

## **An Dr Mícheál Hoyne, Comhalta an Aimbhigínigh, Scoil an Léinn Cheiltigh**

*Cad a chiallaíonn an Institiúid Ard-Léinn domsa?*

Bhí sceitimíní orm nuair a deineadh Scoláire Uí Dhonnabháin díom sa bhliain 2014, ach cosúil leis gach aon scoláire Gaelainne eile bhí cur amach agam cheana féin ar obair na hInstitiúide. Chaith na scoláirí nótalta Mícheál Ó Briain (M.A. O'Brien, 1896–1962) agus Dáithí Ó hUathne (David Greene, 1915–1981) blianta bisiúla san Institiúid – gan ach beirt de laochra léannta na Scoile a lua, beirt go bhfuil meas ar leith agam ar a saothar –, agus is mór an spreagadh a thugann an ceangal sin don nglúin atá suas anois. Is féidir stair Scoil an Léinn Cheiltigh a rianú níos faide siar ná 1940 áfach, go dtí ‘Sgoil Ard-Léighinn na Gaedhilge’, an scoil bhunaigh Kuno Meyer i mBaile Átha Cliath sa bhliain 1903, ‘institiúid’ bheag a chuir oiliúint san fhileolaíocht nua-aimseartha ar ghlúin scoláirí a chuaigh i mbun taighde ceannródaíoch ar an nGaelainn (idir Shean- agus Nua-) ina dhiaidh sin. Leanann an Institiúid den obair ‘bhunúsach’ sin (‘bunúsach’ sa chiall is fearr) a bhí ar bun ag Kuno Meyer, John Strachan, Eleanor Knott agus a leithéid: cur in eagar téacsanna ó na lámhscríbhinní agus taighde ar an nGaelainn féin.

Is iomaí díospóireacht bhríomhar a deineadh i seomra seimineáir na Scoile. Fiú sara dtána go dtí an Institiúid mar Scoláire, d’fhreastalaínn ar na seimineáir sheachtainiúla ann agus chuaigh an cur is an cúiteamh go mór i bhfeidhm orm, an faobhar léinn á chur ar na téacsanna dúshlánacha a bhí á léamh ann. Tá seimineár á thabhairt agam féin faoi láthair (ar thráchtaisí gramadaí fhilí na scol) agus foghlaimím an t-uafás dá bharr.

Bíonn sé d’aga ag scoláirí na hInstitiúide (agus daoine a bhíonn ar cuairt ann, leis) luí isteach i gceart ar a gcuid taighde, ach foghlaimimid óna chéile agus tugaimid cúnaimh dá chéile, leis. Agus ní bhíonn a fhios agat riamh cathain a bhuailfidh an splanc thú! Scríobhas féin alt le déanaí maidir leis an bhforainm sa Mheán-Ghaelainn agus sa Nua-Ghaelainn Chlasaiceach. Is dócha ná scríobhfainn an páipéar sin choíche murach an plé a deineadh ar ainmneacha briathartha na Breatnaise i seimineár eile, seimineár nár bhain leis an bhforainm sa Ghaelainn in aon chor, mar a shílfeá. Cothaíonn an Institiúid comhráite agus díospóireachtaí, tugann sí scóip don bhfiosracht, agus saibhríonn sin an taighde go mór. Gan amhras is í an Leabharlann croí na Scoile, cnuasach taighde ná fuil a shárú ann i léann na Gaelainne.

