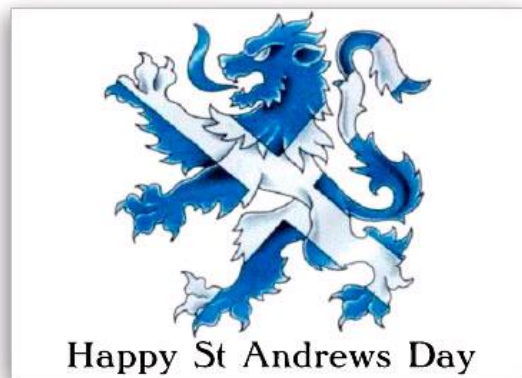
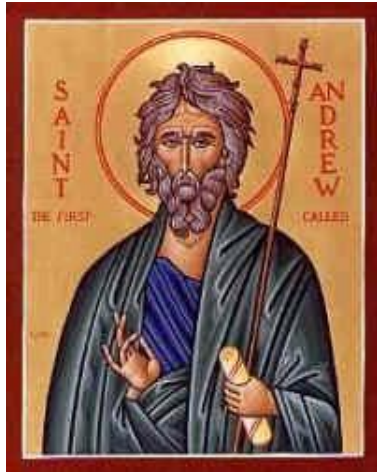


KASS

KENT ASSOCIATION OF SCOTTISH SOCIETIES



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EDITORIAL

The "bumper" 60th Birthday edition of the Newsletter got some encouraging, positive comments – in spite of errors! Did you notice fuel in Belgium was €5 a litre when it had been €0.5 in the original! Also the Sixty Year Quiz had duplicate questions as 2009 and 2010 were identical! The perils of "cutting" and "pasting"! Even so, I received three sets of correct answers (from Carolyn Mowll, John Warner as well as Linda and Brian McRitchie). A draw for the winner will take place at the KASS Autumn Dance. By the way, the missing question for 2010 was "Where was the 25th Anniversary concert of *Les Miserables* performed?" The answer is on page 16, along with all the other answers.



Your Editor - resting before tackling the final Newsletter write up, with Libby the pussy cat

In April, as I wrote my editorial, the weather was swelteringly hot and dry. As I write this now, an unseasonably "hot" start to October is just a distant memory. We now consider turning on the central heating! How things change! Yet, in KASS circles there is continuity, as a topic still prevails - whether we should (or should not) book dances in advance!

With Editorial privilege I can add my contribution to the discussion. So what are my views on booking dances in advance? At Saturday night dances throughout Kent, I relish the chance to dance with friends from other clubs. I know it is easy for club members who may arrive and sit together, to book dances mainly with other members of their own club. I believe this does happen. However, my preference is to go round the hall, as many other dancers do, to meet up with old friends and occasionally make new ones. We look for a "window of opportunity", a mutually empty dance slot that can be booked. If friends from Medway, North Kent, Sittingbourne or Cobtree are all booked up, we regret the fact and hope we will be lucky enough to dance together next time. Booking in advance means I can attempt to match the dance with the calibre of my partner. There are a number of people I actively seek out, who will guide me through one of the more difficult dances! Where I have more confidence with a dance, such as *Trip to Bavaria*, I can attempt to pair up with a less experienced dancer from another group.

My experience of the last KASS Autumn dance, held in Tonbridge, may persuade me the other way in this debate. As a result of travelling difficulties, Helen and I arrived as the band played the first dance. So, with no dances booked we made arrangements with a few of the Dover/Deal crowd, then rushed round each time a dance was announced to find a partner. More often than not there was no one available. At other times, when fortunate enough to find a partner, we were 6th or 7th couple and the set was incomplete. That evening I sat out more dances than I would prefer. At another dance I was not alone in noticing nine gentlemen sitting out a dance! It is true that if no one had booked dances in advance, everyone would be in the same position. So, if sufficient time was given once a dance had been announced, all would have ample opportunity to find new partners. The cause of my predicament that evening, though, had been a really late arrival. When I am able to reach a venue in sufficient time, there is nothing I enjoy more (apart from the dancing itself, of course!) than going round the hall and renewing acquaintances. Or, when I

notice people arrive, make a bee-line for them and book a dance. I am a hoarder and keep all of my dance tickets/programmes. On them are recorded different names as partners. Friends from all over Kent, and some from places further afield, have been noted.

Please do not forget that this is your Newsletter. So, if you want to involve yourself in the debate, or should you want to make any contribution, then please contact me:

Alan@docfrench79.fsnet.co.uk

Alan French
(Newsletter Editor & Dover)

FROM THE CHAIRMAN



KASS Chairman Roger Brown

One year goes very quickly, especially if it includes a glittering diamond! It seems that no sooner are we planning a dance, than we have it, and then look back on its success. The dancing year started with Sevenoaks organising the Autumn Dance with Robin Ellis and his Band. The evening went with a swing under the direction of MC Jim Winter, with help from club members. Tonbridge Girls' School is a venue to note for future dances as it has all the facilities we need and is a good size. The Spring Tea Dance "came west" with joint hosts North Kent and Sidcup, on a very sunny Sunday afternoon. We danced a lively programme directed by Loraine Chase. The Church Hall at Bexley was a very pleasant venue with enough car parking.

The Diamond Jubilee Ball at the Malling School was hosted excellently by Cobtree, with John Day and Dick Barford ensuring we romped

through the dances to the music of Frank Reid and his Scottish Country Dance Band. To mark the special anniversary cakes were cut as we toasted the future of KASS. Special decorations enhanced the dining area. We are much better at running events at this venue and most minor "snags" that developed were covered up successfully. It is very useful to have a central venue which is close to the motorway, so we trust that even more dancers will come next year. Make a note of the date - 12 May 2012 - with *Craigellachie* as the band.

The Summer Walk was held on a sunny day at Chilham. Unfortunately, my recent return from India prevented my participation but the reports are of an excellent, but different, walk. Refreshments were taken in a local hostelry rather than hiring a hall, etc. The Autumn Tea Dance, hosted by Canterbury St. Andrews, was well attended by mainly local dancers. Again it was a glorious, sunny afternoon and as the hall at Littlebourne was full, tea could be taken outside, looking over the playing fields. Andrew Hebling ensured that we coped with the dances and jollied the afternoon along at the right pace.

Alan French celebrated our 60th anniversary with a really bumper edition of the Newsletter, that included personal reminiscences from members of past events and activities, all set out on a decade by decade basis for easy reference. The matching quiz tested our short and long term memories. There were a number of folk who managed to answer all the questions. That edition showed how KASS has changed over time, in response to internal and external factors. Unfortunately, as KASS gets older, so do its members so we need to continually look for new blood and new ideas. The high cost of motoring is now a very significant factor in travelling around Kent.

I note that the London Branch of RSCDS reports lower attendances at their dances and in their classes, particularly in the two classes for "Beginners" and "Improve Social Dancing" as well as for the "Day School". They are also experiencing a drop in numbers at their dances. Over the last decade attendances at the KASS Autumn Dance have remained about the same, but numbers for the Summer Ball have risen over the last five years. This may be partly due to a combination of venues, different bands and greater effort put into selling tickets. We are planning to continue to use new bands for future formal dances as KASS should provide some of the best dancing in the region, but also with some experimentation. We hope that members will support these dances.

We all agree that Scottish Country

Dancing is primarily a social activity which needs a group of people (preferably divisible by eight!) to be most fun. Although the number of KASS member societies has fallen, many individuals attend more than one society. My concern is to maintain a large enough group of people at classes and social events to be able to absorb new members who are learning to dance. The objective should be to make sure they do not feel "exposed" when they take their first daunting steps in a new environment. If more experienced dancers want to continue having social evenings they must actively seek to encourage new dancers to make up sets with them. Why not attend the beginners' class to help out the teacher and to encourage and help newcomers? A small hand gesture or whispered instruction can change hesitation into the right action. After all, we are dancing in a set together, so the corners are equally as important as the dancing couple.

