

# Líofa



Mí na Samhna 2015

November 2015

## Tá Club Leabhar do Pháistí seolta ag an Aire Cultúir Carál Ní Chuilín mar pháirt d'fheachtas Líofa.

Tá Club Leabhar do Pháistí seolta ag an Aire Cultúir Carál Ní Chuilín mar pháirt d'fheachtas **Líofa**.

Le linn a cuairte ar Bhunscoil Bheann Madagáin, labhair an tAire ar thábhacht na léitheoireachta agus ar na buntáistí a bhaineann léi.

Tagann Club Leabhar na bPáistí sna sála ar Chlub Leabhar a d'eagraigh **Líofa** do dhaoine fásta níos luaithe i mbliana agus ar éirigh go hiontach maith leis. Is é an beart is déanaí i bhfeachtas Líofa atá ann, feachtas a bhfuil os cionn 14,000 duine i ndiaidh clárú leis agus iad ag iarraidh snas a chur ar a gcuid Gaeilge.

Is é a dúirt an tAire: “Tá **Líofa** ann le daoine a spreagadh leis an Ghaeilge a fhoghlaim. Tugann sé deiseanna do dhaoine de gach aois agus de gach cúlra cuideachta a dhéanamh le daoine eile agus feabhas a chur ar a gcuid Gaeilge lena linn.

“Dar ndóigh, is í an léitheoireacht an ghné is tábhachtaí de chlub leabhar ar bith. Ba cheart dúinn gach uile dheis a thapú lenár gcuid páistí a spreagadh chun na léitheoireachta. Má léann páistí leabhair Ghaeilge, tá súil againn go mbeidh tuiscint níos

## A New Chapter for Líofa with Children's Book Club

The Culture Minister, Carál Ní Chuilín, has launched the **Líofa** Children's Book Club.

Visiting Bunscoil Bheann Mhadagáin, the Minister spoke to pupils about the importance of reading and the benefits it can bring.

The Children's Book Club follows on from the **Líofa** Book Club for adults which launched earlier this year and was a great success. It is the latest part of the Líofa campaign, which has seen more than 14,000 people sign up to improve their Irish-language skills.

The Minister said: “**Líofa** is about encouraging people to learn Irish and provides people of all ages and backgrounds with the opportunity to engage and interact with others, and improve their Irish in the process.

“Of course, the key part of any book club is the reading. It is something we should be encouraging our children to do at every opportunity. By encouraging children to read in Irish, I hope it will boost their understanding of the language, while increasing the literacy and comprehension skills of those involved.

Carál Ní  
Chuilín with  
Bunscoil  
Bheann  
Mhadagáin  
pupils

Aire Ní  
Chuilín  
le páistí  
Bhunscoil  
Bheann  
Mhadagáin



fearr acu ar an teanga agus go neartófar scileanna litearthachta gach duine atá páirteach sa chlub.

“Is caitheamh aimsire aonarach a bhíonn sa léitheoireacht de ghnáth, ach tugann club leabhar deis do pháistí teacht le chéile agus pléisiúr na léitheoireachta a roinnt. Is féidir cur go mór le pléisiúr na léitheoireachta trí dhíospóireacht i ngrúpaí, tríd an phlé agus trí thuairimí a chur i láthair a chéile. Is mar sin a dhéanann club leabhar slughníomhaíocht den léitheoireacht, rud a mhéadaíonn go mór an sult a bhaineann páistí aisti.

“Tá súil agam go mbeidh Club Leabhar na bPáistí chomh rathúil céanna leis an chlub leabhar a bhunaigh **Líofa** do dhaoine fásta.”

Beidh Club Leabhar na bPáistí le **Líofa** á reáchtáil i gcomhar le Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta, eagraíocht ionadaíoch na scolaíochta Gaeilge. Beifear ag iarraidh ar na páistí sa chlub léirmheas a chur ar fáil ar leabhar faoi leith, agus bronnfar duais ar an iarracht is fearr.

“A book club allows children to come together to share in what is usually an individual pursuit. The pleasure of reading can be enhanced through group debate, discussion and by sharing thoughts and opinions. Through this, a book club makes reading a group activity and a much more enjoyable experience for children.

“It is my hope that the **Líofa** Children’s Book Club will follow in the success of the adult version.”

The **Líofa** Children’s Book Club will be run in conjunction with Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta, the representative body for Irish-medium education. The children taking part will be encouraged to submit a book review, and there will be a prize for the best entry.

