

The National HIBERNIAN DIGEST



Ancient Order of
HIBERNIANS
Irish • Catholic • American



“Ireland unfree shall never be at peace” —Patrick Pearse, August 1, 1915

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October-November-December, 2025

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Celebrating at the Testimonial were National President Sean Pender, and Dr. Sean MacBride Humanitarian Award recipients Andree Murphy and Mark Thompson.

A Forward-Looking Testimonial Weekend

By Sean Pender, National President

I want to thank all those who worked so hard to make the recent AOH President’s Testimonial dinner and presentation of the Sean MacBride Humanitarian Award weekend so successful.

Special thanks to the local members and businesses who welcomed all to the Hamilton, New Jersey, area. Thanks to the recently appointed Irish

Consul General of NY Gerald Angley for joining us and sharing important words. Mark Thompson and Andree Murphy were most worthy Sean MacBride humanitarian award recipients; it was an honor to spend time with them.

At the recent AOH National Board interim meeting, members of the National Board dedicated significant time to collaborative activities. This period should be viewed as a strategic invest-

ment aimed at fostering organizational growth, enhancing member engagement, and increasing active participation within our organization as we continue to move toward our 200th anniversary. Leadership throughout the organization can expect to learn more about this in the coming weeks.

The gathering of the National Board, along with AOH and LAOH members, at our Lady of Knock Shrine on my Division’s grounds to pray the Rosary was a profoundly meaningful experience. This event underscored the deep connection between our Irish heritage and Catholic faith, highlighting the importance of these traditions in our community. It serves as a reminder that the Catholic faith remains a vital component of our cultural identity, fostering unity and spiritual growth among members. Such gatherings reinforce our shared values and the enduring significance of faith in preserving our heritage for future generations. If it’s been a while since you’ve celebrated your faith, take the time to return.

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National President Sean Pender, near center, with state presidents from around the country at the Testimonial on Saturday night, October 18, at the Mercer Oaks Golf Course, Princeton Junction.

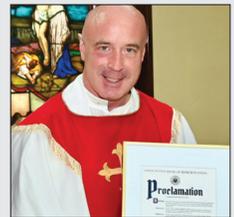


At the Project Children celebration, from left, National AOH Chief of Staff Tim McSweeney, NYSAOH Chaplain Fr. Henry Reid, National Director Keith Reynolds, NYSAOH member Matt Reilly, Miriam and Dennis Mulcahy, AOH National President Sean Pender and NYSAOH members Kevin Cummings and James McLaughlin.

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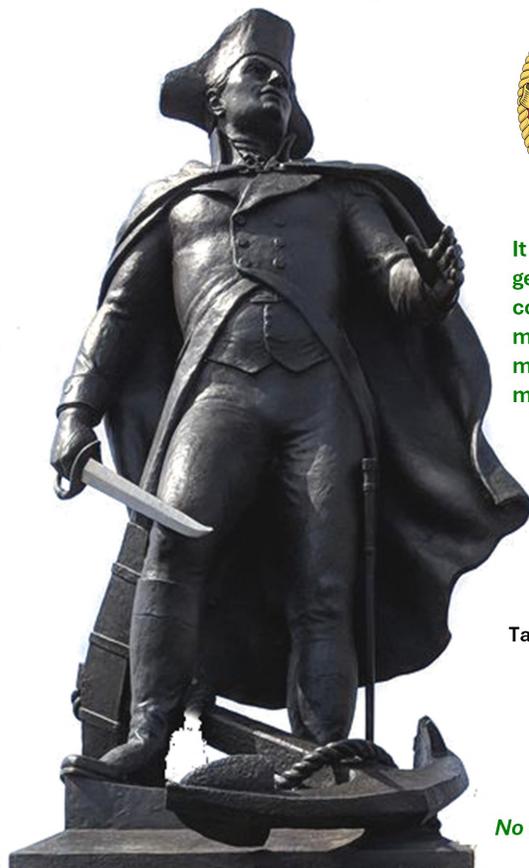


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On this, the 250th Anniversary of the founding of the United States Navy, we the members of the AOH & LAOH pay tribute to Irish born Commodore John Barry. An American Patriot, Barry became the most successful fighting Captain in the Continental Navy - helping to ensure our independence. As our young nation built its sea power to protect our shores, President George Washington entrusted Barry as the first Commissioned Officer and first Flag Officer in the United States Navy. We honor this great man by creating a museum display onboard the Battleship New Jersey Museum and Memorial to educate the Navy and the public visiting the ship through the end of 2025 and possibly beyond. In addition, this display can be duplicated in whole or in parts for AOH & LAOH Divisions around the country to include as part of their America 250th celebration next year.



It is only through your generous support that we could design, produce & maintain this important museum display. Please make a donation today!

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<http://bit.ly/4h4jEXR>



No contribution is too small.



Vice President's Report

By Liam McNabb

Growth, Participation & Engagement

"Growth, Participation & Engagement" were the themes for the Interim National Board meeting in New Jersey in October. President Sean Pender set the tone well in advance of our meeting as the priority was for the leadership team to bring and present ideas related to the theme. The presentations and meeting format enabled open dialogue and the sharing of ideas. This is critical for planning and ongoing operations, especially since this meeting is the only time that the entire national board meets in person this year to conduct business.

During our meeting, there were several discussions that emphasized the need for our board to better communicate with and engage leaders at all levels, especially state presidents. While we find ways to improve our national strategies, we also need the involvement of state leaders. We need state presidents to develop their leadership teams and involve them in all of their work. Elected and appointed positions at each level need to be filled and information needs to be shared with each of their respective jurisdictions. Many Hibernians are interested in each of our topics and initiatives and could be appointed to positions that receive and share important information. To help with this effort, an "AOH Leadership Training" targeting state presidents will be available in coming months.

Our meetings were followed by President Pender's testimonial dinner where he was honored and recognized for his leadership. Many states were represented at the many events and presented President Pender with gifts from their respective states.

The Dr. Sean MacBride Humanitarian Award was presented during President Pender's dinner. This award recognizes the efforts of individuals, like Dr. Sean MacBride, who make contributions to the cause of peace, justice, and the economic well-being

of the Irish people. The recipients of this important award are Mark Thompson and Andree Murphy, who lead Relatives for Justice located in Belfast and throughout the North of Ireland. The husband-and-wife team are strong advocates for justice as they work on cases involving families that were victimized during the conflict of "The Troubles."



Save the Date! 2026 AOH & LAOH National Convention in Omaha

The 2026 AOH & LAOH National Convention will be in Omaha, Nebraska, and will open with Mass and an Icebreaker reception on Wednesday, July 15, and will conclude with our traditional Installation Banquet on Saturday, July 18. Our host hotel is the Hilton in downtown Nebraska, which is across the street and connected to the CHI Center, which will also host many of our dinners and events.

There is a dedicated local convention committee, led by Kelly Hajek and Mike Addy, that is working diligently to organize local events and welcome all of us to their community. Omaha is home to Father Flanagan's Boy's Town and also hosts the Henry Doorly Zoo & Aquarium, which is the number one ranked zoo in the United States.

More information can be found at <https://omahairish2026.com/> We hope you can join us and we encourage you to reserve your hotel rooms as soon as possible.



**To be Irish is an honor...
To be a Hibernian
is a blessing.**



Treasurer's Report

By Dan Deviney

This year's National President's Dinner and National Board Meeting was a huge success. Thursday evening there was a social gathering held at a local pub called Tir na Nog. The pub was the quintessential Irish Republican Pub, which set the stage for what was to come.

All day Friday and again Saturday morning were full of meetings, starting early and ending late. Reports were given by every national officer and chairperson with a few extra reports given on some special projects. Several themes emerged; some of the more prominent were recruitment, engagement, participation and communication. Reports highlighted areas and efforts where we are doing well, however some others showed the need for improvement. For instance, in the area of communication, it was determined that there are interruptions in the flow of information about our initiatives down to the lower levels of our Order and also problems with bringing information from the lower levels of our Order up to the leadership at the higher levels. It is incumbent on the leadership at all levels of our Order to cure these disruptions to make sure that our membership is both receiving information from above and also having their ideas and concerns addressed. Another report showed that we are showing tremendous progress in the number of At Large Members we have, but that we need a way to turn those members into new divisions.

Other highlights included a panel discussion on Friday where five Past National Presidents, including Ed Wallace, Seamus Boyle, Brendan Moore, Judge James McKay and Daniel O'Connell, where they spoke about the challenges and successes they experienced while in office. Their discussion was both entertaining and enlightening. One of the special moments occurred on Saturday afternoon when a large contingent of AOH and LAOH members gathered at the Lady of Knock Grotto located on the Division 1 property to pray the Rosary, led by Deputy National Chaplain Fr. Colm Mitchell. Later in the afternoon, there was a Mass celebrated by National Chaplain Fr. Martin O'Reilly, who gave a very warm and thought-provoking homily.

The evening events on Friday and Saturday were both fun and filled with passion about our Order and the work we do. A representative from the Irish Embassy Department of Foreign Affairs gave a presentation highlighting and praising the work the AOH does. On Saturday President Pender gave a heartfelt speech about the need for more cordial and respectful communication between individuals, especially in areas where they have differing opinions and find the need to agree to disagree. Mark Thompson and Andree Murphy spoke passionately on Friday and again on Saturday when accepting their Sean MacBride Awards about their work in Ireland encompassing the past, present and future.

A huge thank you to Chris Cooke and Tim McSweeney for their efforts this weekend. They were key to making things happen smoothly.



Director's Report

By Keith Reynolds

I hope all our brothers had a safe and healthy summer. By the end of October all the state Hibernian conventions should have been concluded. Congratulations to all our newly elected State Board officers; good luck to you all. For the officers who have served on their State Boards and are stepping away, thank you all for your service to our Order.

I had the honor of attending the South Carolina State Convention in Charleston. It was a great weekend meeting old friends and making new ones. State President Kevin Barnes, his board and the entire convention committee did an outstanding job. Congratulations to E.J. Campbell Jr. on being elected to the position of South Carolina State Secretary.

National Secretary Ray Lynch will be attending the North Carolina state convention on October 4. I look forward to hearing the report of the convention.

I will not be able to take part in N.C., as I will be flying to Ireland on that date and will be attending the Project Children 50th Anniversary Celebration in Monaghan. Hibernian Denis Mulcahy will be honored as co-founder of Project Children and dedication of the Partnership of the Monaghan Peace Campus and Project Children will take place archiving their works that offered 23,000 children a summer of reprieve in America from the troubles in the North of Ireland.

The last state convention I will be attending is my own in Florida on October 25. Thank you President Brendan Kelley for your service to our state and the Order. I look forward to working with our new leadership team on the Florida State Board.

To all the Southern Hibernian State Presidents and their Boards, thank you for your assistance and diligent response in closing all your state applications. As we move forward into the new roster system many of the problems of the past will disappear and a simpler, smoother and more efficient roster system will take over.



Secretary's Report

By Ray Lynch

All State Boards held their elections at their conventions in 2025. If you have had a turnover in officers, please have the new leadership at each level update their Form 9 online with the newly elected and appointed officers. There is no need to send a hard copy via mail or email to the office; instead, update your officers electronically and submit the form accordingly. Be sure that every position is filled, including both elected and appointed roles. If you're a new officer without access to the roster, please get in touch with me, and I will provide you with the link to access it.

Clear communication is crucial for resolving membership issues quickly and preventing delays. Below, we detail the correct procedures for emailing the office about membership concerns.

Please include your Division Locator — A frequent issue in handling membership inquiries is confusion over division identification. To avoid this, always add your division locator in the email subject line. Please don't rely solely on the division name, as we have 332 divisions across the country, some of which share the same names, and that can lead to confusion. For example, a division locator would be "08SL01." Including this information helps ensure that your inquiry enables me to find the correct Division's roster promptly to make the update or change.

Provide Membership Numbers for Card Requests — When requesting new or replacement membership cards, always include the member's number in your email. This simple step saves time and reduces the need for follow-up emails requesting additional information. A membership number might look like "08SL010005." Including it from the start enables us to process your request efficiently and accurately.

Benefits of Following These Protocols — Adhering to these guidelines at the start of your communication helps to:

- Prevent multiple emails requesting missing information.
- Accelerate the resolution of your issue.
- Ensure your concerns are directed to the correct team without delay.

Before sending your membership-related email, double-check that your division locator and any relevant membership numbers are included. These small but vital details significantly help in providing quick and practical support. Thank you for adhering to these email guidelines. Together, we can streamline the process for everyone, making it faster and more efficient.

As we approach the Per Capita season (December 31st), please ensure that all dues for your members are paid in full. Our goal is to prevent the abrupt removal of unpaid members at the end of the year. Removing members in December and gradually reinstating them throughout the year can negatively affect the stability and growth of the Order.

If you have further questions, need clarification, or require assistance, please don't hesitate to contact Deputy National Secretary Greg Seán Canning at 201-787-6650 or grioghar@mac.com, or me, Ray Lynch, at 772-298-2244 or irishyankeenut@gmail.com. We are here to support you and ensure everything runs smoothly.



Director's Report

By Ed Dougherty

With the summer of 2025 now a memory and with the fall season upon us, many Division, County and State Boards will be busy planning activities, communion Masses and veterans' events, food drives and recruitment drives. These are a couple of things that I can think of. Please remember to get your pictures and articles in our Hibernian Digest. Our noble Order does a lot; let us be proud of our accomplishments.

On October 3 I took part in a ceremony honoring Commodore John Barry as part of the 250th Anniversary of the United States Navy and Marine Corps on the Battleship New Jersey in Camden, New Jersey. Commodore John Barry was granted Commission No. 1 and on May 10, 2014, with tireless efforts of the AOH, the Barry Gate and the Barry Monument were dedicated at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis MD.

The weekend of October 16-18, I attended the AOH National Board interim meeting and the presentation of the Sean MacBride Humanitarian Award to Mark Thompson and Andre Murphy from Relatives for Justice at the National AOH President Sean Pender's testimonial dinner. It was good to see so many Hibernian brothers that weekend.

Brothers, we need to continue to increase engagement throughout our organization from divisions, counties and states. Our participation on our National Chairman calls needs to increase so we can share information and promote our successes and best practices for the future growth of our Order.

Happy Thanksgiving to your families.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, as we end 2025. Thank you for the dedicated work you do to make the Ancient Order of Hibernians in America a great fraternal organization.

I wish all of you and your families a Blessed Christmas and a Healthy New Year that will be a prosperous and peaceful one for all Hibernians.



Director's report

By Tom Lambert

I recently had the privilege of attending the New York state convention, as well as the Connecticut state convention. I will also be attending the Florida state convention. Congratulations to the newly installed officers! I particularly enjoy attending the state conventions as they represent great opportunities where Hibernian friendship may be rekindled or even begun. I encourage all brothers who have never attended a state convention to make every effort to attend in the future. You will not regret it!

Our efforts at on-line recruitment also continue. The backlog of online applications is being continually addressed. Much progress has been achieved. Thank you to all who continue to address the backlog of applications, as well as those who continue to address these applications in a timely manner! Online recruitment continues to be a valuable tool in growing our Order. As always, if an officer requests that you follow up on one or more of these applications, please do so as soon as is possible, and be sure to report the results to those in leadership positions as soon as possible. I would again like to give a shout out to NYS AOH Organizer Tim Weklar, who continues his dual effort to coordinate the contact with these possible new members, and to oversee new online recruitment campaigns! Continuing kudos to National Director/Organizer Ryan Curry and Deputy National Organizer Brendan Walsh as well! As we continue to address the backlog of applications, please be aware that as of September 1, 2025, any open applications from 2023 should no longer be addressed.

I have requested all State Presidents from New York and New England to provide me with the status of all open online applications. This request is being followed up with an upcoming Zoom meeting for any officer within my assigned area. More information will follow. Thank you to those who responded to my request. Those who have not responded should do so ASAP!

Happy Thanksgiving to all Brothers and their families!

If any AOH Brother needs to reach me to discuss any AOH issue, I can be reached at Tomlambert12@aol.com or on my cell phone at 716-796-7687.



Director's report

By Patrick Ryan

Friendship, Unity & Christian Charity – there is a lot to unpack in our motto. Let us start with Friendship, which is a state of enduring affection between two people. We just concluded the National Board Meeting and President's Testimonial Dinner and witnessed many friendships being renewed or just starting and as I sat, I reflected on what this means to us and our Order.

Let's start with some basic facts and statistics. Friendship in America is in steep decline: we're more disconnected from each other than ever, and the gulf between us is only growing. Does it matter? It does. Because we know that friendships are good for us.

People with stronger social interactions live longer than those without, according to a study in the UK's Nature Medicine journal. Living with a partner, for example, is as good for physical health as regular exercise, researchers found, and having non-related friends to confide in also extends lifespan.

Loneliness is a silent killer. A U.S. surgeon general's report from 2023 found it as dangerous as smoking, "associated with a greater risk of cardiovascular disease, dementia, stroke, depression, anxiety, and premature death" — while upward of 60 percent of Americans feel lonely on a regular basis, surveys have found. So, reach out to those Brothers you have not heard from in a while.

Along with the impact on personal well-being, the trend is dangerous for America itself. A nation that lacks interpersonal relationships is a lower-trust society, more prone to crime and unrest. The loss of friendship is measurable and can be seen in every age group and demographic — although working-class Americans look to be hardest hit.

