

the GHILLIE CALLUM

Volume 37 No. 2

December 2005

THE 40th ANNIVERSARY BALL OF LOS ANGELES

is just around the corner!

Saturday, April 29, 2006, at the Ports
O'Call Restaurant in San Pedro.

Music will be by ***The Music Makars.***

Watch for the next edition of the Ghillie Callum for full details on the celebration.

As part of the festivities, Rosemary Abend has designed special T-shirts that will be commemorating the 40th Anniversary of the L. A. Branch.

Across from this column is a replica of the beautiful logo that will be embroidered in red on the pocket. The shirts will be white with the logo of the woman in an exquisite ball gown and the man with his back to us. You can pick either a man's polo shirt or a ladies's scooped neck one.

You can order one by calling Ann McBride at her home 818.841.8161 or by email: mcbride@cshs.org for you order.



THE LOS ANGELES DEMONSTRATION TEAM

The demonstration team of the L.A. Branch has lost several members within the last two years or so and we need a full complement of 16 dancers to draw from for performances which average perhaps 10 or 12 each year. We meet each Tuesday from 7:45 to 9:45 p.m. at Cheviot Hills Recreation Center on Motor Avenue south of Pico Blvd. in West L.A. Easy to find with plenty of parking. Come dance with us on Tuesday January 10th and 17th. See if this is something you really want to do, for it does need commitment. Most of our performances are on weekends but with this many regular dancers, there is rarely pressure to be part of every "show." Talk to any member of the team if you have any questions or to your teacher who will tell you if you are ready for this kind of work. Or call Mary Brandon at 818.222.4584.

**LOS ANGELES BRANCH
SCHEDULE OF DANCES FOR
DECEMBER 05 - JUNE 06**

December

31, 2005 - **Hogmanay Party.** Westchester Senior Center: 8:00 pm. Musicians: *Heathertones.*

2006

January

28, 2006 - **Burns Birthday Bash.** El Segundo Woman's Club. 6:00 pm. Musicians: *Fiddlesticks & Ivory.*

February

18, 2005 - **Queen Mary Event Dance.** 6:00 pm. Our Savior's Lutheran Church, 376 Junipero Ave, Long Beach. Musicians: *Thistle Band.* \$8 Members, \$12 Non-members.

25, 2006 - **Beginner Dance.** Gold Crest Rebekah Lodge, 406 Grand Ave., El Segundo. 7:00 pm. Recorded Music. \$8 Member, \$10 Non-member

March

25, 2006 - **Beginner Dance.** Canoga Park Senior Center. 7:00 pm. Recorded Music. \$8 Member, \$10 Non-member.

April

29, 2006 - **40th Anniversary Ball.** Ports O'Call Restaurant. San Pedro. Musicians: *The Music Makars.*

May

27, 2005 - **Pomona Games Dance.** Women's Club of Claremont. 7:00 pm. Recorded Music. \$8 Member, \$10 Non-member.

June

24, 2006 - **AGM.** Canoga Park Senior Center - 5:30 pm Musicians: *Heathertones.* \$10 Member, \$12 Non-member.

**FORREST MACDONALD
HONORED AT 90!**

An newsletter article from the St. Andrews Society of So. Calif. reported that a certificate was presented to Forrest MacDonald at his 90th birthday party by one of his many admirers. This certificate declared that Forrest's bodily fluids contain the DNA of Somerled, Lord of the Isles, who was one of the descendents of the ferocious Viking Eric, Cleaver of Skulls. In 1164, Somerled brought 200 galleys to the Firth of Clyde to battle the king of Scotland, David I. However, Somerled was killed on Knock Hill and only a dozen of his galleys returned to the Hebrides.

But with such a heritage as all of that, Forrest truly deserved the special certificate. Congratulations, Forrest!



OTHER EVENTS

OC = Orange County Branch;

SD = San Diego;

SGV = San Gabriel Valley Branch.

2005-06

December

3, 2005 **SGV Christmas Ball.** TBA

10, 2005 **OC Christmas Ball.** 7:30 pm, Tustin Senior Center, 200 "C" St., Tustin. Musicians: Ryan & Calli McKasson. \$12 Member; \$14 Non-member.

