



# The Richmond Claddagh

<http://richmondias.org/>

Newsletter of the Greater Richmond Irish American Society

October 2007

**The IAS Newsletter.** After a lot of work – Jim Bandeleian has been able to make our IAS newsletter available on line. It is available to all and can be easily accessed by logging on to our website, at

<http://richmondias.org/>

and then clicking on the Newsletter link that is along the side of the page. Where indicated, enter the user name and password to pull up the newsletter style of your choice – either the Word document or the PDF format. The current log on information is:

Please contact Nancy Emig at 804-323-6415 or [bearfan46@verizon.net](mailto:bearfan46@verizon.net) if you have any problems retrieving the newsletter on site.

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**YIKES!** Have you looked at the List of Upcoming events both in the Newsletter and at the IAS website <http://richmondias.org/index.php?content=upcoming?>

There are so many events that I had to move the newsletter calendar to the last page. Honestly, I shall have to thrash about the head and shoulders if I hear someone say, “There’s never any thing Irish to do in Richmond!” Events are so plentiful in the upcoming months - You’d better get some extra strength vitamins!

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**Something New Is Coming** – To honor an idea of our late President, Chris Garrett, the IAS Board has voted to initiate the annual presentation of an MVP Award. This award is to recognize an IAS member for outstanding individual efforts to both promote and support the Irish American Society and its activities and endeavors through volunteerism, enthusiasm, and involvement. The winner of this award will be selected by your votes – the votes of all active IAS members. The Awards Committee, consisting of Larry David, Jim Bandeleian and Pam Hardy will receive all nominations and tally all votes. The presentation will be made at the Christmas Party. Votes must be received **NO LATER THAN November 15th** Please contact either of the three Committee members with your selection for the member that you feel meets the spirit of the award. Call or email: ( I think you can click on their email address to send a note -

Larry David - [davidl@rbha.org](mailto:davidl@rbha.org)

Jim Bandeleian [jbandeleian@gmail.com](mailto:jbandeleian@gmail.com) (347-0924)

Pam Hardy - [fenway7@msn.com](mailto:fenway7@msn.com) (883-6230)

## **October 27th & 28th: The Richmond**

**Highland Games** - A great weekend of games, vendors, music and just plain Celtic fun. The IAS tent will be up and running and “trolling” for new members! **If you’d like to volunteer for an hour or two (or 3 or 4) please call Gloria Cahen (233-2113) to volunteer to help in the tent.** Volunteers greet the guests that stop by our tent. We have some IAS regalia to sell, and other fund raising items, we hand out membership information, a sample newsletter and any Ireland travel information, etc., that we might have for giveaways. There are always experienced members to answer the tough questions so you aren’t ever on your own. The festivals are our best opportunity to meet and greet local and regional Irish folks who are seeking ways to learn about their Irish heritage. All you need to help out in the tent is a friendly disposition, a big smile and perhaps a bit of the blarney. Everyone that comes by the tent has an Irish story that they want to share and you will meet the nicest folks ever. It is a total blast to work in the IAS tent so join us, meet some fellow members and have fun with our visitors. You can log on to the games website for a complete program of activities. - [www.richmondceltic.com](http://www.richmondceltic.com)

**The IAS Silent Auction at the Christmas Party:** The auction is still on for the Christmas party, but Ed and Linda Mayers, are not able to spearhead the auction this year – so some adjustments are needed. Instead of calling or emailing Ed about your donation, please email a full description of the item(s) to Nancy Emig at [bearfan46@verizon.net](mailto:bearfan46@verizon.net). If you don’t have access to email – call Gloria Cahen at 233-2113 with your description. By getting your description information early - description cards can be prepared and ready for the auction. If you want to donate something, but you won’t be able to make it to the Christmas party, you can bring your auction items to the October or November general meetings and Board members will make sure that the items are taken to the Christmas party. If you will be bringing the items to the Christmas party – just give us a description of the donated auction item ahead of time so that we can have the auction bid card information all ready for the Christmas Party. This was a great fund-raiser for us last year, so let’s do it again!

