

Guest Singers:

BOB LEWIS grew up in Heyshott in West Sussex, renowned as an area where English traditional song and music still thrives as a living tradition. When he married he moved to Elsted underneath the South Downs where he worked as an agricultural engineer. Local singers would often have a sing-song in the local pub. When he was away at farm sales, up and down the country, up in Yorkshire and down to Cornwall the evening would often end up with a sing-song somewhere - a few pints and a bit of a sing. The mainstay of what Bob sings is old Sussex but he also has songs from Cornwall where he spent some time. His first recordings were for Karl Dallas on Transatlantic and he has recorded for John Howson on Veteran and a recent solo CD: *The Painful Plough*.

JO MILLER is a singer and fiddler who has performed as a soloist and in groups such as *The Whistlebinkies* and *Cloud Howe Ceilidh Band*. She has worked in music education for over 25 years and taught at the RSAMD for 15 years. She founded the innovative BA (Scottish Music) degree and was course leader from 1996-2005. She currently works as a Youth Music advisor to the Scottish Arts Council, and is a community musician in Stirling, where she runs the Riverside Music Project which supports family and community learning of traditional music. She is also an independent scholar whose research interests include teaching Scottish music.

RON BISSETT of Falkland was born in Kincardineshire and came to Fife with his family when his father came as head shepherd to Kippo at Kingsbarns. He took his first job at Letham in 1950 - driving a pair of horse and living in the bothy. He picked up some songs in the bothy and others from his mother. He was a member of the *Fife Yokels* bothy group when they competed in the Grampian TV *Bothy Nights* in the 1960s.

ALEX CLARKE was brought up in a tenement just off Dundee's Hilltown - hence his signature song - *We're the lads fae the tap o the hill*. His mother was a weaver in the jute mills as was his granny, his father an engineer. As a boy he started out singing Harry Lauder songs and was soon singing in concert parties. He was taught Highland dancing as a boy and later took up Scottish dancing, forming his own troupe for shows with Robert Wilson and Andy Stewart and appearing with the *White Heather Club*. His granny Clarke was a source of songs and old stories of Dundee, of McGonagall and the fall of the Tay Bridge. He was first 'discovered' by Maurice Fleming in the 1950s and was later recorded on the *Coorse and Fine* LP of Dundee songs on Springthyme in 1985. After his knock-out performance last year, how could we *not* invite him back as a guest and for further reminiscences!

JOCK DUNCAN was brought up in the ballad-rich farming country around New Deer and Fyvie in Aberdeenshire, where he developed his love of traditional balladry and music. His extensive repertoire of traditional ballads and northeast songs is an inspiration and he is widely recognised as one of Scotland's foremost traditional singers. In 2006, he was inducted into the Scottish Traditional Music Hall of Fame in recognition of his contribution to Scotland's living song tradition.

JIMMY HUTCHISON is originally from South Uist - his mother a Gaelic speaker, his father from Glasgow. Jimmy has been singing traditional songs for many years. In the 1960s he was involved in the St Andrews folk club and the Blairgowrie Festival and became a great admirer of Jeannie Robertson, the Stewarts of Blair and old Davie Stewart. Jimmy now lives in Newburgh where he runs a joinery business.

ELIZABETH STEWART is recognised as one of Scotland's foremost ballad singers. She has been singing the traditional songs and ballads of the northeast since childhood, learning her art from her family, especially her aunt Lucy Stewart of Fetterangus. She is a gifted player of traditional music on the piano and, like her mother Jean, led her own Scottish country dance band. Through illness, Elizabeth was unable to join us last year. We welcome her return to the fray.

STANLEY ROBERTSON of Aberdeen is a master storyteller, ballad singer and piper. He learned his tradition within his extended family many of whom were musicians and singers. Stanley has strong traveller roots - Jeannie Robertson was his father's sister and her daughter Lizzie Higgins his cousin. Stanley is author of several books of traditional tales and reminiscences of traveller life and of his time in the fish trade. His latest title *Reek Roon the Camp Fire* is due for publication by Birlinn in May (i.e. this week).

JIM TAYLOR was brought up on a farm in the neighbourhood of Garlogie in Aberdeenshire. He is a nephew of the late Tom Reid of Cullerlie, the famous Bothy Ballad King, so it is not surprising that Jim has a repertoire of bothy ballads. Jim is a favourite singer in the northeast and a popular compere at the local village ceilidhs and at the annual Cullerlie Traditional Singing Weekend.

Workshop by:

TIMOTHY NEAT lives in Wormit, Fife. He is author of several books on folklore - *The Summer Walkers: Travelling People and Pearl-Fishers in the Highlands of Scotland* and *The Horseman's Word: Blacksmiths and Horsemanship in Twentieth-Century Scotland* - two of five published by Birlinn. He has also covered some of the same subjects as a film maker and has been a lecturer at Duncan of Jordanstone College in Dundee. His biography of Hamish Henderson: *The Making of the Poet* (1919-1953) was published in 2007, the second volume due later in 2009.

