An Rubha

The Highland Village Gaelic Folklife Magazine

Naidheachd a' Chlachain
The Village News

Dèante le làimh
Highland Women's Clothing at the Time of Emigration

Mar Chuimhneachan
Beannachd Leibh a Shir Iain

An Gàidheal Portmhor
High Road To Linton

Vol. 12 No. 2

www.highlandvillage.ca

Highland Village Museum
AN CLACHAN GÀIDHEALACH

Complete the Tune Campaign

Stòras na h-Òigridh
TREASURES OF YOUTH FUND
Tunes for Tomorrow

Ensuring that cultural skills based on Gaelic arts and traditions continue to flourish with our youth in Nova Scotia.

The Nova Scotia Highland Village Society is pleased to present *Stóras na h-Òigridh* (Treasures of Youth) - a fund to ensure that cultural skills based on Gaelic traditions continue to flourish with our youth in Nova Scotia. The purpose of this fund is to provide 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, language, storytelling, song, and step dance.

We invite you to help us with this endeavour by participating in our "Complete the Tune" Campaign. We ask that you purchase one or more musical notes from "Michael Anthony MacLean's Birthday" - a march composed by Lucy MacNeil.

- Sixteenth Note $50
- Dotted Eighth Note $100
- Quarter Note $200
- Eighth Note $500
- Half Note $1,000
- Treble Clef $5,000

Or

Surprise Us!

The Treasures of Youth fund concept was inspired by the enthusiasm of the late Michael Anthony MacLean from Washabuck, Nova Scotia, a well-known fiddler who always had a keen interest in assisting youth to further their skills in playing traditional Cape Breton music, especially the fiddle. The fund has been ignited by the sales of Michael Anthony MacLean's "Good Boy M.A.!" CD.

Initially, we are hoping to capitalize the endowment fund with a minimum of $35,000. The intention is to develop an endowment fund, whereby the capital would not be used - rather only the annual earned income - which would then be awarded and disbursed to a successful applicant(s).

We would sincerely like to thank you in advance for your consideration in support of this visionary and worthwhile cause. With your help the Nova Scotia Highland Village Society will continue to foster the Gaelic traditions with the youth of today and tomorrow.

A downloadable brochure with details and a pledge form is available on our website - www.treasuresofyouth.ca. Donations may also be made online through Canada Helps.

www.treasuresofyouth.ca

AN RUBHA

Inside This Issue

AN RUBHA (*The Point*) is published in Iona, Nova Scotia, Canada by *Comunn Clachan Gàidhealach na h-Albann Nuaidh*/Nova Scotia Highland Village Society. Comments, suggestions and contributions are welcome.

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Animator Catherine Gillis stands in the feannag (lazy bed) near the taigh-dubh (black house).

Also, on the front is the image for Gaelic Nova Scotia. The image is that of a salmon in the shape of the letter 'G'. The salmon represents the gift of knowledge in the Gaelic storytelling traditions of Nova Scotia, Scotland, Ireland and the Isle of Man. The 'G' represents the Gaelic language and the ripples are the manifestations of the language through its attendant culture: song, story, music, dance, custom and belief system.

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Mar Chuimhneachan - Dedication

This issue of *An Rubha* is dedicated to the memory of Kathleen MacLean, of Ottawa Brook, a former Highland Village interpreter, who passed away in April. Kathleen worked at the Village from the mid 1970's to the mid 1980's. She was one of our three original interpreters, including Anna "Hector" MacNeil and Rita MacDougall. For many years the MacIver-Nash House was known affectionately as Kathleen's House. She is remembered for her great wit and love of family and community. Our hearts go out to her family. Her daughter Sadie MacDonald and granddaughter Patricia Gaudley are current employees of the Highland Village.

From the Director's Desk

Current Initiatives

Rodney Chaisson, Director

Welcome to the Summer/Autumn 2011 issue of *An Rubha*, our Highland Village Gaelic Folklife Magazine. As with past issues, this edition features stories, songs and other aspects of Gaelic Nova Scotia folklife, as well as updates on the news and happenings here at the Highland Village. *An Rubha* is an important vehicle for our communication and community outreach. We hope you will enjoy this issue of the magazine and welcome your comments and suggestions for future editions.

This summer, on the heels of the 50th Anniversary of the Nova Scotia Highland Village Society, the Highland Village marked another significant achievement, the 50th annual Highland Village Day Concert. This was an important milestone, not only because the concert remains as one of the few and oldest "Scottish" concerts on the Island, but also because it set in place the foundation for the Highland Village as its exists today. The funds raised from that first concert in 1962, and all of the concerts since, went into the construction and on-going operation of the site.

The 50th annual Highland Village Day Concert was a great success with one of the largest audiences in over a decade. The concert opened with a special cutting of the cake by Joan Gillis and Bernie Campbell, who danced on the stage for the very first concert in 1962. In addition to some of our regular concert performers, concert producer Quentin MacDonald assembled some new faces as well as some faces that have not performed on the stage in many years. Overall it was a wonderful afternoon of celebration.

During the 50 years of Highland Village Day concerts, many young up-and-coming entertainers got their start on our stage. In that spirit, the Nova Scotia Highland Village Society launched a new initiative - *Stòras na h-Òigridh* (Treasures of Youth) Fund. The goal of the fund is to ensure that cultural skills based on Gaelic traditions (fiddle, pipes, piano, language, storytelling, song, and step dance) continue to flourish with our youth in Nova Scotia through financial support and assistance. The Treasures of Youth fund concept was inspired by the enthusiasm of the late Michael Anthony MacLean, a well known fiddler from Washabuck, Nova Scotia who always had a keen interest in assisting youth to further their skills in playing traditional Cape Breton music - especially the fiddle.

Our intention is that *Stòras na h-Òigridh* (Treasures of Youth) Fund will be an endowment fund, whereby the annual earned income, rather than the capital, would be awarded and disbursed to a successful applicant(s). Our hope is to raise a minimum of $35,000 through our "Complete the Tune" Campaign to begin to capitalise the fund. The main feature of the campaign is the sale of musical notes from "Michael Anthony MacLean's Birthday" - a march composed by Lucy MacNeil of the Barra MacNeils. More information on the fund, including a downloadable brochure, is available on the fund's website *www.treasuresofyouth.ca*. All donors will be provided with a charitable tax receipt.

One final note from our Highland Village Day Celebration - this past spring we received a significant donation of photographs from the estate of the late Harry Crossman of Halifax. These photographs span two decades of Highland Village Day Concerts beginning in the late 1960s. The photos have been digitised. A special DVD has been made from a selection of the photos, which is available for purchase through our gift shop for a limited time.

The Highland Village Day Concert milestone and launch of *Stòras na h-Òigridh* were two of the many highlights of our 2011 season. Our animation program this year was enhanced with the introduction of first person interpretation, or role playing, as well as hands-on activity stations for children and youth.

With an investment from the Department of Canadian Heritage, we are further developing the *An Drochaid Eadarainn* website from prototype to full product. This innovative website provides a virtual experience reflecting the social reality of living Gaelic culture. It will be launched in February 2012

Highland Village was the location for the Bras d'Or Lake Biosphere Reserve Association's core celebration event for UNESCO's designation of the Bras d'Or Lake as an international "Man and the Boisphere Reserve." We are excited about this international designation that recognises the importance of Canada's largest in-land sea, its watershed, and the communities and cultures that surround it.

In the months ahead, we will continue to advance these and other initiative that support our strategic plans and enable us to achieve our vision as a folklife museum and cultural organisation for Gaelic Nova Scotia. We will keep you updated on all of these and other activities in future issues of *An Rubha*.

Nova Scotia Highland Village Society

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

Highland Village Museum
An Clachan Gàidhealach

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

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

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

NOVA SCOTIA MUSEUM
The Family of Provincial Museums

NOVA SCOTIA ALBA NUADH
Communities, Culture and Heritage
Roinn nan Coimhearsnachd, a' Chultair agus an Dualchais

The Society is a member of National Trust of Scotland, CLI Gàidhlig, 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 Genealogy & Heritage Society, Interpretation Canada, Costume Society of NS, Assoc. of Living Historical Farms and Agricultural Museums (ALHFAM), American Assoc. for State & Local History (AASLH), 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 Cape Breton Partnership.

Mar is léir dhomh fhìn

Museum Relevance, Community and a Culture of Sustainability

Seumas Watson

Off-site conversational encounters on the subject of Highland Village are usually brief and centered on perceived indicators of success. Two of the most common queries are "How are the numbers?", or "Busy this year?"- casual questions in passing, understandably benign and polite. Heard less often are queries on how initiatives bearing on the Highland Village mission have impacted on its cultural constituency.

Inside the professional world of museums, however, another conversation has begun with mounting discussion of institutional purpose and social efficacy in response to globalisation, climate change and other challenges facing humanity. A pause for critical analysis has spurred new thought on the role of museums in bringing ordinance to the world chaos affecting the prognosis for our long term future.

Spotlighting a new discourse on museum function in public engagement is the work of Canadian Doug Worts (*http://douglasworts.org)* and colleagues, who comprise the Working Group on Museums and Sustainable Communities (*http://worldviewsconsulting.org/?page_id=47)* Collaboratively, they have spent the past decade establishing a philosophic groundwork for re-positioning museums to advance "socially responsible" initiatives for sustaining cultural environments. Writing for Muse in September 2008, Worts challenged for action centered change in current museum ideology,

> *When will museum professionals develop a robust set of indicators that will help identify the cultural issues of our day and enable us to better assess the cultural outcomes of museum activities? When will we set aside inadequate and inappropriate economic indicators and institutional habits that have been forcing cultural organizations increasingly into a cul-de-sac of tourism and leisure time activity - a glorified niche in the edutainment sector? The cultural challenges of the coming decades will not be addressed simply by technological, economic, or political developments - rather a cultural shift will be required. Can museums play a leadership role in this process? I think so.*

From the Working Group's standpoint, museums are cultural organisations which can significantly contribute to attitudes, thinking and life skills that will forge a worldwide communal view predicated on new sensibilities for stewardship of the environmentand"ethnosphere."(*http://www.ted.com/talks/wade_davis_on_endangered_ultures.html*.) In this forum, according to Worts, the criteria for museum endeavors diverges beyond normal conventions from a...

> *traditional discipline-based, object centered framework of institutionalised activities (including curatorial, education, collections management, conservation, etc.), to one based on the cultural dynamics of people, communities, and their relationships to larger systems...*

A pause for critical analysis has spurred new thought on the role of museums in bringing ordinance to the world chaos affecting the prognosis for our long term future.

Continuing, he posits that all pillars of dominant society, be they educational, political or economic, are in need of transformation if mankind is to have the capacity for addressing overwhelming issues of ecological and social degradation.

Expecting museums to assist in solving the systemic challenges of today's world seems outside their routine charge. It is highly arguable, however, that museums are, indeed, exceptionally well-placed for identifying the causal elements of historical dissolution while serving to inform actions for resolution. The Working Group advocates for purposeful innovation in...

> *focusing efforts on engaging the museum community in Canada in a process of awareness, reflection, learning, knowledge-sharing, capacity-building, and action related to their role in creating a culture of sustainability.*

Qualifying museum relevance is carried out by the group's evaluation tool Measuring Museum Meaning: A Critical Assessment Framework - *http://worldviewsconsulting.org/wpcontent/uploads/2009/06/caf-08.pdf*. The function of evaluation is to apprise museum professionals of their surrounding community's culture and experiences. Information gathered through applying the tool can better guide meaningful formulation of public programs. The framework focuses on three prioritized areas: the individual, the community and the museum.

Sometimes at odds with the received wisdom of established conventions, Worts and colleagues raise salient perspectives on museum function in present-day settings. As visionaries often do, pressing for innovation has introduced a degree of discomfort to some adherents of the status quo. In light of progressive revelations, however, the Village's charge is at ease in reflecting a similar approach to community consciousness in times of social flux.

Highland Village draws from a deep pool of intangible assets and history of rural adaptation. Its mission is crystallized by Nova Scotians committed to cultural continuity and social development. As a mature institution come of age with its fiftieth birthday, we are well positioned in the framework for Measuring Museum Meaning and the struggle for a sustainable planet.

Mar is léir dhomh fhìn (My Own Viewpoint) is a regular feature. Seumas Watson is the Highland Village's Manager of Interpretation.

Gaelic Weather Proverb

Samhradh breac riabhach, foghar geal grianach. - A bright, sunny fall follows unsettled (wet and cold) summer weather.

Contributed by Martha Ramey and Theresa Burke (nìgheannan Pheadair Mhóir Steabhain Mhìcheil) during Stòras a' Bhaile 2011

Naidheachd a' Chlachain - The Village News

The Interpretive Season of 2011 at Hector's Point

Caraman NicArtair

Thus far, 2011 has been an exciting year for interpretative innovation and Gaelic development at the Highland Village. Animation activities representing the Gaels' traditions and material culture continued this year as we further developed role playing as our fundamental approach to interpretation. Gaelic language training was emphasised during off-season staff training, reflecting the Highland Village's commitment to developing and promoting the Gaelic language on site and in the community.

