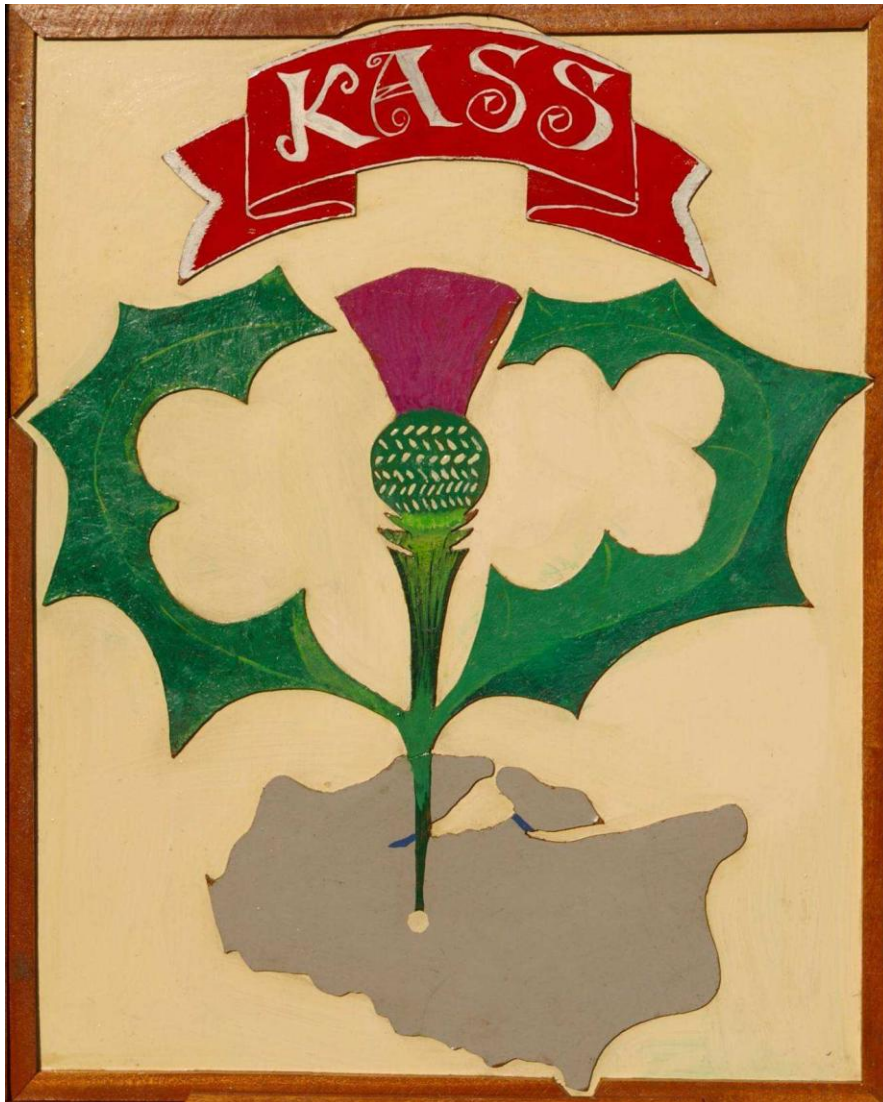


# K A S S

**KENT ASSOCIATION OF SCOTTISH SOCIETIES**



**HAPPY BIRTHDAY**

**KASS is 60!**

**1951 – 2011**

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**EDITORIAL****Editor Alan**

How things change! When I started putting this Newsletter together it was warm – then it was swelteringly hot and dry, so unlike April!! Now the wind is blowing pots over and ripping blossom from the trees, while clouds are looming!!! It is not just the variations in the weather itself, but also the speed of change that alarms me!

Where does the time go? It doesn't seem possible that twenty years have passed since the Ruby (40<sup>th</sup>) Anniversary of KASS in Maidstone. Can it really be a decade since we enjoyed the Golden (50<sup>th</sup>) Anniversary Dance in Dover Town Hall? It feels as if it was only yesterday! Yet, here we are marking our Diamond Jubilee – 60 Glorious Years of KASS!

This makes me realise how time doesn't just pass, it seems to fly past at a rate of knots! In those six decades there have also been so many changes.

Going through the archives it has been fascinating to see how KASS has changed over those sixty years. It has grown then contracted as some groups have ceased to exist. Great characters have come, and gone. However, issues have rarely changed over the years. There have been frequent debates at KASS Committee Meetings about whether we should book dances in advance. Also, discussions have ensued about the profits from Raffles at KASS Dances and if these should go to charity. There has been debate as to whether we even want a formal Ball in the twenty-first century! Resolutions have been passed that at KASS Dances we should be counted in straight lines before making up square sets! We even had a debate as to whether there should be a Newsletter!!

Hopefully you will find something of interest and even amusement in this "BUMPER" Diamond Jubilee edition. As we look back, the past is often seen through rose tinted specs. They were the days when formal Highland Balls were attended by hundreds in now-demolished hotels. Scottish dancing and Caledonian groups were vast in number, located county-wide and had a mix of young and old in their membership. Today things are so different. We are all getting older, we have further to travel to reach a dance and it is difficult to get enough people to attend our one formal dance a year. However, it is not all doom and gloom. Over the decades, like so many of you across Kent, I have had great fun taking part in Scottish country dancing and it is thanks to KASS. Also I have met some great people and made some good friends.

Sadly, amidst our celebrations we have said "goodbye" to Mo Dalton, from Sheerness, and Margaret Bowden from Deal. That great "highland ball in the sky" has gained two great characters but at our loss. Memories of Mo and Margaret appear at the back of this Newsletter. In Scottish country dancing we have many "special" people amongst our members and I believe this Newsletter plays a part in spreading the fact that dancing is good for you. It is beneficial physically, in terms of cardio-vascular exercise; and socially, as you get to meet new people and make new friends. If you agree, then you may want to make a contribution to the next, pre-Christmas edition of the Newsletter, which will be issued at the November Dance. If so, then please contact me:

[Alan@docfrench79.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:Alan@docfrench79.fsnet.co.uk)

**Alan French (Newsletter Editor & Dover) Page 1**

**FROM THE CHAIRMAN**

The new team has now been in operation for six months. We are still settling in and finding out all the little details that make any society work well. I would like to thank all those who have assisted in this learning process, for their advice and patience. There are numerous small details that become apparent only when you have to do them yourself. It's a bit like watching the first couple do the dance, with a perfect combination of figures and footwork, only to find that when it is your turn you have to think: did they cross by the right or left and what about covering and smiling as well!!



**Chairman Roger Brown**

The Autumn Dance was well attended. It was at a good venue – Tonbridge School for Girls, so near the middle of Kent. The evening was well planned. Sevenoaks were great hosts and the evening went very smoothly with Jim Winter as MC. Though thanks go to all those who attended, there was room for more on the dance floor.

The inclement weather in December, with heavy snow and icy roads, interrupted a number of Club Dances. Evenings were cancelled because people just could not get out of their drives or minor roads were impassable. This bad weather also probably had some impact on attendances in the early part of the year as there was always the threat the bad weather would return. Certainly the Burns' Supper at Orpington had lower attendance than in previous years. I hear that other dances had not been attended as well as usual. This is a problem that we are all facing.

When I was elected as Chairman, I did explain that we visited our daughter and family of four grandchildren in New Zealand in their summer. Unfortunately we missed a number of Dances in February and March. My work pattern has also changed a bit as courses, which were held in UK, have now been switched to Africa. This means missing even more Saturdays. Sorry about that – but I shall try to visit clubs when I can.

The KASS Spring Tea Dance, run by North Kent and Sidcup, was an enjoyable afternoon, quite well attended by local clubs. The brilliant sunshine and warmth may have tempted some to tackle their gardens or just to relax instead. The general falling off of numbers does make it sensible for two clubs to be joint hosts of KASS events, so the inevitable tasks can be allocated to more people and a few good souls do not have to do all the work.

At the recent KASS committee meeting it was noted that many dancers are members of more than one club, which shows that there is good local intermingling and support of events run by others. This also raises the question of whether there is a "critical mass" that is required to run a sustainable club. I think that we all prefer to dance with a large, rather than a small group, as this creates a livelier atmosphere and you meet more people. Newer dancers can be "absorbed" more easily and feel less conspicuous. More proficient dancers can also encourage them by example. Costs can be spread over more people.

Many clubs are also finding it difficult to find "volunteers" to become officers of the club and to serve on committees. Closer relationships between local clubs may be one way of creating a stronger Scottish Society in Kent.

**Roger Brown (KASS Chairman)**

**KASS NEWS****KASS Autumn Dance**

A new venue for many local dancers of Tonbridge Girls Grammar School provided the backdrop for an evening of jollity. As people arrived, they were met with an eye catching autumnal stage decoration, in addition to the wall hangings, which transformed the hall from a school hall into a dance hall.

With Jim Winter as MC, the evening started promptly and dancers were keen to get going with 'Currie's Mountain'. Robin Ellis and his band made our feet move with their lively music and this continued throughout the evening.

The programme of dances, which was chosen by host society Sevenoaks Reel Club members, was well received and was, hopefully, what enticed many of the 85 dancers to attend. *The Dream Catcher*, written by a local dancer, was made even better by Robin Ellis' own composition as accompaniment. Another popular dance seemed to be *'Singing Sands'* including the *tourbillon* (coming from the French meaning 'swirl' or 'whirlwind') as something a little different.

As always, the spread for supper was magnificent and there was hardly any left by the end of the interval. Once raffle prizes were won and squirreled away to take home, the dancing started again. The second half of dancing had a full floor, with very few people feeling the need to rest. It was a super atmosphere, with many dancers meeting and dancing with new people. By the time *'Baudy Bain's Fiddle'* was played our feet were tired but happy. A traditional ending of 'Auld Lang's Syne' rounded off the evening well and, with consideration of what to host next, we all made our way home!

**Rebecca Evans (Sevenoaks Reel Club)**

## The Kass Spring Tea Dance

The KASS Spring Tea Dance was held on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> April at St Mary's Church Hall, Bexley, jointly hosted by the Sidcup and District Caledonian Association and the North Kent Scottish Association. We had hoped for freezing cold weather and torrential rain, so everyone would come indoors for Scottish Country Dancing. But, in fact, it was a beautiful, hot, sunny day – which tempted people to stay in their gardens. We still had four or five sets and, with the raffle money, the event made a profit.



**KASS Spring Tea Dance at Bexley**

Loraine Chase was MC and she devised the programme. Dances were walked through, if requested, to encourage newer members. The afternoon proved to be both lively and enjoyable. Our thanks go to the members of

both clubs, who helped to make the afternoon a success.

