

An Naidheachd Againne

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Mòd Naiseanta 2005

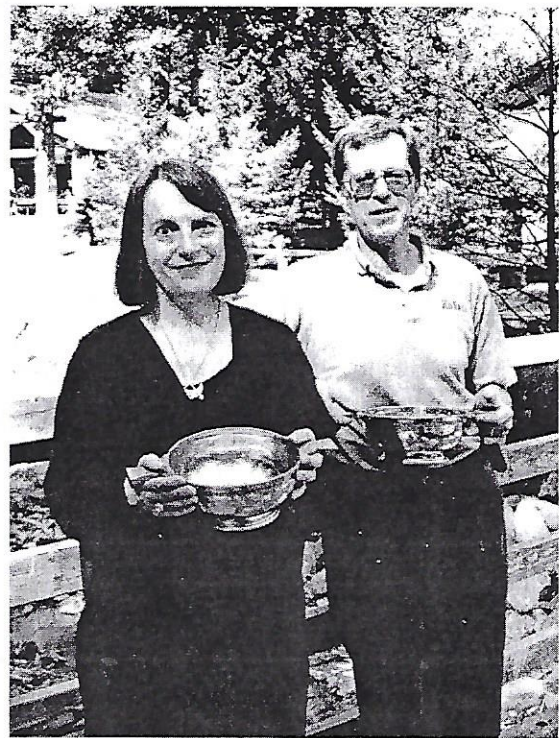
Beard, Ramsey take top honors in Ligonier; Beathag Mhoireasdan to adjudicate in 2006

There are many ingredients to a successful mòd: singing, storytelling and poetry; a certain amount of sweat shed by nervous competitors; the camaraderie of old friends meeting once again and the excitement of newcomers attending a mòd for the first time; musicians striking up sessions and Gaelic speakers and learners striking up conversations; cèilidhs and late-night cèilidhs after the cèilidhs; and, not least, a skilled adjudicator who provides guidance and advice to learners in a constructive and positive way.

To this list some would add a healthy (depending on your measure) dose of libation — usually in the traditional form of *uisge beatha*. And who would say they're wrong?

All of these ingredients helped make the 18th U.S. National Mòd a success, drawing competitors from from Massachusetts, Maryland, Virginia, Ohio and Colorado to Ligonier, Pa., for the weekend of Sept. 9-11, 2005. Gaelic learners from even farther away participated in the distance learning competition or "mail-in mòd."

The 2005 Mòd welcomed about 40 attendees: Mòd competitors, organizers and supporters as well as adjudica-



*Gold Medallists Ellen Beard and Rudy Ramsey.
See page 3 for full results of the U.S. Mòd.*

In This Issue

- **ACGA Immersion Weekend** heads to North Carolina, combines with **ACGA Gaelic Song and Language Week**, July 2-7.
- **2006 Great Lakes Mòd** will welcome adjudicator Donnie Murdo Macleod to Wellington, Ohio Scottish Games June 23-25.
- * Glenn Wrightson's Gaelic **Book List** for 2006 (page 9)

tor Màiri Sine Chaimbeul of Plockton and the 2004 Gold Medallists from Scotland's Royal National Mòd, Iseabail Nic an t-Sagairt of Islay and Gillebride Mac 'Ille Mhaoil of South Uist.

Our guests from Scotland this year provided a great deal of support to Gaelic learners and speakers at all levels. It was particularly interesting to have three guests representing different regions of the *Gaidhealtachd* and different Gaelic dialects — South Uist, Lochalsh and Islay.

In addition, each of the guests was quite accomplished

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in many walks of life: Màiri Sine is an author, actor, folklorist, researcher and educator currently teaching at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, Scotland's Gaelic college on the Isle of Skye; Gillebride, who lives in Spain, teaches geography to students in Gaelic-medium units in Scottish schools and Gaelic to Spanish-speaking students in South America via the Internet; Iseabail, who speaks Chinese and has worked for the BBC in London and Scotland, is operations manager for Morrison Bowmore Distillers in Bowmore, Islay, producer of the Bowmore, Auchentoshan and Glen Garioch brands of single malt whisky.

The trip to the U.S. Mòd is now one of the prizes ACG awards its gold medallists each year, a step toward building stronger links between ACG and An Comunn Gaidhealach-America and closer ties between Gaelic speakers and learners in Scotland and North America.



Adjudicator Màiri Sine Chaimbeul (first row, second from right) with Mòd participants after the song competitions.

Each year months of preparation by organizers and competitors is condensed into three days of concentrated activity, beginning with a dinner and an orientation followed by storytelling and poetry competitions on Friday night and ending with workshops Sunday.