<b>IN RESPONSE TO MEMBERS REQUESTS – ALL IAS FUNCTIONS ARE SMOKE FREE</b>
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**UPCOMING IN NOVEMBER:** Board Member, Jim Kelly has arranged for the Irish American Society to man the phones at the annual PBS Telethon. During our phone stint - November 26<sup>th</sup> 8-11pm the new Christmas Special from "Celtic Women" will be aired. It's a great opportunity for the IAS to make itself known in the community. If you can join us for a few hours please email Jim at

[seamus.oceallaigh@yahoo.com](mailto:seamus.oceallaigh@yahoo.com). There'll be more in the November newsletter but mark your calendars today and plan to come help out... it'll be fun!

### **NINE FAMOUS IRISHMEN Or You Can't Keep a Good Irishman Down!**

In the Young Irish Disorders, in Ireland in 1848, the following nine men were captured then tried and convicted of treason against Her Majesty, the Queen and were sentenced to death. John Mitchell, Morris Lyene, Pat Donahue, Thomas McGee, Charles Duffy, Thomas Meagher, Richard O'Gorman, Terrance McManus and Michael Ireland.

Before passing sentence, the judge asked if there was anything that anyone wished to say. Meagher, speaking for all, said: My lord, this is our first offense, but not our last. If you will be easy with us this once, we promise, on our word as gentlemen, to try to do better next time. And next time--sure we won't be fools to get caught.

Thereupon the indignant judge sentenced them all to be hanged by the neck until dead and drawn and quartered. Passionate protest from all over the world forced Queen Victoria to commute the sentence to transportation for life to far away wild Australia. In 1874, word reached the astounded Queen Victoria that the Sir Charles Duffy who had been elected Prime Minister of Australia was the same Charles Duffy who had been transported 25 years before. On the Queen's demand, the records of the rest of the transported men were revealed and this is what was uncovered:

1. Thomas Francis Meagher, Governor of Montana
2. Terrance McManus, Brig. General, US Army
3. Patrick Donahue, Brig. General, US Army
4. Richard O'Gorman, Governor General - Newfoundland
5. Morris Lyene, Atty. General of Australia,
6. Michael Ireland - Atty. General of Australia
7. Thomas D'Arcy McGee, Member of Parliament, Montreal, Minister of Agriculture and President Council, Dominion of Canada
8. John Mitchell, prominent New York politician.  
(Father of John Purroy Mitchell, Mayor of NYC at the outbreak of WW1)

(Kathy Donovan sent this sweet little piece of Irish history. She and Ed found it printed on the placemat at "Pat Troy's Pub" in Arlington, VA. And lucky for us she sent it along for everyone's enjoyment.)

**From The Editor:** Have you been to the IAS website lately? My goodness there are so many new things to see. Jim Bandeleian has done a ton of work on the site and it surely is apparent. There are photographs of IAS activities and events going back to the early 1990's. There are photos of the original St. Pat's parades, the newer version of the St. Pat's parade (now on Church Hill), various IAS meetings, early IAS sponsored visits by children from Ireland, Christmas parties, picnics, and tons of photos of our members working at events, enjoying events, etc.

There is an updated calendar of current events and also a listing of IAS and other Irish themed events to help you plan your activities. Be sure and check the calendar often because new events are added as they are received.

Jim has even set up a "store" with Cafe Press. You can order shirts, buttons, and car decals - all with the Richmond IAS logo on them. For every sale - the IAS gets a bit of \$\$\$. So please visit the store and maybe order a little something for yourself, or something for all those folks on your Christmas list! Here is the link to the store <http://www.cafepress.com/finnmccool>

There are shirts and sweatshirts, and tons more goodies. More items will be on display and also for sale at the Richmond Highland Games.

### **Membership Corner**

This month we are delighted to welcome more new members! Mike & Terry Conyngham are from New Kent, VA and found the IAS through our website. Glad to have you in the group and we are all looking forward to seeing you soon!

