

ROYAL SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

Chairman's Corner

As we approach our final session of this year we glance back on our activities of 2006 – 2007. Our classes have all been well attended and more than 6 sets of dancers are often to be seen whirling around the floor at our Thursday night 9 o'clock social.

Our Tuesday afternoon classes have been well attended with some 20 members on the books and an average attendance of around 18 dancers. Many thanks to Doris, Pam and Val, who provide an interesting teaching programme week by week.

The February dance at Mayflower Church Hall was very well supported with more than 70 dancers enjoying the popular and varied programme.

The Annual Day School at Avenue Road Primary School was most successful despite the early morning panic concerning the catering arrangements. More about this from Pam in her enlightening article.

At present we are busy preparing for the ASCDS Festival on May 12th at the Dukeries Centre, Ollerton, Nottinghamshire. This year we are the hosts, which involves us in a good deal of organisational activities. The afternoon and evening programmes have been prepared and the new dances are being taught in our class sessions.

To entertain us during the afternoon interval we have invited a group of Polish Folk Dancers from Sheffield, who will provide an alternative splash of colour to the many tartans on display.

We are most grateful to all those dancers and members who have offered their help during the event.

We are also grateful to Keith Oughton who has spent considerable time and effort in the purchase of a new amplifier and speakers. The old amplifier had recently caused some headaches and it was decided to upgrade our equipment. The new lighter weight equipment has been quickly put into action and we are all benefiting from its clear and uninterrupted sound effects.

Contrary to my earlier suggestion our Ball 2007 will once again be held at Braunstone Civic Centre, this year on Saturday November 17th. We are fortunate to have secured the services of the celebrated Ian McPhail, Alun Brown, Joe Hendry and George Darling as our band for the evening.

We shall soon be preparing for our Annual General Meeting to be held on Thursday June 21st. As usual the meeting will be followed by social dancing.

Our final evening before the summer break will be on Thursday June 28th which will be the usual social with bring and share supper.

Finally we learnt of the sad loss of Margaret Crosbie at the end of March. An obituary to Margaret appears on page 2

Marion

Forthcoming events

21st April

Leicester RSCDS Dance

Avenue Road School 7.30 - 11.00pm
Bring and share

28th April

The Galloways Annual Dance

Grange Hall, Radcliffe on Trent

6th May

ASCDS Festival

**Hosted by Leicester RSCDS
Ollerton Leisure Centre**

19th May

Nottingham RSCDS Dance

Supper provided
Community Hall, West Bridgford

3rd June.

Market Harborough SDS

**Assembly Rooms, Welland Park Road,
Robert Whitehead and his band**
Supper included

12th August

Leicester RSCDS Summer Dance.

St Peter's Hall, Glenfield

7th - 9th September

Rutland Weekend

Cottesmore

Scottish/English/International dancing for all.

Margaret Crosbie

Many present and former members of the Leicester Branch will remember Margaret well.

Margaret, our friend, fellow dancer and branch teacher for nearly 20 years. Margaret, who with her quiet control imparted words of wisdom during her classes, where she was always keen to help and support all those with whom she came in contact.

Margaret the demonstration dancer, who travelled far and wide with the group for many years, attending festivals as far away as Newcastle and Leeds or locally dancing for disabled groups, young people's groups and many more.

Margaret who travelled with the team to Krefeld (Germany) and Bratislava (Slovakia) in the 1990s following the fall of communism. Margaret, who on the return visit of the Slovakian group, gave her support unstintingly in so many ways.

Margaret, our fellow dancer, who danced with all of us in our social events for many years.

Indeed before our Branch was established in 1977 Margaret danced

with the Nuneaton and District demonstration group under the direction of Janet Cutting, whom some of you may still re-

Margaret joined the Leicester Branch in the early 1980s along with her husband Brian, a former chairman of our branch. It was her enthusiasm for Scottish Dancing and the Society in particular that induced her to join a teacher's course in Leicester under the direction of Hilary Wilson. In 1989 Margaret gained her teacher's certificate and taught countless groups of all abilities until ill health forced her retirement.

It was Margaret's initiative that established the Quaich Quiz in November last year raising money for research into the treatment of Myeloma. Indeed on my last visit to Margaret, when her health was sadly failing, she continued to be thoughtful for others requesting information about the Romanian Charity that she was so keen to support.

We send our most sincere sympathy to her family near and far and mourn a loyal friend and fellow dancer.

