

IN FRIENDSHIP, UNITY AND CHRISTIAN CHARITY



GENERAL MEAGHER'S DISPATCHES

June 2014

Volume 2/Number 5

>No Division Meeting in July<

HAPPY FATHERS' DAY JUNE 15TH

CELEBRATE THE U.S. ARMY'S BIRTHDAY & FLAG DAY ON 14 JUNE

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Brothers,

As I write this the sun is shining and the air is cool. A far contrast from January and the difficult winter many of us had!

If there were opportunities to enjoy our Irish heritage we certainly took advantage of them over the last few months. My personal favorite was celebrating the Feast of Saint Patrick and the extraordinary privilege of venerating a first class relic of our Patron during the Holy Mass celebrated by our Chaplain, Father Kevin Fimian.

Not to be overlooked were in-depth presentations on our history and heritage, welcoming new Brothers into our Order and advancing others who took the Tower Degree, conducting our first annual golf tournament and raising money to support our several charitable programs in an unprecedented amount and publicly displaying Irish culture in our local libraries.

We also have been marching in parades, participating in festivals, holding a breakfast and dinner celebrating the Irish people, financially supporting the youth of our parishes in their participation with Work

Camp activities as well as providing scholastic grants to students from Holy Cross Academy and St Patrick School who will attend either St Michael's or St John Paul the Great high schools.

I want to compliment all of you who participated in any manner not only in the above activities but in those I haven't mentioned. You have demonstrated unequivocally that you understand the phrase:

It's our Division and all of us have to get involved!

I strongly encourage each of you to continue that involvement and request that you join us on Tuesday, June 17, 2014 for a **Shamrock Degree** at which we will welcome more new members to our Order!

I am truly proud of all that you have accomplished! Thank you!

Respectfully,
Bill

[Pray the Rosary!](#)

America's Army: Service to the Nation, Strength for the Future

Two hundred thirty nine years ago, on June 14th 1775, our nation's leaders established the United States Army, the beginning a rich heritage of successfully defending this great country and her citizens.

MEMORIAL DAY 2014 IN FREDERICKSBURG



Brother Gene McKenna served in the USMC 1958-62. He renders a perfect salute at the Fredericksburg War Memorial Park (*Free Lance Star* photo by Reza Marvashti)

DIVISION ORGANIZER

“Discover Your Irish Heritage”: This is our recruitment mantra. Please remember to wear your AOH name badge to Mass on Sundays. The more visibility we have in our parishes, the higher the probability we’ll increase our membership. We need to collectively shepherd the Meagher Division’s health and welfare with the ‘Hibernian Zeal’ we pledged when we joined the division. Working in unison we should be able to support a goal of recruiting one new brother each month. Irish-Catholic men are not hard to find. They’re everywhere in our everyday activities – in our family, at work, in the neighborhood, at church, in other organizations. Be active in our recruitment effort! **AND** don’t forget -- sell every Trip for Two to Ireland raffle ticket you can! Our good works are dependent on your continuous effort.

FROM THE IRISH HERITAGE COMMITTEE

Battle of Clontarf – Just 1,000 Years Ago

The events that took place at the Battle of Clontarf on Good Friday, April 23rd, 1014 were

the culmination of two centuries of strife, treachery, failed alliances and treaties between

the Irish Celtic chieftains themselves on the one hand and their relationships with the invading Norsemen who had taken a foothold in Ireland.

The first Vikings had arrived in Ireland some two centuries earlier and gradually established settlements around Ireland and engaged in trade and commerce. By 853 'Olaf the White' had assumed control of Dublin. He married the daughter of Áed Finnliath, one of the Irish high-kings --king of the northern Uí Néill (descended from Kings of Tara and ruled Ulster).

Alliances between the Vikings and the Irish chieftains were commonplace as Viking presence became a political inevitability. There was, however, some opposition. This was especially in Munster where King Brian Boru's aim was to unite all the warring Celtic kingdoms under one rule and one High King.

