



Saratoga AOH First Annual Holiday Newsletter 2020

Merry Christmas - Nollaig Shona Dhuit!

The coronavirus pandemic might be raging all around us, but that has not kept the Saratoga AOH Division from thriving in these difficult times! For example, we love motto challenges. For Friendship and Charity, we held a successful September Golf Outing. The proceeds enabled us to send timely donations to The Open-Door Mission, The Echo Food Pantry, and Mary's Haven Hospice Program. Next year, we will hope to sell tickets to the Masters' April practice round as well as repeating our September golf outing.

Several brothers found Unity and Charity time to work on the site of the Fulton County Shrine of the first Roman Catholic Church and its cemetery. We cleaned up the two sites and gravestones in June and will do more next June. Great coverage was given in the National Digest, the state Empire Hibernian Digest, The Evangelist, and area newspapers.

Plans are underway to hold our March Family Feis. Mike Smith was the Brother who encouraged us to do something "special in March". It will be a great opportunity for fun, fellowship, and to lift a glass together. The Charter will be there for you to read, say a prayer and touch it for luck!

To continue to be a viable organization, we need more brothers to serve in these types of activities. Let us work on 2021 as, "The year every Brother undertakes one active task in planning/ working events or Committee work".

Check out the photo of our Division's original Charter! It was retrieved from Brother Ed Duane's family. It was restored, reframed and displayed at the October annual Murphy Monument dedication. Sadly, about all we have used it for, has been to drape black crepe at a Brother's wake. Brother Dan Lehane from the 1980's and our 2003 Treasurer Mike Smith passed in 2020. They



were in their 80's. We also prayed for brothers who lost family members or had challenging ordeals in 2020. It is totally acceptable to include the Hibernians in your legacy; it would be a Charity mission motto!

Please congratulate our new officers for 2021; Ed Kelley - Sentinel, Kevin Quinn - Marshal, Paul O'Donnell - Standing committee chair, Financial Secretary - Rob Przedwiecki, Recording Secretary - Tim Sinnott, Treasurer - Chris Bergman, Vice President - Bob Melia and President - Don McHenry.

President's message: Brothers, Has it really been two years already??? Where has the time gone. First off, I want to thank you for entrusting me to lead the Division over the past two years. It has been a wonderful experience. I'd like to think we had a great couple of years, although that pesty pandemic did cause some disruptions along the way.

We held two very successful golf tournaments. Thanks to Past Division president rich Gorman for leading that effort. He has my vote for golf tournament director for life. With the help of the Irish Legislature Members and State Senator we instituted an Irish Heritage presentation series. We've got one more presentation on the Fighting 69th to go as soon as 1LT Dan Graham gets released from NYS National Guard pandemic duty we can schedule his presentation. We developed a very good relationship with Elizabeth Stack, the director of the Albany Irish Heritage museum. We are hoping to coordinate a field trip to the museum once the pandemic blows over.

We did hit a couple of hurdles that must be addressed over the next couple of months. We lost our major fund raiser with the canceling of the I2K and then we lost our second fund raiser when they cancelled the Masters Tournament. If we want to continue our charitable donations, we must identify a new fund raiser. I do pledge to assist our new President (or is it old President) in his efforts to identify new fund raising opportunities.

Thank you again for supporting me over the last two years. I have complete faith that the new board of officers will continue the Saratoga Divisions' commitment to Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity. I wish you and yours a very Merry Christmas and all the best for the New Year!

In closing I'd like to share a few lines of a newsletter article I prepared for my VFW Post. As we get ready to enjoy the Christmas holiday during these times of pandemic, I hope it provides some inspiration to assist in celebrating with your loved ones. Enjoy!

“While looking for an appropriate Christmas military quote for this edition I found an article on the Battle of the Bulge and the legendary response Brigadier General McAuliffe provided to the German Army when they requested he surrender his troops. BG McAuliffe was the Acting Commander of the 101st Airborne Division. For those of you not familiar with the story, on December 22nd, 1945 the German army surrounded the Belgium village of Bastogne. The German Army held overwhelming superiority in tanks, artillery, and troops. To avoid “total annihilation” the Germans offered to accept the honorable surrender of the US troops.

Taking little time and not consulting with his commanders and staff, BG McAuliffe provide a one word response to the German commanders. The response: “Nuts”. Within four days the encirclement was broken by elements of the Third Army and within two weeks the Germans were pushed back to their original lines. The article I found is: https://www.army.mil/article/92856/the_story_of_the_nuts_reply As we prepare too celebrate Christmas and the New Year with family and friends, let us all agree to say “NUTS” to the pandemic. Be safe, but please try to remember what the holiday is all about and of course take time to give thanks to our troops who are deployed around the world and won’t be able to celebrate the holidays with their families this year.”

Tim McNulty, President, 2019 & 2020

A new long sleeve, blue shirt with the “Saratoga Hibernians” logo is now available for \$35 (see below). If interested, contact Brother Paul O’Donnell



Finally, we would like to check and update our e-mail lists. When you receive this newsletter, please send an email ASAP to Tim Sinnott at txsinnot@gmail.com so we can be sure we are using the right email address to reach you. Thanks, and hope you are all safe, warm, and happy for the Holiday Season!

Two Tickets to Ireland Sweepstakes!

Thanks to the efforts of Saratoga AOH, the Town of Saratoga is sister to the Towns of Fethard-Killusty, County Tipperary, Ireland.

To foster that relationship, Saratoga AOH is raffling off two round trip tickets to Ireland and a night's stay in a B&B in Fethard, up to a maximum amount of \$1,200.

This sweepstakes is open ONLY to all Saratoga AOH Division 1 members who have paid dues for 2021.

Tickets are \$25, members may purchase as many tickets as they like. You can even buy them as gifts!

There are several ways to purchase a ticket:

- On-line at our website, www.saratogaao.com, you can pay dues (\$35) and purchase tickets for \$25 each.
- If you already paid dues, you can go back to the website and purchase raffle ticket(s).
- Come to a meeting and bring your cash or checkbook.
- Mail in checks for both dues payment and/or raffle ticket purchase to: Saratoga AOH, PO Box 205, Saratoga Springs, N.Y. 12866.

The drawing will be held at the AOH Family Feis in March, 2021. Winner need not be present to win. If the Feis is not held, then the drawing will be done at the March 2021 regular meeting scheduled for Thursday, March 4. Payment of dues and raffle tickets can occur right up to a few minutes before the drawing!

Conditions:

- ✓ The winner will have a year to travel. If travel is still being impacted by Covid-19, then the year can be extended by the executive board.
- ✓ The winner must visit the town of Fethard and meet with town officials. AOH will assist in coordinating the visit and contacts in advance. Otherwise, the travel itinerary is up to the winner.
- ✓ The winner will purchase airline tickets themselves, and upon presentation of a receipt, will be immediately reimbursed up to a maximum of \$1,200

Note that there is a \$1.35 fee per transaction when paying dues or purchasing tickets through the website.

Saratoga AOH - The Year in Pictures

