

THE CROPPY BOY

FEBRUARY 2025



**THE FATHER JOHN MURPHY DIVISION
WISHES ALL ITS MEMBERS A HAPPY
ST. BRIGID'S DAY!**

See inside for all the events and goings ons from the
Plymouth division of The Ancient Order of Hibernians



TABLE OF CONTENTS



4

FEBRUARY SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Our full schedule of appearances by the division and events to support our brother Hibernians

6

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

Photos from our David Tereshchuk/ Don Mullan event, initial St. Patrick's Day month schedule, Craic on the Coast Podcast, National Irish Famine Walk

12

POLITICAL EDUCATION

Legacy act preventing closure for families of Troubles victim's

14

FREEDOM FOR ALL IRELAND

New Tánaiste says Irish unity is not a priority for him.

16

IRISH HISTORY

Traditions of St. Brigid's Day

19

GOOD & WELFARE

Items that may be of interest to our members and names to remember in your prayers



2025 DIVISION 9 OFFICERS

Michael Schilling
President

Michael Faut
Vice President

Thomas McTigue
Financial Secretary

Brendan Burke
Treasurer

John Sullivan
Recording Secretary

James O'Sullivan
Marshall

John Travers
Sentinel

Stephen Cohan
Standing Committee Chairman

NEW MEMBERSHIP

The January meeting is our first of our quarterly Saturday meetings. It is a great opportunity to bring along prospective members to either join the division or bring them after the meeting to see the hall and meet some of the brother Hibernians.

We look forward to meet any of those a brother deems worthy of the order.

FROM THE OFFICERS' DESK

DUES

Dear Brothers, it is that time of year again. Starting in the January meeting Brother Tom McTigue will be accepting dues payments for the 2025 Calendar year.

Payment can be made via cash or check or via Venmo with a \$2 processing fee.



RAFFLE TIX

Brother John Travers has this year's tickets available at the March meeting and will be mailing out allotted tickets to members to sell. The St. Patrick's Day Raffle is our largest fundraiser of the year and helps support the division in its endeavors.

calendar of events & important dates

FEBRUARY

2025

S

M

T

W

T

F

S

						
2	3	4	5		7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	

1

St. Brigid's Day

marks the beginning of spring, often aligning with the Celtic festival of Imbolc, and honors Brigid, a patron saint of Ireland associated with themes of renewal, fertility, creativity, healing, and the light overcoming darkness

6

General Meeting

7:00pm, Cordage Commerce Center
Monthly meeting of the Father John
Murphy Division

musical calendar

Dates, locations and times where you can find Hibernians or Friends of the Division playing in the Plymouth County area.

BROTHER STEVE KERR

Traditional Sessions

The Snug Pub - Hingham, MA, Mondays 5:30pm

The ICC Pub - Canton, MA, Fridays 7:00pm

Malachy's Saloon - Quincy, MA, Wednesdays 6:00pm

WEEKLY TRADITIONAL SESSIONS

THE SNUG PUB

116 North St., Hingham, MA

Mondays, Starting at 5:30pm

DILLON'S LOCAL (FEATURING STEVE LINDSEY)

21 S. Park Ave., Plymouth, MA

Third Monday of the Month, 5pm - 8pm

MARTINI'S BAR & GRILL (FEATURING STEVE LINDSEY)

50 Court St., Plymouth, MA

First Monday of the Month, 5pm - 8pm

THE TINKER'S SON

707 Main St., Norwell, MA

Wednesdays, 6pm - 9pm

THE COTTAGE BAR

26 Union St., Weymouth, MA

Thursdays, Starting at 6:30pm & Sunday afternoons

THE AULD TRIANGLE - WEEKLY IRISH MUSIC

42 Main St., Hyannis, MA

Saturdays, 7pm - 10m

CJ'S BAR & GRILL @ JOHN CARVER INN

225 Summer St., Plymouth, MA

Saturdays, 6pm - 9pm



David Tereshchuk book event

The event that the division hosted on Saturday, January 18th was a great success! In all we estimate that 100 people attended the fireside chat between authors David Tereshchuk and Don Mullan. The conversation was riveting with them sharing firsthand account experience of the events of Bloody Sunday, where life took them from there and their experiences throughout the world. It was fascinating to listen to two men speak that have experienced world changing events.

