



The Richmond Claddagh

Newsletter of the Greater Richmond Irish American Society

<http://richmondias.org/>

September 2009

SEPTEMBER 10, 2009: SEPTEMBER MONTHLY MEETING - Virginia Delegate Joe Morrissey – a long time supporter of the Irish community in Richmond and our shared Irish heritage - moved to and lived in Ireland for several years. He will speak about his time spent in Ireland and some of the differences between life there and life in the US – along with the adjustments he had to make. Also some discussion on differences between US law and Irish laws and many more interesting topics. Joe will also answer any questions you have related to the meeting topic

The meeting is at **St. Patrick's Catholic Church 213 North 25th Street Richmond, Virginia** – the program will start at 7 pm sharp – in the Church, but get there early for a good seat. But if you run a little late, come anyway – we'll get you seated! We are not allowed to bring hospitality treats to the Church, but some of us **"might"** stop in at Rosie Connolly's after the meeting for some meet/greet/get to know you time for anyone interested in joining in. If you are reading this on line – click here for [Directions to St. Pat's](#)

SEPTEMBER 19 – IAS PUB SUPPER – Poe's Pub – Start time is 6:30 – for another night of "Hey, Lets all get to know the IAS folks and have supper at that same time"! Join us at Poe's Pub at 2706 East Main, Richmond 23223. To help them plan the seating - **Please call your reservations to Joan at 804-840-0080** or email her at jfynn@hotmail.com Here's a link to the website and the menu so you can make your choices. –

<http://www.poespub.com/images/menu.pdf>

The October 15th IAS Meeting – Dumbarton Library – Local Irish historian, actress, singer/musician, former tour presenter at the Confederate Museum and former IAS member, Annalee Evans is presenting a program on the vibrant Irish community in Richmond in the Antebellum period of the 1860s. Many of the Richmond Irish were centered in the area around St Patrick's Church. But what was it that motivated the Irish to move to Richmond instead of other Northern cities that were more industrial at that time? How did they integrate into Richmond life as newcomers? In what other sections of Richmond did they settle outside of Church Hill? Annalee will also address the tragedy of 1863 that devastated the local Irish community. Annalee, who was a former tour guide at the Confederate Museum, will present on these subjects and more on 10/15/09 at Dumbarton Library at 7PM. 6800 Staples Mill Rd Richmond, VA 23228 (804) 262-6507 [Get directions](#)

The August Events – The Movie Meeting and Supper at Rosie's – a good turnout for the movie – which was super! Hope to get Dan to schedule another showing on a weekend so that we are able to get more members out to see it. Msgr. Hugh O'Flaherty was a true hero and should be better known – by the world and especially by we Irish. Now, we'll just keep still – till the next showing. (Do Come!)

Then later in August, we gathered at Rosie Connolly's for some supper and more wonderful Irish music played by IAS members Joe O'Brien on the penny whistle and Ryan Rourke on the bodhran (and his friend whose name I'll get next time) and return musician – Kevin on the fiddle. It was such a nice night, with good friends, fine music – does it get any better? I hope we'll see more members at every upcoming supper.

Our Special Events Chair - Karon Bell is looking for volunteers –

To help in the IAS tent at the upcoming area Celtic Festivals – **The Williamsburg Scottish Festival** comes first - On October 3rd– (check it out at this website <http://www.wsfonline.org/>) The tent is Set up at 8am to be ready for the start of the festival - and then we need **"meeters and greeters"** for the tent (see the calendar at the end of the newsletter for the schedule for Friday night and Saturday events. This is a great day, a nice location <http://www.rockahock.com/>, and some great Irish/Celtic music and vendors.

Next on October 24th & 25th is the (monster) **Meadow Highlands games** (formerly the Richmond Highland Games – you can use this link for info) <http://www.richmondceltic.com/> (These Games cover 2 full days and the tent goes up on Friday night. So we need volunteers to help with set up on Friday night and more for two days working in the tent.

