

Join us for Hist250

By Luke Fehily and Ursula Quill

Over the next year, the College Historical Society of Trinity College Dublin will celebrate two and a half centuries of excellence in debate, discourse and oratory.

The College Historical Society, more commonly known as the Hist, is commemorating the anniversary of its foundation with a series of special events – Hist250. As the world's oldest student debating society, the Hist has much to celebrate and the programme aims to exhibit the Society's auspicious history as well as demonstrate its continuing relevance.

During spring 2020, the original records, dating to 1770, will be exhibited in the Long Room of the Old Library. Significant work is being undertaken by the Manuscripts Room

to preserve the records and archives of the Society as invaluable historical sources. The celebrations will include the launch of the first complete history of the Society, based on these records, written by Dr Patrick Geoghegan and generously supported by the Trinity Association & Trust.

The anniversary provides a unique opportunity not only to reflect on the past, but also to look to the future. The Hist has always been at the forefront of Irish intellectualism and, at a time when democratic institutions and multilateral cooperation are under attack, it is more important than ever. Hist250 will focus on

the future of democracy and the challenges it faces. Together with global leaders, the Hist will explore these issues through fair and balanced discussion.

The General Committee has organised events with the aim of showcasing the very best of the modern Society. The weekly meetings will include showcase debates with gold medallists for oratory, world championship speakers, and *Irish Times* Champions. Hist250 will also mark the reinstatement of collaborative events with our corresponding societies (Oxford, Cambridge, Durham and Edinburgh) and a celebration of our historic ties with UCD's Literary and Historical Society. A series of special guest lectures, from Honorary Members and Hist Vice-Presidents, will engage students from across the University. Illustrious guests will also be awarded the Society's Gold Medal for Outstanding Contribution to Public Discourse and the Burke Medal for the Contribution to the Arts.

These events will culminate in a celebratory week of 2-6 March 2020 with prestigious guest speakers from Ireland and abroad, including former President of Ireland Dr Mary Robinson, an international student debate, as well as panel discussions, dinners and much more.

The programme of events is being co-ordinated by the General Committee and a very active Hist250 sub-committee, with members in Dublin, London, New York and beyond. This year in particular we welcome all our former members to get involved with the Society. Hist250 events will also be held in the UK and USA.

If you would like to learn more, support the Society through donation, or play an active part in Hist250, please contact Luke Fehily at auditor@thehist.com. For more information, visit the Society's website thehist.com. If you would like to donate photos or memorabilia of your time at the Hist, please contact hist250@thehist.com.

We look forward to welcoming many of you back to the Hist during the year.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Luke Fehily is a Senior Sophister Nanoscience student and a scholar with the Naughton and Laidlaw Foundations. He has previously served as the Society's Treasurer and is the Auditor of the 250th Session.

Ursula Quill B.A. (2012), ex-Auditor, is Director of Hist250 and is currently reading Law at King's Inns. She is parliamentary assistant to Senator Ivana Bacik.



Photo: Fennell Photography

Professor David McConnell, Fellow Emeritus, Pro-Chancellor of the University and President of The Hist; The Honorable Sir Donnell Deeny, Lord Justice of Appeal in NI, Pro-Chancellor of the University; Ursula Quill, Director Hist250; Caoimhin Hamill, Debates Convenor of the 250th Session; Luke Fehily, Auditor of the 250th Session