The audience was also great in showing their appreciation for the two speakers along with asking some incredible questions during our Q&A session for the second half of the event. Great teamwork was put in by the division with several brothers helping set up the event space the Friday morning before, helping set up for the light refreshments, interacting with the guests and transportation of the speakers from their hotel accommodations to our space in Cordage Park.

A special shoutout to Brendan Burke for manning the refreshments table as he does with most of our events and Stephen Rice-Blenkhorn who has turned into our resident photographer.

Holding this event convinces us that we have the capability to hold an event such as this at our location in Cordage Park and we definitely have the manpower to accomplish it. Below are some photos from the day!



David Tereshchuk book event



aoh state board meeting

The Father John Murphy Division hosted this quarter's State Board meeting on the morning of January 18th. It was the first time we have had the honor of performing this responsibility since moving into our new Cordage Park headquarters.

The State board meeting was well attended by the other divisions of the state, and we received many compliments on not only our space but also how we have added to our visibility and that it has resulted in increased membership.

Several items were discussed such as everyone's ongoing Hibernian Hunger projects and the upcoming State Convention that will be held on Cape Cod at the end of May. We will be receiving more information about the convention and present to the division at the February meeting.

st. patrick's day schedule

For membership planning purposes we are sharing the initial plans for the St. Patrick's Day season so that we maximize member participation at all events. It is the most advantageous time of year to promote the order and our division to the public.

Saturday, March 8th we will be joining State Organizer Dick Wall at the Cape Cod Irish Festival at the Irish Village in Hyannis. Last year we participated in the festival for the first time and it was enjoyable and had some great conversations about our division with the public.

Sunday, March 16th we will be marching in the Abington St. Patrick's Day parade for the first time. We want to show our appreciation for our wide ranging membership throughout our area and we are excited to participate in the Abington festivities.

On Sunday, March 16th and Monday, March 17th we will be at East Bay Grille to promote our division and sell raffle tickets leading up to the drawing the evening of the 17th.

craic on the coast podcast

As was discussed at the January meeting the division was invited by The Local Scene media outlet with Plymouth Access TV to create and host an Irish Cultural Podcast. President Michael Schilling toured the studios with the staff to see the setup and understand the commitment and process of putting the podcast together.

After understanding all the aspects of the process we are proceeding with an official Father John Murphy podcast. The first shows will be recorded on February 14th so that shows will be able to be released starting March and we can promote the show during our St. Patrick's Day events. This new avenue is a great way for the division to share its activities with the public, what our mission is, and also share the stage with our Irish organizations and individuals that cultivate their Irish heritage on the South Shore and beyond.

Several members have expressed interest to help in any way necessary and more details of the show will be discussed at the February meeting.



brig st. john commemorative pin

We are still selling commemorative pins to help defray the costs from the 175th anniversary of the brig St. John shipwreck. If any members have not purchased one and would like to please let me know. We will have them available at this week's meeting for any brothers who wish to purchase one. The sale price is \$35/each and all proceeds are going to the cost of running this year's event. Please share this with anyone you know who is interested in this limited edition piece of history. If we can sell (2) orders of pins it will cover all costs.

If you are not able to attend the meeting you can contact President Mike Schilling by replying to the division email or call/text him at 781-706-6209.



national irish famine way walk 2024!

The Father John Murphy Division is putting together a fundraising event for our Hibernian Hunger project of 2025. A group of division members, friends of the division, and family members will walk the *National Famine Way* at the end of May 2025. The National Famine Way is a 100 mile walk that starts in Roscommon and ends in Dublin. The walk will be over the course of 6 days. The National Famine Way represents the walk that was undertaken by 1490 men, women and children who were evicted from their homes in Strokestown in 1849 and walked to Dublin to then be put on immigration ships to England with their eventual landing spot in Canada.

