



Feisean nan Gaidheal

The National Association of Gaelic Arts Youth Tuition Festivals

Aithisg Bhliadhnail 1996

- Annual Report 1996 -

**Feisean nan Gaidheal
Quay Brae
Portree
Isle of Skye
IV51 9DB**

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*A company limited by guarantee
Scottish Charity Number SC130071*

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Introduction

Feisean nan Gaidheal's year has been a busy one, with various projects coming to fruition, and a lot of background work going on to ensure continued support for the Feisean, particularly in areas where the new unitary authorities have taken over the local government reins.

One highlight of the year was the successful ***Ceol nam Feis*** concert, held in Eden Court Theatre in January. This was designed as an event both to celebrate 15 years of the Feis movement, and to raise the profile of the Feisean, and Feisean nan Gaidheal, in advance of local government reorganisation.

The response to the concert was good, with a lot of people coming away very impressed at the ability of the performers, as well as the professionalism of the organisation. Our thanks go to all who took part in the event, for their cooperation, enthusiasm and outstanding talent. A special thank you must go to Dougie Pincock and his team, who put the show together for us. The show would not have been possible without the support of various agencies, and we must thank all who provided funding and help in-kind to enable us to stage ***Ceol nam Feis***.

As usual, we must thank all the bodies who have funded the general work of Feisean nan Gaidheal over the past year. All of them are credited below, but I would like to single out the Scottish Arts Council, who have placed their faith in Feisean nan Gaidheal as an organisation who can be trusted to spend a significant amount of their money wisely. The **Grants Scheme for Feisean**, run by Feisean nan Gaidheal with support from SAC, has worked well in its first year, and with a bit of fine-tuning, we hope it will work even better in the coming year.

I would like to thank all the Directors of Feisean nan Gaidheal, elected and co-opted, who have served over the past year. The organisers of the Feisean must be thanked too, for their continued enthusiasm and hard work in the various communities. Feisean nan Gaidheal is here to support the community Feisean and it is hoped that we do that to the best of our ability.

In conclusion, thanks must go to the National Gaelic Arts Project, Comunn na Gaidhlig and Highland Regional Council's Community Education Department for their assistance both in-kind and otherwise with the work of the Company.

We hope we can count on your continued support in 1995-96. The Development Officer, Arthur Cormack, should be your first point of contact for Feisean nan Gaidheal. He is available at Quay Brae, Portree, Isle of Skye, IV51 9DB, or by phone on 01478 612990 or fax on 01478 613263.

John MacDonald
Chairman
Feisean nan Gaidheal
May 1996

Administration, Finance & Statistics

As in previous years, the Development Officer has been responsible for the day-to-day running of Feisean nan Gaidheal. The workload has increased significantly, and this year, part-time administrative assistants were employed at peak times to assist the Development Officer.

Over the year, just over 2000 young people took part in 25 Feisean, with 356 tutors employed to teach them. The rate of pay for tutors averaged at £220.00 per week for a 5 day Feis. The cost to children varied from £6.00 to £85.00, depending on whether the Feis was residential or not, and the total cost of the 25 Feisean was in the region of £205,000, of which £114,000 was raised in the community.

Financial support in the past year was enhanced by the increased allocation from the Scottish Arts Council to enable us to run our **Grants Scheme for Feisean**. The Council awarded us £45,000, and of this, £25,795 was paid out to the Feisean in grant-aid for their main Feis activities. Another £5,500 of this grant was paid out for follow-on classes and 'one-off' activities.

Since SAC is still the main funder of Feisean nan Gaidheal also, the organisation retained the balance to offset some of its running costs.

We have, for the past two years, applied to the Scottish Office Education Department for core funding for Feisean nan Gaidheal, which would free up much more of the SAC allocation for the Feisean, but to date, we have been unsuccessful. We strongly believe that the organisation should be funded centrally by the SOED, in a similar way to other bodies of national importance such as Comunn na Gaidhlig, An Comunn Gaidhealach and Proiseact nan Ealan, and we will make it a priority over the coming months to lobby the Scottish Office for funding.

