

CONFERENCE UPDATE
RIVERSIDE LODGE HOTEL, IRVINE
7th - 9th SEPTEMBER 2018

**BIG NAMES HEADING FOR
THE RBWF'S ANNUAL
CONFERENCE IN IRVINE**

Two of Scotland's leading traditional musicians - **Celine Donoghue** and **Neil Sturgeon** - will top the bill at this year's popular Friday Night Dinner and Ceilidh in Irvine's Riverside Lodge Hotel on Friday 7th September and will have feet tapping with their lively interpretation of Scotland's traditional music.



Last year, Celine, a multi-instrumentalist who plays tenor banjo and fiddle, and also sings, was accompanied by singer/songwriter Neil Sturgeon, also a talented guitarist, when they played to a packed audience at the finale of the prestigious Final Concert of Irvine's 50th Marymass Folk Festival. They are looking forward to returning to the town in September to be part of the fantastic entertainment programme that the host clubs - Irvine Burns Club and Irvine Lasses Burns Club - have created for this year's Conference.

Celine is a graduate of the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama who has toured and recorded extensively from the age of sixteen with some of Scotland's finest musicians. She was a recipient of the Auleen Therault Young Tradition Award at Goderich Celtic Roots Festival in Canada and performed at the Robert Burns Memorial Lecture given by Kofi Annan at UN HQ, New York. Celine has been a tutor at the Glasgow Fiddle Workshop, the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, and Celtic Connections for several years. Her successful album - "*Something Else*" - features Burns' songs but her repertoire is much more extensive and embraces everything from traditional Scottish and Irish music to American Country Music.

Neil Sturgeon is one of Scotland's rising song-writers who has managed to fuse traditional music with a fresh and lively contemporary sound and with lyrics that are meaningful. He is an outstanding guitarist who has an album - "*Geography and Luck*" - being released on 1st June and, unsurprisingly, Celine's banjo-playing features on the new album. Neil and his band then go on the road to promote the album with several dates already arranged for core venues across Scotland.

There will be other surprises still to be announced for the Friday evening and it's a case of "Watch this space" but you should get your tickets early for what is going to be a ceilidh with a difference and certainly a night to remember.

BACK TO SCHOOL AS IAN MUIR'S BAND GETS SET FOR THE SATURDAY BALL



The Conference Installation Dinner and Presidential Ball is heading back to Greenwood Academy once again on the Saturday evening (8th September) when the Prestwick-based **Ian Muir Scottish Dance Band** will be providing the music immediately following the Conference Dinner. Those who attended the Conference in Irvine in 2014 were stunned by the way in which Greenwood Academy was transformed into something quite special by the combination of clever lighting, illuminated backdrops and a plethora of large screens to create a banqueting suite within a local secondary school. That's set to happen again for 2018!

Ian Muir's Scottish Dance Band will add an extra depth of sound to this setting with a lively and balanced dance programme that will mix Scottish Country and Ceilidh Dancing - and the two are quite different - with what is described today as "Social Dancing" and which is certainly a long way from Strictly Come Dancing!

Irvine-born Ian, who was actually raised in the Doon Valley, started his professional playing career aged 14 at the Gaiety Theatre, Ayr and since then, as well as his busy schedule across the UK, has travelled throughout Europe, United States and the Middle East. He formed his own Scottish Dance Band in 1984 and broadcasts regularly for BBC Radio Scotland appearing often on its popular "Take The Floor". Over the years, Ian Muir and his band have travelled annually on cruise ships playing at ceilidhs and Scottish evenings hosted by P&O, Royal and Cunard in some really exotic places. Yes - they can make a boat rock too!



Further information about Conference Bookings should be made via Margaretann and Beverley at HQ and Conference Deposits should be paid by 1st May