So **Please** call Karon at 804-517-3249 – 'cuz we really do need the volunteers. Thanks!

IAS Favorite, Helen Warriner Burke is lately having some "not feeling so great days" – If you have a minute - you might send her a little greeting. The address is 9943 Cheatham's Road, Amelia, VA. 23002. Helen & Pat are the part of the originators of our IAS and its through their efforts that we have this Irish crew together today. So Get Well Soon Helen, We want you back having some fun with us!

IAS member Joan Finnegan has put some time and energy into finding out what it would take to get a Virginia Historical Marker erected to honor those Irish who helped to settle the Commonwealth. We've asked you all for input on local stories, heroes or incidents that might be considered for such a marker in the Richmond area. There are unsung Irish heroes in every walk of life – and this is the story of a previously unknown band of Irish who worked and died anonymously in Pennsylvania. A marker is located on a road in the Lehigh Valley and theirs is the story that inspired Joan to seek similar stories for recognition in Virginia

Duffy's Cut Mass Grave - Marker Text

“Nearby is the mass grave of fifty-seven Irish immigrant workers who died in August 1832, of cholera. They had recently arrived in the United States and were employed by a construction contractor, named Duffy, for the Philadelphia and Columbia Railroad. Prejudice against Irish Catholics contributed to the denial of care to workers. Their illness and death typified the hazards faced by many 19th century immigrant industrial workers.”

The Story Behind the Marker To build their lines, Pennsylvania railroads had to tunnel through mountains, cross wide rivers, and span deep gorges to lay the track on which their trains would run. This was hard, physically demanding, low-paying and dangerous work. To find men desperate enough to build and maintain their lines, Pennsylvania railroads for generations relied upon foreign workers - Irish and Chinese, and Italians - and on blacks from the south. In 2004, a state historical marker was erected for fifty-seven Irish Catholic men whose fleeting chance at the American Dream ended in horror in August 1832. Hired on the docks in Philadelphia by Phillip Duffy, a Willistown railroad contractor working for the Philadelphia and Columbia Railroad, these Irishmen were taken to two small hills near the present-day town of Malvern, to fill in a ravine for a track bed. Duffy crowded his work crew into a single hastily built shanty. Largely shunned by the local populace - anti-Irish Catholic riots had broken out in Philadelphia just the year before -the newcomers began their grueling labor in June.

That summer, an outbreak of cholera swept through the Delaware Valley, killing at least 900 people and inciting great anxiety. At the beginning of August, the disease made its deadly appearance in the ravine. As they watched their fellow workers fall ill and die, some of the Irish men hurried to nearby homes for assistance. But anti-Catholic and anti-immigrant prejudice was so prevalent that doors were barred, and help denied. Only the contractor's blacksmith risked exposure in a futile attempt to save lives. He also led several Sisters of Charity from Philadelphia to the site, but to no avail. The task of burying the Irish workers, who all died from cholera that August, fell upon the blacksmith.

He buried them all in a shallow ditch on the railroad's right of way without ceremony or funeral. Rejected by the local residents, the nuns walked back to Philadelphia without food or water in the late summer heat.

Although incidents such as this one at Duffy's Cut were uncommon, immigrant workers on Pennsylvania's railroads suffered from injury and death at a high rate, for they were often viewed by the owners and managers of railroad and coal mining corporations as expendable components, and by locals as unwholesome and even dangerous outsiders. Often crowded into company housing in out-of-the-way locations, foreign-born mine and rail workers struggled for survival in a frequently hostile environment.

