



Ancient Order of Hibernians

JOHN CARDINAL D'ALTON DIVISION 3

June 2025

Brother Hibernians



What a strange seven weeks it's been. First, we consolidated our April and May meetings to an early May meeting, then our initial date for the Golf Outing was rained out (not to mention it seems to have rained every other day since!). So, our normal spring cadence has been thrown off. We'll be getting back on track with our next meeting being this **Friday, June 13th, at 8pm**, that being the last meeting before our summer hiatus.

As just mentioned, our annual golf outing was postponed and the reschedule is a little over a week away, on **Friday, June 20th**. So, check your calendars! If you couldn't make the original date but can join us on the 20th, please do, as we have foursomes available. And if you're still planning on golfing, please make sure to confirm and consider paying in advance to avoid registration lines. As a reminder, this year's outing is in memory of all the members we lost in the five years from 2020 through 2024.

Congratulations to the recipients of our ten scholarships. We had a big turnout this year, with seventeen well-qualified students applying for the scholarships. We thank all who put great time and effort into this and wish you all great success as you graduate! Please see the following article on the process and the winners. The scholarships were given out after our Hibernian Mass – another beautiful annual event – please see the article on that.

A big thank you to the members who were able to march with us on Memorial Day at the Pearl River Memorial Day. It is so important that we stand and be counted at important events in our community like this one.

Good & Welfare – As we approach the golf outing, please say a special pray for the repose of the souls of all those members we lost in the past five years – may they rest in peace. Also keep Kevin Haugh in your prayers (and give him a ring / shout!) as he battles his 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
Rockland County AOH County Convention	Tues., 6/17 at 8pm	Hibernian House in the Hall – see the following article
AOH Annual Golf Outing	Fri., 6/20	Blue Hill Golf Course – see the following links for details: https://praoh.org/aoh-division-3-golf-outing-2/
NY State AOH Convention	July 17 th thru 20 th	Rochester, NY; see the following website for details: https://nyhibes2025.com/

County Convention



The biannual election of the Board of Officers of Rockland County AOH is this coming Tuesday at the “County Convention”. The County Board not only has the responsibility of representing and coordinating the four Divisions within Rockland County (of which we are the largest), but it also has the extremely important roll of ownership of the Rockland County St. Patrick’s Day Parade. Without the work of the County Board to run both the Emerald Ball (the Parade’s largest fundraiser) and the Parade itself, there would be no parade. That is why it’s important that we are not only engaged in the election process, but that we start to find the next generation of leaders to help carry on the tradition. If you are interested in being more involved, please talk to any of the Division Officers and/or please come out to the meeting / convention on Tuesday June 17th at 8pm at the Hibernian House.

Hibernian Mass



On Sunday, May 5th, we had our annual Hibernian Mass. The event both recognizes those Hibernians we’ve lost since last year’s Mass, as well as recognize our high school scholarship winners.

Following is the list of Hibernians Brothers whom we have lost in the prior year and memorialized at the Mass:

Francis J. Aiello

Peter Dunne

Philip Lane

Thomas J. Leahy

John F. Madigan

Kevin McAndrew

Michael J. McNamara

John 'Jack' Murphy

Robert Polhemus

May they rest in peace. Thank you so much to Father Raaser – Pastor of St. Margaret's as well as our Division Chaplain for a wonderful service.

Thanks to John Edwards for planning and organizing the day's events (both the Mass and the Communion Breakfast that followed) and to Chef Bill Boera for a great breakfast.

Scholarships



We also got to recognize our high school scholars at the Mass, as well as present them with their awards at the Communion Breakfast that followed. Division 3 takes great pride in our scholarship program as both a way to support our young scholars and to pass on our traditions, history, and heritage. Each year, we award 10 scholarships totaling over \$10,000. Many organizations give only one award, and often their top scholarship is less than our tenth. This is something every Division member should take pride in—it doesn't happen without your support.

Given that we had more applicants than available scholarships, it's good to review the general process we apply to award these scholarships. While we recognize the time and energy all applicants put in, and the natural disappointment of not being awarded a scholarship, they were awarded based on an objective scoring process that has been in place for 15+ years, using the same criteria for everyone.

