

2025 Interim Board Meeting- 9/13/25- Irish History Report

Sisters,

It has been a privilege to serve as National Historian and to deepen my understanding of this important role. I am pleased to report that the alignment of our annual report deadlines with other national reports was implemented smoothly. I commend all Divisions, Counties, and States for their adaptability and timely submissions.

Following the 2024 Orlando Convention, the timeline for disseminating information about the Annual Irish History Contest was revised to better accommodate school schedules. While we are still in the early stages of this new approach, I am optimistic that it will lead to increased participation and more robust submissions.

The theme for the 2026 History Contest is:

“The Irish and the American Revolution: How the Irish Affected the Outcome of the American Revolution.”

For the 2025 History Contest, we received a total of 38 entries: 20 in Level 1 and 18 in Level 2. Submissions came from multiple states, and winners were announced on March 31, 2025, in accordance with the LAOH Constitution. National prizes were updated to reflect changes approved at the Orlando Convention.

The winners were as follows:

Level 1

- 1st Place: Gunner Quinn – VA
- 2nd Place: Lena Gaspar – PA
- 3rd Place: Virginia Barca – NY

Level 2

- 1st Place: Lilianna Roberson – IL
- 2nd Place: Nathan Cooney – CT
- 3rd Place: Michelle Terhune – MA

Regrettably, 2025 marked the end of LAOH’s sponsorship of the Irish History Award at National History Day (NHD). In February, NHD informed us that the award would be discontinued, and our contract would not be renewed.

In collaboration with National Webmaster Maggie Brogan, we launched a dedicated History Contest page on the national website. This resource includes contest rules, judging criteria, reference materials, a sample teacher outreach letter, and the current topic. I encourage all Division, County, and State Historians to bookmark this page for easy access.

In celebration of Irish Heritage Month and International Women's Day (March 2025), I recorded an interview with Williams R. Cole, writer, director, and producer of the short film *Rebel Wife*, which tells the story of Mary Jane O'Donovan Rossa. Through this partnership, LAOH members were able to purchase and view the film, deepening our connection to Irish history and heritage.

I am pleased to share several highlights from my recent activities and ongoing responsibilities as part of my service with the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians.

Earlier this year, I had the honor of serving as LAOH's primary point of contact for the Pittsburgh stop of the *Lost Gaels* book tour. It was a privilege to welcome the author, Peadar Thompson, and to represent our organization during this cultural event.

I also served as the designated representative to write and submit the application for the July 2025 – June 2026 ESP grant offered by the Consulate General of Ireland. I'm proud to report that LAOH was once again awarded the grant, and I look forward to implementing the funded initiatives in the coming year.

Additionally, I am a member of the LAOH GAA Committee. Over the past few months, I've gained a deeper understanding of the Gaelic Athletic Association and its growing presence in the United States. Attending the USGAA Finals in Malvern, Pennsylvania this August was a truly enriching experience and a wonderful opportunity to connect with our Irish athletic heritage.

As I enter the second year of my term, I am actively involved in preparations for the celebration of our nation's 250th birthday. Working alongside LAOH 250 Co-Chair Marilyn Madigan, we are planning a series of events that will honor and highlight the vital contributions of Irish women to the founding and development of our great country.

Thank you for your steadfast commitment to preserving and celebrating Irish history, and for your unwavering support of our mission.

In Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity.

Kathlen Diulus
2024-2026 Historian