

# Ancient Onder of Hibernians

JOHN CARDINAL D'ALTON DIVISION 3

Pearl River, NY

April, 2016



# Brother Hibernians, \_



We hope you and your families a joyous and blessed St. Patrick's Day and Easter. Our next meeting will be held on Friday, April 15th. Welcome aboard to Matthew O'Hanlon and John Walsh. Thanks once again to Jack O'Connor, Larry DeGennaro and crew for hosting another successful senior citizens luncheon. Division 3 looked fantastic in the Rockland Parade as they marched proudly behind Aide Ed O'Dea and Commander Tom Lynch. Thanks to all for a great showing. It was an honor to play with the county pipe band in Centenary marches in Dublin and Belfast, a truly historic event. We kicked off our month of Centenary Celebrations with a fantastic Young Wolfe Tones concert. Please see the Centenary article in this newsletter for all the upcoming commemoration events to honor our heroes of 1916.

Dan Callanan reports the following Good and Welfare News... Congratulations to new grandparents John McElligiott and his bride Pat who were presented with twins Finleih and Braden by their daughter Kristen and her husband Mike. Keep the cheers coming for John Callanan's son Daniel who won the U-12 Irish step dancing world championship in Glasgow. A couple of prayers would be handy for the following: Denis Troy's daughter Kathleen who successfully underwent brain surgery to repair an aneurism, Emmett Woods on his successful knee replacement, Bob Winkelman who is on the road to recovery after back surgery, Vinnie Homenick who is coming along after complications from kidney stone surgery, and Nicky Doyle who ran into complications after knee replacement surgery. Lastly, please pray for peaceful repose of Frank Aiello's wife Joan.

As always, please remember to say an extra prayer or two for our wounded warriors and their families.

Yours in Friendship, Unity & Christian Charity, Dermot O'Connor Moore, President.

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# CALENDAR \_\_\_\_

Apr 22-24 1916 Commemorations

Apr 29 PRHS Concert

Apr 30 NYSAOH

**Board Meeting** 

Apr 30 Bobby Sands

Memorial Social

May 1 Communion Breakfast

May 13 McKeever Golf Outing

28 Railroad Avenue Pearl River, N.Y. 10965

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#### LAOH -

March was a very enjoyable month for the LAOH. We kicked it off with our annual St. Zita's St. Patrick's Day party which was followed by our annual St. Patrick's Day party at the Brew House. Both were well attended. Thank you to the LAOH members who marched in the Rockland County St. Patrick's Day parade. I hope everyone had an enjoyable Easter. We will reconvene at our monthly meeting which will be held on April 12th at 7:30 PM in the AOH hall. I hope to see many of you there.

Yours in friendship, unity and Christian charity,

Terry McGeever President

# DIVISION MASS & COMMUNION BREAKFAST

Sunday May 1, 2016, 9:00 am Mass at St. Margaret's

Ministers & lector needed-contact Eddie O'Dea 917-974-9659 or odea@chapin.edu

Breakfast to follow immediately at Hibernian House

Presentation of 2015 Scholarships

Cost: Adults \$20, Children under 12 \$5

Please contact chuck.parnow@gmail.com for reservations or to volunteer

### **2015 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS**

Katie Parnow, Terence Rogers, Caitlin Tyer, Liam Ridge, Kathleen O'Neill, James Russell, Catherine Watters, Sean Sorahan, Meaghan McKiernan, Rita McVeigh

### DUES/NEWSLETTER/EMAILS/CALLING POST

The deadline for membership dues is long past. If you have not done so, please pay up immediately. We have been discussing the possibility of going to an all electronic newsletter as most organizations have and eliminating mailing. If you have not been receiving the letter via email, please send your email address to praoh3@gmail.com so we can include you. If you have not been receiving the calling post and would like to please send your phone # to praoh3@gmail.com as well.

### HIBERNIAN HOUSE \_\_\_\_

Little league season has now started. Unfortunately Mr. Lynch, the Commissioner, had to suspend Sean Walsh for missing the first game. Too much medicine, HMM. We are working on improving the parking at the AOH. We had one of our parking experts, Mr. CC do a test run on RR Avenue. The results were smashing. Nice run at the club while the shamrock was up. Did not know gurneys fit through the door. Congrats to Charlie Reedy, AKA Bob, for his Villanova sweep. And everyone thought he only knew furniture. Golf season in full swing, no injuries to report yet but it is still early. Need to tell Phil Lane golf is not a full contact sport. In connection with the 1916 Uprising John Gannon is going to attack the Pearl River Post Office. Parade was great success, no one got lost, thanks for the green line no one wound up in New Jersey. AOH golf outing coming up in May. Check the pub for news it is a great day and a lot of fun. Being able to play golf is not a requirement. Found all the missing shot glasses in Scott Thomas Alva's car. The trophy from last years Gannon-Dunne victory over Dumb & Dumber will be on display in the AOH. Hope to see you at the Pub on Derby Day.

