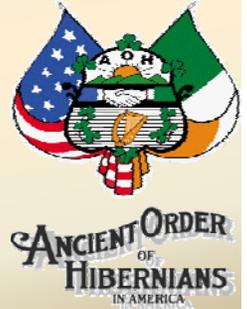


DIVISION NEWSLETTER

DUTCHESS COUNTY MSGR. SHEAHAN DIVISION # 1

Division Website: www.dutchessaoh.com

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MAY
2015

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Brothers and Friends of the AOH,

The excitement continues as we finished up winter, enjoy spring, and have our sights set on summer. Friendship, Unity, and Christian Charity remain the theme.

At the April Membership Meeting we were very fortunate to hear about the wonderful mission of Birthright of Dutchess County from its spirited and selfless Director, Honey-Jo Kelly. The AOH was very pleased to recognize the good works on behalf of distressed pregnant mothers by presenting a check for \$500 to the organization. Your generosity with this donation was very appreciated. Please stay tuned for a fall season event in which we will partner with the Ladies AOH to have a Baby Shower to collect necessary items (new and previously enjoyed, size up to 2T, no car seats or cribs). Kelly-Jo provided a list of desired items which will be broadcast as we get closer to fall. Gift cards for incidentals are also welcome.

A new member took the St. Patrick's Pledge. Welcome to Jim McAliney who was sponsored by Brother Stephen O'Hare.

On Sunday, May 3rd, the Hunger Mass will be celebrated at the Holy Rosary Chapel of St. Peter's Parish in Hyde Park. Of special note is that another significant act of Charity will take place as after Mass a check in excess of \$1000 for the Hyde Park Food Pantry will be presented to Fr. Patrick Curley. There is no finer act of Christian Love than feeding the hungry. Thank you, Brothers.

Looking forward, mark down Saturday, June 20th for the annual picnic at the VA Hospital at Castle Point. Please try to attend. We need help in moving the Veterans into the picnic area, as well as cooking and serving plates of food and beverages. See you there!

It is never too early to mark on your calendar the annual AOH Charity Dinner which will take place on October 24th at the Elks Club in Wappingers Falls. We had a great event last year and are looking forward to more fun at this dinner/dance which is the jewel of downtown Wappingers Falls!!!

There are two pieces of Member news. First, welcome back Brother William Schimpf. It was great to see you on your feet and then with pen in hand! But we also have a very sad note to pass on.....Joanne Sciascia, the sister-in-law of Brother Gerard McVicker passed away after a long and heroic battle. Gerry, we have your family in our prayers. May Eternal Light Shine Upon Joanne.

Yours in Brotherhood and Motto,
Stephen J. Ren
President - Dutchess County - Div 1, Msgr. J. Sheahan



*Gentlemen, please do not forget your
Mothers, Wives, and Family on
Mothers Day!*



*MAY GOD GRANT YOU MANY YEARS TO LIVE,
FOR SURE HE MUST BE KNOWING
THE EARTH HAS ANGELS ALL TOO FEW
AND HEAVEN IS OVERFLOWING.*





Historian's Corner

On April 1, Quinnipiac University opened a year-long Institute honoring The Grey Nuns of Canada for their ministering to Irish Emigrants escaping the ravages of the Great Hunger. The exhibition highlights these charitable Nuns of Montreal and their selfless acts as they cared for the victims of An Gorta Mór during the summer of 1847. The Grey Nuns were founded in 1738 by Marguerite d'Youville as a religious association to care for the poor. The congregation became an official religious institution meaning that the nuns swear the normal three vows of poverty, chastity and obedience as well as an extra pledge to devote their lives to the service of suffering humanity. From the 1840s onwards, they expanded enormously to become a major provider of healthcare and other social services throughout Quebec, Western and Northern Canada, and the northern United States. Dr. Christine Kinealy, Director and Co-Founder of the An Gorta Mór Museum at Quinnipiac said: "The story of the Grey Nuns, and of the other religious orders who helped the dying Irish immigrants, is one of kindness, compassion and true charity." Continuing, Kinealy said: "Nonetheless, almost 6,000 Irish immigrants perished in the fever sheds of Montreal. [The fever sheds were temporary shelters akin to quarantine structures.] These immigrants had fled from famine in Ireland only to die of fever in Canada. The story of the Grey Nuns is a remarkable one that deserves to be better known." The Irish continued to immigrate into Canada long after 1847 amidst great anti-Irish Catholic sentiment.

