

Orkney Songs old and new enjoyed by all

REVIEW

THE Big Orkney Song Project which is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund held its Kirkwall Song Share last Saturday.

The events are growing in popularity and 45 people came to enjoy a free concert of Orkney Song. We were entertained by Billy Jolly, Brian Cromarty, Bruce Mainland, The Song Shop Trio and the Song Shop Choir – an impressive line-up for a free event on a Saturday afternoon.

The repertoire – all Orkney Songs were written and collected by people living here.

The Song Shop Trio and members of the choir opened the afternoon with a song about a barque which sank off the coast of North Ronaldsay in 1908, The Isle of Erin.

Sarah Jane Gibbon – the project's archivist explained the story of the ship sinking and the tragedy of the crew lost aboard. The words to the song were printed in the paper in 1908 but we don't know who wrote them or the song.

Any information about this



SHARING A TUNE: At the free Song Share concert

song or any others would be fantastic and you can contact Sarah Jane on 872056 or e-mail orkneysingers@hotmail.com.

The Trio then sang an Orkney version of A Greenland Whale Fishery, where the loss of a whale was mourned far more than the loss of an apprentice boy!

Bruce Mainland sang the Ballad of Andrew Rose a

Canadian version of a song allegedly written about an Orkney man named Andrew Ross, and Penny Whistle by Ally Windwick.

Next Billy Jolly delighted us with the comic Ally Windwick song Peedie Pakistani and a self-penned song he gave no name to.

Brian Cromarty ended the concert with three new Orkney

songs. The first he developed from a fragment of a tune called Rings on Her Hand taken from Ancient Orkney Melodies by David Balfour. The song now tells the story of Margaret of Norway. The second and third songs took their lyrics from poems; the first written by David Horn about a cockerel and the second An Orcadian Cradle Song written by Robert Menzies Fergusson. This new song was just beautiful.

As with all the song shares after the concert there is the opportunity to take part in a workshop where we were taught the new An Orkney Cradle Song. What a boost to the ego it was to end an afternoon singing a song that an hour before you thought you'd would always leave to the professionals.

The next event is at Firth Community Hall on Saturday February 14 from 2pm. I really can recommend it as a very good way to spend an afternoon for all the family.

JL