

STAPLERS

NEWSLETTER

www.staplers.org.uk

2 January 2013

Notes from the Chairman

At our AGM, at the end of September 2012, the existing committee were elected 'en bloc' again to serve for a further year.

Since then we have held our **Anniversary Dance** and a very popular, highly praised Sunday afternoon workshop, led by John Turner, on '**The Dances of Gary Roodman**'.

Once again a very enjoyable, varied **Christmas Party** was master minded by Ced and Lorraine and we re-start on 7th January 2013, which is *Plough Monday*, with a 'Monday Special' involving traditional dancing and song spots in addition to our usual social dancing.

In February 2013 we have our usual **Spring Dance**, another special Monday Playford evening with Colin Hume and Spring Greens and another Sunday workshop, this time on **Irish Set Dancing**.

Looking even further ahead, after our 'club visit' to Cecil Sharp House for

Christmas Carols and Customs we are hoping to get a group together to go to Eastbourne Folk Festival, 3rd - 6th May — so we have lots to plan for and anticipate in addition to the usual mix of Monday evening club and guest callers.

My very best wishes to you all for 2013.

Ann Gibson

FUTURE EVENTS

Spring Dance

2nd February 2013 • 7.30 - 11.00
Robert Moir with **Folkus Pocus**

Workshop: *Irish Set Dance*

24th February 2013 • 2.00 - 5.00
with **Geoff Holland**

Both Events at: St Ippolyts Parish Hall,
Hitchin SG4 7RA

Committee

Chairman: Ann Gibson
Secretary: Ces Mills
Treasurer: David Millman
Editor: Cedric Morgan

Committee Members:

Kim Brosan;
Leslie Elliott;
Denise Devonald;
Hazel Glass;
Lorraine Morgan

GARDEN EVENINGS

Joan & Chris's Garden Evening • 30th July 2012



On our first Monday evening garden evening of 'the (wet) Summer', the band of Staplers that gathered on Chris and Joan's lawn did not quite compare with the previous Friday's spectacular Olympics' opening show, but perhaps our country dancing in an English village garden married with some aspects of British history portrayed in the 2012 ceremony.

There then followed a very pleasant time dancing on an evening during which the weather behaved quite kindly. The listed caller for the evening was Lorraine but in the event Lorraine and Ced shared the calling.

This was the second time we had personally attended an evening at Chris and Joan's and one of the pleasures of doing so is that because of their long association with the Fine Companions club in Bedford there are always a number attending from Bedford, who it is nice to meet. The evening



was rounded off by some very nice cakes along with tea and coffee, and chatting with friends old and new. A big thank you to Chris and Joan for their hospitality – a gold medal evening.

John Cox and Margaret Charlton

Bernard & Val's Garden Evening • 6th August 2012

On 5th August we met at Val and Bernard's for dancing on their front drive. The weather forecast had not been good, but after people variously had to drive through torrential showers and round up reluctant ducks, about 20 of us were there, a good number. Fortunately it stayed (mostly) dry and those who came were well rewarded.

Ced and Lorraine were calling, and as always, provided us with a lovely variety of dances to great tunes. They always seem to come up with a good selection of dances, including one or two new ones, without any of them taking too long to explain. And I always enjoy their choice of music which usually includes some modern, lively bands.

GARDEN EVENINGS



*If you know
where to look, I
think the spider
is just visible*

They had to put up with a certain lack of concentration though, as the dancers were distracted by a spider on a telephone wire, a rainbow and the spider again (and again!).

Too soon it was getting dark and there was just time for tea and Val's delicious cake before heading home.

Sarah Heiermann

It's a social occasion too !



Kim Brosan's Garden Evening • 20th August 2012

Kim was our hostess for the final garden evening of the year. We had a fun time and Terry called some enjoyable dances.

The weather was perfect for dancing, fortunately not as hot as the previous day, though at one point Terry made to gather up the electrical equipment to rush indoors as he heard 'it's raining!'. It was actually Ced passing comment on the 'geraniums'.

