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Gerard McVicker
Standing Committee
 Matthew Fitzgerald
Historian

**January
 2019**

Presidents Message



Brothers and Friends of the AOH,

I trust that all of you had a wonderful Christmas and a Happy New Year! There is nothing like spending time with family & friends to celebrate and enjoy the holidays. The holidays and the beginning of a new year offer an opportunity for reflection, and a chance to refocus on what's most important to us; and that is no exception for the AOH. With that being said, I wanted to make sure that we said "Thank you" to each of our outgoing officers, whose service and support is greatly appreciated.

To Mike Shephard, our immediate Past-President, we thank you for your hard work and dedication to our organization. I have seen first-hand the effort put in; especially with regards to organizing the Annual Dinner/Dance, gaveling contentious meetings, and rallying "troops" to our cause. A special thanks to Gerry McVicker, as well, who brings an invaluable voice to our meetings and to our brotherhood.

I am very excited for 2019 and beyond, as the previous administration has set us up financially to have a tremendous impact on our community and the lives of our neighbors. I would like to extend a congratulations to our new slate of officers (see masthead). I am truly looking forward to working closely with you all to build upon the momentum we have already achieved.

At our December meeting, we honored Matt Fitzgerald, who has acted as our Division Historian and provided context and texture around the history of The Ancient Order of Hibernians, Irish history and the Irish-American experience. We thank you again.

I wanted to thank Emmett Woods from Mahoney's for hosting our December meeting/Christmas Party. The food was fantastic, and we always feel welcome. A reminder that we will be running both the SuperBowl (50/box) & March Madness(63/box) Fundraiser Pools again, and there are boxes available. Last year we raised \$1,000 from the SuperBowl & \$1,300 from March Madness, respectively, and both were very well received by participants. If you or someone you know would like a box (or 2) please contact Mike Shephard regarding the SB pool, and CJ Tomaskovic for the MM pool.

January's meeting will be held at 7:30PM on Thursday, January 17th at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Wappingers Falls. We expect that there will be a few prospective members to receive their Shamrock Degree, so all are encouraged to attend to show support for our newest members.

The Emerald Ball will be held in February at the Elks Club in Poughkeepsie. Please join me in congratulating the Grand Marshall of the 2019 Dutchess County St. Patrick's Day Parade, Doreen Shephard. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit the Dutchess County St. Patrick's Day committee website, www.dcsppc.org/emeraldball.html

I have invited representatives of the Vet2Vet Program & the Hudson Valley Veterans' Alliance to speak with us about their efforts and how we as an organization can get involved. They will be coming to our February meeting, and again, all members are encouraged to come to learn more about these important organizations and the work they do to make lives better for veterans in our community, and how we can help.



May the Road Rise to Meet You
 CJ Tomaskovic
 AOH President
 Dutchess Co. Msgr. Sheahan Division 1

Outgoing messages from 2018 Officers are on page 4!

**GOD BLESS THE CORNERS OF THIS HOUSE, AND BE THE LINTEL BLEST,
 AND BLESS THE HEARTH AND BLESS THE BOARD, AND BLESS EACH PLACE OF REST,
 AND BLESS EACH DOOR THAT OPENS WIDE.
 TO STRANGER AS TO KIN, AND BLESS EACH CRYSTAL WINDOW PANE
 THAT LETS THE STARLIGHT IN, AND BLESS THE ROOFTREE OVERHEAD
 AND EVERY STURDY WALL.
 THE PEACE OF MAN, THE PEACE OF GOD, THE PEACE OF LOVE ON ALL.**



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**Dutchess County
 Msgr. Sheahan
 Division # 1**

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Historian-Seanchai's Corner:

I start this on the morning after our December meeting and Christmas party. Awarding me the plaque at that meeting was a really meaningful happening for me and I thank my AOH Brothers for awarding me with that Historian plaque. **What a great surprise and honor for me.** A reference was made last night about a previous article I wrote about the meaning of Christmas candle lights placed in windows. As requested, when I returned home, I went back into the “archives”, which was a particularly difficult task due to the back-up system I had been using. [Going forward, I am organizing things in a different way, so I should not have this problem in the future. I also will spend time going back and organizing as many of my previous articles as I can resurrect.] At any rate, the question is why do people put candles in their windows at Christmastime? Since I can't find the actual article, I did find the reference notes I used and did a little more research. [See, give a person an award and he will work even harder.]

