Milestones and memories will be the hallmark of the 11th Blas festival which will take place at venues across the Highlands and Argyll between 4 and 12 September.

Blas Festival Director, Donna Macrae, said: “This year’s programme is packed with a notable series of events marking special anniversaries and milestones enhanced by a ‘blas’ of Scottish produce in this year celebrating food and drink. Fèisean nan Gàidheal, which delivers Blas, will see some of its own members celebrating special milestones. Fèis Spè celebrates its 25th anniversary as do the Kiltearn Fiddlers, established under the auspices of Fèis Rois. World-renowned band Shooglenifty will mark their own 25th anniversary at The Ironworks in Inverness on September 5th with Hò-rò and Niteworks.”

They all have a bit to go before they match the 70th birthday celebrations being thrown to mark renowned singer Anne Lorne Gillies’ major milestone. Friends and associates who have shared stages and experiences with Anne over the years will come together to celebrate a distinguished career both here and on the other side of the Atlantic.

Few bands have had a bigger influence on Gaelic song than Runrig. The songs, written by founder member brothers Calum and Rory MacDonald, will feature in a specially commissioned event “Òran: A celebration of the songs of Runrig” which will be the Grand Finale of Blas 2015. This takes place at the Eden Court Empire Theatre in Inverness on Saturday, September 12th. All the artists appearing in “Òran” have either performed Runrig’s material or collaborated with the band since it was formed in the 1970s and will include Julie Fowlis with Eamonn Doorley & Tony Byrne, Cathy Anne MacPhee and Mànran who are, in many ways, following in the footsteps of the Gaelic Rock trailblazers. They will be accompanied on the evening by an ensemble of musicians from the Fèis movement, which is inextricably linked with the Blas festival.

Tickets for all Blas events can be bought online, or by phone, with details on the festival’s website blas-festival.com where further information is available on the full programme of events.
FÈIS PHÀISLIG TAKING PLACE FOR THE FIRST TIME

Tha a’ chiod fhèis riamh ann am Pàislig a’ dèitheadh oirnn is an luchd-eagraichdhaidh trang a’ déanamh deiseil airson an tachtair.

’S ann bho Dhìhmàirt 21mh gu Dhiaoine 24mh den luchar a thèid an fhèis a chumail agus is ionadh ionsinnraidh is cuspair a bhios ri fheuchainn: fìdhheall, bogsa-ciùil, giotàr, fìdheal air na clasaichean làitheil bidh cèitlidh ann ochair chìdh an fheum a bhith aig far am faighhear cothrom an crùbha seo a chluinnist.

The first ever Fèis Phàislig is drawing closer and the organisers are pulling out all the stops in the lead up to the event.

Fèis Phàislig will offer a four day Summer Fèis in Paisley from 21st - 24th July for young people aged 8-18. An excellent tutor team will offer workshops in a whole host of choices: accordion, chanter and pipes, clarsach, drama, drumming, fiddle, guitar and singing. As well as these daytime activities a cèilidh on Thursday night will provide the opportunity to hear the professional tutor team perform live. All events take place in Sherwood Church Hall, Paisley.

The new committee has been extremely busy preparing for this jam-packed music bonanza and has raised a significant portion of costs associated with the Fèis through fundraising cèilidhs, playing in supermarkets, school visits, agreeing sponsorship with local businesses and a round of funding support from Renfrewshire Council’s Local Area Committees. The Fèis would also like to acknowledge the generous support of all involved in these activities.

Fèisean nan Gàidheal Development Officer Rachel Harris said, “It’s great to see Fèis Phàislig creating opportunities for young people in Renfrewshire to access and learn about the traditional arts. The committee are putting a great deal of thought and effort into the event and the participants are, without doubt, in for a fantastic four days of fun, music and drama, and I’m sure this is only the first of many Summer Fèis weeks in Paisley.”

