

Slighe nan Gaidheal
PO Box 31834
Seattle, WA 98103
PH.: 206-903-9452
www.slighe.com



Photo by Dale DeGraff
Storyteller Tracy Chipman shares a story she collected from elders in the Outer Hebrides at the AGM.

BOOK REVIEW:
*Seonaidh Mòr, le Calum MacMhao-
ilein agus dealbhan le Dòmhnall R.
MacThòmais, Gairm: Leabhar*
106, c. 1993, 57 pp. ISBN 1 871901 26 X
by Nancy Neveln

This short novel in good Lewis *Gàidhlig* presents a romantic triangle somewhat reminiscent of the strong love between Odysseus and Penelope, complete with world travels and one crooked-tongued suitor, but minus such supernatural elements as meddling gods and goddesses, man-eating cyclopes, and sexy jealous women such as Circe and Calypso, although there is a Siren of sorts. The love of land and sea comes through clearly in both vocabulary and drawings. Note: there is some Lewis eclipsis and syncope, for example "na" for the past tense verb marker "an do" and "mar" for "mur" ("if not..."), but the idioms and vocabulary are great. Students in Level 4 of the Z2G program might find this useful in learning more about Hebridean culture of the early 19th century.



MacRae Award Presented to Gary Ingle by Nan Pardew

I'm thrilled to announce in *Am Bradan Fiosa* that the 2011 Alexander MacRae Memorial Award for outstanding contribution to Gaelic culture was presented to Gary Ingle at the Slighe nan Gaidheal Annual General Meeting on October 22. Here are comments from those who nominated Gary and seconded the nomination:

"Gary was a student in Rich Hill's first Gaelic class in 1989 and has been dedicated to learning and studying the language ever since, so he outranks all but Rich in longevity in his passion for Gaelic and involvement in our community. He was metic-

ulous in his translations of Gaelic lyrics for the Féis songbooks and his efforts were praised by Rachel MacPherson for their excellence when she proofread the 2008 songbook for us. Throughout the years, Gary has sought out every opportunity

to speak the language and converse with native speakers of different dialects in his efforts to learn and help preserve the subtle nuances of the spoken language. Gary's articles in *Am Bradan Fiosa*

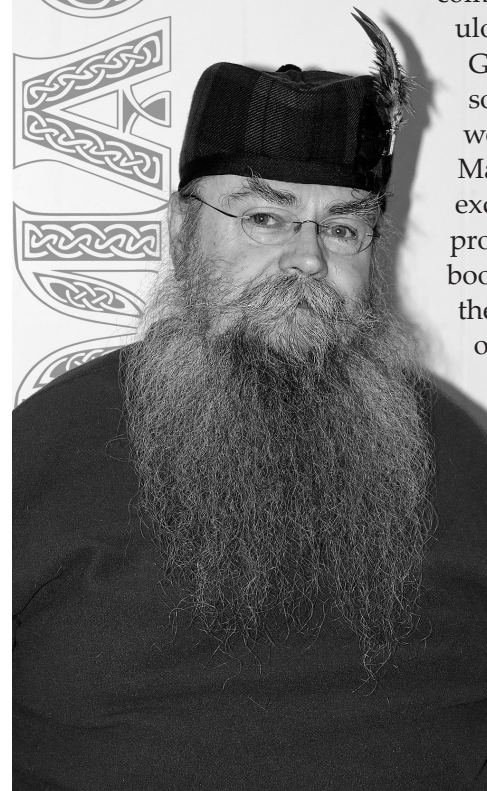
attest to the high level of skill he has achieved in reading and understanding Gaelic literature that he then shares with the rest of us."

"Gary has contributed substantially to the furtherance of Gaelic language and culture in the Seattle area, and to Slighe nan Gaidheal, in the following ways:

- Sponsored a GID scholarship
- Served as a substitute instructor for the GID program
- Led a Gaelic reading/discussion group
- Serves on SnG's Gaelic Education Committee
- Has contributed an article in Gaelic to every issue of *Am Bradan Fiosa* for the past six years
- Has been a translation consultant and provided editorial services for Gaelic content presented by other learners"

"Gary has served on the Gaelic Education Committee longer than I can say. He's been on the Informal Translation Panel, possibly since its inception, and is now the Informal Coordinator of the Informal Translation Panel. He leads a Gaelic reading group. He's on our list of reserve presenters for Zero to Gaelic. All this is possible because he has achieved a level of scholarly knowledge in Gaelic which is possibly unsurpassed in our community. His participation in Gaelic Education is an expression of his desire to share this knowledge. His frequent attendance at Slighe nan Gaidheal events (Féisean, AGMs, concerts) shows... commitment to the organization."

