



## The Richmond Claddagh

<http://richmondias.org/>

Newsletter of the Greater Richmond Irish American Society

June 2009

**The June IAS Picnic** – A day of fun for all IAS members – all ages! The fun and feasting begin on **Sunday, June 7, at 1 pm** at Pat and Helen Warriner Burke's farm in Amelia. Burgers, hot dogs and condiments are provided, **but you are asked to please bring a side dish or dessert to share, beverages for you and yours, and lawn chairs.** If you are a new member, this is a wonderful way to get to know the other members, and it's a beautiful country setting and always one of our big turnout events. Last year, Our Special Events Chairman, Karon Bell even had some great "yard games" ready for anyone interested in some friendly competition – but the weather didn't cooperate very much. Maybe she'll have them ready again this year. The IAS picnic is truly one of our best get together(s) and it's the most fun that you'll have with your IAS friends -Trust me you'll be glad you came! (See Directions in Event section at the end)

**A Special Treat on June 25<sup>th</sup> - The Secret of Roan Inish.** Our IAS members have requested more movies and VP Dan Begley is putting our recent gift from IAS member Sonya Moore to good use. He has arranged a showing of the 1994 Irish movie "The Secret of Roan Inish" (based on the novel "The Secret of Ron Mor Skerry" by Rosalie K. Fry) at Boulevard United Methodist Church at 211 North Blvd. The movie centers on the Irish and Orkney Islands folklore of selkies—seals that can shed their skins to become human. The story is set on the west coast of Ireland near the island of Roan Inish – off the coast of Donegal, where the selkies are rumored to reside. This movie has been widely praised for its uniqueness and its breathtaking cinematography. Roan Inish is where a young girl's mother died and her baby brother was lost at sea. Her father has moved to the city but the girl is sent back to live with her grandparents for her health. Her grandparents live on the coast opposite Roan Inish, having moved off the island at the same time. "The Secret of Roan Inish" features some beautiful Irish music, and lush cinematography of the Donegal area and coast. It is beautifully shot, wonderfully written and performed, and masterfully directed, "The Secret of Roan Inish" will delight everyone in the family (from the website IMDB)

There's a link below – (caution) there's a bit of an ad first before the movie clip starts.

[Video Clip - "The Secret of Roan Inish"](#)

**The May Pub Supper!** – Well, this had to be one of our best ever IAS Pub nights. Nearly 30 "ready for fun" folks joined in at 3 Monkeys Bar & Grill on West Main St for this May event. The place was lively and in a nice setting, the food was great (Ask Hazel and Vance about their dessert – the sight of it brought lots more orders for the same!) the staff was so nice and patient with us and the "Guinness Special" was much appreciated by all. Denis Maguire said every time he ordered one he felt like he was actually saving \$\$ and helping the economy! (And he was! \$1 off per Guinness!) Folks in attendance were – (new and semi-new members are underlined – so if you see them – be sure and welcome them in) Jim Bandeleon, Dan Begley, Karon Bell, Neil & Janet Brussard, Pat & Helen Warriner Burke, Gloria Cahen, Gerry & Gwen Cassidy, Sue & Craig Edwards, Nancy Emig, Joan Finnegan, Dick Harman and Clara Burner, Denis & Josie Maguire, Jim Mahone, Ann McGehee, Sonya Moore, Bill Murphy, Kathryn O'Meara, Vince & Hazel Smith, Mary Smith and Gina Venn. Kudos to our IAS Pub Queen – Joan Finnegan – Great Pick!!!

**A Benefit for our Members!** Joan Finnegan – is hard at work on her efforts to promote the installation of a historical marker in the Richmond area to commemorate the positive impact of the Irish community.

In her efforts she has also secured an extra benefit for our members. The [Virginia Historical Society](#) has extended a \$13.00 discount for membership, which covers full access to all their facilities. You can check out the website using this link or you can call them at 804-358-4901. The annual fee of \$45 is reduced for **our IAS members** to \$32. To take advantage of this, you must contact Joan – **804-840-0080** or [jfynn@hotmail.com](mailto:jfynn@hotmail.com), she will contact the Society with the list of the member names and she will answer any questions that you have.

**REMINDER** - With regard to the IAS efforts for an Irish themed Historical Marker in the Richmond area to honor the contributions by our Irish ancestors – We ask for **your ideas** for **subject matter, event, placement, Irish people** --- we appreciate any and all ideas, suggestions, hints – etc. We want to add a positive spin to the local lore about the presence and the contributions of the Irish. Bring your ideas to the picnic or send them to Joan Finnegan **804-840-0080** or [jfynn@hotmail.com](mailto:jfynn@hotmail.com)

## **THE WORK OF ANGELS –CELTIC ARTWORK**

the intricacies of Celtic artwork have been referred to as "the work of angels". The delicate knot work, with its mystifying spirals and intricate key patterns demonstrates a wonderful understanding of geometric motifs blended with animals and natural forms or with human forms.

