

Naidheachdan Beaga.....

Meadhon a' Gheamhradh

# Ceòlas News

**1st—6th July 2012**

## Trip to Brittany

Ceòlas are taking 12 students and 3 tutors to Brittany on a return trip of a European Youth Exchange 'Youth in Action' programme. They will sample the great Breton hospitality and take part in workshops, music sessions and take classes learning some Breton Music as well as teaching some of their own music.

Breton Music has many parallels to us here in that the music is heavily dependent on the song tradition and Highland Bagpipes are their most popular instrument.

**AGM**

**Ceolas' Annual**

**General**

**Meeting will be held on**

**Monday the 5th of December 7.30pm**

**in Kildonan Museum**

**Meeting Room.**

## NewCentre for Gaelic Language, Music and Dance

Plans are underway for the proposed building of a new Gaelic Language, Music and Dance centre in South Uist. The feasibility study has been undertaken by Dunira Strategy based in Edinburgh and have been working with Benjamin Tindall Architects on a draft design. A stunning design is emerging based on a large 'Broch' concept and was favoured by most of the people who were present at the open public

consultation which was held in the Borrodale Hotel for two nights in September. The centre would have a wide range of facilities primarily for music & dance with professionally designed acoustics, flexible exhibition space with controlled lighting for visual art and archaeology, recording studio space, archive and genealogy re-



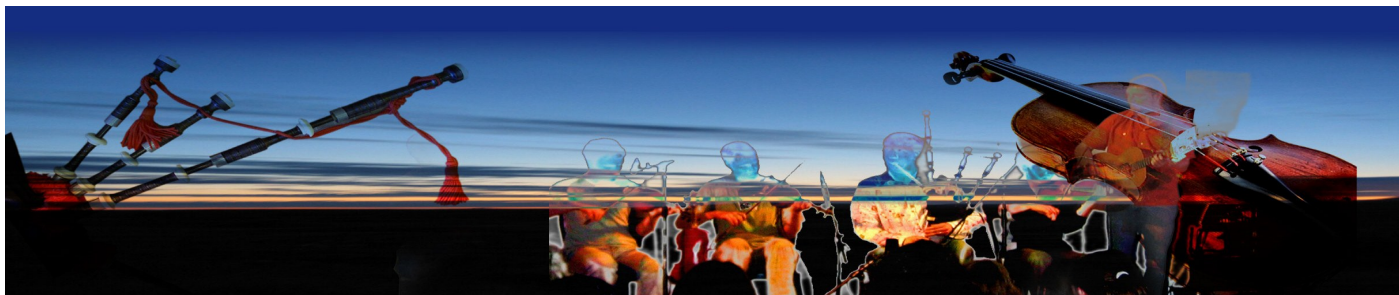
search, teaching and practice rooms, café / bar and a 300-350 seat auditorium. A site has been identified near Daliburgh and negotiations are ongoing. *Contd..*

## Ceòlas at Celtic Connections 2012

Ceòlas are showcasing at Celtic Connections 2012 On Saturday 4th February in the Strathclyde Suite in the Royal Concert Hall. This is a great chance to show off our talents and confirmed artistes so far are; Gillebride MacMillan, Kathleen MacInnes, Sineag MacIntyre, Paul

McCallum, Siblings Angus, Kenneth and Calum MacKenzie from Cape Breton, Angus Nicolson, Allan MacDonald, Frank McConnell, Sandra Robertson and more...The evening will be enhanced with slides and photographs showing Uist and Ceolas off to all.





## Contd.....New Centre for Gaelic Language, Music and Dance

**Dunira Strategy** has conducted research into autochthonous languages, including economic/social benefits, support from government policies, and whether maintenance of these cultures is associated with certain cultural centres or institutions and through a series of case studies have also researched the sustainability and viability of centres which support autochthonous languages and culture. They have also researched whether the promotion of Scots Gaelic culture and Scottish Studies in Scotland has the support of all the relevant agencies and institutions. Hopefully we will have plenty community and business support from the locality as well as from the many national and indeed international organisations that may be involved including; Comhairle nan Eilean Siar • Creative Scotland • Education Scotland • General Teaching Council of Scotland • Highlands and Islands Enterprise • Pròiseact nan Ealan • Scottish Government • Stòras Uibhist, UNESCO • University of Edinburgh • University of the Highlands and Islands (many constituents) • University of Strathclyde • VisitScotland. **We welcome reader feedback!**

