

# AN RÙBHA

*The Highland Village Gaelic Folklife Magazine*

## Naidheachd a' Chlachain

*Highlights from the 2006 Season on Hector's Point*

## Intangible Cultural Heritage

*Recognising the importance of intangible cultural heritage*

## Two Hundred Years in the Telling

*Iona's story of settlement found on the Isle of Barra*

## Dòmhnall nan Òrd (Donald of the Hammers)

*An excerpt from the pages of Mac-talla*

## Pioneer Fabrics in Gaelic Cape Breton

*Clothing pioneer families*

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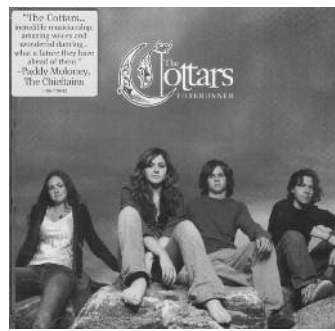
Vol. 9, No. 2: An Geamhradh / Winter 2006/07



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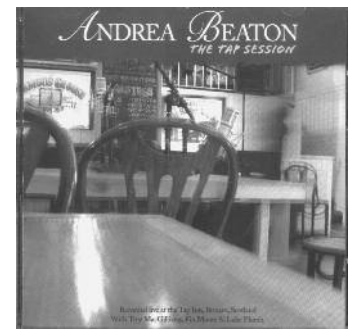
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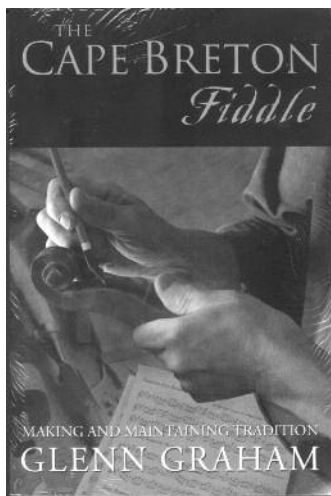
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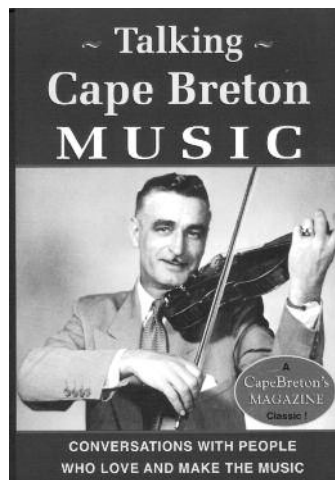
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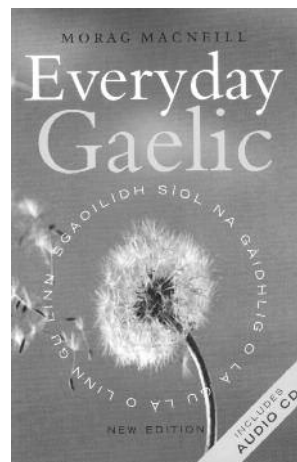
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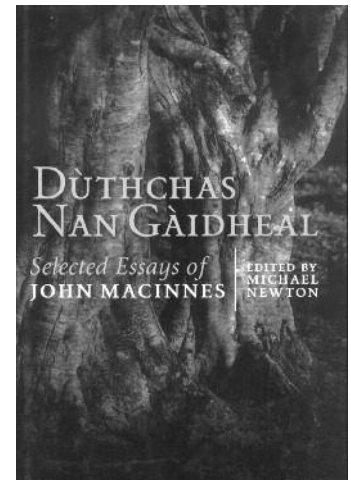
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**Contact:**

4119 Rathad/Highway 223  
Rubha Eachainn/Hector's Point  
Sanndraigh/Iona  
Alba Nuadh/Nova Scotia  
B2C 1A3 - Canada  
Guthan/Phone: 902.725.2272  
Facs/Fax: 902.725.2227  
E: highlandvillage@gov.ns.ca  
W: www.visithighlandvillage.ca

**Editorial Committee:**

Rodney Chaisson, Shamus Y. MacDonald,  
Joanne MacIntyre, Pauline MacLean &  
Seumas Watson

**Contributors:**

Rodney Chaisson, Dr. John Gibson, Shamus  
Y. MacDonald, Jamie MacIntyre, Joanne  
MacIntyre, Dr. Richard MacKinnon, Ishbel  
MacLean, Pauline MacLean, Jean MacNeil,  
Vicki Quimby, Ellison Robertson, Dr. John  
Shaw, Seumas Watson

**Design:**

Wanda Cummings

**Layout:**

Rodney Chaisson

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Quimby with naturally dyed wool in the  
Highland Village log house. Photo by Wally  
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# From the Director's Desk

Rodney Chaisson, Director

We begin this issue of *An Rubha* with a special note of congratulations and expression of appreciation to Hon. Angus MacIsaac, Minister responsible for Gaelic Affairs, and Hon. Rodney MacDonald, Premier, for the establishment of the Office of Gaelic Affairs for the Province of Nova Scotia.

Through the leadership and commitment of both Minister MacIsaac and Premier MacDonald, Nova Scotia's Gaelic community now has an official presence in the Government of Nova Scotia and a voice at the cabinet table. Minister MacIsaac made the announcement at a press conference in Antigonish in December 2006.

The Office of Gaelic Affairs will be based in Antigonish and led in the interim by acting-CEO Lewis MacKinnon. The office will assist with language and cultural development work taking place in the Gaelic community throughout Nova Scotia. It will support the mission of *Comhairle na Gàidhlig* (Gaelic Council of NS) - to create the environment that makes Nova Scotia a place where Gaelic language and culture thrive. It will also offer advice and support to departments, agencies and Crown corporations to develop policies and services that reflect the needs of the Gaelic community.

Minister MacIsaac's announcement marks a significant milestone for Gaelic in Nova Scotia. The establishment of the Office of Gaelic Affairs formalises the relationship between government and the community concerning Gaelic language renewal in this province. It also fulfills a long-time wish of the community for increased support and status within government.

The new office is the latest initiative of the Nova Scotia government regarding Gaelic development in Nova Scotia. Earlier initiatives include: making the Highland Village a part of the Nova Scotia Museum family; undertaking a cultural, social and economic assessment of Gaelic in Nova Scotia; supporting the Gaelic strategy development process; signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Highland Council in Scotland; establishing an outreach office and officer in Mabou; launching the Gaelic Activities

Program; and adopting a bilingual community boundary signage policy (English and Gaelic for communities with Gaelic roots on Cape Breton Island as well as Antigonish, Pictou and Guysborough counties). These signs should be appearing along Nova Scotia roads in the spring of 2007.

Along with grass roots activities, these initiatives, especially in terms of adult immersion (TIP), will help ensure that Gaelic will enjoy renewal as an integral part of Nova Scotia's life and identity.

As Highland Village director and a member of the *Comhairle na Gàidhlig* board I look forward to working with Minister MacIsaac and Lewis MacKinnon on furthering growth of Gaelic language and culture in Nova Scotia.

Finally, I hope you are enjoying some of the visual changes we have made in this issue of *An Rubha*, including the addition of colour. The new design of the publication was provided by Wanda Cummings in Mabou. It is part of the continuing evolution of our publication. We always look forward to your comments on *An Rubha* and its content. We also welcome contributions. ☺



Photo by Pauline MacLean.

Hon. Angus MacIsaac,  
Minister Responsible for  
Gaelic Affairs



Nova Scotia  
Highland Village  
Society

The Nova Scotia Highland Village Society (*Comunn Clachan Gàidhealach na h-Albann Nuaidh*) was incorporated on November 3, 1959 under the Societies Act of Nova Scotia. Its purpose was to construct and operate an outdoor folk museum dedicated to the Gaelic culture in Nova Scotia.



The vision of the Highland Village Museum/*An Clachan Gàidhealach* is to be internationally acknowledged for advancing research, fostering appreciation, learning and sharing authentic Gaelic language and heritage while serving a vibrant Gaelic cultural community.

The mission of the Highland Village Museum/*An Clachan Gàidhealach*, a living history museum, is to research, collect, preserve and share the Gaelic heritage and culture of Nova Scotia and represent it accurately and vibrantly.

The Highland Village Museum/*An Clachan Gàidhealach* is a part of the Nova Scotia Museum Family (Nova Scotia's Provincial Museums), Department of Tourism, Culture & Heritage. The Nova Scotia Highland Village Society operates the site on behalf of the Province.

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The Society is a member of *Comhairle na Gàidhlig* (Gaelic Council of NS), National Trust of Scotland, CLI, Gaelic Society of Inverness (Scotland), Federation of NS Heritage (FNSH), Canadian Museums Assoc. (CMA), Iona Connection Heritage Co-op, Council of NS Archives (CNSA), Genealogical Assoc. of NS (GANS), Cape Breton Genealogy & Heritage Society, Interpretation Canada, Assoc. of Living Historical Farms and Agricultural Museums (ALHFAM), American Assoc. for State & Local History (AASLH), Tourism Industry Assoc. of NS (TIANS), Baddeck & Area Business Tourism Assoc. (BABTA), Destination Cape Breton Assoc., and Grand Narrows & District Board of Trade.

Gillis Point  
Rubha nan Gilleasach

One of the new bilingual community boundary signs



# Mar is léir dhomh fhìn: The Heritage Task Force Submission

By Seumas Watson, Manager of Interpretation

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Carla Pace, Tara Rankin, Bheagh Redden,  
Emily Redden

Gaelic is a Celtic tongue closely related to modern Irish and Manx. Its cousins are Welsh, Breton and Cornish. All of these, the entire Celtic language family, are listed by UNESCO as threatened by extinction in its *Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger of Disappearing*.

Settlement in Nova Scotia by Scottish Gaels began with the disbandment and granting of lands to the 78<sup>th</sup> Fraser Highlanders after the battle for the Plains of Abraham in 1759. Soldiers mustered out were given 80,000 acres on the north side of Prince Edward Island, then called St. John's Island and part of Nova Scotia. By the mid-nineteenth century more than 50,000 Gaelic speaking immigrants from the Highland and Islands had settled in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. At the arrival of the late nineteenth century, Gaels formed the dominant linguistic population in the province's eastern counties with scores of thousands living in homogenous communities, speaking Gaelic, or more properly *Gàidhlig*, as their mother tongue.

Gaels as an ethno-cultural group are distinct in language, custom and tradition in these districts. While generational transmission of *Gàidhlig* in Nova Scotia has dwindled over the past decades, it remains spoken by upwards of 2,000 fluents and learners. The vehicle for one of Western Europe's richest oral cultures, Gaelic is indispensable for accessing the intellectual foundations of a heritage having a marked influence on modern Nova Scotia's identity.

Highland Village is an outdoor living history museum dedicated to interpreting the social and material culture of Scottish Gaels and their decedents in Nova Scotia. The Village is a locally-managed site of Nova Scotia Museum. Its site comprises eleven buildings chronologically depicting rural life in Gaelic Nova Scotia from the time of Highland emigration up to the Great Depression era.

The interpretation philosophy of Highland Village acknowledges both the tangible and intangible cultures of Gaelic heritage. Collections at the museum are an important resource for the sake of posterity and public education. Under conditions of proper care and handling, mere physicality ensures their future.

Unfortunately, this is not the case for Gaelic language upon which its material heritage is dependent to provide social context. To address this issue, the Village has a dedicated commitment to Gaelic language training for staff, accompanied by cultural orientation and historical background.

Beyond emphasizing language as an intangible, yet essential, component for interpretation of its artefacts, the Village is also an advocate institution for its founding constituency. As such, the Village is not just a museum, but a cultural centre engaged as a proactive community member. To this effect the Highland Village mission statement for Gaelic interpretation is as follows:

"In recognising that the Nova Scotia Gaels' distinct ethno-cultural heritage is a language-based identity, Nova Scotia Highland Village will undertake to interpret its museum site through the medium of the Gaelic language; and in doing so become a Gaelic resource facility intended to inform and enhance the Gaelic heritage community wherever possible."

Despite long-term institutional neglect, the Gaelic language has undeniably borne a distinguishing culture in Nova Scotia since the early days of Scottish settlement. Its speakers today may be fifth and sixth generation Canadian. Their legacy is that of the Highland Diaspora. The Gaels, perhaps more than any other ethnic group in the province, link Nova Scotia to an international community with close ties to Gaelic Scotland, Gaelic Ireland, many countries of the former British Empire and the United States. On this expansive plane, the province enjoys a special relationship to a global network of Celtic heritage.

That which is intangible and precious is often fragile as well. Highland Village urges the Heritage Task Force to be vigorous in forging recommendations that will enhance efforts to secure living languages as requisite to safeguarding the intangible heritage of all Nova Scotia's peoples and cultures.

*Mar is léir dhomh fhìn (My Viewpoint) is a regular feature of An Rubha. The final report of the Heritage Strategy Task Force was released in December 2006. The report and its 59 recommendations can be found at [www.gov.ns.ca/vp/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/vp/).* ☞

# Naidheachd a' Chlachain (The Village News)

The Summer of 2006 on Hector's Point

The 2006 season at An Clachan witnessed an energetic and expanding interpretive program drawing on the material and intangible culture of the Scottish Gael in Nova Scotia. With a jam-packed animation schedule, talented and capable interpretive staff, both new and veteran, and an ever increasing presence of Gaelic language in our museum experience, we were able to offer an exceptional range of programs and learning opportunities to our visitors and supporting community...

Before doors opened for the season, Village staff were engaged in interpretive and skills development activities. In April, interpretive staff were led by Bev Brett in two weeks of acting and skit development with a view towards incorporation in daily animation.

The 2006 season was launched with *Òrain an Earraich* (Songs of Spring), a public program focusing on Cape Breton's Gaelic song tradition. The event also marked Gaelic Awareness Month in Nova Scotia.

This spring we were pleased to welcome a number of new employees at Hector's Point. Cynthia MacKenzie joined the office staff, bringing with her impressive organizational skills. She filled in for Administrative Assistant Janet MacNeil, who was off on maternity leave. Our new farmer, Steve Chehy, brought with him a knack for handling horses. Steve, and our Clydesdale Dan, enhanced the visitor experience with daily wagon rides for adults and children. Dan was on loan from Dell Corbett of Grand Mira for the season.

Each year summer students make important contributions to the operation. This year was no different. Emily Redden, Iona, returned for her third season, lending her abilities to program promotions and visitor services. Breagh Redden, Benacadie, applied her organizational skills to projects in the library and archives. Tara Rankin, Carla Pace and Clifford Lee were valued additions to the interpretive staff. Tara of Mabou Ridge, offered her Gaelic language ability and musical talents: vocal and on the piano. Carla, hailing from Sydney, came with fiddle in hand and a talent for step-dancing. Both Tara and Carla enhanced our céilidh sessions and animation schedule by offering piano and step-dancing lessons. They also performed traditional of music throughout the site as part of our cultural animation program. Clifford, of Brook Village, brought with him a flair for history and acting. Each one of them con-

tributed much to the Highland Village this past summer.

As the summer progressed, the presence of Gaelic language and cultural representation on the site became more apparent. Céilidh sessions and weekly milling frolics continued to be well received by visitors, giving them an opportunity to socialize in a Gaelic cultural environment. 'Learn a Gaelic Song' and 'Join a Gaelic Lesson' sessions were animation activities that gave visitors a chance to pick up a few phrases of Gaelic themselves.

In July, *Sabhal Mòr Ostaig* student Ishie MacLean joined us to complete an cultural management internship program. Ishie was sponsored through *Ach An Cuan* (the Nova



(L-R) Summer Students Tara Rankin, Cliff Lee, Emily Redden, Carla Pace & Breagh Redden.

Scotia-Highland Council Memorandum of Understanding on Gaelic development). During her eight week stay, Ishie drafted an outline for new orientation videos, taught Gaelic games to children and assisted in the *Làithean Sona* program for children. As a fluent Gaelic speaker, she nicely profiled the language while communicating with staff and visitors throughout the site.

Special presentations were offered throughout the season, some in conjunction with traditional feast days historically celebrated by the Gaels. '*Là Fhéill Caluim Cille* - St.



Highland Village exhibit at Joan Harris Cruise Pavilion, Port of Sydney

Columba's Day', June 9th, was marked by a song workshop conducted by Manager of Interpretation Jim Watson in the Centre Chimney House. *Làithean Sona* (children's program) and Candlelight Tours ran for the months of July and August, with great success. Inverness County photographer and geographer Wally Ellison presented his slide show, '*Steall nan Eas* - Cape Breton Waterfalls', to an unprecedented number of viewers in the Tuning Room. Additionally, we were pleased to offer presentations from guest lecturers Dr. Rob Dunbar, Lecturer in Law and Celtic at Aberdeen University and Janet Muller, CEO for POBAL, Northern Ireland's Gaelic development agency.

The summer also featured a variety of Gaelic language, storytelling and song workshops, delivered by Gaelic specialists Jim Watson and *Goiridh Dòmhnallach* (Jeff MacDonald). As well, weaving and natural dye workshops were presented by weaver Vicki Quimby. *Là Mòr a' Chlachain* (Highland Village Day) and both of our Codfish suppers met with great success, thanks in no small way to our staff and volunteers.

