

## 'Tell us why you shot them,' say Ballymurphy families

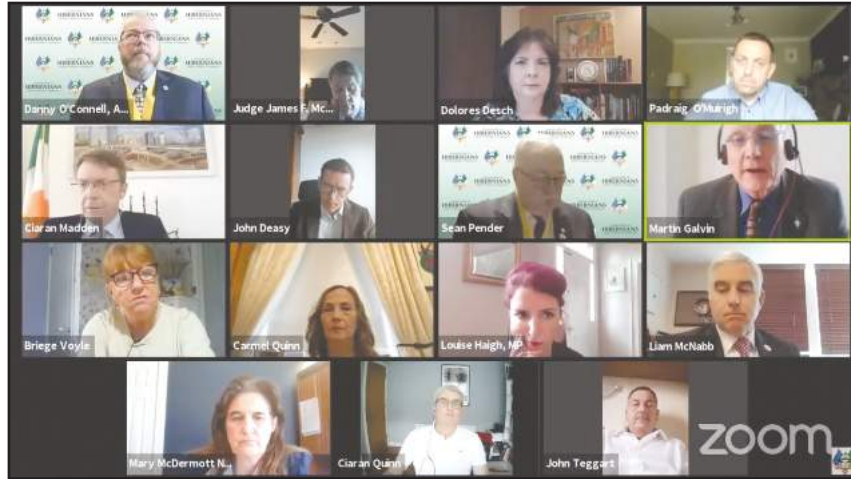
Relatives of the Ballymurphy Massacre victims asked "why British troopers shot our innocent loved ones" during a live webinar broadcast hosted by the Ancient Order of Hibernians, following the inquest verdict. The emotional plea came amidst dramatic revelations made by victims' relatives John Teggart, Briege Voyle and Carmel Quinn, accompanied by solicitor Padraig O'Muirigh. The May 15 broadcast was also joined by Senator Robert Menendez, Congressman Chris Smith, Irish Consul General Ciaran Madden, British Labour Party Shadow Northern Secretary Louise Haigh, Director of Relatives for Justice Mark Thompson, former Fine Gael TD John Deasy, Sinn Fein representative Ciaran Quinn, leading Hibernians and other Irish leaders.

Senator Menendez congratulated these families whose loved ones had been declared innocent after almost 50 years.

In remarks clearly aimed at British trooper amnesty plans Congressman Chris Smith said there should be "no expiration date on justice for Ballymurphy." John Teggart had testified in a Congressional committee in 2011, but it took 10 years for Judge Keegan to proclaim what the families have been saying for almost 50 years, that every victim of the three-day massacre was innocent.

### Shocking

Briege Voyle said none of the families knew the full story of what



Some of the participants in the AOH-hosted Ballymurphy webinar.

happened until they got the autopsy and medical records. Her mother, Joan Connolly, a grandmother and mother of eight children, was not given medical treatment, but left on the ground to bleed to death.

Noel Phillips was shot execution style. Daniel Teggart was shot 14 times. Medical orderlies were asked to plant ammunition on the dead bodies. The British claimed they had fired on British troopers.

continued on page 14

## Hibernian Hunger Project

By Bill Sullivan, National Chairman

In the last issue of the Hibernian Digest, we recognized the recipients of the 2020 Hibernian Hunger Project Awards. We are pleased to report that AOH National President Danny O'Connell and the AOH National Board have announced an additional \$4,500 in Hibernian Hunger Project Awards for Divisions who had submitted their Hibernian Hunger Project Applications in February.

In addition to Division 5 of Bucks County, PA, which we previously reported had received a \$1,000 grant for its Hibernian Hunger Project, two additional Divisions have each received a \$1,000 grant. They are the Monsignor Lee Division 1 AOH of Elmira, NY, and the Father Flanagan Division 1 AOH in Omaha, Nebraska.

During the pandemic, the Monsignor Lee Division 1 AOH of Elmira provided free hot lunches to school-aged children and their families on weekends for more than two months. Division 1 also prepared Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners and food baskets to the less fortunate in the Elmira area during the holiday season.

The Father Flanagan Division 1 AOH in Omaha, Nebraska, provided thousands of dollars in food to the Saint Vincent de Paul Food Pantry in Omaha. In addition, Division 1's 501c3, contributed over 1.75 tons of meat to food banks in the Omaha area, which included Heart Ministries, the Saint Vincent de Paul Society and the Stephens Center.

In addition to the six Divisions that received \$500 Hibernian Hunger Award grants for 2020, that we noted in the last Hibernian Digest, seven additional Divisions were selected to receive \$500 grants each. Listed below are the Divisions who received these additional grants:

Division 16 of Passaic County, New Jersey; the Michael P. Keeley Division 1 of Saint Clair County in Illinois; the John C. Devereux Division 1 of Oneida, NY; the JFK Division 4 of Huntington, NY; Division 3 of the District of Columbia; the Michael Collins Division 1 of Cumberland County, PA; and

continued on page 9

*This would be the perfect time to plan and implement a hunger-related project for your Division for 2021.*

## Kansas Hibernians organize first pandemic road bowling tournament

Local success in the bi-state Kansas City area allowed the Fr. Donnelly Division to organize their first successful Irish Road Bowling tournament on Saturday, May 22, at Wyandotte County Park in Bonner Springs, KS.

Sixty-five teams gathered over the course of that rainy Saturday to test their skills at throwing 2 lbs. cannonballs around the course while having a ball of a time. The event served as a fundraiser for a number of local charities in the Kansas City area, notably the Duschene Clinic and SAFE. The Duschene Clinic provides healthcare to low-income residents

lacking health insurance, while SAFE offers support and aid to the families of police officers killed in the line of duty.

The May 22nd Irish Road Bowling tournament was particularly notable for the amount of rain that fell on the course during the event. Hibernian volunteers who served as marshals out in the open around the course earned a greater appreciation for the simple comforts of a soaking with their brother Hibernians.

The next tournament will be Saturday, October 2, at Wyandotte County Park. Organizers, volunteers and competitors hope for clear skies and sunny weather.



An Irish Road Bowler tried his best in the pouring rain on May 22 in Bonner Springs, Kansas.

## In This Issue...

### Connecticut



**Brian O'Neill**  
1892 Charter  
Page 12

### Massachusetts



**Paul Boyle**  
Easter Rising Commemoration  
Page 19

### Project St. Patrick recipient



**Fr. Michael McCandless**  
Page 10

### State News

Alabama	.....11
California	.....18
Connecticut	.....12, 13
Delaware	.....2
Florida	.....24
Illinois	.....9
Indiana	.....13
Iowa	.....12, 17
Massachusetts	.....19
Minnesota	.....17
New Jersey	.....17, 19
New York	.....17, 20, 21, 24
North Carolina	.....15
Oklahoma	.....24
Pennsylvania	.....24
West Virginia	.....18
LAOH	.....22

# 9/11 Hibernian plaque to be unveiled

This year marks the 20th Anniversary of 9/11, the day when our nation was attacked without warning by a heartless enemy. It is the day we, as a nation, vowed never to forget. That day has a very special significance for us as Irish Americans and Hibernians. As throughout our nation's history, the number of Irish Americans who rushed in as others rushed out was significant, many of whom never returned. Fr. Mychal Judge, the Chaplain to the FDNY, was 'Victim 0001.' Fr. Judge's body was found by one of our Brothers, NYPD Police Lieutenant William Cosgrove, who, along with FDNY members Christian Waugh and Zachary Vause and aided by Kevin Allen, and Former U.S. Army Maj. John P. Maguire carried the slain priest from the rubble to St. Peter's Church, where Fr. Judge's body was placed before the altar. The photo of this act has become iconic: an American Pietà. Since that time, it has been a tradition for the FDNY to march in N.Y. St. Patrick's Day parade with 343 American Flags, one for each firefighter who fell on 9/11, and to remember those wearing their green on that day on their graves in service to America.

As Irish Americans, we have a deep and noble tradition of remembrance, believing that no one, even those tragically murdered, is truly dead as long as they are remembered. The NY State Ancient Order of Hibernians will maintain that tradition by holding a remembrance on Saturday, September 25, 2021, at 11 a.m. at St. Peter's Church, 22 Barclay Street, New York, NY. As part of the ceremony, a bronze plaque will be unveiled at St. Peter's dedicated to the memory of the 18 Hibernian Brothers and Sisters lost on that day. Not only is St. Peter's adjacent to the World Trade Center site and the place where the body of Fr. Judge lay before the altar, it is also the oldest Catholic Church in New York City. It is also where St. Elizabeth Ann Seton converted to Catholicism and began her life of ministry and where Priests of the Holy Cross said their first mass in America on their way to found a new university, Notre Dame. The memory of our Brother and Sister Hibernians will be preserved in the august company they deserve.

For more information, or if you are planning on attending this special remembrance ceremony, please contact NY State Ancient Order of Hibernians Vice President John Manning at [jmanningnysaoh@gmail.com](mailto:jmanningnysaoh@gmail.com) or cell (917) 589-0047.



## Delaware

On May 15, members of the Commodore John Barry Division, in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, met at The Grain on the Rocks restaurant, in Lewes, on the Delaware Bay. This was the first face-to-face meeting since the beginning of the pandemic. This was a perfect setting to honor St. Brendan, Ireland's patron saint of fishermen and navigators. St. Brendan's feast day is celebrated on May 16.— Submitted by Terence Reilly



## The National Hibernian Digest

"The Land, One and Indivisible, Though the Heavens Fall"

HIS EMINENCE, PATRICK CARDINAL O'DONNELL OF IRELAND

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# Deadline

Articles for the August-September issue are due no later than August 1.

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## president's message

By *Danny O'Connell*

The Ancient Order of Hibernians is a national organization representing the largest group of Irish Catholics outside of Ireland. Our historic success comes from our founding fathers who set up a hierarchal organization with a chain of command that has units operating independently under the direction of superior jurisdictions much like military command. This may be why "Division" was chosen as the base unit rather than another title. Our success nationally depends on the success of our divisions following the chain of command yet working independently on objectives established by superior boards and locally. The division often decides independently on how to accomplish the objectives established by the superior jurisdictions. The success of each division is based on you, the member. Thank you for being a member of the AOH and for making the AOH what it is today.

The four annual pillars of the AOH are 1) dues and membership growth, 2) our label fundraiser for charity, 3) our Freedom For All Ireland Christmas Appeal, and 4) our Project St. Patrick Easter Appeal. We ask each and every member, each and every Division, each and every County Board and each and every State Bord to support these four pillars helping us keep the AOH the voice of Irish America.

Clearly, there are other components of the AOH work on every level of the Order, too numerous to list. We, the AOH, are Everything Irish, Catholic, and American. Each member has joined our Nobel Order for their own reasons. Some of us are more interested in our work as Catholics, others our work specifically on Pro-Life, others in our work as an immigration support organization, and others in our work for a free and united Ireland, and others in so much more.

### Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity

The glue that brings us together as the premier Irish organization in the United States is our shared Catholic faith, our shared culture and our shared Irish heritage. Together, we become the Ancient Order of Hibernians in America, the voice of Irish America!

By Constitution, each AOH Division, County Board and State Board has a clearly defined territory. A portion of a county for some, an entire county or state for others. Within each territory, the President is the Executive Officer of the Order. If there is only one division in a county, the division serves as the County Board. In order to form a state board, you must have two counties with divisions. Our Worthy Presidents lead us at every level. Thank you all for your efforts.

### Your responsibility

As we continue to come out of Covid-19, we look to our Presidents and all members to help us move forward as an Order. Be sure your division is successful on each of our annual pillars most especially, number one: membership growth and dues. Make it your responsibility to grow your division every month. Make it your responsibility to assure your division is always in good standing by verifying your county, state and national per capita are paid annually by February 15.

The pandemic has certainly defined the importance of our work on the division level. Our work on Hibernian Hunger is one project that has really jumped out to me during this time. Chairman Bill Sullivan has done a great job of guiding this program and establishing a program where the national board supports some of our best Hibernian Projects in our divisions. Congratulations to all who received a financial award, keep up the great work!

Successful Hibernian projects help the AOH market and promote the Order. Our goal is to be hands on. During the pandemic, organizations such as the AOH stepped up at a record setting pace to serve our communities. We saw many Irish American organizations popping up for pandemic-specific assistance, which was brilliant. Hibernians from around the country assisted with many of these projects and helped these organizations succeed. At the same time, what was really incredible is where the AOH stepped up and became the local project leader rather than simply joining in other projects. Congratulations to all of you for your work!

### Be part of your conventions

We are in the midst of the state convention season. I recommend that all Hibernians participate in conventions whether it's your state or by visiting another. The fellowship is incredible and what you learn will help you become a better Hibernian, and in turn help your division. Our presidents are responsible to put on a program that makes it a good investment for our members. The convention is not a time to race through an agenda, it is a time to work together and improve the Order. A convention in session is the supreme body of governance for each board within the Order. We hope to see you at a state convention this year, and again in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, for the AOH-LAOH National Convention July 13-17, 2022.



## vice president's report

By *Sean Pender*

Thanks to all who contributed to the 2020-2021 Label Program making it the most successful ever. As promised in my last article here is a full recap.

### The positives

An on-line credit card/PayPal donation option was added; 2,133 total donations were received, 167 of which were \$50 or more, the average donation was \$26.74; a net profit of \$34,410 was realized, these funds will be used to fund the charitable work of our Hibernian Charities, including Hibernian Disaster Relief, Hibernian Hunger Projects, National History Day, Seminarian and Religious Vocation Grants through Project St. Patrick, Irish Way and Study Abroad scholarships.

### The sole negative

Only 7.64 percent of members who received the mailing made a donation.

### Future challenge:

Increase participation rate.

Special thanks to all who added notes regarding the program and ideas for the future involvement of this important fundraiser. That input and other ideas are being reviewed for future program enhancements. It is our goal to have the 2021 mailing delivered to members in October.

### Tenacity, Courage and Perseverance

On May 11, thanks to the work of FFAI National Chairman Martin Galvin, I was able to view live from the Belfast Laganside courts, Justice Siobhan Keegan give her verdict and findings into 10 killings in Ballymurphy, Belfast, from August 9 to 11, 1971. As Chairman Galvin has written, "Justice Keegan not only declared that all 10 of those killed were completely innocent, but described the inadequacy of any earlier investigation as 'shocking.'"

When the verdict was read, I was overcome by emotions of relief, joy and anger. I first met the Ballymurphy families in January of 2008, during Bloody Sunday weekend in Derry, when family members presented their emotional stories at an event organized by Relatives for Justice. In 2011 I was in Congress at a Congressional hearing when John Teggart, whose father Daniel was among the innocent murdered at Ballymurphy, testified. For years on our FFAI tours we met with the families and were updated by them on their efforts for truth and justice. A highlight was a very special 2013 Easter Sunday mass which we attended with the families in Ballymurphy.

Like others, I applaud the family's tenacity, courage and perseverance, and condemn the continued policy of the British government to deny the past to delay justice. There are still hundreds of families still waiting for truth and justice only to be obstructed by the British government.



**New Jersey AOH Chaplain Father Kenneth Hallahan and AOH National Vice President Sean Pender, right, congratulated newly installed NJAOH State President Richard O'Brien at the NJ convention.**

*"To be Irish is an honor  
to be a Hibernian is a blessing"  
Show your Hibernian Pride!*

*Remember the AOH in your will*

Please consider the Order when writing or rewriting your will, and add a paragraph along the lines of: "I leave to The Ancient Order of Hibernians in America [X percent of my estate or a specific dollar amount] for its charitable works."



## treasurer's report

By Liam McNabb

### Hibernians are Back in Action!

It appears we may be transitioning from public restrictions due to Covid to having the ability to enjoy restaurants again, some travel and in-person events. During the months of May and June, many AOH Divisions, County Boards and States have held in-person meetings, which have been productive along with fostering renewed enthusiasm for fellowship and our mission.

Covid had a significant impact on membership organizations at every level as some declined in membership and engagement. Your National Board, however, increased our activity during the pandemic through the sharing of resources, presentations and discussions via Zoom. Our commitment to initiatives such as Freedom For All Ireland (FFAI) and the Label Program never wavered, and Divisions, Counties and States strongly supported these and other projects as well.

