

LMS 2009

Learning to play the Clarsach



WELCOME TO

LOCHABER MUSIC SCHOOL

Music School has now been in existence for 22 years. Founded in 1987 by eminent cello teacher Audrey Scott, offering the finest quality string tuition in its regular workshops and weekly music centre, Music School has also throughout the years taken great pride in introducing Lochaber youngsters to the wonders of the enchanting **Clarsach** - the most ancient of all Scottish musical instruments.

We are delighted that your child had shown an interest in learning to play this most beautiful instrument. Is it difficult to learn to play? No, the harp can be approached like any other instrument. Once you learn the hand positions for correct and comfortable playing you become more skilled with practice. In fact, unlike some instruments, the harp makes a beautiful sound from the very first steps of learning to play. The easiest of tunes sound lovely. So, it's a great pleasure for all who hear it!

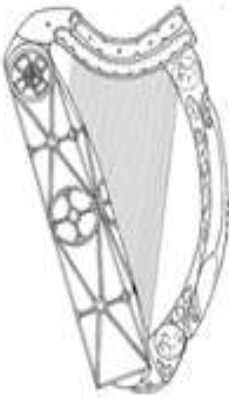


LEARNING to play the CLARSACH with FRAYA THOMSEN

Music being an integral part of Fraya's upbringing offered many opportunities and she was introduced to Scottish Gaelic music through the Fèis Rois.

Fraya studied clarsach at the **Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama**. Alongside performing with *The Duplets* and *Abigail Grey*, Fraya is rapidly gaining recognition as a composer. She also gains much enjoyment from teaching and is passionate about encouraging people and sharing music. She is a much valued tutor for the **Edinburgh International Harp Festival**.





"**Clarsach**" is the Gaelic word for "small harp", and the instrument is sometimes known as the Celtic Harp. These instruments have featured in Scottish history from as early as the eighth and ninth centuries, and by the late Middle Ages were established as the characteristic instruments of the Scottish Gael.

There were two types of harp in Scotland. The clarsach was the harp of the Highlands, and was strung with wire, and the similar gut-strung instrument was found in the Lowlands of Scotland.

Playing the harp was a noble profession during these times, and the Clan chiefs of the Highlands employed harpers or bards to compose tunes and songs for them. One of the most notable of these was **Rory Dall Morrison**, who was harper to the chief of the Clan MacLeod at Dunvegan on Skye in the early eighteenth century.

The harping tradition died out in the eighteenth century after the collapse of the clan system, and there were subsequent attempts to revive the small harp during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. But the strongest and most successful effort has been over the past 20-30 years. There are now more harp players in Scotland than ever before, and the clarsach has once again established itself as one of the strongest instruments on the Scottish traditional music scene today. © Eilidh MacLeod



Learning to play the Clarsach

is a Lochaber Music School initiative

Clarsach tuition is offered in individual lessons only. Until July 09, fees will still be **£8 per child** per half-hour lesson, payable monthly in advance. (*In an average year, we try to run 38 weekly classes*). Charges, heavily subsidised at present, are to be re-assessed for the new academic year. The first invoice will include the annual **LMS Family Membership** fee of **£10.00**.

Music School has several fine clarsachs available for hire by LMS members at a very reasonable cost of **£50 per term**, payable in advance. Use of the clarsach during the holidays is free. (*Our present annual charge is equal to £12.50 per calendar month - half the charge made by the Clarsach Society!*).

What happens if..?

The pupil is poorly or away on holiday...

We are under no obligation to replace this lesson.

The pupil forgets the instrument/the instrument is being repaired...

Again, we have no obligation to replace this lesson.

The pupil has a long-term illness... (e.g. broken limb, hospital operation - for 4 consecutive weeks or more)

Lessons will be credited from the point that you advise us of the absence.

Snow/School Trip...

We will endeavour to make up the lesson or a double lesson will be given.

The teacher is poorly...

We will endeavour to make up the lesson or it will be credited accordingly.

Always feel free to get in touch if you have any queries whatsoever and please do let us know well in advance if for any reason you are unable to attend any of the lessons.

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Visit the Music School website on

www.lochabermusic.co.uk



"Lochaber Music School" is the working title of the Lochaber Music Charitable Trust, founded in 1987 by Audrey Scott, BA, LGSM. Charity Ref. Number: SC015312
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