



Fèisean nan Gàidheal

The National Association of Gaelic Arts Youth Tuition Festivals

Aithisg Bhliadhnail 2001 *Annual Report 2001*

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Fèisean nan Gàidheal

Aithisg Bhliadhnail 2001

~ Annual Report 2001~

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Fèisean nan Gàidheal is a company limited by guarantee, registration number SC 130071, and gratefully acknowledges the support of its core-funders Scottish Arts Council, The Highland Council and Highlands & Islands Enterprise through HI-Arts

INTRODUCTION FROM THE CHAIRMAN

It is with great pleasure that I present Fèisean nan Gàidheal's 2001 Annual Report, in a year when the Fèis movement has reached a milestone 20th anniversary.

The development of Fèisean nan Gàidheal goes on, and we end another year which has seen the organisation continuing to grow to meet the demands of supporting the Fèis movement effectively. Fèisean have taken place in communities, large and small, rural and urban, island and mainland, the length and breadth of Scotland.

It has been particularly pleasing to watch the progress of our four regionally-based Fèis Support Workers. Ingrid Henderson, Rachel Walker, Jennifer Marshall and Lena MacLellan have offered real assistance to the Fèisean they support despite the part-time nature of their posts.

I would like to thank the Board members who have served with dedication over the past year, and presided over the development of the organisation. At last year's AGM, we said goodbye to Coll MacDougall (Fèis Latharna), who had reached the end of his second 3 year term, and Margaret Ann Beggs (Fèis Bharraigh), who left the Board after a number of years service. I would like to thank them both for their contribution during their period as Board members.

I must also pay tribute to Jim Morrison, who was a co-opted Board member almost since Fèisean nan Gàidheal's establishment. During his time as Principal Community Education Officer with Highland Regional Council, he was supportive of the Fèisean within the local authority area, allowing his Community Education staff to become engaged in establishing and running Fèisean. Latterly, as the Development Officer with the Commonwealth Youth Exchange Council, he presided over the organisation of several successful Fèis exchange visits, and guided the Board through the complexities of preparing a Child Protection Policy.

Highlights of the year included the broadcast, in December 2000, of the very successful *Ceòl nam Fèis* concert from Eden Court Theatre in Inverness, preceded by a 30 minute documentary on the Fèis movement. Both programmes were produced by MnE Television, with funding from Comataidh Craolaidh Gàidhlig, and we are grateful to both organisations for their help. The television programmes raised the profile of the Fèis movement, and proved to the outside world, what we involved within the movement have always known; that there is real, often underestimated talent in the Fèisean, and commitment from the volunteers who run them.

We are always mindful of the fact that the majority of Fèisean continue to be run by dedicated volunteers, and we are always wary, as an organisation, of introducing developments which place even more of a burden on already stretched people.

The organisation has a duty to ensure the safety of the young people who are in our care while learning at the Fèisean, and the adoption last year of a Child Protection Policy, and its subsequent implementation, was, for many, a seemingly onerous task. However, with some training offered through Fèisean nan Gàidheal, and help from the Fèis Support Workers, it seems that most Fèisean have found this particular development was, in fact, handled with relative ease. Likewise, Gaelic Development Plans, which were a requirement of funding from April this year. These were received with grant applications, and again with the help of the Fèis Support Workers, have produced some thought-provoking results.

Congratulations are due, then, to all the voluntary committees, and helpers, who have coped with these developments over the past year.

The MacPherson Report, published last September with the findings of the Gaelic Task Force set up by Alasdair Morrison MSP, Minister for Gaelic, offered a model for further developing, and indeed arresting the decline in, the Gaelic language. A further Ministerial Advisory Group has now been convened, which will examine the model recommended in the MacPherson Report, and report back to the Minister with a suggested way forward for the language.

Many of the organisations involved in Gaelic development have been uncomfortable at the seemingly long time it has taken to see any positive action, and this can only have had an adverse effect on the ability of the people

involved to carry out their work effectively during this uncertain time.

I am happy to say that it does not seem that Fèisean nan Gàidheal has been slowed down by this in any way, and has carried on with its development plans until such time as we have a positive steer from the Executive as to the future of organisations like ours.

The Fèis movement must be central to the future of Gaelic language and cultural development, and must continue to take an interest in the future development of the language through whichever agency results from this current process.

The Fèisean continue to be highly regarded as a model of good practice, and one of the most successful community arts initiatives in Scotland, and even, according to Francois Matarasso, Europe.

The National Cultural Strategy for Scotland, published last year, highlighted the Fèis movement as a Case Study, and this has translated into additional financial support for the movement, which has allowed us to increase the percentage grant offered to Fèisean.

However, the employment of the Fèis Support Workers, and the activity they stimulated, resulted in the largest number of year-round activities yet supported through Fèisean nan Gàidheal. It is clear that their help may be breaking the glass ceiling on development that was experienced by volunteer burn out. We must properly evaluate these posts at the end of year two, and find ways of ensuring that they become part of the core of Fèisean nan Gàidheal's work in the future.

Another highlight of 2000 was the long-awaited launch of *Ceòl nam Fèis Volume 2*. Compiled again by Valerie Bryan, to whom our thanks go, this is a unique and invaluable resource for the Fèisean, and indeed, for education outwith the Fèisean.

I have already paid tribute to all the volunteer organisers and helpers in the many communities throughout the country who work tirelessly to ensure the success of the Fèis movement.

We are very grateful, too, for the funding which is granted to the work of Fèisean nan Gàidheal, and I would like to thank Jim Tough, the Director of Strategic Development at the Scottish Arts Council, and his colleagues, for continuing to support the work of the organisation. I would also add my thanks to our other core funders; The Highland Council, and Highlands & Islands Enterprise who support us through HI-Arts.

Project funding comes from many sources, and all the organisations who have offered funding to Fèisean nan Gàidheal in its developmental work are credited within the body of the report, but I would like to formally record our thanks here.

Please remember that Fèisean nan Gàidheal is, and wishes to remain, very much a membership-led organisation. The Fèisean should always get in touch if they are in need of support which Fèisean nan Gàidheal may be able to offer. Our primary aim is to support the Fèisean, and if at any time we can help, we will be happy to do so.

Finally I would like to thank the staff of Fèisean nan Gàidheal who work tirelessly throughout the year to promote and develop the organisation, ensure the Fèis movement is at the centre of any new initiatives and offer support and advice so willingly when required. Along with the tremendous voluntary effort that sustains Fèis activities throughout Scotland the dedication and commitment of our staff are the key factors which have helped the movement flourish so significantly.

Two decades since the first Fèis began on the island of Barra, the Fèis movement looks set to stay at the forefront of traditional Gaelic music development. Here's to the next twenty years!

John MacDonald
Fèisean nan Gàidheal Chairman
September 2001

1 STAFFING

Fèisean nan Gàidheal's staff team has remained unchanged in 2000/01. The core team is based in Portree, and there are four regionally based Fèis Support Workers. Full details are as follows:-

Core Staff

Arthur Cormack	Development Director	0.8 FTE
David I Boag	Development Officer	1.0 FTE
Anne Willoughby	Administrator	0.8 FTE

Regional Support Workers

Ingrid Henderson	Skye, Lochaber, Speyside and Aberdeen	0.6 FTE
Jennifer Marshall	Argyll, Argyll Islands and Glasgow	0.6 FTE
Rachel Walker	Northern Highland and Edinburgh	0.6 FTE
Lena MacLellan	Western Isles	0.6 FTE

Also based within the Portree office were Fraser Shaw and Louise Mackenzie. Fraser was a trainee with YouthLink Scotland, under the auspices of the Route '98 project. Louise is the Traditional Music Co-ordinator for Skye and Lochalsh, running *An Drochaid - Skye & Lochalsh Traditional Music Project*, which Fèisean nan Gàidheal is contracted to manage on behalf of Skye and Lochalsh Enterprise.

