



Ancient Order of
HIBERNIANS
Irish • Catholic • American



GENERAL MEAGHER'S DISPATCHES

November 2023

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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:** Vacant; **Sentinel:** Vacant; **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, we are quickly approaching the end of the year and we only have four Division events left that should be on your calendars. Two of these events are the November and December monthly meetings. We have the honor of having our new State President Bob Fay to install our new Division officers at our December meeting.

Of the remaining two, one of them is our annual Memorial Mass at 7:30pm on Tuesday, 14 November, at St. Jude Church. I want to thank our Chaplain, Deacon Aaron, for helping to schedule this Memorial Mass. I have invited all of the remaining widows and their families to join us and it would be great for them to see a large number of Hibernians remembering their loved ones. The last event is our annual wreath presentation ceremony at the Irish Brigade Memorial at the Fredericksburg City Dock on Sunday, 10 Dec, currently planned for 12:00 noon to remember them and their sacrifices 161 years ago. I hope to see you at one or more of these events.

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

Bob Fitzgerald, President



Division Nominations (and Elections!)

President Fitzgerald, Vice President Lenahan, Standing Committee Murphy, and Marshal Gleason chose not to be nominated for the 2024-25 term and Sentinel Kelly moved away. Three incumbents, Recording Secretary Halpin, Financial Secretary Everitt, and Treasurer McLaughlin asked to be nominated.

The nominees for the 2024-25 term are a quality mix of experienced Hibernians who have served in leadership roles, three incumbents with experience in their positions, and two relatively new brothers with outside leadership experience who will ascend within our Brotherhood.

The Nominees:

President Dennis O'Reilly. Dennis transferred into our division in 2022 after serving multiple terms as president of the Commodore Barry Division in DC. (**Major Degrees 2003**)

Vice President Jack McGovern. Jack joined AOH 30 years ago and served in the Lt Col Dowd Division prior to joining Gen. Meagher Division. (**Major Degree 2005**)

Recording Secretary Bill Halpin. Bill joined AOH in 1983. He served multiple terms as president of the Col. Cunningham and the Gen. Meagher Divisions. He also served as Virginia AOH state president. He currently is the State Political Education Chair and State Organizer. (**Major Degrees 2000**)

Financial Secretary Jeff Everitt, PhD. Jeff joined the AOH in 2016 and served two years as Financial Secretary. (**Major Degrees 2016**)

Treasurer Dave McLaughlin: Dave joined AOH in 2016. He served one term as division president and one term as treasurer. (**Major Degrees 2017**)

Standing Committee Bill Hallahan. Bill joined the AOH in 2023. He is a retired USMC officer and is employed as a data scientist.

Marshal Tim Lynch: Tim transferred into the Meagher Division in 2022 after serving five years as President, Rev. William J. Clifford Division (Tom's River, NJ). (**Major Degrees 2000**)

Sentinel Neil Hornung. Neil joined the AOH in 2022 He is a retired USMC officer (**Major Degrees 2023**)

B. Halpin identified each nominee, in turn, and President Fitzgerald followed protocol in thrice asking for nominations from the floor. There being none, he closed each nomination.

President Fitzgerald reminded brothers that a quorum is critical for voting at our 21 November meeting. SC Murphy noted that meeting is two days before Thanksgiving and many brothers might be unable to attend. J. McGovern moved that the vote be taken immediately. N. Hornung seconded and the motion passed. Because all nominees was unopposed, RS Halpin was asked to cast one ballot for each nominee. This done, the new officers were elected and will be installed at the December meeting. Their terms in office begin on 1 Jan 2024.



2023 Trip to Ireland Winner



The winning ticket for the 15th Annual Hibernian Trip for Two to Ireland raffle was drawn at the Halfway to St. Patrick Day celebration hosted by Fredericksburg's Colonial Tavern – Home to the Irish Brigade. DragonFyre provided inspiring Irish music and the Muggivan School of Irish Dance performed admirably. At 4PM, with great anticipation, the youngest Irish dancer, Raegan, picked the winner from among the 1200 tickets.

The 2023 winners are Gene and Kate McKenna. Gene, a Hibernian for more than 50 years, and Kate are celebrating this windfall along with their 61st wedding anniversary. This marks only the second time in 15 years that one of our own has won the prize.



Division Charities



The Division continued its support to our area pro-life organizations: Mary's Shelter and Birthright. At left VP Shaun Lenahan presents the Division donation to Rose Mary O'Grady of Birthright.

The division closed out the year with donations to each of our four parishes, to the St Matthew Food Bank and Baby Closet, to the Muggivan School of Irish Dance, to the Irish Culture Society of Virginia, and to Freedom For All Ireland.



Virginia AOH State Meeting

The State Board announced the recent convention lost money because the minimum number of room reservations the Alexandria Hilton required was not reached. The Board will be considering convention options such as one day conventions instead of the typical 3-4 day conventions held in the past. To mitigate the loss the Board proposed purchase for resale of small (ca 10”) white Teddy Bears festooned with AOH logos. A motion passed to support this idea. A number of the Teddy Bears will be distributed to the divisions in springtime.



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.

The English Legacy and Reconciliation Bill

Every Northern Ireland major political party, Catholic and Protestant churches, human rights organizations, and the United Nations opposed the British government's *Legacy and Reconciliation Bill*. Nonetheless it passed into law in September. This legislation will stop most prosecutions for killings by militant groups and British soldiers during the three decades of the Troubles in which more than 3,500 people died. This law bans any new civil claims and inquests over the Troubles. Many believe this law will allow killers to get away with murder.

The British government formed an "Independent Commission for Information Recovery and Reconciliation" to investigate alleged crimes. Former militants and soldiers who cooperate with the commission and reveal what they know about past crimes will be granted immunity from prosecution.

Rhetorical Question: When will British oppression in Ireland end?

November 21 – Anniversary of Bloody Sunday 1920

Although outside the Troubles era, Ireland's original Bloody Sunday occurred on 21 November 1920. At that time, the Irish were fighting a guerilla war against the British in the Irish War of Independence.

On that Sunday morning under orders from Michael Collins, the IRA assassinated 14 members of the British Intelligence "Cairo Gang" – a cohort of British intelligence agents and spies.

On that Sunday afternoon the Gaelic Athletic Association had organized a Gaelic football match between Dublin and Tipperary at Dublin's Croke Park.

British authorities suspected some of the assassins may have infiltrated the crowd at Croke Park. Police blocked the exits and entered the playing field to search for IRA members. Without provocation Royal Irish Constabulary reserve forces - known as the Auxiliaries and the Black and Tans - began shooting indiscriminately into the crowd. The firing lasted only 90 seconds. Fourteen people were killed or fatally wounded and dozens more were injured. Fatalities included three schoolboys, a bride-to-be (who was buried in her wedding dress), a former British soldier, and coincidentally, four IRA members (probably not the assassins). There was no public inquiry into the Croke Park massacre. Instead, two British military courts of inquiry into the massacre were held behind closed doors.



Upcoming Division Events



November 14th: We honor our deceased brothers at a Memorial Mass to be celebrated at St. Jude Church

November 21st: Division meeting

December 10th: Wreath presentation at Irish Brigade monument (City Dock)

December 19th: State AOH President Bob Fay will install our 2024-2025 officers





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.
- 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 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](mailto: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 interest in division activities.