

# **The Chanter**



**Newsletter**

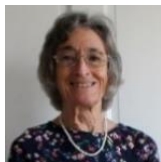
**September 2019**



**The Nottingham Scottish Association**

**Honorary Patron Sir Andrew Buchanan Bt. KCVO KStJ**

## From the Editor



It's been a funny old summer – blistering sunshine, horrendous humidity, torrential downpours and thunder and lightning storms like we've seldom experienced before. At least, albeit briefly, it has taken our minds off the endless debates about Brexit. And, meantime, the heather keeps on blooming!

In response to the request in the June issue, the number of paper copies which still need to be printed and posted has reduced significantly. There are 7 members with e-mail addresses who would still like to have a paper copy and 12 members who do not have e-mail addresses. So, apart from cutting costs, we are doing our bit for the planet! Thank you.

It would have been an excellent day for it – warm and not too sunny. But unfortunately, Don and Sue had to cancel July's Walk and BBQ when their Labrador, Bernie, became unwell and needed treatment. He was put on a course of steroids which left him still "a bit wobbly" but walking again. Sadly, Bernie lost the fight and our thoughts go out to Don and Sue as they come to terms with the loss of a family member.

As always, I would love to hear from any of you have a good story to tell. I am happy to accept any contributions you would like to send me for the next issue. Just attach them to an e-mail in a Word (or some other) document and send them to me before mid-November

[chanter@nottinghamscottish.org](mailto:chanter@nottinghamscottish.org)

**Christine Oldfield**

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## Should we be worried?

Anything that calls itself whisky must have been matured for at least three years – that's the law. It is also generally considered by the producers and drinkers that time is an essential factor in producing a good whisky. But a Californian distillery company is now said to be challenging this long-held belief and aiming to produce its whiskey in just 24 hours. The BBC says "They have analysed the composition of whisky at a molecular level which means they can recreate the taste using natural ingredients but without any maturing". Public opinion of how it tasted included "It'll never beat a nice malt", "It didn't smell like whisky", "It smelt more of apricot or peach", "very smooth, very nice". One taster suggested they must have sneaked in some real Scotch to achieve such an authentic taste. *At present* they have no plans for marketing their product outside the US. **Ed.**

## President's Page

Lesson learnt today - when Christine asks you for notes for The Chanter do them straight away. Because rather than sitting enjoying the sun in the garden, I'm now in the shade typing. September looms which will hopefully produce the summer we have missed in August.



Our Council members have been working behind the scenes, organising events which many have enjoyed. Sue and I are sorry that we had to cancel the BBQ and Walk at such short notice. We were looking forward to it, but Bernie the Chocolate Lab very suddenly became ill.

We have also struggled to attend many events, which is wholly my fault. Being a Borough Councillor as well as a Parish Councillor takes more time than I realised when deciding to go down that route. Saturday 17th August was a classic example – I had three events to attend at the same time. I'm very sorry I missed the Peak District walk - it sounded like everyone had a great time.

The 2019-2020 Dancing Season starts on the 5th September, and I'm sure it will be at its usual high standard of organisation, thanks to the dedication shown by Andrew, Christine and all the regular attenders. With regards to myself, I can do most things using either hand, which can be useful. But when it comes to dancing, I have two left feet, so I restrict my efforts to our two main events - St Andrew's and Burns' Nights.

Looking forward to St Andrew's, it is a shame that traditionally it attracts lesser attendance than our Burns' Night as it requires the same effort from Council to organise both. For those who enjoy dancing, St Andrew's is a good option. The evening is less formal, the food is as fine, there is a raffle and, this year again, Schuggie will be calling the dances. It would be great to see you there.

Let's hope by the time you read this we have had a perfect last Bank Holiday of the year, and that we are enjoying a warm September.

Gach dùrachd  
Don

**Ed.** Did you know that St Andrew's Day and the following Burn's Night always fall on the same day of the week? And this season that is on a Saturday – so celebrations can actually take place on the correct date. In addition, if it's a leap year, as 2020 is, it's the same for St David's Day.

