

# KASS



**CONTENTS**

<u>THE VIEW FROM WATERINGBURY</u>	2
<u>A WEE NOTE FRAE THE CHAIRMAN.</u>	3
<u>LETTERS TO THE EDITOR</u>	5
<u>FEATURES</u>	7
<u>QUIZ</u>	21
<u>WHAT THE PAPERS SAY...</u>	23
<u>AROUND THE SOCIETIES</u>	24
<u>KASS AFFAIRS</u>	30

**THE VIEW FROM WATERINGBURY**

Dear Friends

The poisoned chalice passed to me this November. Rita Menzies, so much the bane of my email during my time in Tortola, dropped a heavy hint that she wanted to relinquish the newsletter editorship. I suggested with the lightest of comments that it might be interesting to take it up and before I knew it she had dumped the title on me, thrown me a pile of press cuttings and papers and vanished in a cloud of steam cackling "Free, Free at last!!!" Oh boy! What to do? I have to follow in the illustrious footsteps of such noble ladies as the gracious Rita herself, Maggie Talbot, Margaret Anne Robertson (my surrogate great aunt), and the irreplaceable Joan Davidson. It was OK in November, it concerned me in December, it was worrying in January and I was terrified by February.

Fortunately, the Great and the Good of KASS have come through. Once I had removed my self-proclaimed sub-editor from putting her four muddy paws over the contributions, I was able to assess what I had. Two societies responded to my requests to write a profile of their clubs, and I am particularly indebted to Jane Whittington and Eileen Physick in Meopham and a whole team from Canterbury St Andrew's to start this series off. I'd be grateful for offers from other clubs to tell us how you began and what you get up to. Another series has been started by the wise hermit who lives above Chatham High Street; I'm sure you'll find Harry Robertson's authoritative profile of the Maid of Norway a great taster to his future contributions on the Kings and Queens of Scotland. I also feature the fantastic ceilidh last November from two angles; the dedicated organiser and teacher, Mo Dalton, and a willing (and occasionally terrified) player in Bob Hunt. David Menzies gives us an account of his dancing holiday in Mallorca but diplomatically refuses to pin the blame on either party involved for losing his suitor at Gatwick. And have you ever wondered how the dance "Minister on the Loch" got its name? Well, Kate Middleham and David How both spotted the explanation based on one of Scotland's most famous pictures. Thanks also to Peter Farrow, Margaret Harwood, Ken Hamilton, Ann Townend and those from around the societies who sent me newsy snippets, for giving my first newsletter a breadth and depth that I hope takes your interest.

It is you that have helped keep the tradition of the newsletter going. And to me, it is so important that the fellowship of the Kent Scottish societies is bound in some way. The newsletter is the best twine. What are our societies up to? What makes them strong? What is the legacy that each society brings to KASS? I want to know and I want you to tell the legions of members across the county from Sidcup to Sandwich, Romney to Rochester. KASS depends on this communication, and although it is only twice a year, it's important that we keep it going. I'm starting a dialogue here on what form the newsletter should take; please tell me what you think.

Despite my comments above, we owe Rita Menzies a huge debt for producing eight issues of the newsletter, and also to her husband, David, who was responsible for much of the running to and fro to get photos reproduced and photocopies made. Rita has put so much of herself into KASS and that reflects in the high quality of the newsletter during her stewardship. Thank you, Rita.

Send your items for the next edition by email if possible, [alanpmillsuk@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:alanpmillsuk@yahoo.co.uk) or by snail mail to 110 Bow Road, Wateringbury, Kent, ME18 5DY. Next deadline for contributions is the 25<sup>th</sup> October.

Have a great summer and GET WRITING!

Best regards

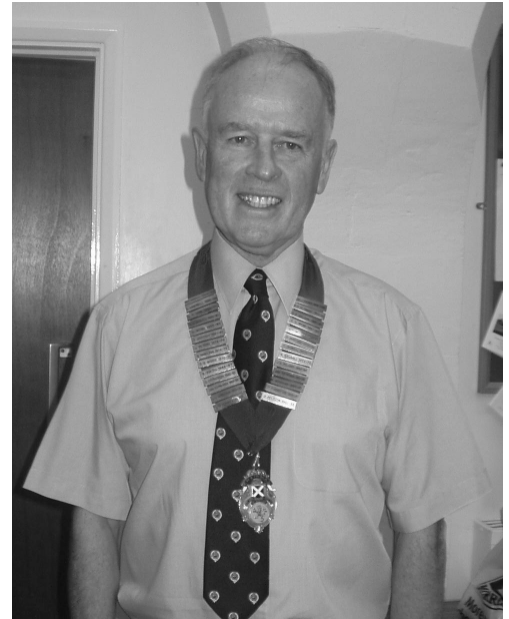
Alan

## **A WEE NOTE FRAE THE CHAIRMAN**

Dear Friends,

"The most important folk are those  
Who wear a sunny smile,  
The friendly, cheery, "help you" folk  
Who make this life worthwhile!"

As Joan and I have continued on our travels around the County to attend dances, we have been very conscious of the warm reception awaiting us at the different venues. There is so much hard work that goes into organising these functions, very often performed by members working in the background and who look for no recognition of their efforts. To those people, in particular, we offer our sincere thanks.



We have been "on the road" most Saturday evenings since last October, attending numerous functions, involving Deal, Isle of Thanet, Medway, Meopham, North Kent, Orpington, R.S.C.D.S. Tunbridge Wells, Sevenoaks, Sheerness and Sidcup. We have also taken the opportunities to fly the flag at a Men of Kent Burns' Supper (when we doubled up as part of a demonstration team - and probably left the audience doubled up as well!), The Kentish Caledonians' Spring Dance and the Ashdown Scottish Country Dance Club Spring Ball.

Our first K.A.S.S. event was the Autumn Dance, hosted by Canterbury St. Andrew's Scottish Country Dance Group and which proved to be an excellent and well attended evening. The Spring Tea Dance, arranged by Medway, was a very happy and enjoyable occasion although, regrettably, the numbers present were a great disappointment. We must continue to address any problems that currently attach to this type of function, which should be very popular, but which currently is not really achieving its aims and objectives. We now look forward to our Highland Ball, to the K.A.S.S. Walk and without seeming to wish our lives away, to our Autumn Tea Dance and to our Autumn Dance in November.

I would love to think that, by the time of our May Committee Meeting, volunteers will have come forward for the current vacancies of Minute Secretary and Events Co-ordinator. In the meantime, may I again express my appreciation to all the Committee members for their support and in particular, to Peter, Maggie and Margaret for their ceaseless hard work, dedication and attention to detail.

One of the hardest and most thankless tasks, facing any person, is to assume the role of Newsletter Editor. At the same time, however, a Newsletter, when available, can provide vital lines of communication, especially within an umbrella Association such as ours, which has a multiplicity of members spread throughout a very wide area.

We have been extremely well served by Rita Menzies in this capacity over the past four years and we are deeply indebted to her for her research and for her persuasive ways in obtaining contributions from members. We are delighted to welcome Alan Mills on board as Rita's successor and we wish him every success for the future.

As the season we call "Summer" draws near, may you all have an enjoyable time, whether at home or on holiday. We trust that the sun will shine on all outdoor functions, such as the K.A.S.S. Walk and the Gravesend/Meopham Annual Picnic Dance and that batteries will have been re-charged in readiness for the Annual General Meeting and beyond!



**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

***ON FIRST WEARING A KILT (continued)***

Thank you to David Papa of Canterbury St Andrews for his comments and follow up article on the first wearing of a kilt. In the article he inquires "Whoever heard of a Papa tartan?" Well maybe not a tartan but how about a whole island with a bit of history to boot?

**Papa Stour**

Not only does he get the island named after him (or was it the other way round?) but he gets to include the name of one of Kent's rivers as well!

I certainly hadn't heard of Papa Stour until Mo Dalton introduced me (and six others) to the Sword Dance of Papa Stour for her Ceilidh back in November 2004 (see separate article). The dance is believed to be Norse in origin and is vividly described by Sir Walter Scott in his novel "The Pirate" or so it says on the internet.

The island lies in St Magna's Bay on the west coast of Shetland.

Until the 17<sup>th</sup> Century Papa Stour was ruled by the Kings of Norway who ceded it to Scotland as part of a wedding dowry. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century a thriving fishing industry supported a population of about 360 but this had declined by 1970 to such a low point that a newspaper advertisement was placed to encourage a number of young couples to move to the island much as in the TV programme "2000 Acres of Sky". Is this where the writers got their inspiration?

In 1996, the last time the internet site was updated, there were only 20 couples left on the island. Nine years on I wonder "Is anybody there?" It would be a pity if the island were now deserted and it was necessary to rely on ex-pats hundreds of miles away to keep a traditional dance alive.

**Bob Hunt**

***Medway And District Caledonian Association***

***Kate's space...***

***Malcolm Pole's article on Pelorus Jock has prompted long-standing contributor, Kate Middleham to write on the original Pelorus Jack. Since she wanted a "Letters to the Editor" column and moaned at me for being too busy to contribute anything to KASS for the last year, I thought I'd better embarrass her and reserve a space for her to write - Less Disgusted of Tunbridge Wells, more Sprightly of Sittingbourne...***

***The Editor***

***Pelorus Jack:***

In September 1838, H.M.S Pelorus under the command of Lieutenant Phillip Chetwode, nosed its way through a narrow waterway which he called "Pelorus Sound". His ship, known to its crew as the "Pel", was negotiating the many bays, inlets and channels in the north west areas of South Island, New Zealand. The area which became known as the Pelorus Region is on land and heavily forested. The waters of the sound are clear, deep and beautiful. It winds on to meet the wooded mountain ranges through which there are intersecting foot-tracks. The tall peaks reach up to 600 metres and more, sheer sides draped with giant tree ferns. But the book, "Wild New Zealand", says the only way to see the Sound's in all their beauty is by boat. Dolphins race alongside and one of these came to be known as "Pelorus Jack!"

***Kate Middleham; Sittingbourne***

**ADVERT:**

**WANTED**

Various children's and adults' sizes of Highland Dance kilts, tartan hose, waistcoats, etc.

Please contact Elaine - 01634 719723.

## FEATURES

### SCOTTISH DANCING THRO' THE AGES CEILIDH. 6TH NOVEMBER, 2004

The long journey towards the event of the Ceilidh - Scottish Dancing Thro' the Ages, started for me 13 months beforehand. I approached Robin Ellis to see when he was available and booked Kemsley Hall. Then began the drawing up of the dances, contacting and talking to other teachers and begging and borrowing as many costumes as I could. Thank you Tunbridge Wells and Pat Begley in Marlow. (Yes, I actually went through the Dartford Tunnel and drove the M25 single-handed.) This had been a big hurdle in my life that had to be overcome. I also had to set about relearning the old dances, ready to teach them and track down special music to practice to.

