

KASS

KENT ASSOCIATION OF SCOTTISH SOCIETIES



Prince Charles [or the Duke of Rothesay as he is known in Scotland] paid glowing tribute to the soldiers of The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland (3 SCOTS), when he presented them with their Afghanistan campaign medals. He was also given a demonstration of a dance (officially named as the Duke of Rothesay's Kandahar Reel) - an idea conceived and put together by cousins, Captain Andy Colquhoun and Lieutenant Rob Colquhoun, during their operational tour. The energetic reel reflects the teamwork required to run and support the battle group in its aviation assault role.

Five members of the Battalion died during their military service and, in a private ceremony, the Prince presented three Elizabeth Cross medals to surviving family members.



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EDITORIAL

Well, here it is - Newsletter Number 54 – the fourth one that I have had the privilege to edit. It is horrifying to think that, what seems like only a short while ago, I was reflecting on the hardest winter, with some of the worst snow, in decades. We were all looking forward to summer holidays. I am convinced that time not only appears to pass more quickly but it does, indeed, speed past with greater acceleration now than it did when I was young.



**Your Editor at Fuschlsee
(teddies are well-travelled ones from All Souls School, Cheriton!)**

By the time you read this Editorial, holidays in various places (for me Austria and the Passion Play in Oberammergau, Bavaria in July and the Veneto and Venice in October) will be just

memories. Also, we will have altered the clocks and, knowing our present climate changes, had the first snow of the winter!! We will have had the KASS Autumn Dance and will be counting down to the Kent Association of Scottish Societies' Diamond Jubilee Celebration Ball. I can't wait!

The Ruby Anniversary Ball, in 1981, in the Corn Exchange, Maidstone, I remember well. Robin Ellis and his Band provided the music and Richard Barford was the MC. David Cullens was Chairman at the time who, with the Lady Mayor of Maidstone, cut the special anniversary cake.



KASS Chairman David Cullens cuts the Ruby Anniversary cake with Robin Ellis on the stage

Ruby red flowers were in the foyer, on the stairs, on the stage and on the tables! It was the first big, formal dance I'd attended in Kent. Supper was served a third of the way through the programme and in a second, later interval Chairman David spoke and the Charity Raffle was drawn. Looking through the programme now I notice that I could tackle only thirteen of the twenty four dances. Some of my partners were Joan Davison (three times) and Mary Howard (twice) plus un-named members of Meopham and Medway groups. Not bad for a relative beginner from Dover!

A decade later – how things had changed! The Golden Jubilee Highland Ball was held in Dover Town Hall in 2001, again with Robin Ellis and

his Band. Supper was at the start before Rita Menzies, as MC, took us through the first half of the programme. Then I was MC for the second half and the time between the twelve dances was reduced so we would complete the programme on time – and even included an extra! My ticket shows I danced all twenty four dances on the programme – plus the extra!! Linda Evans was one of my partners and, reading her name, reminds me of how many lovely people are Scottish country dancers and how painful it is when they are no longer with us.

The KASS Diamond Jubilee Highland Ball is to be held on Saturday 14 May 2011 at the Malling School, East Malling. We will be dancing to Frank Reid and his Band. I do not want to wish my life away but I realise that time will speed past at a rate of knots!! I urge you all to put the date in your diary NOW, keep it free and come along to join in the celebrations of sixty years of KASS. My favourite dance, "Trip to Bavaria", was on the programme at both Ruby and Golden Jubilee Balls! (*ED: Hint to the dance compiler!!*). I presume that "Diamond Jubilee" will be on the programme!!

The KASS Highland Balls of recent years have been splendid occasions, with nearly everyone dressed in their finery. There is something special about such an evening – especially when the dances are well-known and "dancer friendly". I am sure it will be a case of "book early to avoid disappointment".

Alan French (KASS Newsletter Editor)

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

What an act to follow!

Many thanks to Muriel for handing over to me a very forward-looking and financially sound KASS, with a lot of key events planned already. I have complete confidence that KASS can survive these difficult financial times, while providing all of you an even better focus for Scottish Activities within Kent. However, we do need to build on our strengths, while adjusting to changing conditions.

I see the key contributions from KASS as: formal and informal dances, scheduling of dances of members' club to minimise clashes, spreading information through the Website and the Newsletter and safeguards through joint insurance. I hope that the Spring Ball and the Autumn Dance will become "not-to-miss events" for members, which will be written in red

capitals in diaries as soon as dates are publicised. Look on the KASS Website for dates, fliers, venues, directions and mini-cribs. Read about the events in the Newsletter, plus much more to stimulate the mind. We keep printing costs down by giving two hard copies to each club, but the Newsletter (together with back numbers) is also available on the Website, if you care to look them up.



KASS Chairman Roger Brown

Our KASS events should be primarily about sociability in a convivial atmosphere. The Events Co-ordinators and Host Societies provide the right framework and environment, but it is up to all of us to create the "special atmosphere". These are not normal club events so please try to dance with people from other clubs who you know, or better still, do not know yet. We want "East meets West" with a strong measure of Centre. At the AGM we discussed (yet again) the pros and cons of booking dances. There are good reasons for both approaches, so why do we not try a mix? Less experienced dancers, and those who have not been before, should feel welcome and be integrated quickly in order to encourage them to come again.

The two KASS Tea Dances a year should be a great opportunity for less-experienced dancers to meet and dance with different folk. At the last Autumn Tea Dance all dances were walked

through quickly and everyone had an excellent afternoon. It would have been even better with more dancers, so please think how you can get a couple of car loads of dancers to the next one. When and where is it going to be? Look on the Website!! But not yet as the Events Co-ordinators are looking for volunteers to host the events in 2011. Why not host them at your society, or jointly with a neighbouring one? Thereby, you may reduce your petrol costs and carbon footprint!!!

At Orpington, I am based in the extreme west of Kent so travel towards the rising sun (and the promised dances) in the East. Sheila and I also travel even further to the east to visit our daughter's family, including four grandchildren, in New Zealand. So please bear with us when we seek their company for a while during our winter. It isn't that we don't like English winters but that we like New Zealand ones even less!!

The Representatives on the KASS Committee are your most direct link with KASS and will tell you about forthcoming events, so please support them by coming to events. Costs are rising but KASS wants to keep prices low. This can be achieved only by selling more tickets, preferably well in advance, not at the last minute.

I wish you all an enjoyable year 2010/11 and hope to see you at KASS events.

Roger Brown (Chairman of KASS)

PAST CHAIR - MURIEL'S REPORT

(A Report given to the 237th KASS Committee Meeting and AGM – October 2010)

Four years have passed since Iain Kinnear and Ken Hamilton tackled me on the dance floor and, shouting for help, I agreed to become KASS Vice Chairman. Surely someone more worthy would come forward and oppose me – but no such luck! I have had a wonderful four years, mainly because of some superb volunteers supporting me, especially in the past two years as Chairman. My thanks go to the Vice Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Events Co-ordinators, Past Chairman and Newsletter Editor. They are all volunteers and we need more of you to come forward to help. At present we are without a Vice Chairman. Please come along and support Roger Brown, who succeeds me.

Since last October KASS Events have been extremely successful socially. Even though attendances were lower, the enthusiasm was high. Please support KASS Events – I promise you will have a great time. Walking or dancing, bring the family, especially to the Tea Dances and KASS Walk. I know that we are all busy but these events are advertised months in advance so, book them in your diary NOW and refuse all other invitations for the same dates!