2 2000-2001 STATISTICAL SUMMARY

Over the year April 2000 to end March 2001, 1,891 young people took part in 23 main Fèisean, with 3,616 participants taking part in follow-on classes. In all, 348 tutors were employed to teach at main Fèisean, with a further 218 engaged in follow-on classes. The rate of pay for tutors ranged from £150 - £300 pro rata, for a 5 day Fèis.

The total cost of running all 23 main Fèisean was £184,261 or an average of £8,011 per Fèis. Communities themselves raised £109,117 or 59.2% of the total cost of running the main Fèisean. This is made up of participants fees, cèilidhs, dances, raffles, sales, local grants and so on.

The remainder is made up in grants from Fèisean nan Gàidheal, the various local authorities, local enterprise companies, national lottery schemes and donations from other grant making trusts and charities.

A total of 24 Fèisean ran follow-on workshops, and the total cost of running the follow-on programme was £90,886.

The figures are not a true reflection of the actual costs, with at least as much again being donated by individuals and communities in volunteer effort. The Fèisean continue to represent tremendous value for money, and increased funding is needed to allow them to grow and develop.

3 FINANCE

Financial support remained stable in 2000/01, with an increase in our core grant from the Scottish Arts Council to £74,500.

The Highland Council granted us £26,500 for the year towards our core costs and our Grants Schemes. Highlands & Islands Enterprise's funding, through HI-Arts, remained at £15,000.

Development and Project funds came from Comataidh Craolaidh Gàidhlig (£4,000 towards post-Fèis activity),

the Scottish Arts Council Music Committee (£12,000 towards post-Fèis activity), Skye & Lochalsh Enterprise (£1,600 towards our Annual Conference), The Highland Council Education Department (£6,000 towards the cost of pilot projects linking formal education and the Fèisean).

The Fèis Support Workers were funded by Carnegie United Kingdom Trust (£10,000), The Highland Council (£5,000), The Baring Foundation (£5,000), Highlands & Islands Enterprise (£10,000), Argyll & Bute Council (£3,000) and Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (£3,000).

We continued to lobby the Scottish Executive for financial assistance, but although unsuccessful in securing any funding from this source, Fèisean nan Gàidheal was featured as a Case Study in the National Cultural Strategy, and this has translated into additional funding from the Scottish Arts Council for this financial year.

Our *Grants Scheme for Fèisean* and *Grants Scheme for Post-Fèis Activity* enabled us to commit £63,979 in grant-aid to the Fèisean. Although a significant amount of money, we recognise that the local Fèisean could use increased funding, and that this would reduce the burden even further on volunteers having to continually raise money in small communities, in competition with many other organisations.

We have ended the year with a small deficit, for the third year in a row. This can, however be wholly attributed to depreciation, and our increased core costs.

There is no doubt that Fèisean nan Gàidheal is underfunded for the level of output generated by the organisation, and the local Fèisean. This was clearly spelled out in an independent assessment of Fèisean nan Gàidheal's work carried out in 2000 by EKOS for Highlands & Islands Enterprise.

Although there is a trading deficit this year, our financial situation remains relatively secure, and because of the large number of musical instruments we own, our assets are healthy.

We cannot, however, continue to eat into our limited reserves, and therefore, the only real option open to us, other than down-scaling what we do, is to make the case for increased funding. The rapid expansion of Fèisean nan Gàidheal, and its activities, points clearly towards the need for increased core funding, and this must be secured to ensure the future development of the Fèisean.

The Financial Statement for 2000/01, has been prepared by Mann, Judd & Gordon, who were appointed as auditors at last year's AGM, and forms part of the Annual Report.

4 THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors met four times from April 2000 to end March 2001. With the AGM taking place in September 2000 instead of May, the retiring and newly elected members only had the opportunity to attend two meetings. The figures in brackets next to each member indicate actual attendance, compared to possible.

Adopted minutes of all Board meetings, along with Staff Progress Reports, are sent to all member-Fèisean on a regular basis. Board meetings are usually attended by both Arthur Cormack and David Boag.

John MacDonald *Chairperson* (4/4) (The Highland Council)

Rita Hunter *Company Secretary* (4/4) (Fèis Rois)

Nanac Skivington *Treasurer* (2/4) (Fèis Tìr an Eòrna)

Catriona MacIntyre (4/4) (Fèis Lochabair)

Alasdair Beattie (4/4) (Fèis Dhun Bhreathuinn an Iar)

Jessie Newton (4/4) (Fèis Dhun Eideann)

Nan Smith (3/4) (Fèis Eilean an Fhraoich)

Kirsteen Graham (3/4) (Fèis an Earraich)

Kristine Kennedy *Co-opted* (3/4)(Comunn na Gàidhlig)

Malcolm MacLean *Co-opted* (1/4) (Pròiseact nan Ealan)

Cllr Katie MacKenzie *Attending* (1/4) (Comhairle nan Eilean)

Caroline MacLeod *Attending* (2/4) (HI-Arts)

Jim Tough *Attending* (1/4) (Scottish Arts Council)

The following retired from the Board at the Annual General Meeting 01.09.2000

Margaret Ann Beggs (0/2) (Fèis Bharraigh)

Coll MacDougall (0/2) (Fèis Latharna)

Jim Morrison (1/2), *Co-opted* (Commonwealth Youth Exchange Council)

The following joined the Board at the Annual General Meeting 01.09.2000

Moira Dunlop (1/2) (Fèis Latharna)

Morag MacLennan (2/2) (Fèis Eilean na Hearadh)

Murdo Morrison (1/2) (An Comunn Gàidhealach)

Meetings held 23 May 2000 (Inverness), 01 September 2000 (Sabbal Mòr Ostaig), 4 December 2000 (Inverness) and 19 February 2000 (Inverness).

Fèisean ann an Alba 2000 / 2001



Fèis Facts 2000 / 2001

Total Fèisean	35	Main Fèis Grants Scheme (15% grant aided through FnG)	
Highland Council Area	17	Total number of participants*	1,891
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	6	Total number of tutors	348
Argyll & Bute	4	Total expenditure by Fèisean	£184,261
Edinburgh City Area	1	Follow-on Classes (30% grant aided through FnG)	
Aberdeen City Area	1	Total number of participants*	3,616
Aberdeen-shire Area	1	Total number of class sessions offered	1,867
Glasgow City Area	2	Total expenditure by Fèisean	£90,886
West Dunbartonshire Area	1		
East Dunbartonshire Area	1		
North Ayrshire Council	1		

N.B Total no. of participants is an estimate of unique individuals

Grants Scheme for Fèisean

Fèisean nan Gàidheal granted £25,501 to 23 main Fèisean in 2000/2001 - an average of £1,108 per Fèis, utilising part of our allocation from the Scottish Arts Council Combined Arts Department. The Highland Council area main Fèisean were granted an additional £20,214 using our block grant from the Council.

In both cases, funding was awarded to the Fèisean following receipt of a straightforward application form, followed by the application of an agreed formula, whereby all Fèisean received 15% (27.5% in the Highland Council area) of their eligible costs. It has been agreed that for year 2001/2002 the main Fèisean grants would rise to 20%.

Follow-on tuition: Grants Scheme for Post-Fèis Activities

During 2000/2001 Fèisean nan Gàidheal was able to fund 1,867 workshop sessions involving 24 Fèisean, 218 tutors and 3,616 participants. Grants totalling £23,551 were committed.

It is clear that the introduction of the Fèis support workers has had a significant positive impact on the follow-on workshops programme, as these figures represent the greatest level of activity to date.

Annual General Meeting and Conference

The last AGM and Conference was held in Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, Skye, 1 - 2 September 2000. This was the first time that the gathering had taken place in September, and not in the traditional month of May. The change made it easier for the annual accounts to be presented, with more preparation time from the end of the financial year, and because it was held on a Friday and Saturday as opposed to a Thursday and Friday, meant that many more people could attend.

