**Ancient Order of Hibernians**

of Hampden Hampshire Counties

PO Box 6535

Holyoke, MA 01041-0826

www.AOH-Holyoke.com

Next meeting – AOH - Monday, October 4, 7 p.m.

at The Wherehouse?

LAOH – Monday, October 4, 6 p.m. at The Wherehouse?

​**In ainm an Athar agus an Mhic agus an Spiorad Naoimh, Amen.**

**September 11, 2021 Funeral of James A. Curran**

**Eulogy by Francis X. Hennessey**

Joyce, Shawna and Scott, Scott and Sam, grandchildren, nieces and nephews, Rev Clergy, community leaders, delegations from the Holyoke St Patrick’s Parade, the Ancient Order of Hibernians James A. Curran Division One and the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians Division 2 of Hampden/Hampshire Counties, the Holyoke Fire Department, and friends of James A. Curran:

My name is Frank Hennessey and I am honored to be here today to reflect with you upon the life of James A. Curran. I don’t feel anyone can do justice to the impact this man has had on many of us and the Holyoke community.

I have known Jimmy since I was 14 years old as a young kid working at Luchini’s in Holyoke. Jim’s construction company was hired to put on an addition to the store. I marveled at how hard he and the men worked. It was obvious to me that the owner, James A. Curran, took pride in his company and the quality of work they did. All of the men had green uniforms and the trucks were painted in bright green and white each with the saying “Keep Smiling” painted on the back. Jimmy had a conversation with Bill Luchini Jr and it was my first time hearing that famous response: “No Problem.”

As I recall Bill Luchini said to me “Hennessey, those people work hard”, referring to Jimmy and his crew. I quickly got back to work.

About 7 years later during the summer break from college Jimmy gave me an opportunity to work for Curran Construction. I was thrilled. I was excited to be a part of Jim’s team as he built and designed: the JFK Monument on Appleton Street, the First Prize Award Winning Float for that year’s Saint Patrick’s Parade ,“Noah’s Ark, and at the The Wherehouse? Working in the canals with Jim was quite a challenge. Of course, when he asked me to be a Hibernian, I was off and running.

Being a novice in the construction world Jim would sometimes kindly say to me “Frankie, if you don’t know what you are doing don’t do it.” I never forgot that lesson. Jim founded the construction company at age 22 in 1957 with a station wagon and 1 helper. The Wherehouse? was established in 1977.

Over the years, he received many accolades: In 1979, he was named “Business Person of the Year” by the Holyoke Chamber of Commerce. Chamber President Warren Rhoades said of Jim: “Curran’s success story is one that reflects the American dream of a home town boy makes good.”

I like to call him the “give back kid”. In 1954 he gave back to his country as he joined the Army Corps of Engineers during the Korean War. Oftentimes, he did work for the churches, Saint Patrick’s Parade, Hibernians, and others while receiving little or no compensation.

One day a friend of his, Joe Mastaj came into Jim’s office and asked, “Does anyone want to buy a car?” He was selling a Hillman Husky. Jim asked me if I had a car in college. I said I didn’t have the money. Jim wrote Joe a check for the car, gave me the keys and said to pay him back when I could. I did pay him back. Thanks to Jim, I had the coolest car on campus which started in the coldest of weather at Westfield State.

In 1974 Jim got the Mr. Hibernian Award from the Hibernians. He came in late to the Townhouse on Suffolk St. It was a blizzard and Jim was snow plowing. He was given the Award said “Thank you very much” and returned to plowing snow.

Other honors included:

2002 Grand Marshall of the Holyoke St Patrick’s Parade

2010-Hibernians named Division 1 James A. Curran Division

2005-He was honored for his work with Veterans Rep Mike Kane who called him“the jewel of the city”.

Abraham Lincoln once said: ”And in the end it is not the years in a life, it’s the life in the years.” Jim leaves a legacy of humility, generosity, unselfishness, and good humor.

In my mind’s eye, he will always be forever young. Right now he is building a stairway to heaven for others to follow.

A poet once said:

Long before we are ready

We sadly say good bye

But there are those in a more beautiful place

Who are saying “Welcome Home.”