Former KASS Chairman Muriel

Our hosts in the past year are all to be congratulated. We organised the events in different areas of the County, centralised the Highland May Ball and made the Autumn Dance movable. This gives everyone a chance and we hope that booking bands from Scotland and England, who have made the recordings we dance to at our Clubs, will encourage you to come. Also we may have visitors from Societies outside Kent. Host societies work very hard when organising events with some innovative ideas such as:- cream teas at Meopham, which made them a profit and a donation to KASS, and a delicious tea after the walk at Langton Green. Perhaps you could set up a cream tea or just surprise us! We need you to support the events or we will lose them. My dream hasn't yet come true, where I see car loads of dancers travelling from east to west and north to south!

I am indebted to the Committee for supporting me in this last year. Kate Penny, who is retiring as Secretary at the AGM, has been supportive in supplying me with the Diary of Events and details of e-mails, which I don't have access to. Trevor, our Treasurer, has excelled and exceeded his remit in providing us with clear accounts and also forecasting our commitments for costing in the future. My thanks, also, go to

our two voluntary Accounts Checkers, David How and Brian Knell. Helen and Jane, our Events Co-ordinators, who inherited some pre-booked events, have liaised with new hosts and venues. They have also printed tickets and flyers, but they need your input. Alan's 3rd Newsletter was a sizzler – the best I have seen. The photos were excellent and the contents interesting and very amusing! Contributors, give yourselves a pat on the back and come back with more, please. Past Chairman, Ken, has done some sterling work with the Website and has offered tuition to anyone interested in learning more. I'm told that he has had some take up. Ken hasn't been well, so special thanks and best wishes, Ken. It's helpful to have a keen Vice Chair when in the Chair and Roger has been very enthusiastic and I wish him well in his two years as Chairman.

The Dover-Deal combined dance on 2 October was the last I attended as Chairman and it struck me that, perhaps, this could be a way forward with two or more clubs joining to share the cost of an event with a live band. Membership is falling, so combining, not only for club events but also for KASS events, could be an option. Let us join together for friendship and the love of Scottish traditions and Scottish Country Dancing. Let's visit other Clubs, attend other groups' events and mix ideas, ask for help from each other and KASS – anything – but, above all, be friendly and welcoming.

Happy dancing in the 2010-2011 season – our Diamond Jubilee Year.

Muriel Greenstead (KASS Past Chairman)

KASS NEWS

KASS Walk - 27 June 2010 Langton Green, Tonbridge

It was a very hot day, which may have contributed to the numbers attending - 24 in all. There was a choice of a short or a long walk. The long walk, led by George Daly and which I attempted, was interesting and full of surprises, as we trekked along lanes and fields. Some of the things we encountered were the view of the Spa Valley railway, plus steam train, as well as a display by the Red Arrows flying over Groombridge Place.

Groombridge Place was used in the film "*Pride & Prejudice*", which was released in 2005, as "Longbourn", the Bennets' family home. There was a mid-walk break, a welcome stop at the

local pub in Groombridge village.



KASS Walkers resting by the pub!

An even better surprise was awaiting us back at the hall when we finished the walk. There was a full, complimentary tea ready for us, which had been prepared by the ladies of the Tunbridge Wells & Crowborough group, our host group, that included a selection of sandwiches, home-made scones and various delicious cakes!

We were certainly rewarded for our long trek on an extremely hot afternoon!

Jane Whittington (KASS Events Co-ordinator)

The KASS Highland Ball May 2010

The Spring Ball was held at East Malling School, which KASS has found to be a convenient location, near the centre of Kent. Travelling is similar from east and west. The main hall is somewhat stark but the Host Society (Orpington and District Caledonian Society) added a huge bowl of genuine-looking silk flowers, bunting along the front of the stage and flags on the drapes. With the assembled ranks of club shields, the stage was a fitting place for Sandy Nixon and his four piece band to play for an exciting evening of dances.

The bucks fizz reception was held in the main hall, while the caterers were busy in the kitchen preparing a two course supper. The supper was a sit-down affair held in the connecting arts room. The standard school tables with fixed seats were actually quite comfortable and a convivial atmosphere developed as we tucked into ham salad followed by a generous fruit salad. However, the time table slipped a little as folk downed their coffee. The MCs, Angela Campbell and Mike Talbot, managed to catch up time as we enthusiastically reeled, jigged and strathspeyed through a friendly, but interesting, programme of varied dances.

Heat generated by over 120 dancers taxed the "water hole", which will be relocated for the next dance. We try to improve at each event, which is one of the benefits of returning to the same hall. Although the floor is somewhat hard the bounce in Sandy Nixon's music kept everyone on the floor to the end. What about the next morning?

We should say something more about the band. This is the second dance with a Scottish Band that has travelled down from Scotland just for our Ball. They were up at 5.30 am on Saturday to get to their nearest airports to fly down to Gatwick with their instruments. They arrived in time for lunch but had to check their accordions which, in spite of being very well padded in suitcases, often suffer at the hands of over-zealous baggage handlers. Luckily the damage this time was minor and Sandy had soon tweaked the offending faults to give an immediate cure. This must come from his day job as a GP!!! After a short rest it was off to the dance venue to set up with the sound engineer. All went smoothly, so after "unwinding" on the night, the band made their return journey to Scotland, arriving home in mid-afternoon on Sunday. We should realise that the band gives up virtually their whole week end for our few hours of dancing.

In spite of the special draw of a Scottish Band, the sale of tickets was slow initially but, in the end, we were just under full capacity. The Events Co-ordinators and Treasurer had an anxious time before sales bucked up – so, please, buy tickets earlier for the 2011 Spring Ball. This time the income from ticket sales did not cover the full expenditures but the raffle money reduced the deficit. At full capacity we would be closer to breaking even.

Roger Brown (KASS Chairman)

KASS NEWS - from the Groups

News from Dover

An "Open Day" was held at the Dover SCD Group's home, the Triangle Centre. Originally planned for the August Bank Holiday Saturday, the event was postponed to the first Saturday in September. We arrived with CD player, tartan table cloth and flyers (held down by rocks against the strong wind!) to share with other Triangle Centre users – most of whom were fund raising with "Name the cuddly toy", raffles and tombolas!

However, soon after 11am we danced "Mairie's Wedding". Not many people seemed to notice, perhaps as the speakers for the sound system were round the back of the hall, where the dog walkers were to perform later, so it looked as if we were dancing in silence!



The Triangle Centre, Dover

As we were performing outside the Coffee Bar, we had the joy of a couple of very young spectators wandering through the set, either on their way to or from, the refreshments! We enjoyed it though!

Alan French (Dover SCD Group)

News from Medway

MEDWAY & DISTRICT CALEDONIANS – SUNDAY TEA DANCE

On Sunday 19 September, a Tea Dance was held at St Mary's Island, Chatham. The dance had a two-fold purpose; to encourage newer and less experienced dancers to come to a dance and to award the girls in the Junior Class with their Medals and Certificates for passing the RSCDS Medal Tests. The Examiner was Mervyn Short, with Rachel Wilton as Trainee Examiner, for the tests held on 26 June.

Unfortunately, fewer attended the Tea Dance than we had hoped, but it was a very enjoyable afternoon for those who did make it. Everyone, including young children, parents, as well as grandparents, joined in the dancing with Harry Robertson as MC. We were also treated to short demonstrations by the girls in the Junior Class.

Bob Hunt, Medway's President, presented the girls with their Awards, as follows:

Grade I

Lauren Dawson, Emily Maxwell and Katia Solley – Pass

Amy Nelson – Pass with credit.

Grade II

Hayley Nelson – Pass

Karla Dicker – Pass with credit.

