



Bí bródúil as do theanga

# An Fhuinneog Ghaelach

Cumann Gaelge na hAstráile

Fómhar 2014  
1-03-2014

## Daonscoil 2015 - cén chuma a bheidh air ?

Cuirimid ár mbeannachtaí chuig beirt comhalta uaisle Mícheál, Críostóir. Tá súil agam go mbeidh siad ar ais inár measc sar i bhfad. Ár mbeannachtaí chuig Harry i Geelong freisin. Beidh sé ag dul faoi scian go luath.

Bígí ag smaoineamh ar rudaí gur mhaith libh a bheith ar an gclár ag an Daonscoil. Buíochas mór do Mary agus Helen agus Anne as an obair a rinne siad ag déanamh taighde ar an Daonscoil agus an ceistiúchán a chuir siad le chéile. Tá sé fiche bliain ó bhunaíodh an Scoil Samhraidh.

Tá líon mór rannpháirtithe ag teastáil chun go leanfaidh sé ar aghaidh go rathúil.

Tabhair freagraí dom chomh luath agus is féidir libh más maith libh Lá Seoltóireachta a bheith againn in



Ní raibh Clontarf mar seo ?

Albert Park arís. Tá orainn níos mó ná dáréag ar a laghad a bheith ann chun dul ar aghaidh leis an lá sin.

Fáilte ar ais do Nóirín, bíonn sí ag múineadh amhráin nua dúinn agus ag ullmhú le haghaidh an tAifreann Gaelach Bhí an tAifreann sin ar siúl ar an Domhnach, an dara lá de Márta in Eaglais Naomh Eoin i Clifton Hill.

Táimid fíor bhuíoch don Athair Mícheál as ucht teacht ó Sydney chun an tAifreann a léamh.

Ná déan dearmad ar an oíche sóisialta ar an ochtú lá déag de Márta!

Greg

## San Eagrán Seo..

<i>Daonscoil 2015</i>	1
<i>Why Learn Irish ?</i>	2-4
<i>An cás do Esperanto, scríofa as Gaeilge</i>	5
<i>Gaeilge sna S.A.M.</i>	6
<i>Fógraí áitiúla</i>	7
<i>Key dates for March, April, May</i>	7
<i>Special liftout - Winter School 2014</i>	

**Irish Language classes each Tuesday during school terms 7:30 pm in the Celtic Club Melbourne**

[www.gaeilgesanastrail.com](http://www.gaeilgesanastrail.com)

## Why I bothered to learn Irish

I was born and raised in Australia and I came to Ireland and began learning Irish in my thirties. I consider myself to be extremely lucky to have had the opportunity to learn it. While I'm a long way from being articulate 'as Gaeilge' I am for the most part beyond the pain barrier that everyone experiences learning a language as an adult. I have had some of the best times of my life learning Irish. But it didn't take me long to realise that I had also entered a cultural obstacle course.

In the early days I was surprised to find I had to justify myself a lot to people who think the language is worthless. I can't tell you how many times I was asked 'Why on earth would you want to learn Irish?', as if I had had some kind of breakdown and was retreating from the real world into the badlands of a distant past. The companion questions were 'What is the point?', 'What can you do with it?' and once I was asked 'Why don't you go back to Australia and learn an Aboriginal language?'. That is still on my list.

The biggest obstacle I encountered was the 'shame barrier'.

This really kicked in once I was able to converse in Irish. I would be standing with a group of people in a pub in Galway speaking English when an Irish speaking friend passed by. We would have a quick chat and when I turned back to the group the atmosphere had completely changed. Some people would say how embarrassed they were that I could speak Irish as a 'foreigner' when they couldn't. Others felt excluded and resented it. In their view it was ignorant of us to speak in a language they couldn't understand in their company. Particularly one that made them feel bad about themselves and perhaps even a little ashamed. I listened to stories about how badly it was taught in schools in these contexts many, many times. So I

learned a script that made everything okay. I said that because I was Australian I was let off the hook a bit by Irish speakers and I had an easier time of it than Irish foghlaimoirí. There may be some truth in that. I also said that because I didn't go to school here and Irish wasn't 'shoved down my throat' I didn't have the same emotional baggage relating to the language. I would couch it in familiar terms and that too seemed to make people feel better.

However I do have emotional baggage. It's just different.

My father was from Wicklow and he emigrated to Australia in 1950 when he was 25 years old. I don't think he was ashamed of being Irish per se but he was embarrassed by his culture. Traditional music records sent by relatives were hidden away in a drawer and anything overtly Irish was definitely on the nose. We didn't identify as Irish at home even though my mother is also Irish Australian, and it never bothered me, nor did I feel it affected me one way or another. My father had an accent that we teased him about but that wasn't unusual in Australia.

