

Yes, it's that time again – membership renewals are due every year at the Annual General Meeting, so if you haven't renewed yet, please do so at your convenience. Send your check and any changes to your contact information to: PO Box 20667, Seattle WA 98102, Attn: Membership Secretary. Individual renewals are \$25, Family renewals are \$35, or you could go for a 6-year Silver membership for \$135 or a 12-year Gold membership for \$250. Remember, your membership benefits (newsletter, eGroups membership, discounts at events like Féis Shìatàil) and voting rights expire if you don't renew before the grace period ends on May 1, 2000. If you're not sure when your membership expires, please contact Pandora <pandora@slighe.com> or (206) 779-2444.

Membership renewal time

Slighe nan Gaidheal

PO Box 31834
Seattle, WA 98103

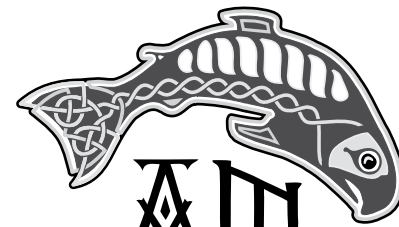
PH.: 206-903-9452

www.slighe.com

Slighe nan

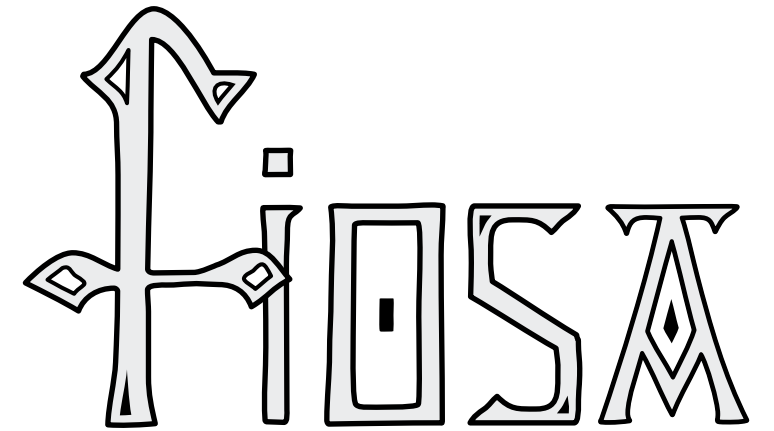


Washington's Gaelic language
and cultural society



ÀIN BRADAN

Quarterly newsletter of Slighe nan Gaidheal



Seattle's Gaelic society

Ceòlas & Sgoil Samhraidh 1999

Pandora Fitzpatrick

Chaidh sia duine deug a dh'Alba an samhradh seo-chaidh. B e mise, Sandaidh Gilliam, Ceataidh-Ruadh Cashatt, Annag-Màiri Lundeen, Sile Hunter, Gary & Nanag Ingle, Chris & Tully Mac-an-t-Saoir, Ros Mòireasdan, Cuini Mack, Gaylord Stiùbhart, Nanag NicIain, Rosemary Villani, Siùcar Cummings, agus Gof Friseal a bh'ann an cuideachd.

A' chiad seachdainn, chuir Gordon Wells, Oifigeach Leasachaidh, Colaisde Chaisteil Leòdhais Pròiseact Oilthigh



na Gaidhealtachd 's nan Eilean, sgoil samhraidh le chéile air ar son ann an Uibhist a Tuath. Dh'fhuirich sinn ann an taigh mór ann am Baile Mór faisg air an àite far an do thogadh Dolina NicFhuinghionn. Fad seachdaine, theagaisg Ceanag NicRuairidh Moffat, Ban-Uibhisteach, agus Iseabail Mhòireach, Ban-Leòdhasach a tha a' fuireach ann an Glaschu. Ghabh sinn mòran spòrs agus dh'ionnsaich

Rona Lightfoot, native of South Uist, will be joining us here in Seattle for Féis Shìatàil 2000. Féis Committee members Sandy Gilliam and Pandora Fitzpatrick report that Rona is excited about the Féis, and looking forward to meeting Slighe nan Gaidheal. Sandy and Pandora also report that Rona is a wonderful teacher with an impressive knowledge of canntaireachd and ceòl mór songs.

