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MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE JERSEY SHORE ORDER OF
THE FRIENDLY SONS OF THE SHILLELAGH

June 2023

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Brother Shillelagh's,

Hope you all are enjoying this great spring weather here at the Jersey Shore!

It is a great time of the year to enjoy all the area has to offer in entertainment at outside bars and restaurants. Don't forget about the Shillelagh Club and using the Irish Exit. We have lots of great entertainment this month with the Kerry O'Keigh Band on 6/9, DJ Don under the tent on 6/16, and Enda Keegan on Father's , 6/18.

The club was led by The Pipes and Drums of the Jersey Shore as we marched in the Bradley Beach and Manasquan Memorial Day Parades over Memorial Day weekend. It was great to see the large crowds of children attending the parades with their families, as we honored those that gave the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom.

Our 2nd Whiskey Education Night was another great success with live music from Jessica Rose, whiskey and gifts from Calumet Farms in Kentucky and some raffles as well. The 50/50 raffle monies were presented to the family of Brendan Treharne. A great job in organizing this event by Brian Canney, Patrick Wildridge and Jeff Wells.

The club rented out two picnic areas for the Irish Festival at Monmouth Park on 6/11 enabling 200 Shillelaghs and guests to enjoy a day at the park, the races and of course, the Human Horse Race. Although not a club event, the club is always well represented in Irish Festival leadership roles and by providing many volunteers for the event.

Our Golf outing is all set for June 23rd. Ray Barnes and the golf committee have done another great job organizing this event over two golf courses.

Membership is now closed. It looks like we will be bringing in approximately 100 new members at the July and August meetings. Those 100 replace approximately 100 who left the club recently, so our total numbers remain around 1,435 members.

An early Happy Father's Day to all the Shillelagh Dads' out there.

All the best to you and your families!

Slainte'

Craig Coyle

President, FSOS Jersey Shore



Sunday June 18th • Enda Keegan

Friday June 23rd • Shillelagh Golf Outing

Wednesday July 5th • FSOS Monthly Meeting

Friday June 16th • DJ Don

Friday July 21st • Strictly 60's Band

The Foundation of the Friendly Sons of the Shillelagh, Inc.

The Foundation of the Friendly Sons of the Shillelagh, Inc., is a charitable organization established and operated to benefit the public interest and is the club's only IRS designated 501C(3) charity and donations are tax deductible. Please help us help individuals in need. If you have any questions, please feel free to email us at Info.fsosbelmar@gmail.com.

Please mail donations to:

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Irish History #105

The Boundary Commission Fails to Deliver

Last month, as part of Ireland's revolutionary decade, we reviewed the end of the Irish Civil War. This month's review is about the Boundary Commission, which means we will look back and then forward in time.

The Commission's purpose was to "determine in accordance with the wishes of the inhabitants, as far as might be compatible with economic and geographic conditions, the boundaries between Northern Ireland and the rest of Ireland." When Michael Collins and Arthur Griffith signed the 1921 Anglo-Irish Treaty, they believed that the Boundary Commission set forth in Treaty Article 12 would deliver the six counties of Northern Ireland into a united Ireland in due time.

The idea for a commission to re-set the border came from British Prime Minister David Lloyd George. Treaty language was vague enough to allow the transfer of territory both ways. But Collins spoke optimistically that the Boundary Commission would determine to remove Counties Fermanagh and Tyrone from the North and return them to Ireland, because of their large nationalist populations. Griffith felt the same way.

Without these counties in "Ulster" province, the thinking went, the province would collapse, because an Ulster comprised of just four counties - Down, Antrim, Armagh, and Derry - would not be economically viable. Furthermore, Ulster's collapse would make unification inevitable. The only real question was how long this would take.

Neither Collins nor Griffith lived long enough to see the Boundary Commission's spectacular failure to redraw the border in a way favorable to nationalists. To the chagrin of the Irish Free State government, the suggested territorial transfer was in reverse of what was expected. Both Fermanagh and Tyrone remained in Ulster. (So did Derry which also had a large Catholic population.)