When I was a child I asked Dad if there was another language spoken in Ireland and he said there was and that he had learned some at school, but that it was dead. I asked him to say a few words and he began to recite a poem. After the first two lines he faltered and then tripped somewhere inside himself. He was ashamed. It's a moment I have never forgotten.

Somehow I remembered the first line phonetically and many years later learned that it was a recitation that many of you would be familiar with: An Spailpín Fánach, a tale of misery, of eviction and of exile.



Consequently the idea of coming to Ireland was never attractive to me. When I did eventually come for a visit I discovered that not only was the Irish language alive, there were whole communities that spoke it. There was also a network of people around the country, around the world in fact. This was a revelation. Over the next few years I connected with it gradually and unexpectedly until it became a big part of my life. I certainly didn't ever imagine that I would be living in Ireland, let alone in the Gaeltacht and speaking a 'dead language' on a daily basis.

While undoubtedly all of these events are connected, I didn't consciously make those connections until I was immersed in the language. I now know where my father comes from and feel that I have some insight into why he felt the way he did about his country and his culture.

In his book *Decolonising the Mind* the Kenyan writer Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o says that the most effective area of colonial domination is the "mental universe of the colonised, the control, through culture of how people perceived themselves and their relationship to the world." He says that political and economic control aren't possible without cultural control, which "annihilate(s) a people's belief in their names, in their languages, in their environment, in their heritage of struggle, in their unity, in their capacities and ultimately in themselves."

I recognise this in my own family, and having been brought up in Australia I recognise it in the devastation wrought on Indigenous Australians. Their diverse languages and cultures were seen as worthless and uncivilised and the view was that they needed to be relieved of them by a paternalistic colonial ruling class. Aboriginal communities have placed language maintenance and revival at the centre of their struggle to regain something of what was taken from them. Language and culture have also become central in defining Aboriginal identity and many would give anything to have their own living language back.

Up until the 1970s assimilationist policies in Australia also extended to non-English speaking immigrants. I have memories in my youth of people speaking Italian, Greek or Mandarin amongst themselves being told 'to speak fucking English'. Policies that recognise diversity and have supported multiculturalism have done a lot to help change people's attitudes.

I've heard people say that they would love to speak Irish, but they feel that they're perceived as not good enough by some Irish speakers and so feel rejected. That there's an exclusivity and an elitism connected to the Irish language. It can be very difficult terrain.

I can only speak from my own experience, but I had my moments when I just wanted to give it up. I'd speak Irish to people, they'd speak English back. It made me feel bad and I felt I wasn't ever going to be able to communicate. I came to understand that in many small communities the language was spoken amongst people who all knew each other and their respective families well, going back generations. Often the same people were discriminated against for speaking Irish. So it took time and I had to build relationships and trust. Just because I was enthusiastic about learning the language didn't mean they had to automatically let me in. Some people didn't want me to feel uncomfortable as I struggled to make myself understood in Irish and so speaking English was an effort to ease my discomfort, and no doubt their own. I realised I had to let people know I was serious about it and make a huge effort. What I found then was incredible generosity and open heartedness.

When it comes to language purists that can be a frightening prospect. I once reversed my car into a pole because I was so worried about my bad grammar after doing a radio piece. I was gripped by an irrational fear that the people listening at home were wielding red pens and marking big crosses through everything I said.

I felt ashamed for not having perfect Irish. In a minority language context in particular 'conservationists' are important, and they're usually very nice people. I have to admit I tend to run away from anyone I suspect might be a bit hard core because I get tongue tied. I'm also aware that the Irish I speak is a diluted version. I try not to apologise for it, but I'm aware of it.

When I participated in the march for Irish language rights in Dublin recently I had a few conflicting feelings. I wondered momentarily if I had the right to be there as an Australian. I wanted to be there because I am grateful to every Irish teacher I have ever had and to every person who has ever taken the time to encourage me. I'm also proud to be a part of the Irish language community.

As we walked down O'Connell Street the gravity of the situation really hit home. Irish speakers are marching for recognition and rights as if they are a maligned ethnic minority or indeed an oppressed in-

digenous people. It seems for many people that is what Irish speakers represent.

