

NATIONAL BOARD



OFFICE OF THE  
NATIONAL  
FFAI

SEAN PENDER  
13 Scullin Drive  
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**ANCIENT ORDER**  
**OF HIBERNIANS IN AMERICA**  
INCORPORATED  
Organized in New York City, May 4, 1836

October 6, 2013

2013 Freedom For All Ireland Christmas Appeal Mailing Contents:

\$1000 Pledge form

Christmas Appeal Letter

The FFAI \$10 club

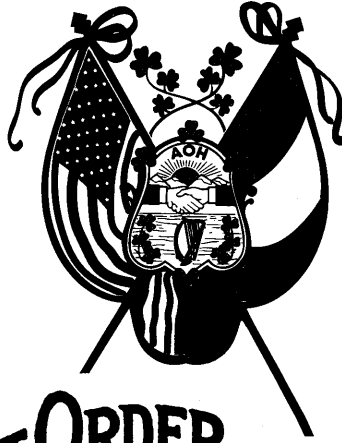
\$10 club sign up

Information on groups the Christmas Appeal has supported

*"Ireland Unfree Shall Never Be At Peace."*

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*\$1000 Pledge Form*  
*Customized Award*

Division # \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Division President \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Division Address (where award will be sent)

Attn: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of division board as it should appear when recognized:

Our division pledges a minimum of \$1,000 for the FFAI Christmas Appeal. We will forward that amount by February 15<sup>th</sup> 2014.

President's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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## 2013 Christmas Appeal

2012 was our most successful Christmas Appeal ever with over \$75,000 raised. When one considers that in the same calendar year our organization raised over \$160,000 for Sandy relief we can be justifiably proud of our accomplishments. It was with a great amount of pride and honor that LAOH Freedom for all Ireland Chair Agnes Gowdy and I presented our donations while in Ireland in the early spring of 2012. To see how appreciative the groups are, to learn about their work and to see how important every dollar is, makes the hard work of running the appeal well worth the effort.

This year's Freedom for All Ireland Appeal kickoff was slightly delayed as important work was completed by a special committee appointed by AOH National President Moore and chaired by AOH National treasurer Danny O'Connell. The committee was tasked once again to review the yearly Christmas appeal and ensure that the FFAI Christmas Appeal remains contemporary in light of changing realities and challenges faced by the North's nationalist community. The goal was to also provide insights that will guide future interest, involvement and support for the AOH FFAI Christmas Appeal. I along with Danny O'Connell and committee members Past National President Joe Roche, Philadelphia division members Pearse Kerr and Ger McHale; categorized and ranked in importance the groups we contribute to, reviewed and updated the process by which applicant groups submit donation requests, updated the selection process and most importantly stressed the importance of increasing involvement and participation from our members to support the yearly appeal.

An analysis of our donations shows that we have a strong core of long time supporters in individuals, boards and divisions throughout the country who we can count on every appeal. To all of you that donate every year you are the foundation that makes this program successful, sincere thanks for being there every year for the people of the North. But in this mailing I want to reach out especially to the divisions and boards who have not supported the appeal in the past. While last year we raised more than any other previous year, only ninety four divisions made donations; or roughly one in four. Only 25% of our boards and divisions are contributing to our success. This year

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if you are a president of a board or division getting this letter or a member of the National board that has not made a donation in the past; I ask for your support. I ask for your commitment to consider making a contribution, regardless of the size of the donation. If we can increase participation we can significantly increase the amount of good work that we do to help build a United 32 county Ireland with peace and justice for all.

Over the last twelve months there have been so many examples of why our support and attention is still needed in the North. Flag protests in Belfast, illegal and/or violent July 12<sup>th</sup> marches by loyalists thorough Catholic areas, the recent renegeing by the DUP on the Long Kesh peace memorial project, and the continued obstruction of truth and justice by the British government and Unionist politicians are just some examples of the challenges and injustices that the people of the North and the groups we support continue to face. The groups we support strive for truth, peace and justice for all the people of Ireland. 2013 marked the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Good Friday agreement which has brought for the most part a welcome peace to a generation of children in the North but there is still so much work that needs to be done.

