

An Naidheachd Againne

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Thachair mòran againn ri Ailig “Bhaltos” Dòmhnallach, ann an cùrsaichean a theagaisg e aig Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, no aig tachartasan ACGA no a leithid. ’S e duine gasta a th’ ann is caraid ACGA. Bha fios againn gun do thogadh e air croit san Eilean Sgitheanach, is dh’iarr sinn air aiste a sgrìobhadh mu dheidhinn nan làithean sin.

Many of us have met Alec “Valtos” MacDonald, in courses he taught at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig or at ACGA events or the like. He’s a fine fellow and a friend to ACGA. We knew that he grew up on a croft on Skye, and we asked him to write about those days.

Làithean m’ Òige ann an Cùl nan Cnoc

le Ailig “Bhaltos” Dòmhnallach

Thàinig mi dhan t-saoghal ann an ospadal Phort Rìgh ’s mi nam isean deireadh linn ann an teaghlach de cheathrar. Cha b’ fhada gus an robh mi a’ dèanamh air Càrn nam Bodach agus mo cheann-uidhe, Bhaltos.

Chaidh innse dhomh gur h-e leanabh lethchar tinn a bh’ annam son a’ chiad mìos no dhà dem bheatha, ach tuigidh duine sam bith a tha eòlach orm an diugh, nach tug tinneas làithean m’ òige cus buaidh orm.

Note: All pictures in this article are used by permission of Alec MacDonald



Croft house at Valtos

Days of My Youth in Back of the Hill

by Alec “Valtos” MacDonald

I came into the world in Portree Hospital as the last of four children in my family. It wasn’t long before I was headed for the Cairn of the Old Man and my destination, Valtos.

I was told that I was a somewhat sick baby for the first month or two of my life, but anyone who knows me today understands that the illness of my youth didn’t get the better of me.

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

Ged nach robh cus againn mar theaghlach, b' e dachaigh thoilichte anns an deach m' àrach.

Though we didn't have too big a family, I was raised in a happy household.

Bha m' athair nach maireann ri croitear-achd ach cuideachd an ceann a chuid chosnaidh le companaidh thogalach ann am Port Rìgh agus mo mhàthair nach maireann na bean-taighe, na màthair agus na croitear. Chan e dad ùr a th' anns an abairt "*multi-tasking*." Bha mnathan na Gàidhealtachd ris a-seo o chionn fhad' an t-saoghail, gu dearbh.



Ailig with his father and youngest sister

My late father was engaged in crofting, but earned the rest of his living with a building company in Portree. And my mother, also deceased, was a housewife, mother, and crofter. There's nothing new about the idea of "*multi-tasking*." Indeed, the women of the Gàidhealtachd have been doing it since the beginning of their world.

Bha bliadhn' eadar mi fhìn agus mo phiuthar a b' òige agus nuair a fhuair sinn comas nan cas agus blaigh de thuigse, bha sinn ri cuideachadh ann an obair an fhearainn. Bhiodh sin ri leantainn rinn an còrr de ar beatha fhad 's a bha sinn ann an Bhaltois.

There was a year between me and my youngest sister, and from the time we could walk and understand a little, we helped to work the land. We kept at it for the whole of our lives, so long as we were in Valtos.

Geamhrachadh sprèidh, àm breith nan uan, 'g innearadh, cur a' bhuntàta, buain na mòna, gearradh an fheòir, càrnadh an arbhair agus ceud rud eile.

Wintering livestock, birthing lambs, spreading manure, planting potatoes, cutting peat, cutting hay, stacking corn and a hundred other things.

'S iomadh là a chaidh mi a thogail a' bhuntàta, ann an geadhail a bha gun chrìch, agus aodann orm cho fada ri clobha 's mi ri damaineagadh fo m' anail. Ach an diugh, chan eil aithreachas oirnn gun robh sinn nar cuideachadh dhaibhsan a bha cho fìor mhath dhuinne.

On many a day I went out harvesting potatoes, in an endless field, with my face as long as a poker and me cursing under my breath. But today, we have no regret that we helped those who were so very good to us.

A' chiad chosnadh a bh' agam, b' anns an fhactaraidh aig Peadar Shomhairle, nach maireann. Bha Peadar innleachdach na bheatha ghoirid air an talamh seo. Bha sinne, mi fhìn 's mo phiuthar, ro thoilichte sgillinn no dhà a chosnadh gach Disathairne anns an fhactaraidh a bha ri taomadh a-mach botail *lemonade*, *orangeade*, *coca-cola* agus fear no dhà eile cuideachd; nan ceudan.



Ailig with his mother and youngest sister

The first job I had was in a factory owned by the late Peter Sorley. Peter was inventive in his short life on this earth. We, my sister and I, were overjoyed to earn a penny or two every Saturday in the factory that was turning out bottles of *lemonade*, *orangeade*, *Coca-Cola* and one or two other things, too; by the hundreds.

'S iomadh caraid dhan do dh'innse mi an sgeul seo agus bu mhinig nach robh iad gam chreidsinn; factaraidh *lemonade* ann a Bhaltois! Abair e!

I've told this story to many a friend, and frequently they didn't believe me; a *lemonade* factory in Valtos! Imagine that!

Bidh cuimhn' agam gu bràth air làithean geala an t-samhraidh agus mi a' faighinn an cothrom a dhol a-mach còmhla ri iasgairan nam breac.

I will always remember the fine days of summer when I would have a chance to go out with the salmon fishermen.

Mo mhàthair air pìosan a dhèanamh dhomh 's iad air an còmhach gu faiceallach ann am pàipear-cèireach an arain a bhithinn ri ithe aig meadhan-là.

A' leum gu sunndach chun na tobrach 's a' lionadh crogan siorap a-mach air a bhus gus ar tì a dhèanamh.

Daoine còir agus ceart. Bha nàbachd againn a bha air leth cuideachd. Cha robh leithid a-rud ri gnogadh air dorus no ri fònadh mus tigeadh tu air chèilidh. Bha dorus fosgailt' ro gach duine a thogradh tadhal agus bha iad sin ann am pailteas.

A dh'aindeoin riasladh na h-obrach, bha ùin' aig daoine do chàch a chèile.

Chùm Bun-sgoil Stafainn cagnadh rium fad seachd bliadhna. Sgoil bheag le deagh theagasg. Deagh theagasg dha-rìribh. Agus cha robh guth air Curraicealam airson Sàr Mhathais!

Fhuair sinn slaic chruaidh nuair a bha mi sia bliadhna deug, le m' athair a' faighinn bàs aithghearr. A' chiad bheàrn 's a' chiad sheidhir falamh nar dachaigh.

Rinn sinn ar dleastanas, a' cuideachadh ar màthair anns gach dòigh a b' urrainn dhuinn 's a' cumail gnothaichean na croite a' dol cho math 's a ghabhadh.

Saoilidh mi gur h-ann mun àm seo a thòisich mi ri cùl a chuir, beag air bheag, air làithean m' òige.

Thàinig agus shiubhail bliadhnaichean na h-àrd sgoile agus nan cois dh'fhosgail dorsan mòra an t-saoghail agus an iomadh nì a bha ri feitheamh orm; math agus dona.

My mother would make sandwiches for me and carefully wrap in waxed paper the bread that I would eat at mid-day.

Leaping happily to the well and filling syrup crocks to overflowing in order to make our tea.

Fine and kindly people. Our neighborhood was special, too. There was no such thing as knocking on a door or phoning before you come to visit. There was an open door for anyone who wanted to visit and they were many.

In spite of the demands of the work, people had time for one another.

Stafinn Elementary School kept me challenged for seven years. A little school with good teaching. Good teaching, indeed. And there was no mention of the Curriculum for Excellence!

We suffered a hard blow when I was sixteen years old, with my father dying suddenly. The first void and the first empty chair in our home.

We did our duty, helping our mother in every way we could to keep the workings of the croft going as well as possible.

I guess it was about that time that I began, little by little, to turn my back on the days of my youth.

The years of high school came and went and opened the great doors of the world and the many things that awaited me, good and bad.



Ailig

Have you seen ACGA's Facebook page?

We've been pretty busy lately, sharing posts of interest to Gaelic learners of all levels. A new three-times-a-week feature is called Dè Thuirt I? I won't tell what she said; you'll have to hop over to <https://www.facebook.com/ACGAGaelic?fref=ts> and listen for yourself. And, while you're there, won't you please "like" us? We have more than 800 likes right now, but you can help us go over the 1000 mark.



Litir bho'n Cheann-Suidhe

le Micheal MacAoidh



A Chàirdean chòir,

Seo sinn, aig deireadh bliadhna eile, agus a h-uile h-ìomairt aig ar Comunn seachad. No a bheil? Gu h-àbhaisteach, bidh cùrsa bogaidh againn (ged nach d'fhuair sinn air sin a chur air bhonn am-bliadhna), bidh seachdain Beinn Seanar againn, bidh am Mòd ann agus, anns a' mhìos seo, bidh sinn a' dèanamh planaichean airson a h-uile rud a chur air dòigh 'san ath-bhliadhna.

