



Ancient Order of Hibernians

JOHN CARDINAL D'ALTON DIVISION 3

October 2022

Brother Hibernians _____



As mentioned in my email last week, there are many events coming up between now and year end, and in particular in November, so make sure to read this cover to cover!

Our next division meeting will be at the Hibernian House **this Friday, October 28th at 8:00pm**.

Welcome to our six new members sworn in at the September meeting: Tim Callanan (PR), Kevin Grace (Blauvelt), Michael Glynn (Valley Cottage), Tony Doherty (Nanuet), Scott MacMaster (PR) and Travis Arterburn (PR).

Thanks much to Dennis Madigan and team for the “Dueling Pianos” event held at the Hibernian House in September. What a tremendous night – well attended and high energy! Also, thanks to John Draper, Sr., Chris Powers and their team for the various fundraisers to support the Wreaths Across America effort (see more under the “Veteran’s Corner” article). In a nice bit of symmetry, the extra money from the door at Dueling Pianos went to the Wreaths charity.

Thanks also to those who attended the Memorial Mass and Re-Dedication ceremony of the Rockland Irish Hunger Memorial at the GAA fields – it was a beautiful morning.

And **NOTE ALL MEMBERS** – the article on the upcoming Major Degree Ceremony to be held right here in Pearl River. Make sure to get that on your calendar if you don’t already have your major degree!

Also note that we as Pearl River Hibernians will be graced by several NY State Hibernian events in November, including the State Board meeting, our State President’s Testimonial Dinner and the State FFAI Social. See more details on the list of *Upcoming Events* and in the full article.

Good & Welfare –Please say a prayer for Kevin Scanlon’s mother, Loretta Scanlon – may she rest in peace. Also, please keep Merrick Rhodes in your prayers as he recovers, after a brief hospital stay. Also, continue to pray for the Ukrainians – while they have faded from the daily news coverage their suffering continues. Please also keep our law enforcement professionals, healthcare workers and members of the armed services in your prayers.

As always, we pray that you and your family are healthy and safe.

Yours in Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity,

Chuck Parnow

Upcoming Events



Put these on your calendar (this is just the next six weeks of activities!) – many more details in the following articles

- Saturday, October 29th – Halloween Howl! at the Hibernian House
Music by The Rummies; doors open at 7:30; \$20/person at door; cash bar
- Friday, November 4th – NY State AOH Board Social at the Hibernian House
Traditional Irish music by Pearl River musicians; doors open at 7:00; cash bar
- Saturday, November 5th – NY State AOH Board meeting; at the Hibernian House
Meeting runs from 10am to noon
- Saturday, November 5th – NY State AOH President's Testimonial Dinner; preceded by Mass at St. Paul's (Congers); Dinner and dancing starts at 6:30pm to be held at Town & Country, Route 9W (across from Rockland Lake), Congers.
- Friday, November 11th – "Wreaths Across America" fundraiser at "Dom's on the Go"
Dom's is at 112 College Ave, Nanuet and the daily menu is available on Facebook.
- Sunday, November 13th – Pot Of Gold first drawing party; Hibernian House, 2:00-6:00
- Thursday, November 17th – NY State AOH FFAI Social, Hibernian House, 7:30
- Saturday, November 19th – Seniors' Thanksgiving Luncheon, Hibernian House, 10:00-2:00pm – as always, Need volunteers!
- Friday, December 2nd – Comedy Night at the Hibernian House; doors open at 7:30.
- Saturday, December 3rd – Major Degree; St. Aedan's CCD Center, noon to 3pm
- Friday, December 9th – Rambling House at the Hibernian House; doors open at 7:00.

Major Degree!



All – when you were initiated into the Ancient Order of Hibernians, remember it was conditional upon you 'passing the test'. In our vernacular, that means obtaining your Major Degree at a formal ceremony. With all the disruptions of the pandemic, many of us have not had a lot of practical opportunities to go to and obtain the Degree, but you now have the opportunity locally!

A Major Degree ceremony will be held on December 3rd at the Saint Aedan's parish meeting center. Doors will open at 10:30am for registration, and the ceremony will run from roughly noon to 3pm. Your incidental cost of the ceremony will be paid by the Division.