# Half a Walk around Bulwell Hall Park

Monday 10th June

The weather forecast was not good but, despite that, twelve hardy souls turned up at Bulwell Hall Park. I had advertised a bit of history and a stroll in this park which not many people know of. It's the park of my childhood, where I spent many a happy day 'conkering' in late autumn and, in spring, picking arms full of bluebells for my mother. And it was there that games of cowboys and indians and then 'sojers' developed into rounds of golf in my early twenties. Yes, I had a lot of good memories to share and I'd even promised to point out the tree under which I had kissed my first girlfriend.

As we set off from the golf club (which also has a nice cafe open to the public) we meandered through the woods towards the golf course for the first part of the walk. We didn't see the jay that Kate and I had seen the previous week, but John Oldfield did spot a tawny owl up in the trees. On reaching the first golf tee we encountered a lesser spotted grumpy golfer who, it would appear, was the dominant male in the pack of golfers he was leading. "You're not allowed on here" was his pleasant Bulwellian greeting. "It's a golf course". "It's also a public park" was our first repost. But in the



*The Woodlands* (© Nova Hespera)

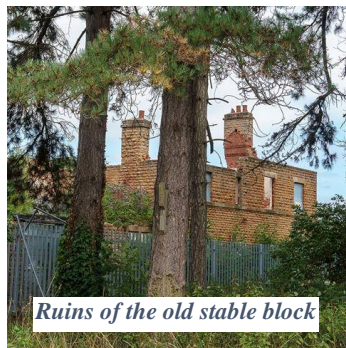
end, the decision was made to walk in the woods round the edge of the course. As often happens, I do make mistakes and after a pleasant walk through historic woodlands, looking out hopefully for another tawny owl, we actually arrived back at the junction which we had started out from! The only spotting that had been done was by Bill Dall who left the wood with

a golf ball, the result of one extremely poor hook shot.

There were quite a few Plan A, B, C and Ds this day and, with the grass becoming very slippery, a decision was made to make for the site of the Bulwell Hall. It was built in 1770 and an old relative of mine was a maid there in the late 1800s. Story has it that when the Hall, along with 574 adjacent acres of land, was put up for sale in the early 1900s, a local business man was intending to purchase it at auction. Unfortunately, his train was half an hour late and he missed the sale. He went on to buy another property in Manchester which was the start of Belle Vue Zoo. What could Bulwell have been like if he had made that auction? It might have had an enclosure for lesser spotted grumpy golfers!



*The Hall*



*Ruins of the old stable block*

The Hall was used as a sanatorium, an approved school and a prisoner of war camp for Italian prisoners in World War II before its partial demolition in 1958. We looked at the ruins of the old stable block, then, moving on from the history lesson, the heavens opened, and boy did it rain. A wee voice was heard to utter "can we nae go tae the pub?". I was disappointed that I had not had time to share with everyone all my experiences in the woods and at the fishing lakes where I had caught a 9oz roach in 1965, but we made our way back to the cars and set off to the Bowman Public House for drinks and lunch.

Thankfully it was dry, the food was good and the company even better. Hopefully we will be able to do the other half of the walk some other time!

**David Potter**

[Ed. Five of us enjoyed the Hunters Chicken on Sizzling Skillets, and it seems that the one and only photo taken that day was of a Caesar Salad and an Omelette. Many thanks must go to Dave for an entertaining outing – just the thing for a miserable rainy day]



## **And on a dry day .....**

On Sunday 23rd June more than 500 people, along with lots of kids, buggies and dogs, *Marched for Men* in Wollaton Park in aid of prostate cancer. Amongst them were five of NSA's regular walkers. With a 2km, 5km or 10km walk on offer, all five opted for the longest distance (10km is just over 6 miles) and enjoyed a lovely morning with plenty of sunny intervals. Deer, including several mature stags, seemed surprised, but unperturbed, by the passing of so many folk. A great way to spend a few hours, especially when it was in such a good cause. **Ed.**

## The Bagpipes

The June 2018 issue explained that a chanter was the mouthpiece of the bagpipes. A year or so on, here are a few more things you may like to know.

A friend of mine at Edinburgh university in the sixties was a member of the OTC Pipe Band and two particular memories have stuck with me to this day. First, when he 'gave me a shot', I couldn't produce a single note from his pipes; and second, he said he couldn't go to the pictures one Friday night because he had to feed them, ready for a Saturday morning parade!