Board members Coll MacDougall (Fèis Latharna), Margaret Ann Beggs (Fèis Bharraigh) and Jim Morrison (Commonwealth Youth Council) all stepped down as Directors. Fèisean nan Gàidheal would like to thank all three for the invaluable skills and contributions they made to the Fèis movement over their period of office.

Two new Directors were appointed to the Board; Moira Dunlop of Fèis Latharna and Morag MacLennan of Fèis Eilean na Hearadh. Murdo Morrison of the National Mod Company was co-opted as a member. Jessie Newton (Fèis Dhun Eideann) and Nanac Skivington (Fèis Tìr an Eòrna) were re-elected to the Board.

The conference included an open forum led by John Stone of SCCMP, which included some lively debate from Fèis organisers, tutors and funders alike. This was followed on by a meeting of the Fèisean in groups led by their relevant Fèis Support Worker. This proved to be a very stimulating session, and many of the suggestions have since been incorporated into Fèisean nan Gàidheal's new Development Plan. The conference was rounded off with a session led by Kristine Kennedy, highlighting the key importance of Gaelic language to the Fèis movement, and which suggested ways in which it could be strengthened.

Fèisean nan Gàidheal is grateful for financial assistance from Skye and Lochalsh Enterprise towards the cost of the event.

Training programme

In the wake of the Rothes Hall Conference on 1 April 2000, the progress of the National Tutor Training Group has been static. This has mainly been due to the inability of the group, which encompasses groups from all over Scotland, to find a suitable time to get together.

However, Fèisean nan Gàidheal has been keen to press on with developments, with the aim of producing a coherent and consistent programme of training, to ensure that Fèisean offer high quality traditional music, song and dance tuition, within a safe and supportive environment.

For the second year running, Fèisean nan Gàidheal organised a tutor training weekend, which took place in Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, 17 and 18 February 2001. In total 11 took part in the Level 1 Introductory and 16 in the Level 2 Tutors' course. The workshops were led by Andy Thorburn and Valerie Bryan. The feedback from this was very positive, and especially pleasing as all the Level 1 trainees had previously attended their local Fèisean.

In addition, Fèisean nan Gàidheal organised an extensive programme of 8 Child Protection Training sessions for member Fèisean. These were led by Marie MacKay of the Scout Association, and were offered as part of the introduction of our Child Protection Policy, compliance with which became a condition of our funding from the start of April 2001.

Fèisean nan Gàidheal is extremely grateful to the Scottish Arts Council for the financial support provided for both the tutor training weekend, and the Child Protection Training sessions.

Fèisean nan Gàidheal achieved *Investors in People* Status, picking up the award at a ceremony at Plockton Hotel on 1 June 2000. This was in recognition of the organisation's on-going commitment to staff training and development. A key part of this has been the instigation of regular staff meetings and formal assessments, which allows everyone to discuss progress and map out plans of work for the coming period of time. As *Investors in People* standard is reassessed on a regular basis, all of the initiatives instigated will be maintained.

Finally, Fèisean nan Gàidheal produced a draft training plan, which sets out the organisation's commitment to staff, organiser, tutor and participant training over the longer term. This will be incorporated into the new development plan. As well as the continuation of the initiatives outlined above, it is hoped that the plan will lead to the appointment of a training officer, who will be able to develop a programme of training in more depth. This includes the long term aim of establishing an SQA approved tutor training qualification.

Ceòl nam Fèis book 2

This year saw the publication of *Ceòl nam Fèis 2*, the second volume to be published by the organisation, under the editorial eye of Valerie Bryan. Reaction to this has been extremely positive, and it is hoped that the book will sell as well as Volume 1, which is nearing the end of its first 3,000 run edition.

Fèisean nan Gàidheal would like to thank Valerie for all her meticulous work in producing this excellent book, which is an essential addition to the first volume.

Links with formal education

Fèisean nan Gàidheal continues to maintain strong links with the formal education sector, with the Director remaining a member of the advisory group overseeing the development of the School of Excellence in Traditional Music at Plockton High School.

In addition, Nicola Marshall, a student on Strathclyde University's Applied Music course spent a number of weeks with the organisation over the summer months of 2000. Her role included assisting with Fèis Alba, updating the Tutors Directory and working on the organisation's Child Protection Policy documents.

6 MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

Directory of Fèis Tutors

The Directory of Fèis Tutors was updated during the summer of 2000, with copies distributed to all member Fèisean. All those contained within the directory have now agreed to a Scottish Criminal Records Office (SCRO) check if, and when, Fèisean nan Gàidheal are in a position to undertake this.

However as part of Fèisean nan Gàidheal's Child Protection Policy, Fèisean have been advised to undertake their own vetting processes, with all potential tutors being asked to fill out a form before they are employed. This will ask for details of all criminal convictions, plus the names of two referees who will vouch for their

ability to work with young people. The directory acts a list of contacts only, and cannot be regarded as a list of those deemed suitable to work with young people. To date, all tutors named in the directory have been more than willing to co-operate in the implementation of the policy.

***Faileas* - Fèisean nan Gàidheal's Newsletter**

Three issues of *Faileas* were circulated in 2000/2001, and this remains an effective way of disseminating information. However, as with most years, more input from the Fèisean would be welcome to enable us to produce them more regularly, and to vary the content. At present, we send more than 1,000 copies out each time it is published. This remains an effective and popular means of communication with Fèis members and other interested parties.

2000/2001 saw the first ever publication of *Faileas* on the internet, with the full text appearing on www.feisean.org, and around 350 copies being circulated directly to people by e-mail, rather than by post.

Working with Local Authorities

Fèisean nan Gàidheal continues to work in close partnership with members and staff of a wide range of Local Authorities. In addition to their on-going core and grant-aid support, the Highland Council, along with Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and Argyll and Bute Council have been of great help in establishing and maintaining the Fèis Support Workers posts.

However, a great deal of support comes from a wide range of authorities, directly to Fèisean in their area. They include the Highland Council, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Argyll and Bute Council, Glasgow City Council, West Dunbartonshire Council, Edinburgh City Council, East Dunbartonshire Council, Aberdeen-shire Council, Aberdeen City Council, and North Ayrshire Council. Their help, either in direct, or 'in-kind' support is of vital importance to the continued success of the Fèis movement in Scotland.

Fèisean nan Gàidheal is represented on the Highland Council's Traditional Music working group by both Arthur Cormack and Rita Hunter.

Fèis Facts leaflets have been prepared for all the local authorities covering areas where there are Fèisean currently, and these have been distributed to key council staff members, and Councillors.

SAC National Lottery Funding

Fèisean nan Gàidheal has kept in touch with developments in lottery funding over the year, and passed on relevant information to its members. Fèisean have been particularly successful in securing grants from the *Awards for All* small lottery grants scheme. Many have used the grants to buy and set up instrument banks of their own, lessening the need to rely on the Fèisean nan Gàidheal bank, which is often over stretched, particularly at peak Fèis times.

Musical Instrument Bank

The Fèisean nan Gàidheal instrument bank is still in heavy demand from Fèisean and individuals alike, keen to make use of the opportunity to try out an instrument before they commit to the full cost. It is particularly encouraging to see many Fèisean throughout the country setting up their own local banks.

In the course of a year the Fèisean nan Gàidheal instruments spend a great deal of time travelling, with the obvious risk of damage that this entails. It is hoped that the establishment of a network of local banks will help ease this risk, whilst providing the Fèisean with a regular source of year round income from hires.

As usual, the greatest demand for instruments is on the small stock of clàrsachs we hold, as well as small accordions.

Fèisean nan Gàidheal plans to increase its bank of instruments in 2001-02.

