

An Naidheachd Againne

The Newsletter of An Comunn Gàidhealach Ameireaganach / The American Gaelic Society

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Nuair a leig i dhith a dreuchd mu dheich bliadhna air ais thòisich Ellen Beard, a bha air a bhith na ball de ACGA fad iomadh bliadhna, air dàrna cùrsa-obrach mar acadaimigeach. San alt seo, innsidh i dhuinn carson a rinn i an rannsachadh aice air Rob Donn MacAoidh, bàrd Catach san 18mh linn, agus càit' an do threòraich an cùrsa-obrach ùr seo i. Dh'fhàg MacAoidh (1714-78), fear a tha cho cudromach do bhàrdachd Ghàidhlig 's a tha Robert Burns do bhàrdachd na Beurla Ghallda, tuilleadh is 220 dàn, a' gabhail a-steach cas-bhàrdachd, marbhrannan, agus òrain de dh'iomradh sòisealta agus poileataigeach.

When Ellen Beard retired as a labor lawyer about ten years ago, the long-time ACGA member embarked on a second career as an academic. Here she tells us how she came to focus the research for her Ph.D. thesis on 18th-century Sutherland bard Rob Donn MacKay and where her new career has led her. MacKay (1714-78), who is said to be as important to Gaelic poetry as Robert Burns is to Scots poetry, left over 220 published poems, including songs of social and political commentary, nature, elegies, and satires.

Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, Oilthigh Dhùn Èideann, agus Dùthaich MhicAoidh *le Ellen Beard*

Ma bhios sibh a' sireadh dùbhlàn às dèidh dhuibh ur dreuchd a leigeil dhìbh, carson nach faigh sibh PhD ann an Ceiltis ann an Alba? Rinn mi fhìn e – am measg Ameireaganaich is Canèideanaich eile (m.e. Rob Dunbar, Wilson McLeod, is Michael Newton) – agus

Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, University of Edinburgh, and MacKay Country *by Ellen Beard*

If you are seeking a post-retirement challenge, why not get a PhD in Celtic in Scotland? I did it – among other Americans and Canadians (e.g. Rob Dunbar, Wilson McLeod, and Michael Newton) – and I'm sure you could, too! But how? I started at

*Fonn dìasach's mòr b' fhiach e
Gu fiadhach's gu nì,
Àite sìobhalt' ri doineann,
Is nach criothnaich a' ghaoth.*

~*~

*Country rich in deer and cattle
And sprouting in corn,
Land protected from the tempest,
Sheltered from the storm.*

*Extract of "Glen Golly" composed by Rob Donn in
praise of a glen near his home in North Sutherland.*

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Go to <http://www.acgamerica.org> for more on upcoming ACGA events and other Gaelic-related activities.

tha mi cinnteach gum b' urrainn dhuibhse cuideachd!
Ach ciamar? Thòisich mi aig Sabhal Mòr Ostaig san Eilean Sgitheanach, far an do chuir mi seachad dà bhliadhna làn-ùine (aig a' cholaiste fhèin an àite air astar) ann an cùrsa bogaidh tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig, ag ionnsachadh cànan, ceòl, eachdraidh agus bàrdachd. As dèidh sin, bha mi aig Oilthigh Dhùn Èideann airson sia bliadhna san Roinn Cheiltis, a' dèanamh MSc agus PhD.

Agus carson? Tha sinnsear agam a bha na bhàrd Gàidhlig – Rob Donn MacAoidh, a bha a' fuireach ann an Cataibh bho 1714 gu 1778. Dh'fhàg e mu 220 òrain agus rannan, foillsichte sa Ghàidhlig anns an naoidheamh linn deug, cuid le ceòl, agus tha sàr eachdraidh-beatha sgrìobhte air le Ian Grimble. Ach bha a' mhòr-chuid de na rannan fhathast gun eadar-theangachaidhean gu Beurla is gun chèol, ged a bha cliù aig Rob Donn mar cheòladair a rinn fuinn ùra airson iomadh òran. Mar sin, leasaich mi trì ceistean rannsachaidh le focas air ceòl: (1) Dè a bh' anns an t-saoghal cheòlmhor aig Rob Donn? (2) Am b' urrainnear na fuinn a chur ris na faclan? agus (3) Ciamar a bhiodh Rob Donn a' dèanamh òrain? Mu dheireadh thall, sgrìobh mi tràchdas fada le tiotal 'Rob Donn Mackay: Finding the Music in the Songs', a' sgrùdadh 100 òran, faclan is ceòl, is fhuair mi PhD ann an 2016. Am-bliadhna, dh'fhoillsich mi alt ann an iris *Northern Scotland* le tiotal "Satire and social change: The bard, the schoolmaster, and the drover".

Bho àm gu àm, dh'fhàg mi mo choimpiutair is shiubhail mi timcheall na h-Alba – Muile, Eilean Ì, Canaidh, Ìle, an tìr-mhòr (gu h-àraidh Cataibh) – agus Lindisfarne is Balla Hadrian ann an ceann a tuath Shasainn. Chaidh mi gu mòran cho-labhairtean is mòdan, ag èisteachd is a' taisbeanadh no a' seinn. Ann an Dùn Èideann, bha mòran chothroman ann a dhol a chuirmean-ciùil, a dhealbhan-cluich, is a dh'òraidean. Bha mi faisg air Leabharlann Nàiseanta na h-Alba, Taigh-Clàraidh na h-Alba, is clàraidhean Sgoil Eòlais na h-Alba, 's mar sin cha robh mi gann de thùsan rannsachaidh, ged a bha mi gann de thim gu leòr a choimhead orra!

A-nis tha mi an sàs ann an dà phròiseact eile, leabhar òran agus slighe dualchais ann an Dùthaich MhicAoidh (iar-thuath Chataibh). Bidh an leabhar stèidhichte air a' PhD agam, a' gabhail a-steach nan ceud òran le ceòl, faclan, agus eadar-theangachaidhean. Tha mi cuideachd

Sabhal Mòr Ostaig in Skye, where I spent two years full-time (at the college rather than distance learning) in a Gaelic-medium immersion course studying language, music, history and poetry. After that, I went to the University of Edinburgh for six years in the Celtic department, doing an MSc and PhD.

And why? I have an ancestor who was a Gaelic bard – Rob Donn MacKay, who lived in Sutherland from 1714 to 1778. He left about 220 songs and poems, published in Gaelic in the nineteenth century, some with music, and was the subject of an excellent biography by Ian Grimble. But the majority of his poems still lacked English translations and music, although he had a reputation as a musician who composed new tunes for many songs. For that reason, I developed three research questions focused on music: (1) What was the musical world of Rob Donn? (2) Can his words be reunited with their melodies? and (3) How did Rob Donn compose songs? Eventually I wrote a long thesis titled 'Rob Donn MacKay: Finding the Music in the Songs' analyzing 100 songs, words and music, and received a PhD in 2016. This year, I published an article in the journal *Northern Scotland* titled "Satire and social change: The bard, and schoolmaster, and the drover".

From time to time, I left my computer and traveled around Scotland – Mull, Iona, Canna, Islay, the mainland (especially Sutherland) – and Lindisfarne and Hadrian's Wall in northern England. I attended a number of conferences and mòds, listening and presenting or singing. In Edinburgh, there were numerous opportunities to attend concerts, plays, and lectures. I was near the National Library of Scotland, the National Archives of Scotland, and the records of the School of Scottish Studies, so there was no shortage of research materials, just a shortage of time to look at them all!

Now I am involved in two other projects, a songbook and a heritage trail in MacKay Country (northwest Sutherland). The book will be based on my PhD, including the hundred songs with music, words and translations. I am also advising



Ellen Beard and Rob Donn Memorial
Ellen Beard

a' toirt comhairle do dhà bhuidheann ionadail, Urras Coimhearsnachd Dùthaich MhicAoidh agus Taigh-tasgaidh Strath Nabhair, a fhuair maoineachadh o chionn ghoirid airson pròiseactan mu Rob Donn. Bidh naoi pannalan ann thairis air Dùthaich MhicAoidh, bho Sgobharaigh san iar chun na Mealbhaich san ear, le mapaichean, fiosrachadh air Rob Donn, mirean bàrdachd, agus eachdraidh ionadail ann an gach àite. A bharrachd air sin, tha sinn ag obair air leabhar beag dà-chànanach, làrach-lìn, agus obair ealain ùr bhon a' choimhearsnachd stèidhichte air a' bhàrdachd. Cho fad 's a tha fhios agam, b' e seo a' chiad slighe dualchais ann an Alba mu dhèidhinn bàrd Gàidhlig sam bith, agus bidh e san àite far nach eil mòran Gàidhlig air fhàgail san latha an-diugh. Tha mi an dòchas gum bi e feumail ann an teagasg an dà chuid luchd-fuirich agus luchd-turais rudeigin mun dualchas bheartach – a thaobh Gàidhlig is ciùil – ann an Dùthaich MhicAoidh.