Throughout the winter months staff kept busy honing interpretive and Gaelic language skills. Monthly staff meetings focused on Gaelic immersion training and the continuing development of cultural knowledge. In addition to our yearly staff training, animation staff participated in an first person interpretation workshop with Peter Pacey, heritage interpreter and educator. Peter, who has a wealth of experience in theatre and working with living history sites, spent four days working with animation staff to develop role playing personas to be applied to everyday animation and special programming. We look forward to working with Peter again as we improve our representations of the Nova Scotia Gaelic story.

In other interpretive developments, Katherine MacLeod was busy this winter designing new interpretive panels which were erected this spring. The six main panels give an introduction to the eras represented by the Village's various historic buildings. There are also four smaller panels which offer additional information relevant to the story of Gaelic Nova Scotia. The panels are in Gaelic and English and include samples of a Gaelic verse reflecting the culture and history of the Gaels as expressed through song. The panels are an attractive and informative addition to the site.

In order to make the site more engaging and interactive for visitors, Katherine also developed hands-on brochures. Specifically designed for youth and parents, the brochures provide a map for the activities that young visitors can engage in throughout the site.

Gaelic programming continued this year via immersion events for the public. To create more opportunities to hear and use Gaelic during the winter months, the village hosted a monthly *caidreabh*, meaning fellowship. Gaelic fellowship was enjoyed by all during gatherings where Gaelic speakers joined for a *srùbag*, conversation and a song or two. Thanks to everyone who attended and especially to the native speakers who generously shared their knowledge and wisdom. We look forward to hosting more *caidreibh* when this year's season comes to a close. Further Gaelic programming included, *"Chun a Rubha"* a tour of the site which was conducted entirely in Gaelic by Manager of Interpretation Seumas Watson. As well, for its fourth consecutive year, the popular program *Stòras a' Bhaile* provided an opportunity for Gaelic speakers and learners to come together and participate in an immersion folklife school.

Caidreabh na Tì - Afternoon Gaelic conversation in the visitors centre

Carding Mill Day was held in June for the third consecutive year and featured a number of demonstrations pertaining to wool production. Sarah Nettleton of Arichat joined us again this year and gave an engaging presentation on sheep shearing. Nettleton sheared two sheep, demonstrating the process of shearing with both hand and electric shears.

In addition to her demonstration, Cash's Carding Mill was in operation, and several members of the Cash family were on site to talk to the public about the history of the mill. The day was rounded off with a spinning demonstration and a natural dye workshop. Participants in the workshop learned to dye a hand spun skein of yarn using plants gathered from the local area. From sheep to skein, Carding Mill Day provided visitors with the opportunity to learn about every step of producing yarn ready for the loom.

Aig gàradh a' bhuntàta - Learning about potatoes from Mickey John H. MacNeil Stòras a' Bhaile

This season we welcomed new animation staff and summer students. Colin Watson and Colette Thomas were hired as permanent animators. They both have had a long association with the Highland Village and bring with them a variety of Gaelic language and cultural skills. Our summer students this year were Laura and Rachael MacNeil, who joined the staff on the hill; Katie MacDougall, who worked on a digisation project; and Rachel Redshaw, who created a directory of field work on oral traditions to support interpretation. Kate Langhorne, a student at the University of Aberdeen, joined us for a volunteer work experiece to research Gaelic Cape Breton. All of the students made a great contribution to our summer season through their hard work and dedication. We wish them all the best in their future endeavours.

As always, we would like to acknowlege staff and volunteers who often go above and beyond the call of duty in their dedication to Highland Village and its mission to preserve and share Nova Scotia's unique Gaelic culture. *Tapadh leibh-se gu mór!*

Naidheachd a'Chlachain (The Village News) is a regular feature. Caraman NicArtair is the Highland Village's Chief Interpreter.

Sgeul ri Aithris / The Story Telling Tradition

Naidheachd A' Chlock Air a h-Aithris le Dòmhnall MacEachairne

Collected from Donald MacEachern by Seumas Watson

Manadh (forerunner) stoires tell of experiences with portents of death. In Highland districts, harbingers of doom appear in a variety of forms such as the rattling of tools heard in coffin makers' workshops, dogs howling from the direction where a death will soon occur, or the presence of lights prior to a passing. Forerunner stories remain commonly heard in Nova Scotia's Highland communities, both in Gaelic and English. The following account is from the recitation of the late Donald MacEachern (Dòmhnall mac Jonaidh Dhòmhnaill Òig) of Northside East Bay (Taobh a Tuath Ceann a' Bhéighe), Cape Breton County. Donald was an exceptional tradition bearer. His paternal antecedents immigrated to Prince Edward Island from Lagan, Arasaig district in the late 18th century, before removing to Cape Breton.

Nuair a thànaig Catrìona NicDhòmhnaill anall o`n t-seann dùthaich a dh'ionnsaidh Chanada, cha robh i ach naoidh bliadhn' deug a dh'aois. `S ann gu Acarsaid Bhaile Shudnaidh a thànaig am bàta air a robh i.

Agus nuair a rànaig `ad tìr ann a Sudnaidh, dh'fhoighneachd fear a bha `na mharsana dhe na soithichean, `s dhe na bàtaichean a bha tighinn astaigh `s a' falbh ás an arcasaid. Bha e cuibheasach math dheth co dhiubh, `s bha e `g iarraidh nighean a bhiodh a' cuideachadh na bean aige le obair an taigh. Agus dh'fhalbh Catrìona còmhla ris agus chaidh i còmhla ris an teaghlach a bha sin, teaghlach dhe `n ainm Ros. Bha `ad `nan *ship-chandlers* mar a chanadh `ad.

Agus fhuair i air n-adhart glé mhath a's an taigh a bha seo, agus fhuair i beagan do dh'eòlas air na rudan a bha ùr `s a' bhail' ùr `s a robh i. Dh'fhuirigh i ann a' shin fad dà bhliadhna ag obair còmhla ri muinntir Ros, agus an uair sin choinnich i mo shin-sheanar, Eòghann MacBhathrais agus phòs `ad. Chaidh i `n uair sin do bhothan beag do thaigh a's a' Bhéigh an Ear far a robh `ad ri taobh na beinn', taigh beag logaichean. Thòisich an teaghlach ás a' sin. Bha ochdnar do theaghlach aca uile gu léir, a h-uile gin dhiubh air am breith a's an taigh-logaichean a bha seo.

Ach co dhiubh, nuair a dh'fhàs na gillean na bu shine, beagan do dh'aois, thòisich `ad air taigh ùr a thogail. Bha `ad a' snaidheadh fiodh agus a' sàbhadh bùird leis an t-sàbh mhór. Bha trì na ceithir dhiubh ag obair air an taigh. Thog `ad an taigh co dhiubh `s bha `ad deiseil airson a dhol ann anns a' bhliadhna 1872. Chaidh an taigh a thogail - bha i deiseil airson daoine a dhol innte - a' bhliadhna mu na thachair an *August* Géil Mhór.

Co dhiubh, air a bha `ad 'fuireach a's an taigh ùr treis mhath, thànaig fear mun cuairt a bha `creic *clocks*, uaireadairean. Cha n-eil Gàidhlg agam air *clock* . Cha chuala mi Gàidhlig air *clock* riamh. Canaidh sinn uaireadar ri *watch*, ach `s e `n *clock* a bha mi `cluinntinn fad na h-ùine. Bha fear a bha seo, co dhiubh, a' creic *clocks*, agus chunnaig Catrìona *clock* far a robh i `g obair agus bha a' fear sin a' bruidhinn Beurla agus bha Beurla aice-se cuideachd. Bha fhios aice dé bha e `bruidhinn mu dheidhinn.

O, ghabh i meas air a' *chlock* co dhiubh. Na *clocks* a bh'ac' an uair ud, bha `ad anull mu dhà throigh a dh'àird' 's

Ach, co dhiubh, bha `ad measail air a' chlock agus bha an clock a' bualadh a h-uile uair a' là `s do dh'oidhche. Sin mar a bha an clock ag obrachadh...Agus bha e aca roinn mhór do bhliadhnaichean ach, mu dheireadh thall, stad an clock."

ceithir oirlich deug a leud, agus bhualadh `ad a h-uile uair eadar aon uair agus dà uair dheug. Agus sin a' rud a bha ise `cuir toileachadh air, an *clock* a bha `bualadh a h-uile uair mar seo. Agus a' fear a bha `gan creic, neo-ar-thaing mar a thuirt mi roimhe, math gu bruidhinn, bruidhinn Beurla co dhiubh, agus bha e `g ràdh riuth' dh'fhaodadh an clock a bha seo a bhi aca airson cóig dolar. Cha robh ac' ach an ainm a chur air a' phaipear a bh'aige ann a sheo `s gheobhadh `ad an *clock*. Sin mar a thuig `ad co dhiubh. Cha robh fhios ac' an uair sin air sian mu dheidhinn *payments*, neo a leithid sin, ach airson an aon phàigheadh, bha dùil aca gu robh sin mar a bha e. Ach cha n-ann mar sin a bha e idir. `S ann air an *installment plan* a bha `ad a' ceannach a' *chlock*. Cha n-eil cuimhn' agam co dhiubh dé `phrìs a bh'air uile gu léir. Tha mi `smaointeann gur e cóig dolar deug, neo fichead dolar, a bha air.

Cha robh `ad fada sam bith air a' *chlock* fhaighinn nuair a fhuair `ad litir bho fhear- lagh thall air a' Bhàr, ann a *North Sydney*, agus dh'inns e dhaibh gu robh a leithid seo do làithichean aca airson a' chuid eile dhen a' *chlock* a phàigheadh. Mara robh e pàight' aca, tha mi cinnteach gur e am prìosan a bha `ad a' coimhead air an uair sin. Cha n-eil fhios a'm dé b'fheudar dhaibh ... dé am beathach, mart neo damh, neo rud air choireginn, a chreic 'ad airson airgead a dheanamh airson an *clock* a phàigheadh. Agus leis a-sin, chuireadh a h-uile sìon a bh'ann neart do mhìobhadh orra. Ach, co dhiubh, bha `ad measail air a' *chlock* agus bha an *clock* a' bualadh a h-uile uair a là `s do dh'oidhche. Sin mar a bha an *clock* ag obrachadh. Cha n-e *spring* a bh'ann idir, ach dà chudtrom do dh'iarainn a bha `ga chumail air falbh. Agus bha e aca roinn mhór do bhliadhnaichean ach, mu dheireadh thall, stad an *clock*. Cha n-eil fhios dé bha ceàrr, ach cha b'urrainn dhaibh faighinn a chur air dòigh co dhiubh.

Agus `s aon àm, bha an t-seann té, Catrìona, a' sin-seanmhathair a' fàs suas an aois cuideachd, agus mu dheireadh thall bha i a' chuid a `s mutha dhe `n ùine `s a' leabaidh. Bha mo sheanair air pòsadh beagan roimhe sin `s a' bhean ùr aige `s an taigh, agus bha is' ag obair ann a *Boston*. Nuair a thànaig i dhachaidh, bha *clock* beag aice. Cha robh e `bualadh idir, ach theireadh e `n uair co dhiubh.

Co dhiubh, bha an t-seana-bhean `s a' leabaidh air a' là a bha seo agus an fheadhainn eile ag obair air an fheur. (A's an àm ud, dh'fheumadh a h-uile duin' a bha staigh treis a thoirt air an fheur a chuir air dòigh, `ga thionndadh agus a dheanamh tioram agus a chuir astaigh dha `n t-sabhal.) Agus bha `ad uile ag obair amuigh air an fheur agus an t-seana-bhean `s a' leabaidh. Fhads a bha `ad ag obair amuigh, thuirt mo sheanmhair ri nighean, Seònaid - a bha `ad fhéin a' togail - a dh'fhalbh astaigh a

choimhead air, mar a chanadh `ad, Gamaidh, "Thall' a ghaoil astaigh `s bheir sùil air Gamaidh feuch a bheil i *all right*."

Chaidh Seònaid astaigh co dhiubh agus nuair a thànaig i air n-ais, amuigh, thuirt i gu robh Gamaidh *all right*, ach rud ait a bh'ann, bha a' seann *clock* a' falbh. Thuirt i nuair a bha i `dol astaigh gu robh i `cluinntinn *clock* a' bualadh `s gun do chùnnt i buillean a' *chlock* `s gun do bhuail e deich tursan agus bha e `bualadh nuair a bha i `dol staigh. Cha n-eil fhios dé a bhuail e.