We will be raising money through donations via GoFundMe that will be disbursed to charities who deal with hunger and food insecurity. This is to remember one of the darkest times in our history of the Irish people. As a group that commemorates the shipwreck of the brig St. John annually this is very fitting.

The dates for the itinerary are to fly in the morning of Friday, May 23rd and getting transport to Strokestown. The targeted finish date for the walk is Wednesday, May 21st. We will then spend a full day in Dublin on the 29th and then be attending a conference back in Strokestown before flying back to Boston on Sunday, June 1st.





Political Education

Legacy Act prevented ‘landing zone’ being reached for Troubles victims — Harris

by Jonathan McCambridge
The Independent, January 28th, 2025

The Legacy Act prevented a “landing zone” being reached that could have enabled Troubles victims to secure truth and answers, Ireland’s deputy premier Simon Harris has said.

The Tanaiste said he hoped that the Irish Government would in future be able to suspend its interstate legal case against the UK Government over the Act, subject to the “right conditions being met”.

The Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Act 2023, introduced by the Conservatives, halted scores of civil cases and inquests into Troubles deaths.

It also introduced a provision to give conditional immunity to perpetrators of Troubles crimes in exchange for their co-operation with a new truth recovery body, the Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery (ICRIR).

The law was opposed by victims’ groups in Northern Ireland and all the main political parties at Stormont.

The Irish Government was also vehemently opposed to it and in 2023 initiated an interstate legal case against the UK in the European Court of Human Rights, claiming the Act breached the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).

The case remains active, with ministers in Dublin wanting to see how Labour resolves its concerns over the legislation before any decision is taken to withdraw the action.

Northern Ireland Secretary Hilary Benn recently set out the UK Government’s plan to repeal and replace the Act.

Inquests and civil cases would resume and the conditional immunity provision would be axed.

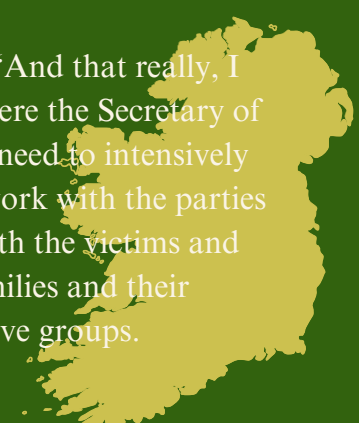
But the UK Government was retaining the ICRIR, which had both investigatory and truth recovery functions.

Speaking during a visit to Belfast, Mr Harris said he wanted to get to the point where an “overarching framework” on achieving truth, answers and justice for all victims could be reached.

I think if people had stuck with the process and worked through those processes, we could have found a landing zone that could provide people with the truth and the answers and the justice that they so richly deserve

Ireland’s deputy premier Simon Harris

He added: “And that really, I think, is where the Secretary of State and I need to intensively work and work with the parties here and with the victims and victims’ families and their representative groups.





“Because the opportunity here is to try and arrive at a place where I believe we could have arrived at a number of years ago, were it not for the Legacy Act, quite frankly.

“I think if people had stuck with the process and worked through those processes, we could have found a landing zone that could provide people with the truth and the answers and the justice that they so richly deserve.”

Regarding the interstate case, Mr Harris said Ireland had “no wish to find itself involved in international legal dispute with our nearest neighbours”.

He said: “We felt we had no alternative, quite frankly, when we had exhausted all other avenues, political, diplomatic and every other way.

“And I very much welcome the fact that in the Labour Party’s manifesto, and then obviously in the King’s Speech and in the comments of the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State since then, they’ve been very clear about repealing and replacing the Legacy Act, and we’re eager to engage on that.

“At the right moment in time, subject to the right conditions being met, I hope us to be,

hopefully, be in a position to suspend that case.”

Mr Harris said he had discussed the 1997 murder of GAA official Sean Brown during a telephone conversation with Mr Benn.

My position in relation to this is we have to get truth for (Sean Brown's) family. We have to get answers.

Mr Brown was shot dead after being abducted as he locked the gates of the Bellaghy Wolfe Tones GAA club. Intelligence material has linked state agents to the death of the 61-year-old.

