

The Institute exists to study, record and promote the cultural traditions and language of communities in the North of Scotland and, in particular, of the North East. It is also concerned with the cultural traditions of groups that have recently come to live in the region, and of Scottish expatriate communities abroad – the Scottish diaspora. Under its Director, Dr Ian Russell, an imaginative programme of fieldwork, research, outreach, collaborative projects, education initiatives, and publications is underway.

Building the Boaties at Boddam

A Craft Project for 2004



Photograph courtesy of Ali Law

Sailing a Fifie at the Den Dam, Boddam

Next Spring a three-month project, funded by the Scottish Arts Council, will be launched in partnership with Aberdeenshire Council. The aim of the project is to revive interest, especially among the young, in the building of model sailing boats, 'fifies', among the community in Peterhead and further afield. The skills of their unique construction will be passed on through a craft residency based at Peterhead Maritime Centre.

'Boaties' are a North-East model-making skill that dates back at least 150 years. They are based on the traditional Scottish fishing boat, the 'fifie', and sail without rudder, motor, or remote control, depending on the skill of the maker/owner to trim the boat and set the sails appropriately. They are made in various sizes/classes from 2 foot to 4 foot 6, but boats as large as 6 foot have been made in the past. The centre for hand manufacture is Peterhead district, especially Boddam, where there is an annual event in August at the Den Dam. Here the boaties are sailed competitively in various classes. There are at least three well-known makers in the district and several others who have the modelling skills. Some of the boaties go back over a hundred years, their hulls having been re-painted and re-fitted many times. All the Boddam boaties are named for and dedicated to a particular child from the community and if they win that child receives a trophy and a small prize at the New Year's party in the Community Hall.

Among the principal crafts-people supporting the project are Jim Reid, whose fine models grace the Arbuthnot Museum; John Buchan, a former ship's carpenter, who built wooden boats all his working life; Ali Law, a marine engineer, a well known builder of model boats from 'fifies' to hi-tech racers; and Sam Wesley Allan, a craft teacher recently retired from Peterhead Academy.

Greig-Duncan Ceilidh in New Deer - Saturday 27 September 2003

A special ceilidh is being held in New Deer Public Hall, Gavin Greig's home village, to mark the completion of the eight-volume Greig-Duncan Folk Song Collection. Among the invited guests will be descendants of some of the singers from whom songs were collected, as well as the senior editor, Dr Emily Lyle. The singers on the night include Jock Duncan, Anne Reid, Geordie Murison, Gordon Easton, Robert Lovie, Stanley Robertson, Sheena Blackhall, Barbara Ann Burnett, Lindy Cheyne, Tom McKean, Katherine Campbell, and others. The evening will come to a lively conclusion with dancing to the 'Greig-Duncan Ceilidh Band'. The event is organised by the Friends of the Elphinstone Institute supported by the TMSA (Aberdeen Branch), Buchan Heritage, and the School of Scottish Studies Archives, University of Edinburgh. Tickets cost a bargain £4 (£2) and are available from the Institute. It will be a great night and one not to be missed!

Button Boxes and Moothies

'Sook n Blaw' Legends in Aberdeen

14-16 November 2003

Legendary squeezebox and mouth organ players are to visit Aberdeen for a Free Reed Convention organised by the Institute in conjunction with RSAMD. This celebration of these delightful instruments will provide a unique opportunity to enjoy and find out more about their appealing music.

The high quality line-up includes Jackie Daly of Patrick Street (button accordion), Mary MacNamara (anglo concertina), Andrew MacNamara (button box), and the Murphy Brothers (John and Pip – mouth organs), all from Ireland; Will Duke (anglo concertina) and Dan Quinn (melodeon) from England; and Simon Thoumire (English concertina), Stuart Eydman (English concertina), Bryce Johnston (mouth organ), Ian Grant (mouth organ), Doddie Murray (mouth organ), and Fred Davidson (melodeon) from Scotland.

