



Ancient Order of Hibernians

JOHN CARDINAL D'ALTON DIVISION 3

December 2023

Brother Hibernians_____



First and foremost – we wish you and your loved ones a healthy, blessed and Merry Christmas.

Our next division meeting is at the Hibernian House tonight, **Friday, December 22nd at 8:00pm**. Aside from discussing the many upcoming events, we'll conduct elections for Division Officers.

Welcome to our newest members who were sworn in at our October meeting:
Liam O'Hagan (Pearl River) Michael Sullivan (Pearl River)

Thank you and congratulations to Larry DeGennaro and chef Bill Boera for a tremendous Thanksgiving Senior Luncheon – we receive so many wonderful thank you notes for this event. Also, thank you to Dennis Madigan and everyone who came out to support our Night of Dueling Pianos. Thanks, too, to Bill Lee and chef Sean Walsh and the large team that put on the second Pot of Gold party (and special thanks to Trish Lee for the meticulous recordkeeping). This year's event brought us back to a level of success not seen since pre-COVID.

We also had a tremendous turnout for our Special Needs Reverse Parade (see the article), as well as many of our members helping with the laying of wreaths as part of Wreaths Across America.

Congratulations to our members who will be honored this coming St. Patrick's Day. Dan Sullivan and Jake McLaughlin are representing our Division as Battalion Commander and Aide to the Grand Marshal, respectively for the Rockland parade. Sean Walsh was elected as the Rockland County Aide to the Grand Marshal for the NYC St. Patrick's parade. And our own Neil Cosgrove will be leading the Rockland parade as the 2024 Rockland County St. Patrick's Day Parade Grand Marshal.

A big 'thank you' to Dennis Madigan and the team helping out Meals on Wheels. In just a short span of time, they have taken on additional routes and are keeping a lot of our local seniors happy. We are looking to add another day - Mondays – so, if you can dedicate about an hour of your time at 10am one Monday a month, please consider it! Reach out to Dennis Madigan at (914) 714-8287 to get involved.

We have a lot coming up over the next couple of months – see the full list under **Upcoming Events** and figure out where you want to get involved.

Good & Welfare – Please pray for the repose of the soul of our Brother, Tom Markham – may he rest in peace. Also, pray for a quick recovery for Kevin Haugh from back surgery.

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

Yours in Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity,

Chuck Parnow

Upcoming Events



Event	Timing	Details
Wren Night	Tues; 12/26, 6-9pm	See article
Comedy Night *	Fri., 1/12 – 8pm	Tickets available in pub
Ski Trip	Sat., 2/10	Bus leaves 6am; see article
Bus Trip to Fink's BBQ *	Sat., 2/17	Finks in Suffern – a great outing
Murder Mystery Theater: "Top of the Mourning" *	Fri., 3/1	Tickets @ pub; questions

* questions, call Dennis Madigan: (914) 714-8287

Wren Night



Traditional "Wren Night" – Tuesday, December 26th: Our Wren Night celebration is once again on this year. The day after Christmas, St. Stephen's Day in Ireland, we will be getting together for some traditional Irish song, music, dance, and storytelling. This is a great evening of fun for the whole family upstairs at the Hibernian House. The day after Christmas, put the hecticness of the season behind you and come out for some great craic! Fliers are up in the pub – any questions, please contact Dermot Moore at dermotmoore@gmail.com or 646-302-5111.

Ski Trip



Division 3 Ski Trip – Yes – it is back! The bus and the ski mountain are booked – so all we need is a bus-load of skiers of all ages and abilities looking for a great day. The AOH Division 3 Ski Trip is scheduled for Saturday, February 10th. Your ticket (\$125 for adults; \$110 for juniors 19 and under) gets you the round-trip bus, and a lift ticket as well as refreshments and sandwiches for lunch. We leave at 6am and spend the whole day. Again – skiers of all abilities (we stop right by the mountain for rentals) and family and friends invited. Sign-up is at the pub – if interested or you have questions contact Tom Moore at tommy929@gmail.com.

Seniors' Luncheon



This might have been our best turnout yet, as we had a packed room of seniors. It was tremendous to see the turnout of our members who volunteered their time in the kitchen, serving and assisting seniors. We also had a tremendous turnout of high school students – it's not clear who gets more out of the day – the students or the seniors. Thank you, too, to the talented musicians and dancers, and special recognition of Teddy Herlihy who is there on stage for us at every one of these luncheons. Thanks to all, and to Larry DeGennaro for all his leadership.



Special Needs Parade



For the second year in a row, we had tremendous weather – the bluest skies and as mild a day as might want in Orangetown. Our guests enjoyed the many Christmas decorations, the various stops (and snacks!), and especially all of our volunteers who dressed as various characters. And as always, no Christmas parade would be complete without a fire truck and Santa at the end! of course.

Thanks to all who made such a special day for our guests, and a special thanks to Dermot Moore for once again organizing the event.