When the time came for appointments to be made to the Boundary Commission, the British government appointed South African Judge Richard Feetham

as the Commission's Chair. The Irish government appointed Eoin MacNeill, a cabinet member. Northern Ireland Prime Minister James Craig refused to make an appointment, lest anyone think he approved of the commission process. This gave the British a second appointment, J.R. Fisher, a unionist.

The Boundary Commission began work in 1924. Feetham took a position that "he and his colleagues were bound to maintain Northern Ireland as 'the same provincial entity,' so that it would be 'capable of maintaining a Parliament and Government, and urged the onus of proof lay with those who would change the border.'" Thus, it was clear from the outset that establishing a new border by transferring territory from North to South was going to be very difficult.

Craig remained adamantly opposed to the commission process, and he declared it was "ultra vires." He took steps to send a message that NI planned to hold onto its territory at all costs. He told the NI Parliament that, if the Boundary Commission reported findings negative to NI's position, "he would resign and place himself at 'the disposal of the people, no longer as Prime Minister but as their chosen leader to defend any territory'" identified for transfer.

The following year, when word came that the Boundary Commission was nearing the end of its work, Craig called an election. He wanted an "emphatic" electoral mandate showing opposition to any change in NI's territorial integrity. Craig's campaign phrase was "not an inch." An editorial in the Belfast Telegraph newspaper read NI desires "to preserve our own ideals and our cherished traditions, and we want no other flag but the Union Jack."

The NI Parliament had already done away with proportional representation at the local level and gerrymandered electoral districts. This ensured that elections solidly favored unionists. In the election, nationalists in Belfast managed to make a strong showing. However, Craig's strategy paid off in the border counties. There, the unionist candidates did very well. Message delivered.

Commissioners reached an informal agreement on findings. Before a report was released to the public, however, Fisher “broke a pledge of secrecy and leaked [the Commission’s] chief findings” to a Tory-friendly newspaper. Throughout the process, MacNeill had rigidly adhered to the secrecy pledge. He had not even kept his fellow cabinet members apprised of developments. The leaked findings caught them by surprise. MacNeill fully knew that he was going to be outvoted 2-1 by the other Commissioners. He resigned in protest over the leak.

When the Boundary Commission announced its findings, nationalists North and South were bitterly disappointed. The Commission proposed shifting a substantial part of Donegal from the Free State to NI and reducing the border from 280 to 229 miles. But there was no change to the three counties with the largest Catholic population. Fermanagh, Tyrone, and Derry were still part of Ulster.

Irish Prime Minister William Cosgrove knew the government would be accused of failing to protect Ireland’s right to self-determination if any part of its territory was lost. He told the Dail that the Boundary Commission had no authority to transfer Free State territory to NI. He feared such a transfer of land could provoke a “national calamity” and lead to his government’s collapse. Waiting in the wings to take power, of course, was Eamon De Valera. For Cosgrove, therefore, “burying” the Commission’s report became a priority.

The British, Irish and Northern Irish Prime Ministers (Stanley Baldwin, Cosgrave, and Craig respectively) reached an agreement in December 1925 that they would ignore the Boundary Commission findings, that the Commission’s final report would not be published, and that the existing border between NI and Ireland would be maintained. Protestant churches in NI celebrated a “Day of Thanksgiving.”

As an additional part of the tri-partite agreement, the British government waived 175\$ million it had been demanding as public debt Ireland owed Great Britain pursuant to Treaty Article 5. In British minds, this was a small price to pay to finally settle the Irish question. A century later, it is abundantly clear just how wrong they were about settling the Irish question (i.e., Ireland’s constitutional status) that has haunted British politics since the 1801 Act of the Union. At present, fallout from the United Kingdom’s

(UK) Brexit decision means NI remains a political quagmire for the UK.

Cosgrove called the agreement “a damned good bargain” for the nascent Irish government. The debt relief staved off any prospect of government insolvency.

As part of the agreement, Craig released 30 IRA prisoners held since Collins’ covert operations against Ulster, and the Irish Free State “abandoned” the Council of Ireland. The Council had been created by the Government of Ireland Act 1920 “with a view to the eventual establishment of a Parliament for the whole of Ireland.” Since the Council had never met, this did not seem to be a big concession. Nevertheless, forsaking the Council removed the issue of Irish re-unification from the list of top government priorities.

