



Ancient Order of
HIBERNIANS
Irish • Catholic • American



GENERAL MEAGHER'S DISPATCHES

September 2023

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President: Bob Fitzgerald; **Chaplain:** Deacon Aaron Zaccagnino; **Vice President:** Shawn Lenahan; **Recording Secretary:** Bill Halpin; **Financial Secretary:** Jeff Everett; **Treasurer:** Dave McLaughlin; **Standing Committee:** Bobby Murphy; **Marshal:** Chuck Gleason; **Sentinel:** Vacant; **Webmaster:** Bob Fitzgerald; **Organizer:** Vacant; **Newsletter Editor:** Bill Halpin (billhalpin@irshcultureva.org)

***OUR HALFWAY PARTY/TRIP FOR TWO RAFFLE DRAWING IS
SEPTEMBER 16TH***

OUR NEXT MEETING IS SEPTEMBER 19TH

Pray to Mary Immaculate Patroness of the United States for the strength of mind and heart to defend our religious freedoms, for national moral guidance, and that our country will always be “one nation under God”. This is critically important in this time of contrary moral agendas and the threats from patently evil elements.



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### **President's Corner**

Brothers,

Summer is about over and we only have a few more events on the calendar for the rest of the year, including our business meetings on the third Tuesday of each month. In September, we have the Halfway to St. Patrick's Day event at the Colonial Tavern on Saturday, the 16th, where we will be drawing the winning ticket for the Trip for Two to Ireland. Keep your phones handy as we might be calling you! In October, we will be nominating our slate of Division officers to serve for 2024-2025 term. The election will be during the November business meeting. We will also have our annual Memorial Mass in November, date and time are to be announced soon.

Finally, in December, we will have the annual wreath presentation at the Irish Brigade Memorial at the City Docks. Planning for this is just beginning but it is likely to be on Sunday, 10 Dec, at noon. Finally, our new officers will be installed at the December business meeting. Please take a moment to add these events to your calendars, especially the November meeting as we definitely need a quorum for the elections. Finally, my congratulations to brothers who received their Shamrock Degrees at O'Brien's Irish Pub on Tuesday evening, and my thanks to Bill, Shawn, and Dennis for making it possible for these newest members of the Division.

In our motto of Friendship, Unity, and Christian Charity,

Bob Fitzgerald, President

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We bid farewell to Division Sentinel and 2022 Hibernian of the Year, Jack Kelly. Jack has been a stalwart member of our division for several years. He was always “on site” for division events, raffle ticket sales, or any other activity. Jack’s low key “Hibernian Zeal” will be missed. We wish the absolute best to Jack and his family as they settle in their new Carolina home.

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## **New Virginia AOH Division is on the Horizon**

The prospect for chartering a new Virginia AOH Division is excellent. It'll be the first new division in more than a decade. Pictured here are six brothers who received our Order's Shamrock Degree at O'Brien's Irish Pub on 29 August. They are (L2R) Randy Tyson, Bill Shanley, Deacon Michael Watts, Deacon Ken Galvin, Jerry O'Brien, and Dennis Mac Minn (kneeling). Four brothers could not attend: Chris Green, Brian Blanchfield, Brandon Tyson and Robert Howard. Another Shamrock Degree will be scheduled for later this year. Worthy of note, three of these brothers received our Order's Major Degrees



Chris Green, Randy Tyson and Bill Shanley. Now the immediate tasks include recruitment of many more Irish Catholic men, updated parish bulletin announcements with local points of contact (instead of Bill Halpin), and determination of who will provide organizational leadership to assure continued momentum. The degreed brothers were sent copies of the current Blue Book, the General Meagher Division by-laws, and application forms/related materials to use in recruitment efforts. While the new division takes shape these ten brothers are on the rolls of the General Thomas F. Meagher Division.

We thank General Meagher Division President Bob Fitzgerald, along with VP Shawn Lenahan and Brother Dennis O'Reilly for taking the time and making the effort to support this important Shamrock Degree ceremony. They honored the commitment made by our new recruits by formally initiating them into AOH.