Marion Turnock

Just a few of my memories of Margaret.

Margaret and I go back a very long time, around 30/35 years. She danced with Nuneaton & District Society Team and I with Caledonian Society team, both taught by the same teacher, Janet Cutting. We used to compete against each other at the Derby and Nuneaton Festivals.

We had several trips to Summer School at St Andrews and after a very energetic morning class we went down to the sea for a paddle to ease away our aches and pains and be ready to dance the night away at Younger Hall in the evenings.

Margaret was always willing to step in on an emergency. A few years ago, the day before the ASCDS Festival, I fell while cleaning the outside windows and broke my arm. She took my place in our display team after a very short practice just before the display, and nobody would have known she had not been practising weeks beforehand.

In mid 1990s the team went to Bratislava. When we arrived we were given accommodation in a student's hall of residence where we did not get any food. On the first morning Margaret and I went out to find a shop to buy food for everyone's breakfast. We eventually found one quite a long way from the residence and with some difficulty with language bought rolls, butter, jam, cheese, juice etc. What we didn't realize was that you have to bring your own basket/bag to put your shopping in. So we made our way back laden with all the goodies stuffed in our pockets and handbags. As we did not have any cutlery except for 1 spoon, we had to butter rolls, cut cheese etc with this 1 spoon. We had a great laugh. Martin, our host for the weekend, raided his mother's kitchen to give us cups, plates and cutlery after that.

Margaret also gave me lots of support with the dem team.

I will miss her. Doris Buchanan

Annual General Meeting – June 2007

Our Leicester Branch committee consists of 9 members. They all have differing abilities and skills to offer and they assist with running dances and organising and supporting weekly sessions.

The committee meets around 6 times a year and discusses past and forthcoming events and all issues related to the running of the branch.

We aim to be represented by all areas of our branch both from Tuesday and Thursday classes.

If you feel that you would like to help in any way and would like to be a member of the committee please fill in a nomination form and hand it to Doris, Pam or any member of the committee. Nomination forms should be available from the beginning of June.

Our present committee members are Marion, Doris, Keith, Pam, Brian, Margaret, Garth, Tony and Janet.

Marion

A NOT- TOO- LONG TALE OF THE 2007 FIDDLE ORCHESTRA CONCERT AT HARROGATE.

Twenty-eight intrepids travelled either Friday or Saturday to the latest Scottish Fiddle Orchestra concert in Harrogate. Staying close to the super Conference Centre it was either across the road or 20 yards from Hotel to venue.

The orchestra boasted more lady Fiddlers this year. After the interval half of the fiddlers were replaced for a few sets by young children from a local school three of whom played on their own.

The programme was varied and exciting. 'Highland Cathedral' was enchanting enough but the piece de resistance had to be the dramatic performance of 'Jumping Jenny' which used to be played at the burning of witches and is reputed to have been played at the execution of the unfortunate Mary, Queen of Scots. (Antonia Fraser's biography refutes this) Be that as it may, it was played dramatically slowly by the whole orchestra with the Timpani muffled by black drapes. Quietly, underneath the main melody, the Timps and Grand Piano imitated the Bagpipes with the Scotch Snap. (a short note followed by a longer one as in the Schottische) A crescendo roll on the Timps followed by 2 goose-bump raising beats on the big drum signalled the end of Mary with 2 strokes of the axe. WOW!

The 12 year old Highland dancer accompanied by the 12 year old Piper danced steps from 4 Highland dances hardly touching the ground! The rather serious and totally dedicated young Piper had 4 members of his family in the orchestra. Music was most definitely in his genes and flying out of the tips of his twinkling fingers.

The M.C. was well on form although some of his punch lines had to be translated for the sassenachs amongst us. Viz: ee-sicht = eye-sight!

A wonderful evening which put the leap upon the lame including the lady with 2 left shoes and the one who having removed her shoe during the performance was seen walking barefoot thereafter.

Folks, you just must come at least once to this splendid event!
See Doris for future info!

Pam Hood

For details of classes, local dances, programmes, maps, etc, try our website

www.leicesterrscds.org.uk

If you have something to promote why don't you email our webmaster, George Shepherd, at
george@leicesterrscds.org.uk

SKYE NEWS

Hello you happy dancers,

At the beginning of February, sunshine, lots of rain then a little snow but the warm sunshine soon put paid to that, in fact, I am still awaiting the harsh winter so that I can wear the thick clothing I brought with me! This is not a grumble.

