Leitrim Society of New York April 2021 Online Newsletter

**Dear Member**,

 I hope you all had a blessed **Easter**. This time last year we were in the midst of the pandemic. We certainly did not think that one year later we would still be dealing with **Covid-19**. However, since then, there have been major strides to combat the virus and we are all hoping that in the months ahead we will see life return slowly to normal.

 Our **April meeting** will be conducted via **Zoom** on **Thursday, April 15th, 2021 at 7:30pm**. If you would like to participate, please contact **Meg McKeon-Baker** at **718-445-8365** for details. A detailed review of the ***Society’s Constitution and By-Laws*** took place at last month’s meeting, with a final review in regards to one item tabled for this month: a membership vote on the implementation of all changes will take place after.

 **SAVE THE DATE!!** - Our celebration of the **‘*125th Anniversary of the* *Society*’** has been ***rescheduled*** for next year, **Friday March 11th, 2022**. We have booked our **St. Patrick’s Day Dinner Dance** in **Antun’s, Queens Village**. Our original **Guests of Honor** and **Distinguished Service Award** recipients will be presented. Further information on this will be published in upcoming newsletters and webpage.

 **Payment of dues for 2021** should be mailed to the **Financial Secretary** at the **P.O.** **Box** address above. Dues are **$20.00 per person** or **$30.00 per couple.**

 ***Final Reminder* – Closing date for completed Application Forms for the Scholarship is April 15th, 2021. Don’t hesitate or you will be late. Please mail to Bernadette Dunleavy, 238 Blackford Ave, Yonkers, NY 10704.** The drawing will take place at our **May meeting**.

 **“Selton Hill Ambush March 11th 1921 – 100th Anniversary”**

**By Frank Brady**

*These were* ***turbulent times in Leitrim*** *a hundred years ago during the* ***Irish War of Independence****. Indeed* ***Michael Collins*** *was quite prescient when he noted that it was the* ***most treacherous county in Ireland****. On* ***March 4th 1921*** *an* ***ambush*** *was successfully carried out by* ***the IRA’s South Leitrim Brigade*** *on the* ***British Army and the RIC.*** *The Crown forces suffered casualties and at least one fatality, while the Irish suffered none. However, the situation was radically different a week later at* ***Selton Hill,*** *located between* ***Ballinamore*** *and* ***Mohill,*** *resulting in six deaths and a number of injuries for the* ***Leitrim Flying Column****. This was not really an ambush but a reprisal or retribution for the* ***Sheemore ambush*** *a week earlier. It is believed that a spy or an informer set the scene for the attack.*

***Captain Sean Connolly****, a Longford man, and his* ***South Leitrim Brigade*** *decamped in a safe house owned by* ***James Flynn****. However, their position seemed to have been given away by a Protestant farmer* ***James Latimer*** *and a doctor, named* ***Charlie Pentland****, who was* ***an ex-British Army officer****. The doctor was quite friendly with* ***Mr. Gore-Hickman*** *the* ***District Inspector for the RIC in South******Leitrim****. He notified the military in Boyle and soon* ***Capt. Connolly*** *and his men were surrounded and greatly outnumbered and outgunned. When the fusillade ended,* ***Capt. John Joe O’Reilly (Miskawn, Aughnasheelin****),* ***Joe O’Beirne (Bornacoola****),* ***Seamus Wrynne (Ballinamore)****,* ***Lieut. John Joe O’Reilly (Derrinkehir****,* ***Aughnasheelin)*** *and* ***Michael Baxter (Bawnboy****) were dead, while* ***Capt. Connolly******(Ballinalee)*** *succumbed to his injuries later in the evening. The survivors were* ***Andy******McPartland (Ballinamore), Paddy Guckian (Drumsna), Pee McDermott (Ballinamore),******Jack Hunt (Carrick-on-Shannon)*** *and* ***Bernie Sweeney******(Ballinamore****). Sweeney was injured in the gunfire but he fell into a drain and hid behind a cluster of rushes. It is believed that the coolness of the drain water helped to curtail his blood loss and alleviated his pain. Any movement could have been fatal, and he was eventually safely rescued. In the aftermath of the* ***Selton Hill tragedy,******James Latimer*** *was* ***executed by the IRA*** *as an* ***informer****, while the doctor fled to England where he was killed in a traffic accident in 1925. The two* ***O’Reillys*** *along with* ***Seamus Wrynne*** *are buried in the Republican Plot in Aughnasheelin. Recently* ***Padraig Leyden****, the former Ballinamore school principal published a book titled “****Selton Hill”,*** *recording one of the most iconic incidents in Leitrim history.*

Please remember our sick members, **Aileen Kilcommons, Noreen Regan-Leggiero, Lisa Cullen, Michael O’Rourke, Elizabeth Keenan Papierowicz, Gerry Gilrane, Anna Bohan, Terence Regan** and all who are ill. We also pray for those affected by **Covid-19.** We wish them all a complete recovery.

**Condolences** to the family of **Josie Cryan (Ballinamore**), to the family of **Kathleen McCawley (Dowra)** who died suddenly recently and the family of the legendary Leitrim footballer, **Packie McGarty (Mohill)** who passed away this week. May they all ***Rest in Peace***.

We continue to pray for all our ***first responders,******medical staff and all essential service employees*** who continue their heroic work on the **front lines.** We thank them for their service, and ask God to keep them safe and well. We also remember all our families in Ireland during these very difficult times. We hope that vaccination will offer us all protection and let us begin to live again.

**BE SAFE AND BE WELL**

 **Sincerely,**

**Donal O’Connell Anna Mulvey Buggy**

***President* *Corresponding Secretary***