



# Division Newsletter

Dutchess County Msgr. Sheahan Division # 1

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

Gene Noone - Editor      [genenoone13@optimum.net](mailto:genenoone13@optimum.net)      (914) 469-6661

December  
2017

## DIVISION OFFICERS

Chaplain:

Deacon  
Robert Horton

President:

Michael  
Shepherd

Vice President:

Gerry McVicker

Financial Secretary:

Jack Fedigan

Recording Secretary:

Michael Quinn

Treasurer:

Robert  
Shepherd

Marshal:

James Sweeney

Sentinel:

James Englishby

Historian:

Matt Fitzgerald

Standing Committee:

John Kelly

## Presidents Message

Brothers and Friends of the AOH,

I am saddened to report the unexpected death of our brother Michael Murphy last week. Michael was one of our youngest members, someone who dedicated his life helping others in need. Michael was an EMT for EMStar and also rose in the ranks of the Union Vale Fire Department and Rescue Squad. Our division congregated at the funeral home and conducted our prayers for a deceased brother. He will be sorely missed and we will continue to pray for his new bride and his family during our monthly meetings.

On a lighter note, several brothers and some family members volunteered at the Lunch Box in Poughkeepsie on November 10<sup>th</sup>. Organizer Jim Englishby did a wonderful job coordinating the entire event. The division served meals to approximately 150 less fortunate Poughkeepsie residents. I personally received multiple words of appreciation from the guests who received meals. We have agreed to continue working with the Lunch Box on a semi-annual basis, once in March during our St Patrick's season and once in the fall. Once again, thank you for everyone who attended and donated to this wonderful event.

Lastly, I want to remind the division that our last meeting of the year will not be held at the Knights of Columbus. We will continue our Christmas tradition of holding our December gathering at Mahoney's in Poughkeepsie. The meeting will begin at 7PM on December 21<sup>st</sup> with dinner to follow at about 7:30PM. Guests are welcome to order off of the menu and separate checks will be provided. We will also be collecting for the Freedom For All Ireland (FFAI) Christmas Appeal. The division will also make a donation but personal donations are appreciated. Thank you for all of your hard work during the past year. It has been my absolute pleasure being your President this year. Looking forward to finishing 2017 on a strong note. God bless.

Yours in friendship,  
Michael Shepherd  
AOH President  
D. C. Msgr. Sheahan Division 1



*"The Light of the Christmas Star to you,  
The Warmth of home and hearth to you,  
The cheer and good will of friends to you,  
The hope of a childlike heart to you,  
The joy of a thousand angels to you,  
The love of the son,  
And God's peace to you."*





### Historian's Corner

A week or so ago I was watching a documentary which included some information on the “travelling People” of Ireland. You know, those are the people we generally refer to as gypsies or tinkers. Ireland, of course, is not the only country where gypsies exist. I remember the times when they used to come to the South Bronx. They seemed to appear out of nowhere “in the middle” of the night before. Their temporary residences usually were your typical “unrented” storefront. They would stay in the area a few weeks; I am sure there was a master plan as to where and for how long they remained in a specific area. Three things I specifically remember: their physical appearance included mostly swarthy complexions, blankets and similar coverings were hung in the store windows for privacy; they drove big cars, mostly with Michigan license plates, with a smattering from New Jersey. What we knew about them generally came from rumor and conjecture. At any rate we viewed them as unsavory people, with the men being of a criminal bent, and the women as fortune tellers, and/or other activities. I do remember their coming to the Bronx's Fort Apache when I was stationed there in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

You know by now that part of my frame of reference comes from films, although not exclusively. Two movies that I recall heavily references the “Travellers” as they are officially referred to in Ireland are: *The Field*, and *Into The West*. The former's cast includes Richard Harris, Brenda Fricker, Sean Bean, John Hurt, Sean McGinley, Brendan Gleeson, Malachy McCourt, and Tom Berenger to name just a few of the members of this powerful cast. The cast of *Into The West* is led by Gabriel Byrne, Ellen Barkin, Brendon Gleeson, Colm Meaney, and a host of other Irish actors. Both of these are “must see” films in general, and for specific interest regarding the topic of this article.

