An Pota Cnuasaigh

THE COLLECTING POT

Local archive of Irish traditional music to be housed at Gaeláras Mhic Ardghail

BA é Oirdheisceart Uladh an tearmann deireanach do phobail labhartha na Gaeilge a mhair in oirthear na tíre i dtús an fhichiú haois. A bhuí le hiarrachtaí na ndaoine a bhailigh lámhscríbhinní, d'fhéadfaí a rá go bhfuil léargas fós le fáil ar an chanúint sa lá atá inniu ann, cé nach ann di a thuilleadh, agus is uirlis luachmhar é ceol an cheantair seo a chaomhnaigh go maith an traidisiún Gaelach sa taobh seo tíre.

Dár le Pádraigín Ní Uallacháin, "the collecting of folklore material in this region (Oriel) during the early twentieth century was not a unique or an isolated occurrence in the area but a continuation of a long manuscript and literary tradition in southeast Ulster which had existed for centuries". Ba shaibhir an traidisiún amhránaíochta in Oirghialla i dtrátha an ama nuair a bhí an Ghaeilge ag dul ó neart go neart sa cheantar. Ar dhuine de na daoine ba ghníomhaí, bhí an tAthair Lorcán Ó Muireadhaigh, fear bródúil Oirghiall de bhunadh Chairlinn. Maíonn Ní Uallacháin, 'Lorcan Ó Muirí was a singer too. His strength was his passion for song and his admiration for the older people in the Gaeltacht of his native Cooley'. Cuireann sí in iúl fosta, 'the amount of songs and poems carried by the older native Irish-speakers there around Omeath… astonished him'. Shaothraigh sé leis an cheol, an litríocht agus an stair… a chur chun cinn. Rith sé leis an Athair Ó Muireadhaigh go raibh an Ghaeilge ag dul i laige ina cheantar dúchais, agus 'he set about transcribing what he heard'. Chuir sé [illegible] leis de cheoltaí Ómeith a bhreacadh síos, de réir mar ab acmhainn dó. Tháinig a chéad bhailiúchán, Ceoltaí Ómeith, amach sa bhliain 1920. Ba léir ó réamhrá an leabhair gur chaith sé beagnach seacht mbliana ag cruinniú amhrán as Ómeith, agus 'nach raibh ann sin ach an tús'.

Sa bhliain 1927, d'fhoilsigh sé an chéad chuid dá 'Amhráin Chúige Uladh'. Bhí daichead amhrán ann, maille le nótaí, leaganacha breise, srl, agus 'cha raibh a leithéid de leabhar againn i gCúige Uladh roimhe sin,' de réir cosúlachta. Bhí an Sagart Ó Muireadhaigh dílis don chanúint agus é ag breacadh na n-amhrán, atá soiléir dúinn ón atheagrán de Amhráin Chúige Uladh, a d'fhoilsigh Colm Ó Baoill in 1977, agus a d'atchlóigh sé in 2009. Deir seisean, 'd'fhág mé focail na n-amhrán mar litríodh (sa chéad eagrán) iad; dá n-athróinn an litriú, b'fhéidir go gcaillfinn cuid de bhlas na foghraíochta a bhí ag na ceoltóirí'. Lean sé ar aghaidh, 'anois agus arís, chuirfinn le poncaíocht an leabhair, óir is minic a bhí MM (Muireadhach Méith) gann faoin phoncaíocht'. Is maith an comhartha é seo dúinn nár bhac Ó Muireadhaigh go mór le heagarthóireacht shuntasach a dhéanamh ar na hamhráin a thaifead sé.

Anois, corradh le céad bliain i ndiaidh do 'Ceoltaí Óméith' teacht ar an fhód, tá súil againn go mbeidh cartlann cheoil thraidisiúnta bunaithe i nGaeláras Mhic Ardghail sna míonna atá amach romhainn. Leoga, tá bua na hamhránaíochta go fras sa cheantar seo agus sna ceantair mháguaird, agus is ríchinnte go gcuirfidh a leithéid de chartlann go mór le stádas an cheantair ó thaobh an cheoil de.

A Traditional Music Archive – a first for Newry

Gaeláras Mhic Ardghail has been developing links with two of Ireland's leading archives of Irish traditional music - Na Píobairí Uilleann (NPU) and the Irish Traditional Music Archive (ITMA). These collaborations are part of the research and consultation for the development of an archive of local traditional music to be made available at the Gaeláras.