Taigh-tasgaidh Strath Nabhair / Strathnaver Museum
(former Farr Parish Church) Strathnaver Museum

two local groups, the MacKay Country Community Trust and the Strathnaver Museum, which recently obtained funding for projects on Rob Donn. There will be nine panels across MacKay Country, from Scourie in the west to Melvich in the east, with maps, information on Rob Donn, bits of poetry, and local history for each site. In addition, we are working on a bilingual booklet, a website, and new works of art from the community based on the poetry. As far as I know, this will be the first heritage trail in Scotland about any Gaelic bard, and it will be in a place where not much Gaelic remains today. I hope it will be useful in teaching both residents and tourists something about the rich heritage of Gaelic and music in MacKay Country.

Ma bhios ùidh shònraichte agaibh sa chuspair seo (gu h-àraidh ma bhios an t-ainm MacAoidh anns an sloinntearachd agad), bidh an t-slighe a' fosgladh san Dàmhair 2018. Cuideachd, tha Taigh-tasgaidh Strath Nabhair ann am Blàran Odhar (faisg air na Fuadaichean na bu mhiosa dà cheud bliadhna air ais) an sàs ann an togail airgid airson an togalach (seann eaglais) a leasachadh airson taisbeanaidhean, rannsachaidh agus tachartasan coimhearsnachd. Tha làrach-lìn aca (<http://www.strathnavermuseum.org.uk/current-projects/refurbishment>) agus bhiodh iad uabhasach taingeil tiodhlacan de mheud sam bith fhaighinn.

In case you have a particular interest in this topic (especially if the name MacKay is in your family tree), the trail will open in October 2018. Also, the Strathnaver Museum in Bettyhill (near the worst Clearances two hundred years ago) is trying to raise money to improve their building (an old church) as a venue for exhibits, research, and community events. They have a website (<http://www.strathnavermuseum.org.uk/current-projects/refurbishment>) and would be extremely grateful for contributions of any amount.

Can You Help?

Rudy Ramsey has been engaged in a serious effort to put together an electronic archive of all issues of *An Naidheachd Againne*, ACGA's newsletter. With help from Glenn Wrightson, we have the list of needed issues down to just a few:

- 1984-86: All issues
- 1987: Summer issue (v. 4, no. 2)
- 2001: Autumn (v. 18, no 3)
- 2002: Spring & Summer (v. 19, nos 2-3)
- 2005: Fall & Winter (v. 22, nos. 3-4)
- 2006: Fall & Winter (v. 23, nos. 3-4, maybe also v. 24, no. 1)

If you have one of these issues, we would love to add a PDF of the issue to the archive. You can create the PDF yourself and email it to Rudy at rudy@ramsisle.com. Or email him for instructions if you would like to send it to him for scanning, in which case the issue will be returned to you.

Litir bho'n Cheann-Suidhe le Micheal MacAoidh



A Chàirdean,

Tha sinn a-nis air tighinn dhan àm dhen bhliadhna as fheàrr leam – deireadh an fhoghair, agus toiseach a' gheamhraidh. Ach, mus tòisich sibh air smaoineachadh gu bheil mi craicte, no co-dhiù gòrach, innsidh mi dhuibh carson a chòrdas an t-àm seo cho mòr rium.

Sa chiad àite, tha mise a' fuireach ann an Virginia, àite far a bheil dà rud a' cur air daoine fad an t-samhraidh – an teas agus na biastagan. Aig an àm seo, tha an dà chuid air a dhol air falbh – cha mhòr. Air m' onair, mura faic mi aon “stinkbug” eile san taigh agam, 's mi bhios taingeil! A bharrachd air an fhàileadh ghrod a bhios aig na bèistean seo, tha de dh'aghaidh orra, 's gum bi iad a' tùrling ort fhèin, le srann oillteil, fiù 's nuair a bhios tu nad chadal!

Agus an teas – chan eil fhios a'm a bheil seo fìor dhuibh, ach b' fheàrr leam fada a bhith blàth nuair a bhios i fuar a-muigh, seach a bhith blàth air sgàth 's gu bheil i blàth fhèin is murtaidh a-muigh. Agus nach e tha tlachdmhor cupa tì no co-dhiù rudeigin blàth a bhith nad làimh air madainn fhuar fhliuch?

Cuideachd, tha sinn a-nist a' coimhead air adhart ri Latha na Taingeachd a-bhos an seo sna Stàitean, agus cha bhi an Nollaig fad às nas mo' – dà latha ris a bheil mi a' dèanamh fiughar. 'S e àm sìtheil a bhios an sin, agus faodaidh sinn gabhail air ar socair, co-dhiù airson beagan ùine.

Seadh, tha mòran adhbharan ann airson seo a bhith na àm taitneach, gun luaidh air mar a tha sinn air a dhol air ais gu iomairtean ionnsachaidh a-rithist. Chì sinn buidhnean air feadh nan Stàitean agus Canada a' tabhainn chùrsaichean agus choinneamhan sgrùdaidh, agus tachartasan mar “Meetup” airson 's gun tig daoine còmhla airson seinn, bruidhinn ri chèile, agus gus spòrs a ghabhail leis, mu dheidhinn, agus a thaobh Gàidhlig, agus 's e deagh rud a th' anns gach rud dhe sin.

A bheil sibh, mar a tha an seann seanfhacal ag ràdh, a' faireachdainn gu bheil sibh ann am “Foghar fada 's beagan buana” – ag obair air a' Ghàidhlig airson ùine mhòr, gun mòran fhaighinn aisde? Tha sinne, aig a' Chomunn, deiseil airson taic a chur ris na tha sibh a' dèanamh, agus nach innis sibh dhuinn ciamar a nì sinn comhair oirbh anns na mìosan fuara geamhradail a tha romhainn. A-nis, ged thà, tha mise falbh airson deagh chopan tì.

Le meas,

Micheal MacAoidh
Ceann-suidhe, ACGA

Letter from the President by Mike Mackay

Friends,

We are now coming to the time of year I like best – the end of fall, and the beginning of winter. And, before you start thinking that I'm crazy, or at least foolish, I'll tell you why I like this time of year so much.

First, I live in Virginia, a place where two things beleaguer people through the summer – the heat and insects. Right now, both of these things are going away. Honestly, if I never see another stinkbug in my house, I'll be all the more grateful. Aside from the terrible smell that they produce, they are so cheeky that they will land on you, with a nasty buzzing sound, even while you are sleeping!

And the heat – I don't know if this is true for you, but I much prefer to be warm when it's cold outside than to be warm because it's warm and humid outside. And isn't it nice to have a cup of tea or something warm anyway in your hands on a cold, wet morning?

Also, we are looking forward to Thanksgiving in the States, and Christmas is not far away – two things I'm looking forward to. That will be a peaceful time, and we can take it easy then – at least for a little while.

So, there are many reasons for this time to be pleasant, not to mention that we are going back to study courses and study groups again. We can see groups all over the States and Canada offering courses and meetings, and events like “Meetup” so that people can come together to speak, sing, have fun, and all about and for Gaelic, and each one of those is a good thing.

Are you feeling like the old proverb says, “A long harvest without much reaping” – working on Gaelic without getting much out of it? We, in ACGA, are ready to support whatever you are doing, and won't you tell us how we can help, in the cold winter months ahead. Now, though, I'm off to get a good cup of tea.

Respectfully,

Michael Mackay
President, ACGA

Sgoil nan Eun neo Sgeulachd Iain Fhearchair Òig le Liam Ó Caiside

An Treas Caibideil Deug (a chiad leth): Tilleadh agus Tuilleadh

*“Am fear as fhaide a chaidh on taigh, 's e an ceòl bu bhinne a chuala e a-riamh 'tiugainn dhachaigh.’ ”
– Seanfhacal*

“Saoilibh am bu chòir dhuinn a dhol air ais a-nochd?” thuirt Eilidh ruinn, nuair a bha sinn a’ dèanamh deiseil a dhol air ais gu taigh an sgeulaiche feasgar. “Bha coltas euslànteach air nuair a dh’fhalbh sinn sa mhadainn.” “An ann a’ tarraing asam a tha thu?” thuirt Calum. “Tha an duine seo cho cruaidh ris an fhraoch, agus cho buan ris a’ ghiuthas. Agus cha chuala sinn naidheachd mar seo riamh bhuaithe neo bho sgeulaiche eile.”

“Tha e dìreach mar a bhiodh e ’g ràdh mu dhèidhinn rud a thachair dha fhèin, neo rud a chunnaic e fad air ais,” thuirt mise riutha. “Sin an sgil a th’ aige,” arsa Eòghann. “Thèid aige air dealbh a chruthachadh a tha cho beòthail, cho fìor, tha e doirbh cuimhneachadh gur e sgeulachd a tha sibh a’ cluinntinn.”

“Shaoil mise gun robh fiabhras air uair neo dhà leis cho geal ’s a bha a shùilean,” arsa Eilidh.

“Bha e aigeantach, gu dearbh,” thuirt Eòghann. “Bha mi air bhioran ag èisteachd ris fad na h-oidhche.”