'S ann mar sin a tha e an-dràsda, gun teagamh, agus chunnaic sibh brath a dhol a-mach mu dheidhinn Beinn Seanar 2015. Bha sinn an dòchas gum bitheadh cùrsa bogaidh air a stèidheachadh ann an Toronto 'sa Chèitean 2015, ach chan urrainn dhuinn. Ach tha sinn a' dèanamh barrachd na sin. An àite mìosan a' Gheamhraidh a chur seachad le planaichean agus ullachaidhean, bidh cuid againn a' toirt rudeigin ùr dhuibh -- sreath de phrògraman rèidio air an cuir an eadar-lìon far an cluinnear Gàidhlig, ceòl, agus rudan mu'n Chomunn agus na tha sinn a' dèanamh 'san àm ri teachd. 'Se "Guth nan Gàidheal" a chanas sinn ris, agus 'se dòigh eile a chleachdas sinn airson ur cuideachadh, ur brosnachadh, agus ur toil-eachadh ann a bhith a' cumail suas bratach na Gàidhlig.

Tha fhios againn air Bòrd ACGA gu bheil sibh nur buill airson 's gu bheil sibh taiceil dhan a' Ghàidhlig, agus seo dòigh eile airson barrachd Gàidhlig agus na rudan co-cheangailte ri a cultur a chluinntinn. Tha sinn an dòchas gun còrd e ruibh!

Ma tha sibh airson barrachd a dhèanamh airson taic a chumail ris an obair a tha am Bòrd a' dèanamh, nach cuir sibh post-dealain thugainn -- gu duine sam bith a tha air a' Bhòrd, agus bidh sinn taingeil airson rud sam bith a's urrainn dhuibh dèanamh. Cumaibh sùil air làrach lìn a' Chomuinn, air an duilleig Facebook againn, agus air ar fòram cuideachd. Tha rudan mòr' a' tighinn!

Le meas,

Micheal MacAoidh

Letter from the President

by Mike Mackay

Friends,

Here we are at the end of another year, and all of ACGA's events are done. Or are they? Normally, we have an immersion event (though we could not this year), we have Grandfather Mountain, and we have our Mòd, and then we start plans to do everything again the next year.

That's how it is now, and indeed you've seen messages about Grandfather Mountain in 2015. We had hoped to hold an Immersion Weekend in Toronto, in May 2015, but won't be able to do so. But we are doing more than that this year. Instead of just spending the winter in preparations, we are giving you something new -- a series of Gaelic programs through the medium of Internet radio, where you can hear Gaelic, music, and information about ACGA and what we are doing. We call it "Guth nan Gàidheal" -- "The voice of the Gael" -- and it's another way we will employ to help, encourage, and interest you in keeping up the banner of Gaelic.

The ACGA Board knows that you are members because you support Gaelic, and this is one more way to hear more Gaelic and all the things connected to Gaelic culture. We certainly hope that you like it!

If you wish to do more to help us with the work we are doing, why not send us an email -- to anyone listed here on the Board. We'll be grateful for anything you can manage to do! Keep an eye on our web page, our Facebook page, and the ACGA forums. Big things are coming!

Respectfully,

Mike Mackay

A' leantainn air aistean ann an ANA an Ògmhiosa agus na Sultaine, seo crìoch an tuairisgeul a rinn Màiri Parr mu dheidhinn turas a thug na sgoilearan Gàidhlig aice bho Alba Nuadh gu Alba.

Continuing articles which appeared in the June and September 2014 issues of ANA, here's the final part of the description from Màiri Parr of a tour which took her Gaelic students from Nova Scotia to Scotland.

Sgoilearan Beaga a' Bhaile Mhòir – Alba bho Alba Nuadh! Pàirt 3

le Màiri Parr

An Siathamh Latha

Shiubhal sinn gu cathair-bhaile na Gàidhealtachd, Inbhir Nis, far an do ghabh sinn dinnear mheadhan-latha leis a' Phròbhaist Greumach ann an Taigh a' Bhaile. Aig uair, dh'atharraich coltas nan sgoilearan bho bhith cho toilichte gu bhith a' faireachdainn caran gruamach oir bha sinn aig Cùil Lodair a' faighinn fiosrachaidh mun Bhlàr. Nam bheachd, bha e cudromach gum biodh na sgoilearan a' faighinn cothrom a dhol an seo oir dh'fhaodamaid a ràdh gur e an tachartas ud a bu mhotha a dh'adhbhraich gun do rinn uiread de dhaoine (an sinnsirean fhèin) imrich à Alba. Cha b' fhada gus an robh iad na bu shunndaiche agus le turas-coiseachd tro Bhaile Inbhir Nis, 's na solais sràide dhathach a' toirt togail dhuinn, thòisich a' ghàireachdainn 's a' chabadaich a-rithist.

The Wee Gaelic Students' Adventure – to Scotland from New Scotland! Part 3

by Màiri Parr

The Sixth Day

We traveled to the Highland city of Inverness where we had lunch with Provost Graham at the City Hall. At one o'clock, the mood of the students changed from being so happy to feeling somewhat gloomy because we were at Culloden learning about the battle. In my opinion it was important for the students to have the opportunity to go there since one could say that it was this event which had the biggest impact on the number of people (their ancestors) who emigrated from Scotland. It wasn't long, however, before the atmosphere brightened, and with a walking tour through the town of Inverness with the colorful street lights cheering us, that the laughing and chattering began again.



Culloden Battlefield
Janice Chan



Bridge over River Ness

Cam MacRae



Inverness

Jeanne Pendergast

An Seachdamh Latha

Aig an àm, bha trìuir chloinn-nighean a' leughadh sreath leabhraichean *Outlander*, 's mar sin, bha e deatamach dhuinn tursachan fhaicinn. Bha am bus ro mhòr a dhol sìos rathad Chlamhaidh (Clava Cairns) 's mar sin, chaidh sinn a dh'fhaicinn Clach an Tuire, a chaidh a lorg ann an Cnoc nan Gàidheal, Inbhir Nis. Tha iomadh clach mar seo sgapte mu thimcheall na Gàidhealtachd, ri taobh an rathaid no ann an achaidhean tuathanais, ach 's iad na clachan air a bheil dealbhan no sgrìobhadh a bhios a' faighinn barrachd urraim. 'S beag an t-iongnadh oir tha iad air an sgeadachadh cho snog 's gun fhios againne cò air a bha iad a-mach!

Gu luath bha sinn ann an Sruighlea agus suas leinn chun a' Chaisteil. Bha an neach-iùil an siud ceum air thoiseach air feadhainn sam bith eile, oir bha e a' toirt air na sgoilearan pàirt a ghabhail anns an eachdraidh - fhad 's a bha e ga h-innse dhaibh. Thug e orra rìgh air choreigin no saighdear a chluich – *eachdraidh a' tighinn beò* mar gum biodh!

An t-Ochdamh Latha

Chan urrainn dhomh creidsinn gun do ràinig sinn am port-adhair leis a h-uile càil, a h-uile sgoilear, a h-uile бага agus a h-uile cairt-siubhail - 's gun trioblaid sam bith!

Air an t-slighe, bha sinn ann an Iorc Nuadh son feasgar. Abair diofar eadar Aimeireaga agus Alba - le togalaichean cho àrd ris na beanntan!

Bha aon rud a' ceangal an dà shaoghal ri chèile, agus b' e sin MaryBeth, an neach-iùil againn. Chaidh a togail anns a' bhaile, ach bha a seanair agus a seanmhair à Eilean Uibhist 's bha fiù 's beagan Gàidhlig aice!

Leis an fhirinn innse, ged a bha tòrr obrach an cois an turais seo bho bhith planadh, a' trusadh airgid, a' rùrachadh obair pàipeir 's a leithid, chan urrainn dhomh feitheamh gus an ath bhuidheann de ghaisgich òga na Gàidhlig a thoirt ann - sa Mhàrt 2015!

Taing mhòr dhan a h-uile duine a thug cuideachadh dhuinn ga chur air dòigh, 's taing mhòr do luchd-leughaidh seo 's do sgioba a' phàipeir airson ur taic. Tha sinn fada nur comain.

The Seventh Day

At the time, three girls were reading the series of books *Outlander*, and so it was necessary to see some standing stones. The bus was too big to go down the Clava Cairns road, and so we went to see the Boar Stone that was discovered in Knocknagael, Inverness. There are many stones like this scattered about the Highlands, beside the road or in farm fields, but those stones on which there are pictures or writing are more highly regarded. It's little wonder because they have been decorated so nicely, though we don't know what they are about.

Very quickly we were in Stirling and up to the Castle. The tour guide here was superior to any others because he was making the students take part in history while he was telling them about it. He had them play some king or other, or a soldier - "hands on history" as it were!

The Eighth Day

I can't believe we reached the airport with everything, every student, every bag, and every passport - without any trouble at all!

On the return trip we were in New York for an afternoon. What a difference between America and Scotland - with buildings as tall as the mountains!

One thing connected the two worlds together, and that is MaryBeth, our tour guide. She was raised in the city (New York) but her grandfather and grandmother were from Uist, and she even knew a bit of Gaelic!

Honestly, although this trip involved a lot of work, from planning, raising money, arranging paperwork and the like, I can't wait to take the next group of young Gaelic heroes there (to Scotland) - March 2015!

Thank you to everyone who helped us organize it, and many thanks to the readers and editors of the paper *An Naidheachd Againne* for your help. We are much obliged to you.

From History to Folklore: Murchadh Mac Brian and Brian Bòrr

How two Irish historical figures were transformed into Scottish Gaelic folk heroes

by Liam Ó Caiside

“Bha trìuir dhaoine ann an dùthaich Chinn a Choire ann an Èirinn; b’ e sin Murchadh Mac Brian, agus Donnachadh Mac Brian, agus Brian Bòrr an athair.”

