



# The Scottish Fiddle Orchestra

Scotland's National Fiddle Orchestra

## NEWSLETTER

Patron: HRH The Princess Royal

Scottish Registered Charity No. SC010753

March 2020 / No. 83

### *The SFO's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*

There's a symmetry to a 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary that means the SFO has existed as long in the 21<sup>st</sup> century as in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Welcome to the 83<sup>rd</sup> edition of the SFO Newsletter, one which will focus on our opening concert of the season, in Perth Concert Hall on 22 February 2020, and also look ahead to the SFO's imminent tour to the USA and Canada.

### *First, a look back to the SFO's very first concert*

The inaugural concert of the SFO was held in the Music Hall on Aberdeen's Union Street on 22 March 1980.



*Merchandise for the SFO's 40th Anniversary season*

Much has changed in 40 years but, given that some traditional music is several hundred years old, it's little surprise that much has stayed the same.

The Royal Scottish Society for  
PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO CHILDREN

SPONSORED BY OCCIDENTAL NORTH SEA GROUP

Presents the

## INAUGURAL CONCERT OF THE SCOTTISH FIDDLE ORCHESTRA

In the MUSIC HALL, ABERDEEN

on Saturday, 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 1980 at 7.30 pm.

Conductor: JOHN MASON :: Leader: Wm. DUNLOP

Soloists:  
PAT CARTER, Soprano :: DAVID BAILLIE, Tenor  
BETTY HENDERSON & RISA MCGINN, Fiddle Duetists  
and Supporting Artists

Compe: REV. JAMES CURRIE, DUNLOP

TICKETS - PRICE: £3, £2 and £1, Bookable at  
MUNRO'S TOURIST AGENCY, 130% UNION STREET, ABERDEEN

Printed by Taylor and Francis, Glasgow, Scotland

The First and Second Half programmes set out below show that many favourite tunes and sets have endured through the whole life of the SFO to date:

- We still open many of our concerts with Fiddlers to the Fore.
- There's a March, Strathspey and Reel tribute to the music of James Scott Skinner.
- The 'classics' such as The Eightsome Reel set and the Irish jigs, starting and finishing with the Irish Washerwoman.
- Swinging reels at the end of the concert, concluding with Caddam Wood.
- The compositions of John Mason are very much in evidence.

Later in this Newsletter, some founder members of the orchestra refer to the experience of playing in that first concert. After a few years out of the Music Hall until recently, as it was renovated and refurbished, the orchestra relishes the prospect of another return to its spiritual home for a concert on Saturday, 16 May 2020.

## The first half of the programme on 22 March 1980

<b>Orchestra(a) Opening Patrol</b>	<i>"Fiddlers to the Fore"</i>	Comp. John M. Mason
(b) <b>Slow Air</b>	<i>"The Heart of Bon Accord"</i>	Comp. John M. Mason
(c) <b>Rantin' Reels</b>	<i>"Breakdown"</i> <i>"Lass O' Gowrie"</i> <i>"Babes in the Wood"</i> <i>"This is no my ain Hoose"</i>	All Trad. Arr. John M. Mason
<b>NGER David Baillie</b>	<i>Selected Songs</i>	
<b>Orchestra(a) Highland Schottische</b>		All Trad. Arr. John M. Mason
	<i>"Orange and Blue"</i> <i>"Loudoun's Bonnie Woods"</i> <i>"Braes O' Mar"</i> <i>"Kafoozalum"</i> <i>"The Keel Row"</i>	
(b) <b>Salute to J. Scott Skinner</b>		Comp. J. Scott Skinner Arr. John M. Mason
<b>Slow Air</b>	<i>"Flower O' the Quern"</i>	
<b>March, Strathspey and Reel</b>	<i>"Scott Skinner's Compliments to Dr. MacDonald"</i> <i>"The Laird O' Drumblair"</i> <i>"Davie Work"</i>	
<b>NGER Pat Carter</b>	<i>Selected Songs</i>	
<b>Orchestra(a) March</b>	<i>"The Strings of Bon Accord"</i>	Comp. John M. Mason
(b) <b>Slow Air</b>	<i>"The Heroes of Longhope"</i>	Comp. W.R. Aird Arr. John M. Mason
(c) <b>Orcadian Music Reel and Jigs</b>	<i>"Scapa Flow"</i> <i>"Deerness Jig"</i> <i>"Graemeshall Bay"</i>	Comp. J. Johnston Comp. J. Johnston Comp. W.R. Aird
(d) <b>Eightsome Reel</b>	<i>"Mrs. McLeod"</i> <i>"Fairy Dance"</i> <i>"De'il amang the Tailors"</i> <i>"Soldier's Joy"</i> <i>"Mason's Apron"</i> <i>"Staten Island"</i> <i>"Kate Dalrymple"</i>	All Trad. Arr. W.S. Dunlop

