

# Grandfather Mountain Gaelic Song and Language Week 2011

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Come to the beautiful mountains of North Carolina, a state rich in Gaelic heritage. Enjoy Scottish Gaelic language classes for beginner, intermediate, and advanced speakers and singing classes covering a range of traditional Gaelic song forms, including waulking, or milling, songs and mouth music.

This year's Grandfather Mountain Gaelic Song and Language Week will run from July 3th through the 8th. The course will consist of language and song classes at graduated levels. Other activities include special interest sessions in the afternoon, an evening cèilidh, Gaelic videos, a silent auction, hikes in the beautiful surrounding mountains and the North Carolina Gaelic Mòd which is held during the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games the weekend following.

The workshop is housed at Lees-MacRae College in Banner Elk, North Carolina. Information about the cost of tuition, room, and board is available on the [Registration Form](#).

We regret that Donnie Murdo MacLeod, who was to be one of our instructors, has been forced to cancel. We're thrilled, however, that Margaret MacLeod has agreed to come. We are pleased to announce the following instructors for 2011:

## Margaret MacLeod



Margaret was born in Edinburgh although her mother was from Point and her father from Tolsta Chaolais in the Isle of Lewis. When she was ten years old, her family moved to Peterhead. She began singing the next year, and she won first prize for traditional song at the first mòd that she went to, in 1959 in Dundee. In 1962 she won the National Mòd Silver Medal and in 1970 she won the National Mòd Gold Medal in Oban. In 1971 Margaret brought together the group Na h-Òganaich (the young ones). This consisted of herself, her brother Donnie (Donnie Dotaman) and Noel Eadie. They went to the Sterling Mòd and they won the competition there for singing groups. Na h-Òganaich sang throughout Scotland, Europe, and the other Celtic countries, as well as the Faroe Islands, in Canada, and the USA. Margaret also made Cur Car, the first Gaelic children's program on Grampian TV. In the 80s, Margaret began working with the group Albany and doing tours that lasted four months each time, throughout America and Canada. She made five tours. She has sung in Abu Dhabi and Dubai and she is the first woman to receive permission to sing in Oman from the Sultan. Her singing has also taken her to Australia and New Zealand and places like Sarawak and Brunei. She spent nine years working in Eden Court in Inverness in the Show of the North, and she has done TV and radio programs throughout Britain. She has made many recordings, by herself, with Na h-Òganaich and with the group Albany. In 2008 Margaret won a prize for the Best Guest Artist of the Year and in 2009 she and Na h-Òganaich for the service that they have done for

Gaelic music. In addition to singing, Margaret teaches Gaelic in Glasgow, in Greenock, and in Falkirk. She is married to a Skyeman, a Nicholson from Portree, and she is proud that her daughter and her grandchild are following the lifestyle of the Gaels, even if they are in Australia today.

## Michael MacKay

Michael Mackay began studying Scottish Gaelic in 1997 and has become fluent through the help of ACGA-sponsored events and through the teachers and native speakers he has met through the organization. He has appeared on the BBC Radio nan Gàidheal station for occasional news interviews on Aithris na Maidne and the Coinneach Mòr program, and has appeared on television news programs such as an Là and Eòrpa.

He contributes to the Internet podcast program Gaelcast, together with Liam Cassidy and Ed Bradshaw.

Michael has been teaching Gaelic to students across the country, both on behalf of ACGA and via Skype on the Internet.



## Nick Freer

Nick Freer has been studying Gaelic since 1988, attending summer sessions at the Gaelic College (including Immersion weeks) from 1991-94, and in 2000, and SMO in 1995, 1997, and 2005. He also spent time at Cothrom na Feinne with Morag Craig. A multiple gold medalist at the US National Mod in Story-telling, Poetry and Prose. Nick has been teaching beginning and intermediate students on a weekly basis since 1995. He is a former president of ACGA, and chaired the



US Mod from 2004-2010.