Friday night also provides a chance for competitors to rehearse their songs, meet and greet friends and, in general, work out the jitters. The last is made easier by the cèilidh that follows the storytelling and poetry competitions, which gives attendees the opportunity to meet the Scottish gold medallists, adjudicator and other guests. The storytelling competition introduced a few years ago continues to grow: four competitors entered the contest this year, two with traditional stories in Gaelic and two with shorter, humorous tales. **Glenn Wrightson** of Denver, Colo., was this year's top "seanchaidh," winning a new prize, the *Duais Dhaibhidh Mhic Risnidh* — David MacRitchie Award — for best recitation of a traditional tale in Gaelic.

Next up on Friday night was *bàrdachd*. Four competitors vied for top honors in poetry recitation, a competition won by **Cathleen MacKay** of Catlett, Va. **Kate Herr** of Richmond, Va., submitted a poem of her own, "Ceò na Mara," winning the *Duais Iain Mhic Mhurchaidh* (John Macrae award) for best original poem.

The song competitions at the heart of the Mòd began Saturday morning when the venue shifted to Idlewild Park

and the Ligonier Highland Games, which have hosted the U.S. National Mòd since 1995.

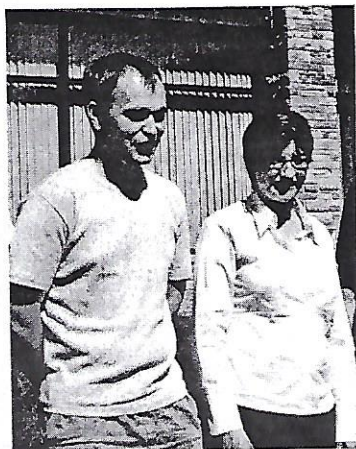
During the course of the day, competitors performed a variety of slow airs, waulking songs and puirt-à-beul. Micheal MacAoidh and his daughter Jessica joined in the "Seinn Mar Aon" or unison group singing competition. Three groups of waulkers from Ohio, Virginia and Maryland sang waulking songs round a plank table as they demonstrated how to waulk or mill cloth.

The finalists who won the U.S. gold medals hailed from Colorado and Virginia: Rudy Ramsey and Ellen Beard. Also competing in the finals were Mary Gillies Swope of Massachusetts and Anne Alexander of Ohio.

"Everything about this year's Mòd reminds us why we hold the Mòd each year in the first place," said ACGA President Micheal MacAoidh. "I think that our Mòd this year was really good — we know that the number of people

who attend the Mòd each year goes up and down, but it's all good. Màiri Sine did a great job as an adjudicator, and we're sure that folks who took part were really helped by her recommendations."

Preparations are now under way for the 19th annual Mòd, Sept. 8-10, when **Beathag Mhoireasdan** will be our adjudicator. But there's a whole "mòd season" to enjoy before then, with regional mòds in Ohio and North Carolina June 23-25 and July 8.



Gillebride and Iseabail

2005 U.S. National Mòd Results

Competitions at the Mòd

Sgeulachd – Storytelling

Recitation of a story from memory, traditional or otherwise.

1. Glenn Wrightson, Colorado
2. Liam Ó Caiside, Virginia
3. Micheal MacAoidh, Virginia
4. Scott Morrison, Maryland

Bàrdachd – Poetry

Recitation of a poem in Scottish Gaelic, competitor's choice.

1. Cathleen MacKay, Virginia
2. Kate Herr, Virginia
3. Scott Morrison, Maryland

Òran Mhall – Slow Air

Song of the competitor's choice sung to a slow air.

1. Ellen Beard, Virginia
2. Mary Swope, Massachusetts
3. Anne Alexander, Ohio

1. Rudy Ramsey, Colorado
2. Glenn Wrightson, Colorado
3. Micheal MacAoidh, Virginia

Òran Obrach – Work Song

Any of several types of work songs, competitor's choice.

1. Ellen Beard, Virginia
2. Anne Alexander, Ohio

1. Rudy Ramsey, Colorado
2. Glenn Wrightson, Colorado

Còmhlaín Luaidh / Waulking Groups

Group waulking or milling competition, competitors' choice.

1. Great Lakes Gaelic Singers
2. Richmond Waulkers
3. Mac-Talla & Friends

Seinn mar Aon – Unison Singing

Group singing, competitors' choice.

1. Jessica MacKay and Micheal MacAoidh, Virginia

Puirt-à-beul – Mouth Music

1. Mary Swope, Massachusetts

Mòd Finals

1. Ellen Beard, Virginia
Song: "Griogal Cridhe" Total Score: 549

1. Rudy Ramsey, Colorado
Song: "A Mhàiri Bhòidheach" Total Score: 549

2. Anne Alexander, Ohio
Song: "Uibhist mo Ghràidh" Total Score: 532

3. Mary Swope, Massachusetts
Song: "Bithidh Clann Ulaidh" Total Score: 533

Distance Learning Competition (Mail-in Mòd)

Creative Writing

Original story or prose composition in Gaelic.

