



The Richmond Claddagh

OCTOBER 2011

<http://richmondias.org/>

The Richmond Irish American Society

[Click for the Calendar of Events](#)

It's October! – and in Gaelic that would be(Deiradh Fómhair) (jeroo foewir)

HAPPY HALLOWEEN!

(Pronounced 'ee-hah shona how-nah'.)



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK –

The Highland Games are on us. This is just about my favorite weekend of the Celtic Year. No matter what the weather, it is fun to see old friends and make new ones. There are vendors whose booths I cannot wait to visit to see what new item(s) they have that I must make mine. There are clans who come from afar and it is just great to catch up with them. Being a two-day event, we always need volunteers help out in the IAS tent. If you are a new member, it is a great way for you to learn more about us and what we do. Come spend the weekend with me and our fellow Celts. Sonya S. Moore - President. 804-272-4138 - sonyasmoore@comcast.net

What Does IAS Do At The Highland Games and Why Do They Need Volunteers?

The IAS tent highlights the heritage and history of Ireland. We have maps of Ireland, books on the history of Irish names, cultural displays of Ireland photos, famous Irish people and Irish books for perusal. Member volunteers help visitors to the tent search for information on their family name. We answer questions on Ireland, and we get the word out about our IAS. The tent is a gathering place for all who have a shared interest in and love for Ireland. You don't have to be an expert on Ireland – much more important is a ready smile, and welcoming attitude. Our visitors are looking to establish or complete their connection to their Irish heritage. The volunteers in the tent work together to help folks find that connection. You can volunteer to work a few hours or all day. Please call Karen Bell at 804-982-7835 if you can give some time over the weekend. She'll work with you to add you to the volunteer schedule at your convenience. You'll have a great time!

Over the past 300 years, seven million people are believed to have left Ireland heading for America. One million of those left Ireland between 1846 and 1851.

2743 ships delivered **651,931 Irish Famine emigrants** to New York from 1846 - 1851, more than half of the total that left Ireland during those years.

Irish Quotes: "Ireland is in your hands, in your power. If you do not save her, she cannot save herself. I solemnly call upon you to recollect that I predict with the sincerest conviction that a quarter of her population will perish unless you come to her relief". Daniel O'Connell to the British House of Commons, 1847.

"We are each our own devil, and we make this world our hell" – Oscar Wilde

We often try to share some Irish jokes, quotes, words of wisdom and such with you and this month is no exception. This is a true Irish travel experience from our very own IAS member – Carol Rasic. She and I were talking about our mutual visits to the wonderful Belleek factory in Northern Ireland and this is Carol's story, "We were in Belleek (1987) and it was a couple of years or so after the big season-ending mystery on the TV show "Dallas". While we were touring the china factory, my niece and I were wondering if the workers themselves used that costly Belleek china. Once into the china-making part, we saw one of the workers drinking coffee --His mug read:



"I Know Who Shot J.R." ☺

SAY IT ISN'T SO! According to some genetic scientists, redheads are becoming increasingly rare and could become extinct in 100 years. Presently, about 10% of the Irish population has natural red hair.

"Ireland, sir, for good or evil, is like no other place under heaven, and no man can touch its sod or breathe its air without becoming better or worse."

– George Bernard Shaw.

New York City – The Irish Hunger Memorial

The image shown here is a bit deceptive. The meadow-like green fills the frame and appears to continue – just like a country scene in Ireland. But it is the Irish Hunger Memorial, built on a slope of stone, standing alone on the shore of the Hudson near the World Trade Center site – another angle would show the New York skyline.



At the Richmond Folk Music concert with Irish singer Fil Campbell, she asked us if we'd ever been to the Irish Hunger Memorial in New York City. Most of us hadn't heard of it – so I went to the web to see what I could find. The following will take your breath away and make you add a new destination to your "bucket list". This really is a little bit of Ireland right here in the USA.

The Irish Hunger Memorial garden—located on the corner of 290 Vesey and North End Avenue—is a beautiful example of outdoor art in New York.

One and a half million people died between 1846 and 1850 in the famine in Ireland caused by potato blight that all but destroyed the main food source of the time. The Irish Hunger Memorial garden is a monument to those who perished during An Gorta Mór (The Great Hunger).

Many who survived the famine did so because they immigrated to the United States, so the site is also of great historical importance to those tracing their Irish heritage, 800,000 of whom now call New York City home.