— **INTERVAL** —

Half time plug...

Please consider making [a donation to the SFO's Just Giving Appeal](#) – More details at the end of this Newsletter.

... And now to the second half...

6. <u>Orchestra</u>	(a) <u>Polkas</u>	<i>"Bluebell Polka"</i> <i>"Liberton Pipe Band"</i>	All Trad. Arr. John M. Mason
	(b) <u>Tone Poem</u>	<i>"Song of the Sea"</i>	Comp. John M. Mason
	(c) <u>Pipe Marches</u>	<i>"The Hills of Alva"</i> <i>"The Scottish Horse"</i> <i>"The Bugle Horn"</i>	All Trad. Arr. John M. Mason Comp. The Marshioness of Tullibardine
7. <u>Singer</u>	David Baillie	Selected Songs.	
8. <u>Orchestra</u>	(a) <u>Irish Jigs</u>	<i>"Irish Washerwoman"</i> <i>"Rakes of Kildare"</i> <i>"Sorry to Part"</i> <i>"The Rollicking Irishman"</i>	All Trad. Arr. John M. Mason
	(b) <u>Scottish Waltzes</u> (Auld Scot's Sangs)	<i>"Auld Scot's Sangs"</i> <i>"O Rowan Tree"</i> <i>"The Auld Hoose"</i> <i>"Kelvingrove"</i> <i>"My Love is like a Red Red Rose"</i> <i>"Annie Laurie"</i> <i>"Scots Wha Hae"</i>	All Trad. Arr. John M. Mason
	(c) <u>Two Step</u>	<i>"Home to Bon Accord"</i>	Comp. John M. Mason
9. <u>Singer</u>	Pat Carter	Selected Songs	
10. <u>Fiddle Duets</u>	Betty Henderson and Reesa McGinn		
	(a)	<i>"The Hardanger"</i>	Comp. and Arr. John M. Mason
	(b)	<i>"The New Caledonian"</i>	Comp. and Arr. John M. Mason
11. <u>Orchestra</u>	<u>Swinging Reels</u>	<i>"Kenmay House"</i>	Arr. John M. Mason
		<i>"Golden Slippers"</i>	Comp. A. Rennie
		<i>"Willie and Bessie"</i>	Trad.
		<i>"The Peedie Sea Indian (John M. Dennison)"</i>	Comp. John M. Mason
		<i>"Caddam Wood"</i>	Comp. Rennie/Cameron.

#### AULD LANG SYNE

## *A Civic Reception for the SFO in Perth – February 2020*

Prior to its first concert of the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary season, the orchestra was treated to a wonderful Civic Reception, hosted by Councillor Dennis Melloy, Lord Provost of Perth and Kinross Council, in the Royal George Hotel, Perth, on Saturday, 22 February 2020.

He said that, as Lord Provost, it really was a great pleasure to welcome the SFO to this special civic reception to celebrate the orchestra's 40th anniversary. He added that he was always delighted to see the orchestra back in Perth and the regular large audiences in the wonderful concert hall bore testament to the SFO's popularity. In his view, this evening's concert carried a special buzz of expectation following upon last year's phenomenal sell-out show. He was sure orchestra members would see sheer joy on the faces of the people who came to the concert that evening.



