



CANADIAN CELTIC ARTS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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Smaointean / Smaointe**

Janice Chan, President

It is a pleasure to introduce to you with this issue, our new newsletter editor, Leah Morrigan. A professional image consultant with a degree in Fine Arts, Leah has very graciously agreed to volunteer what little spare time she has to helping us make our newsletter into the best publication possible.

According to the membership survey conducted last summer, 82% of CCAA members read our newsletter, and consider it to be an important member benefit. We hope that continues to be the case now that we have gone to mostly electronic distribution. Keep in mind that you can always request a printed copy of the newsletter, but by keeping our printing and mailing costs down, we can devote more of your membership fees to programming.

CCAA hosts three to four events a year. We would like to continue to do that, but often it comes down to available bodies to arrange everything from contacting a speaker, booking a venue and arranging catering. We're always looking for new ideas for events and people to help with the practicalities. We'd love to hear from you.

We would also welcome your contributions to the newsletter. If you have read a book or seen a play on a Celtic theme, why not write a review? Are you an aspiring writer? Your short story or poetry would be most welcome! Since we are mostly an electronic publication now we might even be able to publish that wonderful photo that you took on vacation in Ireland or Wales.

Speaking of vacations, I am writing this on the hottest day in Toronto as far back as records have been kept. I'm "cho teth ris an donas" (as hot as the devil), or maybe even "chomh te bruite le caiscín ar ghrídeall" (as roasting hot as a wholemeal cake on a griddle). I hope that you keeping cool, no matter where you are spending this summer, and we hope to see you at our next CCAA event in the autumn!

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

News from Celtic Studies

By Jean Talman

As these notes are being written, Celtic Studies students and staff have scattered for the summer. Several students were awarded scholarships for summer study: **Jennie Williams** to take part in an archaeological program in Ireland and the Isle of Man; **Sarah Norris** to study Welsh language in Cardiff; **Patrick Treacy** received joint funding from the Ireland Canada University Foundation and St. Michael's College to study Irish language at the NUI-Galway summer school in An Cheathrú Rua; and **Kelly Hayes** received a scholarship from the St. Andrew's Society of Toronto to study Scottish Gaelic at Sabhail Mòr Ostaig on the Isle of Skye. In addition, **Katie Longo** was awarded the Eileen Allen Bursary to attend the Canadian Association for Irish Studies annual conference at Concordia University, Montreal, July 6-9. It is so encouraging to see the diversity of our students' interests, with three Celtic languages plus archaeology among their summer endeavours!

The 14th annual **Day at the Races** took place at Woodbine at the end of May, and a wonderful day was had by all. The weather could not have been better, and all enjoyed the delicious buffet lunch and many were lucky in their betting endeavours. The live and silent auctions generated huge interest and were extremely successful. None of this would be possible without that wonderful lady of the Irish in Toronto, **Eithne Heffernan**, and her committee of amazing helpers (her "dream team") and The Ireland Fund of Canada. Celtic Studies is so grateful to everyone who attended or helped in any way.

The money raised at the Day at the Races funds the **Celtic Studies Artist-in-Residence** program, bringing an artist or

writer to the college to meet and interact with students, visit classes, hold workshops, and generally become involved with what we are doing. For 2011-2012, we are very excited to announce that the resident artists will be traditional Irish musicians fiddle-player **Martin Hayes** and guitarist **Denis Cahill** who will be in Toronto in October 2011. In addition to their work with students, there will be a concert open to the general public.

As a mark of our appreciation for all the great work she does for Celtic Studies, **Eithne Heffernan** was awarded an Honorary Fellowship in St. Michael's College at the Graduation Mass held in St. Basil's Church on June 9. This wonderful occasion was attended by bishops and priests, professors and staff, graduating students and their families, and friends and family of Eithne. Principal Mark McGowan gave the citation for Eithne, describing not just the work Eithne does for Celtic Studies, but all her contributions to the Irish community in Toronto. The ceremony was followed by a luncheon hosted by the President of the College.



Pictured here: Eithne Heffernan with Professor Mark McGowan, Principal of St. Michael's College



Course offerings for the 2011-2012 academic year are being confirmed. Instructors will include Ann Dooley, Máirín Nic Dhiarmada, David Wilson, Sarah O'Connor, David Livingston-Lowe, and Tadhg Morris. We will also be welcoming Irish language teacher Dáithí Ó Ceallacháin, who will be coming from Ireland thanks to the generosity of the Ireland Canada University Foundation.