“Cumaidh sinn sùil air a-nochd,” thuirt mi fhìn ri Eilidh. “Ma dh’fhàsas e ro sgìth, falbhaidh sinne nas tràithe.” Cha do thaitinn sin i gu buileach, ach chrom i a ceann.

Cha robh coltas neo-fhallain air a’ bhodach idir nuair a ràinig sinn a thaigh. Theab gun do ruith e a-mach tron doras nuair a chunnaic e an càr a’ teannadh ris a’ chroit. “Uill, tha sibh air ais a-rithist,” thuirt e. “Shaoil mise a-raoir gun robh sibh air fàs sgìth de sgeulachdan, eadhan Calum!

“Ach thigibh a-steach,” thuirt e. “Tha an teatha a’ tarraing agus gheibh sibh grèim bìdh cuideachd.” Lean sinn an sgeulaiche a-steach agus ann an ùine ghoirid bha sinn nar suidhe còmhla ris mun ghealbhan. ’S e ciaradh an fheasgair a bh’ ann. Bha na lampaichean laiste agus teine mòine a’ losgadh. “Seo an treas oidhche bhon a thòisich mi ’g aithris na naidheachd seo dhuibh,” thuirt e. “Ged a chreideadh sibh gur e naidheachd neònach, àirid, dhraoidheil a

bh’ innte roimhe seo, cha chuala sibh fhathast na tha tighinn a-nochd.”

“Abair gu bheil fiughar mhòr oirnn ris na bhios agaibh ri innseadh,” thuirt Calum.

Rinn an sgeulaiche gàire. “Mas e sin an fhèrrinn,” arsa am bodach, “tòisichidh mise leis na thachair do dh’Iain nuair a thill e a dh’Alba.” Agus thòisich e mar a leanas.

“Chuir Iain an currac dearg air a cheann agus dh’èigh e ‘Glaschu a-rithist!’, mar a dh’innis mi dhuibh a-raoir,” thuirt e. “Shaoil e gun robh sìth-ghaoth fo a sgiathaibh. Ann am priobadh na sùla, cha b’ ann am Baile Àth Cliath a bha e, còmhla ri Nighean an Sgàthain, ach ann an seòmair beag cumhang anns an taigh-mharsantachd aig a’ mhaighstir ann an Glaschu.

Chuala Iain clag-pìobach na chluais, agus chunnaic e gur e seòrsa de bhogsa le clog ann air deasg a’ mhaighstir a bha a’ gliongadaich. Ann an tiotag, chuala e brag agus cò bha na sheasamh ri a thaobh ach an Draoidh Mòr fhèin. Chuir an draoidh stad air a’ chlog le crath bhon làimh.

“Is ainm Crom!” thuirt an draoidh. “Thàinig thu air ais slàn! Abair gur mac-ratha thu gun teagamh. Ciamar a rinn thu e?”

Dh’innis Iain a h-uile rud dha, bho thoiseach gu deireadh. Dh’innis e mar a dh’ionnsaigh Cnàmhan Dubha dha air sràidean Ghlaschu. Dh’innis e mun bhàta Èireannach. Dh’innis e mu Nighean an Sgàthain agus ciamar a shaor i esan leis an draoidheachd aice.

Ach cha d’ aithris Iain a h-uile rud a thuirt Nighean an Sgàthain ris mu dheidhinn a màthar, a h-athar neo an gealladh a thug Iain dhi. Agus cha toir e iomradh air a’ chlach aige, Clach Choinnich Odhair, trom



facas àiteachan agus tachartasan agus daoine fad air astar. Chum e i sin diomhair, mar a bha i bhon uair a thug athair dha i anns an t-sìthean. 'S dòcha gu robh amharas air fàs air gum biodh dùil aig a' mhaighstir air a' chloich, agus a leithid de nìthean draoidheil a bha gan cumail anns a' chaisteal aige mu thràth.

Às dèidh sin, chuir Iain ceistean air a' mhaighstir. "Cò an draoidh Èireannach, carson a tha sibh nur nàimhdean, dè fon ghrèin a bha e 'g iarraidh bhuam, agus gu dè 'm fàisneachd a th' aige mu mo dhèidhinn-sa?" dh'fheòraich Iain dheth. "Agus ann an dà-rìreabh, dè tha sgrìobhte mu mo dhèidhinn anns an leabhar dhubh agad?"

Le osna throm, shuidh an draoidh air ais anns a' chathair aige. Chuir e a ad thrì-chòirnealach air a' bhòrd ri a thaobh. Sheall e gu dùr air Iain. "Tha thu air fàs dàna, a bhalaich, airson foghlainte òg," thuirt e. "Chan iongnadh sin, às dèidh na thachair dhut. Dh'fhaodadh gun tàinig an tim airson a' chòmhradh

seo mu dheireadh thall. Èist rium, agus sguir de do cheasnachadh greis."

Agus dh'innis an draoidh an sgeul seo do dh'Iain. "Fad air ais, nuair a bha mi cho òg 's a tha thusa an-dràsta, thàinig mise gu Sgoil nan Eun. Bha foghlaintich ann an uair sin, mar a gheibhear an latha an-diugh, ach cha b' ann agamsa a bha iad, ach aig Coibhidh an Draoidh.

"Bha aon fhoghlainte ann a bha uabhasach fhèin math anns a h-uile ceann-adhbhair a bh' againn. Bha sinn an aois cheudna, agus dh'fhàs sinn cho dlùth ri chèile mar thruaill ri claidheamh."

"An draoidh Èireannach?" dh'fhaighnich Iain. "An duine fhèin," thuirt a mhaighstir. "Ó Croileagan a thugtar air a-nise, mar tha fios agad. B' e 'Fearfeasa' neo duine fiosrach a thug sinn air nuair a bha sinn nar n-oileanaich fo stiùireadh Choibhidh. Cha b' ann an-dè a bha sin!

A Return and More: Iain is back again in Glasgow, having escaped from the Irish druid Ó Croileagan and his piratical henchman Black Bones in Dublin. He questions the Great Druid about his rivalry with the Irish druid and hopes to learn much about his master's past.

Faclair:

Cho cruaidh ris an fhraoch:
Cho buan ris a' ghiuthas:
Aigeantach:
Tha an teatha a' tarraing:
Ciaradh an fheasgar:
Currac:
Sìth-ghaoth:
Clag-pìobach:
Mac-ratha:
Fàisneachd:

As hardy as the heather
As lasting as the pine tree
Spirited, lively
The tea is steeping
Gloaming, twilight, dusk of the evening
Cap
Fairy wind
Chime
Fortunate man (song of luck, prosperity)
Prophecy

Seanfhacal na Ràithe – Pictured Proverb

Do you know what familiar Gaelic
proverb is illustrated here?

Check page 17 to see if you're right.



Sunrise over Little Loch Broom, Scotland Gregory Rock

In our June issue, ACGA member Joyce Campbell explained how she discovered that her ancestor, the Rev. Roderick MacDonald, a Presbyterian minister in Harris and then South Uist until his death in 1900, was also a poet. Joyce was able to locate three of the Rev. MacDonald's poems and has translated them with the help of her Gaelic teacher Frances Acar. "Òran a' Chlò," written in praise of the weaving skills of the poet's wife, appeared in the June 2017 issue of *An Naidheachd Againne*. "Blàr Hogh," the satirical account of a village skirmish, was in the September issue.

"Òran Gaoil," the most personal of the poems, is a beautiful love song to his future wife, Marion, daughter of the Rev. Roderick Maclean, also a minister in South Uist.

Spelling and accents in the Gaelic version of the poem are as they appear in the original, reflecting dialectical and period usage.

Bàrd san Teaghlach / A Bard in the Family

Oran Gaoil

*Leis an Urramach Ruairidh Domhnullach,
Ministeir na Hearradh*

'S ann an Uidhist an eorna
Tha 'n cailinn bòidheach ciuin réidh,
Do'n d' thug mi 'n gaol falaich
'S cha b' aithreach leam e;
Nighean chiallach chiuin shocair
'S i tosdach 'na beus:
O' n is toil leam mo nigh'nag,
'S toil le m' nigh'naig mi féin.

Cha 'n 'eil aogasg mo leannain
Ach ainneamh fo 'n ghréin:
Tha i siobhalta bairidh,
'S cha 'n 'eil meang innt' no beud;
Aghaidh fhilathail gun ghruaiméan
Rinn mo bhuaireadh measg cheud:
'S mar is toil leam mo nigh'nag
'S toil le m' nigh'naig mi fein.

Cha 'n e bòidhchead do phearsa
Ged tha i maiseach leam féin,
No ruthadh do ghruadhach
Ged thug i buaidh air gach te,
Ach na ceutainean àluinn
A tha fàs riut 's gach ceum,
Chuir mo chion air a' nigh'naig
Thar gach nigh'naig fo 'n ghréin.