Meal do naidheachd, Gary!



Slighe nan Gaidheal’s
Board of Directors



Kate Freeburg
President
katefreeburg@slighe.com
position 6 | term expires 2013



Seumas Gagne
Vice President
seumasgagne@slighe.com
position 1 | term expires 2012



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Treasurer
miriahhetherington@slighe.com
position 4 | term expires 2013



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Gaelic Education Officer
geoff@slighe.com
position 8 | term expires 2014



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Director
georgeyoung@slighe.com
position 5 | term expires 2013



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Development Officer
mary@slighe.com
position 3 | term expires 2012



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Director
penny@slighe.com
position 9 | term expires 2014



Russ Smith
Director
russsmith@slighe.com
position 2 | term expires 2012



George Christensen
Director
position 7 | term expires 2014

Publication Information

Am Bradan Fiosa is produced on a quarterly basis for the members of Slighe nan Gaidheal by the Communications Committee and additional contributors.
Editor: Nan Pardew
Layout: Linda Henry

Contributors to this issue: Penny MacLeod DeGraff, Gary Ingle, Nancy Neveln, Michael Newton, Nan Pardew, and George Young

Mission Statement: The mission of *Am Bradan Fiosa* is to provide the membership of Slighe nan Gaidheal with news and information about upcoming events and items of interest to Gaelic language learners, and to document the life of our community.

Slighe nan Gaidheal members and supporters are welcome to submit items for publication in *Am Bradan Fiosa* that are Gaelic-related and meet its editorial guidelines. Publication of such contributions does not imply endorsement of programs or events that are not sponsored by Slighe nan Gaidheal.

Next Publication deadline: March. 15, 2012

FIRST FOOTING a Chàirdean chòir:

We’d like to invite you to First Footing in our homes on *Latha a’ Challuinn* (New Year’s Day). Seirm, Slighe nan Gaidheal’s Gaelic musical group, will be joining the festivities to sing some songs and play tunes for dancing.

This fine old Scottish custom known as “First Footing” or “*Calluinn*,” is when folks go visiting others in the village on New Year’s Day. Folks show up, put the First Foot in the door, and bring “*rudeigin a dh’itheas tu, rudeigin a dh’òlas tu, agus rudeigin a chumas tu blath*” (something for you to eat, something for you to drink, and something to keep you warm). Everyone sings, dances, eats, drinks, warms up, puts a blessing on the house for the New Year—and then the party moves on, often taking the left-over food on to the next house.

So plan to join us for food, drink, songs, tunes, and general good fellowship on New Year’s Day. Friends, guests, and instruments are always welcome.

12 NOON Home of Margaret and Gary Salmi 3210 NE 163rd St., Lake Forest Park WA 98155 (206) 364-2539	3PM Home of Judith and Dale Cummings 3561 NE 166th St Lake Forest Park WA 98155 (206) 365-3561	6PM Home of Carmen Mettler and Patrick Weigel 12517 Corliss Ave N Seattle WA 98133 (206) 354-6625
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Thanks to Slighe nan Gaidheal for letting us use its newsletter to send out this invitation. This is not an official Slighe nan Gaidheal event, but is a way that many Slighe members and friends participate in this favorite holiday tradition of celebrating the New Year.

—Margaret, Gary, Judith, Dale, Carmen, and Patrick

An Triop Agam
(no: ciamar a bhitheas mi a’ cur seachad ùine nan laithean-saora aig àm Nollaige am bliadhna)

le “taibhs’”

An cuala sibh mun “triop” agam? An-diugh fhéin bha mi a’ faighinn a-mach às mo chàr agus a’ dol a-steach ann an oifis le H&R Block (ach is e sin sgeul eile!) astar beag bho Northgate. Thuislich mi. (“Thriop mi” san teanga borb “Beurlig.” Seadh, tha fhios agam, is droch fhealla-dhà e. Dé eile a bhitheas sibh a’ sùileachadh ris? Tha mi a’ sgrìobhadh an aiste seo, agus mise làn de Phearcoset.)