So begins the tale of “Murchadh Mac Brian”, as recited in 1859 by Donald Shaw of Islay, who learned it from one Duncan MacMillan of Colonsay about fifty years earlier, and as it was published in 1860 in J.F. Campbell’s *Popular Tales of the West Highlands, Volume II*. The story Shaw told collector Hector MacLean in 1859 is full of colorful and magical incidents reminiscent of stories of Fionn Mac Cumhaill, as well as examples of “runs” or repetitive pieces of poetic language loved by Gaelic storytellers in Scotland and Ireland. Unlike Fionn, however, Murchadh Mac Bhriain is an historical figure who lived and died 1,000 years ago. His father, Brian Bòrr, better known as Brian Bóroimhe in Irish and in English as “Brian Boru,” is without doubt the best known high-king of Ireland. Like his son Murchadh, he died at Cath Chluain Tarbh, the battle of Clontarf, near Dublin, on Good Friday 1014. His brother Donnchadh survived to claim the kingship of Ireland, but died in exile in Rome in 1064 after being ousted by his nephew, Toirdhealbhach, Brian Boru’s grandson.

How did these kings and leaders from early medieval Ireland wind up being celebrated centuries later in a Hebridean folktale? For one, the sea certainly was no barrier to the diffusion of shared folklore and story between Gaelic-speaking Ireland and Scotland in the Middle Ages and early modern times. Second, Brian and Murchadh made a big impression on the Gaelic-speaking peoples, one that would outlast the Middle Ages. The battle at Cluain Tarbh 1,000 years ago and the career of Brian Bóroimhe were so famed in the Gaelic and Scandinavian worlds that “Brian Bòrr” or “Brian Brugh” and “Murcha” or Murchadh Mac Bhriain were still well known in Scottish Gaelic, let alone Irish, folklore more than 800 years later, when Duncan MacMillan and Donald Shaw flourished as storytellers. That shouldn’t be surprising, as events at Cluain Tarbh affected Ireland, northern Scotland,

Orkney and the Scandinavian-ruled Hebrides and the Isle of Man. Cath Chluain Tarbh began as an Irish power struggle and became an “international” contest. What’s more, the battle between the Irish and Hiberno-Norse outside Dublin took place at a time when the Danes under Svein Forkbeard and his son Cnut were fighting King Aethelred for control of England, which Cnut won, along with Aethelred’s wife, Emma of Normandy, in 1016.

The 1,000th anniversary of the battle of Cluain Tarbh and the death of Brian (and Murchadh, among many others), was commemorated this year in Ireland, particularly in the city Brian Bóroimhe ultimately failed to bring to heel -- Dublin. From museum exhibits and lectures to a recreation of the battle itself and a Viking village (in a city park), there has been plenty in Dublin one may do to remember Boru. A good place to start is the Árd-Mhúsaem na hÉireann or National Museum of Ireland for Archaeology in Kildare Street, where an exhibit called “Clontarf 1014: Brian Boru and the Battle for Dublin” is running through December.



Liam Cassidy

The bilingual exhibit attempts to put the battle in its proper historical context and correct more than 800 years of myth-making about Brian Boru and his opponents: the oft-overlooked Máelmórda or Maol

Mórdha, King of Leinster, Sitric Silkenbeard, the Hiberno-Norse King of Dublin (his mother was Gormflaith, by 1014 Brian's estranged wife, and Máelmórda was his uncle), and their hired swords, Sigurd Hlodvisson, the Jarl or Earl of Orkney, whose realm probably included the northern and western islands and parts of the Scottish mainland, and Brodir, a Norse or perhaps Hebridean-Norse warrior or ruler from the Isle of Man.

“*Céard a tharla go firinneach ag Cath Chluain Tarbh?*” or “What really happened at the battle of Clontarf?” one display at the exhibit asks visitors. The traditional portrayal of the battle as a victory of the Christian Brian over invading Viking pagans and the last act in his life-long campaign to drive the Vikings from Ireland, in any case, is decidedly false. Although Brian defeated the Hiberno-Norse on many occasions he also used them as allies (especially when he needed ships), and married his daughter to Sitric. The Hiberno-Norse settlements in Ireland were a source of wealth, and Brian wanted to control those latter day “Vikings” and their resources, not expel them. In fact, Brian brought all the major Viking settlements except Dublin -- Limerick, Cork, Wexford and Waterford -- under his rule as King of Munster.

The true story of Brian Bóroimhe is more remarkable than the legend. Born into what had been a minor noble family in Munster, the Dál gCais, he became first king of Mumhan or Munster and then, in 1002, the first non-Uí Néill high-king of Ireland in centuries. “This was an historic event on the island,” Darren McGettigan writes in *The Battle of Clontarf: Good Friday 1014* (Four Courts Press, Dublin, 2013), a fresh recounting of Brian's career and the battle.

Being high king of Ireland didn't mean much unless you had the power to bring the island's many kingdoms under your rule, and that effort took Brian years. In 1005 he was famously named “Imperator Scottorum,” Emperor of the Irish (the Latin Scotia

originally referred to Ireland), in a note left by his secretary Máel Suthain, in the *Book of Armagh*. However, he was effectively high-king of the entire island only for a few months in 1011-12, which McGettigan still calls “an astounding achievement.” No previous Irish king had enjoyed such success.

Brian may have been trying to create a more centralized form of kingship in Ireland along Continental lines, mimicking the Carolingian and Ottonian emperors, as the imperial title suggests. He was also trying to create a dynasty. He married four times, and had numerous sons and daughters. In addition to Murchadh and Donnchadh, history and folklore remember Tadhg, murdered in 1023, Domhnall, who died in 1011, and possibly Conchobhar and Flann. He had several daughters as well. One daughter, Sláine, married Sitric, king of Dublin. Another, Bé Binn, married Flaithbheartach (or Flaithbertach) Ua Néill, king of the Cenél nEóghain in the north of Ireland and another adversary of Brian. Another



Liam Cassidy
Two heroes, perhaps Murchadh mac Bhriain and the Orkney Earl Sigurd, fight. From Irish artist Hugh Frazer's *Battle of Clontarf*, 1826, now owned by Kildare Partners.

may have married Máel Coluim son of Cinaed, or Malcolm II, who seized the kingship of Alba in what we now call Scotland in 1005 (his kingdom did not at that time include all of what we now consider “Alba” or Scotland). Evidence for this Scottish marriage is thin on the ground, though historian Alex Woolf does ask whether Brian Bóroimhe may have influenced Mael Coluim's rise to power as he made conquests

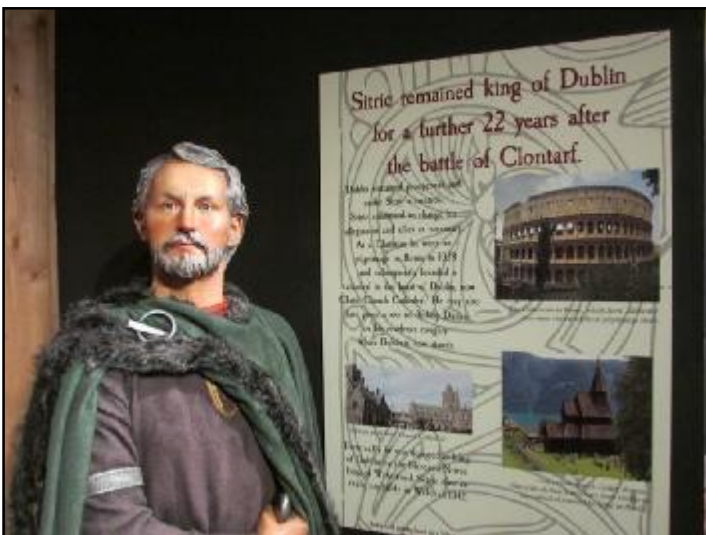
himself in Ulster (*The New Edinburgh History of Scotland, Volume 2, “From Pictland to Alba 789-1070”*, p. 225). Máel Coluim may have spent time in exile in Ireland, Woolf suggests, and his mother, according to one account, was from Leinster. More evidence, if needed, that the sea didn't divide the Gaels much in those days.

Brian's hold on Ireland began to loosen in 1012, however, when Flaithbheartach Ua Néill rebelled. When Ua Néill defeated Brian's leading vassal, the King of Meath and former High King Máel-seachnaill II (often Anglicized as “Malachy”), the kings of Leinster and Dublin (Brian's former

brother-in-law and son-in-law) saw their chance and rebelled as well, recruiting warriors from Orkney, the Hebrides and Man to confront Brian in 1014.

“While Clontarf may not have been fought to expel the Viking invaders from Ireland, King Brian’s career and his seeming ambition for a unified Irish kingdom were remarkable in their own right,” says McGettigan, who compares Cath Chluain Tarbh with Hastings and Bannockburn. The fact that so many of the Irish and Hiberno-Norse leaders died in the battle, he argues, partly accounts for its fame. Murchadh Mac Bhriain fell there, as did Brian, killed by the Manx Norse leader Brodir. Brodir was executed or slain, and Sigurd of Orkney was killed as well. Máelmórda, the Leinster king, who allegedly survived the earlier battle of Gleann Máma in 999 by climbing a yew tree, did not survive Cluain Tarbh. The battle, which may have involved 5,000 men, was renowned in its own time for its carnage, perhaps exacerbated by an unusual high tide that cut the Norsemen off from retreat to their ships. Many of Brian’s opponents were cut down trying to retreat to the walled city.

