



Ancient Order of Hibernians

JOHN CARDINAL D'ALTON DIVISION 3

November 2025

Brother Hibernians



As mentioned in my recent email – there's a lot going on at the Pearl River AOH. Please make sure to read through this newsletter!

Our next division meeting will be at the Hibernian House this **Friday, November 21st at 8:00pm**. Key agenda items include accepting nominations for Division Officers and planning for the many events we have going on from now through the new year.

Congratulations to all the honorees chosen to represent in the of the 62nd annual Rockland County Parade. A special shoutout and recognition to our own Dan Mulligan who will be the NYC Aide and Chris Vergine as Businessperson:

Grand Marshal	Patrick Withers
Parade Commander	Colleen Fitzpatrick
Aide to the NYC Grand Marshal	Daniel Mulligan
Hibernian of the Year	Mary Mulcahy
Businessperson of the Year	Christopher Vergine

We are looking forward to the Senior Luncheon and the first Pot Of Gold Drawing Party – both occurring this weekend. We always appreciate the volunteers who help run these tremendous events. And you still have time to get into this weekend's drawing if you buy that ticket!

There's lots more come after that, as we have a full slate of events, centering on Christmas, including our Special Needs Christmas parade and Wren Night – see the articles. Winter Golf and Family Fund activities going on, too – see the Hibernian House article. And if you're a skier, hold the date – February 7th (day before the Super Bowl), because we're back at the Belle (Mount Belleayre). More details to come on that.

Good & Welfare – Please pray for the repose of the souls of our brothers Pat Nolan and Francis Duffy, Associate Member Juan Fernandez, and Kelly Draper, wife of member John Draper, Jr. – may they rest in peace. Please remember Joan Corrigan (wife of member Jim Corrigan) in your prayers as she fights serious health issues. Also continue to keep Kevin Haugh and John Crilley in your prayers.

We hope you and your family are well – safe travels to all who may be on the roads, rails or skies to see loved ones in the coming weeks!

Yours in Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity,

Chuck Parnow

Upcoming Events



Event	Time / Location	Details
Thanksgiving Seniors' Luncheon	Sat., 11/22, 12-2pm	We'll need volunteers starting at 9am for set up, some shuttle drivers and cleanup help at 1:30.
1 st Pot of Gold Drawing Party	Sun., 11/23, 2-6pm	Upstairs at the Hibernian House. And we need those of you who like to cook to step up and bring your best dish. See article.
'Freeze Your Arse Off' Golf	Fri, 11/28, Noon to 5pm	at Broadacres with lunch at noon followed by nine holes with a three-club format – sign up soon as few spots left
Murder Mystery, "Santa's Slay"	Fri., 12/5, doors open at 7pm	At the Hibernian House; the LAOH presents one of their very popular Murder mystery events. \$40 pp buys entry and 1 free drink. See the flier link for details: https://praoh.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Santas-Slay-1.pdf
Special Needs "Reverse" Christmas Parade	Sat., 12/20, 12-1pm	12-1pm at OMM Field Parking Lot and we'll need help before and after for set up; more details to follow and in below article
2 nd Pot of Gold Drawing Party	Sun., 12/21, 2-6pm	Upstairs at the Hibernian House. Some great pre-Christmas cheer (and still need those cooks!). See article.
Wren Night	Fri., 12/26, 6-9pm	A favorite Irish tradition the day after Christmas (St. Stephen's Day), with Irish music, dancing, storytelling and great craic!
AOH Ski Trip	Sat., 2/7, all day trip	SAVE THE DATE! More details to come, but we're back at Belleayre!

Stay connected! At our website: www.praoh.org and on Facebook: PearlRiverAOH.

Pot Of Gold



The first Pot of Gold drawing party is right around the corner on Sunday, November 23rd starting at 2pm (\$2,000 of prizes will be awarded), so don't get left behind! 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.

