

The Richmond Claddagh <http://richmondias.org/>

Newsletter of the Greater Richmond Irish American Society



October 2010

OCTOBER 14TH IAS MEETING – Mark your calendars for a very special meeting for our IAS – Join renowned Storyteller and Celtic harpist, Denise Bennett, for a delightful program of traditional, historical and personal stories from and about Ireland along with music, both sung and played on the Celtic harp. Program highlights include the story of Annie Moore, the first immigrant from Ireland to come through Ellis Island; the spine-tingling "Mary Culhane" in honor of Halloween and Denise's personal story about her search for her Irish roots; all of it interlaced with the beautiful music of the Celtic harp and Denise's melodious voice. This is another wonderful Irish program for our members – please come and remember **Guests are WELCOME!** The program is at the [Tuckahoe Library](#) (click for map) 1901 Starling Drive, Richmond 23229 – come at 6:30 for a “social” and the program will start at 7 pm. Questions on the program or location please call Dan Begley 804-740-5631

October 23th & 24th: The Richmond Highland Games provide a great weekend of games, vendors, music and just plain Celtic fun. The IAS tent will be up and running and “trolling” for new members! If you’d like to volunteer for an hour or two (or 3 or 4) please call Karon Bell -**804-982-7835** to volunteer, she will be happy to help you set a time to work. Our IAS volunteers greet the guests that stop by our tent. We have some IAS regalia and other fund raising items to sell. We hand out membership information, a sample newsletter and any Ireland travel information, etc., that we might have for giveaways. There are always experienced members in the tent to answer the tough questions so you aren’t ever on your own. All you need to help out in the tent is a friendly disposition, a big smile and perhaps a bit of the blarney. Everyone that comes by the tent has an Irish story that they want to share and you will meet the nicest folks ever. It is a total blast to work in the IAS tent so please try to join us, meet some fellow members and have fun with our visitors. You can log on to the games website for a complete program of activities, music schedules, etc. <http://www.richmondceltic.com/>

Please Note – On October 24th, we mark the 4th Anniversary of the loss of IAS President Chris Garrett in 2006. No one had more fun than Chris at the Games. In fact the IAS presents the “Chris Garrett Celtic Spirit Award” at the games every year in commemoration of that attitude. A nice way to honor his memory and his efforts on behalf of the IAS is to come out, help out and promote the IAS and our Irish heritage – just as Chris always did.

PUB SUPPER - October 23rd – Rosie Connolly’s - 1548 E. Main St. 23219 – 804-343-1063

To have even more fun - Come straight to Rosie’s <http://www.rosieconnollys.com/> from the Highland Games, or if you can’t make it to the Games – just come to Rosie’s for “Nosh & Natter”. It’s a member gather, but also our opportunity to say goodbye to two of our grand members – Janet & Neil Brussard. They are soon off to Florida – job relocation – and we will miss them so much! Only members since April of 2009 – but we will surely miss these two cheerful, helpful & supporting folk. Meet up about 6:30 and we’ll order from there. There’s plenty of parking and we always have so much fun. **As always, call or email Joan with a count.** – 804-739-7359 or j.finn@hotmail.com - **JOAN COUNT ME IN!**

Hey!! This is the tent that YOU could be working in at the **Highland Games!** IAS Members Finn McCool (center) and Carol Daugherty Rasnic (green shirt) stand ready to meet and greet – you can also “see” Frank Hardy and Ed Kast. **SO HEY YOU BE SURE TO COME AND JOIN THE FUN TOO** – Call Karon and volunteer some time today!



Same tent – Same games... Kathleen Petty, Sonya Moore and Karon Bell in the meet and greet phase



FROM THE PRESIDENT - With the end of miserably hot and humid days, comes my favorite season – Autumn. This is the beginning of festival season starting with [Williamsburg Celtic Festival](#) at Rockahock, VA on October 2nd, [The Meadow Highland Games & Celtic Festival](#) on October 23rd & 24th and ending with the [Richmond Church Hill Irish Festival](#) in March. It's time for us all to dig in and volunteer to help at these Irish/Celtic functions. Our IAS needs young members to come out, pitch in and learn from those who have more experience.

