

# Division Newsletter

Dutchess County Msgr. Sheahan Division # 1

Division Website: [www.dutchessaoh.com](http://www.dutchessaoh.com)

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## Presidents Message

Brothers and Friends of the AOH,

Let me share a quote from an unknown author to summarize the experience of our Annual Charity Dinner/Dance and Auction on Saturday evening, October 22<sup>nd</sup>: “No one looks back on their life and remembers the nights they got plenty of sleep.”

- It was many a tired eye on Sunday morning at Mass. We owe that happy memory to the following folks:
- ⇒ VP Michael Shephard for his considerable efforts and leadership on arranging the Elks Club, the dinner arrangements, setup, the auction, the raffle, getting prizes, and having the good sense to involve his parents Doreen and Bob, along with myself in all of those efforts.
  - ⇒ Jack Fedigan for driving the Giants Football Ticket Raffle and sales, along with Matt Fitzgerald (much appreciate the efforts of daughter Patricia) and Kenny Brown. Our Past Presidents always deliver!
  - ⇒ The MacCana Band (the McCann Brothers Colin, Brendan, Ryan, and Terry with friend Stewart)
  - ⇒ Kevin Broesler School of Irish Dance. Thanks to Kim Sottile for bringing the fine performers!
  - ⇒ Jim Sweeney, Peggy Ren, Sarah Ren, and Maureen Ren for selling raffle tickets with Mike.
  - ⇒ Much appreciation for the wonderful Silent Auction items: Handmade blanket (Theresa Briccetti), Airplane Tour (Deacon Bob Horton), Legal Will Preparation (Stephen O’Hare, Esq.), Autographed NY Giants football (Jack Fedigan), and Irish Jewelry (Robin Shephard)
  - ⇒ And to all of the folks who generously donated baskets and other prizes that made the raffle another big success. It is our good fortune that the success of the raffle results from this list being too long to mention by every name.

My apologies if I missed anyone. It takes numerous folks to make an event like this a success and your efforts are sincerely appreciated. Also, I was proud to point out attendance by our own AOH Brother Bruce Coney who was Grand Marshall at the most recent Dutchess County St. Patrick’s Day Parade, as well as several officers from the Germania of Poughkeepsie Club, including President Carol Ann Fischer. Remember to mark down Saturday, October 21, 2017 for next year’s event. Ever onward and upward! We have the following upcoming events for the rest of the year.

- ◆ November 6 Sunday 82nd Anniversary of Msgr. Sheahan, our patron, passing. A 12PM Mass will be celebrated at Our Lady of the Rosary Chapel, St. Peter’s Parish, Poughkeepsie.
- ◆ November 17 Thursday Monthly meeting. 7:30pm at K of C.  
Officer slate for 2017 will be presented by the Nomination Committee  
(Committee: Matt Fitzgerald, Michael Quinn, Jack Fedigan, Ken Brown)
- ◆ December Date TBD Yearly Members Dinner Meeting. Location is Mahoney’s.

Finally, please remember to spread the word and help our membership grow! Contact Gerry McVicker for an application form or use this: <http://www.aoh.com/forms/Form-41-Application-For-Membership.pdf>



Yours in Brotherhood and Motto,  
Stephen Ren – President  
AOH Dutchess County  
Msgr. Sheahan Division One

**November  
2016**

## **DIVISION OFFICERS**

*Chaplain:*

**Deacon  
Robert Horton**

*President:*

**Stephen Ren**

*Vice President:*

**Michael  
Shephard**

*Financial Secretary:*  
**Gerry McVicker**

*Recording Secretary:*  
**William  
Schimpf**

*Treasurer:*

**Robert  
Shephard**

*Marshal:*

**James Sweeney**

*Sentinel:*

**Jim Brady**

*Historian:*

**Matt Fitzgerald**

*Standing Committee:*  
**John Kelly**



*MAY YOUR LIFE BE FILLED WITH LAUGHTER,  
MAY YOUR HEART BE FILLED WITH SONG,  
MAY YOUR EYES BE FILLED WITH BEAUTY,  
MAY YOUR SOUL ALWAYS KNOW TO WHOM YOU BELONG.*