2006

January

21, 2006 **OC-SGV - Burns Ball.** 5:00 pm. War Memorial Bldg, South Pasadena. Musicians: *Syn copaths.*

February

11, 2006 **OC - Beginner Dance.** 7:30 pm. Anaheim Downtown Community Center. 250 E. Center St., Anaheim. Taped Music. \$7 Member, 48 Non-member.

March

11, 2006 **OC - Monthly Dance.** 7:30 pm Anaheim Downtown Community Center.

18, 2006 **SGV-March Winds Dance.** Hillcrest Arts Center, Thousand Oaks.

April

15, 2006 **OC - Monthly Dance.** 7:30 pm Anaheim Downtown Community Center.

22, 2006 **SGV - Tax Freedom Dance.** 7:30 pm Lindberg Park Rec Center, Culver City

28-May 1, 2006 - **Far North Queensland**

Annual Ball and weekend. Contacts:

John Bell <bellsat60@optusnet.com.au> or Anne Archdeacon archdeacon@iig.com.au Phone 07 4055 9329, FAX 07 4055 9260.

May

13, 2006 **OC - Monthly Dance.** 7:30 pm Anaheim Downtown Community Center.

20, 2006 **SGV - Monthly Dance 7:30 pm.** TBA.

June

10, 2006 **OC-AGM.** TBA

December

9&10, 2006 - **Bonnie Rideout - Christmas**

Concert. (Dance Team: Robert McOwen & friends.) Pasadena, CA.

YOU'RE INVITED TO A BIG BIRTHDAY BASH!



Everyone is invited to join with us at Poosie Nancy's Tavern (aka El Segundo Women's Club) on Saturday, January 28, 2006, to help celebrate Robbie Burn's 247th birthday in a manner he would probably have approved of!

This will be a fun event which retains some of our LA Branch traditional Burn's Supper elements (Toast to the Queen, Address to the Haggis, Toast to the Lassies & Reply to the Laddies), but in a less formal atmosphere than usual. The evening will begin with Happy Hour starting at 5:30 pm with appetizers and drinks (soda, beer, wine & scotch).

The toasts will take place at 6:00 pm, followed by a buffet dinner of salad, haggis, shepherd's pie, meat pies, rolls, etc. Dancing will take place from 7:00 pm - 10:00 pm. Our music will be provided by the fantastic *Fiddlesticks & Ivory* ensemble (piano, 2 fiddles and an accordion). Birthday cupcakes will be provided at the breaks. We will end the evening with a ceilidh from 10:00 - 10:45 pm. (If you have a ceilidh act, please contact Ann McBride...)

Tickets will be limited to 100, due to the size of the venue, so get your tickets early from your teacher, or call Doris Fisher at (310) 782-8300 or email at "doris@esfcpa.com". (A vegetarian shepherd's pie is available upon request.)

Doris Fisher

CATALINA ISLAND WORKSHOP & BALL RETURNS!

Can you picture yourself on Catalina Island marching along the strand toward the Casino behind a wonderful piper, going up the winding ramps to the top of the Casino Ballroom, dining on delicious food while gazing out at the spectacular view, then capping off the night by dancing to incredible live music in that enormous and historic round ballroom?

For those of you who were dancing ten years ago, you may remember attending or hearing about a wonderful weekend on Catalina Island. Well, the idea has been resurrected, and plans are in the works for a repeat performance May 4-6, 2007. We have reserved most of the Best Western Hotel for this event, which will feature Saturday and Sunday morning workshops, leaving your Friday night and Saturday afternoon free for playing the part of a Catalina Island tourist or just relaxing with your Scottish dancing friends. The workshops will be limited to 130 people; however, an unlimited number may attend the Casino Dinner & Ball. The musicians will be the *Music Makars* of Pennsylvania (encore performance from the previous Catalina workshop).