Each application is scored based on three categories: an Irish history exam (60%), an essay (30%) and Sponsoring Member's/Father's involvement (including attainment of a Major Degree – 10%). A review of each application is conducted by multiple judges independently, and only the Committee Chair sees the aggregate judges' comments and scoring.

Thank you to John McGowan who was our guest speaker at the breakfast. And a huge thanks to Kevin McNulty and our Scholarship Committee – as we have often said, you

have the toughest job in the Division. Following are our high school scholars along with the Hibernian who was honored by their scholarship:

Recipient	High School	Honoree
Owen Burke	Pearl River	Jack Pendergast
Kailey Dolan	Tappan Zee	Jack O'Connor
Aisleen Green	Pearl River	Philip Lane
Brian MacMaster	Pearl River	Connie Smith
Katherine O'Brien	Pearl River	Patrick Tully
Aidan Schofield	Albertus Magnus	Kevin McAndrew
Carla Tobin	Immaculate Heart	Phillip Sheridan
Shane Tobin	St. Joseph Regional	John Gannon
Dylan Walsh	Pearl River	Peter Dunne
Tyler Walsh	Pearl River	Laurence Kaine

A special congratulations to Owen, Aisleen and Shane who also won awards in the state AOH scholarship program (and yes, our Division won 3 of the 4 awards given!).



Hibernian House



There may not have been a monthly meeting in May, but the Hibernian House monthly drawings continued, as they will throughout the summer months. Winning numbers in the May drawing were:

1st – Drawing number 19

2nd – Drawing number 180

3rd – Drawing number 360

The Hibernian House monthly drawing prizes total \$1,400 each month [1st place (\$1,000); 2nd place (\$250); 3rd place (\$150)]. If you or a friend (you don't have to be a member to play) would like to get in on the action, see a bartender for a ticket that delivers some great odds for \$80 for the remainder of the year!

There will be plenty of activities planned over the summer – keep an ear out for more! And the **softball team reminds you**, if you want some Hibernian-themed shirts or more, their online store is open until June 15th – see the following link:

<https://promofect.chipply.com/AOHSoftballMerchFundraiser/?action=viewall>

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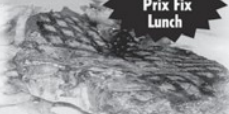
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Before the U.S. Navy, There Was O'Brien



AN INTERPRETATION OF O'BRIEN BASED ON
A LOCKET CAMEO

Jeremiah O'Brien was born in 1744 in Kittery, in the district of Massachusetts that would later form the state of Maine, the eldest of six sons of Morris and Mary O'Brien—Irish Catholic immigrants from County Cork. In 1765, the family moved to Machias, a frontier settlement on the Maine coast. There, the O'Briens established a sawmill operation along the Machias River. There, the family prospered, and by the time he was an adult, Jeremiah had become prosperous through the lumber trade, which also entailed operating coastal sloops that shipped timber to other New England ports.

O'Brien was also a committed patriot, devoted to the land that had afforded his family prosperity they could have never known in British ruler Ireland. O'Brien was a Machias Committee of Safety member, the local governing board. On receiving reports of the battles of Lexington and Concord, O'Brien, and others rallied the citizens to the cause of America's liberty. As a tangible sign of their commitment, they erected a "Liberty Pole" of a tall pine tree stripped of branches except for the top. Before it, they solemnly pledged to resist British oppression even if it required the sacrifice of their property and blood in defense of the town.

That vow was soon put to the test.

