

Baile nan  
Gàidheal  
Highland Village  
MADE OF STORIES



The Highland Village  
Gaelic Folklife Magazine

# an rubha

HIGHLANDVILLAGE.CA

VOLUME 19 • NUMBER TWO

Mar Chuimhneachain | Dedication  
*Tributes to Mickey MacNeil and Flora MacIsaac*

Tobar Mhìcheil Iain a' Rodger:  
*A Healing Well in Ottawa Brook*

Dèanta le làimh  
*Destitute of Clothing*

An Gàidheal Portmhor | Scotch Music  
*Marie MacInnis' Jig composed by Dan Hughie MacEachern*



## Comunn Baile nan Gàidheal | Nova Scotia Highland Village Society

**Board of Trustees (as of March 31, 2024)** – Gordon Campbell, Whycomagh Portage (Treasurer); Matthew Cook, Reserve Mines; John Hugh Edwards, Ross Ferry (Vice President); Madeline Harvey, Estmere; Joanne MacGillivray, East Bay; Joanne MacIntyre, Mabou Coal Mines; Kenzie MacKinnon, Halifax; Hector MacNeil, Castle Bay (President); Teresa MacNeil, Johnstown; Wilf MacNeil, Johnstown; Barbara Morrison, Coxheath; Dena Pruski, Island View (Secretary); Heather Sparling, Sydney; Roland Thornhill, Baddeck; Rhonda Walker, Red Islands.

**Staff (April 2024 – October 2024)** – Colleen Beaton, Animator; Melissa Blunden, Executive Director Feb. 2024 – Present; Màiri Britton, Ban-chleasaiche; Kristen Boyd, Animator; Bernard Cameron, Cleasaiche; Marie Chehy, Animator; Emma Cholak, Student Animator; Brenda Dunphy, Animator; Jessica Farrell, Visitor Experience Manager; Patricia Gaudley, Custodian; Anne Gillis, Welcome Centre Clerk; Catherine Gillis, Animator; Brendan Higgins, Labourer; Cecilia Laing, Animator; Ian MacCalder, Animator; Emily MacDonald, Ban-chleasaiche; Emily MacKinnon-MacDonald, Ban-chleasaiche; Joyce MacDonald, Ban-chleasaiche; Shamus Y. MacDonald, PhD, Stiùiriche na Gàidhlig/Manager of

Language and Culture; David MacKenzie, Groundskeeper; Hoss MacKenzie, Animator; Aileen MacLean, Animator; John MacLean, Animator; Pauline MacLean, Manager of Collections/Genealogist; Stacey MacLean, Ban-chleasaiche; Kaleb MacLellan, Animator; Logan MacLellan, Coordinator of Animations & Programs; Stanley MacLellan, Custodian; Anne MacNeil, Welcome Centre Clerk; Beth MacNeil, Animator; Curtis MacNeil, Farmer; Hannah MacNeil, Student Animator; Janet MacNeil, Administrative Assistant; Kaye Anne MacNeil, Animator; Laura MacNeil, Welcome Centre Clerk; Tim MacNeil, Manager of Operations; Malcolm Matheson, Carpenter; Bradley Murphy, Cleasaiche; Rob Pringle, Cleasaiche; Vicki Quimby, Animator/Textile Consultant; Hazel Rooyackers, Student Digitization Assistant; Colin Watson, Cleasaiche; Lili Watson, Ban-chleasaiche; Phillip Whyte, Student Animator; Phyllis Williams, Animator; Catherine Davison, Student Archivist; Emma Cholak, Student animator; and James MacIntyre, Student Animator.

**Contractors** – Vibe Creative Group, Marketing Creative

**Volunteer Programmers** – Alex Musial, HV Day Producer

*Are you looking  
for your Cape Breton  
ancestors?*



**Sinnsearachd**

*Có ris a tha do dhàimh?*  
**Who are your relatives?**

Roots Cape Breton is a research service for those in search of their connection to Cape Breton. With our knowledge of sources and local history plus our research library, we have information to cover most of the Island. Fill in your details on our research form, click submit and we will reply with our estimate.

Visit us at:

[www.rootscapbreton.com](http://www.rootscapbreton.com)

Or e-mail your requests to:  
[rootscapbreton@novascotia.ca](mailto:rootscapbreton@novascotia.ca)



Stòras na h-Òigridh | Treasures of Youth Scholarship Fund provides financial support and assistance to up-and-coming Nova Scotia youth between the ages of five and twenty-one, who are keen to advance their skills in the Gaelic tradition including: fiddle, pipes, piano/guitar accompaniment, language, storytelling, song, and dance.

The Fund welcomes donations. A downloadable brochure with details and a pledge form is available on our website.

Since 2014, the Highland Village has distributed \$26,000 to 17 youth to help them with their cultural journey. For more information see [treasuresofyouth.ca](http://treasuresofyouth.ca)

Abigail MacDonald, Meaghan O'Handley and David MacLean, standing alongside Treasures of Youth Award Recipients Christena MacCalder, Orangedale, Katey Aucoin, Stellarton, Leo LeFort, Westmount, and Wesley MacLean, Millville. Missing from photo: Donald Gillis of Mabou.



[WWW.TREASURESOFYOUTH.CA](http://WWW.TREASURESOFYOUTH.CA)

© October 2025. All content is copyright of the Nova Scotia Highland Village Society, unless otherwise noted.

AN RUBHA (The Point) is published in Iona, Nova Scotia, Canada by Comunn Baile nan Gàidheal / Nova Scotia Highland Village Society. Comments, suggestions, and contributions are welcome.

**Contact:**

4119 Rathad 223 | 4119 Highway 223  
Sanndraigh | Iona  
Alba Nuadh | Nova Scotia  
Guthan | Phone: 902-725-2272  
Toll Free: 1-866-4GAELIC | 1-866-442-3542  
highlandvillage@novascotia.ca  
www.highlandvillage.ca

 Highland Village Museum  
 @highlandv  
 nshighlandvillage  
 Highland Village Museum  
 @nshighlandvillage

**Editorial Committee:**

Melissa Blunden, Shamus Y. MacDonald,  
Pauline MacLean, Janet MacNeil,  
and Jessica Farrell

**Contributors:**

Melissa Blunden, Dòmhnall Uilliam  
Stiùbhart, PhD. Shamus Y. MacDonald, PhD.  
Jessica Farrell, Màiri Britton, Bradley Murphy,  
Hannah Krebs, Vicky Quimby, Connell  
MacKinnon, Pauline MacLean.

**Layout:**

Emily Rankin of Take Note Graphic Design

**Printing:**

City Printers

**Concept:**

Seumas Watson

**Front Cover:**

Coleen Beaton,  
photo credit Adam Hill Photography

ISSN# 1914-6043

Mailed under Canada Post  
Canadian Publication Mail Product  
Sales Agreement. #41257540

## CLÀR-INNSE | INSIDE THIS ISSUE

<b>Facal bhon Neach-stiùiridh   From the Director's Desk.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Mar is Léir Dhomh Fhìn   As I See It .....</b>	<b>5</b>
Ath-ùrachadh an Earraich / Spring's Renewal	
<b>Naidheachd a' Bhaile   The Village News.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>A-mach air Chèilidh .....</b>	<b>8</b>
Tobar Mhìcheil Iain a' Rodger: A Healing Well in Ottawa Brook	
<b>Mar Chuimhneachain   Dedication .....</b>	<b>9</b>
Tribute to Mickey MacNeil	
<b>Achadh nan Gàidheal.....</b>	<b>10</b>
Cumha na Tulaich: A song about the Abandonment of Rear Beaver Cove	
<b>A Visit with Albert Marshall .....</b>	<b>11</b>
L'nu Advisory Group Member	
<b>A' coimhead air ais   What we've been up to since the last issue.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Cainnt is Ceathramhan   Language and Lyrics .....</b>	<b>14</b>
Tarbh Chloinn 'Ic Artair	
<b>An Gàidheal Portmhor   Scotch Music .....</b>	<b>15</b>
Marie MacInnis' Jig composed by Dan Hughie MacEachern	
<b>Mar Chuimhneachain   Dedication .....</b>	<b>16</b>
Flòraidh ni'n Sheonaidh 'ic Sheonaidh 'ic Mhurchaidh   Florence Anne (Steele) MacIsaac	
<b>Dèanta le làimh .....</b>	<b>17</b>
Destitute of Clothing	
<b>Fo na Cabair   Under the Rafters .....</b>	<b>19</b>
A Breadboard from Castle Bay	
<b>Léirmheasan   Book Review.....</b>	<b>21</b>
A Man in Overalls; The Legacy of a Cape Breton Bard	
<b>Mar Chuimhneachain   Dedication .....</b>	<b>22</b>
Tighinn a-nall air Chèilidh: Mickey's Welcome	
<b>Comunn Ar Rùin   Our People.....</b>	<b>23</b>
Acknowledgements & Accolades	

# Facal bhon Neach-stiùiridh | From the Director's Desk



*Melissa Blunden, Executive Director  
Baile nan Gàidheal | Highland Village*

**A**t Baile nan Gàidheal | Highland Village, we often speak of our site as a living cultural landscape—but more than that, it is a place that invites people to feel at home. Whether a visitor is tracing family roots, hearing Gaelic for the first time, or returning for their annual visit to family, with grandchildren in tow, something intangible happens here. In 2024, more people than ever found that connection—28,000 visitors, our highest annual turnout in the site's history, crossed through our gates to share in stories of resilience, belonging, and identity rooted in Nova Scotia Gaels.

That sense of home was the thread that ran through so much of our year—woven through the placemaking we create with our storytelling, our conversations, and the moments of reflection that play out across the site each day. From language learners finding voice, to Elders sharing wisdom, to visitors transported by song or story, the Village continued to serve as a welcoming space where past and present come together. Our success is a reflection of the work and heart our team brings to this mission every day. It was especially fitting, then, that Highland Village's Welcome Centre exhibition "We Are Gaels" was honoured with the 2024 Award of Excellence in Museum Practices by the Association of Nova Scotia Museums—a moment of pride that recognized our role in offering authentic, meaningful encounters rooted in place and people.

The 2024 season also marked a new chapter for our interpretive team with the arrival of Jessica Farrell, who joined us in late summer as our new Visitor Experiences Manager. Jessica has already begun to leave her mark on the program

by strengthening our visitor service standards and bringing a fresh energy to our guest experience planning. Her thoughtful and collaborative spirit have made her a welcome addition to our team and community.