Many thanks to the hard efforts put in over the year by our two events co-ordinators, Jane and Helen, setting up KASS events throughout the year, as well as planning for a number of years to come. If we want good bands and venues on specific dates, KASS must book well ahead. We also need member societies to volunteer to run these events. Our checklists are being refined with experience.

Nigel has kept us all informed of what we said and what is happening. Trevor has continued to guard our money, but allowed some extra spending for the Diamond Jubilee Year. I would like to thank them both. We had two meetings of officials to discuss issues and to plan ahead, and also reviewed progress at Tea Dances. There are articles elsewhere that set out some new ideas on how Tea Dances can be developed further.

We have a very full programme, with hardly a Saturday evening without an event somewhere in the county. Though member societies have traditional slots, to avoid clashes, some changes are needed this coming year. June dances have been moved because of the Queen's Jubilee weekend and Bank Holidays. Isle of Thanet and Tunbridge Wells and Crowborough have dances on 9 June and Orpington and District Caledonian Society has a 75th Anniversary Ball on 16 June. Meopham celebrates its Golden Anniversary on 21 July.

We are well into the dancing season and I wish everyone a successful year, learning more dances - but not forgetting too many of the old ones - attending dances run by your own and other societies, plus enjoying KASS events too.

Roger Brown
(KASS Chairman – Orpington and District)

KASS DIAMOND BALL Saturday 14th May 2011

It was going to be a very special occasion when KASS celebrated its Diamond Anniversary with a Ball at the Malling School. Cobtree were to be the host society, an honour the group took seriously. As often happens, a draft programme was prepared, then lots of discussion took place in KASS committee meetings. Alternative dances containing the word 'Diamond' or 'Ball' were suggested and eventually a final programme was compiled, containing dances from both the KASS Ruby (1991) and Golden (2001) programmes.



Diamond Anniversary diners at the Malling School

A willing team of Cobtree members met during the afternoon of Saturday 14 May, however, thanks to the efficiency of the two KASS Events Co-ordinators, Helen Knell and Jane Whittington, many tasks had already been arranged.



The birthday cakes, made and beautifully decorated by Jane MacIver, had been collected by Jane, as had the bucks fizz ingredients. The caterers were busy setting up the plates of food. One point

that did cause a little consternation was how to cover round dining tables with banqueting roll. Jane and Helen had the problem sussed in no time and, once covered, the food could be set out.

Scottish Country dancers always get to an event in plenty of time. Thanks to forethought and planning everything was ready to welcome even the earliest of the 104 dancers from all of the KASS member societies. Bucks Fizz was served and the cake was cut by 2011 Chairman, Roger Brown, with Pat Gill, who was Chairman in 2001 and David Cullins, who was Chairman in 1991. They were surrounded, by

many past KASS Chairmen, as the picture below shows.



KASS Chairmen Roger, Pat and David cut the cake, surrounded by Ken Hamilton, Muriel Greenstead, Dick Barford, David How, Alan French and Angela Campbell.

After cake cutting, an excellent cold meat salad followed by fresh fruit salad, coffee and mints, was served in an adjoining room. It was apparent that people enjoyed the meal, chatting with many friends present. The blue and white balloons added a further splash of colour to the various clan kilts and the ladies' dresses. Tables had been arranged in group or club format, but as many dancers attend more than one club, there was a great mix on all of the tables. The young members of the catering team managed serving the meal efficiently but, even so, it took a little longer than planned. After supper it was 'on with the dancing', accompanied by Frank Reid and His Scottish Country Dance Band.

The Grand March, led by Roger and Sheila Brown, started the dancing. Why is it that when the Grand March is done, there is often a set comprising four or six couples at the end? Needless to say that happened again in 2011.



Dancers at the KASS Diamond Jubilee Ball



As I was one of the MCs for the evening, it was very pleasing that for all of the dances, sets were made up swiftly, so little time was spent encouraging more couples to make up a set. From the stage it was very apparent there was obvious delight on the faces of dancers, even when they were a little unsure of what happened next! As is the habit of Scottish Country dancers there is always someone who is only too happy to advise on the next move, though it might not always be the correct next move, but at least the advice usually keeps the dance moving along.

During the interval the raffle was drawn by Daphne and Bob MacDonald who celebrated their own Diamond Wedding on June 2nd. I am sure the many raffle prize winners were delighted by the efforts of the 'Diamond Couple'.



Bob and Daphne, with MC Dick Barford, ready for the Raffle

It was great being part of another KASS milestone and I look forward to the next 'special' celebration, which could well be the 65th "Blue Sapphire" or the 70th "Platinum" events, and I hope to see many of you there as well.

Dick Barford

(Thanks to Jane Whittington, Trevor Graves, Alan French and Helen Knell. Photos from Roger Brown and Bob Leishman)

THE AUTUMN TEA DANCE

It was hot and sunny, unseasonable for a Sunday in late September. Canterbury St Andrews was hosting the KASS Autumn Tea Dance on 25 September at Littlebourne Village Hall near Canterbury. The dance was a little late in starting due to the heavy traffic on the M2 and crowded roads into Canterbury, where a Food and Drink festival was taking place. Latecomers quickly put on their shoes, not holding up the afternoon's dancing any longer.

The dance attracted about 50 dancers who filled the hall to capacity. Andrew Hebling

was MC for the event and the afternoon soon took on a very jovial atmosphere. There were a few new dancers attending and Andrew walked through any dances requested.



Some of the dancers at the Autumn Tea Dance

Tea was served in the lounge area, which was very comfortable with a selection of tables and armchairs, shown in the photo below.



Afternoon tea is served!

Dancers brought their own "eats" along with them. Some brought a few cakes whilst others favoured a more substantial picnic. A very pleasant outside area was chosen by some dancers to sit at picnic tables and enjoy the late summer afternoon sun. A raffle, which is always popular at these events, was held, then the afternoon's dancing went speedily along to finish at the required time.

Recently Helen and I have discussed whether tea dances are what dancers want? Obviously this tea dance was a great success and popular, with a good number of attendees. Canterbury is a good catchment area for East Kent, attracting dancers from Dover, Deal and Thanet. Some clubs are not quite as lucky with numbers attending, as the venue may involve a long drive. We asked for, and have had, feedback from some clubs in response to our e-mail about why people don't go to tea dances. Answers range from distance, cost of fuel and mainly family commitments. Members of some clubs told us they only go to a tea dance when their club is host, feeling obliged to do so.

At the recent AGM, the KASS committee fully discussed this issue because we are finding it difficult to get clubs to volunteer to host the tea dance. Clubs are reluctant to commit themselves and their members to a Sunday event.

In the future, KASS will continue to support any club, willingly wanting to hold a tea dance. So, if a club wants to host either a spring or autumn tea dance, let Helen and I know before the end of 2011. We will no longer twist anyone's arm to host this event!



Some more of the dancers at the Tea Dance

Tea dances started to help new dancers become more confident to attend a Saturday dance. We are not sure if this still stands today. Many KASS members will regret this event fading away, whilst others may not be bothered. Either way there is still room for this event if a club really wants to hold a tea dance.

Jane Whittington
(Events co-ordinator)

The Tea Dance Debate

Rita Menzies described the history and objectives of our Tea Dances, now 25 years old. In the early days the aims were to keep prices low and attract family members, hoping children would become "hooked". Now the children have grown up but there are grandchildren. At Orpington we held a relaxed dance in our garden, on a Saturday afternoon in July, with lots of grandchildren, who tried hard to learn Ceilidh dances. They thoroughly enjoyed the challenge and non-dancers also joined in. However, they will not progress unless there are local classes for children.