Hibernian House



The pub has been lively this holiday season with great turnouts on many nights and the occasional 'sing-song' breaking out. Also, various improvements have been made in the last month including some updates behind the bar including a new sink as well as desperately needed new ice-maker – all essentials for a well-run (and well used) bar, but costing us thousands.

You will have seen in the recent email that the House will be conducting a new fundraiser in 2024 to make sure we have the money for these kinds of upgrades. It is a monthly drawing with three prizes awarded each month of \$1,000, \$250 and \$150. Entry is \$120 payable up front (so, \$10 goes into each monthly pool) and it is open to Division 3 members, boosters and their friends, and you can enter as often as you wish. Drawings will be at the end of each month (fourth Friday), with the first drawing being at the end of January. If you have any questions, check with a bartender or reach out to Bill Boera at 845-596-9047 or e-mail: wboera@gmail.com OR Michael Mulcahy at 845-548-6013 or e-mail mookie2sba@aol.com

Please consider participating – you might win a prize, and you will definitely be helping us keep our House's physical condition healthy and up to date.

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Turlough O'Carolan: The Last of the Bards



In the late 17th century, amidst the turbulent aftermath of Oliver Cromwell's assault on Ireland and the oppressive Penal Laws, the Irish clung to their traditions resolutely. Among them was the O'Carolan family, hailing from Gaelic clans who had been disposed of land and title, but not their pride and love of Ireland as shown in the remarkable life of Turlough O'Carolan.

Born in Nobber, County Meath, in 1670 to the son of a blacksmith, Turlough's life took a fortunate turn when his family moved to Roscommon in 1684. His father secured a position with the McDermot Roe family at Alderford House, where fate intervened in the form of the lady of the house, Mary Fitzgerald McDermot Roe. She took an immediate liking to the young Turlough. Taking him under her wing and paying for his education over the next two years, the young O'Carolan displayed a promising talent for poetry and verse.

However, at the age of 18, tragedy struck when Turlough contracted smallpox. Although he survived the illness, he emerged from the ordeal completely blind, denying young O'Carolan not only the use of his eyes but the prospect of employment, seemingly condemning him to a life of poverty.

In a remarkable gesture of kindness and perhaps recognizing Turlough's artistic potential, Mrs. McDermot Roe sent a harpist, Ruari Dall, to teach the young man to play the instrument so that he would have some means of livelihood. Despite the challenges of learning an instrument at such a late age, Turlough embraced the opportunity, leading to an extraordinary transformation. By age 21, Turlough O'Carolan had developed into an exceptional composer and, with a horse and guide, again provided by the kindness of Mrs. McDermot Roe, set out to make a career as a bard.

His first patron, George Reynolds, a landowner in County Leitrim, witnessed the birth of O'Carolan's iconic composition, "Sí Bheag, Sí Mhor." This enchanting piece was inspired by a site in County Meath where, according to folklore, a druid turned two battling giants into two hills.

O'Carolan's reputation grew as he traveled throughout Ireland, composing planxties—songs honoring his patrons. His compositions captured the hearts of Irish and English families alike, including the wealthy English ascendancy. His interactions with the gentry and élite of the time left an indelible mark on his compositions, influenced by the likes of Vivaldi.

Carolan's strength of character is evident in his loyalty to Catholicism. In contravention of the Penal Laws that outlawed the Catholic faith in Ireland, it is said that Carolan frequently played the harp at Masses and composed some religious music. More than sixty priests would attend his funeral, confirming his loyalty to the Catholic Church.

O'Carolan eventually married Mary Maguire in 1720, and they had seven children. After Mary died in 1733, he continued to travel to support his family.

In a poignant twist of fate, O'Carolan's life came full circle. In the spring of 1738, O'Carolan felt weakness coming over him and feeling his death was imminent, he returned to the home of his dearest friend and original sponsor, Mrs. MacDermott Roe, now an old, old lady. Carolan spoke lovingly to her, telling her he had come home to die. Then, calling for his harp, he played a tune that has come to history as "O'Carolan's Farewell to Music." At the tune's close, he walked

upstairs to the bed, where he died a few days later. During his final moments, he composed touching words dedicated to her, acknowledging her unwavering support.

*Mary Fitzgerald McDermot Roe, dear heart,
Love of my breast and my friend,
Alas that I am parting from you,
O lady who succored me at every stage.*

She sat by his bedside as he drew his last breath, ensuring his final resting place in the McDermot Roe family crypt in Roscommon.

With the advent of the Penal Laws, the bardic way of life faded away, but the compositions of Turlough O'Carolan endured. He is the Bard whose songs survive in both words and music in significant numbers (about 220 exist). His tunes are still to be found as part of today's traditional musicians' playlists.

However, at this time of Christmas, we should not be blinded by O'Carolan's brilliance and ignore the steadfast kindness and charity of his sponsor, Mary Fitzgerald McDermot Roe. Mrs. McDermot Roe likely never realized that in opening her heart to help a young disabled boy, she was also giving a gift to the entire world. Her actions are a lesson in the power of charity that should inspire us all.