

BURNSONG

RESEARCH INTO THE POTENTIAL FOR A EUROPEAN NETWORK FOR FOLK MUSIC

Notes from meetings and discussions in Glasgow at Showcase Scotland, 21-25 January 2015

1. Introduction

- 1.1 On behalf of Burnsong, Scotland's organisation devoted to song and songwriting, Ronnie Gurr and Nod Knowles held a group discussion during Showcase Scotland at Celtic Connections as well as holding a number of one-to-one discussions throughout the weekend and a full day of sharing information on the idea at the Showcase trade fair.
- 1.2 The purpose was to follow on from similar discussions in Bury at the English Folk Expo in October 2014, exploring interest in - and the potential for - the development of a pan-European network of people and organisations working in folk and traditional music.
- 1.3 This report is a summary of those discussions and the practical next steps that were suggested.

2. Participants

- 2.1 The names and details of all those who we met in Glasgow are given in the attached list. In addition, details are added for people who were not able to attend Glasgow meetings but were at meetings in Bury and elsewhere or have otherwise indicated their interest in the prospect of a network and would wish to be involved in future meetings and actions.

3. Reasons for the discussions

- 3.1 Nod Knowles introduced the discussions by explaining that this project started out by Burnsong researching the possibility of bringing a Folk Alliance International (FAI) event from North America to Europe. But it soon became clear that although, for a number of reasons, this was not feasible, many of the people consulted in the UK pointed to the fact that, unlike with FAI in the US and Canada, there is no equivalent formal, structured Europe-wide folk music network.
- 3.2 There are a variety of national or regional folk music organisations and many informal personal networks that have grown through people meeting one another at festivals, showcases and expo events.
- 3.3 There is an increasing number of people who would like to be part of an active, structured membership network for folk/traditional music that reaches across the whole of Europe.

4. Ideas about a network

- 4.1 Overall, in all the discussions, the consensus was affirmed: a European network would be of great benefit for sharing ideas and experience and making collective action - and it should be developed.

- 4.2 There was a clear desire to bring together like-minded people who would focus on uniting to support folk/traditional music.
- 4.3 It would be an excellent way of sharing knowledge, and learning about one another's experience and traditions - and about what was happening today in the folk music of each country.
- 4.4 It would be able to represent and advocate for folk/traditional/ music and raise its profile, in each country and also on a pan-European level.
- 4.5 It should not just be about national showcasing or the interests of individual members or countries. It could demonstrate the true collective strength and value of European partnership and the rich diversity of Europe's music.
- 4.6 There would need to be a clear definition of the network's aims.
- 4.7 In defining those aims, the network would also have to find a broad and inclusive definition of the music it wants to support - a broad definition of 'folk' and 'traditional' music. The network should resist the idea of traditional music being too narrowly defined.
- 4.8 Practical ideas of what a network could do - realistic actions - must be identified.
- 4.9 Some general ideas on what a strong network could do (*which will be added to the ideas reported from previous discussions in Edinburgh and Bury*) included:
- Work to get a better status for folk/traditional music in European countries.
 - Advocate for the importance and value of the music.
 - Lobby for support and recognition for the music - in various countries and in the wider European cultural context.
 - Hold a Europe-wide conference so that members could meet and share ideas.
 - Act as a forum for collecting and sharing information.
 - Provide opportunities for the network members to learn more about each other's music and national scenes.
 - Support training - to share and learn from each other's experiences.
 - Explore ideas of how to build audiences for the music.
 - Create more opportunities for artistic collaborations and exchanges.
 - Raise or help to raise funds for pan-European artistic projects - from cultural, arts and heritage sources.
 - Link with folk/traditional music networks in other continents.

5. Practical issues

- 5.1 There were practical issues that need to be considered in building towards a European network. These included:
- 5.2 Finding ways to fund and host meetings: it would be best if they could happen around existing events that people would already be visiting.
- 5.3 These discussions were being held in English language. It was thought that English was probably the only common language that could be used for the network - at least for the time being.

- 5.4 The membership of a network would need to be defined. Should there be different categories of membership? Membership should be wide and members should be equal. Members would join to support the common aims of the network - not just for the benefit of their own organisation or their own country.
- 5.5 A formal network would need a formal structure. This would require time and discussion on the rules, constitution, governance (i.e. board or committee) and similar non-musical issues. Making this structure was an essential next stage in creating a network.

6. Information

- 6.1 Some people present were also part of the World Trad Forum that was founded in Quebec and has met there over the past four years. It has begin to define its structure and set out its mission and aims.
- 6.2 A new European network should keep in contact with the World Trad Forum and share whatever was possible.