Recently KASS Tea Dances have tended to give less experienced adult dancers the opportunity of dancing in larger groups with new people. There are two major problems: (1) shrinking societies with fewer active dancers and (2) higher travel costs. The former means clubs must take action to maintain membership. The

latter means dancers will not travel as far as they used to. So, as Rita said, Tea Dances will inevitably be regional, serving a small area of Kent.

How, then, to attract new members? We find many "new" dancers have danced elsewhere before, particularly if they were educated in Scotland. Others once danced but found family pressures, with children at home, too demanding. Others have moved to Orpington and want to continue dancing with a new group. Similarly, some of our members have moved and have joined new local groups. There are potential dancers in all areas, who need a nudge in the right direction, or a carrot to start dancing again and take up an old interest and meet new friends.

So where does this leave the Tea Dances? Progression through Scottish Country Dancing is a series of "steps" all of which appear daunting at the time. You go to the first teaching class. How do you cope? Are you welcomed? Do you feel comfortable? You then move up to a social evening with less instruction and gradually become more confident. The final step is formal dances with a live band, but with no instruction at all. How can this transition be made easier? We all know that it is easier to climb a staircase with more small steps than a few larger ones!!! So how do we add another step and help people up?

At the October AGM we had a lively exchange of ideas on what, when, where and how Tea Dances should be run - if at all! I sensed a real reluctance to drop Tea Dances altogether. However, the consensus was that we should depart from the present approach that *"KASS wants two Tea Dances per year so it is now our turn to volunteer (reluctantly) to run one"*. The new approach should be *"our newer and less experienced members, and others in the area, would really benefit from a relaxed but somewhat challenging Tea Dance as an essential part of their dancing progress and getting to know more local dancers"*.

If you agree with this approach and can find a suitable venue with someone who would run the dancing, but do not want to take the financial risk of low attendance, then KASS would like to act as a facilitator. To encourage Scottish Activities in Kent KASS would underwrite the financial risks but, as an additional incentive, the host society/societies would keep a surplus once basic costs have been covered. KASS would assist and publicise the dance in advance. You would be the organiser and could model the Tea Dance in any way you think would be most effective to meet the needs of members in your

area. You could sell cream teas, run a raffle and put on other activities to attract more custom.

So, in summary, Tea Dances are (1) regional in Kent; (2) organised by Clubs taking the initiative; (3) fully supported by KASS and (4) providing the host with any surplus.

At present there is no host for the Spring 2012 Tea Dance. Would you like to take the initiative for your area and fill this slot with a regional Tea Dance, supported by KASS?

Please discuss these ideas in your groups.

Roger Brown (KASS Chairman)

[The Editor will welcome correspondence on this topic - the future of the KASS Tea Dance - which he will include in the May 2012 Newsletter.]

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

Dover



At Dover the Junior class has been faithfully run each Wednesday by our Treasurer, Norma, ever since Tony Baldwin moved to Spain a good number of years ago. She also takes a number of classes at local Junior schools. Unfortunately, as the children get older and school work becomes more demanding, the number of older participants dwindles.

In the main Dover adult group too, numbers are perilously close to the group becoming unsustainable. There are often insufficient people attending on a Monday club night to pay for the hire of the hall! At the AGM the group's future was discussed and it was agreed to have an extensive advertising campaign to try and boost membership and subsidise hall charges from funds. This will be reviewed in six months.

Alan French (Dover)

Medway

From The Reel Magazine No 277 (September to November 2011) reporting Oban's gala day in the Oban Times some decades ago:

"Highlight of a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon was the exhibition by Farlane MacKenzie, Cuilfail Hotel, who played 'Over the Sea to Skye' on the bagpipes while skiing behind a speedboat".

This is even better than the three lads I once saw playing the bagpipes while doing the Highland Fling!

Margaret Anne Robertson
(Medway)

Orpington

Talent in Orpington

We are proud to report that an Orpington and District Caledonian Society member, James Bryce, completed the Brighton Marathon on 10 April in 3hrs 58mins 51secs. James dedicated his efforts to raise funds for the charity *Breakthrough Breast Cancer*.

We congratulate James on his achievement.

Elisabeth Leishman
(Orpington & District)

Sheerness Scottish Heather Club

Fresh brewed coffee, laughter and jokes make this a club with a difference. For me, Mo Dalton *was* the club and we owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to Richard and Mike, who rallied round and saved the club. As a past chairperson of an English Folk Dance Club for several years and a passionate dancer, I had no hesitation in agreeing to act as Chairperson of the club at the end of the summer season.

In April our club celebrated the Royal Wedding with food and costumes, appropriately in red, white and blue plus an exciting and challenging programme of dances from Richard, with "William", "Kate", "Royal" or "Wedding" in their titles. Our Strawberry Summer dance became a Cherry dance because of Global Warming [Why? – Ed] and was well attended and, as usual, great fun.

We now have a rota including new MCs willing to have a go. Last Friday we attracted two new dancers and, after the first dance *Polharrow Burn*, collapsing in a heap, a member was overheard saying, "It's not always like this. Usually it's a lot worse!" One of the new dancers asked Muriel, "Have you done this dance before?" Someone replied, "Yes she has been doing it for 50 years!" Trevor to Peter "Would you like to do The Sexy Link?" and "How do you do a Petronella on a Tandem? - With difficulty!"

And finally the joke of the evening – look away now if you don't want to read it. A burglar broke into a home and was looking around. He heard a soft voice say, "Jesus is watching you". Thinking, he was just imagining it, he continued



searching. Again the voice said, "Jesus is watching you". He turned his flashlight around and saw a parrot in a cage. He asked the parrot if he was the one talking and the parrot said, "Yes." He asked the parrot

what his name was and the parrot replied, "Moses." The burglar then asked, "What kind of people would name a parrot Moses?" The parrot replied, "The same kind of people who would name their Pit Bull Terrier - Jesus".

Come and join us at Iwade Village Hall from 7.30 – 10.30pm on Friday evenings, for £2.50. You will be most welcome and I guarantee you will have a fun evening.

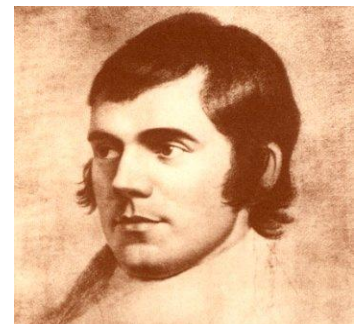
Ernestine Lawrence
(Sheerness Scottish Heather Club)

Sidcup and District

At the AGM in June, Loraine Chase was elected President for another year, with John Whiteside as Vice President, Pauline Cameron as Secretary and Jean Wood as Treasurer. In late June the President's Dance was held at St John's Church Hall, Sidcup. It was decided this year committee members would do the catering and they produced an excellent cold buffet. Our international credentials were maintained by serving French red wine and German white wine. It was a lively, enjoyable evening organised with their trademark efficiency by Maud Boorman and Rene Farthing. The annual frenetic Beetle Drive was held at the end of July with Peter Tonk and his whistle in charge. In August Maud and Terry Boorman organised the Quiz, our annual intellectual venture.

In the Summer we were very pleased to welcome members from other clubs whose classes close at this time. In October a large group is visiting Cumbria for five days, for sightseeing and dancing. The next big event on

the horizon is Burns Night, being held on 29 Jan. Maud and Rene have plans well in hand. It will be held at a new venue, the Catholic Church Hall in Bexley. Membership



remains constant and numbers on Wednesday practice evenings are increasing again now

school vacation grand-parent duties and September holidays have finished, so we can concentrate on our dancing again.