As the visitor season came to a close with the Celtic Colours International Festival and Oidhche nam Bòcan | Night of the Spirits, November gave us space to reflect with gratitude on all we accomplished together. While the visitor season ended with snow in the air, the energy and enthusiasm of our team carried forward into winter planning. We spent the early months of 2025 investing in our people and our future—revisiting language immersion opportunities for community and staff alike, enhancing historical costuming partnerships across Cape Breton, advancing digital marketing, and laying the foundation for long-term growth with a brand-new 2025–2028 Strategic Plan that guides us forward over the next three years. A significant focus was the continued development of the Gàidhlig aig Baile Institute (GABI), now known as Cala Cainnte (Language Haven), a pilot immersion program in partnership with the Office of Gaelic Affairs. Detailed planning for a pilot session in fall 2025 is underway following this model of immersive, community-based Gaelic learning, builds on our vision to be not just a place that teaches about Gaelic life, but one that lives it.

Over the winter, we also took time to revisit and renew our operational goals—ensuring that the systems supporting our mission are sustainable, strategic, and people-centred. Partnership and community engagement were also central themes to our work. We continued our work with our L'nu Advisory Committee on updates to both our tangible operations and our relationships—including exhibition panel revisions, new program offerings, ongoing work with a medicine trail, and more. We continued our close collaboration with the Office of Gaelic Affairs, participated in the provincial

Gaelic language strategy renewal, and connected with tradition bearers to inform our work on language and cultural transmission. These relationships ensure our programming and interpretation remain relevant, respectful, and deeply grounded in the lived experience of Nova Scotia Gaels.

This past year at Highland Village has been a reminder of what it means to belong—of what it means to come home, or to find one, even briefly, in a place of shared story and care. As Executive Director, I am continually moved by the transformative power of what we do here. It's not just about interpreting the past—it's about creating a sense of rootedness for people today. In a time when many are seeking meaningful connection, our work takes on renewed importance.

To our staff—year-round and seasonal—I offer my deepest thanks. Your passion, creativity, and commitment shape this place and define its spirit. To our Board, our partners, our Tradition Bearers and Elders, and community members, and all who have supported our journey this past year—thank you for walking with us. Every conversation, every visitor welcomed, every story shared—it all contributes to something bigger than any one season or program. It creates community.

As we look ahead, we do so with clarity and heart. With Cala Cainnte on the horizon, strengthened partnerships, and new leadership on our team, we are poised to continue building a Highland Village that is not only a site of preservation—but one of living culture, and belonging.

Tha sinn a' coimhead air adhart—we are looking ahead—with purpose, and with the warm invitation that all are welcome here, in this place we call home. ©

**Le meas,** *Melissa Blunden*  
*Melissa Blunden, Executive Director  
Baile nan Gàidheal | Highland Village*

# Mar is léir dhomh fhìn | As I See It

## ATH-ÙRACHADH AN EARRAICH / SPRING'S RENEWAL

Spring this year came early to Camuscross, the township in the south of the Isle of Skye where I live with my family. For most of the winter the west coast of the Scottish Highlands was battered by a series of storms, but, at long last, the sun broke through and a calm settled. We have now enjoyed several weeks of clear, bright, sunny weather. The road verges are flecked with the yellow stars of lesser celandines, the *cinn-àgain*, and the trees are thronged with all kinds of singing birds: particularly prominent this week have been the cascading waterfall song of newly returned willow warblers, the *crìonagan-giuthais* ('the frail little birds of the pine wood'), and the metallic buzz of the greenfinches, the *glaisein-daraich* ('the grey-green birds of the oak'). The cuckoo or *cuthag* returned to Skye last week; I heard its first *gug-gùg* just after seeing the first pink cuckooflower—*bròg na cuthaige* or 'cuckoo shoe'—of the season.

On the saltings by the shore, the tiny white flowers of scurvygrass, *carran*, are everywhere. As its name suggests in English and Gaelic alike (*càrr* is Gaelic for 'the itch', or scurvy), the plant was used in the old days to treat vitamin C deficiency during *sgrìob liath an earraich*. This was the 'grey scrape of spring' when food was scarce and people's gums would bleed through lack of nutrients. Understandably, it was counted as very unlucky at this time of year to hear the first cuckoo with no food in your stomach.

The Highlands are a lovely land to look at, but a challenging landscape to live in. Its people still live lives vulnerable to the elements—and they are also often at the mercy of outsiders, those busy, driven people with a glint in their eye, money in their pockets, and the ear of those in power. Some wish to exploit the region for personal or institutional gain. Others, no less dangerous, are on a misguided mission to save the land, or save its people. Whatever the motivation, it is much easier to meddle with a small, demoralised population spread thinly across a big slice of country, in a region 'peripheral' to central government, whose culture appears to be fading away—ironically, at a time when that culture has never been more universally recognisable across the globe.

The Scottish Highland landscape is just as iconic as Scottish Highland culture, and the bens and glens have become a new financial frontier. Highland estates are now being treated as lucrative portfolio investments: absentee landowners and international trusts and corporations increasingly buy up vast tracts of land, often furtively acquiring them 'off market'. Some estates are being effectively left to fall into decay, in order to burnish 'green' credentials, harvest government environmental subsidies, and 'earn' carbon credits to offset emissions made elsewhere. Others become sites for massive industrial wind farms offering dubious environmental benefits and few long-term advantages for local communities.

At the end of March, residents in the south of Skye woke up to find that the local estate had been suddenly, immediately put up for sale, without a word of warning. What makes this sale particularly disturbing is that the estate is owned and run by the Clan Donald Land Trust, a charitable organisation founded nearly fifty years ago with the support of worldwide members of the kindred, in order to preserve the history and heritage of their clan, and encourage Gaelic culture as a whole. Not one of the trustees lives on the island, let alone in the Highlands; their homes are in London, England; Pasadena, California; and Charleston, South Carolina. Local tenants, crofters, estate workers and their families fear their livelihoods and future have been put at risk. Later this year Armadale Castle and its grounds are scheduled to be sold off. The trustees themselves admit that much of the priceless collection of Highland artefacts in the Museum is likely to be dispersed; incredibly, the trustees have no firm plan regarding the future of the Clan Donald Archives, a collection of thousands of irreplaceable historic records documenting the story of the clan and its people over four hundred years.

In face of such overpowering challenges, it is worth asking: what insights might Scottish Gaelic language and culture offer the people of the Highlands? To speak Gaelic, to know its culture, is to engage with the Highland landscape not just as a jumbled backdrop of



*Stiùbhart enjoying a laugh with new friend, Anna MacKinnon, Broad Cove Banks, June 2024.*

picturesque lochs and mountains, but as a living environment that has been shaped by and at the same time shapes its inhabitants: time-deep, multidimensional, full of historical meaning and cultural resonance. At a community level, Gaelic culture may yet offer us clueless moderns guidelines and protocols suggesting an etiquette of good neighbourliness: mutual respect, courtesy, a shared regard—and a commitment not to fall out with each other too often! Gaelic culture might offer superficial contemporary models of communal resilience a fresh and sophisticated operating system, albeit a buggy one, missing bits of code and possibly in need of updates.

And this is where Nova Scotia comes into the story. When I visited Cape Breton last year, I was impressed—and deeply moved—by the vitality, the grounded confidence, and the clarity of vision of a new generation of Gaelic speakers. Their Gaelic was not so much learnt from books or apps, as from people. And they learnt not only words and formal grammar, but culture: Gaelic songs, Gaelic stories, Gaelic humour, a Gaelic way of living, even. At its best, their Gaelic has a fluent ease, a lightness, and a rootedness often outshining what we hear in Scotland. It sings. This living, breathing, confident Gaelic is what we need more of here in Scotland, not just to revitalise the language and culture in the abstract sense, but to revitalise Highland communities, fostering strong, shared, resilient identities essential to our cultural and social resilience in the face of ongoing challenges and deep-rooted structural inequities. ©

*Dòmhnall Uilleam Stiùbhart, PhD., Senior Lecturer at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, the Gaelic college on the Isle of Skye.*

*Stiùbhart visited the Highland Village as part of the Two Islands, One People Project, spearheaded by St. Mary's University and Historic Environment Scotland.*

# Naidheachd a' Bhaile | The Village News

I started my last update by noting how we're kept busy here all year long. Since that time, it's only gotten busier. But it's also been a very interesting and fulfilling few months.

In addition to our regular language and cultural programming, now supervised by Colin Watson, the newly appointed Cleasaichean Coordinator, we organized two well-attended workshops for language learners last summer. The first was hosted by Stacey MacLean and focused on Gaelic songs and composers from central Cape Breton. The second was hosted by Dougie MacPhee, a native speaker from Barra, who told two long, traditional folktales in Gaelic.

As those who follow our social media may have noticed, Baile nan Gàidheal has also been active in supporting programming off-site. Over the last several months, for example, we helped organize a couple of week-long language immersions hosted by Hannah Krebs. Several animators were able to attend those sessions with support from the museum, helping build language capacity during the off-season. Similarly, Carmen MacArthur organized a series of six sessions for advanced learners on our behalf, which were hosted by fluent speakers in Mabou, Baddeck, Iona, Antigonish, and Halifax.

Without doubt, however, the most significant contribution the museum has made to language programming has been through the Gàidhlig aig Baile Institute, now called Cala Cainnte (Language Haven). Supported by the Office of Gaelic Affairs, the institute is designed to play a leading role in language revitalization efforts in Gaelic Nova Scotia. Once operational, a long-term, live-in immersion programme will live at its heart. Suffice it to say, we believe the institute will be a game-changer and are excited to work with coordinator Màiri Britton to make it happen.

One of the major projects described in my last update was a partnership between Saint Mary's University and Historic Environment Scotland. As part of this project, the Highland Village teamed up with the Boisdale Historical Society to organize an archaeological assessment of Rear Beaver Cove. This took place back in June, when a group of approximately twenty people, drawn from two continents, spent the day exploring the area. Two people who travelled from Scotland to take part also gave guest lectures at the Highland Village. Archaeologist Eve Boyle, Historic Environment Scotland, and Gaelic scholar Dòmhnall Uilleam Stiùbhart, Sabhal Mòr



Shamus Y. MacDonald, PhD  
Stiùiriche na Gàidhlig/Manager of Language and Culture

Ostaig, spoke to a capacity crowd at the museum during their visit to Nova Scotia.

As part of this collaboration, I was later able to represent the museum in Scotland, where I visited Eigg, and spoke about the work of our museum at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig. As it was twenty years since I was last in Scotland, it was a special treat to return as a member of this international partnership. Dr. Karly Kehoe, who spearheaded the initiative through St. Mary's University, later returned to the Highland Village to give the annual Joe Neil MacNeil Memorial Lecture along with members of the Boisdale Historical Society. Their contributions made the ideal backdrop for Judy Roy to launch her new book about the life and writing of her grandfather, Paddy Nicholson, a native of Rear Beaver Cove.

