



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

Newsletter of the Greater Richmond Irish American Society

Dec/Jan 2007/2008

Gloria told me I could skip doing a newsletter in December, so I did – the time surely came in handy over the Holidays, but here we go again... lots of good times coming up so get those calendars and date books ready! You got plans to be making! Nancy

GOOD WISHES TO OUR IAS MEMBERS: As the old year has come to a close – and we turn to 2008 – The Irish American Society Officers and Board of Directors send our hope that your Christmas season was a happy one for you and your family and also our wish to each of you for good fortune for your families and great times at our upcoming Irish events in 2008.

The January IAS Program Meeting: Thursday, January 31st – 7:00 pm at Tuckahoe Library - 1901 Starling Dr. Richmond, VA 23229 (804) 270-5543 (Near the intersection of Parham and Three Chopt, behind Topeka Steakhouse) Dan Begley has a great movie set up for our 2008 kick off meeting. “The Snapper” is from the book by Roddy Doyle about the working class in North Dublin. The movies starts at 7:00 so come a little early to socialize!

This Roddy Doyle novel is the second in his Barrytown trilogy (that included **The Commitments** and **The Van**), and it offers two love stories. The first plays out in the central father/daughter relationship. The second details the author's obvious affection for his kinsmen - their humor, their generosity, even their flaws.

THE STRAWBERRY HILL RACES – 2008 – It's that time again. The Atlantic Rural Exposition is offering our Irish-American Society a Sky Box to use during the Strawberry Hill Races on April 15th at Colonial Downs. We are encouraged to decorate the Sky Box with our Irish flag and ourselves in our IAS/Irish regalia! The air-conditioned Sky Box is equipped with kitchen and bathroom facilities and we bring our own beverage coolers and food to share. The cost is \$35.00 per person, which includes chartered bus (from several locations) to whisk you to and from Colonial Downs (and you are dropped at the front door!) as well as the ticket to the race. We need at least 20 reservations to secure the Sky Box and must place our reservations early to secure the Box. The Box will hold up to 50 comfortably so there's plenty of room. If you wish to avail yourself of this great opportunity for IAS members, please call Gloria at 233-2113 immediately to reserve your spot. This event drew rave reviews from our members and their guests last year, so make your call to Gloria ASAP to reserve for your and your guests. .

JANUARY PUB SUPPER Pub Master, Ed Mayers has scheduled a pub supper on **January 25th** at Dublin's Irish Pub in Mechanicsville. 7526 Mechanicsville Turnpike (Take the Turn at the old waterwheel bank onto Old Mechanicsville Turnpike) The Old Safeway Shopping Center 804-723-5582 Mechanicsville, VA 23111. Arrive around 7 – there is Celtic music on the agenda that night also – Andrew McKay & Carole Etherton with Celtic music and sea shanties. Call Ed at 804-349-5577 or send him an email at ehm1537@msn.com to let him know how many are coming so the Pub can be ready.

THE IAS CHRISTMAS PARTY: Sonya Moore, Special Events Chairman, did another great job with this years Christmas party and Silent Auction. IAS members descended on the Columbian Center with all sorts of wonderful food and great desserts – no way could you go away hungry! Pat Naughton and Tom Murphy were in their annual spot as our friendly and fun bartenders (many thanks guys). The Silent Auction, manned by Gloria Cahen, was a huge success. The biggest of the items – a week at the Burke's cottage in Ireland or a week at Bonnie Atwood's Shenandoah Valley cabin drew a lot of interest and resulted in happy successful bidders - Hutch Hutchinson for the Irish cottage and Kerry Dermady and Dave Beugelsdyk for the mountain cabin. The auction was a huge success and took in over \$1,000 – which will be a big help in meeting the society expenses for the coming year.

This year's party even had great door prizes donated by some fine supporters of the IAS -and the winners were – Colleen Callahan, 2 tickets to the Eileen Ivers concert at U of R and Eileen's new CD; Nancy Emig, Irish Family Name History and Coat of Arms gift certificate from Mike and Bernadette Esler of Irish Eyes of Va. in Fredericksburg; Joyce Blunt – a book on Irish Spirituality, Kathleen Petty, - a book about The Book of Kells, Linda Mayers-Celtic Christmas CD. Paul McFadden – a Lenox bell and Larry David – a \$50 gift certificate from O'Tooles Pub.

Many thanks to Sonya for all her planning and to our hardworking IAS members: Joyce Blunt, Darlene Curtis, Karon Bell, Sally & Ed Gordon and Sonya for set up and clean up and to President Gloria Cahen for working in the Silent Auction area, AND we offer Huge thanks to the IAS members that donated items for the Silent Auction and also to those bidding and buying the great items. It was a wonderful evening, nice people and lots of fun.

