



## Melbourne Scottish Fiddle Club

MEDIA RELEASE – 18 December 2009

### ***Off to Tamworth!*** ***Accolades recognise Melbourne community music excellence.***

One Melbourne music group is celebrating a year of successes in 2009 by planning a trip to Tamworth after this week being nominated for two Golden Fiddle awards for their most recent CD release *Gates of Gold*, which was also awarded *Australian Folk CD of the Year* in the Folk Alliance Australia Music Awards this year.

The Melbourne Scottish Fiddle Club has been nominated for *Best CD* (for *Gates of Gold*) and *Best Original Composition* (*MSFC Originals* track from *Gates of Gold* CD) in the Golden Fiddle Awards, which will be held on 21 January 2010 at the National Country Music Festival in Tamworth. The group was also recently chosen as one of four National Runners-Up in the 2009 community wellbeing-themed Music in Communities Awards, winning a prize of \$2500 to support our activities.

Established in 1995 the Melbourne Scottish Fiddle Club has become one of the most popular acts on the folk festival circuit through high energy shows that never fail to entertain, and has been gathering fans for fifteen years, including Una McAlinden, Director of the National Celtic Festival held annually in Portarlinton.

"I just love the new CD" says Una, "and for months I couldn't seem to stop playing it! .... the members bring together an incredibly diverse range of skills, and freely share their abilities and knowledge with each other: from fiddle playing styles, to experience in Scottish and Celtic dance; to accompanying and rhythm sections, along with recognised experts in Scottish music, language and culture.

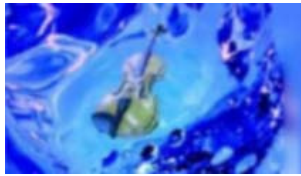
"You can see that all members have an ongoing commitment to learning and improving their styles and performance abilities. They are always raising the bar with the standards of playing through invited national and international guests who hold workshops, to members visiting national international fiddles schools."

However, according to musical director Judy Turner, there's more to this story.

"Our musical arrangements always strive for an exciting, contemporary sound, while paying respect to the direct lineage of traditional Scottish music, both in Scotland and to where the Scots have emigrated, such as Australia, Canada and the United States.

"For example, the *MSFC Originals* set which has been nominated for the Golden Fiddle award for Best composition includes three original tunes composed by club members. The 'Fiddle Club treatment' is quite democratic, with tunes repeatedly played, mulled over and experimented with until a favourite arrangement emerges, with members contributing their suggestions all through the creative process. The result is a fantastic fiddle creation, full of the energy, exuberance and combined creativity resulting from our group's love of our heritage and interest in pushing boundaries".

"One unique aspect of the Club is the mix of ages we have always had, with the result that adults and young people are always learning from each other – the enthusiasm and energy of the kids has been a blessing right from the start, and the group has striven wherever possible to harness and develop their talents. Many of our younger members now run their own bands, and four of them have won major awards as the best young players in their fields.



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“These awards and nominations are far more than just recognition for our group. It’s a very satisfy confirmation of our long held vision and belief that audiences understand, appreciate, value and enjoy our commitment to high quality music, no matter where it comes from.

“And Tamworth will be fantastic!”

The *Gates of Gold* CD, their fourth to date, includes traditional Scottish tunes, original tunes by club members, songs including some in the Gaelic language of Scotland. The title track *Gates of Gold*, comes from a setting of a Robert Louis Stevenson poem by club member Neil Adam.

This commitment to high musical standards is now resulting in an impressive list of achievements, attached below.

### Information for media:

The members of the Melbourne Scottish Fiddle Club are available for interviews, photos and performances.

### Media contacts:

Judy Turner	Club Director	0438 560 741 (all hours)
Dr Ronald McCoy	Communications	0407 318 911 (all hours)

[www.melbournescottishfiddlers.com](http://www.melbournescottishfiddlers.com)

<http://www.folkalliance.org.au/page/folkawards/>

[www.musicplayforlife.org](http://www.musicplayforlife.org)

<http://www.goldenfiddleawards.org.au/winners-finalists/>





## Melbourne Scottish Fiddle Club

### Major Achievements

- Short listed for two Golden Fiddle Awards at the 2010 Tamworth Country Music Festival
- Runner up in the 2009 Music in Communities National Awards
- Winner 2009 Folk Alliance Australia Folk Album of the Year
- In the Scottish fiddling revival currently happening all round Australia, the Melbourne Scottish Fiddle Club is seen by many as the mothership, spawning new clubs in South Australia, Sydney, Brisbane and Canberra.
- Four CDs : 1999 *Red Hot Scots*; 2002 *Reel Cool*, 2005 *A Long Way from Home*, 2008 *Gates of Gold*
- Regularly performing & recording with top Australian talent such as Aria winning Scottish fiddler, Chris Duncan, who appears on all our CDs to date; Jenny Thomas (*A Long Way from Home*) and Eric Bogle (*Reel Cool*).
- Produced Tune Books to accompany each of our CDs – this has been critical in spreading the music far and wide.
- Tours to New Zealand (2005) and Tasmania (2008).
- 1999 hit recording of the traditional ballad *Tam Lin* received over 100,000 plays on mp3.com, establishing our reputation internationally.
- Passing on the tradition: young people have always been a central part of the club. Audiences often comment on the number and quality of the club's young players.
- Regularly supporting young people to attend music workshops, conventions where they bring back their new found new skills to share with other members.
- Long time young member, Pria Schwall Kearney, recently named as face of the National Celtic Festival for 2010 (Judy can you rewrite this bit after a year in Canada and the States has returned an absolute whiz at old time and French Canadian fiddling.
- Many of the club's young players have gone on to create bands of their own.
- In 2008 Jack Wilson – at just 18 years old – won the Chris Wendt Award for best young player of the year at the National Folk Festival in Canberra.
- Actively supporting high quality Scottish musical performance traditions in Australia is seen as an exciting part of the club's achievements such as
- The amazing discovery and restoration of fiddles made in Melbourne, Australia by emigrant Shetland Islander John Anderson. Read "Shetland Fiddles brought back to life in Australia" at <http://www.melbournescottishfiddlers.com/Performances/JohnAnderson/JohnAndersonfiddles.htm>
- Dr Ronald McCoy, club member was awarded the National Library of Australia Folk Fellowship to delve into the archives of the Scots and Gaelic speakers in Australia which resulted in a performance with the club at the 2008 National Folk Festival.
- The Melbourne Scottish Fiddle club is now one of the few places that Gaelic songs can be regularly heard performed in Australia.