

IN FRIENDSHIP, UNITY AND CHRISTIAN CHARITY



GENERAL MEAGHER'S DISPATCHES

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

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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 McMorro **Marshal:** Neil Mulcahy **Sentinel:** Rusty O'Brien,
Newsletter Editor: Bill Halpin

✠ **Joseph D. O'Connor** ✠

June 9, 1927-December 1, 2015

Joe was a visionary. In 1987 he saw the need to celebrate Irish heritage, culture, and traditions in the Fredericksburg area and helped to establish our division. As a charter member, he was tasked with identifying a man of exemplary character and quality and of Irish Catholic heritage to carry the name of our division forward. For the next 28 years, Joe was a key brother, an inspiration to all. He held four elected positions and innumerable appointed positions. In memory of *An Gorta Mor*, he was a founder of the Fredericksburg Food Bank where he worked for decades to alleviate hunger. He volunteered time to bring `Irishness_ to the community. Joe was the example for all Hibernians, especially our younger brothers. Even into his eighties, Joe was a constant presence at Hibernian events, ceremonies, parades, and celebrations. His sense of humor helped to build camaraderie among our brothers. He was an active recruiter for our Order. He established our traditional post-business meeting social `hour_ of a Smithwicks or Pepsi coupled with day-old Danish pastries and the occasional package of pretzels or cheese puffs. Joe was honored as the 2012 State of Virginia St Columcille Award winner, an honor well deserved. We will miss him greatly.

Eternal rest grant to him oh Lord; may he rest in peace, Amen

NOLLAIG SHONA AGUS ATHBHLIAIN FAOI MHAISE DA OIBH!

(Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!)

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

My Brothers,

This will be my last Dispatches Letter. It has been a distinct honor for me to serve as your president. As a first generation Irish American this has truly been one of the highlights of my life. Thanks to all who helped me and lent their support to make the General Thomas Francis Meagher Division one of the finest Hibernian organizations in the country. To all my brother officers thank you. To all who served as Chairmen of our various committees I am indebted to you.

To our Parish liaisons, Bill Phillips at St. Patrick, John Harris at St. Matthew, Hugh O'Brien at St. Jude and Tommy Lyons at St. Mary you are the lifeblood of this organization. We are a Roman Catholic organization first and the four parishes we serve are the be all and end all of all that we do. You did your jobs magnificently and I sincerely thank you for your many efforts.

To paraphrase St. Paul in his letter to Timothy, `I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. _ I have kept my promise to Bill McCarthy.

I leave the Division in good hands, with Andy Link providing his youth, acumen and leadership to keep the Division on a steady keel. I leave with a tinge of sadness as we bury our fourth brother, Joe O'Connor, this year. Being Irish there is a tendency to become maudlin about the death of those you love. I will fight that urge and raise a parting glass to the lives of four great Hibernians, Phil Booty, Mick Linehan, Bill McCarthy and Joe O'Connor - Great Irishmen, great American veterans and strong and devout Catholics. To lead an organization made up of such men is an honor beyond words.

 `But since it fell into my lot
 That I should rise and you should not
 I'll gently rise and softly call
 Good Night and joy be to you all_

In Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity

James Patrick O'Donnell
President

MEET OUR OFFICERS FOR 2016

PRESIDENT - Richard Andrew (Andy) Link, II

Andy joined the General Meagher Division in 2014 and received the Shamrock Degree that yin March. He received the AOH Major Degrees in 2015. Andy was elected to serve as Vice President for fraternal year 2016; however, he will serve as the President to fill an officer vacancy. Andy also serves as chairman of the Division Pro-Life Committee. Other memberships in the Fredericksburg area include: 3rd Degree Knight of Columbus, Battlefield Council 10246; 4th Degree Knight at Rappahannock Assembly 1613; and a Life Member of the Jack Maas Marine Corps League Detachment 1379.

Andy was born in Baltimore on November 15, 1964. He graduated from Benedictine High School in Richmond and enlisted in the United States Marine Corps in June 1983. Andy holds a Bachelor of Science in Management at National-Louis University in Evanston, Illinois and a Master of Public Administration from the University of Oklahoma. He retired from the Marine Corps in October 2004 and is now employed with Life Cycle Logistics, a contractor for Marine Corps Systems Command in Quantico, VA.

