



The Chanter

Newsletter



Inverness

June 2025



The Nottingham Scottish Association

www.nottinghamscottish.org

Lochaber No More

By Allan Ramsay

Farewell to Lochaber farewell to my Jean
Where heartsome wi' thee I hae many days been
For Lochaber no more, Lochaber no more
Maybe to return to Lochaber no more.

These tears that I shed they are a' for my dear
And not for the dangers attending the weir
Though borne on rough seas to a far distant shore
Maybe to return to Lochaber no more.

Though hurricanes rise though rise ev'ry wind
No tempest can equal the storm in my mind;
Though loudest of thunders on louder waves roar
There's nothing like leaving my love on the shore.

To leave thee behind me my heart is sair pain'd
But by ease that's inglorious no fame can be gained
And beauty and love's the reward of the brave
And I maun deserve it before I can crave.

Then glory my Jeanie maun plead my excuse
Since honour commands me how can I refuse?
For without it, I ne'er can have merit for thee
And losing thy favour, I'd better not be.

I gae then, my lass, to win honour and fame
And if I should chance to come glorious hame
I'll bring a heart to thee with love running o'er
And then I'll leave thee and Lochaber no more.

From the President



We are well on our way into the 2025/26 membership year after our AGM held on 24th April.

The AGM this year had its moments....

Margaret, our secretary, who was to be the mainstay of the event was rushed into hospital on the day and so we only had hours to work out how to cope without her.

This was doubly a nuisance as we had planned to mark our great thanks to Margaret for her service to the Association for the past very many years as President, Vice President, Past President and since then Secretary. We will give a token of our appreciation at a future event that Margaret is able to attend.

Many thanks to Sue who stood in for Margaret at the AGM, taking the minutes and keeping everything running along smoothly. This is a feature of the work Sue does for the Association in her various roles as communication secretary, provider of events, dance leader and general all round fount of knowledge and experience. I am truly grateful that Sue has agreed to stay on the Council for another year.

I have much to thank our Vice President, Dieter, for over the year. He is always completely supportive and has many good ideas. We very much enjoyed the Cromford Boat trip and visit to Lea Gardens that Dieter organised as well as his walks.

Ann, our Treasurer, has worked incredibly hard on our account this year. Our accounts are remarkably healthy despite 8 fewer members over the year. Ann has coordinated the move to a new bank, written a Safeguarding policy, negotiated with St Andrews over room charges, suggested and set up a new venue for our dinner dances and much more.

I am so pleased that all members of the Council have agreed to stay on for another year and thank them all for their cheerful, hardworking approach which has led to a varied and successful year of activities.

We have a new member of the Council as Carol Mee has agreed to come on as Membership Secretary. She is very welcome.

There are so many people in the Association who are not on the Council but take a very active role. Our Trustees, Bob Logan, Dave Potter and Andrew Morrison can always be called upon for advice when the need arises. Andrew works incredibly hard for us all editing the Chanter, running the Dancing and the website and organising many walks and events.

Our Life Members Bob Logan and Jeanne and Bill Dall also give so much back and we thank them for it.

I cannot thank everyone individually but each member of the Association deserves thanks. We need you all to keep us vibrant and thriving. Please, please encourage everyone you know to join us so that our numbers don't dwindle.

Here's to another successful year. Please give us your ideas for future activities.

Rosie Allen



The Pap of Glencoe

Dates for Your Diary

Tuesday 24th June	Gunthorpe Walk and Lunch
Thursday 17th July	Garden Dance
Wednesday 30th July	Derbyshire Walk and Lunch
Wednesday 6th August	Lawn Bowls Afternoon (tbc)
Wednesday 13th August	Walk and Lunch
Saturday 18th October	Peak Rail Outing (tbc)
Saturday 29th November	St. Andrew's Night Dinner

Details of these events will be emailed to members and will be posted on the website (www.nottinghamscottish.org) closer to the dates.

From the Editor

Thanks to all for their contributions to this edition of the Chanter. Please, if you have not contributed a piece before, please think about doing so. Your experiences are always so interesting. Have you enjoyed a recent visit to Scotland or elsewhere? Do you have a childhood memory to share? Do you have a piece of Scottish history to recount? Please share with us!

