

# An Naidheachd Againne

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

Am Foghar 2021, Leabhar XXXVII, Àireamh 3  
Fall 2021, Volume XXXVII, No. 3

## Oidhche Shamhna, A Gaelic Halloween as recorded in *An Gaidheal*<sup>1</sup> in 1872

by Liam Ó Caiside

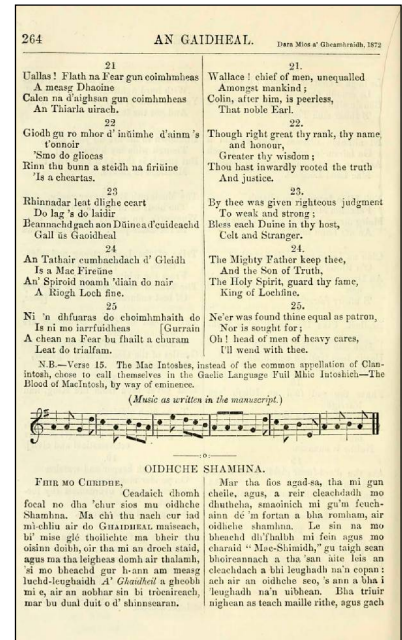
*Oidhche Shamhna* – the eve of the feast of *Samhain* in Scottish, Irish, and Manx Gaelic tradition and Halloween in English – will soon be on us again, though in a pandemic we might not see so many *samhnairean* or “guisers,” known in North America as “trick-or-treaters.”

*Oidhche Shamhna* was one of several holidays in the Gaelic calendar when groups of young people (not necessarily children) would go from house to house asking for food and drink in return for admission, such as *Oidhche Challainn* or New Year’s Eve in Scotland.

But there were other important traditions that have been more or less forgotten in the hyper-commercialized modern version of Halloween. For the Gaels, *Oidhche Shamhna* was a time for divination or fortune-telling, especially to determine who one was going to marry. Our lead article is on that very topic, written and published by the Toronto-based Scottish Gaelic periodical *An Gaidheal* in November 1872. The article is in the form of a letter to the editor of *An Gaidheal*, and it describes the misfortunes of one man who tried to determine who his sweetheart would be through various methods commonly used on *Oidhche Shamhna*.

We reproduce the article in full here, as published, followed by a key to some of the Gaelic spelling changes that have taken place in the past 149 years and some of the more unusual expressions in the letter. Footnotes provide more context and background. Unfortunately, we don’t know who wrote the letter, though it may have been Aonghas MacNeacail himself [see note at end of letter]. *Mac-Dhomhnuill-Duibh* is certainly a pseudonym. It could be translated as “Son of the Devil” – not inappropriate here!

<sup>1</sup> The letter is reproduced as published in 1872, with many letters unaccented although they would be accented today.



*An Gaidheal*, Dara Mios a’ Gheamhraidh, 1872  
National Library of Scotland Digital Resources  
<https://deriv.nls.uk/dcn6/7679/76795184.6.pdf>

### In This Issue

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Litir bhó'n Cheann-Suidhe/Letter from the President.....            | 5  |
| 2021 ACGA Board of Directors Officers.....                          | 6  |
| Litir à Dàn Èideann bhon Taigh Agam .....                           | 7  |
| <i>Sgoil nan Eun neo Sgeulachd Iain Fhearchair Òig</i> .....        | 8  |
| Meek Lines .....  | 11 |
| Cha Bu Mhiste Sinn Leabhar na Trì .....                             | 13 |
| An t-àite agam fhìn .....   | 14 |
| Bàrdachd airson ar linn.....  | 16 |
| Scary Things About Gaelic (STAG).....                               | 18 |
| Book Review: <i>A' Togail an t-Srùbain</i> by Calum L. MacLeòid.... | 19 |
| Sweet Potato and Peanut Butter Soup (Bilingual Recipe).....         | 21 |
| A Bharrachd.....  | 22 |
| Criomagan / Bits of This and That .....                             | 23 |
| Dè Tha Dol?.....  | 24 |

Go to [www.acgamerica.org](http://www.acgamerica.org) for more on upcoming ACGA events and other Gaelic-related activities.

FHIR MO CHRIDHE,

Ceachaich dhomh focal no dha 'chur sìos mu oidhche Shamhna. Ma chì thu nach cur iad mì-chliu air do *GHAIDHEAL* maiseach, bi' mise glé thoilichte ma bheir thu oisinn doibh, oir tha mi an droch stàid, agus ma tha leigheas domh air thalamh, 'si mo bheachd gur h-ann am measg luchd-leughaidh A' *Gaidheil* a gheobh mi e, air an aobhar sin bi tròcaireach, mar bu dual duit o d' shinnsearan.

Mar tha fios agad-sa, tha mi gun cheile, agus, a reir cleachdadh mo dhuthcha, smaoinich mi gu'm feuchdainn dé 'm fortan a bha romham, air oidhche shamhna.<sup>2</sup> Le sin na mo bheachd dh'fhalbh mi fein agus mo charaid "Mac-Shimidh,"<sup>3</sup> gu taigh sean bhoireannach a tha 'san àite leis an cleachdadh a bhi leughadh na'n copan: ach air an oidhche seo, 's ann a bha i 'leughadh na'n uibhean. Bha triuir nighean as teach<sup>4</sup> maille rithe, agus gach té dhiubh air "bhiod," air son a fortan a chluinntinn.

Cha bu luaithe 'ràinig sinne na ruith an triuir a mach air an dorus chuill; agus, ma dh'innseas mi an fhirinn duit-se, 'Ghaidheil ionmhuinn<sup>5</sup>', cha robh sinne bronach, oir cha bu toigh leinn a bhi 'g èisdeachd na caillich a' leughadh na'n uibhean, agus gu'n robh sinn cinnteach gu'm bitheadh na caileagan a' magadh a ris<sup>6</sup> oirn<sup>7</sup>.

Bhrist a' chailleach ubh, agus gu cùramach leag i leis a' ghealagan ruith do'n ghloinne (aig an àm cheudna glé thoitheach nach gluaiseach am buidheagan, oir na'n tuiteadh boinne dheth 'sa ghloinne maille ris a' ghealagan 's ris an uisge, cha bhiodh a' chuis cho math).

An deigh do'n ghealagan a bhi mar bu mhiannach leis a' chaillich, chuir i a bois air beul na gloinne, 's chrath i i gu h-iollagach aig an am cheudna 'g ainmeachadh araon "Mhic-Shimidh" (air ainm 's air a shloinneadh) agus an fhir nach tig an comunn nan criosduidhean<sup>8</sup>. Leag i 'n sin leis na bha 'sa' ghloinne stòladh, 's shìn i-fhein air aithris rann no ubag air chor-eigin. Leugh i 'ghloinne, 's dh'innis i do "Mhac-Shimidh," ni, ma tha e fìor, a ni 'na dhuine sona e, cho fada 's a bhios 'anail a' dol sìos a's suas. Air a mhodh cheudna, leugh i mo ghloinne-se, ach 's duilich leam nach d'thug i misneachd sa bith dhomh.

Dh'fhalbh sinn an sin á taigh na caillich a's dhealaich mi-fein 's "Mac-Shimidh," agus chaidh mi do thaigh eile, agus air dhomh dol a-steach, bha fear ann an sin 'sa cheann gu ruig a ghuailean ann am ballan uisge, feuchain an tugadh e sia sgillinn de 'ghrunnd. Theirteadh na'n tugta an t-sia sgillinn á grunnd a' bhallain uisge, leis na fiaclan, gu'm faigheadh a neach a dheanadh sin ceile, luath no mall. Chuir mi fhein mo cheann 'san uisge, agus gach uair a dh'fheuchainn ri chur fodha, thigeadh an aileag orm, 's ged a bhithinn a' strì ris an t-sia sgillin a thogail fhathasd cha bhithinn dad n'a b'fhèarr; agus sgur mi, oir bha e cho fasa dhomh snaoisean fhaighinn o "Dhòmhnall na Gealaich"<sup>9</sup> 's a bha e dhomh greim a dheanamh air an t-sia sgillinn. Dh'fhiach mi 'n sin ri ubhall a thoirt as a' bhallan, ach cha b'e dad a b'fhasa dheanamh: a's ghèill mi.

Chuireadh an sin brat air m'eudainn, gus an robh mi cho dall ri fath; agus chuireadh trì triunnsairean<sup>10</sup> air mo bhial-thaobh<sup>11</sup> – fear falamh, fear làn adh<sup>12</sup> uisge glan, agus, le do cheadsa, am fear eile làn adh uisge salach. Bha agam ri mo lamh a chur ann am fear diubh, agus a reir an fhir 'san cuirinn i, bha m' fhortan 'sa bheatha seo gu bhi air a thaisebanadh<sup>13</sup>. Tri uairean an deigh cheile, chuir mi mo lamh 's an triunnsair fhalamh as le corraich thilg mi am brat de m' aghaidh.

Fhuair mi an sin ubhall agus chaidh mi leis gus an sgathan; oir chuala i, na'n ithinn ubhall ag coimhead ris an sgathan agus coinneal a' lasadh na m' lamh chli, gu'm faicinn iomhaidh mo leannain. Rinn mi mar dh'iarradh orm, ach an truaighe iomhaidh a chunnaic mise ach m' iomhaidh fein!

Shin iad an sin air losgadh chnothan; 's a chiad dithis a loisg iad (Mac-Shimidh 's a mhaighdeann) "ghabh"

<sup>2</sup> Sic. Capitals in the 19th century were not used in many places we would see them today

<sup>3</sup> Son of Simon, the surname of the Frasers of Lovat. A pseudonym for his friend

<sup>4</sup> As *teach* for *a-steach*, throughout the text

<sup>5</sup> Spelled *ionann* today

<sup>6</sup> A *ris* for *a-rithist*

<sup>7</sup> Sic. *oirn* for *oirnn*

<sup>8</sup> He who wouldn't appear in the company of Christians. i.e.. *An diabhal*, the devil

<sup>9</sup> *Dòmhnall na Gealaich* – The Scottish Gaelic name for the Man in the Moon

<sup>10</sup> *Truinnsearan*, for plates, today

<sup>11</sup> *mo bhial-thaobh* for *mo bheulaibh* – in front or before me

<sup>12</sup> In *adh* we have *do* (reduced to *a*) + *dh'*, as in *làn do dh'uisge*, full of water.

<sup>13</sup> *thaisebanadh* for *thaisbeanadh*

iad cho aillidh agus gu'n eilticheadh tu-fein riutha 'Ghaidheil. Loisgeadh an seo mi-fein agus an té air an robh mi 'n tòir o ghlùn mo mhathar – 's mo loisgeadh, “ghabh” mise, 's “chrag” ise.

Cha b'urrainn mi seasamh ris a' chorr, 's dh'fhag mi 'n taigh le corraich agus thug mi 'n iolainn orm, a spionadh dhias as a' chruaich choirce. Bha fadal mòr orm gus an tigeadh an dias, agus mi 'n dochas gu'm biodh i tarbhach, torrach, ach, mo dhiubhail! cha robh aon siallan oirre! As an iolainn thug mi 'n ath orm, agus thilg mi ceirsle shnatha 'ghoid mi air mo mhathair, suas do chro na h-athainn, a's dh'eigh mi, “co tha siod air ceann mo shnathain?” ach cha d'fhuair mi freagairt; a's gu dubh-chridheach b'eiginn tilleadh dachaidh.

A' dol dachaidh smaonaich mi air oidheirp, eadhon an oidheirp dheireannaich: mo mhuilicheann a bhogadh ann an allt sa bith air an robh beo a's marbh a' dol seachad. Rinn mi seo, chaidh mi dhachaidh, a's chaidh mi 'laidhe. Chuir mi mo mhuilicheann fliuch fo mo cheann agus mi 'n dùil gu'm brudairichinn air ailleag air chor-eigin; ach cha do bhrudair, agus air dhomh eiridh 'sa' mhaduinn bha mi “sgìth, trom, airtneulach.”