## An bhfuil tú i ndiaidh gabháil ar ollscoil?

Thug oifigigh **Líofa** cuairt an mhí seo a chuaigh thart ar mhic léinn an tuaiscirt. Ba é ab aidhm do na cuairteanna ar Aontáí na Mac Léinn Nua a chur ar a súile do na mic léinn na buntáistí a bhaineann le bheith ag foghlaim na Gaeilge. Chláraigh níos mó na 600 idir Ollscoil na Banríona, Ollscoil Uladh Bhéal Feirste agus Mhig Aoidh, agus Coláiste Ollscoile Naomh Muire. Bhí na hoifigigh iontach sásta an oiread sin suime sa Ghaeilge ar na campais éagsúla a fheiceáil.

## Have you just gone to University?

**Líofa** officers visited the students’ fairs last month. The aim of the visits was to make students aware of the advantages associated with learning Irish. More than 600 students registered with Líofa in Queen’s University, Ulster University (Belfast and Magee), and Saint Mary’s University College. The Líofa Officers were very happy to see so much interest in Irish on the various campuses.



Batman signing up to Líofa at Ulster University Belfast

Batman ag clárú le Líofa in Ollscoil Uladh, Béal Feirste

Má tá tú ag féin i ndiaidh tosú nó filleadh ar ollscoil i mbliana cad chuige nach mbeifeá páirteach i do Chumann Gaelach le cuidiú leat ar do thuras Líofa? Tá Cumann Gaelach seanbhunaithe ag formhór na gcoláistí agus na n-ollscoileanna. Cuireann siad ranganna Gaeilge agus imeachtaí sóisialta ar fáil trí mheán na Gaeilge atá saor in aisce nó ar bheagán costais. Má théann tú isteach i gCumann Gaelach, is bealach iontach maith atá ann le bualadh le daoine nua, le bheith páirteach in Aontas na Mac Léinn ar do champas, le teanga a fhoghlaim (iontach maith ar do CV) agus is minic gur deis atá ann a bheith ag taisteal fosta. Ina theannta sin, tá áiseanna leabharlainne agus foghlaim teanga den chéad scoth ag Ollscoileanna. Mar sin de, níl áit ar bith níos fearr le héirí **Líofa**.

Is minic a chluintear nach mbíonn an t-am ag mic léinn mórán a dhéanamh ó tharla iad a bheith ag staidéar ó dhubh go dubh, Domhnach is dálach – ach más féidir le Batman an t-am a spáráil leis an Ghaeilge a fhoghlaim, is féidir leat féin. Ná labhair faoi, tabhair faoi! **Is trom an t-ualach an leisce!**

If you have just started or have returned to university why not take part in your Cumann Gaelach to help you on your Líofa journey? The majority of colleges and universities have a long established Cumann Gaelach. They provide Irish-language classes and social events through the medium of Irish and they are either free of charge or cost very little. If you join a Cumann Gaelach, it is a very good way to meet new people, to participate in the Students' Union on your campus, to learn a language (very good for your CV) and it often provides you with an opportunity to travel as well. As well as that, universities have the best of libraries and language learning resources. Therefore, there is no better place to become **Líofa!**

It's often claimed that students do not have time to do anything else because they are studying from dawn to dusk, without rest - but if Batman can spare time to learn Irish, you certainly can! Don't talk about it, do it! **Laziness is a heavy burden!**



Tá **Líofa** i ndiaidh páirt a ghlacadh i gComhrá '15 curiarracht dhomhanda a bhaint amach don chomhrá Gaeilge is faide riamh. Bhí breis agus seachtain ag déanamh comhrá gan stad idir 6 – 13 Deireadh Fómhair 2015.

Chomh maith le **Líofa**, bhí scoileanna, clubanna óige, cumainn ghaelacha, comhlachtaí agus neart grúpaí eile ar fud an domhain i mbun ciorcal comhrá sealáíochta mar chuid de chlár ama 170 uair a' chloig san iomlán a sruthaíodh beo ar líne.

Bhí Oifigigh **Líofa** i mbun comhrá le daoine i gcóngar agus i gcéin. Labhair siad le Máire, Dónall agus Edel ó Raidió Fáilte agus bhain siad sult as an chomhrá bhríomhar leis an údar Myra Zeph i gContae an Dúin, leis an saighdiúir Séamus Ó Fianghusa i Nua Eabhrac agus leis an léachtóir san fhisic Aralt Mac Giolla Chainnigh i gCeanada.

