



The Richmond Claddagh

<http://richmondias.org/>

The Richmond Irish American Society

JULY/AUG & SEP 2011!

[Click for the Calendar of Events](#)

From The President's Desk – First, I would like to thank all of you who voted in our recent election: not just for me, but for voting in general. This is your organization and we are here at your pleasure and to do the best job for you that we can.

Dan Begley is busy working on ideas for programs for meetings. If you have ideas please contact him. If there is a restaurant or pub that you would like to try, please get in touch with Joan Finnegan. Our member, Mary Smith, has an exciting lineup of Irish/Celtic talent for Richmond Folk Music. More about her programs will be in the calendar. Please come out to support her. Plans are underway for the Highland Games and the IAS Christmas Party.

I am looking forward to seeing you all at these and other events. If you have thoughts, ideas, complaints, whatever – I am available by phone and on line, or if you see me somewhere – Just say “Hi”.

Sonya S. Moore

*****IAS MOVIE NIGHT *****

WEDNESDAY - SEPTEMBER 14TH



Note – it's a different meeting night due to County library schedule changes. Meet us at the Bon Air Library to see this Irish movie “**Dancing At Lughnasa**” – set in County Wicklow Ireland in the 1930's and starring Meryl Streep (whose ancestors come from Donegal) Get to the library early for some “meet & greet time” and we'll start the movie at 7:00 sharp. You know it'll be grand.

IAS Officers and Board Members for 2011 - the listing for the newly elected appears at the end of the newsletter. Please note - although we did not have a candidate for the office of Secretary -- Gloria Cahen returns to her long time position on the Board via the “Power of the Write In Vote.”

DISCOVER 9 RANDOM CURIOSITIES ABOUT IRELAND!



1. **Ukrainian** sailor Iván Beshoff founded the famous “Fish and Chips Shop” in Dublin in 1922. Now this restaurant is the most famous in Dublin.
2. **The** Irish alphabet has only 18 letters. There is no j, k, q, v, w, x, y and z.
3. **It** is estimated that the Irish diaspora has 80 millions people around the world.
4. **Ten** Irish people have been awarded with the Nobel prize: Williams Butler Yeats (Literature), George Bernard Shaw (Literature), Samuel Beckett (Literature), Seamus Heaney (Literature), Sean McBride (Peace), Mairead Corrigan and Betty Williams (Peace), John Hume and David Trimble (Peace), Ernest Thomas Sinton Walton (Physics).
5. **Samuel** Beckett wrote the shortest play of the world – “Breath”. It takes 35 seconds.
6. **The** harp you can see in passports and in the Republic of Ireland stamps is a Harp of the XIV century, and it is kept in the Trinity College of Dublin. It is also known as the Brian Boru Harp.
7. **Ireland** has nearly 3500 miles of coast – so indented that you are rarely ever more than 70 miles from the coast. There are almost 8700 miles of rivers, almost 500,000 acres of lakes and about 200 kinds of different fishes.
8. **Ireland** is known as the “Emerald Island” or 'Emerald Isle'
9. **The** Shannon River was first drawn by the cartographer Ptolomeo, in 330 BC.

Psssst. Be thinking about Irish themed donations For the IAS Christmas Party Silent Auction



The 2011 IAS Summer Picnic – Some of the Fun!



Newly elected President, Sonya Moore



Josie Maguire, Jim Bandeleian and Despa



Jim Mahone



Rosemary O'Donnell & the Lunch Bunch!



Tom Murphy, J. P. Carroll, & Dan Quinlan –
“The Boys of Summer”



Kathryn O'Meara, Karen Ide, Gina Venn, Gloria Cahen, Jim Mahone, (standing – Denis Maguire & Tim Batten

**ALL THIS FUN - DON'T YOU WISH
YOU HAD JOINED US? (We Do!)**

WE'LL LOOK FOR YOU NEXT YEAR!

Dublin People Named Among The Most Intelligent in the World –

But Alas, There's Catch - It's Dublin, Ohio!

Dublin people have long been known for their wit and wisdom so it hardly seemed surprising they would be named among the top most intelligent people in the world.

