

# NAACLTL News

February 1996

Vol. 2, No. 3

North American Association for Celtic Language Teachers

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## Conferences & Publication News

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### Conferences

Many of us are still recovering from a summer of conferences and papers. However I am posting this issue on to you a week or two early so that those on the west coast (and elsewhere) can have an opportunity to send a proposal for the CSANA Annual Meeting/U.C. Celtic Colloquium. The deadline is 1 February 1996 and the conference will take place 25-28 April 1996 at UCLA. See the notes section for more details.

Also attached to this issue is a second call for papers for our own conference. We are now sending this call out to Internet lists, other publications, and Celtic Studies departments in North America and the Celtic nations.

In addition to CSANA and NAACLTL, there are several other conferences where members could present their work. I have just returned from the Modern Language Association conference in Chicago. In 1994, it was in Toronto, and it will be in Washington, DC in 1996 (27-30 December). Many of the presentations paralleled those of our 1995 conference in Glendale and LCTLs were represented at the MLA conference in a number of papers. The ACIS National Conference will be at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale 17-20 April with an appearance by Seamus Heaney. The Canadian Association for Irish Studies Conference will take place 12-16 June at the University of Prince Edward Island in Charlottetown. Another conference that will take place in Philadelphia at the same time as our own conference is the ACTFL meeting. We scheduled this purposely to encourage members to submit proposals to both conferences (NAACLTL & ACTFL). Also those who will be traveling a distance and want to increase their stay in Philadelphia are encouraged to register for ACTFL which begins before and continues after our conference.

### Publication News

The first issue of the [Journal of Celtic Language Learning](#), edited by Nancy Stenson and myself were posted to subscriber in December. Positive feedback has already begun to find its way back to us. Printing and postage costs were completely covered by subscription fees. This included the printing cost of twenty extra copies which were mailed out to journals and some Celtic Studies departments.

The master copy of the journal will be submitted to ERIC for possible microfilming in a few months. We would appreciate any feedback regarding spelling or punctuation in the first volume of JCLL at this time. Unfortunately, no other corrections can be made at this late date.

A side note, it was great to see that of the four linguists cited in the 1995 ACIS (American Conference for Irish Studies) Research Report three are NAACLTL members: James J. Blake for his "Language Report" in *Éire-Ireland* (see NAACLTL News 1.4), James J. Duran for research in progress involving his survey of spoken Irish in the Aran Islands, Co. Galway under the auspices of the Dublin Institute of Advanced Studies, and myself for the article on feedback in teaching Irish that appeared in *Teanga* (see NAACLTL News 2.1).

Continuing on the theme of publications, I would like to keep on inviting members to submit items of interest for the newsletter, be it the "My Turn" column, up coming events, materials, or any other information that can be shared with members.

## My Turn

We would like to give the opportunity to members to share their story with other NAACLT members. Last issue we highlighted one of our Gaelic members. This month we give the floor to an Irish member. We hope a Welsh language member will volunteer next. Please send a 1,000 word article as below with photo. [ed.]

### Tiarnan de Fréine

Ontario

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I was born in Dublin in 1962. I have been living in Toronto, Canada since early 1990. I grew up bilingually (English and Irish), attending a number of Gaeilscoileanna (all Irish speaking immersion schools) including Coláiste Eoin in south county Dublin at the secondary level. This was an interesting educational experience as it was a relatively new school with students from a wide variety of backgrounds and no preconceived traditions. There was however an extremely strong emphasis on Irish language there and also on Irish music, and to a lesser extent on traditional sports, hurling, gaelic football, handball and camogie in the sister school Coláiste Iosagáin which occupied the same campus.

People with whom I went to school include Liam Ó Maonlaí and Fiachna Ó Braonáin of the Irish folk rock band "Hot House Flowers," Davey Spillane, Uilleann piper extraordinaire, members of the traditional folk group "Na Casaidigh " who continue to sing in the Irish language, as well as a number of others who have gained prominence in various artistic and cultural activities. Using Irish in everyday life and speaking it at home, with friends, and in other social settings emphasised to me the importance of presenting Irish as a vibrant living language with a rich cultural, linguistic, literary, and musical tradition underpinning it's importance. I did however get to see the official government view, having spent a year as a civil servant in the Roinn Oideachais (Department of Education ) on leaving school, prior to going to Trinity College Dublin, to study Engineering.