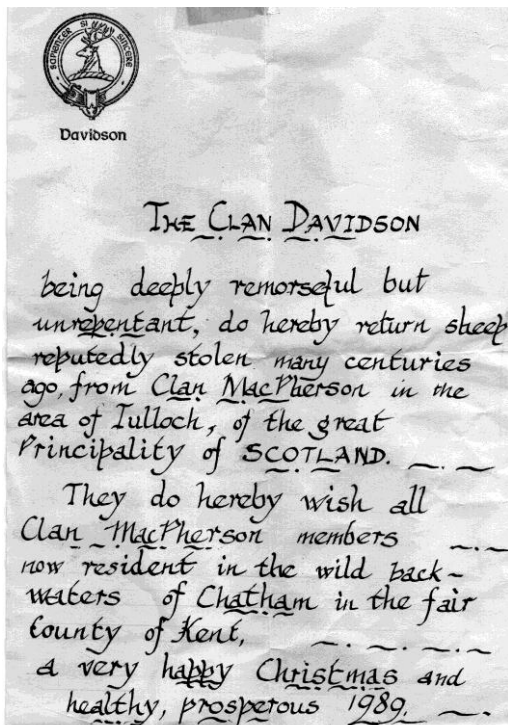
Wendy Carter
(Sidcup and District Caledonian Association)

Thanet and District

Back in 1988 the late Charlie Davidson, of the Sheerness Heather Club, and I were having a discussion about clan wars. Charlie accused the Macphersons of murdering the Davidsons and I said that was because the Davidsons were cattle rustlers and sheep stealers. Joan Davidson, Charlie's wife, came over, sat down beside us and said:

"It's time you two stopped this nonsense!" Charlie, pointing at me, said, "They killed the Davidsons." I replied that he came from a long line of cattle rustlers and sheep stealers and what did he expect!

A week later I received a letter:



together with – these creatures:



Don Macpherson (Past President)
Thanet and District Caledonian Society

MACLENNAN INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCE FESTIVAL

In September 1979 a group of 12 dancers and 3 musicians went to Europaede – an annual folk dance festival, that year being held in Antwerp, Belgium. We were given 2 young men as guides – one of whom was Chris de Smet. Two of our members – Iain Brown and Bryan Bredin – had dreamed of running a dance festival in this country for a long time. With a lot of encouragement from Chris, lots of hard work and a lot of help from friends and the Sidcup Caledonians, the First MacLennan Folk Dance Festival was held in May 1981, in the grounds of Sidcup and Chislehurst Grammar School.

Our stage was made from wooden pallets and our changing facilities were tents. Our visitors and audience, including the Mayor and Mayoress, Councillor and Mrs Pope, who opened the Festival, either sat or stood to watch the performances. When it rained they just put up their umbrellas and stayed!

There were several groups, including the MacLennans, performing that afternoon. One was Chris de Smet's own group and another being the Upland Dancers, who have danced every year at the Festival.



The MacLennans

At the 30th Anniversary of the Festival in May of this year, there was one dancer and one piper from the original group that went to Belgium in 1979. Also there was one dancer from the original Upland Dancers. Our MC, Andrew Kellett, has done the honours nearly every year. Also among the audience and helpers were some past members of the group and original host parents.

At the 2011 Festival, as well as the Upland Dancers, the Latvian folk dance group - Bitte/Auda who danced at the 2005 Festival - was welcomed back. Another returning group, Minge, an ensemble of folk musicians and dancers from Lithuania, first took part eight years ago. Another group was the Fiona Ray

School of Highland Dancing, established in Kent in 2001, with members as young as four years. Also there were the Cinque Ports Morris Men, established in 2008, who are followed on all their travels by a wild wooden horse by the name of Captain Clegg. Last, but by no means least, there was the Epping Forest Pipe Band, which has been associated with the MacLennan Scottish Group since its formation in 1979 and has performed at the Festival for many years.

The Festival is held annually, on the last Saturday in May, at Langley Park School in Beckenham.

Loraine Chase

(Sidcup and District Caledonian Association)

WHY LUXEMBOURG?

Do people ask you why you are going on holiday to Spain, Malta, Florida or Scotland? But almost without exception, when we said we were going on holiday to Luxembourg, people asked "What made you choose there?" I had romantic childhood imaginings of fairy tale castles and deep forests and, when we were returning from Belgium a few years ago by Eurostar, we looked at the places that were easy to access by Eurostar and noted Luxembourg. Furthermore, our Belgian guidebook had an end section on Luxembourg, which sounded really interesting and just our 'cup of tea' (Not that anyone on the continent can make proper tea!).



Eurostar trains at Brussels

So, in June 2011, off we went to Brussels by Eurostar, changing to a train through Arlon to Luxembourg, for 10 enjoyable days. My only reluctance in telling you about it is that you might all want to go and an influx of tourists could spoil its natural charms! The languages spoken fascinated me. Most of the population are tri-lingual, starting with Luxembourgish at home (yes, there is such a word); learning French and German at school. With such linguistic ability, they easily pick up English or any other language. You can hear them switching between languages as they talk to each other!

In modern Luxembourg City, banking is their hobby and there are tower blocks of offices and large modern hotels. Go down to the Lower Old Town, called Grund, and you are in a medieval time warp, with cobbled streets and a picturesque river and old buildings. The Upper Old Town offers the tourist sights of the Ducal Palace, Cathedral and bustling squares, with plenty of cafés. You can also visit the fortifications and casements and the large park. We spent a whole day exploring Luxembourg City. The rest of our stay we divided between three regions: the Moselle valley, the Ardenne and Little Switzerland.

The Moselle valley is lush, with its wide meandering river, lined with vineyards. It is beautiful. There are plenty of pretty, unspoilt villages and many local 'Caves', where you can taste or purchase wine, or take a vineyard tour. Some places along the river offer river cruises, water sports and bike rides. Others are very quiet and you can take gentle strolls. Driving up twisty roads gives great views of the valley, with its patchwork of vineyards.



The Ardennes

The Ardennes forest area is still deeply wooded, with winding roads, spectacular views, interesting towns and miles of nothing. Walking and cycling routes are well marked but not busy. This was one region that suffered particularly badly during World War 2 and several museums and art galleries focus, in particular, on the Battle of the Bulge. It was distressing to see pictures of pretty villages and the countryside we had just visited, devastated by war. It was pleasing to note that the rebuilding had kept the character of the old places.

The area called *Little Switzerland* was allegedly so named by the Dutch, who mistook the hills, rocky features and steep cliffs for mountains. This was a truly fantastic area, with the strangest rock formations, reached by a network of well-marked, meandering woodland paths in pretty river valleys with green glades and steep forested climbs. It has to be seen to be appreciated, with a magical character and atmosphere all of its own, and largely untouched

by the modern world.

Driving our hire car was easy on well surfaced roads, even when narrow and winding up the hills. The only heavy traffic was in the major towns. Fuel is cheap and prices compared favourably with UK. Café and restaurant food covered a wide range of tastes and was well presented. Be aware that some cafés allow smoking inside and smoking outside is commonplace. My other warning is - watch out for closing days. So, if you hit unlucky, you could have trouble finding food or fuel away from the towns. On a religious festival, a whole town can shut down completely!

So what about the fairy tale castles? They were there in abundance with nearly every town, and some villages, dominated by a castle. One valley had seven! Some are open to the public, some are ruins and many are used for municipal offices or as cultural centres. On rocky peaks, surrounded by sheer cliffs or thick forests, with towers, turrets and spires, courtyards, grand halls and winding stairs, they are a fairy-story illustrator's dream. Yes, there was even a 'Rapunzel tower', with no apparent access and only one high window.