On June 7, 1775, the British armed schooner *Margaretta* arrived, escorting two merchant sloops, the *Unity* and the *Polly*, which carried provisions and were intended to be loaded with lumber for British forces. The townspeople of Machias correctly deduced that the lumber was to be used to build British fortifications in Boston. The captain of the merchant ships informed the townspeople of Machias that he would only unload supplies much needed by the town if the lumber were loaded. In an already tense situation, the acting "Captain" of the *Margaretta*, in fact a midshipman named James Moore, perhaps flush with his new authority, demanded that the Liberty Pole be taken down. John O'Brien, a younger brother of Jeremiah, is said to have replied, "*Must come down? Those words are very easily spoken. You will find, I apprehend, that it is easier to make than it will be to enforce a demand of this kind.*" The astonished Moore replied, "*. . . my orders are pre-emptory and must be obeyed. That liberty pole must come down, or it will be my painful duty to fire upon the town.*"

Such a threat pushed even the town's most conservative members to rebellion. Jones and *Margaretta's* officers barely escaped an attempt to capture them while ashore attending church services. Jones and his officer ran to the *Margaretta* and hastily slipped away while firing a few warning shots in the process. After anchoring downriver, Moore, having learned nothing from his prior threats, sent back word to Machias that if harm came to the merchant captain or his sloops, the *Margaretta* would return to burn the village.

On June 11, Jeremiah O'Brien and his brother Daniel captured one of the provision ships. *Unity*. With a rough collection of armaments, muskets, fowling pieces, a small cannon, pitchforks, axes, and a party of 35 volunteers, of which five were his brothers, O'Brien set out aboard the *Unity* to pursue the *Margaretta*. Witnessing the action with his spyglass, Capt. Moore decided to make a run for the open ocean.

The *Unity* caught up with the *Margaretta* at sea on June 12, 1775. Once within hailing distance, Moore demanded that O'Brien keep off and threatened to fire. O'Brien replied, "*In America's name, I demand you surrender!*" Despite the superior firepower of the British ship, O'Brien was able to come alongside the British vessel and board.

Recognizing that Jeremiah O'Brien was the heart and soul of the attack, Moore directed his men to fire at the audacious captain. O'Brien remained unscathed, but Captain Moore was felled by a shot from a Yankee marksman who had witnessed the attempt on O'Brien's life.

O'Brien personally hauled down the British ensign. It was the first naval victory of the American Revolution. The *Unity* was transformed into an armed cruiser with the weapons captured by *Margaretta*. O'Brien rechristened her the *Machias Liberty*, and she was employed as the first American armed cruiser of the Revolution.

When news reached them of O'Brien's actions, the British sent the ships *HMS Diligent* and *HMS Tapnaquish* ". . . to bring the obstreperous **Irish Yankee** in for trial." Jeremiah O'Brien and the *Machias Liberty* captured them both.

O'Brien continued to serve as both a naval commander and privateer. Over the course of the war, he commanded at least six vessels, including the *Resolution*, *Cyrus*, *Tiger*, *Saint Vincent*, *Little Vincent*, and *Hannibal*. Operating in New England and Nova Scotia waters, O'Brien's crews captured multiple British supply ships, disrupting British operations in the North Atlantic.

In 1780, while commanding the *Hannibal*, O'Brien was captured and imprisoned first aboard the notorious *Jersey prison ship* in New York Harbor, then transferred to Mill Prison in Plymouth, England. He was held there for nine months. O'Brien arranged for the prison's washwoman to smuggle in fresh civilian clothing. In exchange, he gave her his last guinea. After weeks of intentionally letting his appearance degrade to where the guards would not be likely to remember his original appearance, he cleaned up, changed into the fresh civilian disguise, and exited the prison during the evening guard change. He even dared to enter the local tavern for some refreshment before making his way to the coast, was ferried across the Channel to France, and returned to America by the end of 1781.

After the war, O'Brien was appointed customs collector in Machias, a position he held until he died in 1818. He is buried in the O'Brien family plot in Machias, Maine.

Five U.S. Navy ships have borne his name. The SS *Jeremiah O'Brien*, a World War II Liberty Ship, is preserved in San Francisco and remains one of the last operational vessels of its kind.

As the United States approaches its 250th anniversary, the story of Captain Jeremiah O'Brien deserves renewed attention. He secured the first American naval victory of the Revolution, led multiple privateering missions, and served his country long after the fighting ended. He did all this as a son of Irish immigrants in a time when that alone could be a barrier. O'Brien's name deserves to be better remembered—not out of sentiment but because he earned it.