Fèis Phàislig is open for bookings: you can do this online at www.feisphaislig.com. You can also find the Fèis on Facebook/feisphaislig and chairperson Grant McFarlane can be reached at grant@feisphaislig.com.

FÈIS NA H-APAINNE

Tha Fèis na h-Apainen a’ dol bho neart gu neart air a chaidh a stèidheachadh anns a’ Ghèarran am-bliadhna. Bidh an Fèis an rìuth air an Disatharne mu dheireadh dhan mhois agus bidh tòrr dhiofar chlasaichean ri fhotaoin air an latha. Eadar dannsa-ceum is teicneolás, fìdhheall is bogsa-ciùil, fìdeag agus clarsach – bidh rudeigin ann don a h-uile aig Fèis na h-Apainne. Tha Fèis bhreach aca a-nise cuideachd agus tha an fheadhainn bheaga air an doigh a’ cluch gheimhaichean, a’ seinn óran agus a’ déanamh obair ealain!

Fèis na h-Apainne has gone from strength to strength from its beginning in February. The Fèis takes place on the last Saturday of every month and offers a range of classes from step-dancing to music technology, accordion to fiddle and clarsach to whistle. There really is something to suit everyone here! They are now pleased to offer a Fèis Bheag and the wee ones are delighted to be singing songs, playing games and having fun with art as well as getting the chance to try out some of the instruments! They have had great support from the local community for all their activities.

The Fèis will be having a break through the summer holidays but will return on 29th August. We are looking forward to this already! If anyone would like to borrow an instrument from the Fèis over the holidays please contact vicky@feisean.org to arrange this.

FÈIS LATHARNA - NAE PLANS GROUPWORK WEEKEND

An exciting collaboration event will take place on the 18th and 19th of September in Oban when Fèis Latharna will team up with the band ‘Nae Plans’ to deliver a weekend groupwork workshop.

The band will also perform a gig in Oban on the Saturday night and will invite the groupworkers to perform with them on the stage. Adam Sutherland and Hamish Napier from Nae Plans will lead the engaging and informative weekend and this is an event not to be missed. It is open to those of high school age who are at intermediate to advanced standard on their instrument. Accommodation will also be available. For more information please contact vicky@feisean.org.

FÈIS MHOIREIBH

Fèis Mhoireibh is looking forward to celebrating its 10th anniversary next year but the question is how will they top this year?

Fèis Mhoireibh 2015 was a fabulous weekend of music, games, art and stories involving eighty-five participants. A great team of tutors led classes in a whole variety of instruments. The three Fiddle classes, Clarsach, Guitar and Bodhran were all jam-packed, as was Art and Storytelling.

The atmosphere throughout the weekend was upbeat and happy amongst participants, tutors and the team of volunteers. There was time for reflection, too, as senior participants at the concert played a moving arrangement in tribute to the late Fraser Shaw to great applause and they finished off with everyone joining in the Fèis song.

Feedback from the Fèis has been fantastic but as always there are things which could be improved and the Fèis committee will be working towards making next year even better.

They are already planning the 2016 party Fèis ... Book early!!

Find more information about the Fèis and its activities on its Facebook page.

FÈIS AN EARRAICH

Tha Fèis an Earraich a chumail ann an Àrd-sgoil Phort Righ bho 6mh - 10mh latha den Ghabhail le mu 130 a’ ghabhail pàirt.

Chaidh taghadh farkasaimh de chuspairean a thabhairn co-cheangailte ri céoil, cànan agus cultar nan Gàidheal agus a bh’ai dhuidhean. Chàinnaigh bhaic tòrr is 40 clann de na Gàidheal agus a bhair an fheum a dhù aird na Gàidhlig.

Thàinig dithis à Ceap Bhreatain a leadhaineachd airson fuinn agus òrain Ghàidhealach. Tha òrachal an latha bho Ceap Bhreatainn am 10 mh latha na Ghabhail. Bha taghadh sònraichte ann do dheughairgean.