As commerce and industry expanded rapidly in the decades before the Civil War, immigrant workers efforts fueled Pennsylvania's exploding economic growth. Landless Irish tenant farmers and laborers fled by the thousands every year - dispossessed by the English in their homeland, and then fleeing starvation after the outbreak of the infamous Irish potato famine. The vast majority wound up in New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Some found skilled labor positions, or farming opportunities, ended up doing temporary and arduous hard labor. One Irish writer remarked in 1860 that there were four modes of power at work in the world of American industry, "water-power, steam-power, horse-power, and Irish-power – and the last works hardest of all." Immigrants from Germany, England, Scotland, Wales, Canada, Norway, and Sweden, and China also arrived in America with high hopes and limited opportunities in the mid-1800s. For those who spoke English or were skilled craftsmen, chances for economic success were greater. Many of these immigrant workers brought with them ideas about labor guilds and fraternities, which would appear in force during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Railroad jobs, especially for brakemen, could be extremely dangerous. In 1881, more than thirty thousand American railroad workers were killed or injured on the job. Many railroads offered no compensation; nor did the courts ruling that workers shared the blame for their injuries and deaths—even when railroads had the ability to use equipment that would improve safety. But in 1832, the fifty-seven Irish laborers, who worked on the Philadelphia and Columbia line, were completely on their own. When disease struck, they suffered, and died, alone. No death certificates were ever filed for these non-citizens. Work on Duffy's Cut resumed in the fall.

The Pennsylvania Railroad purchased the Philadelphia and Columbia in 1857 and the story of Duffy's Cut might have been forgotten had it not been for some local residents who still talked about the gruesome tragedy.

In 1870, sympathetic local railroad workers constructed a wooden fence around what they thought was the gravesite. In 1909, a railroad assistant supervisor replaced the deteriorating wooden fence with a stone wall. But according to at least one local resident, whose story was recorded in 1919, the Irish men's unmarked graves were covered by track when the Pennsylvania Railroad reset its line in the 1880s to straighten out the Sugartown Curve. Old railroad maps appear to confirm this disturbing possibility.

Official record of the deaths at Duffy's Cut, remained locked in the vaults of the Pennsylvania Railroad (PRR) until Joseph Tripican, a secretary to a former PRR president removed them after the company's bankruptcy in 1970. In the 1990s, one of Tripican's grandsons, Frank Watson discovered the papers in a file, and began with fellow historians William Watson and John Ahtes to research the history. The state historical marker, dedicated in 2004, memorializes the fifty-seven Irish workers who died at Duffy's Cut in August of 1832, and the labors and sacrifices of the immigrants who helped build the railroads in Pennsylvania.

For generations the Irish, like these pictured, comprised the largest group of rail workers.



(Photo Credit: Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania).

If you are interested - Here is a link to take you to a short video about Duffy's Cut.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jnFNiKPjA4c>

Then you can listen to a song about this event

[Christy Moore singing "Duffy's Cut"](#)

And in memory of "The Fifty-Seven"

"Ar dheis Dé go raibh a n-anam"

May Their Souls Be On The Right Hand of God

Photograph the beauty of Ireland's villages, towns and cities – GoIreland wants your photos of the beauty of Ireland

What image epitomizes the beauty of Ireland's rural and urban populated areas? Does it feature a landscape, the people or some other aspect of a particular place? Perhaps it's a mix of these or something else.

If you've taken a photo that you feel best represents this year's theme, enter the **GoIreland.com Photography Awards 2009**. Go through your snaps, maybe the winning photo is there! There is no limit to the number of images you wish to submit.

Now in its fifth year, the GoIreland.com Photography Awards is an international amateur tourist photography competition aimed at showcasing Ireland and its tourism qualities.

Open to both Irish holidaymakers and visiting tourists to capture the beauty of Ireland's villages, towns and cities.

The overall winning photograph and 11 runners-up of the GoIreland.com Photography Awards 2009 will become part of history by being reproduced in an original John Hinde calendar.

The overall winning amateur photographer will also receive an award-winning Olympus E-620 digital camera. The closing date for entries is Friday, 16th October 2009 (6pm CET).

