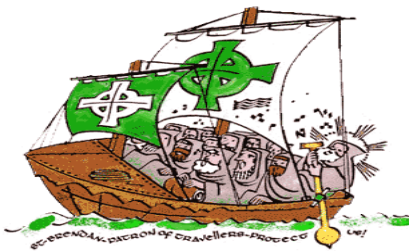


# St. Brendan Division #1 - AOH, Berks County, PA



*Serving the Irish-American Community for more than a century*

Incorporated in the City of Reading & State of Pennsylvania NOVEMBER 7, 1860

RE-ORGANIZED FEBRUARY 16, 1979

Visit our Website [www.berkscoaoh.com](http://www.berkscoaoh.com)

Volume XXIX/Tóirt Fíche a naoi déag - Issue #1/Eagrán a haon-Iúil/Lunasa/Méan Fómhair - July/August/September 2019

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Our ranks are growing thin both in membership and attendance at our monthly meetings. Currently, we have 78 members and half-way into the year, several members have not paid their 2019 annual dues. Also, we have had several deaths of long-term and dedicated members, which were huge contributors of volunteer service and attendees at our meetings.

Our monthly meetings, are now averaging six (6) to seven (7) members. Last month we had four (4) members, which did not allow for the ability to have a formal business meeting and quorum votes to approve bills and motions. The Division officers are looking for recommendations and suggestions on how we can increase our membership and attendance at the monthly meetings! It is somewhat disheartening to attend a meeting of so few, not being able to approve expenditures, and/or plan on charitable community events. So, to the membership, please give some second thoughts to re-new your commitments to attend our monthly meetings and help our Division by volunteering some time at our soup kitchens, and our community events.

We are planning an additional 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary dinner event in the Fall. More information will be announced as plans are finalized for this event. If anyone has **not** received their 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary pin, please call me at 610-678-4590 or call Joseph McCarthy to get your pin. Many thanks to Bill Carroll who coordinated the design and purchase of the anniversary pin.

We express our condolences, thoughts and prayers to the McGuire and Flannery families. Both John E. McGuire and Clare Flannery passed away in June.

In August, we will have the Lady of Knock Mass at Alvernia University. Len Weckel is working on the plans for the Mass. The Mass will be followed by a fellowship dinner. Please consider attendance at this Mass and dinner for this celebratory day. Afterall, this is one of four recognized holidays for the Ancient Order of Hibernians in America.

Many thanks to Len and Bryn Weckel who planned and coordinated the June 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> soup kitchen at the Kennedy House. This was a tremendous week-end event feeding hundreds of needy people in lieu of poor attendance by membership to volunteer.

Please consider volunteering next time to help make this a worthy and meaningful charitable event. Lots of labor goes into this soup kitchen to provide a nutritious meal to those in need, but it doesn't happen without volunteer help!

Our calendar sales in June was successful and raised monies for our general funds. It is planned to do another calendar sale in the Fall. Your efforts to help sell the calendars will be greatly appreciated to help our mission of charity continue.

For the good of the order, the Berks Irish Fest will occur on July 20<sup>th</sup> at Willow Grove, Sinking Spring. This is a great event in the Irish traditions - great food and entertainment. The Berks Irish have been supportive to our division in the past, so please give some thought in attending their event. Also, they are in great need for volunteers, so consider offering some time to help them to make their event successful. We will set up and man a recruitment table at this event to acquire new members and sell surplus 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary pins. Anyone who can sit at this table for a while will be appreciated.

Yours in Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity  
Kerry Williard, President

#### MEMBERSHIP

All members are reminded that membership fees for 2019 are now being accepted. Dues remain at \$25.00 per year. You can forward dues to:

St. Brendan's Division #1  
P.O. Box 14961  
Reading, Pa. 19612-4961

Please make all checks payable to Berks Div. 1, AOH. For information on dues payments call Joe McCarthy at 610-927-5224. All inquiries will be held in strictest confidence.