The Irish Hunger Memorial site sits on a **half-acre piece of land**, significant as a clause added to the Irish Poor Law by Sir William Gregory during the famine meant that anyone who owned more than a half-acre of land was not eligible for any aid or relief. Many of the starving were poor but owned a half-acre, forcing them to abandon their homes in order to obtain food.

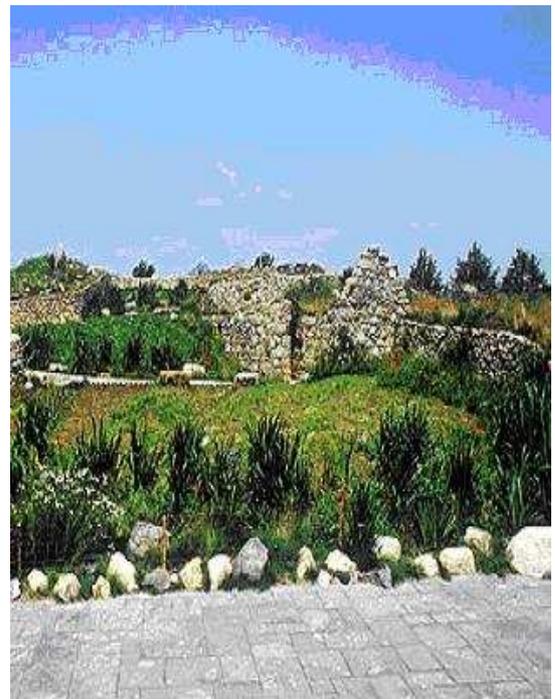
The authentic roofless stone cottage that was brought over from County Mayo in Ireland highlights the decay and ruin of the time and represents the focal point of the garden. Entering from the North side of the memorial you pass through a tunnel directly into the stone cottage and then into the garden.

The site also contains stones from all of the 32 counties of Ireland and over 60 varieties of Irish Flora that give the visitor a taste of the harsh but beautiful landscape found in the western portion of the country.

A winding path ascends 25 feet from the corner of Vesey to the Western end of the garden, offering stunning vistas of the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island.

The exterior wall of the memorial is covered by almost two miles of illuminated text of famine poems, statistics and quotes. An audio track plays accounts of world hunger, accompanying the visitor on their tour.

Brian Tolle created and designed the structure and Gail Wittwer-Laird did the landscaping in collaboration with 1100 Architect of New York. There is no admission fee to the garden, and it offers a rare area of quiet in the busy business district of Lower Manhattan. The [Battery Park City Authority](#) sponsored the Irish Hunger Memorial.



It was a wonderful concert – and with many IAS members in the audience. We were so very lucky to be able to enjoy Fil's renditions of the old Irish songs, her many stories about Ireland and the Irish ladies who sang those songs. And we were also very grateful to learn about this very special memorial to our ancestors.

SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES –

Ireland abounds with tales of the supernatural. Even our literature is strewn with ghosts. James Joyce recalls the black dog, with eyes like carriage lamps that patrolled the stairs of the Jesuit College in Kildare. Oscar Wilde wrote with understanding about the problems of being paranormal in the Canteville Ghost. Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu terrorized his readers with such frightful stories as *The House by The Churchyard*. Is there any truth to all these stories, or are they merely the products of over-active imaginations? It would seem that the counties of Ireland have their own tales to tell too.

Co. Laois: A tour guide tells the story of his father meeting an old man on market day, shortly after the family had moved to a house in Laois. "Are you troubled by the ghosts in the house?" inquired the ancient one. "Not noticed any," replied the father. "When I worked for old Mr. Cuffe up there, they used to be terrible. You watch out for them." With that, he cackled and disappeared into the throng of people. It was only later that the father realized that to have worked for Mr. Cuffe, who died in the 1840s, his informant would have to be in the region of 160, or a ghost!

Kilcarrig Bridge, Co. Carlow: At the ford by Kilcarrig Bridge, Tommy Kinsella used to cross that ford every night on his way back from courting one of the Furlong girls. Every night, so he told his cronies in the pub, he saw a white shape standing in the bushes. One night his friends decided to play a trick on him. Mick Hughes dressed up in a white sheet and lay hiding by the ford. As he heard Kinsella approaching he rose up from the undergrowth and let out a dreadful moan. Kinsella glanced across and, with no terror in his voice, commented, "Two of them tonight, by God!" Hughes glanced around and saw, standing right beside him, a huge and shapeless thing. He fled!

