

One of the great dynasties of Gaelic song, the Campbells of Greepe delivered a magnificent performance in An Lanntair last night (Thursday, July 17th), as part of the Hebridean Celtic Festival Gaelic Showcase events.

Five members of the same famous family, who between them have won ten Mod gold medals through three generations, The Campbells of Greepe – Caimbeaulaich a’Ghnioba – includes sister and brother Kenna and Seumas Campbell along with Kenna’s daughters Mary Anne and Wilma Kennedy and her niece Maggie Macdonald.

It was clear from the outset however that an additional family member shared the stage as film footage of the tiny crofting township of Greepe on the Isle of Skye, famed for the Campbells, set the scene and stirred the family memories to be shared through song across the performance.

This sense was further enhanced by archive recordings of family members now gone, sourced from the School of Scottish Studies, at times played solo, others joining the Campbells on stage; and the tales and stories of each song, where it was learnt and which aunt or uncle taught it, which were told.

Pipers and singers who loved to dance, its no surprise that the family are considered the masters of puirt-a-beul – Gaelic mouth music – and the stature of the Campbells in full flow is an impressive, simplistic yet complex wall of sound as each voice defines itself but melds seamlessly into the fast, driving music.

Guest guitarist Anna Massie helped keep pace and the striking dance skills of John Zurowski delivered another high standard performance.

It was a night where The Campbells of Greepe did what The Campbells of Greepe do best, presenting a superb programme of songs learnt and honed to perfection throughout the generations.

Stornoway Gazzette July 2014 - Live performance - Heb Celt 2014