

**ANNUAL REPORT  
GLASGOW FIDDLE WORKSHOP**

**2013- 2014**



**CHARITY NUMBER: SCO29502**

## **CONTACT DETAILS**

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## **AIMS**

Our formal statement of objectives, as per our Memorandum and Articles of Association, is as follows:

The advancement of education and of the arts, heritage and culture, and in furtherance thereof the company will undertake:-

- (a) To promote an understanding and appreciation of Scottish traditional music.
- (b) To provide opportunities for learning to play and sing Scottish traditional music, with an emphasis on learning to play by ear.
- (c) To create a community of people with a common interest in Scottish traditional music
- (d) To forge links with other organisations who have similar interests.

## **GOVERNANCE**

In January 1994 the Glasgow Fiddle Workshop (GFW) was formed as a voluntary organisation with a core group of eight, and in November 1999, Glasgow Fiddle Workshop was reconstituted as a Charity. In May 2008 GFW was reconstituted as a Company Limited by Guarantee.

## **BOARD**

The Board is responsible for managing Glasgow Fiddle Workshop. The Board holds monthly formal meetings throughout the year and also holds ad-hoc meetings as required. Office bearers are nominated and voted in at Annual General Meeting. The committee has the power to engage volunteers and nominate Directors throughout the year.

## **MEMBERSHIP 2013-2014**

Chair: Virginia Anderson/John Newman.

Treasurer: Ann Pidgeon.

Company Secretary: Cliff Uney.

Board members: Tom Lamb, James Johnston, Craig MacDonald, Iain MacLeod, Sue Moir, Fenella Rennie, Mike Turner, Jack Westwood.

Our thanks go to every member of this group for their steadfast support and hard work during the last year.

## **THANKS TO VOLUNTEERS**

GFW would not manage without the efforts of volunteers. Many help out at enrolment and at special events e.g. Roy Kavanagh for co-ordinating all volunteers and recruitment at Celtic Connections and Jack Westwood for organising the Burns Supper and acting as Master of Ceremonies.

## **STAFF**

Administrator:	Karen McGavock
Senior Tutor: Monday	Nigel Gatherer
Senior Tutor: (Juniors)	Finlay Allison
Senior Tutor: Wednesday	Lynsey Tait
Other tutors:	See appendix

## **THANKS TO TUTORS**

Thanks to all senior tutors in particular – Nigel, Finlay and Lynsey for their hard work and enthusiasm and support for the ethos of GFW. Their interest in promoting Scottish traditional music has not only helped GFW increase its membership for its core activity but also provided opportunities for adult and junior learners to play and listen to Scottish traditional music. Thanks also to all the GFW tutors whose love of teaching Scottish traditional music has provided so much joy to all GFW learners.

## **THANKS TO ADMINISTRATOR**

Sincerest thanks are due to the GFW administrator, Karen McGavock, who has supported the organisation throughout this year. Karen's hard work has helped GFW deliver a good service to learners during a very challenging year, and the committee would like to note their thanks to Karen for her steadfast support.

## **IN MEMORY: SUE BELL**

Sue Bell, GFW's former administrator and active member, sadly passed away this year. Sue was a friend to many and an active musician. Sue is remembered fondly for her great cheer and her commitment to the GFW community.

## **ACHIEVING OUR OBJECTIVES**

GFW places an emphasis on increasing participation and removing barriers to learning music. GFW has a stock of instruments, which are available for loan to learners. All teaching is carried out 'by ear' and CDs and sheet music are provided to back up teaching at the end of lessons or workshops.

GFW encourages juniors and adults – those with little experience of music and also those who have previous musical skills. They are steeped in the skills and traditions of Scottish traditional music.

Our membership is made up of learners aged between 8 – 80+ years of age and has increased over the last year by 11. In August 2013 and January 2014 there were enrolments and the membership currently stands at 374.

Teaching centres on Scottish traditional music although our tutors do introduce students to other related styles and traditions, such as Irish, American, English, Shetland and Scandinavian. This places Scotland's music within a broader cultural context and helps learners to understand why musical traditions from across the country vary in style and history.

## **WEEKLY CLASSES STOW COLLEGE**

The core activity of GFW is the provision of weekly classes on Monday and Wednesday evenings and a mixed instrument class on a Tuesday evening. On Mondays and Wednesdays, a slow session is offered before the start of classes.

### **Adult Classes**

Fiddle classes from Absolute Beginner to Advanced, including Technique and Repertoire classes.

Ukulele classes at the following levels: beginners, improvers, intermediate and advanced.

Mandolin has three levels: beginners, improvers and intermediate.

Bodhran, Guitar, Whistle, and Accordion classes at beginner and improver/intermediate level.

Mixed Instrument classes at intermediate and advanced level.

