



The Richmond Claddagh

OCTOBER 2013

<http://richmondias.org/>

The Richmond Irish American Society

[Click for the Calendar of Events](#)

IAS PUB SUPPER – SATURDAY OCT. 26th ROSIE CONNOLLY'S- 6 pm



Click on the link for directions and menu

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

1548 E Main St -Richmond, VA 23219

Park on the street or in Farmer's Market (Fee)

(804) 343-1063

Join us for a fun evening at Rosie's and enjoy the real Irish atmosphere, the Irish & American pub specialties (both food & drink!). It has such an Irish air about the place that I always look around for Sean Thornton and Will Danaher and expect to see them roll through the dining room at any moment. ☺

MORE IRISH AT ROSIE CONNOLLY'S



December 8th – 1-4 PM

IRISH BRUNCH & IRISH TRAD SEISIÚN

From IAS Member/Irish Musician Bernard Farrell comes news of Irish Trad Seisiún/Performance with some of the best of the best musicians in Richmond. Let's try to have a good showing come out for this. It's a great way to support our Irish Trad musicians and another way to support and encourage these types of Irish activities. Help keep the heritage alive and well.

Will I see you there??? **I HOPE SO!**

A Note From Jim Mahone -

As you may know, I'm involved in traditional acoustic music in our area, including "trad" Celtic music and American "old time mountain music" (which has strong historical roots in Celtic).

Our IAS members may be interested to know that IAS member Bern Farrell (an outstanding fiddler) contributes mightily to many Celtic events in Richmond and Tidewater, including regular seisiúns at Rosie Connolly's.

Recently, Rosie's referred an inquiry from Rare Olde Times to Bern about establishing a new seisiún at R.O.T., and Bern is working on that proposal. My observation is that a major difference exists between traditional Irish seisiúns and their American counterparts; whereas Irish seisiúns typically are neighborhood events, Richmond's have to draw both musicians and listeners from a metro area of over 1,000,000 people, requiring tremendous efforts for promotion, scheduling, and coordination ... all unpaid.

We owe much to folks like Bern who take on this tremendous responsibility for the love of Irish music and our shared heritage.

Please feel welcome to share this information on local seisiúns to lovers of Irish music and the pub experience. If you want more information on our music, Bern and I are more than happy to oblige Jim "Shéamus" Mahone *Fear an tí*

Rosie Connolly Seisiún

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

1548 E Main St -Richmond, VA 23219

(804) 343-1063

2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month

About 7:30 until ?

Hiram Haines Seisiún

Hiram Haines Coffee & Ale House

Rivers' Edge Building [12 Bank Street, Petersburg](#)

2nd Saturday of each month -7 pm -

(Until Hiram throws us out the door),

Ashland Old Time Jam and Irish Seisiún

Ashland Coffee & Tea

[100 Railroad Avenue, Ashland](#)

1st and 3rd Saturdays of each month -10 a.m. until 1pm.

THE GREAT CHICAGO FIRE -



Fire Prevention Week commemorates the Great Chicago Fire. On the 40th anniversary of the fire, the Fire Marshals Association of North America sponsored the first National Fire Prevention Day, deciding to observe the anniversary as a way to keep the public informed about the importance of fire prevention. This was expanded to Fire Prevention Week in 1922. **National Fire Prevention Week** is observed in the United States and Canada, during the week (from Sunday to Saturday) in which October 9 falls.

The fire began on October 8, 1871 around 9:00 at night, but continued into and did most of its damage on October 9th. The traditional account of the origin of the fire is that it was started by a cow kicking over a lantern in the barn owned by Catherine O'Leary. The cow and fire story puts the blame on Catherine O'Leary. She seemed the perfect scapegoat: she was an Irish Catholic immigrant, and they were unpopular because of their high numbers in the city. This story of the cow and the lantern began to spread across the city even before the flames had died out, and it was noted in the *Chicago Tribune's* first post-fire issue. This was denied by the O'Leary household stating that they were already in bed before the fire started. Mrs. O'Leary was later exonerated.

