

The Chanter



September 2018



The Nottingham Scottish Association

President's Piece

[Ed: Looking through old versions of The Chanter, I noticed that, at one time, it was tradition to include a profile of each new president. So, Don was invited to carry on the tradition – and he has responded.]

The fantastic weather we've been enjoying since March has certainly made the time fly by. It doesn't seem that long ago since our editor was chasing me for my piece for the March newsletter.



Sometimes it's quite interesting to hear a person's potted history. So here we go with mine, I was born in Glasgow at my grandparent's house in Grafton Square. It's no longer there but Alan Glenn School, which was just around the corner, still is. As a family we lived in Duke Street and when I visited in 2014, that building was still standing too.

When I was eight my father joined the Army, which led to stays in Hampshire, Bergen-Hohne, which was a garrison in Germany, close to Belsen, Malaya, Singapore and finally Silloth, just outside Carlisle. I left school in 1964 and joined the Army that October, serving for 30 years. From basic training I was posted to Cyprus, an eye opener for a nineteen-year-old. A double whisky and ginger cost 6d and we only worked from early morning until lunchtime. Further postings saw me in Wiltshire and Hampshire, Bergen-Hohne again, Fallingbostal 20 miles from Hohne, Paderborn, Hameln and Edinburgh. During these posts I was fortunate to visit Libya twice, Cyprus on a further four occasions, Belize and Canada.

Just before I retired from the Army, we as a family settled in Trowell, in Nottingham. Civilian life has been interesting – starting with four years working in the composites industry, supplying materials and parts for aircraft, Formula 1 and associated racing teams, hovercraft, satellites, trains and the London Underground. I then spent a short time driving an HGV truck around the UK, followed by a couple of years operating two Shell petrol stations in Carlton and London roads in Nottingham. Another eye opener, I could write a book about the night life in and around a petrol station.

My final working life was an enjoyable fifteen years working for a major American franchisor at their headquarters in Leicester. Our head office was in Memphis, which I was lucky to visit many times.

I retired in 2014 and currently spend my time being a grandparent, School Governor, Parish Councillor and President of our Association. Sue and I had joined The Nottingham Scottish Association in 2005, and enjoyed many great social events. After retirement, I held the honorary post of auditor for two years, followed by two years as Vice President. Since March this year, I have had the honour of being your President. As a dancer I have two left feet, so limit my dancing to St Andrew's and Burns' nights. Where possible I attend all other social events that we organise.

Finally, I would like to ask for some assistance on behalf of the Association. We need to recruit new members, and any help that you can give to achieve this would be gratefully appreciated.

Looking forward to seeing and meeting you at upcoming events and especially at the St Andrew's dinner on the 24th of November.

Regards Don

April AGM

It's a while ago now, but the following is for the benefit of those who were not present at April's AGM.

In our Rule Book, Rule 3 talks of "Ordinary" and "Associate" members and the form for subscriptions mentions "Joint" members. Since there is nowadays absolutely no difference or advantage, financial or otherwise, between any of these designations, it was agreed that everyone would henceforth be called "members". The documents will be amended accordingly.

The majority of attendees also agreed that the annual fee would be raised to £12 and will be payable for the 2019 subscription. Ed.

The Daily Telegraph's Juliet Samuel visited Newtonmore's Highland Games this August. Her view of caber tossing as "a bit of a joke" has now changed to "It is, in fact, bloody difficult." And "not just a matter of brute strength, but also precision." She now claims that "overall, the Highland Games beats the Olympics".



From the Editor



What a braw summer it's been! Some of us may have felt roastit or sweltrie but, for once, NSA activities were blessed with warm, dry and sunny weather. It's so good to be able to eat outdoors in the evenings – and even dance! Each event is reported here in The Chanter and I'm grateful to all those who contributed. For the next issue (at the end of November) I'll be looking for reports about Crazy Golf, the walks and the St Andrew's Day celebration - so if you would like to write something about one of these, or anything else, please let me know.



Some of you may have spotted the minor name change on the cover of this issue. Rule 1 of our constitution states that the association shall be called "The Nottingham Scottish Association". However, over the years, the 'The' has sometimes been omitted. This newsletter has now re-instated it, as has the website.

