



The Richmond Claddagh

FEBRUARY 2011

<http://richmondias.org/>

The Richmond Irish American Society

[Click for the Calendar of Events](#)

Saturday February 19th IAS Meeting – Mark your calendars for another **Saturday IAS** meeting. IAS Members Mary Smith and John Robison will present “Winter Music – With an Irish Twist”(!) at the Dumbarton Library. You know these folks always have a wonderful show of great traditional Irish and Celtic music for us. The show starts at **1 pm** sharp but come early for a little social time - Guests are always welcome – so spread the word! Show us that you like the occasional Saturday schedule by coming to the meeting! The library is at 6800 Staples Mill Road, Henrico, VA 23228. PH: 804-290-9400 –Here’s the Library website for directions and information. <http://www.henricolibrary.org/Libs/du.html>

Irish Christianity Program offered by University of Richmond – **Tuesday March 1, 2011.** Led by Dr. Ken Ostrand - 6:30- 9p.m. HIS211-21. Cost \$35.00

Before there was Roman Catholic Ireland there was Irish Catholic Ireland! This class explores the birth, life and death of this fascinating Celtic branch of early Christianity! In the beginning there were many varieties of Christianity, with the Irish developing their own liturgy, ritual and saints. Then slowly, the Irish gave way, merging until they became one. How, when, and why it happened is the fascinating journey!

To enroll in this course or to see a complete listing of course offerings go to

<http://scs.richmond.edu/schedules-catalogs/think-again/index.html>

For more information please contact the Program Specialist: Christina S. Draper, 804-289-8937, cdraper@richmond.edu at the University of Richmond, School of Continuing Studies, Special Programs Building, 28 Westhampton Way, University of Richmond, VA 23173

Irish Music Session at Finn McCool’s – IAS Member Bernard Farrell and his musical cohorts bring their Traditional Irish Music Session to Finn McCool’s on the 3rd Saturday of every month. Finn’s is The Shoppes at the Corner of W. Broad and Cox 4028 J Cox Road, Glen Allen, VA 23060. Call Finns at (804) 217-8167 with questions

Irish Language Lessons Available - This email was sent to Dan Begley and concerns the opportunity to learn Irish Gaelic through classes offered locally. I am sorry this notice going out so close to the date of the class – but we just got the notice. If you are interested in the class and wish more information on pricing, materials, etc. – **please contact Mr. Wolf at the email provided.**

Subject: Irish Language Class

Hi Dan,

I finally have concrete plans for a start for the Irish course. If you would, please pass this along to the Irish-American Society folks, and please urge anyone interested to contact me as I'm trying to get a sense of numbers. Thanks! Nick

LEARN THE IRISH (GAELIC) LANGUAGE

This spring, Prof. Nicholas Wolf (VCU) will be offering an informal class once a week teaching the Irish language. The course is intended for beginners with little or no prior knowledge of the language, and will emphasize speaking, writing, and reading. An informational session will take place on **Tuesday, February 8th at 7:30 pm at Dumbarton Library (6800 Staples Mill Road)**, and subsequent class times will be 7:00pm Tuesday nights. Those interested in the class but unable to attend should e-mail Nicholas at nwolf@vcu.edu to be added to an information e-mail list for announcements about times and place. The Irish language, (an Gaeilge), is spoken today as a daily language by 30,000 speakers in Ireland, although it is spoken as a second language with varying proficiency by nearly half the country. There are also a number of speakers of the language worldwide, and Irish is today one of the official languages of the European Union.

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 over twenty years.

WHEW!! Lots of Irish Opportunities are coming our way. Mark your calendars and be sure to take advantage – if you can! And tell your friends – let’s beef up attendance at these events – so that the opportunities keep coming.

June is Just Around The Corner – IAS Elections will be here before you know it. All 4 Officer and two Board Member positions are up this year. Announced candidates for the upcoming election are – Sonya Moore - President, Dan Begley – Vice President, Ann McGehee – Treasurer and Gloria Cahen – Secretary. And for the two Board member positions - Jim Bandeleon, Larry David, Stephen Gallagher and Katherine O’Meara. Our Board strives to come up with programs and activities to keep all interested and active in the Society. It would be most helpful to get some new ideas, new attitudes and new energy! If you aren’t able to serve on the Board – we are still anxious for your input with suggestions, ideas, ‘gentle’ criticisms, etc. When we can get new people involved in the business of the IAS it will ensure that it stays strong and continues to provide a positive image of the Richmond Irish and their contributions to local History & Heritage. If you would like to run for a position – please let me know by **February 28th** – the deadline for being added to the ballot. Call me at 804-323-6415 or email me at bearfan46@verizon.net

