

SHILLELAGH SENTINEL

Vol. II, No. 979

THOMAS FRANCIS MEAGHER DIVISION

JIM HAMMILL, PRESIDENT

HELENA, MT

October, 2008

Next regular meeting Tuesday, October 14, 7:00 KC Hall

“Keep the Faith” and “Be proud of your Irish heritage”.

CHARTER DINNER 2008 According to Division President Jim Hammill and VP Neil Connole, plans are completed for our annual Charter Dinner, set for Tuesday, October 21st beginning with a social hour of 5:00 at the KC Hall. This is an important part of the celebration for all members, spouses, and guests—it’s that time for loosening up the Hibernian spirit. Dinner is set for 6:00, with a great menu provided by Capella, the previous year’s excellent purveyor. And the entertainment is the best—a report from the traveling Hibernians about their trip to the Motherland, maybe with a short slideshow. Tickets will still be the same as last several years--\$15 each, a bargain. And, of course, we will have the awarding of our most special recognition, the Archbishop Brunett Medal for Social Justice. VP Neil Connole sent out letters and applications for this prestigious bestowal to all state Division Presidents. Please! Make plans to attend. This is our one superb formal gathering of the year, and always a great time. Tickets available from our top officers. See menu next page.

TRIP TO IRELAND Well, the Hibernian travelers and wives have returned from the Ould Sod, kinda tired but exhilarated from the trip of a lifetime. The 10 who made the trip saw and experienced about all that they could wish for and more. Our fearless leaders will provide a report of this grand trip at next Tuesday’s meeting (October 14th).

A MEMORIAL FOR MEAGHER AT FORT BENTON

Much work has been done on this record of remembrance of Meagher at Fort Benton. After several meetings there is progress to report. A perfect spot on the Missouri bankside has been chosen. The basalt stone has been identified in a quarry near Fort Benton. The fund raising brochure is being developed, and a decision on the bronze sculpture art work of the likeness of Thomas Francis Meagher is coming to fruition. Now we obviously need to raise the appropriate funds. Beginning with our Division, then with support from the other state divisions, then looking for general state financial support, finally looking for national and even international support we hope to raise the needed \$40,000 within a few months.

Our committee, is composed of Mike O’Connor, Dan Sullivan, Jack Ferriter, and Hank Burgess, with Advisory Committee members Bob Morgan, Gary Forney, Paul Wylie and Lenore Puhek. We began with initial \$100 gifts from Bob Morgan, Dan Sullivan, Mike O’Connor, and Hank Burgess. and are seeking pledges from the other members in whatever size each can afford. A letter and a brochure will be sent out soon to all of our Division Presidents with a sketch of the intended monument, requesting a contribution of whatever size one wants to remit. Stay tuned for developments on this really worthwhile project. After all, we are the “Thomas Francis Meagher Division” of the AOH, and it’s long past due that a memorial to our great Irish American hero be validated.

**Menu for the Charter Dinner: PORK LOIN OR TENDER CHICKEN BREASTS W
APRICOT CHUTNEY,
POTATOES, SUGAR SNAP PEAS, FALL SALAD GREENS W CRANBERRIES,
WALNUTS, BLUE CHEESE FOR DESERT, RHUBARB CRUMBLE PARFAIT.**

BOB MORGANS SPECTACULAR BOOK We're working to get Bob Morgan to come to November's meeting with a plentiful supply of copies of his Montana: My life and My Art, for purchase and signing. Will let you know in the November Shillelagh Sentinel. This is a truly fine presentation by one of our highly recognized Hibernian Brothers. Let's hope we're fortunate enough to have Bob here in November.

WHY THE HIBERNIANS ? If you've wondered lately just why you belong to our fine organization of Irish Catholic American men other than the comradery and socializing, which is truly rewarding, try this. We are an organization that firmly believes in our rich Celtic culture and heritage, and our beloved Catholic faith, all of which have been severely tested and threatened over many centuries by a nearby antagonist.

Troubles to her peace and tranquility, aside from the Vikings and Normans, seriously began for Ireland with King Henry VIII in the 16th century when he decided that Catholic Ireland must be conquered and put in its place. Religion was threatened, monasteries destroyed, scholars, teachers, and clergy murdered. His daughter, Elizabeth, continued the reign of terror with the end in mind to wipe out all that was Irish. Colonization by the Scottish occurred to drive the natives off their land, followed by famine, plague and butchery brought on by Oliver Cromwell at the request of the British Crown. The penal laws followed to deprive the Irish of any notion of political and religious freedom. But guess what? The great love these Celtic descendents had for their religion, their freedom, their culture, remained undiminished and great leaders began to arise at the end of the 18th century, notably Wolfe Tone and Robert Emmett, ironically not Catholics, and Daniel O'Connell, a born reformer who became the great Catholic Emancipator. In the early 19th century a totally committed freedom group called the Young Irelanders, which included Thomas Francis Meagher, pushed hard to free Ireland from the grasp of the British foreigners. Unfortunately, they were subdued, tried for sedition and transferred to Australia. Another misfortune arose beginning in 1845, An Gorta Mor, or the Great Famine. (Continued in the November issue)

Our leadership contends that our Division will have a membership drive this fall. We do need some young, fresh, and dedicated Irishmen for our organization, and this will include a real effort at Carroll College and in the parishes. Think ahead! Perhaps it might be a good idea to encourage the return of some members who have dropped out and may want to return.

Please remember Joe Strakal in your prayers. He has been one great Hibernian and the Lord is looking at him with a yearning heart.

HELENA HIBERNIANS
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Quiet the Worry Wheel
Pray a lot & be nice