Pete Dunne

# RAMBLING HOUSE-AN EVENING OF OLD FASHIONED IRISH CRAIC

Friday April 22nd, Hibernian House Doors open at 7 pm, Free Admission -- Cash Bar -- Tea / Soda Bread

A Rambling House seeks to recreate how our forefathers entertained themselves in days gone by. A world without nightly soap operas, football or a film for enjoyment may seem hard to imagine, but perhaps we are the ones who are lacking proper home spun entertainment. Back then, long nights in Ireland were passed by ceilidhing in what was known as a rambling house. This was a house where people congregated for gossip, storytelling - and perhaps the odd song and dance late into the night. Singers, dancers, poets, story tellers, etc....all talent welcome, open mic night.

Any questions, please call Mike O'Sullivan at 732-675-3942

## LARRY McKEEVER MEMORIAL GOLF OUTING

Friday May 13th. 11 am registration, 12:30 pm tee time. \$150 a person includes golf cart, green fee and refreshments on the course (Beer soda water) Full dinner to follow with full open bar (top shelf). Raffles and contests will also be available.

## 1916 CENTENARY COMMEMORATION EVENTS

April is a busy month! Derek Warfield and the Young Wolfe Tones performed the songs of 1916 at a concert at Albertus Magnus HS on April 3. The weekend of April 22-24 will see many of our State and National brethren joining us in Pearl River. Festivities will start with a Rambling House at the Hibernian House on Friday night. Buses to NYC will leave the PR Hilton on Saturday for the National AOH Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral 1 pm followed by a march to the Irish Consulate for a reading of the proclamation. Clan na Gael and Irish Northern Aid will host their Commemorative Dinner Dance at Leonard's of Great Neck on Saturday night at 8 pm. Please call 1-800-IRELAND for more info. Our ceremony will commence on Sunday with a mass at the RGAA Field Clubhouse at 10:30 am followed by a ceremony at the field and brunch will be held at the Pearl River Hilton at 2pm. Martin Mulvihill Branch CCE and Pearl River young musicians, singers, dancers and storytellers are honoring THE HEROES OF THE 1916 RISING & BEYOND in music, song and dance on April 29 at 7:30 pm at Pearl River HS. The Bobby Sands Memorial Mass and Social honoring Brendan Moore and James Donaghy will be held at the Pearl River Elks Hall on April 30, mass at 6 pm followed by the social.

Listory

# The Continuing Cover-Up of the Honor of Maj. Francis Vane

There has been considerable controversy during the commemoration of the 1916 Rising on the need for "inclusivity"; specifically efforts made to honor the British soldiers who fought to suppress the quest for Irish freedom and independence. Ironically, amidst this call there is one British officer that all fair minded people would agree should be honored as he risked, and indeed lost, all for the sake of justice and conscience, yet his name and deeds have been conspicuously absent in the discussion of 'inclusivity'. His name is Major Sir Francis Vane.

Vane was himself Irish, born in 1861 at 10 Great George's street, Dublin the son of a venerable ascendancy family. Taking moral stands irrespective of the political consequences was something of a family tradition. His ancestor Sir Henry Vane was a prominent leader of the republicans in Parliament during the English Civil War who had resigned from politics rather than acknowledge the dictatorship of Cromwell as Lord Protector. Yet despite this, Sir Henry Vane was still executed for treason when the monarchy in England was restored. Sir Francis was a worthy representative of his ancestor. He was enrolled in Oxford Military College at the age of 15 and achieved a commission in the Scots Guards. Vane was described by contemporaries as "fearless in the field of battle" and admired by the soldiers under his command. During the Boer war, Vane was sent to South Africa and served with distinction under Lord Kitchener. In 1902 Vane was appointed to the position of military magistrate, however he was soon dismissed shortly thereafter for taking too seriously his charge to administer justice fairly which was perceives as being pro-Boer. Leaving the Army, he became a critic of the British Military's heavy handed policies in South Africa, but rejoined the Army at the outbreak of WW I out of patriotic duty.

No longer a young man, he was assigned as a Major to Ireland on recruiting duty for the Royal Munster Fusiliers. During the Easter Rising, Vane was placed in command of the Portobello Barracks which had a garrison of about 300 soldiers from the predominantly Belfast recruited Royal Irish Rifles and the Ulster Militia Battalion. During the initial outbreak of the rebellion, Major Vane left the barracks with a party of men to establish a string of observation posts. When he returned to the barracks on Wednesday, April 26 he was shocked to discover the activities of Captain J.C. Bowen-Colthurst during Vane's absence.