1. Suzan Mackenzie

Original Poetry

Original poem or song in Gaelic.

1. Kate Herr
2. Cam MacRae
3. Scott Morrison

Drama Competition

Recorded performance of prescribed Gaelic drama.

1. Bodaich na Cruaiche
(Peter Clepper, Ashby McCown, Nick Freer)

Prose Translation/Recitation

New Beginners

1. Leigh MacBride
2. Anna Bruce

Advanced Beginners

1. Thomas Barclay

Advanced

1. David Grossett
2. Cam MacRae
3. Scott Morrison

(Continued next page)

Special Mòd Awards

◆ **Duais Sgoilearachd Sabhal Mòr Ostaig**

A scholarship presented by Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, Scotland's Gaelic college on the Isle of Skye, for best combined score in prose and poetry in the Mail-in Mòd: **Cam MacRae**

◆ **Duais Dhaibhidh Mhic Risnidh**

The David MacRitchie Award for best recitation of a traditional tale in Gaelic: **Glenn Wrightson**

◆ **Duais Iain Mhic Mhurchaidh**

The John Macrae award, named for the 18th century Gaelic bard of Kintail and North Carolina, presented for best original poem in Scottish Gaelic: **Kate Herr**

◆ **Searrag-Ghlainne Mhic Dhomhnaill**

Edinburgh Crystal decanter presented by Donald F. MacDonald of Edinburgh and North Carolina for best poetry recitation at the Mòd: **Cathleen MacKay**

◆ **Marietta MacLeod Cuach**

Presented by Donald F. MacDonald in memory of his wife to best over-all female singer: **Ellen Beard**

◆ **Herbert P. MacNeal Cuach**

Presented by the Clan MacNeil to best over-all male singer: **Rudy Ramsey**

◆ **SCOTS Shield**

Presented by the Scottish Club of the Twin States for best Waulking Song Demonstration: **Great Lakes Singers**

These special awards honor and encourage significant achievement in specific areas of Gaelic learning and Gaelic arts. Would you, your clan or organization like to sponsor a special award? Contact Mòd chair Nick Freer at neacalban1@aol.com.

ACGA's 10th Annual Immersion Program Moves to North Carolina for Full Week July 2-7

An Comunn Gàidhealach, America, is excited to announce a joint venture for 2006 in which the annual Gaelic Immersion Weekend and the annual Grandfather Mountain Gaelic Song and Language Week will be merged into one grand event to take place from July 2-7, 2006, at Lees-McRae College in the magnificent mountains of western North Carolina.

In the meanwhile plans are moving ahead for the 2007 Immersion Weekend, which will take place at the University of Texas at Arlington.

There will be five levels of Gaelic instruction this year, with no English at all used in Level 5. There also will be a fluent conversation class which will be led by several of the teachers in turn. **Catriona Parsons** and **Sorley MacDonald** will teach the language classes, **Kenna Campbell** and **Fiona MacKenzie** the song classes, and **Jamie MacDonald** will teach both song and language for beginners.

There will also be plenty of opportunities outside of class to practice speaking Gaelic with other students and instructors. Late afternoons will offer a choice of workshops, guided hiking, or just time to relax and enjoy the

surrounding area. Friday morning all students come together to share what they've learned during the week.

The workshop concludes just as the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games are getting underway down the road at MacRae Meadows on Grandfather Mountain.

As usual there will be a Gaelic tent at the games, and the North Carolina Gaelic Mòd will take place there on Saturday at 3 p.m. Participants in the workshop are urged to stay for the games and compete in the mòd.

For more information and a registration form, contact Cam MacRae at Cam.MacRae@charter.net or Libit Woodington at LibitW@aol.com or Jamie MacDonald at jrmacdon@stfx.ca.

Information on last year's Grandfather Mountain Song and Language Week is at www.acgamerica.org.

More details on this year's combined event will be available soon.

2006 will be the 10th anniversary of the ACGA IW and the 50th anniversary of the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games (July 6-9, 2006, Linville, N.C.). We're very excited about this joint event and hope to see you there!

Donnie Murdo Macleod to Adjudicate Great Lakes Mòd at Scottish Games in Wellington, Ohio, June 23-25

Mòd nan Lochan Mòra 2005 was held in conjunction with the Ohio Scottish Games for the first time last year. The event took place at the Lorain County Fairgrounds in Wellington, Ohio, from June 24th–26th.

We were delighted to welcome Flora MacNeil, M.B.E., world famous Gaelic singer, as our adjudicator and workshop leader.

We all met for dinner at about 6:00 p.m. on the Friday at a motel close to the fairgrounds. Then the competition started at about 8:00 p.m. with poetry recitation and storytelling. The following day, the song competition took place at the Games, starting at 9:00 a.m. and continuing until about 3:30 p.m. We had lunch at 12:00 noon, catered by members of the Mòd Committee.