Tá clú agus cáil, leis, ar an Institiúid mar fhoilsitheoir a chuireann bunobair taighde ar fáil ar phraghas réasúnta. I measc na leabhar is ansa liom féin tá na duanairí (leithéid *Leabhar Branach* in eagar ag Seán Mac Airt) agus na hannála a cuireadh amach go luath i stair na Scoile. Le blianta anuas tá an Institiúid ag foilsiú ar líne, leis. Agus í ina Scoláire i Scoil na Léinn Cheiltigh sna ’70í, thosnaigh an Dochtúir Katharine Simms (iar-oide de mo chuid i gColáiste na Tríonóide) clár leictreonach dá bhfuil fágtha d’Fhilíocht na Scol. Tá sé sin anois ar fáil ar fud an domhain ar shuíomh na hInstitiúide (Bunachar Fhilíocht na Scol, [bardic.celt.dias.ie](http://bardic.celt.dias.ie)), agus ní haon áibhéil a rá go bhfuil sé ina chompánach ag gach scoláire le dealramh atá ag gabháil d’Fhilíocht na Scol. Agus mé ag trácht ar áiseanna digiteacha, ní féidir liom gan ISOS, ‘leabharlann’ dhigiteach lámhscríbhinní na Gaelainne, a lua ([isos.dias.ie](http://isos.dias.ie)). Is deacair do mo leithéidse, daoine atá ag baint leas as ISOS ó chuamar leis an

léann an chéad lá, a shamhlú conas mar a bhí saol an taighdeora gan iad. Is comaoin mhór orainn uile an tionscaint sin.

### **Dr Mícheál Hoyne, Bergin Fellow, School of Celtic Studies**

#### **What does the Dublin Institute mean for me?**

I was very excited to come to the Institute as a postdoctoral O’Donovan Scholar in 2014, but like everyone in the field of Irish philology, I was already very familiar with the work of the School of Celtic Studies. The School has been home to many of the giants of Irish scholarship, scholars of the calibre of M.A. O’Brien (1896–1962) and David Greene (1915–1981). Going further back still, the scholars who founded the School of Celtic Studies had a close connection to the School of Irish Learning established in Dublin in 1903, which helped introduce the best of Continental philology to Irish Studies and trained a generation of pioneering investigators. A large portrait of Kuno Meyer (1858–1919), one of the founders of the School of Irish Learning, greets visitors to the Library of the School of Celtic Studies in Burlington Road. In a real sense, the School of Celtic Studies founded in 1940 continues the work of the School of Irish Learning – the editing of the enormous and varied body of Irish manuscript literature and the investigation of the Irish language itself from the earliest sources down to the living dialects.

The School of Celtic Studies can provide a lively forum for scholarly discussion. I started attending research seminars in the School of Celtic Studies as a PhD student. It was thrilling to experience first hand the very best of linguistic and textual scholarship being brought to bear on some of the most difficult texts surviving in Irish manuscripts, and I was inspired by the robust debates these seminars occasioned. I have since started giving a seminar in the School myself, and few experiences have taught me so much.

Staff, scholars and visiting researchers, who have the space and time in the Institute to concentrate on their own research, can learn from one another and spur each other on – often in quite unexpected ways. I recently wrote a paper, to be published in the School’s journal *Celtica*, concerning pronouns in Middle and Early Modern Irish. The stimulus for writing up this paper was a discussion in an entirely ‘unrelated’ seminar – or so it seemed at first! – about Welsh verbal nouns. Such wide-ranging and stimulating conversations can happen elsewhere, but the Institute is the ideal place for them! And all of this research and discussion is fuelled by a research library with no match anywhere in the world for our subject.

Not the least of the achievements of the Institute is that as a publisher it makes so much fundamental research available at an affordable price. Of particular interest to me are the editions of Irish Bardic poetry and annals which made up a significant part of the School’s output in its early decades. In the digital age, the commitment to publishing embraces online resources too. The Institute hosts the Bardic Poetry Database ([bardic.celt.dias.ie](http://bardic.celt.dias.ie)), created by a former teacher of mine in TCD, Dr Katharine Simms, who was herself a member of the School in the 1970s. This has been an essential companion to me and every serious scholar working in the area, enabling ambitious new research anywhere in the world. The project of digitising Irish manuscripts ([isos.dias.ie](http://isos.dias.ie)) must rank among the great services of the Institute

to Irish scholarship. It opens up a rich manuscript heritage to anyone who has an interest, and it has facilitated my own research enormously. It is difficult indeed for scholars of my generation to imagine a world before the Bardic Poetry Database or ISOS, so fundamental are they to our day-to-day work.