As much as our museum is a tourist attraction, it's also an educational facility and events like these are a vital part of our work. As a result, we were very pleased to welcome Allan MacDonald to Baile nan Gàidheal in October to deliver the Alex Francis MacKay Memorial Lecture. A native of Glenuig, Scotland, MacDonald is well-known for his ground-breaking research into the

historic links between piping and singing in Gaelic Scotland. Attended by an appreciative audience, his talk was a great way to kick-off Celtic Colours.

Similarly, in recognition of Mi'kmaq History Month, we were honoured to welcome Sr. Dorothy Moore to the museum for a special screening of a documentary about her life and work, produced by Dr. Mary Jane Harkins. Sr. Moore grew up in Membertou and is a trail-blazing, educator, social justice advocate and Mi'kmaw elder. After the film, she addressed a group of students who attended the screening – holding their attention in a way that made it clear the teaching spirit is alive and well in her!

I hope you enjoy this issue of An Rubha. It's a wonderful way to reflect on the work we're doing together and recognize the many people who make our museum such a special place.

Sin e bhuam. Chi mi sibh air a' bhruthach.  
©

Shamus Y. MacDonald, PhD,  
Stiùiriche na Gàidhlig/  
Manager of Language and Culture

The meaning of home is a central theme explored in our Baile nan Gàidheal | Highland Village Museum narrative. The stories of Nova Scotia Gaels leaving their homes in the Outer Hebrides of Scotland to begin a new life across the Atlantic - most never to return - resonates with our visitors regardless of their cultural background as it is a story universal.

In August 2024, I was thrilled and appreciative for the opportunity to return to my home, and step into the role of Visitor Experience Manager at Baile nan Gàidheal.

This has felt like coming home in many aspects. I will never forget the profound excitement felt during my pre-school years hearing the telephone ring in the summer evenings, finally receiving the much-anticipated call from my aunt Marie MacDonald - a museum weaver and Animator at the time - to ask if I would like to "go to work" with her for the day.

Several days during the summer, my mother would pack my lunch, and my aunt would pick me up before collecting the rest of the Washabuck carpool - Marie MacLean, Gerry MacNeil, and Kaye Anne MacNeil. The tasks assigned to my 4-year-old self have been blurred by time, but I distinctly remember feeling so welcomed and encouraged by all staff and would wait in eager anticipation for the next phone call.

During the 2024 season, the hospitality and warmth I first felt at the Highland Village decades ago, remains strong and is reflected in the results of our CBU World Tourism Institute's Visitor Experience survey.

Throughout the summer and early fall, 228 visitors participated in a brief survey after their tour and an outstanding 100 per cent of respondents rated staff presence and engagement as "positive to very positive." We welcomed more than 28,000 visitors from around the world in 2024 and hosted several first-time and annual special events rooted in Gaelic language, culture and traditions.

As part of the central Cape Breton community, we were pleased to open the doors to community members throughout our winter and spring months through marag making cooking classes, music lessons, and senior's social gatherings.

We welcomed new coordinator positions, all with their own deep connections to Baile nan Gàidheal: Laura MacNeil - Welcome Centre,; Logan MacLellan - Animation, Programs & Costumes; Curtis MacNeil - Farm; The coordinators are a tremendous asset, each contributing a wealth of knowledge and expertise to our ever-growing museum.

Our team of staff, which I've heard more than once described as a family, are the heart and backbone of Baile nan Gàidheal. I would like to thank everyone for your passion, dedication, going above and beyond for our visitors, and sharing your stories that preserve our Gaelic identity and encourage us all to explore the meaning of home. ©



Jessica Farrell, MBA (CED)  
Visitor Experience Manager

Jessica Farrell, MBA (CED)  
Visitor Experience Manager



*Leanaibh dlùth ri cliù bhur sinnsir.*

Comunn Baile nan Gàidheal | The Nova Scotia Highland Village Society 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 Scottish Gaelic culture in Nova Scotia.

Since 2000, the Nova Scotia Highland Village Society has operated Baile nan Gàidheal | Highland Village, A Part of the Nova Scotia Museum, in partnership with the Nova Scotia Museum (Dept. of Communities, Culture, Tourism & Heritage).

A PART of THE NOVA SCOTIA MUSEUM

**Baile nan Gàidheal**  
Highland Village  
MADE OF STORIES

Our vision is to be the leading Gaelic folklife centre, recognized in Nova Scotia, nationally and internationally as an essential institution for continuing development and representation of a vital and sustainable Gaelic community.

Our mission is to grow as a Gaelic folklife centre that bilingually nurtures, communicates and celebrates the heritage and cultural identity of Nova Scotia's Gaelic community.

We are a member of Association of Nova Scotia Museums (ANSM), Canadian Museums Assoc. (CMA), Heritage Cape Breton Connection, Council of NS Archives (CNSA), Genealogical Assoc. of NS (GANS), Cape Breton Genealogical & Historical Association, Assoc. of Living History, Farms and Agricultural Museums (ALHFAM), Celtic Heart of North America Marketing Cooperative, Tourism Industry Assoc of NS (TIANS), Baddeck & Area Business Tourism Assoc. (BABTA), Sydney & Area Chamber of Commerce, Strait Area Chamber of Commerce, and the Cape Breton Partnership.

# A-mach air Chèilidh

## TOBAR MHÌCHEIL IAIN A' RODGER: A HEALING WELL IN OTTAWA BROOK

A good source of water was a key consideration for settlers selecting property in Nova Scotia. Over time, roadside wells and springs also became important landmarks to people travelling by horseback or walking long distances. Older tradition bearers often describe the water these sites produced, recalling their coolness, clarity, and fine taste.

Gaelic names given to such places are retained in a variety of sources today. Written examples include *Fuaran an Tuathaich* (The North Uist Man's Spring) in Washabuck (MacLean 1939, 69) and *Tobar nam Bòcan* (The Well of the Ghosts) in Pictou County (Nilsen 1989-90, 221). Oral tradition recalls additional names: *Tobar Pheadair Bhig* (Little Peter's Well) in Rear Boisdale, *Am Fuaran Gorm* (The Blue Spring) Hillsdale, and *Fuaran Bean Eachainn Dhòmhnail Ruairidh* (Hector Donald Rory's Wife's Spring) in Rear Christmas Island.

Significantly, a small number of such sites were thought to do more than quench thirst. Drawing on a related tradition from Gaelic Scotland and Ireland, some wells and springs in the region were said to possess curative properties. While the best-known example is likely the Glengarry Mineral Spring, located between Big Pond and Loch Lomond, other communities also laid claim to healing springs and wells in Gaelic Nova Scotia.

Several months ago, Gregory MacNeil offered to take a couple of us from the Highland Village to a healing spring in nearby Ottawa Brook. Although it only took about twenty minutes to reach the secluded spot through the woods, without his help, we would never have found it. A series of tall poles stuck in the ground is all that alerts the visitor to its location in a bog. Though narrow, the spring is deceptively deep. Even the longest pole we found could not reach its bottom. Located in a boggy area, near the salty waters of the Bras d'Or Lakes, the water produced by the spring has a distinctly brackish flavour.

According to the late Mickey MacNeil this site was known in Gaelic as *Tobar Mhicheil Iain a' Rodger* (Michael John the Rodger's



Gregory MacNeil

Well) or simply *An Tobar Leigheis* (The Healing Well). For generations, Gaels from the area visited the spring to be cured of a variety of ailments. Gregory MacNeil explained that visitors would usually drink the water or apply it topically depending on the ailment that brought them there in the first place. The water was also bottled so it could be used at home.

Several years ago, Eddie Jack MacNeil, who grew up in Benacadie Glen, shared his memories of the healing spring with me: "*Fuaran beannaichte a bh'ann. 'S e. Bha iad a' toirt uiste dhachaidh cuideachd. Ma bha pàiste 's an taigh, 's cha robh e ' faireachdainn math, chuir iad an t-uisge air a' phàiste, air a' cheann aige. Ghabh iad urnaigh air a' phaiste 's bhiodh e alright*" (It was a blessed spring. It was. They were taking water home too. If you had a child in the house, and he wasn't feeling well, they would put the water on the child, on his head. They said prayers over the child, and he would be alright.)

While those who visit healing wells and

springs sometimes credit their restorative properties to the organic or mineral composition of their waters, others clearly see their powers within a spiritual framework. Either way, special places like these are wonderful examples of the bonds Scottish Gaels forged with the landscape in Nova Scotia and the way cultural beliefs and practices from an old home were transferred to a new one.

As we made the trip back to the car, we couldn't help but think of the many generations who have drawn comfort from the healing spring in Ottawa Brook. Sites like this one never enjoyed much in the way of formal publicity or infrastructure: no grottos were ever built at Tobar Mhicheil Iain a' Rodger. But despite the many changes that have altered the landscape in Ottawa Brook, the powers of this place have never been forgotten thanks to community members like Gregory MacNeil. ©

Shamus Y. MacDonald, PhD,  
Stiùiriche na Gàidhlig/  
Manager of Language and Culture

# Mar Chuimhneachain | Dedication

## TRIBUTE TO MICKEY MACNEIL



Colin Watson and Mickey MacNeil

It is with great admiration that I write this tribute to our charismatic, gentlemanly neighbour and friend, Michael John H. MacNeil. Beloved community elder and generous tradition bearer, *Mickey*, lived a full life in Jamesville to the age of 95 years (September 27, 1928 - April 22, 2024).

Like many others I've spoken to, I was acquainted with Mickey during visits at Mickey's General Store in Iona as a child, where he kept shop in the parish for many years. It wasn't until much later I had the honour of getting to know him better after he agreed to participate in the Bun 's Bàrr (Root and Branch) Master Apprentice Program. Put on in partnership with the Office of Gaelic Affairs in 2010, the general concept of the program was to share knowledge from elder to younger tradition bearers. Providing an opportunity to socialise in Gaelic. A familiar enough and traditional concept of informally passing on information in the

Gaelic community. Mickey began upwelling cultural treasures conveyed to him through family and community. Much to the delight of his audiences, whether at his home or in the community at large, Mickey possessed a great sense of humour and was adept at using witty and wry perspectives in Gaelic and English.

A visit with *Micheal Eòin Chaluim Sheumais Mhòir*, as Mickey's patronymic ran, more often than not offered up connecting threads of Gaelic phrases, jokes, proverbs and more in his conversation. He tactfully worked as a conduit, linking people to the language and culture of his Barra ancestry by way of good hospitality. It was a treat to be in his company, sharing openly insights about his own life time, as well as back further into his cultural memory of tradition bearers before. Mickey felt it his duty to pass on what had been shared with him for the purpose of sustaining the Gaelic language

and culture. His contribution to Gaelic learners was wonderful and his clear voice and strong accent shall resonate for a long time to come.