[Recent Up-To-Date News] After a long battle, Irish Travellers were finally officially recognized as an indigenous ethnic minority by Ireland's government in early March 2017. The website, Culture Trip, took a look at the origins of the Irish Travelling community and how the historic ruling came about. At the time of the 2011 census, there were around 29,500 Irish Travellers in the Irish Republic, making up 0.6% of the population. The community was found to be unevenly distributed across the country, with the highest number living in County Galway and South Dublin. Although – as the name suggests – Irish Travellers have historically been a nomadic people, the census showed a majority living in private dwellings.

Irish Travellers (In the Irish: an lucht siúil) also called pavees, tinkers or gypsies, are a traditionally itinerant ethnic group which maintain a set of traditions. Although predominantly English speaking, some also use Shelta (an ancient secret language used by Irish and Welsh gypsies, based largely on altered Irish or Gaelic words). and other similar cants. They live mostly in Ireland as well as having large numbers in the United Kingdom and in the United States. Their origin is disputed. The historical origins of Irish Travellers as a group has been a subject of academic and popular debate. Research is complicated by the fact that the group has no written records of their own. They may be of Romani extraction, although this theory is disputed, and theories of pre-Gaelic origin also exist. Jean-Pierre Liégeois wrote that the Irish Traveller Gammon vocabulary is derived from pre-13th-century Gaelic idioms with some Indian origin Romani language vocabulary. Gaelic language expert Kuno Meyer and Romani language linguist John Sampson both asserted that Shelta existed as far back as the 13th century, 300 years before the first Romani populations arrived in Ireland or Britain. Their origin is genetically Irish with around 10,000 people in the United States being descendants of Travellers who left Ireland, mostly during the period between 1845 and 1860 during the Great Famine. About 2,500 of them live in Murphy Village, a community outside North Augusta, South Carolina.

In 2011, an analysis of DNA from 40 Travellers was undertaken at the Royal College of Surgeons in Dublin and the University of Edinburgh. The study provided evidence that Irish Travellers are a distinct Irish ethnic minority, who separated from the settled Irish community at least 1000 years ago; the claim was made that they are as distinct from the settled community as Icelanders are from Norwegians. Irish Travellers "left no written record of their own" and their families do not date back to the same point in time; some families adopted Traveller customs centuries ago, while others did so more recently. It is unclear how many Irish Travellers would be included in this distinct ethnic group at least from a genetic perspective. Among other speculation on their origins, "two theories are rejected outright": that they were descended from those Irish who were made homeless by Oliver Cromwell's military campaign in Ireland in the 1650s, or made homeless in the 1840s famine due to eviction.

Throughout Irish history, the Travelling community has been markedly separated from the general Irish population, resulting in widespread stereotyping and discrimination. The same year as the census, a survey conducted by Ireland's Economic and Social Research Institute found that Irish Travellers suffer widespread ostracism; this and other factors have been shown to contribute to high levels of mental health problems among Irish Travellers. The 2010 All Ireland Traveller Health Study found their suicide rate to be six times the national average, accounting for a shocking 11% of Traveller deaths. Through the 2011 census, members of the

(continued on next page)

Travelling community were also found to have poorer general health, higher rates of disability and significantly lower levels of education as compared to the general population, with seven out of 10 Irish Travellers educated only to primary level or lower. Because of a lack of written history, the exact origins of the Irish Travelling Community have been difficult to clarify. Although it had been hypothesized, until relatively recently, that Irish Travellers may be linked to the Romani people, a genetic study released in February of this year revealed this connection to be false. The study found that Travellers are of Irish ancestral origin, but split off from the general population sometime around the mid-1600s – much earlier than had been thought previously. In one widely quoted finding, the DNA comparisons conducted in the course of the research found that while Irish Travellers originated in Ireland, they are genetically different from ‘settled’ Irish people, to the same degree as people from Spain. The results of the study, conducted by the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, University College Dublin, the University of Edinburgh and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, contributed significantly to Irish Travellers being officially designated an ethnic minority, defined as a group within a community with different national or cultural traditions from the main population.

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

**Financial Secretary Corner** 

Brothers,

Brothers, Again, I wish to thank the individuals who have responded and sent in their dues for 2017. There are still some of you who have not responded yet, if this is you, dues are now past due! Please make every effort to send in your dues as soon as possible. They are only \$30 and can be sent to me at the address listed below. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter. In addition, I would like to thank all those who participated in our annual football raffle. As always, please consider a worthy applicant that you know who would benefit from joining our brotherhood. In doing so, sharing in our motto of “Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity”.