In 1990, few of us reported having no close friends at all: just 2 percent of the college-educated and 3 percent of high school-only graduates. By 2024, however, according to the Survey Center for American Life, that number grew to 10 percent for those with a college degree and a whopping 26 percent for those without. In 1990, 49 percent of high school grads reported having at least six close friends; now it's just 17 percent. Americans with college degrees experienced a similar but less steep drop.

The reasons aren't clear, but what I can tell you is that Brothers who engage in true social dialog and genuinely care for one another live longer and have strong and growing Divisions. We have to embrace each other and open ourselves to new friendships. When someone asks about our Order how do you describe the friendships that you have made? I can tell you for certain that when a new member joins and he is welcomed as 'Brother' that you will retain him and you will be the richer for it. This article is by no means exhaustive and I hope it gets you to think about who we are as men of faith and as Brothers.



SCAN TO DONATE



Director's report

By Rory Schulte

Honoring the Importance of Leadership

If you've read my articles in past Digests, you've come to understand that I enjoy writing about the importance of service and leadership within the Order. In mid-October, I had the pleasure of joining the rest of the National Board in New Jersey for the Bi-Annual President's Testimonial. The weekend served more of a purpose than just gathering to celebrate our National President. It was an opportunity to meet as a National Team so that we could formulate goals, address issues, and work to try and make the Order better for all of you.

However, the testimonial event is more than just an event to honor President Pender. The underlying themes of the entire weekend aim to address something bigger.

President Pender has spent a significant part of his life working to make the AOH better for all members, but he hasn't just done that as a National Officer. His accomplishments in the AOH need to be a reminder to us all that leadership doesn't just come from the President's position. Whether it be at the Division level or the National Level, we all should be expected to lead in some way.

When we come together for fundraisers, we need to look to members other than officers to take that charge and lead. When we work with our local food banks, we need members who are going to take the reins and lead the project instead of relying on someone in an officer position to step up.

When it's our time as a member to lead, we must take that moment and run with whatever is asked of us.

As much as President Pender or Vice President McNabb would love to be credited with all the successes of the AOH [insert sarcastic emoji face here], they, along with all leaders in the Order, know that the true success of the Order comes from our membership. It's all of you that were spoken very highly of during our business meetings in New Jersey. We talked about your challenges, your successes, and your goals as we move toward 2026. So, keep leading when the opportunity arises so that we can continue to thrive as an organization.

Lastly, it does need to be said – congratulations to President Pender and thank you for all the hard work you've put into the AOH. It truly was an awesome weekend celebrating you and now... we get back to work!



Director's report

By Ryan Curry

As I write to you, my Brothers, we find ourselves quickly approaching the Thanksgiving and Christmas season. This is a perfect time to reflect on the strength and importance of the bonds we share in our Brotherhood. These connections are a true gift — one that each of us has been entrusted to nurture and preserve.

I encourage you to reach out to Brothers who may have drifted away from active participation. A simple phone call or text can make all the difference in bringing them back into the fold. This effort doesn't require an organized initiative — just the personal commitment of each Brother to reconnect.

Before long, the holidays will pass, and we will enter the St. Patrick's season. State, County and Division leadership should already be preparing their plans to grow our Order during this key period. This includes ensuring both physical and online visibility throughout the season. And remember to make use of the marketing materials and resources available from the National level to support your efforts.

We are the preeminent organization in Irish America, and our leadership and example should always reflect that distinction.

The National Hibernian Digest



"Ireland, One and Indivisible. Though the Heavens Fall" HIS EMINENCE, PATRICK CARDINAL O'DONNELL OF IRELAND

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Celebrating Commodore John Barry

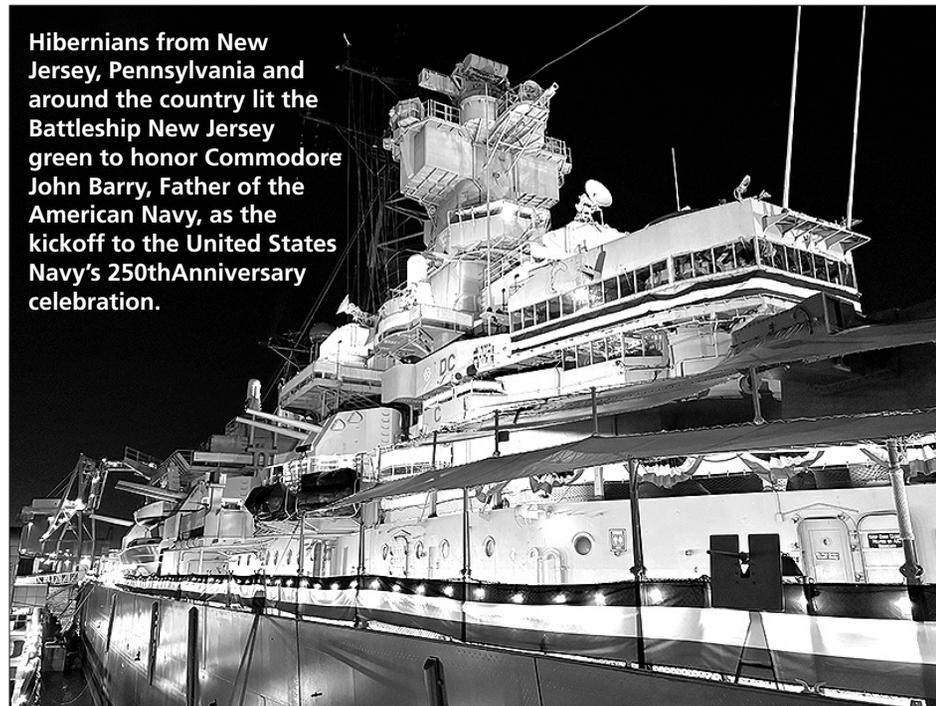
The massive Battleship New Jersey Museum and Memorial glowed Irish green in the Camden night sky as Hibernians from New Jersey, Pennsylvania and around the country gathered to celebrate Commodore John Barry's contribution to the formation of the United States Navy. This celebration was part of the Navy's 250th Anniversary and to open the newly designed Commodore John Barry Museum display, created by the AOH & LAOH, located on the battleship.

Ireland was strongly represented with Irish Ambassador to the United States Geraldine Byrne Nason as the keynote speaker at the reception. She was joined by New York Consul General Gerald Angley, Ireland Lord Mayor Garry Laffen and Wexford City Manager Anthony Bailey. The evening reception on the fantail of the ship had picture perfect weather and a most delightful view of the Philadelphia skyline as the sun was setting over the Delaware river. The ambassador fired one of the ship's cannons to the delight of the guests on the decks. The famous author Tim McGrath spoke about his book on Barry.

The Commodore Barry Museum will be on display on the battleship through the end of this year (possibly beyond). It includes insightful historic information on the Irish born American patriot John Barry. Part of the display includes a multimedia interview with Commodore Barry himself! Find more information on visiting the ship at <https://www.battleshipnewjersey.org/>



Hibernians Kevin Dillon and the Commodore (Ralph Day) joined Ambassador Geraldine Byrne Nason and Ireland's Consul General of New York Gerald Angley onboard the Battleship New Jersey to celebrate the new Commodore John Barry Museum exhibit as part of the United States Navy's 250th Anniversary celebration in Philadelphia and Camden, NJ.



Hibernians from New Jersey, Pennsylvania and around the country lit the Battleship New Jersey green to honor Commodore John Barry, Father of the American Navy, as the kickoff to the United States Navy's 250th Anniversary celebration.



Ireland's New York Consul General Gerald Angley joins LAOH National President Mary Ann Lubinsky, Wexford City Manager Anthony Baily, Lord Mayor Garry Laffen, Irish Ambassador to the United States Geraldine Byrne Nason and Past LAOH President Marilyn Madigan on the fantail of the Battleship New Jersey to celebrate Commodore John Barry's contribution to the formation of the United States Navy on the 250th Anniversary of its founding in 1775.



national archivist report
alan delozier, national archivist

"On Wisconsin!" The AOH & Local History Documentation Through Event Cards – An Example From Milwaukee

The AOH has long sponsored numerous important events, gatherings, soirees and other important spectacles aside from scores of St. Patrick's Day Parades along with the annual National and State Conventions. Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, these assemblies and many others like them have been promoted via the local press and/or to send formal invitation cards via postal mail to an individual mailing address as was the vogue during this era.

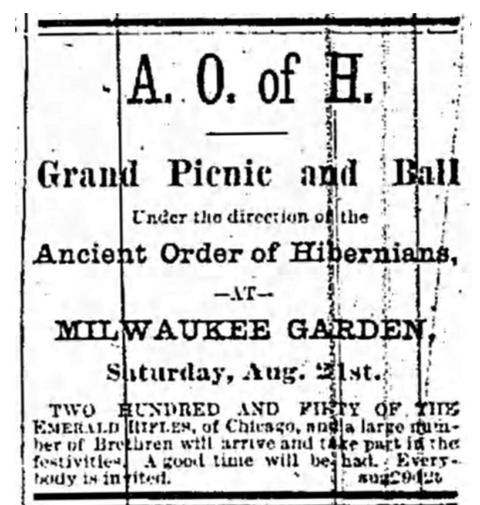
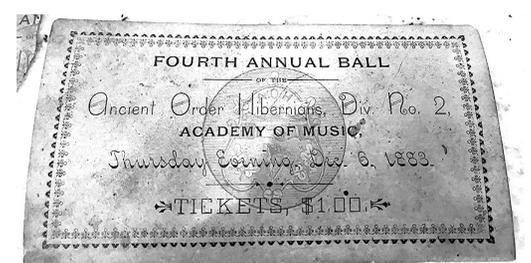
The AOH was no exception in this practice of refined etiquette. Our National President Sean Pender recently came upon a beautiful example of such communication, which can be seen as a complement to this article. This Cotillion, sponsored by the AOH in 1883, will serve not only as one among several examples found within all AOH Divisions across the nation, but it also inspired a look into the Irish experience and legacy of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, around the time of its unveiling.

By way of context and as a lead up to this particular event, the online Encyclopedia of Milwaukee under its heading for those from Éire was summarized in the following manner.... "(the) Irish and Irish-American residents have been an important part of southeastern Wisconsin since the 1830s, creating a distinctive subculture ... with attention to cultural and political concerns in Ireland." The impact of An Gorta Mor and related causes led to an expansive Hibernian influx especially from the regions of Munster and Connacht, where most inhabitants

were mainly Gaelic speakers in large measure accounting for the 14 percent of Irish descendants who lived in what became known as "The Good Land" around this time.

In reference to the AOH and its impact on the Hibernian citizenry, The Catholic Citizen, of Milwaukee, stated within its pages during the early 1900s that the Order "has always had a 'wheel within a wheel.' In most of the cities where it is organized, a faction of its members form a separate and secret society, identical with, or similar to, the Clan-na-Gael; and this faction attempts, more or less, to run the local Division of the Ancient Order of Hibernians."

Otherwise, the invaluable contributions of the Wisconsin Brotherhood have provided a great chapter to the AOH story statewide and nationally overall. More information on the Irish in Milwaukee can be found within The Milwaukee Encyclopedia = <https://emke.uwm.edu/entry/irish/> and via the AOH Milwaukee Division Homepage = <https://aohmilwaukee.com>.





hibernian scholarships

By Bill Sullivan, national chairman

A Note from our 2025 AOH National Board Scholarship recipients

This past spring the AOH National Board awarded three scholarships: one for the 2025 Irish Way Program in Ireland, which is for high school students, and two for college students to study for a semester or more at a college in Ireland. Each of our scholarship recipients recently contacted us and expressed their sincere thanks for receiving this year's awards.

Zoe L. McKay, of New Orleans, was selected as the recipient of the AOH National Board's 2025 Irish Way Scholarship. Zoe, who is now a sophomore at Benjamin Franklin High School in New Orleans, father James McKay and her grandfather Judge Jim McKay are members of the AOH New Orleans Division.

Zoe writes:

"Thanks so much to the AOH for endorsing me and allowing me to go on the trip of a lifetime! I am so grateful that I was able to spend my summer traveling through Ireland and learning about my Irish heritage. Again, thank you so much to the AOH for making this happen" Zoe

Lea McGuigan, of Chelmsford, MA, a junior at Roger Williams University in Rhode Island, received a Study Abroad Scholarship and is studying this fall at University College Dublin. Her dad Sean and grandfather David are members of Division 8 in Lawrence, MA.

Lea writes:

"Thank you so much for selecting me for this scholarship. I am truly grateful beyond words for your generosity. I am committed to making the most of this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and your assistance has brought me one step closer to making this dream a reality. The AOH has assisted me and several generations of my family in many ways and I sincerely thank you for that. With gratitude," Lea

Keira Rheinheimer, of Newton, NJ, a student at Manhattan University in the Bronx, NY, also received one of the AOH National Board's Study Abroad Scholarships. Keira is studying Liberal Arts this fall at Maynooth University. Keira's grandfather, James Sullivan, is a member of Division 1, New York County, NY.

Keira writes:

"Thank you so much to the AOH for the study abroad scholarship! I've been dreaming of studying abroad in Ireland since elementary school and I'm so incredibly grateful and excited for this opportunity. I can't thank the AOH enough for the scholarship to support me in my travels. Thank you and congratulations to all the recipients!" Keira

Interested in finding out more about our scholarship initiatives? Please see our SCHOLARSHIP COLUMN in this month's Hibernian Digest, or the AOH National Website, under Scholarships, which gives detailed information on our different scholarship programs, which are available for AOH members and the children and grandchildren of AOH members. We look forward to hearing from you!

Irish Way & Study Abroad Scholarships

"We are pleased to inform you that you have been selected to receive a scholarship."

This is the type of statement or letter that all students, parents and grandparents like to hear or receive. But you can only receive a scholarship if you apply for it. With 2026 almost at hand, and if you are an AOH member, parent or grandparent of a college student who is thinking of pursuing an education at a college in Ireland, this is the time to investigate studying on the Isle of Saints and Scholars! The AOH National Board offers scholarship opportunities to study for a semester or a full year of study at a college in Ireland. These scholarships are valued at \$1,500 per semester. Please check out the AOH National Board website, which has been recently updated with our scholarship application and other pertinent information on studying in Ireland. All Study Abroad Scholarships are open until they are filled.

For high school students who may want to study in Ireland during the summer, and who are an AOH member, or whose father or grandfather is a member of the AOH, the National Board — in partnership with the Irish American Cultural Institute — offers an opportunity to study in Ireland through the Irish Way Program.

Just what is the Irish Way Program? Established in 1976, the Irish Way is a summer study-abroad program for American high school students. Participants travel to Ireland to take part in a cultural and educational experience under the guidance and direction of the Irish American Cultural Institute Irish Way Coordinator. The dates for the 2026 Irish Way Program have yet to be announced



Zoe McKay

but will be posted on the AOH webpage under Scholarships when they are available. Information on the Irish Way Program, as well as a direct link to the Irish American Cultural Institute Irish Way Program's website and Irish Way application are also posted on the AOH National Board website under Scholarships. AOH.com

In another section of this month's Hibernian Digest there is an article titled: "A Note From our 2025 AOH National Board Scholarship Recipients." We encourage you to take a look at this column about Zoe, Lea or Keira, our 2025 scholarship recipients. Next year you, your son, daughter or grandchild could be highlighted in this column. The common thread each of these individuals had was that they applied for our scholarships and had a connection to the AOH. The experience of studying in Ireland, whether for the summer, a semester or for a full year of study is something that will be with you for the rest of your life and just might shape your future endeavors. Take the initiative and check it out. Who knows, one day one could be an AOH National President!

Best wishes to you and your family for a Happy Thanksgiving, a Merry Christmas, and a Blessed, Happy and Healthy New Year!

Questions? Please feel free to contact me. My email address is: williamjsullivan@verizon.net I look forward to hearing from you.



Keira Rheinheimer



Lea McGuigan



irish-american heritage month

By Neil Cosgrove, national chairman

This March, Irish American Heritage Month meets America's 250th—an obligation for Hibernians to correct the record and claim our place in the nation's founding.

In 1876, as the first Centennial "fixed" the national story, Irish and Irish-Catholic contributions were minimized to fit a tidy Anglo-Protestant narrative. The residue remains. Most Americans know Paul Revere but not Patrick Carr, the Irish immigrant who was among those killed during the Boston Massacre. We call our nation the United States of America, not realizing the name was first coined by Irish Immigrant and Revolutionary War Hero Stephen Moylan. They've heard of early naval heroes but not Commodore John Barry, Washington's choice to help lead the new Navy. Few realize three signers of the Declaration—James Smith, George Taylor, and Matthew Thornton—were Irish-born. And they miss that Washington granted a holiday on March 17, 1780, acknowledging Irish service and the alliance with France.

That erasure will harden if we are passive during the Semiquincentennial. The 250th is generating textbooks, museum exhibits, classroom kits, documentaries, and media explainers that will shape public memory for decades. An organized, factual engagement from a 28,000-member AOH can shape what gets taught, published, and commemorated. This is duty, honor our ancestors with truth and pragmatism, show up with sources and a plan.

What Hibernians Must Do—Now

Secure March proclamations at the state, county, and municipal levels that explicitly reference the 250th and name Dunlap, Thomson, Barry, and the three Irish-born signers. Attach a one-page fact sheet with dates and citations. Make saying "yes" easy.

Place op-eds and letters: one local Revolutionary-era Irish story + one national proof point + one concrete ask (recognition, curriculum inclusion, or event support). Keep it under 700 words.

