

An Naidheachd Againne

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

Am Foghar 2019, Leabhar XXXV, Àireamh 3
Fall 2019, Volume XXXV, No. 3

Tha e duilich a chreidsinn gu bheil faisg air bliadhna air a dhol seachad bho chaochail Seamus Watson, tidsear, seanchaidh agus caraaid Gàidhlig ann an Alba Nuaidh. Tha sinn ag ath-chlò-bhualadh artaigil a sgrìobh e dhuinn san t-Sultain, 2012, mun chànan air an robh e cho measail. Dh'fhàg Seumas dìleab cuideachd san obair aige de chòrr is trithead bliadhna aig Baile nan Gàidheal ann an Ì, Ceap Breatainn.

As we approach the first anniversary of the death of Seumas Watson, Gaelic tradition-bearer and tireless advocate for the Gaelic language in Nova Scotia, we are reprinting this article which appeared in the September 2012 issue of *An Naidheachd Againne*. Watson devoted many years to the preservation of the language, culture, and customs of the Cape Breton Gaels. He worked for over thirty years as the Manager for Interpretation at *Baile nan Gàidheal* / The Highland Village Museum, a living history museum near Iona, Cape Breton.

Facal Farsaing Mu Dhualchainntean an Eilean Cheap Breatainn

le Seumas Watson

Cha chànanaiche mise agus cha bhi ann na tha sgrìobhte an seo ach beachdan glé shimplidh mu 'n chuspair a leanas. Ge-tà, 's e mo bharrail-sa gu feum neach sam bith a nì beagan rannsachaidh air dualchainntean na Gàidhlig an Eilean Cheap Breatainn a thuigsinn gur ann do chaochladh cheàrn dhe 'n Ghàidhealtachd thall a bhuineas diubhar air blas Gàidhlig an Eilein. Tha e riatanach an toiseach, ma-thà, eòlas a leasachadh air gu dé na ceàrnan às an dànaig luchd na Gàidhlig bhon taobh thall agus an

A Broad Word or Two on Cape Breton Gaelic Dialects

by Seumas Watson

I am not a linguist and the following are no more than very simple observations on the following subject matter. However, I do feel that it is necessary for anyone doing a little research on Cape Breton dialects to understand that they originate in a variety of locations in the Highlands and Islands. It is, therefore, required as a starting point to develop a knowledge of those areas from which Gaels



Cape Breton

Cam MacRae

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

rian a bh' aca air tuineachadh air n-ais 'nam buidhnean a-réir bhunabhasan sóisealta mar gu robh ann mun do chuir iad cùl ri Alba. Theagamh gur e an rathad as fhasa sin a dhèanamh, beachd a ghabhail air Eilean Cheap Breatainn mar dhùthaich anns a bheil ceàrnan Gàidhealach fa leth 's iad air an sònrachadh gu h-eachdraidheil ann an nòsan agus air blas-cainnte.

Ma bheirear sùil air an làraich-lìn An Drochaid Eadarainn (<http://www.androchaid.ca>, tha i air ùr-nochdadh bho chionna beagan mhiosan), chithear gu bheil ceithir prìomh roinnean an Eilean Cheap Breatainn a tha comharraichte ann an dualchas 's dualchainnt. 'S ann air ainmeachas a tha iad mar Shiorramachd Inbhir Nis, Crìochan Chamuis Anna, Ceap Breatainn: Loch Mór nam Barrach agus Ceap Breatainn an Ear-dheas. Tha an làrach-lìn seo gu h-àraidh cuideachail gus lorg fhaighinn air diobhar bhlas a chleachdar an Eilean Cheap Breatainn gus an là seo fhéin. Air feadh na làraich, gheobhar eisimpleirean do dhualchainnt mar chuspair a clàir anns gach earrann dhi. A bharrachd air blasadan do dhualchainnt, tha taghadh seanchais ann a leigeas fios air an dòigh-bhruidhinn a tha air bhi anns gach ceàrnaidh àraid bhon àm a chaidh coimhearsnachd Ghàidhealach a stéidheachadh innte.

Ma shiubhlas duine air an Drochaid gu Siorramachd Inbhir Nis mar thoiseach-tòiseachaidh, tuigear gum buin sliochd nan Gàidheal anns a' roinn ud do stoc à caochladh ionad dhe 'n t-Seann Dùthaich, mar a theirte. Tha na ceàrnan sin a' toirt a-staigh àiteachan mar a tha na h-Eileannan Beaga, an t-Eilean Sgitheanach, Uibhist, Mórar, Muideart, Loch Abar agus Srath Ghlais. 'S e na cluinnear gu tric air blas Gàidhlig na siorramachd seo fuaimneachadh ris an canadh cuid "Glug Eigeach." Tha sin 'ga comharrachadh leis an litir "l" 'ga bhlasadh mar "wah" air thoiseach air, agus as deaghaidh, nam fuaimreagan leathann "a, à, á, o,ò ó, u, ù."

Ge-tà, chan ann aig a h-uile neach a bha an "Glug." 'Nam fhiosrachadh fhéin, tha cuimhn' agam air feadhainn a bhuineadh do Ghleann nan Sgitheanach, agus dha 'n taobh an ear do Loch Ainslie - 's do Ghleann nam Màgan goirid do làimh - aig a robh "l" leathann air a blasadh mar tha i sgrìobhte. B' ann a chaidh na crìochan ud a thuineachadh aig Gàidheil a bhuineadh bho thùs do leithid dha na h-eileanan mar a tha Ruma, Eilean nam Muc, Muile, Tiriodh, an t-Eilean Sgitheanach agus, gu ìre, do

emigrated and the way in which they settled along social lines familiar to them before leaving Gaelic Scotland. Perhaps the simplest approach is to think of Cape Breton as a place having a number of Gaelic-speaking regions historically, distinguished to a degree, by cultural expression and dialect.

If we begin by referring to the website The Bridge Between Us, (<http://www.androchaid.ca>, newly launched a few months ago), it will be seen that Cape Breton Island contains four major areas of distinct



*Baile nan Gàidheal / The Highland Village, Iona, Cape Breton
Cam MacRae*

Gaelic culture and dialect. These areas are identified as Inverness County, St. Ann Bay area, Cape Breton: Great Lake of the Barra Men (Bras d'Or Lake) and South-east Cape Breton. This website is especially helpful in tracking Cape Breton dialects in use to the present. Examples of dialect are present throughout the site in all of its sections. In addition to dialect samples, there is a selection

of traditional material representing the speech of each community, as has been the case since its establishment.

Setting out in Inverness County, it will be seen that the antecedents of this area's Highland descendants hailed from various parts of the Old Country, as was said. Those regions include The Small Isles, the Isle of Skye, Uist, Morar, Moideart, Lochaber and Strath Glas. The Eigg Man's Cluck, as it is referred to by some, is often heard in this county, marked by the letter l, before and after the broad vowels a, à, á, o,ò ó, u, ù, being pronounced as *wah*.

Not all speakers had the "Glug," however. In my own experience, I can recall speakers from Skye Glen, East Lake Anslie, and nearby Anslie Glen who pronounced the letter broad l as it is written. These districts were originally settled from places such as Rum, Muck, Mull, Tiree, Skye and, to a certain extent, North Uist. The two ways that this broad l is pronounced can be heard on-line from the following:

dh'Uibhist a' Chinn-a-Tuath. Cluinnear an dà dhòigh air blas na litreach seo air loidhne aig na dithist a leanas: Murchadh Dora (Gileasach) nach maireann, Gleann nan Sgitheanach, a ghabh pios dha 'n òran Gun Dug Mi Fichead Bliadhna (Sruth nan Gàidheal, <http://goo.gl/MYM8x>) agus Annag ni'n Iain Alasdair 'ic Aonghais Ailein a dh'àraicheadh ann an Rubha an t-Seallaidh, faisg air Baile Inbhir Nis (An Drochaid Eadarainn (<http://androchaid.ca/content/1/14?page=1>)). B' ann às an Eilean Sgitheanach a bha cuideachd Mhurchaidh. Dh'imich sinnsearan Annaig a-nall a Cheap Breatainn às Mórar.