In 1893 the reporter Michael Ahern retracted the "cow-and-lantern" story, admitting it was fabricated. He had made it up. The O'Leary barn was the first building to be consumed by the fire, but the official report could not determine the exact cause.

The spread of the fire was aided by the fact that more than two thirds of the structures in Chicago at the time were made entirely of wood and were topped with highly flammable tar or shingle roofs,

All of the city's sidewalks and roads were made completely out of wood. There was also a drought prior to the fire, and strong winds from the southwest that carried flying embers toward the heart of the city. The firefighters were tired from having battled a fire the day before and as they fought the flames into the night and through the next day, they became totally exhausted.

The fire raged out of control through the central business district, it destroyed hotels, department stores, Chicago's City Hall, the opera house and theaters, churches, and plants. After two days of the fire burning out of control, it finally burned itself out, aided by diminishing winds and a light drizzle that began falling late on Monday night. City officials estimated that more than 300 people died in the fire and more than 100,000 were left homeless. More than four square miles were destroyed by the fire. In 1956, the remaining structures on the original O'Leary property were torn down for construction of the Chicago Fire Academy, a training facility for Chicago firefighters.

BEFORE THE FIRE – STATE STREET



AFTER THE FIRE -



NOTE: Many thanks to IAS Board Member & Old Dominion Emerald Society Member Bill Riddell for this most interesting article on the "Irish Connection".



CORRECTION - UPDATE



Sorry... It was pointed out that "The Claddagh" was remiss in not publishing the Richmond location of the Stonewall Jackson's statue that was highlighted in the last issue. The statue was unveiled on October 26, 1875 in Capital Square.

HAPPY IRELAND - The [World Happiness Report 2013](#) ranks Ireland 18th in the world with an average happiness score of 7.076 (out of 10) for the years 2010 to 2012. Ireland ranked only marginally below the United States (17th) and above the UK (22nd). The report was compiled at Columbia University in New York, and measures variables such as health, longevity, income, productivity, and social solidarity using the survey results of different countries to arrive at the results. Some 97.1% of Irish people report having somebody they feel they could rely on in times of troubles, the second best in the world.



LIGHTHOUSE VACATIONS The [Commissioners for Irish Lights](#), which manages 75 lighthouses around the coast of Ireland, plan to add more of their lighthouses to the 6 lighthouses currently available as tourist accommodation. Each lighthouse has accommodations attached, in some cases up to 5 houses, which can now be offered to tourists. The expansion is part of a plan to create a new All-Ireland Lighthouse Trail. – DOES THIS SOUND COOL OR WHAT!!!???

http://www.nli.ie/1916/1916_main.html

1916 REBELLION -In the days after the 1916 Rebellion in which about 300 people were killed, 112 Irish Rebellion leaders were sentenced to be executed. However, after the protracted almost daily executions of 15 leaders over the first 12 days of May 1916, there was a huge shift in public opinion regarding the Rebellion and outrage was also expressed in the British House of Commons. That caused a halt to the executions and the sentences for the 97 other leaders were subsequently commuted to terms of imprisonment. For more details, visit the National Library of Ireland's online exhibition on the [1916 Rising: Personalities and Perspectives](#).