The heat in Wellington was extreme last year. We were lucky enough to have a barn building that was perhaps five degrees cooler than outside. Pipers are always a rehearsing for their competitions at Highland Games and this year we will do as the Harp Society did and post large signs outside our building, requesting quiet, since there is a song competition in progress.

On the Saturday evening we attended the cèilidh put on by the Games Committee. This was an excellent opportunity to showcase our Mòd and advertise for ACGA. We were given two time slots on the program, one in which Flora and the overall winners of the men's and women's singing competitions sang solo, then the second in which we all joined Flora in singing a selection of very spirited waulking songs. We told the audience that since we could not keep rhythm they would have to do so and they did, most forcefully!

Flora was invited to lead the Grand March and the evening continued with old-time dancing and individual performers, including Alasdair Fraser, well known to many members of ACGA.

The Ohio Games Committee publicized our Mòd on their website, putting us first in the order of events. As a result of this there was a number of requests from people who knew almost nothing about Gaelic, wishing to participate in the Mòd. They were given the opportunity to sing the prescribed beginner's song.

One of them accepted the challenge and, in three weeks, learned two verses and the chorus well enough to sing it at the Mòd. She was given a special medal for courage under fire and a great performance! It was most gratifying to see what someone who loves Gaelic song could accomplish.

We had breakfast at the motel on Sunday morning and then met at 10:00 a.m. for a two-hour song workshop with Flora. At our request she taught some of the older songs, most of which are not yet available on CD. Tapes of the songs and song sheets were provided for each participant.

Afterwards, we all went outside for photographs. The weekend concluded with Mike MacKay interviewing Flora about Mòd nan Lochan Mòra and Gaelic in America for Gaelcast.

Now we're looking forward to Mòd nan Lochan Mòra 2006! This year's mòd also will take place at the Ohio Scottish Games, June 23-25.

Donnie Murdo Macleod has agreed to be our adjudicator for our fourth Ohio Mòd. Donnie Murdo is an international consultant in education, has taught at the Grandfather Mountain Song Workshop, is well known as a Gaelic singer, psalm precentor and has recorded the CD, "Sguab is Dlòth."

Mòd nan Lochan Mòra 2006 will follow the same format as in 2005.

For the song competition, all advanced competitors will sing three prescribed songs, one of which will be sung by both men and women. The other two men's songs will be from Donnie Murdo's CD ("Mairi Nighean Alasdair" and "O 's toil 's gu rò thoil leam"). One of the other two for the women will be from Donnie Murdo's CD ("Ri Fuaime an Taibh") and the other will be from Flora's "Craobh nan Ubhal" ("Dh'fhalbh mo Rùn, 's Dh'fhàg e an Cala").

The third prescribed song, common to both men and women, is "Am Mairiche 's a Leannan" from Donnie Murdo's CD.

The beginner's songs will be available on tape: For women, "Crodh Chailein", and for men, "Far an robh mi 'n raoir", and for both women and men, one self select song.

So advanced singers will sing four songs in all and beginners will sing two songs.

The poem "Cearcall mun Ghealaich" by Catriona Montgomery is prescribed. It is only three verses long and has already been recorded by Flora for us. It is available on tape. Storytelling is self select.

For more information or for materials please contact Frances Acar, chair of the Ohio Mòd, by e-mail at:

frances@waspfactory.org

— by Frances Acar

Reflections from the Gaelic Week in North Carolina

Colorado's Amy Johnson Remembers the 2005 Song & Language Week in Linville

J grew increasingly excited as the days passed. On July 3 I would fly from Denver to North Carolina, where I would take part in the Gaelic Song and Language Week located at Lees-MacRae College in Banner Elk. I had found out about this wonderful opportunity in March after receiving an e-mail from Cam MacRae, one of the coordinators of the workshop. I was quite excited right away because Mary Ann Kennedy, one of my four favorite singers, was going to be one of the teachers! I knew immediately that I would go.

I did not know much about Scotland, the Gaelic language or Scottish music as I was growing up. In my mid-teens I started listening to Celtic music but it was not until I had been attending college for several years that I learned more about, and became enraptured by, this beautiful language and these lovely songs. I was a music major at Colorado State University with voice as my emphasis. I learned fairly early on that I did not want to pursue opera or classical singing as a career, both because I did not have the desire to do so and because my voice did not quite seem to fit that "mold."

Then I began to discover Gaelic music through artists such as Màiri MacInnes, the first Gaelic singer I ever heard, and Maggie MacInnes, who are two more of my favorite singers. I eventually discovered the band Clìar as well. I gradually began to realize that I truly loved Gaelic song and that I wanted to sing it more than anything else. I also developed a fascination with the Gaelic language and decided that I eventually wanted to learn it to fluency, and that I wanted to do this in Scotland.