During this time I was somewhat involved with Conradh na Gaeilge (the Gaelic League) and student Irish language groups, as well as spending time in the west of Ireland in various Gaeltachtaí whenever possible. On graduating in 1984, and embarking into an uncertain job market I took further courses in Computing for Engineers and started a masters program in Management Information Systems.

Further along the line I combined Industrial Engineering Consultancy work with teaching both Mathematics and Irish in a Dublin secondary school, having acquired an Irish teaching certificate along the way. Teaching the required high school curriculum to students who may not be the most committed or motivated is not the most enjoyable of tasks, but at all times I endeavoured to make the subject matter as attractive as possible, and to present the language as having some relevance to the background and identity of the participants. For that reason, removing the compulsory element to having to pass Irish in one's final leaving certificate examination was a positive step in my view. Forcing people to devote time to what they are not interested in is not beneficial; however, Irish language should be presented as attractively as possible to younger school students.

I immigrated to Canada in March 1990. Seeing the mounds of snow along the runway as the plane landed, almost prompted me to remain on board and go right back to Dublin. However, I'm glad I didn't as I met my wife Marilyn at a céilí in the now defunct Irish Canadian Centre, just ten months later. I was somewhat surprised to find a reasonably active and interested group of people in Toronto who had just set up a branch of Conradh na Gaeilge there and were in need of an Irish language teacher.

For a year or so I worked with another committed teacher, Audrey Halpin, in providing adult and children's

classes under the auspices of the Toronto Board of Education. I now teach the classes privately on a part-time basis as the official recognition accorded to the language by the school board has been removed, primarily due to lack of financial support.

At present I am teaching two groups of beginners in a community centre in Toronto, on both Wednesday and Thursday evenings, starting out with ten in each group. I decided on this approach when it became clear that by giving people the option of which evening they would attend, that the drop out rate would be substantially reduced. Also it makes for more interesting group dynamics when you are not sure who is going to show up on a given evening. Earlier this year I had an intermediate/advanced Irish language class of about ten, which I hope to resurrect in January 1996. In that class we used tapes of "Ciste Cúrsaí Reatha " by Seán de Fréine and Jim O'Donnell, which provided a diverse representation of the differing dialects. My father is Seán de Fréine, writer of "The Great Silence", "Croí Cine" and formerly C.E.O. of Bord na Gaeilge, and currently secretary to 'Bord na leabhar Gaeilge,' a grant giving body charged with promoting publications in the Irish language. At this point I really have to thank my parents Seán and Josephine de Fréine for affording me many opportunities through their continuous support.

This means that I usually have a steady stream of interesting material for class discussion. Another teaching aid I use is a book of Seán's translation of popular folk songs in Irish, Sing Along Linn, and an accompanying tape. The beginners classes are using a combination of Buntús Cainte, Tosach Maith, Teach Yourself Irish, and some children's materials, as well as a wide variety of taped material. My classes are attended by an eclectic mix of people, both from Ireland, who are keen to remember more than the "cúpla focal," which they may retain from their school days, and many Canadian/North American, or U.K. born people, who may or may not have close Irish ancestry, but are extremely keen to familiarize themselves, and learn more about an ancient and living language, which is an extremely important aspect of a cultural identity. Included in the classes are conversation, vocabulary, grammar, spelling, literature, pronunciation, and any other relevant topics. There is quite a bit of interest in learning Irish in the Toronto area, as there are courses offered in the Celtic Studies Department, St Michael's College, University of Toronto, as well as the branch of Conradh na Gaeilge who meet monthly and put on the odd social event and participate in an all Irish mass around St. Patrick's day.

I became a member of NAACL T earlier this year and also CELTA (Canadian Celtic Language Teachers Association). The summer just passed, I participated on the advisory committee for the organization of a Celtic Ceilidh Festival at Toronto's harbourfront, headline attractions were Altan and Ashley MacIsaac, amongst others which attracted crowds of 50,000 over the three days. There I gave a lecture on "Introduction to the Irish Language" which attracted a reasonable audience. With the Toronto Irish Player's drama group and the Conradh group, I was the Irish language consultant to an innovative bilingual version of J.M. Synge's "Riders to the Sea", Chun na Farraige Síos, which had ten performances in and around the Toronto area. I also made my acting debut. This was a really great way of teaching Irish to a number of the participants. When Irish language is presented in an attractive, relevant, and interesting way, my experience is that there is much goodwill towards learning and promoting the language.

I'd like to conclude by thanking my wife Marilyn for her interest ,and our dogs Voo and Enya (a Scottish deerhound ) for their patience in having to learn Irish before they are given doggie treats. Sin a bhfuil go fóill, any comments on any of the above are most welcome.