Pioneer Day highlighted our September program with one of the highest attendance in the history of this key interpretive event. The half day program gave guests an extensive menu of craft and cultural activities. Once again the Village was grateful to Fortress Louisbourg for organising black powder demonstrations presented by their Volunteer Militia. Food for the day was tradi-





tional fare including corn on the cob, biscuits, lemonade and tea.

Closer to the season's end, *Là Fhéill Micheil* (St. Michael's Day) was observed on September 29th with the launch of *Céilidh air Cheap Breatunn* (Cape Breton Céilidh) virtual (internet-based) museum exhibition on Cape Breton Gaelic culture, with the students of Rankin School in Iona. *Céilidh air Cheap Breatunn* features documentaries, videos, a learning centre, sound files and more. It offers insight into the cultural legacy of the Gaels from the Highlands and Islands of Scotland who settled in Nova Scotia. Virtual Museum Exhibit Curator, *Goridh Dòmhnallach*, was on hand to lead the audience through a partial tour of the site. Others speaking to the significance of the web site's development included Highland Village Director Rodney Chaisson, the site programmer Elliot MacNeil of Threeton.com and Rankin School Gaelic teacher Dawn MacDonald-Gillis, who addressed the value of the site as a teaching resource. Those who attended were treated to fiddle tunes performed by Iain MacDougall and Gaelic milling songs by the Iona Gaelic singers. *Struan Mhicheil*, the traditional bread

made to celebrate the feast day, was specially prepared for the tea.

There was no slowing down as the season came to a close in mid-October. A group of sixty plus people from the island of Barra visited for a day, engaging us in their music and conversation, and tracing lineages of local people to the Barra origins of their ancestors. On the heels of this visit, the Celtic Colours Gaelic Song Workshop, presented by Hebridean singers Cathy Ann MacPhee and Màiri MacInnes, attracted a lively crowd of Gaelic song enthusiasts. Many of the participants stayed for the *Gleann Bharraidh* (Tribute to Barra Glen) concert held in the Malagawatch Church that evening. Despite a wild night of wind and rain, singers and musicians performed to a full house.

The 2006 season concluded with *Oidhche Mór nam Bòcan* (Night of the Spooks), our Halloween program. These two evenings of Halloween fun encompass skits drawn from Cape Breton Gaelic traditions along with special effects, storytelling, fiddle music and *fuarag*. This year's volunteers added much to the diversity and quality of the visitors' experience.



The Christmas holiday season was marked with our annual open house - *Céilidh na Nollaig* (The Christmas Visit). Even with above normal temperatures, which kept away the white stuff, decorations at the visitor centre, as well as music and holiday food around the hill, provided lots of Christmas spirit. *By Joanne MacIntyre.* ☺



*Clockwise from top: Steve Chehy leads "Dan" around the site; Anne Landin demonstrates spinning flax to staff members Debi MacNeil and Marie Chehy; hooked mat exhibit in the MacQuarrie-Fox House; and song session in MacDonald House as part of the Gàidhlig dhan Òigridh, Gaelic youth camp. Photos from Highland Village Collection.*

*See more photos from the 2007 season in our Photo Album on pages 16 & 17.*

# Turas na Dunach (The Hapless Sojourn)

Selection from *Nòs is Fonn*, Highland Village Song Collection

Fonn (*Chorus*):

'S e Turus na Dunach  
Thug mis' air a' sgrìob  
Le béin nan sionnach Niall Gillis  
's mi fhìn  
'S e Turus na Dunach  
Thug mis' air a' sgrìob

(*I undertook a hapless journey with  
Neil Gillis and the fox pelts.*)

Ceathramhan (*Verses*):

S a' mhaduinn nuair ghluais mi  
Bha latha car fuar ann  
'S chuir mise còt' uachdair  
Mun cuairt orm fhìn

(*In the morning when I moved out, the day  
was a bit cold. I wrapped myself in an over-  
coat.*)

Niall Gillis 's a bhràthair  
Air thoiseach a' bàireadh  
Nuair rànaig iad Màbu  
Bha 'n làir aca sgìth

(*Neil Gillis and his brother were in front  
breaking trail through the snow. When they  
reached Mabou, their horse was weary.*)

'Nuair ràinig sinn am baile  
'Se 'n council a bh'air m'aire  
Nuair thug iad dhomh drama

'S ann ghabh mis' a trì

(*When we reached town, I was thinking of  
the council. When they offered me a dram, I  
took three.*)

'Se branndaidh bha 'n dà dhiubh  
Do stuth a bha làidir  
Niall Gillis a phàigh iad  
Ged 's nàir' e ri inns'

(*Two of them were strong brandies. Neil  
Gillis paid for them, though it is shameful to  
say.*)

Nuair chaidh e 'nam phòraibh  
'S ann theann mi ri bòilich  
A Nill tha thu còir  
Thug thu dhòmhsa na trì

(*When the drink soaked into my pores, I  
began to boast, "Neil you are generous. You  
gave me three drams.*)

Thuir mise gu briathrach  
A Nill tha thu fialaidh  
Nuair reiceas mi 'm bian  
Cha bhi sian ort a dhìth

(*I said with articulation, "Neil you are open-  
handed. When I sell the skins, you'll want for  
nothing.*)

Bheir mis' thu thaigh-bòrdaidh  
Far an cumar thu dòigheil  
Théid biadh dhut an òrdugh  
'S bidh 'n t-òl agad free

(*I'll take you to a boarding-house where  
you'll be well treated. Food will be prepared  
and drinks will be free.*)

Nuair rinn mi mo bharagan  
'S a phàigheadh dhomh 'n t-airgead  
Gun d'fhàs mi cho foirmeil  
'S cha n-aithnichinn thu Nill

(*When I settled for the skins and was paid the  
money, I became refined and wouldn't  
acknowledge you Neil.*)

Cha d'chuimhnich mi tuilleadh  
Mo ghealladh a chumail  
Chaidh mis' a thaigh Uilleim

Gun duin' ach mi fhìn

(*I forgot about my promise (to Neil) and went  
to William's boarding house alone.*)

Bha mise gu stràiceil  
Is Niall feadh na sràide  
A' garadh mo làmh  
'S mi gun fhàillinn gun dìth

(*I was arrogantly warming my hands with  
nothing to want while Neil was out on the  
street.*)

Ach Dia leam a dhuine  
'S ann dh'fhàs mi 'nam churaidh  
Cha n-fhaicinn-sa duine  
Bha uiread rium fhìn

(*God bless me, I became a champion. I could-  
n't see another man's equal to me.*)

Gun d'fhàs mi cho sunndach  
'S mo chasan cho sùbailt  
'S gun dannsainn na "Flùrs"  
Air an ùrlar gun strìth

(*I became so merry and my feet were so sup-  
ple, I could dance the Flowers of Edinburgh  
effortlessly on the floor.*)

'S ann feasgar an ath-oidhch'  
A thàinig sinn dachaidh  
'S ann oirnn' a bha 'n cadal  
'S sinn airtneulach, sgìth

(*We arrived home the next night. We were  
sleepy and exhausted.*)

Mac-Talla, Januari 18 1890, taobh duilleig  
224

From the singing of Maxie MacNeil  
(*Maxie Dan Angus Iain Aonghais Eòin*)  
Highland Hill, Victoria County. The vers-  
es reported here were composed by an  
unidentified Inverness County bard. The  
Iona Gaelic singers recovered them  
through the memory of the late Neil John  
Gillis (*Niall mac Ruairidh Nill Iain Bhàin*),  
Jamesville, Victoria County and a print-  
ed version appearing in *Mac-Talla*,  
January 18, 1890, pg. 224. Transcribed  
and translated by Seumas Watson. ∞



Maxie MacNeil



# Cùil a' Leabhar-lainn (The Library Nook)

The Dance Masters' Notice from *Fàilte do Cheap Breatainn*

**S**anas nam Maighstearan Dannsaidh (The Dance Masters' Notice) is a poem composed by Donald MacLellan (*Dòmhnall Gobha*). Donald was born at Glen Eig, Morar and came to Cape Breton Island in 1819 as a boy, settling with his family in South West Margaree.

Reprinted here, the poem is from the McNeil Edition of *Fàilte do Cheap Breatainn* (Welcome To Cape Breton) published in 1933. The original book of Cape Breton composed Gaelic songs was compiled and published in 1891 by Donald's son, Vincent A. MacLellan (*Bhinsent Dhòmhnall Ghobha*).

Born at Broad Cove Interval, Inverness County, Vincent A. MacLellan moved with his father, mother Mary (nee MacIssac) and siblings to Grand Mira in 1868. MacLellan grew to be a man of parts, being a farmer, carpenter and carriage maker in his early working years. Adventurous and on the move, he spent time in the western part of the U.S. and Minnesota. Returning to Cape Breton in 1890, he variously worked as a store owner, a salesman of jewelry and as superintendent of telegraph lines running between Port Hawkesbury and Cape North. His abiding interest in Gaelic poetry and song collecting brought forth the late nineteenth century publication of *Fàilte Do Cheap Breatainn*.

In the introductory biographical sketch for the McNeil Edition, penned by contributing editor Joseph MacKinnon, MacLellan is described at the age of near ninety: "*Bhincsent Dhòmhnall Ghobha* is physically a magnificent specimen ... His manner is confident and gracious; his presence impressive, but not obtrusive. His conversation is ready and intelligent; his wit unexcelled. He is a dancing master, composer of songs, with good taste for the songs of others. He is clever in vocal music (having directed choirs and orchestras), and the theory and rendition of music, performing well on the piano, violin, bag pipes and some brass instruments."

The McNeil Edition of *Fàilte do Cheap Breatainn* reproduces Vincent A. MacLellan's original compendium of Cape Breton Gaelic songs with a supplement containing additional compositions made by MacLellan and other bards. His father's *Sanas nam Maighstearan Dannsaidh* was drawn from a copy of this

reprinting (page 24) that was generously photocopied and donated to the Highland Village library by Special Collections, the Angus L. Library, St. Francis Xavier University. The clever poem gives humorous insight to the rewards of itinerant dancing masters in Gaelic speaking districts of Cape Breton during a time when enthusiasm for learning to dance was in excess of money to pay for lessons.

## Sanas nam Maighstearan Dannsaidh

*Gabhaidh sinn aran is ìm  
'S a h-uile nì a théid air bòrd  
Èorna 's coirce 's gach gné sìol  
Mar sin agus iasg 's feòil  
Leathar uachdair agus bhonn  
Seall an toll a th'air mo bhròig  
Gabhaidh sinn clò dubh agus donn  
Bho 'n tha 'n t-side lom is i redit'  
'S dolar cruinn air ar bois  
An duais bhiodh againn, bhos is thall  
Chuirmaid dannsa 'nad chois  
Ged a bhios tu bodhar, dall*



Illustration by Ellison Robertson.

## TRANSLATION

### Dancing Masters' Notice

We'll accept (as payment) bread and butter and anything that gets put on the table: barley, oats and every sort of grain. The same with fish and meat. Leather for the top and sole, see that hole on my shoe. We accept homespun cloth in black and brown colours, since the weather is bleak and frosty. Our fee about the countryside is a dollar coin placed in our palm. We can teach you to dance supposing you are deaf and blind.

Gaelic editing and translation by Seumas Watson. ☺

## An Cruisgean - The Cruisie Lamp

**O**n Scotland's west coast and in island communities, interior lighting was generally provided by the *cruisgean*. Smithed from flat iron plating, the *cruisgean* was formed with upper and lower pans fashioned in leaf shape, the uppermost set on an adjustable shaft. Utilizing fish oil, or sometimes animal fat, the upper vessel contained a reed wick. Drip from the top leaf was contained in the pan underneath. Such lighting would have been known to Scottish settlers who brought their easily carried *cruisgean* with them to log dwelling in Nova Scotia. Featured here is a typical *cruisgean*, crafted by Highland Village ironworker John MacDonald for display in the museum's Hebridean blackhouse. ☺



# Two Hundred Years in the Telling

Shamus Y. MacDonald

*Despite the passage of time, many regions of Nova Scotia are still characterised by residents of similar cultural, geographic and religious origins. As a result, descendants of German settlers are found in Lunenburg County, Black loyalist ties are clear in Little Tracadie and French is spoken in various Acadian districts in the province. The connection between Gaelic Communities here and in Scotland is particularly strong however.*

In many cases, these ties extend beyond a common language and culture. Where aspects of oral culture and dialect are concerned, close bonds remain with specific regions from which settlers emigrated. Make no mistake, the relationship between these distant communities is not entirely one-sided either.

Two years ago I had the good fortune of visiting Barra, an island in the Outer Hebrides of Scotland. During my stay, I met residents who were enthusiastic and knowledgeable about their connection to communities in Nova Scotia. Donald Lawrence and Neil *Shandaidh* MacNeil, two brothers who were raised on the island, are notable and welcoming tradition-bearers. Here they share a story readers in Nova Scotia may find interesting. From his home on the mainland, Donald Lawrence explains the prominent place Cape Breton held in the Barra of his youth.

Bha dàimh eader sinn-fhéin, agus na daoine a dh'fhalbh a null a dh'Alba Nuadh, a Cheap Breatainn, 'Se an aon àite a chuala mise iomradh riamh air nuair bha mi beag, gus an deach mi dhan sgoil, 's thòisich mi 'g ionnsachadh eachdraidh an t-saoghail. 'S e sin na daoine air a robh iad a' bruidhinn.

*There was a connection between us, and the people who went away over to Nova Scotia, to Cape Breton. That is the one place that I always heard reports on when I was little, until I went to school, and I started learning the history of the world. It was those people they were talking about.*

Building on this point, Neil *Shandaidh*, who lives on the north-east coast of Barra, relates a tale often told in the village of Bruernish years ago. It concerns a group of emigrants who made their way across the Atlantic.

Na daoine a dh'fhalbh á Barraigh, agus chaidh a Chanada. Agus bha mo sheanair agus mo sheanmhair ag innse dhomh mu dheidhinn turus bha feadhainn ac' a' coimhead airson fearran, far an togadh iad taigh. Fearran aca airson spréidh a chur air, ma dh'fhaoidte caoraich, beòthachan 's a leithid sin. Agus feumaidh gun deach iad suas abhainn air choreigin le bàta 's chaidh iad air tìr. Agus feumaidh anisd gu robh iad 'dol a choimhead ach a b'urrainn dhaibh fuireach ann a 'shin. 'S cha robh iad fad ann nuair thàinig *Indians*, mar a chanas sinn riutha. 'S anisd, na *stories...* bha na Barraich a' cluintinn mu dheidhinn nan daoine a bha sin, cha bhiodh iad uamhsach fhèin

*There was a connection between us, and the people who went away over to Nova Scotia, to Cape Breton...*

math. Agus gabh iad an t-eagal. Agus bha iad ag ràdh, uell na daoine a' seo, marbhaidh iad sinn. Agus tha e cho math dhuinn toiseachdainn air ùrnaigh.

Agus ge bith cò fear ac'a bha a' deanamh na bruidhne, gabhaidh sinn a' chonaire Mhoire, mum marbh iad sinn. Agus chaidh iad air an glùinean 's thòisich iad air coisrighadh 's thòisich iad a' chonaire Mhoire a ghabhail. 'S thuir e, fear a bha bruidhinn riu, an *Indian* a bha sin, a bha bruidhinn riu, thuir e, "O cha leig e leas dragh sam bith a bhith oirbh, 's e an aon chreideamh a th'againn." 'S tha sinn a' deanamh dheth gu robh



Highland Village Collection.

*The 2002 Re-enactment of the MacNeils landing at Iona.*

na daoine bha sin, gu robh iad air an *convertadh* aig na Frangaich, mun deach na Breatannaich anull.

*The people who left Barra, and went to Canada. And my grandfather and grandmother were telling me about one trip, there were some of them looking for land, where they could build a house. They wanted land to put cattle on, or perhaps sheep, farm animals and the like. And they must have made their way up a river somehow with a boat and they came ashore. And now they must have been going to see if they could not stay there. And they were not long before the Indians, as we call them, came. And now, the stories the Barramen were hearing about those people there, they would not be too terribly good. And they were scared. And they were saying, well, these people, they will kill us. And it would be good for us to start praying and whoever was doing the talking for them, we will pray the Rosary, before they kill us. And they went on their knees and they started to bless themselves, and they started to pray the Rosary. And he said, the one who was speaking to them, the Indian who was speaking to them, he said, 'Oh, do not be concerned at all, we have the one faith. And we were making of it that those people there, that they had been converted by the French, before the British went over.*

Remarkably, the account bears a striking resemblance to one maintained by the oral tradition of central Cape Breton. For comparison, we can review what the late Mickey MacNeil (*Migi mac Bean*



*Nilleag Ruairidh Eòin a' Phlant*) MacNeil, a noted tradition-bearer from Iona, has said about the first settlers to the area.

