

NATIONAL BOARD



OFFICE OF THE  
NATIONAL  
FFAI

SEAN PENDER  
13 Scullin Drive  
Yardville, NJ 08620

Phone: (609) 581-8348  
Cell: (609) 462-7056  
E-Mail: paddyspeed@yahoo.com

# ANCIENT ORDER OF HIBERNIANS IN AMERICA

INCORPORATED

Organized in New York City, May 4, 1836

## Freedom For All Ireland Christmas Appeal 2011 Mailing Contents:

**\$1000 Pledge form**

**Christmas Appeal Letter**

**The FFAI \$10 club**

**\$10 club sign up**

**Information on groups the Christmas Appeal has supported**

*"Ireland Unfree Shall Never Be At Peace."*

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## *\$1000 Pledge Form Customized Award*

Division # \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Division President \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Division Address (where award will be sent)

Attn: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of division board as it should appear when recognized:

Our division pledges a minimum of \$1,000 for the FFAI Christmas Appeal. We will forward that amount by January 15<sup>th</sup> 2012.

President's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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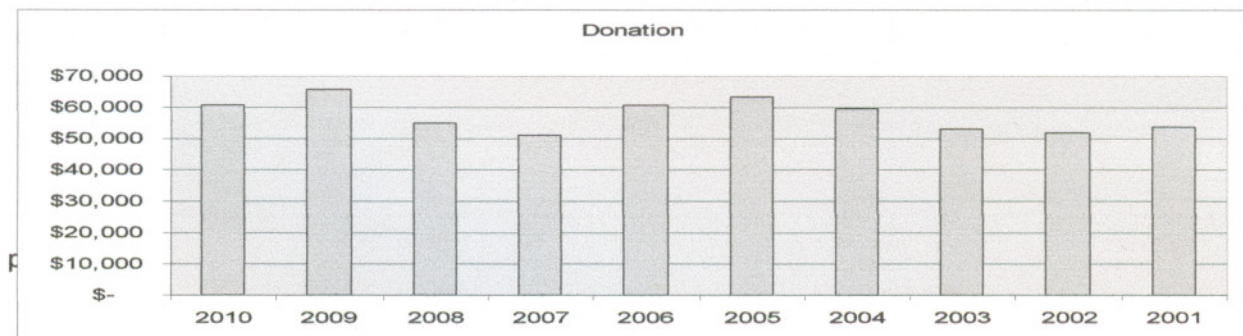
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## 2011 Christmas Appeal: Consider Giving Because

In April I received a request from the Connecticut AOH /LAOH convention to make a presentation regarding Freedom for All Ireland and specifically the yearly Christmas appeal. This request afforded me the opportunity to prepare a detailed look into the history and performance of our yearly appeal. The result was that I developed a presentation that I have been honored to present at several conventions this summer. It gives a brief history of the AOH and our support of a United Ireland, it traced our involvement and support of the struggle for Irish freedom from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to today, it reviewed the groups we support, where the funds go and why those funds are still so important.

In the last ten years the Christmas Appeal has raised over \$570,000 this is a number that we can all be proud of. Analysis of the donations yield that we have a dedicated core group of donors who fund a great portion of the appeal and a participation rate from AOH divisions that is surprising low.



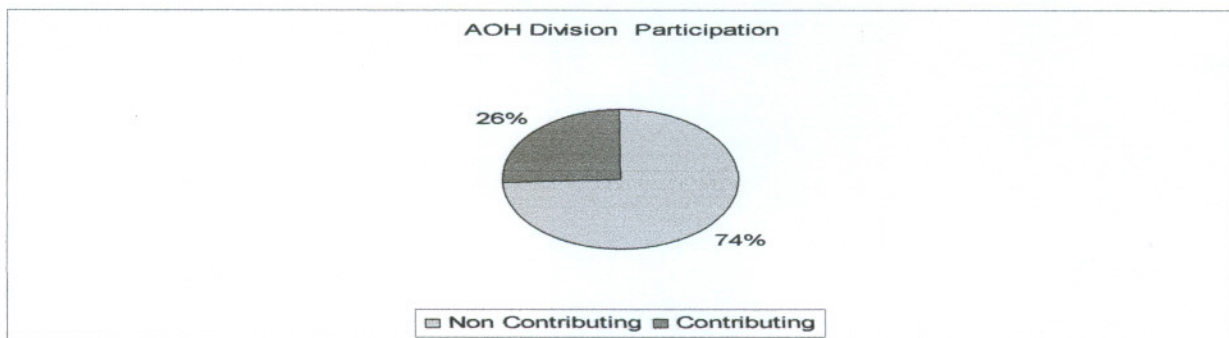
*"Ireland Unfree Shall Never Be At Peace."*