Use your social media channels: Acknowledge that March is Irish American Heritage Month on your Websites and Social Media channels, and, most importantly, in our conversations. Let's get rid of nonsensical terms like "Green Season"; we are not celebrating a color or the Earth's trip around the sun. We will be doing our annual video and profile series for Irish American Heritage Month. All we ask is that you share it.

Honor local forebears: locate graves, homesites, or battle connections of Irish in your county; place a marker or hold a brief ceremony. Tie memory to place.

This is not nostalgia. It is civic maintenance. Two hundred and fifty years ago, Irish hands set type for the Declaration, recorded the nation's acts, fought its battles, and signed its charter. One hundred and fifty years ago, much of that was written out. This March, Hibernians will write it back in—accurately, visibly, permanently.



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Irish • Catholic • American

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charities & missions

By John Tarpey, national chairman

The Hibernian Charity was formed as an approved IRS Charity, 501 (c) 3, to enable the brothers to donate funds to worthy causes on a nationwide basis. This means that you may be able to deduct your donation on your IRS taxes.

As the Hibernian Digest goes to print, we have begun our annual appeal, with address labels as a thank you for your donations. Please respond. Every little bit helps. The generosity of the brothers is amazing. Our AOH brothers daily demonstrate our motto of Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity.

With this appeal we are asking that if you have not given in the past, please consider donating something this year. There are many news articles daily talking about people in need of basic food.

The board of the Hibernian Charity has just approved \$5,000 to the Catholic Charities Food Drive nationwide. This is new, but demonstrates our promise to the AOH brothers to use their donations to further live our motto of Charity. We can only do that with your generous support. Most recently we added Families in Crisis as a worthy focus of our giving.

So, when our appeal hits your mailbox, please keep in mind that donations over \$50 can specify where you want the focus of your donations to go. Maybe we can help more families.

Many brothers who have a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) have taken advantage of the tax laws to make distributions to Hibernian Charity, since we are a Qualified Charity 501(c)3. #20-199369. Discuss with your tax or financial advisors if unsure.



hibernian hunger project

By Bill Sullivan, national chairman

Have you ever gone to bed hungry? Hopefully not, yet there are people all over our country and the world who do. We cannot solve all the problems of the world, but we can do our part and help the less fortunate in our communities. We know from the history of the Great Hunger that occurred in Ireland from 1845 to 1852 that many innocent people died from starvation. This event in Irish history led to many Irish immigrating to the U.S. and other countries to escape the horrendous conditions in our ancestor's homeland. Had this not occurred many of us today may still be living on the Emerald Isle.

Twenty-two years ago, Past National President Ned McGinley established the Hibernian Hunger Project. He saw the HHP as a means to honor those who had died during the Great Hunger; to educate Irish America and beyond about the An Gorta Mor; to help with the hunger problem in the U.S., and to show the generosity of the AOH membership across the country. Over the past 22 years, many Divisions have stepped up to help the less fortunate in their areas. As 2025 wanes, what has your division done this year to help curb hunger in your community? With the season of goodwill upon us, many members and businesses are more than willing to donate to charitable causes, and so if your division has not done a project during 2025, there is still time to do something and have a Hibernian Hunger Project for your Division. The need is just as great now as it was earlier this year!

The State and National Hibernian Hunger Project (HHP) Committee Chairmen met by Zoom on September 15 and had an informative and productive meeting, exchanging ideas on various activities that have been used in their jurisdictions to combat hunger. By exchanging these ideas, it gives the HHP State Chairmen the opportunity to share these events with brothers in their state. The next HHP meeting is expected to take place in early December.

The AOH National Board this year presented \$17,000 in awards to Divisions who developed Hibernian Hunger Projects for 2024 and is expected to award a similar amount this year. To be eligible for these awards, a division must submit a Hibernian Hunger Application to the AOH National Board Hibernian Hunger Project Committee. To be considered for the Hibernian Hunger Project Awards, all activities must have taken place between January 1 – December 31, 2025, and all reports must be filed by February 15, 2026. An application form for these awards is posted on our national web page.

As you know, all divisions must send in a Form 9 (Certificate of Election) to our National Secretary Ray Lynch by February 15, 2026, as well as a Form 11. I ask each State, County and Division President when filling out their certificate of election, to appoint a Hibernian Hunger Chairman and write the chairman's name on the Form 9. By taking this first step, your division or board will be on its way to helping the AOH live its motto of Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity! Thank you!

My best wishes to you and your families for a wonderful Thanksgiving, a very Merry Christmas and a Blessed, Happy and Healthy 2026!

Questions? Please feel free to contact me. I look forward to hearing from you! My email address is: williamjsullivan@verizon.net God Bless!

Digest Deadlines and Requirements

Content submissions for the issues of the Hibernian Digest must be received by the following deadlines:
January 1, April 1, June 1, August 1, October 1.

Photos should be at least 1 megabyte (MB) large, high resolution, and emailed as email attachments, not embedded in Word documents. A caption must be provided for every photo. Captions should say who is in the photo, what's going on in the picture, where was it taken and when was it taken. Don't send photos that show Hibernians drinking or wearing shirts with profane text; they won't get in.



political education

By Neil Cosgrove, national chairman

Brothers, this has been a bad year for Ireland, and by extension, Irish America on Capital Hill from both sides of the aisle:

Dec 2024 — Signals: Washington let the U.S. Special Envoy to Northern Ireland lapse when Joe Kennedy III's term ended (Dec 13) and created a new, unprecedented U.S. Special Envoy to the United Kingdom, naming Mark Burnett, a former British Paratrooper who served in Northern Ireland. The optics are obvious and unfavorable to even-handed GFA stewardship.

Mar 2025 — The smear. The U.S. Commerce Secretary called Ireland his "favorite tax scam," tying Dublin to tariff talk. Irish officials publicly rejected the claim as inaccurate and harmful to a jobs-rich U.S.-Ireland relationship.

Jun 2025 — Allies act (without being smeared). The UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Norway jointly sanctioned Israeli ministers over West Bank violence; the UK also froze FTA talks with Israel. Later, the UK, Canada, and Australia would recognize Palestine, just as Ireland had previously. No one branded these governments "antisemitic."

Jul 2025 — The stereotype. The U.S. Ambassador to Israel told Ireland to "sober up," asking if Dublin had "fallen into a vat of Guinness" and calling its settlements-import bill "diplomatic intoxication." That's not policy debate; it's a trope. (AOH demanded an apology; we are still waiting)

Aug 7, 2025 — GOP letter to Treasury. Rep. Claudia Tenney led multiple congressional signers in urging Treasury to assess Ireland's bill under IRC §999 (anti-boycott), adding them to a list that currently includes only the most hard-line Arab states.

Sep 19, 2025 — Visas, but not for Ireland. Instead of advancing long-sought E-3 Visas for Ireland, a bill was introduced to give them to South Korea (a country already ineligible for the U.S. Diversity Visa due to high admissions). That is a clear signal of where the Irish and Irish America stand, in black and white.

Oct 6, 2025 — Bipartisan pressure on Dublin. Rep. Josh Gottheimer led a bipartisan letter to the Taoiseach claiming Ireland's proposal would "empower Hamas" and "embolden antisemitism." That conflates a territorial trade measure with bigotry.

Oct. 2025 — British Propaganda With A U.S. Name. Former NSA Robert C. O'Brien wrote the foreword to a British think tanks Policy Exchange's Peak Ireland?, arguing Ireland's ties are under "unprecedented scrutiny" and casting Ireland as again antisemitic, a low-tax outlier out of step on defense/Israel/China—intellectual cover for a harder U.S. line.

What's actually true

Ireland's bill targets settlement goods—not Israel proper. (That distinction is standard in EU practice and allied actions above.) Branding Ireland "antisemitic" is wrong and reckless. Reuters

Ireland's civic record undercuts the slur of antisemitism: Dublin elected Robert Briscoe, a Jewish Lord Mayor, in 1956, years before NYC elected its first Jewish mayor in 1973 and before the U.S. elected its first Catholic president in 1960.

Both parties are treating Ireland as a political piñata: Tenney's GOP Treasury push; Gottheimer's Democratic-led letter; executive-branch rhetoric; and a think-tank narrative to normalize it.

What AOH members should do now

Name the pattern, call out the smear. Condemn antisemitism—and reject these horrific charges as intellectually sloppy use and abuse against Ireland for political point scoring.

Demand dialogue, not sound-biting, from our elected leaders. Show the same courtesy to Ireland as show to other nations when we disagree on policy; don't reach into the bag of stereotypes for a cheap headline.

Demand balance. Re-appoint a robust U.S. NI Special Envoy alongside any UK-focused envoy.

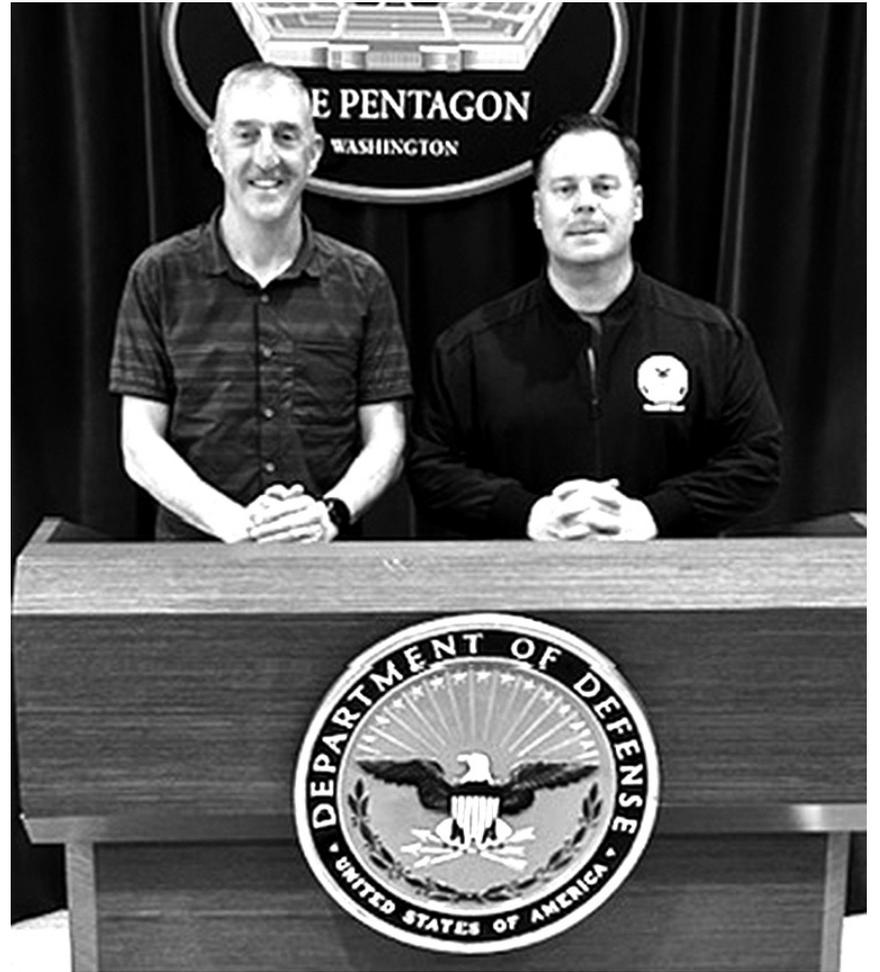
REMIND OUR ELECTED LEADERS IRISH AMERICA IS STILL HERE, WATCHING AND WILL VOTE BASED ON THEIR ACTIONS.

Bottom line: The pressure is real and bipartisan. If we stay silent, the false narrative hardens. Let's answer with facts and action—and remember President Kennedy's warning: "the great enemy of the truth is very often not the lie—deliberate, contrived and dishonest—but the myth—persistent, persuasive and unrealistic."



Make it Your Job to Grow the AOH!

District of Columbia



Colonel Tom McGrath, left, and Hibernian Brendan Cooney were at the Pentagon in mid-August. Tom and his family were visiting the Embassy of Ireland in the United States and Brendan gave him a tour. Tom is the military aide de camp to the President of Ireland.



immigration

By Dan Dennehy, national chairman

As AOH National Immigration Chairman, I have been tasked to identify historical, present and potential Irish Immigration issues and work on ideas to improve matters for Irish immigrants in the future.

Here are the issues:

- Facilitate future Irish immigration, recognizing Ireland's 250-year support for the U.S. and its contributions.
- Provide a path to legalization for the approximately 10,000 undocumented Irish immigrants currently in the U.S.
- Assist returning Irish immigrants facing challenges such as health care access and driving license reciprocity.
- End the U.S. visa denial cycle for descendants of participants in the Irish Conflict and Good Friday Agreement, which has lasted 27 years.
- Create reciprocal arrangements for Americans wishing to live, work or retire in Ireland.

History

After the 1965 U.S. immigration reforms largely excluded Irish immigrants, the Irish Immigration Reform Movement was established in 1987, driven by grassroots advocacy.

Congressman Bruce Morrison's efforts led to the 1990 Immigration Act, reopening pathways for Irish immigration and recognizing all Irish residents equally, aiding the Good Friday Agreement.

The Morrison Visa program established Irish Immigration Centers across the U.S., with New York's Emerald Isle Immigration Center supporting more than 16,000 individuals in securing U.S. citizenship.

What are the trends?

For FY2024, immigration patterns show only one Irish recipient of the diversity visa lottery, highlighting a decline in Irish green card winners.

In FY24, 1,280 Irish nationals secured L visas, 645 H work visas, and 857 F student visas, with J exchange visas totaling 7,355, primarily through the Summer Work Travel program.

Immigration does not stem from joblessness in Ireland but rather from career

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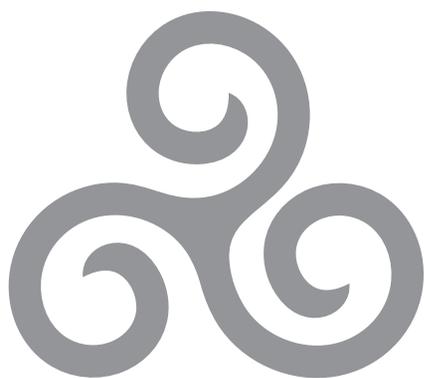
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advancements.

ICE enforcement actions have raised concerns, with at least 56 Irish nationals arrested this year, many facing deportation despite having no criminal records. In New York, the Emerald Isle Immigration Center, founded by leaders of the IIRM mentioned above, has assisted over 16,000 individuals with successful U.S. citizenship applications and continues to offer immigration counseling and services to the Irish Diaspora, as well as to individuals from over 130 other countries who call NYC home.

The Irish government noted a spike in requests for consular assistance from Irish citizens facing deportation, highlighting the urgency of the issue. The Department of Foreign Affairs has reported that 43 Irish individuals sought help with deportation-related matters this year, a dramatic increase compared to previous years. This rise closely aligns with the aggressive deportation policies implemented under the Trump administration, and aims to expel millions of undocumented individuals each year, including an estimated 10,000 Irish citizens living in the U.S.

These developments are raising alarm among the Irish community and policymakers, as the future movement of Irish citizens to the U.S. will likely be impacted by ongoing changes in immigration policy and enforcement practices. Support mechanisms for Irish citizens facing deportation remain crucial as the situation evolves.

In the coming months this chair will be working on a policy paper to address these issues.



veterans affairs

By Patrick Flaherty, national chairman

Greetings, I hope this finds you all well. A great time was had by all at the National President's Testimonial in New Jersey in October. We honored not only National President Sean Pender, but two outstanding advocates for Irish Rights, Mark Thompson and Andree Murphy, both well deserved. I will not discuss the Testimonial any further as I am sure there will be much more in this edition, so on to Veterans information.

One of the major things that I have discussed is the need to reach out to other organizations for assistance and ideas. Other organizations, like the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), the American Legion (AM Leg), Vietnam Veterans Association (VVA) and others have different viewpoints, may have different goals, but we all have a common ground. That is helping or promoting Veterans and the programs that allow Veterans to readjust to civil life and to succeed outside of the military. Sometimes working with groups other than ourselves can be difficult, but the rewards can be powerful. The issue will be convincing our non-Veteran brothers that we can successfully work with those other organizations. I hope that most if not all of our Veteran members are part of a group outside of the AOH. I do not say that to be disloyal to the AOH, but to point out that our records show that of the approximately 27,000 members, only about 4,500 of us are Veterans. We will come back to that point in the next paragraph. The point is that we all need emotional support for our well being and sometimes you can't get that from someone who is not a Veteran and therefore, membership in another organization, which could include a Therapy Group at the VA, is good for our members.

Getting back to the other point, that means we only have 16 percent of our members who identify as Veterans. I find that a surprisingly low number based on the level of service that the Irish as a whole tend to espouse throughout our families and our history. I have a feeling that means that we don't have all of our members registered, so that is something we can work on internally. Using those factors, the chance to work with outside groups will allow us to work on several issues important to the Order simultaneously. The first would be to increase our numbers; it is always surprising to me, how many people say they have never heard of the AOH, so we need to do a better job of selling ourselves. What better way to do that than to reach out to other organizations? The second would be to increase our fundraising. I hear from a lot of Divisions that they only raise money for certain projects; why? Why not raise additional funds and donate to other projects within the AOH, like FFAI or Project St. Patrick? A third reason would be to spread our work and our philosophy to more people; again, that could raise our membership and help the coffers. I am not sure how much of a link we have with other organizations, but we need to try; the more we try, the more we can succeed.



pro life

By Lawrence Squires, national chairman

Dear Brothers in Christ Jesus and St. Patrick,

This fall began my fifth year as National Pro-Life Chairman. During this time, my perception of the Hibernian's position on Pro Life issues has changed radically. I am constantly humbled by the fever, passion and scale that Hibernians across the country display and practice for the Pro-Life cause. Divisions, Counties, States and the National Board are daily sponsoring Masses for the protection of the Unborn, supporting homes for Mothers in Need, praying on the sidewalks in front of abortion clinics, and spreading the Pro-Life message. Every month, we hear from new attendees on the Pro-Life Committee Zoom call and hear about their efforts and accomplishments. If you would like to join the monthly Pro-Life Zoom call, send me an email at lspittcmf@gmail.com and I'll send you the monthly invitations!