Brian’s daughter Sláine, who according to a 12th century account watched the battle from the walls of Dublin with her husband, King Sitric, is said to have remarked to him, “The foreigners are going into the sea, their natural inheritance,” at which point Sitric “gave her a blow.” Sitric did survive the battle -- Irish accounts have him waiting in reserve in Dublin while Sigurd, Máelmórda and Brodir advanced against Brian, Murchadh and their allies.



Liam Cassidy

Scandinavian accounts have him fighting in the battle and facing a Manx ally of Brian, Óspak, who drove him back to the city -- another sign that Norse and Gael may have fought on both sides that day. In either case, Sitric Silkenbeard ruled Dublin until 1036, went on a pilgrimage to Rome in 1028, built Christ Church Cathedral, and died in exile, perhaps in Wales, in 1042. The museum Dublinia, located next to Christ Church Cathedral, goes so far as to suggest Sitric was the real victor of Cluain Tarbh, and surviving, I suppose, is a kind of winning.

It’s a quick leap from history to “legend” to folklore. Once traditions concerning Brian Bóroimhe and Murchadh in particular entered folklore, they may have been reinforced -- or reintroduced -- in Scotland by Hebridean contact with Ireland in the later Middle Ages and more recently by the copying of manuscripts containing early modern romances. In particular, *Cogadh Gaedhel re Gallaibh*, (CGRG) a history of the wars of the Gael in Ireland against the “Foreigners” or Vikings written to glorify Brian Bóroimhe in the 12th Century, made much of Murchadh, picturing him as a second Hector, fighting at Clontarf with a sword in each hand. “He grasped his two valiant strong swords, viz., a sword in his right, and a sword in his left hand, for he was the last man in Erin who had equal dexterity in striking with his right and with his left hand,” says the 1867 translation of CGRG by James Henthorn Todd. “The historians of the Gaedhil do not relate, that there was any man of the sons of Adam in his time who could hold a shield in mutual interchange of blows with him,” the translation says. That heroic image of Murchadh in CGRG (which may have been commissioned to bolster the authority of Brian’s great-grandson, the High King Muircheartach Ua Briain), likely reinforced and shaped oral traditions existing in Ireland and Scotland.

Brian Bóroimhe and his sons appear in more than one Scottish Gaelic tale. They feature in a version of “Leigheas Coise Céin” or the “Healing of Cian’s Leg” collected from Calum Bàn or Malcolm Sinclair of Tiree in the 19th Century and referenced by John Gregorson Campbell in *The Gaelic Otherworld*. There Brian and his sons are named as Brian Borr mac Cimi, Murdoch mac Brian, Duncan mac Brian and Torgill mac Brian “and his sixteen foster-brothers with every one of them.” Murchadh often

takes center stage in folktales (such as “Murchadh Mac Brian” and “Giolla an Fhiugha” in Ireland) and poetry. Here is how he is described in a “popular ballad” collected by Alexander and Donald Stewart in their collection *Cochruinneacha Taoghta de Shaothair nam Bard Gaëlach*, published in 1804:

“Is mise Murcha sin mac Brian,
'S ioma sciath a sgoilt mi'n cath;
Gus an diugh gu'n dìongain ceud
le'm chloidheamh geur a's le'm ghatb”

“I am that Murchadh son of Brian,
Many a shield I have split in battle;
Until today I'd have matched a hundred
With my sharp sword and my spear.”

Interestingly, this stanza is from a poem representing a “coradh (còmhradh) tiamhaidh” or “gloomy conversation” between Murchadh, identified as “Rìgh Eirin” or king of Ireland, and the “Inghean oighre Bhailacliath” or the daughter of the heir of Dublin (Baile Átha Cliath), who doesn't realize the wounded Murchadh has killed her brothers in “Cath chluaine” — the battle of Clontarf. Once she realizes who he is and what he has done, she tells him:

“Ach a Mhurcha nan gruaidh corcair,
O's ann leat a lotadh mo dhaoine,
Gur e cobh'readh air mo dhochunn,
Làn a chopains' dhe d'fhuil chraobhaich.”

“But Murchadh of the crimson cheeks,
Since you have wounded my people,
A remedy for my agony will be
a full cup of your streaming blood.”

According to the late Alan Bruford, the oldest version of the Murchadh Mac Brian recorded from Donald Shaw in 1859 can be traced to a written text in Scotland in 1690 or 1691, “probably not much more than a century after it was first composed.” *Murchadh Mac Brian agus an dirioch* (dithreabhach or hermit) was written down by Eoghan Mac-Ghilleóin, a “prolific scribe” and at one time schoolmaster at Kilchenzie in Argyll, according to Bruford. MacGhilleóin, he said, copied the tale from an earlier manuscript, possibly from Northeast Ireland. Bruford found 12 different versions of the tale of Murchadh and the hermit taken down or recorded from different

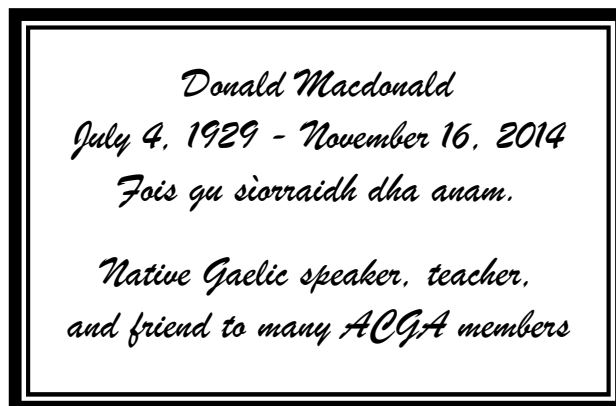
storytellers between 1859 and 1955, nine of them from Scotland and three from Ireland. (See Bruford's “The Hermit Disturbed and Undisturbed”, from *(Re)oralisierung*, ed. Hildegard L.C. Tristram, Guntar Narr Verlag, Tübingen, Germany, 1996.)

Another tale about Murchadh from Ireland is *Giolla an Fhiugha*, or “the Lad of the Ferule,” edited and published by Irish scholar Douglas Hyde for the Irish Texts Society in 1899 from manuscripts written by Micheál Ó Mongáin and Daniel McCabe in the 19th century (Hyde also knew of a third manuscript of the tale written by one Eóghan Toibín in 1817).

Like Murchadh Mac Brian, *Giolla an Fhiugha* includes an episode where Murchadh engages a magical servant, *Giolla an Fhiugha*, not unlike the “*Giolla Deacair*” or “difficult servant” engaged by Fionn Mac Cumhaill in the Fenian cycle. The *giolla* or *gille* is an otherworld figure in disguise. The story has much in common with the tale of the hermit, but instead sends Murchadh on a series of adventures in pursuit of a magical cauldron and other treasures kept by a serpent at the bottom of a loch (Murchadh has a “glass helmet” that allows him to travel underwater). He defeats a five-headed giant (fathach mór modartha mí-sgiamhach na gcúig ceann na gcúig beann agus na gcúig muineál) and again meets the *Giolla*, who is revealed as the King Under the Waves or Rígh fá Thúinn. They return to Ireland together.

And so Murchadh made his eight-century leap from history to legend to heroic fantasy.

Liam Ó Caiside is a frequent contributor to *An Naidheachd Againne* and author of the serialized Gaelic novel *Sgoil nan Eun* being published in this newsletter. *Sgoil nan Eun* will return in March 2015.



27th U.S. National Mòd

September 19-21, 2014
Ligonier PA
Adjudicator: Lewis MacKinnon

Poetry Recitation

Winner of the Searrag Ghlaire award:
Anne Alexander (OH)
Second place: John Grimaldi (NY)
Third place: Barbara Lynn Rice (NY)

Storytelling

Winner of the “Duais Dhaibhidh MhicRisnidh”
award: Mike Mackay (VA)
Second place: Liam Cassidy (VA)

The Argyll Education Society Award

John Grimaldi (NY)

Unison Singing

Na h-Eileanaich (John Grimaldi and
Barbara Lynn Rice)



Lewis MacKinnon
and Anne Alexander

*Facebook: U.S. National Mòd:
Mòd Naiseanta Aimeireagaidh*

Work Song

First place: Liam Cassidy (VA)
Second place: Debby Biro (OH)

Open Competition

First place: Anne Alexander (OH)
Second place: Liam Cassidy (VA)
Third place: John Grimaldi (NY)

Women, Prescribed Song

Winner of the S.C.O.T.S shield, provided by the
Scottish Club of the Twin States:
Debby Biro (OH)
Second place: Lindy Lincicome (OH)

Women - Overall Highest Score in Singing

Winner of the Marietta MacLeod cuach:
Debby Biro (OH)



Lewis MacKinnon
and Debby Biro

*Facebook: U.S. National Mòd:
Mòd Naiseanta Aimeireagaidh*

A Website to Watch



Teicneolas Gàidhlig dhan 21mh linn

As iGàidhlig (a.k.a., Michael Bauer) admits, “Màiri Mhòr nan Òran didn’t have a Gaelic smartphone,” but that’s not really the point. People all over the world struggling to preserve their minority languages know the importance of using them in everyday settings, and iGàidhlig is a collection of digital tools for that purpose.