He is very proud of his Irish heritage of the Kelly, Donnelly and O'Keefe families from Tivoli an eastern suburb of Cork city in Ireland. Extraordinary Irish family history includes Andy's great grandmother Mary O'Keefe the widow of Irish immigrant United States Army 1st. Sgt James O'Keefe who died of malaria during the Spanish Philippine-American War in 1907. Andy's grandmother, Katherine O'Keefe was born in the Philippines in 1906.

Andy is married to the former Martha Selina Zermeno (25 Years) from San Mateo County, Daly City, California and they have three daughters: Anna Cristina, Laura Maria and Sarah Elizabeth.

Vice President Daniel J. Mulhern

Dan joined the Ancient Order of Hibernians in 2012 and received the Major Degrees of our Order in Januaruy2013. Dan is a native of North Eastern Pennsylvania and the 6th of 7 children. He graduated from East Stroudsburg University in Pennsylvania with a BS in education. Dan resides in Fredericksburg, VA. He and Lynne have been married for 40 years and are blessed with a son and daughter and 4 grandchildren all living in Fredericksburg. .

Dan was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant in the Marine Corps in 1974 and graduated from numerous schools to include the Defense Systems Management College and the Marine Corps Command and Staff College. Dan retired from the Marine Corps after 20 years of Service at the rank of Major.

After Active duty Dan pursued a career in education and graduated from George Mason University with a Master's Degree in Education (Special Education) and earned a Post Master's Degree from

Virginia Commonwealth University in Administration. Dan is currently the Assistant Principal at Quantico Middle / High School on the Marine Base Quantico Virginia.

Dan was an active member of the Knights of Columbus for many years joining the Father Widmer Chapter in Stafford County in the 1980's. Dan has been a 3rd degree Knight for over 25 years and a 4th degree Knight for over 20 years. He transferred to the Fredericksburg Council in 2011

Recording Secretary - John Clement Grey

John, or Jack, as he is usually called, was born in Wisconsin, graduated the University there, and came to Virginia in the late 50's. He worked for 43 years at Naval Surface Warfare Center, Dahlgren, as a physicist, mathematician and Operations Research analyst. He holds degrees in Physics and Mathematics, having done graduate work at the University of Wisconsin, George Washington University and University of Oklahoma.

Jack and Rochelle moved to Virginia where they raised four children, have 10 grandchildren and 5 great grandsons. They live in Stafford where recently they celebrated their 58th wedding anniversary with family. They have been members of St. Mary church in Fredericksburg for 50 years; he is a 50+ year member of Knights of Columbus 4034, and of the Fourth Degree of the Knights of Columbus.

Jack wanted to join the Hibernians for several years and his wishes were answered. Recently their oldest daughter, Teri, became a certified genealogist. Through her research and documentation from the Irish National Society of Dublin, Ireland, she found the family records. Great great grandfather Gray came to America before 1900, and the family migrated eventually to Wisconsin. Here his son met with much prejudice because he would work whatever jobs were available. For that he was hated by others. So, to avoid the prejudice, he anglicized the spelling to Grey. Whether that worked for him, we don't know but the spelling has remained with the Grey family. True to Irish heritage, there are many family stories, but for now, Jack is happy to have become a Hibernian and looks forward to the brotherhood found in the organization.

Financial Secretary – Jeffrey Edward Banks

Jeff has been an active member of the General Meagher Division since 2012. He grew up in New England (New Hampshire and Connecticut). He and Christina Marie have been married for more than 12 years and they have four young children (Brendan, Aidan, Alexa, and Nolan). They are active parishioners at St. Mary in Fredericksburg. An avid Boston Red Sox, Florida Gator, and Celtic FC supporter, Jeff loves the outdoors and spending quality time with his family.

He holds a M.S. degree in Nuclear Engineering from the University of Tennessee, a M.S. degree in Technical Management from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University and a B.S. degree in Nuclear Engineering from the University of Florida. For more than ten years, Jeff worked at Northrop Grumman in Melbourne, FL where he developed tactical software and supported flight testing activities for the Air Force's Joint STARS surveillance platform. Since 2007, Jeff has worked for the MITRE Corporation in Quantico, VA where he currently provides a myriad of systems and software engineering expertise to various Marine Corps programs.

Treasurer - Dick Dowd

Dick joined the AOH in 2012, received the Order's Major Degrees in 2013, and will be serving his second year as division treasurer. He attended University of Maryland and served five years in the U.S. Air Force. Married, 3 children; re-married years later. Together, he and Peggy have 15 grandchildren. Dick was a manufacturer's representative (sales) for most of his career. After retiring from that, he worked as a Mortgage Loan Officer six years. Dick is a Fourth Degree Knight and was Treasurer of a large, local golf association (Tuesday Goofers) for three years. Dick and Peggy are St Patrick parishioners and they've lived at Lake of the Woods for 13 years.

