





**Gov. David I. Walsh Assembly #403**

## **4<sup>th</sup> Degree Knights of Columbus History**

---

**Bedford – Brookline – Concord – Lexington – Needham**

**Newton – North Cambridge – Waltham – Watertown - Wellesley**

## **THE GOVERNOR DAVID I. WALSH, GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

### **FOURTH DEGREE, KNIGHTS of COLUMBUS**

#### **A HISTORY**

Any history of this Assembly must, of necessity, begin with Newton Council's Fourth Degree Club. This has to be, since it is from that beginning that the Assembly had its origin.

Prior to 1952, the Fourth Degree Members of Newton Council were at the same time members of Cheverus Assembly of the Fourth Degree who, in those days, had monthly meetings in the Copley Plaza Hotel in Boston, and usually on a Sunday afternoon.

Most of the Fourth Degree members of Newton Council were relatively new members, many of whom found it difficult, if not unseemly, to leave their families on a Sunday afternoon in order to attend Fourth Degree meetings. Moreover, it was the consensus at that time, that proper recognition was not given to the new members, that they were overlooked to some extent, a feeling which left many unhappy. To clarify this, it should be stated here that this feeling was probably exaggerated, that these newer members, having that enthusiasm which is common to most new members of any organization, felt neglected.

The forgoing should be not construed as an apology nor should it be interpreted as an indictment of Cheverus Assembly. Obviously, newer members of any organization cannot be expected to have that expertise which is so necessary to the smooth running of the parent group.

However, be that as it may, at a subsequent date, the more active members of Newton Council felt that they might promote the good of the Order better by forming a Club of their own by having monthly dinner meetings and to provide proper attendance at the wake and funeral of a departed Fourth Degree member of Newton Council.

As of March 5, 1977, those deceased were as follows: †

† William M. Cahill	† James M. Purcell	† Louis Lansed	† Lesle J. Shea
† Wilfred T. Dery	† Walter Clemens	† James A. Waters	† John V. Donovan
† John A. Dunton	† Raymond Perry	† Allan S. Mclean	† Dr . Vincent J. Kelley
† Austin M. Morgan	† J. Seymour Mclean	† George Quinn	† Leo S. Gagnon
† George A. Ouelett	† Martin E. Conroy	† Paul A. Thomas	† Thomas Terrio
† Richard Fennelly	† Frederick Brasco	† Bartholomew J. Ke1ly	† Charles Scipione
† Vincent Harris	† William Geegan		

#### **Honorary Members**

† John T. Burns	† Dr. Thomas Gallagher	† Timothy Hickey
† John F. Gallagher	† Timothy Hickey	† Most Reverend Eric F. MacKenzie

The enthusiasm of the then members increased commensurately with the passage of time and it was not long before serious thought was given to the possibility of forming our own Assembly. Advice was sought from the then Master for the Massachusetts District of Cabot Province, John W. McDevitt, presently serving as Supreme Knight of the Order.

Following a number of conferees with Dr. McDevitt, it was determined that an Assembly could be formed to include Newton Council, Cardinal O'Connell Council, together with Brookline, Lexington, Needham, Waltham, Watertown and Wellesley Councils. At a later date, Crozier Council of Newton, Concord, and Bedford Councils were added to the Assembly roster.

At the suggestion of Dr. McDevitt, the new Assembly would adopt the name of Governor David L Walsh, General Assembly, in honor of him who was the first Catholic Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Application was made to the Supreme Master of the Fourth Degree, William J. Mulligan, and on Sunday, November 25, 1952, an organizational meeting was held in the school hall of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Newton.

At the meeting referred to above, Sir Knight John J. Harrington of Waltham Council was appointed to act as Secretary Pro Tem. The following are excerpts of the minutes of that meeting:

- The meeting, pursuant to a call issued by the Master for the Massachusetts District of Cabot Province, was held in the hall of the school of St. John the Evangelist, on Watertown Street, Newton, on November 25, 1952.
- The meeting was called to order at 8:35 P.M. by the Master, John W. McDevitt.
- The password was taken up by District Deputy, Raymond Perry, assisted by Sir Knight Joseph Alarie of Watertown Council and Sir Knight James M. Purcell of Newton Council.
- The opening prayer was offered by the Master.
- The Worthy Master then read Section 26 of the Laws of the Fourth Degree, stating the purpose of the meeting and set forth that it was pursuant to a notice to the members within the geographical area of the new Assembly.
- The Master further announced:
  1. That this Assembly was now in being as the Governor David I. Walsh, General Assembly.
  2. The receipt of a gift to the Assembly of a copy of "David I. Walsh, Citizen - Patriot", autographed by Mary C. Walsh, sister of the late Senator, November 21, 1952 which, through the courtesy of Sir Knight John Sullivan of Watertown council, was being presented to the Assembly by Judge Connelly of the Brighton District Court to whom the Faithful Scribe would send due and proper acknowledgement, and,
  3. He had directed a preliminary or caucus meeting on November 19, 1952 as a prelude to this formal organizational meeting having no authority but merely to establish the ground work towards fruition in organization this evening.