Prelude to Battle

In 1013, Mael Mordha, the king of Leinster went into revolt after inter-marriage alliances with Brian had broken down. He joined forces with the Vikings. Together, they initially attacked the kingdom of Mael Sechlainn of Meath who summoned the help of King Brian.

Brian set off towards Dublin with 4,900 troops made up 2,000 Munster men, 1,400 Dalcassians (also Munster men), and 1,500 Connacht clansmen. Opposing them were Mael Mordha's army of 4,000 Leinster men allied to 3,000 Viking warriors.

The Battle Ground

Although only a small segment of the battle was fought close to the seafront at Clontarf, the historic encounter of Good Friday 1014 entered the annals as the Battle of Clontarf. This is because some 2,000 Vikings landed in longboats at Clontarf that morning.

As the two opposing armies faced one another that day the Vikings and the Leinster men were lined across the sloping plains bounded by the sea and the River Tolka, while King Brian's army occupied the high ground near Tomar's Wood in Phibsboro.

The most ferocious part of the battle was fought at the Battle of the Fishing Weir. Historic accounts of the battle also refer to the 'savage encounters' fought on the 'Bloody Fields of Marino'.

Battle Victory for Brian

The result of the bloodiest day in ancient Ireland was a rout for King Brian, although some 4,000 of his troops lay dead on the battlefield. In contrast some 6,000 Leinster men and Vikings were slaughtered including every single Viking leader. King Brian's army drove the fleeing Vikings back towards the sea at Clontarf.

A French historical account written at that time tells us that: 'The victory was won over the strangers and the Leinster people by the force of war, superior exertion and indomitable bravery'.

Death of King Brian

Although Brian had won the greatest victory of his long career, he did not live long to enjoy it. As he knelt praying in his tent near Cross Guns, the Isle of Man, Viking Leader, Brodir, who was hiding in the adjacent woods, ran into Brian's tent slaying the 84-year-old with his axe. Brodir was later captured and slaughtered by Wolf the Quarrelsome, the younger brother of King Brian.

The Outcome

A period of relative peace followed where the Celtic chieftains and the Vikings lived together in a spirit of harmony with the emphasis on greater integration, co-operation and commerce.

The legacy of the Vikings in Ireland is extensive. Dublin, Cork, Wexford, Limerick and Waterford were founded by the Vikings and all developed into the major cities of the modern era. The Vikings introduced coinage and international commerce to Ireland providing evidence of the degree to which the Vikings changed from being raiders to merchants and settlers. They also introduced the use of surnames; many survive today. Names such as Doyle, Halpin, Higgins, Loughlin, McLaughlin, McManus, and O'Rourke are some of the Irish surnames originating with the Viking invasions in the late 700s AD.

Genealogy 101

"Secrets of Tracing Your Ancestors" by W. Daniel Quillen, Paperback, 5th Edition, 240 pages (Review by Aubrey Fredrickson) This book is for beginners. It's a quick, easy read, but packs a lot of family history know-how between its covers. You've probably discovered how confusing and frustrating researching your family tree can be – often just figuring out how to get started. What

you need is some helpful advice from an expert. As Quillen states in his introduction, his purpose in writing this book was to "show you the professional genealogist's secrets". A Sixth edition of the book came out earlier this year. It has expanded information on internet research and access to certain types of records

Trip to Ireland Anyone?

Join the Washington DC St. Patrick's Day Committee on their trip to Ireland from 18 to 28 September. The trip includes flights, accommodation, 1916 Easter Rising and Kinsale Walking Tours and visits and admission fees to Glasnevin Museum, the Guinness Storehouse, the National Museum, Kilmainham Gaol, Glendalough, Smethwick's Brewery, Dunbrody Famine Ship, Ferns Castle, Irish National Heritage Park, Old Midleton Distillery, Drombeg Stone Circle, Dursey Island Cable Car, Bantry House & Gardens, King John's Castle. The cost of participation is \$2,995.

For more information contact Monica at celtictraveler@gmail.com.

