



FRIENDSHIP, Unity and Christian Charity



## GENERAL MEAGHER'S DISPATCHES

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

March 2017

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**President:** Shawn Lenahan    **Chaplain:** Father Jerry Wooton    **Vice President:** John Tracy  
**Financial Secretary:** Bob Fitzgerald    **Treasurer:** Jeff Everett    **Recording Secretary:** Bill Vanderveer  
**Standing Committee:** Dave McLaughlin    **Marshal:** Paul O'Brien    **Sentinel:** Jack Grey; **Webmaster:** John Hogan    **Newsletter Editor:** Bill Halpin (sisconsulting@comcast.net)

### Rest in Peace Brother Neil Mulcahy



Our Brother Neil Mulcahy succumbed to cancer on February 8, 2017. Neil was born and raised in St. Louis where he graduated from Washington University with a degree in electrical engineering. He moved to Washington DC where he worked as a Patent Examiner at the U.S. Patent Office while attending Georgetown law school at night. Neil then worked for several years in the patent department at NASA. However, Neil spent the majority of his career with the prescription pharmaceutical lobby in Washington. Neil and his wife Ann, a native Bostonian, raised their children while living in McLean, VA. He retired in 1995 and moved to Fredericksburg and joined the General Meagher Division in spring 2013. In 2013 he received the Lessons of Our Mott (June) and our Order's Major Degrees (July), becoming a "true Hibernian". He immediately assumed division leadership roles as Division Marshal, member of the Shamrock Degree Team, as a catalyst for the first two Shamrock Charity Golf Tournaments, and an active volunteer in every public display of Hibernianism. In addition to AOH activities, he volunteered at the Rosemont School and assisted with income tax preparation as a volunteer with the AARP. May he rest in peace with our Lord.

*Lá 'le Pádraig sona daoibh!!*

## *Irish-American Heritage Month*

### *President's Corner*

Dear Brothers:

As we enter March I would like to focus everyone's attention on the growth of our Division. Irish American Heritage Month is the perfect back drop for this effort. As you know, we lost many brothers in 2016. To keep our Division a vibrant example of our Motto in the Fredericksburg area we need to continue to add new brothers.

We have ample opportunity this month to recruit new members, I ask for maximum participation in the many events we have planned to celebrate the Irish in America. Thank you to the Heritage Committee for coordinating the Irish American History Month displays at the public libraries. Please review the schedule and contact Brother Bill Halpin to help out when you are able. On March 18 we are co-sponsoring the Jeff Fitzpatrick St. Patrick's Day Parade with Adventure Brewing where we will kick off the Trip For Two raffle as well. We need brothers to fill the marching ranks and help out throughout the day.

We have a Lenten Fish Fry, Gaelic and St. Patrick's Day vigil mass, parades, a concert and the Lad's Lunch, also planned for this month. All places where we may represent ourselves as Irish Catholic Gentlemen and to demonstrate the virtues of Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity. My spring challenge to you is to sponsor a new applicant for consideration by no later than the April business meeting. Everyone who sponsors a candidate will be entered in a drawing. The winner will receive lunch on me (food only) at our May Lad's Lunch.

Looking forward, the golf tournament is scheduled for 1 May at Meadows Farm Golf Course. The success of the tournament is vitally important to the ability of the Division to provide the financial support our parishes, charities and deserving students. Please think about what businesses you frequent. Ask them if they would be willing to be a title or hole sponsor, donate a prize or even play! We have letters soliciting community support ready to go and our Tournament Chair, Dave McLaughlin is ready to support your efforts or answer any questions you may have. Contact him at [dave.mcl@verizon.net](mailto:dave.mcl@verizon.net). Of course we will need your support the day of the tournament as well. Get a foursome together and play or help out in the clubhouse. Either way come out and enjoy the day!

Please continue to pray for the repose of the soul of Brother Neal Mulcahy and all those on the prayer list. I also ask for your continued support and prayers and prayers for the Division.

***St. Patrick's Blessing***

*As he brought new faith to Ireland  
So may he bring out in you a touch of Irish kindness in everything you do  
And through the good St. Patrick  
May your home and life be blessed with all the special favors  
That make you happiest.*

In Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity,

Shawn M. Lenahan



**Brothers, we have lined up 11 events in March to celebrate St Patrick and publically support Hibernian life.**

***Displays and Hibernian docents***

**Rappahannock Central Library:** March 7, 8 and 9 from 12-6PM  
**England Run Library:** March 14, 15, and 16 from 3-7PM  
**Salem Church Library:** March 28, 29, and 30 from 12-6PM  
**Muggivan Irish Dancers on 28<sup>th</sup>!**

