

# KASS



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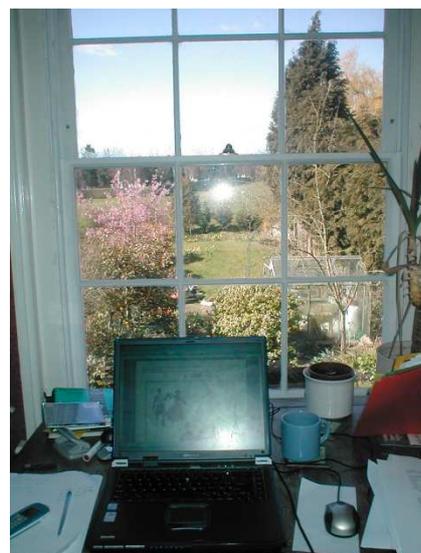
**THE VIEW FROM WATERINGBURY**

Dear Friends

The avalanche of contributions nearly overwhelmed me. Before 2005 had closed its doors, I had received articles voluntarily, my society profile slot was booked up, others had promised stories, and the Chronicler was already thinking ahead to decide which of two kings to tackle. Once my advert had gone out (anyone seen that cow yet?) more promised and delivered their snippets, letters, stories and one liners; I thought I would have to print in two parts or run to quarterly editions. Perhaps we could? But the sub-editor, with her usual clarity, bit my dithering fingers, and told me to buckle down to it so she could get her litter tray changed.

The result only hints at the friendly dialogue I have had with all the generous contributors, the kind comments in quiz submissions and reactions to previous newsletters. The newsletter obviously still stimulates communication amongst KASS members, and the breadth of topics and depth of talent to write pieces continues to be fresh. The news items from the KASS committee keep us all in touch, the quiz stretched and entertained you and the silly jokes, knowledge, information and story telling all help to reflect the rich tapestry of KASS. So thanks are due to all providers for this issue. I was delighted to receive Alan French’s recollections of Dundee to start a new series off. We have two profiles of societies; courtesy of Margaret Lucas and Betty Taylor, Betty unlocking a treasure trove of photos and cuttings. The Chronicler continues his fascinating series of history lessons. David Papa almost flew back from Bruges. Margaret Anne Robertson realised a dream, Ailean Baker draws our attention to a situation that none of us can deny. Where would I be without Kate Middleham, this time giving us sensible advice on haggis preparation? I hope memories of Maisie Holmes help us come to terms with the loss of one of our greatest characters. We also have a well-deserved tribute to Rita and David Menzies, who after 20 years of fantastic service to KASS, in almost every role possible, are retiring from front line duties. I love to hear about society news and while all current correspondents out in the county are much appreciated, I still want more!

Contributors and potential contributors –do not bask in my comments here for too long. November is not that far off and I will have another ream of paper to fill for all. Don’t just think about writing that article – get on and do it now. If you want to beat the enthusiastic ones and get your name in print, as was once



said.... Book Early! The next newsletter's deadline will be 25<sup>th</sup> October, 2006. Send offerings by email to [alanpmillsuk@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:alanpmillsuk@yahoo.co.uk) or by post marked NEWSLETTER EDITOR, 110 Bow Rd., Watlington, Kent, ME18 5DY.

Best regards, Alan

**A WEE NOTE FRAE THE CHAIRMAN**

I find it hard to credit that this will be my last "wee note" to you all, as your Chairman, as I shall be handing over to my successor at our Annual General Meeting in October.

It certainly appears to have been a long drawn out winter, but the severity of the weather has not been such as to restrict our visits to the various Club events. As before, Joan and I have greatly enjoyed all the Dances and the more formal functions.

I have already mentioned to the Committee, however, that it is quite clear that most, if not all of the Clubs appear to be experiencing difficulty in attracting adequate levels of support for their events. It really is quite essential for the future survival of Scottish Country Dancing in Kent, that all Clubs encourage mutual support of events being held by their neighbouring Clubs and of course, our own K.A.S.S. events. Although we, for example at Sidcup / Orpington, are on the outer perimeter of the area, we are still just over an hour from "far distant Dover and Deal", so please do consider spreading yourselves around the wider K.A.S.S. area. All Clubs need YOUR support and I am confident that you will receive a warm welcome from any Club you choose to attend.



Last November, we all enjoyed a truly excellent K.A.S.S. Autumn Dance hosted by Orpington. It was, in fact, over subscribed and we apologise to those whose request for tickets had to be declined. Our Spring Tea Dance, last month, was attended by well over fifty and thanks are due to the host Club, Sidcup and to Mike Gould, our M.C., who stepped in at very short notice.

We must place on record our most sincere thanks to our Vice Chairman, Ken Hamilton, for setting up the K.A.S.S. website. I know that everyone has been very impressed with its formation and with its continuing development. I believe that it will prove to have a major impact on our future progress, but it is up to every one of us to ensure that Ken receives all necessary up-dates, on individual Club events and information, in good time. Every Club should benefit from this venture, but please do remember that Ken's appointment, as our Web-master, is neither a full-time nor a remunerated post!

Sincere thanks are also due to Margaret Harwood, our Events Co-ordinator, who will be relinquishing that post after the May Highland Ball. I have had both the privilege and pleasure of working closely with Margaret during my two years as Vice Chairman and for the past eighteen months in my present capacity. In all that time, Margaret has remained resolute, efficient, innovative, charming, witty, tactful and cheerful! What else could anyone ask for! Margaret, we are so sorry to be losing you, but do enjoy a very well earned rest. You truly deserve it!

We are delighted that Jess Hunt and Sandy Lovelock, both of whom already sit on the Committee, have agreed to become Joint Events Co-ordinators and they will take over from Margaret on 14<sup>th</sup> May. We wish them well in this new venture and we know that they will make a great team. Please offer them your fullest encouragement, co-operation and support.

Another person who merits a good deal more than a word of thanks is Rita Menzies of Medway. A Past Chairman, Rita has contributed so much to K.A.S.S. and to her own Club, that "life without Rita" on the committee will be very strange indeed. Although I have written personally to Rita, on behalf of K.A.S.S., to thank her for her many years of service, more adequate words of appreciation are to be found elsewhere in this Newsletter.