As we continue to open up, it is time to leverage our momentum and re-commit to increasing membership through marketing and sharing our personal stories to appeal to others. **We need to be clear about our narrative for today and tomorrow.** Compared to other organizations, the AOH is stronger now than in recent history as we have a presence of membership in every state. Our membership numbers are trending upward because of our strength and what we have to offer through our extensive "menu of involvement." Remember, we have something for everyone: local charitable work (Charities & Missions), Irish History, Pro-Life efforts through a blood drive, supporting your Church through Catholic Action, or a food drive in the name of Hibernian Hunger. The list goes on ....

Now is the time to trumpet our successes and let everyone know we not only held our own during the pandemic, but we also improved our standing as an organization, and we welcome others to join our team and support our mission.



## Director's report

By Ray Lynch

As we recently passed through the solemn remembrance of Memorial Day 2021, I would like to take a moment to thank the families who have sent a loved one to protect our Nation and they gave the ultimate sacrifice for it. As a veteran of the United States Marine Corps, I can whole heartedly relate to the importance of "stepping up to the call for our freedoms" and all the complexities from doing so. This holiday is not only for the warriors we have lost but it is also for the brave families that endure the lasting pain from doing so. You have my lifelong respect.

I was fortunate to travel up to East Durham, NY, for the New York State Board meeting and State President Tom Lambert's Testimonial Dinner at the end of April. I enjoyed every minute of the unity the brothers from New York shared with me, but it was also great to be part of the State Board doing the business of the Order. East Durham has a beautiful countryside and if you have not been there, I highly suggest you go ... soon!

During the upcoming months I am looking forward to joining our brothers from across the States that are holding conventions, GA, NC, SC, LA, NY and hopefully a few others.

I am sending prayers for continued safety and health rolling out of "pandemic mode" and into a renewed togetherness that has long been needed. I am so grateful to this Order for keeping some form of sanity and commitment to its brothers by making sure we had plenty to do online over the past year. Without our weekly/bi-weekly events I think I would have gone a bit stir crazy. I am looking forward to the months ahead getting back to dealing in person with the challenges of growing and strengthening the Order. Please feel free to contact me at [irishyankeenut@yahoo.com](mailto:irishyankeenut@yahoo.com) or (772) 224-4928 with any comments or suggestions.

Stay Blessed Brothers, in our motto.

## Does your financial secretary have your email address?

The national email system provides an opportunity for the National Board to share information with members between publications of the Hibernian Digest. This system also gives us instant contact with our members when we need a call to action on any Hibernian issue.

If you do not receive our email blasts and wish to be a part of our call to action team, please be sure to get your email updated on your membership information. Your financial secretary can update your information today. We need you as part of our team.



## secretary's report

By Jere Cole

### 'Convention Season' is upon us

We are now fully in convention season and each division is updating their Officers. Let me remind you that you must notify the National Office of all changes to the officers in a division.

First, let's back up a bit. The Financial Secretary is the most important position in a division, as they are responsible for not only keeping their membership data up to date, but also recording all officers.

Recently, we added the capability for the financial secretary to update the Form 9 online, eliminating the tedious process of completing a paper form and mailing it to the office.

In the next few weeks, perhaps by the time you are reading this, the next step in our system evolution will be in place. That is that the State and County secretaries will be given access to update their officers.

If you have just been elected to this important position of Financial Secretary and you aren't sure how to begin, first contact my office. The most efficient way would be to email Joe Ryan at: [joe.ryan.aoh@gmail.com](mailto:joe.ryan.aoh@gmail.com) Joe will see that you are set up and go over any instructions necessary for you to become productive from day one.

If you are unable to complete these updates online, your division president should assign a person to serve in that capacity. Ideally, there would be no more than two brothers from a division with access to the system.

Remember, too, when completing the Form 9, BOTH the President and the Financial Secretary are REQUIRED to have an email and telephone number in the system. Actually, all elected officers should have both an email and telephone number recorded.

State Presidents and area directors will also have access to the system, but it will be "read-only," which will eliminate any confusion around the number of edits allowed.

As is always the case, convention season sees a surge in the demand for pins and medallions. Please do not wait until the last moment as the stock goes quickly. Go to [AOH.com](http://AOH.com) and download the order form, complete and mail with your payment for prompt service.

Again, if anything is amiss, contact Joe Ryan. [Joe.ryan.aoh@gmail.com](mailto:Joe.ryan.aoh@gmail.com)



## Director's report

By Ed Halligan

As we enter the summer and State Convention season, I look forward to meeting with many of our Brothers who I have visited on Zoom. Over the next few months, I hope to attend six conventions, a road bowling event, and meet with some Divisions and County Boards. At your conventions, each of the Directors will carry the same message from our National President. You will hear about the four pillars, which consist of Dues and Recruitment, Project St. Patrick Easter Appeal, Freedom For All Ireland Christmas Appeal, and the Label Program. We will also remind you about Divisions filing their taxes, recruiting and retaining and a few other important items.

### Success

The National Board is celebrating our first anniversary as a team. It has been a remarkable year. Many Divisions and Brothers have stepped up to help our Freedom For All Ireland Christmas Appeal and our Label Program with record donations. Hope the same will be true for our Easter Appeal Project St. Patrick. The National webinars and You Tube events have been a success. So much so that many groups in Northern Ireland are now looking at the AOH as the true Voice of Irish America. Much has been accomplished this past year, but we all need to do more.

### To-Do List

Membership is down nationally and yet there are Divisions that did a great job of recruiting and retaining during the pandemic. We need to follow their lead.

Communications have improved, but still there are issues with lack of email addresses or wrong addresses for Division officers on the rosters. This needs to be corrected at the Division level.

Hibernian Hunger Project awards were announced, but only 33 Divisions participated. We all know so many more were involved with projects. Just look at the pictures in the Digest during the pandemic.

We are asking that you keep track of the number of people that are impacted by your events. Maybe keep a spreadsheet for your events. A festival that an AOH runs could impact hundreds if not thousands of people. Food donations that so many Divisions run locally effect entire families. How many people could these donations feed? Keeping track of the numbers and submitting your reports can help all of us. It will help when we apply for grants. If you publicize your events and get your membership involved, it will help with recruitment and retention. Remember the 33 Divisions that participated in the HHP Awards; they combined to impact 700,000 people. Impressive! Imagine the numbers if all Divisions participated

### Pride

Be proud of what we have accomplished together this past year. As we Hibernians come out of the dark days of the pandemic let us all be inspired by our Irish heritage, defend our Catholic faith, pray for a united Ireland, challenge leadership that does not lead, get involved, and God Bless America. Happy Fourth of July.



## Director's report

By *tim mcsweeney*

New York State Divisions have had a busy spring, as many divisions are back up and running after COVID-19 shutdown. Many divisions are in the planning stages of rescheduled events and functions.

The NY State Board meeting weekend was a rousing success. Over 80 golfers competed in the James Hayes Memorial Golf Outing to begin the weekend. Golfers were met with cold and windy conditions, and in the end, Team Auburn, comprised of Tommy McNabb, Liam McNabb, Craig Kimick and Mike McNabb took home first-place honors. Saturday started with the NYS Spring Board meeting. That evening there was a testimonial dinner honoring NYS AOH President Tom Lambert and NYS LAOH President Marybeth Durkee. Past National President Brendan Moore was bestowed the honor of receiving the NYS AOH Board's Burns-Hayes Award. The weekend concluded with a Mass celebrated by NYS AOH Chaplain Henry Reid at the Mass Rock, on the grounds of the Michael J. Quill Irish Cultural Center. The NYS AOH Spring Board weekend in East Durham has been referred to as a "Hibernian Bucket List" event by many.

Plans are well under way for the NYS AOH/LAOH State Convention, July 8-11 at the Syracuse Downtown Marriott. More information can be found at [www.nys2021syr.com](http://www.nys2021syr.com). On Saturday of the Convention, an exemplification of the Major Degree will be conducted by the Cu Chulainn Celtic Warriors Major Degree Team. To register for the degree or for more information contact Team Chairman Jack King [jkcuchulainn@yahoo.com](mailto:jkcuchulainn@yahoo.com)

The Mid-Hudson St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee has announced NYS Webmaster Kevin Cummings will serve as 2021 Parade Grand Marshal on Sunday, September 19, in Greenwood Lake, NY. Congratulations to Kevin on this well-deserved honor.



## Director's report

By *BOB mehrens*

Summer is upon us and that means state conventions are well under way. Members of your National Board will be traveling around the country to help and offer guidance to State, County and Division Boards. As stated in previous issues, our number one goal is recruitment and retention. When the elected officers attend your conventions, be sure to solicit as much information as possible. While we may not have all the answers you may be looking for, we can brainstorm and come up with the best possible answers. A big part of our success is making sure we have the correct contact information from all State, County and Division Boards. If you have already had elections, please provide all current email, phone and home addresses for current officers.

The excitement continues to grow in Montana as we prepare for our Major Degree Team certification. Brother Jack Schneider and Vice President Sean Pender will travel to Anaconda, Montana, to officially certify our team. Once that process is complete, Montana will have the only degree team west of Ohio. This will be a significant addition for the AOH as we will be able to offer the degree to a whole new generation of Hibernians in areas in which we are trying to facilitate growth. For those who have received your degree, you understand the importance of the ritual and that your involvement within the Order increases once you have attained your Major Degree. For any members who might be traveling or would want to travel, the Montana State convention will be held September 17, 18 and 19 in Butte, Montana. All events for the weekend will be held at the Copper King Inn. For our Brothers in the west, if you would like to contact our Team to set up a possible Degree ceremony in your State you can contact me at [meetah2@hotmail.com](mailto:meetah2@hotmail.com) or Mike O'Connor at [mikeoconnor@hibernian.org](mailto:mikeoconnor@hibernian.org).



## Director's report

By *Richard thompson*

Many of the pandemic restrictions put in throughout New England are being rolled back as a greater percentage of the population becomes fully vaccinated. This means that our Boards and Divisions can start to return to their normal Hibernian activities. The Boards and Divisions that have persevered during covid are to be commended. This news could not be coming at a better time as we are coming upon our State Conventions from now to the fall.

By the time this article is published the Massachusetts State Board will have held their convention. Plans were altered due to covid restrictions and the traditional Cape Cod weekend with the LAOH was scrapped. The convention was scheduled for June 5, at Tomas Cardinal O'Fiaich Division 14, in Watertown. National Treasurer Liam McNabb and myself are scheduled to attend representing the National Board. State President Jack Lahey and his slate of officers are anticipated to be re-elected.

The Connecticut State Board has agreed with the LAOH on the dates for their convention. It will be held September 24-26 at the home of the Stamford Division. Many of the details are being finalized at this time.

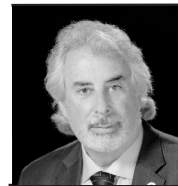
The Rhode Island State Board will be working on their convention plans as they come back on line after the covid restrictions get repealed.

Our sole Division in New Hampshire, Manchester Division 1, has remained active throughout the pandemic with Zoom meetings and in-person activities when allowed. They hope to return to in-person meetings in June.

Brothers, as the tide of the pandemic begins to recede it will be time to reengage our members with the news that we are up and running at full strength again and that the work of the Hibernians will continue. It will also be a great time to recruit new members into the Order.

The AOH has accomplished great things during this pandemic. Our Boards and Divisions will all be up and running at full capacity soon and more great work will be attributed to the Ancient Order of Hibernians in America and for that we all should be proud to call ourselves Hibernians.

The pandemic has affected us all, and we must not forget the Brother and Sister Hibernians who have been lost and those in our Hibernian family whose lives have been altered during the course of this scourge. Please take the time to say a prayer for them and the perseverance of our great Order.



## Director's report

By *sean o'dowd*

We have just passed July 4th and a celebration of our country's independence. It reminds me of our steadfast pursuit of a united Ireland. A few years ago a British citizen asked me why we couldn't leave Northern Ireland alone. The issue, he said, was resolved in the Good Friday Agreement. Why do we continue to pick at the scab? I answered, the issue in Northern Ireland is not resolved. We in the U.S. would like there to be a united Ireland that the Irish could celebrate as we do the Fourth of July.

On that note, I want to thank all our members and friends for the continued support of the Ballymurphy families. I appreciate you reaching out to your Senators to reaffirm the U.S. commitment to the Good Friday Agreement, and our call for a special envoy for Northern Ireland. It reaffirms the AOH position as Ireland's voice in America.

### Conventions, State Board Meetings

State Conventions have been pushed back to late summer/fall but the fact we are moving forward is a credit to the Order and its members. For those States who have not yet set dates or don't plan a convention, I'd like to remind you that there still must be an election for State Board Officers for the next two years. It's important to let your National Director know your State Convention or Board meeting dates so we can put it on the National schedule.

### Missouri State Board Officers

I attended the Missouri State Board Convention this past May. I'd like to congratulate the new President, John McEvoy, and his Board who were elected. They did a great job of mapping out a comprehensive plan for the next two years and are off to a good start. Thank you, past Missouri State President John Callahan, for your work and leadership over the last two years.

**Support Project St. Patrick**

*Make it your job to grow the AOH!*



# Ancient Order of HIBERNIANS

Irish • Catholic • American

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## catholic action

By pat lally, chairman

Have you ever wondered where the term "Catholic Action" came from? Outside of our Order, the term is perhaps better known to Europeans than to most Americans. A bit of history helps to locate Hibernian Catholic Action within a larger tradition.

Catholic Action is a way to describe an assortment of movements and associations that arose in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in Europe, in answer to the rise of the secularist state and of popular culture increasingly devoid of Catholic influence. Various lay Catholic groups sought to live out a Catholic life, giving witness to the Faith in the context of their everyday lives, and hoping to seed Catholic values throughout society. This form of lay apostolate was encouraged by a number of modern popes, notably Pius XI (1922-39).

This Catholic Action took many forms: professional and fraternal organizations, parish and diocesan movements, charitable organizations aiming to aid a particular group or right a particular wrong and protective associations. Due to the diversity of aims and the different situations in different countries and regions, some of these movements were perceived as political, some "left" and some "right." In general, Catholic Action groups tried to avoid becoming actual political parties, but many of the Christian Democratic parties of Europe, at least in their inception, sought to embody the Catholic values of the movement.

The atheistic totalitarian ideologies of the 20th century, such as Marxist communism and fascism, saw clearly the threat to their agendas represented by Catholic Action groups and opposed them, sometimes violently. A dramatic example is the case of Erich Klausener, recognized by many as the leader of Catholic Action in Germany in the interwar years. Twice awarded the Iron Cross in the World War, a Catholic active in public life, Klausener was murdered by the SS in 1934.

Many of the trends that led to Catholic Action movements to begin with have accelerated in our day. There is an ever-growing need for Catholic lay people to give witness to the Faith in their lives and occupations.



## pro life

By Larry Squires, chairman

In the last article, I focused on Pro "Spiritual" Life. For this edition the attention will focus on Pro "Family" Life. Being Hibernians, the emphasis will be on fatherhood, and the superb examples of both Spiritual and Biological fathers in our rich Catholic tradition.

You may ask yourself, What does fatherhood and family life have to do with traditional Pro Life issues? The answer is: Everything.

Many of you reading this article may already be fathers, and know first hand the responsibility that comes with fatherhood. The family is the first and most influential teacher of our youths. With proper Catholic formation, our young people will be able to discern between truth and lies from the evil one that have become ingrained in popular culture.

From the context of the unborn, we read from the Papal Letter "Patris Corde," by Pope Francis, as we see St. Joseph held up as a role model for protector of the weak and innocent. "That child [Jesus] would go on to say: 'As you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.' (Mt 25:40). Consequently, every poor, needy, suffering or dying person, every stranger, every prisoner, every infirm person is 'the child' whom Joseph continues to protect. For this reason, Saint Joseph is invoked as protector of the unfortunate, the needy, exiles, the afflicted, the poor and the dying. Consequently, the Church cannot fail to show a special love for the least of our brothers and sisters, for Jesus showed a particular concern for them and personally identified with them. From Saint Joseph, we must learn that same care and responsibility."

