



The Chanter

Newsletter



Bass Rock, Firth of Forth

September 2023



The Nottingham Scottish Association

www.nottinghamscottish.org

Song Composed in August

Now westlin winds and slaught'ring guns
Bring Autumn's pleasant weather;
The moorcock springs on whirring wings
Among the blooming heather:
Now waving grain, wide o'er the plain,
Delights the weary farmer;
And the moon shines bright, as I rove by night,
To muse upon my charmer.

The paitrick loves the fruitful fells,
The plover loves the mountains;
The woodcock haunts the lonely dells,
The soaring hern the fountains:
Thro' lofty groves the cushat roves,
The path of man to shun it;
The hazel bush o'erhangs the thrush,
The spreading thorn the linnet.

Thus ev'ry kind their pleasure find,
The savage and the tender;
Some social join, and leagues combine,
Some solitary wander:
Avaunt, away, the cruel sway!
Tyrannic man's dominion;
The sportsman's joy, the murd'ring cry,
The flutt'ring, gory pinion!

We'll gently walk, and sweetly talk,
While the silent moon shine clearly;
I'll grasp thy waist, and, fondly prest,
Swear how I lo'e thee dearly:
Not vernal show'rs to budding flow'rs,
Not Autumn to the farmer,
So dear can be as thou to me,
My fair, my lovely charmer!

Robert Burns

From the President



I send my greetings to you at this time of change in the seasons (from my favourite few months of cricket back to my also much-liked rugby/soccer, as I am wont to look at this seasonal transition!). I hope that you have been able to enjoy a happy and relaxing summer, whether you have been on your travels (perhaps to Scotland?) or if you have stayed at home and taken the opportunities to spend more time with family and friends.

Jan and I enjoy sharing our vivid memories of holiday times spent in Scotland and we will contribute some of those stories to future editions of the Chanter.

Although 2023 hasn't brought us back north over the Scots border yet, during the last 3 months we've been able to enjoy some great Scottish music here in the East Midlands. Karine Polwart, whose albums such as 'This Earthly Spell' are enchanting, gave a concert in Lincoln in June and then, by a lucky coincidence, we got to hear the brilliant music of Tide Lines, a Glasgow-based folk/rock band. In fact we were introduced to their guitarist when he visited Nottingham and he played some of their songs to us. At some point in the coming year Jan and I would like to arrange an evening of Scottish music for those of you who'd like to take part.

For me the most momentous event of this summer has been my reunion in Sicily with the guys that I first got to know there 50 years ago when I was their English teacher. It was fascinating and moving for us to be able to share our subsequent life stories and to enjoy swapping memories of people associated with the school and its glorious location in the Sicilian mountains. We had our grandchildren with us, too, and they were treated with such great warmth and affection by my ex-pupils and their families. That trip had been postponed for 3 years due to Covid but we made it eventually!

Now it's time for me to talk about the activities that have brought NSA members together in our 'summer vacation time', while the dancing sessions were on hold. As I write, dancing will recommence on Thursday September 7th. Garden parties, outdoor games and country walks have been our main social occasions in the meantime.

Sue and Andrew hosted both of the garden parties and it was a delight to be there each time. We thank them very warmly for their generosity. During a summer of very changeable weather we were fortunate on July 20th to be able to dance on the lawn in the sunshine and to sit outside to enjoy the delicious food and drink without any rain interruptions. Similarly for the President's Tea Party on August 13th we could sit at our ease in the garden, circulate for a chat with a variety of friends and eat savoury and sweet delicacies to our hearts' content!

Games such as croquet and skittles are likely to become fixtures on our social programme (see below). We'd like to go back for more, please! We had enjoyable walks led by Dieter Hecht, Helen Beeby and Carol Mee which you can read about below – and we have a full programme of events leading up to Christmas.

Dave Chapman

Skittles Evening: Friday 20th October at 7.30pm

Come and join us for an evening of Skittles! The venue is the Balfour Club on High Street in Arnold. There are car parks almost next door or opposite and they are free after 6pm. There is a bar available at the club.