Cello and Tenor Banjo as single level classes. The Song class also ran for 2 terms but had to be cancelled when numbers fell below the viable level.

### **Junior Classes**

Guitar and Tin Whistle at single level classes

Fiddle classes at the following levels: absolute beginners, beginners, improving beginners, intermediate and advanced.

## **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

All our tutors are musicians of a high calibre who perform professionally or semi-professionally. Many have undertaken the degree course in traditional music. All are selected for their experience and deep understanding of traditional music. We are very proud of our tutors who include past winners of the BBC Young Traditional Musician of the Year Award.

Tutors deliver high quality learning and teaching using learning CDs and packs provided by GFW to maintain a consistent curriculum. Guidelines are made available for each of the levels and classes are evaluated through feedback from learners and tutor meetings.

All tutors are appointed in line with GFW Tutor Policy and contract. The policy covers artistic, administrative guidelines and Disclosure Scotland.

Regular senior tutor meetings and tutor meetings are held to allow tutors to discuss the curriculum, events and any aspects of teaching and learning with a view to improving the service to learners.

## **REVIEW OF THE YEAR**

2013 - 2014 has continued to be one of the most challenging in GFW's recent history since the changes in Creative Scotland funding. Fortunately, after a number of years of rigorous focus on helping the organisation become healthy and well run, and with sensible reserves, we have been able to reduce the impact of this loss in support. The committee has continued to concentrate its efforts on ensuring GFW has been able to support itself and reduced its dependence on grant funding.

In August 2013, the cost of an adult class was increased slightly but the junior and concessionary rates remained unchanged. All core classes and activities have been retained, with only some subsidised events having been excluded from the programme. As the financial report and accounts will show, the organisation is ending the year in a break-even position having mitigated against deep changes.

Significant thanks are due to Treasurer Ann Pigeon and to the senior tutors for patiently and effectively managing these changes.

### **Classes and learner numbers**

Learner numbers continue to see steady growth, with additional classes being introduced in key instruments to manage numbers. Registered members have grown from 463 last year to 533 in the current year, an increase of 15%. The membership now comprises 474 adults (89%) and 59 juniors (11%).

The slow session has continued to be a great success with an additional 'Prepare for the Pub' class being introduced on a monthly basis at Hillhead Sports Club. Taught by Finlay Allison, the class helps introduce learners to regular tunes and build their confidence in playing with other instruments.

The success of Ukulele classes grows from strength to strength as the popularity of this instrument gathers momentum. There are now 4 class levels on a Monday night ranging from absolute beginners right through to advanced.

Only the Gaelic and Scots Song class had to be cancelled this year as numbers dropped to below a viable level. Hopefully, there will be more interest in the new academic year for this class and perhaps a 'come & try' workshop could be organised to help promote this.

### **Management**

After another busy year for the GFW Board a number of changes in personnel will take place at this AGM: Ann Pigeon (treasurer) will be standing down after 3 years on the committee; John Newman (co-chair) after 8 years and Tom Lamb (director) after 2 years. Sue Moir has also resigned after 6 years on the committee; Craig MacDonald after 3 years; Jim Johnston after 2 years; Jack Westwood and Iain MacLeod after 1 year each.

New members have already agreed to join the Board and these include: Ken Irvine, Ronnie Melrose, Maureen Smith and Doreen Semple. A new treasurer to replace Ann Pigeon is still being sought from the membership.

## EVENTS

### *West End Festival June 2013*

- *Junior Concert and Ceilidh*

The junior concert and the family ceilidh were merged into a single event at Hillhead Sports Club on 22nd June and this was a great success. Thanks go to Lynsey Tait for organising the event and to volunteers Karen McGavock, Fenella Rennie, Brian Condon and John Newman for helping with the raffle. Thanks are also due to Mairi Newman for baking cakes for the cake sale.

### *One-off Musical Workshops*

- *June workshop*

The Big Band event took place on 22nd June at Stow West and was attended by 25 students who all had a fun time playing in the mixed instrument workshops. Thanks go to Nigel Gatherer who organised the event.

- *Fiddle 2013 Scots Fiddle Festival – November, Edinburgh*

A group of junior members attended this very successful weekend in Edinburgh. As well as taking part in workshops they attended a live show and joined in a music session. The juniors also had a 'bake sale' to raise funds and cash donations were made by Brian Condon and John Newman. Thanks go to Lynsey Tait who organised the event.

- *Glasgow Loves Christmas - December 2013*

This took place in the big tent in George Square and gave the GFW Juniors and 'Scratchy Noises' the opportunity to demonstrate their musicianship. Thanks go to Finlay Allison and Lynsey Tait for attending the event and running the 'Come & Try' sessions, giving children and adults their first taste of playing the fiddle.

