



**Major Dooley Division
Richmond, Virginia**

The Dooley Dispatch

December 2012

Celebrating 33 years of Friendship, Unity, and Christian Charity

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Next Meeting - Tuesday January 8th 7:00 p.m. St. Paul's Church



President's Message

Brothers,

I hope everyone had a nice Thanksgiving, after witnessing events like Hurricane Sandy, we all have a lot to be thankful for.

It has been my pleasure and a privilege to serve as President of the Dooley Division this year. Thanks to all officers who stepped up when vacancies appeared and picked up the slack. A special thank you to Big Dan who stepped in as VP after serving as President for the last two years- you truly have earned a break big Fella!

We have a great new slate of officers for 2013 to lead us forward- a nice mix of veteran AOH'ers as well as some newer members, thanks for serving.

The division had a successful year of adding new members and even with another tough economic year and less Raffle proceeds- we were able to maintain our charitable donation levels like last year. Blessed with fantastic weather, our raffle efforts are off to a great start- thanks again to Tim & Chad for running the raffle committee again this year.

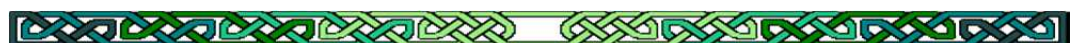
Every year we hope to end with a few more members, and special thanks to Paulie and his usual enthusiastic recruiting efforts, he's invited 18 new prospects to our Christmas party. Please make an extra effort to reach out to the folks with the temporary name tags on and make them and their wives & kids feel like family.

It makes me proud to see how our annual events are the cornerstone of our social calendar- each year they all get even better attendance. This year's Dooley event at Maymont with the full pipe band made the evening news. St Patrick's Mass and events were their usual big success. The Squirrels game was oversold (again!). Jack had members golfing and fishing again this year. Miserable weather couldn't keep us from having a great pool party at Murphs! And at each presentation at our parishes, "all those guys in green jackets" are getting noticed like never before.

I wish everyone and their families a very Merry Christmas & Happy New Year, and don't forget to sign the cards to our priests as you enter the party!

In our Motto

Jim



Prayer List - Please pray for those who are suffering from chronic illness or receiving medical attention: **Hugh Naughton** recovering from double knee replacement, **Wanda Walsh**, wife of Tom, receiving treatments for cancer, **Michael Maynes**, son of member Ed Maynes, has completed a lengthy round of cancer treatments and has received a good report from the doctors, **Bill McKay** who continues to struggle with back pain, and Walt Fergusson's sister is battling a long illness, **Jessie Naughton**, **Dick Moore**, **Thomas Zahn**, brother of Father Zahn, **Jeannie Barrett** wife of Tom Barrett, and **Don Reilly**, **Tom Roche**, Vince Eikmeier's bother-in-law, is recovering from a liver transplant. Please pray for the members of our Division who are serving in the Military. **Father David McGuire**, is serving as Chaplain with the 1st Special Operations Wing of the Air Force in Afghanistan. **CW2 David Bulger**, US Army has been deployed to Iraq with "B" Co. of the 5/159th Aviation Regiment

Upcoming AOH Dooley Events

- January 19th - The Virginia State Boards of the AOH and LAOH will next meet at Old St. Mary's Hall in Fairfax Station, Virginia. The meetings will convene at 10:00 am sharp with an informative presentation by Clann Mohr on the Irish railroad workers in America. The State Board Meetings will convene shortly thereafter. Important topics for discussion will be the 2013 State Convention and the January 21 March For Life. Please mark your calendars.
- January 20th - The AOH Brian Boru Major Degree Team of Virginia will present the Major Degrees of the Order on Sunday, January 20, 2013 at the St. Mary's Lyceum in Old Town Alexandria, Virginia. Details on the Degrees, cost, dress and driving directions will be forthcoming from the team shortly. All Hibernians who have not yet received the Major Degree should take advantage of the opportunity to receive these Degrees in Northern Virginia. For more information, you may contact Team Captain, Past President JJ Kelly at irishknight1@verizon.net.
- January 21st Right for Life March

2013 AOH Dooley Division Officers

President – Brian Kiernan
VP – Vince Eikmeier
Rec Sec- Mike Smith

Fin Sec- Mike Sweeney
Treasurer – Tim McDonnell
Standing Comm- Pat Shea
Marshall – Scott Nugent
Sentinel – Mike Canning

*Christmas in Ireland – Twelve Days ** **Christmas Eve**

This is the day for final household preparations and decorating the interior of the house. For our rural ancestors, the decorations were gathered by the children of the house from lanes and woods nearby. Dressing the fir tree on Christmas Eve is a mid-20th century development of this tradition.