*Cllr Melloy addresses the SFO*

He continued by saying that a milestone such as this anniversary always allowed an opportunity for reflection about how much has been achieved, and he was sure that we had lots of good stories to share with each other, recalling many wonderful memories over the years.

Councillor Melloy referred back to the SFO's inaugural concert in March 1980 in the Music Hall in Aberdeen. He said that he had followed the SFO for many years now and felt that each year the orchestra got better and better.

He mentioned the fact that the orchestra were about to embark – in the next few weeks – on a North American tour. He said he wanted to take a moment of reflection to thank founder and principal conductor of the SFO, John M. Mason, who had held that position from the SFO's first concert until his death in 2011. He said he had many happy memories of John and that the SFO was largely John's creation. In his opinion, John would be more than pleased that Blair Parham was carrying on the mantle of conductor and musical director so well. He had special praise for Blair's 'swinging kilt' during concerts.

The Lord Provost explained that he is from Blairgowrie and that he had fond memories of the SFO's leader (Yla Steven) when she was very young in Blairgowrie, walking down Union Street on her way to school, carrying her violin in its case. To him, it seemed that that she always had her violin with her. He explained that he had followed her musical career via the "Blairie" – The Blairgowrie Advertiser newspaper – and it always seemed to have something in it about Yla. She seemed to him to pick up all the musical awards that were going.

He also referred to another founder member of the SFO, who was a good friend of his, Gordon MacGregor. Gordon died in 2019. Gordon's mother was born on 27 July 1898 in St Andrews. Her father had a jewellery/watchmaking business in the town. He was friendly with the famous Scottish fiddler and composer, James Scott Skinner. One day, Skinner came into the shop and noted that Gordon's grandfather was excited and happy. He asked him why he was so happy. Gordon's grandfather explained that his wife had just presented him with a lovely baby daughter. So, Scott Skinner asked for a pen and some paper, then sat down and wrote the tune The Cradle Song. This was his gift to Gordon's grandparents. Councillor Melloy said that he had first heard this story in the MacGregor family home in Grantown-on-Spey. Gordon played the tune at his mother's funeral. Councillor Melloy said that, every time he heard the tune, he thought of Gordon and his mother.

The Lord Provost concluded his speech by saying: "Ladies and gentlemen of the Scottish Fiddle Orchestra, congratulations on your 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Thank you for the pleasure you have given to so many people over many years. You are truly ambassadors for Scotland – and for Perth and Kinross – in developing strong social and cultural links across the sea and in keeping traditional music alive. At the heart of your success is the committee, the volunteers who continue to make things happen. Thank you for all your hard work and dedication."

He invited all members of the orchestra to turn to the colleague next to them, shake their hand, give them a hug and say "well done".

Bob Diament, SFO chairman, replied on behalf of the SFO.

He said that there was no better place for the orchestra to start its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary season of concerts than Perth. Perth Concert Hall is such a wonderful venue. It is always a very responsive audience in Perth. He thanked Dennis Melloy and his wife, Libby, for attending the celebratory function on behalf of Perth and Kinross Council. Bob went on to explain that Councillor Melloy was not just a high-ranking official but had a number of attributes which members of the orchestra would find interesting. He pointed out that the Provost had been involved in musicals and amateur



*Jive Talkin'*

dramatics for most of his life. He set up the Blairgowrie Folk Club. He is a qualified ballroom dance teacher. Bob told us that the Provost is a former "Dance Star of Tomorrow" – "and hopefully also still of 'today'". And the 'cherry on the cake', according to Bob, was that the Provost is a jive champion.