Uell, chuir sin ioghnadh oirnn an *clock* ud a bhi falbh arithist, ach nuair a chaidh `ad astaigh treis as deaghaidh sin, bha an *clock* sàmhach mar a b'abhaist dha. Cha robh e `g obrachadh idir. Bha `ad an uairsin a' smaointinn dé seòrsa rud a bh'ann nuair a thòisich an *clock* a' bualadh. Agus mu dheireadh thall, bha `ad a' smaointinn, "O feumaidh gu bheil rudeigin a' dol a thachair." Agus thachair sin cuideachd. An ceann seachdain na dhà, dh'eug an t-seana-bhean, agus bha `ad a' smaointinn gur e seo a' rud a bha 'n *clock* a dh'innse dhaibh, gu robh bàs a' dol a bhi `s an taigh.

Co dhiubh, biodh sin mar a bha e. Bha an t-seann *chlock* air an sgeilp a rinn iad nuair a fhuair `ad e - a's a' chisdsin air an t-seann sgeilp a bha seo. Cha do bhean `ad idir e ann a shin fad na bliadhnaichean,'s e `fuireach sàmhach. Agus, o, bliadhnaichean as deaghaidh sin, as deaghaidh dhuinn-ne a dhol suas an deaghaidh bàs m'athar, chaidh sinn a dh'fhuireach còmhla ri m'sheanair, athair mo mhàthar. Agus `s ann as deaghaidh an uairsin, dhùisg mo mhàthair oidhche agus bha mo sheanair air dùsgadh cuideachd. Chual' `ad a' seann *chlock* a' bualadh, bhuail i dà uair dheug. Ghabh `ad seòrsa do dh'eagal, agus làr-na-mhàireach chuir mo sheanmhair an *clock* shuas air a' lobhta.

Bha àit'-obrach aca shuas air a' lobhta agus chuir i an *clock* thall a' sin miosg na draoidhneachd a bh'ann. Cha robh guth tuilleadh air a-sin, ach fhuair `ad fios le litir á *Gloucester* gu robh Raghnall MacBhairis, bràthair mo sheanar air eugachdainn. Agus bha `ad a' smaointinn gur e seo...seòrsa dreag a bh'ann an *clock* ag innse dhaibh bàs eil' a bhi `s an teaghlach, agus as deaghaidh sin, chuir `ad an *clock* a falach `s a' lobht.

Bha mise, agus gill' a bha `ad a' togail cuideachd, *Russell* an t-ainm a bh'air, Russell MacGill-Eain. Bha e cóig bliadhna na `s sine na mise. Bha sinn a' cadal còmhla air a' lobht a bha seo agus an *clock* air an taobh eile dha `n bhalla, balla car tana. Uell, bha e *all right*. Bha e sàmhach ann a shin. Ach an oidhch' a bha seo, o, bliadhnaichean as deaghaidh dhi a bhi `bualadh roimhe, dhùisg *Russell* mise agus thuirt e, "*Listen to the clock*." Agus chuala mi seo, mi fhìn, an *clock* a' bualadh dà thuras. Thuirt esan gu robh e `bualadh mu `n do dhùisg mise, agus bha mo mhàthair shios agus chuala is' an *clock* a' bualadh cuideachd.

O, treis as deaghaidh sin, dh' fhaoidhte gun deach mìos seachad, `s mi fhìn a chaidh gu oifis a' phost a là bha seo, `s fhuair mi litir á *Gloucester*, litir `s seòrsa do *rim* dubh air, *edged in black*, mar a chanadh `ad. Thug mi `n litir dhachaidh agus nuair a dh'fhosgail `ad seo...a' rud a bh'ann, bàs Eòis, brath air mo sheanar, fear eile dhe na gillean.

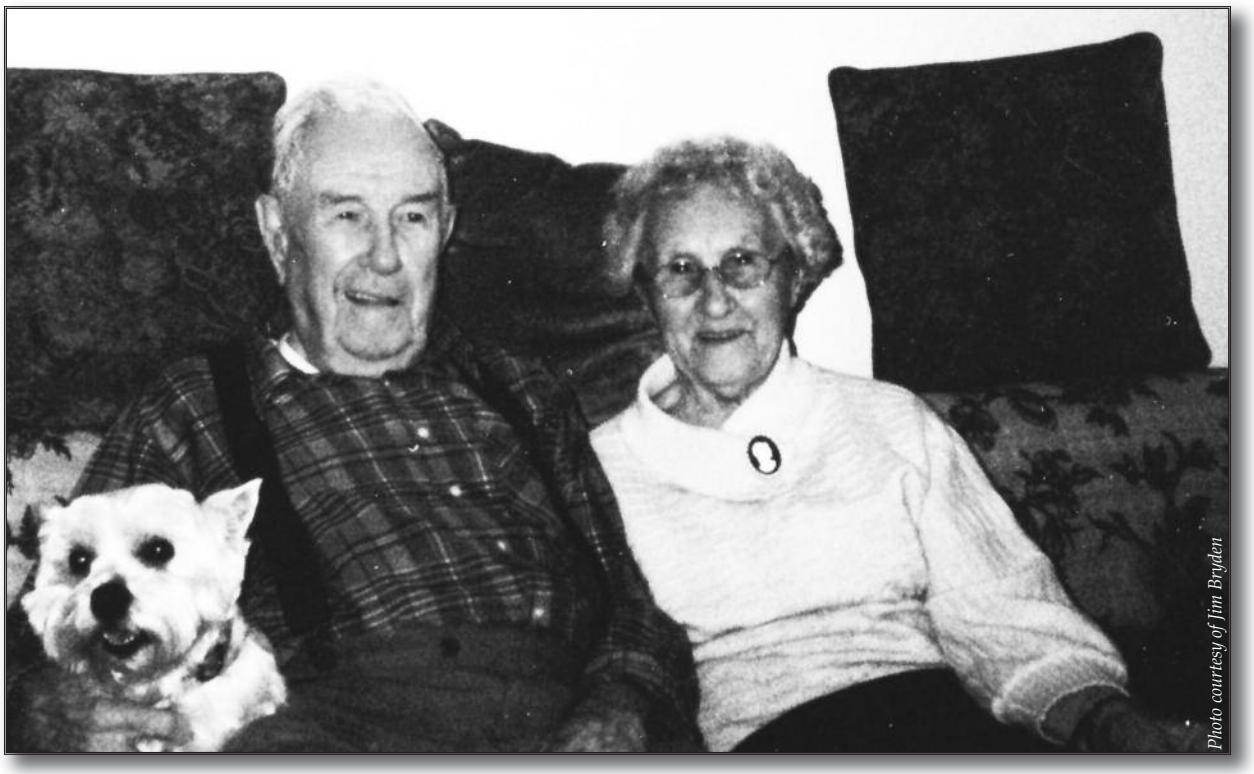
As deaghaidh dha sin a thachair, bha eagal orm a dhol dha `n leabaidh shuas air a' lobhta. Bha eagal orm a dhol suas tuilleadh agus an *clock* air an taobh eile dhe `n bhalla agus gu robh e `dol a *startadh*. Thug mi fhìn is *Russell* am mionach as co dhiubh agus shad sinn air falbh e. Agus sin a chuir crìoch air a' *chlock*, co dhiubh.

Sin naidheachd a' *chlock*.

The Clock Story
English Translation

When Catherine MacDonald came over from the Old Country to Canada, she was only nineteen years old. The ship she was on arrived in Sydney Harbour.

When they landed in Sydney, a merchant associated with boats and ships going in and out of the harbour made an inquiry. He was fairly well off and he was looking for a girl to help his wife with the house work. Catrìona went with him and settled in with that family,



Dòmhnll Mac Jonaidh Dhòmhnaill Oig agus a phiuthar Catrìona
Donald MacEachern with his sister Kaye Bryden

a family called Ross. They were, as they would say, ships' chandlers.

She got along very well in this house and became somewhat familiar with the things in the new town she was in. For two years, she lived and worked for the Rosses, and then she met my great grandfather, Hugh MacVarish, and they were married. She then moved to a bothy, a log cabin, in East Bay where they were next to the mountain side. The family began there. There were eight children and every one of them was born in that log cabin.

Anyway, when the oldest boys got a little older, they began building a new house. They were hewing timber and sawing out boards with the pit saw. Three, or four, of them were working on the house.

In any event, they got the house built and in 1872, the year before the great August Gale, they were ready to move in. Anyway, after they were in the house for a good while, a fellow turned up who was selling clocks, watches. (I don't have a Gaelic word for clocks. We call watches *uaireadairean*, but clock is what I always heard). Anyway, this fellow was selling clocks, and Catherine had seen one where she was working and the fellow was speaking English and Catherine also had English. She could understand what he was talking about.

Oh, anyway, she took a liking to the clock. The clocks they had at that time were about two feet in height and fourteen inches wide. They would sound the hour upon the hour between one and twelve o'clock. That's what delighted her: a clock like this that struck every hour. And, as I said before, the other fellow was certainly good to talk, in English anyway, and he said that the clock could be theirs for five dollars. All they had to do was sign the paper he had there. That's the way they understood it anyway. They had no inkling in those days about payments, or the like, just the one payment and they thought that was the whole thing. However, that wasn't the case at all, they were buying the clock on an installment plan. I don't recall the actual price. I suppose it was fifteen, or twenty dollars.

They weren't long after getting the clock when they got a letter from a lawyer's office in North Sydney informing them they had so many days to pay off the clock. If it wasn't paid...I'm certain that they were looking at jail time back then. I don't know what animal, a cow, or an ox, or something else they had to sell to get money to pay off the clock. All things considered, it was a considerable bother.

Anyhow, they were fond of the clock and the clock struck every hour, day and night. That's the way the clock worked. It didn't have a spring at all, but two weights that kept it going. They had it for many years, but, at last, the clock stopped. Who knows what was wrong, but they couldn't get it going again.

At the same time, the old lady, Catherine, the great-grandmother, was getting old too. At last she was mostly staying in bed. My grandfather had married a little before that and his new wife was in the house, and she was working in Boston. When she came home, she had a little clock. It wasn't a striker, but it nevertheless told the time.

Anyhow, the old lady was in bed on this certain day, and the rest were working at haymaking. (At that time, everyone at home had to give some time to putting the hay in good stead, turning and drying it and putting it in the barn.) They were all outside working on the hay and the old lady was in bed. While they were outside working, my grandmother said to a girl called Janet

They were fond of the clock and the clock struck every hour, day and night. That's the way the clock worked...They had it for many years, but at last the clock stopped...

- who they were raising themselves - to go inside and check on "Gammey" as she was called, "Go inside dear and see if Gammey is all right."

So Janet went in and when she returned outside she said "Gammey" was all right. But the queerest thing about it was that when she went inside the clock was going. She counted the strikes and that the clock struck ten times. She said that it was striking when she went in the house. Who knows how many time it struck!?

Well, we were dumfounded that the clock was going again. But when we went home shortly after that, the clock was silent as usual. It wasn't working at all. They were considering what kind of business this was when the clock started striking. Finally, they were thinking, "Oh something is going to happen." And it did happen. After a week, or two, the old lady died, and they figured this was what the clock was telling them, there was going to be a death in the house.

In any event, that's the way it was. The old clock was on the shelf that they made when they got it, in the kitchen on this old shelf. They didn't touch it after all those years. It stayed silent. Oh, years after that, when we went up (to the house), after my father died, we went to live with my grandfather, my mother's father. After that, my mother and grandmother were woken one night and they heard the old clock striking. They heard it strike twelve times. They got kind of frightened and the next day my grandmother put the clock up in the attic. There was a work space up in the attic and she put the clock over there with the other junk. There was nothing more about it. But then they got a letter from Gloucester saying that Ranald MacVarish, my grandfather's brother, had died. They thought that the clock was a kind of forerunner that was telling them there was to be another death in the family. After that they hid the clock in the loft.

There was myself and another fellow they were raising, his name was Russell MacLean, and he was five years older than me. We slept together in the attic and the clock was on the other side of the partition, which was quite thin. Well, that was fine. It (the clock) was soundless in there. But on this particular night, oh years after the last time it had struck, Russell woke me up and said, "Listen to the clock." I heard it myself, the clock striking twelve times. Russell said that it was striking before I woke up and my mother was downstairs and she heard it too.

A little while later, maybe a month had passed, I went to the post office on this day and I got a letter from Gloucester with sort of a black rim on it, "edged in black" as they would say. I took the letter home, and they opened it and found out about Joe's death, my grandfather's brother, one of the boys.

After that, I was afraid to go to bed up on the loft. I was afraid to go up there any more, because the clock was on the other side of the wall and going to start up. So, Russell and I took the gears out of it and threw them away and that put a finish on the clock.

That's the clock story.

Told by Donald MacEachern (Dòmhnall mac Jonaidh Dhòmhnaill Òig). © Collected, transcribed and translated by Seumas Watson.