**Wendy Carter  
(Sidcup and District Caledonian Association)**

## KASS NEWS – from the Groups

### News from Meopham

#### "Dancing couples HOLD ON"

Joyce and Brian Bach, members of Meopham Scottish Country Dance Club for many years, came from Hamilton in Scotland, to Longfield as Brian was offered a position at Blue Circle in Stone, near Northfleet. Just before the move to Kent, Joyce joined a Scottish country dance club, consisting of only ladies. Brian, accompanying her, was allowed to join – the only male member. I imagine he was not short of partners.

They first came to the Meopham club in 1972 and quickly became active on the committee. In 1975 Joyce was elected club Chairman for the first time. Joyce took over as dance instructor soon after their arrival, although she wasn't a qualified teacher. There had been a drop in numbers and loss of MC, so Joyce volunteered to take on the role. She was very strict in her methods and never allowed any sloppiness in the dancing. The slightest swishing of feet called for the music to stop and the dance to start again! When the club numbers went up again, there were quite a few non-dancers amongst them. Joyce felt it was unfair to more experienced dancers, so arranged an extra evening when dancing technique was taught and practised. We can all thank Joyce for "Set and Link, Espanole, and Rondel" which Meopham members can perform without a hitch. She was such a strong teaching character that many of us can hear words echo in our ears, even now, such as "Dancing couples hold on" when dancing *Nottingham Lace* and "Pass your partner, turn your corner all the way round. Turn your partner left hand and go back the way you came!" when dancing *Sloane Square*.

At some point, Brian took on the role of music arranger and it was through his hard work that the Club's music collection was updated from LP records through to copying music on to mini-tapes. Later he compiled lists and organized the purchase of CDs for use on club nights. When the Club needed a new music system he sourced a CD/tape player that had

excellent sound qualities. We still use this system on some club nights. Brian was also a wonderful carpenter, making toys and nursery items to order for Club members. In fact both Brian and Joyce were very creative people. Who can forget Joyce's knitted chicks and rabbits, complete with crème egg, which she made every year and sold for charity! Or her crocheted Christmas tree decorations! There is a tale that Joyce even made one of Brian's kilts!



**Joyce and Brian Bach**

Both Brian and Joyce were Chairman of Meopham and Brian was also Chairman of Kentish Caledonians, a group of North Kent Scottish dancing clubs. Unfortunately, Joyce reluctantly gave up being Club teacher and Treasurer, though not without a lot of thought beforehand. In 2007 they moved, to be nearer their family so, sadly, they said their goodbyes to Meopham.

I think it can be said that it was due to Joyce and Brian that the Meopham Scottish Country Dance Club is still going strong today. They passed on their skills and dedication to others, who still carry on with the standards that both Joyce and Brian maintained.

**Jane Whittington  
(Meopham Scottish Country Dance Club)**

### Holiday 2011 information

If you are interested in booking a holiday in Scotland or have done so, then below are the dates when Scottish Country Dancing will be held in Pitlochry Town Hall this year and the bands playing:

- |         |   |                 |
|---------|---|-----------------|
| 11 June | - | Glencraig       |
| 25 June | - | Colin Dewar     |
| 9 July  | - | Frank Thomson   |
| 23 July | - | Colin Dewar     |
| 6 Aug   | - | Marian Anderson |
| 20 Aug  | - | David Oswald    |

- |        |   |                 |
|--------|---|-----------------|
| 3 Sep  | - | Glencraig       |
| 17 Sep | - | Marian Anderson |

Further info is available from June Templeman – 01796 473488 (email [jdatt@topofthebox.freereserve.co.uk](mailto:jdatt@topofthebox.freereserve.co.uk))

**Paula Dyke  
(Meopham Scottish Country Dance Club)**

### News from Canterbury St Andrews

#### Dance Teacher Retired at Christmas

Eileen Acott taught at Canterbury St Andrews Scottish Country Dance Group for over 40 years, but now, having reached the age of 85 (I hope she doesn't mind my letting you in on that fact!), she feels that it is time to hand over the reins to someone else.

In 1962, six people, including Eileen, came together to dance Scottish at the Friends Meeting House in Canterbury. From this small beginning, our now much enlarged Dance group was formed. We first danced in St. Andrews Reformed Church, hence our name. In 1968 Eileen began teaching both beginners and also more experienced dancing classes. A public dance was held for the first time in 1978 and dancers were charged the exorbitant sum of 75p entrance! Eileen arranged the programme, as she has for all our dances, and ensured that members practised the dances in the weeks preceding the event. This was to help avoid too many disasters on the night. Many successful occasions followed, thanks to Eileen's strenuous efforts teaching the dances, and now we hold three each year.



Eileen (shown left) had a serious fall in 1983 and was unable to teach for some nine months. Our more experienced dancers stepped in and ran DIY sessions. Happily, Eileen was fully recovered and resumed teaching. Under Eileen's leadership our group flourished, grew, and we moved to

Barton Court School in the early 90s. We moved to Canterbury College in September 2001.

Eileen, supported by our Committee, has done sterling work and maintained a high

standard of teaching, which has held our group together over these past 40 years.

On Friday 10 December 2010, our last Club night before Christmas, Eileen was presented with a rose, appropriately called "THANKYOU", a tartan travel rug and a bottle of scotch, to keep out the cold! She was also given a specially-made compilation DVD of dances involving current and former members of our group, to remind her of the good times we all enjoyed together under her tutelage.

Thank you, Eileen, for all your efforts in hammering home the principles of Scottish country dancing. Often to aspiring dancers, who apparently started off with two left feet, but most of whom eventually blossomed into competent Scottish country dancers. We shall miss you.

### David Papa (Canterbury St Andrews)

#### Marion Dredge stands down from teaching SCD

Marion has taught beginners at Canterbury St. Andrews SCDG for about eleven years, but, due to a serious foot problem, she has been unable to dance for some time. She has 'manfully' walked as many dances as she could manage. She made a valiant effort and continued teaching, helped by some of our more experienced dancers to demonstrate the steps. But, in fairness to our beginners, she decided she should stand down.

Marion (shown below) has encouraged a good many of our present membership not only



to enjoy Scottish Country Dancing, but also to strive always to improve. We are delighted she can still dance (or walk) with us on Friday evenings and at our local dances. Marion, we hope your condition will soon improve enough to allow you to dance "properly", as you would prefer.

Thank you, for all the effort you have put in over the years.

"Dashing White Sergeant" [confused.com](http://confused.com)

### News from Isle of Thanet SCD

#### Former KASS chairman gets married

Pat Ansell, former Chairman of KASS, and Walter Gill's wedding took place at Ramsgate Registry Office on Saturday 6 Nov. 2010 and, six months later, they are still happily married.



**Pat and Walter on their Wedding Day**

Pat was given away by her eldest son, Chris, and grandson, Oliver – a lovely wee fellow, watched by her other grandson, Jacob, and Walter's grandchildren. Walter's son David was best man and what a good job he did too! He encouraged people to be photographed and to take photos, as well as ensuring that all went well. Well, almost! There was one slight hitch when it was discovered, fortunately before the ceremony began, that the ring had been left behind! However, a hurried return to the scene of the omission avoided any potential embarrassment. There was a good crowd from both families at the ceremony plus their many friends, including golfers and dancers, so kilts were much in evidence.

The reception was held at the Birchington Centre, with more people arriving to share Pat and Walter's special day. Pat, who teaches both Isle of Thanet dancers and Canterbury St. Andrews, devised a dance especially for this joyous occasion, called "Wedding Celebrations", and everyone enjoyed dancing it. Walter was dancing in his wedding shoes as his ghillies had been left in a taxi. We all wish Pat and Walter a very happy married life together.

**David & Patricia Papa (St Andrews Canterbury)**

### SIXTY YEARS OF KASS

This review of the six decades of KASS is certainly not fully comprehensive. My trawl of the archives and my photos, plus the articles I've

received for this purpose, have some omissions. However, it recognises some of the events and people that have made KASS what it is now.

**The Fifties**

In the KASS Chair:

- 1951 A F Adamson
- 1952 – 1953 Mr Houston
- 1954 – 1955 J E Henderson
- 1956 – 1957 W S Johnstone
- 1958 – 1959 J W W Stephenson

**Some early photos**

Charles Heseltine of Hythe mentioned to Muriel that he had some photos. She thought they may be of interest. Here they are as, on seeing them, they seemed a good way to begin our nostalgic look at KASS and things Scottish over the past 60 years.



**Dancers at Folkestone's East Cliff Pavilion**

This is what it looked like at the end of the first decade, in 1959! The first photo (above) was taken at a formal dance in Folkestone's East Cliff Pavilion. The youngsters, who are seated in the foreground, had given a Demonstration. The MC "Jock" Young is seated centre right. Many present were dancers from the Ashford and District Caledonian Society. Roy Gillespie-Smith led the strong dance section of the Ashford Society at the time.



**Winners receive their prize**

The second photo, below left, is of the presentation of the *Charing Eight Cup* to Roy Gillespie-Smith and the winning Ashford and District Caledonian Society dance display team. The Competition had been held on 6 Nov. 1959 at the Kempton Manor Hotel, Hothfield, near Ashford. Included in the team are Elizabeth Weir, Pat Woodward, Charles Heseltine, Roy Gillespie-Smith, Ken Bray and Nan Thompson.



**Dancing at Hothfield in 1959**

The third photo, above, shows some of the dancers, believed to be at the Hothfield dance held in November 1959.

**Memories**

My father brought our family to England from Scotland in the 1950s. It did not take him long to track down the Medway & District Caledonian Association. I believe it had begun life as a Social Club for ex-Scottish servicemen who had decided to settle in the south after the war, having married English girls.

In those days children were not allowed to dance in the 'set' dances. Mrs Jan Stephenson was the President and it was her strict rule. However, the social evenings included many dances such as the *Gay Gordons*, *The St. Bernard's Waltz*, the *Quickstep* and the fast *Country Waltz*. We could dance these but enviously watched the grown-ups dance Reels, Jigs and Strathspeys. Bill MacDonald was the MC every week – quite an undertaking. Many members will still remember Bill and Yvonne as they came along to functions until the late 1990s. My mum and brother also came along, until my mother's nursing commitments prevented her from attending too often and my brother joined the Air Cadets, which clashed with the Wednesday Club evening.

