



The Chanter

Newsletter



Quinag Range, Assynt

March 2026



The Nottingham Scottish Association

www.nottinghamscottish.org

Farewell to Lochaber

*Farewell to Lochaber! and farewell, my Jean,
Where heartsome with thee I hae mony day been;
For Lochaber no more, Lochaber no more,
We'll maybe return to Lochaber no more!
These tears that I shed they are a' for my dear,
And no for the dangers attending on wear,
Though borne on rough seas to a far bloody shore,
Maybe to return to Lochaber no more.*

*Though hurricanes rise, and rise every wind,
They'll ne'er make a tempest like that in my mind;
Though loudest of thunder on louder waves roar,
That's naething like leaving my love on the shore.
To leave thee behind me my heart is sair pained;
By ease that's inglorious no fame can be gained;
And beauty and love's the reward of the brave,
And I must deserve it before I can crave.*

*Then glory, my Jeany, maun plead my excuse;
Since honour commands me, how can I refuse?
Without it I ne'er can have merit for thee,
And without thy favour I'd better not be.
I gae then, my lass, to win honour and fame,
And if I should luck to come gloriously hame,
I'll bring a heart to thee with love running o'er,
And then I'll leave thee and Lochaber no more.*

Allan Ramsay

From the President

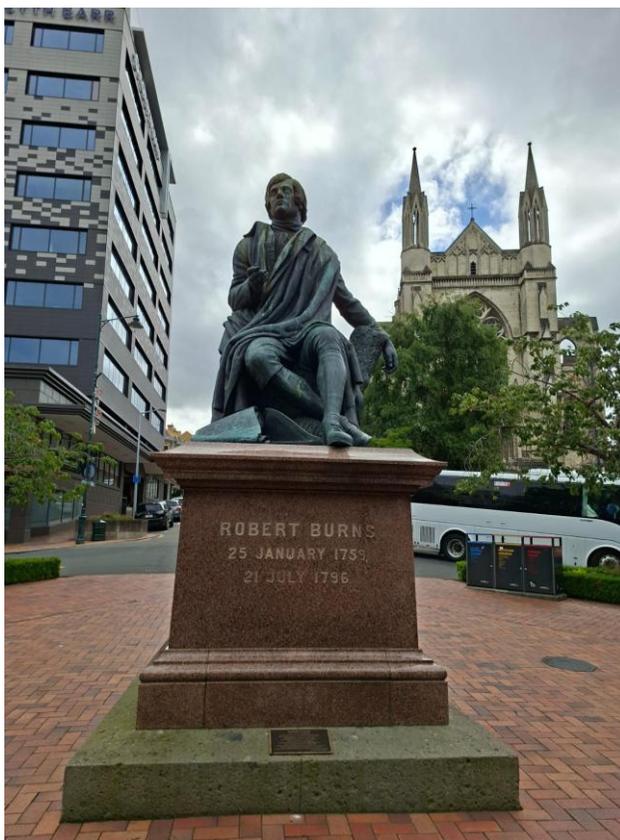


This is the last President's piece I will be writing for the Chanter as we will have held the AGM on the 30th April by the time the next Chanter comes out. 'Thank yous' will be made on that occasion so I will not fill this piece with them. Suffice it so say that we are so grateful to everyone who works to put on events for us.

As many of you know, I have been away for 7 weeks over December and early January back to my homeland of New Zealand with a visit to Singapore on the way out to break the journey. When away, I always look out for Scottish connections and so here are two:



Cavenagh Bridge was built in 1869 and was one of the oldest bridges in Singapore. Originally known as Edinburgh Bridge, its name was changed to Cavenagh Bridge in honour of Major General Orfeur Cavenagh who was appointed Governor from 1859 to 1867. It was constructed using numerous steel rivets and cast iron which was manufactured in Glasgow, Scotland. However, the bridge became overloaded and a police notice was erected to restrict the passage of vehicles. Eventually it was converted to a pedestrian bridge and the police notice was preserved up till today.



Later on in the holiday I spent some time in Dunedin which has a statue of Robert Burns. The statue is to celebrate the city's deep Scottish roots and heritage as the "Edinburgh of the South". It is particularly significant because Reverend Thomas Burns, a key founding father of the city, was the nephew of the famous Scottish poet.

I have enjoyed my time as President and will gladly continue on the Council as Past President. I wish Dieter Hecht the very best in taking up the position.

Rosie Allen

Welcome

A warm welcome to our new members: Coral Simpson and Cristal Crooks.