PLEASE DONATE TO THIS YEARS CHRISTMAS APPEAL, TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

A list of organizations we have supported will once again be listed at the end of this mailing. If you would like to direct your funds specifically to one organization just note that organization in the memo portion of your check and your request will be honored. Direct donations should be at least \$50 per donation.

All Checks must be made out to -AOH FFAI Christmas Appeal, payments should be sent to Sean Pender 13 Scullin Dr. Yardville NJ 08620. Donations should arrive by February 15<sup>th</sup> 2014. I can also be reached at paddyspeed@yahoo.com or by calling 609 462 7056 if there are any questions. Donations of \$1,000 or more will be recognized with a special award. This year the award will be the special Easter Rising print on metal by Limerick artist Patrick Harnett.

NOTE: Once again this year we will be traveling to Ireland during the Easter season to present the donations to those groups we support. I am working with a tour group to once again sponsor a trip. Tentative dates are US departure Wednesday April 17, 2014 and return Sunday April 27, 2014. Hotels in Belfast, Derry and either Kilkenny/Wexford. If there is interest in joining this trip please email me at paddyspeed@yahoo.com or by calling 609 462 7056. As soon as details are finalized they will be posted on www.aoh.com and circulated via email.

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## *The FFAI \$10 Club*

### What is it?

Members make voluntary donations in the amount of \$10 each to support the Freedom for All Ireland Christmas Appeal. Donations are separate from Division contributions.

### Why should I do it?

The preamble to the constitution of our organization lists as the third purpose of our order: "To aid and advance by all legitimate means the aspirations and endeavors of the Irish people for complete and absolute independence, promoting peace and unity for all Ireland." While having a stable government of and by the people of the North of Ireland is a very significant event it is not our end goal. The organizations that we support and that have been highlighted in the Hibernian Digest still need our support to help ensure we reach our goal of 32 county united Ireland that promotes peace and justice for all its people.

### Who is responsible?

All Division, County and State Freedom for all Ireland are responsible for gathering funds and submitting

"Everyone, Republican or otherwise, has their own particular part to play. No part is too great or too small; no one is too old or too young to do something."

Bobby Sands –

Contributing to the \$10 club - the small part you play each year.

*"Ireland Unfree Shall Never Be At Peace."*

Division \_\_\_\_\_ City/County \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

***Freedom For All Ireland \$10 Club***

***Please Remit to:***

***Sean Pender FFAI Chairman 13 Scullin Drive Yardville, NJ 08620***

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## *Groups that have received support via the AOH Christmas Appeal*

### Belfast National Graves

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/National-Graves-Association-Belfast/126310260745335>

Primary mission is the upkeep of Belfast republican graves and memorials. By keeping fitting memorials to those who have paid the supreme sacrifice and with the hope that no other Irish men or women shall ever have to do this again.

### Cairde:

Cairde is a self-help initiative taken by republican prisoners from the Strabane area. Cairde is designed to assist with the particular needs of prisoners and their families and to empower all those who have experienced incarceration as a result of the political conflict in Ireland. The aims of the group are to establish a resource and service facility which will respond to the special needs and interests of ex-prisoners and their families and provide resources which will effectively assist empowerment.