Nuair a thàinig na ciad Ghàidheil, nuair thàinig 'ad anall, 's e na h-Innseanaich a bha 's an àite seo an toiseach. Thànaig 'ad anall, 's cha robh criù ro mhòr aca. Ach nuair a thàinig 'ad gu tìr, bha na h-Innseanaich romhpa. Ach ged a bha na h-Innseanaich fhèin romhpa, dh'aithnich na Gàidheil nach robh an gnothuch dol a bhi rèidh, agus cha robh na h-Innseanaich airson cairdeas a dheanamh riutha. 'S chunnaig na Gàidheil bhocda, leis na bh'aca do dhaoine 's na bha 'nan aghaidh, nach b'urraim dhaibh cus a dheanamh. An aon rud a chuimhnich 'ad air, gum b'fearr leotha sith a dheanamh le Dia air tàilleabh nach robh cus do dhaoine' aca. Choisrig 'ad 'ad fhèin. 'S nuair a choisrig 'ad 'ad fhèin, mhòthaich na h-Innseanaich a' rud a rinn na Gàidheil. Dh'aithnich 'ad an uair sin gur e Caitlich a bh'annda... Dh'fhosgail fear dhe na Gàidheil...dh'fhosgail e drong bheag a bh'aige, na bogsa, chan eil e gu diobhar, agus fhuair e crois. Thog e 'chrois suas... Cha robh na h-Innseanaich 'son an còrr tri-

oblaid a dheanamh on a bha 'ad faicinn... on a chunnaig 'ad gu robh 'ad dha 'n aon taobh.

*When the first Gaels came across (to Iona), the original people here were the Indians. The Gaels came over and only had a small crew. Since the Indians were before them, the Gaels perceived that there was going to be difficulty and that the Indians had no wish to befriend them. The poor Gaels, considering their number and that of those against them, saw there was little they could do. The one thing they thought of was that it would be best for them to make their peace with God, considering their inferiority in manpower. They crossed themselves, and when they blessed themselves the Indians noticed what the Gaels had done. The Indians then knew that the Gaels were Catholics. One of the Gaels opened a small trunk, or box - it doesn't matter, and he took out a cross. He held the cross up. When he raised the cross, the Indians shook hands with the Gaels, realizing they were of the same religion. Since they were on the same side, the Indians had no wish to make further trouble.*

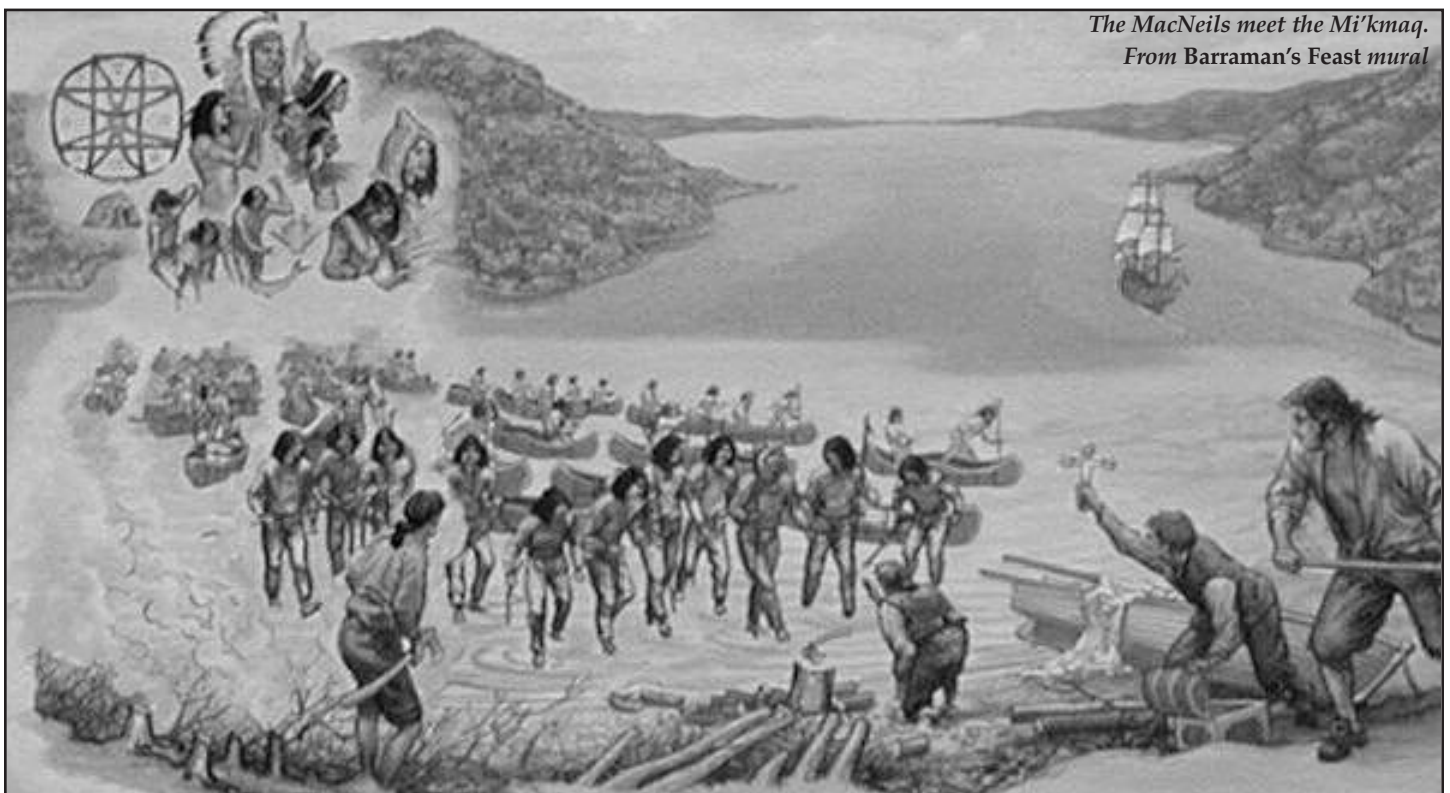
As if to further solidify the relationship between these two tales, Donald

Lawrence explained that some relatives had immigrated to Christmas Island during the early nineteenth century. Despite their geographic separation, both branches of the MacNeil family corresponded for some time and maintained an active interest in each other. As a result, it seems reasonable to assume the story of the first settlers to Iona made its way to Barra in this way. Since then, it has clearly been incorporated into the rich folktale repertoire of Barra.

Although they are no strangers to Canadian soil, Donald Lawrence and Neil Shandaidh MacNeil have never visited Cape Breton. Nevertheless, they appear to have retained a two-hundred year old tale about the settling of Iona in much the same way new-world Gaels like Mickey MacNeil preserved traditions relating to Barra itself. The maintenance of this connection is an achievement of which Gaels on both sides of the Atlantic can certainly be proud.

The account of the Iona story from Donald Lawrence and Neil Shandaidh MacNeil was recorded, transcribed and translated by Shamus MacDonald.

The account of the Iona story from Mickey MacNeil was recorded, transcribed and translated by Seumas Waston. Used with permission. ☺



*The MacNeils meet the Mi'kmaq.  
From Barraman's Feast mural*

Mural by Terry MacDonald.

# Dòmhnall nan Òrd (Donald of the Hammers)

From Mac-talla (March 1896)

*Mac-Talla was first published in 1892. Based in Sydney, NS, Mac-Talla became the world's longest running weekly Gaelic newspaper (terminating as a bi-weekly in 1904). Its publisher was Jonathan G. MacKinnon, a lifelong Gaelic advocate, and descendant from Skye pioneers who was born near Whycocomagh in 1869. We are pleased to share with you excerpts from this great Gaelic resource.*

## DÒMHNALL NAN ÒRD

'S ann bho Mhac Iain Stiùbhairt na h-Apuinn a thàrmaich teaghlach Ibhair na h-Aighle. B'è Alastair, mac do Ailean an treas Mac Iain Stiùbhairt, a' cheud fhear dhiubh. Phòs e Mairead nighean do Dhòmhnall nan Lochan ann am Mùideart. Cha robh aca ach an aon urra chloinne, Dòmhnall, agus thànaig esan astaigh an àite athar. Aréir choltais, 's ann ann an Eilean Stalcaire a bha Alastair a' tùineachadh.

Moch-mhadainn shamhraidh, dh'éirich e 's chaidh e do Eilean nan Gall - eilean beag a tha làmh ri Eilean Stalcaire. Thug e leis an tuagh Abrach 'na làimh, ball-airm a bu tric a bh'aig na Gàidheil 's an àm ud. Rinn e sìneadh air lianaig ghuirn 's leig e a thuagh gu làr. Bha e fhéin agus Fear Dhun-Staibhinnis amach air a chéile agus tha e dualach gu facas e 's an eilean. Thànaig Cailean Uaine, bràthair Fhir Dhun-Staibhinnis, le daoine 's bàta a ghabhail fàth air. Thànaig iad air gun fhios dha. An uair a thànaig e am fradharc Alastair, ghabh e air gura h-ann a thagairt càirdeis air a thànaig e. Ach nuair a thuig e nach robh e air fhaicill, thug e sùil air an tuaigh a bha làmh ris an fhear eile air an làr, agus mun d'fhuair e air a thapadh, rug e oirre 'na làimh. Bha fhios gu math aige mur biodh e ealamh gum biodh daor an ceannach aige air a thuras agus thuirt e, "'S math an tuagh seo, Alastair, nam biodh a leòir sàmhaich innte!"

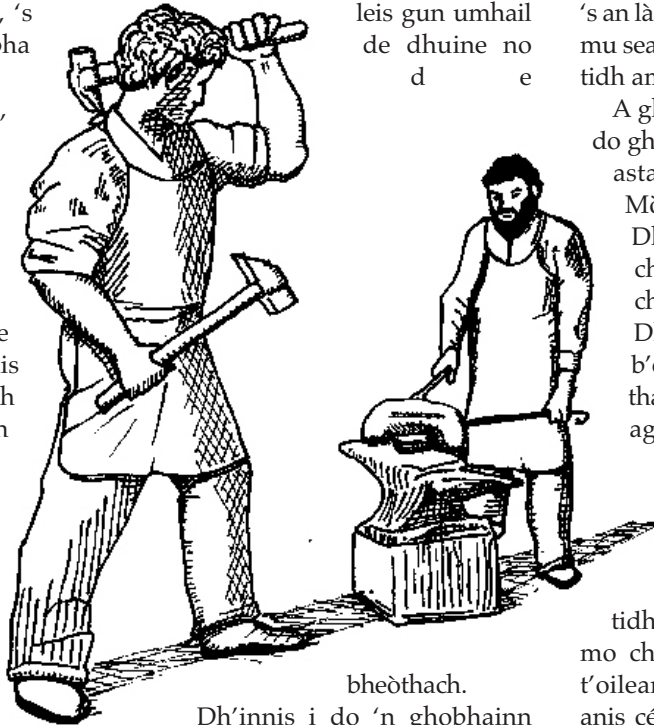
Thuig e gu ro mhath ciod a bha air aire Chailein Uaine, agus gun tuilleadh éisdeachd rug e air an tuaigh. Ach thànaig na daoine aig Cailean agus chur iad às dha.

Cha robh Dòmhnall a mhac ach 'na mhaotharan air a' chiche. Bha e air

*Illustration by Jamie MacIntyre*

bhanaltrumas aig Mòraig, bean Rob a' Pheitidh, gobhainn Mhùideirt. Cha d'fhoghainn le Cailean Uaine bàs Alastair a bhi air a làmh, 's chur e roimhe a chur às do 'n phàisde. Bha fhios aige nach biodh a' chùis gun aichbheal. Ach cha deachaidh an gnothach air mhithapadh do mhuime Dhòmhnail.

Thrus i leatha e, agus thug i Mùideart oirre leis gun umhail de dhuine no d e



bheòthach.

Dh'innis i do 'n ghobhainn mar a dh'éirich, agus 's e bh'ann gun do dh'aontaich iad an leanabh a thogail 's àrach agus urra chloinne a dhèanamh dheth dhaibh fhéin gun innse do choimhearsnach no do dhuine eile gus an tigeadh e gu inbheachd. 'S ann mar seo a bha e. Chaidh Dòmhnall a thogail 's àrach an teaghlach Rob a' Pheitidh.

An uair a thànaig e gu gné spionaidh, bu tric leis làmh-chuideachaidh a thoirt do 'n ghobhainn 's a' cheàrdaich. Bha e làidir, gramail agus ciod sam bith ris an cuairteadh e, cha chuireadh e cualag air. Cha chuireadh 's gun fhios aige nach b'ann leis a' ghobhainn a bha e. Là dhe

na làithean, an uair a bha e mu ochd bliadhna deug a dh'aois, thuit dha a bhi 's a' cheàrdaich. Dh'iarr an gobhainn air an t-òrd mór a thogail a bhualadh amach tinne mhór iaruin. B'òrd dà-làimhe e do neach sam bith, 's cha n-ion do ghlas-ghiuillan dol 'na dhàil air atharrachadh. Ach rug Dòmhnall air 'na leth-làimh agus dh'oibrich e leis 's cha bu luathaid anail e. 'S cha n-e sin amhàin, rug e air fear eile 's an làimh eile 's dh'oibrich e leò le buille mu seach gus an do chur fhéin 's a ghoistidh amach an tinne.

A ghoistidh còir, Rob a' Pheitidh, cha do ghabh e dad air ach nuair a chaidh e astaigh 's a fhuair e cothrom air Mòraig, dh'innis e dhi mu Dhòmhnall. 'S e bh'ann, a mhic chridhe, gun do chur a' chàraid chòir romhpa gun innseadh iad do Dhòmhnall mar a bha a' chùis, có b'è agus có leis am bu leis e. A leth-thaobh, chuireadh fios air Dòmhnall, agus dh'innis iad an diol déisinn-each a rinneadh air athair agus an caol-thearnadh a bh'aige fhéin.

Bhuin an sgeul seo gu guineach, goirt ris. Rug a ghoistidh eadar a ghlaicibh air. "A dhalta mo chridhe," ars' esan, b'fheudar do 'tòilean 's do 'tìonnsachadh a bhi gus anis céillte. Ach tha dòchas agam nach dèan thu dimeas air t'fhuil agus gum bi cuimhne agad air cruadal nan daoine bho 'n dànaig thu."

An sin thug an gobhainn dha claidheamh de smior an iarainn agus 'na cruadhach air a shàr fhadairt, a' guidhe gum biodh e 'n impidh air a thoirt sàbhailt às gach cruadal agus a theasraiginn bho gach gàbhadh 's cunnart. Ghlac Dòmhnall an claimheamh le faoilte gu fear-ghleus, 's cha do leig e le bhàrr-dheis a laidhe fo mheing 's an truaill. Chuir e roimhe an aichbheal a thoirt amach, ach mun gabhadh e dad os làimh, leig e a' chùis am mèinn a mhuime.



Chomhairlich ise dha a dhol gu bràthair a màthar, Dòmhnall Òg nan Lochan. Ghabh bràthair a màthar ris le mùirn 's le fàilte, agus thairg e cuideachadh 's còmhnadh dha nan dèanadh daoine moidhean 's airgead e, gus a chuid fearainn a ghléidheadh air ais dha (chaill e e nuair a thuig iad nach bu bheò esan, an t-òighre).

An uair a thill Dòmhnall do 'n Apainn agus a dh'innseadh mar a dh'éirich dha, thugadh a dh'aon fhacal 'Dòmhnall nan Òrd' air. Cha robh nàdur lompais mu a ghibhlean dha; bha e geur-fhaclach, fileanta, làidir, clis. Rinn na feartan inntinn 's cuirp seo e 'na roghadh 's taghadh a chinn-fheadhna. Bu chulaidh-eagal do luchd-dòibheart e, agus cha b'fhada gus an d'fhuair naimhdean a chinnidh 's a chàirdean fios-faireach-dainn air sin.

B'e a' cheud ghnìomh a rinn e a chur às do Chailean Uaine. Is fear de dhaoine Dhòmhnail nan Òrd a chur às do Chailean Uaine 's e a' snàmh thar Lìobhuinn: "Is glan an fhuil a thug thu do bhrìc Lìobhuinn," orsa fear de dhaoine Chailein 's e a' faicinn na saighde air crathadh 'na uchd.

"Bu ghlainne na sin," ors' am fear de dhaoine Dhòmhnail, "an fhuil a thug thusa do phartain Eilean nan Gall."

Cha d'fhoghainn leis sin. Cha do sguir e gus an do chur e gu buil naoinear de Thaigh Dhun Staibhinnis.

Cha b'fhada gus an dànaig gnìomharan Dhòmhnail gu cluasan Mhic Cailein agus dh'fheuch e r' a chur fo chis, ach dh'fhairtlich air. Fhuair Dòmhnall amach gun robh e a' caitheamh foille air, agus 's e bh'ann gun tug e taobh Loch Odha air 's gun do thog e creach bho 'n tuath sin. Tha ceathramh òrain fhathast air chuimhne mu 'n turus seo:

"Dòmhnall nan Òrd, dalt a' ghobhainn,

Aileagan nan lùireach leobhar,  
Thog creach bho thaobh Loch Odha,  
Nach dèan Mac Cailein a thogha,  
Neo mhac, neo iar-ogha, no ogha."