Skittles are fun whether you are experienced or a first timer. You will be split into teams on the night and the cost is likely to be £4.

Please email or phone Rosie if you would like to come!

rosieallen21@outlook.com or 0115 9679959

From the Editor

Thanks to those who have contributed with words, photos and ideas. It is your Chanter, so please do support it by continuing to contribute.

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

Andrew

Dates for Your Diary

See www.nottinghamscottish.org for updates!

Thursday 7th September: Scottish Country Dancing restarts.

Wednesday 11th October: Walk. Details to follow.

Friday 20th October: Skittles Evening. See above.

Saturday 25th November: St. Andrew's Night Dinner and Dance.

Tuesday 12th December: Christmas Walk and Lunch.

Nottingham Scottish Dancers



This photo may bring back a few memories, but when was it taken?

Netherfield and River Trent Walk

Thursday 29th June



The weather was fine - dry and not too warm, just right for walking. 8 of us set off from the Ferry Boat Inn at Stoke Bardolph to embark on a 4.2 mile walk which first took us away from the Trent towards the Netherfield Lagoons and then looped back to the Trent where we had a short break under the 1850 railway bridge built by Clayton & Shuttleworth from Lincoln.

From there we continued along the river back to the pub where we all enjoyed a tasty and good value for money meal.

Many thanks to Dieter for planning and leading this walk.

Lambley Dumbles Walk

Friday 21st July

It wasn't looking too promising when we arrived in Lambley for our August walk but NSA walkers are nothing if not a hardy lot!

Our route took us from Lambley in the direction of Woodborough giving us good views in all directions. We then walked through Ploughman Wood where Helen explained that it was a small remnant of our ancient woodlands consisting mainly of oak and ash.



We speculated that this was probably how Sherwood would have looked in the days of Robin Hood. We half expected to see a band of men in Lincoln Green flitting through the trees – although, of course, we didn't!

What we did enjoy, however, was an excellent sighting of a Red Kite which flew low over our heads and along the path ahead of us. This is not such a common bird in this part of the world but its reddish colouring and forked tail were unmistakable.



After stopping for our group photograph, we headed back towards Lambley via the Lambley Dumbles. 'The Dumbles' are deeply carved, tree-lined stream beds. They were formed at the end of the last ice age when large amounts of ice and permafrost melted. The resulting streams cut deep, steep-sided valleys into the bedrock. Today, they are havens for wildlife and plants – and make for an attractive and interesting walk.



Returning to Lambley, we passed Holy Trinity Church which dates from the 12th century and is one of the most complete perpendicular-style churches in the county.

Our walk finished with a convivial lunch at the Florlands Café -when the heavens finally opened! Many thanks to Helen for an informative and well-led walk.

Garden Dance Thursday 20th July



Planning a garden dance in this country is always an expression of hope! This year, we had a few anxious moments looking at the weather forecast and rainfall radar but, in the event, it proved to be a much better evening than we could have hoped.

As usual, members from the Association and Beeston U3A mingled happily as we danced through a programme of old favourites. It was then a pleasure to relax into our fuddle and talk until the night began to fall.



President's Garden Party Sunday 13th August

A MEMORABLE AFTERNOON

Like Paddington Bear, we had been invited to afternoon tea with a lady. Unlike Paddington, we did not have to take our own 'Marmalade Sandwiches'!

Our invitation came from our past President of The Nottingham Scottish Association, and her husband, Sue and Andrew Morrison. The weather was very kind to us, with a warm sun, some blustery winds, and threatening clouds, but NO rain.

The tea that Sue and Andrew had prepared was superb. Everyone was catered for, with sandwiches and sausage rolls, lots of delicious home-made scones and cakes, and plenty of cups of tea, and other drinks. (Rosie you are a delightful tea waitress, another string to add to your bow).

There were about thirty people present, from different groups in the NSA, and it was good for us all to be able to mix, and talk to people whom we hadn't met before, and have time to sit and chat generally. Everyone looked so happy and relaxed.