Canadian Association for Irish Studies Conference

By Katie Longo

In July of this year, I had the pleasure of attending the CAIS (Canadian Association for Irish Studies) Conference at Concordia University in Montreal thanks to the generous support of the Eileen Allen Bequest. This was the first conference I had ever attended, and I could not have chosen a better introduction to the current research trends and methods in the area of Irish Studies.

I admit that I was initially intimidated by the prospect of meeting so many experts this field. My fears, however, were soon put to rest. Both the contributors and attendees gave me an incredibly warm welcome and, along with the seemingly endless supply of tea and scones, their congeniality was a highlight of the conference.

The panels that I attended took an interdisciplinary approach to their subjects and the presentations were as engaging as they were varied. Derry's Diamond War Memorial, gender in Irish Music competitions, and former Irish boyband member Brian McFadden were all topics of presentations that used innovative approaches to the study of Irish history, music, and culture.

In addition to the standard panels, a concert celebrating Irish and Québécois music, a set of readings from authors Peter Behrens and Patrick McCabe, and a gastronomic virtual tour of Boulevard St. Laurent all served to make an incredibly memorable conference experience. I'll admit that I was too intimidated to ask a question or participate at any of the panels, but I plan to rectify that next year, and, who knows, I might even be presenting!

Katie Longo has just completed her B.A. (with High Distinction) and will be commencing graduate studies at Oxford University in the Fall. She was the winner of the Eileen Allen Bursary, a program that funds Celtic Studies students to attend the CAIS conference.

Eileen Allen was a long time supporter of both Celtic Studies and CAIS, and the Canadian Celtic Arts Association, and left this very generous bequest as her legacy. Katie was also awarded the Irene and John Ward McGovern Scholarship that covered her tuition fees for one year at the University of Toronto.

FEATURE

The Heart of What's the Matter

by Deborah L. Breesnee



It was in Ireland through artistry and oral traditions that not only the form, but the essence of Sacred Sovereignty was preserved during the Dark Ages. This is a reciprocal relationship with the Sacred Feminine of the Earth as it was practiced by



our ancestors. It encourages a *deep psychological perspective* on our interconnectedness with nature, and with all people of the Earth.

Forged in the fires of exile and loss, of un-remembering and un-forgetting, the Archetype of Sacred Sovereignty is experienced by us when it constellates in visions, dreams, or experiential settings; through emotional connectedness with *All that Is* an unfathomable melancholy; a passionate link with the ancient Sacred Feminine of the Earth.

In a world that is weary of the conflicts that religion has sown, the Sacred Feminine is rising out of the ashes to offer us a partnership of mutual benefit and abiding grace. As the ancient Celts revered the *eternal Self*, they sought to maintain a relationship of honour with nature; a return to Sacred Sovereign relationship is seen by the re-birth of ancient rituals and cultures through language, art, music, and dance. I hear the ancient voice that is the Sacred Sovereignty of my home-land, Ireland; I feel it as the grief and loss of living in exile. She offers to save our souls from the loss that has been felt by millions of wandering and displaced men, women, and children.

The loss of this relationship lies at the crux of the problems related to our extinction or the eventual sustainability of human life upon this planet. Today we exist in a global environment of encroaching wasteland and woundedness; the wasteland that is the destruction of our rainforests; woundedness, seen against the *internalized* colonizer of the past many hundreds of years. We seek to answer the mythical question "*What Ails Thee*", a quest for the grail of peace with the Earth, and, within ourselves. What ails our rivers and lakes, our seas and oceans? What ails our forests and the life that abides there? We must learn

the practice of honouring Her again today, or why should we remain as a species?

The theme of our lost connection with the land on which we live is appropriate to any and all of us who have left our homeland. Felt as an un-forgetting and an un-remembering that will not heal; it is a loss of archetypal proportions. As a lived experience, renewing the relationship of Sacred Sovereignty emphasizes the interconnectedness of all of our relationships – with each other, with the animals, with plants and with the Earth itself. As an archetype that is representative of The Mother, our earth, Sacred Sovereignty stands as a core experience that is universal in its effects and central to the experience of interconnectedness with all creation.

