

An Naidheachd Againne

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Mollaig Chrìdheil agus Bliadhna Mhath Ùr

Thoir an t-soiridh seo thar chuaintean,
Gu tìr uaine nam beann àrda,
'S fàg aig a' Chladach-a-Tuath e
Ged nach ann a fhuair mi m' àrach

*Bear this greeting over the seas
To the green land of the high mountains
And leave it at the North Shore
Though it's not there that I was raised*

When holidays come we all think of home, no matter where that home may be. The Gaels, of course, are no exception, and Highlanders living in places as far apart as London, England, and London, Ontario, will probably empathize with the Gaelic

bard who wrote the verse above, the Rev. Malcolm Campbell. He was not writing about a home in the West Highlands, however, but about the North Shore of Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, where his mother lived. He called the song "Òran na Bliadhna Uire," or "Song of the New Year."

On tha bhliadhna seo aig deireadh,
'S Bliadhn' Ùr eile nise làimh ruinn;
'S còir gun sgrìobh mi beagan facail
Do'n té dh'altrum mi nam phàisde

*Since this year is ending
And another New Year is at hand,
It is fitting that I write a few words
To the woman who nursed me when I was a child*

Christmas and New Year's aren't originally "Celtic" holidays, of course, but they are two of the most important holidays of the year to all the Celtic peoples.

In Scotland, New Year's Eve has particular importance. In Gaelic Scotland it is called Oidhche Challainn while in Scots it is known as Hogmanay. Christmas is known in Gaelic as Nollaig (derived from Latin *Natalica*), and sometimes Nollaig Mhòr or "Big Christmas." New Year's was sometimes called Nollaig Bheag, or "Little Christmas." In Gaelic Ireland, the same name is applied to Epiphany, also called Nollaig na mBan, or "the Women's Christmas" (supposedly because "women's fare" — cakes, tea and wine — was served that day as opposed to the more manly whiskey and beef served Christmas day).

In Gaelic Scotland Christmas primarily was a religious holiday — many of the modern secular trappings of Christmas — such as Christmas trees and ornaments — didn't arrive until the Victorian era or later.

One correspondent on Gaelic-L, the Gaelic e-mail list-service, pointed this out when asked about Scottish Christmas stories:

"Nuair a bha mi nam bhalach beag, cha robh Bodach na Nollaig a' tadhal oirnn air Latha na Nollaig. Bhiodh e a' tighinn thugainn an dèidh Oidhche Challainn air a' chiad latha den Bhliadhna Ùr, ged a bha craobh Nollaig againn agus ged a bha partaidhean Nollaig ann an talla na h-eaglais againn." ["When I was a little lad, Santa Claus didn't visit us on Christmas Day. He would be coming after Hogmanay Night on the first day of the New Year, although we had a Christmas tree and although we had Christmas parties in the in the church hall."]

Before Christmas trees became common, people would decorate their houses with greenery and candles.

There are many religious prayers or blessings associated with Christmas and the New Year. Alexander Carmichael recorded some of them in the 19th century his *Carmina Gadelica*. Here's a portion of one:

Beannaicht an taigh 's na bheil ann,
Eadar chuall, is chlac, is chrann,
Iomair do Dhia, eadar bhrat is aodach,
Slàinte dhaoine gun robh ann.

*Bless the house and that which is in it,
Between rafter and stone and beam,
Give all to God from rug to linen,
A health to those herein.*

Although caroling at Christmas is an English and not a Gaelic tradition, Gaelic Scotland has produced many beautiful Christmas hymns and songs. One of the best known is "Leanabh an Àigh" - "Child of wonder" - written by Mull

poetess Màiri NicLùcais, or Mary MacDonald, who was born about 1790-1800 and died in 1872. She was very active in the Baptist church on Mull. The tune to "Leanabh an Àigh" is well known even to non-Gaelic speakers as Cat Stevens adopted it for "Morning Has Broken."

Leanabh an àigh
An leanabh bh'aig Màiri,
Rugadh san stàball,
Rìgh nan dùl;
Thàinig don fhàsach
Dh'fhulang nar n-àite,
Son' iad an àireamh
Bhitheas dha dlùth.

*Child of wonder
The child of Mary,
Born in a stable,
King of all;
He came to the desert
Suffered in our place,
Happy is the host
Who are to him faithful.*

Carmichael's *Carmina Gaedlica* also contains many traditional Christmas and New Year's songs. "Heire, Bannag, hoire Bannag" is a good example. The "bannag" is a gift — Christ — who is described as the son of all the elements: dew, the clouds, the rain, the stars, the dawn, the globe, the moon and sun and the light. Catriona Parsons sings a beautiful version of this song on "Nollaig Chridheil: A Holiday Selection of Gaelic Songs, Music and Stories," produced by B&R Heritage Enterprises).