Bags used to be made from animal skins and it was necessary to keep them soft and pliable and to seal the pores and seams to make them airtight. This 'seasoning' process is akin to using Dubbin to preserve and waterproof leather walking boots. Today, many bags are made from synthetic materials or, at least, with a hide exterior and a synthetic interior which needs cleaning rather than seasoning. Commercial seasonings are now available but in the old days it was a case of making up your own. The following recipe, quoted by Ron Bowen, owner of *The Bagpipe Place* website, and based on what he had read in the College of Piping Tutor, is just one example of many:



30 ml glycerine,  
30 ml rubbing alcohol (or 40 ml 100-proof whisky)  
60 ml honey,  
10 grammes granulated gelatine dissolved in  
30 ml boiling water (20 ml if using whisky).

Apparently, alcohol is the recommended disinfectant for pipe bags, even for the synthetic ones. Ron says *"I usually pour about two shots into the bag and one into myself, swill it around for a minute or two and pour out any excess."*

The importance of regular seasoning and cleaning rocketed into the limelight in 2013 with *The Scotsman's* headline *"WARNING: your bagpipes may kill you"*. This followed the four-week hospitalisation of a 77 year-old regular piper who was found to have inhaled fungal spores which had colonised his bagpipes and given him a potentially fatal lung infection. So, do remember to feed your pipes plenty of alcohol!



# Garden Dance at the Morrison's

## Thursday 4th July



There was a fine selection of footwear on display - sand shoes, highland dancing shoes, ballet shoes, trainers, strappy sandals boots and more. None were perfect for dancing on the grass and we wouldn't have won any prizes for our footwork. But who cares?

It was a lovely evening with plenty of sunny intervals as we made our way through nine dances, very carefully chosen to suit the occasion.

It was great to have the Beeston U3A group to swell NSA numbers and we were able to field four or five sets for each dance. That proved a bit of a challenge, given the available space



and overhanging foliage, but with some ducking and diving we did manage to avoid too many clashes as we danced down the middle or cast off behind our lines. [Thanks to David C for these 2 photos]

And in the last dance, *Good Hearted Glasgow*, for the final eight bars of 'six hands round and back', we **all** formed a rather deformed apology for a large circle and slip-stepped around the edges of the garden, ending by clapping ourselves for having had such a good time.

[Thanks to Andrew for this photo]

But there was more to come. We all felt that we deserved to indulge ourselves in the mouth-watering and bountiful buffet that was laid out in the kitchen. What a spread - everyone had been very generous! Even the mosquitoes and other insects that had come out to play were (almost) ignored as we passed the next hour or so enjoying the food and the chat.

We all appreciated Sue and Andrew's generous hospitality and hard work in organising such a pleasurable social gathering. Thank you.



Christine Oldfield

## Stornoway Black Pudding

I was surprised to hear that my hairdresser's partner, who is not a Scot, has a love of black pudding. And even more surprised to learn that he has a regular supply sent down from the Isle of Lewis. He maintains it is meatier, bigger and tastier than any of the black pudding he can buy elsewhere.

Black pudding has been made for hundreds of years by crofters who kept just a few animals for food. Being keen to make sure that no part was wasted, they saved the blood and intestines and used them to make their black pudding. Locally it was known by the Gaelic name, *marag dubh*, with *dubh* meaning black.



Picture: Greener Scotland

Some research revealed that “*Stornoway black pudding is one of Scotland's most unique delicacies*” [Maddy Searle, Edinburgh food writer]. But its status was threatened in 2009 when butchers outside the Western Isles were labelling their product as “Stornoway”. Petitions were presented, and eventually, in May 2013, the product was granted protected status by the European Union and a PGI (Protected Geographical Indicator of Origin). So now the only genuine product is made in Stornoway, on the Isle of Lewis. It contains no ‘additives’, relying only on beef suet, oatmeal, onion, blood, salt and pepper, to provide its unique taste. I wonder what will become of the PGI when/if Brexit does actually become a reality!