Tickets are \$100 dollars and give you the chance to win a variety of cash prizes including the grand prize of \$10,000, plus entry for you and a guest to two Sunday afternoon parties at the end of the year. The second party featuring the grand prize drawing will be Sunday, December 21st starting at 2pm. If you have any questions, contact Sean Walsh at aohpotofgold@gmail.com.

Seniors' Luncheon



On Saturday, November 22nd from 12-2pm at the Hibernian House - We are once again hosting this great day of food and Irish culture. Seniors in the community are invited and as always, we will need volunteers, whether it be members or if you have teenagers who need community service hours! Set up starts at 9am with clean up done shortly after 2:00. For questions, please reach out to Larry DeGennaro at ldegenn931@aol.com.

Christmas Events



Special Needs “Reverse Parade – Saturday, December 20th, OMM Parking Lot: Anyone who helped at the parade in past years can tell you how rewarding it was to see the joy on our visitors' faces as they wound their way through the parking lot enjoying the goodies, costume characters, fire trucks, and Santa of course.

We need volunteers once again and ask that they arrive by 11am for set up, and the parade runs from noon to 1pm. This is an excellent time for the kids to earn community service hours. We also would appreciate it if anyone can lend us decorations and/or inflatable figures to help us turn the parking lot into a winter wonderland.

If you would like to volunteer or lend us Christmas decorations, please contact Dermot Moore at dermotomoore@gmail.com or 646-302-5111.

Traditional “Wren Night” – Friday, 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! Look for the fliers at the pub soon.

Hibernian House



Continuing the Christmas theme, it's time for us all to dig deep for the Hibernian Family Fund. We will be taking donations to the fund throughout the upcoming season, so please drop by and donate what you can. Our collections make sure that dozens of local children see some presents under the tree. If you'd like to get involved in the effort, talk to any of the bartenders.

We'll be hosting the *Freeze Your Arse Off* golf outing at Broadacres on the day after Thanksgiving, and any profits made on that will go to the Family Fund. It's a great day of craic and an excuse to spend time outdoors burning off some of that turkey.

Finally, we're taking orders for a variety of Hibernian branded shirts. Please see all the details on our website at:

<https://praoh.org/wear-your-pride-show-your-heritage-represent-division-3/>

There're always things going on at the Hibernian - hope to see you at there soon!

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That's Not My Flag: Peter O'Connor's 1906 Olympic Protest

In the summer of 1906, at the Intercalated Olympic Games in Athens, an Irish athlete made history—not just for his athletic prowess, but for staging what is recognized as the first modern political protest at the Olympics.



From Wicklow to World Record Holder

Peter O'Connor was born in 1872 in Millom, Cumberland, England, where his father, Edward, a shipwright, had temporary employment. Shortly after Peter's birth, the family returned to their ancestral home in County Wicklow, Ireland, where the O'Connors had resided since 1698. Peter was the third eldest of eleven children.

His formal education was suspended at fourteen, after completing Wicklow National School. With no secondary school for boys in Wicklow and his parents unable to

afford sending him to Bray or Dublin, his education ceased—an experience that shaped his nationalist ideals and contributed to his belief that British governance neglected Catholic boys' education in Ireland.

But O'Connor's real education came from an unlikely classroom: the laneway at his family's gate lodge on Ashford Lane, where his father worked as caretaker of the newly built reservoir. There, young Peter began training himself by leaping from his backdoor step over the gravel to the grass margin. This simple practice would lay the foundation for extraordinary athletic achievement.

In 1886, just two years after the foundation of the Gaelic Athletic Association, O'Connor joined, marking the start of a competitive career that would see him hold more than 28 Irish titles. In 1901, he set the long jump world record at 24 feet 11 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches (7.61 meters)—a mark that stood as the global best for 20 years and as the Irish national record for an astonishing 89 years. He was the first person to have a long jump world record officially recognized by the International Association of Athletics Federations.