Heire Bannag, hoire Bannag
Heire Bannag, air a bheò.

Mac na niula, Mac na neula,
Mac na runna, Mac na reula,
Heire Bannag, etc.

Mac na dìle, Mac na déire,
Mac na spire, Mac na speura,
Heire Bannag, etc.

Mac na lasa, Mac na leusa,
Mac na cruinne, Mac na cé,
Heire Bannag, etc.

Mac nan dùla, Mac nan nèamha,
Mac na gile, Mac na greine,
Heire Bannag, etc.

Mac Moire na Dé-méine,
Is Mac De tùs gach sgeula,
Heire Bannag, etc.

Hey the Gift, ho the Gift
Hey the Gift, on the living.

Son of the dawn, Son of the clouds,
Son of the planet, Son of the star,
Hey the Gift, etc.

Son of the rain, Son of the dew,
Son of the welkin¹, Son of the sky,
Hey the Gift, etc.

Son of the flame, Son of the light,
Son of the sphere, Son of the globe,
Hey the Gift, etc.

Son of the elements, Son of the heavens,
Son of the moon, Son of the sun,
Hey the Gift, etc.

Son of Mary of the God-mind,
And the Son of God first of all news,
Hey the Gift, etc.

¹"Welkin" — an archaic term for the sky, or heavens.

Poetic blessings and rhymes continue to be an important part of Gaelic tradition. This blessing was collected in the last century by Iain Paterson from a Mrs. Dix of Bernaray, Harris, who had heard her father recite it. It was published in *Tocher*, the journal of the School of Scottish Studies at the University of Edinburgh.

Air an Nollaig àraidh seo
'S gach là tha tighinn na dèidh
Gun taomadh oirbh de lànachd
Gun fhàillein oirbh fon ghrèin
Ur ceum gun chearb gun tuisleadh
Ach ur slighe dìreach rèidh
Ur cagailt blàth 's ur n-aoibhneas làn
'S sibh sona slàn gun èis.

On this special Christmas
And every day afterwards
May plenty pour over you
Without fail under the sun
Your step be without stumble or sway
But your path level and straight
Your hearth warm
and your joy complete
And you fully happy without want.

Religious services played an important part in the celebration of Christmas, particularly Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve in Catholic areas. But the holiday season was not entirely devoted to solemnity. There was certainly a great deal of merriment among families, friends and neighbors. In some places, celebrations once lasted the entire twelve-day season of Christmas.

Scottish folklorist Margaret Bennett gave a fascinating account of how some Gaelic settlers in the New World kept the Twelve Days of Christmas in her book "The Last Stronghold: The Scottish Gaelic Traditions of Newfoundland." For the Gaels of the Codroy Valley in western Newfoundland, the holiday season began on Christmas Eve and ran through Jan. 6, or "Old Christmas Day."

One of Margaret Bennett's informants was Angus MacNeill. He described the Twelve Days of Christmas for her: "They would arrange to have a big 'time' in a different house every night during the Twelve Days of Christmas ... there would be the biggest kind of a time with Grandpa playing the pipes, and people singing and playing the accordion and the fiddle, and with dancing and step-dancing. And of course there would be plenty to eat; the women would make a big 'feed' with bottled meats and pickles and jams, bannocks, breads, pies and Christmas fruit cakes ... of course there would be lots to drink all through."

Another custom common in the Codroy Valley was mumming — a popular tradition in many parts of Newfoundland. All during the Twelve Days people would disguise themselves in old clothes and masks and go from house to house to play music and dance. The people they visited would have to guess who they were.

Oidhche Challainn — New Year's Eve — was a special night for the Codroy Valley mummers. This was true in Scotland and Cape Breton as well. In old times, people would dress in cowhides and sheep skins and go from house to house, circling houses "deiseal" or sunwise, beating on the walls and beating sticks — driving the old year out to let the new year in. Then they would go to the door and recite a special rhyme, *Rann na Callainn*, requesting entry and food and drink. Here's an example that Allan MacArthur of Codroy Valley gave to Margaret Bennett:

Oidhche chullainn Challainn chruaidh
Thàinig mise le m' dhuan gu taigh.
Thubhairt am bodach rium le gruaim
Buailidh mi do chluais le preas.
Labhair a' chailleach a b'fhearr na'n t-òr
Gum bu chòir mo leigeil a-staigh
Air son na dh'ithinn-sa de bhiadh
Agus deuran beag sìos leis.