Last week three industrious members of the working party, established to create the archive, paid a visit to ITMA to see at first-hand how the national archive is organised. Gerry O'Connor, Donal O'Hanlon and Tommy Fegan spent the day reviewing the systems and procedures behind the archive and library services.

They were hosted by ITMA's Archivist, Maeve Gebruers, who was extremely generous with her time and experiences. The trio came away with lots of ideas for incorporation into the local archive.

The Gaeláras Mhic Ardghail Archive will focus initially on the south Down and Armagh regions, quickly panning out to incorporate counties Down, Armagh, Louth and Monaghan, the historic region of Oriel. The group's key strategy includes forging close working partnerships with local organisations who share an appreciation of heritage and culture. The organisers hope to be in a position to launch the archive later this year.

During the visit, Gerry O'Connor delighted staff and visitors with an impromptu performance on one of the archive's prized artefacts, the homemade fiddle of the Traveller musician, Bernie Dunne. Bernie was one of the famous Dunne family who travelled throughout Munster playing at football matches, cinema queues and other outdoor locations for decades in the mid-20th century.

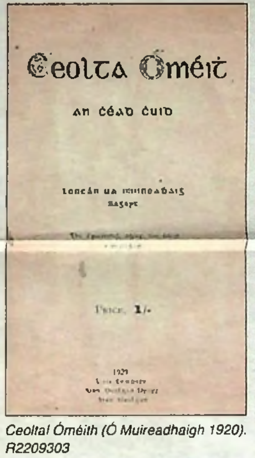
ITMA Archivist Maeve Gebruers kindly sent a link to video footage of Bernie playing his fiddle made from "a bit of an orange box" which readers may wish to access and enjoy. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IkEuEcSzDUc.

Tommy Fegan agus é ar cuairt i gceannáras ITMA i mBaile Átha Cliath. R2209300

Donal O'Hanlon, Gerry O'Connor agus Maeve Gebruers (ITMA). R2209302

Cuid den stoc nua a fuarthas ar na mallaibh. R2209306

Amhrain Chuige Uladh - Cuid a hAon (Ó Muireadhaigh 1927). R2209304



Ceoltaí Ómeith (Ó Muireadhaigh 1920). R2209303

Gerry O'Connor agus an fhidil á bualadh aige. R2209301

'Celebrating 200 years of Saint Bronach's

'CELEBRATING 200 years of St Bronach's, Kilbroney Parish Church, Rostrevor' is a new book covering a vast range of historic material on the history of Kilbroney Parish Church.

It has been co-authored by Rostrevor native Shelagh Roberts and Pauline Coffey and is the result of seven years of partnership which began with a local historical exhibition created by the two women on Rostrevor's most famous resident – Major General Robert Ross which was shown in numerous schools and libraries in the South Down area.

From this humble beginning every aspect of Kilbroney Parish Church's long history has been recorded in detail: the church building from its conception through all its improvements and developments to the present day; a biography of each vicar since the early 1800's; all wall tablets and memorial plaques with all their background stories; the family gifts of stained glass windows have all been traced to the present generation; the bell tower, clock, organ and church furniture are all chronicled with local historical events.

The book also includes many pictures from down memory lane of past baptisms, confirmations, weddings and burials. Also included are the histories of the village church school, Knotty Ash Cemetery, Kilbroney Vicarage and Kilbroney Christian Conference Centre.

It is hoped that this book will be an inspirational and educational tool to all within the local community and wider afield.

Shelagh Roberts and Pauline Coffey with their book "Celebrating 200 Years of Saint Bronach's, Kilbroney Parish Church, Rostrevor" at the recent launch. R2209244

The Kilbroney Parish Church bell ringers entertaining the large crowd at the launch of "Celebrating 200 Years of Saint Bronach's, Kilbroney Parish Church, Rostrevor". R2209245

Oswald Davis, 92 years of age, was an evacuee child from Belfast sent to stay with his Aunt Miss Davis a school teacher who lived next door to Kilbroney Church where she taught for some 30 years in Rostrevor. Oswald formed a bond with the village, school pals and Kilbroney Parish Church where he was a choir boy. He is pictured with Shelagh Roberts, Rev Darren McCartney and Pauline Coffey at the book launch. R2209246