

AG32: Agallamh le Claire NicNeacail: Ag Ionnsachadh Gàidhlig

Interview Claire Nicolson: Learning Gaelic

Presenter: Derek MacAoidh (Derek Mackay)



DEREK:

Còmhla rium tha Claire NicNeacail, a bhuineas do Dhùn Èideann, ach a tha an-diugh a' fuireach anns an Eilean Sgitheanach. Claire, fàilte ort. Innis dhomh, ciamar a thòisich thu air a' Ghàidhlig ionnsachadh?

CLAIRE:

Deagh cheist. Bha mi ... 'S ann à Dùn Èideann a tha mi, agus bha mi a' fuireach ann. Is nuair a bha mi nam dheugaire, bha mi ag obair, ach bha mi tinn - bha ME orm - so stad mi ag obair. Ach bha mi airson dèanamh cinnteach gun cumainn m' inntinn beò. Agus chuir mi romham gun dèanainn beagan ionnsachadh. Bha mi a' coimhead anns a' phàipeir, clasaichean air an oidhche aig a' chomhairle, agus nochd Gàidhlig ann agus bha mi a' smaoinichadh ... Thuirt mi rium fhìn, "O, tha sin rud beag eadar-dhealaichte." Cha robh ceanglaichean idir againn ris a' chànan no ris a' Ghàidhealtachd, ach nuair a bha sinn òg, bhiodh sinn a' dol airson saor-làithean ann. So, 's e dìreach rud beag diofraichte a bh' ann agus chòrd e rium.

DEREK:

Carson a' Ghàidhlig, ge-tà?

CLAIRE:

Bha mi math air cànan nuair a bha mi aig an sgoil, so bha mi airson cànan eile a dhèanamh. Rinn mi Gearmailtis agus Spàinntis. Bha mi measail air a' Ghàidhealtachd agus bha mi dìreach beagan eòlach air. Bha mi air a chluinntinn beagan, ach cha robh "clue" agam idir mun chultar, na daoine, an cànan fhèin, so ... Yeah, bha "spark" ann.

DEREK:

Dè na dùbhlain as motha a bha romhad ann a bhith ag ionnsachadh na Gàidhlig?

DEREK:

With me is Claire Nicolson, who comes from Edinburgh, but who now lives on the Isle of Skye. Claire, welcome. Tell me, how did you begin to learn Gaelic?

CLAIRE:

A good question. I was ... I come from Edinburgh, and I lived there. And when I was a teenager, I was working, but I fell ill - I suffered from ME - so I stopped working. But I wanted to make sure that I would keep my mind active. And I decided to do a little learning. I was looking through the newspaper, the council's night classes, and I noticed Gaelic and thought ... I said to myself, "Oh, that's a little bit different." I had no connection with the language or to the Highlands, but when we were young, we used to go there on holiday. So it was just something slightly different and I enjoyed it.

DEREK:

But why Gaelic?

CLAIRE:

I had been good at languages while I was in school, so I wanted to take another language. I had done German and Spanish. I liked the Highlands and was only slightly familiar with them. I had heard a little, but I hadn't a clue about the culture, the people, the language itself, so ... Yeah, there was a spark.

DEREK:

What was the greatest challenge you faced in learning Gaelic?

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CLAIRE:

Bha e doirbh, a' fuireach ann an Dùn Èideann. Aig an àm sin, cha robh mòran dhaoine airson Gàidhlig ionnsachadh, agus rinn mi clasaichean airson dà theirm agus an uair sin, cha robh àireamhan gu leòr ann airson ga chumail a dol, so stad an clas, ach bha clasaichean eile a' dol aig an oilthigh agus chlàr mi ann agus bha barrachd ann. Bha mi a' dol gach Oidhche Luain airson ceithir bliadhna, tha mi a' smaoinichadh. So, bha e doirbh àm gu leòr fhaighinn airson an cànan ionnsachadh ceart. Tha thu feumach air barrachd air dà uair gach seachdain. So, bha sin doirbh, ach chuir mi an gille beag agam dhan bhun-sgoil Gàidhlig ann an Dùn Èideann agus bha clasaichean ann airson pàrantan cuideachd, so, aig an àm sin, bha mi a' dèanamh suas gu ochd uairean gach seachdain, agus bha sin fada, fada nas fheàrr.

DEREK:

An e a' Ghàidhlig a thug dhan Eilean Sgitheanach thu?

CLAIRE:

Mu dheireadh. Bha mi eòlach air an eilean. Thàinig sinn airson saor-làithean nuair a bha mi òg, is chòrd e rium. Bha sinn a' fuireach ann an Àrasaig airson dà ... dà sheachdain gach bliadhna agus bhiodh sinn a' tighinn a-null. Ach, ann an Dùn Èideann, nuair a bha mi a' dèanamh clasaichean, fhuair sinn ceithir bliadhna, agus às dèidh sin, cha robh clasaichean eile ann, so bha mi airson fuireach ann, ach cha bhiodh clasaichean eile airson iarrtasan a dhèanamh, agus thuirt cuideigin rium, "Dè mu dheidhinn Sabhal Mòr?" So rinn mi An Cùrsa Inntigidh bhon taigh agus às dèidh sin, thuirt mi, "Right, yeah, nì mi e." Thàinig mi airson bliadhna, agus deich bliadhnaichean às dèidh sin, tha mi fhathast an seo.

DEREK:

Dè a thug a' Ghàidhlig dhut?

CLAIRE:

It was difficult, living in Edinburgh. At that time, there weren't many people who wanted to learn Gaelic, and I took classes for two terms and then the numbers weren't high enough for them to continue, so the class stopped, but there were other classes at the university so I registered and there were more there. I went along every Monday night for four years, I think. So, it was hard to find enough time to learn the language properly. You need more than two hours a week. So that was difficult, but I enrolled my son in the Gaelic primary school in Edinburgh and they had classes for parents too, so, at that time, I was doing up to eight hours each week, and that was much, much better.

DEREK:

Was it Gaelic that brought you to the Isle of Skye?

CLAIRE:

In the end. I was familiar with the island. We came here on holidays when I was young, and I enjoyed it. We stayed in Arisaig for two ... two weeks each year and we would come across. But, in Edinburgh, when I was taking classes, we got four years, and after that, there were no more classes, so I wanted to stay there, but there would be no more classes to meet my needs, and someone said to me, "What about Sabhal Mòr?" So I did the Access to Gaelic course from home and after that, I said, "Right, yeah, I'll do it." I came for one year, and ten years later, I'm still here.

DEREK:

What has Gaelic given you?

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CLAIRE:

Tòrr. Tha mi pòsta. Tha an teaghlach agam a-nise. Tha dithis gille agam - uill, triùir, ach dithis on a thàinig mi dhan Eilean. Obair agam. Mòran. Tha e a' ciallachadh tòrr dhomh.

DEREK:

Claire, tapadh leat.

CLAIRE:

Taing.

CLAIRE:

A lot. I'm married. I have a family now. I have two sons - well, three, but two since I came to the island. My job. A lot. It means a lot to me.

DEREK:

Claire, thank you.

CLAIRE:

Thanks.