Information and prices will be coming to you shortly, and you will have a chance to make a reservation for this incredible weekend. This will be an Interbranch event. For more information call Doris Fisher at (310) 782-8300 or email her at "doris@esfcpa.com"

Doris Fisher

Halloween Costumes



**Robyn MacGarva George -
Queen Bee**



**Dorothy Ho & Jim Bell -
The Piper & the Penguin**



Jeff Altman - Follow Me Home

All by Claudia Pedersen

RANDOM THOUGHTS FROM THE CHAIR

As those in attendance will attest, the first branch dance of the new branch year was a huge success. Costumes depicting favorite dances were in abundance, the music by the Heathertones was excellent, and the refreshments were abundant and delicious. Thanks to the host classes-Valley College, Bakersfield, Lancaster and South Pasadena.

Now we can look forward to a gala evening of fun, food and dancing at the annual St. Andrews Ball on November 26th. The South Bay Masonic Lodge will swell with the music of **Hood, Wink and Swagger**, keeping our feet moving through the fine dance program.

We have two dates to put on our calendar for the future. First, be sure to save April 29, 2006, when we will commemorate our 40th anniversary with dinner and dancing at Ports O' Call. Ann McBride and her committee promise a wonderful celebration.

Secondly, mark May 4-6, 2007, for a dance weekend and workshop on Catalina Island. Plans are well underway for a weekend which promises to out-do the previous Catalina workshop 10 years ago.

We can look forward to a year of happy dancing.

Ray



FLOWERS OF THE FOREST

Many long time members of the branch will remember the Miles Playhouse & Watson

family, Joy, Dave and Ian, their teen son. They were very active and attended most events when they lived here. They moved to Berkeley, and then Washington State's Olympic Peninsula, where Joy started a class of her own under the wing of the Seattle Branch.

I have just heard of the sad news of Joy's passing, of cancer. A few weeks ago she explained what been happening and was planning for the end. Her husband, Dave has lung cancer and is now in a rest home. Ian, who is now a barrister in London, came home to make final arrangements, and we talked about all the wonderful times we had here at the dances. I am sure all of you who knew them join with me in extending our sincere condolences to Ian (who now dances on the London Demonstration Team).

In addition:

Sad news has just been received at class from Tony McQuilkin of the passing of his father. Mr. McQuilkin was 82 and was stricken by a heart attack and died in a Long Beach hospital near his home. I am sure all who know Tony will wish to be included in the expressions of condolences to Tony and his family.

Jack Rennie

December 2005 GHILLIE CALLUM



A SPECIAL FLOWERS OF THE FOREST

The Secretary of the RSCDS in Edinburgh has just informed us that Miss Muriel Gibson died Oct. 22, 2005. For those who don't know the story, she came to the RSCDS in the mid-1970s as organising secretary following a 23 year career in the Womens Royal Army Corps from which she had retired with rank of Lieutenant Colonel. She retired from the Society in 1988, having left a firm imprint on the Summer School at St. Andrews as well as the day to day operations at Coates Crescent. She was the Miss Gibson of **Miss Gibson's Strathespey!** We will miss her.



Photo by Claudia Pedersen
Aase Hansen dancing with Eric Fisher as "The Old Man of Storr" while Mike Mackenzie and Robert Burger, as "The Sailor" follow.

HALLOWEEN DANCE

Our first L.A. Branch dance of the year was the Halloween Dance, which also happened to be a beginner dance. We had 57 dancers in attendance, several of them new dancers who were there for their first dance. There were dancers from as far away as Ridgecrest, Santa Barbara and Orange County. The dance was held in a new venue, the Canoga Park Senior Center. The hall we have used for about 10 years got a new director and the price went up so high, that we had no choice but to look for another Valley location. This hall is smaller but cleaner than the one in Sherman Oaks and much more within our budget.

More than half the dancers came in Halloween costumes, a good number of them dressed as a dance. Two prizes were awarded, both going to pairs. Susie and Ray Tucker came in night shirts dressed for the dance *Just as I was in the Morning*. Jim Bell and his friend, Dorothy Ho, came dressed as *The Piper* and the *Penguin*. Very cute!