Last years' appeal served as a perfect case in point. The 2010 appeal generated just under \$61,000 and of that almost two thirds or about \$40,000 was the result of 25 donations. These 25 donations contributed \$39,409 or 65% of the appeal and were from:

- Both National Boards
- One Individual
- Two LAOH Divisions
- Twenty AOH Divisions

The final \$21,000 was the result of 157 donations and raffle returns of almost \$2,000.

Whether the donation was \$5 to \$6,500 all donations are greatly appreciated and the sacrifice noted. The alarming result of this analysis is that nationally out of 370 AOH divisions only 96 contributed or a disappointing 25%.



So this year 2011 I want to once again appeal to those who historically support the Christmas appeal to continue your support but I want to target the 75% of divisions that do not give and ask that you consider giving this year.

Consider giving because: The third principle of our national constitution's preamble states one of the purposes of our organization is: *To aid and advance by all legitimate means the aspirations and endeavors of the Irish people for complete and absolute independence, promoting peace (with justice) and unity for all Ireland.* Our Christmas appeal helps work towards "One Island, One Ireland with Justice for All" be a part of it. The groups we support are helping to build confidence and trust in cross community and reconciliation efforts.

Consider giving because: Our job is not finished in the North until there is a United Ireland inclusive of all people's rights. The groups we support are fighting for these rights and justice for those that have been deprived rights and truth in the past.

Consider giving because: there are ex-republican prisoners who spent large portions of their life unjustly jailed. They never once complained about their situation, rather these men and women have returned to the communities they were fighting for and defending, to make their communities better. These ex-prisoner groups we support continue to need our help to overcome decades of injustice and prejudice.

Consider giving because: there are ex Irish republican prisoners in this country who have never received a peace dividend for supporting the Good Friday Agreement and helping promote peace in the North. These men even after living in this country for over two decades as model citizens, without a mark on their records, having paid taxes and raised children who are American citizens still live with the uncertainty of never knowing when and if they could be denied continued residence. They need our continued support.

Consider giving because: there are more children in the North of Ireland today speaking the Irish language than there has been in generations. Despite the best efforts by those who continue to use subtle forms of discrimination the Irish language is experiencing a revival in the North. The groups we support are helping continue this renaissance.

Consider giving because: because a society that is evolving from over three decades of war needs support to overcome some of the collateral damage of those times. We have supported community groups who have tried to reduce suicides, fund after school programs for the most economically deprived and provide counseling for those that still deal with the grief and the loss of many years ago.

But finally consider giving because: if we don't, no one else will. The sad fact of the matter is that the great majority of the groups we help do not have many other avenues for funding. This makes the dollars they receive so critical. I do not want to take one penny away from any of the charities we support with our divisions and boards; I only ask that you make it a point this year to give something to the Christmas Appeal. Thank you for your consideration.

A list of organizations we support will once again be listed at the end of this mailing. If you would like to direct your funds specifically to one organization just note that request and your request will be honored.

All Checks must be made out to *-AOH FFAI Christmas Appeal*, payments should be sent to Sean Pender 13 Scullin Dr. Yardville NJ 08620. I can also be reached at [paddyspeed@yahoo.com](mailto:paddyspeed@yahoo.com) or by calling 609 462 7056 if there are any questions. Once again this year donations of \$1,000 or more will be recognized with a special reward. I am finalizing details with an Irish craftsman and will post specific details in the very near future.

There has been a considerable amount of interest in once again making a trip to the North of Ireland in late January/early February. While the Bloody Sunday commemoration march ended triumphantly last year, there is still a need for us to present the donations to those groups we support. I am working with a tour group to once again sponsor a week- long trip thru the North. If there is interest in joining this trip please email me at [paddyspeed@yahoo.com](mailto:paddyspeed@yahoo.com) or by call 609 462 7056. As soon as details are finalized they will be posted on [www.aoh.com](http://www.aoh.com) and circulated via mail and email.

