



Ancient Order of
HIBERNIANS
Irish • Catholic • American



THE KELLY NEWSLETTER

Msgr. Charles A. Kelly, Jr. Division 44PO010007

February 2023 Edition Volume 14 Issue 2

2023

Division President's Message

Dennis Mulligan



President's Message

Worthy Hibernian Brothers:

It's February and the raffle ticket sales season is well underway. Please review Jack Simila's e-mail to the Division on January 28th. It contains detailed information on when, where and the costs to buy raffle tickets.

We'll also need the help of all brothers this very busy year to help at the booth for each of our events and to recruit new members.

Upcoming Events:

February 9th—Division Meeting
February 22nd. – Ash Wednesday
March 9th. – Monthly Meeting
March 19th. – St. Patrick's Dinner at O'Tooles Restaurant, Forest Hill Avenue—Details to follow.
March 23rd - AOH Social at O'Tooles-Midlothian 5PM-6PM
March 24th (setup) and 25th – 26th Church Hill Irish Festival. Sign-up will be sent out near the end of February

In Friendship Unity and Christian,
Charity

Dennis Mulligan ,President
Msgr. Charles A .Kelly Division
Ancient Order of Hibernians DIV. NO.
44P001
mulligan.dennis@yahoo .com

Business Meetings

Regular Monthly Business Meetings are held at 7 PM on the 2nd Thursday of the month. No meetings are held during July and August.

Meetings are held at:
St. Joseph's Church
828 Buford Road
Richmond, VA 23235

2023 Business Meeting Schedule:

Our next regular Division Meeting is February 12, 2023

Socials at O'Toole's Restaurant & Pub, 13919 Midlothian Turnpike, Midlothian, VA 23114 on the fourth Thursday of each month starting at 5PM.

A Bit of Irish History

Imbolc Celebration

Every year without fail its welcome arrival brings down the curtain on the darkness of Winter and heralds in the reawakening of the natural world and the promise for us all of the new beginnings and a fresh start. 'You can never hold back Spring' as Tom Waits once sang and I suspect that this year, 2023, our collective céad míle fáilte, one hundred thousand welcomes to the new season will be heartfelt indeed.

In Ireland, the arrival of Spring has been celebrated for thousands of

Dues Notice

2022 Dues are now payable. Dues remain at \$40 and, if 75 or older, dues are \$20.

Please pay at Division Meetings or mail check payable to:

**AOH Msgr. Kelly
Division**

at:

Larry Kelly
120 Carriage Point Ln. Glen Allen
Va. 23059

Great News!

The 2023 Church Hill Irish Festival is officially on!

March 24th, 25th and 26th, 2023 - The Church Hill Irish - Street Festival will be held in front of St. Patrick's Church on North 25th Street and on Broad Street and will run from 10:00 am to 7:00 pm on Saturday and Sunday.

We'll need volunteers to help set up our tent, talk with visitors, recruit new members and, most importantly, sell raffle tickets, so stay tuned for the sign-up in your mail!

Remember the 2019 Festival?



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years. The very ancient Celtic festival of **Imbolc** is the first of the four great annual festivals of pre-Christian Ireland, the others being Bealtaine, Lughnasadh (Lughnasadh or Lughnasa) and Samhain, associated with the beginnings of Summer, Autumn, and Winter respectively. The name Imbolc derives from the Old Irish literally meaning 'in the belly', referencing the pregnancy of ewes and the lambing season on the way.



It was first celebrated at the moveable midpoint between the Winter Solstice and the Spring Equinox, but it was later fixed at 1st February, now the official first day of Spring, and runs through to sundown the following day.

Associated with the great pagan **Goddess Brigid**, a very powerful deity of the Tuath De Danann, a race of the Mythical Cycle who, according to the Annals of the Four Masters, ruled Ireland from 1897 BC to 1700 BC before descending to the Otherworld. Brigid was the daughter of The Dagda, chief among the Celtic gods. She has quite a long list of associations: she is the goddess of poets, wisdom, healing, blacksmiths, livestock, crafts, childbirth, and fertility among others. It is said she introduced the custom of **keening**, a form of ritual lamentation at a funeral, following her own son's death in battle. During Imbolc, thanks were given to Brigid and her blessings were sought for the home and for the farm animals for the coming year. Traditionally a little effigy of Brigid called a Brideog, made of oat straw and reeds was made the night before Imbolc and placed in a basket, a tradition still carried on in some parts of Ireland. Another tradition is that straw would be placed at the hearth for the comfort of Brigid when she would kneel to bestow her blessings and some of the straw itself, because of its newly acquired healing properties, could later for instance be placed under the pillow of a sick child to bring them back to good health.