Another good one was Rosemary Abend's class, who all came dressed as animals in *Noah's Ark*, a dance on this year's program. Doris Fisher was dressed as a bride, which fits many dance names, and Pat Zschoche was very much a *Cranberry Tart*, including wearing a label from Ocean Spray cranberry juice, for those who didn't catch on. Actually, there was one more *Cranberry Tart* but her costume was decidedly more ladylike, namely Erin Holman.



By Deborah Graham

Jon Reeves as a **TATTIE BOGLE**
(a scarecrow).



By Claudia Pedersen

NOAH'S ARK (Rosemary Abend's Class). **Val Rodgers, Anne Clarke, Christine Carlin, Rosemary Abend and Jacqui Sargent.** (Irv Cohen was also a spider but cannot be seen in this photo.)

Of course, we also had Jon Reeves, who as always dazzled us with his costume. He was dressed in a kilt made out of burlap and everything else to look like a Tattie Bogle (a scarecrow). There were many other wonderful and fun costumes.

Jack Rennie's band for this evening was supplemented with several new musicians. The music was outstanding. The food was also outstanding, brought by four host classes: Valley College, Lancaster, Bakersfield and South Pasadena. All in all, it was a very good evening with lots of joyful dancing. Thank you all for coming.

Aase



ROBERT BURNS BIRTHDAY

January 28, 2006

El Segundo Woman's Club

Music: Fiddlesticks and Ivory

Ladies' Fancy	BJ	Book 13
Falls of Rogie, The	IR	Alexander
Miss Milligan's Strathspey	IS	RSCDS Leaflets
Macleod's Fancy	AJ	Book 33
Flowers of Edinburgh	BR	Book 1
Knotwork	IJ	Book 44
Lady Glasgow	BS	MMM I
Bratach Bana	AR	Bon Accord
Three Sisters, The	IS	Drewry Dances
Naughty Nancy	BJ	Solstice
West's Hornpipe	IR	Five for 65
Delvine Side	BS	Book 2
Flights of Fancy	IJ	Boston 50th
Corian Strathspey, The	AS	Book 43
Kelso Races	BR	MMM II
Mrs. MacLeod	IR	Book 6



BEGINNER DANCE

February 25, 2006

Rebekah Lodge, 406 Grand Ave., El Segundo

Music: Recorded

Duran Ranger, The	BR	Book 13
Chequered Court, The	IJ	Book 42
Fair Donald	BS	Book 29
General Stuart's Reel	IR	Book 10
Miss Welsh's Reel	BJ	Graded
Reel of the 51st Division	BR	Book 13
Cherrybank Gardens	IS	Bankhead 1
Quarries' Jig	IJ	Book 36
Lady Glasgow	BS	MMM I
Ways in New Hall	BR	Book 42
Noah's Ark	BJ	Book 43
Miss Milligan's Strathspey	IS	RSCDS
Flowers of Edinburgh	BR	Book 1
Glasgow Country Dance	IM	Book 23
Naughty Nancy	BJ	Solstice
Shiffin' Bobbins	BR	Ormskirk
Tattie Bogle	IJ	Carnforth Coll.

BEGINNER DANCE

March 25

Location to be announced

Music: Recorded

Gloria's Wee Jig	BJ	Devil's Quandary
Kelso Races	BR	MMM II
Silver Strathspey, The	IS	Book 44
Miss Welsh's Reel	BJ	Graded
Miss Johnstone of Ardrossan	IR	Goldring 14 Social
Haste To The Wedding	BJ	Book 25
Linnea's Strathspey	IS	Dunsmuir
Sailor, The	BR	Book 24
Lady Lucy Ramsay	BS	MMM II
Chequered Court, The	IJ	Book 42
West's Hornpipe	IR	Five for 65
Lady Glasgow	BS	MMM I
Falls of Rogie	IR	Alexander
12 Coates Crescent	BS	Book 40
Quarries' Jig	IJ	Book 36
Galloping Carousel	BJ	Ottawa 25 yrs
Ways in New Hall	BR	Book 42

CLASS REPORTS'

Ventura

The most important recent event was the Seaside Scottish Highland Games in which our class members took an active part. In particular, Barbara Evans took on the decorating of McBride Hall where the SCD took place. The walls were liberally covered with class banners, and photographic displays of the classes in Ventura County. Lisa Sage arranged the dancing which included the Scotch Hop, as well as programs by the LA Demonstration Team and the MacLeod Dancers.

