



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

Dec 2019

Regular Meeting **Tuesday, December 10, 2019**
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 all enjoyed your Thanksgiving with your family and friends.

Our Communion Breakfast was wonderful. Many thanks to Rita Lydon-Lenz for all her hard work for making it such a success. Congratulations to our **Distinguished Award Recipients** for their many years of service to the Mayo Society; **Nora Ronan and Tommy Murray**. Congratulations to our **Scholarship Winners**; **Martina McEntee**, granddaughter to George Gibbons who was the winner and to **Catherine Mary Cunningham**, granddaughter of Eileen Cunningham who was the runner up. Marion Hyer and Eddie Jennings presented the scholarship awards as a tribute to their parents John and Kathleen Jennings. We do plan on continuing the scholarship next year.

This past month, we lost **Bridget Cronin** and our dear friend, member and very proud Mayo Man; **Joe Flannery**. We offer our prayers to their families during this difficult time. May they Rest in Peace.

I would like to congratulate **Noreen Lydon O'Donoghue** and **Mike McMahon** who will be your next President and Vice President. Both great people with hearts of gold. I welcome our newly elected Board and Trustees. Thank you all for your dedication to our county. On a personal note, it was a great pleasure to serve as your President. I can't believe my two years are almost over.

Our next meeting will be our Christmas party. Please come and bring a friend. New members are always welcome.

We are looking forward to the Mayo male choir coming in April. They will perform a concert at the Irish American Center in Mineola on April 17th, 2020.

There will be a mass for Theresa Cunningham on January 5th at 1:30pm at St. Sebastian's Church given by Jane Duffy, and one for Joe Flannery on February 23rd given by Kitty Thornton.

Our January letter will enclose our Journal and Dance information.

I would like to wish each one of you a Blessed Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Please remember to pray for our sick and deceased members.

Love Betty

Upcoming Events:

- **Celtic Christmas Concert** at the Irish American Center Mineola on December 20. Chloe's Christmas Celebration Chloe Agnew, star of the PBS phenomenon, Celtic Woman celebrates the joy of the Christmas season, with a Celtic twist.
- **Holly and Ivy** at the Irish American Center on December 21st with music by Sharon and Mike at 8pm.
- **Pre-New Year's Eve Dinner and Dancing** to Tommy Clyne at 2pm at the Irish American Center on December 29th. If you're interested call the center at 516-746-9392
- **Sing! An Irish Christmas with Keith & Kristyn Getty**. Wednesday, December 18 at 7.30pm at Carnegie Hall
- **Irish Arts Center Winter Solstice Celebration** at the Irish Arts Center, NYC on December 11-13.
- **The Irish Tenors: Christmas/Holiday Tour 2019 with Members of The Njso** at the Bergen Performing Arts Center on December 10 at 8 pm.

ST. STEPHEN'S DAY IN IRELAND

December 26th, the day after Christmas is observed in Ireland as St. Stephen's Day or The Feast of St. Stephen. St. Stephen was the first Christian Martyr, killed by stoning for refusing to renounce his faith in Jesus Christ. Saul of Tarsus was present as a prominent persecutor of Christians. Saul was later converted by a vision of Christ and became known as St. Paul the Apostle. That date of December 26th was chosen as St. Stephen's feast day because on December 26, 415 AD, his remains were recovered after having been lost for centuries. It is said that as the bones of St. Stephen were placed in a chest, 70 witnesses were miraculously healed from a variety of ailments. St. Augustine later reported that petals from flowers on St. Stephen's reliquary cured a woman of blindness when placed on her eyes.

St. Stephen's remains were discovered along with the relics of St. Gamaliel and St. Joseph of Arimathea. The spirit of St. Gamaliel appeared in a dream to a priest named Lucian and guided him to the tomb in Caphargamala (modern-day Beir Jimal, Israel) near Jerusalem where all three were buried. St. Joseph of Arimathea had earlier given his own personal tomb to Jesus after the crucifixion after obtaining permission from Pontius Pilate. He was wealthy and influential as a member of the Sanhedrin, the Jewish general council; but was absent when they condemned Jesus for blasphemy. Legend has it that he may have been related to Jesus and as a tin merchant; may have brought Jesus as a boy to Britain, which was then inhabited by Celtic tribes. Legends that he may have brought the cup used at The Last Supper (The Holy Grail) to Britain are at the heart of the legends of King Arthur.

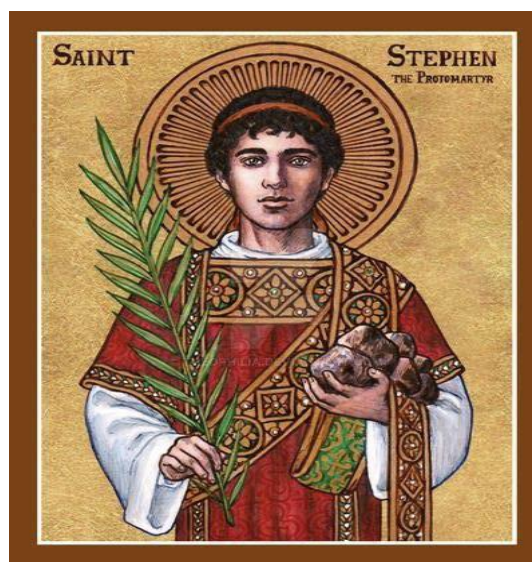
Another legend has it that St. Stephen's martyrdom happened after his hiding place was given away by the song of wrens chattering in nearby bushes. This is how the custom of hunting the wren on St. Stephen's Day came about. The wren appeared also in Celtic mythology that predates Christianity as having a cunning or deceptive character; and was also associated with the Festival of Samhain, November 1st; when the Celtic year began. This custom was also observed in Wales, The Isle of Man and Southern France, but particularly in Ireland. years.

The bird was ceremoniously hunted, and a funeral procession would go locally, door to door to collect money for the burial. The ritual would usually be followed by "Wren Boys"; boys and men, sometimes women wearing costumes or disguises, playing instruments and singing with much eating and drinking. The accompanying customs are still observed in Ireland, though without actually hunting the wren in recent years.

Kevin Rooney



An Irish stamp honoring the wren



The Wren Boys