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## *The FFAI \$10 Club*

### **What is it?**

Members make voluntary donations in the amount of \$10 each to support the Freedom for All Ireland Christmas Appeal. Donations are separate from Division contributions.

### **Why should I do it?**

The preamble to the constitution of our organization lists as the third purpose of our order: "To aid and advance by all legitimate means the aspirations and endeavors of the Irish people for complete and absolute independence, promoting peace and unity for all Ireland." While having a stable government of and by the people of the North of Ireland is a very significant event it is not our end goal. The organizations that we support and that have been highlighted in the Hibernian Digest still need our support to help ensure we reach our goal of 32 county united Ireland that promotes peace and justice for all its people.

### **Who is responsible?**

All Division, County and State Freedom for all Ireland are responsible for gathering funds and submitting

**"Everyone, Republican or otherwise, has their own particular part to play. No part is too great or too small; no one is too old or too young to do something."**

**Bobby Sands –**

**Contributing to the \$10 club - the small part you play each year.**

*"Ireland Unfree Shall Never Be At Peace."*

Division \_\_\_\_\_ City/County \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Page \_\_\_\_\_

## *Freedom For All Ireland \$10 Club*

*Please Remit to:*

*Sean Pender FFAI Chairman 13 Scullin Drive Yardville, NJ 08620*

Name (Please Print)

email

Amount

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***Groups that have received support via the AOH Christmas Appeal***

**Belfast National Graves**

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/National-Graves-Association-Belfast/126310260745335>

Primary mission is the upkeep of Belfast republican graves and memorials. By keeping fitting memorials to those who have paid the supreme sacrifice and with the hope that no other Irish men or women shall ever have to do this again.

**Bogside Artists:**

[WWW.BOGSIDEARTISTS.COM](http://WWW.BOGSIDEARTISTS.COM)

THE BOGSIDE ARTISTS ARE A MURAL TEAM, WHO ARE THE CREATERS OF THE PEOPLES GALLERY IN DERRY. They are also the creators of the twelve large scale murals in Derry that tell the story of the peoples struggle for basic civil rights situated in the bogside, at the entrance to the Bogside they also run a large gallery, where they exhibit work of up and coming artists, it is also where they conduct their workshops with children and youth from both sides of the community. The artists also give lectures and have a number of their own exhibitions on tour, mainly in the US.

*"Ireland Unfree Shall Never Be At Peace."*

## Cairde:

Cairde is a self-help initiative taken by republican prisoners from the Strabane area. Cairde is designed to assist with the particular needs of prisoners and their families and to empower all those who have experienced incarceration as a result of the political conflict in Ireland. The aims of the group are to establish a resource and service facility which will respond to the special needs and interests of ex-prisoners and their families and provide resources which will effectively assist empowerment.

## Cuimhneamh

Cuimhneamh is a 'living history' project initially funded by Newry & Mourne Local Strategy Partnership. Its aim is to compile an extensive and ongoing archive of people's memories and experiences from the early twentieth century to the present day. Audio/visual interviews are being conducted with a wide spectrum of people to provide an oral history of South Armagh and North Louth. These interviews are combined with documents and photographs in order to build up a comprehensive archive of material. Training was provided to volunteers who wish to participate in the project. The intention is that this archive of material – "a living museum" will be made accessible to the public at the Tí Chulainn Centre. The museum will be open to the public one day a week and will be a resource for school groups. The aim of this to build on the success of the project. It aims to facilitate personal, political and cultural development of people from South Armagh, who have been directly affected by the events of the past 30 years. The destructive consequences of the conflict in Ireland have left communities across South Armagh marginalised. Until recently people were unable to talk about their experiences because of fear. Actually being able to go and visit people to record their experiences is one of the advantages of the peace process we now have. Highlighting a legacy of the conflict (people's silence) this project aims to raise the self-esteem and self-confidence across the community. A direct result of the legacy of conflict in the area is the negative media image; we aim to improve this by making accessible an oral history archive online which will highlight the true strength and character of the area

## Green Cross, AnCuman Cubrach Belfast

To provide material assistance to the families of people bereaved in the Troubles and to assist in the alleviation of hardship in the community

## Mary's Gift [www.marysgift.org](http://www.marysgift.org)

Mary's Gift Irish Language Foundation is a US-based charitable endowment fund which provides financial support to Irish-Immersion schools in the Six Counties. Similar conceptually to a college endowment, Mary's Gift distributes earnings from donations to preschool, primary and post-primary schools where all subjects are taught through the medium of Irish language. Mary's Gift is a private and independent "501(c) (3)" public charity, unaffiliated with any other organization, school, government, or religion. Mary's Gift is managed exclusively by volunteers; all donations are used solely to support recipient schools or pay foundation expenses.