The worthy Master then announced that the chair was open to receive nominations for candidates for office in the various offices or positions of the Assembly.

The following were elected as the first or charter officers of the Assembly, duly constituted to serve for the ensuing year, terminating in June of 1953:

Faithful Navigator	Leo Gagnon	Newton
Faithful Admiral	William Geegan	Newton
Faithful Captain	James Sullivan	Watertown
Faithful Pilot	Joseph Santuosuosso	Cardinal O'Connell
Faithful Comptroller	John Murphy	Waltham
Faithful Purser	Paul McGoldrick	Brookline
Faithful Scribe	Daniel Carey	Cardinal O'Connell
Faithful Inside Sentinel	Russell McMakin	Lexington
Faithful Outside Sentinel	John Kerrigan (Daniel)	Needham
Trustee one year	James O'Connor	Wellesley
Trustee two years	John J. Harrington	Waltham
Trustee three years	Edward Lloyd	Cardinal O'Connell

Upon a motion duly seconded, the ballots were destroyed.

The Worthy Master announced that there is an additional office, that of Faithful Friar, which, according to the custom and rules prevailing in this jurisdiction of the Order, would be filled by appointment by the Friar of the State Jurisdiction and State Chaplain of the Order, Msgr. Jeremiah J. Minihan.

At this point, claiming editorial privilege and confident of the acclamation of the Sir Knights of the assembly expresses gratitude to the State Chaplain for his appointment of Reverend Daniel A. McCabe, P.P., of St. Jude's Church in Waltham, as the Chaplain of Governor David I. Walsh, General Assembly. Fr. 'Dan', now Monsignor, has rarely missed a meeting of the Assembly and is held in the highest regard by the members of the Assembly.

Following the election of officers, mimeographed copies of tentative by-laws for the Assembly were distributed. It was pointed out, however, that the proposed by-laws would, of necessity, have to be submitted to the Supreme Master for review and approval and returned to the Assembly before they could become effective.

The attention of the Chair was called to recognize the presence in the hall of Sir Knight John Gallagher of Newton Council, a member of the Order for more than fifty years, a Past Grand Knight and Past Faithful Navigator with an illustrious record of knighthood. At this point, the Faithful Navigator invited Sir Knight John Gallagher to conduct the closing prayer.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 P.M.

On Sunday, January 25, 1953, the formal installation of officers was held at St. John's School Hall. The dinner which followed was presided over by Sir Knight, John H. Walsh; the principal speaker was the Honorable John E. Swift, Supreme Knight. The head table guests were the Most Reverend Eric F. McKenize, Auxiliary Bishop of Boston; Right Reverend Jeremiah F. Minihan, State Chaplain; Right Reverend William J. Daley, Dean Newton District; William J. Mulligan, Supreme Master of the Fourth Degree; Daniel J. Fitzgerald, State Deputy; Joseph Arena, Faithful Navigator of Chevrus Assembly; the Honorable Thomas Connelly, Judge, Brighton District court; and William T. Walsh, Jr., nephew of the late Governor David L. Walsh.

At the meeting held September 22, 1953, on a motion duly made and seconded, it was voted that Third Degree members and their guests would be allowed to attend the communion breakfast. At this same meeting it was announced that the Color Guard of this Assembly had been invited to lead the delegation of Fourth Degree Knights escorting Archbishop Cushing to his place of honor at the religious rally to be held at Fenway Park. Again, and at the same meeting, it was announced that the Color Guard had been invited to participate in the exemplification of the Fourth Degree at Worcester for the class to be known as the Bishop Wright Class. The Bishop was to take his Fourth Degree at this exemplification and be the principal speaker at the following dinner.

(Let me note here for inclusion where necessary, that the then Captain of the Color Corps was John Sullivan of Watertown Council. Captain Sullivan led many rehearsals of the Color Corps at St. John's School Hall in order that they might perform in a manner both fitting and enhancing the many appearances of the Corps. )

In a report to the Assembly at a regularly scheduled meeting held October 20, 1953, Captain Sullivan reported that the Color Corps had held a meeting and had elected officers. He, as Captain, had been elected President. Sir Knight and P.F.N. Gagnon, Treasurer; Sir Knight Morgan, Assistant Treasurer; Sir Knight Simeone, Property Manager; and Sir Knight Purcell, Secretary.