Remember, if you are reading this on the website, you can blow it up to whatever size you wish, to give a bigger and better view of both text and photographs.

Christine Oldfield

**If you have anything you wish to be included in the next issue please e-mail it to: chanter@nottinghamscottish.org or send it by post, by mid November, to: The Chanter
13 Haileybury Crescent, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 7BH**



under The Nottingham Scottish Association

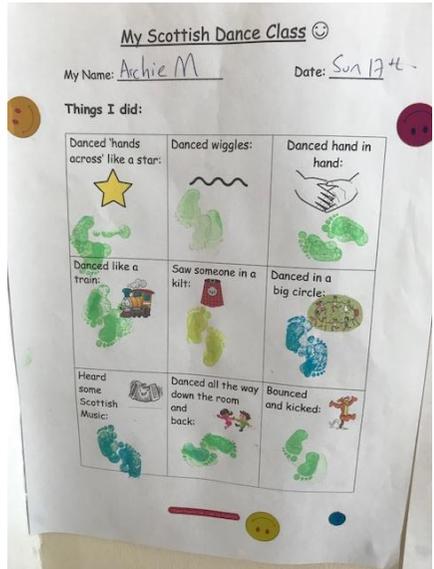
Springy Reelers

Scottish dancing for all

[Ed: Amongst the “objects” of The Nottingham Scottish Association is “The maintenance of the traditions and customs of Scotland”. Springy Reelers certainly fulfils that. You may not want to attend, but why not bring this group to the attention of your children, grandchildren or young friends? It might also stimulate interest in The Nottingham Scottish Association dancing nights.]

This monthly informal dance session is aimed at families, so kids age three and upwards sometimes join in with the dances. We talk and walk through a mix of ceilidh and Scottish Country Dances as often as needed. We don't teach the footwork, unless we have a visiting teacher, but we practise various formations. It's definitely a 'fun and friendly' way to get the family moving on a Sunday morning. To encourage our young dancers, we have a 'stomp and stamp' sheet. They collect stickers and stamps when they participate in certain activities - danced 'like a star' as danced in hands across, 'like a train' as in S-locomotion, and 'wiggles' as in reels.

We've been going for a year now and folk travel from Sheffield, Derby and Chesterfield, and even Forrest Fields to attend this social event and (optional) pub lunch.



We made it into April's edition of the RSCDS Scottish Country Dancer this year by winning their Young Dancers Social Media competition on Facebook. How do we top that one off? Well, a demo team for the ASCDS 2019 festival is being discussed.

See details and dates under Future Programme.

Dougie (Schuggie) MacInnes

Summer Walk and BBQ

Thursday 14th June

The very strong winds had abated as we gathered at Don and Sue's place in Trowell and it was calm as fifteen of us set off for our walk,



led by Sue. Dog Bernie was somewhat disgruntled at not being invited to accompany us, but Don seemed quite comfortable being left behind to tend the barbecue.

The first stretch along the road was endured and lollipop man Andrew then saw us safely across to the other side to start the walk proper. It was beautiful walking in the late afternoon sunshine and as we reached the top of a rise and stopped to admire the view, it was pointed out that "even Ilkeston manages to look attractive from here".

A fair amount of debris had accumulated along the canal in the previous 24 hours or so, but it didn't appear to offer much cover for the fish. We watched a grey heron standing poised and statue-like on the edge of the bank, ready to strike. In places, it was the yellow water lilies set on their green pads that drew our attention, and, thanks to some eagle eyes, a drenched baby bird no more than a fledgling, was scooped out from the edge of the water and deposited under a tree. We decided it must have fallen from a nest in the trees on the opposite bank. Its chances of survival didn't seem good – most of us had been following Springwatch, so were aware of the realities of nature.

Every so often the group at the front paused to let everyone catch up. Whilst waiting at a junction towards the end of the walk we had to step aside to let two scantily clad (slow) lady runners go through – it made a



change to bikes. No sooner had they passed than Hugh beetled after them, seemingly in pursuit. But, apparently, he had not been planning

to go to the BBQ as he had another engagement and had suddenly realised he was short of time and had to go!