To enter the competition – you must visit the "Go Ireland" website. <http://www.goireland.com/> or if you are reading this on line - click this link for the official entry blank

<http://www.goireland.com/photos/enter.htm>

Then you can click

[Click here to see the 2008 Winners - Awesome!](#)

This photo was pulled from the web at [Webshots.com](#) And I bet some of you have shots just as good... so get your entry ready!



(Wouldn't ya' love to be right there)

The Williamsburg Scottish Festival is coming up October 2nd –4th. The IAS has participated for several years to infuse the historical Irish connection of the first Colonies to the Celtic festival. Here is a little background on the Irish connection of those who were part of the First Virginia settlements.

Jamestown: The Irish were at the first American Settlement (Fr. Kevin O’Neill Shanley) Although the Virginian Colony never attracted the large waves of Irish immigrants who would virtually flood the shores of other Atlantic colonies, they are part of the original colony of Jamestown, the first permanent English settlement in North America, founded in 1607. Part of the reason seems to be that its economy was based, to a large extent, on the use of slavery. Although the Irish immigrants were often used in place of the more economically valued slaves, there was little work for the refugees from Ireland.

Religion also seems to have played a part in the exclusion of the Irish. The established church in Virginia was the Church of England (Episcopalian). Presbyterians were also to be found in Virginia, especially in the Shenandoah Valley, along with Methodists and Baptists scattered in small farming communities. It is true that Virginia, in 1786, became the first U.S. state formally to disestablish a state church with its Statute of Religious Liberty. However, even with legal restrictions removed, cultural prejudices against Catholics remained. It was not a welcome place for Irish Catholic immigrants. But in spite of these, and other factors, the Irish turn up in the historical records of this original colony of Jamestown. Perhaps the saying is true that the Irish, “Like the Grace of God, are to be found everywhere”. The first Irish in the colony was one Francis Magnel, born in Ireland and a member of the crew of one of three ships that brought the first settlers. The early historical records do not mention whether he was a crewmember of the “Susan Constant”, or the “Godspeed” or the “Discovery” which arrived there on May 13, 1607. However, Francis Magnel, whose rather unusual family name is generally traced to Co. Cork, certainly deserves recognition for his working contribution to the survival of the colony in both the heat of the summer and the cold and hunger of their first winter. His family’s Norse background might explain his being a sailor, but he must have had other skills to contribute to the survival of Jamestown. And in Ireland today, he is remembered in the County Cork town land of Magnelstown, also known as Castlemagner.

With the help of various foundations and government and individual funds, restoration work on the Jamestown Colony actually began in 1957 but intensified as the place approached its 400th anniversary in 2007. Part of the work turned up some 262 names of the estimated 334 original settlers. And visitors can easily find the name of Francis Magnel

Another Irishman: About six months after Magnel is believed to have returned by ship to England, another Irishman by the name of Dionis (Denis) O’Connor arrived in Jamestown, probably in September or October of 1608. He is simply listed as a tradesman but little more is known about him. There is the possibility that he perished, along with many others colonists, during the great famine which took so many lives in the dreaded winter of 1609-1610. There remains the distinct possibility that O’Connor was buried at Jamestown.

Matter of Conjecture: For historians and others, it can only be a matter of conjecture what actually happened to most of the Jamestown original settlers, the two Irish among them. Certainly there was the danger of attacks by the, sometimes hostile, Indians who felt their lands invaded and confiscated by the white settlers from across the sea. In addition, the colonists had reason to fear the Spaniards from the not too distant Florida settlements and their fleet, which still contained fighting ships from the Spanish Armada that attacked England in 1588. It is not surprising, then, that the original settlement was built within a triangular fort for protection.