At this same meeting, Sir Knight Gagnon came up with a somewhat novel plan. He suggested that in order to insure that all members of the Color Corps would be properly attired with full evening dress, he felt that inasmuch as the members would have to pay \$7.50 for rental of their attire that sum might be applied to the purchase of used suits which were available through the Tux Shop in Newton. He proposed that each member of the Corps pay monthly dues amounting to \$2.50, and as enough money was made available, names would be drawn and the lucky ones would be able to get a suit which would be paid for by the Club. He also announced that in order that working funds be available, several members contributed sums ranging from ten to thirty dollars. As of this date, nine men have been equipped with proper attire.

During the year 1955, it was voted to purchase, yearly, a missal in which the names of those members who had died during the previous year be inscribed and presented to one of the Churches within our area. This practice continued for several years before being discontinued.

It is perhaps well to note here that during the early and formative years of the Assembly, much of its activity centered around the Color Corps. Under the capable leadership of Sir Knight John Sullivan and his successors, Austin Morgan, Michael Gallo, John Torphy, Norman Brunelle and Daniel Proia, they have appeared at almost every major civic function as well as those conducted by the various Churches and Councils within the area.

Through the years the Assembly had sought to find some worthwhile charitable project with which they might become affiliated and offer financial support on a permanent basis. There seems to be no question but that their aims and limited budget precluded the possibility of permanency, but the Assembly did, and still does, contribute regularly to several and varied projects. More often than not, this activity resulted in a particular function being operated with the financial returns being earmarked for the project in mind.

In the Fall of 1955, it was decided to have a Ladies Night and buffet supper in conjunction with the Installation of Officers. The members of the Assembly to be admitted to the buffet dinner at no charge, while tickets for the Ladies would be priced at \$3.00. At a subsequent date, it was voted to increase the annual dues, said dues to include the cost of one ticket to the annual Communion Breakfast and two tickets, one each for the member and his lady, to the dinner and dance to be held in conjunction with the Installation of Officers.

During the latter part of 1956, and continuing through most of 1957, there was much planning for a worthy project to be conducted by the Assembly. It subsequently developed that this would be in the form of an annual award to a person whose outstanding performance on behalf of all men, regardless of race, creed or color, merited recognition by the Assembly, regardless of their affiliation within the Order and notwithstanding their political beliefs. It later developed that this would result in the annual Governor David I. Walsh Memorial Award.

The first such award was given to the Honorable Henry Cabot Lodge, the then United States Representative to the United Nations. This event was held at the Sidney Hill Country Club, November 11, 1957, in Chestnut Hill under the direction of Frederick Brasco, Faithful Navigator. The General Chairman of this event was John R. Murphy, who was later to become the Faithful Navigator of the Assembly.

The head table guests included, Right Reverend John R. Wall, Pastor of St. Joseph's Church, Belmont; Reverend Robert Hearin, Chaplain, U.S. Army, Retired; the Honorable Paul V. Shaughnessy, Mayor of Waltham; Mrs. Henry Cabot Lodge; Mrs. Lawrence Curtis; Mrs. Howard Whittmore, Jr.; Mrs. Paul V. Shaughnessy; Mrs. John W. McDevitt; Mrs. Thomas G. Feenan; Mrs. Frederick Brasco; Mrs. John R. Murphy; and Mrs. James M. Purcell.

On this occasion the Invocation was given by Reverend Daniel A. McCabe, our Faithful Friar.

Speakers for the program were The Honorable Howard Whittmore, Jr., Mayor of Newton; Right Reverend Christopher P. Griffin, State Chaplain; the Honorable Laurence Curtis, Congressman, 10th District; Dr. John W. McDevitt, Supreme Knight; Frederick Brasco, Faithful Navigator; and, of course, the recipient of the award, Henry Cabot Lodge. The benediction was given by Right Reverend Walter Furlong, Pastor of Our Lady Help of Christians in Newton. James M. Purcell presided as keynote speaker and toastmaster.

Since this is in no way to be considered as a chronological report of the progress of our Assembly, it might be well to report here the following memorial awards:

On November 11, 1958, at the dinner at Sidney Hill Country Club, the recipient of our award was the Reverend Joseph T. O'Callaghan, S.J., Father O'Callaghan served as Chaplain on the U.S.S. Franklin during World War II and was the first, if not the only clergyman, to be awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

The head table guests were: Very Reverend James E. Coleran, S.J., Provincial, Province of New England; Very Reverend Michael P. Walsh, S.J., President of Boston College; Right Reverend John P. Wall, pastor, St. Joseph's Church, Belmont; Reverend John P. Kelley, S.J., College of the Holy Cross; Lieutenant James H. Carrington, Jr., U.S.N., Aide to the Commandant; Mrs. A.E. O'Callahan; Mrs. James M. Reilly; Mrs. James M. Purcell; Mrs. Thomas G. Feenan; Mrs. John I.J. McDevitt; Mrs. Winfield C. Anderson; Mrs. Carl F. Espe; Mrs. Howard Whitmore Jr.; Mrs. Thomas J. Spring and Mrs. James H. Carrington, Jr.