Hosted by:

SHEPHEARD, SPIERS & WATSON: The singing weekend is organised and hosted by a committee of Peter Shephard, Tom Spiers and Arthur Watson who also sing together as *Shepherd, Spiers & Watson*. All three are enthusiasts for traditional song. Pete is a singer, musician and folk song collector and runs the Scottish music label Springthyme from his home in Balmalcolm. Tom, who has recently moved to the Turriff area, sings and plays fiddle and was for many years a member of the Aberdeen based group *The Gaugers*. Arthur, sings and plays whistle, was also in *The Gaugers*, founded the renowned Peacock Print Makers in Aberdeen and is now Senior Lecturer in Fine Art at the University of Dundee.

The Programme:

Friday 15th May

Evening Concert: 8.00pm - 10.30pm

The opening concert with songs and ballads from the guest artistes and participants - continuing as:

Singaround: 10.30pm - 12.30am

An opportunity for all to join in a singaround with songs from their own repertoire.

Saturday 16th May

Illustrated Talk: 10.00am - 11.00am

TIMOTHY NEAT: *Hamish Henderson - The Continuing Story*.

Reminiscences: 11.30am - 12.30pm

BOB LEWIS: *Spirit of the Downs - A southern garland of songs and stories*.

Ballad Concert: 2.00pm - 5.00pm

The guests and participants with traditional ballads from their repertoire. The classic big ballads - the muckle sangs.

Evening Concert: 7.30pm - 10.30pm

Songs from near and far: Guest artistes present their song and ballad traditions.

Singaround: 10.30pm - 12.30am

Another chance for all to join in a singaround with songs from their own repertoire.

Sunday 17th May

Illustrated Talk: 10.30am - 11.30am

JO MILLER: *Page to Performance - Learning the ballads of Mary McQueen*.

Reminiscences: 11.45am - 12.45pm

ALEX CLARKE: *A Dundee Life (Part 2) - The Hilltown, the jute mills, daft songs, Will Fyffe, William McGonagall, Scottish dance, the butcher's shop and his granny Clarke's memories of the fall of the Tay Bridge*.

Farewell Concert: 2.00pm - 5.00pm

The guest artistes lead a farewell concert and singaround with songs from all who still have a good song to sing and a voice left to sing it!

We wish to give enormous thanks to all the singers who have given free use of their recordings to the East of Scotland Traditional Song Group. All money raised from the sale of these CDs goes to the Group and this enables us to run the FifeSing events without asking for funds from Fife Council or the Scottish Arts Council.

The Place:

The Fife Animal Park

The **Fife Animal Park** is on the B937 between Collesie and Ladybank on the left about half a mile south from the A91/B937 crossroads. There are good train services from Dundee or Edinburgh to Ladybank station. Taxi from Ladybank *tel:* 01337 858722 or 857485 or 830256.

Restaurant: Food and Bar Facilities

Food will be available throughout the weekend between events - from Friday at 6.00pm and for Breakfast and Lunch (Saturday & Sunday) and Evening meal (Saturday). Full bar facilities at all events.

On-site Accommodation

The **Fife Animal Park** has a paddock for free camping and caravans with on-site toilet facilities. Let us know at the time of booking if you plan to bring a caravan.

Hotel and B&B Accommodation

Freuchie: Lomond Hills Hotel *tel:* 01337 857329 www.lomondhillshotel.com Ochil Villa B&B *tel:* 01337 858031 www.ochilvilla.co.uk

Falkland: Ladywell House B&B *tel:* 01337 858414 www.ladywellhousefife.co.uk

Newton of Falkland: Kiln House B&B *tel:* 01337 857188 www.astayinfife.co.uk/kilnhouse.htm

Auchtermuchty: Redwood Cottage *tel:* 01337 828272 www.redwoodcottage.co.uk

Gateside: Edenshead Stables *tel:* 01337 868500 www.edensheadstables.com

Newburgh: Ninewells Farmhouse *tel:* 01337 840307 www.ninewellsfarm.co.uk

News Update:

www.springthyme.co.uk/fifesing

Websites with artiste information:

Bob Lewis: mustrad.org.uk/articles/b_lewis.htm

Jimmy Hutchison: mustrad.org.uk/reviews/tradbear.htm

Elizabeth Stewart mustrad.org.uk/reviews/e_stewrt.htm

Stanley Robertson mustrad.org.uk/reviews/rumscum.htm

Jock Duncan springthyme.co.uk/album39/39go.html

Timothy Neat mustrad.org.uk/reviews/neat15.htm

Shepherd, Spiers & Watson springthyme.co.uk/ssw