The weekend festival, which includes concerts, workshops, interviews, solo recitals, seminars, and informal sessions, will be an unrivalled opportunity for people of all ages and backgrounds to come together, listen to, and play small free-reed instruments. Local support is being provided by SCaT (Scottish Culture and Traditions Association) and the TMSA. The workshops will include playing style and technique, as well as repertoire, and will cater for different levels of ability. Talks will support the theme of the weekend, focusing on the playing of free reed instruments in Scotland and elsewhere in the UK, and Ireland.

From the Director

Two Warm Welcomes!

To Dr Julia Bishop from Sheffield, who is joining our research team to continue her ground-breaking work on the Carpenter Collection of folksongs and ballads, with funding from the AHRB Creative and Performing Arts scheme.

To our nine new 'MLitt in Ethnology and Folklore' students. We hope that you find the programme interesting and rewarding.

These highly portable, low status instruments are played by many 'amateurs' in North-East Scotland for their own amusement and the entertainment of others. The festival offers a rare chance to experience one of the less familiar musical traditions of Scotland and elsewhere. Funding has been set aside to provide help for young instrumentalists at the convention (nominations to the Director, please). We are grateful to the Scottish Arts Council and the Globe Inn for their invaluable support. See you there!



Andrew MacNamara and Mary MacNamara.

Photograph courtesy of Agnès Patouse

Songs from North-East Scotland: The Performance Edition of 'The Greig-Duncan Folk Song Collection'

Dr Katherine Campbell joined the Elphinstone Institute in January 2003 as a Research Fellow, and has now almost completed her work on the Performance Edition of The Greig-Duncan Folk Song Collection. The collection was made in the early years of the twentieth century by Gavin Greig, schoolmaster at Whitehill School, New Deer, and Reverend James Bruce Duncan, Free Church minister at Lynturk near Alford. Under the editorship of Patrick Shuldham-Shaw, Emily B. Lyle et al., the first volume of the collection was published in 1981, with the eighth and final volume being published in 2002 by Mercat Press for the University of Aberdeen in association with the School of Scottish Studies, University of Edinburgh.

The Performance Edition takes the form of a one-volume selection of around 150 songs from the eight published volumes. The edition concentrates on the singers that Greig and Duncan collected from, and it is the intention that those using the volume, whether singers or otherwise, will be given a sense of immediate contact with those from whom the songs came and with the context in which the songs were sung. New biographical data on singers has been gleaned as a result of fieldwork and archival research, and photographs of some singers have been included. Almost all the singers selected lived in the North East at the time of the collection and amongst them are Mrs Eliza Clark (c. 1849-1934) from Brucklay, New Deer, whom Greig described as one of the best singers he had heard, Robert Alexander (1835-1917) from Whiterashes, a farmer and precursor from whom Duncan collected sixty songs, and George Garioch (c. 1824-1917) from Leochel Cushnie who at the age of eighty-eight impressed Duncan with his rendering of certain tunes and texts. The music that appeared largely in the hands of Greig and

Duncan in volumes 1-8 has been reset in this edition to facilitate sight-reading using *Finale Allegro*, and some of the original keys have been altered to make them more suitable for performers. The edition also includes an introduction, a statement on editorial method, a discography, and bibliography.



Dr Katherine Campbell working in Special Libraries and Archives at The University of Aberdeen with materials relating to the collection

Dr Campbell's post is funded by a Larger Research Grant from The British Academy, with The Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland contributing towards fieldwork costs. Prior to this appointment, she was an AHRB Research Fellow in the Creative and Performing Arts at the department of Celtic and Scottish Studies, University of Edinburgh, where she worked as a joint editor of volume 8 of Greig-Duncan. Her other publications include *The Fiddle in Scottish Culture* (2004, forthcoming), *The Fiddle Tradition of North-East Scotland* (<http://www.celtscot.ed.ac.uk/fiddle>), *Traditional Scottish Songs and Music* (with Ewan McVicar, 2001) and *Burns and Scottish Fiddle Tradition* (with Emily Lyle, 2000). In July of this year she represented the Institute at the International Ballad Conference held at the University of Texas at Austin, USA. She is a keen traditional singer and her CD entitled *The Songs of Amelia and Jane Harris*, backed by musicians Mairi Campbell, Tony McManus, Pete Shephard, and Gary West, is due to be released soon on the Springthyme label.

