

SCOTTISH Country Dancer


rscds
Dance Scottish

The Members' Magazine of the RSCDS

No 27 October 2018



SPRING
FLING
GLASGOW

RSCDS EVENTS



AGM & Conference
Weekend



Summer School

89th AGM & CONFERENCE WEEKEND 2018

2 - 4 NOVEMBER
BELL'S SPORTS CENTRE, HAY ST, PERTH

- Teaching Conference: Friday, from 10am to 4:30pm
- Friday Night - Informal Dance: David Oswald and his Scottish Dance Band, 8pm - 11:30pm
- Friday Night Ceilidh: John Carmichael Ceilidh Band, 7:30pm - 10:30pm
- Saturday Class: Rachel Shankland with Adam Brady, 10:30am - 12 noon
- Nice n' Easy Dance: Saturday, Frank Thomson, 7pm - 9pm
- Saturday Night - Formal Ball: Jim Lindsay and his Scottish Dance Band, 8pm - 11:30pm
- Sunday Class: Peter Cass with Bill Ewan, 10:30am - 12 noon

Tickets available from
www.rscds.org/events

WINTER SCHOOL 2019

17 - 22 FEBRUARY
THE ATHOLL PALACE HOTEL,
PITLOCHRY
CO-ORDINATOR: PAT HOUGHTON

- Teachers: Pat Houghton, Graham Donald, Sue Porter and William Williamson
- Musicians: Muriel Johnstone, Jim Lindsay, Marian Anderson and Ian Robertson

Contact moira.thomson@rscds.org
for more details or book online at
www.rscds.org/events

SPRING FLING 2019

19 - 21 APRIL
PARIS, FRANCE

Details of teachers, musicians and classes
will be posted on the Paris Spring Fling
website as soon as available:
www.springfling.rscdsparis.fr



SUMMER SCHOOL 2019

SUNDAY 14 JULY - SUNDAY 11 AUGUST
UNIVERSITY HALL, ST ANDREWS
DIRECTOR: JIM STOTT

- Attend as a resident or non-resident for any one or two weeks of the four
- Morning classes at all levels and optional afternoon classes. Social dancing every evening, with a ceilidh one evening each week
- Units 2 and 3 will take place in weeks 1 and 2
- Unit 5 will take place in weeks 3 and 4
- The Musicians' Course and Young Dancers' Week will take place in week 3
- The Class Musicians' Course will take place in week 4
- DAA will be offered during several weeks depending upon demand

All classes and courses are subject to demand.

Online booking will open in November 2018. For further information go to:
www.rscds.org/events

The RSCDS 2019 Calendar: *The Archive Edition*

Enjoy a collection of some of our favourite images and memories from the RSCDS Archive, celebrating the Society's rich heritage. Get your copy online at
www.rscds.org/shop

*Member's price



Editorial

Welcome to your Autumn magazine. Although most of us north of the Equator have had a break for the summer, there has still been a tremendous amount of dance activity. Events such as our own Summer School, TAC Summer School, Pinewoods, and Australian Winter School are testament to the energy and vitality of the RSCDS. In June Annie and I welcomed 80 dancers from all over the world to Lews Castle in Stornoway in the Outer Hebrides for a magical weekend of dance with Gary Coull, Mo Rutherford and Neil Copland. I kept thinking that if it weren't for the RSCDS, this would never have happened – and the same goes for almost all Scottish country dancing activity worldwide.

Our magazine is the only direct communication we have with all members. It is a newsletter, a source of information, a way of educating members about country dance and music history, and a forum for members' views, as well as a good read! The Editorial Board was delighted by the overwhelmingly positive response to the recent magazine survey. Our magazine is also partly archival – a snapshot of the RSCDS twice a year – for posterity, taking its place with past Bulletins, Executive Council Reports etc in the Society Archive as a resource for future research. As a firm believer in the power of the printed word, I believe the magazine is an excellent branch recruiting tool, something concrete to hand to beginners and to friends and family.