The K.A.S.S. shield, which was designed and created by Les French many years ago, has been further enhanced by a new frame and stand. We are extremely grateful to Jack Waters, a Sidcup member, who very kindly and gratuitously supplied the materials and necessary craftsmanship. Thank you very much Jack.

I should like to wish you all a very happy summer season, with plenty sunshine by day and rain through the night. "Meeting of the Waters" sounds so much better than "Meeting at the stand-pipe"!

*Iain Kinnear*

*Chairman*

**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR****“Scottish Country Dancer”**

No, not you and me. This is the title of the all new RSCDS Magazine that replaces ‘The Bulletin’. What a bright, interesting and informative first issue. They have produced 28 pages, excluding front and back covers, of first class articles both entertaining and enlightening. For instance in “Diced, tartan or cream, Sir?” about fashions in kilt hose, the writer informs and educates (me at least) with a light and amusing air, touching on garters and flashes, how much leg to display, and even tips on washing your hose.

There is very precise instruction from the manual of Scottish Country Dancing on how to “set and rotate” (but we all knew that, didn’t we). Plus a piece on Miss Johnstone of Ardrossan, not the dance but an interview with Muriel Johnstone, pianist, composer and teacher, in whose honour the dance was written.

There are letters, pictures, news, reports from Vancouver, Tokyo, Brisbane, Coates Crescent and more. If you haven’t seen this publication yet then you need to beg, borrow or steal a copy from anyone who has. Every club and dancer who is an RSCDS member should have received one. So, go seek.

P.S. I am not on commission but as you see I was most impressed!

**David Papa**

**Canterbury St Andrews S C D Group**

**Sounds like the KASS Newsletter has some competition.**

**The Editor**

**Travel Advice**

Dear Alan

With the summer holidays approaching, here are some tourist tips for visitors to Scotland.

Everyday greetings and common expressions that you may care to practice:

Jock	Sir
Hinnie	Madam
Hoozyersel?	How do you do?
Whit’ll ye hae?	Allow me
Nae borra	My pleasure
Dinna fash yersel	No, thank you
Haud yer wheesht!	Excuse me
Dinna ken	Could you repeat that?

To pronounce the Scottish ‘ch’ sound as in Auchterarder, Auchtermuchty, Ecclefechan, Avich, Loch Lochy:

Place one half-stick of freshly cut celery (4¾" long) in the mouth, at right angles to the tongue & stand well back from those you wish to converse with. In summer months rhubarb may be used instead.

When motoring around don’t forget that in Scotland you always drive in the MIDDLE of the road.

I have tried it - it works!!

**Elisabeth Leishman**

**Orpington & District Caledonian Society**

**Thank you, Elisabeth, and don’t forget your spitoon on your way out.**

**The Editor**

**Raffles – Would You Like It?**

“Yellow number 195”, yes, I’ve won, but what?

After the first 3 or 4 prizes come the donations. We have won beer, two years out of date, chocolates with some missing from the box etc! If you donate a prize ask yourself, “Would I like it?”

**A. Winner**

Yes, there is something in that – at our village pantomime there was a bottle of Lambrusco entered in the draw annually for 15 years. Curiously, this year, it went missing. By the way, I used to know a friend of yours; Anon. He wrote some very good music.

The Editor

**FEATURES****BELGIAN ODYSSEY.**

**David Papa, Canterbury St Andrews S C D Group**

Once upon a time, in an earlier life when summers were warm and we were young and vigorous. OK man, it may not be Shakespeare but I'm sure you get my drift. To continue. Patricia and I decided that we should take a short continental break, and we chose Bruges, a charming small town in Belgium. Off we trundled to Dover where we took the hovercraft to Calais (such a pleasant way of crossing the Channel). We were transported from there to Bruges by Hoverspeed coach. On arrival our driver stated, in somewhat fractured English, that this was the place, just outside the huge train station car park, where we would be picked up for our return journey to Calais in five days time. So far so good.

We commenced walking towards our hotel. However, being unaware that one should not walk on the attractively red coloured half of the tarmac footpath, I only narrowly avoided being run down by a cyclist. Naturally, I was well versed in the need to look in the opposite direction to normal when crossing the road, but not to look both ways on the pavement. At that time of course, cycle paths and shared pavements were unheard of in England. We subsequently arrived safely at the hotel and settled in comfortably.

There was much to see in Bruges – many fine churches, lace making and the canal, on which we took a short cruise to the small village of Damme. Along the way we saw lots of quite beautiful windmills. The 15<sup>th</sup> August being the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we enjoyed the spectacle of a procession in her honour which meandered round much of the town and back to the church of the Precious Blood. There were knights on horseback, drummers and pilgrims carrying banners and large statues of the Virgin Mary on their shoulders, and all decked out in gorgeous medieval costumes.

Time to go home, said Zebedee (or something like that). This came round all too quickly, quite usual where holidays are concerned. So we packed our bags and traipsed back to our pick up place. 'Oh Gawd!' I hear you cry. 'Get a move on. How much longer is this saga gonna take?' Patience, people. This is where the odyssey really begins. 'About time.'

OK. Where was I? Oh yes. Standing at the stated location, we awaited the arrival of our transport. As we waited, I noticed a Hoverspeed coach pull into the station car park some 200 metres (See, I was becoming quite Europeanised already) away from where we were waiting, but assumed that this must be a bus going on to some destination other than Calais. How wrong could one be! Well, we waited and we waited until it dawned on us that something was definitely not right. DON'T PANIC! After a relatively short but fraught phone conversation with Hoverspeed Calais, having dredged up enough French to get me connected to them, it transpired that yes that was our coach, and no there was not another to Calais that day. M--DE! (An apt but somewhat impolite French expression). NOW we can panic. We were advised that our only way of getting home was by train.

Great! Being intrepid English travellers and not wanting any foreign money left over to change back into good old pounds, shillings and pence, and lose out on the exchange rate as well, we had run down our Belgian francs to almost zilch. There followed a swift change of direction from going round in circles à la headless chicken to finding the nearest hole in the wall from which to obtain further local funds. This achieved, we dived into the station and found to our profound relief, that the kind gentleman in the ticket office was able to help us, using a combination of French and English. We bought our tickets for the journey to Calais changing at Lille, and moved more calmly now to the required platform.