MacLeod is the most common surname on the Isle of Lewis and two of the top businesses that make the black puddings bear this name. Kenny and Donald founded *MacLeod and MacLeod* in 1931 and Charles set up *Charles MacLeod Ltd.* in 1947. Both are recipients of several *Great Taste* awards.

If you are a lover of black pudding, you might want to try one of these. And, do remember that ‘ordinary’ black puddings are available in all sorts of places, so you needn’t go without, even when you are on holiday. You will find them on sale throughout the UK, and in many other places around the globe, such as Norway, Thailand, Latin America, Australia and Nepal.

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And from the *Sun*, November 2018: “Prince Charles has joked that cops should be armed with frozen black puddings instead of truncheons. The Royal’s wacky idea was inspired by butcher Chris McCabe, who used the meaty treat to bust open a freezer door after getting trapped inside.”

# **Iris and Peter's Peregrinations around Scotland**

**(With the odd mention of a Scottish Country Dance)**

On June 10th, Peter and I headed north for our regular trip to Scotland. The view of the hills when we reached Carter Bar was a great **Tribute to the Borders**. We followed the A68 through Lauder and said hello, as we passed, to the **Lauderdale Lads**. A little further north we reached our usual campsite at Carfraemill - and found very few tents in the large field. Next day, we were the only visitors at Arniston House, Midlothian, built in 1726 by William Adam. We felt rather privileged as the owner and her daughter showed us round, kindly fetching chairs for us in each room.

On the 12th we went up through Dalkeith, recalling **Dalkeith's Strathspey** and took the Edinburgh ring road – but there was no sign of **The Duke & Duchess of Edinburgh**. This led us round to **The Forth Bridge**. We'd seen the new road bridge (the Queensferry Crossing) being built last year and I'd seen the older one being constructed in 1962 on my first trip to Scotland, youth hostelling with Paul, my first-year boyfriend (and Scottish Country Dancing partner).

We headed for Perth, noticing **Loch Leven Castle** on the island where Mary Queen of Scots was imprisoned in 1567. Then the A9 took us past **The Pines of Pitlochry**, the **Kingussie Flowers** and Aviemore to our next campsite near Thomas Telford's **Craigellachie Bridge** over the River Spey. Wet weather here prevented us visiting **The Bees of Maggie Knockater**, but fortunately we got beautiful sunshine for our trip NW past **The Falls of Rogie**. **The Loch Maree Two Step** then took us to our next campsite at Inverewe. Just round the bay we visited the most famous of **Scotland's Gardens** and as National Trust members we had free entry and spent two happy afternoons in there. The lovely blooms in the large Walled Garden and the rhododendrons and azaleas among the huge conifers on the rest of the promontory, were planted by Sir **Osgood Mackenzie of Inverewe** after he bought the estate in the mid nineteenth century. Many people visit the Inverewe campsite specifically to visit the Gardens, but there are some lovely beaches in the area with beautiful white sands and rarely more than six to eight people on them. One had several seals snoozing on the rocks.

We were sorry to leave this lovely area but, as we drove to Speyside, at least the weather was better, so we didn't see the **Spey in Spate**. Instead we visited the fine castle and garden at **Ballindalloch**, a village on the Spey famous for its whisky distilleries, and then the ruins of a medieval bishop's palace north of Elgin. **The Blacksmith of Elgin** was not at home but as we

drove south we saw the striking white castle at Blair Atholl and thought we heard the strains of **The Duke of Atholl's Reel** floating on the breeze.

Back in the Borders, south from Lauder, our last outing was to Dryburgh Abbey, its impressive ruins looking golden on that lovely sunny day. The memorial stone to Field Marshall Earl Haig stands amidst them - just a plain upright stone like the ones in remembrance of most WWI soldiers. His family home, Bemersyde, was a short distance away near Newtown, St Boswells. The family motto is *Tyde what may*, which refers to a 13th-century poem by Thomas the Rhymer –

'Tyde what may betyde  
Haig shall be **Haig of Bemersyde**

From there we took **The Winding Road** back to Nottingham.

