

New Edinburgh Folk Club Inc.
April 2011 AGM
President's Report

It is my pleasure to present my report for the 2010/11 club year. It has been an exceptionally busy year and a huge vote of thanks is due to your committee for the hard work they have put in over the year.

Membership

At the time of writing we have 103 memberships, and if we count family memberships as 2 people – that's 160 members at least. This is the strongest growth I have known and I'm very pleased that people are showing their confidence in the club by becoming financial members. Add to this the extra 250 or more non-member email subscribers and you see we have a healthy and broad base of support. This is again reflected in consistently high attendance of our events and clubnights.

The Committee

To run a clubnight most every week of the year requires a lot of forward planning and work. Your committee has been unflagging in their response to the many requests we get from local and visiting performers. Add to this the additional concerts, festivals and dances that we run and you get some idea of the committee's dedication.

- Richard Dingwall steps down from the committee after many years of leadership, and especially latterly, building up our networks, website and publicity. Richard continues to put out the very popular folk digest email. His expertise will be greatly missed.
- Keith Tonkin also stands down after many years organising the popular Whitestone Winter Festival for us and, more recently, as membership secretary. My thanks to Keith also for his fortnightly sing-around initiative.
- Sue Court leaves us this year to take up a University position in Australia. Sue has produced many of our newsletters and has been a keen contributor to club life and organisation.
- This is Siobhan Moroney's first year on the committee and she has done a wonderful job of producing the Clarion to the necessary deadlines and undertaken other promotional work as well. Her talent and insight is much appreciated.
- Our Treasurer, Kathryn Olcott, deserves a medal for her unceasing work on our accounts. This includes a transition to GST, establishing procedures and policies acceptable to our auditor, training door people and much more. She is also responsible for all our grant applications – with an extremely high rate of success.
- Vic McDonald has been an attendant presence at our clubnights, co-ordinating sound, lights and marshalling staging and furniture where needed.
- Peter Madill has been our artist liaison and clubnight organiser; following up on the many artist applications we receive every month. It is a testament to his organisation that we have bookings that extend through to this time next year!
- Bernadette Berry has contributed hugely to our clubnights, especially those that have been based around a theme or a come-all-ye, making sure that there

is a wide range of talent, much of which may have otherwise gone untapped. All this in addition to her role as Festival Coordinator. Once again, her organisation of the Whare Flat Folk Festival is what brings us the profit that carries us forward each year.

- Our Secretary, Dorothy Browne has been another pillar on whom I have relied to help keep me on track in our meetings and has been an enthusiastic contributor to all our club activities and also organises billets for visiting artists.

There are many people external to the committee without whom we could not have operated. A few that I wish to acknowledge individually are:

- Steve Barkman for his unflagging commitment for providing his sound equipment and his expertise on our clubnights and many other events besides.
- Lois Simpson for her provision – almost weekly - of tea, coffee and food on the many clubnights we had in St Martins Hall.
- Louise Frampton has been a most valuable person behind the scenes, making sure our events are well represented in the press with well designed ads, artist interviews and more. She has also been first line of backup for the Clarion editor.

There are many others that offer help and lend a hand willingly when asked, and I thank you all.

Venue

The past year has seen the major transition from St Martins Hall, where the overheads of bringing everything in and out and setting up and tidying up, as well as the hire costs were a significant impact on our operation; to The Church, where the availability of food and beverage, the in-situ staging and a dynamic and willing manager in Brendon Smith have defrayed much of the stress of organising our weekly clubnights. My thanks to Brendon and the Church for their hospitality and enthusiasm for our club.

One of the things we have done this year is to produce a strategic plan. As a document it is a little bit thin on detail and needs more development, but the tenor of it as it exists now is to become an organisation that is independent of the vagaries of the various hospitality organisations that host us: in short, our own clubrooms. While we are largely happy and comfortable in our current venue, we should not lose sight of our over-arching ambition and continue to work on it.

Festivals

The Whare Flat Folk Festival continues to be our flagship event and this past year's was no exception, attracting some significant grants and making a profit. It is encouraging to see that this event is becoming a "must attend" for many keen teenagers and other young performers, although we acknowledge the Tui festival near Nelson is having a small impact on our numbers, increasingly on those on whose talents and skills we have come to rely.

This year is our Dunedin Celtic Arts Festival year, a festival which has attracted the attention of the City Council. Planning and funding is well underway for a long, 3

week festival commensurate with the Rugby World Cup games that are happening in Otago and Southland, at the behest of the Council. This festival is being seen as the pre-eminent civic event for the period in Dunedin. Details for this will be released as they are confirmed.

As mentioned before Keith has stepped down from his role as Whitestone Festival organiser and has handed this over to Miguel Nitis. We welcome him and look forward to working with him. This is another successful festival both financially and in popularity.

In summary, it has been a most pleasing year in terms of what we have accomplished and I see no let up in the year to come. Mostly I am encouraged by the ongoing good attendance of our events. I acknowledge that many of these are not cheap and we do endeavour to keep a balance of plain vanilla clubnights to special artist concerts. Unfortunately, our overheads continue to increase and we now have to collect GST on our door sales, yet cannot claim it back from our artist fees. We have good budgets for all our major events and will continue to do our best for our members.

I look forward to a successful coming year.

Mike Moroney
President.