Several of our members have been globe trotting. Margaret Falconer took a trip to Russia. Starting in Moscow, she visited the Kremlin, Red Square and GUM Department Store. A river trip took her from Moscow to St. Petersburg along rivers, lakes and numerous man-made canals stopping at cathedrals, fortified monasteries, quaint villages with street markets and finally St. Petersburg. She enjoyed the many palaces, the city architecture and outstanding art collection in the Hermitage.

Margaret Falconer (again), Monica Cherrix and two other hiking friends flew into Anchorage mid-August, rented an SUV and drove up to Denali where they spent three days in the park, seeing grizzlies, wolves, caribou and moose in their

natural surroundings. They took the ferry across Prince William Sound from Valdez to Whittier and drove the Kenai Peninsula, stopping in Seward and Homer before heading to Anchorage for a few days of sightseeing. They hiked as many trails as they could where they felt safe from meeting too much wildlife. They had a wonderful two weeks! Lillian Goldstein took off for Turkey and is believed to be visiting a friend in New York City on her way back.

Frank Ibbott

LOMITA

The fall class has gotten off to a slow start, with some of its longtime members being absent usually for good reasons, Anneliese Grohs has been in Germany all summer and is due back in October. We all look forward to her return.

Rose Peters has been teaching a temporary class on Mondays training senior high school kids how to prepare for college entrance exams, but this short course should be over in a few weeks so that she and Joe can return.

Ray has been out a few weeks with family business trips and also to look after some medical problems. Meanwhile, John and Sheila Bray have been taking part in an 8 week Shakespeare class, which they promise will end shortly. Still there have been enough of the truly faithful to have class, and we have launched into the new dances for the year, and prepare for the coming events of interest.

By the end of October we expect to be back on track with a full complement of dancers.

Jack Rennie

TORRANCE

Torrance class continued right through the summer. Some of our younger students did not enroll for the fall session because they are seniors in high school this year, and feel they must attend their school football games which are always on Friday. But they said they would be back next session, and we look forward to their return. However a few new beginners did sign up, but because they were not enough to make a set, some of the intermediates are arriving early to dance with them, which is very supportive and aids in their faster progress as well, having experienced partners.

Ric Simmons has been conspicuously absent for several weeks, and we have missed Anne Dw-

Dwyer, Ray and Susie due to their busy family commitments and also Bill and Nancy Hartung who had hope to return in the fall. We hear that Nancy has not been well, and hope she has a speedy recovery. Betty Finlay seems to be recovering well from her recent injury and is regaining her stamina, staying for the whole class.

Ruth Fleming-Stephens and Kyle will be celebrating their wedding anniversary soon by traveling up the west coast to commemorate the event. Tony McQuilkin, we hear is preparing for yet another acting performance, which together with his choral work keeps him pretty busy. Marion Reeve has been looking into a possible solution for her severe hip problem which causes pain when she attempts to dance. We are all hoping she finds a satisfactory medical solution soon.

Arlene Lee has been preparing for the joyful event of her daughter's wedding, so she has missed some classes, but she comes when she can. While Beatrice told us that her absence at the beginning of the session was caused by the move to a new high school just opening in September, with new routines causing her to have to be at school at 6:00 a.m. So she has been quite exhausted. This sounds like a really dedicated teacher to me; I would like to be in her class.

Jack Rennie

AGOURA HILLS

The Agoura Hills class is happy to welcome Nadine House. Nadine discovered Scottish dancing at the Highland Games in Pomona last May, and after watching the demonstrations and joining in during the audience participation dances, she was eager to try a class. She has been dancing with us in Agoura since June, and we've all enjoyed the newest addition to our class.

Anyone new to Scottish dancing, or anyone just in need of a little review before the upcoming balls, is invited to attend our Sunday class. With an emphasis on basic figures, dances, and even proper step technique, the Agoura class is the perfect place to perfect your dancing.

