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From the Director’s Desk
Rodney Chaisson

Welcome to a newly freshened publication from the Nova Scotia Highland Village Society. We have a new name accompanied with content and design enhancements. An Rubha will pick up where Na Cuidheachd a’ Chlachain left off in 2002 with news on the activities of the Society and articles inspired by Gaelic cultural heritage in Nova Scotia. An Rubha means “the point” in reference to the physical location of our site on H’Ector’s Point (Rubha Eachainn).

This is our first publication in four years. For that I apologise. Since the Winter 2001/2002 issue of Na Cuidheachd a’ Chlachain, the last one published, we have been immersed in an ambitious program of strategic planning and change. This has involved a reorganization of staffing, significant site development activities, substantial interpretive and cultural programming development, and more. In all of that activity, our semi-annual publication got lost.

With An Rubha, we are renewing our commitment to producing a quality publication highlighting Gaelic heritage and updating our members on activities of the Society. This publication will be produced twice a year. An editorial team has been established internally to aid with the publication process.

Our inaugural issue of An Rubha sets the tone for what we hope to be the future of this publication - seansas and other examples of intangible culture from Nova Scotia’s Gaelic heritage; research and articles prepared by staff; contributions from internationally acknowledged researchers and academics; new initiatives and activities regarding Gaelic renewal in Nova Scotia (internationally); update on Highland Village news; a photo album, and more.

I hope you enjoy An Rubha, its content and format. We are very interested in your feedback. Submissions are also welcomed. See page 3 for all of our contact information.

The past few years have been busy yet rewarding for the Society. In 2000, we entered into a new relationship with the Province of Nova Scotia, the Nova Scotia Museum, for the operation of the Highland Village. This new relationship and status, has provided the operation with many new opportunities that did not exist previously. It has provided us with a direct increase in financial resources (increase in budget) as well as indirect access to other perks (joint marketing, oil & postage prices, computers, truck, and other resources).

In addition to a renewed commitment to our operation, the Province of Nova Scotia has also acknowledged the importance of Gaelic language and culture in Nova Scotia, and has begun making investments in its reconstruction. A Gaelic affairs office has been established in Mabou. The Gaelic Activities Fund is a $100,000 a year funding program for community groups was set up. A formal agreement was signed between the Province of Nova Scotia and the Highland Council of Scotland to work on mutually beneficial projects, an objective of which is Gaelic language development. There are other initiatives as well.

The Highland Village is working hard with other community groups, individuals, institutions and government on the reconstruction of Gaelic language and culture. Our involvement is not only a critical part of our mandate, it enables us to give back to our community, as well as ensure that cultural resources exist in the future. Finlay MacEod’s Total Immersion Plus (TIP) methodology presents the Gaelic community with a vehicle for language growth (p16).

Our renewed commitment to Gaelic language and culture is evident on site. Scheduled dailchins, increased language skills and usage, more storytelling and song sessions, special events and programs with enhanced language and cultural content are all working towards our interpretive goals and vision for the museum. These representations and presentations will increase considerably over the next few years with new investments in skit development, and research on traditional crafts and other aspects of Gaelic life. This work is being aided by tourism development monies from the NS Department of Tourism, Culture & Heritage.

Significant energies have also been focused on improving the material representation on site. The addition of the former farmyard to our site, and the acquisition of the Cash carding machinery (p 9) have expanded not only the tangible presence of Gaelic life on our site, they also present us with exciting potential for programming and interpretation. In addition, we have also been undertaking research to improve the representation of material culture in each of our period buildings.

The Highland Village has come a long way in the past few years. We are beginning to see returns for our hard work and determination. As the tourism sector and the rural economy experiences significant change over the next few years, the Village is better positioned to adapt and grow. We will be more connected with our community. We will be better able to meet the needs of the experience seeking visitor. There’s still a lot of work to do. We are up to the challenge.

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

The vision of the Highland Village Museum/An Clachan Gaidhealach 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 Gaidhealach is to be a living history museum, 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 Gaidhealach is a part of the Nova Scotia Museum Family (Nova Scotia’s Provincial Museums), Department of Tourism, Culture & Heritage. The Nova Scotia Highland Village Society operates the site on behalf of the Province.

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

Over the past few years we have lost many friends; our last remaining founder, Fr. Alex A. Ross, great supporters and Gaelic tradition bearers such as Mary Margaret Mactaggart (who served on our board for many years), Johnny Wiliams of Melford, and many others. All of these individuals were important to the Gaelic culture and to the Highland Village. We miss all of them.

Two years ago, this past November, we were hit particularly hard with the sudden passing of our then President Brian Hussey. Brian was a wonderful supporter of the Highland Village, of its vision, its staff, and its potential for growth and celebration of Gaelic language and culture. At his memorial service, Jim St. Clair, former board member and a past president of the Society, read a tribute he prepared. He has given us permission to include it to share. Brian has left us a tribute he prepared. He has given us permission to include it to share. Brian has left us.

This issue of An Rubha is dedicated to Brian and the many friends we have lost over the past few years.

A Tribute to Brian Hussey
Faith, Hope & Love Abide

In each of our hearts, there is an image of Brian - a personal and emotion-stirring one - whether we are wife and best friend or children or mother or close relatives or co-workers or participants in activities or friends. That image may be summed up with Brian the Sailor in our mind, the sailor with all the attributes of a person skillfully guiding a boat - weather it be an actual sailboat or a piece of electronic equipment or a discussion about policy or a social gathering or a time of learning (recently in Gaelic and Museum Studies) - his hand on the tiller is steady. Faith he had in the goodness of life - in the belief in prayer (and he did receive unexpectedly the answer to his) - in the trust that things could be worked out - in his faith in the vision of justice voiced by the United Church - in his confidence that change could occur through discussion or medical services or indeed through laughter and comradeship - the faith he had that his work as "party-line" organizer helped Cape Breton be a stronger and more unified place.

The faith led to hope - hope in his marriage with Janet - that it would be a deep and real bonding - and it was - that hope that blossomed in our midst, those of us on the Highland Village Board where the romance began; and where he delighted as well in the good relationships between people.

The hope so evident in him that the lives of his sons would be full and happy - and we all hope that.

So it is that we all grew in our presence with him as we realized that he was not only a skillful master of a ship, but also a caring and insightful member of a crew, who tried to see the good in all - the hopeful possibilities. He led too often by example rather than by ego or personal ambition. We enjoyed the light touch that he brought to difficult times - and he for instance delighted in the suggestion of staff at the Highland Village that a bit of rope braided would do for a time for his lost hair.

Faith - and hope - and love - thus, we loved him - his gentle ways - his cheerful greeting - his interest in the future - we loved his confidence that life on Cape Breton would improve for all - that his health would be better - his confidence that the Malagwatch Church would indeed move across his beloved Bras d’Or Lakes. We rejoiced in his capacity to include all in his life - the young singers and musicians - love grew around him - as a particular blessing to us all in his and Janet’s love which made us all happy - and we can only continue to say to one another that love never dies - and that nothing separates us from the love of God.

“Faith - hope - love - these three abide and the greatest of these is love” - “blest be the ties that bind our hearts - the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above. When we are called to part, it gives us inward pain, but we shall still be joined in heart and hope to meet again.

Home now is the sailor, home from the sea and safe from the storms of life.

Brian - we love you - beannadh leat agus soraidh leat. Soraidh leat agus beannadh leat. Amen.
The Bull’s Complaint: A Cape Breton Flyting
Seamus Watson

The following introductory text and song, Òran an Tairbh (The Bull’s Song), is reported here as written in the Stephen Angus Beaton’s Gaelic song collection (available in the Highland Village library). The gist of the story is the rough reaction of a bull to his being yoked to work on a farm in M’ull River, Inverness County. The bull, called Cameron Croft, is sent to another farm in the Christmas Island district. In the Gaelic tradition of flyting, the composer of the first song, Dan S. MacDonald, is responded to by a Christmas Island bard, Hughie MacKenzie.

Song composed by Dan S. MacDonald (M’aramach), M’ull River for the bull they had over there called “Cameron Croft.” He turned on Dan S. one day and nearly killed him. Joe, Dan’s brother, would be trying to work the bull. He (the bull) was not used to that kind of yoke and didn’t work very good. He was shipped over to Christmas Island, and someone over there made a song in reply. S.J. MacInnon was the agricultural man at the time (Stephen Angus Beaton manuscript.)

Òran an Tairbh
le Dòmhnall S. MacDhomhnaill

’S ann a thuirt Èosaph ni athair Feuch an t’oir thu dhomh seoladh Chan eil mi eòlach air an achfuinn Bhith ’ga cuir air an t-sèbors’ ud Nuir air d’èibheas mi “haw” ris Nì e tònnadh ’nam coinnemh ’S nuair a chuairan mas “woh” ris Nì e stòireadh do’n choille ’S cha dean e stad

(Joseph said to his father “Try and put me on the right track. I’m not familiar with the gear used for that kind (of beast). When I holler haw to him, he turns to face me and when I call whoa he makes for the woods and won’t stop.”)