Ma théid sinn a-null air An Drochaid Eadarainn dha 'n earrann Ceap Breatainn Loch Mór nam Barrach, 's ann an sin a chluinnear blas na Gàidhlig a tha comharraichte le "r" fìor chaol air thoiseach air, agus as deaghaidh, na litir "i." Tha an Glug anns a' cheàrnaidh seo cuideachd agus, mar gum bitheamaid an dùil, a-réir nan sloinnidhean is cumanta 's na crìochan mun cuairt, 's e is motha a tha 's an t-sluagh sliochd Ghàidheal à Barraidh. (Tha iarmad muinntir Uibhist a Deas ann cuideachd, mu thuath taobh Bhaghasdail.) A bharrachd air an "r" caol, tha faclan 's an ionad seo a shònraicheas "na Barraich" 'nan cainnt. Cluinnear aig feadhainn 's a' sgìre eadar Sannra agus Am Pòn Mór, "dhuit" ann an àite "dhut," "caduige" ann an àite "carson" agus "caith" seach "tilgeil." Nuair a bhios "mh," agus "bh," còmhla ri fuaimreag, ann aig deireadh an fhacail, tha blas an fhuaimneachaidh "oo" ann, mar eisimpleir: sibh, dèanamh, ullamh (shoo, gee-un-oo, oo-woo.) Tha deagh shamhla air an dòigh-labhairt seo r'a chluinnteil air an Drochaid Eadarainn aig té Tena ni'n Frank Mhìcheil Ruaidh, nach maireann, a mhuinntir a' Phòin Mhóir (<http://androchaid.com/content/2/7?page=2>).

Murdock Gillis, Skye Glen, a Skye descendant (Gael Stream Collection, (<http://goo.gl/MYM8x>)) and Anna MacKinnon, raised in Sight Point near Inverness Town and a Morar descendant (An Drochaid Eadarainn (<http://androchaid.ca/content/1/14?page=1>))

Traveling across the Bridge Between Us to Cape Breton: Great Lake of the Barra Men, we can hear a Gaelic accent marked by its extremely narrow r before and after the slender vowels i and e. The *wah* is heard here as well, and as we might expect from the most common surnames, descendants of Barra settlers predominate. (Descendants of South Uist stock are also found



to the north in the Boisdale area.) Lexical differences are also heard here with *dhuit* instead of *dhut* and *caduige* instead of *carson* for example. The bh and mh endings of words (with vowels) gives them a final oo sound as heard in *sibh*, *dèanamh* and *ullamh* (shoo, gee-un-oo, oo-woo). A good example of this way of speaking can be heard from the late Tena MacNeil, Big Pond on An Drochaid Eadarainn (<http://androchaid.com/content/2/7?page=2>).

Bheir an Drochaid sinn cuideachd dha 'n taobh a tuath do Shiorramachd Bhigtoria, far a bheil crìochan Chamuis Anna agus a' Cladaich a Tuath. B' e na Hearaich 's na Leòdhasaich a bu mhotha a thuinich anns a' cheàrnaidh seo an cois a' Chuain Mhóir. Ged nach eil ann an là an-diugh ach glé bheag dhiubh a bhruidhneas Gàidhlig, faodar a ràdh gu robh dà dhualchainnt r'an cluinnteil am measg muinntir an àite bho chionna gu math goirid. 'S e an dà bhlas sin Gàidhlig na Hearadh agus Gàidhlig Leòdhais. Canar gur e Gàidhlig Leòdhais a bu treasa timchioll na Drochaide a Tuath agus Gàidhlig na Hearadh a bh' aig na daoine taobh a deas air Beann Smogaidh agus sìos gu crìochan Abhainn nam Frangach. Co-dhiubh, tha e fùrasda smaointinn, eadar pòsadh 's caidreabh, gu robh an dà bhlas-cainnte air an gròbadh a chéile aig cuid. Cluinnear gu soilleir anns na dualchainntean seo buaidh na seann Lochlannais nuair a nìthear cainnt. A thuilleadh air guth-ceòl, aithnichear, nuair a bhios an litir "t" caol ann gu bheil blas oirre coltach ri "k" agus mar sin "a' kighinn," an àite a' tighinn 's "kir" ann an àite tìr, m.s.a.a. Gabhaidh eisimpleir air blas muinntir na Drochaide a Tuath cluinnteil air An Drochaid Eadarainn (<http://androchaid.com/content/5/15?page=1/>) aig Teàrlach Chalum Dhòmhnail Iain (Dòmhnallach.) B' ann à Leòdhas a bha a chuideachd. Cluinnear blas-cainnte Abhainn nam Frangach aig Sìne n'in Mhurchaidh Dhòmhaill bhig (NicDhòmhnail) air an Drochaid Eadarainn cuideachd aig <http://androchaid.com/content/5/13/>. B' ann às na Hearadh a bha a sinnsearan fhéin.

Mu dheireadh, feumar sùil a thoirt air a' cheàrnaidh ud a tha 'toirt a-staigh taobh an ear-dheas do dh'Eilean Cheap Breatainn, a-mach 's a-staigh eadar an Abhainn Mhór (Grand River) agus Drochaid Mhira (Marion Bridge.) 'S e muinntir Uibhist a' Chinn a Tuath a bu mhotha a thuinich 's an ranntair seo, (ged a bha roinn eile ann à Uibhist a' Chinn a Deas 's Mórar. Thug iad seo a-mach fearann 's a' Mhira Mhór. Bha beagan dhaoine eile ann às an Eilean Sgitheanach, Leòdhas 's na Hearadh agus Taobh Siar Rois cuideachd, sgapte am measg an t-sluaigh Phroстанаich.)

Tha blas nan Tuathach 'ga chluinnteil fhathast sìod 's a' seo. Tha an dualchainnt seo comharraichte le "r" air leth caol fo bhuaidh na fuaimreige "i." Mar a ghabhas cluinnteil aig cainnt mhuinntir Loch Mór nam Barrach, tha "bh," "mh", le fuaimreag aig deireadh an fhacail, 'gam fuaimneachadh mar "oo." Gheobhar eisimpleirean dhe 'n dualchainnt seo air An Drochaid Eadarainn aig Iain Ragnall MacIgein, nach maireann, Allt nam Breac (<http://androchaid.com/content/3/7?page=1/>) agus Ailean Ruairidh Aonghais (MacLeòid), Catalón, (<http://androchaid.com/content/3/13/>)

Cleachdar, mar 's minig, 's a' cheàrnaidh seo cuideachd "s mathaid" ann an àite "theagamh," air neo "ma dh'fhaoidhte" agus "sen-ach" ann an àite sin.

Should we move on to St. Ann's Bay and the North Shore, at the foot of the Atlantic, this is an area settled primarily by Lewis and Harris people. Although there are few Gaelic-speakers left here, it can be said that there were two dialects spoken by locals until quite recently. These are the dialects of Lewis and Harris. It remains to be said that Lewis Gaelic had a stronger presence around North River Bridge, while Harris Gaelic was spoken south of Mount Smokey down to French River. In any event, it is easy to imagine mixtures occurring by way of inter-marriage and socializing. When spoken, clearly heard in these dialects is the influence of Old Norse. In addition to intonation, there is also heard the sound of k replacing t in words with slender i and e. Some examples are a' *kighinn*, rather than a' *tighinn* and *kir* instead of *tìr*. An example of North River Bridge Gaelic can be heard on The Bridge Between Us by the late Reverend Charles MacDonald, a Lewis descendant (<http://androchaid.com/content/5/15?page=1/>). Jean MacKay, a Harris descendant from French River gives a sample on The Bridge Between Us as well at <http://androchaid.com/content/5/13/>.

Finally, we should consider the region roughly taking in south eastern Cape Breton, extending from Grand River to Marion Bridge. This area was settled in the largest part by North Uist immigrants (although Grand Mira held a substantial community of descendants from Morar, Moideart and South Uist, while Skye, Lewis and Harris and Wester Ross folk found their way here among the Protestant population).

North Uist Gaelic is still heard here and there, marked by a very slender r, influenced by the vowel i. Similar to speakers from around the Bras d'Or, mh and bh with vowel, at the end of words is pronounced as oo. Examples of this dialect are found on The Bridge Between Us as spoken by the late John Rannie MacKeigan, of Trout Brook, (<http://androchaid.com/content/3/7?page=1/>) and Allan MacLeod of Catalone, (<http://androchaid.com/content/3/13/>)

Also heard in this area are words like "s *mathaid*" rather than "*theagamh*," or "*ma dh'fhaoidhte*" for perhaps/maybe and "*sen-ach*" instead of *sin*.

