



## The Richmond Claddagh

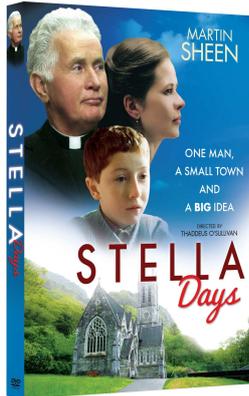
JANUARY 2013

<http://richmondias.org/>

The Richmond Irish American Society

[Click for the Calendar of Events](#)

### JANUARY 26<sup>TH</sup> – 1:00 pm IAS MOVIE BON AIR LIBRARY “STELLA DAYS”



The “Stella” of **STELLA DAYS** refers to a cinema Martin Sheen’s 1950’s era Catholic priest wants to open in his small Irish parish of Borrisokane, Tipperary. But the Stella doesn’t even exist as our story opens. In fact the core of this movie is the battle to get the theater built and opened. Around this core revolves several sub-plots dealing with faith and passion, the fear of change and modernization, censorship and religion and a crisis of identity.

“Stella Days” falls into the comfort movie category. Its period setting, salt of the earth characters, moral dilemmas and general innocence makes it a great Sunday afternoon flick for the entire family.

The library is just off Buford Road at 103 Rattlesnake Road, Richmond, VA 23235 **Phone:** (804) 320-2461

[Click on this for map & driving directions](#)

**Come early for the “Meet & Greet & Snack”**

**From The President** – I want to thank everyone, especially the IAS Board, for making the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary/Christmas Party a great success. We have received lots of positive feedback about the party and will try to get the same location next year. Many Thanks, Dan

#### **COMING IN APRIL!**

Due to many, many requests from our members, Dan Begley has agreed to reschedule the Titanic Program that was first presented last April on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the disaster. This presentation will be scheduled in April at Tuckahoe Library. More details as they become available.

**From Special Events Chair – Karon Bell** – Many thanks to everyone who helped set up and clean up for the party. Without your help – I just couldn’t do it. You know who you are – but I have to toot your horn for you anyway. Huge thanks to Kathryn O’Meara, Ann McGehee, Bill Riddell, Mike Kane, Jim & Alice Mahone, Kerry Dermady, Dave Beugelsdyk, Karen Ide, Ray & Linda Gallagher, Barbara Woody & Helen Lamberta. Very special Thank You’s to Kelly Kennedy and Andy Cleveland for the wonderful music, to Denis Maguire for the Sound System and to Christina and Sharon Maguire – our wonderful Award Winning Irish Dancers. You all added so much to the Irish feel of the night.

Thanks also to all our members who donated for the VA. Food Bank. We collected 105 lbs of food for our donation this year.

And last but not least, Thank you to Nancy Emig for finding the new location for the party! I Love It! – If I have forgotten anyone – PLEASE know that you and your efforts are appreciated - Karon

**From Kathleen O’Meara – the Silent Auction Chair** – Thanks to all of you who donated such wonderful items to our Silent Auction. Lots of lucky people went home happy with their newfound treasures and the IAS was able to make some headway with a bit of an addition to the treasury! Thanks for all your help in getting the items to the party and for the many helping hands in setting up and taking down the auction.

**Left at the Christmas Party** - Karon Bell has 2 Black Plastic Spoons, 1 Wooden Spoon, 1 plastic Butter Dish with a Red Bottom and One Toothpick Holder – call her at 804-982-7832 to claim.

**Mark those Calendars** – March will be here before you know it and the St. Patrick’s Festival on Church Hill will be on the 23<sup>rd</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup>. The IAS will again have a tent, so Karon will need some set up & take down volunteers on Friday and Sunday evenings. Then of course, we’ll need more of our cheery volunteers on Saturday & Sunday to help encourage folks to join the IAS!

**THERE WILL BE NO MONTHLY PROGRAM  
IN FEBRUARY.**  
**But please see the information on the pub supper.**

**December 29 --Last Pub Supper of 2012  
Great Time At Rare Old Times!**

We'd like to introduce you to our new IAS Pub Master  
– Jim Mahone and offer him Super Congrats.



Although out of town and unable to attend – Jim put together a grand outing for his first Pub Supper. The evening produced a great turnout. Those who came... Frank & Pam Hardy and their guests Bill & Bridget Boswell, Carmel Miney, Carroll Graham, Jim Bandlelean & Despa Matzanas, Joe McMenamain, Dan Begley, Denis & Josie Maguire, Helen Lamberta, William Murphy and your humble editor! The band, Kelly Kennedy and her group “Stiltwitchynn” was just great and there were lots of people at ROT - so hope that it was a big boost for them and for Kelly’s group too! Everyone had a great time and we all wish you had been able to join us.

