



Air Chéilidh: the Gaelic Narrative Project

March 26, 2021

Hosted by Iain MacLeod

Guests: Joyce MacDonald, Donnie Forbes, Calum Ferguson, Gráinne Ní Fhoighil

What have these conversations inspired in you?

- I will write more in Gaelic!
- To join Joyce's writing group.
- To sing more Gaelic songs!
- To learn Gaelic again.
- Take more Gaelic classes.
- Speak to my grandchildren in Gaelic.
- To be less afraid of making mistakes and just speak more.
- To get back to my Gaelic sessions.
- To start a Gaelic baking group in my local community shop/café in Scotland after lockdown
- Finally learn the Gaelic song I have been trying to learn for the last year!
- (To learn) the name of my baking supplies and activities as I work in my kitchen.
- Having seen the passion from everyone tonight, Calum and I will be looking to engage with our friends from over the pond.
- As fiddlers get together for sessions, I'd love to join the Gaelic community around Halifax to get together to speak Gaelic regularly.
- To learn Gaelic, storytelling in Gaelic, join an on-line Gaelic song group.
- Feasgar math leibhse! I'm a Phys-ed teacher with a keen interest in preserving our beloved tongue. I'm very interested in assisting a Gàidhlig sports/activity camp in the summers.

- I've come to it too late to pass it to my children, but I want to give some Gaelic to my grandchildren.
- To host a Gaelic kayaking group.
- Inspired to learn a story.
- I will go next week to visit a Gaelic elder in my community with a friend/co-learner
- I'd love to get Calum and Donnie over here to run Soccer camps
- I am now highly motivated to break through my barriers to using Gaelic.
- I'm very inspired to use the language and not be worried about people judging me for having Gaelic.
- Ping pong in Gaelic next!
- To revive a conversation group in Halifax - and maybe a singing group.
- With the promise of warmer weather: Gaelic gardening - Nature, Nurture and Language.
- To be able to incorporate the language into my everyday life and keep learning songs and stories to enrich the language I have. Also start an in-person Pop-Up Gaeltacht/Gàidhealtachd in Halifax when we can :)
- Get back to Gaelic song writing.
- Weight training through the medium of Gaelic!
- Gaelic walks in nature. I have already looked at Gaelic bird names with my learners
- Gaelic in the dirt!!!
- I am trying to get Gaelic road signs on Rte. 395 and around the Lake Ainslie area for a year now. I am going to get the Department of Infrastructure to finally do something about it!
- I would really like to do another youth Gaelic filmmaking camp like we did in Antigonish years ago.

What we are doing already

- I am in a Puirt- a-beul choir in Montreal, keeping Gaelic alive in Quebec!
- I've been doing roll call in Gaelic each morning—some of my students are now responding in Gaelic :-)
- I'm reading the Bible with a beginner next week. His request.
- Sin sibh uile!! Is there an online resource of Gaelic terminology for soccer?
- Good question, Lodaigh. Hugh Dan MacLennan has developed a terminological database for sports.
- I just did a podcast in Gaelic on sports for BBC Scotland--talking about Canadian/North American sports: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p09bqsqb>
- Eoghan Stiubhart is, like Donnie and Calum, doing a fantastic job with shinty. He has organised an annual shinty competition for kids in Gaelic-medium education. It has been so great for the children.

- I learned Irish Gaelic first but found I had to learn Scottish Gaelic to converse with Gáidhlig speakers (rather than conversing with them in English that is).
- My 13 year old is interested in Gaelic music, we read Gaelic stories, and his favourite story is *Conan am fear a bu shuaraiche dhe na Fianntaichean*, as told by Joe Neil MacNeil. He also loves football (soccer), he loves hockey (dad's a Canadian), shinty, and contemporary culture. To be able to engage with that aspect of his cultural interests through Gaelic is so important.

Appreciation

- Loved the young men in Scotland leading the initiative to foster their language. Totally impressed with them wanting to promote community and social consciousness.
- Love it! “I’m going to put Gaelic on some biscuits and give them to people.” ~ Joyce
- All of these creative, amazing ways to make the language live!
- I love hearing about people finding ways to use Gaelic during a whole range of activities — choosing to speak Gaelic even though it’s not their first or most comfortable language. I love hearing about it being used in many contexts on many subjects.
- After arriving here on the west side of Lewis to continue my ethnographic fieldwork, I have been approached by some local Gaelic advocates who appreciate the optimistic and positive energy of grassroots initiatives in Nova Scotia
- Love the connection with Gaelic and our kinaesthetic part of our brain.
- The chats and presentations were very inspiring.
- It was wonderful to see how people had an idea - something that's not been done before - and had the courage and vision to just go for it. Yet, they naturally carried the deep tradition of Gaelic forward. - caring for each other and lifting each other, the importance of us as a community of people
- What is going on in Nova Scotia is inspiring. When I started learning, about 30 years ago, I came to Cape Breton a lot. There were very few young learners. There is so much energy now. I really think that this is wonderful.
- I sense a new optimism for Gaelic in the general population coming our way - more appreciation and just the joy of hearing the language and music.
- When you look at the research on movement, the brain and learning, it makes enormous sense to engage Gaelic in sports and movement.
- Thank you, Iain, for hosting tonight’s session! I felt really engaged. What a wonderful panel of speakers — from Cape Breton, Scotland, and Ireland — I had the sense of a true global Gaeltachd. All your initiatives and projects are so inspiring. Thank you for doing so much to make Gaelic live in today’s world.
- The thing that comes through to me is that there are so many ways that we can engage in the language. I personally value the traditional culture, and I think that needs to be

