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ABSTRACTS

Ronald I. M. Black
Oral Narrative and Propaganda

This article examines some inconsistencies among narratives relating to the dispute between Angus MacDonald of Islay and Sir Lachlan MacLean of Duart over possession of the Rhinns of Islay in the late sixteenth century. While the historicity of the events is not in dispute, local accounts, both written and oral, tended to alter their chronology or other details in order to provide a reading of those events that favoured one side or the other – in other words, propaganda, or as some would say, 'fake news', albeit well after the event.

Virginia Blankenhorn
From Farm to Fork in South Uist

Drawing from her diary of summer stays in South Uist in the 1970s, the author reflects on those aspects of crofting life having to do with food production. Having grown into a comfortable relationship with a crofting family in Howbeg, she witnessed and participated in many of the summer's chores, including lifting peats, haymaking and sheep-shearing, and recorded how the croft's livestock and wild resources provided essential elements of its larder.

Katherine Campbell and Emily Lyle
'Up in the Air' or 'The Grey Mare': A Scottish and English Prosimetrical Form of ATU 1540 'The Student from Paradise (Paris)'

A Scottish lawyers' dramatic entertainment known in the eighteenth century contained a song which Allan Ramsay revised as 'Up in the Air' in his *Tea-Table Miscellany* (1723). The traditional song and air as found in Scotland and a related prose text published in an English newspaper are explored here. They provide an unusual prosimetrical form of a jocular tale which has a wide international currency but is rare in Britain.

Hugh Cheape
'Folklore Reminiscences' of John Lorne Campbell

A leading Gaelic scholar and fieldworker of the twentieth century, the late John Lorne Campbell's writings on traditional Gaelic song and his groundbreaking editions of the stories and reminiscences of islanders have become standard works. Describing himself as a 'folklorist' before that term was widely used, he formed a strong bond with Seumas Ó Duilearga, director of the Irish Folklore Commission, a relationship which inspired him to campaign for the creation of a similar institution that would record and conserve the songs, stories, and lore of Gaelic Scotland. Unaffiliated with a university, Campbell lamented the public neglect of the Gaelic language, and was fiercely critical of Scottish universities' failure to record (or even teach) popular tradition. Eventually, his persistent campaign helped to build momentum for the founding of the School of

Scottish Studies at the University of Edinburgh in the 1950s. Campbell's 'Folklore Reminiscences' – private notebooks held in the library at Canna House – offer rich background to his public life and legacy, from his early determination to learn Gaelic to his growing understanding of 'folklore' as a discipline, and ultimately to his many contributions to Gaelic scholarship as author, editor, technical innovator, indefatigable fieldworker, commentator and critic.

Robert Dunbar

A Song Remembered in Exile: *Annag a Ghaoil, hao ill o*, Fear Chanaidh, agus Eòin G. MacFhionghain

Visiting Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, in the 1930s, John Lorne Campbell became aware of the rich heritage of Gaelic song and culture brought to Canada by Scottish settlers. This article examines Campbell's relationship with an industrious and influential Canadian Gael: Jonathan G. MacKinnon (Eòin G. MacFhionghain, 1869–1944), writer, translator, and editor of the Gaelic weekly *Mac-Talla*. In addition to describing their friendship, the author discusses a fragmentary waulking-song, *Annag a Ghaoil, hao ill o* ('Anna my love, *hao ill o*'), which Campbell recorded from MacKinnon in 1937 – a song that he later mentioned in the first volume of *Hebridean Folksongs* (1969), and eventually published as the first item in his anthology of Cape Breton songs, *Songs Remembered in Exile* (1990). This article is written in Gaelic.

Tiber F. M. Falzett

Music from the Source: *Am Muileann Dubh* and North Atlantic Supernatural Music Legends

This article examines legends of supernatural music associated with the Scottish Gaelic reel tune *Am Muileann Dubh* ('The Black Mill') across the North Atlantic. Drawing on Prince Edward Island, Shetlandic, Hebridean, Highland, and Cape Breton material alongside Christiansen's Migratory Legend type 4090, it traces a legend complex in which supernatural beings at water sites bestow music upon human recipients. The article considers the mill as a site of encounter in Gaelic tradition, the polysemy of *muileann dubh* across musical, ritual, and social registers, and the cosmological dynamics of *bodach* and *cailleach* as figures of cyclical death and regeneration. Three Cape Breton variants preserve structural features absent from recorded Scottish and Irish sources but cognate with Norwegian tradition, suggesting that a related Gaelic legend type was carried from the Highlands and Hebrides during the era of emigration. The community's continued performance despite diabolic associations and clerical prohibition enacts a vernacular resistance through collective discernment.