SAVE THE DATE: This year, September 27th is **Halfway to Saint Patrick Day.**

Your Heritage Committee arranged for a sit-down dinner (not a buffet) at Lake of the Woods clubhouse. Brother Neil Buttimer has volunteered to manage the event. In addition to butter, rolls, a salad and desert, you'll have a choice of a corned beef dinner or a salmon dinner. Naturally our traditional give-away AOH pint glass includes a free beer (or a free glass of wine), door prizes, live Irish Music, superb Irish dancers and céili dance lessons to make for a great evening. Tickets (only \$35/person) will be available at our June meeting (buy early and buy often!). For more information or to purchase tickets contact Neil at 540-972-0083 or Heritage Committee chairman, Bill Halpin at 540-972-5903

The Irish Viet Nam Veterans Memorial Project now lists 30 Irish Citizens

Another name has been added to our list of Irish nationals who died as a result of duty with U.S. Forces in Viet Nam. U.S. Army **Specialist 5 Michael Noel Faherty's name was added to the Wall in Washington on May 11, 2014.** Michael Faherty's is a sad story. He was serving in Saigon when his father suddenly died in Ireland. He was sent home on emergency leave to attend the

funeral and console his widowed mother. Shortly after his arrival in Ireland, he was diagnosed with Malaria and Blackwater Fever and died at age 22 on July 25, 1968.

His grave in Galway has an American military grave marker. Thirteen names were added to the Viet Nam memorial in May. Michael was the only one without a family

member present for the ceremony when the newly engraved names were revealed.

His name will be added to the **Irish Viet Nam Veterans Memorial** in Ennis, Ireland, bringing the total to 30: 29 men and one woman.

As you know from previous *Dispatches*, donations have not met expectations and the project may be delayed, or worse. The Irish Viet Nam Veterans Memorial Project registered 501c. (3) organization;

therefore, donations are legitimate tax deductions. This project is endorsed by the Virginia AOH State Board, the Vietnam Veterans of America, the Embassy of Ireland, and many other Irish/Irish-American organizations. We are soliciting your donations to assist in this worthy project. Donations can be made through www.IVNVMP.org or mailed to IVNVMP PO Box 90592, Alexandria, Va. 22309

HERE'S ANOTHER NAME TO BE HIGHLIGHTED ON THE WALL IN ENNIS

We're working to have a US Navy Destroyer named in his honor: CPL Patrick Gallagher, USMC, NAVY CROSS 1967

Born Feb 1, 1944 Ballyhaunis, Co. Mayo, Ireland; Died March 30, 1967 Da Nang, Republic of Vietnam

When he was 18, Patrick went to live with his aunt on Long Island and began his new life in America. In 1966 he was drafted and joined the US Marine Corp, after a three week visit home he returned to New York and in April he shipped out to Vietnam with Hotel Company, 2/4 Marines, 3rd Marine Division as an Ammunition Carrier with an infantry unit.

In July 1966, while other members of his unit slept, enemy fighters infiltrated the area and on approaching his unit's position threw grenades in on top of his squad. "Four of them had been manning a defense post at Cam Lo near the border with North Vietnam, when it was attacked by Communist forces. Patrick kicked a grenade out of their position before it exploded and,

as the citation for the Navy Cross read "another enemy grenade followed and landed in the position between two of his comrades. Without hesitation, in a valiant act of self-sacrifice, Corporal Gallagher threw himself upon the deadly grenade in order to absorb the explosion and save the lives of his comrades."

As the three other marines ran to safety two further grenades landed in the position and exploded, "miraculously injuring nobody". Patrick's squad leader ordered him to throw the grenade he was lying on into a nearby river. It exploded on hitting the water. "Through his extraordinary heroism and inspiring valor in the face of almost certain death, he saved his comrades from probable injury and possible loss of life," the citation continued.

"It is a pleasure to pin this on your breast," said Gen Westmoreland, at the awards ceremony. It is said that Patrick was told at the time that the only reason the military

authorities decided to award Patrick the Navy Cross, and not the Congressional Medal of Honor, was only that the grenade had not exploded and killed him if it had, he would have certainly been a shoe-in.

