

Riyadh's
Caledonian
Society
hold a
Ceilidh



Ian Ewart

The Caledonian Society of Riyadh held a traditional Scottish Ceilidh on Thursday 18 April, the third major function since the Society's inauguration last year.

The event was yet again a complete sell-out and turned out to be a thoroughly enjoyable evening for all, particularly for all those who got up and had a go! Not only enjoyable but better than a couple of hours in the gym!

The programme consisted predominantly of Scottish Country Dancing, with some live music and a little individual entertainment thrown in. Dave Smith organised the dance programme and called the dances so that those who were not familiar had a chance to learn. The learning curve was steep, but everybody managed well and many lost quite a few pounds! Luke Garry provided live music and Craig Newman from down-under piped for the audience like a true Scot. Neil MacDougall sang some traditional Scottish songs

and we would have had a smattering of poetry had time allowed. Next time.

The meal was a traditional fish and chip supper [Scottish fare, or rather more English?? Apparently very Scottish]. For some, the meal totally neutralised those pounds lost on the dance floor.

The Caledonian Society is now fully established and welcomes new members who have some Scottish blood somewhere down the line or who are interested in Scottish culture and events. Jim Milne is currently Chieftain and Mary MacLachlan is Membership Secretary. Other members of the committee are: Ian Ewart, Margaret Milne, Michelle Fisher, Don MacLachlan, Doug and Gwen Mackie, Luke Garry, Dave Smith, Gordon Bennie and Anne Stobie.

The next scheduled event is members' barbecue in June. This will be followed by two major events and possibly another Ceilidh in the autumn.

*For the uninitiated - Scotland has a rich tradition of music, song and dance. The Ceilidh (pronounced kay-lay) is an informal evening of dancing, singing and, of course, usually d****ing. A Ceilidh involves Scottish Country Dancing, which is enjoyed by a large number of people and can be as formal or informal as people wish to make it. On trying to research the Ceilidh I discovered over 76000 pages listed on www.google.com alone including some of these comments:*

1, A band called 'Ceilidh Minogue' played at a St Andrews Ball in Bahrain recently! 2, The official British Army regulations for under-kilt wear (or not), are: Underclothes will be worn when: Taking part in organised sports, Solo Highland Dancing, At any time ladies are in the Mess, At all other times it is discretionary. (Also amongst the trivia, I was led to the following piece which I thought you might like to read - Ed)

Da, Wha's A Sassenach? My bairn asked me that question the other day, and this is what I told him.

Weel, lad, Ill tell ye. Sassenach are folk that are no Scots. Though ye could say that they're folk that are no Celts - I dinna think ye can call most Irish, Welsh or Cornishmen real Sassenach. Noo then, lad, I dinna want ye treatin Sassenach like inferior folk, een though thats often true. There are guid, kind, intelligent and een holy people among their different tribes. Why, maist o the saints ye hear tell of are Sassenach. That's why yere no tae be treating folk unkindly just for an accident o birth that they're nae Scots - pity them, aye, but dinnae mock them.

Can ye tell a Sassenach? O course, ye can always tell a Sassenach - but ye canna tell em mickle! Och, ye mean how do ye ken a Sassenach frae a Scotsman? Weel, there be several ways. Do ye ken walkin in the market last week, and ye mentioned that lassie passing who smelt like flooers? They call that a scent, pair-fume, colon, or such-like. Sassenach o both sexes wear stuff

tae mak them smell like something they be-nt, belike a garden, or a kitchen or... I heerd o one for gents that they call English Leather. Weel, laddie, I mysel dinna want to smell like something trapped betwixt a sweatin horse and an Englishmans backside, but there's nae accoontin for taste.

Why do they wear such folderol?

I dinna truly ken, unless they canna stand their ain aroma. True, Scots bathe regular, another difference wi the Sassenach. Why, our Queen Marys coosin, the English lass, scandalized her subjects by saying in public that she bathed once a month whether she needed to or no!

Speakin o matters o taste, food is another distinction tween Scots and Sassenach. Those outlanders eat outlandish things - snails, frogs and sich - or cover up meat wi spiced sauces so ye canna tell if its coo, mutton, horse, or somewhat else. Yet they dinna ken how we can list wha gaes in tae a haggis and still eat it.

Noo, many tribes o Sassenach tak great pride in their facial hair. Why, I've seen growths on an upper lip that would do a walrus proud. Walrus, laddie, ye remember, at the Calder Park Zoo?

Aye wi the breath like Uncle Alistair after a bad nicht. These grand mustaches they wax and shape in tae curlicues, horns, or een daggers. Their beards they oil, braid, tie wi ribbands... och, sae fancy! And many of their men do the same things.

Other folk have strange was ospeech - Whah, Ah do declayun, thas so kand o yall! or ye might hear somewhat like Wotcher, guv! Tyke a butchers at me gel there. Aynt she sumpn? So ocourse, mony Sassenach hae trooble wi the wa guid Scots speak. I ken a lassie nicht sae lang syne wha asked me aboot my accent. She went around tae and frae, prating tha she couldna mak oot my woords! Och, bairn, ilka Sassenach maun no ken Anglic verra mickle!

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