



Runrig are a Scottish Celtic rock group formed in Skye, in 1973 under the name 'The Run Rig Dance Band'. Since its inception, the band's line-up has included songwriters Rory Macdonald and Calum Macdonald. The current line-up also includes longtime members Malcolm Jones, Iain Bayne, and more recently, Bruce Guthro, and Brian Hurren. Initially formed as a three-piece dance band, which played wedding receptions, the trio's first performance took place at Kelvin Hall, in Glasgow.

Runrig's music is often described as a blend of folk and rock music, with the band's lyrics often focusing upon locations, history, politics and people that are unique to Scotland. Songs also make references to agriculture and land conservation.

### FORMATION AND EARLY YEARS (1973 TO 1987)

The band was formed in 1973 with brothers Calum and Rory Macdonald and their friend Blair Douglas. Donnie Munro joined the following year and they started to expand outside their native Isle of Skye. Douglas left the band in late 1974 and was replaced by Robert Macdonald. This line-up continued until 1978, when Douglas re-joined and Malcolm Jones became guitarist, both displacing Robert Macdonald. In the same year, Runrig's first album, entitled *Play Gaelic*, was released. All the songs were in Gaelic.



## CREATIVE ARTS

### MAJOR LABEL AND MAINSTREAM SUCCESS (1987 TO 1997)

The period from 1987–1997 marked Runrig's most successful run, during which they achieved placings in both the UK albums and singles charts, and toured extensively.

With (for the first time) major-label support (from Chrysalis), Runrig's fifth studio album, *The Cutter And The Clan* (1987), which had originally been released on the independent Ridge Records label before being re-released on Chrysalis, brought the band wider audiences in the United Kingdom, as well as in other parts of Europe.

From 1987 to 1995, Runrig released a total of five studio albums through Chrysalis Records. Along with *The Cutter And The Clan*, the other four albums were: *Searchlight* (1989), *The Big Wheel* (1991), *Amazing Things* (1993), and *Mara* (1995).

In 1997 Donnie Munro left Runrig to pursue a career in politics. The search was now on for a replacement! The replacement came in the form of Bruce Guthro from Nova Scotia. He has sung with the band since 1999.

## ACTIVITIES

Find out from family and friends if they have seen Runrig live. Write a report on your findings. Where did they see them? When? What songs did they perform?

### MAJOR LABEL AND MAINSTREAM SUCCESS (1987 TO 1997)

On 28 April 2013 Runrig released their first single in 5 years entitled "*And We'll Sing*". At "*Party On The Moor*" former members Donnie Munro and Pete Wishart performed onstage alongside the current line-up and Blair Douglas made an appearance via a short video highlighting the changes in the band's line-up since 1973. This was the first time Munro had performed with Runrig since 1997, and for many it was a powerful statement seeing Guthro and Munro singing together as there had been heated debates about who should be the band's frontman, and who was the better frontman among many fans and critics. The gig was hailed as a success by fans and critics many calling it one of the best concerts Runrig have ever staged.

### TIMELINE