I first became acquainted with Fiona Mackenzie, Màiri Mhòr Gaelic Song Fellow for the Highland Council and another of my favorite singers, in August of 2004. I initially contacted her because I needed help finding songs and translations. I was preparing for my senior recital. Eventually Fiona became a valued mentor and friend. Not only has she helped me find songs, but she has answered my countless questions about many things, including classical versus traditional singing, stage fright, performing at Mods, how to learn Gaelic as an adult — and that just scratches the surface! For a long time Fiona was my only contact, and I know that my recital would not have turned out even as close to as well as it did without her help. If anyone is interested, she has a great Internet radio show called "The Kitchen Cèilidh", located at www.internetradio.co.uk/kitchen. It was Fiona who told me about the year-long courses that are available in Ben-

becula, and I am planning on taking advantage of this during the 2007-08 academic year! I wanted to go this year but since I am visually impaired and have a guide dog, I needed more time to prepare her.

The workshop in North Carolina ran from Sunday, July 3 to Friday, July 8. A few people, including myself, also stayed through the weekend for the Highland Games.

The 3 teachers were Dr. Jamie MacDonald, the founder of this workshop and a teacher in the Department of Celtic Studies at Saint Francis Xavier University in Nova Scotia, who taught beginning Gaelic this year; Màiri Sine Chaimbeul, a teacher at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig in Skye; and Mary Ann Kennedy, member of Clìar and host of a very popular radio program in Scotland, "Celtic Connections". She and Màiri Sine both taught intermediate and advanced language as well as all the song levels, I-III.

I attended every single one of Mary Ann's singing classes as well as her intermediate language ones. Unfortunately, though I was too far along in my learning to take part in beginning Gaelic, I was not far enough along yet for the intermediate level and was usually quite lost!

There were 2 classes in the morning, a regular class in the afternoon and then a special interest session taught alternately by either Mary Ann or Màiri Sine. I attended all of these because I did not want to miss anything, so I was unable to go on any of the mountain hikes that Jamie organized since they were at the same time! My tape recorder was on almost constantly — I taped about 25 hours' worth altogether!

J loved all of the singing classes — the teachers had different but complementary teaching styles. I learned many songs, some of which I had never heard before and some of which I had heard but never properly learned. Fiona Mackenzie tells me that she prefers to learn live from "the source" and now I understand why! There is no comparison between learning live and from CDs!

It was also a truly amazing and thrilling experience for me to learn from Mary Ann, an artist that I had been listening to and admiring for a long time. The pùirt-a-beul special interest session that Mary Ann taught on Monday afternoon was my favorite class. Her family is known for pùirt-a-beul, or mouth music, and I admit that it is my favorite type of Gaelic song as a whole. I certainly was not disappointed! She introduced us to several tunes that day, many of which I had never heard, and had us going relatively fast by the end of class. Mary Ann really helped me feel the rhythm of the music and taught many subtle things

that you might never pick up from a CD. Now I honestly can say that I really sing these tunes differently!

We learned at least ten pùirt that week, one of which “Riobainnean Mòra” I especially loved. Mary Ann said this one came directly from her family. We also learned some great waulking songs, including “Gaol Ise, Gaol I,” and many lovely slower songs as well. Mary Ann told many wonderful stories, some of which had something to do with the song and some of which did not! I enjoyed myself tremendously. Màiri Sine told many fascinating stories too and taught lots of lovely songs such as “O Luaidh,” and “Tighinn air a’ Mhuir am Fear a Phòsas Mi.”

Tuesday, Màiri Sine taught a special interest session about preparing for a Mòd. I sang one of the songs that I was considering, though I ended up singing something else at the actual competition, and she critiqued my performance, which was very helpful.

Wednesday, Mary Ann taught a special interest session about accompanying songs on the harp, or clàrsach. I had never seen a harp like this up close before. It rested on the floor and leaned against the person’s shoulder as they were playing. Mary Ann showed me how to position my arms and hands and where to put my fingers when playing, etc. I was quite honored to be shown this by her, since she also plays the clàrsach superbly and I had admired her playing for a while. I do not know how to play any instrument well, but if I decide to take up anything it will be the clàrsach.

There was no time to rest after supper; evening activities had been planned as well. Tuesday night, several of us watched a Gaelic video in the lobby. Monday night was an impromptu cèilidh. I had never been to a real cèilidh before. It took me a while to get over my “performance” mentality, but I eventually began to understand that people were just sitting around sharing songs, stories, instrumental pieces, and dances, and that no one cared about how “perfectly” everything was performed but just wanted to have fun. We all sat in chairs outside and it was a great experience! For the first time ever I really got the feeling of people sharing songs and stories for their own sake, like priceless treasures. I came from a performance background; my voice was classically trained and my voice teachers stressed that there was a correct, proper way to do things. I am not saying that singing correctly is a bad thing — it can help keep the voice from injury and improve the overall sound. But it is a very stressful way to live, by constantly focusing on what one is doing right or

wrong. I often found myself in a tense state trying to keep track of everything, which meant that I often could not relax and concentrate on what the song was about. But in this new environment I did not feel so much stress or responsibility and eventually was able to open up.