A friend from Carna remarked that this was the first day in her life that she had spoken Irish from morning to night other than when she was at home. There were people there from all over the country who make herculean efforts to maintain Irish as a living language both in and outside of Gaeltacht areas. In a recent article Rónán Ó Muirthile made an appeal for public support so that he is able to pass Irish on to his son "so that that deeper heritage survives for all Irish people." What I've learned is that the world looks very different through the lens of Irish. It has helped me to make sense of it. I can't express those feelings adequately in your native language, but I can appreciate those who do and that has been a gift. Through them, I feel deeply connected to a language and a culture that I didn't even know existed.

Paula Kehoe





## An cás do Esperanto, scríofa as Gaeilge ar ndóigh !

**C**habhraigh muintir na hÉireann leis an mBéarla a chur i réim mar theanga dhomhanda (mar tá an dealramh air pé scéal é gur teanga dhomhanda é). Ach is í an usáid leathan sin an Bhéarla an bac is mó ar athbheochaint na Gaeilge. Tá deis ann anois ag Éireannaigh páirt a ghlacadh i nGluaiseacht a chuirfidh srian le leathadh iomarcach an Bhéarla. Cén fáth gur ceart dúinn an deis sin a thapú?

1. Chun an Béarla a shábháil air féin. Má leanfar ar aghaidh ó Hong Kong go Bruiséil ag stan-gadh is ag baint mí-usáid as millfear é.
2. Chun mion-theangacha in gach tír a chosaint is a chothú.
3. Chun an coimpléasc isleachta atá ag a lán againn faoinár teanga féin a scaipeadh.

An bac é ar athbheochaint na Gaeilge an pháirt dhomhanda atá ag an mBéarla? Tugtar dúinn mar shamplaí an Fhionlainn, Iosrael, an Indinéis.... D'éirigh leo san a dteangacha náisiúnta a athbheochaint ach teipeann orainn. Ach níl an comparáid sin cóir. Theastaigh ó na Fionlannaigh an Fionlannais a chur in áit an Sualannais. Ach is sa Sualann amháin a labhairtear í sin. Ní raibh morán le cailleadh acu. In Iosrael bhí gá le teanga chomónta do dhaoine a tháinig ó a lán tíortha éagsúla.

An ceart dúinn glacadh leis gur teanga dhomhanda é an Béarla, an teanga a labharfadh beirt ó dhá thír ar bith le céile? Is fíor go bhfaighidh aon duine a usáideann aerlíní idirnáisiúnta, bainc mhóra, nó ostlanna costasacha duine éigin a labharann saghas éigin Béarla. Má bhogann tú siar ó na lárionaid go ostlanna beaga nó bainc bheaga éiríonn deacarachtaí don Bhéarlóir, fiú amháin sa Eoraip. Fuair aoinne a thaistil thar lear amach nach fíor go bhfuil Béarla ag chuile dhuine, fiú i dtíortha ina múintear é go coitianta ins na scoileanna.

Ní chuireann sé sin ionadh orainn mar múintear Français do mhórchuid de dhaltaí meánscoile na

hÉirinn ach an féidir leo í labhairt? 'Se an rud céanna i gcás daltaí ag foghlaim Béarla i dtíortha eile. Is fíor go n-éisteann siad le popamhráin i mBéarla. Ba maith leo leabhair i mBéarla a léamh ach is obair an-dhian dóibh é. Ní feidir linn, a labhraíonn Béarla ón gcliabhán a shamhlú comh deacair is atá sé do chuid féin a dhéanamh de theanga ina bhfuil an gramadach comh neamhshoiléir ach ag an am gcéanna atá comh cinnte faoi cad is ceart nó mícheart. An áit a n-usáideann Spáinneach "No?" ag deireadh abairte deireann an Béarlóir "Isn't it?", "Won't he?", "Didn't they?" agus araile. Is tinneas cinn ann féin é an briathar "Do" (Déan).

Casfaidh tú ar chuid mhaith eachtrannaigh annseo a labhraíonn Béarla le morán botún. Ach níl amhras ann go mbíonn barr ábalachta in aon chomhrá ag an gcainteóir dúchais thar an duine a d'fhoghlaim é.

Ní mór duinn a mheabhrú duinn féincuibheasach maith, ach de ghnáth deireann siad leat gur beag nach raibh focal acu ag fágáil na scoile dóibh. Déanann sé difríocht an domhain maireachtáil le teanga. Fiú amháin iad siúd atá annseo le fada déanann go mbíonn doicheall roimh an mBéarla ag a lán gurbh éigin dóibh é fhoghlaim. Nuair a gcaithfidh siad é úsáid agus nuair bhíonn fhios acu go ndéanann siad botúin mothaíonn siad corrabhuaiseach, míshona, agus fiú amháin náirithe.