We can't overstate how important attending a Major Degree ceremony is for you, to get the full picture of what it means to be a Hibernian. There are numerous other benefits to holding the degree – for instance, it is a contributing factor when we assess high school scholarships and it's a requirement for holding higher office in the Order.

We will begin a sign-up sheet at the meeting Friday night and have one in the pub. If you don't have your Major Degree, please do what you can to attend, and there is an online signup list on our website at: <https://praoh.org/event/major-degree/> (just click the RSVP button and add your info). Our goal would be to have at least 60 members of Division 3 get their major degree!

Veteran's Corner



As Hibernians, we recognize and respect those who have served our country – if you read the Hibernian Digest, you'll see a regular column on Veteran's affairs. There are a couple of items to highlight regarding any of our Brothers who have served:

- NY State AOH Veteran's Recognition – As was done last year, the AOH State Board would like to recognize members who are Veterans of the U.S. Armed Services by posting some material on the NYS AOH website. If you did serve, please send us a photo of yourself when serving, branch and when you served and a brief bio/synopsis of your time. Send the information to praoh3@gmail.com and we'll get it to the NYS AOH. Thank you for your service!
- "Wreaths Across America" fundraiser is a charitable effort intended to make sure every veteran has a wreath adorning their grave at Christmastime. This is a joint effort among the local chapters of the American Legion, AOH, Knights of Columbus and the Elks. Thanks to those who have contributed so far this fall. There is one more opportunity to pitch in! "Dom's on the Go" in Nanuet will be contributing a portion of his earnings on Veteran's Day, Friday, November 11th. Please consider ordering your food from Dom's that day (great Italian fare), knowing a portion of your bill will go to a good cause. Also, there will be a story on Rockland Radio (WRCR, 1700 AM) next Monday/Tuesday about the Wreaths effort. Nice work, Mr. Draper!
- A collaboration between People to People of Nanuet, The Joseph P. Dwyer Veteran Support Program and Pearl River AOH is sponsoring a free monthly cooking class for veterans. The next such class will be held at the Hibernian House at 12 noon, on Thursday, November 10th. For reservations at this or future events, questions or to make donations, please send an email to mwoods@bridgesrc.org.

Pot of Gold



The first Pot of Gold drawing party is right around the corner, so don't get left behind! Pot of Gold tickets are once again available. There will be tickets behind the bar at the pub, and we'll have tickets available at our division meeting. Tickets are available to all, so please consider grabbing a few and selling them to friends, neighbors and your friends at work.

The tickets not only enroll you in a drawing that has multiple prizes, including a \$10,000 first prize, but it gains you and a guest admission to two Pot of Gold parties (as mentioned, first one is Sunday, November 13th). If you need additional tickets or have any questions, contact Bill Lee at mr.williamlee@gmail.com or call 845.558.4148.

Hibernian House



The House held two successful events over the last month. First, there was a great early morning start when the Giants went to London to play the Packers. The Giant-faithful were at the pub, and there was plenty of food to go around (thanks so much to those who brought food to share!). Following that 'NFL theme', the upstairs Hall was the venue of the day on Sunday, October 23rd, and everyone was treated to our new audio/visual set up for a full slate of games. Many thanks to chefs Sean, Julie and Richie for a wonderful spread, and thanks to Dennis Madigan for the Giants and Jets 'flags' that were raffled off! We're looking forward to the next such event (should be the Army-Navy game – be on the lookout for details!).

FFAI



Freedom For All Ireland (FFAI) – We will be the host of this Fall's NY State AOH FFAI Social, to be held at the Hibernian House on Thursday, November 17th at 7pm. Speaker will be Mairead Farrell, TD Sinn Fein. Details can be found on the NYS website at:
<https://www.nyaoh.com/calendar/new-york-state-aoh-freedom-for-all-ireland-annual-social>.

As done last year, in conjunction with the social, the NYS AOH FFAI Committee (chaired by our own Vince Tyer) are selling 50/50 raffle tickets to raise money for our FFAI causes. Tickets are \$100 and are available at the pub - last year's drawing netted the winner roughly a cool \$12k. The drawing will be at the social on November 17th.

