you are interested in travelling by coach please RSVP to Julie in the Past Pupils office at 2783362 or pastpupilsoffice@mountanville.ie prior to the 30th of April 2023. The cost of the coach is €50 per person. Alternatively, if you wish to drive directly to Castletown Glebe, kindly advise Julie.

Sophie Barat Residence

Sophie Barat Residence (SBR) has been a hive of activity since January 2022 when work began on upgrading seven houses - a big and expensive undertaking! This project has now been completed and the new residents are happily installed in those houses. We have recently decided to upgrade the insulation of all the houses - another expensive project, but very necessary in this era of climate change.

The AMASC coffee mornings are back in full swing and are being held at SBR on the second Saturday of each month from 10.30 a.m. to 12 noon. Everyone is welcome, so do try to come!

The Directors of SBR (which is a company limited by guarantee and a charity) meet twice a month. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them all for their hard work and commitment, especially during the past six months when I have been ill. I would also like to thank everyone who has contributed to the success of SBR, especially to the Society of the Sacred Heart, and to those who have been kind enough to make donations, whether during their lifetimes or in their wills.

Our manager of the Residence, Grainne, is assisted by Helen and Mags, while Brian looks after the garden and the general maintenance of residences. We are very grateful to them for all their hard work.

Now that Spring has arrived, the garden is waking up and coming to life. And, of course, we are all delighted to have our new Saint Bridget's public holiday to mark *Imbolc* and to celebrate the huge contribution that women have made - and continue to make - to Irish society.

*"Anois teacht an Earraigh,
Beidh an lá dul chun sineadh!"*

New applications for places in the Residence are always welcome. If interested, please contact the office at (01) 2984717 or (085) 7505722 or download the application form from the website: www.sophiebaratresidence.ie

Jean FitzGerald
Chairperson



Joigny 2023 – 2024

A group of past pupils are visiting Joigny, the birthplace of St. Madeleine Sophie from the 25th of May to the 28th of May 2023. At this stage all places are filled but a cancellation list for 2023 is open. The cost is €575 per person including return flights Dublin – Paris, coach transfer from Paris to Joigny and 3 nights' accommodation and full board in Centre Sophie Barat in Joigny.

Bookings are now being taken for our 2024 visit to Joigny in May 2024. Please contact Julie in Past Pupils office on 2783362 or pastpupiloffice@mountanville.ie if you wish to make a booking for 2024 or go on the cancellation list for 2023.



AMASC/MAPPA Monthly Coffee Mornings

The monthly coffee mornings take place in the Sophie Barat Residence on the second Saturday of every month from 10.30am to 12pm.

Hostesses March to September 2023

11th March Hilda O'Connell & Joan Balfe
7th April Mary Clare Norris & Inez Tynan
13th May Pauline Scanlan & Anne O'Byrne
10th June Mary Briscoe & Perdita Quinlan
8th July Margaret Cawley O'Connor & Eithne Gallagher
12th Aug Alice Davy & Fiona Williams
9th Sept Marie Harte & Geraldine O'Connor



**AMASC (IRELAND)
COMMITTEE 2022**

Áine Carson Tennyson (Mount Anville)
Marie Doyle (Monkstown) Treasurer
Pat Egan (rscj representative)
Phil Elwood (Roscrea) Cork Branch
Jean FitzGerald (Mount Anville) Sophie Barat Residence
Maebh Gallagher (Mount Anville)
Elizabeth Gebruers (Roscrea) Cork Branch

Máire Kirwan (Mount Anville)
Frances Meenan (Leeson St and Mount Anville), Chair AMASC
Hilda O'Connell (Leeson Street)
Perdita Quinlan (Mount Anville) Benevolent Fund
Christina Torsney (Mount Anville) President MAPPA
Joanne Sheehan (Monkstown) Vice Chair AMASC
Dairine Walsh (Leeson St and Mount Anville)