Now is also the time for all of us to start thinking about a possible **MVP Award recipient for 2010**. This should be someone who is not the one you like the most, but the one you sincerely believe has made the greatest contribution to the IAS during this past year. This award is presented at our annual Christmas party. Nominations should be sent to one of the following:

Jim Bandeleon: 804-755-4309 – jbandeleon@gmail.com

Dan Begley: 804-740-5631 – dbegley55@hotmail.com

Larry David: dav15@co.henrico.va.us

Stephen Gallagher: 804-739-8503 – Stephen.g1@verizon.net

Frank Hardy – 804-883-6230 – fenway7@msn.com

Our IAS Christmas Party Silent Auction fell short of expectations last year – partly because of the economy. This year, we hope to expand the auction items with more vacation homes in Ireland, jewelry, books, clothing and other Irish themed items. We ask our members to look around and contribute those new or gently used Irish items this will make wonderful offerings for our IAS bidders. This year, we are even offering a pick-up service for those who cannot bring their donated articles to the party. Rumor has it that we may even have a Richmond Flying Squirrels team autographed baseball on the auction block.

We have a special treat for this year's Christmas Party. **"Turf Fire"**– our IAS members Mary Smith and John Robison have graciously consented to play their traditional Irish music for our entertainment. They recently performed for a crowd of 7,000 + before a Richmond Flying Squirrels game.

These events and more should offer a fun and festive time for us in the coming months. However, the IAS always needs volunteer help at these occasions. So please call Our Special Events Chairperson, Karon Bell at 804-982-7835 with an offer to help in any way you can at our IAS events and the local Irish/Celtic festivals. There are great opportunities to learn more about our own Irish History and culture and that of our Celtic neighbors. Gloria J. Cahen, President -

Dear Readers - Are you putting new or gently used Irish Items away for the Silent Auction Fundraiser at the Christmas Party? Call on any of our contacts about your donation and we'll publish a list of donations next month to whet the IAS appetites for a bargain! . (Nancy)

HEAR YE HEAR YE! Some changes to **The Richmond Claddagh** are being considered. We would like to hear from **EVERY** member about this. Please e-mail YOUR answers to Jim Mahone (jim.mahone@comcast.net) to **both** questions:

- 1.) What do you like about the IAS newsletter?
- 2.) What would you change about the IAS newsletter?

This survey won't work unless LOTS of members reply, and the sooner Jim gets your e-mail, the happier he'll be and we can set off to improve the newsletter! We'll let you know what we hear next month. **“Go raibh maith agat!”**

HOW'D YA LIKE TO VACATION IN A CASTLE OR A LIGHTHOUSE IN IRELAND?

I know that many of us are planning and saving for the first or the return trip to Ireland. This is a fantastic deal that might be of interest to some. I know that my imagination is working overtime about being able to stay in an old restored Lighthouse – HEAVEN!

The Irish Landmark Trust saves buildings of architectural importance and gives these properties a new lease of life by renting them as Self Catering accommodation so they can be enjoyed by present and future generations. To date, they have rescued 19 historical landmarks which include Castles, Lighthouses and Gate Lodges in Ireland. You can click on the link below to see the properties that are available – they are awesome. Be sure and check the views from the windows in the photos – it's a WOW moment and you tell me if you wouldn't love to be sitting in one of those windows.

<http://www.irishlandmark.com/Default.aspx>

Over the years, some in our IAS have talked about a “group tour” to Ireland and it seems like this would be really fun way for any group to go using one of these properties as the base. Visit the website – the Trust is doing a lot and we can help with donations. You can download their summer brochure – neat photos.

http://www.irishlandmark.com/SupporterNews/01_Supporter_News_July_2010.pdf

From the Editor - Psssst - Here's a little something for each of you - To see and hear the pronunciation of various Irish phrases – click on the link or go to this website – <http://www.daltai.com/phrases/phrases004.htm>



Re: The Silent Auction - Call Kathryn O'Meara 804-745-1903, Nancy Emig 804-323-6415 or Karon Bell 804-982-7835 with the item description and we'll get the Auction bid sheet ready. Someone could even come & pick it up if you need help getting it to us.

What were the Customs in Old Ireland?