sinn Gàidhlig gu leòr. Thàinig na boireannaich à Taigh Clòimhe feasgar Diciadain, agus bhruidhinn iad mu dheidhinn caoraich nan Eilean 's rudan a dhèanamh a' chlàimh dhuibh. Ghabh sinn turus mun cuairt Uibhist a Tuath agus chunnaic sinn Pobull Fhionn (cearcall cloiche) 's Barpa Langais. Chaidh sinn dhan Taigh Chearsabhagh (taigh-tasgaidh 's ionad-ealain ann an Loch nam Madadh), agus stiùir sinn seachad air mòran àiteachan eile. Choisich sinn air an tràigh nuair a bha an t-side math, agus choisich sinn dhan taigh-seinnse nuair a bha an t-side grod.

An ath sheachdain, chaidh sinn gu deas, gu taigh nas lugha ann an Gearraidh Bhailteas. Agus nach d' rinn sinn spòrs gu leòr nuair a bha sinn ag ionnsachadh aig Ceòlas!

a translation of
this article be-
gins on page 4

'S e sgoil coltach ri Féis Shìatàil agus ri Sgoil na Pìoba a th'ann an Ceòlas. 'S e an aon rùn a th'aig Slighe nan Gaidheal agus aig luchd-eagraich Ceòlas – an eadar-ceangal a tha eadar ceòl traidiseanta na h-Alba, cànan na Gàidhlig, òran agus dannsa a rannsachadh. 'S e sochair a bharrachd a bhith stéidhichte ann an coimhearsnachd Ghàidhlig Uibhist a Deas ann am bòidhchead Eileanan an Iar ann an Alba.

Dh'ionnsaich sinn òrain agus puirt agus dannsaichean agus cuideachd dh'ionnsaich sinn is rannsa-

seallabh air duilleag 2, Ceòlas

Nan Pardew to fill Editor position; Publications looking for new members

The Publications Committee has lots of exciting projects in the coming year, including reworking the graphic standards for *Slighe nan Gaidheal* printed materials, a new look for *Am Bradan Fiosa*, and updates to the Web site.

Also in the works are a new *Slighe nan Gaidheal* brochure, and the many items that will be needed for *Féis Shiàtail 2000*. If you're interested in working as a layout artist or reporter for *Am Bradan Fiosa*, please contact Seumas at <seumas@slighe.com>.

Publication Information

Am Bradan Fiosa is produced on a quarterly basis for the members of *Slighe nan Gaidheal* by the Publications Committee and additional contributors.

Editor Nan Pardew
Layout Seumas Gagne
Calendar Editor Pandora Fitzpatrick
Gaelic Editor Gary Ingle

Contributors to this issue: Pandora Fitzpatrick, Kathryn Cole, Nan Pardew and Nancy Nevln.

If you would like to work on the Publications Committee, please contact Seumas at (206) 297-8398 or via email at seumasg@aol.com

Next Publication deadline: March 15th, 2000

Slighe nan Gaidheal Board minutes to be published to eGroups

To make for easier communications, the board of directors of Slighe nan Gaidheal approved a motion to post the minutes of our meetings to the eGroups list once they have been approved... to start this process, we decided to begin with the minutes from this summer (there was a meeting in June and one in August). If you are interested in reviewing minutes, you can inspect the secretary's book before or after any board meeting, or by making an appointment with secretary Kathryn Cole.

1999-2000 election report

Thanks once again to the Elections Committee for running a smooth operation.

Richard Hill, Sheila Hunter <sile@slighe.com> and Judy Webster have been elected to fill the three 3-year positions, and Nancy Lundeen <annag@slighe.com> has been elected to complete the remaining 2 years of the vacant position. Welcome to new and continuing directors!

Additionally, the Board has elected the officers for the coming year as follows:

President - Pandora Fitzpatrick <pandora@slighe.com>
Vice President - Diane Moss <diannag@slighe.com>
Treasurer - Seumas Gagne <seumas@slighe.com>
Secretary - Kathryn Cole <catriona@slighe.com>
Gaelic Education Officer - Richard Hill <ris@slighe.com>
Highland Arts Officer - Judy Webster <sinead@slighe.com>

Also, remember that Rich Hill is the Chairperson of the Feis Committee <feis@slighe.com> and the Education Committee <gaelic@slighe.com>, Kathryn Cole is the Chairperson of the Library & Archives Committee <library@slighe.com>, and Seumas Gagne and Pandora Fitzpatrick are the Co-Chairpeople of the Choir Committee <seirm@slighe.com>.

