



The Chanter

Newsletter



Loch Morlich and the Cairngorm Mountains

December 2023



The Nottingham Scottish Association

www.nottinghamscottish.org

The Streets of Edinburgh

Along these broken pavements, I let my mind run free.

The past and the present seem just the same to me.
The people I have loved most among these stones did dwell,
And in the plainest language their stories they did tell.

Depending on your viewpoint this place is blessed or cursed,
And in the years I've lived here, I've seen the best and worst.

An air of sordid passion, a look of dirty grace,
But not right in your face, it's not that kind of place.

Down greasy pot-holed roadways I watch the traffic crawl,
But for the cars and buses, I give no thought at all.

I think about the future, I wonder at her health.
How with this human wealth, she does renew herself.

The pass, they pass
They pass, they pass.
The streets of Edinburgh
Hold half the World for me.

In scores, in droves
The living and the ghosts.
The streets of Edinburgh
Mean most to me.

The Proclaimers

From the President



One of the pleasures for me of welcoming the guests to the Belgrave Rooms for our recent St.Andrew's Night celebration was the opportunity it gave me to reminisce with one of the ladies there about our respective holidays in Shetland.

She happened to know the northernmost island, Unst, and had been there a short time ago, so she was able to bring me up to date about it as

we chatted, before joining in with Schuggie's lovely ceilidh dances. Unst was where Jan and I chose to spend our honeymoon nearly 50 years ago and I'd like to tell you a bit about that.

We flew in to Lerwick-Sumburgh airport and hired a wee Mini there from the aptly-named Bolt's car hire firm. I'd only had a driving licence for a few months and my clutch control was so uncertain that the poor car actually bolted off the ramp when our two ferries docked en route to Shetland's northernmost island – a flying start to our stay there! In the mid-1970s the oil industry was still at an early stage in its development off Shetland, so I recall that the traffic was still light on the roads of the mainland, Yell and Unst .

Our accommodation was in a B&B in Baltasound, overlooking a bay on Unst's eastern coast. We were prone to make jokes continually about the extreme northerly location of our stay such as 'that is the northernmost policeman/scrambled egg/letter box/bald head/milk bottle, etc. in the UK'. We decided to explore the countryside and the coast on foot as much as possible, since the sunny weather persisted throughout that first week in June.

It was the wild life on Unst and some spectacular cliff-edge views that left the deepest impression with us. Seals swam in the nearby bay and one of them approached quite near to us as we sat on Baltasound's sandy beach. As for the seabirds, what a display they gave us!



When we were walking across the moors to perhaps the island's most famous landmark, the cliffs of Hermaness with their seabird colonies, Jan protected me against being attacked by an angry diving great skua. I had walked too close to its eggs, apparently. Thanks to Jan, I didn't have to become on that day the A&E patient from the farthest north in our country. We were charmed by the views of the puffins of Hermaness and dedicated reels of camera film to them and their burrows. Fulmars and gannets performed some awesome aerobatics above us, too.

On the drive southwards to Lerwick, we made a detour along the west coast of Yell and the view of another wild animal gave me a thrill. A sea otter stepped ashore onto the rocks beneath the clifftop where I was sitting and drinking a coffee from our thermos. It lay down for a while before diving back into the lapping waves. Jan wasn't with me during those 20 minutes and she still doesn't believe that I really did see it – but it isn't just a tall story, ma'am. It was yet another highlight of one of our many great holiday stays on the Scottish islands.

I hope that you will have a lovely, relaxing Christmas and look forward maybe to seeing you at our next big get-together on Burns Night.

Dave Chapman

Welcome

The Association is pleased to welcome Ian and Yem Gray as members.

From the Editor

Thanks to those who have contributed with words, photos and ideas.

It is your Chanter, so the more articles you can submit the better! Please think about writing about your experiences – or indeed anything which might be of interest to our members. I'll look forward to hearing from you...I hope!

You can email them to me at chanter@nottinghamscottish.org.

Andrew

Dates for Your Diary

Tuesday 12th December 2023: Christmas Walk and Lunch. Colwick. Details on the website.

Thursday 4th January 2024: New Year Walk and lunch. Attenborough. Details to follow.