Wednesday night was the big cèilidh, as well as the end of the silent auction. Many people had brought items to auction off, and all of the money went toward workshop expenses. Another group of people who were having a Scottish dance workshop that week had also been invited, and so others outside our group were present. This cèilidh was even more wonderful than the previous one, since it lasted longer. Later that night games were played and people did many strange and humorous things. I finally went upstairs at around 1 a.m., but later I heard that a few others had stayed up until 3 a.m.!

I especially enjoyed Thursday’s classes. It was raining hard outside and we decided to stay in the lobby instead of going to the other building. The atmosphere seemed more intimate as everyone sat around on couches and chairs, learning songs from Mary Ann who sat with her back to the often-open windows. Occasionally a few drops of rain would blow into the room. I learned songs from her all day, since that was all she was teaching that day.

If I had to pick one highlight above all highlights, for me it would be Thursday night. The opening ceremonies of the Games were taking place and some of us decided not to go for various reasons. Mary Ann was one of those who stayed behind. She signed several CDs for me that I had brought for that purpose, and then several of us sat around and talked for a few hours. It was so wonderful to get to know Mary Ann a little as a person, and I enjoyed this more than anything else. I truly loved learning so many songs live, but nothing can replace just conversing with someone and learning more about them. There is something very special about that kind of fellowship.

My dog Vonda had a wonderful time the entire week, but I think she had an especially great time Thursday night! Everyone loved playing with her. She had a stuffed ball with a squeaker inside that several people threw for her, over and over. In fact, I think she played almost nonstop for about three hours! Mary Ann said that Vonda’s personality was like that of her dog at home but that he was about twice her size, and she especially had fun playing with her. That night Vonda put holes in the

**“The Gaelic Song and Language Week
was the most wonderful, life-changing
experience I have ever had.”**

ball and broke the squeaker, and she had had that toy for about four years!

Friday morning we had our final combined singing class. They took turns picking a song to sing that we had learned earlier in the week. It was a bittersweet moment.

The workshop ended Friday afternoon and those of us who were staying had to move to another dorm. After we were all situated, Cam MacRae, Bill Bucknall and I went for a short walk across a river and to a lake, where we all sat and talked for a while.

That night we went to the public cèilidh that was part of the Games. To me, the only truly interesting parts were Mairi Sine and Mary Ann's performances, as well as those of Jamie and his uncle Donald MacDonald, who was the originator of the Highland Games.

I spent much of the next day in Donald's Gaelic Tent where people would stop by to phonetically learn Gaelic songs as well as some common Gaelic phrases. I competed in the Mòd, which was at 3:00. That night many of us had supper together at an Italian restaurant, and then Màiri Sine and Mary Ann went off to get ready for that

nights' cèilidh, which I did not attend.

On Sunday I unfortunately had to say goodbye to Mary Ann and Màiri Sine, who were flying back to Scotland. We went back to the Games and stayed for a while. The next day, Monday, July 11, I flew back home to Colorado.

The Gaelic Song and Language Week in North Carolina was the most wonderful, life-changing experience I have ever had, along with the trip I took to the Seeing Eye to get my dog Vonda. Unfortunately, space limitations do not permit me to mention all the nice people I met while there, nor can I describe in detail everything that I remember happening. But I hope that this short article will give readers a small taste of the things I experienced. Perhaps some of you would like to consider attending this marvelous workshop next year!

Thanks to Amy for contributing this piece and sharing her memories of the workshop — mòran, mòran taing!

Am Mòd

Cadal an uchd nam Peathraichean
Togail oirnn, 's a' sreap nam beann
Leantainn air gach lùib san t-slighe
'Sior-theannadh air àite mo ghaoil
Bu chaomh leam a bhith ann

Siubhal air rathaidean, drochaid 's cidh'
'Sniomh thar mhilltean sgith is fad'
Caol Acain, Lùib, is Sligeachan,
Port Rìgh, Tairbeart, 's Bail' Ailein
Is ràinig sinn Leòdhas

A' tadhal ann air càirdean còire
Mu'n bhòrd, is lasairean facail
Gan gabhail 's gan toirt, spòrs nan Gàidheal
Le spèis, gaol, mar a bha bho thùs
'Se mo rùn gabhail pàirt ann

Coiseachd sràidean 'm measg nan Gàidheal
'Cèilidh air càirdean, sean is ùr
Thàinig cuid 'son farpais is ceòl
Còmhradh tha beòthail sòlasach
'S 'cur eòlas air a' chèil'

Am mòd seachad, 's ar tid' gu ceann,
Thog sinn rann 's gun do thog sinn oirnn
Tro bheanntan àrda agus gleann,
Gun chadal, fann, ach sinn subhach
Ar siubhal taitneach leinn

Ach chithear tobhtaichean bàna
Far 'm b' àbhaist na Gàidheil bhith ann
Fearann falamh, taighean briste
No mar as tric, an làmhnan Ghoill
Saoil 'm bi iad mar a bha?

