



*Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians, Inc.*  
*National Board*  
*Established 1894*

*Freedom For All Ireland Committee*  
*Committee Chair Dolores Desch*

October 26, 2022

Sisters,

The Freedom for All Ireland Christmas Appeal is underway for the 2022-23 season. This appeal is our way of raising funds for groups in the north of Ireland who still live under British rule and continue to work to sustain peace in their communities, garner cross community partnerships, provide justice services and build a successful society despite many obstacles.

We have some very big news! We have a **VERY generous supporter who has pledged to match our donations** dollar for dollar! So that means we need you more than ever. We are asking that all Divisions, Counties, States work on ways to raise funds for FFAI so that your donations can be matched by our donor. Now more than ever any amount you send in is significant. There are many fundraisers out there as well for the Christmas Appeal so please support them as the money taken in will be doubled! For those of you or your division members who are not sure what Freedom for All Ireland is all about and want more information please go to our web page where there is a PDF report of the tour we were on that included fifteen members of the LAOH: <https://ladiesaoh.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Freedom-For-All-Ireland-Hibernian-Tour-2022-1-1-1.pdf>. In addition, there is a Christmas Appeal awards presentation video where you can learn more about each group that receives a grant: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MIAlyCuwO5w>. Please share this information with your members.

A reminder, **please send your donations directly to me** at: 20 Arlene Ave. Albany, NY 12203. Please include the check payable to: LAOH, Inc., the full name of your State, County, Division making the donation and a contact name with email address. We generally do not have the final list of applicants until January/February however here is the list from this past appeal and you may designate the donation to any of these groups: National Graves Association – Belfast, Bloody Sunday Trust, Bridges Beyond Boxing, Belfast, Duchas-Oiriall, EALU, East Tyrone, Green Cross, Jim O'Neill & Robert Allsopp Memorial Flute Band, Greater New Lodge Cultural Society, Omagh Thunder Basketball Club, The Passionist Peace and Reconciliation Office (Holy Cross), Relatives for Justice, The St. Patrick's Centre, National Graves Association–Tyrone, The Witness Project.



I am also happy to announce that our committee commissioned an exclusive LAOH Good Friday 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary pin to celebrate the peace that has come to the island as a result of the GFA. This pin is being sold for \$10.00 each. We have them in both Silver and Gold. They make a great Christmas present, why not get both? All proceeds go to the LAOH Christmas Appeal Fund. Shipping



is \$5.00 per order and will be waived for orders of 5 pins or more. Please mail your check and all details when placing your order including mailing address and number of pins to me at: 20 Arlene Ave Albany, NY 12203. For alternate payment options please email me at: [laohnationalffai@gmail.com](mailto:laohnationalffai@gmail.com).

In news from Ireland, there is again a new British Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak. It appears this week that there will be a new Stormont Election unless PM Sunak can convince the DUP to sit at Stormont and take the Deputy First Minister seat. This is something the DUP have been fighting since Michelle O'Neill of Sinn Fein won the First Minister seat in May.

In justice news, there is a court case scheduled to begin in Belfast in November regarding Soldier F who is charged with 2 counts of murder and 5 counts of attempted murder on Bloody Sunday. This case has been dragging for years and families are hopeful that this time there will be an actual trial where they will get justice. Another case involves 15-year-old Daniel Hegarty who was shot twice in the head by a soldier known as Soldier B during Operation Motorman in 1972 in Derry. His 16-year-old cousin was wounded in the same incident. The decision in January by the Public Prosecution Service to drop the case despite a 2011 inquest which found that Daniel 'posed no risk and had been shot without warning' was challenged by his family. They recently were granted a judicial review of the case which is scheduled for January 2023. It was just announced that the preliminary hearing for the Springhill Westrock families was postponed last minute and rescheduled to mid-November. Our prayers go out to all the families who have been leading the fight for justice despite the tactics of those who would prefer that these cases be dropped and the truth remain hidden.

The tide seems to be changing when it comes to discussion on Irish Unity. Fallout from Brexit, a majority Catholic population in the North for the first time and the big event in Dublin held by *Irelands Future* on October 1 have helped swing the momentum towards a border poll. Discussion is key and the Irelands Future team have been doing just that. More information on Irelands Future can be found on their website, Facebook page and twitter. <https://irelandsfuture.com/>

I am often asked by members how to find out more about what is happening in Ireland. Social media is very helpful, and I recommend multiple channels and multiple sources. Belfast Telegraph, Derry News, Belfast Live, Irish Times are a few of the places to look for on the web and on Facebook and Twitter. Also Google the question you may have about a topic to learn more. We also have a LAOH National FFAI page which I update daily with news from these and other sources. Stay tuned and follow our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/LAOHFFAI32>

**Please make sure your Division has an FFAI appointee** who will receive and relay the latest information on the news, issues and programs affecting those living in the north of Ireland. FFAI information is readily available on our national website page and Facebook Page. I am also happy to assist if you need any help. Please like, follow, and share our FFAI Page which contains updated information as well as FFAI news. <https://ladiesaoh.com/freedom-for-all-ireland/>

If you are not receiving my emails, please send me your email address. As always, if you have any questions or would like more information, please contact me at [laohnationalffai@gmail.com](mailto:laohnationalffai@gmail.com). Thank you for your support for Freedom For All Ireland.

Le Meas,

**Dolores Desch**  
National Freedom For All Ireland Chair