



R.S.C.D.S.



NOTTINGHAM NEWS REEL

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Christmas 2010

Let's Hear It for the Lassies – A.G.M.2010

After the bungled launch of Book 46, a chaotic 'Grand March' at the Friday night Ball came as no surprise. Those who sat through three hours of the A.G.M. hoping for more Internet communication, even video conferencing, to cut down on paper and managerial jaunts to Auld Reekie, or even downloadable music, were in for a dissie. A giant screen remained blank throughout; PowerPoint hasn't reached Coates Crescent. According to the Rogues' Gallery up on the podium, the (slowing) decline in membership was the Branches' problem, so forget any notion of a vigorous, central media campaign. 'Just a Minute' tactics would have saved many, many minutes, and certain male stumblers and wafflemongers would have gone down under a hail of challenges for repetition, hesitation and deviation. Liz Foster (Secretary), Jean Martin and Linda Gaul, please take a bow for concision and clarity.

And yet...and yet...challenges in one form or another are slowly pushing the Management Board towards a long-overdue awakening. Finance is back on an even keel and *for the first time ever (!)* the Board knows who does what with the bawbees. Last year a sharp prod from Christine Mair elicited the shameful admission that those responsible had been reluctant to tackle the complexities of reclaiming V.A.T. This year we learn that the Board has woken up, smelt the coffee and engaged a specialist who has recovered the sum of his own fees and a great deal more besides. The Board was also defeated in a vague motion to pay an unspecified honorarium to the new Treasurer, which fell by comparison with other unpaid tasks, like running Summer School. Furthermore the Scottish Charities Regulator upheld a complaint over the spending of the capital element of the Jean Milligan Memorial Fund, which propelled the Board into a resolution to maintain the capital at £100k. Finally a successful motion from New York Branch will prevent the Board from ever again imposing increased subscriptions at the A.G.M without due notice and debate, as it did in 2007. For the good of the Society, we, the members, need to hold the Board to account. It is well seen what happens when good people remain silent.

In the past we have seen a variety of lame excuses for late delivery of the Magazine but this year's was a real stunner; the eruption of Eyjafjallajökull came just in time to put back publication and its concomitant expenses into the new fiscal year and so, to tilt the Accounts for 2009-10 gently into surplus.

The rumour that the Board is chartering a Lancaster bomber to get to work on Katla or Grimsvötn, or even, Heaven preserve us, Hekla in time for next year-end has been officially denied.

Let's Hear It for the Lassies – Part Two...

The Two-sex Scottish Dancer

I'm a two sex Scottish Dancer and may seem rather dim,
But I never spend one evening as a full time her or him,
I change my sex from dance to dance, my corners always alter
It's really not surprising I occasionally falter.
The old and simple dances I can manage very nicely
And I can learn a new dance and do it most precisely,
But when it comes to next week I don't know if I can
For I learnt it as a woman and dance it as a man.
And so you men who have the luck to always stay the same
When female gentlemen go wrong be sparing with your blame.
I'll add a postscript to this tale - one comfort I have got
When both the women change their sex it doesn't show a lot!

Patricia Batt

[Now I KNOW why some ladies don't like to wear a braid to dance man...]

Christmas Emergencies

It is class night in Upper Strathdoodle – the last before Christmas, as a matter of fact. There are smiles and Merry Christmases going off all around the room and if several of the company show no signs of 'casting a clood' that is because they are living in hopes that things will warm up after a few lively numbers. 'Plantation Reel' in a nice warm coat, scarf, gloves and boots will be a most

interesting spectacle, and it's first on the programme, but look over in the corner for a moment, where half a dozen ladies have shifted Mrs. McFlannel's mince pies to clear a space and are scribbling desperately...surely they cannot be booking dances at an ordinary class night? No, not at all. But they're being terribly coy about what they're up to.

A glance over Miss Whittleburgh's shoulder reveals – a Christmas card. And yes, it looks as though a Card Emergency has struck, good style. 'From Flora with love', a quick lick and stick, a scrawled 'Jessie' on the envelope, and on to the next before she's caught napping again...wha wad ettle to see the auld dear on a night like this? Over by the CD player old Jock McFooter has played a blinder – he's just dropped a card on Phemie who's only turned out for the tea, perchance a wee mince pie and a blether, and now she's quietly looking for a pen and mebbe the loan of an Emergency Card from Mrs. McFlannel.

Hours later, when auld acquaintance is in no immediate danger of being forgot and the last guid-nichts, Merry Christmases and Happy-New-Year-when-it-comeses have been exchanged, the despairing Secretary is confronted by a forgotten and unwashed plate and a pile of envelopes addressed simply to 'Jimmy', 'Alex and Fiona', 'Gordon', 'Mairi'...ach, well, recycling's a' the talk o' the steamie these days...

One way to make sure that HQ READS the Annual Report...

This year has been an epoch which no active member will forget for many years to come. In order to make a determined effort to combat a fall in numbers we embarked upon a Community Outreach Programme. It was decided to reach out to the young ladies and gentlemen who are regulars at the Bestwell Skateboard Park, and with that in mind, our demonstration team gave a two-hour display concentrating upon reels and jigs on the basis that it would be more of a challenge for bystanders to hit moving targets, it having been market day. Two new recruits, Wayne and Shazanne, said "If, in the words of the great George Bernard Shaw, dancing is the vertical expression of horizontal desire, it's dead cool."

At the following Committee meeting it was resolved to add Red Bull and WKD shots to the catering officer's shopping list, and also that the correct formula for inviting a lassie to dance should be dropped in favour of the more inclusive "Ur yez dancin'?" to which the reply "Ur yez askin'?" might be expected.

Another new venture, to combat any possible accusation of ageism and sexism, has been to target the community of bus-nutters who hang around with their little notebooks at any event

where large numbers of coaches may be expected, the aim being to entice more attractive and physically competent members of the male sex into Wednesday nights. Horace McGargle, retired fruit-machine minder from Rotherham, was so excited at the prospect when recruited in the coach-park for the Grapplewick Floral Extravaganza that he nearly forgot to ask for the chassis number and bodymaker of a nearby Volvo B12M, but when he recovered and secured the missing details from his lifelong pal and chimney-sweep's mate Osbert Frothblower he became even more overcome with excitement and nearly dropped his haversack at the prospect of dancing for a mere four quid every Wednesday. However, we may yet not see him at Branch because his enthusiasm waned somewhat when it dawned upon him that he would be expected [a] to remove his anorak, and [b] to dance with ladies, though the allure of classes held close to a road offering Scania deckers on a ten-minute frequency in each direction might yet prove irresistible.

Branch finance has never been in a stronger position since the treasurer's recent visit to the local bank, though the discolouration of some of the bank-notes given in change at Registration has led some nasty, suspicious minds to make a connection with a stolen JCB and a large hole where a certain cash machine used to live.

Our Green initiative goes from strength to strength, though a member's loud AGM complaint regarding certain invoices for the purchase of heat-lamps and an exponential rise in electricity bills was taken no further when it was agreed to cut him in on the profits from sales of greenery and ciggie papers down at the Red Lion, after which he declared himself to be 'sorted'.

We look forward to our next Big Event, the Jig-up in the Brewery, sponsored by Windbreakers Anonymous with music by Malkie and the Reel Young Team.

Congratulations...

...to Pip Sperling and Schuggie MacInnes on their engagement.

Use it or lose it!

Your Editor is running VERY short of copy for the next edition; if you would like to see NewsReel's 25th issue please think kindly of him and put pen to paper!

And finally.....

A Merry Christmas and a Guid New Year tae Ane an' A'.