



Ancient Order of
HIBERNIANS
IRISH • CATHOLIC • AMERICAN

Ohio State Board

Newsletter

September 2026

Volume 8 Issue 9

President's Message



Brothers,

Welcome to September. I hope all of you had a good Summer and are ready to get back meetings and events. Many of you will be having halfway to St. Patrick's Day events this month. Please share your event information with our webmaster Mark Wolnitzek to be added to the

State Board calendar. Commodore

John Barry Day is an AOH National Holiday and is celebrated on September 13th. On June 14, 1794, President Washington appointed John Barry Commanding Officer of the United States Navy with Commission Number One. His life and contributions to the United States would be a good topic for your historian to discuss at your meeting this month. (See Page 5 for more info about Commodore Barry.)

Thank you to all who submitted a nomination for the inaugural Martin L. Sweeney Ohio Hibernian of the Year award. We have an impressive list of candidates. I think it is important to recognize the hard work that brothers give to this organization. It is an honor to even be nominated for this award. Please make sure to have your vote into State Vice President Bruce McPherson by September 15th. According to the Ohio State Bylaws Article XVI, Section 16.6, the following are eligible to vote for the Martin L. Sweeney Ohio Hibernian of the Year award: All officers of the Ancient Order of Hibernians National Board from Ohio, elected and appointed, All Officers of the Ohio State Board, elected and appointed and all Ohio County and Division Presidents.

We are currently trying to form a new division in Jefferson County (Steubenville.) We had one there in the past and have a great opportunity to form a new one. We have an energetic young man there who is recruiting other locals in hopes of forming this division. If you know anyone that lives in that area and would be interested in joining, please contact State Organizer Joe Casey.

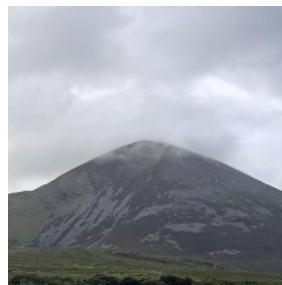
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Chaplain's Comments



Brothers,

I just came back from a pilgrimage to Ireland. We traveled to over a dozen Holy sites all throughout the country; North, South, East and West. Two of the most profound were Croagh Patrick, Ireland's Holy Mountain, and the Basilica of Knock for the 147th anniversary of the apparition.



Croagh Patrick, or Patrick's Mountain, is where St. Patrick went for forty days of Lent in 441 in prayer and fasting. The mountain stands 2,510 feet over Clew Bay, where we started our climb: (You can see the houses in the bottom corner)

And when I got to the top a few hours later, I offered up my climb and prayed for the intentions of the Pope Leo, the intention of the Church, and the intentions of the Ohio AOH divisions offered during our monthly meetings.



Me at the top, sucking wind and not looking forward to the climb down:

The following information is on the website www.knockshrine.ie:

On a wet dark August evening in 1879, the villagers of this place had spent the day doing the usual work of the harvest time of the year – gathering winter fuel and

Continued on Page 2

President's Message, cont.

Please mark your calendars for the next AOH Ohio State Board meeting. The meeting will be held at Tara Hall in Columbus on October 24th. Both Ohio State and Notre Dame are on a bye that weekend so traffic should not be as bad getting to Tara Hall.

Thank you brothers for all of your hard work in moving our Order forward.

In Motto,

Denny

Chaplain's Comments, cont.

fodder. As evening approached, the heavy mist that had been persistent throughout the day, turned to a steady downpour. The villagers gathered around the turf fires in their homes, taking comfort and shelter on a terrible night.

Suddenly word spread throughout the village that something extraordinary was happening at the Church and so they hurried to the windswept gable where they witnessed a heavenly vision surrounded in a brilliant white light. Men, women and children gathered in prayer at the gable wall of the parish church.

The witnesses clearly saw the Blessed Virgin Mary dressed in white robes, her hands and eyes turned towards heaven in prayer. On her head was a gold crown and where the crown fitted the brow, a single golden rose. On her right, bowed respectfully towards her, was St. Joseph. He appeared older, his beard and hair were grey and, like Our Lady, he was barefoot.

To Our Lady's left stood John the Evangelist vested as a bishop, wearing a small mitre. He held an open book in his left hand and in its pages the lines and letters could clearly be seen. He appeared to be preaching but no voice was heard. He stood so that his back was neither turned to the Virgin or to the Lamb that stood upon a simple plain altar. Behind the Lamb was a Cross. The witnesses watched and prayed for over 2 hours and though they were wet, they noticed that no rain fell on upon the Apparition or on the gable.



