

IN FRIENDSHIP, UNITY AND CHRISTIAN CHARITY



GENERAL MEAGHER'S DISPATCHES

<http://www.aohfredericksburg.org/>

November 2015

Volume 3/Number 11

President: Jim O'Donnell **Chaplain:** Father Kevin Fimian **Vice President:** Bob Stevens
Financial Secretary: Bill Gilhooly **Treasurer:** Dick Dowd **Recording Secretary:** Kevin Doyle
Standing Committee: Jim McMorrow **Marshal:** Neil Mulcahy **Sentinel:** Rusty O'Brien,
Newsletter Editor: Bill Halpin

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

My Brothers,

I cannot believe that it is November already. I recently journeyed to Wisconsin for the First Communion of my grandson Conor James O'Donnell. Since my wife does not fly it was a rather long car ride. The beauty of the autumn foliage and the goodness of God our Father awed us as we drove from state to state. November brings another Thanksgiving Day and reminds us of all the things we are thankful for.

With the theme of thanks for this month, I would like to thank all the brothers who stepped up and volunteered to serve as our Division Officers for the 2016 year. I would particularly like to thank my successor, Kevin Doyle who readily said yes to become president when I first asked him several months ago. I have observed the good works that Kevin does at St. Mary. We are most fortunate that he will be our leader starting next month. A special thank you goes out to our nominating committee, Hugh O'Brien, Harry Crisp and Bill Halpin. They are all former Division Presidents and we are fortunate to have their sage advice and vast Hibernian experience helping to guide our Division in right paths.

I wish you and your families all God's Blessings for a most joyful Thanksgiving Holiday season. I thank the good Lord for all of you. May St. Patrick, the glorious patron of Ireland watch over you and yours and keep you safe, happy and healthy.

In Our Motto,
Jim O'Donnell

DIVISION NOMINATIONS FOR FRATERNAL YEAR 2016

- ✓ Kevin Doyle, President
- ✓ Andy Link, Vice President
- ✓ Jack Grey, Recording Secretary
- ✓ Jeff Banks, Financial Secretary
- ✓ Dick Dowd, Treasurer
- ✓ Jack McGovern, Standing Committee
- ✓ Shawn Lenahan, Marshal
- ✓ Paul O'Brien, Sentinel

Gen. Meagher Division Election for our 2016 officers is scheduled for November 17th; Officer Installations are scheduled for December 15th.

Veterans Day in 2015 is Wednesday, 11 November. Veterans Day is intended to honor and thank all military personnel who served the United States in all wars. This day is the anniversary of the signing of the armistice, which ended the World War I in 1918. Originally known as 'Armistice Day', in 1954 Congress changed the word "Armistice" to "Veterans" in response to veteran organizations urging.

The United States Marine Corps birthday is 10 November, the anniversary of the founding of the Corps in 1775.

We thank all Soldiers, Marines, Sailors and Airmen for their service!

OUR IRISH HERITAGE



"We must study our Heritage, for we can only pass on what we preserve. If we only retain trivia ... and fashionable, but distorted versions of our history from uniformed media, we have nothing of lasting value to offer our children about who they really are." National AOH Historian, Mike McCormick

IMPORTANT HERITAGE EVENTS IN DECEMBER

Division Christmas Party: 2PM, December 6th (St Nickolas Day), at St Michael the Archangel High School. We'll need volunteers (Pat Fogarty and Dan Butler already stepped up) for any number of tasks, including menu selection (pot luck for side dishes and desserts), food purchase, set-up and take-down of tables and chairs, decorations, and a Santa. The division budgeted \$500 for food and beverages (based on expenses for the summer picnic this will be more than enough). Any volunteers to stand-in for Santa? The division will spring for the rented suit.

Wreath Presentation at Irish Brigade Memorial and Marye's Heights: For years (at least the past 16 years) our Division has paid tribute to Irish Brigade losses in the Battle of Fredericksburg. In coordination with the National Park Service and the 28th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Regiment (re-enactors), traditionally we present two wreaths - one at the Irish Brigade Memorial at the Fredericksburg City Dock, where General Thomas F. Meagher led the brigade across the Rappahannock River, and a second wreath at Marye's Heights where the Brigade lost more than 40% of its men in a futile attempt to cross the 'Sunken Road'.