Uill, gus sgeul fada a dhèanamh geàrr, chaidh mi dhan dotair, ghabh iad gath-X no dhà, agus fhuair mi an droch naidheachd: tha failcean briste agam. Ciod e sin, “failcean” tha sibh a’ faighneachd? Ceap glùine. Patella, ma’s Laidin a chòrdas ribh.

OK ma tha, feumaidh gum bi mo ghlùn gun ghluasad, ‘s e sin a ràdh, gun lùbadh, ann an deamhan de dh’inneal air feadh sia seachdainean. Gonadh air! An diabhal mise! Is gann gur urrainn dhomh coise-achd le trostanan, agus glé dhoirbh dhomh faighinn a-steach is a-mach nam chàr. Cha bhi mi a’ draibheadh feadh có aige tha fhios de dh’ùine.

Agus is ann mar sin, ged a bha mi ag obair gu dìcheallach air aiste inntinneach, fheallsanachail, fholaimte mun bhuaidh a bha aig teanga nan seann-Lochlannaich air a’ Ghàidhlig—cha bhi sibh ga leughadh anns an iris seo de *ABF*.

Abair truas.



Bottom Left: Gaelic Education Officer Geoff Sammons gives his report at the Annual General Meeting.

Below: Rita Skeeter (aka Dale Cummings) interviews Professor Trelawney (aka Judith Cummings) as she shares her divination of children speaking Gaelic in Seattle during the Children and Parents group report at the AGM.

Photos by Dale DeGraff

Committee Chair Directory

- Awards**
vacant
- Communications**
Seumas Gagne | seumasgagne@slighe.com
- Development**
Mary Fears | mary@slighe.com
- Féis Seattle**
Kate Freeburg | katefreeburg@slighe.com
- Gaelic Education**
Geoff Sammons | geoff@slighe.com
- Library and Archives**
Chas Talbot | chas@slighe.com
- Parents and Children**
Judith Cummings | judith@slighe.com
- Gaelic Music**
Penny McLeod DeGraff | penny@slighe.com
Seumas Gagne | seumasgagne@slighe.com

Dear friends of
Scottish heritage,



This is the time when high school students are thinking seriously about their aspirations for higher education, their career, and their lives. Given your role in promoting Scottish heritage, I would like to encourage you, in turn, to encourage the youth of your community to consider studying formally the history, culture, language, and literature of their Scottish Highland ancestors.

As you may know, there were a large number of settlements and communities across North America which were founded by Scottish Highland emigrants in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century—so many, in fact, that Scottish Gaelic was the third-most common European language in Canada at the time of confederation (1867) and one of many immigrant languages thriving in urban centres such as Boston, Toronto, New York, Montreal, Chicago, San Francisco, and Vancouver in the early 20th century.

The Celtic Department of St. Francis Xavier University is the only undergraduate department fully supporting the field of Celtic Studies in North America, with a special emphasis on Scottish Gaelic. Although some students choose Celtic Studies as their major, others choose to take Celtic courses as electives to enhance majors in other fields.

Scottish Gaelic is at a particularly pivotal stage at this moment: after enduring centuries of attack and neglect, the government in Scotland is offering an unprecedented level of support and encouragement for the language and culture, and the Office of Gaelic Affairs was established in Nova Scotia in 2006 to provide support and develop an infrastructure for Gaelic in this region of Canada. Significant agreements for collaboration have, in fact, been developed between these two bodies, acknowledging that the last Gaelic-speaking community on North

American soil is found here, in Nova Scotia. To sustain this momentum, Gaelic needs teachers, scholars, civil servants, performers, and informed advocates—skills for which a university degree is crucial. Our graduates have gone on to fulfill all of these roles and others, in both Nova Scotia and Scotland. We offer scholarships and bursaries which aid students in their studies here and in travel to Scotland.