During the October Zoom call, I had the pleasure of telling the committee that the AOH will be hosting the TD from Meath West, and founder of the Pro-Life Aontú Party in Ireland, Peadar Tóibín. He was elected as a Sinn Féin candidate in 2011, but resigned from the party on November 15, 2018, primarily due to his opposition to the party's stance on abortion.

Tóibín's most well-known political position is his anti-abortion stance, which ultimately caused his departure from Sinn Féin. Sinn Féin allowed Tóibín to campaign for a No vote during the 2018 Irish referendum on abortion, provided that he would accept the party whip on subsequent votes relating to abortion. However, alongside Carol Nolan, he broke ranks and continued to vote against law reforms regarding to abortion in the Dáil. This led to multiple suspensions and proved to become an untenable situation. Once Tóibín formed Aontú, it was generally agreed that the party was broadly anti-abortion in nature.¹

Peadar will be our keynote speaker at the AOH Breakfast and Mass for the March for Life in Washington, D.C., on Friday, January 23, 2026. Plans are still underway, but breakfast should begin at 9 a.m. at the Irish Channel at 500 H Street Northwest, Washington, DC 20001. Speakers normally begin at 10 a.m. and Mass follows at 11:30 a.m., across the street at Mary Mother of God Parish.

Special thanks to our Worthy National President Sean Pender for working with Peadar to schedule his highly anticipated appearance.

Many thanks and God's blessing to all of our Brother Hibernians and all the Pro-Life activities throughout the year!



catholic action

By Jim Russell, national chairman

Dear Brother Hibernians,

To begin, I would like to thank National President Sean Pender for his trust and confidence by appointing me to his board as National Catholic Action Chairman.

Everyone has a place at church, everyone belongs. This belonging takes place first and foremost in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, where all are most welcome. Our Lord calls us each Sunday to "follow me" by attending mass in our parishes.

Often in life, we have to look for a home. Our parish is that home — that place that impacts people's lives and gives them a sense of belonging.

In a parish, we receive the Body and the Blood of Christ.

In a parish, we listen to the Word of God being proclaimed.

In a parish, we give praise to Almighty God by the gift of music.

It was St. Augustine who said, "singing is praying twice."

In a parish, we find forgiveness, communal support, and ways to give life to our faith.

The Parish is a living, breathing organism because it is God Himself who interacts with his people.

There's a line in the poem Hound of Heaven by Francis Thompson that says, "As we run away from God, God runs after us." This always shocks us, the idea that God thirsts for us; that God hungers for us, that even though God doesn't need us, God runs after us.

God does love you and wants to be part of your life. My hope and prayer for you is that you will experience a Blessed encounter with the Lord. Never forget this: God Wants You, God thirsts for You, God hungers for You!

May we be like the Good Shepard welcome the stranger among us home! May Our Lady of Knock, Queen of Ireland pray for us now and forever!



project st. patrick

By Kevin Delaney, national chairman

We are well along with the Project Saint Patrick grant process for 2025. The introductory letter from the Project Saint Patrick chairs has gone out to the Vocation Directors across the country and they will forward the grant application to their Seminarians in need of a grant. The Vocation Directors will complete a letter of recommendation for each grant application they receive from their students, and both the letter and grant application will be forwarded to the Project Saint Patrick chairs. The Chairs will review the documentation packages with the National AOH President and the LAOH National President and finalize the list of grant recipients. The goal is to have the award letter and grants mailed to the grant recipients by the middle of December.



SCAN TO DONATE

Donations to Project Saint Patrick are still coming in from individuals, Divisions, County Boards and State Boards. It's not too late to contribute to the 2025 Appeal but time is running out, so please contribute today! The QR code above will allow an individual to easily donate to Project Saint Patrick by following the directions on the screen. All donations are greatly appreciated regardless of the size of the donation.

One of the goals for the Project Saint Patrick program for 2026 will be to continue increasing the engagement and participation of our members. The Project Saint Patrick program does great work, but if we build on our momentum, we'll have more participation from our membership, and the program can be expanded to increase the amount of grants we can award.

The next Project Saint Patrick Zoom call will be in Q1 in 2026. The State chairs are automatically sent the Zoom call link. The discussions on the call are informative, engaging and meaningful. I encourage the State chairs who haven't had the opportunity to join us on a call, to please join the next call. Chairs at the Division level and County level are also welcome to join. Please email me at kdelaneypsp@yahoo.com if you'd like to receive the link for the next scheduled Zoom call.

Since this issue of the Digest is for the months of October, November and December, please have a Blessed Thanksgiving, a Merry Christmas and a Happy, Holy and Healthy New Year. Please remember to always pray for our Church leaders, our nation's leaders, and for each other.



rituals & degrees

By Jack Schneider, national chairman

I would like to congratulate Brother Jeff Nisler of the Tara Court Major Degree Team upon his receiving the honor of National Life Member within the Order at our recently convened National Board Meeting in Hamilton, NJ. Jeff serves as Team Chairman of the storied Tara Court Team out of Suffolk County, NY. He also imparts his considerable technical skills to the Order at the National level with development and management of information databases. Jeff now joins the ranks of several other Life Members who are Major Degree Team members bringing the Lessons of the Order to the membership. Jeff also participated as a member of the Major Degree "All-Star Team" who exemplified the Major Degree at the 2024 National Convention in Orlando.

Speaking of which, it is hard to believe we are only now about eight months away from the 2026 National Convention in Omaha, NE. In terms of putting forth a Major Degree Exemplification in Omaha, we are faced with some logistical hurdles in that none of our nine Certified Major Degree Teams are headquartered within 800 miles of Omaha. This was discussed at our recent National Board Meeting and given the success of using the "All-Star Team" concept at the Orlando convention, the consensus at this juncture is to move forward with that concept once again in Omaha. If any of our Major Degree Team members would like to possibly participate in the 2026 National Convention Major Degree exemplification, please contact me. We will have to figure out how to get the necessary uniforms, equipment and props to Omaha to properly exemplify the Degree ceremony, so if anyone has any suggestions along these lines, please offer them up.

Our State Convention Major Degree Program for this year continued along quite successfully with three more Major Degrees held at the South Carolina, North Carolina and Florida State Conventions. Also, the annual New York County Major Degree exemplification was held on October 25 at the Archbishop Hughes Center.

As is our custom at this time of year, we recall the memory of all Major Degree Team Members who may have passed within the last year and sincerely thank them for their invaluable service to the order in performance of our rituals.

I extend to all of you and your families, best wishes for a most Happy Thanksgiving, Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Slainte!

HIBERNIANS

We are excited to announce the upcoming Snowbird Socials for the season! These events are designed to bring together our community, offering a wonderful chance to reconnect and celebrate our shared heritage.

IRISH CATHOLIC AMERICAN SNOWBIRD SOCIALS

YES, THIS YEAR THERE WILL BE 2 SNOWBIRD SOCIALS

**The Original at Tim Finnegans, Delray Beach
And a New One for Our Gulf Coast Brothers
At McGregors, Fort Meyers**

Join fellow Hibernians for an afternoon of fun, food and music

This will be a great opportunity to stay in touch with the AOH during the winter and meet fellow Hibernians who winter in Florida as well as our Florida brothers and sisters from the LAOH. There will be a guest speaker and live music at both venues

**All are welcome including Hibernians,
LAOH, friends and prospective members.**

Hot lunch with one drink \$35.00 Gratuities extra
Reservations required

DELRAY BEACH

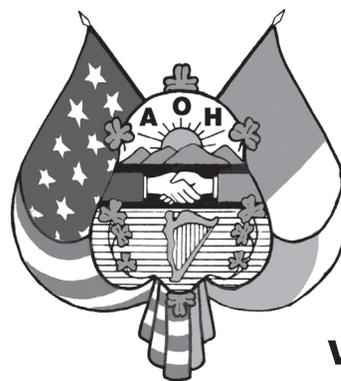
Tim Finnegans, Feb 26, noon-3pm
Hosted by Div. 2 Palm Beach County
Contact Tim Myles Timtam614@aol.com or 516-660-7456
Mark Donovan mfdonovan@msn.com or 631-834-4215

FORT MYERS

McGregors Pub, Feb 19, Noon-3pm
Hosted by Div 1. Lee Co. • Contact Steve McPhillips
naohmpadraig@gmail.com 619-817-5665

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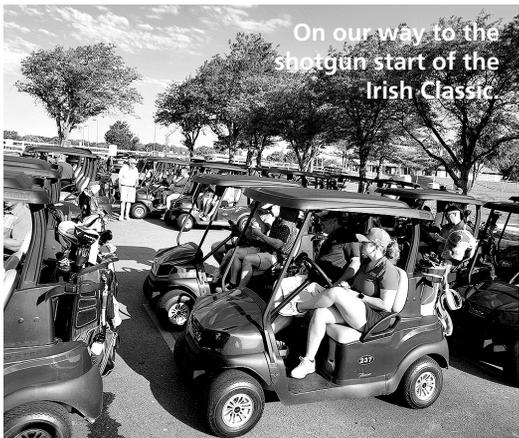
Missouri



The Lord shined on us with this stunning day and wonderful shot at the beginning of the tournament.

Golf Classic

The Padraig Pearse Division 1 conducted the annual Irish Golf Classic in June to fund our Catholic high school scholarships and other local charities in the Kansas City area. The event was a fun day of golf with fantastic weather and an early start. The round was followed by a fun auction and lunch enjoyed by all. — Submission from Joe Flanagan, Padraig Pearse Division 1 Kansas City, Missouri.



Ed O'Connor, left, and his team were big winners and big supporters of the tournament.

The Crystal Cup

The Padraig Pearse Division celebrated the 25th annual Crystal Cup Football Game on Sept. 26 at St. Pius X High School in Kansas City. The game between the St. Pius Warriors and the St. Michael the Archangel Guardians. The cup was yet again kept by St. Pius this year in a spirited match with both teams off on successful campaigns so far. Cash donations to both Athletic Booster Clubs were made by the division to assist in filling the gaps to support the teams. — Submission from Joe Flanagan, Padraig Pearse Division 1 Kansas City, Missouri.



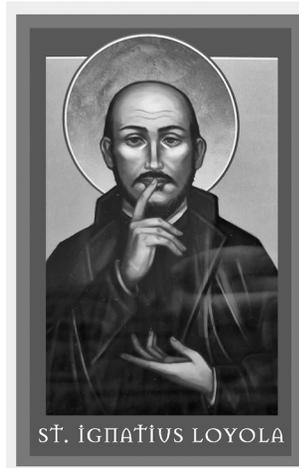
Some of the brothers gathered for a Kansas City Tailgate before the Crystal Cup contest.



Silent Retreat

Multiple AOH Division members attended the St. Ignatius silent retreat September 2025 in St. Louis, Missouri. Brothers came from all over to silent the distractions of our everyday lives and tune into God and our Catholic Faith. From left, back row, Dennis Beckman, Tom Price, Bob Gonzalez, Kevin Flynn, Joe McGettigan; front row, from left, James Dugdale, Chris Burgoyne, Fr. Dan Dayly, Bill O'Neill and James O'Donnell.

— Joe McGettigan,
Cardinal Glennon
Division 2



WHY SILENCE?

There's a reason that the prophets always went into the desert to find clarity and talk to God. You see, silence -true interior silence-is actually how we encounter the divine; and thus it's actually how we encounter our real selves, allowing us to determine and follow the truths that Jive within us.

Of course, there is a difference between exterior silence and interior silence-interior silence cannot happen without first learning to become comfortable in exterior silence. And while moments of exterior silence might be rare in our usual lives, it does occur at White House Retreat, but only if all retreatants cooperate. So .. "Please give each other the gift of silence".

New Hampshire



Hooley on the Lake

On August 16, on beautiful Lake Winnepesaukee in Alton, NH, Manchester Division 1 William J Shanahan member Tom Hayes and his wife, Tanya, hosted the second annual summer hooley for New Hampshire's AOH LAOH members, families and friends. Marty Quirk, NH's balladeer, entertained the attendees with traditional Irish songs. Many swam and took boat rides and engaged in amiable conversations. A great time was indeed had by all. Many thanks to Tom and Tanya Hayes for sharing their home, food and friendship. From left, Warren Hayes, Tom Hayes and Jim Murphy.

California



Halfway to St. Patrick's Day!

The Easter Rising Division 1, Ventura, California, hosted its annual Halfway to St. Patrick's Day celebration on September 13. The evening featured outstanding performances by the Claddagh School of Irish Dancing and the Foggy Dew Irish Band, led by Willie Quinn of Kildare, joined by his daughters, Brigid and Aoife, along with Sean Pierce from Dublin. Guests enjoyed a lively night of music, dance, delicious food and good cheer. The Division, founded in 2015 by Bill Ferguson Sr., is celebrating its 10th anniversary this year, alongside Los Angeles Division 1, which is marking its 150th anniversary.

Project Saint Patrick Mass/Prayer Cards

Project Saint Patrick cards are available by sending your request to:

Kevin J. Delaney, National Chairman
 AOH Project St. Patrick
 2532 Wood Ave, Bristol, PA 19007
 kdelaneypsp@yahoo.com



Long Beach and Los Angeles Hibernians were both on hand to show support at the grand opening of California Irish Arts Center on August 30. From left, Bob Moran, Division 1, Los Angeles; Sean Murphee, Long Beach; Liam Fountain, Division 1, Los Angeles; Jesse Moynihan, Long Beach; and Jimmy Welsh, Division 1, Los Angeles.



California Hibernians were on hand for the Mass for Immigrants at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Angels on September 21. From left, Division 1 Los Angeles Vice President Kris Maines, California AOH State President Jay Hart, and Division 1 Los Angeles Recording Secretary Sean Donahue.

Colorado

In honor of his father



Superintendent Andrew Watters presented Centenary medals and certificates at the Drogheda Garda Station to Hibernian Patrick Maguire — the son of Garda Michael Maguire, who passed away on January 17, 2000 — in recognition of his father's service in An Garda Siochana. Michael Maguire was one of the first members of An Garda Siochana, joining on November 18, 1922. He was born in Kinawley, County Fermanagh, and served for 41 years. Patrick is the Colorado AOH State Board President and is very proud of his Irish heritage and also the history of his father in An Garda Siochana. His father last served in Drogheda Station, and it was a very proud moment for his family to return to Drogheda to receive this medal.



Halfway!

Colorado AOH State Board officers were getting ready to lead the Leadville, Colorado, parade, which took place on September 13. From left, Brothers Mike Sheridan with the American flag, holding the Colorado State Banner are State President Patrick Maguire and State Recording Secretary John Aylward, and carrying the Irish flag is Quintin Sheridan.

Connecticut



New CT State Board installed

Connecticut had its State Convention this past weekend and Director Tom Lambert asked if I would send this to you for the Digest. I also sent this picture to Frank Kearney as well so you might see it from him also. From left, VP Peter Greene, President David Albright, Secretary Tom Keane, Treasurer Brenden Walsh, and National Director Tom Lambert.

Illinois



New State Officers

The new Illinois State Board was sworn in at the September Convention. From left, Patrick Ryan, National Director; Mike Tiernan, Treasurer, St. Clair County Division 1; John Moriarty, Secretary, Chicago Division 32; Dennis McNamara, President, Peoria Division 1; Tim Noonan, Vice President, Chicago Division 59; and Dann Haney, Immediate Past President, Peoria Division 1. — Mike Tiernan

Minnesota

Minnesota Divisions honor Archbishop Ireland

Born in 1838 in Kilkenny, Ireland, John Ireland would grow up to become a priest, emigrate to the United States, and settle in Minnesota where he would become the first Archbishop in Minnesota. One of his boyhood teachers in Kilkenny, Dennis Doyle, would also emigrate to the United States and settle in southern Minnesota. Doyle found an area that resembled Ireland's green rolling hills where he settled and in 1883 started a town that he called Kilkenny after his home in Ireland. He became the town's first mayor.

Archbishop John Ireland accomplished many things in Minnesota. He served as chaplain for the Minnesota Volunteer Infantry in the Civil War and was an advocate for racial justice. As Archbishop, he was a leader who started the University of St. Thomas and the St. Paul Seminary. He encouraged and assisted the immigration of many Irish to Minnesota. He raised the funds for and oversaw the construction of the great St Paul Cathedral.

Because of their connections through Archbishop Ireland and Dennis Doyle, the cities of Kilkenny, Ireland, and Kilkenny, Minnesota, became "Sister Cities" in 2013. On a fine day this September the mayors of Kilkenny, Ireland and Kilkenny, Minnesota came together to honor the memory of Archbishop John Ireland by laying a wreath at his gravesite in St Paul. They were joined by members of the St Paul AOH Division which is named after Archbishop Ireland and the Shamrock Division of Southern Minnesota (which has members from Kilkenny, Minnesota). Our present St Paul Archbishop, Archbishop Bernard Hebda also attended and spoke of this respect of Archbishop Ireland. Following the ceremony, a guided tour of the St Paul Cathedral was provided for the attendees.