Grade III

Emily and Sian Wickenden – Pass

Grade IV

Tara Foord – Pass with credit



Medway's successful Juniors

As there were so few candidates in the exams, the girls had to dance with each other to make up the sets. Also we could not have done it without the willing help of Alison Yarde and Jayne Nelson (Mums) and Barbara Worth, Rita Menzies and Mike Gould (Medway members). We are grateful to them all for so willingly giving up their time to make up the sets and dance with the girls.

Special thanks, too, to Barbara Meade for being my right hand with the Junior Class, to Harry for coaching the girls and to Muriel Greenstead (former KASS Chairman) for her continued interest in the Junior Class and for her usual gift of sweets to them all!

At the interval the refreshments were organised mainly by dancers from the Tuesday Group, organised by Jean Cameron. Jess Hunt and Lis Bowden did the raffle, with earlier help from Elaine Grayland, and the proceeds of nearly £40 will be donated to the Pakistan Flood Appeal. There was a happy, friendly atmosphere in the hall as young and old, experienced and new shared the joy of Scottish Country Dancing.

Margaret Anne Robertson

(Medway & District Caledonians)

News from Orpington and District

STRICTLY COME SCOTTISH
COUNTRY DANCING

'Dance Scottish Week' for us seemed to extend a while longer than seven days. It began at the annual Orpington Summer Fair, which was

held in Priory Gardens, on 18 September, when the Orpington & District Caledonian demonstration dancers participated. Fine weather brought forth an enthusiastic crowd. It was encouraging to see two local 'bobbies' joining in with much hilarity. We wondered if we could recruit them to our Monday evening Beginners' and Improvers' Class!

Another event we were asked to attend (by one of our dancers) was a U3A meeting in Bromley. On the day we had seven Ladies and one brave man! We started with the *Reel of the 51st* and *Mairi's Wedding* and then invited people to join in with a round-the-room-dance. We had a few game participants and everyone did very well. We followed up with *Lady Sophia Lindsay* and *The Robertson's Rant* then more participation before finishing with *Ian Powrie's Farewell to Auchterader*. Angela kept us under control and told the stories about the dances - and a good time was had by all! It has to be said that this was a little more sedate than the Priory Gardens!



Perhaps the highlight for us was participation in the "ON SHOW 2010" at the Royal Albert Hall on Saturday 25 September. Over 900 performers, with a vast age range, ably demonstrated 26 dance styles from children from the Royal Ballet School to the Chinese College of Physical Culture. The Royal Scottish Country Dance Association's contribution was appropriately named 'Flower of Scotland', of which we were a part. This was ably choreographed by Angela Young, the Vice Chairman of the RSCDS in London, supported by Simon Wales and their trusty team. "ON SHOW 2010" marked the 75th Anniversary of the CCPR, the organisers, which is the alliance of representative bodies of sport and recreation.

Our satnav worked overtime, firstly directing us to two rehearsals in the Paddington Academy on consecutive Sundays and then to the Royal Albert Hall for the Show. We arrived at the rehearsals with trepidation, yet with excitement, not really knowing what to expect. We were put at our ease by Angela Young and her team. Step practice was the order of the day before we were introduced to the expertly planned dance routine which was to form a kaleidoscope effect, incorporating 46 dancers into seven

abridged dances, a logistical nightmare! We were to meet old friends and make new ones from around the country and there was plenty of laughter and good humour throughout. Towards the end of the rehearsals, the hall at the Paddington Academy was marked out to represent the dimensions of the Albert Hall, in case we should 'overshoot' on the day!

The question of dress was another problem to be solved but there were ample kind offers of loans of long white frocks allowing every lady to be appropriately dressed on the day. We were proud to wear our own sashes. The men looked very smart in their own kilts and accessories. White was not really the most suitable colour when sharing a very cramped dressing room with the Pushpalata Indian Dance Group who were wearing extensive make up. Accidents were avoided thankfully.

After a brief morning rehearsal in the Albert Hall itself on the day, being blessed with excellent weather, we took the opportunity to continue practising in Kensington Gardens watched, with smiles, by dog walkers and skate boarders, out enjoying the sun. We do not think they could quite understand what was going on!

With so many Scottish country dancers having to enter the Albert Hall arena from various locations in the wings, it was imperative that we all knew where to be and when. It was a challenge competing with tiny Royal Ballet School dancers leaving the arena as we attempted to make an entrance. Despite our fears, our nerves disappeared as soon as the music started up and the audience started clapping. All we can hope is that they enjoyed the performance as much as we enjoyed taking part.

It was an honour to be part of such a memorable day, and we have such happy memories to look back on. The day concluded with nearly 1,000 performers, wearing our sequin-spangled caps, taking part in the Lambeth Walk headed by professionals from the shows "*Billy Elliot*" and "*We Will Rock You*".

These shows at the Royal Albert Hall take place every five years. Will you be in the next one? With very fond memories.

Angela Campbell, Linda Scothern and Pam French (Orpington & District)

A Sentimental Journey

As you know, 2009 was "The Homecoming Year" for expat Scots. We didn't make it then, but made up for that omission by going this year instead. Although we visited several places new to us, there always seemed to be a thread connecting them and us, in one way or another.

Our incentive was an advert in the "*Telegraph*" - "See the Romantic West Coast of Scotland" - three days based at the Barcelo Hotel in Troon ("That must be the Marine, under a new name!").



Barcelo Troon Marine Hotel

This was our home territory, worth a visit at any time, but the organised programme made it even more inviting: private tours of Dumfries House, Mount Stuart and Drumlanrig Castle, all of which I'd been aware of since childhood, but in those dark ages, none was open to the public.

We travelled north at a leisurely pace, stopping off in Dumfries to spend a night with my cousin. We had dinner that night in a hotel in the grounds of the old Crichton Royal Institution - once very famous at the cutting edge of mental health treatment. Now only a small part is devoted to that - the old "Hospice" where the well-heeled can still go for "retreat". In the old days many rich and famous people "visited". I suppose it was The Priory of its day. The beautiful cathedral style church apparently does a brisk trade in weddings now and most of the buildings are occupied by the recently established Dumfries Campus of the University of Glasgow, our alma mater. The original Institution was funded by a member of the Crichton-Stuart family - of them, more anon.

On past Ellisland, once farmed by Robert Burns, following the valley of the Nith to Sanquhar - home of the oldest Post Office in Scotland. Then, through the former mining areas of north Dumfriesshire and south Ayrshire (bypassing

Kelloholm) then west to the coast at Ayr, and finally to Troon.



Ellisland Farm, farmed by Robert Burns

Troon was David's family's home for many years and, after Dumfries, it was my second home. So we really were on our home patch. We rather enjoyed being the source of local knowledge among our fellow trippers!

The tour was hosted by Rita Adam, of the great Adam family of architects and builders. Her ancestor, John Adam, was the older brother of the more famous Robert. Apparently he managed most of the building projects which his brother designed. She was a wonderful speaker and raconteur. As a trained actress, she could make herself heard, unaided by a microphone, above any background noise. She was also a very formidable lady, as we found out the next day at Mount Stuart. Rita gave us an illustrated talk after dinner on our first evening, describing the work of the Adam brothers. She really brought it all to life with family anecdotes in a way that no one else could have done.

Next morning, we set off "doon the watter" to the Isle of Bute, as I had done several times for holidays in my childhood.



The Waverley approaching Wemyss Peir

The Victorian pier at Wemyss Bay didn't seem to have changed at all, except for the addition of a berth for the car ferry alongside. In the 40s and 50s cars parked on the mainland and the steamers were boarded on foot. Does anyone –

apart from David and me - remember the "Jeannie Deans", "Waverley", "Talisman", "Duchess of Fife" etc.?