And From the IAS Christmas Party Here is The 2010 MVP Award Winner – Dan Begley. Jim Bandeleon (One of our IAS Web Masters and Founder of the MVP Award) is shown presenting the award to Dan. The MVP Award is awarded by our members and is meant to recognize an IAS member, who, during the past year, has worked to promote and support the IAS, its events and programs through exemplary enthusiasm, individual effort and involvement. As Program Chair, Dan has worked hard to provide our members with great monthly programs, but 2010 was an especially banner year with programs including an Irish Harpist and storyteller with fantastic stories of ghosties and goblins of Irish legend, a Genealogy presentation with an Irish air, a program on Celtic Crosses with emphasis on the meaning of their ancient carved symbols, great Irish movies, a presentation on the history of Irish music in America, a Flying Squirrels baseball game outing on Irish Heritage night, and more! We are very lucky to have the opportunity to enjoy these great programs that enhance our knowledge and appreciation of our Irish heritage. Many thanks to Dan for giving us so many opportunities to have fun while we are learning!



“GUINNESS Is Good For You.)

The old advertising slogan “**Guinness Is Good For You!**” is actually true it seems. While the manufacturer, Diaego, makes no health claims for the product, scientific research shows a pint of Guinness a day is actually good for your health. “It cuts cholesterol and acts like aspirin” - say Medical Experts. Indeed it may work as well as a low dose of aspirin to prevent heart attacks. Researchers at the University of Wisconsin made the discovery recently. The Wisconsin scientists gave Guinness to dogs that had narrowed arteries. They found the Guinness worked as well as aspirin in preventing clots forming.

The researchers told a convention of the American Heart Association in Orlando, Florida, that a pint of Guinness taken at mealtime had the best impact. They believe that antioxidant compounds in the Guinness are responsible for the health benefits because they decrease harmful cholesterol gathering on the artery walls.

(From **Irish Central Reader Comments:** Posted by reader zagloba “Good news on the Guinness. One pint per day is wise. I personally am up to **July 19, 2021!**” (Don’t you love the Irish sense of Humor -- He’s kidding – Right?)

ST. PATRICK’S FESTIVAL AND THE IRISH COSTUME CONTEST!!

It’s time to start planning for the St. Patrick’s Parade on historic Church Hill March 26 & 27. Back for the 2nd year, The Irish Costume Contest! Come dressed as your favorite Irish character and win a trophy and other great prizes. The Categories or Irish Characters – Real, Fictional, Mythical or Comedic.



2010 Winners - **Frank Hardy** for Literary Figure – Leopold Bloom protagonist and anti-hero of Ulysses, **Gloria Cahen** for Mythological figure -Green Woman the goddess of Spring & Summer, **Glen Crone** for Comical figure– Leprechaun and **Jack Cassells** for Irish Historical figure - St Patrick, Get working on your costume! Join in the fun!

← (Thanks to Linda Gallagher for the photo of Jim and Dan – couldn’t fit the credit into that column!)

The Irish Making Inroads – I have to admit – I'm not one for Irish Punk Rock, but I love the Subaru commercial on TV with the three obviously Irish (little) boys/hockey players and the background music is "If I Should Fall from Grace with God" by The Pogues. The catchy tune just made me want to know more about the song. But, all that I can find is a reference to Irish fishermen and that according to sailing legend, a man overboard would come to the surface three times before succumbing and drowning. I'll be darned if I can make a connection to three young lads being chauffeured around by their Mom to their hockey games – But the tune grabs me every time I hear it...and as I read over the lyrics... they do a bit of a job on the old heartstrings too...

If I should fall from grace with God
Where no doctor can relieve me
If I'm buried 'neath the sod
But the angels won't receive me

Let me go, boys
Let me go, boys

Let me go down in the mud
Where the rivers all run dry
This land was always ours
Was the proud land of our fathers
It belongs to us and them
Not to any of the others

Let them go, boys
Let them go, boys

Let them go down in the mud
Where the rivers all run dry
Bury me at sea
Where no murdered ghost can haunt me

If I rock upon the waves
Then no corpse can lie upon me
It's coming up three, boys
Keeps coming up three, boys
Let them go down in the mud

Where the rivers all run dry
If I should fall from grace with God
Where no doctor can relieve me
If I'm buried 'neath the sod
But the angels won't receive me

Let me go, boys
Let me go, boys
Let me go down in the mud
Where the rivers all run dry

(<http://www.pogues.com>)

Notable Irish Americans - Irish Graduate of Fordham Leads Hunt for Lincoln Assassin



