



Ancient Order of Hibernians

JOHN CARDINAL D'ALTON DIVISION 3

March 2025

Brother Hibernians



Time to pivot! I hope this month's newsletter finds you and your family well and everyone had a good St. Patrick's Day and parade here in Pearl River. From here, though, the weather gets warmer as the days get longer, and we turn our attention to our spring activities, including our Communion Breakfast, distribution of scholarships and our annual Golf Outing. We look forward to seeing you **tonight, March 28th at 8pm** to discuss all of this at our monthly meeting.

A special shout-out to the officers and bartenders of the Hibernian House for making the St. Patrick's season so successful. Also, a big thank you to Larry DeGennaro and the team that served the feast to one of the largest groups of senior citizens we've ever had at our holiday luncheons.

In the upcoming month, our scholarship process will continue with the Irish history exam. Applicants will be contacted with details. This will all culminate with our Hibernian Mass and Communion Breakfast on Sunday, May 4th. And I'm also looking forward to the next Comedy Night organized by Dennis Madigan for Friday April 11th!

Also, a lot of work has begun on the Golf Outing. Please see following articles on a number of these activities.

Good & Welfare – Please pray for the repose of the soul of our brother Kevin McAndrew, our brother John Madigan and for Owen Reilly, father-in-law of Sean Walsh – may they rest in peace. Also keep Tim Diviny, Kevin Haugh and John Kelly in your prayers for a quick recovery as they battle different 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



Event	Timing	Details
Acoustic Happy Hour with <i>The Rummies</i>	Sat., 3/29; 5–8pm	Great music and a great time upstairs in the Hall; no cover and a 50/50.
Hibernian Comedy Night	Fri., 4/11; doors open at 7pm; show at 8pm	As always, a very entertaining night!
Hibernian Mass & Communion Breakfast	Sun., 5/4; Mass at 9am, breakfast follows	Mass at St. Margaret's and breakfast back at the Hibernian
AOH Annual Golf Outing	Fri., 5/9	Bluehill Golf Course – see article

Annual Golf Outing



Division 3 sponsors only two major fundraisers a year, and our spring event is our annual golf outing. The outing takes a tremendous amount of effort by a large group of people and that effort will continue with organizational meetings of the Golf Committee – we'll share times / dates.

This year's outing is in memory of all those members we lost over the last five years, 2020 through 2024. So many of those that we've lost were pivotal in creating the AOH that we know, including many involved in acquiring and building out the Hibernian House. So, we want to make sure all are recognized.

We'd once again like to thank Scott McMaster for chairing the committee for another year. The team has gotten off to a great start – fliers were up before St. Patrick's Day and the volunteer and golfing sign-ups are going up in the coming week. This is a great opportunity for you to get involved in a great event and to meet lots of your brothers!

Seniors' Luncheon



Congratulations to Larry DeGennaro and the team for another great St. Patrick's Day seniors' luncheon. We had some long-time volunteers as well as a number of new cooks and servers step in to serve 145 pounds of corned beef with all the fixin's! A special shout out to all of the student volunteers including the great group that showed up from Albertus Magnus (thanks, Chris Power, for organizing as always!). And a big thank you to Fergal Hayes for performing throughout the luncheon. Much gratitude to all!



Hibernian House



It was a busy week at the pub leading up to the day of the parade with an extremely busy week from the day of the NYC parade, to the parade here in Pearl River. Thanks to all who came out and a special thanks to the Hibernian House officers and the entire team that had to pitch in to make it happen.

The Hibernian House February monthly drawing at our February meeting doled out another \$1,400 [1st place (\$1,000); 2nd place (\$250); 3rd place (\$150)]. There's still a chance to get into the monthly drawings and we can use the support to help with the various improvements planned for the House. If you want to join for the March drawing, it's \$100 dollars (\$10 per month you're in). Just see a bartender or drop us a note at praoh3@gmail.com.



Parade Division 3 honores John McGowan (Grand Marshal) and Pat Casey (Parade Commander) starting the day of the parade.

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Thomas Francis Meagher: A Patriot of Two Countries



Thomas Francis Meagher's life is a testament to the resilience, ambition, and dedication of the Irish people, both in their homeland and in America. Born in Waterford in 1823, Meagher was raised in an affluent household and received a classical education at Clongowes Wood College and Stonyhurst College in England. Here, he developed his skills in rhetoric, history, and philosophy—an education that would shape his later role as a statesman and orator.

Despite his privileged upbringing, he was drawn to the cause of Irish independence. A deep sense of history and justice fueled his passion for Irish freedom. Influenced by the ideals of the American and French Revolutions, he believed Ireland deserved the same right to self-governance. The injustices of British rule, particularly the oppressive response to the Great Hunger, further solidified his commitment to the cause.