The An Gorta Mór Museum is also located on the grounds of Quinnipiac. To get a targeted picture of the Museum, it is best to look at its mission statement: The mission of Ireland's Great Hunger Museum at Quinnipiac University is to collect, preserve, exhibit and study its collection of art, artifacts and literature relating to the Irish Famine/Great Hunger that occurred from 1845–52. In doing so, it seeks to educate audiences of all ages about the underlying political, social, economic and historic causes to the Great Hunger, and the magnitude of the disaster on Ireland and its people. The museum contains the world's largest collection of Great Hunger-related art by noted contemporary Irish and Irish American artists as well as a number of period paintings by some of Ireland's most important 19th-century artists. Presently, the Museum's database contains some 1,846 and continues to grow. Interest has been expressed by many individuals to visit the museum; plans for that will be made in the near future.

More on 1916. For a variety of reasons, I did not write on one of the other significant groups in the history of Ireland's rebellions – Women. As we approach the Centennial of the Easter Rising, we should do homage to a "group" which deserves the title - "The Forgotten Heroes of the Easter Rising". A recent article in *The Wild Geese – Online* presented a brief history of women's involvement in the long history of Ireland's struggle for independence and freedom. Women from all walks of life, and all over Ireland, were just as interested in Irish Independence as their male counterparts in the Irish Volunteers, The Citizen Army, and Sinn Féin. *Inghinidhe na hÉireann* (Daughters of Ireland) was founded by Maud Gonne-MacBride in 1900. It had a political, social, feminist agenda. Its aims were full Independence for Ireland with an Gaeilge as its national language, and the study of Irish literature, history, music, and art. This was their attempt to combat in every way possible, the English influences that had permeated all aspects of Irish culture over the seven hundred years period of British dominance subjugation. It should be no surprise to anyone that these women, who had been aware of the need to promote Irish Nationalism in all its forms for the good of the country, set out their compass in a manner that they thought would befit a free Ireland. They became acutely aware that something needed to be done to further the cause of Irish Independence; by force of arms, if it became necessary. The majority of these women came from an educated, professional or semi-professional background. Importantly, however, many working class women were involved, as well. These women wanted to further the cause of education for all; girls and women in particular.

In 1913, at a meeting led by Kathleen Lane-O'Reilly (née Shannahan) at Wynn's Hotel Dublin, a group of like-minded women discussed the possibility of forming an organization for women who would work in conjunction with the recently formed Irish Volunteers. *Cumann na mBan* (The Irish Women's Council) formally came into being on April 2, 1914 and subsequently subsumed *Inghinidhe na hÉireann* (Daughters of Ireland). With just over one hundred women in that room, they knew that they were taking on a monumental task, since the subject of that discussion was the role of women in the lead up to the revolution. The woman who presided over that meeting was Agnes O'Farrell, and the first provisional committee of *Cumann na mBan* included: Agnes MacNeil, Nancy O'Rahilly, Mary Colum, Jenny Wyse Power, Louis Gavan-Duffy and Elizabeth Bloxham. They adopted a constitution with their stated aims being: 1] To advance the cause of Irish liberty; 2] To organize Irish women in the furtherance of that objective; 3] To assist in arming and equipping a body of Irish men for the defense of Ireland; 4] To form a fund for these purposes to be called the "Defense of Ireland Fund"; and, 5] To engage in the training of first aid, drilling and signaling in military fashion and rifle practice.