Erin Holman

MANHATTAN BEACH

We have a few new enthusiastic beginners. One of them, Jennifer McAuley, will be traveling to Paris, France this month and has already checked out a beginners class there which she plans to attend.

Nan Werner is back at class after a long leave of absence to take care of her daughter and two granddaughters. Nan's daughter Meg, who has had a three year battle with cancer, is now doing much better and Nan has some free time in the evenings.

Bob Brooks had minor surgery on his hand which made it impossible for him to dance or play the piano for several weeks. The MB Class sent Sue Holcombe and her Dad off to Arizona with a party put on by the Fees and Rodgerses. Many of Sue's friends showed up and had some funny stories to tell about Sue and her Kilt Repair business - so many wives allowed Sue to adjust their husbands kilts, while the men were wearing them!

The theme was Western and dollar coins went into a money bag to help Sue have a good time in Ireland and Scotland this month, while she does more family genealogy - she has already researched her family back to Lady Godiva's days - how far back can one go in family history without digging up some DIRT!

Bob and Chris Brooks will be cruising on the Columbia River and dancing to the music of the Big Band. Wilma Fee will make her third trip to Toronto this year to be matron of honor at her sister, Patricia, wedding with many SC Dancers from the Mississauga Brampton groups also attending and Bobby Brown's band playing for the reception and dance.

Wilma Fee



NORTHRIDGE

Our Thursday night dancers were enthusiastic about being back together after their summer activities. A variety of dances was enjoyed, both old favorites and new ones to be explored, as we got the 2005-2006 year underway.

We are so glad to have Linda McWade back dancing with us again after her back surgery. She's been gradually able to participate in more and more of each week's activities and is in fine form.

Audrey Prest was off to Iowa for a week to help her daughter's family relocate from Sioux City to Des Moines. Of course, along with the must do's went the pleasure of visiting and gathering

new photographs of her grandchildren and their new home.

Thursday's class was well represented at the Seaside Games in Ventura on October 8th and 9th. We had members dancing on both MacLeods Dancers and the Los Angeles Demonstration team and fellow dancers there to cheer everyone on as well. Deanna St. Amand who is our instructor, announced the demonstrations for both days acquainting the audience with the individual dances to be performed and giving a touch of their historical background. Deanna is also director for the MacLeods and a longtime dancer with the L.A. team. Her enthusiasm and hard work contribute to the success of RSCDS activities throughout the year.

Claudia Pedersen

LANCASTER CHILDRENS'

Class started in September with six returning dancers and nine newcomers, with ages ranging from 5 to 15. Joining us this year is Donald, the son of longtime branch members Ed & Roberta Lotter. Two of the oldest new children have caught on quickly and have already joined Aase's adult class as well. We hope to see them at one of the spring dances.

LANCASTER FAMILY

This new class has met just once a month for September and October. We've had five different families join us so far to learn some very simple dances. We've been able to get a couple of 'I don't like to dance' dads to join us, and even a couple of pre-teen boys, who decided that it really was sort of fun, after all. One couple from the October class is even interested in trying the adult class. Hopefully, the easy pace of this class will convince more people that yes, they can dance, and that they want to try the regular class. That's it for now!

Kathy Byers

LANCASTER ADULT CLASS

The average age of the Lancaster class has definitely been lowered lately. In addition to Megan Byers and Giselle Kallemeyn who have attended the class for over a year now and have been to several dances, we now have two other young ladies in the class. Kelsey is

14 and Rebecca is 15. Rebecca's mother has even given it a try. We are delighted to have these new dancers in the class.

Since we have so many young people in the class, we have invited Frank Wu to bring down his class for our Christmas party held the third Friday in December. Frank also has young dancers so they should all have fun together. However, all are welcome. After the dancing, which is really just a regular class, we will have refreshments and then some storytelling, singing or playing on musical instruments. Please come join us for this fun evening. *Aase Hansen*

VALLEY COLLEGE

Class has started again and we are happy to report that we have three new dancers. Two learned about it at the Pomona Scottish Festival and one is a friend of a dancer. It is wonderful to see some new dancers in class, and all three came to the first beginner dance of the year.