Chur danadas Dòmhnall corruich nach bu bheag air Mac Cailein, agus chur e roimhe a chuid dhaoine a thogail agus greim a dheanamh air leis a' làimh làidir. Ach chaidh e rithist gu smaointean mu 'n chùis agus chunnaic e aige fhéin nach biodh e sàmhach dha - bha cinneadh a mhàthar, na Mùideartaich agus na Camranaich, ro lionar. Agus 's e a rinn e

moidhean a chur air Mac Iain Stiùbhairt dh'fheuch an tugadh e air Dòmhnall sìth a dhèanamh agus a' chreach a chur air a h-ais. Chur esan a chinn-fheadhna eile an cinn ri chéile, agus mhaoidh iad air mur dèanadh dìoladh-fiach agus sìth nach tàirneadh iad claidheamh 'na aobhar ach gun leigeadh iad eadar e fhéin 's Mac Cailein. Cha robh dòigh aig Dòmhnall air cur amach air a chàirdean, agus smaoinich e gun d'rinn e gu leòir a dhìol bàs athar. Agus 's e rinn e gun fhiamh, gun eagal, gun duine ach e fhéin 's a' ghille, a dhol gu Mac Cailein a shocrachadh na cùise. Thachair Mac Cailein orra goirid bho 'n chaisteal agus - ma 's fhìor is i - seo an fhàilte a chur Dòmhnall air,

"A Mhic Cailein ghnìomhaich, ghlais,  
Is beag an tlachd a th'agad dhìom;  
'S nuair a thilleas mi air m'ais,  
Mar is móth' a th'agam dhìot."

Chaidh iad air sùrd-còrdaidh, agus eadar fealla-dhà 's a' rìreadh, is coltach nach robh a' ghlas-ghuib air Dòmhnall. Bu mhótha 's mór le Mac Cailein a lachanaich fhàgail a lean cian ri iarmad agus dh'iarr e air sealltainn air creig àraid a tha am Bràigh Àird Chonghlais: creag a tha gu math coltach ri ceann duine 's a bheul fosgailte. Dh'fharraid e an sin dheth an robh fios aige c'ainm a bha oirre. Thuirt Dòmhnall nach robh.

"Sìod agad, matà," orsa Mac Cailein, "an Gàire Gnada." (Granda?)

Thuig Dòmhnall cò air a bha e a' tighinn, agus an tionndadh na boise thuirt e,

"Gàire Gnada (Granda?) 's ainm do chreig,

'S fanaidh i mar a gnàth;  
Gheobh thu leithid agad fhéin,  
Ma sheallas tu an aodann do mhnà."

'S iad na cùmhnantan a chuir Mac Cailein mu choinneimh, creach a thogail á Mùideart agus té eile a thogail á Athall. Bha e an dùil mar seo gu cùirteadh às dha gun làimh a bhi aige fhéin 'na bheatha. Dh'aontaich Dòmhnall ri seo, agus thug e Mùideart air.

Dh'innis e do bhràthair a màthar an t-slighe air an robh e, agus chur e a choimhairle ris. Thuirt bràthair a màthar ris gun robh daoine 's a' choimhearsnachd a bu bheag air, agus nan togradh e gum faodadh e an creach a thogail, agus nuair a thigeadh a' chùis gu a chluasan-sa gun cuireadh e an tòir air air sgàth sgoinne, ach cha bhiodh an ro-chabhaig air. 'S ann mar seo a bha e.

Chaidh e an sin do Athall 's rinn e an cleas ceudna. Thill e arithist gu Mac Cailein 's rinn iad an réite.

Bha Dòmhnall a' tilleadh dhachaidh á Siorrachd Shruighlea, far an robh e air ceann-cobhairtich air choireiginn, agus thadhail e an taigh 's an robh banais gu bhi ann an oidhche sin. Cha d'rinneadh biadhachd a b'fhiach riutha, agus 's e bha ann gun deachaidh iad an dàil biadh na bainnse: a' chuid nach do dh'ith iad, mhill iad agus thug iad ris a' bhruthach. Shin iad air Dòmhnall 's cha b'fhada gus an robh iad suas ris. Ghlaodh fear de na daoine riutha a' fanaidh orra airson na dh'òl iad dhe 'n deoch.

"Stiùbhartaich bhuidhe nan tapan, A bheireadh glag air a' chàl!"

Thug fear de dhaoine Dhòmhnail tionndadh air fhéin 's tharraing e an t-saighead 's e a' freagairt, "Ma tha 'n tapan againn mar dhùthchas, Is dùth dhuinn gun tarraing sinn taifeid."

Chur e an t-saighead troimhe a chridhe, agus 's e a bha ann gun deachaidh iad uile an dàil a chéile 's thuit móran dhiubh air gach taobh.

Bha Dòmhnall pòsda dà uair. Ris a' cheud mhnaoi, nighean do Iain Stiùbhairt am Bun Raithneach, bha ceathrar mhac aige: Alastair a dh'eug gun phòsadh, Dunnchadh a thànaig astaigh 'na àite fhéin, Ailean bho 'n dànaig Taigh Baile 'Chaolais agus Iain ris an abairteadh Iain Dubh mac Dhòmhnail - aig an fhear seo bha Leitir Shiùna. -

- Dòmhnall 's a' Ghàidheal

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## Translation:

### DONALD OF THE HAMMERS

The Stewart family of Invernahyle are descended from John the son of Stewart of Appin. Alastair, the son of Allan, third Stewart of Appin, was the first of them. He married Margaret, daughter of Donald of Lochan in Moidart. They had only one child, Donald, who succeeded his father. It would seem that Alastair's dwelling place was *Eilean Stalcaire* (Hunter's Island.)

Early one summer morning Alastair rose and went to *Eilean nan Gall*, (Foreigners' Island), an islet near to *Eilean Stalcaire*. He took in hand a

Lochaber axe, a weapon common to Gaels of the time. He stretched out on a green sward and put the axe on the ground. Alastair and Dunstaffnage were on the outs with each other, and its likely that Alastair had been spotted on the island. Green Colin, Dunstaffnage's brother, arrived with a boat and men to waylay him. They came upon him by surprise. When coming in sight of Alastair, Green Colin pretended that he was there to offer friendship. When Colin realized he was off-guard, he eyed the axe laying on the ground beside the other fellow and before Colin could collect himself, Alastair seized the axe in his hand. Colin knew full-well that if he wasn't quick about it, he would pay dearly for his venture. He said, "This would be a good axe Alastair, if the handle were long enough."

Alastair understood very well what Colin's intentions were, but Colin's men arrived and killed Alastair.

At the time, Donald was no more than an infant on the breast. He was being wet-nursed by Morag the wife of *Rob a' Pheithidh* (Rob from Petty), the blacksmith of Moidart. It wouldn't do for the death of Alastair to be on Green Colin's hands, and so, knowing that there would be revenge for the affair, he decided to do away with the child. However, Donald's stepmother was aware of the plan and she swiftly moved to protect the child. She bundled him up and made for Moidart without regard for man or beast.

Morag told the blacksmith about what had happened, and they agreed to raise the child as their own without revealing the truth to neighbours, or anyone else, until Donald came of age. And so it was that Donald was brought up and nurtured in the family of *Rob a' Pheithidh*.

When Donald matured to the age of strength, he often assisted the blacksmith in his forge. He was powerful and muscular; anything coming to his grip was of no burden to him, not a bit of it. All the while he believed he was the son of the smith.

One day, when he was about eighteen years old, he happened to be in the forge. The smith asked him to pick up the big hammer to pound out a large iron link. The hammer was always held with two hands, and this was so for a callow youth. Donald, however, took it in one

hand and worked away effortlessly. Not only that, he picked up another in his other hand and struck them turnabout until he and his stepfather forged the link.

*Rob a' Pheithidh*, the good natured stepfather, didn't let on he had noticed, but when he went into the house, and had an opportunity to speak to Morag, he told her what Donald had done. And so, dear heart, the kindly couple decided they would tell Donald how things were: who he was and of his natural family. Taking him aside, Donald was informed of the horrible deed done to his father and his own narrow escape.

Donald was stunned and shaken by the news. His stepfather held him in his arms saying, "My darling foster child, your training and learning had to be kept hidden until now. But I hope you won't disgrace your blood, and be mindful of the hardy stock from which you are descended."

The smith then gave him a sword of pure iron, fired in true heat, expressing his wish that it would preserve Donald in every difficult situation, danger and peril. Donald eagerly seized the sword, not letting its hilt rust in the scabbard. He determined to get his revenge, but before going further he consulted his stepmother for her thoughts.

She advised him to go her mother's brother, *Dòmhnall Òg nan Lochan* (Donald the Younger of Lochan). Morag's uncle greeted Donald with delight and hospitality, offering him assistance if men and money would make possible recovery of his rightful land holding. (Donald lost it when it was believed he, the heir, was dead.)

When Donald returned to Appin and his story was told round, he was dubbed *Dòmhnall nan Òrd* (Donald of the Hammers.) He didn't lack in talents. Donald was wry, articulate, strong and agile. These mental and physical attributes made him the outstanding choice for chief of his clan. He was a terror to evil-doers, and it wasn't long before the enemies of his kinsmen felt the effects of his might.

Getting rid of Green Colin was the first task he completed. (One of Donald's men swam across Loch Leven and killed Green Colin. On seeing the arrow in Colin's chest, one of his followers said, "Pure is the blood you gave Loch

Leven's trout."

"Purer yet," said Donald's man,"the blood you fed the crabs of *Eilean nan Gall*."

It wouldn't do for him to leave it at that. Donald didn't stop until he brought nine of the Dunstaffnage House to account.

It wasn't long before news of Donald's deeds reached the ears of *Mac Caillein* (Campbell of Argyll) who attempted, but failed, to bring him into submission. Discovering *Mac Caillein* was planning an ambush, Donald went to Loch Awe side and made a cattle raid from the north. This incident is still remembered in a verse of song: "*Donald of the Hammers, the smith's foster son, little jewel of the rough fitting mail who forayed from Loch Awe side. Mac Caillein won't hang him, or his son, or grandson, or great grandson.*"

Donald's audacity was no small irritation to *Mac Caillein*, who set out to gather his men and apprehend him with a forceful hand. However, reconsidering, he concluded the results wouldn't bring satisfaction. Donald's mother's relations, the Moidart people and the Camerons, were too numerous. Rather, he appealed to Stewart of Appin in an attempt to make peace and recover the stolen animals. In order to consider the matter, Stewart of Appin convened his chieftains. Donald was threatened that without compensation and a truce, they wouldn't draw their swords in his support and they would leave the matter between him and *Mac Caillein*. Donald couldn't reject his kinsmen's decision. He concluded that his father's death had been sufficiently avenged.

And so without fear, trepidation or retinue, Donald and his attendant went to Mac Caillein to settle the matter. Mac Caillein met them near his castle, and Donald reputedly greeted him in this way, "Gray industrious Mac Caillein, You have little satisfaction from me. Nor will I have much satisfaction from you returning home."

They entered into cheerful negotiation. Between jest and serious discussion, it appears that Donald had his say. *Mac Caillein* very much wished to have a last laugh that would follow Donald's offspring. He asked him to look at a certain cliff in Brae Ardinglas, a cliff that very much looks like a man's head with his mouth agape. He then asked if Donald



knew the name of it. Donald replied that he didn't.

"There you have," said *Mac Cailein*, *The Hideous Laugh*."

Donald understood to whom he was referring and turning the tables he replied, "The Hideous Laugh is the name of a cliff and let it always be. You will find you have the same yourself if you look at your wife's face."

The conditions that *Mac Cailein* set for Donald were that he make a cattle raid in Moidart and another in Athole. He was sure that he would be taken care of without having a direct hand on Donald's life. Donald agreed to this and made for Moidart.

He told his mother's brother about his enterprise. His uncle advised him, saying there were people in the region he disliked and, if Donald chose to do so, he could make the raid. When news of it reached him, he would pursue Donald for the sake of appearances, but wouldn't be in any rush about it. And so it was, Donald went to Athole and played the same trick. He then returned to *Mac Cailein* and made appeasement.

Donald was returning home through Sterlingshire where he had been on some foray or other. He stopped by a house where a wedding feast was to be held that night. He and his men were shown little hospitality and so they set upon the wedding food. What they didn't eat they spoiled and then took to the hills. The wedding party pursued Donald. They weren't long before catching up to him. In derision, one of the pursuers called out mocking them for the amount of liquor they drank, "Stewarts of the flax tufts who would choke on cabbage!"

One of Donald's men wheeled about, drew an arrow and answered, "If the flax tuft is our legacy, then it's befitting we draw the bow string!" He put an arrow through the fellow's heart and they all set upon each other with many fallen on both sides.

Donald was twice married. He had four sons with his first wife, the daughter of John Stewart of Bunrannoch: Alastair who died without marrying; Duncan who succeeded him; Allan from whom are descended the House of Ballachulish; and John who was called Black John son of Donald who owned *Leitir Shiùna*.

Translated and edited by Seumas Watson. ☺

## Gaelic in the Bow - A Review

By John Gibson

*Alex Francis MacKay, with Gordon MacLean (piano). "Gaelic in the bow." Rounder Archive, 2005. Produced by Mark Wilson for The North American Traditions Series. Notes by Alex Francis MacKay & Mark Wilson. Photographs from the MacKay collection.*

I had the beginning of Alex Francis' first selection on in the car's CD player, when I picked up an old friend recently. His home is in Ottawa. We were in Pictou County. The tune that cut in was John MacColl's pipe march "Jenny Carruthers."

In its original timing, MacColl's setting just wasn't right for the way Cape Bretoners play this Scottish composition.

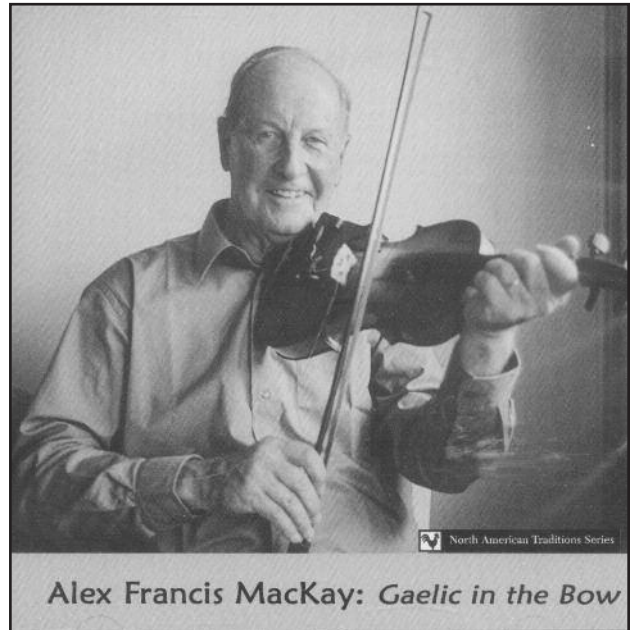
Alex Francis's version of "Jenny Carruthers" is more Scotch than any version I have ever heard on the pipes, and that includes MacColl's pupil Sandy Boyd.

I listened to the whole CD alone driving back to Antigonish later on. There is almost seventy-two minutes of music and, with the exception of one tune, I found it all rich and important as a late-phase collection of Cape Breton Highland music.

To me, few are the fiddlers who play Highland slow music, airs, marches and slow strathspeys more evocatively than Alex Francis; witness the old triplings in the reels and older speeds and timings. His "Miss Menzie of Menzies" is very similar in style to Dan R.'s.

This CD has many lovely, never-to-be-repeated musical glimpses of the old Highlands before mass emigration. "Watson's Class," "The Maids of Arrochar," ring out for me. So do "Munlochy Bridge" and "Dr MacLeod of Alnwick." To me, all as Highland as I could ever imagine it to have been before the dispersion of the Gaels (there was, of course, no music like this in Glen Finnan when I lived there over fifty years ago).

I read the CD notes on the computer screen at home. Mark Wilson wrote that



this was a collection of "off the cuff" Alex Francis MacKay and Gordon MacLean. The music was recorded at Gordon and Hazel's home at Sugar Camp, southern Inverness County. The cuts were compiled from various sessions recorded between 2002 and 2004. Wilson wrote that there are repetitions here and there of the earlier CD "A Lifelong Home."

Alex Francis MacKay's fiddle embellishments often have a yowl to them and grace-notes often occur where someone like John MacColl or Simon Fraser never thought to put grace-notes on the published page.

Mark Wilson's remark that Alex Francis occasionally went to the book "for accuracy's sake" confused me because if there is any living fiddler who knows how to get Highland music off the neutered notes on a music book page it is Alex Francis MacKay.

His, and his family's, part in continuing Gaelic language and music to the Cape Breton community has been exceptional. This CD, like other music he has recorded, will be played as long as there is a real interest in the old Scotland and the new.

*Gaelic in the Bow* is available through the Highland Village Gift Shop. (902) 725-2272 or [hvgiftshop@gov.ns.ca](mailto:hvgiftshop@gov.ns.ca) ☺





# Photo Album

The 2006 Season at Highland Village Museum

This page, clockwise from top left: Soay sheep near the new stone fence (dry stone dyke); natural dye display; interpreter Colleen Beaton breaking flax; our Clydesdale horse “Dan;” Jeff (Goiridh) MacDonald, exhibit curator and Elliot MacNeil, chief designer launch “Cape Breton Céilidh” virtual museum exhibit; interpreter Catherine Gillis in costume for *Oidhche nam Bòcan* (Halloween); and Michael Anthony MacLean and Vince MacLean view sheet music during the Joe MacLean Collection launch.