On the site of the apparition, a shrine was erected, and it depicts what those who witnessed the apparition saw:

The unique thing about this apparition is that Our Lady spoke not one word. The apparition was completely silent. Unique to the Apparition is the presence of the Lamb of God upon the altar, a visual presentation of the gift and mystery of the Eucharist. This central element is not to be found in any other recognized Marian Apparition. The apparition brought the message of hope and healing that the Lamb of God brings to all in the Eucharist and through reconciliation.

The Lady of Knock called me to the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. I experienced a wonderful confession and loving reconciliation. It was in the silence during my preparation for the sacrament that I felt Mary calling me to her son. It was in the silence that I opened up my heart and reflected upon my sins and how I had failed to live the life God calls me to live. It was in the silence that I yearned to remove the hurt I had caused our Lord. It was in the silence that I wanted to repent and repair the damage I had done to my relationship with God. After my penance was completed, I felt the gift of the forgiveness and strength given to me by the Lord through the sacrament. I was forgiven, cleansed and strengthened to go forth once more to give glory to God. It was one of the best experiences I have ever had celebrating the sacrament. Then, I was honored to be the deacon for the Mass on the last night of the Novena to the Lady of Knock.

I encourage you, brothers, to take advantage of sacred silence. Spent time with the Eucharist in adoration. Spend time reflecting on the times when you could have been a better version of yourself, the one God calls you to be. I encourage you to spend time praying the rosary. Call upon our Lady of Knock and ask her to pray for you lead you to the Lamb of God. I encourage you to be still and allow the silence of the moment block out the noise of the world. Let the silence lead you towards the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world and should be the center of our life as we are a Eucharistic people.

God Bless,

Deacon Bruce

2025 - 2027 Officers

Chaplain	Deacon Bruce Dobbins brunomusarra@yahoo.com
President	Dennis Parks dparks121@yahoo.com
Vice President	Bruce McPherson hilliardmcperson@gmail.com
Secretary	Pete Chrystal pvchrystal59@gmail.com
Treasurer	Greg Brown Gbrownsamrock@yahoo.com
Director	Dale Norris danorris64@gmail.com
Director	Chris Schulte crpschulte@gmail.com
Past President	Bob Harper harper.bg.pg.com
National President	Sean Pender paddyspeed@yahoo.com
National Oversight Committee Chairman	Dennis Parks dparks121@yahoo.com

OHIO DIVISIONS**County/Division Presidents**

Clermont	Douglas Gerrard dpgerrard@aol.com
Cuyahoga Board	Tom Ginley tgbigbass@gmail.com
Cuyahoga #2	Jim Kilbane jjk5755@hotmail.com
Cuyahoga #3	Robert Mullin bobbymulls@yahoo.com
Franklin #1	Gerard Tracy Gbtracyjr@sbcglobal.net
Hamilton #1	Patrick Ryan patrick.ryan.300@gmail.com
Lucas	Robert McMahon aohjohnpkellydivision@gmail.com
Mahoning #6	Joe McCormick macman23.jm@gmail.com
Medina	Jacob Durda jacob.durda@gmail.com
Montgomery	Art Gannon artgannon@aol.com
Stark #1	Tom Wolf tomwolfcpa@msn.com
Summit Board	Jim Meszaros meszi01@neo.rr.com
Summit #3	Michael Namsick mpnamsick@gmail.com
Summit #2	Ed Morrison edwardcmorrison@outlook.com
Trumbull	Marty McQuaide emcqu@aol.com
Washington	Bernard Lyons bernardalyons@att.net

Appointed Officers

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Pro Life	Jacob Durda	jacob.durda@gmail.com
FFAI	Patrick Williams	karimcwilly@gmail.com
PEC	Mike Cosgrove	irish.mick213@gmail.com
Project St. Patrick	Nick Jacobs	njacobs@clashmore.com
Missions & Charities	Chris Konik	chriskonik@mindspring.com
Organizer	Joe Casey	qualityjoecasey@yahoo.com
Historian		
Veterans Affairs	Joe McCormick	macman23.jm@gmail.com
Hibernian Hunger	Dave McLaughlin	dmclaug106@sbcglobal.net
Immigration	John Myers	johnmyers216@gmail.com
WebMaster	Marc Wolnitzek	marc.wolnitzek@gmail.com

Jim Casey's Email Addressjjcasey973@icloud.com**Newsletter News**

If you have information for our monthly newsletter, please send it as an attachment to an e-mail to Editor, Jim Casey at

jjcasey973@icloud.com

The Editor requests that articles be submitted by the 21st of the month preceding the month of publication.