Phew! That's really good. At last we could relax a little. Just a minute! What was that announcement they just made? Here it comes again. WHAT THE HELL WAS ALL THAT? Yes. You guessed it. All public announcements in this part of Belgium are made in FLEMISH! This is a language that I find to be totally incomprehensible, I'm afraid. Oh God, at this rate we could end up in Prague or Moscow. Tantaratar! Enter knight in shining armour in the guise of a charmingly helpful gentilhomme who speaks Flemish, French and Oh joy, a little English. He explained that the next train is indeed going to Lille and that we are quite safe in boarding it. Que je vous remercie, monsieur. We got on the train and sank gratefully onto the comfortable seats. Hang on; these seats were a bit too comfortable. Ooops! We seem to have

boarded the First Class section of the train. A quick re-arrangement of position and all was well. We know our place, quoth he, a-tugging of his forelock dutifully.

We got to Lille on time and heard a slightly more familiar language. Forty minutes or so to wait for the train to Calais and then home.....but not quite so straightforward. We arrived at Calais Maritime from where the ferries sail but not the hovercraft. Thus begins the final chapter. We cursed a little as in the gathering gloom (it was getting rather late by now), the wind in our faces, we struggled along the shortest route between the seaport and the hoverport..... across the sand dunes (dramatic music for effect). It reminded me of those tales of the Foreign Legion and the sands of the desert, and Beau Geste, Beau Legs and Beau Nidle.

Now for the final hurdle and what a leap we had yet to make. We found that it was blowing a force 5 gale in the channel and there was a likelihood of there being no further hovercraft flights that evening. We had not envisaged the possibility of spending a further enforced night away from blessed Albion, and did not relish the extra expense involved. Apart from which we were tired and wanted to go home. Waaaah! Happily, it appeared that one flight crew thought the same and it was decided that one last craft would fly. We eagerly if not foolhardily, boarded the hovercraft and then the captain announced that we were about to leave Calais harbour. Yippee, I think! To say that the crossing was not a comfortable one is, to say the least, a masterpiece of understatement. The captain made only one more announcement, very soon after leaving Calais, to state that conditions in the Channel were rather difficult and that nothing more would be heard until he reported our arrival at Dover. Instead of the usual 35 minutes or so, our crossing took some 75 minutes. During this time all the passengers, and I might add here that the craft was less than half full, sat staring straight ahead with their hands tightly gripping their armrests. I did sneak one or two glances out of the windows, and then wished that I had not. The horizon seemed to my possibly feverish perception, to be sometimes at a 45 degree angle to the cabin. Needless to say, we did eventually arrive back safely, but I can still hear the audible sigh of relief that arose from everyone in that cabin when the white cliffs of Dover came into sight, still gleaming in the half light, and finally came over the intercom 'Ladies and gentlemen, we are now approaching Dover harbour'.

If you are still with me, thank you for persevering and I trust that it has proved amusing.

## **THE HAGGIS**

**Kate Middleham, Sittingbourne**

Born and brought up in Scotland, - I was lucky as Dumfries is approximately just thirty miles north and then west of the border with England - I have been familiar with the taste of haggis for as long as I can remember. My grannie and my mother always bought theirs from the shop in Friars Vennel which allegedly sold the best in town, their own make, of course. I should say, and this is almost sacrilegious, that is was eaten sliced and fried with the rest of the bad-for-you-stuff, sausage, bacon, egg and potato scone, all hot from the frying-pan. There was no talk then of cholesterol. Before freezing, it is useful to slice and wrap the haggis slices for individual servings, not that that was done in my childhood - no freezers of course. Nowadays the slices would be quickly grilled. Lovely! Try it. Breakfast, lunch, dinner, whenever you fancy. Thankfully, I liked it very much. Even if I had not, I should still have had to eat it. You weren't allowed to leave anything because of the starving children in Africa.

Perhaps I would not have been so keen in my formative years had I known the contents of the haggis. It never crossed my mind to speculate. Apparently, P.G. Wodehouse once accurately described it as "the most intimate parts of a sheep chopped up fine and blended with salt, pepper, onions, oatmeal and beef suet." However, the "most intimate parts" are not what one might think, but lungs, heart and liver, as I am sure you know. The resulting savoury dish is certainly delicious although I once read that during the address when "a man in a skirt plunges the ceremonial blade into this vast bulging sausage", there is not only a cloud of steam released but - look away now - an eruption of meat SLURRY!! But that is surely no worse a description than that of R. Burns himself, "gushing entrails bright".

If you are enthusiastic enough – and daring, you can make your own haggis though Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall has not attempted it. But I do know someone who does; Joyce, Bert Whittaker's wife. Me, I am too old, too tired and too lazy, as usual.

MacSween's haggis is excellent, I believe. Princess Anne eats it though that's probably not anything to go by. MacSween's also do a vegetarian one which is surely a contradiction in terms. The largest haggis they have made is an 8lb-er which feeds up to twenty. Some people steam the living daylights out of haggis but the poor thing can become distressed and explode! If you want a MacSween from Sainsburys or Waitrose for Burns' Night, you need to know that they do sell out. But there is a growing number of intensely-reared haggis on supermarket shelves. Free-range haggis is infinitely preferable. It is acknowledged that piping in the haggis dates from times when the pipes were played to drown the squealing of it as it was beaten to death with turnips.

### **SOCIETY PROFILES – No. 4**

#### **DEAL SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE GROUP**

**Margaret Lucas**

Shortly after my late husband was appointed to the Royal Marines Barracks in Deal in 1948, I met, at a party in the Officers' Mess, Brigadier H.M. McIntyre. We discussed Scotland (he originated from St Andrews and I from Inverness) and Scottish Dancing etc. and decided that a Scottish Country Dance group might be a welcome asset to Deal.

After several discussions, we were given permission, by the then Commanding Officer, to meet weekly in a room in the Barracks, and that the classes would be for Royal Marines personnel and their families.