Blessing the House: One of the traditions at this time of rest and renewal was the construction of a humble *parshell* (or *parshal*) - a cross-manufactured of two thin wooden staves, about six to nine inches long. Straw was woven tightly in a square pattern around the crossed staves, leaving an inch or so uncovered at the ends. The finished *parshell* was then hung above the door inside the house, replacing last year's. The latter was already taken down and placed somewhere else in the house or the barn. Children were additionally blessed by sprinkling them with holy water or placing some burnt wood into their beds.

Bonfires - Fires of Bones: An outdoor activity was the lighting of a bonfire ... literally a "fire of bones", the unused remains of slaughtered animals were hygienically disposed of. In days of old a rather alarming spectacle followed - once only the embers were glowing, mainly males snatched smoldering pieces and started throwing them at each other. Trying to avoid being hit at the same time. The origins of this "sport" or "ritual" are totally obscure, though it has been branded pagan. Today's bonfires rarely contain bones and embers are not snatched from them - but added tires and (illegal) fireworks make them unforgettable if only for the stench and noise. Halloween is one of the busiest times for Ireland's firefighters and councils try to eliminate illegal (and often dangerous) bonfires by simply bulldozing the site in the afternoon.

Getting Treats: Traditional festivities also included groups of young men in costume, making an enormous amount of noise and going from door to door asking for contributions to their revels. "Threatening" the occupants with often nonsensical rhymes, they asked for food and drink - which was happily provided. The young men were commonly called "**guisers**", "vizards" (sic), hugadais or buachaillí tuí. (Could be guisers be the precursor of "Geezers? Hmmm.)

In Kilkenny and other areas a láir bhán ("white mare", a man in a horse costume) led the procession. The carrying of lanterns seems to have been almost universal in contrast - every young man had a carved turnip with a candle, to illuminate the way and to scare onlookers. This might have been the origin of the "Jack O'Lantern". If you want to make your own, simply get a turnip and treat it as you would a pumpkin. After a few minutes you will, however, notice a certain difference - unless you resort to power tools, carving a lantern from a turnip will take a lot of effort and strength.

Other Wanderers in the Night: According to folklore you may encounter other beings out and about as well. Ghosts, ancestors, the *pooka* ... all held at bay by light. And should the light prove insufficient people made sure to confuse any malevolent "others" by dressing strangely. Bonfires, ghosts, lanterns, undead, costume, and mischievous spirits - all the ingredients of a modern Halloween are there.

Mind you - this time was also a favorite for dares. Like placing some money in a bible or hymnal, then leave same on the cemetery and tell everybody that whoever brings the book back during the night may keep the money. Though some played a dirty hand, donning funerary clothing and watching over the money themselves.



See you at Tuckahoe Library on October 14th for that Wonderful Halloween program of Irish music and stories with Denise Bennett. This is a very special opportunity for our IAS – so please take advantage of this opportunity and bring a friend or two! **I ...CANT ...WAIT!**

Remember those articles on Duffy's Cut – the Irish Railroad workers in PA – buried in a mass grave – here is a link to a Facebook page about it

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Duffys-Cut/132702390101003>

BEFORE THERE WAS A “MOTOWN” – Some cars were made in Ireland (This one’s for the Guys)

The Alesbury was an Irish automobile (of which I could find no photos). It was powered by an 8/10hp Stevens-Duryea engine and had solid tires. The car was exhibited in Dublin in 1907, but manufacture lasted only from then until 1908. Produced during the automotive **Brass Era** - the first period of automotive manufacturing, named for the prominent brass fittings used during this time for such things as lights and radiators. It extends from the first commercial automobiles marketed in the 1890s until about World War I.



The Shamrock Car, so called because the first were completed for St. Patrick’s Day 1959, was a car produced in Ireland for a brief period. The business was established by an American businessman, William K Curtis in Tralee, Co. Kerry, but was moved to Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan, before production began. The aim was to produce a large luxury car model for export to the US market.

Shortly after production began, however, design flaws became apparent. Although the car was big and heavy, it used a relatively small Austin A55 1.5 litre engine, which limited performance. The A55 also provided the transmission and suspension. Another problem was that body panels shrouded the rear wheels, and a rear wheel could not be removed (for puncture repair for example) without dropping its axle. The car used fiberglass body panels and was styled as a four-seat, two-door, coupé with removable hardtop. The wheelbase was 98 inches.