Nis a Ghaidheil ionmhuinn dh'innis mi dhuit mar dh'eirich dhomh oidhche shamhna. Dh'fheuch mi gach ni airson fios fhaighinn air ciod<sup>14</sup> an seorsa mnatha bha mhanadh orm, ach cha d'fhuair mi am fios sin; agus ciod a ni mi? Cha bu mhath leam a bhi na mo sheann fhleasgach, agus sin gu h-araid o'n tha 'n sean-fhocal ag radh “gur fada bu chòir dol a dh'fhaicinn fear nach fhaigheadh bean.” Theagamh gu'm faighinn-se e, ach 'se 'm mi-shealbh a bh'orm riabh – *an te a gheobhainn cha ghabhainn*.

Bha mi 'n tòir air iomadh te, ach dé dheth sin, cha ghabhadh iad mi. An nis a Ghaidheil shuairce tuigeadh tu-fein mo staid, a's theagamh gu'n cur thu focal math as teach air mo shon ri aon de na h-oighean maiseach a tha leughadh do *GHAIDHEAL*. Ma gheobh tu eolas air te a shaoileas tu 'thaitneas rium, abair rithe gur ann innte-se tha 'n eis, 's nach annam-sa; 's ma shaoileas tu gu'm bi i coma-co-dhiù, abair, mar thuirt Uilleam Ros.

Nach cùis ghrain agus mhi-thoirt  
Seann nighean gun sgiabh,  
'N a briogaid gun mhiagh,  
'S nach iarrair a pog!  
Bi' 'h-aodann air casadh,  
Bi' 'falt air fas liath,  
Bi cam-char 'n a bial  
A's fiar char 'n a sroin;  
When she'll whine and repine  
Cha bhi loinn tuille dh' i,  
Not a kiss a gheobh is' –  
She'll be meas cumanta,  
Gun cheile, gun leannan,  
Gun teallach, gun tuar,  
'N a seasg-chaillich thruagh,  
Fo smuaircean, 's fo bhron!



Image by pasja1000 from [www.Pixabay.com](http://www.Pixabay.com)

Na di-chuimhnich m' athchuinge! Seall mo dhealbh do the sa bith leis am miannach fhaicinn! Cuir seo 'sa' Ghaidheal; agus, creid gur mi do charaid seasmhach,

MAC-DHOMHNUILL DUIBH  
Uig, XI Mios, 1872

---

This article was brought to our attention by *Baile nan Gàidheal* / The Highland Village in Cape Breton and by Shannon MacMullin, Amber Buchanan, and Hannah Krebs, who on a regular basis read selections from the newspaper *Mac-Talla* on Facebook Live ([www.facebook.com/93977793806/videos/756270434927052](https://www.facebook.com/93977793806/videos/756270434927052)).  
*Tapadh leibh!*

The ground-breaking Scottish Gaelic periodical *An Gaidheal* was founded in 1871 in Toronto by Aonghas MacNeacail (Angus Nicholson), a native of Lewis who emigrated to Canada in 1855, where he first founded the English-language newspaper, *Canada Scotsman* (1870).

---

<sup>14</sup> Ciod = *dè* in contemporary Gaelic. In Irish, *cad* i.e. What?

MacNeacail returned to Scotland in 1872 as an emigration agent for the newly established Canadian government, and continued to publish *An Gaidheal* there until 1877<sup>15</sup>. *An Gaidheal* published news as well as poems, songs, and stories, and its contributors hailed from Canada, Scotland, and Australia and New Zealand. In many ways, *An Gaidheal* set the bar for the later and more successful newspaper *Mac-Talla*, published in Nova Scotia from 1982 to 1904.

## Vocabulary & Spelling Key

- ◆ The use of an apostrophe at the beginning of a word in this article indicates the presence of an unprinted “a” before it. For example: *bha i ’leughadh* for *bha i a’ leughadh*, “she was reading.” The “a” here is not pronounced. This orthographic convention is no longer in use.
- ◆ The reader will have noticed by now that there aren’t as many accents used in this publication as there are today.
- ◆ In many 19th century texts, “u” is used where “a” would be today. *Dorus* for *doras* (door), for example. *Dòmhnall* in place of *Dòmhnall*.
- ◆ Spellings were often inconsistent in the past: we see *truinnsear* and *triunnsair* (plate, dish) for example, in the same article. Double *ll* or *nn* in place of a single *l* or *n*, with *ubhall* for *ubhal* and *sgillin* for *sgillinn*. It’s possible proofreaders may have been inconsistent as well!

**Focal** – “word,” now spelled *facal*.

**Domh, duit, daibh** – to me, to you, to them. Prepositional pronouns now written *dhomh, dhuit/dhut, dhaibh*, etc.

**Leughadh na’n (nan) copan / uibhean** – “Reading the cups / eggs,” two common traditional divination methods.

**Air “bhiodh”** – “On the bit.” An expression that refers to when a horse (and the bit in its mouth) is in a proper position, willing and eager to take its rider’s directions. A person “on the bit” is “in good trim” and eager for activity.

**Ionmhuinn** – “beloved, dear,” now spelled *ionmhainn*. *A Ghaidheil ionmhuinn* is “my beloved Gaels.”

**Cùramach** – careful (*cùram* = care), attentive, similar to *faicilleach*. May have religious overtones today.

**An t-sia sgillinn** – the sixpenny bit or piece. A coin that was worth sixpence.

**Glé, dé, té** = glè, dè, tè. –Up until recently, Scottish Gaelic orthography made use of both acute and grave accents. Today only the grave accent is used in Scotland. Nova Scotia Gaelic publishers still use the acute accent as well.

**Toitheach / Glé thoitheach** – Today this is spelled *toigheach*, and it means “careful,” “attentive.”

**Snaoisean** – snuff.

**Adh** – as mentioned in the footnotes, this is a contraction of *de dh’* or *do dh’*. “*Ballan làn adh uisge glan*” (A bucket full of clean water) now would be spelled *ballan làn de dh’uisge glan* or *do dh’uisge glan* in some dialects. The initial *d* is not always pronounced, however, leading to this now defunct spelling convention.

**Logadh chnòthan** – burning or roasting nuts. One name for *Oidhche Shamhna* in Scots was Nut-Crack Night. As happens in this letter, a couple roast a pair of chestnuts or hazelnuts by the fire. If they both burn quietly side by side (*gabh*), the signs were they would stay together. If one or both of the nuts cracked (*cnag* or *crag*), they were doomed to separate.

**... gu’n eilticheadh tu-fein riutha ’Ghaidheil** – “that you would rejoice with them, Gaels.”

**Iolann** – a farmyard or barnyard.

**Muilicheann** – Sleeves (of a jacket or shirt). The belief in this section of the letter is that if one wet a shirt or jacket in a stream *air an robh beò a’s marbh a’ dol seachad* – which both the living and the dead cross (most likely on the way to a cemetery) – and placed that wet clothing under their head at night, they would see a vision of their beloved in a dream. As in ...

**... Gu’m brudairichinn air àilleag** – “That I would dream of a pretty girl.” *Bruadar* is both a noun and a verb, dream and to dream. *Bruadairichinn* means “I would dream.”

**Do charaid seasmhach** – “Your constant friend”

---

<sup>15</sup> Kidd, Sheila M. “The Scottish Gaelic Press.” *Edinburgh History of the British and Irish Press*, edited by David Finkelstein, Edinburgh University Press, 2020, Volume 2, Chapter 11.

## Litir bhon Cheann-suidhe

le Liam Ó Caiside



## Letter from the President

by Liam Cassidy

A chàirdean còire,

Fàilte gu bliadhna eile aig ACGA. Tha e doirbh ri chreidsinn gun deach bliadhna seachad bhon a thàinig mise a-steach mar cheann-suidhe a' chomainn. Ach 's e sin an fhìrinn.

Rinn sinn mòran sa bhliadhna sin, agus thòisich sinn tuilleadh. Ach an toiseach, feumaidh mi fàilt' chun a' bhùird a chur air Àdhamh Dahmer agus Dr. Seumas ("Jamie") MacDhòmhnail. Tha mòran agaibh eòlach air Seumas – tha e air a bhith an sàs ann an ACGA nas fhaide na mise, agus chan urrainn do mhòran sin a ràdh! 'S ann à Carolina a Tuath a tha Seumas, ged tha e a-nist' a' fuireach ann an Albainn Nuaidh. 'S e seo a' chiad uair aig Àdhamh air a' bhòrd, an dèidh dha gabhail sa chomann am-bliadhna cuideachd. Tha e ag obair air dotaireachd aig Oilthigh Dhùn Èideann, ged a tha e a' fuireach ann an Canada, ag ionnsachadh air-astar. Sin mar a tha cùisean an àm a' Choròna-bhiorais.

Tha sinn toilichte gu bheil an dithis aca còmhla rinn air a' bhòrd. Agus bu chòir dhomh taing a thoirt do Reese McKay, a dh'fhàg am bòrd am-bliadhna. Dh'fhàg Jeff Justice am bòrd mar stiùiriche agus iar-cheann suidhe, ach tha Goiridh còmhla rinn fhathast mar mhanaidsear-lìn. Mar as àbhaist, tha gu leòr againn ri dhèanamh, agus 's e "obair latha tòiseachaidh."

Bidh Mòd Nàiseanta bhiortail againn a-rithist am-bliadhna, air 12mh - 14mh dhen t-Samhain. Gheibhear tuilleadh mu sin air an làrach-lìn againn a dh'aithghearr. Agus tha sinn an dòchas gun rachamaid uile gu Beinn Seanair san ath-bliadhna, nam biodh cunnart COVID seachad mu dheireadh thall. Thig Oidhche nam Bàrd air ais, agus bidh Coinneamh Bliadhnail bhiortail againn ann an 2022 cuideachd, agus gach bliadhna o sin a-mach.

Bu thoil leinn tuilleadh a dhèanamh air loidhne am-bliadhna, ach tha feum againn air luchd-taic agus saor-thagraichean, mar bhuidheann shaor-thoileach. Seallaibh air an t-sianail YouTube agus air an làrach-lìn againn. Tha làrach-lìn ùr againn, mar a tha mòran agaibh air fhaicinn mu thràth, agus nì sinn tuilleadh leis an làraich am-bliadhna. Cumaidh ur sùilean oirre, mar a theireadh na daoine àrsaidh.

Dear Friends,

Welcome to another ACGA year. It's hard to believe a year has gone past since I became president of the organization. But that's the truth.

We did much in that year, and we began more. But now, I must welcome Adam Dahmer and Dr. Jamie ("Seumas Ruairidh") MacDonald to the board. Many of you know Jamie – he's been involved in ACGA more years than me, and there aren't many people who can say that! Jamie is from North Carolina, but now lives in Nova Scotia. This is the first time on the board for Adam, who joined the organization this year, too. He's working on his doctorate at the University of Edinburgh, though he lives in Canada, learning from a distance. That's the way of things in the time of the coronavirus.

We're delighted that both of them are with us on the board. And I should thank Reese McKay, who left the board this year. Jeff Justice also left the board as a director and vice president, but Jeff will be with us yet as our web administrator. As is typical, we've got plenty to do, and "getting started is a day's work."

We will have a virtual National Mòd again this year, from the 12th through the 14th of November. More information about that will be available on our website soon. And we hope we may all return to Grandfather Mountain in the new year, if the danger of COVID is past at long last. *Oidhche nam Bàrd* (the Night of the Bards) will come again, and we'll have a virtual Annual Meeting in 2022 as well, and each year from now on.

We'd also like to do more online this year, but we do need support and volunteers, as a volunteer organization. Watch our YouTube channel and our website. We have a new website, as many of you have already seen, and we will do more with it this year. Keep your eyes on it, as the old folks would say.

Aig coinneamh a' bhùird anns an Lùnastal, cho-dhùin sinn gun toireamaid \$700 US do Sgoil Gàidhlig Bhaile an Taigh Mhòir ann am Baltimore, Md., mar thaic airson phròiseact gu math ùidheil – “baile-cànain” no “language village.” Siubhlaidh am baile seo bho thachartas gu tachartas, gu h-àraid na geamaichean Gàidhealach, le clasaichean ann an Gàidhlig, ceòl, agus eile. Tha e nas motha na an seòrsa de theant a chì sibh gu tric aig na geamaichean. Leughaidh sibh tuilleadh mu dheidhinn na pròiseact a dh'aithgheàrr. Tha sinn toilichte cuideachadh a thoirt do choimhearsnachd ionnsachaidh na Gàidhlig (CIG) cho làidir.

