



The Richmond Claddagh

JANUARY 2014

<http://richmondias.org/>

The Richmond Irish American Society

[Click for the Calendar of Events](#)



Happy New Year! Athbhliain faoi mhaise dhuit! (ah-vleen fwee vosh-ah ghwitch/)

With a nod to our heritage... Ireland is home to some of the most unique superstitions and traditions - and this is especially true when it comes to ringing in the New Year.

Centuries ago it was customary to begin the New Year with a spotlessly clean house. As a result houses were thoroughly cleaned as it signified a fresh start to the New Year.

Another tradition involved banging on doors and walls of the house with Christmas bread to chase the bad luck out of the house and invite the good spirits in.

On New Year's night, families would remember those who passed away that year before by setting a place for them at the dinner table and leaving the door unlatched.

A lot of meaning was also placed on who would be the first person to pass through the door on New Year's Day. If it was a tall dark handsome man, this would bring the home and its occupants' good luck but if it was a red haired girl it would bring hardship and grief.

Those who were single were advised to place sprigs of mistletoe, holly and ivy leaves under their pillow so they would dream of their future wives and husbands.

At midnight many would enter the house through the front door and leave through the back door for good luck.

Thanks Everyone!!!! The IAS Christmas Party was a great success and we all enjoyed seeing many members that we haven't seen in awhile. Thanks to all for coming out and making it a great success (and a lot of fun too!!!)

The Silent Auction was full of great items and helped the IAS in their goal of raising money for the Mary Ryan Memorial presentation in the Spring. Thanks to all of you for coming out and giving your support.

IAS Board Meeting

The next scheduled Board meeting is Monday, January 13th at 7 pm at O'Toole's Restaurant, 4800 Forest Hill Avenue, Richmond 23225.

Members are ALWAYS welcome at the Board meetings. We need and can use your ideas, suggestions, comments, accolades or complaints! Your input will make the Society stronger.

If you can't make it to a meeting - contact one of our Board members (all contact info at the back of the newsletter) send or call your ideas or suggestions and we will bring them up at the Board meeting for consideration.

Our wish to IAS Members in 2014



Have fun - Take pride in your Irish heritage - and when you can - join us at the Irish American Society Pub Suppers, Meetings and Programs... we'll be looking for 'ya!

RESCHEDULED!!

IRISH BRUNCH & IRISH MUSIC SESSION January 12th - 1-4 pm ROSIE CONNOLLY'S PUB & RESTAURANT



Tommy Goulding and the fine folks at Rosie's are hosting an Irish Brunch in conjunction with an Irish Music Session featuring local musicians dedicated to the promotion and preservation of Traditional Irish Sessions. In the photo above, one can see IAS members Kelly Kennedy and Bernard Farrell. This is a closed session consisting of the best of the best musicians in Richmond.

To enjoy the feeling of being in Ireland without the expense of airfares, please join us in Rosie's Irish Pub on December 8th for this very special Irish opportunity right here in Richmond.

Rosie's is located on the west side of the 17th St. Farmers' Market in Richmond's historic Shockoe Bottom, right next to Havana 59. Just turn on 17th Street off East Main

Let's make a big effort to come out and support both the local Irish musicians and Rosie's. Both promote a very positive image of our Irish heritage, while offering all of us "a little bit of Ireland right here in Richmond.

Click on this link to hear a bit of an earlier session.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4jem_643Yf0

Click on this link for directions to Rosie's

<http://www.rosieconnollys.com/directions.html>

**MARK THOSE CALENDARS
BRING YOUR FRIENDS
AND LET'S DO BRUNCH ☺**

This is a twofer! You can support a local Irish pub and also show support for our local Irish musicians. It gives us all a chance to enjoy the positive aspects of our Irish heritage on a local level. So much cheaper than a trip to Ireland! I hope to see you there! --AND TELL YOUR FRIENDS!! Nancy ☺

OUR PROUD IRISH HERITAGE

The Knights of Columbus – What's the Irish Connection?