Gur e mis' tha gun cheanal,
Aig a' bhaile leam fein;
Bi mi daonnan fo mhighean
O nach cluinn mi uat sgeul:
Nach faigh mi litir o m' leannan
A chur nan naigheachd an ceill;
'S mar is toil leam an nigh'nag
'S toil le m' nigh'naig mi fein.

Love Song

by the Rev. Roderick MacDonald

It is in Uist of the barley
That there is the beautiful, gentle maiden,
To whom I gave secret love.
And I have never regretted it;
A sensible, mild, good-humored girl
She is peaceful in her demeanor:
I love my lassie,
And my lassie loves me.

The appearance of my beloved
Is something rare under the sun:
She is modest and courteous,
She has neither guile nor blemish in her;
An elegant face without frowning
Tempted me among a hundred others:
As I love my darling
So my darling loves me.

It is not the beauty of her appearance
Although it is attractive to me,
Or the blushing of her cheek
Though it has an effect on everyone,
But admiration for her beauty
Grows with her every step,
Making me love my lassie
Beyond every girl under the sun.

It is I who is without merriment,
At home by myself;
I am often discontented
Since I don't hear anything from you:
Since I don't get a letter from my sweetheart
That made sense of the news;
As I love my lassie
And as my lassie loves me.

Cha 'n e dh' fhàgadh mi brònach,
A bhi gun stòras gun spréidh;
Ach nach faodainn bhi pòsda
Aig nigh'n òg nan rosg séimh:
B' anns' bhi 'm bothan an fhasaich,
Is sinn a' mánran leinn fein,
Na bhi 'n aitreamh nan rìghrean
As aonais briodal do bheil.

Ciod am fath dhomh bhi brònach,
Is mo dhòchas cho treun,
Gu 'm bi mi fathast riut pòsda
Le òrdugh bho 'n chleir:
Cha teid crìoch air ar sòlas
Fhad 's is beò sinn le cheil',
'S bi mi maille ri m' nigh'naig
'S bi mo nigh'nag leam fein.

It would not leave me sad,
To be without riches, without cattle;
If only I could be married
To the young girl of the gentle eyes:
I would rather be in a lonely bothy,
Making love songs by ourselves,
Rather than in a palace
Without expressions of tenderness from your lips.

What is the use of being sad?
And my hope is so strong,
That I will yet marry you
With the blessing of the minister:
Our happiness will have no end
As long as we are alive together,
And I will be true to my darling
And my darling to me.



Editors' note:

“Oran Gaoil” appears on pages 137-8 of *The MacDonald Collection of Gaelic Poetry*, edited by the Rev. Angus MacDonald, Minister of Killearnan, and the Rev. Archibald MacDonald, Minister of Kiltarlity, published by the Northern Counties Newspaper and Printing and Publishing Co. Ltd., Inverness, 1911.

A Website to Watch



Dualchas Nàdair na h-Alba / Scottish Natural Heritage at <https://www.snh.scot> is rolling out a new website, which though still under construction, is worth checking out as there is already access to some of their valuable Gaelic content, including a searchable (in both Gaelic and English) Dictionary of Gaelic Nature Words. Read more about their *Rùrachd Lusan Fiadhain* / *Foraging Wild Plants* with text by Ruairidh MacIlleathain (Roddy MacLean) in Criomagan, page 15 of this issue. See <http://gaelic.snh.gov.uk/foillseachaidhean/> for links to their other Gaelic publications, which include the beautiful booklets in their *A' Ghàidhlig air Aghaidh na Tìre* / *Gaelic in the Landscape* series.

And it looks like much more Gaelic content is on the way.

Oisean a' Ghràmair / The Grammar Nook

by Wayne Harbert



Scary Things About Gaelic (STAG): Not a Language for Egotists

English is a great language for narcissists; we egocentrically make ourselves the subject of almost every sentence. I can say things like “I have a cold”, as if I were asserting ownership over it. But the reality is that the cold has taken control of me, so why should “I” get to be the subject? In Gaelic, to a much greater extent, being a subject is a privilege that one needs to earn by actually “doing” something. So if you “have” a condition, like a cold, or thirst, hunger, or sleepiness, or fear, or a toothache, or sea-sickness, or homesickness, the sentence doesn’t start with you; your condition takes center stage as subject and you are relegated to the role of a mere supporting actor – the object of a preposition (*air*, in this case).

<i>Tha an cnatan orm.</i>	I have a cold. (The cold is on me.)
<i>Tha am pathadh orm.</i>	I’m thirsty. (The thirst is on me.)
<i>A bheil an t-eagal ort?</i>	Are you afraid? (Is the fear on you?)
<i>Tha an t-acras air.</i>	He’s hungry. (The hunger is on him.)
<i>Tha cur na mara oirre.</i>	She’s seasick. (The putting of the sea is on her.)
<i>Tha an cadal oirnn.</i>	We’re sleepy. (The sleep is on us.)
<i>Tha an cianalas orra.</i>	They are homesick. (The homesickness is on them.)

My students have a hard time coming to terms with this demotion; even after they learn the construction, they keep trying to smuggle a “mi” into their Gaelic sentences.

In fact, mere ownership of something isn’t enough to entitle you to be the subject in a Gaelic sentence. Gaelic doesn’t have “have”. In English, one can boast that “I have a green Maserati”, as if owning something were all about the owner, but in Gaelic the star of the sentence is the car, and the owner is once again a bit player – the object of a (different) preposition:

Tha Maserati uaine agam. I have a green Maserati. (A green Maserati is at me.)

Similarly, English makes us the subjects of sentences about things we like and enjoy. But liking is something you experience, not something you do (at least back in the days before Facebook). And so in Gaelic, likers and enjoyers are demoted to mere objects of (still other) prepositions:

Is toil leam am film seo. I like this film. (This film is pleasing [*Is toil*] with me.)

Chòrd am film sin rium. I enjoyed that film. (That film agreed [*chòrd*] with me.)

Is beag orm am film sin. I hate that film. (That film is little on me.)

Nor does the mere ability to do something, or the obligation to do it, entitle you to take the lead as the subject of the sentence. Where we say “I can” and “I ought”, Gaelic reaches for still other impersonal constructions:

An urrainn dhut mo chuideachadh? Can you help me?
(Is there an ability to you [for] my helping?)

An tèid agad air mo chuideachadh? Can you help me?
(Will it go at you on my helping?)

Tha agam ri dhol a dh'obair. I have to go to work.
(It is at me to go to work.)

Thig oirrn fhalbh. We will have to leave.
(It will come on us leaving.)

Bu chòir dhuinn sin a leughadh. We ought to read that.
(It should be an obligation to us reading that.)

In English, we even make the sentence about us when talking about our debts to others, whereas in Gaelic it's the money that's front and center:

Tha fichead not aige orm. I owe him 20 pounds.
(20 pounds are at him on me.)

So if you want to speak Gaelic, approach it with humility. And learn your prepositions.



Tha an t-àm sin ann a-rithist! / It's that time again!

2018 ACGA membership renewals are now due. Rates haven't changed in over a decade – abair bargan! You can renew your yearly individual membership for \$35, your family membership for \$45 (2 adults and children under 18), or if you're 25 and under, you can enjoy a year of membership for \$15. Corporate memberships are also available for \$100 per year.

Your membership fees help support *An Naidheachd Againne*, a largely bilingual quarterly ezine with content for everyone from beginners to advanced learners, as well as reduced fees for the Grandfather Mountain Song and Language Week, and the National Mòd in Pennsylvania.

To renew your membership you can print, fill out and mail the membership form here <http://www.acgamerica.org/join/application/> along with your check to the address on the form, or renew online through PayPal at <http://payments.acgamerica.org/>. You can also pay by credit card on the PayPal site without creating a PayPal account.

ACGA programs are funded mainly through donations, which are tax-deductible for U.S. taxpayers. We hope that you will consider making a donation to ACGA in addition to your membership dues. The donation can be large or small, as suits your interest and financial situation. Donations can also be made online at <http://payments.acgamerica.org/> or included with your membership check.

30th U.S. National Mòd Results
Ligonier, PA
September 21 – 24, 2017

Adjudicators: Margaret Stewart and Murdo MacDonald

Special Guests: 2016 Mòd Nàiseanta Rìoghail Gold Medal winners Hector Mackechnie and Carol Maclean.

