



Ancient Order of  
**HIBERNIANS**  
Irish • Catholic • American



## **GENERAL MEAGHER'S DISPATCHES**

**February 2022**

**Volume 10/No2**

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



On January 30, 1972, 13 innocent civilians were shot dead by members of the British Army's Parachute Regiment at a march protesting internment without trial. A 14th victim died months later from wounds received on the day. "Those protestors were gunned down on the streets. Shot as they fled marauding soldiers intent on killing them. "Shot in the back as they ran. Shot as they tried to crawl to safety. Shot as they lay wounded on that cold ground on that day."

The British Government proposes legislation , the “Amnesty Bill”, that will prevent prosecution, investigation, judicial review, inquest or civil case connected with killings which occurred before 1998. This Bill established a statute of limitations for atrocities and will entrench injustice and insult all of us. (Adapted from an *Irish Post* article by Gerard Donaghy, Jan 30, 2022)



***St Brigid Day February 1<sup>st</sup>!***

## President's Corner

Brothers all -

Whether the groundhog saw his shadow or not, the winter months will not be with us much longer and planning for an active year is underway. The Meagher Division February business meeting will be held as usual so I hope to see you in person or virtually on the computer screen at our meeting starting at 7:30pm on 15 Feb. Not only do we need a quorum to vote on the annual budget, but we will also have some important discussion about the upcoming State Quarterly meeting at St. Jude Church which our Division is hosting.

Preparations for the upcoming Quarterly State Meeting at St. Jude Church on Saturday, 26 Feb, are ongoing. All of you are invited to attend and we would like to have a few brother Hibernians volunteering to arrive at the church around 7:00am to help prepare the room for the meeting and set up the tables for early morning donuts and coffee. The meeting itself will start at 9:00 and be over by lunch time. Following lunch a Major Degrees exemplification is planned for those of you who do not already have that Major Degree. Please let me know if you are able to participate in this important event so you can fully enjoy the experience and better appreciate what it means to be a Hibernian.

We also have some dates and times for the events planned at the local libraries for the upcoming Irish-American History Month. They are listed in this Dispatch and please consider volunteering to participate in one or more of them so our local community can better understand the past and present impact that Americans of Irish descent have on our country.

In Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity

Bob Fitzgerald





## **Coming Up -- Irish American Heritage Month!**

Representing AOH at local libraires has been an important piece of the Meagher Division's annual IAHM outreach program for more than a decade. We need committed volunteers to support this program this year. If the virus doesn't interfere here is the schedule for March. All materials needed for a professional display will be provided. Please select the times and locations most suitable for you and let IAHM chairman Shawn Lenahan know ([s\\_lenahan@verizon.net](mailto:s_lenahan@verizon.net)).

### **Fredericksburg Branch:**

Tuesday, March 1 - 12:00-3:00  
Wednesday, March 2 - 3:00-6:00  
Thursday, March 3 - 12:00-3:00

### **Howell Branch:**

Tuesday, March 8 - 3:00-6:00  
Wednesday, March 9 - 3:00-6:00  
Thursday, March 10 - 2:00-5:00

### **Salem Church Branch:**

Tuesday, March 15 - 2:00-5:00  
Wednesday, March 16 - 2:00-5:00  
Thursday, March 17 - 3:00-6:00





*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.*

### *St. Íte of Killeedy, foster mother of the faith in Ireland—pray for us!*



St. Íte's in stained glass in St. Kieran Church, Ballylooby, Co. Tipperary

St. Íte, like her more famous compatriots, St. Brigid and St. Patrick, is one of the great saints of early Irish Christianity. She lived around the same time as Brigid of Kildare and a little later than St. Patrick.

Íte was born in 480 and baptized Deirdre. When she became a religious sister, Deirdre received the name Íte, or Ida, which means "thirst for holiness" to reflect her fire for following God. Íte, like Brigid, encountered obstacles in her path to following God. Despite her family's objections she refused an advantageous marriage to a powerful chieftain. At the age of sixteen, Íte brought a group of women with her, including her sister, Fiona, and started a community at the small town of Killeedy in Co. Limerick. Íte is the patron saint of Killeedy. Pious legends purport that Íte followed three divine lights guiding her to her final destination. Some legends depict St. Íte as a fiery, independent personality.

However, she believed in a joyful spirit, simplicity, and generous care for others. She never took gifts that she couldn't care for herself, she farmed her own land, and she supported her community with her beautiful needlework.

Their community started a school for young boys to teach them the faith. One of their pupils was the great St. Brendan the Navigator. Íte cared for Brendan as a mother, and, throughout adulthood, the adventurous Brendan would return to Íte to rest and seek her wise counsel.

Íte is credited with many miracles and inspired other men and women to seek holiness. Íte's cause of death is an interesting relic of ancient medical reporting. She probably died of cancer, but her contemporary biographers credited her death to a beetle that consumed her side until it grew to be the size of a pig—a grotesque, but comprehensible, metaphor for a cancerous tumor. Íte died around the year 570 and her grave in Killeedy is venerated to this day.