In 1996, there was trading deficit, but Feisean nan Gaidheal's financial reserves remain relatively healthy, mainly due to the fact that we still retain some of the grant from the Foundation for Sport & the Arts for use in this financial year. The deficit is in contrast to a large surplus last year, which came about because the Foundation for Sport & the Arts grant which was only received last year, had 2 years of the grant apportioned for the years 1993-95.

General and project funding for Feisean nan Gaidheal and the Feisean has come from a wide variety of sources, and we are very grateful for the support of the following bodies:



The Highland Council BBC Children in Need Appeal Clydesdale Bank PLC

The Financial Statement for 1995-96, prepared by Alex Graham C.A., forms part of this report.

The Board of Directors

The Board of Directors met 4 times since May 1995, to discuss policy issues as a representative body of the Feisean.

Minutes of all meetings, along with the Development Officer's Progress Reports are circulated on a regular basis to all members, and are available on request to others.

The current Directors of the company following elections at last year's AGM are:

John MacDonald (4/4), Chairperson (Feis an Earraich)
Rita Hunter (4/4), Company Secretary (Feis Rois)
Josie Brown (1/3) (Feis Thiriodh)
Karen MacIsaac (3/4) (Feis nan Garbh Chriochan)
Margaret Ann Beggs (4/4) (Feis Bharraigh)
Coll MacDougall (4/4) (Feis Latharna)
Nan MacLeod (3/3) (Feis Eilean an Fhraoich)
Tommy MacDonald (3/4) (Feis Tir a Mhurain)
Jim Morrison (3/4), Co-opted (Highland Regional Council)
Beathag Morrison (3/4), Co-opted (Comunn na Gaidhlig)
Malcolm MacLean (1/4), Co-opted (National Gaelic Arts Project)

Others attending at various times:

Cllr David Sanderson (Strathclyde Regional Council)
Murdo MacIver (Strathclyde Regional Council)
Rosemary Ward (Strathclyde Regional Council)
Cllr Donnie Murray (Comhairle nan Eilean)

The numbers in brackets indicate the attendance of Directors at meetings out of a possible 3 or 4 depending on when they were elected.

Projects

Over the year, Feisean nan Gaidheal has progressed the following projects:

Follow-up tuition The most extensive programme of community tuition workshops to date, undertaken with assistance from Feisean nan Gaidheal, took place in 1995/96. With support from Western Isles Enterprise, Highland Regional Council and Strathclyde Regional Council, Feisean nan Gaidheal was able to fund over 160 workshop sessions throughout these areas, as funding allowed. This is an extremely important aspect of the work of the Feisean, and we are hopeful of securing enhanced funding from various sources in 1996/97, to enable us to keep the momentum going.

Training workshops 12 workshops were planned for 1995, and of these, 10 took place. The ones which were most successful attracted small numbers, but the participants seemed to glean a lot from them. The Young Tutors Workshop weekend held at Sabhal

Mor Ostaig was particularly successful, and there needs to be much more encouragement given to those young people, who having themselves come through the Feis Movement, are now keen to pass on their skills to others.

A new programme of workshops is currently being drawn up in response to questionnaires sent to all Feisean, and all Feis tutors.

It is envisaged that the number of training days will be cut down, but that 2 or 3 workshops will run simultaneously on a series of dates in various places. This will give the added opportunity for more people involved in Feisean to meet with each other; a function they find very valuable.

Insurance Feisean nan Gaidheal is pleased to be able to continue providing insurance for all the Feisean as part of their membership. All Feisean have been covered for employers' and public liability for 2 years now, and it is hoped that this cover can be extended to musical instruments, either owned or borrowed, in the near future.

Directory of Tutors This is now much in demand as a useful resource, and is due to be further updated, and reprinted in June. Local authority Education Departments are now beginning to use it, as well as Community Education staff. The Highland Council JET Unit in Portree is responsible for maintaining and updating the database.