My father and I would bus from Rochester, having walked the ten-minute journey to the bus stop, changed buses in Chatham and taken another to Gillingham. The Club met in the Assembly Rooms above the Co-op Store, which has long gone. Then the Club

moved to the Labour Hall in Vicarage Road (off Canterbury Street) and we had yet another walk from the bus stop to the hall. We had to leave early as the last bus left Chatham at 10.30 pm. Over two hours travelling by public transport for two hours dancing. How many would do that these days?



**Me, Mum and Dad at Hogmanay 1956**

KASS had formed about then and the big occasion of the year was the Annual Ball, held in the rather salubrious setting of the Star Hotel Ballroom in Maidstone, again long gone (now the Star Arcade). Kilts were not generally worn by the men as tartan was expensive after the war. Those who did, looked very handsome and, those who didn't, scrubbed up rather well in their tuxedos. The ladies all looked very glamorous in their long dresses. The coveted dancing pumps were another item in short supply and the men generally wore ballroom shoes and the ladies small- heeled glittery sandals. It was amazing how we danced in those! I can still remember my first long gown!! As I recall double-decker buses were hired for the evening, as not many people owned cars in those days, and dancers were bussed in from all parts. I can still remember very 'merry' bus journeys home!

The Club moved to the Drill Hall along the A2 towards Rainham. There were no buses travelling that far along in the evening – they stopped at the Jezreels, at the top of Canterbury Street. It was impossible for us to get to the Hall and, therefore, we stopped attending.



However, in 1996 I tracked down the 'Callies' with my youngest daughter, Lynne, who is shown in the photo with Muriel left. They met in the Oast House in Rainham at the time Muriel

Greenstead was President and we tentatively went along. We were greeted with great friendliness and have attended ever since.

When Susan Orr introduced the 'Monday Class' at Bredhurst in 1997, my husband also came along. Little did I know that after over 40 years since starting with the Club I would be on the Council, elected as Secretary and achieve Honorary Membership!



**With husband Ken at Medway's 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Ball**

A few months after we began dancing at the Oast House, my eldest daughter's two daughters, Robyn and Alex, also wanted to learn. They went along to be very efficiently taught by Margaret Anne Robertson and they gained their Grade 5 examinations with Credits. They danced for over 10 years with Margaret Anne, attending some social evenings and most of the Medway & District's Balls and were able to dance in the 'sets' – something never allowed in my young days! They were ably helped and welcomed by adults from all the Clubs who attended. They became life members as soon as they reached sixteen years old. University life then took over but, hopefully, they won't wait over 40 years to join in again!



**Alex and Robyn in Margaret Anne's show "The Twelve Days of Christmas"**

Are there any more four-generation families in KASS?

**Ailean Baker  
(Medway & District Caledonian Association)**

## The Sixties

In the KASS Chair:

1960 – 1961 W Woodham  
 1962 – 1963 C Stephenson  
 1964 – 1965 J W W Stephenson  
 1966 – 1967 S Smith  
 1968 – 1969 J G Pollock

Stories abound about Mrs Stephenson. She was our eighth Chairman (1958-1959) and again from 1964 to 1965. She earned the sobriquet of "Mama KASS". Many of us were in complete awe of her when she appeared at dances in her magnificent ball gown. She seemed to glide around the floor as though on castors. One of my own memories is of attending a day school at Chatham, possibly in 1965, and being greeted by her at the door with, "Are you a gillie?" Being completely puzzled, I denied this vehemently and it wasn't until later that I discovered that the Gillies were a dance group at Woolwich!

David How

## The Seventies

In the KASS Chair:

1970 – 1971 G B Michie  
 1972 – 1973 R Yeudal  
 1974 – 1975 Gavin Hamilton  
 1976 – 1977 Philip Sewell  
 1978 – 1979 J Peters

## Personal memories of KASS in the Seventies

- \* All ladies wore full length dresses to Balls, many with a sash.
- \* You booked very few dances.
- \* No-one got up on to the dance floor before a dance was announced.
- \* No walkthroughs or even talk-throughs but, as mini-crib had not been invented, handy little booklets were produced as cribs for KASS dances.  
*(Some of these, on coloured paper, are still used as my minicribs!- Ed)*
- \* Emphasis on etiquette and knowing the dances was greater than today, but we still had FUN!
- \* Mrs (Dr) Stephenson was the chair and was referred to as 'Mama Kass'. She wore beautiful Victorian style Ball dresses and swept across the floor like a ship in full sail, graceful and elegant.
- \* We tried various catering arrangements, including ploughman's and a fish and chip supper before deciding on one catered Highland

Ball a year and a "bring-a-plate" November dance.

\* On one occasion we had a Ball in the Assembly Rooms at Tunbridge Wells, where the floor was sprung for Ballroom dances. The effect of a hundred pairs of feet doing *pas de bas* in unison was amazing – especially if you had a glass of beer on the table!

\* 1976 was our Silver Jubilee and though there were many special events, I can only recall a concert at Maidstone's Hazlett Theatre, attended by the Mayor.



\* Gravesend held an annual open-air picnic dance at Cobham Hall, seen above. It was THE event of the summer! *(I remember those afternoon/evening dances fondly – Ed)* Whole families came and spread rugs on the ground to picnic, play and chat, even if not dancing. We parked around the edges of the rounders pitches, with the Hall as the backdrop to the live band. We danced into the dusk, occasionally beyond – dancing by the light of car headlights. As dusk descended the worms rose and the dew fell!

Esther Barford (Cobtree)

## My first dance

The first dance I ever attended in Kent, after having moved to Dover in 1977, was the Sheerness Scottish Heather Club's *Burn's Celebration Dance* on 13 January 1979.



## The very ticket from the Ed's first dance!

I remember it fondly. The first half closed with *A Trip to Bavaria* which was the first dance I ever attempted! After that I enjoyed the

Meal, which comprised a small portion of haggis with brown bread, followed by a plate of "fancies" – I remember especially the shortbread and drop scones!

During the interval some of Burns' songs were sung to a piano accompaniment. It was at Queenborough I first met Mary Howard, "Mary's Mum" and Joan Davidson, frequently partners at subsequent dances, as well as Charlie Davidson and a group of people from Dover, that included "Little Joyce" from Ash!

**Alan French (Dover SCDG)**

## The Eighties

In the KASS Chair:

1979 – 1980 Richard Barford  
 1981 – 1982 P Godfrey  
 1983 – 1984 Gavin Hamilton  
 1984 – 1986 Hazel Webb  
 1986 – 1988 E C Webb  
 1988 – 1990 Rita Menzies

*RIP*

*Gavin Hamilton, Charlie Davidson & Philip Sewell*

Titbit

1986 – KASS Tea Dances inaugurated

## KASS Tea Dances – 25<sup>th</sup> Year

The great institution known as the KASS Tea Dance was the brain child of Les and Frances French, the then Social Secretaries, in the mid 1980s. The first was held at Herne Hill Village Hall on 28 September 1986, which was just a few days before I became Vice Chairman. So I can say I was in at the birth, and have attended almost all until now, when the ravages of time are starting to catch up with me.



**Les and Frances French,  
at the 1991 KASS Ruby Ball**

An item in the May 1986 Newsletter advertises a "Family Tea Dance", from 2pm till 6, with the cost being 50p for adults – that is "anyone who has left school or is over 18". While the cost has risen since then, the intention is still to make the Tea Dance as accessible as possible, aiming only to cover the cost of the hall. In those days, the emphasis was firmly on the family. Joan Davidson, the editor of the Newsletter, suggests a family day out – perhaps a visit to Canterbury or Whitstable, a picnic lunch, and then on with the dancing. Some outdoor activities were also arranged for children, and we tried to find halls which had suitable grounds or playing fields adjacent. But it was always hoped that all members of the family would enjoy some simple dances, and perhaps get "hooked".

There were occasions when the abundance of children was somewhat overwhelming. I recall once we had such a crowd at Ide Hill. We didn't know how we were going to cope. By this time, Molly Osment and I were in charge of the event, and the demand for tea, in a very small kitchen, required all hands to the pumps – or should I say urn! Ray Osment, the Chairman, took over the actual tea making, and I discovered later that his method was just to keep filling up the pot and adding another couple of tea bags. When I emptied the pot at the end I found nearly 30 bags!! But there were no complaints.

We have "Tea Danced" from Dover to Crayford, from Thanet to Medway and from Groombridge to Upchurch. Nowadays, with the baby boomer generation reaching retirement, there don't seem to be so many children around. The character of the tea dances has also shifted more to encouraging less experienced adult dancers to dip their toes in the bigger pond of dances outside their own classes, although children are, of course, more than welcome. Perhaps because of the rising cost of travel, Tea Dances have become more "regional" than in the old days. That is why we need to maintain the practice we set up, of spreading them around the KASS area as much as possible.

But 25 years on, I am delighted that the tradition is being upheld. I hope that when KASS celebrates 85 years, there will still be a place for the 50 year-old Tea Dance – encouraging new dancers to mix in an informal setting with the "old stagers." I urge any readers who have so far given these events a miss, to give them a try instead. You will always receive a warm welcome.

**Rita Menzies (Medway)**

### Scottish Dancing in Kent in the 80s and early 90s

Jan and I started Scottish dancing at Cobtree Hall, Mote Park, Maidstone in October 1983. There used to be two or three sets. There wasn't much room for many more. Phyllis and Peter Green ran the club.



**Cobtree Hall as it is today**

Steve Harvey was the first teacher we had, because Phyllis said he was best for beginners. Eventually, we started going to Dick Barford's class on the alternate Wednesdays and we found that we liked his classes too. It was all very friendly and Ray and Mollie Osment persuaded us to start going on Thursdays to Medway at the Oast at Rainham.

The first dance that Jan and I attended was the Cobtree 10th Anniversary Dance at Ditton. I remember it well because there were several beginners there, but we got no support whatsoever from the experienced dancers. Jan and I managed to get a few dances in but a couple of ladies didn't dance at all. That certainly hasn't happened at a Cobtree dance in the last 17 years or so.

We might have started going to dances earlier but Phyllis was reluctant to advertise other clubs and events, for fear of losing members. She did tell me about the Tunbridge Wells RSCDS Day School, however, and I attended my first one in March 1986. Then we started to go to dances all over the place. One of the highlights was the picnic dance in the grounds of Cobham Hall run by Gravesend and Meopham. Our first was in July 1986 and it was a delightful setting. We always looked forward to it.

Tonbridge still had a club in the 80s and Margaret Johns was the Secretary. We went to their annual Ceilidh in March 1988 at David Salomon's House, Southborough. It was packed, dancing shoulder to shoulder, in a lovely wood panelled room.