A fairy tale castle!

Another castle boasted a legend of a princess locked in a tower because she refused to marry her parents' choice of suitor . . .
Happy memories!

Esther Barford
(Cobtree)

TRANSIT THROUGH THE KIEL CANAL

Having come back from a 12-day cruise of the Baltic, I should write about the places we called into such as Tallinn in Estonia, Copenhagen, Warnemunde/Rostock (for Berlin), St Petersburg or Helsinki. We should have called into Stockholm but due to high winds at St Petersburg, we were unable to berth until the next morning and could only remain till midday. To many this was a great disappointment,

especially those who had expected a full day in the city, ending with the Russian Ballet performing *The Nutcracker*. We had our visit to Stockholm cancelled because of our delay. Just hard luck for us!

However, I had always wanted to travel along the Kiel Canal. As a teenager in WW2, listening to the radio report that our planes had bombed the Kiel Canal and Rostock, I wondered what was so important about this canal. So I wanted to see and learn as much as I could on this trip. The first thing is that for ships to go around the Skagerrak, it is 250 nautical miles longer and a dangerous route. Using the Canal, ships, and U-boats, could get into the North Sea very quickly.

The Kiel Canal was started in 1887 to link the Imperial Naval Harbour at Kiel with the North Sea, avoiding the Jutland peninsula. Completed by over 9,000 workers in 1895, it cost 157million marks. It was originally known as the Kaiser-Wilhelm Canal, then the Kiel Canal, although it is also referred to as the Nord-Ostsee Canal. It is almost 100km long, has a permissible draft for ships of 9.5m and joins the River Elbe at Brunsbuttel into the North Sea and Kiel-Holtenau at the Baltic, passing through Schleswig- Holstein. Large enough for big ships, even the ill-fated German Battleship *Graf Spee* used it. It is allegedly the most heavily used artificial seaway in the world.'



The Kiel Canal high level bridge

While we were still some distance away in the Baltic, it was announced that we would enter the Canal at 12.30am, when most would be asleep in our cabins, and go through the sea-lock at Brunsbuttel into the North Sea at 7.30am! For some unknown reason, I woke up at about 12.30am and looked out of my cabin port-hole. The engines must have been just ticking over, as it was so quiet and we were approaching the canal so slowly. I was taken aback at the pretty lights on the promenade opposite. I cannot recall seeing such lovely seaside lights, not at Southsea, Bournemouth,

Eastbourne nor anywhere else on our coast. Deciding not to miss anything, I quickly slipped out-door clothes over my pyjamas and went up on deck, not expecting to meet anyone. To my surprise there were still a few late night drinkers in evening dress in the lounge and, even more surprisingly, quite a lot of people were gathered on the top deck looking towards the bow, as the ship entered the first lock.

It was rather chilly and the deck quite slippery with a night mist, but I was pleased to have not missed the spectacle. However, just before I returned to my cabin, we passed under the Schwebefahre Hochbrucke, that carries the railway line between Kiel and Rendsberg. This was awesome as the bridge is about 40m above the water, leaving little clearance for the ship. This compares with the 48.2m high Forth Bridge where I have seen a cruise liner anchored on the seaward side of the Forth Bridge, presumably as it could not pass under it. This may also be the case for P&O Cruise liners on Baltic cruises.



Another view of the High Bridge, Kiel Canal

Waking early about 7.00am, I found we were still in the Canal but about to enter the lock into the North Sea. Quickly dressing, I went back up on deck to join the very many with their cameras, who had gained vantage places to capture it all. It was quite impressive. After passing under another bridge and through the lock, I found a window seat in the self-service restaurant, so that I could look at Cuxhaven as we passed by. I should imagine that sand banks extend some way into the North Sea, as it was some way off shore before we dropped our sea-pilot.

From then on it was plain sailing back to Tilbury, the end of the cruise and of our holiday.

John Warner
(Wadhurst – ex Tunbridge Wells)

ON POETRY

"To sleep, perchance to dream."

I have surely more than just a trace of insomnia. What to do when sleep eludes? It may be at 3am – too early to get out of bed; or in the early morning at 5am – too dark on winter mornings, but it is easier to get up in the summer when there is only me in the garden, with little traffic noise! Then there is that period when one is neither asleep nor awake. . .

As a wee girl my mother told me to count sheep going through the gate! Perhaps you were told the same thing. Now I do not want to count sheep although I am very fond of them! I remember flocks of them, and herds of cattle, go down the Glasgow Road on their way to market on the Whitesands in Dumfries, which in those far-off days was a small country town. Our grandfather would take my cousin and I and the dog on Sunday afternoon walks along the River Nith as far as Lincluden Abbey – yet I digress as this has nothing to do with poetry!

I have three poetry books in my bedroom and so I came to recite poetry to myself, not aloud at 3am, to help me drift off to sleep. Although I love it I am just a bit weary of *"The lake of Innisfree"*. There must be others. I tried the Sonnets and I came to love so many but it is annoying when you can't get past the first two lines:

*"When I have fears that I may cease to be
Before my pen has glean'd my teeming brain ."*
(Keats?) [Yes it is Keats – Ed]

You just don't want to turn on the light, reach for the book and check up, so try another one.

*"I met a traveller from an antique land
Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert."*
(Shelley)

That's no good either. How about other poems? Oh, yes *"How they brought the good news from Ghent to Aix"* or *"Aix to Ghent"* [Ghent to Aix! and by Browning – Ed]

*"I sprang to the stirrup, and Joris and he;
I galloped, Dirck galloped, we galloped all three.
'Good speed' cried the watch . . ."* and so on.

What follows? What was the good news anyway? Why would we have to learn such stuff? Well it is an example of onomatopoeic poetry. Think about it! Right. Try another.

"A chieftain to the Highlands bound
Cries 'Boatman, do not tarry!
And I'll give thee a silver pound
To row us o'er the ferry'."

No, that one's too sad. Lord Ullin's daughter drowns at the end - all I can remember. I am definitely not wandering "Lonely as a cloud" - aargh! Or

"On either side the river lie
Long fields of barley and of rye."

Again, no more than the first two lines. What about *Flannan Isle*?



Flannan Isle

"Tho' three men dwell on Flannan Isle
To keep the lamp alight,
As we steer'd under the lee
We saw no glimmer through the night."

I got so frustrated I asked in the local library for a book in which to find these last two as they are not in any of mine. What an obliging young man was the Librarian, and what he can do with technology! His computer printed the full poems for me. And guess what? I put them in a safe place . . . Correct! I shall locate them eventually of course! Anyway, getting back to the middle of the night - I might just as well get out of bed and make a cup of Ovaltine.

Kate Middleham
(**Sittingbourne**)

REAL EXAM ANSWERS (which explain why teachers drink!)

- Q Explain why phosphorus trichloride (PCl₃) is polar.
A *God made it that way*
- Q What was Sir Walter Raleigh famous for?
A *He is a noted figure in history because he invented cigarettes and started a craze for Bicycles.*
- Q What is a nitrate?
A *Much cheaper than a day rate.*

- Q Briefly explain what hard water is.
A *ice*

- Q What type of attractive force or bond holds the calcium ions and chloride ions together in a crystal of sodium chloride?
A *James bond*

- Q What did Mahatma Gandhi and Genghis Khan have in common?
A *Unusual names*

- Q Name one of the early Roman's greatest achievements.
A *Learning to speak Latin*

- Q Name one measure which can be put into place to avoid river flooding in times of extensive rainfall (e.g. Mississippi)
A *Flooding in areas such as the Mississippi may be avoided by placing a number of big dames into the river.*

- Q Name six animals which live specifically in the Arctic
A *Two polar bears Four seals*

- Q How does Romeo's character develop throughout the play?
A *It doesn't, it's just self, self, self, all the way through*

- Q Name the wife of Orpheus, who he attempted to save from the underworld.
A *Mrs Orpheus*

- Q Where was the American Declaration of Independence signed?
A *at the bottom*

- Q What happens during puberty to a boy?
A *He says goodbye to his childhood & enters adultery.*

- Q What is the meaning of the word "varicose"?
A *Close by*

- Q What is the highest frequency that a human can register?
A *Mariah Carey*

- Q What is a fibula?
A *A little lie.*

- Q Explain the phrase 'free press'.
A *When yor mum irons trousers for you.*

Q Joanna works in an office. Her computer is a stand-alone system. What is a stand-alone computer system?