Bob reflected that, that evening, during the concert, there would be some 'audience participation' (i.e. dancing in the aisles) and that it was perhaps not too late to alter the programme slightly. He reckoned that we could probably rely on Willie Kidd in the Accordion Section to provide us with some suitable jive music, if we wanted. (From his nearby seat, Willie confirmed that Bill Hailey's Rock Around The Clock could indeed be added to the programme, if necessary).

Bob thanked Provost Melloy for his kind words and also Perth and Kinross Council for doing the SFO the honour of hosting a civic reception for the orchestra. He hoped that Dennis and Libby would enjoy the show.

### *SFO folk enjoy the Civic Reception*

We don't often fill up the pages with rows of photos but our resident photographer, Susie Donlevy, managed to get most of the assembled company to pose 'for the record' (some of them twice!).







## *A memorable concert in Perth – 22 February 2020*

Our ever-patient and smiling Administrator for the annual Perth concert, Alister McLean, said it was one of the largest groups of players the SFO had ever had for this concert – 90 players.

The two halves of the concert were broadly divided so that, in the first half, the programme featured items which looked to the SFO's past, whereas the second half featured more music of the present and the future.

The performance began with Fiddlers to the Fore, which was also the opener at the inaugural concert of the SFO in 1980. The SFO's library now has over 600 pieces of music. The items in the first half of the programme were mostly drawn from arrangements numbered 100 or less.

In each half, there was a fiddle solo. Before the break, Yla Steven performed John Mason's slow air, *The Flower of Portencross*. This is Yla's favourite of all John Mason's numerous slow air compositions. After the interval, it was the turn of one of the 28 SFO members on stage who were not born at the time the SFO was formed, Lewis Kelly, to play Jennifer Whyte's evocative composition "*After the Rain*".

Looking to the future, the second half commenced with a set of Cape Breton Hornpipes, Nova Scotia being one of the Canadian maritime states which the SFO will visit on our forthcoming North American tour (March/April 2020).

The orchestra was joined by RAF Central Scotland Pipe Band, clad in the RAF tartan, who looked resplendent in their bearskins and spats.

The March, Strathspey and Reel in the first half of the concert – “A Tribute to the Maestro” – served as a tribute to two much-missed and pivotal figures in the SFO’s history. The “maestro” referred to was John Mason and the composer of each of the three tunes was Bill Cook, leader of the SFO from 1984 to 2019.

Having sung her first song of the evening, Westering Home, Colette Ruddy explained that she is running a group for primary school children – for singers who wish to compete for Dundee’s [Leng Medal](#). Singers’ performances in the competition must be unaccompanied. She said that she had run groups for several years and they were always predominantly of female singers, in her experience. However, this year she had an unusually high number of boys in the group – 5 in all. She found it interesting that the boys were singing love songs such as Ae Fond Kiss and Durisdeer, while the girls were singing songs such as Ye Jacobites by Name and The Muckin’ o’ Geordie’s Byre.

Colette also sang the ballad The Bonnie Earl o’ Moray, which is famous for its oft-misheard lyrics. The text refers to the rivalry of James Stewart, Earl of Moray, and the Earl of Huntly, which reached its climax with Huntly’s murder of Moray in 1592. The song has spawned the term “mondegreen”, which means a mishearing or misinterpretation of a phrase as a result of near-homophony, in a way that gives it a new meaning. Most often, mondegreens are created by a person listening to a poem or a song. The listener, unable to decipher a particular lyric, substitutes words that sound similar and make some kind of sense.

The coining of the term is attributed to American writer, Sylvia Wright, in 1954. She wrote that, as a girl, when her mother read to her from Percy’s Reliques, she had misheard the lyric “And hae layd him on the green” in the fourth line of the Scottish ballad “The Bonny Earl of Murray,” as “And Lady Mondegreen”.

In Wright’s opinion, “The point about what I shall hereafter call mondegreens, since no one else has thought up a word for them, is that they are better than the original.”

*Ye Highlands and ye Lowlands,  
Oh, where hae ye been?  
They hae slain the Earl o’ Moray,  
And Lady Mondegreen.*

The correct fourth line is, “And laid him on the green”.