State Organizer Report

Has anyone been having issues with the new application program.....besides me??

As I have been mentioning the past few months, it will be a learning process for all those involved; this includes our National Secretary and his staff!

Last week I sent out an email to all Division Presidents, Financial Secretaries and those I have sent new applications to, in the past. Thanks to Bill McCafferty from Clermont County, I was able to send out 3 links that will hopefully be a start to understanding and working through the new program. As I've said previously, it may take a few times to go in and familiarize yourselves with the system and, if you have questions do not hesitate to contact Ray Lynch; he has been very good in responding to my concerns. His contact information is irishyankeenut@yahoo.com. He or one of his staff will help in getting things straightened out.

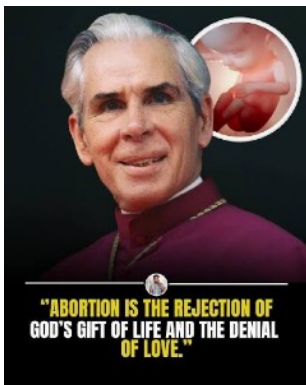
I am still receiving some applications in the old system from our National Organizer's office. Thank you to those who are responding and following up with the applicants. I actually received one for my division and, after speaking with the gentleman, I went into the new system and input the information into that application form. I received notification of a new application in that system and updated it to "pending", then "approved" status once we initiated him into the division.

We're approaching "Half-Way to St. Patrick's Day" and some divisions will be having celebrations. Enjoy yourselves and be sure to be good ambassadors for the Order.

As always, I thank you all for your hard work and assistance as we continue to grow in Ohio.

Joe Casey
Ohio State Organizer
qualityjoecasey@yahoo.com

Pro Life



With Fulton Sheen set to be beatified at the end of September, I would like to mention some of his involvement with the pro life movement. Fulton Sheen was a staunch defender of the right to life and spoke out against abuses to it throughout his entire life. He created the spiritual adoption prayer to remind us of the thousands of babies killed everyday through abortion and that we are not powerless against the culture of death. The prayer goes like this "Jesus, Mary and Joseph, I love you very much. I beg you to spare the life of the unborn baby I have spiritually adopted who is in danger of abortion. Amen" . I encourage you to pray this prayer and tell others about it also. Another one of his pro life quotes is "abortion is the rejection of Gods gift of life and the denial of love". May Fulton Sheen be an inspiration for us to stand for what's right even when it's unpopular at times.

Jacob Durda

Commodore John Barry



Article XXIII of the AOH National Constitution states, in part, that **Commodore John Barry Day, September 13th is a National Holiday of the Order** and it shall be celebrated in an appropriate manner. The John Barry Medal is presented by Hibernians throughout the United States to

commemorate outstanding academic, cultural and civic achievement.

John Barry was born in Tachumshain, County Wexford, Ireland in 1745 and immigrated to Philadelphia at the age of fifteen. Barry found employment with a shipping firm where he prospered and became Master of several merchant vessels.

At the outbreak of the American Revolution, Barry was made Captain of the ship "Lexington" by the Continental Congress and on April 7, 1776, captured the British sloop "Edward", the first war prize taken by the Americans. On December 24, 1776, his ragtag fleet unable to reach open water, Barry left his ships, recruited a company of volunteers, rushed to the aid of General Washington on the banks of the Delaware River and participated in the Trenton and Princeton victories.

In the fall of 1777, with Philadelphia in the grip of the enemy and American hopes at their lowest, the British General, Lord Howe, tried to entice Barry to desert General Washington. Barry replied, "Not the value and command of the whole British fleet can lure me from the cause of my country." During the course of the American Revolution, Barry boldly and skillfully engaged and captured many British vessels and was wounded.

In 1781, the Catholic citizens of France sent to the American patriots the sum of six million dollars. The safe transport of that vital gift was entrusted to John Barry

aboard his ship "Resolute". That money, clothing and munitions enabled General Washington to sustain his army and assemble his forces at Yorktown where, with the aid of the French fleet, he defeated Cornwallis.

