

IN FRIENDSHIP, UNITY AND CHRISTIAN CHARITY



GENERAL MEAGHER'S DISPATCHES

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

January 2016

Volume 4/Number 1

President: Andy Link **Chaplain:** Father Kevin Fimian **Vice President:** Dan Mulhern
Financial Secretary: Jeff Banks **Treasurer:** Dick Dowd **Recording Secretary:** Jack Grey
Standing Committee: Jack McGovern **Marshal:** Shawn Lenahan **Sentinel:** Paul O'Brien,
Newsletter Editor: Bill Halpin

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Dear Meagher Division Brothers,

As I sat down to write my first Dispatches Letter for this year, I received a kind note from our Immediate Past President Jim O'Donnell reminding me that January 18 would have been Bill McCarthy's 78th birthday. As your new president, I intend to live up to all Irish men of our Division who have preceded me honoring their lives as Irish Gentlemen loving the Irish Heritage, the American way of life, and giving our hearts to Jesus Christ. I am especially obliged for all the Presidents who have preceded me to keep our Division growing, sound and lively. Over the past month, I and my Officers have received guidance from many Brothers of the Meagher Division.



This year, there will be a remembrance of events in March and April retelling the historical sequence of events that led to the rebellion and executions in 1916. The National Ancient Order of Hibernians in America will celebrate the Centenary of the Easter Rising in New York City on April 23 with a Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral. A piped procession will also follow from the cathedral to the plaza on Park Avenue where the office of the Consul General is located. There will be a reading of the Proclamation and speeches to commemorate the 100 year Anniversary.

I also request our Brothers to take time to read General Meagher Division Dispatch and learn more about our proud Irish heritage, support our committees and our 2016 Division events. Please also pray for our dear brothers who have gone before us and continue to pray for our brothers who have been convalescent.

In Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity

Richard Andrew Link, II
President

MAJOR DEGREES

Three General Meagher Division brothers received the Major Degrees of our Order on January 16, fulfilling the promise we all make when taking the AOH pledge. Congratulations are in order for : **Jeff Banks, Shawn Lenahan and Pete Needham**. Bill Halpin, Andy Link, Dan Mulhern and Hugh O'Brien were there as witnesses.

2016 OFFICERS INSTALLATION

State Vice President Bill Halpin installed General Meagher Division officers for Fraternal Year 2016 at the December meeting.



(R- L) President Andy Link, VP Dan Mulhern, Recording Secretary Jack Grey, Financial Secretary Jeff Banks, Treasurer Dick Dowd (Hugh O'Brien standing in), Standing Committee Jack McGovern (Rusty O'Brien standing in), Marshal Shawn Lenahan, and Sentinel Paul O'Brien

HIBERNIAN OF THE YEAR - 2015

Outgoing Division President Jim O'Donnell recognized Gene McKenna as the General Thomas Francis Meagher Division Hibernian of the Year for Fraternal Year 2015. Noting that Gene joined the AOH in 1972, O'Donnell commended Gene for his work in developing the 2015 charities budget, his leadership in orchestrating the Second Annual Shamrock Charity Golf Classic, and the positive awareness Gene brings to our Ancient Order.



ANNUAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM MARCH



Ten Brothers and our steadfast banner carriers Adam and James Lenahan supported this important annual march from the Fredericksburg rail station to the Religious Freedom monument. We were joined by former Cunningham Division and VAAOH State Chaplain, Father Jerry Wooten. Not pictured: Neil Buttimer and Gene McKenna. (photo by Pat Korten)

NEWS FROM THE VAAOH STATE MEETING

The **March for Life** is on Friday, January 22. Hibernians are asked to attend 9AM at St. Mary Mother of God Church (727 East 5th Street NW). Breakfast is immediately following Mass. This is a **sash and medallion** event. The church and the Irish Channel pub are located between the Gallery Place-Chinatown & Judiciary Square metro stops for those taking the metro. No need for a head count, but \$25 is the cost of the breakfast and cash is appreciated.