As part of my research for the article on our first five years, I looked at how we had been reported in the Scottish Press in the 1920s. The surprising answer was – a lot! Branch and Society AGMs were reported; there was a tremendous amount of goodwill towards what the SCDS was trying to achieve for Scottish culture and identity. It was seen as something positive and noble. The most striking aspect of the press reports was their coverage of the annual Music Festivals where, more often than not, Jean Milligan was the adjudicator for the country dance sections. In Scotland, to this day, the adjudicator does not only address his or her remarks to the children competing but to their parents, teachers, and the local community. This gave Miss Milligan a captive audience of thousands each year to whom she could 'sell' the benefits of country dancing, which she did – with a vengeance!

There are few people better qualified to speak about all the different forms of dancing in Scotland than Lorn Macintyre of St Andrews: country, ceilidh, ballroom and reeling. It was a great privilege to interview him for this issue. Lorn makes a most telling point about our growing repertoire of dances. He regrets that the great dances of the past are now rarely danced today. His comment that this is a 'way of discarding' them is a very sobering thought.

One of the best things about being editor is reading the letters which come in from members and this issue has a fair number, covering a wide range of issues, some small, some serious. As ever, keep them coming!

Jimmie Hill, Edinburgh

Cover: Young dancers at Spring Fling, Glasgow
Photographs on pp 11, 14, 15, 18 and 25 courtesy of
Fotosearch.co.uk

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The next issue of *Scottish Country Dancer* will be published in April 2019. Please refer to *Notes for Contributors* on the website. Send materials for inclusion to the editor: mag.editor@rscds.org no later than 31 January 2019.

Please send enquiries about advertising to Cécile Hascoët:
mag.advertising@rscds.org

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News from Coates Crescent

Branch Awards

These awards are presented by branches for outstanding service to the branch or to Scottish country dancing in the area of the branch. Listed below are the recipients of Branch Awards since October 2017 – congratulations to you all!

Atlanta	Ronald and Barbara Gemmell
Atlanta	Rebecca Sager
Banffshire	Lindsay Gauld
Birmingham	Elizabeth Cooper
Boston	Peter Tandy
Brighton	Chris and Lee Pratt
Bristol	Barbara Savill
Bristol	Cheryl Ayers
Castle Douglas	Margaret Binks
Castle Douglas	Sylvia Baxter
Cornwall	Ruth Thornton
Edinburgh	Iain T. MacPhail
Hamilton, Ontario	John Walton
Hunter Valley	Helen Taylor
International	Margaret Lambourne
International	Pia Walker
London	Jeremy Hill
Melbourne and District	Uilleann and Bev Tait
Newcastle and District	Gillian Stewart
Newcastle and District	Michael Barlow
Northern Virginia	Maria Ward
Ottawa	Eileen Black
Oxfordshire	Patricia Rawlings
Roxburgh, Selkirk and Peebles	Margaret Pritchard
Roxburgh, Selkirk and Peebles	Marjorie Ballantyne
Sheffield	Marion Pearson
Sydney	Pamela Jehan
Sydney	Ronald Pearce
Tokai	Jim Rae
Vancouver	Simon Scott

Elections to Management Posts

Nominees for this year's elections are listed below. Their profiles are available on the RSCDS website. The results will be announced at the AGM on 3 November.

Management Board (no election necessary)

Lorna Ogilvie (Chair Elect)
Roy Bain, Gary Coull

Education and Training (Convenor Elect plus 3 places)

Sue Ronald (Convenor Elect)
Anne Taylor (Convenor Elect)
Muriel Bone, Elaine Brunken, Ute Hoppmann-Lacour, Deb Lees,
Sue Porter, Anne Robertson

Membership Services (no election necessary)

Alan Ross

Youth Services (no election necessary)

Joana Stausberg (Convenor)
Aymeric Fromherz, Moira Korus

Motion to AGM 2018

Delegates at the AGM will vote on the following motion:

The Management Board proposes that for the year from 1st July 2019, the basic full annual subscription shall be maintained at £20 and that other membership subscriptions will be based pro-rata on this amount.