**Líofa** has just taken part in Comhrá '15 (Conversation '15) helping to achieve the world record of the longest continuous conversation in Irish. There was over a week of non-stop conversation between the 6th and 13th of October 2015.

As well as **Líofa**, there were schools, youth clubs, Irish-language societies, companies and many other groups throughout the world taking part in the 170-hour relay conversation circle that was streamed live online.

**Líofa** Officers chatted with people both at home and abroad. They talked with Máire, Dónall and Edel from Raidió Fáilte, and enjoyed lively conversations with the author Myra Zeph in Co. Down, Séamus Ó Fianghusa, the soldier in New York and Aralt Mac Giolla Chainnigh, the professor of physics in Ottawa.



Johnny McGibbon, Sinn Féin's National Irish Language Officer

Johnny McGibbon, Oifigeach Náisiúnta na Gaeilge do Shinn Féin

## I gCóngar agus i gcéin

### I gcóngar: Jonny McGibbon

Thosaigh mé ar an Ghaeilge an chéad uair, tá níos mó ná 15 bliana ó shin, nuair a bhí mé ar Scoil Lios Mór i gContae Ard Mhacha. D'éirigh go measartha maith liom sa Ghaeilge ar scoil agus bhain mé na scrúduithe GCSE agus AS Leibhéal amach, sular imigh mé chun tabhairt faoin tsaol mhór! Caithfidh mé a mhaíomh ag an phointe seo, go raibh na múinteoirí scoile agam ina gcuidiú iontach, cé nár thug mé cluas mhaith éisteachta dóibh i gcónaí!

Bhí suim riamh agam sa teanga, mar sin féin, is díol iontais é gur stad mé de bheith ag foghlaim na Gaeilge ar feadh i bhfad agus mé sna fichidí. Ar a laghad, thiocfadh leat a rá go raibh mé ag foghlaim ó am go chéile, thuas seal is thíos seal! An rud a théann i bhfad, téann sé i bhfuaire ba chúis leis, is dócha.

Ina dhiaidh sin is uile, rinne mé Dioplóma sa Ghaeilge in Ollscoil Uladh i mBéal Feirste anuraidh, agus tá mé anois i mbun céime go páirtaimseartha. Shíl mé, lá den tsaol, nach mbeadh sé ar mo chumas an chéim a dhéanamh. Foghlaimeoir dícheallach, tiomanta atá ionam anois, ar ndóigh!

Bím ag freastal ar ranganna agus ar dhianchúrsaí ar fud an tuaiscirt, agus ag cuidiú le daoine eile trí ranganna a theagasc i gCraobh na Lorgan de Chonradh na Gaeilge. Lena chois sin, tá mé i ndiaidh cúrsa scileanna raidió a dhéanamh le Raidió Fáilte (107.FM nó ar líne [RaidioFailte.com](http://RaidioFailte.com)), ar na mallaibh agus craoladh an chéad chlár s'agam ar an stáisiún i Mí an Mheithimh.

Chláraigh mé le **Líofa** sa bhliain 2012, agus gheall mé dom féin go ndéanfainn mo sheacht ndícheall bheith chomh líofa agus a thiocfadh liom faoi 2015. B é sin

## Home and Away

### Home: Jonny McGibbon

I started learning Irish for the first time more than 15 years ago when I was at Lismore School in county Armagh. I got on reasonably well at Irish and I achieved GCSE and AS Level, before I left to face the big bad world! I must say at this point that the teachers I had at school were a great help even though I didn't always listen to them like I should have.

I was always interested in the language so it is a surprise that I stopped learning Irish for a long time when I was in my twenties. You could say that I was still learning from time to time, in a stop-start kind of way! 'What goes on for a long time loses its attractiveness,' as they say. That was probably the cause.

Notwithstanding all that, I did a Diploma in Irish in Ulster University in Belfast last year, and I am now doing a degree on a part-time basis. I once thought that I wouldn't be able to do the degree. I am now a diligent, determined learner, of course!

I attend classes and intensive courses throughout the north, and I help other people by teaching classes in Lurgan's Branch of Conradh na Gaeilge. As well as that, I have recently done a radio skills course with Raidió Fáilte (107.FM or online [www.raidiofailte.com](http://www.raidiofailte.com)), and my first programme was broadcast on the station in June.