*On a cold frosty Night of the Callainn
I came with my rhyme to a house.
The old man said to me with a frown
I'll hit you on the ear with a briar.
Said the old woman who was better than gold
That I should be let in
For all the little food that I would eat
And a little drink to go with it.*

These types of rhymes were recited on other occasions as well. Folklorist Calum MacLean, the brother of poet Somhairle, recorded this traditional Christmas rhyme from Archie Cameron, a native of Ardour:

Oidhche Choinnle 's Oidhche Nollaig
Dà oidhche bheir loinn na sona:
Maighdeann òg a' roinn nam bonnach.
Seo an taigh sa bheil mo ghnòthach
'S chan eil romham dol nas fhaide.

*The Eve of Candles and Christmas Eve,
Two nights that bring the greatest joy:
Young maidens dividing the bannocks.
This is the house where I belong,
I have no mind to go further.*

This rhyme and others may be found on the Gaelic Resource Database, a website maintained by Comhairle nan Eilean Siar in Scotland. They bring to mind the popular traditional Gaelic song "A' Challuinn," better known by its refrain: "'S e gillean mo rùin a thogadh oirn sunnd" ("the young men of my love would raise our spirits"). The song describes a traditional New Year's celebration about the time of the Napoleonic wars:

'S e gillean mo ghràidh a thàinig o'n bhlar,
Le'n còtaichean sgàrlaid 's bòidheach iad.

Chualas na duain am briathran nam buadh,
"Thoir botul a nuas 's an tòisich sinn."

Ùrlar math, réidh, bean-tighe 'g a réir,
'S cha b'eagal dhuinn fhéin nach òlamaid.

'S i fidheall nan teud a sheinneadh gu réidh,
'S gun cuireadh i ceud an òrdugh dhuinn.

Thuirt Seumas 's e thall, 's e labhairt mu'n dram,
"Gun theirig a' bhrannaidh, dh'òl iad i."

*The lads of my love had come from the war,
With their scarlet coats, they were handsome.*

*The rhyme was heard in words of virtue,
"Bring down a bottle and we'll begin."*

*A good smooth dancing floor and ready hostess,
There would be no fear we wouldn't get a drink.*

*The stringed fiddle melodiously played,
It would put a hundred in good order.*

*Said Seumas, over there, speaking of drams,
"The brandy is finished, they drank it."*

And so on for many, many verses. You can find a complete version of the song in Helen Creighton and Calum MacLeod's "Gaelic Songs in Nova Scotia," and hear a version on B&R Enterprises' "Nollaig Chridheil" CD.

Although Christmas Trees and Father Christmas or Santa Claus (Bodach na Nollaig, Dadaidh na Nollaig) are relatively recent introductions to the Gaelic world; they have certainly made their mark. Here's another poem and anecdote drawn from Atlantic Canada, from Frank MacRae of North River Bridge, who was interviewed by *Cape Breton's Magazine* many years ago. When he was young a group of parents wanted to introduce a Christmas tree to the local school house - a radical innovation at the time. One of the school trustees, a man named George MacLeod, was opposed to the idea.

The tree was put up, and another local, Duncan MacLean, made an amusing poem about the event.

Am faic thu craobh 's a' chormer?
Mar tha i air a "loadadh"
Le "candies" agus "toys",
le "ornaments" dhaor

*Do you see a tree in the corner?
It's after being loaded
With "candies" and "toys"
And expensive ornaments*

Ged a thigeadh a' rìgh Seoras
Chan fhaiceadh e dad mì-dhòigheil,
'S ann a bhiodh e pròiseil
Le òigridh an tìr.

*Although the king George would come
He wouldn't see anything improper
He would be proud
of the youth of the land.*

A nigheanan, bithidh thu dòigheil;
'S e "bachelor" th'ann an Claus
Seinnibh dha an t-òran
"Cha phòs mi ach thu."

*Young girls, behave well,
For Claus is a bachelor
Sing to him the song,
"I'll marry none but you."*

The "king George" in the song wasn't the English king, but MacLeod the trustee! The full interview with MacRae and his wife Margaret can be found in Cape Breton's Magazine number 46.

From the poems, songs and stories recounted in this brief article, we can see that three separate strands of Christmas custom have become tightly intertwined in Gaelic tradition.

First, the Christian religious celebration of Nollaig, reflected in church ritual and spiritual poetry. Second, ritual customs related to a seasonal midwinter celebration that aren't specifically Christian at all and certainly have pre-Christian roots, including communal celebrations such as mumming and the carousing of Oidhche Challuinn. And third, we have the customs of the commercialized modern Christmas celebrated in Europe, the Americas and around the globe, complete with Christmas trees, candies, ornaments and toys and "Father Christmas" or "Santa Claus" — customs now universal, for good and for ill.

