



Mayo Society of New York

P.O. Box 780214

Maspeth, NY 11378-0214

<http://www.mayosocietyofny.com>

mayosocietyofny@gmail.com

Founded 1879; incorporated 1891 as Mayo Men's Benefit, Patriot and Social Association of the City of New York; later as Mayo Men's P&B Association and in 1985, gender neutral as the Mayo Society, Inc. of the City of New York.

Vol. 138

Newsletter

April 2017

Regular Meeting Tuesday, April 11, 2017

**Where: St. Sebastian Parish Center
39-60 57th Street
Woodside, NY 11377**

Time: 7:30 P.M. Sharp

Regular meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month excluding July & August.

Our President's Notes

I hope everyone had a wonderful Saint Patrick's Day and were able to spend time with family and friends. After enjoying all the St. Patrick's Day parades and festivities, the blossoms of spring are in the air as author, Hal Borland quoted, "April is a promise that May is bound to keep."

I received a lot of positive feedback regarding this year's Saint Patrick's Day dance; 431 guests enjoyed a fabulous evening. I highly commend Rita Lydon Lenz and Mary Lydon Regan for their diligent work to ensure the dance went off with a blast. The cocktail hour and dinner were excellent, the music was fantastic and the guests had a ball cheering our honorees, Deirdre Feerick and Michael McMahon.

Greetings from Rev. Tom Basquel, Fine Gael Minister of State for the Irish Diaspora Joe McHugh, NYC Councilwoman Elizabeth Crowley, Mayo County Council Cathaoirleach Al McDonnell and Mayo Chief Executive Peter Hynes, Emerald Isle Immigration Brain O'Dwyer, Irish Institute James Lombard, and United Irish Counties Association President Katie Barrett, among others, expressed acknowledgement and appreciation to the worthy causes and contributions of the Mayo's Society. Thank you also to Theresa Cunningham for her spectacular singing of the Irish and American Anthems. In addition, thanks to Maureen O'Dea Filip, Michael Regan, Kathleen Flanagan, Sharon Trotti and all the Mayo Society Committee members who provided assistance behind the scenes.

Special thanks to Betty McLoughlin and Mary Coyne for their extraordinary work on developing the Mayo journal. We are proud of their hard work compiling, formatting and interacting with our advertisers, members and friends of the Mayo Society, which resulted in an absolutely beautiful journal. As always, thanks to everyone who supported the Mayo dance and journal.

Please know your donations go a long way in helping others in need.

Saint Patrick was shining down upon us as the Mayo Society marched in four parades this year. First, the Rockaway Parade with our well greeted 2017 Mayo Man of the Year Michael McMahon whose two fine sons, Ryan and Kevin McMahon carried the banner. The Mineola Parade took place the following day with many marching units and a fabulous St. Patrick's party for families at the Irish American Center which provided plenty of music, dancing and raffle winnings for many of the children.

In NYC, the Mayo Society was an Honorary Unit and attracted an enormous gathering of over 400 marchers in our unit, wearing their tri-colored sashes at the 256th annual Saint Patrick's Day Parade. One could feel the excitement and energy of our proud, very disciplined marchers. Mayo members John Garvey, John Gray, Rita Lydon Lenz and Mary Coyne Byrne were very busy organizing and maintaining the parade formation. Along the parade route, his Eminence, Timothy Cardinal Dolan stepped into the center of the Mayo Society Unit and excited the crowd with laughter, exchanging his red hat (biretta) with young Shane Goff eliciting an unique photo op for countless photographers. Further up the avenue, Taoiseach Enda Kenny, Consul General Barbara Jones and Ireland's Ambassador to the U.S., Ann Anderson stepped in and greeted our Honorary Unit again creating much applause and congratulations.

Thank you to John Prendergast, Martin Lydon, Michael Regan, Robert Prendergast, Michael O'Connor, Joseph Goff, Vincent Nee, Michael Prendergast, Justin Lenz and Mike Hannon for their assistance as Marshalls, and carrying the Mayo banner and the Irish and American flags up Fifth Avenue. With great teamwork, everyone marched with pride and represented the Mayo Society with dignity. Please know it is an honor and privilege to march with such a great group of Mayo people proud of their heritage.

That afternoon, a Saint Patrick's reception in honor of Ireland's Patron Saint was held at the NY Consulate General of Ireland House with special guest Joe McHugh, Irish Minister for the Diaspora and International Development. During this ceremony, esteemed Mayo member John Garvey together with equally esteemed Cork Association's Mae O'Driscoll, were recognized by Minister McHugh for their contributions to the Irish-American community. The Mayo Society also commends John Garvey on this notable recognition for his continued commitment and enrichment in every aspect to the Irish-American community.

Lastly, the Mayo Society marched in the Yonkers Parade. James and Shane Goff led the Unit carrying the Mayo banner. Parade formation and Mayo member Mike Morley joined our unit.

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Special thanks to Mayo member Bridget Doonan who, with her family traveled from Schenectady, NY to march with us. Also thank you to my mother, **Esther Prendergast and sister Patricia Goff** who traveled from Yorktown Heights and marched in the Mineola, NYC and Yonkers Parades these past two years. Finally, many thanks to all who participated with the Mayo Society in all these marches. We hope to see you all again next year.