**The Book of Kells Program - Sept. 20<sup>th</sup>** - This program resulted in one of the largest meeting turnout - in forever, we counted 90 folks! Loyal IAS members, along with our friends from the Ancient Order of Hibernians, Saint Andrews Society and The Scottish Society enjoyed a rousing and informative presentation on the wonder that is the Book of Kells. Professor Margaret Duckworth, brought slides of major pages in the book and gave detailed explanations of the drawings and their meanings. Talk about contagious enthusiasm - how wonderful it would be if every teacher had the same passion and love of subject. Mr. Glin, The librarian at the University of Richmond brought their rare copy of the Book of Kells for viewing. Many in attendance have seen the real Book of Kells in Dublin at Trinity University, but no one has been able to view so many of the individual pages at such a close range. It was just a fantastic opportunity. Maggie MacKay, of the Scottish Society made lovely bookmarks as a memento of the joint meeting. What a great evening, a super presentation and such nice folks to pass the time with. The IAS sends along many thanks to all participants

**HELP WANTED** –Did you know that our IAS once sponsored a visit to Richmond by a group of children from Ireland? Since its inception, our Irish American Society has provided many memorable experiences and Irish opportunities to the local and regional Irish community. In order to preserve our history and record these IAS accomplishments, we are in the process of obtaining materials and records from Past IAS Presidents, former and current members, old IAS newsletters, newspaper articles and other sources of information. We eventually hope to get the materials in a format so that it can be viewed at events and also on line at our IAS website. We need help in this project and asking for volunteers to help. If you would be interested in donating a bit of time to this project, please call Gloria Cahen at 233-2113 Based on responses from our members – we can organize dates and places and make the whole thing something fun to do. How about it?

**An Irish Halloween** The Irish people once celebrated Halloween as **SAMHAIN**, and believed it was a time when the souls of the dead came back to visit the earth. The word SAMHAIN, meaning “Summer’s end,” is pronounced “SOW-in” or “SOU-in.” It is still the Irish Gaelic word for the month of November. SAMHAIN marked the end of summer, which was also the end of the ancient Irish year. Halloween, a time honored tradition in many places around the world, may have its origins in Ireland. In fact, one of the reasons why the celebration in the United States and Ireland is so similar is the simple fact that Irish immigrants brought this holiday with them during their exodus from Ireland’s potato famine.

During the eighth century the Catholic Church designated the first day of November as All Saints Day, or All Hallows a day of commemoration for those Saints that did not have a specific day of remembrance. The night before was known as All Hallows Eve, which, over time, became shortened to Halloween. Poor Irish people would beg for food and receive pastries called “soul cakes.” In return, they would pray for the dead. The distribution of soul cakes was encouraged by the church as a way to replace the ancient practice of leaving food and wine for roaming spirits. “Going a-souling” eventually became “trick-or-treating” by children who would visit their neighbors.

From smoky bonfires to childish pranks, Halloween is one of the highlights of October, with its decidedly superstitious twist. An Irish Halloween is celebrated much the same way as in olden days. Bonfires are still lit, but mainly in rural or open areas. Children still dress up in costumes and go trick-or-treating at neighbors and friends. Afterwards, parties are still a big highlight of the night with fun and laughter for everyone.

**The Irish Halloween Bonfire** is a tradition for the lovelorn. Placing a lock of your hair into the glowing

embers is supposed to encourage a revelation of your future husband or wife. Simply toss the cutting of hair into the fire and dream away as your loved one materializes in your dreams.

**Halloween costumes** date back to Celtic times. On the night when the living and the dead were supposedly at their closest encounter, the Celtic Druids would dress up in elaborate costumes as evil spirits

**Irish Tricks** One of the forerunners of the American trick-or-treat customs may very well be Knock a dolly. This prank involved knocking upon someone’s door and then running away quickly before he or she had a chance to open the door.