Chaidh tagadh farkasaimh de chuspairean a thabainment a thòrr mhor a’ tòrr de na Gàidheal agus a bh’ aithin a’ chàilte. Chàinnaigh bhaic tòrr is 40 clann de na Gàidheal agus a bh’ aithin a’ chàilte.

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After celebrating a very successful 10th Anniversary Adult Fèis back in February the committee of Fèis Ghleann Albainn is now looking forward to their Main Fèis week which is open to children aged five to eighteen.

During the week, children will have the opportunity to learn from a fantastic team of tutors who will offer tuition in a wide range of subjects including fiddle, accordion, chanter, art, drama and shinty.

The Fèis which takes place in Kilchuimen Academy, Fort Augustus will run from Monday 20th July through to Friday 24th with classes from 10.30 - 3.15 each day. The cost for the week is £60 for the main Fèis and £35 for Fèis Bheag. For more information contact Tracey on 01809 501468.

FÈIS LOCHABAIR

Chaidh Fèis Lochabair a chumail ann am Bun-sgoil Bhanabhidh aig saor-làithean na Caigs. Bha i gu math soirbhheachail agus nochd tòrr luchd-cùil óga airson na sgilean aca a leasachadh. Bha deagh sgìoba de luchd-teagaisg ann agus bha a’ chlann a’ frithealadh chlasaichean ann am fidheall, fideag, ealain, bogsaputain, meur-chlár am measg eile. Bha clas ann cuideachd don fheadhainn as sine nach b’ urrainn a bhith ann airson an latha air fad air sgàth ‘s gun robh iad ag ullachadh airson deuchainnean!

Rinn iadsan obair gach feasgar còmhla ri iad a thaisbeanadh aig a’ chonsairt.

A class was also held for those unable to make the whole day due to exam preparation and Eilidh Shaw and Ross Martin held a groupworking session for them each afternoon.

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FÈIS TAIGH DHONNCHAILD ENJOYS MUSIC AND HISTORY


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Tha na buidhnean cèilidh aig Fèisean nan Gàidheal air a bhith gu math trang ag uallachadh airson cuairtean samhraidh na bliadhna, a bheir a-steach ceudan de thachartasan air feadh na h-Alba anns an Iuchar agus anns an Lùnastal.

’S e cothrom air leth a th’ anns na Cèilidhean air Chuairt do dh’òigridh a tha eadar 16-25 bliadhna a dh’aois, cosnadh fhaighinn as t’samhраrdh ann an dòigh eadar-dhealaichte. Aig an aon âm, bidh iad a’ togal sgilean sònraichte a bhios gu feum dhaibh anns an àm ri teachd ma bhios iad a’ sireadh obair ann an saoghal a’ chiùil.

Air a’ chiad dà sheachdain den Iuchar bidh cothrom aig gach buidheann seachdain air fad a chur seachad a’ tréanadh agus ag uallachadh airson na cuairt aca mus tòisich iad. Bhon 6-10 Iuchar thig ceithir buidhnean còmhla anns a’ Phloc, às an Eilean Sgìtheanach, sgìre a’ Mhonaithd Ruaidh, siorrachd Shruighlea agus na h-Eileanan Siar. Coinnichd bhuidhean Loch Abair agus Earra Ghàidheil anns an Drochaid Ruaidh airson seachdain tréanadh bhon 13-17 luchar agus air an aon sheachdain thèid muinnitir Fèis Chataibh cómhla ri compàirtichean a’ Phloc airson seachdaird bhon 6-10 luchar.