Dates for your Diary

Wednesday 18th March	Walk and Lunch. Attenborough
Thursday 30th April	AGM. 7.30pm St. Andrew's with Castle Gate
Saturday 9th May	ASCDS Dance Festival

Details 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 - **and a plea for more!** Have you been somewhere interesting recently? Do you have a story to tell? . Please, if you have not contributed a piece before, think about doing so! This newsletter needs **you**.

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

Andrew Morrison

Christmas Walk and Lunch

Wednesday 10th December 2025

In contrast to some of our earlier walks this year, the walkers among us met at the Colwick Toby Carvery on a clear sunny day. After coffees for those who wished it, we set out for the country park, where we posed for our group photo.



We soon reached a decision point where some of the group took the shorter option, while the rest of us carried on round the lakes and along the bank of the Trent.



Once round the circuit we re-joined those on the shorter route and headed back to the Inn. There is nothing that builds an appetite like a walk on a crisp winter's day! Just as well with the Christmas carvery waiting for us.



Once back in the warmth, we met our non-walking members and settled down for a leisurely Christmas lunch with good company and good conversation.



With thanks to Ann, Dave and Jan for organising the lunch and walk

New Year Walk Tuesday 6th January 2026

In the previous two years our New Year walk had been planned for the Attenborough Nature Reserve – and then re-arranged at the last minute as the Trent burst its banks. It seemed like time for a change of plan!



This year's issue was snow and, in particular, ice – would the chosen route be so icy as to be dangerous? In the event, the short sections of uncleared pavement posed the biggest problem, but was safe enough with care.



After meeting at the Admiral Rodney in Wollaton we headed for the small Nature Reserves at Martin's Pond and Harrison's Plantation. Normally the pond is full of swimming birds, but this time the frozen water was more of a skating rink for assorted ducks and coots!

Leaving the ponds, we crossed into Wollaton Park where the Courtyard Café tempted some of us into stopping for refreshments. The rest of us went on to walk round the lake – also frozen – where we admired the snowy scene with Wollaton Hall at the top of the hill.



We then returned to the Admiral Rodney and joined some non-walkers for a hearty and well-earned lunch and leisurely conversation.

It was good to see that some of us were able to do justice to the puddings!

With thanks to Andrew and Sue for arranging and leading the walk.



Burns Night

Saturday 24th January 2026



This January saw another successful and popular Burns Night Celebration. It was so popular, in fact, that applications were closed after the hall reached its limit for dancing!

The evening started as Bill Fernie piped in the President and her party. After a first course of Leek and Potato Soup, the haggis was paraded in for Bob Logan to address. As ever, Bob gave full value with his recital of the 'Address to a Haggis' before slicing it open with gusto!



One of the features of the Nottingham Scottish Burns Night is the Loyal Toast with Highland Honours – rarely seen, if at all, elsewhere! It is always something of a relief when all the able-bodied men are safely back on terra firma after climbing on their chairs!

Past-President Don Pringle spoke to 'The Immortal Memory' and reminded us just why Burns is such an important national figure. This was followed by a toast 'To The Lassies' from Dave Potter and a reply by Gail Mitchell. Both speakers gave humorous and well-received speeches – with honours even on this occasion!



The event finished with a lively cèilidh, led and played for by Iain Carmichael. His splendid music filled the floor for the Gay Gordons, the Dashing White Sergeant and other cèilidh favourites. Auld Lang Syne marked the end of a great evening and thanks must go to all those who made it such an enjoyable occasion.



(Surely there must be a collective noun for a group of Presidents? Ed)

Quiz Night

7th February 2026



Once again, courtesy of Quiz Supremo Dave Potter, Association members gathered for a quiz in St. Andrew's Church.

Once again, we were bamboozled, bothered and bewildered by a series of tricky questions – some of them well beyond the collective brainpower of all the teams.

Fortunately, Dave had all the answers and we eventually found out the extent of our ignorance. True, there were a few disputed answers but, by law, the Quiz Master is always right even if he is wrong, so all was settled to general satisfaction.

Thanks to the unstinting efforts of Don and Sue Pringle we were well-refreshed by a selection of hot pies and went home with full stomachs and empty brains.

Many thanks to Dave Potter for the quiz and to Don and Sue for the catering.



Mapperley Dance Demonstration Thursday 26th February



Two years ago, we were invited by Arnold U3A to talk about and demonstrate Scottish Country Dancing. We must have done well enough, as we were subsequently approached by the Mapperley and District U3A to do the same for them. As a consequence, eight members found themselves in front of a packed hall at the Mapperley Social Club ready to promote Scottish Dance – and, of course, the Association!