**If you love these beautiful views of Ireland -  
click on this link... and enjoy yourself.**

[pinterest.com/m11andrade/irish-scenes/](https://pinterest.com/m11andrade/irish-scenes/)



**Aran Islands**

**(Note - 2 people at top left...heck of a cliff...)**

**First IAS Pub Supper of 2013  
Sat. February 16 – 6pm**



Join us at [Capital Ale House](#) Western Henrico County location, at the entrance to Innsbrook [4024 Cox Road](#) (Cox Road & Broad Street)

Come to the “back room” and hoist a Guinness to salute your favorite team winning the Super Bowl, winter’s bracing weather, your political party’s electoral triumphs, a winning Lotto ticket, or your grandchild being named valedictorian. (If you find nothing so auspicious to celebrate, any of the less jubilant among us can cry in our beer.)

Speaking of beer ... if you sometimes stray from the noble Guinness brand to enjoy the wide world of frothy beverages, you’ll be delighted to know that Capital Ale House Innsbrook proudly features [77 beers on tap](#), as well as two cask-conditioned "real" ales and over 250 bottled beers.

Oh, yes, they have [wine](#) and [spirits](#), too. And then [there’s the food!](#) (Yes -ALL THESE LINKS WORK!)

Everyone attending will be invited to rate the Pub Night experience and vote on locations for future Pub Night social extravaganzas!

Don’t hibernate! Congregate!

Questions? Comments? Cries of protest? Please feel welcome to contact Seamus himself either [by e-mail](#) or at **804-387-8124**.

**Sorry folks** – been a little under the weather and not able to work so much on the newsletter. I’m afraid there is lots of reading this time – I hope you will enjoy the articles and find that they add to your Irish Lore.

Please call if you have any questions about the events.

Hope to see you at the movie on Saturday and at the Pub Supper coming up in February.

**From Nancy** – You all know I like to bring you snippets of Irish history, or stories about Irish Americans. But this time – we share a story I found by accident – about one of our American Presidents. He helped to assimilate our Irish ancestors into the American scene – at a time when that might not have been the most popular of avenues. I hope you enjoy the article – it’s long but I found it very interesting.

### **“Bless Their Honest Irish Hearts”**

Calvin Coolidge, unsung hero of Irish-Americans



As Irish-Americans we can take pride in a rich heritage of distinction in the United States. For many Irish immigrants, the brawling world of politics became an avenue to advancement; unlike other groups, the Irish quickly took to political life, in part because they understood English. Yet when Irish-Americans look back at their history, they would do well to remember a non-Irishman with an English heritage, whose faith in meritocracy helped them gain their rightful place in American society. He was, of all things, a Congregationalist Yankee: Calvin Coolidge, 30th president of the United States.

As a young politician in Northampton, Massachusetts, Coolidge saw the hope that the American dream stirred in the “stout hearts” of Irish immigrants. Jim Lucey, a cobbler from County Kerry who befriended Coolidge when he was a student at Amherst College, helped him get out the vote of “Coolidge Irish Democrats,” who never voted Republican but made an exception for Silent Cal.

After his razor-thin victory in the 1910 race for mayor in Northampton, Coolidge wrote to his father that at least 400 Democrats had voted for him and provided his margin of victory. Coolidge wrote, “They knew that I had done things for them, bless their honest Irish hearts.”

Indeed, Coolidge helped Irish-Americans, even Democratic ones, get elected to office. As a city councilman in 1898–99, he issued a resolution to honor a deceased Irish-American Democrat. As mayor, Coolidge would develop a lifelong friendship with Father Joseph Gordian Daley, with whom he shared a love of classic languages. Coolidge helped Father Daley build a mission church in a section of

Northampton. The church’s dedication booklet ran a quarter-page ad, “compliments and good wishes of Calvin Coolidge.” Years later, after he had served as governor of Massachusetts, the *Daily Hampshire Gazette* noted his support for Irish Americans saying that he never made any distinction between American citizens of different nationalities.

Coolidge always found the Irish people good Americans and good citizens. He had appointed about 75 of them to responsible positions because he found them well qualified for public service.