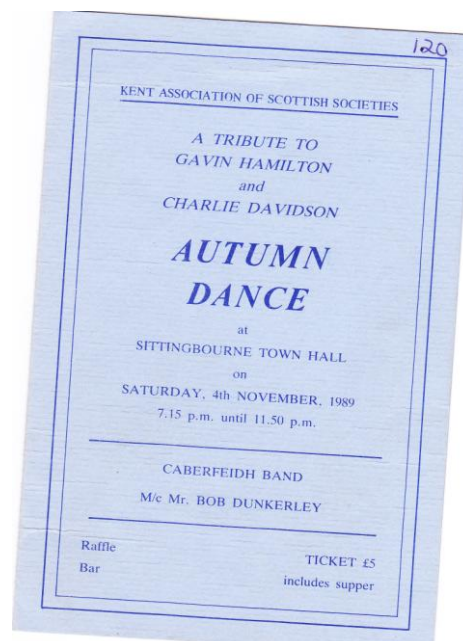
I was very impressed to note from my records that for their day school on 17 March 1990 RSCDS Tunbridge Wells had the following

teachers:- Dorothy Leurs, Bill Ireland, Tom Steele and Bill Zobel. I didn't know them then but I got to know them later after going regularly to the RSCDS St Andrews Summer School and several other day schools. They were superb teachers and the musicians for the event were all top class too. Well done Tunbridge Wells branch! It's fantastic that they could attract so many top notch people to their day school. The following year Muriel Johnstone was one of the musicians.

Wherever Jan and I went we generally found a friendly reception and this is still the case today. Mind you there were a few people around in those days who took themselves very seriously and danced very pompously. I remember them in particular at the 1988 KASS Ball at the Corn Exchange, Maidstone. It was embarrassing and probably helped to explain why there were so few people there. Happily the people concerned soon disappeared from the scene and I've never come across that sort of thing since.

You may have noticed that whilst I have been to a lot of classes, Jan hasn't. This is because she was taught to dance at a very early age and took part in Highland and Country Dance shows on stage from the age of five in the Aberlour and Dufftown area of Speyside. My first experience of Scottish dancing, on the other hand, was watching the White Heather Club on TV in the late fifties. Those were the days!

### John Day (Cobtree – former KASS Secretary)



### The KASS Tribute Dance ticket cover

The last KASS dance of the decade, in Autumn 1989, was held in Sittingbourne as a

tribute to the memory of two great KASS "characters" - Gavin Hamilton and Charlie "The Glasgow Lad" Davidson, who had both recently died. It was one of those memorable evenings of which KASS has had many.

## The Nineties

In the KASS Chair:

- 1990 – 1992 David Cullens
- 1992 – 1994 David How
- 1994 – 1996 Ray Osment
- 1996 – 1998 Angela Campbell
- 1998 – 2000 Alan French

RIP

*Jim Pollock, Bob Moore, Ray & Molly Osment,  
Josie May & Phyllis Green*

Titbits

1990 – KASS comprised 22 Member groups  
 1991 – 120 attend the KASS Ruby Anniversary Ball, held in Maidstone, with a loss of £373!  
 1992 – 1999 The KASS Ball was held in the Assembly Hall at the Kent Police Training School, Maidstone.



**Some of the Dover SCDG contingent (above) and some more (below) at the 1993 KASS Ball, held in**



**The Police Training School, Maidstone**

The Police Training School was central to the County, had ample car parking and two halls – one for dancing while the other could be set up for dining. I remember catering at the first few Balls was excellent with Coronation Chicken

one year and pink roast Scottish Aberdeen Angus beef another.

After 1999 security became an issue for the Police so they ceased to hire out their accommodation and KASS was forced to find an alternative venue for the next decade.

1999 - Venue for KASS Committee Meetings changed from the *Old House at Home* Public House in Maidstone town centre to Cobtree Hall.

## The Perfect Hall??

How do you find the perfect hall for Scottish Country Dancing? Since moving to Kent and dancing in Medway in 1990, the venue for our weekly meetings has changed several times. Good car parking, kitchen and toilet facilities are necessary, but a proper wooden floor should be essential, but is often hard to find.

My first hall was the Oasthouse in Rainham - central, next to the railway station, with a reasonable car park and lots of space, with two other rooms, useful for extra classes/practices. A bar and toilets were on the first floor, while we danced on the second floor, storing valuables in a cupboard on a mezzanine floor above. There was no separate kitchen, just a small bar area where we made drinks. The dance floor was fine, but the hall was not readily accessible for anyone with mobility problems and, in summer, very hot! In those days, as one of the few clubs dancing throughout the summer, we had visitors from Sittingbourne, Sheerness, Cobtree and as far away as Orpington. One very hot summer my suggestion we stop dancing during August was met with a stern refusal!!

Sadly, conditions at the Oast House deteriorated. With no running water on our floor, plastic cups replaced those we washed up, as a temporary measure, and the urn was filled from the bar and carried up a flight of stairs! Health & Safety, where were you! Apart from these problems, it was rumoured the place was closing so it was wise to find another hall. We were lucky to find Upchurch Village Hall quickly.



**Upchurch Village Hall** Page 11

Although not central, Upchurch was a great improvement. There were extra rooms, a good floor and after a few years, the toilets and kitchen were refurbished. It was on ground level, with good parking, but no caretaker and a complicated routine for getting and returning keys! In summer we happily spilled out onto the grassy area with doors wide open. Local lads often watched through the windows and a few were once persuaded in to dance! We continued to get our summer visitors, even a few from Thanet, so we said 'thank you' at a special August evening "Summer Celebration". Sadly, several people disliked the long drive from the main road to the hall, especially in the winter, and, after about six years in Upchurch, we were again on the move.

We went to St Mary's Church Hall in Frindsbury, a very nice, but slightly smaller hall, with good facilities, a stage, but no further rooms. Parking was difficult, on a rough unmade road, which was often unlit. This brought problems on dark winter nights, when we fought for the closest spaces! On the plus side, the caretaker looked after the keys! Sadly for us, by then Cobtree was dancing all summer and we were too far away for our other summer friends. After about three years members wanted to return to a more central area so we were off again!

At St Mary's Island the hall divides into two, which suits our two weekly dancing groups and, as one large hall, has been used for big dances and ceilidhs. It was ideal for the Children's exams. The floor and other facilities are good. It has a well-lit car park and we have our own keys. The main drawbacks are the little kitchen hatches and a ban on noise after 11 pm, as houses are very close to the hall. However, we have been there about six years now, and it serves us well.

Despite our many moves and changes, the Association continues to thrive. Some dancers have moved away, some passed away, and some have just given up. Yet we have welcomed newcomers, many from the Island itself, and have a strong hard core of members who have survived all the moves. Luckily, we have never had to change our dancing night. Despite great improvements in kitchens over the years, we continue to use plastic cups!

**Margaret Anne Robertson (Medway)**

### **A memory from Angela**

One happy memory from my time in office as Chairman is referred to, by my husband, as the "MIPIK" moment. Margaret

Anne Robertson had kindly invited me to the dance held to celebrate several of her children achieving medals, which were presented by Molly Osment, widow of Ray - my predecessor as Chairman. I was adding my congratulations, naturally properly dressed with the splendid and newly polished chain.

One small girl approached timidly and in a hushed voice enquired, "Are you the most important person in Kent?" Obviously this was greeted with much laughter (plus derision and unsuitable comments) by the other important people listening and, unfortunately, my immediate response escapes me - probably something like "I wish I was when I'm teaching".

As well as attending dances all over Kent, I enjoyed the challenge of visiting club nights. This provided an opportunity to chat to more members and indeed work out which club they actually belonged to, as on Saturdays this was more difficult. Usually I took a friend as company on sometimes long journeys and we received a warm welcome everywhere. Sadly I never quite made it to all our societies, due to lack of time and the distances involved. I think Sittingbourne, with Bert and his jolly harem, was the furthest we ventured during the week - but it was an interesting and fun experience, resulting in lots of new friends.



All other memories are a bit of a jumble, but the Ruby Ball at Rochester Corn Exchange stands out as a grand occasion. Also those enjoyable chats after KASS Committee meetings in the "Old House at Home" pub in Maidstone (shown in the photo left) -

what a relaxed atmosphere!

It has been great for me to see those who started dancing as 'raw beginners', gaining confidence and progressing to enjoying dances and helping others. At Orpington we are doing our best to encourage newcomers to join in - just not to try to do the difficult ones too soon!

At the moment I am recovering from a broken bone in my right foot (the Beckham injury) which happened at the Tunbridge Wells Day School - dancing is a dangerous activity!

**Angela Campbell**  
**(Orpington – KASS Chairman 1996 – 1998)**  
*[Get fit soon, Angela – Ed]*

## The Noughties

In the KASS Chair:

2000 – 2002 Pat Ansell

2002 – 2004 David Menzies

2004 – 2006 Iain Kinnear

2006 – 2008 Ken Hamilton

2008 – 2010 Muriel Greenstead

*RIP*

*John Holme, Ron Brisley, David Kynoch,  
Peter Green, Linda Evans, Iain Kinnear  
& Brian Spearing*

Titbits

2001 – KASS Golden Anniversary Ball held in  
Dover Town Hall



**The KASS Golden Jubilee Ball - a special occasion in Dover Town Hall**



**Alan French (now Newsletter Editor) with Louise at the KASS Golden Jubilee Ball in Dover Town Hall, when he was Chairman of KASS**

Dear Reader, it is not that nothing much has happened in the Noughties (or should that rather be the Naughtyies?!!) that there is no contribution. It is rather that at this point in time most of us have been looking back to the earlier years of KASS. We are only too aware of the reality of the last decade in which we were all 'getting on a bit'; petrol was getting more expensive; driving too far at night became more of an ordeal. So, in response to changing times, KASS has adapted accordingly and centralized its May Ball in the Maidstone area, at the brand

new Malling School. Under the Chairmanship of Muriel there was a move towards making the KASS Ball a more formal affair and people were encouraged to "dress for the occasion". There has been a resurgence of "dressing up", which I applaud – is it in retaliation to the drab, cut backs and recession?

The Autumn Dance, however, moves around the County to give us all a chance of hosting it and not having to travel too far after it has finished! The Tea Dances also migrate from east to west, and from north to south of Kent, but have become more localized events rather than county-wide. Another sign of the times!

In the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century we were made only too aware of our mortality with the passing of so many KASS characters. Yet we dance on and enter the second decade positively and with eagerness.

## The Here & Now

In the KASS Chair:

2010 - 2012 Roger Brown

*RIP*

*Mo Dalton & Margaret Bowden*

## A short break to Luxembourg

Why go to Luxembourg? Well at Christmas 2009, I was fortunate (or otherwise) to win 2<sup>nd</sup> prize in a Pembury Hospital raffle, which was a 5 Day Sea-France Dover - Calais ticket, for a car and passengers, to be taken before 30 June 2010. I say "otherwise" because the final outlay far exceeded the cost of a sea crossing!

