



GENERAL MEAGHER'S DISPATCHES

March 2014

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IN FRIENDSHIP, UNITY AND CHRISTIAN CHARITY

"The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place." George Bernard Shaw, Irish writer

St Patrick Day message from Ireland's Ambassador Anne Anderson

Beannachtaí na Féile Pádraig!

A Chairde, Dear Friends,

I am very much looking forward to my first St. Patrick's Day as Ambassador of Ireland to the United States. Since taking up duty six months ago, I have been struck every day by the strength of the bonds that exist between the United States and Ireland, bonds which are especially highlighted and reinforced during the St. Patrick's Day period.

The events (of the month) provide a great opportunity for Irish people and friends of Ireland to come together to celebrate our cultural heritage and our national day. I hope you enjoy the spraoi (fun) of the season, and I look forward to celebrating St. Patrick's Day with you.

Le gach dea-ghuí,

Anne Anderson
Ambassador



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Brothers,

March is the busiest month of the year from a programmatic perspective. One only has to look at the calendar which itself is in a state of flux as events and activities abound.

The largest undertaking of course is our relentless effort to plan and work toward a successful Golf Tournament. Brother Jim O'Donnell and his committee are surging forward with unrelenting determination but they need our help.

As I mentioned in this space last month, the event will be held at Lake of the Woods Golf Course on Monday April 21, 2014.

I am asking each of you to participate in some way to make it a success. The tournament is intended to draw Hibernians from all over the area but isn't limited just to members of the Order. Anyone and everyone is eligible. We also still need you to play, form teams and spread the word to other golfers of your acquaintance or volunteer to perform other tasks. If you don't play golf, we still need your assistance. I am an expert on selling a Mulligan, a 50/50 ticket or a raffle ticket for a Trip for Two to Ireland and as I've indicated before, I'll be happy to train you!

Don't hesitate to encourage individuals and businesses along with professionals like doctors, dentists, attorneys, CPAs and others to sponsor a hole as well and even better to join us for the day!. Details are elsewhere in this newsletter. **Please always remember It's our Division and all of us have to get involved!**

If you have questions, just call me at 786-6203 or Jim O'Donnell at 412-2571. On another note, we are planning on conducting a **Shamrock Degree** at our monthly meeting on March 18th. I really look forward to seeing you there!
Respectfully,
Bill
[Pray the Rosary!](#)

IRISH HERITAGE MONTH ACTIVITIES

IRISH HERITAGE MONTH DISPLAYS

The Irish Heritage Committee is at work coordinating appropriate displays of Irish/Irish American history, tradition and culture at area libraries. Des Flanigan was instrumental in arranging this new initiative in the Fredericksburg area. The Salem Church and Rappahannock Central libraries will feature prominent displays in high traffic areas and permit AOH brothers to interact with their patrons of 20 and 26 March respectively. Several brothers have volunteered for those dates. The Wilderness Library is smaller and will have a static display of Irish crystal, porcelain and knitted products in a lobby display case and smaller versions of our display placards (attached below) are affixed to the foyer wall. Also, our display placards were reduced to 8½ x 11 and handed out to party goers at the Lake of the Woods St Patrick Day dinner party.

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ANNUAL GAELIC MASS

Brothers Halpin, Hogan, and O'Brien travelled north on March 10th to participate in the AOH Annual Gaelic Mass celebrated by Father Jerry Creedon, a County Cork native, at St Charles Borromeo Church in Clarendon. We enjoyed a wonderful choir singing in Gaelic. After Mass entertainment the entertainment was enjoyable with spontaneous song, poetry, and Irish dance. John Hogan captured the celebration in a few photos.



