



**General Thomas Meagher Division
Fredericksburg, Virginia**

December 2008

Fredericksburg, Virginia Instituted: November 11, 1987
Meeting Time: 3rd Tuesday, 7:30PM Membership: 24
Meeting Location: Fredericksburg Knights of Columbus Council Home, 4724 Harrison Road,
Fredericksburg, VA 22401

PRESIDENT

Bruce A. Denault

FINANCIAL SECRETARY

Vacant

RECORDING SECRETARY

Robert J. Sullivan

VICE-PRESIDENT

Robert E. Ghormley

TREASURER

William Halpin

ORGANIZER

Vacant



President's Report

Our Officers for calendar year 2009 were installed at our last meeting. Congratulations and good luck.

My heartfelt thanks goes out to Bill Halpin for helping me organize the wreath-laying at the Sgt Kirkland Memorial and follow-on reception on December 13th. My thanks go out to Joe O'Connor, Hugh O'Brien, and Jerry Burke for your support of the activity as well.



In the future, we may want to consider providing an honor guard for the ceremony. We only need a couple of more interested Hibernians. Most of us have military experience, so marching wouldn't be a problem. I have the flags. This would increase our exposure not only at the wreath-laying, but also during several parades throughout the year.



March will be here before we know it! We need to start planning for our celebration of St. Patrick's Day at St. William of York Church now. I believe we need to give serious thought about starting the raffle for the trip to Ireland that we discussed a couple of months ago. Please, give this some serious thought and we will discuss it at our next meeting.

Coffee and Doughnuts

We sponsor a coffee and doughnut breakfast the fourth Sunday of each month at St. William of York Parish. Thus far, it





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has been successful and has the potential for far more success. This function is not labor intensive, but does take 2-3 Hibernians and/or family members to set up and monitor the activity between 6:30 am until after the 12:15 pm Mass. This gives us an opportunity not only to replenish our coffers, but also a chance to recruit new members. Volunteers can contact either Bruce Denault at 540-446-9123, bdenault2002@yahoo.com, or Bob Ghormley at 540-752-9613, bobkatss@mac.com.

Membership

Membership is the life blood of any organization. Presently, we have only 24 members. **We need to actively recruit!!** We need to revitalize our Division and take advantage of every possible opportunity to make every Irish-Catholic man aware of us, what we do, and how to join!!

For starters, I have drafted a short article for publication in church bulletins and forwarded it to our points-of-contact for each Parish who are as follows:

St. William of York: Bruce A. Denault
St. Patrick's: Bill Halpin
St. Jude's: Hugh O'Brien
St. Mary's: Jeff Fitzpatrick
Lake Anna: Jerry Burke

Any ideas for recruiting or getting our name out there for awareness and recognition will assist our recruiting efforts. Also, if anyone is interested in filling the billet as our Organizer, please let me know. Your assistance in recruiting will be greatly appreciated.

Tower Degree

Fifty per cent of our Division has not taken the Tower Degree. I encourage any member who has not yet taken it to consider it as a part of your growth as a Hibernian.

The world famous Brian Boru Degree Team will conduct The Tower Degree after our 2009 AOH State Convention on July 19th. Those interested, please contact Bruce Denault at bdenault2002@yahoo.com or call (540) 446-9123.



Dues

Dues for 2009 are due. If you are 75 years old or older, all that is required is \$10 to cover your per capita to State and National headquarters. All others are required to pay the entire \$24. Please pay at the next meeting or send your money to:

Bruce A. Denault
14 Savannah Ct.
Stafford, VA 22554

By-Laws

We have up-dated our Division By-Laws. Our last meeting was a great example of democracy in action!! My personal thanks goes out to all who participated. I will formalize our amendments and present them to the State Board during our Quarterly Stae Meeting in January. I do not anticipate any problem getting their endorsement. I will monitor the progress through completion with National Board approval.



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Upcoming Events

State Quarterly Meeting. The next State Quarterly Meeting is scheduled for January 17, 2009 tentatively at Our Lady of Angles in Woodbridge.

AOH State Convention Committee Meeting: I anticipate another coordination meeting in late January. I feel comfortable with the icebreaker, hotel, and the arrangements with St. William of York Parish for their facilities. We still need to finalize the catering, the entertainment during the banquet, the program and a myriad of small miscellaneous details.

St. Patrick's Day:



Our St Patrick's Day celebration actually begins at 11:00 on Saturday, March 14 at the Blue and Gray Brewery. The parade kicks off at noon and the festivities will last at least until 3 pm.

That evening, enjoy Celtic music and dancing as our celebration continues with a corned beef and cabbage dinner at St. William of York Parish.

The Irish-American Social Club, in conjunction with the Fredericksburg Jaycees, sponsors the Fredericksburg St. Patrick's Day Parade in downtown Fredericksburg Sunday evening, March 15th.