## Reviews: Journal of Celtic Language Learning, Vol. 2

Members interested in reviewing books and other materials received should write Tom Ihde as soon as possible. Reviews must be 300 to 500 words. They must be double spaced typed. They must be submitted by 15 April 1996. In return for writing a review, members will receive a complementary copy of both the material being reviewed and the issue in which your review appears. The following materials are now available. Materials and books will be distributed on a first come, first serve basis. To encourage membership participation, we will give preference to non-executive committee members at this time. The editors and

editorial board members are not invited to participate.

The following materials are now available:

1. Comhar na Múinteoirí Gaeilge. (1994). *Who Said That?* Dublin: CMG. [2 hr. video] (Irish language learning).
2. Singleton, D. & Lengyel, Z., eds. (1995). *The Age Factor in Second Language Acquisition*. Philadelphia: Multilingual Matters. [160 pages] (applied linguistics).
3. Ó Murchú, H. (n.d.) *Cogar 2 & 3*. Dublin: RTE. [16 & 48 pages] (Irish language learning).

## Elections

Watch this spot for election information. The next issue of the newsletter (May) will open up the floor for nominations. The deadline for nominations will be 1 June 1996. Profiles and possibly pictures will be published in the August issue of *NAACLT News*. Official ballots will be enclosed with the August mailing. The deadline for ballots will be 1 October 1996. Winners of the elections will be announced in the November issue and installed at the NAACLT annual general meeting to be held on 23 November 1996 at the University of Pennsylvania. The chair of the elections committee is Dr. Nancy Stenson, University of Minnesota.

## Conferences

Only those conferences whose proposal deadline has not passed are mentioned in detail here. Contact the editor if further information is needed on any of these.

- 15-17 February. Univ. of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC. ACIS Southern Regional Conference. Contact Weldon Thornton, Campus Box 3520, Univ. of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC 27599 (phone 919-962-4042).
- 18-19 February. Esopus, NY. Irish Language Teachers' Workshop. Contact Ethel Brogan, (914) 897-5457.
- 14-16 March. Washington, DC. Georgetown University Round Table on Languages and Linguistics. More information at <http://www.georgetown.edu/conferences/gurt96> or phone 202-687-5726.
- 23-26 March. Chicago. American Association for Applied Linguistics.
- 8-12 April. New York City. 1996 American Educational Research Association (AERA) Annual Meeting (includes session of the AERA Second Language Research SIG).
- 12-14 April. New York University. 41st Annual Conference of the International Linguistic Association. More information from Dr. Franklin E. Horowitz, Box 66, Teachers College, Columbia University, NY, NY 10027 (phone 212-678-3353).
- 18-21 April. New York City. Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. For information write Northeast Conference, St. Michael's College, Dupont Hall, 29 Ethan Allen Ave., Colchester, VT 05439, USA.
- 12-16 June. University of Prince Edward Island, Charlottetown. Canadian Association for Irish Studies Conference: "Kings, Lords and Commons: Language, Literature and Society in Ireland since Strongbow". More information from Colman O'Hare, Dept. of English, U.P.E.I., Charlottetown, P.E.I., Canada, C1A 4P3 (phone 902-566-0389).
- 23 June - 1 August. Cornell University. LSA Linguistic Institute: Languages in Linguistics. Information at [linginst@cornell.edu](mailto:linginst@cornell.edu) or 607-255-3384.
- 4-7 July. Trinity College Dublin (Centre for Language and Communication Studies). The Third International Conference on Language Awareness. Information from Dr. J. Ridley, CLCS, Arts Building, Trinity College, Dublin 2, Ireland.
- 17-20 July. Hofstra University, New York. Irish Literatures: Old and New Worlds. Papers will be on all aspects of Irish Literatures: literature in English and in Irish, as related to history, folklore, the arts, women's studies, and immigration studies. Information: Dr. Maureen Murphy, School of Education, Hofstra University, Hempstead, New York 11550-1090.

- 4-9 August. University of Jyväskylä, Finland. 11th World Congress of Applied Linguistics.
- 5-7 September. University of Wales, Cardiff. 11th Sociolinguistics Symposium
- 22-24 November. Philadelphia, PA. American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages Annual Meeting. Call for papers has not gone out yet.
- 22 November. University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA. Celtic Language Teachers' Professional Development Day.
- 23 November. University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA. 2nd Annual Celtic Language Learning Conference. NAACLT. Abstracts to John T. McCranie, NAACLT'96, Department of Computer Science, San Francisco State University, 1600 Holloway Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94132, United States of America. E-mail: [jtm@naaclt.org](mailto:jtm@naaclt.org). DEADLINE FOR ALL ABSTRACTS: 1 MARCH 1996.
- 27-30 December. Washington, D.C. MLA Convention.