Taking the time to appreciate the simple things in life Mickey focused on living well and treating everyone who came to his door with an open heart, Mickey enjoyed a good meal, a drink among friends, singing, socializing and demonstrated a spiritual richness that was commendable. Gentle nature, strong faith and cleverness embodied our good friend. He will be remembered fondly. Duine stuama còir ri moladh, *Micheal Eòin Chaluim Sheumais Mhòir*. ©

Colin Watson,  
Ceann na Cleasaichean/Gaelic Resource Team Lead

# ACHADH NAN GAIDHEAL

## CUMHA NA TULAICH: A SONG ABOUT THE ABANDONMENT OF REAR BEAVER COVE

Achadh nan Gàidheal was a Gaelic column that appeared more than 1000 times in the Casket newspaper between 1920 and 1945. It was edited by Monsignor Patrick Nicholson, a native of Rear Beaver Cove. Because of our recent work with the Boisdale Historical Society, we thought it would be appropriate to showcase this column, and its subject, because of their connection to Rear Beaver Cove. We have retained much of the original orthography in the Gaelic.

### Chorus:

**Air faillirin illirin, e ho ro hi o;**

**Air faillirin illirin, aichrin o.**

Gur mis' tha fo mhulad  
A' fàgail na Tulaich,  
Gun dùil ri tigh'nn tuilleadh  
A dh'fhuireach do 'n Chùl

Gur e mis' tha gu cràiteach  
Fàgail m'athair 's mo mhàthair,  
Mac mo pheathar 's mo bràithrean,  
'S iad gun nàbaidh ri 'n cùl.

Gur muladach tha mi  
Toirt mo chùl ri mo chàirdean  
Mì fàgail an àite  
'S an deach m' àrach bhos thùs

Chan urrainn mi àireamh  
Gu dé dh'èirich do 'n àite  
'S liuthad neach a bha 'tàmhachd  
Gu h-àghmhor 's a' Chùl

Tha 'n t-àite 'n fhàsach,  
Tha na daoine an déidh fhàgail,  
Gun dh'fhalbh iad às gach àite  
'S gu bheil pàirt dhiubh 's an ùir

Sud an comunn bha spòrsail,  
Luchd gabhail nan òran,  
Sheinneadh fìdheall gu ceòlmhor,  
'S piob-mhòr thogadh sunnd

Tha feadhainn ag ràitinn,  
Nuair a nì mi 'n t-àite fhàgail  
Gu 'm bidh mi cho saibhir  
Ri stàta no diùc.

Ged a gheibhinn 'n am stàta  
An déidh an t-àit' fhàgail  
Gu'm bidh mulad gu bràth orm  
Nuair a dh'fhàgas mi 'n Cùl.

Gheibhinn tuilleadh ri ràitinn  
Mu dheidhinn an àite,  
Ach mìle beannachd gu bràth  
Le muinntir ghràdhach A' Chùil

It's me that is saddened  
Leaving the Hill  
Without expectation of returning  
To live in the Rear

It's me that is distressed  
Leaving my father and mother  
My nephew, and my brothers,  
And them without a neighbour  
supporting them

It's woeful that I am  
Turning my back on my friends  
Me leaving the place  
Where I was raised from the start

I cannot account for  
What occurred to the place  
And the many people who were living  
Joyfully in the Rear

The place is a wilderness  
The people are after leaving  
They left every place  
And some are buried under the earth

That was the community  
that was fun-loving  
Song-singing people  
The fiddle would play melodiously  
And the bagpipes would lift spirits

Some people are saying  
When I leave the place  
I will be as wealthy  
As a statesmen or duke

Even if I would get a state  
After leaving the place  
I will forever be saddened  
When I will leave the Rear

I could say more  
About the place  
But a thousand blessings forever  
To the beloved people of the Rear

(Photo Credit: Ellison Robertson)

'S ann air Cùl Còbh A' Bhìobhair, ann am Paraiste Bhaghasdail, a bha Gilleasbuig MacGillios a' còmhnaidh mu'n do rinn e an t-òran a tha mi 'cur gu Achadh nan Gàidheal. Rinn e òran math eile mu fhàgail na Tulaich, agus tosta do'n bhreitheamh MacCoinnich, nach maireann. Tha dùil agam a chuir 'ugaibh an ùine gheàrr.

Bha uair còig air fhichead de theaghlach mhóra a' fuireach air a' Chùl. Bha iad sona saibhir, gun dad de éis' ach chan eil aon duine ann an-diugh. Far am bu tric a dhùisgeadh mac-talla nan creag le sgàl na piob-mhòir, ceòl na fìdhle, no luinneag a' bhàird, chan eil a-nis ach fàsach balbh.

“Cha till, cha till na daoine,  
Bha cridheil agus aobheil,  
Mar mhol air latha gaoithe  
Rinn iad sgaoileadh gu bràch”  
(G. MacC., Eilean na Nollaig)

(Bu chor gu'm biodh am fear-deasachaidh eòlach gu leòr air A' Chul! Tha e am barail gu robh barrachd aobhair dol imrich aig a' luchd-aitich 's a bha aig iomadach aon a dh'fhag an dùthaich, ged nach biodh de dh'ana-cothram orra ach cion cothraim falbh is tighinn. Ach biodh sin mar a tha e, 's math a dh'fhaodas e bhith gu bheil là eile tighinn; tha ionmhas anns an t-seann àite, agus gheibhear seòl uaireigin air a thoirt am follais. Ged nach till na daoine tha cnàmh 's ùir, math dh'fhaodte nach bi an dàil fada gus am faicir sìol ùr a' còmhnuidh air bailtean an seanairean.)

It was in Rear Beaver Cove, in the Parish of Boisdale, that Archie Gillis was living before he made the song that I am sending to Achadh nan Gàidheal. He made another good song about leaving the hill, and a toast to the late Judge MacKenzie. I expect to send it to you in a short time.

There were once twenty-five big families living in the Rear. They were happy, wealthy, and without want, but there is not a person there today. Where often the echo of the rocks would be awakened with the skirl of the bagpipes, fiddle music, or the song of the bard, there is now nothing but a mute wilderness.

“No, the people will never return,  
Who were hearty and joyful,  
Like chaff on a windy day,  
They have been scattered forever”  
(G. MacC. Christmas Island)

(The editor should be plenty familiar with the Rear! He is of the opinion that the inhabitants had greater reason to move away than many an individual who left the country, although they had no disadvantages other than a lack of opportunity for coming and going. But be that as it may, it may well be that another day is coming; there a richness in the old place, and a way can be found that would bring it to light at some point. Although the people whose bones are in the earth will not return, perhaps the delay won't be long until a new generation will be seen living on the farms of their grandparents.) ©

# A Visit with Albert Marshall, L'NU ADVISORY GROUP MEMBER

A highly respected elder and resident of Eskasoni, Albert Marshall is well known for his dedication to Mi'kmaw culture, language, and environmental ethics. A passionate advocate for cross-cultural collaboration, he holds multiple honorary degrees and awards, including the Order of Canada. Despite keeping a busy schedule well into his eighties, Marshall is also an enthusiastic and supportive member of the L'nu Advisory Group at Highland Village. As a result, we thought readers might like to learn more about him. In a wide-ranging interview, Marshall shared his thoughts on our work and hopes for the future.

A proud member of the Moose Clan, Albert Marshall was born in Eskasoni. Despite being forced to spend much of his childhood at the Shubenacadie Residential School, he developed a strong sense of Mi'kmaw identity due to the positive influence of his mother and father: "We don't declare it enough, but the foundation of who we are comes from our parents. They're the ones that developed that footing and foundation. And you just have to work on it after that."

Language and culture are vital parts of identity according to Marshall, who noted the long-term consequences of forced assimilation when we spoke, "It's an obvious question that we should be asking ourselves: What will be the repercussions when you deny a person to think and to talk based on their culture? You're actually robbing them." Instead, Marshall suggests a diversity of voices benefits the whole: "Who you are is a gift—and that gift has to be shared."

Mi'kmaw culture has long been open to new people and ideas according to Marshall, who recalled the example of Mi'kmaw men who long ago learned the blacksmith trade from Gaelic-speaking neighbours in central Cape Breton, "You see, initially, they had skills we needed... Like blacksmiths. And we learned from them. And as these relationships are evolving, I am sure they were more than willing of sharing that knowledge to the Mi'kmaw people. Because eventually, we had blacksmiths here. We had people who can help you if your animals are sick or not. We used to go to Christmas Island. MacKenzie place. That was just before you get to the

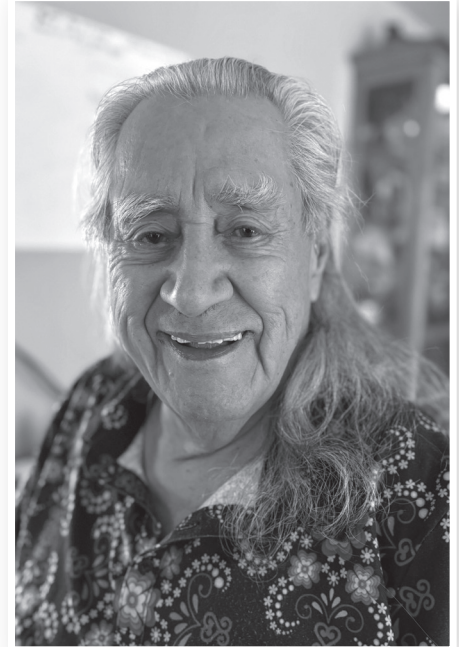
highway, you know...Within a five or ten mile radius, that was nothing. Or twenty-five miles, that's nothing. You know, you can walk there. And more than likely, you'll be offered a shelter, meals, whatever."

The ability to harness skills and knowledge from different perspectives is also essential to two-eyed seeing (Etuaptmumk), a principle that advocates for bringing together Indigenous and Western worldviews to consider issues from multiple perspectives. Because this concept was developed by Albert and his late wife Murdena, we were eager to hear his thoughts on its relevance: "Without using that concept of two-eyed seeing, you know you see everything from one lens, based on your language, culture, and so on. Your background. And deep down you know that you're not alone and that it's impossible to know everything. So this knowledge, if I stay within my small corner here, I can survive. But if I go venture off somewhere else, I have to rely on someone else's perspective to guide me, you know what I mean? So by constantly engaging your two eyes, it helps that angel be much more effective of leading you on the right path."

