

Baile nan
Gaidheal
Highland Village
MADE OF STORIES



The Highland Village
Gaelic Folklife Magazine

an rubha

HIGHLANDVILLAGE.CA

VOLUME 15 • NUMBER TWO

Mar is Léir Dhomh Fhìn | As I see It
Nova Scotia Recipient for Gaelic Excellence Award

Sgeul ri Aithris | The Story Telling Tradition
Beachdnachadh `san Fhasach | Observation in the Desert

Naidheachd a' Bhaile | The Village News





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.

Two - \$1000 scholarships will be awarded in the spring of 2017. Deadline for scholarship application is March 31st 2017. See our website for more details.

The Fund welcomes donations. A downloadable brochure with details and a pledge form is available on our website. Donations may also be made online through Canada Helps.



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2016 Scholarship Winners:
Olivier Broussard and Drea Shephard

www.treasuresofyouth.ca



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AN DROCHÀID EADARAINN

Tha An Drochaid Eadarainn stéidhichte air Stòras a' Bhaile: sgoil bheul-aithris air a cumail aig Baile nan Gàidheal gu bliadhnail. 'Na làraich-lìn eadar-gnìomhail, tha An Drochaid Eadarainn a' cleachdadh teicneolais mar mhodh a' lìonadh beàrn far a bheil du-alchas air tar-aisig o ghlùn gu glùn a dhìth.

An Drochaid Eadarainn (The Bridge Between Us) is an interactive website emulating the social transmission of Gaelic language and culture through technology. Communicating recorded expressions of Nova Scotia Gaelic culture, visitors will witness native speakers through storytelling, music and dance, dialectal samples, kinship, belief, traditional foods, home remedies and cures.

Participants can meet, share and exchange Nova Scotia Gaelic traditions on *An Drochaid Bheò* (The Living Bridge), an interactive feature of the website.



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AN RUBHA (The Point) is published in Iona, Nova Scotia, Canada by Commun Baile Ghàidheal na h-Albann Nuaidh | Nova Scotia Highland Village Society. Comments, suggestions and contributions are welcome.

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Retired animator Jean MacNeil often returns to *Baile nan Gàidheal* | Highland Village for special events such as Pioneer Day.

ISSN# 1914-6043

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

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Welcome to the Winter 2017 issue of *An Rubha*. This edition arrives on the heels of a successful 2016 season at *Baile nan Gàidheal* | Highland Village.

This past year, the operation progressed on several fronts: interpretation & programming including first person animation, storytelling tours, cultural presentations, and other experiential opportunities; collections management including the rehousing of 1,200 artifacts and reorganizing of two collections storage spaces through the Re-Org project; infrastructure improvements including construction of a new log cabin, repair work to the stage, centre hallway house and barn, as well as the completion of a long term site development strategy for the Village; and outreach & partnerships including the continued strengthening of our local and regional partnerships.

In addition to the progress noted above, we also had a very successful visitor season. Overall visitation and site usage was up by 12.6% or 2,218 people. 21,360 people came through the site during the 2016 calendar year, the most since 2010, when 22,315 people visited. On the earned income side, overall gross earned income revenues were up 22.4% or \$50,234 to \$274,517, our most ever.

Volunteer engagement remained strong. In 2016, our volunteers contributed 2,497 hours, up 6.7% over 2015. Engagement through social media continued to grow throughout 2016. As of December 31, 2016, we had 4,174 likes on Facebook (up 49% from last year), 2,063 followers on Twitter (up 68%), and 703 followers on Instagram (up 27%).

It is difficult to talk about our successes without recognizing the people that have enabled the Village to grow and thrive over the past six decades. We are here because of the hard work, dedication, and pure tenacity of our board, staff and volunteers.

2016 saw three individuals, who have contributed much to the Village over the years, recognized for their work and contributions with an international award, a national award, and a regional award respectively.

In July 2016, it was announced that our Manager of Interpretation Seumas Watson was named a finalist in two categories of the Scottish Gaelic Awards - Best Contribution and International. The nominations recognized Seumas' life-long work around Gaelic Nova Scotia including his leadership with Gaelic interpretation and outreach at *Baile nan Gàidheal*; decades of recording and documenting Gaelic Nova Scotia identity from traditional Gaelic speakers; and leadership in current Gaelic renewal initiatives including *Gàidhlig aig Baile*, *Stòras a' Baile*, *Bun 's Barr*, *An Drochaid Eadarainn*, and others. In November, there were cheers on both sides of the Atlantic when Seumas was announced the winner of the Gaelic Award in the Best Contribution

category. Seumas is the first North American recipient of a Gaelic Award. See *Mar is léir dhomh fhin* | As I See It on the next page for a word from Seumas on his award.

In April, we celebrated Highland Village volunteer and past President Jim St. Clair, when he received the national Museum Volunteer Award from the Canadian Museums Association and the Canadian Federation of Friends of Museums. The award, announced at the CMA Annual Conference in Halifax, recognized his sustained and outstanding commitment to the museum community in Nova Scotia, in particular the Highland Village. In addition to his contributions to Highland Village, Jim was also celebrated for his leadership in the wider museum community, including the establishment of both the Federation of Nova Scotian Heritage (now Association of Nova Scotia Museums) and Iona Connection (now Heritage Cape Breton Connection), and work with museums all over Cape Breton Island. The CMA's magazine, *Muse*, carried an article on Jim's many contributions to the Highland Village and the wider provincial museum and heritage community in the fall of 2016.

In late November, our Learning & Media specialist Katherine MacLeod received a Vital Employee Excellence Award through Next-Gen Cape Breton and the CB Partnership. The award recognizes her leadership in challenging us to make our interpretation and programming more engaging and experiential, and managing our social media program.

Mealaidh ur naidheachd agus tapadh leibh a Sheumais, a Sheumais agus a Chatriona!

Unfortunately, 2016 was also a year of sorrow. We started the year, with the abrupt loss of two wonderful members of our staff team. Gerry MacNeil of Washabuck and Debi MacNeil of Big Beach were both enthusiastic and dedicated staff members who brought pride of their culture and love of community to their jobs. They were great ambassadors for Highland Village and for Gaelic Nova Scotia, and were a joy to work with. We miss them both very much. This issue of *An Rubha* is dedicated to these two special women (see pages 14 & 15).



Rodney Chaisson presenting Jim St. Clair with the national Museum Volunteer Award.



Leanaibh dlùth ri cliù bhur sinnsir.

Commun Baile Ghàidheal na h-Albann Nuaidh | 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 the *Baile nan Gàidheal* | Highland Village, A Part of the Nova Scotia Museum, in partnership with the Nova Scotia Museum (Department of Communities, Culture & Heritage).

**Baile nan
Gàidheal**
Highland Village

MADE OF STORIES

A PART of THE NOVA SCOTIA MUSEUM

Our vision is to be internationally acknowledged for advancing research, fostering appreciation, learning and sharing authentic Gaelic language and heritage while serving a vibrant Gaelic cultural community.

Our mission is to research, collect, preserve and share the Gaelic heritage and culture of Nova Scotia and represent it accurately and vibrantly.

We are a member of Gaelic Society of Inverness (Scotland), 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, Interpretation Canada, 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.

Mar is léir dhomh fhìn | As I See It

NOVA SCOTIA RECIPIENT FOR GAELIC EXCELLENCE AWARD



An Rubha Gaelic Folklife Magazine is pleased to announce that Jim Watson (aka Seumas) Manager of Interpretation for *Baile nan Gàidheal* | Highland Village, and Gaelic Editor for *An Rubha* magazine, has been awarded *Sàr Dhuais na Gàidhlig* /Best Contribution Award for 2016 by Scotland's *Bòrd na Gàidhlig* and the Daily Record. An annual event, *Duaisean Gàidhlig na h-Alba* was held at the landmark Grand Central Hotel in Glasgow, November 16th. Organised by Scotland's Daily Record, in partnership with *Bòrd na Gàidhlig*, the event aims to "reward all aspects of our Gaelic culture, education and language highlighting the excellent work undertaken to maintain growth and heritage."

In acceptance, Seumas, the first recipient to receive the award from North America, made the following remarks to the mostly Gaelic-speaking audience:

"Tha e 'na urram mór dhomh a bhi 'gam thaghadh 'son na duaiseadh seo an nochd. 'S tha e 'na thoileachadh mór dhomh a ghabhail rithe mar neach a tha bhos a' seo agaibh-se à *Nova Scotia* – Alba Nuadh mar a chanar. Eang air eang, tha Gàidhealtachd as ùr ag éirigh suas an Albainn Nuaidh a' là an-diugh – beag air bheag mar a dh'ith an cat a' sgadan. Tha nòs, dualchas 's cànan nan Gàidheal air a bhi an cleachdadh an Albainn Nuaidh fad còrr dà cheud bhliadhna.

Ged is beag an uiread do luchd-bruidhinn na Gàidhlig air fàs, 's ann a tha cothromannan na Féinneadh aig òigiridh na Mór-roinn 'san àm seo a bha dhìth air na glùintean roimhe gus bho chionna ùine gu math ghoidid. Tha mi taingeil gu robh an cothrom agam fhìn a bhi ann am measg uidhir do dhaoine dileas, gasda a tha air a bhi cur ri obair leasachadh na Gàidhlig thall fad nam bliadhnaichean móra.

Tha sùil againn ris a' Ghàidhlig a thoirt gu ath-nuadhachadh, 'ga togail suas air dualchas is cainnt mar bhun-stéidh do

nàisean cultarach a bhuineas do shliochd nan Gàidheal air an dà thaobh dhan a' Chuan Mhór. As aonais nòis chan eil feum air cànan ann. As aonais cànan chan eil cultar ann. As aonais a dhà dhiubh sin, tha poball air chall.

Tha e 'na ònar mór dhomh a bhi measg charaidean 's deagh chuideachd air an oidhche seo bhos. Gun éirigh gu math leibh air a' rathad air n-adhart 's mìle taing as leth Gàidheil na h-Albann Nuaidh."

Translation

It is a great honour for me to have been chosen for this award tonight. It is also a great pleasure for me to accept it as one who has travelled here from Nova Scotia. Ever advancing, "the way the cat ate the herring", a contemporary *Gàidhealtachd* is emerging in today's Nova Scotia, where Gaelic language, custom and heritage have been in practice for more than two centuries. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to be among so many dedicated and excellent people, who have led Nova Scotia's Gaelic initiative over many years.

Our expectation is Gaelic renewal in Nova Scotia, built on heritage and language as the foundation of a cultural nation that belongs to the Gaels on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. In the absence of custom, there is no need for language. In the absence of language there is no culture. For the lack of both, a people is lost.

It has been a great honour for me to be among friends and delightful company here on this night (in Glasgow). May you enjoy every success on the road ahead. On behalf of the Gaels of Nova Scotia, a thousand thankyou.

For more on *Duaisean Gàidhlig na h-Alba*, the event and its mission, see: <http://www.scottishgaelicawards.co.uk/index-gaelic.html>. ©



Seumas Watson Manager of Interpretation for *Baile nan Gàidheal* | Highland Village

© Photo by Marlene Ivey

Nead air Brìde
Ugh air Ionaid
Eun air Chàisg
Mara bi sin aig an fhiach
Bidh am bàs

Nest on St. Bride's Day
Egg at Shrove Tide
Chick at Easter
If the crow doesn't get that
He will get death

* Shrove Tide - First Tuesday of the first new moon after Là nan Coinnealan | Candlemas Day - 2nd of February

© Recorded from Joe Neil MacNeil by Jim Watson
Transcription and translation by Jim Watson

Naidheachd a' Bhaile | The Village News

A YEAR IN REVIEW AT BAILE NAN GàIDHEAL - 2016

Review of 2016 begins with May orientation of interpretive staff: one week of preparing for first person role-playing, suggestions for enhancements to public programming and planning events for the upcoming season. A special guest at this year's orientation was Fiona MacKenzie, archivist and manager of Canna House and the John Lorne Campbell collection of Gaelic field recording materials, of which significant items were made in Nova Scotia. Also in May, *Sgadan is Buntàta* (Herring and Potatoes) a special cultural program for Gaelic Awareness Month was performed for public schools on Cape Breton Island.

Opening the Village's doors to visitors in June, our season's first on-site event, *Biadh is Baile* (Food and Farming), was held as an opportunity to experience traditional foods and observe spring agricultural practices, such as Cash's Carding Mill, crop planting and sheep shearing with Sarah Nettleton. *Là Fhéill Caluim Cille* (St. Columba Day, June 9th) marked the Gaelic saint's calendar day with *Bonnach is Im* (bannock and butter) on the hill, along with Gaelic singing and presentations of material culture. Following Canada Day Open House, July saw the launch of annual programming for school age children, with *Spòrs Mór* and *Spòrs Beag*, directed by Gaelic teacher Stacy (*Steusag*) MacLean. As well, the of Children's Living History, costumed, day-long programs for youngsters in two formats: *Làithean Sona* (Happy Days) for kids and *Na Deugairean* (Teens) for those over thirteen, were great successes again this year. On demand programs were also available, June through October, for Adult Living History and Family Living History, made-to-order costumed experiences for individuals and small groups. One the final Sunday of July the Annual Anniversary Service was held in the 19th century Malaga-

watch Church, at the top of the hill.

With a significant spike in tourism generally across Nova Scotia, August through October proved to be very busy months for *Baile nan Gàidheal*. Special events included Donald Og Day, the 55th annual Highland Village Scotch concert and September's Pioneer Day. October brought the season's close with a full schedule of events during Celtic Colours that included ceilidhs, milling frolics and storytelling tours. The season's final event was the popular *Oidhche nam Bòcan* program, two nights of traditional Halloween lore presented as skits in Highland Village buildings and concluding with music, storytelling and a variety of treats.