### Historian's Corner

This past three month period has been an extremely busy one for me, what with my engagement with the PESHV Ireland Trip raffle, the Dutchess County AOH – DIV # 1's NFL Football tickets raffle, and my new assignment teaching a CCD class at St. Peter's School in Hyde Park, I have not even had the time to laze around sand pack on the pounds. Since I have some 40 or more annual AOH Football ticket raffles in which to be involved, I cannot allow the moss to collect on me; so like that proverbial stone, I will just keep on rolling. Since both the PESHV and the AOH both have an interest in Irish history, I have decided to resurrect an article I did for the AOH-DIV #1 newsletter from June of 2010, which I also updated in 2013, and to present it this month for both organizations based on the timeliness of the project's immediate financial needs.

The story concerns the massacre of 57 Irish immigrants who came to Pennsylvania in the early 1830s to work on the construction of a railroad 30 miles from the city of Philadelphia. Anthropologists and historians have been unearthing a mass grave containing the remains of dozens of Irish workers who died nearly two centuries ago. The find, called the Duffy's Cut Project, started out as an investigation into local folklore and ghost stories. It has since transformed not only into a significant historical find but also, perhaps, one of the oldest murder mysteries in the state.

"All the remains found so far [2010 – 2010] indicate the men were brutally murdered,"

William Watson, Head of the history department at Immaculata University in Immaculata, Pa., told AOL News. "Some of them were just bludgeoned [to death]. It's unbelievable."

"Duffy's Cut," as it is known, is a stretch of rail line in Malvern, 30 miles west of Philadelphia. It was constructed for the Philadelphia and Columbia Railroad in 1832. Much of the construction was completed by a group of 57 Irish immigrants from Donegal, Tyrone and Derry, Ireland, who arrived in Philadelphia in June 1832 aboard the ship *John Stamp*. "They came here to partake of the American dream," Watson said. "No doubt, they thought they were going to get some good work; they were hired right off the docks by a fellow Irishman named Philip Duffy, who came to America around the War of 1812. He basically brought them out here to complete the most expensive and difficult mile in the entire Philadelphia and Columbia system." Within eight weeks of their arrival, all 57 reportedly died during a cholera pandemic. The dead were buried together in a mass grave along Duffy's Cut. By 2004, Professor Watson and his twin brother, the Rev. Frank Watson, had amassed enough documentation from their grandfather's records to have a historical marker erected on the site with the inscription: "Nearby is the mass grave of fifty-seven Irish immigrant workers who died in August, 1832, of cholera," the marker reads. "They had recently arrived in the United States and were employed by a construction contractor named Duffy. Prejudice against Irish Catholics contributed to the denial of care to the workers. Their illness and death typified the hazards faced by many 19th-century immigrant industrial workers." Once the marker was in place, the Watsons began an archaeological dig at the site of the Irish workers' camp. Before long, they managed to unearth over 1,000 artifacts, including an old clay pipe with an Irish logo and a bowl inscribed with the words "Flag of Ireland."

The investigation of the bodies found so far [prior to and around the 2009-2013-time frame] would seem to indicate that many of the men may not have died of the dreaded disease, but, instead were the victims of foul play. "There is a newspaper account from October 3, 1832, about cholera striking the camp," Watson said. "Some of the men panicked and tried to get out and were forced back in. Another article, from November 1832, says the earlier story was not accurate and that there were only eight or nine men who died." As a result of the brothers' research and the evidence found upon skeletal remains, the Watsons suspect local vigilantes killed most of the workers. "The fact is, they were murdered," Watson said. "In the first layer of burials, we suspect most of the men are going to be victims of cholera, which leaves no physical traces. But, we believe the others were killed to make sure there would be no cholera getting out of that valley." According to Watson, it could take several more years of digging to fully excavate the area and uncover the rest of the men's remains. Once that work is completed, he says, they will not be displayed in a museum and will instead be given proper burials.

