



OTAGO SCOTTISH HERITAGE COUNCIL

The August 2021 newsletter



Edited by Dene Mackenzie

Ceilidh dancing has derived from the Old Time dances and couple dances that found their way onto the Scottish dance floor in the 19th century. Many Ceilidh dances have been part of the Scottish dancing scene for many years and are an intrinsic part of Scotland's culture. Otago Scottish Heritage Council member Heather Hay reports the Dunedin Ceilidh Club, of which she is also a member, is experiencing a revival in membership and enthusiasm.

Recently, the club has been getting more than 30 members to its Monday dances in Roslyn. Heather says there is a mixture of young and older members enjoying the dancing and it was lovely to see the ages mixing together during the dancing.



Members of the Ceilidh Club include (front) Julie Marshall and Heather Hay. (rear) Isobel Harris and Nico Concha.

New members are taken to a separate room where experienced dancers teach some of the steps. One “young lad” had never danced before and he was enjoying it greatly, she said.

Another young woman had danced ballet, but not Ceilidh dancing. She was also enjoying the change in pace.

Until recently, the club boasted a 95-year-old member who used dancing to keep active.

“We have lovely music and it’s a good way to get exercise. It’s a great way to keep fit.”

The group had been operating since 1982 and had, over the years, attracted a wide range of people interested in their Scottish ancestry, Heather said.

The club meets each Monday, 7pm to 9pm at the St Johns Church Hall, Roslyn. Inquiries can be made to the secretary Ruth Taylor on rumartay@gmail.com

A Night Out to Remember



The Burns Club is organising an exciting event for September 11, in the Hanover Hall.

One of the people involved in the organisation is Mike Moroney from the wonderful Gatgut & Steel duo and the Dunedin Scottish Fiddle Orchestra.

Mike says he has arranged for a limited number of Early Bird tickets at \$30 (\$10 discount), on sale now at Humanatix:

<https://events.humanatix.com/regael-a-scottish-flavoured-variety-concert>

- until Saturday August 14.

There is a Facebook event here:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/652348435725664>

The performers for the concert included Gladys Hope, Peter Chin and Arnold Bachop. Gatgut & Steel will perform along with the Dunedin Scottish Fiddle Orchestra.

Special guest will be “Edinburgh songbird” Kate Targett-Adams (below)



There are a few days left to get the Early Bird tickets. This should be a great night.

History

While members of the Otago Scottish Heritage Council are all friendly now with each other and other Scottish-aligned groups, historian John Stinson is finding that goodwill was not always the case. You may all remember his report on a member of the council being labelled a traitor for favouring one pipe band over another in a concert put on for American servicemen based at Port Chalmers.

A simple inquiry at one of our monthly meetings on how we became the Otago Scottish Heritage Council threw up some interesting news. The Hocken Library has been very helpful to John in delving back into the archives.

A report in the *Otago Daily Times* from May 27, 1988 was started with: *“Blood was not spilled but it was certainly heated at a public meeting called on Wednesday night to form a Scottish Heritage Council in Dunedin.*

Thirty seven people attended the lively meeting where at one stage, accusations of “nitpicker”, “lies” and “cheat” were hurled from one side of the room and back again.

A Scottish Heritage Council would support all Scottish societies and promote Scottish Week in Otago, according to Mr Jim Campbell of Middlemarch, one of those responsible for organising the meeting. He believed that with Scottish Week becoming an annual event recognised throughout New Zealand and Australia, it was vital it be run by an independent Scottish society. He claimed it would not duplicate the Otago Scottish Council.

However, representatives of the Otago Scottish Council felt otherwise. Since its inception four years ago, Scottish Week had been organised by a sub-committee of the Otago Scottish Council. The Scottish Council was itself made up of delegates from various Scottish organisations, including the Dunedin Burns Club, the Caledonian Society, the Dunedin Scottish Society and numerous clans.

The president of the council, Lyn Rayner, said it had worked satisfactorily for 80 years and with recent new blood, it would continue to work well.

The vote to form a Scottish Heritage Council of New Zealand Otago was passed by 20 votes to 17. Mr Campbell was elected chairman by a similar margin.”

Gaelic Phrases

Thank You (Formal) Phrase: *Tapadh leibh* **Pronunciation:** ta'pa liev

"Dh" in Gaelic is usually silent. *Tapadh leibh* is a polite way of saying thank you. This phrase can be used when speaking to strangers.

Thank You (Informal) Phrase: *Tapadh leit* **Pronunciation:** ta'pa let

A less formal way of thanking someone is by saying *tapadh leit*. This can be used when speaking to friends or to children

Peter May



I received a link to an interview where Peter May talks about his novel *Entry Island* which came after the *Lewis* trilogy and mentions “the Clearances”. <https://youtu.be/G0ZZz0MVIDc>

Peter May is a Scottish television screenwriter, novelist and crime writer. The interview provides an interesting insight into our Scottish heritage.

beannachd leibh (Goodbye, see you)

Dene

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