



FORWARD

'Iris na Gaeilge' has developed from our previous magazine 'Nuachtlitir na Gaeilge' and we hope it will be a fully Irish language publication in a few years. In the meantime, and until we have gathered our readers, our first few pages will be in English. Seven articles in Irish by well-known workers for the Language will follow. The final pages will feature articles from the Irish language newspapers. A list of contributors is given as follows

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NUACHT

Irish language events mentioned in our last issue, which were held during the year, were those at Stiperstones (Shropshire), Hope (Derbyshire.) and the British Museum.

More recently an event with forty-five people present took place at Temple Crossing, Braintree, Essex. This one-day outing had classes for beginners, a talk for others, and a conducted tour (in Irish) of the medieval gardens. Christy Evans, Donal Kellegher and Jaqui Wardlaw-Quirke were in charge.

On the weekend from October 14, forty people attended the course at Church Stretton, Shropshire. This drew many speakers and learners of all grades from the West, N.W, and Midlands. Christy Evans, Patrick Duffy, Margaret Holt and Donal Kellegher conducted the classes.

Neil Duncan organised the week-end at the excellent Irish Club at Basingstoke from 14 Nov 2001. Classes to suit all abilities were conducted by Tomás Mac Stofáin, D. Kellegher and C. Evans. It was good to see many from the Southampton area present. This event is to be repeated next year.

Forthcoming events are as follows:

- **Inis Meán Day** at Camden Town on March 3rd. This event is aimed at raising funds to help restore the cottage used by the dramatist, J.M. Synge when writing his world-famous plays. Celebrity speakers will attend.
- A **week-end at Stiperstones** for fluent Irish speakers 8th - 10th March.
- **Sheffield:** an intensive activity day for teaching Irish language.
- The annual, **Irish Language Film Festival** at Tricycle Cinema Kilburn, London.
- Another week-end at **Hope (Derbyshire)** in May,
- Forty secondary school children from Brentwood, Essex will visit the Conamara Gaeltacht.
- **European Festival of the Irish Language** will be held in The Hague 6,7 and 8. Sept, 2002.

Further information about those events may be obtained from Donal. 0208 3485016;

Cathal,01480 450412; Christy Evans and at 'irishchambridge' on www@macginley.com



THE DESBOROUGH DICTIONARY

Gary Desborough is a Northamptonshire man who is living in Holland for the last ten years. He is learning Irish from a Buntús Cainte course. He has also just completed an Irish-English dictionary, which could be an important help to anyone who is doing an intensive course in Irish conversation.

This Englishman knows that there are a thousand words in Italian, which an English learner of Italian does not have to learn, because they are so much like words in his native tongue. So he searched an Irish language dictionary for words, which resembled the English word of the same meaning in sound and spelling. The result is a handy little dictionary for fast learning of Irish.

Like all modern languages, except perhaps Icelandic, Irish has borrowed words from other languages, mostly Latin, French and its big neighbour, English. This is regarded by linguists as a sign of life and vigour in a language. Gary Desborough has nicely exploited this trait. He has gathered together 1300 words, which can be used in everyday Irish language speech.

Experts claim that with 750 words one can achieve good, basic conversation in any language. This small dictionary can make that work so much easier.

The dictionary can be obtained from Gary Desborough by emailing him at o.hucaire@hccnet.nl.

1916 AND THE IRISH LANGUAGE

Sally Richardson

The Easter Proclamation of 1916 is the text that established the Irish Republic. Its very first words are in Irish PÓBLACHT NA H EIREANN - though the rest of the text is in English. The word 'poblacht' was a new word in Irish, coined by the writers of the Proclamation to describe the kind of state they wanted to establish. (1)

There is no further reference to the Irish language in the Proclamation. But the language revival was part of the reassertion of Irish identity that gave Irish republicans the self-belief to carry out the Easter Rising and the Irish people the confidence to take up the fight from there.



So, what of the men who wrote and signed the Proclamation? Where did they stand on the question of the Irish language? Patrick Pearse's commitment to the Irish language is well known. The Gaelic League had only been in existence for three years when he joined it in 1896 as a boy of sixteen, becoming editor of its newspaper 'An Claidheamh Soluis' in 1903. What is perhaps less well known is his internationalist perspective. His interest in progressive teaching methods and bilingual education took him to Belgium in 1905, where he spent five weeks studying the education system and visiting schools where pupils were being educated in both Flemish and French. He learnt much that would help his educational programme at St Enda's, the school he founded.

Thomas MacDonagh and Sean Mac Diarmada were also fluent speakers of Irish. MacDonagh was a real polyglot, as his book "Literature in Ireland", published just after his execution, amply shows, and he taught Irish to Joe Plunkett. His Gaelic League activities

did not prevent his laughing at other members' tendency to take themselves too seriously and he was critical of some of their methods and their 'top-down', Dublin-based approach.

Pearse and MacDonagh did not take a narrow nationalistic view of the language. They set Irish in an international context and recognized that the language, though rooted in Ireland's past, had to 'get into contact with the mind of contemporary Europe'. It would be of no use relying on 'out-worn verse-forms'; modern literature in Irish had really to be modern - experimental and open to new influences. MacDonagh believed that drama in particular offered great opportunities for new literature that would revivify the language.

