



THE BLETHERS



Bryan Luce, Chair

Laurie Walter, Editor

Last call for June Workshop!! Our workshop is May 30 -June 1 at Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, IL. Call Melissa Whitson at (630) 655-4154 (eves.) or Noel Chavez at (708) 848-9218 for last-minute information. We're all looking forward to the weekend. Should be great!!!

Election results: Hot off the press! The results of the election of officers at the Annual General Meeting are: Gary Hay, President; Sue McKinnell, Treasurer; Mary Lou Woods, Secretary; Dawn Arnold, Mike Fitak, and Doug Taber, Members-at-Large. Thanks to all those who ran and to the outgoing Committee of Management members: Bryan Luce, President; Liz Stake, Treasurer; and Joan Hall, Member-at-Large. Best wishes for a successful year to the new Committee.

Summer dancing: As usual, there will be Summer dancing at Fox Center, corner of Jackson Blvd. and Oak Park Ave. in Oak Park. The dates are June 22 and 29; July 13, 20, and 27; and August 3, 10, 17, and 24. Loch Michigan dancing will end on May 25, not to recommence till September.

The Silk and Thistle (Fermilab) dancers will continue undeterred on Tuesday evenings through-out the Summer, switching at some point from the Fermilab Barn to an air-conditioned venue. Call Doug or Susan Jensen at (630) 232-9089, Mady Newfield at (630) 584-0825, or Mary Helen Polensky at (815) 756-7182 for information.

Highland Games: The annual Chicago Highland Games will be held on June 21 at the Oakbrook Polo Grounds, Oakbrook, IL. As usual, the Branch team will do a demo and we will have a tent for low-key social dancing, introducing newcomers to Scottish Country Dancing, and general socializing. Mady Newfield is in charge of the tent. Be sure to sign up for tent time!

English Country Dancing: English Country Dancing is held on second and fourth Wednesdays at 8:00 PM at Saint Mark's Church, Evanston IL. Upcoming dates are May 28 and June 11 & 25. St. Jude's Assembly (featuring Greg Sandell, piano; Shannon Russell, flute; and Ruth Conley, fiddle) plays on second Wednesdays, while Putting on Aires (directed by Susan Hecker) plays on fourth Wednesdays. For information, call Tom Senior at (847) 433-8704 or e-mail: seniort@newtrier.k12.il.us

Sewing session: Several dancers spent Sunday, May 4, at the Jensens' house busily sewing new demo dresses for the Branch and Silk and Thistle demo teams. A good time was had by all and the new gowns look stunning! Many thanks to Mady and Mary Helen for organizing the whole event, to the Jensens for hosting, and to all who participated. The new look will be on display at upcoming demos, such as...

Skokie Festival of Cultures: A successful demo was held May 18 despite a few, *minor* problems. It began to drizzle just as the dancers took the stage; we noticed that our audience was dispersing through-out the first set (though they regrouped under a large tent and continued watching). The break was brief, since there was no place to shelter offstage. In the second set, Ian Powrie's Farewell to Auchterarder went off without a hitch (no easy feat under the best of conditions!) but the lights went off at the beginning of Miss Gibson's Strathspey and lightning was sighted, so it was no surprise when one of the staffers waved us off before the dance was well under way. By the way, dancing in the rain is no terrible trouble on a covered stage--but the front edge was wet by the time we made our unceremonious retreat! All in all, one for the archives.

Message from the Lambs: Sandra and Jennifer Lamb write from Scotland to thank Blethers readers for their good wishes and gifts. "My first real involvement with the group," writes Sandie, "was when Ingrid fell ill on the day of a performance of the demo team and I had to learn on the way in the car (1980)."

Their addresses again: Sandie - Linlathen House Nursing Home, Arbroath Road, Broughty Ferry, Dundee DD5 3NN, Scotland; telephone 1382 480707. Jennifer - Strathallen School, Riley House, Forgondenny, Perth PH2 9EG, Scotland.

Answers to last issue's quiz: 1. What popular air for the pipes was written originally by a well-known composer for an equally well-known opera? *John MacLeod, an Army pipe major, heard a Sardinian band playing the ballet music from Rossini's William Tell during the Crimean War. He adapted it and called it The Green Hills of Tyrol.* 2. Which European composer was inspired by Fingal's Cave and wrote a piece of music about it? *Mendelssohn wrote Fingal's Cave.* 3. When the song, *The Road to the Isles*, is played as a pipe tune, what is its name? *The Road to the Isles changes its name to The Burning Sands of Egypt when it is played on the pipes.* 4. Which musical instrument has been banned as an instrument of war? *The bagpipes were banned as a weapon of war after the 1745 uprising.* 5. What famous opera has a Scottish story? *Lucia de Lammermoor by Donizetti is based on The Bride of Lammermoor by Sir Walter Scott [in case you ever wondered why the characters have names like "Edgardo" and occasionally wear tartan!].*
(Thanks again to Noel Chavez for all the newsletters from last Summer's TAC!)

Highland Dress: Highland Dress is held up traditionally by strict regulations and several large safety-pins. Contravention of the rules can lead to severe punishments, including public humiliation in the case of forfeiture of an offending item of apparel. Those wishing to don tartan must first prove their manhood [sic] by submitting to a series of rigorous probes into their ancestry (and sometimes even exposure of their antecedents) in one of a number of Edinburgh stores specially licensed for the purpose. Non-clanmembers tempted into the purchase of a tie should take due heed of these warnings. (from Scotland for Beginners: Bannockburn an' a' that, by Rupert Besley)