

AN RUBHA

The Highland Village Gaelic Folklife Magazine

Vol. 13 No. 1

Eilean Mo Ghaoil

UNESCO - The Waters by Iona

An Rubha Photo Album

Loch Mór nam Barrach - Bras d'Or Lake

Naidheachd a' Chlachain

The Village News

An Gobhainn Sanntach/The Greedy Blacksmith

An Excerpt From MacTalla



Highland
Village
Museum
AN CLACHAN
GÀIDHEALACH

www.highlandvillage.ca



AN DROCHÀID EADARAINN



Tha An Drochaid Eadarainn stéidhichte air Stòras a' Bhaile: sgoil bheul-aithris air a cumail aig a' Chlachan Ghàidhealach gu bliadhna. 'Na làraich-lìn eadar-gnìomhail, tha An Drochaid Eadarainn a' cleachdadh teicneolais mar mhodh a lìonas beàrn far a bheil dualchas air tar-aisig o ghluin gu glùin a dhìth.

Gus dualchas Gàidhlig na h-Albann Nuaidh a chur an céill, tha An Drochaid Eadarainn a' tarraing air clàraidhean, air an tasgadh is `gan deanamh an là an-diugh, a chuireas air thaisbeanadh cultur Gàidhealach na Mór-roinn.

Air a' làraich-lìn seo, togar fianais air luchd na Gàidhlig tro an stòraidhean, òrain, ceòl is dannsa, dualchainnt, sloinntearachd, creideamh, nòs a' bhìdh agus leigheasan aig baile.

Thig luchd-tadhail còmhla cruinn mar chom-pàirtichean air An Drochaid Bheò, roinn cho-obrachail na làraich far am faod iad an cuid fhéin do dhualchas na h-Albann Nuaidh a riarachadh an cuideachd a chéile.

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

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



www.androchaid.ca



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John Phillip Rankin and our Clydesdale horse "Mira Jean" out for a walk. "Mira Jean" is owned by Dell Corbett, Grand Mira, CB. Destination Cape Breton photo.

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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ABAIRT/ SAYING

'S ann dha fhéin a nì an cat an cronan.
 The cat purrs only for itself.

Collected from: Curstaidh n' in Iain Fhionnlaidh/Mrs. Malcolm J MacNeil

From the Director's Desk COLLABORATIVE SUCCESS

Rodney Chaisson, Director



Welcome to the latest issue of *An Rubha*, our Highland Village Gaelic Folklife Magazine. *An Rubha* is both a communications and outreach vehicle for the Nova Scotia Highland Village Society. We not only share the latest initiatives and news from our Hector's Point hillside, we also feature materials and research from, and relevant to, the Gaelic Nova Scotia folk life story. We hope you enjoy this issue of *An Rubha*, and welcome your comments and suggestions for future editions.

This issue comes on the heels of the launch of our latest internet and Gaelic outreach project - *An Drochaid Eadarainn* (The Bridge Between Us). *An Drochaid Eadarainn* is an innovative, audiovisual online social space featuring living Gaelic Culture in Nova Scotia. Contents for the site are drawn directly from field recordings of traditions, customs, food ways and cultural expressions as found in the Province's Gaelic-speaking regions. The site aims to serve as an interactive portal emulating the social transmission of Gaelic language and culture through technology. The site is designed as the virtual iteration of Highland Village's annual *Stòras a' Bhaile* Gaelic folk life school. For more on the relevance and importance of this project to our mandate and Gaelic renewal efforts in Nova Scotia see Seumas Watson's piece on the next page. You can also check out *An Drochaid Eadarainn* for yourself at www.androchaid.ca.

An Drochaid Eadarainn is the result of a vision to help sustain the cultural environment and values that have defined the Gaelic Nova Scotia identity for the past two centuries. The process of moving the initiative from vision to completion involved the support and collaboration of many partners and individuals. We simply could not have taken on this complex project without their participation and investment. The project was undertaken in three phases: (a) original concept and vision (b) the prototype, and (c) the final product.

The Department of Canadian Heritage through its Canada Interactive Fund was the major funder for the final production phase of the project. Their investment covered a significant portion of the costs of producing the final site.

Gaelic Affairs, a division of the Nova Scotia Department of Communities, Culture & Heritage, provided financial support for all stages of the project from original concept development, to the prototype, the final site, and launch. Frances MacEachen of Gaelic Affairs sat on the steering committee and Executive Director Lewis MacKinnon championed the project to other stakeholders.

NSCAD University supported Marlene Ivey, Professor of Design, as project manager for the project as well as promotion of the initiative.

Nova Scotia CAP Association and the Nova Scotia Department of Economic & Rural Development - provided funding for the prototype phase of the project through the Broadband Nova Scotia Initiative.

The Municipality of Victoria County - financially supported development of the prototype and full website. Tom Wilson, Director of Recreation and Tourism served on the steering committee.

Fr. Charles Brewer Special Collections, Angus L. MacDonald Library, St. Francis Xavier University through its librarian Susan Cameron provided advisory services and served on the steering committee.

Acadian Affairs, a division of Communities, Culture & Heritage provided translation services for French content and navigation.

Other key contributors to the project included: Dr. John Shaw, Honourary Fellow, Celtic and Scottish Studies of the University of Edinburgh, in Scotland who was a research associate and member of the steering committee; Patrick Foster of Patrick Foster Design was the site designer and lead programming consultant; and Adam Shore of Shoreline Consulting was the lead programmer. Our research assistants under the coordination of Shay MacMullin - included Emily MacKinnon, Mary Jane Lamond, and Stacey MacLean.

The Gaelic community was very supportive of the project with the provision of content as well as supporting the research assistants carry out their work. Others providing content include Communications Nova Scotia, Cape Breton Folklore Collection, *Cape Breton's Magazine*, and many others.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the determination of four individuals without whom the project could not have happened: Seumas Watson and Marlene Ivey, who developed and nurtured the *An Drochaid* concept from its infancy; Shay MacMullin, our coordinating research assistant, who immersed herself in the gathering of content, and coordinated the collection of materials; and Highland Village staff member Katherine MacLeod, who spent countless hours organising and formatting the content for the site. All of these individuals have gone beyond the call of duty to ensure the quality and integrity of *An Drochaid Eadarainn*.

We are extremely proud of *An Drochaid Eadarainn* and the potential it has to support Gaelic learners and Gaelic language transmission in the province. ☺



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.



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



Communities, Culture and Heritage

Bòise nan Coimhearsachd, 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

AN DROCHÀID EADARAINN: FILLING THE TRANSMISSION VACUUM

Seumas Watson



For those unfamiliar with the *An Drochaid* project, its function is to provide an online portal for the purpose of transmitting representations of Nova Scotia Gaelic culture in immersion settings. *An Drochaid Eadarainn* is not designed to teach language, but, rather, to provide virtual experiences in Gaelic culture over a range of topics typical in their expression and art aesthetics. To best do that, although navigation is also available in English and French, the site is Gaelic in content and hence, immersive in delivery.

Following prototype development in 2010, the *An Drochaid Eadarainn* (The Bridge Between Us) website project concluded its first phase for public presentation in May during the province's 2012 Gaelic Awareness Month. That stage consisted of site construction, research and populating. Inspiration for *An Drochaid Eadarainn* was drawn from Highland Village Gaelic folklife school *Stòras a' Bhaile*, an annual event providing Nova Scotia's Gaelic learners with opportunities to socialise with each other, and Cape Breton Gaelic-speakers, over familiar, everyday activities and topics.

Co-ordinated by Nova Scotia Highland Village, project contributors were many. They included the Department of Canadian

Heritage, Nova Scotia Office of Gaelic Affairs, Father Charles Brewer Celtic Collection, Municipality of Victoria County, etc. To them, the project owes a debt of gratitude for their support, assistance and continuing encouragement.

An Drochaid Eadarainn is culturally rooted in Highland Village's mission to tell the Gaels' Nova Scotia story. Its design is dictated by the geography of the province's historical area of chain immigration from 19th century Gaelic Scotland. Settlement areas distinct in dialect, kinship systems and aspects of cultural representation are Inverness County, Central Cape Breton, St. Ann's Bay area, south eastern Cape Breton and the eastern counties of mainland Nova Scotia: Picotu, Antigonish and Giant's Lake in Guysborough. Designated categories of information cross-file regional variations, but also demonstrate customs universally held across the Gaelic-speaking areas of the province. Categories for each region are story telling, song, dance and music, traditional foods, home remedies and samples of dialect.

Beginning in the late eighteenth century, the story of the Nova Scotia Gaels' is one of diaspora and chain immigration. The signifi-

cance of *An Drochaid Eadarainn* lies in its capacity to introduce traditions of Gaelic culture, as known by region in Nova Scotia, recorded over previous and recent field work. The diversity of representations apparent in the site's sections are testimony to the breadth of variety that one might experience in districts settled from areas of Gaelic Scotland such as Lewis and Harris, the Uists, Barra, the Inner Hebrides, Lochaber, Morar, Moideart and Strath Glas. Harnessing the voices of Gaels past and present, *An Drochaid* is a bedrock of authenticity delivering as it does first person accounts of experiences typifying Gaelic Nova Scotia, serving as an unimpeachable resource for cultural reference, acquisition and research. As such, the site virtually fills the current transmission vacuum left by a previous generation that ceased speaking Gaelic to its offspring with loss of the language's cultural knowledge.

UNESCO estimates that more than half of the world's nearly seven thousand languages will have passed to extinction by the year 2100. As a globalized economy flattens the world's cultural contours, its technology may also have applications to the maintenance of diversity. For Gaelic Nova Scotia, *An Drochaid Eadarainn* holds the promise of these potential applications. ☺

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

Mar Chuimhneachan - Dedication

This issue of *An Rubha* is dedicated to the memory of three friends of the Highland Village and Gaelic Nova Scotia.



Ellen "Dan Rory" MacNeil was the first woman to serve as president of the Nova Scotia Highland Village Society - 1972/73.



Dr. Ken Nilsen: Professor and Chairman of the Celtic Studies Department, St. Francis Xavier University. Recorded speakers of Celtic languages in North America. Held Gaelic Chair at St. F.X. since 1984.



Tradition bearer Alex Francis MacKay, Kingsville, Inverness County fiddling master and Gaelic-speaker featured on CDs *Gaelic in the Bow* and *An Dachaidh dha Mo Shaoghal* (*My Life time Home*).

THE 2012 OFF-SEASON AT HECTOR'S POINT

By Seamus Watson

Winter and spring 2012 was a time for staff training, and preparation, leading up to the opening of Highland Village for visitation on June 1st. This year's off-season training took on new dimensions as animators, through research and group presentations, focused on developing individual characters for interpretation through role playing. As in other years, Gaelic language instruction formed a component of training. Staff training 2012

also included an introduction to internet research techniques given by board member and Celtic Collections Librarian Susan Cameron. Gaelic language sessions were led by Carmen MacArthur, and Mary Jane Lamond. Peter Pacey of Calathumpians Theatre Company provided expert guidance and tutoring for the role playing approach to site animation, and will continue to advise over the months to come.