Aig Baile: Caisbheart / Footgear

Mar a Rinneadh Caisbheart Na Cloinneadh

Dr. Seósamh Watson with introduction and translation by Seumas Watson

An interesting description of the Gaels' method for covering their feet was provided by Highland priest John Elder in a letter written to England's Henry VIII in 1543. Its original text is quoted by Frank Adams in *The Clans, Septs and Regiments of the Scottish Highlands*,

> *please it Youre Majesty to understande, that we of all people can tollerat, suffir and away best with cold, boithe somer and wynter (except when the froast is most vehemente) goynge alwaies bairleggede and barefootide; our delite and pleasure is not onely in huntynge off redd deir, wolfes, foxes and graines, whereof we abounde and have great plentie, but also in rinnynge, leapinge, swymminge, shootynge and thrawing of dartis... in wynter, whene the froest is mooste vehement (as I have saide), which we cannot suffir barefootide so weill as snow, which can never hurt us when it comes to out girdills, we go a huntynge, and after that we have slayne redd deir, we flaye the skin bey and bey, and setting of our bair foote on the inside thereof... we play the sutters, compasinge and measuring so much therof as shall retche up to our ancklers, prycynge the upper part thereof with holis that the water may repas when it entres and stretchide up with a strounge thwang of the same, meitand and above our said ancklers, so, and pleas your noble Grace, we make out shoois... therefor usynge such manner of shois, the roghe, hairie side outwart...*

I.F. Grant notes in the early nineteen-sixties that the practice of primitive footwear persisted in Sutherland and the Hebrides into recent times, "They were made of untanned calfskin worn hairy side out, roughly shaped to fit the feet, the edges of the heels and toes were drawn together by overcasting, holes were punched along the tops and laces threaded through."

The latter description of foot covering is still remembered in rural Cape Breton and called "shanks." (Gaelic-speaking informants have remarked on the shanks odour detracting from romantic enterprise during the courting years.)

The late Mary Anne Cameron *(Màiri Anna n'in Iain Shandaidh`ic Ailein `ic Iain)*, a Lochaber decedent, was born at Alpine Ridge, Inverness County in 1902. Raised on a farm with eleven siblings, there was no lack of work to be done during the daily and seasonal round of chores. At the time of butchering, little went to waste. Interviewed by Dr. Seósamh Watson, while he engaged in a survey of Cape Breton Gaelic dialects, Mary Anne recalled how her father would save a cowhide to make shoes for the family's children. Mary Anne lived to the age of 102. *(For more transcriptions of field recordings made on Mary Anne's seanchas and recollections of life, see Am Bràighe, summer issue 2002.)*

Mar a Rinneadh
Caisbheart na Cloinnead

Uill, bhiodh m'athair… bheireadh e an t-seiche dhen mhart, bha e 'glèidheadh sin … bhiodh e 'dèanamh bròg an dhan fheadhainn a b'òige. Chosg mi fhìn 's mo bhràthair iad 'dol dhan sgoil agus – dar a – bhiodh a' bhùidseireachd air a dhèanamh bha e ' glèidheadh na seiche. Bha e 'dol dhan choill' an uair sin agus bha – chan eil fhios 'am dè seòrs' craoibheadh a bh' ann, ach – bhiodh fhios aige fhéin agus bhiodh fhios aige air an àm. Bha i furast' ri ghearradh, agus ghearradh e … 'chairt air an taobh, agus thigeadh sin dheth mar siod – na dhà phìos – pìos air an taobh seo 's pìos air an taobh eile.

Feireadh e sin dhachaigh 's bha baraille aige anns an t-sabhal, agus chuireadh e aol anns a' bharaille 's salann 's uisge. Agus bha an uair sin bòrd aig' a rinn e fhèin, agus bha sgian ('s e sgiana-tharraing a bheireadh iad ris) agus chuireadh e – bha 'n t-seiche 'dol anns an uisge agus an salann 's an t-aol fad, dh'fhaoidte, seachdain no leith[id] sin. 'S bha fhios aige an uair sin, bhiodh e 'cumail sùil air agus dar a rachadh aige pìos dhen fhionndadh thoirt às bha i deiseil 's chuireadh e e – air a' bhòrd seo. Agus thòisicheadh e an uair sin 's bha àpran mór aig' a rinn mo mhàthair dha dhen leathar. `S chuireadh e sin air – 'son a chumail tioram agus thòisicheadh e an uair sin.

Agus bha sgian 'o leathann siud a' tighinn anuas… Dar a bheireadh e dhachaigh – na – rudan ' bha e toir' far na craobhan bha e gan sgaoileadh a-mach air an t-sabhal. –'S e cnogain a bheireamaid ris an uair sin. –'S a chuile là, mun rachainn 's mo bhràthair dhan sgoil: 'Thigibh a-mach 's tionndaibh na cnogain a-nis!' Bha 'ghrian air tighinn a-mach. Thigeamaid dhachaigh às sgoil is bhiodh na cnogain ri thionndadh an rathad eile gus am biodh iad … cho cruaidh ri creag… 'S dar a bhiodh an t-seiche deiseil bha [na] cnogain aigesan agus a' sgiantharraing agus… bha e dìreach mar gum biodh tu ' gearradh *pumpkin*. Agus bha...sin na cnogain tioram 's bha iad ' tuiteam sìos anns an uisg' còmh' ris an t-seich'. Bha sin ' dol ann 's bha 'n uimhir s' do dh'ùine an uair sin 's bheireadh e 'n t-seiche às 's… gu robh i deiseil.

Thòisich e 'n uair sin air a sgrìobadh. Bha leathar aige an uair sin. 'S bha àite aige – air fear dhe na saibhlean, 's chuireadh e an t-seiche air [na] saibhlean 's chuireadh e tàirnge annd' 's bha an urad as [so] do dh'ùine aig an t-seich' ri thiormachadh 's bha leathar aige an uair sin. Ach bha leathar…na laogh ri ghlèidheadh airson iallan 'son nam bròg –. Bha sin aige fad na h-ùine is dhèanadh e fhèin na h-iallan às sin dar a gheobhadh e an t-seiche deiseil, tioram. (Mary Ann Cameron)

English Translation
The Making of Childrens' Footwear

Well, my father would... he would take the hide of the cow and save it. He would make shoes for the youngest ones. (My brother and I wore them when we were going to school.) When he did the butchering, he kept the hide. Then he went to the woods and - I don't know what kind of tree it was - he knew himself and the time to get it. It was easy to cut and he would cut it ... the bark on a side, and that would come off like this - in two pieces: a piece on this side and a piece on the other side. He would take that home and he had a barrel in the barn in which he would put lime, salt and water.

Then he had a knife (they called it a draw knife) and he would put ... The hide was going into the water, salt and lime for, maybe, around a week. He would know the right time and he would keep an eye on it. When he could remove a swatch of the bristles, it was ready and he would put it on a table and he would begin. He had a big apron that my mother made for him out of leather. And he would put that on to keep dry and then he would start. There was a knife, oh about this width, coming down.

When he brought home those things he was taking from the trees, he would spread them on the barn - we called them *cnogain* (husks?). Every day, before my brother and I would go to school, "Come out and turn the cnogain - now!" The sun had appeared.

We would come home from school and the crogain would have to be turned the other way, until they would be, oh, hard as a rock. When the hide would be ready, he had the *cnogain* and the draw knife was taken down. It was just as though he was

continued on page 19

Fo na Cabair/Under the Rafters

The Feannag – Efficient use of space

Pauline MacLean & Katherine MacLeod

Much of the Highlands and Islands have limited amounts of fertile ground. These small patches of ground suitable for planting are interspersed with bogs, stones or hills. When on his travels in Scotland in the late 1700s, Samuel Johnson spoke about methods of tilling the land and that farms were divided in long lands and short lands. Long lands were patches that could be worked with the plough and short lands could only be turned by a spade as there was not room to use a plough.

Before 1745, land was commonly subdivided in the runrig system. Strips of land 20 to 40 feet wide were held by individuals while the grazing pasture was held in common by all on the farm. The arable land was of different quality and, to avoid disputes, the lots were chosen at random before the beginning of each season. The strips of land were called *feannag* in Gaelic and is defined in Dwelley's Gaelic to English Dictionary as a "rig, a ridge of ground… used for growing potatoes…the seed being laid out on the surface and covered with earth dug out of trenches along both sides. The term lazy-bed applied to it in English is merely a southern odium on the system of farming in Gaeldom…"

The *cas-chrom* or crooked spade was one of the most ancient tools used by the Gaels. Martin Martin reported the use of a 'crooked spade' in 1698. I.F. Grant gives a description of the method of farming using the *cas-chrom*. The farmer would place a thick layer of sea weed on the ground where planting was to take place. The strip of manure was about five feet wide. Using the *cas-chrom*, ground on each side of the seaweed strip was turned over on top of it. Another row was made beside this one with a two foot ditch between them to provide a drain. James MacDonald as well outlines the "ridging" of the fields.

> *In peat-mosses or bogs, and on the first turning up of deep waste lands, the Hebridian practice of forming narrow ridges with a ditch on every side and at each end of the field, is very judicious...The workman makes a straight furrow with his cas-chrom…from right to left. He continues it for a hundred yards or perhaps the length of the proposed field. At the distance of from four to six feet from this furrow he draws another in a parallel direction…he draws a second and a third…leaving the two feet for the ditch as before.*

The field followed the contours of the land, winding through the arable pieces of soil. When the farmer encountered a large stone which was in the way of the row, he used the *cas-chrom* to leaver it out of the patch. Again, Samuel Johnson describes how this was done. "When the farmer encounters a stone which is the great impediment of his operations, he drives the blade under it, and bringing the knee or angle to the ground, has in the long handle a very forcible lever."

The ditches between the rows provide drainage for the boggy soil while the seaweed nourished the soil. Fencing was not necessary for these patches as the animals were sent to the high pastures during the growing season and boys and girls watched the animals to keep them on the land assigned. Photos show only the ridges and hollows of the bed.

Alexander Fenton, in his work on agriculture in the Highlands, describes the *feannag;*

> *They lay sea ware on the green sward in winter. In February they dig trenches, and cast out the earth, on each side, upon the beds. When it is perfectly dry, in the beginning of May, they sow their bear, and then harrow it with a hand harrow… like a garden rake with wooden teeth.*

Once the bed was planted it was ignored till the fall harvest as the family was involved with other chores.

Footnotes:

(1) I.F.Grant, Highland Folk Ways, 41.
(2) Samuel Johnson, A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland, 180.
(3) Robert Mathieson, The Survival of the Unfittest: The Highland Clearances and the End of Isolation, 63.
(4) Alexander Carmichael, Grazing and Agrestic Customs of the Outer Hebrides, 466-467.
(5) Edward Dwelley, Dwelley's Illustrated Gaelic-English Dictionary, 422.
(6) Alexander Fenton, "Early and Traditional Cultivating Implements" 302.
(7) Grant, Highland Folk Ways, 9.
(8) MacDonald, General View of the Agriculture of the Hebrides, 183.
(9) Johnson, A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland, 180.
(10) Fenton, "Early and Traditional Cultivating Implements, 302.

A section of this article was taken from Rannsachadh Taisbeanaidh a' Chlachain Gàidhealaich - Vol. 1 An Taigh Tughaidh.

Aerial photos on the SCRAN website show the ridges and furrows of the *feannagan* snaking through the landscape. *Geodha na Glaic Bàine*, meaning 'inlet of the white hollow', is situated on the west coast of Scotland. This photo taken in 1944 clearly shows the ridges and furrows of the lazy-bed method of farming and how the farmers took advantage of all the available land. This ingenuity continued in Nova Scotia as Highland settlers, when clearing land, planted their potatoes around the burned stumps making use of available space.

An Rubha Photo Album: *50th Anniversary Quilt*

Debbie Doyle / Elsie Buck
Pipers Cove, NS
First Place Winner

Lorna MacLean
Sydney, NS
Second Place Winner

Sister Harriet MacNeil
Sydney, NS
Third Place Winner

The Nova Scotia Highland Village Society recently celebrated its 50th anniversary. This milestone was marked by a year long program of activities celebrating the language, passion for life and creative abilities of the Gael in Nova Scotia. In tribute to the craft tradition, we held a quilt block competetion to create a 50th anniversary quilt. Our Gaelic speaking ancestors could not purchase blankets for bed coverings in the early years of settlement, so left-over cloth, or worn clothing, were used to make bed coverings. Over time, the creative abilities of women brought variations to the patterns and colours as new materials and packaged dyes became available. The blocks were to be constructed based on the quilter's interpretation of the historical life of the Gael in Nova Scotia. The theme was based on the Society slogan: "*Leanaibh dlùth ri cliù bhùr sinnsir* - Remember the ways of your ancestors". All of the blocks received are shown here and will be included in the final quilt. We want to thank all the talented quilters who submitted these colourful and creative entries and congratulate the top three entrants. The quilt blocks were voted on by Highlland Village staff who assigned a points value to each block. The highest ranking blocks were choosen as the winners. The top three winners received a gift card from Michaels.

All contestants who entered the quilt competition were given a *Membership Plus* for the year to the Highland Village.