A *It doesn't come with a chair.*

Q Steve is driving his car. He is travelling at 60 feet/second and the speed limit is 40mph. Is Steve speeding?

A *He could find out by checking his speedometer.*

Q What is a vibration?

A *There are good vibrations and bad vibrations. Good vibrations were discovered in the 1960s.*

Q Where was Hadrian's Wall built?

A *Around Hadrians garden.*

Q The race of people known as Malays come from which country?

A *Malaria.*

NEW CHRISTMAS REGULATIONS

POLITICAL CORRECTNESS HEALTH & SAFETY

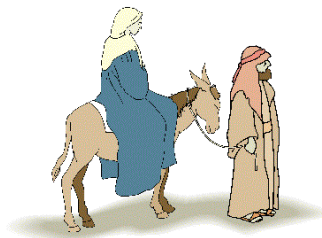
WHILE SHEPHERDS WATCHED



*While shepherds watched their flocks by night
All seated on the ground,
The Angel of the Lord came down,
And Glory shone around.*

The Union of Shepherds has complained that it breaches Health & Safety Regulations insisting shepherds watch their flocks without appropriate seating arrangements. Therefore benches, stools and orthopaedic chairs must be available. Shepherds have also requested that, due to inclement weather, flocks should be watched via CCTV cameras in centrally heated, shepherd observation huts. The Angel of the Lord is also reminded that before shining his/her Glory all around, shepherds must be issued with glasses capable of filtering out harmful effects of UVA, UVB and Glory lighting.

LITTLE DONKEY



*Little donkey, little donkey
on the dusty road,
Got to keep on plodding onwards,
with your precious load.*

The RSPCA has issued strict guidelines as to how heavy a load a donkey of small stature can legally carry plus permitted feeding breaks - at least one rest break per four-hour plodding period. Due to the risk of pollution from the dusty road, Mary and Joseph are required to wear facemasks. The 'Little' Donkey is upset by being labelled 'Little' and would prefer to be referred to simply as 'Mr Donkey'. Comments on his height are a breach of his equine rights.

WE THREE KINGS



*We three Kings of Orient are
Bearing gifts, we traverse afar;
Field and fountain,
Moor and Mountain,
Following yonder star.*

Whilst the gift of Gold is considered acceptable, as it may be redeemed at a later date through organisations such as 'Cash4Gold' etc., Gifts of Frankincense and Myrrh are inappropriate due to the risk of allergic reactions caused by such oils and fragrances. An acceptable alternative may be a gift voucher. It is not recommended that traversing Kings should rely on star navigation and they are advised to use a SatNav or AA RouteFinder. Both can provide the quickest route and advise on fuel consumption. The three camels require regular rest and food breaks. Facemasks are obligatory for the three Kings due to desert dust disturbed by the camels' hooves.

THE ROCKING CAROL



*Little Jesus sweetly sleep, do not stir,
We will lend a coat of fur.
We will rock you, rock you, rock you.
We will rock you, rock you, rock you.*

Fur is inappropriate wear for small infants due both to the risk of allergic reaction and for ethical reasons. Therefore, false fur, a cellular blanket or a micro-fleece material should be considered as alternatives. Only persons subject to an enhanced CRB check will be permitted to rock Baby Jesus. CRB disclosures must be carried at all times along with three proofs of identification before any rocking can commence.

RUDOLPH THE RED NOSED REINDEER



*Rudolph the red-nosed reindeer,
had a very shiny nose,
And if you ever saw it,
you would even say it glows.
All of the other reindeer
used to laugh and call him names,
They never let poor Rudolph
join in any reindeer games.*

Be advised that under the Equal Opportunities Policy it is inappropriate for persons to make comment upon the ruddiness of Mr R. Reindeer. Name-calling contravenes Anti-Bullying policy and, further to this, Mr R. Reindeer's exclusion from any reindeer games is discriminatory and disciplinary action will be taken against anyone guilty of this offence. A full investigation will be implemented, leading to imposing sanctions such as a ban from hanging up stockings or enjoying Christmas dinner.

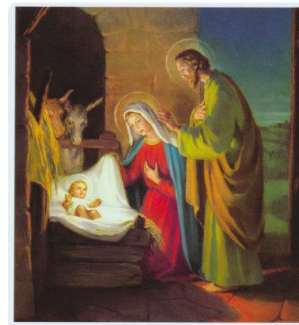
JINGLE BELLS



*Dashing through the snow
in a one-horse open sleigh,
Over fields we go,
laughing all the way.*

A Risk Assessment must be submitted prior to an open sleigh, in which members of the public may ride, can be considered safe. The RA (Risk Assessment) must also consider if the use of only one horse is appropriate if passengers are of larger proportions. Landowner's permission must be gained before going 'over fields'. To avoid offending those not participating in the venture, only 'moderate' laughter may be used, at a level unlikely to be of a nuisance to others.

AWAY IN A MANGER



*Away in a manger,
no crib for a bed.*

Refer to Social Services - IMMEDIATELY!

THE IMMORTAL MEMORY

Last May my sister-in-law, Irene, visited Dumfries from her home in Canada. She was shocked to discover the poor state of Robert Burns' Mausoleum in St Michael's churchyard. The exterior paintwork was peeling and rust marks ran down the walls, while there appeared to be damp marks inside. The small garden surrounding the monument was unkempt, with weeds growing in both the paths and flower beds.

Irene is a feisty lady and on her return home she wrote to Alex Salmond, Scotland's first Minister. She did this because she thought that if she were to write to anyone else, or to another organisation, she would be told that it was not their responsibility. She would not want a relative of hers in such a resting place, nor should it be that of Scotland's National Bard. She thought that he belonged to Scotland and his remains were Scotland's responsibility.



The Mausoleum containing the remains of Scotland's Bard

An article in the Dumfries and Galloway Standard reminded us that the Mausoleum is Grade A listed by Historic Scotland, meaning it is of "national or international importance". A spokesman for the responsible authority, Dumfries and Galloway Regional Council (the mini-behemoth which ate up all the local burgh and county councils in the far south-west of Scotland during the latter part of the 20th century) [Methinks someone does not approve either!!! – Ed.] was quoted as saying "Refurbishment is included in the capital programme for the council's community and customer services department. Refurbishment will take place once discussions with local stakeholders are concluded".

Local Burns enthusiast and former President of the World Burns Federation, Wilson Ogilvie, agreed that it was in quite a bad state and could understand why a letter had been written to Mr Salmond. He thought it should be in the best possible condition for people to visit. I would also add to show due respect to one of Scotland's most celebrated sons.

In mid-July, Irene received a letter from John McIver of the Local Government Division of the Scottish Government which said:

"Dear Professor Turpie,
Following your letter a meeting was convened between various groups involved in preserving the legacy of Robert Burns and the local authority to discuss the state of the Burns Mausoleum. I have been reliably informed by the Minister of St Michael's that at that meeting a senior architect from Dumfries and Galloway

Council confirmed that £30,000 had been allocated to restoring the Burns Mausoleum and that works should commence within about 6 weeks time(sic)."