THE NOVEMBER PUB SUPPER AT O'TOOLE'S:

A good turn out for the "Now Less Than Half-Way to St. Patrick's" celebration at O'Toole's. This one was even better since two members of Uisce Beatha – Jim Guy and Ed Tatum stopped in to add to the Irishness after Glenn Crone's sing along session. In between, Tim Batten, Pipe Major St. Andrew's Legion Pipe and Drum – in full regalia – serenaded with several tunes on the bagpipe. As always, the food was good and the company even better. Many thanks to Pub Master Ed Mayers for organizing and also kudos to the members that turned out – Jim Bandelean, Gloria Cahen, Jerry Cooney and Della, Beverly Creasy, Larry David and Amy Goodman, Nancy Emig, Joan Finnegan, Hutch Hutchinson, Ed & Linda Mayers, Lisa and Ed Murphy, and Tom & Jo Murphy.

THE NOVEMBER GENERAL MEETING:

The IAS expresses many thanks to AOH President Bob Strutton for the interesting presentation on the Ancient Order of Hibernians. Initially formed in Ireland as a fraternal association to protect and promote the welfare of fellow Catholics and their families the AOH soon rallied to also protect their church and clergy from the rampant oppression and persecution against Catholics in Ireland. As the AOH was organized in America – sad to say – the purpose was the same – to help fight the persecution of Irish Catholics in America. No matter your religious affiliation – you can learn more about the Hibernians along with some great historical information on both the Society and on Ireland by going to the AOH website. Some view the AOH as discriminatory for being a Catholic organization – but a look at their history can explain the organization's structure and origins – both rooted in a love of Ireland and their own faith combined with a deep caring for the persecuted. <http://www.aoh.com/links.html>. It was a very interesting and educational program – thanks again, Bob.

MANNING THE PHONES FOR PBS: I hope you all tuned into the PBS telethon and got to see your hard-working IAS members at the ready on the phones. The Celtic Women's Christmas special was wonderful and what a fun time we all had. IAS members working the phones included Karon Bell, Jerry Cooney, Nancy Emig, Frank Hardy, Ed & Linda Mayers, Sonya Moore, Kathryn O'Meara and our organizer, Jim Kelly. Jim's wife Maureen, who works at the station, was busy working at the pledge total table. I heard that the evening brought in \$9,000 for PBS. What a nice way to spend an evening. If we do this again... can we count on you?

FROM NANCY: Thank You! Thank You! Thanks You! My goodness! It was quite a shock to receive the 1st MVP award issued by the Irish American Society. I thank all of you for taking the time to submit nominations for all of the members that were suggested for this recognition, and I am especially grateful to be selected. Until just a few years ago, the only thing Irish

that I did was to wear some green on St. Pat's day. Now, through the various programs at our IAS meetings – I've learned so much more about my heritage and I've developed such a feeling of "***Irishness***". Going to Ireland in 2007, with my daughter Mary Rose, was the culmination of a long held dream between my own Mom and I that we sadly never realized. When I stepped off the plane – such a feeling swept over me – I can't even describe it – but you all know that same feeling. Something happens and a memory stirs, someone says something and inside you there is a sense of your connection to Ireland and your heritage – that's your own "***Irishness***". That feeling comes through often for IAS members – like when we are "working" the IAS tent and introducing other folks to bits of their own Irish heritage. You sense their urge to connect with their heritage and you can see how much it means for them to trace the origins of their Irish name and see on the Ireland map – where their family may have come from. We are so lucky to be able to reach out and share our stories and experiences with them – because of that invisible bond of "***Irishness***". I am luckiest of all because as Membership Chair - I get to meet and greet our new members as they join the society. And then I get to pepper all of you with emails and the newsletter with news and notices of the upcoming events of our IAS and also the Irish community. What luck for me! A captive audience! The best of it is that all of our IAS members are valuable assets to the organization. Some of you volunteer your time as Officers and Board Members. We are most fortunate to have a wonderful IAS website <http://richmondias.org> developed over hundreds of hours of work by Jim Bandelean. Some of you volunteer to work in the IAS booth at an event, or you come to IAS events and meetings through the year with a smile on your face and hand ready to shake. Some of you are less active and can't attend many activities, but you send in that membership renewal every year, just like clockwork, to support the IAS through your membership dues. You are all there for the Society in one fashion or another and you provide the energy that keeps the IAS going. It is really all of our members that are "The Most Valuable" to the Society. You all make it go; you all make it work and you all make it so much fun. Thanks again to every one of you **Very Valuable Members** and please keep getting involved –in fact – get more involved! Your Irish American Society needs you and all of its members for support and input to grow and improve.