Thuirth athair ’s e fregairt Dean a’ thòigh bh’ac’ n’Albainn ’S cha roh mirean dheth cearbach Cuir bogha m’innseach Agus braideach ’s dealg ann Ceangail daingean an t-earball Is an sin, leig air falbh e ’S mò bheannachd leis

(His father replied, “Do it the way it was done in Scotland and it worked without fault. Put a yoke around his neck with a collar and pin. Tie the tail securely and then let him go to it. He has my blessing.”

’S e an tarbh ghabh an tana’ait ’S e cho mòr as a bharaill Nuir a chunnac e’n airmise ’S na cabraichean cama Bha mi eòlach ’s a’ mhòr-roinn ’S iomadach ait ann ’s na dh’fhàn mi Leòd do threo galais neònach Cha deachaidh riabh chuir air m’amhaich ’S mi Cameron Croft

(That was the insulted bull, and he so conciliated, when he saw the equipment and the crooked poles. (He said), “I’ve lived in many places around the province, and the like of this plowing harness was never put around my neck. I am Cameron Croft.”)

* “Mile marbhaisg do’n t-saoghal ’S ann rud tha daonnan an dàn dhùinn Bha mi eòlach air uaisle ’S na h-uile h-àite ’s na thàmh mi O’n a thànaig mi ’n taobh seo Do’n chrò ri cúl Mhàbou Cha ghabh iad riam ach mo dhiol ’S iad ‘g a m’ riasladh le Gàidhlig Aig fear mu seach.

("Curse the world and our inescapable fate. I knew the gentry wherever I lived. Since coming the way to a pen in back of Mabou, I’m only tolerated and tortured with Gaelic by one man after another.)

* “Ach, ochoin mar a thachair Gura truagh mar a dh’eirich Bha mi eòlach an Kentville Bhithinn tric air na fèilltean ’S bhiodh luchd nan ad bhìbhir Daonnan sìobhalta, réidh rium ’S mun chaill mi na h-adhaircean Bha na mnathan orm spèisil ’S a h-uile neach.

("Woe as it happened and pitiful the circumstances. It was well known in Kentville where I often attended the fairs. People wearing beaver hats were civil to me and, before my horns were shorn, women treated me with affection as did everyone.”)

* "Ach le beannachd an fhortain Ni ’n t-àite seo fhàghail Chan eil ann ach a’ bhochdain Agus mòran droch càradh Thèid mi d’fhéilean na Nollaig Bheir iad ann mi na carbad Ach tha Mac Fhionghuinn a’ nochdadh Gu bhèil stoc gu math Gàidhlig ann O mo chràich.

("If blessed by fortune, I will leave this place. There is nothing here but poverty and ill repair. I’ll go to Christmas Island. They will take mi there in a vehicle, but MacKinnon says there are good Highland folk there. Oh, my ruination.”)

[Final three verses from Susan Norwood manuscript and printed in Bàrdachd á Albainn Nuaidh edited by C.I.N. Mac ad, ed.]

The words for Hughie’s song in response, Òran An Tairbh, is edited from a transcription by the late John Joe MacKenzie (Tainaidh Eairdsigh Dhomhnaill Bhig), Rear Christmas Island. In noting the song, John Joe describes Cameron Croft as addressing his circumstances from his new home in Christmas Island parish.

In the year 1935, the farmers in the area of Benacadie, Highlands and Rear Christmas Island grouped together and organized an “Agricultural Society.” Their first project was the purchase of a purebred bull. Hearing that a Mr. M’aconald in Mabou had a registered Guernsey for sale, a couple of the boys went over and made a purchase. M’aconald told them not to trust the animal, as he had attacked him one day he hitched him to the harrows.

Before they left, he sang a song for them which he composed in defamation of the animal. He challenged anyone in Christmas Island Parish to compose a better one. This was the inspiration for this song, a copy of which appeared in the Antigonish Casket at that time. (Mac’alla nan Cùl manuscript)

Òran an Tairbh
le Eoghan MacCocinnich

Guma slàn leis na fearaibh Thug mi thairis às Mabou ’S e mo dhùrachd dhaibh sonas A bhí miail gu brach riuth’ Gun robh mise fo churam Mi ri bùraich ’s a’ rainich Ann an toiseach an Dùdacha ’S mi ‘n nam chùban ‘s an bhàthach Am measg nan cearc

(Farewell to the men who brought me over from Mabou. I wish them eternal happiness. I was in dire straits at the beginning of December, kicking (?) and bellowing and crouched in the byre among the hens.)
New Rounder Records titles feature Cape Breton Fiddle Masters

Two recent Rounder label recordings to check out by those with a taste for older styles of Cape Breton fiddling have been made from the playing of Joe Peter MacLean (Eòs Thèarlaich Eòis, Boisdale, Cape Breton County and Alex Francis Mackay (Alastair Aonghais Iain), Kingsville, Inverness County. MacLean and Mackay are Gaelic speaking fiddlers versed in the music of Cape Breton's Scottish community since childhood and exceptional in their depth of repertoire. Mackay is accompanied by Queensville via Washabuck piano player Gordon (Lighthouse) MacLean, who also appears with Joe Peter MacLean along with Paul Wukitsch and Janet Cameron. The CDs are titled Back of Boisdale (MacLean) and Gaelic in the Bow (MacKay).

Rounder Records is an independent label with a history of insightful traditional recordings since its founding by three folk music advocates in 1970. Its home base is Cambridge, Massachusetts. The company, now with a catalog of titles exceeding 3,000, remains active in the field and is currently working in cooperation with the Library of Congress to reissue the series Folk Music of the United States. Originally initiated in 1942, the series recordings were made available to the public from the Library's Archive of Folk Culture.

Back of Boisdale and Gaelic in the Bow include extensive biographical information on both fiddlers in addition to tune selections. CDs should be available at usual outlets (including the Highland Village Gift Shop) and the Rounder catalog can be accessed on-line at www.rounder.com.

(I am now as I would wish to be. I got warm quarters and proper justice, with no word of punishment, or abusive talk. Although I am only thin, it is my present opinion that before spring comes Cameron Croft will be comely in appearance.)

**[Note: Fionnladh Eadhainn Fhionnlaidh, (MacGill'Fhinnein) Beataig](MacCoinnich), airneo Fionnladh (MaGill'Fhinn-ein) Beataig]

Translations by Seumas Watson.
Eadarain; a Rona Lightfoot recording

A Review by Jim Watson

South Uist’s storehouse of Gaelic culture has produced notable exponents far out of proportion to its population. Cape Breton’s relationship to this island of musicians, poets, singers and storytellers goes back to Highland emigration, and many Nova Scotia families can trace descent to Uist Gaelic crossings the Atlantic in the early nineteenth century. Reputedly, the first Gaelic song composed in Cape Breton was made by South Uist man M’ideal Mor (MacDonald) who praised judi’s natural bounty by the shores of Northumberland Strait in 1775. Lately, Cape Breton fiddlers and step-dancers have participated as instructors at the annual South Uist Gaelic music event Ceòlas. Among those tutoring in the 2005 Ceòlas program was Rona Lightfoot whose music and songs are rooted in her native South Uist, but not unfamiliar to Cape Breton Island.

It often happens in the world of Gaelic culture that individuals who are quietly respected in every day circles don’t seek commercial popularity. These are the kind of artists that seldom surface as performers with box office currency, although they might be in the position of doyen to their junior contemporaries. Rona Lightfoot could be described as such a person, culturally influential, but perhaps less well known to the larger public. The CD production titled Eadarainn is comprised of vocal selections giving samplers of Rona’s own depth of musical tradition and a wide range of Gaelic songs’ usages in cultural expression. These include songs for piping and dandling, humorous songs, and songs brought her family to refer to posed by a 17th century Clan Ranald Piper.

Among those tutoring in the 2005 Ceòlas program was Rona Lightfoot whose music and songs are rooted in her native South Uist, but not unfamiliar to Cape Breton Island. It is helpful to consider her family as Uist natives in the former territory of Clan Ranald’s sphere of Gaelic influence. Rona’s mother was Kate MacDonald (née Campbell), perhaps better known as Bean Eairdsidh Raghnaill, an outstanding Gaelic singer and key informant for the School of Scottish Studies. (See Tocher, issue 27.) Kate was born into a household at Garryheline in 1897 where she was immersed in the songs, music and stories of an island prodigious in its Gaelic culture.