This year's *Sgadan is Buntata* enjoyed another successful Gaelic Awareness Month with full bookings in schools around Cape Breton during the month of May. Begun in 2008, its format for presentation was reviewed and enhanced prior to going on the road this spring, with an increase of Gaelic folklore content such as song and dance.

On the social side of off-season community outreach, *Caidreabh na Tì* (pronounced *cach-ur-uv nuh tee*) gatherings took place on the first Tuesday of every month throughout the winter until May. These immersion sessions have proven to be popular, giving Gaelic-speakers an opportunity to meet with each other and share conversation.

June began special programming at the Village with Cash's Carding Mill Day. An agricultural event, the day featured operation of our carding mill and demonstrations of sheep shearing by wool expert Sarah Nettleton of St. Peter's area. Presentations on wool dyeing were conducted by staff member Vicki Quimby.

Special programming for 2012 again includes *Spòrs* (Fun) for children, *Na Làithean Sona* (Happy Days living history), twice a week *céilidhs*, and a weekly milling

frolic. Music and dance demonstrations are also planned, along with inauguration of the Alex Francis MacKay, Scotch Music series comprised of a lecture on traditional Gaelic fiddling, workshop on fiddling techniques and demonstration performance by Cape Breton exponents of this unique style of Gaelic music.

Afternoon *céilidh* and milling frolic sessions are again well received by visitors, delivering, as they do, intangible examples of Gaelic art expressions and social aesthetics. Sessions introducing Gaelic storytelling, song and dancing at the Centre Chimney House and Schoolhouse give visitors a special opportunity to socialize in a Gaelic cultural environment.

Research on and off the site by Vicki Quimby, Textile Researcher, continues to authenticate period costuming and inform on rural cloth production across our site's historical eras. Textile research is further being brought to bear in 2012 for costuming authentication in the eras leading up to the twentieth century. Village animation is complimented by the seamstress work of Debi MacNeil and a newly formed Cultural Material Committee.

Building on the success and partnerships of *Stòras*: Nova Scotia Gaelic Folklife School since the summer of 2008, *Stòras a' Bhaile* 2012 will take place over four days of immersion activities taking between the hill and tuning room. *Stòras* 2012 repeats with a sold out list of participants since April. Founded on the principal of language acquisition by social transmission, sessions include introduction to supporting technology through the digitized recordings online at *Sruth nan Gàidheal*, <http://gaelstream.stfx.ca>, and will introduce *An Drochaid Eadarainn*, www.androchaid.ca this season. Now extending to four days, this event grows in the interest shown annually. Suggestions are that the schedule be extended to a five day program and held on more than one occasion during the year. As a



Jim Bryden and David MacKenzie carding wool in Cash's Carding Mill.

program presented in an immersion format, the school's mission is to emphasize Nova Scotia's distinct cultural heritage in conjunction with Gaelic renewal efforts in the Province. Having the added benefit of informing on-site interpretation, *Stòras* 2012 is co-operatively organized by Susan Cameron, Celtic Collections, Angus L. Macdonald Library, Nova Scotia Highland Village, Dr. John Shaw and Mary Jane Lamond. Funding support was provided by the Office of Gaelic Affairs. Plans for *Stòras a' Bhaile* 2012 are now in place with dates set for August 13 to 16.

Completion of the *An Drochaid Eadarainn* website was marked by two launches during the month of May. The first launch was held at Province House, with a subsequent event at the Port Hawkesbury Civic Centre. Begun as a prototype in 2010, *An Drochaid Eadarainn* is an innovative, audiovisual online social space featuring Gaelic culture in Nova Scotia. Contents for the site are drawn directly from field recordings of customs, food ways and cultural expressions as found in the Province's Gaelic-speaking regions.

Designed as the virtual manifestation of Highland Village's annual *Stòras a' Bhaile* Gaelic folklife school, the site aims to serve as an interactive portal emulating the social transmission of Gaelic language and culture through technology.

Móran taing (many thanks) once again to the staff and volunteers whose contributions make it possible for Highland Village to tell the Gaels' story of life in historical Nova Scotia. ∞



Peter Pacey working with student animator Caitlin Bennett

Sgeul ri Aithris / The Story Telling Tradition

CHIALL SINN SIN - AIR A H-AITHRIS LE ALASTAIR MACILLFHEÒLAIN

Collected from Alex MacLellan by Seumas Watson

Alec MacLellan (Alastair Mhurchaidh Iain mac Iain Òig) was a descendant of North Uist stock. His Protestant forebears immigrated to Cape Breton's Mira River area from North Uist in the 1800s. Catholic Gaels from South Uist and Morar constituted much of adjacent Grand Mira population. Religious differences, however, were no obstacle to a people sharing in language and culture while managing life on the land. Raised in the old tradition of

communal labour and strict observance of the Sabbath, he lamented passing of the old céilidh tradition when stories of the supern were a focus of attention when visitors gathered. *aturl*

Seumas Watson: Dé an suidheachadh anns a' robh a' chiad fheadhainn a thànaig anall?

Alastair Mac 'I'Fhillain: Start 'ad àite dhaibh fhéin (na Prostanach) dìreach mar a bha 'ad 's an t-seann dùthaich. 'S chaidh an nuair sen na Papanach 'nan àite air an taobh eile dhe 'n abhainn. Cho fad 's aithne dhomh 's ann mar sin a bha 'n gnothach ag obair. Ach bha 'ad a' faighinn air adhart uamhasach math 'm miosg a' chéile. Bha 'ad a' cruinneachadh còmhla steady. Bhiodh 'ad a' céilidh. Cha robh sìon ann an uair sen ach ag innse seann stòiridhean, rudan mar shen, agus ag òl tì. Sen an aon rud a bh'aca, céilidh. Dheanadh 'ad an uair sen luadh. Dheanadh 'ad taoim mór 's bhiodh 'ad anns an taigh fad na h-oidhche. Cha chreid mi gu robh cus aca ri òl. Cha robh e ann, cha robh. O, bha taoimeachan mór 'aca 'm miosg a' chéile.

Agus an àm an fhèid, bhiodh froilaig ann. Bhiodh 'ad uile ann. Agus an aon rud am a' gheamhraidh, bha 'ad uile còmhla. Duine 'togail taigh bha 'ad a' sin uile còmhla - sobhal no rud mar sen. Agus nam bitheadh duine a's an teaghlach bochd, uell, bhiodh 'ad a' cuideachadh bean an taighe cho math 's a b'urrainn dhaibh. Ach cha n-eil sen againn tuilleadh. Chaill sinn sen. Ma théid thu gu taigh an dràsda, 's e a' cheud rud gun tionndaidh 'ad air an telibhision. Cha n-eil thu 'cluinntinn guth air sìon ach watchaidh a h-uile 's an taigh seo, co dhiubh gun còrd e riut, na nach còrd.

SW: Dé seòrsa dhe na stòirlean a ghabhadh an t-seann fheadhainn?

AM: Bha an t-uamhas aca air daoine a bha 'dol a bhàsachadh. Bha nàbaidh agam a' seo 's 's e an fhèid a bh'aige. Uell thuirt e, "Chunna mi a h-uile each 's a h-uile wagon a bh'ann. Dh'aithnich mi uilig 'ad aig an tiodhlagadh."

Agus 's e manadh a chanadh tu ris: taibhse, sen rud eile.

Tha mi 'dol a dh'innse na fìrinn dhut an trup seo. Bha sinn a' fuireach ann a sheo. Agus nuair a bhiodh sinn 'dol dhan sgoil

anns a' gheamhraidh, bhiodh sinn 'crosadh na deigheadh shuas a' seo. Uell nuair a thigeadh March, bha poidhle caoineadh 's an deigh. Bha 'ad a' cluinntinn rudan bliadhnaichean 's bliadhnaichean.

Ach co dhiubh, dhiochuimhnich a h-uile duine mu dheòghainn, co dhiubh an fheadhainn òga. 'S dhiochuimhnich mise mu dheòghainn cuideachd. Bha na daoine an déidh falbh as an àite seo an uair sen. Bha crowd againn a' seo an uair sen, 's bhitheadh crowd ann air chéilidh oidhche Shatharna. Bhitheadh 'ad ag obair air falbh 's bhiodh a h-uile duine 'tighinn dhachaidh.

Ach co dhiubh, chaidh mo bhràthair amach 's thànaig e staigh 's thuirt e, "My

robh mi ach òg an uair sen, mu shia bliadhna' deug na seachd bliadhna' deug. Bhithinn a' coiseachd air a' rathad 's chluinninn a' fear seo ag éibheadh orm 's dh'aithnich mi 'n guth aige. Agus bha sin a' cumail suas 's a' cumail suas bliadhnaichean 's bliadhnaichean. 'S cha n-eil ann ach rud a tha mi smaoinichdainn. Cha n-eil mi 'ga chluinnteil idir."

Ach co dhiubh, feasgar ann a sheo, mi fhìn 's mo phiuthar, chaidh sinn amach dhan a' léag gu sgéatadh. Cha robh mi fad sam bith nuair a dh'éibh e gu tìr orm. Agus nuair a thàna' mi staigh thuirt e, "Tha droch naidheachd agam dhut."

"A' bheil?"

"Tha," thuirt e. "Chaidh do chousin a bhàthadh ann a MacAskaill's Brook thall an Glasbaidh."

Sin a bha mi 'cluinnteil. Sin a bha mi 'cluinnteil. ☺

Translation

Seumas Watson: What was the situation for the old people when they arrived?

Alec MacLellan: They set up their own place (the Protestants) just the same way they were in the Old Country. The Catholics went over to the other side of the river (the Mira). As far as I know, that's how things worked. But they got along very well with each other. They gathered together regularly. They would be visiting. There was nothing back then but telling old stories, things like that and drinking tea. That's all they had (for entertainment), visiting. Then they'd put on a milling frolic. A big occasion would be made and they (the visitors) would be at the house all night long. I don't think they had much (liquor) to drink. It wasn't available, it wasn't. Oh, they had great times among each other.

And at haying time there would be a frolic. Everyone was there. And the same thing in the winter, they were all together: a person building a house, they were together then, a barn or anything like that. And if anyone in the family was sick, they helped out the woman of the house as best they could. But we don't have that (custom) any more. We lost that. If you go to a house now, the first thing they do is turn on the television. You don't hear a word about any-

Well, when March
would come there was
a lot of whining coming
from the ice. They were
hearing things for years
and years.

goodness," thuirt e, "Tha taoim aca thall aig àite Dhòmhnaill Iain, thall a' seo."