Iris Dale

## Derbyshire Peak District Walk

### Saturday 17th August



Trusting in Dieter's weather forecast, rather than that of the BBC, eighteen enthusiastic walkers met at the Willersley Castle Hotel, built in the late 18th-century by Sir Richard Arkwright, of Cromford Mills fame. We set off, some hopefully smoothing on suntan lotion, others pessimistically donning waterproofs. Rosie even wore a mac, defying it to rain. Unfortunately, she didn't succeed, and we did have a sharp, but short, shower just ten minutes into the walk. Thereafter, sun, so cries of "too hot" were heard.

At one of the bridges over the Cromford Canal, Dieter pointed out where the stonework had been worn by the ropes when men had to replace the horses over a very narrow section and pull their barges through themselves.

The canal is no longer used for transporting coal or limestone but is now an SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest). We did see a little grebe, a family of mallard chicks and many wildflowers during our very attractive canal-side walk. We were also invited to take a barge trip, or even gate crash a wedding, but we marched on regardless. There were some cut off points, for flat and speedy short cuts, but all eighteen of us refused and went on to tackle the uphill sections and stiles, none of which was too taxing.



There was always a helping hand to assist the less agile over the stiles and nobody came to grief. Views across the Derwent Valley were magnificent, and it was almost with regret that we plodded our way (it was still uphill!) to the hotel for lunch.

**Liz Matthews**

**Ed.** Lunch was a rather more genteel affair than our usual pub meals – and there wasn't a chip in sight. We enjoyed the luxury of table service in the plush surroundings of the castle dining room and made short work of the two courses, followed by coffee. We had ordered our meals in advance and many of us had chosen the lemon cream gateaux for dessert – and we were looking forward to it. But when we were informed, apologetically, that this option was “off”, I heard no complaints about having to settle for Black Forest gateaux instead! And being told that we were also going to get a 10% group discount, that made it even better value than we had already agreed it was. An excellent end to a lovely outing. Thank you, Dieter, for your organisation and expertise. And thank you, John, for the photographs.

## **Sir Andrew Buchanan Bt. KCVO KStJ**

### **Honorary Patron of The Nottingham Scottish Association**

It has recently come to my notice that some of our newer members (and maybe even a few of the older ones) are unaware that our Association has a Patron; so I thought I would tell you a bit about him.

Sir Andrew was born in Scotland to Sir Charles and Lady Buchanan in 1937. In 1945 he and the family moved to St. Anne's Manor, Sutton Bonington, Nottinghamshire, where they have long connections. After Eton College, Sir Andrew did his National Service with the Coldstream Guards. He read Law at Trinity College, Cambridge and in 1966 married Belinda. Shortly after that they moved north to Hodsock Priory, which the Buchanan family have owned since 1765. They have four children and nine grandchildren. The family have a long record of service to the County. In 1976, Sir Andrew held the office of High Sheriff and in 1991 he was appointed as Lord-Lieutenant of Nottinghamshire and Keeper of the Rolls. He has been involved with many organisations and charities in the county.



So much for his achievements, but what of the man himself? I have met him on a few occasions and consider him a true gentleman – proud, but approachable and friendly.



When I was President of The NSA in 2012, I was honoured to attend, together with my husband Chris, the Service of Thanksgiving to mark his retirement as Lord-Lieutenant. It was a very grand affair, with wonderful

music from the Cathedral Choir and The Band of the Coldstream Guards. There were many tributes to Sir Andrew's work, and it was obvious he was held in very high regard.

A few years ago, at snowdrop time, Sir Andrew invited NSA members to Hodsock. He came to meet us and chatted for a while before our walk round the estate to view the really stunning spectacle of snowdrops and other woodland plants. Nowadays, Sir Andrew and Lady Belinda live in a beautifully converted barn on the farm at Hodsock and the family accommodation at Hodsock Priory has recently been converted to accommodate wedding guests. His son George and family live nearby in Retford.



Sir Andrew and Lady Buchanan have attended some of our dinner dances in the past, but unfortunately due to ill health he is no longer able to make the journey down to Nottingham. But he is always pleased to receive The Chanter and read about our activities. We wish him well in his retirement and are proud to have him as our Patron.