The first written record of the Celts talks of their occupation of the Danube region. From there they spread to the west, establishing tribes throughout parts of France, Spain and the British Isles. The Roman armies overran most this territory - however they were not successful in conquering Ireland and parts of Scotland. Ancient writings mention the Celts as a fierce warrior race, often fighting with their bodies decorated with blue woad paint (woad is the common name of the flowering plant *Isatis*), inked tribal tattoos, and their hair flowing wildly, even spiked with grease. The Romans were most impressed by the Celtic tribesmen's horsemanship, the control of their fighting carts and their treatment of their horses.

Ireland preserved Celtic Art for the world by incorporating Celtic designs into their illuminated manuscripts. Charlemagne (742-814) asked the Anglo-Saxon scholar, Alcuin (c.735-804) of York to teach this art method to other monks and scribes throughout the Holy Roman Empire.

In the last decade of the 20th century this beautiful Celtic art is no longer found just in the monasteries. From the re-enactors of the Dark / Middle Ages to the Renaissance to the American Revolution to present day t-shirts of surfers and skateboarders and tattoos as well as being embroidered onto the intricate Irish solo dance costumes and found on many CD cover jackets as well as television shows. This art is still quite alive and evolving into art styles in many mediums.

Examples of Celtic art and metal works dates back to 2500 B. C. and the earliest People known as Celts lived across Europe from Hungary in the East to Ireland in the West, dipping south into Spain and north to the Baltic Seas. As the Roman Empire expanded it replaced the conquered land with Roman culture and art and so the Celtic way of life was slowly removed from continental Europe. Roman generals tried many times to conquer Ireland but failed. The mighty Roman Empire tried to also conquer Scotland but when they were unable to - they built Hadrian's Wall to keep the Scots out of their empire. Due to this type of resistance, the Celtic way of life and its beautiful art has been preserved to this day to create these drawings. In this computer age it is easy to forget that just two decades ago artists relied on the same materials as the monks of the Middle Ages.



**THE BOOK OF KELLS**  
now residing at Trinity College  
in Dublin is attributed to

St. Columba, founder of a monastery on Iona (now part of modern-day Scotland) around 563 A.D. The influence of the monastery at Iona spread far and wide and included the conversion of Portland. The Picts, (translated as The Painted People") according to legend, were so named because when the Romans encountered them, they saw painted or tattooed bodies and faces and thus called them "Painted-Ones" or "Picts".



With the arrival of Christianity in Ireland, the monks wisely incorporated Celtic art into the illuminated manuscripts. Small pockets of Celtic influence remain alive today in many parts of the World. Scotland, Wales, the Spanish Pyrenees, and Nova Scotia are some of those areas that enjoy the beauty and grace of Celtic art as well as its music. Today we can see the widespread influence of Celtic art in the renowned "Riverdance" which celebrates dance in the many cultures the Irish immigrated to. And in many of the CD's by The Chieftains who have for years traveled the world to share music with other cultures. Spain is often a frequent stop - so they can jam with other Celtic musicians.



**CELTIC NATIONS:** Often people think that Celtic art is Irish art. Though the Irish did preserve the written word of God in their wonderful Illuminated Manuscripts, other Celtic people have existed throughout Europe. The Celts came from central Europe before the time of Christ, eventually settling in Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Cornwall, Isle of Mann (in England), Brittany (in France), and Gallacia (in Spain).



**ZOOMORPHIC** This is a Hounds cuff bracelet. Animals, birds and reptiles interlaced with Celtic knots are called "Zoomorphic". In the Bronze Age these designs are found in Britain and Ireland as well as in Gaul (France) and La Tene (ancient caves with primitive wall paintings). Stone carvings found in Egypt and Assyria from 5000 B.C. influenced the later Celtic carvers, metalworkers, and embroiderers. In Prehistoric Scotland, sacred animals were carved onto stone and probably represented tribes or clans of the area. Reptile ornaments are called "lacertine" and can be found in the Books of Kells, Lindisfarne, Durrow and St. Chad. The Christian monks incorporated zoomorphics into the illuminated manuscripts and thus allowed the people a link to their past as well as a new interpretation.

### **How about a Toast to An Irish Hero**

And let me give you a hand with that pesky job of picking one. You may wish to toast an Irishman named Flor Begley, and never mind if you hadn't heard of him up to now. He was definitely important (though we aren't sure if he is related to our own Dan Begley.)

