

THE HOPKINS BANQUET

Program

Host – Noel Baber, S.J.

Grace – , S.J.

Presentation – Dennis Gallagher introduces Fr. Michael J. Sheeran, S.J., President, Regis University presents Honorary Degree to Rowan Gillispie, Artisit/Sculptor

A poem – Joseph Feeney, S.J. introduces Richard Austin

Keynote – Catherine Phillips introducesPaul Mariniai

Remarks – Jim McCauley introduces Paul Kelly Chair, Hopkins Society, Ireland

Benediction – Fr. Joseph J. Feeney, S.J. Saint Joseph's University



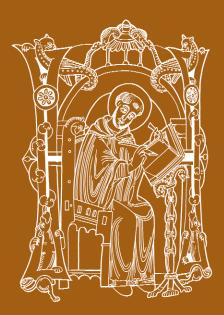












Hopkins: The Dublin Conference

October 19-21, 2007 The Jesuit Conference Centre Milltown Park Dublin, Ireland









DUBLIN HOSTS INTERNATIONAL HOPKINS CONFERENCE

Joseph J. Feeney, S.J.

From Israel and New Zealand, from Poland and Japan, from Italy and Korea, from Canada and the United States, Hopkins scholars ate, read, or dozed away their long flights to Ireland for "Hopkins: The Dublin Conference." Scholars from England and Ireland had easier trips, but all of them - Jews, Catholics, Protestants, unbelievers - looked forward with pleasure to the weekend Conference on Gerard Manley Hopkins, sponsored by Regis University, Denver. The dates were October 19-21, 2007, the venue, Hopkins' own Dublin, where he spent the last five years of his life (1884-1889) teaching at University College and creating music-filled, experimental, sometimes searing poems.

The Conference members numbered sixty: 27 presenters – the world's major Hopkins scholars, some playing multiple roles – and about 30 listeners. New insights and directions abounded on such topics as Hopkins' concept of duty, his creativity, his poems as texts for prayer, his playfulness, his "divine eros," his representations of the body, his use by American novelists, his Jesuit milieu, his role as Catholic writer, his role as poet of workers and laborers, his work with the poor, and of course his poems. An unusual session called "What's My Line?" gave people two minutes to explain some problematic Hopkins line of their choice. (The most interesting choice was the single word "AND" from "The Windhover.") Two writers read from their new books: Paul Mariani, from his biography of Hopkins, forthcoming from Viking, and Ron Hansen, from his novel Exiles, forthcoming from Farrar, Straus and Giroux, about both the drowning nuns of "The Wreck of the Deutschland" and Hopkins himself. Other lecturers linked Hopkins with such writers and critics as Merton, Ong, Kierkegaard, Newman, St. Philip Neri, Derrida, Empson, Hegel, Freud, Lacan, Heidegger, Levinas, Bakhtin, Kohak, the Polish poets Zbigniew Herbert and Jan Twardowski, the English poet Francis Kilvert, and – not to be outdone – the Trinity itself as "Utterer, Utterèd, Uttering." It was quite a collection of topics and lecturers, whose very diversity shows Hopkins' multiple facets. Some of the participants, I add, are writing their own books on Hopkins.

Four events struck me as highlights. Friday evening five editors (from Canada, England, and the U.S.) discussed their new edition of everything Hopkins wrote (including recent discoveries) in an eight-volume set entitled Collected Works of Gerard Manley Hopkins, to be completed by 2012 and published by Oxford University Press. In this edition, all the letters will appear together in chronological sequence – a new approach – and the text will include all of Hopkins' variants: deletions, insertions,