In 1919 alone, Governor Coolidge appointed 55 Catholics, seven Jews, two Swedes, three Italians, one Pole, and eight Frenchmen. In 1920, he named 42 Catholics, eight Jews, three Swedes, three Italians, one Portuguese, one Pole, and two Frenchmen. As president, too, Coolidge picked officials with deliberate care and lack of prejudice. He knew that a meritocratic system was far more attractive to most immigrants than the anarchy or Communism that radicals were offering. “Those who do not want to be partakers of the American spirit ought not to settle in America,” he said.

For those immigrants who did wish to join American life and share its presuppositions, Coolidge was welcoming, but he cautioned: “New arrivals should be limited to our capacity to absorb them into the ranks of good citizenship.” Most Americans could agree, then as now, that the prudent thing to do was to assimilate immigrants slowly. Coolidge worried that cheap citizenship would produce a cheapened republic. A nation grounded on abstract truths needed limits on what was permissible under its laws. “We have certain standards of life that we believe are best for us. We do not ask other nations to discard theirs, but we do wish to preserve ours. Standards, government and culture under our free institutions are not so much a matter of constitutions and laws as of public opinion, ways of thought and methods of life of the people.”

Radicals, Coolidge warned at Holy Cross College in 1919, sought to influence immigrants by telling them that “men of their race and ideas had no hand in the making of our country, and that it was formed by those who were hostile to them and therefore they owe it no support.” Coolidge emphatically rejected this view, telling an audience of Irishmen “whatever ignorance and bigotry may imagine, such arguments do not apply to those of the race and blood so prominent in this assemblage.” As proof, Coolidge offered that 11 of the signers of the Declaration of Independence were of Irish birth or lineage; that “on the roll of Washington’s generals were Sullivan, Knox, Wayne,” as well as Richard Montgomery; and that “a generous portion of the rank and file of the men who fought in the

Revolution and supported those who framed our institutions was not alien to those who are represented [at Holy Cross].”

There are surely more Irish who fought for our independence than those he listed – but no matter the count - Coolidge was with the Irish throughout his political career.

Coolidge’s championing of the Irish contrasted sharply with that of one of his predecessors in the White House, Woodrow Wilson. While Wilson urged the right of self-determination at the Paris Peace Conference ending the First World War, he didn’t include Ireland in his formulation. Wilson resented Irish efforts to derail the Versailles negotiations, telling his personal aide, Cary Grayson, “the Irish as a race are very hard to deal with owing to their inconsiderateness, their unreasonable demands and their jealousies.” He questioned Irish-Americans’ patriotism (especially given their reluctance to fight a war alongside Britain) and linked them with German-Americans for “showing their hyphens” during the war. Wilson was even willing to encourage anti-Catholic bigotry among Protestants. “I have one weapon which I can use against them—one terrible weapon, which I shall not use unless I am driven to it,” he told a reporter, Ray Stannard Baker. “I have only to warn our people of the attempt of the Roman Catholic hierarchy to dominate our public opinion, and there is no doubt what America will do.”

While Wilson admonished the Irish to behave, Coolidge continued to seek the support of the Irish and other immigrant groups. He spoke before Catholic organizations and defended the Church against its enemies in the revolutionary Mexican government. He rejected the view that Catholics were incompatible with American life. What they needed, he believed, was a better understanding of what was good about American institutions. Immigrants “are disposed and inclined to think our institutions partake of the same nature as these they have left behind,” Coolidge said. “They must be shown they are wrong.” His efforts to do so helped immigrant groups, and not just the Irish, assimilate to American life.

As Coolidge wrote in his first letter from the White House to Jim Lucey, the Irish cobbler who helped him win the mayoral election in Northampton:

“I want you to know that, if it were not for you, I should not be here, and I want to tell you how much I love you.” The feeling was mutual. (From City Journal March 2012 -Charles C. Johnson

**On March 13, 2013** – the City of Richmond and the State of Virginia will dedicate this Historical Marker to the souls lost in the Brown’s Island Explosion. More Information regarding the location and the ceremony will be provided as it becomes available.



**Marker Text** -“In 1861, during the Civil War, Confederates established an ordnance laboratory and complex on nearby Brown’s Island. Workers there, many of them women and children who were forced to find employment because of the economic disruption occasioned by the war, assembled cartridges and other ammunition. Despite Col. Josiah Gorgas’ stringent safety guidelines, on 13 Mar. 1863, worker Mary Ryan accidentally ignited a friction primer, resulting in a massive explosion that destroyed the building. Richmond residents, responding to the “terrific report,” found a scene of horror, with many victims “burnt from head to toe.” Ryan, and at least 40 others, died from the explosion.”

