

# BRITISH ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF DANCING

## 113th ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Friday 17th- Sunday 19th June 2005, Bolton

I cannot believe that a year has gone by and that I am already writing the report on the 113th Annual Conference of the BATD. Held as last year at the De Vere Whites Hotel in the Reebok Stadium, Bolton, Conference was once again a resounding success with something for everyone to enjoy. Even the weather was in our favour - that is until Sunday when the thunderstorms that devastated the North of England hit!

Proceedings commenced on Friday in the Reebok Suite with the Executive Council meeting, closely followed by a short meeting with our North American Co-ordinators. After a short break, all District Secretaries, Chairpersons and Treasurers met to discuss their events and share information.

Friday evening was the first of the social events with members gathering in the Wanderers Suite for a pre-Conference casual get-together. This gave everyone the chance of catching up with old friends and meeting some new ones. A most enjoyable evening which set the tone for Conference.

Saturday morning dawned and all examiners met in the Wanderers Suite for a joint meeting. This was closely followed by the A.G.M., which was held in the Lion of Vienna Suite. Our President, Miss Diane Barron opened proceedings by welcoming all members to the 113th Annual Conference and introducing the Executive Council who had worked so hard for the members all through the year. After the President, Treasurer and General Secretary had delivered their reports, the Annual General Meeting got underway.

Miss Diane Barron, having worked extremely hard for the Association over the past four years, had decided not to stand for re-election this year. We therefore voted in a new President: Mr. Roy Sharpe. We were all very sad to see Miss Barron retire. She has been a great ambassador for the BATD and a wonderful President. We wish her, and Bryan Isaac, 'President's Consort', an enjoyable 'retirement' - though I am sure she will be working almost as hard in her new role as Immediate Past President! Congratulations to Mr. Roy Sharpe on becoming our new President. He too will make an excellent President and Association representative, along with his supportive 'First

Lady', Elaine. We look forward to working with them. I think we sometimes forget to appreciate the Presidents' partners who give so much help and support over their term of office.

During the Conference meeting Life Memberships Certificates were given to: Mrs. Carolyn Lyons, Miss Lena MacDonald, Mrs. Aurea Morrison, Miss Heather Fraser, Miss Hilda Cameron, Miss Julie Cannon, Mrs. Catherine Gray and Professor William Gray. Special Certificates for 50+ years were presented to Miss Irene Clark and Miss Jean Edwards, whose certificate was collected in her absence. A special presentation was made by the Highland Committee to Val Geddes, Highland Examiner and organiser of the London District Highland Festival for many, many years, with thanks and in appreciation of all the hard work she has carried out on behalf of the Highland Branch. Two long serving Association Examiners were retiring during 2005 and a special presentation was made to them: Miss Mary Madeley and Miss Barbara Woff. Our Examiners work extremely hard for the Association and our thanks must go to all of them for the time they devote to Association business.

Saturday evening arrived and it was time for the Annual Dinner Dance, once again held in the Premier Suite. Honoured Guests were piped to their seats and proceedings commenced with demonstrations from the 2004 Senior Scholarship Winners: Ballet - Sarah Fogerty (Scott Stevenson School), Modern Jazz - Claire Cook (Irene Clark School), Stage/Tap - Amy Cooper (Amersall School) and Highland - Jennifer Davidson (Stewart School) . They all performed beautifully and made a great start to the evening. After a sumptuous 113th Dinner, we were entertained by Chris and Nadine Judge and some of their students with "A Night to Remember" - and it certainly was! This is a show featuring two of the countries most sought after entertainers in a fast moving floor show aimed to satisfy all tastes. They took us on a musical journey from the 60's to present day. After some general dancing, and straight from 'Strictly Come Dancing' along came 'Strictly Anton and Erin' to entertain us with their Ballroom Cabaret, plus a few of Anton's little stories whilst Erin changed! They were given a very warm welcome. I certainly do not envy them having to dance on such a hot evening. During the evening the President awarded an Honorary membership of the BATD to Paul Harris in recognition of the work he has carried out for the BATD in producing the Club Latino syllabus and technique. Unexpected additional entertainment came late in the evening when the European Line Dance Champions took to the floor - dancers gradually formed a circle around

the centre of the dance floor just to watch, captivated by their dancing, their enthusiasm and energy. After another spell of general dancing, the evening all too soon came to a close.

