



The Richmond Claddagh <http://richmondias.org/> Newsletter of the Greater Richmond Irish American Society

April 2010

IAS April 22nd Meeting –7pm Dumbarton Library 6800 Staples Mill Road The Library of Virginia's, Dr. Gregg Kimball gives the second installment of his tribute to Irish musical masters who crossed the pond and recorded in America during the first heyday of commercial recording with his program, "Irish Music Starts in America". He'll play samples of early performances of Irish immigrants performing traditional tunes including Sligo fiddler Michael Coleman and New York Patrolman Frank Quinn, a native of County Longford. The great Irish American dance bands will also be featured, including Dan Sullivan's Shamrock Band and O'Leary's Irish Minstrels, both based in Boston's vibrant Irish community. Kimball brings his turntable ready to spin original 78-rpm shellac discs from his extensive collection. We're hoping to see Irish masters caught on film, including legendary singer John McCormack.. This program is so much fun - join us for a trip down Memory Lane (some of us for the first time!) and remember our Hospitality Ladies always enjoy extra goodies if you are so inclined as to share.

IAS PUB SUPPER – APRIL 24TH - Pub Master - Joan Finnegan has another fun Pub Supper planned for the IAS. It's coming up on Saturday, April 24th at Finn McCool's located in the Shoppes at Innsbrook at the corner of West Broad and Cox Road -804-217-8167. <http://www.finnmccoolsrichmond.com/> check out the website for the menu and directions. We'll meet at 6:30 – or earlier if you are hungry and thirsty! (Just save a seat for me!) Finn's is offering an IAS special - \$1.00 off Guinness, Harp, and Smithwick's. Also for every 5 people in our group that show up – Finn's will offer a free appetizer – 10 people show – 2 appetizers, 50 show – 10 appetizers! For an added treat - IAS Member Bernard Farrell has one of those fine Irish music sessions featuring Bernard and other local Irish musicians – the music generally starts around 8'ish, so if you can't join us for supper – come later for a pint and some tunes! Finn's has good food, and it's great that they're starting to feature Irish entertainment - long may it continue! Let's give some support to them & help spread the word that the Irish are alive, well and very active in Richmond!

Call Joan at **804-840-0080** or send her an email at jfinn@hotmail.com - to let her know how many will attend so she can advise Finn's – We want them ready for us!!

Ettrick Historical Society's Tenth Annual Celtic Festival – April 24th 10 am to 5 pm – Admission Fee - \$1.00 per car, The family oriented event is held on the grounds of Knox Springs Farm, located at 21100 Halloway Avenue, Mataoca, VA 23803. . Participants include: St. Andrews Legion Pipes and Drums, vintage cars and trucks, Native Americans, Civil War and WWII re-enactors, civic groups, historical displays. Piping performances and other musical entertainment throughout the day and merchandise and food vendors.

The St. Patrick's Festival – Word is that it was a resounding success all around. The IAS Irish Costume Contest was great fun. Winners were: **Frank Hardy** for Literary Figure – Leopold Bloom protagonist and anti-hero of Ulysses. **Jack Cassells** for Irish Historical figure - St Patrick, **Gloria Cahen** for Mythological figure -Green Woman and **Glen Crone** for Comical figure– Leprechaun.

You can use this link to see the winners of the IAS Irish Costume Contest! Great Job everyone!

