



# for SHERROD BROWN U.S. SENATE

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## Cleveland Connection

In 1914, President Ellen Ryan Jolly proposed to the delegates at the National Convention to erect a Monument to the memory and in honor of the Sister-nurses of the American Civil War. The proposal was adopted.

Ellen Ryan Jolly was named as the National Chairman of the Nun's Monument Committee. She worked for the next ten years under the leadership of Mary McWhorter of Chicago and

Adelia Christy of Cleveland, Ohio to make this Monument a reality.

Jolly reached out to Rep. Ambrose Kennedy of Rhode Island to assist her. Rep. Kennedy introduced a Resolution to Congress on Monday September 17, 1917. The Resolution authorized "The erection of a memorial in Washington to the Memory and in honor of the members of the various Orders of Sisters who gave their services as nurses on battlefields, in hospitals and on floating hospitals during the Civil War."

President Woodrow Wilson signed the Joint Resolution of Congress on Good Friday March 29, 1918. The site of the Monument was chosen. Sculptor Jerome Connor presented his model to the Commission of Fine Arts for approval. National President Adelia Christy of Cleveland invited two Sisters from each of the Religious Orders that would be featured on the Monument to visit the artist's studio to make sure that their Order was depicted correctly.

The January issue of the "Sisters College Messenger of the Catholic University addressed the Monument:

"It is really an inspired masterpiece. The life-like elegance of form and attitude

One hundred years ago, the Ladies Auxiliaries of the Ancient Order of Hibernians were celebrating their 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. During that year, the dream of a Memorial was finally realized. The Nuns of the Battlefield Monument was dedicated on September 20, 1924. Adelia Christy was the National President and was present at the Dedication with Ellen Ryan Jolly.

This year the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians are celebrating our 130<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. We celebrated our anniversary at the convention with a Commemorative Pin and a Celebration. The highlight of our anniversary will be the Centennial Commemoration of the Nuns of the Battlefield Monument.

The first time I visited the monument, there was no way of knowing that the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians were responsible for this unless you went behind the monument. This was unacceptable to me as the National Irish Historian. I addressed the delegates at the 2016 Convention with this background.

The story of this remarkable achievement of our Order needs to be shared. The monument is in need of some care, such as cleaning. The LAOH of DC are in the process of contacting the Park Service in regard to the monument. The recognition of the LAOH is on the back of the monument, but most visitors do not go to the back.

I presented this Marker Proposal to the delegates for the LAOH to sponsor a Wayside Monument for the Nuns of the Battlefield Monument, which would tell the story of the monument, Ellen Ryan Jolly and the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians. A local committee of the LAOH will make contact with the appropriate government agencies.

Our goal should be that the marker be complete by the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Monument, in September 2024. The full funding plan is not developed at the present time as I am collecting cost information. I have contacted the DC AOH, as they recently funded the creation of a Wayside Marker to honor the Irish Patriot, Robert Emmet. This

Wayside Marker was dedicated with representatives from the AOH and with Irish Government Officials, including Ambassador Anne Anderson. The proposal was approved.

For eight years, I worked with a Committee and the National Park Service to make the Wayside Marker a reality.

I wish I knew the story of why they had their photo taken at the monument. That story could be a feature article. If anyone knows the story, please reach out to us at iRISH.

The Centennial of The Nuns of the Battlefield Monument will be held on Saturday September 21, 2024. The Centennial Commemoration will include a Mass at the St. Matthew's Cathedral at 12:10pm, celebrated by Cardinal Gregory.

Dedication of the Wayside Marker at the monument will follow Mass. At 5:00pm, there will be dinner at the Army Navy Club, 901 17<sup>th</sup> Street NW, Washington DC. Featured Speaker at the dinner is author Sr. Kathleen Szpila, author of *Lest We Forget: Ellen Ryan Jolly and the Nuns of the Battlefield Monument*.

We are honored that Ellen Ryan Jolly's great granddaughter will be in attendance. We also are privileged and honored to have representatives from the Sisters of Charity, Sisters of Mercy and Sisters of St. Joseph at the Centennial Commemoration.

I am so blessed to be named after my Aunt Sr. Patricia Finn aka Sr. Marilyn. Also, as a Surgical Nurse, I am so proud of my role in honoring these Sister-nurses of the American Civil War. Remember "You can't spell Hero without Her."•

Marilyn Madigan is the Immediate Past National President and National Organizer of the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians and a Deputy Director of the United Irish Societies of Cleveland. She received a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from St. John College and retired from Nursing at University Hospitals of Cleveland.

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