For Scott and Shawna, a poem given to me by the late Bill O’Connor upon the death of my Dad:

My Irish Father

God made a special person

With a twinkle in his eye

A smile upon his loving face

A person strong and wise.

He called this man my father

A descendant of the sod

My Irish father here on earth

My special gift from God

Safe Home Jimmy we love you!

**Saint Patrick’s 2022 March Raffle Chairman Peter Hogan will have calendars** available for distribution and sale at the October meeting. Tickets are still $10 each.

**The AOH/LAOH will be making peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for the needy for Kate’s Kitchen October 3, November 7, and December 19.** If you want to participate in this endeavor please call Fran Hennessey at 413-785-5687.

**Discussions continue with The Log Cabin regarding the 2022 Danny’s Irish Night.** Plans could be for either a sit-down meal or another take-and-go meal.

**Members owing dues for more than 2 years will be suspended by a vote at the November meeting.** The club does not want to pay end of year per capital money to the national AOH for non-paying members.

**LAOH News**

**Thank you to the LAOH members who, at the suggestion of Mary O'Connor, volunteered to make the first batch of 100 peanut butter and jelly sandwiches** for Kate's Kitchen to be delivered by Fran Hennessey.

**The creation of our 2022 LAOH Quilt has officially started.** Please contact Paula Paoli at 413-210-6031 or paula5412@comcast.net if you would like to work on a piece of embroidery. There are still some left to do.

**It was decided, after a discussion with AOH members, that we will request another Mass at St. Jerome’s Church for Hibernians to attend.** The date has not been confirmed, but it will be in February in honor of St.Brigid, the patron saint of the LAOH. Matt O'Connor has generously offered to play the bagpipes for this Mass.

**Please contact Pat Murphy if you are unsure if your dues are paid for 2021,** or would like to pay for 2022.

**If you are receiving a printed copy of the newsletter and want it sent by email instead,**please contact Paula Paoli at [paula5412@comcast.net](mailto:paula5412@comcast.net) or 413-210-6031 to make the change.  We appreciate those who have changed to email to save our division the cost of printing and postage.

**Upcoming Events:**

**Kate’s Kitchen** –  The AOH/LAOH will be making peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for the needy for Kate’s Kitchen October 3, November 7, and December 19. If you want to participate in this endeavor please call Fran Hennessey at 413-785-

**Adult Christmas Party** – to be determined

**Children’s Christmas Party –** to be determined

**Danny’s Irish Night** – tentatively scheduled for Saturday, March 6 at the Log Cabin

**Communion Breakfast** - tentatively scheduled for Sunday, March 13

**Saint Patrick’s Parade** – tentatively scheduled for Sunday, March 20

**In continued memory of Doc Dean and our commitment to Kate’s Kitchen,**Kate's (Providence Ministries) is in need of canned goods. Please bring a can or two to the meeting Monday night.

**ICC News**

**Entertainment at The Trinity Pub**

**The Trinity Pub at the Irish Cultural Center is open 5 days a week; Wednesday through Saturday 4 p.m. to 10 p.m. and on Sunday, 1 p.m. to 6 p.m.**

Entertainment for September includes:

Wednesdays – October 6, 13, 20 & 27 – Trad Seisun

Thursday, Oct 14- German Pairing Dinner

Fridays, Oct. 1 – Dan Ringrose; Oct. 15 – C.A. Jones Band; Oct. 22 – New Leaf; Oct. 29 – The Storytellers

Saturday, Oct. 2 – The Tinkers; Oct. 23 - Dee Reilly and New Fallen Day; Oct. 30 – The Healys

Sunday, Oct. 3 & Oct. 10 – Dee Reilly;

For more information and to make reservations call 342-4358 or email [icctrinitypub@gamail.com](mailto:icctrinitypub@gamail.com).

**Remember the AOH in Your Will**

**Please consider the Order when writing or rewriting your will,** and add a paragraph with the lines of “I leave to the Ancient Order of Hibernians in America (X percent of my estate or a specific dollar amount) for its charitable works.”

**In ainm an Athar agus an Mhic agus an Spiorad Naoimh, Amen.**