

Mòd 2008

Mòd Nàiseanta 2008

Information from the Mòd Bulletin 2008:

Sutherland, South Uist and Cape Breton will be well represented at the 21st annual U.S. National Mòd in Ligonier Sept. 5-7. Both gold medalists from Scotland's Royal National Mòd in Lochaber last year originally hail from the far north of the Highlands: James Graham from Lochinver in the Parish of Assynt and Jean Mackay from East Sutherland. And we are delighted to welcome back Paul MacCallum of South Uist as our adjudicator this year.

Paul first joined us in 2003, when he adjudicated the poetry competition in Ligonier for our 16th Mòd. The adjudicator for our distance learning competition is Seumas Watson of Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, who adjudicated the mail-in competition for our ninth Mòd in 1996.

James Graham began competing at mòds when he was nine years old under the guidance of his primary school headteacher, Kenny Mackenzie. He was greatly inspired by his great-aunt Seòrdag Murray, a native Gaelic speaker from the village of Achilitibuie. "I spent hour upon hour learning songs and listening to her fascinating stories and life experiences," he says. Graham studied the bagpipes and Gaelic song at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, graduating in 2003. In 2004, he won the BBC Scotland Young Traditional Musician of the Year Award — the first male and the first Gaelic singer to do so. Since then, he has appeared in several television and radio music programs and released two solo albums. Graham is currently studying Gaelic language and culture at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, the Gaelic college on Skye, and is employed by the Falkirk Council as "Mòd events officer" to help coordinate the Royal National Mòd, which will be held in Falkirk this October.

Jean Mackay was born in Sutherland and currently lives in the Highland capital of Inverness. "Both of my parents were from Sutherland but I spent most of my youth in Caithness — even further north — before moving to Inverness," she says. Jean began to learn Gaelic as an adult. "I am not a native speaker and did not really get the opportunity to learn Gaelic until I was working in the Glasgow area," she says. "My paternal grandparents were native speakers though and even as a child I had an interest in the language. I was very much involved in the Gaelic music scene as a child and teenager and competed as a junior at both local and national mòds. I took a break from competition for a few years before coming back to it as an adult. It was then that I started learning the language." While working in the technology industry in Glasgow Mackay joined the Glasgow Gaelic Musical Association. She has been a member of several Gaelic choirs, including Edinburgh, Melvich, Glasgow Gaelic, Inverness

and, currently, the Dingwall Gaelic Choir. She moved back to Inverness seven years ago to work for the local council as an IT manager. “In my leisure time I sing solo, sing with the choir, play fiddle and piano and am a member of various fiddle groups.”

More information concerning Reservations, Pricing, and Rules can be found in the Mòd Bulletin 2008

How to get to the Mòd

Here are directions to the Antiochian Village—it’s easy to find, and the scenery is beautiful! These directions are from the Antiochian Village website:

<http://www.antiochianvillage.org/center/about/directions.html>