Father Jerry Creedon



O'Neil School Dancers



From right to left:

Pat Troy, Past National Director & AOH Life Member
Bill Halpin, Virginia State Board and Immediate Gen. Meagher Division Past President
Hugh O'Brien, Past State and Gen. Meagher Division Past President
JJ Kelly, National Director and Past State President

HOLY CROSS ACADEMY DINNER

The Annual St Patrick Dinner at Holy Cross Academy was held on March 13; approximately 100 people attended. The Muggivan School of Irish Dance performed and they were spectacular! Our thanks to Jeff Fitzpatrick who arranged the evening and provided the food and beverages; to the kitchen help -- Paul O'Brien, Tommy Lyons, Pat Fogarty, and Neil Mulcahy -- who did most of the heavy lifting; and to the 2014 Confirmation class who served and bussed tables. Lisa Arthur, the confirmation team leader, did a heroic job setting up and taking down tables, ensuring trash containers were available, and much more!

ST PATRICK DAY PARADE AND FESTIVAL

It was a truly beautiful day for parade -- blue skies, warm weather and a larger than expected crowd lined Main Street to cheers the marchers. Brother Jeff Fitzpatrick who organizes this each year deserves our special gratitude. More than 25 brothers and family members turned out to for this important annual and public display of our Irish-Catholic Heritage. Chaplain Father Fimian led the marchers in prayer prior to kick-off and marched with the division to the Irish festival tents. The festival following the parade included great food, booth displays from St Michael the Archangel High School, Birthright and others, but was highlighted by the Muggivan Irish Dance School dancers who captivated the the attention of young and old alike



ST PATRICK DAY DINNER PARTY

By any measure the ST Patrick Day dinner party that followed the parade and festival was a great success. About 50 brothers, spouses and guests filled the venue as 'Ned's Oldies but Goodies' played traditional Irish music and requests. The food was excellent, the speeches short, and the dance floor crowded!



IRISH BREAKFAST AT ST MARY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Brothers Tommy Lyons and his wife, Sue, Rusty O'Brien, John L Sullivan and AOH candidate Randy James worked long hours on Sunday morning and into the afternoon to provide scones, bangers and mash, and coffee to a large number of patrons. The event could not have happened without their selfless hard work. As in past years, representatives from Mary's Shelter worked alongside our AOH brothers.

SOLEMNITY OF ST PATRICK MASS

The local highlight of Irish Heritage Month began at 7:30PM on March 17th, as our Chaplain Father Kevin Fimian celebrated Mass at Saint Patrick Church. An estimated 100 people attended. A first-class (*ex ossibus*) relic of Saint Patrick was present (photo below) for all who attended this wonderful celebration to venerate. Music Director Maureen McClure and the St Patrick choir were spectacular in every aspect, performing music designed specifically for this Mass.



MARCH MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

President McCarthy presided over our March that included the Shamrock Degree ceremony to welcome four brothers to the Order. They are: Andy Link, Larry Pratt, Michael Timm, and Dave Turley. President McCarthy plans to include the Shamrock Degree in every second

meeting this year; currently five candidates are approved and awaiting entry into the Order. Worthy of note, the division resolved to avoid Guinness, Samuel Adams (Boston Beer Company), and Heineken products. The noted companies withdrew sponsorship for the Boston and New York City St Patrick Day parades in support of antithetic LGBT activists' demands to pervert the parade themes of Irish Heritage and recognition of Saint Patrick as the Patron Saint of the Irish. The resolution encourages all AOH brothers to do the same.

IRISH HERITAGE READING CHALLENGE

To promote deeper understanding of Irish/Irish American history, the Irish Heritage Committee is proposing the Division embark on a book reading adventure. Here's the thought: We'll develop a list of meaningful and known to be accurate historic novels and nonfiction. Brothers can select from the list and voluntarily present a short review/synopsis either in writing to the newsletter editor (preferred) or in a short talk at a division meeting. Books need not be non-fiction; there are many outstanding and historically accurate novels (e.g. *Trinity*, *Tenants in Time*, *Year of the French*), among the vast array of non-fiction books (e.g. *The Green Flag*, *The Story of the 116th Pennsylvania*, *Story of the Irish Race*, etc.). Brother Bob Fitzgerald has already submitted a recommendation: *All Standing* by Kathryn Miles. We look forward to your book recommendations.

