

STAPLERS

NEWSLETTER

www.staplers.org.uk

March 2015

Notes from the Chairman

As our winter season draws to a close we can look back in satisfaction to well attended Saturday dances, enjoyable, sociable special events and a successful *American Square Dance Workshop*. We now look forward to our spring and summer activities.

Once again several Staplers are going to folk festivals – Eastbourne over the early May Bank Holiday

weekend and Chippenham over the late May Bank Holiday weekend. If you haven't yet booked it isn't too late. On the last Monday evening before Easter, Bernard and Val Higgs invite us to help them celebrate their Ruby Wedding anniversary with dances called by Nick Plum and music from Staplers' musicians. We are planning another pub/barbecue evening in June,

we will be participating in local festivals over the coming months and we have lots more evenings to enjoy at St John's, with the usual mixture of club and guest callers, before moving into members' gardens for August.

We don't need to be told to 'keep dancing'!

Ann Gibson

MONDAY NIGHT CALLERS

16 March	Chris Turner	25 May	<i>Bank holiday – no club</i>
23 March	Ann Gibson	1 June	Denise Devonald
30 March	Ruby Wedding celebrations Nick Plum <i>with Staplers Musicians</i>	8 June	Bob Lilley
6 April	<i>Easter Monday – no club</i>	15 June	Nick Plum
13 April	Jeannie Byron-Williams	22 June	BBQ Evening Joan Rutt <i>with Staplers Musicians</i>
20 April	Cedric Morgan	29 June	Alan Dickens & Kim Brosan
27 April	Ann Gibson	6 July	John Green
4 May	<i>Bank holiday – no club</i>	13 July	Jacqueline & Stuart Beattie
11 May	Birthday Celebration for Lorraine	20 July	Wendy Harrup <i>with Staplers Musicians</i>
18 May	Jill Bransby	27 July	Lorraine Morgan

Committee

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

Committee Members:

Kim Brosan;
Denise Devonald;
Lorraine Morgan

Anne Dickens kindly(?) sent me some do's and don't's for editors. Can't think what she meant – *Ced the Ed*

- Don't use no double negatives
- Make each pronoun agree with their antecedent
- When dangling, watch your participles
- Don't use commas, which aren't necessary
- Verbs has to agree with their subjects
- About these sentence fragments
- Try to not ever split infinitives
- Its important to use apostrophe's correctly
- Always read what you have written to see if you any words out
- Correct spelling is esential

EVENTS

Anniversary Dance • 4th October 2014

Where were you on October 4th 1957? (If you 'were' at all that is since this writer was still yet to be.)

It's memorable because it was the day of the launch of *Sputnik 1*. How about October 4th 1976? That was the day that British Rail ran its very first high speed (125) inter-city service. And October 4th 2014? If you were anywhere other than St Ippolyts Village Hall you missed a memorable dance with Barrie Bullimore, his colourful shirt and The Ivel Valley Band.

We were promised a varied programme and Barrie certainly delivered to that brief:

- we danced contemporary contras, for example the smooth flowing "*Lover's Knot*" by Jim Kitch
- we (well, some of us) got lost and then found again in the old English triple minor, *St Wenn*
- we sailed more-or-less serenely through *Emma's Waltz* (courtesy of the joint endeavours of Colin Hume and Brian Stone)
- a very few of us got back home, rendezvousing there with our original partner, in the final bars a six-set progressive square
- we were in harmony with the season for *Autumn Tapestry* to the tune of Autumn Splendour.

True, there were occasional moments during walk-throughs when there was more scratching of heads than moving of feet – always accompanied by much good-natured laughter and "go-back-to-where-you-started"s. On one occasion, towards the end, both numbers and mental/physical energy were starting to wane. It was at this point that an entire dance was abandoned during walk-through in favour of a much simpler one offered straight up to replace it. Equal credit goes to Barrie for his rapid substitution, the band for their seamless switch of tune and to the assembled dancers for their unflappability.



The sound from The Ivel Valley Band was particularly well balanced on the night. I could always hear each individual instrument within the overall ensemble.

Thanks to the committee for a memorable 2014 Anniversary Dance. I'm now looking forward to the next two club public dances over the coming months.

