

NAACLT News

North American Association for Celtic Language Teachers
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JCLL Increases Distribution

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The editors of the Journal of Celtic Language Learning have just recently learned of the acceptance of our journal for inclusion in the "Resources in Education" component of the ERIC database of educational documents. As a result, our journal will be available in over 900 colleges and universities in North America and in many such institutions abroad. ERIC has also agreed to provide subscription information to readers as well as handle all back order sales in both photocopy and microfiche form of the journal. Volume 1 is expected to be ready in microfiche form by October and will sell at about \$4 directly from ERIC.

The editors have also created a homepage for JCLL. It can be visited at <http://www.naaclt.org/JCLL>. This site will carry a multimedia version of each issue of the journal. The only element that will be excluded from the web pages will be the lengthy research articles. For these articles, only the abstracts will appear. Subscription information and links to the NAACLT page and ERIC Clearinghouse will be available for those wanting to read the research articles.

To reserve your copy of issue number two, be sure to order when renewing your annual dues. Among the articles to be included in the upcoming issue are "The Natural Approach to Teaching Irish" by Ron Crow of Antioch College, "Motivation and Gender: A Welsh Case Study" by Christine M. Jones of the University of Wales - Lampeter, "Morphological Objects" by Annette McElligott and Gearóid Ó Néill of Ollscoil Luimnigh, and a review of the "Who Said That?" Irish language teaching videos by Laura J. Guardi of Scoil Uí Lócháin. Several other articles are still in the refereeing process.

Call for Nominations

Nancy Stenson
Minnesota
stenson@naaclt.org

This year NAACLT members will be electing two new officers, a Vice President/President-elect, and one Member-at-large. The election will be held in early fall, and those elected will be installed in office at the November conference in Pennsylvania. Now is the time to submit nominations for these important posts. Members are permitted to nominate themselves and Members-at-large who have not served full terms can run again. Members-at-large serve three-year terms on the Executive Board, which meets annually at the conference. The Vice-President serves for one year, followed by a second year as President, and a third as emeritus board member. We hope to have multiple candidates for each office in this and future years.

Submit your nominations now to Nancy Stenson, at one of the following addresses: e-mail:
stenson@naaclt.org

snail-mail:
Linguistics

ILASLL
University of Minnesota
190 Klaeber Court
320 SE 16th Ave.
Minneapolis, MN
55455.

Deadline for submission of nominations is June 1.

My Turn

We would like to give the opportunity to members to share their story with other NAACLT members. Please send a 1,000 word article to the editor.

John T. McCranie
California
jtm@naaclt.org

It is just over one year since the NAACLT'95 conference, when names and faces came together and it seemed that all things were possible. Those who were there may remember me as the student in search of a teacher, having studied Irish but not able to find a teacher in San Francisco (surprisingly). Language classes were being offered across the bay at the University of California - Berkeley, and down south in Mountain View, but both were impossible for me (and many others) to attend. I knew that there was a large interest in local language classes (not just Irish but all the Celtic languages), since just before the conference I'd organized a Celtic languages information booth at the local Celtic festival. Over 200 people signed up on my list, requesting information about Celtic language classes, newspapers, computer software, and so on. Most, as expected, were interested in Irish, but a significant number expressed an interest in each of the languages.

One year later, and a group I'm directly involved with has just started its second round of Irish classes here in San Francisco - one for complete beginners and one for folks who completed the first class or have some Irish already. Each class runs for ten weeks, and has about twenty students. Along with the classes, there is a weekly study/conversation group for the students, and a conversation group for fluent speakers and advanced students. Imelda White (along with her student Michael Robinson) continues to teach Irish classes in Mountain View, as she has done for years. Thus if you are able to make it down to Mountain View on Monday nights, you could participate in Irish language activities five days a week in and near San Francisco. In addition, New College of California offers Irish language classes as part of their World Studies Program (they also teach classes on history, culture, and so on).

David Williams is teaching Scottish Gaelic here in The City, and a student of his, Tris King, out in the East Bay. Tris has started up the Bay Area Scottish Gaelic Learners' Association, with an eye towards a newsletter, regular classes, and so on. He regularly attends the highland games and other gatherings that occur around here, distributing information and finding like minded folk. Jack Cormode, also in Mountain View, continues to gather the Manxmen and -women about him and encourage interest in their language, but so far without any organized classes. I got to know David, Tris, and Jack at last year's Celtic Festival, where they helped out with the language booth. We shared tips on acquiring Gaelic language materials, which are so hard to find here on the West Coast, while passing out information we'd collected, and showing off the few videos and computer programs we had that were in Irish. Several folks from our Irish group attended a recent showing of the bilingual (Welsh/Irish) film "Branwen", and found a quite large group interested in Wales and Welsh culture, including a few Welsh speakers. I don't know at this time if Welsh classes are begin offered in the Bay Area (other than at UC Berkeley), but we are strengthening our ties to all these different groups in an attempt to promote the various Celtic languages.