Sopwell Castle Co. Tipperary: Sopwell also known as Killaleigh Castle, ancestral home of the MacEgans was confiscated and given by Cromwell to General Sadleir. It's said that General Sadleir's son disagreed with his father over his funeral wake. The General did not want any ceremony, just a quiet exit from this world to the next. His son felt otherwise and in a drunken fit, he and a friend dragged his father's coffin down the stairs, tripping in the process. The coffin toppled unceremoniously down the stairs. To this day the sound of the coffin can be heard toppling on the stairs and the groans and moans of General Sadleir can be heard echoing through the halls in disapproval.

Brookborough, Co Fermanagh: Widow Murphy and her family lived in a mountain cottage. Their lives

were plagued by a poltergeist that appeared determined to evict them from their house. Rapping was heard night and day. Mysterious shapes appeared and disappeared, music would waft across the room. Clothes were seen rising and falling on an empty bed, as if someone was underneath breathing. Pots and pans would suddenly fly across the kitchen. Rapping noises were sometimes to the rhythm of tunes – favorites being "Boyne Water" and "The Soldier's Song." Eventually the family was forced to flee, and they set off by ship for America but even then, to their horror, the poltergeist continued its terrible deeds in their cabin and even followed them to their new home. Eventually, after many years, its manifestations subsided and the family members were able to get on with their lives in peace.

Shanagolden, Co. Limerick: The Earl of Desmond and his wife were trying to escape from St. St Katherine's Augustinian Nunnery, but the Countess was shot and mortally wounded by an arrow. Believing his wife to be dead, the Earl hastily buried her beneath the altar in the main chapel. However, it is said that the poor Countess, was not dead, and she awoke to find herself buried alive. Her screams of agony still echo throughout the ruins today.

Drogheda, Co. Meath: Sir Edward Golding and his wife Elizabeth Fleming were said to have drowned in mysterious circumstances, in a boating accident on the river Boyne. It is said by locals, that their statues come alive to haunt passers by.

Athcarne Castle Co. Meath: This somber 16th century ruin lies only 6 miles from the site of the Battle of the Boyne. The cries of dying soldiers can be heard and the manifestation of a soldier who was hanged from a great oak tree in the grounds has been seen.

Entire books have been devoted to the topic of ghosts in Irish castles, cottages; ships, lighthouses; churches, and graveyards. There's not many an Irish man or woman who would argue with the belief that during Halloween, the veil separating the living from the dead is at its thinnest. Are you ready to accompany that handsome yet pale person you just met on the road and dance with them in the moonlight; on an Irish hillside, charmed by the sweet dulcet tones of a fiddle or pipe? (**Irish Culture & Customs - Bridget Haggerty**)



HAPPY

HALLOWEEN!

GRAVE-DIGGING CERTIFICATION - In rural communities around Ireland, the tradition from time immemorial has been for neighbors to both dig and fill the grave when a member of the community dies. Now Cork County Council has issued regulations requiring graves to be dug by registered gravediggers with qualifications that include training in first-aid and risk-assessment. One community responded with the notice: "In Myross, we dig for our own, we shoulder our own and we inter our own. Our traditions and customs - Your respect required."

For those Cool Autumn Evenings ----- Might be good when you come back from "Trick or Treating?"

Slow Cooker Irish Stout Stew

Ingredients:

3/4-cup flour
2 1/2 pounds beef stew meat, cut in cubes
2 tablespoons vegetable oil
2 large potatoes, peeled cut into bite-size pieces
2 carrots, peeled and cut into bite-size pieces
2 large yellow onions, quartered
1 sprig fresh thyme, or more to taste
2 cups Irish stout beer (such as Guinness®)
1-teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley (optional)

Directions

Place the flour in a resealable plastic bag. Add the beef, a few pieces at a time, and shake the bag to coat. Heat the vegetable oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Stir in the beef, cooking until browned on all sides, 8 to 10 minutes. Transfer the browned beef to a plate lined with paper towels to drain. (The better the browning – the better the stew)

Place the beef, potatoes, carrots, onions, and thyme into a slow cooker, and pour the stout beer on top. Cover and cook on Low until the meat is very tender, about 8 hours. Season with salt then remove thyme. Garnish with parsley before serving.