*We thank Brother Joe Daley for this article on a little known Irish Saint.*



**Happy Birthday, James Joyce**, by [Sheila Langan](#), Deputy Editor *Irish America Magazine*

On February 2, 1882, James Augustine Aloysius Joyce, author of *Dubliners*, *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, *Ulysses*, and *Finnegans Wake*, was born in Rathgar, Dublin to John Stanislaus Joyce and Mary Jane Murray. February 2, 2022 marks the 140th anniversary of his birth.

*Ulysses* is ranked by Modern Library as the number one book of the 20th Century. In celebration, check out this excellently animated video of Joyce (or his bust in St. Stephens Green) set to a recording of him reading from *Finnegans Wake*. It's a notoriously daunting tome, but when read aloud – especially by the author himself – it all makes a beautiful sort of sense.

Control Click here: [James Joyce Reading Finnegans Wake \(w/Subtitles\)](#)



### *Ireland Reaching Out -- Chronicles Insight*

#### **Ships and Steerage**

During the 19th Century, millions of Irish people left in search of a better chance at life, but the conditions aboard the ships meant that many never made it to their final destination. The Steerage Act of 1819 helped improve the conditions endured by the poorest of passengers but the biggest impact was due to a remarkable young woman,

who dedicated her life to ensuring that Irish emigrants would have a safer passage across the Atlantic Ocean.

The dreadful conditions faced by the poorest passengers on board the many emigration ships which crossed the Atlantic during the 19th century have been well-documented, and at times romanticized in books, film, and television. The lowest class of travel, known as steerage, was reserved for those who could not afford to travel in better conditions. Often these passengers were trying to escape the poverty and starvation which they had endured at home in Ireland. Such was the reputation of these ships that the American government saw fit to introduce a special law which dictated a minimum standard for steerage conditions. The following outlines the Steerage Acts, an account of a tragic accident on board a passenger ship, and the story of a Charlotte Grace O'Brien, whose commitment to improving conditions for the most impoverished of travelers extended to both before and after the voyage.

### **The Steerage Acts**

In 1819, the U.S. government passed its first Steerage Act. Its official name was the Manifest of Immigrations Act. It was intended that this act would mean better conditions on board the ships which were arriving in American ports passengers in their droves who were seeking out the American Dream. The act provided strict regulations and also required the captains of these ships to report a full, detailed list of all their passengers. This was the very first American immigration law. Sadly, it was not enough. The Act was revised in 1847 and 1849 as immigration to the country increased. A separate law, the Carriage of Passengers Act of 1885 was passed in order to focus more specifically on the plight of the steerage passengers. Similar legally binding regulations came into place in Ireland with the passing of the Merchant Shipping Act in 1894 which sets out strict regulations regarding the number of passengers which a ship could carry and also stipulates that these ships must be surveyed at regular intervals.

### **Tragedy on the Londonderry**

The conditions of steerage and the treatment of the passengers therein came into sharp focus at the end of 1848. On the first of December, a paddle steamer called 'The Londonderry' was making its way from Sligo to Liverpool, a journey which it undertook on a regular basis. As the Londonderry was a smaller ship, the steerage passengers generally travelled on deck for the relatively short journey. On this occasion, it is believed that the 174 steerage passengers were being transported to Liverpool where they would board a larger ship bound across the Atlantic to the

United States. As this was at the height of the Great Hunger, it is not surprising that large volumes of people were emigrating from Ireland every week. Rampant starvation and abject poverty with little to no sign of improvement meant that there were few reasons to stay in Ireland if you could afford to leave, or if you fell under one of the many assisted migration schemes.

Whilst the Londonderry was navigating around the northwestern coast of Ireland, a terrible storm gathered, with gusts of wind reaching hurricane level. For their own safety, the steerage passengers were sent below deck to shelter from the vicious winds. During the storm the companionway cover broke loose and in order to prevent the sea water from getting below deck and sinking the ship, the crew sealed the gap with tarpaulin. This meant that the passengers taking refuge below were now effectively trapped. With very little space, which they shared with cattle, and extremely rough conditions, the situation soon turned into a catastrophe as people suffocated from a lack of oxygen or were crushed or trampled to death. The Londonderry eventually made its way to Derry Harbor where it remained for the night.

When morning came and the skies cleared, the crew made a grisly discovery. 72 of the passengers, men, women, and children, had perished in the storm. The crew and their captain were put on trial for manslaughter, claiming that had they not acted as they did, then the ship would have gone down in the storm, taking many more lives with it. The case highlighted that the Steerage Act had not been sufficient to prevent the loss of life on migrant ships and that more needed to be done.

### **Charlotte Grace O'Brien**

Charlotte Grace O'Brien, daughter of the Young Irelander William Smith O'Brien, was born in Limerick on November 23, 1845. When Charlotte was 3 years old her father was involved in the failed 1848 rebellion. For this he was sentenced to death, but had his sentence commuted to transportation. He was sent to Tasmania to serve his sentence. From this early experience with ship conditions, Charlotte went on to become heavily involved in campaigning for an improvement in the standards of Irish emigrant ships.

