

Sisters,

It has been a privilege to serve as your National Historian over the past two years. I am deeply grateful for your support and for the opportunity to get to know so many of you through this office. It has truly been both a pleasure and an honor. Following is my report of activities since the Interim Board meeting in September 2025.

The 2026 contest marked the first year of our revised timeline and updated approach. I am pleased to report that these changes have yielded positive results: submissions doubled compared to the 2025 contest.

This was also the first year we incorporated the AI-detection tool Grammarly to help ensure academic integrity. Essays determined to contain more than 10% AI-generated content were disqualified.

- Level 1:5 disqualifications
- Level 2:7 disqualifications

Eligible entries for judging totaled 37 for Level 1 and 28 for Level 2.

2026 Contest Theme: *“The Irish and the American Revolution: How the Irish Affected the Outcome of the American Revolution.”*

Winners

Level 1 • 1st Place: Molly – NY • 2nd Place: Liam – OH • 3rd Place: Emma – OH

Level 2 • 1st Place: Isabella – OH • 2nd Place: Carolyn – NY • 3rd Place: Savannah – OH

To celebrate Irish Heritage Month and International Women’s Day two national webinars were hosted:

- Kevin Westley, AOH member: The Women of Ireland in Stories and Songs
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- Dr. Elizabeth Stack: Scullery to Soapbox: The Radical Legacy of Irish American Women

Both programs were well received and helped highlight the extraordinary contributions of Irish and Irish-American women.

In September, I hosted a Q&A webinar with LAOH scholarship recipient Madeline Byrnes, who represented us in the Young Ambassador Program at the St. Patrick Centre in County Down. Maddie shared photos and reflections from her experience abroad.

Following discussion at the Interim Board Meeting, the LAOH approved sponsoring up to two candidates annually going forward. I look forward to seeing how future ambassadors will continue to strengthen our connection to Ireland.

As part of the AOH/LAOH America 250 initiatives, I was honored to participate in and offer remarks at a wreath-laying ceremony at President John F. Kennedy's memorial marker in Arlington National Cemetery. This event recognized the legacy of Irish-American U.S. Presidents and our shared heritage.

I served as the designated representative to prepare and submit the application for the July 2026–June 2027 ESP Grant through the Consulate General of Ireland. I remain hopeful that the LAOH will continue to receive funding to support our work on behalf of the Irish Diaspora.

Additionally, I continued my service on the LAOH GAA Committee, collaborating with the GAA on initiatives that promote both organizations and strengthen community engagement through our shared cultural and athletic traditions.

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,

Kathleen Diulus  
National Historian, 2024–2026