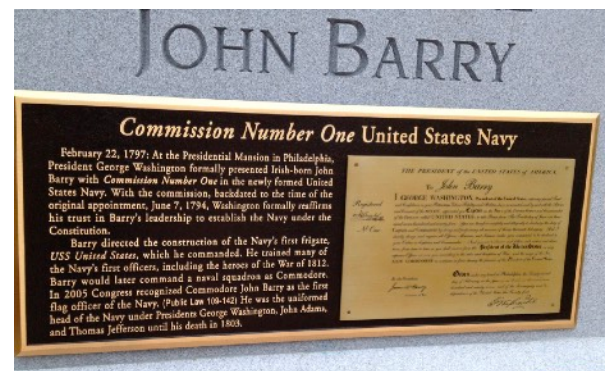
On March 10, 1783, Barry, aboard the "Alliance" won the last sea battle of the American Revolution when, while escorting a shipment of funds vital to the new nation, he engaged and avoided capture by the British ship "Sybille".

When recalcitrant members of the Pennsylvania Assembly shirked their duty to consider and vote on adoption of the Constitution, Barry led a group, called "the Compellers", who dragged the delegates to the State House and thrust them into the Chambers as the assembled citizenry cheered.

On June 14, 1794, President Washington appointed John Barry Commanding Officer of the United States Navy with Commission Number One.

On September 13, 1803, at his home on Strawberry Hill, Philadelphia, Barry died after a long illness. He is buried at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Philadelphia. By Joint Resolution, approved August 20, 1981, the U.S. Congress designated September 13, the anniversary of his death, "Commodore John Barry Day" as a tribute to the "father of the United States Navy". By Joint Resolution, approved in December 2005, Commodore John Barry has been recognized as the first flag officer of the United States Navy.

Monuments honoring John Barry have been raised in Philadelphia, Washington D.C., New York, Boston, and County Wexford, Ireland. **On May 10, 2014, due to the efforts of the AOH, the Barry Gate and the Barry Monument were dedicated at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, MD.**



Dublin Irish Festival Hosts International Panel On Irish Unity

*Judge Michael C. Mentel

In August, the Dublin Irish Festival was the site of a two-day international panel discussion on the reunification of Ireland. The annual Festival held in Dublin, Ohio, is the largest three-day Irish cultural and music festival in the United States with over 80,000 people attending from the United States and internationally. The panel was moderated by WBNS-10TV evening news anchor and Emmy award winner Jeff Hogan.

The panel brought together knowledgeable and influential voices from Ireland and the United States.



L to R: Andrée Murphy, Sean Pender, Reverend Karen Sethuraman, Judge Michael Mentel

I was privileged to serve on the panel with **Ms. Andrée Murphy**, a member of the Board of Directors of Ireland's Future, a non-governmental organization (NGO) dedicated to inclusive dialogue and preparation for potential constitutional change and a future referendum on Irish unity; the **Reverend Karen Sethuraman**, Vice Chairperson of the Board of Directors of Ireland's Future. Reverend Sethuraman is an influential voice in the Irish unity conversation, especially on reconciliation, social justice, and inclusive dialogue, and is the first and only female Baptist minister in Ireland; and **Mr. Sean Pender**, National President of the Ancient

Order of Hibernians (AOH), the oldest and largest Irish Catholic organization in the United States.

The panelists discussed multiple issues of significance to be addressed in forming a new Ireland. These issues include the recent political and economic shifts in the north in support of reunification, the contemporary role of Irish America in the reunification discussion, reconciliation among the people of the north and the inclusion of all traditions and religions, and what the "Constitutional question" refers to in the context of forming a new Ireland.

At the outset, it is important to identify what the "Constitutional question" is before highlighting the significant issues addressed by the panel. The Constitutional question in the reunification context is not what we in the United States may think. It actually refers to the multiple issues that must be addressed in planning for a new Ireland, such as the issues addressed by my colleagues on the panel. As I stated during the discussion, the laws of the United States are "...backdropped against our Constitution, a written framework, a document that is the supreme law of the land of the United States to which all other elements of government answer to. That's what we know a constitutional question to be." It the context of framing a new Ireland, the Constitutional question is "not just on a document. It's far from it to be quite frank. It's on the issue of what does history, tradition, reconciliation, citizenship, governance, what does all that entail?" All of these elements, including the framework of the Good Friday Agreement, comprises the Constitutional question to be answered.