“Mondegreen” was included in the 2000 edition of the Random House Webster’s College Dictionary, and in the Oxford English Dictionary in 2002.

In the second half of the concert, Colette sang The Loch Tay Boat Song which she said she had first heard at family get-together sung by family friend John Corrigan. He was wearing tartan trews, which was the first time she had ever seen such clothing. It always makes her imagine that the boatman referred to in the song must have himself been wearing tartan trews.

She concluded her songs with Scotland Again, which takes the melody of John Mason’s slow air, The Wild Rose of the Mountain.

Dennis Haggerty, wearing the Inverclyde tartan, began with Scotland the Brave and then sang Mary of Argyll. In the second half, his songs were A Land for all Seasons, followed by Scots Wha Hae. He explained that Scots Wha Hae had been a contender for Scotland’s unofficial national anthem but had come in second to Flower of Scotland. He claimed that his own preference would have been for Ye Cannae Shove Yer Granny Aff A Bus.

## *An SFO Concert: a game of two halves*



*Pre-match briefing from Bob Diament (L); L-R: Willie Kidd, Catriona MacLean and Jamie Mason*

Following in the footsteps of such renowned half-time pundits as Alan Hansen, Graeme Souness and Ron Manager, our own Catriona MacLean, Willie Kidd and Jamie Mason subjected themselves to interrogation by SFO Chairman, Bob 'Lineker' Diament, during half time at our Perth concert, the whole of which was streamed live on YouTube.

Rising above the periodic hectoring of the PA system, these brave souls touched on subjects as diverse as cymbals, nepotism in the SFO, (appropriately) Monty Python, and (as confusingly as possible) the SFO's forthcoming North America Tour. They packed a lot of information – some of it relevant – into 10 minutes and 43 seconds of chat. We're pleased to report that the SFO consolidated its 1-0 half-time lead (which, unfortunately, none of our pundits bothered to mention), winning 2-0 through a late header from youngster, Dennis Haggerty.

### **Scottish Fiddle Orchestra half-time chat at the Perth Concert Hall concert on Saturday 22nd February**

**Present:** Bob Diament (SFO Chairman); Catriona MacLean (SFO Administrator East); Willie Kidd (SFO Accordion Section); Jamie Mason (SFO Administrator South).



*Bob*

Bob: We've never done a half-time chat before, so you'll have to bear with us. We haven't got any great stars: Beyoncé wasn't available and Madonna apparently was booked. But we have got three real stalwarts of the orchestra and, for people who follow the orchestra, I think you'll know who our guests are tonight. First of all, we have Catriona Maclean...

Catriona: Hello.

Bob: Catriona plays in the First Violin section... We also have Willie Kidd...

Willie: Hello.

Bob: Willie is in the Engineering Section – he plays the accordion. And we have the principal, leader and artistic director of the cymbal section, Mr Jamie Mason.

Jamie: Good evening.

Bob: So, Willie, what do you think of it so far?

Willie: Absolute rubbish! But beautifully played.

Bob: Did you enjoy it?

Willie: I enjoyed it very, very much.

Bob: Jamie, how do you think it's going?

Jamie: It's going very well. Full hall. It's great fun. A very receptive audience.



Willie Kidd (seated) and others in the "Engineering" Section

Bob: What do you think of the audience, Catriona?

Catriona: They're fantastic.

Bob: We always get a great reception in Perth. This year just the same as ever, if not a little bit better. My only problem was that I was struggling with Robert Lovie's poetry.

Willie: There is no form of amplifier near us so that's why we never smile or laugh – because we can't hear what the compere is saying.

Catriona: Is that your excuse, Willie?



Catriona

Bob: It is a conscious decision by the SFO management to make sure that the accordions are not amplified. I'm going to ask a few questions about your experiences of the orchestra because you are all long-term members. Most of you are founder members. I'm just a 'new boy': I only joined about 10 or 11 years ago. So, Catriona, how did you get into the Scottish Fiddle Orchestra?

