



Ancient Order of
HIBERNIANS
Irish • Catholic • American



GENERAL MEAGHER'S DISPATCHES

September-October 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.



September 13 – Commodore John Barry Day



John Barry was born, in Ballysampson, Wexford. Barry's family was evicted and moved to Rosslare where his uncle worked a fishing skiff. As a naval officer he was the first captain to command a ship commissioned under the Continental flag. After the Revolutionary War, President Washington commissioned him as first American naval officer with the rank of Commodore. He is "The Father of the American Navy" and is commemorated at the Barry Gate to the U.S. Naval Academy.

The Continental Congress established the Navy on 13 October 1775. Happy Birthday!

Congratulations: Mike Keegan and Bill Temple are now "*True Hibernians*" having received our Order's Major Degrees on 19 October.

President's Corner

Greetings Worthy Brothers:

It's hard to believe that the year is half over – if one considers Saint Patrick's Day to be the start of the New Year. September's highlight was the Halfway to Saint Patrick's Day celebration at the Colonial Tavern. See the write-up and the pictures elsewhere in this newsletter.

Major Degrees were conferred on eligible candidates after the Virginia State Board Meeting on Saturday, October 19th. Brothers Michael Keegan and Bill Temple were among those receiving the Degrees. Congratulations to both.

Planning is underway for the wreath laying ceremony at the Irish Brigade Memorial at the Fredericksburg City Dock on Sunday, December 15th. Brother Dave McLaughlin is coordinating our participation in this event with the Irish Brigade Camp No. 4 Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. I encourage all our Division members to attend the ceremony, and to join us at the Colonial Tavern afterward. Spouses, families and friends are welcome. Perhaps we can also make it a Division Christmas party!

In Friendship, Unity, and Christian Charity

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John Joseph "JJ" Kelly, Rest in Peace

JJ died on 17 September 2024 at age 84. He joined the AOH in 1982 and served AOH for decades in Division, State and National levels. He was a Past Virginia State President (2003-05), National Director of Degrees and Rituals, National Chairman for Veterans Affairs, *Ard Rí* for the Virginia Brian Boru Major Degrees Team, 2023 Gael of the Year, and much more. He was active in the Knights of Columbus, and as a Knight in the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre. Colonel Kelly graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and was awarded a Purple Heart during service in Viet Nam.

A funeral Mass will be celebrated in the Old Post Chapel, Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall on a date to be determined. The burial will be at Arlington National Cemetery on a date to be determined.

Division Administration:

November 1st: The Old House Winery, distillery and Irish Pub invited the Meagher Division to tour the facility during the afternoon of November 1st. This is a not to be missed opportunity. We recognize this is All Saints Day – Mass in the Morning and the Vineyard in the afternoon.

Quorum: the minimum number of brothers that must be present at meetings to make the proceedings of that meeting valid. Without a quorum the division cannot vote on critical issues, install new Brothers or elect officers, pay bills, or approve the minutes of previous meetings. We

need you to attend in person or, if needed, virtually using the Internet connection provided with the “Call to Meeting” alerts. Our meetings are to the point, generally lasting one hour and followed by a social time with snacks and beverages.

Brother in the News: Brother Mike Yearsley (division piper) was honored by the National Defense University College of Information and Cyberspace. Mike’s submission exploring *Artificial Intelligence and the Next Sixty Years of Education* won first place among the school’s distance-education students. Mike’s paper can be reviewed at:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vHNghjIgidxqHp4bRNA_JCb7ILhsgB/view?usp=drive_link.

Halfway Party 2024

This year was exceptional in several ways. First was Hibernian attendance – triple the number of past years including brothers we’ve not seen in a while. We were pleased to see Brothers Bill Temple, Jake Ruppert, Paul O’Brien, Joe and Barbara Daly, and Dick and Peggy Dowd enjoying the day.

The program was delayed about an hour as the Tavern staff got organized but the Muggivans as always were flexible. As always, the Irish dance routines were superb as was the music provided by DragonFyre!



Muggivans with Bothers Dick Dowd and Paul O’Brien looking on

We were surprised when seven young women featuring cowboy hats and green sashes entered the Tavern. They were from Philadelphia and celebrating a multi-state bachelorette party. They were returning from North Carolina and on a whim decided to sightsee in Fredericksburg. They saw our Halfway signage and joined in. They were Irish, played on a Gaelic Football team, and were accomplished Irish dancers.



Needless to say, the bride-to-be drew the winning Trip for Two ticket, with assistance from Division President Dennis O'Reilly. This year's winner was Patricia Alexander and she decided to take the trip.