The Performance Edition links with an ongoing project at the Elphinstone to make a recording of young singers performing songs from the Greig-Duncan collection, and it is hoped that both initiatives will help to strengthen the strong living tradition of song found in the North East and further a field.

Who's Who at the Elphinstone

Dr Ian Russell, Director, *Ethnology, oral traditions, including music, drama and speech*
Dr Colin Milton, Associate Director, *Scottish literature and folklore, especially of the North East*
Sheena Blackhall, Scottish Arts Council Creative Writing Fellow, *Creative writing in Scots*
Dr Katherine Campbell, British Academy Research Fellow, *Scots fiddle, instrumental and song traditions*
Dr Thomas A. McKean, Archives and Research, *Oral tradition, songs and ballads, Gaelic tradition*
Stanley Robertson, Heritage Lottery Fund Keyworker, *Scottish Travellers Project*
Dr Julia C. Bishop, AHRB Research Fellow, *Carpenter Collection, biographies and social world of NE singers*
Roddy Mackenzie, MPhil student *researching the contemporary use of healing wells*
Siobhan Tolland, PhD student *researching 'Mary Brooksbank of Dundee'*
Judith Herring, Research Assistant, *Scottish Travellers Project*
Alison Sharman, Secretary

Honorary Research Fellows

Dr Mary Anne Alburger, Traditional music and song, *fiddle making, 18th century culture*
Dr Caroline Macafee, Scots Language, *Scottish National Dictionary Association*
Professor Bill Nicolaisen, Ethnology, *folk narrative, name studies, Scottish place names*

Research Associates

Evelyn Hood, *Scottish traditions of dance*
Dr David Northcroft, *Education in the North East*
Les Wheeler, *Scots language, education*

Postscript

If you have any information, comments or suggestions of relevance to the work of the Institute, do not hesitate to contact us.

The Institute relies on outside financial support to make many of its activities possible. If you would like to help us in this way and/or become a Friend of the Elphinstone Institute, please contact the Secretary.

Elphinstone Public Lectures

From October to May, a series of public lectures has been arranged at Marischal Museum, Marischal College, Aberdeen, 7.30-9.00pm, on the following Tuesday evenings:

21 October 2003 - Dr Marjory Harper, University of Aberdeen, ' "We'll take Scotland with us, a kingdom of the mind": Scottish Emigrant Identities in the 19th Century'

18 November 2003 - Adam McNaughtan, Glasgow, 'Glasgow's Singing Traditions'

9 December 2003 - David Welch, Banchory, 'The Monymusk Psalmody Revival, 1753-1765'

20 January 2004 - Dr Lizanne Henderson, University of Dundee, 'Charmers, Spells, and Holy Wells'

17 February 2004 - Dr Freddie Freeman, Edinburgh, ' "I am a fiddler and a poet": Burns as a Folk Musician'

16 March 2004 - Dr Ian Russell, University of Aberdeen, 'The Sailing of the Boaties at Boddam: Community, Craft, and Cultural Tradition'

20 April 2004 - Dr Julia Bishop, University of Aberdeen, 'The Most Valuable Collection of Child Ballads Never Published? The James Madison Carpenter Collection and North-East Ballad Singers'

18 May 2004 - To be confirmed

There is an admission charge of £2.00 and free refreshments

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Date for Your Diary: St Andrew's Night Ceilidh, Friday 28 November 2003, Elphinstone Hall, Old Aberdeen, dancing to Hallyracket, organised by the Friends with SCA T