Other Irish Connections: In addition to Magnel and O’Connor, there were other Irish connections in Jamestown. Edward Wingfield, the first president of the colony’s Governing Council, had fought in the Province of Munster, Ireland, against the Rebellion of the Earl of Desmond (1569-72). And at least three other colonists – George Percy, Richard Crofts and Edward Morris – also fought with Queen Elizabeth’s armies in Ireland during the nine years’ war (1594-1603) against Hugh O’Neill of Tyrone and Red Hugh O’Donnell of Tyrconnell and their clans and allies. This previous military experience against the elusive and guerrilla tactics of the Irish may explain the unusual triangle shape of the Jamestown fort, similar to those used by the English in Ireland. Strangely enough, Irish copper coins were also found at Jamestown, along with Catholic religious articles such as a Crucifix, rosaries and a Marian medallion.



“EASTER SIXTEEN” - Here’s a new film for the IAS to keep an eye out for its release. Having originally been slated for production in March 2009, this feature film produced by the LA based Marathon Pictures is scheduled to go into production in Dublin in September. Based on one of Ireland’s most significant events ‘Easter Sixteen’ the film will mark the directorial debut feature by Irish actor Jason Barry (Titanic) and will star Guy Pearce (L.A. Confidential) as Padraig Pearse and Ian Hart (“Finding Neverland”) as Thomas Clarke. The actor for the role of James Connolly has yet to be confirmed. The film’s budget looks to be in the domain of \$25 million. – (Hope it comes to Richmond!)

MARK YOUR CALENDARS – Click on links in calendar for more And ALWAYS click the link directly below to get the latest updates on upcoming events <http://richmondias.org/index.php?content=upcoming>

Sept. 5th & 19th Olde Time & Irish Music Jams	Java Jodi’s Coffee Cafe - The Old Time and Irish Music Jams Sessions , from 1pm-4pm. 2918 River Road West Goochland, Virginia 23063 Telephone: (804) 556 7979. On Rte 6 in Goochland Courthouse-a mile from Rte 522 Bridge (Maiden's Crossing)
September 6th Irish Festival Blackthorne Inn, Upperville, Virginia,	The Prodigals, Solas an Irish American band playing traditional tunes, The Dublin City Ramblers, Pittsburgh based Ceann Shannon Lambert-Ryan & RUNA, an Irish Dance stage, & kids activities http://www.theirishfestival.com/bands.htm
September 10 IAS Monthly Meeting St. Patrick’s Church 7:00– 9:00pm	Virginia Delegate Joe Morrissey will be speaking about his time spent in Ireland. 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. St. Patrick’s Catholic Church 213 North 25th Street Richmond, Virginia. We are not allowed to bring hospitality treats to the Church, but some will stop in at Rosie Connolly’s after the meeting for some meet/greet/get to know time among the members. Directions to St. Pat’s
September 13th IAS Board Meeting Ideas, suggestion and comments are welcome!	Board meetings start at 7:00 and members are welcome. Meetings are held at President Gloria Cahen’s house – please call her for directions - 804-233-2113. Your ideas and thoughts are welcome. If you can’t come – contact any Board member with your ideas, suggestions, or comments.
September 13th St. Andrew’s Legion Pipes & Drums	Will be playing at the Commonwealth Cup Polo Match on September 13th. It’s in a new location (same place as the Virginia Highland Games) this year and is combined with a wine festival. www.winefestivalattheplains.com
September 19th IAS at POE’S PUB 2706 E. Main Street Richmond, Virginia 6:30 till???	Pub Supper at Poe’s Pub – It’s a fun place and we’ve been there before – Nice folks -and we always have a real good time. Here’s a link to the website and the menu so you can make your choices. – http://www.poespub.com/images/menu.pdf Don’t forget to contact Joan -804-840-0080 or jfinn@hotmail.com and let her know you are coming and how many! We want to have a place for everyone
September 23rd SALPD	St. Andrew’s Legion Pipes and Drums will be at Mt. Vernon, VA, playing at a function for the Black Women United for Action with First Lady Michele Obama in attendance.
October 2nd & 3rd Williamsburg Scottish Festival	Friday, Oct 2 nd , Balmoral Reception , 7 PM–9:00 PM, Ceilidh 6 P.M. – 11 P.M. Saturday, Oct 3 rd . Festival 9 AM–5:30 PM Ceilidh 5:30 PM–Midnight Sunday, October 4 th – Kirkin 10 A.M. http://www.wsfonline.org/ (The IAS needs volunteers our tent on Saturday. Please call Karon Bell 804-517-3249
October 15th 7:00 pm 6:30 Meet/Social IAS Monthly Meeting Dumbarton Library 6800 Staples Mill Rd. Richmond 23228 804-262-6507	Annalee Evans is presenting a program on the vibrant Irish community in Richmond in the Antebellum period of the 1860s. Many of the Richmond Irish were centered in the area around St Patrick’s Church. But what was it that motivated the Irish to move to Richmond instead of other Northern cities that were more industrial at that time? How did they integrate into Richmond life as newcomers? In what other sections of Richmond did they settle outside of Church Hill? Annalee will also address the tragedy of 1863 that devastated the local Irish community. Directions to the library – click here Get directions