Maxim Fomin

Maritime Folklore in the West Highlands: Some Mid-century Collectors and their Informants (1953–1970)

The article focuses on the oral maritime heritage of the West Highlands and Islands of Scotland, discussing legends and stories collected in the mid-20th century and maintained in the School of Scottish Studies Archives at the University of Edinburgh. Items include omens warning fishermen of adverse conditions at sea, premonitions of future disasters, and lore involving seals, water horses and mermaids. The contributions of some of the School of Scottish Studies' outstanding informants, including Kate Dix of Berneray and Nan MacKinnon of Vatersay, are featured.

Terry Gunnell
The Fiddler and the Waterfall: The Quest for Inspiration in Norwegian Legends of Fiddlers

Tracing cultural affinities between stories recorded in the Northern Isles of Scotland (especially Shetland) and those found in the wider Nordic world, the author examines legends and beliefs connecting fiddle music and the supernatural. Tales tell of would-be musicians learning tunes from supernatural masters, and in some legends these are demonic figures with whom the musician must fight for his life. Many stories suggest a belief that running water – a stream, a mill, a waterfall – can provide artistic inspiration, and that such environments possess a liminal quality where natural and supernatural worlds meet. The author argues that stories asserting the supernatural origins of fiddling skills and tunes likely go back to a shared Nordic, rather than mainland Scottish tradition.

William Lamb
A' Chluais-chiùil ann an Dualchas nan Gàidheal

In generations past, Gaels had difficulty separating melody from words. When discussing a song, for example, someone who knew the air to a song was thereby assumed to know the words as well. A wide range of evidence also points to a pervasive cultural tendency to mix instrumental music and song. Lastly, music and song are frequently conflated in Gaelic traditional narrative – most apparently in tales of the *cluas-chiùil* ('musical-ear'), the ability to transmit and receive messages through instrumental music, with many such narratives serving as aetiologies for well-known pipe tunes and dance songs. While the *cluas-chiùil* may be regarded as a supernatural trope, these tales – coupled with linguistic evidence – point towards an earlier cognitive configuration that entails a very close relationship between words and music. This article is written in Gaelic.

Carl Lindahl
The Women of Islay and Issues of Gender in the Core Fairy Tale Repertoires of Scotland and Appalachia

An underappreciated aspect of John Francis Campbell's *Popular Tales of the West Highlands* is the richness of its representation of the women storytellers of Islay. Although female narrators recorded outside of Islay account for less than four percent of Campbell's published texts, women contributed more than half of the published Islay tales. This repertoire represents an otherwise hidden domestic tradition with strong links to women's narrative traditions documented in the Scottish Lowlands in the nineteenth century and the Appalachian Mountains in the twentieth. Both Campbell and his star fieldworker Hector MacLean were Islay natives with lifelong ties to the narrators. This familiarity allowed the two men not only to record the women's tales, but also to describe performance contexts and to show how one island community shaped a repertoire that is both distinctively Gaelic and demonstrably continuous with the female repertoires of Scots-speaking Lowlanders and English-speaking North Americans.

Séamus Mac Mathúna
Aspects of the Marine Otherworld of Rathlin Island

This article examines maritime stories and folklore collected in Rathlin Island. Located between Ireland's north coast and southwestern Scotland, Rathlin has long connected the two countries while also developing its own distinctive culture. Just as its Irish Gaelic dialect shares a range of

linguistic isoglosses with Scottish Gaelic, Rathlin's heritage includes many maritime customs, stories and beliefs also found in Scotland. Seals, mermaids, sea monsters, supernatural boats, shipwrecks, fishing taboos, enchanted islands and other phenomena associated with the island's marine otherworld have been central to Rathlin's culture and its stories.

Dòmhnall Eachann Meek
An Cùbair Collach agus a' Chuibheall-Chnò: Sgeulachd à Tiriodh

In this article, the author presents a tale told by his grand-uncle Charles MacDonald (1874–1960), whose storytelling was part of his childhood in Tiree. The tale concerns Alexander Maclean (1776–1822), the 'Cùbair Collach', a Coll man whose reputation as a daring whisky-smuggler made him the subject of colourful anecdotes. In this one, the Cùbair persuades a mermaid to give him two devices: a 'wireless' that allows him to track the exciseman's whereabouts, and a 'smoke-screen' that obscures his own. The author compares MacDonald's narrative with an outline of the same story summarised by a Coll writer, Hector MacDougall (1889–1954), who says he heard it from a Tiree man. Although it relates to an early nineteenth-century character, the story's technological references strongly indicate that it was first told in this form in the early 20th century. This article is written in Gaelic.