On April 23, 2016, the **AOH National Board Mass** commemorating the Easter Rising will be celebrated at St Patrick Cathedral, New York City. A reception (*invitation only*) will follow at the Irish Consulate in NYC. The Hilton Hotel in Pearl River (20 miles north of midtown) is offering Hibernians a special room rate. Buses will transport attendees to/from Mass

Several VAAOH divisions are planning **significant activities commemorating the Easter Rising 1916**. See the division reports located in the restricted area of the state website.

2016 AOH National Covention will be held at Harrods in Atlantic City, NJ - 11-14 July.

Father Corby Division has embarked on and **Irish Book Discussion Group**. About sixty interested men and women meet in a local Irish pub once each month. Books are generally historically accurate fiction and non-fiction. (*See the Meagher Division summer reading recommenations printed in the June/July Dispatches*)

The **2015 Hibernian of the Year** awardee is Kevin Cassidy, Past President, St Patrick Division, Virginia Beach. In 2015, Brother Cassidy lived our Hibernian values. He increased division membership, recruited a division chaplain, took a courageous stand in support of Hibernian values when he withdrew from the 2015 Virginia Beach St Patrick Day parade protesting the selection of a grand marshal who publically supports gay marriage and abortion. His stand generated wide spread support among Catholic clergy and Catholics throughout the region.

St Columcille Award was presented to Mike Creegan, Father Mychal Judge OFM Division, Triangle, VA. Mike has served the VAAOH for 16 years as division president in two divisions, as Prince William County president, and on he VAAOH State Board as webmaster.

We remembered in prayer deceased Brothers and charter members each of their repective Divisions: Mike Tivnan, Lt Col Dowd Division, Joe O'Connor, General Meagher Division, Tom Barrett, Major Dooley Division.

Exemplification of the Order's **Major Degrees** followed the state meeting. Twenty brothers from across the state receievd the Major Degrees and became `true Hibernians`.

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

BATTLE OF FREDERICKSBURG COMMEMORATION

Re-uniting General Meagher and Father Corby at the Battle of Fredericksburg Commemoration, December 13, 2015

On beautiful Sunday afternoon, Fredericksburg commemorated Irish Brigade losses in the Battle of Fredericksburg. National Park Service historian Frank O'Reilly presented a stunning account of how General Thomas Francis Meagher inspired his Irish Brigade in the face of near certain death. How he adored his soldiers with green sprigs of boxwood to remind them of their heritage and their future in America. The Irish assaulted the dug-in Confederate positions behind the stone wall. Father William Corby later said it was "*a body of about 4,000 Catholic men marching – most of them – to death*".

Two Virginia AOH Divisions, General Thomas F. Meagher Division (Fredericksburg) and Father Corby Division (Fairfax) joined the National Park Service and the 28th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment re-enactors in the annual ceremonies at the Fredericksburg city dock, where the brigade crossed the Rappahannock River, and at Marye's Heights.



Father Corby Color Guard



Bill & John/City Dock



John & Hugh/Marye's Heights



Shawn Lenahan, John Hogan, Bill Phillips, Frank Connor Gene McKenna
Not pictured, yet present for duty: Tom Donahue, Bill Halpin and Hugh O'Brien

IMPORTANT SPECIAL NOTE: You may have seen in the *Free Lance Star* **Brother Jeff Fitzpatrick** sold the Blue and Gray Brewery to Adventure Brewers of Stafford. Jeff said the 2016 St Patrick Parade and Irish festival will proceed as usual. However, in 2017 and beyond we may need to assess alternatives for the parade and the Irish fest. The 2016 Oktoberfest (final Trip for Two sales) will be held at a venue other than the brewery (TBD).

