

A Write Highland Hoolie

Mallaig's Book Festival – 10-12 November 2017



On behalf of us all at a Write Highland Hoolie, we would very much like to thank the Highland Society for your generous donation towards our event. The weekend went exceedingly well and all those present agreed that we had a fabulous range of authors and talks. This year we had packed audiences (from last year's average of around 35 - we were up to an average of 80 at nearly all of the events); but to my mind, perhaps our greatest achievement was the fact that this year we had far more local participation.

We arranged for two authors, Bernard MacLavery and Colin Speedie, to hold events for senior pupils at the High School in Mallaig on the Friday morning. This was extremely well-received and the headmaster was thrilled, and hopes very much that we can work with them again in the future to hold more author events there for pupils of different age groups. Certainly, when we first decided to have a small book festival in Mallaig, it was always my aim for us to work closely with the school and the local community to help encourage a love of books and literature. We hope to be able to work further with the school's art department to see if they can help design our programme and leaflets adding more of their artwork/graphics to these.

We were also thrilled this year to have the Scots Magazine as our media partner. Robert Wight, its award-winning editor did a great deal to promote us by running features and author profiles in the lead-up to the event. He brought gratis copies of the magazine for all visitors, and did an excellent job running a feature writing workshop. It seems likely that in 2018 he will plan to do this again as it was greatly oversubscribed. He also hopes to run one in the High School for those senior pupils wishing to take up journalism.

Robert was also the judge of our pupils' writing competitions. He read out the winning essays, and the one on Arisaig caused much amusement. The prize giving took place at the end with parents providing a sumptuous tea with donations given for school funds for a special trip they are taking in 2018. We would hope to repeat this in future Hoolies as it brought all the locals in and was a great finale amid local author Alasdair Roberts' piping.



We have agreed that from now on we will invite local musicians to play rather than bringing them in from further afield. We have also agreed that the standard of author and talks must be kept high, and equally to that end we must always ensure that we have excellent tech facilities.

Once more I would like to thank you for your valuable support. Without this we would not have been able to run such a successful weekend, and it means that we are able to offer our authors a reasonable fee and their expenses, as well as a high standard of food and accommodation, which in turn means we can invite and lure the best!

With very best wishes

Polly Pullar
Chairman - A Write Highland Hoolie
Mallaig's Book Festival