If you are interested in finding more information, you can do so through the Google and/or Bing search engines. A reference on the university's website, [duffyscut.immaculata.edu](http://duffyscut.immaculata.edu), states: "The Duffy's Cut Project is an ongoing archival and archaeological search into their [the 57 Irish immigrants] lives and deaths and seeks

(continued on next page)

## **A Wee Bit of Irish History (continued)** By: Matt Fitzgerald, Division Historian

to provide insight into early 19th Century attitudes about industry, immigration, and disease in Pennsylvania. With the help of the Chester County Emerald Society, we obtained an official State Historical Marker for the site in March, 2004, thereby putting Duffy's Cut on the map of history. The marker was dedicated on June 18, 2004, and was placed by us at the intersection of King Rd. and Sugartown Rd. in Malvern."

The most recent update [2016] would seem to indicate that the dead are still crying out for justice. As you probably know, Amtrack controls the "Duffy's Cut property. More of the site will be explored since Amtrack has agreed to let geologists dig underneath the tracks after all these years. Apparently though, the grant from the State of Pennsylvania to pay for the digging was pulled. The group needs \$14,000 to finalize this project. It would seem that they could use all of us to give a little; if that were to happen, it wouldn't take long to raise the funds to see this project through to its completion. I have posted a reference to the Project on my Facebook page, which will take you to where you can donate; or you could just copy and paste the "immaculata" link above into your browser.

**[Historian's note: Although the Ancient Order of Hibernians was "aborning" around this time, it would be some 30 years before the birth of the Molly Maguires in that same state of Pennsylvania. Additionally, violence in cities was starting in U.S. cities against immigrants, especially Irish-Catholics, and other ethnic Catholics in the early 1830s. It would be another 10 to 15 years before the establishment of Know-Nothingism on the American Scene.]**

Matt Fitzgerald  
[irishrm@juno.com](mailto:irishrm@juno.com)  
845-454-5308

### Financial Secretary Corner

Brothers,

It is that time of year for the Financial Secretary to settle our membership dues with the State and National Boards. We are responsible to pay for each member who was on the 2016 roster. At this time, a reminder letter will be sent to those members who are still in arrears on their 2016 dues. I know that sometimes we have unforeseen financial circumstances that requires us to prioritize our spending. On previous occasions we have carried members who have communicated their willingness to remain brothers of our worthy division. Please respond to our mailing and let us know if you still want to remain as members. The dues are \$30/ year. If I do not hear back I will assume that you no longer want to participate within our division. If this is the case, I will submit the necessary paperwork to have you removed from the rolls. I hope and pray I do not have to submit any removals.

Please consider a worthy applicant that you know who would benefit from joining our brotherhood, and sharing in our Motto of "Friendship, Unity, and Christian Charity. If you have not done so already, please return your dues payment as soon as possible. Your support is the foundation of our division.

In Brotherhood & Motto,  
Gerard McVicker  
Financial Secretary  
101 Brothers Rd  
Stormville, NY, 12582



***It's always time for membership, ask your friends, neighbors, even members of your church! The only requirements are that you need to be a male, at least 16 years old, Irish and Catholic. Help make our Division grow. Bring someone to a meeting!***



Brothers,

As we close out the month of October we find ourselves in the midst of two important days to Hibernians. All Saints' Day on November 1<sup>st</sup> and Veterans Day on November 11<sup>th</sup>. With this in mind we are sending you an article from Jim Green, National Veterans Affairs Chairman and Bill Lehn, Ohio State Catholic Action Chairman.