However, it was Dublin, Ohio, which was originally settled by Irish immigrants that was named as one of the top seven most intelligent communities in the world for 2011 by a leading New York based think-tank.

Commenting on the award, Dublin City Manager Marsha Grigsby An Irish gentleman named John Shields who originally settled there named the town. According to historians, Shields decided to name the town after his birthplace: "If I have the honor conferred upon me to name your village, with the brightness of the morn, and the beaming of the sun on the hills and dales surrounding this beautiful valley, it would give me great pleasure to name your new town after my birthplace, Dublin, Ireland," he said. A major Irish festival every August relives that Gaelic past.

The accolade was bestowed on the Ohio city by the Intelligent Community Forum (ICF), which has selected the top seven smartest communities in the world for over a decade. Communities are awarded for tackling "the complex task of building and maintaining competitive and inclusive local economies in the global Broadband Economy." (By: Cathy Hayes - IrishCentral.com Staff Writer)

(Many thanks to Jim Bandeleon for sharing this article. If your interest has been tapped, here is a link to Dublin Ohio, <http://www.irishisanattitude.com/> -I think it looks like a fun place to visit! (Nancy)

HERITAGE CERTIFICATE - As of October 2011, people of Irish heritage around the world who do not qualify for Irish citizenship, may apply to the Irish government for an official "**Certificate of Irish Heritage**". Applicants will be required to submit comprehensive details of their Irish ancestry, together with relevant documentation that proves their connection with Ireland. You can visit this website for more information. <http://www.irish-genealogy-toolkit.com/certificate-of-irish-heritage.html>

For members tracing their family histories - Karon Bell sends a note to let all know that on Tuesdays (from 10-1) and Wednesdays (10-4) the Chesterfield County Library at 9501 Lori Road (23832) off Rte 10 Chesterfield has staff on hand that will assist you with your genealogy questions. (804) 748-1601. It is near the Courthouse complex. [click here for a Map](#)

******Please check the calendar on the last page for upcoming IAS meetings and local Irish events.******

Polar Bears In Ireland – It's a long way from the Arctic to Tipperary, but scientists have discovered polar bears can trace their family tree to Ireland. Genetic evidence shows they are descended from Irish brown bears that lived during the last ice age.

Modern polar bears share a distinct DNA sequence, passed down the female line, with their now extinct brown ancestors. However, the same DNA fingerprint is absent from other species of brown bear alive today.

It is thought the link arose from interbreeding between prehistoric polar bears and female brown bears when their paths crossed as the Irish climate cooled. Scientists made the discovery after analyzing DNA in mitochondria energy-producing structures within cells that are only passed from a mother to her offspring.

Dr Ceiridwen Edwards, from Oxford and a member of the international team that carried out the study, said: "Hybridization between ancient Irish brown bears and polar bears has led to the complete replacement of the original polar bear mitochondria. This maternal lineage is now present in all modern polar bears." Polar and brown bears are hugely different in terms of body size, skin and coat color, fur type, tooth structure and many other physical features. They are also very distinct behaviorally. Polar bears, the world's largest carnivores, are expert swimmers that prey on seals, while forest-living brown bears climb and have a varied omnivorous diet. Yet the two appear to mate successfully whenever they come into contact. Climate change is believed to have produced mating opportunities for the two species at various times in the past 100,000 years. The scientists extracted mitochondria DNA from the teeth and bones of 17 bears found at eight cave sites across Ireland.

Ten Irish brown bears from the ice age period between 10,000 and 38,000 years ago had the maternal DNA that is now seen in every polar bear. Other bears going back up to 43,000 years ago, had a different genetic signature matching only that of modern bears from Eastern Europe. Only the ice age brown bears carried the maternal genetic hallmark of polar bears.

Polar bears may have moved into what is now Ireland when the region was experiencing much cooler temperatures than it is today. At the same time, brown bears may have been pushed towards the coast by advancing ice sheets. (EVERBODY wants to go to Ireland!)



(Maybe they looked like this!☺)

**For Irish Man Executed in 1845,
Rhode Island Seeks Amends**

By David Klepper 04/01/2011
PROVIDENCE, R.I. (AP) —

John Gordon's American dream ended on Valentine's Day in 1845, when the 29-year-old Irish immigrant was hanged for killing a wealthy mill owner and became the last man executed in Rhode Island. Today, historians say he was probably innocent.