and interlinear alternatives. The highlight on Saturday was a formal debate by four scholars on the proposition "Resolved: As a poem, 'Tom's Garland' is a failure." A rousing discussion ensued and the audience discovered new aspects of this caudal sonnet in new ways. Perhaps paradoxically, "Tom's Garland" seemed to rise in their esteem. Sunday morning's highlight was a presentation by two Israeli scholars, both Jewish women, about their book-length project which examines, as they put it, "the hold he has on me" - the reasons why Hopkins has such a "hold" on them, why he fascinates them and similar readers despite differences in belief. Finally, after the lectures ended, the group enjoyed a bus tour of Hopkins' Dublin: #86 Stephen's Green where he lived, taught, and died; Phoenix Park where he went to escape the crowded, smoky city; Grafton Street and O'Connell Street where he walked; Trinity College which he visited; and "Bellville," the home of the MacCabe family in Donnybrook, where he enjoyed Sunday dinner with the MacCabes and rowed a small boat with their children on a nearby pond. But most moving was our visit to Hopkins' grave in the Jesuit plot in Glasnevin Cemetery. We looked at the Jesuit names inscribed on the base of the great Celtic cross, noted Hopkins' friends and associates buried there, and laid flowers by the cross in tribute to our poet. Just before we left, the English actor Richard Austin stood by his grave and (I use Hopkins' word) "performed" his Dublin poem "That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire and of the comfort of the Resurrection." A few tears flowed at the last lines, "In a flash, at a trumpet crash, / I am all at once what Christ is, since he was what I am, and / This Jack, joke, poor potsherd, patch, matchwood, immortal diamond, / Is immortal diamond."

This Dublin Conference, a splendid and stimulating gathering, was organized by Prof. Victoria McCabe of Regis University. and chaired by Paul Kelly, a friend of Regis, along with his wife Loredana. The president of Regis, Michael Sheeran, S.J., joined us for the sessions. We met at the Jesuit Conference Center, Milltown Park, hosted by Noel Barber, S.J. It was, as the Irish might say, "a grand weekend." So successful was the Dublin Conference, in fact, that I rather imagine the scholars, on their return flights, inwardly smiling a long smile all the way home, all the way to Poland, Israel, Korea, Japan, even New Zealand. The great, long, quiet smile was well deserved.

Joseph J. Feeney, S.J., is Professor of English at Saint Joseph's University, and Co-Editor of The Hopkins Quarterly. His new book, The Playfulness of Gerard Manley Hopkins, will be published in April by the Ashgate Press of England.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT DR. VICTORIA McCABE AT VMCCABE@REGIS.EDU • FAX 303 964 5405 • PHONE: 303 458 3572 REGIS UNIVERSITY, 3333 REGIS BLVD., H-24; DENVER, COLORADO 80221 USA

HOPKINS MARCH 27-29, 2009

SPEAKERS

Richard Austin (Canada)

Noel Barber, S.J. (Ireland) Ewa Borkowska (Poland) Sam Eccher (USA) Philip Endean, S.J. (England) Joseph Feeney, S.J. (USA) Frank Fennell (USA) Ron Hansen (USA) Leslev Higgins (Canada) Sr. Tomiko Hirata (Japan) Youngmin Kim (Korea) Joaquin Kuhn (Canada) Maria Lichtmann (USA) Paul Mariani (USA) Francis X. McAloon, S.J. (USA)

David Miller (Italy) Michael Moore (Canada) Jude Nixon (USA) Catherine Phillips (England) Gerald Roberts (England) Rachel Salmon (Israel) and Dennis Sobolev (Israel) RKR Thornton (England) Evnel Wardi (Israel) Bernadette Waterman Ward (USA) Peter Whiteford (New Zealand) Loren Wilkinson (Canada)

TRIP TO GLASNEVIN

The Hopkins Committee at Regis University

Honorary Chair: Fr. Michael Sheeran, S.J. — President, Regis University

Chair: Mr. Paul Kelly — President, Veteran Home Loans

Co-Chair: Ms. Loredana Parini Kelly — Student, Regis University

Director: Dr. Victoria McCabe — Commitment Program, Regis University

Public Relations: Mr. Dennis Gallagher — Auditor, City of Denver

Publications and Photography: Ms. Lisa Greco — Creative Arts Director, Regis University

Administrative Coordinator, Regis University