The idea behind doing this Ceilidh was to involve as many dancers from this area. I also wanted to use dancers who didn't necessarily dance in demonstrations and I wanted to show the old dances that were danced before the advent of the RSCDS. In the end we had dancers from the Children's Class, taught by Margaret Anne Robertson, Highland Dancers, taught by Jenny Barrow, some from the Beginners Class, some from the Medway Caledonian Association and Sheerness Scottish Heather Club and some from Meopham, Gravesend, Maidstone and Canterbury. We had 3 Pipers and a Drummer and Jan Day sang for one of the dances.

We started practising just after Easter (I didn't want them to peak too early) and for the first 3 or 4 weeks, my "pupils" fell about laughing. They had never seen anything like what I was trying to teach them! The Sword Dance of Papa Stour nearly caused a riot, with the men getting tied, literally in knots while trying not to drop the "swords". The Reel of the Black Cocks also caused uproars, but everybody soon got into the spirit of things and settled down to learn these peculiar dances. I tried to assure them that it would all seem better when they were in costume. Absolutely nobody believed me

The trouble was that everybody eventually wanted to dance every dance, which ultimately ended up with Jean Peters and me making 24 ladies and 24 men's costumes circa 1755 in the space of precisely 3 weeks. A big thank you to Jean - I would never have managed it without you!

A comment that one of the dancers made at the end was "Pure Hell, but Fun".

#### **The Dances**

##### The Sword Dance of Papa Stour

7 men dancing with 7 swords - which would have been made from the iron bands around whiskey barrels. It comes from the Long Sword Dances from the North. It was originally Viking and it is believed to have been the god Odin and other Norse gods. Since Christian times, the dance became part of a Mummers Play and the Gods became the Seven Knights of Christendom. St. George of England, St. Denis of France, St. Patrick of Ireland, St. James of Spain, St. Anthony of Italy, St. David of Wales and St. Andrew of Scotland. It was danced to a wonderful recording by Aly Bain.

##### The Foursome Reel and Reel of Tulloch

This was danced by dancers taught by Jenny Barrow and was here in the programme to show the oldest type of dance - travel and set and is the remnants of the Auld Reels that were danced for centuries, the setting steps becoming more intricate and important.

##### Old Kilt Demonstration by Jack Warburgh

This was to show how the Pheileadh Mor (pronounced Philamor) - the early form of the kilt, the belted plaid and was made from not less than 7 yards of tartan. The length of cloth was laid and pleated across a belt, and then the wearer lay down, folded the two edges over himself, and did up the belt thus making a kilt and a plaid. This would be his attire, his blanket and his shelter.

##### Reel of the Black Cocks

Another example of an Auld Reel, with setting steps followed by travelling. The dance would have been danced in a small croft, just 4 people dancing to a fiddle, or maybe just keeping in time to the clicking of the fingers. (This originated in the Moorish lands where the trade routes were from).

**Flora MacDonald's Fancy**

Danced by the Highland dancers, a Ladies Step Dance, with the girls wearing Aboyne outfits - specifically designed when the kilt was outlawed.



**Seann Triubhas**

Once it was legal to wear the kilt again, this dance shows the freedom of dancing without the restriction of the wearing of trousers.

**Montgomeries' Rant**

Taken from a Ball programme from Castle Menzies dated 1755, this was originally a strathspey. Danced by 4 sets of dancers in full evening dress of that period, it was indeed a grand sight.

**The Evans Family**

Paul (Dad), with Lloyd and Bethan played beautiful arrangements, on their recorders, of, in the 1st.half, The Eriskay Love Lilt and in the 2nd.half, The Skye Boat Song.

**The Hebridean Weaving Lilt**

Danced by the children in Margaret Anne's class. This was an old mill dance and the children danced it beautifully.

**The Sword Dance**

Danced Traditionally by Highlanders prior to going into battle, it was believed that they would be successful if they did not touch the swords during the dance.

**The Orkney Wedding Dance.**

This began by the dancers performing an ancient dance called, sometimes Bee Baw Babbity, Bob o' the Bolster or The Kissing Dance, once extremely popular in Scotland, especially at weddings. Jan Day sang the song, while the men, asked a lady to dance, by kneeling on a silk hankie, (originally a cushion or bolster) and then kissing her. The lady then chooses the next man by tossing the hankie to him. He in turn catches her up and kisses her before going and asking his partner to dance. The couples promenade round until there are enough couples to make up the set.

The bride and groom stand back to back with arms linked and a reel is danced round them. In this case it was the Axum Reel, which was again a popular wedding dance. The music starts in strathspey time and gradually gets faster, turning eventually into reel time. When the band abruptly stops at the end, the men rush to kiss the bride and the ladies to kiss the groom before the newlyweds can turn and kiss each other. In the olden days it was called the Brides Reel or the Grooms Reel.

**The Earl of Errol's Reel**

Collected in Canada by Mrs. Mary Isdale McNab, a great friend of Miss Jean Milligan. We set the dance in 1820 at the time of the Napoleonic Wars, hence the diaphanous dresses. It was danced by a team of ladies. Beautifully, I might add.

**The Cakewalk**

Performed by Jenny Barrow and Francis Amery. The dance originated in the Deep South of America and depicts the slaves mimicking their white masters. It came over here at the turn of the century and was danced in Scotland in the 1920's, hence the "flapper" costume. It is now a competition dance.

**The Reel of the 51st. Division**

This dance was written in 1940 in a POW camp in St. Valery, France. The men were officers of the Highland Division and had Scottish Country Dancing as part of their exercise periods. Although the dancers wore their kilts for the Ceilidh, they would have worn battledress and tackity boots if only we could have found them to hire. Nowadays the dance is for a four couple set, but was originally was written as a 5 couple dance, that being the number of men in that particular group.

It was a great evening. I hope all who took part and those who came to watch and join in, enjoyed it. We raised £1080 for charity, dividing it between The MacMillan Trust and The Friends of Wisdom Hospice.

Grateful thanks to all concerned, also to Medway and District Caledonian Society and to Sheerness Scottish Heather Club for their kind donations and for their faith in me. I received nothing but support from everyone.

***Mo Dalton; Medway and Sheerness.***

## THE CAST OF THOUSANDS

### **Dancers**

Bob Ansell  
 Ailean Baker  
 Dick Barford  
 Pirjo Beaumont  
 Sue Bodle  
 Pat Boulting  
 Lis & Tim Bowden  
 Morag Catchpole  
 Monica & Harry Drew  
 Paula Dyke  
 Mike Gould  
 Muriel Greenstead  
 Bob & Jess Hunt  
 Rosemary Jackson  
 Heather Kelly  
 Chris & Rob Little  
 Sandy & Emily Lovelock  
 Rita & David Menzies  
 Mary & Malcolm Pole  
 Margaret-Anne & Harry Robertson

### **Children**

Leona Chalmers  
 Bethan & Lloyd Evans  
 Rebecca Goode  
 Robyn & Alex Hackwell  
 Emily Lovelock  
 Kirsty Russell

### **Cakewalk**

Francis Amery  
 Jenny Barrow

### **Highland Dancers**

Laura Aldridge  
 Francis Amery  
 Robyn Hackwell  
 Lorna Hicks  
 Mike Gould  
 Emily Lovelock  
 Laura Tapson

Jack Ruler

### **Pipers**

Eddie McHale  
 Tony Daniel  
 Rob Little

### **Drummer**

Anne Fraser-Reed

### **Orkney Wedding**

Robyn Hackwell  
 Jamie Rudd  
 Alex Hackwell  
 Emily Lovelock  
 Russel Phillips  
 Leona Chalmers

### **Singer**

Jan Day

### **Recorder Music**

Paul, Lloyd & Bethan Evans

### **Belted Plaid Dem.**

Jack Warburgh

### **Video**

John Beaumont

### **Catering**

Alan Trevethan

### **Helpers**

Ken Baker  
 Noel Boulting  
 Lynda McGowan

### **Costumes**

**Doorman**  
 Peter Peters  
 Jean Peters  
 Mo Dalton



## **MO DALTON'S CEILIDH. - A PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE.**

I don't know how long Mo had been planning the Ceilidh, but for me it started just before Easter 2004 when Mo casually asked, "What are you doing on Monday nights?" Now after the cake carrying ceremony for Medway's 80th Anniversary ball you might have thought that I would have stopped and considered the possible angles for a moment or two before answering "Nothing Mo, why?" But, too late, I was drawn in like a salmon after a fly.

We began practicing just after Easter.

The theme was Scottish Country Dancing Through the Ages and the dances selected for our group ranged from Old Norse to mid 20<sup>th</sup> Century and were:

### ***"The Reel of the Black Cocks"***

This was probably everybody's least favourite dance and dates back several centuries. It was devised to be danced in the confines of a crofters kitchen. The mob caps and shawls made the ladies instantly unrecognisable.

### ***"The Earl of Errol"***

A set dance of four parts which was performed by one set of ladies although we all practised it just in case. There were far too many poussettes for me to cope with.

This dance dated from the early 1800s, and the dresses were (I think) Empire Line.

***“Montgomeries Rant”***

An elegant strathspey version of the fun dance that we know as Montgomeries Rant today and not a hint of the tandem reels and multi-couple sets to the dancing couple that we, in Medway at least, go in for. The main surprise here was the announcement after the summer break that we would all have costumes. Frock coats and knee breeches for the men with white socks and buckle shoes, fancy waistcoats, jabots and lace cuffs, oh! and ball gowns for the ladies. The gasps of appreciation from the audience were I think partly due to the costumes themselves and partly due to the fact that all four sets were in costume. A tribute to our Wardrobe Mistress and her Herculean efforts which continued right up to the dress rehearsal.

***“The Orkney Wedding Dance or Axum Reel.”***

This starts with a promenade where the men choose their partner with a kiss then form up around the Bride and Groom, progresses through strathspey to reel and finishes with the ladies kissing the Groom and the men kissing the Bride. For some reason this was a popular dance but it did take a lot of rehearsing to get it right.

***“The Reel of the 51<sup>st</sup> Highland Division”***

This was a rather more robust version of the dance we know today and an opportunity, for some members of the team at least, to attempt to hurl each other from the dance floor during the turns. There was also some banter during rehearsals about the relative abilities of the Royal Navy, Royal Engineers and the Scots Guards when it came to marching. At least no costumes here, just kilts.

And of course

***“The Sword Dance of Papa Stour”***

I don't think any of those taking part ever expected to get through it without any mistakes and in the end we all danced it from just one position, except that is, for one young lady from the Juniors who stood in at rehearsals for whoever was missing and who must have danced every part except the leader's. She also stood in where required for all the other dances as well as taking part with the Juniors in their own dance. I'm pretty sure that she did some Highland dancing as well as finding time to dress up as one of the Brides for Orkney Wedding Dance. (I've had to have a breather after just writing all that.)

