

# Shorenanigans



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

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May 2024

## Your President's Message

My Shillelagh Brothers,

I want to take this opportunity to thank the membership for entrusting me with the Presidency. I am truly humbled and honored to lead this club. I appreciate all the good wishes and support that everyone has expressed toward me. Having been a member for over 24 years, I have seen and been a part of many changes and the growth of our club. Including membership expanding from a few hundred members to 1,400+ today and also moving from the old clubhouse to our new building. It's always amazing to see our members come together, working hard for the better of the club.

Our new e-board is a strong mix of hard-working men with a deep commit to the better interest of the club and the members. VP Ryan Lavender brings his passion evidenced by years of volunteering on various committees. He continues to bring a fresh, youthful approach as we continue to move forward. Recording Secretary Kevin "Boom Boom" Giblin is a long-standing member, and a talented member of the pipe band is someone who is always looking to help and take on more responsibilities for us. Corresponding Secretary Matt Doherty, the new head of the Thanksgiving food drive, will be a great addition to the e-board as we move forward. Richie Mackay took a step forward moving from Assistant Treasurer to Treasurer; our "Irishman of the Year" brings a commitment that is second to none. I look forward to working with our First Keeper Chuck Healey and new to the Second Keeper Chris Celiberti. Wayne Buning remains as Steward along with Mike Miles as assistant Steward; they continue to work hard keeping our membership fed. And for Trustees, welcome back Billy Clohosey and Ray Barnes, our former Treasurer, Rick McKenna, head of membership, Mike Kahrer, Bill Cook and Guy Barbagalata, all great additions to the e-board.

The club's Annual Dinner Dance was held on April 20th at Spring Lake Manor. It was a sold-out event; a great time was had by all. Thanks to Dinner Dance Chairmen Ray Barnes and Billy Clohosey. Congratulations to our honorees, Irishman of the Year Richie Mackay, Shillelaghs of the Year, Billy Aker, Tony Falcone, Mike Kahrer, Bill McCusker, and Mark Mastowski.

I want to thank all the volunteers that helped with our 3rd Annual Shillelagh Polar Plunge for Autism and the Shillelagh Foundation. It just keeps getting better. Big thanks to Anthony Kelly, Dan Reilly, and Craig Coyle for organizing and running the event.

We had a busy three weekends in a row, ending with Chad's Cinco De Derby. Despite the weather, it was a huge success. Margaritas were flowing, the kitchen had the Mexican fare for all to enjoy.

The club's softball team is off to a great start, standing 5 & 3. Last Sunday's games were rained out. They play on Sundays, so if you need some entertainment, come out and support our brothers. They play on Sundays, check at the club for times.

*continued*

*Presidents Letter continued*

We have the Strictly 60's Band on Friday May 24th, followed by the Bradley Beach Memorial Day Parade on Saturday May 25th and the Manasquan Memorial Day parade on Monday May 27th. For both parades we wear summer uniforms: white Shillelagh golf shirt and Khaki shorts.

For the month of June, we have the club's golf tournament on Friday June 21st, stay tuned for details. On Saturday Night, June 22nd, we will have a comedy night; details to follow.

Our July meeting will be held Wednesday June 26th, due to the first Wednesday of July being the 3rd. We will also have a cigar/whiskey night on Thursday, June 27th under the big top.

Please keep Brother John Crook in your prayers as he has been in the hospital for the last couple weeks.

In closing, I want to thank Craig Coyle for an outstanding job as President. I have big shoes to fill. Craig was also asked to join the board of the club's Foundation; he will be a great addition to the Foundation. Also, thanks to the outgoing e-board for their hard work and commitment to the club.

Slainte'

John J Padgett

President

FSOS, Jersey Shore



**Friday May 24th • Strictly 60's Band**

**Saturday May 25th • Bradley Beach Memorial Day Parade**

**Monday May 27th • Manasquan Memorial Day Parade**

**Wednesday June 5th • FSOS Monthly Meeting**

**Sunday June 9th • NJ Irish Festival @ Monmouth Park**

**Friday June 21st • Shillelagh Golf Outing**

**Saturday June 22nd • Comedy night w/John Pizzi**

**Thursday June 27th • Cigar & Whiskey Night**



We proudly support the Friendly Sons of Shillelagh of Belmar.