FOURTH IN OUR SERIES OF IRISH PATRIOTS - EASTER 1916

Edward `Ned_ Daly 25 February 1891 - 4 May 1916



Edward `Ned_ Daly was born into a large and proud Fenian family on February 25, 1891. He was the only son among the ten children born to Edward and Catherine Daly). His father was a Fenian; his sister, Kathleen, married Tom Clarke, an active member of the Irish Republican Brotherhood. His uncle, John Daly, participated in the Fenian Rising on 1867 and remained active in the IRB. They instilled Irish Republicanism in him. When he was a young boy, he wanted to be a soldier, but his family would never allow him to join the English Army. He was educated by the

Presentation Sisters, the Congregation of Christian Brothers, and at Leamy's commercial college. He spent a short time as an apprentice baker in Glasgow, before returning to Limerick to work in a timber yard. He later moved to Dublin where he worked as a wholesale chemist.

Although Ned's sister, her husband, Tom Clarke, and his Uncle Joe instilled Irish Republicanism in Ned, it is unclear when exactly Ned joined the Irish Republican Brotherhood. But in November 1913 he joined the newly founded Irish Volunteers. He studied military manuals and gained the admiration of senior officers in actions such as the Howth gun-running of 1914. He became a brilliant strategist and fighter, and his ties to a few of the leaders and his legendary bloodline helped him fast-track into command. Ned was the youngest person ever to be given the rank of

Commandant and his men followed his orders, despite his youth.

On the day that the Easter Rising of 1916 began, Ned addressed his men somberly: `I have to tell you men, that you will shortly be going into action. At 12 o'clock today, the flag of the Irish Republic is to be raised - now I don't want any cheering - and I also want to make it clear that if anyone wants to withdraw now, then he is at liberty to do so. _ Only one man left and the rest, known as the First Battalion, marched into the battle. They covered the northwest area of Dublin, where some of the heaviest fighting was to take place in the Four Courts area of the central Dublin. He split his 250 men into smaller, more mobile groups that were strategically placed to give each other cover and aid when necessary. His battalion was one of the first to see action during the Rising. He captured 24 loyalists, including English Col J.P. Brereton. Though he was in the midst of a

fierce battle, Ned made sure that his prisoners and the civilians in the area were always cared for. Daly was also captured Linenhall Barracks, which gave him an excellent field advantage. However, an onslaught of English forces caused him to retrograde. Ned set fire to the barracks.

When the order came from Padraig Pearse to surrender, Ned and his men were exhausted, hungry and stretched to their breaking point, but talked of ignoring the order. Daly took charge and made sure that the surrender was

orderly and professional. . He surrendered his battalion on 29 April and was executed by firing squad on 4 May 1916. At the age of 25, he was the youngest to be executed. A priest who was at Kilmainham Gaol before Ned was executed said `I remember well seeing Commandant Daly coming down from the prison cell. He was calm and brave as when he was with his men in Church Street Area. _ He was killed on the same day as Joseph Plunkett, Willie Pearse and Michael Hanrahan.



Mike McCormick's 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 General Meagher Division Brother Joe O'Connor, charter member of our division and Tom Barrett, charter member of the Major Dooley 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, Jim McMorrow, Mike Creegan (VAAOH webmaster); Matthew Carroll (Irish Viet Nam Veterans Memorial Project) and Bridget McCarthy (wife of Halpin's Infantry School classmate who died suddenly on Christmas Eve)



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!

January 19: Division Meeting

January 22: Annual March for Life, Washington DC (see above)

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

March 5: The Alexandria St Patrick Day Parade is March 5th. 8AM Mass will be celebrated at historic St Mary Church

March 12: Annual St Patrick Day parade and Irish festival at Blue and Grey Brewery, plus kick off of our 2016 [Trip for Two to Ireland Raffle](#).

March 14: Gaelic Mass, Cathedral of St. Thomas Moore on March 14 @7:30PM. Bishop Loverde will celebrate Mass!

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: President Link is accepting volunteers for this mission -- 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>