From Life is Worth Living, "When a child is given to his parents, a crown is made for that child in Heaven, and woe to the parents who raise a child without consciousness of that eternal crown!" Fulton J. Sheen.

In Ephesians, Chapter 6, Verse 4, we hear, "Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up with the training and instruction of the Lord."

The Catechism of the Catholic Church, paragraph 2225, teaches, "Through the grace of the sacrament of marriage, parents receive the responsibility and privilege of evangelizing their children. Parents should initiate their children at an early age into the mysteries of the faith of which they are the 'first heralds' for their children. They should associate them from their tenderest years with the life of the Church. A wholesome family life can foster interior dispositions that are a genuine preparation for a living faith and remain a support for it throughout one's life."

And in Proverbs, 22:6, we hear, "Train the young in the way they should go; even when old, they will not swerve from it."

In Luke 15:20, we hear of a father's mercy upon his prodigal son, "So he got up and went back to his father. While he was still a long way off, his father caught sight of him, and was filled with compassion. He ran to his son, embraced him and kissed him."

Let us pray that all men accept the role of fatherhood by loving their wives and raising faithful children marked for Christ in Baptism, and that couples see their children as true blessings from God, and not as inconvenient impediments to their own selfish motives.

May God bless all of you, and your families, and have a Happy Father's Day!



## political education

By neil cosgrove, chairman

I hope, Brothers, that this article finds you not only well but returning to a “true normal” rather than a “new normal.” Hopefully, we will never take for granted the little things of “normal” for granted again.

This is a year when we elect state boards and where new state officers are appointed. I ask you in your deliberations to please chose as electors or as newly sworn-in state presidents people who have a passion for Hibernianism and a sense of duty to their roles. The Order is only as strong as its parts; we need officers and appointees who are willing to support and add their energy, ideas and initiative to our national efforts; simply forwarding on emails from the National is not enough.

We have had some significant successes recently, a resolution sponsored by Senators Menendez of New Jersey and Collins of Maine reaffirming the U.S. commitment to the Good Friday Agreement (with special thanks to President O’Connell, Vice President Pender and FFAI Chair Martin Galvin ) and a congressional letter calling for the appointment of a Special Envoy to Northern Ireland. I do not want to stray as PEC into FFAI, but needless to say, the recent events in the north of Ireland are reasons for grave concern; the U.S. must show that the Good Friday Agreement and the peace of Northern Ireland is a U.S. priority.

As significant and as great an achievement as getting the resolution on the Good Friday Agreement passed and the letter calling for a Special Envoy sent, it was disappointing to see the large number of names not on the list of sponsors or signatures on the letter. Without diving into partisan politics, we are seeing only token representation (sometimes only one representative of a party) on these efforts to qualify them as “bipartisan.” In this specific case, this is mind-boggling; who can be against peace? Frankly, we do not see this behavior on similar issues touching on issues by other groups.

Whether it is ignorance, apathy or a cynical belief of “I already have the Irish Catholic vote” or worse, “there is no Irish advocacy to worry about,” we cannot accept it. While being non-partisan as an organization, we can let our elected representatives know that as individuals, we are watching their action/inaction on Hibernian issues and that this does weigh on our voting considerations.

It is critically important that our causes enjoy strong bipartisan support; it amplifies the strength and effectiveness of the message. To that end, I have some homework assignments. First, worthy state presidents, ensure that we have up-to-date contact information for your state PEC chair. Second, PEC chairs, please help us to identify contacts with your senators and members of Congress. Very frustratingly, in an age of alleged transparency, communication and openness, political leaders in both parties continue to raise obstacles to contacting them. We desperately need “the personal touch” to get through to them. I ask that each State PEC chair identify a contact to their two Senators’ offices and for County PEC chairs to get connections with their Congressional Representatives.

Finally, we need to instill upon Brothers that when we have an important issue in Washington, they must take five minutes to make that phone call. To be blunt, again, other groups far smaller than us have an impact out of all proportion to their size because of their dedication and energy; we need to do the same for our just causes.

## charities & missions

By patrick ryan, chairman

I trust that everyone is enjoying the summer season and celebrating our Independence! I ask for your prayers for our Brothers and Sisters who are struggling to gain theirs. One of the best ways we can help is with your continued support of FFAI. Here at home in the U.S. we are continuing to work hard in support of our Hibernian Hunger Project, which gives grants to Divisions who work in their communities helping feed the hungry. This year we were able to award more grants than in any previous year, but the need is still very great.

We are continually searching for ways to support our Charities & Missions, and only as a group can we achieve our goals of establishing an on-going legacy.

How can you help? I am asking if you know of a company, organization, foundation or perhaps an individual that we should reach out to please let us know. We are actively seeking grants and raising funds to create an endowment for our different projects and your one contact may just be the difference.

Another way to help is to track your activities and fill out the single and annual event reports. These reports let us know your involvement in your communities and when we make the ‘ask’ we can say and show how our charity is helping in our various pursuits. It’s not trivial, and I ask for your concerted effort.

With the easing of restrictions and our Divisions becoming more active during these warm months I want to know what activities that have sustained your Division throughout the lockdowns. But more importantly, if you have none and are having trouble engaging with your Brothers and Sisters then please let us know. We have many great ideas that have worked throughout the country, and I am sure that we can help your Division plan a creative event.



## rituals & degrees

By jack schneider, chairman

With the widespread distribution of Covid vaccines and the downward progression on the descent side of the third surge of the pandemic, it is certainly uplifting to finally be able to re-engage in in-person Hibernian activities and events. As such, I was able to resume my observation of Ritual and Degree events in the Order.

In April, I had the pleasure of traveling to Allentown, PA, to observe a wonderfully orchestrated candlelight exemplification of a Shamrock Degree hosted by Tir na nOg, Lehigh County Division 1, complete with bagpipe accompaniment. I wish to congratulate Division President Ken Walsh and the officers of Lehigh Division 1 for their outstanding efforts put forth in this presentation. We congratulate the 11 Brothers who were presented with tri-color sashes during the proceedings and who took this important first step toward achievement of full Hibernian Brotherhood. I would encourage all Divisions and jurisdictions to refer to the new edition of the Blue Book for details on the proper conduct and execution of the Shamrock Degree.

I am pleased to report that the prospective Montana Major Degree Team remains on course for a Certification Review in late August with the goal of achieving Team Certification in time to exemplify the Major Degrees of the Order at the Montana State Convention, in Butte in mid-September. We wish our Brothers continued luck and success in this challenging endeavor. Worthy Vice President Sean Pender and I greatly look forward to our venture to Big Sky Country to conduct the Certification Review of the candidate team.

The balance of this column will be devoted to announcing the 2021 State Convention Major Degree schedule. We are optimistically looking to large turnouts for these Degree events due to the lack of exemplifications in 2020 due to the pandemic.

### Upcoming Major Degrees of the Order:

New York State Convention. July 7-10. Marriott Downtown Syracuse, 100 East Onandaga Street, Syracuse, NY. Cu Chullain Celtic Warrior Major Degree Team exemplifying. <https://nys2021syr.com/>, <https://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/symc-marriott-syracuse-downtown/>

Pennsylvania State Convention. Sat., July 31. Noon. Radisson Hotel Trevese, 2400 Old Lincoln Highway, Trevese, PA. Isle of Erin (PA) MDT exemplifying. Candidates are encouraged to pre-register for this Degree at [www.isleoferin.com](http://www.isleoferin.com). <https://www.aohpastate.org/2021-state-convention>, <https://www.radissonhotelsamericas.com/en-us/hotels/radisson-trevese-sesame/deals/2021-convention-committee>

Virginia State Convention. Sunday, August 22. Noon. St. Michael’s Church Lake House, 4491 Springfield Road, Glen Allen, VA. Brian Boru (VA) MDT exemplifying. Candidates are encouraged to pre-register at [www.aohvirginia.org](http://www.aohvirginia.org).

Certification Review Major Degree – Candidate Montana Major Degree Team. Sat., August 28. Anaconda, MT.

Tentative - Montana State Convention. Butte, MT. September 16-18. Copper King Hotel and Convention Center, 4655 Harrison Avenue, Butte, MT, 59701, <https://www.guestreservations.com/copper-king-hotel-and-convention-center/>

Florida State Convention. Orlando, Fl. Oct. 1-3. Rosen Centre Hotel, 9840 International Drive, Orlando, Fl. Innisfail (FL) MDT exemplifying. [www.aohflorida.org](http://www.aohflorida.org)



Eleven candidates, front, received their Shamrock Degree on April 21, 2021, at Immaculate Conception Church Hall, Allentown, PA, hosted by Tir na nOg, Lehigh County Division 1.

The Hibernian Digest’s latest edition and archives  
can now be found on our webpage,  
[www.aoh.com](http://www.aoh.com).



## veterans affairs

By *Danny Eakins, chairman*

Brothers, I hope your summer is off to a great start and you and your families are safe and well. Widespread vaccinations across the country have allowed communities to begin reopening and I have been thrilled to attend our local Patrick Pearse Division meetings in person. Once again, our Tara Hall in Columbus rings with the sounds of music and fellowship as we also look forward to attending the Ohio State Convention in Cleveland in June. For its part, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has provided full vaccinations to over 2.9 million veterans, caregivers, employees and federal agency partners making a big impact in many communities. I hope that Hibernians around the country have the same opportunity to gather in brotherhood after this long hiatus.

After being unable to gather to honor our fallen servicemembers last year, I have learned of tremendously moving Memorial Day commemorations held in towns and cities across the nation, many involving our Hibernian community. I was honored to provide the keynote remarks at the Memorial Day event in my hometown of West Jefferson, Ohio, a small town just 20 minutes outside of Columbus. The day was a keen reminder of the obligation we all carry to live up to the ideal of service in our own communities in honor of those who sacrificed so much on behalf of so many.

### **Veteran Services Spotlight: VA Service-Connected Disability Compensation**

In this edition we take a quick look at service-connected disability compensation provided by the VA. The VA delivers disability compensation services through the Veterans Benefits Administration. This system includes 60 Regional Offices processing benefits applications across the country, with two in the Philippines. They work in collaboration with the network of 1,255 VA healthcare facilities where disability examinations are conducted.

VA disability compensation provides monthly tax-free payments to eligible veterans who have been determined to be permanently sick or injured because of conditions derived from their service in the military. Disability compensation may be received for both physical and mental injuries, including those that may have pre-existed enlistment in the military but were aggravated while in the service.

To be eligible for disability compensation a veteran must meet several qualifications. These include having served on active duty, active duty for training, or inactive duty training, and having received a VA-determined disability rating for a service-connected condition. That disability rating will be based on whether the veteran was injured or became sick while serving in the military and can link the condition to an illness or injury they are living with or had an illness or injury before joining the military that was made worse due to service, or had a disability related to active-duty service that didn't appear until after service.

In a major issue that affects disability compensation, VA recently announced it will re-adjudicate claims for Veterans who served in the offshore (blue) waters of the Republic of Vietnam during the Vietnam War. This stems from a November 5, 2020, decision by the U.S. District Court of the Northern District of California to re-adjudicate previously denied claims as applied in *Nehmer vs. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs*, a veteran benefits case that goes back to 1986. Veterans previously denied service connection for herbicide (Agent Orange) related presumptive condition due to lack of in-country Vietnam service will automatically have their claims re-adjudicated. This review will also apply to eligible survivors of deceased Vietnam-era Veterans.

All members, especially veterans and VA Chairs, are encouraged to participate in VA Committee meetings held online every third Tuesday at 7 p.m. ET. Please contact me directly for details if you would like to participate. A quick reminder that links to online VA facility location and healthcare enrollment information are maintained on the AOH Veterans Affairs website at [www.aoh.gov/veterans-affairs](http://www.aoh.gov/veterans-affairs). Best wishes for a wonderful summer and a grand Independence Day! Garryowen! — [dannyekins@hotmail.co](mailto:dannyekins@hotmail.co)

## For his selfless service

### **McCormick inducted into NYS Senate Veterans Hall of Fame**

On May 22, 2021, on his 89th birthday, Hibernian Brother Jack McCormick was inducted into the New York State Veteran's Hall of Fame. NYS Senator Phil Boyle (also a Hibernian Brother) bestowed the honor on Brother McCormick for his selfless service to our country, which spanned 40-years.

Jack McCormick joined the U.S. Marines during the Korean War and was involved at the Battle of Inchon in September 1950. He was promoted to sergeant in 1952. Jack stayed on in various positions and destinations, being stationed in the Philippines, Japan, Hawaii, Quantico and even Brooklyn! In 1961 Jack joined the New York City Police Department and retired in 1982.

In 1975, after the Vietnam War, the military was having a hard time getting troops to enlist. The NYPD and other NYC units were allowed to go into the Reserves. At age 43, Jack McCormick joined the Air Force Reserves on December 7, 1975, as a Sergeant (E-4).

Jack was on active duty at Robbins Air Force Base, GA, at the Security Police Headquarters when Desert Storm was upon us in 1991. His unit, 514th Security Police Flight, was being activated to go overseas so his orders at Robbins AFB were canceled and he returned to McGuire AFB, NJ. Brother McCormick finished out his career at McGuire. Brother McCormick spent more than 16 years in the USAF Reserves and his last assignment was Superintendent of the 514th Security Police Flight and retired at age 60 as Senior Master Sergeant (E-8) in May 1992.

Hibernian Jack McCormick's military career spanned from the Korean War to Desert Storm. He is a very active member of St. Patrick's Division 2 in Babylon, Long Island, and is also the Pro-Life Chairman. Congratulations Jack!



## Irish way & study abroad

By *Bill Sullivan, chairman*

With the announcement by the Irish government on May 28, that travelers from the U.S. were no longer subject to a mandatory 14-day hotel quarantine upon their arrival in the Republic of Ireland, a ray of hope has shone forth that life will soon return to the new normal, and that travel and international study-abroad programs between the U.S. and Ireland will soon resume. Naturally, there are other COVID Irish government regulations in place that must be adhered to, but this announcement offers optimism for many.

Unfortunately, in early May, the Irish American Cultural Institute, which oversees the Irish Way Program, announced that the 2021 program would not take place this year due to the uncertainty of when travel between the U.S. and Ireland would open up. At the same time, the Irish Way Coordinator disclosed that the 2022 program would be

limited to 25 students and that the dates for the 2022 program would be forthcoming in the fall. Please keep in mind that the AOH National board offers one \$1,000 scholarship for this high school summer program for the children and grandchildren of AOH members. Why not look into this opportunity for next year? It is never too early to start planning!

Realizing the uncertainty that the pandemic has caused for those hoping to study abroad in Ireland, the application deadline for submitting an AOH National Board Study Abroad Scholarship Application has been extended and will be open until filled. For those considering studying during the fall or spring semester, or for both semesters of the academic year 2021-2022, this just might be your golden opportunity to receive one of our scholarships. These scholarships are available for undergraduate and graduate studies in Ireland.

Please see the AOH National Website at [aoh.com](http://aoh.com) for more information on all National Board Scholarship opportunities. Among the items you will find is a direct link to the Irish Way Program website, various educational informational sites on studying abroad in Ireland, and links for the Irish Way and Study Abroad Scholarship applications.

Please feel free to contact me with any concerns, comments or your questions: [williamjsullivan@verizon.net](mailto:williamjsullivan@verizon.net)





## history report

By Daniel M. Taylor, Jr.  
national historian

I write this column on Memorial Day; you will be reading it closer to the Fourth of July.

The Irish contribution to American independence is well known, and yet the men who gathered in Philadelphia in the summer of 1776 were in some ways different from our ancestors. Although many of the signers of the Declaration had roots in Ireland, only one of the 56 signers of the Declaration was a Roman Catholic – Maryland’s Charles Carroll of Carrollton.

This is not surprising, given that the Founding Fathers were leading citizens of what were then British colonies. Indeed, a frequent complaint of the colonists in the run up to the Revolution was that they were entitled to the “rights of Englishmen” – a concept deriving from the Magna Carta that evolved through centuries of British common law. (A decision of the Court of King’s Bench in 1608 held that a child born in Scotland following the union of the crowns of England and Scotland in 1603 was entitled to all benefits of English law. The full extension of such rights to Irish Catholics would remain in many respects a legal “gray area,” right up until the establishment of the Irish Free State in 1922.) It should surprise none of us to find that among the men who voted to declare independence from Great Britain in 1776 and those who gathered in 1787 to draft the Constitution, there may have been some who harbored certain prejudices against Irish Catholics.