Rona Lightfoot’s maternal grandmother, M’or Campbell, spoke little English and is reported to have been an extraordinary Gaelic singer in all ways and a considerable source for Kate’s own song repertoire. (The authority of M’or on the meanings of obscure Gaelic words in songs brought her family to refer to her as “The Dictionary.” She died at the age of 102.) Kate MacDonald’s maternal aunt, Catriona Campbell, also contributed significantly to the songs she knew. Of course there were others, from whom songs were learned in the company of the day. On Kate’s maternal side again, her uncle was Angus Maclean, well known South Uist storyteller whose autobiography Saoghal an Treibhaidhe, recorded and edited by John Lorne Campbell, was published in Gaelic (1972) and stands as a Scottish Gaelic classic in the genre of Ireland’s An t-Oileáinadh by Tomás Ó Críomhthainn. As well as singing, Kate Macdonald’s childhood was filled with music. Her father, Neil Campbell, and brother Angus were both pipers. At the age of 29, Kate became the wife of another piper, Archie MacDonald (Eairdisidh Raghnaill 1c Ruairidh 1c Raghnaill), and was henceforth identified socially by her husband’s abbreviated patronymic. They had a family of four boys and three girls.

Two of them, Neil and Rona, were noted for their piping. Rona was described by the late Dr. Donald Archie MacDonald as “... probably the finest woman piper Scotland has ever produced.”

The only surprise about Rona Lightfoot’s CD Eadarainn is that more of her piping and song representations haven’t appeared in an extended recording format prior to now. Her repertoire is about generational transmission. At present, there are fewer and fewer performers of Gaelic music and song who could call on the deep well of home and family tradition in a similar way. Eadarainn contains fourteen tracks of piping and singing. The cuts selected give the CD a book like quality through their variety and singing. The cuts selected give the CD a book like quality through their variety and singing. The cuts selected give the CD a book like quality through their variety and singing. The cuts selected give the CD a book like quality through their variety and singing. The cuts selected give the CD a book like quality through their variety and singing.

The CD’s seventh cut offers a lament for an unidentified MacDonald, likely learned from Rona’s mother Bean Eairdisidh Raghnaill. (It is reported in the School of Scottish Studies publication Tocher, issue 27.) Ile Bhain, track 8, is a dandling song for an infant who has yet to walk. It begins with the line, “Ile Bhain, Bhid Do Larm a h-Uile M’aghdean. (Fair-haired lad you’ll have your hands on every girl.)” Tha M’o Bhreasa F liuch fo’n Dile is familiar to all who’ve ever attended a Cape Breton milling frolic. Rona’s air is a dead-ringer for that of late Inverness County singer, Seannaidh Aonghais Bhig (Johnny W/illiams) and an excellent reminder that being a vocalist does not mean that one can sing Gaelic songs.

Cut 11 from Eadarainn gives us purit a beul, two reels, Ruidhealadh Cailleach ris a’ Bhialg and Eadarainn Mòr Ruadh followed by the piobrach Cùmha Alasdair (12) and “Ial, Ial” ars a’ Chailleach (13), another potent a’ beul set in reel time and learned by Rona from her mother. The concluding track (14) is a set of jigs played on the Highland pipes.

It is clear that Eadarainn has been a careful production concerned for Rona Lightfoot’s understanding of standards for Gaelic presentations. Underlying the CD from beginning to end is a sense that this material is communal property. Its delivery is direct without affectation, or pretensions. These qualities are enhanced by Rona’s own stamp in approaching songs and making music as the rare person who plays an instrument and also sings. Piping here is reminiscent of older styles of Cape Breton fiddling, played without haste and with a strong idiosyncratic flavor.

Musical arrangements are supportive of the far greater importance of voice and the song being sung. Back up musicians and vocalists are some of Gaeldom’s best. Appearing on Eadarainn are Dèidhr Graham, daraish, lain Macdonald, whistle and flute, Carol-Anne MacKay, accordion, Allan Henderson, fiddle and piano and M’aghread Stewart and Annag MacInnis as backup singers. The liner notes for Eadarainn are informative and of high quality, reporting in both Gaelic and English. The list of acknowledgments is also impressive with a special thanks to Rena Maclean, widow of Alasdair Maclean (brother to Calum and Sorley) who was the first to record Bean Eairdisidh Raghnaill in 1951.
Cash’s Carding Mill
Vicki Quimby

“People would bring their wool and they had a machine that would card it, and the wool comes out in rolls. Makes it easy for the women who were doing the spinning.”

(Hilda MacDonald, Cape Breton’s Magazine, No. 12, pg.15)

For most of the 19th century, the making of cloth and clothing was a necessary and time-consuming task for women of rural Cape Breton families. Most of the work was done in the home with hand tools such as carders, spinning wheels, spindles, and looms.

The process of carding was essential. Before wool can be spun into yarn for knitting or weaving cloth, it must be carded, that is made into rolls (rolagan) in preparation for spinning. Hand carders were wooden paddles with metal teeth embedded in leather. The wool was brushed out between the metal teeth, a small bit at a time, and as the combing progressed, was transferred from one carder to the other until the fibres were thoroughly aligned. The direction of the carders was then reversed and a roll was “doffed off,” that is, slipped off the carder. These were motions that were repeated over and over until there were finally enough rolls for spinning.

As the century progressed, so did the advent of machinery into rural industry. Gristmills, sawmills, and horse-drawn mowers saved hours of back-breaking labour needed for grinding, sawing, or cutting hay. Carding mills, too, could save a family much effort. A mill could produce as many rolls in one hour as a woman could in one day using hand carders. These rolls were more even in thickness than any made by hand, allowing them to be spun up much more quickly.

The census of 1851 shows that 6 weaving and carding mills were operating in various parts of the island. One of the more well-known of this period was Glendyer Mills near Mabou, where dyeing and fulling services were available as well as the carding. By 1891, there were 21 carding and fulling mills in operation in Cape Breton. One of these was Cash’s carding mill in Irish Cove. These mills were largely water-powered and were often combined with other types of mills, such as sawmills, gristmills, or shingle mills.

A carding machine, developed from a 1748 patent, and changing little since 1773, consists of several rotating drums of different sizes. These are covered with a leather backing fitted with wire teeth, reminiscent of the material used in hand carders. As the wool passes through the machine, these cylinders grab the wool in one direction and release it in the other, the tangled fibres of wool becoming brushed and aligned.

This mill is made up of three separate parts. In the front is the picker. Its cylinder conceals a spike-toothed drum which fluffs and loosens the clean wool. The breaker cards make up the middle section of the mill. In this machine, the wool is transferred to the feed rolls which feed the wool to the tumbler and onto the main cylinder. The main cylinder carries the wool along to the smaller cylinders called workers and strippers. The wool is removed by the first worker and deposited back onto the main cylinder by the first stripper. Then the main cylinder passes it to the next worker and stripper, etc. This series of rollers operates in the same direction, but at different speeds due to larger and smaller diameters. Next, a fancy uses long bristles to fluff the wool up on the main cylinder so that a doffer can remove it and, finally, the comber takes the wool off the doffer.

The last section of the mill, the finishing cards, consists of essentially the same machinery, but with finer teeth. Also, batts for stuffing quilts could be produced instead of rolls.

Cash’s carding mill was purchased second hand in 1883 by Frank Cash, an Irish immigrant who settled in the community of Irish Cove, Cape Breton in the early 1800’s. He bought the machinery, manufactured by E. C. Cleveland in Worcester, Massachusetts, from a Mr. Chisholm in Loch Lomond, Cape Breton. It was originally powered by water, using a 21-foot-high man-made dam. Later, a gas-powered engine, called a one-lunger was added, to be used when the water supply was inadequate. Over time, the operation was expanded to include a shingle mill, sawmill and a gristmill.

Residents of the surrounding areas would send their wool to the mill by road and by boat. It had to arrive at the mill clean and washed and some people even dyed their wool before they sent it. Late summer and fall were the busiest times at the mill, when over a thousand pounds of wool was carded in a month. Each customer’s wool was carded separately and weighed at the end for pricing. In 1880 the price was 3 cents per pound; by 1900 it was 5 cents; and by 1933, 8 cents per pound.

Frank’s son, Tom, took over the carding business in 1921 and ran it until 1946. By this time, fewer families were spinning wool and there was little demand for the rolls. Thereafter, it was operated only occasionally for custom work.

Charlie Cash, Tom’s son, who worked the mill with his father, wanted the carding mill to be preserved and experienced by future generations. He has graciously donated it to the Highland Village.
Naidheachd a’ Chlachain - The Village News

The 2004 and 2005 seasons have seen the interpretive program successfully expand the Village’s material collection, daily site-animation, staff training and community outreach contributing to Gaelic renewal in Cape Breton and on the mainland.