In order to encourage that exchange, Marshall believes building personal connections between people is essential. While music has long played a vital role in bringing together the Gaels and the Mi'kmaq, he also highlights the value of stories, "The fundamental principle in a relationship is to exchange our stories. Because it's through this exchange of stories, you will not only know where this person comes from, but where they're going and who they are. And you know, that's the seed of a relationship. You know where this person comes from. You know why they are here. And how they got here. Then everything else is simple."

As our visit came to a close, Marshall reflected on his hopes for continued collaboration between the Mi'kmaq and the Gaels: "I would like to see more interaction. Because it's through this interaction that we'll cement and create the kind of relationship that will be required to achieve whatever we're trying to achieve."

Now in his late eighties, Marshall has seen



Albert Marshall

a great deal of change during his life. But despite the challenges, he remains optimistic about the future and concluded with an important reminder to all of us: "The roads were not paved in gold. But despite everything else we're still here. And you can say the same thing about your culture...If there is love and compassion within, then you bank on love and compassion, knowing that love and compassion will always prevail. And that's the foundation for resilience." ©

Shamus Y. MacDonald, PhD  
Stiùiriche na Gàidhlig/  
Manager of Language and Culture

"Who you are is a gift—and that gift has to be shared." - Albert Marshall

# A' COIMHEAD AIR AIS | WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO SINCE THE LAST ISSUE



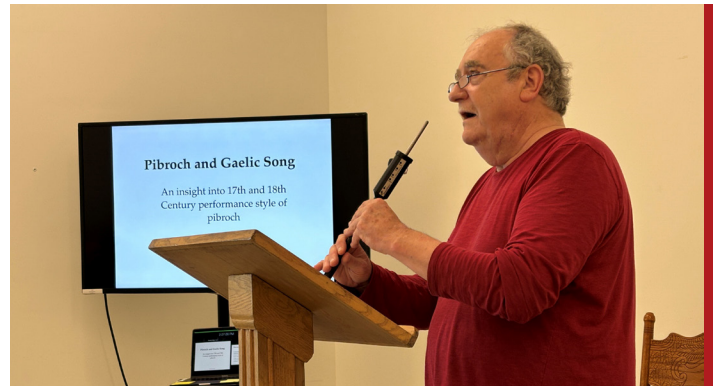
*TOP LEFT: Shamus Y. MacDonald and Dòmhnall Uilleam Stiùbhart flank Alasdair Macleod, who interviewed them in Gaelic about their trip to Eigg for BBC Alba.*

*TOP RIGHT: Fr. Allan MacMillan accepts the Award of Merit from Board Chair Rhonda Walker and Executive Director, Melissa Blunden.*

*MIDDLE: Museum staff provide food from our farm to the Eskasoni Food Bank.*

*RIGHT: Members of the Boisdale Historical Society share their thoughts on the history and culture of Rear Beaver Cove as part of the Joe Neil MacNeil Lecture.*





*TOP LEFT: Judy Roy is joined by her brother, Paul Kiritsy, in the Gathering Space at the Highland Village at the launch of her book 'A Man in Overalls: The Legacy of a Cape Breton Bard,' which tells the story of their grandfather, Paddy Nicholson.*

*TOP RIGHT: Piper and scholar, Allan MacDonald, delivers the Alex Francis Memorial Lecture during a visit from Scotland.*

*MIDDLE: A capacity crowd listens to presentations by archaeologist Eve Boyle and Gaelic scholar DW Stiùbhart from Scotland.*

*LEFT: Sr. Josephine MacLellan, Elder Sr. Dorothy Moore, and Dr. Mary Jane Harkins*

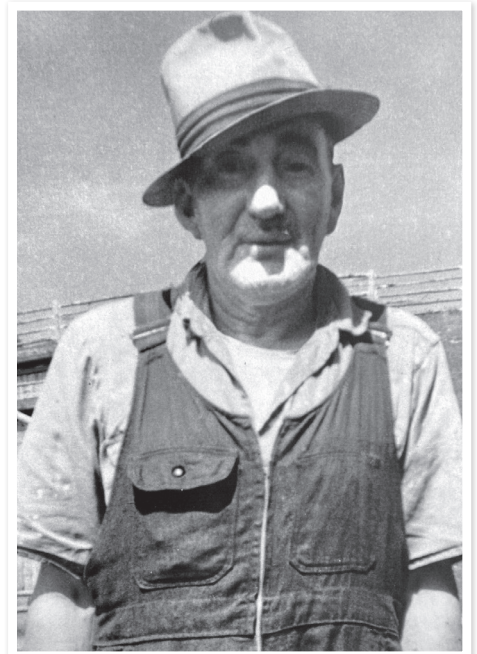
# Cainnt is Ceathramhan | Language and Lyrics

## TARBH CHLOINN 'IC ARTAIR

For the past three years, the Cainnt is Ceathramhan project has been working to catalogue and transcribe the 2,000 plus recordings which make up the Cape Breton Gaelic Folklore Collection. We are in the final year of the project now and getting excited to share the treasures of this collection in a new database housed online through DASG (Digital Archives of Scottish Gaelic) at Glasgow University. Amongst the many gems that have surfaced during the project is an entire reel that has never been available online before. It was recorded by Dr. John Shaw late in 1977 and features 33 recordings from Gilleasbuig Eóghainn Dhòmhnail 'ic Aonghuis | Archie Dan MacLellan and his sister Flòraidh ni'n Eóghainn Dhòmhnail 'ic Aonghuis, of Broad Cove, Inverness County.

Archie Dan and Flora were the children of Hughie D. and Annie (MacPherson) MacLellan. Their ancestors came from Morar, Scotland when their great-grandfather, Angus MacLellan (Archibald), emigrated from Swordland in 1816. Dr. Shaw commented on both siblings' remarkable memory, saying of Archie Dan that he "recorded an impressive variety of items in an almost offhand way as part of his cordial and generous style of hospitality" (*Na Beanntaichean Gorma*, p. 204). Dr. Shaw noted that "Archie Dan's contributions rank among the very best gathered from Gaelic tradition bearers" and that his sister Flora seemed to know the same extensive repertoire. She was his "constant companion during recording sessions, occasionally discreetly prompting him" (*Na Beanntaichean Gorma*, p. 204).

In the anecdote below, Archie Dan talks about their neighbours, the MacArthurs, who had a bull who was so fierce the locals nailed a board to his horns so he wouldn't impale anyone! Siblings Angus Sr., Angus Jr., Flora and Eunice lived close to Archie Dan and Flora's homestead while the latter were growing up. They emigrated from the Island of Canna in Scotland with their parents, Alasdair and Kate, and older sister Mary in 1857. Mary married and had a son, Dan MacKenzie. In the 1911 census for the area, when Archie Dan was 11 years old and Flora was 1, the four younger siblings in the MacArthur family were living together on their family farm with the terrifying bull. Archie Dan and Flora were so scared of the animal that the thought of it would keep them awake at night, so their father composed a soothing lullaby about it to try to get them to sleep.



Gilleasbuig Eóghainn Dhòmhnail 'ic Aonghuis

### NAIDHEACHD 1: TARBH MHIC ARTAIR

*An tarbh aig Cloinn Artair a bha shuas a' seo agus bha dithist bhràithrean ann is 's e Aoghnas a bh' air an -orra ri cheile, na gillean - agus bha piuthar [sic] aca. B' e sin na daoine laghach. Ùna gu té agus Flòraidh. Agus bha an t-eagal [orra] uileadh ro 'n tarbh, fhios agaibh, bha e crosd'. Agus nuair a bhiodh 'ad a' cur a chadal nan cnapach a' seo, fhios agad, bhathas a' maoidheadh, an tarbh, gun tigeadh tarbh 'ac Artair agus bha an tarbh alright crosda.*

*Agus, chuir 'ad bòrd air, agus bhiodh e 'tighinn a-nuas air rathad bràigh' a' bhail' againne a' sin oir thigeadh e a-nuas pìos bha e dìreadh an aghaidh beinneadh dha'n phasture againne. Agus 's e rud uabhasach a bha 's an tarbh nuair a chluinnear gu robh e 'tighinn!*

*Agus rinn m'athair ceathramhan de dh'òran dhe seo, 's ann coltach ri port-sheinn bha e. 'S start e:*

*An tarbh 'ic Artair ri dìreadh na beinneadh,  
Tha tarbh 'ic Artair ri tighinn 's am bòrd air.  
An tarbh aig Ùna, aig Ùna, aig Ùna,  
An tarbh aig Ùna, 's aig Aoghnas, aig Flòraidh.*

MacArthur had a bull up here. There were two brothers - they were both called Angus - and they had a sister [sic]. They were nice people. Eunice was the name of one of them, and the other was Flora. Everyone was afraid of the bull, you know, he was cross. And when they would put the little ones to bed here, you know, there was the threat of the bull, that MacArthur's bull would come and he was fierce alright.

And so they put a board on him, and he would be coming down the road on the slope of our farm. He would come down a bit and climb up the hill to our pasture. And it was a terrible thing when the bull was heard coming!



Flòraidh ni'n Eóghainn Dhòmhnail 'ic Aonghuis

Our father made a verse of this song, it's kind of like a mouth music tune. It started like this:

MacArthur's bull is climbing the hill  
MacArthur's bull coming with a board on him  
The bull belongs to Eunice, to Eunice, to Eunice  
The bull belongs to Eunice and Angus and Flora

Taing mhór | Many thanks to Susan Lamond for her genealogical research on the MacLellans and MacArthurs.

Cainnt is Ceathramhan is a partnership project directed by Dr. Heather Sparling (Cape Breton University) in partnership with DASG (Glasgow University), St Francis Xavier University, Colaisde na Gàidhlig | The Gaelic College, Baile nan Gàidheal | Highland Village Museum and Oifis Iomairtean na Gàidhlig | Office of Gaelic Affairs, and with support from Dr. John Shaw. It is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. For project updates, please visit [languageinlyrics.com](http://languageinlyrics.com). ©

Màiri Britton,  
Language and Lyrics Team Member

## An Gàidheal Portmhor | Scotch Music

### MARIE MACINNIS' JIG COMPOSED BY DAN HUGHIE MACEACHERN



Marie MacInnis

Marie MacInnis is the daughter of Christie and fiddler Dan Joe MacInnis of Big Pond. Their home was a cèilidh house for musicians far and wide. After many years attending the Broad Cove Concert, Dan Joe asked his community: "If they can have it in Broad Cove, why can't we have one in Big Pond?" That's how it started. And so as time went on, the best Cape Breton players and composers of the time made their mark in Big Pond. These players included Mike MacDougall, Donald Angus Beaton, Eugene and Angus Morris, Alex Francis MacKay, Theresa, Marie and Donald MacLellan, and Dan Hughie MacEachern to name a few. It was on one of these visits that Dan Hughie composed Marie MacInnis' Jig. "Dan Hughie was at the house. He said, 'What kind of tunes do you like?' And I said, 'Oh, I like the jigs.' He said, 'Okay' And when I came home from school that day he had the jig made and he played it for me." -Marie MacInnis

Dan Hughie MacEachern (1913-1996) Queensville, Inverness County. Composed hundreds of excellent fiddle tunes that are still be played and recorded today.