All Board members and Committee chairpeople can also be reached via the Slighe nan Gaidheal phone line (206) 903-9452.

Moran Taing gu...

Slighe nan Gaidheal would like to thank a number of people and organizations without whom we could not have had such a great year:

Penny & Dale DeGraff – for always being there to take pictures, or videotape, or boot up a computer, or help with just about anything we throw at them!

David Patterson – for helping Michelle LaFrance with the Slighe nan Gaidheal booth at Highland Games around the state.

Kevin MacKenzie – for feeding us at Gaelic Camp – you did such a great job, we hope you'll help out again!

Daniel Thompson – for painting our wonderful new banner.

Queen Anne Masonic Center – for providing us with a location for our activities, until we're able to build *Talla Slighe nan Gaidheal*.

Essential Baking Company – for donating bread to SOOO many intensive days.

...and of course, to all the family-members and friends who support us in all of our endeavors.

ich sinn an càirdeas eadar na puirt is na faclan, eadar na dannsaichean is ruithim nam port. Bha e inntinneach gu dearbh na dannsairean a dh'fhaicinn is na luchd-ciùil a chluinntinn. Agus 's e toil-inntinn mhór puirt-à-beul a dh'ionnsachadh bho Ceana Chaimbeul 's Màiri NicAonghais, agus òrain ciùil mhór a dh'ionnsachadh bho Màiread Stiùbhart 's Rona Lightfoot, agus dannsa-ceum a dh'ionnsachadh bho Alasdair ManDhòmhnaill 's Wendy NicIosaic, agus fìdheall a chluich còmhla ri Buddy MacMhaighstir 's Kinnon Peutan, agus pìoba a chluich còmhla ri Ailean Dòmhnallach 's Aonghas MacCoinnich, agus dannsa-céilidh (ruidhlean Albannach 's cuad-railean) a dh'ionnsachadh bho Mats Melin. 'S e sealladh math aig Hamish Moore, neach-stiùiridh ciùil 's neach-cruthachaidh Ceòlais, agus tha mi'n dòchas gum bi aonachadh gu mór anns na bliadh-nachan ri teachd. Mar eiseimpleir, tha mi'g iarraidh aire nas motha air òrain 's puirt airson dannsa-céilidh a faicinn.

Ceòlas, bho duilleag 1

'S e dian fhiosrachadh a th'ann an Ceòlas. Tha tàlann mór aig gach tidsear agus tha a h-uile duine cho càirdeil. Dh'fhosgail na h-Uibhistich na taighean aca agus rinn sinn moladh ciùil 's dualchais fad seachdaine. Thachair sinn ri mòran càirdean ùra bho gach ceàrn an t-saoghail. Bha céilidhean is cuirmean-ciùil ann gach oidhche agus nach gabh ach dol a dh'Eirisgeidh air an latha as fhliche – agus nach sin an aon rud a rinn sinne! Ghabh mòran luchd-Ceòlais pàirt ann an seirbheis Dhiadhachd Ghàidhlig agus bha céilidh ann far an cuala sinn Rona Lightfoot a'cluich air a'phiob-mhór – abair aoibhneas! B'e nèamh gu dearbh gun do dh'fheumadh sinn taghadh a dhèanamh eadar cuirm-ciùil na pìoba agus òrain a'seinn còmhla ri luchd na Gàidhlig. Agus ciamar a ní mi mion iomradh air mar a bha mi a' faireachdainn, a bhith a fuireach ann an dualchas Ghàidhlig 's a bhith a' bruidhinn na Gàidhlig fad na h-uine – feumaidh sibhse dol a dh'Alba agus blasad a ghabhail de gach rud dhuibh fhein!

Congratulations to Slighe members...

