

# IN FRIENDSHIP, UNITY AND CHRISTIAN CHARITY



## GENERAL MEAGHER'S DISPATCHES

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

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**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

## *SHONA LÁ FHÉILE PÁDRAIG!* *Irish-American Heritage Month*

### PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Dear Brothers,

The growth of our Division continues. During our March Division meeting, a Shamrock Degree instruction was completed for our new and existing division brothers. Congratulations to Brothers Rob Burke, Bill Vanderveer, Jack Grey, Jeff Everett, Francis Connors and Dave McLaughlin for making this degree. A special thank you to Brother Bill Phillips, Financial Secretary Jeff Banks, Vice President Dan Mulhern, Marshall Shawn Lenahan and Sentry Paul O'Brien for supporting me in making this Shamrock Degree possible.

During the month of March, Brothers Bill Halpin, Hugh O'Brien, Des Flanigan, Paul O'Brien, Neil Buttimer and John Hogan have dedicated themselves to exhibit Irish American History Month (IAHM). Their efforts shine a wonderful light on our heritage and remarkable presence throughout



American history. The locations for the month long events are the Central Rappahannock Regional Library in Fredericksburg, Salem Church Branch Library, and at the Wilderness Library in Orange County.

Thus far, our division has participated in the following events: Mass at historic St. Mary Catholic Church in Alexandria (8 AM) followed by the Alexandria St. Patrick Day Parade, the 14th Annual St. Patrick's Day parade sponsored by the Blue and Gray and Adventure Brewery Brewing Companies located in Fredericksburg, and the 38th Annual Gaelic Mass at the Cathedral of St. Thomas Moore in Arlington. Another Mass will be said by our very own Division Chaplain Father Kevin Fimian at St.

Patrick Catholic Church in Spotsylvania on Thursday, 17 March at 6:30 PM. I look forward to seeing everyone there.

Detail on the Trip for Two to Ireland kick off last weekend (March 12) was a success selling tickets at both the Blue and Gray/Adventure Brewery St. Patrick's Day parade and at St. Patrick's Church. I am very thankful for Vice President Dan Mulhern for his support in making this Raffle possible. Please continue to support his efforts and reach out to the officers of our division regarding the sale of raffle tickets. The drawing for the Trip for Two to Ireland will take place on September 17 at the Oktoberfest which will be an event sponsored on by Adventure Brewery. Please reach out to Brother Mulhern at [djmulhern1@msn.com](mailto:djmulhern1@msn.com) if you have any questions or want tickets to sell.

Please continue also supporting me as your chairman of the 3rd Annual Shamrock Golf Tournament. The date for the tournament will be on Monday, April 18th and the location is at Meadows Farms Golf Course in Locust Grove Virginia. We are still in need of sponsors, players and donations to make the event raffle successful and exciting. In everything we do for charity, getting many hands to support will make this event highly successful and increase our capability to give to charities in the Spotsylvania and Fredericksburg area. I also have a cover letter otherwise known as a 'beg letter' which includes two pages of information for the Shamrock Golf Tournament to provide any volunteers to solicit sponsors and donations for the raffle. Please let me know either by phone 540.846.1844 or by e-mail [ramslji@comcast.net](mailto:ramslji@comcast.net) and a special thanks to the Brothers who are already assisting me now.

Irish Freedom Quote on Easter 1916:

*We are ready to die and shall die cheerfully and proudly, you must not grieve for all of this. We have preserved Ireland's honor and our own. Our deeds of last week are the most splendid in Ireland's history. People will say things of us now, but we shall be remembered by posterity and blessed by unborn generations. You cannot conquer Ireland. You cannot extinguish the Irish passion for freedom. If our deed has not been sufficient to win freedom, then our children will win it by a better deed. Ireland unfree shall never be at peace. Pádraig Pearse (1879-1916)*

In Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity

Richard Andrew Link, II  
President

## OUR IRISH HERITAGE



***“The Celt would forfeit his title to the respect of the civilized world, did he not fight with all his heart and all his soul and all his cunning against the empire which has despoiled him and murdered his kin, now with arms, now with artificial famine. There can be no peace between the two people until either Ireland is a desert or is free. It is war to the knife, and the knife to the hilt. There can be neither truce nor compromise.”***

## **SIXTH IN OUR SERIES OF IRISH PATRIOTS - EASTER 1916**



**Seán MacDiarmada**

Born and raised in rural County Leitrim surrounded by signs of Irish history. There was an ancient sweat-house, Mass rocks from the penal times and the persecutions of the 17th and 18th centuries, and deserted abodes as an aftermath of *An Gorta Mor* in the 1840s. He was educated by the Irish Christian Brothers.

In 1908 he moved to Dublin, by which time he was already involved in several Irish separatist and cultural organisations that promoted the use of the Irish language and the Gaelic revival, including Sinn Féin, the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB), the Ancient Order of Hibernians and the Gaelic League. . He was national organizer for Sinn Féin, and later manager of the radical newspaper *Irish Freedom*. Within the Irish Republican Brotherhood, he was a close colleague and friend of veteran republican Tom Clarke. He was promoted to the Supreme Council of the IRB and became an IRB national organizer. Shortly thereafter Mac Diarmada was stricken with polio and forced to walk with a cane.

In 1913 Mac Diarmada was one of the original members of the Irish Volunteers and worked to bring that organization under IRB control. In May 1915 Mac Diarmada gave a speech against Irishmen enlisting into the British Army. He was arrested for violating the 'Defense of the Realm Act'. Following his release from jail, he joined the secret Military Committee of the IRB, which was responsible for planning the rising.

Due to his disability, Mac Diarmada took little part in the fighting of Easter week, but was stationed at the headquarters in the General Post Office (GPO). Following the surrender, he nearly escaped execution by blending in with the large body of prisoners. However, he was betrayed by Daniel Hoey (Hoey was killed by Michael Collins's Squad).

Following a court-martial Mac Diarmada was executed by firing squad on 12 May at the age of 33. Before his execution, Mac Diarmada wrote:

*"I feel happiness the like of which I have never experienced. I die that the Irish nation might live!"*

### *SHAMROCK DEGREE*

The Meagher Division conferred the Shamrock Degree on six new brothers during our March meeting



Pictured are (l-r) Division President Andy Link, Bill Vanderveer, Jack Grey, Dave McLaughlin, Rob Burke, Jeff Everett and Frank Connors

### *HERITAGE COMMITTEE AT WORK*

**NEW BOOK!** *The Immortal Irishman*, by Timothy Egan (\$17 at Amazon.com)

Exiled from Ireland, he won fame in the Civil War and died mysteriously on the Montana frontier. From best-selling author Timothy Egan comes the epic story of one of the most fascinating and colorful Irishmen in nineteenth-century America.

The Irish-American story, with all its twists and triumphs, is told through the improbable life of one man. A dashing young orator during the Great Famine of the 1840s, in which a million of his Irish countrymen died, Thomas Francis Meagher led a failed uprising against British rule, for which he was banished to Tasmania. He escaped and six months later was heralded in the streets of New York – the

hero, back from the dead, at the dawn of the great Irish immigration to America.

Meagher's rebirth in America included leading the Irish Brigade in many of the fiercest battles of the Civil War. Twice shot from his horse while leading charges, left for dead in the Virginia mud, Meagher's dream was that Irish-American troops, seasoned by war, would return to Ireland and liberate their homeland from British rule.

The hero's last chapter, as territorial governor of Montana, was a romantic quest for a true home in the far frontier. His death has long been a mystery to which Egan brings haunting, colorful new evidence.

**Irish-America Heritage Month and Centenary of the 1916 Easter Rising** were featured in area parades, in a *Free Lance Star* article (Communities Section, March 6<sup>th</sup>) and at four area libraries.