Question - where to go in 5 days from Calais? After pondering, we agreed on a quick visit to Luxembourg - normally a place to pass through, or have an over-night stop or break in a journey, when one sees very little of it. It is only 260 miles from Calais, so we could easily get there in a day. Our route was to motor along the coast, past Dunkirk and turn off at Veurne for Ypres (Ieper). Then on to Kortrijk (Courtrai), make for Tournai (Doornik), Mons (Bergen), Charleroi, Namur (Namen), then on to Luxembourg. Looking at the map now, the route seems easy, but I only noted one place name, overlooking the Walloon and French names for the same place. So, at Tournai we were lost. In the nearest town we spotted MacDonalds, where we usually only go for a banana milk shake! But we both needed a comfort stop. The



Manageress spoke good English and after the obligatory milk shake and a brief rest, she pointed us in the right direction.

We had left Calais at 12.45 and, with another stop, we arrived at Luxembourg about 18.00hrs. On the outskirts, we followed a route which seemed quite simple on a map provided by the hotel but, in reality, it was nothing like and I had to admit defeat! Finding a place to stop, without causing a traffic hold-up, was nigh impossible but eventually I did so, then hailed a passer-by, with my school boy French, for assistance. After pondering, he considered it to be the other side of the valley we were in, despite the area being built up and the other side not visible. So, with a polite 'merci', we retraced our route back to a 'y' junction where we could go in the same direction. It was still built up each side but gradually the buildings lessened and then I let out a whoop as I spotted a sign for Parc. Not much to go on but I was sure we were close.

When planning this trip, I had used my limited computer capability and, not only had I received an information pack of Luxembourg and its environs, but also details of hotels. Discarding those in the centre, I opted for one on the outskirts, with good parking facilities. It turned out a wise choice because after spotting the Parc sign, we were soon in a wooded area, which I understand is called the Val de Vert, and then to the Hotel Alvisse Parc.



**Hotel Alvisse Parc, Luxembourg**

The 320-room hotel has a "wellness area" and an indoor swimming pool which was deep at both ends! There was also an outdoor pool, presumably only in use in summer. The hotel was very comfortable, meals good and it was quiet. By booking on line and paying up front (non-returnable) we got a very good rate.

The next day we took the local half hourly bus which costs €1.50 into Luxembourg. In the old city we quickly found the main square, bordered by open-air restaurants and cafes,

where we had morning coffee, also a lunch and lager. Nearby, the Information Office advised us about open-top bus tours of the old and new city. With a ticket comes a free headset for a running commentary, in a choice of five languages. We also had the choice of getting off at interesting places and rejoining the next bus. One place was the Museum of the History of the Old City, located in an old building of the town, shown in the photo below.



The old city was originally a fortress and a true text book example of European military architecture. It changed hands many times and was occupied by Italian, Spanish, Belgian, French, Austrian, Dutch and Prussian military engineers. All were involved in extending the fortifications and traces of their work still remain. When it was no longer defensible, due to advanced weaponry, the fortress was razed to the ground and the city built on the top. However, casements beneath remain and can be visited. Since 1994, the fortifications and the old city have been classified as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is a European capital, not only due to its geographical situation in the heart of Europe, but it is also multi-lingual, cosmopolitan and welcoming, with a population made up of some 150 different nationalities.

After seeing all the new buildings connected with the European Union on the first and last days of our trip, we leisurely motored out into the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, into quite pleasant countryside. Inadvertently we strayed into Germany, as there are no borders now, but we did spot the 'dragon's teeth' of the Siegfried Line, which stretches for miles.



**"Dragon's Teeth" of the Siegfried Line**

Then, back into the Duchy and to "little Switzerland", where houses are built in a Swiss style. I had read of a war museum in the area and, by chance, arrived at Diekirch where we found it, realising we were in the Ardennes where 'The Battle of the Bulge' took place in December 1944. The freezing conditions were truly awful for both sides. One building in Luxembourg City was where General Patton had his HQ and he had to turn round his army 90° to face his advancing enemy. I could have stayed at the Museum all day but my partner had other ideas and I was dragged away!



After seeing the City from an open-top bus, like the one above, and going down into the gorge in a tuk-tuk(?) a tractor engine pulling a couple of carriages, it was time to return. So, filling up with diesel at €50 per litre the night before, made for an easy departure the next morning at 08.30hrs. Confident in our directions, we found ourselves back in the centre of Luxembourg! With no signs to help us and, at times, traffic coming at us from all directions, I chanced on one road that took us through a tunnel. When we emerged the only sign pointed to Trier, 20 miles away in the wrong direction! It then dawned on me, that was the way to go and, after crossing the gorge – shown in the photo below - for the last time, we followed the signs until we came to the motorway for Trier, but took the opposite direction to Brussels.



**Luxembourg Gorge**

We could only have been delayed about 20 mins but it seemed a jolly long time! At least we were on our way home and arrived back at Calais about 15:00 hrs. After a quick kip in the

back of the car and a visit to the hypermarket it was on to the car-ferry, in plenty of time and looking forward to a meal aboard.

We enjoyed our visit to Luxembourg but would I do it again? Yes, using a different ferry and having longer time to explore the city and Duchy.

**John Warner (Wadhurst – ex Tunbridge Wells)**

### **Scottish influence world wide**

Where do you find Scots and Scottish influence? The answer is virtually everywhere in the world. Here are some reflections on where have I found them?

From 1974 to 1976 I was in charge of the construction of a large dam in NW Peru. My 3 year old daughter and 1 year old son had 2,000 miles of the Atacama Desert to play in: no shortage of sand but not much water, hence the need for a dam and reservoir for irrigation of fertile land. The Scottish connection was that many of the old farming families had originally come from Scotland. They kept their Scottish names, but pronounced them with some difficulty in Spanish. The local airfield was full of private planes at the week end, as these rich farmers flew in to relax at the Piura Club. Many had joined the Allied forces during the war, using their flying skills, and their children were educated in the UK. When I asked one farmer if we should converse in English or Spanish, as I had heard that he spoke good English, he replied, "Oh my God, you're pulling my leg!" We spoke in my less polished Spanish!!

On the other side of South America, the Argentinians were looking for new farmers to settle the Patagonian pampas, where local tribes had been eliminated during the Spanish Conquest. They wanted sheep farmers as the land was so poor. The nearest candidates were Scottish crofters, forced to leave Scotland and set up in the Falklands. Many were tempted by a free offer of 10,000 hectares, a horse and a cow in Patagonia. This seemed great till they saw the poor land but, by then, it was too late!! Huge sheep farms still exist there, but the sheep have to be killed after 5 years as their teeth have been worn down by the grit covering everything edible. Owners keep their fingers crossed and hope oil will be discovered!!

Hong Kong was next from 1978 to 1982, with a young family. We lived in Kowloon Tong, on the mainland, just under the flight path to the old Kai Tak airport. Scottish activities were held on Hong Kong Island, which was difficult to get to when we arrived, except by the Star Ferry.

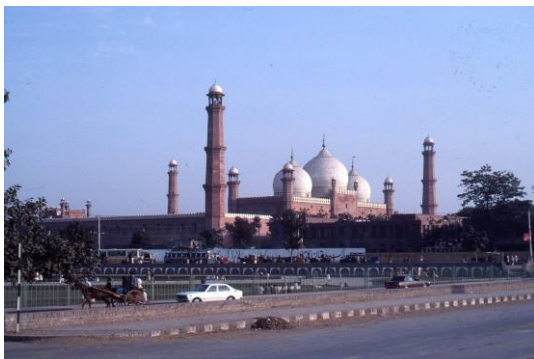
This is one of the most spectacular boat trips in the world and great value as it costs only a few pence to cross the busy harbour.



**The Hong Kong Ferry**

A few years later a tunnel was built so we could drive to the island, for weekly Scottish Country Dancing. That was the good news. The bad news was that the water supply was cut to 4 hours per day and our flats did not have storage tanks. After a sweaty night's dancing we had to rush back to the mainland in time to have a shower before the water went off at 10pm!!!

From 1982 to 1986 we were in Pakistan, living in the lovely old city of Lahore. We passed the Badshahi Mosque and Lahore Fort when we went north on the Grand Trunk Road to visit Rawalpindi, Murree Hill Station and the valleys in the foothills of the Himalayas.



**The Badshahi Mosque**

They were eventful journeys. Rudyard Kipling described the road in *Kim*. Peshawar was a frontier town and the Khyber Pass closed when we were there, because of the Russian invasion of Afghanistan. There were "no go" areas ruled by independent war lords.

So what is the Scottish connection? The answer is the Pakistani Army. Every camp seemed to have its own pipe band which participated in all major events. The annual two-day Lahore Horse and Cattle show, held in a huge stadium, included massed pipe bands performing complicated formations. The display of tartans and the sounds were atmospheric. I once met a senior British Army officer from the First Battalion 51<sup>st</sup> Highland Volunteers, who was judging the piping and marching skills for an

award donated by the Duke of Edinburgh. The first dance in the Battalion's 1979 Reel Book was our old favourite "*The Reel of the 51<sup>st</sup>*".

One of the most exciting events was "tent pegging" which developed as training for surprise attacks on an enemy camp. At dawn, cavalry would enter the enemy camp at a gallop and, with a lance, lift out the wooden pegs holding up the tents, which would collapse on the sleeping inmates who would be quickly dispatched by the following infantry. Today, teams try to spike a peg. It is spectacular in day light but even more so at night, when the pegs have flares attached!

By now the family had to return to the UK for formal secondary education. However, my work still took me abroad. I spent many years in Kathmandu, Nepal and, one year, Sheila was out at the end of November, guiding the British Ambassador through dances at our special St Andrew's night event at the Malla Hotel.

Expatriates are dwindling in most of the developing world but my recent visits to Africa have covered similar ground to Dr Livingstone, another Scot. There are many churches with their particular messages and devotees. Other enterprises also claim divine links, as shown in the photo below.



**"In God we trust motors"**

Now my daughter and her family live in New Zealand so we have explored widely. We keep coming across communities with Scottish names, links with the home country. Most Scottish activities are in South Island, at Dunedin, where the local directory lists kilt makers. There is even a New Zealand tartan. Scottish shops sell possum sporrans. Possum fur is sent from New Zealand to Scotland, made into sporrans and then shipped back to New Zealand. Anzac Day (25 April) is the equivalent of our Armistice Day and the march through the local town, Paraparaumu, was led by the local pipe band and an open air service included a bagpipe lament.