On a visit to St Michael's about the same time, I was equally saddened by the condition of the Mausoleum. I have proposed the toast to the Immortal Memory many times and talked proudly of my connection with St Michael's and of attending the wreath-laying ceremony every year as I was grew up in Dumfries: It was very upsetting to see the site so neglected. However, it looked as if things were about to improve. I was, however, concerned that the £30,000 earmarked for the work would be unlikely to provide for the upkeep of the garden. I wrote to the "Standard", suggesting that maintenance of the garden might be undertaken by the local Burns Clubs, of which I believe there are at least four within Dumfries itself, as their whole purpose is to honour the memory of Robert Burns. What better way to do this than to look after his grave? As far as I know, that letter was not published.

If you are hoping for a happy ending, then read no further. Last week, to bring the saga up to date, I contacted Dr Maurice Bond, Minister of St Michael's, for an update and received this exasperated and exasperating response:

"It has been agreed to spend £80,000 but I have been on vacation and, as far as I know, work has not yet started. The problem has become a political football with parties blaming each other, as always." Why does that not surprise me?

This news has been passed on to Irene Turpie, and she is minded to write to Alex Salmond again. She also suggests others do the same! If anyone has influence with either the Scottish Government or Dumfries and Galloway council, please use it, not on our behalf, but on that of Robert Burns. As Burns put it so well, "The best-laid schemes o' mice and men gang oft agley" and sometimes they need an almighty shove to get them started!

**Rita Menzies,
(Medway and District Caledonian Association)**

[The Local Government Officer who wrote to Rita's sister-in-law, Prof Irene Turpie, is:

John McIver
Scottish Government
Local Government Division
Victoria Quay
Edinburgh

EH6 6 QQ I am sure he would value your opinion - should you care to write to him – Ed]

60 YEAR QUIZ – ANSWERS

1951–New York	1952–Kenya
1953–Casino Royale	1954–Joe DeMaggio
1955–Winston Churchill	1956–Doris Day
1957–Ghana	1958–Atomic bomb
1959–Motown	1960–Farthing
1961–J F Kennedy	1962–Juan Carlos
1963–Flying Scotsman	1964–Jack Ruby
1965–Stanley Matthews	1966–John Lennon
1967–Sandy Shaw	1968–Vietnam war
1969–Eagle	1970–Apollo 13
1971–Decimal coinage was introduced	
1972–Queen Elizabeth	
1973–Denmark	1974–Richard Nixon
1975–Margaret Thatcher	
1976–Save your kisses for me	
1977–Elvis Presley	1978–Polish
1979–Compact Disc	1980–Radio Caroline
1981–Bucks Fizz	1982–De Lorean
1983–Fasten seat belts	1984–Libya
1985–Live Aid	1986–Challenger
1987–Docklands Light Railway	
1988–Lester Piggott	1989–Satanic Verses
1990–Nelson Mandela	1991–USSR
1992–UN Secretary General	
1993–Buckingham Palace	
1994–Ordination of women priests	
1995–N Ireland	1996–Venice
1997–Divorce	1998–Monia Lewinsky
1999–1969	
2000–Hit by a falling tree	
2001–Wikipedia	2002–Knighthood
2003–Hailstone	2004–Queen Mary 2
2005–Civil Partnership	2006–Mozart
2007–Harry Potter	2008–The Euro
2009–Barak Obama	2010–The O2 Arena
2011–Earl & Countess of Strathearn	

OBITUARIES

Peter James Still
(2 May 1943 – 27 June 2011)

It is with great sadness that we report the death of Peter Still. Peter was the immediate past President of the Canterbury Scottish Society and served as President for five years from 2005 to 2010. Peter's involvement with the Canterbury Scottish Society goes back over twenty years and, for about twelve of those years, Peter was an active member of the Committee. Peter was also a member of both the Deal and Dover Scottish Country Dance Groups and also, more recently, attended some classes at the Thanet Scottish Country Dance Group. Peter was very active on the Scottish

country dance scene, attending dances across the county, participating in day schools and Scottish country dancing holidays.



Peter Still of the Canterbury Scottish Society

Peter was an extraordinary person, a larger-than-life character, who was completely dedicated to making people smile and laugh. For example, there was Peter the clown and many people will remember Peter at the Canterbury Scottish Society barbecues, dressed in his see-you-Jimmy hat, rude apron, shorts and big boots, looking like a caricature of Desperate Dan from the Beano.

Whenever you met Peter and asked 'How are you?' he invariably replied, "Absolutely Wizard!!" Then he would launch into his 'story-of-the-day'. These stories were always told with enthusiasm and lots of laughter. The stories themselves were usually based on some incident that had happened to Peter in the previous 24 hours. Peter was a joy to be with and he will be missed by all who knew him. Peter is succeeded by his wife Linda and their two children, Carol and Martin, to whom we send our sincere condolences.

Ken Hamilton
(Canterbury Scottish Society)

Daphne Boucher

Some of you may remember Daphne Boucher, who danced at Canterbury for some years until early 2005. Sad to say she died on 28 August this year, at the age of 87. Daphne was a charming woman who much enjoyed her dancing, which she performed rather elegantly.

Two of her Scottish dance friends, Mary and Trevor Howard, penned a poem in her honour during a dancing holiday in Crete in 1992.

Daphne in the ballroom is a pleasure to meet,
with flashing eyes and twinkling feet.
She gracefully moves from figure to figure,
with lots of zeal and plenty of vigour.

Her catering too shows expertise,
with lovely red carrots and beautiful green peas.
Meat is so tender it falls off the bone,
a visit is a must when Daphne is at home.

Watching Daphne on the floor
is like a magic potion –
Hence her latest nom de plume –
'Poetry in Motion'.

David Papa
(Canterbury St Andrews)

Ian Powrie

Ian Powrie is one of Scottish country dance music's best-loved figures, with a band sound and fiddle style that were instantly recognisable as his own. Born at Bridge of Cally, in Perthshire on 26 May 1923, Ian began playing violin at the age of five. His father, Will, played melodeon and was well known on the Scottish country dance scene as *The Angus Ploughman*, but Ian's teachers forbade him to play Scottish music in favour of the classics.

Classical studies gave Ian command of his instrument and resulted in him making his first broadcast, playing solo violin on BBC Radio's Children's Hour at the tender age of twelve. The pull of traditional music, which he heard at spontaneous gatherings in houses and in the nearby fields on summer evenings, proved too much, though, and before long he was playing with his father's band.



Ian Powrie (1923 – 2011)

The Ian Powrie Band got its first big break when Robert Wilson, whose *Personal*

Appearance programme regularly featured Ian's band, recommended Ian to his recording manager, George Martin, later to become synonymous with The Beatles. The first recording of Ian's that the future fifth Beatle oversaw *Bothy Ballads for the Gay Gordons* became a best seller and when the band turned professional in 1960 it became one of the mainstays on BBC Television's iconic *White Heather Club*, appearing in eighty-six of its one hundred-show run. Ian also became musical director for entertainer Andy Stewart, branching out into pop music and touring Canada, New Zealand and Australia, where, in 1966, Ian started a business and decided to settle down with his family.

Before emigrating, Ian enjoyed one of the highlights of his career, playing solo fiddle at the opening of the Pitlochry Festival Theatre on a bill including the legendary singer Jeannie Robertson. Once in Australia any thoughts of retiring from music disappeared and Ian became much in demand, both as a fiddler and as a judge of fiddle competitions in America and Canada.

In 1986 Ian returned to Scotland and continued to delight his many admirers with his fiddle playing until, in 1999, at the age of seventy-six he decided finally to retire, still a master of his beloved Scottish slow airs. Ian died on the 5th October 2011

COME AND JOIN OUR CELEBRATION!