Catriona: Well, I was playing with the Highland Strathspey and Reel Society in Inverness.

[PA System Announcement]: Ladies and gentlemen, this is your 10-minute call. You have 10 minutes, thank you.

Bob: Madonna doesn't have to put up with that.

Catriona: No, Madonna doesn't get '10 minutes' in Perth. I got a letter sent to the Society from John [Mason], asking if anyone would like to come and play in the SFO. I thought that sounded like a good thing to do. So I trundled along as a wee lassie. I was there from the very first concert, aged 15. Oops – just given away my age...

Bob: So, Willie, how did you get into the SFO?

Willie: I played with John's original orchestra which was Ayr and Prestwick Strathspey and Reel Society. They formed the nucleus of the new orchestra.

Bob: A nuclear-powered orchestra?

Willie: The first concert in Aberdeen was a real success because it was the first time we had done a really big concert. Ayr and Prestwick did lots of smaller concerts around the district but this was the first time we had done a big concert and it really was a great success. In the Music Hall in Aberdeen.

Bob: And you were there from the start – ‘in with the bricks’?

Willie: We used our own singers. We hadn't guest singers as we have nowadays. We used the singers from the Ayr and Prestwick orchestra. Aberdeen made us very, very welcome.

Catriona: Yes, they did.

Bob: Jamie – here's a ‘loaded’ question: How did **you** get into the Scottish Fiddle Orchestra?

Jamie: Well, I think it was more down to babysitting duties. One night, because Andrew Cousar [former SFO bass player] couldn't make it to a concert of the Ayr and Prestwick society, I was told by my Dad to play. Dad said he would stick up one finger if it was in ‘G’, so I went BOM-bom BOM-bom...

Bob: And ‘Dad’ being?



Jamie

Jamie: John M. Mason. I should have guessed – no nepotism allowed in the SFO... If he held up one finger, we were in ‘G’ and I could play D and G open strings. Two fingers and we were in ‘D’: *BOM-bom BOM-bom*. If he held up three fingers, we were in ‘A’ – and I should not play anything at all! I was given my brother's bass and put straight onto the stage. Then, about four years later, I came to play with the SFO in Aberdeen. I'd been to some of the concerts previously. My Mother had brought me along – I would have to come as part of the family. I think my Dad saw it as a better opportunity to be able to mind the children without having to pay any fees [for babysitting]. So I became a fully-fledged member of the orchestra from 1983.

Bob: So, looking forward: 2020 – this is a big year for the SFO. It's our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Willie, what are you looking forward to in the coming year?

Willie: Well, we're playing a lot of new things which are not like the type of thing we played when I first joined the orchestra. I think it's a good idea. We've branched out. We've got to move with the times. While the traditionalists would want us to play traditional music, we've got to branch out and the young people have got to get their chance. The young people are coming forward with new ideas. Let's go for it!

Bob: Good. Catriona, what is going to be the highlight for you this year?

Catriona: Well, I am one of the one of the administrators for the orchestra so I organise the concerts in Edinburgh. I'm looking forward to the June one. We had a very successful concert at Hogmanay and I'm looking forward to a repeat or even better concert in June.

Bob: What's the date of the concert?

Catriona: Saturday, 13 June 2020. The tickets are already on sale from the Usher Hall box office in Edinburgh and online.

Bob: Jamie, what does 2020 mean for you and the SFO?

Jamie: Of course, there is our ‘usual’ concerts. We are playing in Aberdeen in May.

Willie: I thought it was in April.

Bob: No, we just told the **accordions** that it was in April. The rest of us are going to be there on 16<sup>th</sup> May.

Jamie: tickets are available for the [Aberdeen] Music Hall on 16 May 2020.

Bob: I just got my 'instructions' opened and it is definitely 16<sup>th</sup> May.

Catriona: You sure about that, Bob?

