



The Richmond Claddagh

MARCH 2012

<http://richmondias.org/>

The Richmond Irish American Society

[Click for the Calendar of Events](#)

It's March and in Gaelic – that's Marta



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Happy St Patrick's Day to each of you. I will be looking forward to seeing you at the St Patrick's Church Festival on March 24th and 25th.

Plans are afoot for the Anniversary Party and we will be getting the word out as soon as it is final.

The next big piece of business is this year's election - no not the National one - but our own IAS election. Last year we elected the four officers and part of the Board. This year we elect the other part plus fill a vacancy that is outstanding. It is hard to field a team in any sport without a full complement of players. The same situation exists with our own Board. There is plenty of work to be done and not enough people to do it. If you would like to attend a Board Meeting prior to committing, the dates are listed in each month's newsletter and are held at my house. They are always open to the membership.

Current members up for re-election are Karon Bell, Nancy Emig, Frank Hardy, and Denis Maguire, plus the vacancy.

I hope to hear from members willing to serve and help further our organization. Sonya S. Moore
272-4138 sonyasmoore@comcast.net

St. Pat's Festival – IAS Volunteers Needed

The Church Hill Festival is March 24th & 25th.

Volunteers are needed to help set up the IAS tent on Friday night – (please contact Karon Bell about the time to arrive call her at 804-982-7835, or email her at irishmom1958@gmail.com. We also need volunteers in the tent for both Saturday and Sunday to answer questions about the IAS – meet and greet visitors to the tent – and just be a friendly face in the crowd. You can donate an hour or a couple of hours or a full day – or both (!) so that Karon can set up a schedule of volunteers.

These festivals are our chance to engage the public and let them know about our IAS organization. Support from our current members and adding new members to our roster will ensure that the IAS continues to grow and prosper. We will gladly show you the ropes and you will have a great time, meet new folks, and you'll be glad you lent a hand. (The bonus – we all get better acquainted!)

The Festival opens at 10 each day – see the last sheet for info on the St Pat's Irish Festival Parade

Ann McGehee – IAS Secretary/Sunshine Chair



Ann – at Three Monkeys - IAS Pub Supper – What a crowd we had and such fun!

I am originally from Louisa County, VA (now best know for its earthquake) and I even graduated from the high school that has now been condemned. I briefly attended VCU then moved back to Louisa and worked there for 10 years before moving back to Richmond in 1998.

My love of all things Irish began well before I joined the IAS. It was forged in my mother's family's Irish roots and fired by my love of reading and writing.

I found another outlet in volunteering for the pledge drives at the local PBS station, particularly during the Celtic-themed shows. It was during a showing of Celtic Woman in November 2007, that I had the privilege of meeting and spending time with a group of IAS members who had also volunteered to answer phones that same evening. There was also a group of students from James River High School volunteering but as I was the only non-IAS member of legal drinking age present, I was "recruited" by our then membership chair, Nancy Emig, who appropriately enough had the seat next to mine. I left that evening with a membership form in hand – and joined several weeks later.

I joined the IAS Board in June 2008 in the position of treasurer and held the post until November 2011, when a shuffling of duties on the Board took place. I am currently serving in the dual roles of Secretary and the Sunshine Committee.

I treasure the friends I have made and the wonderful fellowship with all I have met through the IAS. Our love of all things Irish, our common bond, brought us together, but just as love is only one third of the symbol of a Claddagh, the friendship and loyalty is what keeps us growing as we approach the 20th anniversary of the IAS.

Hey – We Need Help from YOU!

A Request from Pubmaster Mary Smith –We are always looking for good places to hold our pub nights, and I am inviting our IAS members to please send me their suggestions for sites for our Pub Suppers. It's nice if the pub is Irish, but some places are at least Irish in spirit, if not in name, if they offer a selection that includes Irish beers, good Pub Grub, friendly service and a congenial atmosphere. There are a few places in town that sound Irish but are really more like generic sports bars. So do not hesitate to nominate any local pub that you think would be a good option just because it isn't technically Irish – because we can give it that Irish air for the night!

We are looking for a nice space where we can all be seated together, if not at the same table at least at adjacent tables. And we also would need -

- Separate checks
- Irish beer available
- Good food
- Reasonable prices
- Convenient parking
- Easy to find and not too far off the beaten path

If you have a favorite eatery that you think would be great for our Pub Suppers, let me know at maryrf@yahoo.com -Thanks, Mary!

“Take Your Breath Away Moment”

Better known as

“St. Patrick’s View of Ireland Today” –



Photo from NASA taken March 17, 2010

Hey – We Need Some More Help From You!