Anne Morrell Robinson
Margaree, NS

Carolyn Hudson
Brierly Brook, NS

Anne Morrell Robinson
Margaree, NS

Betty Roberts
Baddeck, NS

Debbie Doyle
Pipers Cove, NS

Carol Dziubek
Sydney, NS

Anne Morrell Robinson
Margaree, NS

Denise J White
Scotsburn, NS

Barb MacIntyre
Port Hawkesbury, NS

The finished quilt will be on display during the 2012 season.

Naidheachdan
Bho Mhac-Talla Vol. 5 No. 39,
Sidni, C.B.
Di sathairne April 3 1897

Tha an t-sìde a bh'ann bho chionn che'-la-deug glé mhi-fhallain, agus chaochail móran. Aon là air an t-seachdain seo, Di-mairt, bha trì torraidhean anns a' bhaile.

Tha carbad a tha ruith eadar Sidni 's Sidni-a-Tuath anise, oir tha 'n deigh air fàs dona. Leanaidh e air ruith gus am fosgail an acarsaid 's am faigh na bàtaichean cothrom ruith. Tha a' chuid a 's fheàrr de 'n gheamhradh seachad agus mar a 's luaithe thig an samhradh 's ann na 's fheàrr.

Thuit fear Henry Newton anns a' bhaile Di-sathurna s' a chaidh. Thàinig e do 'n bhaile o chionn treis a bhliadhnaichean air ais còmhla ri cuideachd chleasaichean. Dh'fhàg e iad agus bha e on uair sin a' creic stuth làidir. Chan eil teagamh nach b' e an t-òl a dh'aobharaich a bhàis. Thatar ag ràdh gu robh a chuideachd glé mheasail agus math air an dòigh, ged a chaidh esan a dholaidh mar siod.

Aon là air an t-seachdain s' chaidh, thachair dithis dhaoine oirnn a chuir beagan annais oirnn. A' cheud fhear, tha e ag giùlan ainm Gàidhealach ach is e ban-Éireannach a bha 'na mhàthair. Am fear eile, 'se bana-Ghàidheal a bha 'na mhàthair, ach 'se Spàinn teach a b'athair dha aig nach robh Gàidhlig na bu mhotha na bha i aig màthair an fhir eile. Ach ged a bha sin mar sin, tha an dithis dhaoine seo 'nan cainnt 's nan cleachdaidhean cho Gàidhealach ri duine a tha leughadh Mhic-Talla.

Là na Sàbaid s' chaidh, aig Leitche's Creek, chaochail Mòr, bantrach Dhòmhnaill Dhòmhnallaich, an déidh dhi aois ceud bliadhna 's a' seachd a ruigheachd. Rugadh i 's an t-Seann Dùthaich 's a' bhliadhna 1790, agus thàinig i air imrich do 'n dùthaich seo 's a'bhliadhna 1827. Bha a cuimhne cho math 's a bha e riamh gus ùine ghoirid mun do chaochail i. Bha a fradhrarc cho math 's gun cuireadh i snaithlean ann an snathaid bhig gun ghlaineachan. Dh'fhàg i sianar chloinne beò, trì fichead 's a dhà de dh'oghaichean, agus a h-aon deug air fhichead de dh'iar-oghaichean. Bha a fear-pòsda ceithir fichead 's a dhà nuair a chaochail e.

Ann an siorrachd Richmond, chan eil Ioseph Mathanach (Lib.) a bha 's a' phàrlamaid a' dol a dh'fheuchainn idir. Tha MacFhionnlaigh a' ruith 'na àite. Bha buill Cheap Breatuinn air an roinn gu cothromach anns a' phàrlmaid seo, ceathrar air gach taobh: siorrachdan Inbhirnis a' cur chonservatives innte, agus siorrachd Victoria 's Richmond liberals. Tha am Màrt air falbh ach tha 'n t-sìde fuar, greannach gu leòr fhathast.

Bha ar caraid "A.S." á Amaguadies Pond, 'gar coimhead an là roimhe. Cluinnidh sinn uaithe an ùine ghoirid. 'S toigh leinn daonnan ar càirdean a thadhal againn 'nuair a thig iad a stigh do 'n bhaile.

Chaidh Ioseph Handley a thug ionnsuidh air duine mharbhadh ann a Halifax o chionn beagan nam mìosan, fhaotainn ciontach air an t-seachdain s' a chaidh, agus fhuair e deich bliadhna anns an tigh-obrach.

Tha ceannaichean Halifax an déidh móran tì a cheannach an dùil gum bi cìs air a cur oirre air an earrach seo. Thathar ag ràdh gu bheil de thì anns a' bhaile na chumas ris a' mhór-roinn fad bliadhna gu leth.

B' e Di-ardaoin Latha nan Amadan, no mar a their cuid Latha na Gògaireachd. 'S iomadh duine 's bean, nighean us gille as an d' thugadh an car air an latha sin; nam biodh againn ris gach aon a chaidh a chur air turus gògaireachd a chur sios siar amadan, cha mhór daoine glice a bhiodh againn 'san dùthaich. Ach chan e h-uile duine as an gabh an car toirt a dh' fhaodar a mheas 'na amadan.

Tha cath an Taghaidh air tòiseachadh. Tha 'n dà phàirtidh an déidh an cuid dhaoin' ainmeachadh, agus a' cur rompa spàirn chruaidh a dheanamh chum am faotainn air an taghadh. Cho fad 's is aithne dhuinne, cha 'n eil eadar-dhealachadh gun sealltuinn ri pàirtidh idir, ach an duine 's fhearr a chur astigh, ge b'e taobh de 'm bheil e. An duine tha ceart agus ònarach aig an tigh, 's e 's dòcha gu 'm bi e mar sin anns a phàrlamaid, ach an duine nach eil ceart, no ònarach aig an tigh, agus ris nach earbadh duine a ghnothuch fhèin, creideadh e nach bi e mar bu chòir ann an tigh na pàrlamaid. "Am fear a bhios carrach 'sa bhaile seo, bidh e carrach 'sa bhail' ud thall.

"Aig na Forks, maduinn na Sàbaid s' a chaidh, chaochail Ruairidh Mac Fhionghain, fear de na daoine bu shine 'san sgireachd. Rugadh e an Uidhist a chinn a Tuath 'sa bliadhna 1815, agus bha e mar sin ceithir fichead bliadhna 's a dhà a dh' aois.

Each issue of An Rubha *features an excerpt from Eòin Aonghais Chaluim - Jonathan G. MacKinnon's* Mac-Talla *(Echo) with translation.* Mac-Talla, *published in Sydney, Nova Scotia, was the longest running Gaelic weekly (ending as a bi-weekly) 1892-1904. MacKinnnon, born in Dunakin in 1869, published his first issue at 22 years of age. He was a life-long promoter of Gaelic and was involved in other publications including Gaelic translations of English literature. Digital copies of* Mac-Talla *can be found on the Sabhal Mòr Ostaig website at: http://www.smo.uhi.ac.uk/Foghlam/Leabharlann/Mac-talla/index_en.html*

Mac-Talla: ***the longest running Gaelic weekly now on-line***

Sabhal Mòr Ostaig has digitised Mac-Talla ("Echo"), Nova Scotia's weekly Gaelic newspaper/magazine published - later bi-weekly - between May 28, 1892, and June 24, 1904, around 540 issues in all. Its store of news, local, national and international, letters to the Editor, Gaelic proverbs, poetry/song, stories, translations and articles are a repository of Gaelic cultural ideas. Mac-Talla can be found at:
http://www.smo.uhi.ac.uk/en/leabharlann/mactalla/

Dh' fhag e bantrach, ceathrar mhac us triùir nighean. Bha e 'na dhuine math air an robh mór-mheas aig na fhuair eòlas air. Bha e 'na eildeir an eaglais St. Andrew; b'e fear de na cheud fheadhain a bha air an taghadh ri linn an Dotair Mhic Leòid. Chaidh an corp a thìodhlachadh anns a chladh air Hardwood Hill. Bha e 'n toiseach air a thoirt astigh do 'n eaglais, far an robh seirbheis ghoirid air a cumail. Bha móran sluaigh a làthair, agus lean a' chuid mhor dhiubh an giùlain do'n chladh, mar sin a' taisbeanadh an urraim agus an gràidh dha-san a bha mar athair anns an eaglais agus an sgireachd.

The News
From Mac-Talla Vol. 5 No. 39
Sydney, C.B.
Saturday, April 3, 1897

The weather for the past fortnight has been very unhealthy, and many have died. One day this week there were three funerals in the city of Sydney.

There is a coach running between Sydney and North Sydney at this time on account of the ice being unsafe. It will continue to run until the harbor opens up and gives the boats an opportunity to operate.

One Henry Newton fell in town last Saturday. He came to Sydney a few years ago with a troupe of actors. He left them and since then has been selling liquor. There is no doubt that drink was the cause of his death. It is reported that his family background was very respectable and upright, though he went to the dogs in this way.

One day last week, we met two interesting people. The first one had a Highland surname, but his mother was Irish. The next fellow's mother was a Gael, but his father was Spanish and didn't have a word of Gaelic anymore than the other man's mother did. Nevertheless, they are both as Highland in there speech and manners as anyone who reads MacTalla.

Last Sunday, at Leitches Creek, Sarah, Donald MacDonald's widow, died at the age of one hundred and seven. She was born in Scotland in 1790. She immigrated to this country in 1827. Her memory was perfect until very close to the time of her death. Her eyesight was so good that she could thread a small needle without glasses. She leaves behind six children, 62 grandchildren and 21 great grandchildren. Her husband was 82 when he died.

In Richmond County, Liberal in parliament Joseph Matheson won't be re-offering at all. Duncan McKinley is running in his place. Cape Breton members of this parliament were evenly divided with four from each party. Inverness County contributed the Conservatives with Richmond and Victoria sending the Liberals. March is gone but the weather remains cold and raw.

Our friend A.S. from Amaguadies Pond was in to see us the other day. We'll be hearing from him soon. We like our friends to stop by when they're in town.

Joseph Handley, who assaulted and killed a man in Halifax a little more than a month ago, was found guilty last week and sentenced to 10 years hard labour.

Merchants in Halifax have bought large quantities of tea in expectation of it being taxed this spring. It is reported that there is enough tea in Halifax to do the province for a year and a half.

Thursday was April Fools' Day. Many is the man and woman, and boy and girl who were fooled on that day. If we called all that were sent on a silly mission fools, we would hardly have a wise person in the country. However, not everyone that got duped could be considered a fool.

The election campaign is beginning. The two parties have named their representatives and are engaged in a vigorous effort to get them elected. As far as we know, there's little difference in the parties. Put in the best man, regardless of what side he's on. The person who is just and honest at home will likely be the same in parliament. He who is not and can't be trusted by a person around his own affairs, be sure that he won't do right in parliament. (As the proverb says, "The man who is devious in this village will be the same in the next.")

Rory MacKinnon died last Sunday morning at Sydney Forks. He was one of the oldest people in the parish. He was born in North Uist in 1815, and so he was 82 years of age. He leaves behind a widow, four sons and three daughters. He was well regarded among his friends. He was an elder of St. Andrew's Church and one of the first to be elected during the era of Doctor MacLeod. The body was buried in the Hardwood Hill cemetery. At first he was brought into church where a short service was held. There was a large crowd on hand and most followed the remains to the graveyard to show their love and respect to him who was like a father to the church and parish.

Translated by Seumas Watson

Tapadh leibh-se gu mór

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Dèante le làimh

Highland Women's Clothing at the time of Emigration: Part One

By Vicki Quimby

So closely identified is the clothing of the Highland male with the idea of Scottish culture today, that reams of information are available on tartan, the féileadh beag, and military dress of the late eighteenth to mid-nineteenth centuries. But what were women wearing? Comparatively little detail was recorded, but with the help of eyewitness accounts and some knowledge of the conditions of everyday life, we may be able to piece together a picture of women's dress throughout this period - a time of upheaval and emigration for many.

Clothing will always be determined by the conditions of life and the environment in which one is living. By understanding that Highland life is a study in contrasts - a wealthy few living amongst a population struggling against all odds to survive, to nourish and clothe themselves, sometimes with the most primitive of tools - we might begin to imagine how those women who ultimately arrived on the shores of Nova Scotia might have appeared as they were poised to leave the Old Country and the lives they had known.

Although we may tend to think only of the Gaels as tenants or sub-tenants, there were, in fact, other classes in Highland society, from the landlords (often aristocrats), to gentlemen farmers,tacksmen, merchants, and business owners. Then there were the servants of the gentry, tenants, the cottars, and even the destitute. The class to which a woman belongs will largely determine her mode of dress. As J. T. Dunbar states in his *History of Highland Dress:*

> *I doubt very much if the trend of fashion has changed over the centuries. The gentry have nearly always spent a great deal on clothes and the middle classes have usually attempted to imitate their extravagances, whilst the peasants have made do with what they could afford.*

Wives and daughters of the landowners did dress extravagantly, in imported silks, velvets, damasks, and lace. Dress was important to their families to demonstrate their wealth and social standing. However, their everyday garments tended to be made by local trades people. Some weavers and tailors were employed exclusively by the family. Their women servants' duties included spinning the threads to make the clothing (and household linens) for their employers. Attention was paid to the production of high quality linens and fine woolens in these households, and the clothing was carefully styled after the fashion of the day.