February 16th marks the death of [General James Rowan O'Beirne](#) (1844-1917), Civil War general and public official. Born in Roscommon, who came to America as a child and graduated from St. John's College (now Fordham University) before the war. During the war he served in the Eastern Theater, winning the Medal of Honor for bravery at the Battle of Fair Oaks in 1862. Severe wounds at Chancellorsville the following years effectively ended his fighting days, and he was made Provost Marshal of Washington, D.C. When President Lincoln was assassinated in April 1865, it was Major O'Beirne who was in charge of pursuing John Wilkes Booth. For his wartime services he was awarded the honorary rank (called a brevet) of Brigadier General. O'Beirne sometimes joked that he missed being in the famous picture of Lincoln's passing, because he was off looking for Vice President Andrew Johnson. After the war he worked for the federal government and was a newspaper editor. A popular speaker on Catholic participation in the Civil War, he died at his home on West 117th Street in Harlem and was buried out of St. Thomas the Apostle Church.

Tuck This Little Tidbit Away for When You Make That Trip To Ireland - The Lonely Planet Guide online has named [The Harbour Bar](#) in Bray, Co. Wicklow, as the overall best bar in the entire world. The Harbor has an interesting history and a website with fun photos of the place and the customers to enjoy. <http://www.harbourbarbray.com/>

ATTN – All you Lovers of the Printed Word. Would you love to buy books that might only be available in Ireland – and you can't make the trip right now??? Well, not to worry! [Kenny's Bookshop in Galway](#) has announced plans to take on Amazon.com and the store now stocks more than five million titles and provides free shipping worldwide. Visit them online and see if they have what you're looking for! <http://www.kennys.ie/>

THE Great Irish Frost of 1740

The record-breaking cold snap that brought Ireland to its knees this past December was little to compare with the Great Irish Frost of 1740 that killed more than a third of the population.

Between 310,000 and 480,000 people out of a population of 2.4 million are believed to have died during the Great Frost that swept across Ireland between 1739 and 1741, according to a new book called 'Arctic Ireland'. By Trinity College history professor David Dickson, the book explores the causes of the calamity. Mr. Dickson said the frost "remains to this day the longest period of extreme cold in modern European history", and its causes remain unknown. But it wreaked utter devastation across Ireland leading to food riots, famine, epidemic and death.

In an eerie similarity to the eruption of the Eyjafjallajökull volcano in Iceland last April; the Great Frost of 1740 is believed to have been precipitated by volcanic eruptions on the Kamchatka peninsula in Russia that sent thousands of tons of dust into the upper atmosphere.

While much of the country has coped with weeks of unseasonably cold temperatures, snow and ice this winter, our forebears endured "21 months of bizarre weather" that was "without known precedent and defied conventional explanation," according to the book. And there was no let-up for almost two years in which extremely cold and bitter wind, freezing temperatures and drought were regular features.

The Great Frost began shortly after Christmas on December 29, 1739, and "introduced a cold so penetrating that liquids froze indoors and ice floes appeared at the river mouths".

Ice

Three ships sank in Dublin Bay, drowning all on board while the body of one of the crew members was found washed up on Merrion Strand covered with ice. But unlike our wintry conditions this year, there was hardly any snow due to a vast high-pressure system affecting most of northern Europe.

Such was the cold that the rivers Liffey, Slaney, Boyne and parts of the Shannon froze over within days as well as Loughs Cong and Neagh. Huge numbers of frozen fish were found along the shores of Strangford Lough and Lough Neagh.

Coal could no longer be brought in from across the Irish Sea due to ice-bound quays and frozen coal yards causing coal prices to soar. As a result "hedges, fine trees, and nurseries around Dublin were stripped bare as desperate people searched for substitute fuel," Mr. Dickson wrote.

"The frost also plunged the streets of Dublin into darkness at night, for not only were there problems in milling the rapeseed plant to make the customary lamp oil, but even fully serviced lamps were being snuffed out by the intense cold," according to the book, published by White Row Press. Things took a turn for the worse when the frost virtually wiped out the potato crop the following spring.

Drought

As if that wasn't bad enough, widespread drought coupled with unseasonably low temperatures and bitter northerly winds killed off sheep and cattle as well as crops of wheat and barley.

At the port of Drogheda, locals ransacked a grain ship bound for Scotland while in Cork city a full-scale food riot erupted aimed at grain wholesalers planning to ship their wares outside of Ireland.

And just when things couldn't get worse, blizzards hit the east coast in late October 1740, followed by widespread flooding in December and a mixture of snow and thaw leading to mini-icebergs careening down the Liffey.

