



Ancient Order of Hibernians

JOHN CARDINAL D'ALTON DIVISION 3

September 2024

Brother Hibernians



As mentioned in my email about a week ago, activities cranked up very quickly after we passed Labor Day. We hope those of you involved in the school year are able to ease into getting back on schedule.

Our next division meeting will be at the Hibernian House on **Friday, September 20th at 8:00pm**. We have a number of key agenda items to cover including: (1) nominations for Hibernian House offices that are up for election (President and Treasurer for regular two-year terms and Vice President for a one-year term), (2) review of some work being done on the House, and (3) some good news around funding sources for such work. As work is already starting on organizing the 2025 Rockland St. Patrick's Day parade, we will also be taking nominations for Grand Marshal and Aide to the NYC Parade Grand Marshal.

Congratulations to Dennis and team on another well-received Comedy Night – I understand we're becoming the venue of choice for some well known comedians. Also, thanks to those who came out for the Irish Language Mass in the Bronx – a number of our members and the local Irish language club spoke during the Prayer of the Faithful. BTW, if you're interested in getting involved in Irish language sessions, contact Dermot Moore at dermotmoore@gmail.com.

Also, take special note of the articles on Meals On Wheels (we can use a volunteer or two!) and the Pot Of Gold drawing (as always, need and appreciate your support!).

Finally – a special recognition of "Pan & Peel Pizza" located on North Main St. (same storefront as Gentle Giant), for providing a huge complementary spread at the pub on the 9/11 anniversary – they were good to us (and the food was great!), so be good to them.

Good & Welfare – Please pray for the repose of the soul of our Brother Pete Dunne, and the souls of John "Jack" Murphy, Joe Toal (father of Dennis and Patrick Toal), may they all rest in peace. Also keep the following in your prayers for their quick recovery: Jim and Eileen Finn still recovering from a bad car accident and Francis Cull grappling with various health challenges.

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

Yours in Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity,

Chuck Parnow

Upcoming Events



- **NYPD vs. FDNY Gaelic Football Match, Saturday, September 21st**, 5pm at the Rockland GAA –a great chance to see a Gaelic football match live.
- **Fall NY State AOH Board Meeting – Saturday, October 16th** in Utica
- **Seniors' Thanksgiving Luncheon – Saturday, November 23rd**: Our annual feast of food and Irish culture for our senior citizen community
- **First Pot of Gold Drawing Party – Sunday, November 24th**: First drawing party – great food and multiple chances to win.
- **Dueling Pianos – Friday, December 6th**: Show starts at 8pm. Get your tickets early as we always sell out. Contact Dennis Madigan at (914) 714-8287.

Pot Of Gold



Once again, we're happy to announce that our big fall fundraiser (and one of our best social events of yearend) is kicking off once again. Tickets are \$100 and not only give you the chance to win a variety of cash prizes including the grand prize of \$10,000, but the ticket affords you and a guest to two Sunday afternoon parties at the end of the year (just before Thanksgiving and Christmas).

After leading the Pot of Gold committee for a number of years, Bill Lee will be releasing the reins to Sean Walsh. A huge thank you to Bill (and his wife, Tricia Lee) for putting in tremendous amounts of effort in making this such a successful fundraiser, particularly in resurrecting it after the pandemic. Sean has been involved in the effort in the past, and we thank him for stepping up and taking over.

As noted, this is one of two major fundraisers we have each year, so we need our members to support it – not only by making sure to buy your own ticket but, more importantly, by helping sell tickets to our friends and the community. Our charitable giving does a lot of good work throughout the year, but we need the money to do it, so our fundraisers have to be successful.

This isn't a job Sean can do by himself, and we continue to need to get newer members involved in efforts like this. If you would like to get more involved in supporting this effort and join the committee or you need a ticket, please contact Sean Walsh at smw573@gmail.com.

As always, tickets will be available at the pub. And as a final reminder, we will have tickets and can discuss further at our next meeting on Friday, September 20th.

Hibernian House



As noted, we are conducting annual House Officer elections, with three offices up for election. The offices of President and Treasurer are up for a normal two-year term, and the post of Vice-President is up for a one-year term due to the loss of Pete Dunne (again, may he rest in peace). If you're interested in stepping up, make sure you come to the September meeting for nominations.

Also, a quick note that the monthly fundraising drawings continued throughout the summer – congratulations to all those who won! And the HH staff is hard at work planning out events for the Fall, including some football afternoons in the upstairs Hall – stay tuned!