Now an effort to pardon Gordon 166 years after his execution has state officials revisiting a cold case from a darker time, when discrimination against Irish Catholics was a fact of life.

"My grandmother used to sing a little ditty about 'Poor Johnny Gordon,'" said Ken Dooley, a Newport writer who wrote a play based on the case. "Gordon was executed because he was an Irish Catholic at the wrong time. As far as I'm concerned, they murdered that kid."

Lawmakers reviewed legislation Wednesday that calls on Gov. Lincoln Chafee to pardon Gordon. Chafee said he supports the idea.

"There are many grains of sand through the hourglass of time since then," Chafee told The Associated Press on Wednesday. "But I think it's appropriate as a symbolic gesture. There could have been errors. There could have been emotional issues at play."

Gordon left Ireland to join his brothers Nicholas and William in Rhode Island in 1843, on the eve of the great potato famine. Nicholas had arrived years earlier and owned a general store and tavern near a major mill. Business was good.

Wealthy mill owner Amasa Sprague wanted the tavern closed. Too many workers showed up drunk. Sprague had connections: His brother William was a former governor and a sitting U.S. senator. Authorities soon closed Nicholas Gordon's tavern. Amasa Sprague's body was found Dec. 31, 1843. He'd been shot in the arm and beaten hard enough to fracture his skull in two places.

John Gordon was arrested the next day. Prosecutors later said he and his brothers conspired to kill Sprague to retaliate for their lost liquor license.

The trial lasted nine days and included more than 100 witnesses. The judge told the jurors — none of whom were Irish — to give more weight to "Yankee" witnesses than Irish ones.

"Hindsight is 20/20, but this case was compromised from the beginning," said Michael DiLauro, a public defender who has researched the Gordon case for years.

Much of the evidence was circumstantial. Pieces of a gun were found near Sprague's body; witnesses said they had seen one of the brothers carrying a gun days before the shooting. A prostitute testified that she knew the Gordons and had heard one vowing to kill Sprague

But when asked to name the Gordon brothers individually, she couldn't. Historians later discovered that she worked for the brother of one of the judges presiding over Gordon's trial.

The jury deliberated for 75 minutes before finding John Gordon guilty. The sentence was death. Appeals to the General Assembly and the governor went unheard.

"Gordon clearly was wrongly convicted," said Patrick Conley, a retired professor of history and law who has taught at Providence College and Roger Williams University. "It was the temper of the times. Bigotry, hostility toward Irish Catholics was widespread."

Gordon was hanged on Feb. 14, 1845. Irish immigrants — who had raised money for the Gordons' legal fees — protested throughout New England. Thousands marched in Gordon's funeral procession.

Gordon's brothers were never convicted. John Gordon was buried in a church cemetery in Pawtucket. The site of his hanging is now a downtown mall. Across the street is a tavern, designed as a replica of a traditional Irish pub.

The Catholic Church and the American Civil Liberties Union both support the call to pardon Gordon. Representatives from both groups told lawmakers Wednesday that Gordon's trial shouldn't be forgotten.

"John Gordon was put to death because he was Catholic," said Father Bernard Healey of the Diocese of Providence. "It was Catholics in the 19th century."

Questions about Gordon's trial prompted Rhode Island to abolish its death penalty seven years after the execution. The state reinstated capital punishment in the 1870s before abolishing it again in 1984, but no executions were carried out.

Rep. Peter Martin, the lawmaker who sponsored the legislation to pardon Gordon, said some people tell him his bill is a waste of time when the state faces problems including a \$331 million deficit.

"This was an injustice done by the state of Rhode Island by our predecessors," said Martin, D-Newport. "We have a lot of responsibilities to the citizens of Rhode Island. Justice is one of them, isn't it?" (Many thanks to IAS Member Kathy Donovan for finding and sharing this article with our members. —

Reilly is walking through a graveyard when he comes across a headstone with the inscription --

**"HERE LIES A POLITICIAN
AND AN HONEST MAN"**

'Faith now,' exclaims Reilly, 'I wonder how they got the two of them in one grave.'