Where have all the dentists gone? Although my name has been on a N.H.S. list since being here, nothing has happened and the powers that be have no idea when I will be called so I am forced to 'go private' as they say. £80 check up, £100 a filling, two to be done. They have you over a barrel. I have been told that there is a pain clinic at the Portree Hospital so I will not suffer pain, just ring! To finish the story, I had to return to the surgery on Monday as the front filling was not 'right'. More smoothing had to be carried out.

R.S.C.D.S. dancing continues, only missed a couple of Thursdays because of the weather. I set off at about 6.45 without car lights on to be on time for the warm up, much more pleasant.

Last month, Kathie made her way to Stornoway to carry out an audit for Boots the Chemist, they have a shop there. It was not a good time of year for it was a bit choppy but all was well. She had to stay two nights there and regards the work as a holiday for all expenses are paid and there is a small wage.

A pleasant day was spent at Kyleakin recently. The Dunvegan Bowling Club played a match against other Bowling Clubs on the island. An early start from here and a late finish but well worth it. My partner and I played four games and, guess what, we were knocked out! This year though, after a very nice lunch at the centre instead of returning to the bowling hall to watch, I took myself for a walk to the harbour in the sunshine for fresh air. I enjoyed the exercise and the view across the water to Kyle of Lochalsh where the ferry from the main land to Skye used to cross.

Popped into the post office, bought a post card and had a nice chat to the lady behind the counter – I talk to anybody!

The following day, Sunday, Kathie and I sat in the garden for a coffee!

Also in February, I enjoyed the film Miss Potter at the Aros Centre, Portree, no bad language or violence but beautiful Lakeland scenery. Then a forest walk which is adjacent to the Centre's car park.

Marie Curie day has been and gone with the usual table set up just inside the Co-op, no raffle this year, just a collecting box on the table, much easier. My partner to be caught chicken pox from her school children, she is the secretary, so I was going to be on my own for an hour 12 to 1pm. However, one of the ladies I was relieving said, without hesitation I will stay with you. I was so pleased for she knew most of the shoppers and chatted to them while they emptied their pockets. Once again, the folk were very generous and £714.84p was collected.

22nd March, another fine day so I drove to the car park for the coral beaches. On the way, just after passing Dunvegan Castle, there were about a dozen highland cattle with their young. What a picture they made.

Tuesday 27th March – I made for Broadford. There was a haar across the Minch but it cleared. Picked up some petrol from John and made my way to Sligachan. By now I was among the Cullin Hills – did you know there are black and red ones? I expect so but if not, the black are the pointed ones and the red are the rounded ones. Now you are as wise as me! Drove past Sconser from where the ferry sails to the Island of Rassay then the boatyard to Broadford. I had a good potter and visited Waterloo where Doris stayed last year. Back on the main road, I turned left on to the Elgol road. The scenery changes again, much softer and greener. I went as far as a small place called Torrin, it isn't even a village, before turning around in search of food. I finished up enjoying a pineapple upside cake with CUSTARD. That's living. On the way home, I passed three sites where heather was being burned off. Unfortunately, the flames came down to the road, burning the gorse which was in flower. That evening, there was a perfect whole red sun setting, making a strip of red light across the water into my lounge. Beautiful

If all goes well, I hope to journey South sometime this summer. Waiting for our son to say when.

Enough from me. Love to all. Olive

Kathie and Steve, now that Mum is settled, are ready to take visitors and, in fact, have their first couple coming in this Friday and Saturday. A good welcome will be given to anyone who would like a holiday on Skye. www.kathie-and-steve.co.uk will give you details of the B&B, www.visit-waternish.co.uk will give you details about Waternish.

Answers to February's Scottish quiz.

Wee, sleekit, cowrin, tim'rous beastie..." Burns's ode to a what? b. Mouse

Which of the following jobs did Muriel Spark, author of The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie, not do in her youth? d. Cabaret dancer

What is Irvine Welsh's sequel to Trainspotting called? a. Porno

John Knox's most famous work trumpeted against the 'Monstrous Regiment' of what? a. Women

Who of the following is not Scottish? c. Alistair Macleod

Next edition of the newsletter will be issued on June 15th. If you have any stories, articles, details of forthcoming events, photos or other items that you would like included please let me have them by May 25th. Either by hand or by email, barbara.sharp@virgin.net