

# AN CUAIRTEAR CEILTEACH

Foghar 2011

Autumn 2011

[www.stfx.ca/academic/celtic-studies/](http://www.stfx.ca/academic/celtic-studies/)

## Celtic Studies Newsletter



### CONFERENCE PUBLICATION

This spring former Chair Professor Kenneth Nilsen launched the volume resulting from the *Rannsachadh na Gàidhlig / Scottish Gaelic Studies 2008* conference, held at StFX.

*Continued on Page 5*

### CELTS IN THE AMERICAS CONFERENCE 2011

We are currently preparing to hold a major international conference on the legacy of Celtic peoples in the Americas for summer 2011.

*Continued on Page 7*

### NEW IRISH LECTURER

We welcome the newly arrived lecturer in Irish, Darren Ó Dochartaigh, to St FX's Celtic Department. He is here thanks to the support of the Ireland Canada University Foundation.

*Continued on Page 4*

### GAELIC INSTRUCTORS

We also welcome two part-time instructors in the Celtic Studies department, both graduates of the department: Goiridh Dòmhnallach, teaching first-year Scottish Gaelic, and Lewis MacKinnon, teaching second-year Scottish Gaelic.

*Continued on Page 4*



*Attendees at one session of the Celts in the Americas conference at StFX, June-July.*



*Department graduate Andréas Hirt delivering a talk on Gaelic song.*

## *Tuairisgeul a' Cheannaird, an t-Ollamh Linkletter* Notes from the Chair, Dr. Michael Linkletter

*On the Hill of Tara next to the (supposed) Lia Fáil in August.*

The 2010-11 academic year was an eventful one for the Department of Celtic Studies. In addition to offering two completely new courses, CELT 253: Gaelic Music and Dance, taught by Dr. Newton and CELT 230: Celtic Christianity, taught by Dr. Linkletter, we revamped our curriculum to bring our course offerings in line with other departments at StFX. This entailed altering most of our courses from full-year, 6-credit courses to half-year, 3-credit courses. These included the history of the Scottish Gael in Scotland (CELT 331) and North America (CELT 332) (formerly 6-credit course Scottish Gael: Old World and New (CELT 333)); our previous Celtic Literature course (CELT 120) was redesigned into two 3-credit courses at the 200-level to become Early Irish Literature (CELT 221) and Early Welsh Literature (CELT 222); likewise our full-year Irish poetry course (CELT 430) was separated into two-halves CELT 431: Irish Gaelic poetry I (AD500-1650) and CELT 432: Irish Gaelic Poetry II (1650-present).

In the fall, Celtic Department faculty and students made our annual pilgrimage to Glen Bard which coincided with the unveiling of a new plaque translating the Gaelic monument of the Bard Maclean into English. During the winter term two former Celtic Studies students now working on their PhDs, Andréas Hirt of the University of Otago in Dunedin, New Zealand and Tiber Falzett of Edinburgh University, Scotland, returned to StFX to deliver talks on aspects of their current research.

The student Celtic Society, led by Cassidy Fortin and Jason Bond, organized

another successful concert at the end of the second term helping to raise funds to send a Gaelic student to study the language at the Gaelic-medium college Sabhal Mòr Ostaig on the Isle of Skye in the summer. David Rankin was the recipient of this scholarship and Rachel Redshaw and Veronica Troy received Celtic Travel Bursaries; they will speak about their experiences at our Gaelic Day on November 5th.

The coming of spring saw the launch of *Rannsachadh na Gàidhlig 5: Fifth Scottish Gaelic Research Conference*, a collection of articles edited by Dr. Kenneth Nilsen and published by Cape Breton University Press from the conference of the same name organized by Dr. Nilsen at StFX in 2008. Articles by a number of members on faculty at StFX, as well as former students of the department, also appear in the collection. This summer Dr. Michael Newton organized a successful four-day conference at StFX which featured delegates from Canada and abroad speaking on topics relating to the "Celts in the Americas." Dr. Newton's conference was the fifth academic conference hosted by the Celtic Studies Department at StFX since the early 1990s. This is an average of about one conference for every five years, not bad at all for such a small department.