Opposite page, clockwise from top left: Nova Scotia Government caucus members visit Highland Village (L-R: Hon. Bill Dooks, HV Trustee Walter MacNeil, Hon. Jamie Muir, and former Premier Hon. John Hamm); ceilidh in MacDonald house; Sandy MacNeil, John Urich and Steve Griffin work on the Village’s new dry stone fence; farmer Steve Chehy gardening with children’s program participants; *Gàidhlig dhan Òigridh*, Gaelic youth camp; Highland Village Day concert; Jim St. Clair receives the 2006 Award of Merit from Society treasurer Janet Gillis-Hussey and director Rodney Chaisson; the Christmas candy display. *All photos from the Highland Village Collection.* ∞









# Cainnt mo Mhàthar:

## A Sound Example from which to learn

by Shamus Y. MacDonald

*Enthusiasm within the Gaelic community of Nova Scotia is certainly running high these days. There is little doubt much of the excitement can be attributed to the introduction of TIP (Total Immersion Plus). This language teaching methodology was developed in Scotland and is based on successful indigenous language renewal programs in Hawaii and New Zealand.*

Photo by Shamus Y. MacDonald



*Nigheanan Pheadair Mhòir Steabhain Mhicheil á Cùl Beag a' Phòin Mhóir  
Sisters Theresa Burke & Martha Ramey, Rear Big Pond*

Because so many of the world's languages are endangered, success stories like these should be celebrated and studied. That the Gaelic community of Nova Scotia is gaining from international experience, and embracing new advancements, is certainly encouraging. There should be no mistake however; we are not only following sound examples but setting them ourselves.

*Cainnt mo Mhàthar* (My Mother's Language) is an innovative initiative designed to record idiomatic, everyday Gaelic from fluent speakers in the province. Organized by *Comhairle na Gàidhlig* (Gaelic Council of NS) and supported by the Gaelic Activities Program, the project is being run out of the Highland Village Museum / *An Clachan Gàidhealach*. The information it collects will act as a primary resource for those designing and teaching Gaelic courses through TIP. Recordings will contribute to immersion teaching materials that focus on the incorporation of local content in classes. Unlike previous fieldwork within the Gaelic community, which has largely focused on recording aspects of

developed an international following.

The dialects of Scottish Gaelic spoken in Nova Scotia are characteristic of the geographic origins of many eighteenth and nineteenth century immigrants. Programs designed to teach language should recognize the needs of students

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and be reflective of the communities in which they instruct. As a result, *Cainnt mo Mhàthar* gives learners the opportunity of deepening their language skills while acquiring the *blas*, or flavor, of the Gaelic spoken in different areas of the province. The incorporation of regional dialects, sayings and idioms in classes also acts as a strong assertion of their inherent value to the larger community.

*Cainnt mo Mhàthar* is a long-term project with professional standards and

landmark goals. The first of its three stages was completed in the spring of 2006. Focused largely on creating a detailed plan for the project in general, this phase was essential in laying a strong foundation for subsequent work while ensuring we take full advantage of this rare opportunity. Prototypes of other fieldwork have been explored and scores of academic researchers have been consulted. Scholars from the University of Hawaii, the University of Edinburgh, the University College Dublin and the University of California Berkeley, among others, are acting as on-going consultants. An eight member Advisory Committee, comprised of tradition-bearers and professionals from the Gaelic community, was also established. Besides being a vital source of ideas, encouragement and debate, this group has been an important link with local residents and demonstrates a commitment to seeing *Cainnt mo Mhàthar* remain a community-based initiative with international vision.

A significant feature of our work thus far has been the development of a comprehensive conversation guide designed to prompt natural, idiomatic speech during interviews. Like TIP classes themselves, the guide represents many facets of community and family life and helps ensure consistency in collecting procedures and results. Three pilot interviews, which were filmed and digitally recorded, were conducted in January 2006. Besides being generous and invaluable contributors, the enthusiasm shown by our initial informants, Willie Fraser, Deepdale, Peter MacLean, Rear Christmas Island and Allan MacLeod, Catalone, is certainly inspiring.

The second stage of *Cainnt mo Mhàthar* is nearing completion. Because of earlier planning, this phase is able to concentrate solely on the exciting task of fieldwork with a growing list of willing informants. Seumas Watson, working on behalf of the Highland Village Museum / *An Clachan Gàidhealach* is acting as primary fieldworker.

...continued on page 30



# Tales of a Travelling Man - A Review

By Seumas Watson

*Tales of a Travelling Man-Sgeulachdan bho Mhac-cèaird: Two CDs of traditional Highland stories from Alec Williamson, produced as part of the Merry Dancers Storytelling Project.*

The origins of Highland Travellers are ambiguous. Some accounts attribute their beginnings to the Highland Clearances, or as a people displaced following the Jacobite rebellion of 1744 - times of disruption that left families homeless and wandering. In any of these explanations there is no certainty, other than Travelling Folk to have been on the road for generations: plying their skills variously as tin workers, pearl fisherman, horse traders and casual labourers for barter or small wages.

Historical explanations for this transient society aside, Highland Travellers remain a primary repository for folklorists and those recording traditions and customs of life in a Gaelic Scotland now known to few. Songs, stories and music preserved in the oral traditions of Traveller culture, unaffected by institutionalized approaches to learned performance, are of particular importance to defining Scotland's artistic heritage among the world's nations.

While documentation of the Travellers' origins may lack scholarly substantiation, perhaps the accounts most worth consideration are those from the Travellers themselves. To this end one may refer to Timothy Neat's book *The Summer Walkers: Travelling People and Pearl-Fishers in the Highland of Scotlands*, a beautiful blend of black and white photographs accentuating Travellers' narrations on their way of life over Scotland's roads and by-ways. A caring overview (unfortunately lacking in Gaelic content), Travelling life and culture is remembered in personal accounts by Essie Stewart, Eddie Davies, Alec John Williamson and Gordon Stewart. Neat also includes a chapter of reminiscences from the late folklorist Hamish Henderson on time spent with Northern Travellers. Henderson is credited by many as having brought Scottish national attention to the importance of Travelling People through his pioneering field work while a folklorist at the School of Scottish Studies.

My first introduction to Traveller storytelling came through the School of Scottish Studies publication *Tocher*. Told by the late *Ali Dall* (Alasdair Stewart) a Stewart family Traveller from

Sutherland, the story was *An Dreathan Donn* (*Tocher* 4 pp. 108 - 116.) My next encounter was through the same publication's pages (*Tocher* 29 pp. 303 - 331) in the person of another Sutherland man, Alasdair Stewart (Brian/*Am Bràighean*), nephew of *Ali Dall*. Aside from content and entertainment value, much of these stories' appeal lays in their flow of idiomatic expression and confident style of telling that seems to break through the constraints of printed words. And again in *Tocher* (issue 23, pp. 188 - 195) through a story titled *Peadar Sgoilear* told by Alick Williamson, Alec John's father, recorded by Dr. John MacInnes who was then working for *Sgoil Eòlais na h-Alba*.

Since *Tocher* employs an orthography that reports its Gaelic transcriptions in a manner closely reflecting the individual's spoken word, the dialectal representations alone of these mainland informants kept me wondering for some time what their speech actually sounded like. As it happened, Seòsamh Watson's recording work among the last of Easter Ross Gaelic speakers included recordings of the late Lindsay Williamson, brother of Alick, which he allowed me to listen to during a stay in the Watsons' Dublin home some number of years ago.

The legacy of the Williamson's storytelling tradition remains with Alec John Williamson. An exceptional performer with a genuine fireside manner, Williamson's style is reminiscent of Gaelic story tellers who were known in Cape Breton. Alec John's intonation, speed of delivery and easy presentation, much reminds me of the late Malcom Campbell (*Calum mac 'Illeasbaig 'ic Caluim an Tàilleir*), Woodbine, Cape Breton County whose specialty was relating his own experiences with *taibhsearachd* (portents of death.)

Williamson was born in a tent on New Year's Eve in 1932 at a small place called Rhexgullie near to Edderton, Ross-shire. His parents were Alick and Jane (a Stewart from the Isle of Skye.) The pace of life for the Rhexgullie Williamson Travellers during Alec's formative years was seasonal with winters spent in Edderton where Alec attended formal school to the age of thirteen. It was here, while at winter quarters during the long nights, that he learned many of the stories in his repertoire. With the break of spring, the call of the road would come once again. Like other Traveller children, Alec was granted leave from school to



accompany adults earning a living on circuits about the Highland countryside. Though perhaps best known as tinsmiths (hence the Gaelic designation, *na cèaird*), other bread winning enterprises included employment with crofters. The allure of the Travelling life was strong. In Alec's own words, "Once you would hear the birds singing, something stirred in your blood, you'd want to get away again, to travel the roads. You see, you could take the Traveller out of the road, but you couldn't take the road *oot o' the Traveller*."

Titled bilingually as *Tales of a Travelling Man-Sgeulachdan bho Mhac-cèaird*, the recordings are contained on a double CD. Disk one gives listeners four stories in Gaelic with their English versions retold on disk two. In addition there are two songs, one in Gaelic and another in English on their respective disks. Sound recordings are clear and accompanied by liner notes drawing on quotes from Alec John's memories of Travelling life and autobiographical information.

Taped before live audiences, this selection of recordings is available to the public from the Merry Dancers Storytelling Project. Funded by the Scottish Arts Council and managed by Highland Council for a three year period, plans to encourage Scotland's storytelling tradition will take place on a number of fronts. These include bringing storytellers to schools, special events and creating new stories for the Highlands. Recording storytellers is also part of this initiative.

I am not aware of outlets in Nova Scotia where copies of *Tales of a Travelling Man-Sgeulachdan bho Mhac-cèaird* can be found for purchase. However, enquires of interest can be made by phoning 01997 421186, or e-mailing [strath@ndo.co.uk](mailto:strath@ndo.co.uk) ☺

# Intangible Cultural Heritage & Nova Scotia

Brief to the Heritage Strategy Task Force by Dr. Richard MacKinnon

Dictionaries usually define heritage as, "Something that is passed down from preceding generations; a tradition" or "property that is or can be inherited; an inheritance." Some definitions are more inclusive. For example, "heritage" to the Canadian Encyclopedia includes tangible things such as railway stations, bridges or neighbourhoods, artifacts such as paintings, parks, gardens or heritage trails along with folklore, customs, language, dialect, songs and legends.



For many people in civic society and government, however, "heritage" means material culture including buildings, artifacts and important objects. When we look at Nova Scotia, we have a Heritage Property Act and we have numerous provincial, federal and local museums throughout the province. These important institutions conduct research, conserve artifacts, produce exhibits and educate people about various aspects of Nova Scotia cultural heritage.

Heritage is indeed becoming an increasingly important industry that influences the economy, business and tourism in our province. I am advocating a widening of the paradigm of "heritage" in Nova Scotia to include much more than artifacts, buildings or museums. The term I will use is one that is not well known in Nova Scotia but currently in international usage by UNESCO, (*United Nations Educational and Cultural Organization*) - **Intangible Cultural Heritage**".

UNESCO's Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2003 defines intangible cultural heritage as "the practices, representations, expressions, as well as the knowledge and skills, that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage."<sup>1</sup> It is the body of cultural and social expressions that characterize groups and communities and are based on tradition.

It is sometimes called "living cultural heritage" and includes such cultural items as: languages and dialects, oral traditions and story-telling, beliefs, customs, traditional knowledge and skills, ways of working and making a living, ways of celebrating such as music, festivals, rituals, performing arts, traditional foodways, and traditional crafts.

In English Canada, the common term used for these kinds of cultural materials is folklore; in Quebec "*arts et tradition populaire*" or *ethnologie*. The definition of "folklore" is similar to what UNESCO calls, "intangible cultural heritage." Folklore refers both to the academic study of traditional culture and to the materials themselves. Thus, oral stories, legends, songs, ballads, beliefs, crafts, rituals, games, proverbs, sayings, rhymes, music and so on are referred to as "folklore." The reason why UNESCO has chosen the phrase "intangible cultural heritage" is that it translates much better throughout the world in different cultures and languages than the word, "folklore."

Folklorists have long studied these

Heritage is indeed becoming an increasing important industry that influences the economy, business and tourism in our province.

items of tradition mentioned in UNESCO's definition of intangible cultural heritage. Even though pioneers in the folklore field such as Helen Creighton and William Roy MacKenzie worked throughout Nova Scotia, folklore is not a well-established discipline within our Nova Scotia universities. Nor is folklore or intangible cultural heritage well-represented in the archival holdings of our established provincial archival institutions. Cape Breton University (CBU) with its Beaton Institute Archives and Mi'kmaq Resource Centre is the only university in the province to regularly offer courses in this discipline. Indeed we have recently been given the approval by the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission (October,

2005) to begin offering a Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Arts Community Studies major in folklore studies with a minor in ethnomusicology. The study of folklore and its allied discipline, ethnomusicology, allows students to study and analyse traditional music along with other aspects of cultural tradition. We are getting interest from students around the world for our specialty courses in folklore and traditional fiddle music at CBU; in the last academic year we had 9 students from *Sabhal Mòr Ostaig*, a Gaelic university in the Isle of Skye, who were attending our folklore and ethnomusicology courses. As well, CBU along with the Canadian government, has established a Tier One Canada Research Chair for the study of intangible cultural heritage. To widen our definition of heritage to include these items of intangible cultural heritage requires that we have trained researchers who know how to conduct fieldwork in our communities and are able to work within our established institutions in gathering, recording, studying and making available aspects of intangible cultural heritage. There is a need for more training in identifying, researching, archiving and making inventories of intangible cultural heritage that is threatened or is at risk of disappearing.

UNESCO has also created allied instruments to support the *Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage*. It has issued an international *Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity* to "honour the most remarkable examples of the oral and intangible heritage of Humanity." (UNESCO, 1998). The Proclamation encourages governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and local communities to identify, safe-



guard, revitalize and promote their oral and intangible cultural heritage. UNESCO also aims to encourage individuals, groups, institutions and organizations to contribute to the management, preservation, protection and promotion of this heritage. A third proclamation, identifying 43 oral masterpieces of humanity, occurred in November 2005. As the Canadian government is not yet a signatory to this international convention, no Canadian masterpieces have been proclaimed to date.

Three other allied UNESCO policies have been developed in this area including: *Living Human Treasures*, *Endangered Languages* and *Traditional Music of the World*.

Why is this important for Nova Scotia? The province is presently undergoing social, cultural and economic change with the decline of population in rural communities and the loss of traditional industries such as the fishery, the forest industry, coal mining and steel making. Larger urban centres are becoming the growth areas of the province. Much cultural knowledge is disappearing or changing as this transition occurs. What traditions and local knowledge are being lost with the closing down of these primary industries on Cape Breton Island, for example, in the past five years? Will there be concerted effort to record the cultural knowledge of these disappearing work traditions in the fishery, mining, steelmaking, boat building, etc. that have been a part of Cape Breton Island and Nova Scotia for centuries? There is a need to record aspects of intangible cultural heritage of all areas of the province and to make available in old and new media formats that material for educators in secondary and post-secondary schools.

The province is made up of a variety of cultural groups – Aboriginal peoples, Europeans (English, Irish, Scottish Gaels, Acadians, Italians, Polish, Ukrainians); Caribbean Blacks, Black Loyalists, Lebanese, etc, and, increasingly ethnic communities from around the world – that have different ways of expressing their cultures. For all of these people it is the intangible aspects of culture that define them more than the physical expressions of culture. Their intangible cultural heritage affirms their cultural identity and communities. Are there

threatened traditions amongst these groups? On Cape Breton Island, for example, the Mi'kmaq, Gaelic, Italian and Ukrainian languages, once prevalent in many communities, can be considered threatened. Are there concerted efforts in each community to study, record and consider ways to perpetuate these languages and their associated traditions? Is this supported by provincial government policies and programs? As well, many new Canadians bring their living cultural traditions with them to the province making Nova Scotia a rich and varied multicultural community. It is this rich diversity that is a major strength for our province as it faces the future. Will this diversity be represented in our curriculum, in our museums, galleries and historic sites? With an increased understanding and knowledge of intangible cultural heritage and with trained personnel to study and record its content, the province can become a leader in this area of heritage preservation.

The province has initiated a Gaelic Activities Program (GAP) that is designed to help Nova Scotians learn from, work with and share resources with other Gaelic communities. In addition to GAP, the province has also signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Highland Council, Scotland to share resources, ideas, skills and experience. The aims of these government program are to increase the number of Gaelic speakers of all ages in the province, improve the quality and effectiveness of Gaelic learning and promote inter-generational transmission of language, thus preserving and sustaining knowledge of Nova Scotia's Gaelic tradition bearers. The programs support projects that try to preserve and develop traditional arts that reflect Nova Scotia's distinct Gaelic culture such as music, dance, song and storytelling; interprets Gaelic culture through new media, drama, visual arts, literature and film and ones that enhance pride, appreciation and visibility for Gaelic language, tradition, arts and culture in Nova Scotia.

These programs were developed after the province commissioned Dr. Michael Kennedy, Ph D Celtic Studies, in 2001 to write a comprehensive study entitled "*Gaelic Nova Scotia: An Economic, Cultural and Social Impact Study*" where he highlighted the precarious state of Gaelic lan-

guage, noting that it had dwindled to under 500 native speakers. This was followed by a *Strategy for Developing and Preserving Gaelic In Nova Scotia* completed in April 2004. What is remarkable is that at the same time UNESCO was working on its intangible cultural heritage and masterpieces policies, there does not seem to have been any direct communication or understanding of the UNESCO initiatives by the province. The Gaelic policy in NS was being driven from the ground up at the local community level from people who were concerned that a living language was dying before their eyes.