Just some of the categories of resources at iGàidhlig: dictionaries, education, email, games, graphics, Internet, media, operating systems, and spellchecking.

Click on the link for iGàidhlig’s Gaelic-language page: <http://www.igaidhlig.net/gd/> or here for the English translation: <http://www.igaidhlig.net/en/>

You can also find iGàidhlig on Facebook.



An t-Ionnsachadh Bòidheach

by Caroline Root, Youth Page Editor

A' Mhiotag

Ath-innse
le Caroline Root

The Mitten

A Ukranian folk tale
as retold by Caroline Root

Uair a bha siud, bha gille beag a' cluich anns a' choille air feasgar soilleir geamhraidh. Air an rathad dhachaigh thuit aon de na miotagan aige a-mach às a phòcaid. Cha do mhothaich an gille gus an robh e dhachaigh agus an uair sin bha i ro dhorcha airson a dhol a choimhead air a son.

A-muigh anns a' choille bha a' mhiotag na laighe air an t-sneachda gheal ann an solas na gealaich. 'S e oidhche shàmhach fhuar a bh' innte.

Bha luchag bheag a' coiseachd seachad. "O nach mi a tha fuar," thuir i. An uair sin chunnaic i a' mhiotag.

"Seall seo!" thuir i le toileachas, "àite math blàth far am faigh mi cadal cofhurtail a-nochd. Nach mi a tha fortanach," agus chaidh i a-steach dhan mhiotaig.

Bha an luchag dìreach air tuiteam na cadal nuair a chuala i guth. 'S e radan a bh' ann.

"O tha mi cho fuar! Nach leig thu mi a-steach dhan mhiotaig bhòidhich bhlàith agad a Luchag," agus fhad 's a bha i cho cofhurtail agus i ag iarraidh a dhol air ais a chadal thuir i ris gum b' urrainn dha thighinn a-steach. Bha e na bu bhlàithe còmhla agus bha rùm gu leòr ann airson an dithis aca.

Bha an luchag agus an radan air an dòigh glan anns a' mhiotaig bhig bhlàth nuair a thàinig beathach eile.

"O mo chreach, tha i fuar," thuir a' ghràineag. "Tha mi cinnteach gu bheil rùm anns a' mhiotaig sin dhomhsa. Bithibh còir agus leigibh a-steach mi." Uill leig iad a-steach i ach cha robh e buileach cho cofhurtail 's a bha e. Ach mu dheireadh thall bha iad uile ann agus cha robh na bioran aice a' bruideadh nam feadhainn eile.

Once upon a time there was a little boy playing in the woods on a bright winter afternoon. On his way home one of his mittens fell out of his pocket. The little boy didn't notice until he got home and by then it was too dark to go look for it.

Out in the forest the mitten was lying on the white snow in the moonlight. It was a cold quiet night.

A little mouse was walking by. "Oh, I am so cold," she said. Then she saw the mitten.



"Look at this!" she said happily, "a good warm place where I can sleep comfortably tonight. I am so fortunate." And she went into the mitten.

The little mouse had just fallen asleep when she heard a voice. It was a rat.

"Oh I am so very cold. Won't you let me into that beautiful warm mitten of yours, Mouse?" And because she was so comfortable and just wanted to get back to sleep she told him that he could come in. It was warmer with the two of them in there and there was plenty of room for them both.

The little mouse and the rat were feeling marvelous in the little warm mitten, when another animal came along.

"Oh my goodness it is cold!" said the hedgehog. "I'm sure there is room in that mitten for me. Be nice and let me in." Well they let her in but it wasn't as comfortable as it had been. But in the end they were all in and none of her bristles were poking the others.

“O tha mo spògan reòite!” thuirt madadh-ruadh. “Leigibh a-steach mi. Mas e ur toil e.” Rinn e fiamh-ghàire agus nuair a chunnaic an fheadhainn eile na fìaclan fada biorach aige, cha do rinn iad argamaid sam bith.

Nis, cha robh ann ach miotag balaich, cha b’ e teanta no fiù ’s poca mòr a bh’ ann agus bha na beathaichean gu math dlùth ri chèile na broinn.

“Obh obh,” smaoinich an luchag bheag bhochd. Bha ise ann an òrdag na miotaige agus cha robh i a’ faighinn cadal idir. “S dòcha gum bi sinn ceart gu leòr mura bi duine eile ag iarraidh a-steach.” Ach cha robh i aig deireadh na smuaine nuair a thàinig mathan mòr dubh.

“Leig a-steach mi,” thuirt e, gun ghuth air ‘mas e ur toil e’ idir. Cha ghabh e creidsinn, ach fhuair e a-steach dhan mhiotaig.

Bha iad uile ann agus dh’fhàs an oidhche sàmhach a-rithist. Bha a’ ghealach a’ deàrrsadh air na craobhan is air an t-sneachda agus bha an saoghal ciùin. Bha iad nan cadal, agus mar sin cha chuala iad guth beag sàmhach ag ràdh, “Am faod mise tighinn a-steach?” ’S e daolag a bh’ ann agus ged nach d’ fhuair i freagairt thòisich i a’ sreap suas gus am faigheadh i a-steach dhan mhiotaig.



“Oh my paws are frozen,” said the fox. “Let me in please.” He smiled and when the others saw his long sharp teeth, they didn’t argue.

Now, this was naught but a little boy’s mitten. It wasn’t a tent or even a big bag and the animals were getting a bit squished inside.

“Oh no,” thought the poor little mouse. She was now in the thumb of the mitten and she wasn’t getting any sleep. “Maybe it will be okay as long as no one else wants in.” She wasn’t even at the end of the thought when a big black bear came along.

“Let me in!” he said without even a ‘please’ at all. It’s hard to believe but he got into the mitten.

They were all in and the night grew quiet again. The moon was shining on the trees and on the snow and the world was calm. They were all asleep and so they didn’t hear a small voice saying “May I come in?” It was a little beetle and though she didn’t get an answer she started to climb up into the mitten.

Gu h-obann, spreadh a’ mhiotag. Thuit na beathaichean a-mach air an t-sneachda. Aon as dèidh aon dh’fhalbh iad gu cànrnach.

An ath mhadainn chaidh an gille chun na coille a lorg na miotaige. Ràinig e an t-àite far an robh e a’ cluich an latha roimhe ach cha robh ann ach pìosan beaga clòimhe an siud ’s an seo.



Drawings by Caroline Root

Suddenly the mitten exploded. The animals fell out on to the snow. One after another they went away disgruntled.

The next morning the little boy went to the woods to look for his mitten. He got to the place where he had been playing the previous day, but there was nothing there but little bits of wool scattered around.

Seanfhacal na Ràithe – Pictured Proverb

Do you know what familiar Gaelic proverb is illustrated here?

Check page 17 to see if you’re right.



Chris Chan

Stiubha Phònairean à Iamaiga

2 chrogan de phònairean dubha
2 phiobar-tiolaidh
80 ml uisge
1 chrogan bainne còco
2 dhuilleag labhrais
1 spàin-teatha de ghràinean allspice
4 clòbhan de chreamh
3 uinneanan an earraich
1 uinnean beag
3 geugagan de thiom
½ spàin-teatha de phiobar dubh
1 spàin-teatha de shalann
2 bhuntàta
1 bhuntàta milis
3 curranan

1. Cuir am bainne còco, na duilleagan labhrais agus 1 uinnean an earraich, na gràinean allspice, 3 clòbhan creamh slàn agus na piobaran-tiolaidh ann am poit agus bruich fad 5 mionaidean.

2. Sgudaich 1 clòbh de chreamh agus an t-uinnean agus cuir iad còmhla ris an tiom, an salann is am piobar.

3. Rùisg agus gearr na curranan, am buntàta agus am buntàta milis agus cuir iad dhan phoit. Cuir ris na pònairean dubha cuideachd. Bruich aig teas iosal gus am bi na curranan agus am buntàta maoth.

4. Tog às uinnean an earraich, na duilleagan labhrais agus na piobaran. Sgudaich uinneanan an earraich eile agus cuir agus sgaoil air uachdar iad dìreach mus cuir thu air a' bhòrd e.

Jamaican Bean Stew

2 cans of black beans
2 chilli peppers
1/3 cup water
1 can coconut milk
2 bay leaves
1 teaspoon ground allspice
4 cloves of garlic
3 spring onions
1 small onion
3 sprigs of thyme
1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
1 teaspoon salt
2 potatoes
1 sweet potato
3 carrots



1. Put the coconut milk, water, bay leaves, one of the spring onions, the allspice, 3 whole cloves of garlic and the chillis in a pot and cook for 5 minutes

2. Chop 1 clove of garlic and the onion and add them with the thyme, salt, and pepper to the pot.

3. Peel and chop the carrots, potatoes, the sweet potato and add them and the black beans to the pot. Continue cooking on a low heat until the carrots and potatoes are tender.

4. Take out the spring onion, bay leaves, and the chillis. Chop the remaining spring onions and put them on top just before serving.



Cam MacRae



Do you have a favourite 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 future issues 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!

ACGA has awarded a Gàidhealtachd Support grant of £2000 to Laura Howitt's Dunoon Grammar School Gaelic class to help support their March 2015 cultural exchange with Gaelic pupils at Dr. John Hugh Gillis Regional School in Antigonish NS.