When my daughter and grand-daughter both



entered the Kapiti Coastadies Triathlon (sea-swim, road cycling followed by a run) the 100+ contestants were led onto the beach by a lone lady piper, shown in the photo to the left.

I almost forgot to mention the universal appeal of the Scottish Beverage. You must serve the top quality in China if you want to retain status, whether entertaining or for a special occasion or just showing off! Yet, in many countries, after long hours travelling on bone-shaking, dirt tracks you are then very grateful that tarmac was another Scot's invention!

**Roger Brown (KASS Chairman)**

### Stovies and Brose

As I typed the word "stovies", it came up underlined in red! I thought I would write a stovie recipe because my Sassenach (underlined in red again!) [*Not on my PC it wasn't – Ed!*] friends look at me "gone out" when I mention stovies. I tell them it is a bit like Bubble and Squeak (which I've never had) but without any cabbage. However, having been faced with a delicious selection of stovies at a recent Medway Ceilidh, I don't know why I am writing this for the KASS Newsletter. It is like taking coals to Newcastle. So please feel free to skip the rest.

When I was a wee (Wow! That is not underlined in red!) girl, "stovies" were the regulation Monday lunch, as that was washday when the mangle came out of the scullery. In those days Sunday lunch was usually roast beef (chicken was an expensive treat, only for special occasions – not the cheap alternative as today!) Stovies were a way of using up the left over roast beef (what sacrilege!) and I don't know if left over potatoes were used as well. Needless to say, this canny Scot and an Aberdonian at that (the Scotsman's Scotsman!) isn't going to modge up (red underlining again!) any leftover beef in stovies, so I'll just give you my haphazard recipe that will fill a pressure cooker: 2-3oz Dripping; 3 onions; 1.25lb sausages; sliced potatoes to fill the pan; marmite & gravy browning

Melt the dripping, fry the sliced onions a few minutes and add sausages, fry a few more minutes till starting to brown a little; add chopped potatoes, gradually, turning the mixture as you add them, until the pressure cooker is

about full. Add 1 large teaspoon of Marmite and some gravy browning plus water to about a quarter way up the pan. Bring to pressure and cook for 20 minutes. Season to taste and mash with a potato masher. My family has to have it with HP Sauce, but I prefer mustard.



Brose – if this is unknown to you, worry not. Most Scots have never heard of it either! And yes, it's underlined again! [*Not on my PC it isn't – Ed!*] It all started when my husband was a student, making porridge for breakfast every morning, long before microwaves were even imagined! While the porridge was cooking he would go across the road for his daily newspaper. Not surprisingly, the porridge was burnt on a fairly regular basis. So, when he went home for the holidays, he asked his dad (a north east farmer) what this "brose" was that he had often mentioned. And so he came to make that for his breakfast, which was in no danger of burning – as you will discover anon.

When we were first married, my husband ate this revolting stuff every morning, while I tucked into cereal. Every six weeks or so, I was going for a bottle of Cascara, which was a laxative. James (said husband) told me, while I was at the bottle, that I should have brose every day as it would keep me regular! I was sceptical but, the next day, I was brave and tried a very small helping of the "noxious brew". I was very apprehensive – I always want to say trepidatious, but that word doesn't exist (yes, red underlining again!). Believe it or not, it tasted good. I was hooked. I have had it for breakfast every day since. James has muesli on Sundays for special, but I want my brose on Sundays too! And I suspect the Cascara bottle never got finished! Mind you, I'll still have bacon and eggs and the full works on holiday! But never, never, will I have porridge – I loathe the stuff and think it is slimy.

So what is brose? It's Medium Oatmeal (not Rolled Oats) which in Gravesend we can only get in Morrisons, though possibly at great expense in a health food shop. You put 2 rounded dessert spoons in a bowl with a sprinkling of salt and add boiling water to taste – not a lot, you can always add more. You can have it as thick or as thin as you like. If you've put in too much water, never mind – it thickens up quickly. Pour on milk and enjoy. Warning: the water must be boiling and if you leave it any time before eating, you will certainly be able to dance a Highland Fling on it!

**Ann Stott (Meopham)**

Page 17

**"Women and children first!"**

This phrase is most famously associated with the *RMS Titanic*. Actually, it came into usage in 1860, following an outstanding collective act of discipline and bravery by soldiers, mainly from two Scottish regiments, that had happened eight years earlier.

**The wreck of HMS Birkenhead**

In February 1852 soldiers of the 73<sup>rd</sup> and the 74<sup>th</sup> (Highland) Regiments of Foot, with others, were on the troopship *HMS Birkenhead* off the South African coast. She struck an uncharted rock and began to sink. The Commanding Officer of the 74<sup>th</sup>, Lt Col Alexander Seton, gave the order for the men to stand fast on the deck to give the women passengers and their children a chance to use the few usable boats. Even when the wreck began to break up and her Captain gave the order to abandon ship the Colonel ordered his men still to stand fast so as not to swamp the boats. When, eventually, the boats were clear the order, "Every man for himself," was given to the troops. Some managed to swim the two miles to shore using wreckage to help them keep afloat. Others were rescued the following day, clinging to the rigging. Of the 643 on board when *HMS Birkenhead* struck the rock only 193 survived, which included all the women and children. Lt Col Seton was amongst those who died from drowning, exposure or were taken by sharks.

Rudyard Kipling, among others, immortalised the event as the "*Birkenhead Drill*" and the King of Prussia ordered that the story be read to every regiment in his army as an inspiring story of bravery. In 1881 the 74<sup>th</sup> was amalgamated with the 71<sup>st</sup> to become the Highland Light Infantry.

**Bob Hunt (Medway)**

**WaterAid's  
'Big National Ceilidh'**

We are delighted to report that the 2010 event was a great success and saw 85 ceilidhs taking place across the world from Canada to Australia! We doubled our funds from 2009 and, you guessed it, we want to double these again this year!

The aim of the event is to have as many ceilidhs as possible taking place world-wide on 15 October, although you can have your ceilidh at any time if this isn't suitable. To unite the events everyone will dance the same dance to the same tune – the 'Circassian Circle' to the tune of Jamie Allen' at 10 pm (internationally where possible).

It's a great opportunity to bring your community together. We would be delighted to have as many Scottish Country Dance Clubs in Kent involved this year by hosting a ceilidh. The event not only raises funds for WaterAid but also awareness of folk music and dancing. It's so easy to get involved – all you need is a venue, a ceilidh band and a caller!

Every day in the world's poorest countries diarrhoea, caused by dirty water and poor sanitation, takes the lives of more children than AIDS, malaria and measles combined. So far WaterAid has helped 14 million people. With your help we can reach far more.

Would you be interested in doing this? For more information, and to download a pack, please see our official website at [www.bignationalceilidh.co.uk](http://www.bignationalceilidh.co.uk).

Contact us via email at [ceilidh@wateraid.org](mailto:ceilidh@wateraid.org) or call Clare on 020 7793 4550 if you are interested or if you have any questions at all.

Many thanks,

Ben Jones - on behalf of Clare McTaggart  
(Community Fundraiser WaterAid)



**OBITUARIES****Maureen "Mo" Dalton****Maureen Elizabeth Dalton**14<sup>th</sup> June 1941 to 14<sup>th</sup> January 2011**Memory of a lady – to whom it was difficult to say "No".**

Mo Dalton had a wonderful knack or talent for getting the best out of people, especially when or where dancing was concerned. My first recollection of Mo was when she was in the early stages of preparing a 'Dancing through the Ages' evening'. I had not long returned to dancing after retiring as a full time teacher when I got the 'summons' – Mo needs another man. At that stage I had little idea exactly who Mo was, but having been given the message by both Linda Evans and Sue Bodle, one did not refuse. I can clearly remember going along to Badlesmere Village Hall and being introduced to a small, dynamic individual with the words, "Meet Mo!" That was the start of a long and very happy friendship involving many further opportunities to learn many 'old' dances that Mo had 'dug up' from somewhere, usually with the complete history of the dance.

Not only was Mo proficient at teaching the dance, she had another talent as a dress maker, costume maker, seamstress, procurer of costume artefacts and a walking encyclopaedia of Elizabethan, Stuart, Hanoverian, Regency, Victorian, Second World War and more modern fashion. Mo usually wanted to be "hands on", which could lead to certain problems - How do

you manage to finish eight Regency costumes in 24 hours, whilst trying to remember the vital statistics of the eight people who had to wear them? Somehow or other it always turned out well and the show went on.

Mo's knowledge of dances was pretty amazing. She had no particular speciality and was equally at home with Scottish Country dancing as she was with Quadrille dancing, as she was with English Folk dancing. After all, who in their right mind, would try to teach the Sword Dance of Papa Storr, including the many intricate twists and turns? Mo's enthusiasm for these "Dancing through the Ages" pageants was infectious and before long I found myself 'encouraging' and 'cajoling' other folk to join in and take part. I even managed to get a complete team to perform a MacNab dance to an experienced audience of dancers. This I would not have attempted without the knowledge that Mo had seen it and deemed it to be good.

I am extremely thankful that I had an opportunity to get to know Mo and to join the many people who have been told – "Mo needs another person!"

**Richard Barford (Cobtree)****Fond memories of Mo Dalton**

Jess and I got to know Mo when we joined her class for beginners in 2002. Over the years a small group of us became good friends. Mo loved dance and besides teaching Scottish Country Dancing, in 2007 she started to teach us Quadrilles from the Regency and Victorian periods. This led to some wonderful evenings dancing at York House, Richmond, Mo herself was part of a team invited to dance at the Wallace Collection in London. After dancing on some evenings, Jack, Sandy, Mo, Jess and I used to go back to one or other of our houses for a few nibbles, a bottle of wine and the odd glass of whisky and sometimes the laughter and talking went on way past 1am.

Besides the last girls' holiday, which I'm sure you all read about in the KASS Newsletter, as a group we had several enjoyable holidays in Scotland. On one coach trip we arrived at Stirling Castle where a group of musicians were playing medieval music in the Great Hall. They were dressed in period costume and playing authentic instruments. After chatting for a few minutes we learnt they would be playing medieval dance music in the afternoon, just as our coach was due to leave. Realising how disappointed we were to miss it, they treated us to an early impromptu concert!