Placing candles in the window during Christmastime is reminiscent of that first Christmas in Bethlehem “when Mary and Joseph could find no shelter,” which is an Irish tradition and symbol of Irish hospitality. “It is a symbolic gesture to those ancient travelers, the Holy Family, who could find no shelter that there is room in this home for them and the coming child.” Because of English-imposed laws against the Catholic faith, a candle in the window signified a home where fellow Catholics and priests were welcome. During that period of religious [anti-Catholic] persecution by the English, Catholic religious practices of all sorts were suppressed throughout Ireland. During these persecution, certain religious practices, including church attendance were basically outlawed. Priests hid in forests and caves and secretly visited the farms and homes to say Mass there during the night. [In 1678, The Viceroy of Ireland, Ormond, issued a proclamation ordering that all priests should leave the country, and that all Catholic churches and convents should be closed.] Every Irish family longed for at least one chance during their lifetime to be visited by a priest at Christmas to celebrate the Divine Sacrifice during that Holy Night. Many hoped and prayed for this all through the year. When Christmas came, they left their doors unlocked and placed burning candles in the windows so that any priest who happened to be in the vicinity would know they were welcome and were guided to their home through the dark night. Silently he would enter through the unlatched door and was received by the faithful who were grateful that their home was used to commemorate the birth of Christ Jesus. To justify this practice in the eyes of the English soldiers, the Irish people used to explain: “We burn the candles and keep the doors unlocked, that Mary and Joseph, looking for a place to stay, will find their way to our home and be welcomed with open doors and open hearts.” The English authorities, finding this Irish “superstition” harmless, did not bother to suppress it. The practice of placing lighted candles in the windows at Christmas was brought to America by the Irish.

Future plans... This has been a recurring theme of mine in the recent past and has me again at the thinking and revisioning of my presentations. Because of what happened at last Thursday's meeting, I am bound and determined to make my articles more interesting and noteworthy. I am putting the final touches on a document template for my use so that I won't be “reinventing the wheel” each time I sit down at the computer for my monthly article. That will be in addition to a similar form to list ideas for future items or topics of interest. For instance, I have finally decided to tackle the meaning of the Christmas greeting Merry Christmas as compared to Happy Christmas. Since Christmas Day has just turned the corner, I will leave that for next November's article, and will include at that time the story about St. Stephen's Day, also known as Hunt The Wren Day [*Lá an Dreoilín*, as it is known in the Irish]. Ah, shades of the Clancy Brothers and The Wren Song. In addition to history [whether it be based on fact or myth], there will be cultural references; language tidbits; a humor section; one on Trivia or “Did you know?” things; recipes; questions for brief discussions at upcoming meetings; and member requests. On a more personal note and goal-setting, this year I am going to develop a “traveling” presentation on The Great Hunger. The itinerary is in the developmental stage, but plans include libraries, schools, other organizations, and/or any venues of interest. More on that as plans unfold. This current edition will include some of the sections listed but are subject to a more structured layout next month and beyond.

I recently came across a list of 50 of the most beautiful words in the Irish language. [The list was compiled by Smartling, an international business language translation firm.] In future articles I will also include some phrases or greetings that may be of interest to you. [Now there's a request from members which can be handled at a meeting, assuming you don't hold my South Bronx accent against me.] Anyway, look at this word as we enter the season of New Year merriment. **Pléaráca (PLAY-raw-ka)** – Revelry, boisterous merrymaking A PARTY YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS. [The Ultimate in Craic.] This word speaks to an element of Irish culture that goes back a long time. It is contained in the title of an eighteenth-century poem which was set to music by the famous harper Turlough O'Carolan and translated by Jonathon Swift as ‘O'Rourke's Feast’. It begins: O'Rourke's noble fare / Will ne'er be forgot / By those who were there / And those who were not. O'Carolan was an Irish harpist who lived in the mid-1600s and wrote pieces for the people he met and stayed with - playing music in exchange for hospitality. Tradition has it that the harp was played the last thing at night, before people went to bed. The harpist's talents were not hampered by the fact that O'Carolan was blind. A second of those beautiful Irish words to accompany this month's selection is **Uisce (ISH-ka)** – Water THE SOURCE OF LIFE. Something which seems to fall from the sky endlessly in Ireland. Naturally, it has captured the Irish imagination. Its flowing underground has given rise to a metaphorical term for ‘intrigue’. Uisce beatha [BA-ha], ‘the water of life’, was originally anglicized to usquebaugh and variants thereof, and later shortened to ‘whiskey’.

