

## Canada's Gaelic College

As many Gaelic Society members have expressed an interest in the Canadian institution known as the Gaelic College, a review of the origin, aims and progress of the organization follows.

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The Gaelic College was established in 1939 by the Cape Breton Island Gaelic Foundation as a memorial to the Cape Breton Island Highland Scottish pioneers. It was dedicated to the promotion and preservation of the Celtic and Gaelic culture in Nova Scotia.

The College aims to do this by means of a six-week Summer school at St. Ann's, a remote and hilly section of Cape Breton Island, said to be reminiscent of the Scottish Highlands. In addition, Extension Schools in Fall, Winter and Spring terms of eight weeks each are conducted in Sydney (on the mainland) and elsewhere.

The school operates in six main departments:

The School of Gaelic Language and Literature,  
the Right Rev. Dr. A. D. MacKinnon, Dean of Gaelic.

The School of Clan Lore, the Rev. A. W. R. MacKenzie, director.

The School of Highland Folk Art (Highland and Folk Dancing),  
James L. MacKenzie, S.D.T.A., Aberdeen, Scotland, director.

The School of Bagpipe Music, Seumas MacNeill, principal.  
Winter School in Sydney, Pipe Major Donald A. MacIntyre,  
director.

The School of Gaelic Music and Song, Mrs. Tina Morrison,  
principal.

The School of Clan Tartan Handweaving and Rural Home Industries  
Department, A. W. R. MacKenzie, acting director.

With the help of a \$12,000 Nova Scotia Government Assistance Grant, a Gaelic College Handcrafts and Craft Centre Building was erected in 1947. In 1963 a Celtic Arts Building housing thirty-six girl students was opened and work in progress will result in a rear wing accommodating thirty-six more.

The majority of Summer students travel to St. Ann's to learn or to improve their skill in Highland dancing or piping. However, the College stipulates that students must also attend a class in Scottish Gaelic. Unfortunately, for the vast majority this means merely attending a class for a brief period each day, during which a few prayers, a few expressions and a few songs are memorized. Few pupils, if any, advance along this road to the actual study of "Gaelic Language and Literature," although it appears there are one or two teachers capable of teaching a course should there be a demand for it.

A Gaelic "Mod" is the main event of the Summer session, and competitions in dancing and piping for students only take place at this time. The Mod is