



THE BLETHERS



Ree Grisham, Chair

Laurie Walter, Editor

Goodbye party for Jeanette Parrott: Silk and Thistle is planning a goodbye dinner and party in honor of founding, honorary Branch member Jeanette Parrott on Tuesday, May 25, at the Fermilab Village Barn, starting at about 6:30 PM. We will have a potluck dinner with main dishes and non-alcoholic drinks provided; please bring a salad or dessert. (By the way, alcoholic beverages are not permitted until after dancing, when the camaraderie continues at the User Center.) Social dancing will follow the dinner. Everyone is invited to come and join us and wish Jeanette well! More information is available by calling Doug at (630) 840-8194 (office) or (630) 232-9089 (home) or Mady at (630) 584-0825. [Mady Newfield]

Last Loch Mich session: The last day of dancing at St. Josaphat is this Sunday, May 23. Be there!!!

Summer dancing: Summer dancing in Oak Park on Friday evenings worked out so well last year that we're going to repeat. The **tentative** dates are June 25; July 9 and 23; and August 6, 20, and possibly 27 (check beforehand!). It's a good way to keep your dancing feet and see your friends during the Summer.

Silk and Thistle (Fermilab) keeps going through the Summer, as always. They will be at the Fermilab Barn through most of June, then at the high-rise (probably starting June 29). Phone one of the above contacts for more information.

Cincinnati Workshop: The response has been great for the Cincinnati Branch June 12th Workshop and Ball, but they still have a few spaces left. If you haven't sent your registration form, and would like to attend, give Jim or Donna Ferguson a call at (740) 439-3874 or e-mail them at jfergie@jadeinc.com. If you didn't get a flyer, you can check at the details on the Cincinnati Branch web site, <http://www.infinet.com/~plindsay/rscds/> or the Heather 'N' Thistle Web Site <http://www.members.tripod.com/~gardenia/SCD/index.html>. [Jim Ferguson, via Eric/Tine MacKay]

Highland Games: The Illinois St. Andrew Society Highland Games will be held on Saturday, June 19, at the Oak Brook Polo Grounds. Highlights of the day will include a performance by the RSCDS, Chicago Branch, demo team; a Branch tent and table (sign up with Greg Canfield to person it for a couple of hours); and participatory dancing. Be sure to show up for a good time.

Demos: In addition to their regular Tuesday night class, the Silk and Thistle Demo Team will be active this Summer, at least at the Ethnic Festival in Mokena on July 10 and the Warrenville Folk Festival on July 11 (where they will also lead participatory dancing). Check them out!

Also, the RSCDS, Chicago Branch, Demo Team hopes to dance at the Ravinia Festival on July 9 and the Fox Valley Folk Festival over Labor Day weekend. Stay tuned.

Celtic Fest: The Grant Park Celtic Fest will be held this year on September 18-19. Demos, Scottish food and vendors, and musicians of varied Celticity always make this a grand occasion.

Indianapolis Beginner's Ball: The Beginner's Ball in Indianapolis this year will be held at the same place as last year, the Ramsburg YMCA. The date is September 25th, 1999, at 1:00 PM EST. For a program, directions, more information, or to RSVP, contact Eric and Tine MacKay, 7089 Bridgmont Court, Avon IN 46168; (317) 272-2231; ericmackay@sprintmail.com

"Frolic on the Fox 4": Fermilab's Silk and Thistle Scottish Dancers, a class of the Chicago Branch of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society, present an informal Scottish Ball on Saturday, November 6, 1999. Dancing begins at 7:30 PM at the Baker Center in St. Charles, IL ("a lovely hall"), one block south of Rte.

64, on the corner of Walnut and Rte. 31. Only \$8 at the door; non-dancers are welcome to observe and listen for \$2. Music by Mike Briggs, Susan Conant, and Dave Mullen. For more information, contact Doug or Susan Jensen at (630) 232-9089, Doug (wk.) at (630) 840-8194, Mady Newfield at (630) 584-0825, or Mary Helen Polensky at (815) 756-7182; email: folkdance@fnal.gov

20th Anniversary New Year's Ball and 2000 Workshop: Don't forget, right after your Holiday/New Year's/Millennium celebrations, to save January 8, **2000**, for a special event, the Twentieth Anniversary New Years's Ball, chaired by Ken Schoon and Ingrid Kendall. Watch your *Blethers* and mail boxes for more information as the gala date nears.

Later in that same millennial year, we are looking forward to a splendid June Workshop (particularly since we were done out of it this year by the evil machinations of certain despicable universities).

Tartan Day celebration: As you know, the US has recently declared April 6 as Tartan Day. It is partly in recognition of the fact that on the order of half of the signers of the Declaration of Independence were of Scottish descent. The date is chosen to coincide with the anniversary of the signing of a document in Scottish history, the Declaration of Arbroath in 1320, which has some similarities to the American Declaration of Independence.

The Silk and Thistle Scottish Country Dancers had a spectacularly successful Tartan Day celebration at our regular Tuesday night class. We were very pleased that we received good press - a nice article in the *Daily Herald* (with two color photos) and further information presented on the front page of the "Trib West" section of the Chicago *Tribune* and in the local newspapers. Special thanks to Mady Newfield for pushing on the publicity. As a result of all of this publicity, we had more than 50 people show up to join in our celebration.

As a part of the celebration, Mady Newfield prepared haggis, Scotch eggs, bannocks and short-bread; Mary Helen Polensky prepared griddle scones; and many others contributed other goodies. We had on display many sources of information on Scotland and tartans collected from the local libraries. Bryan Luce provided a wonderful display of Scottish artifacts. Greg Canfield brought along the Chicago Branch tartans to help lend a festive atmosphere.

We danced Scottish Country dances and Ceilidh dances with many of the attendees joining in the dancing. We were pleased to see young and old, those of Scottish descent and non-Scots as well, join in the festivities. It seems that a good time was had by all. By the end of the evening - after 10 pm, we still had 4 full sets of dancers joining into a final Strathspey.

As usual, the evening was a success due in large part to the support and encouragement that the experienced dancers from the Silk and Thistle class offer, as they do regularly, to newcomers - helping them through the dances with grace and humor at every turn and cast. [Doug Jensen]

Farewell: If my archaic floppies can be trusted, I started the job of editor of *The Blethers* in 1991, after Ken Schoon had held it for more years than he probably cares to remember, and Chari Wurtzel had manfully (or personfully?) edited a transitional issue. For the last couple of years, I've felt that I was running out of new ways to say the same things and that it was time for someone else to take over this "bully pulpit." And fortunately, Sue McKinnell, the best possible person, is willing to do so, so that I can return to being an ordinary, inarticulate dancer. I know you will give Sue the same encouragement and support that I have so appreciated over the years. Special thanks to the assorted contributors, COM's (both too numerous to list individually), and mailing listmeisters (Kent Smith and Ken Heinemann) without all of whom I could not have done it. Thank you for everything, love and hugs, and keep dancing!