Saturday 27th January 2024: Burns Night Dinner and Dance. Masonic Hall, Goldsmith Street. Details to follow.

Saturday 3rd February 2024: Quiz Night.
(To be confirmed).

Wednesday 13th March 2024: Walk and Lunch. Details to follow.

Iris Dale

We are sad to note the death of Iris Dale. Iris was a long-term member of the Association and a stalwart of the Scottish Dance Group. We shall miss her. Margaret Morrison, an old friend, has given us her appreciation of Iris:

“My husband, Rae, and I moved to Nottinghamshire in 1981. Having been Scottish dancers in Northamptonshire, we immediately looked for a group to get involved with and were lucky enough to find a weekly class in Tollerton Church Hall. Iris and Peter were very welcoming, and we soon became good friends with them. In addition to the classes, we also had many special evenings at Scottish Dancing events where bands played live music, and the social side of Nottingham Scottish Association. Iris was always ready and willing to assist and provide refreshments for different events.

Iris was a very talented lady with photography and dressmaking skills. She loved the countryside and she and Peter had many holidays in the Lake District and Scotland where they would camp and explore by walking through the beautiful scenery. Receiving postcards and birthday cards, all beautifully written on some of her lovely photography was a great pleasure. During the years of active Scottish Dancing events, Iris, as a talented dressmaker, produced so many lovely dresses.

During the years of working life Iris supported Peter in his Gardening business, so although initially she had trained to be a teacher, she was happy to help by lifting and carrying in customers' gardens.

Over the last few years Iris and I have attended many interesting matches at Trent Bridge. We both liked to score matches and could be seen busily noting down all the aspects of the cricket. Despite her health challenges in recent years, Iris was determined to attend the matches and I will miss her company immensely at future events.”

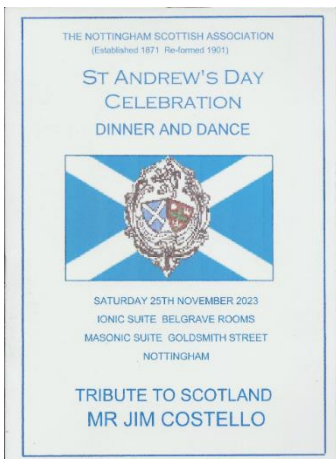
St. Andrew's Night Dinner and Dance

25th November 2023

For this year's celebration of St. Andrew, over 50 members and friends gathered in the Masonic Hall. After the President welcomed us all, we heard a Scottish Grace from Margaret Barnes. We then enjoyed an excellent meal.



Stripping the Willow



The tables were beautifully decorated thanks to the efforts of the Council and the menus expertly produced by Bill Dall. The theme for the tables was 'Scottish Lochs and Wildlife' chosen by the President and with information cards produced by Andrew Morrison

We also welcomed Mr. Jim Costello, our speaker for the evening, who gave us his Tribute to Scotland.



For those who were not aware of how much the Scots have given to the making of the modern world, this was a real eye-opener!

From the telephone to the postage stamp; from television to the Bank of England; from the bicycle to the road it travels on – they were all invented by Scots!

With thanks to Jim for entertaining us.

One of the highlights of the evening is the dancing, led by Schuggie Macinnes. The company circled, birled, 'scooshed' and waltzed its way through the dances until the Willow was finally Stripped.

It remained only to join hands for 'Auld Lang Syne' and to make a tired but happy way home.





Nottingham University Walk Monday 4th September

Nottingham University's Park Campus is one of the glories of Nottingham, and we are fortunate to have, in the Association, Teresa who is able to show us aspects of the campus we would otherwise miss.

Did you know, for example, that a grassy hillside close to the Portland Building conceals the remains of the medieval village of Keighton? The village was in the possession of Lenton Priory and paid tithes until it was apparently abandoned towards the end of

the 15th Century. It was only discovered by accident in 1940 when the ground was used as a 'Dig for Victory' site!



If you visit the campus, be sure to visit the Botanical Garden – a peaceful oasis of unusual and attractive trees. These include a fine Medlar and a Ginkgo (the Maidenhair Tree).