RSCDS Staffing

While the Board considers options for recruiting a new Executive Officer, it has appointed Sandra Parish as temporary Office Manager. As a consequence, she has temporarily relinquished some of her duties as Finance Manager. We are grateful to Sandra for stepping up into this new role, and we wish her every success.

Michael Greenwood has moved to Australia and he is working remotely in his role as Digital Marketing Communications Officer until the end of the year. Thank you to Mike for his dedication to the RSCDS and we send our best wishes to him for the future.

Dance Revisions

An additional erratum has surfaced in the combined edition of Books 31-38: *The Argyll Ludging* (p.65): In Fig. 3, 3rd couple should be on own sides of the dance.

Funding

We would like to remind members that funds are available from the Jean Milligan Memorial Fund to support initiatives, innovation, creativity and outreach activities. Submissions are accepted throughout the year. Guidelines and application forms can be found on the RSCDS website.

RSCDS Website

Over the last two years we have been hard at work redesigning our website, and our new online home will be ready for launch before the end of the year. It comes with increased functionality, more diverse content and a wealth of new features, including improved search and event-booking functionality, all of which are outlined in various walkthrough documents and video tutorials in the Blog section of the new website. Guidance is also available from the RSCDS office. We are very grateful to The Website Working Group for their commitment to the project, and to all the members who have tested the website during its development and provided much valuable feedback. If you have any comments on the new website please contact Mike Greenwood: mike.greenwood@rscds.org

Communication Volunteer

We are looking for a volunteer to help with our on-line communication. Our mission in the Business Plan is 'To grow a vibrant worldwide community of Scottish dance and music'. At present, our website and social media do not reflect the scale and breadth of Scottish dance activity around the world. Many major RSCDS events do not get a mention. We need someone with knowledge of the SCD scene and experience of the RSCDS to direct our staff to current events and stories that show Scottish dance and music at their best. You would have to make a regular commitment of no more than an hour a week. The job is on-line and you can be based anywhere, but you must be connected to the global RSCDS network. If you are interested, drop a short email explaining why you fit this position to mike.greenwood@rscds.org

Correction

Unfortunately, an incorrect caption appeared on page 16 of the previous issue. The young dancers were from North Vancouver's children's class, taught by Pat Johnson and not Roxburgh, Selkirk and Peebles Branch. Our apologies to both branches and to the children for this mistake and the embarrassment it caused.

Magazine Survey



Andrew Kellett

Chairman Elect, Andrew Kellett, analyses the responses to the survey about magazine distribution.

Thank you to the 100 branches and 1600 individual members who responded to our on-line survey about *Scottish Country Dancer*. One purpose of the survey was to gauge how many of you would prefer to receive the magazine in electronic format. About 20% of respondents would welcome such an innovation. Unsurprisingly the majority liked the physical feel of

the magazine as it is, so let me assure you that *Scottish Country Dancer* will remain a hard copy publication. However, in future it will be possible to receive the magazine electronically if you would prefer it that way.

If you would like to receive the magazine electronically, please login to the My RSCDS area on the RSCDS website, go to your member details page, and click the box under 'Magazine' titled 'Electronic'.

For the spring edition of the magazine you will then receive a PDF version of the magazine sent to your email inbox. If you do not click this box, you will continue to receive a paper copy of the magazine delivered to your door. Please note that in order to receive an electronic copy your email address must be up to date.

The survey also revealed how much members appreciate the magazine. 94% like it, as opposed to 2% who do not. About half

the respondents keep back copies of the magazine for reference, and a similar number share the magazine with family, friends and fellow dancers. It was very pleasing to note the number of members who enjoy 'everything about the magazine', and read it 'from cover to cover'. Only a very small number do not read it.

