

MUSIC

Cape Breton's Diversity in Unity

Làithean Sona M'Òige

Nuair bha sinn aotram gòrach,
Gun eòlas air an aois,
Gun chùraim airson lòn oirnn
'S sinn beòthail is làn sunnd;
Bu tric ri cluich is spòrs sinn,
'S ro-dheònach bhith ri caoch;
Ò làithean sona m'òige
Nuair bha sinn òg làn sunnd.

Air madainn shamhraidh òir-ghil
'S an driùchd air bhàrr an fheòir,
Bidh grian nan speur 's i deàrsadh,
'S gach nì mar airgead beò.
Bidh eòin na coill' cur fàilt' oirnn,
'S gu 'm b'àlainn leinn an ceòl,
Bha sud far 'n d'fhuair mi m'àrach,
'S a thug dhomh slàint' 's mi òg.

Bu tric air feasgar Dhòmhnach
A chite sinn nar grunn,
A' falbh nar cupaill còmhla
Is dreach na h'òig' nar gnùis.
An diugh tha 'r cinn air liathadh,
Tha 'n deuchainn sin 's a' chùis,
Oir thig an aois gun iarraidh
Tha milleadh leus ar sùil.

Gur iomadh rìbhinn ghràdhach
A dh'fhan 's an àit' ud leinn;
Bu chridheil fuaim an gàire
'S gum b'àlainn cùl an cinn,
Le 'n gruag 's i mar a dh'fhàs i
'N a dualan cuachach mìn;
An diugh cha dèan iad fhàgail --
Bidh blàr air cùl an cinn.

Bu shòlas leam 's an àm ud
Bhith muigh air feadh nan craobh,
A' falbh ri taobh na h-aibhne
Bha ruith a-nuas gu ciùin.
Na làithean bòidheach samhraidh,
Nach iad bha ann às ùr,
Ann an gleanntan gorma challtainn
'S gach crann a' dèanamh ciùil.

Bu chridheil sinn 's a' gheamhradh
Ann an timeannan an fhuachd,
Bhiomaid air na bainnsean,
'S an geall air taigh an luaidh.
Bu chridheil anns an àm sinn,
'S gum b'annsa leinn an uair
Bhith cluich air feadh na h-aibhne
Nuair bhiodh i reòite cruaidh.

'S a' cheann-a-tuath de Framboise
A fhuair mi m'àrach òg,
'S bu shona mi 's an àm ud
An gleanntan gorm' an fheòir;
Far am bithinn feasgar samhraidh
'S a' ghrian dol fo na neòil,
'S an ceò air bhàrr nam beanntan
'S a' ghleann far 'n robh mi òg.

Mo shoraidh slàn gu bràth
Leis na làithean ud a dh'aom,
Le làithean sona m'òige
Nuair bha mi òg làn sunnd;
Na làithean bha cho bòidheach
Ri ròs air madainn chiùin;
Mo shoraidh slàn gu bràth
Leis na làithean ud a dh'aom.

Translation:

Happy Days of My Youth

When we were light-hearted and foolish
And ignorant of age,
Without care for provisions
And lively and full of joy;
We often played and had fun,
Too willing to be in good cheer;

Oh happy days of my youth
When we were young and full of joy.

On a golden summer morning
With the dew on top of the grass
The sun would shine in the sky,
And everything would be like quicksilver.
The birds of the wood would welcome us
With music that we considered beautiful.
This is where I was nurtured
And which gave me health when young.

Often on a Sunday evening
We would be seen in company,
Going out together in couples,
With the radiance of youth in our complexions.
Today our heads are grey,
That is a painful fact,
For age comes unbidden
To spoil the sight of our eyes.

Many a dear maiden
Lived with us in that place;
The sound of their laughter was hearty
And the back of their heads was beautiful,
With their hair as it had grown
In curly soft plaits;
Today they cannot leave it alone --
The back of their heads will be in turmoil.

It was joy for me at that time
To be out among the trees,
Walking by the bank of the river
That moved down so gently.
The beautiful summer days,
I wish they were here again,
In the green glens of hazel
With every tree ?????

We were merry in the winter
In times of cold,
We would be at weddings
And enjoying milling frolics.
We were happy in those days
And we loved the time
Of playing on the river
When the ice was hard.

It was in the north of Framboise
That I was reared in my youth,
And I was happy at that time
In the green grassy glens,
Where I would spend a summer evening
As the sun disappeared in the clouds,
And the mist covered the mountain-tops
In the glen where I was young.

My last farewell forever
To those days gone by,
The happy days of my boyhood
When I was young and full of joy;
The days that were as beautiful
As a rose on a calm morning;
My last farewell forever
To those days gone by.

Recording:

[Làithean Sona M'Òige](#), 1969. Dan Alex MacDonald . T-107. Beaton Institute, Cape Breton University.