***Parish Support***

**March 3: St Jude Parish Lenten Fish Fry** 4pm-7pm (supports building fund)

**March 11: Young Irelanders in concert!** Sponsored by Fr. Judge Division

St Francis of Assisi Parish Center, 18825 Fuller Heights Rd, Triangle Starts at 8PM  
View Video at <http://www.aohconcerts.org>. Reserved Seats: \$25 - \$35; more info - email [aohconcerts17@gmail.com](mailto:aohconcerts17@gmail.com) or call 703- 634 - 2378 ext. 5

## Parades!

**March 4: Annual Alexandria Parade (Our Division in Marching)**

(followed by party at Terry Riley's home)

**March 11: Annual Manassas Parade (several divisions march)**

**March 12: Annual Washington, DC parade (ditto on divisions marching)**

**March 18: 15th Annual St Patrick Parade in Fredericksburg**

will honor our deceased Brother Jeff Fitzpatrick. Immediately following the parade is the **Irish Festival** featuring Irish music, dance and kick-off of our **Trip for Two to Ireland Raffle**. Spotsylvania Business Park (Mills Drive off Route 2). Division assembles at corner Mills Drive and Main Street at 11 AM

## Hibernian Celebrations of Mass!

**March 13: 39<sup>th</sup> Annual VAAOH Gaelic Mass**, Cathedral of St Thomas More, Arlington, VA at 7:30 PM Celebrated by Father Creedon, a Cork native.

**March 16: 4<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meagher Division Mass**, this year on the vigil of St. Patrick Day 6:30 PM at St. Patrick's Church, Ely Ford Road.



*“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.”*



### *Get in the Picture!*

President Shawn Lenahan has instituted a monthly luncheon on the Sunday prior to our scheduled meetings. These are great opportunities to get to know our brothers outside of the meeting room and enjoy the *Friendship and Unity* piece of our motto.

Beyond bringing brothers together in an informal, social environment, Shawn is displaying our support for the pubs and restaurants that support us each year with their generous donations. In February we met at J. Brian's Tap Room.

**The next "Lad's Luncheon is March 19<sup>th</sup>.**

**Hugh O'Brien passed this along -- Listen:** Thomas Francis Meagher and the Famine [Memory Of Potato Famine Burdens 'Immortal Irishman'](#)

**John Hogan passed along a fantastic website:**

<http://www.kilmainhamgaolautographbooks.ie/> This site offers more than Easter Rising notes and letters from various prisons. Click on "Find Prisoners" and then a name of interest and you'll find a potentially valuable source of families and residences in Ireland ca 1910. Click on prison name for letters (I found a letter written in May 1916 by William Halpin an "insurgent prisoner").

**Bill Phillips alerted Dispatches to this:** The Venerable Father Felix Varela, a Cuban immigrant, was Vicar General, Archdiocese of New York in the mid-19th century. He played a major role in how the American Catholic Church dealt with the tremendous influx of Irish refugees, which was just beginning at the time. To communicate more effectively, Father Varela mastered the Irish language and he protected the Irish who were being brutally abused and even killed by Know Nothing/Nativists. In 1827 Father Varela founded the Church of the Immigrant in the Five Points neighborhood of Manhattan. (**Note:** If you haven't seen the 2002 movie "Gangs of New York" it is worth renting).



In 1835 Father Varela purchased Christ Episcopal Church and renamed it St. James Church. It was in this church that the **Ancient Order of Hibernians in America** organized in 1836. The AOH organized in response to the burning of St. Mary's Church and other acts of violence against Irish clergy and Church property. St. James Church is the second oldest Roman Catholic Church in Manhattan. In 1983, the AOH financed the restoration of the Church when the roof was in danger of collapsing and city officials ordered it closed.

March 4, 1704 – The Penal Laws passed in 1695 restricting Catholic civil rights were expanded and strengthened. Catholics could no longer buy or own land or could a son inherit property from his father, unless he converted to Protestantism.



Col. Bernard J.D. Irwin, Irish immigrant, First Person awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor



The earliest military action to be revered with a Medal of Honor award was performed by Colonel Bernard J.D. Irwin, an Irishman. Irwin was born on June 24, 1830 in County Roscommon in the west of Ireland. His parents, James and Sabina Marie (Dowling) Irwin, immigrated to the United States during *An Gorta Mor* and settled in New York City. Irwin graduated from medical school and joined the 7th Regiment of the New York National Guard (later the 7th US Infantry Regiment) as a surgeon. After several interim assignments he was transferred to the Arizona Territory.

