



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.

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NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2022

Regular Meeting Tuesday, December 13, 2022
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 Note

I hope this letter finds you well. The reason I am sending you this email is to inform you the recent happening within the Mayo Society of New York.

We recently conducted our communion mass at Connolly's Station with great thanks to Father West for performing the ceremony, Connolly's Station for hosting us every year, and the forty-two members who came out and made the event such a good time.

Our Christmas celebration has been changed from Donovan's restaurant to St. Sebastian's scheduled for December 13, 2022, and we hope to see everyone there.

It is with highest congratulations to those few bright students that were given the various scholarship awards during the communion mass. I would like to personally thank Betty McLoughlin and Mary Coyne-Byrne for the great work they did to ensure the communion mass was such a success.

I hope that everyone had a Happy Thanksgiving, has a Merry Christmas, and a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Mike McMahon
President

Upcoming Events and News

- The **Irish Tenors** on Thursday, Dec 8, 8 – 10 PM at State Theatre New Jersey, 15 Livingston Ave, New Brunswick, NJ
- **Holiday Céilí Celebration** on December 07 at Irish Art Center, 726 11th Avenue, New York, NY
- **A City Singing at Christmas** December 15, 2022 - 7:00 P.M. The 43rd Annual A City Singing at Christmas Concert will be performing at iconic St Patrick's Cathedral located at 50th St and Fifth Avenue, NY, New York
- **Celtic Woman: A Christmas Symphony** on Wed, Dec 21, 7:30 – 11:30 PM Red Bank, NJ Hackensack Meridian Health Theatre at the Count Basie Center
- **Performance-A Child's Christmas in Wales** on Friday, Dec 23, 2022, at 8:00 p.m. at the Irish Repertory Theatre, 132 West 22nd Street, New York, NY 10011
- **An Irish Christmas with Andy Cooney** at the Irish Center at Mineola, Dec 15 at 7pm
- **"New York Croons for Christmas"** is the annual holiday concert at the Irish Center, Long Island City, on Dec 09. It's staged as a fundraiser to support all the cultural and social-support programs of the New York Irish Center. Colm Reilly, son of beloved co-founder Paddy Reilly, delivers a cabaret-style performance with a who's who of special guests and some of New York's most esteemed jazz musicians.

The Irish Republican Army Invasion of Canada

On June 1, 1866- an estimated force of 1,000-1,300 Irish Republicans-known as Fenians, invaded Canada. Their aim was to ransom Canadian territory for Ireland's freedom; or at least, to divert British resources and focus world attention to their cause. They were members of the Fenian brotherhood, the American branch of the Irish Republican Brotherhood. They are the first armed force to be called the Irish Republican Army (IRA). An 1869 painting confirms this. They achieved the only Irish republican victory in battle from 1798 to the War of Independence.

They crossed the Niagara River into Canada from Buffalo, New York, USA. The force was comprised mainly of veterans of the American Civil War. These were battle-hardened veterans of both sides. The Union (north) and the Confederacy (south). Regiments came from New York, Ohio, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Louisiana.

General John O'Neill was their commander. He came from Drumgallon, Conitbrit, Co. Monaghan. He emigrated to New Jersey in 1848, during The Great Hunger. He enlisted in the US cavalry and served on the Union side of the American Civil War. The 13th Tennessee regiment of Nashville was commanded by Captain Laurence Shiels in his place, as O'Neill assumed overall command. O'Neill joined the Fenian Brotherhood while in Tennessee.

The British were aiding the Confederates in the south, which was their supply of cotton. The Union had blockaded southern ports to cut them off from trade. The British had also massed troops in Canada, prepared to intervene in the war. Perhaps for these reasons, Fenian Brotherhood recruitment was quite open and successful among Irishmen in the Union army. It appears to have been not only tolerated but permitted by the US army.

The Fenian Brotherhood was founded in New York in 1858 by John O'Mahony and Michael Doheny. At the same time, James Stephens founded the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB) in Dublin on St. Patrick's Day. Both were connected, secret oath-bound organizations dedicated to establishing an independent Irish Republic by force of arms. The name "Fenian" came from the Fianna, an ancient warrior band from the legends of Fionn MacCumhail, a mythical Irish warrior.

O'Mahony, Doheny, and Stephens fought together in the Young Ireland Rebellion of 1848. They fled to Paris to avoid arrest and execution. After a few years, they settled in New York. Their intention was to organise a rebellion in Ireland, but the outbreak of the American Civil War

delayed their plans. Stephens was not happy about Irishmen participating in this fight, but the Fenians in America saw the war as a chance to gain battle experience and improve the standing of the Irish in America.

By the end of the war in 1865, which resulted in a Union victory; there were two factions in the Fenian Brotherhood. One followed O'Mahony, the other followed William Randall Roberts. Roberts was born in Co. Cork, 1832. He had emigrated to New York in 1849. The faction split occurred over the plan to invade Canada. Roberts was quite openly making arrangements for it, while O'Mahony was not initially for the idea.

The invasion or raid set the stage for The Battle of Ridgeway, or Limestone Ridge which was fought on June 2, 1866. They faced a like number of Canadian troops-not British. The Canadian infantry were routed due to their inexperience as compared to the veterans on the Fenian side. The Fenians won a second small victory at Fort Erie. However, the victory was short-lived as British and Canadian reinforcements were arriving. O'Brien headed his army back to the US.

The returning Fenians were detained and disarmed by the US authorities, who didn't seem interested in punishing them. They were basically told to go home. Preparations then began for the Fenian Rebellion in Ireland in 1867. A flag captured in Tallaght; Co. Dublin reveals a clear American influence. Fenians from America did land in Ireland, but the Rebellion was unsuccessful.

For this, Stephens chose young John Devoy. Devoy was captured and imprisoned in 1866 but released in exile to the US in 1871. He received an address of welcome from the US House of Representatives (a branch of the US congress- the upper house is the US senate). By this time, William Randall Roberts was elected to that body as Representative for New York (Democrat, 1871-1875). Devoy continued to plan, arrange, and finance Irish revolutionary activity; most notably with Tom Clarke, who would also emigrate to New York after being imprisoned himself for Fenian activity. So here we see the passing of the torch from the Young Irelanders, to the Fenians to 1916.

Kevin Rooney