Wishing you and your family a blessed and joyful Easter.

James Prendergast, President

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News of our members

Heartfelt condolences are extended to Mayo member and 2015 Mayo Man of the Year **John Jennings** and his family on the passing of **Kathleen McDonnell Jennings**. Prior to joining the Mayo Society of New York, Kathleen was also a long-time member of the Mayo Ladies Auxiliary. Kathleen passed away on March 20, 2017. She was married to member John T. Jennings for 64 years.

Kathleen was a native of Ballinlava, Foxford PO but nearer Knockmore, Co. Mayo. She was an inspiration to her four children: Marian Hyer, Dr. John Jennings, Edward and Brian Jennings, and Mom-Mom to her fourteen grandchildren: Gary Hyer Jr., Brian Hyer, Katie Hyer, Dr. John D. Jennings., Jason Jennings, Erin Jennings, Tara Jennings, Rachel Jennings, Edward Jennings Jr., Thomas Jennings, Andrew Jennings, Clare Jennings, Mary Kate Jennings and Emily Jennings.

Kathleen was preceded in death by her sisters Mary Culligan, Margaret McDonnell, and brothers Edward and Patrick McDonnell. She is survived by brothers John McDonnell and James McDonnell from Ballinlava, County Mayo, Ireland, and by Peter McDonnell from Woodside, NY. Kathleen was a true matriarch, a trusted and dear friend.

She had the special knack of bringing joy to everyone she ever met. She loved life; she loved us all. Even amidst great pain she never lost her sense of humor. Son John in his splendid eulogy quotes her remark on a suggested dress for her funeral "I wouldn't be caught dead in that." That was our beloved Kathleen. A simultaneous Mass was celebrated for Kathleen's entry into her Eternal Life, in the church of her childhood, **The Church of Christ the King, Knockmore, Co. Mayo.**

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Member **Brendan Ward** celebrated his 93rd birthday on March 10 in his retirement home in Naples, Florida. Longtime friends of John and Kathleen Jennings, Brendan and Bridge were greatly saddened by Kathleen's death. Both send their condolences. Legendary orchestra leader, classical musician and arranger, a graduate of Professor William O'Shaughnessy at Foxford Music School, Brendan brought the Big Band Sound to Irish-American audiences during his remarkable ten years, 1955 – 1965, in City Center Ballroom, Manhattan. He hails from Clossagh, Foxford and Breege from Foxford town. Old timers will remember Brendan's carefully orchestrated program -- Clint Miller's "Fraulein"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GMBzCjk5Nec>. Singer Bobby Helms isn't a patch on Clint; Paddy Noonan, on his piano accordion, provided much-loved-ceili music and mostly Brendan and his peerless orchestra in superbly managed City Center Ballroom which facilitated lasting friendships and marriages. There were often 2,000 of us in attendance and Brendan says always 1500 +. Bill Fuller's City Center Ballroom was widely acknowledged as the largest and best managed of all the Irish dance facilities in the City. . . ah, those were the great times when New York was Irish!

Sources: This writer's chats with Brendan Ward and Ian Gallagher's Home page, <http://www.iangallagher.com/mickdel.htm> Scroll down to segment on Brendan Ward but read segment on Mick Delahunty also.

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Member Maura Mulligan is thrilled to have her literary work included in a new anthology – a themed collection of what the publication calls "some of the finest

writing performed on our stages." The true stories Edward McCann has assembled in this collection called, "The First Time" are described as "a cross section of indelible firsts." Check out: http://www.read650.com/?page_id=4010

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Belated condolences to John O'Neill and Family on the death of his beloved wife Beatrice. Bea was well known to and loved by many of our members and was former mother-in-law of member Mike Regan. She was a highly esteemed, long-time member of the **New York Yankees administrative staff** who often shared anecdotes with us. She spoke highly of George Steinbrenner's unpublicized kindnesses towards his employees.

Events

Scholarships: The New York City Parade Scholarship contests applications and all relevant information are available to download under 'About Us' on the home page. Monetary awards have been greatly increased. Members are urged to encourage family members in high school and university to avail of this twice-enriching opportunity -- monetarily and intellectually. Check our:

<https://www.nycstpatrickspatrol.org/2017-scholarship-application/>

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The New York Irish Center, L.I.C. fundraiser: A Night of Country Music, Friday, April 21, 7:30 pm. Cathy Maguire and Friends sing the most famous Country songs. Donation \$70 includes open bar; Seniors \$50. Email: www.newyorkirishcenter.org or call 718-482-0909. Fundraising support will be appreciated.

Membership Renewal

Out of status members should complete and mail their renewal forms with check to Financial Sec'ty John Gray at his address indicated. Your status is indicated to the right of your surname on the envelope label. We value your membership and regret having to remove out of status members from our Mayo Society Family. Kindly oblige us!

John J. Garvey, Editor with input from **Jim Prendergast, President**, and **John Gray, Financial Secretary**.

Items of interest for our newsletter may be sent to JGarvey386@aol.com