(Jake Ruppert, Jack McGovern, Neil Hornung, Lisa O'Reilly, and Bill Halpin contributed photos)



The 4th Quarterly Virginia AOH State Meeting was hosted by the Major Dooley Division on 19 October. Key takeaways:

1. National Officers were elected at the National Convention, They are President Sean Pender, VP Liam McNabb, Secretary Ray Lynch and Treasurer Dan Devinney.
2. The new National Director for Virginia is Ed Dougherty of Pennsylvania (eddoc215@verizon.net)

3. There are several National AOH programs available for young Hibernians and children of Hibernians in good standing. For more information check the national website.
4. FFAI Christmas Appeal begins. Virginia was among the top four donor states in 2023. Each division should consider a \$1,000 donation.
5. The State Board's Teddy Bear campaign was a great success.
6. State Chaplain Fr. Joe Farrell is soliciting donations toward the St. Patrick statue and stained glass alcove. To donate, contact him at (540) 735-6291 or via email at chaplain@gmu.edu
7. Planning for the 2025 state convention is underway. State VP Vince Eikmeier will lead the planning group.
8. The next State Quarterly meeting will be on 25 January 2025 at a location TBD.
9. From the Divisions:
 - a. Col. Fitzgerald: The 2025 Gaelic Mass will be celebrated in the Cathedral of St. Thomas More, date is TBD. The Life Membership request the division submitted for **Jim Carmody** was approved. Jim is now an **AOH Life Member**.
 - b. Fr. Mychal Judge Division: The St. Patrick Coloring contest will be continued in 2025.
 - c. Cardinal O'Connor Division: Sponsors Irish films at a local library.
 - d. Fr. Kelley Division: will host a Past Presidents Dinner.



Who Knew? Johnny Cash's Irish Tribute

Johnny Cash wrote "Forty Shades of Green" in 1959 as a tender tribute to a country that he loved and as he admitted, "has a special place in my heart."

Hear the song: [Forty Shades of Green - Johnny Cash, 1988 \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4G8F8F8F8F)



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.

Legacy Act Update:

British **Prime Minister Keir Starmer** said he'd repeal the Legacy Act. There was no hint of a need to replace the Act.

King Charles said: “My Government in consultation with all parties, measures will be brought forward to begin the process of repealing and replacing the Northern Ireland Troubles Act 2023.

British secretary for the north of Ireland Hilary Benn followed this by commenting the British government wants a viable replacement Act *before it commits to its promise* to revoke the existing Act. *Designing a replacement may take years.* Among the Stormont parties, the Irish government, and communities in the north of Ireland there is *no support for the Act.*

One piece of the Act is in operation, the **Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery (ICRIR)**. The ICRIR has more than 3,500 killings/serious incidents to investigate. Since May 2024, the ICRIR has accepted eight cases, the first being the 1974 IRA bombing of the Guildford pub (the irony should not be lost).

However, the NI Court of Appeal found the *British government's veto power* over what information can be disclosed by the ICRIR *is illegal*. The judgment concluded the ICRIR is unable to conduct their work free of state interference and to be *incompatible with the European Convention on Human Rights*.

A UK Government spokesperson responded with the government will take "*the necessary time to consider our next steps on this complex judgement*".

Brothers – These people cannot be trusted.

Now is the time to contact your Senators and Representatives and have them apply pressure to assure the English (the PM in particular) keep the promise and repeal the Act without delay.

On a lighter note: If you're looking for the very best Irish Whiskey to serve at Thanksgiving dinner try Waterford Cuvee “Koffi” single malt. The Beverage Testing Institute (2024) judged it to be Top Rank. The distillery was founded in 2015 and uses 100% Irish grown barley. Available for about \$95.00



Upcoming Events



31 October: Halloween

1 November AM: Mass - All Saints Day holy day of obligation

1 November PM: Division Tour of Old House Vineyard, Distillery and Irish Pub, 18351 Corkys Lane, Culpeper, VA 22701 assemble at 2PM.

10 November: USMC birthday celebrations

11 November: Veterans Day

19 November: Division business meeting

21 November: Anniversary of Bloody Sunday (1920)

28 November: Thanksgiving Day

15 December: Annual wreath presentation at Irish Brigade Memorial, City Dock, Fredericksburg



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 soon.
- Jim O'Donnell: Radiation treatments for prostate cancer are completed but he's still in PT recovering from surgery to repair a torn quadriceps tendon.
- Bob Fitzgerald – still plagued by a detached retina.
- Joe Daley - COPD and hemoptysis is improving.
- Tim Lynch recovering from back surgery on September 17th.
- Jack Grey recovering from a fall.
- Lynne Mulhern, Brother Dan's wife recovering from back surgery.
- 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.

- Repose of the soul of PSP and National Director J.J. Kelly
- 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.