**DUBLIN MAP** - A wonderful new interactive map of [Dublin's main landmarks](#) (click on the link) is now available on Google. The map identifies the location of about 650 favorite and notable Dublin buildings, bridges, hospitals, parks, theaters, historical sites, cinemas, train stations, museums, including some old and new haunts that even Dubliners might not know exist. If the link doesn’t work – copy and paste this entire link below into your address bar  
[https://maps.google.com/maps/ms?msa=0&msid=208237324688104574060.0004ce3e3d2d5b26128dc&hl=en&ie=UTF8&t=m&ll=53.352601,-6.25946&spn=0.102463,0.20565&z=12&source=embed&utm\\_source=Seattle-News%40IrishClub.Org+%C2%A9+Tuesday%2C+November+27%2C+2012&](https://maps.google.com/maps/ms?msa=0&msid=208237324688104574060.0004ce3e3d2d5b26128dc&hl=en&ie=UTF8&t=m&ll=53.352601,-6.25946&spn=0.102463,0.20565&z=12&source=embed&utm_source=Seattle-News%40IrishClub.Org+%C2%A9+Tuesday%2C+November+27%2C+2012&)

## IRELAND'S TEARDROP



On Ireland's southwestern tip, at the mouth of the Atlantic, stands this monument of man's gift to mankind. The first lighthouse on Fastnet Rock was opened 156 years ago on January 1 1854. Called "the teardrop of Ireland", it was the last sight of Ireland for many Irish emigrants to the US. .

At 177 feet (54 meters) high, with a lamp the strength of 1.3m candles, the lighthouse was, from a navigator's point of view, the most important outpost of Europe.

For more than 100 years afterwards, its light helped steer countless people to safety. It provides the first glimmer of Europe for passengers emerging from the gray mists of the Atlantic; for ships passing the other way, it is "the teardrop of Ireland"—a farewell to familiar shores for mournful Irish émigrés.

The *Titanic* sailed past on her maiden voyage to New York in 1912. On May 4th 1915 its keepers, probably peering out from the elegant balcony on the seventh floor, saw a German submarine cheekily surface to buy the morning's catch from a local Irish fishing boat. According to local lore, they warned the Royal Navy, but to no avail. The same day, the U-boat sunk the *Lusitania*, killing 1,200 civilians on their way from America.

In more modern times, the Fastnet Race, a 615-mile dash from England to Ireland and back, brings some of the world's fastest sailing vessels hurtling around the rock each year. In 1979 a force-ten gale struck unexpectedly in the waters off Fastnet, crashing 40-foot waves over small vessels. Whole crews were swept overboard and 15 yachtsmen were drowned.

George Bernard Shaw put it like this: "I can think of no other edifice constructed by man as altruistic as a lighthouse. They were built only to serve." History bears this out. Since the beginning of seafaring,

families and friends have lit bonfires at night to guide sailors home. As far back as 261BC, Ptolemy I started building the Pharos of Alexandria, standing over 400 feet tall with an open bonfire that could be seen 29 nautical miles away. One of the Seven Wonders of the World, it lasted 1,500 years. As their empire expanded, the Romans put up lighthouses as quickly as they expanded trading routes. With the Dark Ages, the lights went out as they ran the risk of attracting marauding Vikings.

According to "A History of Lighthouses" by Patrick Beaver, as stability returned to Europe, monks and hermits began tending beacons in lonely outposts around the British Isles. After Henry VIII's dissolution of the monasteries in Britain, philanthropic laymen took their place, and lighthouses began to emerge as far across the continent as the Bosphorous.

The Fastnet Rock is about as rugged as they come. Its Irish name, An Charraig Aonair, means "The Rock that Stands Alone".

Electricity came in 1969, and 20 years later the last full-time keeper left. It is now manned when it needs maintenance by Neilly O'Reilly, a local man who retains the lighthouse keeper's deep affection for the rock and the stories from its past. But there is no disguising the sense of loss that has crept in since it became fully automated. As Mr. O'Reilly kicks hard to open the heavy steel doors on arrival at the lighthouse, he notes that they swing inwards. When Douglass designed them, and Kavanagh built them, they were never made to be opened from outside, because it was not envisaged that the lighthouse would be unmanned. Mr. O'Driscoll refers to those doors in his letter to the *Cork Examiner* in April 1989 when he last left the lighthouse. "The closing is a very poignant moment, as these large gun-metal doors crash into place behind me for the last time, sealed like a tomb." Once again, An Charraig Aonair was alone. (From an article in *The Economist* 12/18/2008)

## IRISH MANUFACTURING -- DID YOU KNOW? --

- The TicTacs factory in Cork produces 36 Tic Tacs a second.
- Sildenafil, the active ingredient promoted and sold as Viagra, is manufactured in Ringaskiddy, Co Cork.
- Much of the world's Botox is made in Westport, Co Mayo.