Imbolc is a Fire Festival and lamps were lit and bonfires set ablaze in honour of Brigid and to welcome back the power and heat of the sun after the cold Winter.

St. Brigid of Kildare, Ireland

As well as Imbolc the 1st February marks the Feast Day of St. Brigid of Kildare, Lá 'le Bríde in Irish, sometimes known as the Mother Saint of Ireland and one of the three National saints of Ireland, (St. Patrick and St. Columba being the other two). As well as sharing her name and feast day with the goddess Brigid St. Brigid also shares almost all of the goddess's attributes.

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For this reason there has been open debate for many years as to whether St. Brigid was in fact a real, historical person or whether she was a Christian reimagining of the goddess Brigid. One school of thought is that St. Brigid was a chief druid at the temple of the goddess Brigid in Co. Kildare and that she converted it into a Christian monastery and that after her death and over time the many stories and characteristics of the goddess were transferred to the saint.

One very well known story or miracle associated with St. Brigid relates to an instance when she asked the King of Leinster for some land upon which to build a monastery. When he refused she reduced the scale of her request asking only for the amount of land that her cloak would cover. Of course, the king quickly agreed. However, when the cloak was laid on the ground it grew bigger and bigger until it covered the entire Curragh of Kildare!

Today St. Brigid's place in Irish life remains second only to that of St. Patrick. On the night before her feast day, some folks will leave out a strip of cloth or scarf, known as Bratóg Bríde, on a bush or tree for St. Brigid to bless as she passes along. The bratóg will be imbued with the power to cure headaches. In the coming days the beautiful and iconic St. Brigid's Cross, Crosóg Bríde, simply formed with reeds or straw, will be crafted in schools and homes up and down the length and breadth of Ireland. They will be placed over the door and over the hearth in the home and maybe in the cowhouse and among the sheep too. They will invoke both the holy power of St. Brigid of Kildare and the magical and mystical power of her pagan predecessor the Celtic Goddess Brigid to ward off evil spirits and bad energy and guard against illness, fire and hunger in the year ahead. In doing so they are continuing an unbroken Irish tradition whose ancient origins are lost through the mists of time.

Sick and In Memorium Notices for the Newsletter

Brothers, if you have anyone you would like to have entered in the Notices, please contact Sonny Dorish-Standing and Compassion Committee, and he will notify the Editor.

Sick List

New update from Jack Simila about his wife Carol's condition:

Carol has almost complete recovery.

Thanks fo all your prayers!

Dan Harrington-Being treated for Lukemia. Also, slowly recovering from COVID but with a few post-recovery issues.

More Great News!

2023 Central Virginia Celtic Games

We are excited and honored to announce that the Richmond Highland Games are scheduled for the weekend of November 4th and 5th, 2023. We are very happy to share that our new location will be at beautiful Dorey Park, located at 2999 Darbytown Road, Henrico, Va. 23231. We are working with the County of Henrico getting ready for this great event, and we look forward to seeing all of our friends. We will keep everyone updated with the schedule of events, Heavy Athletics, Piping and Drumming, Dance, Fiddle and Harp, Clan and Society Registrations, and all that we do! Thanks again for your continued support!



Daniel Harrington
Photography



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HIBERNIANS
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2023 Division Officers

President-*Dennis Mulligan*
mullighan.dennis@yahoo.com

Vice President- (Vacant)

Treasurer-*John Frampton*
firemedic45@comcast.net

Recording Secretary-*Mike Norton*
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Financial Secretary-*Larry Kelly*
ilkelly1@verizon.net

Standing/Compassion Comm.-*Sonny Dorish*
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Marshal-*Bob Cavanaugh*
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[Sentinel-*Jim Dunn*](#)

Webmaster-*Dan Harrington*
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Our Division History

The Msgr. Charles Kelly, Jr. Division of the Ancient Order of Hibernians was formed in December, 2009 and conducted its first meeting on January 21, 2010 at St. John Neumann Church, Powhatan, Virginia. The next few meetings were taken up with election of officers and the many procedural items needed to get our group started.

Since that time we continue to grow, adding new members and supporting and donating to Catholic schools and Churches in the area, in line with our commitment to Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity.