



The **Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH)** is the oldest Catholic lay organization in America. Officially formed in New York in 1836, it was born in anger centuries earlier in Ireland, after successive invasions by those who tried to master the Irish, and alter their Gaelic life-style. Inflexible opponents like the Vikings were fought until their power was broken; others, like the Normans, were absorbed until they became as Irish as the Irish themselves. Through it all, the Irish maintained their language, traditions, and religion. But in the Sixteenth century, a concentrated attack, unswervingly focused on the most precious part of their heritage - their religion - and proved to be their greatest challenge.

After several attacks on Irish and Church property, the Irish immigrant resorted to a familiar tactic. Those, who had been members of the AOH in Ireland, banded together in this new land, and in 1836, formed an American branch of their Order. True to their purpose, they stood guard to defend Church property, and though actual attacks were few and far between, the long, cold, and lonely nights of vigil were many. The early AOH in America remained a secret society, and little is known of its activities except that it provided a monetary stipend to immigrants who arrived as members in good standing from the Irish Order, and they assisted Irish immigrants in obtaining jobs and social services. Quite naturally, the early AOH Divisions were nurseries for the preservation of Irish culture and traditions in America.

In large measure due to the significant contributions of the Irish in defending the Union during America's Civil War, it became unfashionable to be anti-Irish, and the bigoted "Know Nothings" faded away, taking their "No Irish Need Apply" signs with them. The AOH, on the other hand, grew stronger, following Irish immigrants as they worked their way across the country. As the need for militant support of their Church dwindled, the AOH shifted its purpose to charitable activities in support of the Church's missions, community service, and the promotion and preservation of their Irish cultural heritage in America. Today they stand, not only as the oldest Catholic lay organization in America, but as the largest Irish society in the world with Divisions in Ireland, and 49 of the United States. The AOH in America is partitioned into Divisions, County Boards, and State Boards, and is governed by a National Board elected every two years. The Division is the basic unit in the Order, and membership in a Division is membership in the Order. Even County, State, and National Officers, maintain membership in a local Division. Annual dances, concerts, and parades sponsored by all levels of the Order raise millions for charity, while providing a showcase for the positive contributions of the Irish to every walk of

American life. Divisions usually support local charities within their geographic areas, while sending a portion of their monies to higher levels for support of state, national, and international charities. Subcommittees are often established to perform specific functions such as the administration of an annual Feis or Festival, the raising of a historic memorial, or providing instructions in such Irish subjects as history, bagpiping, dancing, and language.

The many Divisions and Hibernian Halls across the country have also traditionally provided a welcome for new immigrants. Here, the unique art, dance, music, and other interests of the Irish are fostered and preserved, making the AOH Hall a home away from home for many. Together, they are at the forefront of support for issues concerning the Irish, such as Emigration Reform, MacBride Legislation, and the Right to Life. They never forget their ancestral homeland either, and can always be found actively lobbying for, praying for, and working for the total independence of a united 32-county Ireland, as their constitution avows: "by all means constitutional and lawful".

As a potential Member to our Order, you are seeking admittance to the finest and fastest growing Irish-Catholic organization in the world. Our Catholic faith and our values are exemplified in our motto:

"Friendship, Unity, and Christian Charity"

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

I hereby apply for admission into the Ancient Order of Hibernians in America, Inc., and agree that my reception and continuance in said Order shall depend upon the truthfulness of my answers to the questions which are attached, and my answers are made by me for the purpose of obtaining admission into the Order. You must be Irish by birth or descent and a practicing Roman-Catholic to become a full member:

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ **Zip Code (+4):** _____

Birth Date: _____

E-Mail: (H): _____

E-Mail: (W): _____

Phone (H): _____

Phone (W): _____

Occupation: _____

Mother's Maiden Name: _____

Are you Roman-Catholic? (circle) YES NO

Are you Irish? (circle) YES NO

→ If yes, by...? (circle) BIRTH DESCENT

Have you complied with your religious duties within the past twelve (12) months? (circle) YES NO

Do you belong to any society(s) to which the Catholic Church is opposed? (circle) YES NO

Parish/Church Name: _____

Have you ever been an AOH member? (circle) YES NO

→ If yes, please list:

- City/Town and State: _____

- Previous membership #: _____

- Reason and date of your withdrawal: _____

Sponsor's Signature: _____

I do solemnly pledge my sacred word and honor that the answers I have given to the above questions are true.

Applicant's Signature: _____

Dated the _____ of _____, 20____
(date here) (month here)

Please list your interests: (check all that apply)

- Irish History
- Irish Northern Aid
- Missions/Charities
- Catholic Action
- Catholic Schools
- Political Education
- Irish Language Lessons
- Irish Step Dance Lessons
- Comhaltas Music Sessions
- Division Golf Tournaments
- Family Picnics
- Dinner/Dance
- Fundraising
- Marketing
- Service Projects
- Other → please explain: _____



**The Ancient Order of Hibernians
are on the Internet !**

Go to www.aoh.com and find out what is happening in the world of the AOH. Find a local Division, news releases, articles on Irish History, and much more !!!

AOH Syracuse Div. web site:
www.syraoh.com

AOH New York State web site:
www.nyaoh.com

AOH National (USA) web site:
www.aoh.com



**AOH SYRACUSE
(COMMODORE JOHN
BARRY DIVISION)**

**APPLICATION FOR
MEMBERSHIP**

DIVISION USE ONLY

SPONSOR'S CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify on my honor as a member of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, that I am acquainted with the applicant. I know him to be a practicing Roman-Catholic, and one worthy in every way to become a member of this Order.

Sponsor's Signature:

Sponsor's Address:

REPORT ON APPLICATION

This committee was referred to the applicant, and would respectfully report that we have investigated the qualifications of said applicant for membership and we recommend him.

Committee Chair's Signature:

DIVISION PRESIDENT'S CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that this application has been read by me at a regular meeting and that the applicant has been elected by the membership of this Division on the day of the

_____ of _____, 20____
(date here) (month here)

President's Signature:

FINANCIAL SECRETARY'S CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the initiation fee of \$ _____ has been paid on the day of the

_____ of _____, 20____
(date here) (month here)

Financial Secretary's Signature:

MEMBERSHIP NUMBER: _____