Cùin a bu chòir dhuinn no an tèid againn air cruinneachadh a-rithist mar a b' àbhaist dhuinn? Nach mòr a' cheist i sin. Bu thoil leam a ràdh gum bi sinn a' cruinneachadh “beò” san ath-bhliadhna, agus tha mi dòchasach. Chan urrainn dhomh dad a bharrachd air “chì sinn” a ràdh ge-tà. Bithibh faiceallach agus fallain, a chàirdean. Chunnaic gu leòr againn àmannan cruaidh sa bhliadhna a chaidh, agus tha sibh uile nar smuaintean, an-còmhnaidh.

Leis gach deagh dhùrachd,

*Liam*

Ceann-suidhe, ACGA

At the August board meeting, we decided to give \$700 US to *Sgoil Gàidhlig Bhaile an Taigh Mhòir* (The Baltimore Gaelic School), as support for a very interesting project – a “language village.” This village will travel from event to event, especially Highland games, with classes in Gaelic, music, and more. It's more than the sort of tent you often see at the games. You will read more about the project soon. We're delighted to assist such a strong Gaelic Learning Community.

When will we be able to gather again as we used to? Isn't that the big question. I would like to say we will be gathering “live” in the new year, and I am hopeful. I can't do more than say “we'll see.” Be careful and healthy, friends. Plenty of you have seen hard times in the past year, and you are all in our thoughts, always.

With every good wish,

*Liam*

President, ACGA

---

## 2021 ACGA Board of Directors Officers

ACGA's Board of Directors met August 15th to elect officers for the coming year. **Liam Ó Caiside** was elected president and **Jamie MacDonald** was elected vice president.

Continuing as Board-appointed officers for the coming year will be:

**Mike Mackay** - treasurer

**Joyce Campbell** - recording secretary

**Nickie Polson** - bookkeeper

**Janice Chan** - chair Membership committee

**Jeff Justice** - chair ACGA Website committee

**Eileen Walker** - chair Learner Support committee

**Liam Ó Caiside** - chair Gaelic Learning Communities committee

**Janice Chan, Jeff Justice, Cam MacRae, and Barbara Rice** - editors *An Naidheachd Againne*

**Jamie MacDonald** - chair Grandfather Mountain Gaelic Song and Language Week committee

**Mike Mackay** - chair U.S. National Mòd committee





## Litir à Dùn Èideann bhon Taigh Agam

by Jeff W. Justice

A chàirdean,

I was hoping that I would finally be able to do a *Litir à Dùn Èideann* for you this edition, but it seems like we're taking one step forward, two steps back in beating this virus. So, I sit here at my desk, watching the map as local counties turn darker and darker as new cases come up. Then I notice my fingers dancing across the trackpad. They turn the map a quarter way about the globe to a small country in the North Atlantic with a very squiggly coastline and its capital of Edinburgh. Then my fingers open my photos app, and I look back over the thousands (literally!) of pictures I have shot over the years I have visited and lived there. If I can't write a *Litir à Dùn Èideann*, I can always live vicariously *bhon taigh agam, ceart?*

When we do get to resume life as we knew it, more or less, before 2020, there are a couple of places a short walk from each other where you can experience both Gaelic and Scots, and they are both on Edinburgh's Royal Mile. These are the [Scotch Whisky Experience](#) and [The Real Mary King's Close](#). I've been through both several times. (Yes, I *do* know of plenty of other things to do in the capital.) Both will offer visitors a chance to see important parts of Scotland's life and culture, including the savoury and the not-so-savoury.

I have long viewed the Scotch Whisky Experience as the most expensive tourist trap you will ever enjoy. Having a dram of whisky (or more) at the tour's end makes it well worth the high admission fee. I went through on my own maybe nine or ten years ago. It includes a guided tour describing the various types of whiskies distilled in Scotland and the different flavours that are unique to each distilling region. Part-way through, you board a cask-shaped car for an amusement park-type ride that takes you through the distilling process. Since Edinburgh draws millions of tourists from around the globe, the ride has several language options, including *Gàidhlig na h-Alba*. The first time I went through, I asked for *Gàidhlig*; the ride attendant gave me a puzzled look and then told me nobody had ever asked for it before. I went through a few years later as part of a package that also included that night's performance of the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo. Again, I asked for the *Gàidhlig* audio on the ride; I had the car all to myself.

Real Mary King's Close gives you a first-hand look at life in Edinburgh in the 14<sup>th</sup> through 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, including the long-abandoned homes, tenements once reaching fourteen stories in some places, now locked underground by newer buildings constructed on top of them. You will get a glimpse of how residents dealt with the Bubonic Plague that killed at least a third of Europe's population, and you will learn how the local phrase "gardyloo", a mangling of the French *Gardez l'eau!* (mind the water), came to be. (Hint, it has to do with people pouring out the rancid contents of their bathroom buckets onto the streets far below.) You will also see dramatised scenes with dialogue recorded in the Scots *leid* [language] that dominated much of the Lowlands at the time. To be sure, I have never been sure how much of what I saw was drama and urban legend and how much was based on fact, but it was still a fun way to see hidden –literally – parts of the capital. I also got to hear a bit of the linguistic history of Scotland in the process.

Soon enough, I hope, you will have a chance to experience this for yourself. In the meanwhile, check out their websites and experience them vicariously.

*Leis gach deagh dhùrachd,*

*Goinnidh | Jeff*

Ràinig latha na comhairle is a h-uile draoidh ann, a' beachdachadh air an droch shuidheachadh anns an robh iad. An dèidh do dh'Iain coimhead tro tholl clach Choinnich Odhair bha plana aca. Dh'fheumadh Iain agus Nighean an Sgàthain a dhol air turas. Càit' an tèid iad? Uill, feumaidh sibh a' chaibideil seo a leughadh!

## Sgoil nan Eun neo Sgeulachd Iain Fhearchair Òig

*le Liam Ó Caiside*

**Caibideil a Naoi Deug: Comhairle nan Draoidh**  
**Pàirt a dhà: Latha na Comhairle**

*“Chan ann a h-uile là a bhios mòd aig Mac an Tòisich.”*  
— Seanfhacal Gàidhealach

Bhris an ath-latha fuar, fliuch agus dubh. Dhòirt an t-uisge a-nuas air clachan a' chaisteil, ach dh'èirich Nighean an Sgàthain agus chuir i uimpe. Chaidh Iain air ais a sheòmar nam foghlamaichean an oidhche roimhe sin, agus thachair iad a-rithist ann an clos a' chaisteil. Choisich iad dhan tùr agus dh'èirich iad suas na staidhrichean cloiche, cama, caola gus an tàinig iad dhan t-seòmar far an do dh'ionnsaich na balaich draoidheachd agus far an d'ràinig Nighean an Sgàthain gu Iain ann an cruth calmair. Nuair a chaidh iad a-steach, bha an seòmar mòr cearsalach loma-làn le draoidhean agus sìthichean, beag agus mòr, agus iad nan suidhe air beingean mun cuairt a' bhalla. Bha feadhainn dhiubh nan suidhe air an ùrlar. Bu mhòr an toirm agus fuaim a rinn an còmhradh.

Bha an Draoidh Mòr na shuidhe ann an cathair mhòr, slacan fada le ceann airgid na làimh. Bha coltas seann cheann-cinnidh air bhon àm ro Chogadh a' Phrionnsa, le aodach Gàidhealach air a chom agus briogais-mhòr bhreacte air a chasan. Bha athair Iain agus a' bhan-shìthe Aoife nan suidhe air a' bheingidh ri a thaobh. Bha Brìd Mhòr Each ann, na còta còmhdhaichte le itean, a' smocadh dùideach faisg air a' chagailt.

Bha feadhainn de na foghlamaich eile aig an Draoidh Mhòr ann, Mac Mhanainn agus Ceann-Cleiteag. Bha am bàrd, am ministear, agus an sagart ann – draoidhean a bh' annta uile. Bha MacDhòmhnaill agus a bhean Gormfhlaith ann, agus na peathraichean Fearbhlaith agus Dearbhlaith cuideachd. Bha teine air a lasadh agus bha an seòmar glè bhlàth. Thog an Draoidh Mòr a làmh agus thuit na daoine nan tost.

“A charaidean agus a dhaoin' -uaisle,” thuir e, “Tha cunnart anns an t-saoghal a-nise nas miosa na sion a

chunnaic sinn ann an iomadh linn. 'S e Mac na h-Oidhche ainm, ach 's e 'Balar ùr' an t-ainm a chuirinn air. Bidh feadhainn agaibh a' cuimhneachadh Balar leth-shùileach agus an sgrios a rinn e gus an do mharbh Lùgh Làmh-fhada e.

“S ann às an sgoil seo a thàinig Mac na h-Oidhche, mar a chuala sibh bhuam,” ars' an Draoidh Mòr. “Ach cha chuala sibh an sgeul air fad. Tha nighean còmhla ruinn, leth-phiuthar mo nigheanan fhèin, aig a bheil tuilleadh fiosrachaidh mu Mhac na h-Oidhche. Èirich a-nise, a nighean Uí Chróileagáin, agus innis dhuinn do naidheachd.”

Agus 's e sin a rinn Nighean an Sgàthain, bho thoiseach gus an latha sin. Dh'innis i dhaibh mar a chaill i a màthair, agus mar a chaidh a togail le Cailleach nan Cearc ann an Druim Alt na Muice.

Dh'innis i dhaibh dè thachair nuair a thàinig a h-athair air ais, agus mun bheatha aca ann am Baile Àtha Cliath. Dh'aithris i ciamar a choinnich i ri Iain – an Gille Dubh a thug i air – an toiseach, agus ciamar a dh'ionnsaich i gur e a h-athair fhèin Mac na h-Oidhche. “Agus sin agaibh mo sgeul gu ruige seo,” thuir i aig an deireadh. “Thàinig mi gu Sgoil nan Eun, agus tha fhios againn gun tàinig m' athair às mo dhèidh. Rinn e ionnsaigh oirnn, agus ged a chaidh a ghonadh, tillidh e. Tha mi cinnteach gun till. Chan eil e marbh, mar a tha feadhainn dhiubh dòchasach.”

“Is iongantach do sgeul leam,” thuir Brìd Mhòr Each ris an nighinn. “Cho iongantach ri sneachd an Lùnastail. 'S iomadh linn a tha mi air seachran, ach cha do dh'amaid mi ri ban-draoidh eile coltach riut, aig a bheil draoidheachd nan cailleach agus draoidheachd nan sgoiltean – ach mi fhìn.”





“Ach ’s e neach air leth a th’ annaibh, a Bhrìd,” thuirt am bàrd. “Cha leigeadh le boireannaich draoidheachd ionnsachadh anns an sgoil seo neo ann an sgoil eile.”

“Mì-cheart eile a rinn na sgoiltean bho na meadhan-aoisean gus an latha an-diugh!” fhreagair Brìd gu feargach. “Tha fhios aca gun robh mnàthan-draoidh ann o chionn fhada an t-saoghail, ro theachd nan Ròmanach. Bha gu leòr dhiubh ann nuair a thàinig Calum Cille a dh’Alba. Agus thog Sgàthach fhèin – bana-shithe – an sgoil seo!”

“Agus ’s e mo mhàthair a bh’ innte,” ars Aoife, a’ togail a guth. “Tha e cho soilleir ri gathan na grèine gu bheil an nighean seo na ban-draoidh, mar bu dual do bhan-ogha Sgàthaich. Ach chan e sin an cuspair a tha romhainn an-diugh. Feumaidh sinn dèiligeadh ri Mac na h-Oidhche ann an dòigh mhaireannach, mus dèan e ionnsaidh eile oirnn. Ach dè nì sinn? Dè bu chòir agus dè b’ urrainn dhuinn a dhèanamh, draoidhean agus sìthichean ri chèile?”

Dh’fhàs iad uile sàmhach greis. Bhriis athair Iain an tost. “A bhalaich,” thuirt e ri Iain, “tog a-mach do chlach, agus innis dhuinn gu dè a chì thu ann.”

Chuir Iain a làmh na phòcaid far an robh e an còmhnaidh a’ cumail clach bheag, chruinn, ghorm le toll na meadhan, a’ chlach a thug athair dha. Clach Choinnich Odhair.

