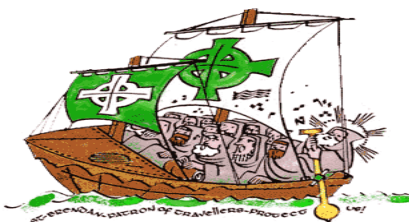


St. Brendan Division #1 - AOH, Berks County, PA
Celebrating 40 years of community service February 19, 2019



Serving the Irish American Community for over a century
INCORPORATED NOVEMBER 7, 1860 ---- RE-ORGANIZED FEBRUARY 16, 1979
Visit our Website www.berkscoaoh.com

Volume XXXI/Tóirt a Tríocha a haon -- Issue #1/Eagrán a haon - Iúil/Lunasa/Méan Fómhair - July/August/September 2021

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Open

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

It appears the effects of the COVID pandemic is slowly passing us by, and the world is normalizing once again. As summer approaches, our thoughts become focused on enjoying family and social events as we once enjoyed and appreciated. Enjoy these moments to the fullest!

We continue to look for a permanent meeting place, but in the interim, we have decided to return to the Liederkrantz for the summer and fall months until a suitable meeting place is found. These meetings will be held outdoors in the pavilion area. We have discontinued Zoom meetings until further notice. So, please give some thoughts to re-new your commitment to attend our monthly meetings, and re-new your acquaintance with your fellow brothers!

On August 21st, we will have the Lady of Knock Mass at St. Ignatius of Loyola Church. Mass will be at 4:00 pm. Please consider attendance at this Mass for this celebratory day!

Our recent calendar sale in April was successful and helped raised monies for our Church food gifting funds. It is planned to do another calendar sale in November. Your efforts to help sell the calendars will be greatly appreciated to help our mission of charity continue and may be a great Christmas gift option!

For those who still have not paid your annual 2021 membership dues, please send your dues monies to Joseph McCarthy as soon as possible. Enjoy your summer and stay safe and healthy!

Yours in Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity,
Kerry Williard, President

MEMBERSHIP

All members are reminded that membership fees for 2021 are now being accepted. Dues remain at \$25.00 per year. You can forward dues to:

Joseph G. McCarthy, Financial Secretary
St. Brendan's Division #1,
437 Elmer Circle
Reading, Pa. 19605-9116

Please make all checks payable to AOH. Div. 1 Berks. For information on dues payments call Joe McCarthy at 610-927-5224. All inquiries will be held in strictest confidence.

Please, check your membership card and notify me a.s.a.p. if changes are needed in address, phone numbers (land & cell) and email addresses. In addition, all members who have served in the Military, if your card does not signify that you are a veteran, please supply me with your branch of service and dates of service and an updated card will be supplied.

As you may have noticed, the National Office is sending out direct e-mail notices concerning member participation in video conferencing and issues of importance asking for your input in addition to mailing the Hibernian Digest every other month. So, it is very important we have updated information on hand.

POST PANDEMIC NEWS

Now that the threat of Coronavirus has abated, we are doing what we can to get things back to normal. We have resumed in person meetings on the second Wednesday of the month at the Reading Leiderkranz. To make it more appealing, for those who have trouble driving at night, we have moved our starting time up to 7:00pm, which will have our meetings concluded while there is still some daylight. Depending on meeting agenda, meeting should last no more than an hour or less.

Our search for a permanent meeting location is currently ongoing and we are open to suggestions. President Kerry Williard is meeting with some possible sites, but nothing is set in stone as we write this. As many know we had been meeting at the Slovak Catholic Home on Crestmont St. in Reading and they had similar problems as ourselves with Covid closures. Although the meeting room was ideal many members encountered problems using the stairway to get to the meeting room. So, a decision has been made to continue our search for more ideal meeting facilities. The current meetings are held outdoors for the summer months, however once the cooler weather arrives other arrangements must be made.

Speaking of summer weather, we are considering renewing our annual Summer Family Outing later this year. We think that after being confined to our homes for the past fifteen months, we may be anxious to get out and spend time with our Hibernian friends. If there is enough interest, we will start

the ball rolling on plans, however, we must hear from you before we make final arrangements on renting a picnic grove, etc. Please let us know no later than July 21st and if warranted we will finalize plans and let all know a.s.a.p. We are contemplating something during the weekend of the 18th or 25th of September. Again, it is up to you our members if we follow through on this idea.

REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

Prayers are requested for following person who have requested to be listed in our prayer list. Included in the list are AOH members, family of members and members of the LAOH, Berks County: Joanne Marnell, wife of Brother Joe Marnell, Deacon John Murphy, Henry and Eleanor Trexler, Michael Riley, Henry & Rita Mullen, Kathleen Fink, Julie Miller, Mary Collins, John Mackey, Mary DeMarco, Charles Fritz, Leontine Williard, wife of President Kerry Williard, Dennis Mulligan, Doug Carlson, Carey Carlson, Teri Brennan Carlson, Terry Morrison, Betsy Paolini, Carolyn Healey, Shay Mulligan and all members in need of prayers.

Special prayers are asked for the following deceased members and their families: Dr. Richard Flannery, Kathleen Creed, Joseph P. Riley, Craig Wolfe, Clare Flannery and all the deceased members of the AOH-LAOH of Berks County.

COMING EVENTS

07/04/21	Fourth of July - Independence Day
07/14/21	General Membership meeting
08/11/21	General Membership meeting
08/21/21	Feast of "Our Lady of Knock"
09/06/21	Labor Day
09/08/21	General Membership meeting
09/13/21	Commodore John Barry Day
10/13/21	General Membership Meeting
11/10/21	General Membership Meeting
11/11/21	Veteran's Day
11/20-21/21	Kennedy House Soup Kitchen Duty
11/25/21	Thanksgiving Day
12/08/21	General Membership Meeting
12/25/21	Christmas Day

NEWSLETTER

Once again, we remind our members and friends that all members should forward name, address or e-mail changes to the Financial Secretary as soon as they occur. It is imperative that all information listed for each member is accurate to ensure receipt of the National Hibernian Digest mailed bi-monthly. In addition, the National President and other National Officers regularly puts out email notices of items of interest and news updates on the national level.

If we have learned anything from the recent pandemic, it is the necessity to keep the avenues of communication open when we lose our ability to meet regularly. This newsletter is our main source of communicating with you as well as the

National Hibernian Digest mailed every other month, so it is of great importance that keep you informed as to what plans are being made with you, the member in mind.

As with all things the cost of putting our newsletter out quarterly keeps rising with no end in sight. We direct you to the list of supporters on the last page of our newsletter. Thanks to their support our newsletter is made possible. If you would like to join our list of supporters for the first time, our rates remain the same \$12 for patron ads, and \$50 for business card ads.

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

The names of members who are celebrating birthdays during the next two months are listed below. We have acquired the information from our membership applications, so if there are any corrections or errors please advise.

JULY

11th Fr. Robert Finlan
11th Robert J. McHale
23rd Robert McIntyre
30th Msgr. Stephen Radocha

AUGUST

3rd Michael B. Riley
9th Andrew Scott
10th Fr Eugene Ritz
11th Sean Flannery
16th John J McHale
18th John McCormack
19th Timothy J. Dillon

SEPTEMBER

16th Timothy M. Kelly
17th James D. Caherly
22nd Ray Butterworth
23rd Daniel R Flannery
23rd John J. Dore

MEETING NIGHT Just a reminder that St. Brendan's Div.#1 has changed our meeting to the second Wednesday of each month. For the past 40 years we had been meeting on the second Friday, however due to a drop in membership attending meetings we decided that perhaps changing to Wednesday would be more acceptable and increase member participation.

During the ongoing pandemic restrictions, we will continue to use ZOOM to conduct our meetings. For the past six months we were fortunate to have our first Chaplain, Fr. William Campion join us on Zoom. We encourage all members who may be interested to join us. Anyone interested can call or email me and I will add your name to the list of invitees and you will be emailed the codes to join the meeting by using the passcodes.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Are you aware that St. Brendan's Division #1 is available on several social media platforms? Listed are the addresses where we can be found:

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/aoh.stbrendans>
St Brendan's Website - www.berkscoaoh.com
National AOH Website - www.aoh.com

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Have you ever considered running for an office in St. Brendan's? If so, now is the time to give it some serious thought. We realize it is only July and the election of Officers won't take place until October, but we are urging our members to give the idea some serious thought!

