



Major Dooley Division Richmond, Virginia

The Dooley Dispatch

May 2025

Celebrating 46 years of Friendship, Unity, and Christian Charity

Editor – Patrick Shea 804.516.9598 (pshea1128@gmail.com)

Photographer – Patrick Shea (patrick.shea@aohrichmond.org)

Webmaster – Patrick Shea (pshea1128@gmail.com)

Webpage <http://aohrichmond.org> Check out the web page for better pictures, events, green pages, various reports

Chaplain
Jim Arsenault

President
Mike Valacer 516-4004

Vice President
Joe McGowan 703-593-7866

Recording Secretary
Charley O'Connor 514-8023

Financial Secretary
Tim McDonnell 678-9764

Treasurer
Fred Gerloff 305-2662

Chairman of Standing
Committee
Dave Woychik

Marshal
Dan McLaughlin

Sentinel
Peter "PJ" George

Historian
Brian Hegarty 814-3517

Right to Life
Mike Smith 873-2198

Executive Secretary
Dan Caffrey 512-6288

Raffle Chairman
Jim Woods 747-9286

Chair of the Sick
Scott Nugent 503-9888

All phone numbers are area

Next Meeting – Tuesday May 13, 2025 7:00 p.m. St. Michael's Church

President's Message: President's Message:



Brothers,

Since our April Meeting we have seen Pope Francis go to his eternal resting place and the election of Pope Leo XIV. Two truly remarkable men. As we go forward into the summer and the many opportunities to interact with our fellow man, let us all

share love and mercy to all we meet during the summer and beyond.

Our faith should be strengthened with the peaceful transition to Pope Leo IV. As the first American born Pope, I wish for him a strong faith, a just leadership for Catholics and non-Catholics, and love.

I pray for Justice, Love, and Mercy for all.

Yours in friendship, unity, and Christian Charity,

Mike

Upcoming Events:

May 17, 2025, Saturday, 11 am to 3 pm; Montpelier Celtic Festival, 17205 Mountain Road, Montpelier, VA 23192 – **Sell Raffle tickets; Irish food, drink, Whiskey tasting, music. Order tickets online at <https://www.montpeliercenter.org/celtic-festival.html>**

(NEW DATE) June 14, 2025, Saturday, at 6:05 pm; Richmond Flying Squirrels Baseball Game Outing (Family), The Diamond, 3001 N. Boulevard, Richmond, VA 23230 - (Tim McDonnell - Chair) (ph 804-678-9764; tmc1918@gmail.com – let Tim know how many tickets).

(TBC) 4th of July Picnic at Columbian Center (Family Event) with the KOC 4th Degree Assembly. Ashland Parade.

August 1-3, 2025, Fri. thru Sun.- AOH State Convention. Registration info available later. Hilton Garden Inn in Innsbrook, please plan on staying at the hotel for Friday and Saturday night and enjoying the Evening Events, as well as attending the Business Meeting on Saturday morning, Mass on Saturday afternoon. The Tower Degree will be offered as well, so please plan on attending especially if you need your Degree. Golf on Friday at 10 am at Sycamore Creek.

AOH Dooley Division Prayer List For April 8, 2025 Meeting

Please contact Fr. Jim Arsenault if you need him to visit and pray for and with someone in the hospital. Contact him at M 804-221-1508 and/or jarsenault@stelizcc.org

From Previous Meeting and since then:

- **John Hegarty** – Passed away, cousin of *Brian Hegarty* – had cancer.
- **Pam Lingle** – melanoma, Dave Woychik's sister-in-law.
- **Cathleen McNulty** – eye cancer surgery, surgery week of April 8, friend of Dave Woychik's.
- **Mary Margaret McGowan** – had a fall, had to move into Assisted Living. Undergoing Physical Therapy. Pat McGown.

Presented at Previous Meeting:

- **Chris Woods brother of Jim Woods passed away.**
- **Pat Naughton** – Diagnosed with glioblastoma
- **Vince Eikmeier** – surgery on April 30 to remove a small tumor from his right kidney. Stage 1.

- **Kay Sullivan wife of State Board Treasurer, Patrick Sullivan passed away in early March.**
- **Joanne Antenino** – myeloma. Dave Woychik.
- **Courtney McGowan - Pat McGowan's sister-in-law** – breast cancer surgery, had double mastectomy. Had another surgery in December of 2024. Surgery went well. Appreciate the prayers.
- **Marty Schofield** – Mike Smith's uncle in MA. Growth on pituitary gland survived long surgery to remove tumor on his jaw, undergoing chemo and radiation. **UPDATE – no chemo needed! 30 days of radiation needed.**
- **Qin Costello** – **Matt's** daughter-in-law, blood disease, doing ok now.
- **Brian Kiernan**- recovering at home from foot surgery.