Ach co dhiubh, bha sinn astaigh ann a' seo 'nar suidhe a' bruidhinn 's ag innse bhreug 's a h-uile rud. Well, by golly, chuala sinn cù a' comhartach. Chaidh cuideiginn a bhàsachadh. Bha ràn a' tighinn gon an taighe: dithist 'tighinn gon an taighe. Cha chualas a' leithid dhe 'n ràn sen riamh ann.

Rànaig 'ad abhos: boireannach 's fireannach. Agus fhuair sinn amach dé bha ceàrr. Bha dithist air am bàthadh a's a' léag thall a' seo. Chaidh 'ad amach ann am bàta, 's chuir 'ad am bàta fairis. 'S chaidh an cnapach a bhàthadh, 's chaidh an duine bhàthadh. Bha esan mu dhà fhichead bliadhna na dà fhichead 's a' cóig. 'S bha 'ad ag iarraidh (a) Shudni. Uell, sen agad a' rud a bha 'ad a' cluinntinn air a' léag bliadhnaichean 's bliadhnaichean, agus bha 'ad ceart. 'S mathaid gu robh 'ad 'cluinnteil siod-ach suas ri lethcheud bliadhna mas dànaig e gu teachd.

Innsidh mi stòiridh eile dhut mu mo dheòghainn fhéin. Bha mi ann a seo, 's cha

thing, but everybody in the house watches it - whether you like it or not.

SW: What kind of stories did the old people tell?

AM: They had a lot (of stories) about people who were going to die. I had a neighbour here and he knew the facts. Well, he said, "I saw every horse and wagon there. I recognized them all at the funeral."

And you called this a forerunner. An apparition, there's another thing.

I'm going to tell it to you straight this time. We were living right here, and when we'd go to school in the winter, we'd cross the ice up here. Well, when March would come there was a lot of whining coming from the ice. They were hearing things for years and years.

In any event, everyone had forgotten about this - the young ones anyway. I forgot about it too. The men had left here by then. There was a crowd of us here (in the home) at the time, and there would be a bunch vis-

iting here on Saturday night. They worked elsewhere and they would all come home.

Anyway, my brother went outside and came back in and said, "My goodness, there's a time going on over there at Donald John's place."

At any rate, we were sitting inside here talking and telling lies and everything. Well, by golly, we heard a dog barking. Someone had died. There was a scream coming towards the house: two people coming to the house. The like of that scream was never heard before.

They arrived, a man and a woman, and we found out what was wrong. Two people had drowned in the lake over here. They went out in a boat and capsized it. The little fellow was drowned and the man was drowned. He was about forty or forty five. They (the two that came to the house) wanted to get to Sydney. Well, there you have what they were hearing on the lake for years and years, and they were right. Perhaps they were hearing that up to fifty years before it came to pass.

I'll tell you another story about myself. I was here (at home) and I was only young at the time, about six or seven years old. I used to walk on the road, and I would be hearing this fellow calling out to me, and I recognized his voice. And that kept up and kept up for years and years. And (I thought) its nothing but something I'm imagining. I don't hear it at all.

Any how, this particular evening, my sister and I went out to the lake to go skating. I wasn't (there) any time at all, when I heard him (a neighbour) calling me in to shore. And when I came in he said, "I have bad news for you."

"Do you?"

"I do," he said. "Your cousin drowned in MacAskill's Brook, over in Glace Bay."

That's what I was hearing. That's what I was hearing. ☺

Told by Alec MacLellan (Alastair Mhurchaidh Iain mac Iain Òig). © Collected, transcribed and translated by Seumas Watson

Cainnt nan Ainmhidhean / Animal Talk **A' CHOMHCHAG / THE OWL**

Collected from Archie Dan MacLellan by John Shaw

Nigheannan rìgh a bh'ann 's chaidh an cur fo gheasaibh 's bha crodh aca air chall.

[*Flora*idh: *Sin agad a' chomhchag.*]

'S e, a' chomhchag. Na h-igheannan, dh'fhalbh iad 's chaidh - c'ainm a th' agaibh air - bana-bhuideachd, agus bha iad a' falbh. Dh'fhàs na h-igheannan a bha seo 'nan comhchagan agus bhiodh iad ag èibheachd,

'Am faca tu an crodh maol odhar?'

'Chan fhaca 's chan fhaigh'.

'S bha iad a'gràdhainn gur e sin a' chomhchag gus an latha an diugh - gur e nigheannan a chaidh a chur fo gheasaibh, nigheannan rìgh. Tha iad a'coimhead airson crodh maol odhar 's gun iad `gam faighinn. Agus dh'fhoighneachdadh an dala té ris an té eile.

'Am faca tu an crodh maol odhar?'

'Chan fhaca 's chan fhaigh'.

Sin agad. Cluinnidh tu na comhchagan's na 'hù-hù, hù-hù' aca.

Shin agaibh na's urainn dhomhs' idir - a chuala mise guth mun deidhinn. ☺



The daughters of the King were put under spells, and their cattle were lost.

[*Flora*: *that was the owl*]

Yes, the owl. The daughters went and [encountered] - what would you call her - a witch, and then they departed. And they were turned into owls and they would be calling:

"Have you seen the hornless dunn cattle?"

"I have not, nor can I find them."

And they say that that's the owl right down until today - it's the princesses put under enchantments who are looking for their hornless dunn cattle, and not finding them. So one of them would ask the other,

"Have you seen the hornless dunn cattle?"

"I have not, nor can I find them."

So there it is. You can hear the owls and their 'hoo-hoo, hoo-hoo'.

And that's what I heard concerning them. ☺

Told by Archie Dan MacLellan (Gilleasbuig Eòghain Dhòmhnail 'ic Aonghais) from Broad Cove. ©Recorded, transcribed and translated by John Shaw.



A PIONEER ACCOUNT - FROM THE ISLE OF COLL TO MALAGAWATCH

The Historical Account of Bartimeaus.



At the end of July 1820, my father with eight of his family and many others left the Isle of Coll to immigrate to America. The vessel boarding the exiles lay in Tobarmory Harbour (Isle of Mull.) It was a sad sight to see relations parting with little expectation of meeting again.

The weather was clear as the sails were hoisted and the Dunlap of Greenock left Tobarmory under the command of John Brown, setting a course from the west side of Barra for Cape Breton Island (although the settlers were to be landed in Pictou.) We were fortunate as we endured only one storm during the voyage. Five children were born aboard the ship: John MacLean, Lachlan MacKenzie, Ebenezer MacMillan, John Rankin and a MacNiven. All were of Coll stock. Three came out to Cape Breton and two went on to Prince Edward Island.

Five weeks after departure, at ten o'clock on a sunny morning, we got our first glimpse of Cape Breton. Since there was a favourable light breeze, every yard of sail cloth was unfurled and in a short while we entered the Strait of Canso with the wind and current. Settlers turned out to greet us from both sides of the strait and before nightfall we reached Cape George (Antigonish County.) Following that, a pilot was taken on board who guided us into Pictou Harbour, where the immigrants and their belongings were put ashore. The passengers then dispersed: some going to Prince Edward Island, some to Cape John and others to Cape Breton. The Dunlap of Greenock continued on to Richibucto (New Brunswick) picking up a cargo of pine

lumber for the return trip to the Old Country.

My father, and a number, of others chartered a small vessel from one Angus MacDonald to bring us to Cape Breton. The weather was fair leaving Pictou, but reaching Cape George we were overtaken by a storm from the north-west. The boat was tossed to and fro until the top rigging was destroyed by the fury of the waves. It was the passengers opinion that if not for the presence of an adept Barraman, who knew how to handle the situation, we wouldn't have made port. As Alasdair Mac Mhaighstir Alasdair said in his poem to Clan Ranald's Galley, "The navigator called to the helmsman and another took from her what was needed..." And so we safely reached the Canso Strait, where we were met by a kindly man from Long Point, Judique. He advised us to spend the winter and five families accepted the offer.

Over the winter we received much generosity from two men, a MacDonald and a Chisholm, and also from the parish priest: the Reverend Alexander MacDonald. When summer arrived, the charitable folks of Long Point gave us seed and advised us to plant it on their land so we would have it for the next winter.

My father heard a report about the great Bras d'Or Lake, and after planting, a party of us went with a guide in a small boat to St. Peters. There we hauled the boat over "The Crossing" and onto the Bras d'Or where we were met by a magnificent sight on that calm, sunny day. The south side of West Bay was already taken up by those who came

before us, but North Mountain (Marble Mountain) was unoccupied. We passed many lovely islands and went through the Boom Narrows to Malagawatch Lake - named by the Mi' kmaq and meaning "Lake Full of Islands". Here were the headquarters of the Mi' kmaq tribe and its chief, John Denny, from whom the River Denys derives its name. He was a brave and benevolent man but very wild if angry. The Mi' kmaq kept their territory here, and although few live in the area today, a thousand acres of the best land was reserved for them.

The River Denys empties into Malagawatch Lake. When we arrived in 1821, there wasn't a single European living on its shores. We began to clear the forest where we intended to settle, everyone near their neighbour. After that, we communally built moss-caulked log houses thatched with tree bark. Straight, slender, adze hewn sticks served as flooring.

At the end of a month's time, we all returned to Judique for the winter. In the first month of summer 1822, we returned to Malagawatch with seed from the previous summer's planting and made our homes there. In the way we had learned from our Judique friends, we made our first planting. Fences were unnecessary as there were no animals to bother the crops other than bears that came at night to chew on sprout harvest, stealing seed from the barns to store for winter. ☺

Part two will appear in the next issue of An Rubha. ©Translated by Seumas Watson Originally appearing in MacTalla Vol. 3 July 7th 1984

Fo na Cabair/Under the Rafters

AN OVERVIEW OF RELIGION IN THE HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS OF SCOTLAND.

Pauline MacLean & Katherine MacLeod

As a provincial museum site that strives for excellence and international acknowledgement, professional research is essential to support quality interpretive presentations, exhibits and programming. The Highland Village is committed to base all interpretive and site developments on sound research findings.

Fundamental to this process are research reports that authenticate the physical presentation of our living history site and provide our animators with tangible resources on which to base their interaction with visitors. This excerpt is taken from our Blackhouse research book:

William Forbes Skene in his book, *The Highlanders of Scotland*, was unsure of what the ancient religion of the Highlanders was before they were converted to Christianity. Through information gleaned from early writers such as Adomnan, it appears Gaels had an organization of priests and a Pagan religion with "ceremonies and superstitions" which was part of their life. Irish Christians moved into the western part of Scotland in the fifth century and brought with them their own religion. According to Skene, St. Patrick, St. Ninian, St. Palladius, along with other priests in Ireland and Britain, were of Rome, but "they did not owe ecclesiastical obedience to the aspiring bishops of that city". St. Columba, a presbyter of St. Patrick's church, was sent to Scotland to convert the people to Christianity in 565 AD, and added the Scottish Gaels to his church. The conversion to Christianity was completed by the seventh century.