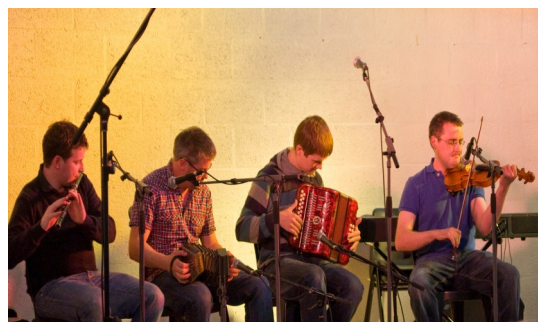
## CEOLAS 2011

Ceolas 2011 was a resounding success despite worries of lack of funding which there were but we soldiered on as always! All the concerts were full to capacity most nights and with the fantastic line-up of tutors from Uist and further afield ensured some of the best entertainment to be had anywhere in Scotland. The welcome concert was extremely well received by all including very positive accounts from locals. The piping concert on Monday was an amazing night with an outstanding performance from 'Seudan'. Tuesday saw the ever popular House Ceilidhs and Domhnall Ruairidh's Walk and a dram being the usual hit with everyone. Wednesday's busy singing concert concluded with a star performance from the all male Ceilidh Choir! This was followed by the Dance in Eriskay. Thursday's Fiddle and Dance was a firm favourite with many people and the all star Ceilidh Mor was a fitting end to a great week!

**"May I just say I went to the Fiddle & Dance concert in St Peters Hall on Thursday 7th July and had a fantastic time. The atmosphere was unbelievable and the turn out was fantastic"**  
**" (happy visitor comment 2011)**

## Féille Iorras

Ceòlas was delighted to host a return visit from County Mayo in Ireland. Visitors from the Arts Centre in Belmullet, which Ceòlas visited in 2008 came to observe and participate in our Summer School. They brought with them several musicians and one of them, Liam McGonnigle, who is an all Ireland champion accordionist, taught The Button Box for the week. Other members of the group performed at events and they were delighted to hear so much Gaelic spoken in the community.



# Symposium: Géirinis an Oir

Ceòlas decided to hold the 2011 symposium to celebrate the centenary of the settling of the village of Gerinish. The community opened the symposium with a photographic exhibition of the village in Gerinish Taigh Ceilidh on the Saturday afternoon. Linda Fabiani MSP who has strong personal links with the community addressed the gathering of over 70 people. An open air Mass celebrated by Bishop Joseph Toal supported by Fr Michael MacDonald, Fr Calum MacLellan and Canon Donald MacKay had a congregation of over 200 in the summer sunshine before moving to Iochdar School to hear Dr Mary Low talk about “Bride Mhòir nam Buar” and A Bride Cross making workshop attracting over 60 people. The Sunday evening talk given by Jo MacDonald, retired broadcaster, on “Dualchais Ghèirinis” kept the same audience riveted.

Monday opened with a talk by Fr Michael MacDonald on the history of the village, from estate and parish records. Mary Bremner followed with her reminiscences of growing up in Gerinish in the 1950’s when the rocket range was being considered. The Monday evening Piping Concert was a sell out with Fred Morrison and Pipe Major Donald MacPhee from Texas and Scotland, they were supported by young Pipers Mairi MacInnes, Michael Steele, Fiona MacLennan and Haley MacKay. Pipe Major Donald MacPhee’s recital was very warmly received especially his stories about his arrival in Uist! Fred Morrison, supported by Matheu Watson then came to the Stage to electrify the audience with his Piobrobatics!! The evening closed with a well deserved standing ovation to the two Piping Masters from the Village Diaspora.

Tuesday’s talks were about the arrival of the “Rocket Range” by Donald MacKenzie and the history of the school, by Mary MacInnes and Catriona MacIntyre. A walk on the ‘East side’ of West Gerinish led by Allan MacDonald. Tuesday evening’s concert was ably hosted by Morag MacDonald which was a sell out. This was another opportunity to hear Fred Morrison along with more local talent which included local dancers, Josie Burgess, Seumas Campbell and Peggy Campbell. Gillebride MacMillan took the opportunity to launch his new CD “Air Forladh”. The highlight of the evening was the screening of a short film with Tom Sloss, a son of Gerinish, followed by a tribute to Tom from his apprentice Nollie and Tom’s son Paul. Deoch an Doras played for the Dance.

## Ceòlas na - h-Òige

Besides offering tuition during the week of the Summer School Ceòlas have made a successful bid for funds under the YMI programme to run additional classes outside school hours. This will help to encourage young musicians to advance musically and add to the talent that is on the increase in Uist and will also feed into the different strands of music i.e. Ceòlas, Highland Music Trust, Colleges, etc.. Tuition will be offered in: Fiddle, Singing, Whistle, Accordion and in group work on a monthly basis.