Thainig na daoine bho'n t-saoghal mhòr
'N tòir air samhchair, a' teiceadh strì
Ach thug iad leotha na dh'fhàgadh:
Cràdh, beusan fuar is bragail
'S e sgathadh 'tha 'd ris.

"Chan e 'n taigh ach na daoine"
Bu mhath leam m' aonta a thoirt ann
A' Ghàidhealtachd, 's i tha lurach
Ach bu shuarach am maise
'S aonais anam nan Gàidheal

le Micheal Mac Aoidh

Make a Gaelic 'Wish List' for 2006



Did you get those Gaelic gifts you hoped *Bodach na Nollaig* would put beneath the tree last year, or just a big lump of black gual? If your New Year's resolution was to buy more Gaelic books, or even shop early for future stocking stuffers, here are a few suggestions from Glenn Wrightson:

1. *Sgeulachdan Dhòmhnaill Alasdair*. This treasure trove of short stories gives a rare glimpse into the changing Gaelic world through the eyes of a Gael himself. Each tale is full of twists and ironies that bring to mind the writings of O. Henry. This is a good read for the advanced Gaelic learner, but with the stories for the most part fairly short, it's not overly burdensome for intermediates to try to tackle

2. *The Gaelic-English Dictionary* by Colin Mark. If you need a dictionary and price is not a concern, then you might as well buy this one. If the special Gaidheal in your life already has this in the pricey hardcover edition, consider buying the more reasonable paperback one for when he or she goes off to the Gaelic College or Sabhal Mòr Ostaig or one of those other crazy places. I have nearly every Gaelic dictionary and there's something to recommend them all, but nowadays this is the one I use almost exclusively.

3. *Fealla-dhà no Trì* by Dòmhnall Greumach is a collection of silly jokes at about a nine-year old's level. The language of jokes often exemplifies how a language is really spoken, and that's what makes this small book special. Published by Leabhraichean Beaga.

4. *Barrachd Gaidhlig* by Ruairidh MacFhionghain (Roderick MacKinnon). Yup, that's the same guy who wrote the original *Teach Yourself Gaelic*. This is a collection of short pieces, each one dedicated to a discussion about a specific animal species. At the end of each chapter there's a short list of new words and phrases that are defined, plus there's a small Gaelic-English dictionary in the back of the book as well. I've found this to be a handy companion when I travel and don't want to drag along my dictionaries. Published by An Comann Gaidhealach in Scotland, it may be out of print now, so a little Internet searching for this could be at hand.

5. *Eilean Fraoich*, a collection of songs from Lewis, is a venerable war-horse that only recently I've made part

of my life. Whenever I'm trying to track down a song that's new to me, this is the first place I turn to look.

6. *An T-Oranaiche, The Gaelic Songster*. Trueman Matheson of Siol Cultural Enterprises (www.gaelicbooks.com) did the Gaelic world a wonderful favor when he republished this 500+ collection of songs from 19th century Scotland. Used copies of the original had been pricey, but this new edition not only has been corrected for errors in the text but comes with a CD of 21 songs.

7. *As an Talamh: "From the Earth."* These 2 small booklets along with cassette tapes for teaching children were put together mainly by Jim Watson and Frances MacEachen, as part of a projected series of five that never was completed. They serve as a good introduction to the Cape Breton Gaelic culture and may still be available from Siol Enterprises.

8. *Sgiab: Simple Gaelic Instruction And Background* by Jeff MacDonald is a small booklet and short CD that is also a wonderful introduction to the Gaelic of Cape Breton. I bought my copy at the Highland Village in Iona, Cape Breton and I would guess that Trueman Matheson would be willing to stock some.

Seirm Gaelic Choir, Folk Group Òran nan Car, Judith Cummings to Perform in Seattle

Seirm, Seattle's Scottish Gaelic choir, will perform with vocalist Judith Cummings and folk group Òran nan Car March 18 at the Central Lutheran Church in Seattle. Cummings, born and raised in Scotland, began studying Gaelic and the harp as a teenager. She is a former member of The Whistlebinkies and the 2000 winner of the traditional singing competition at the Royal National Mòd.

Òran nan Car is a Seattle-based folk group that won first place in the quartet and folk group competitions at Mòd Vancouver in 2001 and 2003.

Seirm, formed in 1998 to compete in Mòd Vancouver, has grown from a four-part choir to perform staged musical dramas. It won the Sons of Scotland Shield for mixed choir in 1998 and 2003 at Mòd Vancouver.