We ask all members to keep us informed of any changes in mailing addresses or phone numbers. The National Secretary is initiating a new record keeping format in that the Financial Secretary must maintain a spreadsheet of all members and each year when we submit annual report outlining division activities, an accurate record of division membership will be submitted. From this report the new membership cards will be printed, and names and addresses will be submitted to the National Hibernian Digest to maintain their accurate mailing list. In addition, where possible they request regular updates on email addresses

and cell phone numbers. By now some of you may have already received a message from the National President. In plain words the AOH is joining the Cyber World to speed up processing and dispensing information.

As usual we need a few new recruits to join our diminishing ranks. In the last year we lost six members through death and new membership will spread new life among our ranks. If you need assistance in recruiting contact our organizer John Mackey or any officer. Applications are available on our website [www.berkscoah.com](http://www.berkscoah.com)

#### REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

Prayers are requested for following person who have requested to be listed in our prayer list. Included in the list are members, family of members and members of the LAOH. They are: Craig Wolfe, James Caherly, Deacon John Murphy, Henry and Eleanor Trexler, Michael & Joseph Riley, Henry & Rita Mullen, Patricia Garrigan, Kathleen Fink, Julie Miller, Mary Walsh, Mary Collins, John Mackey, Mary DeMarco, Michael Riley, Charles Fritz, Kathleen Creed, Dennis Mulligan, Doug Carlson, Terry Morrison, Betsy Paolini and all family members and members in need of prayers.

Special prayers are asked for the following deceased members and their families: Kathleen Creed, Lee Garrigan, Joseph M. McGee, Jack McGuire, Alfred Recke, Clare Flannery and all the deceased members of the AOH-LAOH of Berks County.

#### COMING EVENTS

07/04/19	Independence Day
07/12/19	General Membership Meeting - Slovak Catholic Sokol's 7:30pm
08/09/19	General Membership Meeting - Slovak Catholic Sokol's 7:30pm
08/15/19	Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary
08/24/19	"Our Lady of Knock Mass"
09/02/19	Labor Day
09/13/19	General Membership Meeting - Slovak Catholic Sokol's 7:30pm
09/13/19	Commodore John Barry Day -AOH Holiday
10/11/19	General Membership Meeting - Reading Sokol's - 7:30pm
11/08/19	General Membership Meeting - Reading Sokol's - 7:30pm
11/11/19	Veteran's Day - Thank a Vet today!
11/28/19	Thanksgiving Day
12/08/19	Immaculate Conception of Blessed Mother
12/13/19	General Membership Meeting - Reading Sokols - 7:30pm
12/25/19	Merry Christmas
01/01/20	HAPPY NEW YEAR

### ST. BRENDAN FUNDRAISER

Plans are underway for our September fundraiser which will be used to fund our bi-annual Hibernian Hunger program in November and April.

To fund our annual charitable donations, we run calendars for the months of January, June and September.

### BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

The names of members who are celebrating birthdays during the next two months are listed below. We have acquired the information from our membership applications, so if there are any corrections or errors please advise.

<u>JULY</u>	<u>AUGUST</u>	<u>SEPTEMBER</u>
11 <sup>th</sup> Fr. Robert Finlan	3 <sup>rd</sup> Michael B. Riley	8 <sup>th</sup> Richard P. Flannery
11 <sup>th</sup> Robert J. McHale	9 <sup>th</sup> Andrew Scott	16 <sup>th</sup> Timothy M. Kelly
11 <sup>th</sup> Joseph P. Bonner	10 <sup>th</sup> Fr Eugene Ritz	17 <sup>th</sup> James D. Caherly
20 <sup>th</sup> Michael J. Cawley	11 <sup>th</sup> Sean Flannery	22 <sup>nd</sup> Ray Butterworth
23 <sup>rd</sup> Robert McIntyre	16 <sup>th</sup> John J McHale	23 <sup>rd</sup> Daniel R. Flannery
30 <sup>th</sup> Msgr. Stephen Radocha	18 <sup>th</sup> John McCormack	23 <sup>rd</sup> John J. Dore
	19 <sup>th</sup> Timothy J. Dillon	

### OUR LADY OF KNOCK MASS

This year's Annual Mass to honor our Blessed Mother "Our Lady of Knock, Queen of Ireland" will be held at the McGlenn Chapel in Alvernia College at 4pm Mass on Saturday August 24, 2019. All members of the AOH -LAOH of Berks County are encouraged to be in attendance.



