

Ancient Order of
HIBERNIANS
Irish • Catholic • American



GENERAL MEAGHER'S DISPATCHES

July-August 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:** Tim Lynch; **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.

President's Corner

Greetings Worthy Brothers:

I had the privilege of attending the 102nd Biennial AOH-LAOH National Convention in Orlando, Florida from August 7th to August 11th, along with fourteen (14) Brother Hibernians from the State Board and other Divisions across the state of Virginia. You can go to the National AOH website to get a summary of the business conducted at the Convention. I would like to share some personal observations resulting from Convention happenings:

- ♣ The meeting was well attended. There were approximately five hundred (500) Delegates there. Most were elderly – lots of gray hair, many with canes, and some with walkers and motorized scooters. There were some younger people there that included the six (6) Thomas McNabb Scholarship Winners. These are men under forty (40) years of age who are asked to formulate ideas for attracting and keeping younger members in the Order. My observation is that we need to be concerned about the same thing! For the remainder of my term as President, this will be the top priority. I will be reaching out for help in gathering ideas about things to do in this regard, and for help in implementing those ideas.

- ♣ There were a number of Resolutions and Constitutional Amendments considered at the Convention. I want to focus on one Constitutional Amendment that will change the membership requirement from being a “practicing Roman Catholic” to a “Roman Catholic, who has received First Communion, been confirmed, and is living in harmony with the teachings of the faith.” It passed by just five (5) votes. The Constitution can be amended only in a National Convention, and it requires a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the delegates in session. In the discussion before the vote, there were many speakers who were “for” the Amendment and many speakers who were “against” it. The outcome of the vote might have been different if Virginia had been able to “fill” all of its Delegate authorizations. Virginia was able to fill fifteen (15) of its thirty-two (32) Delegate authorizations. Another issue is that some of the Delegates attending the Convention were not in the room when the voting was being conducted, and therefore did not vote. It is my observation that we need to do a much better job of filling our Delegate authorizations and assuring all Delegates and Alternates attending future National Conventions are in the room and vote.

Ticket sales for the trip to Ireland fundraiser have been brisk. Brother Shawn Lenihan is leading this effort. The last ticket sales weekend will be September 6th and 7th at Saint Mary of the Immaculate Conception Church. The drawing will take place at our “Half-way to Saint Patrick’s Day” celebration at the Colonial Tavern on September 14th.

In Friendship, Unity, and Christian Charity

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Division Administration

Two new applicants should be approved for membership and installed in September. This should bring division membership to 55 brothers.

Several brothers and wives attended the FredNats baseball game on July 28th.

Brothers maintaining division property (awards, etc.) at home are asked to let President O’Reilly know. This will assist in completion the division audit.

President O’Reilly will personally deliver our donation to Mary’s Shelter.

A tour of the Old House Winery, including the distillery and Irish pub, is tentatively scheduled for October 4th.

More Salient Points from the 2024 AOH National Convention

New National Officers for 2024—2026:

President: Sean Pender-- NJ
Vice President: Liam McNabb-- NY
Secretary: Ray Lynch--FL
National Treasurer: Dan Devinney—PA

New directors were elected but their districts are unassigned at this time. We'll have to wait to learn who will be our national representative.

JFK Memorial Medal was awarded to Congressman Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA District 1) for his work on Irish and Irish American issues in the U.S. Congress. Fitzpatrick is a former FBI special agent and as such was embedded with U.S. Special Forces in Iraq. He serves as Chairman of the National Intelligence Subcommittee of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and Member of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly. FYI - In 2020, Congressman Brendon Boyle (D-PA 2d District) received the JFK Award.

AOH Membership Eligibility When your editor joined the AOH in 1983 and when I returned to active participation (after multiple overseas postings) in 1998, AOH eligibility required an applicant to be a “practical Catholic”. This requirement was on the application form. Sometime in the “00s” the term “practical Catholic” was replaced by “practicing Catholic”. There is a difference between the two terms. The “slippery slope” has taken us to other downward changes in the current decade. At recent National Conventions:

- The AOH National Board suggested we should not be the “religious police” when vetting applicants. The clear implication is it should be sufficient for an applicant to simply state he’s a “practicing Catholic” without further inquiry.
- Recently the AOH National Board entertained a proposal to remove the word “male” as a prerequisite for membership. This novel idea made its way onto a national convention agenda for a vote. Sadly, some members of the National AOH board supported this idea as a “means to grow membership”. Fortunately, it was roundly defeated, but some brothers may continue to advocate for this at future conventions.
- At the 2024 National convention AOH slipped further away from our roots when “practicing Catholic” was removed from the process in favor of simply “Catholic”.



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.

In August 1649, Oliver Cromwell marched to Drogheda, an Irish port held by Royalists, where his troops indiscriminately massacred 3,500 Irish men, women and children.

In August 1791, Theodor Wolfe Tone, leader of the United Irishmen and of the Irish rebellion in 1798 published a pamphlet entitled “*An Argument on Behalf of the Catholics of Ireland*”.