Airson a’ chiad uair ann an seachd bliadhnaichean, tha compàirtichean bho Fèisean nan Eilean Siar air tighinn còmhla airson buidhean de dh’òigridh uallachadh a thèid air chuairt air feadh nan eilean as t’samhраrdh fo stiùr Màiri NicLeòid, co-òrdanaiche a’ phróiseict. Le measgachadh de dh’ionnsramaidean agus de thàlant eatorra, tòisichid iad aig Fèis Cheilteach Innse Gall a’ dadhal air aiteachain air feadh Lèòdhais, agus a’ nochtadh air Ard-ùrlar ann an Eilean aig an Phèis air Disathairne 18 den Iuchar. Bidh cèilidh aca ann an Ulapul còmhla ri Fèis Rois air an ath sheachdain agus ni iad an slighe tro na h-Uibhistean, Beinn na Faoghla, Èirisgeidh agus Barraigh, a’ criochnachadh air a’ chiad latha dhàn Lùnastal.

Fèisean Ceilidh Trail groups across the country have been busy preparing for this year’s tours which will feature a mammoth 160+ gigs throughout July and August. The Ceilidh Trail is a fantastic opportunity for young people aged 16-25 to work as paid musicians for a few weeks during the summer and learn invaluable skills which will stand them in good stead for a musical, or non-musical, career.

Over the first two weeks of July all eight Ceilidh Trail groups will undertake a week of intensive training and preparation before they head out on tour in their own areas. From the 6th-10th July four Ceilidh Trails from Skye, the Cairngorms, Stirlingshire and the Western Isles will meet in Plockton. The Argyll and Lochaber groups will go to Roybridge for a week of training from the 13th-17th of July. Meanwhile the Fèis Chataibh Ceilidh Trail participants will team up with their counter-parts from Ross-shire in the lovely setting of Cromarty.

Fèisean nan Gàidheal Senior Development Officer, Nicola Simpson, said: “We are delighted to see the Ceilidh Trails going from strength to strength. Every year they grow and develop and create unique opportunities for both participants and audiences. Although we don’t set a theme for our Trails, this year we have a number of events taking place at Castles around the country including the Castle of Mey, Dunrobin, Eilean Donan, Braemar, Glamis Castle, Invarary Castle and Stirling Castle.”

This year, for the first time in seven years, there will be a Ceilidh Trail taking place in the Western Isles. Following a successful audition process, seven young people will be taking part. With a multitude of instruments and a wealth of talent between them, they will kick off their tour in venues across Lewis including a performance on the Island Stage at the Hebridean Celtic Festival on Saturday the 18th of July. They will also join forces with Fèis Rois in Ulapool for a cèilidh on the 21st of July and will then continue on through the Uists, Benbecula, Eriskay and Barra.

A number of the Ceilidh Trails will be meeting up for joint events along the way and these performances will be well worth catching.

For more information about the tours visit www.feisean.org/ceilidh or find your local Trail on facebook
CALL FOR EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL TO BE STRENGTHENED

Sgiroib Fèisean nan Gàidheal fíanais do Chomataidh Foghlaim is Cultair aig Pàrlamaid na h-Alba bhò chionn greis ag iarraidh neartachdainn ann am Bile an Foghlaim (Alba) a bhò is Gallainn a’ bheilteachadh an-dràsta.

Gabhaidh an phàipear a leughadh, cho math ri freagairtean eile an dlaigh a chuir air do Ghàidhealadh an dràsta. Mar phàirt den chruinneachadh, bhà eaich a thoirt do Ghàidhealadh airson bhò airson a’ bhuaidhean na’ bhàs a’ fhorbrachadh an-dràsta.

The paper can be read, along with all other submissions, on the Education and Culture Committee’s page at scottish.parliament.uk.
Open to secondary school pupils fluent in Gaelic, teenagers from Gaelic Youth Theatres in Tain and Dingwall have been meeting once a week since the groups were established after the Easter holidays.

As part of the project, both groups develop new Gaelic plays with support from Angus Macleod from Fèisean nan Gàidheal and Eden Court Creative, and will have the opportunity to perform them at ‘Fèis Dràma Dheugairean’ a Gaelic Youth Theatre Festival to be held at Eden Court in Inverness on Thursday 10th September 2015.