Climate change expert Prof John Sweeney of the Irish Climate Analysis Research Unit (ICARUS) at Maynooth University said the cause of the catastrophic winter of 1740-41, often referred to as the mini Ice Age, remains a mystery. A change in solar or volcanic activity is one possible theory, he said.

"But certainly extreme winters are part and parcel of history. Now and again we'll get the odd extreme event like the current cold snap," he said. (By Allison Bray December 30 2010 <http://www.independent.ie/>)

Many thanks go out to Jim Bandeleian for the note about this little known but terrible period in our Irish History and Heritage. Not as well well-known as the Great Famine – but every bit as devastatingly tragic



(Winter In Ireland. Nellie Vin. Fine Art.)

And then there is this item from the Seattle Irish Club's newsletter -There is a shortage of **Uilleann Pipe** makers in Ireland, with fewer than 20 left. The Uilleann pipes have a different harmonic structure, sounding sweeter and quieter than many other bagpipes, such as the [Great Irish Warpipes](#), and are almost always played sitting down

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>February 19th – SAT. Starts at 1:00 Monthly Meeting</p>	<p>“Winter Music with an Irish Twist!” IAS Members Mary Smith and John Robison will bring their considerable talent for Irish and Celtic Music to the Dumbarton Library at 6800 Staples Mill Road, Henrico, VA 23228. PH: 804-290-9400 –Here’s the Library website for directions and information. http://www.henricolibrary.org/Libs/du.html Guests are welcome.</p>
<p>Feb 25th & 26th Williamsburg Library Coyote Run – Concert \$15</p>	<p>Coyote Run - The Thinking Person's Celtic Rock Band - A powerful and compelling blend of Celtic legend, literature and song. "Coyote Run is one of the hottest bands on the Celtic music circuit today" 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 as they return home to the Williamsburg Library. 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!- http://www.coyoterun.com/</p>
<p>March 1st 6:30 – 9 pm “Irish Christianity” (HIS211-21) Program at University of Richmond. Dr. Ken Ostrand - Cost - \$35.00</p>	<p><u>Irish Christianity</u> -. Before there was Roman Catholic Ireland there was Irish Catholic Ireland! This class explores the birth, life and death of this fascinating Celtic branch of early Christianity! In the beginning there were many varieties of Christianity, with the Irish developing their own liturgy, ritual and saints. Then slowly, the Irish gave way, merging until they became one. How, when, and why it happened is the fascinating journey! To enroll in this course or to see a complete listing of course offerings go to: http://scs.richmond.edu/schedules-catalogs/think-again/index.html For more information please contact the Program Specialist: Christina S. Draper, 804-289-8937, cdraper@richmond.edu at the University of Richmond, School of Continuing Studies Special Programs Building, 28 Westhampton Way, University of Richmond, VA 23173</p>
<p>March 1st – THE IRISH ROVERS March 1st – 7:30 pm Newport News</p>	<p>For more than four decades, The Irish Rovers have charmed and entertained audiences around the world with their exciting stage shows. These international ambassadors of Irish music have maintained their timeless ability to deliver a rollicking, rousing performance of good cheer— one that will soon have you singing and clapping along. Like the Unicorn, the Rovers are legendary and magical, and a good time is guaranteed for all. Christopher Newport University's Ferguson Center for the Arts - 1 University Place Newport News, Virginia 23606 Christopher Newport University's Ferguson Center for the Arts1 University Place Newport News, Virginia 23606 http://fergusoncenter.cnu.edu/visitors.htm (Click for directions) TICKET PRICES: VIP \$44 / \$39 / \$34 / \$29</p>
<p>March 2, 2011 – 7 pm Williamsburg Library Celtic Film Series Free Admission</p>	<p><u>Boxed (2002, not rated)</u> Williamsburg Library Theatre, 515 Scotland Street This powerful drama set in Northern Ireland centers on a young Catholic priest fresh from seminary, full of idealistic beliefs and faith. He is mistakenly taken to an isolated house where an IRA group is holding a suspected informer awaiting execution. The priest is expected to hear the informer's last confession but refuses to go along with this and locks himself in a room with the victim, threatening to expose the IRA members. The terrorists are now faced with the possibility of having to kill a priest, a decision none of them can make.</p>
<p>March 4 2011 Cultural Arts Center Glen Allen VA</p>	<p>“Celtic Night!” 2nd Stage - An Evening of Celtic Music Featuring John Turner, Scottish Fiddler and Friends. 10-time winner of US National Scottish Fiddling Championship. Food and beverage available for sale. General admission seating. Time: 7pm Admission: \$10 advance; \$12 door Box Office: 804-261-ARTS (2787) or online at www.artsglenallen.com</p>
<p>March 26 & 27 St. Patrick’s Festival on Historic Church Hill in Richmond,</p>	<p>The Annual Irish Festival, with the Kick off event – The IAS sponsored parade on Saturday morning –step-off at 10am. 2nd Annual Irish Costume Contest. All members are encouraged to join in the fun by participating in the contest. Come in costume as your favorite Irish character in one of the categories – Historical, Mythical, Literary or Comedic. Trophies and Prizes for category. Volunteers are also needed to help man the IAS Tent for the festival. Please call Karen Bell at 804-982-7835</p>