From Prior Meetings:

- **Alesia** – Jim Whelen's wife – back surgery.
- **Stokes McCune** – update - went to the hospital recently, TIA – mini-stroke, should have been released on Monday. Had Brain surgery, heart issues, lung issues. Stage 4 cancer.
- **Scott Nugent** – Finished initial treatment for his brain tumor. Ongoing treatment now
- **Debbie Brokaw** – Wife of *Matt Brokaw* – diagnosed with colon cancer and starting chemo
- **Sean O'Grady** – AOH brother, bone marrow cancer and wife who was in a recent car accident.
- **Tom Murphy** – low oxygen levels
- **Jim Donohue** – Meniere's disease
- **Ruth McMurtray** – Grandmother of *Colin McMurtray* - has back pain
- **Mark Ambrozy** – Friend of *Tom Nolan* – has cancer
- **Karen Lucas** – **sister of Chad Costello** – breast cancer, Stage 1.
- **Theresa** – Sister of *Mike Canning* – Diagnosed with cancerous lesion on her face. In recovery from surgery
- **Barbara O'Connor** – Wife of *Charley O'Connor* – has Multiple System Atrophy. In VCU at home hospice program
- **Debra Fitzgerald** – Wife of Past President *Jim Fitzgerald* – Had a bad fall and recovering.
- **Oscar Nauman** – recovering from car accident; facial reconstruction surgery.
- **Marty McAuliff** – cancer; brother-in-law of Brian Kiernan.
- **Taylor Ribar** – daughter of Marty; brain cancer surgery; Brian Kiernan.
- **Molly Nugent** – Daughter of Scott Nugent – Diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis. Ongoing treatment.

- **Dick Kemper** – Undergone medical procedure in late September
- **Melissa Atchison** – Daughter of *Mark Atchison* – Stage 3 cancer
- **Jim Calpin** – Recovering from stroke
- **Rita Hastings** – *Tom Hastings*' mother – Hip operation, gallbladder removed

- **Dover Harper** (Social Member, Good friend of *Jack Cassells*) – Recovering from Triple Bypass Surgery

Contact Scott Nugent at 804-503-9888 or at swnugent44@yahoo.com

April 2025

Hold my Beer!

Contributed by Brian P. Hegarty Jr.



In the early hours of September 30, 1956, Thomas Fitzpatrick, known as “Fitz” among his friends, had already spent a good chunk of the evening at a bar in New York City. As the conversation grew bolder and the bets wilder, Fitzpatrick found himself at the center of a challenge: could he travel from New Jersey to New York City in just 15 minutes? For most, this would have been a harmless boast or an impossible proposition, but Fitzpatrick took the dare as a call to action. (When most people have a drink or two, they might wager on a game of darts or boast a little about their past. But for Thomas Fitzpatrick, an evening in a bar in 1956 lead to an unexpected night flight – and ultimately, a legend that spanned decades.)

Without a second thought – or perhaps one too many – he made his way to Teterboro Airport in New Jersey, a small airport known for flight schools and private planes. Here, Fitzpatrick, evidently unbothered by notions of legality or basic safety, helped himself to a single-engine plane. Under normal conditions, even the most experienced pilot would exercise caution, especially in the dead of the night without lights or radio. But Fitzpatrick, by all accounts, flew with an enviable combination of skill and sheer nerve, navigating the dark skies above New Jersey and New York.

The New York Times would call it a “feat of aeronautics” and praised his “fine landing” – and that wasn’t an exaggeration. Fitzpatrick successfully touched down on St. Nicholas Avenue near 191st street, directly in front of the bar where his wager had originated. With an audience astonished by his unexpected return, Fitzpatrick had completed his 15-minute journey from New Jersey to New York City in about the most memorable way possible. His landing on the narrow avenue, in pitch darkness, showed a skill most pilots would have struggled to replicate even under ideal conditions.

Despite the audacity (or perhaps because of it), Fitzpatrick avoided serious repercussions. The plane’s owner declined to press charges, leaving Fitzpatrick with nothing more than \$100 fine. It was a slap on the wrist for what was, without a doubt, a highly illegal stunt.

Most people might have counted themselves lucky and left it at that. But two years later, Fitzpatrick found himself in another bar, recounting his story with a hint of swagger. The problem was that one of the patrons didn’t believe him. That’s when “Fitz” said “Hold my Beer”. Stubborn pride – or, as Fitzpatrick himself would later

blame, “the lousy drink” – kicked in, and he took the challenge to prove his claim. Once again, he headed to Teterboro Airport, commandeered a plane, and took to the skies.

This time, he aimed to land near Amsterdam Avenue and 187th Street, not far from Yashiva University. The police were less forgiving than before, and Fitzpatrick second stunt landed him in front of Judge John A. Mullen. This time, the judge wasn’t content with a fine. As he handed down the six-month prison sentence, Judge Mullen commented, “Had you been properly jolted then, it’s possible this would not have occurred a second time.” Fitzpatrick, slightly humbled, agreed that the drink has something to do with it.

Thomas Fitzpatrick’s two late-night flights became a stuff of legend, especially in Washington Heights, where tales of his near-impossible landing circulated for decades. In time, his reputation was such that a drink called the “Late Night Flight” was named in his honor – an appropriate tribute to a man who could turn a casual night at the bar into an urban legend.

Yet Fitzpatrick’s life wasn’t defined solely by his airborne escapades. Born in Emerson, New Jersey, he’d lied about his age to join the Marines at 15, serving in China during World War II, where he learned to fly reconnaissance aircraft. After his time in the Marines, he joined the Army and became the first New Yorker wounded in the Korean War. Wounded while driving an ammunition truck to rescue trapped American soldiers, Fitzpatrick received the Purple Heart for his bravery.

He eventually settled into civilian life, working as a steamfitter with Local 638 in New York City and Long Island for over half a century. Fitzpatrick was also active in community groups, including the VFW Post and the China Marines Organization, living out his later years with the same fearless spirit that had fueled his infamous flights.

Raise a glass to Thomas Fitzpatrick – a man who truly took barroom bets to new heights.

Ancient Order of Hibernians
Doolley Division
Patrick Shea
3312 Hard Rock Court
Henrico, VA 23230-1945



«First_Name» «Last_Name»
«Street»
«City», «State» «Zip»