You will also find a half-hidden rock garden and restored Edwardian Summerhouse. These were, until recently, completely hidden by vegetation. It was only when this was cleared in 2006 that these gems came to light!



Our final treat was wholly unexpected. As you pass the wall of the School of Psychology on your way to the Lakeside Car Park, you will see (if you look closely) a wall with embedded fossils probably from the Peak District.!

Our walk finished with lunch at the nearby Nurseryman. Our thanks go to Teresa for organising the event and for her excellent guiding!

Gotham Walk

Wednesday 11th October



We met with our leader for the day, Dave Chapman, at the Star Inn in Gotham, ready for our circuit from the legendary village.



As soon as we set off on our walk, we passed a pole commemorating just some of the legends.

The pole's imagery includes the figure of Batman, (climbing up the right hand side in the photo). Dave and Jan were able to explain that Washington Irving had given the nickname of Gotham to New York City– inspired by the 'foolish ingenuity' of the Gothamites! The nickname was then borrowed by the creator of the Batman stories, which is how Gotham become world famous!

The so-called 'simplicity' of Gothamites arises from the stories of the "Wise Men of Gotham". These depict the people of the village

as being stupid. However, the reason for the behaviour is believed to be that the villagers wished to feign madness to avoid a Royal Highway being built through the village by King John. Frightened of the madmen, the King bypassed the village!



Our route took us up to the ridge of Gotham Hill with fine views over the village and across the Trent towards Attenborough. We then circled round and back, passing the famous Cuckoo Bush on the way back. This is where, according to legend, the 'Wise Men' of Gotham tried to prolong the summer by fencing in the cuckoo – under the impression that the leaving of the cuckoo triggered the onset of winter. Sadly, they failed to put a roof over the enclosure, allowing the bird to fly away unhindered!

The walk ended as we returned to the Star Inn where we joined the non-walkers for an excellent meal. Thanks to Dave and Jan for arranging and leading the walk – and for the information about the legends of Gotham. Thanks also to the staff of the Star Inn for their hospitality (and for the photo!)



Skittles Evening

Friday 20th October



The Nottingham Scottish Skittles Night turned out to coincide with a day of record rain – but for those who braved the weather to reach the Conservative Club in Arnold it was all about the skittles.

There were 16 participants so our organiser, Rosie, divided us up into 4 teams and the games began. We very soon realised that with 9 skittles and arranged in a triangle, it was all too easy to miss or, more frustratingly, pass through them all without touching any!



The Winners!

Nevertheless, we persevered and after two preliminary rounds we reached the grand final. The winners, after a hard-fought match, were Deryck, Anita, Teresa and Hugh. They were appropriately rewarded with a box of Tunnocks' Tea Cakes!.



The evening continued for a while longer as we sat and chatted in the bar before setting off for home.

It was a great evening's entertainment.

Thanks to Rosie for organising it (and us!).

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**Winter on Loch Arkaig**





*(You will recall that we published this photo in the previous issue of 'The Chanter' with the question 'when was it taken? Well, courtesy of Bill and Jeanne here is the answer! Ed.)*

**Q: When Was It Taken?**

**A: November 2006.**

I know, because I was there, surrounded by friends past and present plus a photographer and a reporter from The Nottingham Evening Post, who joined us as we practised for our St Andrews Dinner and Dance.

**Back row: Left to Right;** David Potter, Kate Potter, Peggy Cooke, Stephan Sos, Diana Burkhardt,

**Next row:** Fred Harris, Susan Harris (hiding behind Fred) Hilary Saunders, Andrew Morrison, Isobel Logan, Bob Logan.

**Next row;** Graham Young, Dennis Willey, Sylvia Greenfield, Sue Morrison, Gina Rose, Marie Hecht, Dieter Hecht.

**Front row:** Bernice Young, Shona Willey, Jeanne Dall, Bill Dall, Sylvia Cozens, Godfrey Cozens.

The Group photograph, along with eight smaller prints, filled a page in The Evening Post colour supplement. (sadly, small prints are not suitable to reproduce)

As they say in Nottingham; Aye up! scrubbed up fine!