~

Gus an rud beag do dh'fhiosrachadh seo a thoirt gu crìch, cuiridh mi ris dòrlach do dh'fhaclan air iasad on Bheurla a nochdas gu tric an dreach na Gàidhlig an Eilean Cheap Breatainn:

Gamalas - Siorramachd Inbhir nis (measgachadh do rudan mar a tha biadh. Chan eil fhios air bun an fhacail seo.)

Stiof - Siorramachd Inbhir Nis (air am bàs fhaighinn. 'Ga chleachdadh air beòthaichean a' bhaile a bhàsaich.)

Poidhle - Eilean Cheap Breatainn (tòrr mór)

Seansa/teansa - Eilean Cheap Breatainn (coltach, buailteach, glé dhòcha)

Steint - Siorramachd Inbhir Nis (tì air a tarraing aig an laidireachd cheairt)

Pull - Siorramachd Inbhir Nis (tàir, duilgheadas)

Cleabhar - Ceap Breatainn an Ear-dheas (tapaidh, gu sgiobalta)

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Tobraichean A Bharrachd Air Loidhne:

Cainnt Mo Mhàthar

<http://www.cainntmomhathar.com/>

Sruth nan Gàidheal

<http://gaelstream.stfx.ca/>

~

In conclusion, I'll include here a few English loan words often heard in Cape Breton Gaelic:

Gamalas - Inverness County (a mixture of things such as food. No one seems to know the origins of this word.)

Stiof - Inverness County (state of being dead, referring to farm animals.)

Poidhle - Cape Breton Island (a large amount of something)

Seansa/teansa - Cape Breton Island (likely)

Steint - Inverness County (describing tea steeped to the right texture)

Pull - Inverness county (having difficulty)

Cleabhar - South-east Cape Breton (smart, nimble)

~

Additional On-line Sources:

Cainnt Mo Mhàthar

<http://www.cainntmomhathar.com/>

Sruth nan Gàidheal

<http://gaelstream.stfx.ca/>



Tòimhseachan Gàidhlig / A Gaelic Riddle

Togaidh leanabh beag na dhòrn e 's cha tog an t-Arm Dearg le ròp e.

A child may lift it in his fist, and the Red Army cannot lift it with a rope.

Check page 17 for the answer.

Litir bho'n Cheann-Suidhe le Micheal MacAoidh



Letter from the President by Mike Mackay

A Chàirdean,

Tha iad ag ràdh, “Is ùrachadh atharrachadh,” agus tha mi cinnteach gun tèid sibh leis a sin. Ged a tha atharrachadh caran eagalach aig amannan, agus ged a dh’fhàsas sinn comhfhurtal le cùisean mar a bha agus mar a tha, chì sinn iomadh suidheachadh anns an dèan atharrach feum dhuinn, fiù ’s gu ìre agus gun canamaid gur e saoghal ùr, brèagha a bhios againn nuair a thig e. ’S e atharrachadh sìde deagh eisimpleir dhe sin – nuair a thig am foghar agus aimsir nas fhionnaire, bidh sinn gu math toilichte leis an atharrachadh sin, tha mi cinnteach!

Ach chì sinn sin cuideachd ann an cuid de na rudan a thachras ann an saoghal ar Comuinn – mar eisimpleir, gach bliadhna, bidh an t-seachdain ann an Carolina a Tuath, aig Colaiste Lees McRae – seachdain Beinn Seanair, a chanas cuid – agus dh’fhaodadh sibh a ràdh, “uill, chan e rud ùr a th’ ann an sin.” Ach tha atharrachadh ri fhaicinn anns an iomairt sin, air sgàth ’s gu bheil am fear-stiùiridh, Seumas Ruairidh MacDhomhnaill, a’ toirt cuireadh gach bliadhna gu buidheann ùr a thig airson ar teagasg rè na seachdain – ag atharrachadh nan tidsearan airson sealladh ùr a thoirt seachad air cànan agus ceòl nan Gàidheal. An turas seo, fhuair sinn fìor dheagh oideachadh bho Sheumas Greumach, Andrea Kluge, Seumas fhèin, agus Tiber Falzett, agus ’s e ùrachadh do mhòran a bh’ ann a thaobh an cuid Gàidhlig. Tha sinn uile nan comain airson a h-uile rud a thug iad seachad!

Agus, mar a nì sinn gach bliadhna, chùm sinn taghadh airson faighinn a-mach cò a bhios air bòrd-stiùiridh a’ chomuinn, agus am bliadhna, chuir sinn fàilt’ air dithis a tha rudeigin ùr dhan obair sin – co-dhiù bho chionn beagan bhliadhnaichean. Ghabh Cam NicRath agus Shannon Duncan pàirt anns a’ choinneimh a bh’ aig a’ bhòrd o chionn ghoirid, agus tha sinn cho toilichte gu bheil daoine ùr air tighinn a-steach airson cuideachadh a thoirt dhan Chomunn. Tha sinn fortanach gu bheil an cothrom ann gach bliadhna ùrachadh a thoirt dhan bhòrd, agus tha sinn a’ coimhead air adhart ri tuilleadh tighinn a-mach às na daoine a tha a’ stiùireadh a’ Chomuinn, agus a’ bhuidheann a bheir sin air na ’s urrainn dhuinn toirt seachad dhuibh-se a tha nar buill.

Le dùrachdan,

Micheal MacAoidh
Ceann-suidhe, ACGA

Dear Friends,

It’s said, “change is renewal”, and I’m sure you’ll agree with that. Although change is somewhat scary at times, and though we can grow comfortable with the status quo, we can see many situations in which change can do us good, and in which we’d say that we are now in a new, bright world when the change comes. A change in the weather is a good example of this – when fall comes, and with it cooler weather, we’ll be quite happy with that change, I’m certain!

But we also see that, in some of the things that happen in our Society’s world – for example, every year, there is the week in North Carolina at Lees McRae College, Grandfather Mountain Week, as some call it – and you could say, “well, that’s nothing new!” But, there is change to be seen in that event, since the head of the event, Jamie MacDonald, invites a new team every year to teach us through the week – changing the teachers in order to provide a new perspective of the Gaelic language and song. This year, we got a truly good education from James Graham, Andrea Kluge, Jamie himself, and Tiber Falzett, and it was a renewal for many, as far as their Gaelic was concerned. We are all indebted to them for everything they gave us!

And, as we do each year, we held an election this spring to determine who would be on the Board of Directors of the Society, and this year we welcome two people who are somewhat new to the position – at any rate, it’s been quite a while. Cam MacRae and Shannon Duncan took part in a recent board meeting and we are very happy that new people are coming in to help the Society. We are fortunate that there is this opportunity each year to renew the board, and we look forward to new ideas from the folks who guide the Society and the benefits that they will bring to what we can provide to you, our members.

Respectfully,

Michael Mackay
President, ACGA

ACGA Board of Directors Election Results 2019

ACGA recently held its annual election for the Board of Directors and officers, with the following results.

Shannon Duncan and **Cam MacRae** will join the Board, replacing Jamie MacDonald and Erin Park, who have finished their terms. Remaining on the Board are **Michael Mackay**, **Jeff Justice**, **Liam Cassidy**, **Traci Kennebeck**, and **Barbara Rice**.

At its meeting August 11, 2019, the Board elected officers as follows: **Michael Mackay**, President; and **Jeff Justice** and **Liam Cassidy**, Co-vice Presidents.

Other ACGA officers include Recording Secretary **Joyce Campbell**, Membership Secretary **Janice Chan**, Web Editor **Liam Cassidy**, and *Naidheachd* Editor **Suzanne McDougal**.

Regional Mòd Results

Mòd nan Lochan Mòra
Akron, OH,
June 7-9, 2019

Adjudicators: Michael Mackay
and Rachel Walker

Leughadh aig a' chiad sealladh

1st Hilary NicPhàidein
2nd Cam MacRae
3rd Anne Alexander

Bàrdachd

1st Cam MacRae
2nd Hilary NicPhàidein

Singing

Open

1st Hilary NicPhàidein
2nd Anne Alexander
3rd Sharon McWhorter
4th Tom Terry

Prescribed

Women

1st Hilary NicPhàidein
2nd Anne Alexander

Men

1st Michael Mackay
2nd Tom Terry

North Carolina Regional Mòd
Grandfather Mountain, NC
July 13, 2019

Adjudicators: James Graham
and Tiber Falzett

Women's Division

1st Connie Smith
2nd Cathleen MacKay
3rd Doah Chabot

Men's Division

1st Tom Terry
2nd John Grimaldi

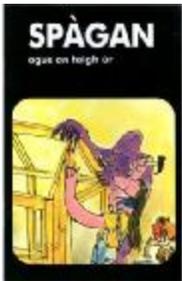
Overall High Score

1st Connie Smith
2nd Cathleen MacKay
3rd Tom Terry



North Carolina Mòd participants

Sherry Kremer



Book Review:

***Spàgan Agus An Taigh Ùr* by Ellen Blance and Ann Cook
Translated into Gaelic by the Bilingual Project**

Acair: Stornoway, 1977, 37 pages

ISBN 978-0-861523-72-6

Reviewed by Ted Brian Neveln

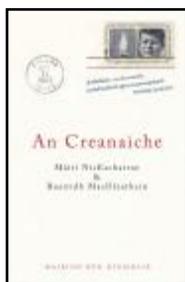
I know one person who loves Spàgan and another who hates him. What's to hate about a goofy, fuzzy, magical, purple monster? Maybe it's a parent thing.