Brother Lehn reminds us "All Saints' Day is a solemn holy day of the Catholic Church celebrated annually on November 1 and generally, All Saints' Day is a Catholic Holy Day of Obligation, meaning all Catholics are required to attend Mass on that day (Catholic Online) He also takes the time to look at the origin of Halloween and the tie to Ireland and the Catholic church.

Brother Green takes us to the origin of Veterans Day and the importance of sharing our gratitude with the many Veterans in our lives. Although we recognize their efforts daily we also give our Veterans the special recognition they earned on this important day.

Please take a moment to read the articles below and share with our brother Hibernians.

In our Motto,  
James F. McKay III

Brothers,

"All Saints' Day is a solemn holy day of the Catholic Church celebrated annually on November 1. The day is dedicated to the saints of the Church, that is, all those who have attained heaven. It should not be confused with All Souls' Day, which is observed on November 2, and is dedicated to those who have died and not yet reached heaven."(Catholic Online)

"Generally, All Saints' Day is a Catholic Holy Day of Obligation, meaning all Catholics are required to attend Mass on that day, unless they have an excellent excuse, such as serious illness."(Catholic Online)

As we prepare to celebrate Halloween this weekend into next week, let me remind you a little bit of just how this holiday started, it's origin in Ireland and it's relationship to all Saints day. However, "it is important to remember these basic facts: Halloween is a secular holiday that comes the night before All Saints' Day. All Saints' Day is on November 1, and it is a Holy Day of Obligation. All Souls' Day is on November 2, and it is NOT a Holy Day of Obligation."(Catholic Online)

In what has become a holiday in which more adults celebrate than St. Patrick's Day, \$6.9 Billion versus \$4.7 Billion in merchandise, costumes, and food (according to 2015 National Retail Foundation statistics) many do not know that many origins cite it as a Celtic holiday tradition.

We first see a reference to Halloween in the Celtic Calendar with the Autumn Festival of Samhain, which was held the first day of November. The pagans celebrated four festivals and the Samhain Festival is widely accepted as the traditional end of the Celtic year. The festival meaning is rooted in its word etymology with Sam meaning summer. According to the Online Etymology Dictionary, its origin is "from Irish *samhain* (Gaelic *samhuinn*), from Old Irish *samain*, literally *Summer's end*, from Old Irish *sam* *Summer*"(see *summer* (n.1)) + *fuin* 'end.'Nov. 1, the Celtic festival of the start of winter and of the new year." Rather than being about rituals or worshipping the dead, the Celts marked it as the end of a season and the beginning of the Irish Winter.

In an effort to move Christians away from pagan gods and culture in the early 7<sup>th</sup> Century, Pope Boniface IV established All Saints Day around 609 or 610 AD. This day is also known as All Hallows Day and thus All Hallows Eve being October 31<sup>st</sup> or Halloween. Even though the Celts celebrated this festival in a spiritual sense, a lot of confusion ensued in the transition years and the holiday took on a darker meaning. Being known for a transition from one year to the next, the Samhain Festival devolved into a transition between worlds as evidenced tales of the puca or Irish evil fairies spitting on any unharvested apples to make them inedible as the Samhain marked the end of the final harvest of the summer, and all apples had to have been picked by the time the day's feasting began.

In a world and time where banshees and fairies also existed, Samhain offered a time where they could freely move about and the ancient Celts often lit bonfires and wore ugly masks to both ward off evil spirits and to stop the dead from identifying those people they disliked during their lives.

Another reference to modern day Halloween and passing out candy can also be traced back to Samhain and the early Celts. While the outspoken lit fires and raised hell (so to speak), the timid, however, would leave out food in their homes, or at the nearest hawthorn or whitethorn bush (where fairies were known to live), hoping that their generosity would appease the spirits. Revelers also bobbed for apples in buckets of water and quenched their thirst with mugs of spiced cider. Also, the dish Colcannon, an Irish potato pie made with Kale that comes into season in winter in Ireland is often viewed as a traditional Halloween meal that pays homage to our ancestors.