THE BOOK OF KELLS – VIEW IT ONLINE

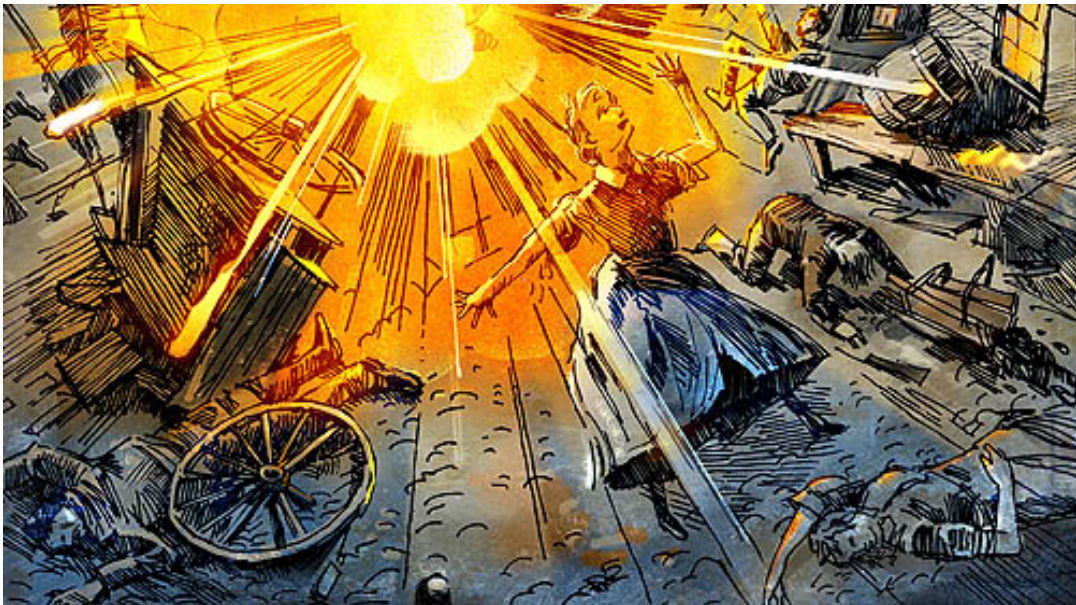


High quality digital images of the 677 pages of the Book of Kells can now be [viewed online](#). Written by Irish monks around 800 AD, the hand-written Gospel in Latin is renowned for its lavish decoration. The origin of the Book of Kells is generally attributed to a monastery founded around 561 by Irish monks on Iona, an island off western Scotland. In 806, following a Viking raid on the island, the monks fled to Ireland where they started a new monastery at Kells, Co. Meath. The Book of Kells was written around that same time and it stayed at Kells until 1654 when it was sent to Dublin for safekeeping from Cromwell's troops. It was presented to Trinity College in 1661, and has remained there ever since. It has been on public display at Trinity since the mid-19th century, and currently attracts over 500,000 visitors annually.

http://digitalcollections.tcd.ie/home/index.php?DRIS_ID=MS58_003v

**THE RICHMOND IRISH AMERICAN SOCIETY
PRESENTS A SPECIAL PROGRAM
SATURDAY – NOVEMBER 9TH – 1:00**

**BROWN'S ISLAND 1863 ARSENAL
EXPLOSION
& THE IRISH CONNECTION**



Dan Marsula/Post Gazette Illustration

Guest Speaker – Sandy McCracken Bergman
of THE FRIENDS OF THE RICHMOND SHOCKOE HILL CEMETERY

TUCKAHOE LIBRARY – 1901 STARLING DRIVE

HENRICO, VA -(NEAR PARHAM/THREE CHOPT)

Please join us a bit early for hospitality time prior to the start of the program.

FREE PROGRAM – OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

An Irish Samhain

Celebrating Halloween the Traditional Way

**Rule Number One:
Never Frequent Graveyards
After Sundown on Halloween**



Samhain is a Gaelic festival marking the end of the harvest season and the beginning of winter or the "darker half" of the year. It is celebrated from sunset October 31st - sunset November 1st.

With Halloween parades and carnivals entertaining the masses and Irish children going trick-or-treating with plastic pumpkins you might be excused for thinking that Samhain is dead. But stop ... is this not the night the dead can return? And indeed they do, several customs observed on All Hallows' Eve still have a certain pagan ring to them. Though it has to be said that the fabric of tradition is rapidly wearing thin.