An Irish-American Catholic priest, Father Michael J. McGivney in New Haven, Connecticut, founded the Knights of Columbus. He gathered a group of men from St. Mary's Parish for an organizational meeting on October 2, 1881 and the Order was incorporated under the laws of the U.S. state of Connecticut on March 29, 1882. Though the first councils were all in that state, the Order spread throughout New England and the United States in subsequent years.

The primary motivation for the Order was to be a mutual benefit society. As a parish priest in an immigrant community, McGivney saw what could happen to a family when the breadwinner died, and wanted to provide insurance to care for the widows and orphans left behind. He had to temporarily leave his seminary studies to care for his family when his father died. In the late 19th century, Catholics were regularly excluded from labor unions and other organizations that provided social services. In addition, Catholics were either barred from many of the popular fraternal organizations, or, as in the case of Freemasonry, forbidden from joining by the Catholic Church itself. McGivney wished to provide them an alternative. He also believed that Catholicism and fraternalism were not incompatible and wished to found a society that would encourage men to be proud of their American-Catholic heritage.

McGivney traveled to Boston to examine the Massachusetts Catholic Order of Foresters and to Brooklyn to learn about the recently established Catholic Benevolent League, both of which offered insurance benefits. He found the latter to be lacking the excitement he thought was needed if his organization were to compete with the secret societies of the day. He expressed an interest in establishing a New Haven Court of the Foresters, but the charter of Massachusetts Foresters prevented them from operating outside their Commonwealth. The committee of St. Mary's parishioners, which McGivney had assembled then decided to form a club, that was entirely original.

McGivney had originally conceived of the name "Sons of Columbus", but James T. Mullen, who would become the first Supreme Knight, successfully suggested the name - "Knights of Columbus".

UPCOMING IAS PUB NIGHT!



Richmond Irish Landmark
“Rare Old Times Irish Public House”
Is pleased to present
Traditional Irish music by
Mary Smith
&
Gregg Kimball
On
**“Saturday, January 25th,
6 to 8 pm**

This performance coincides with

The January Pub Night
Scheduled for
The Irish American Society

*10608 Patterson Avenue,
Richmond 23238
804-750-1346

Click below for menu & directions
<http://www.rareoldtimes.com/>

You might be interested in visiting the website of
our newest IAS members – Michael Regan Waugh
& Trish O'Donnell Jenkins.

<http://www.wildwestirishtours.com/>

COMING ATTRACTIONS

The Cultural Center at Glen Allen
Presents
The Celtibillies
Saturday, March 15, 2014 7pm
Tickets - \$25



Formed in 1994 as a contra dance band, Celtibillies began exploring the deep-rooted connections between Celtic music and the Appalachian music of their home region of southwest Virginia. Their music expanded beyond dance tunes to include a wide range of traditional Celtic and Appalachian Old-Time music and song as well as original music. Bluegrass Unlimited described their music as, masterful work of art that transcends all musical genres. Dancers from the Blue Ridge Irish Music School join in on the fun giving a down-home twist to this St. Patrick's Day celebration.

To Buy Tickets on Line Click Below

http://purchase.tickets.com/buy/TicketPurchase?organ_val=23798&schedule=list

Artist [Website](#) – (Click to Visit)

Anyone interested in going and sitting as a
group?

IN THE NEW YEAR, MAY
YOUR RIGHT HAND
ALWAYS BE STRETCHED
OUT IN FRIENDSHIP AND
NEVER IN WANT.

Newgrange and the Winter Solstice



The passage tomb at Newgrange is probably Ireland's most iconic archaeological site and it is indelibly linked with the winter solstice. The tomb itself is over 5000 years old, pre-dating the first phase of Stonehenge by 1000 years and the Egyptian pyramids by 400 years. It is roughly circular in plan and contains an east-facing passageway, 19m long leading into a central chamber containing three recesses or small rooms. The tomb is a massive structure measuring 76m in diameter by 12m in height and it contains over 200,000 tons of earth and stone in its fabric. It was a monumental feat of engineering in a time pre-dating metal tools and it must have taken many years to complete.