Your IAS Board members are working to bring you interesting monthly programs and activities and we are also trying to put together a 20th Anniversary Party. We are looking for places to hold these types of activities. Many of you may belong to organizations or clubs, or you live in a neighborhood that has a Community Center or a similar type of facility for rent for such activities as ours

Cost is certainly a major consideration, so with that in mind – if you think you might know of a place... Would you please call or email Karon Bell 804-982-7835, or irishmom1958@gmail.com with contact information for the location/facility that may be available to the IAS for activities. We really do need your help in finding some locations that we might be able to use for future events.

Our IAS member, Karen Ide, mentioned that she'd love to have a little map of Ireland that she could tuck in her purse for a quick reference. You know you are in the middle of a conversation and someone says, “I've been to ___ in Ireland”, or “my family comes from ___ in Ireland” Karen said it would be nice to be able to check and identify the reference point in Ireland. Hey - never let it be said that we don't listen to our members' requests! Here's your map and keep reading.



Irish Counties - And as a bonus, if you want to learn more about a particular county – click on the link below and– at the linked webpage – click for access to all kinds of interesting facts on each county.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Counties_of_Ireland



The Irish In Richmond A Look Back

Shockoe Hill Cemetery
March 18, 2012

Local Richmond group, “Friends of Shockoe Hill Cemetery” is pleased to host “The Irish in Richmond: A Look Back” – a program dedicated to the men, women and children of Ireland who left their homeland to brave a new life in Virginia in the 1800s. This program will present, musical performances, stories of the Irish immigrants who came to Richmond, many of whom are buried at Shockoe Hill, and specially themed Cemetery tours are also scheduled.

This event is scheduled for 18 March 2012 from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm. Tours will begin at 11:30 and 2:00.

This event is free and open to the public. Parking is available within the cemetery. For Google maps, please click [HERE](#).

Directions and further information about the Friends of Shockoe Hill Cemetery may be found at our website, <http://shockoehillcemetery.org/>, or by contacting Jeffry Burden at 804.426.1355. For the complete Facebook invitation and updated material, please visit

<https://www.facebook.com/ShockoeHillCemetery>. The Friends of Shockoe Hill Cemetery is a citizens group devoted to the preservation, improvement and interpretation of Richmond’s first city-owned cemetery.

**Hey! Who among us DOES NOT love
An IRISH WOLFHOUND?**



**Happy St. Pat’s Day –
(I Love this Photo!)**

IAS President, Sonya Moore received this notice and note -via email – and we thought that the show might be of interest to some of our members

JEFFREY NICOLOFF AND SUSIE BUTLER
ShowStoppers Productions
PRESENTS
"WHEN IRISH EYES ARE SMILING" 2 SHOWS ONLY
TRADITIONAL IRISH SINGERS
TRADITIONAL IRISH DANCERS & TRADITIONAL IRISH MUSICIANS
A BIT OF THE BLARNEY
FEATURING
STRAIGHT FROM IRELAND
ANTHONY FALLON
4 TIME WORLD SOLO IRISH DANCE CHAMPION
PRINCIPAL DANCER FOR RIVERDANCE
MARCH 17TH
2:00 PM
7:30 PM
1-800-HISTORY
FOR TICKETS
KIMBALL THEATRE
WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA
EVERYONE IS IRISH ON ST. PATRICK'S DAY
www.showstoppersproductions.org

Hi Sonya,

I just wanted to let your organization know that we are producing an Afternoon and Evening of Irish Music, Song and Dance.

We have hired, direct from Dublin, Ireland - Anthony Fallon, former principal dancer for River Dance. We would love if some of your group could make the show on March 17th. There are two shows - 2:00 and 7:30 pm – both at the Kimball Theatre in Merchant Square of Historic Williamsburg. Please call 1-800-History for tickets \$22.00. Beverages may be bought and brought into the theatre during the performances. Thanks so much. Susie Butler <http://www.showstoppersproductions.org/> (here’s a cute link for you and more info.



Do you know of a fellow member who is going through a difficult time and could use a card or note of support from their friends in the IAS? If so, please pass the information on to our Sunshine Chair, Ann McGehee at 540-894-7284 or Sonya Moore at sonyasmooore@comcast.net or 804-272-4138.

At an Irish wedding reception recently someone yelled, "Will all of the married men please stand next to the one person who has made your life worth living." The poor bartender was nearly crushed to death. 😊



Well to one and all... **Happy St. Patrick's Day** -- that one-day of the year when eating your greens can mean cupcakes, beer, even bacon.