In 1921 Flor Begley was a military bagpipe player who so inspired his unit, the Flying Column of the 3rd West Cork Brigade, in a clash with the British Army, that he is said to have "piped old Ireland free."

It was in 1921 that the original 26 counties to make up the Republic of Ireland achieved a measure of independence after centuries of English rule. One of the last battles took place at the village of Crossbarry in County Cork, when the Flying Column commanded by Tom Barry defeated a much larger British unit.

Begley had offered to fight that day, but Barry told him it was more important that he play his pipes, "Today you'll stride between our lines and martial music play."

So Begley played while the battle raged. Volunteers, who fought at Crossbarry, spoke later of the way the piper spurred them on to greater effort and he became the subject of a ballad by Bryan McMahon, "The Piper of Crossbarry."

(From Somewhere on the web – many months ago)

**Have** you ever thought about owning an Irish Wolfhound? Well here is an interesting site about the breed <http://www.iwclubofamerica.org/> that will answer any and all questions and if you never thought about it or don't want a dog - There are still neat photos and interesting facts to be read about this breed. No particular reason for this photo. I just found it. I love Irish wolfhounds and I wanted to share. C'mon - how cute is this guy? (He's Tons cute!)



-30-

**This** symbol is typed at the end of a newspaper story to denote the end of the item/copy. Today, I use it to tell you that I am stepping down as the Editor of the "Claddagh".

You know - one of my very favorite quotations is:

"I arise in the morning torn between  
A desire to improve the world  
And a desire to enjoy the world  
This makes it hard to plan the day"  
(E. B. White)

A whimsical thought true, but it sums up a situation often faced regarding the balance between our obligations in and our enjoyment of life. At this point in time, changes in my life and my job require more and more of my time. That results in too much pressure between meeting my personal, work and IAS obligations. One of my solutions to improving my "piece of the world" is to turning the reins of the Claddagh over to a new publisher/editor.

Since March 2007, when Bonnie Atwood stepped down as Editor, I took over the position and I have loved being able to "Spread The Irish". What a great job for a person who LOVES to talk. I thank all of our members for your many kind notes and remarks. The encouragement helped to make the task much easier, the suggestions helped to improve the newsletter and the *gentle* critiques helped me do a better job.

Unfortunately, at this same time – I will also be giving up the Membership Chairman duties for the IAS. That has really been fun for me – meeting and greeting all our new members.

These two jobs are the best of the best. Membership welcomes new members in and then encourages all to continue to support the club through renewals. The Newsletter can keep everyone connected to the rest of the members and apprised of upcoming IAS and other Irish events.

If you can accept either position please contact President Gloria Cahen at 804-233-2113 and if you have any questions about the job responsibilities for either position, please call me at 804-323-6415 or email me at [bearfan46@verizon.net](mailto:bearfan46@verizon.net)

Again, my most sincere and heartfelt thanks for your help, encouragement and support. You are all dear to me and I appreciate all of you.

Nancy

-30-

**Hello all.. This is the JUNE issue of the Claddagh that you are reading – so if your membership was due for renewal in May or earlier – you are late! Please help me get the information updated and to the new Membership person in good shape. And call me if you want to be removed from the membership rolls. Thanks! Nancy**

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS** – Click on links in calendar and you can hear song selections from the artists  
 And ALWAYS click the link directly below to get the latest updates on upcoming events  
<http://richmondias.org/index.php?content=upcoming>