**Margaret Barnes**

**Ed.** After reading this article, I asked around for a bit more information. Bill Dall told me that Sir Andrew had been our Patron since 2001, the 100th anniversary of the NSA. Bob Logan filled in a few more details: "As a Scot and the Lord-Lieutenant of Nottinghamshire, the Queen's representative, Sir Andrew was invited to The Association's 100th anniversary celebration by the then President, John Flynn. As the previous Patrons, the Duke and Duchess of Portland, had passed away, Sir Andrew was invited to take on the role of Honorary Patron. He was invited to some of the Burns' Dinners and I remember that when I was President, I invited him and he thoroughly enjoyed it. Subsequently Isobel and I had an invitation to a Buckingham Palace Garden Party, which we attended as representatives of NSA."

I have since been in contact with Sir Andrew and I am sure he won't mind me quoting from one of his e-mails:-

"I would like to continue as Patron of NSA  
and am happy for you to make use of me!"

You will already have noticed his name on the cover, and it is also on the website. I also intend to send an article to The Nottingham Post in the hope that (if published) the weight behind his name might attract some attention and new members to the Nottingham Scottish Association I also sent an article to the Nottingham Local News - but they deemed it not local enough!

## And talking of Patrons ....

### An irreverent look forward to 30th November

#### St Andrew's Day

St Andrew is our Patron Saint – you might hae wondered why;  
Well this wasnae just an honour bestowed from way on high.  
No, Andrew was a canny man all Scots could well revere.  
So I'll gae ye some guid reasons that ye'd really like tae hear.

St Andrew's University is up amang the best  
And his lovely east coast seaside town is better than the rest.  
Another reason he's oor choice, and this is even better,  
He comes aheid o' ither saints when listed by first letter.

He organised a special day for parties, music an' dancin' too,  
And, besides, he has a bonnie flag... white cross on real true blue.  
Yes, he's a smashin' Patron Saint, there's lots more I could tell;  
But who needs better reason when he invented golf as well?



**NB** The next issue, due 1st December, will be slightly delayed in order to be able to include a report of the St Andrew's Night Dinner Dance. For this, I am looking for a volunteer who plans to attend and can guarantee to do a short write-up within a couple of days! It doesn't matter if you have been to dozens of them before or if this will be your first, your contribution would be gratefully received. Offers to me as below – first come, first served. **Ed.**

[chanter@nottinghamscottish.org](mailto:chanter@nottinghamscottish.org)

And, by the time you get that December issue, Great Britain may no longer be a member of the EU, Scotland might be organising another Independence referendum and we could be seeing 24-hour matured whiskey on the supermarket shelves! But please keep the heid!

# Future Programme



## NSA Events

**Thursday 5th September Scottish Country Dancing restarts** 7.15pm for 7.30 start at St Andrew's with Castle Gate church hall, Chaucer Street.

**Wednesday 25th September Crazy Golf & Football Golf** at Highfields Park, University Boulevard - adjacent to tram stop on the Toton lane route. Meet at the café at 10.15 am for a 10.45am start. Play either or both (Seniors - £4 each. £8 for both). Lunch afterwards in the café or Arts Centre. Contact Dave at davekatepotter13@gmail.com or by phone on 0778 615 7958.

**Sunday 27th October Treasure Hunt** Details will follow later. Contact Lyndsey & Graham on 0115 923 2832

**November** Walk to be arranged

**Saturday 30th November St Andrew's Night Dinner and Ceilidh Dance**  
Details in a separate flyer or e-mail.

## Other Events of Interest

**Friday ceilidhs, 6th September, 11th October, 22nd November.** Boat & Horses, Beeston. Contact Schuggie@Ceilidhcalling or on 07875 718 702.

**Springy Reelers, Sundays 22nd September, 20th October, 17th November, 8th December (party session)** 10am–12noon at the Scout Hall, St Michael's Square, Bramcote NG9 3HG. No experience required. Adults £2.00, kids free. Optional 12.30pm lunch at The Nurseryman. Contact Schuggie as above.

**Saturday 28th September Nottingham RSCDS Social Dance** 7.30pm – 11pm, Lowdham Village Hall, details at <https://nottinghamrscds.org/events>

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under The Nottingham Scottish Association