



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.161

Newsletter

Jan 2021

Regular Meeting **Cancelled Due to COVID-19**
Where: **St. Sebastian Parish Center**
 39-60 57th Street
 Woodside, NY 11377
Time: **7:30 P.M. Sharp**

Our President's Note

Dear Members and Friends,

I hope you had a Merry Christmas with family & friends even though, it might have been a zoom greeting.

Our dinner dance scheduled for March 13th is now postponed indefinitely.

Due to the ongoing pandemic, all our meetings & events are also canceled at this time. We will keep you informed should things change.

It is an honor to represent the Mayo Society of NY going forward in 2021. We have a great board of hard working and caring people who are available at a time to chat, share a story or run an errand. We're all one family trying to take it all day by day during this difficult time so please don't hesitate to contact any of us.

All members in an officer or directorship role have agreed to continue their position in 2021 which was reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees in January. A list is enclosed for your reference.

We are all optimistic with the COVID vaccine now available there is a light at the end of the tunnel.

Meanwhile, please continue to practice social distancing, wash your hands and wear your mask.

Continue to pray for our sick, dearly departed, and our first responders.

Wishing you a healthy and happy New Year.

Stay Safe, God Bless.

Lé Grá Mór.

Noreen Lydon O'Donoghue
President.

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BLOODY SUNDAY: 30 January 1972

Bloody Sunday is the name given to the events of the 30th of January 1972 in Derry City. It was a pivotal event in the history of the North of Ireland that was the source of much anger and mistrust that followed. What had been mostly a peaceful civil rights movement became an armed struggle.

A peaceful march was planned for the city of Derry by the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA) for Sunday, the 30 January 1972. It was to protest the policy of Internment without trial. NICRA was a popular non-violent organization much inspired by Martin Luther King and the Civil Rights Movement in the USA. On 18 January, Brian Faulkner, Prime Minister of Northern Ireland had banned all parades and marches until the end of the year. The march went ahead along the lines of Civil disobedience.

There were many civil rights issues for which they were also marching. There was blatant sectarian discrimination against the catholic population of Derry. Though they were actually a majority there, they were a minority in representation. This was the result of a system of political gerrymandering, strategic drawing of districts. Up until 1969, voting in local council elections had requirements that denied votes to some while granting multiple votes to others, such as business owners. This invariably ran along sectarian lines and favored Protestants/Unionists.

This setup ensured that Catholics experienced systematic discrimination in employment and housing. The rate of unemployment among Catholics was more than twice that of Protestants all through the North of Ireland. The catholic/nationalist community saw much violence from loyalists and from the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) a notoriously sectarian and abusive police force. The Special Powers Act of 1922; enacted at the foundation of the Northern Ireland state, practically allowed the police to act with impunity. The Parliament at Stormont was known as a "Protestant Parliament for a Protestant State".

The RUC were known to collude with loyalist mobs when they attacked civil rights marches. A loyalist mob attacked a civil rights march from Belfast to Derry organized by another non-violent group called People's Democracy on 4 January 1969 at Burntollet Bridge, outside Derry City. The 300 attackers included 100 off-duty RUC reservists. The mob beat the marchers with lead pipes and wooden cudgels with nails. The RUC did nothing to stop them.

On 12 August of 1969 tensions erupted into what became known as "The Battle Of The Bogside." It was sparked by a provocative loyalist parade. For three days the people of the area, fought police and loyalist incursions into the area called "Free Derry". Over 1,000 were injured. Many homes were damaged. Similar riots in Belfast brought British troops to the streets in August 1969.

Internment came in August 1971. The British Army arrested republicans, nationalists and civil rights leaders across the North of Ireland and held them without trial, often for months. Many of those arrested had no current involvement. Only Catholics were arrested. In ensuing rioting in Belfast, eleven unarmed civilians were killed between 10 and 11 August 1971 by the 1st Battalion, Parachute Regiment of the British Army in what became known as The Ballymurphy Massacre.

The British ordered the same 1st Battalion Parachute Regiment, which had earned a reputation for over-aggressive brutality, to be brought in to arrest the protestors in Derry. The march was attended by 10,000-15,000 people. The soldiers opened fire on the crowd, killing 14 people. The soldiers claimed they acted in self-Defense, but none of the victims were armed, and no soldiers were wounded. Of those killed, 6 were shot in the back, 3 were shot while helping the wounded. Another 12 survived bullet wounds.

On 2 February, there was a general strike in the Republic of Ireland. In Dublin, thousands turned out to march at the British Embassy which was burned down that day. There were protests all over the world, including New York.

The Widgery Tribunal Report issued in April 1972 cleared the soldiers of all wrongdoing and has been discredited, it appeared to point blame at the victims. John Hume had requested a new inquiry of British Prime Minister John Major, which was rejected, but agreed to by his successor, Tony Blair in 1998.

The Saville Inquiry Report published 15 June 2010, concluded that none of those killed and wounded on Bloody Sunday posed any threat, and that the soldiers concocted lies to cover their acts. British Prime Minister David Cameron stated "There is no doubt, there is nothing equivocal, there are no ambiguities. What happened on Bloody Sunday was both unjustified and unjustifiable. It was wrong." He offered apologies on behalf of the British Government.

Kevin Rooney