It is, however, also nice to see all the old friends back. We have had good news from Robyn George. She is now stationed in Los Angeles, which means we will see her more often. We often have to miss Steve Kaplan because he goes out of town to teach comedy workshops. He has done that in both Singapore and New York. In December, Jon Reeves will be making a short trip to Bristol, England, for a business meeting. The company he works for only has two people in the US, the rest are in England.

Terry Schaeffer has been to England already. In November, she spent 11 days there. She did a speech on preservation in Liverpool. Last November, we had a visitor from England, Diane Rooney. In July, Diane visited Robyn George in New York. Then in August, Diane and Terry met up at TAC summer school on Vancouver Island, Canada. That friendship has now resulted in Diane picking Terry up at the airport, and Terry will also be staying with Diane. That is one of the many benefits of meeting new friends in Scottish country dancing.

Christine Richard also known as Dorian Richard makes her living producing computer games. However, she also has other interests and this fall produced a stage play which ran to very good reviews.

Lisbet Hencke, our former class member but still member of the branch, almost left Tampa in October to avoid Hurricane Wilma. In the end she, her husband, horse and bunny decided to stay put. Fortunately, all they got was some rain and strong winds. When they lived in Virginia, Hurricane Felix almost hit them. Lisbet has told me she much prefers earthquakes to hurricanes. An earthquake happens unexpectedly and you deal with it. A hurricane has days of anticipating in fear of the worst. Lisbet, by the way, has become quite the expert on horses. She makes her living training horses and teaching riding. She also tutors private students in Spanish. Once in a while, she even has time to join the Scottish dancing class in Tampa.

Audrey Prest has been missing for months, because her boss hasn't given her Mondays off. She is happy to report that her daughter and family have moved into a nice, bigger home in Des Moines. They now will have more room when she visits and she can stay with them. To help with the move and also to attend a grandchild's birthday party, she has been to Iowa twice since June.

We do have people on the sick list. Claudia Pedersen has been nursing a sore knee since spring. She still comes and has been able to walk or hobble through a few dances. We will be glad when she has her surgery behind her. It is scheduled for right after Thanksgiving. Deborah Ash is in much the same situation. Her knee had bothered her a bit in the spring, but when she stood on a collapsible chair and it collapsed under her, that was the end of her dancing for a while. She is under treatment and doesn't know yet if she will need surgery. We hope both of these nice ladies will be back dancing with us soon. *Aase Hansen*

BAKERSFIELD

In June the Bakersfield class lost a very loyal dancing teacher. Herald Yule died in a traffic accident. Hal showed up every Monday night for at least thirty years, to my knowledge, to teach us the intricacies of our favorite dancing. After he had a heart transplant, he was unhappily unable to dance. He was very active in the Kern County Scottish Society and some of you may be familiar with his store, *Thistle And Rose*, whose wares he took to many of the Games in California.

Thanks, Hal, for your dedication to dancing! John and Dorothy Hill were unable to attend Hal's funeral because in the same week my (Dorothy's) mother died so we were on our way back to England. Blanche Langton was 92 years old, and danced all her life from being sent to lessons as a girl with her brother. Her choice was Old Tyme, which is related I believe to what is now called Modern Sequence dancing. Thank you for teaching me so much Mum! After our sojourn in England we spent a wonderful week in Stockholm, what a beautiful city!

Barbara and Mike Mackenzie traveled around quite a bit too. They went to the Azores and the Scottish Highlands and I can't remember all they did but I know it involved a lot of dancing. Eleanor Clark still shows up when she's not traveling. She is presently in Yugoslavia. She'll probably come back and paint some more award winning paintings.

We had an exciting visit from Tom and Gil Cusack last night, October 25th. They now work in Ghana and were back for R & R but only for a couple of days here.

Our class has grown by a whole family of mother, daughters and friends, sisters and grandson. The Fergusons are catching on very well and Sheryl is particularly devoted to doing well. A guiding hand seems to send us new people every time we begin to despair, thank you Lord!



Dorothy Hill

The Branch is pleased to welcome the following new members: Jacqueline Sargent, Sue Higgins, Frances & Lyle Myles. We hope that you enjoy dancing with us.
Melinda & Frank.