## Omagh Basketball Team [www.bebo.com/Profile.jsp?MemberId=4283498778](http://www.bebo.com/Profile.jsp?MemberId=4283498778)

The main goal of the Omagh Basketball Club (OBC) is to bring children from all sides of the community and teach them to work together, using basketball as our tool. The Omagh Basketball Club cannot thank you enough for all the assistance you have provided to us to help keep children healthy, active and open-minded in Omagh.

Contributions in 2009 helped fund the historic 2010 summer OBC trip to the USA.

**Pat Finucane Centre: Derry and Newry** [www.patfinucanecentre.org](http://www.patfinucanecentre.org)

Inherent to the work of the Pat Finucane Centre is our core belief that;

- 1) the conflict has produced a legacy that will prove destabilising and destructive to any efforts at peace building and reconciliation unless that legacy is faced openly and honestly;
- 2) The criminal justice system is wholly inappropriate to the task of truth recovery, restorative justice and reconciliation in respect of the legacy of the conflict.

As part of our strategy to address point 1 a central focus of our work has been (and will continue to be) to research and document individual cases of conflict related loss of life following a specific request from a relative. Underpinning this is human rights based approach which dictates that relatives have a 'right to truth' in respect of each individual loss. We have developed a certain level of expertise in terms of our advocacy and research and this has been recognised both at a statutory and parliamentary level.\*

The first challenge for the PFC has been to 'piece together the missing pieces of the jigsaw' in terms of those incidents where our help is sought. The second and more difficult challenge (point 2) has been to find innovative alternatives for families seeking redress as a result of having lost relatives. The inability of the criminal justice system to provide for 'justice' in terms of cases which may go back a generation is self evident. The majority of families with whom we work have little or no confidence in the prosecution service or the courts.

**Relatives For Justice** **Belfast and Dungannon** [www.relativesforjustice.com](http://www.relativesforjustice.com)

Supporting the victims of State violence and collusion to campaign for Truth; developing legal strategies aimed at uncovering the truth; supporting families engaging with the Police Ombudsman, Courts, Inquests re truth finding investigations; creating awareness and providing information – especially in US via Irish America, including lobbying the Congress and Senate with AOH partnership support.

Examining transitional justice and truth recovery mechanisms for families and survivors of British State violence; providing therapeutic models for healing and personal recovery due to traumatic impact of the conflict.

**Saint Patrick Centre** [www.saintpatrickcentre.com](http://www.saintpatrickcentre.com)

Located beside Saint Patrick's Grave in Downpatrick, County Down, the Saint Patrick Centre is the only permanent exhibition in the World dedicated to the memory of the Patron Saint of Ireland. It is a centre for Tourism, reconciliation and is dedicated to all of the people of Ireland. Created through finances

secured by the International Fund for Ireland, the Millennium Commission and Northern Ireland Tourist Board, the Centre was developed as a visitor resource to boost the local tourism economy in an area hard hit by the Troubles and thereby bring help normality and stability to Mid Down. Tourism and the economic benefits which it brings, so much enjoyed in the other provinces of Ireland, is slowly coming back to this corner of the island through our endeavors.

The Centre has also become a key player in the Peace Process through the reconciliation work which is done here with over 5,000 children a year coming through our program. What better role model for mutual understanding than someone from Britain who became the Patron Saint of Ireland? Patrick provides a common denominator between children of all faiths and traditions in this part of Ireland and allows an exploration of our common Christian heritage. Our Education Programme uses outreach workshops which focus on icebreaking sessions between schools the exploration of identity and conflict resolution using Patrick's example. We also use the facilities of the Centre to provide in-house drama, games and art workshops. The Education Programme seeks to extend its work to include cross border activities, as well as to create more outreach within the communities of the North of Ireland.