Sheas an Draoidh Mòr gu h-obann. “Tha mi eòlach air a’ chloich seo, ged nach fhaca mi riamh i,” thuirt e ri Iain. “Shaoilear gun robh i cailte nuair a thilg Coinneach Odhar i an Loch Lomhair. Ciamar a thàinig i thugadsa, fhoghlamaiche agam fhìn?”

“Thàinig e dha bhuainn nuair a bha sinn còmhla anns an t-sìthein,” ars Aoife, mus b’ urrainn do dh’Iain dad a ràdh. “Agus seo an uair a dhèanadh i feum dhuinn. Cuir do shùil ris an toll, ’ille, agus innis dhuinn dè chì thu.” Agus sin a rinn Iain. Dhùin e a shùil chlà, agus chuir e a’ chlach ris an t-sùil eile.

Lìon muir slàn a shùilean, na tonnan a’ fàs nan stuadhan agus stuadhan a’ fàs nam mamanan. Ghluais a lèirsinn mar eun-mara thar a’ chuain agus chunnaic Iain eilean uaine fada bhuaithe, eilean còmhdachichte le feur, agus dà chnocan cruinne ann. Theann e nas dlùithe, agus chunnaic e taigh eadar na cnuic agus riobhag de smùid a dh’èireadh às. Bha boireannach caol, àrd, le falt dualanach buidhe aig an doras. Bhruidhinn am boireannach ri eun beag a bha na làimh. Bha Iain cho dlùth ri the ’s gum faiceadh e a

breacan-seun. Thionndaidh am boireannach gu h-obann agus sheall i dìreach air a shùil. Leum Iain an comhair a chùil agus chaidh an aisling a bhriseadh.

“Dè chunnaic thu? Dè chunnaic thu?” ghlaoidh a h-uile duine. Bha na sìthichean beaga a’ leum agus bha a h-uile duine eile nan seasamh. Dh’innis Iain dhaibh dè chunnaic e - an cuan, an t-eilean, na cnuic, an taigh, agus am boireannach àlainn. “Na dèan dearmad air an eòin,” thuirt Brìd Mhòr Each. “Tha mi cinnteach gu bheil e cudthromach.”

“Sin an t-eilean a chunnaic mi nam bhruadar,” thuirt Nighean an Sgàthain, “ged nach fhaca mi an taigh neo am boireannach.” “Agus tha mi cinnteach gum faca am boireannach mi fhìn,” fhreagair Iain.

“Feumaidh sinn bhruidhinn ris a’ bhoireannach seo,” thuirt Brìd Mhòr Each. “Feumaidh sinn a dhol dhan eilean,” thuirt am bàrd. “Chan fheum sinn nì sam bith a dhèanamh, ach an dithist a chunnaic an t-eilean, Nighean an Sgàthain agus an Gille Dubh,” thuirt Aoife. “S ann acasan a bhios an ceann-turais seo, tha mi creidsinn.”

“Tha mi ag aontachadh ribh,” thuirt an Draoidh Mòr ri Aoife. “Nach do dh’innis mi dhuibh gun deach ainm a’ bhalaich seo a sgrìobhadh anns an leabhar dhubh agam dà cheud bliadhna mus d’ rugadh e?”

Sheall Iain agus an nighean air a chèile. “Tha sinn deònach,” thuirt iad aig an aon àm, “Ged nach eil fhios againn càite am faigeadh sinn an t-eilean,” ars Iain.

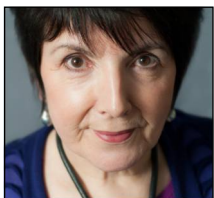
“Gheibhear an t-slighe,” ars an Draoidh Mòr. “Ach chan fhalbh sibh gun dàil. Bheachdaicheamaid air dè an seòrsa cuideachaidh a bu chòir dhuinn a thoirt dhuibh. Seo deireadh ar comhairle.” Dh’fhalbh iad uile an uair sin, agus chaidh iad gu biadh anns an talla.

“A bheil aon smuain agad mu dheidhinn na tha feitheamh oirnn anns an eilean?” dh’fhaighnich Iain de Nighean an Sgàthain. “Seadh,” thuirt an nighean. “Mo mhàthair.”

Las an sgeulaiche a phìob. Bha sinn uile sàmhach. “Bha mi cinnteach gun coinnicheamaid ri màthair na nighinn mus tigeadh crìoch air an sgeul,” thuirt Eilidh, ag òl balgam uisge. “Chì sinn,” ars an sgeulaiche. “S iomadh car a tha san t-saoghal, ged nach eil fhios againn dè bhios romhainn. Agus tha Iain agus an nighean dìreach air tòiseachadh air an turas.”

# North Carolina Regional Mòd (held on Zoom)

July 9, 2021



**Adjudicator: Christine Primrose**

## Results:

- **First:** Seán Heely
- **Second:** Cathleen MacKay
- **Third:** Adam Dahmer

Cash prizes were awarded as follows: \$125 first prize, \$100 second prize, and \$75 third prize.

After the competition, Christine's general advice to all the mòd singers was to pick the right song, be sure you're prepared, and watch that you pronounce the ends of words as you sing. The three winners did all of that and more.

**Mealaibh ur naidheachd!**

## Bruidhinn Gàidhlig! / Speak Gaelic!

Speak  
Gaelic

SpeakGaelic (<https://speakgaelic.scot/>), a new language learning platform for complete beginners, as well as speakers at different levels of fluency in Scottish Gaelic, is launching this September.

Users will have the option of face-to-face classes, self-guided online learning, and media content through television programmes, radio programmes and podcasts. These will be available internationally using the BBC Sounds app, the BBC ALBA YouTube page, as well as a new SpeakGaelic website and social media content. Much of the content will be free of cost to the user.

This initiative will be rolled out in four stages from 2021 through 2023. Each stage is aimed at a different proficiency level on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) scale of A1, A2, B1 and B2 (<https://delf-dalf.ambafrance-ca.org/cefr/>), providing a standard point of reference for Gaelic ability. SpeakGaelic will start with level A1, with a new level being offered every three months after that.

SpeakGaelic is presented as a partnership through the media organization MG ALBA; Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, the National Centre for Gaelic Language and Culture in Skye; and the BBC, with funding provided by the Scottish government, Bòrd na Gàidhlig, MG ALBA and the BBC.

For questions or comments about SpeakGaelic, email [conaltradh@mgalba.com](mailto:conaltradh@mgalba.com).

## Meek Lines

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

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

Here ACGA member Adam Dahmer, who is in the last year of his doctorate in Celtic Studies at the University of Edinburgh, explains how a seemingly simple poem carries a much deeper meaning.



### **TURAS DHÒMHNAILL AIR A’ ‘WAVERLEY’** *leis an Urramach Ollamh Dòmhnall Meek*

Chaidh Dòmhnall do Ghlaschu le aighear na cheum,  
airson turas a ghabhail air abhainn a spèis,  
air a’ ‘Waverley’ mhaiseach le Caipitinn tha treun -  
a dheagh charaid Ailig gun a shamhail fon ghrèin.

Nuair a dh’fhàg sinn sa mhadainn bha fras anns an  
speur,  
ach thòisich deagh fharam le glagail is gleus,  
Nuair bha Ailig ri faire cumail smachd air a rèis  
is cop geal nam padal a’ sradadh na dèidh.

Bha an còmhlan a bh’ againn gu carthannach rèidh  
le gàire is naidheachd is facail bha geur;  
an dèidh glasadh a’ ghalair bha ar n-aighe air sgèith,  
ged bha faiceall gar sgaradh beagan astair bho chèil’.

Bha Dòmhnall na bhalach le tlachd a bu lèir  
do gach neach a bha cumail a thaic ris an rèil,  
's e a’ cuimhneach’ an latha bha athair ’s e fhèin  
a’ falbh air an abhainn gun laigse, gun èis.

Ach an-diugh bha an abhainn ’s i sàmhach na gnè;  
cha chluinntè ’s chan fhaicte na gàrraidhean gleusd’  
no gach ceàrdach bha tàthadh na stàillinn ri chèil’  
airson na cabhlaich bu ghasda san t-saoghal gu leir.

### **DONALD’S TRIP ON THE WAVERLEY** *by the Reverend Doctor Donald Meek, as translated by Adam Dahmer*

Donald went to Glasgow with cheer in his step  
To take a trip on the river of his affection  
On the beautiful Waverley, captained by a hero  
His good pal Alec, no one like him under the sun

We left in the morning with rain in the sky  
But a fine noise started up, with rattling and whirring  
When Alec was vigilant, keeping control of her course  
With the white foam of the paddles sprinkling after  
her

Our crew was charitable and even-tempered  
With smiles and small-talk and witty words  
After the lockdown, our spirits were soaring  
Though we were careful to keep apart

Donald felt like a wee lad, with a joy  
That was obvious to anyone leaning on the railings  
He was recalling a day he and his father  
Had gone out on the bold and unhindered river

But today, the river was quiet in her way  
No well-trimmed shipyards could be seen  
Or heard, or metalworkers joining steel  
For the most upstanding navy in the world

Tri-fichead bliadhna! Cò a chreideadh an sgeul?  
Bha Dòmhnall den bharail nach robh ann ach an-dè!  
Ach cha robh aige ach tamhasg, gun fharam ri èisd'  
Ach MacTalla nam padal 's iad a' glagail leo fhèin.

Dùn Breatann a sheas air a' Chreig le deagh stèidh,  
nach e chunnaic gach aiseag rinn gaisgeach is treubh,  
gach eathair is iùbhrach thog smùid fad nan rè -  
is abhainn na beatha siubhal seachad na leum!

Ach tha ise ann fhathast, a' 'Waverley' threun,  
a' togail ar n-aighe 's a' lasadh ar spèis,  
's guma fada a mhaireas a latha 's a rèis -  
is Ailig ga stiùireadh air Chluaidh le deagh ghrèim!

Sixty years! Who would believe it?  
To Donald, it seemed only yesterday  
But he had only the memory: no sound to listen to  
But the echo of paddles churning to themselves

Dumbarton that stood well-founded on the Crag  
Was it not he, who had seen every crossing made by  
warrior or tribe,  
every dinghy and cutter that ever went under steam –  
with the river of life travelling past, leaping!

But she's still there, the brave Waverley  
Lifting our spirits, kindling our affection  
Long will her day and her course last  
With Alec's firm grip guiding her on the Clyde

Abair dàn! Nuair a leughas sibh e, 's urrainn dhuibh an  
calpa fhaireachdainn. Bu dheagh òran e, nan cuireadh  
cuideigin fonn air. Chan eil an t-eadar-theangachadh a  
rinn mi idir cho math ris a' bhàrdachd fhèin, ach bha mi  
air son 's gum biodh fios fiù 's aig an luchd-leughaidh aig  
nach eil Gàidhlig dè mu dheidhinn a bha e, oir chuir am  
fear seo iongnadh orm gu mòr, a thaobh susbainte. Aig an  
toiseach, bha mi a' smaointinn nach b' e bh' ann ach  
bàrdachd shìmplidh, aotrom mu dheidhinn sgrìob bheag  
spòrsail air bàta-èibhinn. Nach mise a bha ceàrr: b' e  
cromadair de dh'fhaireachdainn a bh' ann! Feumaidh mi  
aideachadh gun do ruith na deòir om shùilean nuair a  
leugh mi an ceathramh rann, anns an do chuimhnich an  
t-ùghdar turas eile 's bha e air an aon bhàta mar bhalach  
beag, làmh ri athair, sna seasgadan, nuair a bha  
gàrraidhean-bàta tranga ri taobh na h-aibhne; agus san  
ath-rann, far an do mhothaich e cho eadar-dhealaichte 's a  
bha an saoghal san latha an-diugh – an abhainn nas sine,  
is às aonais nan gàrraidhean; an dùthaich nas sine, is às  
aonais cabhlaich, agus am balach nas sine, is às aonais  
athar.