Politically, in my view, it is important now for Nova Scotia to become active in this area if indeed we are interested in influencing local, regional, national and indeed international cultural policy. A number of countries throughout the world have taken leadership in protecting and preserving intangible cultural heritage. As of March, 2006, thirty-two countries around the world have ratified this international UNESCO convention on Intangible Cultural Heritage. These countries include Algeria, Mauritius, Japan, Gabon, Panama, China, the Central African Republic, Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus, Republic of Korea, Seychelles, Syrian Arab Republic, United Arab Emirates, Mali, Mongolia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Oman, Dominica, Iceland and India. The convention became international law in April 2006 because more than 30 countries have ratified the agreement.

Unfortunately Canada has not signed this international convention to date despite many lobby efforts by UNESCO and its allies. If Canada was a signatory, provinces could access an international fund established by UNESCO to support intangible cultural heritage initiatives in Canada. As well, the federal government would be required to pay more attention to folklore archives and digital repositories at museums and other public institutions that deal with intangible cultural heritage.

What's happening internationally with intangible cultural heritage? The *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* was adopted by the thirty-second session of the UNESCO General Conference on 17 October 2003.

According to UNESCO, "This new Convention, the fifth of its kind adopted by the organization for the protection of cultural heritage, is designed to bind States Parties, to take the necessary measures, including, for instance, identification, in order to ensure the safeguarding of the international cultural heritage and to strengthen solidarity and cooperation at regional and international levels in this field."

It provides for the preparation by member states of national inventories of intangible cultural heritage, the establishment of an *Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage* composed of representatives of the States Parties, and the drawing-up of two lists by this Committee, i.e. the *Representative List of the International Cultural Heritage of Humanity* and the *List of International Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding*.

For one example, the Columbian government developed a pilot project, "*Columbian Intangible Cultural Heritage: Show Who You Are*." Through newspapers, national television stations and radio announcements, this \$137,000 project promoted the concept of intangible heritage, thereby sensitizing the general public to the value of various types of intangible expressions from the country's different cultures and regions. Training workshops were held for authorities charged with developing inventories. Workshops were organized for staff of cultural, education and communication institutions, for teachers and for representatives of indigenous and Afro-Columbian communities.

Another example can be found in China. After signing this international convention in 2003, the Chinese Academy of Arts (CAA) set up fifteen groups of domestic and foreign experts and put them to work inventorying the oral and intangible Chinese culture. A comprehensive database is to be created within five years. (Leclaire, Annemiek, "From Chinese opera to Bolivian carnival: International Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention", p. 1).

In a number of other countries intangible cultural heritage is designated to be of national historic importance. Perhaps best known is Japan who, for many years, have developed a Living Treasures

program, that supports the sustaining and teaching of threatened traditions throughout the country. Unlike other countries (such as the US or many European countries) Canada has no national institution or archives where collected folklore is stored and made available.

The Archive of Folk Culture, the American Folklife Center, The Library of Congress, Washington DC has been a world leader in archiving folklore materials. Recently they've become a world leader in making digital archival materials available via the internet. Our university has been in close contact with this Washington archives; we have established a collaborative relationship with them. In the fall of 2005, the head of their archives spent a week at CBU meeting faculty, examining our Beaton Institute oral and music collection, and advising us on our plans to digitize and make available aspects of our collection to teachers and the general public.

Why has Canada not taken leadership in this area? I believe one reason why Canada has not supported this international convention is that the federal government is waiting to see if there is any interest whatsoever at the provincial level concerning this issue. From my perspective, the Canadian government sees cultural policy as a federal/provincial issue and is awaiting provincial input and consideration. To date, there has been little discussion of intangible cultural heritage in Nova Scotia even though I think it is extremely important for the many cultural groups and citizens who live in this province. Only two Canadian provinces have shown much interest in intangible cultural heritage: Newfoundland and Labrador and Quebec. Quebec has begun a complete inventory of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of the province and Newfoundland and Labrador is currently working on an intangible cultural heritage policy. They have appointed a cultural policy development office in the Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation to take leadership on this issue.

#### Recommendations:

1. Nova Scotia should develop an intangible cultural heritage policy.

2. Define what constitutes Nova Scotia intangible cultural heritage.
3. Develop tools and plans for safeguarding the province's intangible cultural heritage.
4. Work with established educational institutions for developing training in intangible cultural heritage. Cape Breton University is one of the only universities in Nova Scotia to take leadership on this issue to date.
5. Work with archives, museums and other institutions throughout the province to create digital repositories of intangible cultural heritage.
6. Celebrate intangible cultural heritage and establish appropriate connections with Departments of Education, and Tourism, Culture & Heritage on this matter.
7. Identify ways in which intangible cultural heritage can provide opportunities for economic development and community well-being.
8. Increase the provincial/federal dialogue on this issue. Nova Scotia should at least become familiar with the International Convention and have some of their representatives attend any UNESCO meetings on this topic in Canada.
9. If interested, Nova Scotia policy developers can begin to take regional, national and perhaps international leadership in this emerging worldwide cultural policy.
10. Support digitization efforts of archives and repositories to make available threatened audio and music tapes and recordings now held in Nova Scotia collections

For more information on intangible heritage and UNESCO's International Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage visit UNESCO's website at [www.unesco.org](http://www.unesco.org).

*This article is based on Dr. Richard MacKinnon's submission to the Nova Scotia Heritage Strategy Task Force in November 2005. Dr. MacKinnon is a Tier One Canada Research Chair and Professor of Folklore at Cape Breton University.* ∞



# An Gàidheal Portmhor

## Tune Selections from the MacLean Collection

One of the newest and most significant additions to the Highland Village library and archives is the MacLean Collection of Music. This collection represents a lifetime of collecting by the late Joe MacLean of Washabuck.

Joe MacLean (*Eòs Bhinsent Pheadair*) was born in 1916 in Washabuck, Cape Breton and began playing fiddle at age 12. In his teens, he began playing for dances and at parties with his siblings, Theresa and Michael Anthony.

He was not only a fiddler but a custodian and promoter of the Gaelic fiddle tradition and music. He collected well over 100 music books containing more than 10,000 tunes. This collection includes original books from Nathaniel and Neil Gow, Scottish composers and publishers of music. Joe shared these resources with fiddlers from around the Island. His generosity with his time and talent was well known.

Joe also collected and was given tunes from noted Cape Breton fiddlers such as Dan Hughie MacEachern, Dan R. MacDonald, Bill Lamey, Donald Angus Beaton, John Campbell, Jerry Holland, Dave MacIsaac and many others. Modern music books were also added to the collection. He was a member of the Cape Breton Fiddlers Association and played around the Island. A collection of newsletters from the association gives us a good

picture of what was happening in the Cape Breton fiddle scene from 1975 to 1993.

The MacLean Collection is important not just for tunes but also letters to Joe and the fact that it is a collection of related materials, gathered over a lifetime, that has remained intact.

It is significant that many of the collection's tunes come from Gaelic tradition. Some are Gaelic language based; the lilt and flow depends on an understanding of the language and its pronunciation.

### Mar A Chaidh An Càl A Dholaidh The Haughs of Cromdale

Fonn (*Chorus*):

Siod mar a chaidh an càl a dholaidh  
Seo mar a chaidh an càl a dholaidh  
Laigh a' mhin air màs a' chòire  
'S bean an taigh' a' dannsa

*That's how the kale soup was ruined  
That's how the kale soup was ruined  
The meal lay on the pot's bottom  
While the housewife danced*

Ceathramhan (*Verses*):

Latha dhuinn mu àm na buana  
'S cuideachd ghrinn do ghillean uallach  
Suidh mu 'n bhòrd ag òl nan cuachan  
'S 'ad an taigh-òsda Gallda

*One day around harvest time, there was a fine group of light hearted young men sitting round the table drinking from bowls in a Lowland public house.*

Bha sinn greis ri gabhail òran  
'S tacan eile ri sgeulan gòrach  
Chuir Rob Cam a phìob an òrdan  
'S thòisich sinn ri dannsa

*We spent a while singing songs and a spell at telling foolish stories. One-eyed Rob put his pipes in order and we started to dance.*

Staigh oirnn thànaig bean an taighe  
Leis gach té a bha aig baile  
Nigheannan òg' 's seann chailleach  
'S 'ad a' togairt dannsa

*The housewife burst in upon us with every woman in the village. Young lasses and an old lady wanting to commence dancing.*

Fonn agus ceathramhan air an gabhail le Steabhan Ruairidh Mhicheil Steabhain nach maireann, Gleann Bharraidh, an t-Siorrachd Bhictoria.

Chorus and verses from the late Steven Rory MacNeil, Barra Glen, Victoria County.

For a fuller setting see Gaelic Songs in Nova Scotia page 248.

By Pauline MacLean.∞

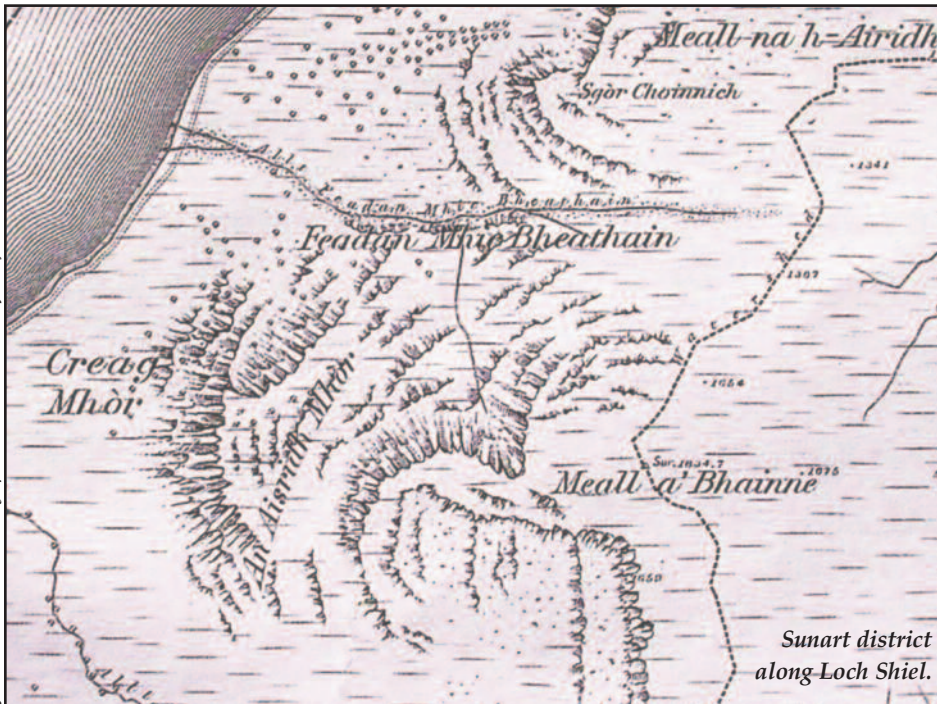


# Gaelic Place Names in the Highlands

By Dr. John Gibson

*There are two Scotlands. If perhaps only just, and, if perhaps little more, Scotland remains in its European essence, a bi-lingual country.*

from Ordnance Survey, published direction of Maj. Gen. John Cameron, 1874.



Perhaps the Gaelic place-names used by the English, Victorian Ordnance Survey are the most eloquent defence of what is, but more important, what was Gaelic Scotland. That is most telling in areas that were majority Gaelic speaking into the twentieth century.

In the Lothians there are Anglicised names of obviously Gaelic origin — some may have persisted since Medieval times where British / *Cymraeg*, Saxon, and Norman French dominated for many generations (the last two often bi-lingually). More likely they were latter-day unobtrusive culturo-linguistic absorptions in the land of laws, fords, riggs, and mains.

Alongside Bridgend and Mungoswells, south of Aberlady, East Lothian, for example, you find Ballencrief and Ballencrieff Mains. More convincingly, one of the Pentlands is Caerketton.

The irony of persisting in writing Gaelic place-names on maps of areas where today almost no Gaelic is spoken (in what was majority Gaelic speaking in 1900), is an interesting subject.

In most cases, great care has been taken by the Ordnance Survey to get the Gaelic grammar and the spelling right. Few are the folk who appreciate as much.

There are even “errors” in gender which, alongside their correctly written

friends, force one to ask the question, could there have been different applications of the rules.

Why for example does one find *Allt an t-Sùileig* (The Suileag Stream) along Loch Eil, unless as a distinguisher between the feminine diminutive *Sùileag* (a little eye) and a word related to the Gaelic for a little willow tree which, although feminine by general definition, was made masculine?

*They mark with eloquence an echo of the old geography, the old land-use, the old boundaries, the old look-out points, the old shrines and wells.*



The use of *Allt an Fhaing* instead of *Allt na Fainge*, the first of which Dwelly explains as found c.1900 in Arasaig and Badenoch Gaelic, may suggest something alien and resented about sheep farming in Gaelic north-west Ardgour.

On the 6” Ordnance Survey maps, made in the 1870s, the word for a holding area for sheep is “sheep-fold.” For square miles around, it is often the only [compound] word in English.

Most Saxon Scots, most non-Scots, can’t read Gaelic. Places like *Coire Buidhe*,

*Gualainn nan Osna*, and *Lochan Dubh Torr an Tairbeirt* are meaningless, and words like Swordland are misleading.

In Glenfinnan [*Gleann Fhionnain*] in the 1940s, a Gaelo-Norse place name from South Morar, *Meoble*, was Mewble, on the lips of an old, non-Gaelic speaking school-friend of mine.

A much older phenomenon, in legal documents from 1770 until 1815 *Meoble* is often given by Gaelic-speaking lawyers as *Maybole* (giving Scotland at least two such names).

The persistence of giving correctly written forms of Gaelic names in the 1870s, if not earlier, has been the policy lasting, largely unchallenged, to this day. To an as yet unknown degree it was a reaction to the Anglicisation of Gaelic Scotland.

Obviously a great effort was made by the 6” map makers to get the Gaelic names right, and by 1870 that cannot have been easy, as so many people had emigrated.

*Feadan mhic Bheathain* on the Sunart side of northern Loch Shiel, for example, was a collector’s minor coup. There were few MacVeans left in Ardgour. The nearest was probably near Corran Ferry. Most of the rest were in Australia by 1850. Indeed there were very few, if any people living near MacVean’s *Feadan* on Loch Shiel.

The 6” Ordnance Survey maps of the Morars, Arasaig, and Moidart, were surveyed in the 1870s, Victorian times. The anti-Gaelic education act was a new insult to Gaels. This was also a time when the works of *Iain Òg Ile*, Alexander Carmichael, and W.F. Skene were in the minds of many prominent Scots.

This huge tombstone is going to be well worded in the right language.

The preserving of these Gaelic names has had a profound effect on Scotland. They mark with eloquence an echo of the old geography, the old land-use, the old boundaries, the old look-out points, the old shrines and wells. They mark where the Gaels were and leave tangibly much of their lives and knowledge.

For those who delve in old maps they are a reminder that there was once a day when an alien wrote *Glen Inan* for *Glenfinnan*, and “*Ault na Mia*” contained a diphthong an English speaker would not suspect in *Allt*. ☺



# Pioneer Fabrics in Gaelic Cape Breton

By Vicki Quimby, Highland Village Interpreter & Textile Coordinator

*Early 19th century settlers who arrived in Cape Breton from the Highlands and Islands of Scotland not only faced the obvious challenges of housing and feeding themselves, but also had to overcome various obstacles to providing their families with sufficient clothing and household fabrics. Cloth production in Cape Breton was primarily domestic, that is, made in the home for the use of the weavers' family. And every weaver with roots in the Highlands was continuing a long tradition of skills that had been integral to life there.*

The effects of the Industrial Revolution were slower to materialise in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland than in England and the Scottish Lowlands. In an average early 19th-century Highland community, women spun their own yarn from their own sheep and flax and measured lengths of it for a neighborhood weaver (often a man) to turn into cloth. Spinning and weaving were, for most families, the most important activities outside of food production. All types of clothing were made from infant swaddling to burial shrouds.

For many of the Gaels, the greatest difficulty encountered in North America was a lack of fibres to process. Because most immigrants did not bring animals with them, sheep were very scarce in the new land. What stock did exist was inbred and yielded little wool. Land had to be cleared of trees to provide fields and pasture, a slow process. Eventually, when a few sheep might be acquired, predators from the nearby woods, such as bears, could easily wipe out a small flock unless well protected.

To overcome the shortage of wool, many settlers planted crops of flax, *lion*, as soon as they had built an adequate shelter and cleared fields for food and grains. Thus began a laborious procedure that ended with the spinning, *snìomh*, of the flax fibres into linen thread.

Flax was sown thickly and weeded carefully. Upon ripening, the stalks had to be pulled by hand and stacked to dry. Next, the flax was rippled (the seeds removed by pulling the stems through a flat coarse comb), then retted (soaked in a pond or laid on the grass to rot the outer stem). Once again it was dried, then broken or crushed in a flax break (*pronnadair lìn*). A scutching knife was then used to scrape and beat away the last of the stem pieces from the fibre. Finally, the remaining fibres were hackled (combed and sorted into rough and fine fibres) in preparation for spinning. The better part of a year would pass before spinning could start.