This year's *Seòmbar na Grèineadh* (Summer Room Lectures) featured the Joe Neil MacNeil Annual Lecture, given by Effie Rankin of Mabou. Her presentation looked at the milling song tradition as a woman's work domain, with special reference to her native North Uist. Guest speaker for the annual *Am Blas air a' Bhogha*, Alex Francis MacKay Gaelic in the Bow Memorial Lecture, was Kate Dunlay, musician and Cape Breton fiddling researcher. Her lecture looked at Scottish and Cape-Breton Fiddle Traditions. Also, this fall saw the launch of *Am Braighe*, a Gaelic newspaper that ran from the 1993 to 2003. It is now available online as part of the Saint Francis Xavier University Digital Collections.

Ongoing building maintenance at the Village during the summer and fall season saw shingling of the barn's north roof, a major undertaking requiring many hours of work. Renovations were also completed on the tuning room and centre-hallway house. The old log cabin, the site's second one was replaced in the fall with a new building, remaining in the current location and reconstructed around its original stone hearth and chimney.

Daily programming at the Village provided its usual variety of strong Gaelic-based animation, with daily presentations of food fare such as *maragan* (white puddings), *bonnach* making and meals prepared from the garden, music, milling frolics, *céilidh* house settings, quilting, rug hooking, animals and wood working. Gaelic language-based cultural expression continues to grow throughout the site, highlighted by *Na Cleasaichean* (The Village Players), who, along with enhanced skill sets among full-time animators, bring to life the stories, songs and customs of Gaelic Nova Scotia.

In the material culture quarter, a major collections project, under the direction of Collections Manager Pauline MacLean, assisted by University of Toronto Museum Studies Victoria Byers, resulted in an updated system of collection storage for Village artifacts. Inspired by UNESCO's initiatives for preserving and restoring cultural property, support was received through Canadian Heritage, Museum Assistance Program, for the Atlantic Re-Orig Project.

Baile nan Gàidheal staffing continued to contribute to its larger community of association in 2016, with awards for excellence in heritage and social achievements made to Katherine MacLeod in Sydney, Nova Scotia by the NextGen Leadership Society, in collaboration with the Cape Breton Partnership and Seumas Watson by *Duaisean Gàidhlig na h-Alba*, Glasgow, Scotland. A number of Highland Village staff also participated in the *Eilean an Àigh*, the Macphail Homestead Gaelic festival, held at Orwell, Prince Edward Island.

As always, accomplishments of *Baile nan Gàidheal* | Highland Village are the outcome of staff's combined efforts and the generosity of our volunteers. *Ceud taing dhuibh uile* (a hundred thank-yous, all). ☺



Joe Neil MacNeil Annual Lecture was presented by Effie Rankin of Mabou and looked at the milling song tradition in North Uist.



Katherine MacLeod was one of this year's recipient's of the Vital Employee Excellence Award through NextGen CB and the CB Partnership.



Our new log cabin was assembled over the Fall of 2016 and will be completed for opening in 2017.

Fo na Cabair | Under the Rafters

A' CHOILLE MHÓR | THE GREAT FOREST - Part Five

©Illustration by Ellison Robertson



Scottish Gaels of the nineteenth century were accustomed to getting along with whatever the land provided. Their former homes were no more than appendages to the countryside's terrain, built from stone and natural resources of the land itself.

Turning their faces to the forest presented the necessity of building new houses from unfamiliar materials. The Gael was apparently well suited for the task. This opinion was held by Cape Breton's Surveyor General, who stated in 1827 that the Scottish Gaels "...were much better suited to this climate and soil than any the Parent State was desirous of removing."

A geologist exploring the Nova Scotia, New Brunswick region in 1843 concurred, saying that, "Scotch emigrants are hardy, industrious and cheerful, and experience has fully proved that no people meet the first difficulties of settling a wild land with greater patience and fortitude."

In a chapter of Vernon's Cape Breton at the Turn of the Century, Jonathan G. MacKinnon, a Whycocomagh, Inverness County native of Skye descent - and publisher of the longest running Gaelic Weekly ever, Mac-Talla (1894-1902), describes in the predominant language of rural Cape Breton the early Gaels' circumstances and their log houses:

Thàinig a' mhór-chuid dhiubh anall gun aca an cùl na làimhe ach chumadh beò gu ceann bliadhna iad, agus cha robh aca ach dol a ghleachd ris a' choille airson am beòlainte. Anns a' chiad dol amach, bha iad a' togail bhothan anns an deasachadh iad biadh 's anns an caidealadh iad gus am biodh e 'nan comas taighean na 's fheàrr a chur suas.

An dèidh seo, mar a gheibheadh iad ùine 's cothrom roimh thoiseach a'

gheamhraidh, bha iad, le cuideachadh nan coimhearsnachd, ma bha iad ann, cuideachadh nach deach ariamh iarraidh gun fhaotainn, a togail taigh na b' fheàrr, ged a shaoileadh àl an latha-an-diugh nach robh am feàrr ann.

Bhiodh an taigh seo air a dheanamh air logaichean air an càradh air a chèile 's na sgaran eatorra air an calcadh le coinnich, maidean snaidhte no bùird shàbhte mar ùrlar agus am mullach air a thubhadh le càirt nan craobh. Bhiodh similear 's an dàrna ceann de 'n bhothan seo a' cumail blàths is soluis ris an teaghlach. Bha a' choille pailt agus cha bhiodh dìth connaidh orra... Mar a shiubhail na bliadhnachan, shiubhail a' choille mhór; dh'fhàs na h-àitichean réitichte na bu mhotha, agus dhlùthaich iad ri chèile. A lion fear is fear, chaidh na taighean logaichean fhàsachadh agus ghabh an sluagh còmhnuidh ann an taighean bu mhotha, bu shoilleire 's a b' fheàrr.

Most of them came over without enough in hand to keep them going until a year's end and all they could do was wrestle with the forest for a living. At the very first, they put up shanties where they could prepare food and sleep until they could build better houses.

After that, when they could find the time and opportunity before the onset of winter, with the neighbours' assistance, if there were any neighbours, help that was never sought for and not received, they built a better house. Although today's generation might not think there was any improvement.

This house was made of logs

stacked on top of each other and the cracks were caulked with moss. Hewn timbers, or sawn boards, made the floor. The roof was covered with tree bark. There was a fireplace at one end of this camp that provided the family with heat and light. There was no scarcity of fuel, the forest was everywhere. As the years went by the great forest faded and the cultivated patches grew larger and merged with each other. The log cabins were abandoned one by one and the people began living in larger, brighter and better houses.

Mention of the log house as the initial dwelling of immigrants is frequent among accounts of living conditions during the pioneer era in Cape Breton. Elva E. Jackson, writing in Jackson *Kith and Kin*, describes the communal building of such cabins in the North Sydney area at the turn of the nineteenth century: "Cooperating with each other on the day of the erection of the cabin, the young men assembled together and carried the trimmed logs on their shoulders to the selected spot. The walls were made of spruce logs and the chinks filled with moss. The rafters were covered with spruce bark which had been stripped off the larger trees by means of an ingenious instrument shaped somewhat like a hockey stick. The overlapping spruce coats were held in place by poles fastened to each other and the lower walls by ropes made of birch stripping. The whole roof was then sodded. As a rule, a rough chimney, made of field stones, stood at the end. Nearby, on wooden hinges, swung the only door which was without a lock. By pulling a string, which hung through a

Continued on page 27

Sgeul ri Aithris | The Story Telling Tradition

BEACHDNACHADH `SAN FHASACH | OBSERVATION IN THE DESERT

TOLD BY *Eòs Nìll Bhig* | Joe Neil MacNeil

A favourite theme of the late Middle Cape, Cape Breton County story teller Joe Neil MacNeil (*Eòs Nìll Bhig*), this story looks at the issue of acquisition, ownership, superficial values and the revelations of nature in guiding our choices to the fundamentals of tangible reality. Joe Neil was author of *Sgeul gu Latha* (Tales Until Dawn), edited by John Shaw, and recipient of an honorary doctorate from Saint Mary's University in 1996. Joe Neil can be heard on the *Sruth nan Gàidheal* | Gael Stream website: <http://gaelstream.stfx.ca/greenstone/collect/capebret/index/assoc/HASH8cde.dir/GF122i02.mp3>

Beachdnachadh 'san Fhasach

Seadh, sgeulachd air beachdnachadh.

Thachair fear ri ceannaichean-siubhail, na marsantan, agus thuirt e riutha "Chaill sibh càmhail."

"Chaill."

"Agus, a' robh e crùbach air a chois dheas?"

"Bha."

"Agus a' robh e dall air an t-sùil chlì?" Thuirt `ad ris gu robh.

"Agus," ors esan, "chaill e fiacail à aghaidh bheòil." Thuirt iad ris gu robh e ceart.

"Agus bha e," ors' esan, "air a luchdachadh air aon taobh le arbhar buainte."

"Seadh."

"Agus le mil air an taobh eile."

Thuirt `ad ris gu robh.

"Ach," ors' àsan "Càit' a' bheil na seudan; a' chuid a bu luachmhoire uile dhen eallach? Agus bhon a chunna tu e cho soilleir, feuch an treòraich thu sinn dha ionnsaidh."

"O", thuirt esan, "Chan fhaca mise ur seudan, na ur càmhail."

Agus ghlac `ad e. Cha chreideadh `ad e nach do ghoid e an càmhail, air neo nach do chuir e an àite falachaidh e. Agus thug `ad e gu fear air son breitheanas a thoirt air. `S e sagart Turacach a bh' ann agus bha esan `na bhreitheamh, `s thugadh an duine air a bheulaibh.

"Gu dé an dòigh air a robh fios aige air cho math mu dheidhinn a' chàmhail mura fac' e e, `nam b' e nach robh fios aige càit' a robh e."

Agus thuirt e gun gabhadh beachdnachadh dèanamh gidheadh anns an fhasach. Agus thuirt e gun do dh'aithnich e gu robh an càmhail crùbach air a chois dheas a thaobh gu robh a luirg anns a' ghainmhich gu math aotrom `s nach deach i sios cho



domhain 's chaidh càch.

"Seadh."

"Agus deamar a bha fhios aige gu robh an càmhail air a bhith dall?"

Thuirt e gu robh a' feur, nuair a bhiodh e ag ionaltradh, gu robh sin air a lomadha air an taobh dheas agus nach do bhean e do shian air an taobh chlì dhen rathad air a robh e `coiseachd. Bha sin a' toirt dha-san ri thuigsinn nach robh e `faicinn air an taobh sin.

"Agus gu deamar a bha fios aige gun do chaill e fiacail à aghaidh a bheòil?"

O, bha fios aige air a' sin far a robh e `criomadh gu robh sopan air fhàgail gun ghearradh lom `s gu feum gu robh fiacail a dhith `s an àit' a bha seo, nach robh e gearradh mar bu chòir dha.

"Agus gu deamar mar a nisd a bha fios aige air an eallach, na an t-uallach, a bh' air a dhruim?"

Agus thuirt e gu robh na cuileagan a' toirt dha dearbhadh air an dàrna taobh agus na seangan a' toirt dearbhadh dha na bha air an taobh eile. Ach cha robh sian ann a bheireadh dearbhadh dha mu dheidhinn nan seudan.

Cha robh a' sin ach rudan a chaidh a bhuain agus a mhèinneadh agus cha robh cuileagan na seangan, na beòthaichean beaga sam bith eile dol a dhol mun cuairt air `ad sin a thrusadh, na chruinneachadh.

Agus sin agaibh mar a bha naidheachd air beachdnachadh. ©

Observation in the Desert

So, a story about observation. There was a man who met itinerant traders, or merchants, and he said to them, "You lost a camel."

"We did."

"And was he lame on the right leg?"

"He was."

"And was he blind in the left eye?" They said he was.

"And," he said, "it lost a tooth from the front of its mouth." They say that was correct.

"And it was," he said, laden on one side with reaped corn."

"Yes."

"And with honey on the other side?"

They told him that it was.

"But," they said, "where are the jewels, the most valuable share of the load? And since you saw the camel so clearly, try and guide us to him."

"Oh," the fellow said, "I didn't see your jewels, or your camel."

And they seized him. They wouldn't believe that he hadn't stolen the camel, or put it in a hidden place. They took him to a person to be judged. The fellow was a Turkish priest who was a magistrate, and the fellow was brought before him. In what way could he know so well about the camel, unless he saw him - since he didn't know where he was.

And the fellow responded that an observation could be made, even in the desert. And he stated that he recognized the camel was lame on the right leg because its track in the sand was very faint and didn't sink down as far as the rest.

"Yes."

"And how did he know the camel was blind?"

And he replied, "When it was grazing, the grass was taken from the right side (of the road), but nothing was touched on the left side of the road where it was walking." This told him the camel couldn't see on the left.

"And how did he know the camel lost a tooth from the front of its mouth?"

Oh, he knew that because wisps of straw, where it had been browsing on grass, were left without being completely severed and so there must have been a missing tooth in that place that wasn't cutting properly.

"And how did he know about the load, the burden that was on its back?"

The fellow said that flies on one side, were evidence of that, and the ants were proof of what was on the other side. But, there was nothing to confirm that there were any jewels. There was no more substance to that than things that were picked, or mined. No flies, or ants, or any other wee creature, would go about gathering, or collecting such as that.