Insurance

The past twelve months has seen Fèisean nan Gàidheal taking out a new enhanced policy with the Ansvar Insurance Company. As well as cover for Fèis activities and instruments, the new policy provides better cover for the company and employees from eventualities such as personal injury.

This continues to be a significant saving for those involved in Fèisean, giving them, and their equipment, an excellent level of protection.

Gaelic resource book

The Fèisean nan Gàidheal Gaelic resource booklet *Gàidhlig do Luchd-tòiseachaidh* continues to be of great use to Fèisean. It is hoped that a CD to accompany this will be available later on in 2001. Once complete, this book and CD package will offer Fèis organisers a valuable resource to help them achieve our aim of having Gaelic language available to all Fèis participants.

7 ADVOCACY and COLLABORATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES

In line with the organisation's role as a major advocate of traditional Gaelic arts in Scotland, and elsewhere, Fèisean nan Gàidheal maintained strong links with other key agencies in the sector. As well as this, we regard meaningful collaboration as an effective way of maximising development, and regard this approach as essential. The following section of the report outlines some of the on-going and new links and collaborations that took place in 2000/2001.

The Scottish Arts Council

Fèisean nan Gàidheal continues to enjoy an excellent relationship with the Scottish Arts Council (SAC), both as a key funder and development partner in a number of projects. The SAC has been undergoing a major strategic review over the last year, and it was agreed by the Board of Fèisean nan Gàidheal that the organisation would be dealt with under the new Strategic Development Department - formerly Combined Arts.

Rita Hunter continued to be a member of the SAC Music Committee, although she was due to step down in June 2001, and she, and Arthur Cormack, took part in a consultation with the SAC Music Department as to how the SAC should allocate its additional traditional arts funding.

HI-ARTS Board of Directors

Arthur Cormack is a director of HI-Arts Ltd, and attends Board meetings, and other HI-Arts events, on a regular basis. As HI-Arts is one of Fèisean nan Gàidheal's core funders, and is involved in work which complements the Fèisean, this is a very useful link to maintain.

Scottish Tourist Board Traditional Music Initiative

Fèisean nan Gàidheal's Director is a member of this group, set up to advise the STB, now VisitScotland, on traditional music development within tourism. Progress over the last twelve months has been slow, and consultation with the groups at a minimum. There was disappointment among the group members that the level of funding available to run various schemes was on the low side, and that although SAC were trying hard to develop opportunities, STB/VisitScotland were slow to take these up.

MIDAS

Although the original three year lottery funding for MIDAS (Music Industry Development and Support) came to an end, additional funding was secured to maintain the project. Fèisean nan Gàidheal staff continue to work in close contact with the project officer, Iain Hamilton, and MIDAS continues to be a very successful project, offering very real and practical help to those involved in the music industry in the Highlands & Islands.

The Scottish Parliament

Links between Fèisean nan Gàidheal and members of the Scottish Parliament have been maintained, with Arthur Cormack having attended a successful meeting of the Cross Party MSPs group on Gaelic.

MSPs are sent copies of *Faileas* on a regular basis. This has resulted in number of MSPs contacting us on a regular basis for updates, and the Fèis movement being cited as an example of good practice in parliamentary debates on a number of occasions.

In addition, a new cross-party group of MSPs on Traditional Arts (START) was established this year. This offers officers and other representatives of traditional arts in Scotland, a chance to discuss with members, issues affecting the sector. Fèisean nan Gàidheal has been represented at most of these meetings over the year.

Youthlink Scotland

Youthlink Scotland have continued to be strong advocates for youth work in Scotland over the last year. In particular, they were instrumental in ensuring that the Scottish Executive decided to offer SCRO checks free of charge to voluntary organisations in Scotland. This will be of enormous benefit to all youth organisations in Scotland, including Fèisean nan Gàidheal.

With Fraser Shaw on placement from YouthLink Scotland, a great deal of contact existed with their staff. Fraser successfully completed the Foundation level of his BA in Community and Informal Education in May 2000.

Youthlink have now appointed an Arts Officer, and Fèisean nan Gàidheal will work along with her on any mutually beneficial projects.

Comunn na Gàidhlig Board of Directors

Fèisean nan Gàidheal's Chairman, John MacDonald, is a member of the CnaG Board of Directors, and Kristine Kennedy from CnaG attends our Board meetings. CnaG has undergone some significant changes in recent times with Donald Martin taking over as acting Chief Executive, while Allan Campbell was seconded as a Consultant to the newly established Ministerial Advisory Group on Gaelic.

National Mod and An Comunn Gàidhealach

Murdo Morrison of the National Mod Company is represented on the Board of Fèisean nan Gàidheal. He has made it clear that a great deal of good will exists to ensure that the Fèis movement and the National Mod are mutually supportive.

We hope to work more closely with the National Mod, and indeed local Mòds. Fèisean and Mòds both offer significant opportunities for young people to become actively engaged in the Gaelic arts, and one should not in competition with the other.

Iomairt Chalum Chille

Good links continue with Iomairt Chalum Chille, with on-going Scottish/Irish links being explored and developed. In addition, Fèisean nan Gàidheal provided advice with regard to the development of a proposed project involving Irish, Scottish and Rumantsch young musicians to take place in Summer 2001.

Gaelic Development Task Force

Over the last twelve months, the Gaelic Development Task Force has been relatively inactive, which has caused a great deal of uncertainty within Gaelic language development organisations. Fèisean nan Gàidheal has been relatively unaffected by this state of affairs, as no direct funding from the Scottish Executive is received at this stage. The task force itself was disbanded towards the end of 2000, with a new group, the Ministerial Advisory Group on Gaelic established in its place, to bring forward the recommendations of the MacPherson Report.

Sradagan

The links between the Fèis movement and Sradagan groups throughout Scotland remained strong. It is the case that in many communities, both are organised and attended by the same groups of parents and participants respectively. A number of Sradagan groups made use of the Gaelic-medium tuition available at Fèis Tìr a' Mhurain in Summer 2000.

In addition, an unsuccessful application to the Rural Challenge Fund, to develop the potential of Fèis Tìr a' Mhurain becoming a national event included a great deal of collaboration with Sradagan groups throughout Scotland. It is hoped that this plan can be realised in another way in the near future.

The interests of Sradagan groups are represented by Kristine Kennedy, Comunn na Gàidhlig's Head of Youth Services, who attends Fèisean nan Gàidheal's Board meetings on a regular basis.

GASD -- Gaelic Arts Strategic Development

Pròiseact nan Ealan, An Comunn Gàidhealach, Comhairle nan Leabhraichean, CCG, Tosg and Fèisean nan Gàidheal have been collaborating in a new group, GASD. GASD came about as the result of a seminar held by Pròiseact nan Ealan to discuss the way forward for the arts within the new Gaelic framework recommended in the MacPherson Report.

Meetings have continued to be held regularly since the seminar, held at Balnain House, Inverness, in November 2000.

8 KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Fèis Support Workers

2000/2001 was one of the most exciting in the development of the Fèis movement in Scotland, with the appointment of four regionally based Fèis Support Workers.

After a lengthy period of planning and fund raising, all four workers took up their posts in the Summer of 2000, with the aim of providing Fèisean throughout the country with key support and advice. In previous years, the phenomenon of volunteer burn out was having an adverse effect on the development of the movement. It is envisaged that their appointment will go a long way to alleviate this, and provide volunteer Fèis committees with the kind of hands-on support that has been lacking to date.

Prior to these appointments, it was simply impossible for the core staff to provide the level of contact, support and advice that the movement needed. Fèisean nan Gàidheal are extremely grateful to The Carnegie UK Trust, The Baring Foundation, Western Isles and Skye and Lochalsh LEADER II, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, The Highland Council, Argyll and Bute Council and Highlands & Islands Enterprise for providing the funding to make this new initiative possible.