Information of the Shamrock Division in Southern Minnesota can be found at our website: hibernianshamrock.com and on Facebook @hibernianshamrock.

— Tim Halloran



Hibernians, clergy and Kilkenny mayors honored the memory of Archbishop John Ireland at a wreath-laying ceremony at his gravesite in St Paul, Minnesota.

Tennessee



Sons of Erin Division attends Irish History & Music event in Nashville

Officers from the Sons of Erin Division proudly attended a special event and concert dedicated to exploring and preserving the history of the Irish in Nashville on Sunday, August 24.

The program featured two local musicians who performed a collection of Irish songs centered on themes of emigration, hardship and the immigrant experience in the United States. Through music, attendees were reminded of the resilience and contributions of the Irish community in Middle Tennessee and beyond.

“This event is important because so much of the Irish story in Nashville has faded from memory,” said Kevin Philbin, Division President. “It is up to us, as Irish-Americans, to keep our history alive and ensure that future generations understand the sacrifices and influence of those who came before us.”

While Nashville is home to historic names such as McGavock, Briley, Donelson and former President Andrew Jackson — figures well known in local history — the contributions of Irish immigrants are less widely remembered. Towns like McEwen and Erin, founded by Irish settlers who built railroads and established enduring communities, remain vital reminders of this legacy and continue to celebrate their Irish roots to this day.

The event also highlighted the complex history of Irish soldiers during the Civil War, when many found themselves divided by circumstance. “Explaining why Irish countrymen fought on opposing sides is difficult especially when viewed through the lens of 2025.”



Wisconsin

Milwaukee: a Busy Summer and Autumn



Late summer through mid-autumn is a busy time for the Rev. William J. Kelly, S.J. Division.

Each August, the Milwaukee Irish Fest presents a perfect opportunity for us to celebrate with brothers and showcase the AOH to attendees. We host a hospitality area and a recruitment table each year. We enjoyed visiting with brothers from other divisions, including Past National Director Sean O’Dowd. Each year, our division ushers the Sunday mass at the festival grounds. The heavy rains throughout the weekend dampened attendance, causing a financial loss for us. However, it will not weaken our resolve. We’ll be back at the Milwaukee lakefront for the 2026 Irish Fest, and look forward to seeing many of you there. We’ll remind you next year so you can join us.

Taste of Ireland

Next, we’re in our final preparations for the October 16 Taste of Ireland. This is a fantastic evening of food, fun and fraternity. With entertainment provided by musicians and an Irish dance troupe, local Irish restaurants compete for the coveted bragging rights of being named the judges’ favorite or the people’s choice. More importantly, this event has been our primary fundraiser for donations provided to three Catholic schools in Milwaukee. Through the 2024 Taste of Ireland, we awarded \$30,000 to the schools. We couldn’t do this without our volunteers, sponsors, auction donors, attendees and Milwaukee’s Pabst Theatre Group, which provides the historic Turner Hall venue at a generous rate. Although you’ve missed the 2025 event, plan ahead to autumn 2026 for the next Taste of Ireland. We’ll share updates on our 2026 events in future digests.

Sad loss

We received sad news that Milwaukee’s Irish Cultural and Heritage Center is closing. The costs of maintenance and upkeep have grown too high for the owners to sustain, forcing the sale of the National Historic Registry venue. The ICHC has been our meeting home for many years, where we celebrated the Easter Rising mass, and is a popular destination for St. Patrick’s Day celebrations. Not always the ICHC, the building opened in 1887 as the Grand Avenue Congregational Church. In 1957, it hosted Dr. Martin Luther King’s first speech in Milwaukee. About 30 years ago, it became the ICHC home, and it contributed greatly in promoting Irish-American culture and heritage through its programs and a lending library. We hosted our final meeting there on October 8.

Our important role

It is a tragedy whenever we lose institutions that bridge our connection to our shared heritage and immigrant past. Today, it is harder for any historic venue to compete for funds against other causes and entertainment options. The loss of the ICHC reminds us of the importance that AOH divisions play in preservation. First, we need to do what we can as divisions to support our local groups as best as we can to sustain their operations. Secondly, it is critical to grow our membership, particularly with younger generations of men, so they can continue to foster an appreciation of Irish culture and heritage after we’re gone.



freedom for all ireland

By martin galvin, national chairman

Cautious Welcome for Legacy Agreement

The Legacy Agreement between the British and Irish governments marks a victory for victims' relatives, who defeated the Tory Legacy Act in the Court of Appeals and discredited the Independent Commission for Reconciliation & Information Recovery (ICRIR) by refusing to participate. The Irish government, too, deserves credit for taking Britain to the European Court and getting terms with the potential to give justice. Those who understand the past will welcome the agreement with caution, to see whether new laws are applied in a spirit that finally gives truth to families after decades of bad faith and injustice.

The inspiration behind this 50-year legacy battle has always been victims' relatives, who would not accept being denied the truth about murdered loved ones. All families are equally entitled to justice, but the injustice cut deeper when state agencies with a duty to uphold justice collaborate in murder cover-ups because the victims were murdered by British state forces or state agents.

When Paras murdered a Catholic priest, a grandmother and eight others at Ballymurphy or 14 civil rights marchers on Bloody Sunday, heroic family and friends overcame decades of denials and delays to get vindication at the Saville Inquiry, then a Ballymurphy Inquest.

When Britain shifted tactics, using state agents to direct loyalist murders, they left behind families like those of Pat Finucane or Sean Brown, who want public inquiries to uncover the extent of crown collusion in the murder of their loved ones.

Families took their fight to the European and local courts, inquests, civil actions and the Ombudsman. Truth was slowly emerging.

British officials took away inquests and ombudsman reports, attempted an Amnesty with British troopers in mind, and sidelined solicitors and human

rights groups by funneling everything into an ICRIR Commission to put a lid on damning revelations.

'Special protections'?

Today, obvious questions must be posed.

United Kingdom Prime Minister Keir Starmer has referenced "special protections" for former British troopers, and the proposed statute requires investigations be "balanced" and "proportionate." Will "special protections" become a thinly disguised amnesty for troopers who committed murder, or an excuse to block genuine investigations because of prior participation in sham investigations? Will "balanced" and "proportionate" mean limiting investigations into crown force killings to balance them in proportion to investigations of Republicans?

British officials have employed a "Neither Confirm Nor Deny" (NCND) policy, which amounts to a blanket national security veto suppressing disclosure of crucial information about the role of paid British agents in Troubles killings. Hilary Benn has even taken cases involving the murders of Paul Thompson and Sean Brown to the London Supreme Court. The Coroner in the Brown case issued a gist simply acknowledging that intelligence reports linked multiple British agents in the murder, while the Coroner in the Thompson case was blocked from issuing even a gist approved by Chief Constable Jon Butcher. Will the new disclosure regime mean that families are no longer denied such crucial information about collusion?

One reason for the lack of trust in the ICRIR were objections about staffing by former senior RUC members. Families believe collusion went far higher than local RUC level. Will new statutory conflict of interest standards and the requirement that Hilary Benn confer with an advisory panel before making appointments insure that families can trust the impartiality of investigators and staff?

We give the Joint Legacy Framework a cautious welcome. It does have the potential to at last give the truth to grieving families.

However, it would be foolish to take British good faith for granted. The AOH stands behind these victims' families as they wait to see the final version of British legislation and, crucially, to test whether new laws are applied in a spirit that finally gives them truth, after so much bad faith and injustice.

Christmas Appeal

A chairde,

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer has shown that it makes little difference which English political party rules the six counties. The Good Friday Agreement may say it is for the people of Ireland alone to exercise their right of national self-determination "without external impediment." However, the British ignore all signs of nationalist advances that should mandate a border poll. British officials say a vote on Irish reunification "is not even on the horizon." Their opposition, Nigel Farage and the Reform Party, want to change the agreement and even withdraw from the European Convention on Human Rights.

On legacy, Labour promised to "repeal and replace" the law designed by the Conservatives to take away legal mechanisms that gave truth to victims' families. Now they not only retain the Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery (ICRIR) commission set up by the Tories to bury the truth but are dragging families like Sean Brown's to the London Supreme Court, rather than accept Belfast Court of Appeals judgements, striking down the ICRIR. This is heartbreaking for families who have fought for decades to get justice for loved ones murdered by crown agents.

The British government continues austerity policies that are a disaster for the north. They broke a longstanding pledge on funding for Casement Park Gaelic Athletic Association stadium in Belfast. They block Irish language initiatives.

Last April, Hibernians joined a special live webinar broadcast from the Houben Centre, Holy Cross Church, in Belfast, where 19 grant recipients spoke about their work for freedom for all Ireland, and how much they count on Christmas Appeal donations.

Grants were awarded to justice campaigners like Relatives for Justice, Ballymurphy Massacre Committee, Bloody Sunday Trust and the Witness Project; groups helping ex-prisoners or bereaved like EALU and Green Cross; heritage groups like the Bogside Artists, St. Patrick Centre, Martin McGuinness Foundation and Duchas Oriall; groups keeping patriot graves like Belfast National Graves and Tyrone National Graves; cross-community groups like the Houben Peace Centre Project, Bridges Beyond Boxing and Ardoyne Youth Club; commemorative groups like the O'Neill-Allsopp Flute Band, Greater New Lodge Committee, and Eileen Hickey Irish Republican Museum; and Ireland's Future, working for a vote to unite Ireland under the terms of the Good Friday Agreement.

These groups are appealing to the AOH. Because the British want to close down work for freedom for all Ireland, these grant recipients desperately need us to come through for them! We cannot let down those working for freedom for all Ireland, at a time when their work is needed most.

I am personally appealing to every State, County and Division President, to take a lead, find a way to donate through special fundraising or donations from funds. Don't let them down! Help make Freedom for all Ireland not an aspiration or endeavor but the reality for those Irish people still denied it!

Please make your check payable to AOH – FFAI and send to:

AOH – FFAI • PO Box 904 • Jefferson Valley, New York • 10535

Thank you, Martin Galvin, FFAI Chairman



National Legal Counsel Chris Thompson, left, and his wife Melinda, were presented with Freedom For All Ireland contribution awards by Dr. Sean MacBride Humanitarian Award recipients Andree Murphy and Mark Thompson, with Relatives For Justice.

Criteria for FFAI Financial Support

The FFAI Christmas Appeal enables the AOH to provide financial help to groups that assist in our goal of achieving complete and absolute independence, peace, and unity for all Ireland. The defined categories of Hibernian support include (a) support for former Republican political prisoners, (b) truth and justice groups, (c) cross-community and local community groups, (d) Irish culture, heritage and language, (e) preserving Irish Republican history, and (f) cross-border groups, forums and initiatives. Groups requesting financial support from the FFAI Christmas Appeal, must submit an application that describes how their activities promote freedom for all Ireland.

Groups that received FFAI Christmas Appeal support for 2025:

Bloody Sunday Trust - Operates the Museum of Free Derry and aids Bloody Sunday campaign.

Bogside Artists - do political murals in Derry's Bogside, "The People's Gallery."

Ballymurphy Massacre Campaign - campaigns for justice for the victims of the Ballymurphy Massacre.

Duchas Oriall - Armagh/Dundalk - Promoting cross-border and heritage projects in South Armagh-North Louth.

Holy Cross Ardoyne Trust in North Belfast - Cross-community Centre on Crum-

continued on page 17



Past National Secretary Jere Cole and Past National President Brendan Moore.



Group of Hibernians gathered to pray the Rosary on Division grounds.

A Forward-Looking Testimonial Weekend

continued from page 1

There are countless reasons one might choose not to attend church; however, it may be beneficial to focus on a single compelling reason to participate in communal worship and spiritual growth. Honor your heritage, and respect those that came before you and the sacrifices they made.

Project Children

Recently, I had the opportunity to represent the Ancient Order of Hibernians at the 50th anniversary celebration of Project Children in County Monaghan. The County Monaghan Peace Museum now displays artifacts related to this remarkable initiative. It was a privilege to participate in the event and to acknowledge Dennis Mulcahy, a dedicated AOH member and founder of the project. Dennis's leadership inspired numerous ordinary individuals to realize that they could positively impact a child's life by hosting them during the summer, providing a safe environment away from the conflicts that affected the North during that tumultuous period.

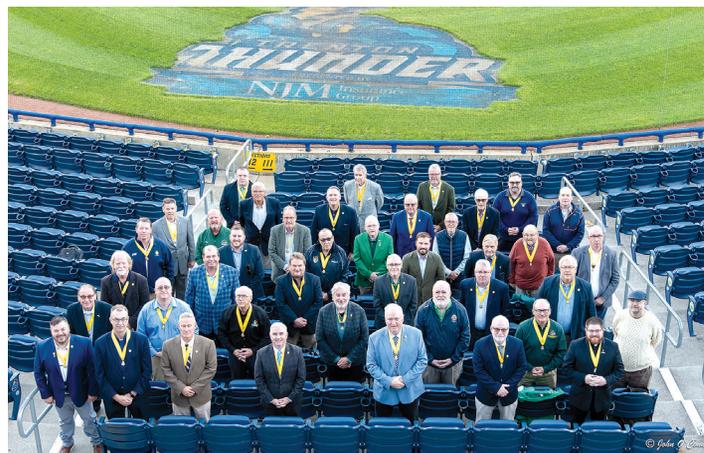
Many of these volunteers, including cooks, teachers, law enforcement officers and tradespeople, returned to Monaghan to join the celebrations. They met the children they once hosted, who are now adults, exemplifying the enduring impact of community-driven efforts. This experience underscored the profound influence that committed individuals can have when they prioritize the well-being of others.

Relatives for Justice

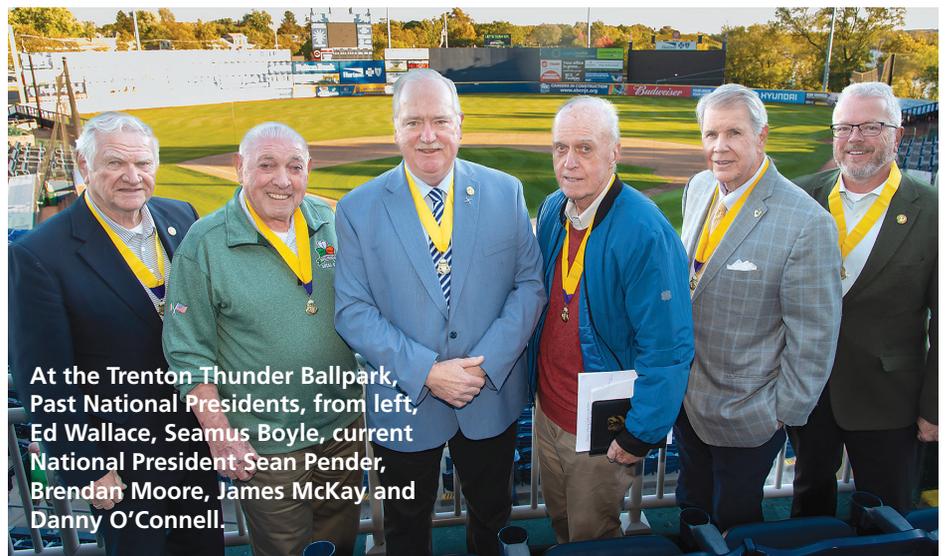
Similarly, the spirit of service and advocacy is exemplified by organizations such as Relatives for Justice (RFJ). Clara Reilly, a distinguished recipient of the MacBride Award, exemplifies this ethos. As a mother and healthcare professional, she dedicated herself to defending human rights and was instrumental in establishing RFJ, an organization highly regarded for its commitment to justice. Her efforts reflect the importance of standing up for what is right and advocating for societal change. It is work that Mark Thompson and Andree Murphy, our 2025 Sean MacBride Humanitarian Award recipients, continue today. In contemporary society, there is a pressing need for more individuals who prioritize empathy, respect and understanding, even in the face of disagreement. Promoting these values is essential for fostering a more inclusive and compassionate community.



Sandra Riley Swift flanked by Past National President Danny O'Connell and National Secretary Ray Lynch.



The AOH National Board of officers, chairmen and past national presidents after our business meetings on October 17 at the Trenton Thunder Ballpark.



At the Trenton Thunder Ballpark, Past National Presidents, from left, Ed Wallace, Seamus Boyle, current National President Sean Pender, Brendan Moore, James McKay and Danny O'Connell.



Fr. Colm at Shrine led the Rosary.



National AOH Deputy FFAI Chairman Bob Bollbach, left, Sean MacBride Award recipients Andree Murphy and Mark Thompson, and Albany County (NY) President Dolores Desch.



Irish Consul General of NY Gerald Angley, center, attended the President's Testimonial, flanked here by Past National President Jim McKay, left, and PNP Danny O'Connell



National Chaplain Fr. Martin celebrated Mass for Hibernians on October 18.



ABOVE
From left, Chaplain Fr. Martin, Deputy Chaplain Fr. Colm, Consul General Gerald Angley, MacBride Award recipients Andree Murphy and Mark Thompson, LAOH National President Mary Ann Lubinsky, and National AOH President Sean Pender.

LEFT
President Sean Pender with Irish Consul General of NY Gerald Angley.