With the end of the 2010-11 academic year we said goodbye to our guest lecturer from Ireland, Ailish Bhreathnach, and welcomed a new visiting Irish scholar to the department for 2011-12, Darren Ó Dochartaigh. Mr. Ó Dochartaigh comes to us from Queen's University, Belfast and he will be teaching three levels of Irish Gaelic



as well as the course on Irish folklore (CELT 351). We are also very pleased to have two former students teaching for us in a part-time capacity this year. Jeff MacDonald is teaching first-year Gaelic (CELT 100) and Lewis MacKinnon second-year (CELT 200).

We welcome back Celtic Studies student Rachel Redshaw from her year abroad as an exchange student at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, and we welcome to StFX exchange student Sonya Barrett who comes to us from Sabhal Mòr for the fall term. We should also note that a welcome back is due Celtic Collection librarian Susan Cameron who was abroad last year in Scotland where she spent part of her sabbatical immersed in Gaelic at Sabhal Mòr as well.

With Dr. Nilsen on sabbatical, Dr. Linkletter was appointed department chair for 2011-12. In addition to his new

administrative duties Dr. Linkletter will be teaching five courses this year: CELT 220 & 230: Celtic Paganism and Christianity, CELT 341 & 342: Scottish Gaelic Poetry I & II, and a new “selected topics” seminar, CELT 361: Exploring Themes in Celtic Studies. Three articles by Dr. Linkletter appeared in print this past winter, and over the summer months Dr. Linkletter presented papers on aspects of Gaelic place names of PEI and Gaelic publishing in the nineteenth century at three conferences: the meeting of

the Canadian Society for the Study of Names at the Congress of Humanities and Social Sciences in Fredericton, NB, the *Celts in the Americas* Conference at StFX, and the quadrennial International Congress of Celtic Studies, this year hosted by the National University of Ireland, Maynooth.

The upcoming year looks to be another event-filled and exciting one. During the second week of classes we will be hosting an open house/welcome back céilidh for new and returning students, faculty, and

friends, and the following week we will be making our annual pilgrimage with students to Glen Bard. Keep an eye out for other Celtic Studies Department events, such as our Gaelic Days, our film and lecture series, and our students’ thesis presentations as the year progresses.

Welcome (or welcome back) to all students and friends of Celtic Studies at StFX. May we all have a good year! *Ciad mile fáilte oirbh agus biodh bliadhna mhath againn uile!*

## 2010-2011 Graduating Students

Kelsey MacKenzie: BA with Major in Celtic Studies.

Lewis MacKinnon: Master of Arts in Celtic Studies.

Darien Merrick: BA Honours in English, Subsidiary in Celtic Studies.

Catherine Thornton: BA Joint Advanced Major, History & Celtic Studies.

## 2010-11 Celtic Studies Prizes

*Rev. John MacGillivray Gaelic Scholarship for Summer Study in Scotland:* David Rankin.

The following awards are generally awarded on an annual basis to students who excel in Celtic Studies courses, with preference given to students in the Celtic language courses. Each award is valued at \$500.

*Honourable Allan J. MacEachen Fellowship for Celtic Studies:* Anne Williams.

*The Rev Donald M. Rankin Scholarship for Celtic Studies:* Patrick Tozer.

*The Reverend John Archie Chisholm Memorial Award:* Kevin McLaughlin.

*Angus L. Macdonald Memorial Scholarship for Celtic Studies:* Catherine Thornton.

*Angus Dan Gillis Award in Celtic Studies:* Breanna MacLeod.

*Flora MacDonald Award in Celtic Studies:* Veronica Troy.

*Fr. Malcolm MacDonell Award in Celtic Studies:* David MacDonald.