A report on their first year's progress was produced in June 2001, and there are plans for a full appraisal of their work at the end of year 2 of their employment.

Development Plans and Gaelic Language Development Plans

Given the diverse and unique character of each Fèis, the support workers have spent a great deal of time getting to know the Fèisean they are supporting and generally making the committees aware of what it is they can do to help them. However, all Fèisean, with the support of their workers, have been asked to produce Development Plans, and Gaelic Language Development Plans.

With the appointment of the workers, it was felt that this was an excellent opportunity to take stock of where each Fèis was in its Development and where the committee envisaged where they would like to be in the

medium to long term. In addition, it was felt that Gaelic Language Development Plans would assist Fèisean in gaining a greater understanding of how they could have Gaelic as a central part of their activities, in a way that is appropriate to the community in which they are based.

Child Protection Plan implementation and training

As of 1 April 2001, the adherence by each Fèis to Fèisean nan Gàidheal's Child Protection Plan became compulsory. From that date, full compliance with the plan becomes a condition of grant for all.

Prior to that, in a bid to make the process as easy as possible, Fèisean nan Gàidheal spent a great deal of time over the last couple of years developing the policy, with the aim of ensuring that it is as robust as possible, without being too difficult to understand.

It is the view of Fèisean nan Gàidheal that the implementation of the policy provide a safe working environment, protecting young people, tutors, organisers and the organisation from harm.

In 2000, full copies of the policy were sent out to all member Fèisean, in specially prepared folders. Each Fèis appointed a Child Protection Officer, whose responsibility it is to co-ordinate the implementation and adoption of the policy at that level. The policies were accompanied by laminated summary cards, which were provided to all Fèisean to distribute to all their volunteers, tutors and paid helpers.

All of the Fèis Support Workers have been extremely busy assisting Fèisean with the implementation of the Child Protection Policy, which was accompanied by a whole series of training days throughout the country, attended by representatives of each Fèis.

Ceòl nam Fèis Concert

The television broadcast of Fèisean nan Gàidheal's third *Ceòl nam Fèis* concert took place on BBC2 Scotland, on 21 December 2000. This was preceded the week before, 14 December, by a 30 minute documentary on the Fèis movement.

Both these programmes were excellent, and captured the real spirit of the Fèis movement. The concert programme in particular, which featured 120 young people from all over Scotland, was a really proud moment for all those involved, now and in the past. There was more good news in December 2000, when the Highland News named the *Ceòl nam Fèis* concert as its 'gig of the year.' This relegated T in the Park to seventh place, and confirmed the belief that the concert was the unmissable event of 2000.

Both programmes were produced by MnE Television with finance from Comataidh Craolaidh Gàidhlig - the Gaelic Broadcasting Committee.

Fèis Alba

Fèis Alba is specifically aimed at 16 - 25 year olds from all over Scotland, keen to develop their traditional Gaelic music, song and dance skills at the advanced level. The third Fèis Alba took place in Stornoway, Isle of Lewis, from 7 -11 August.

A total of 27 participants attended the Fèis, and benefited from a low participant/tutor ratio.

The Fèis was originally set up as a partnership between Fèisean nan Gàidheal, Pròiseact nan Ealan, HI-Arts and An Comunn Gàidhealach, although the entire project is co-ordinated and run by Fèisean nan Gàidheal staff. An independent Board of Directors meets to ensure that the project is progressing as envisaged at the outset of the development.

The Fèis included a series of masterclasses and concerts, as well as the workshops, and was rounded off with a concert, *Ceòl is Cleas*, which was run in partnership with the Sgoil Drama Gàidhlig Lasair group. Despite a great deal of rain, the Fèis was a success, and introduced the Western Isles to this developing event.

Fèis Alba 2000 was funded by Fèisean nan Gàidheal, The Scottish Arts Council National Lottery Fund, Highlands & Islands Enterprise and Comhairle nan Eilean Siar.

Teenage Provision

The debate over the most suitable solution to the provision of workshops for the teenage age group continued over the course of the year. It is widely reported by Fèisean that they note a significant tailing off in the participation level of teenagers. This is not unique to the Fèis movement, with Kristine Kennedy of Comunn na Gàidhlig reporting that a similar trend had been noted with Sradagan groups.

In order to try and alleviate the problem, a number of Fèisean have implemented senior classes as part of their normal Fèis activities. In addition, Fèis Rois successfully, with additional support from Fèisean nan Gàidheal, opened up Fèis Rois nan Deugairean, the senior school age-group Fèis, to youngsters from outwith Ross and Cromarty.

It is clear that these developments are the tip of the iceberg, and a great deal of work will have to be done to ensure that teenagers are engaged fully in the Fèis movement, to ensure that future generations are able to feed back into their community, as organisers and tutors.

EKOS Report

Highlands & Islands Enterprise ordered an Interim Assessment of Fèisean nan Gàidheal, which was carried out by Inverness-based consultants, EKOS.

The assessment was to look at the effectiveness of Fèisean nan Gàidheal as a model, and also to examine how transferable the model might be to other areas of community development.

The resulting report was favourable on the whole, and recognised the tremendous return the investment in the Fèisean produces. It also pointed to certain weaknesses within Fèisean nan Gàidheal and the Fèisean themselves, and suggested ways in which these could be rectified.

Some of the recommendations of the EKOS Assessment will be taken on board in Fèisean nan Gàidheal's new Development Plan for the years 2001 - 2005.

www.feisean.org

The Fèisean nan Gàidheal web site continues to be a source of valuable information for people all over the world. At the present time approximately 25 individual unique 'hits' are recorded on a daily basis.

9 CONTACT WITH FEISEAN AND FEIS NEWS

The most important aspect of Fèisean nan Gàidheal's work is to support the work of Fèisean throughout the country. The last twelve months has seen a dramatic increase in the direct contact between Fèisean nan Gàidheal and the member Fèisean, through the appointment of the four Fèis Support Workers.

As part of the on-going development of the Fèis movement, many member Fèisean have now completed Development Plans, in conjunction with their support workers. These should assist Fèisean to map out their programme and financial sustainability, as well as to give the a reference point against which to assess progress.

In addition, as a direct follow-on to the discussions at last year's Annual Conference, all Fèisean have this year, produced Gaelic plans. This outlines the steps that each Fèis intends to take in ensuring that Gaelic language is at the heart of their activities.

This section gives a brief summary of the work of each Fèis over the last twelve months, presented by regional Fèis support worker areas.

Fèis Support Worker: Rachel Walker

Fèis Air an Oir

Fèis Air an Oir, which is based in North West Sutherland, was one of two Fèisean this year which came about through funding provided by the Scottish Arts Council supporting the Dùthchas project. The Fèis committee have been working really hard, and ran a series of one day summer workshops in 2000. A large number of children from all over the North Coast attended the workshops, and this promises to be a significant new development for the Fèis movement in the North.

Already good links have been established with the neighbouring Fèis Chataibh, and it is hoped that in the future, more joint initiatives can be developed.

Fèis a' Bhaile

This took place in Inverness's Charleston Academy, attracting 57 participants, 17 - 23 October 2000. There was an increase in the number of new faces this year, which was extremely encouraging, along with the large number of Gaelic speaking children who attended. A fantastic team of tutors gave a great Cèilidh on the Wednesday afternoon, with some great tunes and dancing, and the high level of teaching was obvious at the final cèilidh on the Friday night, with all the seats filled.

The committee met with the support worker to discuss their Gaelic development, which was subsequently completed. In addition, the Fèis ran a series of two follow-on classes, and it is hoped that a further drama workshop can be organised for later on in the year, once demand for them has been assessed.

Fèis na Comraich

The Fèis was given an *Awards for All* grant in October 2000, and since then, they have organised a series of workshops. The main thrust of the application focused in on the problems the community has in overcoming long distance to participate in the traditional arts. The road into the Applecross community, the infamous Bealach nam Ba, is frequently blocked by snow or ice in the winter, leaving a long road journey to the nearest sizeable settlements. This award allows the community to bring tuition to the participants, rather than the other way round.