In the 50's and 60's the Royal Marines School of Music in Deal accepted a number of overseas music students for training. Of these students, 3 joined our S.C.D. Group and very quickly mastered the dances and accompanied us to various dances.

Our dancing students were Dan from Ceylon, Tesfaye from Ethiopia and Sam from Thailand.

In 1965 our Group decided to devise a dance in honour of Brigadier McIntyre. We called the dance "The Brigadier McIntyre Reel" and Dan (Lieutenant D. Danwatto L.R.A.M., A.R.C.M. of the Royal Ceylon Navy) composed the music.

This dance was first demonstrated at a dance in the Royal Marines barracks, Deal on 16th October 1965 and the M.C. was the late Jock Young, the leader of the Folkestone Group which used to meet in Newington Village Hall – now, like much of East Kent, demolished for the Channel Tunnel.

Jock Young was quite a character. His dances were all started with a piper and "The Grand March". Jock disliked (and let everyone know he did) English men who wore kilts, and one in particular (now dead) English man who wore a Glengarry!!

In the days before motorways, several of our members travelled to Tunbridge Wells, Maidstone, Chatham etc. to attend dances, and picnicked by the wayside on our way home.

When "outsiders" wanted to join and when our numbers increased and security in the Barracks tightened we looked for other venues in Deal. We met in various halls over the years, until when our membership increased to approx. 40 members we decided to meet in Great Mongeham Village Hall where we still meet every Tuesday evening and have a beginner's class on a Wednesday morning.

Brigadier McIntyre danced until he was almost 90 and died at 101 and a half years – I gave up dancing at the age of 81 years after a couple of orthopaedic operations but am still the Hon. Secretary of the Group.

#### **PAW DE BASQUE?**

Gisele Cole from Cobtree submitted this lovely cartoon (right) via John Day and they suggest we hold a caption competition. John offers "Scottish Dancing in the doghouse" or "We don't turn anyone away from Cobtree" (Back to the day job, Day!). Can anyone do any better?

**The Editor**

### **HEARING AID**

Needing to protect the birds from cats entering my garden I bought a scarer which emits a sound only audible to cats. On receipt I read the instructions which advised that it is useless against deaf cats. Guess what, one of them is deaf!

**Muriel C Greenstead, Medway**



**MY DREAM .....**

**Margaret Anne Robertson, Medway**

For years I have been dreaming of producing a Scottish dance show, based on the Twelve Days of Christmas, with members of the Medway Junior Class dancing through the twelve days, with the audience singing the refrain to introduce each dance. On December 4th 2005, before a capacity audience at St Mary's Island, we did just that!



**Seven swans about to swim**

The planning and printing of programmes and tickets, choosing music and dances and practising had been going on for months, but with the willing help and advice of so many friends and relatives of the Junior class, it all gradually came together, and the dress rehearsal a week before the Show highlighted the deficiencies! On the day, behind the scenes were many others helping to make the afternoon go smoothly – taking tickets, providing refreshments, arranging the hall and helping the dancers in and out of costume to be ready for the next item – a quick change for those dancing in many items.

There were 35 junior dancers, (four of whom also did Highland dancing) four mature ladies, two reciters, a piper, a lad playing the recorder, a keyboard player, a dance caller and of course an MC who had compiled the music, and who directed the Show. The audience were invited to sing and to dance in appropriate places, thus taking an active part in the afternoon's performance.

We adapted the words of the song to be more suitable, and to keep costume costs down, used outfits the children already had, adding various accessories to ring the changes. Many months earlier, a lucky find of five bright yellow gypsy skirts and some beautiful feather shawls, proved ideal for the Golden Rings who danced 'the May Dance' and the Seven Swans who danced the only strathspey. Others came dressed as Santa's helpers, complete with sacks and red hats, butterflies, bees and ladybirds, playing cards, milk maids, weavers, penguins, Lords in tartan waistcoats and Jabots, pipers in wonderful hats, country dancers in white or tartan, drummers, in red and black and highland dancers in traditional costume.

The youngsters were amazing and are to be congratulated for dancing their way so well and with obvious enjoyment, through twenty one different dances during the afternoon, some danced all the way through, others adapted suitably. We were very proud of them all and I was delighted and grateful to them - they had truly made my dream come true .....

With thanks to everyone who helped in any way but especially to Ailean Baker, Barbara Meade, Harry Robertson, Lynda MacGowan and of course all the dancers.

**CHOCOLATE MATHEMATICS 2006**

It takes less than a minute...work this out as you read. This is not one of those waste of time things, it's fun.

1. Pick the number of times a week that you would like to have chocolate
2. Multiply this number by 2 (Just to be bold)
3. Add 5 (for Sunday)
4. Multiply it by 50 (I'll wait while you get the calculator...)
5. If you have already had your birthday this year add 1756. If you haven't, add 1755
6. Now subtract the four digit year that you were born.

You should have a three digit number. The first digit of this was your original number (i.e. how many times you want to have Chocolate each week).

The next two numbers are.....YOUR AGE! (Oh YES it IS!!!!) **David Papa, Canterbury St Andrews SCD Group**

**ROOTS AND RECOLLECTIONS PART 1: DUNDEE****Cold, foggy – a long way from home – but I loved it (apart from the cake, that is!)**

**Alan French, Dover Scottish Country Dancing Group**

On 1st October 1969, at 7.21 a.m. precisely the overnight sleeper pulled into Dundee Tay Bridge Station. I alighted from the train and humped my huge case and bag to the exit then I stood outside the station. It was cold – very cold. It was damp and foggy. Across the way I could see a few dark, grey buildings looming from the mist and to my right – nothing – just swirling fog where the River Tay should have been.

“What am I doing here?” I thought as I clutched a sheet of paper with written directions on how to reach Broughty Ferry. It was a struggle to cross the road to the bus station with my luggage – little as I was, even though I was eighteen and off to University. However, I caught the bus, got off at the right place and found my way to Mr and Mrs MacFarlane’s house in Panmure Terrace, just round the corner from Guthrie Toe. Apart from that initial worry on my immediate arrival, I don’t think I had time, yet alone the inclination, to regret my being in Dundee.

