

Fèis Phàislig

Annual Report 2016



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Overview

Fèis Phàislig was established in November 2014 to provide traditional music opportunities for young people in Renfrewshire. I'm happy to present the Fèis Phàislig Annual Report for 2016 which outlines a successful second year for the organisation. The committee has worked throughout the year to build on the success of our inaugural Fèis Week and maximise opportunities for young people across Renfrewshire.

The committee were successful in securing funding from a number of organisations; Fèisean nan Gàidheal, Paisley 2021 'Culture, Events and Heritage Fund' & Renfrewshire Council. The support of these organisations has allowed us to deliver a number of fantastic opportunities for young people and I would like to emphasise the committee's thanks to them for their support over the past year.

I would also like to pass on the committee's thanks to all the tutors who have worked with us over the past year. Their work with our young people ensures all participants receive a fantastic experience and we appreciate their continued work across a range of projects.

The committee continues work on a number of projects and I would encourage anyone looking for further information to get in touch at any time.



Grant McFarlane

Chairman | Cathraiche

November 2016

Fèis Week

The committee wanted to ensure our 2016 Fèis Week built on the success of our 2015 event allowing more young people across Renfrewshire and further afield to take part. One of the challenges we faced with our inaugural event was a limited number of rooms and space for classes to operate in. To tackle this, the committee set out early-on to find an alternate venue. After consideration of a number of venues, Renfrewshire Council kindly agreed to give us use of Paisley Grammar School for our 2016 event. On behalf of the committee, I'd like to pass on thanks to Renfrewshire Council for their continued support of our work.

With a larger venue confirmed we were able to offer 10 choices for our participants this year, up from 8 in 2015. The choices for 2016 were; accordion, clarsach, chanter, drama, drumming, fiddle, guitar, singing, whistle and ukulele. Our tutors for 2016 were:

- Allan Craig (Drumming)
- Grant McFarlane (Accordion)
- Joy Dunlop (Singing)
- Scott Wood (Whistle)
- David Shedden (Chanter)
- Innes White (Guitar)
- Ron Jappy (Fiddle)
- Debbie Mackay (Drama)
- Jessica Burton (Ukulele)
- Sarah MacNeil (Clarsach)

The Fèis Week saw a large increase in numbers from 56 participants in 2015 to **94 participants** in 2016. This presented a challenge for the committee to ensure the correct ratio of supervising adults to participants and a much larger administration task in advance of the Fèis. We welcomed back **Karen Oakley** as our Fèis co-ordinator who managed the day-to-day running of the Fèis. This was supported by the work of a number of committee members, parents and volunteers without whom it would not of been possible.

Activities during the week included 'Fèis Painting', a Gaelic treasure hunt, sports and celtic art. Thanks to Karen Oakley and Rachel Harris at Fèisean nan Gàidheal for facilitating this.

Returning from 2015, the Fèis Fhoirt ceilidh trail performed a lunchtime concert for our participants on Thursday afternoon. The concert is an example of what our participants

can aim towards in years to come and was inspirational for our participants. The committee would like to extend their thanks to Fèis Fhoirt for a fantastic performance.

Our tutor concert and ceilidh returned on Thursday night of the Fèis and was a fantastic evening of music, song and dance. Introduced in 2015 as an opportunity for participants to hear their tutors performing together, the event continues to be a huge success and is now an integral part of our Fèis Week.

Over 200 people joined us on our last day with family, friends and local councillors enjoying our participants concert. The concert showcased the incredible work of our participants and the hard work our tutors put in across the 4 days.



Weekly Lessons

With support from the Paisley 2021 Culture, Events and Heritage Fund, the committee has been able to establish a programme of year round tuition for participants. Taking place on Saturday mornings during term-time, our weekly lessons offer tuition in accordion, fiddle, guitar and singing and take place at Gleniffer High School.

We currently deliver tuition to 26 young people with participants receiving a half hour instrumental class and a half hour groupwork/musicianship lesson. Participants numbers for each subject are as follows:

Accordion: 6

Fiddle: 5

Guitar: 14

Singing: 1

Funding was granted from Renfrewshire Council for instrument purchases and these are actively being used by our participants. We have a number of accordions and fiddles available for hire and would encourage any interested parties to get in touch with enquiries. The committee would like to extend our thanks to Renfrewshire Council for their continued support.

We continue to accept applications from new participants where spaces are available. We have taken steps towards promoting singing lessons with our tutor, Ainsley Hamill, visiting a number of primary schools in Renfrewshire to promote the lessons.

Our weekly lessons will run through to June 2017 with a number of performance opportunities throughout the year. We continue to work with Renfrewshire Council and Paisley 2021 to offer opportunities for our participants.

Spree Sessions Ceilidh Trail

The Spree is Paisley's national music, arts and comedy festival and we were delighted to deliver our first project with the festival in 2016. *The Spree Sessions* saw a number of community organisations deliver events that gave members of the public a chance to be involved with the festival.

The committee was approached to deliver a ceilidh trail project that would allow young musicians, who already play at an intermediate/advanced level, to perform at the festival. We worked with the council to timetable a week of activity for young people that visited different areas of Renfrewshire. The format of our week was as follows:



Monday 17th Oct: **Rehearsal at Gleniffer High School, Paisley**

Tuesday 18th Oct: **Busking Session at the Piazza Shopping Centre, Paisley**

Wednesday 19th Oct: **Rehearsal at Park Mains High School, Erskine**

Thursday 20th Oct: **Rehearsal with all participants at Paisley Museum**

Friday 21st Oct: **Concert at the Spiegel tent, Paisley**

The project ran successfully with 16 young musicians taking part and delivering a fantastic concert as part of the festival line-up. This is our first project aimed solely at musicians who already play and gave those involved experience of arranging a concert programme, stagecraft and working collaboratively with other musicians. We believe projects like this will play a more important role in years to come as we work with more young people who have been inspired by the work of the Fèis and look forward to giving more opportunities to musicians in the future.

Halloween Festival

Paisley's Halloween Festival is a firm part of the town's exciting winter events calendar. As part of a weekend of arts and culture events, the Fèis was asked to deliver a number of 'come and try' sessions. These sessions gave young people the opportunity to work with two of our tutors to try some Gaelic singing and fiddle playing.

School Visits

To raise awareness of our Fèis Week and weekly lessons projects, we delivered a number of workshops to schools across Renfrewshire in April 2016. These visits were free for all schools and gave pupils a short performance, information on the different instruments and the opportunity to ask questions to our tutors.

Fundraising

The Fèis held a successful fundraising ceilidh on November 28th, 2015 at the Wynd Centre in Paisley. The committee would like to thank Scotia Ceilidh Band for giving their services and support to the Fèis and this event.

As part of our fundraising programme for the year, we returned to Morrison's Shopping Centre at the end of April. As well as handing out information on the Fèis Week and details on how to sign up, we had local musicians performing for shoppers throughout the day.

We also gave young people an opportunity to perform at Braehead Shopping Centre across a weekend in May. This was a great opportunity to raise awareness of the Fèis to the wider public and our committee were available to answer questions and explain our various projects to shoppers.