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We do live in an area that is predominantly Scottish and the Celtic music community is a driving force behind the preservation of the Scottish culture. So we are truly blessed to be broadcasting from such a location. But, I think it's more than that. The management at CJFX holds strong connections to the music, which is really the heart of our communities, and they are incredibly supportive of the program. Without the support from Station Manager Dave MacLean and Program Director Barry MacKinnon, there likely wouldn't be a Ceilidh. Thankfully we have such a strong team of individuals who believe in the necessity of a program like this.

WM: *How do you stay in touch with the fiddling community?*

JE: I grew up listening to fiddle music and that's pretty much all I listen to on my personal time. My circle of friends includes many fiddlers and I attend as much live fiddling as I possibly can. I'd love to be able to do more, but with other commitments that's not always possible. This is why I would love to see more fiddlers touching base with me...just to let me know what is happening; if they're going out on tour, if they're releasing a new album, etc etc. The audience is always interested in what's happening.

WM: *What do you love the most about hosting the Ceilidh?*

JW: There's really not much I don't love about hosting The Ceilidh. It seems to be an extension of the rest of my life – I am Chair of the Antigonish Ceilidh Association, I'm a member of the Antigonish Highland Society and I've worked with various Celtic musicians over the years, helping them with biographies, press kits, etc. I love being able to play music that I love for people who love it as much as I do. I love getting to meet so many different artists. I love being invited to host ceilidhs or concerts. I love sharing the music of my ancestors with such a large, devoted audience.

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Fiddle Shop Talk



In this shop talk I'm including one of my favourite tunes. it's also one that I am often requested to play. In learning any new tune from sheet music there's a simple sequence to go through that will help you be able to play the tune. What's the key signature? Without going into a long explanation here, the major sharp keys are C,G, D, A with each key having one more raised note than the previous key. So C has no raised notes (only the white keys on the piano), G has one raised note F# and D has two raised notes (F# and C#), A has three raised notes (F#, C# and G#). For now we'll stop at three sharps.

Sheebeg Sheemore has two raised notes so it's in the key of D Major. So the notes of the tune will fall in the D scale, D,E F#, G, A ,B C#, D to cover the octave. The notes and pattern for the major scale was covered in one of my previous shop talks.

Next is the time signature. In this case 6/4. That means 6 beats per bar and each beat is a quarter note. This piece could also be written in 3/4 in which the bar lines would fall after every three beats.

Before beginning to play don't forget to do a warm up to loosen up (covered in previous shop talks. I often play the scale for a new tune I want to learn. Play the scale slowly and try differing fingering positions as you play into the higher notes. The notes on the page are just the skeleton for the tune. adding grace notes, double stops, rolls, etc. will embellish the melody and add more interest. Be discreet with these embellishments and listen to recordings to see how other players add these embellishments.

Sheebeg Sheemore translates into "little hill and big hill" and was written by the blind Irish harpist Turloch O'Carolan. There are references to a battle between the fairy kings having taken place in the vicinity so that may influence your interpretation of the tune.

Enjoy and till next time keep your bow rosined and the fiddle in tune.

ECMA multi-nominee, performer and recoding artist,
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Sheebeg and Sheemore



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