There was some difficulty early in 2001, when it emerged that there was some competing interests in terms of prioritising activity, but these seem to have been largely overcome, and the Fèis is delivering the programme as envisaged.

The *Awards for All* grant has also allowed the community to establish an instrument bank, and it is hoped that this move will ensure the longer term sustainability of tuition within the area.

Fèis Chataibh

This year's Fèis ran throughout the first week of July 2000, and was a great success. The Fèis had undergone a couple of difficult years prior to this, but a new committee has brought with it a great deal of new enthusiasm.

They have been particularly successful in acquiring new funds, and were awarded £4,500 from *Awards for All*, and a further £600 from Caithness and Sutherland Enterprise to develop further their follow-on programme and establish an instrument bank.

In addition, the Fèis has made great progress in their Gaelic development, with the successful operation of a series of Gaelic night classes within the local community over the course of the year.

The Fèis received a further boost early in 2001, when it emerged that a former participant had performed at one of the highest profile celebrity weddings of recent years. As described by clàrsach player Jennifer Port of Golspie, who is currently studying traditional music at the RSAMD in Glasgow, "As a musician, playing for one of the most famous singers in the world is something I have always dreamed of. Therefore you can imagine how excited I was to play at Skibo Castle to entertain guests attending the marriage of Madonna and Guy Ritchie, and at the Christening of their baby son Rocco."

Fèis Chille Mhòraig

In addition to an extensive range of year round workshops, Fèis Chille Mhòraig ran a three-day main Fèis in the early part of August 2000. The Fèis covers a large area, in the Glens around Beaulieu to the West of Inverness. During the year, the Fèis has undergone a significant change in the composition of the committee. It appears that a great deal of the work was being done by a very small number of individuals. They decided to move on as the work load was becoming too great, and a new committee was formed.

It is now the case that a greater number of people are involved in activities, and they have been busy planning a series of events for later in 2001.

In preparing their Gaelic Development Plan, the Fèis Chille Mhòraig committee came up with the idea of producing a CD to accompany Fèisean nan Gàidheal's *Gàidhlig do Luchd-tòiseachaidh* booklet. It was clear that the committee were struggling to fully integrate Gaelic into their programme despite some great efforts since the Fèis began. The idea of producing a CD came about to ensure that they are able to fulfil their commitment to promoting Gaelic within their area.

Fèis Dhun Eideann

The Edinburgh-based Fèis Dhun Eideann has had another incredibly busy year, with their main Fèis taking place during the February long weekend. As usual, the voluntary Fèis committee delivered an amazing level of follow-on workshops, encompassing a large variety of traditional Gaelic music, song, dance and drama disciplines.

Of particular note over the year was the development of the Meanbh-Chuileag Theatre Group, who have developed a series of theatre-in-education scripts, which they performed under the auspices of Fèis Dhun Eideann in and around the city of Edinburgh.

It was clear from this initial short series of performances that demand exists for such a group throughout the country. Performing in both Gaelic and English as required, the group introduce elements of Gaelic language and culture throughout, and it is clear that this represents an important opportunity to raise awareness of Gaelic to groups of young people who may not otherwise know or hear of it.

Fèis Dhun Eideann performers played in the Scottish Parliament on 21 June 2000, at the end of a debate which highlighted the demise of the Edinburgh Folk Festival, but which focussed, too, on traditional music in general. During that debate, the Fèis movement was mentioned by several MSPs as an example of good practice, a fact that was further emphasised by the Fèis Dhun Eideann performance.

Fèis na h-Oige

This year saw the Inverness-based Gaelic-medium Fèis undergo a transformation, with the forming of a new committee. Essentially the group is made up of parents of children at the city's Central Primary School, who are keen to see cultural aspects of Gaelic be taught to their children in parallel with the language.

In previous years, Fèis na h-Oige had operated a week long main Fèis, but this proved to be unsustainable. Despite there being a lapse of a couple of years, clàrsach follow-on classes continued. This year, the new committee decided to expand the programme by offering a series of Gaelic-medium Saturday workshops. These took place over the winter and spring and proved to be a great success. Fund-raising events, such as cèilidh-dances have helped the financial position.

Another positive aspect of this revival has been the fact that children from other Gaelic-medium classes have been coming to the Fèis. Not only does this help the sustainability of the classes, but gives Gaelic-medium pupils a chance to integrate with peers from other areas. With opportunities for young Gaels to mix socially outwith the formal sector few and far between, Fèis na h-Oige is, and will continue to be, an important part of Gaelic development in the Highlands.

Fèis Rois

Fèis Rois had another very busy year, with Fèis Rois Oigridh taking place in Ullapool and Fèis Rois nan Deugairean in Gairloch. The junior Fèis attracted a record number of young people from all over Ross and

Cromarty, who for the first year were able to make use of the new Ullapool High School and MacPhail Centre. This new building offers both exceptional classroom and performance spaces, and will be an excellent new home for the Fèis for years to come.

It was at the senior Fèis that the *Celtic Links* CD was launched. This was the fruits of a collaborative project between Fèis Rois and young musicians from the County Roscommon area of the Ireland. Although a fire destroyed the previous accommodation at the Gairloch Sands Hotel shortly after the 1999 Fèis, participants were housed in a number of bed and breakfasts throughout the West Coast village. Numbers were slightly affected by the fact that the Fèis had to take place during Mod week, as a number of participants were due to take part in Highland Council's Millennium Dome performance the following week. Nonetheless, the week was a great success.

This year's Fèis Rois nan Deugairean received extra funding to allow up to 10 participants from outwith Ross and Cromarty to attend. This was in direct response to the growing need that has been identified for teenage provision within the Fèis movement.

Fèis Rois continues to run a highly successful and comprehensive follow-on programme, in locations throughout the Ross and Cromarty area.

The Fèis Rois programme received a boost towards the end of 2000, when it was announced that they had been successful with a Scottish Arts Council National Lottery application which would allow them to appoint an Education Officer. The project includes setting up and managing a series of classes in primary and secondary schools throughout Ross and Cromarty, as well as community classes and tutor training.

Summer 2000 saw the instigation of the Fèis Rois summer sessions, which involved a group of ten young people coming together for training in performance, followed by a tour of Ross and Cromarty to entertain both locals and tourists alike. The initiative was made possible by further funding from SAC National Lottery, and it is envisaged that this will be an annual project.

Fèis Strath Fharragaig

The Fèis committee have had another busy year, running a series of Saturday workshops in the newly refurbished Farr village hall. As one of the Fèisean who have opted to run solely year round workshops as opposed to a main Fèis, the committee managed to offer approximately 12 different disciplines in each of four occasions throughout the year.

As well as this, the Fèis has been working on its Gaelic Development Plan. In line with other Fèisean, the aim is to produce a plan that is appropriate to the level of Gaelic that exists within the community. The main aim is to ensure that as far as possible, the Gaelic language is central to the activities of the Fèis movement.

The refurbished village hall at Farr has been an extremely busy venue since it opened in 2000. As well as the Fèis, the hall has hosted a wide variety of bands and other performances, and is rapidly gaining a reputation in the area as a prime performance venue.

Fèis Support Worker: Ingrid Henderson

Fèis an Earraich

This year's main Fèis took place in Portree, 10 - 14 April, utilising mainly the High School hostel. In total some 80 young people from all over Skye and Lochalsh attended. In addition, Fèis nan Deugairean offered more advanced tuition to local teenage participants.