There you have the story on making an observation. ©

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ˆSAN TAIGH-CHÉILIDH | IN THE CÉILIDH HOUSE

MA THRÉIG THU MI, LEANNAIN | IF YOU HAVE ABANDONED ME, DARLING

The refrain for *Ma Thréig Thu Mi, Leannain* has been used commonly for other verse compositions set to its air. An example of the melody, though a different song, was recorded from the singing of Dan Alec MacInnis, Castle Bay (*Beigh a' Chaisteil*) Cape Breton County. Set to a similar chorus, it can be heard on *Sruth nan Gàidheal* (<http://gaelstream.stfx.ca/greens>). John Shaw has provided *An Rubha* with verses transcribed from two southern Inverness County singers: Johnny Williams (*Seonaidh Aonghais Bhig*, late of Melford (*Crìochan Bràigh na h-Aibhne*), and Roddy MacInnis, (unrelated to Dan Alec), late of Riverside Road (*Rathad na h-Aibhne Deas*), Kingsville. Both singers were well known to each other in their community and lived in homes where other singers, and visitors, frequently gathered for songs, pastime, company and conversation. John Shaw has suggested that 'interpretation would be that the verses are on the part of a girl deserted more than once by her lover (hence the suggestions in verses 1 and 4), and she's down on him and herself."

Ceathramhan bho Johnny Aonghuis Bhig agus Rodaidh Ailig Ruairidh | Verses from Johnny Williams and Roddy Alec MacInnis.

Fonn: Ma thréig thu mi, leannain,
O cha mhath leam fhéin thu.
Ma thréig thu mi, leannain,
ˆS mi sùgradh air m'aineol,
ˆS mi gu deanadh gearan
Nan deanadh e feum dhomh

Chours: If you have deserted me lover,
oh, I won't like you.
If you have abandoned me, darling,
while I am [still] flirting but lost,
I would protest
- for all the good it would do me.

1. Gura mise tha gu truagh dheth
Cur crodh laoigh dhan bhuailidh;
ˆS buidhe dhan té a fhuair thu,
Mo thruaighe an té thréig thu.

I am pathetic, sending milk cows to
the paddock. Good luck to the girl
who won you and pity the one who
spurned you.

4. Mo mhallachd air an nighean
A bheireadh rùn a cridhe
Do dh'fhear falbh-is-tighinn
ˆS a tha a rithist ˆga tréigsinn.

My curse on the lass who would give
her heart's wish to one who comes
and leaves, and has yet again forsaken
her.

7. Gur ann di-Dòmhnaich Càisge
Dh'aithnich mi do nàdar:
Thòisich thu ri'm chàineadh
ˆS gura nàr dhut fhéin e.

It was on Easter Sunday that I
recognized your true character. You
began to denigrate me, something
you should be ashamed off.

2. Gura mise tha fo dhorran
A' coimhead an taigh-sgoile
ˆS nach fhaic mi ˆna dhorust
Fear a' bhroillich ghlé-ghil.

I am vexed gazing at the schoolhouse,
and not seeing the fair chested fellow
in its doorway

5. Gur ann aig ceann a' bhidse
Dhealaich rium an sgiobair;
Tha saighead ann am chridhe
ˆS cha tog fidheall fhéin e.

There, at the beachhead, I parted with
the skipper. My heart is wounded by
an arrow that fiddle music won't heal.

3. Fìdhleir cho ainmeil
ˆS a bha an taobh-sa dh'Albainn;
Cha robh a chinneadh ro-chearbach
Do dhearbh Chloinn 'IllFheòlain.

A fiddler as renowned as any in this
part of Scotland. His kindred were not
slovenly, mark of the MacLellans.

6. An toiseach an t-samhraidh
An àm crodh laoigh nan gamhna
ˆS ann a chaidh mi ˆn geall ort
ˆS a theann sinn gu chéile.

At summer's beginning, the season of
stirks and calves, I gave my promise to
you and we drew close to each other.

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Naomh Eòs is Deagh Bhiadh | St. Joseph's Blessing & Good Food

SLAMAN | CURDS

© Photo by Frances MacEachen



Alice Smith, (*Aileas n'in Ailidh Sheoig*) née MacRae, was native to MacRae's Hill (*Cnoc MhicRath*), North River Bridge (*Drochaid na h-Aibhne Tuath*), Victoria County, Cape Breton Island. Her antecedents emigrated from the Isle of Lewis. Reminiscing on foods common to her childhood, she provides a description of producing home-made rennet for *slaman*: a substance consisting of curdled milk produced in a young calf's stomach and used to curdle milk for cheese making. A common dish in other Gaelic-speaking areas of Nova Scotia, it is also known in Prince Edward Island and sometimes called *bainne-deasginn*.

Slaman

Nuair a rachadh laogh a mharbhadh, bheireadh 'ad a' stamag às agus ghlanadh 'ad gu math i. B' àbhaist dha mo mhàthair a bhi 'ga glanadh. Chuireadh i an uair sin salann agus uisge 'na broinn agus dh'fhàgadh i sìod 'na sheasamh fad oidhche. Làr na mhàireach, chuireadh i bainne ris a' stuth eile. Bha i an uairsin 'ga crochadh fad beagan làithean, na 's dòcha, fad seachdain. Nuair a bhiodh a' slaman deiseil, chuireadh i uibhir do bhainne air dòigh 's dòcha cart. Bha i 'ga bhlàthadh sin air a' stòbh. An nuair sin, chuireadh i spàn mhór, na dhà dhiubh, dhen stuth ris a' bhainne bhlàth. Chuireadh i sìod mun cuairt uile agus chuireadh i dhan dàrna taobh e gu fàsadh e car fuar. Nuair a bha am bainne air fuaradh, bha e tiugh - coltach ri *tapioca pudding*.

B' àbhaist dhi a' slaman a thoirt dhuinn le uachdar air. Dh'fhaodadh tu siùcar a chur air, na rud sam bith eile a chòrdadh riut. Bha i 'cantainn gu robh e math do dhuine. Bha an t-seann fheadhainn a' géillleadh dha sin, co dhuibh. Chan eil *puddings* mar sin againn an diugh. Chan eil sgath ann ach a' fùdar a chuireas tu ri bainne gus a dheanamh tiugh. Ach b'e sìod a bh'aca 's an t-seann aimisir.

Bhiodh stamag a' laogh air a crochadh 's a' phoirt fad na bliadhna - far a robh i fionnar. Nuair a bhiodh uibhir do spàinntean air an toirt às, bhatas a' cuir tuilleadh bainne innte. As t-samhradh, chuireadh 'ad suidheagan làir, na smeuran gorma, air an t-slaman gus barrachd do bhlas a chur ris. ©

Curds

When a calf was slaughtered, they would remove the stomach from it and give it a good cleaning. It was customary for my mother to clean it. She would then fill the inside of it with salt and water and let it stand for a night. The next day she would add milk to the other ingredients. She would then hang it for a few days, maybe a week. When the *slaman* (curdled milk) was ready, she would get so much milk ready, perhaps a quart. She would warm it on the stove. She would stir up all of that with a tablespoon. Then she would add a tablespoon, or two, of the mix to the warm milk. She would give it a good stirring and set it aside until it cooled a bit. When the milk got cold, it thickened, something like *tapioca pudding*.

She used to give us the *slaman* with cream on it. You could put sugar, or anything else you liked on it. She was saying that it was good for a person. The old people believed that, in any event. We don't have puddings like that today. There's nothing but powder that you add to milk to thicken it. Anyhow, that's what they had in the old days.

The calf's stomach would be hanging in the porch all year long, where it would stay cool. After so many spoonfuls had been taken out of it, they added more milk. In the summertime, they added strawberries, or blue berries, to give it more of a taste. ©

This piece originally appeared in *Am Bràighe*, v.1 no.1, 1993. *Am Bràighe* is now available online at <http://collections.stfx.ca/cdm/landingpage/collection/AmBraighe>

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© Photo by Murdena Stephen

Stuthan

Stamag laogh
Salann
Uisge
Bainne
Uachdar

Modh bìdh

Glan stamag a' laogh gu ìre mhath. Lìon le uisge agus salann i. Leig dhi a bhogadh fad na h-oidhcheadh. Air là-na-mhàireach, lìon le bainne i, agus tioramaich i 'na crochadh mu thuaiream seachdain a thìde. Nuair a bhios i tioram, teasaich mu cheithir cupan nan do bhainne air uachdar a' stòbha. Cuir beagan spàinean móra dhen stuth às stamag a' laogh ris a' bhainne bhlàth. Cuir mun cuairt e gu math agus fàg dhan dàrna taobh e dh'fhuarachadh. Thèid a' slaman an tighead mar na 's fhuair a dh'fhàsas am measgachadh. Cuir air a' bhòrd e le uachdar, siùcar - air neo smeuran na ràithe - air a' bhàrr.

Ingredients

Calf's stomach
Salt
Water
Milk
Cream

Recipe

Thoroughly clean the calf's stomach. Fill with salt and water. Set to soak overnight. The next day, fill with milk while hanging and let dry for about a week. When dry, heat about four cups of milk on stove top. Add a few tablespoons of the ingredients from the calf's stomach to the warm milk. Stir well and set aside to cool. The *slaman* will thicken the colder the mixture becomes. Serve with cream and sugar, or berries of the season, on top.

Air Bràigh a' Bhaile | On the Farm

A' BHÓ GHÀIDHEALACH | THE HIGHLAND COW

With much of Scotland's Highland region being poor of soil and short in growing season, the Gaels developed herding as a main component in their subsistence relationship with the land. Contrary to contemporary images of sheep dotted landscapes, cattle were the primary beast upon which the Highlanders drew their food source, and based an indigenous economy disrupted by the Highland Clearances. Such was the significance of cattle as a measure of wealth in autonomous Highland society, the Iona Statutes of 1609 legislated that the sons of chieftens owning sixty head, or more, be sent to the Lowlands for an English education intended to anglicize the Highland's ruling class.

As in Ireland of antiquity, cattle generated a symbolism manifesting itself in the literature of songs, stories and rituals of folklife. In a martial society, *togail nan creach* (cow raiding) was once an accepted initiation rite for proving the merit of male heirs groomed to become clan leaders. Domestically, the care of cows was seasonal work, with villagers accompanying their herds to upland pastures for communal grazing over the summer months, their shelters constituted by crude wattle, or sod covered huts. The summer, time for going to the *àirigh* (sheiling), was a high-point on the Gaels' seasonal calendar: a time of social interaction, connection with the environment, singing, music and storytelling.

*Thoir mo shoraidh thar an t-sàile
Null gu tìr nam beanntan àrda
Far an d'fhuair mi greis dha m'arach
Air an àirigh anns na glinn.*

Convey my regards across the sea, to the land of high peaked mountains: the place where I received my early upbringing, at the sheiling in the glens.

Resonating druidical times, Highland cattle, staple for dairy, meat and hides, were central to important annual community customs. *An t-Samhainn* (November 1st) traditions included lighting hill top bonfires, around which cattle were driven sun-wise, to sain them against disease. Fires for cattle purification were again built for *Là Bealtainn* (May 1st), which brought the advent for returning stock to hillside pastures. Among other rites, the first day of May was observed by preparation of oatmeal cakes, a special treat eaten with a smothering of *uidheagan* (milk and egg custard). Scored with crosses, *Bealtainn bonnachs* were rolled down hill slopes to make luck divinations.

A' Bhó Ghàidhealach (the Highland cow), along with Soay sheep also seen at *Baile nan Gàidheal*, dates its origins to Neolithic times. As a breed, modern Highland cattle are said to be derived from two earlier stocks: the West Highland, a smaller animal usually with black coats typically found in the islands and a mainland variety, somewhat larger, with coats in variants of brown. Evolved in a harsh environment demanding resilience, the Highland



cow is distinguished by its great sweep of horns and shaggy coat of double hair, capable of withstanding cold and wind. Seemingly feral in nature, the Highlander grazes on precipitous slopes with scant fodder, while subsisting on vegetation shunned by other breeds. In size, bulls can reach near the ton mark, while cows can weigh in at about half that. Both are squat in height and stocky in build.

Originally a utilitarian animal, providing the dairy (including a particularly a rich butter), meat and leather necessary to life in the rugged Highlands and Islands of Scotland, today's herds are prized for the ornamental market and a quality of beef notable for being low in cholesterol. An exceptionally hardy breed of cow, the Highlander's lifespan can extend to twenty years.

*Thig, a Mhuire, 's bligh a' bhó,
Thig, a Bhrìde, 's comraig i,
Thig, a Chaluim-chille chaoimh,
'S iadh do dhà làimh mu m' bhóin.*

Come, Mother Mary, and milk the cow. Come, St. Bridget, and give her shelter. Come, gentle St. Columba and spread your arms about my cow. ©

Carmina Gadelica:

<http://www.smo.uhi.ac.uk/gaidhlig/corpus/Carmina/G99>

Seumas Watson is the Highland Village's Manager of Interpretation.

Highland cattle are loaned to the Highland Village courtesy of Jim & Kelly Booth.





Iun 18, 1892
Rob Ruadh 's an t-Amadan

Nuair a bha Rob Ruadh MacGhriogair aig àirde anns a' Ghàidhealtachd, bha duine uasal 'na uachdaran air Dun Bheagain d' am b'ainm Tormod MacLeòid. Bha na Leòdaich 'nan uachdarain air Dun Bheagain ceudan bliadhna roimhe sin agus tha 'n sliochd ann gus an latha an diugh. Bha Tormod seo 'na dhuine cho ainmeil 's a bha dhiubh riamh, agus bha e 'na dhlùth charaide do Rob Ruadh. Innsidh sinn ciama a thàinig iad a bhi mar sin.

Bha MacLeòid air àm àraidh ag iarraidh airgead a bh'aige an lhbhir Nis a thoirt gu Dun Bheagain. Thug e òrdugh do aon de sheirbhisich a dhol 'ga iarraidh, ach bha eagal air an duine gun coinnicheadh Rob ris. Bha fhios aige gu robh Rob aig a cheart àm an àiteigin am falach eadar an t-Eilean Sgitheanach agus Inbhir Nis.