Among these customs and traditions there is plenty for all people of good will, regardless of their faith, to celebrate. I'd like to wish you a Merry Christmas, and a Good New Year. Nollaig Chrìdheil, agus Bliadhna Mhath Ur!

— Liam Ó Caiside

Beannachadh Bliadhna Ùir

Dhé, beannaich dhomh an là ur
Nach do thuradh dhomh roimhe riamh;
Is ann gu beannachadh do ghnùis,
Thug thu 'n ùine seo dhomh, a Dhia.

Beannaich thusa dhomh mo shùil,
Beannaicheadh mo shùil na chì;
Beannaichidh mise mo nabaidh,
Beannaicheadh mo nabaidh mi.

Dhe tabhair dhomh-sa crìdhe glan,
Na leig a seall do shùla mi;
Beannaich dhomh mo ghin's mo bhean,
'S beannaich domh mo nearc's mo nì.

New Year's Blessing

God, bless to me the new day
Never vouchsafed to me before;
It is to bless Thine own presence
Thou hast given me this time, O God.

Bless Thou to me mine eye,
May mine eye bless all it sees;
I will bless my neighbour,
May my neighbour bless me.

God, give me a clean heart,
Let me not from sight of Thine eye;
Bless to me my children and my wife,
And bless to me my means and my cattle.

— from the *Carmina Gadelica*.

Facal bho'n Cheann-Suidhe: President's Report

A Chàirdean,

Mar a tha a' bhliadhna a' tighinn gu crìch, 's ann a tha mo smuain a' tionndadh, mar a tha e do mhòran, air ais air an ùine a chaidh seachad, gu h-àraid air mar a chaidh ar comunn air adhart. "'S e ùrachadh atharrachadh", mar a chanas an seanfhacal, ach gu dè na atharraichean tha thainig air ACGA anns a' bhliadhna a chaidh seachad? A-mach à bòrd ùr, (agus ceann-suidhe ùr), tha cùisean taobh a-staigh ACGA air atharrachadh cuideachd, mar eiseim-pleir: tha buidsead nas deimhinne againn na bh'againne fad bliadhnaichean, tha comadaidhean ùr air tighinn a-steach (Taic Gaidhealtachd agus Buth-Obrach Beinn Seanair), tha sinn air ar Farpais Sgoilearachd a ghluasad dhan Gheamhradh (cuimhnic air an ùine a th'agaibh fhathast airson gabhail pàirt ann, agus mholainn-sa gum biodh e uamhasach math do dhuine sam bith a tha ag ionnsachadh Gàidhlig 'sa Chomunn a' gabhail pàirt!!) agus tha cathraiche ùr againn airson a' Mhòid - Neacal Freer.

Tha e math a bhith dèanamh rudan ùr 'sa Chomunn, airson leasachadh is leudachadh a dheanamh, ach tha sinn an còmhnaidh a' coimhead a-mach gus a bhith cinnteach gur e na atharrachaidhean a tha sinn a' deanamh freagarrach is feumail. Tha an uiread de dhaoine a tha nam ball anns a' Chomunn a' cumail rèidh fad bliadhnaichean - ged a dh'fhalbhadh daoine, dheidheadh daoine eile nan àite. Ach tha sinn airson a bhith, chanainn, beagan nas motha na tha sinn, agus seo an rud as cudthromaiche, nas fheumaile. Ged a tha sinn 'sa Bhòrd a' feuchainn ri rudan a dheanamh a chumas an Comunn ann an òrdugh, chan iad sin na rudan a ni feum dhan bhallrachd (gu dìreach).

'S e aon rud a ni feum gun teagamh dhan daoine a theid ann bliadhna an dèidh bliadhna - an Cursa Tumaidh againn a tha gabhail àite thairis air deireadh-sheachdain gach earrach. Am bliadhna, bidh sinn ann an Toronto, agus chan urrainn nach bi an IW ann a sin a cheart cho spòrsal, feumail agus làn fhoghlaim 's a bha an fheadhainn a chaidh seachad roimhe. Tha measgachadh uamhasach math againn de thidsearan, le Goiridh Dòmhnallach, Murchadh MacLeoid, Ken Nilsen, agus Oidhrig Rankin. Mura robh sibh riamh aig deireadh-sheachain tumaidh roimhe, nach gabh sibh an cothrom an turas seo? Tha Toronto na bhaile uamhasach math, tha na daoine ann an Canada laghach is fialaidh, agus, airson na daoine a tha a' feuchainn ri Gàidhlig ionnsachadh, chan eil cothrom nas fheàrr ann airson ùrachadh a thoirt 'san oidhirp - no, mar a tha e dhomh-sa gu tric, breabag a thoirt far a bheil i ri-atanach! Bi cinnteach gum bi sibh a' cumail sùil a-mach airson bileag a tha tighinn dhan taigh, le tuilleadh fiosrachaidh.