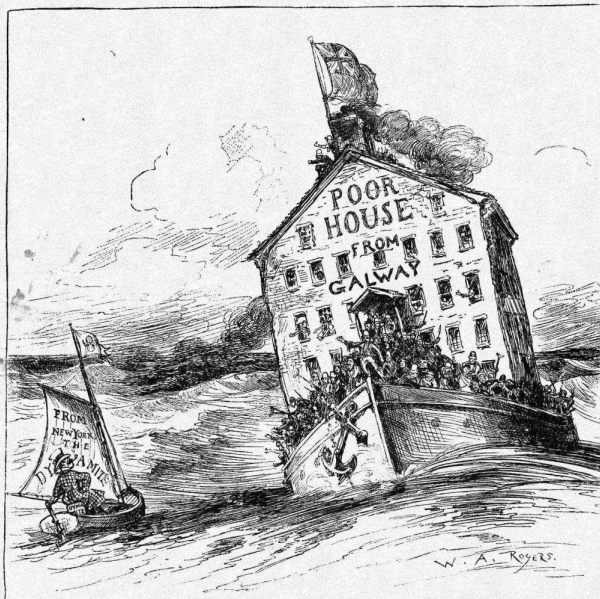
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And Speaking of the Irish Festival – I have two notes to all who helped out at the festival. **From Karon Bell** – “Thank you to everyone who helped with setting up, working in the booth on Saturday and Sunday and helping with the take down on Sunday night. And a special “Thanks ” to Karen Ide for her donation of 4 new Irish tablecloths which we used for the Festival.”

From Jim Bandlelean- “A big Thanks to the folks who came on Friday night to help put up the tent and displays. Also thanks to those who helped with the take down on Sunday after the festival. Of all the years that we have all worked --- in all kinds of weather – to set up our IAS displays – this year was the smoothest and best operation so far. It makes the festival even better and more enjoyable when so many offer and come to help.

A note to All Members – Karon Bell is looking for 3-6 folding chairs to replace the six non-folding and bulky chairs that we use now in the tent. We can swap out the old ones if you need or want them. Folding chairs would be a great help in transporting! Please call Karon at 804-308-3709 if you have some chairs you'd like to donate or swap.

What our Ancestors Would Have Seen. On April 28, 1883- Harper's Weekly featured a political cartoon by William Allen Rogers about the immigration of destitute Irish to the United States.



THE BALANCE OF TRADE WITH GREAT BRITAIN SEEMS TO BE STILL AGAINST US.
650 Paupers arrived at Boston in the Steamship *Nestoria*, April 15th, from Galway, Ireland, shipped by the British Government.

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(The Print at the Bottom of the Cartoon)

The Balance of Trade with Great Britain Seems to Be Still Against Us. 650 Paupers arrived at Boston in the Steamship *Nestoria*, April 15th, from Galway, Ireland, Shipped by the British Government.

Cartoonist W. A. Rogers uses the language of debates in the early 1880s over tariff policy and "the balance of trade with Great Britain" as a vehicle to criticize the British government's policy of paying for the transport of impoverished Irish to the United States.

The Irish have been one of the largest immigrant groups in American history, with Americans of Irish descent constituting today 10 times the population of Ireland. During the potato famine years of the 1840s, the Irish were by far the most numerous immigrant class arriving in the United States. Although the stream of emigration continued to flow from Ireland in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, from 1871 to 1880, the Irish totals dropped to third place with 436,871, just behind the English (the "silent" immigrants of the period) and almost 300,000 below the number of Germans.

The Irish moved to the United States for a variety of reasons, but economic and political factors were especially important in the 1870s and 1880s. It was a period of poor harvests and famines in Ireland, which hit the western and southwestern regions particularly hard.

The floating poorhouse in this cartoon is from Galway in western Ireland. It was also a time of the political unrest of the Land War of 1879-1882 that was fought over the eviction of tenant farmers.

Shortly after this cartoon appeared, *Harper's Weekly* reported (May 12) that the steamship *Catalonia* arrived in Boston Harbor bearing 1200 Irish paupers "sent at the expense of the British government." The newspaper complained that they were without money, and that most would be on the dole at least temporarily. The news item unfavorably contrasted the open-door policy toward the destitute Irish with the closed-door policy that Congress implemented against the industrious and law-abiding Chinese immigrants under the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882.

Harper's Weekly was also concerned about the Irish support of political violence against the British. Over the years, Irish-Americans had supported a variety of political organizations that agitated for Irish home rule or independence. Leaders in America were divided over methods and goals, but there was a faction that condoned violence. In the early 1880s, some Irish arrested by the British as dynamiters claimed American citizenship, which provoked tensions in diplomatic relations between Great Britain and the United States (In the cartoon, the poorhouse ship is met by a New York political hack in a boat called "The Dynamite.")

