

**THE SCOTTISH ARTS COUNCIL**

**SPECIALIST ADVISER ARTISTIC EVALUATION - MUSIC**

**Organisation/Venue:** **Traditional Music and Song Association of Scotland**

**Title of Event:** **TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT DAY**  
Perth Library

**Type of Event:** Lectures, discussion and Annual General Meeting

**Date of Visit:** Sunday 16 November 2003

This report has been commissioned by the Scottish Arts Council to evaluate the artistic quality of the production named below. It has been prepared by either a specialist Advisor, or a Council Officer, as indicated at the end of the form. The report will be circulated to the organisation which produced the work, to the management of the venue if the venue is core funded by the Scottish Arts Council.

The report may be made available to Scottish Arts Council Officers, Council and Committee members, and specialist advisors as appropriate. It will be taken into account in assessing the work of the producing company in relation to applications for funding to the Scottish Arts Council. It may also be used by the Council to report on the overall performance of its Core Funded organisations.

**Evaluators should enter their rating under each section, explaining briefly their reason for the rating with reference to their comments under each section. Ratings should be given in accordance with the following:**

**Very Poor** –standard falls well below what is acceptable

**Poor**- not attaining acceptable standards of conception or presentation

**Competent**– routine rather than especially interesting

**Good** –well conceived and executed.

**Excellent** –conceived and executed to a high standard.

**Rating for this event is ‘good’**

## COMMENTS

The lecture theatre in Perth library provided a suitable venue for this day of lectures and discussion, followed by the society's AGM. There were about 40 in attendance at the morning session.

Anne Neilson, convenor of the TMSA, opened proceedings, and Carolyn Paterson of the SAC chaired the morning session. Keynote speeches were delivered by Arthur Cormack of Feisean nan Gaidheal, Steve Byrne, Traditional Arts Co-ordinator in Edinburgh, and Karine Polwart, vice-convenor of the TMSA. Afternoon talks were presented by Cathie Rae and Joyce Murison.

Central to the discussion were questions of funding and the future direction for the TMSA.

Arthur Cormack outlined the history and development of the feis movement, and described a range of activities currently undertaken by *Feisean nan Gaidheal*, from tutor training and tourist-related initiatives, to the core activity of supporting and publicising the locally-based feisean. It was agreed that the TMSA, as a similarly constituted, branch-based organisation, might be able to draw on the experience of *Feisean nan Gaidheal* in addressing future funding and organisational needs.

Steve Byrne outlined his experience in setting up *Ceilidh Culture*, launched in Edinburgh in March 2003. Steve discussed the practicalities, financial and otherwise, of bringing together a variety of different arts events under a single banner.

Karine Polwart, as vice-convenor of the TMSA, outlined positive developments since last year's AGM, including the appointment of John Morran as a development worker, joining the existing staff of Caroline Hewat and Caroline Smith. The society has redesigned its logo and expanded its quarterly newsletter, and offers improved membership benefits.

Karine stressed the need for better communication within the organisation at both local and national level, and suggested that the TMSA should focus its activities on the practical and manageable, rather than attempting to cover all bases in an already crowded artistic landscape. Opportunities for co-operation with other arts bodies and organisations should be explored, as with the successful joint-promotion of St Andrews Night events with *Hands Up for Trad*.

Disappointment was expressed at the low turn-out for the training and development day events.

This was a well-conceived and informative meeting, albeit relatively sparsely attended. Not surprisingly, discussion focused on immediate and practical issues of funding and organisation. It seems to me that the format of the meeting could well be expanded to incorporate a full day's conference, with a much wider artistic/ musical agenda. This might have broader appeal, and would be a very practical way of attracting a larger audience, some of whom might be encouraged to attend the society's AGM.

**3. Acknowledgement of Scottish Arts Council Funding** (if applicable)

Following is an extract from the Scottish Arts Council’s conditions of grant for funded organisations:

*“The company should acknowledge Scottish Arts Council funding in press releases, at launches, on all published materials (including leaflets, brochures, programmes, posters, notices display and exhibition materials, websites and advertising). Acknowledgement of the Scottish Arts Council grant must also be made in any secondary or indirect products arising from the revenue funding such as recordings, publications, video, broadcasts, and computer programmes etc. “*

Please comment on whether the above conditions of grant were met, including use and prominence of the Scottish Arts Council logo on the company’s website.

The new TMSA logo, newsletter and publicity material are very well designed. The SAC is fully acknowledged in this material.

**Name: Iain MacInnes**

**Date: 16 December 2003**

**Advisor**      **?** **x**                      **Scottish Arts Council Officer**                      **?**

*(Please tick above as appropriate)*