



BIO - PAT MURTAGH

GRAND MARSHAL 2019 – ST. PATRICK’S DAY PARADE
Community Volunteer, Promoter of Irish Culture, Businessman
“The Voice of the Eastchester Irish”

Pat Murtagh, an Eastchester resident, known for his involvement in promoting Irish culture and community volunteer service, is Grand Marshal for the Eastchester Irish-American Social Club’s (EIASC) 15th Annual Eastchester St. Patrick’s Day Parade.

Murtagh is known as the “Voice of the Eastchester Irish” for his melodious, lilting brogue delivering lively and knowledgeable commentary during the annual St. Patrick’s Day Parade. His energetic presence, along with this voice, have him in demand as Master of Ceremonies for many community events. As a 26-year member of the EIASC, he has played many roles in the club’s resurgence including terms as Vice President and Public Relations Co-Chair, and as event volunteer. Murtagh is also proud of the growth of Irish culture in Eastchester and surrounding communities through the work of EIASC and Irish dance schools like the Anne Hendry School of Irish Dance and others that did not exist in 1991 when he moved to Eastchester.

His community service includes Trustee of the Eastchester Public Library since 2013 and Board Member, Eastchester 5K Committee. He is committed to education as a Board Member, Eastchester Irish Versus Eastchester Italian Golf Outing Scholarship Fund; Member of the Construction Review Committee for the Eastchester High School extension and renovation, and as a former Board Member for Swazi Legacy, an organization supporting education of orphans in Swaziland.

Born in Ballivor in County Meath, Ireland, Murtagh grew up in Portlester Ballivor with his father Johnnie (deceased) and mother Margaret (Peggy), his brother Gerry, now living in Ennis in County Clare, and his sister Mary (Murphy), a resident of Strandhill, County Sligo. His family lived on land where the Battle of Portlester, a famous early conflict for Irish independence, was fought in 1643.

After receiving his Leaving Certificate from Trim CBS, he became a machinist at a local American-owned business. Murtagh was invited to visit the United States in 1983 by his

cousins, the Murtha's who lived on Long Island. The Murtha family was a great influence in Murtagh's life, inspiring him to immigrate to the United States in 1984 where he took up residence in the Bronx.

Both in Ireland and his new Bronx home, Murtagh was active in athletics including Gaelic football and soccer. He played on Gaelic football teams with many Irish All Stars in the 1990s including Dublin's Charlie Redmond, Keith Barr and Mick Deegan, and Kildare's Martin Lynch, when travel to New York by Irish teams was common. Among the soccer teams Murtagh played with in the late 1980s and early 1990s includes St. Barnabas of Woodlawn, in the Bronx winning the Flamhoff Cup and Cosmopolitan League Reserve Team Honors in 1992 and 1993.

Murtagh has been employed in the construction industry from the day he arrived in the United States in 1984. He joined Interior Alterations Incorporated in 1997 where he soon became a partner with Bob Helenius and later as Vice President with his current partner Pat Whetzle. Now known as IACM Interior Alterations Construction Management, the firm specializes in brownstone restoration and renovation work. In 2006, Murtagh started a second firm and serves as President of Heights Historic Window and Door LLC, which specializes in custom window and door distribution, and construction management for high end residences.

He and his wife and best friend Margaret have four children—Thomas, Rory, Julie and Patricia.

Marching with Murtagh on Parade day will be his Aides: Thomas Murtagh, son; Rory Murtagh, son; Mike Murtha, cousin from Massapequa; Jimmy Murtha, cousin hailing from Mineola, and Roger Tierney, brother-in-law, an Ardsley resident.

Murtagh's involvement with EIASC started very soon after he moved to Eastchester in 1991 through the efforts of EIASC Past President Liam Deegan. At a time when membership was dwindling, Murtagh and Deegan focused on encouraging other young Irish and Irish-America families to join with special events, picnics and parties involving their children. Membership grew to almost 200 families and still hovers around that number today.

Murtagh was part of the core group of new and old members, and town officials, when the idea of the Eastchester St. Patrick's Day parade was conceived to introduce Eastchester to Irish culture. Stepping off in 2005, the parade's first year, was awe inspiring to Murtagh, to see the enthusiasm of the Eastchester community for the marchers.

As Board Member for the Eastchester Public Library since 2013, he has led the Construction Committee on projects to improve the living and working conditions in the 50-year-old building, many completed in time for the library's 50th Anniversary.

Among his significant volunteer efforts for education include as Board Member for the Eastchester Irish Versus the Eastchester Italian Club Golf Outing Scholarship Fund which supports the Mary Denning Scholarship and the Italian Scholarship funds. Funds are awarded to college- or technical school-bound children of the members of the EIASC and the Eastchester Italian Club.

As member of two Eastchester Union Free School District building committees, he has helped advise on high school and middle school construction projects along with fellow EIASC members Enda McIntyre and Brendan Ahern.

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