Four years later I graduated in June 1973, with an M.A. in the Faculty of Social Science and Letters. My degree was graciously conferred upon me by HM The Queen Mother, whom my Mum, Dad and I bumped into at the Garden Party in Camperdown Park that afternoon. She was tinier than I thought.

Of my student days I have very fond memories and one of my oldest friends dates back to October 2nd when a gang of us met on the bus at Broughty Ferry, all making our way into Dundee to Matriculate. What memories do I have? As I consciously sit at my PC and recall those days (36 years ago for heaven’s sake!) I have vivid images in my mind’s eye and suddenly I remember things I had forgotten. Like so many naïve students who set off to purchase a bright scarlet gown with blue collar to wear on the Law Walk on our first Sunday (and hardly ever after that!). Following a few pipers a straggle of students ascended the Law and grabbed an eyeful of the city, the Tay, the mountains to the north and the Kingdom of Fife to the south. I recall there was some reeling, lots of whisky swigging – then we just shuffled our way down again.

On Monday it was Gaudie Night and we met up at “Old Dines” – an old building, home to the Student Union Bar – a long way in the bowels of the earth it seemed. I recall the loos were so far away, you had to set off a long while before you really needed them to be sure of reaching them in time! In the upstairs room on that first Monday evening, the Social Science “Bejants” and “Bejantines” (that was us) met up with our senior men and women who took us out for the evening. Needless to say the pretty girls were picked first, then the extrovert males, leaving a gang of us behind. I cannot remember exactly where we ended up but it was in an awful student flat in the back streets, where a party concluded the night. Little did I realise that part of my student life would be spent residing in similar sub-standard accommodation – what fun!

Some weeks later was “Raison Monday” when the “bejants” had to repay their Senior Man or Woman for their hospitality and receive a receipt. I can still see fellow first year students entering the lecture theatre carrying their “receipts” – one was a ladder, another had a huge oil painting, while another carried a bucket and mop – others clutched assorted balloons and ribbons or were plastered with make up!

I recall fieldwork in the Highlands – the sights: Suilvan and Canisp, Glen Oykle, or being taken down into Loch Torridon, or seeing snow on the Cairngorms in late spring – were all so memorable. Also the social events – trips in a hired car over the Devil’s Elbow; visits to a quaint county pub in Grange in Fife, with its distinctive peat fire smell; and the annual “Geog. Soc.” Visit to Dewars distillery in Perth, when so many students had to be carried onto the coach to come back home!

If I have any regrets it is the misunderstanding that I laboured under that the Scottish Country Dancing Club was for experts and not novices. I attended a few formal balls and the Dundee Students Charities Campaign Highland Ball, held in The Angus Hotel on 4th May 1973, had on its programme “The Duke of Perth”, “Glasgow Highlanders”, “Hoopers Jig”, “Mairi’s Wedding”, “Montgomeries Rant” as well as “Trip to Bavaria”. The instructions for these were complete jibberish to me at the time. However, it was such a fantastic sight, all those young people in kilts and posh frocks reeling around. The music was superb and I just wished I could have joined in. The rest is history as, on my return down south, I got involved with

Scottish Country Dancing and I still love haggis, malt whisky, the sound of pipes and drums and other things Caledonian, thanks to my spending four years as a student in "Bonnie Dundee".

***For the November Edition, do you have stories from Dumfriesshire? Of course, I would also love to have your feedback stimulated from Alan's excellent article. I am thinking of using the KASS website to share the stories around, so don't hold back. The Editor***

**THE KINGS AND QUEENS OF SCOTLAND: PART 3****King William I the Lyon: King of Scotland, 1165 - 1214  
and Earl of Northumberland (1152 - 1157).**

William was born in 1143 and succeeded his brother Malcolm IV (1153-1165) as king at the age of twenty-two. They, together with their younger brother, David, Earl of Huntingdon, were the grandsons of King David I (1124-1153) by his only son Henry, Earl of Northumberland and Huntingdon (who died before his father in 1152).

**Background:** By the middle of the 9th Century Scotland became a united kingdom with the merger of the Scottish and Pictish realms followed by the take over of Strathclyde. The latter continued to retain its own identity but it had a position comparable with modern Wales to England in that it was generally ruled by the heir to the Scottish throne. On the down side, the unification of Scotland coincided with the occupation of all the Western Isles, Orkney and Shetland and much of mainland northern Scotland (i.e. above Inverness) by the Vikings. The islands were completely separated politically from Scotland but, Caithness and Sutherland continued nominally to be part of the Scottish realm though only when the king was strong and in the area otherwise they were ruled as part of the Viking empire.

The Vikings also occupied much of England, including the southern half of Northumbria leaving the northern part in local hands. English Northumbria looked to Scotland for protection both from the Vikings and later from the growing power of the English kings in Winchester. Scottish influence gradually stretched southwards and the Scottish kings considered they had strong claims to ownership of Northumbria. It was not until the end of the reign of King William II of England that the border between the two countries was finally settled with Cumbria and Northumberland firmly on the English side. However, the Scottish royal family (foolishly I believe) continued to pursue their claims to the earldoms of Northumberland and Huntingdon and it became central to Scottish foreign policy.

**Royal Family:** An addition factor was the rivalry within the Royal family. Three competing lines had fought for the throne over the last century and a half: two had subsequently merged so two remained. They were:

- a) the main line (of which King William was part) descended from the sons of Malcolm III's (1158-1193) second marriage to Margaret of England,
- b) the Lords of Moray descended from Lulach (1057-1058), step-son of Macbeth (1040-1057) and finally,
- c) from Duncan II (1094), who was the son of Malcolm III by his first marriage to Ingibiorg. Duncan left a young son, William and his descendants were called MacWilliam as a consequence. The heiress of the Morays married the heir of the MacWilliams so giving them a strong territorial base in the north from which to operate.