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

Andrew Morrison



**A Date for your Diaries Saturday October 18th
Come and enjoy a trip on the Palatine steam train with
afternoon tea.**

The Peak Rail route runs for 8 miles round trip from Rowsley South along the Derwent valley. We pass through Darley Dale station on our journey to Matlock before the return trip. The journey takes 1 hr 20 mins and leaves at 2pm. There is a free car park at Rowsley South.

During the train ride we will enjoy a delicious Afternoon Tea.

The Afternoon Tea consist of a selection of sandwiches and a piece of homemade quiche followed by a homemade scone served with clotted cream, butter and strawberry preserve, fresh strawberries and a selection of homemade cakes all served with a choice of either tea or coffee. To start we will be given a complimentary glass of Prosecco.

Prices are as follows:

£45 for Adult and Senior Citizens.

£28 for Children aged 5-15 years.

Children under 5 are free (Excludes food).

If we can reach the magic number of 20 people the price will reduce to £40 per person.

**ASAP: To register your interest please contact Rosie Allen on
rosieallen21@outlook.com**

Norma Smith

We are sad to record the death of Norma Smith, a long-time member of the Association. Margaret Barnes has given us this tribute to Norma who will be greatly missed by the Association.

A Tribute to a very dear friend.

Most of you will know that Norma Smith, a loyal and long-standing member of the Nottingham Scottish Association passed away very suddenly.

Norma and I were very close friends and it goes without saying I miss her so much. She was funny, kind, generous and thoughtful – and a terrible timekeeper and unbelievably stubborn when she dug her heels in! Norma was always game for anything and if anyone suggested an outing, whether it was the cinema, theatre, lunch, afternoon tea or just an extra game of Rummycub her response was always “Count me in.”

I will always be indebted to Norma for the help she gave me when I had an unexplained black-out a few years ago and as the medics couldn't find out the reason, I was not allowed to drive for 6 months. She was always ready to take me for scans and other hospital appointments and we were always on time because I gave her the appointment time at least 15 minutes before it was actually due!

We were both addicted to Rummycub and played most Friday evenings, either at her house or mine. We would decide it was time to pack up and still be sitting at the table with a G&T for ages afterwards, talking about our families and our lives in general and reminiscing about Scotland.

The world will be a poorer place without this very special lady and I will never forget her. Rest in Peace Norma.

Margaret Barnes

Strelley Walk

Saturday 29th March

This spring has been notable for long stretches of fine weather and, this time, our March walk fell on a lovely morning.

Strelley village, right on the edge of Nottingham, is the gateway to a network of paths between Bramcote, Trowell, Ilkeston and Kimberley. Carol had planned a circular walk starting from the Broad Oak pub where we were booked for lunch later.

Our route took us south towards Bramcote, under the M1 and on to the Nottingham Canal, south of Cossall.



After following the canal for a while, we crossed it and walked through the fields to Cossall. After the closure of the local pit in the 1960s, the village has become a quiet oasis nestled between the M1 and Ilkeston. It is in the heart of D. H. Lawrence Country; was the home of his then fiancée, Louie Burrows; and is the setting for his novel 'The Rainbow'.



The Monks' Way, Strelley

After walking through Cossall, we headed back towards Strelley and our starting point. This took us through the fields and back over the M1 into the historic village of Strelley. The village is recorded as a settlement in the Domesday Book of 1086 and, like Cossall, has a history of coal mining.

As the walk passed All Saints Church, we reached a section of heavily eroded pavement – the Monks' Way. This is a remnant of a series of paths which probably linked the various abbeys and priories of this part of Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire.

The Monks' Way today leads through the village and it duly returned us to the Broad Oak and our waiting lunch – the culmination for a very satisfying walk.

With many thanks to Carol for organising and leading the walk.



Bestwood Park Walk

Saturday 26th April



Our April walk started and finished at the splendidly gothic edifice of the Bestwood Lodge Hotel. The present building dates from 1865, but Bestwood has a much longer history.

From the reign of Edward I, Bestwood was a favourite hunting ground. Perhaps the most famous of royal visitors was Charles II who loved to visit with his mistress, Nell Gwyn. On his death, the lodge was bequeathed to Nell, and her descendants owned it until 1939 when it became first a military establishment and now a hotel.