**IRISH WORDS IN ENGLISH SPEECH** - In her book *Irish Traditional Cooking*, Darina Allen tells the story of “**Cake Dances**” that led to this expression. On summer evenings it was customary for the rural people to meet at a crossroads and enjoy dancing to the music of local musicians. Someone would bring a cake along that was treated grandly, displayed on a white linen cloth on top of a milk churn. After dancing for several hours a couple was chosen as the winners. It could be that they danced the longest, or the most finely, or that they were honored for announcing an engagement. Regardless, they were the ones who could “**take the cake**”, which of course they shared with others in the party

**Oct. 24th & 26th Irish Tenor in Concert at St. Bridget’s Catholic Church in Richmond**

As the newsletter is being prepared, it appears that there are still tickets available for the performances of acclaimed tenor Anthony Kearns who will perform at St. Bridget Catholic Church, Wednesday October 24 and Friday October 26 at 7:00 p.m. For information, please call Courtney Karam at (804) 364-0105

**Sometimes - Often Used Phrases - Are Often Irish In Origin:** (My mom used a lot of these over the years)

“Necessity is the mother of invention”. (George Farquhar)

“You see things; and you say “Why?” But I dream things that never were; and I say “Why not?” (George Bernard Shaw)

“Ask me no questions and I’ll tell you no lies” (Oliver Goldsmith)

“Every dog must have his day”(Jonathan Swift)

“Beauty is in the eye of the beholder” (Margaret Hungerford)

“The sight of you is good for sore eyes”. Jonathon Swift

“The first blow is half the battle.” (Oliver Goldsmith)

“I can resist everything except temptation”. (Oscar Wilde)



### **THE CONNEMARA PONY**

The Irish have contributed much to America and any owner will tell you the Connemara Pony is one of the greatest Irish contributions. For along with great athleticism and versatility, the Connemara has a special kindness, a huge heart, and an ability to bond with their human handlers that is unique to this breed.

Good-natured individuals may be found in most breeds, but for the Connemara Pony a gentle disposition is its most outstanding characteristic. Next would be the ability to adapt to any situation, excelling in all equestrian sports. Born out of poverty, the Connemara evolved from an unusual blend of natural selection and human need.

Rocky, barren mountainous terrain, craggy, lunarscape strands, pounded by the tide and storms of the Atlantic and endless desolate moors and bogs - this is the area of Western Ireland known as Connemara, which lends its name to its indigenous pony breed.

The history is obscure, yet the Connemara Pony is considered Ireland's only native breed. The Ancient Celts, who were skilled horsemen, brought the ponies to Connemara. Mythology tells us that the tribes of western Ireland were mounted. Legend has it that when the Spanish Armada sank off the Connemara coast in the 16th Century, the horses swam to shore and bred with the native ponies running wild in the mountains. They learned to live on the tough vegetation and survive the hardships of their habitat, as a misplaced step could send a pony crashing to its death.

It was a desperate and arduous life for the farmers of the area. With large families to support, they could only afford one good pony - often captured off the mountain and tamed. This had to be a mare that could give him a foal each year, to sell for their subsistence through the long, dark winter. She would pull a plow, a cart; work from dawn to dusk at whatever task was needed under extremely harsh conditions.

Fitted with baskets called creels they carried a heavy load. They moved tons of rocks, to claim the land. Seaweed used to fertilize the barren fields was dragged from the shore by the ponies. They carried turf cut from the bogs, used for cooking and heat. Strong, sturdy legs could maneuver through the muck, which might swallow a different type of horse.

Never a day of rest, she also carted the family to Mass on Sunday. She had to have the hardiness, stamina and disposition needed, or she was replaced with a mare that could. In this manner, the good mares were kept in Connemara reproducing these qualities in their foals. Stallions would travel the primitive roads between villages, covering many mares and many miles in one day. Local racing was popular and the Connemaras competed equally with the larger Irish Hunters and Thoroughbreds.