## 2011-12 Celtic Studies Courses

**100** – Introduction to Scottish Gaelic (6 credits)

**110** – Introduction to Irish Gaelic (6 credits)

**131** – Celtic Civilization I (3 credits – Fall Term)

**132** – Celtic Civilization II (3 credits – Winter Term)

**200** – Second-year Scottish Gaelic (6 credits)

**210** – Second-year Irish Gaelic (6 credits)

**220** – Celtic Paganism (3 credits – Fall Term)

**230** – Celtic Christianity (3 credits – Winter Term)



*Departmental Faculty 2010-11 (left to right): Michael Linkletter, Ken Nilsen, Ailish Bhreathnach, and Michael Newton.*

**341** – Scottish Gaelic Poetry I (3 credits – Fall Term)

**342** – Scottish Gaelic Poetry II (3 credits – Winter Term)

**351** – Gaelic Folklore of Ireland (3 credits – Fall Term)

**352** – Gaelic Folklore of Scotland & Nova Scotia (3 credits – Winter Term)

**361** – Exploring Celtic Studies Seminar (3 credits – Fall Term)

**362** – Third-year Irish Gaelic (3 credits – Winter Term)

**420** – 4th-year Scottish Gaelic (Canadian Literature) (6 credits)



Minister of National Defense Peter MacKay, Darren Ó Dochartaigh and Loyola Hearn.

## IRISH LECTURER: DARREN Ó DOCHARTAIGH

We were fortunate enough this year to once again be given an Irish lecturer by the Ireland Canada University Foundation. Darren Ó Dochartaigh is currently pursuing a Master's degree at Queen's University Belfast. He has worked as a post-primary school teacher and currently works as a translator. As a Celtic Studies undergraduate Darren studied at Queen's and also received his initial teacher training there. He is the secretary of the long established Cumann Chluain Árd in West Belfast. As a non-denominational education setting it uses the Irish language as a tool in educating the community and is held to be the only association in Ireland to adhere to a single language policy. His specific interests and hobbies include Irish language Translation Studies, Culture in Translation, Donegal Literature of the 20th Century and Sean-nós singing. This year he will be teaching Irish Folklore (CELT 351), as well as 1st, 2nd and 3rd year Irish.

## SCOTTISH GAELIC INSTRUCTORS

Dr. Kenneth Nilsen is on sabbatical leave during the 2011-12 academic year. The Celtic Studies department applied and was awarded with funds to support two instructors to fill some of the teaching hours left by Dr. Nilsen's absence.

Jeff MacDonald comes from the Gaelic community of *Bràigh na h-Aibhneadh*

(Kingsville) in Cape Breton. His acquisition of Gaelic began as a student at StFX and continued in his own community where he learned from some of the finest native speakers. He has taught the Gaelic language extensively through the *Gàidhlig aig Baile* methodology and is the Gaelic Field Officer for The Office of Gaelic Affairs, Province of Nova Scotia. He is also known as a singer and storyteller and was the founding president of Comunn Ceilteach StFX (The StFX Celtic Society) while a student here. He is currently working on a Master's degree at Memorial University. He will be teaching CELT 100 this year.

Lewis MacKinnon was born in Inverness, Cape Breton and raised in Antigonish County. Lewis graduated from StFX in 1992 with a Major in Political Science and a Minor in Celtic Studies. He also teaches through the *Gàidhlig aig Baile* methodology in the HRM, New Glasgow, Antigonish and Cape Breton. In May 2011 he graduated from StFX in spring 2011 with a Master's in Celtic Studies. His thesis examines Gaelic language and culture in and around Inverness Town as experienced, remembered and shared by members of the family of his father, Joe MacKinnon. He is now Executive Director of The Office of Gaelic Affairs. He will be teaching CELT 200 this year.



## Department activities and opportunities

### GAELIC STUDIES VOLUME PUBLISHED

In the summer 2008, the StFX Celtic Studies Department hosted the biennial *Rannsachadh na Gàidhlig / Scottish Gaelic Studies conference*. This spring, former departmental chair Professor Kenneth Nilsen launched the conference proceedings (see below), which he edited. It is published by Cape Breton University Press and contains papers by several StFX faculty and staff members – Michael Linkletter, Laurinda Matheson, Michael Newton, Ken Nilsen, and Laurie Stanley-Blackwell – as well as recent graduates of the department Tiber Falzett and Shamus Y. MacDonald.

### SCOTLAND EXCHANGE PROGRAM

StFX has an exchange program with Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, a college on the Isle of Skye in Scotland which teaches all courses through the medium of Scottish Gaelic.

Rachel Redshaw spent her 2010-11 academic year at Sabhal Mòr and has returned to StFX this year as a fluent Scottish Gaelic speaker (see her report on page 11). We hope that other students will take up this exciting opportunity in the future.