Our object was Mount Stuart, home of The Marquis of Bute. (The present Marquis is Johnny Dumfries, the former racing driver. He was Earl of Dumfries in those days, hence the name, although the family name is Crichton-Stuart.) Our arrival at the front of the House - a magnificent Gothic pile set in a sheltered hollow on a hill above Rothesay, was hardly welcoming.



The Gothic pile that is Mount Stuart

"No. there is no tour booked for today".
"Oh, yes there is," says Rita. "I did the negotiations myself".

The chief guide was adamant - no tour booked, not enough staff available, etc., but Rita stood her ground. I could see in her some of the formidable ladies of Scottish history, defending their castle and their children when marauders came to the door - was it Lady Douglas who put her arm through the slots in the door in place of a wooden bar to keep enemies out? Needless to say, Rita won the day. Half an hour later they had closed the small shop, releasing one of the volunteers from his post, and called up someone else from the town, to conduct our party round and it was certainly worth the wait.

The University of Glasgow has "Bute Hall", scene of graduations, exams and celebrations where we have danced the Eightsome and the Duke of Perth at a Graduation Ball. Now I know why it looks as it does, "in your face" Gothic, brightly coloured and gloomy at the same time, since it was gifted by the 3rd Marquis, builder of Mount Stuart and also Cardiff Castle in the 19th century, on the proceeds of trade - coal and the docks. I believe there is also a Bute Hall at

St Andrews - the editor will no doubt correct me if I'm wrong - I wonder if it looks the same?
(ED: No Bute Hall at St Andrews but there is the Bute Medical Building, built in 1897 under the auspices of the then Rector, 3rd Marquis of Bute!)

Our guide was splendid, a real enthusiast with a wealth of detailed knowledge and a great sense of humour. It was a fantastic place – and I mean that literally: really over-the-top Gothic - magnificent, but not for every day.

Our first destination on the second day was Dumfries House – not in Dumfries but just west of Cumnock – a beautiful Adam house famously saved, almost intact, by the Prince of Wales. The former home of “Johnny” (before he became Marquis of Bute) was to be sold and its contents dispersed when HRH stepped in and organised finance for its future.



Dumfries House

Some of the contents were removed to Mount Stuart, as our guide there had gleefully told us - “Don’t tell the Prince of Wales” was his favourite comment”.

But it is a lovely place, more to my taste than Mount Stuart, with a magnificent collection of fine Scottish and English furniture, silver etc.. I am always interested in other people’s books, and since we had coffee in the library/billiard room during our tour, I was interested to see that the bookshelves were filled with an eclectic mix - obviously not bought by the yard to look good. Imagine my disappointment when we were told that nearly all the family books had been removed to Mount Stuart and these were only a job lot, bought to fill up the shelves!!

It is described as “work in progress” and craftsmen working on restoration projects can be seen as you tour the house. A visit is a must, if you have any interest in architecture or furniture. God bless the Prince of Wales! Using one of his Scottish titles, he set up The Great Steward of Scotland’s Dumfries House Trust. I

believe he actually provided most of the money himself in the form of a loan, to be repaid when funds permit. The Trust hopes that the estate can provide facilities to promote activities connected with “the house’s craft skills heritage”, and “promote the responsible stewardship of the estate”, to quote the Prince’s foreword to the guidebook.

The name of Adam is, of course, synonymous with Culzean Castle, the magnificent house built on a clifftop overlooking the Firth of Clyde. One of my favourite historic houses, we have visited there on many occasions.



Culzean Castle

I recall one visit with our family and David’s sister and her Canadian brood. Our nephew George was about six, and his mother had made efforts to teach him about his Scottish heritage. He had got hold of two names - Robert Burns and Robert the Bruce, but hadn’t quite sorted them out. At the Auld Kirkyard in Alloway, he’d asked in a loud voice, which made my children attempt to disown him, “Auntie Rita, is this where Robert-the-Burns was buried?”

Then at Culzean “Is this Robert the Bruce’s Castle?”

I must admit I had a wonderful picture of Bruce abandoning his cave hiding place and lying at the bottom of Robert Adam’s wonderful oval staircase, watching the diligence and determination of the spider which, according to legend, persuaded him to pursue his title to the throne of Scotland. Well, the staircase, and the rest of the castle were as lovely as ever, but this was a short visit, and there was little time for more than a quick dash round to see my favourite places.

In the evening, we returned to Dumfries House for dinner. The brochure had mentioned “entertainment”, and I half jokingly asked Rita Adam if I should take my dancing shoes.

(I always carry a pair with me in the car now, after arriving at the last KASS Ball with only one shoe!!) She didn't know anything about the



entertainment - no one had told her. But, sure enough, when we were ushered into the Tapestry Room there was a man with an accordion in the corner, and the tell tale Slip Stop on the floor! It was lovely, sipping champagne and nibbling canapés, watching dancers from Ayr Branch RSCDS. They did a couple of medleys - I recognised all but one of the dances - then they invited us to join in the inevitable *Gay Gordons* and *The Virginia Reel*. I hadn't taken my shoes, but was wearing flat sandals, so was happy to "get up".

"You've danced before," said my Demo. Team partner.

"Yes, just a little...".

The dinner which followed was superb – nothing exotic, but very good food, beautifully cooked and presented, with Dumfries House crested silver, china and glassware. It was a real highlight of our trip.



Drumlanrig Castle

Our last visit was to Drumlanrig Castle, in the heart of my native Dumfriesshire. It wasn't open to the public when I was a child, but there was a public right of way which went right in front of the castle, so we had driven past it on several occasions. It was a great thrill finally to see inside. The Duke of Buccleuch's family were our local "big-wigs" and their photographs were often in the local papers, especially when entertaining royalty, notably Princess Margaret. I was slightly disappointed with the interior, having imagined the rooms to be larger and more grand, like Buckingham Palace. Most seemed fairly small by stately home standards and, occasionally, very cluttered. The Morning Room, for instance, seemed to have every available surface covered with ornaments,

photographs etc., with piles of books, giving the impression we had walked in on a family having a lazy weekend, not expecting visitors! However, there are some magnificent works of art which, alone, would make a visit worthwhile.

The rest of our holiday was spent catching up with friends and family, including lunch at the famous Nardini's ice cream parlour in Largs. This has recently been restored to its earlier art deco magnificence, which we remembered from our youth.



Nardini's Ice Cream Parlour, Largs

It still produces great ice cream! I am rather glad we did our own private "homecoming" away from the commercialism which I have no doubt would have affected last year's event. If you think that Edinburgh and the Highlands is all that Scotland has to offer think again. You've missed a lot if you've rushed from the M6 to the M74 without calling in on the South West – and I don't mean just a quick visit to Gretna Green!

Rita Menzies (Medway & District Caledonians)

Prancing In Pitlochry

In September I attended a "prancing holiday", as my children called it. I go on four or five prancing holidays a year and this one happened to be in Scotland, at Pitlochry, a centre for Scottish Country Prancing - but a long, long way from home in Chislehurst.

North of the border is a different country. The men wear skirts (well, certainly when they're dancing!) and the people speak a foreign language as well as eat porridge and haggis. The grass is incredibly green, due to the extraordinary amount of annual rainfall. There, red squirrels abound and you can see the oldest yew tree in the world. It is where SCP is

alive and well, in the place of its birth.

Once in Scotland, you know you're in the land of reels and jigs by the names on signposts - Auchterarder, Moffat and Annan. Also, spotted often in the distance, Schiehallion – the mountain with the weight of the world on its shoulders and, yes, there are pines in Pitlochry!