Newgrange rock art

Archaeological excavations carried out by M. J. O' Kelly revealed the bones of at least five people, some cremated and some un-burnt, within the central chamber and recesses. However, originally there may have been more burials as Newgrange has been open to the public since the late 17th century and has been much disturbed since then. Either way these internments demonstrate that Newgrange was, at least on one level, a tomb for the dead. The structure is also notable for the extensive use of rock art in its build, especially in the surrounding kerbstones and along the orthostats that define its passageway and inner chambers. A variety of abstract images are used including spirals, lozenges chevrons, dot and circle, and pecking. Although the original meaning of these motifs remains unknown they probably played an important role in the ceremonies carried out at the tomb.

Winter solstice ray of light

However, it is not its size, nor the beautiful artwork that adorns so many of its stones, that Newgrange is probably most famous for, but instead its association with the winter solstice. This date marks the shortest day of the year and it appears to have been a time of special significance for the people who built Newgrange. Indeed, the whole monument was designed around capturing the first rays of sunshine on the morning of the solstice.

Due to the natural slope of the ground the floor of the passageway rises gradually as you journey from the entrance to the inner burial chamber. This means that the floor of the burial chamber is actually 2m higher than the floor at the entrance. As a result no light can reach the inner recesses of the tomb, which remain in nearly total darkness for most of the year. However on the 21st of December something very special occurs. And it occurs for number of days on either side. As the sun raises above the eastern horizon a single beam of sunlight creeps slowly up along the tomb's passageway until it reaches the dark confines of the burial chamber. The near perpetual darkness is broken and the inner and most sacred confines of this ancient tomb are, for short time, illuminated.

To ensure this solstice event occurred the tomb builders had to construct a special 'roof box' above the passageway. This was located roughly 2.5m in from the entrance and was in essence a stone lined window measuring measured c. 1m wide by 0.60m high. The extra height provided by the 'roof box' allowed the sun's rays to reach the very back of the tomb. The entire monument is modeled around this single beam of light and considerable planning must have gone into working out the exact time and angle of the solstice sunrise and how to capture its rays for maximum effect.

The winter solstice was obviously an incredibly important date for the builders of Newgrange. It marked the end of the old year and the start of the new one. It was a significant moment in the farming calendar, from that day on the days would gradually grow longer and eventually warmer. Moreover, it may also have symbolically marked an important moment in the human life cycle. It is hard not see parallels with the old sun 'dying' on this day and the new one being 'born anew' and a human belief system based on the principle that people would similarly be reborn when they died. Today we can only speculate on why the builders of Newgrange put such emphasis on the winter solstice sunrise. However, there is no denying that 5000 years later there is still a sense of magic and wonderment when the darkest recesses of Newgrange light up on the 21st of December.

Fellow Members - I found the information below when I was checking out the class schedule at the Cultural Center. This is a class at the Cultural Center to learn how to make Celtic earrings. I pass it along only because some might be interested in this. The Center did not ask me to promote the class – I just try to find things that might be of interest to our members. If anyone is offended – I apologize in advance.



Chain Maille - Celtic Earrings
Celeste Miller

“Explore the world of chain maille and finish the class with two beautiful pairs of silver earrings. Chain maille is an ancient art of interlocking jumprings and has become quite popular for making jewelry. Students will make a pair of Celtic Line earrings and a pair of Celtic Knot earrings. No experience required - just bring good eyesight!”

Winter Session - Wednesday, February 19 - 7-9 pm

Cost: \$30, plus \$40 materials fee

Link below for more information & registration

<http://www.artsglenallen.com/classes/jewelry-classes.php>

Don't Forget to Get out and Have Some Fun At local Irish Sessions.... ☺

Rosie Connolly Session

<http://www.rosieconnollys.com/>

1548 E Main St -Richmond, VA 23219

(804) 343-1063

2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month

About 7:30 until?