Christmas Appeal

continued from page 15

lin Road. Support enables the group to continue the essential cross-community work, reconciliation and the improvement of community relations within North Belfast through the Houben Centre Development Project.

National Graves Association in Belfast - Support for the upkeep of Belfast Republican graves and memorials.

EALU-East Tyrone-Republican Ex-Prisoners group assisting in the needs of ex-prisoners and their families.

Relatives for Justice in Belfast - Supports victims of State violence and collusion within a safe environment. Engage courts, request investigation, create awareness and provide information. They lobby Congress with AOH support.

St. Patrick Centre - Located in County Down, near Saint Patrick's final resting place, this cross-community center is the only permanent exhibition in the world celebrating the life and relevance today of Ireland's Patron Saint.

Green Cross in Belfast - Provides financial help and material assistance to bereaved families of the Troubles.

Greater New Lodge Republican Commemoration Committee - Provides support for Republican ex-prisoners and maintains memorials in the New Lodge area of Belfast.

Bridges Beyond Boxing - Cross-community boxing club in Belfast.

Tyrone National Graves - Maintains Republican memorials and patriot graves in Tyrone.

Witness Project - Film project to research, document and preserve personal narratives of events during the Troubles.

Ardoyne Youth Club - offers targeted youth facilities and programs benefitting the young people in the Ardoyne community.

O'Neill & Allsopp Memorial Flute Band - from Greater New Lodge Belfast, teaching young people Republican history through the playing and learning of music.

Martin McGuinness Foundation - preserving the legacy of Martin McGuinness.

Ireland's Future - working to achieve a successful vote for the reunification of Ireland.

Eileen Hickey Irish Republican Museum - Located in Conway Mill, the museum preserves and promotes the history of the Republican Struggle for Irish Freedom.



At the banquet, National Director Ed Dougherty and Past National President Seamus Boyle were presented with FFAI Awards by MacBride Humanitarian Award recipients Andree Murphy, left, Mark Thompson, right, with Relatives For Justice.



From left, Andree Murphy, Relatives For Justice; FFAI Award recipients NY State FFAI Chairman Patrick Miller, NY State President Tom Beirne, and NY State Vice President Kevin O'Reilly; and Mark Thompson, Relatives For Justice.



At left, National Director Rory Schulte, from Montana, and National Veterans Chairman Patrick Flaherty, far right, were presented with their FFAI Awards by MacBride Humanitarian Award recipients Andree Murphy and Mark Thompson.

MacBride Award recipients Andree Murphy and Mark Thompson presented an FFAI Award to Denny Parks, center, from Ohio.





Dear AOH Brothers,

Christmas is a joyous season for reflecting on the birth of **Our Lord and Savior** and the blessings we have received throughout the year. It is also a time to share these blessings with those around us while we step back from the stresses of life and enjoy time with our family and friends.

May the **Peace of this Season**, the **Beauty of Hope**, the **Spirit of Love**, and the **Comfort of Faith** fill your home with joyfulness this Christmas and guide you throughout the coming New Year.

On behalf of your **AOH National Board**

Sean Pender, Liam M McNabb, Raymond P Lynch, and Daniel P Devinney,

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Nollaig Shona agus Athbhliain faoi Mhaise Dhuit.



Indiana



Delegates from County Donegal and members of the Kevin Barry Division 3.

Donegal welcomes delegation from Indianapolis

By Kevin Charles Murray

Donegal County Council was delighted to welcome a distinguished delegation from Indianapolis to the Donegal Town Public Services Centre on June 20. The visit marks a growing relationship between Donegal and Indiana, following the recent launch of direct flights between Dublin and Indianapolis in early May.

The delegation was received by Cathaoirleach of Donegal Municipal District, Cllr. Michéal Naughton, along with Head of Tourism Joy Browne, Diaspora Officer Eoin Leonard and Tourism Officer Eoin McHugh.

The visiting delegation included representatives from local government, public service, education, and Irish cultural organisations in Indianapolis. Notable attendees were Kevin Charles Murray, General Counsel for the Marion County Sheriff's Office; Federal Judge Jane Magnus-Stinson; Marion County Treasurer Barbara

Lawrence; and Kasey Kendrick, Deputy Chief of Staff to the Mayor of Indianapolis. Also in attendance were former Fire Chief Louis Dezelan, President of the AOH in Indianapolis David Ruhmkorff, and Tom McNulty, Hibernian officer. Among others, John Hegarty — originally from Kilcar and now Director of the International Division at Seccina Memorial High School — was warmly welcomed home.

During the visit, it was announced that Kevin Murray is to be appointed as the Honorary Consul for Indiana, further strengthening ties between the Hoosier State and Ireland.

Discussions focused on deepening collaboration in areas including tourism, culture and education, with a shared ambition to promote Donegal to audiences across Indiana. — Submitted by Ryan McGinley

New Jersey

'Hamsgiving' for charity in Central NJ



The St. Patrick Division 1, Somerset County, NJ has a committee chaired by Tom Lenahan, Dan Esposito, Pat Mannion and Tom Burns for the purpose of its annual dinner projects for Thanksgiving and Easter (Hamsgiving). All financial donations and financial support from sponsors, donors and generous partners are allocated at 100 for the assistance of our Central New Jersey areas of Somerset and Middlesex counties during the holidays.

The Sunday prior to Thanksgiving, we hold our Annual Irish Seisiun in honor of its founder, the late Brother Mike Berry, which brings members, friends and families from our community together for Irish music, food, drink and fellowship at the Knights of Columbus Council 1432, Somerville. The Seisiun also serves as a Thanksgiving turkey and pantry items drop off for the following morning assembly and delivery on the Monday prior to Thanksgiving. On each Good Friday, our Easter dinner program takes place where we distribute Easter ham dinners to families and foodbanks in need.

The committee co-chair responsibilities are around three key functions contributing to the success of the Division's Dinner Project: Recipient Need and Community Relationship Management; Operations, Procurement, Assembly, Distribution and Fund Raising; and Community Outreach, Promotion and Charitable Volunteerism.

In the Fall of 2024 (Thanksgiving) and Spring of 2025 (Easter) we distributed a total of 105 Thanksgiving dinners and a total of 80 Easter Dinners with all the fixings to needy families and organizations in the Central New Jersey area just in time for the holiday season. This was augmented with the distribution of \$500 in Shop Rite Food Cards for Thanksgiving and \$400 in Shop Rite Food Cards for Easter through the committee's donation budget. Additional Shop Rite gift cards donated by the generosity of others, added to the aforementioned offerings.

Organizations and families receiving our dinners included Center for Great Expectations, AGAPE House, Visions & Pathways, Elijah's Promise, Anderson House (Turning Point), Samaritan Homeless Interim Program (SHIP), Somerset County Food Bank and individual families in need at the Centerbridge Apartments, Immaculate Conception Church, St. John's Episcopal Church, Our Lady of Mount Virgin Church, St. Bernard's Catholic Church and Holy Trinity Church.



Kansas

Kansas AOH State Convention, Past and Future

By Jerry Lonergan

The current three, and counting, divisions of the Kansas AOH met 650 ft. underground at the Strataca Underground Salt Museum in Hutchinson on September 19-20. It was noted that as the divisions discussed accomplishments and future directions it was fitting to be meeting underground and in a mine as tribute to the AOH's role in defending the faith, protecting priests, and playing an integral part in labor struggles.

Hutchinson's Fr. O'Shea Division hosted the event, which included a reception at the well-known Prairie Dunes Golf Club. The meeting in the mine kicked off with the Hutchinson Police Department Color Guard presenting the U.S., Irish, Kansas and Vatican flags as they were escorted by a bagpiper playing The Minstrel Boy.

Concluding his term as state president, Andy Sprehe, Donnelly Division of Johnson County, welcomed those attending, highlighting that since the formation of a state board, two new divisions now thriving and three strong candidate communities in Salina, Topeka and Wichita appear ready to create divisions in the near future.

Setting a consistent tone, National Director Rory Schulte in discussing running for the National Board noted, "I got in it to pick a fight." He is challenging divisions in the West and Midwest to grow fast and to begin to even out the number advantages the East has with the West. This was not an us-versus-them proposition but more a recognition that improved numbers will make the western divisions have a bigger influence in their own areas while demonstrating a relevancy to contribute to a shared national vision.

President Sprehe laid out an agenda for a two-year focused effort to increase net membership by 10 percent and add three divisions with a goal of 225 members across the state.

A set of new officers willing to take on Sprehe's goal were elected and there was much discussion of successes and opportunities for the Kansas AOH. With a hardy God Speed to Director Schulte and traveling members the convention concluded, and recruitment and retention efforts are under way coupled with a commitment to maintain the already established fundraising programs, church involvement and promoting all things Irish.



The outgoing and incoming Kansas State Boards. Front row: Incoming Kansas State Board, from left, President Larry Shepard, Vice President Jeff Deal, Secretary Joe Leary and Treasurer Gary Long. Back: Outgoing Kansas State Board, from left, Vice President Denny Dennihan, President Andy Sprehe, National Director Rory Schulte, Secretary Charlie Lamont and Treasurer Gerard Walsh.

Kansas

Fr. Donnelly Hibernian recognized for Exceptional Service in KC Parade

Kyle Pipes, Hibernian brother from the Fr. Bernard Donnelly Division in Johnson County, Kansas, was honored with the Horse Whisperer Award from the Kansas City St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee for his services during this year's parade in March. Pipes took over holding the reins of the riderless horse honoring the late Irish chef Shaun Brady at the end of the parade route at 43rd Street and Broadway Boulevard in Midtown Kansas City after the original cowboy leading the horse was incapacitated. Shaun Brady was murdered in August 2024 outside his restaurant while intervening in a carjacking. News of Brady's death shook the Kansas City Irish community and was reported in the press both in the United States and in Ireland.

Pipes, a veteran Army medic, is a native of Amarillo, Texas, and grew up steeped in cowboy culture. He has quickly proven an eager participant in our Hibernian brotherhood demonstrated in his spirit of service on St. Patrick's Day. The award was presented to Kyle, alongside the Betsy Hudson Family who led the riderless horse through the rest of the parade, on Friday, August 29, the first evening of the 2025 Kansas City Irish Fest. The riderless horse with its stirrups facing backward is a rich cowboy tradition honoring the dead. In his act of service, Pipes was an image of Hibernianism that was seen throughout Greater Kansas City on television and earned the recognition of those on the parade's reviewing stand alike.

— Seán Kane

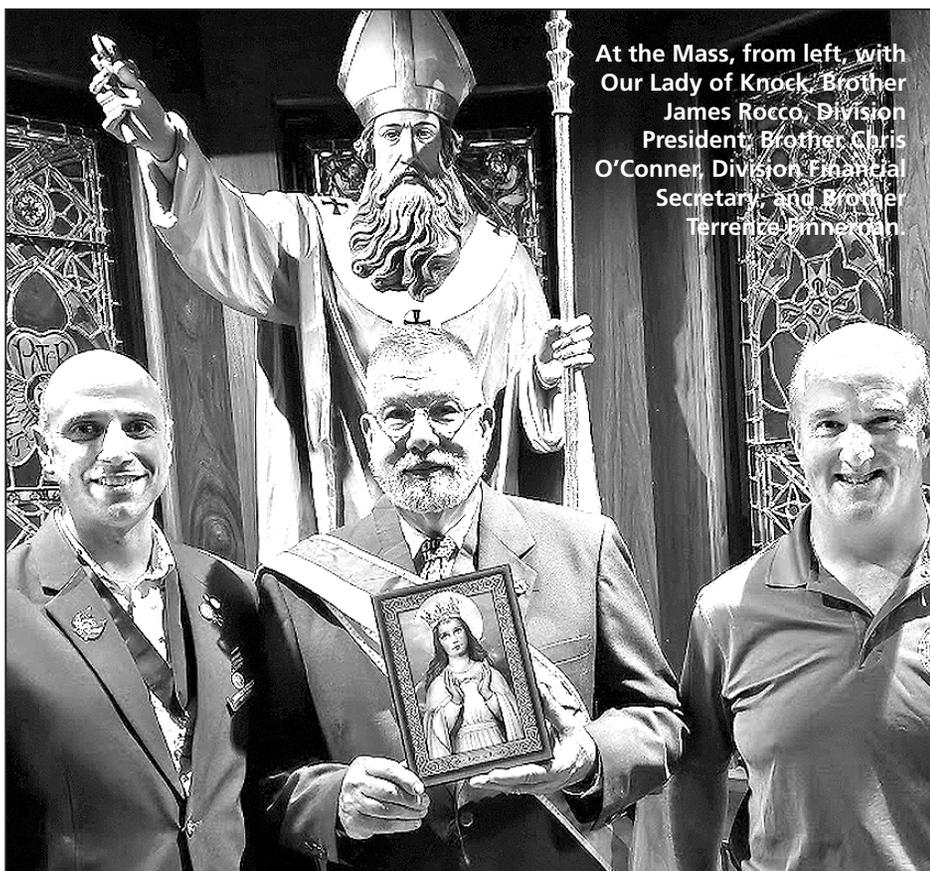


Fr. Donnelly Hibernian Kyle Pipes with his Horse Whisperer Award at the Kansas City Irish Fest.

Virginia

Hibernians Participate in Multi-Cultural Mass

On July 18, the Col. John Fitzgerald Division 1, Arlington, VA, participated in a great evening Mass representing all cultures across the Diocese. The Mass began with a Marian procession where each culture processed with their image of the Blessed Mother — naturally we brought Our Lady of Knock. We were well represented in green among the other celebrants, and as quoted in the local Catholic Herald, by our Brother Terrence Finnernan (quoting James Joyce) "Here Comes Everybody" — which was a fitting sentiment for the event.



Commemorating the Miracle at Knock

Fr. Lynch Division in Roanoke, Virginia marked the 146th anniversary of the appearance of Our Blessed Mother at Knock, County Mayo. Celebrating Mass was the Rector of the Basilica of St. Andrew, Fr. Kevin Segerblom assisted by Division Chaplain Deacon Dan Derringer. Notable participants at the Mass were Division President Brian Carroll and Division member and State Board Vice President Edwin Hanson. — Paul Yengst

New York



Hornell Division Donated Jerseys

Hornell Sons of Ireland Division recently sponsored the local New York Collegiate Baseball League "Steamers" wooden bat league game. The AOH purchased the jerseys for them to showcase our support. The Steamers won 9-8 over the visiting Genessee Rapids in late July. The sponsor game was part of Hornell's City Connect.



St. Patrick's Division 2 Holds Past Presidents Luncheon

Division President Jim McGrath hosted a special Past Presidents' Luncheon at Shandon Court in East Islip, Long Island, on August 17. It was a wonderful afternoon filled with camaraderie, shared stories and warm remembrance of those past presidents who are no longer with us, as well as reflections on the legacy and spirit of Division 2.

The most senior past president in attendance, AOH National Life Member John Biesty, brought along a collection of photos and personal mementos, sparking fond memories and lively conversation. President McGrath also presented each past president in attendance with a newly designed "Past President - Division Two" sash, a gesture of appreciation that will be proudly displayed at AOH events.

Joining McGrath were Vice President Chris Bradley and Recording Secretary Bob Farrell. Since our founding by Mike Rice on October 6, 1946, Division 2 has been led by 42 dedicated presidents — 14 of whom are still with us today.

We were honored to be joined by the following past presidents: National Life Member John Biesty (1995-1996); National Life Member John Rattigan (2001-2002); Bill Kelly (2007-2008); Jerry Belmont (2012-2013); Matt Buckley (2014-2015); Bill Corrigan (2018-2019); Jim Killen (2020-2021); and Dennis Harty (2022-2023). Though unable to attend, the following past presidents were fondly remembered: Broughan Gorey (1975-1976); National Life Member Bob O'Shea (1977-1978); Bob Kane (1988); Jack Gerrity (1993-1994); Ed Cotter (2005-2006); and Tom Bennet (2016-2017).

Hibernian Fellowship Onboard



On August 8, members of Division 5, Suffolk County, NY, gathered for their annual fishing trip aboard the Rosie in Center Moriches. The weather was perfect, providing the ideal backdrop for a day of camaraderie, fresh air and time on the

water. It was a wonderful event that brought brothers together in the spirit of fellowship, and everyone is already looking forward to next year's trip. Division President Larry Hurley reeled in the biggest fluke of the trip, earning him some well-deserved bragging rights.

— Ed Kelly, Recording Secretary



Past Presidents of Suffolk County's Division 2. Each Past President was presented with a new sash, pictured at top.

Hibernian is a 'Fallout' Star

New York AOH Division 4 member Leer Leary has wrapped up Season 2 of Amazon Prime's hit show "Fallout." In which he co-stars, and is waiting for word about when shooting for Season 3 will begin.



New York

Congressional Recognition for Gaelic Mass Day

Marching behind the Kerry Pipers, Hibernians wearing sashes and medallions, joined with local Irish community groups and St. Barnabas parishioners, for the 8th annual Gaelic Mass said by Fr. Brendan Fitzgerald, on Sunday, September 14. The Bronx County Gaelic Mass has become a national AOH event, with viewers from as far away as Texas or California and Ireland itself, watching on AOH YouTube and Parish Facebook pages. This year the Mass was dedicated to all those who have kept the Irish language and culture alive, as symbolized by a mural of a Mass Rock, where Gaelic speakers gathered in secret to hear outlawed Masses said by outlawed priests in the days of British Penal Laws.