As I get more details, I will pass them on.

Irish Marines

The curator at the National Marine Corps Museum is scheduled to talk at 1 pm on March 28 at the museum. He will discuss the Irish Marines.

Unfinished Business

Honor/color guard.

In the past, there had been an expressed interest in our Division starting an honor/color guard for participation in parades. If that interest still exists, please contact Bruce Denault at 540-446-9123, bdenault2002@yahoo.com

Division Hats and shirts.

If there is an interest in purchasing shirts, hats, jackets or any other Division-specific clothing, again, please contact Bruce Denault at 540-446-9123, bdenault2002@yahoo.com

Irish at the Battle of Fredericksburg

The Irish Brigade under General Thomas F. Meagher suffered its most severe casualties in December at the Battle of Fredericksburg where its fighting force was reduced from over 1600 to 256. The brigade was involved in the northern battleground at Fredericksburg, where they assaulted the sunken road in front of Marye's Heights. Ironically, one of the regiments manning the sunken road defenses was a predominantly Irish Regiment commanded by General Thomas Reade Rootes Cobb. Knowing that Cobb's men manned the wall, and that both Cobb's and Meagher's units contained members of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, an organization dedicated to gaining military experience in the United States then freeing Ireland from Britain after the Civil War, Lee ordered reserves sent to the position. He need not have worried.



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Cobb's men helped decimate the Irish Brigade before the reinforcements could settle in place. It was at Fredericksburg that Lee allegedly referred to Meagher's regiment as the "Fighting 69th".

the "Angel of Marye's Heights" offered water to one adversary after another. After helping those that he could, he crossed back to the safety of his lines, and resumed his duties as a Confederate soldier defending those lines.

***Sgt. Richard Kirkland - The Angel of
Marye's Heights***



No longer able to withstand the wrenching moans of the suffering wounded and dying Union soldiers, 19-year-old Confederate Sergeant Richard Kirkland of the 2nd South Carolina approached Brigadier General Joseph Kershaw, CSA, seeking permission to go to their aid. Initially hesitant, the General acquiesced, refusing however to allow the white flag that would ensure his safety. Despite the danger, Kirkland sprang forward over the stone wall with canteens full and ventured out between the hostile lines. At first, Federals fired upon the young man but ceased as they soon discovered his merciful intent. Then cheers rang out from both sides as the man to become known as

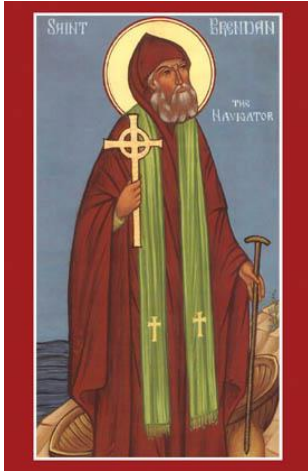


In September of 1863, Sergeant Kirkland would find himself fighting in the western theater as a detachment from Lieutenant General Longstreet's Corps moved west to support General Braxton Bragg's efforts to stop Union Major General William Starke Rosecrans and the Army of the Cumberland. They would do just that during the Battle of Chickamauga which would produce both a Southern victory and 34,600 casualties. Sadly, the valiant Sergeant ranked among those killed during this colossal battle. Mortally wounded in a failed charge, Kirkland exhorted his comrades to, "Save yourselves" adding "Tell Pa, I died right".



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Saint Brendan



***Patron of
boatmen,
sailors,
travelers, and
whales***

**St. Brendan
(486?–578?)**

Also known as *St.
Brendan the
Voyager, St.*

Brendan the Navigator, and St. Brandon

Born near Tralee in County Kerry, Brendan spent his childhood in the care of St. Ita at Killeedy, continued his studies under a number of other Irish saints, and was ordained a priest in 512. From an early age, Brendan was a great traveler, establishing a number of monasteries in Ireland, of which the most famous was Clonfert, founded about 560. Brendan also reputedly journeyed

to Scotland, Wales, and Brittany, furthering the spread of Christianity to these areas.

But Brendan's fame as a traveler really rests on *The Voyage of St. Brendan*, a tale popularized during the Middle Ages.

According to this account, Brendan and a company of monks set sail on a fantastic journey in search of a fabled paradise. Along the way they visited a number of islands in the Atlantic – one of which turned out to be the back of a whale! – and possibly even reached the Americas. Although there is no historical proof of this journey, an expedition organized in the mid-1970s demonstrated that it was possible for the monks to have sailed a coracle of wood and leather that far. Whether or not the monks reached the New World centuries before Columbus will probably never be known.

***NOLLAIG SHONA AGUS ATHBHLIAIN FAOI MHAISE DAOIBH
OUR NEXT MEETING IS 7:30 PM TUESDAY JANUARY 20th***