Laura is the recipient of the 2014 Duaisean na h-Alba Innovation in Education Award, and Part 3 of Màri Parr's article about the visit to Scotland by the Dr. John Hugh Gillis Regional School Gaelic students appears in this issue (see page 5)

Turas a Chanada 2015

*leis na h-oileanaich aig Laura Howitt,
Sgoil-ghràmaidh Dhùn Obhainn,
Earra-Ghàidheal*

Tha sinn uile a' tuigsinn a' cheangail eadar Alba agus Canada, gu h-àraid a thaobh cànan, cultair agus dualchais.

Tha sinn air a bhith ag ionnsachadh mu dheidhinn a' cheangail seo rè nam bliadhnaichean anns an sgoil (gu h-àraid a chionn 's gum b' e sgoil Ghàidhlig a bh' againne). Ach, a-nis, nuair a tha sinn anns a' bhliadhna mu dheireadh againn agus gu bhith seachd-deug agus ochd-deug, tha sinn air an cothrom fhaighinn an tuigsinn seo a leasachadh.

Anns a' Màirt, thèid sinn a Chanada airson seachdain gu leth làn Gàidhlig, cultair agus spòrs. Ach, ro làimh, tha tòrr obrach againn ri dhèanamh.

Tha sinn air sgeama caraid-pinn a chur air dòigh le sgoilearan anns an sgoil 'Dr John Hugh Gillis Regional School' agus, ged a tha sinn dìreach air tòiseachadh, tha sinn uile a' coimhead air adhart ri caraidean ùra fhaighinn.

Cuideachd, tha againn ri airgead a thogail agus, gu fortanach, tha sinn air tabhartas mòr fhaighinn bhuaibh; chan urrainn dhuibh tuigsinn cho taingeil 's a tha sinn agus cho cuideachail 's a tha sin dhuinn. Tha plana againn gum bi oidhche chiùil ann san t-Samhain, oidhche rèis mar a chanas iad, 'bag packs' gu leòr, agus stuth a bharrachd air sin cuideachd!

Cumaidh sinn ann an conaltradh leibh uile tro'n bhliadhna!

Teacher Laura Howitt and some of her pupils with their award

From a press release for the Duaisean na h-Alba awards



Trip to Canada 2015

*by the students of Laura Howitt,
Dunoon Grammar School, Argyll,
Scotland*

We all understand the link between Scotland and Canada, in particular in relation to language, culture and heritage.

We've learned about this link throughout our school years, particularly as it was a Gaelic Medium school that we went to. Now, as we enter our final years of secondary school and turn 17 and 18, we have the opportunity to develop our understanding.

In March, we'll travel to Canada for a week and a half of Gaelic, culture and fun. But, before we set off, we have lots of work to do.

Already we have established a pen-pal scheme with Dr John Hugh Gillis Regional School and, although this has just started, we look forward to making new friends.

Also, we have to raise money for our trip. Fortunately, we have been so kindly gifted with a donation from your organisation; you cannot understand just how thankful we are and how much of a support you have been to us. We have a fundraising plan of our own with a music night in November, race night and plenty of bag packs at local supermarkets.

We'll keep you updated throughout the year.



Film Review: Blackbird

reviewed by Rudy Ramsey

We who live in Denver got a special treat in October. The Jamie Chambers film, “Blackbird”, was shown here as part of the Bolder Life Festival. This is a film about a young Scottish singer who has a passion -- or perhaps obsession -- for preserving the traditional culture of Scotland, and especially the traditional songs. Many of us here are interested in doing this in our own small ways. The film was inspired by Martyn Bennett’s song, “The Blackbird” on his *Grit* album. And Margaret Bennett (Martyn’s mother, who has taught at some of our ACGA events) sings, beautifully though in English, in the film. Sheila Stewart sings memorably in the tradition of the travelling people. Norman MacLean has a significant part in the film, which he plays exquisitely. And just when we’re sure he’s never going to sing, he also sings a Gaelic song. The remaining actors in the film, including Andrew Rothney, who plays the lead, are or were relatively unknown. Indeed, most of the bit players, and even some of the major supporting actors, are local residents of the village of Whithorn, where the film was shot. The acting is, in general, excellent.



Here's the filmmaker’s description of the story: “A young Scottish folk singer named Ruadhan struggles to survive as his village faces economic hardship, more and more people moving to the big city every day. When the village bard, and Ruadhan’s hero, disappears to a retirement home, Ruadhan must enlist the help of his friends to save the village and keep their heritage alive.”

The showing we attended was part of a U.S. tour. Part of the special treat we got as a result was that we met the producer, James Barrett, and the production designer, Anisha Fields, who were here for the showing and were delightful to meet. I really liked the film, and would recommend it for folks who are

interested in the subject matter I described above. I do have certain reservations, nonetheless.



Rudy Ramsey

This is not an easy film to watch. Indeed, the producer said as much in his brief introduction to the film before the projector started rolling. Ruadhan, the main character, doesn’t always live up to the “pro” in “protagonist”. His obsession becomes almost psychotic, and leads him to self-destructive behavior that injures both himself and his friends. It’s painful to watch portions of this film. Yet the film remains beautiful in many ways, and should be considered by anyone with an interest in preserving traditional Scottish -- and Gaelic -- culture.

And maybe a little discomfort is appropriate to the subject matter. The music of Martyn Bennett -- for whom I shed yet another tear while writing this review -- stretches us uncomfortably across the chasm between traditional and modern cultures. Some might say that this chasm is important for the protection of our traditions. Others might say that bridging it is necessary for tradition’s preservation. Both positions contain truth, and together they create the dilemma that Ruadhan must somehow navigate, or cease to be. If you, too, care about this question, then I’m afraid this beautiful, uncomfortable little film belongs high on your to-do list.

James indicated that the film should be available for purchase around mid-December, just as this review is published. Purchase information is not available as this review is being written, however. To whet your appetite while you wait, don’t fail to view the companion short film, “When the Song Dies”, viewable online at <http://tinyurl.com/ohggldf>. You’ll find further information about Blackbird at <http://www.filmblackbird.com>, <https://www.facebook.com/blackbirdthemovie>, and <http://www.martynbennett.com/A013.html>.

Cha Bu Mhiste Sinn Leabhar Na Tri

le Cam MacRae

“Tha e mòr, tha e gorm, agus tha e ruadh.”

~ John Ferguson

As t-earrach 2013 sgrìobh mi pìos air mar a bha cion nobhailean grafaigeach Gàidhlig ann aig an àm. Ged a bha na sgeilpichean sna leabharlannan agus sna bùthan leabhraichean loma-làn de a leithid sa Bheurla, cha do lorg mi ach còig dhiubh sa Ghàidhlig, is ceithir dhiubh sin nan eadar-theangachaidhean.



“He’s big, he’s blue and he’s ginger.”

~ John Ferguson

In the spring of 2013 I wrote a piece about the dearth of Gaelic graphic novels at that time. Although the shelves of libraries and bookshops were overflowing with English-language graphic novels, I only found five in Gaelic and four of those were translations.

Agus an-diugh? A bheil cùisean nas miosa no nas fheàrr? Tha mi toilichte a ràdh gun deach leth-dusan nobhail grafaigeach Gàidhlig ùr fhoillseachadh san eadar-ama. Deagh naidheachd, gun teagamh. Tha iad uile tarraingeach dathach agus ’s fhiach sùil a thoirt orra, ged ’s e eadar-theangachaidhean a th’ anns a h-uile gin dhiubh.

And today? Are things worse or better? I'm happy to say that since then six new Gaelic graphic novels have been published. Good news, for sure. They are all attractive and colorful and worth taking a look at, but they are all translations.

Anns an fhichead mìos mu dheireadh, thill Asterix ann an trì leabhraichean ùra, agus nochd Tintin agus an cù aige (’s e Dileas an t-ainm a th’ air anns na tionndaidhean Gàidhlig) ann an dà leabhar, agus bu chòir dhuinn fàilte a chur orra. Agus an siathamh leabhar? Uill, san t-Sultain, nochd leabhar ùr le sàr-ghaisgeach na dhuilleagan a tha gu tur eadar-dhealaichte bho chàch.

In the past twenty months, Asterix has returned in three new books, and Tintin has appeared with his dog (he’s called Dileas in the Gaelic versions) in two books, and we ought to welcome them. And the sixth book? Well, in September, a new book appeared and in its pages a superhero, completely different from all the others.

Seo agaibh bho Dhiamondsteel Comics, Saltire, Albannach mòr ruadh is dath gorm air, agus mar a dh’innsear anns an leabhar fhèin, “laoch dhe leithid cha robh aig Alba roimhe.” Seo an leabhar: *Saltire: Ionnsaigh*, measgachadh de dh’eachdraidh, de mhìotas-eòlas agus de ghniomhan gaisgeil. Sgrìobh John Ferguson an sgeulachd agus rinn Raghnaid Sandilands an t-eadar-theangachadh. Rinn Gary Welsh agus Tone Julskjaer na dealbhan.



I give you from Diamondsteel Comics, Saltire, an immense blue, redheaded Scotsman, and as we are told in the book, “a hero the likes of which Scotland has never had before.” This is the book: *Saltire: Invasion*, a mixture of history, mythology, and good old superhero action. John Ferguson wrote the story and Raghnaid Sandilands made the translation. The artwork is by Gary Welsh and Tone Julskjaer.

Mo bheannachd air Diamondsteel Comics!

My regards to Diamondsteel Comics!