What members seem to value most about the magazine is the connectivity to the Scottish dance community. There were many comments about 'staying in touch' and 'keeping up to date' from dancers and former dancers alike. Information and ideas from other branches are particularly popular, more so than reports from Coates Crescent and the Committees, though members do like the contact with Scotland. This demonstrates the success of *Scottish Country Dancer* in promoting member-to-member and branch-to-branch communication. The magazine is not primarily about top-down messaging.

Readers appreciate the letters column and the articles on history, technique and the personalities who have helped to shape Scottish dancing; plus the hints and tips on recruiting new members and devising dance programmes. Some of you would like to see more history and research in the magazine, and some check 'who has died', but most want the focus to be on 'what is happening now'. For many respondents the photographs are more important than the words. 'Recognising people I know' and pictures of people, especially young people, dancing give members a lot of pleasure.

The survey was nothing more than a snapshot, but it was gratifying to learn that members do value the magazine. The editor and his team put a tremendous effort into each issue, and it is heartening to know that it is worthwhile. On behalf of RSCDS members everywhere, a big 'thank you' to the Editorial Board.



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New Zealand Summer School 2019 - 2020

Cambridge, New Zealand

28 December 2019 - 5 January 2020

Make your plans now to escape the northern winter for a summer of dancing and holidays!



For further information on classes, teachers, accommodation, and on holiday destinations and activities in the area, see:

ss2019.dancescottish.org.nz

Organiser - Antanas Procuta

ss2019@dancescottish.org.nz



From the Chairman



Helen Russell

This is my final column as Chairman. The past two years have flown by. Two years is a short time in which to try to implement major projects. Thanks to the hard work of the staff at Coates Crescent, the members of the Board, the committees

and many other volunteers, the building of the new website and the new Core Teaching Qualification have taken shape. The new links made with education departments at university level are promising, and will allow the RSCDS to once again offer teacher training in SCD to some student teachers. Many people are already working on materials and various routes to bring SCD back into schools. The integration of children and young people into St Andrews Summer School has been wonderful to watch. Of all the events I have attended in the last few years, the most engaging were where children have been dancing. Their enthusiasm, the expression on their faces and their response to the music never fails to lift my spirits.

It has been a great privilege to attend so many branch anniversary celebrations and other special events. Going to St Andrews Summer School, Spring Fringe and other residential courses has allowed me to talk to many dancers from different places, yet we all share the same passion for traditional Scottish dance. There are fascinating stories about how dancers first discovered Scottish country dancing, many through pure chance, which leads me to conclude that we do not market ourselves effectively enough. If we are to maintain the RSCDS past its centenary, our main objective has to be to persuade more people to dance and to join the RSCDS, and marketing is very important in achieving this. Progress will come, not just through marketing initiatives from the Management Board, but at all levels in the Society. Having said that, I have been impressed by the ingenuity and creativity of branches. A few branches have strategic plans for increasing membership. This is great, as it encourages 'joined up thinking', not just sporadic unconnected events. At least one branch sets money aside for outreach; this money funds wider community events and gives opportunities for recruitment. Some branches use social media most effectively to advertise what they offer. One group has supported their beginners by posting film clips of basic steps and formations on line. Why not advertise the content of a beginners' course on social media with film clips? 'By the end of the course you will be able to...' or is that just my background as a teacher kicking in? Marketing relies on gathering information and evidence. With convincing evidence, we could even influence health care. Sometimes I fantasise that family doctors, as well as prescribing rehabilitation in a gym, prescribe SCD as preventative medicine. There are quite a few case studies, usually categorised as anecdotal evidence, showing the benefits of SCD, but there is a need for more soundly based research. What existing research does tell us is that we are a social species. To thrive and develop, to maintain well-being and balance in our lives, we need social contact and social activities. We all know that SCD is the ideal social activity; we just need to convince more people. Producing more evidence of the benefits of SCD can only help in promoting this very special tradition.

