

NAACLT News

NOVEMBER 1994

VOL. 1, NO. 2

North American Association for Celtic Language Teachers

From the Editor's Computer...

In this issue you will see just how much the NAACLT fever is catching on. Before you begin to read about all the good things that are taking place, I would like to make a call for volunteers. Two new committees will be founded: constitution and elections. As you will read, a business meeting is scheduled to take place in Glendale during our conference. I have recommended to the executive committee that a constitution be approved by the membership and elections ballots be mailed to all paid members by 1 February 1994. By doing this, we will be able to swear in our new officers at the business meeting. Also NAACLT will have elected officials who can begin building ties with other associations and empower NAACLT members to build their own future.

If you would like to serve on a committee or run for office, please write me at the address at the end of the newsletter or call 1-201-256-6417.

Thomas W. Ihde

Membership

Those who would like to join NAACLT and have not yet sent in their dues can send \$15 to the following address: [old info removed.]

NAACLT On-line!

While the NAACLT was born through the e-mail messages of the founding committee, we're now reaching many people who may not know how to reach us on the net. E-mail sent to exec@naaclt.org will reach the executive committee, while questions about membership should be sent directly to [old info removed.] The conference co-chairs are Dennis Doyle at doyled@naaclt.org and John T. McCranie at jtm@naaclt.org, and the journals are being handled by Thomas Ihde at ihdet@naaclt.org and Nancy Stenson at stensonn@naaclt.org.

Also, point your favorite World Wide Web browser to <http://www.naaclt.org> and check out our new homepage! It is small but growing, with information about the organization, the newsletters, and our members. Questions and comments about the homepage should be sent to jtm@naaclt.org. See you on the net!

John T. McCranie

Celtic Language Learning Conference

NAACLT'95 will take place in California on Saturday, 25 March 1995. We hope as many of our members as possible will be able to join us.

Our local chair is Dennis Doyle. The conference will be held at Glendale Community College, 1500 N. Verdugo Road, Glendale, CA 91208. Papers and presentations will be given in Krieder Hall in the San Rafael Building. Prof. Doyle reports that there is ample free parking behind the college near the corner of Verdugo and Mountain Avenue. Glendale is a suburb of L.A. and the college is accessible north from the 134 fwy or west of the 2 fwy. It's about 45 minutes from LAX.

The proposed schedule reads as follows: 9:30am sign in, 10:00-12 presentations, 12-1pm lunch (various restaurants are across the street from campus; the cafeteria will be closed as this will be during spring break), 1-3 presentations, 4pm closing, 6pm Executive Committee Meeting.

Here are some local hotels. There are several near Hollywood-Burbank Airport (about 17 minutes away), among them Ramada Inn, 2900 North San Fernando Road, Burbank 818-843-5955; Holiday Inn, 150 E Angeleno Ave, Burbank 818-841-4770; and Travelodge, 112 N. Hollywood Way, Burbank 818-845-2408. A little closer (about 10 minutes away) and with fewer frills are Astro Motel, 326 E. Colorado Blvd, Glendale 818-246-7401; Econo Lodge, 1437 E. Colorado Blvd, Glendale 818-246-8367; and Best Western, 123 W Colorado Blvd, Glendale, 818-247-0111.

[Journal of Celtic Language Learning](#)

On the page six, you will find a call for manuscripts for JCLL. Please note that research articles should be between 2,500 - 3,000 words. The journal will also include a section devoted to language teaching methodology. If you would like to share a successful teaching technique with fellow teachers, a description of 200-500 words can be submitted. The deadline for all manuscripts will be 15 April 1995 with publication to be expected by September.

JCLL is honored that the following individuals have volunteered to serve on the editorial board: Martin J. Ball (University of Ulster), Paul W. Birt (University of Ottawa), James J. Blake (Nassau Community College), Marion Gunn (Everson Gunn Teoranta), Wayne Harbert (Cornell University), Jeffery L. Kallen (Trinity College Dublin), Dónall P. Ó Baoill (Institiúid Teangeolaíochta Éireann), Liam Ó Cuinneagáin (Oideas Gael), Helen Ó Murchú (Comhar na Múinteoirí Gaeilge), Frederick Suppe (Ball State University), and Marta Weingartner (Indiana University).