It's oddly appropriate that we celebrate our country's Irish heritage by binging on fatty food and drink; after all, Ireland is the home of the fry-up, a typical breakfast consisting of fried eggs, bacon (rashers), sausages and black pudding (made from pig's blood), with a few other fried things thrown in for good measure. Not surprisingly, Ireland's also near the top of the list of countries with the highest heart disease death rates.

But there is some good health-related news on the Irish front: You know those charming old Guinness beer ads that proclaim it to be good for you? Turns out, they might be right—though not for the reasons originally thought.

Back in the 1920s, when the "Guinness is Good for You!" slogan was introduced, the claim was based on market research that found that people felt good after they drank a pint of the dark and foamy stout. (Well... Duh!)

This flimsy claim was eventually bolstered by the fact that Guinness contains iron. Pregnant women were even advised to have an occasional pint. Of course, it would take something like a dozen pints a day for a woman to get her recommended daily allowance of iron, in which case the alcohol and calories would cause more harm than good.

But another health benefit was discovered in 2003: stout beer like Guinness (as opposed to lager and other light beer) is high in the antioxidant compounds called flavonoids—similar to those found in red wine, tea and chocolate—that can reduce the risk of heart attack from blood clotting. Researchers at the University of Wisconsin carried out laboratory tests on dogs (Irish setters, I wonder?) with clogged arteries, comparing the effects of Guinness and Heineken. Only those dogs that were fed the Guinness had reduced clotting.

(Citation – I found this somewhere on the net??? I wonder where?!? Sorry

USING OUR IAS WEBSITE! - I recently received this note from a member: "Hi Nancy, I'm a paid member of the society but have never been instructed how to sign in w/user name plus password to delve into old/new newsletters. Please advise – Thanks."

And so - here is a Primer for all our members. First - no password is needed to access the old issues. Our volunteer Website Managers try to post the newsletter in six-month increments – maintaining the most recent for our members via distribution.

To access the Archives, Log on to our IAS website, <http://richmondias.org/index.php> - click on "**ABOUT US**" – one of the links found at the Home page. When the "About Us" page opens, you will see a link to [Adobe Reader](#). All of the old newsletter issues are in PDF format, so if you don't have the program, you can click on the Adobe Reader link to download the program to your computer. It is **free, safe, secure, and you will find many uses for the program**. I hope you all will visit the IAS website and enjoy the old issues.

Print & Place on your Door When You Leave For the St. Pat's Festival & Irish Parade



Things To See In Sligo – Off the Beaten Track

Finn Mac Cumhail and the Split Rock



In the townland of Kileenduff, west of Easky in County Sligo, there is an enormous boulder on the south side of the road called the Split Rock, which skeptics say was dropped there by a glacier. Irish legend, however, has another explanation.

Everyone has heard of Finn Mac Cumhail (sometimes McCool) and his legendary band that wandered around Ireland performing great deeds and combating evil. One day the Fianna, as the band was called, took a break from hunting on top of Sligo's Ox Mountains. Large boulders surrounded the site, and one of the group challenged Finn to a rock-throwing contest to see who could throw a stone into the sea, some 20 miles away. The challenger selected a small boulder, threw it, and it landed just short of the ocean near the mouth of the Easky River.

Finn started to pick up a large stone, but then spotted an enormous boulder that no other member of the Fianna could even pick up. He hoisted it, reared back, and threw it as hard as he could. The boulder landed a great distance away, but it fell short of the sea.

Finn was not one to take failure gracefully. Enraged by the laughter of the others, he leaped off the mountain and raced down to the boulder. He pulled out his sword, gave the rock a mighty whack, and split it in two.

It is said that one can safely walk through the gap **two times**, but if one attempts a third passage the gap will close and squish the person flat. (...Hmmm)

(From Ancestry.com)

It isn't **WRONG** to NOT be Irish -



It is just too bad for you.

Queen Maeve's Tomb –



The reputed final resting place of the legendary Queen Maeve of Connacht located on the summit of Knocknarea Mountain near Sligo town. It is thought to date to about 3,000 BC - which would mean that the legendary queen would have been buried in an existing tomb. The cairn is comprised of an estimated 40,000 stones, weighing about 27,000 tons, which were quarried on the summit of Knocknarea. The enormous man-made cairn is 32 ft high and 180 ft in diameter. Due to the size and makeup of the tomb, even modern imaging techniques cannot penetrate the interior. Too bad, according to tradition, she was buried standing upright with sword in hand, facing towards her bitter enemies in Ulster. Imagine that image! There are also 14 caves near this ancient historical site.