### IN MEMORIUM

We mourn the loss of Brother John "Jack" McGuire who passed away on Tuesday June 11, 2019. Jack, as he was called became a member of St. Brendan's back in July of 1879. His father John O. McGuire was a charter member of St Brendan's.

We also mourn the loss of Clare Flannery, wife of our organizer Daniel J. Flannery who passed away Friday May 31, 2019. Clare & Dan, along with her family were avid supporters of St. Brendan's Div. #1.

Former brother Alfred Recke, of Boyertown Division #2 Berks County has recently passed away. His viewing and

funeral Mass will be held Wednesday July 3, 2019 for 9-11am with Mass immediately following.

### DID YOU KNOW THAT?

Many thanks to Brother John McHale who relayed the following article to me. He received it from a McHale cousin from Ireland who thought we should know of these details. On checking my archives, I find that I had published a similar article about the Emerald Isle of the Caribbean, Monserrat prior to its destruction by a volcano eruption several years ago.

#### IRISH: THE FORGOTTEN WHITE SLAVES

They came as slaves: human cargo transported on British ships bound for the Americas. They were shipped by the hundreds of thousands, men, women and even the youngest of children.

Whenever they rebelled or even disobeyed an order, they were punished in the harshest ways. Slave owners would hang their human property by their hands and set their hands or feet on fire as one form of punishment. Some were burned alive then had their heads placed on pikes in the marketplace as a warning to other captives.

We don't really need to go through all of the gory details, do we? We know all too well the atrocities of the African slave trade.

But are we talking about African slavery? King James VI and King Charles I, also led a continued effort to enslave the Irish. Britain's Oliver Cromwell furthered this practice of dehumanizing one's next door neighbor.

The Irish slave trade began when James VI sold 30,000 Irish prisoners as slaves to the New World. His Proclamation of 1625 required Irish political prisoners be sent overseas and sold to English settlers in the West Indies.

By the mid-1600s, the Irish were the main slaves sold to Antigua and Montserrat. At that time, 70% of the total population of Montserrat were Irish slaves.

Ireland quickly became the biggest source of human livestock for English merchants. A majority of the early slaves to the New World were actually white.

From 1641 to 1652, over 500,000 Irish were killed by the English and another 300,000 were sold as slaves. Ireland's population fell from about 1,500,000 to 600,000 in one single decade.

Families were ripped apart as the British did not allow Irish dads to take their wives and children with them across the

Atlantic. This led to a helpless population of homeless women and children. Britain's solution was to auction them off as well.

During the 1650s, over 100,000 Irish children between the ages of 10 and 14 were taken from their parents and sold as slaves in the West Indies, Virginia and New England. In this decade, 52,000 Irish (mostly women and children) were sold to Barbados and Virginia.

Another 30,000 Irish men and women were also transported and sold to the highest bidder. In 1656, Cromwell ordered that 2000 Irish children be taken to Jamaica and sold as slaves to English settlers.

Many people today will avoid calling the Irish slaves what they truly were: Slaves. They'll come up with terms like "Indentured Servants" to describe what occurred to the Irish. However, in most cases from the 17th and 18th centuries, Irish slaves were nothing more than human cattle.

As an example, the African slave trade was just beginning during this same period. It is well recorded that African slaves, not tainted with the stain of the hated Catholic theology and more expensive to purchase, were often treated far better than their Irish counterparts.

African slaves were very expensive during the late 1600s (£50 Sterling). Irish slaves came cheap (no more than £5 Sterling). If a planter whipped, branded or beat an Irish slave to death, it was never a crime. A death was a monetary setback, but far cheaper than killing a more expensive African.

The English masters quickly began breeding the Irish women for both their own personal pleasure and for greater profit. Children of slaves were themselves slaves, which increased the size of the master's free workforce.

Even if an Irish woman somehow obtained her freedom, her kids would remain slaves of her master. Thus, Irish mothers, even with this newfound emancipation, would seldom abandon their children and would remain in servitude.