### DEPARTMENT VIDEO

Dr. Newton has completed a video about the Celtic Studies department, featuring interviews with several StFX students. You can see it on YouTube at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UWIFtJy0w-Q>

### TARTAN DAY DEBATE

Tartan Day has become a nationally recognized day in Canada and the United States, but why celebrate tartan? Is tartan the best means of representing Scottish heritage? Are “Scottish” and “Gaelic” heritage the same thing? Who is privileged to decide what representations are appropriate for which communities?

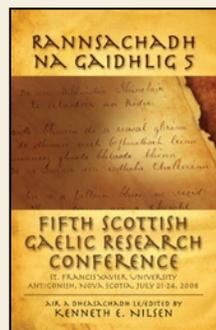
These were among the issues raised at the Tartan Day Debate and Forum on this year’s Tartan Day, 6 April 2011, by four speakers: Lewis MacKinnon (Office of Gaelic Affairs, Nova Scotia), Michael Newton (Dept of Celtic Studies, StFX University), Irene MacLeod (Antigonish Highland Society), and Tom Wallace (President of the Federation for Scottish Culture in Nova Scotia). The event was sponsored jointly by the Antigonish

Highland Society and the StFX Celtic Studies department. Videos of the opening statements of the four speakers and their responses to one another can be seen on YouTube at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oge5zVzoe9o>

### NOVA SCOTIA BARD COMMEMORATION

On 30 April 2011, the Antigonish Highland Society held its first annual celebration of the Gaelic poets of Nova Scotia: one poet will be chosen each spring and a portrait of him/her mounted in the Hall of the Clans in the Angus L Macdonald Library. The first poet to be celebrated is Ailean “the Ridge” MacDonald, whose poems were recently edited by StFX professor Effie Rankin and published by CBU Press. She offered an insightful talk about the poet and his work, and three songs by him were sung by Goiridh Dòmhnallach and Catriona Parsons. Two of the poet’s descendants were present for the unveiling of the portrait. There have been so many prolific Gaelic poets in Nova Scotia that there will be no shortage of celebrations for the next century or so!



Effie Rankin, editor of the poems of Ailean “the Ridge” MacDonald, poses with a portrait of the bard, along with two of his descendants.

## Department activities and opportunities

### CELTIC WEEK - IN IRISH

Our visiting Irish lecturer for 2010-11, Ailish Bhreathnach, worked with students to create an entertaining and educational set of activities during the week of S. Patrick's day, which they called *An t-Seachtain Cheilteach* "Celtic Week." This included an Irish-language immersion day, Irish trivia quiz, film showing, song workshop, and talk about communities in Newfoundland.

### FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES

The Celtic Studies department is planning a number of exciting activities this year.

We will undertake our annual autumn pilgrimage to the Glenbard cemetery on Thursday 22nd September. We'll meet in the Immaculata parking lot before 6PM to arrange ride-shares and leave on the hour.

Our autumn *Latha Gàidhlig* (Gaelic Day) will be held on Saturday 5th November, 9:30 AM to 4:30 PM on the 8th floor of Nicholson Hall, St FX campus.

We will be holding a series of Celtic Studies lectures this coming year: Dr Regina Uí Chollatáin, a visiting lecturer at

St Mary's University in Halifax, will be speaking about the revitalization of Irish, and Dr. Newton will be presenting his research about the history of Scottish dance; further speakers will be announced shortly.

We will have a showing of the film *The Eagle* in the autumn term and *Cré na Cille* in the winter term. A discussion of the content with StFX faculty and students will accompany each film. *STAY TUNED!*

### COMUNN CEILTEACH

*An Comunn Ceilteach*, StFX's student Celtic Society, continues to provide social and educational activities for students. This year Jason Bond and Cassidy Fortin return as President and Vice-President, respectively.

### ANTIGONISH GAELIC CHOIR

Stephanie Johnston will be continuing to run the Antigonish Gaelic Choir this year. It performed at a number of social events last year – the annual Comunn Ceilteach concert, the Tartan Day debate, the annual Heatherton fundraiser, the 2011 Antigonish

Highland Games, and more – and Ms Johnston has already been asked about having the choir perform at other venues in coming months.