In modern times, the nature of Columba's church (called Culdee or sometimes Celtic) gave each of the ensuing denominations a view of their own beliefs. Each religious group, (Episcopal Presbyterian, Roman Catholic) which has been formed since that time has tried to claim this Celtic church was their own, regardless of the true form of Columba's church.

In his work *The Highlanders of Scotland* (1902 edition) Skene states: "The church of the northern Picts and northern Scots, to which the name of Culdee was afterwards given, and which owed its origin to St. Patrick... emanated from the church of Gaul, a church always opposed to that of Rome, and claiming a descent from the church of Ephesus, and its founder, St. John the Evangelist; and it was under the teaching of St. Martin of Tours that St. Patrick framed the system of church government which he afterwards introduced. The principal writer from whom any information regarding the Culdee church is to be derived, is the Venerable Bede, and we accordingly find that writer imputing to the Culdee church certain peculiar-

ities in its outward form and government which he implies not to have existed in other churches."

Skene writes that although Christianity replaced the "general worship of false gods" some of the superstitions and practices remained with the Gael, especially on holidays. He goes on to say, "It may perhaps be sufficient to remark...superstitions of the Highlanders consisted principally of three kinds: first, a belief in...supernatural beings, termed by them *Daoine-shiith*, or fairies; second-

The religious denominations changed based on politics within the districts, but the people kept their own belief system, a mixing of religious teaching, beliefs, superstitions and rituals.

ly, a belief in the influence of departed spirits over the affairs of this life; ...thirdly, in second sight, a subject of considerable difficulty, and one altogether peculiar to the Highlanders." These traditional beliefs or superstitions also were seen in the festivals celebrated by Gaels such as *Beltain*, (May Day) and *Samhuin* or "All Hallows Eve".

The Culdee (Celtic) Church flourished from the sixth to the twelfth century. It was a monastic church which emphasized learning. North of the Clyde and Forth, Gaelic was the language spoken and evidence of thirty monastic communities can be found. The Companion to Gaelic Scotland says that "...faith...between the eighth and the twelfth centuries was sustained by a clerical caste divided into fully monastic and quasi-monastic communities...The cult of saints...was strongly entrenched."

In Skene's book, *Celtic Scotland Vol.II*, the differences between the "Scottish" church (Culdee) and the Roman Catholic Church are explored. Margaret, wife of Malcolm Canmore, King of Scotia, was a Saxon and a Roman Catholic. She noted



that the observance of Easter was not as in her church, sacrament was not taken on Easter Sunday, masses were celebrated in a "barbarous way" (which is not explained), and the Sabbath was observed on the Saturday in the Jewish way.

After Malcolm's death, the new kings were the sons of Margaret and Malcolm and of the Roman Catholic faith. The end of the Celtic church was brought about by three events according to Skene: "First in placing the church upon a territorial, in place of a tribal, basis and substituting the parochial system and a diocesan episcopacy for the old tribal churches... secondly, in introducing the religious orders of the Church of Rome and founding great monasteries as centres of counter influence to the native church; ... thirdly, in absorbing the Culdees, now the only clerical element left in the Celtic Church, into the Roman system by converting them from secular into regular canons and merging them in the latter order."

In 1203, Reginald, the Lord of the Isles, followed the policy of the Scottish Kings and founded Roman Catholic monasteries in several areas of his territory. By 1332 the Celtic (Culdee) Church of St. Andrew's was mentioned in literature for the last time. Over the next centuries, the Celtic monks from the Culdee monasteries were replaced with Roman Catholic clergy and monks by the Kings of Scotland.

The causes of the Reformation in Scotland were laid on the fourteenth century corruptions of the Christian church which developed during the time between the end of the Celtic Church and the sixteenth century. Thomas McCrie, in the book, *The Life of John Knox*, gives the "corruptions" of the Christian religion in the western world as the main cause for the formation of the Church of Scotland. Knox was widely heralded as the chief figure to lead the Reformation in Scotland. The system of religion in Scotland had deteriorated, with the clergy holding most of the wealth of the country and the congregations taught that, if they fulfilled the requirements laid out by the clergy, they would attain salvation.

The seeds of discontent with the path of the church were also influenced by outside forces. Martin Luther's books on religion were forbidden by the Scottish government



Inside the Cathedral at Iona, Thomas Pennant 1776

in 1525. Patrick Hamilton, a Scottish nobleman, was burned at the stake for spreading “heresy” and became the first Protestant martyr in 1528. This action lit the fire for change. Also by 1535 in England, Henry the VIII had broken with the Roman Catholic Church over his wish to divorce and marry again. All of these factors helped play a role in fueling the reformation.

The Church of Scotland (Presbyterian) became recognized by the Scots Parliament in 1560 and became the national church in 1690, but could not assert itself in the Gaelic areas until the eighteenth century. The Highlands of Scotland were not affected greatly by changes in religion due to the remoteness of the territory and the language barrier. The Companion to Gaelic Scotland mentioned that the Highlands and Islands parishes were very extensive, and the power of the chiefs and lairds was such that the “inhabitants changed from one creed to another at the behest of local potentates”.

The Church of Scotland had many

distinctive features; revivals, open-air communions and questioning day, the yacht Breadalbane which travelled to distant communities bringing the ministers to the congregations and the rhythmic singing style of precenting. It also had room, according to The Companion to Gaelic Scotland “for a variety of opinions, attitudes and practices”.

The Scottish Episcopal Church (pre Anglican origins) is “an indigenous Scottish denomination” that was pro-Jacobite. The reformation of religion in Scotland, and the recognition of the Church of Scotland, had little effect in the Episcopal Church in remote areas. Many Episcopal ministers remained in their posts as parish ministers until they died and the first Presbyterian ministers in the Highlands were locally opposed.

Parts of Gaelic Scotland had remained Catholic since the time of Malcolm Canmore. However, in 1600, there were only 12 Catholic priests in all of Scotland and none were in the Highlands. Years of neglect, through lack of priests and

religious instruction, led to some problems but when the Roman Catholic missionaries came back to Scotland in the early 1700s, the main tenets of that religion were still there, as they had been passed on through oral tradition. The areas covered by the missionaries were limited to those of friendly chiefs. The Jacobite uprising of 1745 halted the progress of the Roman Catholic Church because the clans closed their land to them. The areas of Scotland which are Catholic today such as South Uist and Barra are the same places the early missionaries taught in the 1600s and revisited in the 1700s. The taint of the “45” was gradually lost but emigrations of the nineteenth century decreased the number of priests, as they often went with the settlers to new homes.

The settlers, who came to Cape Breton from the late 1700s to 1820, came without the Evangelical fervor of the settlers after 1825 (the Wee Free Church). They came with the belief system from their community and settled in groups according to the kinship system. As seen, the religious denominations changed based on politics within the districts, but the people kept their own belief system, a mixing of religious teaching, beliefs, superstitions and rituals. The scarcity of ministers and priests in the Highlands and Islands along with the lack of schools in this early time period meant that formal education was as limited as was their knowledge of church affairs. Laurie Stanley, in her book, *The Well-Watered Garden*, says “the immigrants who settled Cape Breton at this early date (1800-1815) were frequently illiterate, superstitious and, lacking a clearly-defined Christian faith, were indifferent to the clergy.” ☺

This excerpt is taken from Rannsachadh Taisbeanaidh a’ Chlachain Gàidhealaich: Na Gàidheil An Albainn 16Mh Linn - 19Mh Linn / Highland Village Large Interpretive Research: The Gael in 16th to 19th Century Scotland, by Pauline MacLean and Katherine MacLeod.

Ùrnaigh Airson an Àma Ghabhail Mu Thàmh / A Prayer for the Time to Go to Sleep

Laighidh mi `n nochd mar a laigheas Muire le mac
 Laigh mi le mac Dé `s laigh mac Dé leam
 Ri Dhia `s Muire agus Micheal `s an Naomh Aingeal Eòin
 Bho mhullach mo chinn gu troigh mo bhonn
 A Dhia chiùin `s tu fhéin a chrùthaich mi
 A Dhia chiùin `s tu fhéin a naomhaich mi
 Aingeal bho Dhia an diugh `s an nochd `s gu uair mo bhàis.
 - Amen ☺

I shall lie tonight as Mary lies with her son
 I shall lie with the son of God and he shall lie with me
 To God and Mary and Michael and the sainted angel John
 From the top of my head to the bottom of my feet
 Oh serene God, it is you who created me
 Oh serene God, it is you who sanctified me
 An Angel from God today, tonight and to the hour of my death
 - Amen ☺

*Air a gabhail air Pàdraig MacEachairne (Pàdraig Aonghais Sine), nach maireann, Gleann Dùil, Siormachd Ibhnmis. Patrick MacEachern, Glendale
 ©Recorded, transcribed and translated by Jim Watson*

An Rubha Photo Album: Loch Mór nam Barrach - Bras d'Or Lake

On June 29, 2011, UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) designated the Bras d'Or Lake and its watershed a "World Biosphere Reserve." The designation recognises the Bras d'Or for its "balanced relationship between humans and the biosphere." Biosphere reserves are places that have natural features and where people are committed to their stewardship through sustainable development practices. They are places where there are collaborative efforts "to promote the sustainability of local economies and communities, as well as the conservation of the terrestrial or coastal ecosystems." Congratulations to the Bras d'Or Lake Biosphere Reserve Association for achieving this international recognition for our lake.

Our photo album for this issue on An Rubha features images of the Bras d'Or Lake an its communities from our archives. ☺





5.

Buckley Collection



6.

Highland Village Collection



7.

Buckley Collection

1) S.S. Enterprise passing through the Grand Narrows train bridge, 1930's; 2) Winter in Iona, 1920's; 3) UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme certificate 4) The Barra Strait and Hector's Point from Grand Narrows, 1901; 5) The train in Jamesville as it heads towards Iona; 6) The Malagawatch Church overlooking the River Denys Basin; 7) The plasters in Iona; 8) Sailing on the lake, 1930's; 9) Kidston Island in Baddeck, 1935; 10) St. Columba Church Iona.



8.

Malcolm MacNeil



9.

Bruce Melville



10.

Buckley Collection

MAG-TALLA

An Gobhainn Sanntach

Bho Mhac-Talla Vol 3 No 40

Sidni, CB

Di sathairne, April 6 1895

Bha tàillear agus gobhainn a' tilleadh le chéile air feasgar àraidh á baile anns an robh iad ag obair air an càirdibh fa-leth. Mar a bha am feasgar a' teannadh orra, chunnaic iad a' ghrian a' dol sìos air cùl nam beann agus a' ghealach ag éirigh anns an àird an ear. Aig a' cheart àm chuala iad fad às ceòl binn a bha a' fàs na bu chruaidhe mar a ghabh iad air an aghaidh. Bha am fuaim car neo-thalamhaidh, ach bha i cho annabarrach binn 's gun do dhìochuimhnich iad an sgìos agus ghabh iad an rathad le ceumaibh sunndach.

