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Foreword

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Foreword

The National Centre for Franco-Irish Studies (NCFIS) has a long history of developing post graduate research across different academic areas. One of the more recent additions to its discipline stable is that of gastronomy and, in particular, beverage culture. Hence, the NCFIS is now home to post graduate students undertaking projects in areas such as whiskey tourism, cultural representations of the Irish pub and the use of performance and drama to communicate the authentic story of Irish beverages. Dr Eamon Maher and I were recently involved in the development of an innovative PhD structured module on conference organisation and dissemination. As part of this module, postgraduate students are required to plan an academic event around an agreed theme that complements their area of research, contact prospective speakers, organise a suitable venue and funding, and then edit a special issue of the *Journal of Franco- Irish Studies (JOFIS)* comprising a selection of papers that reflect the essence of the proceedings. To that end, two postgraduate researchers at the centre organised a daylong seminar on the theme of **The changing nature of the Irish beverage story** on November 8, 2017 at the Technological University Dublin - Tallaght Campus. This very successful event brought together a wide range of speakers and participants, all linked by the common thread of beverage. The organisers then collated and edited the papers that constitute this special edition of *JOFIS*. Their exemplary efforts in this regard were made all the more challenging when one considers that both guest editors are based in different countries. Sylvain Tondeur is based at the Université de Lille and is registered with the NCFIS on a *co-tutelle* in pursuance of his PhD on Whiskey Tourism, while Susan Boyle is based in TU Dublin and is developing a PhD using performance and drama to tell the story of Irish beverages. The papers in this special edition are therefore truly born out a Franco-Irish collaboration.

Elements of drink culture are buried deep in the gastronomic DNA of Ireland's past and present. Because of our new-found epicurean confidence in recent years there has been substantial academic interest in all things food-related. Culinary studies are now better served than they ever were in terms of academic research and significant initiatives such as the Dublin Gastronomy Symposium (DGS) attest to this success. What is sometimes missing in such developments, however, is a deeper understanding of beverage studies both in Ireland and abroad and how historical and contemporary drinks culture impacts on society. The original beverage research network arose out of the success of the DGS, where a number of people expressed an interest specifically in the beverage research area. The purpose of such a

network is to provide participants with the potential to interact with and learn from each other and this publication is a welcome manifestation of that interaction.

The event itself was interesting on a number of fronts. A busy schedule on the day included fascinating presentations by speakers from a variety of beverage research backgrounds. There were contributions on topics as diverse as Poitín, Coopering, Storytelling, The Irish Pub, Female Brewers, Irish Whiskey, and even Guinness and Sex! Participants were treated to a pre-lunch sensory analysis session led by Susan Boyle which explored among other things the twelve key botanicals used in gin distillation. The day was rounded off with a bespoke tour and tasting at Teeling's Distillery in Dublin.

Special tribute must be paid to both guest editors of this publication, Sylvain Tondeur and Susan Boyle. They have successfully delivered an interesting and diverse set of papers that will undoubtedly encourage further beverage research developments in both an Irish and international context. There is a wealth of beverage research talent residing both within and outside the Irish third level sector. There are researchers, practitioners, educators/trainers, retailers and producers. In many ways, there are not sufficient opportunities for networking and cooperation among these many disparate groups. I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank both guest editors on the successful organisation of a seminar that has not only provided an important publication, but has also encouraged this nascent group to engage in continued and fruitful collaboration.

Brian Murphy

Brian Murphy works with The National Centre for Franco-Irish Studies based at The Technological University Dublin. He is the founder of The Beverage Research Network and one of the co-founders of The Dublin Gastronomy Symposium.