Proclamation

Prior to the service special recognition to the event was given both by Congress and Westchester County. Bronx Congressman Ritchie Torres commended the Irish American Community "for preserving the Gaelic language, celebrating their faith, and sharing their rich cultural heritage with the Bronx and beyond." A Congressional Proclamation, presented to Fr. Fitzgerald before the Mass by Congressional aide Joseph McManus, praised the event "as a celebration of Irish heritage and the enduring contributions of Irish Americans."

Westchester County proclaimed "Ancient Order of Hibernians Day" in a measure sponsored by County Legislator David Tubiolo.

Mass Readers

Readings in Irish were done by Ireland's New York Deputy Consul General Roisin Leonard and Eugene Collum of the Heritage while Intercessions were read by members of the Pearl River Irish Language Group Dermot Moore, Kevin McNulty and Brian Pearson.

Translation booklets were provided so that those attending could follow the Gaelic words in English.

A special highlight of the event was the musical program performed by the Dawn Doherty Academy of Irish Music. Singers included Dawn Doherty, Ellie Reilly, Eimear Moylan, Maggie Feehan, Lauren Tuffy, Katie Talty, Maureen Rutledge, Lily Kenny, and Frank McCormick.

The large AOH contingent was led by newly elected New York State President Thomas Beirne, and Ladies AOH members were led by Joan Moore. Local Irish community groups Aishling and the Emerald Isle Immigration Center also supported the event.

Sermon

In his sermon Fr. Fitzgerald noted the strong links between the Irish language and the Catholic faith, where even common greetings like good morning have a religious component. He said "the Catholic faith in Ireland, like the Irish language had survived centuries of persecution and penal laws intended to wipe it out. Our ancestors had defied everything, attending outlawed Masses said by outlawed priests to keep their language and faith alive. We will survive the problems of today and come through stronger than ever."

Following the Gaelic Mass, Martin Galvin, President of host Bronx County AOH, said: "Gaelic Mass Day has grown from a small local Bronx AOH event eight years ago, to a truly national event, where Hibernians are led by prominent state and national officers and are watched across the country and in Ireland through AOH YouTube and St. Barnabas Parish Facebook. It is even recognized as an important celebration of the Irish language both in Congress and in Westchester County. The annual Gaelic Mass has introduced Irish to many Americans who have never really heard the beautiful language of our ancestors being spoken.

"We deeply appreciate the support we get from St. Barnabas Parish, Irish Consulate, AOH statewide, local Irish community groups, Irish language clubs, and musicians which has made this event such a success. We are especially grateful to Fr. Fitzgerald who makes Gaelic Mass Day possible."



Presenting the Congressional Proclamation on Gaelic Mass Day are Bronx County President Martin Galvin, Irish Deputy Counsel General Roisin Leonard, Fr. Brendan Fitzgerald, Joseph McManus and NY State AOH President Tom Beirne.
Photo by Nuala Purcell

Feeding Those in Need



Division 5, Suffolk County, held a community food drive at King Kullen, in Patchogue, on October 4. The effort was a great success, collecting more than four shopping carts filled with non-perishable food items, along with more than \$200 in cash donations from generous shoppers. The funds collected were used to purchase King Kullen gift cards, which together with the food donations, were delivered to Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Roman Catholic Church in Patchogue. The church's food pantry will distribute these items to local families in need. — Ed Kelly, Division Recording Secretary

Commemorating September 11



At the solemn ceremonies, Ken McGowan, Bill Zangerle, Mark Tynan, Jim Davis, Nancy Belmont, Jerry Belmont, John Biesty, Kevin Ferry, Kevin Diegnan, Chris Bradley, Bill Stoddard, Jim Killen and Bob Farrell.

On the morning of September 11, 2025, Brothers and a Sister of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, St. Patrick's Division 2, gathered at the Irish Cultural Center in Babylon, NY, to honor the lives lost on that tragic day, 24 years ago.

At 8:46 AM, the exact time the first tower was struck, Pipe Major Brother Bob Farrell of the Saffron United Pipe Band played Amazing Grace. At 9:03 AM, he followed with "Dawning of the Day" and "Hard Times Come Again No More," marking the moment the second tower was hit.

Vice President Brother Chris Bradley led those assembled in a decade of the Rosary, offering prayers for the souls of the departed and for the families who continue to carry their loss.

The Brothers and Sisters of AOH St. Patrick's Division 2 remain steadfast in remembrance, prayer and solidarity with all who were affected on September 11, 2001.

— Submitted by Jim Killen, St. Patrick's Division 2 - Public Relations

New York Driving for Good



The 5th Annual Mike Moran Division 8 Golf Outing was held on October 20 at the Glen Cove City Golf Course on Nassau County Long Island's North Shore. Ninety-three golfers benefitted from the work of eighteen AOH and LAOH volunteers, who staffed the planning for and day-of supervision of the event, which raised funds for local charities. Past Division President Sean Basdavanos and current President Andy Stafford led the efforts with many worthy assistants.



Hibernian Music Fest

More than 2,500 people attended the AOH-LAOH-sponsored Long Island Irish Fest V, at Plattduetsche Park in Franklin Square, Nassau County, on October 19. The music festival was headlined by Shillelagh Law and Andy Cooney. It was a day to celebrate Irish culture on Long Island.

— Photos by Jim Henry



North Carolina

Pat Tracey Mourned

In August, Guilford County, North Carolina, NaCara Division 1 lost one of the staunchest supporters of Irish Heritage and AOH.

Pat Tracey was a President of Na Cara Division and also our State President. During his term as State President he visited all five divisions. Pat was a man to be reckoned with. Once he took hold of an issue he never stopped working on it. Before his passing, he was chairing the Freedom for All Ireland program.

Social Calendar

Our Standing Committee, made up of Rick Boedicker and Michael Holian, have planned a social calendar with at least one event a month. We run the gamut with two St. Patrick's day parades. The Brunswick County AOH helps to run the parade in Wilmington and the Mecklenburg County Division 1 & 2 lend their help.

We have had a diversity of events such as indoor golf tournaments, our Raffle and Proclamation dinners, Pork Butt sales, Irish Football, halfway to St. Patrick Day picnic and our Christmas Party, where we will revive the "best looking legs in a kilt" contest. We will have pictures of that contest, but Parental Advisory is suggested.

One of our brothers, Jim Furman, has obtained a large map of Ireland and all brothers have marked where their family originated from.



State Convention

The North Carolina AOH 9th biennial State Convention took place in Southport. The host, Brunswick County Division 1, put in a lot of effort to make it special. The delegates from the five divisions elected a new slate of State Officers. The new officers will try to draw out new members, get more publicity and expand in other parts of the state. The new officers pictured are, from left, Director George McEvoy, VP Sean Harrington, President Edward Croughan, Secretary Michael Fanning, Financial Secretary Al Guecia and Director John Ganther.

Rhode Island



Newport Hibernians gather for Family Day in the Park.

Family Day in Newport

The Hibernian Family Day in the Park was celebrated by the Dennis E. Collins Division and the Newport LAOH, who are celebrating their 125th Anniversary as Hibernians. This was truly a display of Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity.

Family Day has been held in many of the past 70 years. It is a day of food, fun, games, foot racing and face painting spearheaded by brothers Jim Fowler, Paul Saunders and Pat Donovan, pictured, and by associate members Tim Whitford and John Fletcher. Also by the contributions of LAOH President Kathy Brady, daughter of past National Director the late Joe Brady, along with several Lady Hibernians and students from Salve Regina University. The Newport Police and Fire Departments had their equipment and officers demonstrating with the children how the fire trucks and police cars work.

Hibernians Make Major Donation In Honor of Gary Loftus

On a picture-perfect Monday, June 2, at the scenic Wanumetonomy Country Club in Middletown, RI, friends, family and fellow Hibernians gathered for the 5th Annual Gary Loftus Memorial Golf Outing, a heartfelt tribute to a man who left an indelible mark on the local community of Newport and the Dennis E. Collins Division 1 of the AOH.

This annual memorial outing honors the late Gary Loftus, a beloved member of the AOH, who embodied the values of Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity. Hosted at one of Aquidneck Island's premier golf courses, the event brought together more than 240 golfers from across Rhode Island and beyond — not just to play the game Gary loved, but to celebrate his life and legacy.

Foursomes took to the course for a round filled with laughter, competitive spirit and more than a few Mulligans. While some came for the golf, most came for what Gary represented: loyalty, generosity and a genuine love for bringing people together.

After the final putt dropped, attendees gathered in the clubhouse for a hearty meal and shared stories. Speakers, including AOH representatives and close friends of Gary, offered touching reflections on his unwavering commitment to the Order and to the local Irish-American community.

In addition to celebrating Gary's life, the outing serves a greater purpose. Over the past five years this charity golf outing has raised thousands of dollars for local charities. This year, a donation on behalf of the Dennis E. Collins Division 1 was made to Newport Mental Health in the amount of \$2,500. — Pat O'Neill



A Hibernian donation was presented to Newport Mental Health. From left, Division President Austin Behan, Division VP Brian Doyle, NMH CEO Dayna Gladstein, and NMH VP of Philanthropy Susan Piacenti.

West Virginia



Irish Road Bowling in Wheeling

Wheeling AOH Division 1 held its annual Irish Road Bowling fundraiser on September 20. It was a huge success! More than 66 teams took part in the event under perfect sunny weather. This is the Wheeling Division's largest fundraiser. Pictured are the plaques and trophy for the winning team.



Maryland

Frederick Division 'In The Streets'

On September 13, members of the Frederick Co. Division 1 proudly represented our Irish Catholic heritage at the city's annual In The Streets festival. Our tent on Market Street welcomed hundreds of visitors throughout the day, where we shared information about the AOH mission, promoted Irish history and culture, and invited new friends to join our charitable and fraternal works.

The annual event was an opportunity for fellowship and community engagement, with plenty of smiles, Irish music and camaraderie. We are grateful to all the brothers and families who volunteered their time, and we look forward to building on this momentum as we continue to grow our Division's presence in Frederick, Maryland.

— Michael Daugherty



Hibernians, from left, Michael Daugherty, Ryan Robinson, Tom Robinson, Bill Traub and Matt McGivern.

Maryland

Irish Day at the Races



Members of Division 3, Towson, and other supporting organizations held the annual Irish Day at the Races on August 23. The event, held every year at the Maryland State Fairgrounds, featured a full race card with Race 5 designated by the Maryland Jockey Club as "Irish Day at the Races." Weather was fantastic and much fun was had by winners (and losers). — Submitted by Stephen H. Riegger

Our Daily Bread



Towson's Division 3 volunteers at Our Daily Bread food resource center. Located in the heart of Baltimore City, the center serves meals to needy and vulnerable Baltimore citizens. From left, John McManus, Joe Dougherty, Tim Walsh, Mike Murphy, TJ Mullin and Greg Certeza. — Submitted by Stephen H. Riegger

Towson Division holds Irish Trivia Night



Members of the Division 3's "Trivia Team" participated in the Maryland Irish Festival held at the B.C. Brewery in Baltimore County. Funds are raised for the festival held at the Maryland State Fairgrounds November 7-9. Division 3 team sadly came in a mere fourth! — Submitted by Stephen H. Riegger

Scholarship and Charitable Fund



St. Brendan's Scholarship and Charitable Fund, a newly launched nonprofit to raise money for students in need by Division 3, held a Surf and Turf on September 19. The event raised funds for students who demonstrate scholarship and need. The event was attended by more than 270 and featured traditional Irish music and dance by the Sham Rogues, an internationally known Irish band based in Maryland. The event was an amazing success headed by Terry Brennan and a team of dedicated volunteers. The highlight of the evening was watching the "wee little ones" dance to traditional Irish music. — Submitted by Stephen H. Riegger

Division 3 and St. Vincent Cemetery Project

Members of Division 3, Towson, at the solemn dedication.



The St. Vincent Cemetery is located within the confines of the Clifton Park Golf Course in Baltimore. Though it looks like open space park land, it was once covered with gravestones and mausoleums. Unfortunately, it suffered from extensive vandalism that included destruction of the monuments and disinterring bodies. There are records of more than 3,700 people buried at St. Vincent Cemetery, many of whom are of Irish decent.

A small group of descendants found each other online and formed the Friends of St. Vincent Cemetery (FoSVC). Its mission is to develop the cemetery into a memorial dedicated to all those buried there, complementing the encircling Clifton Park.

Thanks to the tireless work of the project coordinator, Stephanie Town, and the multitude of donations from organization and volunteer manhours, the project was dedicated at a solemn ceremony held on June 14 with members of Division 3 in attendance.

— Submitted by Stephen H. Riegger

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tombas na teanga

Is minic nach mbíonn ciall ar bith ag logainmneacha na hÉireann i mBéarla. *Often that place names in Ireland make no sense at all in English. Bíonn siad dothuigthe, agus ní bhíonn leid ar bith ann conas iad a fhuaimniú. They are unintelligible, and there's often no clue as to how to pronounce them. Ach bíonn a mhalairt fíor maidir leis na logainmneacha bundúchasacha i nGaeilge. But the opposite is true of the native place names in Irish. Den chuid is mó (tá eisceachtaí ann), fuaimnítear an Ghaeilge mar a litrítear í (má tá tú in ann Gaeilge a léamh i gceart) – fiú sa tseanlitríocht. For the most part (there are exceptions), Irish is pronounced like it is spelled (if you know how to read Irish correctly) – even in the old spelling. Bíonn stair agus cur síos ar an dtírdhreach ann den chuid is mó inár logainmneacha. There is history and a description of the landscape in most of our place names.*

Seo liosta d'fhocail úsáideacha - Here's a list of useful words:

ard – hight, top part ((h)ard); áth (átha) – ford (of a ford) (ah(ahuh)); baile – town (b'Alya); béal – mouth (bale); bun – bottom, base (boo(k)+n); caiseal / caisleán – castle (cashill / cash+lon); carraig – big rock, boulder (carraige but with a g like in gimmick); cathair – city (ca(t)+hur...) ceann (cinn, cionn) – head (heads, of a head, to/at/on a head) (cyown, kin(g), cyun); cill – cell (of a monk), church, churchyard (cemetery) (kill); cloch (cloich, clocha) – rock (of a rock, rocks); cluain – meadow (clue+in); corca – race of people (cork-uh) dún – fort (doon); inis – island (in+ish); mainistir – monastery (man+ish+ter); inbhear – river mouth, estuary (inver); leitir – hillside (letcher); má – plain (mah); lios – ring (fairy) fort (liss); ros – wood, wooded headland or promontory (russ); tobar – well (tubber); trá – beach (trah); tulach – low hill, mound (tull + ch like in loch)

Baile Átha Cliath (Dublin) – town of the ford of the wattles (said fast: B'Áth' Cliath – blah cleeh uh)

Daingean Uí Chúis (Dingle) – daingean (dang-in) is another word for a fort. Uí is the genitive (possessive) of Ó + a person's last name (also genitive case). (dang-en ee coosh but c like in loch). Also called An Daingean (ahn – the).

Dún na nGall (Donnegan) – the fort of the foreigners (doon na nall)

Uaireanta tá logainmneacha ann ón tseanGhaeilge, agus mar sin, tá siad níos deacra a thuiscint. *Sometimes there are place names which are from Old Irish, and so they are harder to understand. Mar shampla, Ceatharlach. For example, Carlow. Tá baint aige le 'cathair', ach de réir dealraimh, tá sé bunaithe ar fhocal na seanGhaeilge 'ceithir', sin é, beithíoch ceithre chos. There's a connection to the word for city, but apparently it is based on the Old Irish word for four-footed beasts (place of). Ach tá ciall aige fós! But it still has a meaning!*

Michigan



Hibernians Host Meadhbh

The Stephen Walsh Division hosted Irish folk singing sensation Meadhbh Walsh, from Cork, at their remodeled hall in Redford, a suburb of Detroit. With her is Division Building President Kevin Murphy, left, and Irish Music Cafe host Patrick Johnson. — Tim Casey

in memoriam

In Memory of Brother Eugene Byrne

Michael L. Delaunay Division 9 – Montclair, NJ (Essex County)

It is with great sadness that we share the passing of our Brother Eugene Byrne, a proud and devoted member of the Michael L. Delaunay Ancient Order of Hibernians Division 9 – Montclair, New Jersey.

Throughout his many decades of faithful service, Eugene exemplified what it means to be a Hibernian. He held numerous leadership roles within the Order, including Past Division President and Past State President, and was also honored as a Past Dinner Dance Honoree — a testament to his unwavering dedication, generosity and commitment to our Irish heritage.



Eugene embodied the true Hibernian principles of Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity. His leadership, kindness and love of faith and culture left a lasting mark on all who had the privilege of knowing him. His presence at meetings, events and celebrations was always accompanied by warmth, wisdom and good humor.

Eugene will be deeply missed by his AOH brothers and sisters and by the entire Irish-American community. His legacy of service and brotherhood will continue to inspire all of us who were fortunate enough to call him a friend. May his soul rest in eternal peace. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam.



Ohio

Ohio Hibernians Support Mothers in Need

The Saint Brendan Division, of Clermont County, Ohio, has shown how a little creativity, teamwork and faith can make a life-changing difference in their community. For the second year in a row, the division hosted a sold-out golf outing to benefit A Caring Place, a pregnancy center in Clermont County that has assisted more than 4,400 women in recent years, providing thousands of sonograms and helping mothers choose life for their children.