Check out the calendar at the end of the newsletter – coming up in March (right around the corner) is a 2 for one Irish concert at the Cultural Center in Glen Allen. It's **Poisoned Dwarf** from Williamsburg

<http://www.poisoneddwarf.com/index2.html> and **Lilt** <http://liltirishmusic.com/> featuring IAS' own Kelly Kennedy! It's \$10 in advance for an evening of great Irish music. It's open seating – so get your tickets early and let's meet up in Glen Allen.

You know if the Irish concerts don't find support – especially from the Irish – we won't see them so much around these parts. Reserve your spot now!



Dún Aengus is the most famous of several prehistoric forts on the Aran Islands, of Co. Galway, Ireland. It is located on Inishmore at the edge of a 100-metre high cliff. Dún Aengus is an important archaeological site that also offers a spectacular view. It was built during the Bronze Age and dates from 1,000 B.C. or before. It has been called "the most magnificent barbaric monument in Europe." The name "Dún Aengus" meaning "Fort of Aengus" refers to the pre-Christian god of the same name described in Irish mythology.

The fort consists of a series of four concentric walls of dry stone construction. Surviving stonework is four metres wide at some points. The original shape was presumably oval or D-shaped but part of the cliff and fort have since collapsed into the sea. Outside the third ring of walls lies a defensive system of stone slabs, planted into the ground that is still largely well preserved. These ruins also feature a huge rectangular stone slab, the function of which is unknown. Impressively large among prehistoric ruins, the outermost wall of Dún Aengus encloses an area of about 14 acres. Although clearly defensible, the particular location of Dún Aengus suggests that its primary purpose was religious and ceremonial rather than military. The Druids may have used the site for seasonal rites, perhaps involving the bonfires that could be seen from the mainland of Ireland. The location also provides a view as much as 120 km of coastline, which may have allowed for control over a coastal trading highway. (<http://www.irishtourism.com>)

Kilmore Quay, County Wexford A Bit of Old Ireland

Even with all our modernization, you still find odd little pockets of “old Ireland” in surprising places. One such gem I’ve been making weekend visits to for three years is Kilmore Quay (pronounced “key”), about an hour’s drive from Waterford in the southeast corner of the country.

Tourist attractions are in short supply in Kilmore Quay. But if you slow your pace long enough to enjoy its beauty and pure atmosphere, it makes for memorable side-trip. This little fishing village of about 850 people has a small, yellow-sanded beach, colorful fishing boats and a deep blue harbor that creates an image more Mediterranean than Irish. This part of the country is known as the “sunny south-east,” and Kilmore Quay is a rare spot I always associate with brilliant sunshine and blue skies.

Thatch Roofer’s Heaven: You can see the Saltee islands just off the coast as you drive the smooth country road into town. It doesn’t take long to notice that the area has an amazing concentration of thatched houses and businesses. From the **Wooden House Pub**,



With its impressively complex roof, to the many smaller, more traditional homes, each roof seems to have its own tale to tell with a unique style and shading. All over town there’s a contrast of older, grayish brown thatch, set off against bits of newer straw that glimmers gold in the noontday sun. Trailing clematis and roses add color to the whitewashed townhouses, and to the cottages that dot the expansive farmyards for miles outside of town. Many of the area’s buildings date back to the 18th and 19th centuries.

All this thatching exists thanks to four local men who work and train in the trade. Matt Whelan, a local man who trained with the City and Guilds in England in the 1980s, has since returned to teach the trade to other local men, some of them former fishermen. They now travel nationwide to practice thatch roofs in the traditional style, but the attention they’ve paid to their hometown has given it a truly unique appearance.

Nautical Themes: A new 55-berth marina has made the village one of few places where pleasure and commercial fishing exist side by side, and it makes for a varied and vibrant scene. Miscellaneous boats, ropes and fishing crates offer a mish-mash of colors and shapes that hint of total chaos. But it all runs successfully on a system known only to the fisherman. The low stonewall on the pier is a point for conversations with old and young alike, and for relishing ice cream in the summer sun. The area is particularly good for deep-sea and lobster fishing, and the seafood chowder in the town’s **Hotel Saltees** easily beats anything I’ve eaten on the west coast. The village hosts an annual seafood festival in July, promising a colorful blend of food tasting, music and entertainment.

Kehoe’s Pub, across from the village church, is a local favorite with an unusually powerful nautical theme. Proprietor James Kehoe has spent almost 30 years diving the more than 1,000 wrecks off the Wexford coast from Hook Head to Arklow, and the artifacts he’s retrieved are displayed throughout the pub. It’s a fine collection to take in while settling into a pint or two, and the small, comfortable beer garden at the rear is a perfect place to enjoy the village’s timeless feeling on a summer day.

