



Next year will be the Semiquincentennial of the United States. Irish Americans have played a significant role in shaping our Country. President Lubinsky has assigned Kathleen Diulus and Marilyn Madigan to Co-Chair this important commemoration for the LAOH. As the current Irish Historian and a Past Historian, we remember the words spoken to John Adams by his wife Abigail, as he left for Philadelphia in 1776. ***“Don’t forget the ladies.”*** As an Irish woman’s organization, it is our responsibility to remember and honor the Irish born and those of Irish descent that have contributed to our great nation over the past 250 years. Our goal is to educate our members on the role women played. We will be sharing stories in newsletters and webinars.

As the summer comes to an end, many will gather with family and friends to celebrated Labor Day. Do you know the women of the Labor Movement? Do you know that the most famous woman in the Labor Movement was Irish born? On this Labor Day, it is fitting that we remember the most famous woman in American labor history.

Mary Harris was born in 1837 in Cork, Ireland. This was a time when Ireland was in turmoil. Her early years were in the period know as An Gorta Mor, the Great Hunger, with poverty and injustice forcing her family to leave Ireland to seek a new life in America. Although she built a life in America, her memories of Ireland—the hardships her family endured and the resilience they showed—continued to shape her outlook on life. She experienced many tragedies in her lifetime. Her husband and children died of yellow fever. Her dressmaking shop in Chicago was destroyed by fire. From those tragedies, her Irish roots were a source of strength. Remembering the oppression that the Irish people suffered and what was happening in America, she found a purpose to fight for the dignity of working men, women, and children. Her determination in the labor struggles was to teach American workers to stand together against exploitations. She was an organizer working with the coal miners, steelworkers in the mills, and children who worked in the factories. Her battles for justice in the mines and mills were inspired by her Catholic faith

and Irish heritage to fight for the dignity of the worker. She was known as “Mother Jones” a woman of courage, compassion, and a sense of justice. Mother Jones led the “Children’s Crusade” in 1903 to the White House to demand President Theodore Roosevelt to end child labor. Mary Harris Jones, “Mother Jones”, was one remarkable woman who helped shape the American Labor Movement. Her opponents stated she was “the most dangerous woman in America” but to many others she was a mother, a leader and an advocate for the working people. One of her most famous statements was “Pray for the dead, and fight like for hell for the living.”

On this Labor Day, let us remember and pray for Mother Jones and all those that gave a voice to the American Labor movement.