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"If They Are Like To Die, They had Better Do It And Decrease The Surplus Population"



THE ROCKLAND COUNTY AOH HUNGER MEMORIAL AT THE GAA FIELDS

The history of Ireland is one of the oldest of any nation in the world. The passage Tomb at Newgrange in the Boyne valley of County Meath is 500 years older than the pyramids. Irish literature is the oldest in the vernacular in Western Europe. Yet, in all that vast millennia, no moment defined the history of Ireland more than the period of 7 years between 1845-1852 when the potato crop, which eight million people relied on for basic sustenance, failed. It was a tsunami of human suffering, the waves of which touched every corner of the globe, nowhere more so in the United States, where it reshaped the landscape of American society.

Yet, despite its significance, few events have been and continue to be so misrepresented.

We may get eyerolls when we refuse to call the period from 1845-1852 a "Famine," but it was not. In the worst year of the Hunger, 1847, 4,000 vessels carrying food left Ireland for ports in England: many of those ships went to Liverpool, the main point of embarkation for the Irish fleeing the devastation of their country for America and Canada. One can but imagine the effect that seeing a ship, or perhaps even being on the same ship, that was transporting food from your homeland as you were driven out by hunger had on the psyche of those who witnessed it. Apologists today will claim that the food exported was "not enough to make a significant difference"; how many saved lives are needed to make it significant?

Perhaps the greatest myth of the Great Hunger is that it was "fate," whether the "act of Providence" claimed by British officials of the time or an "environment catastrophe" popular with today's revisionists. 175 years later, some still engage in victim blaming that the Hunger was due to the Irish over-reliance on the potato as a crop, ignoring the fact that that dependency was not a choice. At the start of the Hunger, 90% of the land in Ireland was in the hands of absentee landlords, who, to increase the return on their holdings, forced Irish tenants onto smaller and smaller plots of inferior land. The potato was the only crop that could sustain a family on that land; it was not a choice. Even in the best of times, there would be annual periods of hunger as the old crop had been consumed and the new crop not ready for harvest.

Hunger was no stranger in Ireland, and the impact of the blight that arrived in 1845 was no surprise. In the four decades since the Act of Union abolished the Irish Parliament in 1801, 150 British committees and commissions had warned that Ireland was a humanitarian catastrophe waiting to happen. In 1835, ten years before the mass failure of the potato crop, the French political scientist Alexis de Tocqueville wrote of a visit to Ireland,

"If you wish to know what the spirit of conquest, religious hatred, combined with all the abuses of aristocracy without any of its advantages, can produce, come to Ireland."

Yet, when mass starvation became epidemic, the British government labeled it an "Irish problem" to avoid accountability. They instituted policies that "*Irish property must pay for Irish poverty*," cynically putting the responsibility of solving the problem on the same absentee British landlords who were the root cause of the problem. Others callously saw an opportunity to recreate Ireland as starvation ruthlessly cleared the land. They echoed the sentiments of Dicken's Scrooge

in "A Christmas Carol," published during the first year of the famine, that "*If they are like to die, they had better do it, and decrease the surplus population.*" The Government's Chief Economic Advisor, William Nassau Senior, is recorded lamenting that the famine "*will not kill more than one million people, and that would scarcely be enough to do any good.*" However, in 1852, Prime Minister Russell took a more ghoulishly upbeat tone to Ireland losing a quarter of its population, "*Famine and emigration have accomplished a task beyond the reach of legislation or government.*"

The Great Hunger is not just an Irish story but also an American one. Most of those fleeing hunger arrived in the United States, where they were still confronted with the poverty and prejudice of the old in the new world. The immigrants of the Great Hunger were described by Archbishop John Hughes, himself an immigrant from Tyrone, as "*the debris of the Irish Nation.*" However, from that debris came people who transformed every aspect of American Society: Henry Ford, Walt Disney, Mother Jones, John F. Kennedy, and numerous awardees of The Medal of Honor. Yet too often, our media and curriculums focus exclusively on the 'Gangs of New York' aspects of Irish Hunger Immigrants, not Irish America's triumphs despite their beginnings.

Apologists claim that the Great Hunger was not a genocide because the British government did not actively try to kill the Irish. These revisionists should remember the words of George Bernard Shaw "*The worst sin towards our fellow creatures is not to hate them, but to be indifferent to them: that's the essence of inhumanity.*" The great Hunger should teach us all, Irish and non-Irish, about that great sin of indifference and when corn prices were given priority over lives. For that reason, we can never forget not to let the Great Hunger be forgotten.