Joining up with the 'non-walkers' back at Don and Sue's we numbered around thirty – a great turnout but, judging by the amount of food provided, our hosts had expected at least 5000. The evening was almost balmy, and the garden provided very convivial surroundings. It was good to see sparrows again. As we munched our way through the magnificent spread, which included haggis - vegetarian as well as 'proper' - a few bottles were emptied, and conversation flowed. A small snippet might be worth more investigation – two of our past presidents discussed their criminal pasts!



As proceedings wound down, our current president appeared modelling a 'bargain basement' Buchanan tartan kilt - £14.99 online and light enough to wear on warm evenings. Later in this newsletter you can read how he might make good use of it.

Many thanks to Don and Sue for their hospitality and hard work, and to all others who helped in any way – it was a memorable occasion.

A Summer Dance

Thursday 12th July

[Ed. Andrew and Sue Morrison were the perfect hosts, as they opened up their house and garden for over forty guests. Some of us wondered how they squared things with their neighbours! Andrew's account, on the NSA website and copied here, captures the ambience perfectly.]

For once it really was summer weather for the annual garden



dance! Dancers and friends from Nottingham Scottish and the Beeston U3A came together on a glorious June evening for a programme of Scottish Dances. The evening also included greetings for Garth Dring on his 81st Birthday. He provided a delicious cake

which seemed to show his age as 18. Well, we knew he looked young....

We moved on to a 'bring and share' supper accompanied by a glass or two of wine as the sun slowly set.



No better way to spend a summer evening!

Andrew Morrison

Treasure Hunt

Sunday 22nd July

Holme Pierrepont - formerly the National Watersports Centre



There were *thousands* of people there when we arrived, and it was such a major event that they were charging £15 per car to park. Word must have got around that there was a very valuable treasure to be found. But ... the hoards were just there for the National Junior Canoeing Championships, along with hundreds of multi-coloured canoes, their transportation vehicles, tents, picnics, dogs, kids – and lots of noise!

Luckily Dave had arranged free parking for our comparatively minor event and a select few formed into three small groups and headed off to solve 15 clues. It was pretty hot so we were glad the sky was overcast as we strode out - along the lakeside and riverbank, past the white water course and the lock, up and down grassy slopes, all the time with eyes peeled. Following directions, which were at times challenging, we sought out and minutely examined benches, bridges and several noticeboards. In addition to puzzling out a few anagrams. Each solved clue had a, sometimes tenuous, connection to one of 16 place names on the treasure map. We crossed off these 15 places and the one remaining told us the location of the treasure – Pierrepont Stables.

But actually the treasure was waiting for us at the home of Lyndsey and Graham Lyas, where, to mark Dave's significant birthday, we were welcomed with a glass of suitably cold Prosecco. Dave then marked our answers, while we all tucked into tea and cakes, taking the opportunity to rest our weary legs. The competition was deemed to be a tie between two teams and it was decided that the treasure – a box of chocolates – should be opened up and enjoyed by all.

Many thanks to Dave and Kate for the work they did in organising the treasure hunt, and to Graham and Lindsey for their kind hospitality.

The Perth Kilt Run

On the 12th October 1210 (that's 12/10/1210) King William the Lion of Scotland made Perth a Royal Burgh. And, 800 years later, in 2010, according to the magazine, *Scottish Life*, Perth was “engaged in a flamboyant yearlong series of events, from concerts to curling and horse trials to historical re-enactments, to celebrate its 800th birthday”. A small booklet of Scottish Country Dances was also produced. Called Perth 800, it contained dances compiled by dancers in both Perth, Scotland and Perth, Australia. These included Perth Meets Perth and The Swan and the Tay – the Swan being the river that helps make Perth, Western Australia, such a fantastic city.

In 2009, in Canada, the Mayor of Perth, Ontario, had asked for town residents to come up with an idea to help Perth, Scotland, celebrate its 800th birthday. And so, the Perth Kilt Run was born and held in



June 2010. All of the 1089 finishers were wearing a kilt, or a kilted skirt of some sort. This beat the existing record of 250, for the largest number of runners in kilts, setting a new official Guinness World Record. Dozens of different tartans were represented and created quite a spectacle for the many onlookers.

