

President's Report for our year 2019-2020

We are now in uncertain times with regard to our lifestyle due to this pandemic: there is a new government directive issued almost every day. We are all constantly receiving advice via radio and television; the only thing I would add is beware of people trying to take advantage during these trying times via scam emails or offers of help from strangers. What is recommended is only deal with friends and neighbours if you need help with errands etc. An on-line neighbourhood group is useful to keep in touch. It has been suggested that members may be able to help each other, you already have the contact numbers for the Treasurer and the Secretary on your membership programmes, my number is 0208 658 9188. We may be able to help in some way or suggest a member who lives nearby. All ODCS activities are of course on hold until things improve. Once the country starts to recover your committee will reconvene and will prepare a new timetable.

As is traditional I list below a precis of activities of the past year.

Our Monday beginners' classes have had a varied attendance, from the mid twenties to over forty on one evening! Most of your committee started as beginners on a Monday and then progressed to Thursday evening social dancing so I am pleased to report that there are several beginners who show great promise, and with encouragement could become Thursday dancers. This appears to be the only way our Society can continue to thrive as I can't recall ever having an experienced dancer joining us as a new member. The free 'Taster Session' is still in use and continues to provide a friendly welcoming touch to new people who come through the door for the first time. Although membership numbers are only down slightly we must continue to support our teachers, led by Angela Campbell and assisted by Ginny and Don. Any suggestions to promote our Society would be most welcome. Roger Randall continues as our webmaster www.orpingtonscottishdancing.com an important role as some of our beginners have found us via our website. Members also use our website for information of Thursday dances and for forthcoming events.

Thursday evenings also have had a varied attendance but we are managing to cover the cost of hall rental, and it is always definitely 'social'! Thanks go to Angela Campbell, Don, Ginny and John as our regular MCs ably assisted by guest MCs on occasion.

2nd and 3rd Wednesday classes have been well attended and both gave excellent demonstrations at the Ceilidh recently.

Our regular dances have all been successful. Our Summer Dance convened by Deirdre was a great success, music was by Ian Muir, everyone had a thoroughly good time. Ginny organized our Autumn Dance with Craiggellachie's four-piece band which was excellent but was unfortunately not our usual sell out as folk had other commitments due to the time of year. Angela C again convened our Birthday Dance in November, aimed at encouraging our beginners to experience a social dance. Joan Kinnear provided a new twist to our St. Andrew's dance. All dances were introduced by Ken I'Anson who explained either the location in the title or a historical connection. This proved to be most successful. It gave dancers a welcome break between dances and made for a more orderly start to the next dance on the programme. Angela H made a special Saltire out of iced buns, a spectacular alternative to our usual fruit cake.

Hogmanay was as usual a sell-out event, organized by Roger Randall assisted by Rebecca and Ginny. Brian Scothern was Old Father Time as I was able to welcome in the New Year for the first time. Burns' Supper, our sole remaining formal dance was a great success. We did not spend as much money on the band this time, (Craigevar two-piece) and Linda managed to keep a tight control on expenses with the result that the event almost broke even despite keeping the ticket price to below £40. We have rebooked The Alexandra Suite again for 2021.

Dave Keen organized the annual Ceilidh once again. Despite having no volunteers before Christmas,

members did come forward in the New Year with offers of a variety of entertainment and we were able to enjoy a full evening of dancing interspersed with the acts. There was a mouth-watering selection of freshly baked cakes at the interval. This must be the best value for an evening's entertainment for £2! Angela H convened March On dance which was so popular that she had to organize a waiting list for tickets. This dance is aimed at beginners and it was encouraging to see some of their numbers on the night. The programme as always was compiled by Angela Campbell who was able to rehearse most of the dances at her Monday classes. Music was provided by The Caledonian Reelers, the range of food brought by dancers as always was excellent.

We have continued to hold displays thanks to Angela C being as our contact person and organizer. Members have continued to provide demonstration dances for schools, care homes and social organizations. We also danced at three Burns' events, each time raising money for our charities. Angela C and Ginny also organized a full day's ceilidh at St. Olave's for students.

The Society is lucky to have so many members willing to help out in different ways at every function and my thanks to everyone for their efforts and for giving up their time. All the committee have played leading roles and I am grateful for their advice and support.

I look forward to the time I can put my dancing shoes back in the car and restart dancing. Take care, I know you will all look after yourselves.

Hadyn
President