## **Cìsean [Fees]**

All instruction, lodging for 5 nights and 3 meals a day from Sunday evening dinner to Friday lunch are included. There are options for tuition only for those not staying at the college and family members not attending classes as well.

Both single and double rooms are available and anyone wishing one can have a single room at the same price as a double. Cafeteria meals are quite good and provide a good selection to cater to most diets. A salad bar is offered at almost every meal and an ice cream bar is always available as well. Further meals and additional dorm room nights are available for a reasonable charge from the college for those staying for the Highland Games.

Please note that all fees are intended to be paid by mail prior to the event. Except in extreme circumstances, we do not intend to receive payments at the event itself.

## **Clàr-Ùine [Schedule]**

Check in will take place from 2:00 to 5:00 on Sunday afternoon. Dinner will be available for those who arrive before 6 pm. Classes will begin Monday and run through noon on Friday. There are a variety of special interest sessions being planned for the afternoon and opportunities for fellowship

with other Gaelic learners in the evening.

## **Fiosrachadh Tèicneolach [IT]**

Those wishing to bring laptops, the wireless network at Lees-MacRae College will be available; however, in order to connect to it, one must have already downloaded or be willing to download from Lees-MacRae the current version of Microsoft Live Update and an active anti-virus program. We are told that if you do not have either of these that you may download them from Lees-MacRae College. They provide a free download of AVG Anti-virus, by Grisoft.

For people using Macintosh computers, you will no longer have to go to LMC's Tech Services; you will be prompted to download them as well, if you don't have the required software and updates. Vista will also work, we are told.

## **Siubhal [Travel]**

If you will be flying the nearest airports are Tri-Cities, Tennessee, and Charlotte, North Carolina. Take a look at the Town of Banner Elk Web site.

### **Van Service:**

From **Charlotte Airport** to **Lees-McRae College Banner Elk**

Contact Dan with Air Haven Limo

[Dana@airhavenlimo.com](mailto:Dana@airhavenlimo.com)

828-265-2504

### **Directions to Lees-McRae College in Banner Elk, NC, from Johnson City, TN, and the Tri-Cities Airport area:**

Take 321 northeast from Johnson City to Elizabethton. From Elizabethton continue east on 19E across the state line to Elk Park, NC. At Elk Park go left on 194 to Banner Elk. As you come to the top of the hill and enter Banner Elk, Lees-McRae College is on your right. Total driving time from Johnson City is about one hour. See \*\*\* below for directions to help with finding the dorm.

### **Directions to Lees-McRae College in Banner Elk, North Carolina, from Charlotte, North Carolina, and the Charlotte Douglas International airport:**

NOTE: These directions are not the same as Mapquest or Yahoo! but are better suited to those not familiar with mountain driving.

Directions to Lees-McRae College from Charlotte airport:

When you come out of the airport, head for Interstate 85 NORTH. Interstate 85 N will soon junction with Interstate 77.

· Take Interstate 77 north. Follow this until the junction with US Highway 421.

- Then take US Highway 421 West until you reach Boone, NC. You are almost there now.
- Simply take Highway 105 south in Boone until you get to the Scottish Shopping Village of Tynecastle where you will see a big sign for Grandfather Mountain.
- There will also be signs there telling you to turn right on Highway 184 to get to Banner Elk. Banner Elk is only a few miles from there and the town is so small you cannot miss the college. When you come to the T-junction at the traffic light (the only one in Banner Elk), turn left. A block up the road you will see a large parking lot on the right. When you are almost past the parking lot, turn left into the college and drive up the road to the stop sign. Turn left at the stop sign and you will see Virginia Hall on your right.

### **Scenic directions:**

From Charlotte Douglas International Airport, take I-485 to I-85 West. Take I-85 to 321 North, at Exit 17. Follow 321 through Hickory and Lenoir to Boone. At Boone, turn left onto Rte 105 at large intersection. Take Rte 105 approximately 15 miles and turn right at the traffic light onto Rte 184 (Tynecastle Hwy). Stay on Rte 184 until it ends at Rte 194 in Banner Elk. Turn left. Lees-McRae College is on the left.