Videos of several of the choir's performances have been put on YouTube, such as the song "Dàl Riata" by Griogair Labhraidh, sung at the Tartan Day debate: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=50LQGoQLLbc&feature=related>

Stephanie will be holding auditions on Tuesday 27 September. To arrange an audition for yourself, email her at: [sjohnsto@stfx.ca](mailto:sjohnsto@stfx.ca)



Winners of the St Patrick's Day Irish Trivia Quiz.



## *Celts in the Americas* – International Conference 29 June – 2 July 2011

The *Celts in the Americas* conference was held 29 June – 2 July, 2011 at Saint Francis Xavier University in Nova Scotia, organized by Dr Michael Newton and hosted by the Celtic Studies Department of St FX and the Centre for Cape Breton Studies at Cape Breton University. There were about 90 attendees, including about 40 speakers addressing a wide range of topics relating to the experiences and literatures of the communities speaking Breton, Cornish, Irish Gaelic, Manx Gaelic, Scottish Gaelic, or Welsh in the Americas, as well as talks about the interactions between Celtic peoples and non-Celtic peoples in the Americas. Information about the speakers and paper is still available online at:

<http://www.mystfx.ca/academic/celtic-studies/AllAboutConference.pdf>

We wish to thank our sponsors The MacLeod Group, Antigonish; Harbourview Properties; The Charitable Irish Society of Halifax; John Hamilton, Antigonish; The Office of the Academic Vice-President, Saint Francis Xavier University; Centre for Cape Breton Studies, Cape Breton University; The Office of Gaelic Affairs, Nova Scotia; The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

Dr Newton is designing a volume of papers from the conference which will also include introductory essays about each of the Celtic-speaking communities, to appear in late 2012.



Thanks to Pauline MacDonald for the use of her photographs from *Celts in the Americas*



In August at Brú na Boinne (Newgrange) in Ireland.

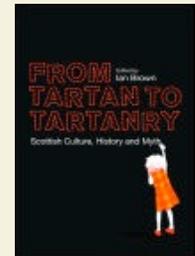
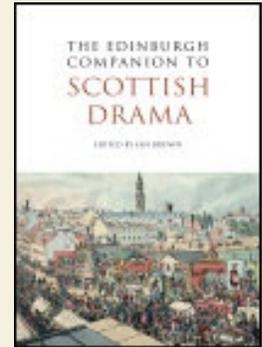
## DR MICHAEL NEWTON

Dr. Newton's third year at StFX was tightly packed with activities that could be put into four categories: (1) teaching, (2) research and publications, (3) conferences, and (4) community outreach.

Dr. Newton taught CELT 253 "Gaelic Music and Dance Traditions," a course he proposed and designed, for the first time. He also taught the two-term course about the history of the Scottish Gaels in Scotland and North America for the first time (CELT 331-332), as well as the two-term course about Celtic Civilization (CELT 131-132). Recognizing that the Celtic Civilization course is an important cornerstone for our Celtic Studies students and that there is no textbook which covers the subject adequately, he spent a great deal of time creating one this summer. He was awarded with a Faculty Development Grant to pay for the help of a student assistant, Krista Nelson, who developed materials for the CELT 131 textbook as well as portfolios which will be used by students to debate the Celticity of the famous Gundestrup Cauldron. He also wrote the CELT 420 (4th-year Scottish Gaelic) textbook, an anthology of Canadian Gaelic literature, which he will use in class this year; it will be published in the near future. He also wrote a supplemental textbook for the winter term's CELT 352 (Scottish Gaelic Folklore) course.

He wrote an article about Gaelic immigrant communities in Canada for the current issue of *History Scotland*, devoted to the history of Scots in Canada, entitled "Beyond the Single Narrative: The Scottish Gaelic legacy in Canada." He also wrote two new papers based on new research which were presented at conferences this summer and will soon be submitted for publication: "Dannsair air ùrlar-déile thu": Gaelic evidence about dance from the mid-17th to late-18th century Highlands" and "How Scottish Highlanders Became White: The Introduction of Racialism to Gaelic Literature and Culture." His articles " 'Paying for the Plaid': Scottish Gaelic Identity Politics in Nineteenth-Century North America" appeared in late 2010 in *From Tartan to Tartanry* and "Gaelic Folk Drama" has just appeared in *The Edinburgh Companion to Scottish Drama*; both volumes are published by Edinburgh University Press. He is beginning work on a volume based on a selection of the papers presented at the *Celts in the Americas* conference, to be supplemented by introductory essays about each of the Celtic-speaking communities in the Americas. Several more of his essays should be appearing in further volumes and journals in the next few months.

