

HIGHLAND SOCIETY OF LONDON

Please contribute to our “focus charity” 2018:

Centenary commemoration of the loss of the *Iolaire*

Donate via: highlandsocietyoflondon.org or
justgiving.com/campaign/iolairecommemoration



2018 is the final year of the 100th anniversary celebrations of the Great War of 1914-1918, and of the 1918 Armistice. With our strong historical and continuing relationship with the Armed Forces (and particularly the Scottish Regiments), the **Highland Society of London** is keen to mark this year by raising money for a project which both commemorates the events of that time, but also creates a lasting legacy for remembrance in the future – specifically through Piobaireachd, the musical form traditionally supported by the Society.

Late on New Year’s Eve 1918, the *Iolaire* set sail from Kyle of Lochalsh, carrying nearly 300 servicemen returning from the Great War to their homes and families on the Isle of Lewis and nearby islands. But in the early hours of New Year’s Day 1919, the ship sank at the entrance to Stornoway Harbour – 205 of the men on board perished in one of the most devastating maritime tragedies in modern British history.

In memory of this event, the Society is working with **14-18 NOW** (the lottery-funded body commissioning new arts works inspired by the period 1914-1918) and **An Lanntair** (the arts centre in Stornoway, Isle of Lewis) to produce a professionally recorded performance of *Sàl (Saltwater)*. This new work, composed by renowned Lewis-born piper Iain Morrison whose great-grandfather was among those drowned, has its roots in ceòl mòr (or Piobaireachd, the classical music of the pipes) and will be premiered in Stornoway on 27th October 2018; then broadcast on **BBC Alba** as part of the December 2018 centennial commemorations; and released as a CD.

Please donate using the Society’s website, where there is a link to the dedicated Justgiving page. Your donations will be used to produce a professionally recorded version of *Sàl (Saltwater)*, CD’s of which will then be made available to Members of the Society and to the public (with appropriate accreditation to the Society).

More information is available at the **An Lanntair** website, <http://lanntair.com/creative-programme/iolaire>:

Iolaire centenary commemorations

The anniversary of the *Iolaire* disaster on 1st January 2019 will be the final formal event in the official, national four-year programme commemorating the centenary of The Great War. An Lanntair are working with local and national partners on a number of projects around the *Iolaire* centenary. In addition to the memorial activities outlined below, there will be a new publication, exhibitions, and a wide-reaching education programme running throughout 2018 and early 2019.

Iolaire memorial

Stones have been collected from the home villages of each the servicemen lost at sea off the Isle of Lewis in the heart-breaking *Iolaire* maritime disaster. They were recently incorporated into a unique memorial in Stornoway town centre to mark the 100th anniversary of the tragedy. School children from the Isle of Lewis have helped by collecting stones from villages all over Lewis, Harris and Berneray. In addition to the stone cairn, there will also be a slate engraving to the memory of the victims.

Sàl (Saltwater)

Composed by Lewis-born musician Iain Morrison, whose great-grandfather was among those drowned, and presented with pioneering Scottish artists Dalziel + Scullion, *Sàl (Saltwater)* has its roots in ceòl mòr (the classical music of the pipes). The link between past and present will be a thread throughout, from the perspective of one man's journey. To ground these aspects of the piece, Iain will draw on his own family experience. His father Iain Murdo Morrison will initially compose a ceòl mòr and this will seed themes for the full composition.

In the visual aspects of the performance Iain will work closely with Dalziel & Scullion, drawing heavily on an environmental perspective. Dalziel + Scullion are among the most innovative and acclaimed contemporary artists working in Scotland today. Their work is ecologically driven, connecting with the sense of a place, its authentic features and unique character. *Sàl (Saltwater)* will be a suite of music, poetry and song to be performed by a full band.

Timeline for performance and release:

27th October 2018 – premiere of *Sàl (Saltwater)* at An Lanntair, Stornoway, Isle of Lewis (tickets available from An Lanntair website)

31st December 2018 – TV broadcast of *Sàl (Saltwater)* on BBC Alba, as part of *Iolaire* commemoration activities

From January 2019 – studio recording of *Sàl (Saltwater)*, mainly at An Tobar, Isle of Mull and in Glasgow

Early Summer 2019 – CD and digital release of *Sàl (Saltwater)*, through Proper Music Distribution and AWAL

Summer 2019 – live performance tour to support the album release

The **Highland Society of London** will receive full recognition and credit on the album sleeve notes, and a number of complimentary copies of the CD which will be distributed to interested Members.

Full details of the wider **14-18 NOW** programme are available on the website 1418now.org.uk.