



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Tony Avella

## Senator Avella Attends Wreath Laying Ceremony at Recently Discovered Irish Cemetery

TONY AVELLA April 28, 2014

| ISSUE: **COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT**

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*Cemetery was found to be final resting place for Irish Immigrants who fled the Great Irish Famine*

(Astoria, Queens) On Saturday, April 26<sup>th</sup>, Senator Avella joined the Queens County Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH), the oldest and largest Irish Catholic organization in the United States, as they begun an annual Wreath Laying Ceremony at the Irish Famine Cemetery in Astoria, Queens.

The Our Lady of Mount Carmel Cemetery, located at the intersection of 21st Street and 26th Avenue, was just recently discovered by AOH as the final resting place for Irish immigrants who fled the Great Irish Famine in the 1800s. Records show that the original Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church was located just to the right of the cemetery, marked by several preserved tombstones.

"I am honored to join the Queens County AOH at this wreath laying ceremony and to paying tribute to their Irish roots, which bare so much historic significance," stated Senator Avella. "The roots of this community are now also an important piece of the borough's history since the great discovery of this tucked away cemetery. I am humbled to stand with AOH on such a momentous occasion and will work with them to preserve and possibly even landmark this site."

The cemetery is thought to be the only resting place in all of Queens County for immigrants trying to escape the Irish Famine.

President of the Queens County AOH, John Manning, stated, "We all know how important our families are to us, and to all of the Irish People that are buried at the this sacred Cemetery, they were all forced to flee their home country back in mid 1800's because of the Great Irish Famine. The sacrifices they made for a better life for themselves and their families should never go unnoticed. We as Brother and Sister Hibernians of Queens County are very fortunate to have this History in our County and I feel it's *very important*, that WE NEVER FORGET."

**Photo:**

*Standing immediately to the left of the Wreath:* Msgr. Sean Ogle, Pastor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church

*Standing immediately to the right of the Wreath:* Mr. John Manning, President of Queens County AOH, State Senator Tony Avella; Father James Devine, Chaplain of Queens County AOH