The NI Secretary is appealing against a court ruling from December that a public inquiry should be held. A UK Government barrister has argued that ruling was wrong in law.

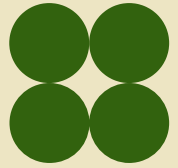
Mr Harris said: “The Secretary of State made the point to me that I think he has made in public, and that the appeal has been taken, or the case has been taken on the grounds of process, in terms of being a government and not a court who can decide these things.

“My position in relation to this is we have to get truth for that family. We have to get answers.

“They have to get justice and I’m very supportive.”



FREEDOM FOR ALL IRELAND



TÁNAISTE SAYS IN NORTHERN IRELAND THAT IRISH UNITY IS NOT A "PRIORITY" FOR HIM

irishcentral.com, January 28th, 2025

Tánaiste says his priority is harnessing the "full potential" of the Good Friday Agreement - while others argue that the Irish Unity debate can no longer be avoided.

Ireland's Tánaiste Simon Harris said in Northern Ireland on Tuesday that a border poll is not a "priority" for him and that he does not expect one to take place within the decade.

Harris, who served as Taoiseach in the last Irish Government, was in Northern Ireland on Tuesday for his first time as Tánaiste. He met with First Minister Michelle O'Neill and Deputy First Minister Emma Little-Pengelly at Stormont, as well as other party leaders.

When asked on Tuesday, the Tánaiste said that it is not his "expectation" that a border poll will be called within a decade.

According to the PA, Harris said there has never been "Irish

head or deputy head who hasn't aspired to a united Ireland but that is not where my priority is today."

While Ireland's latest programme for Government doesn't explicitly discuss Irish Unity, it does commit to remaining "steadfast in implementing the Good Friday Agreement in full."

As per the 1998 Good Friday Agreement, Northern Ireland's Secretary of State has the power to call a border poll "if at any time it appears likely to him that a majority of those voting would express a wish that Northern Ireland should cease to be part of the United Kingdom and form part of a united Ireland."

Meanwhile, Fine Gael's manifesto ahead of the 2024 Irish General election says the party is "committed to unification as our objective."

Harris further said on Tuesday: "I'm very conscious that the Good Friday Agreement is a mechanism and a peace agreement that allows everybody to have their legitimate aspiration as to the constitutional status of Northern Ireland.

"And that is, in many ways, the beauty of the Good Friday Agreement, that it can respect differences in terms of aspiration and differences in terms of the constitutional question."

He continued: "What my priority is is in making sure that the Irish Government, as co-guarantors of the Good Friday Agreement, can play a really constructive, positive role in making sure all of the institutions work, that they work to their full potential.

"I think in many ways, the Good Friday Agreement had at its core two fundamentals – peace and prosperity.

“I think many people in Northern Ireland and across the island and islands have seen the peace dividend of the Good Friday Agreement.

“Many have yet to see the prosperity dividend.

“And I think it’s really important that we focus on harnessing the full potential of all of the Good Friday institutions and the Good Friday Agreement in its totality.

“That’s where my priority is.”

The Tánaiste's comments come a few days after the group Irish Border Poll, which advocates for Irish reunification, shared its first podcast of 2025.

In it, Colin Harvey, a Professor in the School of Law at Queen’s University Belfast, says that the time for running away from debate about constitutional change is over.

“People worry if this new Irish government is going to dodge the Irish Unity issue for the next five years,” Harvey said.

“The worry I have is that the more the Irish and British governments stay away from the United Ireland debate, the more they lend credibility to those people who say it is divisive. That creates a messaging that there’s something not quite right

about the Unity debate.

"Think about what that means for us in the North trying to make the argument proactively? We need to keep calling this out and reiterate that pursuing Irish Unity should be uncontroversial."

Harvey said that in Northern Ireland, there is still a "chill factor" about joining the Unity conversation "because there’s still that worry about the consequences of them doing so." Harvey feels this shouldn't be the case and needs to be vigorously confronted.

“The next time some worthy person stands up and lauds the GFA, keep reminding them that a border poll is a fundamental part of the Agreement,” Harvey said.