This run had been intended as a one-time only event but, in 2011, the Provost of Perth and Kinross, Scotland, paid a visit to Perth, Canada, where he was presented with a “*Historical Challenge*” to attempt to beat Canada’s record. The challenge was accepted immediately and

in June 2012, Perth's North Inch saw a complete day of free entertainment. Along with the 13,000 spectators was the Scottish mascot, Hairy McKilty, and over 1000 kilted runners who tackled the 5-mile course. Unfortunately, this was too few to beat Canada's record.



In Canada and in Scotland the Perth Kilt Run became an annual event and in 2013 Perth, Australia, decided it wanted to get in on the act. The City of Armadale, a local government area in Perth's south-eastern suburbs has long been famous for its annual

Highland Gathering and, in 2013, they announced that *"The City of Armadale is proud to host the inaugural Perth Kilt Run on Saturday 16th November. Participants will aim to break the Guinness World Record for the greatest number of kilted runners, a title currently held by Perth in Canada. We in Perth, Australia, will compete with our namesake cities from across the world including Perth, Canada and Perth, Scotland to claim title to the record."* That was a forlorn hope since no more than a couple of hundred turned up to run – but nobody could fault them for noisy enthusiasm.

The three Perths continue with their annual quest for the record, currently held by Canada with 1764 kilted runners.

It's now too late to enter any of the 2018 Kilt Runs, but there's



always next year! Don't worry if you don't have a kilt – you will be able to hire, or buy, one when you put in your race entry.

And **Gentlemen** – if **running** in a kilt doesn't tickle your fancy, why not try a different form of exercise? Read on

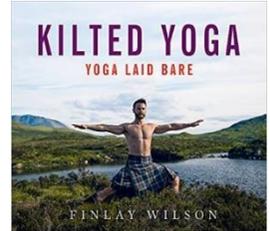
Kilted Yoga

“Yoga as it's never been seen before!”

Finlay Wilson grew up in the Scottish countryside and learned a lot about the natural world. Following operations on both his legs that led to complications when walking he started exploring Yoga and healing.

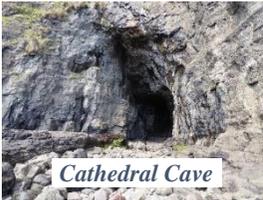
When asked to become a contributor to BBC The Social, an online platform featuring creative people across Scotland, he and a friend, kilts in hand, went to the Hermitage in Perthshire to shoot a video illustrating Finlay's book. It was a cold business, especially shooting the 'cheeky' headstand, captured in a photo on the last page of the book and also on the unmissable video at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rKIGystgThc>



The Massacre Cave on Eigg

Earlier this year Kate and I holidayed with friends in the north west of Scotland. One day we took the local ferry from Arisaig to Eigg, a small Inner Hebridean isle. On its shoreline is the vast Cathedral Cave, site of Catholic masses, and close



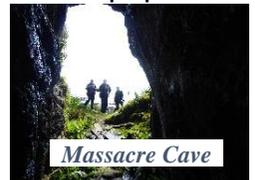
Cathedral Cave

by is the Massacre Cave. Its narrow entrance soon widens and extends about 79 metres into the darkness. It was here, in 1577, that a group of Macleods from Skye



Shoreline Secrets

landed on Eigg, seeking revenge for the latest act in a long running feud with the MacDonalds. The entire population of the island hid in the cave for three days and it was only as the Macleods sailed away again that they spotted a lookout and were able to follow his footsteps in the snow to the cave entrance. There they built a huge fire whose smoke killed 395 people trapped inside the cave. The following year, the MacDonalds exacted a similar and equally bloody and ruthless revenge on the Macleods at Trumpan Church on Skye.



Massacre Cave

David Potter

A Circular Walk from Parwich, Derbyshire

Saturday 4th August

It was a bright, sunny day with a chill in the air as fourteen of us congregated at the Sycamore Inn, Parwich, for our annual walk in



Derbyshire. Off we set, but not for long, as our attention was drawn to a dog seemingly stranded on the window ledge of the first floor of the inn.