Pitlochry is a centre for many activities, whether you want to dance, walk, wander around shopping areas spending money or visiting castles and gardens. One of its special shops is the Claire Charles shop owned by the lovely Janet Washington who makes beautiful tartan dresses and skirts to order and who dealt with a stream of females from the Atholl Palace Hotel (where we stayed) all wanting to buy one of her creations. It also possesses a marvellous theatre where, if you stay for a week, you can see a different play every night. I managed to squeeze in two during my week, one of which was the funniest farce I've ever seen and added face-ache to the aches I was already experiencing! It possessed more than the required number of doors, had a memorable trouser-dropping incident, an enormous quantity of objects which were moved around from place to place with split-second timing and no reasons for their being there at all, and all the actors mistaking each other for someone else.



The Atholl Palace Hotel, Pitlochry

The dancing holiday, arranged by Barry and Doreen Steele (who run two such holidays every year, one in Europe and one in the UK) was for 70-80 people so required a big hotel with a room for dancing which could accommodate up to 10 sets in reasonable comfort. We also had the excellent Marian Anderson and her band playing for us. In the impressive Atholl Palace I had an enormous room in a turret all to myself, from where I had to negotiate corridors and pass through the snooker room in order to get anywhere else.

If anybody thinks of going on a dancing holiday for a rest, forget it. The day starts with an enormous breakfast and the rest of the daylight hours are filled with vigorous walks – or less vigorous but tiring hikes through stately homes - followed by tea and cake.

Then there are "walk-throughs" of all the evening's 15 dances at 4pm, then an hour or so to have a shower (rather a waste of time when the sweat starts running nicely after a couple of reels) before getting dressed in one's best frock. Then three-course dinner with helpings fit for a 20-stone rigger player. The rest of the evening is spent dancing. On top of this week of mounting activity there is the long drive home....

After this chosen holiday of delight and high-octane living I opted to stay another night and go to the final Saturday dance of the Pitlochry season organised by June Templeman at the Town Hall. The place was packed to the gills and at the end of each dance people just shuffled around a bit, changing partners, and stood waiting impatiently for the next dance to begin. The marvellous Colin Dewar (below) and band -just drummer actually - played for us and it was a fitting end to a wonderful Scottish week.



Colin Dewar

Few are prepared to organise dancing holidays but they are to be lauded for their willingness and stamina in the face of countless obstacles. I hope this article attracts more punters because, besides the many benefits, the main benefit is that dancing holidays are fun – really!

Jill Roeder
(Sidcup & District Caledonian Association)

The Munros

In the last issue of the KASS newsletter I wrote a piece about Schiehallion and its part in the 1774 attempt to measure the mass of the earth.



At the end of the article I commented that it was a Munro, one of 283 mountains in Scotland over 3000ft (914.4m) high. Munros are so called after Sir Hugh T Munro (pictured left) who surveyed and listed 236 mountains

over 3000 ft high in the 1890s, publishing the list as "Munro's Tables" in the Scottish Mountaineering Club's Journal, September 1891. When he died in the Spanish Flu epidemic of 1919, Munro had one mountain out of his original list still to climb.

As Munro distinguished between prominent, stand alone, peaks and those that are surrounded by equally high, but close neighbours, Munros can only be elected onto the list by the Scottish Mountaineering Club. The figure of 283 comes from the revised list, published in 2009, which also lists 227 "tops" as those mountains which don't stand out enough to qualify as Munros, even though they exceed 3000ft.

About 4000 people have climbed all the listed Munros since 1891. The first, undisputed to do so, was Ronald Burn in 1923. He was also the first man to climb all the "tops".



Pictured left is Charlie Campbell, a former Postman from Glasgow, who completed (sic) all Munros on the list in 2006. He did it in 48 days and 12 hours. The average time is 8 years!

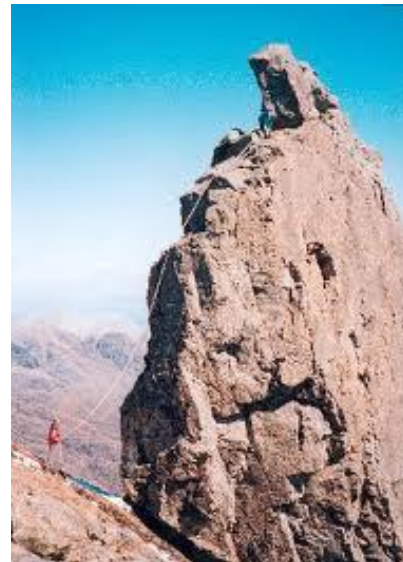
The number of most complete rounds is 13 (as of 2006) by Steve Fallon of Edinburgh. He must be very fit, but what does he talk about at dinner parties?

(ED: Since this article was written a 45-year-old known as Spyke – pictured below - touched the trig pillar on Ben Hope in the NW Highlands at 3.06pm on Thursday 3 June 2010, to beat Charlie Campbell's 10-year-old record by nine days!)



The process of adding a Munro to the list that you have climbed is known as "bagging". The

spelling of completion is preferred by the SMC who title those who bag all the peaks as "Compleationists". With one exception all the Munros are "walkable". The exception is Sgurr Dearg (the Inaccessible Pinnacle or In Pin) on the Cuillin Ridge on the Isle of Skye, which requires ropes and moderate climbing skills.



The Inaccessible Pinnacle of Sgurr Dearg

The SMC recognises 6 peaks in England and 15 in Wales that would qualify for Munro status. These are known as Furths.

There are several further classifications of Scottish mountains for those summits which do not qualify as Munros.

(1) Corbetts, after one J Rooke Corbett, who listed them in the 1920s. A Corbett is a mountain with a top between 2500ft (762m) and 2999ft (914m) with at least 500ft ascent or prominence on all sides. Currently there are 221 Corbetts.

(2) Grahams, which are named after a Fiona Graham, as being between 2000ft (610m) and 2499ft (762m). Grahams are also known as Lesser Corbetts and currently there are 224 of them.

(3) Donalds, which are listed by Percy Donald against a rather complicated formula.

(4) Murdos, which like the Munros are all over 3000ft but include many Munro tops. This means that all the Munros are also Murdos but not all the Murdos are Munros!

Outside of Scotland there are Nuttalls, Wainwrights, Hewitts and Marilyn's.

Just in case anybody is wondering - No, I have never climbed or walked a Munro, though I did climb Snowdon and a couple of other Furths when I was 16 and on a Geographical Field Trip at school.

(ED: I once climbed Helvellyn via Striding Edge on a Geographical Field Trip, wearing wellington boots! What a plonker!!)

Incidentally, what I forgot to mention in my previous article is that Schiehallion is generally taken to mean "The Fairy Mountain of The Caledonians". Also the schiehallion reels we dance represent the distinctive triangular shape of the mountain!

Bob Hunt (Medway & District)

Our Sutherland Holiday

On 10 September Jean and I flew from Gatwick to Inverness and were met by good friends Hugh and Lena, who drove us to "Grannies Hellan Hame" in Embo. We stopped at Morrisons's for a cup of tea where I sampled Lumpy Bumpy cake for the first time – delicious! Our caravan site overlooked the North Sea and we could see the Duke of Sutherland's statue in Golspie. A map would help with this narrative.

(ED: Hope this will suffice!)



A map of Sutherland

The next day we saw the local stunning panoramic view, Struie, then went on to Dornoch, visiting the Cathedral where Madonna was married.