I urge you to pass this information on to your members. Our departmental Web site contains many details about our department—courses offered, financial aid available, the history of Gaelic in Canada, and so on—as well as testimonials from our students and the journeys they have undertaken after their training with us. See <http://www.mystfx.ca/academic/celtic-studies/>

I would also urge you to watch and pass on a video I have created about our department, which features a number of students telling about their own paths into this wonderful field. It is on YouTube at:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UWIFtJy0w-Q>

There has never been greater reason for hope for the future of Scottish Gaelic, and never more opportunities to be involved in its development. We demonstrate to students that Scottish Highland heritage is not just a curious relic of the past but a living culture that can thrive now and in the future. Your communities and youth can be involved in ensuring that happens here and elsewhere.

If there is any question that we can answer for you about these opportunities, please contact us.

Leis gach deagh dhùrachd

Michael Newton

Féis Seattle Presenters Announced

by George Young

We are pleased to announce the presenters for the eighth Féis Seattle. Our seven presenters of language, instrument, and song all have great Celtic traditions and skills to share. Join Slighe nan Gaidheal's thriving community of Scottish Gaelic language and culture enthusiasts for Féis Seattle 2012, to be held June 13 through 17, 2012 at historic Fort Worden, located along the Admiralty Inlet on the Olympic peninsula near Port Townsend, Washington



Language Presenters

this year will be:

- **Beginning Speakers**—Muriel Fisher a native of the Isle of Skye and the founder and director of the Tucson Gaelic Institute. She also teaches regularly at the University of Arizona and in the summers at *Sabhal Mor Ostaig*, the Gaelic-medium college on her native island. <http://www.murielofskye.com/murielofskye.com/Welcome.html>
- **Emerging Speakers**—Rachel McPherson, who's spoken Gaelic from childhood, was born on Skye and raised in Benbecula, Harris, and Inverness. Recently retired as Deputy Head Teacher in Scotland's exciting new Glasgow Gaelic School, she has devoted her life to Gaelic education.
- **Immersion Speakers**—Margie Beaton a native Gaelic speaker from the Island of Eriskay, Scotland. She currently lives in Mabou, Cape Breton and has recently retired as Gaelic Teacher and Vice Principal at Dalbrae Academy in Mabou.



Instrument Presenters

this year will be:

- **Bagpipes**—Barry Shears, a native of Glace Bay, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia. He is an acknowledged expert on the history of traditional piping in Nova Scotia and its intrinsic connection to the Gaelic language, music and culture. An award-winning musician, Barry has performed

at concerts and festivals throughout North America, as well as in Scotland and Europe. <http://www3.ns.sympatico.ca/caper/>

- **Fiddle**—Kimberley Fraser, born on Cape Breton Island and nurtured within its rich musical heritage. She holds a degree in Violin performance from Berklee College of Music and in Celtic Studies from St Francis Xavier University in Nova Scotia. A master at the trio of fiddling, step dancing and piano, Kimberley is a much sought-after teacher for all three. <http://www.kimberleyfraser.com/>
- **Wire-strung Harp**—Cynthia Cathcart is an expert on the Clàrsach, the wire-strung harp of Scotland and Ireland. Performing and teaching internationally, she is a leader in a new wave of interest in this rare instrument. The brilliant revival of this ancient instrument is in part due to the uniquely bell-like resonance of brass, silver and gold harp strings, producing a sound unlike any other harp. Cynthia strives to bring the joy of making music on these precious strings to anyone who is drawn to their sound. <http://www.cynthiacathcart.net/>



Gaelic Song Presenter

this year will be Gillebride MacIlleMhaoil (MacMillan), from the Milton, South Uist.

Gaelic is his first language and Gaelic songs and traditions were always an important part of family life. Gillebride studied Celtic Studies at Glasgow University and is employed in Glasgow University Celtic and Gaelic Department. He has been described as having a voice "that wine writers would love to set their vocabularies loose on—mahogany richness with hints of sea salt, perhaps—and he has a way of singing in Gaelic that conveys the gist and tone of a song by subtle inflection."

Additional presenter information and photos can be provided upon request.

Féis Seattle is a festival consisting of prepaid three-day classes and workshops, with traditional

continued on pg. 4

Féis Seattle Presenters (Cont.)

evening céilidhs—gatherings at which participants sing, dance, play instruments, tell folk stories—and ends in a lively finale with a public concert on June 15, at Fort Worden’s USO Hall . It brings the tradition bearers together once every two years, and it gives students of Gaelic and traditional Celtic instruments the chance to study with all seven presenters in a seaside setting of mists, greenery, and distant mountains, at a fraction of the cost of a trip to Scotland or Eastern Canada.