- *Celtic Connections - January 2014*

GFW hosted a series of very busy workshops during Celtic Connections. This year we offered various 'Come and Try' events for Ukulele, Whistle and Fiddle: the workshops were oversubscribed and extremely successful including Nigel Gatherer's 'Big Slow Session'. They are used as a way of raising the profile of GFW and encouraging new learners. The closure of the Royal Concert Hall Foyer (due to redevelopment) meant that GFW's activities were promoted at the Mitchell Library and City Halls this year.

- *Edinburgh Youth Gaitherin - April 2014*

A group of 11 junior members attended this long-weekend event, supported by 2 parent volunteers, and it proved to be a great success. The children helped to raise funds by busking and having a 'bake sale' to cover the costs of accommodation, transport and meals for the adult supervisors. As well as attending music classes the children were able to play in mixed instrument workshops, sessions and perform at the tutor concert. Thanks go to Lynsey Tait who organised the event.

### *Social Events*

- *Christmas Do December 2013*  
Our Annual Christmas event, which was oversubscribed, was well attended with a fun music session. Thanks go to Craig Macdonald and Karen McGavock for organising the event.
- *Burns Supper January 2014*  
Organised by Jack Westwood and Karen McGavock, this was sponsored by the Islay Inn and proved to be another sell out evening. There was music and song from GFW tutors who are thanked for their support. Thanks are also due to Jack who compered the evening.

### *Weekly Sessions*

- *Islay Inn*  
Every Monday, GFW hosts a Session in the Islay Inn, Argyle Street led by Alan Jones and Alan Shute. This is an extremely well attended session attracting tourists, visiting musicians and a regular cohort of players. It also encourages and enables learners to keep playing during summer holidays.
- *Curlers Rest*  
A 'Very Slow Session', led by Finlay Allison, takes place once a month on a Sunday evening. The session is deliberately slower than the Monday Session to encourage new learners to try out this kind of playing, without being intimidated by stronger and more experienced players.
- *Hillhead Sports Club*  
A 'Prepare for the Pub' session, also led by Finlay Allison, takes place on the last Sunday of each month. The aim is to help students play at a faster tempo and build sufficient confidence to play in pub sessions.

## **OTHER ASPECTS**

### *Accommodation for Academic Year 2014 -15*

Unfortunately, after more than 20 years we will no longer be able to use Stow College to hold our evening workshops. Stow College merged with North Glasgow College and John Wheatley College in November 2013 to form Glasgow Kelvin College and the Stow building will no longer be open for evening classes as of next academic year.

A number of alternative options are currently being investigated and hopefully a decision will be made shortly to allow us to make the move over the summer recess. Some of the options include:

- a) Moving to the John Wheatley Building (part of Kelvin College).
- b) Moving to the Building College (part of City of Glasgow College).
- c) Moving to a Primary or Secondary School in a central location.

### *Website*

Significant improvements have been made to the GFW website over the past year with more links added to similar organisations and a media page added for videos and photos. Thanks go to Lesley Alton and Mike Turner for carrying out this valuable work.

### *25th Anniversary*

Next year will mark the 25th year since a group of like-minded individuals got together to form what was to become the Glasgow Fiddle Workshops. Perhaps some of the founding members could be brought together to help us celebrate this event.

## **FUTURE PLANS**

### *Strategic Development Plan 2014- 2015*

The focus for the coming year will be on retaining and increasing the core class offering. Increasing numbers at junior level continues to be a priority, as is retaining learners.

As learners progress through GFW's class levels, they can be lost at the advanced and upper intermediate levels. We are keen to help the more advanced learners continue to develop their skills and the mixed instrument classes offer an opportunity for this. Other options will be examined.

### *Class Fees*

These were adjusted in August 2013 when the cost of an adult class was increased by about 70p per night. In recognition of the financial climate, however, concessionary and junior rates stayed unchanged. Therefore, the current fees for a 7-week term remain as follows:

Adults £68

Adult Additional Class £57

Adult Concession £52

Adult Additional Class Concession £47

Junior £37

Membership only £7

**Virginia Anderson/John Newman- Co-Chairs**

**June 2014**

## **LEVELS - FIDDLE**

**Absolute Beginners:** This class is for people who have never played the fiddle before. You will be taught how to hold the fiddle and the bow and learn to play some simple tunes by ear. Everything will be explained assuming no prior knowledge.

**Beginners:** This class is for those who have already completed the Absolute Beginners class and/or those who have played a little before. You should know how to hold the fiddle and bow and be able to play a couple of simple tunes at a slow pace. This class will work on simple tunes with an emphasis on creating good tone, tuning and confident playing.

**Improving Beginners:** This class is for those who have completed the two previous standards and have moved to being able to play a few tunes with reasonable confidence at a medium pace. This class will continue to work on simple tunes with an emphasis on creating good tone, tuning and fluency of playing. You may also be introduced to some basic bowing and simple ornamentation.

