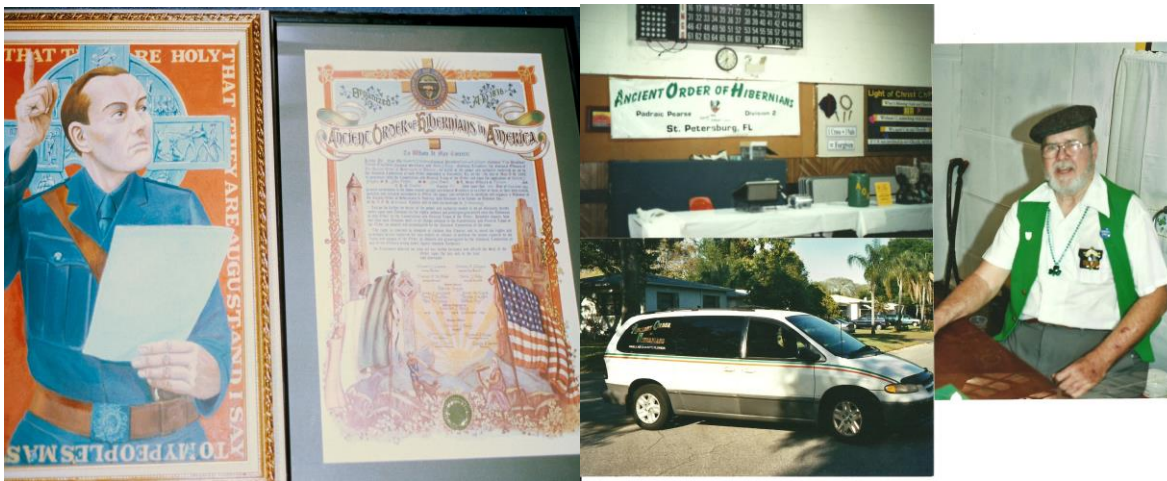




History of the Padraic Pearse Pinellas County Division 2 ANCIENT ORDER OF HIBERNIANS IN AMERICA



The AOH Pinellas Division 2 was the brainchild of Edmund T. Pauly whom after several years was an officer of the AOH James Comerford Pinellas Division 1. Those who lived south of Ulmerton Road in Pinellas County found it challenging to get to meetings in Clearwater and Palm Harbor. On the 10th of December 1995, Florida State President Patrick Gilligan installed the Division at Transfiguration Catholic Church in St. Petersburg. The first regular meeting convened on 9th of January 1996 with Ed Pauly installed as Charter President. Soon, the Division picked Padraic Pearse (1879-1916) as their namesake. Padraic Pearse was one of the Irish who stood up for their rights during the Easter Uprising of 1916. Unfortunately, he was executed on May 3, 1916. He was a poet, lawyer, linguist, educator, author and military leader. He gave the immortal quote, *"Ireland Unfree Shall Never Be At Peace."* The AOH is still looking for peaceful ways of Ireland's re-unification. The AOH is best known for protecting the Catholic Clergy from certain persecution since 1836. The AOH Florida State Board presented the official charter to the new Pinellas County Division 2 in May 1996. In the fall of 2001, the meeting nights were changed from the third Tuesday of the month to the third Thursday of the month. The Division moved to Sacred Heart Church in the Spring of 2009 in an attempt to recruit new members. However the Division was dismissed by the new Pastor before the chance to explain why the AOH is important to the Catholic Church. We returned to Transfiguration Catholic Church on November 21, 2009. We established a website www.aohpinellas2.org in celebration of the division's 15th Anniversary. We stayed with Transfiguration until April 2011.

The current meetings are held on the third Saturday of the month at 1PM except for July and August. The Mission of the Division is to recruit new members of Irish-Catholic Heritage and the Clergy, support the Church and local events.



James Prior was elected second Division President in December 1997. John Kenny served as Division President in 1999. Sean Denny has served as Division President since December 1999.

Several members have served on the Florida State Board. Ed Eccles was the first State Webmaster in 1998. Ed Pauly was elected State Vice President in May 1999 and had to assume the role of State President when it was suddenly vacated in 2003. Sean Denny was elected State Secretary 1999-2003, then Vice President 2003-2007, then State President 2007-2011. Jim Whelan served as State Chairman for Political Education and State Organizer from 2001 to 2009. Robert King was asked to serve as Pro-Temp State Secretary as of April 2, 2011

AOH PINELLAS 2 DIVISION PHOTOS->1996-2004



The Shamrock Degree ceremony was held on February 21, 2002 administered by State President John Brogan. David Aaron, David Prior, Martin Geary, and Danny Crawford took their Shamrock Degree. Jimmy Owens flew down from New Brunswick, Canada to take his Shamrock Degree on February 10, 2005. Ed Eccles took his Major Degree in 1998. George Clarke and Sean Denny took their Major Degree in 2002. Danny Crawford took his Major Degree in 2004. Jim Gillis and Rob King took their Shamrock Degrees on November 10, 2009. Michael Lenihan took his Shamrock Degree on January 16, 2010. Terry Cunniff and James Brett took their Shamrock Degrees on June 10, 2011.