At the **PARADES**

In the Alexandria Parade where the crowds were five to eight deep along the entire mile parade route



Hugh, Frank and Andy



(L-R) Past and Current State Presidents Hugh O'Brien and Gene Bransfield and State Vice President, Bill Halpin, behind the VAAOH banner, led a large AOH contingent (Photo by Jon Bransfield)

**In Fredericksburg**, the General Meagher Division led the parade and proudly displayed its new 10 foot Celtic Cross float and US and Irish flags



**At Salem Church Library:** Where we engaged with more than 80 patrons!



Des Flanigan: Mentoring Mode



Two O'Briens on the importance of the 1916 Rising



Muggivan School joined us at Salem Church on March 14

NOTE: Dedicated Hibernians will be at the **Central Rappahannock Regional Library (CRRL)** on 21 & 23 March 2-7PM and at the **England Run Branch Library** on 29 & 30 March, 2-7 PM



Please pray for the repose of the souls of deceased General Meagher Division brothers and all deceased Hibernians and family members. We pray especially for the repose of the souls of:

**James T. Fegan**, Brother Mike Fegan's father

**Robert Regan**, Brother Bill Phillips' brother-in-law

**Rosemary McCarthy**, Brother Bill Phillips' sister-in-law

**Richard Mulcahy**, Brother Gene McKenna's brother-in-law

**Matthew Duffy**, Past President, Father Lynch Division (Roanoke)

May God's perpetual light shine upon all deceased Hibernians and family members; may they all rest in peace.

Please pray for the comfort and healing of our **Brothers Dick Dowd, Jim McMorrow, Mike Creegan** (VAAOH webmaster); Andy Link's mother, Eileen and Andy's father and care giver, Dick Link; and Matthew Carroll (Irish Viet Nam Veterans Memorial Project).

Pray to **Mary Immaculate, Patroness of the United States**, for preservation of our religious freedoms and for an unambiguous national moral compass. This is critically important in this era of progressive secularism and threats from patently evil terror organizations.



## ***Mark Your Calendars!***

***Multiple Dates:*** **Bingo!** Every Thursday and Saturday evening 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!

**March 1-31:** **Irish American Heritage Month** -- Our Heritage Committee began working on this project in November. Displays will be arranged at the Central Rappahannock Regional Library, the Salem Church Library and the Wilderness Library. At times/dates to be announced, knowledgeable Hibernians will be available at these locations to field questions and provide information.

**March 17:** **Division Mass** - Chaplain Father Fimian will celebrate Mass honoring St Patrick at 6:30PM in St Patrick Church. Eucharistic Adoration follows.

**March 30:** **Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day.** The Virginia Ancient Order of Hibernians initiated action to formally recognize past, current, and future contributions of Vietnam and Vietnam-era military veterans resident in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Former State Delegate Ed Scott championed this legislation. House Joint Resolution Number 136 designates March 30 as 'Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day in Virginia to celebrate the service and numerous contributions of the Commonwealth's Vietnam-era veterans. The resolution notes 1,304 Virginians lost their lives in Vietnam. Further, the resolution notes that more than 262,000 Vietnam veterans currently reside in the Commonwealth.

**April 18:** 3d Annual Shamrock Charity Golf Classic, Meadows Golf Course in Orange County. Registration, coffee & donuts at 8AM; tee-off at 9AM

**April 19:** General Meagher Division meeting

**April 23:** Commemoration of the Easter Rising 1916 at various locations around the world, but especially in New York City at the epicenter of American Hibernianism, St

Patrick Cathedral. Mass is a 1PM and will be followed by a procession to the Consulate General of Ireland for a reading of the Poblacht.

**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:** **The Division is seeking a volunteer to manage orders** of Division logo polo shirts, sweatshirts and ball caps (prices subject to change).

- 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](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](mailto:traceysbydesign@aol.com)
- D & E Morrissey (954-426-3514) <http://www.hibernians-shamrock.com/donations.html>