**Vassalage:** William had been the Earl of Northumberland since the death of his father in 1152, but the earldom was lost again in 1157 as part of dealings between his brother, Malcolm IV and Henry II of England. William inherited from his grandfather a driving ambition to regain Northumberland and it strongly dictated subsequent events. William, like the rest of his family, was on cordial terms with the English Royal family even if it was more tense than warm, and regularly attended King Henry's court. When Henry's sons (led by the eldest, the young Henry) revolted against their father in 1173, William joined them, expecting Northumberland as the price for his aid. The Scottish force being more of a rabble than an army were soundly beaten and William was captured in 1174 and taken in chains to Falaise in Normandy. In captivity William was forced to pay homage to Henry, acknowledging him as his overlord. He, and under the Treaty, his barons also, became the vassals of Henry and Scotland effectively passed into English hands. The main focus of discontent to the loss of Scottish independence centred on Galloway. William, who had been released from captivity and returned to Scotland, was able to crush the rebellion but needed English support. He then fortified Galloway with a series of burghs and castles, including those at Ayr and Dumfries, and so Galloway was pacified and became loyal to him.

**Conquest of the Highlands:** William now endeavoured to re-integrate the northern counties within Scotland. The Highlanders paid lip-service to the king but otherwise generally ignored him. The last king to live in northern Scotland for any length of time, rather than just visit the area, had been Alexander I (1107-1124). In 1179, William advanced into the Highlands, establishing castles at Redcastle and Dunskeath in County Ross. This was seen as a challenge by the latest rival claimant, Donald MacWilliam, who rebelled in 1181. Donald's claim to the throne was two-fold - as the grandson of King Duncan II on his father's side and great-grandson of King Lulach on his mother's. Donald considered himself already king of the Highlands and allied himself with the half-Viking half-Scottish Earl of Orkney, Harald II, in opposing William's advance. Initially, Donald was successful and took control of Ross until he was killed in battle at Mangarnia Moor near Inverness on 31 July 1187. It was now William's turn to have the upper hand and founded more burghs at Elgin and Inverness. William continued to press home his advantage and in 1197 invaded Caithness and defeated Earl Harald of Orkney. To guarantee his future good behaviour, Harald was required to hand over his son, Thorfinn, as a hostage. Despite the obvious threat to his son's well-being, Harald invaded Caithness again in 1202 which resulted in a strong reaction from William. Thorfinn was blinded and castrated and subsequently died from his wounds. A large, strong army was raised and Caithness became a battlefield once more. Harald finally admitting defeat, submitted to William and recognised him as his overlord for northern Scotland.

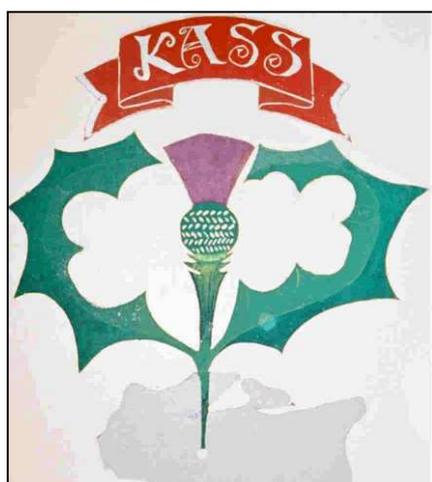
**Independence:** In 1189 the new English king, Richard the Lionheart was desperate to finance his crusade to the Holy Land and as one of Richard's vassals, William was ordered to contribute on behalf of Scotland to the "Saladin Tithe". William was now in a much stronger position compared to 1174 and refused, but after negotiations Richard reached an agreement with William known as the "Quit-claim of Canterbury". Richard sold all his claims over Scotland generally and William personally, back to William for 10,000 merks (or about £6,700). Scotland had become an independent country again. William had a further stroke of good fortune when in 1192 the Pope decreed that the Scottish church was answerable directly to him and not subordinate to Canterbury or York. By 1202 William was therefore undisputed king and overlord of all mainland Scotland.

**Family:** For some unexplained reason William did not marry until he was 43 years old when he took as his bride, Ermengarde, daughter of Richard, Viscount of Beaumont-le-Maine in France. They had four children but their son and successor, Alexander II was not born for a further 12 years. William was anything but celibate before his marriage and is known to have had nine illegitimate children - known mainly because their descendants are recorded as having William as their ancestor. He had undoubtedly more natural children but they left no mark on history. William's younger brother David, Earl of Huntingdon, also married late. For many years, therefore, Scotland had no clear heir to the throne and this only added to the unease in the north and encouraged further unrest. There was one final rebellion in Scotland in 1211, by Godfrey, the son of Donald MacWilliam. This was easily quelled, and Godfrey was executed in 1213.

**Conclusion:** William's reign was one of the longest in Scotland by an adult king and can be considered successful, for all its darker periods. Although he never extended his authority again over Northumberland, he regained Scotland's independence, politically and ecclesiastically, took back control of the northern counties and ended all further claims to the throne from rebellious family members. He was subsequently called "the Lyon" probably because of the symbol of the Lion he used on his seal.

William died in Stirling on 4 December 1214, aged 71 and was buried in Arbroath Abbey.

*The Chronicler*



**SHIELDS AND GONGS**

**Alan French, Dover Scottish Country Dancing Group**

The KASS Shield was designed by my brother Les when he (and his wife Frances) were joint social secretaries (known as events co-ordinators now!).



It is very simple - being the outline of the county with the county town Maidstone marked and growing out from that a thistle. The exact date I am not sure of (though Les says he has the original art work still) but I know it definitely appeared in 1991 at our Ruby Anniversary at Maidstone and at the KASS Highland Ball even earlier I think. Les also designed the Sheerness Heather Club's shield and "gong" - the support of which is based on the design for the Kingsferry Bridge. I also designed the Dover SCD Group's shield - with the keep of Dover Castle with the Saltire as a background, supported by Scotland's Rampant Lion and the Invicta white horse of Kent. This was then copied in enamel on the Dover "gong".

***Anyone else able to shed light on the derivations of their shields or badges? – The Editor***

**SOCIETY PROFILES – No. 5**  
**SITTINGBOURNE DANCE GROUP**

**Betty Taylor**

As the membership of Sittingbourne Dance Group had been falling for some years, it was good to receive a phone call from a gentleman one evening inquiring about the group. Unfortunately, he only wanted to pass on a series of photographs he had acquired from a past Kent Messenger photographer. Recognising some younger versions of our own troop and Joe May and his wife from Sheppey, I took the photographs along to our Thursday meeting. This quite disrupted the usual routine of our dance night as the more senior of our members took delight in pointing out friends from Sittingbourne and other groups in Kent.