In October, 13 older Fèis an Earraich participants travelled to visit the Armagh Pipers Club, and join their Irish counterparts in a series of traditional music workshops. The club, which has operated for about 20 years, is very similar to Fèisean in Scotland, and covers the whole of County Armagh. In addition to the classes, the group saw many of the sights the local area has to offer. It is anticipated that a group from Armagh will attend Fèis an Earraich during Easter 2001.

Fèis an Earraich received funding from Iomairt Chaluim Chille towards the cost of the trip.

Fèis Eige

Eigg held it's annual Fèis during the summer of 2000, and again drew most of the islands young people. In conjunction with the support worker, plans have been discussed to create links with other local Fèisean, such as Fèis nan Garbh Chrìochan and other small island Fèisean. They hope to develop more sustainable fund raising programmes and have produced a new development plan.

Fèis nan Garbh Chrìochan

The Fèis which is based in the village of Acharacle took place 17 - 21 July, and again drew together about 90 young people from a wide area of West Lochaber. The Fèis is primarily non-residential, but some accommodation is provided for those who come from some distance away.

The wide coverage of the Fèis participants is reflected in their follow-on programme which operates in Acharacle, Arisaig and Morar. Of particular significance during the year, were the initial moves to integrate Gaelic song and instrumental tuition within the school day in the Gaelic-medium unit at Morar. This would be a very significant development, as Fèisean nan Gàidheal are keen to develop further the links between Fèisean and formal education.

This is particularly the case with Gaelic-medium units, where the desire to link language and culture has been expressed from the outset.

Fèis nan Garbh Chrìochan continues to receive the overwhelming backing of the local community, demonstrated by the support fund raising initiatives gain throughout the year. This example highlights the vital links that must exist between a Fèis and the local community if they are to thrive, and gain longer term sustainability.

Fèis Lochabair

The main Fèis took place in Caol Primary School week beginning 10th April 2000. The usual venue, Lochaber High School was unavailable this year due to major refurbishment work. Close to 100 participants enjoyed tuition from a fantastic team of tutors, many of whom were Lochaber based.

During the year, Fèis Lochabair decided to try and pull all their follow-on activity together, so that a wide range of disciplines were on offer to participants, on the same night, and in the same venue. Lochaber High School was the venue, and this proved to be a very successful move. By doing this, the amount of administration work was reduced to shorter period of time.

This follow-on programme was preceded by a questionnaire survey which went out to all Lochaber schools. The results enabled the committee to gauge levels of interest, whilst at the same time notifying potential participants.

Fèis Mharr

Fèis Mharr was based in the Deeside village of Aboyne, and was the first member Fèis to be established in the Aberdeen-shire area. The main aim of the Fèis was to provide Gaelic music, song and dance tuition as part of the annual Aboyne and Deeside festival.

This took place 3 - 5 July 2000. It was not clear how the Fèis wanted to develop, so for the first year, Fèisean nan Gàidheal agreed to lend instruments, with the possibility of financial support in the future once demand had been assessed. Since then, there has been little activity and it may be the case that Fèis Mharr was a one off event.

Fèis Obar Dheathain

The annual Fèis took place during the February weekend 2001. Once again the Fèis made use of Aberdeen's Grammar School. In all 98 people took part in the Fèis, which again drew some participants from the city's Gilcomston Primary School Gaelic unit.

Fèisean nan Gàidheal acknowledge the tremendous amount of work that goes into organising Fèisean, the vast majority of which is undertaken by volunteers. This effort is particularly impressive in areas that may not be considered traditionally Gaelic speaking such as Aberdeen.

Despite this, the committee have consistently managed to find Gaelic speaking tutors for a number of subjects, and offer Gaelic language as a subject at the Fèis. As a Scotland wide organisation, it is important that all Fèisean try to promote Gaelic within their area, and Fèisean nan Gàidheal acknowledges the work of all Fèisean, including Fèis Obar Dheathain in promoting the Gaelic language.

Fèis Ratharsaidh

This year's Fèis Ratharsaidh took place at the scenic Isle of Raasay during the February long weekend 2000. In total 33 young people took part in the wide range of activities on offer. This was up on last year's figure, resulting in extra accommodation on the island being used for the first time. In numeric terms, this is one of the smallest Fèisean, but per head of local population is one of the largest.

One of the unique aspects of the Fèis movement is the wide range and unique nature of the communities in which they operate. For this reason each has it's own unique character and Fèis Ratharsaidh is no exception. With such small numbers compared to some of the large Fèisean, everyone can get to know each other and there is an exceptional rapport between tutors and students.

This Fèis receives a great deal of support from the Raasay Heritage Trust, and Fèisean nan Gàidheal fully acknowledges all that they have done for Gaelic music development on the Island.

Fèis Spè

This year's Fèis Spè which serves the community of Badenoch and Strathspey took place at Loch Insh Watersports Centre, Kincaig. A total of 61 participants took part in the Fèis, making use of the exceptional accommodation at the centre. Fèis Spè is unique in the fact that the programme incorporates traditional Gaelic music, song, dance and drama tuition, with a daily activity, such as kayaking, archery and mountain biking. This is only possible given the range of facilities available at the centre.

This committee has seen a great deal of change over this year, but the new group did an exceptional job in pulling the Fèis together in such a short period of time. One of the suggestions that came from the Fèis committee is that extra funding be made available for a person to be employed to stay in the centre for the full week, to provide overall supervision responsibility. The committee had found it very difficult to be able to commit to staying in the full week.

Fèis Thròdairnis

This year saw the development of Fèis Thròdairnis, based in the Trotternish peninsula of North Skye. The initiative came about as part of the Dùthchas project, which identified from a local survey, a desire to have traditional music tuition in the area. The Scottish Arts Council provided start up funding, and with advice from Fèisean nan Gàidheal the Fèis was established. A steering group met on a number of occasions throughout the year, in preparation for the Fèis itself which took place 3 - 6 July 2000.

Since then, the group have moved forward with plans and implemented a follow-on workshops programme in locations throughout the area.

Fèis Support Worker: Jennifer Marshall

Fèis Arainn

This year's Fèis took place 24 - 28 July 2000, and was judged to have been a great success. The committee have been exceptionally busy over the last year, developing and implementing plans for a series of follow-on workshops. Their programme has greatly expanded with financial assistance from Fèisean nan Gàidheal, Scottish Arts Council and Comataidh Craolaidh Gàidhlig, and now offers a wide range of subjects to young people on Arran.

The workshops took place over a series of Saturdays' during the winter months, with two tutors per session offering subjects including Gaelic drama, Gaelic song, Accordion, Whistle, Percussion and Clàrsach. In addition, funding from Awards for All has allowed the Fèis to set up a bank of instruments.

Fèis Carmunnock

Fèis Carmunnock is based on the South-side of Glasgow, and has been developing over the last year. The support worker for the area attended a meeting at the beginning of November 2000, which was followed by a public meeting the next month. In all twelve people attended, along with a representative of Glasgow City Council.

A committee was formed and has been busy organising fund-raising events for their first workshop which they had hoped would take place in January 2001, but that has been put back to May 2001.

Fèis Dhun Bhreatuinn

The Fèis took place from 12 February 2001, for six weeks in and around Dumbarton. The support worker has met with the committee on a number of occasions over the year, providing support and advice as required. It is hoped that a further schools project will take place within the short term.

They successfully completed their Development Plan which should help the committee progress their programme of activities over the next few years.

Fèis Ile

The Fèis has experienced a great deal of difficulties over the year, as the committee ran into difficulties recruiting office bearers. However, after a great deal of help from the support worker, a viable committee was formed to run this year's Fèis, which took place 19 - 23 February 2001.

This situation highlights the fragile nature of Fèis committees in general, who still suffer from volunteer burn-out. It is hoped that the support and advice of the support workers will enable Fèisean to be freed from some of the more time consuming tasks, keeping their enthusiasm intact.