His bravery meant Patrick had to tell his family he was in Vietnam. On January 28th, 1967, he wrote home. He had just heard that day about the coming award and wrote to tell his Mom before she was contacted by the expected news stories in New York and at home in Mayo. Pat began the letter: "I hope you won't be too mad at me for the news I got for you. When I was at home last year I had my orders for Vietnam when I went back to the US. I have been in Vietnam since last April (1966) and I will be leaving here in 60 days. Now don't get worried. Everything is going just fine here and I am enjoying it very much.

"I was afraid you might worry too much so I made my aunt and sister in New York promise they would not tell you I was there. I had planned on not telling you until I got back to the US." He made light of his heroism. "It was not much but they made a big thing of it," he said.

Tragically, on March 30th, 1967, he was shot dead while on patrol in Da Nang. He was 23. The American embassy in Dublin contacted Father Rushe, parish priest in Ballyhaunis. He told Patrick's parents following that Sunday's Mass. Bob's casket was escorted home by Staff Sergeant Moylan, (a cousin who had preceded Patrick into the Corps) who laid a wreath on the grave on behalf of the US Forces and then

presented the American flag which draped the coffin, the Navy Cross insignia and the citation to Mrs. Gallagher, mother of the deceased.

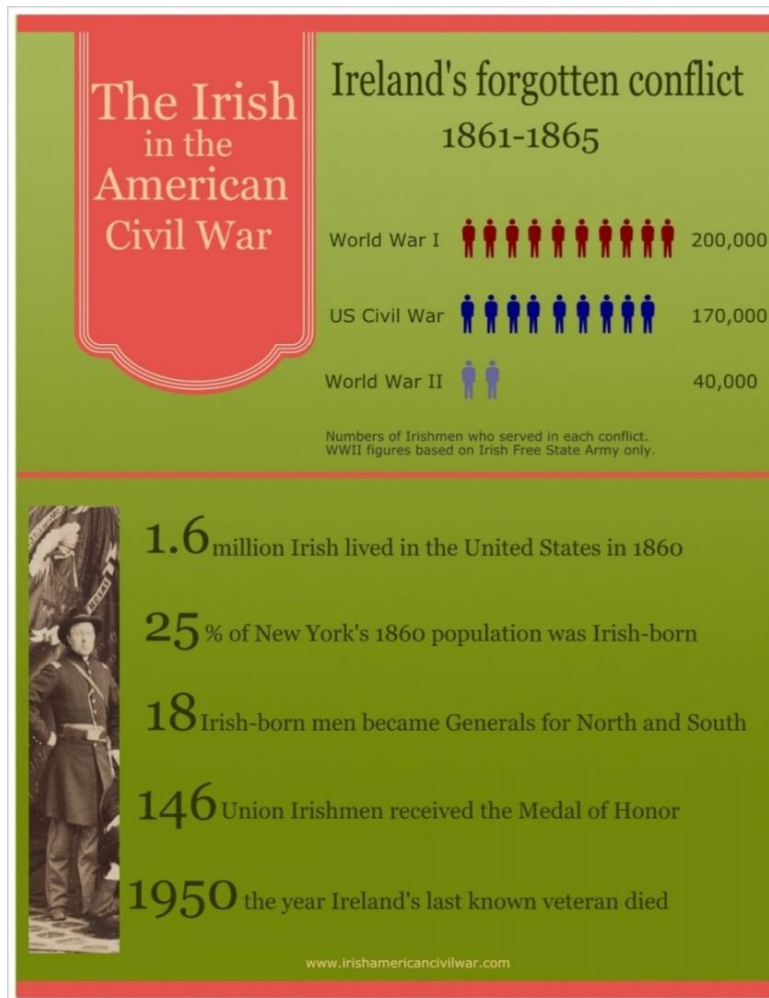
The US Navy is slated to procure a Destroyer Class DDG Ship in 2017 which would be 50 years from when Patrick died in action. This would be a unique way for our country to say thank you for your shining example, courageous selflessness in defense of your fellow Marines, and your mission. There would be no better recognition of this service & commitment than a powerful modern vessel out in the world at sea, under the US Navy Flag, carrying the name of one of her immigrant heroes!