Harvey added: “People expect leadership from the Irish government. We’re talking about what remains an imperative for the Irish government and state as laid out in article 3 of the constitution."

Irish History

The Celtic and Catholic traditions of St. Brigid and her cross



By Brendan Patrick Keane
irishcentral.com



While Brigid has roots in Irish mythology, the Irish tradition of making crosses on St. Brigid's Day is remembered by most as a Christian ritual.

St. Brigid's Day, February 1, is when Ireland remembers the Celtic goddess Brigid and her immense power in both the Irish mythological and religious imagination.

The goddess Brigid was the daughter of the Dagda and one of the Tuatha Dé Danann before she was melded with the Christian saint of the same name in the Middle Ages.

In ancient Celtic tradition, the holiday of Imbolc is observed on February 1 or 2 as a day to

celebrate Bríd transforming from a *cailleach* ("witch") into a maiden who collects kindling to make a fire in the winter that will warm the spring and make her young again.

The holiday is understood through the stories of the incredible Brighid. She was the inventor of the mourning songs called *caoineadh* or "keening." Legend has it that she keens to mourn the death of her son Ruadán and so invents the art form. Brighid's *caoineadh* is like the Tibetan ritual of ushering

souls to nirvana in the Book of the Dead.

The meaning behind St. Brigid's Cross

The Irish tradition of making crosses on Imbolc or Lá Fhéile Bhríde (St. Brigid's Day) is remembered by most Irish people as a Christian ritual.

The spiral of the Brigid cross invokes the North Star and the pattern that the Big Dipper makes in the sky over the course of a year. As the night sky turns



Brigid is the fire-keeper of that flame of life that mothers tend to so that we don't die in the winter, and so the lines of the family are not broken by the trauma of the cold months. In the winter, Brighid becomes the cailleach, the woman in agedness, and on Imbolc, she collected the kindling of the fires that get her to the spring of regeneration.

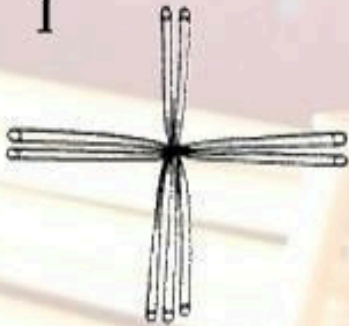
Christian interpretation in Ireland makes Brigid into a nun, and children occupy themselves by taking bits of straw and weaving this potential-kindling into the shape of spiraling Brigid's crosses.

St. Brigid is said to have invented the cross herself while attending a sickbed and picking up rushes from the floor to craft them into a sacred cross. Taking up the tradition in its many forms focuses the mind in the meditation of craft, and connects our winter minds mad at the cold to the great wheel that turns and is slowly bringing us into the spring of renewal.

Brigid Cross for Imbolc

At Imbolg, the Maiden aspect of the Goddess might be represented in a great variety of ways -- by a simple ear of dried corn, a figure made of grain at Lughnasadh, or straws or wheat braided into an intricate design. One representation of the Goddess is Brigid's Cross. Although the original design may well have been made from rushes, wheat versions have been recreated for centuries. Make a cross for each room in the house to invite the blessings of the Goddess into them.

1



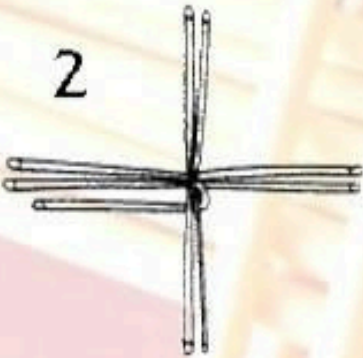
Materials

Nine long, large diameter wheat straws without heads

Directions

1. Soak straws in a tub of cool water for half an hour before starting, then wrap in a towel for another 15 minutes. Tie nine straws together at their ends. Spread them as shown with the tied end facing down (three to the right and two each other direction. (Image #1)