Material and animation additions include the acquisition of Soay sheep, a primitive domestic animal associated with the black house, and the initiation of “Barvas ware” pottery making, also in context to Hebridian black houses. Significant larger projects were relocation of the Malaigawatch Church to the hill (see photo album on page 12) and setting into operational use, Charlie’s Carding Mill, generously donated by Charlie Cash of Middle Cape (see article by Vicki Quimby on page 9). An on-going activities schedule was also established with demonstrations of home crafts and cultural representations featured daily.

Notably on the side of staff training and community outreach is the success and spread of interest in a new immersion pedagogy introduced to Nova Scotia by Scotland’s Finlay MacLeod, Chief Executive of CNSA, the Gaeltacht Preschool Council in Scotland. McLcLeod has developed a teaching methodology called Total Immersion Plus (TIP) for adult learners of Gaelic. The approach is a stress-free and confidence-building language learning program based on the co-ordination of speech and action. McLcLeod claims TIP can bring children or adults to a functional level of Gaelic conversation in 200 hours. For more on TIP see article on pages 16 & 17.

Finlay visited Nova Scotia for two weeks at the invitation of the Highland Village Museum in the fall of 2004. He instructed a one-week training course for fluent speakers of Gaelic who wish to become TIP teachers. He also visited the homes of parents who speak Gaelic to their children or who would like their children to hear more Gaelic in the home. Returning in the spring of 2005, McLcLeod ran an extended trainers’ course in Grass Cove for two weeks. With Gaelic Activities Program Assistance, Jeff Mac Donald, Kingsville, was subsequently placed on staff for the 2005 season and conducted daily classes integrating staff training, and site interpretation through Gaelic. Instruction for the public was also offered free of charge.

Highland Village was pleased to welcome new interpretive staff members over the past two years. Ailean MacLellan joined costumed guide staff in summer of 2004. She brings with her pottery skills, initiating the barvas ware interpretation, and is currently researching the Highland basket making tradition. Catherin Gilliss came on board in the summer of 2005 as an excellent addition to animation staffing with a flair for acting in skits portraying traditional Gaelic folklore. Joanne MacIntyre joined the staff as Chief Interpreter in 2005. Joanne, a Gaelic learner, singer and step dancer has brought multi-tasking skills to her position while creating an on-going activities schedule with demonstrations of home crafts and cultural representations featured daily. All three have gone a long way to contribute to living interpretation at the Highland Village.

The presence of Gaelic language and culture at the core of Highland Village animation continues to develop measurably. The availability of Jeff Mac Donald to train staff in Gaelic language skills while assisting with interpretation points has been a considerable help. Many of this year’s student staff are keen to learn Gaelic and come with step-dancing skills. Three of the student staff had completed the annual Eilean nan Òg program. The twice weekly afternoon ceilidh sessions were a favorite of visitors again and were very well attended. Sessions introduce Gaelic storytelling, song and dancing at the Mac Donald House and gave visitors and opportunity to socialize in a Gaelic cultural environment.

Scottish summer student Claire Wastle, from Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, has returned to the site for a second year through the Memorandum of Understanding with the Highland Council and the Province of Nova Scotia. Claire and her eight-year-old son Robb were assets on site animation and human resource development. Both speak Gaelic fluently and nicely profile the language while communicating as they work in costume around the site. They served as interpreters and tutors, with Claire helping regular staff members and Robb assisting in each of the Lathain Sona programs for children. They also contributed to Highland Village community outreach in Christmas Island as cultural resource people at the weekly Fèis an Eilean Gaelic Camp for Children.

Research and off the site by Vicki Quimby has produced good results with much information acquired on the subject of the Gaels’ customs and methods in producing cloth. Vicki’s research has also resulted in discovering other references which will be helpful in interpreting aspects of material culture with a view towards future exhibits. Her research was the foun-

Dr. John Gibson, Guggenheim recipient speaks on the Cape Breton piping tradition
Highland Village celebrated the reprinting of An t-Òranaiche The Gaelic Songster by Truman Mactheson with a book launch and Gaelic song session. An extensive collection of popular Gaelic songs well known to Gaels on both sides of the Atlantic, An t-Òranaiche was collated and first published by Archibald Sinclair, Glasgow, Scotland in 1879. The book became a valued reference work for many households in Scottish Nova Scotia and well worn copies of the original remain in use to the present. Mactheson and his collaborators are to be congratulated for making An t-Òranaiche once again widely available to the public. Copies are available at the Highland Village gift shop.

Finally, Highland Village welcomed Amber Bondy, a Museum Management and Curatorship intern for a term of fifteen weeks. Amber completed a post-graduate certification course with Sir Sandford Fleming College, Peterborough, Ontario. Her focus of expertise is exhibit creation. She demonstrated exceptional competence in designing orientation panels for the visitor centre foyer.

The bi-lingual panels are divided into three themes: Highland History and Emigration, Settlement in Nova Scotia and Maintaining Nova Scotia’s Gaelic Heritage. The exhibit is an excellent addition to the Village’s interpretive capacity. Complementing guidelines contained in the Cole and Kennedy Report 2003, it provides visitors with a general introduction to Gaelic Nova Scotia and the themes they will encounter while touring the hill.

Amber also created an information board for the forge explaining the central aspect of ironwork to rural life among Gaels while bringing attention to the work of Village ironworker John Macdonald. We are grateful for her contributions.

The initiative of all staff committees, and individual employees should be cited for exceptional commitment to the interpretation of Gaelic life at Highland Village. Their suggestions have been innovative and numerous.

Interpretive programming for 2004 - 2005 has been well in keeping with projections based on Sàth’s Iomairt: A Five Year Action Plan for Gaelic Development 2001 - 2006. Highland Village’s objective to become a living-history museum of “acknowledged excellence” is advancing as we continue to concentrate on the storyline that distinguishes this museum from others in the province while contributing to its cultural community.
In the fall of 2003, the Highland Village undertook its most ambitious project ever; the relocation and restoration of the former Malagawatch United Church (Malagawatch Union Presbyterian Church 1874-1925). The project captured local, national and international headlines. The 2000 sq. ft. church was moved 2 km by road in Malagawatch, 14 nautical miles across the Bras d’Or Lakes to Iona, and then 1.5 km by road to the Highland Village site. Once on site, the Highland Village began the process of restoration. The church officially opened to the public in July 2004. Since then it has been used for site interpretation, services, weddings, concerts and other presentations. The Society thanks the River & Lakeside Pastoral Charge for donating the building. The project was financed by Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation, Donner Canadian Foundation, Municipality of Victoria County and many individual donations. Special thanks to Walter MacNeil, who chaired the process, Les MacIntyre for ensuring a safe move, Guy MacLean for bringing the Donner Canadian Foundation on board, Wayne MacIntosh for funding advice, Jimmy & Donna MacNeil for the wreath that guided the church on its journey, and many others. A plaque has been placed in the church foyer with the names of all those involved in the process.

Photos:
(1) Malagawatch Church, from Clara Dennis collection, Nova Scotia Archives & Records Management, no date.
(2) Malagawatch United Church, summer 2002.
(3) Leaving original site in Malagawatch.
(4) Coming round the bend in Malagawatch to meet the barge.
(5) Being loaded on the barge.
(6) Sailing in the River Denys Basin.

All photos by Rodney Chaisson unless otherwise noted.
Photos:
(7) Docked in Iona next to St. Columba Church.
(8) Docked at the Iona wharf.
(9) Disembarking in Iona.
(10) Travelling up Highway 223 to Highland Village.
(11) New home at Highland Village Museum.
(12) Moving to its new foundation.
Highland Village was very pleased to host Dr. Seósamh Watson with wife Dr. Vivian Hick and daughters, Rhonwyn and Rhiannon for the third annual Joe Neil MacNeil Memorial Lecture in the summer of 2004.

Watson is no stranger to Cape Breton having conducted surveys of Gaelic dialects on the island complementing similar work he has done in Ireland and Scotland. His academic interests include folklore and Gaelic storytelling. As a fluent speaker of Irish and Scottish Gaelic, Dr. Watson has collected and published in both dialects for academic journals and field related publications.

He has worked extensively to record the folklore of the Bluestacks Mountains in south County Donegal, where he established a major collection of Irish Gaelic singing as practiced in her area. In addition to his work in Ireland and Cape Breton, Seósamh Watson recorded many of the last Gaelic speaking folk in Scotland’s Black Isle and Easter Ross region.

Watson’s presentation theme was the Celtic Spirit in Gaelic Literature through readings and lecture, he examined expressions of Celtic culture in Gaelic literature and explored the influences of Celtic society on literary figures writing in their native languages.

The following was recorded by Seósamh Watson from the recitation of the late John Allan Beaton (Iain Ailean mac Iain ‘ic Ragnhail) of Broad Cove Marsh, Inverness County in July, 1983. The story explains the making of a reel known as Am M uileann Dubh, or The Devil’s Mills in English.