Eden Court Creative and Fèisean nan Gàidheal are very grateful for funding received through Bòrd na Gàidhlig’s Gaelic Drama Network Fund 2014/15 which has enabled the development of this Gaelic Youth Theatre Festival since its establishment in 2013. More information about the project can be found at www.feisean.org/tog.
AGM & CONFERENCE 2015 IN UIST

Thèid Coinneamh Bhiadhnaigh agus Co-labhrait Fèisean nan Gàidheal a chumail ann an Taigh-òsta an Eilein Dhùirche, Beinn na Faoghla. Cruinnichidh muinntir nam Fèisean airson sùil a thoirt air a’ bhiadhna dh’fhàilbhe agus na thà romhainn. Bidh ceol agus òrain bhò òighridh Fèisean nan Eilean Siar agus dinneir le dannsa às a dèidh. Thèid a h-uile càil a chumail Dìhaoine 25 agus Disathairne 26 An t-Sultain agus thathar an dùil gum bi slàugh mör an lathair òr a’ bhaobh na fhearg thuigmidh. Thathar an dòchas gun tig co-dhù aon rìochdair a h-air an ditheadh a’ bhliadhna a dh’fhalbh agus na tha romhainn. Ma tha sibh airson a dhol ann agus ag òigh ghoiread a dhìth oirbh, leigibh fios gu annt a bhàil an dràimheachadh airson Fèisean nan Eilean Siar agus dinnear le dannsa às a dèidh. Thathar an dòchas gun tig co-dhù aon rìochdair a h-air an ditheadh a’ bhliadhna a dh’fhalbh agus na tha romhainn. Ma tha sibh airson a dhol ann agus ag òigh ghoiread a dhìth oirbh, leigibh fios gu annt a bhàil an dràimheachadh airson Fèisean nan Eilean Siar agus dinnear le dannsa às a dèidh. Thathar an dòchas gun tig co-dhù aon rìochdair a h-air an ditheadh a’ bhliadhna a dh’fhalbh agus na tha romhainn.

The Annual General Meeting of Fèisean nan Gàidheal will be held in the Dark Island Hotel, Benbecula, on Friday 25 September 2015. It is expected that representatives from all the Fèisean across Scotland will be in attendance. We hope to be able to welcome at least one representative from each Fèis to the event as it is the only time of year when everyone can get together. We hope your Fèis can be represented. We have had lots of interest already and invitations haven’t gone out yet, so to avoid disappointment book your place now by contacting anne@feisean.org. There will be a reception featuring young people from the Western Isles Fèisean and a Ceilidh following the dinner. The Conference will take place on Saturday 26 September, with a varied mix of presentations and workshops. More information will be available on our website feisean.org in due course.

**FÉIS STALWARTS IN SCOTTISH TRADITIONAL MUSIC HALL OF FAME**

Tha sinne aig Fèisean nan Gàidheal air de dhan eòraich a bhù ainm a’ bhéamaich a bhàil airson Fèis an Earraigh agus Fèis Dhùn Èideann am measg iomairtean eile. Fèisean nan Gàidheal is delighted that Kirsteen Graham and Jessie Newton have been inducted to the Community section of the Hands Up for Trad Traditional Music Hall of Fame. Both are very worthy of honour and thanks for years of dedication to Fèis an Earraich and Fèis Dhùn Èideann respectively, as well as other initiatives. There are many others involved in the Fèis movement worthy of such recognition but, as we say, ‘s e obair latha tòiseachadh. Congratulations Kirsteen and Jessie.

Read more about Kirsteen, Jessie and the other worthy inductees here http://projects.handsupfortrad.scot/hall-of-fame/services-to-community/

**SORAIDH LE DOUGIE**

Dougie Beck will be leaving Fèisean nan Gàidheal soon to train as a primary teacher. Dougie has been with us for many years working in music, drama and language teaching and we will miss him and his many skills.

We wish him all the best with his change of career and are certain he will make a great teacher.

Soraidh leat, Dougie.

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