Mar anarcaiche a dh'fhàs suas sna Stàitean, chan eil  
dàimh cho làidir eadaram agus gàrraidhean-cabhlaich nam  
Breatannach, ach a bheil duine beò air aghaidh an  
t-saoghail aig nach eil fios no faireachdainn dè cho  
neònach 's a tha e gu bheil an tìde an còmhnaidh a'  
sruthadh seachad, a' toirt leis na daoine is na h-àitichean  
air a bheil gaol againn? Smaoinich mi, nuair a leugh mi an  
dà rann sin, air m' athair fhèin, a tha nas fhaisg air seann  
duine na fear òg, agus air mo sheanairean, nach maireann;  
air an Abhainn Othàidheo, ann am Baile nan Easan far an  
do rugadh mi, agus air an diofar eadar a' bhaile sin mar a  
tha e a-nis agus an dòigh 's a bha e nuair a bha mi òg.  
Dh'fhairich mi, an uair sin, gun robh a' bheatha goirid,  
mì-chinnteach, agus bristeach.

What a poem! When you read it, you can feel  
the rhythm. It would make a fine song, if  
someone put a tune to it! The translation I  
made isn't nearly as good as the poem itself,  
but I wanted even readers who didn't have  
Gaelic to know what it was about, because this  
one really surprised me, as far as content goes.  
At the outset, I thought it was just light, simple  
poetry about a fun little ride on a pleasure boat.  
Was I ever wrong: it was an emotional  
rollercoaster! I must admit that I cried when I  
read the fourth verse, in which the author  
recalled another trip on the same boat as a little  
boy, beside his father, in the sixties, when there  
were busy shipyards beside the river; and, in  
the next verse, when he noticed just how  
different the world was in modern times – the  
river older, and without the shipyards; the  
country older, and without a navy; the boy  
older, and without his father.

As an anarchist who grew up in the US, there's  
not so strong an emotional connection between  
me and the British naval shipyards, but is there  
a living person on the face of the earth who  
doesn't know or feel how strange it is that time  
is always streaming past, taking with it the  
people and places we love? When I read those  
two verses, I thought about my own father,  
who is closer to an old man than a young one,  
and about my grandfathers, may they rest in  
peace; about the Ohio River, in Louisville,  
where I was born, and the difference in that  
city as it is now and the way it was when I was  
young. I felt, then, that life was short, uncertain  
and brittle.

Ach an sin, gu tròcaireach, thug Dòmhnall dòchas dhomh san rann mu dheireadh: ged a tha a' chuid as motha de bhàtaichean a chaidh thairis a' Chluaidh fo dhian-amharc Dhùn Breatainn fada às dèidh an dol-fodha, tha a' Waverley bheag ghaisgeil fhathast còmhla rinn – a' sealltainn dhuinn, ged nach mair a' bheatha no rud sam bith a th' innte, nach bi sinn gu tur nar n-aonar, gu tur gun chofhuirt, cho fhad 's a bhios sinn fhèin air mhaireann. Mar a their an abairt, thig crìoch air an t-saoghal, ach mairidh gaol agus ceòl. Taing mhòr, Ollaimh Meek, airson sin a chur nam chuimhne!

But then, mercifully, Donald gave me hope in the last verse: though most of the boats that went over the Clyde under the watchful gaze of Dumbarton have long since gone under, the brave little Waverley is still with us – showing us that although neither life nor anything in it lasts forever, as long as we ourselves live, we will never be completely alone or wholly without comfort. As the saying goes, the world will end, but music and love will endure. Thanks, Dr. Meek, for reminding me of that!

## Cha Bu Mhiste Sinn Leabhar na Trì

*le Cam MacRae*

Cha bu mhiste sinn leabhar na trì. Deagh smuain, nach e? Sgrìobhainn colbh cunbhalach leis an ainm seo do dh'ANA greis air ais ach dh'fhàs mi trang agus an ceann bliadhna no dhà, sguir mi ga sgrìobhadh.

B' e leabhraichean Gàidhlig cuspair a' mhòrchuid dhe na pìosan a sgrìobh mi son a' cholbh, agus ged a chaitheas mi mòran ùine a' leughadh, tha ùidh agam ann an sgrìobhadh cuideachd. Tha cuimhne agam air colbh sònraichte a rinn mi air mo mhiann a bhith a' sgrìobhadh sa Ghàidhlig. Aig an àm sin bha leabhar leathar donn beag, leabhar le duilleagan bàn ann, air oir an deasg agam. Seo e. Thug mo pheathrichean dhomh e. Nach eil e àlainn?

Uill, tha an leabhar seo fhathast ri mo thaobh, ach tha mi duilich a ràdh gu bheil na duilleagan fhathast bàn. O, sgrìobhaidh mi gu tric, gu h-àraidh naidheachdan goirid dha na h-oileanaich agam, is na sgeulachdan uile air a' choimpiutair agam. Tha tè dhe na sgeulachdan mu eun beag ruadh a bhuaill uinneag na h-oifis agam is mise is an cat ga choimhead gus an do dh'itealaich e air falbh. Agus tèile mu chat a chunnaic mi san t-sràid is a cheann an sàs ann am bogsa, bogsa geal is buidhe anns an robh ìm aig aon àm. Kitty bochd.

Ach carson nach do chuir mi na sgeulachdan seo dhan leabhar shnog agam? Air duilleagan a tha a' feitheamh rium? Chan eil mi cinnteach. Teagamh an làthair duilleige bàine? 'S dòcha. Co-dhiù, bidh mi a' sìor dhèanamh sgeulachdan goirid air a' choimpiutair, agus tha mi toilichte gu bheil daoine eile an sàs ann an sgrìobhadh cuideachd. Ann an “An t-àite agam fhìn” ann an ANA an turas seo, a bharrachd air an sgeulachd, *Sgoil nan Eun*, le Liam Ó Caiside, chì sibh pìos èibhinn le Mary Traywick, a tha ag ionnsachadh Gàidhlig ann an North Carolina, agus pìos eile le Hilary NicPhàidein ann an Washington, DC. Agus tha bàrdachd againn cuideachd. Ann am “Bàrdachd airson ar linn” leughaidh sibh dàin le Barbara Rice, is ise a' fuireach ann an New York.



Cam MacRae

Carson a bhios sinn uile a' sgrìobhadh? Uill, tha e sìmplidh. Ma bhios sibh airson ur cuid Gàidhlig a leasachadh, bidh sgrìobhadh sa Ghàidhlig cuideachail dhuibh.

And if you would like to try your hand at a short anecdotal piece in Gaelic about the place where you live, or the people in it, we'd love to publish it in “An t-àite agam fhìn.” Don't worry about making your Gaelic perfect. We'll help you with the editing process.

## ACGA now on AmazonSmile

Amazon offers a feature called AmazonSmile which allows the purchaser to direct a small percentage of Amazon's profit on the sale to the purchaser's preferred charitable organization. Now, your AmazonSmile purchases can raise money for ACGA. When you make an eligible purchase, Amazon will donate a portion of the sale back to ACGA. Use <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/52-1352293> to link to our account. For more information on AmazonSmile, use <https://smile.amazon.com/gp/chpf/about/>. Note: This service is not available in Canada or the UK.

### Seanfhacal na Ràithe – Pictured Proverb

Do you know what familiar Gaelic proverb is illustrated here?

Check page 20 to see if you're right.



Emily Howe

## An t-àite agam fhìn

With this issue, we are beginning a new feature, “An t-àite agam fhìn,” where you will find short pieces by ACGA members and friends about their families, their homes, and their world. We begin with an introduction to Hilary NicPhàidein's home in Washington, D.C., and some of the animals she sees on her daily walks, but what we want to know is: did she meet the Gruffalo? Cò aig a tha fios. Next up, Mary Traywick, from North Carolina, tells the story of what happened when her brother Iain's peanut butter and jelly sandwich met a VCR. Ohh, ohh.

And if you would like to try your hand at a short anecdotal piece in Gaelic about the place where you live or the people in it, we'd love to publish it in “An t-àite agam fhìn.” Don't worry about making your Gaelic perfect. We'll help you with the editing process.

### An t-àite agam fhìn

le Hilary NicPhàidein

Ma tha sibh eòlach orm, bidh fios agaibh gun robh mi san Arm Aimeireaganach fad bliadhna air fhichead. Ged a bha sin o chionn fhada, 's urrainn dhomh fhathast cothrom a ghabhail air buannachdan na seirbheise san Arm. Le sin tha mi a' fuireach a-nis ann an taigh-cluaineis do sheirbheisich ann an Washington, DC. 'S caomh leam fuireach an seo ged a tha a' mhòr-chuid dhe na daoine nas sine na mise. A dh'aindeoin sin tha mi fortanach a bhith a' fuireach ann an àite le sealladh nàdair, falaichte ann am meadhan sgìre còmhnaidheach. Mar fhiosrachadh, tha *President Lincoln's Cottage* anns an aon àite agus tha a' chiad Chladh Nàiseanta (*US Soldiers' and Airmen's Home National Cemetery*) faisg air làimh.

'S math dhomh a bhith ann an àite far a bheil nàdar dìreach air an stairsnich agam. Tha an campas làn de sheann chraobhan, fiodhach is mòran fhùraichean air nach robh mi eòlach. Dh'fheumainn *phone app* a cheannach gus na seòrsachan a th' ann aithneachadh. Tha mu dhà cheud acaire gu leth ri mo làimh agus coisichidh mi gach latha. A bharrachd air pailteas nan lusrach, tha fiadh-bheatha ann: fèidh, sionnaich, *ground hogs*, tunnagan, geòidh, iomadh eun eile: truideagan, brùthan-dearga ameireaganach, sgreuchagan nam measg, seabhagan, fiù 's iolairan bho àm gu àm.

O chionn ghoirid bha mi a' gabhail cuairt anns an àrainn aig dol fodha na grèine. Gu h-obann chunnaic mi sionnach òg a' ruith thairis air an t-slighe agam ach chaill mi sealladh air ann am priobadh na sùla. Lean mi an rathad dhachaigh. Gun rabhadh sgarraich cailleach-oidhche dìreach os mo chionn! An ceartair fhèin chunnaic mi nathair dubh-liath a' slaighdeadh thairis air an rathad. Chaidh esan à faire gu luath anns an fheur fhada; ma dh'fhaoidte gun robh e a' sealg luchan airson a dhinneir. Bha i a' fàs na bu dhuirche an uair sin ach bha mi dlùth air an dachaigh agam. Gidheadh, thòisich mi ri coiseachd na bu luaithe an dòchas nach tachrainn ris a' Ghruffalo!

### **Mo Bhràthair agus a Cheapaire**

*le Mary Traywick (Màiri Nic Gille Mhaoil)*

'S e naidheachd air Iain, mo bhràthair a's sine, a tha seo, nuair a bha e glè òg, mu dhà no trì bliadhna a dh'aois. Mar sin, cha robh mi fhèin ann aig an àm, ach chuala mi an naidheachd seo agus bha i èibhinn dhomhsa, mar sin, tha mi 'ga h-innse dhuibhse.

Co-dhiù, aig an àm sin, bha VCRs ùr fhathast, "on the cutting edge", mar a chanainn 'sa Bheurla, is bha VCR aig m' athair, 'is bha e ag obair air leth math. Ach, bha mac beag aig m' athair cuideachd.

Latha bha seo, bha Iain 'na shuidhe 'san t-seòmair-shuidhe, ag ithe ceapaire PB&J. Smaoinich m' athair gum biodh e sàbhailte gu leòr fad mionaid no dhà, agus dh'fhàg e a mhac na aonar.

Chan fhaca duine sam bith dè a thachair an uair sin, ach tha mis' a' smaoinichadh gun do sheall Iain air a' cheapaire aige, agus smaoinich e, "'S e an aon chruth 's an aon mheud a tha seo agus VHS. Cluichidh VHS film. 'S toigh leam filmichean. An cluich seo ruideigin a chòrdas rium?'"

Bha m' athair 'sa chidsin nuair a chuala e fuaim uabhasach de chnagadh a' tighinn bho'n t-seòmair-shuidhe. Ruith e air ais, agus fhuair e Iain 'na shuidhe, agus esan gun cheapaire. Agus an uair sin sheall m' athair air a' VCR, a bha a' feuchainn ris a' cheapaire a chur gu dol.

Cha robh e a' dol dha gu math idir, idir.

Chan eil mi cinnteach an do dh'obraich a' VCR sin gu sìorraidh tuilleadh. Ach tha mi a' smaoinichadh gun robh mo bhràthair toilichte gu leòr. Bha e airson 's gun rachadh an ceapaire a-steach, agus chaidh e a-steach. Agus rinn e fuaim. 'S ann math a bha a bheatha.