Newsletter 3 issues of Feisean nan Gaidheal's newsletter, **Faileas**, were issued during the year. This is now distributed to over 600 individuals and is a useful means of communication.

Local Feis Development Plans This work continues and several of the Feisean have now drawn up Development Plans. Feisean nan Gaidheal is happy to assist any Feis which has not yet taken on this task.

Musical instrument bank The number of instruments continues to grow, and we have made an application to the SAC National Lottery department for £43,000 to expand the bank. The result of the application will be known in June.

Traditional music resources Feisean nan Gaidheal's *Ceol nam Feis* music book is now at the printers, and will be officially launched in June.

Feisean nan Gaidheal also assisted the publication of 2 other music books over the year, which will be of benefit to the Feisean. Neil Campbell from Skye received grant-aid towards his *Gaelic Classics*; a collection of Gaelic tunes arranged for guitar. Taigh na Teud publishers received assistance with the *Angus Fraser Collection*; a re-print of an old manuscript of tunes for lesser well-known Gaelic songs, which will be a very useful resource.

Database of Traditional Arts In collaboration with the Traditional Music and Song Association of Scotland (TMSA) with funding from the SAC, Feisean nan Gaidheal was involved in commissioning a feasibility study on establishing a national database of traditional arts. The resulting report has been finalised, and the next step will be a meeting of the potential key users of such a resource. The Scottish Arts Council is currently

conducting a consultation on Traditional Arts Development in general, and it is possible that the database project will be discussed as part of that process.

Ceol nam Feis Concert As already reported in the introduction, a successful showcase of the Feis Movement was staged in January 1996, with 120 children from 15 Feisean taking part before a large audience of guests and the public. The feedback from this was tremendous, with a lot of press coverage and importantly, a lot of the funders of Feisean seeing for themselves the range of talent which has come through the Feisean. Some have asked if this will be an annual event, but the cost of mounting such a show is so enormous that it would not be possible to make it so. However, there is a possibility of more localised showcases taking place in various areas.

Review of Feisean nan Gaidheal's Development Plan The organisation's Development Plan must be renewed before the end of 1996. This process has already begun, and the Feisean will be consulted fully on new plans to be included.

Poster Competition A competition was run by Feisean nan Gaidheal, in which Feis participants were asked to produce a design for a poster which represented the Feisean. The overall winner was Fergus Napier of Feis Spe, who received a prize of £100.00, with Feis Spe receiving £50.00.

Ard Fheis The idea of an *Ard Fheis* or *National Feis* or *Feis Alba* (different bodies have different titles) was discussed on and off throughout the year. Proiseact nan Ealan and An Comunn Gaidhealach have plans for such an event, but as Feisean nan Gaidheal already firmly has this in their Development Plan, discussions were to have taken place between the three bodies before any concrete plans were progressed.

Feis Facts A series of fact sheets for each of the 3 main local authorities in whose area Feisean currently take place, were produced by Feisean nan Gaidheal. These outlined the support from previous district and regional councils (in the case of those involved in re-organisation), suggested ways in which support could be enhanced, and sought on-going support for the Feisean in the coming year.

Press Pack A Press Pack has been produced for use by the Feisean. This includes tips on writing Press Releases, as well as the names, addresses, telephone and fax numbers of all the main newspapers and other media. This was produced in a bid to ensure that Feisean had the necessary information to be able to publicise their events more effectively.

Working with other bodies The Development Officer has been engaged in visiting Feisean, attending Feis committee meetings and linking with various other bodies. The following is a summary of meetings and conferences attended by the Development Officer, and other Feisean nan Gaidheal personnel:

Regular liaison with NGAP Director The Development Officer has met regularly with Malcolm MacLean, Director of the National Gaelic Arts Project. We still maintain close contact with NGAP.

Regular meetings with various funding bodies on behalf of the Feisean Regular

lobbying and liaison with all the main funders of the Feisean, particularly local authorities, has been maintained throughout 1995/96.

