

REINVIGORATING TRADITIONAL ARTS IN SCOTLAND - AN IMPACT CASE STUDY



Forging new understandings of the role of tradition in Scotland and internationally, the projects nurtured within the umbrella of Reinvigorating Traditional Arts in Scotland have contributed to the reanimation of Scotland's rich traditional heritage by transferring music and song into a contemporary context.

The music and other cultural artefacts that have been the basis for much of the research have been brought to life through websites, public performances in Scotland, Ireland and North America, educational packages, CDs and radio broadcasts.

Through combining the traditional music with new media, the projects, across three main threads, have influenced the way the cultural and educational professionals, performers and public have engaged with traditional Scottish arts.

Tobar an Dualchais is a multi-partner online digitisation project, involving two Higher Education Institutions, the University of Edinburgh and Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, University of the Highlands and Islands. The online resource includes substantial material from the University of Edinburgh's School of Scottish Studies Archives. Launched in December 2010, the website generates traffic of ca. 7,000 visits per month, including hits from 98 different countries.

RESEARCH BACKGROUND



The projects described here relate to innovative research into Scottish traditional music and song including the books *Voicing Scotland: Folk, Culture, Nation* (West), *The Greig-Duncan Folk Song Collection, volume 8* (Patrick Shuldham-Shaw, Emily Lyle and Campbell) and *Songs from North-East Scotland* (Campbell).



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At its launch in 2010, the Scottish Cabinet Secretary for Culture and External Affairs, Fiona Hyslop, praised how the resource “makes available an enormous amount of rich material in Gaelic and Scots which will help current and future generations learn where they come from”.

A partnership with Education Scotland was established to provide online teaching material for the Curriculum for Excellence (the new national schools’ curriculum for Scotland). In conjunction with Creative Scotland, a programme has been established to encourage creative use of Tobar an Dualchais amongst artists from a wide range of backgrounds.

The BBC Radio Scotland programme, ‘*Pipeline*’, presented by Gary West, and which broadcasts to an average of 40,000 listeners each week, is greatly informed through the research undertaken through the **Survivals and Revivals** project. The research exploring traditional music within contemporary society, including the revival of Lowland and Border piping has helped to produce over 500 hours of broadcasting since 2003.

In 2009 the programme was shortlisted in the media category of the Scots Traditional Music Awards and in 2010 received a nomination in the Best Music Programme Category at the UK Sony Radio Awards. The programme also contributed significantly to the development, understanding and expansion of piping internationally with a 6-times World Pipe Band Champion commenting, “Here in British Columbia we have a strong but slightly isolated piping community. We have relied on *Pipeline* for the latest piping music as well as the history of tunes and pipers ... we learn from it and use what we learn to promote and develop piping in our part of the world”.

The Greig-Duncan Folk Song Collection from North-East Scotland is a rich resource which has inspired educational initiatives and performances, notably through the work of singer Frieda Morrison, our Traditional Artist in Residence (2012-13).

The pupils of Oyne Primary School in Aberdeenshire created a new drama entitled “Johnny Sangster” based on the story of the collection which is available on GLOW (the Scottish schools intranet run by Education Scotland).

In June 2013, the Greig-Duncan Online Songs Project went live: 35 songs from the collection, sung by 16 well-known folksingers, were uploaded to YouTube, bringing the songs from the page to life.

Singing competitions held at a festival in Portsoy, Aberdeenshire, have also drawn on the resource. A newspaper report noted: “The Greig-Duncan collection is an amazing collection of our North-East singing tradition, and the organisers of the competition can be well satisfied that they demonstrated that it is part of a truly living tradition”.

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