Anyway, nothing seriously bad or scary or even all that impressive happens in the world of Spàgan and his young friends, the creation of American children's author Ellen Blance, who named her goofy, fuzzy, magical, purple monster, Monster.

So why bother with Spàgan? Well, he is a break from angst and paranoia. One or two books can be read in a session with time left over for impromptu grammar drills. They do not have frightful idioms or puzzling cultural references. An advanced beginner or early intermediate will find plenty to reinforce what they may have already been exposed to, but have not internalized.

I call myself an intermediate learner, and while I can read Spàgan books without assistance, my Gàidhlig is not so advanced that I could read them in English and quickly turn them into fluent Gàidhlig, for example: "*Às aonais plana thèid an taigh cho cam ort agus gun tuit e*" (page 21). Kid's stuff, perhaps, but not easy for me to write. An intermediate learner could learn a lot guiding a beginner through these tales. To read it requires irregular verbs in multiple tenses, knowledge of nominal inversion and infinitives, some simple idioms, and a fair number of prepositional pronouns.

There are twelve books in the series and I have read about eight. My favorite so far is *Spàgan Agus An Taigh Ùr* in which his purple girlfriend, Spàgag, salvages a challenging situation with a bit of girl power (a.k.a. competence). A good book for fans of *This Old House*.



Book Review:

***An Creanaiche* by Ruairidh MacIlleathain
Sandstone Press (Lasag Series) 2015, 84 pages**

ISBN 978-1-910124-78-9

Reviewed by Ted Brian Neveln

The subtitle of this book could be *Myself, Lee Oswald and the Murder of JFK*. The co-authors are Ruairidh MacIlleathain and Màiri NicEachairne. Màiri who? A fictional character credited as a co-author? Ruairidh what? What is the real Ruairidh MacIlleathain doing in his own novel? It is called self-insertion and is analogous to the way Dante inserted himself into a tour of the afterlife while guided by the Roman (and part-Celtic) poet Virgil. Màiri NicEachairne is a less reliable guide than Virgil, though she too is a kind of part-Celt. She leads the author through the circles of a modern American Inferno, the Inferno of JFK conspiracy

theories. The paradoxes start right on the front cover with the words MAIRIDH RÙN-DÌOMHAIR which I am pretty sure is a deliberate pun. The unease is furthered by the anachronism of the cover art.

Poor Mgr. MacIlleathain is trying to do journalistic due diligence (a bit of an anachronism these days) while Màiri, an elderly woman he seemingly meets randomly on a train, is making him doubt everything he thought he knew about JFK's murder by claiming to know the inside scoop about the vast conspiracy in which her old friend, Lee Oswald, was mostly a patsy. Then, for good measure, she draws a direct link from the Appin Murder, a famous murder conspiracy (and possible miscarriage of justice) from the 18th century (and one of the inspirations for the novel *Kidnapped*).

By the time she's finished, this English woman has drawn the Gaelic reporter into an impressively twisted strand of knot-work. He's a journalist, she's a novelist. Storytelling versus fact-finding; and sometimes fact-finding is a story in itself. Will truth prevail? Can truth prevail? What is truth? And why is it important to her that the story be published in Gaelic?

Màiri is dying. Surely a woman on the verge of death can be trusted to come clean at last. Maybe. Coincidences are pervasive and some may even be real coincidences. Never mind the JFK assassination, you can finish the book with your head whirling with theories of who Màiri NicEachairne is and what her agenda is. She first appears like a fairy, a kind of *aisling*, a fairy-guide in old Irish tales, to lead the reporter through a misleading mist-land as elusive as any fairy tale that he has recounted in his radio broadcasts – a woodpecker is not just a woodpecker and a thunderbolt is not just a thunderbolt. *Nì sin a' chùis* are his concluding words, "AN CRÌOCH." But, it's not done and it is never finished, a story without real closure and with major chunks missing – typical of many a good Gaelic tale and a good many conspiracy tales.

At least we befuddled readers can count on the author of *Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh* to select his vocabulary with care, although there are some slightly obscure idioms and words. (I found *gnòst* in my dictionary under *gnùst*). This being Roddy Maclean, we should not be surprised to see at least one Dwelly search and references to geography, history, Scottish politics, linguistics, and nature. This being a Lasag book there are vocabulary footnotes throughout and English-language summaries at the start of each chapter.

One possible stumbling block could be that the emotionalism of the JFK/Oswald murders will cause some learners to get so heated that they forsake the Gàidhlig and start expounding their pet conspiracy theories in English. For the same reason, it's hard to put the book down. It was written in 2015, and the United States has not grown mellow since then. *An Creanaiche* has 16 short chapters and I did not spot a single typo although the print quality is not as good as in other Lasag books. The last three chapters are remarkable and it is an impressive book.

Seanfhacal na Ràithe – Pictured Proverb

Do you know what familiar Gaelic proverb is illustrated here?

Check page 19 to see if you're right.



Image by Markus Spiske from www.Pixabay.com



Oisean a' Ghràmair / The Grammar Nook

by Wayne Harbert

Scary Things About Gaelic (STAG): A Guide to Understanding Gaelic Men and Women

We're talking about the words, of course – not the folks they refer to. This is a column about language, after all. The idea for it came when a student and I were looking at the lovely, wistful song '*Guma Slàn do na Fearaibh*', written in the early 19th century by a man known as Dòmhnall Phàil, in honor of the people whom he watched setting out for the New World. The history of how the song came to be written is described in *Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh* 908. The title translates as 'Health to the Men.' It contains a strange word form, though. We know that one of the Gaelic words for 'man' is *fear*. *Fear* means 'man' in contexts where there is emphasis on masculine gender: *fear is bean* 'a man and a woman', for instance. The more general word, *duine*, is used in contexts where gender is less emphasized. Both of them are old words. *Fear* is remotely related to the *were* of English *werewolf*, and to the Latin word *vir*, which shows up in English *virile*. *Duine* comes from the same source as *human*, believe it or not (and the *-groom* of *bridegroom*!) Our Gaelic dictionaries tell us that the plural of *fear* is *fir*. So, why isn't the title of the song '*Guma Slàn do na Fir?*' *Fearaibh* is in fact a linguistic fossil. The common ancestor, spoken 5000 years ago, from which English, Latin, Gaelic, and many other languages developed, was a language called Proto-Indo-European. PIE was a highly inflected language. Nouns had endings that signaled their case, gender and number. Some languages, Latin, for example, retain a fair amount of these endings. So, for example, if a plural noun was used in Latin as the object of particular prepositions, the dative plural ending *-bus* was added. (This ending makes a guest appearance in English words and phrases borrowed from Latin, like *omnibus* and the *pluribus* of *e pluribus unum*.) In other descendants of PIE, like English and Gaelic, the inherited endings fared less well; they were gradually worn away by time, until nowadays little is left of them. The *-aibh* ending of the dative plural in Gaelic – from the same source as Latin *-bus* – withstood this erosion longer than most because it was more substantial to begin with, and by the time our song was written it stood out as the only case ending left, and had begun to sound old-fashioned, so it was trotted out only for songs and other poetic purposes.

