



Queens County Fiddlers record new CD!

Launch set for April 29 in Charlottetown

By Carolyn Drake

Walking into Park Royal United Church on Feb. 25 was a bit like walking into your living room on Christmas morning. We'd all circled this day on our calendars. Just like Christmas, the lead-up was hectic – endless preparations and attention to the smallest of details. We also had to get as many members of the “family” there as possible, along with a few special guests. Many of us were even “counting the sleeps”, eager for all the excitement to begin.

But, unlike Christmas, there were no wrapped-up presents under a glittery tree. What the members of the Queens County Fiddlers were so eager to tear into was the gift of music and the chance to create our very own CD.

And over the next seven hours — after set-up, tunings, recordings, do-overs, do-overs again, last-minute alterations, chit-chat, food, feedback, laughs and the love of our music — that's just what we did.

“To bring a group of our size together, consisting of various age levels and playing skills, and create something truly amazing shows the dedication and cohesiveness of what I like to call our big fiddle family,” said Queens County Fiddlers (QCF)

president Tammy MacEachern. “To the silent players, such as family, friends, supporters and professionals, there would be no QCF without them. Strong leadership, dedication to the tradition and hard work have proven what we can create together.”

The “hard work” started in the fall when the group decided it was time for another CD. Once there was a commitment, music director Aaron Crane set about selecting music. With some input from the group, he chose tunes we'd been playing, for the most part, over the past five years. Some sets were selected “as is”, while others were broken apart to add new

selections. The result was 14 sets, jam-packed with traditional tunes, great music from Cape Breton tunesmiths and as many Island-made tunes as possible, including compositions from Marlene Gallant, Kevin Chaisson, Val Reddin and Aaron himself.

“To have a piece of music that is going to be part of something forever is a feeling I can't really describe,” Marlene said with a smile. “It makes my heart happy.”

After our Christmas break, Aaron had Marsha McCormick begin scouting churches in Charlotte-



This beautiful – and delicious – cake was the first thing many of us saw upon arriving at Park Royal United Church on recording day. It was made by group member Val Reddin.

The Island Fiddler

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The Island Fiddler in colour
online at www.peifiddlers.com

Editor: Ward MacDonald
celticsomething@gmail.com
902-314-7950

Advertising: Paul Cheverie
pcheverie@pei.sympatico.ca
902-566-3551

Events Forecast:
Marsha McCormick

Distribution:
Lorraine McMillan

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MAILING ADDRESS

The Island Fiddler, 101 Kent Street,
P.O. Box 3311, Charlottetown, PE C1A 8W5

P.E.I. Fiddlers Society

Established 22 May 1977 * Incorporated 31 March 1983

P.E.I. Fiddlers Society Executive

President/Secretary: Tammy MacEachern 902-940-5949
Vice President: Aaron Crane 902-388-1040
Treasurer: Amy Swenson 902-962-2273

Prince County Fiddlers

Cathy Campbell 902-436-0380
cathycampbell6@hotmail.com

Queens County Fiddlers

Tammy MacEachern 902-940-5949
tammymac@hotmail.com

Eastern Kings Fiddlers

Anne McPhee 902-687-1521
annemcphee@pei.sympatico.ca

Southern Kings Fiddlers

Amy Swenson 902-962-2273
gagliano31@hotmail.com

Acadian Fiddlers

Dorothy Griffin-Farish 902-432-9692
dfarish1@eastlink.ca

Morell Fiddlers

Leonard and Linda Deveau 902-961-2061

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If you wish to be listed as a teacher, contact the editor

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Tim Chaisson	www.timchaisson.com
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Square dancing: the original
social networking.

QCF recording continued from page 1

town, with Park Royal United eventually chosen. Meanwhile, he used his own knowledge of P.E.I.'s music industry to select Adam Gallant as our sound engineer. With Feb. 25-26 selected as the dates, reality set in that this was actually going to happen.

“Ages” CD LAUNCH
Queens County Fiddlers
Saturday, April 29
3:30 p.m.
Park Royal United Church
Charlottetown
Admission at the door
CDs, Light refreshments

In the five Wednesday night practices leading up to the recording, we put the finishing touches on our music. For 90 minutes, we played, concentrated, listened, made little changes, worked on beginnings, smoothed out transitions, perfected endings and took

our work home with us where we practised some more to do it all again the next week.