### Cuimhneamh

Cuimhneamh is a 'living history' project initially funded by Newry & Mourne Local Strategy Partnership. Its aim is to compile an extensive and ongoing archive of people's memories and experiences from the early twentieth century to the present day. Audio/visual interviews are being conducted with a wide spectrum of people to provide an oral history of South Armagh and North Louth. These interviews are combined with documents and photographs in order to build up a comprehensive archive of material. The intention is that this archive of material – "a living museum" will be made accessible to the public at the Tí Chulainn Centre. It aims to facilitate personal, political and cultural development of people from

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South Armagh, who have been directly affected by the events of the past 30 years. The destructive consequences of the conflict in Ireland have left communities across South Armagh marginalised. Until recently people were unable to talk about their experiences because of fear. Actually being able to go and visit people to record their experiences is one of the advantages of the peace process we now have. Highlighting a legacy of the conflict (people's silence) this project aims to raise the self-esteem and self-confidence across the community. A direct result of the legacy of conflict in the area is the negative media image; we aim to improve this by making accessible an oral history archive online which will highlight the true strength and character of the area

### **Green Cross, AnCuman Cubrach Belfast**

To provide material assistance to the families of people bereaved in the Troubles and to assist in the alleviation of hardship in the community

### **Mary's Gift** [www.marysgift.org](http://www.marysgift.org)

Mary's Gift Irish Language Foundation is a US-based charitable endowment fund which provides financial support to Irish-Immersion schools in the Six Counties. Similar conceptually to a college endowment, Mary's Gift distributes earnings from donations to preschool, primary and post-primary schools where all subjects are taught through the medium of Irish language. Mary's Gift is a private and independent "501(c) (3)" public charity, unaffiliated with any other organization, school, government, or religion. Mary's Gift is managed exclusively by volunteers; all donations are used solely to support recipient schools or pay foundation expenses.

### **Omagh Basketball Team** [www.bebo.com/Profile.jsp?MemberId=4283498778](http://www.bebo.com/Profile.jsp?MemberId=4283498778)

The main goal of the Omagh Basketball Club (OBC) is to bring children from all sides of the community and teach them to work together, using basketball as our tool. The Omagh Basketball Club cannot thank you enough for all the assistance you have provided to us to help keep children healthy, active and open-minded in Omagh.

Contributions in 2013 will help fund the planned historic 2014 summer OBC return trip to the USA.

### **Pat Finucane Centre: Derry and Newry** [www.patfinucanecentre.org](http://www.patfinucanecentre.org)

Inherent to the work of the Pat Finucane Centre is our core belief that;

- 1) the conflict has produced a legacy that will prove destabilising and destructive to any efforts at peace building and reconciliation unless that legacy is faced openly and honestly;
- 2) The criminal justice system is wholly inappropriate to the task of truth recovery, restorative justice and reconciliation in respect of the legacy of the conflict.

As part of our strategy to address point 1 a central focus of our work has been (and will continue to be) to research and document individual cases of conflict related loss of life following a specific request from a relative. Underpinning this is human rights based approach which dictates that relatives have a



'right to truth' in respect of each individual loss. We have developed a certain level of expertise in terms of our advocacy and research and this has been recognised both at a statutory and parliamentary level.\*

The first challenge for the PFC has been to 'piece together the missing pieces of the jigsaw' in terms of those incidents where our help is sought. The second and more difficult challenge (point 2) has been to find innovative alternatives for families seeking redress as a result of having lost relatives. The inability of the criminal justice system to provide for 'justice' in terms of cases which may go back a generation is self evident. The majority of families with whom we work have little or no confidence in the prosecution service or the courts.

**Relatives For Justice**    **Belfast and Dungannon [www.relativesforjustice.com](http://www.relativesforjustice.com)**

Supporting the victims of State violence and collusion to campaign for Truth; developing legal strategies aimed at uncovering the truth; supporting families engaging with the Police Ombudsman, Courts, Inquests re truth finding investigations; creating awareness and providing information – especially in US via Irish America, including lobbying the Congress and Senate with AOH partnership support.

Examining transitional justice and truth recovery mechanisms for families and survivors of British State violence; providing therapeutic models for healing and personal recovery due to traumatic impact of the conflict.