I registered with **Líofa** in 2012, and I promised myself that I would do my level best to be as fluent as I could by 2015. That was the first time I ever gave myself such a challenge or goal. I am grateful to the **Líofa** campaign for encouraging me to do that.



an chéad uair riamh a chuir mé dúshlán nó sprioc romham ar an dóigh seo. Tá mé buíoch d'fheachtas **Líofa** gur spreagadh mé leis sin a dhéanamh.

Ach is rang Gaeilge an saol mór! Ráiteas saoihiúil go leor is cosúil, ach cuireadh cúpla píosa de chomhairle maith orm i rith na mblianta, a luíonn go maith leis an ráiteas agus le feachtas Líofa, dar liom.

- **Mura bhfuil comhpháirtí comhrá agat, bí ag caint leat féin!** Cad é atá tú a dhéanamh? An bhfuil tú ag ní na soithí? Cibé rud a dhéanann tú, déan i nGaeilge é!
- **Ná bac le mac an bhacaigh!** Ná bí buartha faoi na rudaí atá duine eile a dhéanamh. Díriú d'aird ar fad ar na rudaí atá tú féin a dhéanamh nó atá tú ag iarraidh a dhéanamh. Is tusa an tiománaí!

Is minic a chluinim daoine fós, ar foghlaimeoirí agus cainteoirí líofa iad araon, á rá gur gá do dhuine céim a dhéanamh sula mbíonn Gaeilge mhaith acu. Bíodh is go bhfuil bunús leis an dearcadh sin, nó is fíor nach bhfuil ranganna de chaighdeán na hollscoile ar fáil in achan cheantar, níor chóir go nglacfadh muid leis nach bhféadfaí líofacht a bhaint amach gan céim ollscoile.

Bí dearfach, agus compordach leis na focail atá ar eolas agat cheana féin agus bain úsáid astu go rialta. Ná déan dearmad go bhfuil muid uilig ag foghlaim, agus beidh go deo.

I dtaca liom féin de, is é an rud is fearr liom faoi fhoghlaim agus labhairt na Gaeilge an mothú a thugann sí dom agus mé á labhairt. Spreagann sí mar dhuine mé, ar bhonn phearsanta, agus tugann sí le fios léargas eile ar an tsaol atá difriúil ón dearcadh a bhíonn ag lucht an Bhéarla, nó a bhíonn agam féin agus mé ag labhairt i mBéarla. Is follas an oiread sin agus tú ag léamh na litríochta.

Bíonn mo dhúil sa litríocht ag síormhéadú, agus gearrscéalta chlann Uí Ghrianna agus Phádraic Uí Chonaire go mór chun tosaigh i láthair na huair, chomh maith leis na leabhair ó Chlub Leabhar **Líofa**, ar ndóigh! An saibhreas, an véarsaíocht, an dúchas agus an pheirspictíocht, tá siad sin uilig le fáil i litríocht na tíre seo. Deirtear nach féidir anam tíre a thuigbheáil gan eolas ar litríocht nó ar fhilíocht theanga na tíre sin, agus tá mé féin ag teacht leis sin mar dhearcadh.

Is fiú a chuimhneamh gurb é **Líofa** an chéad fheachtas oifigiúil dá chineál atá ar an fhód le muintir an tuaiscirt a mhealladh i dtreo na Gaeilge. Tá níos mó ná 14,000 duine anois cláraithe. Seo ráth nár chóir beag is fiú a dhéanamh de. Ba cheart go leanfadh Líofa ar aghaidh

But life is a big Irish-language class! That may seem like a funny kind of statement, but I got some good advice over the years, that is in accord with that statement and with the Líofa campaign, I think.

- **If you do not have a conversation partner, talk to yourself!** What are you doing? Are you washing the dishes? Whatever you do, do it in Irish!
- **Mind your own business!** Do not worry about the things other people are doing. Focus your attention on the things that you yourself are doing or are trying to do. You are the driver!

I still often hear people, both learners and fluent speakers, say that a person has to do a degree before they have good Irish. Even though there is some truth in that opinion, it's a fact that university-level classes are not available in every area. We should not accept that fluency cannot be achieved without a university degree.

Be positive, and comfortable with the words that you already know and use them regularly. Don't forget that we are all learning, and always will be.

As regards myself, my favourite thing about learning and speaking Irish is the feeling it gives me when I speak it. It inspires me as a person, on a personal level, and it makes me aware of another outlook on life that is different from the outlook that English speakers have, or that I myself have when I speak English. That much is evident when you are reading literature.

