

Ivoc

Kyles of Bute Music Club

'Heatherfield'

160

Shore Road

Kames

Tighnabruich

Argyll PA21 2AG.

km Oct 04.

Cultural Commission

06 Oct 2004

Dear Mr Boyle.

I must apologise for this late reply to your letter. I put the letter in my file for our next committee meeting, but it was unavoidably cancelled until the end of Sept, so we missed the date for reply.

My committee & I find it hard to know how to reply to your correspondence. We are a fairly young music club, just going into our 7th season, and right from the beginning we have struggled financially, and without grants simply could not exist. Until the club was formed there was no classical (or even light classical) music in the area. There is live music in the hotels at weekends and some ceilidhs were run locally.

1) As far as Education is concerned we have tried to interest and involve the local children (there is only a primary school here). We offer FREE seats at any of our concerts or club nights to those in full time education. We involved the school, in the form of a choir & little band with percussion instruments in one of our fund raising concerts, yet not one child has since been back. So please, how do we develop "artistic, cultural & social skills"?

2) We are isolated here, at the end of a road, & have no institutional infrastructure within easy reach.

3) No venue - this year - quite professional

A Baroque group, a brass quintet, a well known Scottish music ensemble, a saxophone ensemble, and finally a guitar trio. All concerts are held on a Saturday evening here in Kames at a price generally of £6.00.

4. Usually we have about 20 posters printed and these are put up locally & in villages, holiday chalets etc within a 10 mile radius. Our season's programme is on display at the Tourist office in Dunoon, yet most of our sales are done by word of mouth. The result of all this effort is an average audience of 38!!

With performances costing a minimum of £500 - usually more - we sustain losses of £250 - £350 on every concert. Much of this loss is covered by Enterprise Music Scotland, which gives wonderful support to us, and has done since our inception. They also provide the information we need to choose and contact groups available to tour and perform in Scotland. Without them our existence would be very difficult. This coming season we anticipate a deficit of about £2,000. E.M.S has already given us a grant of £1,000, and Argyll & Bute Council have awarded us £200. The shortfall will have to be made up with fundraising events - which brings us to the last heading: -

We encourage creativity by organising an amateur concert in most years and "persuade" anyone with any performing talent at all to take part.

We are not sure we agree that every citizen has cultural "rights." Most are not interested in these "rights" if they do have them, and want no part of "culture". At least they are given the choice but most say "No thank you."

This is as I see things as applied to music: but there is probably a higher

Take-up on the visual Art scene, with large numbers of participating painters and visitors to galleries. I think that Scottish Art has become very lively in recent years with an enormous amount of talent becoming accessible to more people with the opening of more galleries. And now there is a very lively ladies handicraft group running in our district, which has surprised me by the sheer numbers taking part and the variety and amount of work produced in so small a community - population about 600.

This last figure is the whole crux of the matter here no doubt - 600 people at the end of a road that is not on the way to anywhere else. I find it hard to think more radically. Our aim is to provide good performances of quality music for any who may enjoy it, and also to provide a platform for the enormous number of young musicians trying to make a living. This is difficult financially and hard work, but I think we are moderately successful.

Sincerely,
Joan Johnston,

Hon Sec. Kyles of Bute
Music Club.