Production of up to 10,000 cars a year was planned, but eventually, only eight complete cars were produced during the six months before production ceased. After the factory closed, the unused parts were dumped into the local Lough Muckno. The car is now very rare, and only four are believed to be still in existence: three in Ireland — one each in Killarney, Thurles and Drogheda — and one in the USA in Seattle, WA.

1985 TMC Costin 1600
(Pardon me – while I salivate)



The **TMC Costin** was a lightweight sports car built from 1983 to 1987 at the Thompson Motor Company in Wexford, Ireland.

It was designed by the aerodynamicist and Marcos founder Frank Costin and was intended to be an Irish-made rival to Lotus Seven-inspired cars as manufactured by companies such as Caterham and Westfield. Costin had previous associations with Lotus and Maserati for racecar chassis designs. The cars were very successful in racing, but just 39 cars were built before TMC went bankrupt in 1987. The chassis rights were sold to the American Daniel Panoz, founder of Panoz Auto Development, which still builds the Panoz Roadster, which is based on the Costin.



The 1981 DeLorean

DMC12 – featuring gull wing doors with a fiberglass underbody to which non- structural brushed stainless steel panels were affixed. Originally manufactured in Dunmurry, Northern Ireland and immortalized in the American Film, “Back to the Future”. The most fun car – have no idea how good or bad it was, but a friend of mine had one years ago and I loved it – but then you know how I am about shiny things.

Irish Car Humor- - -

A small Irish village could not afford a speed camera, so they put up a sign saying: “Slow down. Old People’s Home.” But, it had no effect.

At the next meeting they decided to play on paternal instincts and put up a sign: “Danger - Children at Play” The result was no discernable reduction in traffic speed.

Then the chairman had another idea and suggested they try a sign with “Nudist Colony.” – Today – traffic through the village moves at a crawl.

FROM THE EDITOR:

Often, we seem to have occasions where there are Multiple Irish activities on the same night. On one hand, it's great that the Irish events seem to be increasing, but on the other hand, it could be that it makes it harder for people to decide where they want to be or which event they want to attend on a night of multiple opportunities. I'm just wondering – is there a solution to the problem? Is it a problem? Do you care? I can try harder to keep the website calendar updated to give a reference for folks who are planning the events. Maybe some one would volunteer just to do the calendar updates? I do hear from members when we have scheduling conflicts – but unfortunately – I'm not in the business of setting events – I just pass the event information along to all.

To answer some questions, I do tend to put events in the newsletter that are both local and out of town. These events are of Irish/Celtic origin, or they may be a free show or appearance by one of our long standing members who have given of their talents on many occasions to the IAS. Maybe it's a free Celtic movie or concert series such as those offered at the Williamsburg library. While some of the events are of a commercial nature – those are the professional concerts – and I only put those in to let you know about entertainment possibilities in the area. I try to find as many free entertainment outlets as I can to pass on to the members.

Anyway, what do you think? Do you have any suggestions for the planners so that the events aren't hurt by low attendance? Send them in and we will make sure they are forwarded to the right folks. The IAS is here – not only to promote our Irish heritage and history, we are here to assist our members by providing them with as much information as we can about opportunities to learn about and enjoy the wonderful pieces of our heritage. Now... pardon me while I step off my soap-box – 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>