Ach a thiginn air ais gu atharrachadh, 's dòcha gu bheil rudan ùr a tha sibh airson faicinn 'sa Chomunn. 'S dòcha gu bheil sinn a' deanamh rudan a tha, 'nur beachd-san, a tha feumach air atharrachadh. Nach innis sibh dhuinn mun deidhinn ma tha. Tha an dorus fosgailte, agus tha ar claisneachd ri'r cluasan. Tha mi gu h-àraid airson cluintinn bhon daoine nach eil an-diugh ag ionnsachadh Gàidhlig ach a tha airson taic is cuideachadh a thoirt gu Gàidhlig gus a cumail beò. De a ni sinn airson ur toirt a-steach nas fheàrr, airson 's gum bi sibh a' smaoinachadh gu bheil sibh a' deanamh diofar? Agus, de ni sinn airson 's gum bi sibh a' smaoinachadh gu bheil sibh a' faighinn luach nas fheàrr anns an airgead a tha sibh a' paigheadh dhuinn gach bliadhna? Mura h-eil

sibh a' smaoinachadh gu bheil ur n-airgead a' dol gu feum, agus ma ni sinn leasachadh air sin, is cinnteach gum b'e atharrachadh math a th'ann!

Le spèis,

Micheal MacAoidh - Mike Mackay

Ceann-suidhe, ACGA - ACGA President

Friends,

As the year comes to a close, my thoughts turn, as do many, back on the time that has passed, and especially how our society has come along. "Change is renewal" as the old saying goes, but how has ACGA changed in the past year? Aside from a new board (and new president), matters within ACGA have changed as well, for example: we have a more definite budget than we've had in years, we have new committees (Grandfather Mountain Song Workshop and Gaidhealtachd support), we've moved our scholarship competition to the winter (remember how much time you have left to take part, and I'd recommend that it would be very good for anyone learning Gàidhlig in the society to take part!!), and we have a new Mod chairperson (Nick Freer).

It's good to do new things in the society, to improve and expand, but we are always watching out to be certain that these changes are appropriate and useful. The numbers of members of ACGA have been stable for years—though people have left, others have come in to take their place. But I'd say that we want to be a little bigger and, this being the more important part, more useful. Though we on the board are doing things that help keep the society in order, that does not provide usefulness to the members (directly).

One thing that certainly is useful to people who go year after year—our immersion course that takes place over a weekend each spring. This year, we'll be in Toronto, and this IW is sure to be just as fun, useful and full of learning as the ones that went before it. We have an extremely good mix of teachers, with Jeff MacDonald, Murdo MacLeod, Ken Nilsen, and Effie Rankin. If you've never been to one, won't you take the opportunity this time? Toronto is a great city, the people in Canada are nice and friendly, and, for learners, there is no better opportunity to renew the effort or, as happens to me often, to get a kick in the pants! Be sure to keep you eye out for a brochure to come to the house with more information.

But returning to changes, perhaps there is something new you want to see in the society. Perhaps we are doing something you feel needs to be changed. Won't you tell us about it, then? The door is open, and we are listening. I especially want to hear from people who are not learning Gàidhlig now but want to support and help Gàidhlig stay alive. What can we do to bring you in better, for you to feel that you are making a difference? And, what can we do for you to feel that you're getting better value out of the money you pay each year? If you don't feel that you're getting use out of your money, and if we can fix that, that would certainly be a good change!

CRÌOMAGAN

By Micheal Newton

This is a legend recorded by Donald Robertson of Uist and sent by him to *The People's Journal* (an old Scottish periodical) in 1916. It is the tale of two brothers meeting in America during the Revolutionary War, although it has the marks of a migratory legend (i.e., one that could be re-set in practically any time or locale).

The Gaelic is reasonably straightforward, and I leave the translation as a challenge to the reader!

'N àm Cogadh nan Staitean Aonaichte agus Bhreatainn, is iomadh fear a chaidh thairis air sàillibh fhortain a dhèanamh ann an America, aig an robh ri claidheamh stàillinn no gunna cruadhach a thogail a chum a bhith dìon na Rìoghachd sin a thug dha àite agus cothrom air e fhèin a chleachdadh ri saothair aig am biodh de dhuais.