In Brotherhood & Motto,  
 Jack Fedigan  
 256 Osborne Hill Road  
 Fishkill, NY 12524



*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!*

**Division Activities**

**AOH Activities**

We will continue our Christmas tradition of holding our December gathering at Mahoney’s in Poughkeepsie. The meeting will begin at 7PM on December 21<sup>st</sup> with dinner to follow at about 7:30PM. Guests are welcome to order off of the menu and separate checks will be provided. We will also be collecting for the Freedom For All Ireland (FFAI) Christmas Appeal. The division will also make a donation but personal donations are appreciated.

- ◆ December 21st; Christmas Business Meeting
- ◆ December 25th; MERRY CHRISTMAS
- ◆ January 1st; HAPPY NEW YEAR
- ◆ January 18th; Regular Business Meeting

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

# Sponsors Page

  
**INDEPENDENT BENEFIT PLANS**  
  
WILLIAM J. SCHIMPF  
EMPLOYEE BENEFIT SPECIALIST  
  
WILLIAM.SCHIMPF@YAHOO.COM  
  
107 PROSPECT AVENUE (845) 427-2957  
MAYBROOK, NEW YORK 845-427-0820  
12543-1019

Robert G Shephard Jr CPA PC

---

**Robert G Shephard Jr**  
Certified Public Accountant  
488 Freedom Plains Road  
Suite 139 PHONE 845-485-3000  
Poughkeepsie, NY 12603 FAX 845-485-3257  
bshephard@optimum.net



 Custom Machine Embroidery

Vicki Dunning  
7 Jordan Court  
Poughquag, NY 12570-5038  
(845) 724-3986

**Stephen P. O'Hare**  
Attorney at Law

488 Freedom Plains Road Tel: (845)452-4090  
Suite 103 Fax: (845)452-4615



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.

## Dutchess County Msgr. Sheehan Division Activities as reported on NY State AOH webpage



The **Dutchess County Msgr. Sheehan AOH Division 1** held their annual dinner dance on **October 21, 2017**. According to division President **Michael Shephard** (shown right with fiancé Cassandra Kaye), the dance held at the Elks Club in Wappingers Falls raised more than \$5,000 and was a huge success. Profits from the event will be used to support local charities including Meals on Wheels, Birthright, and the Dutchess County St Patrick's Parade to name a few.



Needy area neighbors didn't have to wait long to benefit from some of the money raised... when on **November 10, 2017**, the membership of Msgr. Sheehan Division 1, along with family and friends prepared meals for approximately 150 less fortunate people at the Lunch Box in Poughkeepsie, NY.



The event was chaired by division Sentinel **Jim Englishby** (shown far right) who solicited donations from local supermarkets and businesses. Additional food and supplies were provided by the division.



# Merry Christmas

## Important Dates

- December 21st, Christmas Business Meeting
- December 25th, Merry Christmas
- January 1st, Happy New Year
- January 18th, Regular Business Meeting

## Prayers for the Sick

Paul Becker  
Nathan Redmond  
Jim Sweeney

Noel Morris  
Bill Schimpf

## \* In Memoriam \*

Michael Murphy



*"WE ARE THE ROCKS AND REEFS OF THE HUMAN SEA, TUMULTUOUS OUTCROPS, MAGNETS FOR WRECKS. THE PEAKS OF MOUNTAINS YOU CANNOT SEE: THAT'S US, ALL RIGHT. DARK EVEN ON THE BRIGHTEST DAY. STONY AND DEFIANT OF THE PREVAILING CURRENTS UNTIL WE ARE EVENTUALLY WORN DOWN AND DISSOLVED. SOMETIMES SOAKED AND SOMETIMES DRY AS A BONE. HAMMERED BY TIDES AND GRIMLY STANDING OUR GROUND AGAINST THE POUNDING. PROBABLY EVEN SECRETLY ENJOYING THE POUNDING."*

*~ ~ BRIAN DOYLE ~ ~*



**ANCIENT ORDER**  
OF  
**HIBERNIANS**  
IN AMERICA

Dutchess County  
Msgr. Sheahan  
Division #1

PO Box 1530 Wappingers Falls, NY 12590



Friendship, Unity & Christian Charity