Jamie: In fact, I found a poster from the very first year – the very first concert in Aberdeen, in 1980. I think that's [featured] in one of the posters that is going up – I hope so. And we'll have lots of paraphernalia to show from the very first concert. But, before that, of course, we're going on our tour to North America. We fly to Boston and we are starting with the first concert on 31 March 2020, after couple of days to get ourselves organised and rehearse and acclimatised – I think it'll be a bit chilly. On the 31<sup>st</sup>, we are in Portsmouth [New Hampshire]

[PA System Announcement]: Ladies and gentlemen, this is your 'five-minute' call. You have five minutes, thank you.

**SFO**  
**SCOTTISH FIDDLE ORCHESTRA**  
**1980-2020**

**40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary North American Tour**

Come and join us for a fabulous evening of fiddling, piping, drumming, singing and dancing at ;

Portsmouth Music Hall, **Portsmouth, NH**, March 31<sup>st</sup> 2020  
Franco Centre for the Arts, **Lewiston, ME**, April 1<sup>st</sup> 2020  
Fredericton Playhouse, **Fredericton, NB**, April 2<sup>nd</sup> 2020  
Confederation Hall, **Charlottetown, PEI**, April 3<sup>rd</sup> 2020  
Riverview Arts Centre, **Riverview, NB**, April 4<sup>th</sup> 2020  
Rebecca Cohn Auditorium, **Halifax, NS**, April 6<sup>th</sup> 2020  
Le Gesu, **Montreal QP**, April 8<sup>th</sup> 2020

Full details on our website at [www.sfo.org.uk](http://www.sfo.org.uk)  
Scottish Charity SCO10753

**FIDDLERS TO THE FORE**

ALL VIOLINS  
Patrol  
Comp. J.M. Mason

Poster for the SFO's NA Tour 2020

Jamie: After that, we go to Fredericton [New Brunswick]. April 1<sup>st</sup>. [NOTE: This is not the correct date – see below].

Catriona: Is that for real? [i.e. 1<sup>st</sup> April].

Jamie: That is for real. We are really going to be in Fredericton. We are at the Franco Centre for the Arts in Lewiston [Maine] on 1<sup>st</sup> April. Fredericton Playhouse on April 2<sup>nd</sup> [which is the correct date]. Confederation Hall in Charlottetown [Prince Edward Island] on April 3<sup>rd</sup>. The Riverview Arts Centre in New Brunswick on April 4<sup>th</sup>. The Rebecca Cohn Auditorium in Halifax [Nova Scotia] on Tartan Day – 6<sup>th</sup> April – and then in Montréal [Quebec] – in Le Gesù – on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2020. Tickets are available. If you're listening to us from North America, book your coach parties and buy your tickets. Come and see us. We very much look forward to meeting you.

Bob: We don't mind if you follow us from concert to concert.

Jamie: We will be doing a number of 'pop-up' concerts in different places here and there which are not on that list. Where we just 'arrive'. We have been helped by 'cultural exchanges'. Meeting pipe bands. I'm very much looking forward to the Mounties [Pipe Band].

Bob: [By way of explanation] 'Cultural exchanges' are not all 'liquid'. There will be some genuine culture involved.

Catriona: I'm not keen to play a 'pop-up' concert in the rain, Bob.

Bob: That will be **snow**.

Catriona: Fine. Snow is good.

Bob: I apologise for not printing the concert list out in large-enough type that Jamie could actually read it. The orchestra really is looking forward to going to North America. We're going to be joined by pipe bands at most of our concerts. That really is the highlight for me, meeting all the local groups, [*including*] local fiddle groups.

Catriona: I'm looking forward to meeting the Mountie Pipe Band. It's not 'Monty Python'; it's the 'Mountie Pipe Band'. It's not easy to say.

Bob: I'm afraid we're running out of time, so there will only be time for one last question: 'What do you enjoy most about being a member of the SFO?' – Catriona?