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# Irish History #114

## The Tides of War (World War II) in Northern Ireland

We open this chapter sending congratulations to the club's newly elected officers. You can be sure that the new Executive Board, led by President John Padgett and Vice President Ryan Lavender, will continue the terrific work that has preceded it and maintain the club's tradition of being the top Irish American civic organization at the Jersey shore. One can learn a lot about World War II in Europe by watching celebrated movies - like the British "Battle of Britain" (1969), German "Das Boot" (1982), and the virtuoso American film "The Longest Day." But those films will not teach you about Northern Ireland's important role in the Allied - which included the United Kingdom, Canada, and the United States - war effort against Nazi Germany. 300,000 US soldiers went to Northern Ireland between 1941-45.

The Irish Republic's neutrality during the war enhanced the value of Northern Ireland's strategic location. Northern Ireland provided a home base for ships involved in the "Battle of the Atlantic," and a training ground for troops who took part in the D-Day invasion of Normandy. This chapter will look at these features of the war, after reviewing the Battle of Britain.

Europe suffered the ravages of war for two years before the US became involved. US involvement was precipitated by the Japanese sneak attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt called it "a day which will live in infamy." By then, Germany already had overrun most of continental Europe and taken over the countries of Poland, Denmark, Norway, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, France, Yugoslavia, and Greece.

After France fell in 1940, Germany turned its attention to the UK. During that summer, the Luftwaffe (German air force) conducted bombing raids on British air bases and aircraft factories. With the aerial British response, the Battle of Britain began.

The British had an exceptional early radar warning system that eliminated the element of surprise attacks. The Dowding System brought the technology of radar, ground defenses, and fighter aircraft into a unified system of defense. The British also manufactured Spitfires, which were superior fighter planes in aerial dogfights.

The UK was divided into four Royal Air Force fighter command squadron areas. Pilots successfully defended the skies making it impossible for the Luftwaffe to achieve air

control in any sector. Most of the pilots were from the UK; they were fighting to save their home soil. Some pilots were also from British Commonwealth nations, Ireland, and the US. The bravery of the air squadrons led to British Prime Minister Winston Churchill's famous statement in a speech before the House of Commons. "Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few," he said.

Once German planes were shot down faster than German industry could produce them, the Luftwaffe shifted its attack strategy to nighttime raids focused on industrial centers. During the fall, "the Blitz" began. London was attacked 57 consecutive nights. More than 40,000 civilians were killed in the UK by Luftwaffe bombing, almost half of the dead were in London.



Belfast had a large shipyard and aircraft manufacturing base. During April and May in 1941, the Luftwaffe attacked Belfast 4 times. The first was aimed at testing the city's defenses. The second came two days after Easter. It involved 200 German bombers targeting shipbuilding and military manufacturing sites across the city. 900 people were killed and 1,500 injured. Apart from what happened in London, it was the deadliest night attack of the Blitz. Another 150 civilians were killed during 2 bombing attacks in May. Many of the dead could not be identified. If rosary beads were found on their bodies, it was assumed they were Catholic and they were buried in Belfast's Milltown Cemetery.

Despite the heavy loss of life during the Battle of Britain, it was a major defensive victory for the UK. The country lived to fight another day, making long-term victory possible. In fact, four years later, the Allies would launch their invasion of Nazi-occupied Europe, "Operation Overlord," from UK shores. The D-Day invasion was deadly for Allied forces but decisive. Ultimately, it led to "bringing the war against Germany to an end" with an Allied victory.

The Battle of the Atlantic involved the fight to control sea routes between North America - the US and Canada - and Europe. Transatlantic convoys transporting supplies and munitions across the Atlantic Ocean were intercepted by German U-boats. Allied supply ships were torpedoed and sunk. Warships, therefore, needed to accompany the convoys and protect them.