*Michael Landay*

## **Photo Quiz**

Where is this lovely old bridge located and who built it?

Cars are no longer allowed to cross this dry-stone bridge, but a two-lane road now runs alongside the two-hundred year old structure.

See page 19 to find out how well you know your Scottish bridges.

# Bàrdachd airson ar linn

We love it when Gaelic learners turn into Gaelic poets! “Bàrdachd airson ar linn” is an ongoing column to encourage and promote original contemporary Scottish Gaelic poetry. Poets may range from fluent and native speakers to adult learners. Here we have one of our editors, B.L. Rice, returning with two new poems.

## A' Chailleach

*le B.L. Rice*

A Chailleach, chuala mi sgeulachdan mu do dheidhinn.  
Mar a chaidh thu nad chaothach ann an tìde  
geamhraidh.  
Ma-thà, mhaoltaich thu as t-earrach  
Nuair a thill am fìor-ghaol agad.

Chaidh an t-ainm brèagha agad, Brìghde, is do  
bhoìdheachd ath-stèidheachadh,  
A' cur loinn air an dùthaich agus air d' aodann,  
Fo bhlàth,  
Le creutairean òg a rinn lèideag is ceum is leum.

Thàinig blàths an t-samhraidh,  
A-nis, thàinig am foghar gu slaodach,  
Agus thàinig fàgail an fhìor-ghaol  
Nuair a thug an geamhradh buaidh air uile.

## The Cailleach

*by B.L. Rice*

Old Woman, I've heard tales about you.  
How you've raged in the winter time,  
Then you softened in the springtime,  
When your true love returned.

Your lovely name, Brìghde, and beauty were re-  
stored,  
Gracing the land and your face.  
In flower [flowering],  
With young creatures who hopped, skipped, and  
jumped.

The warmth of summer came,  
Now, slowly came the fall,  
And the departure of true love,  
When winter once again conquers all.

---

## Tro uinneig

*le B.L. Rice*

Tro uinneig  
Dh'fhaodamaid a chèile fhaicinn  
Agus dhèanamaid iomlaid de naidheachd an latha.

Tro uinneig,  
Dh'fhaodamaid òrain a sheinn,  
Agus fealla-dhà no dhà innse, air an t-slighe.

Tro uinneig  
Dh'fhaodainn beanntan Carolina a Tuath is an Eilein  
Sgitheanaich fhaicinn,  
Agus ged nach b'urrainn dhomh tadhal orra gu seo,  
b'urrainn dha mo chridh' a bhith leis na dhà.

Thar uinneag a' choimpiutair  
Aon latha, coisichidh mi a-mach tron doras,  
Aon uair eile, a bheantail ri gath grèine agus  
coinnichidh mi ris mo cho-Ghàidheil.

---

## Through a window

*by B.L. Rice*

Through a window,  
We could see one another,  
And exchange the news of the day.

Through a window,  
We could sing songs,  
And tell a joke or two, along the way.

Through a window,  
I could see the mountains of North Carolina and the  
Isle of Skye.  
And although, I would not be able to visit, up to  
now, my heart would be able to be with them both.

Beyond the window of a computer,  
One day I will walk out through a door,  
Once again, to touch a shaft of sunlight and meet my  
fellow Gaels.



# Celebrating the Boulder Gaelic Study Group and Sue Hendrix: All good things come to an end.

by Reese McKay, Boulder, Colorado

What we believe to be the longest running Scottish Gaelic study group in North America started in Boulder, Colorado, in the home of Sue Hendrix and Glenn Blauvelt, way back in 1997. The group was started by a few students of Glenn Wrightson, who taught many people the Gaelic language in Denver for a number of years from the mid-1990s until about 2005. Sue's group met on Monday evenings, from 7 to 9 pm, probably about 45 Mondays each year. For all those years, meetings were canceled only for inclement weather, major holidays or when Sue or Glenn was ill or had out of town visitors. This continued up until the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020. The group tried a few video conference meetings during the pandemic, but it was not the same.

Sue graciously hosted the meetings in her kitchen for the group's entire existence, always providing plenty of tea, and warm and welcoming hospitality. The rest of us would bring cookies, candy, and other goodies to share with each other. Dozens of people learned some Gaelic over the years at these meetings, with several of us becoming "regulars" who came most Monday evenings over the course of ten or twenty years or more. Lots of other people came for a few weeks or a few years.

At Sue's study group meetings, we would typically have a brief go at Gaelic conversation for a few minutes. People would socialize for a while in some combination of English and Gaelic. Then we would usually read something in Gaelic or study some grammar topic for the rest of the first part of the evening. Over the years we read through a number of books either written in Gaelic or translated from English to Gaelic, along with short stories and various other short Gaelic texts. Sometimes one or more of us would sing a Gaelic song and teach it to the group, especially during the early years. Occasionally we would play a Gaelic board game or Gaelic Scrabble, which was largely created by Sue herself, if I remember correctly.

For the final part of the evening, we would move into Sue's living room, where we would proceed to watch, on a large screen, episodes from a fairly varied collection of videos. We watched series such



Sue Hendrix with grandson Sawyer (now 3 years old)  
Photo by Glenn Blauvelt. Used with permission.

as *Can Seo*, the long running *Speaking Our Language*, *Baile Mhuilinn*, *Rediteag Air Rothan* or sometimes even a movie that had Gaelic dialog, such as *Seachd: The Inaccessible Pinnacle*. Sue and Glenn had an amazing library of videos with Gaelic content, which they shared generously with all of us who came to the study group meetings. These are just some of the numerous ways in which the study group creatively found ways to encounter and learn the Gaelic language and culture over these many years.

This summer Sue finally decided to bring the study group to an end, primarily due to health issues that have made it more difficult for her to host the meetings. Many of us will miss the study group, which became a big part of our lives over the past twenty-plus years. On behalf of many people over a period of many years, we offer a big thank you to Sue Hendrix. *Mòran taing dhuibh, a Shiusaidh! Nach math a rinn sibh!*



## Oisean a' Ghràmair / The Grammar Nook

by Wayne Harbert

### Scary Things About Gaelic (STAG): *Guma Sealladh Sealbh Oirnn!*

On browsing through back issues of *An Naidheachd Againne* (always a rewarding pastime), I ran across an unkept promise that I made to you all, and this column is by way of making good on that debt. The STAG column that appeared back in the 2018 Winter issue attempted to sort out and put in order all the little words that are pronounced as *gu(n)*. *Gu* can be a preverbal particle meaning 'before', or 'for the purpose of', or 'almost' (*gu bhith*), or it can be a preposition meaning 'to' or 'until' (*bho thaigh gu taigh*), or it can be a particle that turns an adjective into an adverb (*gu math*), or it can be the equivalent of the English conjunction 'that' (*gu bheil*). After sorting out this plethora of sound-alikes, I hinted that this last case – *gu* = 'that' – posed special problems of its own, and promised to turn my attention to these in a later column. So here goes.

*Gu* does indeed translate to the English subordinating conjunction *that*, for example in reported speech. If Màiread says "I am sick" *tha mi tinn* and I wish to report what she said, "Màiread says that she is sick" *Tha Màiread ag ràdh gu bheil i tinn*. This Gaelic *gu* is a bit of a shape-shifter: it has the shape *gu* before the verb form *bheil*, but before other most other verbs it is *gun*: "Màiread says that she will come" *Tha Màiread ag ràdh gun tig i*. *Gun* becomes *gum* before the lip consonants /p, b, f, m/: "Màiread says that she will pay" *Tha Màiread ag ràdh gum pàigh i*. (One curious exception to this is that when the /f/ is followed by a vowel it undergoes lenition, and, since the resulting <fh> is silent, there is no longer any following lip consonant to turn *gun* to *gum*: "It is clear that we would get more" *Tha fhios gun fhaigheamaid barrachd*.) And, finally, *gu(n)* takes on yet another special form when the verb of the quoted utterance is the copula *is*. If Màiread says, for example, *Is fheàrr leam tì* "I prefer tea", I report it as *Tha Màiread ag ràdh gur fheàrr leatha tì*. In this case, *gun* turns to *gur* (in some dialects) and the copula itself disappears (as it generally does after particles). On this account, the word that follows *gur* is generally something other than a verb (like a noun, adjective, pronoun or preposition).

One little side note: Gaelic also has a conjunction, *nach*, that combines the meaning of 'that' and 'not'. So, if Màiread says *Cha tig mi*, or *Chan fheàrr leam tì*, I would report these as *Tha Màiread ag ràdh nach tig i*, or *Tha Màiread ag ràdh nach fheàrr leatha tì*. (The last example shows that *nach*, too, causes the /f/ to lenite.)

And one more thing: One would think that this *gun* / *gur*, as a subordinating conjunction, introduces subordinate clauses. And so it does, mostly. But there are special cases in which it introduces main clauses. *Gur(a)* can begin a main clause for (exaggerated) emphasis. One finds in waulking songs like *Gura Mi Tha Gu Tinn* "I am sick!", *Gur E Mise Tha Fo Ghruaim* "I am under gloom!" and rhymes like the following:

|                         |                  |
|-------------------------|------------------|
| Càit' eil an t-earrach? | Where is Spring? |
| Tha esan air falach     | It is hidden     |
| 'S gur brònach tha mi!  | And I am sad!    |

*Gu(n)* can begin main clauses expressing wishes". *Gun dèanar do thoil air talamh* "May your will be done on earth", *Gun tèid gu math leibh* "May it go well with you". In fixed expressions of this sort, one also often finds the old variant form *guma*, conveying wishes good and bad:

*Guma fada beò thu, is ceò às do thaigh.*  
“Long may you live, with smoke out your chimney”

*Guma meal thu do naidheachd!*  
“May you enjoy your news!” (Congratulations!)

*Guma bu droch dhrùighleach dhut!*  
“Bad dregs to you!”

And finally, this *guma*, too, has a negative counterpart. ‘May...not...’ is *nara*:  
*Nara tig an là a thig e air ais* “May the day not come that he returns”

If this all is leaving you a bit gobsmacked, you may feel like exclaiming  
*Gu(n) / guma sealladh Sealbh orm!* (literally, “May Providence look at me”, but used in the approximate sense of “Good Lord!”).

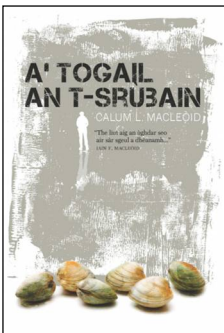


*Michael Landay*

## Answer to Photo Quiz, p. 15

Sligachan Old Bridge, Isle of Skye, built between 1810 and 1818 by Thomas Telford.

## REVIEWS



### Book Review:

*A' Togail an t-Srùbain* by Calum L. MacLeòid

Clàr, 2017. 204 pages

ISBN: 9781900901925

*Reviewed by Ted Neveln*

This well-regarded first novel won the Scottish Book Trust Gaelic New Writers Award for prose 2016. The Gaelic is straightforward and the novel has important things to say and valuable insights to impart. Nonetheless I cannot say I actually liked the book all that much. The problem is that the protagonist is lost for quite a few chapters in a world of ennui and depression; his world seems like a conspiracy to gross him out and we readers share every nauseating detail down to the last ant.

College seems meaningless to Daibhidh so he drops out of school, returns to his mother to live in a trailer outside her house, and spends his time harvesting cockles - *a' togail an t-srùbain*. He is not in splendid shape to begin with when he suddenly sees a corpse washed up on the beach. He swoons and wakes up later to find that the tide has washed the victim back out to sea. He notifies the police who make a routine search and find nothing. Everybody knows that he is in precarious shape and some wonder if he was hallucinating. His own search attempts fail; his mother does not understand either him or why he dropped out, and she is a mess in her

own right. Nature or nurture? With Daibhidh and his mother you can argue it both ways. His mental health worsens and he is hospitalized.

Wave after wave of dysfunctions washes over Daibhidh. The police do their minimal duty and nothing more. His pals busy themselves with plans to trash eastern European cities with their orgies. His internet community swarms with useless conspiracy theories. The stock solution of the medical system is to drug him with diazepam (Valium). He is alienated from the educational system. He is college-aged and yet rants like an old man to a bank teller about the good old days before forms and checkboxes took over the world.