And so our Founders were imperfect, like all men. Yet what hath their genius wrought? The Declaration they adopted eloquently declares profound universal truths. “All men are created equal ... endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights... .” The Constitution they enacted after throwing off the British yoke remains the most enlightened framework ever devised for the purpose of securing the “Blessings of Liberty” to a free people. Our Irish Catholic forebears faced strong resistance in some quarters upon arriving in this country. They had much to overcome and yet they persevered, working their way into the fabric of this great Nation and leaving to us the blessings and obligations of American citizenship.

Thomas Francis Meagher, veteran of the Rebellion of 1848 and Commander of the famed Irish Brigade, exhorted his audience to action in an 1861 recruiting speech by noting the opportunity the United States presented:

“[H]ere and here alone, can the Irish race – ceasing to be a race of emigrants and exiles and becoming citizens, reconstruct itself as a political power, and so retrieve some measure of historic reputation.”

Here in the America, Meagher noted, social, economic and political avenues long closed back in Ireland were open. The door to full participation in the promise of American might need a little pushing, but the door was there. Today we can look back and see that Meagher’s vision for the Irish Brigade and for Irish America as a whole has been realized. When Memorial Day originated as “Decoration Day” in 1868, countless of the graves to be decorated were those of first- or second-generation Irish Americans. The “fighting Irish” had proven that they were unquestionably American.

That tradition of service continues and today, as we observe Memorial Day, we think of the countless Americans of Irish descent who rest in honor with their fellow Americans here at home and at places like Romagne-sous-Montfaucon and Normandy. On the Fourth of July, we rightly celebrate the birth of the great nation for which they gave their lives and the principles that make us proud to be Irish, Catholic and American.



### HIBERNIAN HUNGER PROJECT continued from page 1

Division 2 of Hartford, CT.

Without a doubt, AOH Divisions throughout the U.S. did a tremendous job using various approaches to tackle the problem of hunger in their communities during the pandemic in 2020. In fact, when we combine the efforts of the Divisions that submitted Hibernian Hunger Project Applications, we can report that the 33 Divisions that submitted award applications served food to over 700,000 people. That is an amazing number from only 10 percent of our divisions!

So that we can accurately account for the Hibernian Hunger Projects of all our Divisions, we strongly urge all Divisions to submit a Hibernian Hunger Project Application next February for the next round of Hibernian Hunger Project Awards, which will involve Division Hibernian Hunger Projects that will take place between January 1 to December 31, 2021, With the pandemic just about behind us, this would be the perfect time to plan and implement a Hunger related project for your Division for 2021.

In future Digest articles, we hope to highlight Division’s efforts to fight hunger. Please email me a short article on an activity your division is doing or has done. When available, photos are most welcome too.

Please feel free to contact me with any concerns, comments or your questions. I look forward to hearing from you! My email address is: [williamjsullivan@verizon.net](mailto:williamjsullivan@verizon.net)

# The Tree of Liberty

By Daniel Taylor, National Historian

We are all familiar with the notion of a catechism – a summary of religious doctrine, usually presented in the form of a series of questions and answers. The United Irishmen are known to have used a catechism of their own in spreading their republican beliefs:

What is that in your hand? It is a branch.

Of what? Of the tree of Liberty.

Where did it grow first? In America.

Where does it bloom? In France.

Where did the seeds fall? In Ireland.

Another version adds a final verse: “Where are you going to plant it? In the crown of Great Britain.”

While the deepest roots of republicanism go back to Antiquity, it was Enlightenment ideals of intellectual and religious freedom, the “rights of man” and equality before the law that informed the worldview of our founding fathers. The American Revolution sent shock waves around the world and resonated, not surprisingly, in Ireland, where reaction varied,

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*“As the tree of Liberty grew and flourished in the United States, its Irish seeds lay dormant, germinating slowly. On Easter Monday 1916, as the tricolor was raised above the General Post Office, a tender shoot took root and emerged, reaching for the Sun. Tall, straight and strong may they ever grow, the Irish tree and our own.”*

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depending upon class and religion. The Anglo-Irish ascendancy supported the Colonists, to a point short of violence, while the disenfranchised Catholic masses were all in for the Americans. The Presbyterians of Ulster, tied by connections of family and culture with the large Scots-Irish population in the Colonies and influenced by Hume and other Scottish Enlightenment thinkers, found themselves aligned with Catholic Ireland. Support for the Americans was such that news of the victory at Bunker Hill is said to have sparked celebratory bonfires in Ulster, and when John Paul Jones sailed the U.S.S. Ranger into Belfast Lough three years later, he was in no danger from the locals.

In 1780, George Washington, mindful of Irish support for the American cause and prevalence of Irish troops in his Army, issued an order making St. Patrick’s Day a day of rest:

“The general congratulates the army on the very interesting proceedings in the parliament of Ireland and the inhabitants of that country ... as they appear calculated ... to restore a brave and generous people their ancient rights and freedom and by their operations to promote the cause of America ... the general directs that all ...working parties cease for tomorrow the seventeenth [of March] a day held in particular regard by the people of [Ireland].”

The loss of the American Colonies stung Britain and modest appeasements of Irish grievances were affected. Yet still the republican movement grew, with the Society of United Irishmen had been formed in 1791, the same year that Thomas Paine’s *The Rights of Man* swept Ireland.

The French version of republicanism erupted in revolution in 1789. The excesses and proximity of that movement caused far greater alarm in Westminster than the loss of the Colonies, while the fervent nationalism of French republicanism appealed to the Irish. Efforts to mollify Ireland were renewed, yet real reforms like Catholic Emancipation were off the table. A French fleet sent in 1796, intending to support an Irish rising, was scattered by a storm. Theobald Wolfe Tone, leader of the United Irishmen, convinced Napoleon to mount another effort in 1798 but French forces landed in Mayo in August, two months too late to impact the doomed Rebellion of 1798. Tone was captured and his plan to “unite Catholic, Protestant and Dissenter under the common name of Irishman” upended.

As the tree of Liberty grew and flourished in the United States, its Irish seeds lay dormant, germinating slowly. On Easter Monday 1916, as the tricolor was raised above the General Post Office, a tender shoot took root and emerged, reaching for the Sun. Tall, straight and strong may they ever grow, the Irish tree and our own.

## Illinois

### Division earns Hibernian Hunger grant

As the incoming President of the Michael P. Keeley Division 1, St. Clair County, Illinois, I want to say that our division is greatly honored to be a recipient of an award provided by the National Board Hibernian Hunger Project. That award, along with other such funds and food collected this year, will be used to continue our support for the Catholic Urban Programs (CUP), a part of Catholic Charities of Southern Illinois.

The restrictions associated with the pandemic severely impacted our ability to raise money in 2020. Normally, our division can rely on our donations of money and food from the St. Patrick’s Day parade and annual golf tournament to support our Hibernian Hunger program. Thankfully, our membership met the challenge with a “1/2 Way to St. Patrick’s Day” bowling event and a summertime cash fundraiser that enabled us to provide resources to CUP so they could continue their mission of serving the neediest in our Metro-East area. During 2020, CUP was able to provide meals, utility support and homeless prevention to 336 households, adults and children across our various communities.

Covid has continued to hamper our efforts in 2021 as our St. Patrick’s Day parade was again cancelled. However, things are looking up. Our annual golf tournament is back on schedule, as well as the Half Way to St. Patrick’s Day bowling event.

We will continue to raise money and provide groceries to support CUP as well as other of local charitable organizations, thereby continuing our goal of helping our neighbors and less fortunate in our own backyard.

— Division President Patrick Hume and Hibernian Hunger Chairman Mr. Jim Kelly.



## Irish American Heritage Month

By Neil Cosgrove  
Chairman

Our nation recently received the sad news that Brigadier General Michael Collins, the Command Pilot for the Apollo 11 mission that put a man on the moon, had passed. Being that General Collins had been featured prominently in this year's AOH Irish American Heritage Month video, we felt an obligation to post a message of condolence celebrating his achievements on the national AOH Facebook page. To date, that post has been viewed by 59,593 and generated 4,606 Likes, Comments & Shares!

Why mention this? First, to show there is a hunger in people wishing to celebrate our heritage. Secondly, if your Division, County Board and State Board are not taking advantage of this by making the celebration of our Heritage and Culture part of your goals, you are not only failing one of the critical purposes of this organization ("To foster the ideas and perpetuate the history and traditions of the Irish people") but missing out on a tremendous means to reach potential new members.

Brothers, I do not want to go down the rabbit hole of the controversial social changes sweeping our country, but let us be honest; no one is going "To foster the ideas and perpetuate the history and traditions of the Irish people" other than us. The hypocrisy of virtue signalers "No Irish Need Apply Sign" (which some of them deny its existence in history) is rife. Yes, we have to demand our seat at the table. Still, we also have to recognize that "God helps those who help themselves" and that we cannot make a case for further recognition of our heritage if we, as Hibernians, are not in the vanguard promoting it. We need to create an environment where people can confidently and proudly claim to be Irish.

We can optimistically look forward to a resumption of our traditional St. Patrick's Day activities in March 2022. We know the "happy chaos" of that time, and next year it should be even more so with the pent-up energy of a two-year hiatus. We can also anticipate enhanced media interest around St. Patrick's Day after two years of Covid cancellations. Let us help guide that attention the right way, not on funny hats, llamas with green bow ties, and unicyclists; let's save that for when the circus comes to town. Instead use the layoff to refocus our celebrations on their roots; a celebration of our heritage, faith, and the contributions millions of Irish immigrants and their descendants have made our nation.

That is why I ask you to start planning NOW an Irish American Heritage Month program, so you have it ready to execute as soon as March 1 comes. Over the next few months, identify a significant contribution that an Irish American(s) played in your community and come up with a commemoration. Reach out to your library and schools and ask how they are planning to celebrate Irish American Heritage Month with an offer of assistance in putting together a program. Many of us have added Zoom to our toolkits; let's leverage it now for outreach more than necessity.

The important thing is to begin planning NOW. We know that once November and the holidays roll around, we go into a time warp, and March is knocking on the door before you know it.

Irish American Heritage Month is more than a national program; it is more than an obligation; it is an investment in the next generation of Irish Americans and Hibernians.

"People will not look forward to posterity who never look backward to their ancestors." — Edmund Burke.



## Immigration

By Tom Lambert, Chairman

As noted in the last National Digest, issues involving Immigration were expected to be "front and center" in the coming weeks and months. Not much is happening publicly now, but there appears to be a lot going on behind the scenes in Washington. The Preamble of our organization's Constitution sets forth our goals. One of the goals of the Ancient Order of Hibernians is to "encourage an equitable U.S. Immigration Law for Ireland, and to cooperate with groups for a fair American Immigration Policy..."

To this end, and as was noted previously, members of the AOH National Board, including our Worthy President Danny O'Connell and your Immigration Chairman, have maintained an ongoing dialog with former Irish Teachta Dala (TD) and Special Envoy to the U.S. John Deasy, in an effort to promote legislation that would rekindle immigration to and from Ireland. In addition to Mr. Deasy's extensive Irish political roots, the former Special Envoy has an equally extensive background in the goings-on within Washington, D.C. It was hoped that this unique background would allow Mr. Deasy the ability to open many doors in Congress. John has been doing what we hoped for when he was hired by the Order to lobby for our interests. He has been very busy in the background, engaging his contacts on both sides of the Atlantic. This ability to open doors can and will help to shore up political support for AOH efforts to obtain an "equitable U.S. Immigration law for Ireland." John Deasy is a tremendous asset for the AOH!

In the coming months, there will be an urgent need to enlist the help of many of our AOH Brethren to contact their Representatives and Senators as an expected Irish-related Immigration Bill is introduced. We will have the chance to begin the process of reversing the downward trend of legal Irish immigration over the last 50 years, as well as pursuing a goal outlined in our Constitution. I look forward to reporting on the successful adoption of this expected legislation. The process continues!

I have started to read "Unintended Consequences" by Ray O'Hanlon, editor of the Irish Echo. This book chronicles the effects of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 and its effect on the Irish. As Ray also notes, it is the story of Irish Immigration to the United States and how America's door was closed to the Irish. There are great lessons in this book for understanding today's Immigration environment. It is hoped that a webinar can soon be scheduled featuring Ray with a focus on "Unintended Consequences."



## Project St. Patrick

By Ron Hagan, Chairman

Our last big push for Divisions to make our current year fundraising commitment for the Easter Appeal concludes at the end of June. We appreciate those Divisions who have contributed so far this year and we ask that those that have not yet contributed to please do so by the end of June. We are requesting each Division to make a \$500 contribution for the grant program for the religious and seminarians. Those Divisions that cannot make that commitment of \$500 should consider a contribution that will fit their budget for this year. We ask all Divisions to please contribute for the benefit of Project St. Patrick. Please use the 2021 Project St. Patrick Donation Form that is on our aoh.com website to make your Division contribution.

Please note that in July we will be sending the Vocational Directors whose names you provided on the 2021 Division Diocese Form a letter requesting them to have their candidates for the grant program complete the 2021 Grant Application and then have the Vocation Directors prepare a letter of recommendation and send the letter and the applicant's grant request to both the AOH and LAOH Chairpersons. The grant application must be turned into the Vocational Director and the Director must send their letter and application together. The applicant should not send the grant form to the chairpersons; the Voc. Director's letter of recommendation must accompany the grant form.

We have received some of these applications directly from the applicants, using prior year grant forms, and thus are not acceptable for this year's grants.

Thank you for your efforts in making Project Saint Patrick a success for 2021!

### Hibernian Success Story

Deacon Michael McCandless received a Project St. Patrick grant in 2007-2008 as he answered the call to become a priest. He was ordained on May 10, 2008. It didn't take the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland long to realize he belonged in the Diocesan Vocation Office, so they appointed him Director of Vocations on November 4, 2010, where he guides single Catholic men and women in vocational discernment.

Today, Rev. Michael McCandless, a member of the Ancient Order of Hibernians in America, continues his work on vocations. On June 13, he celebrated mass with Hibernians and friends during the Cuyahoga Falls Riverfront Irish Festival. Fr. McCandless was selected to be a part of the U.S. delegation for the International Conference on Pastoral Work for Vocations in 2016, which was hosted by the Congregation for the Clergy in Rome over the last five days. The conference included an address from Pope Francis along with the opportunity to greet the Holy Father.

This Hibernian Success Story, Father Michael McCandless, is just one reason it is critical that each and every Division contribute to the Project St. Patrick Easter Appeal. Has your Division made your 2021 Easter Appeal donation? If so, thank you; if not, today is the perfect day to make your annual donation to Project St. Patrick.



Fr. Michael McCandless, 2008 Project St. Patrick grant recipient and now Director of vocations for the Diocese of Cleveland, Ohio

# At-Large membership program is alive and well

By Joe Casey, Deputy National Organizer

As mentioned in previous Digest articles, the At-Large membership program is for those men who live beyond a 60-mile radius from the closest division. Although they cannot vote at a national convention, they are considered full members and receive the National Digest and electronic notifications, the same as regular members.

Currently we have 47 active members from 28 states. Included in these numbers are four members of the clergy and 17 veterans of all five branches of service, including one who is actively serving in the Middle East. He should be returning home in the next few months.

Membership continues to grow, although our main goal is to get enough interest in these outlying areas to get divisions formed. This has already happened in a couple of the states and several of our At-Large brothers are actively working on getting more members in their areas.

If anyone has any relatives who might be interested in joining but live in rural areas, have them get onto our website and fill out an application. I will receive that application and contact them personally.



## from the editor's desk...

By John O'Connell

### Read all about it!

It's still amazing and inspiring to read what Hibernians have been doing all over the country, in spite of the pandemic. Even now as we return to some semblance of "normal," there's tons of things to catch up on, that we've postponed and must turn our attention to. Nonetheless, Divisions are meeting and doing things, County Boards and State Boards are holding conventions, and the National Board are issuing educational information pieces and publishing important You Tube programs.