LCTL Project -- U. of Minnesota

As part of a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, the University of Minnesota began a project in late 1993 intended to help relieve some of the isolation and problems experienced by teachers and learners of many less commonly taught languages (LCTLs), among them the Celtic languages. The establishment of NAACLT is most timely as a model of the sort of networking that the LCTL project hopes to encourage and assist with, and we hope that the project may be of as much interest to NAACLT as the founding of that organization is to the LCTL project and that the two will be able to work together to our mutual benefit.

The two immediate goals of the project are to gather information for a LCTL database and to set up communication networks for teachers of LCTLs. The database currently has information on institutions known to teach each of a large variety of less commonly taught languages and will eventually include information on teachers and researchers for each language, descriptions of teaching materials, institutions and organizations, sources for funding, and other information as appropriate. The information is still being gathered and edited, and a gopher has been established to make this information available via Internet. Limited raw data for Irish is available. Please try the gopher out and send in corrections and additions. You can access it through the University of Minnesota main gopher menu by selecting University of Minnesota Campus Information, then All the University of Minnesota Gopher Servers, and finally Center for Advanced Research in Language

Acquisition. If you can access gophers directly, the address is lctl.acad.umn.edu (port 70). We are interested in information on all LCTL classes currently being taught, whether or not they are offered within an academic institution.

Teams consisting of interested teachers in selected languages (Irish is one of the first groups) will be established next to advise the project on the best approaches for gathering and disseminating information, and to discuss specific issues and problems faced by teachers of each language and to begin brainstorming possible solutions, sharing materials, and exploring ways the Internet can be exploited to help relieve the isolation so many LCTL teachers face and to improve the teaching of the language. We in the Celtic languages already have a good start with NAACLT and networks such as Gaelic-L and Welsh-L; while teachers of other languages may need assistance establishing such networks, we are ready to take the next step. I hope that the LCTL project will prove to be a valuable resource to NAACLT as the organization develops.

I hope that our March meeting will provide an opportunity to discuss further how the LCTL project staff can work with NAACLT to serve the needs of its members. Meanwhile NAACLT News readers should feel free to contact me with any questions or ideas you may have concerning the project.

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Nancy Stenson

Justification for Scottish Gaelic Education in Canada

Language itself is the backbone of our culture, and being able to speak the language is, in itself, a source of personal enrichment - through language each child has a better understanding of their cultural values and themselves. The study of any heritage language allows Canadians to nourish their roots, and nurture their children, by allowing them to discover who they are, and what part they have to offer to Canada. The language of Scottish Gaelic, in particular, served as the root and basis of many parts of English Canada. Gaelic-speaking Scots were prominent pioneers for 65% of the land and government which is called "Canada."

Due to the ethnic origin of many of its founding leaders, there is a case to be made for learning Gaelic in Canada. Scots such as: John A. MacDonald [the first Prime Minister], William Lyon MacKenzie, and Alexander MacKenzie all contributed to the Upper Canadian legislative assembly, and the federal and provincial governments, which manage Canada to this date. Women legislators claiming a Gaelic heritage, such as Nellie McClung and Adelaide Hoodless, acted as catalysts for women's rights and their equal recognition within Canada. In fact, long before North American, and British women were allowed to vote, Gaelic Scots recognized the woman's contribution to society. Scottish highland women could inherit and hold property, enlist in wars and battles, remain single and raise a family alone if their spouse(s) died, and make local laws. Hence, these men and women contributed some of the basic utilitarian principles of the Gaelic culture to Canada: gender equity, and an established social justice. If it were not for these Gaels making decisions in the Gaelic tongue, Canada might have been a very different place.

Other Gaelic Scots contributing to Canada's founding were fur-traders and explorers such as Simon Fraser, Simon MacTavish, William MacGillivray and Sir Alexander MacKenzie, who opened up and settled Western Canada through increased trade and commerce with the Hudson's Bay and North West companies. This executive trade, which was conducted in Scottish Gaelic, is the reason why many Canadians today live where

they do. Lord Strathcona (one organizer of the C.P.R.), also a Gael, expanded Canada through railway ties from the East to the West. And Scots such as Dr. Thomas McCulloch, precursor of responsible government in Nova Scotia, and Sir James Douglas, governor of the colony of British Columbia from 1858-1864, organized a working judicial system in the East and the West to protect their inhabitants, and hence, formed the systemized geographical cornerstones of Eastern and Western Canada.

