

RSCDS, Chicago Branch

The Blethers

Greg Canfield, Chair

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Sue McKinnell, Editor

<http://www.midwestnet.com/clients/piper/branch.html>

Tartan Day: The Fourth annual Tartan Day is fast approaching! On March 20, 1998 the following was published in the Congressional Record:

Whereas April 6 has a special significance for all Americans, and especially those Americans of Scottish descent, because the Declaration of Arbroath, the Scottish Declaration of Independence, was signed on April 6, 1320 and the American Declaration of Independence was modeled on that inspirational document;

Whereas this resolution honors the major role that Scottish Americans played in the founding of this Nation, such as the fact that almost half of the signers of the Declaration of Independence were of Scottish descent, the Governors in 9 of the original 13 States were of Scottish ancestry, Scottish Americans successfully helped shape this country in its formative years and guide this Nation throughout its most troubled times;

Whereas this resolution recognizes the monumental achievements and invaluable contributions made by Scottish Americans that have led to America's preeminence in the fields of science, technology, medicine, government, politics, economics, architecture, literature, media, and visual and performing arts;

Whereas this resolution commends the more than 200 organizations throughout the United States that honor Scottish heritage, tradition, and culture, representing the hundreds of thousands of Americans of Scottish descent, residing in every State, who already have made the observance of Tartan Day on April 6 a success; and

Whereas these numerous individuals, clans, societies, clubs, and fraternal organizations do not let the great contributions of the Scottish people go unnoticed:

Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate designates April 6 of each year as "National Tartan Day."

This year you have two ways to celebrate Tartan Day with the Chicago Branch:

1. Tuesday, April 3rd, the Silk & Thistle class, dancing at Fermilab in Batavia, plans to celebrate all things Scottish. There will be a display of Scottish items and information, food, and of course dancing. The celebration starts at 7:30 p.m. at the Fermilab Barn.
2. The **Spring Dance** will be held Saturday, April 7th at 3:00 p.m. at the Irish American Heritage Center, Room #111, Ceili Room, 4626 N. Knox Avenue, Chicago. There will be tea and cookies following the dancing.

Information about both events is available on the branch website.

2001 Annual General Meeting: The AGM is scheduled for Sunday, May 20th, 2001 at St. Josaphat's Parish Hall, starting at 6:00 p.m. Following the AGM is the last Loch Mich class of the season. Look to the next issue of *The Blethers* for details of the AGM.

Summer Dancing: The Branch hopes to have Summer Dancing again this year. The details are still being worked out and will appear in the next issue of *The Blethers* and on the branch website.

2001 Weekend Workshop: The 2001 Weekend Workshop will be held Friday, June 8 – Sunday, June 10 at *Stronghold*, a conference/retreat center located in Oregon, IL. Duncan & Maggie Keppie from Nova Scotia are the weekend teachers, and the Branch's own Barbara Cool will teach an advanced technique class. In addition to classes on Scottish Dance technique, there will be a musician's workshop and classes on Cape Breton Step Dance, mouth music, and the History of Scottish Dance. Look for details in the flyer you should receive soon and on the Branch website.

Publicity: In general, the people organizing a class or event are responsible for publicizing the event. Venues for publicity are the Branch website, *The Blethers*, email, local and regional newspapers and other media outlets, and distributing flyers at appropriate events. There is a Branch publicity committee that is need of additional volunteers (hint, hint). If you have information you would like included in Branch publicity, please contact Sue McKinnell (suem18@worldnet.att.net) or Greg Canfield (gcanfield@worldnet.att.net) and they will see it gets to the proper person for inclusion. Remember **you** are the best publicity for dancing; invite your friends and acquaintances to come and try it.

Additional Up-coming events:

- There is no Loch Mich class Sunday, April 8th due to the Spring Dance
- On Sunday, April 29, Melissa Whitson will offer a special technique class on handing at St. Josaphat's
- March 30-April 1 – Ames, Iowa Scottish Country Dance Workshop
- April 6 – National Tartan Day Celebration at the Chicago Cultural Center, 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
- April 21 – Madison Annual Ball; **NOTE: Change of Venue;** check the Madison website for details: <http://sprott.physics.wisc.edu/mscd/home.htm>
- April 27-19 – Lyndhurst Spring Weekend (30th Anniversary), Cleveland, Ohio
- May 11-13 – Ames, Iowa Spring Ball
- June 2 – Milwaukee Highland Games
- Saturday, June 16th - *The 15th Annual Highland Games* at the Oak Brook Polo Grounds; look for the Branch table and come watch the demo team
- June 23 – Highland Mist Ball, St. Louis, Missouri

The Ladies Man:

I'm a two-sex Scottish Dancer
And may seem rather dim,
But I never spend one evening
As a full-time her or him.

I change my sex from dance to dance
My corners always alter,
It's really not surprising if
Occasionally I falter.

The old and simple dances
I can manage very nicely,
And I can learn a new dance
And do it most precisely.

But when it comes to next week
I don't know if I can,
For I learnt it as a woman
And dance it as a man.

I'll add a postscript to this tale
- One comfort I have got -
When both the women change their sex
It doesn't show a lot!!

-- Some of Pat's Party Pieces,
Book 1 No. 1