We need an infusion of new officers if we are to survive. Not that the current officers are doing something wrong, it is just that new ideas, and new faces helps breathe new life and many of our officers have been around a long time and for health reasons some of us would welcome the opportunity to see our division explore new horizons. At the same time our experience could provide assistance to our replacements as our division progresses into the future.

Come October we will be opening nominations for the following offices: President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Financial Secretary, Treasurer, Standing Committee Chair, Marshal and Sentinel. There are also several officers that are appointed by the President. So, if interested, please contact any officer re. questions and duties of officers. It can prove to be a very rewarding experience!

IRISH HISTORY (continued from last newsletter)

Comodore Barry:

On March 8, 1778, Barry attacked a British fleet with a tiny squadron of tubs — a plan made to order for the daring Irish commander. Barry took his mix of seven small craft, including rowboats, barges and longboats, and surprised two armed sloops as well as a fortified schooner capturing all three.

Barry was on the active roll of American Navy until the end of his life. But he received little in the way of compensation from the always hard-pressed Continental Congress during the Revolutionary War. In fact, Barry petitioned the Congress for back wages after the War in the amount of \$6,000. Barry's Navy was always fraught with problems ranging from lack of supplies and money to mutinous sailors or no sailors at all.

Barry also succeeded in destroying three ships, holding off a frigate and a ship-of-the-line and garnering vital British intelligence and valuable Engineers' entrenching tools. Washington sent Barry a letter commending him, stating "may a suitable recompense always attend your bravery."

The year 1778 saw Barry assigned to the 32-gun frigate *Raleigh*. Unfortunately, shortly after getting out of port in late September of that year the *Raleigh* was sighted by the superior British forces which included the frigate, *Unicorn*, and the ship-of-the-line, *Experiment*. A 48-hour northward chase ensued with Barry fighting the *Unicorn* steadily until the *Raleigh's* foretopmast cracked and he arrived in Maine's Penobscot Bay — unfamiliar waters where Barry had no

knowledge of a safe harbor amongst the rocky shoals. Cornered on Wooden Ball Island in the rocky Maine inlets, Barry determined to save his crew and fire his ship rather than let the British take possession.

Barry saved two-thirds of his crew. But the perfidy of a traitorous American midshipman of English ancestry prevented the blowing up of the *Raleigh* and the complete escape of all hands. (Barry didn't want the ship to fall in the hands of the British.) Nevertheless, Barry successfully guided 88 of his men to safety in rowboats to Boston. The entire episode reflected on Barry's concern for the welfare of his crew and his stubborn refusal to surrender.

Colonial seamen in the Revolution often found it more lucrative to sign up with "pirates," private ship owners who raided British ships, rather than with the fledgling Continental Navy. The reason: money. When a privateer captured a British ship, the booty belonged to that captain who divvied it with his crew. While Continental Navy men would also receive some share of the spoils if they caught a British ship, it was nothing compared to work in the private sector. Further, life in the U.S. Navy imposed much more discipline than the freewheeling freebooters.

Obviously, Barry was a commanding figure. He appeared on deck a burly 6'4", well-built, ruddy-complexioned man of dignified carriage who spoke in a commanding tone. His handsome, Irish features were accentuated by a small mole located at the upper bridge of a Grecian nose and unusually inverted eyebrows. Hazel eyes glistened brightly and his determination was evidenced by a square, Irish chin. Barry was owner of a wry sense of humor and had to control a sudden Irish temper on occasion. His sheer physical size was an imposing sight in an era when most men stood about 5'5". His great strength was well known in naval circles especially after he single-handedly suppressed three ship mutinies and threw the mutinous ringleaders in the hold. As a disciplinarian, he was firm though fair. Barry was still able to raise crews, despite the mass exoduses to the privateering business. Barry was a firm believer in Divine Providence and regularly opened his ship day with a Bible reading to his crew.

The frigate "Alliance" was Barry's favorite and the most popular ship in the Continental Navy. It was the one regularly commissioned ship afloat at the close of the Revolution in 1783.

Barry captured numerous British prizes during the Revolution and holds the record for prize money returns in a single voyage. His Continental commands included successively: the *Lexington*, 16 guns, the *Effingham*, 32 guns, the *Raleigh*, 32 guns, and the *Alliance*, 36 guns.