The Connemara "Stands on short legs, covering a lot of ground. On this strong, sturdy body sets a handsome pony head, with a well-defined jaw and good width between large kindly eyes. The Connemara has a natural jumping ability, and its rectangular build lends it suitable for dressage. They often beat horses 16 hands and over with staying power, intelligence and heart. Easy keepers, they do not require a rich diet to stay healthy and fit.

The most common colors are gray and dun or buckskin, but there are blacks, bays, browns, chestnuts, palominos, and an occasional roan. The Connemara is the largest of the pony breeds, ranging in height from 13 to 15 hands, with 14 to 14.2 hands as the average. Full maturity is at five years of age, sometimes older, and they can live well into their 30's.

Like the Irish people, the Connemara has been exported to all European countries, New Zealand, and Australia. Adapting to extremes of climate, they have made useful working partners with those who own them, and have competed with the best of the sport horse breeds. The Connemara is the image of strength, kindness and trust. Their inner peace will calm you as they charm their way into your heart.

*This description of the Connemara Pony written by Maureen Loughman Abel is based on her article in the October, 1995 issue of The Western Horse.*

(Hi Folks, I like to try and bring you bits of Ireland that might be "out of the ordinary". I love the story of this rugged Irish pony breed whose hard history reminds me of Ireland and the Irish. I hope you enjoy these pieces and if you have any suggestions for more articles on "Bits of Ireland". Send your ideas or copies of articles on to me. Thanks, Nancy)

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### **Irish Quotes.**

"..The English country gentlemen galloping after a fox – the unspeakable in full pursuit of the uneatable". Oscar Wilde)

I blew hundreds of thousands of pounds on women and drinking. The rest I just squandered." (George Best – footballer)



**ADVERTISING IN THE CLADDAGH AND ON THE IAS WEBSITE** - You may have noticed that the business card advertisements on our newsletter are not in the same spot this month. Sadly, their advertising terms have all expired... Last year, Ed and Linda Mayers did a yeoman's job on securing advertising for us. This year, they aren't able to help us out. However, we do have a lot of members out there. (Yes you.. the one reading this right now)and it is our hope to get some of you to try and help us get new advertisers.

If you have a business and you would like to advertise with us – Great! Or if you know of local Irish business person that may be interested in advertising - please spread the word for us. Do you occasionally stop in at one of the local Irish pubs? How about asking them for an advertisement.

Advertisements are only \$25 per year. There is no extra cost, because we use your business card, so no special artwork is required. The advertisements will be placed on our website and it will be set up so that the ad can be linked directly to a website if there is one. If you are interested in advertising your business or service– or if you are able to secure other advertisement for us, just send the \$25 (check) and the business card to”

Nancy Emig  
9620 Tuxford Road Richmond, VA 23236  
804-323-6415 with any questions

### **More upcoming Items (phew!)**

The IAS at the Science Museum - On November 19<sup>th</sup> – the IAS will join with other local groups in a celebration of ethnic Christmas at the Science Museum. Various groups around Richmond will decorate a Christmas tree for display at the Museum – using articles from or about their heritage. This program, “Joy From the World” is open to the public and is a terrific family affair. We'll have more information on fees and such and will print it in the next newsletter

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The Christmas Party..

December 1<sup>st</sup> is coming at us fast and you know what that means...Toga Party! Oops, I mean IAS Christmas Party. This year, the party is moving back to the Columbian Center More information will be coming out in the next newsletter – but for now, we just want you to save the date for the party. We'll have the Silent Auction and tons of other fun stuff... you won't want to miss this.