Séamas Ó Catháin
Shades of Light and Darkness

Irish people, especially those living in rural areas, reflected their keen awareness of the passage of time in expressions describing the shortening daylight hours in autumn and the imperceptible advance towards spring in the winter months. The author examines several idioms tracking the sun's progress – and that of time itself – and their linkage with calendar customs in the Irish countryside.

Lillis Ó Laoire
***Craobh nan Ubhal:* A Gaelic Panegyric**

Craobh nan Ubhal forms part of the well-known corpus of Gaelic waulking songs. Drawing on the idea of the chief as a miraculously fecund apple tree, through fulsome praise, the female speaker bears witness to her patron's prosperity, with exhortations to the elemental powers for his continued success. Both singers and audiences implicitly understood inherent concepts of kingship, sovereignty, charismatic personhood and leadership. Using nineteenth and twentieth century printed and audio texts, this paper examines links with early Irish tree lore, which continued to inform a Gaelic worldview for over a millennium. Popularised by the renowned Flora MacNeil, her family's views on *Craobh nan Ubhal* testify to the song's separate categorisation apart from other work songs. The exploration concludes that *Craobh nan Ubhal* is an exceptional example of the continuity and dynamism of Gaelic tradition, continuously adapting to new and varied contexts.

Roibeard Ó Maolalaigh
Ossianic Informants Named by the Rev. Dr Alexander Irvine (1773–1824)

The Rev. Alexander Irvine (1773–1824), minister of Little Dunkeld, Perthshire (1806–1824), was an acknowledged Gaelic scholar and collector of Gaelic oral and written materials. Unlike many

of his predecessors, he was careful to record metadata associated with his sources. This paper, which is based for the most part on key Irvine manuscripts, provides the names and further details of twenty-three tradition bearers or informants of Ossianic material named by Irvine, one of whom was a woman.

Rósa Þorsteinsdóttir
'The Dead Bridegroom' (ATU 365) in Iceland

The tale is familiar: A young woman is collected from her home and taken on horseback by a male figure known to her, but subsequently discovers that the rider is his ghost, and that the grave is their destination. While ATU 365 is known throughout Europe, this article traces the form and details of the story as they were localised to reflect the social reality of Iceland. Beginning with 'The Deacon of Myrká', collected by Konrad Maurer and included in his 1860 collection of Icelandic tales, the article discusses five further variants published by Jón Árnason beginning in 1862, and one collected in Canada by Torfhildur Hólm from a fellow Icelandic settler sometime after 1876. After discussing how these variants reflect the Icelandic context, the author suggests that they may ultimately derive from oral traditions disseminated by trade between Iceland and England during the fifteenth century.

Ríonach uí Ógain
'Giollas na gCos Dubh'

The author recorded the tale entitled 'Giollas na gCos Dubh' from Pádraig Ó Nia, originally from the island of Fínis, Co. Galway, in 1982. To date, only two other versions of the tale have been identified, although some motifs are found in other narratives. After introducing the storyteller and describing his community, the author transcribes the tale, in which the hero rescues a mortal held captive by the fairies, frees her from a sleep charm, and marries her. When Giollas again encounters the fairies, they ask him to help them abduct a mortal woman. He insists that they go first to Rome, where the fairies help Giollas persuade the Pope to allow Giollas' local priest to resume celebrating mass. Returning to Ireland, Giollas sabotages the fairies' planned abduction, and the woman is safe. This article is written in Irish.

Seosamh Watson
Borgstrøm's Word Lists: East Sutherland and Easter Ross Dialects in the Light of the Scottish Gaelic Dialect Survey

This article surveys points of similarity between the Scottish Gaelic spoken in Easter Ross – a distinct dialect area not covered by Borgstrøm's 1942 study of Skye and Ross-shire Gaelic – and the dialects of East Sutherland / Caithness, features of which were identified by Nancy Dorian's 1978 study of East Sutherland Gaelic and subsequently brought together in the *Scottish Gaelic Dialect Survey* published in the 1990s. Basing his study on two of Borgstrøm's word lists, the author identifies isogloss boundaries in light of *SGDS* data to help us towards a better understanding of the dialects of the Eastern Highlands.