The Hill of Tara

Some claim Ireland’s ancient capital was established as long ago as 3500 BC, but the consensus today is the beginning was probably during the more recent Bronze Age, circa 2000 BC. It is located in County Meath and is the traditional inauguration place and seat of the High Kings of Ireland. Legend has it that Tara was established by Tea, wife of the Érimón, great-grandson of the king of Celtic Galicia. He was one of the chieftains who took part in the Milesian invasion of Ireland.



These Galician Celts battled Tuath Dé Danann the Irish pantheon of gods. The two groups agreed to divide Ireland between them: the Milesians took the world above, while the Tuath Dé Danann took the world below, the supernatural kingdom of everlasting youth, beauty, health, abundance and joy, where time moves differently. In any event Tea is buried there. She gave her name to the site named “*Tea mur*” which morphed into Tara.



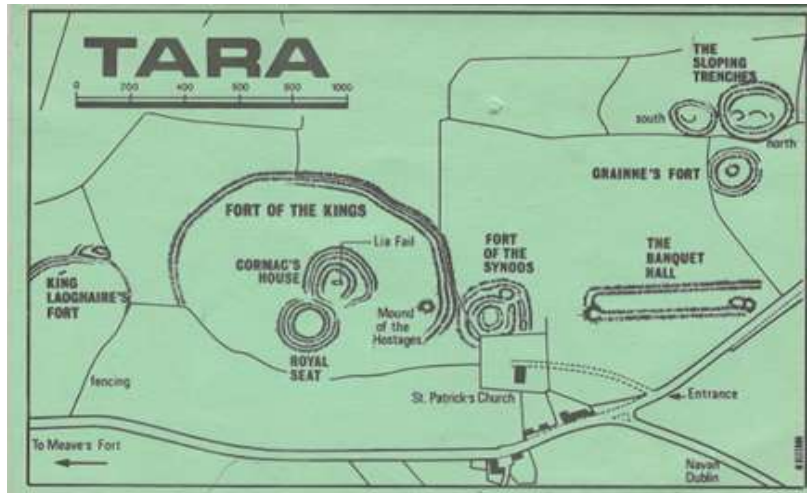
Lia Fáil is the coronation stone for the High Kings of Ireland. According to legend, all of the kings of Ireland were crowned on (at) the stone until 500 A.D. During the uprising of 1798, the rebels camped at Tara, fought the English, and were defeated. The stone was moved to commemorate the 400 rebels who died there in May 1798

In 1843 Ireland’s Great Emancipator Daniel O’Connell held a “Monster Meeting” there evoking the significance of the site as he advocated for Irish self-governance and revocation of the 1801 English Act of Union. An estimated 1 million people attended.

Today a statue of St. Patrick stands on the site of King Cormac’s house near the *Lia Fáil*. Another reminder of St. Patrick is the Church of Ireland church built on the hill and dedicated to

the Saint. Construction of this church on the most historical spot of European soil has been described as” a little less than sacrilegious.

Lisa and I walked the Hill of Tara. I was inspired to take a few ounces of soil home.



Upcoming Events



September 14th: *Halfway to St. Patrick Day and Trip for Two raffle drawing at the Colonial Tavern, 1100 - ??*

September 17th: *Meagher Division Meeting*

September 21st: *Centennial Commemoration of Nuns of the Battlefield Monument, Washington, DC. For more information see www.ladiesaoh.com*

October 4th: *Tentative date of Old House tour*



Our Division Prayers



Keep our brothers, family members and friends in your prayers.

- Deacon Aaron: Recovering from surgery to remove his thyroid. He hopes to return to his duties in early September.
- Jim O'Donnell: Recovering from surgery to repair a torn quadriceps tendon.
- Bob Fitzgerald – still plagued by a detached retina.
- Bill Halpin: recovering from reverse total shoulder replacement.

- Joe Daley - 100% blocked carotid artery, COPD, and hemoptysis.
- Tim Lynch scheduled for back surgery on September 17th.
- Jack Grey: Recovering from a fall.
- Lisa Halpin: Brother Bill's wife who is recovering from a July heart attack and related issues.
- Russell McLaughlin: Brother Dave's brother - frontotemporal dementia
- Hill Hornung: Brother Neil's brother - dementia.
- Margaret Casey: Brother Tim Lynch's aunt - dementia.
- Mary Lou and Keith Bowers: St Jude parishioners/friends of Deacon Aaron
- Alice Wilkowski associate of PDP Shawn Lenahan - stroke

Pray for the repose of the souls of deceased Brothers and family members.

- Brother Jerry Timmons, died on June 3, 2023
- Gary Fitzgerald, PDP Fitzgerald's uncle, died 14 February 2024
- Ruth Pettinger: Shawn Lenahan's aunt (Vietnam Vet) died on 19 March 2024
- Linda Mulhern Smith, Dan Mulhern's sister, died on 28 April 2024
- Jack Salvo, Jack McGovern's father-in-law, died in April 2024.

Send requests for inclusion in our newsletter to 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. 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 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 \(540-898-7888\)](https://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.