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I hope that you noticed the large banner on the front of the newsletter. The IAS is now a Smoke Free Organization. This move is not intended to discourage anyone from joining the IAS or to discourage 100%

participation in all activities by all members. However, many members have mentioned that the smoke bothers them and some might even stay away from events to avoid the smoke. Being an ex-smoker myself (in 54 days -4 Full Years -but who's counting) I can remember going outside or away from the group to indulge. It's a minor inconvenience for our smokers, but in the long run it makes the majority more comfortable. Please don't be offended – we value all of our members and just feel that this is a fair resolution to the problem. If you'd like to talk it over or offer an opinion, please call the President, Gloria Cahen at 233-2113

### **Glendalough**

(Irish: Gleann Dá Loch, meaning "Glen of Two Lakes")



photo by Nancy Emig

### **Just another beautiful site in Ireland**



Photo by Mary Rose Stuhldreher

**October 18th IAS GENERAL Meeting** to be held at Midlothian Library, 521 Coalfield Rd. (Phone: 794-7907 for directions or go to Mapquest.com to get custom driving directions) Meeting start time – 7:00. The main focus of this meeting will be a discussion by IAS members on travel to and inside Ireland. This includes favorite places in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland; sites to see and maybe sites to avoid. Perhaps there will be some information available on tour companies used by our members and personal feedback. There will either be maps for everyone or an overhead to follow the "terrain" of the discussion. Everyone knows the places given in the tourist books, and there will be some discussion on the favorites, but the hope is to highlight the many other lesser-known places of interest. The discussions are intended to enhance a first time or experienced visitor's trip to Ireland by hearing the experiences of others. There will be a DVD presentation of scenes in Northern Ireland and photos of the Republic. Bring your stories if you've been, or a notebook if you are in the planning stages!

<http://richmondias.org/>

#### MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Oct 17 <sup>th</sup>	“Half Way to St. Pat’s (and less) Irish Sing-Along at O’Tooles 6:00
<b>Oct 18<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>IAS Monthly Meeting – Midlothian Library – newsletter for details “IRELAND TRAVEL”</b>
Oct 19 <sup>th</sup>	U of R Class – Great City: Dublin Lecture and Dinner - \$59 fee for class and dinner
Oct 21st	Albafaire (local traditional Celtic band) at Capital Ale House on Sun, Oct21st, at 6pm.
Oct 24 & 26	Irish Tenor Anthony Kearns at St. Bridget’s. Call 338-5218 for reservations
Oct. 27 & 28	Richmond Highland Games <a href="http://www.richmondceltic.com">www.richmondceltic.com</a>
Nov 7 <sup>th</sup>	Science Museum – IAS Christmas Tree Decorating Call Gloria Cahen 233-2113
<b>Vote - NO LATER THAN Nov 14<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>MAKE SURE TO SEND OR EMAIL YOUR VOTE IN FOR THE IRISH AMERICAN SOCIETY’S 2007 MVP AWARD TO BE PRESENTED AT THE CHRISTMAS PARTY (email and phone info in newsletter)</b>
Nov 17 <sup>th</sup>	“Half Way to St. Pat’s (and less) Irish Sing Along at O’Toole’s 6:00 pm
Nov 18th	IAS Board Meeting – Gloria Cahen’s House, 7:00 pm
Nov 18 <sup>th</sup>	Edsall Road–Traditional Irish Music, Capital Alehouse - 6 pm, \$3 cover Ample parking
Nov 19 <sup>th</sup>	Science Museum – Joy From the World Christmas Tree Party and Social – Free Family Event
Nov 26 <sup>th</sup>	IAS manning the phones at PBS Telethon – see newsletter for details
<b>Nov 29<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>IAS Monthly Meeting – Dumbarton Library Program to be Announced</b>
Nov 30 & Dec 2	UR Int’l Film Series, "The Wind That Shakes the Barley"(804) 289-8860 for info or check your IAS email for details.
Dec 1 <sup>st</sup>	IAS Annual Christmas Party with Silent Auction 6:00 till 11:00
Dec 10th	Eileen Ivers & Immigrant Soul “An Nollaig – An Irish Christmas” 7:30 Univ. of Richmond Camp Concert Hall. For ticket info-804-289-8980
Dec 17 <sup>th</sup>	“Half Way to St. Pat’s (and less) Irish Sing-Along at O’Toole’s 6:00 pm

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