**Father of the U.S. Navy, Commodore John Barry Day is  
September 13th**



*The Barry Memorial and plaza inside the Barry Gate, United States Naval Academy was dedicated on January 6, 2012*

September 13<sup>th</sup> is a legal holiday in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the only constitutionally mandated observance of the Ancient Order of the Hibernians. We can credit Jack O'Brien and John McInerney, District of Columbia AOH members, who worked relentlessly for more than three years to build support and raise funds for this memorial.

Commodore John Barry (1745-1803) was a native of County Wexford and a Continental Navy hero of the American War for Independence. Barry's many victories at sea were important to the morale of the Patriots as well as to the successful prosecution of the War. When the First Congress, authorized the United States Navy, George Washington turned to Barry to lead the nation's new U.S. Navy. Barry was given the rank of Captain with "Commission No. 1," United States Navy, effective June 7, 1794. Barry then supervised the construction of his own flagship, the USS United States. As commander of the first U.S. naval squadron, which included the USS Constitution (Old Ironsides"), Barry was a Commodore with the right to fly a broad pennant, which recognized him as a flag officer. He served as the senior officer of the United States Navy, with the title of "Commodore" under Presidents George Washington, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson.

The ships built by Barry and the captains selected and trained by him, constituted a U.S. Navy that performed outstanding service in battles with the Barbary Pirates and in America's Second War for Independence, the War of 1812. Significantly, and by joint resolution of Congress, pursuant to Public Law 109-142 (signed by President George W. Bush on December 22, 2005), John Barry was formally recognized, in the Public Law of the United States, as the first flag officer of the U.S. Navy, ergo Father of the U.S. Navy. (assembled from various sources)





*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. There can be neither truce nor compromise.*

### **1690: Rebellion and Legacy of the “Wild Geese”**

Based on annual Orange Order parades and bonfires one might conclude the Battle of the Boyne took place on 12 July 1690. Not so, but that's another story. In the Battle of the Boyne on July 1, 1690, William of Orange defeated King James' army. But that was only a battle, it was not a decisive victory. The Irish rebellion continued for more than a year as the Irish fought for sovereignty, religious tolerance for Catholicism, and land ownership.

The Battle of Aughrim (July 1691) was probably the bloodiest day in Irish history. The Irish were on the verge of defeating the English when a cannonball decapitated the Irish commander. Without his leadership, confusion reigned, the defense faltered, and potential victory turned into defeat. Patrick Sarsfield assumed command and fought the Williamite army to a standstill. However, his army depleted, Sarsfield retreated to Limerick. He fortified the Limerick garrison and endured a long siege until he was forced by disease and starvation to negotiate a surrender. According to military historian Richard Doherty, Sarsfield may have concluded the Jacobite cause would benefit if Irish soldiers were to fight with the French where they could plan an invasion of the British Isles. The Treaty of Limerick brought the rebellion to its end in October 1691.

Under the terms of surrender, the Irish were given the option of sailing to France to join King James II, in exile. Shortly after Sarsfield signed the treaty, a French fleet arrived with reinforcements and urged Sarsfield to tear up the treaty and fight on. Sarsfield had given his word of honor when he signed the treaty and refused this temptation. He led an estimated twenty thousand Irish soldiers and family members to France.

The British immediately disgraced the treaty Sarsfield honored by implementing what we know as the Penal Laws. These laws deprived Irish Catholics every right of citizenship.

For the next hundred years "*Cuimnidh ar Luimneach agus ar Feall na Sasanach!*" (Remember Limerick and the Saxon betrayal) was the French Irish Brigade's battle cry. The "Wild Geese" fought in battles all over Europe and the world, many looking for ways to fight the eternal enemy, England.

The term "Wild Geese" originated when French ships smuggling brandy and wine into Ireland used the return trip to ferry recruits for the French Irish Brigade. In the ships' logs the recruits were listed as wild geese.

The term "Wild Geese" is usually associated France's Irish Brigades, however, many Irish served in Spain, Austria, Russia, Poland and the German Kingdoms. Several "Wild Geese" rose to prominence in European armies. George Brown was made a Field Marshal of the Austrian Army. Francis Maurice Lacy was a Field Marshall in both the Austrian and Russian armies. Patrice McMahan, a descendant of the Limerick Wild Geese, became President of France. In South America, Bernardo O'Higgins, son of a Sligo native and general in the Spanish Army, became the Liberator of Chile. Admiral William Brown of County Mayo became the Father of the Argentine Navy.