Bha leth-chiallach de dhuine mun cuairt air Dun Bheagain aig an àm sin agus dhasan a dh' innis an seirbhisich an càs anns a' robh e. Dh'fhalbh an t-amadan 's a' mhionaid far a robh MacLeòid agus thairig e a dhol a dh'iarraidh an airgid an àite an duine eile. Dh'aontaich a mhaighstir ri sin gu toilichte.

Dh'fhalbh e, agus air an t-slighe gu lhbhir Nis, a' dìreadh bruaich chais, thachair air duine mór breagha a dh'fheoraich dheth càit' a' robh e 'dol. Dh'innis e sin agus dh'fheoraich an coigreach dé an gnothuch air a robh e. Fhreagair e gu robh e 'dol a dh'iarraidh airgid a bh'aig a mhaighstir ann an lhbhir Nis.

"Feumaidh gu bheil do mhaighster glé bheairteach," ars' an coigreach.

"O, tha e glé mhath air a dhòigh," ars' an t-amadan.

"Am bidh mórán airgead agad a' tilleadh?"

"Bithidh, ma dh'fhaidhte, mile punnd," ars' an t-amadan gu bosdail.

"Feuch gun gabh thu cùram dheth, matà," ars' an coigreach. "Tha mi 'n dòchas gun tachair sinn fhathast."

"Tha mi fhìn an dòchas sin cuideachd," ars' am fear eile. Chum e air adhart an sin gu lhbhir Nis, agus fhuair e an t-airgead.

Air a thilleadh, stad e a leigeil anail faisg air an àite aig am fac' e an coigreach air a thuras gu lhbhir Nis. 'S gann a bha e air a shuidhe nuair a chunnaic e an ceart duine,

a' marcachd air each eireachdail, a' tighinn far a robh e. Dh'fhaighnich e dhen amadan an deachaidh a ghnòthuch gu math leis anns a' bhaile.

"O, chaidh glé mhath, ars' esan. Shaoil leis gum bu duine mór, inbheach an coigreach leis cho greadhnach 's a bha e fhéin 's an t-each air an uidheamachadh.

"Tha mi 'n dòchas," ars' an duine, Agu bheil an t-airgead tèaruinte, oir tha agad ri thoirt dhomhsa."

Cha robh fhios aig an sgalaig dé dheanadh e, ach ann an tiotadh fhreagair e, "Chan urrainn domh airgead mo mhaighstir a thoirt seachad."

"Ach feumaidh tu a thoirt seachad," ars' am fear eile. "'S mise Rob Ruadh!"

"Cha toir mi dhut idir e," 's e air chrith leis an eagal.

"Cuiridh mi peilear troimhead mur toir," arsa Rob.

Nuair a chunnaic an t-amadan nach robh ann dha ach an dara cuid, an t-airgead a thoirt seachad, no am bàs fhaighinn, thog e pasgan beag as a bhroilleach agus, "Siod agad e," ars' esan agus e 'ga thilgeil sìos am bruthach.

Leum Rob bharr an éich agus ruith e sìos, mar a shaoil leis, an déidh an airgid. Ann an tiotadh, bha an t-amadan an diollaid Roib agus thog e rithe gu toilichte, oir cha robh anns a' phasgan ach pàidhir stocainnean, agus bha an t-airgead aige 'na phòcaid. Chaidh Rob mar seo fhàgail air deireadh gun fhios aige có bu teòma, e fhéin no an t-amadan.

Nuair a thàinig am marcaiche fasig air Caisteal MhicLeòid, chunnaic am fear-faire e, 's cha robh fios aige có am fear staiteal a bh'ann. Chaidh e le cabhaig a dh'fheòraich do MhacLeòid an leigeadh e an duine uasal astaigh. Thuirt MacLeòid gun leigeadh; nach deanadh aon duine cron sam bith orra. Nuair a chunnaic iad có a bh'aca, bha iongantais orra.

"Càit' an d'fhuair thu an t-each sin?" arsa MacLeòid.

Dh'innis an t-amadan agus chòrd an sgeul ri Tormod gu fìor mhath. Ach nuair a rannsaich iad an diollaid, fhuair iad mórán airgead a bharrachd air na thug an sgalaig a lhbhir Nis. Thuirt MacLeòid an sin ris an amadan gu feumadh e a dhol air ais gu Rob le each 's le airgead.

Bha e glé leisg air sin a dhèanamh, ach mu dheireadh rinn e mar a dh'aithneadh

dha. 'S bha an t-amadan 's Rob Ruadh 's MacLeòid 'nan càirdean gu mór aig a' chéile riamh tuilleadh. ©

Translation
June 18 1892
Rob Roy and the Fool

At the time Rob Roy MacGregor was at this height in the Highlands, there was a contemporary gentleman called Norman MacLeod who was the proprietor of the Dunvegan estate. The MacLeods were lords of Dunvegan for centuries and their stock is still found there at present. This Norman was a man as famous as any of them ever were, and he was a close friend of Rob Roy. We'll tell you how that came about.

On an occasion, MacLeod wished to move a sum of money from Inverness to Dunvegan. He ordered one of his servants to retrieve it, but the fellow was fearful that he would meet with Rob Roy. He was aware that Rob was just then somewhere in hiding between the Isle of Skye and Inverness.

There was a half-wit in the vicinity of Dunvegan at the time and to him the servant immediately described his situation. The idiot immediately went to MacLeod and offered to go for the money in the other man's place. To that, his master agreed happily. Off he went.

On the way to Inverness, while climbing a steep embankment, he met a big, fine looking man who asked him where he was going. He told him his destination and the stranger then asked what his business was. The fool replied that he was going to Inverness to get his master's money.

"Your master must be wealthy," said the stranger.

"Oh, he's very well off," said the fool.

"Will you have much money when you return?"

"I will have, perhaps, a thousand pounds," the fool answered boastfully.

"See that you take good care of it," said the stranger. "I hope that we meet again."

"I hope so too," said the other fellow. He then continued to Inverness and got the money.

On his way back, the fool stopped to rest near the place where he saw the stranger while on his journey to Inverness. He had

hardly sat down when he saw the same man coming to where he was and riding a handsome horse. The man asked the fool how he had got along in town.

"Oh, things went well," said the fool. He thought that the stranger was a big and important man from the way he and his horse were decked out.

"I hope," said the man, "that the money is safe, because you have to give it to me."

The servant didn't know what to do, but he answered right away, "I can't hand over my master's money."

"But you must," said the other fellow. "I'm Rob Roy."

"I will not give it to you by any means," he said shaking with fear.

"I will put a bullet in you if you don't," said Rob.

When the fool saw that he had only two choices, to give over the money, or be killed, he took a little bundle out of his shirt and said, "There you have it!" And he threw the bundle down the hill.

Rob jumped down from the horse and ran down the hill, thinking he was going after the money. In an instant, the fool was in Rob's saddle happily moving off since there was nothing more in the bundle than a pair of socks, while he had the money in his pocket. Rob was left behind wondering who was the smarter, himself, or the fool.

When the rider drew near MacLeod's Castle, the sentry spotted him. He hurried to MacLeod to ask if he should let the gentleman inside. MacLeod said that he could and that one individual would do them no harm. They were surprised to see whom

they had on hand.

"Where did you get that horse?" MacLeod asked.

The fool told him the story and MacLeod was greatly pleased. When they searched the saddle, they found a good deal more money than that which the servant had brought home from Inverness. MacLeod then told the servant that he had to return Rob's horse and money to him.

The servant was loath to return, but at last did as he was ordered. The fool, Rob Roy and MacLeod were best friends ever after. ©

An excerpt from MacTalla, Translated & Edited by Seumas Watson.

Iulaidh 10, 1903

Anns an Railway Bill, a tha tarrainn na h-uiread de dh'ùine na h-àrd-pharlamaid, bha riaghailt a' cur mar fhiachai-bh air cuideachd nan rathad-iaruinn "cluairin (giogan) is luibhean cronail eile" a chumail o bhi fas timchioll an rathaid. Nuair thàinig a' chiuid sin de'n bhill fa chomhair an tighe, dh'éirich an t-Ònarach Uilleam Ros, agus chuir e gu làidir an aghaidh achd parlamaid a bhi 'g ràdh gu'm bu luibh chronail an cluaran,

suaicheantas na h-Alba. Chunnaic càch, mar dhaoine tuigseach, gu'm bu reusonta 'n tagradh a rinn e, agus bha 'n cluaran air a thoirt bhar àireamh nan luibhean cronail gun dàil.

July 10, 1903

In the Railway Bill, which is taking up so much of national Parliament's time, one of its directives made it the railway company's responsibility to keep "thistles and other harmful weeds" from growing near

the rail bed. When that section of the bill came before the house, the Honourable William Ross rose and expressed himself robustly against a Parliamentary Act that would designate the thistle, emblem of Scotland, a detrimental weed. The rest (of parliamentarians), being discerning people, saw this as a reasonable appeal and immediately removed the thistle from the list of harmful plants.

An excerpt from MacTalla, Translated & Edited by Seumas Watson.

Maigh 13, 1904

Tha aon duine brònach an diugh an Glace Bay. Chuala sinn uile mu'n t-soitheach-chogaidh "Maine" a bha air a cur 'na smuid ann an Acarsaid Havana. Am measg nam beagan nithean a bh' air bòrd an t-soithich sin a chaidh a shabhaladh, bha beagan bhrioscaidean. Chaidh na briosaidean cuide ris gach ni eile a cheannach le daoine bha déidheil air rudan annasach dhe gach seòrsa. Fhuair aon de dh'ofaigich Cuideachd a' Ghuail greim air té dhiu 's phàidh e air a son ceud 's trì fichead 's cóig dolair dheug (\$175.00).

An là roimhe, thug e bhrioscaid luachmhor seo leis do 'n ofais air-son a sealltuinn do aon no dithist de chairdean. Bha saoir aig an àm seo ag obair 'san ofais, agus air do shealbhadair na briosaide dhol a mach, thàinig fear de na saoir a stigh. Chunnaic e 'bhrioscaid, 's ma chunnaic cha b'fhada thug e 'ga 'cur thar a chioch-shlugain, far nach gabhte 'n còrr ioghnaidh dhi. Tha fear na briosaid a nis air tòir an t-saoir, ach ma tha e cho marbhteach 's a tha e cho maoidhteach,

tha sinn an dòchas nach beir e air. Chan ann a h-uile latha gheibh duine greim bidh a chosd uiread sud a dh'airgid.

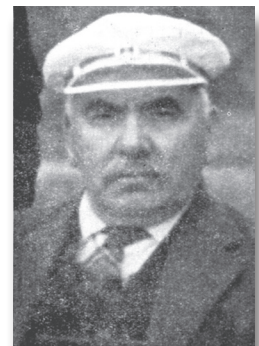
May 13, 1904

There's one person distressed in Glace Bay today. We have all heard about the battleship *Maine*, which was exploded in Havana Harbour. Among the few things salvaged from on board, were a few biscuits. The biscuits, along with everything else, were put up for purchase by people interested in those types of novelties. One of the Coal Company officials got hold of a biscuit and paid \$175.00 for it.

The other day, he took his expensive biscuit to show to one, or two of his friends. At the time, there were carpenters working in the office, and after the biscuit's owner had gone out, one of the carpenters came in. He saw the biscuit, and if he did, it wasn't long before he had it down his gullet, where its wonder would never be seen again. The biscuit's owner is now tracking down the carpenter. If he's as murderous as he is threatening, we hope he never catches up to

him. It's not every day one gets a morsel of food that cost that amount of money.

An excerpt from MacTalla, Translated & Edited by Seumas Watson.



MacTalla, published in Sydney, Nova Scotia, was the longest running Gaelic weekly paper and ending as a bi-weekly (1892-1904). Eòin Aonghais Chaluim - Jonathan G. MacKinnon's was a lifelong promoter of Gaelic and was involved in other publications including Gaelic translations of English literature.

Soraidh Slàn le Deagh Chàirdean | Farewell to Good Friends

The winter of 2016 was a difficult one for us here at Hector's Point, as we said "*beannachd leibh*" to two very special people - Gerry MacNeil and Debi MacNeil. Both ladies, who were our colleagues and friends, shared a passion for life, family, community, culture, and the Highland Village. Gerry passed away in early February and Debi later that month. This issue of *An Rubha* is dedicated to the memory of these two remarkable women.

Searaidh ni'n Fhrans `ic Ruairidh `ic Raghnaill Mhóir | Gerry MacNeil

For almost 27 years, the first face a visitor would see when arriving at the Village, was that of Gerry MacNeil. Gerry began her journey at the Highland Village as an animator before moving to the Gift shop as the Senior Visitor Centre Clerk. She welcomed every visitor with a warm smile, that famous Cape Breton hospitality, and a great Gaelic sense of humour. Gerry was a cherished member of the Highland Village staff. She worked hard to ensure we were serving our visitors well while keeping the shop stocked. She also ensured that the Village was a enjoyable place to work, with lots of laughs, and delicious fudge. Gerry retired at the end of the 2013 season, but remained a great friend and supporter of the Village.

Gerry was born and raised in Washabuck in a Gaelic speaking household, the daughter of the late Francis and Margaret MacDonald. She is survived by her husband Jimmy "Hector" MacNeil, her daughter Juanita MacNeil, her sister Clare MacDonald, brother Roddie, and beloved grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Gerry was pre-deceased by her twin sons James and Sheldon and her daughter, Kerrie Lynn. Gerry passed away on February 5, 2016. ©



Deabag n' in Mhicheil `ic Steabhain `ic Dhòmhaill ic Eòghain | Debi MacNeil

Debi MacNeil was a part of our Highland Village family for over 14 years, initially as an Animator and most recently as our Senior Animator & Costume Coordinator. Debi tended to the scheduling of animation staff, the organizing of interpretive activities and programming, and caring for the site's extensive costume collection. She was also a champion enhancing visitor experiences including first person interpretation. We remember Debi for her great sense of humour, love of life, commitment to Gaelic, ability to organize, and drive to provide great visitor experiences.