Was it hard work? Yes.

Was it fun? You bet.

And that’s what Aaron was all about. With different ages and levels –all eager to do their best – he told us over and over that while we had to be ready, the process was meant, above all, to be fun.

“And in order to do that, everyone had to prepare in their own way. Folks had to practise more, I had to be more organized — and in doing these things in advance it allowed us to actually enjoy the day instead of stressing.”

That attitude went a long way toward getting an excited but not-too-stressed-out group of musicians to Park Royal on recording day. With much of

See ‘QCF record’ page 4

East Pointers win a JUNO!



The East Pointers’ first Juno win recognizes their album “Secret Victory” as Traditional Roots Album of the Year. The East Pointers expressed their gratitude April 1 via Facebook from Woodfordia, Australia stating they couldn’t be happier and thanking everyone involved in the making of Secret Victory and for supporting their tunes, songs and shows.

Congratulations Tim, Koady and Jake!

The annual
PEI Fiddlers Society
**Fiddle Jam and
Potluck**
will be held
on
Sunday
April 23 2-5PM
Irish Cultural Centre
(Benevolent Irish Society)
on North River Road

Queens County Fiddlers “Ages”...and the players are...

30 fiddlers: Aaron Crane, Carolyn Drake, Cheryl Edmunds, Cecil Trainor, Christine Nicholson, Jacqueline McQuaid, Abby Ives, Father Charlie Cheverie, Jenna Cyr, Jeannine McQuaid, Lindsey Doiron, Katie Sonier, Lorraine McMillan, Lorraine Lynch, Marlene Gallant, Cailyn MacAulay, Linda Moran, Patsy Cook, Paul Cheverie, Tammy MacEachern, Reby Sharpe, Carl Sharpe, Luka Hall, Val Reddin, Vince Koughan, Annie Kitson, Fiona MacCorquodale, Sarah Jenkins, Susan Hughes, Marsha McCormick and
4 accompanists: Jennifer Garrity – piano; Norman LeClair, Pat McKenna, Julian Kitson – guitar.

QCF recording continued from page 3

the set-up done, including positioning mics and chairs and getting Adam's portable studio established in a small adjacent room, all that remained was to hand over our fiddles to Vince Keoughan and Father Charlie Cheverie for tuning and find our places to sit.

As noon approached, 30 fiddlers, three guitarists and Jennifer Garrity on piano were ready. We ripped into a test set of jigs – just to settle the nerves – and then we were good to go.

“Recording day was a blast!” said Marsha McCormick. “We were all up for the event and right from the first tune I knew we were going to be fine.”

Over the next six hours, the sets just kept rolling: the Jigs in D, the Tennessee Waltz, the Paddy LeBlanc set, Inisheer, the Lime Hill set, the Sinnie's Jig set and The Lover's Waltz. Aaron was always positive, even when inevitable mistakes were made (it's a challenge for 34 musicians to be absolutely silent for about three seconds at the end of a rollicking set of reels).

And Adam was a gem. With a great ear for music, he could tell if something didn't sound quite right, and with his input and Aaron's, everyone seemed to be in tune with the whole process.

“For the recording session in itself, it was well organized, there was no pressure on us, he knew how he wanted each cut to sound and we worked together until they came out right,” said Lorraine McMillan about Aaron's effort.

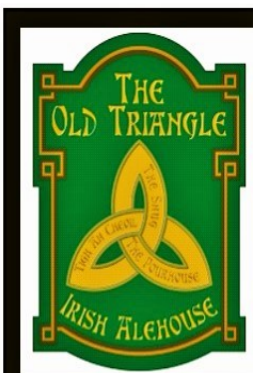
“I thought he did a marvelous job trying
See 'QCF record' page 5



It was time to concentrate on recording day.



There was also plenty of time for a few good laughs.