The formation of *Cumann na mBan*, with the stated aims set out above, obviously did not go unnoticed. It caused immediate controversy with the suffragette newspaper *The Irish Citizen*, which referred to the *Cumann na mBan* members as "slave women." For some in the feminist movement, the *Cumann na mBan* members were seen as "handmaidens" or slaves to the male Irish Volunteers; a backward step for these feminist women who had been campaigning for female emancipation. Nevertheless, these heroic and committed women supported the Irish Volunteers in their call to arms for an Irish Free State. When John Redmond made an appeal to The Irish Volunteers to enlist in the British Army at the outbreak of World War I, there was a stark rebuttal of anywhere between 2000-3000 Irish Volunteers ignoring this appeal. *Cumann na mBan* stood united in their support of these men – stating as always, that their aim was for a Free Ireland. Over the next two years, the ranks of *Cumann na mBan* were swelled by their recruitment drives, while they continued to practice military drilling, rifle shooting, first aid, and anything else that may be required in a siege situation. They knew only that there would be a Rising, but were not told when this event was actually going to take place. They were not shocked or surprised that, at the eleventh hour, they were advised to be ready for the call of duty to their country the very next day.

(Continued on next page)



On the 23rd of April, 1916, the Military Council of the Irish Republican Brotherhood made the fateful decision to go ahead with the Easter Rising (not forgetting that the Rising was initially to have taken place the day before.) Cumann na mBan were at last taken into the confidence of the Military Council. They were told that they (along with The Irish Volunteers and The Citizens Army) were to be integrated into "The Army of the Irish Republic." Patrick Pearse was appointed as the overall Commandant-General of the Army of the Irish Republic and James Connolly was appointed as the Commandant-General of the Dublin Division.

As a united Cumann na mBan unit, they set out early on the morning of the Easter Rising to be advised in what capacity there were going to be involved, and where they were going to be based. By nightfall, these brave women insurgents had established themselves alongside their male counterparts in all the major rebel strongholds throughout Dublin City (the exceptions being Boland's Mill and the South Dublin Union, held by De Valera and Eamonn Ceannt respectively.) Winfred Carney was the first woman through the door of the General Post Office with a Webley Revolver and a typewriter. For the most part, these women worked as Volunteer Red Cross workers, assisting in whatever way they could. Not perceived as any real threat by the British Army, they were able to gather intelligence on scouting expeditions; they carried dispatches from one unit to another and transferred arms from their holding places across the City to other insurgent strongholds. It has been said that Nora Connelly (daughter of James Connolly) did more than make bacon sandwiches for the troops; standing steadfast beside her father every step of the way. Countess Markievicz (based at St Stephens Green along with Mary Hyland, Liz Kempson, and other unknown women) had already taken up arms, and had already shot a policeman in the head. It was the Cumann na mBan unit of woman at St. Stephen's Green who demanded that they be allowed take the Shelburne Hotel by force of a bomb, if it became necessary. Unbeknown to them however, British troops had entered the Shelburne at nightfall by the rear entrance on Kildare Street. At dawn the next morning, the British troops opened fire on the unprotected open space at St. Stephen's Green. The fighters there only had dugouts to shelter them from the onslaught, forcing the Irish troops to retreat. Undeterred, a group of twelve Cumann na mBan, including Countess Markievicz, Mary Hyland, Lily Kempson, made their way to Trinity College. They broke in, found fifty rifles and bullets, and made their way back to their unit. By this time, the Irish troops had retreated to a smaller but stronger trench, taking over the College of Surgeons.

Helena Maloney was one of the women who helped form the attack on Dublin Castle and then went on to work with wounded Irish Soldiers. Along with other Cumann na mBan members, she did everything to ensure the troops had rifles, bullets, and food. All these women combined their skills and their efforts to maintain crucial support to the fighting men. A number of Cumann na mBan died during the Rising, including Margaret Keogh: shot dead outside South Dublin Union. At the Four Courts and Mount Street Bridge, Cumann na mBan helped in much the same way: keeping the men supplied with rifles and food. They also organized the evacuation of the buildings at the time of the surrender and destroyed incriminating documents, lest they fall into the wrong hands. The destroying of documents also took place at all the other strongholds, including the General Post Office. The following day, on the 29th of April, with many casualties of both men and women, the call to surrender was made. Cumann na mBan member Elizabeth O'Farrell, a mid-wife, was asked by Pearse to take the surrender order to Dublin Castle. Under British military supervision, and with assistance from the Capuchin Friars, these surrender orders were taken all over Dublin to the various strongholds throughout the City. Some of the leaders had difficulty comprehending the surrender document, thinking that it was either a false document or that Patrick Pearse had been put under duress to sign it. Other volunteers who knew Elizabeth O'Farrell and knew the Capuchin Friars had to persuade all the men that it was indeed a true document. De Valera was loath to accept this surrender order, but in the end he had to command his troops to lay down their weapons. After the surrender, over seventy women, including many of the leading figures of Cumann na mBan, were arrested and sent to Kilmainham Gaol. All but twelve women were released by the 12th of May, 1916.