While the landlord was being



alerted, the dog nonchalantly backed through the window frame, the glass clearly having been removed especially for his use!

Off we set again on a steady incline across fields. Alan tried hard to keep to the line of the contours, to no avail, as we had to go up (and further up!). The views from the top were spectacular and down we went to Blatch Brook, and up again... on the other side. From there we joined the flat Tissington trail on an old railway line. Finally, after roughly four and a half miles in total, we descended back to Parwich for a well-deserved cold drink and lunch at the Inn,

After lunch, seven of the group walked through the village to a quiet road leading uphill to a footpath across the fields. All went well until,



nearing the end, the path descended very steeply and the ground became very rough. Everyone was ready and willing to help each other so, at a slow but steady pace, we persevered until we reached more even surfaces on the outskirts of Parwich. A further steep descent took us back to the inn and

we all decided another drink was deserved. A toast was drunk to a really enjoyable day's walking and to Andrew for his leadership.

Rosie Allen

Dancing is Good for the Brain

The following is from an online article written by Brent Lambert in 2017 about an 18-month age-reversal experiment.

“As we grow older we suffer a decline in mental and physical fitness, which can be made worse by conditions like Alzheimer’s disease. A new study, published in *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*, shows that older people who routinely take physical exercise can significantly reverse the age of the brain. But of the physical activities examined, there was only one that towered above all the rest – dancing.”

The participants in the study had an average age of 68 and were put through different exercise routines. It turned out that “Two different types of physical exercise (dancing and endurance training) both increase the area of the brain that declines with age. But, comparing the two, it was only dancing that led to noticeable behavioural changes in terms of improved balance.”

In the ‘dancing’ group, “steps, arm-patterns, formations, speed and rhythms were changed every second week to keep them in a constant learning process. The most challenging aspect for them was to recall the routines under the pressure of time and without any cues from the instructor.”

Ed: This is something all Scottish country dancers can relate to! So, as the new dancing season begins, we hope to see all the usual dancers, as well as new dancers and lapsed dancers. We’ve always known it was physically good for us, but now there is scientific proof that it is mentally stimulating too. And the less we rely on the callers, our cribs, multiple walk-throughs and other dancers to steer us round, the more benefit there will be to our brains. Focus and concentration are the keys!



It is rumoured that the entire population of Aberdeen took to the streets with an empty glass in their hands when the weather forecaster said there would be a nip in the air. Hic!



Future Programme

NSA Activities

Thursday 6th September Scottish Country Dancing season begins. 7.15pm for a 7.30pm start in the church hall of St Andrew's with Castlegate in Chaucer Street.

Monday 10th September Crazy Golf. Highfields, adjacent to the Nottingham University tram stop. Meet at 10.45am at the entrance to the golf course. 9 holes for £3.60 (concessions). Lunch (15 places booked) at Lakeside cafeteria. **Contact** Dave Potter 0115 8490638.

Wednesday 10th October Walk. Details to follow from Andrew & Sue Morrison.

Friday 2nd November Walk. Details to follow from David Potter.

Saturday 24th November St Andrew's Night Dinner followed by Ceilidh Dance. See enclosed flyer for details.

Sunday 25th November: St Andrew's Church Service, St Andrew's with Castle Gate Church.

Monday 10th December – Christmas Walk in Colwick Park, followed by Lunch at the Toby Inn. For details and to book, **contact** Mick Horrocks 0115 9874239.

Saturday 26th January 2019 Burns Night Dinner, incorporating a Ceilidh Dance. A flyer will be in The Chanter in December.

Other Events

December: Springy Reelers, 10am – 12noon at the Scout Hall, St Michaels Square, Bramcote NG9 3HG. No experience required. Adults £2.00, kids free. Optional 12.30pm lunch at The Nurseryman. Contact Schuggie@Ceilidhcalling or on 07875718702

Fridays 14th September, 19th October, 23rd November: Ceilidhs at Boat & Horses, Beeston. Contact Schuggie as above.

Saturday 22nd September Nottingham RSCDS Social Dance 7.30 –11pm Lowdham Village Hall. See nottinghamrscds.org/events.