JUST FOR FUN... Use the link at the end of this section to see all the goodies at the IAS Online store. Make note of all the things you'd like to have and then go for it! Help the IAS treasury and get some fun Irish stuff too! <http://www.cafepress.com/finnmccool>

PROJECT Did you know that our IAS once sponsored a visit to Richmond by a group of children from Ireland? Since its inception, our Irish American Society has provided many memorable experiences and Irish opportunities to the local and regional Irish community. In order to preserve our history and record these IAS accomplishments, we are in the process of obtaining materials and records from Past IAS Presidents, former and current members, old IAS newsletters, newspaper articles and other sources of information. We plan to organize the materials so that historical items can be viewed at events and also on line at our IAS website. We need help in this project and are asking for volunteers. If you would be interested in donating a bit of time to this project, please call Gloria Cahen at 233-2113 or email me at bearfan46@verizon.net. Based on responses from our members – we can organize dates and places and make the whole thing something fun to do. Once we get some response from the members – we can pick a central location and time to meet and get started on putting the history of the IAS in a good format. How about it? Can you give us a hand? Also, if you have any materials that would benefit this project, please let us know that too.

PLEASE NOTE - WE REALLY NEED YOUR COMPUTER SKILLS

Take a second and please check out our great IAS website. <http://richmondias.org/> Our IAS Webmaster, Jim Bandeleian has done a Herculean job to rebuild and also redesign our website. He continues to add new links to all things Irish and other features all the time. Jim has spent the time to develop the website, but could use a little help in maintaining the site. If you have computer skills and could offer a helping hand in periodically maintaining and updating the IAS website for upcoming events on our IAS calendar, please contact Jim Bandeleian at either his email address - jbandeleian@gmail.com or by phone at 804-347-0924 (Mobile) 804-755-4309 (Work). Check it out and if you can lend a hand – please call Jim. The website is a valuable tool to let people know about our Richmond organization and it is a valuable tool for our members to find out more about Ireland and our heritage. Using our website should be like voting in Chicago.

. “Go early and Go Often” 😊

MEMBERSHIP CORNER: The IAS sends a hearty welcome out to our newest member – Ann McGehee. We met Ann during our stint manning the phones for PBS. We had such a good time laughing during the program that we were able to convince her that joining the IAS would be a good move. Ann even joined us one evening to hear Mary Smith at the new Dublin’s Irish pub. Welcome Ann and here’s to you joining us for more Irish fun in 2008

OUR FELLOW CELTS IN RICHMOND

At the Highland Games, we met Doug Elder of the St. Andrews’s Legion Pipes and Drums. Through our conversation, we decided to share news and events of our groups. It will give all our members some background on an area Celtic group and also provide event information that you might be interested in – but wouldn’t necessarily hear about. If you are a member of such a group, this is an invitation to share event information and some background on your group. We all have the same interests at heart, promote the Celtic culture and heritage and have some fun at the same time! If you are in another Celtic group, please contact me 804-323-6415 and we’ll work on exchanging information. Thanks to all -- Nancy

A Note from St. Andrew’s Legion Pipes and

Drums: First I’d like to thank Nancy Emig and the powers that be at the Irish American Society for agreeing to work together to keep both groups informed of the others events. Now for those of you who don’t know who we are or maybe wanted to know a little more about us I’d like to take a second and introduce ourselves.

The band is a non-profit organization whose main purpose is to pass on the art and tradition of playing the pipes and drums. St. Andrew’s performs in many events around the state. From the Polar Plunge in Virginia Beach to the Alexandria Scottish Christmas Walk to the Roanoke St. Patrick’s Day Parade to the Richmond Highland Games and the Richmond St. Patrick’s Festival as well as numerous events in and around the Richmond area. Whether it’s the whole band or an individual piper there is a piper for your needs be they weddings, parties, funerals or corporate events.

Membership is open to all comers and lessons are free. If you’re not up for the challenge of learning a new instrument we welcome all musicians. If you don’t think you have it in you to play an instrument we have a full color guard that is always looking for new members. The band meets and practices at Westhampton United Methodist Church on Monday nights from 6:00 to 9:00. Feel free to stop in look around and give a listen. New members, fans, and supporters are always welcome. For more information on the band check out our website <http://www.salpd.com/> or give our Pipe Major Tim Batten a call at 804-502-7046. To subscribe to the bands newsletter you can click here, or go here http://www.salpd.com/newsletter_registration.php Thank you for your time and support. We hope to see you at our next event.