Stuart Beattie



Another demonstration to see if this is possible, I think

EVENTS

Christmas Party • 22nd December 2014



This report is a bit of a list, but I didn't want to miss anything out! – Anne

What a great start to the evening – *Connoisseur's Contra* danced to *Bus Stop Reel* by Folkus Pocus set the merry mood. This was followed by a *Snow Dance* to the strains of *In Dulci Jubilo*, then the light-hearted *Radetzky Quadrille*.

Graham, in his own inimitable fashion, then recited **Sam's Christmas Pudding**; how many of us thought of our own puddings to be steamed in a few days? To help counteract the effects, we stepped lively with the *Dashing White Sergeant*, more gently with (only one?) *Shepherd's Delight*.

Sweet singing in the choir – how can five voices produce such a harmoniously beautiful sound? The *Holly and The Ivy* was followed by *Here We Come A-Wassailing*. Special thanks to Ces, Jenny, Kim, Lorna and Lorraine.

Time for an American Supper – we ate, drank, chatted, attempted those infuriatingly baffling puzzles dotted around – thanks Ann, Denise and Kim. Well done those high scorers Jeanette (17/20), and Barry (15/20).

All those nibbles, plus a large Christmas tree did not impede our dancers – *Lister Special Contra* was followed by Bernard's decorous game involving three packs of

cards, plus a pile of prizes, over which mature adults scrabbled, then stole and attempted to cheat. (We are a very select dance club!)

Washington Quickstep restored order, then Stuart recited **Nothing** by John Cooper Clarke. (If this sounds confusing, see Stuart!) To remind us of what might be in those Christmas Puddings, we danced *Five Penny Piece*, finishing triumphantly with the old favourite *Devil's Dream*.

What seems like an effortlessly enjoyable evening has taken so much organisation by our hard-working Committee.

Special thanks to our callers: Ann, Denise, Joan, and especially sole reindeer Lorraine, who presided

over the evening. A happy conclusion to our year of dance; marred only by reindeer Ced's absence – come back soon. Here's to a happy and healthy 2015 for all of us!

Anne Dickens



Lots of folks spotted that answer then!

One of Ann's prized prizes



A captivated audience — whether it's Graham or Santa I'm not saying



EVENTS

Spring Dance • 7th February 2015

Another good dance organised by Stapler's committee. I can't write much as I wasn't there – again. However a couple of photos to tell the story of the dance with **Lynne Render** and **Kelly's Eye**. *Ced the Ed*



Forget the dance, food is what we need



For musicianship or dancing I'm not prepared to say

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

ANNIVERSARY DANCE

3rd October 2015 • 7.30 – 11.00

Ron Coxall
with **Stradivarius**

CHRISTMAS DANCE

5th December 2015 • 7.30 – 11.00

Kathryn & David Wright
with **Folkus Pocus**

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

I have a little book entitled **Dont's for Dancers**, first published in 1925. I have quoted one or two snippets in the past and this is another of those times as I have a small corner of the page to fill.

For the Married Male Dancers: *Don't insist on your wife dancing only with yourself. She may obey you, but she will either laugh at your jealousy or resent your attitude as selfish and narrow-minded.*

For Married Lady Dancers: *Don't tell your husband you have nothing to wear for the dance, if you know he can't afford to buy you a new frock. He will feel the reproach and if he is strong-minded he won't buy the frock, and if he is weak-minded he will spend money he can't spare. In either case there will be something wrong and neither of you will be happy.*

You have been warned – Ced the Ed

EVENTS

Workshop: *Square Dance with Style* • 22nd February 2015

On a cold wet Sunday afternoon in February, I attended a workshop entitled '*Square Dancing with Style*'. The workshop was held at St Ippolyts Parish Hall; an excellent venue for dancing. The very knowledgeable and experienced caller was Colin Hume and the inspirational musicians were Mollie Koenigsberger and Alison Ellacott.

Forty three dancers participated in the workshop. Whilst a good number were Staplers members, many additional dancers attended, a number travelling significant distances.

In the main the participants appeared to be very experienced square dancers. Indeed there were a number of experts, eight of whom were called upon to demonstrate. Their unprepared demonstration exemplified instant and accurate response to the caller's rapid instructions – very impressive!

A variety of 'through' moves was the central theme for the workshop. Hence during the afternoon dancers were required to *pass through*, *dive through*, *star through*, *right and left through* and *square through*. In addition dancers learned to '*shoot the star*', '*slip the clutch*' and '*box the gnat*'!