Bradley Murphy, Cleasaiche/Gaelic Cultural Animator



to listen to Marie MacInnis' Jig,  
performed by Bradley Murphy

god you

### Marie MacInnis' Jig

D. H. MacEachern

# Mar Chuimhneachan | Dedication

## FLÒRAIDH NI'N SHEONAI DH 'IC SHEONAI DH 'IC MHURCHAI DH | FLORENCE ANNE (STEELE) MACISAAC

**O**chionn bliadhna, dh'fhàg sinn soraidh slàn aig deagh charaid dhuinn. In April of 2024 we said goodbye to a dear friend to many, Flòraidh ni'n Sheonaidh 'ic Sheonaidh 'ic Mhurchaidh | Florence Anne (Steele) MacIsaac.

Growing up in the rear of Boisdale on the Bourinot Road, Flòraidh was born July 27th, 1939. The only living child of John and Jessie (Campbell) Steele, she grew up speaking Gaelic at home and in the community. Flòraidh went to school in MacAdam's Lake, Boisdale, and Iona before training as a teacher in Truro. She spent some time away, working in southern Ontario as a teacher for several years before returning to Cape Breton.

She made her home in Boisdale with the love of her life, Charlie. There they raised 2 sons, Stephen and John Pat. Flòraidh taught elementary school in the area for 35 years, and was proud to earn her B.A. from CBU over the course of 25 years. A first cousin to Gaelic speaker and fiddler Joe Peter MacLean, she enjoyed fiddle music and had a close friendship with the Cameron and Wukitsch families in the Boisdale area as well.

Flòraidh had an impressive zest for life and great sense of humour. She was always one to seek out fun and invite folks along for the ride. Whether it be to the Blue Mist sessions, catching up with friends on the mainland, trips with family or wherever the card game was on the go, you can bet she was never in one place too long. She had a wide circle of friends of all ages who she held in great esteem, and dearly loved her family. Flòraidh was always looking sharp – well-dressed, with her lipstick on, and ready to go.

I met Flòraidh very shortly after I began learning Gaelic while attending an immersion weekend at the Gaelic College. Though Flòraidh spoke Gaelic as a child, she didn't use it much for many years before getting into it again in the early 2000s. She so enjoyed those weekends at

the Gaelic College, and made a point of attending Gaelic events in the area, like the Gaelic conversation group in Beaver Cove, Stòras a' Bhaile at Highland Village, the Féis in Christmas Island and even the online Pop-up Gàidhealtachd, offered by the Highland Village.

Flòraidh was one of my most encouraging mentors, who became a dear friend along the way. So kind and supportive of Gaelic learners, she helped many of us out over the years - always willing to speak in Gaelic and have fun while doing it. I learned so much from her, even a few bad words now and then – usually only during a card game if she was losing, which wasn't often! I loved hearing her stories, which she would tell me in Gaelic – about growing up in Boisdale, living in Ontario and taking the bus into the city for Cape

Breton dances, Joe Peter's adventures over the years, her own trips – she was always so willing to share.

A few years ago, we took a drive out to Rear Boisdale on a clear winter afternoon. After stopping to visit a friend she spotted as we drove by, we continued down the Bourinot Road where she grew up. I'll always remember that drive, and how in awe I was at that glimpse into the world she grew up in – it seemed that every field, brook, and bend on the road had a name, many of which recalled the people who had once called that place home, and most in Gaelic. Her memories brought the place to life as we drove at a snail's pace and she regaled me with stories. I cherish the memory of that day. It was an honour and privilege to get to know Flòraidh, and I'll always be grateful for that.

Flòraidh is dearly missed by her family and friends. Right until the end, her good cheer and sense of humour shone through. I'll leave you with the closing lines she wrote in her obituary: "Remember, I'm watching from somewhere. Be kind to each other." ©

*Hannah Krebs  
is a Gaelic teacher who divides her time  
between Christmas Island and Scotsville*



# Dèanta le làimh

## DESTITUTE OF CLOTHING

When the British were trying to entice Loyalist settlers to Cape Breton after the American Revolution, they offered them three years' worth of supplies, including a three-year supply of clothing. Years later, the Gaels, arriving from Scotland, were not as fortunate. Keeping themselves sufficiently clothed would prove to be one of the many difficulties they would have to face in their new life.

Fleeing untenable conditions in the Western Highlands and Islands, these newcomers to Cape Breton were faced with many challenges—acquiring land, clearing forests, building shelter. But the greatest challenge of all may have been the Canadian climate. Long, cold winters lay ahead, as the Bard MacLean, an early settler to Nova Scotia, warned:

*Mur bi mi eòlach air son mo chòmhaich  
Gu'm faigh mi rèta mo shròn 's mo bheul;  
Le gaoth a tuath a bhios neamhail fuaraidh  
Gu'm bi mo chluasan an cunnart geur.*

If I'm not careful about my clothing  
My nose and lips get frozen;  
My ears are always in serious danger from the  
north wind,  
Which is bitter and biting.

Coming from the milder maritime climate of the Western Highlands and Islands, many of those Gaels who arrived in Cape Breton were not adequately clothed for their first almost six-month-long Canadian winter of bitter cold and deep snow. As time went on, and conditions in the Highlands worsened, some who arrived were not adequately clothed at all.

The phrases “destitute of clothing” (or “destitute of food”, or “destitute of money”) appear again and again in reports from customs officials in the Canadian ports that were receiving the immigrant ships. For example, one group of Highlanders arriving in Cape Breton in 1829, were described as being “destitute of money or clothing”. They settled in a “remote place” a few miles behind St. Patrick's Channel, where they struggled for the next few years until the government distributed relief supplies.

One of the most extreme examples of destitution was a ship sailing from South Uist in 1851 with over 400 of the poorest Hebridean passengers aboard, including a



*A historical example of a coat from Ashfield, Inverness County, showing many years of wear and patches.*

number of evicted families from Barra. The receiving agent wrote: “I never during my long experience at the station saw a body of emigrants so destitute of clothing and bedding; many children of 8 and 9 years old had not a rag to cover them. Mrs. Crisp [the wife of the master of the ship] was busily employed all the voyage in converting empty bread-bags, old canvas and blankets into coverings for them... One fully grown man passed my inspection with no other garment than a woman's petticoat.” (As of a few years before this, all immigrant ships were being turned away from Cape Breton, as there was no longer any way the local government could support the many

ill and indigent arrivals with either land or supplies. This ship, the Admiral, ended up docking in Quebec.)

The first Gaels who came to Cape Breton, in the late 1700's, were usually self-sufficient and left Scotland voluntarily. They were able to obtain land in the fertile “frontlands” and could produce goods from their own land to use as barter with local merchants. This meant they could supplement, as needed, whatever clothing or bedding they had brought with them. Those arriving by the early 1800's, were poorer crofters and tenants, but they were able to get some frontland, or at least

arable land, for farming. They raised sheep for the wool to make their own clothes.

The collapse of the kelp industry in Scotland caused widespread destitution in the Hebrides by the 1820's. Now the poorest crofters of all were forced to emigrate from these areas. But, by then the only lands available in Cape Breton were the "backlands" in the rocky, infertile hills, where it would be a struggle to survive.

One visitor to a backland settlement, after a few years of poor harvests, described the struggles of families trying to keep warm and get by "with little food", and "scant clothing." In 1835, Rev. John Stewart wrote: "I have baptised the child of a parent lying on a pallet of straw with five children in a state of nudity. I have baptised where neither father, mother, nor children could venture out in their tattered rags." The next winter, following another crop failure in the backlands of Victoria County, Rev. James Fraser wrote: "There are families with scarce a blanket for bedding... There are children in abundance who, covered with rags, lie stretched all night alongside the fire on the floor from having no bed clothes to cover them, and a person starts up every other hour to throw a log on the fire."

The accounts by these missionaries of deprivation in the backlands led to appeals to their sponsor, the Glasgow Colonial Society in Scotland—not for the usual religious reading material, but for clothing, bedclothes and hemp. These supplies were sent, and put to use quickly. One lot of hemp which left Greenock in April was made into nets and in use by October.

Letters sent from settlers back to friends or relatives in Scotland also gave advice to those who might consider emigrating. Donald Campbell, New Harris, wrote to Hugh McKay, Isle of Lewis in 1830: "If you come mind bring with you good store of wool, clothes, leather, herring nets and lines...."

The problem is, that in order to be adequately clothed (especially in a cold Canadian climate), you must have access either to the money to purchase cloth; some product to barter for cloth (butter, grain, animals); or access to the materials and skills to make your own cloth. Perhaps fortuitously, many Highlanders who emigrated early in the 1800's had, in spite of the rapidly advancing Industrial Revolution, still been actively involved in spinning the wool from their own sheep



and having it woven into cloth by someone in their own community. They were arriving in Cape Breton with their cloth-making skills intact.

Most Highland weavers were men, although at least ¼ of the weavers were women. These women worked in their own homes, mainly for their families and neighbours. (At least one woman, whose family settled in Margaree, brought her own loom with her on the ship.) Circumstances upon arrival in the thickly wooded forests, however, made it necessary for the men to carry on the heavy work of clearing land and farming. As a result, it was usually the women who took over the role of weaving for each family. Those who had the skills passed them on to others.

By the mid-nineteenth century most families were faring better. They had cleared land and now normally grew sufficient food to survive the long winters. They had acquired cows, pigs, and most importantly, sheep. The sheeps' wool was woven into the warm cloth that was necessary to make bedding and clothing, on looms that were built for each home.

And looms were certainly prevalent in most homes, especially in the rural areas. A report to Halifax from Victoria County in 1862 stated that: "...Durable home made cloth of good appearance is made in almost every farmer's house, either of wool or partly of wool and of cotton warp."

Keeping a family clothed and warm meant an enormous amount of work for the women and girls in each household. Even if a carding mill was reasonably close by to prepare the wool *rolagan* for spinning,

there was still the washing of wool, spinning, winding, dyeing, warping, bobbin winding, and weaving. Once the cloth was woven, there might be a milling frolic to soften and thicken it, especially for blankets and *clò mòr* (a very thick, almost waterproof, cloth). Then began the tailoring, cutting, and sewing of any clothing to be made: pants, shirts, jackets, and even underwear, for men and boys; skirts, blouses, dresses, petticoats and shawls for women and girls. After that, there was the constant washing, mending and patching to keep the precious textiles intact as they began to wear out.

