



# Comann nam Pàrant

## Dùn Èireann agus Lodainn

*Cuairt-litir air. 33*

2<sup>nd</sup> March/2 Am Màirt 2007

### Looking forward

With the year marching relentlessly on, and daylight reclaiming the day, the Gaelic world is waking up to a very exciting future. Here is just a little of what is going on...

### The Glasgow Experience

A bunch of us, including parents, teachers, and Children and Families staff went though to Glasgow a few weeks ago on a fact-finding mission. We came back with more than we bargained for.

The trip was organised by CGhDhE as part of Edinburgh's Gaelic plan initiative (see below), and we were made very welcome by head teacher Donalda McComb and the other senior staff at the newly opened Glasgow Gaelic School.

Walking round the spacious, bright school, with whole areas available for future expansion, we constantly encountered polite yet very cheerful young students, moving from class to class as it was Friday afternoon and *àm òir* (golden time).



Glasgow Gaelic School circa 2005

The school site houses primary school, secondary school (currently classes up to S3, but to provide up to S6 as current years progress), and one of Glasgow's GME nurseries.

There are also a number of businesses, Gaelic-related in the main, in a separate building, helping to make the whole development viable.

It was nothing short of breathtaking to witness all manner of subjects taught through Gaelic yet with all modern means such as internet and projection.

The project was carefully planned of course, but it is still remarkable that the school has succeeded in attracting Gaelic-medium teachers to cover all but a few secondary subjects so quickly. Donalda was confident that the remaining subjects will be taught through Gaelic before long.

It was exciting to see Gaelic signs, notices and posters for the likes of after-school guitar Club, but perhaps the most striking discovery was hearing how it is necessary, and indeed possible, to seek and employ further Gaelic-speaking staff every few months. This is to cover various new needs - from the teachers, and activity leaders, to janitors and other staff. These are not specially funded Gaelic-medium jobs, just a regular requirement of a Council-run school.

Gaelic, given a start, becoming normal - that was the message from Glasgow. We also heard this from education and arts officers, and key parents all of whom were instrumental to the Glasgow success story.

We learned much more than it is possible to set down here, and there will be opportunities for all who are interested to find out more through a forum to be arranged by CGhDhE soon.

### Tha V ann am Vitality

Following the afternoon's activities, we were invited by Glasgow to witness further evidence of the vitality of the vibrant Glasgow Gaelic scene.

### *Cutting edge arts event*

*Chan eil V ann an Gàidhlig* was a new drama staged at the Citizen's theatre, full of youthful self-confidence, and side-splitting besides. It was a fusion of some of the best of professional talent from Gaeldom, and a generous handful of youngsters not long through Gaelic-medium - writing and performing their own material.

The result was seductive energy, honest and bold, tackling subject matter previously completely off-limits for the Gaelic arts, and as real and as personal as the best of the arts in any sphere.

With events like this Gaelic is no longer somewhere 'out there' with tradition (and nothing wrong with that). It has finally arrived at a point where it can become an integral part of everyday life. And it's young fluent Gaels that have made that possible.

There is no reason that we can't see such vitality here in Edinburgh, and the way to achieve this is no longer completely beyond our grasp.

### Partnership..., and *Our Plan*

The very exciting news is that, while any such aspirations may have seemed mere wild fantasy a short while ago, Edinburgh will have its own plan for Gaelic that will make just such things happen.

*Facal no Dhà*

Na choimhead sibh na Red Hot Chilli Pipers air an TV? Nach robh iad iongantach? Mealaibh ur naidheachd a bhalacha! Abair cultar saidhbhir a th' againn.

Nick Croft, senior Council policy developer is determined to see a plan for Gaelic that will both be seen to be what the Gaelic community wants, and have mechanisms to ensure that it is effective.

That is new and inspiring stuff. Don't take my word for it - the MSPs at Holyrood on the cross-party group were impressed when Nick presented his ideas.

Nick may be very much our man at Waverley Court, but there will be work to be done - by parents and by the community - to win over Council staff and politicians. There will be events and campaigns soon, and we need you to support these.

We need you to make your voices heard, too, when Edinburgh's draft plan comes out for public consultation (early Apr. depending on national plan progress).

We must now make it clear that we are unhappy with the status quo with no GME at secondary, with little drive for expansion at primary or nursery. So if we want what Glasgow has, if we want a second GME nursery in Edinburgh we must say so loud and clear.