7. Next actions

- 7.1 Nod Knowles would write a short report about the discussions in Glasgow - and circulate it by email to the people involved and others who had been in contact but who were unable to meet over the weekend.
- 7.2 Nod would also write a summary of the ideas discussed so far and send it to the European Music Council.
- 7.3 Burnsong's Board would be asked to formally approve further actions.
- 7.4 UK organisations - EFDSS (England), trac-cymru (Wales) and the Trad Music Forum (Scotland) had agreed to help Burnsong prepare for the next stage of the work.
- 7.5 If agreed by the Burnsong Board, Burnsong and the UK organisations, in liaison with some of most active people in the discussions so far, would organise a working meeting - which would be in a European city (not in the UK) that would be cheap and easy to reach from most countries.
- 7.6 The meeting would be a practical working meeting to decide on the aims, structure, membership, constitution, name etc for the network. It would have a clear agenda and the UK organisers would prepare material as much as possible in advance.
- 7.7 They would invite people from each of the countries that had so far been involved in these discussions. To make the meeting group a manageable size, the invitations would be limited (to perhaps one or two people from each country).
- 7.8 People would have to pay for their own travel and hotels - but Burnsong and the other UK organisations would try to find funding for at least some of the costs - and invitees would be asked to do the same if possible.

- 7.9 The date (and place) for the meeting would have to be agreed and announced well in advance - but the UK group would work out a reasonable timetable.
- 7.10 At some point, most likely in the late Spring, Burnsong would liaise with other contacts in the wider group to co-ordinate and send out a PR/press release about the work so far and the plans and possibilities for the network.
- 7.11 If possible, Burnsong would (temporarily) create a European network page on its website for news and information and possibly create an email address for further work on this project.

NK 18.02.15

BURNSONG - EUROPEAN NETWORK PROJECT - PEOPLE INVOLVED IN MEETINGS, DISCUSSIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE at 18 February 2015

After meetings in 2014 and 2015 in Edinburgh, Bury and Glasgow plus email and telephone correspondence

Surname	First Name	Company	Country
Couchez	Rik		BE
De Loecker	Patrick	Loecker	BE
Scheys	Melanie	Dranouter Festival & Music Centre	BE
Schils	Rudi	Schots weekend	BE
Vandewijer	Agnes	MuziekMozaiek	BE
Vanoutrive	Bart	MuziekMozaiek	BE
Davies	Ian	SUNFEST Festival, Ontario	CA
Kamp	Mike	Folk im Feuerschlösschen/Folker magazine	DE
Steppat	Volker	Radio Bremen	DE
Walter	Alexander	WOMEX / Piranha Arts	DE
Andersen	Dorthe	Folk Roskilde	DK
Hansen	Lene Buch	Folk Roskilde Lirum Larum	DK
Høirup	Morton Alfred	ROSA/Folk	DK
Jensen	Lone Lambert	folksongs.dk music agency	DK
Madsen	Gunnar	ROSA	DK
Theessink	Maria	Tønder Festival	DK
Noormaa	Tarmo	Estonian Traditional Music Centre	EE
Belho	Vitor	Nordesía Produccións	ES
Cassidy	Brent	The Irish Festival of Oulu	FI
Suvanto	Jani	The Irish Festival of Oulu	FI
Agnew	David	The Met / So It Is	GB
Anstey	Mark	Unique Gravity	GB
Armstrong	Claire	Active Events	GB

Baillie	Stuart	Oh Yeah Centre, Belfast	GB
Barcan	Eddie	Cambridge Folk Festival	GB
Barrow	John	Stoneyport Agency	GB
Bearman	Alan	ABM	GB
Bell	Roz	Eden Court	GB
Besford	Tom	RNCM	GB
Bolton	Polly	Adastra/ Beverley Folk Festival	GB
Brownlee	Neil	Visit Scotland	GB
Bryant	Tristan	Dotted Line	GB
Byrne	Steve	Scots Music	GB
Campbell	Norah	Creative and Cultural Skills	GB
Campbell	Mairi		GB
Campbell	Katherine		GB
Campbell	Fiona	Voluntary Arts Scotland/Scots Music Group	GB
Carle Taylor	Wendy		GB
Carpenter	Lorraine	Different Strings	GB
Catto	Amanda	Creative Scotland	GB
Chapman	Karl	Usher Hall, Edinburgh	GB
Christie	Marie	Event Scotland	GB
Cooper	Leila	Adastra	GB
Cooper	Caroline	Scottish Music Industry Association	GB
Cormack	Arthur	Feisean nan Gaidheal	GB
Corse	Craig	TwentyTwo Promotions	GB
Coull	Martin	Martin Coull Management	GB
Coxson	Sarah	Alan Bearman Music	GB
Cripps	Geoff	Village Pump Festival/Allsn Yn Y Fan	GB
Dale	Jaqui	Royal Northern College of Music	GB
Dalgetty	Fiona	Feis Rois	GB
Devlin	Charles	Ireby Festival	GB