October 14th IAS Monthly Meeting Tuckahoe Library 1901 Starling Drive Henrico, VA 23229 Come 6:30 for Social Program starts at 7:00	A very special treat for the IAS - Join Storyteller and Celtic harpist, Denise Bennett, for a delightful program of traditional, historical and personal stories from and about Ireland along with music, both played on the harp and sung. Program highlights include the story of Annie Moore, the first immigrant from Ireland to come through Ellis Island; the spine-tingling "Mary Culhane" in honor of Halloween and Denise's personal story about her search for her Irish roots; all of it interlaced with the beautiful music of the Celtic harp and Denise's melodious voice. Guests are WELCOME! http://storiesbydenise.com/site/
October 23 & 24th 15 th Annual Richmond Meadow Highland Games 1 mile E of Kings Dominion	Sat – 9am – 6pm, Sunday – 9am – 5pm. Athletic Competitions –or Large Men throwing Heavy Stuff, Pipe & Drum Competition, Highland Dance, Scottish Fiddle, Irish Fiddle, and Harp Competitions. Great Celtic Music all weekend. Over 80 vendors and artisans featuring handmade clothing, jewelry, crafts, collectibles and other authentic Celtic wares. Rugby game Sunday 25 th – 11:30 am For directions http://www.richmondceltic.com/maps-lodging or (804) 994-2800
October 23rd – IAS PUB SUPPER -	Rosie Connolly's – Not just a Pub Supper – but an opportunity to say good bye to Janet and Neal Brussard.
October 23rd Irish Music Session - Finn McCool's – 8pm	Bernard Farrell passes the word about the Irish session at Finn McCool's - located in The Shoppes at Innsbrook at the corner of West Broad and Cox Road. You can visit their website at (www.finnmccoolsrichmond.com)
Nov 3rd – 7pm Williamsburg Library <u>Celtic Film Series</u> Free	<u>Leap Year (2010, rated PG)</u> Williamsburg Library Theatre, 515 Scotland Street A woman (Amy Adams) has an elaborate scheme to propose to her boyfriend on Leap Day, an Irish tradition that occurs every time the date February 29 rolls around. http://www.wrl.org/programs/theatre.html

Friday, Nov 5th Williamsburg Library “Battlefield Band” Concert - \$25 7:30 pm	Under their banner <i>Forward</i> with Scotland’s Past, Battlefield Band has been performing on the international scene for more than three decades, inspired by their rich heritage of Celtic music and fired by the strength of the modern Scottish cultural scene. Their music is played regularly on National Public Radio’s Thistle and Shamrock http://www.battlefieldband.co.uk/index.htm
Sat – Nov 13th Turf Fire at Finn McCool’s 7pm – 10pm	IAS members, Mary Smith & John Robison, known as “Turf Fire” will be playing traditional Irish & Celtic Music – stop in and support both the Pub and our members! Finn's is Located at the Shoppes at Innsbrook (Corner of West Broad and Cox Road) (804) 217-8167. Click for website to check Menu - www.finnmccoolsrichmond.com
Dec 1st – 7pm Williamsburg Library Celtic Film Series Free	December Bride (1991, not rated) -- Williamsburg Library Theatre, 515 Scotland Street A proud Irish servant girl rebels against her strict upbringing by having love affairs with two brothers at the same time – they all risk happiness, reputation and safety for their daring love.
December 3rd 7:30 Danú Christmas In Ireland An Nollaig in Éirinn U of R Modlin Center 804 289-898	This acclaimed Irish ensemble celebrates a traditional Irish Christmas and continue to thrill with virtuoso players on fiddle, flutes, button accordion, percussion, and the gorgeous voice of Muireann Nic Amhlaoibh. Danú returns to the Modlin Center with dancers and other special guests. Bring the entire family to enjoy this glorious Irish celebration of Christmas. Tickets – Adults - \$34, Seniors - \$32, Children \$17 –Click on the link below for a taste of their music It is the best 4 minutes you’ll spend this week.. Keep a sharp eye for the dancing couple at the end. Tickets on Sale – October 22nd http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s0RIInGkoMQk&feature=related
Dec 4th – 8pm Irish Music Session Finn McCool’s	Bernard Farrell invites all to the Irish session. Finn McCool's is located in The Shoppes at Innsbrook at the corner of West Broad and Cox Road. You can visit their website at (www.finnmccoolsrichmond.com)

DO NOT MISS THE IAS CHRISTMAS PARTY & SILENT AUCTION!!!