Bhí an leiriú ab fhearr ar sin le feiscint san Iaráin taréis titim an Seá. Chreid an tAire Oideachais nua in Esperanto agus chuir sé cúpla caibidil eolais faoin teanga idirnáisiúnta ins na teacsleabhair meánscoile nua. Is é an toradh a bhí air gur dhiúltaigh 80,000 daltaí scoile níos mó teangacha "Imperiúlacha" a fhoghlaim agus ní shásódh dada iad ach go múinfí Esperanto dóibh. Chuireadh dianchúrsa míosa ar fáil do mhuinteoirí.

.....ar lean san chéad eagrán eile

**Tuilleadh Eolais: Esperanto-Asocio de Irlando, 9 Coill Theach Mealóg, Baile Á Cliath 6**

## Gaeilge sna S.A.M.

**I**s minic a feictear rian tír bheag mar Éire i Mór Roinn eile i bhfad i gcéin, uaireanta sofheicthe agus ollmhór, m.sh clann Cinnéideach ins na Stáit Aontaithe agus uaireanta eile folaithe i dtreo gur ar éigin a fheiceá é. Mar sin is iontach é rian a fheiceáil in áit nach mbíonn coinne agat leis. Ag taisteal dom i Meiriceá le déanaí tháinig mé ar rian Éireannach trí huairé a bhí an-suimiúil.

An chéad áit ná *Ireland's Great Hunger Museum* in Hampden, Connecticut. Cé nár osclaíodh an iarsmalann go dtí 2012 bhí a bunús ceaptha sa bhliain 1997 de thoradh téama an Mhórshuíil na bliana sin i Nua Eabhrach ar Lá 'Le Phádraig – An Gorta Mór – comóradh 150 bliain a bhí ann. Rinne ionadaí agus brontóir le Ollscoil Quinnciac, cinneadh ar cuimhneacháin buan a bhunú. Dá bharr sin tá an *Lender Family Special Collection Room* san Ollscoil agus foirgneamh ar leith ann don Iarsmalann. Istigh san dá áit seo tá an bailiúchán is mó ar domhan d'ábhair a bhaineann leis an nGorta Mór.

An dara áit suimiúil le nasc Gaelach ná séipéal in Boston. Ar do shlí isteach san Old South Church tá fógra mór ag cur fáilte roimh cách, scríofa i 30 teanga éagsúil. Ina measc tá **"Fáilte romhat"** go soiléir i ndathanna geala. Baineann an séipéal sin leis an United Church of Christ.

Ag léamh scríbhinní ar na fallaí sa séipéal in Ollscoil Princeton a tháinig mé ar an tríú radharc bainteach le hÉirinn. 'Sé a bhí ann, scríofa as Gaeilge, ná **"Ní bheidh a leithéid ann arís"** – tagairt a deineadh do John Francis McCarthy, Jnr, a bhí mar scoláire san Ollscoil sin ins na daicheaduithe. Comh maith le sin tugadh le fios gur de bhunús Princeton é, dlíodóir, agus saighdiúir a ghlac páirt in ionradh Normandy sa Dara Cogadh Domhanda. Má tá a thuilleadh eolais faoin bhfeair seo ag éinne ba mhaith liom é a léamh.

**I**t's common knowledge that little Ireland has left its mark on many bigger nations around the world. Sometimes the mark itself can be massive, like the Kennedy Family, and sometimes it can be so small it's almost missed. It's tantalising, therefore, to find these small marks when you least expect it. On a recent trip to the USA I came across three of particular interest.

The first discovery was what is called Ireland's Great Hunger Museum in Hampden, Connecticut. While the museum only opened in 2012 the idea for it came to life in 1997 out of the New York St. Patrick's Day parade which had the famine as its theme. A representative of and benefactor to Quinnciac University made a decision to highlight this historical event resulting in the creation of the Lender Family Special Collection Room at the University and a separate building to house the museum. Together this makes the it biggest collection, globally, of material relating to the famine years.