Women of lesser standing, yet still considered "women of means", made an effort to dress in similar styles, but with less imported cloth and more locally manufactured and tailored clothing. They were able to purchase the services of the more skilled weavers, and employed servants of their own. Women servants of the upper classes were partially paid in clothing - sometimes cast-offs - and shoes.

Of course, the majority of women were the wives and daughters of tenant farmers. They made their own clothing of homespun wool and linen with whatever tools or raw materials they had at hand. The

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quality of their clothing varied with these materials and their own skill levels. From the 1790's *Statistical Account of Harris*:

> *Of spinsters and weavers, the number is almost equal to that of householders, among the lower class of people, whose wives and daughters both spin and weave their wool into coarse cloths for the use of the family, and a few blankets for sale.*

Worse off yet was the cottar (*sgalag*) and his family. John Buchanan *(Travels in the Western Hebrides)* observes in the 1780's: "The scallag… procures for himself a few rags, either by what little flax or wool he can raise; or by the refuse or coarser parts of these articles furnished by his master…"

Adverse climate, scanty soil, overpopulation, and a rise in rents were some of the factors contributing to the poverty of so many. Scarcity of clothing is a problem throughout this entire time period. There are *Statistical Account* references to the population being scantily clad and even, in Barra, "destitute of bed-clothes". And church attendance in Tiree and Coll was affected: "Scantiness of clothing also deters many from attending public worship."

In spite of these hardships, most women had access to some raw materials with which to manufacture cloth. Linen was needed for undergowns, neck kerchiefs, mutches and head kerchiefs. To supply these needs, flax was grown in many areas of the Highlands, or small amounts could be purchased from a merchant. If a young woman had attended one of the spinning schools financed by the Scottish Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, or a benevolent landlord's wife (for example, Mrs. MacKenzie of Seaforth, in Lewis in the 1790's), she might be the owner of a spinning wheel with which to spin her linen. But many of these efforts to introduce wheels failed, and the majority of women in the Hebrides continued to spin with the spindle and distaff until well into the nineteenth century.

Sheep were all around, and wool was available to all but the poorest, who were reduced to begging for small amounts of wool. Although the larger Lowland breeds were beginning to be introduced into many areas of the Highlands by the late 1700's, most women still preferred to use the wool from the smaller traditional type of sheep. The *seana chaoirich bheaga* (little old sheep) breed could be a dull yellow or amber colour (*lachdann*), bluish-gray (*gorm*), white or black. In Harris:

> *They are so diminutive a size… that 16 fleeces go to a stone (14 pounds) of wool. The wool is generally short, but very fine… All the wool is spun and manufactured in the parish. A few fine, light stuffs are made, which are worn by the*

first rank of the inhabitants; the lower ranks get their wool manufactured into coarse, but decent clothing for themselves.

Women, of course, enjoyed clothing with color, either dyed a solid colour - indigo-dyed blue was very common - or woven into patterns of stripes, checks, or plaids. While many colours could be dyed with local plants such as bedstraw roots, water lily roots, heather or lichens, some imported dyes such as cochineal for reds, or 'old fustic' for yellow, and indigo for blue gave brilliant colours generally unequaled by local dyestuffs. And certainly many of the surviving fabrics of the period show the bright reds, greens and blues as predominant colours. The dyeing was either done in the home, or sometimes, by the local weaver. Although the nobility and gentry may have been importing their ready-made, exotic fabrics from agents in Edinburgh, the standard four-post looms were everywhere throughout the Highlands and some weaving was of a very high quality. *The Statistical Accounts* of the Hebrides show numerous weavers in every parish - mostly men, but a high number of women working as weavers as well. The weavers were not necessarily paid with cash; meal might be given as payment instead. Other accounts imply that some less-well-off women did their weaving in their own homes. Some looms were crude, as in Mull (Nielson Report): "…I found a Loom or two made of sticks and bound together with Ropes and Twigs, and in every respect such clumsey machines that I could not have believed (had I not been assured by good Authority) that any kind of Cloath could be made with them." Homes with no looms took their spun yarns to a local weaver.

As the majority of women at the period of emigration were not "women of means", it is safe to assume that most of the clothing was manufactured in the home with whatever flax, or wool, was at hand. Fashions varied with time, location, certainly with class, and there was always a contrast between the dress of older and younger women.

The late 1700's were a time of great social and economic change. An initial period of emigration had already occurred in the 1770's. It came mostly from the western Highlands, with a scattering of others from the Islands. Proscription had come and gone, but fashion had changed anyway. The long traditional plaids, *earasaid*, were no longer being worn. They had been admired for their fine quality, but criticized by some the seventeenth century puritanical churchmen for the wearer's ability to hide under her plaid and sleep during the church service. They had now been replaced by plaids of a much shorter length, as well as the *guailleach* (shoulder shawl), and cloaks, both long and short.

Even with the demise of the *earasaid*, there are many references into the nineteenth century as to "plaiding" being worn by women. "Plaid" has always had many meanings, from body covering, to bed blankets. It could also refer to the cloth itself - a strong woolen cloth, identified by some as "flannel". But its more usual meaning was as a shawl worn over a woman's clothes. It could be made of silk, fine wool lined with silk, or all wool, depending upon your means. As well, it could be a solid colour, or checked, striped, or even what we now know as a plaid pattern. For the impoverished, of course, plaids were not only shawls, but also covered up a lack of clothes and served as their bed-clothes.

A description by Buchanan from 1790 tells us that the women of the Hebrides wear "long or short gowns", with a waistcoat and two petticoats, "mostly of stripes or tartan… except the lower coat (undergarment) which is white." The long gown was either of thigh- or knee-length -

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a loosely fitted outer gown or light coat; the short gown was more fitted. And: "The married wives wear linen mutches, or caps, either fastened with ribbons of various colours or with tape straps, if they cannot afford ribbons. All of them wear a small plaid, a yard broad, called *guilechan (guailleach)*, about their shoulders, fastened by a large broach." The broaches were round, made of silver or, more generally, brass.

A long or short gown with a waistcoat was standard - often wool - along with the undergown, or undergarment, normally described as white, peeking out here and there, at the bodice and sleeves. This was generally made of linen. Linen was also used for the "napkins or handkerchiefs" some women were beginning to wear on their necks, in lieu of the *guailleach*. These could be of coloured, or patterned silk, for women of means; white linen for everyone else.

He also tells us that, "The breid, or curtah, a fine linen handkerchief fastened about married women's heads, with a flap hanging behind their backs above the *guilechan (guailleach)*" is no longer much in use, having been replaced by "the caps of various fashions". Many descriptions and drawings of the period show an assortment of head coverings - from linen headscarves tied about their chins, to long head-dresses. Old women were sometimes described as wearing woolen hoods with very coarse linen under them, fastened below the chin with a pin. Headwear was conferred upon a woman, usually at her marriage, but also upon the birth of a child, or when she achieved a certain age.

There were differences in headwear (and hair styles) between young women and wives. Buchanan states: "The married women wind up their hair with a large pin into a knot on the crown of their heads, below their linens; and the unmarried …go bareheaded, with their hair bound up with ribbons, or garters." They might also bind their hair with a fillet or snood (*stìom*), as Elizabeth Grant recorded in her Memoirs of a Highland Lady: "…No Highland girl ever covered her head; the girls wore their hair neatly braided in front, plaited up in Grecian fashion behind, and bound by the snood, a bit of velvet, or ribbon placed rather low on the forehead and tied beneath the plait at the back."

Sundays and holidays were for dressing as well as one could. In St. Kild: "The men and women dress in the same form that the Hebrideans do, and are possessed of an equal share of pride and ambition of appearing gay on Sundays and holidays, with other people." Buchanan continues, with a description of the Hebrideans: "They often wear linen caps, called mutches, particularly on Sabbaths. Many of the more wealthy appear at church with a profusion of ribbons and head-dresses, with cloaks, and high-heeled shoes. Those whose circumstance cannot admit of that, must appear with one of their petticoats, either tartan, or of one colour, around their shoulders, on Sundays, as well as on week days."

Part two will appear in the next An Rubha.

Vicki Quimby is a textile consultant and animator at the Highland Village. Déante la làimh (handmade) is a regular feature of An Rubha that explores various aspects of textiles and craft production in Gaelic Nova Scotia.

Mar Chuimhneachan

Beannachd Leibh a Shir Iain

Seumas Watson

A champion of growing vigorous communities on a solid foundation of their native tongues, Sir Iain Noble provided a model for the world through his own initiatives: combining pride of place, language and culture with economy building enterprises. A supporting voice calling for Gaelic renewal in Nova Scotia, Highland Village regrets the death of Sir Iain, who succumbed after a long illness on Christmas day, 2010 at the age of 75. The following is an extrapolation from an interview with Iain Noble originally appearing in the 2002 spring issue of Am Bràighe. The conversation took place on a blustery November afternoon standing on Purdy's Wharf during Sir Iain's visit in Halifax to promote his company's Gaelic-labelled whisky products. Sir Iain was a fluent learner of Gaelic and a visionary founder of Sabhal Mór Ostaig.

Ag Còmhradh le Sir Iain Noble

Seumas Watson: *Cà 'n do rugadh sibh?*

***Sir Iain*:** Uell, rugadh mise ann a *Berlin*. Chaidh mi bhaisteadh anns a' Roimh agus chaidh mi 'n uairsin dha 'n sgoil ann a *Shang Hai* agus ann a *Buenos Aires* agus an uair sin ann a Sasuinn. Bha m'athair ag obair anns a' *Diplomatic Service*. Bha e a' dol mun cuairt siod 's a seo. Co dhiubh, 's ann á Earraghàidheal a bha an teaghlach agam, agus bhithinn a' cur seachad, 's dòcha, mìos na dhà gach bliadhna còmhla ri mo pharantan thall thairis. Bha mi ann an sgoil ann a Sasuinn an uairsin bho aois aon deug air adhart. Bhithinn-sa dol dhachaidh a dh'Earraghàidheal airson nan saor-làithean còmhla ri bràthair m'athar.

SW: *Dé bha 'gur tarraing dha 'n Ghàidhlig an toiseach?*

SI: Well, iomadh rud leis an fhìrinn... Bha ùidh agam. Bha i ceangailte ri Alba. Ach an uair sin, chaidh mi dha na h-Eileanan Faró, far a bheil cànan aca fhéin, agus bha mi 'tuigsinn gu robh e a's a' chridhe aca, gun dug e misneachd dhaibh, agus brosnachadh, nuair a bha an cànan aca a' tighinn air ais. Thàinig mi dha 'n Eilean ann an naoidh ceud deug trì fichead 's a' dhà dheug, bho chionn naodh bliadhn' air fhichead anise.

SW: *Tha sibh as deaghaidh roinn do dh'iomairtean a chuir air adhart on uair sin. Gu dé bhiodh annda sin?*

SI: Nuair a bha mi 'fuireach o thùs a's an Eilean, a' cheud ochd bliadhna, bha mi 'cur seachad seachdain an Obair-dheathainn gach mìos. Bha ann companaidh a chaidh a chur air bhonn airson a' Chuain-a-Tuath: companaidh a bha 'ruith bhàtaichean amach dha na *rigichean*. An uairsin, ann an 1980, bha mi a sàs ann an cùisean ann an Dùn Éideann, gu h-àraidh a thaobh, mar a chanas 'ad 's a' Bheurla, *"merchant banking"*, saoghal an airgid. Bha mi ris a' sin gus an do *retire* mi 'n uiridh. Ach tha mi fhathast a' cumail a' dol le companaidh beag 's cùisean.

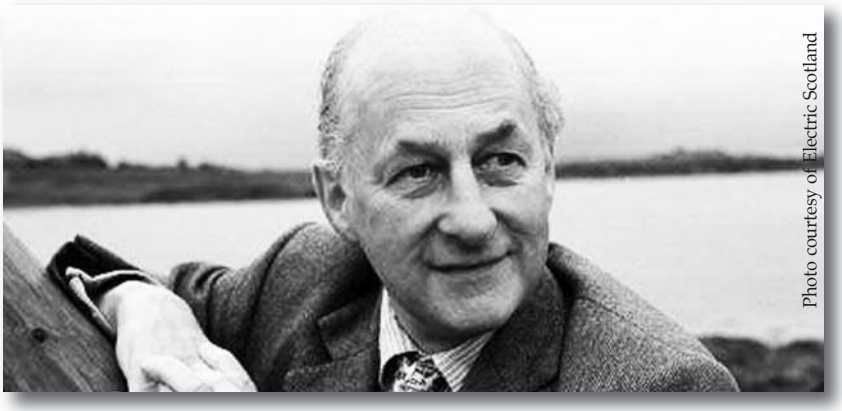


Photo courtesy of Electric Scotland

SW: *Chaidh sibh amach dha 'n Eilean Sgìathanach anns na '70s. Gu dé a' cheud iomairt a bh'agaibh a' sin agus ciamar a bha na h-oidhirpean sin 'gan leudachadh amach tro' na bliadhnaichean?*

SI: Nuair a thòisich mi, bha mi air a bhi sàs ann an saoghal an airgid ann an Dùn Éideann. Thòisich mi companaidh air a bheil *Noble Grossart*. Tha iad caran ainmeil an diugh a thaobh *merchant banking* ann an Dùn Éideann, a' cheud chompanaidh dhiubh a bha ann an Alba.