James Connolly supported the language movement as part of the counter attack against British rule. He believed that Irish independence and equality for Irish people - and, by extension - the revival of the Irish language - was possible only through socialist revolution. Another internationalist, he knew some Irish, as well as French, German and Italian (an extraordinary achievement for one who had left school aged eleven) but his ideal was a universal language such as Esperanto (2). Such a language, however, could not be imposed by force, but would come out as a result of agreement between free and equal nations.

These extraordinary men were progressive thinkers and activists - there was nothing insular or parochial about their political or cultural beliefs. Their commitment to the Irish language opened them up to what was valuable in the experience and culture of other countries, and we in turn can learn a great deal from them.

1) For a full discussion of this, see 'On the Easter Proclamation and Other Proclamations by Liam de Paor, pp 31-36.

2) See Ken Keable's article 'Was James Connolly an Esperantist?' in the 'Irish Democrat, August/September 2001, as well as Connolly's own writings (Collected Works Volume One, pp 340-346).

"GAELIC LITERATURE SURVEYED"

C. O'Beirne

Many of us who cite the richness and variety of Gaelic literature as one more reason for learning Irish, or for keeping up the Irish which we so painfully learned at school, can still find it difficult to explain clearly the range and scope of that literature.

This frequently being the case, perhaps it is worth looking at what Aodh de Blacam, a Londoner who settled in Ireland, had to say on the subject. His book "Gaelic Literature Surveyed" is a mine of information. It contains 410 well-written and interesting pages.

De Blacam once known as Roddy the Rover in his 'Irish Press' daily column shows us at first the periods covered by Gaelic literature.

They are as follows:

- Old Irish AD 700 to 950
- Middle Irish 950 - 1350
- Early modern 1350 - 1650
- Late modern 1650 -to the present.

Before going on to discuss interestingly this vast range of work, the author makes it clear that he confines himself to material which was written before 1893 only. Then he goes on to say: "The classical literature of the Gael contains (up to 1893) almost nothing in drama, autobiography, modern science, travel, art, criticism or recent history. What, then, does the corpus of Irish letters comprise?"

De Blacam, in answer to his own pointed question, then lists for us seven categories of Irish writing from the earliest times up to 1893. They are:

- Native annals, histories, clan records, topographies.
- A vast mass of heroic and romantic tales, beginning with the mythological and heroic sagas, and developing down the centuries towards the form

of the modern romantic novel and short story.

- A great volume of narrative, lyrical and elegiac poetry.
- Lives of the Irish saints; homilies, and translations of foreign works of Catholic devotion.
- Native law tracts, and mediaeval works on philosophy, medicine and science.
- Gaelic renderings, generally very free, of Classical and mediaeval literature.
- An abundant folklore; masses of proverbial matter, epigrams and anonymous songs.

A fine journalist and novelist De Blacam writes easily and attractively on this treasure of our national heritage and in a clear and unstuffy manner.

When the book was issued in paperback recently, a further chapter was added. In it Eighan Ó Hanluain, a lecturer in Modern Irish, covers Irish language writing since 1893 and up to the present day. Also, the gap referred to by De Blacam drama, autobiography modern science etc. has now been filled in by numerous fine writers of modern Irish.

Among those writers are: Leon Ó Broin, Padraic Ó Conaire, Earnán De Blaghd, Liam Ó Briain, Domhnall Mac Amhlaigh, Tárlah Ó Huid, Seamus Ó Grianna, Micháel Mac Liamóir, Tomás Ó Criomhtháin, Liam Ó Flaherty, Brian Ó Nuaian, Máirtín Ó Cathain and many others.

For those who are seriously interested in the history and development of the Irish language, "Gaelic Literature Surveyed" is a good companion. It is highly readable. It is also a great book to have for consulting occasionally.

AN LÁMH DEARG

Liam Ó Briain

Cuireadh Craobh Chronadh na Gaeilge ar bun i Manchain seasca bliain ó shin nó níos mó. “An Lámh Dearg” an t-ainm a bhí ar an gcaobh sin. Seomra thíos staighre a bhí mar ionad acu, and bhí sé congarach go leor do lár na cathrach in aince le Cearnóg Naomh Pheadar.

Bhíodh rud éigin ar siúl ann gach oíche beagnach, ach oíche Dé Domhnaigh; bhíodh damaí ann idir a hocht a chlog agus leath uair tar éis a deich. Bhíodh banana ceoil dá gcuid féin acu, agus an dul isteach sé phigin i sean airgead.

Na rincí gaelacha a bhíodh a ndéanamh, ar ndóigh de réir an traidisiúin docht. Maire do té a bheadh ag déanamh praiseach de “Ballí Luimní” tar eis an iomarca a bheith óllta aige sa “Seven Oaks” roimhré.



Bhodh cupán tae le fail ag an leath-am agus briosca. Is iomaí caidreamh buan grámhar a thosaigh ansin i rith “An Cor Séisear déag” nó a leithéid. Bhíodh sé feicthe mar thearman sabháilte do dhaoine óga de bhunadh Gaelach.