Nam measg seo, bha gillean Dhonnchaidh Bhàin agus an dòigh anns an do thachair iad a' cheud uair 'nam beatha, tha e suimeachail.

Bha Donnchadh Bàn an àiteagan anns a' Ghàidhealtachd le teaghlach mòr; ach bha Domhnall an gille bu shine gu tighinn gu ìre cosnaidh agus thàinig e 'na inntinn falbh gu Galltachd air son tòiseachadh ri obair ann. An dèidh dha bhith ùine gun a bhith fada anns an àite sin do'n deachaidh e, thog e air agus thug e America air. Shuidhich e sìos an sin ri obair agus e dèanamh gu math ann, ach thòisich e ri dì-chuimhneachadh fios a bhith 'ga chur dhachaidh ach ro ainneamh; mar bu shine bha e fàs, is ann bu dì-chuimhniche bha e dol.

An dèidh do Dhomhnall an taigh fhàgail, rugadh gille eile anns an teaghlach; agus a thaobh Dhomhnaill a bha air astar cho fada air falbh, is ann a thugadh 'ainm air a' ghille b' òige. Thòisich an gille seo air fàs suas agus is e "Domhnall Beag" a bhiodh aca air; agus nuair bhiodhte bruidhinn air Domhnall bu shine is e "Domhnall Mòr" a theirteadh ris.

Nuair a dh'fhàs Domhnall Beag suas gu ìre cosnaidh, a thaobh gun robh feadhainn dhe na gillean a bha anns an eadar-mheadhon (mar is trice bhios a' tachairt) a' greimeachd ris an dachaidh, is ann a smaoinich e falbh agus America thoirt air. Cha d'thubhairt e riu aig an taigh gun d'thugadh e "làn fada dhith" ged a bha e 'na chridhe 's 'na inntinn; cha do ghabh e air ach a bhith dol do'n taobh deas.

Co-dhiubh, ràinig Domhnall Beag America agus ma rinn e forbhais sam bith air son a bhràthair cha d'fhuair e idir e.

Ged nach fac' e gnùis a bhràthar riamh agus ged nach cuala e bruidhinn e air chor is gun cuireadh e eadar-dhealachadh eadar e fhèin agus daoine eile, chan eil teagamh idir nach robh America mhòr na bu bhlàithe leis e bhith smaoinneachadh gun robh e ann.

Cha robh Domhnall Beag uamhasach fada ann uair a bhrist an cogadh a-mach; agus co-dhiubh, a thàirngeadh ann e no a chaidh e ann gu aontach fhuair e ann a-measg nan saighdearan a' cur nan cathan. Bha e faighinn duine an-dràsta is a-rithist a-mach a bhuineadh d'a dhùthaich fhèin; ach brath-sgial sam bith cha d'fhuair e air a bhràthair; is ann a bha e call a chuimhne gun robh a leithid ann no gum faodadh e bhith idir beò.

Air là àraid, chruinneachadh mòran de na rèisimeidean còmhla agus thòisich na saighdearan ri tighinn a-measg a chèile, ri bruidhinn agus ri argumaidean a chur suas. Bhiodh Domhnall Beag a' gabhail a chuid fhèin dhe'n chur-seachad a bhiodh an seo gus aon uair a chaidh e fhèin agus fear eile cho fada anns an argumaid agus dh'fhàs iad cho teth le feirg is cha dèanadh dad an gnothach ach a chèile fhiachinn le sabaid. Cho-aontaich iad a chèile fhiachainn aig an àm sin a-màireach agus mar sin dhealaich iad an là sin.

Thubhairt fear ri chòmpanach: "Am fac' thusa cho coltach is a bha an dithis ud ri chèile?" is fhreagradh a chòmpanach gun d'thug e an aire dha siud agus gun do chuir e fìor-ioghnadh air. "Ach ciod e m'a dhèidhinn sin fhad 's a chì sinn sabaid."

Bha càirdean Domhnaill Mhòir dha fhèin cinnteach gum bu Dhomhnallach e agus bha càirdean Domhnaill Bhig air an làimh eile cinnteach gum bu Dhomhnallach e cuideachd; ach an corr fios cha robh aca.

