



# Lord Frederick W. Cook

*Descendant of the high kings of Ireland at Tara, and laird of Ardmore*

## January 2023 – New Year’s address

Happy new year to the people of Ardmore and around the world!

Let me start off this address by saying that I often feel like a complete fool holding the title of “Lord,” or “Laird,” honestly. I did nothing to earn it; I was merely born and did a deep dive into my DNA and contacted people in Ireland who in turn helped me decipher my past. I’ve never been to Ardmore, but I have studied the history and people there to a great extent, and a bit of my heart will always belong to you.

If and when I visit Ardmore, please, I implore you, do not call me by any titles, just know me as Fred and Fred alone...

That being said, I have to do these addresses on the request by your local government, and if I may speak candidly, I don’t mind doing them. I’m sure a good many of you are wondering; “Who is this Yankee wanker?” and while it’s true, I’m a Yank, I am doing my best to honor my ancestors who helped to forge the land by the sweat of their brow and the blood in their veins.

Now, on with the address...

It’s another year over and a new year ahead of us, but as we make our resolutions and give up on them before January is even done, I have a favor to ask. Love your land, love where you are from, love where you are, and love the people around you inasmuch as possible. Make a mend with your neighbors you don’t get along with, find common ground with those you normally wouldn’t have befriended, and most importantly, be kind to one another. I am aware of Ardmore (Much like the rest of Ireland) being a Christian place, and me being a Jew I found something I’d like to look at together;

Genesis 4:9 says; “ G-d said to Cain, “Where is your brother Abel?” And he said, “I do not know. Am I my brother’s keeper?” and this is Cain spitting in the face of even divinity, and in part spitting in all of our faces, with his ill-intentioned quip which harkens for us all to reply. Now, how we answer this defines who we are, as a people, as human beings, “am I my brother’s keeper?”

Do you care only for yourself, or would you be willing to assist someone in need? If you saw someone suffering, or under attack, would you want to help them? To what extent are we willing to “keep,” our brothers and sisters, and if we are willing, why? I am willing, I give of myself nearly every day of my life; in my psychotherapy practice where I help those who cannot afford it freely, through donations to various charities, in speeches and talks, and on the streets when I give money to the less fortunate.

Am I my brother’s keeper? Yes...so, why am I? What compels me to act, what drives me to moral and empathetic action so much? Firstly, because I know if I were in need, I would hope others would do and feel the same. If I were in need, I would pray that my neighbors would take notice and offer a hand, or at minimum a kind word, anything positive and uplifting or helpful.

Now, why on earth am I writing this in a new year’s address? We, that is you and I, cannot think of the government as our parents, and or rely on government to always help in our time of need. Often times it is our neighbors who will be our saviors, not government, and so we should help one another out, forge stronger communities, and become better stewards of the earth, minus the belief that government will always be there for us. We have to kick out the notion that the media, which are the governments mouthpiece, say about one another and you’ll find we’re all much more harmonious and have more in common than not.

Governments and politicians have numerous times in the past, been shown to be self-motivated and agenda driven. I am sure many of you by now will have your jaw on the floor, but shockingly, I am of the belief that we whom have fancy titles or some semblance of grand standing, owe it to the people to be honest and forthcoming. You and your neighbors, and families, and friends; you are one another’s keepers, and let nobody sway you into false allegiance by promises of taking that responsibility away from you.

If you can make one resolution and truly try to see it through this year, try to be kinder towards one another, to make sure the people around you have what they need and are okay. I hope that you could truly be your brother’s keeper, to do and be better towards each other, in fraternal love and empathetic kindness.

It is the new year, bringing with it new projects, new hopes, and new aspirations for us all, and this year Ardmore will see a lot of changes. I have it on authority that there may be some new wildlife refuges being built, protecting the flora, fauna, and natural beauty of Ardmore for generations to come. Ardmore has also seen at minimum a sixty percent rise in tourism, which will fund several municipal projects this coming year.

Also, I've been told a heavy focus on infrastructure is coming in 2023, especially roads and bridges to facilitate more tourism and smoother travels. New restaurants and attractions are also coming in 2023 (thanks to the tourism uptick), be sure to keep an eye out for them throughout the year to come.

I'd like to end this address on a bit of a high note, as the world steps out from under the shadow of Covid-19 and into uncertainty, we stand together. No matter where in the world we are, no one stand unaffected by the pandemic and as we resettle into our lives, that is what 2023 should represent to us all. 2023 should be a reset, whereas we evaluate what it is that is most important in life as we rebuild it, and make this iteration of life better than before, and ourselves better than before.

I hope that all of us see 2023 as an opportunity to do better, be better, to grow more, and hate less. 2023 is the year of the community, of the whole, inasmuch as it is the year of the individual also. May 2023 help us connect more in our shared humanity and divide less in the miniscule differences we have. Let us make 2023 "**OUR**," year!!!



**Mo ghrá go léir**

*Lord Frederick William Cook*