**Bill (President 2005 – 2007) and Jeanne**

## "To Morrow" by Bob Gibson

I started on a journey about a year ago to a little town called Morrow in the State of Ohio.

I've never been much of a traveller, and I really didn't know  
That Morrow was the hardest Place I'd ever try to go.  
So I went down to the station for my ticket and applied  
For tips regarding Morrow not expecting to be beguiled.  
Said I, "My friend, I'd like to go to Morrow and return  
No later than tomorrow for I haven't time to burn."

Said he to me, "Now let me see if I have heard you right.  
You'd like to go to Morrow and return tomorrow night.  
You should have gone to Morrow yesterday and back today.  
For the train that goes to Morrow is a mile upon its way.  
If you had gone to Morrow yesterday now don't you see,  
You could have gone to Morrow and returned today at three.  
For the train today to Morrow, if the schedule is quite right,  
Today it goes to Morrow and returns tomorrow night."

Said I, "My friend, it seems to me you're talking through your hat.  
There is a town named Morrow on the line now tell me that."  
"There is," said he, "but take from me a quiet little tip.  
To go from here to Morrow is a fourteen-hour trip.  
The train today to Morrow leaves today at eight thirty-five.  
At half-past ten tomorrow is the time it should arrive.  
So, if from here to Morrow is a fourteen-hour jump,  
Can you go today to Morrow and get back today, you chump?"

Said I, "I'd like to go to Morrow so can I go today  
And get to Morrow by tonight if there is no delay?"  
"Well, well," said he to me, "and I've got no more to say.  
CAN YOU GET anywhere tomorrow and get back again today?"

Said I, I guess you know it all but kindly let me say,  
How can I get to Morrow if I leave this town today?"  
Said he, "You cannot go to Morrow any more today  
'cause the train that goes to Morrow is a mile upon its way."

I was so disappointed. I was mad enough to swear.  
The train had gone to Morrow and had left me standing there.  
HE HAD NO RIGHT in telling me that I was a-howling jay.  
I could not go to Morrow so I guess in town I'll stay.

*(Thanks to Bill and Jeanne for this poetic gem!*

## Calling All Genealogists...



## Why Not Research your Family Tree with the Help of Scotland's People?

During the Pandemic we decided to research our family history back in Scotland. We tried the Ancestry website but soon discovered it did not really cover Scottish records. They suggested we try 'Scotland's People', which is supported by Scottish Government. This allowed us to build our family history back to 1766.

Our main reason for starting was that our two granddaughters, born in Derbyshire, had no real knowledge of their Scottish ancestors. Bill's family worked in farming, mainly in the North-East and Perthshire before settling in Fife. Jeanne's roots trace back through Fife to Ayrshire with generations working in coal mining.

After registering with 'Scotland's People' you can research all records, only paying when downloading Birth, Marriage, and Death Certificates etc. Before starting you must be prepared to spend a lot of time with many disappointments through dead-ends, usually caused by inaccurate information and skeletons lurking in cupboards.

Don't be deterred as it is much more fun getting back yet another generation. We included as much information as we could find, not only names and dates but also details of employment found on the same certificates.

We spent two years searching the records and along with family photo albums we finally produced two A4 books filled with certificates, photographs and many family stories which have been passed down over the years.

Our granddaughters now have an insight into their Scottish background. Eventually, they can pass on their family history to the next generation.

### **Bill and Jeanne Dall**





## The Proclaimers



**Craig and Charlie Reid**

Craig and Charlie are twins, born in Leith in 1962. They spent their teenage years in Auchtermuchty and attended the Bell Baxter High School in Cupar (*a distinction they share, incidentally, with the Editor's mother!*).

Their musical career started in 1983, when they joined forces to become 'The Proclaimers'. They have continued to produce their own distinctive brand of music ever since – with their best-known works including '500 Miles', 'Letter from America' and 'Sunshine on Leith'.

'The Streets of Edinburgh' was recorded in 2018 and reflects their roots in the East of Scotland and is a nostalgic journey through its streets.

You can see the official video of the song [here](#). For anyone who knows Edinburgh, this will bring back a few memories!

## THE COUNCIL 2022/23

### Office holders

|                                                    |                                                                                                                  |
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