December 4th IAS Christmas Party 6-ish to 11-ish Va. Power Boat Club 4051 Old Gun Rd East – Midlothian, VA 23113	The party will be held again at the Virginia Power Boat Club Association clubhouse, a warm and festive setting for us. The boat club is located at 4051 Old Gun Road East, Midlothian, VA. 23113. Here are directions from the Huguenot Bridge: Stay on Huguenot Road until you reach the intersection of Old Gun Road. There’s a traffic light there. Turn right. The road will twist & turn. Go 1.7 miles. The boat club is on the right. There’s a sign, but caution—it’s not very large or well lit. NO PARKING ON THE GRASS, & DRIVE SAFELY! Attendance is free – but we ask that you bring a “Dish to Share” – a dessert, an appetizer, your specialty... it’s all good! It’s BYOB – but we’ll have the mixers available. Call the contacts listed in the newsletter about your donation to the Silent Auction. We need your new donation or gently used donation for the auction. Everything from Irish books, posters, collectibles, vacation properties (some in Ireland) will be available. Start getting ready for the party and come up with that Auction item!
Dec 4th – Irish Music Session Finn McCool’s 8pm	Bernard Farrell invites all to the Irish session. Finn McCool's is located in The Shoppes at Innsbrook at the corner of West Broad and Cox Road. You can visit their website at (www.finnmccoolsrichmond.com)
December 18th, Richmond Folk Music Congregation Or Ami 9400 Huguenot Road Richmond, VA	Celebrate the Holiday Season with dance music by Richmond's favorite Klezmer ensemble - Klezm'Or'Ami'm , and rousing traditional Irish party music by Turf Fire . What is "Celtic Klezmer"? Well, described by Mick Malone -imagine if the Kellys and the Cohens were to put on a block party! Although it might seem a strange combination, these were two groups who not only came to America to build a better life, but really felt they had no homeland to go back to". Ticket pricing to be announced. It will be worth it to hear “Danny Boy” in Yiddish!

Jan. 5th 2011 – 7 pm Williamsburg Library Celtic Film Series Free	<u>P.S. I Love You (2007, rated PG-13)</u> Williamsburg Library Theatre, 515 Scotland Street In this romantic comedy based on the novel of the same name, a young widow (Hilary Swank) discovers that her late husband (Gerard Butler) has left her 10 messages intended to help ease her pain and start a new life.
Feb 25th & 26th Williamsburg Library Coyote Run – Concert \$15	Coyote Run - The Thinking Person's Celtic Rock Band - A powerful and compelling blend of Celtic legend, literature and song. "Coyote Run is one of the hottest bands on the Celtic music circuit today" http://www.coyoterun.com/
<u>March 2, 2011 – 7 pm</u> Williamsburg Library Celtic Film Series “ BOXED ” Free	<u>Boxed (2002, not rated)</u> Williamsburg Library Theatre, 515 Scotland Street This powerful drama set in Northern Ireland centers on a young Catholic priest fresh from seminary, full of idealistic beliefs and faith. He is mistakenly taken to an isolated house where an IRA group is holding a suspected informer awaiting execution. The priest is expected to hear the informer's last confession but refuses to go along with this and locks himself in a room with the victim, threatening to expose the IRA members. The terrorists are now faced with the possibility of having to kill a priest, a decision none of them can make.
<u>April 6, 2011 – 7 pm</u> Williamsburg Library Celtic Film Series FREE	<u>Black Irish</u> (2007, rated R) Williamsburg Library Theatre, 515 Scotland Street. In South Boston, where Irish roots run deep and Catholic tradition reigns, two brothers face similar hardships but lead far different lives.
<u>May 4, 2011 – 7 pm</u> Williamsburg Library Celtic Film Series FREE	<u>A Love Divided</u> (1999, not rated) Williamsburg Library Theatre, 515 Scotland Street Based on a true story this is the moving and dramatic love story of a marriage between a Catholic and a Protestant in 1950s Ireland.
<u>May 21, 2011</u> Ulster Spirit Richmond Folk Music Congregation Or Ami 9400 Huguenot Road Richmond, VA 804-647-7856	Musical Journey from the Glens of Antrim to the Hills of the Blue Ridge with Chris Caldwell and Steve Mulholland, founding members of the Traditional Irish Group – Killultagh - who last visited us in 2002 and so impressed IAS members with their the vibrant energy and spirit in their renditions of the traditional music of their native Ulster. Workshops will be announced in conjunction with this appearance. More information to follow! Tickets \$12 advance / \$15 door
<u>June 1, 2011 – 7pm</u> Williamsburg Library FREE Celtic Film Series	<u>Bloom</u> (2004, rated R) Williamsburg Library Theatre, 515 Scotland Street On the morning of the 16th June, 1904, Leopold Bloom (Stephen Rea) set out on a journey that was to become one of the greatest tales of the 20th century.

IAS OFFICERS & BOARD

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