Debi was born in Sydney and raised in Northside East Bay, the daughter of the late Bernie and Frances MacPhee. She is survived by her husband Joey, son Hector, daughter Shannon, sisters Bev Neville and Linda Nickerson, brother Bernie and her special granddaughter Salerah. She was pre-deceased by her sisters Sylvia, Nancy and Frankie. Debi passed away on February 25, 2016. ©



In September, at our annual Pioneer Day event, Tom and Donna Poulette presented the Highland Village with two traditionally beaded eagle feathers in memory of their dear friends Debi & Gerry.

*Eilean gorm nam beanntan àrd
Tìr mo dhùthchais, tìr mo ghràidh
'S iomadh tonn a bhuaileas tràigh
Mun iarr mi fàth air carachadh*

Green island of grand hills
Place of my heritage and deepest affection
Many the waves that will strike your shore
Before I'll seek cause to forsake you

Composer: Jonathan G. MacKinnon

Dèante le Làimh | Handmade

THE DEALGAN: A HIGHLAND SPINDLE



The spindle has a long history in many cultures. Used for thousands of years as an implement to spin fibre into thread to make clothing and other textiles, it had a particularly interesting development in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.

Its origins were possibly something as crude as a hooked stick, or even a rock. A rock could have twisted fibre tied around it, then could be twirled around as fibre was drawn out and spun. A hooked stick was used to twist the fibre by rolling the stick horizontally down the thigh. Eventually many types of spindle sticks evolved into tools for spinning all sorts of animal and vegetable fibres into threads.

Spindles in Scotland were generally of two types: those with whorls and those without whorls. As spindles developed, it was realized that the spindle stick could be made more efficient with a weight added to it.

These weights called 'whorls' were usually made of bone, soft rock, wood or clay. They were shaped into small disks of various sizes with a hole in the centre. The hole allowed the disk to be slipped onto a slightly tapered stick. This extra weight provided more momentum for twisting and allowed for a stronger and, therefore, longer thread. The type of fibre to be spun determined the size of the whorl in proportion to the stick, as the stronger or longer the fibre, such as flax, the heavier the whorl needed.

While spindles with whorls never fell out of use in some cultures, in wide areas of the Highlands and Islands another type of spindle had developed by the eighteenth century, often referred to as a *dealgan*. The spindle stick itself became wider at the bottom, more of a slender cone shape. It usually had a knob or notch carved into the narrowest point at the top to loop the thread around. Often the wider bottom had grooves carved into it in an x-shape. Sometimes they were decorated with a bit of carving. The weight of a whorl was replaced by this thicker bottom. Whorls were no longer needed.

Why this occurred is open to speculation. Enid Gauldie, in her National Museums of Scotland publication *Spinning and Weaving*, attributed it to the development of better woodworking skills and the fact that this shape gave a more constant spinning motion and smoother thread.

Modern analysis shows that a spindle with a whorl distributes weight out at the rim of the whorl, resulting a longer spin. On the other hand, a whorl-less spindle,



An image of a woman using a drop spindle
from Arthur Mitchell's *The Past in the Present:
What Is Civilization?*

where the weight is centred around the shaft will result in a faster spin. A *dealgan* made with a dense wood also provides enough weight to ensure that the spindle spins well. The weight of a heavier spindle is suitable for spinning linen or wool, typical Highland fibres.

Other aspects of a *dealgan* are its ease of use and its portability. A small one can be tucked away in an apron pocket. It would also not be apt to break when dropped or if thrown, as it might be, in one of the methods of spinning with this type of spindle.

As the yarn is spun, it is wound by the spinner around the shaft in a way to balance the weight of the spin. If the yarn has been carefully wound to form a ball, it can simply be slid off the narrower part of the shaft, saving the effort of winding the spun yarn into a ball for further processing.

Descriptions and images of the *dealgan* over the past 200 years have been recorded in the Highlands, including photographs from the late 1800's in the Hebrides. One eighteenth century spindle from Harris is in the Glasgow Museum in Edinburgh, with another *dealgan* in the Alexander Carmichael Collection in the West Highland Museum in Fort William.

How was the *dealgan* used? R.R. McLan, in *The Past in the Present* (1848), gives us a description:

"...By a simple noose which prevents the thread from unwinding, the spindle can be suspended so that the spinner may work while standing or walking, thus gaining a greater length of thread. Having set it

in motion by the fingers and thumb, or a smart roll against the thigh, the fibres which have been attached to the small end are twisted into thread of the requisite fineness...until a convenient length is obtained, when she winds it around the thicker part of the spindle, repeating the operation and removing the balls of worsted or thread until the task is completed."

Su Grierson, in *Whorl and Wheel*, says that there were two ways of spindle spinning in Scotland. The first was from a standing position, as described above, either twisting it or rolling it against the thigh. Many descriptions have been handed down of women in the Hebrides, walking along to tend the cows or with creels of peat or seaweed on their backs, spinning as they go.

The second way was from a sitting position where the spindle was rolled down the thigh, then allowed to drop to the floor, where it continued to spin. It is possible that this method, used with more force, may be what is referred to in recollections of spindle use as 'throwing' the spindle. We can imply from accounts of the use of the *dealgan* in North America, that this method was sometimes used here in eastern Canada.

One interesting aspect of the proliferation of the whorl-less *dealgan* is that as time went on, people in many areas of the Highlands were no longer familiar with spindle whorls. This became fertile ground for the creation of myths surrounding the strange 'stones' that were found from time to time. These whorls were often found in abandoned living sites. Or sometimes they would have been found where they were lost by centuries of women spinning outdoors, tending to cattle or doing other tasks. (Whorls were often removed if the weight of the spun yarn became heavy enough to keep the spindle spinning on its own, and therefore, were easily lost.)

At some point in the 19th century, however, the whorl-less spindle was so common that the knowledge of the use of whorls was forgotten. I.F. Grant mentions in *Highland Folkways* that these now mysterious objects were often used as charms. She collected two made of antler that were found over the doorway of a cottage in Glenurquhart. The woman who lived there said that they had been left there by a witch.

Perhaps even more strange were the beliefs that these whorls—often made of stone—were formed by snakes with their saliva. (This idea may actually have had ancient Roman origins, where even more ancient Iron Age whorls were sometimes

found.) They called them *clachan nath-rach* ('serpent-stones' or 'adder-stones') and believed they had healing powers for animals. Immersing the *clach nathrach* in water, then bathing an affected animal's sore muscle or sprained ankle would result in healing.

These findings strengthen the idea that the use of the whorl-less *dealgan* was well entrenched in many areas by the 19th century. Arthur Mitchell, who, in the 1860's discovered these beliefs existed not only in the Highlands and Islands, but also in Shetland, remarked:

"So is it also with some parts of the outer Hebrides, where the sudden disappearance of the spindle and whorl, and the complete oblivion into which all about them has fallen, made a deep impression on my mind. It did so because it happens that in these same districts whorls are still to be frequently seen. Being of stone, they do not rot away like spindles, and they are often turned up in diggings about deserted townships. By those who so find them they are treated with a superstitious respect and care, being regarded as charms, and known under the name of Adder Stones. It was frequently found that no knowledge existed as to the purpose for which they had originally been made: and in many cases it was not possible to persuade the possessors of them that they were really commonplace objects which had at one time, and perhaps not long ago, been used in spinning, and that they were entirely destitute of any qualities potent either to prevent or to remove disease and misfortune."

Mitchell observed that spindles were still being used as late as the 1860's, even in areas where spinning wheels were also being used. Yet the fact that people there had no knowledge of spindle whorls, leads us to believe that these were areas where the use of the *dealgan* had evolved. He observed this in Shetland, Orkney and the Hebrides, as well as in the counties of Ross, Sutherland, Inverness, and the district of Galloway. "The art of hand-spinning is widely tenacious of life in Scotland," he stated.

In fact, it wasn't that unusual for hand spindles to still be used even after spinning wheels were commonplace. It has been said that you either spun 'on the distaff' or 'on the wheel'. Flax and longer stapled wool were still spun with a spindle, while spinning wheels were used to spin shorter wool fibres, as well as flax tow.

The use of various terms for Highland spindles (*cuigeal*, *dealgan*, *fearsaid*, *farsadh*, etc.) throughout time can be confusing. They often did not differentiate between the two types of spindles.

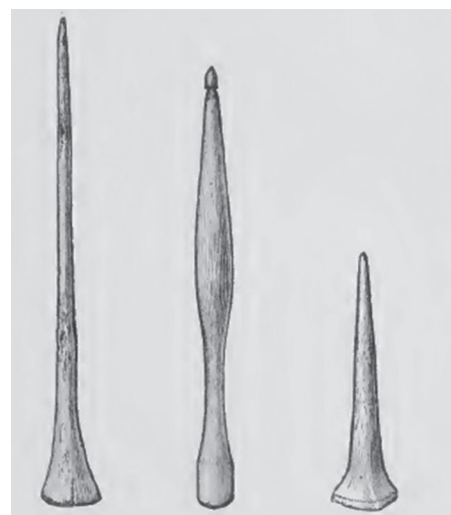
Spindles of both types, whether with

whorls or without, were always used with a distaff (*cuigeal*), a long forked stick tucked under one arm. The unspun flax or wool was wrapped onto the top of the *cuigeal*, to be drawn down as needed for spinning. Because the use of the distaff was integral to spinning with a spindle, these two items became more or less synonymous and spinning with the spindle was often referred to as spinning with the *cuigeal*.

By the nineteenth century, the terms *dealgan* and *fearsaid* both seemed to be used interchangeably as the Gaelic words for the whorl-less spindle. This could simply be due to the decreased use of spindle whorls. (The exception to this would be the use of a potato, sometimes preserved in glycerin, as a whorl.) Less often, this type of spindle might be called a *farsadh*, as was sometimes heard in Cape Breton. By the time of immigration, however, the term *dealgan* seems to predominate. (The word '*dealgan*' itself means 'collarbone,' or 'little pin' or 'skewer' in English. Its Gaelic root word is '*dealg*', a small fastening pin.)

Wherever Highlanders settled in the New World, it is probable that these spindles were in use. We must remember that spinning wheels were not all that common among some Highland populations, especially in the Hebrides, until mid-19th century—a bit after the time of emigration for many. Various examples of the *dealgan* can be found in North America, especially in the Maritimes and Quebec, in Eastern Canada.

But the use of the *dealgan* changed over the years, eventually replaced by the spinning wheel for spinning. It now became a tool for plying single strands of yarn together to make thicker or more stable yarns for knitting or rug hooking. It was now used in conjunction with the wheel.



An image of *Dealgan* from Arthur Mitchell's *The Past in the Present: What Is Civilization?*

Dorothy Burnham in *Keep Me Warm One Night* (1972), talks of spinning wheels in both Scotland and Canada with a *farsadh* stored in the distaff hole in the platform of the wheel. "A wheel seen at Auchindrain, near Inverary in Argyll, still had its *farsadh* in place, and another...in Ontario." She found that in Scottish areas of Canada women did not use their wheels for plying, as they felt that "...plying yarn put too great a strain on the treadle wheel and threw it out of balance."

Burnham had not been able to find anyone who had actually used a *farsadh*, but said that "...one informant in Cape Breton had been told that it was rotated by hand and thrown across the room, the twist passing along the length of the ply as it twirled. If this was done, each stretch of yarn plied in one action would have been longer than would have resulted from twisting and dropping."

Mary Red Dan Smith, however, in *Cape Breton Magazine*, in 1979, had used her *dealgan beag* (small spindle) for most of her life. Her spindle was smaller than most—only about 13 cm in length. She stated that its 'sole purpose' was to ply yarn. She took two balls of yarn and rolled them up together by hand to make a single ball. From this ball she spun the two strands together with her *dealgan beag*. Two strands of yarn were plied together to make 2-ply yarn for knitting clothing such as mitts, socks and men's long underwear. As well, two 2-ply balls of yarn were spun together to make 4-ply yarn for hooking floor mats. It was even used sometimes to ply together strands of burlap from sacks to make additional material for hooking into the mats.

Mary said that the spinning wheel was used if a lot of yarn had to be plied, but "...if you only want a little you do it like this. [Spin with the *dealgan*.] My mother would do this any time of the night or day she had a minute to spare. She'd be doing it and I'd be doing it. Every kid then learned to knit and make things with yarn. It's the only thing they had to get something to put on yourself."

According to Eveline MacLeod in *Celtic Threads*, two members of the South Haven Weavers' Guild in Cape Breton had used the *dealgan* to ply yarn for knitting. They had placed 2 balls of yarn in a basket and using the two threads as one had twisted the threads around the knob on the top, then around the wider part of the cone. It was spun from the top with the fingers, with the two strands twisting together. As the yarn was plied, it was wound onto the bottom of the *dealgan*, forming a ball of 2-ply yarn.

Eveline herself was the owner of a *dealgan* which had come from Harris to St. Anns, near South Haven, in Cape Breton.

As well, there are many Cape Bretoners who still possess one of these spindles, often passed down in their family. Rod C. MacNeil of Iona owns a *dealgan* pictured in *Celtic Threads* that is thought to have come from Barra in 1802.

Baile nan Gàidheal has a small *dealgan* collection. These spindles vary in size from about 18 to 30 cm in length. One has carving around the wider bottom part.

But other spindles are found outside of Nova Scotia. Margaret Bennett, in her research in the Scottish Gaelic settlements of Quebec found that several homes in 1992 still had spindles. One woman had one that had been her grandmother's. It was described as being a tapered piece of wood about 3 cm at the base and it was known to her as a *dealgan*. It is pictured in Bennett's *Oatmeal and the Catechism*.