It was quite a family evening, with Graham's daughter and two granddaughters – both of whom are confident dancers in the making. We were also joined by Bernard's son Ben, wife Emma and their little daughter

Amira, who obviously loved to watch the dancing - a budding third generation dancer no doubt.

We laughed as Kim's cat, picking it's moment, rushed between the feet of the dancers several times to get between house and garden.

We enjoyed a relaxing end to the evening with a glass of Pimms and more delicious home-made cakes, which Kim had found time to make despite her preparations to go on holiday the next day.

Lorraine Morgan

GARDEN EVENINGS

Sarah & Toby's Garden Evening • 13th August 2012

Our third Staplers garden evening took place in Sarah & Toby's garden. The weather had looked a bit grey during the day and early part of the evening so Toby fixed up a temporary awning to cover the caller and equipment just in case.

Bridget was calling, with DJ Toby on standby to help out with the music, when part way through the evening there was a sudden shower which sent us all rushing under the shelter. It stopped after a few minutes, though Ced nearly got an extra soaking by standing near Toby, who decided to empty the rain off the top of the awning at that moment!



As the sky lightened up into a lovely evening, I spotted a large dragon-fly which danced with us for a while, maybe en-route to Oughtonhead.

Sarah provided us with delicious home-made cakes and we learnt with sadness that this would be our last garden evening with Sarah and Toby as they will be moving from the area due to work commitments in the near future.

Lorraine Morgan



EVENTS

Workshop: 'Dances of Gary Roodman' • 4th November 2012

We have been running a series of workshops on various dance topics and styles over the past few years and they have all proved popular. It is a good opportunity on a Sunday afternoon to get to grips with something new. The latest workshop featured the dances of Gary Roodman who was an applied maths professor with a background in problem solving that seems to influence his dances. The results are wonderfully 'flowing' dances with just the right amount of complexity.

The workshop was led by 'Gary' fan, John Turner who did an excellent job in his own own inimitable way with music from the wonderful Paul Hutchinson. A good time was had by all, I suspect.

Cedric Morgan



EVENTS - DANCES

Anniversary Dance • 6th October 2012



We welcomed back, **Mark Elvins** for our **Anniversary Dance** this year. Music was played by newcomers to **Staplers, Stick Shift** - Holly Norton, Robbie Thomas and Nigel Walker

EVENTS - MARQUEE ERECTION

Bearing in mind the vagaries of the British climate, the committee decided in the summer that as we were performing more displays, it might be a good idea to invest in some form of shelter for such events - Not only for the dancers, you understand but also musicians and 'groupies' of one form or another'.



After much deliberation, a 3m square marquee was bought and this photograph shows what fun we all had in putting it up for the first time. Inside, I know but we didn't want to get it wet!

Oh, you know it's brilliant being on the committee – never a dull moment.

Ced

EVENTS - DANCES

Christmas Dance • 1st December 2012

What a fabulous evening – so glad I made the effort to get out despite being amid a very full weekend.

One of the opportunities of sitting out for a couple a dances to maintain my energy was it gave the opportunity really to listen to the music from Stradivarius. Good melodies, especially from the fiddle, is one of my favourites for dance music. What Rod is able to produce on his accordion acknowledges both the wonders of modern technology and more importantly his brilliant musicianship. The sound a mere three instruments created – phenomenal – put us in mind of a whole orchestra – at times I had to look at the stage to convince myself there really were still only 3 of them!!

Although our caller, Ron Coxall is, I believe, very well known by many, Stuart and I still feel very new to the club circuit and have never danced to him before. He certainly kept us on our toes and our brains alert. Joining a set near the top half of the hall gave us the advantage of being able to hear every word he called – but with the disadvantage of being caught when we were giggling. We both enjoyed the challenge and satisfaction of dancing more complicated figures in Ron's very capable hands.

It reminded us that at the very first Staplers public dance we came to, we were plunged immediately into Stuart's first ever triple minor. A very on-the-ball Terry Elvins offered to swap so we were firsts all the way down. It made a huge difference, especially as it was

only at that moment I realised that experienced in Ceilidh and Contra though Stuart was, he had never danced an Old English Dance in his life! (After dancing with Andrew Swaine, I no longer call them Playford because I now know most of them are not!!) Again good clear calling and generous, supportive handy hints from others meant we survived that first evening still smiling and came back for more.