Closer to home, members of the French Irish Brigade served with John Paul Jones on the "Bonhomme Richard" and others were at Yorktown with Rochambeau. The Spanish Hibernian regiment, known as O'Neill's Regiment, fought the English at Pensacola (Florida) in 1781. Thousands of Irishmen in America -- no less "Wild Geese" than the others -- made up the bulk of Washington's Continental Army -- 22 rose to be generals. They fought in America and accomplished what their fathers could not do in Ireland: Throw off the oppressive yoke of England.

Excerpted for W.B. Yeats' poem *September 1913* :

Was it for this the wild geese spread  
The grey wing upon every tide;  
For this that all that blood was shed,  
For this Edward Fitzgerald died,  
And Robert Emmet and Wolfe Tone,  
All that delirium of the brave?  
Romantic Ireland's dead and gone,  
It's with O'Leary in the grave.



### *Upcoming Division Events*



**September 13<sup>th</sup>**: Commodore John Barry Day

**September 16<sup>th</sup>**: Halfway to St. Partick Day and T4T raffle drawing, Irish dancers and music at the Colonial Tavern – Home to the Irish Brigade noon to 5PM Irish dancers at 2PM!

**September 19<sup>th</sup>**: Division meeting



## ***Our Division Prayers***



### ***Keep our brothers, family members and friends in your prayers***

- Bob Fitzgerald: detached retina
- Joe Daley: 100% blocked carotid artery, COPD, and hemoptysis.
- Peggy Dowd, Dick Dowd's wife requires in-home professional assistance
- Russell McLaughlin: Dave McLaughlin's brother - frontotemporal dementia
- Jerry O'Brien: Paul O'Brien's brother – cancer
- Ruth Pettinger: Shawn Lenahan's aunt (Vietnam Vet) inoperable brain tumor
- Margaret Casey: Tim Lynch's aunt has Dementia
- Mary Lou and Keith Bowers: St Jude parishioners/friends of Deacon Aaron
- Alice Wilkowski (stroke) associate of PDP Shawn Lenahan

### ***Pray for the repose of the souls of deceased Brothers and family members***

- Brother Jerry Timmons, died on June 3, 2023
- Shelagh Hornung: Neil Hornung's sister-in-law died on January 14, 2023.
- Loretta Larzelere: Bob Fitzgerald's sister-in-law died on January 19, 2023
- John K. O'Brien: Hugh O'Brien's brother died on March 15, 2023

*Send notifications to Committee of the Sick Chair Bobby Murphy ([smurphy823@gmail.com](mailto:smurphy823@gmail.com))*

*Send requests for inclusion in our newsletter to [billhalpin@irishcultureva.org](mailto:billhalpin@irishcultureva.org)*



## **Hibernian Attire**

***Every brother should have these articles of clothing***

***Green Jacket:*** Brothers procure their own green jackets -- Kelly green is the color.

- 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.

- Second source used by Major James Dooley Division:  
<https://www.uniformsinstock.com/collections/blazers/products/executive-apparel-winston-mens-kelly-green-blazer>

***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 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, a raincoat/overcoat (and a growing waistline). Sashes are available from:

- **D. & E. Morrissey (954-426-3514/ <http://www.hibernians-shamrock.com>.** The National Hibernian usually has an ad for D & E Morrissey.
- **Gettysburg Flag** offers tri-color sashes and “special prices” for larger orders.  
<https://www.gettysburgflag.com/custom/irish-parade-sash>

***Division Logo Items:*** Contact Shawn Lenahan for division logo polo shirts, sweatshirts and ball caps ([s\\_lenahan@verizon.net](mailto:s_lenahan@verizon.net))

#### The AOH “uniform”

- ***Semi-formal/formal occasions*** are green sport coat, tri-color sash, white shirt, Irish theme tie, black trousers and optional ball cap. These occasions include AOH Masses, funerals, dinners, parades, State and National conventions, and other public events.
- ***For Informal events*** (i.e. Division outings (ball games, picnics, meetings, etc.) the division logo polo/sweatshirt and optional ball cap are appropriate.

**This newsletter is an unofficial publication providing information to members of the Gen. Thomas F. Meagher Division (44SP01) and others who may have an interest in division activities. It is published by Bill Halpin and unless shown otherwise, he is responsible for content interest in division activities.**