



Ancient Order of
HIBERNIANS
Irish • Catholic • American



GENERAL MEAGHER'S DISPATCHES

January 2024

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President: Dennis O'Reilly; **Chaplain:** Deacon Aaron Zaccagnino; **Vice President:** Jack McGovern; **Recording Secretary:** Bill Halpin; **Financial Secretary:** Jeff Everett; **Treasurer:** Dave McLaughlin; **Standing Committee:** Bill Hallahan; **Marshal:** Tim Lynch; **Sentinel:** Neil Hornung; **Webmaster:** Bob Fitzgerald; **Organizer:** Vacant; **Newsletter Editor:** Bill Halpin (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.



Athbhliain Faoi Mhaise Duit

(avleen fway vosh-ah gwitch)

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**ALERT!**

Our Order's **Majors Degrees** will be exemplified at the Quarterly State Meeting on 27 Jan in the KofC Hall, 9290 Stonewall Rd, Manassas. This local opportunity should not be missed. Register at 1PM (the Shamrock Degree is not a prerequisite).



## President's Corner

Brothers: Let me take this opportunity to introduce myself to you all. I have been a Hibernian since 1998. I was a member of Commodore Barry Division in Washington, DC from 1998 to 2017. During that timeframe, I received the Major Degree in 2003, and I held all the elected and appointed positions in the Division, including President from 2004 to 2008. In 2017, I moved to Charleston, South Carolina. I transferred my membership and was an active member of the Monsignor John L. Manning Division while living there. I moved to Spotsylvania in August 2022 and transferred my membership to the Thomas F. Meagher Division.

I am 100% Irish. My Father was an immigrant from Belfast. My Mother was born in Detroit to immigrants from Ireland. Her parents came from the Limerick area. They met and married in Detroit. I am the eldest of six children and was raised in a household where the Irish heritage and traditions were preserved and passed on to us children. We are still in contact with our relatives on both sides of the family in Ireland. We correspond with them in writing and social media, and we visit them all each time we go to Ireland.

My membership in the Hibernians has made me a better Irishman. It has encouraged me to study the rich, and sometimes sad, history of our people and to have a greater appreciation of their strength and their contributions to the world, and especially to our country. Over the course of the next two years, I hope we can continue to grow together in our interest and appreciation of our Irish heritage.

In Friendship, Unity, and Christian Charity

Dennis

Dennis M. O'Reilly

c: (703) 201-6959//e: [oreillyd@ix.netcom.com](mailto:oreillyd@ix.netcom.com)



**Division Officers Installed**

After Deacon Aaron blessed the officer medallions, President Fitzgerald invited State AOH President Bob Fay to the podium. President Fay proceeded to install our elected officers for the 2024-2025 term. Our installed officers are President Dennis O'Reilly, Vice President Jack McGovern, Recording Secretary Bill Halpin, Financial Secretary Jeff Everett, Treasurer Dave McLaughlin, Standing Committee Chair Bill Hallahan, Marshal Tim Lynch, and Sentinel Neil Hornung. They will serve until December 31, 2025.



### At the Irish Brigade Memorial on December 10, 2023



On the left flank are four members of Camp 4; in the center are 28<sup>th</sup> Mass Inf re-enactors, and on the Right Flank are Hibernians: Bill Halpin, Bill Hallahan, Bob Fitzgerald, Jack McGovern, Shawn Lenahan, Jeff Everitt, and Dennis O'Reilly. Not pictured Dave McLaughlin was present.



President Bob Fitzgerald presented an outstanding talk on the situation facing the Irish Brigade after they crossed the Rappahannock and moved to battle at Marye's Heights



Lunch at Colonial Tavern after the wreath presentations



### Formation of a new Virginia AOH Division

Eighteen months of recruiting, advertising, meetings, and encouraging paid off on 23 December when the Request for Formation of a New Division (Form 28) containing 17 names of committed Irish men was approved by State President Bob Fay who gave them the alphanumeric designation 44FQ01. This approval was endorsed by National AOH President Danny O’Connell, National Vice President Sean Pender, and National Secretary Ray Lynch on 29 December. State President Bob Fay will install the elected officers of 44FQ01 on January 9<sup>th</sup> at O’Brien’s Irish Pub/Restaurant in Warrenton. All are welcome to attend!