By Bob Brooks

The Thistle Band about 10 years ago: Colin Gordon, fiddler and singer; Pete Kier, accordionist; Tony Rizzo, drummer; Dohl Morris, bass player; Jack Rennie, accordionist; and Bob Brooks, piano.

Ken and Nancy Hall

Rosemary has been exchanging emails with Ken and Nancy Hall, who have moved to Las Cruces, New Mexico. Ken reported that their new email address is:

kenahall@fastwave.biz

And their street address is:

Ken and Nancy Hall
2220 Laguna Drive
Las Cruces, NM 88005
505-647-3392

Then Ken reported, "We have pretty well folded into the social whirl of Las Cruces: oral history club, Nancy's high school class that still meets once per month for lunch, church, Spanish language classes, many of our college friends are with them, I have been elected to the Civic Concert Association Board of Directors, I have signed onto Red Cross -- no, I am not making a trip soon to the gulf states, etc.

"I have included a photo of our casa below. (And no, I have not juiced the blue sky - its real.) The blue gate is indicative of welcome, and that is especially true for our RSCDS friends. Just check before coming, we travel a bit more, here and there -- this month it is to the Hills of Tuscany with Elderhostel."

“AND THE BAND PLAYED ON “

In the mid-1950s Jack Rennie migrated from Toronto to California to pursue a degree at UCLA. At a college party, a young man (Pete Kier) asked Jack if he knew any Scottish tunes. When Janet Rennie volunteered Jack's services at a Scottish lodge garden party, Jack recruited Pete to go along with him. Together, they coaxed a drummer friend, Walt Sereth, to join them to make a trio.

Ella Thomson, who taught a Scottish Country Dance class in North Hollywood, was at the party and invited Jack to play for her class. Hearing about the live music in Ella's class, David Brandon, a folk dance teacher who had just become a Scottish Country Dance teacher, came by one night. After he received his SCD teaching certificate from Miss Milligan herself, David invited the trio to play for the first Los Angeles Branch dance. Jack enlisted a pianist to practice with him, Walt and Pete. The Thistle Band was formed.

When Mary Shoolbraid and David Brandon were married, the Thistle Band played at the reception. Their wedding was the first of many Scottish dancer weddings the band played for.

At the Branch's first weekend workshop (held at the historic Mission Inn in Riverside), C. Stewart Smith, the guest teacher, wanted to teach a dance called *1314*, but he could not find a recording of the proper music. He asked the band if they could record that music as well as the music for *St. John River*. The 45s were pressed and sold at the weekend. Wherever Stewart taught these dances, he sold the records, popularizing both the dances and the band. After hearing the band play at the weekend ball, Smith invited them to play at a San Francisco event providing that Branch with live music for the first time. Soon the band was driving to San Francisco three or four times a year to play for dances as well as the Santa Rosa Games.

Wherever Smith taught in North America, he continued to request records for the dances he taught. The recordings of *Polharrow Burn*, *White Heather Jig*, *Belle of Bon Accord* and other dance tunes all sold out and had to be repressed. The records brought the band to the attention dancers in other cities in the west that had dancing but no live music. The Thistle Band brought live music to the West Coast of the U.S. and Canada. Soon, the band was traveling to Vancouver, Victoria, Sacramento, Phoenix, Orlando, Winnipeg, and Calgary. For almost 20 years the band were the resident musicians for the Banff Workshop in October.

As the number of dancers grew, so did the band. Eventually the Thistle Band had a front line of first and second accordions and a fiddle, backed up by piano, bass and drum rhythm sections just like the six piece bands in Scotland. Three successful LPs of their live music were produced and widely distributed.

There is no doubt that live music in those early days contributed to the growth of Scottish Country Dancing and the proliferation of groups to play for in the U.S. The Los Angeles Branch was indeed fortunate to have the first Scottish Dance Band resident in the United States and had live local "in house" band musicians as branch members from the "get go" of the branch's founding. This year marks the 40th anniversary of the Thistle Band, and although some of the personnel have changed over the years, "the band plays on!"



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**the
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Susie and Ray Tucker in Halloween costumes.