SOURCE MATERIAL:

- Breesnee, Deborah L. ABD, (not published as yet). "A Mythical Kiss."
- Hussey, Leigh Ann (1988). *Lady of the Depths: Primal Goddess of Celtic Shamanism*.
- Larson, Stephen (1990, 1996). "The mythic imagination: The quest for meaning through personal mythology." *Inner Traditions International VT*. (Lorenz & Watkins, 2002), (Lorenz, Helene Shulman, (2000).
- Depth Psychology: Meditations in the Field, Essays from Pacifica Graduate Institute*. Carpinteria, CA.



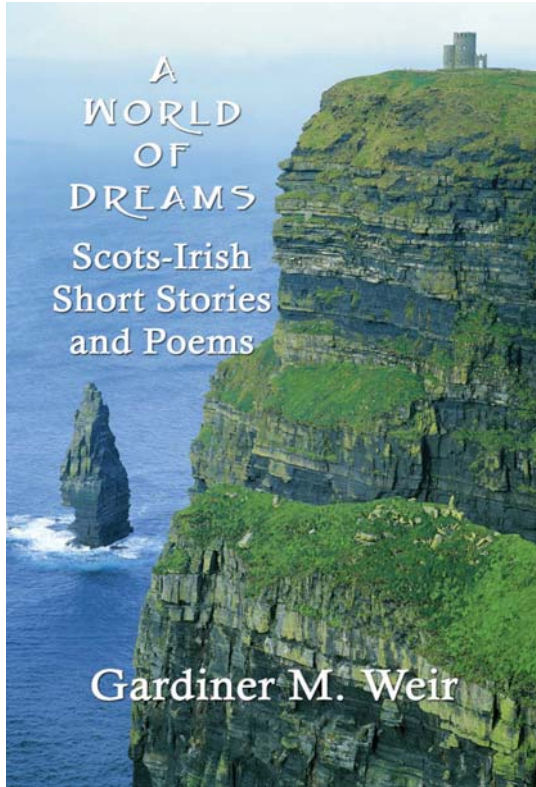
Deborah Breesnee is a Canadian born of Irish descent, currently residing in Toronto, Ontario. As a doctoral candidate at Pacifica Graduate Institute, Carpinteria, CA, Sacred Sovereignty inspired her passion!



FEATURE

A World of Dreams

Scots-Irish Short Stories and Poems by
Gardiner M. Weir



These short stories are set primarily in the farmland of County Antrim in Northern Ireland during the author's youth in the nineteen forties and fifties, though there are related stories set in the U.S. and Canada.

County Antrim has strong residual connections to Scotland that are reflected in the manner of speech and in the social values that the author experienced during his youth - hard work, religious belief, and strong family connections.

Long before television entered the home, family and neighborhood get-togethers were common, often around a hearth-fire, especially in winter. An exchange of

comment kept everyone abreast of happenings in the area though often tripped into friendly gossip, especially of those whose life's escapades set them apart from the accepted norm.

The very human lives of these wholesome people, their sorrow, happiness, humor and futility are picturesquely captured in the author's sensitive, homespun stories.

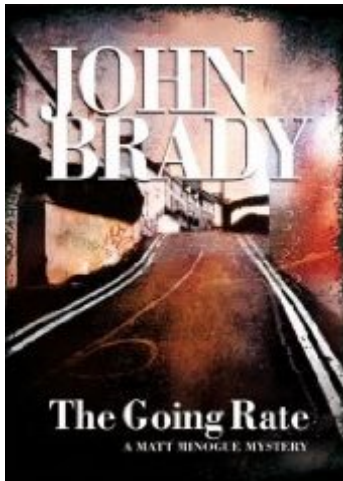
Mr Weir has written two previous books of Scots-Irish short stories, *Music On The Wind* and *Voices in the Glen*. Weir's three books are available from major North American bookstores, through Amazon's Kindle, and online at publishamerica.com.

Please see Mr. Weir's website for more information: <http://home.comcast.net/~gmweir/Scots-IrishShortStories.html>



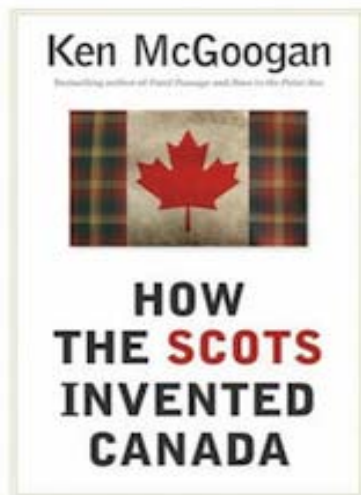
Read & Recommended

We're only half way through summer, so if you're looking for a good book or three to wile away the hot summer nights, why not check out the following books by authors who have shared their work at Canadian Celtic Arts Association events?