Iain Ailean Beaton: ... Ann an Gàidhlig ... ’s e M uileann Dubh a’ Logadair. A gus an naídheachd a bh’air a’ phorth ... an t-sàinn bhon a thug ‘ad ... An rud a thug oir’ an t-sàinn se a thoirirt air, M uileann D uibh a’ Logadair.

Bha fear aiseò ’s e bha e slack. N uil’s a gheamhradh a th’ainn, ’s chaithd e dhùrrraith an t-sàgairt. A gus start e air n-às lèis an t-sàgairt. A gus bha a’ fear eile, cha robh mòran uain a’ig airson a bhith bhéab agus bha e airson cabhag d’héannach.

A gus bha a’ sagart a bhao site agus a’ fear eile, bha ’ad uainhasach measail air ceol, meid gèbaidh ac’ air ceol. A gus bha ’ad a’ dol seachad air an Bhàidheann a bhao site dh’fhàirich ‘ad port cho sìck’ s a dh’fhàirich ‘ad riamh. O, bha am port, bha e cho sìck’ s cha ... cha ghabhadh ... cha ghabhadh gun stad ‘ad dh’eàiseachd ris. Bha ’ad a’ fèitheadh ris a’ phort ‘s a’ fèitheadh ri ... gu’n tigeadh am port gu ceann. ’S cha robh am port a’ tighinn gu ceann no croiach.


T hog ’ad rithe ’s dur a rànaig ’ad, bha ’ad am moch. Bha an .... fear a bhao ’ad ’ dol a choimhead air, bha e marbh. ’S dh’ionnsaich ’ad a’ chumail air ceol. ’S e Devil’s Mills a th’ac’ air ann an Beurla. ’Se Muileann Dubh an Logadair a bh’air ann an Gàidhlig.

Seósamh Watson: Gu dé am facail mu dheireadh?

An Muileann Dubh continued...

M uileann Dubh an Logadair a bh' ac' air a... bh'ac' air a' phort. Ga b' de a... tha seansa guru ga b'e cailt' a' rohb ... cailt' a' rohb am muileann, ach sin an naidheachd a bh'ac' air a' phort, co-diù agus... s e D'Evil's M ill's a th'ac' air a' phort ann a'm Bèurla.

Translation
The Black M ill: Story and Tune

John Allan Beaton: In Gaedic it's called M uileann Dubh a' Logadair. T his is the story behind the tune ... the name they gave it ... what made them call it M uileann Dubh a' Logadair.

T here was this fellow and he was pretty sick. It was over around wintertime and he (another fellow) went to get the priest and he started back with him. T he other fellow didn't have much time to live, so this fellow wanted to make haste. T he priest and this fellow were very fond of music, terribly fond of music.

A nd they were going by this mill and they heard as nice a tune as they had ever heard. O h, it was so slick. You couldn't but to listen to it. T hey waited and waited for the tune to an end, but, well, there was no conclusion or ending to it.

A t last the priest said to the other fellow, "G et going, W e'll be late for the sick man. T ha't's the devil there and he's trying to keep us back. G et going! W e can't be listening to the tune." A nd they took off.

A nd when they arrived, they were late. T he fellow they were going to see was dead. A nd they learned the tune that night and that's the tune. I n E nglish it's called D'Evil's M ill's. M uileann Dubh a' Logadair was its name in Gaedic.

Seòsamh Watson: W hat was that last word?

John Allan Beaton: Likely that was the name of the ... where M uileann Dubh a' Logadair was. W hatever an Logadair was, I don't know. But M uileann Dubh a' Logadair was what they called the tune.

[ N ote in 'Logadair' we may have the corrup- tion of an original form, cf. the L ochaber placename, A chluacharach, in G ley Roy.]

A Port á Beul Setting For A m M uileann Dubh

A'deag dar:

Tha nead na circe fraoich anns a' mhuilean Dubh, 's a' mhuilean Dubh Tha nead na circe fraoich anns a' mhuilean Dubh as t'samhradh

Mar is lèir dhomh
Seumas Watson

T he N Os is F onn song collection project completed for Highland Village M useum by Shamus M acDonald has been a valuable addition to the museum's library resources. W hile the future of Gaedic singing as a social practice continues in popularity among small numbers of appreciative listeners and singers, the purpose and communal aspects of Gaedic singing are in danger of slipping from sight. H ighland Village and the public of interest can be grateful to the Iona Gaedic singers and the late Johnny W illiams for contributing their cultural skills, songs and perspectives on Gaedic singing to a recording project that can be accessed for reference by groups and individuals desiring to research, or maintain this non-performance stage tradition.

T he musicality of Nova Scotia's Gaedic culture, Cape Breton fiddling and step-dancing in particular has been acknowledged by international audiences for decades. M usicians exemplifying this special sound range in generations from Buddy M acA ster to A shley M acAsaac, household names who continue to play Cape Breton music around the world. T he province's Gaedic song tradition, is, or has been, represented by performers like M ary J ane Lamond, T he Barra M acNeil's and T he Rankin Family, who have also received their share of recognition. A lthough some would distinguish song, music and dance as separate enterprises, these expressions of Gaedic culture have existed as integrated entities in Scottish communities to the present. T he performers mentioned above, among many others, have all been directly influenced by experiencing the Gaels' shared music, dance and song in their own homes or Cape Breton communities.

"Scotch" music's instrumental side continues to show strength and is publically evident.

However, styles of communal singing, in keeping with retraction of the Gaedic l anguage, have been reduced to a handful of proponents who naturally perform the art as they learned it in their formative years. I n districts where there have been distinct regional singing styles and singers, such as Framboise, the North Shore, I ona, Christmas Island and South W est M argaree - little remains today except for the I ona Gaedic singers.

Communal singing in the Gaedic context refers to people gathered together for the purpose of sharing songs. T hese songs are of several types, perhaps now the most usual of which are work songs which were sung while cloth from the loom was milled by hand to full it. O ther genres include sailing songs, laments, elegies, love songs, satires and songs of comedy often locally composed. T he singing of songs communally is a practice originating with H ighland immigrants who settled in N ova Scotia during the early to mid-nineteenth century.

A s a tool for cultural development, it is important that this vehicle of artistic expression and highly social form of song presentation remains a vibrant part of modern Gaedic N ova Scotia. T o this end, H ighland V illage has compiled sound recording of the repertoires of the Iona Gaedic Singers and Inverness County singer Seonaidh Aonghais Bhig. C ritera for selecting these singers was based on their song corpuses which are, perhaps, the most extant remaining in N ova Scotia.

A s a museum focused on interpreting Gaedic N ova Scotia through the language and culture of the Gaels, we are inspired by their good will and commitment to Cape Breton's unaccompanied song tradition. - Seumas Watson

First turn

(The moor hen's nest is in the black mill, the black mill, the black mill. The moor hen's nest is in the black mill at summer time.)

An darna car:

Tha 'm muileann dubh air thurraban, tha 'm muileann dubh air thurraban 's a' togaird dol a dhannsa

Second turn:

(Th e black mill is pitching, the black mill is pitching and eager for dancing.)
T otal Immersion Plus teacher training and presentation series was co-ordinated by the Highland Village Museum and the Gaelic College. Financial support for the initiative was provided by the co-operating institutions and the Culture Division of Nova Scotia Tourism, Culture and Heritage through the Gaelic Activities Program.

Finlay MacLeod, Director of Comhairle nan Sgoiltean Àraich (The Gaelic Pre-school Council CNSA), in conjunction with the staff of CNSA, has developed an innovative immersion program for adult Gaelic learners. CNSA is a Gaelic educational organization that has been in the van guard of establishing Gaelic medium pre-schools throughout Scotland since the 1970s.

The CNSA adult course, titled Total Immersion Plus (TIP), is based on the principles of Total Physical Response, conceived by Dr. James Asher. Adaptations of Dr. Asher’s pedagogy are now in use internationally, with notable success documented among the indigenous peoples of Hawaii and New Zealand. In view of the Scottish demand for fluent adults in multiple social roles, CNSA’s vision is to leave the learning environment for children in Gaelic medium schools by giving them more opportunities to hear parents and elders speaking Gaelic in non-institutional settings like the home.

As a method that places an onus on using language in natural surroundings, Total Immersion Plus holds promise as an effective course offering for adult Gaelic learners in Nova Scotia. Responding to inquiries from Highland Village in the spring of 2004, CNSA director Finlay MacLeod expressed a generous interest in visiting Nova Scotia to demonstrate the methodology and train Gaelic instructors in its techniques and applications. Highland Village Museum and the Gaelic College took this opportunity to initiate an inaugural project to compliment their respective mandates for advancing the province’s Gaelic language and culture.