The tabards we wore with the Knights Emblems also had pictures of the Seven Dwarfs on the inside and somebody (why are you all looking at me?) suggested in the dress rehearsal that we reverse tabards for a laugh. Mo was halfway through the words accompanying the Sword Dance before she looked up and saw what we had done.

Retribution came during the actual Ceilidh.

Just as we were dancing off, having breathed a huge sigh of relief at getting through the sword dance without any mistakes, The MC announced that if the audience clapped and cheered enough he would call us back for an encore and that we would reverse our tabards.

Panic set in on two counts. One, could we repeat the dance without any mistakes (if so it would be a first for us) and two, having been pinned and sewn into our tabards would we be able to reverse them in time? In the event we managed both and I think the audience enjoyed it. We certainly did,

I didn't get to see many of the other turns but the Juniors doing the Weaving Lilt certainly impressed me (and made me proud that they were Medway's Juniors).

I can't help wondering that if seven Juniors had been doing the sword dance would they have done it with real swords instead of sticks? They are a credit to their teacher.

What can one say about the Cake Walk? Wonderfully performed, superb costume!

I've seen it performed once more since the Ceilidh and just hope that it's not something that one is expected to do when one becomes ex-treasurer at Medway. I might just have to die in office.

I haven't mentioned names other than Mo's because everybody put in a great effort over a period of more than six months to make a success of the Ceilidh. Much credit must go to Mo for being able to pull it all together. I also haven't mentioned every contribution on the night, I'm sorry but I spent a lot of time

in the changing rooms making sure that I had the right socks with the right costume (and getting my breath back) and missed many items. I look forward to the release of the video to get the whole picture.

As a participant I certainly enjoyed the evening and it is fantastic to also be able to say that we raised £1080.00 for charity.

***Bob Hunt, Medway and District Caledonian Association***

**SOCIETY PROFILES – No. 1****CANTERBURY ST. ANDREW'S SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE GROUP**

In 1963 Eileen Aycott spotted a notice in the local paper inviting people to go Scottish Country Dancing. Two ladies from the Quakers, who had some records, were hoping to start a group at the Friends Meeting House in Canterbury. Eileen had danced in London and had some records herself, so went along with her daughter.

Sometimes a lady was seen outside listening to the music. One day she plucked up courage to come in and eventually joined in the dancing. Her name was Angela but became known as Fiona. Nothing unusual you might think, except she brought her budgies along to the class!

The group almost folded but Eileen, who was teaching by now, decided to join KASS and put the group on a more formal basis. Diane Kirkbank, who was secretary for 20 years, joined in the early days. So did Mike and Barbara Armstrong. Mike was chairman for some time. He and Barbara would invite us to an end-of-year picnic dance in their garden. The group was reconstituted in 1977. Day schools were held at the Dominican Priory. The first 'proper' dance is recorded in 1978. Bill Young charged £10 for the music for the evening, admission was 75p.

The group moved to the then new University of Kent at Canterbury, then St Pauls Hall and then Barton Court. Currently we meet at Canterbury College on a Friday night. The dance studio has a lovely sprung dance floor and now they have air-conditioning it should be pleasant in the summer. General classes are held during term times. A beginners class was discussed for some years but it was not until Marion Dredge bravely took her 'prelim' that a beginners' class was formed. Several of the beginners have blossomed and are very keen dancers. Beginners' classes are held in the autumn and Spring Terms. Some of our dancers go to other clubs and Scottish Societies. We attend day schools, the summer school at St Andrews and various other events and holidays. Some go to Pat Ansell's Thursday class and are in the demonstration team, dancing at such diverse places as Chislet fete, the university and the Salvation Army where they are made welcome at their Burns night.

In 2003 we held a 40 year celebration dance. Green Ginger provided the music. Caterers gave a speech and Eileen cut the cake. Special mention must be made of Eileen who still teaches us. She absolutely hates people sitting down and frequent cries of 'come along' can be heard when the dance is called during class. She keeps us in order with those steely eyes which somehow manages to twinkle at the same time! John Hildick-Smith took over when Eileen was ill. We usually have two dances a year, our autumn dance this year is at a new venue, Littlebourne Village Hall. So we shall be pleased to have your feedback. English Folk dancers use the hall and speak highly of it. We have hosted KASS dances and tea dances.

By the time this is printed, Eileen will have celebrated her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. Pat Ansell has devised a dance in her honour, Eileen's Medley, in square formation.

Our current Chairman is Andrew Helbling. He makes an announcement with a laconic style – we must have the shortest AGM's ever! He has us in stitches with his get-ups for Comic Relief and Children in Need and urges us to "fork-it-oot" when we make a mistake. He and his wife, Jenny, host a barbecue and dance in the summer term and we have a lovely evening, dancing till it finally gets too dark.

We like to think we are a happy vibrant club and look forward to another 40 years.

*Committee and Members of Canterbury St Andrew's  
Read more about Eileen's celebration in "Around the Societies"*

**MALLORCA FEBRUARY 2005**

We first went on a dancing holiday in 1997, with Robin Ellis to Fuengirola in Spain. When Robin's last tour, to Mallorca, was announced we felt we had to join the party.

We were flying from Gatwick, with take off at a ridiculous hour and the requirement to check in 2 hours before that, so we took advantage of car parking and a room at the Ramada Jarvis hotel about 6 miles from Gatwick. We were comfortable enough there, but I would look for another closer hotel if we do it again – that one is a very rambling place and we had a room a very long way from reception and the dining room. There was a luggage room, so we were able to leave our suitcases there and take the overnight bag to our room. Unfortunately, when we retrieved the luggage at 5:30 am one of us forgot the suiter which contained my kilt, and we did not notice the omission until we had checked our luggage into the airport (fortunately, I was able to retrieve the suiter on our return to collect the car!).

The early flight was the usual charter plane – minimal service and cramped seats, but we did get a good breakfast and had a following wind so we arrived in Mallorca in good time: - collect the luggage, join the coach and off to our hotel. We arrived at about 12:00 – unpack and then look around the hotel for lunch. We started to discover the problems of Mallorca in February: it is the off-season, so lots of tourist facilities are not yet open. We did manage to get a bar lunch of a toasted sandwich (experience in Spain and elsewhere is that toasted sandwiches are universal, always with ham and cheese – quite tasty, but gets a bit boring after a time).

Afterwards we wandered down to the town and discovered practically every shop was closed – off-season. We did find one excellent liquor store which was open, so we were able to stock up with suitable refreshments for the coming week.

The tour rep wanted to offer us the possibility of a visit to a Night Club: since we planned to dance every evening, the only night available for such a visit was the Saturday night when we arrived, so he agreed to brief us on all the attractions available, including the night club, at 17:00. As it happened, no-one wanted the night club, but we did book several coach tours to make sure we saw the island through the week. The discussion was in a corner of the main hotel lounge, and the rep had to compete with a disco which was operating from a stage in the corner of the lounge!

The session with the rep let us meet the others in the party. There were a small number who had been on Robin's original dance tour, also to Magaluf, and to the same hotel. There were others we knew from around Kent and from other dancing holidays, including four of our friends from Watford, so we all knew each other. Unfortunately, the numbers were low – about 22 dancers and Robin had only himself and Eric for the band (two others had called off at the last minute).

Meals in the hotel were excellent. It was all buffet service, but that suited us – we could go at our own pace and no hold-ups waiting for waiters. They served a full English breakfast – bacon and eggs of various sorts, sausages and lots of other goodies. Their bread and croissants were baked in an oven in the dining room, so they were very fresh. To start we had a selection of various cereals and muesli or fruit salad peaches or prunes. There was even a container with porridge, but I am afraid that looked rather sad so I did not try it. Similarly, dinner provided a roast of some sort, various grills, and kebabs, lots of vegetables and of course salads. They did have paella on some evenings – I tried that, but it was not very fishy so I did not try it again. Desserts were extensive and varied – at least there were some variations in the gateaux, but the main selection of crème caramel, fruit of various sorts and a cheese board did not change.

Dancing started on Sunday evening and was scheduled for each evening thereafter. A programme of 14 dances each evening, starting at about 20:30 with a break half way through. We usually managed two sets, even for the 5 couple dances, but it was a bit exhausting, and dancing on a hard carpet led to some muscle strains by the end of the week, so the floor started getting a bit empty



at times. Robin and Eric did us proud with their playing and kept a good pace up throughout the week. We had Lorraine Chase as MC – she led us in walk-throughs at 20:00 each evening before the band struck up. Most of the programmes were familiar dances, but there were two – Anniversary Tensome and the Burns Centenary Strathspey – which were new to us and some of the other dancers. Needless to say some of us forgot some of the finer points before the dance came up on the evening, but Lorraine kept us going with a commentary as the dancing proceeded.

Our first excursion was to Palma. We caught a public service bus and were carried through to the centre of Palma. There was a wait for the bus to arrive, while a large number of locals assembled at the bus stop to wait, and needless to say they were first on the bus to the extent that there was no room for us. Fortunately another bus drove up while we wondered what to do – an empty one, so Rita and I enjoyed comfortable seats for the trip while the rest of our party were standing in the first bus!

The centre of Palma seemed to be a chaotic building site. The cathedral and the royal palace sit on the top of an escarpment looking down on a marina with a fountain. We found our way through the road works and other building work to a set of stairs which led up to the base of the cathedral. First impression was that that too was shut for the building work, but when we walked all round we found a door with a clerk who took our money and admitted us. We passed through the treasure house into the main cathedral – a magnificent building with lots of rose windows and lots of paintings and statues – all very impressive and very interesting. There was clearly a Moorish influence in the architecture, but it all hung together nicely. Afterwards we found a café which was prepared to serve us with the usual toasted sandwich of ham and cheese. We split the party going through the cathedral at our individual paces, so we had some fun communicating with mobile phone text messages to arrange where to meet, but as it happened there was a window at the back of the café and the others saw us there as they passed.

The next trip was supposed to be a coach tour to Formentera, the Cape at the Northern end of Mallorca. Our first stop was at a leather factory with all sorts of shoes and other leather goods on display for us to buy: a bit of a waste of time for some of us who did not want anything in leather. The coach then went on towards the Cape and climbed some hair raising roads round hairpin bends with steep drops on one side to a viewpoint where about a dozen coaches had all dropped their passengers to see the view. After a short climb there was a magnificent view of the North West coast – a good photo opportunity. Then back to the coach again and down to Formentera, not the Cape but the Hotel and resort. The hotel was closed and the beach was not inviting in the cold weather we were suffering. There was a cafe open which allowed some of us to warm a little with some coffee. We were told that the road to the Cape was too difficult for the coach to go there: having seen the previous part of the road, it was believable, but it was a disappointment. From there we went back to the last significant town and were given time for lunch, then it was back to the coach for the journey home, but on the way there was a further stop at a commercial development – an interesting development looking rather like Disneyland without the rides, but with lots of shops, most closed waiting for the season to start!. We did manage coffee and a doughnut.