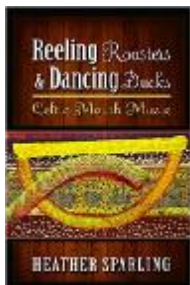
Jim Chan

Seanfhacal na Ràithe

Mura comas dhut teumadh, na rùisg do dheudach.
- If you can't bite, don't show your teeth.

Or “Discretion is the better part of valour.”

Mealaibh Ur Naidheachd!



***Reeling Roosters and Dancing Ducks: Celtic Mouth Music* by Heather Sparling**

If you enjoy pùirt-à-beul, mouth music, you'll be interested in a new book by Heather Sparling that examines the origins, characteristics and functions of this popular musical genre that is often overlooked by academics. *Reeling Roosters and Dancing Ducks*, published this fall by Cape Breton University Press, looks at pùirt-à-beul from both its Nova Scotia and Scottish perspectives. Heather Sparling is Associate Professor of Ethnomusicology, a Tier 2 Canada Research Chair (Musical Traditions) at Cape Breton University, and a long-time member of ACGA. Meal do naidheachd, Heather!

To listen to an interview (in eight sections) Heather did with John Alick MacPherson, click on the link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mTdO0RpA6fQ>

Duaisean na h-Alba Innovation in Education Award

Laura Howitt, Gaelic teacher at Dunoon Grammar School, has won this year's Innovation in Education Award. ACGA's Gàidhealtachd Support Committee recently gave Laura and Dunoon Grammar School a grant to help fund a trip Laura and her secondary school students are planning. In March the group will visit Nova Scotia and Cape Breton where they will spend ten days learning about the area's Gaelic heritage and culture. You can read a short article by Laura's students about the upcoming trip in this issue. Meal do naidheachd, Laura!



Daily Record



Muriel Fisher wins Linguistics Society of America award

Muriel Fisher, Gaelic teacher and friend of many ACGA members, was recently awarded the Excellence in Community Linguistics award from the National Science Foundation, recognizing "her lifetime commitment to documenting, revitalizing and teaching the Scottish Gaelic language." Besides teaching through her own Tucson Gaelic Institute, Muriel, a native of Skye, also teaches Gaelic at the University of Arizona, at Pima Community College, and at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig short courses. Since 2008 she has worked with linguists at the University of Arizona on three National Foundation grants documenting aspects of the Gaelic language. Meal do naidheachd, Muriel!

Duaisean na h-Alba - Gaelic Awards 2014

Bòrd na Gàidhlig presented the 2014 Duaisean na h-Alba November 20, 2014, to ten individuals and organisations, recognizing their contributions to the Gaelic language. Among the winners were:

Best Contribution Award	Katie Anne (Nan) MacDonald
Young Gaelic Ambassador of the Year Award	Coinneach Mac a' Ghobhainn
Community, Heritage and Tourism Award	Comunn Eachdraidh Nis
International Award	Michael Bauer
Inovation in Education Award	Laura Howitt

For the complete list of Duaisean na h-Alba winners, click here:

<http://www.scottishgaelicawards.co.uk/finalists-gaelic.html>



NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Press Release
Contact: Sam Eskenazi
202-744-1868; sam@nmap2015.com

New National Museum in Washington To Tell History of Scottish Americans

The most important American museum that doesn't exist ... yet.

There's a museum being planned for Washington DC now that will tell when and how Scots came to the United States, where they settled, how they became Americans and about their contributions to this nation.

The story of Scottish Americans will be told along with every other group that became Americans in the National Museum of the American People. The Scottish, including Scots-Irish who were largely of Scottish origin who moved to Ireland before coming to America, are together the eighth largest ethnic group in the nation with 9.2 million people as of the 2000 Census.

The museum will tell the dramatic story of peoples crossing oceans and continents to begin new lives. The story begins in the prehistoric period and winds through the nation's compelling history about the making of the American People through today.

The coalition of more than 150 ethnic, minority and nationality organizations calling for a commission to study the museum's establishment has a resolution in Congress with 48 bipartisan cosponsors including Reps. John Duncan, R-TN, and Mike McIntyre, D-NC, co-chairs of the Congressional Friends of Scotland Caucus.

The museum has been endorsed by eight Scottish American organizations including the American-Scottish Foundation, **American Scottish Gaelic Society [ACGA]**, Chicago Scots, Council of Scottish Clans and Associations, Mid-Atlantic Scots4Tots, Saint Andrew's Society of the Eastern Shore, Saint Andrew's Society of Washington DC, and the Scottish-American Military Society.

Among the scholars associated with the museum is Thomas Martin Devine, Sir William Fraser Professor of Scottish History and Paleography and Director of the Scottish Centre of Diaspora Studies at the University of Edinburgh. He is author of: *Scottish Emigration & Scottish Society*; *Scotland's Empire 1600 - 1815*; and *The Scottish Nation 1700 - 2007*. He, along with many other scholars, will help tell the museum's story.

Scottish Americans started coming to the American colonies in the 17th Century, came in large numbers during the 18th Century and their immigration peaked in the 19th Century. Large numbers of Scots fought for independence in the Revolutionary War and many of the Founding Fathers, including a third of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, trace their roots to Scottish and Scots-Irish immigrants.

Twenty frequently asked questions about the museum are here: http://www.nmap2015.com/NMAP_FAQs.pdf



17th Annual Grandfather Mountain Scottish Gaelic Song & Language Week July 5th – 10th 2015

Lees-McRae College, Banner Elk NC.

An Comunn Gàidhealach Ameireaganach / The American Scottish Gaelic Society is pleased to announce instructors for the 2015 Grandfather Mountain Scottish Gaelic Song & Language Week.



Gillebride MacMillan from South Uist is one of the few who have won both the Seann Nòs and Men's Gold Medal at the Royal National Mòd. After completing a degree in Celtic Studies at the University of Glasgow and a Masters Degree from the University of the Highlands and Islands, Gillebride now works in the Celtic and Gaelic Department at University of Glasgow. He is a Gaelic translator, author, and has worked on the Tobar an Dualchais archiving project. He regularly sings and teaches Gaelic song at festivals and cèilidhs in Scotland, Europe and the USA. You may have seen Gillebride in episode 3 of the Outlander television series as "Gwyllyn the Bard". Find out more on YouTube, on his website: <http://www.gillebride.com/> and on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/Gillebride>

Named Gaelic Singer of the Year in 2010 and 2011 by the MG ALBA Scots Trad Music awards, Joy Dunlop has won both the Royal National Mòd Gold Medal and the Oban Times Gold Medal. A native of Argyll, Joy teaches Gaelic, performs with the Joy Dunlop Band, presents programs on BBC ALBA, and makes frequent appearances on Radio nan Gàidheal. She is also an award winning Scottish step-dancer and Traditional Inter-Celtic Dance Champion. Find out more about Joy via YouTube, on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/joydunlop> and from her website: <http://www.joydunlop.com/>. We are delighted to welcome Joy to Grandfather Mountain for the first time.



Kathleen Reddy was born in Sydney, Nova Scotia. She is a graduate of Saint Francis Xavier University and also holds a Postgraduate Certificate in Secondary Education from the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow and a Diploma of Higher Education in Gaelic and Related Studies from Sabhal Mòr Ostaig in Skye. She has worked as a teacher of Gaelic learners and fluent speakers at secondary schools in Scotland, and spent several years living in a Gaelic-speaking community on South Uist. In Nova Scotia, Kathleen has taught Gaelic immersion courses in the Halifax area and at the Gaelic College in Cape Breton. In addition, Kathleen has worked for the Nova Scotia Office of Gaelic Affairs. Currently, she teaches Gaelic at Saint Francis Xavier University and serves as a mentor for the Nova Scotian Gaelic mentorship programs, *Na Gaisgich Òga* and *Bun is Bàrr*.

For more information see:

Grandfather Mountain Song and Language Week <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1463155417230179/>
An Comunn Gàidhealach Ameireaganach <http://www.acgamerica.org>

Dè Do Naidheachd?

by Cam MacRae and Jeanne Pendergast

You never know what the results will be when two different people are given the same list of words to use in a story. Real life events, or fiction? We're not telling.

Cam:

Abair sealladh! Bàta-siùil, mu dhà fhichead troigh am fad, anns an achadh air beulaibh an taighe.

“Tha dùil agam a dhol dhan Fhraing,” arsa Colly.

“Tha cinnt agam gu bheil e às a chiall,” arsa Martha, a bhean.

Gach madainn **thrusadh** Colly a chuid aodaich agus chuireadh e ann am basgaid i còmhla ri pìos agus dà bhotal leann. B' àbhaist dha fuireachd air bòrd a' bhàta aige fad an latha, a' feitheamh. Nam biodh duine airson a dhol air bòrd, chuireadh Colly fàilte chridheil air agus botal leann na làimh.

Ged a bha an **t-uabhas** de dhaoine sa choimhearsnachd fo iomagain mu dheidhinn Cholly agus a bhàta, cha bu **dùraig** do Mhartha an **cuspair** a thogail leis an duine aice. Bha fios aig Martha, bha fios againn uile san teaghlach, gun robh tinneas air an inntinn aig Colly a **thruailleadh**.

Bu **shuarach** leinn an **t-àmhghar** a bha air inntinn a **mhilleadh** ach bha sinn dèidheil air an duine fhèin. Tha mi duilich nach robh an cothrom aig Colly a dhol dhan Fhraing. Chòrdadh Paras ris.