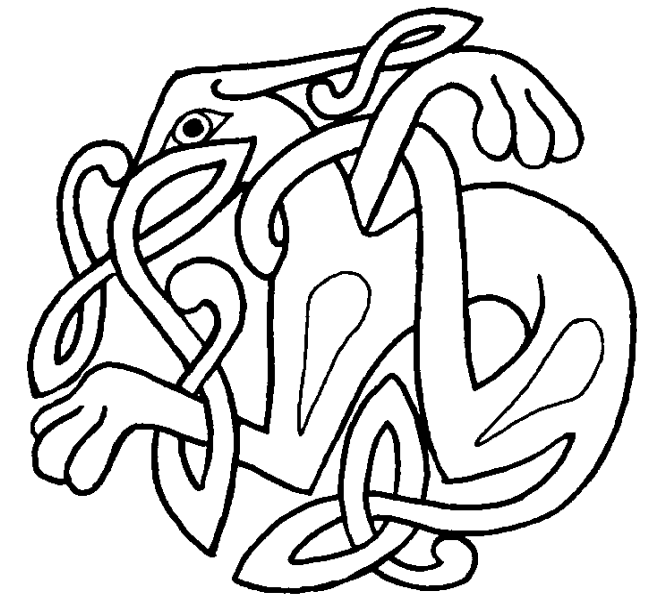
...Christine Traxler and Christian Hoffman on their wedding 15 August 1999

...Zack DeLong and Helen Gineris (now the Davissons) on their wedding 5 September 1999

...Stephanie Raymond and Bobby Reeder on the birth of their daughter Aileen.

T-shirt design contest!

We're ready for a new T-shirt design, so fire up your creativity and submit a design! A bottle of whisky will be awarded to the design chosen by the Board, so send your camera-ready, 2-color design incorporating our name and URL to Pandora by January 31, 2000.



Pairc Stanley

(Dealbh nam Facal)

Nanag Neveln an 12mh latha Chéitein

1999

B'e ar ceud thuras ann am Bhancoubhair. As deidh a' Mhòid, Chaidh sinn chun na Pairce Stanley, cridhe uaine a' bhaile mhóir, òrdag uaine na miotaige. 'Nar seasamh anns an aon àite, chunnaic sinn coille nan tùr-glainne sìos a' bhaile; Thionndaidh sinn leth-chearcall gu tuath — coille nan crànn-bàtaichean, Giuthais dùbha air 'nan cùlaibh, ard-bheanntan sneachdach anns an astair. Choisich sinn thar drochaid na h-Acarsaid-Ghuail Seachad air h-ìomhaigh de Lord Stanley le gàirdeanan sgaoilte a' cuir oirn fàilte.

Rinn tunnacail teaghlach gèoidh, pàrantan leis an iseannan, a dh'ionnsaigh na glumaige. Streap sinn slighe troimhe a' choille fhionnar is dhùbh, le craobhan gaillinn-briste far an do deach air spiris iolaire, nach tug an aire air feannagan móra fuaimneach a sàrachadh. 'Sann ann an craobh uaine-ùr na h-earraich ri taobh an t-slighe a chuala sinn brù-dheargan an nead a dhion gu labhar an aghaidh na feannagan-spùinneadairean. Dh'ionnlaid brù-dhearg eile buileach air a shò-cair ann an lòn faisg air an ionad-chluich. Ruith feòragan dùbh-gual le earbail dosaic air feadh na pairce.

B'e an fheasgar Di-Dòmhaich tràth 'sa Chéitein a bh'ann agus bha móran dhaoine anns a' phairc: teaghlacha le cloinn bhig, móran chàraidean leannain, luchd-turais le camaran, sluagh na h-òigridhe, lùth-chleasaichean a' cluich ball-coise, cricket neo baseball. Ghluais na daoine neo air a' chois, air a' bhàidhsagal, air a' bhròg-spéilidh, anns a' chàr, neo anns a' chairt-éich. Ach cha do ghluais feadhainn — Chluich fear-ciùil fuinn le Bach air a' shéileafon tlàth-fhuaimneach. Reic luchd-peantaidh na dealbhan aca faisg air an Taigh Éisg. S' iomadh cànan às gach ceàrnaidh de'n t-saoghal a chuala sinn timcheall oirn. B'e anam a' bhaile mhóir a bh'ann gu dearbh. Tillidh sinn a-rithist.

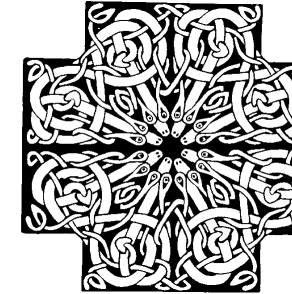
Slighe nan Gaidheal Photo Contest!