Nuair a rànaig mi 'n t-Eilean, bha mi 'smaoineachadh 's dòcha gum bu chòir dhuinn feuchainn ri iomadh seòrsa rud a chur air bhonn. Thòisich sinn air an iasgach. Thànaig bàt'-iasgaich á Scalpaigh le sgiobair Scalpaigh, duin' uamhsach laghach, Dòmhnall MacSuain. Thòisich sinn air fighe cuideachd. Bha muileann-figh' againn Muileann Beag a' Chrotail an t-ainm a bh'air. Dh'obraich e 's ma dh'fhaoidhte gur e deich bliadhna a bha iad a' dol.

Bha tuathanas éisg againn, airson greiseag, a bha air a chur air bhonn. Bha sin math gu leòr. Rinn e uamhasach math airson seachd bliadhnaichean. Tha e ann fhathast an diugh, ach le daoin' eile. Bha sinn ri tuathanasachd cuideachd.

Air an taobh eile, bha an taigh-òsda ann, a tha cumail a' dol gus a' là an diugh. A bhon-raoir, fhuair an taigh-òsda dùais bho fhear dhe na leabhraichean airson luchd-turais, *Relais Routiers*, a tha caran ainmeil ann am Breatunn anise. 'S ann ás a' Fhraing a thànaig 'ad 's a' cheud dol amach. Fhuair sinn dùais mar an taigh-òsd' a 's fheàrr ann an Alba. Agus, còmhla ri taigh-òsda ann a Sasuinn, bha sinn eadarainn an dà thaigh-òsda a b' fheàrr ann a Breatunn. Bha sin glan, nach robh?

Thòisich sinn air an uisge-bheatha ann a 1976, 's tha e a' fas fhathast. Tha an òigheachd fhéin a' deanamh meadhonach math cuideachd. 'S mar sin, faodaidh tu a ràdh gu bheil gnothaichean a' tighinn air adhart.

SW: *Dar a thòisich sibh air brosnachadh na Gàidhlig ann a Sléibhte, bha beachd agaibh gu robh ceangal cudtromach ann eadar cultur slàn 's leasachadh na coimhearsnachd. A' bheil sibh 'ga chreidinn sin fhathast?*

SI: Tha gu mór, agus tha mi 'smaoineachadh gu bheil e 'tachairt ann an iomadh àite. Gu neònach, tha e 'tachairt am miosg Frangaich Chanada cuideachd. Tha mi 'tuigsinn gu robh cuid mhath dhe na Frangaich ann a Canada o chionn, 's dòcha, fichead bliadhna, na barrachd, 'nam biodh iad comasach, bhiodh iad a' dol astaigh dha 'n eaglais, no bhiodh iad a' teagasg. Glé ainneamh a bhiodh iad a' dol astaigh ann a gnìomhachas. Ach an diugh, on a thànaig *Levesque* agus a charaidean, tha iad anise dol astaigh dhan a' ghnìomhachas agus "*entrepreneurship*" agus tha iad a' deanamh glé mhath.

Tha sin a' sealltainn mar a tha sin ag obair. Nam biodh a' Ghàidhlig a' tighinn air ais gu math làidir, beò ann a Ceap Breatunn, tha mi cinnteach gum biodh cùisean a' coimhead na 's fheàrr ann a Ceap Breatunn. Bhiodh iomadh duine 'toiseachadh le proisectan ùra a'siod 's a' seo. Bhiodh ceangal na bu làidire eadar Ceap Breatunn 's Alba, 's dòcha. Tha mi

'smaoineachadh nam biodh aon chas agad ann an eachdraidh, bhiodh an té eile 's an ùin' a tha romhad. Cha n-urrainn dhut coiseachd ach le aon chas a bhi 's an deireadh agus a' chas eile air thoiseach.

SW: *Gu dé am beachd a bh'agaibh nuair a chaidh Colaisde Ghàidhlig an t-Sabhal Mhóir a chur air bhog?*

SI: Tha cuimhn' agam air nuair a thòisich Sabhal Mór Ostaig. Bha sinn a' feuchainn ri chanail ris a' riaghaltas gum bu mhath leinn gnìomhachas, stiùireadh, manaidearachd 's a leithid a theagasg. Agus bhiodh iad a' foighneachd ann an Dun Éideann 's gu h-àraidh aig a' riaghaltas, ma tha thu `dianamh seo, dé an obair a bhios aca nuair a bhios iad deiseil? Bha mise cumail amach nach robh e gu diofar dé seòrs' obair a bhiodh aca. Nam biodh iad ag obair ann an garaid 's dòch' an ceann fichead bliadhna ... ma tha comas aca 's inntinn aca gum biodh companaidh ann an *engineering* aca a' fàs gu mór. Agus nam biodh iad a' dol gu taigh-òsda, gum biodh 'ad a' ruith nan taighean-òsda, ma tha iad comasach agus ceann aca.

Conversation with Sir Ian Noble

SW: *Where were you born?*

SI: Well, I was born in Berlin. I was baptized in Rome and then I attended schools in Shang Hai, Buenos Aires and then in England. My father worked for the Diplomatic Service. He traveled about here and there. In any event, my family was in Argyll, and I would spend, perhaps, a month or two each year with my parents. I was at school in England from the age of 11 onward, and I would go home to Argyll for my holidays with my uncle.

SW: *What attracted you to Gaelic in the first place?*

SI: Well, to tell the truth, many things. I was simply interested. The language was connected to Scotland. So, then I went to the Faroe Islands where they have their own language. I realized that their language was in their hearts, that they were inspired and encouraged when their language became renewed. Well, I came to the Island (Skye) in 1972. It's 29 years since then.

SW: *You have initiated a number of enterprises since then. What would those be?*

SI: Well, when I lived in the Island at first, the first eight years, I spent a week in Aberdeen every month. There was a company there established for the North Sea (oil development), a company that ran boats out to the rigs. But at the time, I was involved in affairs in Edinburgh, especially in what we would call merchant banking, the financial world. I pursued that until I retired last year, but I still keep going with a small company and other things.

SW: *You went out to the Isle of Skye in the 1970s. What was your first enterprise there and how has that grown over the years?*

SI: When I started out, well, I was engaged with the financial world in Edinburgh. I founded a company called Noble-Grossart They are somewhat famous today in Edinburgh in the line of merchant banking, being the first company of them in Scotland. When I arrived in the Island, I thought perhaps we should try and establish a variety of things. We began with the fishing. A boat came from Scalpay with a Scalpay skipper, Donald MacSween - an awfully nice man.

We initiated weaving too. We had a weaving mill called *Muileann Beag a' Chrotail*. It was successful and carried on for, maybe, 10 years. We established a fish farm which went for a while. That was all right. It's still going today, but with different people. We were also involved in agriculture.

On the other side of things, there was the hotel (*Eilean Iaramain*) which continues at present. Last night the hotel received a prize from one of the tourism publications, somewhat well know in Britain these days, called *Releis Routiers*. We were given a prize for being the best hotel in Scotland. Along with another hotel in England, we were declared the best two inns in Great Britain. Wasn't that wonderful?

And then we started on the whisky business in 1976, and that is still growing, and the estate is doing fairly well.

SW: *In your work advancing Gaelic language in Sleat, you believe that there is an important link between a healthy culture and community development. Did you still believe this to be true?*

SI: Absolutely, and I think that this is the case in a lot of places. Interestingly, this is evident among French Canadians too. I understand that, perhaps, 20 years ago, or more, many skilled French Canadians went into the church or teaching. They very seldom entered into the field of business.

But today, since the advent of Levesque and his colleagues, they are going into business and entrepreneurship and doing very well. That demonstrates the way it works. I'm sure that if Gaelic was to return strong and vibrant in Cape Breton, the (economic) situation would look much better. There would be a lot of people starting up new projects here and there. The (Cape Breton) connection would, perhaps, be a lot stronger with Scotland and the United States. I think that you have to have one foot in history and the other in the future. You can walk only if one foot is behind and one in front.

SW: *What was your idea for launching Sabhal Mór Ostaig as a Gaelic college?*

SI: I remember when *Sabhal Mór Ostaig* started up. We were trying to tell the government that this would be worthwhile and that we intended to teach enterprise, leadership, management and those kinds of things.

In Edinburgh, and especially from the government, the question arose, what employment will they (the students) have when they're finished? I maintained, what difference is it what work they do? Supposing they worked in a garage, perhaps in twenty years, if they are competent and savvy, they would have founded an engineering company that was growing well. Or, if they were working at an inn, they could be operating hotels, should they be capable and shrewd.

Transcribed and translated by Seumas Watson.

Mar a Rinneadh Caisbheart Na Cloinneadh *Continued from page 10...*

cutting a pumpkin. And then the dried *cnogain* were dropping into the water with the hide. That went into it (the mixture.) It set for a period of time. He would take the hide out and it was ready.

He would begin scraping it and then he had leather. He had a place on one of the barns and he would nail it up on the barn(s). It would take a certain length of time for the leather to dry and then it was ready for him. Calf leather was saved for shoe laces. It something he always had on hand and he made the laces himself when the hide dry and all ready.

**Other than being derived from an unidentified tree, seemingly with curative properties, a specific meaning for the word cnogain is unsure in our transcription. An Rubha invites readers to help us with an appropriate definition.*

An Rubha Review

Sgeulachadan Gàidhlig á Earraghàidheil
Gaelic Folk and Hero Tales from Argylshire

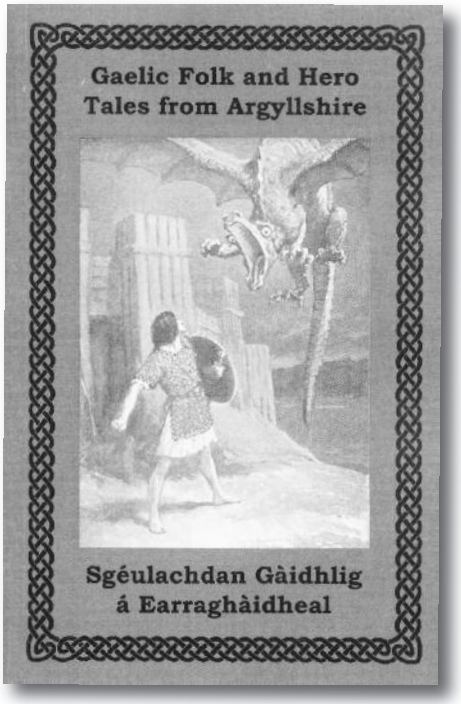
A book review by Seumas Watson

With an extensive stock of books, CDs and DVDs, Sìol Cultural Enterprises has been Nova Scotia's mainstay for distribution of Gaelic related matter over many years. The company's catalog listings are eclectic with book titles of Gaelic interest that include children's materials, textbooks, songs and poetry, traditions and fictional reading. As well, Sìol has returned a number of important Gaelic publications to community domain, which would otherwise be left to archival sources. Significant among these are re-edited editions of *An t-Òranaiche, O Cheapaich nan Craobh* and a new volume of *Gaelic Folk and Hero Tales from Argyllshire / Sgeulachdan Gàidhlig á Earraghàidheil.*

The ten tales contained in the Argyllshire collection first appeared in 1891. Their oral source was Ardnamurchan native Alexander Cameron, a roadman in the districts lying between Duror and Ballachulish. Collector, editor and translator of his stories was the Craignish born Reverend James MacDougall (1833 - 1906), minister at Duror in 1871. A contemporary during an active time for gathering Gaelic folklore in the Highlands and Islands, MacDougall shared his interest with other celebrated collectors such as Alexander Carmicheal and *Iain Òg Ile.* He first published his work on old tales in Archibald Campbell's *Waifs and Strays of Celtic Tradition.*

MacDougall's own forward says that his collaboration with Alexander Cameron took place between 1889 and 1890 over sessions varying from roadside locations to convening in the Reverend's own home. As a discerning collector, MacDougall notes that other informants possessing the same stories were also available to him nearby. He assessed Cameron's settings, however, as those most complete and giving the best available representations. The methodology for taking down Cameron's stories was also meticulous, described by MacDougall as a process of first rehearsing the stories followed by scribing them in pencil as they were repeated and finally committing them to pen when satisfied that versions were comprehensive.