Friday, September 22

Storytelling

1. Michael Mackay
2. Barbara Lynn Rice
(Audit) Liam Cassidy

Poetry

1. Barbara Lynn Rice

Sight Reading

1. Liam Cassidy

Saturday, September 23

Open song category

1. Anne Alexander
2. Liam Cassidy
3. (Tied) Cathleen MacKay and Katherine Harris

Prescribed song

Men

1. James Ruff
2. Liam Cassidy

Work song

1. James Ruff

Puirt

1. Liam Cassidy

Choir

1. Còisir Ghàidhlig Ohio

Harmonized singing

Unscored

Accompanied Singing

- 1st Place: Liam Cassidy and Edward Bradshaw
2nd Place: Cathleen Ransom MacKay
3rd Place: Anne Alexander and Mick Hurray

Final Song Results

Men

1. James Ruff
2. Liam Cassidy

Overall Mòd Gold Medal results

Men

1. James Ruff
2. Liam Cassidy

Awards

Searrag Ghlainne nam Bàrd (Edinburgh Crystal Decanter). Presented by Mòd co-founder Donald F. MacDonald to the winner of the competition in bàrdachd recitation at the Mòd.
Barbara Lynn Rice

Duais Dhaibhidh Mhic Risnidh (David MacRitchie Award). Presented for best traditional story in Gaelic
Michael Mackay

MacComb Shield for the Men's prescribed highest score
James Ruff

Herbert P. MacNeal Memorial Quaich. Presented by Clan MacNeil Society to highest scoring male solo singer (Gold Medal).
James Ruff

Congratulations to James Ruff on his second Mòd win, and first to be awarded the new Gold Medal pin in competition.



Margaret Stewart (left) and Murdo MacDonald (right) with Gold Medal winner James Ruff (centre)

Kathy Park Photography <https://www.facebook.com/kathyparkphoto/>

**Mòd Nàiseanta Rìoghail Loch Abar 2017 /
The Royal National Mòd Lochaber 2017
13 – 17 An Dàmhair 2017**

Am Bonn Òir Farpais Crìochnachaidh (Mnathan) / Gold Medal Final (Ladies)
Rachel Walker, Drochaid an Aonachain

Am Bonn Òir Farpais Crìochnachaidh (Fir) / Gold Medal Final (Men)
Alasdair MacMhuirich, Ìle

**Bonn Òir Mhàiri NicLaomann Farpais Crìochnachaidh (Mnathan) /
Mary Lamont Gold Medal Traditional Final (Ladies)**
Hannah Knight, Càrlabhadh

**Bonn Òir Mhàiri NicLaomann Farpais Crìochnachaidh (Fir) /
Mary Lamont Gold Medal Traditional Final (Men)**
John Joe MacNeil, Barraigh

Leabhar as Fheàrr airson Inbheach / Best Book for Adults
Latha Litreachais a' Mhòid anns a' Ghearasdan / Mòd Literature Day, Fort William
Sreathan anns a' Ghainmhich le Dòmhnall Meek

Leabhar Chloinne Bige / Best book for children published in the last year
Latha Litreachais a' Mhòid anns a' Ghearasdan / Mòd Literature Day, Fort William
An Triùir agus Lùbag le Maoilios Caimbeul

Dealbh-Chluich as Fheàrr / Best Play
Marcas Mac an Tuairneir

2017 Duaisean Gàidhlig na h-Alba / Scottish Gaelic Awards

Duaisean Gàidhlig na h-Alba / Scottish Gaelic Awards were presented in Glasgow, November 15. Sponsored by the *Daily Record* along with Bòrd na Gàidhlig, the awards are meant to reward all aspects of Gaelic culture, education, and language. See page 13 for more information on this year's International Award, which was won by American Robert Currie.

The 2017 finalists and winners (in bold type) are:

Learner Award

To celebrate an outstanding contribution towards the learning of the Gaelic language

Organising Committee - Buidheann Disathairne
Island Voices
Lasadh

Arts & Culture Award

Sponsored by Creative Scotland
For the most outstanding contribution to Gaelic culture in 2016/17

Alex MacDonald
Marcas Mac an Tuairneir
Rona MacDonald

Event Award

For the event which best promotes and or supports the Gaelic language within Scotland

Comunn Eachdraidh Nis

Comhairle nan Leabhraichean

Seachdain na Gàidhlig / Edinburgh Gaelic Festival

Community, Heritage & Tourism Award

Sponsored by Highlands and Islands Enterprise

For the group, organisation, community or school that has done most to utilise Gaelic within its community, in highlighting its heritage, or by promoting tourism in 2016/17

Fife Gaelic Development Group

Fiona J MacKenzie

Furan Gaelic Centre

Best Contribution Award

Sponsored by Bòrd na Gàidhlig

For the individual, group or organisation that has contributed significantly towards the growth or development of the Gaelic language

Arthur Cormack

DASG

Misneachd (Màrtainn Mac a' Bhàillidh)

International Award

Sponsored by MG ALBA

For the individual, event, group or organisation that best promotes Gaelic outside Scotland

Robert Currie

Grandfather Mountain Gaelic Song and Language Week

Emily McEwan-Fujita

Innovation in Education Award

For teachers, support staff, pupils/students, a Local Authority or education group which creates innovative ideas to support the strong delivery of Gaelic education

Lasadh

e-Sgoil

Kenneth MacKenzie

Young Gaelic Ambassador of the Year Award

For the outstanding young Gael (Under 25) who has made a significant contribution to the promotion of the Gaelic language

Pàdruig Morrison

Gaelic as an Economic Asset Award

Sponsored by Thorntons Investments

To recognise success made by a business, social enterprise or community group in realising the proven value of Gaelic towards Scotland's economy

Fèisean nan Gàidheal

Obraichean Gàidhlig

Bob Currie wins at the 2017 Duaisean Gàidhlig na h-Alba / Scottish Gaelic Awards

American Robert Currie has won the International Award at this year's Duaisean na h-Alba / Scottish Gaelic Awards, presented in Glasgow on November 15th. The International Award, sponsored by MG ALBA, is given to the individual, event, group, or organization that best promotes Gaelic outside Scotland. Dr. Emily Fujita-McEwan and ACGA's Gaelic Song and Language Week were also nominated.

Robert Currie

Robert "Bob" Currie, recently named Commander of the Name and Arms of the Learned Kindred of MacMhuirich, or Currie, has been a staunch supporter of Gàidhlig for many years. From a bursary at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig to a Gaelic Song Competition in Virginia, from symposia in Scotland to a program of Gaelic poets in NYC in conjunction with the exhibit of "An Leabhar Mòr" on Ellis Island (where the annual Tartan Day on Ellis Island celebration is possibly the largest Tartan Day celebration in the world (<http://tartandayonellisland.com/>) and the annual Pipes of Christmas concert (<http://www.pipesofchristmas.com/>), which has always featured Gaelic song, Bob Currie has for decades promoted the language and culture of the Gael.



Bob Currie, An Duais Eadar-nàiseanta
winner
Clan Currie Society

ACGA Grandfather Mountain Gaelic Song and Language Week

The Grandfather Mountain Gaelic Song and Language Week is ACGA's annual week-long workshop of Gaelic song and language classes held each summer high in the mountains of western North Carolina at Lees-McRae College. "Grandfather Mountain" classes are taught by Gaelic singers and teachers from Scotland, Canada, and the U.S. Originated by ACGA board member Jamie MacDonald, Grandfather Mountain Gaelic Song and Language Week will celebrate its 20th gathering in July 2018. Early in the new year you will find information on next summer's event at www.acgamerica.org/events.

Dr. Emily Fujita-McEwan

Known to many as the author of *The Scottish Gaelic Tattoo Handbook: Authentic Words and Phrases in the Celtic Language of Scotland*, Dr. Emily McEwan is a linguistic anthropologist in Halifax, Nova Scotia, specializing in the linguistic and cultural revitalization of Scottish Gaelic and other minority languages. She blogs at *Ath-bheòthachadh na Gàidhlig* / Gaelic Revitalization on a range of topics related to Gaelic including education, linguistics, religion, and songs. You can follow her at: <http://gaelic.co>.



Litir à Dùn Èideann

By Jeff W. Justice

Mo charaidean ann an Ameireaga a Tuath,

In late August, I was packing my bags at the conclusion of the master's program that brought me to Scotland a year earlier, when I received a surprise offer to do some part-time teaching for the University of Edinburgh. I was very delighted to take up their offer, and so I have a bonus *Litir à Dùn Èideann* for you. What's more, it's a bit of a "rebel-rousing" edition!

As the last edition of *An Naidheachd Againne* went to press last summer, I crossed another item off my bucket list: The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo. I've seen it broadcast on television, and it's cliché to say that it is so much better in person, but that *is* the honest truth. The TV broadcast does not include, for instance, the opening ceremony. This involves the evening's guest of honour engaging in the old Highland Celtic custom of drinking whisky from the quaich and kissing the bottom to show that all the whisky is gone. Then everyone wishes one another a hearty "*Slàinte mhath!*" The evening features military bands from all over the world, which makes it very much an international evening, but it still warms a Gaelic-speaker's heart to see our language have a prominent place in the programme.

As I have written before, Gaelic seems to have to claw, scrape, and fight to receive the respect it is due, and for every victory it achieves in one part of the city, it has to lick its wounds in another. In one of the victories last year, the Edinburgh University Students Association voted overwhelmingly to re-brand itself with bilingual signage. This was in keeping with the university's written policy that Gaelic will be given equal prominence on signage on campus where bilingual signage is used. This year, the university unveiled a new "Welcome" banner used throughout the several campuses' outdoor spaces. Not a single one of them had "*Fàilte*" written on it. Not *one* did. I took a photograph of one of them and sent it to the head of the School of Celtic, a friend of mine, with a simple caption: "*Nach eil brataichean sa Ghàidhlig againne?*" It seems that the one place, where policy requires that Gaelic is always supposed to have a place on campus, is on the flagpoles outside the recently-renovated McEwan Hall. Those poles were removed during those renovations and have yet to be replaced. I've since received assurances that the School of Celtic is following up on the picture with a view to ensuring that the university does follow through on its own Gaelic policy.