It would be understandable, but very unfortunate, if our Order had just taken an intermission during the deadly spread of the virus. After all, millions of people have died directly or indirectly from covid. Sadly, many of our brother and sister Hibernians have passed away. Who could blame us if we temporarily shut down out of fear or mourning?

But we didn't. Hibernians are taking action.

Your brothers in Alabama held a charity fundraiser softball game for wounded veterans. California Hibernians used traditional Irish music to gather crowds. Connecticut members commemorated the 1981 Hunger Strikers and also presented a check for \$1,000 to the Central Connecticut Celtic Cultural.

In Florida, after a deranged person damaged a local church, your brothers in the Sunshine State donated more than a thousand dollars to help out. Indiana Hibernians used new and imaginative ways of living our Motto. Delaware brothers are happy to be meeting face-to-face again!

The Father John Murphy Division 9, Plymouth, Massachusetts, in conjunction with the Town of Scituate, hosted the Annual Easter Rising Commemoration.

Divisions in states all across America are holding recruiting events, golf outings, Masses, fundraisers, Communion Breakfasts, Irish Road Bowling games, athletic events, music seisiúns, historic commemorations and otherwise rejoicing in being Hibernians.

Read about all this and much more in this issue of the Digest. And if you don't see your Division, County or State among these pages this time, then plan an event this summer, publicize it, do it, get someone to take a good photo, write a paragraph-caption and mail it to me at editorhiberniandigest@yahoo.com.

## Alabama

### In-person meetings resumed!

Our last in-person division meeting was February 2020, and over the last 14 months we saw a few of our brothers at a charity fundraiser softball game for wounded veterans at the local minor league baseball stadium and then, unfortunately, at a funeral mass for the beloved wife of one of our brothers. Outside of that, we remained in contact via email and social media.

As more and more people across the country have been vaccinated or in the process of being vaccinated, Alabama lifted its COVID mandates. We were hesitant until we heard from several brothers wanting to meet in person while respecting those that remained cautious. We held our first in-person meeting in April and for those who did not have conflicting schedules and felt good about attending, it was a true fellowship experience. Our division remained connected over the last 14 months via virtual means, but the experience of spending time with one another truly lifted many spirits.

We have hope that our greater community will continue making strides to diminish the threat of COVID so that in future meetings more and more of our brothers can come again and be part of the remarkable interaction and fellowship that ensues. Many brothers that were remaining respectably cautious or had conflicts reached out and shared their hope to truly be able to see their brothers at a future meeting. We are incredibly proud of our brothers in our division and all of our brothers in our Worthy Order and look forward to seeing many more across our fine country in the months ahead! In our motto: Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity.



## ORGANIZER

By Tim McSweeney, Chairman  
and National Director

Usually, our sole intention regarding memberships is recruitment. While growing our Order is important, the retention of membership is equally important. This fact is evident reviewing paperwork that is required to be submitted yearly to the National Secretary. What is alarming is the number of resignations and terminations of membership in 2020. Why are brothers resigning? Why are brothers being terminated. What on a division level can we do to prevent this?

### Resignations

Often times, members resign due to relocation for work or family obligations. You can assist these brothers by directing them to me or the National Secretary. We can find a division to transfer their membership to or reassign them to at-large status. We will work with the new at-large member to network him with other Hibernians in his area. This is to attempt to form a division in that area. This has worked in the past. The at-large member is still a member of the AOH, receives the Digest and National emails, but is not a member of a division, until one is formed in his area.

Another reason for resignations are that the brother does not have time to commit, due to work or family commitments. If a brother wants to resign due to these factors, the local division leadership should contact this member and start a dialog to retain the member. Let him know that his situation is understood and we welcome his participation when he can find the time. Letting him just walk away is a disservice to him and to the Order. Divisions can task a member with tracking these members and not letting them resign.

### Terminations

The number-one reason why we are forced to terminate a membership is failure to pay dues. Some Brothers are financially unable to pay. The division should develop a plan to assist these members. A division should be able cover the per capita expense of some these members. Sometimes, it's not that the member is not paying dues, but the Division is not collecting them. What is your division's dues collection method? Mailed reminder? Email reminder? In-person drop off? If your division is having a hard time collecting, it's to time review what method is being used. It may be time to try something different. Please reach out to me at newjack12007@yahoo.com for assistance. Many divisions are seeing a growth in timely dues collection by using online payment apps such Venom and PayPal.

### Organizers Awards

The 2020 National recruitment awards are being finalized and will be announced in the next issue this publication. The Awards will be presented at the National President's Testimonial dinner on October 16 in Youngstown, Ohio.

New Divisions forming- Organizing efforts are currently being conducting in Spokane Wa., Jackson Hole Wy., and Knoxville Tn., and Canton Oh., If you know anyone in these areas, that you think would make for a new member, Please contact me newjack12007@yahoo.com

## District of Cloumbia



### Mass of our Patron Saint

The St. Patrick's Day Mass at St. Patrick's Church, Washington, D.C., was celebrated by His Eminence Wilton Cardinal Gregory, Archbishop of Washington, with ushers from the AOH D.C. State Board and its participating divisions. During his homily, the Archbishop expressed his love of Ireland and appreciation of our Order. Hibernians, from left, Past State Board President Ralph Day, James Morris, State Board President Brian Curran, State Board Vice President Don Connolly, Division 5 President Chris Coker, Past National Director Keith Carney, Cardinal Gregory, Past State Board President J.P. Walsh, Kevin Dillon, Jim Keenan and Steve Sullivan. Catholic Standard photo by Andrew Biraj.

# Connecticut

**By Phil Gallagher**

Connecticut Hibernians have had a rebirth this spring. Hartford and New London have returned to regular in-person meetings. The Danbury Hibernians have been meeting monthly in person and on Zoom since January and attendance has been extraordinary with a couple of dozen or more in person and another half dozen on Zoom, which has enabled retirees in the sunny South to participate.

Kudos to the Hartford Division for being one of 14 nationally to receive a Hibernian Hunger Award from the AOH National Board. The grant will be used to continue the fight against hunger in the Hartford area.

State President Brenden Walsh conducted a State Board meeting on Zoom on May 11, where the main topic was the Biennial State Convention, which will be held in Stamford from September 24 thru 26. Stamford President Peter Greene reported that the Stamford men and women are going all out to welcome Connecticut Hibernians with a post-pandemic shindig and are hoping that all divisions will send full delegations to the convention, which will give our Order a well needed boost.

Before we get to the Convention, there are several important events to take place.

On July 17, the Hartford Division will host an Irish Road Bowling Tournament that is

attracting interest. Danbury reportedly will send a couple of teams.

On August 20, the annual Waterbury AOH golf tournament will be held at East Mountain Golf Club and early reservations are recommended.

On August 28, Bridgeport will host the 10th annual Connecticut Softball Bash for Charity at Foote Field in Milford. The interest in this annual event grows with each passing year. In between games President Walsh will be holding a State Board meeting to finalize plans for the State Convention.

New London Hibernians were saddened in May with the loss of Sean Madden, who was a unique individual, very proud of his Irish heritage who had spent all his 55 years in New London.

The Danbury AOH lost a stalwart member with the passing of Bob Heffernan at the age of 86. A native New Yorker, one of 11 born in Irish Harlem of Irish-born parents, Bob had served as Danbury and Fairfield County Board President in the 1990s and had been named Danbury Hibernian of the Year in 1995. Bob was a popular fun-loving guy who enjoyed going to National Conventions and could always be counted on to help the AOH.

For news or info contact [jpgallagherct@svglobal.net](mailto:jpgallagherct@svglobal.net)



Hartford AOH presented a check for \$1,000 to the Central Connecticut Celtic Cultural Center from a portion of the proceeds of our March Calendar Raffle to be used for the 2022 Hartford Saint Patrick's Day Parade. Pictured are Brothers Kevin Morton, Mike Enright and Jim Mulcahy along with Liz Saunders and Eileen Moore from the CCCC.



State Vice President and Past Stamford Division President Brian O'Neill holds the Charter issued by the Connecticut State AOH Board to the General Philip Sheriden Division in 1892. State Charters preceded the issuance of National Charters.



The Hibernians of Stamford eagerly waiting to host the Biennial Connecticut Convention at their magnificent hall on the last weekend in September!

# Iowa



**Corpus Christi**

St. Francis Xavier Basilica in Dyersville, Iowa, celebrates Corpus Christi each year with a Community Procession. For the last 12 years the AOH Dubuque Co. 1 has been given the honor of carrying the Canopy. This year's Hibernians carrying the Canopy were Ted Deacon, Greg Keegan, Dan Oberding and John Gallagher. Leading procession was Iowa State Chaplain and St. Francis Xavier Basilica Pastor Rev. Dennis Quint. Also participating was Fr. Raymond Tyler (Dubuque Co. 1's Associate Chaplain, Dubuque Co. 1 President Tim English and Hibernian Deacon Keith McCarraher. Later, Fr. Quint celebrated his 25th Jubilee with help from the AOH and the local K. of C.

# Connecticut

By Mike Enright, President, Hartford Division 2

## Commemoration of the 1981 Hunger Strikers

Brothers from around Connecticut gathered in Hartford on May 8 for the 40th Anniversary Commemoration of the 1981 Hunger Strikers. The event was sponsored by Irish Northern Aid of Connecticut and held at Bobby Sands Circle. The memorial, which was dedicated in 1997, is the only one of its kind in the United States.

The keynote speaker for the ceremony was AOH Brother Martin Galvin, the chairman of Freedom For All Ireland for Order. He gave a passionate talk on Sands and all the Hunger Strikers and the present situation in Ireland.

Brothers from Divisions in Bridgeport, Danbury, Hartford and Meriden attended the event, as did many members of the State Board. Irish Northern Aid national chairman Rich Lawlor and INA Connecticut chairman Tom McBride did an outstanding job organizing the ceremony.



The Bobby Sands Memorial is in the South End of Hartford and is the only memorial for him in the United States.



Martin Galvin delivers his speech.



FFAI Chairman Martin Galvin gave a passionate speech at the ceremony about the Hunger Strikers and the state of Ireland today.



Gathering at the commemoration were John Gallivan, Tom Breen and Mike Enright of the Hartford Division; INA National Chairman Rich Lawlor; AOH FFAI Chairman Martin Galvin; Connecticut State President Brenden Walsh, State Secretary Scott McNulty, State Political Education Co-Chair Tom Keane and Fairfield County Secretary Bob Fox.



# freedom for all ireland

By Martin Galvin, Chairman

## Ballymurphy's Triumph

The Ballymurphy Massacre families won a major triumph in their 50-year fight for justice. Each of the 10 murder victims, including a Catholic priest and a grandmother, was declared completely innocent. Every British excuse about gunmen or gunwomen, or petrol bombers, was proven totally false. Justice Siobhan Keegan not only said Britain had violated the European Convention on Human Rights, but also called the inadequacy of the original investigations into these murders "shocking."

*"Irish American support is vital to all victims' families fighting for justice, and the AOH is playing a leading role in providing this support!"*

These families were celebrated in Ireland and rightfully so. They have been an inspiration to the families of hundreds of victims murdered by British crown forces, directly or in collusion with loyalists. The verdict was a triumph for all Irish families, who have been fighting for justice.

Britain responded by announcing plans to give amnesty to troopers and to cut out Historical Investigations from legacy laws. They fear that genuine investigations will prove that crown forces committed or conspired in hundreds of murders. Britain wants to bury the truth along with its victims. They must not be allowed to get away with it.

Hibernians should note that when the judge announced the date for the verdict, campaign Chair John Teggart telephoned the AOH asking us to get Irish America standing with the families at this critical time. Our National President, Vice-President and I were given a special link to watch the verdict live. We organized a webinar with the Ballymurphy families that was joined by Irish American leaders, representatives of the Irish government and the British Labour Party. Irish American support is vital to all victims' families fighting for justice, and the AOH is playing a leading role in providing this support!

## Christmas Appeal

Last year's Christmas Appeal was a record-breaking success, with Hibernians awarding almost \$100,000 in grants. This year the groups working for freedom for all Ireland, because of Covid lockdowns, could do no fundraising and needed AOH grants more than ever before. Meanwhile we could not bring speakers from Ireland or hold special fundraising events. With major contributions coming in from many new areas, the AOH will not only come through for these groups, despite all obstacles, but we will surpass last year's record. You have done a tremendous job!

## January '22 Fact-Finding Tour

In 2019, Hibernians completed a highly publicized nine-day fact-finding mission led by President Jim McKay and LAOH President Carol Sheyer and including leading Hibernians from 13 states.

In January 2022, we are planning a tour taking in the 50th anniversary of Bloody Sunday, including events in Derry, Tyrone and Belfast. We will be announcing details and prices as soon as we have them. We are already getting offers from Ireland for special events they want to arrange for us. Spaces will be limited so get on board as soon as details are announced.

## Political Initiatives

The United States Senate, led by Sens. Menendez and Collins, passed a resolution supporting "full implementation of the Good Friday Agreement and subsequent agreements, including the Stormont House Agreement." They called for "action to resolve the injustices of past violence," including state-sponsored violence. The AOH has not only lobbied key senators to support this resolution, but our National President Danny O'Connell and Vice President Sean Pender organized a meeting with the Senate staff, in which myself and Neil Cosgrove were included, and we were able to get the language about the Stormont House Agreement inserted.



**Make it your job to grow the AOH!**



## Denny Flanigan earns FFAI award

AOH Allegheny County, PA, Division 1 President Ollie Jedlick, left, presented the National Board's Freedom For All Ireland plaque to Division 1 FFAI Chairman Denny Flanigan for 2020 Division contributions to the FFAI charity. Contributions from Division 1 have routinely exceeded \$1,000 over many years thanks to Denny's leadership and passion.

## BALLYMURPHY

continued from page 1

No weapons were found. Judge Keegan said all four people were totally innocent, and that there was no adequate investigation into their deaths until the inquest. Breige Voyle called on the British to "Tell us why you shot them!"

## Cover-up began while dead bodies lay in the street

John Laverty was murdered along with Joseph Corr. British press officer Mike Jackson held a press conference before the dead bodies were removed. Mrs. Quinn said, "The

*The Ballymurphy Massacre families have been an inspiration to the families of hundreds of victims murdered by British crown forces directly or in collusion with loyalists. The inquest verdict was a triumph for them and for all Irish victims' families who have been fighting for justice." — Martin Galvin*

British cover-up began while the dead bodies were still lying in the street."

"John Teggart likened the murder of Fr. Hugh Mullan to the iconic Bloody Sunday photo or mural of Bishop Edward Daly holding up a white handkerchief as others helped a wounded man. Catholic priest Fr. Mullan was shot down along with Francis Quinn, while holding up a white handkerchief, and going to aid a wounded victim.

## Doherty was asking direction when shot

John McKerr had suffered a permanent hand injury while serving in the British Army during World War II. He had just been working at Corpus Christi Church when killed. He too was declared totally innocent.

"Solicitor Pdraig O'Muirigh said the British Royal Military Police rubberstamped the murders. After the Good Friday Agreement, it took more than a decade before the Attorney General ordered a new inquest and almost another decade before the inquest began.

## Support

The families received important statements of support from Irish Consul General Ciaran Madden, and Labour Party Northern Secretary Louise Haigh accused Boris Johnson of an inexcusable lack of basic decency. Burying the truth and refusing to investigate crimes is not the way to achieve reconciliation.

Other speakers from Ireland included Mark Thompson, John Deasy and Ciaran Quinn. Leading AOH and LAOH members also joined. Leaders of the Irish American Unity Conference, Irish Northern Aid and the Brehons also participated.

The Ancient Order of Hibernians, National Freedom for all Ireland Chairman Martin Galvin added: "The Ballymurphy Massacre families have been an inspiration to the families of hundreds of victims murdered by British crown forces directly or in collusion with loyalists. The inquest verdict was a triumph for them and for all Irish victims' families who have been fighting for justice."

# North Carolina

## NaCara Hibernians hard at work

The Greensboro Nacara Division has had a busy season. Kevin Neary was installed as the new President in January. March saw the drawing of the Patrick Rooney raffle that netted \$10,000 to be distributed to the needy in Guilford County.