Our final trip was to the Dragon Caves on the East coast. This time we had a stop at a factory making artificial pearls – interesting, but it would have been nice if someone had explained the process to us while we watched the workers creating the goods. We did get a birthday present for our granddaughter, so it was not entirely a waste of time. There was also a dinosaur park with a number of models beside the factory which filled in a few minutes waiting for the bus. The East coast has a number of very fine beaches in small coves, each of which is being developed with a set of hotels and apartments for the holiday season. We passed through several such developments – all closed waiting for the season – and stopped on one headland which gave a view of the coast, cliffs and coves. The coach driver found one café which was open and released us for lunch.



The dragon caves are truly magnificent – you descend into the earth and follow a path through arrays of stalactites and stalagmites, and are left to proceed at your own pace down the path. It was all very well illuminated and there was only one path which stretched for a mile or so down to the depths where we found a lake and a set of seats waiting for us. There must have been a thousand or so in the party, and we all assembled waiting to see what would happen on the lake: the lights went out and three boats appeared, each lit up.



One was loaded with a chamber orchestra, and they entertained us with a range of pieces including the Barcarolle from the Tales of Hoffman. When they finished we had a different path to follow through more caves to the exit, then on to the bus and, you have guessed it, yet another coffee shop. Since the island is fairly small, they seem to have to make all these stops to pad out the day trip (I wonder what commission they get from the various stopping places!). Finally, we rejoined the bus and went straight back to the hotel which was a relief.

The main problem with the holiday was the temperature. We looked at the television weather forecasts and found the UK was passing through a cold spell, but unfortunately so was Mallorca! I am glad we went to support Robin, and the dancing was enjoyable, but Mallorca does not appeal. The choice seems to be going in the summer when the beaches and so on will be crowded and all the facilities will be open and crowded, or go in the off season when nothing is open. Altogether not attractive at my time of life!

*David Menzies, Medway And District Caledonian Association*

## **SOCIETY PROFILES – No. 2**

### **MEOPHAM SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE CLUB**

The Meopham Scottish Country Dance Club was founded on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> September 1962 by Mr Glen Pollock, his wife Amy and a group of friends from Meopham and Gravesend, who, having learnt the basic techniques of Scottish Dancing at evening classes held at Meopham School by Kent County Council, wished to put their knowledge into practise, and to enjoy social dancing with other clubs in Kent.

Mr Pollock was elected first chairman of the club, which met on Monday evenings in the small hall at Meopham Village Hall from September until May. Forty years later the club still meets on Monday but the year is now extended till June. The original membership numbers of the club was fixed at 32, enough for 4 sets of dancers but attendance was usually half that number. The present membership totals 26 and dancing takes place now in the large hall except for the second Monday each month when the local gardeners club unfortunately have a booking for this. We still carry on in the small hall but it can be very cosy at times!

In 1963 the club was affiliated to KASS and Mr Pollock as well as being chairman at Meopham was invited to be the chairman of KASS for 1967-69.

The club held its first Guest Dance, as it was then called in December 1962, with music played by Bob Duncan and his Band who continued to play for the dances until 1969 when he emigrated to South Africa. A dance was booked but with no band! Jim Pollock suggested that a fellow dentist friend who had just formed a band for relaxation should be asked to play. So Robin Ellis and his Caledonian County band came to play at the dance and has done so every 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday in March and December ever since. The club has held 2 dances a season regularly first at the village hall and then, in 1996 a successful move was made from the village hall venue to Northfleet School for Girls for the Christmas Dance. With increasing numbers wishing to enjoy this event the village hall was now too small to accommodate so many dancers in comfort and safety. The spring dance although not as well attended as the Christmas dance soon followed and is now held at the same venue.

A 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary dance took place in 2002 and ex-chairman Alex King and Patricia Barr attended along with other ex chairman who still dance regularly at the club. Alex King made a special journey with his wife Rita from Spain to attend the occasion.

In 1977 Meopham joined Gravesend and District Scottish Association to hold its first Open Air Picnic Dance in the grounds of Cobham School in aid of charity. Frank Reid, Robin Ellis and Caber Feidh have all played at this event. When Cobham Hall was no longer available a change was made to Nurstead



court in Meopham. The event still takes place on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday each July at another venue, Northfleet School for Girls. Although not on the grand scale as Cobham Hall the dance is still very popular with an extra bonus of indoor dancing in the event of rain.

For many years the dancing tuition was taken by Joyce Bach. Joyce reluctantly gave up this position last year and now enjoys sitting on the sidelines letting someone else do the work. Various volunteers now take turns weekly with dance instruction.

The present club Chairman is Bill McFarlane, very well known in the North Kent dancing area. His father was a founder member of North Kent Scottish Association. Our longest serving member is Mrs Eileen Physick who joined the club in 1963 and was also club secretary from 1969 until 1991 when Jane Whittington took over. Eileen still plays an active part at the club as committee member and dance arranger for our club dances.

Some of our past chairmen have of course passed on. Jim Pollock, his wife Amy, Scottie Armstrong and wife Peggy amongst these. Harry Slade (former member of the London Scottish Regiment and a great dancer) still lives in Eltham; Joe Beaman now lives in Bath. Charlie Messer moved to Majorca and is no longer in touch but we still hear news of Alex King (our MC for many years when Scottie retired) from Alicante, Spain. Pat Barr has recently moved to Dorset and Jim MacQuillan (who was also our MC) still lives in Dartford and is very much involved with the Ellenor Hospice movement.

Former Chairmen still dancing are Joyce and Brian Bach, Elizabeth Trasler, Eileen Physick, Heather Kelly and Jane Whittington. The club welcomes visitors to join the dancing evening on Monday nights.

***Jane Whittington, Eileen Physick, Meopham Scottish Country Dance Club***

## **THE KINGS AND QUEENS OF SCOTLAND: PART 1 - THE MAID OF NORWAY**

***Harry Robertson, Medway And District Caledonian Association***

Your Editor has suggested that I write a pilot article on the kings of Scotland and if it proves popular then to convert it into a series. As the first monarch chosen has a short life I thought I would begin with an introductory potted history of Scotland.

Scotland, like the rest of Britain and Ireland, was inhabited by Celtish tribes. The Celts were a wide-spread people, stretching from the Black Sea to Ireland. They arrived in Britain in a series of migrations. In England the main route was from East Anglia, Kent and the South East coast and each migration would displace the previous inhabitants towards the north and west in a ripple effect. According to legend the main route into Scotland was via Ireland and the Irish themselves had come directly from northern Spain. There is not enough evidence to prove or disprove this legend.

The Romans tried to conquer Scotland and failed. They tried first to settle the border with the Scottish tribes between the Forth and the Clyde but eventually pulled back to a line between the Solway Firth and the Tyne (Hadrian's Wall). Between the Wall and the Forth and Clyde the Romans had client tribes to protect them from the more hostile tribes further north.

By about 500 AD, four recognisable peoples/states existed in Scotland, the Picts, the Irish Scots, the British kingdoms of Strathclyde and the Gododdin.

The Picts were the largest group occupying most of Scotland above the Forth and Clyde. They are still mysterious in many ways but the most famous fact about them was their inheritance customs, which was strictly through the female line. Kings became kings because their mothers were heiresses. The children of kings were otherwise excluded from the succession. The Picts eventually united with the Irish Scots and appear to have been absorbed into their culture.

The Scots or Scotti came from northern Ireland and occupied the Argyllshire coast. It is not clear when they first arrived but probably between 200 and 300 AD. In the late 5th century Irish princes arrived and took over the settlements and made a separate kingdom for themselves (Dalriada). Eventually, in about 847 King Kenneth of the Dalriada became King of the Picts as well (through his Pictish mother) and the two nations were then linked by the same king.

The Kingdom of Strathclyde had its capital at Dumbarton and covered most of south-west Scotland and, at various times, Cumbria as well. It lost its independence at the end of the 9th century and became a

dependency of Scotland being normally ruled by the heir to the Scottish throne. Strathclyde retained its own identity until the 12th century before being finally absorbed into Scotland.

The Kingdom of the Gododdin held a similar position in south east Scotland as Strathclyde in the west. It covered (at its maximum extent) the Lothians down to Northumberland with its capital at Edinburgh. It was the weakest of the states and was overwhelmed by the Anglo-Saxon invaders by about the end of the 6th century. Its military strength must have been sapped when its royal family and, therefore, many of the valuable troops, moved down to north Wales to settle. The king, Cunedda, is claimed as the ancestor of all the subsequent Welsh royal families.

Now for one of Scotland's least known monarchs. Margaret, the Maid of Norway (1286 - 1290).

Margaret was heiress to her grandfather, King Alexander III, called the Glorious, (1249 - 1286). His reign started well. He married Margaret of England, daughter of King Henry III and had three children, two sons and a daughter. But disaster and death struck the family. Firstly, his wife died in 1275, his second son, David in 1281, his daughter Margaret in 1283 (in childbirth) and his first son Alexander in 1284. King Alexander married a second time in October 1285 but he died 5 months later from a fall from his horse at night near Kinghorn in Fife in 1286. His only descendant was his daughter's child, Margaret of Norway.

King Alexander's daughter, Margaret, was only 11 years old when she was despatched to Norway in August 1281 to marry its young king, Erik II. He was not much older being only 13. Despite their tender age they must have led a full married life soon after the wedding as she gave birth to a daughter, (another Margaret) born at Tonsberg on the 9th of April 1283 but unfortunately dying in the process. With the death of her uncle, Alexander, Margaret of Norway was declared heiress of Scotland in 1284 aged 10 months and on the death of her grandfather she became Scotland's first reigning Queen at the age of a few weeks under 3 years.

Scotland was in turmoil. Its monarch was not only a child (its first in the country's history) but lived outside the country. Six Guardians of the Kingdom were appointed to act as a Regency Council, made up of two bishops, two earls, one lord and the High Steward of Scotland. King Edward of England could not resist from fishing in troubled waters and strived to bring about an early Union of the Crowns by negotiating a Treaty of Marriage between his young son Edward (the future Edward II) and the young Queen. Although King Edward maintained that Scotland would retain its independence, he ensured that the clerks inserted minor clauses that allowed him loopholes. It was one such clause that allowed Edward to take possession of the Isle of Man (then part of Scotland) in 1290. (Edward, as the Welsh and Scots would know was the original neighbour from Hell!)

