



## GENERAL MEAGHER'S DISPATCHES

December 2023

Volume 11, No 12

**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:** Vacant; **Sentinel:** Vacant; **Webmaster:** Bob Fitzgerald; **Organizer:** Vacant; **Newsletter Editor:** Bill Halpin ([billhalpin@irshcultureva.org](mailto:billhalpin@irshcultureva.org))

**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.



### ***Nollaig Shona Daoibh!***

Christmas greeting in Irish is *Nollaig Shona Duit* or *Nollaig Shona Daoibh* [plural]

The Christmas Season begins on 8 December, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. On that day Christmas trees are decorated. The season comes to an end on Epiphany, 6 January or “Little Christmas”.

A tradition in the west of Ireland relates to St. Stephens day, the day after Christmas. There this a tradition is the “Wren Parade”. In the Gaelic tradition people dress up and chase a *symbol* of the wren through town. In the “olden days” dressing up involved painting faces black and killing an actual wren. Young boys

would go from house to house collecting money for ... the Clancy Brothers have the answer (control click on [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com))

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## President's Corner

Brothers all - I hope all of you had a wonderful Thanksgiving! Before looking forward to the end of the year, I want to take a moment to thank Father O'Keefe and our Division Chaplain, Deacon Aaron Zaccagnino, for celebrating our annual Memorial Mass at St. Jude Church on 14 Nov. I strongly encourage you to try to attend this event next November so we can remember and pray for our deceased brothers just as you will want to be remembered and prayed over when your time comes.

There are only a couple of Division events remaining for the rest of the year.

- First we have our annual wreath presentation ceremony at the Irish Brigade Memorial on Sunday, 10 Dec, at 12 noon. The ceremony does not last long so please bring your family and friends to the Fredericksburg City Dock not later than 11:45am so we can get organized along with the Civil War reenactors who are planning to attend as well. Following the wreath laying ceremony, we plan to enjoy some fellowship while having lunch at the Colonial Tavern.
- Second, on Monday 11 Dec, starting at 6:30pm in the auditorium of the Main Fredericksburg Library on Caroline Street, I invite you to attend a lecture sponsored by the Irish Culture Society. The speaker is Dr. Christopher Shannon of Christendom College on the "*Fighting Irish: Songs and Stories of the Irish Americans during the U.S. Civil War*". This event is open to the public so please pass the invitation on to your family and friends. There is more information about this event at our website at [aohfredericksburg.org](http://aohfredericksburg.org).
- The final event of the year is our December business meeting on Tuesday, 19 Dec., when Virginia State President Bob Fay will install our new Division officers for the 2024-2025 term.

In conclusion, it has been an honor for me to be your Division President for the past two years and I ask that you continue your generous support for the incoming

Division President, Dennis O'Reilly, the officers, and the rest of your Division brothers for the next two years. I certainly am looking forward to continuing the work of the Division as we continue the celebration of our Irish heritage. Sláinte!

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

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### News From the Irish Culture Society of Virginia

#### Irish in the U.S. Civil War in Song and Story, Monday December 11<sup>th</sup>

Just in time for the Battle of Fredericksburg anniversary, the Irish Culture Society of Virginia presents "*Fighting Irish: Songs and Stories of the Irish Americans during the U.S. Civil War*", a lecture by Dr. Christopher Shannon. The presentation is scheduled for **6:30PM, December 11<sup>th</sup> in the Central Rappahannock Regional Library auditorium located at 1201 Caroline Street, Fredericksburg.** Admission is free, donations will be gratefully accepted.

The Irish who fought in the American Civil War (1861-1865) often did so in distinctly Irish military units, such as the New York "Fighting 69<sup>th</sup>" Regiment and the Irish Brigade. Fighting for the cause of preserving the Union, Irish American soldiers also fought to express pride in their ethnic heritage. These dual loyalties found expression in a substantial body of songs celebrating the achievements and camaraderie of Irish American soldiers. This lecture tells the story of these Irish American soldiers through the songs they sang, songs that affirmed their dual identity as fully Irish and fully American.

Dr Shannon earned his PhD in American Studies, from Yale University. Later he served as a visiting lecturer at Yale, the University of Rochester, and the University of Notre Dame. Currently, Dr Shannon is a professor of history at Christendom College, Front Royal, Virginia

### Strategic Searching on Findmypast , Saturday, December 16<sup>th</sup>

Recommended by Trish Taylor, ICS of VA board member and LAOH historian  
December 16<sup>th</sup> 10:30 AM - Noon **CST** (UTC-6)

This webinar is free to all but ***registration is required!*** Recording is available for later viewing to all registrants. ***Register at:***

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8963386349815093846>

*Instructor:* Jen Baldwin is a Research Specialist and North American Content Manager for Findmypast. She lectures, writes, and consults on a variety of genealogy related topics and was part of the research team for Genealogy Roadshow, season two, on PBS. She has authored course materials for the National Institute of Genealogical Studies. She will help you leverage the site to your greatest advantage. Lucky registrants will receive a free one-year subscription to the site as a door prize.

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### *Upcoming Division Events*



***December 10<sup>th</sup>:*** At noon our annual wreath presentation at Irish Brigade monument located at the City Dock followed by lunch at the Colonial Tavern – Home to the Irish Brigade

***December 19<sup>th</sup>:*** Monthly division business meeting. AOH State President Bob Fay will install our 2024-2025 officers.

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## *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.
- David Lee Chichester undisclosed illness
- Peggy Dowd, Dick Dowd's wife requires in-home professional assistance.
- Russell McLaughlin: Dave McLaughlin's brother - frontotemporal dementia
- Hill Hornung: Neil Hornung's brother who has 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*

- Agnes Alexsy, beloved wife of Past State President Brother Rich Alexsy, passed away peacefully October 26, 2023
- 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>
- Third option: <https://www.readygolf.com/trophy-club-green-blazer-jacket-by-readygolf/>

**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>

**Meagher Division shirts:** Order from Minuteman Press 4122 Lafayette Blvd, Fredericksburg, VA 22408 (540-898-7888)

**General AOH Logo Items:** <https://aohapparel.com>

**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.**