Tickets for the 7 p.m. concert will be available at the door: \$10 for students, seniors and members of Slighe nan Gaidheal and \$12 for the general public.

For more information, contact Pandora Fitzpatrick at 425-760-0753 or pandora@slighe.com.

Directory of Gaelic Classes & Study Groups

A listing of groups and teachers known to ACGA. If you have information on study groups, classes or teachers you would like to submit, please contact the editor at liam@gaidheal.com

Alaska

Linda C. Hopkins
PO Box 1418
Palmer, Alaska 99645
907-373-6339

Arizona

Muriel Fisher
722 W Vanover Rd.
Tucson, Ariz. 85705
520-882-5308
skye@dakotacom.net

Arkansas

Christie Saunders
1701 N. Bryant, Apt. 4
Little Rock, Ark. 72207
501-663-8434

California

Donnie Macdonald
P.O. Box 607
Citrus Heights, Calif. 95611
916-723-6320

David G. Williams
480 30th Street
San Francisco, Calif. 94131

Claudia Ward
22651 Equipoise Road
Monterey, Calif. 93940
408-373-5069

Tris King
Scottish Gaelic Learners
Association of the Bay Area
(925) 283-8029
tris@speakgaelic.com

Deborah (Gobnait) White
2125 Peterson Lane
Santa Rosa, CA 95403
(707) 545-6676
gaidheal.DISTANTOAKS.com

Colorado

Glenn Wrightson
2673 S. York St.
Denver, Colo. 80027
303-698-9023

Kyri Comyn
5060 S. Washington
Englewood, Colo. 80110
303-781-0553

Sue Hendrix
4590 Darley Avenue
Boulder, Colo. 80303
303-499-4927

Florida

Steven McBride
7904 Capwood Avenue
Tampa, Fla. 33637
813-980-0017

Illinois

Dr. William R. Roy
2404 Brookens Circle
Urbana, Ill. 61801-6621

Joshua Wilson
707 W. Melrose (right door)
Chicago, Ill. 60657
773-929-8119

Massachusetts

Callanish School Of Celtic Arts
Maggie Carchrie/Tom Leigh
1 Bridle Path Circle
Sandwich, Mass. 02563
508-888-0107
info@mermaid-productions.com

Kira McGann
330 Acton Road
Chelmsford, Mass. 01824
978-244-0237
kiracliff@mediaone.net

Maryland

Fred Bosworth
248 Inlet Drive
Pasadena, Md. 21122
410-437-7090

Ken Campbell
69 Burr Hill
Berlin, Md. 21811
410-208-0524

Minnesota/Wisconsin

Robert L. Hoyt
913 15 St. East
Menomonie, Wis. 54751

Missouri/Kansas

Greg L. McCoy
3605 Blue Ridge Blvd.
Independence, Mo. 64052
816-737-5979

New Mexico

Kathy Lare
8715 Silvercrest Ct. NW
Albuquerque, N.M. 87114
505-890-6572

New Jersey/New York

Brenda Steele
44 S. Main Street, Apt. 5K
Lodi, N.J. 07644
973-614-0848

Donald Mackinnon
26 Miller Drive
Hopewell Junction, N.Y. 12533
914-221-9404

John P. Barlow
951 Sunnyside Drive
Oswego, N.Y. 13827
607-687-3272

Ohio

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Cincinnati, Ohio 45208-1073
513-321-6781
MacAoidh@eos.net

Frances Acar
234 Lowell Drive
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frances@kineta.com

Oregon

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Portland, Ore. 97202
503-234-1582
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Pennsylvania

Kevin McLaughlin
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Catlett, VA 20119
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James F. Goff
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Washington, D.C. 20016
202-244-6867

Washington

Richard W. Hill
#212 400 Harvard Ave. East
Seattle, Wash. 98102
206-322-3604

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Toronto Gaelic Learners Association
c/o Janice Chan
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Etobicoke, Ontario M9V 4P7
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Donald Macdonald
2220 Claremont, Suite 408
Montreal, Canada H3Z 2P8
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donaldm@megaweb.ca

Nova Scotia, Canada

Seumas Watson
P.O.Box 600
Port Hastings, Cape Breton
BOE 2T0, Canada
Phone: 1-888-4Gaelic
Email: gaeltalk@ctp.auracom.com

Nova Scotia Gaelic Council
P.O.Box 29035
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3L 4T8
Contact: Lewis MacKinnon
Phone: (902) 826-9662

This list is based on the best information currently available to ACGA. We acknowledge that there may be errors and certainly omissions, and we apologize beforehand. We plan to publish an expanded version of this directory twice annually, and would appreciate any suggestions, addresses, names, etc., that you can provide. Please send any such to An Naidheachd Againne c/o Liam Ó Caiside at liam@gaidheal.com or Micheal Mac Aoidh at mackay@progeny.net.

Gun robh mìle math agaibh.

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