In the same issue as this cartoon (April 28), an editorial urged the Irish-American National Convention meeting in Philadelphia to denounce "unequivocally and completely ... all sympathy with murder as a means of [political] agitation. Particularly at issue was the assassination on May 6, 1882, of Britain's chief secretary of Ireland, Lord Frederick Cavendish, and his under secretary, T. H. Burke, in Dublin's Phoenix Park. Editor George William Curtis contended that other Americans would be receptive to constitutional change for more just and equitable laws in Ireland, home rule, or even independence, if only terrorism were rejected. The next week, Curtis expressed disappointment in the convention's resolution that blamed the British government as the source of violence, without condemning the "Phoenix Park murders" explicitly. (Robert C. Kennedy)

Even in our sleep
Pain, which cannot forget
Falls drop by drop upon the heart,
Until in our own despair, against our will,
Comes wisdom through the awful grace of God.
(Aeschylus)

(Words of the Greek dramatist, but they could
Be etched in stone about the history of Ireland)

We think this regional project, spearheaded by our IAS friend Kevin Donleavy from Charlottesville, will be of interest to our IAS members:

The O'Neill-Malcom Branch is pleased to announce our support and cooperation with Project spearheaded by former Branch officer, Kevin Donleavy. Watch for details about a visit to the site.

Clann Mhór is documenting the many workers who labored for ten years on the thirty mile long Blue Ridge Railroad from Ivy to Staunton, Virginia.

They have records of more than 1,400 Irish workers and their families and more than 50 African American slaves and hope to trace the family history of some of the Irish families. They are also looking for information about enslaved workers and the slaveholders who pocketed their salaries.

They know from 1850s accounts that workers lived in shanties along both sides of the track. Their goal is to locate the stone foundations of shanty housing and invite an historical archaeologist to conduct a dig. Surviving material culture will help better understand the everyday lives of these heroic yet forgotten workers.

(Kevin's notes: - Here is the link to our Irish research project, which focuses on the workers who dug and blasted the railway tunnels and tracks through the Blue Ridge Mountains, 1849-1859. For further details, please email me at kdonleavy@embarqmail.com.

You can also subscribe to news feeds on the project: Type/paste the following into your browser search box: www.clannmhor.blogspot.com)

Clann Mhór The Blue Ridge Railroad Project

In Gaelic **Clann Mhór** means Great Family and the name refers to all people— Irish workers, their families, and enslaved African Americans—who labored one way or another on construction of the Blue Ridge Railroad and its four tunnels from 1849 through 1859. The longest of these is the Blue Ridge Tunnel on Afton Mountain, Virginia.

At 4,263 feet, the Blue Ridge Tunnel was the longest in the United States at the time and some say the longest in the world. It is a National Historic Civil Engineering Landmark. The tunnel is located under the junction of the Blue Ridge Parkway and Skyline Drive at Rockfish Gap, Virginia. Thomas Jefferson, James Monroe, and James Madison once stood on this spot to choose the site for the University of Virginia.

But the real story of the Blue Ridge Railroad concerns the many hundreds of workers who drilled and blasted through tons of rock to build the tunnels and connecting tracks. Thousands of people died building railroads in America. With all honor to them, we believe that the Blue Ridge Railroad is exceptional for the following reasons –

Construction:

The magnificent setting of the Blue Ridge Railroad made construction far more difficult than other railroad projects on the eastern seaboard. The tunnels were built without shafts or dynamite. The men literally hand-drilled and hand-blasted their way with black powder through granite for ten years.

Sometimes work crews made only a few feet of progress per month. In scope and scale, the Blue Ridge Railroad and its four tunnels exceeded other 1850s projects such as the Kingwood, Board Tree, and Hoosac railroad tunnels.

Mortality:

Workers on the Blue Ridge railroad labored for three shifts a day, six days a week. Overseers, contractors, and Claudius Crozet, the chief engineer, controlled the work schedule for slaves. These captive laborers rested only when permitted. The Irish took time off only for funerals—to the chagrin of Crozet, who complained in a letter that Irish hands refused to work for two days after a “mere child,” as he put it, died.

