

Inverness Highland Scottish Country Dance Ball 2008

As we approach next year's Ball on March 29th at the Sports Centre, Bught Park, Inverness I am pleased to report that everything is booked and we are waiting with great expectations for another excellent evening of friendship and good dance. Over the last ten years we have had excellent music from Colin Dewar but for 2008 we have gone for a change by asking Marian Anderson and her Band to play for us so another good night is in store.

All organisers of balls and dances will know organising such an event can be thwart with unforeseen problems and the 2006 was no exception. It was probably more difficult to cater for 360 dancers than at a normal dance or rally. Our problem was not the dance programme or music. As a committee of five we have to rely heavily on caterers and with five weeks to go our caterers decided that they didn't want to do it. However they recommended another caterer who, on face value fulfilled our requirements satisfactorily, but on the night nothing turned out as it should have done. Dinner should have taken 90 minutes, but it turned into a 140 minute fiasco. All you "organisers" beware! Catering has always been a problem but in 2004 we had it cracked only to fall apart in 2006. In view of this we have decided to supply light refreshments only during the interval, giving us more time on the dance floor as a bonus. By doing this we have been able to reduce the cost from £26 a ticket to £13.50. However this will be a formal ball and for all of you who haven't attended the Highland Ball before, there is no finer sight than watching over 100 men in Highland Dress dancing Reel of the 51st! One of the success stories of the ball has been the carefully selected programme of weel-kent dances, we aim to cater for all tastes! The 2008 programme is no exception and be they beginners or advanced dancers there are plenty of dances to enjoy. We hope to attract dancers who just love to dance be they social dancers or Scottish Country Dancers. All dances will be called for those of us who have short memories, where was I! In view of the popularity of our event we have limited the numbers in the past to 350 but now that we no longer require space for dinner we can extend the number to 400.

We can advise that Inverness Airport is much more accessible than 2006 and there are frequent flights by various airlines from most UK airports. If booked early enough there are excellent prices to be had through Ryanair, EasyJet, BMI, Eastern and B.A. There is also a regular direct service from Kings Cross leaving at 12 noon and getting to Inverness at 20.05pm. A relaxing way to see the changing landscape in comfort. The City of Inverness offers a wide range of accommodation and the Tourist Information Office will gladly advise.

On that note we look forward to welcoming new and old friends once again.

Rob Sargent, Chairman, Highland Scottish Country Dance Group