For additional Féis information, including class registration, housing, meals, costs, etc., contact Slighe nan Gaidheal, Féis Seattle 2012 Committee, PO Box 31834, Seattle, WA 98103, 206-903-9452, or through our Web site at: www.slighe.com/feis

Contact the Féis committee at www.slighe.com/feis2012committee



Above: Storyteller Tracy Chipman engages both children and adults with her wonderful stories at the AGM.



Top Right: Plenty of scrumptious food at the AGM potluck dinner!



Right: Nedra Gaskill and her granddaughters enjoy Tracy’s stories.

Photos by Dale DeGraff

Calendar of Events *For the most up-to-date and complete information, always check www.slighe.com/calendar.php*

- Sunday, Jan. 1

First Footing | Not an official Slighe nan Gaidheal event, but you know it will happen! Start your new year with food, friends, and Gaelic music!
Location: Private homes; see pg. 2 for details
- Sunday, Jan. 8
10:00 AM to 6:00 PM

Board of Directors Annual Retreat | New and returning Board members spend a full day working on Slighe nan Gaidheal’s medium and long term goals and the 2012 operating budget.
Location: A private home; email postmaster@slighe.com for details
- Saturday, Jan. 14
9:30 AM to 4:00 PM

Zero to Gaelic Intensive Day 3 | The third intensive day of the current program year. Register for a single day of Gaelic for the cost of only \$50.
Location: Shoreline Unitarian Universalist Church, 14724 1st Ave NE Shoreline, WA
- Sunday, Jan. 22
7:00 PM to 9:00 PM

Féis Seattle 2012 Committee Meeting | Open positions remaining on this committee can be found on the www.slighe.com Féis Seattle page.
Location: Skype; participate from the comfort and convenience of your home!
- Sunday, Feb. 8
7:00 PM to 9:00 PM

Féis Seattle 2012 Committee Meeting | Open positions remaining on this committee can be found on the www.slighe.com Féis Seattle page.
Location: Skype; participate from the comfort and convenience of your home!
- Sunday, Feb. 22
7:00 PM to 9:00 PM

Féis Seattle 2012 Committee Meeting | Open positions remaining on this committee can be found on the www.slighe.com Féis Seattle page.
Location: Skype; participate from the comfort and convenience of your home!
- Sunday, March 14
7:00 PM to 9:00 PM

Féis Seattle 2012 Committee Meeting | Open positions remaining on this committee can be found on the www.slighe.com Féis Seattle page.
Location: Skype; participate from the comfort and convenience of your home!
- Saturday, March 24
9:30 AM to 4:00 PM

Zero to Gaelic Intensive Day 4 | The fourth intensive day of the current program year. Register for a single day of Gaelic for the cost of only \$50.
Location: Shoreline Unitarian Universalist Church, 14724 1st Ave NE Shoreline, WA
- Sunday, March 28
7:00 PM to 9:00 PM

Féis Seattle 2012 Committee Meeting | Open positions remaining on this committee can be found on the www.slighe.com Féis Seattle page.
Location: Skype; participate from the comfort and convenience of your home!
- Looking ahead....

May 19

Seirm Spring Concert and Dance

June 13-17

Féis Seattle 2012
- Seirm

Rehearsal Schedule

All rehearsals are held at:
Ingraham High School
1819 N 135th St Seattle, WA

Monday	Jan.	9	7:30 - 9:30 PM	Singers only
Monday	Jan.	23	7:30 - 9:30 PM	Band only
Monday	Jan.	30	7:30 - 9:30 PM	All
Monday	Feb.	6	7:30 - 9:30 PM	Singers only
Monday	Feb.	13	7:30 - 9:30 PM	Band only
Monday	Feb.	27	7:30 - 9:30 PM	All
Monday	Mar.	5	7:30 - 9:30 PM	Singers only
Monday	Mar.	12	7:30 - 9:30 PM	Band only
Monday	Mar.	19	7:30 - 9:30 PM	All
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