As the couple were closely related (first cousins) it was necessary to seek a dispensation from the Pope before the marriage could proceed and this was speedily agreed.

Edward of England put pressure on the Scottish parliament for the child to leave Norway as soon as possible, so that she could be brought up in England and a letter from the Guardians was therefore sent to Norway dated 17 March 1290. Edward sent a great ship, fully equipped and provisioned with a crew of 40, to Norway in May 1290 to bring the little Queen back to England but King Erik refused to allow his daughter to embark so it had to return empty, much to the anger of King Edward.

However, King Erik then arranged for the little Queen to travel directly to Scotland in the Autumn of the same year and she was accompanied by Bishop Narve of Bergen and the Baron Haakonson and his wife. Alas there were storms off the Orkney coast and the little girl, never very strong, died on board ship in the hands of the Bishop. The exact date of her death is uncertain but it is believed to have been 26th September 1290. Technically, Queen Margaret never touched Scottish soil because the Orkneys, at this time, were part of Norway. The ship returned the body to Norway where her father King Erik had the coffin opened and closely examined the body before acknowledging that it was his daughter's corpse.

The little child, not yet 8 years old, was buried beside her mother in the stone wall on the north side of the choir in Christ's Church Bergen.

The consequences of the Queen Margaret's death was the disastrous war between England and Scotland which lasted for about 400 years. King Edward could not forget he had Scotland so nearly in his grasp so he tried to take by force what he lost through marriage.

King Erik obviously liked Scottish women because he married secondly, Isabella, the sister of Robert the Bruce but had no further children. He died in 1299 aged 31.

Finally, in the year 1300, one year after the death of King Erik, a woman from Lubeck in Germany claimed to be the "lost" Queen Margaret. This "false" Margaret was tried, convicted and burned as an impostor at Nordness, Bergen and her husband beheaded in 1301. The court had no difficulty in finding the accused Guilty knowing how closely the late king had examined the little Queen's corpse before its burial.

**The Chronicler**

*ADVANCE NOTICE: A DATE FOR YOUR DIARIES*



***KASS Autumn Dance***

12 November , 2005 at Petts Wood Memorial Hall

**BOOK YOUR TICKETS EARLY from your club secretary!**

## QUIZ

**Ann Townend has cleverly put together a verse that combines a number of Scottish Dances. I must say I once considered something similar but couldn't work in my favourite puns - where can you slot phrases such as a "Nun, so pretty" and "The knees of Maggie knock together" into a story? Ann has counted 67 dances (but one is a bit of a cheat) - how many can you spot? No prizes excepting the glow of personal achievement - The Editor**

### Ceilidh Poem

Whilst working at my desk on a cloudy summer's day  
I thought 'I feel so tired, I'll have to get away'.  
My mind is in a fidget from burning midnight oil  
I'll take a rest and be thankful, away from my daily  
toil

The planes are all booked up by now, the trains are  
on go-slow  
So I'll get into my car and to Scotland I will go.  
It took three days to get there, the traffic was so bad  
But I ended up in Glasgow where I met my Glasgow  
lad.

"Now what should I be seeing?" I asked this brisk  
young lad

'I'll send you off to friends of mine, to see you they'll  
be glad.

Just take the road to Mallaig" his face was wreathed  
in smiles

"Round the Devil's Elbow to meet MacDonald of the  
Isles".

Stay a while with Bonnie Anne and when it's time to  
sally forth

Go on to Muirland Willie and then Rose of the North.  
Captain Whiteside, Duke of Perth, I've friends in every  
sphere",

I thanked him for his kindness but quietly thought  
"Oh, dear".

I've only got two weeks up here, his ideas will take  
time.

I'll find my own way round this land, I'm sure I'll be just  
fine.

His plans for me, I have to say, were really rather  
scary

So I set off for the Isle of Skye, my spirits light and airy  
Broadford Bay and Culla Bay were sparkling in the  
sun

I had a really lovely time. After all, it's just for fun.

I then went south from Oban, down round Guthrie  
Toe.

Where I met a highland fair run by three sisters of  
Glencoe.

"Come to the fair and join the fun" the word was  
quickly spreading,

To raise a glass and dance a jig to celebrate Marie's  
Wedding.

I thought "I'll stop and look around, I fair I can't resist  
And while I'm here I'll treat myself to a wee dram of  
Scotch Mist

They made me very welcome and bid me to join in  
"The music makars are here" they said, "so let the  
party begin"

"Haste to the wedding, have some fun, make the party  
fine and dandy

Let's have a ceilidh, drink some wine and feast on sugar  
candle

I met such a jolly crowd that day, the finest in the land  
The merry dancers took to the floor to Seton's Ceilidh Band  
The pretty ladies laughing said "Before the night is over  
We'll have you all up on the floor dance the Irish Rover"  
The last of the lairds, a spiffin chap, the gentleman and his  
wife  
Regaled us with merry tales of the wee Cooper o' Fife.

Miss Allie Anderson, dressed to kill, quite took Tommy Ford's  
fancy

But that was quickly dealt with but a sideswipe from Spouse  
Nancy

Wicked Willie, naughty boy, in triumph yelled in glee

"At last I've got that highland lass to sit upon my knee.

The Laird of Milton's daughter has a slim and shapely body  
Will someone kindly give her a bucket of hot toddy?"

My 'one wee dram' went on and on, we all got tight as  
ticks

And the bonnie lass of Bon Accord got herself in quite a fix  
The dancing master's had enough, he's crashed out onto  
the floor.

And Jack o'Carron groaned and said "I can't drink any  
more!"

The ladies of Dunse had all passed out, beer stains on their  
gowns

When Mrs Helpburn belches, old Miss Nancy frowns.

We wished each other happy returns and said let's meet  
again

By the time I left that merry band the moon was on the  
wane.

I left to lay my aching head at an inn called Ship O'Grace  
The very next day the weather broke so I packed my things  
in haste.

The sky above was darkening with wild geese on the wing  
Then le tempete broke in force, a truly awesome thing.

The tall trees round the singing sands were torn limb from  
limb

Their branches hurled into the loch by force of the whistling  
wind

My trip up here I hoped would be a tribute to the borders  
But thanks to the torrential rain, became the meeting of  
the waters.

I stood and watched the wind on Loch Fyne then found  
my route was blocked

So I sat and waited out the storm with the minister on the  
loch.

At last, the waters drained way and I was free to roam.

I've reached the gates of Edinburgh to take the train back home.

I've had enough of driving, I'm going on alone

I'll let the train take the strain and my car can follow me home.

The express that's taking me back south is racing through the night.

Back to my friends in Canterbury, back to the fireside bright.

I've many happy memories of my visit to that area,

But next year I think I'll play it safe with a nice trip to Bavaria.

***Ann Townend***

***Answers are on Page 21***

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## WHAT THE PAPERS SAY...

### THE MINISTER ON THE LOCH

#### Reverend Dr Robert Walker Skating on Duddingston Loch

(c1795; 30x25 in) by Sir Henry Raeburn. National Gallery of Scotland

This year's picture for darkest winter is Henry Raeburn's small portrait of Reverend Dr Robert Walker Skating on Duddingston Loch. Painted some time in the mid-1790's, this lighthearted but exquisite portrait of a learned Scottish Divine at his leisure is one of the most popular pictures in the National Gallery of Scotland in Edinburgh.

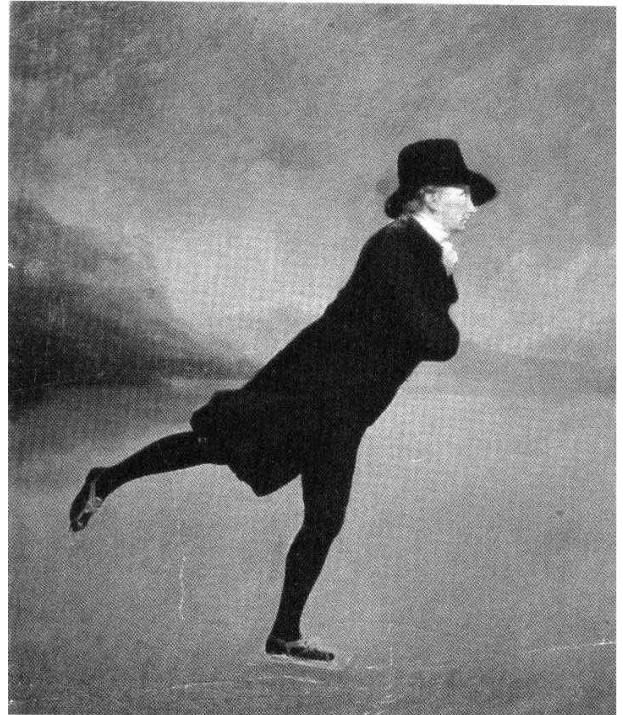
The unusual setting of Raeburn's portrait may have been suggested by the sitter, who was a keen member of the Edinburgh Skating Society. He was, presumably, proud of the skills he had acquired in figure skating, described by his fellow enthusiast Lord Cockburn as 'the poetry in motion'. The elegant pose which he has struck for Raeburn would have been recognised by 18<sup>th</sup> Century skaters as the travelling position. This stance enabled the skater to cover the maximum distance with the minimum of effort, and involved the difficult act of maintaining balance while keeping both arms folded across the chest to reduce wind resistance.

The artist has made the most of the contrast between the sternly ascetic black costume of the Scottish Minister and the wild backdrop of Duddingston Loch on which he is shown skating – a stretch of water at the base of an outcrop of volcanic rock known as Arthur's Seat, just east of Edinburgh. The pinkish-grey crags and sky have been painted with great freedom, whereas the figure of the Reverend Robert Walker himself is so tightly drawn and painted that he appears almost as a silhouette against an icy vaporous wilderness. Perhaps this was the artist's way of suggesting that, for all his apparent probity and self-restraint, the minister was at heart something of a romantic – a man, at any rate, with a penchant for communicating with nature.

Sitter and artist were almost exactly the same age, Raeburn the younger by just a year. They may have been friends, to judge by the affectionately playful character of the portrait. Raeburn had recently travelled to Rome to study the art of antiquity and there are echoes of the antique in his subject's pose, which mock-heroically recalls those of the marble figures of ancient Greek and Roman athletes. He is shown in perfect profile too, as Roman emperors were on coins and medals.

The subject of the painting, however, recalls Dutch 17<sup>th</sup> Century art and in particular the works of Hendrick Avercamp, who had popularised the genre of the winter landscape, peopled by skaters. Reverend Dr Walker had spent his formative years in Holland – his father, William, also a minister, had been translated to Rotterdam when Robert was five – and retained a lifelong interest in Dutch history and society. As well as publishing a volume of sermons and *The Psalms of David Methodized*, Walker was the author of *Observations on the National Character of the Dutch*, and the *Family Character of the House of Orange*. So Raeburn's picture of him may have been intended to convey, among other things, his affinity with Holland.