In time, the English thought of a better way to use these women to increase their market share: The settlers began to breed Irish women and girls (many as young as 12) with African men to produce slaves with a distinct complexion. These new "mulatto" slaves brought a higher price than Irish livestock and, likewise, enabled the settlers to save money rather than purchase new African slaves.

This practice of interbreeding Irish females with African men went on for several decades and was so widespread that, in 1681, legislation was passed "forbidding the practice of mating Irish slave women to African slave men for the purpose of producing slaves for sale." In short, it was stopped only because it interfered with the profits of a large slave transport company.

England continued to ship tens of thousands of Irish slaves for more than a century. Records state that, after the 1798 Irish Rebellion, thousands of Irish slaves were sold to both America and Australia. There were horrible abuses of both African and Irish captives. One British ship even dumped 1,302 slaves into the Atlantic Ocean so that the crew would have plenty of food to eat.

There is little question the Irish experienced the horrors of slavery as much (if not more, in the 17th Century) as the Africans did. There is also little question that those brown, tanned faces you witness in your travels to the West Indies are very likely a combination of African and Irish ancestry.

In 1839, Britain finally decided on it's own to end its participation in Satan's highway to hell and stopped transporting slaves. While their decision did not stop pirates from doing what they desired, the new law slowly concluded this chapter of Irish misery.

But, if anyone, black or white, believes that slavery was only an African experience, then they've got it completely wrong. Irish slavery is a subject worth remembering, not erasing from our memories.

But, why is it so seldom discussed? Do the memories of hundreds of thousands of Irish victims not merit more than a mention from an unknown writer?

Or is their story to be the one that their English masters intended: To completely disappear as if it never happened.

None of the Irish victims ever made it back to their homeland to describe their ordeal. These are the lost slaves; the ones that time and biased history books conveniently forgot.

### IRISH HISTORY

The following story brings vivid memories of a Pilgrimage to Grosse Ile on the St. Lawrence river in Quebec, Canada. Three members of St. Brendan's Div. #1 participated in the commemoration of the "Coffin Ships" that were quarantined there as they brought Irish immigrants fleeing the Great Hunger, "An Gorta Mor", where most died from diseases such



a Typhus, cholera, starvation and other diseases brought on by the living conditions aboard the ships crossing the Atlantic. I learned much later that my third grandfather spent time on that island before settling in Quebec.

Joining in the pilgrimage were James & Maureen Caherly, Daniel & Clare Flannery and Joseph & Bernice McCarthy. It is indeed a trip that will be remembered well after I am gone since I have video tape of the events associated with the activities of the commemoration of "Black 47" the worst years of the Great Famine.

As mentioned in the following article, The High Cross erected by the AOH at the turn of the nineteenth century. The cross is indeed a site to behold, it is also quite a climb to get to top of the hill. I just made it to the top, however, I could never do it today - I almost didn't back in 1995. In addition of Grosse Ile, we also ventured to visit St. Anne's Shrine. The weeks activities ended with a parade through the streets of Olde City Quebec where we were warmly greeted. Jim, Dan and I were proud to carry St. Brendan's banner in the line of march.

### **GROSSE ILE REMEMBERED**

By Mike McCormack AOH Nat'l Historian

On August 15, 2009, members of the AOH gathered on Grosse Ile in the St. Lawrence River just off Quebec to commemorate a centennial. The American AOHs of U.S. and Canada had erected a 50-foot Celtic Cross in sensitive recognition of the thousands of Irish who sleep there in mass graves after fleeing the Great Hunger in Ireland. It was dedicated on the Feast of the Assumption, August 15, 1909 and here we were again, 100 years later, with the late Marianna Gallagher - grand-daughter of the AOH committee chairman who erected the cross - to commemorate the Centennial Anniversary of that event.



It was a jovial morning departing from the hotel and a pleasant hour and a half boat trip to the island, but when the massive stone cross came into view, standing as it does on the highest hill on the island, the joy in many eyes

turned to meaningful reflection on why it was there. How many had escaped starvation and disease in their beloved Ireland, reluctantly seeking a new life in America, only to find an American grave just outside the door? I thought of

them and those who never even made it that far and a verse that I had written down on my first trip back in 1997 - the 150th anniversary of Black '47!