**Total Immersion Plus: A New Approach to Teaching Adults Gaelic From CNSA**

Comhairle nan Sgoiltean Àraich (CNSA) is an independent organization dedicated to teaching and preserving the Gaelic language. Established with four playgroups in 1982, its initial focus was on pre-school education through the medium of Gaelic. Today, CNSA offers early Gaelic education in 120 playgroup settings serving more than 2,000 children and has become an international resource for parents and schools engaged in Gaelic language development.

To meet the growing need for adult Gaelic speakers in Scotland, CNSA has created the Total Immersion Plus program to bring adults to fluency as quickly as possible. The program is designed to accommodate parents, educators, linguists and mature learners. It also features comfortable incorporation of older Gaelic speakers as resources for its curriculum. In this way community based Gaelic speakers can become part of the TIP learning experience and develop contributing skill sets that can be on-going.

The Total Immersion Plus methodology contains two components: 1) teacher training, 2) adult immersion programming.

The environment for TIP classes is a natural one, and if possible a home setting is preferred. Through the course’s methods, language is taught without the aid of written...
materials, nor is note taking, or reading allowed. The pedagogical premise is to synthesize the early experiences of childhood during which language is acquired effortlessly through exposure.

CNSA objectives for its approach to Gaelic immersion for adults are as follows:

1. To take adult students to a Gaelic conversational level within a 200 hour time span or less. The underlying rhythm of the whole learning course is that language acquisition occurs speedily.
2. To develop adult language of the home and community, so as to enable students to converse in Gaelic naturally and easily with their children, other members of their family and the wider community.

Week One Teachers' Training Course, Grass Cove, Cape Breton (29/11 - 3/12)

Week one, the first phase of TIP teacher training, was presented to trainers by CNSA Director Finlay MacLeod from November 23rd to December 3rd. Sessions were held in the private home of Jean and Duncan MacNeil of Grass Cove, Victoria County, Nova Scotia. Daily orientations ran from 9:30 AM - 4:30 PM. Instruction was entirely through the medium of Gaelic. Sixteen individuals representing adult educators, public school teachers and language learners were present for Total Immersion Plus training.

The MacNeil home provided an excellent and natural environment for TIP training. Sessions were divided between a finished basement area, modeled as a recreation area with sewing room and laundry, and the main floor of the house, which included a kitchen and living room.

From Day one, the tone was set for Gaelic immersion training as Finlay MacLeod declared the entire MacNeil household as a Gaelic only place. The one exception was the living room space, designated as the “English Room”, where students were briefed on session content and allowed periodic opportunities to speak English.

Week-long sessions consisted of orientation on the pedagogical principles of Total Immersion Plus, detailed explanation of CNSA handbooks for use by instructors and demonstrations of the actions and language of the methodology. Learners assisted in the presentation of lessons prepared by trainee tutors as students receiving instruction.

Week Two: Presentations and Information Sessions (4/12 - 10/12)

Week two of Finlay MacLeod’s working visit to Nova Scotia was spent delivering a series of presentations on topics related to adult immersion planning and developing Gaelic pre-schools. Sessions were well attended with over one hundred and forty participants turning out to hear Finlay MacLeod speak on language learning programs and methodologies for adults and children.

Some general results arising from this initiative are as follows:

* Introduction of an innovative language training program for adult Gaelic learners to Nova Scotia.

* Advancement of human resource development goals through acquiring new approaches to teaching adults Gaelic in a community setting.

* Provision of cultural outreach to interested community members concerned with Gaelic language renewal in Cape Breton. These included public school teachers, parents, potential Gaelic teachers, organizational members and the general public.

* Increased institutional liaison with individuals, organizations and institutions within Nova Scotia and Scotland pursuing Gaelic development.

* Significant image building for Gaelic language through media coverage of Total Immersion Plus Nova Scotia and in Nova Scotia Tourism, Culture & Heritage.

TIP Phase Two and Follow-up

Teacher training for Total Immersion Plus encompassed two weeks of orientation. The final segment of teacher training phase one, held on December 5th, was a group session conducted in English and inclusive of learners and tutor trainees. Feedback was very positive, and participants agreed unanimously that TIP was an excellent approach to Gaelic language teaching with potential for effectively increasing the number of Gaelic speakers in Nova Scotia.

Subsequent to the introduction of TIP teacher training in the fall of 2004, Finlay MacLeod returned to Nova Scotia and conducted two additional weeks of training in Iona in April 2005. This session was sponsored by Comhairle na Gàidhlig with assistance from the Gaelic Activities Program of Nova Scotia and Nova Scotia Tourism, Culture & Heritage.

The success of this new language teaching method has been demonstrated by well attended classes in Glendale, Christmas Island, Little Narrows, Baddeck, Sydney, Iona and St. Ains.

The fall of 2005, brought MacLeod once again to Halifax for an additional two weeks of teacher training on the mainland of Nova Scotia. This was followed with a strategic planning session in Port Hawkesbury to formally organize the future for Gaelic language teaching in Nova Scotia through the TIP methodology.
Nòs is Fonn: Song Recording Project
Shamus M aCd onalld

The following account is a brief review of work completed at the Highland Village M museum/An Cladhán Gàidhealach, aimed at recording a sampling of the Gaelic song repertoire and communal singing style maintained in central Cape Breton. An index of all the songs and song fragments which have been collected is also included. The project was titled Nòs is Fonn and funded by the Province of Nova Scotia under the aegis of the Gaelic Activities Program.

As a group, singers in the Iona and Christmas Island region draw on a rich Gaelic song tradition once found throughout much of northern Nova Scotia. Today however, they also represent the best remaining native-born examples of this tradition generally and as a distinctive regional style in particular. Over the course of nine informal gatherings held at the Highland Village during the spring of 2005, seven singers were recorded. All of these individuals have a long-standing dedication to the song traditions of the area and are well versed in its cultural heritage. Contributors were:

* Johnny Gillis: (Jamesville) Iain mac Ruairidh Nìll Iain Bòin
* Peter Maclean: (Reef Christmas Island) Peadar a’ch Phheadair mac Calum Ghòbo
* Jamie M aCd onalld: (Boisdale) Seumas Iain Shumas D’homhnall Òig Iain Ruairidh
* M aCd onalld: (Highland H III) Calum mac D’homhnall Aonghais Iain Aonghais Òg
* Mickey M aCd onalld: (Jamesville) Mìcheal Eòn Chaluim Shumas Mòr
* Rod C. M aCd onalld: (Barra G len) Ruairidh Iain Shumas D’homhnall Òig Iain Ruairidh
* Jim Watson: (Highland Village M anager of Interpretation) Seumas mac Shumas Shumas
* Johnny Williams: (M aCd onalld) Seannaidh Aonghais Bòin, nàd maireann

A total of seventy songs was recorded from the above singers. While many songs are not complete, they supply sufficient melodies and sample verses to be considered ample for our purpose. Numerous song fragments were also recalled during our meetings. On a number of occasions more complete versions of these songs were recovered in subsequent recording sessions after singers were encouraged to think about missing verses at home. Of the fourteen song fragments presently included in this collection, it is likely more complete versions could be recovered with additional time and research.

Although many of the songs represented in this collection are well-known throughout Gaelic Nova Scotia, various local compositions are also included. Several of these are of high quality and were praised by the singers, including two laments; Cumhach do D’homhnall Mac hionghain (composed by N Iel M aCd onalld - Níoll M ór - H ighland H III) and Cumha do Mìcheal Murphy (composed by Donald M aCd onalld - D’homhnall Bharra - Red Point).

Of special interest to the collection are a number of songs which are ascribed to members of Scotland’s bardic elite such as John M Maclean (Iain mac Ailein) and Duncan MacIntyre (D’unadh Bàn). These include Bithibh Eutrom ‘Stoight Fonn, Òran Seachd Sàileige and Hór Gùn Togaimid Hùgan Fhathast. It is also significant to note those songs which are specifically associated with the musical tradition of Barra: Annag a Ghaol, Haoil o and ‘S Mòd an Dhìugh Gun d’Rinn mi Glusad are good examples. As the Iona and Christmas Island region was settled primarily by emigrants from this island, and because in-migration subsequent to settlement has been negligible, the song corpus in the area continues to display a connection to Barra despite generations of separation, a fact reflected in John Lorne Campbell’s Songs Rembered in Exile.

The informal approach taken to recording encouraged informants to fall into the well-established routine of a house visit where so many aspects of oral culture were historically transmitted. As a result, a broad range of topics were discussed and are reflected in the recordings. Historical information regarding the song-singing tradition in the central Cape Breton area and its social contexts are well represented and add considerably to the value of research. Wherever possible we have also recovered the patronymics of local tradition-bearers, singers and bard who have passed away. Discussions about the local practice of jigging tunes and singing part-á-bail have also been recorded, with two full examples: Dhomhnall Beag an t-Suidair and Calum Crudhaidh. Finally, background information on the composition of a number of songs inspired by local topics, including Mìcheal Lurad (composed by Mòlcom Gillis - Calum Eòghain - South West Margaeres) and Gearrán nam Mìighdòn (composed by Hughie M aCd onalld - Eòghain mac A’irdidh Shumas - Rear Christmas Island) adds considerably to the interest of the collection as a whole.

