



# CANADIAN CELTIC ARTS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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## Smaointean / Smaointe\*\*

Janice Chan, President

The Celts have always believed that certain people are blessed (or perhaps cursed) with the ability to see the future as if it is actually happening.

Particularly prominent in the Scottish Highlands, it was thought that people born on Samhain were gifted with *an dà shealladh*, a term often translated as “second sight”, though “two sights” could be a better meaning, as the future event would appear as if it was happening in the present. Unfortunately, the prophecies most often foretold death.

Although not quite the same as *an dà shealladh*, in Ireland, people who experienced mystical visions were said to be *aislingeach*, and their visions often prophesied death. *Deirdre of the Sorrows* is probably the most well-known tale involving *aislingeach* in Irish mythology.

The story began as Conchobar mac Nessa, king of Ulster and his retinue celebrated Samhain in the Great Hall. A shriek interrupted the festivities, and the court druid proclaimed that the cry came from the yet-to-be born daughter of the court bard. He prophesied that the child, Deirdre, would grow up to be so beautiful that kings would go to war to win her hand. Instead of killing the child as many urged, Conchobar raised Deirdre for himself, intrigued by the thought of her future beauty.

Deirdre did indeed grow up to be both beautiful and kind, but with no desire to marry King Conchobar. She too had a vision, one of a black-haired man with skin as white as snow and blood red lips, and declared that this would be the man that she would marry. One day, she encountered Naoise literally the young man of her dreams. At first Naoise resisted Deirdre's charms, as he was aware of the prophecies, but he soon fell hopelessly in love with her.

The two escaped to Scotland with the help of Naoise's brothers, Ardan and Ainnle. The lovers lived there happily for a number of years, until King Conchobar finally discovered their whereabouts. He sent an envoy with a



false declaration of amnesty if the couple agreed to return home. Deirdre however, had yet another vision, this time of the death of the three brothers, but Naoise was determined to return home. Although there are various versions of the story, all of them end with the death of the brothers and the capture of Deirdre by Conchobar, and Deirdre's eventual death as well.

The story of Deirdre and Naoise is probably one of the best known stories from pre-Christian Ireland and forms part of the Ulster Cycle of tales. They are also remembered in Scotland where the young couple enjoyed their few years of happiness. Listen to a traditional retelling of the story from Barra, in the Western Isles collected in the 19th century by the Scottish folklorist Alexander Carmichael [here](#).

Read a traditional Scottish Gaelic tale of *an dà shealladh* on page 6, in both Scottish Gaelic and English, but be forewarned - it does not end well!

\*\*Smaointean / Smaointe is translated as "Thoughts" from Scottish Gaelic and Irish Gaelic respectively.

## FEATURE

### News from Celtic Studies

By Jean Talman/David Wilson



We have started the academic year firing on all cylinders – our enrolment numbers are up, we are all encountering a high level of student enthusiasm, and we have some first-class instructors.

Thanks to the Ireland Canada University Foundation, Noel O Murchadha has joined us to teach our Irish language classes; he tells us that we have the most motivated students he has ever taught. Tadhg Morris is teaching our core course, Celtic Cultures Through the Ages; Dan Brielmaier is teaching Celtic Mythology (which has a record number of students); and Hefina Phillips is teaching our Welsh language course. Mark McGowan is teaching our modern Irish history courses.

Next term, we welcome back Sarah O'Connor, who will be teaching Contemporary Celtic Cinema, and Sean Conway on the Irish and Scots in Canada. We are also looking forward to a course by Stuart Macdonald from Knox College on the Scottish Reformation. We are delighted to announce that Charles Foran, a Celtic Studies alumnus who has won more major nonfiction awards than any other Canadian writer, will be teaching a course on Irish Literature in the Twentieth Century. It seems that Ann Dooley has an elastic definition of retirement, since she is teaching one and a half courses this year, to our general delight.

Our Speakers Series is up and running. In September, Allan Blackstock of the University of Ulster, spoke on Irish-Canadian Relations in the 1830s; his talk generated significant interest and a lively Q&A session. In October, Michael Vance from St Mary's University spoke on the Scots in the Upper Ottawa Valley. We also welcomed Liam Kennedy from Queen's University Belfast who spoke on *Planter and Gael: Explorations in Irish Ethnic History*.

In November, we will have Willeen Keough of Simon Fraser University speaking on Irish Women in early Newfoundland fishing communities, and Catriona Crowe of the National Archives of Ireland, to talk about the Irish census on-line.



We have also been active on other fronts. The book based on our 2010 international conference on Irish and Scottish Encounters with Indigenous Peoples has been accepted for publication by McGill-Queen's University Press, to come out in the spring.