California, by the way, now boasts three of the NAACLT executive committee members, with Beth Ellyn O'Mullan recently joining Charlie Rudd and myself as a resident. We are hopeful that the teaching experience

she brings with her will add to the momentum and help spread the enthusiasm we all feel. Our biggest difficulty has been, and remains, successfully bringing in fluent speakers who live in the area. Many of them seem to still feel some bias against the language, and are reluctant to become involved with a class of beginning students. As our small group of fluent speakers (which does not include myself, but does include a few Irish and American speakers) increases, we hope that will be able to coax these other speakers into joining our group.

I'm personally quite pleased with the current Irish classes that we're running here in The City. I've been a student of the language for several years, but for most of that time without the benefit of a "live" teacher. So it was quite a dramatic change to suddenly become an "advanced" student, and to try to help out the beginners. But forty students is a heavy load for a single teacher, and so I, and another student with a similar background (Caoimhín Mícheál), have become teacher's aides, of a sort. We attend the second level class, and host weekly study groups for the students of both classes. Attendance at these sessions varies widely, from two to ten different students each week. But those who come regularly seem to find them very helpful. While the intent is to allow conversational practice and help with the topics covered in class, actual evenings have also found us plunging deep into obscure grammatical concepts (of interest only to those few with some linguistic background) and then off and wandering into stories of vacations in Ireland.

These sessions are quite interesting to me, as someone who is studying teaching methods and second language acquisition. It is here that we can really observe the students' individual learning styles and preferences. Many seem to come more for the social ties than for any specific help with the language - they find encouragement listening to others who are going through the same difficulties. Other students want to know the rules, all the rules, of the language (all at once!). Some get flustered when they can't quite put the simple sentence together that they want to say, and others shoot out something more or less close and keep right on going. Having been in all these situations at one time or another myself, and having studied language acquisition a bit, I find myself fairly comfortable in the role of "encourager", rather than teacher. The smaller group and relaxed atmosphere (the sessions are held in a coffee shop) seems to be more conducive to spontaneous speech than the classroom. Those who don't want to speak unless it's a perfect utterance are encouraged to just say what they can, without fear of being judged.

Likewise, those who have questions too far off the topic for class are encouraged to ask them in the group, where they can be answered without worrying about boring the rest of the class. Intricate grammar patterns and exceptions are described, while it is pointed out that knowing them won't necessarily make anyone a better speaker (though having a firm grasp of grammar does seem to relax a number of students). And, of course, everyone is encouraged to practice, read the text, listen to the tapes, and practice some more! The setting usually provides plenty of opportunities to expand on the classroom lessons, using new vocabulary and topics as they arise naturally.

Looking back, it's been an amazing year. I'm in my second year of graduate work, studying computer science and linguistics. My university classes have flown past, some very interesting and useful, some less so. But the experiences outside that setting - working towards making these language classes possible, keeping them going once started, bringing together people in with similar interests and in similar situations - these have been as educational as any of those classes. It makes one think that perhaps we were right, back at the conference, and that all things are possible. The hot topic around here these days is "immersion weekend," and how can we best bring everything together to pull one off. The way things are going, it might not be too long before folks around here stop saying: "You know, if we were on the East Coast, it'd be easy to learn this...."

CELTIC-T Subscriptions

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This note is merely a reminder about how to subscribe and unsubscribe to the listserv for teachers of Celtic languages. 1.) TO SUBSCRIBE send the message: subscribe celtic-t first-name last-name to listserv@VM1.SPCS.UMN.EDU (note that it is @vee emm one). 2.) TO POST A MESSAGE (which I encourage all of you to do. Certainly you have a question about the teaching / learning of your language) send the message to: celtic-t@VM1.SPCS.UMN.EDU

Discussions on this list have been rare (so rare some of you thought you had unsubbed or the list was shut down!). On other lists (CHINA-T, HINDI-T, NORDIC-T, POLISH-T, & LCTL-T), the discussions have been more lively, with questions and answers about ways to express things in the languages, material available, grammar.

CELTIC-T is a list for the discussion of pedagogy of Celtic languages. The list is sponsored by the Less Commonly Taught Languages Project at the University of Minnesota's Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition. Please visit our World-Wide Web site for more information on all CARLA's projects: <http://carla.acad.umn.edu>.

Journal Review

[Please send in reviews of articles you have read on the subject of Celtic language learning.]

Ó Gadhra, N. (1995). Múineadh na Gaeilge mar 'Nua- Theanga' sna Coláistí Réigiúnacha. Feasta August, 7- 11. This article has as its focus a comparison between the teaching of German and French to the teaching of Irish at Regional Technical Colleges in Ireland. The author who teaches at the Galway Regional Technical College points out the weaknesses in Irish language teaching at all levels as compared to German or French. Not only are teaching methods different (German and French being largely focused on function and Irish focused on translation and perfection in writing) but also student's and industry's expectations are different as well. The article contains no references.
Thomas W. Ihde

Financial Report

Ron Crow
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1-FEB-1996

JCLL Checking: \$18.00
NAACLT Checking: \$426.05
NAACLT Savings: \$255.54
(Interest earned \$1.90 / days in period: 91 / Annual % yield:3.04%)

Conferences

Only those conferences whose proposal deadline has not passed are mentioned in detail here. Contact the editor if further information is needed on any of these.