An déidh doibh a dhol beagan astair, ràinig iad aonach grinn far am faiceadh iad bannal de dhaoine 's de mhnathaibh beaga, greim aca air làmhnan a chéile, agus iad a' dannsadh gu h-aighearach ris a' cheòl a chuala iad.

Ann an teis-meadhoin na cuairt mu 'n robh na sìthichean a' dannsadh, sheas seann duine daigeil, beagan na b' àirde 's na bu shultmhoire na càch. Bha còta de iomadh dath air a dhruim agus bha fheusag cho geal ris an t-sneachda a' ruigheachd sìos gu a bhroilleach. Sheas an tàillear agus an gobhainn ag amharc le mór-ionghadh air na dannsairean an uair a sméid an seann duine riutha, agus rinn na daoine beaga bealach doibh chum 's gun tigeadh iad an taobh astaigh de 'n chuairt.

Bha an gobha 'na dhuine gaisgeil, le croit bheag air a dhruim, 's leum e astaigh 'nam measg gun sgàth. Ach bha an tàillear an toiseach car gealtach agus sheas e air ais. An ceann beagan ùine, getà, air faicinn da cho aoidheil agus suilbhir 's a bha iad, ghlac e misneach agus chaidh e astaigh do 'n choisir leis a' ghobhainn. Ghrad-dhùin na sìthichean mu 'n timchioll mar mhuinntir mhearachinne.

Am feadh 's a bha seo a' dol an aghaidh, tharraing an seann duine a bha 's a' mheadhoin sgian mhór a bha 'na crochadh r' a' chrìos 's gheuraich e air cloich i agus a' feuchainn a géiread le bàrr a mheòir, thionndaidh e 's sheall e air na coigrich air mhodh a thug orra critheachadh le h-oillt.

Cha deachaidh an cumail fada an imcheist, oir rug am bodachan air a' ghobhainn agus ann am prìobadh na sùla, gheàrr e dheth a h-uile fuilte às fheusaig le aon sgud! Thionndaidh e 'n sin ris an tàillear agus rinn e 'n cleas ceudna airsan.

Ach dh'fhalbh an geilt an ùine ghoirid, oir, an déidh, do 'n t-seann duine an gnothuch a chur seachad mar seo, thàinig e agus dh'fhàiltich e gu cridheil iad a' bualadh a làimh' air an guallain mar gum b'ann 'gam moladh airson cho èasgaidh 's a cheadaich iad dha an lomadh. Chomharraich e amach dhoibh an dùn guail a bha dlùth do làimh agus sméid e orra iad a lìonadh am pòcannan.

Fhreagair iad e, ged nach robh fios fo 'n ghréin aca cìod am feum a bhiodh anns a' ghual doibh. An sin, thog iad orra 's dh'fhàg iad na daoine beaga, oir bha i a' fàs annoch 's bha toil aca amas air codaichean oidhche.

Dìreach nuair a ràinig iad an gleann, chuala iad clag a' bualadh dà uair dheug. Ghrad-sguir an ceòl, shìolaich na daoine beaga air falbh mar sgàile 's laidh an aonach gu tosdach fo sholus fuar na gealaiche.

An ceann greis, ràinig na coisichean taigh-òsda aig taobh a' rathaid, ach cha robh an sin dòigh air cur suas mura laigheadh iad air boitean conlaich. Rinn iad seo gu toileach, 'gan sìneadh fhéin a sìos le an aodaichean orra mar a bha iad agus iad tuilleadh 's sgìth gu smaoineachadh air am pòcannan guail a dh'fhalachadh. Moch air madainn, fada na bu tràithe na b' àbhaist doibh, dhùisg cuth-drom a' ghuail iad às an cadal. Nuair a chur iad an làmhnan 'nam pòcannan, 's gann gun creideadh iad an sùilean air faicinn doibh an àite guail, gur ann a bha an làmhnan làn de dh'òr fìor-ghlan!

Cha bu lugha an t-ionghadh a bha orra an uair a mhothaich iad gun robh an cinn air an comhdach le falt. Bha iad ann an tiota air fàs beairteach. Ach air do 'n ghobhainn a bhith ro shanntach 'na nàdur, lion e an dà phòca leis a' ghual air alt agus gun robh a dhà uiread aige 's a bha aig an tàillear. An déidh seo uile, cha robh e làn toilichte agus chur e an ceann a chompanaich gum fuiricheadh iad gus an ath-latha 's gun rachadh iad air an fheasgar agus gum faigheadh iad tuilleadh òir às a' bhodachan bheag.

Dh'iùlt an tàillear seo a dheanamh, "Tha gu leòr agamsa," ars' esan, "agus tha mi buidheach, riaraichte. Chan eil a dhìth orm ach a chur suas air mo làimh fhéin a' mhaighdean àillidh air am bheil mo ghaol a phòsadh agus an sin, bidh mi 'nam dhuine sona."

Coma co-dhiubh, a thoileachadh a charaid, dh'fhan e latha eile 's an taigh-òsda

agus anns an fheasgar thog an gobhainn air leis fhéin le dà phòca air a ghuallain agus ràinig e an t-aonach. Fhuair e na daoine beaga a' dannsadh agus a' seinn mar e bha iad air an fheasgar roimhe.

Ghabh iad astaigh do 'n chròilean e, thug an seann duine dheth a fhalt 's a fheusaig arithist agus sméid e ris, mar a rinn e roimhe, a thoirt leis uidhir de ghual 's a thogradh e. Cha do dh'iarr an gobhainn na b'fheàrr. Chan e amhàin gun do lion e a phòcannan ach dà phòca-shaich cuideachd agus thill e dhachaidh làn ghàirdeachais a' smaoineachadh air a dheagh fhortan.

Ged nach d'fhuair e leaba an oidhche sin, laidh e sìos le aodach uir mar a bha e ag ràdh, "Mothaichidh mi nuair a dh'fhàsas an t-òr trom, dùisgidh e mi."

Mu dheireadh thuit e 'na chadal air a lìonadh le dùil chinntich gun dùisgeadh e anns a' mhadainn làn maoin agus saoihbheis.

Cho luath 's a dh'fhosgail e a shùilean gun do ghrad-leum e suas agus thòisich e air na pòcannan a rannsachadh. Ach cìod a bu mhòtha a b'ìoghnadh leis na am faigh-inn làn ghual shalach, dubh mar a bha iad roimhe. Thilg e amach làn duirn an déidh làn duirn ach gun aon chrìoman òir.

"Chan eil atharrachadh air," ars' esan. "Tha agam fhathast an t-òr a fhuair mi a' cheud oidhche. Tha a' chuid sin cinnteach gu leòr." Ach nuair a chaidh e a shealltainn, bha e uile air fàs 'na ghual arithist agus bha e air fhàgail gun pheighinn an t-saoghail!

Chuir e làmhnan salacha suas air a cheann ach bha e gun rib fuilte agus a smig cho min ri bonn a chois.

Ach cha b'e seo fhathast crìoch a mhi-fhortain, oir bha a chroit a bha air a dhruim an déidh fàs fada na bu mhòtha na bha i riamh. An uair a chunnaic e mu dheireadh gun robh e a' fulang peanais air son a shanntachd, thòisich e air bròn 's air caoidh gus an do dhùisg e an tàillear còir. Chomh-fhurtaich esan e mar a b'fheàrr a b'urrainn dha, ag ràdh ris gu caoimhneil 's gu fialaidh, "Sguir de d'caoidh. Bha sinn 'nar companaich agus 'nar luchd-turais le chéile agus anis is e do bheatha fantuinn leamsa agus co-roinn a ghabhail de m'chuidse. Bidh gu leòr ann duinn le chéile."

Sheas e ri a fhacal. Cha d'fhuair an gobhainn riamh saor 's a' chroit air a dhruim. Agus b'éiginn da daonnan tuilleadh bonaid a chaitheamh a dh'fhalachadh a chinn mhaoil sgalaich. ☺

The Greedy Blacksmith
From MacTalla Vol 3 Vol 40
Sydney, CB
Saturday, April 6, 1895

One evening, a tailor and blacksmith were returning together from a village where they had been practising their trades. As the evening came upon them, they saw the sun going down behind the mountains and the moon rising in the east. At the same time, they heard sweet music that grew clearer as they continued along. The sound was quite unearthly and so lovely that they forgot their weariness and took to the road with cheerful steps. After having gone a little distance, they arrived at a well-kept green where they could see an assembly of tiny men and women dancing hand in hand lightheartedly, to the music they heard.

In the middle of the circle, around which the fairies were dancing, stood a sturdy old fellow who was a bit taller and merrier than the rest. Over his back, there was a multi-coloured coat and a snow white beard reached down to his chest. The tailor and the blacksmith stood gazing at the dancers in astonishment, when the old man beckoned to them. The little people made a break for them so they could enter the circle.

The blacksmith was a stouthearted man with a small hump on his back and he fearlessly leapt into their midst. But the tailor was at first a bit timid and he hung back. In a short while, however, after he'd seen how hospitable and gleeful they were, he got up his courage and joined the company and blacksmith. The fairies closed around them at once like a drunken band.

While this was going on, the old man in the middle drew a great knife that hung on his belt and he honed it on a rock. Testing its sharpness with the tip of his finger, he turned and looked at the strangers in a way that made them tremble in terror.

They weren't kept in suspense for long, because the old fellow seized the blacksmith and in a wink he cut every hair from the smith's beard with one stroke. He then turned to the tailor and did the same. The shock quickly wore off, for the old

man, after having done this in such a manner, came and welcomed them heartily, clapping his hand on their shoulders as if he was praising them for their enthusiasm in allowing him to shave them. He pointed a nearby mound of coal out to them and signalled for them to fill their bags

They responded to him, although they had no idea under the sun what use the coal could be to them. They then made off and parted from the fairies, since it was getting late and they wanted to seek out quarters for the night. Just when they reached the glen, they heard a bell striking twelve o' clock. The music ceased immediately, the little people faded away like shadows and the green lay silent under the cold light of the moon.

A short while later, the walkers arrived at a roadside hotel, but there was no way to accommodate them unless they lay on bundles of straw. They did this happily, stretching out as they were with their clothes on, too tired to think about hiding the bags of coal.

Early in the morning, far earlier than usual for them, the weight of the coal woke them from their sleep. When they put their hands in the bags, they could hardly believe their eyes when they discovered that, rather than coal, their hands were full of pure gold.

They were no less amazed when they realized that their heads were covered with hair. They had become rich in an instant. But, because the blacksmith's nature was so greedy, he filled the two bags with gold until he had twice as much as the tailor. After all this, he wasn't completely satisfied and he convinced his companion that they should stay until the next day and that they could go in the evening to get more gold from the little old man.