### **From Rte. 421 in Boone, NC:**

Take Rte 105 South approximately 15 miles and turn right at the stoplight onto Rte 184 (Tynecastle Hwy.) Stay on Rte 184 until it ends at Rte 194. Take a left. Lees McRae College is on the left. See \*\*\* below for directions to help with finding the dorm.

### **From Rte. 221 in Linville, NC:**

Take Rte 105 North and turn left at the stoplight onto Rte 184 (Tynecastle Hwy.) Stay on Rte 184 until it ends at Rte 194. Take a left. Lees McRae College is on the left. See \*\*\* below for directions to help with finding the dorm.

\* \* \*Banner Elk is a small town and you should have no trouble finding the college and the dorm. For those who feel more comfortable with explicit directions, these are step-by-step directions for finding your way. Pass the Student Commons, then Hayes Auditorium, and then a small parking lot--all on the left. (There's a larger parking lot on the right also.) Take the next left and go up a small hill to the stop sign (the Historic Rock House will be on your right.) Take a left. Virginia Hall is on your right. It is an old stone building with a porch between the two arms of the dorm. It is next to the Tufts Chimes Tower and across the street from the campus store. After you unload your belongings, you will need to return to one of the parking lots that you passed on your way in. You may not park either behind the dorm or beside it unless you have a handicapped sticker.

## **An Aimsir [The Weather]**

Temperatures usually range in the low 60's to mid 80's during July. The weather is normally beautiful and cool. However, it can be hot, and it can be cold. It is advisable to bring both a fan for

your room and a blanket for your bed. Shorts and lightweight long pants are both appropriate as are short sleeved t-shirts and light weight sweaters. A raincoat or umbrella is also advised just in case the weather doesn't cooperate.

## **Rudan Feumail [Useful Things]**

### **Dorm Room Items:**

- Bed linens and pillow (Those who drive are encouraged to bring their own. \$25.00 will be due upon arrival at college. Do not add to fees.)
- Blanket for your bed
- Towels and washcloths
- Fan for your dorm room
- Desk lamp

### **Personal Items:**

- Laptop computer. The College tells us they expect to have the campus on a completely wireless network by July. Dial-up service won't be available.
- Casual clothing for both cool weather and warm (see the weather section)
- Walking or hiking shoes
- Swimsuit or fishing equipment
- Raincoat
- Camera
- Flash light (needed for the Opening Ceremonies of the Games)
- Cell phone if you want to make a call. Pay phones are not available on campus.
- Lap top computer, if you wish to use one during the week. Service is wireless. Have your computer updated with all Windows Updates and be sure that all programs are legal. See IT section above for further information.

### **Classroom items:**

- Gaelic reference books
- Tape recorder or pen and paper for taking notes

### **Other items:**

- Props for cèilidh

- Musical instruments
- Items to donate for Silent Auction
- Cash or checkbook for Silent auction—great bargains!
- Dancing shoes if you are a dancer and would like to attend any of the evenings of social dancing at the Thistle School of Scottish Country Dance \$5.00 per night.
- Gaelic Language videos to share with the group at night (examples of videos watched in the past are An Ceasnachadh & The Blood is Strong)

The workshop ends just as the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games (July 7 - 10) are getting underway down the road in MacRae Meadow on Grandfather Mountain. As usual there will be a Gaelic tent at the games, and the North Carolina Gaelic Mòd will take place at the games on Saturday, July 9, 2011. If you would like to stay over for the Games and for the Gaelic Mod on Saturday of the Games, contact Lees-McRae College at 828-898-3311 to make a reservation for Friday and/or Saturday. If you don't reach anyone, leave a message and some way to get back with you. Be sure to mention that you are attending the Gaelic workshop the week before.