Poor Daibhidh has a curse for seeing things that are not officially there such as escaped deer that the government declared to not exist after a cursory search. An entrepreneur with a flawed plan had imported the deer and so they become a meta-theme of the economic spirit and government apathy that this novel criticizes. Daibhidh cannot even lose himself as a shellfish raker because clannish Eastern Europeans are competing with him. This is the first time that I have read a sympathetic explanation for the emotions behind Brexit. MacLeòid does not tip his hand about his own attitudes but he depicts how a borderless Europe looks to working men. As one says “I would never vote for a party with the word Nationalist in its name, but ....”

The pace picks up when Daibhidh recovers from his drug stupor and uses basic logic that the police ought to have had. Luck pays off and he gets a valuable clue. He misuses his friends with James Bond-like ruthlessness. He burns bridges (and his trailer) behind him to atone for his weakness and bring some closure to the drowned man’s family.

The story ends in Bratislava and not in the way he hoped for but he can say that he tried his best in a world that barely bothers. The word bittersweet does not do justice to the final chapters. My wife and I debated about where he will go from there. She thinks he will use his new insights to turn his life around and become a wise older man, but I think he has burned too many bridges behind him and is likely to become a high-functioning derelict.

We read this book as a group. One of our members is a medical professional who told us that it is common for medical systems to pop pills down the throats of distraught people and call the job done. We were glad to let her get stuck reading the extremely explicit (and unerotic) sex scene. We all got stuck with descriptions of rot and decay. This novel has enough ants to give Salvador Dalí nightmares. Why couldn’t it have had some old-fashioned midges?

Anyway it is very hard to write about depression, disgust, and tedium without being tedious and disgusting and I don’t think that MacLeòid succeeds. The book is undeniably literature and reminds me of why I did not become a lit major. Even so I look forward to reading more of his novels.

*A’ Togail an t-Srùbain* has 26 chapters, readable typography and a reasonably good binding. There are no chapter titles but this book does not need them. The Gaelic is straightforward and adult-level but required only a few dictionary searches for our group of mostly advanced intermediate readers. It was interesting to see the word *taghta* used as a synonym for okay. The novel is well-edited.



Emily Howe

## Answer to Seanfhacal na Ràithe, p. 14

**Tha clòimh mo chaorach fhèin ort.**

Wool of my sheep is on you.  
(We’re kindred spirits. / You’re my kind of person.)

## Brot le Buntàta Milis agus Ìm Cnòtha-talmhainn

### Grìtheidean

2 spàin-bhùird ime  
1 uinnean meadhanach-mòr air a ghearradh ann am pìosan meadhanach  
1 spàin-tì de shiùcar donn no druaid an t-siùcair dhuibh sàlann, a rèir a' bhlais a thogras tu  
piobar, a rèir a' bhlais a thogras tu  
3 no 4 pìosan longan-creamha air an gearradh gu mìn  
1/2 spàin-tì choireamain meilte  
1/4 spàin-tì (no nas lugha) piobair-cayenne  
3 1/2 cupannan brùth glasraich no brùth circe  
2 chupa uisge no brùtha  
3 buntàta milis meadhanach mòr rùisgte agus air an gearradh ann am pìosan de dh'òirleach a dh'fhaid  
3 spàin-bhùird ìm cnòtha-talmhainn (mìn no cruasbach)  
1 no 2 spàin-bhùird lùs a' choire ùr air a ghearradh gu mìn

Leagh an t-ìm ann am pana iarainn mòr thairis air teas meadhanach. Cuir an t-uinnean, an siùcar, agus an salann ris. Co-mheasgaich iad gu tric gus am bi an t-uinnean bog, mu 5 no 7 mionaidean. Cuir an creamh, an coireaman, agus am piobar-cayenne ris agus bruich iad airson leth-mhionaid eile.

Cuir brùth glasraich, an t-uisge, am buntàta, agus ìm cnòtha-talmhainn ris. Thoir gu goil e thairis air teas àrd. Tionndaidh an teas gu ìosal agus bruich air a chòmhdach gu ìre gus am bi am buntàta bog, mu 25 gu 30 mionaid.

Pronn gu mìn am brot ann am inneal-measgachaidh dighe neo pròiseasar-bìdh gus am bi e mìn. Bi faiceallach; bidh am brot teth. Cuir tuilleadh sàlann agus piobar ris ma thogras tu, cuir lùs a' choire ris, agus bidh thu deiseil. Bidh 6 gu 7 cupannan brot agad.



## Sweet Potato and Peanut Butter Soup

### Ingredients

2 tbsp. butter  
1 medium onion, chopped  
1 tsp. brown sugar or dark molasses  
salt to taste  
black pepper to taste  
3 to 4 garlic cloves minced fine  
1/2 tsp. ground coriander  
1/4 tsp. or less, cayenne  
3 1/2 cups vegetable or chicken stock  
2 cups water (or replace with vegetable or chicken stock)  
2 pounds (about 3 medium) sweet potatoes, peeled and chopped into 1-inch pieces  
3 tbsp. peanut butter (smooth or crunchy)  
1 or 2 tbsp. minced fresh cilantro

Melt butter in large Dutch oven over medium heat. Add onion, brown sugar, and salt. Stir frequently until the onion softens, 5 to 7 minutes. Add garlic, coriander, and cayenne and cook another 30 seconds.

Add broth, water, sweet potatoes, and peanut butter. Bring to boil over high heat. Turn heat to low and cook partly covered, until the sweet potatoes are cooked soft, 25 to 30 minutes.

Working carefully because it's hot, puree the soup in a blender or food processor until it's smooth. Add additional salt and pepper if desired, stir in cilantro, and serve. Makes 6 to 7 cups.

Do you have a favorite recipe that you'd like to share with other ACGA members? Submit it in a bilingual format to one of our editors and we'll publish it in a future issue of *An Naidheachd Againne*. Na gabhaibh dragh – we'll pass the Gaelic by a native speaker to be sure your recipe is delicious in both languages!

# A Bharrachd

*Leabharlann Nàiseanta na h-Alba* / The National Library of Scotland has many digital resources available to view or download for free, among them, the piece from our lead article, *Oidhche Shamhna* from *An Gaidheal*, 1872. <https://deriv.nls.uk/dcn23/7679/76795184.23.pdf>. The piece starts on page page 264 of *An Gaidheal* (page 242 of the PDF).

\* \* \* \*

To help you get ready for the launch of SpeakGaelic, you might want to explore the following resources:

## BBC ALBA YouTube channel

<https://www.youtube.com/c/BBCALBA/playlists>

The BBC ALBA YouTube channel offers short Gaelic videos on various subjects from poetry (Dàn), to music (Cuirme@Celtic Connections), to crafts (Dreuch Ùr) and children's programming (CBeebies ALBA). Many of the videos have English subtitles.

## BBC Sounds app

Free to access radio programmes, podcasts and music from the BBC.

Available in the Apple app store for iPhone (iOS 11.3 or later), iPad (iPadOS 11.3 or later) and iPod touch (iOS 11.3 or later) or in Google Play store for Android 5.0 and up.

\* \* \* \*

Did you recognize the list of animals Hilary NicPhàidein mentions seeing on her walk in “An t-àite agam fhìn” (page 14)? First a fox, then an owl, and then a snake. These are the same animals that a mouse meets in the children's picture book *The Gruffalo* by Julia Donaldson. The small but cunning mouse outsmarts the larger animals, who are hoping to eat him for dinner, by scaring them off with the mention of a bigger, fiercer animal, the Gruffalo. Hilary ends her own story with the hope that by quickening her step, she'll avoid meeting the Gruffalo on her way home. *The Gruffalo* was translated into Gaelic in 2004 by the late Tormod Caimbeul, and you can watch him reading it to a group of school children in this video.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=saGpX89tu84&list=PLyLb83jNQGQLRL7K69al4Y0zbjyIq4KkH>

\* \* \* \*

Alison Lang, Director of the Gaelic Books Council and author, talks about *A' Togail an t-Srùbain*, the novel reviewed in this issue, in Gaelic on her YouTube channel, Criomagan

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B\\_hnaio5BYk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B_hnaio5BYk)

## A Website to Watch



*Sgeulachdan nan Gaisgeach* is a collection of twenty ancient Gaelic tales, most of which were collected from Seòras Mac a' Phearsain by Ruairidh MacIlleathain. The stories, about Fionn, Cù Chulainn, Deirdre, and other familiar Gaelic heroes, are told in Gaelic and there is a transcript for each. Although the stories are not translated into English, each includes a short glossary of terms.

You can immerse yourself in the world of the Gaelic *gaisgich* by clicking on this link:

<https://gaisgeach.com>

# Criomagan / Bits of This and That

## The Gaelic Literature Awards 2021 Shortlists

(titles published between May 1, 2020, and April 30, 2021, and manuscripts for books not yet published)

The prizes will be awarded on Thursday, September 16, 2021, in an online event to be broadcast on YouTube, Facebook and Twitter.

Duais Chomann Gàidhealach Lunnainn / Highland Society of London Prize for best work of fiction

- *Deirdre agus an Rìgh* le Jason Bond
- *Fon Choill* le Calum L. MacLeòid
- *Hiort* le Iain F. MacLeòid

Duais Ruaraidh MhicThòmais / Derrick Thomson Prize for best poetry book

- *Fo Bhlàth* le Niall O'Gallagher
- *Leanabachd a' Cho-Ghleusaiche* le Crisdean MacIlleBhàin
- *100 Dàn as Fheàrr Leinn / 100 Favourite Gaelic Poems*, air a dheasachadh le Pàdraig MacAoidh agus Jo NicDhòmhnaill

Duais Dhòmhnaill Meek / Donald Meek Prize for best work of non-fiction

- *Eachdraidh le Càirdeas is Cridhe: Ainmean-àite Ceann a Tuath Leòdhais / History with Heart and Soul: The Place-names of North Lewis* le Comunn Eachdraidh Nis agus Dr Rachel Barrowman
- *Dràma na Gàidhlig: Ceud Bliadhna air an Àrd-ùrlar / A Century of Gaelic Drama*, air a dheasachadh le Michelle NicLeòid
- *Iain mac Mhurchaidh: The Life and Work of John MacRae, Kintail and North Carolina*, air a dheasachadh le Màiri Sìne Chaimbeul

Leabhar as Fheàrr do Chloinn/Òigridh / Best Book for Children/Young People

- *Òran mo Sheanar* le Catrìona Lexy Chaimbeul
- *An Gille, am Famh, an Sionnach 's an t-Each* le Charlie Mackesy, air eadar-theangachadh le Johan Smith
- *Anna Ruadh* le L.M. Montgomery, air eadar-theangachadh le Mòrag Anna NicNèill

Làmh-sgrìobhainn as Fheàrr do Chloinn/Òigridh / Best Unpublished Manuscript for Children/Young People

- *An Turtar a bha a' Giùlan na Talmhainn* le June Ghreumach
- *Curstag a' Chearc Ruadh* le Liam Alasdair Crouse
- *Moilidh agus Doilidh: Na Fuadaichean bho Shealladh nan Caorach* le Maoilios Caimbeul

Làmh-sgrìobhainn as Fheàrr do dh'Inbich / Best Unpublished Manuscript for Adults

- *A' Ruith Eadar Dà Dhràgon* le Màrtainn Mac an t-Saoir
- *Mar Chlach a' Ruith le Gleann* le Cairistiona Stone
- *Seanchas nan Creag* le Alistair Paul

\* \* \* \*

## Wigtown Poetry Prize 2021 Shortlists Announced

The shortlist for the 2021 Wigtown Scottish Gaelic Prize

- Caroline Bennett
- Deborah Moffatt
- Eoghan Stiubhart (winner)
- Màiri MacLeòid
- Gillebrìde MacMillan (runner-up)

Winners and runners-up were announced September 10th. The prize-giving will take place at the Wigtown Book Festival on October 2.