After their release from prison, Cumann na mBan members were instrumental in popularizing the memory of all the 1916 Easter Rising Leaders. They also organized prisoner relief agencies, opposed conscription, and canvassed for Sinn Féin in the 1918 general elections. Countess Markievicz was elected Teachta Dála (member of the Dáil.) Still imprisoned at this time, she later became the Minister for Defense of the Irish Republic from 1919-1922. Neither mustn't we forget women such as Mable Fitzgerald, Muriel McSwiney, Kathleen Clarke, Countess Markievicz, Nora Connolly and all those other women who have not been mentioned and remain unknown. Female Irish nationalists played a crucial role in the politics of the time. They continued to do so, despite the fact that W.T. Cosgrave, President of the Executive Council of the Irish Free State, banned the organization in January 1923, and opened up Kilmainham Gaol as a detention prison for suspect women. Cumann na mBan had always maintained throughout its short existence that they would not be deterred from doing what they thought was the right thing. They also believed that the only way for Ireland to achieve its goal of becoming become a Republic was to aid and support their male comrades in the Army of the Irish Republic. Mary Colum, one of the leaders of Cumann na mBan, defended their actions by stating that they intended "to do any national work that came within the scope of our aims." They certainly did that, and more. As Easter 2016 rolls around we must also memorialize and salute Cumann na mBan, these forgotten courageous heroes of 1916.

Are you a Plastic Paddy? This term and issue came to my attention just as I was getting ready to send this piece along. I will deal with it in the June newsletter.

Matt Fitzgerald
irishrm@juno.com
845-454-5308



Brothers,

I have in my possession the membership cards for 2015. Please support me in committing to the Order by submitting your dues as soon as possible. The dues are \$30/year. There are a few brothers, whom we have kept on the rolls, who have not paid their dues for 2014. I am sure that in their busy lives that this is just an oversight. Please send your checks to me at address below or better still bring them to our next meeting.

In Brotherhood & Motto,

Gerard McVicker
Financial Secretary.
101 Brothers Rd
Stormville, NY, 12582

AOH ACTIVITIES

International Famine Memorial Mass

Father has reserved May 3rd for us to attend the Mass, with us processing in with him. He will make a brief announcement of our presence there and our purpose. After Mass, he will join us giving over the check to Ms Barbara Wansor of the Hyde Park Food Pantry.

Veteran's Picnic at Castle Point

The date for this annual event is June 20th. Many hands will be needed as we transport the Veteran's, cook for them, serve them food and beverage, and need to transport back to their units. This is always an inspiring day as you give back to the Veteran's whom served our great country!



- ◆ May 3rd, International Famine Memorial Mass
- ◆ May 10th, Mothers Day
- ◆ May 21st, regular business meeting
- ◆ June 18th, regular business meeting
- ◆ June 20th, Castle Point Picnic
- ◆ June 21st, Fathers Day
- ◆ July - August, activities on hiatus

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

Be a good member and join in, be ACTIVE!

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IMPORTANT DATES

- May 3rd: Famine Memorial Mass
- May 21st: Regular Business Meeting
- June 18th: Regular Business Meeting
- June 20th: Castle Point Picnic
- July & August: On Hiatus

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK

Paul Becker	Deacon Bob Horton
Noel Morris	Nathan Redmond
Bill Schimpf	Richard Whalen

‡ IN MEMORIAM ‡

Joanne Sciascia



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.

*On she went, and her maiden smile
In safety lighted her round the Green Isle;
And blest forever was she who relied
Upon Erin's honor and Erin's pride.
~Thomas Moore~*



Friendship, Unity & Christian Charity

