

WATFORD AND WEST HERTS SCOTTISH SOCIETY

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Watford and West Herts Scottish Society

NEWSLETTER FOR JANUARY 2018

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Is it a bit late to wish you all Happy New Year? Happily, I have already seen many of you to wish you this in person. My Scottish dancing year got off to a great start at the Harrow and District Caledonian Society's New Year Ball. If you haven't been to a ball yet you really should do it. It is such a joyous experience to join dozens of people dancing to live music. Our own ball is on 18th March and we are learning the dances on the programme at both our Monday and Thursday classes, so you will be well prepared.

The Bushey Centre (home of our Thursday class) is to close at the end of March. I have contacted venues in Bushey Watford, Croxley, South Oxhey, Abbots Langley, Kings Langley, Rickmansworth and Chorleywood. Several have indicated availability on Thursday evenings and the committee will aim to book the most appropriate venue for the society's needs and budget. If you can suggest a venue, please email me as soon as possible President@Watfordscottish.org and (if I haven't already contacted that venue) I will make an enquiry.

Our Christmas social had such a lovely atmosphere and was well attended. It is always a delight when members of other societies support our events. The musicians, Ken Martlew and Barbara Manning, were on top form performing wonderful music all evening.

I thoroughly enjoyed our New Year's walk taking the chance to natter to our members, learn about the local area and enjoy a splendid spread of food and selection of soups. Thank you to Stuart and Rose for hosting this.

At the society's Burns Supper on 19 January I received a wonderful piece of wisdom from past president and Hon. Chaplain Donald Wallace. He told me 'everyone wants to be past president, that's the best job.' What a pleasure it was to have so many past presidents there. John Crowder was guest of honour and his marvellous Immortal Memory speech was both entertaining and informative. Donald Wallace's rendition of Address to a Haggis was magnificent, Margaret Ingram and Duncan McNiven entertained us with To a Mountain Daisy and Holy Willie's Prayer

respectively. Andy Weiner was MC for the dancing which we performed with a lot of laughter and not a lot of style. I had a splendid time.

May I take this opportunity to remind you to share with Duncan your memories, funny stories, mementoes, and pictures for a written history of the society to celebrate our fast approaching centenary next year.

The society is sometimes asked to demonstrate Scottish country dancing and it can be difficult to find enough people to form a set on any given day. Without in any way committing yourself, may I ask you to let me know what days of the week and times (morning/afternoon/evening) you are potentially available. This would enable me to know a) who best to ask and b) when it is an impossible task and apply to other societies for assistance.

Thank you as ever to everyone who gives their time and energy to support the society. I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at a dancing or social event.

Morag Wilshere

PRESIDENT'S RECEPTION, 15 OCTOBER

Around 20 members and guests (including from Morag's salsa classes) attended Morag's reception at the Nascot Wood recital hall. Apart from nice food and convivial chatter, there were demonstrations of Irish dancing as well as Scottish dancing called by Andy Weiner. Instead of a fixed entrance fee participants were invited to make a donation. People were generous and covered more than the cost of the food and hire of the hall and provided a modest contribution to the Society's financial resources.

SUNNYSIDE CLUB, 17 OCTOBER

Six of us demonstrated "Jean Martin of Aberdeen" at the Sunnyside club in Croxley Green, whose members have various types of learning difficulties. They seemed appreciative of the demonstration, and then participated enthusiastically in the subsequent Ceilidh-type dancing. The prevailing motif of the evening was constructive, creative and enjoyable chaos. The club members must have liked it since we have been invited back for the third time for another demonstration at the end of June.

CHRISTMAS SOCIAL DANCE, 21 DECEMBER

The theme for the social dance this year was the "dancing cat". People came in feline themed costumes and thoroughly enjoyed the dancing. The beginners group which meets on Monday in Nascot Wood turned out in force for the evening, and are now practising for the Caledonian ball. It was good to see members of other societies both at the Christmas dance and the Caledonian Ball.





NEW YEAR'S STROLL, 7 JANUARY

14 members attended the walk and 18 stayed for soup and cakes graciously provided by Stuart and Rose Kreloff. The walk started at the Kreloff's home and meandered gently for 3.5 miles through three separate playing fields complete with children's playgrounds, lots of woods and a refreshing coffee at the Courtlands café. For most of the participants, this was an unusual opportunity to see the playing fields, children's slides and woods in the vicinity and come out in areas where most of us had only driven past. Members enjoyed nice tea and coffee in the Courtlands café towards the end of the walk followed by a visit to see the birds in Cheslyn Gardens then back to the Kreloffs for some tasty and nourishing soup and cakes.

BURNS NIGHT 2018

The Society's annual celebration was held at the Grim's Dyke Golf Club on 19 January. Around 36 people attended. As Morag has said above it was a very enjoyable event with contributions from John Crowder, Donald Wallace, Margaret Ingram and Duncan McNiven in memory of Burns. Judy Snook and David Dickson organised the raffle and we expect around £200 will have been raised as a contribution to our chosen charity this year, the Watford Samaritans. The toast master was Stuart Kreloff and Andy Weiner called the dances.





DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Caledonian Ball, 17 March

This should be the most important date in your diary with the Ball at its usual venue at Allum Hall, starting at 1930. There will be a rehearsal on Sunday afternoon 4th March starting at 1400 at the Nascot Wood recital hall. Music will be provided by Strathallan. The programme for the Ball is as follows:

Welcome to Ayr
The gentlemen
A trip to Bavaria
The machine without horses
The clansman
Rougemont Castle
Neil M Grant
Clutha
City of Belfast
Bauldy Bain's fiddle
Staircase in Styria
Neidpath Castle
The starry eyed lassie
Mrs Stuart Linnell
Saint Columba's strathspey
Pelorus Jack
Mary Erskine
The Moray rant
A capital jig
Mrs Macpherson of Inveran

West MACS Ball 2018, 14 April 2018 The venue is at the Allum Hall. Music will be provided by Nicol McLaren and the Glenraig Band. The charity for the evening will be the Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre, Edinburgh.

Annual General meeting, 7 June One of the items on the agenda will be a new version of the Constitution which will be presented to the meeting for adoption.

Summer social dance, 21 June This will take place at a venue to be advised. Music will be provided by Ian Robertson.