<p>March 29th 7:30 Celtic Woman Landmark Theater Richmond</p>	<p>“Celtic Woman – Songs from the Heart” from spirited Celtic fiddle and Bodhrán pieces to lush arrangements of Irish classics & contemporary favorites and original compositions Celtic Woman brings their Celtic magic to Richmond’s Landmark Theater 6 N Laurel St, Richmond, VA 23220 Directions - Parking 877-686-5366 with questions.</p>
<p>April 6, 2011 – 7 pm Williamsburg Library Celtic Film Series FREE</p>	<p>Black Irish (2007, rated R) Williamsburg Library Theatre, 515 Scotland Street. In South Boston, where Irish roots run deep and Catholic tradition reigns, two brothers face similar hardships but lead far different lives. While older brother Terry descends into drugs and crime, 16-year-old Cole vies to make the state baseball championships - but must struggle to withstand his brother's destructive influence. When the two inevitably clash in a life-and-death confrontation, family ties-and futures-are at stake.</p>
<p>May 4, 2011 – 7 pm Williamsburg Library Celtic Film Series FREE</p>	<p>A Love Divided (1999, not rated) Williamsburg Library Theatre, 515 Scotland Street Based on a true story this is the moving and dramatic love story of a marriage between a Catholic and a Protestant in 1950s Ireland.</p>
<p>May 21, 2011 Richmond Folk Music Congregation Or Ami 9400 Huguenot Road Richmond, VA Tickets \$12 \$15 804-647-7856</p>	<p>The Living Tradition – Tom Martin and Mary Smith – Tom originally from Belfast Ireland - draws his inspiration not only from his Celtic roots, but from traditional American folk, country blues, and the song poets of the sixties - Visit Tom's website at http://www.tommartinmusic.com/ Our own IAS member, Mary Smith has performed and researched the traditional ballads of Britain, Ireland and America for many years. She is a popular performer at festivals, coffeeshouses and concert venues in Virginia and Washington, DC, and has toured in the UK as well. She also gives educational presentations and workshops on traditional ballads. Visit Mary's website at www.maryfsmith.com. Together they will present a program of traditional songs and ballads, along with some of Tom's original compositions - showing how traditional music has come full circle and is being integrated and adapted to reflect an ever-changing global village.</p>
<p>June 1, 2011 – 7pm Williamsburg Library FREE Celtic Film Series</p>	<p>Bloom (2004, rated R) Williamsburg Library Theatre, 515 Scotland Street On the morning of the 16th June, 1904, Leopold Bloom (Stephen Rea) set out on a journey that was to become one of the greatest tales of the 20th century.</p>

Note - Requests to be added as a Candidate - to the Election Ballot must be received by February 28th by calling or emailing Nancy Emig. Elections Ballots will be sent to every member this year via email and hard copy if no email is available. All ballots must be turned in by May 21st to be included in the final tally election tally. Election results will be announced at the Picnic.

IAS OFFICERS & BOARD

President	Gloria Cahen	804-233-2113	
Vice-President/ Programs	Dan Begley	804-740-5631	begley55@hotmail.com
Secretary	Stephen Gallagher	804-639-1044	stephen.g1@verizon.net
Treasurer	Ann McGehee	540-894-7284	anniev67@juno.com
Board Member	Denis Maguire	804-739-0429	maguired@comcast.net
Special Events	Karon Bell	804-982-7835	
Email & Newsletter	Nancy Emig	804-323-6415	bearfan46@verizon.net
Pub Master	Joan Finnegan	804-840-0080	jfinn@hotmail.com
Board Member	Larry David	804-349-2091	dav15@co.henrico.va.us
Board Member	Frank Hardy	804-883-6230	fenway7@msn.com
Board Member	Kathryn O’Meara	804-745-1903	Mungojerrie23@aol.com
Webmaster	Jim Bandeleian	804-347-0924	jbandeleian@gmail.com
Webmaster	Doug Elder	804-365-7948	elderclann@yahoo.com