Chruinnich iad air làr-na-mhàireach agus rinneadh cuairtealan agus rùisg iad iad fhèin agus is ann a bha sùil na bha timcheall a' coimhead air cho fìor choltach agus a bha iad ri càch a chèile. Bha iad dìreach a' feitheamh ri òrdugh fhaighinn air son tòiseachaidh nuair a thubhairt Gàidheal a bha làthair nach bu chòir an leigeadh air adhart gus am faigtheadh a-mach cò 'n dùthaich dhe'n robh iad taobh air taobh; chionn gun do mheall a bharail e, air neo gum b'e bràithrean a bh'annta. Chuireadh dàil anns a' chùis gus am faigtheadh seo a-mach. Dh'fhoighneachd an Gàidheal a bha seo an ainm le chèile; cò às a bha iad.

Thubhairt fear aca gum b'esan Domhnall mac Dhonnchaidh Bhàin à eilean Hòisgear; thuirt am fear eile gum

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)

b'esan Domhnall mac Dhonnchaidh Bhàin à Cnoc nan Torran. Dh'èigh an duine seo gum b'e na bràithrean a bh'annta agus gun robh e tuigsinn a-nis gum bu luchd-dùthcha dha-san iad le chèile; thubhairt e mu'n d'fhàg esan gun robh Donnchadh Bàn air a dhol do Chnoc nan Torran à Hòisgear agus mar sin gur iad seo na bràithrean da-rìreamh.

Chreid an darna fear gun robh e aghaidh ri aghaidh ri bhràthair nach fac' e riamh chuige seo agus an àite nan dòrn, phòg iad a chèile air son a' cheud uair. Dh'fhalbh iad a-mach as a' chuirtealan a' toirt leo a' charaid agus am fear dùthcha a rinn aithnichte dhaibh an dàimh ri càch a chèile. Dh'òl iad air an fheasgar sin deoch-slàinte na seann-dùthcha.



"Criomagan" is a column by Dr. Michael Newton of the University of Richmond that will appear regularly in *An Naidheachd Againne*.

Dè tha dol?

Calendar of Gaelic events

Jan. 3: Vancouver Gaelic Society Cèilidh, Vancouver, British Columbia. A New Year's cèilidh sponsored by An Comunn Gàidhlig Bhancubhair. For more information on the event and the society contact Maureen Lyon at Plyon1@shaw.ca or visit www.vancouvergaelic.org. The society will hold another cèilidh Feb. 7.

Feb. 27-29: Gaelic Retreat Weekend, Richmond, Va. Language classes and cultural workshops offered by Scot-

tish Gaelic Enthusiasts in Richmond at Camp Hanover, a retreat center near Richmond. Space is limited. For more information contact Kate Herr at ceit@mindspring.com.

March 13: Latha na Gàidhlig, Saint Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, Nova Scotia. A day-long program of Gaelic classes for children, beginners, intermediate and advanced students followed by a milling frolic. For more information, contact Ken Nilsen at knilsen@stfx.ca.

April 3: Mòd nan Lochan Mòra, Bath, Ohio. The Great Lakes Regional Mòd, adjudicated by Gaelic singer Paul MacCallum, an adjudicator at this year's ACGA Mòd. For more information on the event contact Frances Acar at frances@waspfactory.org.

May 22: Féis a' Chlachain, Highland Village Museum, Iona, Nova Scotia. A day-long festival of Gaelic song. Workshops lead by local Gaelic singers feature milling songs, songs composed locally, and other local favorites. Followed by an evening milling frolic. For more information visit <http://museum.gov.ns.ca/hv/>.

June 11-14: ACGA Immersion Weekend, Toronto. A weekend of intensive language classes offered at St. Michael's College in downtown Toronto. Additional information will be available shortly. Visit www.acgamerica.org for updates.

June 15-20: Feis Shiatail 2004, Port Townsend, Wash. Classes, cèilidhs and a community celebration of Gaelic culture with internationally renowned teachers and presenters. Includes a public concert June 18. For more information contact Kathryn Cole at kathryn@slighe.com.

Sept. 10-12: Mòd Naiseanta Aimeireagaidh (ACGA's U.S. National Mòd), Ligonier, Pa. Three-day event featuring competitions in Scottish Gaelic storytelling, poetry and song, workshops, dinner and cèilidh. For more information contact Nick Freer at neacalban1@aol.com.

