

## Charles Mackey



### **An Irish American Life**

#### **Charles Patrick Mackey**

As Irish and Irish-Americans, we have so many things of which we can be proud. As Hibernians, we regularly hear stories of Commodore John Barry, Michael Collins, Al Smith, John F. Kennedy and many others. We have so many great heroes and role models. We are truly fortunate.

Occasionally, it is important to remember that there are also heroes and role models amongst us. Friends, family members, and fellow Hibernians who work hard and give to family, church and community, making our world a better place. Charles Patrick Mackey was surely an example of this.

Charlie was born on December 29, 1933 in Whitegate, County Clare. He was the third of five sons born to Delia (County Clare) and Thomas (County Tipperary) Mackey. The family moved to the U.S. shortly after Charlie's birth and he was raised in Union City, New Jersey. He attended catholic elementary and high school there.

When his father became a manager for a large smelter in Glen Cove, the family moved to Long Island. Charlie finished high school in Sea Cliff, New York. He then entered the U.S. Army where he served for two years before being honorably discharged in 1955. Charlie went on to Hofstra University where he received a Bachelor Arts degree in 1958. After that he did additional coursework at both Hofstra University and C.W. Post College of Long Island University.

Like many of his generation, Charlie took a job in the defense industry on Long Island. He worked for AIL Division of Eaton Corporation rising to senior administrative positions. He married Miriam Ann Lynch in 1957. They had three children, Charles Jr. (Chip), Sheila, and Thomas. They became involved in their community. Miriam in Girl Scouts and as a Confraternity Christian Doctrine Teacher. Charlie in Little League and CYO at St. Mary's in East Islip. Charlie was made an Extraordinary Minister of his parish in 1977.

In 1972, Charlie joined the Ancient Order of Hibernians. Following the example of his father who was very involved in the Irish-American Society in Mineola (he was Grand Marshall of their St. Patrick's Day Parade in 1957), Charlie wanted to involve himself and his family in the culture, history, and social connections of the Irish and Irish-Americans. Charlie became a great Hibernian.

His list of service to the A.O.H. grew with Division 7 and the County Organization. Charlie served in most of the executive offices including President of Division 7. He also held numerous county offices leading to County President in 1983. Charlie went on to

be a New York State Director in the late 1980's. In 1998, Charlie received perhaps his greatest honor - he was made a Lifetime Member of the Ancient Order of Hibernians. In addition to all of these offices and honors, Charlie was Division 7's Grand Marshall and Hibernian of the Year. He helped found the Roisin Dubh Pipe Band and was the original band manager. His many charitable works for which he volunteered are far too numerous to list here.

These are all great accomplishments in an extraordinary life. This is a large part of what made Charles Patrick Mackey one of our heroes and role models. He lived the American Dream. He gave to his community and made it a much better place. He lived his faith and relied on it through the difficult times, particularly the tragic loss of his daughter Sheila in an automobile accident in 1978. He gave two sons who continue to give to their communities.

He instilled in many of us and particularly his family the pride of our heritage, our faith, and Hibernianism. He has left a strong legacy that is especially pronounced in his son, now President of Division 7, and his grandson an officer in the Junior Boys Division 7. For these and so many other things, we are grateful for the life that Charlie gave us. Charles Patrick Mackey passed away on December 24, 2001 and was buried on his 68th birthday December 29, 2001. As he moved on to his final reward he was accompanied by the sounds of the pipes and drums of the Roisin Dubh Band.

Although Charlie's passing leaves us with a feeling of loss, in truth we have all gained through our connection with this special Irish-American Life.

