

IN FRIENDSHIP, UNITY AND CHRISTIAN CHARITY



GENERAL MEAGHER'S DISPATCHES

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

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President: Andy Link **Chaplain:** Vacant **Vice President:** Dan Mulhern
Financial Secretary: Jeff Banks **Treasurer:** Dick Dowd **Recording Secretary:** Jack Grey
Standing Committee: Vacant **Marshal:** Shawn Lenahan **Sentinel:** Paul O'Brien, **Newsletter Editor:** Bill Halpin (sisconsulting@comcast.net)

Reminder: If you haven't paid your 2016 dues – please do so!

BREAKING NEWS: Our Hibernian Brother Tom Evans's brew-pub, the *Red Dragon*, will open on August 15th at 4PM with the Grand Opening Celebration scheduled for August 20th. The *Red Dragon*, located at 1419 Princess Anne Street, can seat about 100 patrons and is designed a `cozy place for the neighborhood to come together_. Tom hired brew master Cody Natale (formerly of the Blue & Gray) and will eventually have 20 taps for the discriminating beer connoisseur. We're working on Irish music jam sessions

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Division Brothers,

With the transfer of Father Kevin Fimian from St. Patrick parish, his duties as our Chaplain for General Thomas F. Meagher Division has ended. I have formally requested and received permission from the Diocese of Arlington to appoint Father Jerry Wooten to become the next Chaplain for our Division. I want to welcome Father Jerry Wooten to our Division and in the same, I want to let Father Fimian know that we will miss him very much. We are very blessed to have you both as Brothers of our Division and our works of charity are much more significant. The presence of a Division Chaplain adds greatly to the dignity and importance of our monthly meetings, furthermore, prayers said and the thoughts expressed constitute the spiritual good to the Order and to the members.

The month of August we will participate in the 10th Annual Mary's Shelter Gala Fundraiser on August 13th. This year, 16 Meagher Division brothers and their guests will be present. We will also hold our next montly meeting on Tuesday, August 16th. During our meeting, we will hold

another Shamrock Degree, hold a memorial for three of our recently fallen brothers since our meeting in June.



During the month of September, our Division will host two events, the Halfway to St. Patrick's Day Dinner Party and the next AOH Virginia State Quarterly meeting. The St. Patrick's Day event will take place at Lake of the Woods Clubhouse on Saturday, September 10th. The Virginia State Board Quarterly meeting will be held at Holy Cross Academy, Fredericksburg. During this meeting, any Division Brothers who have not made the Major Degree Exemplification or Tower Degree will have the opportunity on Saturday, September 17th. The Tower Degree will be officiated by the Virginia Brian Boru Major Degree Team. Please let me know that you are interested in completing this degree program. The becoming a full Hibernian is achieved through this degree program. The Trip for Two to Ireland raffle drawing will be on the same day as our Virginia State Quarterly meeting Saturday, September 17th. I want to thank Vice President Dan Mulhern, individual brothers and our parish representatives who have worked very hard to make the close out of all ticket sales a reality.

"The Breastplate," St. Patrick's poem of faith and trust in God

*"Christ be within me, Christ behind me, Christ before me, Christ beside me,
Christ to win me, Christ to comfort and restore me, Christ beneath me, Christ
above me, Christ inquired, Christ in danger, Christ in hearts of all that love me,
Christ in mouth of friend and stranger."*

Please continue to pray for our sick and convalescing Brothers, our families and friends.

In Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity

Richard Andrew Link, II
President



“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.”