The nearby **Saltee Islands** are home to Ireland’s largest bird sanctuary. **Great Saltee Island** is particularly famous for its colonies of cormorants, and has more than 1,000 pairs of guillemots, along with gannets, puffins and gulls. Both islands are privately owned and have not been farmed or inhabited since the 1940s, but boat trips to them run from the quay (calm weather pending), as visitors are welcome.

Changes Ahead: Given its proximity to Dublin, County Wexford is popular with homebuyers wishing to relocate down the country. In the next few years, the area around Kilmore Quay is likely to change, as plans have been approved for a second hotel and some 300 houses. I recommend you visit sooner rather than later, as this level of building seems outlandish for a village so small. For now, the atmosphere is still far-away. On a Saturday morning at 11am, you’ll be hard-pressed to find a coffee (sincerely!) and the purchase of sunglasses requires a trip to the pharmacy in the neighboring village of Kilmore. The nearest ATM is located some five miles away.

On a whole, Kilmore Quay is a bit out of the way as locations go. But for those who are getting a bit burnt-out on the standard tourist trail, it’s worth an overnight stay (or two). The (417!) locals are warm and inviting, the seafood is second to none and the place affords you a real break from the pace of modern living. **A true Irish gem.**

(Geraldine Keane Irish Fun Facts.)

PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS – **Click on links** in calendar to hear song selections from the artists - **Click here to visit our website at <http://richmondias.org/events.php>** for a full month calendar of current events

<p>Oct 19th - 6pm Irish Music Richmond - Forest Hill Avenue.</p>	<p>Tom Martin, Irish Guitarist/Singer/Songwriter from Belfast Ireland will appear at Crossroads Coffee and Ice Cream, 3600 Forest Hill Avenue, (corner of Forest Hill and Semmes). A great spot for drink or a meal while listening to great live music. It's friendly, locally owned, the food is great and they have a wide selection of drinks, including imported and locally brewed beer. http://www.tommartinmusic.com/</p>
<p>Oct 29 – 9 – 8:30 Oct 30 - 9 – 5pm The Meadow Event Park</p>	<p>The Meadow Highland Games & Celtic Festival http://www.meadowceltic.com/ Celtic Clans, Celtic Market, Celtic Food and Drink, Big Men throwing Big things –IAS Tent open both days – Can you volunteer to help out a bit? Bonfire & Pipe Concert – Sat night.</p>
<p>Friday, 11/25/2011 11/26/2011 11/27/2011 7:30 PM - 9:00 PM Kimball Theatre A Celtic Solstice Celebration</p>	<p>The winter solstice takes many shapes and has been celebrated in many forms throughout the generations. Join internationally renowned band Coyote Run as they revisit Yuletide legends and traditions from prehistoric Celtic lands to Christmas not so long ago. This rollicking concert is a family favorite, blending mystery and myth, sacred and irreverent, all in an unforgettable journey through the unique Celtic rock stylings of one of the hottest bands on the circuit today. Family Friendly.</p> <p>Tickets \$20 adults, \$17 seniors/students, \$14 children under 12.</p> <p>Reservations or additional tickets required. Call 1-800-HISTORY for prices and reservations.</p>
<p>December 3 6-ish to 11-ish IAS Xmas Party</p>	<p>IAS Christmas Party & World Famous (well our IAS world anyway) Silent Auction - More Info Coming Va. Power Boat Club 4051 Old Gun Rd East – Midlothian, VA 23113 – Please - Be planning to attend and also think about an Irish themed donation for the auction.</p>
<p>December 3 A Celtic Christmas with Poisoned Dwarf, Handsome Molly and Edsall Road. Williamsburg's Merchant Square.</p>	<p>AT Kimball Theatre in Williamsburg's Merchant Square. "A Celtic Christmas with Poisoned Dwarf, Handsome Molly and Edsall Road." Tunes, Songs and Dances from the Tradition! 8 pm. Click on the links below to hear the groups. http://www.cdbaby.com/cd/kellykennedy http://www.cdbaby.com/cd/poisoneddwarf2 http://edsallroad.com/</p>
<p>December 17th IONA Celtic Concert 7:30 – 10pm Williamsburg.</p>	<p>Iona's music is a unique, acoustic weave of the traditional music of Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Cornwall, Brittany (France), the Isle of Man, Asturias and Galicia (Spain), as well as their transplants in America. Blending songs, dance tunes, and airs into a rich and stunning tapestry, their style is outstanding in an arena where these traditions are seldom intertwined. http://www.wrl.org/events/iona Williamsburg Library, 515 Scotland St. Williamsburg VA 23185Phone: 757.259.4040</p>
<p>February 10& 11th 2012 Celtic Concert Coyote Run 7:30 – 10pm Williamsburg Library</p>	<p>Coyote Run (click for their website) Touring the country - Coyote Run presents sweeping soundscapes in concert halls, earthy Celtic vibes at highland festivals, and rollicking good times at the Pennsylvania Renaissance Faire. Now join them in story after story, whisking them away to march side by side with Joan of Arc, or to roll out the guns against Sir Francis Drake, invade the French city of Calais, snatch back a faerie abducted victim, or witness the cruelty of a witch trial in colonial Virginia. Tight harmonies and soaring vocals telling tales from legend, history and myth are the hallmark of this band. Come and experience the magic that is Coyote Run! Williamsburg Library, 515 Scotland St. Williamsburg VA 23185 P hone: 757.259.4040 \$16 adults • \$14 Friends of WRL and students•\$8 under 16 http://www.wrl.org/events/coyote-run-1</p>
<p>Feb 12th 8pm Wolf Trap Vienna, VA</p>	<p>SOLAS - A burst of Celtic vitality, this folk quintet uses catchy melodies and fast-fingered instrumentals to put a modern spin on traditional Irish classics. The internationally acclaimed Solas—meaning “light” in Celtic—incorporates several instruments including the</p>