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The younger members bring plenty of enthusiasm and fun to the Queens County Fiddlers.

to be in control of a whole bunch like that,” added Lorraine Lynch, an Islander who has lived in the Boston area since the 1950s but is a summertime member of the QCF and made the trip to P.E.I. to be part of the recording. “The whole scenario, to me, was just wonderful. It was the thrill of a lifetime. It was something I wouldn’t miss and didn’t want to miss.”

The day was not all work and no play. There were breaks to keep us loose and have a chat.

“It was lovely to have the time to have conversations with the fiddlers and just spend the day with everyone — getting caught up and getting to

know some of them a little better,” said Linda Moran.

As we checked off set after set, it became clear we might be able to do the whole recording in one day, even though people were getting a little tired. And then we came up against a wall with Jerry Holland’s marvelous slow air, Lonesome Eyes. I’m not sure how many takes were started and stopped — 15 seconds in, 30 seconds in, a minute in. With Aaron on piano, Cailyn MacAulay on solo fiddle for the beginning and the end of the tune and everyone else (along with harmony), we couldn’t seem to make magic happen.

Finally, Aaron literally changed speeds and got Jennifer back on the piano. He took a little break, and the group ripped off two sets of reels, finishing with the Flowers of Edinburgh set.

Maybe the familiar, friendly notes, not to mention the pace, helped clear the late-day cobwebs because our next attempts at Lonesome Eyes finally began to do it justice. And with a little bit of floor directing from one of our guitarists, Julian Kitson, we finally got what we all wanted.

Our last act was to record some footstompin’, clapping, hootin’ and hollerin’ for possible mixing into the finished recording.

After putting the church back in order for the next day’s Sunday service, we were gone — leaving Adam and Aaron to work their magic that will result in our new CD — “Ages”.



Aaron takes a look as another set gets underway.

The name, in part, represents the group’s wide range of fiddlers — from nine years old to 84 at the time of the recording.

“It was an exciting day,” said Luka Hall, the youngest on the recording. “Now I know what it is like to make a CD!”

“When you have a goal to reach, it’s a challenge for the group as a whole,” added Father Charlie, the oldest. “To see the excitement of the young people with the ones who have been around for a while — the tradition is enlivened and enriched by their presence.”



Cathy

Prince County Fiddlers
by Cathy Campbell

The Prince County Fiddlers have had a relatively quiet winter, though we continue to play at local seniors' residences.

Our main focus at the moment is brainstorming on what we would like to do as a group for National Fiddling Day this year.


Last year we had an incredible experience playing on the big stage of the Harbourfront Theatre! It was a great evening, but it was also a great deal of work! This year we plan to celebrate on a smaller scale and are open to ideas.

We would love to see more fiddlers attend our practices. We continue to practice Monday nights at Community Connections Inc. from 7:30-9:30pm. Happy fiddling!

Safely Home

Marie MacEachern
March 31, aged 72

Marie was a devoted member of the Queens County Fiddlers for many years. She was generous as a volunteer and was always the first person to offer a hand.



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SAVE BELFAST SCHOOL MARCH

FEB.1,2017

AMY SWENSON



Amy Swenson

Southern Kings Fiddlers by Amy Swenson

Our group has been meeting every two weeks as usual at the Rural Development building at Brooke and Main in Montague, Monday evenings from 7-9. Our next practices are April 24, May 1, May 15 and May 29. Everyone is welcome, if you have a question or need the rest of the spring practice dates, please call me at 962-2273. We are working on some new tunes as always, and we had fun playing for an enthusiastic group of residents at Perrin's on Jan. 20th and plan to be back soon to get their feet tapping again.

Accompanied by my student Carrie Docherty, I played my new Save the Belfast School March (see page 6) and a set of jigs on Feb. 4 at a fundraiser for the defense of Belfast School. Apart from a mishap when MC Alan Buchanan fell right off the stage at the start, the concert was very successful and can be seen on the Save the Belfast School website (you have to scroll way down to Debbie Coopers' post, we are on at 1:10, Alan's mishap is at the very beginning - he recovered and did a great job as MC). A group of my students will play the march at the Music Festival recital at Hillcrest United in Montague on April 30th, and I have good feedback on it from the Southern Kings Fiddlers. We all hope the government is listening!