Gwen and Marcelle – our two octogenarians reminisced about the early years when the ladies wore white dresses and tartan sashes and Mrs Stephenson would come and teach (as Gwen put it) proper dancing? –Mrs Stephenson, I gather, was very strict on deportment and style. I must say in the photograph (right), Mrs Stephenson and her husband used to look very regal dancing among the more energetic souls (we all know the joy of a dance performed well with excellent music).



All this reminiscing took us back to the beginning of Scottish country dancing in Sittingbourne (at least as far as the memory of our members can go – and with newspaper articles to help).

The Sittingbourne branch of the Charing Eight Dance Group started in approximately 1960 with 80 members. The HQ of the Charing Eight was in Charing with another branch in Faversham. Details from a

membership card for the years 1962-3 show the fees for adults to be 5/- per annum and for children 2/6 per annum. The group held its first dance at the Coniston hotel in 1962 (as the Kent Messenger put it “Scottish country dancing is enjoying a boom in Kent”).

The group leader and teacher at that time was Mr L.R. Leavett Brown (Mrs Stephenson being a visiting teacher). At that time, the group did not appear to have a president as the first indication on Bert’s chain of office is Mrs J.M. Reid 1967. The Sittingbourne branch was affiliated to the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society and the

<p><b>GROUP SOCIAL PROGRAMME</b></p> <p>May 12 K.A.S.S. One-Day School Gillingham                  May 18 Thanet Dance St. Nicholas                  May 25 Folkestone Heather Group 5th Highland Ball                  June 1 CHARING 8 German Tour - Mainz &amp; Wiesbaden                  June 16 Milstead S.C. Dance Milstead                  June 23 CHARING 8 S.C.D. Camping Week-end Lenham                  July 12 Folkestone Heather Group Dance Folkestone                  July 19 CHARING 8 German Tour — Schwabenberg</p> <p>— August Recess —</p> <p>Sep. 21 Medway Charity Dance Medway Towns                  Oct 13 K.A.S.S. Come Dancing Day Chatham                  Oct 19 K.A.S.S. Autumn Ball Tunbridge Wells                  Oct 31 Medway Halloween Dance Rochester                  Oct 31 Bostall Park Halloween Dance Bostall Park                  Nov 16 CHARING EIGHT                  ANNUAL HIGHLAND BARN DANCE Ashford                  Nov 30 Medway St. Andrews Buffet Supper Dance                  Dec 31 Medway &amp; CHARING 8 Combined                  HOGMANAY DANCE                  Jan. 25 Medway Burns Night Supper &amp; Dance                  Medway Towns</p> <p>Feb 15 SITTINGBOURNE BALL Sittingbourne                  Mar 22 Medway Spring Dance Medway Towns                  May 3 K.A.S.S. Annual Ball Maidstone</p> <p>Secretary: Mr. R. W. D. Anderson                  Eastcote, The Hill, Charing, Ashford, Kent. Charing 454</p> <p>Treasurer: Mr. V. D. H. Young                  28 Douglas Road, Lenham, Maidstone.</p>		<p>1962—1963  SEASON</p> <p><b>The Charing Eight Group</b></p> <p>CHARING : KENT</p> <p>and BRANCHES at                  SITTINGBOURNE &amp; FAVERSHAM</p> <p><b>Group Leader</b>                  MR. L. R. LEAVETT BROWN</p> <p><b>Deputy Group Leader</b>                  Mr. P. D. Scott</p> <p><b>MEMBERSHIP CARD</b></p> <p>HONORARY                  SENIOR MEMBER No. 98                  JUNIOR</p>
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Kent Association of Scottish Societies. In 1963 a member, Mr Bob Thompson, was approached to set up a dance in Milstead, which Joyce and Bert Whittaker.

The Sittingbourne group prospered in these years with dancers coming from the Faversham branch and other groups in the area – sometimes making up to eight sets.

Over the following years membership waxed and waned - sometimes it was difficult to raise a full set of eight dancers but each time membership picked up again. Bert Whittaker joined Sittingbourne as a dancer in 1965. In the 1980's Kay Crabb was president and teacher but ill health forced her to give up and Bert took over both presidency and teaching in 1992 – and the rest, as they say, is history.

In the late 1990's early 2000 our membership was at a low of 11. Sometimes during times of sickness and holidays it was difficult to raise a set of three couples and, as Kate Middleham mentioned in the KASS newsletter of May 2001, closing down the group seemed inevitable. As we all know, Bert does not give in so easily and, after a few words with friends in other groups, in 2005 Anne, Margaret, Beryl and Jim joined us from Thanet and District, and Jean, Irene, Sylvie and Margaret joined us from Sheppey. So, as well as Bert not being the only gentleman, we can now raise enough people to dance five couple sets.

Although at the moment, Sittingbourne lives to dance another day, we are still an ageing group and it would be a shame to see all the hard work that Bert and other members have put in over the years disappear forever.

The future –watch this space!

***Along with the article, Betty presented me with a whole pile of photos and cuttings which I shall continue to share in subsequent newsletters and on the website (in this photo spot Joe May and Gwen Stubbings). As a recent and youthful (shush at the back there!) incomer, the old membership card above (owned by Marcelle Bunch) opens up a whole series of questions to me. What was the Charing Eight Group, did anyone go on their camping weekends or their German tour of 1962? Who went to the Faversham branch and Charing HQ? Can anyone enlighten me further?***  
**The Editor.**



**SAFETY FIRST**

In this day and age of regular air travel and increasing safety concerns at public events; it is easy to switch off when the obligatory Fire Safety announcements are given at our dances. This year at Medway Burns, I, as toastmaster, tried to make people pay attention by reciting the below. Several people have asked me to reproduce it here, so those who attended will not be the only ones to have suffered:

1. In case there is a fire; beer.  
 I think you may desire,  
 To listen to my simple instructions.  
 If you follow my advice,  
 We'll be through this in a trice  
 And we won't have anybody causing ructions.