Flax was also used for weaving and could be combined with wool to make a warm cloth. It was grown in the most fertile soil, processed to release the inner fibers, then spun into linen thread. Florence Mackley, in gathering information for her book *Handweaving in Cape Breton*, talked with an elderly woman, a Mrs. Munroe, who remembered the hard work for her family in growing and processing flax on their farm in Strathlorne. The linen was mostly used for toweling, or to make a fine cloth for shirting, aprons, and headwear (mutches, in the early years). Coarser parts of the fibres were woven into grain sacks, or mattress sacks that were stuffed, then covered with the homespun wool blankets. (Flax would be gradually replaced by the importation of cotton threads for weaving.)

Because the making and maintenance of textiles was so labour intensive, many people had only two outfits—one for everyday and one for church. If you ruined one outfit, it would likely have been hard to come up with a replacement very quickly. That each item of homespun cloth was precious is evident in the surviving pieces we see today. Clothing was patched again and again, and sometimes re-worked with turned collars and cuffs, or even a new, stylish shoulder pad or tucks. You can sense the reluctance to give up on any of these pieces of clothing.

This appreciation of textiles is far removed from our modern world of stuffed closets full of fast fashion: cheap, mass-produced clothing (with its accompanying environmental degradation). The Gaels had to work long, hard days, but they successfully rose to the challenges of life in Cape Breton, including keeping warm throughout the cold, snowy, interminable winters. And one phrase that would no longer be heard again would be "destitute of clothing". ©

Vicki Quimby, Animator, researcher & textile consultant at Baile nan Gàidheal

# Fo na Cabair | Under the Rafters

## A BREADBOARD FROM CASTLE BAY



In recent months, our museum received an exciting donation in memory of the late Alex MacDonald, who was a generous and talented tradition-bearer from nearby Castle Bay. Over the years, Alex shared his knowledge of the Gaels in his part of Gaelic Cape Breton with generations of community members and language learners. As a result, it seems fitting that his widow, Kay, chose to honour his memory with a donation that will help us to tell the story of these people at Baile nan Gàidheal.

The breadboard Alex's mother used during his youth, stored for many years on top of a barrel of flour, speaks to the size of the trees immigrants and their descendants encountered in the region while bringing to mind a favorite food item of the Gaels. Bread of many types has been a staple of homes, kitchens and markets for centuries: one of the smells that takes us of a certain age back to our childhood, must be yeasty, fresh bread just out of the oven. Bread boards such as this one helped produce the wonderful bread for the household.

In my years receiving donations, I have never seen a breadboard made from the perfect slice of a large tree and worn smooth from decades of kneading the perfect loaf. This is a rare item and a wonderful gift in memory of Alex 'Katie Ann' MacDonald. ©

*Pauline MacLean,  
Collections and Genealogy Manager*

*With contributions from Shamus Y. MacDonald*

## BEGIN YOUR EDUCATION WITH AN EXTRAORDINARY FOUNDATION, MABOU STYLE



**BEINN MHÀBU, LOCATED IN MABOU, CAPE BRETON; A PREMIER POST-SECONDARY LEARNING EXPERIENCE UNLIKE ANY OTHER**



**A CAMPUS OF COLAISDE NA GÀIDHLIG | THE GAELIC  
COLLEGE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CAPE BRETON UNIVERSITY**



Discover a unique post-secondary experience at Beinn Mhàbu, where education transcends traditional boundaries. Immerse yourself in a vibrant community that celebrates Gaelic culture, offering a rich and living perspective on the world. Our now two-year program, in partnership with Cape Breton University, provides an innovative curriculum that intertwines history, music, dance, folklore, and literature, all through the lens of the Gaels. With small class sizes, personalized instruction, and guaranteed scholarships up to \$10,000, students thrive in an environment that fosters both academic and personal growth. Join us in September 2025 to begin your educational journey in the heart of Nova Scotia's Gàidhealtachd.

[BEINNMHABU.CA](http://BEINNMHABU.CA)

# Cala Cainnte | Language Haven

## LEARNING BY LIVING. TEACHING THROUGH DOING.



**B**aile nan Gàidheal | Highland Village Museum, in partnership with Oifis Iomairtean na Gàidhlig | The Office of Gaelic Affairs, is excited to announce the establishment of Cala Cainnte, formerly known as Institiud Gàidhlig aig Baile | Gàidhlig aig Baile Institute (GABI).

Cala Cainnte | Language Haven is a structure supported by professionals invested in the research, coordination, training, delivery, and ongoing development of Gàidhlig aig Baile (GAB) methodology and programming. Cala Cainnte is the place where GAB lives and is nurtured -- by, with, and for community.

GAB is a language and culture acquisition method based in social-learning principles. Simply put, the journey begins in the same way as a child learns their mother tongue and progresses to active transmission of language, skills, and culture reflected in the Gaelic expression o ghluin gu gluin | from knee to knee conveying the concept of inter-generational transmission.

While training, research, and a commitment to continuous improvement are critically important pieces of Cala Cainnte, and will be incorporated from the beginning, the central focus of the first year of Cala Cainnte is An Àirigh | The Shielling, the home-based live-in program. Delivered as a pilot-program, it will

launch in October 2025 and will be open to Nova Scotian adults. Up to 10 participants will live together in a Gaelic-speaking house for four months, acquiring both language fluency and cultural skills with the support of fluent instructors and tradition bearers. Participants must be 18 years or older, residents of Nova Scotia, and committed to learning Gaelic. No prior knowledge of Gaelic is required. The tuition for this program is valued at \$10,800. We are committed to ensuring that financial barriers do not prevent motivated individuals from participating and will offer a range of full and partial bursaries for eligible Nova Scotian applicants.

While the pilot-program's first location will be in Roberta, Cape Breton, future iterations of the program will move to different communities across the province. Cala Cainnte aims to increase Gaelic fluency in Nova Scotia and positively impact the communities where it is based. By accelerating the development of fluent Gaelic speakers, Cala Cainnte will also help address critical gaps in the labour market by supporting the growth of a skilled workforce, including much-needed language instructors and cultural professionals.

Gaelic language and culture has a deep-rooted history in Nova Scotia, brought by Gaels in the 18th century, and remains a vital part of the province's cultural identity,

preserving traditions in music, storytelling, and community life. Today, Nova Scotia is the only region outside Europe where Gaelic language, culture, and identity continue to be passed down through the generations.

Since 2004, the GAB methodology, developed in Nova Scotia with the help of Scottish Gaelic advocate Finlay MacLeod, has emphasized complete immersion, low-stress learning environments, and cultural integration. This approach has proven effective in rapidly developing Gaelic speakers in the Province. Cala Cainnte will also focus on continuing the development of teaching methods, providing tutor training for Gaelic instructors, and conducting research on language acquisition. Cala Cainnte will invite language educators from Mi'kmaw, Acadian French, and Newcomer Nova Scotian communities to observe and participate in programming and training for mutual learning.

Cala Cainnte will impact hundreds of participants creating ripple effects that strengthen local culture, enhance community cohesion, and contribute to the revitalization of Gaelic as a living language in everyday life.

To learn more about Cala Cainnte, please visit our website [www.calacainnte.ca](http://www.calacainnte.ca).

*Contributed by Shannon MacMullin,  
Cala Cainnte Advisory Group Member*

# Léirmheasan | Book Reviews

## A MAN IN OVERALLS; THE LEGACY OF A CAPE BRETON BARD.

This past autumn I was able to attend the book launch of Judy Roy's new work 'A Man in Overalls' ('The Legacy of a Cape Breton Bard'). The launch was hosted at the Nova Scotia Highland Village and coincided with the annual Joe Neil MacNeil lecture. Author Judy Roy, Dr. Karly Kehoe from the department of History at St. Mary's University, and the Boisdale Historical Society, all presented talks on the evening's topic: Rear Beaver Cove.

Rear Beaver Cove, or as Roy's grandfather termed it "The Big Glen," is the birthplace of her maternal grandfather, Patrick ('Paddy') MacEachan Nicholson. Roy's new work looks back on the life of her grandfather, his childhood in "The Big Glen," his involvement in labour activism during his time spent in Glace Bay, his outmigration to the Boston States, and what seemed to be his greatest passion; his writing.

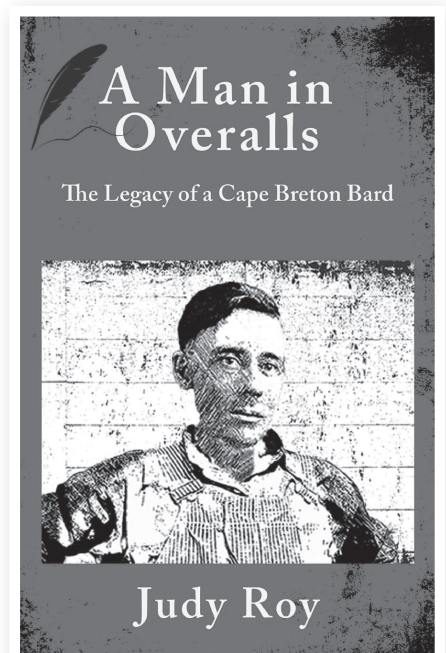
While Nicholson's life story is similar to that of many Gaelic men of his time, Roy writes of the distinct impact that Patrick, and his extended family, had on Nova Scotia's history. She creates narratives, giving depth and emotions to her grandfather and extended family members, imagining how the events of their lives may have played out. These vary from Nicholson meeting his wife at a dance in Sydney, to his dealings later in life with the stern Father Reilly, under whom her grandfather was employed. Roy's narratives provide the reader with not only an accurate history of his life, but also a true sense of Nicholson's character and complexity.

In learning Nicholson's story, we obtain a glimpse into Cape Breton's burgeoning

labour movement at the start of the 20th century. Paddy was a staunch unionist. Although a painter by trade, he began writing for labour newspapers in Glace Bay (under the pseudonym 'A Man In Overalls') and helping to organize unions in industrial Cape Breton. Like so many others of his time, Paddy eventually set out for Massachusetts, joining his brother Dan and engaging in factory work. I found great interest in this segment of the book as I've so often heard of Cape Bretoners emigrating to 'The Boston States' but rarely have heard tell of what took place after reaching their destination.

