



GENERAL MEAGHER'S DISPATCHES

April 2023

Volume 11No 4

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:** Chuck Gleason; **Sentinel:** Jack Kelly; **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.



President's Corner:

Brothers,

Your Division needs YOU! We have about 60 brothers currently in the Meagher Division and with some recent recruiting efforts, it looks like we will be growing to 70+ members in the near future. With that growth comes challenges. As in any volunteer organization, there is a core group doing a lot of the preparatory work, but more brothers are needed to participate in Division activities if we are to execute this year's plans and move forward into next year at the same pace. In addition to participating in our Irish-American cultural events and the fund-raising events, there is a need for more brothers to attend our business meetings on the third Tuesday of each month, either in person or via the internet, so that we can have a quorum which is required to conduct our necessary Division business. Our next meeting is on Tuesday, 18 April, starting at 7:30pm so please add it to your monthly calendar, and I hope to see you at the KofC Hall at 4724 Harrison Road in Fredericksburg or on the computer screen!

We had a great start for the annual Trip for Two to Ireland raffle ticket sales at St. Jude Church on St. Patrick's Day and the sales will continue through the summer. Keep an eye on your mailboxes

for your raffle tickets and please be sure to return the ticket stubs along with the money for any tickets that you sell or purchase. If you have any unsold tickets, please be sure to return them so that we can pass them on to other purchasers.

And finally, we are just five weeks away from our golf tournament on Monday, 08 May, and we are planning for at least 100 golfers. For this event to be a success, we are looking for more sponsors and raffle prize donations so please pass on our golf flyer to any local businesses and any golfing buddies for them to consider supporting us. I also ask that individual brothers consider donating items of value such as gift cards, maybe a bottle of your favorite adult beverage, or even cash to be used for raffle prizes. If you play golf, I hope you sign up to play. For the non-golfers, any help you can provide at the LOW golf course during the morning sign-in and at lunch will be appreciated.

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

Bob Fitzgerald



Northern Ireland Protocol Update

(27 Feb) British Prime Minister Sunak and European Commission President Von der Leyen announced a “decisive breakthrough” regarding the Northern Ireland Protocol. PM Sunak said the UK parliament would vote on it “at the appropriate time”. DUP leaders immediately denounced the “breakthrough”.

(29 Mar) The Orange Order (30,000-members) voted unanimously to oppose a return to Stormont until “substantial improvements” are made to the UK/EU Protocol agreement. PM Sunak insists the UK/EU agreement is not open for renegotiation.

(29 Mar) British **MI-5 increased the terror threat level in NI to “severe,”** meaning “politically motivated violence” is considered highly likely. This is the first time in 12 years MI-5 has implemented this terror threat level.

Here’s a question: Is our Special Envoy working behind the scenes in New York City to create a last minute “miracle” prior to the April 10th GFA anniversary or is he still having coffee with his friends in Boston?

Yogi Berra said it best: “It’s like *déjà vu* all over again”. Are we seeing a repeat of Home Rule promises in 1893, 1896, and 1912? The English parliament couldn’t muster the votes to pass Home Rule because of Ulster loyalist opposition.



Watch the short video produced to explain the Troubles to children ... “From conflict to peace in Northern Ireland”. I’m impressed --no mention of religion!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VQXBpt5RArY>



Grand Finale to IAHM



Principal Austin Poole of the Epiphany Catholic School in Culpeper accepted age appropriate Irish history books for the school library. Meagher Division donated similar books to area Catholic elementary schools and high schools.

Committee Chair Shawn Lenahan kicked off the 2023 ***Trip for Two to Ireland*** raffle at the St Jude Parish corned beef dinner IHO St. Patrick on March 17th. Sales continued after Masses on March 18th and 19th. A phenomenal 154 tickets were sold!

On March 25th and 26th President Fitzgerald and RS Halpin recruited new brothers at St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church in Warrenton. This effort is undertaken to establish an AOH presence in Culpeper and Fauquier Counties. On Sunday our table was the center of attention as many men and women stopped by to learn about the AOH. Thirty men indicated interest and were given applications. Applicants will be installed in the Gen. Meagher Division, but following our 2010 precedent in forming the Fr. Judge Division, when the new division is chartered, these brothers will be transferred. As an added value nine women expressed interest in LAOH and their contact information was forwarded.



March Trivia Question was: What is the significance of St. Patrick's fire at Slane?

Answer: In 433AD St. Patrick set a bonfire at the Easter Vigil to honor Jesus, the "light of the world". This was on the Hill of Slane close to Tara and on the banks of the Boyne River. Patrick wanted the fire to be seen for miles around. Legend has it the pagan/druid king sent troops to capture Patrick and extinguish the fire, but they could not extinguish the holy fire.

April Trivia Question: What subatomic particle has its name taken from the James Joyce's "Finnegans Wake"?



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.

A Closer Look at the Rising in '98

In the late 18th century Irishmen were tired of the "system of savage repression" described as worse than the atrocities of Cromwell's occupation -- including house burnings, torture of captives, and pitchcapping. Inspired by the successful revolutions in America and France, the concepts of democracy and nationalism influenced Catholics and Presbyterians to rise above sectarian issues in an effort to free Ireland.