In practice, many, if not most, modern homes have had their tree in full celebration gear for a week or three and it is already the main focus of the family's living room. Wrapped presents collect beneath it. If it hasn't already been done, **lit candles are placed in windows** as dark falls. Again, this is an old tradition, symbolic of lighting the way for Mary and Joseph. **Welcoming refreshments** are also left out for them. Traditionally this is a small seed cake and drink. Many Irish families still go through this little ritual, but many more leave out a mince pie, glass of whiskey and a carrot, intended for Santy and his reindeer who bring gifts for children (good ones only) during the dead of night. One of the most prevailing traditions of Christmas in Ireland is **Midnight Mass** and most churches are packed on Christmas Eve.

Christmas Day

Children discover their **gifts from Santy** (not Father Christmas, not Santa Claus) at the foot of their beds or beneath the Christmas Tree (depending on family tradition) on this morning. Morning is also the time when most of the **madcap swims** take place around the freezing coast. Most of these are organized for charity and the individuals taking part are sponsored to take their chilly dips. The rest of the day is spent exchanging gifts, eating **an extravagant feast** of traditional Irish Christmas recipes and generally indulging the palate. Making merry usually involves **drinking seasonal concoctions** such as mulled wine, Irish cream, whiskey, sherry and champagne. Christmas Day in Ireland remains primarily a family occasion.

The feast of St Stephen

The 26th December is known as St Stephen's Day in Ireland. In Northern Ireland it's also known as Boxing Day. In most homes it is a **sociable day**, when visitors may call in to share some seasonal foods or liquid (usually alcoholic) refreshments.

Sport is also high on the menu throughout the twelve days of Christmas in Ireland and several **horseracing** meetings start on St Stephens. But there's no need to attend the track. My Nana Tierney always made sure she placed a few bob each way on a St Stephens meet, and I don't think that she ever visited a racetrack in her life. (I don't think she much liked horses, either! But the thrill of the race when a few pennies were riding on it was a different matter.)

St Stephens is also the day when a purely Irish phenomenon can be witnessed: the tradition of **Hunting the Wren**. This is when the Wren Boys take to the streets in colourful costumes and masks, and noisily parade a dead wren on a decorated pole. It's a strange tradition and its origins are often debated. Some say it originated in Pagan times. Others from the Viking invasion. Most opt for a simplified religious reference: the betrayal by a wren of St Stephen who was hiding from the Romans who subsequently killed him for his Christian beliefs.

This, then, gave the reason for hunting down the wren, and in olden days a bird was, indeed, captured and killed. The Wren Boys would then carry the dead bird on a pole from house to house and beg for money to bury the 'evil bird'.

Hunting the Wren on St Stephen's is a purely Irish phenomenon

At each house they would sing their song:

*The Wren. The Wren. The king of birds
on St Stephen's Day it was caught in the furze.
Although he is tiny, his family is great.
Put your hand in your pocket and give us a treat.*

*On Christmas Day I turned the spit.
I burned my finger, I feel it yet,
so up with the kettle and down with the pan;
oh, give me a penny to bury the Wren.*

Over time, and probably in only a few isolated instances, the mischievous antics of some Wren Boys grew increasingly boistrous and disorderly. My mother remembers being terrified of the Wren Boys when she was a little girl growing up in County Carlow, and convinced herself they'd take her away if they found her (she always had an active imagination!). She admits being rather glad when the tradition started to wane.

It used to be celebrated in towns and villages everywhere, but is now observed in only a few locations (mostly in the southwest and Dublin), and is a much more organised affair than it used to be. Instead of running amok, the Wren Boys parade through the streets with music and collect money for charity from spectators and from the many pubs and bars they visit on their way.

Epiphany or 'Little Christmas'

The 6th January, or the feast of the Epiphany, commemorates the arrival of the three Kings or Wise Men at crib. It is the final day of Christmas in Ireland and is the time when **all seasonal decorations have to be taken down**. Failure to do so results in bad luck, so the superstition goes, unless you leave them up for a full twelve months!

This day is also known as Little Christmas in Ireland. In Irish, Nollaig na mBan, means Women's Christmas. Traditionally, **the woman of the house was given a day off** after the twelve days of cooking and acting the hostess. Instead, the men would take over family responsibilities while the women went out with their friends. It was probably the only day of the year when the local bar would be full of women rather than men. Sadly, this is another tradition of Christmas in Ireland that is dying out. There have been attempts to revive it, and some restaurants, bars and hotels still try to entice groups of female friends with special deals. However, in a society where so many women now work outside the home and are economically independent, it seems destined to quietly fade away.

- [Irish Genealogy Toolkit](#)

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**Uiscea Beatha's Annual
Freedom House Benefit**
December 8th 8:00 p.m
Rare Olde Times

It's an all request night
(including a donation with each
request is strongly encouraged)

Put a few bucks down and
request your favorite Irish ballad