Later we visited the falls of Shin, waiting and watching for the salmon to leap! The Visitors' Centre has a restaurant and shop owned by Mohamed Al Fayed, a statue of whom,



in highland dress with a dog, stands in the shop. That evening we watched the Dornoch Pipe Band and highland dancers perform in Dornoch town square.



Dunrobin Castle

On Sunday we visited the largest house in the highlands (with 189 rooms) Dunrobin Castle, in Golspie. The beautiful gardens were laid out by Sir Charles Barry, designer of London's Houses of Parliament. Sir Charles was also responsible for the Victorian extension to the Castle. The weather had been kind to us till then when, to coin a phrase, "it was bucketing doon"! Despite this we walked to the Falls of Golspie arriving back drenched – but it was worth the trip.

On Monday we drove up the A9, passing Helmsdale, then at Latheton took the A99 to Lybster, Wick and on to John o'Groats, where tickets for a trip to Orkney were purchased. Travelling west on the A836 we arrived at the Castle of Mey, the late Queen Mother's home.



A Lone Piper outside the Castle of Mey

Looking out on the Pentland Firth, the Castle, with a lovely walled garden, is very homely. The Queen Mother picked up furnishings from here and there. One of her staff was playing around and threw a soft toy Nessie up in the air which landed on top of a huge picture. While trying to retrieve it the Queen Mother entered the room and ordered he leave it there, where it still lies! The Queen Mother also wanted a pair of stag horns and she obtained them – a soft

toy deer head with antlers which, to this day, still hangs from the wall! The bric-a-brac is quite surprising.

After leaving the Castle of Mey we continued on the A836, passing Thurso and, before reaching Portskerra, turned south on the A897. Continuing on this narrow road we passed distant mountains and moorland with heather beginning to bloom. It is a very remote wilderness on a vast scale. That evening we went dancing at Dr Catherine's class in Dornoch and her husband, Philip, who has written two books on the Italian Chapel in Orkney, was there.



The stunning view of Loch Eriboll

The following day we set out on the A9, then on the A949, passing Bonar Bridge and on to the A836, past the Falls of Shin and up to Laig. Thence to another remote area, Tongue, where we turned east to visit the Strathnaver Museum at Bettyhill. We asked for senior citizen tickets and the sassy young lassie behind the counter replied she could knock ten years off our age for an extra 50p each! The Museum dealt with the Highland Clearances and Clan Mackay. They had a Bratach Bana there and we wondered if it had any connection with our dance. After the Museum we went west along the A836, on to the A838 at Tongue to Heilam and round to the magnificent scenery of Eriboll Loch and up to Durness.

We drove down to Laxford Bridge then joined the A894, passing Scourie, to Unapool. Then we went on to Skiag Bridge, turning west on to the A837 to Lochinver and its pretty harbour. Thence we doubled back to Skiag Bridge, past Ardvreck Castle and down to Rosehill, then Inveran. Hugh wondered if this is where the dance originated. Then via Bonar Bridge back to Embo.

On Wednesday Hugh drove to John o'Groats and caught the very basic passenger ferry for a

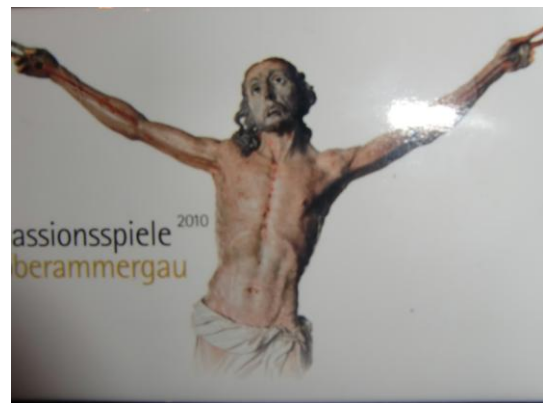
40 minute crossing of the Pentland Firth to Burwich, South Ronaldsay. A coach met us for Kirkwall via the four Churchill Barriers (*ED: causeways linking the islands built by Italian prisoners of war*), stopping at Stromness for lunch. We visited the prehistoric village at Skara Brae, the Ring of Brodgar and the Standing Stones of Stenness, as well as St Magnus Cathedral and the Earl's Palace – all places within a short distance of each other. On our way back to the ferry we stopped at the Italian Chapel, in two Nissen huts crafted with simple tools and basic raw materials, built by prisoners of war.

Overall the weather was favourable – raining at night and changeable in the day. Thanks to Hugh for his knowledge of the area and his driving, even having to change a tyre in a remote place! It was a fabulous holiday and to top it all – not one midge!

Pauline Cameron (Sidcup and District)

If it's Thursday it must be Salzburg, or Oberammergau, or Venice or...

One joy of being retired is being able to go on holiday (a) when the kids are in school [incredibly important if a former teacher!] and (b) when the prices are cheaper! This year we have been lucky to visit Fuschl, near Salzburg in Austria, specifically to see the Passion Play, performed every ten years, across the border in Oberammergau, Bavaria. After the amusing article in the last Newsletter I checked my tickets to be sure I was there on the right date!



Oberammergau Passion Play logo 2010!

When the proposed Church visit was first announced two years ago, some of my lump sum was put away in savings to pay for it – otherwise it would have been an expensive trip and in term time too! Those couple of years flew by and suddenly we were at Heathrow's

Terminal 5 (plenty of space), with plenty of time for a "Full English" before our flight to Munich. Thence we sped by luxury, air-conditioned coach to Fuschl, where the lake-side Hotel Schutzenhof was our base.

A trip to Salzburg included cultural highlights like singing "Do re me" (as did Julie Andrews and the von Trapp children) on the steps in the Mirabel Gardens, as well as flicking water at

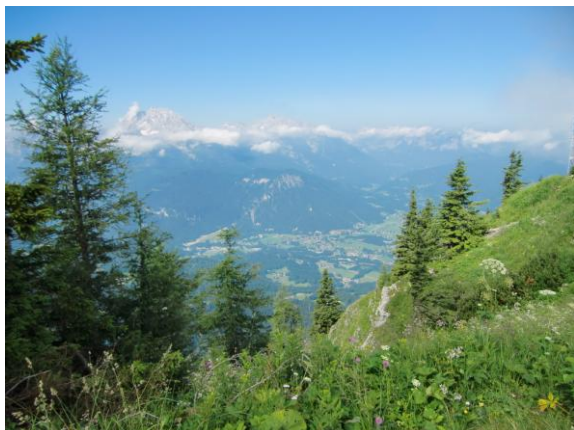


horses in the Residence Square fountain! On one other trip we saw the pavilion used in the film, but now restored and re-located in the grounds of the Castle Hellbrunn. On another trip we went to the church (left) in the town of Mondsee, where

the wedding scene was filmed!

Not being complete Philistines we also visited Salzburg to see where Mozart had been born and to attend a fabulous three course dinner, in a wonderful setting – the Baroque refectory of an abbey. Between each course a string quintet of music students, with soprano and baritone soloists, all in 18th century costumes, performed arias from Mozart's most famous operas. It was an enchanting evening.

In a week of "un-seasonally warm" weather (it hit 34°C in Mondsee one day) we cruised Wolfgangsee on a boat and visited the original "White Horse Inn"; we took a cable-car ride up a mountain; crossed into Bavaria and visited Hitler's "Eagle's Nest" near Berchtesgarden, as well as the beautiful Koenigssee.



A stunning view from The Eagle's Nest

Then our week was over and we transferred to Oberammergau in Bavaria, for the Passion Play.



"Pilate's House" – one of the painted houses of Oberammergau

The village, with its many painted houses was a sight and words cannot describe the experience – but I will try!