By now, it has fallen from use even in poetic language, and pops up only in some frozen phrases like *air beulaibh* 'in front of' (but, historically, 'on the mouths of'). If Dòmhnall's poem were written now, he may well have said *Guma Slàn do na Fir*'. Now, this brings up another question: why should the plural of *fear* be *fir*? Once again, ancient endings, long since gone, are to blame. The original vowel of this word was an /i/ sound like the one in *vir*. The nominative singular would have been something like *wir-os*. The vowel of the ending here, *-o*, is a back vowel (formed with the tongue raised in the back of the mouth), and under its influence, the original front vowel, /i/, of the preceding syllable was pulled backward in the oral space, becoming /e/. This didn't happen in the nominative plural, whose ending contained a different vowel, so /i/ stayed /i/ in the plural. The endings themselves disappeared long ago, but they left behind little mementos of themselves, in the effects their sound shape had on the rest of the word – a linguistic Cheshire Cat smile. So we've ended up with *fear* 'man' ~ *fir* 'men'. Lest this seem exotic, the vowel alternation in *man/men*, *woman/women* in English is the result of similar processes.

The genitive plural, back in ancient times, had an ending with a vowel that resembled the vowel of the singular ending, so the genitive plural in Modern Gaelic (here and in other masculine nouns of the same type) looks like the singular: *na fir* 'the men' but *nam fear* 'of the men'.

Having gone this far down the grammatical rabbit hole, it is perhaps time to confess that no noun in the whole of Gaelic bears more evidence of its turbulent linguistic history than the traditional word for ‘woman’ – *bean*. *Bean* comes from the same ancient ancestor as the English word *queen*, and the Greek *gunē* which shows up in such borrowed words as *gynocracy*. It isn’t the most usual word for ‘woman’ in Gaelic anymore – we’ll talk about its replacement in a minute – and tends to occur most often in the meaning ‘wife’. It, too, has a different vowel in the genitive plural, showing up as *ban* ‘of the women’ (don’t ask why). In other forms, though, it goes completely off the rails. Would you believe:

	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
Nominative	<i>bean</i>	<i>mnathan</i>
Genitive	<i>mnatha</i>	<i>ban</i>
Dative	<i>mnaoi</i>	<i>mnathan</i>

How did it ever come to this? Well, the short answer is that in some of the ancient forms of this word the accent fell on the ending, not on the noun itself. Because it was unaccented, the vowel of the noun dropped out altogether. So at some early stage, *mnaoi* would have looked like *bnāi*, with no vowel between the /b/ and the /n/. Now /bn/ isn’t (and wasn’t) a possible word-beginning in Gaelic, so the nasal quality of the /n/ spread to the /b/, and /bn/ was reshaped as /mn/. A pretty exotic development; no other words in Gaelic begin with *mn-* except for these forms of *bean*. And, of course, even though we spell them with /mn/, we no longer pronounce them that way. In another sound change a couple of centuries back, the n’s of consonant clusters like *gn-*, *cn-*, *mn-* came to be pronounced as /r/’s. All of this has made *bean* – let’s face it – a pretty scary looking noun. Small wonder, perhaps, that it has been replaced in more general use by another noun – *am boireannach* ‘the woman’. *Am boireannach* is a perfectly regular noun of its type, though it does bring one of its own quirks to the table as the only masculine noun in Gaelic with a feminine meaning.

Photo Quiz

Nowadays, we complain about seating on budget airlines. Imagine being an 18th-century 3rd-class passenger who had to get out and push the stagecoach to the top of this lovely view! Do you know what this place in present-day Argyll and Bute is called?

The answer is on page 19.



B.L. Rice



Litir à Dùn Èideann

by Jeff W. Justice

A Chàirdean,

I began writing this column a few weeks ago with the intent of ruminating a bit over the different self-study language platforms out there. I was also going to lament that one of the most popular, Duolingo, does feature Irish and Welsh but not Scottish Gaelic. As I was packing up my belongings to move house and start my new job a couple of weeks ago, I got a text message from a friend with exciting news:

Gaelic is coming to Duolingo!

So, a half-baked article which I wrote in Gaelic during breaks between filling boxes now sits on a cloud service somewhere waiting for me to come back to it, and I get to share my excitement – and a few concerns – at the wonderful news. As I'm still settling in, I'll have to revert to just doing this in English, if you will pardon my using it this time.

Duolingo will not make anyone fluent in a language, but it *can* give someone enough of a foundation that he or she can travel to a given country and do better with the local vernacular than what a tourist's language book will provide. It also gives enough of a background in most cases that one could move easily into regular tutored lessons. Speaking personally, it also raises my blood pressure on occasion, usually accompanied by a bit of "French," if you will pardon my using it as well.

In addition to my taking it seriously for Irish and Welsh, I also use it to keep sharp other languages I have learnt in the past. This is where my aforementioned blood pressure rises to unsafe levels. I will enter a sentence, knowing fully well that what I typed is both grammatically correct and an acceptable translation for the given exercise, only to be shown a red screen and told I have to do it over again. This is a point where those of us in Gaeldom who will be working on the Duolingo project will have our work cut out for us (no, I have not been asked to work on it as of this writing). Just when a group of writers think that they have covered every possible legal translation in the system, some disgruntled learner will indicate that the translation they entered should have been accepted. I have had more luck/success with some languages than others with this feature. In other words, once the beta for Scottish Gaelic on Duolingo goes live, it will always be a work in progress.

The Irish government and the Republic's president, Michael O'Higgins, have gone out of their way to promote the Irish course on Duolingo; I have not seen such vocal support for the Welsh course from their authorities, but I should point out that more people are learning Klingon — KLINGON! – and *Game of Thrones*' High Valyrian than are taking Welsh. Irish, for its part, falls just 60,000 learners short of High Valyrian's tally as of this writing, but Irish has many more that are trying their tongues at *tlhIngan Hol*. To be sure, pop culture has a hand in Gaelic coming to the platform; *Outlander*'s success played a significant role in raising demand for Gaelic on Duolingo.

Scottish Gaelic's debut will mark the third Celtic language to be available on this learning platform, and despite the pitfalls that abound on any such platform, it will breathe new life into the Celtic linguistic communities. I would also like to see the other three – Breton, Cornish, and Manx Gaelic – added to the platform. Given that the last two have been revived from the dead, their presence on Duolingo could and should greatly improve their prognosis for long-term success post-revival.

I have no doubt that many reading this will have at least some role to play in the debut of Gaelic on Duolingo, and many more will want to try the course once it enters the beta stage. Many have worked long hours on social media and elsewhere to get Gaelic this opportunity. Speaking for myself, *tapadh leibhse!*

Le meas,

Goiridh | Jeff

Dè nì thu nuair a tha thu airson cèic a dhèanamh ach chan eil a' mhòr-chuid de na grìtheidean agad? Carson nach eil thu a' dèanamh suas an reasabaidh thu fhèin? Agus abair deuchainn bhlasta!

Our recipe this time comes from Janice Chan, one of our editors. Kefir (a drink made from fermented milk) is good for you, right? So doesn't it stand to reason that a loaf made with kefir will be good for you too? While we're not saying if it is or isn't, there's no doubt that this nutty, fruity loaf is delicious!

Lofa le Measan agus Ceifir

Grìtheidean

1/2 chupa ìm taisichte
1 chupa siùcar donn
2 ugh mhòr
1 chupa min-fhlùir
1 chupa min-chruithneachd
1/2 spàin-tì pùdair-fuine
1/2 spàin-tì sòda-fuine
1/2 spàin-tì salainn
1/2 chupa ceifir air blas measan
1/4 chupa bainne
1 spàin-tì faoineig
1 1/2 chupannan de mheasan no chnòthan-Frangach air an gearradh



Janice Chan

Ro-theasaich an àmhainn gu 375°F.

Cuir pàipear-fuine air pana-lofa meud 9x5x3 òirleach.

Measgaich a' mhin-fhlùir, a' mhin-chruithneachd, am pùdar-fuine, an t-sòda-fuine agus an salainn ann am bobhla agus cuir an dàrna taobh e.

Ann am bobhla mòr, buail an t-ìm agus an siùcar donn gus am bi iad aotrom mothtanach. Cuir ann na h-uighean, fear mu seach, agus an fhaoineag, a' measgachadh gu math an dèidh gach grìtheid.

Cuir na grìtheidean tioram, bainne agus ceifir anns a' mheasgachadh uachdrach beag air bheag, a' tòiseachadh agus a' crìochnachadh leis a' mhin-fhlùir. Cuir e mun cuairt gu math. Cuir ann na measan no na cnòthan-Frangach gu socair.

Dòirt am measgachadh anns a' phana-lofa, a' liosradh bàrr na taoise. Bruich ann an àmhainn aig 375°F mu 60–70 mionaidean no gus an tig dealg bonnaich a-mach gu glan. Leig leis fuarachadh anns a' phana airson 10 mionaidean mus tionndaidh thu a-mach e gus leigeil leis a dhol gu teothachd an t-seòmair air racais-uèir.

