



Mayo Society of New York

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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

November 2017

Regular Meeting **Tuesday, November 14, 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. There are no meetings July & August.

Our President's Notes

During the last several months, I have been in communication with Monsignor Sakano, Pastor of the Basilica of St. Patrick's Old Cathedral in lower Manhattan regarding the struggling parish needs to complete some dire repairs and restorations within the cemetery grounds. The fund-raising goal is \$358,500. The Cathedral was erected between 1809 and 1815 with the funds of Irish immigrants and was dedicated to Ireland's Patron Saint. This historic parish was the first in America. It is now the resting place of John Curry, our beloved, last-surviving visionary of the apparition of Our Lady at Knock.

To help with these repairs including the area around John Curry's gravesite, the Mayo Society is considering a donation in memory of John Curry. This is subject to limits discussed at our last regular meeting. The church was designated a New York City landmark in 1966 and the cathedral complex was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1977. As such, repairs and restoration require extra expense. It was declared a minor basilica by Pope Benedict XVI on March 17, 2010.

Special thanks are extended to the teamwork of our Mayo members Betty Mcloughlin, John Garvey, John Gray, Betty and Jerry Knapp who conducted a site visit to the Basilica on Tuesday, October 31. Their assessment as a "committee" and interaction with the Frank Alfieri Director, Rite of Christian Burial and myself was very productive and greatly appreciated by Monsignor Sakano.

Last month, I represented the Mayo Society of New York and attended the Greater Cleveland Mayo Association Ball that took place at the legendary Rock and Roll Hall of Fame located on the shore of Lake Erie in downtown Cleveland, Ohio. This event was very impressive, as one could tour the history of our favorite, legendary music stars, while at the same time enjoy terrific, Irish entertainment and the camaraderie of newly made friends. Compliments to the Greater Cleveland Mayo Association President Gerry Quinn for the charitable work he and his team are doing to promote Irish and in particular, Mayo heritage and culture in this very "Mayo City."

During my visit, I had the opportunity to tour the beautiful Irish

Cultural Gardens originally opened in 1939. Later, I attended a reception for us visitors including Mayo entrepreneurs, at the estate of Edward Crawford, who is being considered for US Ambassador to Ireland. This meeting was followed by a formal dinner at the Intercontinental Hotel to greet approx. 40 visitors from other US cities and Ireland and was hosted by Cleveland's prominent attorney Thomas Scanlon. Finally, on Sunday morning, I enjoyed a speaking engagement with Gerry on the Quinn Irish Radio program along with many of the visitors from Mayo. A special thank you to Cleveland's Mayo Society and board member Bill Garvey and his lovely wife, Carol for their kind hospitality during my visit. Networking with our sister Societies reinforces the mission of all.

As a reminder, on Sunday, November 19, 2017 at 10am, the Mayo Society is hosting its annual communion breakfast at Connelly's Restaurant, 71-17 Grand Avenue, Maspeth, Queens. This is a time to remember the souls of deceased members of our society and their families. We hope you can attend and support one another. A traditional Irish breakfast will be served following the Mass. For reservations, please contact Rita Lydon Lenz at 516-455-3879.

Condolences are extended to the family and the Mayo Society's Chaplin, Rev. Kevin Sweeney on the passing of their beloved mother and dear Mayo member, Agnes Sweeney. Thank you to the members who attended the wake or funeral Mass. Please keep the family in your prayers. We also extend our heartfelt condolences to Fr. Tom Basquel on the death of his beloved mother Kathleen. Kathleen Basquel (nee McDonagh) passed away peacefully after a short illness with her family by her bedside on July 27 at Mayo University Hospital Castlebar. She would have been 91 on August 25. Interestingly, Mrs. Basquel had fifteen children among whom were four sets of twins.

In compliance with the society's constitution, our Board of Trustees will present a slate of officers for the 2018 election at our November meeting. Qualified candidates may also be nominated from the floor. In the event a vote is necessary, this will take place at our December meeting. Please be reminded that members can only run for office if their dues are fully paid to date, have attended a minimum of five meetings since November 2016 and in the case of directors, be a member in good standing for the past three years. Furthermore, the right to vote is only afforded to members in good standing. We look forward to your attending this important meeting.

Happy Veterans Day to our Mayo Society veterans. In addition, I hope all enjoy their feast this Thanksgiving holiday.