Registrations quickly exceeded capacity, thanks to the combined efforts of Saint Brendan's members and support from their neighbors at the Saint Patrick / Our Lady of Knock Division in Cincinnati. Participants enjoyed not only the course itself but also a celebration that included Irish beers, a ribeye steak dinner, featuring live Irish music and dancers.

Through sponsorships, registrations, raffle and donations, more than \$30,000 has been raised over the past two years, all directed to the mission of A Caring Place.



A few of Saint Brendan's members presenting one of the checks to A Caring Place's Client Services Director Jody Olson. AOH members, from left, were main event sponsor Dave Yates, owner of Vanguard Cleaning; Recording Secretary Mark Faust; and Financial Secretary Bill McCafferty holding the event program filled with recognition of the dozens of donors that gave to the cause.

Ohio

'NORAIID Irish America and the IRA'



The Ohio FFAI committee had the honor of hosting National FFAI Chairman Martin Galvin in Columbus for a screening of the documentary "NORAIID Irish America and the IRA." The evening included a viewing of both parts of the documentary and a question-and-answer session with Martin. A big thanks to Martin for coming to Ohio and Ohio FFAI Chairman Patrick Williams for hosting the event. From left, Ohio State President Dennis Parks, National Chairman Galvin, State Chairman Patrick Williams and State Vice President Bruce McPherson.

Pennsylvania



Running Against Cancer

The 33rd Annual Paul "Hook" O'Malley 1 Mile Firecracker Run/Walk Against Cancer was a great success. The weather was perfect, and there were lots of runners and walkers. It was a great tribute to the late boxing trainer "Hook" O'Malley, who would've been proud of the participants. Numerous Hibernians from the Paul "Hook" O'Malley Division 4 helped out at the race, which is in memory of their Division's name sake. From left, official race starter James Moran, Patrick O'Malley, Jamie Kane, the American Cancer Society representative who received a check for \$4,005, Mark McDade, Mary O'Malley Ruddy, Joe Holland, Leo Ruddy, Mike Robinson and Gene Barrett.



Halfway to St. Patrick's!

The Cumberland County, PA, Division 1, celebrated a halfway to St. Patrick's Day in September by inviting the Lena McGinley Irish dancers. Pictured with the dancers after their performance is Elizabeth Tuleya, sister of Division VP Ray Tuleya.

**REMEMBER
the aob 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."

Pennsylvania

Remembering September 11

The Paul "Hook" O'Malley Division 4 held a memorial service on September 11 to remember those who lost their lives, including our firefighters, police and EMTs who ran into the Towers when everybody else ran out and the heroes of Flight 93 who brought down the plane before the terrorist could strike Washington, D.C. During the service there was a reading of the names of Hibernians who lost their lives that day. From left, Gene Barrett, Rob Sherry, Rob Fletcher, Fr. Richard Fox of St. Patrick's Parish in Scranton, Patrick O'Malley, Bob McAndrew, Joe Holland, Mark McDade and John Fletcher.



Massachusetts

Watertown Division 14 began the month with a successful Red Cross blood drive and food drive. Thirty pints of blood were collected along with 130 pounds of non-perishable food that was delivered to the Watertown Catholic Collaborative Food Pantry. Later that month, close to 120 tickets were sold for the Boston Red Sox Irish Celebration game on August 17. After the game, a tailgater with about 60 people from Divisions as far away as Worcester and Holyoke, MA, as well as Hibernians from Bridgeport, CT, was hosted by Division 14 President Rick Connell and his wife, Nancy.

September 13 was another big day in the Division. It began with a gravesite dedication of Fenian Denis Cashman that was hosted by numerous groups, including the Fenian Memorial Committee of America. Later that day, Division 14 honored several Division 14 Hibernians such as past president Joe McCusker, recently deceased Division and Club president Billy Gildea, and Dan McAdam, who was honored with a Division Life Membership.

Finally, the Division hosted the 2026 annual golf tournament in memory of brother Patrick Hanlon to raise money for Division scholarships. Under the leadership of former Division President Joe McCusker, Division 14 closed out the month with a successful golf tournament honoring the memory of Patrick Hanlon. Approximately 86 golfers hit the links to raise money for our division scholarship fund.

Division 8 opened up its fall season on September 10 with a tribute to those lost on 911. Ed "Hoppy" Curran sang the Irish National Anthem and God Bless America during the memorial service. The Division's Monthly Meeting followed. Three days later, the Division held its Fifth Annual Cornhole Tournament, chaired by Tim Doherty, at the "New" Claddagh Pub in Methuen on September 13.

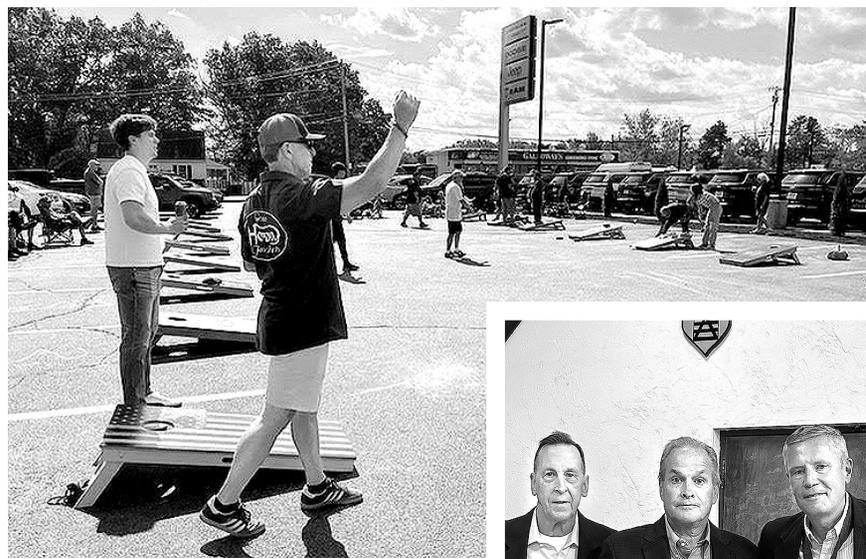
On November 1, the Division kicked off their 55th annual FFAI Christmas Appeal, which is being headed up by FFAI Chairman Bob Collins. Division 8 has again pledged \$1,000 to this cause.

To get all in the holiday spirit, Division 8's Christmas Celebration will be held on December 10 at the Irish Cottage. A large committee of Division members, headed up by John Michael Pelletier and Anne Marie Nyhan Doherty, are promising a night of great food, seasonal entertainment with an Irish flair, super prizes and a few surprises.

Planning on Irish Heritage Month 2026 has already begun. Irish Month will begin with the raising of the Irish flag on March 2 on the North Common across from Lawrence City Hall. A series of social events, lectures, exhibits and concerts will follow right up until the 31st.



Division 11, in Peabody, MA, had a booth at their city's 40th annual International Festival. At the booth the division worked to raise money to fund their annual Christmas party for the children of the division's membership by selling drinks, popcorn and T-shirts. Brothers also shared information of what the Ancient Order of Hibernians organization is about to the patrons of the booth to bolster membership. Peabody brothers, from left, Paul Donovan, Ryan Cox and Recording Secretary Derek McCarthy.



ABOVE: State President Joe McCusker, left, and Dan McAdam were honored by Division President Rick Conell, right, at the Watertown Night of Celebration.

RIGHT: Lawrence Division 8 family and friends participating in the Fifth Annual Cornhole Tournament, chaired by Tim Doherty.



Nebraska

Omaha AOH holds 22nd Annual Hibernian Irish Open

Irish Charities of Nebraska, the giving arm of the Father Flanagan Division 1 of Omaha, held the 22nd Annual Hibernian Irish Open on September 6. The golf tournament charity fundraiser took place at Tregaron Golf Course in Bellevue. There were 72 participants, compared to only 60 last year.

More than 30 Hibernians and Lady Hibernians were involved as golfers and event volunteers. The golf tournament included family members with kids. There were 18 hole sponsors and a total of 69 raffle prizes awarded.

"It was perfect weather for playing golf and raising funds for charities," said Jeff Johnson, who serves as the current Division President and is in his fourth year as President of the golf tournament. "It is an event that I never want to miss," he added.

"People think that it is my golf tournament, but with a committee like mine, we knock it out of the park," said Johnson. "It is our tournament."

— Submitted by Mike McMorrow,
Division Historian



Chaplain Monsignor James Gilg led the opening prayer before the Irish Charities of Nebraska, the giving arm of the Father Flanagan Division 1 of Omaha, 22nd Annual Hibernian Irish Open on September 6. Photo by Alice Sullivan



A row of golf carts lined up awaiting the shot gun start of the Irish Charities of Nebraska's 22nd Annual Hibernian Irish Open on September 6. Photo by Alice Sullivan

Nebraska



Nebraska Hibernians Gather in Convention

The AOH Nebraska State Convention was held on September 27 at Camp Ashland. Pictured are members of the Father Flanagan Division 1 of Omaha and the St. Columbkille Division 1 of Sarpy County. They were joined by National Vice President Liam McNabb. The meeting included updates on the AOH/LAOH National Convention that will be held July 15-19, 2026 in Omaha. The meeting was held prior to the annual picnic that was also attended by family, members of Mother Catherine McAuley Division of LAOH, and National Convention Chair Kathie Linton.

Photo by Liam Nary

Showing the Flag



Father Flanagan Division 1 of Omaha, Nebraska, obtained a new Division flag for use in parades, at AOH events and especially the AOH/LAOH National Convention on July 15-19, 2026, in Omaha. *Photo by Mike McMorro*

Camaraderie in Omaha



Father Flanagan Division 1 held a Pub Crawl on July 19 in Omaha. Twenty-six brothers, family members and friends participated. A bus was used to travel between three establishments. *Photo by Alice Sullivan.*

Delaware



Dueling Pianos

On October 18, the Commodore Barry Division of Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, held their Dueling Pianos Dinner fundraiser at Saint Jude the Apostle Parish Life Center. There were 210 guests dancing and singing along with the Flying Ivories and the dinner was catered by Mission BBQ. All money raised will be donated to local charities. The three members kneeling are, from left, President Bill Guerin, Division Organizer Peter Curran, and member Steve Kennedy. The 11 members standing are, from left, Treasurer Jim Ryan, Jim McCue, Martin Foye, Dennis O'Shea, Terence Reilly, Gerald Donegan, Terence McInerney, Dan Beyer, Ken Marren, Vice President & Financial Secretary Kevin Cunnion, and Joe Garrigan.

New Jersey

Notre Dame tour

What an unforgettable day with AOH Division 9, Essex County, New Jersey, at the University of Notre Dame! Our very own Jim McHugh, a proud senior at Notre Dame, gave us an outstanding tour of this incredible campus on October 4. The day was filled with laughter, Irish pride, and the kind of moments that remind us of the deep traditions, family bonds and heritage that unite us. Truly special from start to finish!

It was a day that celebrated not only the Fighting Irish spirit of Notre Dame but also the enduring pride, faith and friendship that define our Order.

— Jere E. Cole, Jr.



Division 9, Essex County, proudly represented New Jersey at the Notre Dame game against Boise State on October 4. The division is especially proud of its own Jim McHugh, pictured here with Jere Cole, Terry McHugh, and Cole Schmittler — a proud day for Essex County and for the AOH.

Ladies hibernian news

From the Desk of . . . the Ladies National President

by Mary Ann Lubinsky

President's Message from Mary Ann Lubinsky

I have had a very exciting Spring and Summer. I was so lucky to be able to travel to the State Conventions in New Jersey, Massachusetts, Ohio, and my own in Pennsylvania.

Thank you to all who attended the Interim Board Meeting on September 13, and/or the Presidential Dinner that evening, as well as the reception on Friday evening. It was a wonderful weekend for yours truly. Congratulations to Dolores Desch for receiving the Constance Markievicz Award and the four new National Life Members! It was an honor to have our National Chaplain Bishop Schlert celebrate our Mass and to attend the dinner with Father Keith Mathur. It was also an honor to have the new Consul General Gerald Angley at the dinner. Special thanks to the Committee who do a fantastic job!

As some of you may know, the U.S. Navy is celebrating their 250th anniversary with a kickoff reception on October 3 on board the Battleship New Jersey. Thank you to Keith Carney for inviting Marilyn Madigan and me to be involved with the planning from the very beginning. It has turned out to be a great working group of AOH and LAOH members from Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

For those of you who may not know, SOAR, Support Our Aging Religious, is honoring the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians on November 7 at their Washington DC Awards Gala with the Saint Katharine Drexel Award at the Italian Embassy. I think it is wonderful that our award is named after Philadelphia's own Katharine Drexel. I will be accepting the award on behalf of each and every one of you, my Sisters.

Have a wonderful Fall Season!

Robbinsville, New Jersey

The New Jersey State LAOH held a very successful Convention at the Hampton Inn in Robbinsville, Mercer County, NJ. We were honored to have National LAOH President Mary Ann Lubinsky and National Catholic Action Officer Brianna Curran join us. During the meeting, Vice-President Maread Gallagher was recognized for her the human rights contributions in the cause of peace, justice and well-being of the Irish people and was awarded the LAOH State Humanitarian Award.



NJ LAOH Humanitarian Award recipient, State VP Maread Gallagher, shown with National President Mary Ann Lubinsky(L) and State President Jacoba Kenna(R)

Newport, RI

The Newport, RI Division of the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians celebrated its 125th Anniversary with a memorable series of events. The festivities began on Saturday with a lively performance by talented Irish step dancers from the Clann Lir Academy of Irish Dance.

We welcomed Dr. John Quinn of Salve Regina University, who spoke about Dr. Ellen Ryan Jolly (1850-1930), a true Hibernian pioneer. Dr. Quinn shared his deep knowledge of her extraordinary life and contributions. We were especially honored to welcome Ellen Ryan Jolly's great-granddaughter, Jacqueline, and her husband.



City Councilor At-Large Jeanne-Marie Napolitano presenting proclamation from the city of Newport to LAOH President Katheryn Brady



Louisville, Kentucky

The Kentucky LAOH State Board held its 2025 State Convention on September 6, 2025, in Louisville, KY at St. Brigid of Kildare Parish. Thank you to all the 2023-2023 KY State Board officers for their tireless work and dedication to improving and carrying out the mission of our Order. We would like to congratulate our new 2025-2027 Kentucky State Board Officers elected during the 2025 Convention and wish them the very best as they lead the Commonwealth of Kentucky in advancing the work and expansion of our Order.





Juniors Commemorate 9/11

On September 11, the Hibernian Junior Boys and Girls from Our Lady Of Knock Division 7, in East Islip, NY, participated in a 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony. God Bless Our Juniors!



AOH Juniors Do Good Deeds

On Saturday night, September 27, Division 4, Huntington, NY, the Junior Boys assisted in serving a wonderful dinner for Police Widows and Veterans, sponsored by Dr. Raymond Mascolo at Saint Anthony of Padua Parish in East Northport. Great Job Boys and keep up the good work!



Car Wash for Good

On September 6th, Junior Boys and Junior Girls from Saint Patrick Division 2 in Babylon, NY, held their Annual Car Wash. Thank you to Hassell Auto Body for supporting our Juniors!

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South Carolina

A Productive, Enjoyable Convention

The Msgr. John L. Manning Division 1, Charleston, SC, hosted the 14th Biennial State Convention the weekend of September 12-15. The weekend was filled with not only Convention business, but a number of activities for brothers and their plus ones. They included two demonstrations:

- Irish St Bridget Crosses Making by Laura Travis of Rhode Island.
- Low-Country Sweetgrass Basket Making presented by Marsala Jefferson, of Mt Pleasant's Hamlin Community

A Major Degree was conducted by the Brian Boru Team from Virginia for 37 brothers among whom were 16 Brothers of the host Division. Participants and observers were most impressed in the Degree and the team and its professionalism in conferring the Degree.

Judge Irv Condon, President of the James Hoban Society, spoke about James Hoban, the Architect of the White House and a founding member of St. Mary of the Annunciation Roman Catholic Church, in Charleston, the first Catholic Congregation in the Carolinas and Georgia.

Bishop Jacques Fabre Jeune celebrated Mass in the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist and incorporated the 205-year-old Silver Chalice belonging to John England, the First Bishop of Charleston. The mass was attended by approximately 50 Brothers and their spouses.

Saturday's dinner activities included Irish dancers, traditional music, and a talk by keynote speaker, Dr. Elizabeth Stack, who quieted the dinner crowd with her presentation about "The challenges, contributions, and deep commitment of the Irish emigrants coming to America".

Of special note was bestowing the honor of induction of Brother Shannon Hurley, our Division Sentinel into the Order of the Golden Shamrock, a State level acknowledgement of dedication and service.

The planning, execution and success of this convention was made possible by a team of Brothers of the John L. Manning Division headed up by Martin McNulty, Dave Cummings and Chris Bermingham. Very gratifying were the many favorable comments from attendees who commented how much they enjoyed the convention.

All photographs provided by Doug Deas, diocesan photographer.



Division 1's Jubilee Year Mass at the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist with celebrated by Bishop Jacques Fabre, using the Silver Chalice belonging to the first Bishop of Charleston, John England.



Saturday's dinner activities included Irish dancers, traditional music, and a talk by keynote speaker Dr. Elizabeth Stack.



More than 100 brothers attended the convention dinner, where we granted several awards, including the Hibernian of the Year, two 50+ year members and Golden Shamrock awards. And the Major Degree ceremony that was held had 37 candidates earning their degree.



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