Dieter Hecht kicked off with a short explanation of the roots and purposes and activities of the Association – including the unlikely route which took him, as a German, into Scottish Country Dancing! Andrew Morrison then took over and talked about the nature and origins of Scottish Country Dancing.

This led into the demonstration itself, where the team had planned a selection of four dances to showcase the variety of tempos and formations. Unfortunately, one of the team pulled a muscle mid-way through one of the planned dances, necessitating a quick change of plan. We rapidly re-arranged ourselves into a three couple set and brought in a new dance – one which we had not practised. It is a tribute to the team that they took it in their stride!

We were greeted with much applause and it was gratifying to be told how much the audience had enjoyed our performance.

With thanks to Dieter for organising the event and the whole team for their support.

Holme Pierrepont Walk

Saturday 28th February



The forecast for Saturday morning was far from promising, and when we arrived at the Poppy and Pint the car park was more puddle than tarmac. So, having ordered our lunch, we set off in a fine drizzle.



The walk took us to the National Water Sports Centre along the edge of the rowing course before we reached our Coffee Stop – and very welcome it was too!

Moving on from there, we looped back along the bank of the Trent when, miraculously, the sun appeared to help us on our way.

After admiring the new bridge, we returned to the Poppy and Pint where we were joined by the non-walkers for a hearty and leisurely lunch – finished off, by some, with a very handsome sticky toffee pudding!

With thanks to Rosie for leading and organising the walk.

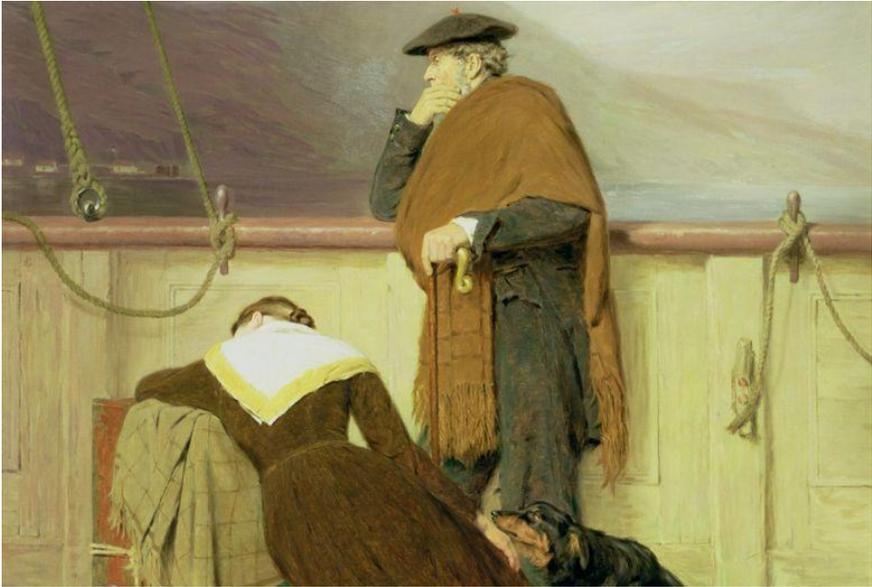


Enjoying the sunshine!



Enjoying the meal!

Farewell to Lochaber



'Lochaber No More' by John Watson Nicol

The poem 'Farewell to Lochaber' was written in the 18th Century by Allan Ramsay. It is a lament that depicts the emotional pain of forced emigration or departure, particularly resonant with the Highland Clearances of the late 18th Century onwards.

It is often sung to an air dating back to at least the early 18th Century – possibly originating in Ireland. Robert Burns commented, on hearing the air, that *"Oh, that's a fine tune for a broken heart!"*.

It inspired the later painting by John Watson Nicol which depicts the pain of an emigrant couple leaving their native land, never to return.

In recent years the phrase 'Lochaber No More' was used by the Proclaimers in their song 'Letter from America' ([here](#)) which compared the clearances to the de-industrialisation of the 1980s which ripped the heart out of much of central Scotland.

You can hear 'Lochaber No More' sung by Breabach [here](#).

THE COUNCIL 2025/26

Office holders

President	Rosie Allen president@nottinghamscottish.org
Past President and Minutes Secretary	Dave Chapman
Vice President	Dieter Hecht
Enquiries and Contacts Secretary	Margaret Barnes secretary@nottinghamscottish.org
Treasurer and Events Secretary	Ann Widdowson treasurer@nottinghamscottish.org
Membership Secretary	Carol Mee members@nottinghamscottish.org

Members

Jan Chapman

Marie Hecht

Sue Morrison