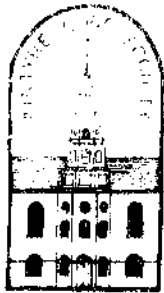


7 Heritage / Vol



KINTYRE CIVIC SOCIETY

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27 SEP 2004

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24th September 2004

Mr James Boyle,
Chair, Cultural Commission,
Broughton High School,
Carrington Road,
EDINBURGH,
EH4 1EG

Dear Mr Boyle,

Cultural Commission Consultation Phase 1: Response from Kintyre Civic Society

We are grateful for the opportunity to give our views on the questions posed by the Cultural Commission.

Kintyre Civic Society is a Scottish charity registered as no. 20956. Its income is derived from annual membership fees and it currently has 60 members. Its objects are: 1. To stimulate public interest in, and care for the beauty, history and character and the built and natural environments of Kintyre; 2. To encourage the preservation, development and improvement of features of general, public amenity or historic interest; 3. To encourage high standards of architecture and town and country planning in Kintyre; 4. To pursue these ends by means of meetings, exhibitions, lectures, publications and the promotion of schemes of a charitable nature.

As requested, our response is largely framed under the suggested headings. However, having recently published (in December 2003) a book of 20 miscellaneous chapters entitled *The Campbeltown Book* (ISBN 0-9545845-0-3), which did not initially seem commercially viable, though it has since almost exhausted its original print-run, we have been made acutely aware of the difficulties involved in attracting funding for publication of a work of obvious educational and cultural value, and of the complex and frustrating procedures involved in applying for grant-aid. We believe similar frustrations beset most attempts by the voluntary sector to get beneficial projects off the ground.

Education: *How do we develop artistic, cultural and social skills and provide cultural knowledge?*

Development of these skills should be encouraged in schools by including them as part of the National Curriculum. For adults, the work of local authorities in offering classes in targeted areas should be encouraged, as should the work of voluntary organisations able to offer educational opportunities in appropriate areas.

It is important to recognise that voluntary organisations often struggle, particularly in deprived areas, to find enough individual members to support educational programmes, and outside financial support is essential if programmes are to expand. While mindful of the need for appropriate fiscal control over public monies, as far as possible voluntary organisations should be autonomous in running their programmes, as their contributions are essentially **voluntary**, and official guidelines too often seem unable to distinguish between employees and volunteers.

Institutional infrastructure: *How best to organize and support the cultural sector in Scotland to deliver the maximum value in the most effective manner?*

There is a need to ensure that local creativity is not stifled by poor local authority or national support for local cultural initiatives, both to encourage actual artistic achievement, and to provide suitable buildings in which they can be shown to audiences.

Local museums are often poorly supported, though housing collections of great local and national significance. We would instance the recent unhappy saga of Kilmartin House, and our concern for the future of the listed Campbeltown Library and Museum building, which will shortly be left housing only its museum collections, without dedicated staffing or a purchase grant, as a result of the impending removal of the Library to a new purpose-built Community building on another site.

A local cultural organisation should be recognised in each geographical centre as best able to assess how funds should be distributed between competing bids. Such organisations must be subject to democratic control, though departments of local authorities may not necessarily be the best medium for this.

The delivery of services and access to them: *How best to provide cultural facilities and ensure the widest access?*

Local initiatives to provide forums for local talent and buildings to house them need positive encouragement and more easily-accessed funding from the centre.

In remote areas, support for local public transport in the evening may be the only way to ensure that cultural events in local centres of population can be visited at reasonable cost.

Marketing and promotion: *How to increase and broaden the profile of the audience and the public engaging with cultural activity in Scotland?*

The availability of funding support should be advertised more widely, and the bureaucracy for applying should be streamlined.

Part of the tourism budget currently targeted on visitors to Scotland should be geared to home audiences, who are often ill-informed on local cultural opportunities.

Encouraging creativity: *What is the best way to maximise the creative potential of the people of Scotland?*

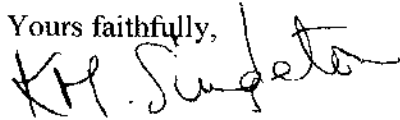
Diversity of cultural activities should be encouraged, particularly those less well advertised and supported at present. For example, current emphasis on some sporting activities may not appeal to many, who are discouraged by the apparent absence of alternatives.

The concept of "cultural rights for the Scottish citizen and those of its creative community" *-how these rights might best be formulated and translated into a scheme of entitlements.*

School children should be enabled to access a range of cultural activities outwith the school curriculum, if necessary with supplementary ring-fenced funding. Programmes should be implemented to ensure remote communities have facilities to showcase cultural activities, e.g. theatrical equipment for village halls.

It should be noted that most of the questions, and the answers we have suggested, are inter-dependent.

Yours faithfully,



(Mrs) Kate M. Singleton,
Secretary, Kintyre Civic Society