

IRISH LANGUAGE PROGRAMS

IMMERSION PROGRAMS

A circuit of Irish language immersion weekends currently exists in Ontario, Quebec, and the Eastern United States. These events give people the opportunity to learn and use the spoken language, and to acquire fluency. The advantages of a permanent site to hold these events are many. The venue will be assured of availability, and we will be able to alter the facility to meet our specific needs. The range and frequency of programs can be expanded enormously. The greatest problem in learning Irish in North America is the relative absence of people to speak Irish with. Our Gaeltacht would address that problem, and presumably develop a type of "community" that gathers periodically on location.

IRISH LANGUAGE LIBRARY AND LEARNING CENTER

There exists considerable difficulty in acquiring Irish language materials in North America. At best, materials can be purchased by internet, but costs are high, and one is never certain of the exact content of what they are purchasing. A committed learning center would provide a central location at which all learning resources could be located: e.g. DVDs, video tapes, cassette tapes, course books, novels, poetry, and scientific texts. This would constitute a very attractive resource to anyone

attempting to learn Irish in North America.

SEAN-NÓS SINGING

Many of Ireland's most beautiful traditions are attached to the language. Many people are interested in learning Irish in order to be able to sing traditional Irish songs in the "Old Style". It is our intention to establish a program to teach singers to properly pronounce the words to Irish songs, and to embellish these songs with the unique "Sean-nós" ornamentation.

SUMMER CAMPS FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN

Summer is a challenging time for most parents of young children. When school is out for the summer, parents are normally still required to work. Summer camps of all sorts have developed over the years to provide interesting, and worthwhile diversion for grade school children. An Irish language summer camp for grade school children could be expected to draw a large clientele. More importantly, we would be transmitting the language to precisely the audience that is best able to learn, and best able to create a viable future for it in North America.

CREDIT COURSES FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Many high school students use the summer to earn extra credits. By so doing they free up time during the regular school year, or simply enrich their learning experience. The Irish language has never, to our knowledge, been offered as a high school credit course in North America until recently, when an Ontario High School (KCVI) began offering a course, every other year. This vacuum needs to be filled, and the facilities available at our Gaeltacht will be ideally suited to do so.

TEACHERS FROM IRELAND

Irish cultural events in North America are always enriched when close ties to Ireland are maintained. Ireland is, and will undoubtedly remain, the "source" for Irish language learning. It will be our intention to bring teachers from Ireland on a regular basis in order to cater to the needs of advanced learners, and to keep ourselves current with regards to the international aspects of the language.

INDIGENOUS TEACHER TRAINING

The absence of qualified Irish language teachers in North America is one of the greatest handicaps we have in establishing programs at the present time. Qualification programs in Irish for secondary school teachers exist nowhere. Training teachers will have a high priority among our development programs.

EXCHANGE PROGRAMS WITH GAELTACHT FAMILIES

In order to establish a viable future for Irish in North America, we must bring the language to our homes. Raising our children with the Irish language (as well as English, French or Spanish) expands their horizons, while at the same time passing the living language along to the next generation. Families in Ireland's Gaeltacht will benefit from the opportunity to use their language in contexts beyond Ireland's borders.

IRISH LANGUAGE RETREATS

It is extremely significant that our site will be perpetually available for people to visit. Whenever free time exists, people will be able to withdraw from the "English speaking rat-race" and be among other Irish language speakers, in a friendly, relaxing environment.