Seek me not among the tombstones  
for I sleep beneath the waves,  
or lie with friends and family  
in some lonely unmarked grave.  
But remember me each dawning  
of the days I'll never see,  
and pray for those that I left mourning,  
wondering what became of me.

As we landed, we were greeted by the lonely strains of a piper playing a lament in the background - a nice touch! We saw the old buildings that these poor souls first laid eyes on, and we were taken on a tour of what they experienced when they landed. It was a sobering experience. Of course, here and there were commercial distractions such as a film crew interviewing visitors for a documentary to be produced and sold to more visitors; and a gift shop where you could buy a rock from the island shellacked and mounted on a piece of wood that had Grosse Ile printed on it. I thought that amusing as I exited the shop, picked up a small rock from the ground, slipped it into my pocket and wandered over to answer the call of an interviewer to tell her why we were really there.

A noon Field Mass was held in memory of those who repose on that historic, yet strangely beautiful island. Reminiscent of the Masses held in the hills, woods and fields of Ireland during the Penal Days, it was celebrated adjacent to an acre of white crosses covering approximately 6,000 of our ancestors in one of three cemeteries located on the island. I couldn't help wondering that if I missed the return boat to Quebec and had to stay there all night, would I see them; what would I say? How would I explain the inhumanity that consigned them to this fate for eternity? Then the bells of the consecration woke me to the reality that they were no longer there, but with the Lord who surely held them as close as I wished I could have. And I envied them for their heartache was over and the goal we all seek had been realized.

After Mass, we visited a memorial at the mass grave erected by the Canadian government and trekked our way up the hill to the Cross. The hill seemed to be higher than the last time I climbed it, until my equally winded brother, Seamus Boyle, noted that we had been 12 years younger then. At the top, the Canadian AOH National President stepped out of the crowd and introduced our American AOH and LAOH National Presidents and they laid a wreath at the base of the largest

Celtic Cross in the world. We were then addressed by the Irish Ambassador to Canada. He said, 'What happened here was a horror,' and added that among the many people to thank were the clergy, doctors and caregivers who attended the Irish as well as the people of Quebec who adopted the orphans and allowed them to keep their names so that they would never forget their heritage. He was spot on as he thanked the young Parks Canada guides who called the tragedy An Gorta Mor and not the Famine. He added, 'in Irish, Gorta means hunger and everyone familiar with the history knows that in a famine there is no food; in the hunger, there was food available, but sadly it was being exported.' He also thanked the Canadian government for the recent grant of a million dollars to refurbish historic buildings on the island and noted that the Irish government had donated \$75,000 to provide an exhibit and restore the Lazaretto, the only remaining hospital building on the island. 'But most of all,' he added, 'we must thank the AOH both in Canada and the United States for remembering them.'

After the ceremony at the cross, we were free to wander the island until the boat arrived to ferry us back to Quebec. As we got to the bottom of the hill, I said to brother Keith Carney, I hope you got good pictures of that cross, because I'm never climbing that hill again. Of course, we both knew I was kidding. Brother Carney found the name of a relation on the huge memorial wall at the edge of the mass graves. To me, they were all related; I think of them often, not just on August 15th - the day we came to see them.

### **CHARLOTTE GRACE O'BRIEN**

By [Mike McCormack](#)



Charlotte Grace O'Brien was born 23 November 1845 in Cahirmoyle, County Limerick. Her father, William Smith O'Brien, took part in the aborted rising of 1848 for which he was exiled to Tasmania when Charlotte was 9-years old. Charlotte's mother died when she was 16

and the 19-year-old Charlotte went to live with her brother, Edward and his wife, Mary. Following Mary's death in 1868, Charlotte remained with Edward to raise his three children, then aged 4, 3 and 2-years old. In 1870 she found her voice as a writer. Her first book was **Dominick's Trials: An Irish Story**, but her 1878 novel about the Fenians, **Light and Shade**, was more widely known. She wrote poems and a play, as well as **Charlotte's Children** stories and other contributions to periodicals like The Nation, United Ireland,

Limerick Field Club Journal, Dublin University Review and the Irish Monthly.