The General Chairman was James M. Reilly, P.G.K., invocation by Reverend Daniel A. McCabe, Faithful Friar of the Assembly, and the guest speaker was The Honorable Howard Whitmore, Jr., Mayor of Newton; The Honorable Thomas J. Spring, Master of the Fourth Degree; Thomas G. Feenan, state Deputy; Rear Admiral, Carl F. Espe, Commandant First Naval District; Dr. John W. McDevitt, Supreme Knight; Winfield C. Anderson, Faithful Navigator, David L Walsh, General Assembly; and Reverend Joseph T. O'Callahan, S.J., the recipient of our award.

Benediction was offered by the very Reverend William A. Donaghy, S.J., President of the College of the Holy Cross. James M. Purcell presided as key note speaker and toastmaster.

The third annual Dinner and Award was held on November 11, 1959, at the Commonwealth Country Club in Newton. The recipient that year was Dr. John W. McDevitt, Supreme Knight of the Knights of Columbus. Under the direction of Norman E. Brunelle, the head table guests consisted of Mrs. Norman E. Brunelle; Mrs. Thomas G. Feenan, Mrs. John M. McDevitt; Mrs. John R. Murphy; Mrs. Austin D. Rhodes; Mrs. Thomas J. Spring; Mrs. Louis J. Venti; Joseph E. Boothroyd, Massachusetts State Secretary and Daniel J. Fitzgerald, Master, Fourth Degree.

John R. Murphy was toastmaster and the Invocation was given by Reverend William Chevalier. Remarks were offered by the Honorable, Austin D. Rhodes, Thomas J. Spring, Thomas G. Feenan and John E. Swift, Past Supreme Knight of the Order. The principal speaker was the Most Reverend Jeremiah J. Minehan. Benediction was offered by our Faithful Friar, Reverend Daniel A. McCabe.

The Fourth Annual Award was given at a communion breakfast. The recipient was Past Supreme Knight John E. Swift.

Your author finds no record as to where or when. At the meeting held May 24, 1961, it was voted to discontinue the Annual Memorial Award Dinner. His Excellency, The Most Reverend Eric F. McKenzie attended the meeting of June 11, 1957, and warmly promised support of anything we might ask of him.



At the meeting of January 28, 1958, a resolution recommending a change of the by-laws was presented. To wit, "Be it resolved that Article VIII of the By-Laws of this Assembly be changed in the following manner: by addition to Section 2, these words: 'or members of the clergy or religious who have taken the vow of poverty.' Section 2 shall then read: 'Annual dues shall not be levied upon life members or members of the clergy or religious orders who have taken the vow of poverty. '" The minutes fail to record any action on the above.

At the meeting of February 25, 1958, the resolution referred to above was read and passed unanimously.

With reference to our many attempts to attach ourselves to a project having charity as our goal, there can be no question but that Sir Knight Frank Donnellan, prior to, during and following his term as Faithful Navigator was our most outstanding worker. Through his efforts and the committees chosen to work with him, we inaugurated the Walsh-O-Rama, the St. James-O-Rama, the Charles River Workshop and the program to assist the St. John of God Hospital. All of these programs received sizable donations from the Assembly for the furtherance of their charitable works. One of the most outstanding of Sir Knight Donnellan's projects was to solicit and receive from each of our 50 states a contribution from their respective Governors a memento which could be used in the raising of funds.

At the meeting of June 23, 1969, it was moved and voted that a rosary, cost not to exceed \$5.00, was to be given to all ill members.

For several years it was the practice of associates of the late Governor David I. Walsh, for whom this Assembly was named, to hold a Memorial Mass in his honor. It was also the practice of those associates to invite the Color Corps of this Assembly to participate in the events of the day.

Needless to say, our always faithful Color Corps always attended. That attendance was received most graciously by the associates who responded by extending invitations to attend the luncheons which followed.

At this point, I am forced to surrender. I have not heard from Sir Knights Brasco, Derry or Terrio. I have a strong feeling that the job has not been properly done, but am unable to determine wherein I have erred. We most definitely need other opinions. I will be happy to go over this with you on my return to Newton.

END