The previous day, a well-known Dublin political activist Francis Sheehy Skeffington had been detained in the barracks without charge. While Sheehy Skeffington had Republican sympathies, he was an ardent pacifist and had been out trying to form a citizen's patrol to stop the looting that had broken out during the Rising. As Sheehy

Skeffington attempted to speak out against the looting, a commotion had broken out. Given that Sheehy Skeffington had already run afoul of the British Military for speaking out against recruitment for the war, it was assumed by the military that Sheehy Skeffington had to be the cause and he was detained at the barracks without charge. Also in the barracks was a Captain Bowen-Colthurst, the scion of an old Anglo-Irish family from Cork that had rebuilt Blarney Castle, who had returned to Dublin from the Western Front on sick leave to recuperate from wounds and shell shock. Bowen-Colthurst seized Sheehy Skeffington and in contravention of all the rules of war used him as a human shield as he led a party of soldiers out of the barracks in a raid that would leave a trail of cold blooded murder.

Bowen-Colthurst's first victim was 17 year old J.J. Coade who was returning from a church sodality meeting. Bowen-Colthurst ordered one of his soldiers to "Bash him!" The soldier hit Coade in the face with the butt of his rifle, breaking his jaw-bone. As the boy fell to the ground, Bowen-Colthurst drew his revolver and shot him dead. Bowen-Colthurst's party then proceeded to the target of the raid, the shop of a Dublin Alderman Kelly who was believed to have strong rebel sympathies. Unfortunately, Bowen-Colthurst had the wrong Kelly; his squad actually attacked and destroyed with grenades the premises of an Alderman with the same surname, but who was actually pro-British. He also arrested two pro-Union journalists, Thomas Dickson and Patrick J. MacIntyre, who had fled to what they believed was a safe house for protection. Bowen-Colthurst's party returned to Portobello Barracks with Sheehy Skeffington and the two new prisoners where Bowen-Colthurst then organized a firing squad and had the three innocent men executed. Bowen-Colthurst's final murder came when he left the barrack on a final raid and encountered Richard O'Carroll, a Dublin city councilor who Bowen-Colthurst's shot and then ordered his soldiers to toss him into the street to die of his wounds.

Major Vane was appalled that this wonton spree of unjustified violence had gone on unchecked and unquestioned; he immediately ordered Bowen-Colthurst arrested and confined. However, Vane was to be even more shocked by the response of his superiors. They ordered Bowen-Colthurst released and he immediately took a party of soldiers to raid the home of Sheehy-Skeffington in an attempt to find evidence to justify after the fact his unlawful murder. The commander-in-chief of British forces in Ireland General Maxwell (unlike his modern Col. Blimp like depiction in the musical "Bloody Irish") ordered the bodies buried in unmarked graves behind the barracks guardroom and sent members of the Royal Engineers to repair and repaint the walls, a literal whitewash. Outraged, Vane went to Dublin Castle on Monday May 1st to confront Army officials, but he was treated with contempt. Vane was told by a Major Price:, "Some of us think it was a good thing Sheehy-Skeffington was put out of the way, anyhow."

Vane applied for personal leave and traveled to London that evening. Using personal connections, he was able to secure an appointment to see the Secretary of State for War Lord Kitchner. Kitchner sent a telegram to Sir John Maxwell instructing him to place Bowen-Colhurst under arrest. Maxwell ignored the order and decided instead that Vane should be dismissed from the army. There was an uproar in the House of Commons on May 11th when John Dillon, the nationalist MP, in his criticisms of the army's violent repression of the Easter Rising cited the Sheehy-Skeffington murder and Maxwell's refusal to place the main culprit under arrest. Simultaneously, details were coming to light of a separate incident and attending cover-up of the murder of 13 innocent civilians in North King Street by members of the South Staffordshire Regiment.

The outcry was now too loud for even the British Army to ignore. Bowen-Colthurst was arrested, charged with murder and court-martialed on June 6th. The trial was a farce, carefully choreographed by the Army with prosecutors and defense counsel deliberately playing into each other's hands to arrive at a predetermined outcome, Commenting on proceedings, a well-known lawyer and politician Tim Healy said: "Never since the trial of Christ was there a greater travesty of justice"

Bowen-Colthurst's was found guilty but insane, and condemned to be detained indefinitely at Broadmoor criminal asylum. Twenty months later, he was deemed cured and released. On April 26th, 1921, exactly five years to the day after the murders, he immigrated to Canada supported by a full military pension. The British Army was not as generous to Maj. Vane, a man to whom duty and honor were more than just words. Despite multiple attempts, including an appeal to the King, Maj. Vane was never able to clear his name nor reinstate his commission. Vane attempted to publish several books after being dismissed from the Army, only to see them suppressed by the military censors. A man whose only crime was to see justice done was hounded and persecuted by a hypocritical and vindictive military establishment until his death in 1932

It is interesting that in this year where academics and government pundits have called for casting a new light on the events of the Rising and for broader inclusion that the principled actions of British Officer Maj. Sir Francis Vane continue to be dismissed for political reasons, the sad victim of a continuing cover-up and whitewash.

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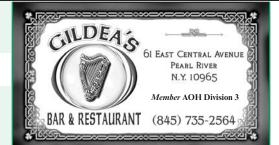


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