cultivated. But it is great to be able to engage in things like football (soccer), or hockey, or sports or other pursuits through the medium of Gaelic

- Great talks! Great to learn about a Gaelic writers' group. Important note that Grainne mentioned around taking ownership and pride in learning the language.
- Learning Gaelic is challenging, but it is one of the most exciting initiatives that I've taken on since I've retired. Looking forward to the revival of the good old-fashioned ceilidh - now that I am back to my roots.
- Profound what Calum is saying about “ceilidh”
- I need a taigh-ceilidh in my life.
- *tòrr sconaichean* (lots of scones)
- Miss the dances so much!!
- SDDS (Square Dance Deficit Syndrome) is a thing, mo chreach 's a thàinig (ruination has arrived).
- Just had my son, who is obsessed with soccer, come and listen to Donnie and Calum. It's profoundly inspiring and motivating to hear how they're integrating Gaelic into such a popular sport.
- Calum and Donnie are such great role models for young Gaelic-speakers. My 13-year-old is in Gaelic Medium Education and he and so many of his classmates love football, and to have Gaelic-speaking role models for them is so important.
- Come here to teach football (soccer) in Nova Scotia!!
- interested in Joyce's writing class
- The writing group is intriguing.
- Singing Gaelic songs is a great way to start learning the language
- Sin sibh fhein, a h-uile duine. Tapadh leibh. (Well done all. Thank you.)
- Ceud mile taing airson a-nochd! (100,000 thank your for tonight) Instagram: @FCSonas2020 Twitter: @FCSonas2020 Facebook: FC Sonas Gmail: fctsonas2020@gmail.com
- This has been a very informative session. Looking forward to April 9th. Thank you!
- Tapadh leibh a h-uile duine. (Thanks everyone)
- Wonderful to have the connections across the pond!
- The intense passion of the upcoming generation to bring Gaelic to the mainstream is so encouraging,
- Mòran taing airson an còmhradh a-nochd! (Many thanks for the conversation tonight).
- Taing mhor! (Big thanks)
- Sin sibh, a Sheòighe, a Ghráinne, a Dhonaidh, a Chaluim!! Eireachdail air fad!!
- Great to chat with old friends.
- Great discussion
- Great to see you, guys! Here's the Halifax (NS) Wanderers football/soccer club crest with its Gaelic motto:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HFX_Wanderers_FC#/media/File:HFX_Wanderers_FC_logo.svg

Our Wildest (and not so wild) Dreams

- My wildest dream is that we can and choose to speak Gaelic whenever, wherever, and we use this intellectual freedom to innovate the language and culture to hand a rich heritage over to our children.
- Living in a world in which we can speak Gaelic to our neighbours, sing songs while we work, and learn stories through osmosis instead of studying them home alone.
- The dream is what I've heard a few people say: to hear, speak and feel Gaelic around me daily.
- To hear and speak Gaelic speak at the Coop!
- I would love to live in a house or a small community where we all speak Gaelic as our social language, I would like to work on a million more films, and learn to sing tons of more songs and have no fear in singing them loudly. Also, a Gaelic pop punk band!
- I dream of going to Tim Hortons and hearing, "Am faod mi do chuideachadh?" (Can I help you?)
- Looking forward to hearing the first time an NHL game is broadcast in Gaelic.
- My wildest dream is to have as much access to Gaelic as I do to English or French.
- NHL is broadcast in Punjabi, so let's make Gaelic next!
- Gaelic spell check for iPhones and laptops!!!
- I want my grandchildren to have memories of Gaelic from when they visit and to carry it with them, even little words and phrases as a start.
- To see Gaelic in the menus
- People conducting their vocations in Gaelic with opportunities for apprentices for work skills/language/cultural skills.
- Make Gaelic "cool" in Nova Scotia!
- Wild dreams of sailing around the Bras D'or and speaking Gaelic! thigaihb air bord (come on board!)
- Have an environment with engaging activities where my boys are supported and encouraged to use their Gaelic with peers and community members so that they will build a further foundation to pass the language on if and/or when they have families of their own
- My wildest dreams would be to find a way to use Gaelic in all modern settings while still speaking Gaelic in Gaelic, and not English in Gaelic.