Fruit and Kefir Loaf

Ingredients

1/2 cup butter, softened
1 cup brown sugar
2 large eggs
1 cup all-purpose flour
1 cup whole wheat flour
1/2 tsp baking powder
1/2 tsp baking soda
1/2 tsp salt
1/2 cup kefir (raspberry, strawberry or blueberry flavour)
1/4 cup milk
1 tsp vanilla
1 1/2 cups chopped fruit or walnuts

Preheat oven to 375°F. Line a 9x5x3" loaf pan with parchment paper and set aside.

Whisk together the flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt, and set aside.

In a large bowl, cream the butter and sugar together until fluffy. Add the eggs one at a time mixing well after each, and then add the vanilla. Add the flour mixture with the milk and kefir in batches, starting and finishing with the flour. Mix well. Fold in the fruit or walnuts.

Pour the mixture into the prepared loaf pan. Smooth the top and bake at 375°F for 60-70 minutes until a tester comes out clean. Let cool 10 minutes and then remove from the pan and cool further on a wire rack.



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!

Barbara Rice, one of our editors, is also an accomplished poet. Here, in “Ann an cùirt-lios àrsaidh,” she asks a rowan tree, rooted in Celtic mythology, for bardic inspiration. In 2015, Barbara won the Duais Iain MhicMhurchaidh at the U.S. National Mòd for “Còmhradh-Fòn / Telephone Conversation.” Her poem “Leasaichidh ceòl an t-anam / Music mends the soul” will appear in an upcoming issue of Clar’s Gaelic literary magazine *Steall*.

Ann an cùirt-lios àrsaidh

le B.L. Rice

Ann an cùirt-lios àrsaidh,
Fàsaidh a’ chraobh-chaorainn ri taobh geata
Faisg air far a bheil sgrìobhadairean air am moladh.
Cha sgaoil a geugan ach uiread seo, ach a-mhàin,
Far am feum iad a dhol.

Bhon a thàinig mi ann,
Gus a faicinn a’ fàs,
Tha mi gan cuimhneachadh romham,
Na bàird a’ sireadh togail-inntinn.

Faodaidh na geugan aice sgaoileadh tharam,
Gun dìon mi o dhòigh chroin
Agus gun toir i na briathran a dh’fheumas a bhith
sgrìobhte
Mar a sgrìobh cheana, Robert Louis Stevenson, Scott,
is Burns.

Giùlain luchd-siubhail gu tìr eile is àm eile
Ged ’s ann a-mhàin, tro dhuilleagan,
Air feadh Alba mhoiteil is a cloinne,
Tulgadh mar thuinn, sreath air sreath, loidhne air
loidhne.

In an ancient courtyard

by B.L. Rice

In an ancient courtyard,
Grows the rowan tree by a gate,
Near where writers are praised.
Its branches spread only so far,
But only where they must go.

Since I have come to see it grow,
I am remembering those before me,
The bards seeking inspiration.

May its branches spread over me,
Protect from harm’s way,
And give the words that must be writ,
Like previously, Robert Louis Stevenson, Scott, and
Burns.

Transport travelers to another land and another time,
If only through pages,
Throughout proud Scotland and its clans,
Rolling like waves, line by line, line by line.



Eeno11
[CC BY-SA 3.0]

A Website to Watch



We don't usually feature games in this space, but our editors have been playing one that came to our attention recently, and, well, it's interactive, fast-moving, and we think other Gaelic learners might enjoy it. We've noticed errors in some of the Gaelic phrases, however. If you see something you know is wrong, there is a button on each page which lets you report mistakes.

We'd say caveat emptor, but Clozemaster is free and is available for the computer, Android, and iPhone. Maybe we should say it anyway: Have fun with Clozemaster but Buyer Beware.

<https://www.clozemaster.com>



by Hilary NicPhàidein

Answer to the word puzzle in the June issue of *An Naidheachd Againne.*

In our June issue, Hilary NicPhàidein challenged our readers to see how many words you could make using only those letters that appear in DÌOCHUIMNEACHADH. Well, we're sorry to say that no one was able to beat Hilary's own list of 102 words. Here's Hilary's list followed by 55 more words our editors came up with:

Hilary's List			Editors' List	
aca	cuimhne	mi	achd	ma
ach	cuimhneach	min	aidh	mam
achadh	cuimhneachadh	mìn	amh	maim
ad	cumach	mion	amhach	mean
adan	cumaich	mo	amhachd	mham
aice	cumachd	mu		miann
aide	cumachdan	muc	cam	mic
ainm	cumadh	mucan	camh	mum
ainmeach		mìneachadh	cham	
am	dachaidh	mud	chaidh	nach
amach	damh	muin	chì	nad
amhaich	daimh	mun	chìoch	naoi
an	deadhan		cian	nead
anmoch	deoch	na	cìoch	nid
aon	dha	nad	cnoc	ni
	dhan	nam	cuaich	nochd
cead	dhi	namh	cuine	
ceadan	do	neach	cumaidh	ochdamh
ceud	dom	neo		oich
ceudan	don	nì	dad	
ceum		no	de	uamha
cha	each		deach	uaim
chan	eich	ochd	deadhain	uaimh
cho	eun	oide	deich	uaimhe
chuid		oidhche	dhe	uainead
cia	iad		dhìom	uchdach
ciad	ìm	uamh	dhomh	uidheam
ciod	ime	uamhan	dia	
co	iomadh	uan	dion	
coin		uain	dona	
con	mac	uaine		
cuach	madadh	uchd	eud	
cuachan	man	uchdan		
cuid	meadhan	ud	ìne	
cuideachadh	meud	uime	iomadach	
cuideachd	meudan	umad		
cuideam	mheud			

Meek Lines

Professor Donald Meek, academic, editor, writer, and poet shares his poetry on a Facebook page called “Meek Lines,” explaining that he uses Facebook “in the same way our ancestors used the oral airwaves of their own day. Songs were sung and recited far beyond the composer's original locality.” And as Meek reminds us, “Poems and songs are for sharing, and that is what gives them life.”

In that spirit of sharing (and with Professor Meek’s permission) in this issue of *An Naidheachd Againne* we have again asked one of our friends to pick a poem from Meek Lines and tell us about it.

Here, Dr. Michael Newton, a leading authority on Scottish Gaelic heritage in North America and author of a multitude of books and articles about Gaelic culture and history, discusses Meek’s poem “An t-Oll. Iain MacAonghais nach mairean,” written on the death last May of Newton’s mentor Iain MacAonghais, considered by many to have been Scotland’s leading authority on Gaelic language, tradition, and culture.

An t-Oll.
Iain MacAonghais nach maireann
le Dòmhnall E. Meek
11 May 2019

Iain MhicAonghais, a charaid,
'S ann tha mise fo smalan
Bhon a chuala mi sanas do bhàis.

Bha do Ghàidhlig-sa barraicht',
Mar shruth soilleir gun stad air -
Seudan àlainn bho fhacail nan sàr.

Cha robh do leithid air an talamh
Ann am foghlam nar latha,
Le mòr-thuigse air annas gach bàird.

Bu mhinig aig do chasan,
Fhuair mi oideachadh maiseach -
Bhon Àrd-Ollamh bu ghasda san àit'.

Shiubhail thu fad agus farsaing
Anns gach eilean is baile,
'S tu a' clàradh gach naidheachd is gnàths.

Bha thu fialaidh nar n-aineol,
A' fosgladh dhuinn rathad
Gu bhith tuigsinn ar laigse le bàidh.

Cha robh do leithid ann ri aighear,
'S nad cho-chomann ri caraid,
Is bu toigh leat an drama nad làmh.

Bu tu ceann-uidhe ar taisdeil
'S sinn an tòir air do mhaitheas,
'S tu a' seasamh mar abhall nar gàrr'.

Le neart Mac na Braiche,
Bhiodh do shùilean a' lasadh,
'S deagh sgeulachd ga h-aithris le gàir'.

Iain MhicAonghais, a charaid,
Ged a dh'fhàg thu an talamh-s',
Bidh do chliù-sa air mhaireann gu bràth.