Bennett stated that if one woman was working alone she would find it easier to ply her yarn on her spinning wheel. But if two women could work together, one would keep spinning on the wheel while the other could do the plying with the spindle. They used 2-ply wool for mittens and socks, with 3-ply used for winter sweaters.

Another informant of hers had actually used a *dealgan* with her mother. "...She'd be busy spinning and I'd be twisting it for her...we used the spindle...There'd be two businesses going on together...you know, I have one at the house, some place...It's just a stick, and you wound it around this end...at the big end...And then you twist it...and you'd wind that on, and start all over again...We had a pan or something to put it in; if not, just let them run, and see that the cat wouldn't get after them!"

In Cape Breton, the memory of using a *dealgan* has not faded away completely. One of our staff members at Highland Village, Emily MacDonald, relates a conversation with her grandmother, who is 100 years old.

"My grandmother, Mary Jessie (Gillis) MacDonald grew up in Gillisdale in Margaree. When I showed her my *dealgan* she recognized what it was right away and said 'That's for putting the twist in the yarn.' I asked if hers looked like mine and she said, 'Yes, except there was a little cut in the bottom to hold the yarn', and when I turned mine over to show her the bottom she said hers was exactly the same. She was born in 1916 and still used hers until around the early 1940's. When I asked her if it was used for spinning or plying she said you could do both, and that you would ply if you wanted thicker yarn for something but not necessarily all the time."

In spite of the many examples that still survive, it may seem that the *dealgan*'s time has come and gone. But that is not the case. There has been a revival of sorts for this unusual spindle. Internet sites and blogs—even videos on YouTube—are now responsible for sharing information on the *dealgan*. There are even several sites where one may go to purchase a newly crafted spindle of this type. Another generation of spinners is set to enjoy the satisfaction of both spinning and plying on this historical tool of the Gaelic Highlands. ©

Vicki Quimby is textile consultant and animator at the Highland Village. Dèantle le làimh is a regular feature of An Rubha.



This drop spindle and yarn was made in Barra Glen, NS.

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Baile nan Gàidheal an Eilean nan Àigh

GAELIC HANDS ACROSS THE STRAIT

Extending the hand of cultural kinship across *An Caolas-a-Tuath* (Northumberland Strait), a number of Highland Village animators participated in the 2nd Annual Gaelic Folkways Festival and Summer Institute, 26-27 August, 2016, Prince Edward Island (<http://www.macphailgaelic.com>). Organized by the Sir Andrew Macphail Foundation, the two day program was held in Orwell, at the Sir Andrew Macphail Homestead: a 140 acre interpretive centre encompassing a working garden, tract of old Acadian Forest, numerous bird species and other wildlife (<http://macphail-homestead.ca>). Its featured building is the original 19th century home of Island native Sir Andrew Macphail: physician, Renaissance man and forward thinking environmental scholar.

With many shared kinship ties and cultural expressions, the Gaelic legacy of Prince Edward Island, euphemistically referred to here as *Eilean an Àigh* (Island of Joy) - is familiar ground to its Nova Scotia first cousins. Major Highland immigration to the then named St. John's Island commenced in 1772, through founding of the Glenaladale Settlement. Established by Captain John MacDonald, its land holdings ostensibly provided relief for oppressed Catholic Gaels, most of who hailed from South Uist, Moydart and Arasaig. Large scale Highland immigration to Prince Edward Island is next marked by the Lord Selkirk initiative of 1803, bringing Gaels - primarily from the Isle of Skye and Raasay - to the eighty-thousand-acre Lot 57, in the area of Belfast. Place of Highland origin for other Island

immigrants included regions of Argyll, Perthshire and Sutherland. By the late nineteenth century, the eastern half of the Island, adjacent to Cape Breton Island separated by the Northumberland Strait, had formed an intense Gaelic-speaking "cultural zone," with frequent social and cultural traffic to and fro over the water.

From the Irish side of the Gaelic equation, several waves of immigrants, comprised of settlers and trades people, sought refuge from the Penal Laws and favourable prospects in the Island's abundant countryside and growing population. Forming a significant segment of the Island's ethnic make-up, they arrived through the latter decades of the eighteenth century up to the mid-1800s. Geographic origins for Irish settlement was weighted towards the southeast, including Kerry, Cork, Waterford and Wexford and to the northeast, with many families from Monaghan and Armagh represented.

The Macphail Homestead Gaelic festival exemplified a contemporary model for these ongoing exchanges, in a program featuring some of Cape Breton's accomplished cultural ambassadors, representing Gaelic Nova Scotia through story, song and language instruction. Among these was Shay MacMullin, *Ban-chleas-*



2nd Annual Gaelic Folkways Festival and Summer Institute

© Photo by Marlene Ivey

aiche, *Baile nan Gàidheal*, Colin Watson, animator, *Baile nan Gàidheal*, Mary Jane Lamond, Gaelic Mentor, *Baile nan Gàidheal* and Seumas Watson, Manager of Interpretation, *Baile nan Gàidheal*. Also attending was *Lodaidh MacFhioghain* (Lewis MacKinnon), Executive Director, Nova Scotia Office of Gaelic Affairs, who recited some of his own poetic compositions and contributed a sung *Fenian Lay* from the Nova Scotia corpus on the closing concert stage.

With a vigorous Irish cultural heritage still evident in the Prince Edward Island tradition, the Macphail Gaelic festival welcomed as special guest outstanding *seann nòs* singer Dr. Lillis O' Laoire, a Donegal native fluent in both Gaelic languages. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YFWlErjWN9c>)

A leading European ethnographer, Lillis is a Senior Lecturer in *Scoil na Gaelige*, National University of Ireland Galway. His bi-Gaelic singing and presentations provided an illuminating approach to Prince Edward Island's Gaelic heritage.

Looking to the future for developing Prince Edward Island's Gaelic resources, Dr. Tiber Falzett, key organizer with the Sir Andrew Macphail Foundation, remarked, "Such opportunities are integral to fostering a wider appreciation and awareness of the lasting impact made by Scottish Gaels upon Prince Edward Island's multicultural and multilingual landscape, a legacy that all Islanders regardless of individual background or place of birth can take pride in sharing as a unique and irreplaceable contribution to the human experience." ©

Seumas Watson is the Highland Village's Manager of Interpretation.



Macphail Homestead Milling Frolic - Orwell, Prince Edward Island

© Contributed by Tiber Falzett

An Gàidheal Portmhor | Scotch Music

BUAN NA RAINICH ANNS A' MHONADH | CUTTING BRACKEN

Commonly heard in Cape Breton as a strathspey, this tune seems to have been played in other tempos as well on the pipes. A sung Don-egal version was recorded by Clannad and titled as *Dulaman*, (see The Session: <https://thesession.org/tunes/647>).

An associated Gaelic story with this tune is that of a man attracted to a fairy mound by music and consequently captured and imprisoned for a year and a day. His labour assignment is to sickle all the ferns from the front and back of the hill. Upon finishing his chore on one side, the fellow discovers that the hill's other side has again grown in with bracken. Joe Neil MacNeil (*Eòs Nill Bhig*), late of Middle Cape, Cape Breton County, provides a common Scottish setting for the *port-à-beul* and a Cape Breton variant.

Scottish Setting

Car a h-aon | First Turn

Tha mi sgìth 's mi leam fhìn 'buan na rainich anns a' mhonadh
(I am weary, all alone, cutting ferns in the moorland).

Tha mi sgìth 's mi leam fhìn a' buan na rainich daonnan
(I am weary, all alone, cutting ferns without rest).

Car a dhà | Second Turn

A chuile latha, fad a' latha, a chuile latha daonnan
(Every day, all day. The same every day).

A chuile latha, fad a' latha, a chuile latha daonnan
(Every day, all day. The same every day). ©

Cape Breton Setting

Car a h-aon | First Turn

Tha mi sgìth 's mi leam fhìn a' dèanamh feansa dha * na maighich
(I am weary, all alone, making a fence for the rabbits).

Tha mi sgìth 's mi leam fhìn a' dèanamh feansa dhraighinich
(I am weary, all alone, making a scrub wood fence).

Car a dhà | Second Turn

Gu dèanamh feansa dha na maighich, a' dèanamh feansa dhraighinich
(Making a fence for the rabbits, making a scrub wood fence).

Gu dèanamh feansa dha na maighich, a' dèanamh feansa dhraighinich
(Making a fence for the rabbits, making a scrub wood fence). ©

*The Gaelic word *maigheach*, though translated as rabbit in the Cape Breton vernacular, is the correct word for hare. There are no feral rabbits in Cape Breton.



The Skye Collection of the Best Reels & Strathspeys, 1887, page 105



Music notation above is from *Athole Collection*, Vol. 1, 1883. *Cutting Ferns* can be found on page 58 of the collection.

Seinn fo Sgàil nan Geugan Uaine | Songs from the Greenwood

GURA MIS' A THA FO MHULAD | I AM SADDENED

Gura mis' a tha fo mhulad is a locally composed drinking song, reported as having been made by Donald Gillis of Rear Beaver Cove (*Cùl Còbh a' Bhìobhair*). Recorded from the late Margaret MacLean (*Mairead bean Ruairidh Iagain Ruairidh* of Boisdale [*Baghasdail*]), née MacDonald). Margaret was an exceptional source of songs known in Boisdale and the surrounding area. Reared in a household setting where song was eminent, from an early age Margaret's singing was influenced by her grandmother, *Màiri Dhòmhnaill Nill*, (MacKinnon), grandfather *Dòmhnall Dòmhnallach* (Donald MacDonald) and two MacDonald uncles: *Jonaidd Iain* and *Dòmhnall Iain*. Her setting here was taped in 1986, during a song session in Boisdale, with singing on choruses provided by daughter Sadie and Father Allan MacMillan, currently of St. Andrew's Church, Judique. ©

© Recorded by Seumas Watson and Ellison Robertson
Transcription and Translation Seumas Watson



© Photo by John MacLean

Fonn: Gura mis' a tha fo mhulad on sguir mi dhen òl
Chan òl mi deur tuilleadh fhads a bhios mi beò
Gura mis' a tha fo mhulad on sguir mi dhen òl

Chours: I am downcast after having quit the drink. I'll
never touch another drop, so long as I live. I am
downcast after having quit the drink

1. Tha sagart na cléireadh
`Cuir soighneadh an céill dhuinn
Cha bhi mi `ga bhléimeadh
B'e sin fhéin a chòir

A priest of the clergy is making us
sign the pledge. I can't really blame
him since that's his privilege

2. Gur h-e Maighstir Fionnlagh
A dh'fhàg mise tuirseach
Nuair a thuirt e riumsa
"Tionndaich ris a' Hall"

It is Father Finlay who left me melan-
choly, when he commanded me turn
to the *Hall.

3. Gura mis' a tha tuirseach
On lath' a chuir mi cùl ris
`S tric na deòir o m' shùilean
Drùdhadh sios dha m'shròin

I'm the one who's dejected, since I
shunned it (drink). The tears from
my eyes often drip to my nose.

4. `S toilicht' tha mo mhàthair
`S tric a bhois i 'g ràitinn,
"Dòmhnall fhuair na gràsan
On sguir e dhen òl."

My mother is so pleased. She often
says "Donald has been enlightened,
since he stopped drinking."

5. Nuair théid mi gu bainis
`S an fhiodhull `na caithream
Càch ag òl nan dramaich
`S bidh mise fo bhròn

When I go to a wedding, and the
fiddle is ringing, the rest are drinking
drams and I'll be so pathetic.

6. Is mis' a bhios cràiteach
Nuair a thig lath'pàidhidh
Na botuil `gan tràghadh
`S mi gun làn mo bheòil

I'll be glum on pay day: bottles
being drained off and me
without a swallow.

7. Ma chumas sinn na h-àintean
Mar a dh'iarr a' Slànaighear
Saoil nach bidh sinn sàbhailt
Ged bhiomaid ag òl

If we keep the Commandments, as di-
rected by the Saviour, don't you think
we'll be saved, although we should
be drinking?

8. Ach nuair a thig an Nollaig
`S a thig na fir air Chollaig
Òlaidh sinn na galan
A dh'aindeoin na Hall

But when Christmas comes, and the
lads are visiting on New Year, we'll
drink it by the gallon, despite the Hall.

9. Maggie Cook an creutair
Bu laghach leam fhéin i
Nuair rachainn air chéilidh
Bhiodh botal `na dòrn

Maggie Cook, the old dear, I think she
is so nice. When I would go to visit,
she'd have a bottle in her hand.

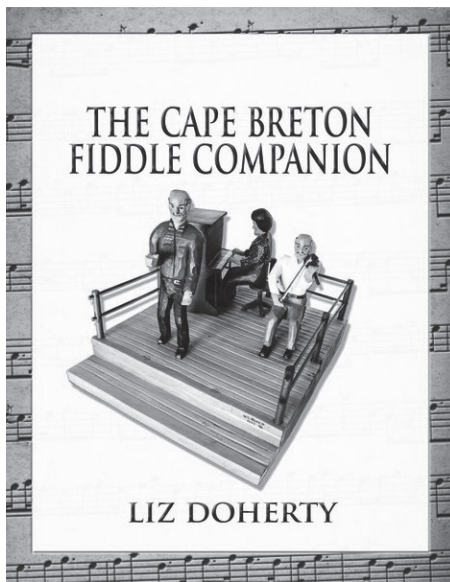
10. Alex Steele ud shuas
`S e an dram' a bhiodh air suarach
Mac an fhìor dhuin' uasail
Dham bu dualach bhith còir

Alex Steele up yonder, a dram for him
was trifling. Son of the true gentle-
man, kindness was his custom.

*Temperance Hall

An Rubha Review

THE CAPE BRETON FIDDLE COMPANION



The Cape Breton Fiddle Companion is an encyclopedic compilation of diverse information pertaining to Cape Breton's fiddling tradition. At once obvious as a huge undertaking, compiler and editor Liz Doherty has summoned the troops, with a legion of contributors and helpers along the way, who have engaged with her in producing an informative volume on a Cape Breton musical expression now being brought before international audiences.