A hereditary hearing impairment plagued the O'Brien's and by 1879, Charlotte, who had been hard of hearing since childhood, became entirely deaf. Her brother, Edward, remarried and she was on her own. Her nephew, Stephen Gwynn, published a memoir of her in 1909, in which he notes the turning point that 1880 marked in Charlotte's life: '*Now at the age of thirty-four, she had to shape her own life*' and she shaped it to help others. Emigration drew her to that issue after she read: **The Irish in America** by J.F. McGuire and she declared, '*I was deeply impressed by his account of the ships and it took hold of my mind, that was to be my work*'. She visited the Queenstown embarkation point for many emigrants and in March 1881, toured the emigrant ship **Germanic**. She later wrote: '*I was not prepared for the way I saw all sexes and ages huddled together . . . I got into the fight; tumbled into it, I may say*'.

She fought and got a Catholic priest aboard the ships to help ease the passage, at least spiritually, despite the fact that she herself was Protestant. She saw arriving prospective emigrant women emerging like cattle from crowded carriages, sick with hunger or fatigue, stupefied with grief; and then the mob of lodging house runners seizing them, dragging them this way and that. She opened a 105-bed lodging house in Queenstown to shelter emigrant girls and women awaiting departure; about 3,000 lodgers stayed with her each year. She also policed the ships in which her lodgers were destined to sail, with a medical officer day after day, from six in the morning. Those visits convinced O'Brien to sail herself in order to gain insight into what passage was really like. In 1882, she traveled between Liverpool and Queenstown, a 24-hour journey, in the steerage berths that carried most Irish emigrants; she reported: '*There were four horses berthed among us. It appears it is legal to berth up to ten... It was all awfully dirty and disgusting and the food bad enough, but on the other hand, the people were so friendly, so good to one another*'. She then made a transatlantic voyage to investigate shipboard conditions and her findings prompted her to lobby for the reform and enforcement of health and safety standards in America.

O'Brien wrote: '*Having been at the work more than a year, I saw clearly that no permanent good could be done in Ireland and that New York was to be my next point*'. Later, she wrote of her first visit to the New York tenements in 1882: '*When I arrived, instead of going to a hotel or fashionable boarding house, I took a room in a tenement house in Washington Street. I spent some time there with a porter, a longshoreman and their wives. A month spent in New York*'

*gave me a full insight into the lives of the Irish emigrants and the fate of the innumerable unprotected girls who were swarming through my own hands in Queenstown. She told an interviewer: I have not seen one child that we would call perfectly healthy. As to your tenement house system, it seems to me to be as miserable a system as it is possible to conceive. I did not happen to visit a single family that had not lost most of the children it had ever had. One does not wonder when one sees the sleeping rooms, with their poisonous atmosphere, all opening into one common apartment. To combat the miserable conditions, she contacted Archbishop Ireland to set up an information bureau at Castle Garden for immigrants and convinced NY Cardinal John McCloskey to provide a chaplain for arriving Irish girls. Girls needing accommodation were placed in a Home for Immigrant Girls set up at 7 Broadway. On 1 January 1884, it became The Mission of Our Lady of the Rosary for the Protection of Irish Immigrant Girls. Then in 1885, Charlotte bought the Watson House for the Mission. Rev. Riordan was its first Director and when he died of pneumonia in December 1887, he was followed by Rev. Hugh Kelly as Director, who was succeeded by Rev. Michael Callaghan.*

By 1 July 1899, 476,149 Irish people landed in New York, of which 249,995 were women; many were guided to the Mission. The Mission persuaded ship lines to better safeguard their immigrant passengers and helped arrivals intending to proceed to another destination. Over the years, it provided a home for 70,000 girls whose friends did not show up to meet them, who had no one expecting them or who were unable to proceed on their journey. It helped locate relatives of those with an incomplete address and examined the fitness of those who called for the immigrant girls. It also secured positions for more than 12,000 young women, mostly in domestic service.