I've known Professor Dòmhnall Meek since the 1990s, when I lived in Scotland, and have drawn many times on his broad and deep scholarship in many aspects of Scottish Gaelic Studies, from his examination of the intersection of religion with Gaelic culture to his detailed editions of Gaelic literature. Although I was well familiar with his expertise as a scholar, it came as a delightful surprise when he revealed a few years back on Facebook that he is a prolific poet. Mere hours after a noteworthy event, he releases a finely crafted response in verse. At least one of these I've seen was in not vernacular Gaelic but Classical Gaelic, demonstrating his mastery of the medium of medieval *filidhs*. And so copious is his output that I have even been the subject of one of his odes, in that instance recognizing my contributions to understanding the Gaelic heritage of the Lennox and Menteith.

The poem that I have chosen to highlight from the Meek canon, however, was composed in honor of our mutual friend Iain MacAonghuis aka “John MacInnes,” who passed from this world on 10 May this year. *Tha mi a’ measadh Iain ’na oide dhomh* / I consider John my mentor. He was certainly one of the major figures in the the twentieth-century Scottish Gaelic world, between the fieldwork he did for the School of Scottish Studies, the scholarship he produced, and the contributions he made to Scottish media, the arts and the wider community. He is probably known best in scholarly circles for his delineation of a pervasive rhetorical system in Scottish Gaelic literature that he named “the Gaelic panegyric code.”

Before I get to the content of Meek’s ode to Iain, I’d just like to point out that he has followed the very conventions – in structure and content – that Iain explored in great detail in his scholarship. One of the more notable aspects of this is the metrical structure, conventionally called “strophic” in English by previous generations of scholars, but probably formally referred to as *iorram* in Gaelic in previous centuries. As Iain noted, it seems to have been particularly favored as a metre for composing clan-oriented praise poetry before the nineteenth century, when it started a precipitous decline. The second stanza of the poem refers to Iain’s scholarship about the artistry of the Gaelic literati.

The third stanza of the poem refers to Iain’s fieldwork collecting Gaelic material throughout Scotland. Unlike many other ethnographers who tended to concentrate on their home communities in the Outer Hebrides, Iain worked with tradition-bearers on the mainland where the language was already marginalized and quickly disappearing.

The next two stanzas refer to Iain’s conviviality in social settings and his love of a dram – although he was much fonder of *fhion dearg na Spàinne*. It was particularly in the pub that he would begin to sing rare but amazing Gaelic songs and share some of the traditions he had inherited or collected.

In the ninth stanza, Meek compares Iain to an apple tree growing in our garden. Iain was very fond of trees and one of his notable scholarly articles in Gaelic is a brief exploration of the symbolism of the apple in Gaelic literature and tradition (a topic I ended up choosing as the focus of my Ph.D. dissertation at Edinburgh University). When we were working on a biographical sketch for the volume of his essays (published under the title *Dùthchas nan Gàidheal*), Iain told me that he had helped Runrig with the lyrics for their popular song “An Ubhal as Àirde,” itself a reference to a metaphorical Gaelic proverb and idiom. My friend Prof. Wilson McLeod of Edinburgh University and I are editing the first comprehensive anthology of Scottish Gaelic literature, to be released this autumn, which we have named after this song and dedicated to Iain.

This brief commentary on my choice from Dòmhnall Meek’s poetic corpus underlines the fact that the Gaelic world is a small one, as one might expect of an endangered language spoken by a minoritized ethnic group. Progressing the interests of Gaelic – whether as the language of a living community or as a topic of scholarly research – requires the goodwill and collaboration of those willing to swim against the prevailing currents. The loss of someone like Iain, who had inherited and accumulated a wealth of cultural lore and understood how to bring it alive in the present, can be felt and grieved at both personal and communal levels, similar to the death of clan chieftains of old.



Caleb Wilson

Answer to Tòimhseachan, p. 5

Fuasgladh: Ugh / An egg

This riddle appeared in *An Naidheachd Againne*, Winter 2001-2001.
The answer was revealed in the Spring / Summer 2002 issue.

“A-muigh ’s a-mach” is where we feature activities organized by local study groups, activities that we think will help build a stronger Gaelic community in the U.S. and Canada. 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-muigh ’s a-mach / out and about

Gàidhlig Photomac Song Workshop

by Hilary NicPhàidein

Gàidhlig Photomac members enjoyed a song workshop at the home of Liam Cassidy at the end of July with Kyle Carey, a Celtic Americana singer and musician. Kyle, who hails from New Hampshire, is noted for her beautiful marriage of Scottish Gaelic and Appalachian music traditions. She studied with Christine Primrose at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig and is a fluent Gaelic speaker.

After the initial introductions, Kyle taught four songs, all of which can be found online performed by various singers. First, a lullaby, *Bà i ù o hò*, followed by *Gaol ise gaol i*, a waulking song. Then, *Sìos dhan an Abhainn*, a Scottish rendition of the American gospel hymn *Down to the River to Pray*, translated by Kenna Campbell. Lastly, *Griogal Cridhe*, the lament of the widow of Gregor Ruadh, Chief of Clan MacGregor of Glenstrae, who was executed in April of 1570.

The workshop was followed by a potluck supper, and then it was time for a cèilidh. Everyone sang and there was even some fiddle playing. It was a great way to spend a Saturday afternoon and evening in the company of other Gaelic learners and singers.

An Afternoon (and an Evening) with Gillebrìde Mac ’IlleMhaoil

by Janice Chan

On the 6th of August, Scottish Gaelic singer, author and teacher, Gillebrìde Mac ’IlleMhaoil, was back in Toronto for what is becoming an annual song and language workshop and evening concert sponsored by the Toronto Gaelic Society before his weekend appearance at the Fergus Scottish Games.

For 3 hours on a wet and stormy afternoon, approximately 17 learners (and a few native speakers) sang songs and picked up quite a few useful tips for learning and teaching Scottish Gaelic, while having the opportunity to practise their conversation skills.

Amongst his recommendations, Gillebrìde suggested learning verbs and their tenses first in order to facilitate conversation. Keeping a daily diary in Scottish Gaelic can reinforce this, as you write about activities that you are doing, will do, and did do. He also said that you shouldn’t be afraid to throw in an English noun in conversation if you don’t yet know the Gaelic word!

We also learned four songs – *Chì mi, chì mi fada bhuan*, *Fear a phige*, *Am maistreadh a bh’ aig Moire*, and *Ruidhle gogan a’ chinn mhòir*.

In the evening, Scottish Gaelic speakers, learners and music enthusiasts enjoyed a concert of traditional songs and Gillebrìde’s own compositions. A special treat was provided by six-year-old Anna Nic ’IlleMhaoil, who sang a few songs as well. Another star in the making!

Criomagan / Bits of This and That

A Gaelic Poet Laureate for Glasgow

Poet Niall O’Gallagher has been named Bàrd Baile Ghlaschu / Glasgow City’s Gaelic Poet Laureate. Although Glasgow has had an English-language poet laureate for many years, O’Gallagher is the first Gaelic poet to be so honored. O’Gallagher’s post will run from July 28 through October 31, 2019, and notably will include the period when this year’s Royal National Mòd takes place in Glasgow. Glasgow’s new bàrd’s first collection of poems, *Beatha Ùr*, was published in 2013 by Clàr, and O’Gallagher is currently the poetry editor of Clàr’s Gaelic literary journal *Steall*.

Two Gaelic Films Showing at International Film Festival

If you live near Halifax, Nova Scotia, you’ll have the opportunity to see two recent Gaelic-language short films this month. Jenny MacKenzie’s “Slighe Agnais / A Journey for Agnes” (2018) (5 minutes) and Iain MacLeod’s “An t-Inneal Expresso / The Espresso Machine” (2019) (16 minutes) will both play at FIN Atlantic International Film Festival, which runs this year from September 12-19, 2019.

You can read Emily McEwen’s interviews with filmmakers MacKenzie and MacLeod here

<https://gaelic.co/slighe-agnais/> and here <https://gaelic.co/espresso-gaelic-film/>



Image by Markus Spiske from www.Pixabay.com

Answer to Seanfhacal na Ràithe, p. 9

Dèan cnuasachd san t-samhradh a nì
an geamhradh a chur seachad.

Gather in summer what will serve for the winter.



B.L. Rice

Answer to Photo Quiz, p. 11

This spot at the top of *Gleann Crò* / Glen Croe, through which an old drovers road ran, is called “Rest and Be Thankful.”

Dè Tha Dol? Gaelic Events

An t-Sultain / September 2019

Friday Night Cèilidh, Comunn Gàidhlig Toronto, Tiki Room at the Tranzac, 292 Brunswick Ave, Toronto, ON, Friday, September 20, 2019

Come out to speak and learn Gaelic, enjoy cultural fun and activities, share a story, song or dance and help grow our Gaelic community together.