IRISH LANGUAGE CLASSES IN RICHMOND

Dan Begley received the following note on Sept 1st about some upcoming Irish Language classes here in Richmond. We apologize for the short time frame – I did send an email note out and this is for those who don't have or choose not to use email. If you are interested – you will have to check out the website or call VCU to try to reach Nicholas Wolf. Here is the information that we have.

From: nmwolf@vcu.edu
Subject: Fall Irish Language Classes

Dear past and potential Irish language students:

Hope your summer has gone well and the recent earthquakes and hurricanes have not left you in too bad a shape.

We are all set to start our Tuesday courses again. We will now be meeting at St. Bridget's Church 6006 Three Chopt Road, (at the Grove Ave. intersection) on Tuesday evenings, 7:00 - 8:00 pm. As always, all are welcome to join up at any time, even if one cannot make every class. We're intended for beginners, so no need for any previous background in the language. Our first meeting will be next Tuesday, September 6th, and we'll continue meeting through November 29th for the fall term.

Our website, <http://www.virginiagael.org> is still a good way to follow our progress, so feel free to look us up. Best, Nicholas Wolf

From their website - Nicholas Wolf has been studying and teaching Irish for eight years, including time learning with Gael Linn, Conradh na Gaeilge, and Galway summer study in Ireland. He has also previously taught Irish with [Gaeltacht Minnesota](#), a community group that has been dedicated to teaching and learning the language for nearly thirty years.



DON'T FORGET IRISH MOVIE NIGHT ON SEPTEMBER 14TH!

A note from Mary Smith – one of our favorite IAS members, Irish Musician and one of the founders of the Richmond Folk Music sessions.

On September 24th Richmond Folk Music presents “Songbirds – A Tribute to the First Ladies of Irish Song”. This program has something for everyone who loves Irish songs.



Fil Campbell, from Belleek in Co. Fermanagh in the North of Ireland will perform songs made famous in the forties and fifties in Ireland by Delia Murphy, Margaret Barry, Mary O'Hara, and other Irish women. The "Songbirds" series was a big hit on Irish TV and is the basis of the concert. She not only has a beautiful voice, but she has the sweetest personality! Here's a link to the concert info <http://www.richmondfolkmusic.com/page36.htm> - There's also a video on that page of Fil performing "The Homes of Donegal".

The concert will be held at Congregation Or Ami, 9400 W. Huguenot Rd., Richmond VA. Tickets are \$12.00 in advance/\$15.00 at the door For more information or to purchase/reserve tickets Click [HERE](#) for on-line tickets, or call 804-647-7856 to reserve at the advance price.

Doors open at 7:15 and concerts start promptly at 8:00 pm -Light refreshments (coffee, tea and cookies) will be available.

A September Diversion ☺

Dandy Shandy

Makes: 1 (8-ounce) serving - Prep: 5 minutes
4 ounces good quality dark stout or porter beer
4 ounces (1/2 cup) chilled ginger ale or ginger beer



Directions

Place dark stout beer in a serving glass.
Pour ginger ale atop. Makes 1 (8-ounce) serving.

Officers and Board of Directors - 2011

President	Sonya Moore *	804-272-4138	sonyasmoore@comcast.net
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Please keep this list handy in case you need to contact any of the officers with questions. . Those folks with the * behind their name are the newly elected or re-elected folks. Congratulations to all and many thanks to everyone who ran for this election.

PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS – Click on links in calendar and you can hear song selections from the artists - And **ALWAYS** click the links below to get the latest updates on upcoming events
 Visit our website at <http://richmondias.org/events.php> for a full month calendar of current events