This the tailor refused to do. "I have enough," he said, "and I'm completely satisfied. There is nothing I want to do other than marry the beautiful girl who I'm in love with and then I'll be a happy man."

At any rate, to please his friend he remained for another day at the hotel and in the evening the blacksmith set out by himself with two sacks on his shoulder and he arrived at the park. He found the little

people dancing and playing music as they were the evening before.

They took him into the assembly and the old fairy man removed his beard and hair again and gestured to him, as he had done before, to take as much coal as the blacksmith wished. The blacksmith couldn't have wished for better. He not only filled his own sacks but two others as well and he returned joyfully home contemplating his good fortune.

Although he didn't get a bed that night, he lay down, clothes on, as he was saying, "I'll be alert when the gold gets heavy. It will wake me."

At last he fell asleep, assured that he would wake in the morning wealthy and prosperous.

As soon as he opened his eyes, he instantly leapt up and began searching the bags. To his great astonishment, he found them full of dirty black coal as they had been before. He threw out handful after handful but there wasn't a speck of gold.

"This doesn't change anything," he said. "I still have the gold I got the first night. That measure is certain enough." But when he went to check, it had all become coal again and he was left without a penny in the world.

He put his filthy hands on his head and he was without a single strand of hair and his chin was as bare as the sole of his foot. But this wasn't the end of his misfortune. The hump on his back had grown bigger than it had ever been. When at last he realized that he was being punished for his greed, he began to lament and sob until he woke the gentle tailor. He did his best to comfort the blacksmith by saying to him with kind generosity, "Stop your crying. We were companions and fellow travellers and now you can stay with me, take a share of what's mine. There will be enough for us both."

He stood by his word. The blacksmith never got free of the hump on his back and ever after he had to wear a bonnet to hide bald, scabby head. ☹

Translated by Seumas Watson.
Artwork by Jamie MacIntyre.



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. MacKinnon, 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 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/>

Dèante le làimh

HIGHLAND WOMEN'S CLOTHING AT THE TIME OF EMIGRATION: PART TWO

By Vicki Quimby

One constant in all women's outfits was the petticoat. We might think of a petticoat as similar to a skirt, almost always, in the Highlands, made of homespun woolen cloth. Two were usually worn, often striped or tartan. Although "tartan" could be almost any checked or coloured cloth, or a type of fine, "hard" (tightly spun) combed wool fabric, it generally implies some coloured pattern. They were often indigo blue. I. F. Grant (*Highland Folk Ways*) describes petticoats in Barra: "A much coarser combed fabric, dyed dark blue with indigo, was used for the women's petticoats.... It was practically waterproof. "They also wore drugget (drogaid), striped wool with linen warp: "The women used to wear a very attractive stuff of dark blue, the weft striped with bright colours, for their petticoats."

John Buchanan (1790) adds: "They seldom travel any where without this appendage; nay, in the house, when at such work as will admit of it; seeing it would be thought naked in a woman to go without it; it also defends them from the inclemency of the weather." Not only was the warmth of the material important against the cold, damp climate, but the bulk of fabric could be used, bunched up in the back, to help support the heavy creels of peat, manure, or seaweed. He continues: "One must be a hard-hearted taskmaster that will not pity a poor woman with her petticoats tucked up to her knees, and a heavy load of dung, or wet seawe-tangle, on her back, mounting those rugged declivities and steep hills, to the distance of a compleat mile from the sea before they lay the burdens on the ground." Frequently, there are references to the use of the petticoat as a substitute for a cloak or shawl when there is no other outerwear.

By the early 1800's we have water-colour sketches of older women from Skye by John Kaye, showing an assortment of headwear—mitches, kerchiefs and caps. The predominant colour of the homespun wool petticoats and other outerwear seems to be indigo blue. Muted blue plaids are seen in a small shoulder plaid or in a cloak and cap. At least one woman might be wearing a wool long gown. Incidentally, one woman is shown spinning with a distaff and spindle. Almost all the women are shown with bare feet.

In fact, most women did not wear shoes or stockings. Very rarely, shoes might be worn to church if one did have a pair. Women who were working at harvesting kelp might have shoes provided for them by their employer. And part of a servant girl's wages was almost always paid in pairs of shoes. Shoes (*brogues*) were usually made at home, but could be purchased from a shoemaker. Stockings throughout this time period are generally made from woven fabric, cut on the bias,



Alexander Kaye - National Museum of Scotland

and held up with garters (woven tape), although knitted stockings had long been worn in cities such as Edinburgh, and in other parts of Scotland.

By the 1830's, the Statistical Accounts of Scotland are recording large numbers of emigrations from many areas. Populations had increased, making available arable land divisions smaller. At the same time, rents had increased, and a decrease in kelp prices was taking away one source of income for paying the rent. Living



conditions had worsened for almost everyone. Some families went from place to place looking for work here and there, often working for a time in the cotton mills of the "Low Country" (Scottish Lowlands)—even as early as the 1790's. Around the same time, young women were beginning to find work. From Mull: "The young women are often employed in cutting the kelpware, in summer; and afterward, many of them go to the reaping of harvest, in the Low Country."

This will have a great impact on women's dress. From Tiree and Coll: "A great part of the young unmarried population, especially of females, are in the habit of resorting every year to the low country in quest of harvest employment. Hundreds of these set off about the middle of August, and are generally absent from six to eight weeks. I fear it cannot be reckoned a profitable kind of service, any wages which they earn being chiefly bestowed on superfluous finery, not much suited to their means or rank in life" To some observers, not much benefit was to be had from this annual migration of young people out of the Highlands. Not only did they return with infectious diseases, English words, and not much money saved for the coming winter, but they also held a new appreciation and desire for the new styles and cotton fabrics to which they were introduced.

From the Small Isles (Eigg, Rum): "...With the money thus earned, they endeavour to dress themselves after the low country fashion; the fashion, thus introduced, raises an emulation among the women in general, and, of course, merchants are encouraged to import like articles." This desire for purchased clothing will continue, with the young women being the most enthusiastic; older women will be very much slower to change.

By the 1830's, the Statistical Accounts show a range of clothing being worn, most of it still of homespun, and many Gaels are still struggling to adequately clothe themselves. In Harris: "Some of their articles of

dress are of the most primitive description, and of the coarsest materials, all manufactured by themselves." And in Lewis, clothing was homemade "gray and blue stuff", and of the "plainest description". From Barra: "...The women wear clothes made by themselves, and, at times, south country droggets (drugget, or striped woollens) or prints. They wear a hand kerchief about their head instead of a cape (cap?), and a petticoat about their shoulders for a cloak.... The people are so very poor, that many of them are destitute of bed-clothes."

Again, in Barvas, it was reported that the clothing was of the "plainest description", but there was also "...stuff, variously striped, by the women, with underdresses of plaiding, all homemade. In many instances, however, cotton shirts and print gowns are beginning

There were also changes reported in North Uist. Whereas all the women had before worn clothing in "beautiful strips (stripes) and tartans of their own manufacture", now, in 1837, some were wearing

calicoes and cottons from Glasgow. A few even had straw bonnets instead of the old-style "neat head dress". Cottons were also brought into South Uist by enterprising young men who went around the country with baskets, buying eggs. They took them by boat, to Glasgow, or Greenoch, returning with the cotton goods women wanted—along with dye stuffs, tobacco, and crockery.

I. F. Grant states that in areas where sheep were plentiful, with a good supply of wool, the clothes were homespun, but often in dark browns or blues. For the poorest, however, there was a scarcity of wool—not enough land for sheep of their own, and they were not able to procure enough wool for their own clothing needs. For many of these women, buying some cheap low country clothing had long been a necessity, as their families were forced to earn money with seasonal work in order to survive.

So we have seen that the Highland woman lived in a land of extremes. A very few wealthy women of means were able to

purchase fine cloth and tailored fashions, yet the majority of women were struggling to make enough clothing for themselves and their families. Even though a bit of cotton might have been creeping in over the 50 years or so that we have covered, it was slow to gain complete acceptance, and was still financially out of reach for many. Women will continue to rely on the traditional homespun wool and linen throughout this period. Some are not even adequately clothed for the Hebridean winter, much less the Canadian winters to come, yet homespun clothing is what many will be wearing as they leave their homeland to face even more hardship in the new world. ∞

Part one appeared in our last issue of An Rubha.

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



Help us preserve & share Nova Scotia's Gaelic language and heritage by joining the Nova Scotia Highland Village Society!



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Eachdrad, Cànan, Nòs is Dualchas - History Language, Tradition and Heritage

Aig Baile: AN CORRAN / THE SICKLE

By Seumas Watson

Among the earliest of agricultural tools, the sickle remains in use around the world as an implement for reaping grains, fruits and other forage. In the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, it was applied generally to the cutting of oats, hay and kelp. While oats were cut with the sickle (*corran*) or scythe (*speal*), plucking barley from the ground by its roots was a seemingly curious custom witnessed by observers in older times. (I.F. Grant notes in *Highland Folkways* that a Duncan Forbes, visiting Tiree in 1737, reported to the Duke of Argyll that barley, the island's main crop, was harvested by pulling it from its roots, writing "There was never one sheaf of barley cut in Tiree since the beginning of the world.")

With the scythe absent from the Highland harvest, reputedly not introduced until early in the 19th century, reaping of grain in general was done by sickle and mostly by women. As in the case of other forms of labour, the work of the sickle was done to the rhythm of song. Captain Edward E. Burt, an officer of engineers working under General Wade in 1730 remarks in his *Letters from a Gentleman in Northern Scotland* (1754), "They all keep time by several barbarous Tones of the Voice; and stoop and rise together as a Rank of Soldiers ... it being disgraceful for anyone to be out of Time with the Sickle." Burt also notes that on occasion "... they are incited to their work by the Sound of a Bagpipe."

A similar description of communal work and singing appears in *Boswell's A Journey to the Western Isles of Scotland*, published in 1775. While in Rassay, he commented, "I saw the harvest of a small field. The women reaped the corn, and the men bound the sheaves. The strokes of the sickle were



timed by the modulation of harvest song, in which all their voices were united. They accompany in the Highlands every action, which can be done in equal time, with an approved refrain, which has, they say, not much meaning; but its effects are regularity and cheerfulness."