The Slighe nan Gaidheal Library and Archives Committee has been trying to collect photos and other memorabilia for our archives. We would really like to have photo albums available for people to look through at our events, especially for Feis 2000. It's a wonderful way to tell the story of where we've been, the great events we've had, and of the community we've built here in Seattle.

To that end, we've decided to hold a photo contest! Pandora and Kathryn decided that they'd had too much fun in the costume shop and have now joined forces to create some wonderful hand-decorated prizes, including a completely hand-made, tartan-covered photo album. The categories are as follows:

- Grand Prize for Most Usable Photos
- Funniest Photo
- Best Feis '98 Photo
- Best Performance Photo
- Most Betartaned Photo
- Best Portrait
- Best Ceilidh Photo

The deadline for entry is January 31, and labelled photos can be turned in to Kathryn Cole or Pandora Fitzpatrick. The Library and Archives Committee will judge the contest. If you have any questions, please call the Slighe phone line at (206) 903-9452.



Backstage at Am ri Teachd

Nan Pardew

"Time—go to your places in line!"

Uh...where am I supposed to be? Behind Sheila...where's Sheila? Suddenly, she appears more or less in front of me and I fall into the line of colorfully dressed characters covered with glitter. We troop out of the dressing room and across the street to the theater accompanied by a blast of piping. This is it, opening night.

For 10 weeks we learned and rehearsed the songs, met and worked with the band, were moved around and run through pieces of the show while director Carmen worked out the blocking, and did our best to sell tickets. For a week before the show, Seirm spent its evenings at the theater getting *Am ri Teachd* into final form. Pandora, costumer and producer, appears to be on the verge of collapse. Our fearless leader Seumas can't be much better off, but doesn't seem to show it. Even choir members with no lines and no solos are sleep-deprived and adrenaline-wired. The separate days of the experience run together into a pattern of walkthroughs, trying not to walk into people onstage, adjustments, director's notes. Now here we are waiting in the lobby to make our entrance on opening night, and my mind is a blank. I'll just have to hope I remember where I'm supposed to be and what sing as we go along.

Onstage for the first number, I only sing the chorus because the women's part is mostly out of my range. Oh well, I can't be out of tune if I'm not singing... The rest of the choir and Seumas's harp parts sound good, though.

Opening number over, I move to the first of several "attractive clumps." The non-dancing, non-band portion of the choir is supposed look like it's having a blast, scoping out the dancers and grooving on the music. It isn't difficult. The band is very, very hot, and the dancers are cute and look like they're having blast themselves, which makes them fun to watch.

The next two choir numbers ("Cha Teid Fionnladh a dh'Eige" and "Seinn o ho ro seinn") go pretty well. Then we hit the dreaded "'S Ioma Rud Tha Dhith Orm/Domhnall Beag an t-Siucair" medley, which goes badly sharp. Helen's warming up her villainess role, sulking ostentatiously and getting cockeyed looks from various choir members. We get through the medley and dance merrily offstage, filing in behind the supertitle screen to provide backup vocals for Bobby's big number, "An Cluinn Thu Mi, Mo Nighean Donn." Then quickly out of the theater and back in through the lobby and onstage again for "Si Morag a Rinn a' Bhanais," where Kathryn, affectionately known as "Bridezilla," is dressed for the wedding in her enormous costume and gets to shake her panniers. Jori the Wonder Piper goes into "Highland Wedding" and we move into places for the high point of Act 1, the wedding scene.

Kathryn does a great job on her first solo, "A Nionag, A Ghraidh," more-than-ably accompanied by Seumas on the harp. I don't know about the audience, but the choir gets pretty damp as it sings "Gradh Geal mo Chridhe" and the blessing is spoken. We yip and cheer at the conclusion of the ceremony, however, and the dancers dance again and lead the rest of us offstage with the help of a great tune set from the band.