This is but one example that points to the fact that Gaelic speakers cannot afford to wait for people to come to us. We are going to have to bring the language to the people, and we had several such efforts during the annual Edinburgh Gaelic Festival, *Seachdain na Gàidhlig*, at the start of November. As usual, it featured a wide variety of literary events, presentations, and exhibitions, plus Gaelic-language tours of well-known landmarks. It also highlighted the various Gaelic-speaking circles – each growing in size! – which meet weekly in the capital. Edinburgh University played a prominent role as it always does, which included a Gaelic-speaking space carved out of a university café by students and staff who signed a corner table as "reserved" for conversation in Gaelic. I am very pleased to say that a conversation was always in progress whenever I dropped by, and I was even happier to see a different group of people was sitting there each time I went in. It was not just the "usual suspects" who were seated at the table.

One of the highlights of *Seachdain na Gàidhlig* was the 180th anniversary dinner and ceilidh of *Comann Ceilteach Oilthigh Dhùn Èideann*, which included wonderful presentations –entirely in Gaelic – from senior members on the society's history and a recitation of poetry and song from the society's official bard. Members and guests then danced the night away to foot-tapping traditional tunes provided by Glenfinnan, one of Edinburgh's best-known ceilidh bands.

So, I find myself packing my bags again, due to leave Edinburgh about the time that this letter reaches your inbox. I have always found it hard to leave Edinburgh, and those who have been here before know exactly why that is. I could close this letter by taking stock now of the past year and a few months that I have lived here, but I think that purpose would be better served with one more letter, and I will pen that for you after I have returned to North American shores. Until then

Leis gach deagh dhùrachd,

Jeff

Criomagan / Bits of This and That

Duais Dhòmhnail Meek

The 2017 Donald Meek Award for Gaelic Book of the Year was presented in Glasgow on October 5. For the first time the prize has gone to a drama script, *Taigh Sheonachain*, by actor Iain MacRae.

Prizes were also awarded to Eoghan Stewart for his first collection of poetry, *Beum Sgèithe*, and Mòrag Ann MacNeil for her children's book, *Èiginn Ùisdein*.

Three other titles were short-listed - *Am Balach Beag a dh'èisteadh aig Dorsan* by Alison Lang, *Dìoghaltas* by Iain F. MacLeod and *Eachdraidh Beatha* by Alison Dix.

Duais Dhòmhnail Meek / the Donald Meek Award is an annual literary competition funded by Creative Scotland and Bòrd na Gàidhlig to encourage creative writing in Scottish Gaelic.

Rùrachd Lusan Fiadhain / Foraging Wild Plants

Dualchas Nàdair na h-Alba / Scottish Natural Heritage and Bòrd na Gàidhlig have joined together to produce a Gaelic guide to responsible foraging for wild, edible plants in Scotland. This free download has text by Ruairidh MacIlleathain (Roddy MacLean) and is entirely in Gaelic except for the English common names for each plant.

Even if you are not planning a foraging expedition to Scotland in the near future, this colour-illustrated guide is a great learning resource for not only preserving the Gaelic names of common flora, but each entry gives information about the uses of the plant, as well as any traditional lore associated with it.

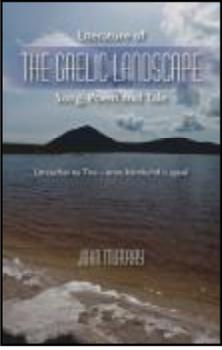
<http://www.snh.scot/gd/node/4268931>

Ràithean airson Sireadh / Seasons for Seeking

The fourth book of Gaelic poetry by Nova Scotia Gaelic Affairs Officer Lodaidh MacFhionghain (Lewis MacKinnon) features not only his own original work, but translations of poetry by Coleman Barks, the American poet known for his interpretation of the poetry of 13th century Persian poet, Rumi.

This bilingual collection groups the poems according to the seasons referred to in the title, marking the days that are celebrated in the Gaelic cultural calendar year in Nova Scotia.

Published by Bradan Press, *Ràithean airson Sireadh* is available directly from the publisher (<http://www.bradanpress.com/books/>) or as an ebook through Amazon.com.



Book Review:

The Literature of the Gaelic Landscape: Song, Poem and Tale / Litreachas na Tìre – òran, bàrdachd is sgeul,

John Murray / Iain Moireach,

Published by Whittles Publishing, 2017

Reviewed by Michael Newton

It is sad to say that the landscape of the Highlands is much better known than the language or literature that have been produced by the people nurtured by that environment. Featuring in films and imaginative literature, the natural features of the Highlands and Western Isles form a dramatic backdrop upon which anglophones have projected various notions and narratives, while the voices and long literary traditions of the natives are seldom heard or acknowledged.

Although it may be hard to counteract apathy and antipathy towards Gaelic and its literary heritage, and the co-option of Highland iconography, including the landscape, for anglophone ambitions, the shortage of good resources is to Gaelic's detriment. Murray's book promises to help inform a wide readership without any previous knowledge of Gaelic culture or literature in a thorough and systematic way.

This volume is an excellent companion to Murray's earlier book *Reading the Gaelic Landscape / Leughadh Aghaidh na Tìre* (2014): while the first book provides the micro-scope to help understand the meaning of individual place names and how they reflect Gaelic ways of seeing the landscape, the new book provides the macro-scope to help understand how Gaelic perceptions of the landscape and sense of place are reflected in and strengthened by Gaelic literary and cultural expressions.

The Literature of the Gaelic Landscape / Litreachas na Tìre examines a number of Gaelic literary expressions in roughly chronological order, beginning with Fenian / Ossianic materials. It moves through "Òran na Comhachaig" (by Domhnall mac Fhionnlaigh nan Dàn), and several Gaelic texts by Donnchadh Bàn Mac an t-Saoir and Somhairle MacGill-Eain, and then even examines the work of Neil Gunn who, although writing in English, is argued to maintain continuity with Gaelic ways of thinking about place and landscape. Throughout these analyses, Murray highlights inter-textual relations between these items, i.e., the ways in which the texts composed by Gaelic authors often build upon the messages of previous texts and generally relate to one another.

It would be misleading to imply that all Gaelic literary expressions are inherently rooted in the landscape and reflect a sense of place, but as Murray demonstrates, many do require taking such issues seriously to understand them in their fullness. One of the most interesting of these to me was "Òran do Chaora" by Donnchadh Bàn Mac an t-Saoir, which is littered with Argyllshire place names and "can be understood as a complete metonym for the waulking of cloth and its accompanying song." It is challenging to present the disparate sets of information (literary, rhetorical, cultural, geographical, etc.) that are needed to enable readers to understand texts from a society, time, and place that are so different from our own, and Murray attempts to facilitate the geographical dimensions by supplementing texts with images of places, maps, and lists of place names (that include their translation into English and geographical coordinates).

At its best, Murray's text successfully synthesizes a range of analytical tools from geography, literary criticism and anthropology, and offers observations about Gaelic literary expression with an eloquence that approaches poetry. He remarks, for example:

“Like all languages, Gaelic has a view of landscape to which it has responded, and to which its own vocabulary, grammar and idiom have evolved to describe. The land is often perceived through a prism of animism, which can assume the massive proportions of mythical beasts and giants. Landform is frequently described in anthropomorphic and biomorphic terms. ... There is a longing for a golden age of heroes and hunters, often elaborated in the tales of the Fianna. There is a longing for a time of innocence untarnished by modernity.” (p. VIII)

It is difficult to present texts and the names of people, places and compositions in two different languages, and I felt that the book is sometimes marred by this challenge, as the editorial choices made in the presentational style make it more difficult to parse than it should be. There are some errors in Gaelic texts and inconsistencies in nomenclature (“Donnchadh” is sometimes spelt as “Donncha”).

Regardless of these shortcomings, Murray’s book is a delightful read which makes an important contribution to Gaelic literary criticism by presenting texts and critical approaches that can be appreciated by a non-specialist audience. The Highlands offer spectacular scenery, but once one knows and understands the Gaelic literature composed by the native population of these places, it is difficult to see them without the associated voices that Murray helps to bring to our awareness.

Literature of the Gaelic Landscape/ Litreachas na Tìre” can be ordered through Whittles Publishing https://www.whittlespublishing.com/Literature_of_the_Gaelic_Landscape.

Clach air a Càrn

Those of us who had the pleasure of having Marion (Mòrag) Burke as an instructor at the 2010 ACGA immersion weekend in Colorado Springs were saddened to learn of her passing on September 16 in Cape Breton.