<p>Tickets \$22</p>	<p>flute, tenor banjo, mandolin, guitar, and accordion. The Washington Post raves, “Solas has established itself as one of the top Irish-folk groups on either side of the Atlantic.” Listen to Solas Music here</p>
<p>Feb 24th 8pm & 25th 7:30pm Wolf Trap Vienna, VA Tickets \$25</p>	<p>Cherish The Ladies (←Click for their website)- Witness the dynamic vocals, instrumentals, and step dancing of this sensational ensemble as they celebrate Irish culture through music. In 1985 Cherish the Ladies became the first all-female Irish music ensemble and in 2009 they released their 11th album, The Girls Won’t Leave the Boys Alone.</p>
<p>March 2nd POISONED DWARF AND HANDSOME MOLLY Cultural Art Center 2nd Stage 7 pm 804-261-2787 http://www.artsglennallen.com/ Tickets \$10/Adv \$12 at door</p>	<p>What a great opportunity this is – Wonderful Irish music. If you can’t get to the pubs in Ireland – this might be just as good! Poisoned Dwarf – plays driving traditional Celtic music. Focusing primarily on Irish traditional music, and with acoustic instruments only, this band from Williamsburg, Virginia has entertained audiences in many different settings for years. Handsome Molly plays Irish music that is heard in pubs all over Ireland, in bars, at Irish dances and social events. Our IAS member Kelly Kennedy adds to the luster of this Irish group along with Andy Cleveland, Craig DuBose and Rachel Blake. To hear some music from these local and area talents – just click on the links. http://www.cdbaby.com/cd/poisoneddwarf2 http://www.cdbaby.com/cd/kellykennedy</p>
<p>March 15th CELTIC NIGHTS! 7:30pm University of Richmond Adults \$36 Seniors \$32 Group o 20+ \$32 each Children \$18 (Age 0 – 12)</p>	<p>Celtic Nights – “Journey of Hope” Alice Jepson Theatre - click here Modlin Center for the Arts click here, University of Richmond - From the creators of Gaelforce Dance, the “two hour spectacular [that] has brought audiences to their feet all around the world” comes a brand new show in celebration of song. Celtic Nights expertly weaves together the lilting melodies and plaintive lyrics of the rich Celtic heritage to tell the story of a people. The audience is invited to travel along on a journey of hope, transported in time through traditional ballads, vivid choreography, and the story of a people struggling to find their place in a changing world. Celtic Nights features the finest male and female voices of the Celtic world, showcased against a thundering backdrop of expert dancing and musicianship. In this glittering production, six of Ireland’s most prominent vocal talents are complemented by six of its most accomplished step dancers, creating an exhilarating picture of a proud people who dared to dream big and doggedly carved out a home in the New World. In Celtic Nights, their story is told through the power and majesty of music and the hypnotic fury of dancing feet. http://modlin.richmond.edu/events/index.html</p>