

**CAIRNCASTLE ULSTER-SCOTS CULTURAL  
GROUP**

**YEAR END REPORT**

**YEAR ENDED 31<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2016**

## **COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Tommy Stewart  
Hubert Hunter  
Adrian Rolston  
Jean Hunter  
Fraser Agnew  
Robert Stewart  
Bobby Hunter

## **OFFICERS**

CHAIRMAN	TOMMY STEWART
SECRETARY	FRASER AGNEW
TREASURER	BOBBY HUNTER

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## **CHARITY TRUSTEES**

Tommy Stewart  
Hubert Hunter  
Adrian Rolston  
Fraser Agnew  
Robert Stewart  
Bobby Hunter

**The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland Number NIC104227**

**A Charity (Inland Revenue) Number XT31532.**

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

To Promote and Develop the understanding of History, Heritage and Culture of Ulster-Scots.

## **OBJECTIVES**

Promoting Ulster-Scots Culture in a rural area on the East Antrim Coast, through mainly arts and musical events, rejuvenating dormant songs, reducing attendee's loneliness and increasing their wellbeing through the provision of social occasions.

## **BENEFICIARIES**

Participants develop musical and presentation skills while performing at our wide range of events, and improve their competency in dancing and playing a variety of musical instruments.

Those Attending our arts, history and recreational events improves their knowledge and understanding of Ulster-Scots culture and tradition, developing friendships and increasing enjoyment.

Committee members and volunteers increase their skills in the execution of a variety of talks, while running their Group's programme of events and activities throughout the year, and increasing their knowledge in the event subject matter.

The local economy benefits from income generated by attendees at our events, which attract a significant number of regional, national and international visitors

## **CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE**

As Chairman of the Cairncastle Ulster Scots Cultural Group it is with pleasure and a lot of pride that I write this report.

As a non-profit making organisation we rely heavily on Volunteers and the support of those who attend our Events and Classes. That support has been magnificent.

Our aim is to promote in a positive manner the Ulster Scots Heritage through Arts, Culture, Music, Talks and Workshops. Already we have seen the mutual understanding that exists through cross community involvement at so many of our events.

We have seen an increase in numbers at our Monthly Soirees and over the past year the Burns Night, St. Patricks Night and St. Andrews Nights have proved to be an unbelievable success. The Music Club and Highland Dancing classes continue to provide interest with many including Senior Citizens enjoying new skills.

The five day Festival in July was yet again an unqualified success. From Bluegrass, Scottish and Country music to the largest Praise Service yet to finish the week we continue to provide a service that adds to the quality of life to an aging population.

I would like to thank a hard working Committee all of whom have vast experience and proper training. Adrian Rolston has an important role to play in sourcing funding and developing our work. He has excellent administrative skills that have helped to create the ongoing success of the Committee's work.

Finally, a word of thanks to the owners and staff of the Halfway House Hotel for their help and assistance. They are excellent hosts and their hospitality is second to none.

## **REPORT ON ACTIVITIES**

### **FESTIVAL**

The Group was very grateful for ACNI, CRC and M&EAC funding and support from some suppliers, making it feasible to engage top class bands and develop the festival strategy. With the result we had a very successful festival, with large audiences at each event.

The musical evenings commenced with Bluegrass evening comprising Blue Stack Mountain Boys making their debut appearance in Cairn castle, Watery Hill Boys and Down & Out

Bluegrass band, followed with Ulster-Scots evening comprising Willie Denman's band and the Grouse beaters. The week finished with a musical evening and a Soiree of Scottish, Irish and Country musicians.

The festival also included a Cross Community evening of dancing, comprising Irish, Scottish, Indian, Polish and Ugandan dancers, each performing their own dances and then performing as a group dancing a variety of Ethnic Minority dances.

The festival also included workshops on the History of Bluegrass Music, playing a Harmonica, Manufacturing a fiddle, Ulster Scots & Irish Languages, different tunes and sounds produced by the Accordion in various parts of Ireland and a discussion on the 1916 Uprising-from both Irish & British perceptions.

As part of the festival a musical bus tour took place to Enniskillen, with live music on coach and in Saddlers in the town. The festival closed with an Ulster-Scots praise service on the Sunday, comprising musicians Full Armour Gospel Group, John Burns, Stewart Buchanan and Wilbert Clarke singing gospel hymns and songs

### **SOIRÉES**

The monthly Soirees continue to increase in popularity. The main Function Room in the Halfway House Hotel is packed to capacity on the last Wednesday of each month. The Grousebeaters are the resident band with visiting singers and groups providing a variety of music ranging from Irish and Scottish music to Country music. Storey telling is a regular feature at the Soirees and we always welcome beginners whether they are singers or musicians.

### **BURNS NIGHT, ST ANDREWS NIGHT AND ST PATRICKS NIGHT**

We were successful in securing funding from M&EAC for both the Burns night and Ulster Scots St Patricks night, enabling us to engage a variety of quality bands and artists participating at both events, with both events well supported.

### **MUSIC GROUP**

Although the senior citizens music club tutor resigned her post due to taking up an additional school post, members continued to develop their musical and presentation skills and successfully participated at Cairncastle Ulster-Scots Festival.

### **SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE CLASSES**

The Group continued to be successful in securing ACNI funding for tuition of Scottish Country dance classes run by Ruth Barnes. With members displaying their dance skills at our festival and St Andrews Night

### **CHRISTMAS DINNER & MUSICAL EVENING**

Thanks to (AIVC) Association of Independent Volunteer Centres – LCDI Ltd, Limavady, for funding the Christmas Dinner in early December. It enabled all those who gave their voluntary time to help run the activities in Cairncastle, to meet on a social occasion, relax and enjoy themselves. The music afterwards, again by volunteers, was appreciated by all present.