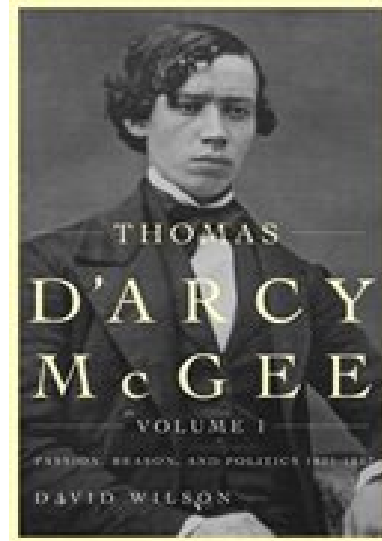
The Going Rate, a Matt Minogue Mystery
John Brady, McArthur and Company, Toronto, 2008 (paperback)

Having been reassigned to the Garda International Liaison office after his "Murder Squad" is disbanded, Minogue finds his skills and those of his old squad once more in demand as gang violence erupts on Dublin's streets.



How the Scots Invented Canada
Ken McGoogan, Harper Collins, Toronto, 2010 (hardcover, ebook and soon in paperback)

This very readable account of how a relatively small number of Scots and Scottish Canadians laid the foundations for Canada's pluralism, takes the reader from the first Scottish explorers to a descendent of Scots, Marshall McLuhan.



Thomas D'Arcy McGee, Volume 1: Passion, Reason, and Politics, 1825-1857
David A. Wilson, McGill-Queen's University Press,

Montréal, 2008 (hardcover & ebook)

An academic treatment of how the Irish-born revolutionary, Darcy McGee, became a supporter of the Canadian Confederation, which may require some prior knowledge of both Irish and Canadian political history to appreciate fully, is appropriately peppered with Professor Wilson's trademark humour. This is volume I of a two-volume biography on McGee; volume II will be available this October.



Canadian Celtic Arts Association Events Calendar

August 1 - 5, 2011

Goderich Celtic College, Goderich District Collegiate Institute, 260 South St., Goderich, ON.

For timetable and registration, see <http://www.celticfestival.ca/celtic-college/schedule-and-faq.html>.

August 1 - 5, 2011

Celtic Kids Day Camp, St. Mary's Catholic Elementary School, 70 Bennett St. E., Goderich, ON.

Running concurrently with the Celtic College for kids aged 4 to 12 to enjoy Celtic music, drama, dance, storytelling, arts, crafts, and outdoor activities.

For information and registration, see <http://www.celticfestival.ca/kids-day-camp.html>.

August 5 - 7, 2011

Celtic Roots Festival, Lion's Harbour Park, 168 West Street, Goderich, ON.
Performers include RUNA, The Kane Sisters, Caladh Nua, Vishten, and the Pierre Schryer Trio

For information, see <http://www.celticfestival.ca/>.

Friday August 12, 2011

House Concert with Kane Sisters and Edel Fox, 24 Wilson St West, Perth, ON, 8 pm.
\$20 advance / \$25 at the door
Email Clare Dwyer claredwyer@aol.com
The ladies will be offering workshops prior to the concert. Please contact Maureen Mulvey O'Leary at moleary2001@rogers.com for details.

August 15 - 20, 2011

Féis an Eilein, Christmas Island, Cape Breton NS. 21st annual féis, celebrating Scottish Gaelic language and culture.

Events take place at the Christmas Island Firehall, 8539 Grand Narrows Hwy (Route 223).

For more information, call 902.622.2627 or email feisaneilein@ns.sympatico.ca or anitamacd@hotmail.com.

September 10 - 11, 2011

The Beach Celtic Festival, Kew Gardens, Toronto ON.

See <http://thecelticfestival.com/index.php>

Saturday October 15, 2011

Celtic Studies concert, Alumni Hall, St. Michael's College, 121 St. Joseph Street, Toronto ON. 8 pm, \$20.

Traditional Irish music by Celtic Studies Artists-in-Residence Martin Hayes (fiddle) (<http://www.martinhayes.com/>) and Dennis Cahill (guitar).

For more information call 416-926-7145 or email celtic.studies@utoronto.ca.

* 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 with the following information:

- date and time
- location with address
- admission cost, if applicable
- contact telephone number or email address

For further information, please visit <http://www.canadiancelticarts.ca/>



Executive Committee

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