(continued on next page)



From AN CISTIN [the kitchen]... How about a hearty lunch or supper selection for the New Year, or maybe even, New Year's Day? In many parts of Ireland, mashed potatoes are used to top pies instead of pastry. This makes these pies a complete meal in one. [Ah sure! Didn't I have the Moira's Shepherd's pie at Mahoney's last week.] The recipe here for **Irish Hunter's Pie** is a great one for a cold winter's day to help warm those bones, and maybe even the cockles of your heart. [And just what is a cockle?]

Ingredients:

- 2 Tbs. fat, or suet - 1 carrot, peeled and chopped - 1 onion, peeled and chopped - 1 stalk celery, trimmed and chopped
 - 8 lamb chops, trimmed [or an equivalent portion of venison] - 1-pint rich brown stock or gravy - 3 lbs. potatoes, peeled and quartered - Knob of butter - Salt and pepper - A little milk and butter

Now to the making of Hunters Pie:

Heat about one-half the fat in a frying pan, lightly brown the vegetables, and then place in an oven proof dish. Lightly brown the chops in the remaining oil, then place on top of the vegetables. Bring the stock to the boil and pour over the meat and vegetables. Cover and cook for about 30 minutes or until the chops are tender. Drain the chops and allow to cool. Strain the stock and reserve. Boil the potatoes in lightly salted water, mash well with the butter and use just over half to line a buttered 2-pint pie dish, pressing well into the sides and base. Place the chops in the pie dish, season well and top with the remaining potato, roughing it up with a fork. Brush the top with the milk and dot with butter. Bake at 300 degrees for about 20-30 minutes or until golden brown. Bring the reserved stock to the boil and, just before serving, make a hole in the top of the pie and pour in some of the stock, serve the remainder separately in a gravy boat. Serve with carrots and a green vegetable. Serves 4 [for hearty meat eaters]

From the joke book:

First- -Gerry walked his dog through the village every day first thing in the morning. You could set your watch by them. One day Gerry is on his walk without the dog. His pal, Billy, sees him and asks, "Where is your dog?" Gerry answers, "I had to have him put down". "Was he mad?" asks Billy. Well, he wasn't too pleased said Gerry.

Second--Paddy and Mick were walking down the road; Paddy has a bag of doughnuts in his hand. Paddy says to Mick: "If you can guess how many doughnuts are in my bag, you can have them both."

Third--Two Kerry men were working in the public works department. One would dig a hole and the other would follow behind him and fill the hole in. After a while, one amazed onlooker said: "Why do you dig a hole, only to have your partner follow behind and fill it up again?" The hole digger wiped his brow and sighed, "Well, I suppose it probably looks odd because we're normally a three-person team. But today the lad who plants the trees called in sick."

Fourth, and final---Seamus opens the newspaper and is shocked to see his OWN obituary. In a panic, he phones his friend and asks: "Did you see the paper?! They say I died!" The friend replies: "Yes, I saw it! So, where ya calling from?"

Part of the story of it all.... A great deal of the Irish story is a mixture of factual accounts and myth...in the mythological sense. In fact, Ireland has a rich mythological history. In last month's article I made reference to a previous article I wrote about the Ninth Wave and the Coming of The Milesians [the sons Of Mil] from Spain. Next month I will reference the legend of The Seventh Stream and Silkie. There are so many other such topics, many of which have gone by the wayside as we have seen the "passing" of the Seanchai. In his travels as he would gather people [the young and the old] around the fireplace, he would inform them about the "news of the day", recount the history of the culture, and regale them with entertaining stories, and keep alive that rich Irish mythological history which seems to have passed into obscurity, making us, our children and grandchildren the poorer for it. I remember a song from the mid-1900s which asks the question "Where Have All The Flowers Gone?". I would paraphrase and ask a similar question, "Where have all our stories gone? The short list of questions would include: Fionn mac Cumhaill [Finn McCool], Cuchulain, The Cattle Raid at Cooley, The Fianna Warriors, to specify just a few. Celtic mythology is found in a number of distinct, and somewhat related, subgroups, largely corresponding to the branches of the Celtic languages:

- ancient Celtic religion (known primarily through archaeological sources rather than through written mythology)
- mythology in Goidelic languages, represented chiefly by Irish mythology (also shared with Scottish Gaelic mythology)
- Mythological Cycle --Ulster Cycle --Fenian Cycle --Cycles of the Kings

Do you have a "party piece"? Do you remember the scene from the movie, "Michael Collins", after Collins and Harry Boland have been released from jail and they make a visit to the Kiernan family's home? After Kitty plays a melody on the piano, Collins is asked to perform, and he recites a bit from "Skibbereen". Those of you who have been to "the ould sod" lately, may have been asked to do something, as well. My party piece is "Raftery the Poet", both in English and The Irish.