Working with the *corran* as an agrarian tool in Gaelic Nova Scotia is, of course, known to the present. In keeping with antiquarian reports on group co-operation in Gaelic Scotland, the late Jimmy MacKay (*Seumas mac Aonghais 'ic Iain 'ic Uilleim 'ic M h u r c h a i d h*), of Kingsville, Inverness County provides a picture of helping neighbours at the harvest in the province's emerging Gaelic-speaking communities:

Bho `n àm a chuireadh iad a' choille thar a buinn leis an tuaigh, bha obair mhór air a toirt gu ìre gus bàrr a thoirt. Le cinnt, bha na coimhearsnaich teann air a' chéile. Bhiodh iad tric am am pàirt ri gach obair. `S tric a bhiodh frolaig rèiteach fearainn aca agus frolaig buana. B'e an corran a bha iad a' cleachdadh, agus arithist, an speal bheag. Bha bàrd anns na crìochan seo ris an canadh iad Ailean mac Eòghainn. Bha e aig frolaig bhuana turas agus rinn e ceathramh do dh'òran gus tàmailt a chur air càch. Tha e ruith mar seo:

*Bha mi uair a' buan air achadh,
Còmhla ri sgioba ghillean tapaidh.
'S ann a thùlg mi dhìom mo sheacaid,
'S ghabh mi seachad suas orra*

From the time the forest was felled with an axe, until a crop was brought to the point of harvest, the amount of labour was immense. Certainly, neighbours were close to each other. They frequently held plowing and reaping frolics; they used the sickle and the scythe. There was a bard in these parts called Allan son of Hugh (MacEachern.) He was once at a reaping frolic and he made a verse of song to incite the others. It goes like this:



"I was once reaping on a field with a crew of nimble lads. I threw of my jacket and passed them by."

Varying purposes for the sickle in Highland agrarian life is attested to by the types of *corran* listed in Dwelly's *Illustrated Gaelic to English Dictionary*:

"1. corran-bearraidh -ain-, sm Pruning-hook. corran-coille see corcan-coille. corran-creige (DC) sm stickleback — Uist. corran gartghlanaidh sm Weeding-hook, hoe. corran-greusaiche (AF) sm Small catfish, angler. Argyll. corran-lìn sm Corn-spurrey, see cluain-lìn. corran-sgathaidh sm Pruning-hook. 2(MMcL) Hook for cutting the lower part off sheaves of corn for thatch. corran-shioman. sf see corshiomain. corran-fiaclach (CR) sm Serrated or toothed reaping-hook. This kind of sickle, like some other implements, is now known only by tradition in the Southern and Eastern Highlands, although still in common use in the North West."

Seinn fo Sgàil nan Geugan Uaine - Songs from the Greenwood

UNESCO - THE WATERS BY IONA

The Bras d'Or Preservation Foundation was established as a conservation organization in 1993. Its initial interest in a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve designation for the great underwater canyon situated at St. Andrews Channel in the Bras d'Or's east end was sparked in 2003 and further explored by an internal steering committee which has evolved as the Bras d'Or Lake Biosphere Association. The committee soon discovered that this dramatic feature of the lake didn't meet Man and the Biosphere criteria per se, but was rather a fit in the larger eco-system of the Bras d'Or and its watershed area. Included in UNESCO's requirement for Biosphere status is the need for a human presence that interacts with a specific environment: a condition easily met in the case of the Bras d'Or as it borders on native and "Scottish" communities.

Following an assiduous period of complicated efforts resulting in stakeholders brought to understanding and agreement, the association announced on April 9th, 2011 UNESCO approval of the Bras d'Or Lake, and its attendant water system, for nomination to become part of the global Biosphere Reserve Network. Official designation was given on June 29th, 2011 in Dresden, Germany.

Highland Village Museum, high on the hill at *Rubha Eachainn Mhóir* (Hector's Point) and overlooking *Loch Mór nam Barrach* (the Bras d'Or), congratulates the Bras d'Or Biosphere Reserve Association and friends, for their vision, labours, success and example in securing for posterity the underpinning of a sustainable future of "The Lake and its watershed". *Guma fada bhios ceò as ur taighean* (Long may smoke rise from your houses.)

The following song was composed by Hughie MacKenzie (*Eòghann Ghilleasbaig Sheumais*), from the rear of Christmas Island. In it he expresses his affection for the Bras d'Or Lake and surrounding countryside. ☺



Eilean Mo Ghaoil

Fonn: A chiall nach mise bha 'n eilean mo ghaoil
A' fuireach am bothan mu choinneamh a' chaoil,
Far faicinn na beanntan, na gleanntan 's na raoin,
'S na luing mach o 'n chala 's siùil gheala mar sgaoil.

*(Pity I wasn't in the island I love, living in a bothy facing the *strait where I could see the hills, glens, upland pastures and sailing ships off the harbor with their white sails spread.)*

*Barraman's Strait

'S e Eilean Cheap Breatuinn dha 'n dug mi mo spéis,
Gun àite cho maiseach ri fhaicinn fo 'n ghréin;
Tha nuallan na mara is fanna-ghaoth thar sléibh,
'Gam thàladh gu m'dhachaidh 's fìor aigne `nam cheum.

(I gave my love to Cape Breton Island. There is nowhere under the sun more fair to be seen. The murmur of the sea, and wind's rustling over hillside slopes, draw me home with spirited steps.)

Càit' a' bheil sealladh ri fhaicinn na 's bóidhch'
Na 'n eilean mo ghaoil air dà thaobh a' Bhràs d'Or;
Na fearann chaidh shaoradh a' laomadh le lòn,
'S na beanntanan àrd' a' cumail sgàil air gach pòr.

(Where can be seen a more enthralling sight than in my darling island on two sides of the Bras d'Or? Cultivated land brims with sustenance while lofty hills provide shade for every crop.)

Air tulaichean àrd' tha gun àireamh mun cuairt,
Tha pailteas a' fàs de gach bàrr orr' dha 'n t-sluagh;
'S e rìomhachd chuir nàdur air àilleachd nam bruach
Thug dùsgadh air tàlant nam bàrd iomadh uair.

(On innumerable surrounding hills, every crop grows in abundance for the people. Nature's beauty, imprinted on embankments of loveliness, have often inspired the bards' muse.)

An t-eilean `s nach bàsaich a' Ghàidhlig gu bràth,
Tha an sluagh ann bàigheil do chànain nam bàrd.
O eilein a' choibhneis, na h-aogheachd `s a' ghràidh
'S e an t-eilean am bu mhiann leam gu siorraidh ann tàmh.

(In the island where Gaelic language will never die, its people are well disposed to the language of poets. Oh island of generosity, hospitality and warmheartedness, it is the island where I wish to forever remain.)

Bhiodh òganaich sgairteil ag obair gu dian
'S chluinnt' iad air astar seinn òran mar am miann.
Gach maighdean `s cailleach a' bleoghann, no `sniomh
Toirt fonn air na rannan a fhreagradh dha 'n gnìomh.

(Vigorous youth would be hard at work. They could be heard from far-off, singing spontaneously. Each young girl and old woman milking, or spinning giving air to verses suitable for their task.)

Mo shoraidh-sa greis bhuam gu eilean mo ghaoil,
Tha mise fo chràdh on latha dh'fhàg mi an caol.
'S tric a chì mi an aisling an cladach `s na raoin,
'S mi rithist `s an dachaidh tha 'm fàsgadh nan craobh.

(Hasten from me my greeting to the island I adore. I am tormented since the day I left the strait (Grand Narrows) Often in dreams, I see the shoreline and hill pastures and am once again at my home in the shelter of trees.) ☺

Translated by Seumas Watson

An Rubha Review

TALES FROM HIGHLAND PERTSHIRE

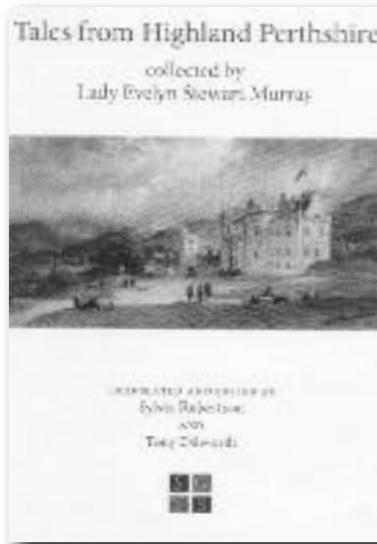
By Lady Evelyn Stewart Murray, Sylvia Robertson & Anthony Dilworth

A book review by Seumas Watson

Tales from Highland Perthshire (collected by Evelyn Stewart Murray) brings to readers over 240 stories and songs edited from the 19th century manuscripts compiled by Lady Evelyn Stewart Murray, 1868 - 1940. As a Scottish Gaelic Text Society, the usual high standards of editing apply, along with forewords in English and Gaelic by Donald Meek, editors' preface by Sylvia Robertson and Tony Dilworth, extensive bibliography and introduction to Lady Murray and the environ of Perthshire Gaelic. Extending to 615 pages of text and notes, contents also include biographical notes on local informants, notable individuals and an index of place-names from about the estate of Blair Castle, residence of the 7th Duke of Atholl, father of Lady Murray.

Tales from Highland Perthshire imparts its stories on a variety of fronts to reveal the life and times of Gaelic-speaking Perthshire among its rank and file and gentry. Of no small interest is the matter of Lady Evelyn's own fluency, spoken in the dialect of her home region. The Duke of Atholl was himself a Gaelic speaker, who did much to encourage maintenance of the language in the bounds of his properties, containing some 350,000 acres. Certainly an exception as an aristocrat of the Victorian Age, he did his best to ensure that residents of the Atholl estate, in their various capacities, were Gaelic-speakers with good command of the language. The Duke's support for Gaelic included his own six children, all of whom were nursed by local women as first language Gaelic-speakers.

An intellectually gifted woman of the upper-classes, Lady Evelyn's interest in her first spoken tongue led to a path of



self-education as she developed Gaelic literacy skills, began a related library and attuned herself grammatically. The Duke's reaction to his daughter's further interest in Gaelic matters was, initially, one of encouragement, although this enthusiasm was not shared by his wife who did not speak the language and rigidly perceived the social orientation for women of her class. In 1881, and in the face of growing parental disapproval, Lady Evelyn applied herself ever more zealously to collection of Gaelic folktales from the countryside surrounding Blair Castle. The resulting depletion of her health, and exacerbated tensions with her family, found her traveling to Switzerland in December of that year and finally to Belgium, where she remained self-exiled, leaving Gaelic Perthshire behind to find passion in the artistic creation of lace and needlework.

Through the pages of Tales from Perthshire, Lady Evelyn's contribution to Scotland's Gaelic legacy is as unique as it is considerable. The only woman collector of Gaelic folktales active during the era, her manuscripts were ultimately donated to the School of Scottish Studies by the 10th Duke of Atholl. Their contents, also containing some songs, are the core for this excellent book, rendered with respect and great care by its editors who provide a solid cache of attending knowledge further focusing the late 19th century Atholl Gàidhealtachd. Key to this understanding are sections on dialect, glossary, placenames, tale types and brief bios of informants, along with photos of eminent persons related to the manuscripts. An impressive bibliography is located at the front.