**Saint Patrick Centre**    **[www.saintpatrickcentre.com](http://www.saintpatrickcentre.com)**

Located beside Saint Patrick's Grave in Downpatrick, County Down, the Saint Patrick Centre is the only permanent exhibition in the World dedicated to the memory of the Patron Saint of Ireland. It is a centre for Tourism, reconciliation and is dedicated to all of the people of Ireland. Created through finances secured by the International Fund for Ireland, the Millennium Commission and Northern Ireland Tourist Board, the Centre was developed as a visitor resource to boost the local tourism economy in an area hard hit by the Troubles and thereby bring help normality and stability to Mid Down. Tourism and the economic benefits which it brings, so much enjoyed in the other provinces of Ireland, is slowly coming back to this corner of the island through our endeavors.

The Centre has also become a key player in the Peace Process through the reconciliation work which is done here with over 5,000 children a year coming through our program. What better role model for mutual understanding than someone from Britain who became the Patron Saint of Ireland? Patrick provides a common denominator between children of all faiths and traditions in this part of Ireland and allows an exploration of our common Christian heritage. Our Education Programme uses outreach workshops which focus on icebreaking sessions between schools the exploration of identity and conflict resolution using Patrick's example. We also use the facilities of the Centre to provide in-house drama, games and art workshops. The Education Programme seeks to extend its work to include cross border activities, as well as to create more outreach within the communities of the North of Ireland.

**Tar Anall** Belfast [WWW.Taranall.ie](http://WWW.Taranall.ie)

Tar Anall offers support services required to empower and provide opportunities for Republican ex-prisoners, and their families and those that have been affected by the conflict in Ireland. Tar Anall, offers family support and welfare support services. Tar Anall provides training and education service, helping ex-prisoners and their families gain the necessary skills to seek employment and further opportunities. Tar Anall delivers youth provision services through its youth development unit. In one of the most disadvantaged areas of the north of Ireland, this service is essential in providing a safe haven and opportunities for the youth of West Belfast. They are engaged in delivering equality training to other youth groups and children across Belfast, on both sides of the community. Tar Anall also provides a much needed outlet for a women's 50+ group, who are active in bringing together those that have suffered as a result of the conflict and arrange activities that keep a community spirit alive. Tar Anall also provides a counselling service and a stress clinic for a wide range of people, who cannot access this service through normal health providers.

**Thar Saile** [www.tharsaile.org](http://www.tharsaile.org)

Thar Saile is specifically an Irish American organization dedicated to working for the rights of former Irish Political POWs in the United States. The Mission of Thar Saile is to achieve a permanent solution to the immigration issues facing the former Irish Republican Political Prisoners residing within the United States. These men have faced deportation and extradition from the U.S. and the goal of Thar Saile is to obtain a collective resolution for all of their cases.

**Holy Cross Ardoyne Trust** North Belfast <http://www.holy-cross-ardoyne.com>

1. Creation of a cross community Family Centre on CrumlinRd Woodvale Road 'interface' in North Belfast  
This will involve restoring the original Holy Cross Schools in the Holy Cross church grounds
2. Continue to promote educational and recreational activities for the youth of the parish to further the reconciliation and peace in this deeply divided area

Support will enable us to continue the essential cross-community work and concentrate our efforts preparing the planning application for the Family Centre Development. Holy Cross Ardoyne Trust has a totally voluntary membership and nobody is paid for their extensive and professional input. Therefore all funds received go directly to the realization of the project of reconciliation and the improvement of community relations in this 'interface area'.

**Coiste na n-Iarchimí** Six counties of the North [www.coiste.ie](http://www.coiste.ie)

Coiste is the representative group supporting former IRA ex-prisoners and assisting them in building a just peace in Ireland. We lobby and advocate on their behalf; we provide services such as welfare advice, family support, training for employment, emotional support and counselling to them and their families. We are also involved in peace building and dialogue activity, establishing projects aimed at deepening respect between former combatant groups and building understanding of the political institutions