Rest assured we are not alone. The Gaelic community, which first got together at the meeting in November, has now organised itself into *Coimhearsnachd Ghàidhlig Dhùn Eideann* (CGhDhE). Regular committee meetings will be followed by an open forum.

It is the CGhDhE committee (incl. several parents) that meets with Council, CnaG, BnaG and others to form the Executive body of the Edinburgh Gaelic Partnership, the group developing our plan.

### Education Policy

Two pieces of good news on the Council Education's policy: the current draft now includes CnP's aspirations for robust development of GME; and, the policy will now be part of the wider Gaelic plan consultation, so the whole Gaelic community will have a say on education. This is entirely how it should be.

### Bòrd na Gàidhlig... listening!

Those who took the time to comment on the BnaG plans deserve a huge vote of thanks.

Not only will the plans be radically revised and simplified (based now on two ideas - *acquiring* Gaelic and *using* it), Edinburgh is now recognised as a major centre of Gaelic activity, rather than the backwater it seemed (not to us!) The reason for this realisation... more responses were received from Edinburgh than *any other area*.

### Social Events

A very well-attended family get-together at Clambers drew up a social/fundraising plan for the coming months. The next event will be a springtime treasure hunt. More news soon.

### Ùlpan: spread the word

This new, nationally structured course will be launched after the summer. Right now, Ùlpan are seeking tutors willing to take a short accreditation course. So spread the word to anyone who might be interested in a skill that could seriously affect their bank balance! (Ròs-mhuire Gibson 01463 226 710 [ros-mhuire@cli.org.uk](mailto:ros-mhuire@cli.org.uk).)

### Community Centre Users' AGM

A call to parents to attend the AGM on 5<sup>th</sup> March, 7 pm to ensure we are properly represented.

### On TV This Month

#### *Children's Entertainment/Education*

BBC2 Mon-Fri 8.30 a.m. *CBeebies:*

*Blarag a' Bho, Bràithrean Cuideachail*

Mon/Fri	<i>Na Luchagan Fhiacla</i>
Tue-Thu	<i>Luch is Famh</i>

BBC2 Tue 1 pm *Airgead Afraga*

STV Sun 10.30 am *Bigeil*

BBC2 Thu 6 pm *Dè a-nis?*

*older kids... Cuairt nam Blog, Rapal*

#### TeleG 6pm

Mon *Sailidh Mailidh, Fifi, Bilidh Biodach*

Wed *Dè a-nis? (rpt from prev Thu)*

Thu *Angelina Ballerina, Bilidh Biodach*

Fri *Fifi agus na Fluragan* (6.30 pm)

#### General

BBC2 Thu 7 pm-ish *Eòrpa, PC Alasdair St*

STV, midweek late *Fir Chlis, Guthan nan*

*Gaidheal, etc.*

STV Sun 10.55 am *Sin thu fhèin*

TeleG, 6 pm: Tue, Fri-Sun *various*



*Oisean ealain!*

### Next CnP Meeting

April/May. To be announced.

### CnP Contacts

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### Members' Web-site & Forum:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/cnpduneideann>

### Feuch e! *A few ideas to try*

Nach tig thu dha na tachartasan seo:

### For your diary...

24 Feb-24 Mar Fèis Sat classes 1-4 pm

Fri 2<sup>nd</sup> Mar Bothan 8.30 pm Quiz

Fri 2<sup>nd</sup> Mar Julie Fowlis CD launch

Sat 3<sup>rd</sup> Mar Choir at Assembly Rooms

Mon 5<sup>th</sup> Mar Community Centre AGM

Fri 23<sup>rd</sup> Mar Julie Fowlis Musselburgh

24 Mar-15 Apr Ceilidh Culture

Sat 24<sup>th</sup> Mar Gaelic Song Workshops

Sun 25<sup>th</sup> Mar Shore Poets Evening

Wed 28<sup>th</sup> Mar Tollcross Choir at UK

Health conf. (daytime)

Thu 29<sup>th</sup> Mar Lothian Gaelic Choir

30 Mar Last day of school

2 - 16 Apr *Easter holidays*

31 Mar-4 Apr Harp Festival

2 - 5 Apr Youth Gaitherin'

Fri 6<sup>th</sup> Apr Bothan

Tue 17<sup>th</sup> Apr Back to school

23-27 April Schools Gaelic Week

early July Family Learning Week

*For further info on any of the above events contact Comann nam Pàrant.*