"Your soldier's heart almost stood still as we watched those sons of Erin fearlessly rush to their death" Confederate General George Pickett

UPDATE: Irish Viet Nam Veterans Memorial Project (IVNVMP)

After almost a year of inactivity due in part to Matthew Carroll's illness, the project is back on track. You'll recall funding shortfalls placed the original memorial on hold. The Ennis town council in coordination with IVNVMP managers sought to restart the project with a more modest memorial. The town council is receiving new designs and appears to be favoring a new proposal: This Memorial is a curved single polished block of Irish Limestone about six feet high, set into a circle of limestone paving 12 feet in diameter. The names of the fallen and dedications will be inscribed into the limestone. Visitors will be able to trace over

the names. Inset into the top of the memorial is a bronze panel. Seven sections give an illustrative and symbolic outline of Irish participation. When read from left to right the bronze panel has a depiction of the Brian Boru harp. The next five sections reflect the harsh economic climate in Ireland, the hard decision to leave Ireland, the Atlantic passage, and arrival in the USA. The final section is a depiction of the Statue of Liberty. I believe the project is within \$10,000 of the new monetary goal. (I'll have the artist's drawing for next month's *Dispatches*.)

CÚ CHULAINN



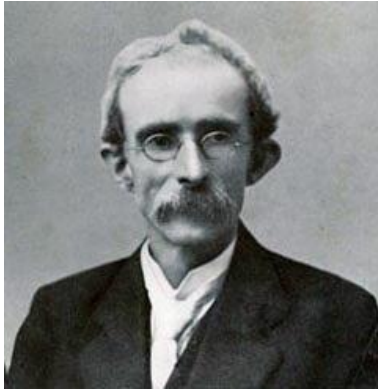
For Irish nationalists, Cú Chulainn is the most important Celtic Irish hero. This bronze sculpture of the dead Cú Chulainn by Oliver Sheppard stands in the Dublin General Post Office in commemoration of the Easter Rising of 1916. According to the best-known legends, he was tricked by his enemies into an unfair fight and slain at the age of 27. The sculpture depicts Cú Chulainn tied to a pillar, slumped in mortal agony, his head hung in defeat, the shield falling from his grasp, yet still, his sword is still clutched tightly in his right hand. A raven, with talons gripping the flesh is on his shoulder. The statue's image was used on the 1966 ten shilling coin produced for 50th anniversary of the Easter Rising. The Military Star for the Irish Defense Forces has the image of Cú Chulainn on the obverse.

(The **Military Star** is similar to the U.S. Military's Purple Heart; however, it is awarded posthumously to Irish Defense Force personnel killed or fatally wounded as a direct result of a hostile action in the course of service on approved military duties overseas.)

In our series on 1916 Easter Rising Irish patriots, this month feature:

Thomas J. Clarke

"We all believe we have saved the soul of Ireland. We have stuck the first successful blow for freedom. Freedom is coming, but between this and freedom, Ireland will go through hell. Ireland will never lie down again."



Tom Clarke was born on 11 May 1857. His is arguably the person most responsible for the 1916 Easter Rising. At the age of 20, he joined the Fenian/Irish Republican Brotherhood and by 1880 he was head of the local IRB circle. He was an ardent proponent armed revolution. In August 1881, during riots between the Orange Order and the Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH) in Dungannon, Clarke and other IRB members attacked some Royal Irish Constabulary men. Clarke, fearing arrest, fled to the United States where he became active in the Fenian related Clan Na Gael. In 1883 he was sent to London, under the alias of "Henry Wilson", to blow up London Bridge as part of the Fenian dynamite campaign. He was arrested and sentenced to life in prison. When accusations of torture were verified, he was released after serving 15 years and returned to the USA.

In 1907 he returned to Ireland, opened a tobacconist shop in Dublin, and immersed himself in the IRB which was undergoing a substantial rejuvenation. Clarke maintained a low profile in Ireland, but was influential behind the scenes in the years of preparation for the Rising.

The Irish Volunteers were formed in 1913. Clarke did not join the Volunteers; as a felon he believed his membership would discredit them. However, he convinced Padraig Pearse, the principle spokesman for the Volunteers, to become the critical liaison between the Volunteers and the IRB.

When the IRB Military Council was formed, in 1915, Clarke brokered an arrangement with James Connolly and the Irish Citizen Army. This completed the organization for the eventual rising.