Hiram Haines Session

Hiram Haines Coffee & Ale House

Rivers' Edge Building

[12 Bank Street, Petersburg – for map/directions](#)

2nd Saturday of each month -7 pm-?

Ashland Old Time Jam and Irish Session

Ashland Coffee & Tea

[100 Railroad Avenue, Ashland](#) (map/directions)

1st and 3rd Saturdays of each month

10 a.m. until 1pm.

WHY YOU SHOULD NEVER MISS OUR IAS CHRISTMAS PARTY.



Received this note from IAS member – Colleen Callahan -

Nancy - I thought you would like to have this picture of my nephew Colin and his fiancée Diane wearing the double Saint Patrick's Day T-shirt that I purchased at the IAS Christmas Party Silent Auction. Colin and Diane met on St. Pat's Day 2012 which is the date on the T-shirt and they got engaged on St. Pat's day this year. They will be getting married on April 26, 2014.

I gave them the T-shirt for Christmas and it was a big hit, as you can see. I don't know who contributed the T-shirt but my family and I thank whoever it was for this very fun present for a great young couple!

A couple of websites you might enjoy

<http://irishfireside.com/category/culture-2/history/>

<https://www.facebook.com/IrishHillwalkers?ref=ts>

(Beautiful photos of Ireland by hikers)



MARK YOUR CALENDARS –

January 12th	Irish Brunch and Music Session at Rosie Connolly's 1 – 4 pm.
Jan 13th 7 pm	IAS Board Meeting – O'Toole's Restaurant – 4800 Forest Hill Avenue, Richmond 23225 All members welcome.
Jan 25th – Sat 6-8 pm	IAS Pub Supper Rare Olde Times – this pub supper is the same night as the special Irish Music Concert with Mary Smith & Gregg Kimball. Starts at 6pm
March 15, 2014 Sunday -7pm Box Office: 804-261-ARTS (2787) Monday-Friday 9am-5pm	Celtibillies - Formed in 1994 as a contra-dance band, Celtibillies began exploring the deep-rooted connections between Celtic music and the Appalachian music of their home region of southwest Virginia. Their music expanded beyond dance tunes to include a wide range of traditional Celtic and Appalachian Old-Time music and song as well as original music. Bluegrass Unlimited described their music as, a masterful work of art that transcends all musical genres. Dancers from the Blue Ridge Irish Music School in Charlottesville join in on the fun giving a down-home twist to this St. Patrick's Day celebration. Artist Video The Cultural Arts Center in Glen Allen http://www.artsglenallen.com/facility-info/directions.php
March 29th	Presentation of the Mary Ryan Marker at Hollywood Cemetery.
March 2014	Women of Ireland in Concert at John Paul Jones Arena in Charlottesville. Info coming.

IAS OFFICERS/BOARD MEMBERS & VOLUNTEERS

President	Gloria Cahen	804-233-2113	wildirishrose@verizon.net
Vice-President & Programs Chair	Dan Begley	804-740-5631	begley55@hotmail.com
Secretary & Sunshine	Ann McGehee	540-894-7284	annmcgehee7@gmail.com
Treasurer	Kathryn O'Meara	804-745-1903	Mungojerrie23@aol.com
Board Member, Membership	Denis Maguire	804-739-0429	maguired@comcast.net
Board Member, Special Events	Karon Bell	804-982-7835	irishmom1958@gmail.com
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Board Member	Mike Kane	804-270-2828	MikeKane@KW.com
Board Member	Bill Riddell	804-262-4226	wjriddell@verizon.net

***** How cool is it that there are 3 events scheduled in January that are at different Irish Pubs in Richmond. A Brunch & Music Session, an Irish Concert & and an IAS Board meeting.

Its great to add our support to these establishments... Hope to see you at these events.