

In Step



The Newsletter of The Dublin Scottish Country Dance Club.

SPRING 2001

Visitors

Once again it has been a pleasure to welcome visitors to our Club.

We were delighted when Chris Sanders from Bearsden near Glasgow joined us for two weeks. He was working temporarily in Navan and drove from there to dance. He is a very experienced dancer and dances at Newkilpatrick S.C.D.C. He would like to return to Dublin and our Club some time in the future, hopefully with his wife, who is also a dancer.

Also it was good to have Liz Hadley from Maryland join us for the past few months. She has been working in Dublin with the North Kerry T.D. Jimmy Deenihan. At home she dances every week. We give her our best wishes as she returns home at the end of April.

Sadly we will be saying farewell to Norah at the end of this season. We have enjoyed her being with us very much. A great asset to the dancing — we will miss her but wish her well as she returns to Canada.

New Members

We extend a very warm welcome to Mary Tan. She and her husband Tony and her baby son Mark have come to Ireland and hope to settle in Malahide. Both Mary and Tony are Scottish Country dancers. Mary has been dancing for quite a few years. We look forward to having them with us on a regular basis.

Dancing Displays

Since Christmas, we have given the following displays, all with disinfected feet of course!

1. Dalkey Ladies Club.
2. Glasnevin Active Retirement Group
3. Margaretholme.

All three were greatly enjoyed by everyone, particularly the rhythm and beat of the “Reel of the 51st Division” the music of which seemed to create a good atmosphere.



We will finish our Season on Thursday **21st June** and the New Season will commence on Thursday **6th September**.

Bereavements

We all extend our sympathy to Meadhbh and her family on the recent death of her Mum.

Also our sympathies go to Add and Kaoru on their recent family bereavements.

We were all saddened by the death of Jimmy Shand and hereunder is an appreciation of his life written by our musical director John Barnes.

In Memoriam Sir Jimmy Shand

On 23 December 2000 Sir Jimmy Shand died at the age of 92. Born in East Wemyss, Fife, he followed his father down the mines at 14, learned to play his father's melodeon and was playing at dances before he was out of his teens. At 25 he was sampling accordions in a Dundee music shop when the manager, impressed by his ability, offered him a job as salesman and demonstrator. He also arranged for Shand's first radio broadcasts and recordings, where he played (as he always would thereafter) the button accordion.

After the War Jimmy Shand and His Band was formed, and played in strict tempo — Scotland's answer to Victor Sylvester — on the radio every Saturday evening. In the 1950s the Band had a top twenty hit with "Bluebell Polka", which helped make Shand's name synonymous with Scottish dance music. He toured the UK and the Commonwealth extensively, his music appealing particularly to expatriates. One album, *Awa frae Hame* (1963) was aimed at that market.

In 1957, with his wife (Anne, married in 1936) and two sons he moved to Auchtermuchty, where he remained for the rest of his life. He recorded "Auchtermuchty Gala March" as a tribute to his adoptive village.

In the early Sixties Jimmy Shand and His Band became a household name with their appearances on BBC-TV's *The White Heather Club*. Despite a lack of show-business charisma on Shand's part (he looked austere and rarely smiled), the BBC liked working with this kindly, even-tempered man, who ran a well-organized band and did not drink. He also had a turn of wit. Staying in a boarding house where the landlady gave him a niggardly portion of honey, he said, "Hmm. Ah see ye keep a bee!"

Having chosen not to update his music in the swinging Sixties, Jimmy Shand retired in 1972 owing to ill health, though he still undertook charity work and made guest appearances.

He received many accolades. He became an MBE in 1962, and often appeared before the Royal Family, both the Queen and the Queen Mother showering him with compliments. He was a subject of *This Is Your Life* in 1978, and more recently of a Radio 2 documentary, as well as a biography (*The Jimmy Shand Story*, 1998). He received an honorary degree from the University of Dundee, and in 1999 his knighthood, which many Scots felt was long overdue.

Jimmy Shand was very much the orthodox voice of Scottish dance music, and for that reason elicited a love-hate response from some observers. Undoubtedly, though, he was an inspiration to all who practice his craft.

He wrote literally hundreds of fine dance tunes. As our own small tribute to Sir Jimmy, Judy and I will be playing several of his tunes at the DSCDC Annual Dance on 6 October, including a whole set of his strathspeys (except for the "prescribed" first tune) for the dance "Alltshellach".

John Barnes

Gossip

John Gibson was home for his Easter break. Student life seems to be agreeing with him. He has lost a bit of weight and is looking very well and youthful.

Eric and **June** have recently moved house. We wish them well in their new home in Rathfarnham.

Florrie and **Blair** did marvellous work once again on Daffodil Day and raised approx. £1,400. A lot of hard work went into this. Well done and congratulations.

Liam is enjoying his retirement and seems to be trying to climb the mountains of the world! He also has lost weight and is looking very well. Every good wish to you on your travels, Liam.

Aad and **Kaoru** travelled to Hawaii once again to meet up with some S.C.Dancing friends. They had a great time and enjoyed the sunshine whilst we were knee deep in snow.

Forbes and **Kaoru** are interested in playing the harmonica. I hear both are practising hard. Will they be joining John and Judy sometime?

Keep your eye on this space for gossip of our members. Remember the 'Ed' is watching you. BEWARE.

Forthcoming Events.

Owing to the Foot and Mouth crisis, we have postponed our annual Dance from 21st April to **6th October** 2001. Please make this change in your Diary

However, hereunder is a list of future planned events that we hope will not be affected by the Foot and Mouth crisis.

Coleraine 21st Week-end School **4th-5th May**, 2001
Organised by R.S.C.D.S. Portrush Branch.

Comber 21st Anniversary Dance. **June 8th**. Music by Ian Muir Sound
Organised by Comber S.C.D.C.

"Dance for Fun" Ceilidh. Taney Parish Centre. Saturday **19th May** 7:45
(The Dublin Scottish Benevolent Society of St Andrew)

A.G.M. Thursday **14th June**.

Morris Dancers and Scottish Country Dancers: Sunday **24th June** at 3.00p.m.
At H.S.S. Terminal Dun Laoghaire.