IMPORTANT IRISH PHRASES

Ireland forever *Éirinn go Brách* (Air-ran guh brow)
 Cheers *Sláinte* (Slon-chuh)
 Hello *Dia Duit* (Dee-uh ditch)
 Bye *Slan* (slan)
 A hundred-thousand welcomes.....*Céad Mile Fáilte* (Ky-ed meel-ay fall-chay)

The AOH National Convention: July 11-14 2016

The convention was a tremendous success. Our new officers are: Judge Jim McKay (New Orleans) was elected National President, Danny O’Connell (Ohio) Vice President, Jere Cole Secretary and Sean Pender (both New Jersey). Shown here with National Directors, Liam McNabb, Tom O’Donnell, Dan Dennehy, John Wilson, Denny Parks, and Bill Sullivan



And then, there were the 'Men in White' - members of the Virginia delegation (l-r) Jay McCarthy, State Secretary, Bill Howard (Fr Lynch Div.) National President Jim McKay, Bill Halpin (State VP), Gene Bransfield (State President), Brian Kiernan (State Treasurer), and Vince Eikmeier (Maj Dooley Div.)



BREXIT and FFAI were key discussion points as was the impact on the north of Ireland where about 86% voted to remain in the EU. Our keynote speaker, Ambassador Anderson, Sinn Féin TD Mary Lou McDonald and Barbara Jones, Irish Consul General in NYC all addressed the issue.

The AOH position expressed by outgoing National President Brendon Moore as reported in the Irish Echo is: The 'Irish people of the North should be given the same opportunity to leave the United Kingdom as the people of England were given the opportunity to leave the EU - Certainly Irish Republicans from Wolfe Tone to Bobby Sands would understand those sentiments.')

Ambassador Anderson said continued growth of the Irish economy (fastest growth in the EU) must be Ireland's primary focus (intimating reunification might be a drag), the Good Friday Agreement must be the foundation of any unification discussions, and any talk of unification must include Dublin, Belfast, and London. She expressed concern BREXIT could possibly result in a 'hardening of the border'.

McDonald spoke without notes for nearly an hour. It was a rousing speech in which she asked the US Irish for support for an immediate public referendum on unification. A few conventioners walked out, but she had the vast majority listening intently. As she wrapped up, most were ready to 'sign up' for whatever Sinn Féin would have them do.

Barbara Jones discussed the historic relationship between AOH and Ireland and the need to work together to assure the future.

(Editor's Note: After Brexit, could we see a union between Scotland, Ireland, and Northern Ireland? I read an article by Fintan O'Toole in the *Irish Times*. He summed up the situation: 'Scotland, Northern Ireland and Ireland now see their relations with the world in one way, while England and Wales see them very differently.' He suggested the idea of 'a new union' of Scotland, Ireland and Northern Ireland, or SCINI.

O'Toole opined such a union may be 'the only long-term solution to Northern Ireland's problem of double identity - the 'British' part of that identity has always been much more Scottish than English. It may also be Scotland's only way to stay in the EU. And it may be the Republic's only way to avoid the re-imposition of an internal border on the island.' He further observed that the borders and states of Ireland and Britain have changed many times throughout their histories and that even the current structure, of the island of Ireland divided into 26 and six counties, was unimaginable a little more than a century ago.)

On another theme, among many issues was the need for AOH to 'reinvent' itself and become relevant to younger men of Irish descent. A lack of knowledge about Ireland and the Irish is a function the generation gap - the further one is removed from the immigrant ancestor the less likely it is that Irish traditions will be passed along. At about four generations removed, knowledge likely will be limited and as will be any impetus to join AOH. The idea of foregoing the standard business format and devoting some meetings to movies related to Irish history, talks and /or panel discussions on Irish history, and skits was promulgated. This could be one meeting per quarter or on another convenient schedule and conceivably could be open to the public.

Also presented was the idea of expanding division rosters to include information about brothers that might be helpful to the membership. For example, listing a skill (carpentry, plumbing, public speaking, etc.) might support another brother's need.

Other discussions included ideas on updating the *National Hibernian Digest* format and content to include more news on US Gaelic sports and inclusion of relevant book reviews, recognition of national and state Veterans Affairs positions as 'official appointed positions', and the need for national officers and directors to coordinate their monthly submissions to avoid duplication of themes and messages.