<p>Oct 24th & Oct 25th The Highland Games and Celtic Festival NEW LOCATION</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 & Celtic Festival (formerly the Richmond Highland Games & Celtic Festival) features two days of “Music. Food. Large Men Throwing Stuff.” http://www.richmondceltic.com/ The IAS Needs Volunteers for the IAS Tent – Please call Karon Bell - 804-517-3249</p>
<p>December 5th More info coming Mark The DATE</p>	<p>IAS Christmas Party – James River Boat Club –But Mark your Calendar now and be sure to start planning for the Annual Silent Auction. Start putting those pennies away and also start planning your donations for the auction.</p>
<p>The Irish Guards and Regimental Band</p> <p>Friday, January 22, 2010 7:30 pm Carpenter Theatre</p>	<p>In their first tour of the United States since their establishment in 1900, the Irish Guards and Regimental Band visit Richmond to share the glory of their signature pomp and pageantry. Formed at the express wish of Queen Victoria to commemorate the bravery of Irish regiments who fought in South Africa, the band performs, in turn with four other foot guard bands, for the Mounting of the Queen’s Guard at Buckingham Palace and for state ceremonial occasions including royal weddings and the Queen’s Birthday Parade. With a current roster of 49 musicians, the band also performs in a variety of professional combinations including a concert band, marching band, salon orchestra, dance band, and fanfare trumpeters. Join in the spirit of this historic ensemble by attending the concert in your favorite traditional regalia. Public Tickets: \$18-\$38 with discounts for seniors & children; through Ticketmaster at 1-800-745-3000 or ticketmaster.com</p>
<p>Eileen Ivers</p> <p>March 15, 2010 7:30 pm Carpenter Theatre, Richmond CenterStage Modlin Ctr</p>	<p>Diva of the Celtic music genre, fiddler Eileen Ivers leads her audience on a magical mystery tour in "Beyond the Bog Road"- a multimedia tribute to her Irish-American heritage and the people who gave it meaning. Paying homage to the rich and tireless passage of the native Irish people from Ireland to Canada and the United States, Eileen Ivers has created “Beyond the Bog Road,” an all-star assemblage of Irish and traditional musicians, singers, step dancers and cloggers/tap dancers. Told through music, story, and dance and featuring an exquisite video, this multimedia performance is a celebration of the Irish immigrant’s impact on America and America’s impact on the Irish immigrant. This is Eileen Ivers at her most heartfelt—a seminal work and a slice of Irish-American musical history underscored by Ivers’ abiding passion and timeless grace. Public Tickets: \$19-\$38 with discounts for seniors & children; through Ticketmaster at 1-800-745-3000 or ticketmaster.com.</p>
<p>April 2010</p>	<p>Riverdance – Landmark Theater – Tickets - \$37.50 - \$57.50 – Tickets not on sale yet.</p>

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I’ll be looking for you at these wonderful events planned for us in the coming weekSEE YA!