Irish governments that followed willingly expressed rhetorical reverence for unification. (Afterall, Article 2 of the 1937 Irish Constitution - *Bunreacht Na hEireann* - claims “the whole island of Ireland” as its “national territory.”) But none have been willing to take steps to make unification a reality. Today, the 1998 Belfast/Good Friday Agreement provides a peaceful and democratic pathway to a united Ireland, based upon the consent of a majority - North and South - expressed in a unity referendum. The demanding work of reconciliation must be genuinely undertaken to achieve it.

References: Michael Collins, *A Path to Freedom*, Roberts Rinehart Publishers (1996); Tim Pat Coogan, *Ireland in the 20th Century*, Palgrave MacMillan (2006); Tim Pat Coogan, *Eamon de Valera*, Harper Perennial (2006); Alan Parkinson, *A Difficult Birth*, Eastwood Books (2020).

Slainte, emn



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The Pipes and Drums of the Jersey Shore - June 2023!!

Summer is closing in.... The club has a ton of activities and events planned and the band is planning our 25th anniversary part, hopefully in November. More details to come!

We performed for the club in the Manasquan Memorial Day Parade and we also performed in the Bradley Beach Parade where club members joined us for the first time! The weather was outstanding and the crowds were there to honor our heroes that made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom!

We also performed at the Headliner on May 7, for one of our drumming students and club member Rob Moore as he awarded his service K9 in a presentation at the fundraiser for Rebuilding Warriors!

Congratulations again Rob!

Our annual clothing drive was a huge success! Quite a few club members helped support the band by donations of clothing and helping us load the truck. Special thanks to the MANY club members that support the band with monetary donations! We know you do not want to be singled out for recognition and we respect that but please know, you are appreciated and we thank you!

We have about 20 club members in the Band. We have about 1400 club members. I am sure there are more of you out there that always wanted to learn to play bagpipes or drums. We encourage you to show up on a Tuesday night, upstairs around 6:30pm to see what the band is all about!

PDJS Q&A:

1. How do pipers and drummer improve and learn music?

Practice... more practice then... more practice.

2. Are all members playing at the same level?

That is the goal however we all learn at different paces and in different ways. The time to practice is at home. Our rehearsal nights are to learn/improve what we are learning or need to work on and always continue to work on rhythm and timing at rehearsals.

3. This seems like its easy, how hard can it be?

I think this is a repeat question and that's ok. To play Tenor, Bass, Snare or Bagpipes takes a lot of work and

the reward is fantastic! We want to sound good and have fun doing so. Bagpipes are finicky instruments that change as we play them and weather affects them in a huge way.

Do you have a question to ask? Let me know and your question can be featured right here!

Do you want to learn to play bagpipes or drums? Yes YOU!! All you need to do is show up to see what it's all about and give it a try!!!

Growth is key for the band's future. It would be great to see more club members (and your families) join the band! Remember the band is not just for club members andlessons are FREE!!!

All you need to do is show up on Tuesday evening and/or contact me 732-685-9232 so you can get started to become a bagpiper or drummer in the band!

If you already know how to play bagpipes or drums & want to join the band, just head over to practice on a Tuesday evening and check us out. Our email is band@jspipesanddrums.com which can be accessed by visiting our updated website www.jspipesanddrums.com or talk to any band member for information.

Want to have a bagpiper, small group or the band to celebrate a promotion, a backyard bbq or birthday party? We perform for all kinds of events: weddings, funerals, parties, grand openings, ceremonies, graduations, backyard bbq's and more!

For more info, please contact our Band Manager, Mark Mastowski (732-233-6136)

We always try to accommodate all requests. Remember that we, just like you, have family, job and other commitments/obligations (some beyond our control).

Anyone with pictures or video of the band, please send them along to me pdjspiper@hotmail.com

Thank you!

As always, we want to thank you all and we appreciate the continued support from all of you!!

Slainte,

Ray Spengler

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of the
Shillelagh
of the
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Upcoming Meetings

Wednesday, July 5th, 2023

7:30pm

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njbarrett63@gmail.com

Have information on bereavement?

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