Meals On Wheels



Congratulations to our meals on Wheels team who completed their first full year of coverage in August! ***If you're looking for an easy local volunteer opportunity*** – we've got several drivers on the Injured Reserve and could use the help of one or two new team members. All it requires is roughly an hour once a month, a driver's license and a smile! Please get in touch with Dennis Madigan if interested at (914) 714-8287.

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“The Greatest Murder in Ireland That Ever Was”



Few cases exemplify the injustices suffered by the Irish people under British rule more starkly than the Maamtrasna Murders of 1882 and the wrongful execution of Myles Joyce (Maolra Seoighe). This tragic episode is a prime example of the prejudices of the British colonial policy and the prejudices dressed in the black robes of the British legal system.

1882 was part of a period of political and social upheaval in Ireland known as the Land War, sparked by poor harvests, falling agricultural prices, and the long-standing abuses of the

landlord system. The Irish National Land League, founded by Michael Davitt and led by Charles Stewart Parnell, was orchestrating a resistance campaign against landlords, including rent strikes and boycotts. The Land War's goals were the "Three Fs": fair rents, fixity of tenure, and free sale for tenant farmers. Protests were often met by evictions, civil unrest, and occasional violence.

On August 17, 1882, a shocking crime occurred in the remote village of Maamtrasna, a small, tight-knit rural community straddling the border of Galway and Mayo. Five members of the Joyce family were brutally murdered in their home: John Joyce, his wife Bridget, his mother Margaret, and two of his children, Michael and Peggy. Only young Patsy Joyce, age 9, survived the attack but was seriously injured.

The horrific nature of the crime quickly gained the attention of the British press, who often viewed the rural Irish as barbarians. British authorities moved swiftly in response to the outrage and to validate their authority. They arrested ten local men, including Myles Joyce (a first cousin to the victims), a father of five in his 40s.

From the outset, Myles Joyce's trial was tainted by injustice and prejudice. Under the Prevention of Crime (Ireland) Act 1882, the trial was moved from Galway to Dublin—a world far removed from Maamtrasna. The 'Prevention of Crimes Act' was instituted as the Crown could not get convictions under their unjust laws from Irish juries. Joyce's jury in Dublin was drawn from the city's middle-class Protestant population, who were unsympathetic to rural Irish Catholics. The prosecution deliberately manipulated the jury selection process. The prosecutor's notes from the trial show a "C" next to the names of potential jurors identified as Catholic and used challenges to exclude them to ensure a jury that would likely convict. These practices, known as "jury packing," rigged the trial against Myles and his co-defendants.

Yet the greatest travesty of justice was the language barrier. Irish was not permitted in Irish courts under British rule. Myles Joyce only spoke Irish and could not speak or understand English. While an interpreter of sorts was present, a Royal Irish Constabulary Officer who spoke Irish, he spoke the Ulster and not Connacht. His flawed translations were for the benefit of the English-speaking Judge and jury only; the officer was not permitted to translate the English portions of the trial for Joyce, leaving Joyce unable to understand the proceedings or participate effectively in his own defense.



Two of the accused, Anthony Philbin and Thomas Casey, turned Queen's evidence against their co-defendants in exchange for leniency. Their testimony was later revealed to be both unreliable and scripted by the prosecution. At the same time, the court disallowed the testimony of young Patsy Joyce, the sole surviving eyewitness, which could have significantly weakened the prosecution's case.

Despite proclaiming his innocence throughout the trial, Myles Joyce was found guilty along with two other men, Patrick Joyce and Patrick Casey. All three were sentenced to death. With the certainty of death and the imminent judgment of God before them, Joyce and Casey admitted their own guilt shortly before their execution but emphatically proclaimed Myles Joyce's innocence. "It is the greatest murder in Ireland that ever was if he [Myles Joyce] is hanged," one wrote in English, and both noted that guilty men, including witnesses for the state, remained free. The statements were sent to the lord lieutenant but to no avail with a reply "The law must take its course", with no note of justice.

On December 15, 1882, Myles Joyce was hanged at Galway Gaol. To his last breath, he proclaimed his innocence, "*Níl mé ciontach*," in a language that his executioners and the gawking crowd could not understand.

In 2018, 136 years after his execution, Myles Joyce was granted a posthumous pardon by Irish President Michael D. Higgins. Sadly, speaking Irish in the north of Ireland, as guaranteed by the Good Friday agreement, is still challenging to this day. Despite binding commitments, Britain has failed to deliver an Irish language act and the parity of esteem it would guarantee. The ghost of Myles Joyce still haunts us.