Everyone was up bright and early on Sunday morning ready to participate in the day's lectures. Ballroom lectures were held in the Premiere Suite commencing with Roy Sharpe, ably assisted by Howard and Joanne Cookson, giving amendments to the Classical Sequence Syllabi plus Tarantella Tango and Stardust Saunter. A most enjoyable and informative lecture. Following this we welcomed Paul Harris for a Club Latino lecture. Paul is a leading choreographer in Film, Television and Theatre having choreographed stars such as Catherine Zeta Jones, Sean Connery and Charles Dance. His credits include 'To Kill a Mockingbird', 'The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe', 'Casualty' and 'A Touch of Frost', to name but a few. He was also a former Latin American Champion. Paul, who compiled the technique book for the BATD Club Latino, covered Merengue and Salsa syllabi and gave valuable information on how to teach these dances and construct suitable steps for the different standard of dancer. This lecture was particularly valuable to those teachers who have not yet started teaching the Club Latino syllabus. Club Latino is very versatile and the lecture was supported by teachers from other branches. It is always refreshing to have lectures which can be enjoyed by all and bring the branches together.

In the meantime the Platinum Suite was host to the Stage and Highland Branches for their lectures. Nadine McKenzie was first on the floor with Highland Choreography, closely followed by the Highland Forum for teachers. This was a very valuable session. Nadine was soon back on the floor with a lecture on Song and Dance. This lecture was enjoyed by all - the audience being used as the 'backing group', with a degree of success! Ilya Andreyev was welcomed for a Ballet class. Having trained as a professional dancer at the famous Moiseyev Academy of Dance in Moscow he then went on to perform as a troupe member and soloist with the Moiseyev Dance Company before joining 'Riverdance the Show' and touring for six years. Ilya was very well received by all. Final lecture in the Platinum Suite was the Jazz lecture by Adelle Maasz. A member of the BATD, R.A.D., and co-principal of the Elma Whyte Theatre School, Adelle has an impressive C.V., which includes dancing for many television shows as well being a presenter and choreographer. Adelle presented a very interesting Jazz routine that all the students mastered. This lecture was much appreciated by students and spectators alike.

The Stage Branch had an afternoon of lectures for Teachers only in the Hall of Fame Suite. Ilya Andreyev gave a Ballet class, followed by Mike Denman who lectured on Audition Technique. Mike has Film, Theatre and Television credits including such shows as: 'Thoroughly Modern Millie' and 'Saturday Night Fever' and 'Blue Peter'. Teachers were then introduced to the new Membership Ballet and Membership Stage syllabi. Whilst these lectures were taking place, the new Junior Highland Committee met in the Strix Room for a meeting.

The Premier Suite was again filled to capacity during Sunday afternoon for the Inventive Dance Competition. Compere and scrutineer for the event was Roy Sharpe, and hard working judges were: Lesley Marshall, Sue Webster, Graham Thompson, Pam Cragg and Richard McGilchrist, with non-voting Chairman being David Moffat. This years winners were: Worrall Trophy - June Day and Robin Flynn with Blairhall Swing; Chester Trophy -Debbie Long partnered by Janet McDonald with Ben's Waltz; President's Trophy -Michael and Angela Hayton with Catbells Cha Cha Cha. The floor was so full for the teaching of the winning dances that some were even dancing in the aisles!

Final event of the weekend was the President's Sequence Dance, also in the Premier Suite. Allan and Audrey Bainbridge compered the evening and dancing was to some lovely music provided by organist Cameron Lloyd. During the evening there was a demonstration of the winning Inventive Dances which everyone appreciated. This is a very popular event and is always extremely well attended. At 9p.m. the President's Chain of Office was transferred from Miss Diane Barron to our new President, Mr. Roy Sharpe. The end of one era and the start of another.

The 113th Annual Conference was over. A very big thank you must go to all involved in the organising of Conference, the President, Vice Presidents and Executive Council and especially the General Secretary and all in Head Office. We all very much appreciate your hard work on behalf of us, the members.

Another very successful event for THE BRITISH!

Report by: **Jan Williams**  
*Press Representative*