For the record, of 876 authorized nation-wide delegates, about 600 attended the convention while others from nearby states arrived specifically for the vote. In competition with strong delegate representation from New York (167 authorized), Pennsylvania (134), New England (102) and New Jersey (63), our Tristate (73) candidate for National Director (Ralph Day) was not elected. This means for the next two years we'll not have an elected national representative in the region south of the Mason-Dixon Line and east of the Mississippi River.

Looking to the future, the 2018 AOH National Convention will be in **Louisville, KY** and the 2020 National Convention will be in **Orlando, FL**

IRISH HERITAGE



HALFWAY TO ST PATRICK DAY CELEBRATION

The Heritage Committee is gearing up for the 5th Annual Halfway to St Patrick Day Celebration which will be held on September 10th at Lake of the Woods. 130 tickets are available for sale. At \$35/person this includes choice of salmon or corned beef dinner, commemorative pint glass, live Irish Music and Irish dancers, plus ceili dance lessons (a popular form of folk dancing in Ireland). **We continue to seek table captains.** A Table Captain is responsible of filling a table of 8-10 people (you, your spouse and six-to-eight others). Andy Link, Shawn Lenahan, Dan Mulhern, Bill Halpin, Neal Buttimer and Bob Stevens have volunteered. Clearly we need more to help with this. Please let Bill Halpin know as soon as possible (sisconsulting@comcast.net or 540-972-5903)

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2017 AND BEYOND

As the Blue and Gray Brewery fades into AOH history, we need to be proactive in protecting and continuing what is now an annual Irish tradition in the Fredericksburg area - The **Annual St Patrick Day Parade and Irish Festival** that Brother Jeff Fitzpatrick organized for 12 successive years.

Among the many ways we can continue two might would be:

- ✓ Organizing a parade in the City of Fredericksburg (inviting other Irish/Celtic organizations to join us and seeking sponsorship from local establishments (Red Dragon, Capital Ale, Irish Brigade, *et al*).

- ✓ Organizing a Celtic Festival (perhaps at the fairgrounds or similar large open area). For example, when I presided in the Colonel Cunningham Division we helped organize and participated in an annual three day Celtic Festival featuring the six Celtic tribes (Irish, Scots, Manx, Welsh, Breton, and Galatia). Many booths (about 50) were set up to display traditional craftsmen at work, sale of heraldic products, food, etc. Traditional games were scheduled (hurling, pole tossing, etc.). AOH always led the opening parade.
- ✓ **YOUR IDEAS ARE WELCOME!**

PATRICK SARSFIELD: 'WOULD IT WERE FOR IRELAND'

From *The Wild Geese* on January 19, 2013



Patrick Sarsfield

*Ah! Why, Patrick Sarsfield, did we let your ship sail
 Away to the French Flanders from the green
 Innisfail
 For far from your country you lie cold and low:
 Ah? Why Patrick Sarsfield, ah, why did you go.
 We prayed, Patrick Sarsfield, to see you sail home,
 Your flag waving victory across the white foam,
 But still in our fetters, poor slaves we live on;
 For oh, Patrick Sarsfield, for, oh! You are gone*

Patrick Sarsfield was born in Lucan, County Dublin, perhaps in 1655, though it could have been a few years later in Tully Castle, County Fermanagh. His family name was Norman-Irish, his Sarsfield forebears coming to Ireland in 1172. But his maternal roots were very Gaelic, as his mother was Annie O'Moore, daughter of Rory O'Moore, one of the organizers of the Rising in 1641. The Sarsfields had allied themselves with the Royalists during those years and paid for it by having their estates in the east exchanged for less valuable ones in the west.

Patrick, who grew to be a tall, powerful young man, was sent to a military college in France when he was 20. He then served with Hamilton's Irish regiment in France. Catholics had been barred from holding officer positions in the English army in the Test Act of 1673. It was one of the greatest periods in French military history, with their army fighting and winning numerous battles. Sarsfield gained more battlefield experience there than he ever could have in the English army of the period.