Barry's most renowned naval encounter occurred off the coast of Newfoundland on May 28, 1781. Barry's ship, the

36-gun frigate *Alliance*, took on two British ships, the sloop *Atlanta*, and the sloop, *Tresspassy*. Barry's guns spoke first in the form of a well-directed broadside. Unfortunately, however, the *Alliance* soon lay becalmed in the water due to a lack of wind. The two smaller British ships were able to employ sweeps and maneuver close to the prow and stern of the *Alliance*. They thus were able to rake the *Alliance* from either end. Both ships inflicted considerable damage to the *Alliance*'s rigs, spars, masts and sails due to her inability to make steerageway. Barry conducted a relentless defense from the quarterdeck until a hurtling projectile of canister shot (broken nails, metal fragments, and minnie balls) struck him in the left shoulder. He remained on deck bleeding from many wounds for twenty minutes, until, losing consciousness from loss of blood, he was escorted below deck to the cockpit for medical care by the ship's surgeon Kendall.

As the struggle increased in smoky intensity, the *Alliance*'s colors (flag) were shot away. Barry's second in command, Lieutenant Hoysted Hacker, appeared before him as his wounds were being dressed and said, "I have to report the ship in frightful condition, Sir. The rigging is much cut, damage everywhere great, many men killed and wounded, and we labor under great disadvantage for want of wind. Have I permission to strike our colors?" Barry angrily replied, "No Sir, the thunder! If this ship cannot be fought without me, I will be brought on deck; to your duty, Sir." A new flag was raised using the "mizzenbrail" for a halyard, and the fight continued. Just as Hacker reached the deck, filled with renewed resolve, a bit of luck arrived in the presence of a gust of wind filling the *Alliance*'s sails. Replying to her helm, the battered *Alliance* swung about. The whole starboard battery was employed with decisive effect. Fourteen 12-pound cannons were brought into the fray. After two successful broadsides, both the "*Atlanta*" and the "*Tresspassy*" struck their colors. The grueling battle had lasted nearly four hours and had cost the British two ships, 11 dead, including one of the two captains, and 25 wounded.

The surviving British commander, Captain Edwards, appeared on the deck of the *Alliance* for the customary surrender ceremony. He was led to Barry's cabin where the American commander's wounds had just been dressed. Edwards presented his sword. Barry received it, then returned it with the message, "I return it to you, Sir. You have merited it, and your King ought to give you a better ship. Here is my cabin, at your service. Use it as your own."

Barry prepared an official report of his double victory for the Board of Admiralty, which rejoiced in the success achieved. Barry's agent, John Brown, referred to the Board's reaction when he said, "Amidst their rejoicing it gives them pain to think that so Gallant and diligent an Officer should by a wound be prevented even for a Short time from rendering those Services which he hath always shown such an inclination and Ability to perform."

The Final Fight

Barry's final battle of the Revolution was also the last sea battle of the Continental Navy. On March 10, 1783, Barry was returning from Havana aboard the *Alliance* escorting the *Duc de Lauzon*, a transport carrying a shipment of 72,000 Spanish silver dollars destined for the Continental Congress. Off the coast of Cape Canaveral, Florida, the *Alliance* fell in with the British frigate, the *Sybil*. To protect his escort and its precious bullion, Barry engaged the *Sybil*. A 45-minute exchange of gunfire ensued, with Barry directing his gun crews to superb results. The British vessel sheared off after experiencing severe punishment from the American crews who shattered her rigging, mast's and hull.

After the War for Independence and the dissolution of the Continental Navy, Barry reentered the maritime trade. Between the years 1787-89, Barry helped to open commerce with China and the Orient while captaining the merchant ship, *Asia*. Patrick Hayes, his second wife Sally's nephew, accompanied Barry on his eventful journeys to the Orient where porcelain and ivory treasures were brought back and sold to Philadelphians hungering for luxurious items.

In the 1790s, under Washington's guidance, the Navy was revived as a permanent entity. Barbary Pirate depredations on American merchantmen had strained relations with America's old ally France and brought about this revival. On June 5, 1794, Secretary of War Henry Knox wrote Barry to inform him that on the day earlier, Barry had been selected senior Captain of the Federal Navy by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate.