Extending to four hundred plus pages, the companion's commencement is marked with a front cover photo of a fiddler, piano accompanist and step dancer carved from wood by well known Chéticamp folk artist William Roach. Its succeeding pages present a wide aggregate of connections to the Cape Breton fiddling scene, including such as historical overviews of the music, associated individuals, groups and families in their many capacities, events, organizations, commentary on styles of playing,

its technical terminology and intrinsic references too voluminous to list in a brief review. The Companion's format is alphabetical presentation, concluding with a substantial list of further references and an extensive list of individuals affiliated with Cape Breton fiddling, past and present.

As a living tradition having deep roots in a participatory environment informed by social transmission, fiddling, the origins of Cape Breton "violin music" and associated dance, remain a source of discussion – and sometimes debate in its cultural community of followers. With over a thousand items listed, the Companion contains multiple topics that illuminate development of Cape Breton fiddling in its representations. Much of what the Companion offers touches on the field of ethnography, with sections providing informative background on the influences Scottish, Irish and Acadian music have had on the style(s) of playing. An extensive essay on the development of audiences for Cape Breton music, describes its emergence from a social function in homes, dance halls and local occasions to more recently include stage presentation for seated audiences.

Other lengthy essays examine the genesis of the music itself, including bagpipes, an examination of the discourse concerning "Gaelic in the music," the Scottish element, collections, composers and Irish music. While there remains pro and con conjecture as to how "Gaelic" Cape Breton fiddle music was, or remains, analysis based on social-anthropological research seems scant in the discussion – just one area in which the Companion's diverse content points towards a need for further inquiry. The provision of *sloinnidhean* (patronymics) for Gaelic-speaking musicians, often a marker for a family's geographic origins in the Scottish *Gàidhealtachd*, might be a suggestion in this discus-

sion. For example, Malcolm Campbell, late of Woodbine, Cape Breton County, comes to mind. Identified in his Gaelic community as *Calum mac Ghilleabaig Chaluim*, of Uig, Isle of Skye descent, Calum instructed "Scotch music" in the Sydney area during the '70s. Looking for links to regional aesthetics of playing might be worth investigating in context to communities formed by chain immigration and distinguished by variations in their song corpuses, singing styles, melodies and composition: differences readily found in archived collections of Gaelic song and related folklore.

Liz Doherty is a native of Buncrana, Donegal. An accomplished fiddler herself, she is a prominent authority on the fiddling traditions of Ireland, Scotland and Cape Breton (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2z31H_g0_6o). Her introduction to Cape Breton fiddling was made during a field trip in 1992, at which time she immersed herself in the halls, concerts and homes of wherever Cape Breton fiddling could be heard. Her Ph.D. thesis, through the University of Limerick, focused on Cape Breton music. With a long history of Donegal labourers working seasonally in Scotland, exchanging and returning with tunes, Donegal's fiddling tradition(s) shares observable commonalities with Cape Breton styles. Liz Doherty's work on Cape Breton fiddling will serve as a cornerstone for continuing research of a style distinct, and outstanding, in the world of a people's social expression through music. *Maith thú!* ©

The Cape Breton Fiddle Companion was published in 2015 by Cape Breton University Press.

This review was written by Seumas Watson, the Highland Village's Manager of Interpretation.

Tapadh leibh-se gu mòr

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

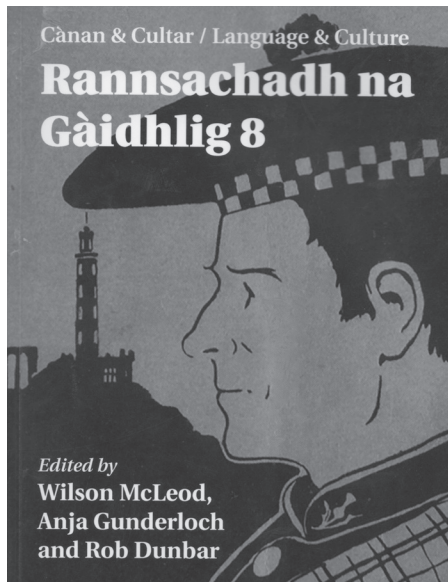
The Nova Scotia Departments of Internal Services, Labour and Advanced Education, *Iomairt na Gàidhlig* | Office of Gaelic Affairs, and Nova Scotia Provincial Lotteries & Casino Corporation, Transportation & Infrastructure Renewal.

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

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

An Rubha Review

RANNSACHADH NA GÀIDHLIG 8



Air fhoillseachadh aig *Dunedin Academic Press*, tha *Rannsaichadh na Gàidhlig 8* air nochdadh anise le trusadh do chòig prìomh òraidean air an cur an clò agus còig pàipearan deug eile ann 'na bhroinn a bharrachd. Bha tuilleadh is trì fichead pàipear 'gan libhrigeadh ann gu léir aig àm na co-labhairt, 'ga cumail aig Oilthigh Dùn Èideann 'sa bhliadhna 2014. Gheobhar deagh thaghadh chuspairean ann 'na dhuilleagan, an dara cuid 'sa Ghàidhlig agus 'sa Bheurla. Buinidh iad uile ri gnothaichean na Gàidhlig 's iad fad is farsaing eadar cuspairean a tha a' beachdnachadh air litreachas, foghlam, eachdraidh, cananachas, cùisean eaganomach agus dualachas - gus beagan raointean air an riochdachadh ann a thoirt air iomradh.

Leughar dà phàipear ann a tha gabhail gnothaich ri cusapir na Gàidhlig an Albainn Nuaidh. Tha fear dhiubh sin, fon tìotal *Celtic Colours: cultural sustainability*, a' suidheachadh air an fheum 's a tha an fhéill ud a'dèanadh gus dualchas is cultur Ghàidheal na h-Albainn Nuaidh a chumail beò 'sa choimharsnachd, le bhi 'toirt cothrom do chleasaichean ionadail bloigheag dhen dùthchas ac' a thoirt air thaisbeanadh mu choinneamh luchd-èisdeachd air an àrd-ùrlar. Fon tìotal *Nàisean Cùltarach nan Gàidheal: Ath-chruthachadh Tìr-dhùthchasaich ann an Albainn Nuaidh*, tha an dara aiste a' toirt sùil air rannsaichadh toiseach-toiseachaidh a bhios a' sgrùdadh air rathaidean ionnsachaidh a chleachd cuideachd a dhaoine inbheach gus smachd air seachas 'sa Ghàidhlig aig deagh ìre a shealbhadh. Gu ruige seo, tha coltas ann gu faighear fear dhe na rathaidean sin an cois dual-

chais a bhios 'ga chur an céill am measg cuideachd 'sa choimharsnachd - seach air togail cànan 'san t-seòmar-ionnsachaidh fhoirmeil.

'S e tachartas gluasadach a th'ann an *Rannsaichadh na Gàidhlig* a bhios 'ga ghleidheadh gach dàrna bliadhna. B'e cruinneachadh *Rannsaichadh na Gàidhlig 2014* 'ga chur air n-adhart an Dùn Èideann, an t-ochdamh turas dhan a' cho-labhairt a bhi air a cumail bho chionn a ceud bhogaidh aig Oilthigh Obar Dheathain, air eagra-chadh aig an Roinn Cheiltis ann an sin, 'sa bhliadhna 2000. Bhon uair sin, tha *Rannsaichadh* air a bhi 'ga chumail an diubhair cheàrnan 'san t-Seann Dùthaich agus turas an taobh seo bhos aig Oilthigh Fhransaidh Xavier 'sa bhliadhna 2008. B'ann aig Sabhal Mór Ostaig a bha co-labhairt *Rannsaichadh na Gàidhlig 2016* air a toirt gu saod.

Rannsaichadh Na Gàidhlig 8

Proceedings of Rannsaichadh na Gàidhlig 8 are now available in publication from Dunedin Academic Press. The eighth bi-annual conference on Gaelic Research was organized and held by the Celtic and Scottish Studies department of Edinburgh University. Of the more than sixty papers delivered, the proceedings includes five keynote presentations and an additional fifteen of other papers read. Two papers concerning Nova Scotia appear in the mix: one suggesting the Celtic Colours festival as having a cultural impact on transmission of Gaelic tradition in Cape Breton communities (English), the other an overview of possibilities for developing socio-linguistic pedagogy as a means for community-based transmission of Gaelic language and culture (Gaelic).

An excellent publication, *Rannsaichadh 8* covers a wide swath of topics pertinent to Gaelic studies: a worthy addition to the home, or institutional bookshelf. ©

Air dheasachadh aig: Wilson McLeod, Anja Gunderloch agus Rob Dunbar

Edited by: Wilson McLeod, Anja Gunderloch and Rob Dunbar. Dunedin Academic Press 2016
<http://www.dunedinacademicpress.co.uk/>

This review was written by Seumas Watson, the Highland Village's Manager of Interpretation.

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Is beò an duine an
déidh shàrachadh, ach
cha bheò e idir an
déidh a nàireachadh.

A man will endure
harassment but won't
survive a shaming.

Próiseagt Ath-Eachrachaidh Canada a' Chuain Siar

RE-ORG ATLANTIC CANADA PROJECT



Victoria Byres and Pauline MacLean are seen here preparing a hooked rug for storage as part of the Re-Org Atlantic project.

2016 has been an exciting time at the Highland Village Museum, especially behind the scenes! This fall, the Village had their Log Cabin reconstructed so it is safe and sound for the artifacts and ready for visitors in the Spring of 2017. 2016 also saw the undertaking of a large re-organization project for the artifacts not currently on display. This was part of the Re-Org Atlantic Project, sponsored by the Canadian Conservation Institute, which aims to have museums re-imagine their collections' storage. This is part of an exciting international initiative created by The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property. As part of this project and with funds from Canadian Heritage - Museums Assistance Program, the Highland Village updated their main storage areas, organizing their collection, and finding homes for any bits-and-bobs.

Being a museum studies student myself with a background in Canadian history, I was excited to drive out from Toronto for the opportunity to work with the Highland Village on this project over the course of the summer. We had a few main goals with this project: to photograph as much of the collection as we could to share it with our lovely visitors in the future, to ensure the collection was stored in a safe and efficient way, and to upgrade the storage organization systems themselves. This was a fantastic

opportunity to work intimately with the collection and see many pieces that don't have the opportunity to be seen.

We started by completing an updated inventory of the collection, which the Collections Manager, Pauline MacLean, had almost finished by the time I arrived. This is important to do before you begin a big project - to have a good idea of what objects are where. As you know, if you have seen the 2006 movie "A Night at the Museum", artifacts sometimes walk around and turn up in strange places, all on their own. Once an inventory was completed and everything accounted

for, we began work on the collection of about 50 hooked rugs, which received a VIP treatment. The rugs were cleaned, received labels if they did not have them already, went for a photoshoot, then were neatly wrapped up and hung on the fancy new wall system built in house. The rugs are now organized by and have an accession number affixed with their picture and name on top.

Hundreds of smaller artifacts, such as tools, shoes, bottles, and dishes, received a similar treatment. They were labelled, photographed, and packed in new boxes that would then be organized by object type and added to the new, or existing shelving. One storage room received new rolling shelving, and a custom organization system for the various beds and headboards in the collection. The second storage space received additional shelving and a custom closet for hanging textiles contained in the collection, with room behind to store related objects such as hats or shoes. Thank you to the staff at Highland Village for being fantastic to work with and teaching me more about museum work and about Cape Breton. Your collection is now ready for many more years of love! ©

Victoria Byres is a student at the University of Toronto in the Masters of Museums program. This past summer Victoria was a Young Canada Works student intern here at the Village.

We would like to send a thank you to Victoria for all of the work she completed while here at the Village.



As part of the Re-Org Atlantic project, the loft storage saw artifacts rehoused which meant that almost 50% of the storage area was reclaimed.

Mar Chuimhneachan

AILEAN MACLEÒID AGUS ALASDAIR MACDHÙGHAILL

Chaill Gàidhealtachd na h-Albann Nuaidh dithist dha na càraidean a b'fheàrr a bh' aice-se ann an 2016. 'S ann a bhios sinn ag iondrainn gu mòr na dithist ud: Ailean MacLeòid, (mac Ruairidh Aonghais Dhòmhnaill Uilleim) à Catalón, Siorramachd Cheap Breatainn agus Alasdair MacDhùghaill, Siùdaig, Siorramachd Ibh-nir Nis, 'san ùine a tha romhainn.

B' ann do shliochd Cloinn 'ic Leòid Leòdhais a bhuineadh cuideachd Ailein air an taobh thall. Rugadh 's a thogadh e fhéin taobh astaigh crìochan Abhainn Mhao-ire, an Siorramachd Cheap Breatainn. Chaidh àrach air baile beag an àite gann do dhaoine an là an-diugh ris an canar *Boston* Ùr. B'i a' Ghàidhlig a bu mhoth' a bha 'ga bruidhinn astaigh aig teaghlach Ailein agus a' mhór-chuid dha na nàbaidhean goirid do làimh m'an timcheall. 'Na shaor sgilear'san t-seann nòs, bha e air fhastadh aig taigh-tasgaidh nàiseanta Dùn *Louisbourg* fad bhliadhnaichean móra. Gu de-arra, 's e fear do dh'iomadh tàlan is eòlas a bh'ann an Ailean, 'nam measg sin: tuathanchas, sealgaireachd, tighinn beò air tìr, sloinntearachd na sgìreachd aige agus dualchas nan òran a bh'ann 'san àm a bha e 'g éiridh suas.