During intermission, we decompress in the dressing room across the street, gulping down water while trying not to smear our makeup or drip on our costumes, repairing smeared makeup, singing, pacing nervously, talking, and waiting to get back across the street and into Act 2. The flowers delivered

"What a thoroughly enjoyable evening. But I was left with a bad case of "chorus envy." I am very proud of my group and my artistic direction, but I couldn't believe that you could find so many people willing to sing (in a rare language), act, wear futuristic costumes, and dance around in a stage so small it might as well have been a closet." — Chris Vincent, Something Else! Ambassador group for Seattle Gay and Lesbian Chorus

see Backstage on page 5



Ceòlas & Summer School 1999 Pandora Fitzpatrick

This summer, 16 people went to Scotland. In our company were myself, Sandy Gilliam, Katie Cashatt, Nancy Lundeen, Sheila Hunter, Gary & Nancy Ingle, Chris & Tully McIntyre, Ross Morrison, Cuini Mack, Gaylord Stewart, Nancy Johnson, Rosemary Villani, Dale Cummings, and Geoff Frasier.

Translation of cover story

The first week, Gordon Wells of the Lews Castle College University of the Highlands and Islands Project organized a summer school for us in North Uist. We stayed at a huge house in Balemor, near the place where Dolina MacKinnon grew up. Kenna Moffat, a South Uist native, and Ishbel Murray, a Lewis native now living in Glasgow, taught us all week. We had lots of fun, and learned lots of Gaelic. The women of Taigh Clòimhe came Wednesday evening to talk about the Hebridean sheep and the things they are making from the black wool. We also toured around North Uist, and saw Finn's People (a standing stone circle) and Barpa Langish (a burial cairn several thousand years old). We went to Taigh Chearsabhagh (museum and arts center) in Lochmaddy, and drove past many other places. When the weather was nice, we walked on the beach, and walked to the pub when the weather was nasty!

The next week, we went south to a smaller house in Milton. And didn't we have plenty of fun while we were at Ceòlas!

Ceòlas is a school much like our Féis and Piping School. Slighe nan Gaidheal and the organizers of Ceòlas have a similar purpose – to explore the connections between traditional Scottish music, the Gaelic language, songs, and dances. Ceòlas has the additional advantage of being situated in the Gaelic community of South Uist in the beauty of the Western Isles of Scotland.

We learned songs, tunes, and dances, and we also studied and explored the relationship between the tunes and the words, the dances and the rhythms of the tunes. It was indeed interesting to see the dances, and to hear the musicians. And it was a great pleasure to learn mouth music with Kenna Campbell and Màiri MacInnes, piobrach songs with Margaret Stewart and Rona Lightfoot, step-dancing with Alexander MacDonnell and Wendy MacIsaac, fiddling with Buddy MacMaster and Kinnon Beaton, piping with Allan MacDonald and Angus MacKenzie, and social dances (Scottish reels and quadrilles) with Mats Melin. Hamish Moore, the musical director and organizer of Ceòlas, has a great vision, and I hope to see even more integration in the years to come. For example, I'd like to see more attention on songs and tunes for the social dances.

Ceòlas is quite an experience. Every instructor is so talented, and all the people so friendly. The people of Uist opened their homes to us, and we celebrated music and culture all week. Céilidhs and concerts were on every night, and not only did the instructors perform, but the students and the people of Uist also gave songs and tunes and dances – Catherine Garbutt, Màiri Smith, Cathy-Ann MacPhee, Fred Morrison, Margaret Callan, and so many others. And each night in the pub there were sessions. It's traditional at Ceòlas to go to Eriskay on the worst day – and isn't that exactly what we did! Many people from Ceòlas participated in a religious service in Gaelic, and at the céilidh we heard Rona Lightfoot play her pipes – what a joy! It's pleasure indeed to have to choose between a piping concert and singing songs with native Gaelic speakers. And how can I describe accurately the experience of living in Gaelic culture and speaking Gaelic all the time – you all will just have to go to Scotland and experience each thing for yourselves.

Annual Robert Burns Supper in Whiterock

Don't miss the annual Robert Burns supper on January 22nd at the Star of the Sea hall in Whiterock. Tickets are \$35 Canadian and going fast! Phone Maureen Lyon for details at (604) 536-1367.

Fealla-dha

translation next issue

Bha bodach sine, agus bha e glè thinn. Chaidh a mhac a thadhail leis. Chunnaic e athair 'na shuidhe anns an leabaidh, agus bha e a' leughadh "Scottish Gaelic in Three Months".

"Carson a tha sibh ag ionnsachadh na Ghàidhlig agus sibhse cho sean?" dh'fhaighnich a mhac.