Minimum \$5 donation, additional donation towards costs accepted. There will be door prizes; snacks will be provided but you are welcome to bring your own. A cash bar is also available. Bring your instruments, wear your dancing shoes and share the richness of our Gaelic culture together.

The Gaelic Society Cèilidhs will occur on the third Friday of every month: September 20, October 18, November 15, December 20, 2019.

An Dàmhair / October 2019

Celtic Harmonies International Festival, Eastern Townships of Québec; Knowlton (Lac-Brome), Waterloo, Mansonville and Bromont, Canada, October 5–13, 2019

Celebrating Nature Through Music, Dance and the Arts. For more information see <http://www.celticharmonies.ca>

Celtic Colours International Festival, venues throughout Cape Breton Island, NS, October 11–19, 2019

For the full schedule of events and performers, see <https://celtic-colours.com/schedule/>

Mòd Nàiseanta Rìoghail a' Chomuinn Ghàidhealaich / An Comunn Gàidhealach's Royal National Mòd, Glasgow, Scotland, October 11–19, 2019

Celebrating Gaelic linguistic and cultural heritage, the Mòd provides opportunities for people of all ages to perform across a range of competitive disciplines including Gaelic music and song, Highland dancing, instrumental music, drama, sport and literature.

See <https://modghlaschu2019.com>

Julie Fowlis in concert, Beaches Presbyterian Church, 65 Glen Manor Dr., Toronto, ON, Wednesday, October 23, 2019

8 pm. For tickets see <https://downtowntoronto.snapd.com/events/view/1232782>

Oidhche Shamhna Gàidhealach / Halloween Gaelic Weekend, Gaelic College of Arts and Crafts, St. Ann's, NS, October 25–27, 2019

This weekend will blend spooky fun and traditional Gaelic Halloween practices with time set aside just for ghost stories, old-fashioned fuarag, and a masquerade square-dance. The weekend offers instruction in the Gàidhlig Aig Baile (GAB) style of teaching, which allows students to be fully immersed, even at the most beginner level. Classes are available in a variety of topics and skill levels (Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced) with evening activities.

See <https://gaeliccollege.edu/session/oidhche-shamhna-gaidhealach-halloween-gaelic-weekend/>

An t-Samhain / November 2019

An Nollaig Ghàidhealach | A Gaelic College Christmas, Gaelic College of Arts and Crafts, St. Ann's, NS, November 29–December 1, 2019

Kick off the holiday season with a Gaelic immersion weekend that includes a turkey dinner with all the trimmings, Christmas carols and decorating, and a chance to relax by the fireside with friends new and old. The weekend offers instruction in the Gàidhlig Aig Baile (GAB) style of teaching, which allows students to be fully immersed, even at the most beginner level. Classes are available in a variety of topics and skill levels (Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced) with evening activities.

See <https://gaeliccollege.edu/session/an-nollaig-ghaidhealach-christmas-at-the-gaelic-college/>

Is your Gaelic class or study group planning an event, or are you aware of an event with substantial Scottish Gaelic content that you'd like your fellow ACGA members to know about? You can make submissions to 'Dè Tha Dol?' by sending the following information to naidheachd@acgamerica.org

- Name of event
- Date
- City
- Address of venue
- A short description, or web link and / or contact person's email address

Please keep in mind the following deadlines:

- Spring – February 15 (published March 15)
- Summer – May 15 (published June 15)
- Fall – August 15 (published September 15)
- Winter – November 15 (published December 15)

Cuideachadh a dhìth

Help Wanted

One of the benefits of membership in ACGA is our quarterly bilingual e-zine, *An Naidheachd Againne*. It is often the only connection that geographically isolated members have with ACGA and Scottish Gaelic. We hope that you enjoy reading it as much as the editorial team enjoys putting it together for you.

If *An Naidheachd Againne* is something that you consider to be worthwhile, we wonder if you would consider joining our volunteer editorial team. Gaelic is not a requirement in order for you to volunteer your help.

We are looking to fill the following positions to supplement the current editorial team. Please note that we work cooperatively so that no one person is left with too much of the work.

English Proofreaders

Must be:

- Able to work carefully according to our guidelines to proofread content for spelling, typographical and formatting errors. No particular computer skills required beyond a general ability with Word, Apache OpenOffice or Pages.
- Willing to join the ACGA forum where discussion about the current issue takes place.
- Available in the two weeks before publication (not necessarily for every issue). Publication dates are March 15, June 15, September 15 and December 15.

Content Editor

Must be:

- Willing to shadow the current content editors for the next few issues to acquaint themselves with our process, and be ready to take on the job of content editor for one issue per year. We currently have three editors who take turns being content editor. Work on a particular issue begins approximately a month after the publication of the previous issue (March 15, June 15, September 15, December 15).
- Willing to join the ACGA forum where discussion about the current issue takes place.
- One of the “shepherds” who coordinate an issue by:
 - Deciding with the other editors on a lead article and contacting potential authors.
 - Contributing ideas for other articles / content of a particular issue and contacting authors.
 - Keeping track of article submissions and deadlines.
 - Coordinating the proofreading schedule.

Layout Editor

Must:

- Be experienced with Microsoft Word and Publisher, especially with creating and using styles.
- Have a sense of *An Naidheachd Againne* design.
- Expect to do one issue per year and take over at some point.
- Be available at least 2 weeks prior to publication (March 15, June 15, September 15, December 15).

If you are interested in any of these positions, please email membership@acgamerica.org

leis gach deagh dhùrachd,

An Sgioba Deasachaidh ANA

~Barbara

~Cam

~Janice

~Suzanne

Directory of Gaelic Classes & Study Groups

Arizona

Tucson

Classes

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

California

Sacramento Area

Classes

Donnie MacDonald minchmusic@comcast.com

Colorado

Boulder

Study Group

Sue Hendrix susan.hendrix@colorado.edu
<http://moosenoodle.com/language/boulder/>

Denver

Conversation Group

Monthly at Stella's Coffee Shop

Reese McKay reese.mckay25@gmail.com

San Luis Valley

Daily Gaelic

Skype-based online private lessons and classes,
and email courses

<http://www.gaidhliggachlatha.com>

Find us on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/DailyGaelic/>

Illinois

Springfield

Study Group

Bill McClain

217-854-7918

<https://tinyurl.com/SpringfieldILLGaelic>

Maryland

Baltimore

Study Group

<https://tinyurl.com/BaltimoreGaelic>

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301-928-9026

New York

New York

Classes

New York Caledonian Club

Contact Barbara L. Rice, Chair, Scottish Studies

Barbara.Rice@nycaledonian.org

<https://nycaledonian.org/scottish-studies/>

North Carolina

Triangle / Raleigh area

Study Group

An Phillips fiongeal@gmail.com

Virginia

Warrenton

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 www.Meetup.com

Contact Liam willbcassidy@gmail.com

Washington

Seattle

Classes & Study Groups

Slighe nan Gàidheal

<http://www.slighe.com>

Canada

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Classes

Comunn Gàidhlig Bhancoubhair

Email Vancouvergaelic@gmail.com

<https://www.facebook.com/GaelicVancouver/>

Ontario

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Gaelic classes & private tutoring

<http://www.torontogaelic.ca>

Québec

Montréal

Study Group & Celtic choir

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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ACGA Online Faces

Like most organizations in the modern world, ACGA has several online faces, including:

- www.acgamerica.org, our main website, containing a blog for announcements, tips, articles, etc.; an archive of newsletters; detailed information about our major events; information about ACGA and how to join; learning resources; and more.
- <http://forum.acgamerica.org/>, our collection of conversational forums.
- <https://www.facebook.com/ACGAGaelic>, our Facebook page.
- www.youtube.com/user/ACGAmerica, our YouTube channel with video content.
- <https://twitter.com/ACGAGaelic>, our Twitter account, used for ACGA announcements.
- <http://usmod.wordpress.com/>, the ACGA Mòd website, containing information about past, present, and future Mòds.
- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1463155417230179/>, a special Facebook page for our Gaelic Song and Language Week at Grandfather Mountain.

An Naidheachd Againne

An Naidheachd Againne is the quarterly newsletter of *An Comunn Gàidhealach Ameireaganach (ACGA)*. The newsletter is published in the Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter. It is produced by the Publications Committee of ACGA.

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An Naidheachd Againne welcomes submissions. Contact the editors for more information.