Last September we spent two weeks in Turkey together and, to Mo's delight, she was able to have a go on a loom in a carpet factory. But, true to form for our holidays, there were eventful moments. We hired an open 4x4 and drove up into the mountains for a very enjoyable day, until a storm broke. We got the canvas roof on, despite the efforts of the wind to blow it away, and set off again. The passengers were holding the roof on and I was peering intently through the windscreen, all snug and dry in the front. Mo was in the back, wrapped in a towel, trying to keep dry as there were no side windows. When the rain stopped she removed the towel and, as we went round a corner, a large pool of water which had collected on the canvas roof poured all over Mo, drenching her. I had to stop driving because we were all laughing so much. Over the years our little group have had many funny, happy times together. She will be missed by everyone who knew her.

Before Mo's death we had arranged to dance for a local church's Burns Night and Medway's Ceilidh. It is a sign of the affection with which she was held that the dance communities, both Scottish and Quadrille, rallied round to make sure that both events went ahead. Both Sheerness and the Quadrille Club members are determined to keep going. Sheerness are holding its Summer Dance on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> July and the Burns Supper will be on 14<sup>th</sup> Jan 2012. The Quadrille Club members will be off to the Richmond Ball in early December.

Mo loved roses and included visits to rose collections in her trips out. In memory of this Sheerness Scottish Heather Club have clubbed together and, with donations from others who knew her, have purchased and had inscribed, a crystal rose bowl which will be filled with roses and put on display at Dances and Burns Nights organised by Sheerness. The bowl is inscribed:

***The Maureen Dalton Bowl  
1941 - 2011***

***In celebration of her love of dance***

Two ladies from Sevenoaks, who donated, remembered Mo from her Tonbridge days and still chuckle at her instruction for Ladies Up, Men down - "Skirts Up, Trousers Down!"

**Jess & Bob Hunt (Sheerness)**

## **Margaret Anne Bowden**



**Margaret Anne Bowden  
15<sup>th</sup> March 1947 to 18<sup>th</sup> April 2011**

Members of both the Deal and Dover Scottish dance groups were shocked and saddened to hear of Margaret's sudden death. She had started Scottish Country dancing in her late teens, attending both the Dover and Deal classes, eventually taking over the Deal class as the teacher. During that time she was a regular participant at the social dances around the area, and at several day schools. In the last few years she also managed to attend the class at Thanet.

Apart from dancing, she was very much involved in Guiding. Beginning as a Guide, she ran a Guide company for many years, and then became a District and Division Commissioner, before taking on the job of County Registrations Secretary and, in addition, County Badge Secretary. She was also an active Trefoil Guild member, and part of the Foxlease singing circle. The week before she died she received the news that she had been awarded the Laurel Award for outstanding service to the Movement.

As if that wasn't enough, she was also active with the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association, going round the area collecting the donations from the collecting boxes, as well as running a stall for them at various fetes. She even found time to go to Pilates classes once a week.

She worked for Lloyds Bank, taking early retirement in 2002. After her parents had moved to Somerset, Margaret spent much time travelling to and from Porlock, especially during recent years to help her father after her mother's death. She was in the process of finalizing his affairs in April, after his death in January. She will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

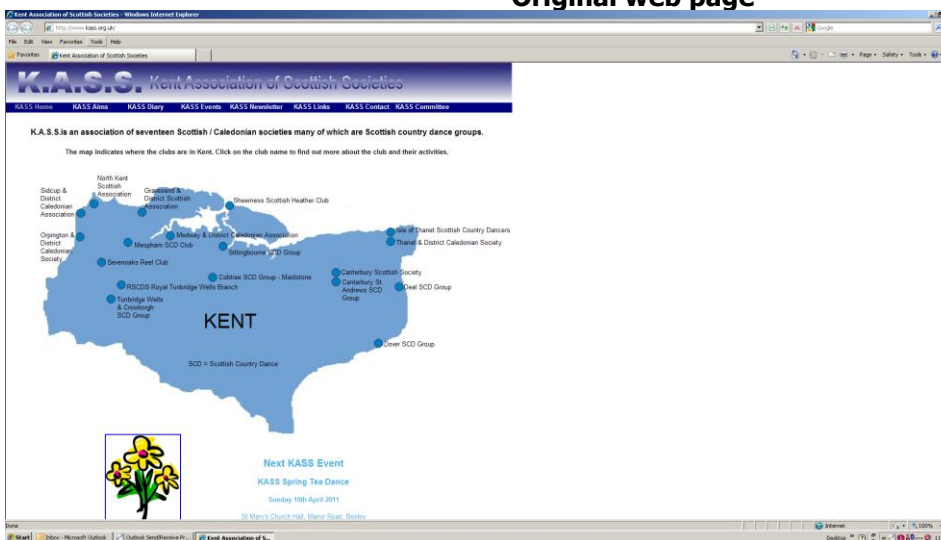
**Mary Quinton (Deal and Dover SCDG)**

## KASS Website Report April 2011

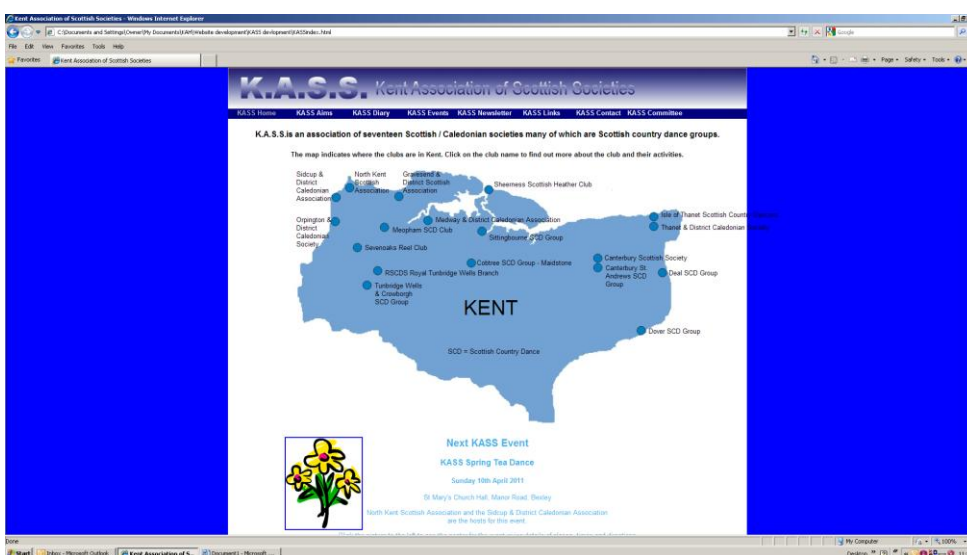
Development of the site continues with attempts to make the pages open in the centre of the screen, regardless of the monitor that is being used. The page width has been increased from 800px to 1024 px, since most of the users are now using monitors with 1024 or greater. The most recent attempts have been successful and the two screen prints, below, show the site as originally designed, with all of the content to the left of the screen, and the revised page, which is now central to the screen, with blue margins on either side.

The change of design will require all pages to be revised. This will only affect the layout of the pages and not the content. To revise all of the pages will take some time and the KASS pages will be the first to be converted. These will be followed by the club pages, with the most active pages being converted first.

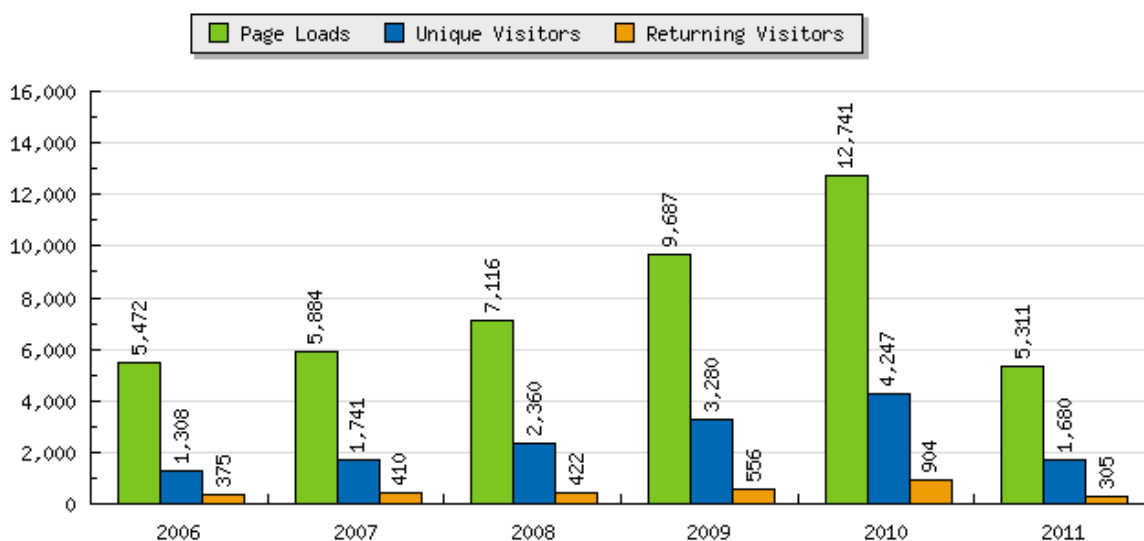
### Original web page



### New web page format



[Daily](#) | [Weekly](#) | [Monthly](#) | [Quarterly](#) | **[Yearly](#)**



**Website Statistics**

	Page Loads	Unique Visitors	First Time Visitors	Returning Visitors
<b>Total</b>	<b>46,211</b>	<b>14,616</b>	<b>11,644</b>	<b>2,972</b>
Average	7,702	2,436	1,941	495

Year	Page Loads	Unique Visitors	First Time Visitors	Returning Visitors
2011	5,311	1,680	1,375	305
2010	12,741	4,247	3,343	904
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 most popular pages are the Home page, the Diary, KASS Pictures and the Events page, followed by the various club pages with Orpington, RSCDS Royal Tunbridge Wells, Tunbridge and Crowborough, North Kent, Dover and Canterbury St Andrews all at the top of the list.

Minicribs are the most frequent downloads, with photographs from the events the next most popular group.

**Ken Hamilton (KASS Website Manager)**

### Word Play

What nine letter word in the English language is still a word when eight letters are removed, one by one? Do not rearrange the letters – just close them together. (For a solution see p24)

### Sixty Year Quiz

On the next two pages is the KASS "Sixty Year Quiz". This has 60 questions, one for each of the 60 years. There will be a small prize for the entrant with the most correct answers (or drawn randomly from those with all correct answers) received by the closing date: Mon. 1<sup>st</sup> Aug. 2011

**SIXTY YEAR QUIZ****1<sup>st</sup> Decade – The Fifties**

- 1951 – Jan 9 - In which city were the United Nations HQ officially opened?  
 1952 – Feb 6 – In which country was Princess Elizabeth when she became Queen?  
 1953 – April 13 – What was Ian Fleming's first James Bond book published in the UK?  
 1954 – Jan 14 – Which baseball star did Marilyn Monroe marry?  
 1955 – April 5 – Which British PM resigned today?  
 1956 – Feb 24 – Who recorded her most famous song "Que sera, sera"?  
 1957 – Mar 6 – What name did Gold Coast take on Independence from UK?  
 1958 – Mar 11 – What did a US B-47 bomber accidentally drop on Mars Bluff, SC?  
 1959 – Jan 12 – What Detroit based record label was started by Berry Gordy Jr?  
 1960 – Dec 31 – Which coin ceased to be legal tender in the UK?