Although growing up in the almost totally Gaelic-speaking Big Pond, Cape Breton, in the 1940s, she was never encouraged to speak the language that she heard all around her, and it wasn’t until she attended St. Francis Xavier University much later in life that she became a more fluent speaker. It was also at St. FX that she learned to read and write Gaelic. She considered herself a life-long learner of the language and never missed an opportunity to attend classes.

In addition to tutoring Gaelic at St. FX, teaching the language to school children in Nova Scotia, and leading conversation groups, Mòrag loved Gaelic singing and composed songs herself, including Òran Imriche / Immigration Song

In keeping with her kind and gentle nature, her final wish was to be remembered by simply spreading kindness to others.



Sunrise over Little Loch Broom, Scotland
Gregory Rock

Answer to Seanfhacal na Ràithe, p. 6

Cha mhair a’ ghrian mhaidne fad an latha.
Morning sunshine may not last all day.

ACGA member Jeff Grabell (Toronto) remembers that when he was a child he enjoyed this version of pide (PEE-duh) that his mother learned to make from a Turkish co-worker. He has recently been able to recreate the recipe for his own family and friends.

Pide Turcais (Tionndadh Mo Mhàthar)

Taois

1 phacaid beirme
1 1/2 cupa uisge blàth
1 spàin-tì siùcair no meala
1 spàin-tì salainn
3 1/2 cupannan mine-flùir

Na chuireas tu ann

1 gu 1 1/2 punnd mairt-fheòil phronn
no uain-fheòil phronn
1/2 uinnean milis, air a ghearradh
1 phioabar-dearg, air a ròstadh agus air a ghearradh
1/2 cupa tomàtohan beaga (gun sil), air an gearradh
1 spàin-bùird sùgh liomaid
1 spàin-bùird ola a' chroinn-ola
paprika 's salann 's piobar gu do bhlas fhèin

1 bhuidheagan air a chur mun cuairt le 2 spàin-
bùird ola a' chroinn-ola
sil seasaman no ròs-Màiri

Stiùireadh

Taois

Cuir a' bheirm agus an t-uisge blàth ann am bobhla beag agus cuir mun cuairt gu socair. Fuirich co-dhiù còig mionaidean deug gus am bi am measgachadh a' fàs cobharach. Cuir a' mhin-flùir ann am bobhla mòr agus dèan lag anns a' mhin-fhlùir. Cuir ann a' bheirm 's uisge mean air mhean agus cuir mun cuairt le forca.

Measgaich an salann 's siùcair (no mil) anns an taois.

Taoisnich seo gu math gus am bi i mìn. Bidh i steigeach aig an toiseach. Còmhdaich am bobhla leis an taois na bhroinn le nèapagean glan agus cuir seo ann an àite blàth airson uair a thìde no gus am bi an taois air dùblachadh ann am meud.

Na chuireas tu ann

Fhad 's a tha an taois ag èirigh, bruich na glasraichean, an sùgh liomaid agus ola a' chroinn-ola ann am pana air an stòbha air teas meadhanach gus am fàs na h-uinneanan bog. Cuir ann an fheòil. Cuir ann am paprika agus an salann agus am piobar gu do bhlas fhèin. Na bruich an fheòil cus air sgàth 's gum bi i a' bruich anns an àmhainn cuideachd.

Turkish Pide (Mom's Version)

Dough

1 dry yeast packet
1 1/2 cups of warm water
1 teaspoon sugar or honey
1 teaspoon salt
3 1/2 cups flour

Filling

1 to 1 1/2 lbs. ground beef
or lamb
1/2 sweet onion, finely diced
1 roasted red pepper, finely diced
1/2 cup cherry tomatoes cut in half, no seeds
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1 tablespoon olive oil
paprika, salt, pepper to taste

1 egg yolk stirred with 2 tablespoons of
olive oil
sesame seeds or rosemary for topping



Jeff Grabell

Method

Dough

In a small bowl, add yeast to warm water and stir gently. Wait at least 15 minutes for the mixture to get bubbly. Pour the flour into a large bowl and make a well in the centre. Mix the yeast mixture into the flour a little at a time with a fork. Mix the salt and sugar (or honey) into the dough. Knead the dough until it is a smooth consistency. The dough will be sticky at first. Cover the bowl containing the dough with a clean cloth and place somewhere warm to rise for at least an hour, until it is double in size.

Filling

While waiting for the dough to rise, cook the vegetables, lemon juice, and olive oil in a pan on the stove on medium heat until the onions become soft. Add the beef. Add paprika, salt and pepper to taste. Don't overcook the beef as it will cook in the oven some more.

Nuair a tha an taois deiseil, gearr i ann an dà phios agus le do chorragan, cumaich gach pìos ann an ceart-cheàrnach mu 4 òirlich air leud agus 12 òirleach am faid. Na cleachd crann-fuime.

Cuir gach ceart-cheàrnach air clàr-fuine agus sgaoil an fheòil air an taois. Tarraing na h-oirean fada ri chèile agus plùisg iad gus am bi iad teannta. Lùb an taois ann an cearcall.

Bruisig am mullach agus na sliasaidean leis a' bhuidheagan agus leis an ola a' chroinn-ola. Crath sìl seasaman no ròs-Màiri air an uachdar.

Bruich iad ann an àmhainn aig 350°F fad leth-uair gus am bi an t-aran òrdhonn. Gearr ann am piosan agus cuir iad le tzatziki no sabhs eile.

When the dough has doubled in size, cut it in half and make two long rectangles, about 4 inches wide and about 12 inches long using your fingers and not a rolling pin.

Put each rectangle of dough on a cookie sheet and spread the beef mixture over each one. Pull the long sides of the dough together to form a tube over the beef and pinch the edges firmly to join. Coil the tubes into a circle.

Brush the tops and sides of the dough with the egg yolk and olive oil mixture. Sprinkle sesame seeds and/or rosemary on top.

Bake at 350°F in the oven for about half an hour until the bread browns. Cut into sections and serve with tzatziki or a sauce of your choice.



Jeff Grabell



Do you have a favorite recipe that you'd like to share with other ACGA members? Submit it in a bilingual format to one of our editors and we'll publish it in a future issue of An Naidheachd Againne. Na gabhaibh dragh – we'll pass the Gaelic by a native speaker to be sure your recipe is delicious in both languages!

a-muigh 's a-mach / out and about

Coimhearsnachd. Community. ACGA's Board of Directors has been talking lately about community, Gaelic community. Since few if any of us in North America have the luxury of actually living in a Gaelic-speaking community, we need to work to build our communities. For many of us, our community includes a Gaelic study group. Every study group has its own organization and its own schedule of classes and events, but the goal of each is to build a closer relationship between its members and the Gaelic language and the members with each other.

An Naidheachd Againne is starting a new column which will feature activities organized by local study groups, activities that we think will help build a stronger Gaelic community that more of us can be part of.

Does your study group have anything special planned in the coming months? Let one of our editors know and we'll feature it in our next "a-muigh 's a-mach."

A' Comharrachadh 130 Bliadhna / Celebrating 130 Years

Comunn Gàidhlig Thorontò / The Gaelic Society of Toronto began in the mid-1800s as an all-Gaelic debating society but had evolved by 1880 as a place for Gaelic-speaking immigrants to the Toronto area to meet and interact in their new country. It wasn't until seven years later that efforts were made to formally organize, and in 1887 The Toronto Gaelic Society was inaugurated with the purpose of promoting Gaelic language and literature, to provide education in the Scottish Gaelic language and to provide aid to Scottish immigrants to the area. In 1903 the Society changed its name to Comunn Gàidhlig Chanada, with the aim of broadening their activities across the country, but by 1940, the society once again became Comunn Gàidhlig Thorontò.



Over the years the Society has sponsored Gaelic reading and language classes, Gaelic Bible classes, a Gaelic chòir, Mòd Ontario and Cànan agus Òran, the latter being one-day Gaelic language and song workshops that continue to this day. The Society maintains a presence at Highland Games in Ontario and has regular meetings and social activities related to Gaelic language and culture, including concerts and workshops by Joy Dunlop and Gillebrìde Mac'IlleMhaoil.

You can find out more about Comunn Gàidhlig Thorontò here: <http://www.gaelicsocietytoronto.com/>

Òraid ann an Toronto le Gillebrìde Mac'IlleMhaoil / Gillebrìde MacMillan Lecture in Toronto

On Tuesday, November 28, ACGA member and past Beinn Seanair instructor Gillebrìde Mac'IlleMhaoil delivered the annual St. Andrew's Society of Toronto Lecture at the Department of Celtic Studies, University of Toronto, in conjunction with the University of Guelph. Gillebrìde spoke on the topic of historic Gaelic song collecting and collectors in the Outer Hebrides, and then described his own research supported by the European Oral Song Tradition and Ceòlas. In 2015 Gillebrìde worked with a group of native Gaelic speakers in South Uist to revive locally composed Gaelic songs that were no longer sung in the community with the help of archived material. The result was that these speakers, who were previously reluctant to sing because of their self-perception that they "weren't good enough", developed an increased interest in singing in Gaelic, and songs that once were lost to the community in which they were composed are now being sung again.