During the summer, David Wilson had numerous adventures with his D'Arcy McGee book, including launches in Donegal, Carlingford, and the Canadian Embassy in Dublin. He spoke at the first D'Arcy McGee Summer School held in Ireland, and was appointed President of the Thomas D'Arcy McGee Society. He is currently writing a book on the Fenians in Canada, but does not expect to be appointed President of any related organizations.

In September, Ann Dooley presented a paper at University College, Cork, and has just returned from giving a paper at a conference in Gulfport, Louisiana. Over the summer, Mairin Nic Dhiarmada attended the annual John McGahern Summer School in Leitrim, a conference on Irish language teaching at NUI-Maynooth, and several writers' festivals. Jean Talman attended the Percy French Summer School at Castlecoote House, Roscommon, which was quite a delight, particularly due to the presence of President Michael D. Higgins, who is also Honorary President of the Summer School and a long-time Percy French aficionado. He attended on the first day and gave the keynote address.

We are delighted to confirm that our writer-in-residence for the 2012-2013 academic year will be Charles Foran, on campus from January to April 2013. As mentioned above, he is already on board to teach a half-course on Irish literature.

## FEATURE

### The Galatians –Celts of Turkey

By Hilary MacKenzie



The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* takes the point of view of the average Greek or Roman who generally regarded the Galatian people as “Barbarians” and describing Galatia as “an ancient district in central Anatolia that was occupied in the third century BC by Celtic tribes, whose bands of marauders created havoc among neighbouring Hellenistic states”.

Recent archaeological digs at Gordion led by the University of Pennsylvania and the Royal Ontario Museum, however, have revealed that they created a thriving community there.

How did these Celts end up in Turkey? Some Gauls migrated south and east at the end of the fourth century BC, but Alexander the Great of Macedonia managed to push them back towards Western Europe. A few decades later, they began the same migration and got as far as Greece. Around 279BC they split up with some heading south to sack the temple at Delphi and



others moving further east into Thrace. In 1978BC some of this second group were hired by Nicomedes I, king of Bithynia in Asia Minor, who needed help in suppressing a rebellion by his younger brother. These Celts who crossed the Hellespont helped to turn the tide for Nicomedes and, as a reward, they were granted considerable territory on the central plateau of Turkey that became known as Galatia.

Roughly 20,000 Celts, 10,000 fighting men and the same number of women and children migrated to Galatia. Roman historians believe they divided into three tribes: the Tectosages settled in the centre of the plateau around their main town, Ancyra; the Tolistobogii settled in the west, around their main town of Pessinue; and the Trocmi settled in the east around their main town of Tavium. It appears that they lived largely by plundering. The location of their homeland was perfect for launching raids on neighbouring territories. Later in the third century BC, however, King Attalus of Pergamum was able to raise enough forces to beat them back and confine them to Galatia. After this, the Galatians did less independent fighting and more as mercenaries for surrounding states.

Each of the tribes established a huge ring fort in the area of their main town. They had a sophisticated political and legal system. Each tribe was divided into four sub-groups called Tetrarchies, with its own ruling Tetrarch, and a judge and military commander under the Tetrarch. Once a year, each of the tribes sent 100 men and their four Tetrachs to a meeting at the sacred oak grove, or Drynemton, probably near Ancyra. At these meetings, murder cases were judged, intertribal disputes resolved, and trade agreements made.

By the second century BC, the Roman Empire was expanding. After the Galatians

allied themselves with a Roman enemy, the Romans launched a punitive invasion deep into Asia Minor to get control of the plateau. The Galatians suffered heavy casualties and thereafter, Galatia was dominated by the Roman Empire. In 64BC, it became a client state with just one Tetrach per tribe, then, in 25BC, Octavian Augustus officially incorporated Galatia into the Roman Empire as a province and made Ancyra the provincial capital. Thereafter, little is heard of the Galatians.



What we know as the *Dying Gaul* is actually the *Dying Galatian*, a copy of the original made for the King Attalus of Pergamon to commemorate his victory over the Galatians.

Cities like Ancyra were on important trade routes and trade prospered under the stability of the Roman Empire. Gold coins and stone sculptures found in Galatians' homes during archeological digs at towns such as Gordion have proved wrong the historical depiction of Galatians as raiders and poor farmers.

Based on found inscriptions and also the writing of visitors, Galatian language appears to continue for several centuries. In the fourth century AD, St. Jerome visited and reported Galatian language being similar to that spoken in Trier on the Rhineland, the territory they had migrated from six centuries ago.