DID YOU KNOW . . . (EXTRACTED FROM THE *HIBERNIAN DIGEST*)

- . . . Almost half of Washington's troops in the American Revolution were Irish by birth or descent and among them were 1500 officers, including 26 Generals
- . . . in 1776, New York City was burned to the ground following the Battle of Harlem Heights. It was rebuilt by Irishman James Duane who later became Free New York's first Mayor
- . . . At least 11 of the 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence were Irish by birth or by descent
- . . . Washington's top spy ring consisted of the Irish-American Roe brothers
- . . . 250 Irish names are engraved on the memorial honoring the defenders of Bunker Hill
- . . . 22 of the 54 American patriots killed at Lexington and Concord were Irish American . . .
- . . . William Thompson, of Co. Meath, became the U.S. Army's first General when his Pennsylvania Rifle Battalion was designated as the First Continental Regiment
- . . . Charles Hoban of Co. Kilkenny designed and built the White House, and repaired it after it was attacked and burned by the British in 1814. He also helped in building the Capitol
- . . . Landlords in 1840s Ireland, to avoid a Poor Law tax on the number of tenants they held, evicted and shipped off countless families on "coffin ships" to America and America benefitted by the largest population growth in her history
- . . . America was preserved by the overwhelming number of Irish who enlisted in the Union Army just before and during the American Civil War with 38 companies and regiments having the word "Irish" in their name
- . . . The most celebrated military unit in our nation's history was the legendary Irish Brigade led by General Thomas Francis Meagher, part of which was the distinguished, celebrated and much honored "Fighting 69th"
- . . . The Comstock Lode, America's biggest silver strike, was found by Irish Americans John Mackay, James Fail, James Flood, and William O'Brien in 1873
- . . . An Irish flag stands inside the Alamo in recognition of the largest ethnic group to give their lives defending that icon of independence - they were 12 and among them were Davy Crockett, Jim Bowie, and William Travis - the only U.S. ship ever named for a plant was the U.S.S. Shamrock, a Civil War blockade runner
- . . . 17 U.S. Presidents were descendants of Irish immigrants
- . . . The first to cross New York's famed 59th Street Bridge was a contingent of the Ancient Order of Hibernians on their way to join the N.Y. St. Patrick's Day Parade. The honor was accorded in recognition of the Irish labor that built the bridge.

. . . America's first woman to walk in space was Kathryn Sullivan; the first civilian chosen to go into space was Irish-American Christa Corrigan McAuliffe; and astronaut Col. James Irwin planted a shamrock on the moon

FORGOTTEN WHITE SLAVES'

The history of the African slave trade is well-documented. The Irish have a history of being traded as slaves and this history is largely ignored. Elizabeth I set the stage for a savage program directed specifically to exterminate the Irish. James II and Charles I continued Elizabeth's campaign, but Cromwell almost perfected it.

After the Battle of Kinsale (1601) the English were faced with a problem of some 30,000 military prisoners; they solved this by creating an official policy of banishment. Banishment did not solve the problem entirely, so James II encouraged selling the Irish as slaves to settlers in the New World colonies. The first 'recorded' sale of Irish slaves was in 1612, sold to a settlement on the Amazon River. In 1656, Oliver Cromwell ordered 2,000 Irish children be taken to Jamaica and sold as slaves to English settlers.

James II's Proclamation of 1625 required Irish political prisoners be sold to English settlers in the West Indies. By the mid-1600s, the Irish were the main slaves sold to Antigua and Montserrat. At that time, 70 % of the population of Montserrat was Irish slaves.

African slaves, not tainted with the 'stain of Catholic theology' were often treated better than the Irish. During the late 1600s African slaves were more expensive than the Irish: Africans sold for around £50, while Irish were about £5. The practice of interbreeding Irish with Africans went on for several decades and was so widespread that, in 1681, legislation was passed 'forbidding the practice of mating Irish slave women to

African slave men for the purpose of producing slaves for sale.

[Click here to read John Martin's article :The Irish Slave Trade - The Forgotten 'White Slaves' in its entirety.](#)