Journey to Athens: An Irish Team Betrayed

When Peter O'Connor, Con Leahy, and John Daly set out for the 1906 Intercalated Games in Athens, they did so with clear intent and unmistakable identity. Entered by Irish sporting bodies, the Gaelic Athletic Association and the Irish Amateur Athletic Association, they traveled as representatives of Ireland. They wore green blazers and shamrock caps, and carried with them the "Erin Go Bragh" flag, green with a golden harp, a banner of their national identity.

However, when O'Connor and his Irish teammates arrived in Athens, they were shocked to find that the Olympic committee had changed its rules. The rules now allowed only athletes entered by recognized National Olympic Committees. Ireland, under British rule, had no independent National Olympic Committee and therefore no official recognition. The British Olympic Council quickly exploited this reality. On this technicality, the Irish athletes, who had set

out as an Irish team, in Irish colors, under Irish sporting organizations, were now officially reclassified and recorded as part of the Great Britain team.

The Irish athletes were press-ganged into competing under the Union Jack. For O'Connor and his teammates, this was a deeply offensive exertion of political power through sport governance, an attempt to erase their Irish identity and subsume them (and their likely medals) under the British umbrella on the international stage. This wasn't O'Connor's first encounter with British attempts to claim him for their team. The British Amateur Athletic Association had previously invited him to represent Britain at the 1900 Paris Olympics. At that time, O'Connor refused, making clear he would only represent Ireland.

The Long Jump: Injury Added to Insult

O'Connor was widely expected to win gold in the long jump, but he placed second to American Myer Prinstein. The result came amid accusations of bias; the main judge was Prinstein's own coach and manager, and the judging itself was highly irregular. The distances recorded were not announced until after the competition, when the winners were announced.

Whether or not the judging was compromised, the victors' ceremony added insult to what the Irish athletes already considered an injury to their national honor. As seen in the registration process, the 1906 games introduced the concept of teams competing for their nation (unless, of course, you were Irish). This included the introduction of the now-familiar practice of athletes receiving their medals under their national flag. O'Connor was required to accept his silver medal standing beneath the Union Jack—the flag of the nation that had stripped him of his Irish identity, the flag he had explicitly refused to represent.

For the Wicklow athlete who had spent his life asserting his Irishness, this was a moment too far.

The Protest: Brothers at the Flagpole

What happened next would echo through Olympic history. Refusing to stand under the British flag, Peter O'Connor, using his athletic prowess, quickly scaled the flagpole and unveiled the "Erin Go Bragh" banner he and his teammates had brought from Ireland.

But O'Connor did not stand alone—literally or figuratively. His Irish teammates stood guard around the flagpole, quickly joined by Irish American athletes who stood with their Irish brothers in this moment of resistance.

At the base of that flagpole stood proof that the bonds of Irish identity transcended borders and that the community would protect its own in moments of principled resistance. The act is recognized as the first modern political protest at the Olympics, a bold assertion that would inspire athletes for generations to come.

After the Protest

Later in the games, O'Connor won gold in the triple jump. Notably, he did not repeat the flag protest during that medal presentation—the point had been made, the statement delivered.

The 1906 Games are no longer officially recognized by the International Olympic Committee, so O'Connor's medals do not appear in official Olympic records. Yet his protest resonates through history far more powerfully than any medal ever could.

O'Connor continued in athletics as a judge and later became a barrister. He remained throughout his life, which ended in 1957, a symbol of sporting excellence and national pride. Four of O'Connor's sisters were nuns. Peter O'Connor had his silver medals made into chalices and presented to his sisters.

The Wicklow Town Heritage Trail has a marker on the site of Peter O'Connor's boyhood home. It notes, "*It was from the doorstep of this gate lodge that Peter began to perfect his long jump and hop, step and jump across the laneway to the grass margin. He ultimately succeeded in not only reaching the grass margin but went many feet beyond.*"

No one can deny that Peter O'Connor, as an athlete and a proud Irishman, certainly went many feet beyond.