

## An Appreciation of Bert Whittaker

by

Kate Middleham

Albert Henry Whittaker – we all knew him as Bert.

Bert taught us at the Sittingbourne Scottish Country Dance Group for many years. Sadly we never numbered very many at the best of times and our numbers had been dwindling over the years, as they do, for various reasons, but we kept going.

Eventually we ended up with just one four couple set, even a three couple set sometimes, and Bert was always there for us. After he became ill I phoned his wife, Joyce, frequently and most times I spoke to Bert himself right up until the sad news arrived.

Bert had unlimited patience, however stupid we were being, especially when we were learning a more complicated dance that was new to us. He never got cross with us. For some years, he and I went down to Thanet to dance once a week. These evenings under Pat's tuition were especially enjoyable. We always sat in a row with Malcolm, Walter, Derek, then Bert and me on the end. They would often be having a good laugh but sometimes I wasn't in on the joke. Those were good evenings. Bert also drove the Sittingbourne contingent to the Saturday night dances, at St. Nicholas-at-Wade and to Thanet.

He leaves a loving wife Joyce, two daughters Sue and Carol and grandchildren.

Rest in peace Bert. You will always be missed.

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Sittingbourne Scottish Country Dance Group