

Iona set to share stage with stars

A YOUNG Huntly musician will be performing as part of a packed programme at Portsoy's 7th Haal festival.

Some of the best local and national artists in folk music will be showcased during the festival, which runs from June 3-5.

Kicking off the Saturday evening with traditional songs will be Huntly musician and folk club regular, Iona Fyfe, now a student at Glasgow's Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.

The headline act this year is Simpson, Cutting and Kerr, one of the top English folk acts on the road.

The group will play the main festival concert in the Town Hall on Saturday, June 4.

Another event not to be missed is the guitar workshop led by Martin Simpson at the Station Hotel from 12.30-2.15pm on the same day.

Festival chairman Bob Philips said: "Martin Simpson

is widely-acknowledged as one of the finest acoustic and slide guitar players in the world, his interpretations of traditional songs are masterpieces of storytelling.

"Fifteen years living in the USA were well-spent. His own song-writing has produced some real gems, from the truck-stop epic, Love Never Dies, to the moving Never Any Good and One Day.

"Martin's career includes collaborations on stage and record with Richard Hawley, Richard Thompson, June Tabor, Kelly Joe Phelps, Jackson Browne, Danú, Martin Carthy, Cara Dillon, Roy Bailey, Martin Taylor, David Hidalgo, Steve Miller, Dick Gaughan and many more.

"Nancy Kerr and Andy Cutting are also very talented musicians and Kerr's vocals are simply superb."

They are joined on the Saturday Night by The Jeremiahs. Three young men based in Dublin, accompanied by well-known flautist, whistle player and piper originally from Fochabers, but now living in Brittany, Calum Stewart. He is a member of Rura.

There is also loads of entertainment for youngsters, including a family ceilidh on Saturday afternoon in the Scout Hall, with dances and music by newly formed Feerochie.

They will be demonstrating dances and will talk participants through the steps, just the thing for beginners and the young and not-so-young.

Organisers are delighted that Artie Trezise, of Singing Kettle Fame, will be back with his Tartan Tales Road Show on Sunday afternoon in the Scout Hall.

Those events are sponsored by GM Systems and Portsoy Ice Cream. Tickets for Artie's show will soon be on sale from Portsoy Ice Cream and advance purchase is recommended.

The main stay of the festival is the rich Scottish and north-east tradition and this year is no exception.

Mabel Duncan, Tom Spiers, Arthur Watson, Scott Gardner, Sarah Beatie and multi-award-winning Robyn Stapleton all appear in Friday's Memorial Concert for Jimmy McBeath.

The full programme of events can be found at www.bothyfolk.org or by contacting: bobphilips25@live.co.uk or 01261 82571.



Huntly musician and Portsoy folk club regular Iona Fyfe.