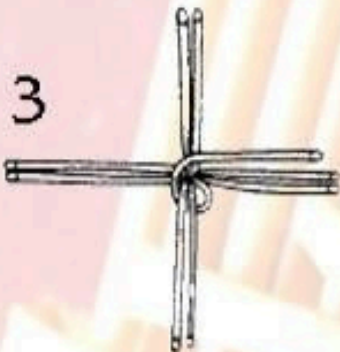
2



2. Fold the front straw of the three under the other two.

3. Bring it up and over to be alongside the two at the next corner.

3



4. Completed cross

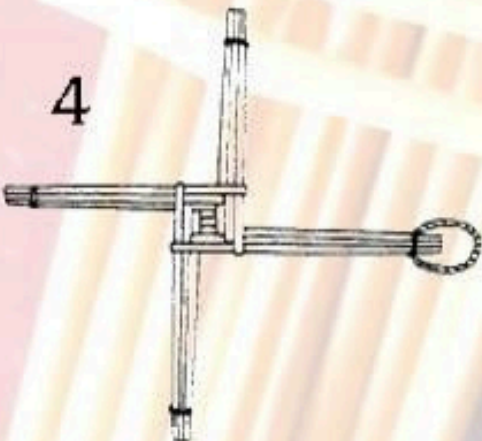
Brigid Cross Rite

Make a cross for each room of the house. Place a red pillar-sized candle center to the front of the door, with cross in hand, light the candle, open the door, and say:

We welcome in the Goddess and seek the turning of the wheel away from winter and into spring.

Close the door, take up the candle, and go to each room of the house. Say:

4



Great Lady, enter with the sun and watch over this room!

Leave a cross in each room and proceed thusly throughout the house. The last room should be the kitchen, and here you say:

*Mother of the Earth and the Sun
Keep us safe and keep us warm,
As over our home you extend your blessing.*



Good & Welfare

Division 9 Scrapbook

From all the items that have turned up in the moving of the hall we have decided to create a division scrapbook. We are looking for a volunteer to put this together. Anyone interested please let Mike Schilling know at the next meeting.

PRAVERS FOR.....

Deceased

Margaret Irene Kerr
Frederick Happel

Special Prayers

John Travers



Gaeltacht CORNER

Initial

English - Happy Christmas

Irish - Nollaig Shona duit

'Null-eg hunna gwitch!'

Reply

English - and a Happy New Year!

Irish - agus athbhliain faoi mhaise dhuit!

'ogg-us ah-vlee-on fwee vash-ah gwitch'

"boolavogue"

At Boolavogue as the sun was setting o'er the bright May meadows of
Shelmalier

A rebel band set the heather blazing and brought the neighbors from far and
near

Then Father Murphy from old Kilcormac spurred up the rock with a warning
cry

"Arm, arm," he cried, "For I've come to lead you, for Ireland's freedom we'll
fight or die."

He led us on against the coming soldiers and the cowardly yeomen we put to
flight

'Twas at the Harrow the boys of Wexford showed Bookey's regiment how
men could fight

Look out for hirelings, King George of England, search every kingdom where
breathes a slave

For Father Murphy of County Wexford sweeps o'er the land like a mighty
wave.

We took Camolin and Enniscorthy and Wexford storming drove out our foes

'Twas at Slieve Coilte our pikes were reeking with the crimson blood of the
beaten yeos

At Tubberneery and Ballyellis full many a Hessian lay in his gore

Oh, Father Murphy, had aid come over, the Green Flag floated from shore to
shore.

At Vinegar Hill o'er the River Slaney our heroes vainly stood back to back
And the yeos of Tullow took Father Murphy and burned his body upon the
rack

God grant you glory brave Father Murphy and open heaven to all your men
The cause that called you may call tomorrow in another fight for the Green
again.

Father John Murphy was the parish priest in Boolavogue, a small town in County Wexford in Ireland, who led his parishioners in battle during the 1798 uprising. For his participation, Father Murphy was tortured, flogged, decapitated, burned, and ultimately, had his head put on a stake to warn his countrymen against further rebellion. The song "Boolavogue" was written in his honor in 1898 by Patrick Joseph McCall, who set the lyrics to an ancient Irish air called "Eochail."