James A. Prendergast, President

Our esteemed 2018 Mayo Man of the year Businessman Tony McGarry

Tony McGarry was born November 2, 1938 in the village of Aughoose, Co. Mayo. He left Ireland in September of 1959 and sailed to America where he got a job the following week in the Meat Packing District as a butcher. Tony worked there for 26 1/2 years and in the interim, ventured into the Real Estate Market, where he achieved great success. Tony met the woman of his dreams, Mary, at a céilí, and has been happily married for over twenty-one years. Tony is an active member in the Irish Community and enjoys celebrating all things Irish, especially, playing the button accordion and traveling/ cruising with his wife. Our souvenir journal will carry a more detailed biography.

We look forward to publishing, in our December newsletter, the bio of our esteemed Mayo Woman of the Year, our society's past president, **Mary Coyne-Byrne**.

News of our members

Agnes Sweeney, nee Blewitt, passed away Wednesday, Oct. 18. She was 88. Agnes' friends noted how mentally sharp she was despite the challenges of her Parkinson's Disease. We offer our heartfelt condolences to her son, Fr. Kevin Sweeney who is also our esteemed Chaplain, son Brendan and daughter Marie as well as Agnes' Family in Knockmore and Ballina, Co. Mayo. Agnes is also related to former USA VP Joe Biden through the Blewitts.

Agnes was a longtime member of the Mayo Ladies Auxiliary, a fact that led to the beginning of our society's long association with Fr. Kevin who served as Altar Boy at Communion Breakfasts of both the Mayo Ladies and the Mayo Men's Associations. After the Mayo Men's P & B Association became gender-neutral, Agnes joined the reincorporated Mayo Society of New York en masse with other members in March 1988.

She has been an equally loyal and productive member of the Mayo Society of New York and was a valued director from 2007 – 2011.

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She was honored as our 2006 Mayo Woman of the Year. Saturday, November 25, member Maura Mulligan will be honored by the *Craobh Úll Mór* (Big Apple branch of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann CCE) (Gathering of Musicians of Ireland) at the NY Irish Center L.I.C. Dinner at 6PM is \$12 and requires reservation. A céilí will take place at 8:00P.M. Email Christine Goodwin, ChrisG113@gmail.com. Maura is simply indefatigable when it comes to promoting Irish heritage and culture. She is also the author of her much acclaimed memoir, *Call of the Lark*, read and admired by many of our members.

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Prayers for our sick

Kindly add the following much loved members to your Prayers for the Sick List: Michael Rooney (Kevin's dad), Mary McDonagh, Paddy Nee and all of us who are sick but not listed here as well as their distressed families.

Email addresses are essential in our modern world

You are NOT on our email contact list **if you do not receive our newsletter in digital form**. So far about one half our membership is on our email list. We urge you to provide us with your preferred, active email address. You are very important to us. Help us communicate efficiently with you especially in emergencies. Kindly oblige.

Did you know that . . . up to 1830, Old St. Patrick's Cathedral was the end point of the NYC St Patrick's Day Parade. At that time the Parade was short and began in the area. At the time the City was under-developed and when the visionary Arch Bishop John Hughes selected the current site of the replacement St. Patrick's Cathedral between 50th and 51st St. and Fifth Avenue, it was termed "Hughes Folly" because of its remoteness uptown – Hughes had correctly foreseen the uptown expansion of NYC. For Highlights of the Basilica of Old St. Patrick's Cathedral **check** <http://oldcathedral.org/historical-points>. For more Parade and Old St Patrick details google "*Celebrating 250 Years of the New York City St. Patrick's Day Parade*" by John T. Ridge.

Events

The Irish American Society, Mineola will hold its Christmas Céilí at the Center on Saturday, Dec. 9. Dennis O'Sullivan and Mayo Society VP, Betty McLoughlin chair this supremely enjoyable event. Time is 8:00 P.M. and \$20 admission. Check out:

www.irishamericansociety.com,
AmericanSocietyNY@gmail.com or 516-746-9392

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UICA Research Essay Contests – Last Call

Completed applications with Research Essay entry must be submitted, postmarked no later than **November 30, 2017**. Applications, details on eligibility, topics and awards, rating method, etc. may be downloaded from the following UICA web site or for questions, email address: http://www.uicany.org/United_Irish_Counties/Failte.html
Email: unitedirishcounties@gmail.com

Membership Renewal

Financial Secretary John Gray, wishes to thank all who renewed his/her membership for 2018. Approximately two thirds of our membership is now up to date. He especially appreciates those who updated for multiple years thereby helping reduce our workload. Your current status is indicated on your mailing label after your surname R17 or earlier needs up-dating.

John J. Garvey, Editor, with input from James Prendergast,
President; John Gray, Financial Secretary;
Items of interest may be sent to JGarvey386@aol.com