As you enjoy your Magners Irish Cider and bob for apples all while wearing your ugly Hillary or Trump mask, know full well your ancient Irish history is completely represented in the celebration of the 2016 Halloween Season.

Yours in Friendship, Unity, and Christian Charity,  
**Liam**  
William Lehn  
Ohio Catholic Action Chairman

Dear Hibernian Brothers and military veterans,

As we approach Veterans Day on Friday, November 11<sup>th</sup>, please try to make an effort to do something, or say something, special to a veteran on this special holiday. Just buy him or her a cup of coffee if you can, and say thanks.

Recently, Brother Rich O'Malley of Pittsburgh reminded me that this past Sunday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, marked the 41<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War. Try to remember those that came home, and those that didn't make it back, in your prayers today.

Finally, AOH Virginia State Vice President and Veterans Chairman Bill Halpin shared this short piece with me that I wanted to take the opportunity to put in front of you, too. It reads as follows:

"On Friday, November 11th, we'll be celebrating Veterans Day. In 1919, President Woodrow Wilson established Armistice Day on the first anniversary of the end World War I. The armistice was signed at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918. The holiday was renamed Veterans Day in 1954 to honor all military veterans. Veterans Day should not be confused with Memorial Day. Veterans Day celebrates the service of all U.S. military veterans, while Memorial Day honors those who died while in military service."

May God bless you and your families this upcoming holiday season, and may He bring all of our brothers and sisters home safely.

In Friendship, Unity, and Christian Charity,  
Jim Green  
AOH National Veterans Affairs Chairman

# Sponsors Page

  
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Attention, all AOH members, your help is needed. This newsletter needs sponsors, for a small yearly fee we will print a business card sized ad monthly. This newsletter goes out to all our membership and to several other Irish organizations. If you or someone you do business with wants to advertise with us, just get a business card to the newsletter editor. And the money to our Financial Secretary the cost is just \$25.00 per year.



## Division Activities

### AOH Activities

Please join our AOH Division (Brothers, family, friends) to sit as a group in commemoration of the 82nd Anniversary of the passing of our patron, Msgr. Joseph F. Sheehan, at the Sunday, Nov 6th, 12PM Mass at Our Lady of the Rosary Chapel of St. Peter's Parish in the Town of Poughkeepsie.

Voting season is upon us, Nominations for 2017 - 2018 Officers of our Division will be accepted at our regular business meeting November 17th. Voting on these Officers will take place at our Annual Christmas Party meeting to be held at Mahoney's Irish Pub & Steakhouse, Date to be determined.

Here to having a safe and Happy Thanksgiving to you and your families!

- ◆ November 6th, 12PM Mass for Msgr. Sheahan.
- ◆ November 17th, Regular business meeting / Nominations for 2017 Officers considered.
- ◆ December 15th, Annual Christmas Party / meeting / voting!

*Just some of the activities your  
Dutchess County,  
Division 1, AOH is involved in.*

*Be a good member and join in, be ACTIVE!*

## Important Dates

- November 6th: 12PM Mass for Msgr, Sheahan
- November 17th; Regular business meeting,  
2017 Officer nominations
- November 24th; Happy Thanksgiving
- December 15th; Annual Christmas party meeting / VOTE

## Prayers for the Sick

Paul Becker  
Nathan Redmond  
Jim Sweeney

Noel Morris  
Bill Schimpf

**\* In Memoriam \***

**On the Radio 91.3 FM: "A Little Bit of Ireland"**

**Hosted by our own Brendan Daly and broadcast from Vassar College.**

**Saturday's from 1 PM to 3:30 PM.**

*"WHETHER IT BE A MATTER OF PERSONAL  
RELATIONS WITHIN A MARRIAGE OR POLITICAL  
INITIATIVES WITHIN A PEACE PROCESS, THERE IS  
NO SURE-FIRE DO-IT-YOURSELF KIT."*

*~ Seamus Heaney ~*