Gillebrìde Mac'IlleMhaoil
Cinders McLeod



Dè Tha Dol? Gaelic Events

Am Faoillteach 2018 / January 2018

Celtic Connections, Glasgow, Scotland, January 19 – February 5, 2018

With 2,100 artists, 300 events and 20 venues, Celtic Connections features concerts, ceilidhs, talks, free events, late night sessions and workshops focusing on the roots of traditional Scottish music.

<http://www.celticconnections.com/Pages/default.aspx>

An Giblean 2018 / April 2018

Cùrsaichean na Càisge / Easter Short Courses, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, Skye, April 2 – 6, 2018

Gaelic 1, Gaelic 3, Gaelic 5, Gaelic 7, Gaelic Song with Christine Primrose, Gaelic in the Landscape with Roddy MacLean. For course descriptions, costs, and further information see:

<http://www.smo.uhi.ac.uk/en/cursaichean/cursaichean-goirid/caisg-2018/>

Cùrsaichean na Càisge / Easter Short Courses, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, Skye, April 9 - 13, 2018

Gaelic 2, Gaelic 4, Gaelic 6, Gaelic 8, Gaelic Conversation with Joy Dunlop, Aspects of Highland Material Culture with Margaret Stewart. For course descriptions, costs, and further information see:

<http://www.smo.uhi.ac.uk/en/cursaichean/cursaichean-goirid/caisg-2018/>

An t-Iuchar 2018 / July 2018

Beinn Seanair / Grandfather Mountain Gaelic Song and Language Week, Banner Elk, NC, July 8 – 13, 2018

Further information will be available in early 2018.

Cùrsaichean Samhraidh / Summer Short Courses, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, Skye, July 9 – 13, 2018

Òrain Ghàidhlig with Christine Primrose, Gaelic 1, Gaelic 2, Gaelic Conversation Course (Lower Intermediate) with Muriel Fisher, Scottish Gaelic for Irish Speakers (Beginners). For course descriptions, costs, and further information see:

<http://www.smo.uhi.ac.uk/en/cursaichean/cursaichean-goirid/cursaichean-samhraidh-2018/>

Ionnasachadh Tro Chultar Beò Ann Am Flòdaigearraidh / Learning Through Living Culture in Flodigarry, Quirang Lodge, Staffin, Skye, July 16 – 20, 2018

This course is suitable for fluent speakers or for those who have acquired at least an upper intermediate or advanced level of Gaelic (SMO Level 6 or above). The Flodigarry Township Trust in association with Sabhal Mòr Ostaig. For course description, costs, and further information see:

<http://www.smo.uhi.ac.uk/en/cursaichean/cursaichean-goirid/flodigarry-16-07-2018/>

Eòlas Mun Eilean sa Ghàidhlig le Muriel Fisher / Exploring Skye with Gaelic, Hosted by Muriel Fisher, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig and environs, July 23 – 27, 2018

The course will be partly College-based, and the rest of the time will be spent exploring Skye. In the tutorials, participants will receive a pronunciation workshop, learn basic and useful social phrases, and will cover some simple grammar and language skills. The course is ideal for participants who have little or no Gaelic. For course description, costs, and further information see:

<http://www.smo.uhi.ac.uk/en/cursaichean/cursaichean-goirid/exploring-skye-23-07-2018/>

Cùrsaichean Samhraidh / Summer Short Courses, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, Skye, July 30 – August 3, 2018
Gaelic 1, Gaelic 3, Gaelic 5, Gaelic 7, Gaelic for Irish Speakers (Advanced Learners). For course descriptions, costs, and further information see:
<http://www.smo.uhi.ac.uk/en/cursaichean/cursaichean-goirid/cursaichean-samhraidh-2018/>

An Lùnasdal 2018 / August 2018

Cùrsaichean Samhraidh / Summer Short Courses, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, Skye, August 6 – 10, 2018
Gaelic 2, Gaelic 4, Gaelic 6, Gaelic 8, A Seascape of Gaelic Song, with Margaret Stewart. For course descriptions, costs, and further information see:
<http://www.smo.uhi.ac.uk/en/cursaichean/cursaichean-goirid/cursaichean-samhraidh-2018/>

Cùrsaichean Samhraidh / Summer Short Courses, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, Skye, August 13 – 17, 2018
Gaelic 1, Gaelic 3, Gaelic 5, Gaelic 7, Gaelic 9, Gaelic Creative Writing with Alison Lang. For course descriptions, costs, and further information see:
<http://www.smo.uhi.ac.uk/en/cursaichean/cursaichean-goirid/cursaichean-samhraidh-2018/>

Cùrsaichean Samhraidh / Summer Short Courses, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, Skye, August 20 – 24, 2018
Gaelic 2, Gaelic 4, Gaelic 6, Gaelic 8, Gaelic 10, Learning through Living Culture in Flodigarry. For course descriptions, costs, and further information see:
<http://www.smo.uhi.ac.uk/en/cursaichean/cursaichean-goirid/cursaichean-samhraidh-2018/>



The Online Faces of ACGA

Like most organizations in the modern world, ACGA has several online faces, including more than one website, a Facebook page, a conversational forum, a YouTube page, and even a Twitter account.

Our main website, www.acgamerica.org, includes a blog for announcements, tips, articles, etc. It also contains an archive of newsletters, detailed information about our major events, information about ACGA and how to join, learning resources, and more.

Our forum site, <http://forum.acgamerica.org/>, is a collection of conversational forums, some public, some for members only, and some for ACGA's internal organizational functions.

Our Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/ACGAGaelic>, is a public face of ACGA. Because this page is in a social network, it has a very different feel from our website, and likely attracts a different crowd.

We don't have very much video content on our ACGAmerica YouTube channel, www.youtube.com/user/ACGAmerica, yet (we're looking for more), but what we do have is interesting and ACGA-relevant.

Our Twitter account, <https://twitter.com/ACGAGaelic>, is used for ACGA announcements.

Some of our events have their own web presence, too. The ACGA Mòd website, <http://usmod.wordpress.com/>, contains a lot of information about past, present, and future Mòds. And our Gaelic Song and Language Week at Grandfather Mountain has its own Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1463155417230179/>.

Directory of Gaelic Classes & Study Groups

Arizona

Flagstaff

Study Group
Richard Ferguson
fergusdubh@yahoo.com

Phoenix

Classes
Richard Smith
coindubh@yahoo.com

Tucson

Classes
Muriel Fisher
<http://www.murielofskye.com>

California

Sacramento Area

Classes
Donnie MacDonald
minchmusic@comcast.net

Colorado

Boulder

Study Group
Sue Hendrix
susan.hendrix@colorado.edu

Denver

Study Group
Reese McKay
reese-mckay25@gmail.com

San Luis Valley

Phone and Online lessons
Caroline Root
www.gaidhliggachlatha.com

Connecticut

Hartford area

Classes
Thomas Leigh
tleigh.piper@gmail.com

Gaelic Song Classes
Maggie Carchrie
860-748-7549

Florida

Jensen Beach

Treasure Coast Scots-Gaelic
Study Group
sryan1812@mylincoln.edu

Illinois

Springfield

Study Group
Bill McClain
217-854-7918
<https://tinyurl.com/SpringfieldILLGaelic>

Maryland

Baltimore

Study Group
<http://tinyurl.com/Maryland-Baltimore>
Rick Gwynallen
Rgwynallen@yahoo.com
301-928-9026

Missouri

St. Louis

Missouri Scottish Gaelic Learning
Group
Virtual meet-up group for those in the
Bi-State area:
<https://tinyurl.com/BaltimoreGaelic>

New York

New York

Classes
New York Caledonian Club
www.nycaledonian.org/studies.php

North Carolina

Triangle / Raleigh area

Study Group
An Phillips
fiongeal@yahoo.com

Chapel Hill

Classes
Michael Newton
gaelicmichael@gmail.com

Oklahoma

Midwest City

Study Group
Barry Acker
bearachanse@yahoo.com

Texas

Hurst

Classes
David Gressett
jdgressett@hotmail.com

Fort Worth

Study Group
Jonquele Jones
jonquele@flash.net

Virginia

Catlett

Local in person and via
Skype
Michael Mackay
mackay@progeny.net

Northern Virginia- Washington, DC- Maryland

Gàidhlig Photomac
Gaelic Learning Community
Regular workshops and
social events
Join us on Meetup.com
Contact Liam
willbcassidy@gmail.com

Tidewater

Classes
Jason Wilson
wilsonsoxford@gmail.com

Washington

Seattle

Classes & Study Groups
Slighe nan Gàidheal
<http://www.slighe.com>

Canada

Toronto

Classes

CLUINN

www.torontogaelic.ca

Québec

Montréal

Study Group

Linda Morrison

linda@lindamorrison.com

FOR MORE information about these resources and for information on long-distance courses, short courses, and private instruction, see our web page at <http://www.acgamerica.org/learn/classes>

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AN NAIDHEACHD AGAINNE

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