Although research was specifically concerned with songs, a great deal of local history and folklore was recorded as were many stories. Consequently, this study is far more reflective of the traditional oral culture of the Iona and Christmas Island area than one might expect for a song collection. Moreover, the quality of information we received on several topics also shows the potential for further recording aimed at other aspects of the oral tradition.

Though our research aimed to elicit information on the historical context of the singing tradition in central Cape Breton, setting this in a larger culture framework was equally important to our study. To that end, accounts of early pipers and fiddlers - and their links - are featured in the Nòs is Fonn collection, as is information about dancers and fighting at dances. A discussion about local traveling people from the first half of the twentieth century has been recorded as well.

During research, informants supplied a number of Gaelic expressions and proverbs, various important calendar customs, including those associated with New Year’s Eve (Oidhche Challain) and All Souls’ Day (Latha nam Mòbh). Information about local superstitions and popular beliefs was recorded, together with a taboo connected with the water in which eggs are boiled; the root of the following expression recalled by Joe Neil MacNeil (Eòs Nìll Òg) in Sgual gu Latha, ‘S ann orra chaidh uisge nàr uighean bhò fhaer liath gu leannabh; T’th egg-water came down on them from the white-haired man to the infant.

A number of interesting accounts of active divination, the evil eye and a remedy for the evil eye (silver water, usge airtgdir) have been recorded as well. As we might expect, stories about forerunners and the second-sight were readily supplied by informants, along with many humorous anecdotes, testifying to the continued vitality of these forms of entertainment among Gaelic speakers. Accompanying the above, we have also collected a number of traditional Gaelic folktales including Biorachan Beag agus Biorachan Mòr, Caileach nan Còb and Di Luain, Di M’ Mòr.

Though by no means exhaustive, this collection provides a good overview of the Gaelic song tradition and oral culture of central Cape Breton at the beginning of the 21st century.

Shamus M aCd onalld, Halifax, holds a Master’s degree in Scottish Studies from the University of Edinburgh. His full report and recordings of the Nòs is Fonn project are available through the Highland Village Library. Funding for the project was provided by the Gaelic Activities Program through the Culture Division of the Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage.
1. Óran na Stàrr

Singer: Peter M ad, ean (Peadar) ad Phaedain mac Calum Ghabhra, R éir Christmas Island

Hillean ó hillean ó
Hillean ó hillean ó
Fàl lí le s’ na hò rò
Gu dé ni mi mur faigh mi thu
(What will I do if I can’t have you.)

Gum bidh cuimh’n’ agam gu bràth
Air a’ bhiadh’n’ a thuair mi ‘Starr
Chà robh ban-sgoilear ‘s an àit
Nach dug a làmh ‘ s a’ ghealladh dhomh
(I’ll never forget the year I got the Starr. There wasn’t a school mistress around who didn’t give me her hand and promise.)

Clann Choinnich ‘ s na cnuic ud shuas
Bhid iad a’ fochaid orm ‘ s gach uair
Gu tric a thug mi ‘ad mun cuairt
Le truas anns a’ Phontiac
(The MacKenzies up there from yonder hills
went to pieces on mi. The Indian deserted
me. The Indian deserted)

Gura h-ann feasgar anmoch Di luain
Chaidh mi dh’hi’th e Chaluim Ruaidh*
A dh’iarraidh dà chaor’ ‘s uan
Chaidh mi dh’àite Chaluim Ruaidh*
(On the way to Fair John’s Mountain, the car
went to pieces on mi. The Indian deserted
and wouldn’t give me a helping hand.)

2. Mo Nìghen Donn Bù Laghach Thu

Singer: Johnny Williams (Seonaidh Aonghais Bhig), M dford

Mo nighean donn bù laghach thu
Cho fads a bhuaidh mi dhut
Mo nighean donn bù laghach thu
Cho fads a bhuaidh mi dhut
(*goideadh)

Gu trì saigh na mara dhut
Cho b’ann air na sràidean
Mo nighean donn nam blàth-shùil
A dh’àraich ‘ad òig thu
(My brother Mick deserted me. He jumped
out on the hill. The rosary beads were rat-
tling as he said them in repentance.)

Mo nighean donn a’ chuailiein
Gur h-òg a thug mi luaidh dhut
Cha doir ‘ad idir bhuam thu
Mo nighean donn nam blàth-shùil
(Mo nighean donn a’ chuailiein
Gur h-òg a thug mi luaidh dhut
Cha doir ‘ad idir bhuam thu
(A dh’àraich ‘ad òig thu
(Gur h-òg a thug mi luaidh dhut
Cha doir ‘ad idir bhuam thu
(You were never criticized behind your back
and always lighthearted. You got that man-
ner from your mother who reared you as a child.)

Mo nighean donn nam blàth-shùil
‘S òg a thug mi gràdh dhut
Cha b’ann air na sràidean
Chaidh t’arach a ‘s òige
(Mo nighean donn nam blàth-shùil
‘S òg a thug mi gràdh dhut
Cha b’ann air na sràidean
Chaidh t’arach a ‘s òige
(You got that man-ner from your mother who reared you as a child.)

Mo nighean donn nam blàth-shùil
A bheireadh sìod ort m’ fhàgail (?)
Mo nighean donn nam blàth-shùil
A bheireadh sìod ort m’ fhàgail (?)
(Your talk, mother, has left me this way (?).
(Your talk, mother, has left me this way (?).
(Do not be ashamed Mary. You are lovely.)

Chaidh t’arach a ‘s òige
Mo nighean donn nam blàth-shùil
A bheireadh sìod ort m’ fhàgail (?)
Mo nighean donn nam blàth-shùil
A bheireadh sìod ort m’ fhàgail (?)
(Do not be ashamed Mary. You are lovely.)

Chaidh t’arach a ‘s òige
Mo nighean donn nam blàth-shùil
A bheireadh sìod ort m’ fhàgail (?)
Mo nighean donn nam blàth-shùil
A bheireadh sìod ort m’ fhàgail (?)
(Do not be ashamed Mary. You are lovely.)

Chaidh t’arach a ‘s òige
Mo nighean donn nam blàth-shùil
A bheireadh sìod ort m’ fhàgail (?)
Mo nighean donn nam blàth-shùil
A bheireadh sìod ort m’ fhàgail (?)
(Do not be ashamed Mary. You are lovely.)

Chaidh t’arach a ‘s òige
Mo nighean donn nam blàth-shùil
A bheireadh sìod ort m’ fhàgail (?)
Mo nighean donn nam blàth-shùil
A bheireadh sìod ort m’ fhàgail (?)
(Do not be ashamed Mary. You are lovely.)

Chaidh t’arach a ‘s òige
Mo nighean donn nam blàth-shùil
A bheireadh sìod ort m’ fhàgail (?)
Mo nighean donn nam blàth-shùil
A bheireadh sìod ort m’ fhàgail (?)
(Do not be ashamed Mary. You are lovely.)

Chaidh t’arach a ‘s òige
Mo nighean donn nam blàth-shùil
A bheireadh sìod ort m’ fhàgail (?)
Mo nighean donn nam blàth-shùil
A bheireadh sìod ort m’ fhàgail (?)
(Do not be ashamed Mary. You are lovely.)
The following piece came from the scrapbook of Mrs. Katie Bell (MacDougall), who lived in Boston but was originally from Lake Ainslie. It describes a trip on the Minniehaha, a boat used at Lake Ainslie during the latter part of the 1890s to the early 1900s. Though there is no date or author on the clipping, it seems to have been a very festive outing. The scrapbooks were loaned to the Lake Ainslie Historical Society by Myrtle MacDougall, a relative of Katie Bell.

The First Sailing of the Minniehaha

A most noteworthy event took place in the quiet vicinity yesterday when the Minniehaha ploughed, for the first time the beautiful waters of Lake Ainslie. While the bay and harbour, creeks and nooks of Cape Breton, in virtue of their position and commercial relation with the rest of the world were frequented from early years by the sail and steam of foreign countries, the crystal waters of Lake Ainslie were destined to remain blank until her own enterprising sons should honor and decorate her unvirgaled charms with such floating facilities and our less picturesque inlets so long and so luxuriously enjoyed. The industrious tillers of her soil have long and patiently awaited luxuriously enjoyed. The industrious tillers of her soil have long and patiently awaited luxuriously enjoyed. The industrious tillers of her soil have long and patiently awaited luxuriously enjoyed. The industrious tillers of her soil have long and patiently awaited luxuriously enjoyed. The industrious tillers of her soil have long and patiently awaited luxuriously enjoyed. The industrious tillers of her soil have long and patiently awaited the industrious tillers of her soil have long and patiently awaited the industrious tillers of her soil have long and patiently awaited the industrious tillers of her soil have long and patiently awaited

M. C. McGregor, father of the Rev. Donald McGregor, and the late lamented M. urdock. M. C. McGregor, a student for the ministry, who died before completion of his college years. From such reflection s one can see the truth of Byronís lines.