Dick	Karen	Creative Scotland	GB
Dixon	Dick	Warwick & Bromyard Folk Festivals	GB
Dixon	Sue	Warwick Folk Festival	GB
Docherty	Caroline	Creative Scotland	GB
Dunbar	Morag		GB
Emlyn	Mari	Galeri, Caernarfon	GB
Fenn	Paul	Asgard Promotions Ltd	GB
Flower	David	SASA Music	GB
Francis	Dave	Traditional Music Forum	GB
Frost	Jo	Songlines	GB
Gardner	David	Atlantic Edge Music Services	GB
Gibson	Faye	Wales Millennium Centre	GB
Graham	Cathy	British Council - Head of Music	GB
Green	Michael	Kings Place Music Foundation	GB
Gurr	Ronnie	Apprentiship Manager	GB
Hâf	Eluned	Wales Arts International	GB
Halfpenny	Lynne	Head of Culture/Sport, Edinburgh City Council	GB
Harris	Adrian	The Queen's Hall	GB
Heavenor	David		GB
Hewat	Jade	Celtic Connections	GB
Hicks	Robert	Beyond	GB
Holmes	Liz	Knockengoroch Community Interest Co	GB
Holmes	Katriona	Knockengoroch Community Interest Co	GB
Honeyman	Susie	The Grey Gallery	GB
James	Alan	EFSS	GB
Jenkins	Angharad	trac	GB
Keir	Grant	Faction North Ltd	GB
Kennedy	Mary Ann	Watercolour Music	GB
Kilbride	Danny	tracs	GB

King	Vic	Vaguely Sunny	GB
Knowles	Nod	Nod Knowles Productions	GB
Law	Kirsty		GB
Lee	Sam	The Nest Collective	GB
Levermore	Gary	Membran Records	GB
Liddell	Faith	Festivals Edinburgh	GB
Macdonald	Sheena	Musicians Union	GB
Macdonald	Alex	An Lanntair	GB
Maclennan	Caroline	Hebridean Celtic Festival	GB
Macleod	Dana	British Council Scotland	GB
Mandelson	Ben	WOMEX	GB
Maxwell	Gill	Scottish Music Centre	GB
McAlister	Maria	ACNI	GB
McGlone	Jennifer	Glow Arts	GB
McIntyre	Rhiannon	The Touring Network	GB
McLaughlin	Dermot	Creative Strategic Solutions	GB
McLeod	Lynsey	Creative Scotland	GB
Morgan	Emily	Faction North	GB
Morrison	Frieda	Scots Language Radio & Birseland Media	GB
Napier	Finlay		GB
Newton	Rachael		GB
Ó hEadhra	Brian	Gaelic Arts & Culture Officer	GB
O'Brien	Terry	English Folk Expo / Playpen Agency	GB
Owen-Hicks	Antony	Arts Council of Wales	GB
Parkinson	Paul	British Council	GB
Parry	Crispin	British Underground	GB
Paterson	Carolyn	The Tolbooth Theatre	GB
Payne	Julia	the hub	GB
Pearson	Neil	EFSS	GB

Pentney	Chris	Folkworks/Sage Gateshead	GB
Polwart	Karine		GB
Roberts	Elen	Wales Arts International	GB
Santer	Trish		GB
Scullion	Ciaran	ACNI	GB
Seddon	Patsy		GB
Shaw	Donald	Celtic Connections	GB
Shearer	Andy	Horsecross Arts	GB
Smith	Ian	Creative Scotland	GB
Smith	Donald	Scottish Storytelling Centre	GB
Spicer	Katy	English Folk Dance and Song Society	GB
Taylor	David	Creative Scotland	GB
Temple	Loudon	Brookfield Knights	GB
Thomas	Stuart	Original Noise	GB
Thoumire	Simon	Hands Up For Trad	GB
Turner	Nick	Watercolour Music	GB
Vandepoorter	Eric	Bureau export Musique France	GB
Wade	Chris	Adastra/ Beverley Folk Festival	GB
West	Gary	TRACS & Edinburgh University	GB
Whytock	Lisa	Active Events	GB
Wills	Todd	Colston Hall	GB
Zanaska	Geraldine	Bureau Export (French Music Office)	GB
		Ceolas, South Uist	GB
		Lews Castle College, Benbecula	GB
Hannigan	Shaun	Regional Cultural Centre, Donegal	IE
O'Hare	Sean Paul	Séamus Ennis Arts Centre	IE
Sherlock	Tom	Tom Sherlock Management	IE
Sisk	Christine	Director, Culture Ireland	IE
Foster	Chris	Folkarts	IS

Berardo	Magali	Musicalista Produzioni	IT
Bresciani	Gian Luigi	GEO Music	IT
Oude Weernink	Geert	Folk Groningen/de Ousterpoort Festival	NL
van Gorp	Joep	Qanvas	NL
Bakka	Egil	Norwegian Council for Traditional Music & Dance	NO
Szota	Bozena	Culture Center Zamek	PL
Ferreira	Carlos	Radio Diana	PT
Berg	Goran	Kultur i Väst	SE
Finnan	Aengus	Folk Alliance International	USA