

LOCHABER NO MORE

A History of the Jacobite Rebellions in Narrative and Song

**Songs performed by Australia's finest Celtic duo - "Braemar"
Written and Narrated by Alyson Fearon**

This presentation tells the story of the Jacobite rebellions and the aftermath, romanticised in song and felt deeply in the hearts of Scottish people and their descendants all over the world. The story begins with injustice and ends with the destruction of the Scottish Clan system and the virtual destruction of Scottish language, music and culture. During this story, tens of thousands of Scots are butchered or humiliated and forced to flee from their homes but ultimately this is a tale of strength, fortitude and generations of enduring love for a country.

The idea for this presentation was originally conceived by Alyson Fearon in 2004 and the first draft was completed by late 2005. Thereafter Braemar was exceptionally busy with performance bookings for festivals, variety concerts, private functions and weddings and "Lochaber No More" was put on the back burner while the duo focussed on becoming established in the Celtic scene in Victoria and further afield.

In mid 2007 it was felt that Braemar had become well enough known to become the vehicle to propel "Lochaber No More" to some prominence among the Celtic and particularly Scottish communities in Australia. "Lochaber No More" has met with standing ovations in Victoria at La Trobe University, Beechworth Celtic Festival, Kilmore Celtic Festival, Maldon Folk Festival and on two occasions at the National Celtic Festival in Portarlington. The performances have met similar acclaim at the Fleurieu Folk Festival and at Celtica in South Australia in 2008. Most recently, in Jan 2009, each performance at the Cygnet Folk Festival in Tasmania elicited prolonged audience appreciation and admiration.



The performance begins with the haunting pipe melody 'Mist Covered Mountains' followed by an extract from a poem by Scottish writer and poet Sir Walter Scott. These two items set the scene for the tale to follow – the victories and defeats of the Jacobite Rebellions and the tragedy of the Highland Clearances.

The story that follows puts many familiar Scottish traditional songs into historical and dramatic context; one of the early songs "Bonnie Dundee" tells of the patriotism of the Earl of Claverhouse who stormed out of a meeting of Scottish lairds at which the monarchy of the Dutch usurper, William of Orange, was accepted by most of them. Claverhouse became a staunch Jacobite, a stand which cost him his life at "Killiecrankie"

The raw patriotism stirred in the audience by the songs of Claverhouse and the Jacobites' early victories are soon quelled by the realism of the dreadful consequences of opposing a powerful Monarch and government. "The Massacre at Glencoe" has had many in the audience in tears as they are told of the most foul betrayal ever to have taken place in the British Isles – how the MacDonalds of Glencoe opened their homes and gave utmost trust to those who deceived and eventually murdered many of their clan – this betrayal at the order of their King.

The audience now realises the fear instilled by such an act in the population of the Highlands of Scotland and why, because of this act, Jacobitism went into hiding for a number of years.

At this point in the performance, we introduce a work of the Bard of Scotland, Robert Burns, and present an acapela version of his poem 'Parcel of Rogues' which tells of the belief amongst many in Scotland that the Act of Union which united Scotland and England to create the United Kingdom was paid for by English gold and was not negotiated for the benefit of Scotland nor the Scottish people.

Despite of, or perhaps because of, the Act of Union, Jacobitism resurfaced and King James Edward Stuart attempted another rebellion and this is acknowledged in song by a powerful rendition of "Will ye go to Sheriffmuir" accompanied by Bodhrans.

The arrival in Scotland of the final protagonist of the tale, Bonny Prince Charlie, is announced in the stirring song 'News from Moidart' and news of his Jacobite victories are pronounced in 'Johnny Cope' and "Wha Woudn'nae Fecht for Charlie" while "Blue Bonnets are over the Border" tells of the Jacobite army's entry into England.



The narration then takes the audience through the withdrawal of the Jacobite army to Scotland and the final and terrible defeat of the Jacobites at Culloden. This narration is accompanied by a single guitar. During the unfolding of these events, the audience recognises the importance of this as a culmination of what went before and as a catalyst for the horror that is to come.

The ever familiar "Skye Boat Song" and "Will ye no' come back again" take the audience through the Bonnie Prince's escape from the Scottish mainland and the heartbreak of the Jacobites at the thought that he will never return.

The narration tells of the rape of the Highlands by the Butcher Cumberland and the humiliation of the Scots by the prohibition of the wearing of tartan, speaking Gaelic, playing the bagpipes and carrying weapons. "I Will Go" tells of Highlanders joining the British Army only to find on their return to Scotland that their homes had been destroyed and their families removed to make way for sheep.

The narration continues with a synopsis of the Highland Clearances, beautifully recounted in the melodic "Hush, Hush". Again, audiences have cried openly at this final awareness of the destruction of a country and the dispersal of its people.

The presentation ends with a summation of what it means to be Scottish, an acknowledgement that the Highland Clearances and later unforced immigration has benefitted the whole world, particularly the new world, and a final declaration that no matter how many generations removed you are from these historical events or the country in which they happened, you can be proud to be Scottish.

This declaration is superbly rendered in the final song of the show "Highland Cathedral" during which many audience members continue to be gripped by the intense emotions of significant sadness and profound pride.

Audience Comments

"The voice of Eddie Lewis is both powerful and musical, therefore when joined with the harmony provided by Marc de Rijk there is an enhancement of both lyric and melody line. To this then, add the Jacobite storyline re-told in songs, and overlay it with narrative recreating the history of unrest in the Highlands The well played variety of instruments, including bodhráin (sic) accentuated the drama in the theme throughout the performance, which indeed was too short for the listener...However the memory of Scotland past will remain with all long after leaving". VALERIE J. SMITH, PRESIDENT SCOTTISH AUSTRALIAN HERITAGE COUNCIL

"Excellent. Well done!! Wonderful production of a very sad time for us Scots!look forward to the next CD and DVD! NORMA McPHERSON, RADIO PORT PHILLIP (3RPP)

*Having seen the inaugural presentation (at same venue) I was amazed by the new rendition which surpassed the original in quality, performance, presentation, polish and professionalism! Remarkable! This is a wonderfully moving, insightful and historical performance in narrative and song which showcases the talents of all involved. Well done!!!, Kind regards, **RAY KELLY***

" but great though all the acts we saw were, the highest accolade for the day would have to go to a brilliant presentation in the evening called Lochaber No More which was a history of the Jacobite Rebellions and the Aftermath in written and narrated by Alyson Fearon and the songs were performed by Braemar (another favourite act of ours). It was an amazing show and really put context around so many of the songs we have been listening to over the years. It was so emotional and I think I became Scottish somewhere like 20 minutes into the performance, it was so moving. I suspect it will be performed at other Celtic Festivals around the country (Australia) and possibly overseas. So if you get the chance to see it, I highly recommend you take the opportunity. Source: <http://www.scrapsofmind.com/newsletter-archive/080701-1/>