Sept 14th IAS Meeting Movie Night!	“Dancing at the Lughnasa – at the Bon Air Library, 9103 Rattlesnake Road (just off Buford Road in Bon Air. Richmond, VA 23235 (804) 320-2461 Movie starts promptly at 7 so come early for “social”
Sept 17th Irish Music Session – 7pm	Bernard Farrell and local Irish musicians gather at Finn McCool’s for a traditional music session. Finn’s is located at 4028 J Cox Road (near the intersection of Cox & Broad St.) Glen Allen, VA 23060 (804) 217-8167 You can check out the website at this link. http://www.finnmccoolsrichmond.com/index.html
Sept 24th Richmond Folk Music – “Songbirds” Irish Concert (you don’t want to miss this.	“A Tribute to the First Ladies of Irish Song” featuring Fil Campbell performing the songs of Delia Murphy, Margaret Barry, Mary O’Hara and other Irish women. The concert will be held at Congregation Or Ami, 9400 W. Huguenot Rd., Richmond, VA. To purchase or reserve tickets visit www.richmondfolkmusic.com or call 804-647-7856. Doors open at 7:15, concerts starts at 8:00 pm Light refreshments (coffee, tea and cookies) will be available. Here’s a link to her concert info and a video of her singing “The Homes of Donegal” http://www.richmondfolkmusic.com/page36.htm

Sep 30 & Oct 1 Scot Festival	Virginia Celtic Gathering & Highland Games –New Name for the Williamsburg Scottish Festival. http://vacelts.org/ For directions http://www.rockahock.com/Directions.aspx
Oct 15th Irish Music Session – 7pm	Bernard Farrell and local Irish musicians gather at Finn McCool’s for a traditional music session. Finn’s is located at 4028 J Cox Road (near the intersection of Cox & Broad St.) Glen Allen, VA 23060 (804) 217-8167 You can check out the website at this link. http://www.finnmccoolsrichmond.com/index.html
Oct 29 & 30 The Meadow Event Park	The Meadow Highland Games & Celtic Festival - Celtic Clans, Celtic Market, Celtic Food and Drink, Big Men throwing Big things... More information soon. http://www.meadowceltic.com/home
Nov19th Irish Music Session – 7pm	Bernard Farrell and local Irish musicians gather at Finn McCool’s for a traditional music session. Finn’s is located at 4028 J Cox Road (near the intersection of Cox & Broad St.) Glen Allen, VA 23060 (804) 217-8167 You can check out the website at this link. http://www.finnmccoolsrichmond.com/index.html
December 3 6-ish to 11-ish	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.
Dec 17th Irish Music Session – 7pm	Bernard Farrell and local Irish musicians gather at Finn McCool’s for a traditional music session. Finn’s is located at 4028 J Cox Road (near the intersection of Cox & Broad St.) Glen Allen, VA 23060 (804) 217-8167 You can check out the website at this link. http://www.finnmccoolsrichmond.com/index.html
Feb 12th 8pm Wolf Trap Vienna, VA Tickets \$22	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 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
Feb 24th 8pm & 25th 7:30pm Wolf Trap Vienna, VA Tickets \$25	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. Widely celebrated for their “passionate, tender, and rambunctious” music (The New York Times), the group was named the Best Musical Group of the Year in 2002 by BBC.

It’ll soon be Festival time and we’ll be setting up the tent and looking for volunteers. (Pssst -I see you)



<p>POISONED DWARF AND LILT March 2nd Cultural Art Center 2nd Stage 7 pm 804-261-2787 http://www.arts.glenallen.com/ Tickets \$10/Adv \$12 at door Open seating.</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. Lilt plays Irish music that is heard in pubs all over Ireland, in bars, at Irish dances and social events. Tina Eck on the Irish wooden concert flute and tin whistle and Keith Carr are both prominent players in the Washington DC area; Tina plays the Irish wooden concert flute and tin whistle, and Keith on the Irish bouzouki and tenor banjo. They have performed at numerous concerts, festivals, restaurants and social events. Their music is played with passion and virtuosity, and covers the genre's full range of expression, from lively reels and jigs to haunting airs. ... To Listen to Poison Dwarf - Click Here and To Listen to LILT - Click Here</p>
<p>CELTIC NIGHTS! Mar 15th 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>
<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. Williamsburg Library, 515 Scotland St. Williamsburg VA 23185 Phone: 757.259.4040</p>
<p>February 10& 11th Celtic Concert 7:30 – 10pm</p>	<p>COYOTE RUN Williamsburg Library, 515 Scotland St. Williamsburg VA 23185 P hone: 757.259.4040</p>