Our fiddlers are planning a special benefit concert in honor of National Fiddling Day. We are holding it at St. Paul's Hall in Sturgeon on Saturday May 27th from 2-5 pm. We were planning to hold it on National Fiddling Day itself (May 20), but the big garage sale and fundraiser for the Panmure Lighthouse is being held that day. The lighthouse looks fantastic in its new paint job, and it is undergoing other renovations. It is well worth a visit this summer if you are out this way.

So the Southern Kings Fiddlers will perform at Sturgeon on the 27th, joined by several talented young fiddlers in the area, plus special guest Sterling

Baker, who will perform some of his own compositions. George Docherty will play the fiddle and the harmonica (hopefully at the same time) and we plan to welcome the most senior fiddler to be performing on the Island these days, Mr. Maurice O'Shea. He is 99 years young and will join me in performing his lovely Iona Corner Waltz, composed back when he was only 93. Our concert will be a benefit for two good causes. One is local school music programs,

which can always use help with funds for much needed instruments and equipment. Our group recently purchased rosin for the kids taking violin at Belfast and Lucy Maud Montgomery Schools, and it was fun seeing

the smiles on their faces when they got their "very own" rosin.

The other good cause is the Bowing Down Home website created by Ken Perlman. The website is in need of funds to maintain and add to its amazing record of Island fiddling and fiddlers. Best wishes for a happy Spring!

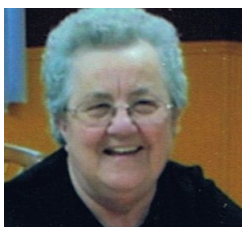
Special benefit concert in honour of National Fiddling Day St. Paul's Hall in Sturgeon on Saturday May 27th 2-5 pm

Safely Home



Rita C. M. Morrison (nee MacDonald)
1919-2017

Longtime piano accompanist for
the Queens County Fiddlers



Dorothy Griffin-Farish

Acadian News by Dorothy Griffin-Farish

Greetings and Bonjour Everyone! Rendez-vous de la Francophonie 2017 occurred this year from March 2nd to the 22nd with several events. The Vanier Centre in Wellington was the venue on Sunday afternoon, March 5th, for a CD launch entitled "L'Acadie est ma Maison" and musical entertainment by 112 Accords, a musical group from Evangeline School directed by Chuck Arsenault with the help of Maurice Hachie.

A music jam in honor of the famous fiddler from the Evangeline Region, the late Eddy Arsenault also took place March 5. A good crowd was in attendance and enjoyed the very lively toe-tapping music provided by Eddy's family, the Friday Night Jammers, Paul Chaisson, and numerous others. 88-year-old Amand, Eddy's brother, accompanied on guitar and also was one of the many step dancers who couldn't keep off the floor as the fiddlers' fingers merrily flew. Three keyboards and a second guitar were also part of the musical event. The keyboard players included Eddy's daughter Helene and her daughter, Hermine Gallant and Dorothy Farish. Daniel Cormier was the second guitar player.

Amand & Friends continue to perform at seniors' homes in both Wellington and Summerside. The group includes Amand, his son Norman Arsenault, John Eudes Gallant, Fred Arsenault, and Dorothy Farish. Other fiddlers that play from time to time are Edward P. Arsenault and Jackie Biggar. Elaine Arsenault, singer from St. Chrysostome, also occasionally participates.

The Friday Night Jammers still play in Wellington on Friday nights, weather permitting. Horace Thompson of Richmond plays a few harmonica tunes and step dances each Friday, as well as playing the spoons with some of the other visitors. This has been a good winter for the group, and they look forward to more visitors once the weather is warmer. Till next time, cheerio!



Anne M. McPhee

Eastern Kings Fiddlers by Anne M. McPhee

With the longer days and one last storm almost upon for us, courtesy of St Patrick's Day, it's safe to say winter is on the run and we'll soon be into the spring season and all the good things that come with the warmer weather and being able to get out and about a lot more.