Feisean nan Gaidheal will continue to act on behalf of all the Feisean to ensure continuity of funding over the next year, against a backdrop of cuts in overall funding.

HI-ARTS Consultative Forum The Development Officer attends a forum set up to offer advice on the direction HI-ARTS should be taking. The forum meets 3-4 times a year.

HI-ARTS Board The Development Officer is now a Director of HI-ARTS Ltd, and attends their Board meetings, which take place approximately every 2 months.

HI-ARTS Working Party on the Music Industry in the Highlands & Islands There is currently a study being carried out into the extent of the music industry in the area, with a view to it being developed. This is on-going, and the Development Officer is a member of the Working Party.

E U Objective One Feisean nan Gaidheal is represented alternately by the Chairman and the Development Officer on the consultative board overseen by CnaG to make plans for Objective One applications for the development of Gaelic. It is a strategic aim of this group to improve the level of Gaelic used at Feisean, and there could well be European funding available to enable this to happen.

CNAG Board The Chairman of Feisean nan Gaidheal represents the organisation on the new Gaelic Council set up by Comunn na Gaidhlig. This body meets twice a year, to draw up a strategy for Gaelic development in general.

RSAMD BA Scottish Music Course The Development Officer was a member of the Full Scrutiny Panel which met to validate the new BA Scottish Music Course. It was recommended that the course should proceed, and it is to begin in September this year. Significantly, several former Feis participants have been granted a place in this first year.

Presentation to Comhairle nan Eilean The Development Officer made a presentation to the Arts & Leisure Committee of Comhairle nan Eilean at one of their meetings, and this resulted in them putting forward a motion to the full Council that the Feisean in the Western Isles should receive substantially more support than previously!

Studies on the Feis Movement Two independent studies which involve the Feisean are being carried out at present. One is by a company called Comedia, with support from SAC, into the Social Impact of the Feis Movement. The other is a study on the Economics of the Gaelic Arts, being carried out by Glasgow Caledonian University, with the cooperation of Proiseact nan Ealan. Both seem to be very thorough, and should produce some interesting results.

Feisean

The Development Officer attended Feis an Earraich, Feis Lochabair Bheo, Feis Rois Inbhich, Feis nan Garbh Chriochan, Feis Tir an Eorna, Feis Chataibh, Feis Tir a Mhurain,

Feis Eilean an Fhraoich, Feis Rois nan Deugairean and Feis a Bhaile in 1995. At Easter 1996, he attended Feis an Earraich, Feis Lochabair Bheo and Feis Latharna.

Three new Feisean, Feis Eige (Isle of Eigg), Feis Dhun Eideann (Edinburgh) and Feis Obar Dheathain (Aberdeen) took place in 1995/96, with great success. The Development Officer visited the latter two, and we wish them all every success in the future.

A policy decision was made at a Board meeting, that is would not be expected that the Development Officer would visit each Feis, as it would be physically impossible. It is however expected that the Development Officer will maintain regular contact with all the Feisean and will try to visit each committee at least once a year, whether it be at the time of the Feis or not.

Minutes of all meetings of the Feisean nan Gaidheal Board and all other relevant papers will continue to be sent to all Corporate members of Feisean nan Gaidheal.

The newsletter, ***Faileas***, has succeeded in bringing the main points from these meetings to the attention of a wider group, with a circulation in excess of 600. Members should feel free to contact the Development Officer or any Board member for any information pertaining to the organisation, and with any items for the agenda at Board meetings.