One of the most appealing aspects of the picture is the extremely delicate painting of fine detail, particularly in the ice skates and the ice itself. This may have been a legacy of Raeburn's apprenticeship to the leading Edinburgh jeweller and goldsmith, James Gilliland, as the art historian Duncan Thomson has eloquently argued: 'The filigree within the buckle on the strap at the skater's right knee and the taut complexities of the arrangement of the pink ribbons that binds the skates to his shoes are a reminder of the manipulative skills that Raeburn must have developed during his apprenticeship... Perhaps the tour de force of observation and the finding of equivalent forms are the marks of the skater (or those who have circled with him) has made on the ice: the curving grooves incised with some appropriate tool (a



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technique not unusual for Raeburn) in a liquid, greyish white which has been spread over a darker grey that has been allowed to dry and the edges of these tiny furrows, more pronounced towards the bottom of the picture, tipped in with a purer white to simulate the froth of ice thrown aside by the cutting blade'.

There may be also be a broader symbolic dimension to this portrait. Edinburgh in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century was the centre of the Scottish Enlightenment - the city of David Hume and the Adam brothers, a place which prided itself on being the intellectual capital of Scotland. Walker, who was a philosopher as well as a minister, was in many ways an embodiment of the spirit of the Enlightenment and the tracery of serpentine skate-tracks around him on the ice may be seen as a kind of metaphor for the free movements of his thought. While he is evidently something of an eccentric, eccentricity itself was viewed as a mark of freedom of thought in enlightenment Britain. That attitude is to be found in John Stuart Mills' *On Liberty*, where the author says, in passing, that 'Eccentricity has always abounded' – a remark with which, I suspect, the skating minister would have wholeheartedly agreed.

*Article spotted by David How, Gravesend,  
and Kate Middleham, Sittingbourne,  
taken from the Sunday Telegraph, 12 December 2004*

**Kate adds:**

"The Reverend Robert Walker Skating on Duddingston Loch" is the famous painting by Scottish artist Sir Henry Raeburn. However, the senior curator at the Scottish National Gallery has examined the work in detail and has cast doubt on the actual artist. She thinks it may be the work of a Frenchman, Henri-Pierre Danloux, who was a "refugee" court-painter and came to Edinburgh during the French Revolution in the 1790's. The Suggestion provoked instant outrage from fans of the painting as it is a Scottish icon.

## **AROUND THE SOCIETIES**

### **CANTERBURY ST ANDREW'S SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE GROUP**

Eileen Acott reached the milestone of 80 years on 6th April 2005 and we decided that this was an occasion that we should not let pass without celebration particularly as Eileen has been teaching at Canterbury for more than 40 years. Accordingly it was agreed to mark the day (albeit two days late) on Friday at our usual club evening when we knew that at least two dozen people would come to dance. In the event, we were thirty and that's a good number for an informal party, and one bottle of Sherry is just enough, allowing for non-drinkers and being a trifle (sherry trifle ha ha! Sorry about that) careful as you slop the drink into the glasses. (Plastic of course, only the best for Canterbury St. Andrews SCD). And so, with just three weeks to go, we arranged for a cake to be bought, a card with a sprig of heather and displaying Scottish country dancers to be especially made, and, the crowning glory, a dance to honour Eileen's birthday to be devised by Pat Ansell. Sorted!

Since "80 years young" already adorned another dance, Pat's dance, expertly (as one would expect) and quickly completed, is titled simply "Eileen's Medley". Now all we had to do was to get the demo team to learn the dance with just two weeks to go. So with two ½ hour practice sessions and much effort on Pat's part, plus a hurried ten minute walkthrough beforehand in the ladies changing room at Canterbury College (and a very cosily restricted area it is!) and after sherry and cake, the demonstration was mounted, much to Eileen's delight. It really is a most delightful dance and a joy to perform. All went well and then everybody had a go. Success – now we really had it cracked. And you can dance it too, when you attend our dance on 21st May at St. Anselm's School, Canterbury.

You might think that enough is enough, that's sufficient celebration for one night. But no, there's more to come. We had a cunning plan. We needed to make presentations to two other people, but not wanting to alert them to this fact we invited them to celebrate Eileen's birthday (probably not as cunning as Baldrick of Black Adder fame but well, it worked didn't it?) Now Eileen had some idea that we would do something to mark her birthday, but none as to how we would actually do it. After all the aforementioned excitement she was also presented with a painting of a horse (she is particularly fond of horses) beautifully executed by Janie Grimwood. What an evening for Eileen. And then ----- first we surprised Ann Townend, who was our secretary for seven years, with a flowering Cherry bush for her lovely garden, of which she is rightly proud. And secondly, an even greater surprise for our previous secretary, Diane Kirkbank, with twenty years service, who received a specially commissioned plate with a thistle in the centre and our title and "For Auld Lang Syne" around the edge. Now we may be slow but we do like



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to honour those who work so hard for the group and it transpires that when Diane laid down her quill and stepped down from her high stool, club funds were somewhat parlous, to say the least, and we were in no position to be generous. Thus we have rectified our omission. And it all made for a very happy evening, culminating in a final modest presentation of a gift voucher to Pat Ansell for all her effort and enthusiasm in devising and teaching "Eileen's Medley". Then on with the dancing!

*David Papa*

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### **COBTREE SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCING GROUP**

This year marks an important milestone for Cobtree. It is our 30th anniversary. Not only that, it is also John and Jan Day's ruby wedding anniversary. To mark these events we have arranged a very special Celebration Summer Dance at Ditton Community Centre on Saturday 25th June. We have been lucky enough to be able to book Frank Reid and his band for the dance. Tickets are available from Jan Day.

Over the last year we have welcomed a total of 1900 people to our club nights on Wednesday at Grove Green Hall. In that time we have given £2000 to Maidstone Mencap whose fine work we have supported since the formation of the group.

This year, in addition to our own dance we will be hosting the KASS Autumn Tea Dance on 2nd October and continue with our programme of demonstrations.

Visitors and new members are always welcome at our club night every Wednesday throughout the year.

*Brian Knell*

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### **DOVER SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCING GROUP**

Perhaps the deciding factor was an increase in hall hiring charges in the New Year that prompted the Dover SCD Group to move to a new venue. We had suffered each winter with inappropriate heating and a solid cold concrete floor that had started to Monday club nights a bit of an ordeal. It really is hard to dance with hat, scarf, gloves and leather jacket! However, we were lucky to find a superb new community hall with not only a sprung floor but also under-floor heating. The radiators also worked! It was also going to be much cheaper as we wanted to make a block booking. So in January 2005 we moved.

Our first evening saw us dressed, by habit, for the cold. As the evening progressed we had to peel off as many layers as we could, as our new venue – the Triangle Centre on the Poulton Industrial Estate at the end of Coombe Valley Road, seemed to be sub-tropically warm!

The hall is splendid. On one wall are three spectacular ceramic murals. The lower level of the walls has slowly changed colour since January as painting has progressed. And it is bliss to stand for a moment, on the spot, and feel the warmth coming up through one's ghillies!! Monday club nights are now completely different and we are aware of a change in the atmosphere. We start a little later, at 8.15 now, as a five-a-side team use the sports hall before us. However, that is a small price to pay for warmth, a superb floor and a convenient kitchen complete with all mod-cons.

If this all reads too good to be true – never fear you will have a chance to try it out for yourself. Our October Dance is usually held at St Margarets Village Hall but as a prior one-off party has pre-booked for 2006 we are going to make use of our new venue. Furthermore, if your appetite has been whetted and you cannot wait till next year, then look out for the Autumn Tea Dance, which is to be held in Dover. Guess where we will hold it. That's right in our brilliant new home. If you cannot wait till then, even, then we would welcome any visitors on a Monday night – just drive past Buckland Hospital to the end of the road, first left at the round-a-bout and first right – we are in the new building on the left.

*Alan French*

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### **GRAVESEND AND MEOPHAM SOCIETIES**

**28<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL PICNIC DANCE**

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**YES, IT DOESN'T SEEM POSSIBLE BUT IT REALLY IS 28 YEARS SINCE WE HELD OUR FIRST PICNIC DANCE, THEN ON THE LAWNS OF COBHAM HALL, NOW IN THE GROUNDS OF THE NORTHFLEET SCHOOL FOR GIRLS WHERE WE THE ADDED ADVANTAGE OF BEING ABLE TO USE THE SCHOOL HALL IF IT IS WET.**

**SO WHY NOT PACK UP YOUR PICNIC, PUT IN SOME CHAIRS AND JOIN US WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS FOR A VERY ENJOYABLE AFTERNOON'S DANCING ON 16<sup>TH</sup> JULY FROM 2.30 TO 6.00. ENTRANCE IS £5.00 FOR DANCERS, £2.50 FOR SPECTATORS, CHILDREN FREE; TICKETS CAN BE OBTAINED FROM YOUR CLUB SECRETARY OR FROM KAY, 6, THE DOWNAGE, GRAVESEND, DA12 7NB, 01474 568458**

**ALL THE PROFITS FROM THE EVENT WILL BE DONATED TO THE KENT AIR AMBULANCE.**

***DAVID HOW, GRAVESEND AND MEOPHAM***

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## **MEDWAY AND DISTRICT CALEDONIAN ASSOCIATION**

The Medway & District Caledonian Association held its first RSCDS Medal Tests for Children locally, at St Mary's Island Community Centre Hall on Sunday 17 April 2005. Congratulations to the 20 youngsters who danced through the various grades and attained the following results –

Introductory Grade –	2 passes/1 credit
Grade 1 –	5 passes/1 credit
Grade 2 –	3 credits/1 distinction
Grade 3 –	1 credit
Grade 4 –	3 credits
Grade 5 –	3 distinctions

Our thanks too to other class members who weren't doing the tests, but willingly came along to make up sets and partner other dancers.

*Barbara Meade and Margaret Anne Robertson*

***Congratulations to all involved and thanks to Margaret Anne, Barbara and all their supporters for their encouragement and hard work put in to teach the children - The Editor***

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## **MEOPHAM SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE SOCIETY**

Dear friends,

Just had to let you know about my special birthday dance in February. I was having one of those awful "noughty birthdays" but instead of letting someone else do something I didn't want to do I organised a Special Birthday Scottish Country Dance.

I booked the village hall at Meopham and invited Meopham members, friends and relations whom I thought might like to join in.

On the invitations I stipulated dancing to commence at 8.00pm. By 7.30pm all of the dancers had arrived and were sitting on their chairs waiting, shoes on! Still no non-dancers at 7.50pm Thinking that my plans were going to go haywire the non dancers suddenly all turned up together. The programme consisted of 16 dances, some easy dances included. I welcomed everyone and said that I hoped dancers would assist the non-dancers and the evening was off to a good start.

Paula Dyke acted as MC and caller. The first dance Cheviot Rant was announced, and the floor filled up immediately. After that there was no stopping everyone. The dancers led the novices through the dances sometimes with ease sometimes with hilarity. Children and adults alike, some whom have never been seen on a dance floor before cast, reeled, made arches and circled and back. At half time my eleven year old Grandson said this was the best party he had ever been to.

I had planned the programme so that dancers could dance some of the dances without guiding the non-dancers but when I looked around everyone was up determined to have a go at everything on the programme. Nobody wanted to be left out in fact.

The evening ended all too soon but everyone agreed that they didn't realise what good fun we have. They all went home with music and laughter ringing in their ears. I hope it will be a night to remember. It certainly was for me.

A friend told me that they were invited to a party last week-end. When they got there it was a noisy disco and was so dismayed after the Scottish Country Dance that they left after a short time.

The only disappointing part of this tale is that there have not been any new recruits at Meopham on Monday evenings.

Regards Jane

*Jane Whittington*

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## **ORPINGTON AND DISTRICT CALEDONIAN ASSOCIATION**

The large number of members and friends who attended the Orpington & District Caledonian Society's Ceilidh, held on 10 March at Petts Wood Memorial Hall, were treated to a most enjoyable evening.

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Bagpiper Hugh Mackay began proceedings in traditional style, followed by dancing which continued throughout the evening, interspersed by various items of entertainment featuring members of the Society. Pat Rowe's unaccompanied singing of Scottish and Irish folksongs was truly moving. David Cullens' side-splitting recitation on the travails of a Glaswegian bus conductor was followed by Edna Cottrell on the accordion, an instrument so vital for a Scottish evening. The ladies of the Wednesday group displayed their stunning new outfits, designed by Valerie Vincent, and together with their gentlemen performed the taxing dance 'Auchindoun Castle'. Dancing resumed after the interval when members of the Monday Beginners Class drew rapturous applause for their performance of "Bramble Circle" which began as a traditional country dance and then skilfully transformed into rock & roll. Popular Scottish songs were performed by the trio Betty, Sylvia and Joan, accompanied on the piano by Betty Davidson. Elisabeth Leishman, who convened the Ceilidh, then gave a rendition of 'Olde Tyme Dancing', accompanied by Lesley Vincent at the piano. Members of the Committee displayed a superb range of acting skills in a somewhat less-than-profound setting of a Greek tragedy. President Angela Campbell then allowed the audience to 'recover', before thanking all participants for their contributions to a highly entertaining evening.

*Elisabeth Leishman*

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## SIDCUP AND DISTRICT CALEDONIAN ASSOCIATION

### IN MEMORIAM

**Andrew Wylie ; 1<sup>st</sup> August 1933 – 12<sup>th</sup> March 2005**

*O Flower of Scotland, When Will We See Your Like Again?*

On a grey day in March, in a small chapel in his adopted county of Kent, a hundred people gathered to say farewell to Andrew. Led by a piper, he arrived to the tune of the Green Hills of Tyrol, entered chapel to The Battle's O'er and after a very moving service, departed to the haunting melody of Highland Cathedral.

Andrew was born in Motherwell on 1<sup>st</sup> August 1933, the first of two sons of Thomas and Elizabeth Wylie. His primary education years were spent in Scotland but at the age of 11 he moved with his family to Birmingham. Andrew's father was keen on him learning a trade, so on leaving school at the age of 16 he started work as an engineering apprentice. During his time as an apprentice, Andrew applied himself to his studies and was rewarded by gaining his O.N.C. Although anyone who knew him would never accuse Andrew of not having his feet firmly on the ground, during his apprenticeship years his thoughts were positively in the clouds. To be more accurate, he was passionate about learning to fly. Perhaps he saw it as an escape from the noise, grease and clamour of the workshop. He joined the Air Training Corps and won a scholarship entitling him to free flying training. All his spare time was spent working towards a Private Pilots license and this he gained at the age of 19. On the strength of this training, Andrew applied to join the Royal Air Force and at the age of 21 was one of the only four selected by the board out of 98 applicants.

The "buzz" of piloting Vampire jets obviously didn't give Andrew enough excitement because two years later, in 1956, he married Margaret. Sadly, this same year his R.A.F. flying career was cut short by illness and he was obliged to resign his commission. With a courage and resilience that became his trademark, Andrew, with strong support from Margaret, fought his way back to good health and moved to Kent. Here he returned to engineering and joined Marley Tiles as a draughtsman. Once again he applied himself to his studies and after much hard work gained his H.N.C. in engineering. While with this company Andrew was accepted as a Member of the Institute of Mechanical Engineers.

Andrew and Margaret had two children, daughter Ann born in 1960 and son Stephen in 1965. In 1966 Andrew joined BICC where he stayed until his retirement in 1997. Several times during those 31 years Andrew was hit by ill health but his courage carried him through, even after major surgery. There were good times as well during these years for as well as making a host of good friends he also gained respect and admiration of his colleagues here and overseas. During this time Andrew was accredited with a patent and also achieved a Management Diploma. Three of the highlights of this period of his life however were the births of his grandchildren, Nicola in 1986, Lisa in 1989 and Scott in 1996. Also in 1996, Andrew and Margaret celebrated their Ruby Anniversary. Sadly, Margaret's health deteriorated soon after this and despite not being in the best of health himself, for the

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next five years Andrew cared tirelessly for her. The strong support he received from family and friends carried him through these years and especially so when Margaret died in October 2001.

After a brief spell at home, Andrew thought a cruise would be an ideal chance to collect his thoughts and formulate his future plans, so he set sail for Africa. Happily, (for him and for us), he decided to immerse himself in Scottish Country Dancing (as well as golf, badminton and country walks). For the next four years Andrew embarked on numerous holidays, dance classes and social dances as well as regular appearances with Maud's Marauders demonstration team. During these years he made many friends, as indeed he did throughout his life. And so, on that grey day in March we gathered to pay our respects to Andrew, a good companion and a gentleman. Not our *last* respects mind you, for respect will remain for as long as we remember him.

**Terry Boorman**

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## THANET AND DISTRICT CALEDONIAN SOCIETY

Members of Thanet and District Caledonian Society and friends of met at Minster Village Hall in Thanet for their Annual Hogmanay Dinner and Dance.

Some sixty members and friends sat down to Dinner consisting of cock-a-leekie soup with crusty rolls and butter, Steak and Porter Pie, tatties and a medley of vegetables, followed by Profiteroles in a rich chocolate sauce enhanced with Cherry Brandy. Tea and Coffee with Shortbread.

After dinner our President Mr.... Don Macpherson got the evening underway with a couple of recitations before getting everyone up on the floor for old favourites like Scottish Waltz, Gay Gordon's, Dashing White Sergeant, Strip the Willow, Waltz Country Dance and fun dances like The Dhoon (danced with great hilarity as we found those who did not know right from left) These were interspersed with anecdotes from Don Macpherson.

Members of the dance class demonstrated their skills on the dance floor with a couple of dances before and after the quiz. The Quiz was on London Underground Stations (Caledonian Road being the one that foxed most people).

As usual Don brought us up to midnight with a sing-a-long before joining Radio Two for the Bells, 2005 was welcomed in with a Toast, streamers and greetings. Soon members were back on the floor dancing until the wee sma hours ending of course with Auld Lang Syne

**Mary Rose, Membership Secretary**

## ANSWERS TO THE CEILIDH POEM QUIZ

Whilst working at my desk on a cloudy summer's day  
I thought 'I feel so tired, I'll have to get away'.  
My mind is in a **fidget** from burning **midnight oil**  
I'll take a **rest and be thankful**, away from my daily toil  
The planes are all booked up by now, the trains are on go-  
slow  
So I'll get into my car and to **Scotland** I will go.

It took three days to get there, the traffic was so bad  
But I ended up in Glasgow where I met my **Glasgow lad**.  
"Now what should I be seeing?" I asked this **brisk young lad**  
'I'll send you off to friends of mine, to see you they'll be glad.  
Just take the **road to Mallaig**" his face was wreathed in  
smiles  
"Round **the Devil's Elbow** to meet **MacDonald of the Isles**".

Stay a while with **Bonnie Anne** and when it's time to sally  
forth  
Go on to **Muirland Willie** and then **Rose of the North**.  
**Captain Whiteside**, **Duke of Perth**, I've friends in every  
sphere",  
I thanked him for his kindness but quietly thought "Oh, dear".

I've only got two weeks up here, his ideas will take time.  
I'll find my own way round this land, I'm sure I'll be just fine.  
His plans for me, I have to say, were really rather scary  
So I set off for the **Isle of Skye**, my spirits **light and airy**  
**Broadford Bay** and **Culla Bay** were sparkling in the sun  
I had a really lovely time. After all, **it's just for fun**.

I then went **south from Oban**, down round **Guthrie Toe**.  
Where I met a **highland fair** run by **three sisters of Glencoe**.  
"Come to the fair and join the fun" the word was quickly  
spreading,  
To raise a glass and dance a jig to celebrate **Marie's**  
**Wedding**.  
I thought "I'll stop and look around, I fair I can't resist  
And while I'm here I'll treat myself to a wee dram of **Scotch**  
**Mist**  
They made me very welcome and bid me to join in  
"The **music makars** are here" they said, "so let the party  
begin"  
"**Haste to the wedding**, have some fun, make the party fine  
and dandy  
**Let's have a ceilidh**, drink some wine and feast on **sugar**  
**candie**

I met such a jolly crowd that day, the finest in the land  
**The merry dancers** took to the floor to **Seton's Ceilidh Band**  
**The pretty ladies** laughing said "Before the night is over  
We'll have you all up on the floor dance the **Irish Rover**"  
The **last of the lairds**, a **spiffin** chap, the **gentleman** and his  
wife  
Regaled us with merry tales of the **wee Cooper o' Fife**.  
**Miss Allie Anderson**, dressed to kill, quite took **Tommy Ford's**  
**fancy**  
But that was quickly dealt with but a sideswipe from **Spouse**  
**Nancy**

Wicked Willie, naughty boy, in triumph yelled in glee  
"At last I've got that highland lass to sit upon my knee.  
The Laird of Milton's daughter has a slim and shapely body  
Will someone kindly give her a bucket of hot toddy?"  
My 'one wee dram' went on and on, we all got tight as ticks  
And the bonnie lass of Bon Accord got herself in quite a fix  
The dancing master's had enough, he's crashed out onto  
the floor.  
And Jack o'Carron groaned and said "I can't drink any  
more!"  
The ladies of Dunse had all passed out, beer stains on their  
gowns  
When Mrs Helpburn belches, old Miss Nancy frowns.  
We wished each other happy returns and said let's meet  
again  
By the time I left that merry band the moon was on the  
wane.