In contrast, the preparation of wool, *clòimh*, when it finally became available, was relatively simple, involving sheep shearing, *rùsgadh nan caorach*, cleaning the fleece, *glanadh nan rùisgean*, carding the rolls, *rolagan*, then spinning the rolls into yarn.

If coloured yarns were wanted, the environment was rich in plant materials that provided natural dyes. The gathering of dye plants, however, was another time-consuming task and useful predominantly for wool yarns, as linen was more difficult to dye.

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*For many of the Gaels, the greatest difficulty encountered in North America was a lack of fibers to process.*

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Weaving was essential in providing the textiles a family needed, not only clothing, but also bedding and other household necessities. Looms, *beart-fhighe*, were only occasionally brought across the Atlantic to the new land (although professional weavers were known to have brought theirs). They were cumbersome to transport and, with a bit of carpentry skill, a serviceable loom could be constructed from local materials. As the immediate pressures of land-clearing and obtaining food and shelter had the highest priority, it is tempting to speculate that at least a few years of settlement might have passed before a loom was ready for use in a Highlander's Cape Breton household. And as the men were occupied with the heavy work of land-clearing, it was almost exclusively the women who became the weavers and weaving became another household task.

Finally, as looms and related equipment (bobbins, shuttles, reels, winders, etc.) were readied, and enough linen was spun to make a warp, *dlùth*, weaving could begin. Shirts, underclothes, light blankets, sheets, toweling, mattress sacks



Vicki at the log house loom.

and even grain bags were woven with linen and its coarser by-products.

Occasionally, if a small amount of wool was available, a linen warp (vertical threads) was combined with a wool weft (horizontal threads) to produce material called drugget, *drogaid*, commonly used in the making of clothing such as pants, shirts, skirts, petticoats, etc. Wool blankets were produced as soon as more wool became obtainable, and still later, as supplies of wool increased, flannel and fulled (milled) cloth became more predominant. *Clò mór*, a particularly heavy woolen cloth used in men's pants and outdoor clothing was woven in some Cape Breton homes well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

During the onset of pioneer development, most woven goods coming off the looms were fairly plain goods. More complex articles such as coverlets were considered a luxury. They required a dyed wool weft and a longer preparation and weaving time than was feasible during this period. Weaving such as this would have its day later in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Very few examples of early weaving, especially linen goods and clothing, have survived to the present. Each hand-made item was so valued and had been produced by such intensive labour that it was recycled, patched and integrated into new products until little was left of the original fabric. Anything that did survive was often cut into rags for the hooked rugs that were soon to become popular in so many eastern Nova Scotian homes. ☺

# Mar a Chaidh Aonghus Bàn a Shealgaireachd/ Angus Bàn Goes Hunting

An excerpt from John Shaw's *Na Beanntaichean Gorma agus Sgeulachdan Eile à Ceap Breatainn*, coming this summer from McGill-Queen's University Press.

An Rubha is pleased to include for readers an excerpted story (pp. 112 - 113) from the upcoming McGill-Queen's University Press publication *Na Beanntaichean Gorma agus Sgeulachdan Eile à Ceap Breatainn/ The Blue Mountains and other Gaelic Stories from Cape Breton* (summer 2007.) This fine collection of stories is edited and translated by Dr. John Shaw, Senior Lecturer at the School of Scottish Studies, University of Edinburgh, from field recordings transcribed by his daughter Katie Shaw. The Shaw family were long time residents of Glendale, Inverness County.

The genre represented here is from the *rolaist* tradition, farfetched tall tales popular with Cape Breton Gaels. Told by the late Angus "Cù" MacDonald (Aonghas Dhòmhnail Iain Ruaidh) of Mabou, well known for his repertoire of humorous anecdotes, the story is attributed as a composition of one Alexander MacDonald (Alastair Aonghais 'ac Dhòmhnail), still remembered by his nickname *An Sagart Bàn* (The Fair Haired Priest.) His home was MacDonald's Glen near Mabou Coal Mines.

We are grateful to John Shaw and McGill-Queen's University Press for permission to publish Angus Bàn Goes Hunting in this issue of Highland Village Gaelic Folklife Magazine.

## MAR A CHAIDH AONGHUS BÀN A SHEALGAIREACHD

[Chaidh Aonghus Bàn] a shealgaireachd a'lath' seo 's bha roinn do stoirm ann. 'S bha na tunnagan, bha iad ann an loch 's bha e car duilich faighinn teann orra. Nam biodh tu falbh 'n rathad a bha 'n soirbheas, shnàmhadh iad amach bhon chladach. Ach chaidh a'Sagart Bàn a'rathad nach robh 'n soirbheas séideadh far a robh na tunnagan. 'S fhuair e teann gu leòr orra ach cha b'urrainn dha cothrom fhaighinn air losgadh orra ach le aon urchair. 'S e seann ghunna a bh'aige – seann *muzzle-loader*. Dh'imireadh e a lòdadh. 'S bha e *watch-head* nan tunnagan 's bha e feuchainn ri faighinn gu biodh iad as deaghaidh a chéile 's cha robh iad ann a'sin. Ghluais iad cruinn ann an àite coltach ri cuibhle 's bha e studaigeadh dé 'n dòigh a bha e dol 'gam faighinn. Chuir a 'n gunna ri ghlùin mar siod is lùb e am baraille. Bha e faighinn *pull*: bha dùil aige gu reachadh iad cruinn. Ach thànaig iad dìreach ann

a'circle mar siod 's loisg e. Mharbh e na seachd tunnagan. O, bhreab an gunna 's chaidh e air ais dha na buisean far a robh e falach 's rinn e car do spadadh air. 'S nuair dh'éirich e dh'fhairich e rud car a'gluasad. Thug e sùil 's bha moigheach fo gach uilinn.

Uill, thug e leis an dà mhoigheach agus na tunnagan 's dh'fhalbh e dhachaidh 's bha e car bòsdail. Uill, bha roinn do dh'astar aige ri dhol 's bha 'n làn ìosal an uair sin far a faigheadh e *cross*. Cha robh mòran do dh'uisge anns an àite ach bha poidhle do làthaich ann. O, chaidh e suas – bhiodh e sios 'na h-amhach – 's theab nach d'fhuair e às idir, ach fhuair e às. Stad e a thoirt an uisg' às na bòtaidhean 's chuir e dheth iad. Thug e sùil 's bha iad làn easgannan.

Thug e leis na h-easgannan 's chuir e air gad iad 's na tunnagan's an dà mhoigheach 's chunnaic e madadh ruadh. Bha e a'ruith. Uill, cha robh fhios aige dé 'n dòigh a gheobhadh e 'm madadh ruadh. Cha robh luaidh' aige a chuireadh e 'sa ghunn' idir ach bha fùdar aige 's chuir e fùdar ann. 'S dh'fheuch e 's bha tàirnean 'na phòcaidean 's chuir e na tàirnean anns a'ghunna an àite na luaidh'. Bha 'm madadh ruadh dol seachad air craobh 's loisg e air 's loisg e air 'san earball – cha robh e toileach an t-seich' aige mhilleadh. Dhràibh na tàirnean - chaidh iad astaigh dhan earball 's thàirnich iad am madadh ruadh ris a'chraobh. Chaidh e suas 's bha am madadh ruadh beò 's gheàrr e mun chuairt dhan bheul aige mar siod mu chuairt dha na spògan aige 's tug e dha cnag le maide is leum am madadh ruadh às a sheich'. Dh'fhàg e 'n t-seich' aig a'chraobh. Thug e leis an t-seich' 's bha na moighich aige 's na tunnagan 's na h-easgannan. 'S bha i fàs anmoch; beul na h-oidhch' a'tighinn. 'S bha e fàs teann air a bhith faighinn mach às a'choille, faigh-



Storyteller Angus "Cù" MacDonald

inn teann air an taigh 's thug e sùil 's chunnaic e mathan mór a'tighinn. Uill, thuirt e,

"Tha mi aig an diabhal a nist," thuirt e. "Chan eil ùin' agam air mo ghunn' a lòdadh agus tha e dol a dh'ith mi fhéin 's na moighich 's na tunnagan."

Lig e sios an gunna 's a h-uile sian a bh'aige 's bha 'm mathan a'tighinn. Phut e suas a mhuilchinn 's dhràibh e sios am beul a mhathain a's amach air toll a'mhathain 's rug e air earball 's thionndaidh e *inside out* e 's ghabh am mathan air ais dhan choille a'rathad eile. Sin agad trup an t-Sagairt.

## ANGUS BÀN GOES HUNTING

One day Angus Bàn went out hunting and it was fairly stormy. There were ducks on a loch and it was difficult to get close to them. If you went with the wind they would swim out from the shore. So the White Priest (as they also called him) went against the direction that the wind was blowing and approached the ducks. He got close enough to them but he could only get the chance to fire one round at them, since he had an old gun – and old muzzle-loader - that he had to load (after every shot). And he was watching the ducks, trying to get into position where they would be lined up in a row but they weren't going that way.



Instead they would move around in a semicircle, and he was trying to figure out how he was going to get them. So he put the gun over his knee and bent the barrel. It had been difficult - he thought that they would come together in a formation - but then they formed right into a circle there and he fired and killed the seven ducks. But oh, the gun kicked back, and back he went into the bushes where he was hiding and it knocked him right down. And when he got up he felt something moving. He looked and there was a rabbit under each elbow.

He took the rabbits and the ducks and set off home very proud of himself. He had some distance to go and at the time the tide was out where he could cross. There wasn't much water there, but there was a lot of mud. So up he went - right up to his neck - and he almost didn't get clear but finally he succeeded. He stopped to pour the water out of his boots, removing them, and when he looked they were full of eels.

He took the eels and put them on a stick and the ducks and the two rabbits and then he saw a fox. The fox was running and he had no idea how he would manage to get it. He didn't have a single lead bullet to put into the gun, but he did have powder, so he put in the powder. He felt in his pockets and there were some nails so he put the nails into the gun instead of the lead bullet. Now the fox was running past a tree and he fired and he shot him in the tail - he didn't want to spoil the pelt. The nails drove right in, they went into the tail and they nailed the fox to the tree. He went up and the fox was still alive so he cut around its mouth just so, and then around its paws, and he gave it a whack with a stick and the fox jumped out of its pelt and left the pelt right on the tree. So he took the pelt and the rabbits and the ducks and the eels. Now it was getting late; night was falling. And he was getting close to coming out of the woods and drawing near to the house and when he looked up and saw a big bear approaching. Well, he said,

"The devil's got me now," he said. "I don't have time to load my gun and it's going to devour me along with the rabbits and the ducks."

He put down the gun and everything else he had and the bear approached him. He pushed up his sleeve and drove his arm down into the bear's mouth and out the other end and grasped the tail and turned it inside out and the bear took off in the other direction back toward the woods. That was the White Priest's hunting trip. ☺

## Sùil air an t-Sìde (An Eye to the Weather)

A weather rhyme from the late Alec Goldie.

*Perhaps the best recalled weather rhyme in Cape Breton is that of the Faoilleach. The Faoilleach, loosely meaning season of the wolf, was traditionally believed to correspond with the last two weeks of winter and the first two weeks of spring. The late Alec Goldie, reared in the Irish Vale area of Cape Breton County, recalled this setting of the Faoilleach rhyme.*

'S e seo rann a dh'ionnsaich mi nuair a bha mi 'na mo bhrogach òg mu dheidhinn an Fhaoillich, agus bha e mar seo...

Mios Faoillich  
Cola-deug Gearrain  
Trì latha Feadaig  
'S trì latha Gopaig  
Seachdain Sguabaig  
Suas an t-Earrach

Thuirt Am Faoilleach ris an Earrach, "Càit' an do dh'fhàg thu an gamhainn bàn?"

"Dh'fhàg mi," os' am Faoilleach, "a sheich air an spàl'.

"Uell," os' an t-Earrach, "Ma gheibh mise féithe beò 'na chridhe, cuiridh mi earball air a ghualainn a' bramadaich air feadh nan cnoc."

### TRANSLATION:

*This a rhyme that I learned about the Faoilleach when I was a little fellow. It goes like this,*

*A month of January,  
Two weeks of February  
Three days of whistling  
Three days of biting  
A week of sweeping  
In with the Spring*

*February said to Spring, "Where did you leave the white calf?"*

*"I left," said February, "his skin on the peg."*

*"Well," said Spring, "If I find a living vein in his heart, I will put his tail over his shoulder and send him farting among the hills."*

\* Learned by Alec from Micheal Ian Chaluum (Mac Gill-eain) á Gleann nan Eireannach (Irishvale).

This weather rhyme was recorded, transcribed and translated by Seumas Waston. Used with permission. ☺



Illustration by Ellison Robertson.

# Is ioma rud a thachras ris an tè a bhios a-muigh

Le Iseabail NicIlleathain, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig

Obair Shamhraidh aig a' Chlachan Ghàidhealach, Eilean Cheap Breatainn

## SEALLADH ÙR

Gu simplidh, feumaidh mi a ràdh gun robh mo thuras a dh'ionnsaigh a' Chlachain Ghàidhealaich air cothrom ionnsachaidh air leth a thabhann dhomh. Anns na seachdainean a chur mi seachad air taobh eile a' chuain, chunnaic 's chuala mi iomadach rud a tha air buaidh a thoirt air mar a tha mi-fhìn, mar Ghàidheal òg a' sùileachadh chùisean a thaobh cànan 's cultar na Gàidhlig. Tha na briathran seo a' tighinn thugam an dèidh dhomh suas ri dà mhìos a chur seachad ann an Ceap Breatainn 's los gu bheil mi làn chinnt gun till mi uair no uaireigin. Tha mi an dùil nach eil an t-ionnsachadh ùr seo ullamh fhathast. "Cho fad 's a bhios an deò, bidh an dòchas" mar a theirear!

Gu dearbh 's ann a chur e iongnadh orm aig an fhìor thoiseach na h-uimhir a bha ri thogail mun chànan 's mun chultar air taobh eile a' chuain. Tha astar 's eile buailteach toirt oirnn diochuimhneachadh gu bheil meur eile de chultar nan Gaidheal fhathast beò 's a cur aghaidh ris an t-saoghal mhòr thairis air a' Chuan Siar, ach mar an tè a bha thall 's a chunnaic, tha mi a-nis tuigseach gum feum sin an ceangal seo aithneachadh 's a bhrosnachadh airson piseach a thoirt air suidheachadh na Gàidhlig. Tha seo a' sìor fhàs cudromach ann an saoghal far a bheil mion-chànain a' strì airson aithne 's inbhe.

Ged a tha suidheachadh na Gàidhlig eadar-dhealaichte air gach taobh den chuan, an dèidh dhomh am beagan ùine seo a chur seachad ann an Ceap Breatainn, tha mi air mothachadh gu bheil cothrom ann dhan dà thaobh ionnsachadh bho chàch a chèile. Tha seo gu h-àraidh feumail dhomhsa an darna cuid mar Ghàidheal òg aig a bheil suim mhòr sa chultar agus cuideachd mar bhall de Bhòrd Stiùiridh Chomunn na Gàidhlig. Ann an Alba, thathas a' faicinn an t-uabhas ghluasadan a thaobh phoileasaidhean 's foirmealachd sa chànan le Achd na Gàidhlig a-nis stèidhichte

's fhad 's a thathas a' cur fàilte air na h-adhartasan seo 's docha gu bheilear buailteach a bhith a' coimhead thairis air na rudan bunaiteach. Ge-tà, 's ann air

na rudan bunaiteach a-mhàin a tha an cuideam a' laighe ann an Ceap Breatainn 's tha e air a bhith air leth feumail a bhith a' faicinn nan gnìomhan seo gan cur an cèill. Tha seo air tuigse a thoirt dhomh mu na freumhan a dh'fheumas a bhith stèidhichte airson leasachadh 's leudachadh sam bith a dhèanamh a thaobh a' chànain.

## IOMAIRTEAN 'S IONNSACHADH

Am measg nan iomairtean a bha a dol air n-adhart fhad 's a bha mi thall bha 'Eilean nan Òg,' sgeama airson an cànan 's an cultar fhàgail so-ruigsinneach do dheugairean aig a bheil ùidh sa ghnòthach. Bha deichnear dheugairean air an làraich fad cala-deug 's anns an ùine seo fhuair iad uile an cothrom tighinn an aithne dualchas nan Gàidheal ann an dòigh a bha inntinneach, fiosrachail 's tarraingeach dhaibh. Chur mi-fhìn seachad beagan den ùine seo còmhla riutha agus 's ann a dh'ionnsaich mi-fhèin an t-uabhas cuideachd. Bha iomadach sèasan-oideachaidh aca anns a robh iad air an cur an teis-meadhan a' chultair, a ghabhail pàirt ann an òrain luaidh, dannsa 's eile. B' e a chòrd rium fhìn ach na làithean a chur sinn seachad ag èisteachd ri na seann sgeulachdan air an innse le daoine anns a' choimhearsnachd aig a bheil cliù airson a leithid.