Also in March, the Hibernian Man of the Year was awarded to Jim Furman. The pickup and drop-off program deals with food that is donated to the Room at the Inn. These arrangements have been headed up by Jim for the past year. In April, the division met for their annual reading of the Proclamation of April 24, 1916. A brief history of the 300 Women's role in the rebellion was also read.



Man of the Year Jim Furman, left, and Charlie Connolly picking up donated food to be brought to the Room at the Inn. — Charles Rauscher, Greensboro



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# Indiana

By Jim Lynch

## Creative thinking prevails for St. Patrick's celebration

The Hibernians of the Kevin Barry Division 3, in Indianapolis, Indiana, were forced to cancel their biggest event, the Saint Patrick's Day Celebration, for the second year in a row, due to the pandemic. But even though we didn't have the full Celebration, with some creative thinking we were able to carry on certain aspects of the event in a safe and new way.

First, we did have our traditional March 14 Hibernian Mass at St. John's, the city's first Catholic and Irish church. Coordinated by Mass Chairman Dan Shea, the church was well-equipped to provide a safe environment for worship and also offered the option to participate online. Masks were worn and social distancing was practiced. Fr. Joe Moriarty, the AOH Chaplain, celebrated the 10:30 Mass and brothers David Certo and Dan Shea served as readers. President Tom Branson and family took up the offertory gifts and the cantor was Kate Miller. Additional instrumental music was provided by Eamon and Joe Hegarty.

Fr. Moriarty led the traditional service of laying the wreath at the base of St. John's outdoor Celtic Cross before Mass.

The second Celebration event we were able to recreate in a new and novel way was our Map of Ireland program. We've conducted this fundraiser to support St. Meinrad's Seminary for many years. Hibernian families have traditionally made donations to have their family and deceased family members' names listed on the Map of Ireland page, which was part of the center section of the Celebration printed program.

Instead of a printed program, the Division, in partnership with Beltrame Leffler Advertising, designed an 18" x 24" print piece, Indiana Families of Ireland, that showcased our local Irish community and commemorated our deceased family members. The money raised will be used for two purposes. The first \$3,000 will support St. Meinrad's, and funds in excess will help fund donations to local charities. Prints were not shipped, but were made available for pickup at the Golden Ace Inn on March 13 and at Scecina Memorial H.S. on March 14.

And through the generous gifts of three Hibernian families and with additional support from the Division, we were able to offer four \$1,500 scholarships. Hibernian members' children, grandchildren, family members and friends who were high school seniors going to college were encouraged to apply for the 2021 Hibernian Scholarships. The scholarships criteria are financial need, scholastic achievement, extracurricular activities, Irish heritage and involvement in church, community and Irish culture.

The winners were: the Denis Moriarty AOH Scholarship won by Caoimhe Knutson from Cathedral H.S.; the Katie White AOH Scholarship won by Scott Cahill from Roncalli H.S.; the Jim McCaughna Scholarship won by Connor Cadwallader from Roncalli H. S.; and the Hibernian Kehoe Scholarship won by Owen Mercer from Brebeuf Jesuit H. S.

We also held our annual President's Award, presented each year to an Irish Catholic individual who has made contributions to the Irish community. Nominations are accepted from Hibernian members, and President Branson makes the selection. This year's winner was long-time supporter and member of the Order, Joe McGinley.

A new feature was introduced this year. Standing Committee Chairman Danny McNelis and AOH member Eamon Hegarty led an effort to create a St. Patrick's Celebration video. Among other topics, the video featured the following: images and video from previous Kevin Barry Division events, acceptance speeches from our 2021 Hibernian Scholarship recipients and President's Award winner, a message from our Division president and AOH member memories of previous St. Patrick's Celebrations.

Even though we were unable to have our usual St. Patrick's Celebration, considering the circumstances, this year's event was a noteworthy success.



Hibernians gather before Mass at St. John Church. — Jim Lynch

**Make it your job to grow the AOH!**

# In memoriam

## Edward Richard "Dick"

**Boland**, 84, passed away on June 2, 2021, at Samaritan Hospital, surrounded by his children. Dick joined the James Connelly Division 8 of Troy, NY, in 1960, and obtained his major degree in 1965. Dick held all elected Division officer positions, including several terms as President. Dick also served the NY State Board as District 1 Director (2001-2003). Rarely did he miss a State or National Convention, where the phrase "I'll second that, Boland, Rensselaer," was commonly heard. Dick loved all things Irish. Always found on the dance floor, he was an avid set dancer and would proudly lead crowds in the Irish National Anthem or Our Lady of Knock. Dick was a longtime and faithful parishioner of St. Joseph's in Troy. The son of the late Edward and Alice O'Keefe Boland, Dick is survived by his children, Patrick (Sandy) Boland, Bridget (Charlie) Enderle, and Maureen (Ron) Lindell and many grandchildren and great grandchildren.



**Brian P. Gallagher**, Life Member of Fr. Henry Tansey Div. 5, passed away peacefully at home on May 13, 2021. He was born in Albany, NY, in 1940, son of the late Donald J. and Rosemary (Martin) Gallagher. He is survived by his loving wife of 58 years, Marie, sons Brian P. and Craig (Kelly), beloved granddaughters Maggie and Kate and his Brother Donald. He was predeceased by his brother Marty.

Brian was a lifelong resident of Delmar and a lifelong communicant St. Thomas the Apostle Church. He was a 1958 graduate of Vincentian Institute, an active member the Albany Irish Rowing Club, an avid skier and loved to travel. Brian retired after many years of service to the New York State Dormitory Authority.

Brian joined the Fr. Henry Tansey Division 5 of Albany in 1991. Brian was a steadfast volunteer at almost every division event and faithfully attended division meetings. Brian was a true Hibernian and was honored in 2019, receiving his Division Life Membership.

**Charles T. Logan**, second born son of Charles P. and Mary A. Logan, beloved son, brother, uncle, cousin, godfather and friend, entered into eternal rest on May 21, 2021 at the age of 66.

A lifelong member in good standing of the Commodore John Barry Division 3 of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, Charles served in many capacities for the Perth Amboy Division, including Vice President, Financial Secretary and Chairman of the Division's Freedom For All Ireland Committee. Charles for many years also arranged for the raising of the Irish flag at City Hall Square as well as the purchase and cooking of the traditional corned beef served at the club on St. Patrick's Day. He stepped up and kept those traditions alive.

Born in Perth Amboy, Charles lived there most of his life. After graduating from Saint Mary's High School in 1973, Charles pursued a career as a chef in the Poconos for many years. This was just one of many different jobs Charles worked at in his lifetime, finally retiring from the U.S. Postal Service several years ago. Charles was a parishioner of St. Mary's in Perth Amboy, which later became part of Saint John Paul II Parish.

Charles loved driving and would often journey back to Mt. Pocono for a day trip, and to New York City and Red Bank, NJ, where he would visit the Dublin Houses. He loved going to Ireland and many times took two trips a year there visiting the Burke and Duffy families. He held U.S. and Irish passports.

Predeceased by his maternal (Burke) and paternal (Logan/Dittman) grandparents and his father, Charles P. Logan, Charles is survived by his mother Mary, brother Patrick, sister-in-law Ann, brother Brian, sister-in-law Bonnie, sister Nancy, brother-in-law Ray, nephew RJ and many cousins.

Donations May be Made in Charles Name to the Commodore John Barry Division 3 Ancient Order of Hibernians 428 Brace Ave. Perth Amboy, NJ 08861.

**Sean Patrick Madden**, 55, of New London, passed away from complications of Crohn's Disease on Sunday, May 9, 2021, surrounded by his family.

Sean was born in New London, Sept. 19, 1965, to the late Eileen (O'Dwyer) and John Madden. He graduated from Saint Joseph School in 1979. He attended both New London High School and graduated from Saint Bernard High School in 1983. He played basketball for Saint Bernard High School and baseball at Avery Point. He graduated from the University of Connecticut with a degree in history and obtained his master's degree in special education from Southern Connecticut State University.

Sean married the love of his life, Stacey Crandall, Aug. 31, 1996, at Saint Joseph Church. Together they raised two children in New London, Jack, age 22, and Patrick, age 20. He was extremely proud of his children and they were the light of his life.

He worked in the field of special education with a variety of students whose special needs ranged from multi-handicapped to autistic children. Sean taught alternative education first at Ledyard High School and later at New London High School, where he spent the majority of his career. His care, concern and commitment for his students was unwavering.

Sean was a first-generation Irish American. He was extremely proud of his Irish heritage and took many trips to visit family in Galway and Tipperary. He truly felt at home in Ireland. He and Stacey were fortunate to take a trip to Galway with close friends in 2019. He was a member of the John P. Holland Division of the AOH.

He was very strong in his Catholic faith, serving on the boards of Saint Joseph School, Saint Joseph Church and as a Eucharistic Minister at Camelot Nursing Home. In addition, Sean volunteered on a regular basis at the New London Community Meal Center.

A lifelong resident of New London, Sean had a profound impact on many people in the community. He coached a multitude of sports at the high school, junior high and youth levels. He also coached Unified Sports with special needs students at New London High School. He enjoyed nothing more than coaching his own children.

Sean had an amazing sense of humor and was a prolific storyteller. People loved his stories as much as Sean enjoyed sharing them. His Irish wit and smile were contagious. His face was so expressive that he could actually tell a story with his eyes and eyebrows. When spotted locally, Sean could be seen donning a flannel shirt, fleece vest, cargo shorts and work boots — his "preferred uniform." He was a fixture at many New London homes sharing a cup of tea, which often segued into a meal. Sean also enjoyed helping friends remodel their homes, bartering for food, drink and gift certificates in lieu of money.

To know Sean was to love him. He was an extraordinary human being, selfless, humble, honorable, kind and loyal. The hole he leaves in our lives will never be filled. He lived every day to the fullest, working, volunteering and dedicating his life to his family, even as he struggled with severe Crohn's disease for 40 years.

**Robert D. Masterson**, 68, of South Amboy, New Jersey, died on January 13, 2021, at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital. He was a longtime active member of the AOH Colonel D.B. Kelly Middlesex Division, South Amboy. He was named Hibernian of the Year in 2017. Bob was also a bagpiper with the Colonel D.B. Kelly Pipes and Drums. In addition, Bob was also the Executive Chef at the AOH, where he ran the kitchen and prepared meals for their weekly dinners and catered many community events.

Born in South Amboy, he lived there his entire life. A veteran of the Air National Guard, he was employed by the Middlesex County Department of Labor. He was a member of St. Mary's R.C. Church in South Amboy.

Robert is survived by his wife of 47 years, Gloria Jeanette Masterson; his sons Richard Masterson and his fiancé Sara Wood, and Ryan Masterson and his wife Renee, Robert Masterson II and Ross Masterson; his brother William P. Masterson and his wife Carol; his grandchildren Maddux, Mickey, Emily, Landon, Harden, Isaac, Johnathan and Kaleigh.

**Brian A. Manley**, 87, National Life Member, entered Eternal Life on April 9, 2021, at home with his loving family. Born in Model Cottages, Cork City, he was the son of Daniel and Anne Manley. Brian married the love of his life, Kathleen Burke, in 1956. Brian and Kathleen immigrated to America in 1956 on their honeymoon.

Brian was a carpenter and longtime member of Local Union 291. In retirement, he worked the Albany County Courthouse and Capital Hills Golf Course.

Shortly after immigrating, Brian joined the Fr. Henry Tansey Division 5 in Albany, NY. Brian rose through the division offices to Division Vice President and then served as longtime Division Marshal. As Marshal, Brian proudly led Division 5 down Central Avenue during the Albany St. Patrick's Day Parade. To honor his commitment to the AOH, Brian received National Life Membership in 2006. Brian was also a gifted and renowned Irish Tenor.

He was the husband of the late Kathleen Manley. He was the father to Daniel G. Manley, Elizabeth A. Manley, Deirdre M. Mozes (Pete) and the late Brian A. Manley. He was the brother to Ann Shuster, Donal, James, Frank and Michael Manley. Grandfather of Christine Berghela, Seamus and Molly Manley Manley, Brian A. Manley III, Max and Katie Mozes and Great Grandfather to Logan, Nyla and Primrose Marrero.

**Richard T. Cremmins** age 70 of Selden, NY went home to God on 25 May 2021. He was a devoted Hibernian, Past President of Division 8, Suffolk, NY; an extraordinary minister at St. Margaret of Scotland parish; a member of the Selden Civic Association and an avid Yankees fan.



As a Hibernian, his knowledge of the constitution and by-laws was above that of his brothers. His insistence in adhering to the letter of those regulations, despite arguments to ignore them on occasion made him an icon of Hibernian structure. He joined Division 8 on 2 July, 1991, served in every office of the Division and as its President four times. He quickly made a mark at Suffolk County and NY State levels with his winning personality and quick wit. Though he served his County as an appointed officer, he never ran for higher office believing that the strength of the Order was in its strong Divisions. He even refused higher honors when offered, preferring to remain in the background. Yet when it came to activities like Food Drives and the annual Tom Clarke Homesite commemoration, he was a tireless worker.

Beloved husband of Past County President, Patricia Mary Cremmins; cherished dad of Jim Rugen (Stacey), Rob Cremmins (Jessica), Mandy Rugen and Vicki Cremmins (Orlando Sanchez); adored grandpa of Hunter, Samantha, Jocelyn and Alina; brother of Patrick, Claire (Bob), Neil (Cathy) and Kevin (Nancy) and brother-in-law of Lois. Richie is reunited in Heaven with his parents Libby and Neil, his brother Dennis, his sisters Bernadette and Maureen and his sister-in-law Pat. Richie will also be remembered by many nieces, nephews, friends and many members of the Hibernian family.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord.  
And let the perpetual light shine upon  
them. And may the souls of all the  
faithful departed, through the mercy of  
God, rest in peace. Amen.



## Iowa



**Scholarships awarded.** The Father James Kiernan Polk County Iowa Division 1 recently awarded two \$500 scholarships to students at Dowling Catholic High School. Presenting the award to Dr. Dan Ryan, Dowling Catholic President, are Mike Fleming, President, and John Langin, Financial Secretary.

## New York



**Hibernian Dan Mulvey, seated, with Hibernians, from left, Tom Allison, Dennis O'Brien, Al Fitzpatrick and Jack McDonald.**

### Honoring active Hibernians

For over 25 years, Hibernians Mike Morley and Dan Mulvey have served as officers in Myles Scully Division 1, Yonkers, NY, and actively demonstrated our motto of Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity. The division recently honored them with custom plaques and gift cards to recognize their numerous contributions to the Yonkers Irish-American community and for demonstrating what it means to be a Hibernian.

## New Jersey

### Community service in Middletown

Brothers from Vol. Patrick Torphy Division in Middletown donated 4000 16.9-ounce bottles to support local fire and first-aid squads. The donation will be matched by the local urgent medical care center. The water will be used on service calls for drinking, washing eyes and cleaning hands. From left, EMT John Callahan, EMT Mary Callahan, John Ward, Declan Cassidy, John Foy, Jim Shaw, Terry McAnuff and Bert Byrnes.