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Directory of Gaelic Classes & Study Groups

A listing of groups and teachers known to ACGA. If you have information on study groups, classes or teachers you would like to submit, please contact the editor at liam@gaidheal.com

Alaska

Linda C. Hopkins
PO Box 1418
Palmer, Alaska 99645
907-373-6339

Arizona

Muriel Fisher
722 W Vanover Rd.
Tucson, Ariz. 85705
520-882-5308
skye@dakotacom.net

Arkansas

Christie Saunders
1701 N. Bryant, Apt. 4
Little Rock, Ark. 72207
501-663-8434

California

Donnie Macdonald
P.O. Box 607
Citrus Heights, Calif. 95611
916-723-6320

David G. Williams
480 30th Street
San Francisco, Calif. 94131

Claudia Ward
22651 Equipose Road
Monterey, Calif. 93940
408-373-5069

Tris King
Scottish Gaelic Learners
Association of the Bay Area
(925) 283-8029
tris@speakgaelic.com

Deborah (Gobnait) White
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(707) 545-6676
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Englewood, Colo. 80110
303-781-0553

Sue Hendrix
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Boulder, Colo. 80303
303-499-4927

Florida

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Tampa, Fla. 33637
813-980-0017

Illinois

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Massachusetts

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Of Celtic Arts
Maggie Carchrie/Tom Leigh
1 Bridle Path Circle
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508-888-0107
info@mermaid-productions.com

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330 Acton Road
Chelmsford, Mass. 01824
978-244-0237
kiracliff@mediaone.net

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Pasadena, Md. 21122
410-437-7090

Ken Campbell
69 Burr Hill
Berlin, Md. 21811
410-208-0524

Minnesota/Wisconsin

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913 15 St. East
Menomonie, Wis. 54751

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816-737-5979

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ruadh@idirect.com

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Nova Scotia, Canada

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Port Hastings, Cape Breton
BOE 2T0, Canada
Phone: 1-888-4Gaelic
Email: gaeltalk@ctp.auracom.com

Nova Scotia Gaelic Council
P.O.Box 29035
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3L 4T8
Contact: Lewis MacKinnon
Phone: (902) 826-9662

This list is based on the best information currently available to ACGA. We acknowledge that there may be errors and certainly omissions, and we apologize beforehand. We plan to publish an expanded version of this directory twice annually, and would appreciate any suggestions, addresses, names, etc., that you can provide. Please send any such to An Naidheachd Againne c/o Liam Ó Caiside at liam@gaidheal.com or Micheal Mac Aoidh at mackay@progeny.net.

Gun robh mile math agaibh.

Mòd nan Lochan Mòra 2004

On April 3, 2004 The Akron Masonic Complex in Bath will be the site of Mòd nan Lochan Mòra 2004. A poetry and storytelling competition will also take place at The Acars in Kent on April 2 at 7:00 p.m. and a song workshop on Sunday April 4, from 10:00-12:00 a.m. We are planning a dinner and ceilidh on the Saturday night, very similar to the National Mòd event.

This year Mòd nan Lochan Mòra will be somewhat different from our first event, and quite challenging. Competitors will choose their own stories for storytelling but the poem, *Ar n-Athraichean*, is prescribed. It appears in Dòmhnall Iain MacDhòmhnail's book, *Chi mi*. For the song competitions, learners will sing one prescribed song. Women learners will sing *Fear a Bhàta* and men learners will sing *Mo Roighinn's mo Rùn*. There are two song competitions, classical and traditional, for more experienced learners and speakers. The classical competition includes two prescribed classical songs and one self selected classical song. The traditional song competition includes one traditional song which is self selected. Both men and women experienced singers will sing *An Ataireachd Ard*, then women will sing *Do'n Chuthaig* and the men will sing *Mo Leannan*.

Mòd nan Lochan Mòra will be adjudicated by Paul McCallum from South Uist. He was a co-adjudicator at the National Mòd in Pennsylvania in 2003. Paul won the traditional gold medal at Mòd Lochaber 1985, the Comunn Gaidhealach gold medal at the Stirling Mòd 1987. He is from a long line musicians, having been brought up in North Glendale the cradle of Gaidhlig music and tradition in South Uist. He also won a medal at the Flath Cheol in Glasgow for singing traditional Irish songs. Paul is also much in demand for radio and television engagements, and sang at the inauguration of the late Cardinal Winning in Rome. The Akron Masonic complex is very close to last year's venue, but it is a much bigger building and will accommodate more performers and vendors. Our Mòd takes place in conjunction with the Cuyahoga Valley Tartan Day Celebration, run by Jim Collver of Akron.

For more registration forms or more information, please contact Frances Acar at frances@waspfactory.org or write to

Frances Acar
234 Lowell Dr.
Kent OHIO
44240

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Upcoming Gaelic Events at St. Francis Xavier University,
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March 13, 2004 Saturday *GAELIC DAY* at Nicholson Hall
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di-ciadain aig 1:15 pm ann an Immaculata 205. Thigibh ann! Bidh fàilte
oirbh)

Contact: tsnyder@stfx.ca 902-867-2300

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