In the book, '*The Irish in America*' by J.F. McGuire, Charlotte read about the dreadful experiences Irish emigrants endured on their journey across the Atlantic. Determined to have a positive impact, Charlotte travelled to Queenstown (now called Cobh) to see how the steerage passengers were expected to live. Charlotte took a short journey in steerage, 24 hours from Liverpool to Queenstown. She was

horrified by what she saw. Charlotte lobbied the government to make dramatic changes to ship conditions. Her first success was the introduction of Catholic priests to each journey to provide spiritual comfort for the passengers and, when fatalities occurred, to administer the last rites. She began to inspect the ships prior to departure. On these visits, she would take a medical officer with her to insure that the steerage section of the ship was fit to safely house its passengers. She went on a number of transatlantic voyages to inspect ships and insure standards were being upheld.

Charlotte also established a lodging house for women in Queenstown where passengers often had to spend a number of nights before travelling. As a busy port, Queenstown had become a dangerous place to be, especially for vulnerable young women travelling alone. She was also instrumental in establishing a mission house in New York City dedicated to providing aid to newly arrived Irish immigrants. It was called the Our Lady of the Rosary mission house.

Though these years of intense emigration depleted the Irish population, it also provided us with our incredibly diverse diaspora which stretches all over the world. The Our Lady of the Rosary building is still in operation today and their records help people to track down their Irish roots as many immigrants would have at least passed through New York.



***Bingo!*** Every Thursday and Saturday evening 6:30PM at St Michael the Archangel High School, 6301 Campus Drive, Fredericksburg. Bring the family!

***February 15:*** Division meeting, 2022 budget vote

***February 26:*** Hosting the Quarterly State meeting at St. Jude Parish hall

***March 1-31:*** Irish-American Heritage Month







### *Our Division Prayers*



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

- **John Hogan:** pulmonary fibrosis; treatment for Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma chemotherapy completed/regaining strength
- **Joe Daley:** COPD
- **Jack Grey, Jr.:** Jack Grey's son – cancer
- **Russell McLaughlin:** Dave McLaughlin's brother - frontotemporal dementia (FTD)
- **Loretta Larzelere:** Bob Fitzgerald's sister-in-law suffering from seizures and Alzheimer's
- **John O'Brien:** Hugh O'Brien's brother-- recovering from stroke.
- **Jerry O'Brien:** Paul O'Brien's brother – cancer
- **Ruth Pettinger:** Shawn Lenahan's aunt (Vietnam Vet) inoperable brain tumor.
- **Donna Maffeo:** Joe Monaghan's sister-in-law and his father Joseph Sr. care giver for his mother and uncle (dementia/Alzheimer)
- **Brian Kiernan:** VAAOH President, lymphedemic edema
- **Nolan Banks:** Former FS Jeff Banks' son (chemo-compromised immune system) *Pray for the intercession of Venerable Father Augustine Tolton:*  
<http://www.toltoncanonization.org/prayer/canonizationprayer.html>
- **Mary Lou and Keith Bowers:** St Jude parishioners/friends of Deacon Aaron
- **Randy James** (COVID)
- **Leann Hanson** (COVID)
- **Father Zeigler** (COVID)
- **Tara Pettyjohn** (miscarriage)

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

- **Bob Phillips:** Brother of Bill Phillips who died on 30 January 2022
- **Lois M. Hanson:** mother of Edwin Hanson who died peacefully on 18 November 2021
- **Mary O'Brien Gardner:** mother of Jill Lenahan, mother-in-law of PDP Shawn Lenahan who died on 12 November 2021
- **Angelo Jr Zaccagnino:** father of Deacon Zaccagnino who died 19 August 2021

- **Chris Link:** brother of PDP Andy Link who died on 11 June 2021

*Send illness notifications to Standing Committee Chair Bobby Murphy ([smurphy823@gmail.com](mailto:smurphy823@gmail.com))*

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



***Semi-formal/formal occasions:*** The AOH “uniform” is 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.

***Informal events*** (i.e. Division outings (ball games, picnics, meetings, etc.) the division logo polo or sweatshirts (optional ball cap) are appropriate.

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

***Green Jacket:*** Brothers procure their own green jackets. 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.

A second source recommended by Major 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:

LAOH Sister Patricia Ankrom produces a 7.5-foot sash; Send a personal check for \$60. Turnaround time is about 10 days. The sash will be sent to you via Fed Ex or UPS -- signature required. Her address: Patricia Ankrom, 7400 Airport Dr., Quinton, Va. 23141-2400. Email [traceysbydesign@aol.com](mailto:traceysbydesign@aol.com)

Gettysburg Flag offers tri-color sashes and “special prices” for larger orders. <https://www.gettysburgflag.com/custom/irish-parade-sash>

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