The ten tales reported here are true *sgeulachdan,* that is - in the Cape Breton sense of the word - the older, long stories. Five of them are Fenian tales. The



remaining five are of the hero tale variety. Their presentation is in the order of Gaelic text preceded by its English translation. Attendant notes at the book's back pages provide scholarly clarification on each story's more obscure details. Included are such explanations as meanings for rare words, character background, mythological significance, localisms in pronunciation and comparisons to story settings gathered from other areas of the Highlands.

The late nineteenth-century collection of Gaelic stories by the Reverend James MacDougall, and others, formed the vanguard of interest in recording the Highlands' folklore and oral literature for posterity. Their actions were forward looking at a time when social and educational changes, promulgated by an English school system, were hastening retraction of the Gaels' traditional aesthetics - especially in mainland environs. It is worth considering, however, that the currency of long tales as popular Gaelic entertainment did not end entirely at the turn of the twentieth century.Storytelling continued in the Hebrides - with counterparts in Cape Breton - to the years preceding the Second World War: a survival that has made it possible to record stories over multiple genres with modern-recording devices to the present.

Exemplars recorded of Nova Scotia's Gaelic storytelling in the late twentieth century have appeared in *Am Bràighe* magazine (and this publication) along with three excellent books S*geul gu Latha, Luirgean Eachainn Nìll* and *Na Beanntaichean Gorma.*

Whither the future of Gaelic storytelling as a medium of cultural expression is difficult to predict. As Nova Scotia progresses in Gaelic language renewal and cultural restoration, the place for storytelling, along with song, music and dance should seem evident. In addition to transcribed stories appearing in publications, modern technology renders the tradition accessible on-line to listeners at sites like Scotland's *Tobar an Dualchais* project *http://www.tobarandualchais.co.uk* and Nova Scotia's *Sruth nan Gàidheal http://gaelstream.stfx.ca,* where the voices of storytellers at their craft can be heard.

Gaelic Folk and Hero Tales is evocative of the *céilidh* house - and other impromptu locations - serving as a hall of letters where nonreading artists delivered their stories to critical audiences informed in their native literature: the salient point being that illiteracy and unlettered are not same in meaning. The introduction to *Sgeulachadan Gàidhlig á Earraghàidheil /Gaelic Folk and Hero Tales from Argylshire* was written by Alfred Nutt, English folklorist and Celticist (1856 - 1910). His estimation of the book's tales, written more than a hundred years ago, continues to ring a pertinent note, "To the student and lover of folklore, be his interest, his aims, what they are, volumes such as these, which present trustworthy material, are the first requisite. But indeed their interest is not confined to the folklorist. I venture to think that no lover of the speech and fancy of the Gael can afford to overlook these tales."

The reading public can be grateful to Sìol Enterprises for its commitment to keeping these stories in circulation.

Seumas Watson is the Highland Village's manager of interpretation.

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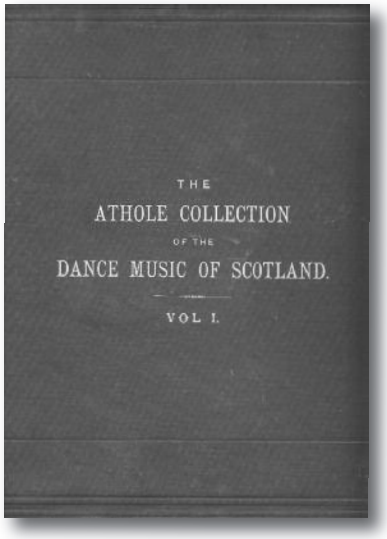
High Road To Linton

Seumas Watson & Pauline MacLean



The High Road to Linton is certainly one of the most recognized reels played in Cape Breton's Scotch music corpus. A small village in the Scottish Borders, Linton was historically an active centre through which passed the drove trade in cattle coming down from the Highlands. The on-line website Fiddlers Companion *http://www.ibiblio.org/fiddlers/HIGH.htm* points out that the tune is claimed to have been composed by a native Linton resident, one James Dickson (1827-1908). Settings are reported in Robert MacIntosh's *A Third Book of Sixty-Eight New Reels and Strathspeys*, Edinburgh (1796), and in McLashan's collection published in 1798.

A Lowland Scot's air, The High Road to Linton is sung in a number of Gaelic mouth tune versions with varying words. Perhaps the better know of these are the oft printed *Bodachan a' Mhìrein* and *Dòmhnall Beag an t-Siùcair*. An Irish setting, sung in English, is titled Kitty Got a Clinking Coming from the Races. The following Gaelic Cape Breton variant was recorded from the recitation of Boisdale resident Joe Peter MacLean who learned it from his father Charles *(Teàrlach mac Eòis `ic Pheadair `ic Theàrlaich `ic Coinnich)* a Gaelic style fiddler who didn't read music. Remarking on learning tunes from his father at home Joe Peter said,

"O, seann phort math a bh'ann co dhiubh - Bodachan a' Mhìrein. Bhiodh m'athair a' cantail... `S e a bhiodh aige..."

"Oh it was a good old tune anyway, *Bodachan a' Mhìrein*. My father used to say...he sang it like this...."

Am bodach a mhill Anna,
mhill Anna, mhill Anna,
Bodach a mhill Anna,
bhiodh e air an daoraich x2

Am bhiodh e air an dealanaich,
an dealanaich, an dealanaich
Bhiodh air an dealanaich `s
barrachd air an daoraich x2

The old man spoiled by Anna,
spoiled by Anna, spoiled by Anna
The old man spoiled by Anna,
he would get drunk x2

He would be on the moonshine,
the moonshine, the moonshine
He would be on the moonshine a
nd get even drunker" x2

"Sin mar a bha e aige-san."
"That's the way he had it."

The MacLeans, from MacAdam's Lake (*Locha Màiri Eamainn*), are of South Uist descent, tracing their family line back to *Coinneach* (Kenneth) - in Joe Peter's patronymic, who arrived in Cape Breton in the early nineteenth century with son *Teàrlach* (Charles) and others of the family. Their district of origin was Frobost.

A similar setting, collected from an Agnes Currie, North Boisdale, South Uist, is reported by Margaret Fay Shaw in her book *Folksongs and Folklore of South Uist* (pg. 182.) Notation here for The High Road to Linton is taken from *The Athole Collection of The Dance Music of Scotland*. It can also be found in several other books which are part of the Highland Village's Joe MacLean Collection.

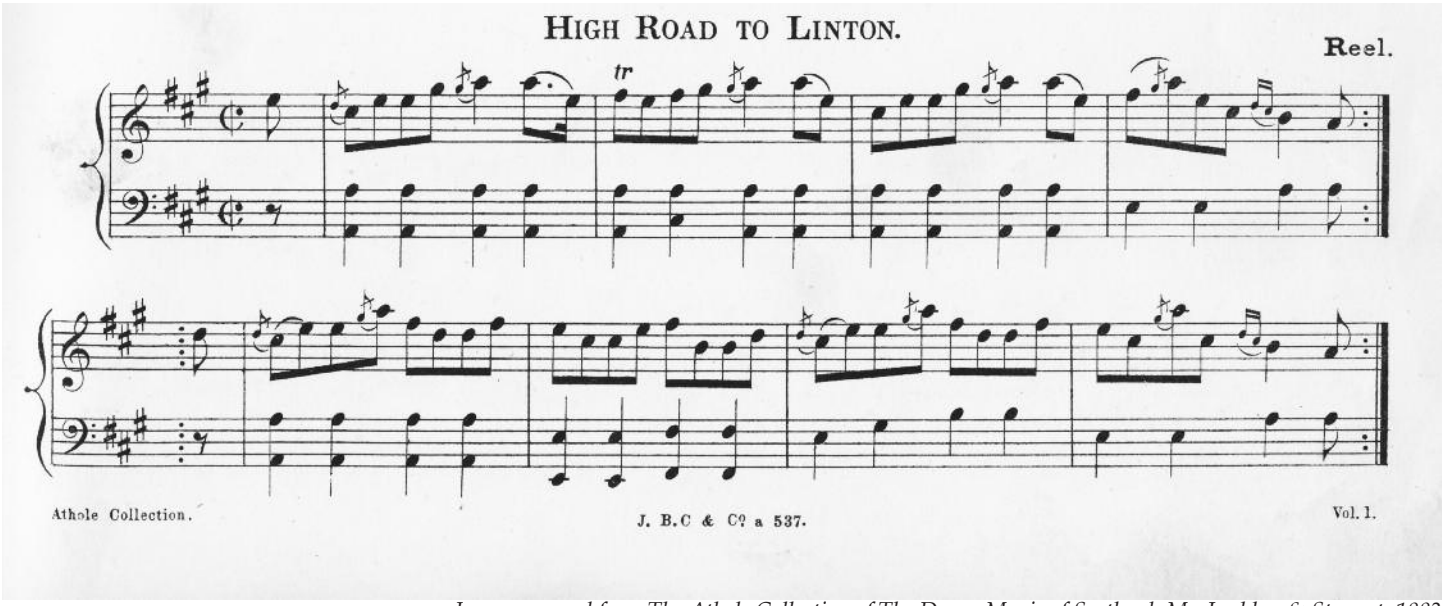


Image scanned from The Athole Collection of The Dance Music of Scotland. MacLachlan & Stewart, 1883

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Tapadh leibh-se gu mór
The Nova Scotia Highland Village Society gratefully acknowledges the support of many individuals and organisations:

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Artefacts & Archival Donations
John MacKinnon per Peter Jack MacLean, Claudette Chaisson, Geneva Landry & Carol Law.

Congratulations
-To Hon. Rodney MacDonald on his appointment as the CEO of the Gaelic College.
-To Tracey Dares-MacNeil on her appointment as the director of education and programming at the Gaelic College.
-To Gaelic tradition bearer Theresa Burke on her 90th birthday.
-To Lewis MacKinnon executive director, Office of Gaelic Affairs, who was named Poet Laureate for the Royal Scottish Mod.
-To board member Hector MacNeil for his appointment as Gaelic teacher at Sgoil Mhic Fhraing a' Chaolais/Rankin School of the Narrows.
-To board member Walter MacNeil and Florence on their 50th Wedding Anniversary.
-To Highland Village volunteer and former board member Pat Bates and Patricia Fricker on their marraige.

Sympathies
-To families of Highland Village friends who have passed away in the past several months: Ellen "Dan Rory" MacNeil Kathleen MacLean, Murdock MacNeil, Neil MacLennan, Kaye "Caddie" MacNeil, Michael "Shorty" MacNeil.
- To Cynthia and Hoss MacKenzie on the passing of her mother, Constance Brooks.
-To Rhonda Walker (Nova Scotia Museum, Director of Sites) on the passing of her brother Rev. Joseph Walker. Our hearts go out to all their families for their loss.

We would like to thank our students for all their hard work over the summer months and we wish them much success with their future endvours.
Pictured left to right: Laura MacNeil, Rachel Redshaw, Katie MacDougall and Rachael MacNeil.

Kate Langhorne a student at the University of Aberdeen in Scotland traveled to Cape Breton to conduct research for her upcoming thesis.

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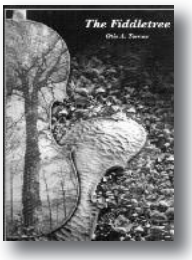

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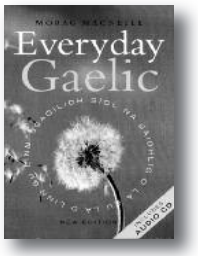

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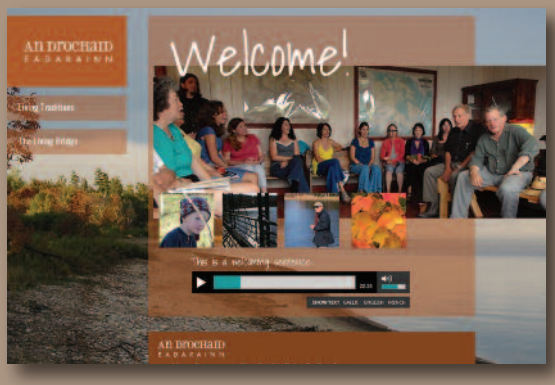

Coming Soon !!

This is a conceptual design mockup of the forthcoming An Drochaid Eadarainn website, currently being developed by Patrick Foster Design.

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A multimedia exhibit on the our Gaelic culture
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Anull Thar nan Eilean
From Island to Island

From the Island of Barra to the Island of Cape Breton, we tell the story of the Barra immigrants leaving Scotland and their life in Cape Breton. Part of the Virtual Museum of Canada's Community Memories Program.
www.virtualmuseum.ca

Cainnt mo Mhàthar
My Mother's Tongue

Unique audio and video recordings of Nova Scotian tradition bearers for Gaelic learners. Features clips from Highland Village's *Nòs is Fonn* and *Mar bu Nòs* Collections.
A project of *Comhairle na Gàidhlig*
www.cainntmomhathar.com

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Highland Village Museum
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