The epithet Father of the Navy first appeared with the publication of a biographical sketch in Nicholas Biddle's literary journal, *Port Folio*, in 1813.

The Father of the Navy

On February 22, 1797, President Washington called Barry to the President's Mansion at 190 High (Market) Street, to receive Commission Number One in the Navy which was dated June 4, 1794, the date of his original selection. The formal ceremony took place on Washington's birthday.

Barry outfitted and supervised the construction of the first frigates built under the Naval Act of March 27, 1794,

including his own forty-four-gun frigate the "USS *United States*", which was to serve as his flagship. The *United States* slid into the water on May 10, 1797, under Barry's helm.

Barry held the courtesy title of Commodore from this period since he served as squadron commander of the fleet which assembled in the West India Sea. He commanded all American ships during the undeclared naval war with France (1798-1800) and personally captured several French merchantmen. Barry finished his active career as head squadron commander of the United States Naval Station in the West Indies at Guadeloupe (1798-1801). Perhaps most significantly he trained numerous future sea heroes who won fresh laurels in the War of 1812.

John Barry was so well-regarded during his lifetime that when President Jefferson retrenched the military establishment, Barry's services were retained.

Despite being so engaged with naval matters, Barry was active socially while on land. He was a member of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick, the Hibernian Fire Company, and the Order of the Cincinnati — the military brotherhood of officers of the Continental Army, Navy and Marines that General Henry Knox organized in 1783.

He also showed a philanthropic side. Early in his career as a young ship master, he joined the Charitable Captains of Ships Club, organized for the relief of widows and orphans of sailing men.

Barry's contributions to the nascent navy were singular. He authored a Signal Book in 1780, which established a set of signals to be used for effective communication between ships voyaging in squadron formation. Barry also suggested the creation of a Department of the Navy with separate cabinet status from the Secretary of War. This was finally realized with the formation of the United States Department of the Navy in 1798. Barry's suggestions about establishing government-operated navy yards were also realized. So many of the heroes of the War of 1812 were trained under Barry's tutelage that he earned the sobriquet, "Father of the Navy."

The esteem in which Barry was held by his contemporaries can best be summarized by the words of his close friend and eulogist, Signer of the Declaration, Doctor Benjamin Rush, who wrote:

He fought often and once bled in the cause of freedom, but his habits of War did not lessen in him the peaceful virtues which adorn private life."

Prematurely aged from an arduous life at sea, as can be evidenced by looking at an 1801 Gilbert Stuart portrait,

Barry lived but 58 years. He died on September 12, 1803, at his country home "Strawberry Hill," some three miles north of Philadelphia, of a long-standing asthmatic affliction.

In placing Barry at the head of the Navy, George Washington stated he had special trust and confidence "in [Commodore Barry's] patriotism, valor, fidelity and abilities." Neither Washington, Barry's old friend, nor the Nation ever had reason to regret the selection of Barry as head of the Navy. Barry played a vital role in establishing the earliest traditions of the Navy: faithful devotion to duty, honoring the flag, and vigilant protection of the rights of the sovereign United States.

Barry's last day of active duty came on March 6, 1801, when he brought the *USS United States* into port. He remained head of the Navy until his death on September 12, 1803, from the complications of asthma. On September 14, 1803, John Barry received his country's salute in a full military burial in Philadelphia's Old St. Mary's Churchyard. Such was the man, John Barry, a gallant mariner who served his Nation well and stood tall in the annals of American naval history.

"OUR LADY OF KNOCK - IRELAND'S ONLY QUEEN"



"On a wet Thursday evening of the 21st August, 1879, at about the hour of 8 o'clock, Our Lady, St. Joseph, and St. John the Evangelist appeared in a blaze of Heavenly light at the south gable of the Church of St. John the Baptist. Behind them and a little to the left of St. John was a plain altar. On the altar was a cross and a lamb with adoring angels. The Apparition was seen by fifteen people whose ages ranged from six years to seventy-five and included men, women, teenagers and children.