**2<sup>nd</sup> Decade – The Sixties**

- 1961 – Jan 20 – Who became the 35<sup>th</sup> President of the USA?  
 1962 – May 14 – Which Monarch did Princess Sophia marry in Athens?  
 1963 – Jan 14 – Which steam loco made its last run before preservation?  
 1964 – Mar 14 – Who was found guilty of murdering Lee Harvey Oswald?  
 1965 – Feb 6 – Which knighted footballer played his last League game for Stoke City, aged 50?  
 1966 – Mar 4 – Who said to the Evening Standard, "We are more popular than Jesus now."  
 1967 – Apr 8 – Who won the Eurovision Song Competition with "Puppet on a string"?  
 1968 – Mar 17 – Against what was the Grosvenor Square demo, with 91 injured and 200 arrested?  
 1969 – Jul 20 – What lunar module landed, watched live by over 500 million people world-wide?  
 1970 – Apr 13 – From which Apollo Space craft was heard, "Houston we have a problem!"

**3<sup>rd</sup> Decade – The Seventies**

- 1971 – Feb 15 – Why was today called "D Day" in the UK?  
 1972 – Jan 9 – Which former trans-Atlantic liner was destroyed by fire in Hong Kong harbour?  
 1973 – Jan 1 – Which other country joined the EEC along with the Republic of Ireland and the UK?  
 1974 – Aug 8 – Which US President announced his resignation after the Watergate scandal?

- 1975 – Feb 11 – Who defeated Edward Heath to become leader of the Conservative Party?  
 1976 – Apr 3 – What song won the Eurovision Song Contest for the UK's Brotherhood of Man?  
 1977 – Aug 16 – Which king of rock died aged 42?  
 1978 – Oct 16 – What nationality was Pope John Paul II, successor to the short-reigned John Paul?  
 1979 – Mar 8 – What audio innovation did Philips first publicly demonstrate?  
 1980 – Mar 20 – The *Mi Amigo* sinks, which was home to what pirate radio station?

**4<sup>th</sup> Decade – The Eighties**

- 1981 – Apr 4 – Who won the Eurovision Song Contest with "*Making your mind up*"?  
 1982 – Feb 19 – Which Belfast car firm, famous due to *Back to the Future*, went into receivership?  
 1983 – Jan 31 – What did drivers and car front seat passengers have to do?  
 1984 – Apr 17 – Outside which London Embassy was WPC Yvonne Fletcher shot and killed?  
 1985 – Jul 13 – What were the simultaneous Philadelphia & London famine relief concerts called?  
 1986 – Jan 28 – What was the name of the space shuttle that disintegrated on take-off?  
 1987 – Jul 31 – Where did the Queen open the first driver-less railway in the UK?  
 1988 – Jun 6 – Which jockey was stripped of his OBE by the Queen for his tax irregularities?  
 1989 – Mar 7 – What book caused Iran to break diplomatic relations with the UK?  
 1990 – Feb 11 – Who was released after 27 years in prison and then became a world statesman?

**5<sup>th</sup> Decade – The Nineties**

- 1991 – Aug 19 – What spectacular collapse began with Mikhail Gorbachev under house arrest?  
 1992 – Jan 1 – In what position did Boutros Boutros Ghali replace Javier Pérez de Cuéllar?  
 1993 – Aug 17 – What royal residence opened its doors to the public for the first time?  
 1994 – Mar 12 – What landmark event occurred in the C of E?  
 1995 – Mar 24 – For the first time in 26 years where are no British soldiers on patrol?  
 1996 – Jan 29 – In which city was *La Fenice* opera house, which was destroyed by fire?  
 1997 – Feb 27 – What became legal in the Republic of Ireland for the first time?  
 1998 – Jan 26 – With whom, on US TV, did President Clinton deny he had "sexual relations"?

1999 – Jul 23 – Woodstock 99 commemorated the original Woodstock Concert of what year?  
 2000 – Jan 6 – How was the last natural Pyrenean Ibex killed?

**6<sup>th</sup> Decade – The Noughties**

2001 – Jan 15 – What internet encyclopaedia was launched today?  
 2002 – Feb 13 - What honorary gift did the Mayor of New York, Rudolph Giuliani, receive from the Queen?  
 2003 – Jun 22 – What largest ever recorded meteorological phenomenon fell on Aurora, Nebraska?  
 2004 – Jan 8 – What largest passenger ship afloat did the Queen name?  
 2005 – Dec 5 – What first took place at 11am at St Barnabas Hospice, Worthing, West Sussex?  
 2006 – Jan 27 – Whose 250<sup>th</sup> birthday was celebrated in Salzburg?  
 2007 – Jul 21 – Of which series did the final book become the fastest selling book in history – selling over 11 million copies in the first 24hours?  
 2008 – Jan 1 – What did Malta and Cyprus both adopt?  
 2009 – Jan 20 – Who was inaugurated as the 44<sup>th</sup> President of the USA?  
 2010 - Jan 20 – Who was inaugurated as the 44<sup>th</sup> President of the USA?  
 2011 – Apr 29 – Apart from being the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, as well as Baron and Baroness of Carrickfergus, what other title did the Queen confer on Prince William and Catherine Middleton?

Send your answers to: 60 Year Quiz Answers  
**79 Harcourt Road, FOLKESTONE Kent  
 CT19 4AE**

**Word Play solution**

**STARTLING**

Remove the underlined letter, making a word - just close the letters together each time!

STARILING  
 STARLING  
 STARAING  
 STRING  
 SING  
 SING  
 SIN  
 IN  
 I

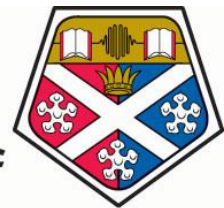
Simples!!

SEE the solution on Youtube by searching for:-  
 WordRiddle.wmv

**Scottish country dancing IS good for you**

“Scottish country dancing could be the key to keeping fit in old age” a leading university has said. Participants in a study who took part in the dancing were found to have better levels of fitness than people who did other exercises.

Dr Paul Dougall, an expert in Dance and Drama at Strathclyde University in Glasgow, led the research. He said, “It’s generally assumed that dancing is good exercise but we wanted to measure whether Scottish country dancing has specific health benefits.”



**University of  
 Strathclyde  
 Glasgow**

The study focused on older women and had 70 participants – 35 women aged between 60 and 85 who practised Scottish country dancing and 35 in the same age range who took part in other forms of exercise. The comparison between two groups who were active in different types of exercise suggested that country dancing was particularly effective in keeping people fit.



**A prelude to healthy dancing – piping in the Haggis at Queenborough January 1994**

Dr Susan Dewhurst, an exercise physiologist from the Strathclyde Institute of Pharmacy and Biomedical Sciences, led assessments of the participants’ fitness. She said, “We used state-of-the-art equipment to give very precise measurements of muscle quality and function.”

*From "The Scotsman" (7 Aug. 2010)*

**Mary Quinton (Dover and Deal SCD Groups)**

### The way we were – or the way I was!

Many years ago (and it seems a hundred and fifty!) my excellent English teacher, Mrs Adamson, told us that our essays should have a beginning, a middle and an end. Surely that's obvious, you say. Well, yes – but if the first sentence doesn't intrigue, the reader may not continue to the middle or reach the pithy sentence that rounds things off! A Daily Telegraph journalist recently began her column with, "I've been sitting here for ages chewing my pencil." Well, I don't chew pencils but . . . how to begin?

Alan (our esteemed Editor) [*Flattery will get you anywhere, Kate! Ed*] asked me when I started dancing. Was it a hundred and fifty years ago? In her wisdom, my dear mother sent me, aged six or seven, to dancing classes- tap, ballet and everything else but NOT Scottish. I hated it, I cried. I would not go back. But as my mother had paid two-and-sixpence, [*12½p in today's money! – Ed.*] I had to keep going till the end of term! Perhaps she thought I would change my mind – but I didn't. All I can remember, apart from the short, blue sleeveless tunics we wore – I hated them too! – was learning five positions of the feet.



I began Scottish country dancing as a Girl Guide, aged eleven, and the first dance I learned was *Machine without horses*. There were school dances, twice a year, when we shuffled through the

slow foxtrot, trod on toes in the tango and were sometimes woo-ed in a wonderful waltz – all of which were practised in the playground at lunch time. Time passed – jitter bugging arrived, followed by the jive – great fun! Ah, nostalgia!!

So here I am. The cobbler in the High Street has just put a beautiful wee patch, almost invisible, on one of my dancing shoes where my toe had gone through. A true, frugal Scot – I do not want to buy a new pair after all. How many dancing days have I got left? Carpe diem!

#### Kate Middleham (Sittingbourne)

PS – In Littlemore, Oxfordshire, there is a parson who "rejoices" (I wonder if he really does) in the name of the Rev. Richard Haggis. Poor man!

### A tour of Scotland in dance

The KASS Autumn Dance on 8 November 1985 took dancers on a tour that proceeded from **Scotland**, as the opening dance, via *The Hamilton Rant*, **Glasgow Highlander**, and **Schiehallion**, to the last dance of the first half – **Rest and be thankful** – with its fabulous view from the top! The second half went from *The Duke of Perth*, via *The Dundee Whaler*, *Wind on Loch Fyne* and **Polharrow Burn** as well as many other places, before ending, as you must have guessed, at Auchterarder!



#### "Scotland's for me" Ticket cover

The KASS Autumn Dance in those days included a plated salad, followed by a pudding – all for the price of £3.50! Don't forget there was also a live band, *Caberfeidh* on that occasion, usually alternating with *Robin Ellis*, who played at the Spring Ball. There was also a licensed bar. Today, the cost of hall hire, the problems thrown up by Elf and Safety, the low consumption of alcoholic beverages, as dancing drivers don't drink, all mean that KASS functions, in its seventh decade, cannot be moth-balled repetitions of past events. What we still have today, however, is good, healthy exercise with a right friendly bunch of dancers.

As KASS goes into its sixty first year,  
**Enjoy your dancing!**