2. If the fire alarm should sound,  
 Then the exits can be found,  
 By the doors marked here, here and here.  
 Walk in a calm way;  
 Do not rush and do not stray  
 And leave behind your wine glass and your

3. The assembly point is where  
Your cars are parked and there  
You'll be safe away from any conflagration.  
Don't stop to get your coat,  
Or you'll really get my goat;  
You'll be a service to your flag and to your  
nation.

4. I'm sorry for the fuss;  
Do not curse, do not cuss;  
Take my logic through all its twists and turns:  
If you do not heed my word  
And my warning you've not heard,  
Then you'll end up with the wrong sorts of Burns.

**The Editor**

**WHAT THE PAPERS (?) SAY...**

Ailean was first to send it, then it appeared in another guise from our Chairman, then I saw it in Wateringbury Parish Magazine quoting it from another in Oxon. Is this a new breed of chain letter? I dare not break it so here goes:

**A Newly-Discovered Affliction**

This is how it manifests:

I decide to water my garden. As I turn on the hose in the driveway, I look over at my van and decide it needs washing. As I start toward the garage, I notice that there is mail on the porch table that I brought up from the mailbox earlier. I decide to go through the mail before I wash the van.

I lay the van keys down on the table, put the junk mail in the litter bin under the table, and notice that the bin is full. So, I decide to put the bills back on the table and take out the rubbish first. But then I think, since I'm going to be near the mailbox when I take out the rubbish anyway, I may as well pay the bills first.

I take my chequebook off the table, and see that there is only one cheque left. My extra cheques are in my desk in the study, so I go inside the house to my desk where I find the can of Coke that I had been drinking. I'm going to look for my cheques, but first I need to push the Coke aside so that I don't accidentally knock it over. I see that the Coke is getting warm, and I decide I should put it in the refrigerator to keep it cold. As I head toward the kitchen with the Coke a vase of flowers on the counter catches my eye--they need to be watered.

I set the Coke down on the counter, and I discover my reading glasses that I've been searching for all morning. I decide I better put them back on my desk, but first I'm going to water the flowers. I set the glasses back down on the counter, fill a container with water and suddenly I spot the TV remote. Someone left it on the kitchen table. I realize that tonight when we go to watch TV, I will be looking for the remote, but I won't remember that it's on the kitchen table, so I decide to put it back in the den where it belongs, but first I'll water the flowers.

I pour some water in the flowers, but quite a bit spills on the floor. So, I set the remote back down on the table, get some towels and wipe up the spill. Then I head down the hall trying to remember what I was planning to do.

At the end of the day:

- \* the van isn't washed
- \* the bills aren't paid
- \* there is a warm can of Coke sitting on the counter
- \* the flowers don't have enough water
- \* there is still only one cheque in my chequebook
- \* I can't find the remote
- \* I can't find my glasses
- \* I don't remember what I did with the van keys

Then when I try to figure out why nothing got done today, I'm really baffled because I know I was busy all day long, and I'm really tired. Don't laugh -- if this isn't you yet, your day is coming!

**Spotted by Ailean Baker, Medway and District Caledonian Association**

**Kate's Space...**

**This and That:**

- ✘ Have you heard that a kilted Billy Connolly suffered his come-uppance when wearing a sporran made from badger fur? It was fiercely attacked by a terrier.
- ✘ The design firm, Howie Nicholsby's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Kilts in Edinburgh is on a mission to modernise the highland dress and his sharpest innovation is the kilt suit (???) available in pin stripe, charcoal or plain black.

✂ Cherrybank Gardens, home of the National Heather Collection, at Necessity Brae, Perth, are open throughout the year. Members of the Royal Horticultural Society are admitted free.

✂ There is an arts critic by the name of Rupert Christiansen in the Daily Telegraph. In one of his articles he had the audacity to refer to the Gay Gordons as a reel. I had the temerity to write and correct him. He said he "roared with laughter" at my letter (wonder what I said now – I didn't keep a copy). He added, "Funnily enough, I thought as I was writing the article, 'I'm not sure the Gay Gordons is a reel' and now I have been soundly corrected." Nice of him to acknowledge my letter.

**AROUND THE SOCIETIES**

**MEDWAY AND DISTRICT CALEDONIAN ASSOCIATION**

**Maisie Holmes.**  
**19th February 1923 – 20th February 2006**

Two personal memories of Maisie amid the million. One, my earliest, is when I first walked into Medway's Thursday social at the Oast House, Rainham in 1991, dance shoes in hand, and my cheeks were held between her thumbs and forefingers as she roared "It's a man! And he can dance! Here, give us a kiss". That was Maisie. The other; when president of Medway, I had sent out begging letters to seek performers for our Burns evening, and received Maisie's reply. She had been reciting segments of Tam O'Shanter for many years, had said "I've enough material to keep me going till I'm a hundred", but this particular year she realised she could finish it. No ordinary letter from Maisie:

"In answer to yours of last week  
 I'm delighted to grant what you seek  
 When you ask, nay you plead, when there's really no need,  
 Then I'm sure to accede, yes I'll speak.  
 I'll give them the last of Old Tam  
 As I've quoted him ad nauseam  
 I'll bid him goodbye, with no tear in my eye  
 'Cos, frankly, I don't give a damn!



"Love, Maisie"

I cherish that letter to this day, and show it to you despite her horror that I shared that "personal correspondence" with everyone at Burns that year. That too was Maisie. Here are some more reflections and tributes from her close friend and Medway's President, Lynda MacGowan.

**Editor**

**The**

**OUR FRIEND MAISIE**

Our friend, Maisie, was a joy to be with. She loved talking to everyone, old friends and new acquaintances alike and was at her happiest when she was with a crowd of people and being the life and soul of the party, the proverbial extrovert.

Maisie Holmes (Mary Greenshields Holmes) was a member of the Medway & District Caledonian Association for over 40 years and became the first woman president in 1969 at the age of 46, supported by her doctor husband, Sandy. Since then she has worked tirelessly for the club, both on and off the council.