These Celts had no doubt brought their own beliefs when they migrated to Asia Minor. Archaeology has revealed evidence of rituals found in many Celtic sites in Europe, including human sacrifice. They became one of the most loyal Roman provinces and built a temple to venerate Augustus in Ancyra. The Galatians converted to Christianity at early stage, although archaeological evidence seems to indicate that some Celtic rituals continued. St. Paul visited Galatia several times and wrote his epistles out of concern that the people were being influenced by “Judaizers”, Christian Jews who insisted on the respect of certain Jewish laws. Paul of Tarsus wrote that he felt the Galatians were not getting the “correct” version of Christianity.

In a recent article in the *British Journal of Anatolian Studies*, British and Turkish academics wrote the Galatian communities were “a new, significant and increasingly important geopolitical entity within Asia Minor” and “the fact their polities survived to be incorporated into the Roman Empire would indicate the existence of highly developed social structures bound together by shared value systems. The European Galatians successfully adapted to their new environment, changing it and being changed by it.”

So now, finally, it is acknowledged that there was a sophisticated Celtic civilization in Turkey that blended with surrounding Anatolian Plateau peoples. Here’s hoping for motivation and funding to do more research on these people that up until recently were such a low priority.

## FEATURE

### Summer School in Wales

By Sarah Norris

I was awarded a scholarship by the Celtic Studies Program and St. Michael’s College that allowed me a great experience in summer, 2011. I used the scholarship to fund my tuition and boarding for a month-long intensive Welsh course in Cardiff, Wales.

The course I participated in was learning Welsh. *Welsh for Adults/ Cymraeg I Oedolion* drew people of all ages and nationalities, many were university students like myself, some from other countries learning Welsh out of interest or family connections; others native Welsh with an intent to become fluent.

There were students from all around the world spread out across four levels, *Mynediad* (Introduction), *Canolradd* (Intermediate), *Uwch Un* (Advanced 1), and a course designed for local Elementary school teachers. The classes were taught in Welsh, with occasional smatterings of English when the vocabulary was difficult or a concept not clear.



Our classes were full days with tea and lunch breaks. Classes were Monday to Friday for 4 weeks, but one day the whole



group went on a day trip to Pwll Mawr, a former mine, which is now run as a museum, and Blaenarvon, the nearby town.

Studying Welsh in the country where it is spoken was a wonderful experience, and the course allowed me to improve my comfort level and proficiency in the language immensely. After the course was over I spent two days in Wrexham to go to the National Eisteddfod, a Welsh language cultural festival, and while there had the great experiences of speaking with native Welsh speakers in a social environment and discovering that I was comfortable enough with the language to carry on a conversation with relative ease.

I had a fantastic month of new learning and experiences and I am so grateful to St Michael's College and the Celtic Studies Program for making it possible for me to take this trip and deepen my knowledge of a subject so fascinating. I intend to continue my Welsh learning through classes at Eglwys Dewi Sant in North York.

Diolch enfawr iawn! (Thank you very much)

## FEATURE

### *An dà shealladh*

Gaelic translation by Janice Chan



This is a traditional tale of second sight, or *an dà shealladh* from Uist in the Western Isles of Scotland. As with most such stories, it

deals not just with a premonition of death, but an actual vision in the present.

### *Sealladh a Chunnaic Balach aig Banais*

Bha balach òg uair ann an Uibhist agus chaidh e gu banais a bhràthar 's e a' pòsadh nighean òg eireachdail a mhuinntir Uibhist fhèin. Cò-dhiù, nuair a bha a' bhanais a' dol gu math agus bha ruidhle na bainnse air an ùrlar, thàinig dath bàn air aodann an duine òg seo. is e a' dùr -bheachnachadh air bean na bainnse. An ceann greis dh'fhalbh e agus chaidh e dhachaigh, agus chuir e iongnadh mòr air daoine gun deach e dhachaigh cho tràth far banais a bhràithar. Nuair a ràinig e an taigh, dh'fhaighneachd a mhàthair dheth gu dè a chuir dhachaigh cho luath e.

“Chuir seo,” fhreagair esan. “Ged a tha mo bhràthair cho toilichte a-nochd, mun tig ceann bliadhna bidh e gu math mì-thoilichte. Cha mheal e a bhean òg ro fhada. Nuair a bha iad anns an ruidhle na bainnse chunnaic mi a lèine-bhàis air bean na bainnse, suas chun na h-amhaich.”

Mar a thuirt e, b'fhìor. Mun do ruith a' bhliadhna, bha am boireannach air a tuisleadh air leanabh gille, agus bhàsaich i fhèin ged a dh'fhan am pàisde beò.

### *A Vision That a Young Man Saw at a Wedding*

There was once a young man in Uist and he went to the wedding of his brother and a beautiful young lass from Uist as well. Anyway, when the wedding was well underway and the wedding reel was on the floor, a pallor came over the face of this young man as he was staring intently at the bride. After a while he left and he went home, and it greatly surprised people that he went home so early from his brother's wedding. When he arrived at the house, his



mother asked him what sent him home so quickly.