Significant change has occurred in the north based on relatively recent socio-economic and political events. Ms. Murphy noted several of these events and the impact it is having on the reunification discussion. "So what's happened since I was here

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Dublin Irish Festival Hosts International Panel On Irish Unity, *Cont.*

[in January] I think the Brexit vote in 2016 created a momentum for a united Ireland in an unprecedented way. That vote where the majority in the north of Ireland voted to stay in the European Union was superseded by England's vote and Wales vote together to come out of the European Union. That paid no regard to [the Good Friday Agreement], no regard to my children's future or any of my neighbors wherever they lived. And that democratic deficit put in place a new train toward a united Ireland." Ms. Murphy pointed out that the debate on setting up planning ahead of future referenda has elevated in Dublin. "[T]his debate has gained momentum to the point that just in the past number of weeks the issue of a united Ireland is being debated by all of the parties in Leinster House in

Dublin, in the place [and] site of partition in Dublin. And every single one of those parties now say we want a united Ireland. We want to use the Good Friday peace accords to have a vote on a united Ireland in a peaceful way and the only thing they're disagreeing on is the timing of [a referendum]."

Irish America has a significant role in calling for a planning process according to Sean Pender. "We have been proud as Hibernians to be called [the] voice of Irish America... I think we should be very proud that in the proclamation of 1916 we were called Ireland's exiled children in America. So we'll always have that tie, working for peace, justice, and unity on the island of Ireland. We were very proud to do our part as Hibernians...". He added, "Remember the Good Friday Agreement was signed 1998 and many of those who are promoting a vote want to move it to 2030. 2030 will be 32 years after the Good Friday Agreement. If we can't have an honest discussion and a vote 32 years after the signing of an agreement, when are we ever going to have it? So the AOH stands firmly behind, letting the people

decide. Let's move away [from] the rhetoric. It's a democratic process." The AOH and LAOH in Ohio have initiated a signature petition effort calling for planning to be initiated in advance of any referendum. The petitions will be sent to the Foreign Ministers Office, Dublin.

Reverend Karen Sethuraman delivered points that are little heard in the reunification discussion here in the United States. "I am a board member of Ireland's Future and we are committed and guided by the Good Friday Agreement and [the] right for our people to determine our future. I am a Baptist minister. I grew up in East Belfast. I come from a very different community than Andrée [Murphy] and grew up in a Protestant, Unionist, loyalist background. So, my background was bands, the orange order, going to the bonfires and all of those things." Reverend Sethuraman said that today, "there are more people from my background, from a Protestant unionist loyalist background, going we want to be part of that we want to create something new too... But, we model what we want to become. Different backgrounds, different stories, different views, but we want a new Ireland." To view the panel discussion held on August first, you may view it at YouTube link: <https://you.be/wjVoOs4FOes>*Judge Michael C. Mentel

Judge Michael C. Mentel is an appellate court judge on the Ohio Court of Appeals for the Tenth District. He has participated in round table discussions on the British Legacy Bill at the National Committee on American Foreign Policy and in panel discussions on Irish Unity. Judge Mentel is the author of "The 1981 Irish Hunger Strike: An Account From Declassified British Documents". He is a columnist and contributor to local and national publications. He is a member of The Ancient Order of Hibernians, Patrick Pearse Division 1, Franklin County, Ohio, The Shamrock Club of Columbus, Ohio, The Irish American Club East Side, Euclid

Project Saint Patrick, Supporting Religious Vocations

Project Saint Patrick is celebrating its 31st year in 2026. Through the annual Easter Appeal, the program provides grants to seminarians and religious to help with the practical expenses of formation and ministry.

Participation in the grant program has increased 63% year over year. Although donations remain comparable to last year, the growing number of applicants means greater participation and additional support are needed. Pennsylvania, Illinois, and the State of Ohio have already contributed.

Ohio Participation

In addition to the State of Ohio's donation, the following Ohio counties and divisions have contributed:

Lucas County — John R. Kelly Division

Franklin County — Patrick Pearse Division

Summit County — Mark Heffernan Division

Cuyahoga County — Boland/Berry Division

Medina County — Irish Brigade Division

Five of Ohio's 15 county and local groups have participated so far, in addition to the state-level contribution. This is a welcome start, but we can do better. Every county board and local division is encouraged to place Project Saint Patrick on its meeting agenda, make an organizational contribution, and invite individual members to donate online.