*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.*

Tánaiste Micheál Martin confirmed the Republic of Ireland initiated an inter-state legal case against the UK under the European Convention of Human Rights. The Irish are taking the Legacy Bill case to EU. Government will argue that the provisions of the Northern Ireland

Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Act 2023 are incompatible with the UK's obligations under the convention. The Bill is designed to give immunity to the British government and security agencies involved in murders during the troubles. The European Convention on Human Rights is written into Northern Ireland law as a fundamental requirement of the Good Friday Agreement. See:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/82232-statement-by-the-tanaiste-micheal-martin-on-the-government-decision-to-initiate-an-inter-state-case-against-the-united-kingdom/>



## *An Gorta Mor – Great Irish Hunger Memorial*

### *Worth a Visit when in NYC*

(I've learned many of us don't know about this place.)

The Irish Hunger Memorial is a ½ acre park at the corner of Vesey Street and North End Avenue in the Battery Park City neighborhood of Manhattan. The memorial is dedicated to raising awareness of the Great Irish Hunger, *An Gorta Mór* in Irish, in which more than one million starved to death between 1845 and 1852 because of British policies.



The Memorial reminds Americans who proudly trace their heritage to Ireland, of those forced to emigrate during one of the most heartbreaking tragedies in world history. *An Gorta Mor* began in 1845 when a blight destroyed the Irish potato crop. By 1847 millions of Irish were starving and dying. Between 1847 and 1852 hundreds of thousands of Irish immigrated to New York where they arrived at South Street Seaport and Castle Garden.

The Memorial contains stones from each of Ireland's 32 counties and is on a limestone plinth. Along the base are bands of texts separated by layers of imported Kilkenny limestone. The limestone is more than 300 million years old and contains fossils from the ancient Irish seabed. The text, which combines the history of the Great Hunger with contemporary reports on world hunger, casts a shadow onto illuminated frosted glass panels.

From its eastern approach the Memorial appears as a sloping landscape with a pathway inviting visitors to walk upward past a ruined fieldstone cottage and stone walls toward a standing stone. At the western end of the Memorial, 25 feet above the pavement, a cantilevered overlook offers views of the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island, emblems of America's welcome to all immigrants.

From the western end, the visitor approaches the Memorial through a formal ceremonial entrance that recalls the megalithic court cairn that are found in the Irish northwest. The passageway ends inside the ruined fieldstone cottage brought to New York from Carradoogan, County Mayo.

The one-quarter acre cultivated area is significant. In Black 1847 the British added the 'Gregory clause' to the Poor Law Bill. Starving families holding a quarter-acre or more would not be eligible for relief or for admission to a workhouse unless they abandoned the tenancy. This law had a devastating effect and contributed to the suffering. The unroofed abandoned cottage reminds visitors of the stark choice between survival and holding home and hearth.

Nearly two miles of text have been installed in illuminated bands that wrap around the base of the Memorial. The text includes 110 quotations, including autobiographies, letters, oral traditions, parliamentary reports, poems, recipes, songs, and statistics. Backlit text panels are installed behind frosted glass sections that appear to the visitor as shadows. At night the light functions as a beacon to those on the river.



### *Upcoming Division Events*



**9 January:** Installation of officers of Virginia's newest division 44 FQ01 at 7PM in O'Brien's Irish Pub, Warrenton. AOH State President Bob Fay will officiate.

**16 January:** Monthly division business meeting. Charities Committee selections for 2024 donations and budget input

**19 January:** March for Life, 1:00 PM meet at corner of 7th and Constitution, Washington, D.C.

**27 January:** Virginia AOH State Quarterly meeting hosted by the Father Kelly Division in Manassas. Major Degrees will be exemplified.





### *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 recovering from a December heart attack.
- 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 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 are 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 may 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 \(540-898-7888\)](http://www.minutemanpress.com)

***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 for 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 its content.