

Committee Report for year ending December 2020

Dear FoHM member

The end of another year and what a year it has been! Little did any of us expect that we would once again be holding a virtual AGM in 2021!



The committee would like to express thanks to Mr GWJ Eden for the independent examination of the 2020 accounts and to all members for your ongoing support. We very much hope to be able to hold the Annual General Meeting in 2022 face to face but until that is possible please stay safe and well. Meanwhile please find below our report for 2020.

December 2020

Committee Members

Convener Moira Leslie

Vice Convener Dave Greer

Secretary Rhona MacDonald

Treasurer Moira Leslie

Membership Secretary Hanako Cameron (Sept2020 to present) Oona Sim (January – September 2020)

Grants Secretary Kathreen Hunter

Website Administrator Dave Greer

Committee Member Jean Fleetwood

2020 Annual General Meeting

The AGM which had been planned for March 2020 in the Kingsmills Hotel was postponed due to Covid-19. A virtual AGM was held in September which allowed us to submit the OSCR return by the due date. The minutes of the AGM are available on the website.

Membership: Our membership now stands at 65.

Inverness Music Festival

This year we again supported the Festival by sponsoring a half page advert in the programme and 6 Sections:- Accordion Solo, Fiddle Solo, Scottish Traditional Performance, Clarsach Solo, Traditional Vocal, Piping and Chanter Solo.

Briggs Harp

Friends of Highland Music have for some time had in our possession a rare 'Briggs' Harp. The Harp was donated to FoHM some time ago by our previous Treasurer Alan Findlay who inherited it from his father. It is quite a significant Clarsach design and it has an interesting history which can be read on our website. In October 2020, Friends of Highland Music donated our cherished 'Briggs Harp' to Inverness Museum who were delighted to receive the exhibit, so do go along and view the Harp when you can!

Tune for You

Last year we reported that after many years of supporting FoHM through the Tune for You tune writing scheme Eric and Helen decided it was time to "retire". This, however, did not prove to be easy as demand for more tunes continued and Eric just couldn't say "No". We continue to be extremely grateful to Eric and Helen for the financial support provided by this venture.

Slow Jam

Another consequence of Covid -19 was the cessation of Eric's Slow Jam sessions in Ness Bank Church. However, despite not being able to meet in person Eric has continued to encourage members to keep playing by circulating sets of tunes and we very much look forward to hearing them play again in the not too distant future.

Grants: This year we have awarded the following grants.

NAME	TYPE OF ACTIVITY	AMOUNT
Hamish Drennan	2 nd instalment for piping tuition	£250.00
Graham Mackenzie	Production of CD	£1500.00
Oliver Kinghorn	1 st instalment for small pipes tuition	£300.00

Ardersier Folk Festival had been awarded a grant of £250.00 but this was subsequently refunded as the event did not go ahead as planned.

Reports from 2020 Grants Recipients

Graham Mackenzie

"Unfortunately, the current situation of lockdown has meant the studio is closed currently in Glasgow and with travel restrictions in place throughout the UK as you know, this has meant we have been unable to meet up. I'm currently in the middle of recording guide tracks to send out to all the musicians involved from home. I'm sorry there hasn't been much headway since the last time. The situation is a little difficult. Hoping that we can get going soon."

Oliver Kinghorn

I've been getting lessons with Scott Hay focusing on the traditional and folk music side to piping. We would sit down in the lounge and play whatever we felt like and see where the music went. He would usually bring a large array of instruments with him, like his guitar, tin and low whistle, his own set of small pipes and a mandolin. This let me play my small pipes with other instruments which I've never been able to do before. The mix of instruments gave a very enjoyable and unique experience.

In-between lessons, I would have some copies of music to learn for the next one, such as Tain in the Rain by Gordon Duncan. He chose more traditional tunes because I haven't had much experience playing folk music which have very different styles of tunes. And I was also able to learn more about the techniques for small pipes with his experience and knowledge.

We would usually discuss how instruments were played around pipes and went into detail about the chords and keys we would play, which will help if I am playing with others sometimes in school.

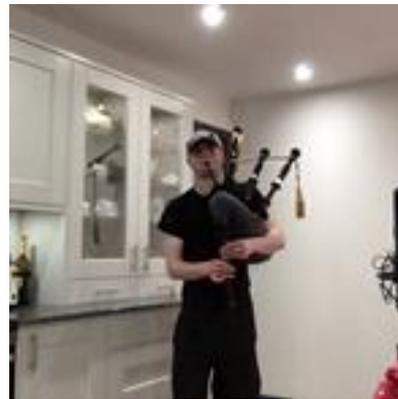
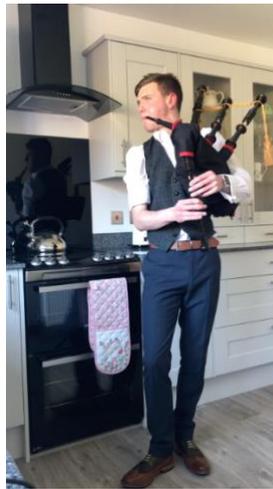
Unfortunately, lockdown has stopped any more face to face lessons but hasn't stopped any practicing in the down time. I'm looking forward to meeting Scott again and just jamming for a bit and learning lots along the way. I don't often get the opportunity to play with a large variety of other instruments, so I value the lessons we get. This couldn't have happened without Friends of Highland Music, I hope we can have more!

Final report - Hamish Drennan

Thanks to Friends of Highland Music, I was able to continue my regular lessons with David Shedden in Glasgow. The lessons were very beneficial; David provided lots of great feedback with many constructive points to think about when I was practicing for the next lesson or performance.

I mentioned in my first report that I had asked David to listen to my sets for the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland audition. In November I found out that I had gained an unconditional offer to study BMus in Traditional Music (Piping). This was the best news I had heard all year as I had been working towards it for over a year. I am very grateful for David's mentoring as I was able to implement the main points we had discussed in my audition pieces. I also would like to thank Friends of Highland Music for the financial support that paid for my travel expenses.

My final performance for the BA in Applied Music at the UHI (Video 2) was completed during the Lockdown and I had to record half of my sets at home and the other half were played live on Zoom. I was very pleased with how I had played and was proud of the performance I showcased for the examiners. I recently received my gradings from the first year at the University of the Highlands and Islands. For my performance, I scored 71/100 which is an A. I am very happy with my overall score and for passing first year too. Additional information from Hamish can be found at www.friendsofhighlandmusic.org and Hamish has sent us three performance pieces which can be heard by clicking on the link below his picture.



<https://youtu.be/ANjKPiGoA4Q> <https://youtu.be/oFKP8Dfa140> <https://youtu.be/rK9kjp9o8m4>

Finally an update from Kyle Cameron – a previous grant recipient

We previously supported Kyle with his piping tuition in Glasgow. Kyle won 2nd in March, 3rd in Strathspey and Reel, 3rd in Jig at the Scottish Pipers Association Juvenile Online Competition in the 18 and under categories in December 2020, with a very high standard of piping particularly in the U-18 category.

In February 2021 Kyle competed in an international open amateur piping contest organised by famous Canada pipers and came second, in which 82 participants (no age restrictions) recorded their piping videos and submitted them online (YouTube).

The links below will take you to the news article and his video recording submitted for the contest.

<https://www.pipesdrums.com/article/gandy-charity-contest-goes-to-watson-and-biggs/>
<https://youtu.be/DUmstSsCPqY>