How the Grants Make a Difference

These grants make a genuine difference in the lives of their recipients. Seminarians have used their awards for tuition, textbooks, theology books, vestments, hand-sewn albs, transportation to parish assignments, car insurance, and ordination supplies.

Here are a few reports of how our seminarians have used their grants:

Declan used his grant for car insurance and travel to parish assignments, as well as supplies for his May ordination to the priesthood.

Sam, a second-year seminarian, is applying his grant toward tuition, textbooks, and other formation expenses.

Dominic is using his award to purchase theology books and vestments.

Jay used his grant to purchase hand-sewn albs.

Donation forms should preferably be completed electronically before being printed and mailed. This helps ensure that recipients' names and other information are recorded accurately. **(See Page 11 for the Form)**

Mail donations to:

Kevin Delany

2532 Wood Ave.

Bristol, PA 19007

kdelaneypsp@yahoo.com

Older prayer cards displaying an Ohio address or Hagan's name should no longer be used. The current donation form contains the correct address.

Thank you to everyone who has already contributed. Please help us increase participation, strengthen support for our seminarians and religious, and continue praying for vocations.

In closing, I would like to offer my heartfelt congratulations to Denny Parks on his election as National Treasurer. Denny, this honor is well deserved, and I wish you every success in your new role.

Respectfully,

Nick Jacobs

Ohio State Project Saint Patrick Chair



Ancient Order of
HIBERNIANS
Irish • Catholic • American



2026 Project St. Patrick Donation Form

Kevin J. Delaney, Chairman
2532 Wood Ave
Bristol, PA 19007
kdelaneypsp@yahoo.com

Fill Out and Return No Later Than August 31, 2026

GENERAL DONATION: (LESS THAN \$500 DONATION)

\$ _____

Please accept our donation to the Project St. Patrick Grant Fund:

NAME RECOGNITION GRANT: (\$500 MINIMUM DONATION FOR EACH DONATION)

Please Honor our Chaplain/Individual with this Grant Donation

Name: _____

\$ _____

Please Honor the Memory of this Individual with this Grant Donation

Name: _____

\$ _____

Total Donation Amount: (Payable to "HIBERNIAN CHARITY")

\$ _____

Contact Name & Position: _____

State: _____ County: _____ Division #: _____

Division Name: _____

Phone: (____) ____ - ____ Email: _____

Address to send Recognition Certificate:

Attn: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

FFAI

The following are FFAI Christmas Appeals recipients pictures with Patrick Williams and Martin Galvin



Joe McCormick, Mahoning County President accepting for Mahoning County



Dale Norris State Director accepting for the Riverfront Irish Festival



State Vice President Bruce McPherson accepting for the Ohio State Board



Michael Cosgrove FFAI Chairman Patrick Pearse Division accepting for Patrick Pearse division



Mike McKenzie past State President accepting for Mark Heffernan division.

All awards presented at the National Convention were for a donation over \$1,000 for the Christmas Appeals.

Patrick Williams

Continued on Page 13

FFAI, cont.

The following is a message from Martin Galvin regarding the Inquiry into the murder of Civil Rights lawyer Pat Finucane

Patrick Williams, State FFAI Chairman

A chairde

The Public Inquiry into the murder of Civil Rights lawyer Pat Finucane will hear opening statements in September with the inquiry expected to get into gear with witness testimony early next year.

This inquiry is expected to show high levels of collusion which will have political and legal implications for every collusion murder during the Troubles.

Pat's son John Finucane MP will be making a special appeal at the Bronx AOH Dinner on November 22nd asking for Irish American input.

Martin

Finucane Inquiry to sit over two days, by Mark Robinson, m.robinson@irishnews.com

The next hearing of the Pat Finucane Inquiry has been confirmed to take place over two days in September.

The 39-year-old Belfast solicitor was shot dead at his family home in the north of the city in 1989 by the UDA.

Mr Finucane's family have been calling for decades for a public inquiry to establish the extent of security force involvement. The independent inquiry into his murder was announced in June 2024 by then-Northern Ireland Secretary Hilary Benn. It aims to investigate and report upon the circumstances of Patrick Finucane's murder, and particularly the role of the state.