Donald Meek's final words in his English forward speak well for this lovely volume and the Lady Evelyn story: "Lady Evelyn has waited a long time for this honour, but it has come to pass. She deserves it richly, as do all who esteem the Gaelic-speaking people of Scotland, their language and their literature."

Tales from Highland Perthshire is available through The Scottish Gaelic Texts Society. ☺

Tales from Highland Perthshire Volume 20 of Scottish Gaelic Texts, Lady Evelyn Stewart Murray, Sylvia Robertson, Anthony Dilworth, Published by Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 2009

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

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An Rubha Rewvìw

LIVE AT THE HOUSE - DONALD ANGUS AND ELIZABETH BEATON

CD REVIEW by *Carmen MacArthur*

“Live at the House” is a delightful recording that captures the unique Gaelic sound of Donald Angus Beaton’s Mabou Coal Mines fiddling style. The recording, which features his wife Elizabeth Beaton (née MacEachen) on piano, is comprised of the very best of traditional tunes, as well as some of Donald Angus’s own compositions. Recorded in the 1970s, at Donald Angus and Elizabeth’s home, the recording captures the joy and spontaneity of a house session without distracting noise that can detract from home recordings. According to the liner notes, the recordings were made during a series of visits by Father John Angus Rankin and his friend Collie Beaton. Surely, Donald Angus and Elizabeth were at their best while enjoying an evening of music with good friends. The simple love of traditional music comes through loud and clear in this recording and it makes it easy to imagine oneself among the lucky listeners in the Beaton household on Sunday evenings.

Although Donald Angus was not as prolific a composer as some, such as, Dan R. MacDonald, almost all of the tunes he composed have become staples of the Cape Breton fiddle repertoire. Tunes that can be heard on the CD such as “Joey Beaton’s reel,” and, “The Joys of Mabou Mines” are favourites of dancers at square dances and céilidhs because of their lively lilt and rhythmic drive. Donald Angus was so steeped in the Gaelic fiddling tradition that his tunes flow seamlessly and are almost indistinguishable from the classic traditional tunes included on the CD such as the ever popular King George Medley.

Donald Angus’ musical pedigree can be traced back to Lochaber and the Isle of Skye, two areas where fiddling and piping are noted to have been strong. Donald Angus undoubtedly inherited much of his musical tradition from his father Angus Ronald Beaton, from MacKinnon’s Brook, who was a piper and fiddler. The Mabou Coal Mines style that can be heard on this recording is characterise bace notes which mimic the sound of the pipes. One of the outstanding unique characteristics of the style is referred to as “dotting” or strathspeying” the reels which gives the music a wonderful lift, especially for dancing. Variations of the Mabou Coalmines style can still be heard, especially in the playing of his children and grandchildren.

The music on this recording is so rich and exciting that it has sustained its appeal for more than forty years. It has no need for the complicated arrangements and instru-

mentation that are common on some recent traditional recordings. During the years when traditional music was not in fashion, the Beatons kept it alive in their home for the enjoyment of family and friends. Many thanks to the Beaton family and the Celtic Music Centre for recognising the value of this recording and for making it available for the enjoyment of traditional music lovers. ☺

Live At the House was produced by Donald Angus’s son Kinnon Beaton and granddaughter Andrea Beaton in 2008.

Carmen MacArthur former staff member.



Tapadh leibh-se gu mór

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



Province of Nova Scotia

through the Departments of Agriculture, Transportation & Infrastructure Renewal, Economic & Rural Development & Tourism, and the Office of Gaelic Affairs;



Government of Canada

through the Department of Canadian Heritage, Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation & Service Canada;



Municipality of Victoria County

through District 1 and the Recreation & Tourism Dept.

DONSIDE / DÒMHNALL GOBHA `S BONAID AIR STRATHSPEY

Seumas Watson & Pauline MacLean

The image shows a musical score for a strathspey. It is divided into two sections: 'DON SIDE.' and 'Strathspey.'. Each section consists of two staves, a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The music is written in a traditional strathspey style, featuring a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, often with grace notes. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is common time (C). The score is presented in a slightly curved, scroll-like format.

Donside is a place name from Aberdeenshire. It refers to the River Don in Scotland's north-east. The tune appears noted as far back as 1757 in Rober Bremner's *Collection of Scots Reels or Country Dances*, the first such collection in which strathspeys were published. Oft played by Cape Breton fiddlers to the present, Donside was recorded on 78 RPM by the late Margaree fiddler Angus Allan Gillis (*Aonghas mac Alasdair Eòghainn Aoghmais Eòghainn*), a favorite player for step-dancers in his day.

A popular, strathspey, the late Joe Neil MacNeil (*Eòs Nill Bhig*) reported its Gaelic name as *Dòmhnall Gobha `s Bonaid Air* (Donald Smith Wears a Bonnet.) He provided the following words for the tune as a *port à beul*.

Tha Dòmhnall Gobh' `s bonaid air
Tha Dòmhnall Gobh' `s bonaid air
Tha Dòmhnall Gobh' `s bonaid air
Tha bonaid mhór `s bonaid air

Donald Smith is wearing a bonnet 3x
He is wearing a large bonnet and there's a bonnet on it.

Tha bean na bainnse `s currac oirr'
Tha bean na bainnse `s currac oirr'
Tha bean na bainnse `s currac oirr'
'S bidh e feasda tuilleadh oirre

There is a bride and she wears a cap 3x
She will wear it forever more ☺

Notation for Don Side can be found in The Skye Collection of the Best Reels & Shathspeys Vol. II 1887, Paterson & Sons, Edinburgh, Scotland. The Skye Collection is part of the Joe MacLean Collection of Scottish and Cape Breton Music housed at the Highland Village.

Transcription and translation: Seumas Watson





Our People

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & ACCOLADES

Tapadh Leibh-se Gu Mór

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

Project Partners

Cabot Trail Motel, Castle Moffett, Celtic Colours Festival Society, Celtic Heart of North America Cooperative, Destination Cape Breton, Eskasoni First Nation, Glenora Distillery, Highland Heights Inn, Municipality of Victoria County, Musique Royale, NSCAD University, Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture, Nova Scotia Office of Gaelic Affairs, Sage Voices Society, St. FX University (Angus L. Macdonald Library), *Sgoil Mhic Fhraing a' Chualais*/Rankin School of the Narrows, and Silver Dart Lodge.

Farm Program Partners

Dell Corbett, Grand Mira ("Mira Jean" Clydesdale horse); Doug & Susan MacDonald, Ottawa Brook (Highland cattle); and Truman and Laurinda Matheson, St. Andrews (Soay sheep).

Donations

Brenda Barclay, London, ON; Pat Bates, Sydney; Janet Cameron, Boisdale; R. S. Latimer, Truro; Anne MacNeil, Ottawa Brook; Michael A. MacNeil, Benacadie; David Newlands, Dartmouth; River and Lakeside Pastoral Charge, and Jim St.Clair, Mull River.

Stòras na h-Òigridh/ Treasures of Youth

Donations: Vic Aucoin, Sydney; Baddeck Home Hardware, Baddeck; Boudreau's Fuels, Arichat; Canso Ford Sales, Port Hawkesbury; Daphne Dominy, Renfrew, ON; Charles Ellis, Little Narrows; Jim Gillis, North Sydney; Helen's Bakery, Baddeck; Denis Larade, Cheticamp; Raymond

McCann, Vienna, VA; Rebecca McConnaughey, Saint Peter, MN (IHO Deborah Goodwin); Margaret McCurdy, Halifax; Jack & Aileen MacKillop, Baddeck; Angus MacLean, Lower Washabuck; Calum MacLean, Dartmouth; David MacLean, Millville; Jennifer MacLean, Millville; Martin MacLean, Millville; Susan MacLean, Sydney Forks; Vince & Charlotte MacLean, Washabuck; Vince & Natalie MacLean, East Bay; Charles & Mary MacLennan Foundation, Truro; Jack & Anita MacLeod, Ingonish Beach; Deidre MacNeil, Vienna, VA; Lisa and Boyd MacNeil, Sydney; Jim Matheson, Bedford; Gloria Munro, Whycocomagh; Johnanna Nalan, Ledyard, CT (IMO Ella MacAulay, Seafoam & IHO Edith S. Cross, Norwich, CT); Piper Pewter, Indian Brook; Larry & Marge Sondler, Chicago, IL (first donor to campaign); Victoria Standard, Baddeck; and Ken Wilson Home Hardware, Sydney.

Artefacts & Archival Donations

Lorrie MacKinnon/John MacKinnon/Peter Jack MacLean, Carol Law, Dorothy Barnard (family of Norman MacIver); Charles Bayne, Stephen Vigneau, and John Marshall.

Best Wishes

-We extend best wishes to Carmen MacArthur, former chief interpreter. We also like to extend best wishes to staff members Colleen Beaton, Aileen MacLean and Gerry MacNeil who have been dealing with health issues over the past few months.

Symphathies

To the families and friends of the Highland Village and supporters of Gaelic in Nova Scotia who have lost loved ones over the past year: Alex Francis MacKay, Glendale (Gaelic speaker and fiddling icon), Ken

Nilsen, Antigonish (Nova Scotia Gaelic scholar and supporter), Betty Ivey, North Sydney (mother to Marlene Ivey), Peter Murphy, Iona; Duncan MacNeil, McKinnons Harbour (former volunteer, father of staff member Patricia Gaudley and father-in-law of director Rodney Chaisson), Angus MacDonald, Ottawa Brook (former volunteer) and Carol Kenndy (mother of blacksmith Jamie Kenndy). Our hearts go out to all their families for their loss.

Retiring Board Members

Special thanks to retiring board members Donald Beaton, Little Narrows and Catherine Ann Fuller, Baddeck for their years of service on the Board of Trustees of the Society. ∞



Donald Beaton

25 years of service on the NSHVS Board



Catherine Ann Fuller

9 years of service on the NSHVS Board

Commun Clachan Gàidhealach na h-Albann Nuaidh/Nova Scotia Highland Village Society

Board of Trustees (Elected June 2012) - Kathleen MacKenzie, Antigonish (President); Hector MacNeil, Sydney River (Vice President); Hugh MacKinnon, Benacadie (Secretary); Susan Cameron, Antigonish (Treasurer); Charlene Ellis, Little Narrows; Madeline Harvey, Estmere; Pam MacGillivray, Shunacadie; Hector MacNeil, Iona; Walter MacNeil, Sydney/Grand Narrows; Susan Stubbert-Samways, Iona; Hugh Webb, Antigonish; Paul Wukitsch, Shunacadie; and Daniel Chiasson, Baddeck (Legal Advisor).

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Complete the Tune Campaign

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 *Stòras 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.

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.

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



-  Sixteenth Note \$50
 -  Dotted Eighth Note \$100
 -  Quarter Note \$200
 -  Eighth Note \$500
 -  Half Note \$1000
 -  Treble Clef \$5000
- or
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