Bhéadh imeachtaí eile ag baint leis an gcaobh ag an am: siúl sléibhte maidin Dé Domhnaigh tar éis an Aifrinn ag an Hidden Glen, cór, dramaí, and fuireann peile Gaelaigh.

Bhí sean chara dom ar an bfoireann chéanna. Lá amháin agus cluiche fíochmhar ar siúl bhí seisean ag iarraidh súil mná óige a bhí ar an taobhlíne a mhealladh. Le linn do a bheith gafa mar sin, tháinig an liathróid go tobann air agus isteach sa chúl. Bheul togadh raic thart timpeall air agus bhí

sé cáinte go gear Go mór mhór ag a dhearthair féin.

Phós sé an bhean chéanna agus tá said le céile, fós sona sásta, caoga blian níos déanaí. Dála a scéil, phós an dearthair sin bean eile a casadh air sa chraobh. Laethanta geala!

Dúnadh doras na craoibhe don uair dearannach sa bhliain 1964 nuair a tháinig deireadh leis an leas. D’imigh sin agus tháinig seo! Roimh dheireadh na n’ochtóidí bunaíodh craobh nua de Chonradh na Gaeilge i Manchain. Craobh an Athar Emmitt Fullen a bhí mar ainm uirthi i gcuimhne ar shagart dílis a shaothraigh go ciúin ar son an Teanga agus ar son na n’imirceanach sa chathair seo. D’imir sé peil le foireann Dhoire agus le Lancashire. An peil arís!

Bíonn rang again gach oíche Déardaoin idir a h’ocht a chlog agus a deich. Sa chéad leath (go dtí a naoi a chlog, nó mar sin) bainimid úsáid as “Teach Yourself Irish” mar bhunleabhar. Seachnaíonn sé go cliste faidhb na gcanúintí. Sa dara leath bímid i mbun rudaí éagsula, mar phiosaí filíochta on sean leabhar “Fíon na Filíochta”, “An Crann faoi Bhláth” etc. Bíonn amhrán again de gnáth. Bímid ag éisteacht le sliocht ó Nuacht an Lae de Radio a h-Aon. Bíonn sliocht le léamh again ó “Foinse” freisin mar shampla.

Mar bharr ar an ndonas, bíonn cluiche bingo againn as Gaeilge anois is arís. Tá clú agus cáil ar na duaiseanna móra a bhíonn le buachaint ar na h’oicheanta sin. Tá muid ag iarraidh cothromaíocht a aimsiú idir súlt agus saothar. An n’éiríonn linn? Níl fhios agam. Mar sin féin, tagann na daoine ar ais.

I DTOSACH AN CHÉID

Seo sean aiste déanta fadó, fadó, sa tsean scríbhinn agus sa tsean litríocht ag m’athair, do ndéanaidh Dia trócaire air, an créatúir. Bhí sé ina mhaistear scoile i nDún na nGall

san am, agus is ioma uair a chluig a chaith sé ag scríobhadh agus ag ullmhú ceachtanna. Ar chaoi ar bit, seo giota a fuairamar fághta ina dhiaidh.

Tionnscail na Gaeltachta

Leis na blianta beaga anuas tá alán tráchta fá mhuintir na Gaeltachta – a bhoichte is atáid agus a dheacracht is a bhíos sé ortha riar a gcáis a bhaint amach. Is ioma tionnscail a bhí aca san am a d'imígh, ach baineadh truisle asta agus cuireadh ó rath iad. Ar na tionnscail a chuaigh in isle bhrí tá an tionnscail olna, an tionnscail ceilpe agus an iascaireacht.

Do chuir an Rialtas Coimisiún ar bun cúpla bliain ó shin, le féachaint isteach sa gceist seo na Gaeltachta agus na tionnscail a bheadh feileamhnach dí. Moladh báid agus gléasraí a thabhairt do na h-iascairí nach mbeadh ortha íoch asta ach do réir a chéile. Sin rud atá á dhéanamh ach ní leor é sin leis an tionnscail seo a chur ar a bhonnacha arís. Do mhol an Coimisiún don Rialtas teacht de chabhair ar lucht ceilpe. Fiche bliain ó shin bhí trácht mór ar cheilp sa Ghaeltacht, ach is beag ceilp a dóghadh ann, na blianta beaga anuas. Is as an bhfeamuinn a déantar an cheilp – an choirreall an cine feamuinne is fearr chuine. Ar na carraigeachta isle achar maith amach on gcósta a fhásann an choirreall. Ní féidir teacht uirthi acht nuair bhíos tráigh mhór ann.

Baintear le corrán í, nó stróichtear den charraig í le croisín. Scaiptar go tanaidh ar chladach ard annsin í. Fághtar mar sin ar feadh cupla lá í. Annsin déantar cocaí beaga dí. Tar éis tamaill eile déantar coca mór dí. Nuair a bhíonn an coca stálaíthe tirim, bíonn sé réidh le dóghadh. I sornóig nó áihne a déantar an dóghadh. Balla de chlaidhe dúbalta é, naoi dtroighthe ar faid, ceithre troighthe ar leithead, agus dhá trogh ar airde a bhíos sa tsornóid agus na clocha innti an-dlúth le chéile.

Cuirtear sraith isteach agus cuirtear tine anon is anal trithe. Ansin cuirtear sraith eile isteach, leantar do go mbíonn an coca ar fad doíghte. Bíonn an cheilp ar fiuchadh annsin. Suaithítear an lucht le rácaí leis an gceilp a chur ar a chéile. Caithtear uisce fuar uirthi annsin le n-a briseadh. Tar éis sin, tá sé réidh don mhargadh.

Íodín an ceimice is tairbhíge a bhaintear as an gceilp sa mhonarchain. Do thairg an Roinn Talmhaíochta and Iascaireachta margaí a fháil don cheilp, agus íoc aisti do réir an mhéid iodine innte. Ceannaíthe ó Shasana agus an Fhrainc a cheannaíos í. Tháinig tuairim is £24,000 punt go h-Éirinn anuaridh de bharr díolaidheacht ceilpe.

Tionnscail eile go bhfuil trácht air faoi láthair is ea an Carraigín. Fásann an Carraigín anfhada síos sa gcladach. Bailítear idir Bealtaine agus Mean Fómhair é. Leis na lámha a baintear é. Tá dhá chineál leathan a fhásas thíos i n-uachtar an chladaigh. Is beag de shú atá sa gcineál caol. Ar an gcarraigín bheith bainte, scartar amach ar an talamh é le tiormú is le gealladh. Nuair bhíonn taobh amháin réidh, iompaítear druim ar ais é leis an taobh eile a thriomadh. Ar a bheith tirm dó, cruinnítear le chéile é agus baintear amach an cuid is fearr de.

Máire Ní Chuinn
(Le Séamas Mac Chuinn O.S. nach maireann)

“THE SQUARE FELLOW”

Barry Tobin

Breandán Ó Beacháin (1923-1964).

Brendan Behan,
ba Réabhlóidí,
Óglach, File,
Drámadóir,
Craoltóir,
Scéalaí,
Amhránaí, Réice,
Pófaire agus
eile...



Rugadh Brendan i mBÁC sa bhliain 1923. Bhí a athair sa bpríosún mar bhí sé le De Valera nuair a bhí “Cogadh na gCarad” ar siúl. D’fhág sé an scoil nuair a bhí sé a 14. Chuaigh sé amach ag obair lena athair a bhí ina phéinteálaí tige. Níos déanaí chuaigh Brendan isteach in “Óglaigh na hÉireann”. Bhí sé ar diúté leo i Londain sa bhliain 1939 nuair a bhí buamáil sa chathair sin. Chaith sé seal (1939 – 1941) sa “Borstal” i Suffolk dá bharr. Nuair a bhí sé san áit sin thosnaigh sé, ar aithne a chur ar Shasanaigh mar dhaoine don chéad uair ina shaol. Ag an am céanna bhí seans aige léamh go tiubh.

Nuair a tháinig sé amach chuir na póilíní ar ais to hÉirinn é. In Éininn dhein sé iarracht in aisce bleachtair a mharú agus chaith sé cúig bhliain dá bharr le hóglaigh eile i gcampa géibhinn ar Churrach Chill Dara. Is sa “jailteacht” sin a d’fhoghlaim sé an Ghaeilge. Nuair a tháinig sé amach chuaigh sé ar ais ag péinteáil tige lena athair. Ag an am céanna bhí sé ag léamh agus ag smaointeamh. Bhí cónaí aige lena mhuintir i dtuaisceart na cathrach. Bhí go leor de na daoine beo bocht, gan fiú obair phéinteála acu. Ní hannamh go raibh ubh bheirithe amháin ar an mbord i gcóir teachlaigh. Is ar an ábhar sin go raibh sé ina shóisealach amach is amach.

Chuaigh sé go dtí an Bhlascaod Mhór and chuir sé snas ar a chuid Gaeilge. Chonnaic sé saol na ndaoine ansin, ar an dé deiridh, tréigthe ag De Valera, ag an eaglais agus ag bocaí móra Chonradh na Gaeilge. Bhí cúpla drámaí scríofa aige roimhe seo sa Bhéarla atá cailte anois. Ag an am céanna bhí saol na n-amhrán agus an cheoil go láidir ag a mhuintir. Bhain a dheartháir Dominic clú mór amach mar amhránaí agus mar chumadóir amhrán – beidh cuimhne go do ar “Liverpool Lou”. Ba uncail dó Peadar Kearney (1883 – 19420), a chum “Amhran na bhFiann” agus bhí uncail eile ina bhainisteoir ar an Queen’s Theatre sa chathair. Scéalaí agus amhránaí ab ea a mháthair a mhair go dtí níos mó ná nócha

bliain – tháinig CD dá hamhráin amach sara bhfuair sí bás ins na hochtóidí.

Le cúlra mar sin ní aon íonadh gur éirigh leis cúpla drámaí a scríobh a bhí agus atá ar na drámaí ba mhó a scríobh duine ar bith in Éirinn riamh. Ach mar sin féin ba bhocht an fháilte a fuair a chéad cheann, “The Quare Fellow” (1954), nuair a bhí sé ag iarraidh é a léiriú don chéad uair. Ní raibh suim ag an Amharclann na Mainistreach (Abbey Theatre) ná ag an Gate ná ag an Olympia. Sa direadh ghlac amharclann bheag leis. Ní raibh ach 56 suíochán san Pike Theatre! Thit an lug ar an lag ar na daoine a bhí ann don chéad léiriú sin agus chuaigh an scéal amach in Éirinn agus thar lear go raibh Seán O’Casey nua ann.

Chuaigh an drama go Londain agus go Nua Eachrach ina dhiaidh sin agus sa direadh go dtí an Abbey Theatre féin. Níor fhoghlain an Abbey an cheacht, áfach, mar nuair a tháinig John B. Keane (uncail Fergal Keane) go BÁC lena chéad drama “Sive” (1959), níor ghlac an Abbey leis! Tar éis “The Quare Fellow” scríobh Brendan drama sa Ghaeilge. Bhí an chéad léiriú de “An Giall” (1958) in amharclainn bheag i mBÁC. Sa bhliain chéanna tháinig sé amach sa Bhéarla faoin teideal, “The Hostage”. Bhí an chéad léiriú i Londain.

Um a’ dtaca so bhí clú ag Brendan mar phótaire. Tháinig sé ar theilifís an BBC sa bhliain chéanna agus é coach bagarthach lasánta cosúil le tincéar lá aonaigh. Bhí a fhios ag na meáin go raibh Paddy Gaelach eile acu agus tháinig cuití chuige ó chian is ó chongar. Ghlac sé leo go léir, beagnach, agus thosnaigh sé ag ól geall le capall. Ní raibh a chorp ábalta cur suas leis go ceann i bhfad agus fuair sé bás sa bhliain 1964 nuair a bhí sé 41 d’aois. Seo sampla gear dá chuid filíochta:

Uaigneas

Blas sméara dubh’
Tréis báisteach ar bharr an tsléibhe
I dtost an phríosúin

Feadaíl fhuar na traenach.
Cogar gáire beirt leannán
Don aonarán.

Tionól na nGael – i Shropshire!

Christy Evans

Bhí sléibhte Shropshire i Sasana beo le cabaireacht i nGaeilge le déana. D'eagraigh 'Coláiste na nGael' deireadh seachtaine do Ghaeilgeoirí; bhí ceol, bia agus siúlóidí trí radhairc áibhéile.

Tháinig an Coláiste le chéile i sráidbhaile álainn darb ainm Church Stretton. Tá a lán ceangail ceilteacha ag an áit, mar aon le 'Síle na gCíoch' agus uaigh 'Milburga', naoimh Éireannacha. Bhain Pádraig Ó Dúfaigh sult as casadh le



Gaeilgeoirí agus foghlaiméoirí na Gaeilge:

"Bhí atmaisféar fíor chairdiúil ann.
An sagart paróiste, an t'Athair
Pádraig Shivanan fiú a chuir fáilte
romhainn as Gaeilge!"

D'freastail 40 ar an ócáid i rith an deireadh seachtaine. Chuaigh a bhfurmhór ar an siúlóid álainn thíd an ceantair fiáin i Shropshire. Thug an múinteoir Don Kelleher faoi ndeara go bhfuil meas nua don Ghaeilge sa Bhreatain:

"Is mór an feabhsú atá
taghtha ar an scéal.
Léiríonn an slí a d'éirigh
ie 'Coláiste na nGael'
go bhfuil Gaeilgeoirí
ag tabhairt faoi deara
gur pobal ar leith agus
speisialta iad".

An t-Athchaidreamh

Paisceal Ó Fionnain

Tháinig litir chugam le déanaí ó fhear agus sealadh aige in Essex a deir gur iar scoilire liom é a mhúineas Béarla dó i rang Sam Coster i Mheanscoil stáit De Búrca i bPlastow i Londain Oirthear ins na seascaidí. Bhí sé ag lorg comráidithe ranga agus múinteoirí a bhí ag an scoil san am sin le haghaidh athchaidreamh a bheith againn. Fuair sé mo sheoladh ó iar mhúinteoir ó'n scoil atáim i dteagmháil leis go fóill, agus d'fhiafraigh sé díom an raibh baint agam le duine ar bith eile de'n fhuireann teagaisc.

An t-aon duine eile a raibh eolas agam faoi ná an Méiriceánach a fuair post san scoil nuair a bhí sé ag ealú ó bheith ag troid in Arm Mhéiriceánach san chogadh i Vietnam agus a bhfuil ina eagarthóir ar iris i Florida anois. Ach níor dóigh liom go gcaithfeadh sé airgead ar teacht arais go Londain Oirthear. Ní raibh fonn air airgead a chaitheamh riamh fiú ar dhinnéar scoile. D'fhánfadh sé go mbeadh an béile ite ag a chomhghleacaithe san seomra fuireann agus annsin ghlachfadh sé an cuid eile, go dtí gur chuir na múinteoirí Sasanacha déireadh leis an chleachtadh. B'fearr leo an bia a chaitheamh amach ná é a thabhairt soar do Méiriceánach.

Chinneadh an cruinniú le tarlú i seomra ar cúl 'An Leon Dubh', an pub i bPlastow a bhí múinteoirí na scoile is mó tugtha dó, ar Satharn i Mhí Lúghnasa thart. Bhí saghas imní orm agus mé ag siúil ó'n staisiún. Nach fearr buail ar aghaidh san saol seo ná bheith ag breathnú siar ar an am atá caite? Leagadh an scoil i 1972. Bhí deireadh leis. Chuimhnigh mé ar na botúin a rinneas agus mé ag dul i mbun múinteoireachta ann, gan cáilíocht ceart ná taithí agam, agus mé ag stopadh i mBrú Tigh Arlington i mBáile Camden, turas fada ó bPlastow. Caithfidh go raibh daoine ann le seasamh a baint amach ar son sean achrainn. B'fhéidir nach san teacht le chéile seo ach seift chun mé a mhealladh do'n phub agus deochanna a thabhairt dom agus mé a ciceáil chun bháis

nuair nach mbeinn ábalta mé féin a chosaint.

Ar dhul isteach go socair san seomra cúl dom an céad duine a d'aithin mé ná an Mháistreas Chluicí, an aghaidh troideach céanna aici agus fonn cainte uirthi mar is cuimhin liom. Ní raibh ceal smachta aici riamh de bharr a teanga gear agus foclóir maslach agus féachaint idir an dá shúil a chuireadh scannradh a n'anama ar na dáлтаí. Ba é Sam, ar a dtugamar Sam 'Costa' air de réir an carachtar san seó Radio BBC, ITMA ('Is É An Fear Sin Arís!'), craobh an aonaigh. Bhí sé ina mháistir ar an rang an t'am ar fad a bhí said san scoil. Fear aclaí nach raibh mórán athrú air ach go raibh cuma fealsúnach ag baint leis. An raibh sé ag smaoineamh ar an am, agus é tar éis teacht amach ó'n Aerfhorsa, a ghlach sé post sealadach san scoil roimh dul ag obair i dtionscal? Ach chuireadh chun cinn é agus d'fhán sé.

Cuireadh achan muinteoir chun cinn chun muid a choimead san scoil, ach duine amháin, fear singil, a bhí comh tugtha do'n a gháirm bheatha nar mheall an cleas é. Lean sé ar a shlí éagsula féin gan comhairle a glacadh ó éinne. Sár oide a bhí ann a raibh a shaol caite do'n scoil. Chonaic sé an díon bainte as le buama i rith an chogaidh agus d'oibrigh sé le muinteoirí eile chun leabhair agus bainne a fháil saor do na scoláirí. Lá san bhliain ina raibh sé chun dul amach ar pinsean bhí sé ag gábhail treasna an chlóis, a cheann ar leathtaobh mar ba gnáth, chaith ceann acu cartáin bainne saor a bhuail ar a mhuinneal é agus chuir deireadh leis.

Ní raibh an meas céanna ag na dáлтаí ar sár oidí agus a bhí ar carachtairí mar an Máistir Ealaíne, a raigh toitín ina bhéal aige i gcónaí, fiú san seomra teagaisc, agus é ag gearáin faoi an Árdmáistir. D'fhanfadh an duine mórchúiseach sin ina oifig i rith an lae gan dada á dhéanamh aige ach a phíopa a chaitheamh agus éisteacht leis an radio. Is é an leas Árdmáistir dícheallach a choimead an áit as siúil. Duine nach raibh an teacht

iláthair aige chun an phríomh phoist a baint amach ach go raibh diansmacht aige a bhainfeadh an bláth de'n Mháistreas Chluicí féin. Ar laeannta fluicha nuair b'éigin do na scolairí fánacht istigh san am súgartha agus an scoil ar ruaille buaille, ní raibh ach a choiscéim le chloisint ar na staighre clocha agus bhéadh ciúineas ar an toirt.

Is trua nach raibh sé agus iad eile de'n fhuireann theagaisc nach maireann san seomra cúl chun éisteacht le na iar scolairí ag ceiliúireadh laeannta mar sin, agus ag gábhail buíochas dúinn ar an méid a dheineamar chun iad 'a ullmhú chun saol'. An gcréidfeá? Daoine fial, dea múinte, mean aosta anois, an t'áth ina ráth acu agus iad go léir imithe do na bhruachbhailte agus níos fuide. Tháinig Barry Hunt daingean agus bean ó na Stáit Aontuithe le bheith i láthair. Is é a chuir an fógra ar an ríomhaire a chuir tús leis an chomradh stairiúil seo. Ba é agus Seán Godwin ceann rogairí an ranga. Tá loingeas tacsáí ag Seán, fear ann féin agus é ag cur ceisteanna crua ar a iar mhúinteoir bhocht: 'An é do thuairim, a Phaisceal, gur Londain príomh cathair ealáine an domhain, agus má's ea, cad faoi Veineis?' Cheapfá gur as Scoil Gramadaí a tháinig sé!

'Teach Synge' Library Christy Evans.

J.M. Synge stayed on Inis Meáin in the Aran Islands for four Summers, between 1898 and 1902.



It was there on, that remote Atlantic island that he learned Irish and, later, wrote his finest work. The cottage in which he stayed, at Baile an Duna, fell into disrepair. In the 1960's, the Government offered to build a modern house for the islanders in exchange for their old homes. Luckily, the family who had played host to Synge resisted calls to demolish the cottage.

Treasa Ní Fhátharta's family have lived in Teach Synge for at least 400 years. It was Treasa who began a programme of fundraising and restoration.

C.na G. members raised money for the cottage and were guests at the official opening in August 1999 when Brian Friel gave a magnificent oration. Treasa is now trying to raise funds to create a library and archive about Synge in an adjoining farm building. If you would like to make a donation, sterling cheques should be made payable to "Teach Synge Library". Please send cheques to Christy Evans at Shenfield High School, Alexander Lane, Shenfield, Essex CN15 8RY. The donations will be sent promptly to Treasa Ní Fhátharta

On March 2002 there will be a charity event at the Camden Town Irish Centre. Celebrity guests, including writers Pat McCabe and Martina Evans will be in attendance. Treasa Ní Fhátharta from Inis Meáin will explain why Teach Synge is so important. There will be exhibitions, stalls, music and food. All money raised will go to the ongoing restoration of Teach Synge . A Dublin Protestant., John Millington Synge (1871-1909) wrote "The Aran Islands" in 1907. He also wrote six plays: 'The Shadow of the Glen' (1903); 'Riders to the Sea' (1904); 'The Well of the Saints' (1905); 'The Playboy of the Western World' (1907); 'Deirdre of the Sorrows' was unfinished at his death in 1909. 'The Tinker's Wedding' was not staged until the 1950's.

A world-renowned writer, audiences rioted when 'The Playboy of the Western World' was first staged in Dublin, New York, Boston, and Philadelphia. A critic wrote: "In protest against the play's unsentimental treatment of the Irishmen's love of boasting and their tendency to glamorise ruffians, the audience rioted "

Despite all that, the restoration of his cottage is a worthwhile labour. It is well worth our most generous support.

Éireannach Léannta

Seoirse Ó Broin.

Is beag Éireannach a bhfuil cáil chomh mór aige ar an Mhór-Roinn le Naomh Fearghal nó Virgilius a bhí ina Ardeaspag Salzburg nuair a fuair sé bás ar an 27ú Samhain 784. Tá eolas cruinn air i gcaipéisí a scríobhadh faoi i ndiaidh a bháis.

Bhí sé ina mhanach in éineacht le Dubhdáchríoch agus Siodón, Éireannaigh eile sa chúirt ag Pepin, rí na bhFranc agus athair Shéarlais Mhóir ag áit darbh ainm Quierzy, nuair a tugadh faoi deara go raibh sé éirimiúil thar mar ba ghnách. Bhí eolas fá leith aige faoi mhatamaitic, agus suim as cuimse ann. Chuir Pepin chuig Duic Odilo na Baváire iad sa bhliain 746. Rinneadh ab de Virgilius ar mhainistir Naomh Peadar i Salzburg. In 749 ceapadh é chun an deoise chomh maith leis an mhainistir a rialú nuair a fuair an t'easpag bás, ach bhí sé ró-umhal an easpagacht a ghlacadh and d'fhág se an cúram sin ag a chomrádaí Dubhdáchríoch a bhí suite ag Chiemsee sa Bhaváir. Bhunaigh San Bonafás, misinéir Sasanach, suí an easpaig i Salzburg i 739.

Ní raibh Bonafás ró shasta le tuairimí Fhearghail agus tharla aighneas eatartha faoi data ceiliúrtha na Cásca, agus go mórmhór faoin mhaíomh a rinne Fearghal go riabh an domhan cruinn. Ní raibh an dearcadh sin coitianta san aois sin agus bhí barúil ag eaglaiseoirí go raibh an dearcadh sin amaideach. Shíl Bonafás go riabh an teagasc sin i gcoinne na Scriptúr agus d'iarr sé ar an Phápa Zachaire Fearghal a chur faoi choinnealbha. Ach ar chloising an aighnis, thaobhaigh an Pápa le Fearghal. Chomh maith le sin rinneadh ardeaspag de Fhearghail. Is iontach an réiteach sin nuair a fheictear an dóigh ar cháineadh Gallileo ag an Chúistiúnacht i 1616. Thóg Fearghal ardeaglais i Salzburg idir 769 agus 774, agus bhunaigh sé misean ar fud na tire. Deirtear go raibh gaol leis Eirintriúd, ina

banab ar Nonnberg áit ar tharla an eachtra sa drama "Sound of Music".

Buamáladh Ardeaglais Salzburg i rith an chogaidh ag na Meiriceánaigh agus sa tóchailt ina dhiaid sin fuarthas an chéad ardeaglais a thóg Ferghal agus aimsíodh uaigh Naomh Ferghal. Tá taisí Naomh Feargal agus Naomh Rupert i scrín ann. Bhí an Cairdinéal Mac Con Midhe i lathair ag comóradh an 1200ú bliain de choisreacan na chéad ardeaglaise ar an 15ú Lúnasa 1974. Arís bhí Cairdinéal Ó Fiaich agus cuid mhór daoine léannta ag comóradh chuimhneachán báis Naomh Fearghal i 1984. Chan cór na hardeaglaise Aifreann Sheáin Uí Riada go gleoite cé gur Ostarraigh is mó a bhí ag canadh na Gaeilge. Canónaíodh Fearghal sa bhliain 1233.