More information on the Wigtown Poetry Prize and the other shortlists can be found at:

[www.wigtownpoetryprize.com/poetry-competition/introduction](http://www.wigtownpoetryprize.com/poetry-competition/introduction)

# Dè Tha Dol?

## Gaelic Events

### **An Dàmhair 2021 / October 2021**

**Am Mòd Nàiseanta Rìoghail 2021 / The Royal National Mod 2021, Inverness, Scotland and online, October 8–16, 2021**

The Royal National Mod will take place in a hybrid format in 2021, with live competitions at Eden Court in Inverness, as well as an online component, with competitors submitting video entries. In addition to the competitions, the Mod will also feature special concerts, amongst them Lauren MacColl, who will perform specially commissioned music as part of The Year of Coast and Waters. The *Ar Cànan 's ar Ceòl* concert will showcase the musical talent of the Highlands. Many of these events will be streamed online for audiences across the globe. <https://www.ancomunn.co.uk/nationalmod/mod2021>

### **Celtic Colours at Home International Festival 2021, Cape Breton, NS, October 8–16, 2021**

Celtic Colours will be presenting live-streamed concerts, as they did last year. In addition to these nightly concerts, Festival organizers are also developing more content to be enjoyed at home, while providing the opportunity to employ more artists this year. See <https://celtic-colours.com/at-home/> for more information as it becomes available.

### ***Ròs Fiadhaich* / Gaelic Graphic Novel Launch, The Cottage Café (An Teachín), 300 Prince Albert Rd, Dartmouth, NS, Saturday, October 16, 2021**

Launch of the Gaelic graphic novel *Ròs Fiadhaich*, a translation of the English comic book series *Wild Rose* by award-winning Halifax romance novelist Nicola R. White. Sponsored by Bradan Press [www.bradanpress.com/](http://www.bradanpress.com/). This event will be following all COVID safety protocols currently in place.

### ***Ás a' Chamhanaich* / Gaelic Graphic Novel Launch, Colaisde na Gàidhlig, St. Ann's, 51779 Cabot Trail Rd, Baddeck, NS, October 23, 2021**

Featuring the spectacular black-and-white art and original stories of Angus MacLeod of Goose Cove, Cape Breton. This is the first Gaelic graphic novel ever to be written originally in Gaelic, rather than translated. It is also the first Gaelic graphic novel ever to be illustrated by a Gaelic-speaking artist. Sponsored by Bradan Press [www.bradanpress.com/](http://www.bradanpress.com/). This event will be following all COVID safety protocols currently in place.

### **An t-Samhain 2021 / November 2021**

**Mòd Nàiseanta Aimearagaidh Air Loidhne / ACGA Virtual U.S. National Mòd Nov. 13–14, 2021**

Following last year's successful online Mòd, An Comunn Gàidhealach Ameireaganach will hold the U.S. National Mòd via Zoom again this year. See [www.acgamerica.org/news/2021/us-national-mod-registration-opens/](http://www.acgamerica.org/news/2021/us-national-mod-registration-opens/)

### **Ongoing**

### **Highland Threads: the story of Highland fashion through history, virtual exhibit**

Fourteen museums from all over the Highlands of Scotland showcase 14 key pieces of clothing through photography, film, stories and supporting archival footage. Free to view, but donations to support the museums are gratefully accepted. <https://highlandthreads.co.uk/>

### **Cèilidh Oidhche Haoine Bhiortail / Friday Night Virtual Ceilidhs, Comunn Gàidhlig Toronto**

A ceilidh is all about community and coming together. If you have a story, a song, or an instrument you play, you are invited to contribute, wherever you are in the world. Skill level is not the important thing, so simply join and tell, sing or play. Most of all, you are invited to contribute with your presence.

- Upcoming ceilidhs: Friday, September 17; Friday, October 15; Friday, November 19.
- To register, simply fill out the form at the link below and you will be sent the Zoom link to join in online, 7:30 pm Eastern Time. <https://www.gaelicsocietytoronto.com/friday-night-ceilidh.html>

### **An Clas Camelon**

Gaelic song and language workshops are offered on Zoom, from complete beginner to advanced / fluent, taught by Gillebrìde MacMillan, Maeve Mackinnon and Joy Dunlop amongst others. Most song workshops are great for those with little or no Gaelic as they are taught phonetically, but workshops fully in Gaelic are also offered for those more advanced. For more information, email [anclascamelon@gmail.com](mailto:anclascamelon@gmail.com) or see our FaceBook page.



### **Gaelic Song Sharing on Meetup**

**Gàidhlig Photomac** hosts a song sharing session every month or so. You can find more information about this informal event at the Gàidhlig Photomac page on Meetup at <https://www.meetup.com/Gaidhlig-Photomac>. Email Cathleen MacKay at [amum44@yahoo.com](mailto:amum44@yahoo.com) for more information.

### **Pop-up Gàidhealtachd**

Pop-up Gàidhealtachds, hosted Fridays on Zoom by the Highland Village Museum in Iona, Cape Breton, are open to anyone who would like to engage in Gàidhlig conversation. Drop in and use what Gàidhlig you have – mistakes are welcome, all dialects and abilities are welcome, and a word or two of English if necessary.

The pop-up meets for an hour at noon (Atlantic time); 11am (Eastern time); 8 am (Pacific time).

See the Pop-up Gàidhealtachd 2021 Weekly page on Facebook for details and registration information.

<https://fb.me/e/e6iNTQfGo>

## **Cùrsaichean Air Astar / Distance Learning**

### **Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, An Cùrsa Inntrigidh / Gaelic Entry Course**

An Cùrsa Inntrigidh is a supported distance learning Gaelic course for complete beginners and learners with a little Gaelic. The emphasis during learning is on speaking and listening skills, but reading and writing skills are also an important part of the course. For complete information see

<http://www.smo.uhi.ac.uk/en/cursaichean/an-cursa-inntrigidh>

### **Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, An Cùrsa Adhartais / Advanced Gaelic Course**

An Cùrsa Adhartais is aimed at intermediate level learners whose goal is fluency in the language. It is a distance learning course which normally requires a minimum of two years to complete and is broadly equivalent to Sabhal Mòr Ostaig's An Cùrsa Comais. For complete information see

<http://www.smo.uhi.ac.uk/en/cursaichean/an-cursa-adhartais>

For a description of all distance learning courses offered through Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, see

<http://www.smo.uhi.ac.uk/en/cursaichean/cursaichean-air-astar/>

\* \* \* \*

### **Colaisde na Gàidhlig, Leasanan Bhideo / The Gaelic College, Video Lessons**

Six different disciplines are taught by six knowledgeable and experienced instructors who will be sharing tips and techniques to get you playing, dancing, singing and speaking Gaelic the Cape Breton way. Each discipline is offered at 3 levels with 10 lessons per level for a total of 30 lessons in each discipline. Each level can be purchased for 20 CAD for a 6 month subscription. For a list of lessons and more information, see

<https://gaeliccollege.edu/learn/online-learning/video-lessons/>

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

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

Please keep in mind the following deadlines:

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

# Directory of Gaelic Classes & Study Groups

## United States

### **California**

#### **Sacramento Area**

Classes

(on pandemic hold, will resume when possible)

Donnie MacDonald [minchmusic@comcast.net](mailto:minchmusic@comcast.net)

### **Colorado**

#### **Denver**

Conversation Group

(on pandemic hold, will resume when possible)

Monthly at Stella's Coffee Shop

Reese McKay [reese.mckay25@gmail.com](mailto:reese.mckay25@gmail.com)

### **San Luis Valley**

Daily Gaelic

Online lessons & classes; email courses

<http://www.gaidhliggachlatha.com>

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

### **Kentucky**

#### **Louisville**

Online Gaelic language and song lessons

Adam Dahmer [atdahm01@gmail.com](mailto:atdahm01@gmail.com)

### **Maryland**

#### **Baltimore**

Online Classes and Conversation Group

Sgoil Gàidhlig Bhaile an Taigh Mhóir

<https://sgoigaidhlig.org/>

Rick Gwynallen [richard.gwynallen@gmail.com](mailto:richard.gwynallen@gmail.com)

301-928-9026

### **New York**

#### **New York**

Classes (online during pandemic)

New York Caledonian Club

Contact Barbara L. Rice, Chair, Scottish Studies

[Barbara.Rice@nycaledonian.org](mailto:Barbara.Rice@nycaledonian.org)

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

### **North Carolina**

#### **Triangle / Raleigh area**

Study Group (online during pandemic)

An Phillips [fiongeal@gmail.com](mailto:fiongeal@gmail.com)

### **Northern Virginia-Washington, DC-Maryland**

Gaelic Learning Community (online during pandemic)

Gàidhlig Photomac

Regular workshops and social events

Contact Liam [willbcassidy@gmail.com](mailto:willbcassidy@gmail.com)

### **Washington**

#### **Seattle**

Slighe nan Gàidheal

Online Classes & Informal Study Groups

<https://www.slighe.org/gaelic-classes>

## Canada

### **British Columbia**

#### **Vancouver**

Classes (online during pandemic)

Comunn Gàidhlig Bhancoubhair

[info.vancouvergaelic@gmail.com](mailto:info.vancouvergaelic@gmail.com)

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

### **Ontario**

#### **Toronto**

Gaelic classes & private tutoring via Zoom

Comann Luchd-Ionnsachaidh Thoronto

<http://www.torontogaelic.ca>

### **Québec**

#### **Montréal**

Study Group & Celtic choir (online during pandemic)

Linda Morrison [linda@lindamorrison.com](mailto:linda@lindamorrison.com)



**FOR MORE** information about these resources and for information on long-distance courses, short courses, and private instruction, see our web page at <http://www.acgamerica.org/learn/classes>

For additions and corrections, contact Janice Chan, [naidheachd@acgamerica.org](mailto:naidheachd@acgamerica.org)

## ACGA Officers

### President

William (Liam) Cassidy  
[willbcassidy@gmail.com](mailto:willbcassidy@gmail.com)

### Vice President

Jamie MacDonald  
[gaelteach@gmail.com](mailto:gaelteach@gmail.com)

### Treasurer

Michael Mackay  
[mackay@progeny.net](mailto:mackay@progeny.net)

### Bookkeeper

Nickie Polson  
[finance@acgamerica.org](mailto:finance@acgamerica.org)

### Recording Secretary

Joyce Campbell  
[jyccmpbl@aol.com](mailto:jyccmpbl@aol.com)

### Membership Secretary

Janice Chan  
[membership@acgamerica.org](mailto:membership@acgamerica.org)

### Web Administrator

Jeff Justice  
[webmaster@acgamerica.org](mailto:webmaster@acgamerica.org)

### Naidheachd Editor

Suzanne McDougal  
[somcdougal@gmail.com](mailto:somcdougal@gmail.com)

### A Note on ANA's Gaelic and English Orthography

ANA generally publishes articles in Gaelic using the Gaelic Orthographic Conventions published by the Scottish Qualifications Authority ([www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45356.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45356.html)). However, articles employing older spelling are welcome, as are articles written in a particular Gaelic dialect (e.g., Cape Breton, Argyll).

For English articles, both British and American orthography are acceptable, as long as usage is consistent within the article.

## ACGA Online Faces

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

- [www.acgamerica.org](http://www.acgamerica.org), our main website, containing a blog for announcements, tips, articles, etc.; an archive of newsletters; detailed information about our major events; information about ACGA and how to join; learning resources; and more.
- [www.facebook.com/ACGAGaelic](https://www.facebook.com/ACGAGaelic), our Facebook page.
- [www.youtube.com/user/ACGAmerica](https://www.youtube.com/user/ACGAmerica), our YouTube channel with video content.
- [www.twitter.com/ACGAGaelic](https://www.twitter.com/ACGAGaelic), our Twitter account, used for ACGA announcements.
- [www.facebook.com/groups/1463155417230179](https://www.facebook.com/groups/1463155417230179), a special Facebook page for our Gaelic Song and Language Week at Grandfather Mountain. Click the "Join Group" button in the main menu to send a request to join.

## *An Naidheachd Againne*

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

### Content Editor:

Cam MacRae, [cam.macrae70@gmail.com](mailto:cam.macrae70@gmail.com)

### Layout Editor:

Suzanne McDougal, [somcdougal@gmail.com](mailto:somcdougal@gmail.com)

### Assistant Content Editors:

Janice Chan, [seonaganna@gmail.com](mailto:seonaganna@gmail.com)

Jeff Justice, [jw\\_justice@icloud.com](mailto:jw_justice@icloud.com)

Barbara Rice, [barbaralynrice@gmail.com](mailto:barbaralynrice@gmail.com)

### Associate Editor:

Hilary NicPhàidein

### Proofreaders:

Jeanne Pendergast, An Phillips, and Rudy Ramsey

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