Derry was designated as "Base One, Europe" for the US Navy. US ships began arriving there shortly after the attack

on Pearl Harbor. At the height of the Battle of the Atlantic in 1943, Derry hosted 150 US, UK, and Canadian warships.

The tide turned in the Allies favor by the middle of that year due to the use of new escort aircraft carriers and very-long patrol aircraft, along with the interception of U-boat codes. U-boats were sunk with increasing frequency and forced to operate close to shore, where it was only possible to wage a guerilla campaign against shipping. By the end of the year, the Battle of the Atlantic was over. The Allied victory at sea meant Atlantic shipping lanes were safe for transport.

When the war ended in May 1945, 156 German U-boats surrendered to the British. Most of them surrendered at Lisahally port on Lough Foyle in Derry. 116 were towed to deep water off Ireland's coast and scuttled. The remainder were used for target practice or placed in museums. As for the US sailors, it was reported that many returned home with Derry brides.

By April 1944, a large US naval task force, comprised of two battleships - the Nevada and the Texas - and several cruisers and destroyers had berthed in Bangor, Co. Down, on the southside of Belfast Lough. The ships prepared for the naval mission on D-Day, which was to bombard German land defenses on the Normandy coast. US General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces, visited the armada to observe naval exercises. On May 19, he set out from the pier in Bangor to wish the soldiers on the cruiser USS Quincy good luck. 60 years later, the pier was renamed "Eisenhower Pier" in his honor. Eisenhower also addressed troops assembled on the decks of the Nevada and the Texas.

Two days earlier, Eisenhower had flown to the airfield at Greencastle, Co. Down, to inspect airmen and soldiers preparing to invade Normandy. (General George S. Patton also visited troops at the airfield and at other places in Northern Ireland prior to D-Day.) The US air force had occupied the airfield since 1943. Four large aircraft hangers had been erected, in addition to buildings for ammunition and bombs. Airplane repair and maintenance facilities were constructed there also. The airfield served as the center of aircrew training "for air-to-air and air-to-ground gunnery," as well as bombing runs near the coast.

It was reported that the Americans were "affable" and got along well with members of the community. "They went to dances and taught the locals how to jive." Because Guinness and Irish whiskey was not readily available in the pubs frequented by US troops, a profitable enterprise arose on dark nights when the tide was right. A small boat with crates of the tasty adult-beverages would unload its contents at a jetty in Greencastle. The beverages then miraculously appeared in the pubs.

The Allied advance after the Normandy landings resulted in the use of captured French airfields by the Allies. This diminished the importance of Greencastle's air base, which closed in 1945.

While in Co. Down, Eisenhower also inspected two infantry

regiments. Afterward, he traveled to Co. Fermanagh, where he inspected troops in the 8th Infantry Division. At the time, 120,000 US soldiers were billeted throughout Northern Ireland. Eisenhower could not visit them all. Additionally, there were hundreds of thousands of Allied soldiers, including tens of thousands of US troops, stationed in southern England and Scotland. They too were preparing for D-Day. Just before the invasion, Eisenhower sent everyone under his command a message: "You are about to embark upon the great crusade toward which we have striven these many months. The eyes of the world are upon you . . . I have full confidence in your courage, devotion to duty and skill in battle."

Operation Overlord, the D-Day invasion, began shortly after midnight on June 6, 1944, with an airborne assault involving 22,000 British, Canadian, and US paratroopers. By 4:30 AM, the first French town, Sainte-Mere Eglise, was liberated by the 82nd Airborne Division.

At dawn, 5 Allied infantry divisions began storming a 50-mile sector of Normandy beaches, which had been divided into 5 sectors for the attack. US forces hit Utah and Omaha Beaches; the UK hit Gold and Sword Beaches; and Canada hit Juno Beach. By day's end, approximately 156,000 Allied soldiers had landed: 73,000 Americans, and 83,000 UK and Canadian forces.

The Omaha Beach landing was the deadliest; 3,000 Americans lost their lives. Normandy American Cemetery is located on a bluff overlooking Omaha Beach. 9,387 US military are buried in graves there. Most of them died during the D-Day landings. Another 1557 names are inscribed on the Wall of the Missing.