My interest in literature is ever increasing, the short stories of the Ó Grianna family and Pádraic Ó Conaire are very much to the fore at present, as well as the books from the **Líofa** Book Club, of course! Richness, verse, heritage and perspective; they are all available in this country's literature. It's said that one cannot understand the soul of a country without a knowledge of literature or poetry in the country's language, and I agree with that opinion.

It's worth remembering that **Líofa** is the first official campaign of its kind to attract the people of the north to the Irish language. More than 14,000 people are now registered. This success is no mean feat. Líofa should continue after 2015 and wouldn't it be great if the campaign were underway in the south as well. I would recommend that Conradh na Gaeilge should think of **Líofa**, as part of the campaigning they do, especially in the 26 counties. Imagine, if 100,000 or 250,000 people were officially registered to learn the language throughout the country, wouldn't that be

i ndiaidh 2015, agus nár mhaith an rud dá mbeadh an feachtas ar bun ó dheas chomh maith. Mholfainn féin gur cheart go smaoinodh Conradh na Gaeilge ar Líofa, mar pháirt den fheachtasaíocht a dhéanann siad, go háirithe sna 26 contae. Samhlaigh, dá mbeadh 100,000 nó 250,000 duine cláraithe go hoifigiúil, leis an teanga a fhoghlaim ar fud na tíre, nár mhaith an dul chun cinn é? Léiríonn **Líofa** gur féidir tionchar dearfach, cuimsitheach a imirt ar chúrsaí Gaeilge i measc an mhórphobail. Gan amhras, tá **Líofa** ag tógáil caisleán, de réir a chéile.

Is í seo an abairt Ghaeilge is fearr liom, “*Is iomaí fear cliste nár ól a dhath ach uisce is nach raibh aige ach leathphingín bhriste i ndiaidh lá a bháis.*”

D’fhoghlaim mé seo ar ollscoil, níl mé á rá gur cheart go mbeimis go léir ar an drabhlás, ach sílim go bhfuil bunús lena chiall. Ná bíodh ag cur srian leat féin.

good progress? **Líofa** demonstrates that it is possible to positively and comprehensively influence Irish-language issues in the wider community. Without doubt, **Líofa** is ‘building castles, gradually’.

My favourite Irish language sentence is: “*There are many clever men who drank nothing but water and who only had a broken ha’penny after they died.*”

I learned that at university. I’m not saying that we should all be on the tear but I think that there’s some truth in it. Do not restrain yourself!



Geneviève Breton, who is learning Irish in Canada.

Geneviève Breton, atá ag foghlaim na Gaeilge i gCeanada.

## I gcéin:

### Genevieve Breton

Haigh! Geneviève Breton is ainm dom agus tá mé i mo chónaí in Sherbrooke, Québec i gCeanada, áit a bhfuil mé i mo mhac léinn Aistriúcháin. Tógadh leis an Fhraincis mé ach tá Béarla agus Gaeilge agam fosta anois.

Cosúil le lear mór daoine a thosaigh ar an Ghaeilge, spreagadh an tsuim ionamsa mar gheall ar an dúil a bhí agam sa cheol thraidisiúnta. Nuair a thosaigh mé ag foghlaim na feadóige stáin, tá cúig bliana ó shin, bhí mé fiosrach faoin Ghaeilge; bhí a fhios agam go raibh sí fós á labhairt in Éirinn. Fuair mé roinnt ceachtanna simplí ar YouTube agus mheall na fuaimeanna agus ceol na teanga mé láithreach bonn, cé nach ndearna an litriú ciall ar bith dom ag an am! I dtús báire, shíl mé nach mbeinn riamh ábalta teanga a fhoghlaim a bhí

## Away:

### Genevieve Breton

Hi! My name is Geneviève Breton and I live in Sherbrooke, Québec in Canada, where I am a student of Translation. I was raised in French but I also speak both English and Irish now.

Like for a lot of people who become involved in the Irish language, for me the interest was sparked by a taste for traditional Irish music. When I started to learn the tin whistle five years ago, I was curious about the Gaelic language I knew was still spoken in Ireland. I found some simple lessons on YouTube and was immediately drawn by the sounds and the music of the language, even if the spelling made no sense to me at the time! At first, I thought I would never be able to learn a language that looked so complicated, but it was too late... I was hooked! So I spent the last

chomh casta sin, ach bhí sé rómhall... bhí an teanga i ndiaidh greim a fháil orm! Mar sin chaith mé na cúig bliana dheireanacha á foghlaim, liom féin den chuid is mó, ag úsáid na n-acmhainní gan chuntas atá ar fáil ar líne.

