

## RSCDS Glasgow Branch Seniors

Iain and Kirsteen Maclean were the entertainers at the April lunch meeting of the Seniors Group. Kirsteen, has been conductor of the Glasgow Islay Gaelic Choir for nearly 25 years and her choral arrangements are used by many choirs and also as prescribed pieces in competitions. Iain also sings in the Glasgow Islay Gaelic Choir and both Iain and Kirsteen have been awarded the coveted Mod gold medal for singing.



The afternoon's performance opened with the beautiful song by Robert Burns, *"My Heart's in the Highlands"*. Kirsteen explained that although Iain is a true highlander (from Skye), she was born in Glasgow. We were then treated to a musical tour which began with the Hebridean Islands; this included songs in Gaelic and English about the Hebridean culture interspersed with poetry from the Western Isles. Kirsteen accompanied their performance on piano and occasionally harmonised. We learned about the herbal healing properties of St John's Wort, its Gaelic name translating as the armpit package of St Columba. With their charming humour they poked gentle fun at how developed the islands have become. We heard the story of Great Aunt Rachel and her recipe for tea. The tea was made in a metal can over an open peat fire, a fist full of tea was added to the boiling water and boiled vigorously for 10 minutes, a charming story - no doubt embellished at every telling. Kirsteen's soprano and Iain's bass voice, and their love of poetry combined wonderfully well on our journey with stories of Samuel Johnstone and Flora Macdonald. They performed a hilarious recitation of A A Milne's poem, *"The Dormouse and the Doctor"*, possibly better recognised as 'geraniums red and delphiniums blue'.

Our journey continued across to England and the Lake District, where we encountered MacDowell's *"To A Wild Rose"* and Wordsworth's *"I wandered Lonely as a Cloud"*, even across to the Alps. We had an exotic link to the South Pacific with *"Some Enchanted Evening"* and continued the musicals' theme with *"Finnian's Rainbow"*. Finally we came close to home and looked at Housing problems, some verse by Sir Walter Scott and finished our journey in *"Bonnie Dundee"*.



Many thanks to Iain and Kirsteen for a very professional afternoon's entertainment, a splendid event carefully planned and linked together with a huge amount of fun thrown in. They are definitely on our "Must Invite Back List".

*Maureen Daniel, Seniors' Group Member*