## Minnesota

### Irish Unity Day!

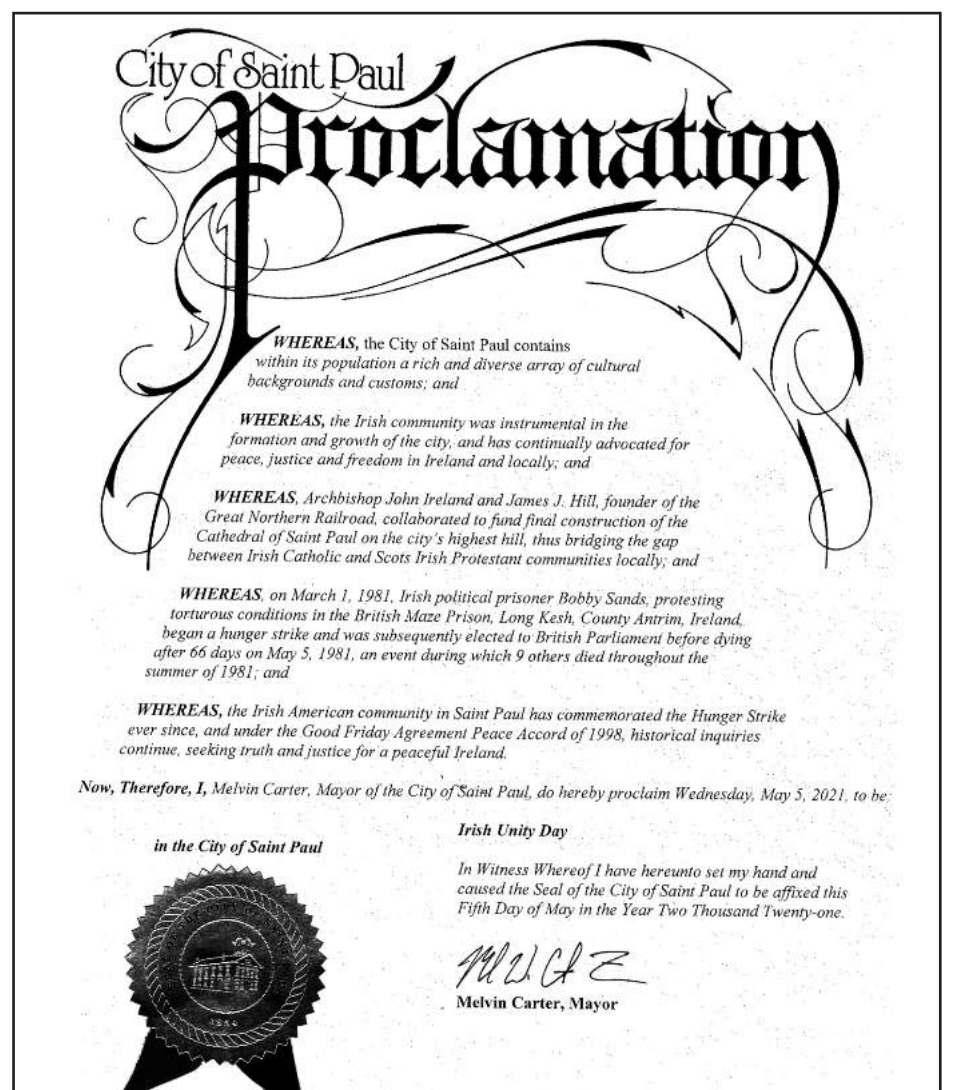
The mayor of Saint Paul, MN, Melvin Carter III, issued a proclamation naming May 5, 2021, Irish Unity Day in the city of Saint Paul in recognition of the 40th anniversary of the 1981 Irish Hunger Strike. May 5 was chosen because it is the day Bobby Sands, Hunger Strike leader, died.

Also, on St. Patrick's Day, the Saint Paul City Council passed a resolution declaring May 5 to be Irish Unity Day. The City Council did not specify the declaration to be in commemoration of the Hunger Strike, although the language within it does advocate peace and unity in Ireland and recognized the continued efforts through historical inquiries to bring justice to Ireland.

The proclamation concluded: "RESOLVED, on this Saint Patrick's Day, March 17, 2021, at the request of the Archbishop John Ireland Division 4-Ramsey County Ancient Order of Hibernians in America, in conjunction with collaborating Irish American organizations, the City of Saint Paul, in recognition of the sacrifices and struggles of the Irish people to achieve that peace, hereby declares May 5, 2021, to be Irish Unity Day in Saint Paul, Minnesota."

Ward 7 City Council member Jane Prince worked with Division 4 (Archbishop John Ireland, Division 4, Ramsey County, Minnesota) to introduce the resolution and to get the Mayoral Proclamation. The proclamation not only commemorated the 1981 Hunger Strike, but it named Bobby Sands, recognized the torturous conditions prisoners were fighting, and acknowledged that nine more men died after Bobby Sands. Division 4 plans to continue raising awareness this year of the historical significance of the 1981 Hunger Strike and to work with other Irish organizations to advocate Freedom For All Ireland.

— Mark Connor, Division Freedom For All Ireland officer.



# California

California Hibernians gathered to celebrate Christmas and St. Patrick's Day with ceol agus craic in Long Beach. — Submitted by David McKenna, CA State President.



Brothers from the Joseph Plunkett-Joe McDonnell Division perform a proper music seisiún under the winter sun on December 10



Brothers from Los Angeles and Orange counties sang along as AOH member Eamonn Knuff performed at Irish Music Night on March 4 at American Legion Post 555 in Midway City, CA.

## Support Project St. Patrick

Please keep those studying for the religious life in your thoughts and prayers. *Project Saint Patrick* is a wonderful way of putting those prayers into action. Send your check, made payable to Hibernian Charity, to P.O. Box 19325, New Orleans, LA 70179.

Mark the Memo section: "Project Saint Patrick."



## Tomhas na Teanga

by Jim Norton  
le Séamas Ó Neachtáin

Tamall roimh Mhárta 2021 tugadh faoi deara go raibh long iomráiteach i mbaol a bheith báite. A while before 3/21 it was noticed that a ship was in danger of sinking. Bhí a cabhail pollta agus bhí uisce á líonadh. Its hull had holes and it was filling with water. Cén long seo? What ship? An USS The Sullivans. Tá sí ina iarsmalann ó na naoi déag seachtóidí, lonnaithe i mBuffalo Nua-Eabhrac. She has been a museum since the 70s, in Buffalo.

Ainmníodh an long seo in ómós do na deartháireacha Ó Súilleabháin, cúigear a bhí sa chabhlach agus i seirbhís ar an long chéanna sa dara cogadh domhanda. This ship was named after the five Sullivan brothers... Fuair siad go léir bás ag an am céanna i Samhain 1942 ag cath Guadalcanal, nuair seoladh a long, an USS Juneau, go grinneall (fuarthas a long ar Lá 'le Pádraig 2018). They all died together when their ship was sunk... Ní raibh aon pholasaí míleata ann chun a leithéid de thubaiste a sheachaint. There was no military policy to avoid such a disaster. Tharla a leithéid do ceathrar deartháir Borgstrom san arm i 1944, freisin. The same sort of thing happened to the 4 Borgstrom brothers in the army... Ní raibh dlí i bhfeidhm chun iarmharán a choimeád beo i measc deartháireacha mar seo go 1948! The sole survivor policy wasn't created until... Ach bhí uafás ar gach éinne faoi bhás na ndeartháireacha seo. But everyone was horrified by the death of these brothers. Rinneadh scannán faoi na hUí Súilleabháin i 1944, agus is dóchúil go raibh tionchar ag a scéal ar Saving Private Ryan, freisin. They made a movie about them, and their story probably also influenced...

Tosaíodh an long féin faoin ainm USS Putnam mí sula bhfuair na deartháireacha bás. The ship was begun under another name... D'athraigh an tUachtarán Roosevelt an t-ainm i 1943, agus seoladh í faoin ainm nua sin i Meán Fómhair na bliana sin. FDR changed the name... Idir 1944 agus 1945 bhí sí gníomhach san Aigéan Ciúin, i gcathanna mar Iwo Jima agus Okinawa. She was active in the Pacific... Bhí sí gníomhach freisin sa Chogadh Cóiréach, agus fiú i rith ghéarchéim na ndiúracán le Cúba. She was also active in the Korean War, and even the Cuban Missile Crisis. Fuair sí aon réalta catha dhéag ina saol. The earned 11 battle stars. Cuireadh as seirbhís í i 1965. She was retired in...

Ach níl sin deireadh a scéil! But that is not the end of her story! Bhí páistí ag an deartháir Ó Súilleabháin ab óige, agus thosaigh a gharmhac tionscadal i Márta 2021 chun airgead a bhailiú chun an long a shábháil. The youngest Sullivan brother had children, and his grandson started a project 3/21 to collect money to save the ship. Agus d'éirigh leis! And he succeeded! Táthar á deisiú anois. They are fixing it now. Go maire sí, agus go maire cuimhne na Súilleabhánach. May she live on, as well as the memory of the Sullivans.

Deadline for next issue of  
Hibernian Digest  
no later than August 1

## West Virginia



The Order is growing in Wheeling  
The Wheeling, WV, Division 1 initiated three new members at its April meeting. From left, the newest WV Hibernians are Jack Bodkin, Dale Knutsen and Ray Blust. All three are Wheeling residents and are looking forward to being contributing members of our Division. — Submitted by Division VP Tom Murphy.

# Massachusetts

## Honoring Irish history in Scituate

The Father John Murphy Division 9, Plymouth, in conjunction with the Town of Scituate, hosted the Annual Easter Rising Commemoration on April 25. We were honored to have the Consul General of Ireland, Laoise Moore, as well as Massachusetts AOH State President Jack Lahey.

The program consisted of a number of speakers, including the President of Division 9, John Travers. The keynote speaker was Jeremy Hales, who has taught Irish history to juniors and seniors at Plymouth North High School for the past six years. He shared with the audience about how he and his students conducted a reenactment of the events of April 24, 1916, by "taking over" the Plymouth Post Office with hurleys and putting up copies of the Easter Rising Proclamation inside and outside of the Post Office. Mr. Hales also read the last letter of Michael Mallin to his wife and children written from Kilmainham Jail, which he has shared with the students in the school system.

The Town of Plymouth is being recognized as being in the forefront of public schools in the area in terms of teaching Irish history to this most Irish region of the United States. Next year on April 24 there will be formal dedication of the Easter Rising Monument located alongside Scituate Harbor.

— Submitted by John L. Sullivan



Paul Boyle, a member of the Boston Police Gaelic Column, at the ceremony



The Brothers of Division 9 at the history ceremony, from left, Michael Harrington, Kevin Lynch, James O'Sullivan, Joseph Murray, John Travers, Phil Joy, Michael Schilling, John Sullivan and Sean Hughes.

## Bay State Hibernians get busy post-pandemic

At the Essex County Board Convention that was held on April 10, Lawrence Division 8 members Michael Miller, Keith Murphy and Kevin Walsh were reelected as President, Vice President and Sentinel, respectively. Also reelected were Jack Lawless of Division 11 in Peabody as Secretary, and Salem Division 18 members Paul MacDonald, Charles Sinclair, Dan Dumont and Gerald Martin respectively as Financial Secretary, Treasurer, Chairman of the Standing Committee and Marshal.

The Massachusetts State Board Convention Committee, due to the COVID restrictions, moved the location of the convention from Cape Cod to the home of Division 14 in Watertown. The 2021 Mass AOH State Golf Classic was held on June 14 at Olde Salem Greens in Salem. AOH State Treasurer Charlie Sinclair chaired this event.

On June 16, Division 8 in Lawrence awarded five college scholarships at the annual ice cream social. The recipients were Andrew Bernal, Abigail Cain, Sean McCarthy, Declan Murphy and Ashtyn Sipsy. On July 17, Division 8 will hold a cornhole tournament at the Claddagh, which is being chaired by Division 8 member Tim Doherty. With the lifting of COVID restrictions, Division 8 looks forward to resuming in-person meetings in September, as well as kicking off celebrations in honor of the Division's 150th Anniversary.

Also, with the lifting of COVID regulations across Massachusetts on May 29, Watertown Division 14 opened their hall to members for the first time since March 2020. The Division is planning to hold their annual Golf Tournament in July. Division 14 Club Inc. presents "A Night of Fun and Comedy" on Saturday September 10, 2021, Hibernian Hall, 151 Watertown St., Watertown, MA. Doors open at 7:30 p.m. On Friday, October 1, the division will host the annual scholarship fund golf tournament, at Wayland Country Club, \$130/person 1 p.m. Shotgun start scramble, contact Joe McCusker.

Worcester's Hibernian Cultural Foundation, the home of Division 36, recently reopened its doors, and is looking forward to resuming activities.

Division 19 in Lowell welcomed Tom Casey as their new President.

And that is the way we see it, in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. God Bless!



# New Jersey

## New Jersey elects new state board

The New Jersey Ancient Order of Hibernians held their 2021 bi-annual state convention on May 15, at Home of the Vol Patrick Torphy Division in Middletown. During the convention, the organization elected its new state officers, including Rich O'Brien serving as State President; Kevin Jackson, Vice President; James McNally, Secretary; and Leo McGuire, Treasurer.

"I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the tremendous honor to be named your next President," said Rich O'Brien. "I will strive to guide the NJAOH by the principles of Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity. I can't accomplish all of my goals alone. I look forward to working with my NJ AOH Brothers and our newly-elected Board on many initiatives.

"We have the 9-11 Remembrance Mass on September 18th and several other initiatives that I will introduce in the near future," the new worthy president said. "I've selected new Chairmen, and the Board is creating our meeting calendar. I ask everyone to follow our website, [www.njaoh.com](http://www.njaoh.com), for updates. Thank you for your continued support."



The new state board, from left, Father Kenneth Hallahan S.T.D. of Sacred Heart Church of Camden, NJ; Leo McGuire - Treasurer; Rich O'Brien - President; Kevin Jackson - Vice President; James McNally - Secretary; and Sean Pender - National Vice President.

# New York

## Living the Hibernian motto

The lads of Division 21, of Rockaway Beach and Breezy Point, again lived true to the Hibernian motto of Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity as they delivered donations from their successful St. Patrick's Day Raffle to four local parishes on April 9.

The pastors of St. Rose of Lima, St. Francis de Sales, St. Camillus/St. Virgilius and Blessed Trinity were each handed a \$5,000 check to spend as they see fit within their parishes. To say the men of the cloth were happy is an understatement. Father Gelfant, of Blessed Trinity, said that the money was coming "at a perfect time" as they were preparing for much needed structural repair work to be started on the roof of St. Thomas More Church, one of the three churches that make up the parish of Blessed Trinity in Breezy Point. Father Gelfant then informed the check deliverers that the donation will be used to purchase bells for the bell tower of the 70+ year old church.

The pandemic created many challenges for the men of the Order to sell their tickets, but their determination made it a success. Christian Charity has always been a priority for the Rockaways division, as they have used their annual Rockaway Irish Festival each year to raise much needed money for local parishes and Christian causes. Since the inception of the Irish Fest after Superstorm Sandy in 2013, the Division has donated \$265,000 to local parishes and organizations.

Division 21 President Mark Edwards had the following to say about the raffle donations: "It is always a great day when we can give much needed monetary help to our local churches. I am especially proud of the boys who – despite an ongoing pandemic – were able to make this raffle a rousing success. Though we couldn't have our annual Irish Festival, Golf Outing for Special Olympics and night at the races fundraisers, we found a way to give back to our community who always supports our endeavors. Thank you to everyone that helped make our raffle a success and for helping us fulfill our motto of Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity."