Souris Live will once again host a Festival of Small Halls concert at the Centre Stage in June. Lots of great concerts will be held in other small halls across the Island. Always a great way to kick off the summer and before we know it, the Rollo Bay Fiddle Festival will be upon us when fiddlers from east to west and all over the Maritimes and eastern seaboard re-unite for non-stop tunes, dance and good times. Be sure to check www.rollobayfiddlefest.ca



John, Alan, George and Kevin belt out a few tunes.

for updates and to register for the Rollo Bay Music Camp July 11-13 and to get your tickets for the Fiddle Festival July 14-16.

Between the storms and holiday Mondays, the Eastern Kings Kitchen Group has missed a few practices and are feeling a little further behind than



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The Eastern Kings Kitchen Group meets Mondays at the Souris Regional School



From left - Matthew Arsenault, Marie McGaugh, Allan MacDonald, John Campbell, Alan Ryan (keyboard), George MacDonald, Jean Carter, Darren Chaisson, Kevin Chaisson, Jim Townshend.

we would like to be.

We are hoping to have a recording session with Brent Chaisson of Studio Dimanche, to produce a CD that we would use to help new members wanting to learn our tunes by ear. Once we nail down our new tunes for the year end concert scheduled for May 15 at Souris Regional School and polish up some of our more commonly played sets.

All in all, we are doing pretty good. Our numbers at practice are consistently good. The new members have certainly added to our sound and we've had great fun when we get together. It sure helps to pass the winter and you can't beat the feeling when the bow crosses the strings on the same note with a great group learning new tunes and keeping the old tunes and the tradition alive.

Safely Home



Betty J. Foster (nee MacKay)
January 30, 2017

Betty faithfully attended the Queens County Fiddlers' practices and concerts for many years, her favourite tune was "Tennessee Waltz"

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A music jam in honour of Eddy Arsenault took place at the Vanier Centre in Wellington on Sunday, March 5. Lively toe-tapping music was provided by Eddy's family, the Friday Night Jammers, Paul Chaisson, and numerous others. Eddy's brother, 88-year-old Amand, accompanied on guitar and was one of the many step dancers.



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Weekly Events Forecast Spring 2017

For a complete list of 2017 Festivals, Events & Ceilidhs on PEI, visit www.tourismpei.com/pei-festivals-and-events,
www.ceilidhs.ca, www.buzzon.com or check local listings

Sundays 2:00-5:00pm	Weekly Music Sessions	Old Triangle Irish Alehouse	Charlottetown	902-892-5200
Sundays 8:00pm	Kitchen Party	St. Margaret's Parish Hall	St. Margaret's	902-687-2546
Sundays 7:30pm	Sunday Night Ceilidhs	Cymbria Lions Centre	South Rustico	902-963-2793
1 st Sundays 7:00pm	Ceilidh	Olde Dunstaffnage School Centre	Dunstaffnage	902-629-1494
4th Sundays 7:00-9:00pm	Ceilidh/Concert	Bonshaw Community Centre	Bonshaw	902-675-4282
2nd Sundays 7:00-9:00pm	Kitchen Party/Ceilidh	Cotton Centre	Stratford	902-569-2732
2 nd Sundays 7:00pm	Ceilidh	Hunter River Lions Club Hall	Hunter River	902-964-2536
3 rd Sundays 1:30pm	Ceilidh	Seniors Active Living Centre, UPEI	Charlottetown	902-628-8388
3 rd Sundays 7:00pm	Ceilidh	Kelly's Cross Church Hall	Kelly's Cross	902-658-2290
1st & 3rd Mondays 7:00pm	Ceilidh/Kitchen Party	Bingo Country, Riverside Dr.	Charlottetown	902-940-6702
2nd & 4th Mondays 7:30pm	Winsloe Ceilidh	Winsloe United Church	Winsloe	902-368-1233
Tuesdays 8:00pm	Georgetown Ceilidh	Kings Playhouse	Georgetown	902-652-2053
3rd Tuesdays 7:00pm	Lions Club Ceilidh	Cotton Centre	Stratford	902-393-2264
Wednesdays 6:30 pm	Old Time Music Jam	Murphy Community Centre	Charlottetown	902-569-2471
Wednesdays 8:00pm	Ceilidh	Silver Threads	Souris	902-687-2396
Wednesdays 8:00pm from June 28	Square Dance	Old Lorne Valley School	Lorne Valley	902-314-7950
Thursdays 7:00-9:00pm	Schooner Sessions	Old Triangle Irish Alehouse	Charlottetown	902-892-5200
Fridays 8:00pm from May 5	Ceilidh at the Irish Hall	Irish Cultural Centre	Charlottetown	902-892-2367
Fridays 8:00pm	Ceilidh & Dance	St. Peter's Bay Circle Club	St. Peter's Bay	902-739-3334
2 nd Fridays 9pm-12am	Kitchen Party	Resto-Bar La Trappe	Abram-Village	902-854-3300
Fridays 8:00pm	Ceilidh	Kaylee Hall	Pooles Corner	902-838-4399
Fridays 8:00-11:00pm	Workshop & Jam	Boys & Girls Club	Wellington	902-436-5532
2 nd Fridays 7:30pm	Kitchen Country Ceilidh	Wheatley River Community Hall	Wheatley River	902-964-2586
Fridays 9-12	Kitchen Party	Centre Expo-Festival	Abram Village	902-854-3300
Saturdays 3:00-6:00pm	Kitchen Party	Summerside Legion	Summerside	902-436-2091
Saturdays 8:00pm	Belfast Ceilidh	Belfast Rec Centre	Belfast	902-659-2554
Saturdays 8-11pm	Pig & Whistles	Kaylee Hall	Pooles Corner	902-838-4399
Saturdays 8:30pm	Kitchen Party de Cuisine	Village Musical Acadien	Abram-Village	902-854-3300
Alt Saturdays 7:30	Ceilidh	Immaculate Conception Parish Hall	The Brae	

