

“Let’s Learn Some Gaelic” (Part 1)

Scots Gaelic is the language that the first settlers of Pictou County spoke. The majority of the passengers on the Ship Hector, having come from the Highlands, spoke only Scots Gaelic and only few of them knew the King’s English.

The Highlands were considered the “less civilized” part of Scotland according to the British because the influence of British lifestyle and language hadn’t successfully reached that far into the Scottish territories until the early 1700s.

The Lowlands of Scotland, being much closer to British towns, therefore became influenced by the English way of life. By the mid-1600s, the Lowlands had already adopted English as the main language of communication.

Here are some fun and basic phrases in Scots Gaelic.

Ciamar a tha thu?	[kimmer uh ha oo]	How are you?
Tha gu math.	[ha goo ma]	I’m fine/OK.

The Scots Gaelic language is a very guttural language, meaning that there are a lot of dark throat sounds. Similar to languages like German, Gaelic has sounds like kkh as if you had something caught in your throat. Give it a try with some of these funny sounding Gaelic phrases!

Tha mi duilich.	[ha mee doo-leekkh]	I’m sorry.
Chan eil mi cinnteach	[kkhan yil mee keen-chokkh]	I’m not sure.

To learn more about Scots Gaelic and the Gaelic Society and Culture in Nova Scotia, visit: <https://www.novascotia.com/explore/culture/celtic-gaelic-culture> or keep up with the next publication article of “Let’s Learn Some Gaelic.” It is up to YOU to keep the interest of the Scots Gaelic language alive! Nach bruidhinn sinn Gàidhlig! (Let’s speak Gaelic!)