It has been the Christmas and other public dances that Staplers have put on over the last few years that have wooed us to now being members and more importantly regular Monday night attendees. Thanks must also go to Lorraine for her very gentle but enthusiastic email reminders (I had happily given her my email from the first) which were extremely effective in reminding us of the Monday dancing opportunity and when work commitments finally allowed, off we went.

We have always enjoyed the easy social aspect of the interval supper at the public dances with its ample nibbles and social chat and this event was no exception.

So, finally thanks to all of the hard working committee that make every club evening, dance and workshop possible that give us so much pleasure and exercise – what a great combination.

Jacqueline & Stuart Beattie

EVENTS

Christmas Party Night • 17th December 2012

As **Boxing Day** was announced I couldn't understand how I had somehow missed out on Christmas Day, so it was with some relief that I realised that this was the first dance of the evening. This was followed by the **Washington Reel** and the first of the evening's quiz questions with a chocolate Father Christmas presented to the knowledgeable geographer amongst us.

Bridget's poem humorously expressed the confusion we ladies feel as we flip back and forth from man to lady between (and within!) dances. Gentlemen pray be patient. Time then to concentrate hard as Ann called for **Fivepenny Bit** using some Christmas Reels.



Staplers resident musicians entertaining us

With **Sweet Bells**, Lorna kindly led us on our 'heavenly way' (some hope) with a traditional rendering of While Shepherds Watched from the Chester area. Time then to dance **Musical Chairs** and sink into said chairs to be charmed by a gentle and jolly medley from Derek and Chris.

Our challenge to earn our refreshment break came from Bridget who hoped that we could sing and dance at the same time. It was a good thing that The Twelve Days of Christmas gave us a good few chances to get the hang of it.

Then a well deserved break to partake of the delicious goodies and drink that folk had brought.

Joan quelled our chatter with memories of traditional country Christmas celebrations as we danced **Barn Dance**. Then it was every man and woman for themselves in Bernard's parcel game. I had thought that Staplers were more polite than that.

Swedish Masquerade commenced deceptively slowly only to leave us short of breath



Lorna performing with Highland Cattle in the background



The game started in a sedate fashion but quickly got quite frenzied with the lucky winners being little more than a blur



and grateful for a rest as Graham regaled us with Roald Dahl's witty take on the story of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. How does Graham remember it all? I often can't recall why I went upstairs.

The evening drew towards its close with answers to Sarah's fascinating picture quiz. Do not be tempted to crouch down at the dinner table and squint at unconventional angles. You may not be offered any more wine.

Finally we swung into **Devil's Dream** for a fitting end to a most enjoyable evening. Thank you to all who contributed, with particular thanks to the reindeer who drove us steadily through the evening. Or were they really mountain goats!

Angela Gould

Of course, we ended with Devil's Dream



MONDAY NIGHT CALLERS

7 January	Plough Monday Special	25 February	Chris Turner
14 January	Bernard Higgs	4 March	Graham Foster
21 January	Barry Goodman	11 March	Martin Butler with <i>Cloudburst</i>
28 January	Jill Bransby	18 March	tbc
4 February	Lorraine Morgan	25 March	Joan Rutt
11 February	Nick Plum	1 April	Easter Monday – no club
18 February	Playford Evening with Colin Hume and <i>Spring Greens</i>		

IN MEMORIAM



It is with extreme sadness we report the death of Daphne Nicholls.

In November Daphne was diagnosed with “fairly advanced” pancreatic cancer. She passed away on 26th December 2012 at St. John’s, Moggerhanger, a hospice about 8 miles from Bedford.

Daphne and Roger are life members of Staplers and long standing friends. For many many years we enjoyed the music provided by the *Orange and Blue* band at the afternoon ‘Gathering’ as well as the annual Staplers barbecue and many of our Saturday dances.

Daphne and Roger have been very much part of Staplers family and we send Roger, Heather and Andrew our sincere condolences.