In February 1861, a detachment of 60 men from 7th US Infantry commanded by Lt. George N. Bascom was sent to Apache Pass to negotiate with Cochise for the return of a kidnapped child. Cochise agreed to meet but denied knowledge of the kidnapping. Bascom arrested him and several other Apaches. Cochise escaped, but his brother and two nephews were held hostage. To

retaliate, Cochise kidnapped three white men for an exchange. When the exchange didn't materialize, Cochise killed the white men; the Army responded by hanging the Indians, setting off the first of the Apache wars. Lt Bascom's unit was surrounded and under siege by 500 hundred hostile Indians under their Chief, Cochise.

Lieutenant Irwin volunteered to lead a rescue mission. Irwin with only 14 men of the 1st Dragoons (in 1861 renamed the 1st Cavalry Regiment) and initially without horses and riding on mules, began the 100-mile trek to reach Bascom's position. For nearly two weeks Irwin's detachment fought their way through to Apache Pass. Along the way, Irwin's small force defeated Indian bands, captured prisoners and recovered a drove of stolen horses and cattle. They reached Bascom's beleaguered force on February 14th. Irwin strategically deployed his small unit, tricking the Cochise into thinking he had a much larger force with him. The Apaches fled and Bascom and his men were saved. Bascom's men joined Irwin force and together they tracked Cochise into the mountains and rescue the young boy. Although Irwin's bravery in this conflict was the earliest Medal of Honor action, the

award itself was not created until 1862; and it was presented to him on January 21, 1894.

Despite the title of "the fighting doctor" frequently bestowed upon General Irwin he was always interested primarily in his professional medical work. In the early years of his army experience he gave no thought to distance, danger, or hardship in answering the many calls for his help. During the Civil War while stationed in Memphis Irwin married Antoinette Elizabeth Stahl; they had three children. George LeRoy Irwin, graduated from West Point, served with distinction in the World War I, attaining the rank of Major General. One daughter married Robert R. McCormick, publisher of the Chicago Tribune, and the other, married Dr Arthur A. Small of Chicago. General Irwin died December 15, 1917; he is buried at West Point.



**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** President Lenahan appointed **Jack Grey, Chairman, Committee of the Sick.** Prayer requests should be sent to Jack not later than the Wednesday prior to the business meeting ([RHGrey@cox.net](mailto:RHGrey@cox.net)//540-373-4496). It might be wise to let your spouse/family member know this, just in case you become ill or hospitalized.

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 for the repose of the soul **Brother Neil Mulcahy who died on February 8, 2017.** Neil served the division as Marshal, as a key member of the Golf Committee, and in many other volunteer activities.

Keep in your prayers our family members and friends:

- Bill Phillips' brother Robert;
- Joe Monaghan's sister-in-law, Donna Maffeo (cancer) and his father Joseph Monaghan Sr. who is caring for his mother and uncle (dementia/Alzheimer);
- Hugh O'Brien's brother, John O'Brien (recovering from stroke);
- Rochelle Grey (hip surgery);
- Bob Doan's sister-in-law Latisha Horwath (Parkinson's disease);
- Barbara McCoy (cancer);
- Amy Whittaker (cancer),
- Andy Link's parents Eileen and Dick (Dick is Eileen's care giver),
- Matthew Carroll (IVNVMP)



***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!***

***March 1-31: Irish American Heritage Month – SEE ABOVE***

***March30: Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day:*** In 2010 VAAOH promoted Virginia bill to honor Viet Nam Veterans. With Delegate Ed Scott's support, House Joint Resolution Number 136 designated March 30th as "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day" and encouraged ceremonies/activities that promote recognition of those involved in the Vietnam conflict. More than 262,000 Vietnam veterans reside in the Commonwealth; 1,304 were KIA.

***May 1: 3d Annual Shamrock Charity Golf Classic, Meadows Farms Golf Course***

***May 2: Irish Heritage Night at Nationals Stadium – see the Washington Nationals play the Arizona Diamondbacks. Details will follow.***



*May/June: (Date TBD) the second quarterly VAAOH State meeting – Richmond, VA*

*June/July: (Date TBD) 3d Annual family picnic*

*September 16: Trip for Two to Ireland Raffle* drawing at Adventure South Oktoberfest (*Note*: 2017 Halfway to St Patrick Day Celebration is cancelled)

*September 22-24: VAAOH Biennial State Convention, Virginia Beach Resort Hotel*

*October 28: Gen Meagher Division's 30th Anniversary Dinner Party*



*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](mailto:s.lenahan@verizon.net))*

**Green Jacket:** Brothers procure their own green jackets. 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:** 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](mailto: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.
- Gettysburg Flag offers tri-color sashes and offers "special prices" for larger orders.  
<https://www.gettysburgflag.com/custom/irish-parade-sash?>