The Passionplay stage is vast, there is a cast of over a thousand and the atmosphere is electric. Our seats were two thirds of the way back and as the stage is open air we could see the mountains in the background to begin with. Then, almost before the end of the first half, black clouds came over and the mountains disappeared. The wind picked up and leaves were ripped from the violently swaying trees we could see. Then thump, thump, thump on the roof. Jesus and his twelve disciples stopped preparing for the Last Supper and looked skywards as hail stones, the size of golf balls pelted down on them. They retreated into the protection of the covered part of the stage as the audience rose to its feet and applauded. People in the front rows, hit by hail stones were sent off for treatment and car windscreens were damaged. After some twenty minutes it stopped, the stage was cleared and the performance resumed.

After the interval, in which we had dinner back at our hotel, we returned to find the moveable stage roof had been put in place. So, in spite of it pouring with rain for most of the second half, the play continued. Knowing the story and the inevitable outcome, it was spell-binding. At the end there was only silence as hundreds of people left the auditorium with their thoughts. Back at the hotel we all met up, had coffee and reflected on the experience.

Then, before we had really adjusted to life back in UK we were off to visit friends in their hotel, the "Villa Altura", south of Padua, in the Veneto.

A visit to a wine tasting, held in a Palazzo outside Venice, was marvellous - excellent food and drink. We went to the local fun fair (part of a religious festival) and even at midnight there were lots of families with young children and no yobs - no trouble at all. The firework display at the end on Sunday was superb. We visited Padua with a park and ride by tram rather than bus! In Vicenza we saw a window display of nothing but shortbread and other edible delights from the "Shortbread House of Edinburgh" - as shown below!



Scottish shortbread window display

We also stayed in Venice, dining in our friends' restaurant. One day we caught a train to Ferrara, then on to Verona in a single carriage "chug chug" train, returning to Padua on an intercity "Frecciargento" Eurostar - fabulous. We visited a small, local winery and wine producer, whose products we had already enjoyed at Villa Altura! A high light must have been midnight in St Mark's Square, shown below.



Midnight in St Mark's Square

Back in the UK it feels chilly and it is getting dark early in the evening. However, hundreds of digital photos, keep the memories alive until the next holiday!

Alan French (Dover SCD Group)

Scotland? No, Ireland!

For many years I have longed to visit more of the Emerald Isle than Belfast and the Giant's Causeway, which I have visited on several occasions. Till June of this year there had been no opportunity. Once upon a time I would have cast caution to the wind and set off solo. Not now, a wee bit too long in the tooth to contemplate such adventures on my own! Though who knows whom I might meet along the way? Anyway, at last the chance came.



Incidentally, this wee tale is nothing like the hilarious carryings-on of Sandie, Jess and co in the last Newsletter - which I absolutely loved. More, please!

My dear friend, Avril, also a Scot, is an internationally known flower arranger, whom everyone in NAFAS and others besides will know. I am lucky we have been friends for many years. She had been invited by Northern Ireland Floral Art Groups to give a demo in Antrim. So, thought I - aha - and, yes, I could go. It was brilliant, not just the flower bit, but the on-going anecdotes as well.

She drove from Sittingbourne to Holyhead, having a stop-over with friends Kevin and Nick in Shropshire, ex-flower arrangers (Yes, men do it too and are good!) but now too old. Sadly, Kevin has terminal cancer but he is rosy-cheeked and cheerful. We paid extra to sail Club Class with Irish Ferries, thus enjoying better seats away from the hoi-polloi, with wine, smoked salmon and the like. The drive to our B&B in Annalong, a delightful little town (bet

you've never heard of it) which was lovely, up through the Mountains of Mourne. Sure, you should have heard us singing there.

The drive next day, across to the west coast was serene, quiet moorland and low hills much of the way and Croagh Patrick, the Holy Mountain, rising 2510 feet from the shore of Clew Bay.



CROAGH PATRICK

Co. Mayo

Croagh Patrick, Co mayo

In 441AD St Patrick spent 40 days here, fasting and praying for the people of Ireland. Years ago I would have been up the mountain myself like a shot, not on my knees as some penitents have been known to do. Is this possible? There is a path! I suppose I never imagined I would be there.

So we reached Westport. Edna O'Brien's books are set around there. W B Yeats ("I will arise and go now . . .") is buried there. I would have liked to go to Innisfree, but one cannot do everything!

I'm told it rained in Sittingbourne while we were away. Well, the sun shone on the righteous. The Scots and the Irish have much in common, apart from their Celtic origin. The nicest thing about Ireland, apart from the accent, is the friendliness of the people.



Ireland

Molloy'sBar

The worst thing – we passed Matt Molloy's Bar and it was closed!! Well, the Chieftans would

not have been playing there anyway, so maybe I'll go back one day, if I am spared.

Kate Middleham (Sittingbourne)

TO BE READ OUT LOUD!

The BBC Radio 4 programme "I'm Sorry I Haven't A Clue" often finishes with announcements for late arrivals at a themed ball. Then contorted names are created on the lines of the theme (e.g. a Vicars ball might have a guest called Cathy Dral).

Perhaps these would be the ones to turn up late at a Scottish Dancing Ball. You have to say them out loud to get the full effect:

Mr and Mrs Ealafor and their son Arthur

Mr and Mrs Kanarch and their daughter May

Mr and Mrs Dounemiddle and their son Lee

Mr and Mrs Roomdance and their daughter Rhonda

From Ireland, we have Paddy Barr

Mr and Mrs Avenpastacupple and their diminutive son, Wee Pete.

Petra Nellor and Kurt Zee, Ol Sett and Scot Eesh

Mr and Mrs Chain have brought their Gran

Mr and Mrs Chanjersteppe and their son Skip

All the way from Wales, Di Mond-Poussette

And his distant Arabian relation Ali Monde (or perhaps a Scottish version: Isla Monde)
Eamonn Thedanceteam

Ron Dell

From Sweden, Hans Across and Hans Round, aged four and eight.

Mr and Mrs Item and their daughter, Kay-Lee.

Mr and Mrs Handcross and their son Seth

And of course, a help at any dance, Mini Crib.

Alan Mills (Medway & District Caledonians)

Not a kilt advert!

Enid Reeves has contacted KASS saying that because of ill-health and hip replacements she no longer dances. She has 2 lady's kilts she no longer wears (mainly because they've shrunk in the wardrobe!) and she thinks it is a shame these perfect items are doing nothing except

taking up space. Surely someone could find a use them for them:

2 Lady's kilts
(made to measure by Geoffrey the Tailor, Edinburgh) in nearly new condition.
1 short day kilt & 1 long dress kilt. Only worn a few times.
For more details please contact enid.reeves@btinternet.com

Another kilt advert

Beryl Spearing has also contacted KASS as she wishes to thank everyone who donated money for the Hospice in memory of Brian, who died earlier this year. She also asks if anyone can find use for, and give a good home to, any of the following of Brian's Scottish dancing gear:

- Lamont Tartan (blue/green) kilt [65cms long x 49cms]
- Sgian Dubh - Black leather sporrans
- 3 pairs James Senior soft shoe (size 11)
- 4 pairs wool socks plus garters and ties.