Bits of Ireland In our Irish American Society – we have a very special member – Charlie O’Brien. Charlie has never been able to attend a meeting, but he exemplifies so much of what is a true symbol of Ireland. Charlie is an Irish wolfhound and is listed on the membership form with owner Mariah McCann. Many of our members have known Mariah and her Wolfhounds through the years. I thought you all might enjoy some history on Wolfhounds. (Truly the coolest canines. ever!)

The Irish Wolfhound A Bit of History (borrowed from Bridget Haggerty)

Before Christ was born, Julius Caesar mentions Irish Wolfhounds in his "Gallic Wars", and by the year 391 A.D., the breed was known in Rome, when the first authentic mention of it was written by the Roman Consul, Quintus Aurelius, who had received seven of them as a gift which "all Rome viewed with wonder." Later still, the dogs were brought to fight and die for the entertainment of the crowds in the Circus Maximus. As time went on, the Celts were driven back into Brittany and the British Isles and their gentle giants went with them. Ownership of these great hounds was highly restricted. They were sent as much-coveted gifts to emperors, kings, nobility and poets and their chains and collars were often of precious metals and stones.

They were held in such high esteem that when disputes arose over them, individual combats and even full-scale wars often occurred. During the 3rd or 4th century, the famed Irish poet Ossian celebrated the mighty mythical warrior and huntsman, Finn, son of Cumall. Finn was chief of the High King Cormac, commander of the armies and master of the hounds - 300 adults and 200 puppies. According to legend, Finn's favorite hound, Conbec, could head off and bring back any stag in Ireland to Finn's main pack. The ancient Irish word for hound is "cu". In those days, it was common for warriors and even kings to place the preface "Cu" in front of their names, the implication being that they were as worthy of respect as a cu. A well-known Irish epic is the legend of CuChulainn (koo-hoo-lin), perhaps the most famous of the old Irish heroes. As the story goes, he came to the castle of a King but his entrance was barred by a huge hound. He battled with the dog for a day and a night before he was finally able to kill it. Then, in typically Irish fashion, he was so filled with remorse that he had been forced to slay so fine and noble a beast. To make it up to the King, he resolved to act as the King's hound for a year and a day, and so he came to be known as CuChulainn, "Hound of Cullain".

Today, the Irish Wolfhound has appeared as a symbol, on everything from jars of Tulamore Dew whiskey to

every piece of Belleek Pottery, the Irish sixpence, and a postage stamp that featured the Irish Wolfhound.

One of the most touching uses of the Wolfhound as an Irish symbol is the statue in the Gettysburg National Battlefield in Pennsylvania. Sculpted in memory of the fallen soldiers of the 63rd, 69th and 88th New York infantry - the Irish Brigade - it features an Irish Wolfhound in mournful respect, lying at the base of a Celtic cross

"And all their manners do confess that courage dwells in gentleness..."

Here is a note from our IAS member Mariah McCann owner and friend of our fellow IAS member – Charlie:

“Before Charlie, I had three Wolfies, sadly all are dead now, but many of the people in the IAS met them over the years, so perhaps they will enjoy a little story. The hounds were Cullen; Drogheda, and Fiacre.

I always took Fiacre to the Highland Games. She was a social butterfly, and she just loved things like that. She particularly liked to lick the back of knees for some reason, so her first year at the Highland Games she would creep up on pipers, stick her nose up under their kilts and lick the back of their knees. She loved it when they would giggle and appear to be startled. She was quite a character, my “*Wild Irish Nose*”.



Paws down.. ooops, I mean “Hands Down”, this may arguably be our cutest IAS member – Charlie O’Brien

Here's some fun for you to start the New Year. The names of the twenty-six counties of the Republic and the 6 counties of Northern Ireland are hidden in this puzzle. The Answers will be in the February newsletter along with more fun facts!

m	a	m	n	e	p	s	e	n	m	b	t	o	s	t	o	n	n	k	p
i	k	g	o	u	o	u	k	t	b	o	g	t	k	o	g	t	o	m	t
r	v	m	a	v	g	o	b	n	d	u	b	l	i	n	t	n	n	e	g
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d	h	d	e	r	r	y	g	a	c	h	t	m	o	b	n	r	o	n	i
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g	l	a	g	e	n	o	d	v	s	m	c	b	h	m	o	n	e	m	a
s	g	b	c	k	t	m	v	t	s	a	c	m	b	o	y	a	m	g	l
b	t	s	v	b	c	h	t	a	e	m	t	s	e	w	a	g	s	c	t

Find all of the 32 Counties in Ireland in the Grid above!