Membership Services Committee



Anselm Lingnau, Convenor

As I write this, Summer School is just over and by the time you are reading this edition of the magazine, one of the greater projects the Society has recently undertaken – and one that Membership Services has been intimately involved in

– will (hopefully) have come to fruition. Our new website will be online and open for business! In addition to technical advice, we have provided ideas on how the site should be structured, and a dedicated working group, overseen by MSC, has produced content for the new site, in particular for the new explanatory sections about dancing. Well done, all of you!

I am also happy to report that *Book 52* was very well received at Summer School, as was its accompanying CD recorded by Jim Lindsay and his band. If you haven't ordered a copy of the book (on paper or as a PDF file) or the CD from the RSCDS shop, there's still time – and remember that it should make a great Christmas present for your dancing friends or family. The CD is also available for download from the usual sources.

Our survey of branches for suggestions for the 2019 book of popular dances has produced interesting results and we're looking forward to being able to make a selection by the time you're reading this. This will also determine, at least in part, the content of the CD we will be publishing next year.

There's been some movement (no pun intended) on the *Index to Formations and Movements* and we hope to finally finish this long-awaited project. I'm keeping my fingers crossed for early copies to be available, at least for inspection, at the Conference Weekend, but no guarantees. Another long-standing project, the second volume of dances from the Imperial Books and leaflets, should be ready in time for Winter School 2019.

The Society's new website will make it a lot easier for us to add content – not just written material but also audiovisual media – and we're looking forward to making more use of this new ability. This means that the focus of our Committee's activities may shift, at least to a degree, from producing printed books to producing content for the website, in particular (in cooperation with the Society's Music Director) in support of musicians but also dancers and teachers. The new website will have much more extensive information on the 'how' of Scottish country dancing, and we're hoping it will be a resource that we (and you) can use to make more people aware of how enjoyable SCD can be, and how the Society supports Scottish dancers throughout the world.

This is the last column I'm writing in my capacity as Convenor of Membership Services before I hand over the reins to Peter Knapman at this year's AGM in November. It has been a great pleasure for me to serve the Society, and I'd like to thank all the various committee members over the years for their work and many fruitful and passionate discussions in person and by e-mail, HQ staff for their unflinching support, and everyone who got in touch with us, over the Internet or otherwise, with questions, ideas, constructive criticism and inspiration. It's been a great time!

Education & Training Committee



Malcolm Brown, Convenor

We currently have a total of 21 examiners, 11 of whom live overseas, with five in Australia / New Zealand and six in North America. While attending the 60th Anniversary school of the Teacher's Association of Canada (TAC)

in Minneapolis I managed to meet and talk with the examiner who is based in Seattle, and hold an afternoon meeting with the other four based in the USA who were attending the school. This was an opportunity to update them regarding the new system, and to listen to any suggestions they had regarding the current system. It turned out to be such a very productive and useful meeting that it is intended to hold a similar meeting over the Internet with the examiners based in the Southern hemisphere, and something similar for UK-based examiners.

The last Unit 2 exams using the old syllabus took place in Glasgow in June. July marked the introduction of the revised syllabus, with exams taking place both at the TAC school and at Summer School in St Andrews. It was encouraging that the Unit 5 course at St Andrews had so many candidates that it was decided to run it as two classes, with two separate tutors, and it was very pleasing that all of the candidates at Summer School were successful.

We have introduced a new system for appointing examiners, which allows people to apply at any time. Applications will be considered by a small panel (not necessarily composed of the same people), and will take into consideration all the information regarding past experience that the applicant considers relevant.

The new website should have been launched by the time you are reading this, and a great deal of effort has gone into making the E&T pages easily understood and accessible. It is hoped that once the website is up and running it can be developed to enable the various E&T tracking systems to be put on-line and integrated with the new database.

While at TAC we discussed their plans for next year's school, when there will not be exam classes. We agreed to develop a new training course for assessors of the Dancing Achievement Award (DAA), and to run the course at the School, probably during the first weekend, which is when the teachers attend. It is hoped that the course can be run in other suitable locations, wherever sufficient teachers gather together to make such a course feasible.