Beryl may be contacted using her son Kevin's email:
spearik@tiscali.co.uk

NEVER MESS WITH WOMEN

A Punjabi lawyer, working in the UK, wrote to his wife in India:

"Dear Sunita, Darling,
I can't send you my salary this month because the global market crisis has affected my Company's performance. So I am sending you 100 kisses.
You are my sweetheart, please adjust.
Your loving husband,
JITA SINGH"

His wife replied:

"Dear Jita,
Thanks for the 100 kisses. Below is the list of expenses I paid with the Kisses...:
1. The Milk man agreed on 2 kisses for one month's milk.
2. The electricity man agreed not to disconnect after only 7 kisses.
3. Your landlord Balkar Singh comes every day to take 1 or 2 kisses instead of a month's rent.
4. Supermarket owner Jaswant Singh did not accept kisses only, so I gave him other

items - I hope you understand.
5. Miscellaneous expenses 40 kisses.
Please don't worry about me, I still have a balance of 35 kisses and I hope I can survive the month using this balance.
Shall I plan the same for the next month?
Your Sweet Heart,
Kichi"

The moral of this tale? - NEVER MESS WITH WOMEN AND THEIR HOUSEHOLD EXPENSES!!!!

Spa Day – A Pampering at Rohill Grange, Wilmington

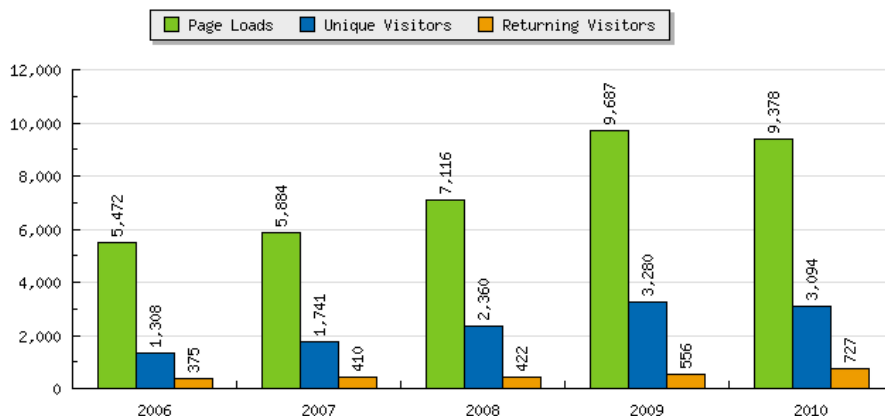


We arrived at 10 am and were greeted by a bubbly young lady who took us around, explaining the various pleasures in store for us. First, though, a much needed coffee and biscuits! Then down to the changing rooms where I donned my bathing suit, which hasn't seen the light of day for many years. They wrote the song "My bathing suit never got wet" about me! I made for the hydrotherapy pool which, I was assured, was only four feet deep. Well, I'm not a lot taller than that and there was quite a current of bubbling water – and I can't swim! I was terrified of falling but was helped so I could lie on the various jets. All very nice but then I had to be helped out. Next I tried the Jacuzzi and that was heavenly – very warm, frothy and relaxing – just what I needed. Then the sauna followed by a cold shower – but no birch twigs!

All this was the build up to a full body massage. This was bliss, quite gentle but releasing pent-up tensions. The aromatic oils and soft music, which floated without beginning or end, created a wonderful atmosphere. Then we donned our white robes, to sit with other participants for a scrumptious lunch. Not a slimming diet and I had my first Smoothie – I may become addicted. It was a wonderful day and one to be recommended. I floated home on cloud nine!

Muriel Greenstead (Former KASS Chairman)

KASS website statistics from January to September 2010



	Page Loads	Unique Visitors	First Time Visitors	Returning Visitors
Total	37,537	11,783	9,293	2,490
Average	7,507	2,357	1,859	498

Year	Page Loads	Unique Visitors	First Time Visitors	Returning Visitors
2010	9,378	3,094	2,367	727
2009	9,687	3,280	2,724	556
2008	7,116	2,360	1,938	422
2007	5,884	1,741	1,331	410
2006	5,472	1,308	933	375

The figures quoted on the chart and in the table for 2010 are for the first nine months of the year. The number of page loads and unique visitors in the nine months is nearly the same as that for the previous twelve months indicating that the steady growth in the use of the website is continuing. The number of returning visitors is significantly ahead of last year with 727 in the nine months of 2010 compared to the 556 in the twelve months of 2009. This suggests that people are finding the website useful and are returning to it for updates and information. The KASS Diary is frequently revised, clubs are now giving details of their dances including cribsheets and some clubs have added photograph albums showing pictures of their events. All of these activities are reasons for visitors to return to the website. The most popular pages are the Home page; Orpington’s page; North Kent’s page; the KASS Diary, Events, Newsletter and Committee pages. The most frequent downloads are the KASS Diary and the Minicribs for the club dances.

The browsers used to look at the site are: Internet Explorer 64%; AOL 16%; Opera 8%; Chrome 4%; Safari 3%; Firefox 2%. The decrease in the use of Internet Explorer is most likely linked to resolving the layout problems with the other browsers.

An analysis of the screen sizes used gives the following data.

	Perc.	Resolution
▼ 36	36.36%	1024x768
▼ 26	26.26%	Unknown
▼ 25	25.25%	1152x864
▼ 7	7.07%	1280x1024
▼ 5	5.05%	800x600

The website has been redesigned to fit the 1024 x 768 screen but further work is required to make it automatically appear in the centre of all screen sizes. Two clubs are now updating their own pages and three others have started to learn the software or will start this Winter.

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The 237th KASS meeting & AGM took place on 5th October 2010 with 19 members attending, representing 14 Societies.

The Retiring Chairman welcomed everyone to her last meeting in the chair. Having enjoyed four wonderful years as Vice Chairman and later as Chairman, she thanked the superb volunteers and officers who had supported her. Since last October the KASS events had been extremely successful, even though attendances were low, the enthusiasm was high. The host societies work very hard and are to be congratulated. Events are organised in different areas of the county, to give everyone the chance to come along. She asked that we please support these events.

The Deal and Dover dance in October, where two clubs joined together to spread the cost of an event with a live band, could perhaps be the way forward. Memberships are falling, so combining not only for club events, but also for KASS events, could be an option.

Muriel was thanked for the inspiring work she had done, she had worked diligently in promoting all the KASS events and few could match her tireless efforts in encouraging the various clubs to attend other club events.

Treasurer. - The comprehensive accounts were all in hand and the finances of the Association remained sound.

Future KASS Events. - KASS Diamond Anniversary, 14th May 2011, at Malling School, with Cobtree as hosts and Frank Reid's band booked.

The Caledonian Reelers are booked for the 2011 Autumn Dance, the Craighallichie Band are booked for 2012 Spring Ball and Marian Anderson is booked for the 2013 Ball. We urgently need a host for the 2011 Autumn dance.

Vulnerable Adult Policy. - A statement regarding the Vulnerable Adult Policy will be put on the website. It simply states that while we would welcome them whenever practicable, we make it plain that they remain the responsibility of their carers at all times.

Website. - The Website Manager reported that there was a marked growth of people returning to the KASS website, because of the clubs advertising dances and mini cribs. The most popular pages are the Home page, Orpington, North Kent, KASS pages and Sidcup. The most popular download is the KASS Diary and mini crib.

The Election of Officers took place, with Roger Brown becoming the new Chairman and Nigel Hewitt taking over the Secretary's post. The other officers remained the same this year. The New Chairman asked Representatives to be pro-active in their societies in publicising KASS and encouraging members to attend events and buy tickets early.

David How appealed to the clubs to make sure News Letters were widely distributed, as they were an advert for KASS. Should you wish to receive a full copy of the minutes of the above meeting please do not hesitate to contact the new KASS Secretary.

Nigel Hewitt, Secretary nigel.f.hewitt@talk21.com