Clarke announced the rising would be on Easter Sunday 1916. He was declared President and Commander-in-chief, but he refused any military rank or honors; these were given to Pearse, who was more well-known and respected on a national level. However, his was first signature on the Proclamation of Independence because of his seniority and commitment to the cause of Irish independence,

Clarke was stationed at headquarters in the General Post Office during the events of Easter Week, where rebel forces were largely composed of Irish Citizen Army commanded by Connolly. Though he held no formal military rank, Clarke was recognized by the garrison as one of the commanders, and was active throughout the week in the direction of the fight, sharing the fortunes of his comrades. He opposed the surrender, but was outvoted. Following the surrender on 29 April, Clarke was held in Kilmainham Jail until his execution by firing squad on 3 May at the age of 59. He was the second person to be executed, following Patrick Pearse.

Before execution, he asked his wife Kathleen to give this message to the Irish People: *'I and my fellow signatories believe we have struck the first successful blow for*

Irish freedom. The next blow, which we have no doubt Ireland will strike, will win through. In this belief, we die happy.'

To learn more, please watch the 41 minute video: *'1916 Easter Rising - The True Story: Thomas J Clarke'* Copy to your browser: www.youtube.com/watch?v=sqwt7r1Tizw

Mike McCormick's newest book ***The Road to Rebellion*** is an excellent, illustrated chronicle of the reasons for the Easter Rising, the events of the six-day battle, and profiles of the 16 executed patriots. **This book should be required reading for all Hibernians** as we prepare to celebrate the Easter Rising centennial next spring. Order it at: www.shamrockandclover.com



OUR DIVISION PRAYERS



Please pray for the repose of the souls of deceased Gen. Meagher Division Brothers and all deceased Hibernians and family members. We pray especially for the repose of the soul of AOH Life Member **Mike Tivnan**, co-founder of the Lt Col Dowd Division and retired Marine, who lost his fight with pancreatic cancer on 31 October 2015. May God's perpetual light shine upon them all; May they rest in peace.

Please keep in your prayers to comfort and heal Brothers Joe O'Connor, Jim McMorrow, Paul O'Brien, Bud Logan, Mike Creegan (VAAOH webmaster); Bud Logan's granddaughter, Julia, and Matthew Carroll (Irish Viet Nam Veterans Memorial Project).



UPCOMING EVENTS



Mark Your Calendars!

Multiple Dates: **Bingo** every Thursday and Saturday evening starting at 6:30PM - at **St Michael the Archangel High School**, 6301 Campus Drive, Fredericksburg, VA 22407 (540) 548-8748). Bring the family!

Multiple Dates: **Roller Derby** at **Golden Skate World** (Five Mile Road) -- Family Friendly Fun. For more information, contact Jill Lenahan (Brother Shawn's wife) at 540-295-2464. John Hogan attended a Derby and reports it is terrific family oriented fun!

November 17: Election of officers for fraternal year 2016

November 26: Thanksgiving Day

December 6: *Family (Pot Luck) Christmas Party at St Michael the Archangel High School!*

O/A December 12: Wreath Laying at City Dock/Marye's Heights!!!

December 15: Installation of 2016 officers



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 optional ball cap. These occasions include AOH State and National conventions, **Masses**, **funerals**, AOH **dinner**s, **parades**, and other **public events**.
- 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 ball cap.

Division Logo Items: Brother Ed Kelly (EJPKelly@yahoo.com) will order Division logo polo shirts, sweatshirts and ball caps.

- Sport Tek Long sleeve polo: \$28.95 (XXL is extra)
- Sport Tek Short sleeve polo: \$26.95 (XXL is extra)
- Cotton Long Sleeve polo: \$22.75 (XXL is extra)
- Cotton Short Sleeve polo: \$19.75 (XXL is extra)
- Sweat shirt: \$21.25 (XXL is extra)
- Ball Cap: \$14.00

Green Jacket: Brothers procure their own green jackets and sashes. One source: http://blazerdepot.com/pages/mens_blazer/augustagreenblazer.html. Visit the website; call the 800 number. Tell them you're with AOH and the \$5.00 small order fee can be waived. Kelly green is the color.

AOH Sash: The AOH tri-color sash represents the national flag of Ireland and should be worn over the right shoulder (green closest to jacket collar) crossing to the left hip. Tri-color AOH sashes are available from:

- LAOH Sister Patricia Ankrom. Email Patricia at traceysbydesign@aol.com
- D. & E. Morrissey (954-426-3514) <http://www.hibernians-shamrock.com/donations.html>