**Division 21 President Mark Edwards and Christian Charity Committee Chairman John Fahy delivered the \$5,000 check to Blessed Trinity Parish Pastor Fr. Michael Gelfant.**



**Msgr. Richard Ahlemeyer, pastor of St. Camillus-St. Virgilius Parish, was thrilled to receive the donation from Division 21, presented by Treasurer John Moroney.**



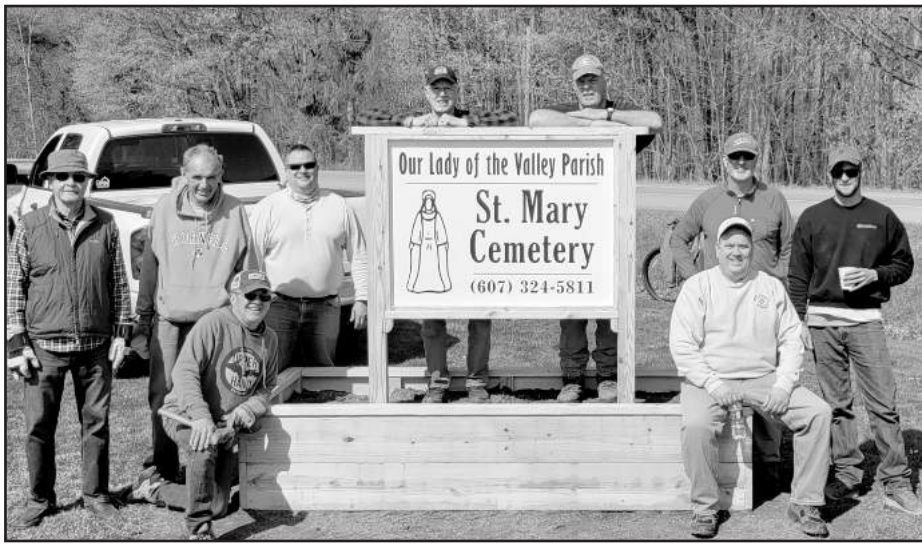
## Cleaning up for children

Members of the Father Henry Tansey Division 5, Albany, NY, participated in their bi-annual clean up day at the Double H Ranch in Lake Luzerne, NY. Double H Ranch is a camp founded by Paul Newman and Charles Wood that provides a fun camp experience to children with life threatening illnesses. Division 5 brothers, led by past Division 5 President Tim Carey, spent the morning raking and cleaning the pool area. — Tim Weklar



**The Nassau County NY AOH held its convention on Sunday, June 6, at the Irish American Center in Mineola, Long Island. The new NC Board is, seated, from left, Financial Secretary John Nolan (Division 15), President John O'Brien (Div. 11), VP Ken Ferguson (Div. 15), Recording Secretary Joe McDonald (Div. 20); standing, from left, Marshal Tom Scanlon (Div. 20), Sentinel Sean McClenin (Div. 17), Chairman of the Standing Committee Paul Doud (Div. 3), Treasurer Sean Hood (Div. 17), and New York State Director Sean O'Rourke (Div. 3). The installation was performed by Past State President Jim Burke (Div. 15) and State Treasurer Thomas Beirne (New York County), with the assistance of Past County President Michael O'Rourke (Div. 3) and National Editor John O'Connell (Div. 8). Brother O'Connell served as convention chairman. The Charter Draping Ceremony and the Officer Installation were made even more special by the fine bagpiping of Robert P. Lynch (Div. 8).**

# New York



## Good deeds at St. Mary's

Sons of Ireland Division 1, Steuben County, NY, built and replaced the sign for St. Mary Cemetery on May 1. The Division replaced the signs because one had become unreadable and the other's planter had become dilapidated. Many of the Division's brothers and their families are buried in the cemetery. Performing this service were, front row, from left, Tom Fagnan, Dave Watt; back row, from left, John Cain, Steve Hoyt, Mark Kelly, Mark VanDurme, Ed Hanbach, Jerry McAneney and Dan Kelly — Jerry McAneney.



## Helping the 'Book Fairies'

Division 15 in Nassau County, New York, organized a book drive to help support "The Book Fairies" of Freeport. They collected 1,554 books. The Book Fairies is a non-profit Long Island-based charity that gets books to schools, churches and libraries. From left, Helen McHale, President LAOH Division 15; Tom Hand, Councilman in Oyster Bay; Dennis McCauley, Vice President AOH Division 15; and Eileen Minogue, the Executive Director of The Book Fairies.



The Suffolk County, NY, convention was held on May 22 at Our Lady of Mount Carmel RC Church, home to Pastor Fr. Henry Reid. The new county officers are, front row, from left, Vice President Bill Corrigan, President Bill Gorham, Immediate Past President Chris Thompson, Recording Secretary Rich McCrosson, Financial Secretary Dennis Harty; back row, from left, Marshal Jim Dougherty, Sentinel John Walburg, Standing Committee Steve Lemanski and Treasurer Frank Nappe.



## Helping veterans

Albany Division 5 President Ciaran Geraghty and Veterans Affairs Chairman Peter Lounsbury presented a donation to Albany Housing Coalition Executive Director Joseph Sluszka and Lee Vartigian, Director of Veterans Services. Since 1987, the Albany Housing Coalition has provided supportive housing and services for homeless veterans. Albany 5 raised \$1,000 by holding their Inaugural Memorial Day Picnic in support of homeless veterans.

## County presidents awarded Barry Medals

During new Suffolk County President Gorham's opening remarks after election at the county convention, he thanked immediate past Suffolk County President Chris Thompson and all Suffolk County Division Presidents for their excellence in leadership during the pandemic. President Gorham then honored each President with the very

prestigious Commodore John Barry medal. Receiving the medal were Presidents John Walburg, Division 1; Jim Killen, Division 2; Rich McCrosson, Division 3; Larry Hurley, Division 5; Michael Grennan, Division 8; Ray Senenfelder, Division 9, and Steve Lemanski, Division 11. (Missing from photo: John Broderick, Division 4; and Tom McCugh, Division 7).



From left, Mike Grennan, Division 8; Ray Senenfelder, Division 9; Steve Lemanski, Division 11; Chris Thompson, Immediate Past Suffolk County President; Rich McCrosson, Division 3; Larry Hurley, Division 5; John Walburg, Division 1; Jim Killen, Division 2.

# Ladies hibernian news

## From the Desk of the Ladies National President...

**Karen Keane**

### **Contradictions in Our Daily Life**

Over the past two articles, I wrote about the meaning of what the Catholic Pro-Life position includes (gun control, mental health, elder care, abortion, capital punishment, immigration, etc.) and have met with many in agreement with educating all our members of the true meaning of Catholic Pro-Life. Others remain steadfast that Pro-Life is 99.99% anti-abortion and that inclusive of these other issues is misleading or watering down Our Church's position. To those I say, please educate yourself and become a full Pro Life Catholic.

Also, through these "discussions" I have learned that some people consider getting the vaccine to be against Our Church's teaching. Some believe that the vaccine, being possibly made from science including the use of aborted fetuses, is against Our Church's teaches. Sorry to let you know that in January, the Church clearly stated that the vaccine was acceptable to receive as Catholics. Getting the Vaccine can save your life, as well as others in your community. Aren't those lives worth saving?

The other big contradiction I am personally struggling with is the people saying, "I'm an American, No one can make me wear a mask!" I guess for them being American comes first, then being a Catholic is second. That was not what the nuns taught me. Catholic First-American Second was their line. People are calling for the right to own assault rifles because it is their right as an American citizen but fighting to take rights away from others because they do not agree with their choice. I am confident I will be misquoted here but fighting to take away a woman's right to choose, does not seem to cross many minds. If a woman cannot have the right to health decisions including her own body because she may decide to kill her child; why aren't we fighting to have the right to own assault weapons taken away. Please understand that I have never had an abortion; that I have helped others make the decision to keep their child; that I cared for and supported such child for 10 years after his birth; and genuinely believe that it is one of the biggest sins of this country. It is the contradiction that I struggle with. How can we proclaim that we are Catholics, and fight for only part of the Church's teaching? It is very hard to be an American Catholic or should I say a Catholic in America.

Just some food for thought. Life is truly a struggle and hopefully through prayer I will find an answer.

## **New LAOH Membership Application**

Ladies, we now have a new LAOH Membership Application ready for immediate use. The Membership Committee has been working very hard to update our membership application to make it more enticing and welcoming for new members. This application highlights our membership requirements and outlines several of our most important initiatives and charities that we support.

You can find the application on our website: ladiesaoh.com under the "Forms" tab and also under the "Membership" tab. I can also email you a copy directly, by sending a request to my email laohnationalmissions@gmail.com

I would like to thank the members of the Committee for all their hard work over the past several months: Jennifer Goodman -New Jersey, Marilyn Madigan -Ohio, Carol Sheyer - Ohio, Kathleen Diulus - Pennsylvania, Amanda Bacque -Texas. The committee is now developing a guidance document for Maintaining and Growing the membership. This document will soon be available to all Divisions.

Stay well,

Cathy Turck, Membership Committee Chair

## **LAOH NYS Marie English Award**

It is with great pleasure to bring you news of the winner of the Marie English Award.

With a 26% increase in membership, between January 2019 and December 2020, Oswego County - Division 3 - Dean Michael Barry, is the recipient of the NYS Marie English Award. Congratulations ladies on making sure our traditions are carried on.

Ladies, please subscribe to our website for updates and important information delivered right to your email.  
[www.ladiesaoh.com](http://www.ladiesaoh.com)

## **New York**

As is customary on the first weekend in May, the NY State LAOH and AOH gathered in East Durham, NY to hold their Spring board meeting and celebrate Mass together. It was good to have everyone back together for a weekend of work and fun. After the board meetings, a testimonial dinner was held at the Shamrock House to honor outgoing LAOH president MaryBeth Durkee and AOH President Tom Lambert. On Saturday, the ladies had a great meeting with funds being raised for the Pat Doyle Fund (previously Appeals for Aid) thanks to the Past NYS Presidents. On Sunday, Father Henry Reid said mass at the mass Rock. After Mass, the LAOH recited the prayer by Archbishop Sheen in front of a ring of white flowers, led by NYS President Durkee and NYS Catholic Action Officer, Teresa Kearns.



**A reading by NY State VP Agnes O'Leary at the Mass Rock in East Durham NY**



**Pictured are the daughter and the niece of Maura McSweeney, Jr. Coordinator and LAOH Albany County Past President; the granddaughter of Kathleen Stevens, LAOH Division 1 President; and the granddaughters of Chris O'Reilly, LAOH Albany County Vice President.**

### **Young ladies living the Motto**

The Junior Division of the ALBANY LAOH participated in the annual Missions and Charities Baby Shower to support Community Maternity Services of Catholic Charities of the Albany Catholic Diocese. This baby shower benefits the mothers and children who need the services that are provided by this organization. These young ladies have participated each year in the baby shower since they were all young.

## **Maryland**



### **MD LAOH, Cecil County Div. 1 holds Baby Shower**

On May 5, Cecil County LAOH Division #1 held its baby shower at the Cecil Pregnancy Center in Elkton, Maryland. 13 members attended and donated hundreds of diapers, cases of baby wipes, and so much more. Some members crocheted beautiful blankets. Division Members were treated to a grand tour of the center and enjoyed refreshments, learned about the services provided, and the women who received these services. They have a newly certified ultrasound technician and a translator on hand. God is truly at work here. Our LAOH sister, Bette Green, is the founder of the center.

# St. Mary's Grand Church

*In the last issue of the Digest, Hibernian Tom Beirne wrote about the Church of St. James in lower Manhattan and the role that church played in the foundations of the AOH. St. Mary's is another important church inseparable from the history of our Order. — The Editor.*

**By Tom Beirne, NY State AOH Treasurer**

On May 14, 1826, Fr. Hatton Walsh, an Irish Augustinian, addressed the parishioners at Mass in the new St. Mary's Church, which was established to serve Irish immigrants living on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. For the first seven years the parish used a wood-framed building, the former Seventh Presbyterian Church located on Sheriff Street, that was purchased by the Diocese. St. Mary's is the third oldest Catholic parish in the Archdiocese of New York, following St. Peter's (1786) and The Basilica of St. Patrick's Old Cathedral (1815). However, it is the oldest Catholic Church building and the longest continually operating Catholic Church in New York State. The current St. Peter's Church was completed in 1840, and St. Patrick's Old Cathedral was reconstructed after a fire in 1866.

On November 9, 1831, anti-Catholic and anti-immigrant Nativists set fire to St. Mary's Church. The church was burned to the ground and completely destroyed. The pastor, Rev. Luke Berry, fought the flames, trying to save the church and contents; was injured and devastated by the destruction of the Church, and died less than a month later. St. Mary's continued to serve the neighborhood after the fire in temporary facilities. On April 30, 1832, the cornerstone was laid for the larger stone Church building on Grand Street. The first Mass was said in the basement of the new St. Mary's Church on December 23, 1832, and the Church was formally dedicated in June 1833. The Rev. William J. Quarter, an immigrant from County Offaly, Ireland, ordained by Bishop Dubois in 1829, was appointed Pastor of the new Church. In 1843, Fr. Quarter became the first Bishop of the new Diocese of Chicago. The destruction of St. Mary's led to the founding of the Ancient Order of Hibernians in 1836; primarily to defend Irish, Catholics and the clergy. The AOH grew quickly and took their mission seriously. In 1884, 48 years after our Order's founding, 42

AOH Divisions operated in New York County (Manhattan). There were attacks on Catholic churches in NY, but Hibernians staunchly defended them and prevented any from being destroyed.

St. Mary's church was enlarged in 1840, and in 1871 the current brick façade and dual steeples were added. St. Mary's has a proud history serving the Lower East side, and its changing ethnic make-up. It had distinguished pastors such as Rev. Nicholas Hughes (1881–1909), James Byrnes (1909–1933), and Michael Daly (1943–1960). Fr. John Drumgoole, a Longford native and pioneering social worker referred to as the "Shepherd of the Homeless Newsboys," was sexton at St. Mary's for 19 years prior to his ordination, and returned as a priest in 1869.

Fr. Andrew O'Connor, the pastor, was born in Chicago and ordained 25 years ago by Cardinal O'Connor. He has celebrated Masses in Gaelic for NY and Nassau counties of the AOH. Fr. O'Connor started to learn to speak Irish in Donegal in 1981, and has a Masters from the School of Irish Studies in Ballsbridge, Dublin. He celebrates Mass in: English, Latin, Italian, German, Spanish, French and Irish. Fr. O'Connor is a sculptor, a visual artist, a fashion designer and multi-talented. He recently made six new arched, entrance doors out of mahogany in the basement of the church with bronze overlays that he designed, and installed them on the front of the Church. The historically accurate taller arched doors, replaced the deteriorated rectangular doors that were installed under headers in the arches. In 2004, he founded Goods of Conscience, which uses sustainable cotton grown and woven in Guatemala. The fashion line is designed and manufactured in the basement of St. Mary's and employs people in Guatemala and the Parish at fair wages. Fr. O'Connor is currently overseeing a renovation of the church, part of which will leave exposed the stone walls on the interior of the Church below the stained glass windows. It is amazing to see the large stones; and think they were quarried, transported and set by mostly Irish tradesmen almost 190 years ago. The walls of the church are almost 3' thick; probably intended as a formidable defense, and to insure the new St. Mary's Church would not meet a similar fate as the previous church.



The Church of St. Mary in lower Manhattan.



Fr. Andrew O'Connor, the pastor, was born in Chicago and ordained 25 years ago by Cardinal O'Connor. He has celebrated Masses in Gaelic for NY and Nassau counties of the AOH.



The sanctuary of the church.



"The Shepherd of the Homeless Newsboys."



The detailed Baptismal records from St. Mary's Church in 1829.

# Pennsylvania

## Edmiston honored for his years of service

The Michael Collins Division 1, Cumberland County, PA, honored Mike Edmiston at their April meeting. Mike has been instrumental in coordinating our semi-annual Gettysburg trips to keep Irish Brigade monuments in pristine shape. Mike also has been

our historian for more than 10 years, always providing valuable insight at every meeting regarding past events in Irish-American history.

Michael was honored with a plaque thanking him for all his service, as well as a framed etching of various Gettysburg scenes, which seemed befitting for the occasion.



Mike Edmiston, honored by his Division, first row, second from left, with many of his Cumberland County Division brothers

# Florida



## State, Division donates to damaged church

In March 2020, a deranged individual claiming he "has problems with the Catholic Church," crashed a vehicle through the front doors of Queen of Peace Catholic Church, in Ocala, Florida, poured gasoline in the foyer area, and lit it on fire. The entire church was damaged. Recently, the Florida AOH State Board and the Blessed Teresa of Calcutta Lake County Division 1 made a donation of \$1,175.78 to purchase new albs and chasubles. Making the donation to Pastor Parick J. O'Doherty are, from left, John Gaffney, Tom Egan, Division President Joseph Farrell, Fr. O'Doherty, Tom Healy, Jim Judge and John McClory.

# New York



## 'You gotta have heart'

The Sons of Ireland Division 1, of Steuben County (NY), supported the local challenger baseball program on June 6. Brothers ran with the athletes who needed support, helped with batting, and talked to them throughout the game. After two innings and the score tied, all had fun with celebration in the pavilion with hotdogs and drinks. This is an annual tradition the Hornell Division enjoys participating in. The Hornell Challenger Program is financially supported by the Sons of Ireland.

# Oklahoma



The Crowning of Mary. Members of the Bobby Sands Division celebrated the Crowning of Mary rite on May 1, with Deacon Tim Sullivan as celebrant at the Church of the Madalene in Tulsa, Oklahoma. From left, David Lawrence, Nathan Wilson, John Miggins, Deacon Tim Sullivan and Tom Nichols.