



Preserving, promoting and developing Wellington North's unique cultural resources to build a vibrant community and a prosperous economy.

CULTURAL MOMENT FOR MAY 25TH CELEBRATES SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCING

The St. Andrew's Country Scottish Dancers, pre Covid, met Tuesday mornings in, appropriately, St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Mount Forest. The dances performed do not include ones like the well-known Highland Fling which is a solo Scottish highland dance. Rather, the dances are the Scottish form of social dancing involving groups of couples tracing progressive patterns set to the music of Jigs, Reels, and Strathspey Reel (a Reel played at a slower tempo) which are Gaelic in tradition. Their history dates back to an 18th-century combination of English country dance formations with Scottish Highland music and steps. The Ceilidh (pronounced Kaylee) is a traditional Scottish or Irish social gathering involving dancing and Gaelic folk music either at a house party or community hall.



The St. Andrew's dancers began in Mount Forest in 2012 when Elizabeth Ghent formed the group. The dances learned are traditional ones and mainly from Scotland. They have provided demonstrations at Birmingham Lodge, Caressant Care, Music Days at St. Andrew's church on the lawn, and have danced at the Arthur Fall Fair for several years.

They have participated in several Wellington North Culture Days by having a Ceilidh at the church giving the attending public a chance to dance, sing, and enjoy some Scottish fare. There have also been some annual outings to locations such as Walter Falls and Kincardine.

Elizabeth and Alan Ghent also play the bagpipes and have entertained everyone at the annual St. Andrew's dinner in November. The Ghents, playing the bagpipes, have entertained the public at the Arthur cenotaph for 6 weeks during July and August for the past 5 or 6 years.

The dancing is a wonderful form of exercise, as not only does it get the body in motion, but it exercises the mind having to remember in which direction that body, especially the feet, will be moving.

Pre-Covid, there were 20 members, both female and male, who come to enjoy either the music, the exercise, the social aspect, and/or the fun. Whatever their reason, they all leave after having had a lot of laughter and a good time!



Submitted by Penny Renken, Wellington North Cultural Roundtable