<p><b>June 7<sup>th</sup></b>  <b>IAS Annual Summer Picnic</b>  <b>Burke's Farm</b>  <b>1 pm</b></p> <p><b>Beautiful country location, great folks, good food, lots of laughs. BE THERE!!!</b></p>	<p><b>World Famous - IAS Summer Picnic</b> – 9943 Cheatham's Road, Amelia, VA – <a href="#">click here for directions and a Map from Chippenham &amp; Powhite - you can modify to your address</a> The picnic is fun for the whole family. You are asked to please bring a side dish or dessert to share, beverages for you and yours, and lawn chairs. - <b>Picnic Driving Directions:</b> Take 360 West out of Richmond. After crossing the Appomattox River into Amelia, go about 3-4 miles and you will see a billboard on your side of the road, a McDonald's billboard. (Only billboard in the county) Slide over into the left lane and about a half mile further turn left onto 627, which is Cheatham's Road. (DON'T turn onto 628 which comes first - that's not Cheatham's Road) The Salvage Shed is at the corner of 627. Go about 3/4 of a mile down Cheatham's (627) and the picnic is at the two-story white house on the left. The number, 9943, is on the mailbox. If you have any problems, call 804-561-5778 or 804-366-6925.</p>
<p><b>Saturday &amp; Sunday,</b>  <b>June 13th 10AM-7PM</b>  <b>June 14th 10AM-5PM</b></p>	<p><b>16<sup>th</sup> Annual Potomac Celtic Festival</b> in Leesburg, VA, on the picturesque historic green near the <a href="#">Morven Park Mansion and Museum</a>, will include continual music and dance from many of your Celtic favorites, juried crafters and specialty import vendors, 2000 years of Living History reenactments, storytelling in the grove, workshops, children's activities and crafts, food and drink, the authentic pub tent, and all of the family-fun that has become synonymous with PCF! <a href="http://www.potomaccelticfest.org/">http://www.potomaccelticfest.org/</a></p>
<p><a href="#">Celtic Women</a>      Landmark Theater      Richmond, VA      Sun, June 14<sup>th</sup> – 8PM</p>	<p>In a new program titled, “A New Journey”, the show spans two hours and contains selections from the group's platinum albums, <i>Celtic Woman</i> and <i>A New Journey</i>. The Celtic Women themselves are as beautifully, quintessentially Irish as the music they perform. Tickets are – Orchestra or Grand Tier \$60.00. Balcony – 2<sup>nd</sup> level - \$45.</p>
<p><b>June 25<sup>th</sup> – IAS Monthly Meeting – Blvd</b>  <b>Movie starts at 7 or so. Come early 6:30 –or so for a “Social” before</b></p>	<p>Movie Night – Featuring the 1994 film, “The Secret of Roan Inish”. “Between Land &amp;* Sea – There is a Place Where Myths are Real”. Come to the Boulevard United Methodist Church 321 N. Blvd. Richmond and find out what “That’s All About”! Social starts about 6:30 or so with the program to start around 7:00 or so. Try and come early to meet and greet your fellow members, then sit back and enjoy a beautiful Irish movie.</p>
<p><b>June 28<sup>th</sup> – IAS Board Meeting – 7:00 pm</b></p>	<p><b>IAS Board of Directors meeting.</b> All IAS Board meetings are open to the general membership of the Society and members are invited to attend and bring suggestions and ideas. Meetings start at 7pm. Agenda items may be presented to the Board by notifying the President in writing not less than 7 days before a Board meeting. For directions to attend or to present an item for the agenda, contact President Gloria Cahen, 804-233-2113</p>
<p><b>54<sup>th</sup> Grandfather Mtn, Highland Games – July 9<sup>th</sup> – 12th</b></p>	<p>The 54th Grandfather Mountain Highland Games will be held July 9-12, 2009 at MacRae Meadows on Grandfather Mountain near Linville, NC. <a href="http://www.gmhg.org/">http://www.gmhg.org/</a></p>
<p><b>Sept. 6<sup>th</sup></b>  <b>Irish Festival</b>  <b>Blackthorne Inn, in Upperville, Virginia,</b></p>	<p>The Prodigals, Solas an Irish American band playing traditional tunes, The Dublin City Ramblers, Pittsburgh based Ceann Shannon Lambert-Ryan &amp; RUNA, an Irish Dance stage, &amp; kids activities <a href="http://www.theirishfestival.com/bands.htm">http://www.theirishfestival.com/bands.htm</a></p>
<p>Sept. 11, 12 &amp; 13<sup>th</sup>      Pittsburgh PA      Irish Festival</p>	<p>Scythain, Gaelic Storm and more Irish music – Vendors, Sunday Mass, <a href="#">Pittsburgh PA Irish Festival/</a></p>
<p>32<sup>nd</sup> Annual      Williamsburg Scottish Festival  <b>October 2<sup>nd</sup> &amp; 3<sup>rd</sup></b></p>	<p>Friday, Oct 2<sup>nd</sup>, <b>Balmoral Reception</b>, 7 PM–9:00 PM, <b>Ceilidh</b> 6 P.M. – 11 P.M.      Saturday, Oct 3<sup>rd</sup>. Festival 9 AM–5:30 PM Ceilidh 5:30 PM–Midnight      Sunday, October 4<sup>th</sup> – <b>Kirkin</b> 10 A.M.</p>
<p>The Highland Games and Celtic Festival  <b>Oct 24th &amp; Oct 25th</b></p>	<p>The Meadow Event Park – 13111 Dawn Blvd., Doswell VA 23047. It’s a new name and new home – the fifteenth annual Meadow Highland Games &amp; Celtic Festival (formerly the Richmond Highland Games &amp; Celtic Festival) features two days of “Music. Food. Large Men Throwing Stuff.” <a href="http://www.richmondceltic.com/">http://www.richmondceltic.com/</a></p>