Hmm... the temptation is strong --- but I think it's probably better if I don't add any editorial comments on the possible commercial relationship of these items.



**MARK YOUR CALENDARS** – Click on links in calendar or click here for the latest [IAS Calendar](#)

<b>January 26th IAS Movie</b>	Bon Air Library 1:00 pm – “Stella Days” 9103 Rattlesnake Road, Richmond, VA 320-2461 More info in Newsletter
<b>Monday Feb 18 IAS Board Meeting 7 pm</b>	The Board meeting is at O’Toole’s Restaurant 4800 Forest Hill Avenue, Richmond, VA 23225. All members along with their ideas and suggestions are encouraged to attend.
<b>Feb 26 &amp; 27 Tue &amp; Wed Gaelic Storm</b>	Tue. & Wed. Feb. 26 & 27: The Birchmere 7:30pm \$35.00 GAE LIC STORM 3701 Mount Vernon Avenue Alexandria, VA 22305 (703) 549-7500 –Visit the website for more information <a href="http://www.gaelicstorm.com/">http://www.gaelicstorm.com/</a>
<b>March 12<sup>th</sup> 2013 – 7 pm Celtic Crossroads Glen Allen Cultural Arts Center Tickets \$25 - +65 = \$2 disc 10+ 10% disc. 20+ 15% disc.</b>	The name <b>Celtic Crossroads</b> originates from a time in Ireland when neighbouring communities met at the crossroads between towns and villages to socialize – long before the pub tradition began. Experience the best that Irish music and dance has to offer with this group of seven highly talented singers/multi-instrumentalists and two dancers. Direct from Ireland, they take the art form to an entirely new level. Experience a wonderful fusion of musical genres, such as eastern European Gypsy, North American Bluegrass, world Classical and Jazz, and the various forms of Celtic music from around Europe and the rest of the world. Click on this link to see a video of the group. <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4wDtEDAy0Js">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4wDtEDAy0Js</a> 2880 Mountain Road, Glen Allen VA 23060 804-261-2787 <a href="http://www.artsglenallen.com/">http://www.artsglenallen.com/</a> <a href="http://purchase.tickets.com/buy/TicketPurchase">http://purchase.tickets.com/buy/TicketPurchase</a>
<b>March 13<sup>th</sup></b>	Dedication of Historical Marker commemorating the Irish fatalities in the Civil War era Explosion of the Brown’s Island Munitions factory.
<b><a href="#">Danú</a> March 16 –SAT 7:30 Modlin Center Alice Jepson Theater – \$36.00 804-289-8980</b>	<b><a href="#">Danú</a></b> - Hailing from historic County Waterford, Danú is one of the leading traditional Irish ensembles today. Their standing-room-only concerts throughout Ireland feature high-energy performances and a glorious mix of ancient Irish music and new repertoire. For more than a decade, Danú’s virtuosi players on flute, tin whistle, fiddle, button accordion, bouzouki, and vocals (Irish and English), have performed around the globe and recorded seven critically acclaimed albums. <b>NOTE:</b> - Meet at the Modlin Center for the Arts and celebrate St. Patrick’s Day with a pre-show reception beginning at 6pm in the Booth Lobby. Discount available for Senior Citizens 62+ and groups of 20 or more - \$32/ticket. Tickets on line <a href="http://modlin.richmond.edu/tickets/index.html">http://modlin.richmond.edu/tickets/index.html</a>
<b>March 23<sup>rd</sup> &amp; 24<sup>th</sup> St. Patrick’s Church Hill</b>	<b>Volunteers needed for Friday night set up and to work in the tent on Saturday and Sunday.</b>
<b>March 30<sup>th</sup> Richmond Folk Music</b>	<b><a href="#">Blue Ridge School of Irish Music</a></b> presents "An Evening of Irish Music and Dance" The students and instructors of the Blue Ridge Irish Music School (BRIMS) have been actively bringing traditional Irish music and dance in its most vital and exciting form to central Virginia since 1999

**IAS OFFICERS & BOARD**

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