Glossary:

arsa -- said; used only in written dialogue, not during conversation

às a chiall -- out of his mind

thrusadh -- bundle up, gather; used here in the conditional to indicate repeated action; the use of the conditional is repeated throughout the story

b' àbhaist dha -- he used to, he was accustomed to

an t-uabhas -- great quantity, a lot; may be used alone, followed by a genitive singular or plural noun, or as here, it may be followed by *de* plus a lenited nominative plural

an cuspair -- the subject, the topic; included here for practice pronouncing *cuspair* following *an*

a bha air inntinn a **mhilleadh** -- that had destroyed his mind - past perfect construction

Sine:

Diciadain sa chaidh, thuir mo nighean rium: “S e **truailleadh an cuspair** a bh' againn san sgoil an-diugh. Dh'ionnsaich an clas mun stuth a tha a' **milleadh** fiù 's an tràigh faisg oirn.” Cha robh iad a' tuigsinn daoine a bhith cho **suarach** sin, ach chuir iad romhpa an truilleis a bha ann a **thrusadh** air an deireadh-sheachdain.

Fhad 's a bha iad ag obair Disathairne, a' cur **an t-uabhas** de nithean a lorg iad ann am bagaichean, fhuair Peigi botal. Dh'èigh i ris a' chloinn eile, “Seall! Tha nòta beag ann!” Leugh i na faclan lùbach do chàch: “Tha duine gam thoirt am bruid a chum airgead fhaighinn bho mo phàrantan. Tha mi air eilean beag ann an Loch Ciseorn. Cuidich mi! Flòraidh.”

Thug iad am pàipear do na poilis, agus an ath latha, chuala iad air an rèidio mun nighean **fo àmhghar**. ('s na poilis ag iarraidh fiosrachadh). Uill, chuala dithis bhalaich an aon naidheachd. Cha mhòr **gun dùraig dhaibh**

guth a ràdh, ach bha iad onarach. Leig iad fios gur iad a sgrìobh an nòta --- cha b' ann ach airson spòrs fhad 's a bha iad ag iasgach.

An-dè thug na h-ùghdarrasan teisteanas don chlas ag ràdh gun d' rinn iad mar bu chòir dhaibh.

Glossary:

truailleadh -- (m) v.n. of *truaille*, pollute, contaminate

truilleis (also can be *truilleis*) -- (f) waste, trash, rubbish

suarach -- uncaring, indifferent, contemptible

thoir am bruid -- kidnap, abduct

fo àmhghar -- in distress, serious trouble

dùraig -- dare; attempt; also wish, incline; *cha mhòr gun dùraig dhaibh* means they hardly dared to...
cha b' ann ach -- it was only



Dè Tha Dol? Gaelic Events

An Dùbhlach 2014 / December 2014

The Pipes of Christmas, New York NY, Saturday December 20, 2014

Celtic Christmas Concert with special guest Gillebride MacMillan.

2 pm & 7 pm, Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, 921 Madison Ave, New York, NY 10021

<http://www.pipesofchristmas.com>

The Pipes of Christmas, Summit NJ, Sunday December 21, 2014

Celtic Christmas concert with special guest Gillebride MacMillan

2 pm, Central Presbyterian Church, 70 Maple St, Summit, NJ 07901

<http://www.pipesofchristmas.com>

Am Faoilteach 2015 / January 2015

Celtic Connections, Glasgow, Scotland, January 15 - February 1, 2015

Glasgow's annual folk, roots and world music festival, Celtic Connections celebrates Celtic music and its connections to cultures across the globe with 2,100 musicians from around the world, concerts, ceilidhs, talks, art exhibitions, workshops, and free events. Full programme to be announced in October of 2014.

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

An Gearran 2015 / February 2015

Zero to Gaelic, Seattle WA, Slighe nan Gàidheal - Saturday, February 7, 2015

Multiple dates: Also see March 7 and April 11.

Lake City Presbyterian Church, 3841 NE 123rd Street, Seattle WA 98125

9:30 am - 4 pm Pacific Time

Three levels of progressive instruction & Ceum Suas for ongoing advanced learners.

\$50 + \$2.24 Eventbrite fee for the day / \$220 + \$6.49 Eventbrite fee for Slighe nan Gàidheal member-only season pass for all 6 days.

<http://tinyurl.com/nyw33dv>

Please register at least one day before course takes place.

Am Màrt 2015 / March 2015

Zero to Gaelic, Seattle WA, Slighe nan Gàidheal - Saturday, March 7, 2015

Multiple dates: see February for details.

Sabhal Mòr Ostaig Easter Courses, Isle of Skye, Scotland, March 30 - April 3

One week long Scottish Gaelic language classes at various levels will be offered, as well as a Gaelic song class with Christine Primrose.

<http://www.smo.uhi.ac.uk/en/cursaichean/cursaichean-goirid/caisg-2015/>

An Giblean 2015 / April 2015

Zero to Gaelic, Seattle WA, Slighe nan Gàidheal - Saturday, April 11, 2015

Multiple dates: see February for details.

Sabhal Mòr Ostaig Easter Courses, Isle of Skye, Scotland, April 6 - April 10

One week long Scottish Gaelic language classes at various levels will be offered, as well as a fiddle class for those at an intermediate level or higher.

<http://www.smo.uhi.ac.uk/en/cursaichean/cursaichean-goirid/caisg-2015/>

An t-Iuchar 2015 / July 2015

Grandfather Mountain Gaelic Song and Language Week, Banner Elk NC, July 5 - 10, 2015.

ACGA's 17th annual Gaelic Song and Language Week will be held at Lees-McRae College with instructors Gillebrìde MacMillan from South Uist ("Gwyllyn the Bard" in the TV series *Outlander*); Joy Dunlop, Gaelic Singer of the Year in 2010 & 2011; and Kathleen Reddy, Gaelic instructor at Saint Francis Xavier University, Antigonish NS.

<http://www.acgamerica.org/gfm-2015/>

Sabhal Mòr Ostaig Summer Courses, Isle of Skye, Scotland, July 20 - 24, 2015

One week long Scottish Gaelic language classes will be offered at levels 1, 3, and 5, as well as a Gaelic song class with Christine Primrose.

<http://www.smo.uhi.ac.uk/en/cursaichean/cursaichean-goirid/cursaichean-samhraidh-2015/>

An Lùnasdal 2015 / August 2015

Sabhal Mòr Ostaig Summer Courses, Isle of Skye, Scotland, multiple dates, August 2015

One week long Scottish Gaelic language classes will be offered.

Multiple dates: see July for details.

August 3 - 7 - levels 1 & 2, song class with Christine Primrose

August 10 - 14 - levels 2, 4, 6 & 8

August 17 - 21 - levels 3, 5, 7 & 9

August 24 - 28 - levels 4, 6, 8 & 10



Directory of Gaelic Classes & Study Groups

Arizona

Flagstaff

Study Group

Richard Ferguson

fergusdubh@yahoo.com

Phoenix

Classes

Richard Smith

coindubh@yahoo.com

Tucson

Classes

Muriel Fisher

<http://www.murielofskye.com>

California

Sacramento Area

Classes

Donnie MacDonald

minchmusic@comcast.net

North Hollywood

Study Group

Eva Gordon

celt@celticartscenter.com

Colorado

Boulder

Study Group

Sue Hendrix

susan.hendrix@colorado.edu

Denver

Lessons

Glenn Wrightson

thegaelicguy@hotmail.com

Denver

Study Group

Reese McKay

reese-mckay@q.com

San Luis Valley

Phone and Online lessons

Caroline Root

<http://saoghalgaidhligc.weebly.com>

Connecticut

Hartford area

Classes—Thomas Leigh

tleigh.piper@gmail.com

Gaelic Song Classes

Maggie Carchrie

860-748-7549

Florida

Jensen Beach

Treasure Coast Scots-Gaelic

Study Group

sryan1812@mylincoln.edu

Illinois

Springfield

Study Group

Bill McClain

fidheall@yahoo.com

Maryland

Baltimore

Study Group

<http://tinyurl.com/Maryland-Baltimore>

Rick Gwynallen

Rgwynallen@yahoo.com

301-928-9026

Chevy Chase

Song Group

Joan Weiss

sweiss@american.edu

New York

New York

Classes

New York Caledonian Club

www.nycaledonian.org/studies.php

Newfield / Ithaca

Conversation groups

Wayne Harbert

weh2@cornell.edu

North Carolina

Guilford

Classes (advanced beginner)

An Phillips

fiongeal@gmail.com

Triangle / Raleigh area

Classes (beginner)

An Phillips

fiongeal@yahoo.com

Ohio

Cincinnati

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Andrew MacAoidh Jergens

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Michael Mackay

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Tidewater

Classes

Jason Wilson

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Washington

Seattle

Classes & Study Groups

Slighe nan Gàidheal

<http://www.slighe.com>

Canada

Ontario

Ottawa

Classes

Randaìdh Waugh

comunnghaidhligottawa@rogers.com

Toronto

Classes

CLUINN

www.torontogaelic.ca

Québec

Montréal

Study Group

Linda Morrison

linda@lindamorrison.com

FOR MORE information about these resources and for information on long-distance courses, short courses, and private instruction, see our web page at

<http://www.acgamerica.org/learn/classes>

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AN NAIDHEACHD AGAINNE

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