Sligo would seem to be an ideal destination – full of charm, beautiful scenery, legends and lore – and I bet a charming pub or two to sit and sip and swap stories... You know what? This really makes me want to go back to Ireland. Anyone else ready? I think I can be packed in an hour.

The Irish at the Alamo On March 6, 1836, the men inside the Alamo, many of them Irish, could hold out no longer. Barricaded within a mission compound-turned-fort in San Antonio, they had held out for nearly two weeks against several thousand Mexican soldiers under the command of Santa Anna. But with a rising death toll, dwindling supplies, and no reinforcements, defeat was only a matter of time.

When Santa Anna's men finally breached the compound that day in early March, none inside were spared in the most heralded battle in the struggle for Texas independence.

Before 1835, Texas was part of Mexico. The government of Mexico was wary of the expanding United States to the north, but it also wanted to attract settlers – even if they were Americans -- to its northern regions. So, beginning in the late 1820s, it offered contracts to any impresario who, in exchange for as much as 40,000 acres of land, agreed to settle a certain number of families in Mexican territory.

Stephen Austin was the first to arrive with the band of settlers in 1821. Thousands more Americans soon followed, drawn by the promise of land and opportunity. "What I have seen of Texas," wrote one enthusiastic pioneer by the name of Davy Crockett, "it is the garden spot of the world."

Among these Texas pioneers were many Irish. Indeed the Mexican government was quite keen on Irish immigrants, reasoning their Catholic faith would strengthen their loyalty to the Mexican government.

Two notable Irish impresarios were James McGloin and John McMullen who in 1828 received a large land grant for the settlement of 200 families. The next year they brought Irish families from New York, establishing the "Villa de San Patricio de Hibernia" (town of St. Patrick of Ireland) on the Neuces River's north bank. In 1834, two more Irishmen, James Power and James Heweston, likewise established a settlement named Refugio on the Gulf of Mexico. They brought dozens of families directly from Ireland.

By the early 1830s, the more than 20,000 American settlers in Texas easily outnumbered their Mexican counterparts. The Mexican government passed laws to slow the tide of American immigration, but to no avail. To make matters worse, few of these settlers exhibited much affection for the Mexican government; especially after the overbearing Gen. Antonio López de Santa Anna became President in 1833. Protest soon flourished into open rebellion and by late 1835 the war for Texas independence was on.

Enraged, Santa Anna led an army of 5,000 into Texas to subdue the American rebellion. He headed straight for San Antonio, an old mission settlement reportedly under rebel control.

The report was true. By mid February, a force of 187 men had barricaded in the old Alamo mission compound. Among them were nearly 40 men of Irish heritage, beginning with two descendents of Ulster Irish immigrants, the leader Col. William Barrett Travis and Davy Crockett. At least a dozen, with names like Jackson, McGee, and Nolan, and McCafferty, were Irish-born. The rest, including several from the Refugio and San Patricio settlements, are believed to be either of Irish or Irish American heritages.

The goal of Travis and his men was to hold the Alamo until reinforcements arrived. Unfortunately, they never arrived. Santa Anna laid siege to the Alamo on February 23. For thirteen days, his men poured a hail of bullets and cannon balls into the stubborn outpost. Several times Santa Anna offered to spare their lives if they would surrender, but they refused, choosing instead to fight to the death. When the final assault succeeded on March 6, Santa Anna's men were under strict orders to execute all survivors.

Santa Anna's victory at the Alamo was short-lived. For Sam Houston, another man of Irish lineage soon had the opportunity to avenge the massacre at the Alamo and win Texas independence. In late April 1836, Houston's force surprised Santa Anna's army at San Jacinto and crushed it. Texas independence, declared on March 2 during the siege of the Alamo, was now a reality.

Today the Alamo is a shrine maintained by the Daughters of the Republic of Texas. Every year on St. Patrick's Day, members of the Harp and Shamrock Society of Texas lay a wreath at the Alamo to honor the memory of the Irish and Irish Americans who died in the struggle to win Texas independence.