I believe readers with a general interest in Cape Breton history, particularly its labour history, will find enjoyment in this work. Roy's inclusion of her grandfather's autobiographical writings, which appeared in The Casket's 'Achadh nan Gaidheal' segment, will be of particular interest to any residents of Central Cape Breton. In these pieces, Nicholson tells the stories and folklore of settlement times in Rear Beaver Cove and remembrances of his youth in 'The Big Glen.' As a Gaelic speaker myself, I was hoping to find more instances of the language in Roy's work. While Gaelic was Nicholson's first tongue, he never learned to write in Gaelic; his compositions were solely in English. His cousin Patrick J. Nicholson, however, took on the task of translating Paddy's works into Gaelic. I think any Gaelic reader would have been interested to have some of these translations published in this collection as well.

There are few available studies of the many "backland" or "rear" Cape Breton Gaelic settlements, even though these areas were



once highly populated communities. As I learned at Judy Roy's book launch, there is much being done to preserve the history of this often-forgotten community of "Rear Beaver Cove". Alongside Dr. Karly Kehoe's "One Island, Two People" fieldwork, and the Boisdale Historical Society's efforts, Judy Roy's book is an excellent offering, preserving both her grandfather's legacy and providing a thorough understanding of the fascinating community of Rear Beaver Cove. ©

*Connell MacKinnon is a Gaelic enthusiast and teacher living in Christmas Island and Vice President of the Board of the Highland Village Society*

*Comunn Baile nan Gàidheal | The Nova Scotia Highland Village Society gratefully acknowledges the support of its government partners. In addition to our core funding from the Province of Nova Scotia through the Department of Communities, Culture & Heritage (Nova Scotia Museum), support has also been received from:*

*Government of Canada through the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Departments of Canadian Heritage, and Employment & Social Development Canada;*

*Nova Scotia Departments of Transportation & Infrastructure Renewal, Labour and Advanced Education, Iomairtean na Gàidhlig | Office of Gaelic Affairs.*

*Municipality of Victoria County through District 1 and the Recreation & Tourism Department.*

Canada

NOVA SCOTIA  
ALBA NUADH

Victoria  
County  
Naturally Connected

# Mar Chuimhneachain | Dedication

## TIGHINN A-NALL AIR CHÈILIDH: MICKEY'S WELCOME

One by one, they all seem to be slipping away, those men and women of the old stock, whose lives were so deeply connected to Gaelic. Mickey was one of the latest. When he died last Spring, many of us lost a good friend. His home had become a gathering place for language learners who were drawn by his knowledge, warmth, and fun-loving spirit.

But my goodness, didn't he leave a legacy. He seemed busier than ever in recent years; ramping up, instead of slowing down. When it came to social events involving Gaelic, Mickey always seemed game. As a long-time member of the Iona Gaelic Singers, he was a fixture at milling frolics around the island. He also agreed to mentor several language learners in recent years and put together a children's book in Gaelic, making him a first-time author at the age of 93.

Despite his reputation as a talented and generous tradition bearer, Mickey may be best remembered for the warm welcome he extended to visitors of all kinds. When I was a boy, my grandparents had a plaque on the wall of their home in Iona that read: "Let all visitors be received as Christ." Few adhered to that rule better than Mickey. He was a man of deep faith who was also deeply hospitable – and I'm sure if Christ had come visiting in Jamesville, Mickey would have offered him a good, strong drink. In a world that seems intent on driving people further away from each other, Mickey provided an important reminder of the importance of coming together.

Hospitality and sociability have long been cornerstones in the cultural identity of the



Photo credit: Shannon MacMullin

Gaels of Cape Breton. On more than one occasion, Mickey underscored the value of seeing friends and family arrive at his door by telling me about the value his grandmother assigned his own visits many years ago. Now that he's gone, it's nice to think of the welcome she gave him and the one he provided so many others in return - one that asks us to consider the lasting impact our presence can have in the lives of others: "O, Mhuire Mhàthair, tha mi cho toilichte gu'n d' thàinig thu 'nall. Seo a chiad rud a bhios romhad

nuair a dh'eugas tu – gun d' thàinig thu 'nall gam choimhead. (Oh, Virgin Mother, I'm so happy you came over. This is the first good deed that will be ahead of you when you die – that you came here to see me.)

Bidh sinn ga chuimhneachadh. ©

Shamus Y. MacDonald, PhD,  
Stiùiriche na Gàidhlig/  
Manager of Language and Culture

.....

## HIGHLAND VILLAGE ONLINE GAELIC RESOURCES

.....



Check out our website!  
[WWW.HIGHLANDVILLAGE.CA](http://WWW.HIGHLANDVILLAGE.CA)



An Drochaid Eadarainn  
[WWW.ANDROCHAID.CA](http://WWW.ANDROCHAID.CA)



Cainnt Mo Mhàthar  
[WWW.CAINNTMOMHATHAR.COM](http://WWW.CAINNTMOMHATHAR.COM)  
*Developed in partnership with Comhairle na Gàidhlig*

 Like us on Facebook  
Highland Village Museum

 Follow us on Instagram  
@nshighlandvillage

 Follow us on Twitter  
@highlandv

 Follow us on Tiktok  
@nshighlandvillage



# Comunn Ar Rùin | Our People

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & ACCOLADES

### Tapadh Leih-se Gu Mór

Commun Baile Ghàidheal na h-Albann Nuaidh | The Nova Scotia Highland Village Society gratefully acknowledges the support of many individuals and organizations:

### Project & Marketing Partners

Other partners include: Cape Breton Centre for Craft & Design; Cape Breton University (Beaton Institute & Centre for Cape Breton Studies); Celtic Colours International Festival; Celtic Heart of North America; Colaisde na Gàidhlig | The Gaelic College; Central Cape Breton Community Ventures; Comhairle na Gàidhlig | Nova Scotia Gaelic Council; Community Foundation of Nova Scotia; Destination Cape Breton Association; Eskasoni Cultural Journeys; Féis an Eilein; Fortress of Louisbourg; Grandona Legion, Branch 124, Iona; Iomairtean na Gàidhlig | Office of Gaelic Affairs; Iona Heights Inn & Jill's Chocolates; Musique Royale; Municipality of Inverness County, Municipality of Victoria County, St.F.X. University (Angus L. Macdonald Library); and Sgoil MhicFhraing a' Chaolais | Rankin School of the Narrows.

### Farm Program Partners (2024)

Dell Corbett, Grand Mira ('Mira Jean' Clydesdale horse), Sarah Nettleton, Arichat (sheep), Aileen MacLean, (chickens)

### Artifact & Archival Donations (2024/2025)

Gary Young, ON  
Martha Hood, Sydney, NS  
Josie Ramsay, Dartmouth, NS  
Valerie Billard, East Bay, NS  
Margie Gillis, New Waterford, NS  
Darlene Carter, Georges River, NS  
Jim MacDonald, Baddeck, NS  
Blaine MacKinnon, Beaver Cove, NS  
Kay MacDonald, Sydney, NS  
Fred Patton, Lardoise, NS  
Susan MacFarlane, Gillisdale, NS  
Patricia Elson, Duntroon, ON  
Marlene Ivey, North Sydney, NS  
Ann Bonner, Georges River, NS  
Nolma Florence, Georges Lake, NS  
David Gillis, Scotsville, NS  
Ada MacPherson, Glace Bay, NS  
Vincent W. MacLean, Washabuck, NS

### Lifetime Memberships

Dr. Margaret Bennett, Perthshire, Scotland and Stuart MacLeod, Northside East Bay.

### Financial Contributions (to March 31, 2025)

Marty Krebs, Annie T. MacNeil, Kevin & Theresa Campbell, John MacNeil, Kenzie MacKinnon, Phillip Love, Effie MacCormick, Vince W. MacLean, JJ MacEachern, Rodoslav Tkalec, John Farrell, Gail Sullivan, anonymous and The Steele Group.

### Congratulations & Thank You To the following for their dedication and service:

Kaye Anne MacNeil – 40 years  
Aileen MacLean - 20 years  
Austin MacKenzie – 15 years  
Emily Marie MacDonald – 10 years  
Phyllis Williams – 10 years  
Laura MacNeil – 5 years

### Sympathies

To the families of Annie Buchanan, mother of Janet MacNeil, Admin for Highland Village; Barbara Ann Sutherland-Foote, supporter of the Gaelic language and the Gaelic Council of Nova Scotia; Hugh J. Webb, board member, volunteer, donor and long time supporter of the Highland Village; Gabriel Marshall, brother of L'nu Advisory Group member Albert Marshall, Elizabeth Marshall daughter of L'nu Advisory Group member Albert Marshall, Darlene Marshall, niece of L'nu Advisory Group member Albert Marshall; John Joseph Herney, partner of L'nu Advisory Group member Dolena Poulette; Donald Beaton, long-time volunteer, former board member, and father of animator Coleen Beaton.

*Help us share Nova Scotia's Gaelic language and heritage by joining the Nova Scotia Highland Village Society.*

Membership is open to anyone. Members can:

- Attend general meetings;
- Elect the Board of Trustees;
- Receive *An Rubha*, our Gaelic Folklife Magazine;
- Receive notices for events.

### General Memberships:

Individual: \$25\* & Family: \$40\* per year (one household)

*\*Income tax receipts are issued for general memberships.*

### Membership Plus:

Individual: \$50\* & Family: \$100\* per year (one household)

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

- Free admission for the year to the Highland Village (excludes special events & programs not part of regular admission)
- 20% discount in the Highland Village Gift Shop
- Membership Plus fees are not tax deductible

### Sustaining & Lifetime Memberships

Ask about our Sustaining & Lifetime Memberships

- Sustaining Membership - \$200 per annum
- Lifetime Membership - \$1000

Membership - Bailrachd  
An Comunn Baile Ghàidheal  
na h-Albann Nuaidh

Ainm | Name:

Seòladh | Address:

Cathair | Baile | City | Town:

Cód a' Phuist | Postal | Zip Code:

Dùthaich | Country:

Fón na Dachaidh | Home Phone:

Post-d | Email:

Type of Membership:



theVillage  
Store  
HIGHLAND VILLAGE GIFT SHOP

Visit our Gift Shop in the  
Welcome Centre

Or Shop Online!  
www.highlandvillagegiftshop.ca



Baile nan  
Gàidheal  
Highland Village  
MADE OF STORIES  
Strùpag  
A LITTLE TASTE

Explore our variety  
of authentic Gaelic,  
Mi'kmaq & Nova Scotian  
gifts and souvenirs for  
every budget, or grab a  
bite of traditional fresh  
food from the Village  
Kitchen "Strùpag"

an rubha

4119 RATHAD 223, SANNDRAIGH, ALBA NUADH, B2C 1A3, CANADA  
4119 HIGHWAY 223, IONA, NS B2C 1A3, CANADA

CANADA		POSTES
POST		CANADA
Postage paid		Port payé
Publications Mail		Poste-publications
41257540		

NOVA SCOTIA  
ALBA NUADH