The Orpington and District Caledonian Society will be celebrating its 75th Anniversary next year.

Many of our KASS friends have supported our dances over the years so are invited to please come and celebrate with us at our special

75th Anniversary Summer Ball.

Our Ball will be held on **16th June 2012** at **Bromley High School**, which has a large hall and separate dining area. Dancing will be to **Robin Ellis** and his augmented Band.

The subsidised ticket price will include a welcome drink followed by a sit down supper and a full evening of dancing.

Reserve the date now for a bumper evening!

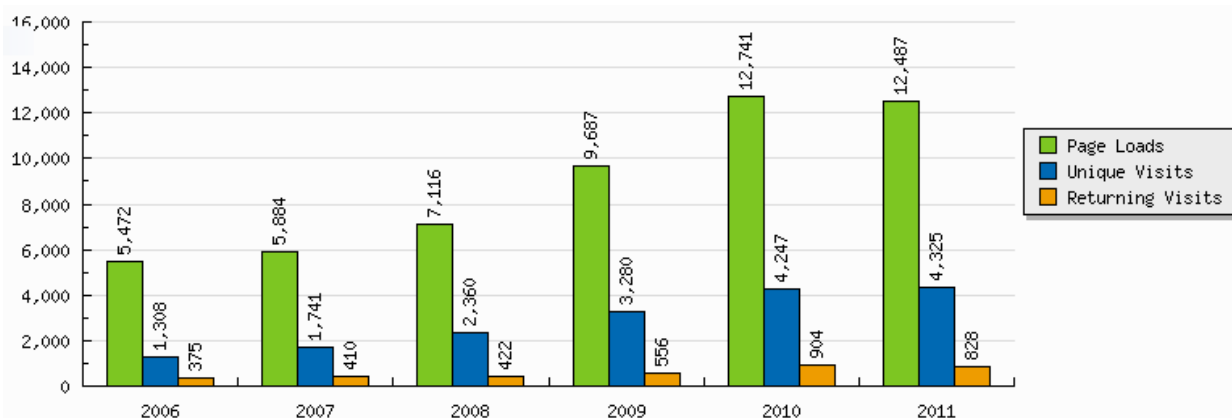
KASS Website Report 4th October 2011

The website has been particularly active over the last six months, with more clubs adding details of their dances with downloadable crib sheets. Downloads from the website have increased, with the Diary being the most popular, followed by the Newsletters, then dance crib sheets and photographs from the various Picture Galleries that have now been created.

The introduction of the centre aligned page has progressed with 8 out of the 30 pages now converted to the new layout.

The website statistics show that the activity in the first 9 months of 2011 nearly equalled the activity for the whole of 2010, which was itself a record year. It appears that we are approaching 1000 regular users.

Four clubs are now active in revising their own pages and, in particular, they are adding dance programmes, crib sheets and photographs of their events.



	Page Loads	Unique Visits	First Time Visits	Returning Visits
Total	53,387	17,261	13,766	3,495
Average	8,898	2,877	2,294	583

Year	Page Loads	Unique Visits	First Time Visits	Returning Visits
2011	12,487	4,325	3,497	828
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

Returning Visits - Based purely on a cookie, if this person is returning to your website for another visit an hour or more later

First Time Visits - Based purely on a cookie, if this person has no cookie then this is considered their first time at your website.

Unique Visitor - Based purely on a cookie, this is the total of the returning visits and first time visits - all your visitors.

Page Load - The number of times your page has been visited.

The most popular page is the Home page and this page now has a page index rating of 3 (on a logarithmic scale of 1 to 10, with 10 the most desirable but virtually impossible to achieve). All this helps to bring the page up to the top of the search engine lists, which in turn makes it easier for people to find the website.

The other popular pages are the club pages for Orpington, Canterbury St Andrews and Cobtree, followed by the Diary, Newsletters and the Events page.

Some 79% of the visitors use Internet Explorer, with 11 % using FireFox and 6% using Chrome. Some FireFox users have reported problems with some of the pages and this is usually due to a minor error (e.g. a space in the text which should not be there) which Internet Explorer overlooks. Each page should be tested on Internet Explorer, FireFox, Chrome and Opera but sometimes not all of the checks get completed at the time changes are made. However, with 20% of the users now using browsers other than Internet Explorer, these checks are becoming very important. Of the search engines Google accounts for 76.5 % of the enquiries and Yahoo 23.5 %.

Of the most recent enquiries, the majority are from the UK but we have had visitors from the USA, Portugal, France, Austria and Ireland.

Ken Hamilton

(Canterbury Scottish Society and KASS Website Officer)

KASS 239TH COMMITTEE MEETING & AGM

4 October 2011 - Cobtree Hall, Maidstone

18 members, representing 12 clubs, attended with apologies from 4 people.

The Chairman welcomed everyone and gave a comprehensive report of KASS activities and thanked all involved in these events. He noted a general reduction in the number of people attending clubs and events around Kent as KASS members get older and higher motoring costs.

The Chairman continued that there was a need to continually look for new blood and new ideas.

The Treasurer presented the accounts for 2010/2011 and thanked clubs for responding with payment of the insurance premium & KASS subs.

The KASS Events Co-ordinators reported on KASS events for 2010/2011, starting with the Autumn Dance and the spring Tea Dance, hosted jointly by Sidcup Caledonian Society and North Kent Scottish Association, at which 38 dancers attended, 34 from North Kent or Sidcup. The KASS walk was held on Sunday 26 June and 19 walkers met at Chilham car park for a very pleasant countryside walk on a hot afternoon, finishing with cream tea at Shelley's Tea Room, Chilham. Canterbury St Andrews hosted the Autumn Tea Dance at Littlebourne on a warm and sunny afternoon when 50 dancers attended. The Autumn Dance is being hosted by Dover & Deal at Hawkinge Community Centre. The 2012 Highland Ball is on 12th May, again at the Malling School with *Craigellachie Band* playing.

Lengthy discussion about Tea Dances followed and reasons for low attendance were aired and thought given to how these could be arranged and funded in the future.

The latest version of the KASS Diary was circulated and the Secretary asked club secretaries to notify him of any diary amendments. Then Ken gave a comprehensive report on website activity. Alan reported he has emailed all the clubs requesting items of interest for the November edition of the KASS newsletter.

The following Officers were elected for the year 2011/2012:

Chairman	-	Roger Brown;
Vice Chairman	-	Wendy Carter;
Treasurer	-	Trevor Graves;
Secretary	-	Nigel Hewitt;
Events co-ordinators (x2)	-	Helen Knell and Jane Whittington.
Accounts Checkers	-	David How and Brian Knell.

In spite of the fact that a subscription of £15 for the coming year had already been paid by each KASS member club, there was much discussion about the subscription level for 2011/2012 in view of the difficult financial circumstances in which clubs are finding themselves. It was agreed the subscription be reduced to £5 for the year 2011/2012 and be reviewed at the next AGM. It was also agreed that individual clubs would decide for themselves if they were able to contribute to KASS event raffles. As the subs have already been paid, it was agreed a reduction of the insurance premium payment by £10 would be made - the balance of the premium being paid from the £10 currently being held in the KASS bank account. Where a club has made its own insurance arrangements, then a cheque refund of £10 will be arranged.

In AOB Muriel Greenstead asked that clubs support the RSCDS Tunbridge Wells Dance School on 17th March 2012 and also welcomed Rebecca Evans to her first KASS meeting, noting it was refreshing to have a younger person join us! Deidre Wilden reported the Orpington 75th Anniversary Ball in 2012 and that details will be sent to clubs.

The chairman thanked everyone for attending and for their contribution to the meeting which closed at 22:40.