Chairman, Standing Committee - Jack McGovern

Jack McGovern attends Mass regularly between St. Patrick and St. Mathew's Church in Spotsylvania County. Jack has been a member of the AOH since 1992 when he was initiated as a member of the Lt Col John Dowd Division in Woodbridge, Virginia. He transferred to the General Meagher Division in 2013, and spearheaded a program to collect toys at the Division's annual Christmas Party for Mary's House.

Jack has worked for the City of Fredericksburg Fire Department for more than 15 years and currently serves as a Lieutenant. On top of his assigned duties, he also serves as the NIMS Compliance Officer; Confined Space Team Leader; the Dive and Water Rescue Team Leader; and as a Deputy Team Leader for the Regional Hazardous Materials Team. He also teaches future firefighters throughout the Commonwealth and travels to Guyana, South America annually to assist with developing a fire department at an international airport. Further, Jack has been an active member of the Occoquan-Woodbridge-Lorton Volunteer Fire Department for over 24 years and continues to serve the citizens of that area.

Jack lives in Spotsylvania County with his wife, Jessica and their dog Bubba. In his spare time, Jack enjoys mentoring young children; attending concerts and sporting events; throwing darts; and fishing. He is a fan of the Washington Redskins; Washington Capitals; and the Boston Red Sox- a love which he inherited from his Dad who was born and raised in Cambridge, MA. He hopes to be more active with the AOH and aspires to learn about and educate others about Irish-American Heritage- specifically the influence of those in the local area.

Marshal - Shawn Lenahan (no biography available)

Sentinel - Paul Timothy O'Brien

Paul joined the General Meagher Division in November 2013 at which time he received the Shamrock Degree; he received our Order's Major Degrees in April 2014.

Paul was born in Boston, Massachusetts and graduated from Saint Kevin's Elementary School and Catholic Memorial High School (Christian Brothers of Ireland) in Boston. He holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Government from Suffolk University in Boston.

Paul served in the United States Air Force from 1967 to 1971. He then began a 33-year Federal career serving in the Departments of Treasury, Defense and State. Since retiring from the Department of State in October 2004, he has worked in several security-related positions to include

role-playing for the FBI and DEA Academies in Quantico, Virginia. Paul also volunteered for four years at the National Park Service.

Paul is proud of his Irish roots. His paternal side comes from Belfast by way of County Clare, while his mother's people (Kelliher) hail from Tralee. He has been to Ireland three times and while in South Africa he was able to visit the grave of his great-grandfather, Bernard O'Brien, who was killed in April 1901 while serving in the British army during the Boer War.

Paul is married to the former Patricia Noreen Williams (43 Years) and they have three children and are blessed with three grandsons: Colin, Mason and Benjamin. Paul and Patty O'Brien are parishioners of Saint Jude Catholic Church and reside in Spotsylvania County. Paul is a 3rd Degree Knight of Columbus, a member of American Legion Post 320; National Association of Retired Federal Employees, and Assistant Director of Oblates, Mary Mother of the Church Abbey, Richmond, Virginia. Paul also teaches in the religious education program at Saint Jude Parish, Spotsylvania, Virginia.

NEW BROTHERS

We welcome, David Le Battier, Edward Crenshaw, Tom Donahue, Jake Ruppert, and Danny Tryon, all of whom recently joined our Order. Our division continues to grow. In November, we approved five new applications.

HERITAGE COMMITTEE

We all owe a great Hibernian 'Thank You' to Brothers **Pat Fogarty** and **Danny Tryon** for organizing the highlight of the AOH Christmas Season; for **Dennis O'Leary's** star performance as you know who; everyone who attended and contributed food; and to **Jake Ruppert** who stayed behind to help clean-up. Our family Christmas party was a great success with more than 75 brothers, spouses, children and grandchildren attending. Food and beverages were plentiful and enjoyed by all. Santa was a BIG hit with the children.



Yes Virginia! !



'Twas the Night Before!



Sterio wishes w/helper Shane Quinlan



Enjoying the moment



Rapt Attention



Ready, Set, Gone



Abigail Quinlan leading Grace

NEXT UP!

Honor the Soldiers of the Irish Brigade!