## 1997

- 3-6 April. New York City. Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. For information write Northeast Conference, St. Michael's College, Dupont Hall, 29 Ethan Allen Ave., Colchester, VT 05439, USA.

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## Notes

### 1996 CSANA Annual Meeting/U.C. Celtic Colloquium

The organizers of the 1996 CSANA meeting, to be held in conjunction with the eighteenth annual University of California Celtic Studies Conference at UCLA (25-28 April), have issued a call for papers. Proposals are especially welcome from students. Papers are to be twenty minutes in length, with some additional time allotted for discussion. Proposals should be no more than one typed (double-spaced) page in length and should indicate whether audio-visual equipment is needed. The deadline for submitting proposals is February 1. They should be sent to: UCLA Celtic Colloquium, c/o Professor Joseph Falaky Nagy, English Department, UCLA, 405 Hilgard Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90095 (note UCLA's new zip code). Information in general is available from the above address or at [jfnagy@ucla.humnet.ucla.edu](mailto:jfnagy@ucla.humnet.ucla.edu) (from CSANA Newsletter 13.2)

## Gaeltacht Weekends

Information was received from Ethel Brogan regarding forthcoming Irish immersion weekends in the New York area and beyond. The next Esopus, New York weekend will be held the 16-18 February 1996. Following the weekend for beginners and advanced beginners, a "Ceardlann ar son Múinteoirí na Gaeilge" or Irish language teacher workshop will begin at 2pm on the 18th at the same venue. The workshop to be lead by Éamonn Ó Dónaill will continue to 1 pm on Monday, the 19th, which is a holiday in the United States. For more information, call Ethel Brogan at 914-897-5457.

March is reported to have two Gaeltacht weekends scheduled: one in Toronto (write to Cumann na Gaeltacht, 71 Leander Street, Brampton, Ontario L6S 3N5) and one in Greensburg, Pennsylvania (write to the Gaelic League, c/o Peter Gilmore, 659 Frayne Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15207). One is also planned for sometime in the spring in West Yarmouth, Massachusetts (write to Dick Ó hEigeartaigh, 8 Rutledge Street, West Roxbury, MA 02132). May will see weekends once again in New York (call Ethel), Ohio (write Ron Crow - see page 4), and Maryland (write Joseph Gilvary, c/o Conradh na Gaeilge, P.O. Box 1335, Chesapeake Beach, MD 20732-1335). Lastly, Ethel is beginning to plan the annual Gaeltacht week for 7-14 July 1996 in Wappingers Falls, NY. This is sure to be a sell out so remind your students to book early

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## Celtic Language Teachers' Professional Development Day

Lauder-Fischer Hall, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia  
Friday, 22 November 1996

Contact Ron Crow for early registration information at 3990 Havensport Road, Carroll, OH 43112-9711

9:00 - 10:00 Preregistration  
Ron Crow, Antioch College

10:00 - 11:00 Psychology of Language Acquisition  
Nancy Stenson, University of Minnesota

11:00 - 12:00  
a) Classroom Management Strategies for Elementary-Secondary Teachers  
Kara Smith, University of Stirling

or

b) Adult Learning Strategies  
Thomas W. Ihde, Bergen Community College

12:00 - 1:00 LUNCH

1:00 - 2:00 Electronic Tools for Language Acquisition  
Mark Nodine, Massachusetts

2:00 - 3:00 Curriculum Materials and Ideas:  
a) Scottish Gaelic - Catriona Parsons, St. Francis Xavier University

or

b) Irish - Paul Birt, University of Ottawa

or

c) Welsh - Joan Owen Maudry, Ohio [tentatively]

## NAACL T '96 BOOKINGS

The Celtic Language Teachers' Professional development Day will be followed by NAACL T's annual conference, the Celtic Language Learning Conference , on Saturday, 23 November 1996. It will also be held at the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA. Those interested in housing should contact Roslyn Blyn at: [blynr@naaclt.org](mailto:blynr@naaclt.org) or Penn Language Center, University of Pennsylvania, 401 Lauder-Fischer Hall, Philadelphia, PA 19104-6330 as soon as possible.

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**DEADLINE** for next issue: 15 April 1996

NAACL T News 2.3  
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