At least two Albemarle County slaves and scores of Irish, including children, perished in horrifically dangerous conditions on the railroad. Apparently no slaves died from cholera, but at least thirty-three Irish died during an 1854 epidemic. One intriguing question concerns the whereabouts of the cholera victims. Seventeen are buried at Thornrose Cemetery in Staunton, Virginia. Where are the others?

Community:

As far as we know, no one in the academic community has analyzed the material culture of a southern Irish immigrant community. Historical archaeologists have focused instead on dense Irish immigrant populations north of Virginia. These groups had access to numerous Catholic churches that fostered a sense of community.

Staunton's Catholic Church was completed in 1851, two years after the first tunnel workers arrived. Unlike Irish in the north, Catholics working on the Blue Ridge Railroad were unable to join a large community of fellow immigrants. Whereas Protestant Irish immigrants working on the railroad could attend one of the many Presbyterian churches that Scots-Irish had already established in the area, Catholic immigrants had only one priest for their religious needs. He was a circuit-rider priest and responsible for congregations in Staunton, Charlottesville, Lynchburg, and Harrisonburg. The construction of a plank chapel on Afton Mountain is a testimony to the isolation of the Irish Catholic workers and their families.

Clann Mhór - Economy:

Clann Mhór—our Great Family of slaves and Irish wage slaves—gave their lives so that the Commonwealth could establish a trade route through

the Valley of Virginia to the Ohio River and beyond. Before construction of the railroad, merchants paid \$1.10 to ship a barrel of flour from Richmond to Staunton on the Scottsville, James River, and Kanawha Canal route. After laborers completed the tracks, the same barrel shipped for \$.80 and arrived two days earlier.

The Blue Ridge Railroad also led to booming business at resorts in the Great Valley. Virginians who flocked to the cool breezes and healing springs west of Rockfish Gap represented 40% of passenger traffic. This means that our exploited group of laborers literally died so that Tidewater and Piedmont planters could take vacations.

The luxurious Greenbriar Resort was a favorite destination. Although the Greenbriar is a National Historic Landmark, railroad workers who made holiday excursions possible lack even a National Historic Register roadside marker.



The Elections Are Coming! The Elections are Coming! No – not those elections – the Officer Elections for the Irish American Society. Elections will be at the June IAS picnic. Our IAS Secretary Steve Gallagher is at the ready to handle all the requests from our members that want to stand up and be counted – by volunteering to run for one of the Board positions. Think about adding your name to the mix. New Blood is always good for any organization. We need new ideas, new attitudes and maybe you have them! Karon Bell, Joan Finnegan, Nancy Emig, Frank Hardy and Denis Maguire are on the list so far. Call Steve at 804-639-1055 and get your name added too! It's not hard work, but you'll be helping our your IAS.

May 31st Memorial Day –IAS members Larry David, Steve Gallagher and Dan Begley will participate in the Memorial Day Services at the VA War Memorial by presenting a wreath in memory of and honor to all Irish veterans on May 31, 2010. The Service is from 10 to 11 am at the Virginia War Memorial at 621 South Belvidere St ([map](#)). This event is family friendly and free.

Children's Name Patterns: Irish Customs and Traditions: One interesting aspect about Irish children's first names, is this name pattern tradition that a large number of Irish families followed in the 1800's and 1900's:

1st daughter named after the mother's mother

2nd daughter after the father's mother

3rd daughter after the mother

4th daughter after the mother's eldest sister

1st son was named after the father's father

2nd son after the mother's father

3rd son after the father

4th son after the father's eldest brother

While not a hard and fast rule, this tradition is seen in numerous Irish family document records from 1850 through 1920 according to information found at - <http://www.goballycastle.com/blog/index.php>

Welcome to the Irish Family History Foundation Online Genealogy Databases for Ireland

This site is part of the Irish Genealogical Online Record Search System (ORS), an all Ireland initiative organized by [the Irish Family History Foundation - website: http://www.irish-roots.ie/](http://www.irish-roots.ie/)