Tamall ó shin fuarthas seipéal beag faoi Ardeaglais San Stiofán i Wien darbh aimn do Virgilienkapelle. Taispeánann sé sin chomh tábhachtach agus a bhí sé mar dhuine. Bhí tionchar ana mhór ag na manaigh Éireannach san Ostair agus meas mór orthu ag an phobal ansin.

Coláiste na nGael School Field Trip to Ireland

40 school children from Essex recently visited Conamara and the Aran Islands. Organiser Christy Evans says: "We visited TG4 – the Irish language television station and the cottage of writer J.M. Synge. The students met the curator Treasa Ní Fhátharta and saw for themselves the landscape that inspired the great Gaeltacht writer.

As most of the school trip was spent in Gaeltacht



areas, Irish was the medium of instruction. Even the bus driver spoke only Irish! The group also met Daithí Ó Sé, a well-known face on Irish-language television.

The Coláiste na nGael School Field Trip is evidence of what can be achieved in British schools, given effort and imagination.

Tá scolairí Ardscoil Shenfield, Essex, ar ais sa bhaile arís tar éis a dturais samhraidh go hÉirinn. Arsa Christy Evans, Ceannaire Roinn an Léinn Éireannaigh: "Táimid ag iarraidh freastal a dhéanamh ar dhaoine óga maidir le foghlaim agus cleachtadh na Gaeilge i Sasana. Le linn a gcuairte, chuaigh na scolairí go dtí an Cheathrú Rua, TG4 agus Inis Meáin.

Deir Matt Evenett, 17 mbliana d'aois, a rugadh i bPort Omna, ach atá ina chónaí in Essex anois: "Thugamar cuairt ar an nGaeltacht agus *Guth na Mara* in Amharclann na Taibhdhearca. Shíl mé go raibh na haisteoirí an-mhaith agus go raibh an drama ar fheabhas." Níl amhras ar bith ar Chris McGuire, scoilire, faoi luach an turais: "Táimid ag déanamh staidéir ar an bPíarsach, Friel agus Synge. Thug ár scoil cabhair maidir le hath-chóiriú agus bímid ag déanamh staidéir ar pholaitíocht agus sochaí na hÉireann."

Coláiste na nGael Derbyshire

Coláiste na nGael's major three-day language event takes place in the Derbyshire Peak District on May 4th, 5th and 6th 2002.



Photo: "Irish speakers of all ages greatl enjoy our Derbyshire College"

We meet in the pretty village, near Castlton. The scenery is most impressive, with towering hills 2,000 feet above the valley. There are pubs, restaurants and plentiful B&B's in hope. The village has a railway station also with direct lines to Manchester and Sheffield.

The classes are for learners, but there will be a group for people who have a high competence in Irish. Tickets for this friendly event are limited. They cost just £15.00

For an application form please write to Christy Evans, Shenfield High school, Alexander Lane Shenfield, Essex, CM15 8RY.

Quote.....Unquote

"The essence of national identity is language". Lord Eric Roll, Kt., Civil servant Academic. BBC. 31 Aug. 2001.

"Those Nazi officials dealing with foreigners were obliged to learn the appropriate language. Thus they were obliged to learn by heart 100 words a week. They soon learned the language". Group Captain F.W. Winterbotham. "The Nazi Connection", 1978.

"A university does many great things, but there is one thing it does not do. It does not intellectualise its neighbourhood!" Cardinal John Henry Newman, (1801-1890) .

"Thus you have a starving population, an absentee aristocracy, an alien church, and in addition, the weakest executive in the world. That is the Irish Question!". Benjamin Disraeli (1804-1881). House of Commons, Feb. 1844.

"Please do not ask Mr. Bernard Shaw for money. He can write for you: he cannot finance you!". G.B.S. (1856-1950). Irish born dramatist on a post card in 1935.

"It is not fitting that any nation should put itself wholly in the hands of another". Winston Churchill, (1874-1965). House of Commons Jan. 1941. Churchill, a life. by M. Gilbert.

Language is a uniquely human characteristic. Each person has programmed into his genes a faculty called universal grammar". Noam Chomsky (1928---).U.S. Linguist. Educator. Speech to the Royal Society, London

"All races have produced notable economists, with the exception of the Irish, who doubtless can protest their devotion to higher arts". John Kenneth Galbraith (1908----).U.S. Economist.
"The Age of Uncertainty".

"The humorist runs with the hare, the satirist hunts with the hounds". Fr. Ronald Knox S.J. (1888-1957) Bible scholar.

"Language always keeps pace with the social development of its users!". John Honey. "The Language Trap" 1983.

"The job of a journalist is to get people to take an interest in things that didn't interest them". Mark Twain (1815-1910) U.S. writer.

"All good writing is protest writing". John O'Hara (1905-1970)). U.S. novelist

"The knowledge of ancient languages is mainly a luxury". John Bright, M.P. (1811 --1889)

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