**Tar Anall** Belfast [WWW.Taranall.ie](http://WWW.Taranall.ie)

Tar Anall offers support services required to empower and provide opportunities for Republican ex-prisoners, and their families and those that have been affected by the conflict in Ireland. Tar Anall, offers family support and welfare support services. Tar Anall provides training and education service, helping ex-prisoners and their families gain the necessary skills to seek employment and further opportunities. Tar Anall delivers youth provision services through its youth development unit. In one the most disadvantaged areas of the north of Ireland, this service is essential in providing a safe haven and opportunities for the youth of West Belfast. They are engaged in delivering equality training to other youth groups and children across Belfast, on both sides of the community. Tar Anall also provides a much needed outlet for a women's 50+ group, who are active in bringing together those that have suffered as a result of the conflict and arrange activities that keep a community spirit alive. Tar Anall also provides a counselling service and a stress clinic for a wide range of people, who cannot access this service through normal health providers.

**Thar Saile** [www.tharsaile.org](http://www.tharsaile.org)

Thar Saile is specifically an Irish American organization dedicated to working for the rights of former Irish Political POWs in the United States. The Mission of Thar Saile is to achieve a permanent solution to the immigration issues facing the former Irish Republican Political Prisoners residing within the United States. These men have faced deportation and extradition from the U.S. and the goal of Thar Saile is to obtain a collective resolution for all of their cases.

**Holy Cross Ardoyne Trust** North Belfast <http://www.holy-cross-ardoyne.com>

1. Creation of a cross community Family Centre on CrumlinRd Woodvale Road 'interface' in North Belfast This will involve restoring the original Holy Cross Schools in the Holy Cross church grounds

2. Continue to promote educational and recreational activities for the youth of the parish to further the reconciliation and peace in this deeply divided area

Support will enable us to continue the essential cross-community work and concentrate our efforts preparing the planning application for the Family Centre Development. Holy Cross Ardoyne Trust has a totally voluntary membership and nobody is paid for their extensive and professional input. Therefore all funds received go directly to the realization of the project of reconciliation and the improvement of community relations in this 'interface area'.

**Coiste na n-Iarchimí Six counties of the North [www.coiste.ie](http://www.coiste.ie)**

Coiste is the representative group supporting former IRA ex-prisoners and assisting them in building a just peace in Ireland. We lobby and advocate on their behalf; we provide services such as welfare advice, family support, training for employment, emotional support and counselling to them and their families. We are also involved in peace building and dialogue activity, establishing projects aimed at deepening respect between former combatant groups and building understanding of the political institutions

**David Ervine Trust Belfast <http://www.davidervine.com/>**

A pilot program funded by The David Ervine Foundation ( DEF ) in Short Strand and inner east Belfast . Education By Choice seeks to provide disadvantaged young people with skills to more fully engage with their own individual development and positive development . It offer alternative and relevant education, training and personal development aimed at local young people from both main cultural traditions . It seeks to assist programme participants to identify critical issues concerning their individual development . To work with them to identify solutions to their particular problems , and to move planned solutions into responsible actions . Education By Choice East Belfast currently provides opportunities to enable young individuals to empower themselves to take personal charge into their own hands as a means of ensuring their involvement with their development that will allow them to thrive economically , socially , emotionally culturally and politically.

Education By Choice currently provides an educationally intervention programme which offers 14-16 year-olds who have been excluded or dropped-out of mainstream education . These young people are engaged in this innovative programme five days per week . It currently has a waiting list of those wishing to participate . However , it does not have sufficient resources to meet the current and growing demand. Short Strand and inner east Belfast ( the former Unionist/Protestant ; the latter Nationalist/Catholic ) are neighboring communities that are similarly characterized by educational under attainment However , Short Strand had no such provision and inner east Belfast did not have adequate resources to meet the demand . Short Strand Community Forum expressed an interest in developing a cross-community pilot programme based in Short Strand Community Centre and The Bridge Community Association premises Ravenhill Road , east Belfast . The pilot programme , funded by the David Ervine Foundation , encourages social interaction between the young people from both communities and foster positive relationships that will shape their personal behavior on a cross community basis . The programme offers opportunities for young people to participate more meaningfully in their communities.