June 6, 2024, marks the 80th anniversary of D-Day. If you have a moment that day, please remember to say a prayer for the souls of the heroes who fought, and especially for those who sacrificed their lives, so that we could remain free. And, if you are looking for a good movie to watch, The Longest Day should be playing on multiple television channels.

This chapter is dedicated to the memory of former FSOS President Matt Sharin. He was a loving family man, supporter of all things Irish, and friend to all. RIP brother!

Slainte, EMN

References: "Bangor's Role in D-Day's Normandy Landings," BBC News NI (June 6, 2019); "Eight Things You Need to Know about the Battle of Britain," Imperial War Museums, <https://www.iwm.org.uk/history/8-things-you-need-to-know-about-the-battle-of-britain>; Norman Freeman, "Greencastle Airfield and D-Day Preparations," an Irish Diary, Irish Times (June 4, 2023); "General Eisenhower Inspects US Army Infantry and Airborne Troops in Northern Ireland," WartimeNI, <https://wartimeni.com/article/eisenhower-in-northern-ireland/eisenhower-in-ulster-1944>; Irish Central Staff, "Horrendous Belfast Losses during WWII Bombing Blitz," Irish Central News (April 7, 2021); Marc Milner and Thomas Hughes, "Battle of the Atlantic," Britannica.



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# The Pipes and Drums of the Jersey Shore

## May 2024

Performing for Autism Awareness is something we have done for quite sometime now back when Anthony and Jackie Kelly started fundraising around 15 years ago at the Spring Lake Manor. The past few years, the event has grown quite a bit! We are proud to be a small part of this annual event!

We also performed at the Rebuilding Warriors event where another service dog was awarded to a veteran. It is truly an honor to lead in the recipient in and perform for the veterans and guests at this event!

Performing at the annual FSOS Dinner Dance for the honorees, including our own Mark Mastowski as one of the Shillelagh's of the Year), the newly elected e-board and all the attendees was a really fun and great night.

Get those old clothes ready!! May 18th we are having a clothing drive from 7am until 3pm across the street from the club.

We accept:

Wearable and usable clothing

Shoes (please bag separately), belts, handbags, purses, backpacks, briefcases, blankets, towels

Linens, tablecloths, curtains, comforters, quilts, sheets, bedspreads

Car seats with base, strollers, bikes and scooters

Please secure clothing in a garbage bag and tie them.

Thank you so much for your support!

Here are performances and parades set for May:

Bradley Beach Parade on May 25

Memorial Day Parade where we lead the club May 27

PDJS Q&A:

1. Does the band turn down events?

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

2. What is the clan associated with the tartan for the kilt?

Our kilt is the Irish National Tartan. The band voted on this back in its inception

3. How often are events and practices?

We have many events throughout the year with March and September usually being the busiest. We hold beginner lessons every Tuesday at 6:30 followed by band rehearsal at 7 upstairs at the club on Tuesday evenings.

Do you have a question to ask? Let me know and your question can be featured right here! Email me: pdjspiper@hotmail.com or text 732-685-9232

Do you want to learn to play?

Growth is key 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 and ..... lessons are FREE!!!

Did you read that? FREE LESSONS!

Reach out and contact me 732-685-9232 or our band manager Mark Mastowski 732-233-6136 so you can get started with 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 to 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.

Need a piper or the band to play at an event?

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!

Thank you all and we appreciate the continued support from all of you!!

Slainte,

Ray Spengler

## 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](mailto:Info.fsosbelmar@gmail.com).

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# Upcoming Meetings

## Wednesday, June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024 7:30pm

Not receiving email or have contact information to update?

Contact Ned Barrett at  
njbarrett63@gmail.com

Have information on bereavement?

Contact Dan Reilly at  
Irish0361@aol.com

or

Ray Spengler at  
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**Have news to share in the newsletter? Contact [info.fsosBelmar@gmail.com](mailto:info.fsosBelmar@gmail.com)**

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