Armagh, Antrim, Carlow, Clare, Cork, Cavan, Donegal, Down, Derry, Dublin, Fermanagh, Galway, Kerry, Kilkenny, Kildare, Louth, Leitrim, Laois, Limerick, Longford, Mayo, Meath, Monaghan, Offaly, Tyrone, Tipperary, Roscommon, Sligo, Waterford, Wexford, Wicklow, Westmeath

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TIDBITS FROM OUR MEMBERS:

And yet another new section for the newsletter - based on notes/jokes/articles from our members submitted for the newsletter. All that's fit to print - that's our motto!

AN IRISH CONNECTION!

Hi Nancy, I was talking with a cousin in Coolbawn in northern Tipperary over the holidays. He told me a priest has researched Barack Obama and found he has an Irish heritage connection several generations back.

Do not know if this is true, but it brought a smile.
Gina Venn

IRISH LOGIC

After having dug to a depth of 10 meters last year, Scottish scientists found traces of copper wire dating back 100 years and came to the conclusion

that their ancestors already had a telephone network more than 100 years ago.

Not to be outdone by the Scots, in the weeks that followed, British scientists dug to a depth of 20 meters, and shortly after, headlines in the UK newspapers read: "British archaeologists have found traces of 200 year old copper wire and have concluded that their ancestors already had an advanced high-tech communications network a hundred years earlier than the Scots."

One week later, "The Kerryman," a southwest Irish newsletter, reported the following: "After digging as deep as 30 meters in peat bog near Tralee, Paddy O'Toole, a self taught archeologist, reported that he found absolutely nothing. Paddy has therefore concluded that 300 years ago Ireland had already gone wireless

MARK YOUR CALENDARS – and you can click this link to get the latest updates on upcoming events

<http://richmondias.org/index.php?content=upcoming>

Jan 17th	“Sing Along at O’Toole’s – Some Irish and Some Olde Tunes – Glenn Crone 6:00 pm
Jan. 17, 24, 31	Mary Smith at Dublin’s Irish Pub – Irish Music – 723-5582
Jan 18 th	Albafaire: Celtic Music for the Common Man is playing this Friday at Dublin's Irish Pub, Mechanicsville, VA (The Old Safeway Plaza) from 7 to 9 pm. http://albafaire.com/
Jan 25 th	IAS Pub Supper at Dublin’s Irish Pub –Mechanicsville – 7pm Also, Crane Drivin Music, Celtic music, sea shanties
Jan 25 th & 26 th	Robin Rich at Sullivan’s Irish Pub in Ashland – 301 South Center Street, 804 752-1628
January 31st	IAS General Meeting – Tuckahoe Library 7:00 Irish Movie “The Snapper”
February 2nd	Seven Nations at Dublin’s Irish Pub – St. Andrews Pipes leading off. . Tickets \$10.00/advance and \$15/ at the door., For more info - Dublin's Irish Pub, Mechanicsville, VA 804-723-5582
February 17th	7:00pm – 8:30pm - Poisoned Dwarf – Free Concert at Williamsburg Unitarian Church, 3051 Ironbound Road, Williamsburg 23185
February 17th	“Sing Along at O’Toole’s – Some Irish and Some Olde Tunes – Glenn Crone 6:00 pm
February 23rd	Richmond Folk Music Cornerhouse Great Irish music – 804-647-7856 for Info.
February 28 th	IAS General Meeting – Program To Be Announced.
March 1 st	Old Town Alexandria, VA 27th annual St. Patrick's Day Parade & Irish Festival - for more info http://www.ballyshanners.org/content.aspx?page=2&section=1
March 6 th	U of R Concert -Jepson Theater Natalie McMaster – Celtic Fiddler Tickets: \$32 adults, \$30 seniors 65+, \$16 children 12 and under For Info – 804-287-6012
Mar 9 th	Heritage Aire Celtic Ensemble – 3:00 pm Special FREE Event sponsored by Richmond Folk Music 3:00 pm Concert is Free, but Reservations Required 804-647-7856
March 9 th	Leahy at Paramount Theater in Charlottesville (They do a Great Show! Nancy) http://www.theparamount.net/calendar_shows_leahy.aspx
March 12	Chieftans at Sandler Theater – VA. Beach http://www.sandlercenter.org/calendar/?event=34
April 12	Strawberry Hills Races in the Sky Box – Call Gloria Cahen 233-2113 NOW – with any questions and to make your reservation.