

Mean air Mhean *(pronounced 'men er ven')*

A Newsletter for the Inverness and Nairn Area

August

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2005

Introduction

'Mean air Mhean', which means 'Little by Little' in English, is the first issue of a bi-monthly newsletter which will keep you up-to-date with the developments relating to the Gaelic Language & Culture Plan for Inverness and Nairn.

The Plan's development co-ordinator Angus MacLeod works from Comunn na Gàidhlig's office in Inverness and since he began in the part-time position in early March has been making progress in implementing the proposals set out in the Plan. The following bodies support and fund the plan - the Highland Council, Inverness and Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey Enterprise, Bòrd na Gàidhlig and Comunn na Gàidhlig.

The Plan serves the Inverness and Nairn areas of the Highland Council. Since March he has been involved in familiarising himself with the organisations and individuals who'll help him fulfill the aims of the Plan.

Following recommendations from a meeting of the Steering Committee on May the 3rd, 2005 the first 'Officers' Group' meeting was held on the 30th of June. Membership of the Officers' Group comprise Stephanie Murray of I.N.B.S.E., Donald Morrison of Bòrd na Gàidhlig, Dolina Grant and Margaret Mulholland from the Highland Council and Brian Ó hEadhra - Development Officer for the Inverness Gaelic Forum.

The group will continue to meet regularly and aid the development co-ordinator implementing the goals set out in the Plan.



One of the projects - Working with the Highland Council's Department of Leisure and Culture to re-establish Whin Park's Gaelic Alphabet and promote it as an educational feature for families.

Whenever possible Angus has made efforts to publicise the area's Gaelic services at community events. He attended the St. Colm's Fair in Auldearn on June the 4th and he recently had a display at the Highland Games in Inverness.

In an effort to improve the profile of the language and encourage interest in Gaelic he is in the process of co-ordinating activities for future community events. 'Gaelic Information' boards for the various Highland Council service points around the area are in the process of being prepared.



Staff at CnaG give the new equipment a trial run.

Bilingual Business as Usual

Simultaneous translation equipment provided free of charge by Comunn na Gàidhlig enabled the working party meeting to be conducted in Gaelic. The experience was regarded a success by all parties and it is hoped the next meeting of the Steering Committee will also make use of this service.

The equipment is available to any group wishing to use it for Gaelic meetings. Contact 'Comunn na Gàidhlig' by phone on 01463 234 138 or by e-mail oifis@cnag.org.uk for further information.

Josie Forman provides an opportunity for Gaelic speakers at every level of fluency to meet in a conversation circle which takes place every Wednesday from 7.30p.m. in the Blackfriars Pub on Academy Street, Inverness. Contact Josie Forman by e-mail for further information - JosieNicleoid@aol.com



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Bilingual Signage

The development co-ordinator has assisted Jean Ramsay Smith of JRS Marketing Associates in providing Gaelic for Inverness Leisure, the Inverness Dine Guide and Inverness Library. A campaign to encourage businesses and organisations to use bilingual signage with the backing of HIE, CnaG and the Highland Council is also being undertaken.

Learn Gaelic Online

Here are some useful links to websites that will get you started.

- www.bbc.co.uk/scotland/alba/foghlam/beag_air_bheag/index.shtml
- www.bbc.co.uk/colinandcumberland/
- www.smo.uhi.ac.uk/gaidhlig/ionnsachadh/bgfp/
- www.learn-gaelic.info/DesktopDefault.aspx

Òigridh (Oi-kree) / Youth



The Highland Youth Voice Website

Work is being done to further develop extra curricular activities for children, and those in their teens and twenties. This will be done in collaboration with Highland Council and CnaG.

Companies and organisations will be encouraged to cater for Gaelic speaking youth. Through co-operation with Evanton based 'Arts in Motion' it is hoped to generate enough interest from young Gaelic speakers in the area to enable the company to provide a film workshop through the medium of Gaelic.

If you have any queries regarding the work relating to the Gaelic Language & Culture Plan or can assist in developing the Gaelic language in the Inverness and Nairn area, Angus MacLeod can be contacted at the Comunn na Gàidhlig's Office on 5 Mitchell's Lane, Inverness, IV2 3HQ. Phone him on 01463 234 138 or E-mail aonghas@cnag.org.uk

Angus will be hoping to work with Fèisean nan Gàidheal and local Fèisean to provide further programmes of activities and events which will inform children about their culture heritage and the Gaelic language. Following the 'Feis Ghlinn Albainn' in Fort Augustus organised by Fèis nan Gàidheal further opportunities will be considered to develop Gaelic.



Students and tutor at Fèis Ghlinn Albainn in Fort Augustus

From September the 12th Inverness College and Highland Council will be providing Gaelic night classes. Phone Inverness College on 01463 273 000 for further information.



The Inverness City Ambassadors

Inverness City Ambassadors

Increasing awareness amongst visitors to the area is an important step in achieving recognition of the language on a local, national and international level.

Both Angus MacLeod and Sharon Mackay of Inverness City Centre Management saw the opportunity that the Inverness City Ambassadors have in shedding light on the Gaelic language and cultural heritage..

Angus intends to work closely with the City Centre Management in the future to ensure Gaelic is an integral feature of Ambassador training.



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