Andrew had prepared a quiz for us. I wonder how many of us 'Read the Paper' correctly. He said the answers were from 2022, not 2023. As one of the questions was about the number of people on the Earth now, Ron was reminded of a Monty Python skit some years ago, of a baby being born every eight seconds. As there are now eight billion people on the Earth, presumably it must now be every six seconds! As well as general questions, there were questions related to Scottish topics.

Altogether it was a really enjoyable afternoon. So, many thanks, Sue and Andrew, for your wonderful hospitality.

Ron and Wendy Clements

Calverton Walk Saturday 19th August



After heavy overnight rain, our August walk started from Calverton on a pleasant morning. 11 of us met at the Admiral Rodney, where Carol – our leader for the walk – briefed us on the route.

Starting off, we headed south from Calverton into rolling countryside with some good views over Nottinghamshire. The path led us into Fox Wood, which conceals the site of an iron age hill fort. It is a nationally important archaeological site, although, being heavily-wooded, it is almost impossible to see the fort!



After leaving the wood, we passed through fields, with many of the hedgerows covered in ripe blackberries. Between us, we picked and ate a fair few! As you might expect, that – and the pleasures of conversation slowed us down considerably!

In due course we arrived back at the Admiral Rodney for a well-earned lunch and more conversation.



Thanks to Carol for an excellent and well-planned walk.

Anyone for Croquet? Friday 25th August



Well, yes, there were 16 of us for croquet! The Long Eaton Croquet Club generously allowed us access to their lawns and provided us with the equipment. Equally, they also gave us the help and instruction we needed!



Most of us were beginners, although a few had some distant memories of playing in the past. The hoops looked unfeasibly narrow and the balls had a habit of going in the wrong direction! Nothing daunted, we cracked on and finally began to get to grips with it.

On the Lawn...



Once we got the hang of it, the competition began to heat up! After a first game – won by the team who achieved the most hoops – we changed the teams and started another, hotly contested, round!

Who won? It matters not. The point was to enjoy ourselves and we did.

Thanks to the Long Eaton Croquet Club for their support and to Sue for organising it.

Did You Know?

(With thanks to Margaret Barnes)

Scotland is home to the oldest tree in Europe. It is a twisted yew and has been around for 3000 years in Forthingill, Pethshire.

Edinburgh was the first city in the world to have its own Municipal Fire Brigade, formed in 1824, 8 years before London.

There are over 600 freshwater lochs in Scotland and the only one referred to as a lake is the Lake of Menteith in Perthshire.

The raincoat was invented by Charles MacIntosh, who was born in Glasgow.

Scotland has the highest proportion of redheads in the world. 13% of the population are redheads and 40% carry the redhead gene.

The official animal of Scotland is the Unicorn.

Scotland has over 800 islands, but only 118 are inhabited.

The Royal Mile in Edinburgh is longer than the standard mile by 107 yards. Prior to the mile being standardised, Scottish miles were longer than English miles.



The highest mountain in the UK is Ben Nevis at 4409 feet.

Loch Morar is the 17th deepest lake in the world at 1077 feet.

The bagpipes were invented in Ancient Egypt and brought to Scotland by the Romans.

The Romans never conquered Scotland. The military efforts lasted on and off for 40 years until the Romans gave up and built Hadrian's wall instead to keep the marauding Scots out.

Scotland has her own version of Stonehenge – the Callanish Stones in Lewis on the island of Harris and Lewis in the Outer Hebrides. Many people think that Harris and Lewis are two separate islands, but they are two areas of one island.



Scotland's coastline is 6,160 miles long – three times longer than England's.

MacArthur's cave in Oban was a Mesolithic settlement around 6000 years ago. The remains of 2 men were found, along with various tools in 1894 by quarrymen. Unfortunately, it had to be closed off because it was considered too dangerous to allow any further excavation.



The Corryvreckan whirlpool between the islands of Scarba and Jura in Argyllshire is the third largest in the world.

Edinburgh has been the Capital of Scotland since 1437, when it replaced Scone, which was where the Scottish Kings were crowned.

19th century Edinburgh was one of Europe's most important centres for medical research and, because of body-snatching, coffins were caged to try and prevent this rather lucrative trade.

THE COUNCIL 2022/23

Office holders

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