23-25 May.

University of Western Ontario. Canadian Association of Applied Linguistics.

12-16 June.

University of Prince Edward Island, Charlottetown. Canadian Association for Irish Studies Conference

23 June - 1 August.

- Cornell University. LSA Linguistic Institute: Languages in Linguistics.
 4-7 July.
 Trinity College Dublin (Centre for Language and Communication Studies). The Third International Conference on Language Awareness.
 17-20 July.
 Hofstra University, New York. Irish Literatures: Old and New Worlds.
 4-9 August.
 University of Jyväskylä, Finland. 11th World Congress of Applied Linguistics.
 5-7 September.
 University of Wales, Cardiff. 11th Sociolinguistics Symposium.
 25-28 October.
 University of Arizona. Second Language Research Forum.
 22-24 November.
 Philadelphia, PA. American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages Annual Meeting.
 22-23 November.
 University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA. 2nd Annual Celtic Language Learning Conference & Celtic Language Teachers' Professional Development Day.
 27-30 December.
 Washington, D.C. MLA Convention.

Notes

During May 10-12 Uachtarán Gearóid Ó CAIREALLÁIN of Conradh na Gaeilge and editor and founder of Lá, the Belfast based newspaper, will be conducting lessons and other workshops at a Gaeltacht weekend. Other lessons will include céilí and set dancing, music lessons, sean nós singing, Irish singalongs, ciorcal cainte, drama and language classes, historical and cultural lectures, evening socials, and a Sunday brunch.

The cost of \$135 includes a private room, bath, linen, meals and classes. The center is air conditioned and handicapped accessible. The center features sixty acres of naturally wooded areas with a lake and nature trails. It is located just 35 minutes away from downtown Milwaukee.

The deposit of \$25 was due by April 15 and room accommodations were limited; however call now to see if space is available at 1-800-924-6008 or fax 414-567- 0134 Ethel Brogan sent information concerning two Irish language immersion courses in Esopus and Wappingers Falls respectively. The former will be held May 10th through 12th and the later is scheduled for July 7th to 14th. For more information call 914-897-5457. Daltaí na Gaeilge will be conducting a one day Irish language immersion program on Saturday June 1st at the Miquon School in Miquon, PA (Just outside Philadelphia). Anyone who is interested can send a message to jmcgough@mssa.com Conradh na Gaeilge, Washington Branch will hold a Gaeltacht Weekend from June 7th to June 9th in Emmitsburg, MD. For more information write Joe.Gilvary@CENSUS.GOV The Canadian Association for Irish Studies will host a conference entitled "Kings, Lords and Commons: Language, Literature and Society in Ireland since Strongbow". The dates and venue are June 12-16, 1996 and Charlottetown, University of Prince Edward Island. For more information write or phone Colman O'Hare, Dept. of English, U.P.E.I., Charlottetown, P.E.I., Canada, C1A 4P3. Tel: 902/566-0389; fax: 902/566-0420. The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee sponsors a 3 credit Gaeltacht course at the Oideas Gael cultural institute in County Donegal. The town is called Gleann Colm Cille in the northwest. It consists of language classes, excursions and various lessons in dancing, singing and music, as well as guest lectures. The three week course begins on July 5- July 28. For information write or call: L&S OFF CAMPUS PROGRAMS, University of Wisconsin Milwaukee, Holton Hall 253-PO BOX 413, Milwaukee, WI 53201, 414-229- 5879, 414-229-6827 fax, overseas@csd.uwm.edu. An Teanga Mharthanach is scheduling a five-week tour of the Irish-speaking regions of Ireland to start July 14th (leaving the USA on July 13th). Participants can sign up for parts of the tour or the whole five weeks. Classes will take place during each week. Week one is in Connemara at Áras Mháirtín Uí Chadhain, week two is in Kerry at Oidhreacht Chorca Dhuibhne, week three is in Donegal at Oideas Gael, week four will include Belfast, Co. Meath and Dublin, and week five will be spent on Inis Oírr. For more

information write Treasa Ní Laoi at An Teanga Mharthanach, 42 Montrose Avenue, Summit, NJ 07901, Phone/Fax 908-273-4039.

Jobs/Jobs/Jobs/Jobs

The Boston Language Institute, a well-known language school and translation agency in Boston, MA, is seeking part-time, experienced instructors of Castilian Spanish, Irish Gaelic, Italian, Haitian Creole, Cape Verdean Creole, Serbian, Croatian, Urdu, and Danish. Classes are taught in downtown Boston or at corporate sites throughout eastern Massachusetts. If you are interested or know someone who might be, please call Ms. Behnaz Rezaei at 617-262-3500.

DEADLINE for next issue: 15 July 1996

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This and previous editions of NAACLT News may be read at the following World Wide Web address:
<http://www.naaclt.org/News>

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