Bha Ailean deiseil daonnan gus a chuid dhualchais a roinn, co dhiubh air an àrd-ùrlar, 'san eaglais, air neo 'na shuidhe ceann shìos an taighe agus luchd-rannsachaidh a' clàradh chuspairean a sheanchais. Tro na bliadhnaichean, thug Ailean seachad gu saor-thoileach do leithid dha na proiseag-tan mar a bha Cruinneachadh Beul-aith-ris Cheap Breatainn, Caint Mo Mhàthar, Mar Bu Nòs agus do chlàraidhean Sgoil Eòlais na h-Alba. 'Na fhìor dheagh sheinneadar beòthail, bha Ailean an làthair agus ag éiridh air òrain aig froileagan 's cuirmean-ciùil gun àireamh. Ghabhadh e caochladh sheòrsa do dh'òrain agus bha e gu sònraichte eòlach air a' bhàrdachd ionadail a rinneadh aig Uilleam Mac a' Bhio-cair, fear a mhuinntir Chatalón a chumadh tachartasan na coimhearsnachd air chuimhne aig càch le deanadh òran ait. Bu tric a bheireadh Ailean iomradh air làithean òige, nuair a thigeadh còmhlan dha na nàbaidhean cruinn 'son seinn an cidsin athar 's déileachan 'gan riarachadh ann taobh a' bhalla gu faigheadh a h-uile gin àite-suidhe. Ghabh Ailean òran mu cho-inneamh luchd-éisdeachd aig a' *Vancouver Folk Festival* agus an Eilean Eòin mar bhall dhan Chape Breton *Gaelic Show*. Cluinnear seinn is seanchas Ailein aig na h-URLs seo a leanas: <http://www.cainntmomhathar.com/speaker.php?sp=6Gl=e>

Chaidh Alasdair MacDhùghaill (mac Iain Dhòmhnuill Ghilleasbuig Aonghuis Dhòmhnuill Iain) a bhreith ann a Siùdaig, Siorramachd Ibh-nir Nis, far an do dh'àra-icheadh e òg fo sgeith a sheanmhathar as deaghaidh dha pharantan a chall 's e 'na phàisde. B'ann à Srath Ghlais agus Uibhist a' Chinn a-Deas a bha sinnsre Alasdair.

Thogadh e an taigh dùthchasach, far an do dh'ionnsaich e Gàidhlig mar chànan làitheil am measg ciùil is seanchais. As deaghaidh do dh'Alasdair a cheumanachadh às an àrd-sgoil, thog e rith' a *Halifax*, far an deach e fhastadh aig *Nova Scotia Power*. Ri ùine, chur e chùil ri obair an dealain a ghabhail dreuchd air mar Neach-gnìomha aig Uilleam MacGil-Eathain, Ball Parlamaid na h-Albann Nuaidhe, (Siorramachd Ibh-nir Nis), anns h-ochdanan. Air dha tilleadh dhachaidh a Shiùdaig, chuir Alasdair an gnìomh fad sia bliadhna deug an dàrna cuid mar chomhairliche siorramachd agus mhaor-comhairle Siorramachd Ibh-nir Nis, gu ruige 2004.

Cha do chaill Alasdair riamh cleachdadh na Gàidhlig. Bhuannaich e ceum aig Oilthigh Fhransaidh X., Antaigeanais 's e an sàs an Roinn na Ceiltis. 'Na fhìor tha-graiche dhan Ghàidhlig mar chànan beò na coimhearsnachd, thug e seachad iomadh bliadhna eadar Siùdaig, Creaginn-is agus An Gut (*Port Hawkesbury*) - mar a chanar, a' teagasg chlasaichean Gàidhlig. A bharrachd, bha e 'na Eòlaiche 'sa phrò-gram Bun is Bàrr, gu minig 'na neach-comhairle ré phrògramannan-bogaidh air an cumail aig Colaisde na Gàidhlig agus 'na neach-pàirteachaidh anns a' phròiseagtlaraidh Caint Mo Mhàthar.

Cluinnear Alasdair a' seanchas mu chuspairean a tha 'toirt deilbh air beatha thìreil an crìochan Shiùdaig 's na làithean a dh'aom aig an URL seo a leanas: <http://www.cainntmomhathar.com/speaker.php?sp=4Gl=e>

Cha bu bheag an dìleab a dh'fhàg Ailean is Alasdair as an deaghaidh. Có thig 'nan aite?

In Memory

Nova Scotia's *Gàidhealtachd* lost two of its stalwarts in 2016, with the passing of Allan MacLeod, Catalone, Cape Breton County and A.J. (Alexander James) MacDougall, native to Judique, Inverness County. Both made major contributions to maintaining the province's Gaelic traditions, through lifetimes of cultural service to their communities.

Allan MacLeod, born and raised in New Boston near the Mira River, was noted for



Ailean mac Ruairidh Aonghais Dhòmhnaill Uilleim
Allan MacLeod



Alasdair mac Iain Dhòmhnuill Ghilleasbuig Aonghuis Dhòmhnuill Iain | A.J. MacDougall

his dynamic singing style of locally composed and Old Country songs, as well as being an extensive source of information on the flora, fauna, and skill sets of rural life lived by Gaels in south eastern Cape Breton Island. In addition to concerts, church events and milling frolics, Allan appeared on stage with the Gaelic Cape Breton Show at the Vancouver Folk Festival and venues in Prince Edward Island. He was recorded for archival projects such as *Caint Mo Mhathar* and the *Mar Bu Nòs* recording project at Highland Village.

A.J. MacDougall, long serving county councillor and warden for Inverness County, was a prominent advocate for Gaelic language and cultural maintenance in Nova Scotia, giving freely to teaching classes in the Judique to Port Hawkesbury area over many years. A.J. served as a senior mentor in the program for traditional learning *Bun is Barr*, was a frequent Gaelic advisor during immersion programming at St. Anns Gaelic College and contributed to the *Caint Mo Mhathar* recording project of Nova Scotia Gaelic speakers.

Both men were loyal members of their respective churches. ©

© Jim Watson Photos: © Ryan MacDonald



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & ACCOLADES

Tapadh Leibh-se Gu Mór

The Nova Scotia Highland Village Society gratefully acknowledges the support of many individuals and organizations:

Project & Marketing Partners

CB Centre for Craft & Design; Cape Breton University; Celtic Colours Festival Society; Celtic Heart of North America; Colaisde na Gàidhlig | The Gaelic College; Central Cape Breton Community Ventures; Comhairle na Gàidhlig | Gaelic Council of NS; Community Foundation of Nova Scotia; Dalhousie University's Computer Science Community Outreach; Destination Cape Breton; Eskasoni Cultural Journeys; Féis an Eilein; Fortress of Louisbourg; Glenora Distillery; Inverness County; Iomairtean na Gàidhlig | Office of Gaelic Affairs; Iona Heights Inn | Jill's Chocolates; Musique Royale; NSCAD University; St.FX University (Angus L. Macdonald Library); Sgoil MhicFhraing a' Chaolais | Rankin School of the Narrows; the Municipality of Victoria County & the Northside East Bay Volunteer Fire Department.

Farm Program Partners

Dell Corbett, Grand Mira ("Mira Jean" Clydesdale horse); Kelly and Jim Booth, Gillis Point (Highland cattle); and Trueman and Laurinda Matheson, St. Andrews (Soay sheep).

Donations (2016)

Sheila Adams, Victoria, BC; Frances Langille, Truro; Robert Latimer, Truro; John James MacEachern, Sydney; Ann MacIntosh, River Denys; David & Marion New-

lands, Dartmouth, NS; River & Lakeside Pastoral Charge; Jim St.Clair, Mull River (in memory of Gerry MacNeil); Barry Shears, Halifax (in memory of Margaret Shears); and Doris Tinney, Compton, NH.

Artefacts & Archival Donations (2016)

Jerry Chaisson, Pictou; Patsy MacMullan, Sydney; Mary MacLeod, Iona; Rev. Raymond Purchase, per Shirley Bonnell, George's River; George Chant, West Bay, for the Marble Mountain Church; Charles Gautier, Brome-Lake, Qc; Janet MacIntosh, Chelsea, Qc; Margaret Gillis, Hammonds Plains; Sheila Adams, Victoria, BC; Bernie MacInnis, Grand Mira; Marjorie MacKinnon, Albert Bridge

Stòras na h-Òigridh Donations (2016)

Jill's Chocolates, Iona; and Joseph Chorbar, Clifton, NJ.

Congratulations

To Marie Chehy, HV Animator, and Vicki Quimby, Animator/Textile Consultant, on their 30 years and 25 years (respectively) service to the Highland Village; to HV Animator Matthew Moore on his new career in the newsroom at CJFX Radio in Antigonish; to HV blacksmith Jamie Kennedy on the birth of his son, Seumas; to HV Board member Meaghan O'Handley and her husband Ian MacNeil and the birth of their first son Theron; to Sadie MacDonald on the birth of her first granddaughter Sadie; to HV volunteer Marguerite MacNeil on her marriage to Adrian Merriam & to David Brian MacKenzie on the birth of his granddaughter, Mya.

Best Wishes

We send our hearts out to HV staffers Seumas Watson and Catherine Gillis who are currently receiving treatments for health issues.

Sympathies

Sympathies to the families of friends of the Highland Village or supporters of Gaelic in Nova Scotia over the past year including: Charlie MacNeil (husband of HV animator Kaye Anne MacNeil); Ada MacLean (mother of HV staff members Aileen & Paul MacLean); Wilfred Asaph (father to HV Board member Catherine Ann Fuller); Michael MacNeil (father of HV Past President Bruce MacNeil); Gaelic tradition bearers Angus Currie (*Aonghas mac Dhùghaill 'ic Aonghais 'ic Mhicheil Lachlainn*) from North Side East Bay; and Martin Boston, long time station master of the Orangedale Station. ©



(L-R) Animator: Matthew Moore; Summer students: Dryden MacNeil, Caitlin Bennett, Linden MacMillan, Victoria Byres, Samara MacNeil & Page Jamieson

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Volunteer Programmers (2016) - Quentin MacDonald & Mary Emma MacNeil, HV Day Producers.

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hole in the door, the visitor could lift the wooden latch and gain entrance.” (Thus, the Cape Breton expression of hospitality, *Nuair a thig thu, bidh an t-sreang air an taobh amuigh*. When you arrive the string will be on the outside.)

Rev. Richard John Uniacke, travelling in Cape Breton during the mid-nineteenth century, described the log cabins he encountered along the way in his *Sketches of Cape Breton*, “The log cabin or cottage is a rough but rather picturesque construction, and when first erected is not uncomfortable. The logs of pine or hemlock are laid one upon another, with their ends let into notches and interlaces inter-laid with mud or clay. Rough boards form the roof which is sometimes constructed of poles and layers of thick bark. Nails and glass are the only materials for which money is needed. There are many degrees of comfort and improvement in these log houses. In the winter, if in bleak situations, they are often protected from cold by spruce trees cut down and placed in an upright position against the walls most exposed to the wind.”

A Gaelic account of the way cabins' logs were packed was recorded from late Iona resident, Michael MacNeil (*Migi mac Bean Nilleig Ruairidh Eòin a' Phlant*)

Uell, bha sin ann an toiseach. Bhiodh

na bothain-logaichean sin ann an toiseach. Nuair a bha thu airson gum biodh 'ad blàth agus gun cumadh 'ad amuigh an droch shìde. Cha n-ann mar a tha 'ad 'gan togail an diugh a bhiodh 'ad 'gan togail idir. An dràs' tha 'ad 'gan togail 's tha 'ad an uair sin 'gam pacadh. Ach cha b'ann mar sin a bhiodh 'ad an toiseach.

An dòigh a bhiodh ac' an toiseach. Bhiodh 'ad a' faighinn logaichean 'gan gearradh 's a' faighinn an uair sin còinneach. Dh'fheumadh a' chòinneach a bhi bog - 'ga cumail bog. Rachadh a' chiad log' a leagail 's an uair sin an ath-loga 's a' chòinneach 'ga cuir fodha sin. Cha b'urrainn dhan loga laighe dòigheil. Chumadh a' chòinneach gun laigheadh e dòigheil, ach nuair a rachadh a' log' air muin log' a chuir an cudtrom... Nuair a thiormaicheadh sin, bha e dìreach mar gun cuireadh tu clòimh' ann am pòca. Dh'atadh sin fo na logaichean 's bha e dìon.

Ach anisd, nuair a tha thu 'ga phacadh, an taigh sin... nuair a thiormaicheas e, tha bealaichean ann. Cha n-eil e gu deifear gu dé cho math 's a chuireas tu ann e, cha n-urrainn dhuit a chuir ann cho math mar gun cuireadh tu ann a' chòinneach a bhiodh bog.

That was in the beginning. There would be log cabins at first. Those who wanted to make them warm,

to keep out the bad weather, didn't build them like they do today at all. Today they build them and then chink them. That's not the way it was done originally.

At first, they would get the logs cut and then gather the moss. The moss would have to be wet or kept wet. The first log would be set down and then another with the moss under it. That log wouldn't lay properly because of the moss. But once the logs were stacked up, the weight (held everything in place.) When that dried, it was just like wool in a bag. It would swell under the log and it was waterproof.

Nowadays, when you're chinking that kind of house (after building it), when it dries there are openings (between the logs). It doesn't matter how well you pack it in, you can't pack it as well as you can with wet moss.

As a vernacular architecture with the aim of providing a temporary shelter for its inhabitants, there were, no doubt, variations in the log cabin, dictated by want, resources or aesthetics. ©

Seumas Watson, Manager of Interpretation. Part six will appear in the next issue of *An Rubha*.

Illustration by Ellison Robertson. ©

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Join us and support Nova Scotia's Gaelic language and folklife traditions by becoming a member of the Nova Scotia Highland Village Society. Membership is open to anyone.

Members can:

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

General Memberships:

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*Income tax receipts are issued for general memberships.

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