I left to lay my aching head at an inn called Ship O'Grace  
The very next day the weather broke so I packed my things  
in haste.  
The sky above was darkening with wild geese on the wing  
Then la tempete broke in force, a truly awesome thing.  
The tall trees round the singing sands were torn limb from  
limb  
Their branches hurled into the loch by force of the whistling  
wind

## KASS AFFAIRS

### KASS Committee Meeting – 1<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2005

#### Meeting 1/3/05 held at Cobtree Hall Maidstone

19 people attended representing 12 Clubs/societies

Subject to a few minor amendments the minutes of the last meeting were agreed.

No volunteers had come forward yet to replace the Secretary or the Social Secretary in time for the next AGM. The next Tea Dance was to be held on March 20th, hosted by Medway. The Autumn Tea Dance will be hosted by Cobtree on October 2nd. The KASS Highland Ball will take place on 14th May hosted by Dover and the KASS Autumn Dance will take place on November 12th hosted by Orpington. Lastly the KASS Walk will be on Sunday 26th June hosted by RSCDS Tun Wells. For 2006 hosts are required for the KASS Ball on 13th May and the KASS Autumn Dance on 11th Nov. Due to the clash of dates this year the diary now gives the future dates up to 2010.

At the beginning of the meeting Iain Kinnear, the Chairman, welcomed Alan Mills and Alan was subsequently co-opted onto the committee as Newsletter Editor. Rita Menzies and her trusty helper David were thanked for all their efforts in producing the Newsletter up to now.

The Treasurer circulated the accounts to date and explained several items. The Tea dances did not cover their expenses so the price may have to rise. The donations that KASS make will be discussed at the next meeting in time for the Highland Ball and the AGM.

The current position on Insurance was explained by Ken Hamilton who had volunteered to take over this area of responsibility and as the cost of the premium was not now included in the KASS subscription Clubs had to contact Ken for Insurance cover. Medway, Orpington and Dover & E. Kent had changed their venues for their weekly dances and members should contact the respective Secretary if they wish to visit these clubs.

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 3rd May 2005 at 8pm

Peter Farrow , Secretary

### AN ADVERT FROM THE KASS SECRETARY

**Vacancy**

Part Time Administrator wanted

Must have a passing interest in ethnic dance traditions, particularly Scottish

Must be available at the beginning of March, May and October in each year

Pleasant telephone manner (and a telephone!) essential

Knowing how to use a typewriter or computer would be an advantage

The ability to take minutes at enhanced talking speeds is desirable

The ability to foretell the future or predict the unlikely is a key tool

Putting people's problems and requirements in front of your own is a pre-requisite

Must satisfy the diverse needs of up to 57 regional members and 4 board members

If you have any one of the above qualifications you may have what it takes to be the next Secretary of KASS. Do not tell anyone, they will put you off the idea, just apply now to the current Secretary, do not enclose any references, money or any previous experience as the post is unremunerated and may involve you in many enjoyable hours of office work, record keeping, photo copying, e-mailing, stuffing envelopes and shuffling papers

Oh I nearly forgot a good memory would be helpful improved

Note. This advert has been improved by the equal opportunities panel

*Hmmm, he really tries and sells it, says the Editor. It is a wonderful job, as Peter will no doubt tell you, but he has completed several years in the post and he hopes someone will come forward to fill this pivotal role in KASS as he moves on to pastures new. Please consider whether you can take this on, and volunteer through one of the KASS committee, and also if you want to nominate yourself as a replacement Event's Secretary, I'm sure Margaret Harwood would be more than happy to lead you through the ropes, ....and the chains and shackles....*

**NEWSLETTER IN YOUR INBOX?**


Would you like to receive a free copy of the newsletter by email?

Please email the Editor at alanpillsuk@yahoo.co.uk by 31<sup>st</sup> May to make your request.

The newsletter will be emailed to subscribers en masse on 1<sup>st</sup> June.

Ensure that your Inbox can receive files up to 2Mb. The Newsletter is in Microsoft® Word format.

Once subscribed, the Editor will keep your address on file  
and you will receive new editions as they are completed.

<p><b>Sunday 26 June 2005</b>                  The Recreation Ground Pavilion                  KEMSING                  OS Grid Reference 561588                  departing at                  2.00 pm                  (Hall open from 1.30 pm)</p>	
 Choice of walks - sturdy shoes recommended	<p>Walk 1 is between 4                  and 5 miles long.</p> <p>Walk 2 is about 1½-2 miles -                  you'll have time to stop and smell                  the roses along the way!</p>
16.00 - 16.30 (~ish)	Back to the hall for refreshments. Bring your own picnic; tea and squash provided.
Also of interest:	While in the area you may want to visit Kemsing Church, part of which was built in the 14 <sup>th</sup> C, with its crinkle, crankle wall in the churchyard.
RSCDS TUNBRIDGE WELLS look forward to welcoming you all and hope for a fine afternoon.	

**KASS Insurance**

Of the KASS nineteen member organisations, seventeen and KASS have agreed to participate in the KASS Public Liability Insurance. The advantage to the participating members is that the insurance premium is shared by a large number of organisations. The total premium for the insurance is £787.50, which, when divided by the 18 insured organisation means that the premium per organisation is £43.75.

To ensure continuity of insurance from the 1<sup>st</sup> May, KASS has agreed to pay the premium in full and collect the individual contributions over the next few weeks.

The scope of the insurance is:



**'Association of Societies (18) whose activities include Dinner Dances, Walks, BBQ's, Dances, Day Trips to Flower Festivals, Social Gatherings, Theatre Trips, Weekly Meetings and the like. There is usually at least one event each week arranged by one of the groups with attendance from 30 - 600 for large events. The standard excess applicable to this policy is £500. Public Liability is based on £5,000,000 limit of indemnity.'**

Copies of the insurance schedule have been issued to all of the participating organisations.

All questions on the insurance should be addressed to Ken Hamilton, Deputy Chairman, telephone 01227 762075 or by e-mail, kenhamilton1@compuserve.com.

**Ken Hamilton, Deputy Chairman**

**PLEA FROM THE EDITOR - WITHER THE NEWSLETTER?**  
 Well, we hope not; but whither the newsletter? What should the newsletter be doing? How should it look? What is KASS, the societies and the members prepared to pay for? Over the course of the next few months, I hope to look at alternative ways to put out the newsletter, covering the format, the printing and the costings. The first stages of this are to look at all the options, and to get feedback from you, the readers. If anyone has publishing experience, knows of connections in the advertising, printing and publishing world that we might tap into, I would love to hear from you. Also I expect my next postbag to be full of opinions and ideas from the members of the content in the newsletter. Please don't hold back; at this stage

**KASS Autumn Tea Dance**

**2 October, 2005**

**at Grove Green Community Centre**

*Hosted: Cobtree Scottish Dancing Group*  
 2.15 - 5.15  
 MCs Dick Barford, John Day

**EASY PROGRAMME**

Bring A Picnic  
 £1 for a cup of tea



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## KASS Diary, 2005

Secretaries; please ensure your society's events are passed to the KASS secretary well in advance for entry in the diary to avoid clashes and publicise your special occasions to the rest of KASS. Also, the secretary is happy to enter dates where venues and other details are uncertain; but would request updates when you can confirm.

### Year 2005

- 21/05/2005 Canterbury St. Andrews Spring Ball St Anselms RC School Green Ginger  
28/05/2005 Sidcup Dance St Johns Hall Robin Ellis  
28/05/2005 Tunbridge Wells & Crowborough Spring Ball Beechwood School Pembury Rd. T. Wells  
4/06/2005 Orpington Summer Dance, Petts Wood Memorial Hall. Robin Ellis  
11/06/2005 Isle of Thanet SCD Summer Dance, Minster Vill.Hall, Records  
Cobtree 30th Anniversary Dance Ditton Community Centre Frank Reid Band (bring a plate)  
25/06/2005  
26/06/2005 KASS Walk. RSCDS T Wells The Pavilion Kemsing from 1.30pm. 1 long, 1 short Walk  
09/07/2005 North Kent Dance St. Paulinus Hall Recorded  
16/07/2005 Meopham & Gravesend Picnic Dance Northfleet School Caber Feidh ( Indoors if wet)  
30/07/2005 Sidcup Dance St Johns Hall Robin Ellis  
27/08/2005 Sidcup Dance St Johns Hall Taped Music  
24/09/2005 Medway Autumn Ball Kemsley Hall  
24/09/2005 Sidcup Dance St Johns Hall Robin Ellis  
01/10/2005 Tunbridge Wells & Crowborough Dance, St.Dunstan's Hall  
01/10/2005 Dover SCD Group St Margarets at Cliffe. Supper + Band Green Ginger  
02/10/2005 KASS Autumn Tea Dance Grove Green Community Centre hosts Cobtree  
08/10/2005 North Kent Dance St. Paulinus Hall Recorded  
08/10/2005 Orpington Autumn Dance, Petts Wood Memorial Hall. Robin Ellis  
15/10/2005 RSCDS Tun. Wells Autumn Dance Weald of Kent School Scottish Measure  
22/10/2005 Isle of Thanet SCD Autumn Dance, Minster Vill.Hall, Records  
29/10/2005 Canterbury St Andrews Autumn Dance Littlebourne Village Hall (new venue) Records  
12/11/2005 KASS Autumn Dance. Petts Wood Memorial Hall hosts Orpington, raffle North Kent  
19/11/2005 North Kent Dance St Paulinus Hall Robin Ellis  
19/11/2005 Medway Day School & St. Andrews Dance .Rainham Girls School  
25/11/2005 Orpington Andrews Night, The Warren, Hayes. Robin Ellis  
10/12/2005 Meopham SCDC Christmas Dance Northfleet School Robin Ellis  
10/12/2005 Isle of Thanet SCD Ceilidh, The Centre, Birchington,  
31/12/2005 Orpington Hogmanay, Petts Wood Memorial Hall. Robin Ellis  
31/12/2005 North Kent Hogmanay Party Baker Trust Hall Crayford  
31/12/2005 Medway Hogmanay Party St Georges Centre Chatham Maritime Recorded Music

### Year 2006

- 7/01/2006 Isle of Thanet SCD New Year Dance, The Centre Birchington  
13/01/2006 North Kent Burns Supper Dance Gravesend Masonic Hall Robin Ellis  
27/01/2006 Orpington Burns Supper, The Warren, Hayes. Robin Ellis  
28/01/2006 Medway Burns Dinner Dance Franklin Rooms Gillingham Caber Feidh

**Peter Farrow, April 2005**

**Secretary**

## THE LAST WORD

**Always be sincere..... whether you mean it ..... or not.**