He attended three conferences in the summer of 2011: the annual Celtic Studies Association of North America conference, held this year in





With Margaret Bennett at the *Celts in the Americas* conference.

Columbus, Ohio, where he presented for the first time his paper on racialism in Gaelic conscious; the *Celts in the Americas* conference (which he organized); and the International Congress of Celtic Studies, the largest gathering of Celtic Studies scholars, held every four years, this time in Maynooth, Ireland, where he presented his research on dance history.

He was very encouraged by the excellent papers presented at the *Celts in the Americas* conference and by the enthusiasm of the 90 attendees who came to StFX for the event. Besides raising funds from the local community – which demonstrates the interest in and support for Celtic Studies in the wider community of this area – he was fortunate enough to receive a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada award for the conference. (For more about the conference, see page 7.)

The last academic year was his second, and last, year on the board of the Antigonish Highland Society. He has also served on the society's Cultural Subcommittee and Anniversary Subcommittee over the last year; this collaboration has reformed links between the Celtic Studies department and the Antigonish Highland Society resulted in several events co-sponsored by the two institutions, as well as providing input about Gaelic matters in activities held by the AHS, such as the Tartan Day Debate

and Forum and *Latha Cuimhneachadh nam Bard* / Nova Scotia Gaelic Bards Commemoration (see page 5). Dr. Newton was also involved in the planning for the Highland Caravan, which travelled around Antigonish County examining local communities settled by Scottish Gaelic immigrants, and provided the opening lecture, which examined the history and culture of Scottish Highlanders before their migrations to North America.

He was invited to address StFX students enrolled in the Humanities Colloquium. He argued that one of many flaws in the standard approach to the history of “Western Civilization” is that it excludes some of the most important contributors to Europe, the Celts, and that this neglect is a direct result of the subordinate status relegated to Celtic peoples by the Anglo-British empire in the early modern period. His talk can be read at: <http://people.stfx.ca/mnewton/westernciv7celts.pdf>

His community outreach work in the last year has also included writing Gaelic articles for the *Casket*, maintaining the department website, producing the department newsletter, editing videos of the Tartan Day Debate and Antigonish Gaelic Choir for YouTube, and producing a video promoting the department (see pages 5-6 for more information).

## *Librarian's Report, from Susan Cameron*

As a professional librarian responsible for the Fr. Charles Brewer Celtic Collection here at the Angus L. Macdonald library, I have been absorbing the story of the building of this collection and an integral part of this was the participation and collaboration of various people in Scotland. One in particular, John Lorne Campbell can be singled out. During my 2010-11 sabbatical I set out to investigate as many places as I could manage and to gather materials I felt spoke to the connections between Scotland and StFX, particularly focusing on materials which are not available to us here in North America.

In order to accomplish this I felt it was important to improve upon my Gaelic skills and to use this opportunity to pursue this. To this end, I arranged to sit in on the *Cùrsa Comais*, first semester at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig. During the reading week break, I visited Edinburgh where I spent time at the School of Scottish Studies, University of Edinburgh, as well as the Special Collections at the University of Edinburgh Library, National Library of Scotland and the Scottish Catholic Archives. I visited the offices of the Carmichael Watson website project and spent some time learning about their procedures and the scope of the project.

I returned to Scotland in the late spring 2011 and followed up on previous research as well as visiting University of Glasgow, Celtic Department and the Special Collections at the University Library. I also met with Mairead MacDonald, Project Manager for *Tobar an Dualchais*, and had an extensive interview with her and became well versed in the history and ongoing development of that groundbreaking venture.

I was also able to visit both Eigg and Strathglass in Scotland which were of interest to me as being the places from which my ancestors emigrated on my father's side. As a librarian I am interested in making resources available to people and I hope to continue with this in the next few years. There are many interesting web-based projects being developed and it would be ideal if these could work well together and in a truly collaborative manner.

