



R.S.C.D.S.



NOTTINGHAM NEWS REEL

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September 2011

Haste ye Back!

It doesn't seem over three months since the AGM but here we are again in September with the new season just starting. Some of you may be thinking it can't get any better but let me assure you it can...the holidays are over, the nights are fairly drawing in and with over a hundred shopping days to you-know-what you'd be twiddling your thumbs for want of things to do were it not for Branch every Wednesday evening! And just think of all those holiday calories just waiting to be burnt off...

Rhona Page

Winging It

Given the appetite of my coach-driving colleagues for a juicy bit of gossip, I'm awaiting a shower of texts with trepidation...Debbie Hammond from Rotherham and I were heading down the M1 for David Cunningham's master-class at Wing Village Hall and minding our own business when we were overtaken by my favourite motor in the Hammonds fleet (no relation) and I'm positive that Colin at the wheel clocked the pair of us...

How David managed to conduct an SCD musicians' master-class and gig under two severe handicaps I really do not know: just to get things off to a good start, his music software had packed up and barred access to his files, obliging him to send out our music, and there was a heck of a lot of it, in the form of some of the worst photocopies since William Caxton, and the previous day he had endured an hour-long assault by his dentist on a recalcitrant tooth, and still had a mouthful of toothache..."I'm not going to talk much today," he announced, and then spent the first hour doing little else...but that first hour was packed with useful information and stylistic prompts..."*Aye, ye know the notes...now play the tune...*" which backed up his comment that the spaces between the notes were just as important as the notes themselves, especially when playing jigs. Memorable quotations came thick and fast; we were about to tackle 'Margaret Parker' when David announced that this was 'not a peelie-wallie strathspey...'

Included in the ensemble was flautist Andrew Paterson who announced his unique distinction of having been chucked out of Musicians' Week at

Summer School! Surely not on grounds of gross immorality, laughed Mr. Cunningham, or there'd be hardly anybody left...no, it was for having 'an inappropriate instrument.'

During the afternoon session the ensemble really began to take off and David expressed himself satisfied, to the extent that anyone who wished was welcome to play the whole evening rather than leaving some of the really challenging numbers to him.



In rehearsal at Wing: Debbie, Margaret, DP, the drummer from London, David Cunningham.

By half past seven it had looked a bit thin, with only three sets or so in the hall, and an ugly rumour went round the band that sooner or later Jan Jones, our MC, would be picking off the known dancers on the stage to make up sets! But more customers arrived, things livened up and by the time we were into the *White Heather Jig* the place was fairly bouncing. Debbie and I had brought our shoes and took to the floor for 'Scott Meikle' and 'Monty's Rant', the latter complete with all the customary embellishments, and by quarter to eleven we were back on the road, having made a diary note of September 1st next year, when Keith Smith will be teaching and playing.

F'ae a' the airts...

Some of us will remember Sue and Bob Steele who were members before moving up to Dundee.

We learnt recently that Sue now has her Teacher's Certificate.

Summer School – 80 years old

No, not *quite* all the participants – but Summer School 2011 was my sixteenth since 1979, including a gap last year for a pilgrimage to the Holy Land - and immensely enjoyable, too, for this was my first week of energetic activity since the op in January. My week included dancing in classes to live music - under new teachers from outside Scotland as well as some established staff - enjoying a generous cuisine, meeting dancers from all over the world, taking part in evening socials, where the musicianship was truly impressive, and travelling by coach for Edinburgh Branch's major event, '*Dancing Forth*'. All the St. Andrews venues were within walking distance of the University halls and all had good floors.

Above all there was a healthy mixture of young and older dancers of all stages of agility and learning, from beginners to those in my Advanced Seniors class. And some of us can't keep away – when I was in Kenya I used to fly over and stay for two weeks! Those who have been before will tell you how much they enjoyed their week in St. Andrews – Joy, Rhona and David and Dilys and Tony have all been recently. The dates for 2012 are in this edition and it would be good to see as many of you as possible there next year!

Leslie Harris

Recycling

And what is exercising the minds of the dancers of Upper Strathdoodle this bright September morning? Of all things, it's recycling. No, they're all well acquainted with the idea of the pink bin for life-expired haggis, neeps an' tatties, the blue bin for single malt bottles, the orange sack for Irn-Bru empties and all that jazz, and the green credentials are well taken care of by what Jock McFooter cries the 'silly wee windmills' up on the Stushie Brae.

No, it's coming up to the Annual Dance, and the raffle is the problem. It's well known that Mistress Whittleburgh is well into her belated spring cleaning already, and who knows what might surface in the raffle as a result? Only last year, faced with a choice between a wally dug with a chipped left lug and a box of tissues with a tasteful tartan frill – was it Wallace or McQueen? – she chose the dug, drew the final ticket and poor auld Eppie Mucklebackit got landed with the tissues. Which was a poor exchange for the old dear, because it's widely rumoured that Eppie, on the Committee these forty-three years, gave that half-bottle of Red Hackle which vanished into the last few glasses of Hogmanay punch under mysterious circumstances and resulted in a

performance of 'Midnight Oil' which will be long remembered by all twelve or thirteen who enjoyed some temporary involvement, and not all of it in perfect accord with Mr. Drewry's instructions. More like a tag bout, in fact. She *can't* recycle that awful dug for the next raffle...can she?

Auld Jock's problem is that dreadful calendar. He won't it last back-end...you remember, in that twopenny hop at Bridge of Bùrach when a wheel came off Angus's taxi and went birling right through somebody's front door. It would have been just one of those things but for the fact that the door in question was attached to the polis office. But the photos are awful, the printing's worse and he can't get rid because half of Bridge of Bùrach will be coming to the dance and somebody's bound to clock it, and this is us nearly in October anyway. So it looks like one for the yellow sack or the purple bin or whatever.

And surely Mairi McFlannel won't have the nerve to give that tired old box of toiletries yet another hurl in the raffle, because it's been doing the rounds of every social from Bridge of Bùrach to Alltnadoodle for dear knows how many years; not that it was getting on a bit, but on its first appearance the wife from the Clashmaclavers Bar was black affrontit when it dawned that she'd forgotten to take off the four shilling and sixpenny price ticket. And when did you last see bath *cubes* in the shops, anyway?

All this is on top of the fluttering in the doocots over the nine different colours of tickets at the Auld Dears' Ball, one of which was variously described as 'salmon', 'flesh-coloured', 'terra-cotta' and 'peach', and the muttering that still goes on about Phemie McGuffog at the End of Season Dance, she who arrived late and got in for nothing while Erchie McSporran's back was turned, escaped *Seann Trùibhas Uilleachan* by nipping into the loo and, clearly on a hat-trick, won a year's supply of Liquorice Allsorts whilst her man was mowing into the buffet for seconds. And on *his* tickets, too!

For your diaries...

Saturday Social at Lowdham, 24 September.

Winter School 2012 at the Atholl Palace Hotel, Pitlochry, 19-24 Feb and 26 Feb–2 March 2012.

Summer School 2012 in St. Andrews:

Week 1 15-22 July

Week 2 22-29 July

Week 3 29 July – 5 August

Week 4 5 -12 August

ASCDS Festival 2012 at the Dukeries Leisure Centre, Ollerton: **12th May 2012.**