The mission was able to continue the advocacy work of Charlotte Grace O'Brien, even when O'Brien's failing health curtailed her own involvement. Poor health, and her profound deafness caused her to return to Ireland in 1883. She retired from active work in 1886, moving to Ardanoir, Foynes, on the Shannon Estuary. She joined the Roman Catholic Church in 1887 and her generous heart failed her on 3 June 1909; she was buried at Knockpatrick. By then her humanitarian determination had inspired others. Women helping each other occurred in every step of the emigration process, from O'Brien's philanthropic efforts to young servants who sent passage money to sisters, cousins or neighbors at home. Any understanding of Irishwomen's emigration must include the tragedy, the survival and the commitment to unity which make up the drama; and it must

remember Charlotte Grace O'Brien and the thousands of young women whose passage she eased and who, in turn, shaped America.

### **MEETINGS**

All meetings of St. Brendan's Division #1 are held on the second Friday of each month at the Reading Sokol's 411 Crestmont St. Reading at 7:30pm Sharp

### **FACEBOOK**

All members are advised that St. Brendan's Division #1 is also listed on [Facebook@aoh.stbrendan's](https://www.facebook.com/aoh.stbrendan). In addition, we still maintain our website [www.berkscoaoh.com](http://www.berkscoaoh.com).

### **AOH-LAOH NEWS**

The Pa State Convention will be in Greentree (near Pittsburgh), Pa this year from July 17-21st If anyone would like details feel free to contact me.

The Berks Celtic Fest will be held on July 20 at Willow Glen Park again from 11-9. Ladies we will again be selling soda bread.

Bosco's Friends helping Friends will be on October 16, 2019. Call or email me for passes. Please remember that this is our main fundraiser so we need all the help we can get.

### **2019 Pennsylvania AOH-LAOH Convention**

This year's Bi-Annual State Convention will be held at the Doubletree Hotel in Pittsburgh from July 18 - July 21, 2019.

Any member interested in attending the convention should call the hotel to reserve room reservations at 1-412-922-8400.

For information concerning the various activities and costs of the various meal packages can be found at <https://www.pairish19.com/>

Anyone attending the convention are reminded that you need your membership card to participate in activities.

There are division delegate spots open. If you wish to be a delegate (members in good standing) please let us know so we can notify them of you delegate status.

Remember July 20, 2019 the Berks Irish Festival will be held at Willow Grove Park in Sinking Spring,

### **Labor Day Monday September 20, 2019**



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Thanks to the support of the following patrons and advertisers, our newsletter is possible. Your continued support of our advertisers will be greatly appreciated



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### FAMINE POEM

Give me three grains of corn, Mother -  
Only three grains of corn;  
It will keep the little life I have  
Till the coming of the morn.  
I am dying of hunger and cold, Mother -  
Dying of hunger and cold;  
And half the agony of such a death  
My lips have never told.

It has gnawed like a wolf, at my heart, Mother--  
A wolf that is fierce for blood;  
All the livelong day, and the night beside,  
Gnawing for lack of food.  
I dreamed of bread in my sleep, Mother,  
And the sight was heaven to see,  
I awoke with an eager, famishing lip,  
But you had no bread for me.

How could I look to you, Mother--  
How could I look to you  
For bread to give to your starving boy,  
When you were starving too?  
For I read the famine in your cheek,  
And in your eyes so wild,  
And I felt it in your bony hand,  
As you laid it on your child.

The Queen has lands and gold, Mother,  
The Queen has lands and gold,  
While you are forced to your empty breast  
A skeleton babe to hold,-  
A babe that is dying of want, mother,  
As I am dying now,  
With a ghastly look in its sunken eye,  
And famine upon its brow.

What has poor Ireland done, Mother -  
What has poor Ireland done,  
That the world looks on, and sees us starve,  
Perishing one by one?  
Do the men of England care not, Mother -  
The great men and the high,-  
For the suffering sons of Erin's isle,  
Whether they live or die?

There is many a brave heart here, Mother,  
Dying of want and cold,  
While only across the Channel, Mother,  
Are many that roll in gold;  
There are rich and proud men there, Mother,  
With wondrous wealth to view,  
And the bread they fling to their dogs to-night  
Would give life to me and you.

Come nearer to my side, Mother.  
Come nearer to my side,  
And hold me fondly, as you held  
My father when he died;  
Quick, for I cannot see you, Mother,  
My breath is almost gone;  
Mother! dear mother! ere I die,  
Give me three grains of corn.