**Editors Note:** We wish to acknowledge and thank Laurinda Matheson, who filled in for Susan Cameron during her sabbatical. We were very fortunate to have a qualified, Gaelic-speaking librarian available to us.



## *Report from Rachel Redshaw*

I arrived in Scotland at the beginning of last September and was overwhelmed by the landscapes of the Highlands and Islands. After travelling from the rolling hills outside of Glasgow to the great mountainous terrain of the Highlands I realized that I was entering something that was going far beyond my expectations.

I had decided to accept an exchange at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig to complete *Cùrsa Comais* (a one-year immersion course) to become fluent in the Scottish Gaelic language. At the beginning, the course was a bit difficult and my classmates and I would be trying to work out what the teacher was saying by attentively watching their various actions and facial expressions. Gradually, we became accustomed to hearing Gaelic and speaking it with our friends at the college. Today, I am fairly fluent in Scottish Gaelic and continue to converse in the language with past classmates and older and younger members of the community who are involved with the language. Scottish Gaelic has given me a different perspective on culture, specifically in the context of a minority language such as Gaelic. I look forward to continuing to learn more about Gaelic culture and language and hope to encourage it within my own community.



*Left to right: Rachel Redshaw, Kirsty Blackhall and Ella Jenkins.*



## Report from Veronica Troy

My name is Veronica Troy. I am a fourth year Honours Celtic Studies student with a subsidiary in Anthropology. This past summer I was lucky enough to be awarded the ICUF scholarship through the Celtic Studies department. From mid-July to mid-August, I spent four weeks learning Irish Gaelic in An Cheathru Rua, Co. Galway, Ireland. During the months of July and August, I studied Irish at a satellite campus of the National University of Ireland in Carraroe. The town and surrounding area of An Cheathru Rua was beautiful, and the people there were very pleasant--not to mention patient as I did my best to speak to them as Gaeilge. The scholarship's funding gave me the opportunity to live and to study for a month; the ICUF very generously took care of the expenses of accommodation and tuition for the duration of the course. On field trips I visited Patrick Pearse's house and got to explore Inis Oirr (one of the Aran Islands), and in my free time I managed to chat with the locals at the pub and swim in the other side of the Atlantic once or twice. Before going to Ireland, I had spent two years learning Irish; this summer course was very thorough, and a wonderful way not only to improve but to enrich my Irish. I had an amazing time in Ireland and I can't wait for Third Year Irish next semester!



## *Report from David Rankin*

I'm David Rankin, I'm in my third year studying Celtic Studies, and I went to Scotland this summer on the St.FX scholarship, along with the Fr. Vernon Boutilier Travel Bursary, in order to study Scottish Gaelic at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig. A keen interest in my ancestral history and an aspiration to carry on cultural and linguistic traditions played an integral part in how I got there, and what I did while I was there. I studied Gàidhlig for two weeks (Level 7 and 8) under the tutelage of Beathag Mhoireasdan - a fine teacher originally from the Isle of Lewis. Inside and outside of the classroom we were encouraged to use nothing but Gàidhlig, and this did wonderful things for my development in using the language. In addition, speaking Gàidhlig with people of all ages, and especially those my own age, in a laid-back environment outside of the classroom did more for my Gàidhlig than I could have ever expected.

As I had planned on travelling around the Highlands in my final week there, I had no set or structured plan for that week - and oh boy - I am more than glad that I did that. On my "final day" at SMO, I was approached by an organizer for the Alasdair Fraser Fiddle Week, a fiddle camp led by the well-known fiddler Alasdair Fraser held at SMO, and he asked me if I would be able to teach step-dancing at the Fiddle Camp. I jumped at the opportunity to share step-dancing with the people there. So, I was teaching an hour a day for the week and I had the opportunity to do my travels the rest of the time seeing places like Culloden, Inverness, Cille Choirill Church and Graveyard, and Glencoe. A video has been going around on facebook that encapsulates my experience at the fiddle week itself - it's pretty funny. It can be accessed by FaceBook users at: <http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?v=10150252557456773>

In order to thank all of those who supported me in my travels financially, and those who supported me in prayers and words of advice, I will be doing a presentation on my trip at the St.FX Gaelic Day, November 5th.