The poor humble witnesses distinctly beheld the Blessed Virgin Mary clothed in white robes with a brilliant crown on her head. Over the forehead where the crown fitted the brow, she wore a beautiful full-bloom golden rose. She was in an attitude of prayer with her eyes and hands raised towards Heaven. St. Joseph stood on Our Lady's right. He was turned towards her in an attitude of respect. His robes were also white. St. John was on Our Lady's left. He was dressed in white vestments and resembled a bishop, with a small Miter. He appeared to be preaching and he held an open book in his left hand.

The witnesses watched the Apparition in pouring rain for two hours, reciting the Rosary. Although the witnesses standing before the

gable were drenched, no rain fell in the direction of the gable. They felt the ground carefully with their hands and it was perfectly dry as was the gable itself."

OUR LADY OF KNOCK, Queen of Ireland

Brighter than worlds of sunburst beaming-
Fairer than myriad fair stars gleaming-
Whiter than floods of moon waves gleaming-
Lovelier far than the loveliest seeming-
Vision of love, of a pure heart's dreaming-
The blight of the night of lost life redeeming-
Our Lady of Knock!

Thy beauty the heavens and earth transcending-
Purer than crystalline dew descending-
On the lips of the virgin rose low bending-
Softer than rays of the rainbow blending-
Tint into tint, in the heavens depending-
Sweeter than incense clouds ascending-
When the organ its silvery peal is lending-
To the aid of the suppliant voice attending-
Our Lady of Knock!

In the least of thy charms more wonders combining-
Than the mightiest mind in its art designing-
Fairer than milk white lilies entwining-
Their petals of gold round their heart's snow lining-
Cherubim, Seraphim, all outshining-
Far above mortals, or angels divining-
Our Lady of Knock
"Queen of all queens", bespeaks thy brow-
Virgin of Virgins, we fervently vow-
To thy service each day that our lives allow-
Life of our life! To thee we bow-
Hope of our joy! We hail thee now;
Love of our heart's deep love art thou-
Our Lady of Knock

Consoler of Erin! Art thou not so?
Come in the night and the might of our woe-
In the storms that blast, and the winds that blow,
O'er our poor motherland drooping low,
Forsaken of friend, derided by foe-
Thy mercy show, and relief bestow-
On the hearts that break, and the eyes that flow,
With tears - still the fears that their sad souls know-
Our Lady of Knock!

OUR LADY OF KNOCK MASS

Now that the coronavirus pandemic seems to lessen its grip on our area, we will have our annual Lady of Knock Mass at St. Ignatius Parish on Saturday August 21, 2021 at 4pm Mass.

We normally had been holding our Mass at the McGlinn Chapel at the Bernadine Convent in Alvernia University but due to the pandemic and the Chapel being in the retirement home of many Bernadine Sisters, the convent has been closed to the public. Hopefully, we can resume in the not-to-distant future for the Chapel is a special place.

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Len & Bryn Weckel 03/21



On 4 July 1776, the Philadelphia State House was packed, despite a sweltering heat, as Secretary Charles Thomson of Derry read a Declaration that Adams, Jefferson, Franklin, and Livingston had composed and that he, Thomson, had drafted. It was a declaration explaining why their revolutionary action was justified. After a full day of debate, modifying copy and amendments, Secretary Thomson recorded the changes and America's Declaration of Independence was complete! The formal copy would not be ready for signature until August, but the public first heard that document read on 8 July 1776 by Col. John Nixon, son of a Wexford immigrant. Philadelphia printer Charles Dunlap of Tyrone rolled out copies that were snatched up before the ink was dry. Among the courageous men who signed that Declaration of Independence were eight Irish Americans, three of whom were Irish born. To sign this momentous document was an act of high treason against the British Crown. All the signers could be executed, and their estates confiscated, thereby impoverishing their families. But they hated monarchy and their spirit of independence is at the heart of the Republic they would crucially help to form. Their brand of defiance saw through British imperialism and used Enlightenment ideas to create a nation of free people.

Those Irish signers were:

Thomas McKeon, Charles Carroll, James Smith, George Taylor, Matthew Thornton, Edward Rutledge, Thomas Lynch, JR, and George Read. All the 56 signers were brave and daring men and put their lives on the line to give their sons and future Americans the country we have today. Remember them and keep America the way they envisioned it could be.

Happy Easter from the officers and members
of St. Brendan's Division #1, AOH Berks
County, PA



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