Arthur Cormack
Feisean nan Gaidheal Development Officer
May 1996

Feisean nan Gaidheal

Management accounts

Trading account for the year to 31 March 1996

	1996 £	1995 £
<u>Income</u>		
Grant income	71985	37008
Membership fees	1190	1000
Bank interest	1989	502
Other income	1623	175
Ceol nam Feis	9820	0
	-----	-----
	86607	38685
Foundation for Sport and the Arts	8750	17500
-----	-----	-----
	95357	56185
<u>Expenditure</u>		
Development Officer fees	18928	17475
Development Officer expenses:		
Travel & Subsistence	6593	6422
Stationery & Postage	3743	2293
Telephone	699	641
Fax	69	56
	-----	-----
	11104	9412
Grant expenditure	35829	1702
Salaries	0	0
Accommodation, travel & subsistence	8609	4739
Stationery & printing	261	362
Bank charges	29	29
Other expenses	3145	1161
Accountancy	450	400
Depreciation	2745	1994
Music book fees	1799	2000
Workshops/seminars	2910	296
Tutors fees and expenses	1841	437
Ceol nam Feis	16103	0
	-----	-----
	103753	40007
	-----	-----
Net surplus/(deficit) for the period	(8396)	16178

Feisean nan Gaidheal

Management accounts

Balance sheet as at 31 March 1996

	£	1996 £	1995
<u>Fixed assets</u>			
Equipment		7734	7039
<u>Current assets</u>			
Debtors	4947		4295
Cash in hand and at bank	10903		37604
	-----		-----
	15850	15850	41899
<u>Current liabilities</u>			
Creditors and accruals	3046		(1254)
Grants received in advance	2500		(12500)
	-----		-----
5546	5546	(13745)	
		-----	-----
Net current assets		10304	28145
Deferred Income		8750	(17500)
	-----	-----	-----
		9288	17684
		-----	-----
<u>Capital and reserves</u>			
Profit and loss account		9288	17684
	-----	-----	-----
		9288	17648
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APPENDIX 1 Board Members 1995/96

ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES:

1. **John MacDonald, Chairman**, Lonach, Kilmore, Sleat, Isle of Skye, IV44 8RG
(Feis an Earraich)
Telephone 01478 612386
2. **Rita Hunter, Secretary**, The Stables, Allangrange, Munlochy, Ross-shire, IV8 8NZ
(Feis Rois)
Telephone 01349 862600
3. **Nan MacLeod**, Gleannan, Garrabost, Isle of Lewis, Western Isles, HS2 0PL
(Feis Eilean an Fhraoich)
Telephone 01851 870264
4. **Karen MacIsaac**, Smirisary, Glenuig, Inverness-shire, PA38 4NG
(Feis nan Garbh Chriochan)
Telephone 01687 470261
5. **Josie Brown**, 4 Cornaigbeg, Scarinish, Isle of Tiree, Argyll, PA77 6UZ
(Feis Thiriodh)
Telephone 01496 302051
6. **Coll MacDougall**, Central Cottage, Stafford Street, Oban, Argyll, PA34 5NJ
(Feis Latharna)
Telephone 01631 563058
7. **Margaret Ann Beggs**, 1 Cnoc a Chonais, Skallary, Isle of Barra, PA80 5UP
(Feis Bharraigh)
Telephone 01871 810562
8. **Tommy MacDonald**, 9 Howmore, South Uist, Western Isles, PA81 5SH
(Feis Tir a Mhurain)
Telephone 01870 620283

CO-OPTED MEMBERS:

9. **Beathag Morrison**, 22 Mansfield Street, Glasgow, G11 5QP
(Gaelic Development Officer; CnaG)
Telephone 0141 339 2022
10. **Jim Morrison**, 30 Wyvis Crescent, Conon Bridge, Dingwall, Ross-shire, IV7 8BZ
Telephone 01349 861110
11. **Malcolm MacLean**, 10 Shell Street, Stornoway, Isle of Lewis, HS1 2EA
(Director, National Gaelic Arts Project)
Telephone 01851 704493
12. **Cllr Donnie Murray**, Comhairle nan Eilean, Sandwick Road, Stornoway, Isle of Lewis
(Comhairle nan Eilean Representative)
Telephone 01851 703773

DEVELOPMENT OFFICER:

12. **Arthur Cormack**, Quay Brae, Portree, Isle of Skye, IV51 9DB
Telephone 01478 612990