Eight Irish born men were among those who are known to have died fighting for Texas in defense of the Alamo: Samuel E. Burns (1810-1836), Andrew Duval (1804-1836), Robert Evans (1800-1836), Joseph M. Hawkins (1799-1836), Thomas Jackson (? -1836), James McGee (? -1836), Jackson J. Rusk (? -1836), Burke Trammell (1810-1836), and William Ward (1806-1836). (From - The Irish Echo * February 28, 2001-

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

<http://richmondias.org/events.php> or for a full month calendar of current events click here. **IAS Calendar**

<p>March 11 Sunday 7:30 pm The Chieftans VA – Beach The Sandler Ctr.</p>	<p>Celebrate St. Patrick's Day as the Chieftains mark their 50th year of performances! Six time Grammy winners, The Chieftains, are now recognized for bringing traditional Irish music to the world's attention. They have uncovered the wealth of traditional Irish music that has accumulated over the centuries, making the music their own with a style that is as exhilarating as it is definitive. 201 Market Street (adjacent to the Westin Hotel) Virginia Beach, 757-385-2787 The Sandler Center for the Performing Arts. Tickets: \$40, \$50, \$60, \$75 Click here for Chieftan Tickets -Chieftan's Website: www.thechieftains.com</p>
<p>March 15th CELTIC NIGHTS! 7:30pm Thur. University of Richmond</p>	<p>Celtic Nights – “Journey of Hope” Modlin Center for the Arts click here, University of Richmond - 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.. 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, For ticket pricing and show information click on this link - http://modlin.richmond.edu/events/modlinarts-presents/celtic-nights.html</p>
<p>March 20th Landmark Theater 7:30 -</p>	<p>Celtic Woman – “Believe” Phone 804-646-0546For Ticket Information – click on the link below http://theatrericmond.com/Tickets-Active.php?eventID=1774514&venueID=754</p>
<p>March 24 & 25 St. Pat's Festival and Irish Parade 10 am – 5pm</p>	<p>St. Patrick's Festival on Church Hill - Come out – Volunteer some time to work with us in the IAS booth. Help educate about our true Irish heritage – not some made up version of the Irish. Meet new folks and have some fun with your fellow members. Call Karon Bell to volunteer 804-982-7835. The St. Patrick's Day parade steps off at 10:00 on Saturday – come out and march with us!</p>
<p>April 4th WEDNESDAY IAS Meeting Program Tuckahoe Library</p>	<p>To commemorate the 100 year Anniversary of the sinking of the Titanic –The meeting will focus on The Titanic and the Tragic Irish Connection</p> 
<p>April 15th Sunday 7 pm</p>	<p>IAS Board Meeting – open to all members. Please contact Sonya for directions. 804-272-4138 sonyasmoore@comcast.net</p>
<p>May 12th Saturday Ft. Lee, VA Celtic Festival.</p>	<p>Ft Lee Celtic Festival 2012 Ft Lee, VA (Petersburg area) - Fort Lee Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation (FMWR) presents the Celtic Festival on Saturday, May 12 from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. at the Hide Away. The Hide Away is located on 5th Street, Bldg. 15013. The festival is free and open to the public. The festival opens at 10 a.m. with authentic Celtic food, music, vendors and more. FMWR's Kid Zone, inflatable rides and games for kids will also be there. For Additional information - See http://www.leemwr.com/celticfestival.htm</p>
<p>May 30 – WED Charlottesville 7:30 pm RIVERDANCE One Night only</p>	<p>John Paul Jones Arena in Charlottesville VA on May 30, 2012 for one night only! Few shows have touched audiences like RIVERDANCE, the Original International Phenomenon, now on its FAREWELL TOUR. This thunderous celebration of joyful music, song and dance that has that has tapped its way onto the world stage thrilling millions of people around the globe. Groups of 15 or More Receive \$5.00 Off All Tickets!</p>

REMEMBER... St. Patrick's Festival – The Parade and the Irish Costume Contest: Join in for the Annual **Church Hill Irish Festival** on March 24th and 25th in historic [Church Hill](#). The festival starts Saturday at 10:00 am with the Irish American Community Council sponsored Walking Parade featuring musicians, dancers and our own IAS members. We hope that many of our members come and march with us – and if possible – wear a bit of the green. Join us Saturday around 9:30 ish to line up and march in the parade.

St Patrick Festival Parade in Richmond



Leading off the Irish American Society Parade Contingent
The St. Andrew's Pipe Bank, Leprechaun Glen Crone, & Grand Master – Carroll Graham



Following up with the IAS Goodie Wagon full of Irish Beads and other items –
IAS Members – Steve Kelly and Parade Marshal Gary McAuliffe in the Blue Jacket

*****HERE AT THE END OF THE NEWSLETTER *****

- 1.) DID YOU CALL KARON BELL TO VOLUNTEER IN THE IAS TENT?
(I've put her contact information everywhere to make it easy for you!)**
- 2.) DID YOU ARRANGE YOUR SCHEDULE TO MARCH IN THE SATURDAY PARADE?
I hope so! --We are all looking forward to seeing you at the festivities!**