The Scottish Gaelic judicial system, similar to the one Dr. Thomas McCulloch and Sir James Douglas originally implemented, was more complex, and even more flexible than the present-day system of justice. A person charged with a crime could be deemed innocent, guilty, or "not proven"; whereas, our Canadian counterparts are only innocent or guilty (which does not allow for any "gray" area of proof, and determinate.) The current system of car insurance in Ontario is moving this way also - "no-fault" insurance allows the responsibility of an accident to be shared as a percentage by both parties involved, instead of just one or the other. Often both are partly at fault.

Much of the English-Canadian aesthetic culture is owed to Scottish Gaelic as well. A majority of the hymns sung in Presbyterian churches are Gaelic melodies, stemming from the lilting language. Much of the Canadian folk music stems from the Gaelic bardic tradition as well - Gaelic naturally lends itself to such harmonic tales, and if Italian is the language of opera, then Scottish Gaelic, through groups such as The Rankin Family and The Barra MacNeils, is a language of Canadian folk music.

Canadian-English linguistics and diction owes much of their content to Scottish Gaelic too, since geographical words such as: ball, bannock, bard, bog, brought, bun, clan, cock-eye, cork, cot crag, crofter, drum, glen, loan, loop plaid, port, reel, shallow, slogan, whisky and the "ch" in words like "church" all come from the Gaelic (OED). Also, phrases such as, "Smashing!" [That is good], "he sat on the fence when he should go the whole hog", "he has an ax to grind", and "I WILL pick you up" [as opposed to the British first person "I SHALL pick you up"]; names such as "MacDonald" and "MacKenzie" [the son of...] were derived from the Gaelic language.

Hence, the importance of maintaining such a geographically and linguistically pioneering culture [and its values] through its language is obvious; however, the Scottish Gaelic influence on the development of the country is perhaps so well known that it is often taken for granted, and overlooked. Mistakenly, Scottish Gaels are often grouped into a more general category called, "British". In this multicultural society, however, the "British" ["English"] are considered to be one of the "oppressors", rather than one of the "oppressed" (whatever their numbers may be.) Yet highlanders have suffered centuries of such class and language discrimination from the "English" [such as the highland clearances which drove many highlanders to Canada in the first place to begin a country of their own based on their values.] Scottish Gaelic should not receive any less claim to part of the curriculum than any other equally valued heritage language simply because it is mistakenly but generally associated with one of the major dominating groups in Canada.

If the minority language of Scottish Gaelic had an influence on making Canada, then Scottish Gaelic, and the culture and ideals which are contained within it, will be needed for the continuing survival and re-structuring of multicultural Canada. After all, if you do not understand the basis behind that which you belong to, then where do you have left to go? The Scottish Gaelic language had a part in building Canada, and it should have a legitimate claim in keeping it.

Kara Smith

Other Conferences

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

- 24-27 March. Long Beach, CA. Language Testing Research Colloquium.

- 25-28 March. Long Beach, CA. American Association for Applied Linguistics Annual Meeting.
- 25 June-1 July. Belfast. 1995 ACIS-CAIS Conference. American Conference of Irish Studies and Canadian Association for Irish Studies annual conference.
- March. Georgetown University, Washington, DC. 40th Annual Conference of the International Linguistic Association. Deadline for proposals is 6 January 1995. General Theme: Discourse and Text Analysis. Papers on any linguistic topic welcome; time not to exceed 20 minutes. Information and abstracts (in 7 copies): Ruth Brend, Conference Coordinator, 3363 Burbank Dr. Ann Arbor, MI 48105.
- 18-20 November. Anaheim, CA. 1995 American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Annual Meeting. Deadline for proposals is 2 December 1994. Theme: Standards and Assessment: Implementing the Vision . Address: 1995 ACTFL Annual Meeting, 6 Executive Plaza, Yonkers, NY 10701-6801.

THE EDITOR, ASSOCIATION, AND ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE BOARD EXCEPT NO RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ACCURACY OF CONFERENCE INFORMATION.

Publications/Papers

Please continue to send information of your publications and papers on Celtic language learning to the editor of NAACLT News.

Nancy Stenson

Published the following articles:

- 1993: "Review of Máire Owens, The Acquisition of Irish.' *Modern Language Journal* 77.3, pp. 391-392
- 1993: "Patterns of variation in Irish loan phonology," in G. Iverson and M. Eid, eds., *Principles and Predictions: the Analysis of natural Language*, Amsterdam: J. Benjamins, pp. 351-366.
- 1993: "English influence on Irish: the last 100 years," *Journal of Celtic Linguistics* 2, pp. 107-128.

Presented the following paper:

- 1994: "Cognitive status, discourse salience, and Irish pronominal form," with Ann E. Mulkern, International Conference on Language in Ireland, University of Ulster at Jordanstown.

