

John Reilly

By David Ring



We have here at Div.7 one of the great Reillys among us.

John Reilly, son of Patrick (County Wicklow) and MaryAnn, nee Crowley, (County Antrim) was born on July 14, 1934. One of four boys, he was raised in the Bronx and in Little Neck.

A graduate of Marianist Prep in Beacon New York, John served four years in the U.S. Navy as an aerial navigator on a hurricane chaser Super Constellation. John holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Education from Fordham University and a Master's degree from Queens College. John spent 30 years in the Brentwood School District as an elementary teacher, retiring in 1989.

John has a long history of leadership and community service. His commitment to the Ancient Order of Hibernians is unparalleled. Since he became a Hibernian on February 24, 1963, John has had an impressive record of service and

accomplishment:

- Charter member of Division 7
- Parade Chairman since its inception
- Gold Medal, National Hibernian Essay Contest. Topic: AOH Division 7
- President of Division 7
- Suffolk Count Secretary
- Aide to Grand Marshall Dennis Quinn, N.Y.C. St. Patrick's Day Parade, 1987
- Grand Marshall, East Islip St. Patrick's Day Parade
- Hibernian of the Year
- Life member, Ancient Order of Hibernians

John's dedication, service and love for all that is Hibernian is legendary. His commitment to our beliefs, the church, and service to the organization is inspiring. He IS the East Islip St. Patrick's Day Parade. These, however, are not his greatest accomplishments. There are at least two more.

The first is, of course, family. John and his wife, Pat were married on August 20, 1955. This year they will be celebrating their golden anniversary. They are the proud parents of six children, three boys and three girls. John lives the ideals of our church and our organization. He is a role model for all of us.

John's other great accomplishment is the high esteem in which he is held by his fellow Hibernians. In over forty years of service to any organization, a person can wear out and lose their motivation. This has not happened in John's case. His commitment is firm, and his beliefs are strong. He has earned and kept the respect of his fellow Hibernians. He helped to build our foundation and assisted in our successful growth. He embodies true Hibernianism.

The great tradition of the Reilly's is well represented by Division 7's own John Reilly. Through him, his actions and example, our Division and our Order are stronger.

Reilly

O'Reilly, Reilly, and Riley are just a few of the variations of this prominent Irish name. The name dates back to the Middle Ages, "The individual who gave the sept its name was one Raghallach ("Ragh": Irish, a race; "ceallach" gregarious) was slain at the Battle of Clontarf, 1014, alongside the High King of Ireland, Brian Boru. Raghallach himself was of the same stock as the O'Rourke's and therefore of the line of the great O'Connor kings of Connacht". (www.araltas.com) The O'Reilly's were aristocrats in Ireland for hundreds of years.

The (O) Reilly's were for centuries the ruling family of the kingdom of East Breffny, and at their height controlled most of Co. Cavan and large parts of Co. Meath. The family was widely involved in trade in medieval Ireland and at one time 'Reilly' was a term for Irish money, subsequently banned by the English. It has also been suggested that they lived well, as the phrase 'the life of Reilly' indicates. They were also notable as ecclesiastics, the family, since the sixteenth century, providing five primates of All – Ireland, five Bishops of Kilmore, two of Clogher and one of Derry. (www.araltas.com)

There have been many famous Reilly's throughout history. The following is just a partial list:

- Cathal O'Reilly, Prince of Breifne, founded the Franciscan Monastery at Lough Oughter.
- Count Don Alexander O'Reilly, Field Marshall for Spain (born in Ireland) and Governor of Louisiana.
- Count Andrew O'Reilly, Field Marshall for Austria (born in Ireland) and Governor of Vienna.
- Sir John O'Reilly, Chamberlain to the Austrian Emperor.
- John Roberts O'Reilly, invented the Naval distress flare.
- John Boyle O'Reilly, Fenian, poet and author.
- Myles O'Reilly, commanded the Irish Brigade in the Papal service.
- A.J.F. (Tony) O'Reilly, President and CEO of Heinz.

There are, of course, many, many more.