Following a preliminary hearing in June this year, the next hearing will be held on September 15 and 16 at Bradford Court, Belfast.

In a statement, a spokesperson for the inquiry said that the purpose of this hearing is for the "presentation of an opening statement by the inquiry's counsel team, led by Matthew Hill. "Drawing upon openly available material, including from those previous reviews and investigations identified in the Terms of Reference that have been published, the statement will set out what is currently understood about the murder of Mr Finucane and related issues," they said. "This will establish a baseline position from which the inquiry can take forward its work."

The hearing will be chaired by the Patrick Finucane Inquiry Chair, Sir Gary Hickinbottom. It will be streamed for those who wish to watch the proceedings online."

The hearing will be livestreamed, subject to a short delay, on the Inquiry's YouTube channel between 10.30am and 5pm each day.

More from Martin Galvin.

A chairde

During the 1990s there were a number of triumphalist Orange Marches at nationalist flashpoints which were strongly opposed by residents. Drumcree along the nationalist Garvaghy Road, Ardoyne and the Holy Cross area in Belfast, the lower Ormeau Road became scenes of annual showdowns where nationalist residents were hemmed in to allow sectarian Orange Parades to remind the Croppies to lie down. Some AOH members actually served as observers at the request of the nationalist residents. Residents protested and fought legal battles and a Parades Commission was created which eventually denied permission for most of the contentious parades. It was taken for granted that the issue of these flashpoint parades was settled.

It goes without saying that there are hundreds of Orange Parades across the north and even some in the south in Unionist areas which proceed every year. Yesterday a judge set aside a Parades Commission decision which had refused permission for last month's Drumcree March. This was heralded by Unionists as opening the door to future parades. Some nationalists contend that the problem that the Parade Commission did not follow its own rules and the ruling is only technical not a change in policy. The following story from the IRISH NEWS is a good example of opinion.

Martin

Sinn Féin can see 'no justification' for Garvaghy Road march.

by Conor Sheilsc.sheils@irishnews.com

SINN Féin MP John Finucane has accused unionist politicians of a "tribal and triumphalist" response to the High Court ruling on Drumcree, saying he sees "no logic or justification" for the Orange Order to parade along the route.

Mr Justice McAlinden made the quashing order after the Parades Commission conceded that not all six of its members had signed off on a determination barring the Orange Order from returning along the Garvaghy Road before it was issued last month.

Mr Finucane said the judgment needed to be studied carefully, "but it is important to be clear about what it is and what it is not".

Continued on Page 14

FFAI, cont.

“The court has quashed a Parades Commission determination because of failings in how that decision was reached,” he said.

“It has not determined that an Orange Order parade should proceed down the Garvaghy Road, nor does today’s judgment give permission for one.

“The people of the Garvaghy Road and Portadown have lived peacefully for 28 years and deserve to continue doing so. Drumcree came to represent deep sectarianism, bitterness and division, leaving wounds which have still not fully healed. Nobody should want to reopen those divisions.

“That is why the tribal and triumphalist reaction from some within political unionism today is so telling.

“Those declaring this a victory for unionism and loyalism should reflect on who exactly they believe has been defeated. The residents of the Garvaghy Road are not opponents to be defeated, and this should never become a contest where one community must win and another must lose.

“We see no logic or justification for an Orange Order parade proceeding down the Garvaghy Road. If a fresh application is made, we will make representations to the Parades Commission firmly on that basis.”

His comments came after the DUP and the Orange Order called for all current members of the Parades Commission to resign, with party leader Gavin Robinson describing the outcome as “a totemic victory”.

Upper Bann MP Carla Lockhart also called the outcome “absolutely seismic” and said she is writing to the Secretary of State to seek removal of the current members of the Parades Commission from office.

“After 28 years of Portadown District being denied its traditional church parade route along the Garvaghy Road, a forensic legal challenge has blown open the decision-making of the Parades Commission,” she said.

“This is a massive victory for Portadown District and a massive victory for unionism and loyalism.

“The Parades Commission has conceded illegality in its decision-making and, such was the strength of the evidence advanced, a full contested court hearing was not even required.

“The Commissioners should now voluntarily resign, and I call on them to do the right thing and do so,” she said.