Blessing the House

One of the traditions at this time of rest and renewal was the construction of a humble "parshell (or parshal)", a cross, manufactured of two thin wooden staves, about six to nine inches long. Straw was woven tightly in a square pattern around the crossed staves, leaving an inch or so uncovered at the ends. The finished parshell was then hung above the door inside the house, replacing last years'. The latter was already taken down and placed somewhere else in the house or the barn. Children were additionally blessed by sprinkling them with holy water or placing some burnt wood into their beds.

Bonfires - Fires of Bones

An outdoor activity was the lighting of a bonfire ... literally a "fire of bones", the unused remains of slaughtered animals were disposed of hygienically.

Getting Treats

Traditional festivities also included groups of young men in costume, making an enormous amount of noise and going from door to door asking for contributions to their revels –

"Threatening" the occupants with, often-nonsensical rhymes, they asked for food and drink - which was happily provided. The young men were commonly called "guisers", "vizards" (sic), hugadais or buachaillí tuí. In Kilkenny and other areas a láir bhán ("white mare", a man in a horse costume) led the procession. The carrying of lanterns seems to have been almost universal in contrast - every young man had a carved turnip with a candle, to illuminate the way and to scare onlookers. This might have been the origin of the "Jack O'Lantern".

If you want to make your own, simply get a turnip and treat it as you would a pumpkin. After a few minutes you will, however, notice a certain difference - unless you resort to power tools, carving a lantern from a turnip will take a lot of effort and strength.



JACK O' TURNIP (cousin of Jack O'Lantern)

Other Wanderers in the Night

According to folklore you may encounter other beings out and about as well. Ghosts, ancestors, the pooka ... all held at bay by light. And should the light prove insufficient people made sure to confuse any malevolent "others" by dressing strangely. Bonfires, ghosts, lanterns, undead, costume, and mischievous spirits - all the ingredients of a modern Halloween are there. Mind you - this time was also a favorite for dares. Like placing some money in a bible or hymnal, then leave same on the cemetery and tell everybody that whoever brings the book back during the night may keep the money. Though some played a dirty hand, donning funerary clothing and watching over the money themselves.

Home Sweet Home

But most people stayed at home on All Hallows' Eve anyway. Having a typical Irish Halloween meal or trying to divine the future, Some food is "typical" for an Irish Halloween – Like Colcannon, Boxy, Soul Cakes and Bairin Breac which is a Fruit Bread.

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](#)

Oct. 26th	Pub Supper – Rosie Connolly’s
Oct. 28th	IAS Board Meeting – 7:00 pm O’Toole’s Forest Hill Avenue - MEMBERS WELCOME & PLEASE BRING IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS!
Nov 9th	Tuckahoe Library – Sandy Bergman – Guest Speaker 1:00 – see Newsletter item
Dec 15th	IAS Annual Christmas Party and Irish Silent Auction - 2pm to 6pm
March 15, 2014 Sunday -7pm Box Office: 804-261-ARTS (2787) Monday-Friday 9am-5pm	Celtibillies - Formed in 1994 as a contra-dance band, Celtibillies began exploring the deep-rooted connections between Celtic music and the Appalachian music of their home region of southwest Virginia. Their music expanded beyond dance tunes to include a wide range of traditional Celtic and Appalachian Old-Time music and song as well as original music. Bluegrass Unlimited described their music as, a masterful work of art that transcends all musical genres. Dancers from the Blue Ridge Irish Music School in Charlottesville join in on the fun giving a down-home twist to this St. Patrick’s Day celebration. Artist Video The Cultural Arts Center in Glen Allen http://www.artsglenallen.com/facility-info/directions.php
March 2014	Women of Ireland in Concert at John Paul Jones Arena in Charlottesville. Info coming.

IAS OFFICERS/BOARD MEMBERS & VOLUNTEERS

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Board Member	Bill Riddell	804-262-4226	wjriddell@verizon.net

Hope that we see you all at these upcoming events... most especially the Program on November 9th – a great speaker and a topic of interest to all our Irish members. See ya!