Ba é an rud ba dheacra a bhain le mo thuras foghlama, ag an tús, ná ní raibh duine ar bith agam le labhairt leis. De thairbhe go bhfuil cónaí orm i mbaile beag i lár cúige ina labhraítear Fraincis ar ilchríoch ina labhraítear Béarla den chuid is mó níor casadh mórán Gaeilgeoirí orm ar bhonn laethúil! Ar ndóigh, de thairbhe nach mbíonn mórán deiseanna agam Gaeilge a labhairt, caithfidh mise na deiseanna sin a chruthú: nuair a fhreastalaím ar sheisiún nó ar cheolchoirm thraidisiúnta a bhfuil ceoltóirí Éireannacha páirteach inti, déanaim iarracht dul a fhad leo agus rud éigin as Gaeilge a rá leo. Baineann sé gáire asam i gcónaí an t-iontas ar a gcuid aghaidheanna a fheiceáil nuair a chluineann siad mise ag caint Gaeilge, rud nach raibh siad ag súil leis!

Seachas sin, freastalaím ar champa samhraidh bhliantúil agus glacaim páirt i roinnt deirí seachtaine tumoideachais. Le himeacht na mblianta, na gníomhaíochtaí difriúla, na turais go hÉirinn, agus trí bhualadh le daoine ar an dá thaobh den Atlantach, d'éirigh liom Gaeilgeoirí a aimsiú agus coinním i dteagmháil leo tríd an ríomhphost nó ar Skype.

Is teanga álainn í an Ghaeilge i mo bharúil; tá sí chomh difriúil sin ó aon rud eile a chuala mé roimhe. Is breá liom an dóigh a mothaíonn roinnt fuaimeanna agus an dóigh a rollann siad i mo bhéal. Is breá liom na fuaimeanna seo a leanas a fhuaimniú: an défhoghar san fhocal *naoi*, an i caol san fhocal *Gaillimh* agus an séimhiú casta atá le fáil cúpla iarraidh i bhfrasaí ar nós "*gan clocha a chaitheamh*".

Anseo in Québec, is iomaí duine atá dátheangach (Fraincis agus Béarla) agus má bhíonn an tríú teanga acu, is Spáinnis nó Gearmáinis a bhíonn ann de ghnáth. Is maith liom a bheith difriúil trí theanga iomlán dhifriúil a labhairt, nach teanga Rómánsach ná Gearmánach í. Ach thar aon rud eile, trí a bheith ag foghlaim faoin chultúr Ghaelach agus a bheith páirteach ann casadh a lán daoine deasa orm, rinne mé cairdeas le daoine agus fuair mé an deis páirt a ghlacadh i bpobal láidir, bródúil agus spreagúil.

Bealach iontach ba ea an Ghaeilge domsa le dúshlán a thabhairt dom féin, le spriocanna a leagan síos agus le déanamh níos fearr ná mar a bhí mé féin ag súil. Thuill mé aitheantais agus deiseanna iontacha fosta: Fuair mé an duais *Foghlaimoír na Bliana Cheanada* sa bhliain 2013, rud a chiallaigh go raibh mé ábalta

five years learning it, mainly on my own, using the innumerable resources that can be found online.

The most difficult thing, at first, was not having anyone to talk to. Living in a small town in the middle of a French-speaking province on a primarily English-speaking continent, I do not come across many Irish speakers on a daily basis! Since I do not naturally have a lot of opportunities to speak Irish, I have to make them happen: whenever I attend a session or a traditional music concert featuring Irish musicians, I try to go up to them and say something in Irish. It always amuses me to see the surprise on their face when they hear the language and they did not expect to!

Other than that, I attend a yearly summer camp and take part in some immersion weekends. Over the years, the various activities, the trips to Ireland, and through encounters on both sides of the Atlantic, I managed to find Gaeilgeoirí, with whom I keep in touch by email or Skype.

Irish is a truly beautiful language in my opinion, so distinct from anything I had ever heard before. I love the way some specific sounds feel and roll in my mouth. I love pronouncing the diphthong in *naoi*, the slender i of *Gaillimh*, and the difficult multiple lenitions in phrases like "*gan clocha a chaitheamh*".