A particular delight of the workshop for me was the challenge of being in the right place at the right time despite the rapidity and complexity of the caller's instructions. Given my limited experience there were times when the accomplishment of such feats felt mildly miraculous! Overall the opportunity to attend a workshop on a specific style of dancing, to learn named figures and then deploy them in context was invaluable; it combined information with enjoyment. Having said that I am not sure to what extent my efforts could be described as '*Square Dancing with Style*'! As with all of the dances I have attended, this event was characterised by friendly, helpful dance partners, a general sense of good will and a welcome cup of tea.



Intense discussion

Maggie Killingbeck



Poseurs

EVENTS

Burns Night Celebrations • 26th January 2015



Staplers Country Dance Club commemorated **Burns Night** with an Anglo Scottish evening on Monday 26th January. The dancers were taken on an imaginary journey north, doing dances with the names of places en route such as 'Wakefield' Hunt and Newcastle (both well known English country dances). At the border they learned the steps to perform a Scottish border Strathspey, 'Dalkeith's Strathspey' then on reaching their final destination they celebrated with Scottish ceilidh dances such as *The Dashing White Sergeant*, *The Gay Gordons* and *Posties Jig*.

Other dances enjoyed during the journey included the *Foula Reel*, *Trip to Bavaria* and

MacHinery's Reel. Members sported tartan sashes and bow ties and wore tartan waistcoats to add to the festive atmosphere. The fun filled evening was led by club caller and well know international dancer Jill Bransby with lively music provided by local folk band Cloudburst. A good time was had by all.



Ann Gibson

This is extracted from a press release sent to the local newspapers - Ced

EDITORIAL

For various reasons, not all connected with me this issue of the Staplers Newsletter has seemed a long time coming. The worrying thing is – I'm not sure anyone has noticed!

Anyway, here is this first issue of 2015. It has some interesting reports on our activities over the past few months written by an ever-increasing band of authors – some 'persuaded' it has be admitted to but still it's good to get a wide variety of views I believe.

On a similar theme, Kim has started to take an increasing role in the production of some of our adverts and press-release material. Those of you who read the **Comet** may have noticed the weekly enticements to come to the club evenings, virtually all of which have been written by Kim in a very encouraging way. In fact I believe a couple of the newer members have been drawn to the club after reading the piece in the newspaper – Oh, the power of the press!

Also we could have found a new photographer in Nick Bedford. Those of you who were at the **Sunday Lunch** last week may have noticed Nick snapping us folks munching away. I have included a couple of his efforts in the report.

Taking photos of dancing I find particularly difficult – don't chop the feet off; do they look like they're enjoying it (sadly not some times, although I expect they are really). Fast movement in low light conditions leads to a lot of blurry action too and unless you catch the action just right it just looks a bit of a mad scramble. So well done Nick – thanks, I just need a load more to update the website now – so get snapping please.

Ced the Ed

EVENTS

Annual Club Sunday Lunch • 8th March 2015

Sunday March 8th saw members of Staplers Folk Dance Club congregating at The Green Man, Stanford for their Annual Club Lunch. This was our first visit to The Green Man so we weren't sure quite what to expect. However, the favourable reviews in *TripAdvisor* proved to be well-founded. We were treated to some very good food, with seating in the newly-refurbished and extended bar area.

Convivial chat ebbed and flowed between courses in the warm and friendly atmosphere and I believe we all had a thoroughly enjoyable time. Our thanks go to Cecilia and everyone else who helped to organise such a successful event. All that remains to do now is keep practicing our dancing and eagerly await the next Staplers event!

This year, the lunch date coincided with Graham's 70th Birthday celebrations. After the meal, Graham was presented with a card and gift from the club members together with a superb cake made by Val and decorated by a fellow Church member. The Straw Boater and Waistcoat depicted on the cake were beautifully in keeping with the Staplers colours – a true work of art!

Rumours that the smoke that briefly filled the bar earlier in the proceedings was caused by there being so many candles on Graham's cake proved to be untrue. It was simply an unsuccessful attempt by one of the bar staff to light the open fire!

Graham generously shared the cake with those at the lunch and there was even enough left to share out at the club night the following evening.

Many Happy Returns Graham!

Lynn & Nick Bedford



Congratulations once again, Graham. If he eats the cake, that waistcoat will never fit!



Cake's what we need