AOH PINELLAS 2 DIVISION PHOTOS->2004-2005



CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CHURCH

The Division's first major contribution to Transfiguration Church was a scholarship contest dedicated to founding member, Fr. Dermot O'Doherty who passed away on June 25, 1997. Starting in 1998 through 2008, the eighth graders were challenged to submit an Irish-American related project through an essay, poem, sketch, or painting. The projects were collected around St. Patrick's Day, voted upon at the April meeting, and awarded the eighth grade at their graduation ceremonies. Each participant received a certificate, green beaded rosary, and their projects returned. The outstanding projects also received \$100 for First Place and \$25 for Second Place.

The division hosted a Loaves & Fishes Lenten Dinner at Transfiguration on March 27th, 1998. The AOH Division Chaplain, Fr. John Bolger, who retired from Pastor of Transfiguration in 1998, was promoted to Monsignor on June 25, 2000. In the spring of 2001, Msgr. Bolger and Jim Whelan led a Gaelic Language Class.

AOH PINELLAS 2 DIVISION PHOTOS->2006-2008



Our First Pancake Breakfast at Transfiguration was organized on February 12, 2006. Each person got 2 pancakes and 2 sausages with juice or coffee for \$3.00. A profit of \$323.00 was raised and split with the church. The second pancake breakfast on February 25, 2007 brought in \$415.00 which was split with the church. The division won \$500 in the Festival Raffle at Transfiguration. The third Pancake Breakfast only made \$106.41 on April 6, 2008. We had a successful comeback in 2011 donating a profit of \$214.00 to Transfiguration Catholic Church.

Starting during Lent of 2003, the AOH partnered with St. Vincent DePaul for the An Gorta Mor Hibernian Hunger Project where food donated to the poor would be tallied and reported to National. This was documented every year through 2008. The results were in 2003---\$129.00; 2004----\$ 24.69; 2005----\$ 72.11; 2006---\$199.21; 2007--\$99.43; 2008---\$183.05.

We have participated in Pro-Life activities in Pinellas County such as the Mission For Life Mass on April 28, 2007 and the first 40 Days for Life Vigil in September 2008. We participated in every 40 Days For Life Campaign since 2008.

AOH PINELLAS 2 DIVISION PHOTOS->2009-2010



We organized the Easter Monday Mass at Light of Christ Church on April 12, 2004. Four years later, we organized the Easter Monday Mass at Transfiguration Church on March 24th, 2008. We were asked to host again in 2011 and had the Mass at St. Michael The Archangel on the 25th of April.

The Division presented a dedication certificate to founder Ed Pauly during his 50th Wedding Anniversary to Margaret Pauly on September 4th, 2005. Fr. Jerome Laubacker gave them a papal decree. We hosted the Fall 2005 Florida State Board Meeting at the Cathedral of St. Jude on October 29th. The division was honored to have soon-to-be National President Jack Meehan at our meeting and Installation on January 19, 2006. The Division raised \$50 and sent rosaries to the Armed Forces in the summer of 2006. The Division donated \$25.00 to Lighthouse of Largo for the visually impaired. The AOH invited Irish Performer Cahal Dunn to perform in Pinellas Park on March 30th, 2008. A crowd of 100 people came and enjoyed the afternoon performance.

AOH PINELLAS 2 DIVISION PHOTOS->2010-2011





In 2010, the AOH National Board asked for all AOH State and Divisions to ask the State Governors to declare March as Irish American Heritage Month. State President Sean Denny finally acquired Governor Rick Scott's declaration on March 18th, 2011. Sean managed to read and present in person the signed declarations to Transfiguration Catholic Church on March 20th, St. Therese the Little Flower in Hollywood on March 27th, the AOH FL State Board on April 2nd, and St. Michael The Archangel and LAOH Pinellas on April 25th.

Sean Denny attended the 175th Anniversary of the AOH in New York City from May 19th-21st, 2011. Noel Kilkenny, General Counsel to Ireland invited the State Presidents to his Penthouse Apartment Suite for a pre-Mass reception. Next morning, the AOH Paraded from Little Italy to the Basilica of the Old Cathedral of St. Patrick for a beautiful Mass. A big outdoor reception commenced in the adjacent School after the Mass.

The following are brothers who have gone to their eternal rest and our Division is indebted to their service:

Emory Brannen-Spring 1997	Fr. Dermot O'Doherty--June 25, 1997
Tom Kennedy--August 24, 2001	James P. Dalton--October 6, 2002
James Laughlin--March 31, 2004	John McAndrew---June 12, 2004
John P. "Buddy" Connolly--July 28, 2004	Jim Walsh---August 9, 2006
Ed Pauly-April 11, 2008	John Kelly-Spring 2008
Andrew Coyne--May 7, 2008	Patrick Kennedy--May 15, 2008
Jack Crawford-August 4, 2009	Msgr. John Bolger-November 10, 2009
John Kenny-April 24, 2011	

Documented by Sean Denny, Florida State President on June 11, 2011