The United Irishmen's inspirational leaders were Theobald Wolfe Tone, Edward Fitzgerald, and Father John Murphy.

- ❖ Tone gained financial and moral support during his "exile" (1775-76) in the United States. He convinced the French to support an Irish revolution, but in 1796 a French invasion force was swept away in a rare hurricane and never landed on the Irish coast.
- ❖ Fitzgerald, formerly a British explorer and soldier, dropped his "Lordship" title, joined the United Irishman, and was appointed Commander-in-Chief.
- ❖ Father John Murphy was the inspirational leader in County Wexford.

According to McCarthy “the organization was literally infested with spies” and the English could have arrested the leaders at any time. However, the English favored a plan to permit escalation, provoke a general revolt, and then crush the entire rebel organization “forever”.

One of the English spies was Thomas Reynolds, Wolfe Tone’s brother-in-law. He was an insider and provided the English with rebel passwords and secret meeting locations. Based on Reynold’s information, in spring 1798 the English raided a clandestine meeting in Dublin and arrested 14 key United Irishmen leaders.

Another traitor, Francis Higgins, compromised Fitzgerald’s hideout in Dublin. Soldiers, led by the infamous Major Henry Sirr were sent to arrest Fitzgerald. He fought back, killing one attacker and wounding another, but after suffering multiple wounds himself, he was taken to prison where he died from his wounds in March 1798.

Father Murphy led Irish rebels in the southeast. He was captured after the battle of Scollagh Gap/Kilcumney Hill in June 1798 and hanged in Tullow (Co. Carlow). His severed head was spiked and placed on a pole in the market square¹.

Early in 1798, Wolf Tone again convinced the French to send troops to Ireland. This time they landed in Killala (Co. Mayo), joined the Irish rebels, and enjoyed a series of quick victories including defeating the English army at Castlebar. This victory prompted a declaration of the "Irish Republic".

The “Irish Republic” lasted twelve days. The French/Irish were defeated in July and French troops were repatriated to France while many Irish troops were summarily executed. Tone was captured, tried and sentenced to death by hanging. Tone demanded death by firing squad -- hanging was for criminals. The English refused and Tone replied: “*the connection between Ireland and Great Britain is the curse of the Irish nation*”.

On execution day Tone was found dead in his cell with his throat cut. The English reported he’d committed suicide, but this was a fabrication. Tone was in solitary confinement, he did not have access to a knife, and he was not permitted visitors. Ironically the English made one exception: a French surgeon was allowed to visit Tone the night before the scheduled execution. He may have murdered Tone.⁴

In the Rising of ’98 an estimated 30,000 were killed.

¹ McCarthy, *Ireland Since the Union*, Belford Clarke & Co, Chicago, Ill, 1887

² Thomas Flanagan, *Year of the French*, Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, New York, 1979

³ Richard Roche, *Here’s to Their Memory, A Tribute to the Fallen of Republican Wexford*, John English & Co, Wexford, Ireland, 1966

⁴ C. Desmond Greaves, *Theobald Wolfe Tone and the Irish Nation*, Connolly Publications, Ltd., London, 1963





Upcoming Division Events



April 9: Easter Sunday – The Risen Christ!

April 18: Division business meeting and camaraderie time

April 23: Anniversary of the **Battle of Clontarf** and the death of Brian Boru

April 24: Anniversary of the **1916 Easter Rising** (often celebrated on Easter Monday)

May 8: The 10th Annual Shamrock Charity Golf Classic to be played at Lake of the Woods Golf Course.



Our Division Prayers



Keep our brothers, family members and friends in your prayers

- Joe Daley: COPD
- Frank Connors: recovering from abdominal surgery
- Neil Hornung: recovering from knee surgery
- Dan Mulhern: radiation treatments (prostate cancer)
- Lisa Halpin: Bill Halpin's wife suffered a minor stroke of the cerebellum.
- Russell McLaughlin: Dave McLaughlin's brother - frontotemporal dementia
- Jerry O'Brien: Paul O'Brien's brother – cancer
- Ruth Pettinger: Shawn Lenahan's aunt (Vietnam Vet) inoperable brain tumor
- Brian J. Fitzpatrick: friend of Jim O'Donnell
- Margaret Casey: Tim Lynch's aunt suffering from Dementia
- Ken Fishback: Bob Fitzgerald's neighbor diagnosed with cancer
- Donna Maffeo: Joe Monaghan's sister-in-law and his father Joseph Sr. care giver for his mother and uncle (dementia/Alzheimer)
- 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

- John K. O'Brien: Hugh O'Brien's brother died on March 15, 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 Hogan: Gen. Meagher Division 2015 Hibernian of the Year, died 14 Feb 2022
- Christopher Grey: son of Brother Jack Grey, died 15 February 2022
- Dawn Forest: Wife of Brother Dean Forest, died suddenly on 13 January 2022.
- Bob Phillips: Brother of Bill Phillips died on 30 January 2022

Send notifications to Committee of the Sick Chair Bobby Murphy
(smurphy823@gmail.com)

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'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>

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>

Division Logo Items: Contact Shawn Lenahan for division logo polo shirts, sweatshirts and ball caps (s_lenahan@verizon.net)

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.