Upcoming Special Events Spring 2017

Mar.26 and alternate Sundays till May 7	Treble with Girls Winter Fundraising Concert series	Assumption Parish Hall	2:00pm	
April 23	PEI Fiddle Society Fiddle Jam	2-5pm		
April 29	QCF Concert / CD launch	3:30pm		
April 30 and last Sunday monthly	Music in Motion Ceilidh	7-9		
April 30	8:00 Patrick Ledwell/Mark Haines			
May 5/6,	8:00 JP Cormier			
May 21,	8:00 Mairi Rankin			
Jun 02,	8:00 Billy Mac Innis			
Jun 06	weekly Tuesdays 7:00	Scottish Ceilidhs		
Jun 07 / 08	8:00 Madison Violet			
Jun 10	weekly Saturdays 7:30	Richard Wood Kitchen Party		
Jun 19 -Sep.27	Mon/Wed 7:00	Ross Family Ceilidh		
Jun 27-Sep19	weekly Tuesdays 7:00	Dunes'n Tunes		
		Irish Cultural Centre		902-892-2367
		Park Royal Church		902-894-9656
		Jack Blanchard Hall		902-368-8449
		Trailside Café, Mt. Stewart		902-394-3626
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		Mackinnon Homestead, Richmond		Cecelia@route2.net
		Trailside Café, Mt. Stewart		902-394-3626
		Stanley Bridge Hall		902-962-3204
		Stanley Bridge		866-298-8244
		Brackley Beach		866-298-8244



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Fiddle Practices Open to the Public

<p>Eastern Kings Fiddlers Souris 902-687-1521 October to May Mondays 7:00pm Souris Regional School</p> <p>Prince County Fiddlers Summerside, 902-436-0380 Mondays 7:30pm Community Connections</p> <p>Southern Kings Fiddlers Montague 902-962-2273 Alt. Mondays 7:00pm Active Communities</p>	<p>Queens County Fiddlers Charlottetown 902-940-5949 Wednesdays 7:30pm Andrews of Stratford</p> <p>Morell Fiddlers Morell 902-961-2962 Thursdays 7:30pm Morell Pharmacy</p> <p>Acadian Fiddlers Wellington 902-436-5532 Fridays 8:00pm Boys and Girls Club</p>
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What are my benefits of membership?
For \$20 per year, you will receive hard copies of The Island Fiddler by mail. Your contribution will also support the activities of the Society including The Island Fiddler, our website and the promotion of fiddle music across P.E.I.

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