While the **Secretary of the Navy has the authority to assign names to vessels and the tradition of reserving the Destroyer classes to be named for heroes of the US Navy, Marine Corp & Coast Guard, there is a hesitancy to name a ship for a non-American.** (Not impossible, but not many so far...) However, with your help and that of your friends and communities, we think the Secretary could be persuaded that Patrick Gallagher fully committed himself to the USA, and there should be nothing that would stop us from celebrating his service, and its shining example to generations of immigrants that now make this our home.

To HELP, sign petition at <http://www.ipetitions.com/petition/patrickgallagher>

... AND BY THE WAY

As our communities commemorate Civil War battles in Fredericksburg and surrounding counties, here's a bit of trivia for the well rounded and informed Hibernian. Keep in mind that Irish immigrants and Irish-Americans have received 2,018 Medals of Honor awarded as of September 17, 2009 (see below).



PRAYER LIST

Pray for a speedy recovery for Brothers Mike Lenihan, John Walsh, Mike Creegan (Father Mychal Judge OFM Division), and for the repose of the soul of MCPO (SEAL) Lenny Pulizzi (USN, ret.) a Knights of Columbus associate and friend of Bill McCarthy.

UPCOMING EVENTS

17 June: *Shamrock Degree* Ceremony at our regular monthly meeting

No Division Meeting in July

30 July-2 August: The 2014 *AOH National Convention* to be held at the Marriott Renaissance Hotel, St Louis, MO. The convention will open with an ice breaker on July 30 and close with the banquet on Saturday (2 Aug) evening. Exemplification of Major Degrees on Aug 2.

August 9: The Annual *Ballyshaners Festival* in Alexandria -- fund raiser to support the annual St Patrick Day Parade.

August 14: *Halfway to Saint Patrick Day Celebration* with the Potomac Nationals. An AOH brother will toss the first pitch and sing our National Anthem.

September 27: The *General Meagher Division Halfway to St Patrick Day Celebration* at the Lake of the Woods clubhouse.

October 11: VAAOH *Quarterly State Board meeting* followed by exemplification of the *Major Degrees* hosted by Father Kelly Division, Manassas.

GENERAL MEAGHER DIVISION ATTIRE

As in most organizations, we have AOH specific attire. In a perfect world every brother would have these articles of clothing.

For semi-formal/formal occasions, the AOH `uniform_ is green sport coat, tri-color sash, white shirt, Irish theme tie, black trousers and ball cap. These occasions include AOH Masses, funerals, AOH dinners, State and National conventions, all parades, and other public events.

- Brothers procure their own green jackets and sashes. One source: http://blazerdepot.com/pages/mens_blazer/augustagreenblazer.html. Say you're with AOH and the \$5.00 small order fee can be waived.
- The AOH tri-color sash. The sash represents the national flag of Ireland and Tri-color AOH sashes are available from LAOH Sister Patricia Ankrom. Email traceysbydesign@aol.com and D. & E. Morrissey (954-426-3514) <http://www.hibernians-shamrock.com/donations.html>.

The sash should be worn over the right shoulder crossing to the left hip (see photo)



At informal events (i.e. Division outings (ball games, picnics, meetings, etc.) the division logo polo or sweatshirts (optional ball cap) are appropriate. Many have already ordered the division polo and sweat shirts and the ball cap. Division logo polo shirts, sweatshirts and ball caps are priced as follows:

- Long sleeve polo: \$22.75 (XXL is extra)
- Short sleeve polo: \$19.75 (XXL is extra)
- Sweat shirt: \$21.25 (XXL is extra)
- Ball Cap: \$14.00

EDITOR'S NOTE: Every Brother is encouraged to submit an article for publication in the *Meagher Dispatches*. Makes my job a lot easier!

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