"This," he answered. "Though my brother is so happy tonight, before the end of the year arrives, he will be quite unhappy. He won't enjoy his young wife very long. When they were dancing the wedding reel, I saw the bride in her shroud, up to the neck."

As he said, it came to pass. Before the year had run its course, the woman had delivered a baby boy, and she herself died, although the child lived.



## Canadian Celtic Arts Association Events Calendar

**Saturday, September 15 – Saturday,  
November 24, 2012**

### **Saturday Scottish Gaelic classes**

Alumni Hall, 121 St. Joseph Street, Toronto,  
10 am - 12 pm. Non-credit Scottish Gaelic  
classes, beginner to advanced. Please  
registration details [here](#).

**Thursday November 1, 2012**

### **[Blas, A Taste of Things Irish, with special guest, Roddy Doyle](#)**

TIFF Bell Lightbox, 350 King Street West,  
Toronto ON, 6 pm Cocktails / 6:45 pm Chat  
with Roddy Doyle / 7:30 pm Whiskey  
Tasting / 8 pm Live Music  
Individual tickets begin at \$250. For more  
information, please call 416.367.8311.  
Presented by the Ireland Fund of Canada.

**Thursday, November 8, 2012**

**"Go to the Devil to the River Head to Your  
Own Bogs: Unsettling Femininity in Early**

### **Irish-Newfoundland Fishing Communities"**

Willeen Keough, Simon Fraser University  
Charbonnel Lounge, St. Michael's College,  
81 St. Mary Street, 6 p.m.

For more information on this series, please  
contact [celtic.studies@utoronto.ca](mailto:celtic.studies@utoronto.ca) or  
416-926-7145. Thanks to the Irish Cultural  
Society of Toronto for their sponsorship of  
the series.

**Saturday November 10, 2012**

### **RSCDS Toronto Scottish Country Dance Association Workshops**

Bishop Strachan School, 298 Lonsdale Rd,  
Toronto ON, 8:45 am - 3:45 pm.

Please [click here](#) for more information.

### **RSCDS Toronto Scottish Country Dance Association Monthly Dance**

Crescent School, 2365 Bayview Avenue,  
Toronto ON (N of Lawrence Ave. E.  
opposite the Granite Club, ample parking  
on site), 8 pm - 10: 30 pm. Live music by  
Don Bartlett & The Scottish Heirs.

For more information including cost, click  
[here](#) or contact Duncan Forbes at  
[fmduncan@sympatico.ca](mailto:fmduncan@sympatico.ca) or call 416.266.3377

**Thursday, November 22, 2012**

### **"Broken Down by Age, Sex and Religion: the Irish Census Online"**

Catriona Crowe, National Archives of  
Ireland

Robert Madden Auditorium, Carr Hall,  
St. Michael's College, 100 St. Joseph Street,  
6 p.m. Free Admission. All welcome. For  
more information, email  
[celtic.studies@utoronto.ca](mailto:celtic.studies@utoronto.ca) or phone  
416.926.7145.

**Saturday December 1, 2012**

### **Cànan agus Òran Gaelic Language and Song Workshop**

121 St. Joseph St., Toronto ON, 9 am - 4 pm.  
The Gaelic Society of Toronto and the  
University of Toronto Celtic Studies



Program will be holding a day of Gaelic language and song for learners of Scottish Gaelic. The guest teachers for this date are Catherine-Ann MacPhee, Oighrig Keough and David Livingstone-Lowe.

\$40 for the day, \$20 to non-U of T students, free to U of T students and native speakers. Early Bird Registrations (including cheque or money order) received by November 16 - \$27 and non-U of T students \$15.

For more information, call Lorrie at 905.844.4908. [Click here](#) to register.

**Saturday December 8, 2012**

**RSCDS Toronto Scottish Country Dance Association Family Christmas Dance**

Crescent School, 2365 Bayview Avenue, Toronto ON (N of Lawrence Ave. E. opposite the Granite Club, ample parking on site), 7:30 pm -10:30 pm, with live music by The Scottish Accent.

This event is specially designed for families. All dances will be briefed and walked. [Click here](#) for more information including cost, or contact Duncan Forbes at [fmduncan@sympatico.ca](mailto:fmduncan@sympatico.ca) or call 416.266.3377.

\* All events and dates are subject to change. Please call the number provided to confirm any event listed.

To list your Celtic-themed event, email [ruadh@idirect.com](mailto:ruadh@idirect.com) with the following information:

1. Date
2. Event
3. Location
4. Start time and other info including price, tickets, and contact info

## Canadian Celtic Arts Association Executive Committee

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Jean Talman

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