**Intermediate 1:** This class is for those able to learn simple tunes comfortably by ear and play them fluently with simple bowing and good tuning. This class will work on tunes in a wider variety of tune types and keys. You will look at bowing and ornamentation in more depth.

**Intermediate 2:** This class is for those who feel comfortable with the previous classes and can play a wide range of tunes with confidence, in tune and with fluent bowing style. The class will assist in developing a traditional style of playing, increasing knowledge of ornamentation and repertoire. You will learn a variety of tune types and look at some of the more difficult key signatures.

**Advanced:** This level is for students who have a wide knowledge of techniques and repertoire specific to Scottish traditional style. You should be able to learn easily by ear and have some reading ability. This class will focus on advanced tunes from the solo fiddling repertoire and will assume good technical knowledge.

**Technique:** For those of standard Intermediate 2 and above. Students should ensure they have a good basic knowledge of Scottish fiddling techniques and some music reading ability before joining this class. Work is based around tunes but with emphasis on different techniques within tunes rather than building a repertoire.

**GFW LIST OF TUTORS MAY 2013****Monday Night Classes - Senior Tutor Nigel Gatherer**

CLASS	TUTOR	ROOM
ACCORDION – BEGINNERS	JOHN CARMICHAEL	5/16
ACCORDION – IMPROVERS	ALAN SHUTE	3/19
BODHRAN	CHRIS WAITE	1/12
BODHRAN	MARISSA VACHON	5/4
CELLO	TRISH STRAIN	2/23
GITAR – BEGINNERS	JOHNNY CRADDEN	2/18
GITAR – INTERMEDIATE	JOHN MALCOLM	2/15
MANDOLIN – BEGINNERS	JENN BUTTERWORTH	2/19
MANDOLIN - IMPROVERS	NIGEL GATHERER	1/1
MANDOLIN – INTERMEDIATE	LAURA BETH SALTER	2/16
TENOR BANJO	CELINE DONOGHUE	2/20
UKULELE – BEGINNERS 1	FINLAY NAPIER	1/32
UKULELE – BEGINNERS 2	MARTIN MCLAUGHLIN	3/18
UKULELE – IMPROVERS	JONATHAN HILL	1/31
UKULELE – ADVANCED	FINLAY ALLISON	1/33
WHISTLE - BEGINNERS	LORNE MacDOUGALL	2/17
WHISTLE – INTERMEDIATE	KATHERINE MACLEOD	2/22
MIXED INSTRUMENT	ALAN JONES	2/21
SCRATCHY NOISES		2/5

**Total of 19 classes**

**Tuesday Night Classes - Senior Tutor Finlay Allison**

CLASS	TUTOR	ROOM
MIXED INSTRUMENT - ADVANCED	ALAN JONES	CAFE

**Total of 1 class****Wednesday Night Classes (Juniors) - Senior Tutor Finlay Allison**

CLASS	TUTOR	ROOM
SIGN IN ROOM	LYNSEY TAIT	1/1
JUNIOR FIDDLE LEVEL 1	TRICIA MULLEN	1/33
JUNIOR FIDDLE LEVEL 2	EILIDH RAMSAY	1/12
JUNIOR FIDDLE LEVEL 3	TRISH STRAIN	2/18
JUNIOR FIDDLE LEVEL 4	LYNSEY TAIT	1/32
JUNIOR FIDDLE LEVEL 5	DANIEL THORPE	2/23
JUNIOR FIDDLE LEVEL 6	SANDIE FORBES	2/20
JUNIOR GUITAR	FINLAY ALLISON	1/1
JUNIOR TIN WHISTLE	KATHERINE MACLEOD	2/17
	MARISSA WAITE	
PARENTS FIDDLE	RUAIRIDH MACMILLAN	2/16

**Total of 10 classes**

**Wednesday Night Classes (Seniors) - Senior Tutor Lynsey Tait**

CLASS	TUTOR	ROOM
FIDDLE – ABSOLUTE BEGINNER	LYNSEY TAIT	1/1
FIDDLE - BEGINNER	FINLAY ALLISON	1/31
FIDDLE - BEGINNER	TRISH STRAIN	2/18
FIDDLE - IMPROVING BEGINNER	SANDIE FORBES	2/20
FIDDLE – INTERMEDIATE 1	JAMIE SMITH	1/12
FIDDLE – INTERMEDIATE 2	RUAIRIDH MACMILLAN	2/16
FIDDLE – ADVANCED	FIONA CUTHILL	2/15
FIDDLE – TECHNIQUE 1	TRICIA MULLEN	1/33
FIDDLE – TECHNIQUE 2	DANIEL THORPE	2/23
FIDDLE – TECHNIQUE 3	DOUGLAS LAWRENCE	2/21
MIXED INSTRUMENT	KATHERINE MACLEOD	G23

**Total of 11 classes**