Today, the woods and the old colliery constitute an extensive country park with fine woodlands and sweeping views from land reclaimed from the old waste heaps.



The first half of our walk took us through a fine display of bluebells where a kindly passer-by took a group photograph.



We also passed a bench labelled 'Vincent's View' – was this the same Dave and Chris Vincent who were previously members of the Association and loved the area?

The weather was warming up nicely when we reached the community café at the site of the old winding engine – a good place to buy a coffee (at the extraordinarily cheap price of 50p!) before heading back to the Lodge and lunch.

With many thanks to Rosie for organising and leading the walk.

Wednesday 7th May

Cromford Canal and Lea Gardens



In May, members enjoyed a visit to the Cromford Canal and Lea Gardens. After meeting at Cromford Wharf, the group boarded a beautifully decorated barge for a short trip on the canal.



The interior was immaculately presented in a traditional style.



The canal trip, as far as High Peak Junction, offers views of the surrounding hills – and also some of the resident wild life as represented by this family portrait!





The second half of the trip took in the Lea Gardens – noted for their spectacular display of rhododendrons.



The combination of the Canal Trip and the Garden Visit made an excellent day out. Thanks to Dieter for organising it.

ASCDS Dance Festival, Retford

Saturday 10th May



The annual Festival of the Association of Scottish Country Dance Societies (ASCDS) took place in Retford on Saturday 10th June. Nine different dance groups from all parts of the North Midlands and South Yorkshire took part including the Nottingham Scottish Association.

Preparation for the Festival involves learning 12 dances and practising them until they can be danced flawlessly (well, nearly flawlessly!) on the day.

So, preparation done, we all set off on a sunny June day for the Retford Oaks School, where the Festival took place. After changing into our outfits, with the men in kilts and ladies resplendent in white dresses and sashes, we waited, a little nervously, for the start.

The band struck up giving the signal for the afternoon to start, we paraded proudly in with our fellow dancers. Master of Ceremonies, Neil Scott, then took over to introduce the dances. Showing a nice touch of humour he told us that we would be reminded of the first 8 bars of each dance – after that it was up to us and not his concern! Off we went!



The programme for this year was a well-chosen mix of the familiar and the less well-known. We finished with a joyfully chaotic 'Round the Room' performance of the 'Borrowdale Exchange'. It all made for a most enjoyable afternoon of dancing – helped along by the splendid music provided by Chris Dewhurst and his band.



With thanks to all the dancers and to the organisers for a great afternoon.



Wednesday 28th May

Gravelly Hollow Walk and Lunch



The venue for our May walk was Gravelly Hollow, starting at the Watchwood Car Park. Watchwood is an old forest criss-crossed with trails and excellent walking country. It made a fine walk for most of us.

However, the multiplicity of trails did cause one problem: for one of our number, an attempted short cut turned out to be anything but short!

After a failed rendezvous, Gail, who was leading the walk, set off to locate our straying walker – without success. It was only at the end of the walk that contact was made – at a petrol station on the far side of the A614!

All's well ,however, that ends well – and we regrouped to enjoy lunch at the Patchings Art Centre. Thanks to Gail for organising and leading the walk.

Lochaber No More

'Lochaber No More ' is a poem written by the poet Alan Ramsay (1686-1758). Ramsay is considered to be one of Scotland's leading poets and a significant influence on Robert Burns.

The poem was probably written in about 1720 and refers to the anguish of a soldier leaving his beloved, Jean, and the Highlands of Lochaber for war.

The words are set to an old tune which circulated in Scotland and Ireland in the previous century.



Lochaber No More!

Although the song predates the worst of the Highland Clearances, it has become an expression of the sorrow of the emigrants forced from their homes in the 18th and 19th centuries.

It inspired the famous painting by Erskine Nicholl which shows an emigrant couple about to depart forever from their homeland. It was painted in 1883 after riots in Skye against the impact of the clearances.

In modern times, The Proclaimers used the phrase in their 1987 song 'Letter from America' to link the effects of deindustrialisation under Margaret Thatcher to the Clearances of earlier centuries.

You can hear the original song performed by Breabach [here](#) and 'Letter from America' by The Proclaimers [here](#) .

THE COUNCIL 2025/26

Office holders

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