The Irish Family History Foundation is the coordinating body for a network of government approved genealogical research centres in the Republic of Ireland (Eire) and in Northern Ireland which have computerized almost 40 million Irish Ancestral records, primarily Church births (baptisms), marriages and deaths. It appears that much information is available with no charge, but more detailed searches might have an associated fee. This site contains the largest collection of Parish records for the island of Ireland that are searchable online. Search for your ancestor across [all counties and research centres](#) or [select a particular centre from the map](#)

Hmmmmm - - It seems there was this guy named "MacMurphy" - who was 1/2 Irish & 1/2 Scottish. The downside - he wanted a drink... but he couldn't bring himself to buy one.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS – When shown, Click on links in calendar to 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](#)

IAS Monthly Meeting April 22nd – 7:00 pm Irish Music Stars in America Dumbarton Library, 6800 Staples Mill Road, (23228) For More Information – Call 804-262-6507.	The Library of Virginia’s Gregg Kimball gives the second installment of his tribute to Irish musical masters who crossed the pond and recorded in America during the first heyday of commercial recording. He will sample early performances of Irish immigrants performing traditional tunes including Sligo fiddler Michael Coleman and New York Patrolman Frank Quinn, a native of County Longford. The great American dance bands will also be featured, including Dan Sullivan’s Shamrock Band and O’Leary’s Irish Minstrels, both based in Boston’s vibrant Irish community. Kimball will return with his turntable in tow ready to spin original 78-rpm shellac discs from his extensive collection. Also sample a few Irish masters caught on film, including legendary singer John McCormack of Athlone.
IAS Pub Supper April 24th Finn McCool’s The Shoppes at Innsbrook Corner W. Broad & Cox Road 804-217-8167	Pub Master - Joan Finnegan has another fun Pub Supper planned for the IAS. It’s coming up on Saturday, April 24 th at Finn McCool's http://www.finnmccoolsrichmond.com/ We’ll meet at 6:30 – or earlier if you are hungry and thirsty or later if you choose! Finn’s is offering an IAS special - \$1.00 off Guinness, Harp, and Smithwick’s. Also for every 5 people in our group that show up – Finn’s will offer a free appetizer – 10 people show – 2 appetizers and so on! For an added treat - IAS Member Bernard Farrell has one of those fine Irish music session featuring Bernard and other local Irish musicians. Finn’s is a nice little pub with good food, and it's great that they're starting to feature Irish entertainment - long may it continue – and let’s give some support to spread the Irish!
April 24th Ettrick, VA Historical Society’s 10th Annual Celtic Festival Mataoca VA \$1.00 fee per car.	April 24 th 10 am to 5 pm – Admission Fee - \$1.00 per car, The family oriented event is held on the grounds of Knox Springs Farm, located at 21100 Halloway Avenue, Mataoca, VA 23803. . Participants include: St. Andrews Legion Pipes and Drums, vintage cars and trucks, Native Americans, Civil War and WWII re-enactors, civic groups, historical displays. Piping performances and other musical entertainment throughout the day and merchandise and food vendors
May 5th Wed. 7pm Williamsburg Library Celtic Film Festival Free Directions	The Brylcreem Boys May 5 th Wed. 7pm Williamsburg Library Celtic Film Festival - Free (Click on the link for a preview) A portrayal of life in a World War II POW camp holding both British and German prisoners in 1941 neutral Ireland. In an effort to remain neutral, Ireland made a deal to intern any soldier, German or Allied, captured on Irish soil. During a dogfight, Allied pilot Miles Keogh, and German pilot Rudolph von Stegenbek shoot each other down and are captured. The camp commandant tries to keep the peace between these sworn enemies. But, when both men fall in love with Mattie, their hatred becomes person Stars Gabriel Byrne and Bill Campbell.(1998, rated PG)
Patrick O’Flaherty Friday May 21st Time: 6:00 – 7:30 pm Library of Virginia Lecture Hall Parking and Directions Phone 804-692-3500	<u>Ireland Meets Appalachia: A Conversation in Music</u> - Three musicians—Mary Dailey and Jimmy Costa from Appalachia and Patrick O’Flaherty, a native Gaelic speaker from the west coast of Ireland—discuss and demonstrate through songs and tunes the common threads that run through the vocal and instrumental music of Ireland and Appalachia. The speakers will explore how the traditions evolved, and the similarities and differences they found when they began performing together. O’Flaherty will also discuss his immigration experience and involvement with Appalachian musical culture. The panel discussion Moderator is Gregg Kimball, director of Education and Outreach at the Library of Virginia.
Patrick O’Flaherty “Paddy in the Holler” Ireland Meets Appalachia May 22, 2010 Richmond Folk Music Tickets - \$12/advance - \$15/door	Patrick O’Flaherty, Jim Costa and Mary Dailey - three experienced solo musicians who met at Patrick's pub in Lewisburg, West Virginia (The Irish Pub on Washington Street) in 2007 during a Sunday evening session/jam. They soon discovered a shared love of the traditional music of Ireland and Appalachia, and shortly began performing. Concert held at Congregation Or Ami, 9100 West Huguenot Road, Richmond, 23235 For directions - Richmond Folk Music