Nam bheachd sa bha an cola-deug seo air leth soirbheachail 's rè na h-ùine bha m' inntinn trang a' smaoinneachadh air dè ghabhadh dhèanamh le bun-bheachd a' ghnòthaich thall air an taobh thall. Tha mi gu mòr den bheachd gun gabhadh an t-seòrsa sgeama seo a chur an gnìomh ann an Alba cuideachd 's gum bitheadh uabhasach fhèin soirbheachail. Tha mi làn chinnt gum bi fios aig Dòmhnall Màrtainn bochd gu dè nis a bhios roimhe air a thilleas mi 's làn mo chinn do bheachdan ùr agam dha!

A bharrachd air an iomairt seo, fhuair mi deagh eòlas air a' chultar tro bhith a' frithealadh cèilidh gach feasgar Dimàirt 's Diardaoin an seo aig a' Chlachan. Air

na làithean seo bidh grunn den luchd-obrach a' cruinneachadh còmhla 's a' cur fàilte air an luchd-turais a thig air chèilidh los am feasgar a chur seachad a' seanachas, a' seinn 's ag èisteachd ri ceòl. A bharrachd air a bhith na dheagh dhòigh cànan 's cultar a bhrosnachadh ann an suidheachadh sòisealta tha e cuideachd a' toirt gu aire am beartas stuth a th' againn nar cultar 's an luach a th' ann dhuinn. Ged nach eil mòran ceòl annam airson cur ris a' chèilidh anns an t-seagh sin, tha iad a' còrdadh rium 's tha mi ag ionnsachadh an t-uabhas dìreach bho bhith ga frithealadh. Bha dùil aig Seumas bochd gun tigeadh aige toirt orm òran a ghabhail mus fhalbhainn ach gu mi-fhortanach cha deach leis!

Dà sheachdain mus do thog mi orm dhachaigh, thòisich an darna ceum den phroiseict "Cainnt mo Mhàthar" 's bha mi fortanach gu leòr an cothrom fhaighinn a bhith an sàs anns a' ghnòthach. An lùib an obair seo, chur sinn seachad ùine anns a' choimhearsnachd, a' coinneachadh ri daoine aig a robh a' Ghàidhlig bho thùs 's a bha deònach am briathrachas 's an t-eòlas a th' aca a' chlàradh airson stuthan taic a chruthachadh do luchd-teagaisg 's luchd-ionnsachaidh na Gàidhlig.

Chòrd e rium gu mòr a bhith ag èisteachd riutha: na sgeulachdan, eachdraidh na dùthcha 's cuideachd a' Ghàidhlig bhrìgheil, ealanta a bha aca. Gu dearbh 's ann a chuala mi dualchainntean nach cluinnear ann an Alba tuilleadh, agus 's e rud inntinneach 's smaoinneachail a bha sin da-rìribh. A bharrachd air nam buannachdan seo, bha am proiseict seo cuideachd na dheagh chothrom beagan cuideachaidh fhaighinn le clasaichean an t-Sabhail 's againn ri measadh a dhèanamh air diofar dhualchainntean ro dheireadh na bliadhna. Mar sin, tha mi-fhìn air toiseach-toiseachaidh fhaighinn mu thràth 's mi am beachd coimeas a dhèanamh eadar dualchainnt nam Barrach ann an Eilean Bharraigh 's am measg sìol nan daoine a dh'fhàg Barraigh sna 1800an 's a thuinich ann an Ceap Breatainn. B' e cothrom air leth inntinneach 's buannachdail a bh' ann dhomh a bhith an sàs anns an iomairt seo 's tha mi gu math taingeil gun deach agam air a leithid a dhèanamh.

## OBAIR GU RUIGE SEO

Fhad 's a bha aig a' Chlachan, bha mi an sàs ann an caochladh de roinnean de dh'obair an àite. Airson a' mhòr-chuid

Photo by Jean MacNeil





ge-tà, bha mi ag obair anns an oifis air pios rannsachaidh a thathas an dòchas a thig a chleachdadh ann am bhideo fios-rachaidh mu eachdraidh nan Gaidheal 's eachdraidh a' Chlachain fhèin. Bidh a' bhideo seo air a shealltainn do gach neach-turas a tha gu cuairt a dhèanamh mu thimcheall na làraich 's thathas an dòchas gun toir e dhaibh cùl-fhios-rachaidh feumail 's cuideachd gun toir e dhaibh an stiùireadh a tha a dhìth orra son cuairt shoirbheachail a bhith aca. Chòrd seo rium 's thug e dhomh an cothrom eachdraidh mo dhaoine fhèin ionnsachadh ann am barrachd doimhnead.

A bharrachd air an obair seo, bha mi cuideachd a' dèanamh beagan obair a thaobh seann chlàraidhean a chaidh a thogail san sgìre thar nam bliadhnaichean. Chur mi cuid dhiubh air CD 's bha mi cuideachd ag obair air rud no dhà a thras-sgrìobhadh. Ged 's gun robh beagan de dhuilgheadas agam an toiseach a greimeachadh nan diofar dhualchainntean, gu h-àraidh an fheadhainn a tha stèidhichte air Gàidhlig tìr-mòr na h-Alba nach eil cumanta san latha an-diugh, bha e na dheagh chothrom dhomh eòlas a chur air a' leithid 's na sgilean cànan agam san t-seagh seo a leasachadh gu mòr.

A bharrachd air obair anns an oifis, bha mi ag obair air an làrach fhèin cuideachd, no shuas air a' cnoc, mar a theirear ris, an measg an luchd-obrach. Tha muinntir a' chnuic an sàs ann an obair thaisbeanaidh, gu sònraichte tha iad ag obair airson beatha nan Gàidheal tro na linntean a' riochdachadh le bhith gan giùlain fhèin a-rèir dhòighean beatha ann an eachdraidh. Feumaidh mi aideachadh gun robh e glè neònach an toiseach a bhith ris an dol air n-adhart seo, a' cur orm èideadh seann fhasanta 's a' dol tron latha mar gum b' e latha ann an eachdraidh a bh' ann, ach 's ann a tha e uabhasach fhèin spòrsail 's chan eil dòigh nas fheàrr ann na dòighean beatha seo a thuigsinn na a bhith gam faicinn a' tighinn beò mar seo.

Cuideachd, bha mi a' cur air n-aghaidh program fon ainm "Spòrs." Gach madainn Dihaoine, bhiodh sinn a' cur fàilte air clann eadar 5–8 tighinn a dh'ionnsaigh a' Chlachain airson beagan Gàidhlig ionnsachadh tro bhith a' cluich gheamannan 's ri ealan 's eile.

#### A' BHEATHA SHÒISEALTA

Mar a tha mi air innse, bha cùisean a thaobh obair math da-rìribh 's gu dearbh bha an aon rud fìor taobh a-muigh an àite obrach. Bha a h-uile duine cho coibhneil, còir rium on an latha a ràna mi gun

do thog mi orm a-rithist aig ceann an dà mhios. Bha e follaiseach gu bheil suim aig gach duine anns na tha a' dol san t-seann dùthaich. An toiseach, 's ann a bha mi a' faireachdainn mar "celebrity" 's a h-uile duine ag iarraidh coinneachadh rium 's ceistean a chur orm! A bharrachd, tha m' ainm air nochdadh ann am barrachd phàipearan naidheachd an seo anns an ùine ghoirid seo na nochd a-riamh aig an taigh!

Air sgàth 's gun robh a h-uile duine cho math rium rè na h-ùine seo, fhuair mi an cothrom tòrr siubhal a dhèanamh 's cha mhòr an t-eilean air fad fhaicinn, seallaidhean gu math brèagha gun teagamh. Bha seo gu h-àraidh fìor an latha a chaidh sinn mun cuairt air an "Cabot Trail" – turas a chòrd rium dìreach glan. Ach mar a tha fios aig a h-uile duine as aithne dhomh ann an Ceap Breatainn a-nis, cha d' fhuair mi a-riamh thairis air na craobhan, chur e iongnadh uabhasach orm na th' ann de chraobhan – anns gach àite 's fhathast chan urrainn dhomh a ràdh gu bheil mi uabhasach measail orra!

Gu dearbh 's ann a chur e iongnadh orm aig an fhìor thoiseach na h-uimhir a bha ri thogail mun chànan 's mun chultar air taobh eile a' chuain.



A bharrachd air a bhith siubhal, rinn iad cuideachd cinnteach gun d' fhuair mi cothroman gu leor a bhith a' frithealadh nan tachartasan a bha gan cumail tron t-samhradh san sgìre. Dìreach mar a th' ann an Alba aig an àm seo den bhliadhna, bha gu leòr a' dol eadar fìdhlearachd, òrain luaidh, oidhche sgeulachdan 's naidheachdan 's "square dances." Mar sin, 's ann a fhuair mi deagh bhlas den chultar mar a tha e air a riochdachadh air an taobh eile den chuain. 'S e fìor chothrom a bh' ann daoine a choinneachadh 's eòlas a chur air caraidean ùra cuideachd.

Airson crìochnachadh tha mi airson taing a thoirt do: Seumas, Ruairidh, Eòsag 's an luchd-obrach gu lèir airson an cuid coibhneis; Comhairle na Gaidhealtachd, Riaghaltas na h-Alba Nuaidh, CnaG, (a chur a-null mi); agus gu h-àraidh Morag Anna a chur cùisean air dòigh; Sìne 's Donnchadh MacNèill airson na rinn iad dhomh, an taic 's an coibhneas; an teaghlach MacCoinnich a bhìadh mi gu tric; na Gillisich a bha cho còir; agus do gach duine air feadh an eilean ris an do thachair mi. Mar a b' e sibh uile, cha bhiodh cùisean air falbh on

taigh air a bhith leth cho furasta no cho tlachdmhor!

#### ENGLISH SYNOPSIS

Ishbel MacLean, a native Gaelic speaker from the Isle of Barra and a student at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, spent a summer work term at the Highland Village as a cultural management intern. Funding for this position was courtesy of the Commun na Gàidhlig as well as the Highland Council and Province of Nova Scotia under the auspices of their Memorandum of Understanding.

The following is a brief synopsis of the activity described in Ishie's report:

Researched and wrote two draft scripts (Gaelic). One for a seven minute visitor centre orientation video and the other for an extended version meant for educational purposes.

Participated in weekly céilidhs and milling frolics. She was costumed and joined in Gaelic conversation with gathered animators as part of interpretation.

Conducted children's Gaelic games sessions on site in the schoolhouse on a weekly basis.

Conducted a Gaelic children's day on behalf of *Féis an Eilein* during the *Féis* celebration.

Assisted in *Eilean nan Òg* programming

Transcribed field recordings of conversations with *Seonaidh Aonghais Bhig* and made copies of several field recording tapes for dialect analysis.

Researched documentation of development processes and language projects for Gaelic renewal in NS

Participated in interviews of Gaelic-speaking informants for the *Cainnt Mo Mhàthar* project

Assisted in helping with Highland Village events such as Highland Village Day and the *Seòmbar na Gréine* Lecture Series.

Ishie concluded her report with appropriate acknowledgments for persons, institutions, and government bodies who assisted her in funding, travel and social introductions to Cape Breton. ☺

# Our People, Acknowledgements & Accolades

## TAPADH LEIBH-SE GU MÓR

The Nova Scotia Highland Village Society gratefully acknowledges the support of many individuals, organisations and governments for their unwavering support of the Highland Village and its work.

### Government Support

- \* Province of Nova Scotia through the Departments of Tourism, Culture & Heritage, Transportation & Public Works, Office of Economic Development, and Office for Gaelic Affairs.
- \* Government of Canada through the Department of Human Resources & Skills Development and Tourism Atlantic (ACOA).
- \* Municipality of Victoria County
- \* Highland Council, Scotland

### Private Sector Support

- \* Highland Heights Inn
- \* Mablene's (Jim & Donna MacNeil)

### Donations

- \* Lilly Gillis
- \* Theresa MacNeil
- \* River & Lakeside Pastoral Charge, United Church of Canada
- \* James O. St.Clair

### Artefacts & Archival Donations

- \* Dorothy Almon (mats)
- \* Katie Ann Gillis (flour barrel and pin)
- \* Margaret Gillis (yarn winder)
- \* Gordon Johnston (Gaelic materials)
- \* Vincent J. MacLean (Joe MacLean's music collection)
- \* Alex MacLennan (bob sled)
- \* St. FX Library (Mactalla copies)

## FÁILTE ORIBH

Hector's Point has been a busy place this past few months, not only on site but also in our neighbourhood. We want to send a special welcome to our new neighbours.

- \* To *Keith and Marie Keating* the new owners and inn-keepers of the Highland Heights Inn. Keith and Marie purchased the property last spring. They are welcomed additions to the community. We look forward to continuing our great relationship with the Inn.

- \* To the staff and students of *Sgoil Mhic Fhraing a' Chaolais*/Rankin School of the Narrows. Central Cape Breton's new primary to grade 12 public school opened in early January 2007, in the former pulp yard below the Highland Village site. We look forward to working closer with the school, especially its Gaelic students.

## CONGRATULATIONS

- \* To Terry Smith and all the folks at Icon, our marketing firm, on their 10th anniversary.
- \* To Highland Village staffers Tim & Janet MacNeil on the birth of their daughter Hannah.
- \* To Highland Village trustee Jamie MacDonald on his recent marriage.
- \* To Highland Village trustee Hoss MacKenzie on his recent retirement from the RCMP.
- \* To Helen Campbell, former owner of Helen's Bakery in Whycomogah, on her retirement.

## BEST WISHES

- \* To former Highland Village Board members and active volunteers Dan E. MacNeil and Vince MacLean (Washabuck) who are currently fighting cancer.

## SYMPATHIES

In the past year the Highland Village has lost a number of important friends and supporters. Our sincerest sympathies go out to their families:

- \* Anna "Hector" MacNeil, former interpreter, volunteer and great support of the Highland Village
- \* Hughena MacNeil, volunteer and wife of Iona Gaelic singer Mickey MacNeil
- \* Bea "Peter F" MacLean, early supporter and volunteer of the Highland Village.
- \* Roddie Frank MacNeil, wife of Caddie MacNeil, volunteer, father & grandfather to many Highland Village volunteers
- \* George Maher, volunteer & community leader.
- \* John Allan Cameron, HV Day performer & "Celtic Godfather." ☺

*Cainnt mo Mhàthar continued from page 18...*

A great deal of publicity, both provincial and international in scope, has resulted in numerous inquiries from language enthusiasts around the globe. This exposure is an important way of raising the profile of the Gaelic language and culture in Nova Scotia and demonstrates the level of support enjoyed by our work. At the same time, a sizeable number of local Gaelic speakers have volunteered to be interviewed by *Cainnt mo Mhàthar* after learning of its goals through the media. This is certainly an encouraging development and demonstrates the continued resolve of the Gaelic community to seeing the language survive in its fullest form. There is little doubt the value of these recordings will only grow with time.

The final phase of *Cainnt mo Mhàthar* will concentrate on putting the retrieved material into a suitable format for language learners and instructors. When completed, *Cainnt mo Mhàthar* will provide those designing, teaching and attending locally-relevant Gaelic courses with an invaluable primary resource from which to learn. At the same time, the professional approach taken to our work helps elevate the status of the material we collect and those who share it with us. Since many learners have little exposure to contemporary tradition-bearers, recordings should be seen as an essential tool for language learners now and in generations to come.

While enthusiasm within the Gaelic community is inspiring, language maintenance is dependent on far more than good will. *Cainnt mo Mhàthar* demonstrates that a strong foundation, built on principals of language renewal, helps support the current climate of optimism. The Gaelic community of Nova Scotia is leading the way in embracing the TIP methodology while working hard to make it reflect the Nova Scotia experience. The importance placed on the inclusion of local content in classes, and the role of *Cainnt mo Mhàthar*, act as strong statements of self-worth to which any minority language group should aspire.

*Shamus Y. MacDonald is Project Administrator of Cainnt mo Mhàthar. He is a graduate of St. F.X. University and hold's a Master's degree in Scottish Ethnology from the University of Edinburgh, Scotland.* ☺



# Interested in Nova Scotia's Gaelic language and heritage?



## Join the Nova Scotia Highland Village Society!



The Nova Scotia Highland Village Society is incorporated as a non-profit Society under the Societies Act of the Province of Nova Scotia, and a registered charity with the Canada Revenue Agency. The Society is made up of a membership which elects the Board of Trustees (from their ranks) to operate the Society on their behalf.

### General Memberships

Individual: \$15.00\* per year.

Family: \$25.00\* per year (one household).

\* Income tax receipts are issued for general memberships.

### Membership Plus

Individual - \$25.00\*\* per year.

Family - \$40.00\*\* per year (one household).

Members can attend meetings, elect the Board, sit on committees, receive and approve annual reports including audited financial statements, receive *An Rubha* (semi-annual newsletter), receive notices for events, and feel a sense of pride in contributing to Nova Scotia's Gaelic Culture. Membership is open to anyone.

### In addition to general membership privileges, Membership Plus members get:

- free admission to the Museum (excludes special events & programs)
- 10% discount in the Highland Village Gift Shop

\*\*Membership Plus fees are not tax deductible and include 14% HST.

Membership – Ballrachd  
an Comunn Clàchann Gàidhealtach  
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*Eachdraidh, Cànan, Nòs is Dualchas – History, Language, Tradition and Heritage*

# Céilidh air Cheap Breatunn: a virtual exhibit on the Gaelic culture of Cape Breton Island

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Céilidh air Cheap Breatunn



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The Highland Village Gaelic Folklife Magazine

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