As a leader of the Young Ireland movement, Meagher became a powerful voice for national self-determination. In 1846, at the ironically named Conciliation Hall in Dublin, Meagher delivered his fiery "Sword Speech." While advocating for the repeal of the Act of Union, he rejected pacifism, arguing that armed struggle was sometimes necessary for freedom. This speech earned him the title "Meagher of the Sword." In perhaps its most famous passage, Meagher cited the example of the American Revolution:

"Abhor the sword? Stigmatize the sword? No, my lord, for at its blow, and in the quivering of its crimson light, a giant nation sprang up from the waters of the Atlantic, and by its redeeming magic the fettered colony became a daring, free Republic."

In 1848, Meagher unveiled the Irish tricolor of orange, white, and green (unlike the current Irish flag, the orange was closest to the staff). The flag's green represented the native Irish Catholics and their nationalist aspirations, the orange symbolized the Protestant community, and the white in between stood for the hope of lasting peace between them. Later that year, after participating in a failed uprising, he was arrested and sentenced to death, which was commuted to exile to Van Diemen's Land (modern-day Tasmania).

Refusing to accept a life in captivity, Meagher made a daring escape in 1852 and made his way to the United States. He quickly established himself as a leader in the Irish American community, speaking on behalf of his fellow immigrants and advocating for their rights. As a lecturer, lawyer, and journalist, he became one of Ireland's most prominent leaders, urging his compatriots to embrace their new country while never forgetting their heritage.

When the Civil War broke out, he recognized the opportunity to demonstrate the loyalty and valor of Irish Americans while also achieving training for men who could later be used to fight for Ireland's cause. He formed the famed Irish Brigade, composed of Irish immigrants, which became one of the most celebrated units of the Union Army. The Brigade fought in some of the war's most grueling battles, including Antietam, where they played a crucial role in the Union assault on the Sunken Road, later known as Bloody Lane. The Brigade's valor at Antietam cemented its reputation as one of the most tenacious units in the Union Army, though the cost in lives was immense. Meagher himself was injured and had to be carried from the field.

The Brigade continued to fight in the most perilous engagements, suffering immense casualties at the disastrous battle of Fredericksburg. Meagher resigned his command shortly thereafter in 1863, citing frustration with the way the Brigade had been irresponsibly used and being denied permission to recruit to replace the Brigade's severe losses, leading some in the Irish community to believe that the Brigade was being used as cannon fodder on account of being Irish. This sense of ingratitude after the loss of so much Irish blood led to Meagher's disillusionment and eventual resignation.

After the war, Meagher was appointed acting Governor of the Montana Territory. It was a turbulent period, and he struggled to maintain order in a rapidly growing and often lawless frontier. Meagher's efforts to impose federal authority put him in direct conflict with the Montana Vigilantes; a powerful and extralegal group that had taken justice into their own hands and was also anti-Catholic. In one particular incident, a fellow Irishman, James Daniels, had shot and killed a gambler in the town of Helena. He was tried and found guilty of second-degree murder and sentenced to 15 years in jail. Daniels maintained he had shot in self-defense and appealed his case to the Acting Governor. As a former lawyer, Meagher personally reviewed the case and ordered Daniels' release. Daniels returned to Helena, and on the day of his return, the vigilantes hanged him and pinned a note on his body that read: "If the Governor does this again, we'll hang him."

On July 1, 1867, Meagher was traveling by the steamboat G. A. Thompson after traveling to Fort Benton, Montana, to receive a shipment of guns and ammunition for use by the Montana Militia. The weather was extremely hot, and for several days, Meagher had been extremely ill, suffering from dysentery and dehydration. Sometime in the early evening, Meagher fell overboard from the steamboat into the Missouri River. The boat's pilot later described that section of the river as "instant death – water twelve feet deep and rushing at the rate of ten miles an hour." Meagher's body was never recovered. Rumors and theories abounded—some believed that political rivals had assassinated him, while others speculated that his injuries from the war or his declining health had played a role in his fall while on the deck trying to escape a hot night.

Thomas Francis Meagher remains an enduring figure in Irish American history. His legacy lives on in the Irish tricolor and the legend of the Irish Brigade. His life was emblematic of the dual identity but never divided loyalties of Irish America—a people who, though forced to leave their homeland, carried its spirit with them across the Atlantic, determined to prove their worth and shape their own destiny and that of a new country while never forgetting where they came from.

As we honor Meagher's legacy this Irish American Heritage Month, we are reminded that the fight for justice and identity is ongoing. His story is not a relic of the past, it is a call to uphold the values of courage, unity, and resilience in our own time.