<p>May 27th IAS Meeting Midlothian Library Irish Movie Night - Movie will start at 7pm</p> <p>“OMAGH”</p>	<p>“Omagh” examines the events and aftermath of August 15th 1998, when a Real IRA bomb claimed 31 lives. It tells the story of the Omagh Support and Self Help Group as they strive to find the truth of what happened that day. At the heart of the film is the story of Michael Gallagher, who lost his 21-year-old son Aiden in the explosion, and who has become a key spokesman and lobbyist for the Support Group.' I would like to think “Omagh” shows that in the midst of evil and wickedness, ordinary people from a wide variety of backgrounds have come together in the fight for truth and justice. I hope this film will help bring our struggle to a wider audience who will get the message that hope comes out of despair,' says Michael Gallagher.</p>
<p>June 2nd Wed. 7pm Williamsburg Library Celtic Film Festival Free - Directions</p>	<p>Closing The Ring June 2nd Wed. 7 pm - Williamsburg Library Celtic Film Festival Free - Directions (Click the link for a preview) In 1943, a dying gunner in an American B-17 gives a ring to a local to return to his girlfriend in the U.S. Fifty years later, a man finds the ring and tracks down the girlfriend and the history of this ring. Stars Shirley MacLaine and Christopher Plummer. (2007, rated R)</p>
<p>Sunday June 6th IAS Picnic Starts at 1:00 Burkes' farm in Amelia</p>	<p><u>IAS Picnic</u> - A day of fun for all IAS members – all ages! The fun and feasting are at Pat and Helen Warriner Burke's farm in Amelia. Burgers, hot dogs and condiments are provided, <u>but you are asked to please bring a side dish or dessert to share, beverages for you and yours, and lawn chairs.</u> If you are a new member, this is a wonderful way to get to know the other members, and it's a beautiful country setting and always one of our big turnout events. More information in the May newsletter.</p>
<p>June 7th 4th Annual Memorial – Rare Olde Times Golf Classic</p>	<p>In memory of John R. Riley, Sr. -12:30 Shotgun start, 4-person Team Scramble, \$80 per player, \$320 per team. Beverages and snacks will be provided. Call Rare Olde Times for entry information Rare Olde Times is located at 10608 Patterson Ave., Richmond, Virginia 23238. Call 804-750-1346 for directions, reservations or to register for the Classic</p>
<p>June 12 & June 13th</p> <p>Potomac Celtic Festival Visit the website for more details</p>	<p>Potomac Celtic Festival Visit the website for more details Morven Park International Equestrian Center, 41793 Tutt Lane, Leesburg, VA 20176 - The 2010 festival will include continual music and dance from many of your Celtic favorites, juried crafters and specialty import vendors, 2000 years of Living History reenactments, bagpipers, storytelling in the grove, workshops, children's activities and crafts, Highland games athletic demonstrations, food and drink, pub tent, and family-fun. http://www.potomaccelticfest.org/default.html</p>

A PATH I'D LOVE TO BE WANDERING DOWN



RIGHT NOW