"'S docha gun teasdaibh mi," dh'fhreagair am bodach, "agus tha fios aig gach duine gur na Ghàidhlig a' chànain nèamh."

"'S docha nach teid sibh do nèamh," thuirt a mhac.

"Ach! 'S amadan a th'annad!," ran am bodach, "Tha Beurla agam cheanna!"



Calendar

- February 12 Slighe 2nd Saturday activities TBA; Board Meeting 9:30-12:00, potluck & céilidh 8:00pm @ QAMC
- March 11 Slighe 2nd Saturday activities TBA; Board Meeting 9:30-12:00, potluck & céilidh 8:00pm @ QAMC
- March 25 Seirm, Friends and Special Guests present a benefit concert for Féis Shiàtail at Central Lutheran Church on Capital Hill. Tickets \$10 at the door. Contact Seumas for more information (206) 297-8398.
- April 8 Slighe 2nd Saturday activities TBA; Board Meeting 9:30-12:00, potluck & céilidh 8:00pm @ QAMC
- April 29 Ruith nam Bradan 2nd Annual Great-Kilted Fun Run
- May 1-7 Féis Shiàtail activities – see Féis brochure and website for details @ Town Hall
- May 13 Board Meeting time & location TBA
- June 10 Slighe 2nd Saturday activities TBA; Board Meeting 9:30-12:00, potluck & céilidh 8:00pm @ QAMC
- July 3-7 Ceòlas, South Uist
- September 9 Slighe 2nd Saturday activities TBA; Board Meeting 9:30-12:00, potluck & céilidh 8:00pm @ QAMC
- October 28 AGM & activities, potluck & céilidh 8:00pm @ QAMC
- November 11 Slighe 2nd Saturday activities TBA; Board Meeting 9:30-12:00, potluck & céilidh 8:00pm @ QAMC
- December 9 Slighe all-day Board retreat followed by potluck & céilidh @ QAMC Time to be determined

Backstage, continued from page 3

earlier and addressed to "Seumas and Seirm Gagne" get a general laugh. I realize I'm limptired. There's no time for being tired, though, and

I push it away until later.

Soon, we're back in the lobby waiting for our Act 2 entrance while Helen has her solo, "Iain Ghlinn Cuaich." Since we're behind the theater doors awaiting our entrance, I'm not sure how it sounds, but the audience seems to like her. Now comes my second-favorite part: The choir becomes Helen's conflicted conscience and gets to bear down on her singing "Thig am Bata" like a troop of valkyries and Vikings, with short but meaningful solos by Kathi and Dale. Helen dances that she's going mad while we cluster at the edge of the stage reaching out toward her like demons from the inferno. Helen makes a dramatic exit, and we revert from demons to a choir reflecting how sad it is to be outside one's community with "Muladach Mi 'S Mi air m' Aineoil" and embracing each other in boozy brotherhood with "Gleann Baile Chaoil" while whisky bottles full of iced tea make the rounds. Jori has a rousing pipe solo. (A bagpipe at a range of 5 feet will rouse anyone!) Then Helen's back on the scene, trying to spread rumors about Kathryn, who promptly puts Helen in her place by singing "Tha Mulad," backed up by an outraged choir. Helen retreats and we all celebrate with "B'fhearr Leam Fhin" and "B'fhearr Mar a Bha Mi An Uiridh." This is followed by a story, then another tune set and dance. I feel something like a runner's high when I realize that we're almost through tonight's performance.

At this point, the party onstage is supposed to wind down and let the wedding couple be on their way. Seumas gets everybody all teary with his solo, "Cagaran Gaolach." This is followed by the choir singing "Cearcal a' Chuain" while coming out of character by removing bits of our costumes and piling them near the back of the stage. Then it's time to get the audience to sing along, with "Chi mi na Morbheanna." Seumas introduces this as "our favorite part" and in fact it is mine, not because the audience sings or because it's the last number of the show but because it's why I joined Seirm, to stand in the midst of a crowd of people making a good sound and add my voice to theirs. We take our bows, dance off the stage and fly to get out of our costumes and get the stage cleared before Jet City Improv takes over the space.

By our last performance on Sunday afternoon, we're all flagging at least a little bit. I'm glad I was part of it, but just as glad that it's over for awhile. If you missed *Am ri Teachd* the first time, come see it