

A Brief History of ' Aberdeen Strollers '

Aberdeen Veterans and ' Golden Oldies " Rugby had been organised in the 1960's by Ron Comber, Doug Georgeson and a group of fairly enthusiastic Senile Rugby Fanatics, playing local Village Teams and whoever else they could find and cajole to provide opposition! This group of sporty stalwarts developed into – 'Aberdeen Strollers ' who for many years, were the only Scottish Team attending the World and European Rugby Festivals.

The Strollers first World Festival, was in 1985 in London, when they were most ably captained by former Scottish Internationalist Scrum Half – Ian McCrae, who although now having " hung up his boots " made History, as the first replacement in the 5 Nations Championship (as it was then !) The Festival opened with the 5,500 participants parading Olympic Style around Twickenham, with the Strollers being led by one of the Queen Mother's Pipers! 1989, saw the first overseas venture to the Festival in Toronto, with pre Festival Matches in Ottawa and in Montreal where the Match finished in almost total darkness! Strollers signed up their first real ' overseas ' Player – Jeff Tone – who supplied plenty refreshments !!!!! and decided to trace his Family Roots at the following Festival in Dublin where he kept a local film developing shop in Business each day! 1993 saw the Strollers in Dublin, with the World's biggest Beer Tent!! - and in 1995, they attended the Festival in New Zealand, in the beautiful South Island City of Christchurch, after playing en route in Hong Kong.

In 1992, the first European Golden Oldies Rugby Festival was held in Denbosch (Holland and two years later, Club Stalwart – Dave McDonald was invited to the second Festival in Heidelberg by the then European President – Jeff Butterfield (England and British Lions Centre) to participate. Seeing the arrangements, Dave decided to Bid for a Festival. In 1996, the Festival was in Verona and in 1998, the Festival was held in Aberdeen, Scotland. In 1997, after a pre – Festival visit and Match in Vancouver Island with the whole Party's Luggage being lost and delayed for four days!! the Team returned to Vancouver for the Stroller's fifth World Golden Oldies Rugby Festival Aberdeen Strollers then participated in their sixth World Festival in Toulouse, with the only Person at all six, being Dave McDonald. In the heartland of French Rugby – Toulouse - as always, the Strollers met old friends and made new ones .. always ensuring the motto of the World Golden Oldies – ' *Fun, Friendship and Fraternity!*' linked with the " Toast of Bon Accord " ' *Happy to Meet, Sorry to Part, Happy to Meet Again '*

Following on from the most enjoyable Toulouse Festival, Aberdeen Strollers played Host to Festival Organiser - Andre Plantie's Oldies Team - Les Musquets sur Leze - in the first *Auld Alliance Golden Oldies Rugby Festival*, played at Rubislaw Playing Fields, Aberdeenthe venue for the 4th Festival.

Dave became the European Golden Oldies President in Split at the 6th Festival in 2002 and attended the 7th European Festival in Benidorm and Strollers were in attendance at the 8th Festival in Zurich in 2006. Strollers have participated in Festivals in Caernarfon (Venue for our 10th Festival) and recently organised a very successful Kronenbourg Viking Festival. They are just back from the 9th European Event in MADEIRA....and took part in the 17th World Festival in Edinburgh in September. Following the Festival, Strollers will be looking for regular Games..... Like many Teams, Aberdeen Strollers have had a drop in its numbers as the original Players get older....but things are hopefully getting better with newer, younger Players getting involved. If you fancy a Game, or wish more info, contact Dave on – 07866 910 865 or – mcgoldiego@hotmail.com