Dennis Doyle

Published the following:

- 1994: "Teaching Irish to Americans in Milwaukee," in T.W. Ihde (ed.), *The Irish Language in the United States*. Westport: Bergin & Garvey.
- 1994: Abbess: Songs of St. Brigid. with Paula Doyle. Sound Recording. Cassette/Compact Disk. Incarnation Music [including the following songs in Irish: Deus Meus Aduva Me (bilingual Latin/Irish), Gabhaim Molte Brigde, Ag Críost an Síol, Bí a Íosa, and Céad Míle Fáilte a Íosa].

Gave the following workshops:

- 1994: "Singing in Irish and Celtic Spirituality," Irish Cultural Festival of Cleveland, Ohio.
- 1994: "Celtic Spirituality," Irish Fest at St. Xavier University, Chicago.

James J. Duran

Presented the following paper:

- 1994: "Branching Trees, Waves, and Rising Tides: Some Reflections on the Notions of 'Speech Community' and 'Diffusion of Linguistic Traits,'" UCLA Celtic Conference, Los Angeles.

Notes

Celtic Language Software Directory

Computers have become very powerful and versatile tools for language teachers. But how do you know what software is available that might be of use to you? How do you go about determining if a promising program really fits the needs of your students? And how do you get a copy of a program you'd like to try?

Do you know how to access a Welsh tutorial freely available on the Internet (1)? Do you know how to get free and inexpensive Irish language games for your Macintosh (2)?

All these questions and others will be answered in the **Celtic Language Software Directory**, which will be available at our conference next March. In the meantime, if you know of any software that involves one of the Celtic languages, please let me know about it. You can contact me by e-mail at jtm@naaclt.org, or by regular mail to

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 USA

Answers:

1. Use Mosaic or another WWW browser to look at <http://www.cs.brown.edu/fun/welsh/home.html>.
2. The mailing list GAELIC-L archives several games as well as a host of other useful materials.

John T. McCranie

Kent State University

Julie Burke reports that Irish language activity is growing at Kent State University. She is now on a second order of Buntús Cainte and Foclóir Póca, Julie recently informed me, and that it is hard to keep up with the demand.

What caused this explosion of interest? Julie founded the Kent Gaelic Learners' Support and Study Group some months ago. Since then, after four meetings and continuing local promotion, she now has a phone list of 26 people who have expressed interest.

Julie wrote to me that, "We had a visiting Gaeilge teacher warm us up and are continuing on. Even have a native speaker sitting in rendering assistance and livening up the discussion; he's a Ph.D. candidate and will be here for the next year at least."

With all these exciting developments afoot, Julie commented on American academia's standard negative response to our efforts to further the teaching of Celtic languages in North America by saying, "Of course, there's no interest in this kind of thing for credit on campus. RIGHT!!! I KNEW this was a for- real trend."

In other news, the local central Ohio Conradh na Gaeilge has scheduled its Gaeltacht Weekend for May of next year, and the group continues to plan its trip to Ireland for June. We will spend a week in one of Oideas Gael's

immersion courses in Gleann Cholm Cille. Leaving June 13, we will return on the 27. Other activities are also planned. The trip is in conjunction with Columbus, Ohio's Patrick Pearse Division of the AOH.

Ron Crow

[Journal of Celtic Language Learning](#)

Journal of Celtic Language Learning (ISSN: 1078-3911) is an international review for researchers and teachers of modern Celtic Languages. The official publication of the North American Association for Celtic Language Teachers, JCLL includes papers presented at the association's annual conference in addition to manuscripts submitted by Celtic language scholars world-wide. It is also a forum in which Celtic language teachers can share insights into methodology with their peers.

JCLL's mission, similar to that of NAACLT, is to provide another forum in which teachers and applied linguists can contribute to the literature presently available on bilingual and second language acquisition as well as increase communication among Celtic language teachers and researchers.

Those interested are encouraged to submit research articles or descriptive accounts of teaching techniques to either of the editors, Thomas W. Ihde or Nancy Stenson, at the addresses below.

Research articles should be between 2,500 to 3,000 words. APA style should be strictly observed. Two typed copies should be submitted. If possible, the text should also be submitted on disk or via e-mail. Teachers who would like to share a successful language teaching technique or describe the Celtic language program in which they are teaching are invited to submit a 200-500 word description. Deadline for all submissions is 15 April 1995.

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