An Gaeilge Gaeilge, Irish, or "Irish Gaelic" is the national and first official language of Ireland, as well as one of the official languages of the European Union. Although everyone in Ireland speaks English, there are regions known as the Gaeltacht that use Irish as the main language of communication, both in businesses and in families. When we say Irish (the language) we don't mean our accent. The Irish language is not an easy one to master. Each month I will present five or so short phrases and/or greetings that may be of use to you, or, at the least, of interest to you. Hopefully, it might also steer you in the direction of more intensive interest or study of the language.

Athbhliain faoi shéan is faoi mhaise daoibh.

Brothers,

As we near the end of the year we still have few brothers that owe dues for 2018. If there is any reason that you are unable to take care of this, please let me know.

I wish to thank everyone for their prayers and words of encouragement for my recent procedure. All is well and I'm getting back into the swing of things.

I would like to wish all the AOH brotherhood and their families a safe and prosperous New Year!

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!*

Brothers,

In my last address as your president I want to express my gratitude for the past two years of terrific progress. I had massive shoes to fill when I took over, following such a capable leader in Steve Ren. I feel like we are in a better place now than when I started and I have the utmost confidence that it will be the same situation two years from now after our new incoming president, CJ Tomaskovic passes the torch to someone else. Let us continue building the momentum we have built the last few years. We have some new faces coming in and I'm sure their fresh perspective and enthusiasm will be infectious for the rest of the organization. I am excited to step aside and be an adviser when needed. Thank you all for putting your faith in me and being receptive to challenging the status quo, allowing all of our new ideas and plans to be discussed without judgement. Socrates said "the secret of change is to focus all of your energy, not on fighting the old, but on building the new." So let us continue building the new. God bless you all. Merry Christmas, and Happy New year and blessings to all.

Michael Shephard
President

Brothers,

I would like to wish everyone a wonderful Happy & Blessed New Year. Congratulations, to our Brother, and Historian Matthew Fitzgerald, for his recognition award "In Appreciation of your Dedication & Service to our motto of "Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity." Thanks to John Kelly for presenting Matthew with his much needed pair of Irish Shamrock socks. Matt has promised to wear them at all Irish celebrations in the coming year. A speedy recovery for our Financial Secretary, Jack Fedigan, who was dearly missed and whom I hope is on the mend.

Gerry McVicker,
Vice President

Matt Fitzgerald getting his award at Mahoney's



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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

At our January 17th business meeting we will conduct a Shamrock Degree for our new members. If you have not received your Shamrock Degree as yet, please plan on attending this meeting.

The Dutchess County St. Patrick's Parade Committee will be holding their annual Emerald Ball on February 9th at the Elks Club in Poughkeepsie Tickets are available from Trish Costello (845) 297-0800.

Speaking of the parade, it will be held on March 2nd, line-up at 12noon and step off at 1:00PM. We will be marching. We also will need someone to pull our float in the parade.

- ◆ January 1st - Happy New Year!
- ◆ January 17th - Regular Business Meeting
- ◆ February 9th - Emerald Ball
- ◆ February 21st - Regular Business Meeting
- ◆ March 2nd - Dutchess County St. Patrick's Parade
- ◆ March 21st - Regular Business Meeting

*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

- ◆ January 1st; Happy New Year
- ◆ January 17th; Regular Business Meeting
- ◆ February 9th; Emerald Ball
- ◆ February 21st; Regular Business Meeting
- ◆ March 2nd; Dutchess County St. Patrick's Parade
- ◆ March 21st; Regular Business Meeting

Prayers for the Sick

Paul Becker	Deacon Bob & Judy Horton
Noel Morris	Nathan Redmond
Dan Reilly	Bill Schimpf
Jim Sweeney	

* In Memoriam *



"WE IRISH PREFER EMBROIDERIES TO PLAIN CLOTH. TO US IRISH, MEMORY IS A CANVAS-- STRETCHED, PRIMED, AND READY FOR PAINTING ON. WE LOVE THE "STORY" PART OF THE WORD "HISTORY," AND WE LOVE IT TRIMMED OUT WITH COLOR AND DRAMA, RIBBONS AND BOWS. LISTEN TO OUR TUNES, OBSERVE A CELTIC SCROLL: WE ALWAYS DECORATE OUR ESSENCE"

--Frank Delaney, Tipperary--



ANCIENT ORDER
OF
HIBERNIANS
IN AMERICA

Dutchess County
Msgr. Sheahan
Division #1

PO Box 1530 Wappingers Falls, NY 12590



Friendship, Unity & Christian Charity