Here in Québec, many people are bilingual (French and English) and when they have a third language, it is usually Spanish or German. I like being different by speaking a totally different language, one that is neither Romance nor Germanic. But most importantly, through my learning of, and my involvement in, the Irish culture, I met a lot of great people, made close friends and got the opportunity to take part in a strong, proud, and inspiring community.

Irish for me has been a great way to challenge myself, set goals and to surpass myself. I also earned amazing recognitions and opportunities: I received the *Foghlaimoír na Bliana Cheanada* (Irish Learner of the Year) award in 2013, allowing me to attend the Acadamh's summer course in Carraroe the year after. I also recently obtained the first place in the Seán-Nós singing competition of the *Oireachtas Gaeilge Cheanada*, which comes with a trip to Dublin to take part in the coming *Oireachtas na Gaeilge* in October.

Obviously, I am really proud and extremely grateful for those amazing opportunities, but I think my biggest accomplishment is the fact that Irish, which is so far from my roots and so foreign in my environment, has become a part of who I am. Every day I sing in Irish or listen to seán-nós singers, I think in Irish,

freastal ar chúrsa samhraidh an Acadaimh ar an Cheathrú Rua an bhliain dár gcionn. Fuair mé an chéad áit sa chomórtas amhránaíochta ar an tSean-Nós de chuid *Oireachtas Gaeilge Cheanada*, duais a bhfuil turas go Baile Átha Cliath mar chuid di le páirt a ghlacadh in *Oireachtas na Gaeilge* a bheas ar siúl ag deireadh mhí Dheireadh Fómhair.

Dar ndóigh, tá mé breá bródúil agus thar a bheith buíoch as na deiseanna iontacha sin, ach sílim gurb é an t-éacht is mó atá déanta agam ná go bhfuil an Ghaeilge, atá chomh fada sin ar shiúl ó mo rútaí agus chomh coimhthíoch i mo cheantar dúchais, mar pháirt díom anois. Gach lá canaim as Gaeilge nó éistim le hamhránaithe sean-nóis, smaoiním as Gaeilge, léim stáidais Facebook, blaganna agus ailt éagsúla sa teanga. Éistim le Raidió na Gaeltachta agus amharcaim ar TG4 go rialta. D'éirigh liom "í" a fhí isteach i mo shaol ar dhóigh éigin.

Sílim gur dochreidte na doirse a osclaíonn an teicneolaíocht dúinn na laethanta seo! Mar sin déarfainn gurb í an chomhairle a thabharfainn do dhuine ar bith atá toilteanach foghlaim: déan giota beag gach lá, bíodh an próiseas foghlama mar chuid de do ghnáthlá agus déanfaidh tú dul chun cinn iontach roimh i bhfad.

Bíodh bród ort as Gaeilge a labhairt, is leatsa go hiomlán í An Ghaeilge abú!

### **Acmhainn Foghlama Ar Líne Saor in Aisce do Rannpháirtithe Líofa. Ar iarr tú do cheannsa?**

Tá gach duine a bhfuil gealltanas Líofa tugtha acu i dteideal acmhainn foghlama ar líne saor in aisce de chuid Gaelchultúr. De ghnáth, chosnódh an cúrsa sin £120 lena cheannach. Má tá tú cláraithe le Líofa cheana agus más mian leat d'acmhainn a iarraidh déan teagmháil le Líofa, le do thoil:

**Ríomhphost: [liofa@dcalni.eu](mailto:liofa@dcalni.eu)**

**Guthán: 02890515058**

read Facebook statuses in the language, as well as various blogs and articles. I regularly listen to Raidió na Gaeltachta and watch TG4. I somehow managed to integrate "her" into my life.

I think it is pretty amazing what technology grants us access to nowadays! So I guess that would be my advice to anyone who is willing to learn: do a little bit every day, make the learning process a part of your routine and you will achieve impressive progress in no time.

Be proud to speak Irish, she's all yours :) An Ghaeilge abú!

### **Free On-Line Learning Resource for Líofa Participants. Have you asked for yours?**

Everyone who has signed up to Líofa is entitled to a free on-line learning resource from Gaelchultúr. Usually this course would cost £120 to buy. If you are already registered with Líofa and want to request your resource, please contact us:

**E-mail: [liofa@dcalni.eu](mailto:liofa@dcalni.eu)**

**Phone: 02890515058**