



ANCIENT ORDER
OF
HIBERNIANS
IN AMERICA

THE SEANACHAI REVISITED

October 2012

Fr. William Corby Division
Fairfax Station, Virginia

Friendship, Unity, and Christian Charity

www.aohfairfax.org

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Monthly Meetings - 1st Sunday of Month - Historic St. Mary's Church Hall

President's Message



We had a very eventful and busy September. On the 2nd, the Division co-sponsored a very special event entitled "Remembering Their Sacrifice." This event was the 150th anniversary of the trains leaving Fairfax Station and St. Mary's Church for Washington, DC with Clara Barton and many of the wounded and dying soldiers from the Battles of Second Manassas and Chantilly. Approximately 200 people were in attendance at the anniversary event along with Fairfax County dignitaries, Chairperson Sharon Bulova and Board Member John Cook from the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and Ralph Victory, the First Secretary of the Embassy of Ireland along with our very own Color Guard and AOH members including our State President.

On the 3rd, the 137th annual Labor Day Picnic took place at the St. Mary of Sorrows Historic Church grounds, the oldest annual picnic event celebrated in Fairfax County. More than 2,000 people attended. Our Color Guard presented the colors, followed by a mass and blessing of the tools, games, vendor booths, food to include a new recipe for barbecued chicken. Our Division had a booth displaying our brochures, family crests, Ireland maps and membership applications. The picnic was a huge success.

We participated in two Ceili's in September 8th and 22nd. The first co-sponsored with the Tuesday Night Ceili Club and the second, the CCE Irish Festival at the Auld Shebeen and Sherwood Community Center.

Looking ahead this month, there are several planned concerts to include Carlos Núñez, Bagpiper legend at the Wolftrap Barns; The Celtic Thunder, at the Lisner Auditorium; the Druid Murphy Full Cycle: Conversations on a Homecoming, A Whistle in the Dark, and Famine at the Kennedy Center; and the Cathie Ryan Band, Lyceum, Old Town Alexandria. Check out what's happening on our website.

Be careful of Frankenstein Friday (10/26) and have a Happy Halloween.

In our Motto,

Bill



150th Anniversary Remembrance of the Events at St. Mary of Sorrows Church after the Battles of Second Manassas and Chantilly

By John Patrick Murphy & William C. Baker

On the evening of September 2, 2012, the Father William Corby Division of the Ancient Order of Hibernians sponsored a candle light remembrance program entitled "Remembering Their Sacrifice" at the St. Mary of Sorrows Historic Church, Fairfax Station, Virginia. The program took place almost 150 years, to the hour, of the trains leaving Fairfax Station and St. Mary's Church for Washington, DC with Clara Barton and many of the wounded and dying soldiers from the Battles of Second Manassas and Chantilly. Approximately 200 people were in attendance at the anniversary event along with Fairfax County dignitaries and Mr. Ralph Victory, the First Secretary of the Embassy of Ireland.

The Irish in America have a particular connection to this specific event. It was a microcosm of the Irish contribution to the development of the United States in the 19th Century. The Irish immigrants settled and developed the eastern part of the United States, built the eastern railroads and were the significant ethnic group in both the armies of the North and South.

Construction of St. Mary's, the first Catholic Church in Fairfax County, Virginia, began in 1858 by a combination of the Irish who settled the area as farmers and the Irish workers laying the track for the Orange and Alexandria Railroad.

Many of these settlers and workers later comprised Companies of the local Confederate 17th Virginia Infantry Regiment. It should also be noted that the trains leaving the Church contained many Irish soldiers of the North, such as the members of the 28th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Regiment which fought gallantly at the Battle of Chantilly, later to become part of the famed Irish Brigade of the Army of the Potomac.

After the Battles of Second Manassas and Chantilly, the most seriously wounded of the Union soldiers were brought to the field hospital setup at St. Mary's Church close to the Fairfax Train Station from where they could be transported by rail back to Washington, DC. Soldiers lay on the ground around the Church all the way down to the Station while surgeons operated inside the church. Clara Barton, who was later to found the American Red Cross, comforted the soldiers for three days as they lay on the grounds around the Church.

The moderator and coordinator for the program was John Patrick Murphy, an AOH Fr. William Corby Division member, with William C. Baker, the AOH Fr. William Corby Division President, giving the Welcoming speech. There were comments by the dignitaries and "first person" presentations by Clara Barton and Union and Confederate persona. These were interspersed with period songs, violin and harmonica performances.

The candle light remembrance ceremony involved 100 participants holding candles representing the states whose regiments participated in the battles. During this ceremony, a bagpiper on the hill of the church graveyard played "Amazing Grace". The number of candles for each state was proportionate to the percentage of casualties for the state. As each state was identified, the bell in the Historic Church tolled and the candles for that state were extinguished until all of the lights were out. At this point, a bugler from the VFW played TAPS.

The program concluded with a procession and wreath laying led by the Squires, Squire Roses and Boy Scouts of St. Mary of Sorrow's at the Ancient Order of Hibernians Monument to the fallen soldiers during the Civil War.