Fèis Innis an Uillt

This Fèis based at Bishopbriggs Meadowburn Primary School offers an important opportunity for Gaelic-medium pupils in and around the area to come together and learn through Gaelic-medium. Throughout the course of the year, the Fèis ran two successful day long Fèisean.

As part of the Fèis Innis an Uillt Gaelic development plan, it is hoped that the Fèis will be opened out to Gaelic-medium pupils from other schools in the area. As with Fèis na h-Oige in Inverness, this Fèis offers an important opportunity for young Gaels in the area to gather in a setting out with their normal school times.

Fèis Latharna

For the second year, the Fèis took place in Oban's Park Primary school, during the third week of April. Approximately 80 young people enjoyed a wide range of classes, following on from a series of pre-Fèis workshops in the run-up to the event. Of particular note was the use of Gaelic amongst both Gaelic and English medium youngsters. This may have been in part due to the fact that they were not allowed to get anything from the tuck shop without ordering in Gaelic. It certainly worked.

Fèis Latharna participants Anna Currie, Joy Dunlop and Andrew Dunlop, who play as the band "Ceòl Gàire" were asked to perform the songs at the Oran Ur competition at the National Mod in Oban. The band spent a week working with the composers of the songs and performed them all live at the competition final, broadcast live on Radio nan Gàidheal.

Fèis Mhuile

This year's Fèis Mhuile took place in Bunessan 15 - 17 February 2001. The committee met in December and decided to press ahead with this year's Fèis after a lapse of a year. The support worker was especially useful in providing tutor contacts details, and securing grants from various sources including Fèisean nan Gàidheal.

The committee have spent time looking at their Gaelic Development plan, as well as longer term strategies for funding. There are also moves afoot to develop a follow-on programme, which it is hoped will provide Mull youngsters a great opportunity to participate in activity on a year round basis.

Fèis Oigridh Glaschu

Fèis Oigridh Glaschu took place on Tuesday 9th May at the Mitchell Theatre in Glasgow. The Fèis featured participants from various Gaelic-medium primary and secondary schools from the Glasgow and Argyll areas. The theme for this millennial event was “Sùil air adhart” or “Into the future.” The standard of these performances was fantastic with each act showing that they had a good grasp of Gaelic. A sell out performance was enjoyed by everybody.

Fèis Thiriodh

Due to the reconstruction of the island's hall, the Fèis committee decided to have a 'sabbatical' whilst the work was under way. However, activity was maintained by two groups of participants who attended Fèis nan Garbh Chrìochan and Fèis Tìr a' Mhurain.

Fèis Support Worker: Lena MacLellan

Fèis Bharraigh

The Fèis Bharraigh committee have undergone a difficult year, with a fair degree of change within their committee. However, after an appeal to the local community in *Guth Bharraigh*, a new group of volunteers came forward. Since then, a great deal of work has been undertaken, and new funds raised. The most significant change was that for the first time, the Fèis took place over a week 21 - 30 July 2000, instead of the traditional fortnight. This significantly reduced the burden of work on the committee, and helped reduce operating costs.

Fèis Eilean an Fhraoich

The annual Fèis Eilean an Fhraoich took place in Stornoway's Nicolson Institute during the third week of July and attracted more than 200 young people. It was encouraging to see the large number of local tutors employed at the Fèis, particularly as many of them had been Fèis participants in the past.

The final concert was attended by Eamonn O' Cuiv the Irish Minister of State at the Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands. He was on a visit to the Western Isles and took time out from his busy schedule to attend the concert.

Fèis Eilean na Hearadh

This year's Fèis took place in the summer of 2000, and attracted a total of 51 participants from all over Harris. A wide range of disciplines were on offer including clàrsach, accordion, whistle, keyboard, drama, song, dance and guitar. The Fèis also ran a dance class throughout the year.

There was some disappointment during the year, when it emerged that the Harris Arts and Heritage Office they had been using had been let out to somebody else. However, this problem seems to have been overcome and the Fèis, a success.

Fèis Tìr an Eòrna

The main Fèis took place in the school at Paible in North Uist, 3 - 6 July 2000. In excess of 100 participants from all over North Uist took part. They were joined by a number of young people from Berneray, who were able to make use of the newly completed causeway to attend on a daily basis.

The Fèis committee operates an extensive range of follow-on classes throughout the year, and it was clear that these were having a significant positive impact on the skill level of the island youngsters.

Fèis Tìr a' Mhurain

The only week long Gaelic-medium Fèis took place again, during summer 2000, in Sgoil Lionacleit, Benbecula. This is a unique experience, as the young people gain from 100% Gaelic immersion for the duration of the

week. With this appeal, the Fèis is developing a reputation all over the country, and participants from Acharacle Sradagan, and Fèis Thiriodh joined the local young people for the week.

During the year, plans were submitted to the Rural Challenge Fund with the aim of developing the national appeal of the Fèis to Gaelic-medium pupils. However, this application was unsuccessful, but it is hoped that the plan can be achieved through alternative sources of funding.

10.0 Financial Statements 2000/01

Fèisean nan Gàidheal trading account for the year to 31 March 2001

	31.03.2001	31.03.2000
	£	£
Income		
Grant income	158,489	143,677
Membership fees	2,435	1,940
Bank interest	329	220
Other income	54	4,636
Book sales	2,806	1,250
Instrument bank revenue	3,243	3,520
Ceòl nam Fèis concert	-	4,051
Management Fee from TMP	2,155	-
Fèis Alba	11,658	-
Carnegie United Kingdom Trust	10,000	-
	-----	-----
	191,169	159,294
Scottish Arts Council National Lottery grant release	6,750	6,750
	-----	-----
	197,919	166,044
Expenditure		
Staff fees	69,959	38,045
Staff expenses	8,270	11,677
Grants paid out	61,599	56,972
Office expenses	1,038	1,413
Accommodation, travel & subsistence	3,374	6,120
Stationery & printing	1,979	7,524
Bank charges	-	5
Training Programme	5,061	1,473
Music book fees	4,427	2,017
Annual Conference	3,892	4,061
Other expenses	3,892	4,591
Auditors remuneration	350	350
Board expenses	3,666	-
Accountancy	-	561
Rent, electricity etc	6,852	4,250
Insurance	-	2,313
Ceòl nam Fèis	-	13,141
Fèis Alba	6,500	3,561
	-----	-----
	187,280	158,074
	-----	-----
	10,739	7,970
Depreciation:		
Office equipment	2,760	3,148
Musical instruments	12,418	10,736
Computer Equipment	400	-
	-----	-----
	15,578	13,884
	-----	-----
Net surplus/(deficit) for the period	(£4,839)	(£5,914)
	-----	-----

Fèisean nan Gàidheal balance sheet as at 31 March 2001

	2001	2000
	£	£
Fixed Assets		
Tangible assets	8,815	21,197
Current Assets		
Stocks	8,959	2,400
Debtors	7,052	13,453
Cash in hand and at bank	14,822	12,288
	<u>30,833</u>	<u>28,141</u>
Creditors		
Amounts falling due within one year	(22,749)	(20,895)
	<u>8,039</u>	<u>7,246</u>
Net Current Assets		
	<u>16,854</u>	<u>28,443</u>
Total Assets less Current Liabilities		
	<u>(6,632)</u>	<u>(13,382)</u>
	<u>10,222</u>	<u>15,061</u>
Reserves		
Profit and loss account	10,222	15,061
	<u>£10,222</u>	<u>£15,061</u>

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- 18 **David Boag**, Meall House, Portree, Isle of Skye, IV51 9BZ
(In attendance; Fèisean nan Gàidheal Development Officer) Telephone 01478 613355

Appendix 2**Fèis Contacts 2000 / 2001**

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Appendix 2 (cont.)**Fèis Contacts 2000 / 2001**

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Fèis Tìr a' Mhurain	Tommy MacDonald, Ben Mhòr House, Howmore South Uist	(01870) 620283
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