

Melbourne Scottish Fiddlers



Having wowed and wooed audiences across Australia with their exciting mix of traditional and contemporary music, the award-winning Melbourne Scottish Fiddlers will be bringing their signature fun, high energy show to the Mortlach Memorial Hall as part of their 20th anniversary tour of Scotland.

Tuesday 22nd September is sure to be a great night of Scottish song and dance, with the Melbourne Scottish Fiddlers being joined on the bill by a host of local musicians. There will be pipers, dancers, more fiddlers in Dufftown than ever before, as well as a great raffle and supper. Doors open at 7 for a 7.30 start. Details on price of tickets will be coming soon.

This is not the club's first overseas trip, if they can count tours to Tasmania and New Zealand. Their voyage to Scotland is much farther, however, and no mean feat, given that over 40 of them have made the journey, not just with fiddles but also with harps, guitars, bagpipes, cellos and a double bass!

They will be travelling around the country from the Borders to the Shetlands with over two weeks of performances, workshops and sightseeing

and maybe the odd whisky tasting, connecting with Scottish arts organisations such as Fèis Rois, community music groups such as Morayshire's own Fochaber's Fiddlers and Riddell Fiddles from the Borders and internationally renowned artists such as Chris Stout and Ross Couper.

It has been a busy first half of the year for the Melbourne Scottish Fiddlers in what is proving to be a very busy end to their second decade. Performances have included a number of high-profile festivals back home, including the National Folk Festival and the Port Fairy Folk Festival, where they performed in collaboration with Alasdair Fraser and Natalie Haas, and their 20th anniversary grand Ceilidh, where the club was a testament to the close connection to Scottish dance in Australia. The group will depart the following day from Aberdeen on the ferry to the Shetland Islands, a part of Scotland with which they have been fostering a close relationship for over 10 years thanks to the generous support of long-term patrons and friends of the club, Bill and Dianne Sides. Over the last decade, the group have brought out Shetland fiddlers such as Chris Stout and Ross Couper for workshops and performances in Australia, as well as sending lucky members to Shetland to learn about the traditions there.

Jack Fleming - Dufftown Fiddler

Many years ago (1985) I visited my father's cousin and her husband - Anne & Jess Hale. They gave me some old music which included handwritten manuscripts with the name J. Fleming at the top.

I believe these are his original tunes. I wonder if anyone knows anything about him or them. - circa 1930. Also included was a copy of his published tunes - "Four Scotch Pieces: By Fiddich's Banks, The Giant's Cave, The Linen Apron and Auchindoun Castle". There is a local walk called the Giant's Chair Walk - I have walked this with another of my father's cousins - Ian Shearer.

About "Alexander Nicoll".

The Nicoll family Ellen, Peg and Alex - were another lot of my father's cousins and lived together at Burn End in Dufftown and had a small band. I met Peg when I visited in 1985 but she was then elderly and living in a flat by herself. I was not aware of the existence of the tunes at that time and so did not ask her about her past life playing music.

I would like to research the background of the tunes and record them. Given the association of Dufftown with whisky - being part of the "whisky trail" and in the Speyside district, I will also present a workshop incorporating the tunes and information about the area. Contact me - **Jean McConnachie** <mailto:jeaniuszasz@optusnet.com.au> -if you can help with any information about the names of the tunes or Jack Fleming's life and times. These are the names of the other tunes by Jack: The Piper's Meeting, Bonny Livet Side, The Gough o' A'an, J Fleming's Compliments to Mr G Dunbar ("Stoneywood") The Hills o' Glen A'an, The Hoose, The Burn, Frank Gilchrist, Tromie Bridge, The Haughs o' Tervie, Farewell to Glenlivet, The Toll Brig, The Banks o' the Dullan, The Piper's Welcome, There are also 2 tunes by Alex Sim: The Laverocks' Nest The Linties? Love Song,

Jean McConnachie