“If they do not, there is a clear obligation on the Secretary of State to remove them from office and I am writing to him today to ask this process is commenced immediately “The people of the Garvaghy Road and Portadown have lived peacefully for 28 years and deserve to continue doing so” John Finucane said

“For 28 years Portadown District stood firm, sought engagement and pursued a peaceful resolution,” she said.

“People said Drumcree would never change. They were wrong.”

Mr Robinson described the outcome as “a totemic victory which has laid bare why confidence in the Parades Commission has collapsed within the unionist community”.

“Those who have presided over unlawful decision-making cannot credibly continue in office,” he said.

“They have been entrusted with and paid for a significant role of public importance and they summarily failed.”

He added that the process around contentious parades had “for too long handed disproportionate influence to those unwilling to reach accommodation with their neighbours”.

The Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland said the case had “once again highlighted the inconsistency and arrogance of the unelected body”.

“By their own admission, the Parades Commission’s processes were not followed regarding their most recent determination on the annual Drumcree parade by the members of Portadown District LOL No.1,” it said in a statement.

“The Commission’s failure to recognise the willingness of Portadown District to enter into dialogue with the residents of the Garvaghy Road, and the latter’s abject refusal to do so, has for too long been used as a convenient ‘get out’ for the Commission. We further call on the Secretary of State to instigate a long overdue comprehensive examination of the Commission’s internal decision-making processes, which since its inception, have often lacked credibility, accountability and transparency.”

The Parades Commission and the NIO have been approached for comment.

Division News

Patrick Pearse Div. #1, Franklin Co.

Hibernians were well represented and highly visible at the recently concluded Dublin Irish Festival, with Patrick Pearse Division sponsoring two Irish Unity Forums, an Irish Language Mass, and manning an AOH recruiting tent on the grounds. The festival takes place over three days during the first weekend of August, this year from July 31st to August 2nd, at Coffman Park in Dublin, Ohio.

The Irish Unity Forums took place on August 1st and August 2nd. National President Sean Pender and Judge (and brother) Mike Mentel of Columbus were joined by two Board members of Ireland's Future, both from Belfast... Andr  e Murphy, deputy director of Relatives for Justice, and Reverend Karen Sethuraman, the first female Baptist Minister in Ireland. Andr  e and Karen have both been involved in peace, reconciliation and justice efforts for many years.

The forums were informative and thought provoking, and helped bring attendees up to speed on the challenges, opportunities, and our and others current efforts to bring about the reunification of the island of Ireland.



The morning of August 2nd, an Irish Language Mass was celebrated by Father Stephen Dominic Hayes, O.P., a Dominican friar from St Patrick Church in Columbus. Brothers served as ushers and eucharistic ministers during the Mass. This is a well-attended annual event at the festival, and brings spoken Irish into communion with the liturgy. Father Hayes never disappoints, and his homily brought in stories of masses



held at Carraig an Aifrinn, or Mass rocks, in remote locations, when the Penal Laws outlawed the celebration of Mass. Catholic priests faced arrest, deportation or death for holding services, but managed to gather their flock by word of mouth, and keep the faith alive.

Sean O'Dowd also brought in his AOH recruiting tent from Chicago, and was assisted in manning it by brothers of the Division. A good number of prospects were informed about and expressed interest in joining the Order.



On Sunday, August 30th., the Patrick Pearse Division #1 served as Honor Guard for our brother Fr. Stephen Dominic Hayes' farewell Mass at St. Patrick's Church, Columbus. The attached picture shows the Patrick Pearse Honor Guard with our brother Fr. Hayes. Fr. Hayes has been transferred to St. Dominic Parish in Youngstown. This was a farewell Mass and Fr. Paul Marich (another brother) asked us to be the Honor Guard for the Mass. Fr. Hayes was our chaplain many years ago and has been a loyal brother ever since.

Div. #1 Stark Co.

Our Division is having a Can't Wait for St. Patrick's Day Party on September 12th in Canton Ohio. The annual fundraiser on Saturday September 12th will be held in the Large Hall of St George Romanian Byzantine Catholic Cathedral 1123 44th St NE, Canton, OH 44714. Doors Open at 5:30pm

Tickets are \$35 which includes dinner. There will be live music, Irish step dancing, 50/50s, card tears, raffle baskets, and more activities, but most importantly A LOT OF FUN! For tickets and information please either reach out to Matt Poletti at ohiodistrictdeputypoletti@gmail.com or Tom Wolf 330-417-9685