He returned to Ireland to serve in the army of King James against William of Orange. He served well in numerous battles there, including a raid he led on the Williamite siege-train at Ballyneety, en route to attack the Jacobites in Limerick.

He negotiated the "Treaty of Limerick" in 1691, a fair and equitable pact that might

have transformed Irish history, but it was not honored by the English. Sarsfield then led "The Flight of The Wild Geese" to help form the Irish Brigade of France before being killed at the Battle of Landen in 1693, dying with the words "Would it were for Ireland" on his lips. He is buried in the grounds of St Martin's Church in Huy, Belgium



Please pray for the repose of the souls of all deceased General Meagher Division brothers, especially Ed Cranshaw, Ron Cullen and Larry Pratt all of whom died within the past month, and all deceased Hibernians and family members.

Please pray for the comfort and healing of our Brothers Jeff Fitzpatrick (melanoma) Dick Dowd (recovering from cancer), Jim McMorrow (recovering - cancer & knee replacement), Jack Grey, and Neil Mulcahy.

Also keep in your prayers our family members and friends: John O'Brien (recovering from stroke), Rochelle Grey (hip surgery), Bob Doan's sister-in-law Latisha Howard (Parkinson's disease) and Andy Link's mother, Eileen and Andy's father Dick Link (Eileen's care giver), Matthew Carroll (Irish Viet Nam Veterans Memorial Project)

In July 2016 **Pope Francis** declared *'We are living in a moment of annihilation of man as image of God.'* He recalled Pope emeritus Benedict's pronouncement: *'It's the epoch of sin against God, the Creator.'*

Pray to **Mary Immaculate, Patroness of the United States**, for preservation of our religious freedom and for an unambiguous national moral compass. Prayer and votes are critically important in this era of progressive secularism and multiple threats from evil organizations.



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 the Derby and reports it is terrific family oriented fun!

August 16: Division meeting

September 10: Fifth Annual Halfway to St Patrick Day Celebration at Lake of the Woods Club House. Tickets are \$35 each and include dinner, live Irish music, Irish dance performances and lessons, plus the coveted AOH pint glass!

September 17:

- ✓ **VAAOH** third quarter **state meeting** hosted by General Meagher Division at Holy Cross Academy. All are welcome! Major Degree exemplification included - given sufficient number of candidates.

- ✓ **Trip for Two Raffle drawing!**

October 19: Presentation of the 2017 Officers slate

November 15: 2017 Officers Election

December 10 or 11: Wreath presentations at City Dock and Marye's Heights

December 4(?): Annual Family Christmas Party (Date/Location TBD)

December 20: 2017 Officers Installation



GENERAL MEAGHER DIVISION 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.

Division Logo Items: The Point of Contact for Division logo polo shirts, sweatshirts and ball caps is Shawn Lenahan (s_lenahan@verizon.net)

Green Jacket: Brothers procure their own green jackets. 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: Brothers procure their own sashes. The AOH tri-color sash represents the national colors of Ireland and should be worn over the right shoulder (green closest to neck/collar) crossing to the left hip. Measure from right shoulder to left hip in inches; keep in mind the sash will normally be worn over a jacket, possibly a raincoat/overcoat (and maybe a growing waist line).

Tri-color AOH sashes are available from:

- LAOH Sister Patricia Ankrom. Email Patricia at traceysbydesign@aol.com She produces 7.5ft long sashes costing \$ 40.00 and guarantees satisfaction: if you're not satisfied send it back for a full refund.
- D & E Morrissey (954-426-3514) 1978 S.W. 17th Drive, Deerfield Beach, FL 33442
- Gettysburg Flag: <https://www.gettysburgflag.com/custom/irish-parade-sash#all-variations>