".....! On whose arbitrary wing
The varying hours must flag or fly,
W hose hardy winter, fleeting spring
But drag or drive us on to dye"

Returning from those melancholy sidelines into which we have unconsciously drifted, let me hit my text on the head- The first trip of the Minniehaha on Lake Ainslie was a rich and joyous feast of ..... fat things. Needless to say, that both gratitude and congratulations are justly due the McMillan Bros. For this enterprise, which will be a benefit to our business men, a support to the traveling public and a source of pleasure to tourists that come to enjoy the various sports and ..... Scenery of Lake Ainslie.

Yours truly,
(Author missing from newspaper article)

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The Highland Village wishes to thank our donors for their generous gifts of art facts and archival items (2002 to 2005).

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Ach an Cuan: Sabhal Mór O staig Student at Highland Village
Claire Wastle

under the auspices of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Nova Scotia and the Highland Council, Scotland, Highland Village was able to return Sabhal Mór Ostaig student Claire Wastle on-site as a costumed animator and community worker. Printed here bi-lingually is Claire’s final report on completing her term at Hector’s Point, Iona.

Aithisg mu dheireadh bho
Claire Wastle aig A’ Chlachan Ghàidhealach, Ceap Breatainn
25mh den Lunasdal 2005

Cha ghabh e creidinness gur e a-nàireach a bhios na là mu dheireadh againn aig A’ Chlachan. Dh’fhaith ann sheachdan deug seachad ann am prìobhachd na stàl. A-rithist, còrd ann uine a tha sinn air cur seachad ann am Ceap Breatainn rinn gus mòr – fàgaidh sin a’ tè is daoinn sònraichte fisinn.

A thaobh obair, tha mi a’ creidinness gun deach cùichean gè mhath. Bhà mi an sàs le mòran thachartais suas air a’ chnoc – ag obair sna tightheann, sa ghastradh, leis na beathaichean agus fiù s ‘còmhla ris a’ ghobha anns a’ cheàrdadh. A bharrachd air sin bhà mi an sàs am prìobhachd na cluinn ris an canndaidh iad Na Làithean Sona. Tha an prìobhachd seo ann am a-huile Dìcheidain, nuair a thuig clann dhan Chlachan airson là a chur seachad nar mèag. Am bhliadhna-sa, bhà mi gan toirt a-muigh dhan choille far an robh iad ag ionnsachadh cìmarr a bhà cùichean airson muinntir na h-inrichid mòr a réitidh iad Ceap Breatainn bhon Ghàidhealtaich còrr is dà chèud bhaidh air ais.

Shìos, far a’ chnuic, bhà mi ag obair air pròiseact còmhla ri Amber Bondy agus tha mi toilichte rádh gu bheil an taisbeannadach aice deiseil nis, a’ crochadh air a’ bhalla san ionadh fàiteachaidh is e a’ coinhead snog is fos-rachail. Cuideachd, bhà mi ag obair air oird a thug mi seachadh a-noir mun t-Sabhail Mòr agus ag ionnsachadh aig foigham ard-tre tro mheadhan na Ghàidhlig.

Am bhliadhna-sa, tha mi air a bhith a’ cheàrdadh Gàidhlig fada nas trice air le chudluth-obraich a’ Chlachain na bhà mi an uair fhèin. Thàinig piseach air mòran dhiubh on a obrach a Chlachain agus mhòran le luchd-mun chànan fhèin, mun oidhirp a tha air a bho. Tha mi fhìn a’ creidinness gur e obair air ais san t-Seann Dùthaich agus cùisean shabhaladh (an seo ann an Alba Nuadh agus mar sin. Tha mi fhìn a’ creidinness gur e obair fiòr chuidhromach a tha seo, airson cuid eòginn a bhith air a’ chnoc, a’ cur a’ chàthainair shùilean dha ‘nu luchd-tadhail, a’ bruìdhinn mun chàrann agus a’ fèigearnt nam cèithir ara. Chòrd seo ruim gu mòr agus thachair mi rì rò dhaoine inntinnreach.

Taobh a-muigh a’ Chlachain, bha mi a-null ann am Eilean na Nollaig gu tric far an robh mi ag obair le Féis an Eilean. A-rithist, bha mi gu sònraichte an sàs le prìobhachd na cluinn. An seo, bha mi a’ cheàrdadh Gàidhlig gu tric ’s mi a’ feuchann ri beagan Gàidhlig, abairtean feumail is faclan freagarrach, a theagsaich dhaibh. Chòrd seo ruim gu mòr. Rinns mi duilleagan spòrsail sa Ghàidhlig – wordsearch es msa – a’ b’ urrainn dhaibh cheàrdadh a-rithist ’s a-rithist.

Mar oileannach nam meadhon, bha mi gu math fortanach cottrom fhuaighinn a bhith a’ dol timcheall cómhla ri muinntir na Eilean Sìne Bean an Eilean airson na thàislean Sona. Tha mi theaghasg air an t-eòrpaich ùrinne, a thoirt do: Roinn na Ghàidhealaidh.

Dhunnaachaidh is Dunschadh MacNeill (Còbheach Fhèin), Ragnhild MacCoinnich is Sìne NicCoinnich (Mabou) agus Pat Bean Phheadair is Peadar MacNeill (Boisdale) aig a bh’ theaghasg a dh’ a bheil an taigh agus a dh’ a bheil air cuideachd a’ freachdach.

Mòran taing dhaibh uile!

Final Report from Claire Wastle at The Highland Village, Cape Breton
25 August 2005

It’s unbelievable that tomorrow will be our last day working at the Village. Eleven weeks went by so quickly. Once again, our time in Cape Breton has been happy, fruitful and very special.

With regards to work, things have gone very well. I have been involved in many activities on the Hill including working in the building, in the garden, with the animals and even with the blacksmith in the forge. As well as that, I have been involved with the regular Wednesday children’s programme when children come to spend the day on-site. This year I have been taking them out to the woods to teach them about the situation faced by emigrants when they arrived in Cape Breton from the Gàidhealtaich.

Off the Hill, I worked on a project with Amber Bondy and I’m happy to report that her exhibition is now hanging on the wall in the reception centre where continued on page 22...
Claire Wastle continued...
from page 21

it looks nice and is informative. I also
worked on a lecture that I gave last night
on Sabhal Mòr and studying at degree
level through the medium of Gaelic.

This year, I have used more Gaelic
with the Village staff than I did last year.
Many of them have benefited from the
new teaching method that is being used.
And I would also say that I have spent
an even greater amount of time this year
talking to visitors about Gaelic – the lan-
guage itself, the state of it and the current
trends in the language.

Away from the Village I again worked
with Fèis an Eilean over in Christmas
Island and was particularly involved
with their children’s programme where I
spoke to them about teaching a new
method that is being used.

Many of them have benefited from the
new teaching method that is being used.

I would like to take this opportunity
to thank: The Department of Tourism,
Culture and Heritage Nova Scotia, The
Highland Village, and Again!!

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

* Province of Nova Scotia - Departments
  of Tourism, Culture & Heritage,
  Transportation & Public Works, and
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Thanks also to all who donated artifacts
and archival material (see page 20), to
those who helped out at our many
fundraising events and programs, to
those attending our programs or visiting
our site, and everyone else who in some
way supported the Highland Village.

Volume 9 Number 1
The Nova Scotia Highland Village Society is incorporated as a non-profit Society under the Societies Act of the Province of Nova Scotia, and a registered charity with the Canada Revenue Agency. The Society is made up of a membership which elects the Board of Trustees (from their ranks) to operate the Society on their behalf. Members can attend meetings, elect the Board, sit on committees, receive and approve annual reports including audited financial statements, receive An Rubha (semi-annual newsletter), receive notices for events, and feel a sense of pride in contributing to Nova Scotia's Gaelic Culture. Membership is open to anyone.

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* Income tax receipts are issued for general memberships.

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OFFICIAL LAUNCH WINTER 2006

An Rubha

Nova Scotia Highland Village Society
4119 Highway/Rathad 223, Iona
Nova Scotia/Alba Nuadh B2C 1A3 Canada
Telephone/Guthan: (902) 725-2272
highlandvillage@gov.ns.ca
http://highlandvillage.museum.gov.ns.ca