General Thomas F. Meagher Division will honor our namesake with wreath presentations at the Frederickburg Irish Brigade Memorial and at the Sgt Kirkland Memorial statue at Marye's Heights. **This is on Sunday December 13.** We will rendezvous at the **City Dock at 11:45AM** for the 12Noon ceremony. We will reconvene at the **Kirkland Memorial at 1:45PM** (behind the NPS building on Lafayette) for a 2PM presentation.

Maximum participation is encouraged...

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

THIRD IN OUR SERIES OF IRISH PATRIOTS - EASTER 1916

"Don't worry! Those of us that signed the proclamation will be shot, but the rest of you will be set free."

James Connolly (Séamas Ó Conghaile)



Connolly was born in St Patrick's Roman Catholic parish, in the Cowgate district of Edinburgh known as "Little Ireland" in 1868. He had an education up to the age of about ten in the local Catholic primary school, at which point he left school to work as a laborer. Nearly destitute, at age 14 he joined the British Army by falsifying his age and giving his name as Reid. He served in Ireland with the Army for nearly seven years. When rumors abounded that his regiment was destined for India, he deserted the army in order to marry Lillie Reynolds. In 1890, they settled in Edinburgh where he was involved in the Socialist Movement. He opened a cobbler's shop, but this failed after a few months as his work with socialist movement was more important than his business.

Later he was hired by the Dublin Club and he moved his family to Dublin. Under his leadership, the club quickly evolved into the Irish Socialist Republican Party (ISRP). Frustrated with the progress of the ISRP, he emigrated in September

the Socialist Labor Party of America, the Socialist Party of America and the Industrial Workers of the World. He founded the Irish Socialist Federation in New York and authored "Labour in Irish History" that

included a chapter critical of Daniel O'Connell. He returned to Ireland in 1910 as senior member in the Irish Transport and General Workers Union. He founded the Irish Labour Party, was a member of its National Executive, and became one of the leading Marxist theorists of his day.

In 1913 Connolly co-founded the Irish Citizen Army (ICA), an armed and trained body of labor men. Their mission was to defend strikers from the Dublin Metropolitan Police and longer term to establish a socialist Ireland. Though small, just 220 members in 1912, it was well disciplined and trained and ideologically united; its goal was an independent Irish republic. With the outbreak of war, Connolly became increasingly committed to fomenting an insurrection against British rule in Ireland, and threatened to order the ICA to attack British interests. This worried Irish Republican Brotherhood as it had its own plans for an

insurrection. In order to talk Connolly out of any such rash action, the IRB leaders, including Tom Clarke and Patrick Pearse, met with Connolly. The IRB and the ICA agreed to act together at Easter 1916. When the Easter Rising began 24 April, Connolly was Commandant of the Dublin Brigade and as such was *de facto* commander-in-chief. Michael Collins said he "would have followed him (Connolly) through hell."

Following the surrender, Connolly told the other prisoners: "Don't worry. Those of us that signed the proclamation will be shot. But the rest of you will be set free." Connolly was severely wounded during the fighting. Although he had no more than a day or two to live, at dawn on 12 May he was carried to the prison courtyard on a stretcher. After absolution and last rites were administered by Capuchin Father Aloysius, he was carried to the spot where the others had been executed, tied to a chair, and shot.

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



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 General Meagher Division Brother Joe O'Connor, charter member of our division. May God's perpetual light shine upon them all; May they rest in peace.

Please keep in your prayers to comfort and heal Brothers Dick Dowd, Bud Logan, Jim McMorro, Mike Creagan (VAAOH webmaster); 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!

December 15: Division Meeting -- Installation of 2016 officers

January 17: Religious Freedom March in Fredericksburg

January 19: Division Meeting

March 1-31: Irish American Heritage Month -- Our Heritage Committee began working on this project *last* month!

March (TBD): Gaelic Mass

March 12: Annual St Patrick Day parade and Irish festival at Brother Jeff Fitzpatrick's Blue and Grey Brewery, plus kick off of our 2016 *Trip for Two to Ireland Raffle*.

April (TBD): 3d Annual Shamrock Charity Golf Classic

May 17-June 5: The Kennedy Center presents **IRELAND 100: Celebrating a Century of Irish Arts & Culture**, a major festival highlighting Irish culture and its relationship to America. This coincides with a larger global celebration commemorating the 100th anniversary of the 1916 Easter Rising, which led to creation of the Irish Free State and the road to independence. <http://www.kennedy-center.org/festivals/ireland>



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 dinners**, **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>