Catriona: Well, for me, because I've been in the orchestra since I was 15, it's like my extended family now. It's great when you get new members coming in because the family just keeps on growing. We bumped into two former members this evening in the hall, coming in. It was just as welcome to see them as it is to see everyone who is in the orchestra currently.

Bob: Great. Willie?

Willie: I would say exactly the same. It's the friendships. Anyone can sit down beside you and, when the music goes up, that's it. You all enjoy it and you all participate. And that's the main thing in the orchestra. This great feeling in the orchestra that you're there to enjoy yourself.

Bob: I think we will have to wrap up now. Is there anyone you would like to say 'hello' to before we go off air?

Willie: I would like to say hello to Jennifer [*Willie's daughter*] in New Zealand, if she is listening. Hello Jen!

Bob: Jamie?

Jamie: Everyone who knows me. My family at home and also people all over the place that I told late-on that this was happening.

Catriona: And Mum, if you're listening, 'Hi'!

Bob: So, Lady and Gentlemen, thank you very much for joining us.

Catriona: It's been a pleasure.

Bob: So I should probably introduce myself... Too late!

Catriona: [*That was*] Bob Diament speaking...

Bob: Thank you very much.



## *SFO JustGiving Appeal*

On our North American Tour – we leave Scotland on 28 March 2020 – we will present 7 concerts in a 12-day period.

In addition, we plan to lead workshops with young local musicians.

We will be inviting members of local communities with physical, mental or behavioural constraints to attend our rehearsals. Our aim is to help to expand access to music for those who find it difficult to attend formal concerts.

At each concert location, a local pipe band will join us on stage to help us perform our signature Orchestra and Pipes showpiece arrangements.

**We would really appreciate your donations towards our travel costs.**

We have set up an SFO Just Giving page, for that purpose.

In return for donations, we are delighted to offer the following rewards:

- £20 – a CD signed by The SFO's conductor, Blair Parham;
- £50 – a signed CD and your name in our tour programme (only available for a limited time);
- £100 – a signed CD, your name in our tour programme and two tickets to one of our concerts of your choice;
- £200 – a signed CD, your name in the tour programme and four tickets to one of our concerts of your choice;
- £500 – all of the above plus four backstage passes to meet the orchestra at the interval;
- £1000 – the opportunity to name a new March or Two-Step written for the orchestra.



*SFO Rehearsal - Perth - 22 February 2020*

## Contacts and concerts

Contacts	
Secretary	SFO Secretary, 44 Roman Road, Almondbank, Perth, PH1 3LQ.
Treasurer	SFO Treasurer, 0/1 162 Hill Street, Glasgow, G3 6US.
Patrons/Friends	SFO Patrons, 24 Golf Crescent, Troon, Ayrshire, KA10 6 JZ.
Postal Sales	SFO Merchandise, 24 Golf Crescent, Troon, Ayrshire, KA10 6 JZ.

Concert Diary				
North America	Various locations	28 March 2020 – 08 April 2020		<a href="http://sfo.org.uk/sfo-na-tour-2020/">sfo.org.uk/sfo-na-tour-2020/</a>
Aberdeen	Music Hall	16 May 2020	01224 641122	<a href="http://aberdeenperformingarts.com">aberdeenperformingarts.com</a>
Edinburgh	Usher Hall	13 June 2020	0131 228 1155	<a href="http://usherhall.co.uk">usherhall.co.uk</a>
Glasgow	Royal Concert Hall	05 September 2020		Tickets not yet on sale
Edinburgh	Usher Hall	30 December 2020		Tickets not yet on sale

Clickable links to the ticket booking pages for the various concerts above can be found on the SFO's home page at <http://sfo.org.uk/> - [HERE](#)

## Back desk chat

I'm filling out a reader survey in the SFO Newsletter. They asked what my favourite type of tune is: so, I wrote "Medleys of Two-Steps in B major and Eb major". I'll be expecting some interesting SFO programme developments...