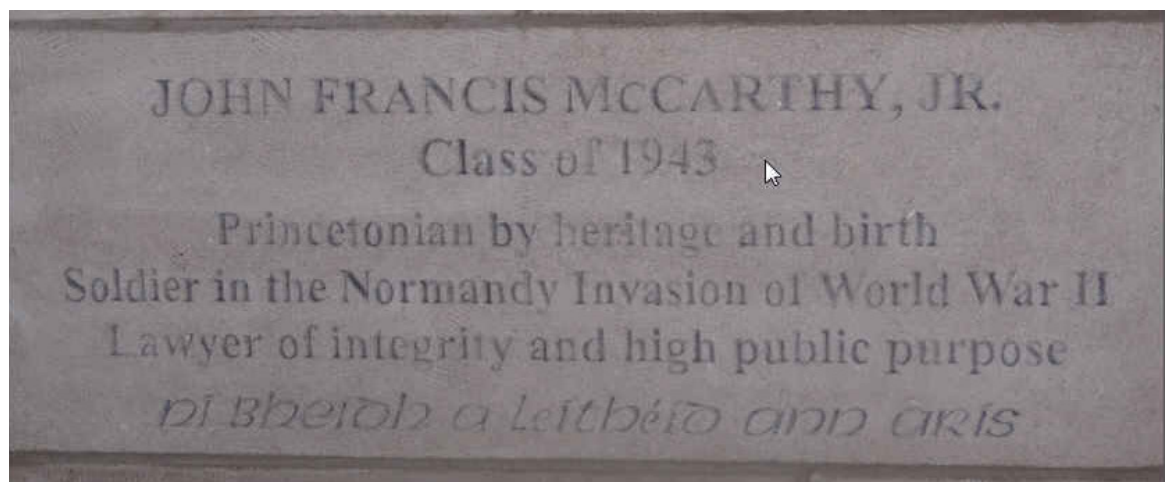
The second and most charming Irish link was located in the Old South Church in Boston where there is a large poster in the entrance showing a range of welcomes in over 30 languages. There among them was tá fáilte romhat written in glorious living colour! The Old South Church is a United Church of Christ in case anyone's interested in the denomination.

The third Irish connection was discovered by accident. Wandering around the chapel at Princeton University I was idly 'reading' the walls, and came upon mention of a student of the 1940s, named John Francis McCarthy, Jnr, whose inscription ended with the words "... ní bheidh a leithéid ann arís". Apart from what was engraved on the wall "a Princetonian by heritage and by birth, soldier in the Normandy invasion of WW11 and a lawyer..." I couldn't find out anything about him until now— see next page.

Deirdre Gillespie







Our editorial team has tracked down Jack. He died aged 90 in 2012 and his obituary is available at ....

<http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/trentonian/obituary.aspx?n=john-f-mccarthy-jack&pid=158217043>

It's quite a good read !

#### Seachtain na Gaeilge

Cumann Gaeilge na hAstráile will have our party upstairs in Celtic Club on Tuesday March 18th at 7:30pm, open to friends and family, no cover charge.

Come along and do your party piece in Irish, or maybe your class would like to do a song, poem or drama.

#### Music for St Patrick's Day

Jacqui Rutten, Mick Ryan, and Christina Green will be performing a concert "Music for St. Patrick's Day" from 2 to 3pm on Sunday March 23rd in the Celtic Club.

Admission is \$15 or a donation. Pay at door and children are admitted free

#### Key Dates for Mar, Apr, May 2014

17th Mar	St Patrick's Day
18 Mar	Party night upstairs in Celtic Club
1st Apr	Last night of term 1
3rd Apr	Committee meeting
22nd Apr	First night of term 2
1st May	Committee meeting

Information given here about term dates is for students in Victoria only and Interstate students should check with their local teacher.

*Cumann Gaeilge na hAstráile Teo**IRISH LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA INC.*

Cumann Gaeilge na hAstráile, the Irish Language Association of Australia is a non-profit organisation run entirely by volunteer tutors and a voluntary committee of management. Its aim is to promote the Gaelic language as a second language within the Australian community, and to form networks with other cultural, heritage and Gaelic-speaking groups. Formally established back in 1992, the ILAA offers structured weekly language classes to students of all ages, nationalities, and walks of life, across a range of levels — absolute beginners, basic, intermediate, advanced — as well as the opportunity to practice and converse together in a supportive environment.

Members receive a quarterly newsletter; access to the library; and also enjoy weekly singing and informal conversation sessions; as well as participation in social events and residential language schools.

Irish Language Association of Australia Inc., 320 Queen Street, Melbourne VIC, 3000.

**This form can be used for membership renewal or to notify a change of details.  
New members should use the form available on our website [www.gaeilgesanastrail.com](http://www.gaeilgesanastrail.com)**

Renewal     Update

Sloinne .....  
(surname)

Guthán bh) .....  
(phone)

Céad ainm .....  
(first name)

ah) .....

Seoladh .....  
(address)

Fón .....  
(mobile)

.....

Ríomhphost .....  
(email)

Membership fee is \$40 per annum and due each January. Class donation is \$4 per week.