## Symposium

**We are looking for suggestions for next year’s symposium preferably in the North end / Benbecula area. The events on Iochdar and Gerinish townships have been very popular and we want to develop the ideas to include a wider sector of the Uist and Benbecula Community. Look for details of a planned meeting soon.**

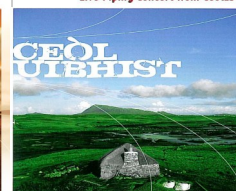
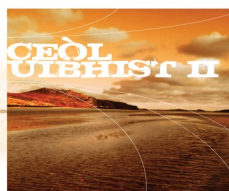
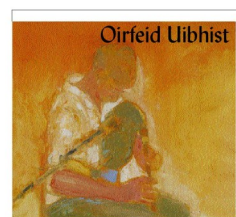
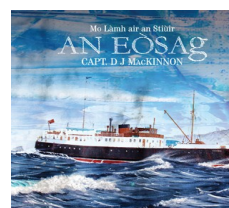
## Artist in Residence

Ceòlas 2011 Artist in Residence was Michael Gilfedder, who lives in Gerinish, South Uist and has recently retired from teaching Art in the schools. His extensive work was on show at Talla Chidhe in Lochboisdale during and after Ceolas 2011 and was able to fill the venue with a riot of colour. The many visitors to his exhibition acclaimed his work. You can view Michael’s work on the Ceòlas website.

## CNAG Undergraduate Placement

Ceòlas continues to support the programme and has benefited greatly from the talents of the young people who have been placed to work in the Ceolas office during the very busy summer period leading up to Ceolas week and continuing for a few weeks after. The placement is mutually beneficial and will continue to be supported. Eoina Rogers took responsibility for the arrangements for the exhibition at Gerinish, she was supported by the office with help from Alana MacInnes but the main work was hers.

## CD’s For Sale!



**Ceòlas Uibhist  
Gleus House  
Daliburgh  
South Uist  
HS8 5SS**

**Phone:**

**01878700 154**

**Web:**

**www.ceolas.co.uk**

**Bu mhath linn taing mhòr a thoirt gu h-uile duine ann an Uibhist airson a Fàilte a' tha an t-sluaigh a tha tighinn gu Ceòlas a faighinn bhon choimhearsnachd a' h-uile bliadhna. Se seo a tha sealltainn Ceòlais ann a deagh shùinnt eadar na Cèilidhean, a chafe, na Taighean Òsda, na 'volunteers' uile gu leir agus na duaisean 'raffle' etc . Tha fhios agaibhse co sibh! Tha sinn n' dòchas gum bith Nollaig Chrìdheil agus Bliadhna Ùr Sona, Sòlach agaibh uile.**

## In Progress.....

Apart from the week of the summer school which is a big workload in itself, Mary Schmöller, Peggy Ann MacMillan and Iain MacDonald work part time all year round and are supported by the Board and Committee which in turn meets on average once a month. In the summer we get help from an undergraduate placement person and a lot of voluntary support.

Ceòlas operates all year round to manage all the projects that are going on from promoting events, Diaspora, European Exchanges, Symposiums and Conferences, producing CD's, organising workshops and music tuition etc... as you can see in this newsletter.

We are constantly filling funding applications ( well, Mary is! ) to keep afloat. It is a struggle especially in this economic climate but it is worth it.

Ceòlas offer a unique experience with the summer school and tries to put Uist on the map as much as possible. We are always looking for people to join the Ceòlas ranks and we would love to hear from any of you who would like to contribute in any way whether it be certain skills Artistic or not, IT, technical, sound, music, audio, video, office, baking.... etc...or just join the committee and take it from there! We recruit our Board members from our Committee.

There are exciting things happening and time does not stand still, the next generation must carry Ceòlas forward so we urge young people to get involved to keep flying the flag! Please come to the Ceòlas **AGM on MONDAY 5<sup>TH</sup>** December if you are interested.

*"Benbecula and South Uist are bulging with the richest unrecorded mine of tradition in Western Europe - it is simply incredible..."* **Seumas Delargy (Head of the Irish Folklore Commission, writing to Edinburgh University in 1950)**

## DIASPORA = LONDON 2012!

Ceòlas Board members and staff visited Inverness on 12<sup>th</sup> March as part of our outreach to the Diaspora community. As the team approached Inverness the weather warning signs became increasingly urgent about not driving if not necessary. The evening was tremendous for those who attended with a cast that was fantastic: Rona Lightfoot, Margaret Stewart, Julie Fowlis, Iain MacDonald, Angus Nicolson, Tara Rankin, Donald John MacIntyre, Coll MacDonald. Michael J MacMillan and Chris MacKenzie played for the dance. The audience embraced the evening with enthusiasm and a great night

was had. The journey back to Uist was precarious as it had snowed significantly all across the route back through Skye. It will probably be better to delay the Diaspora visit until later in the spring in future which is why we are planning the next Diaspora visit

for **London in May 2012.**

This will coincide with the annual Gaelic Mass on **Sunday 20th May** so Ceòlas plan to run a **Ceilidh/Dance** the night before which will be on **Saturday 19th May.**