Work on the new teacher training system and qualification is still ongoing. It was apparent by mid-year that the two groups working on the Syllabus and the Training of Tutors had taken things as far as they could, working separately. As the two requirements were so intertwined it was decided to take the work forward with a smaller group who are expected to have a first draft of both by the year end. What was initially described as a Teaching Guide is now dependent to a large extent on the new Website, as it is now planned to use it to store the more detailed content and as a means of making it available.

Youth Services Committee



Anne McArthur, Convenor

As I come to the end of my time as Convenor, I reflect on our work over the last three years. Spring Fling is now a well-established event in the RSCDS calendar. Each year has built on the previous, so thanks go to every local committee who

has ensured that these landmark events have grown to the success we now expect. We all look forward to Spring Fling 2019 in Paris. Who wouldn't want to spend Easter weekend in the city of love? By the time you read this, the booking will be open so check it out on www.springfling.rscdsparis.fr

Plans are advanced for 2020 and 2021. We dream of two Spring Flings in 2020, one in Europe and one in America. In 2023, our 100th anniversary, it would be amazing to have one on each continent. Watch this space.

Our new venture in 2018, a Virtual Festival, has attracted lots of interest from around the world. Andrew Kellet, Rebecca Head from Australia, and Jamie Berg from Norway have agreed to judge the entries on Saturday 26 October. The entries will be on our YouTube channel for all to see. The winner(s) will be announced during the Conference Weekend in Perth at the beginning of November. I would like to thank all who took the time to join with us in this venture.

Junior Summer School, now in its third year, went well thanks to Marilyn Watson and Joana Stausberg. Although our numbers were down, we saw many of last year's 11-year-olds moving up to the 12-18 year-old class. We must have done something right. This year's group had a heavy dance programme. They prepared three dances for Grade 1 Medal Test, a dance from *Book 52* filmed for YouTube and of course a performance dance for the Ceilidh. Each year, Marilyn has to get a routine that will wow the audience. I think we did it. Thanks go to Marilyn and the dancers who gave up some of their games time for extra practices. Thanks also go to Bill Ewen for playing some jaunty hornpipe music. The music makes the difference between a good performance and an awesome one.

Looking forward, Youth will consider the establishment of a family friendly event and a template for holding a St Andrews event. Global Youth Week in 2019 will be in October. I wish to thank the members of the Youth Services Committee over the last three years. I have had the opportunity to work with some amazing people whom I would like now to call my friends.



The 'youth, technically challenging class' in the Younger Hall

From around the World

Please note that, starting with the Spring Issue 2019, all branches and affiliated groups are invited to send in news of their activities, especially innovations and successes direct to Caroline Brockbank. Maximum 200 words caroline@ceilidhkids.com

Europe

Correspondent: Margaret Lambourne

margaret.lambourne@ziggo.nl

Following last year's big weekend in Spa, **Brussels Dance Scottish** went for a more low-key event on 21 April. It was held at a new venue for the group in Rhode-St-Genese, on the outskirts of Brussels, not far from Waterloo, site of the famous battleground. The setting was an old farmhouse surrounded by green fields on a beautiful spring day. The guest teacher, Pia Walker, managed to get the participants of all levels dancing together really well and with increasingly challenging dances. The guest musicians for the evening dance – Nicol McLaren on accordion and Graham Berry on keyboard – made sure the momentum which had gathered in the day was kept up right to the end.

It was a pleasure to see so many familiar faces at the **Utrecht Summer Ball** on 26 May, all raring to get going under Margaret Lambourne's tender ministrations. By the end of the afternoon, we had warmed up in more ways than one. In the evening, the hall filled with even more dancers and we were away for an evening of great dances, some new, some familiar and all fun. *The Big Mac* was the highlight of the evening and all went away exhausted and satisfied. A heartfelt thank you to the Swilcan for the Workshop and Ball.

Fiona Grant taught the **Luxembourg Weekend** on 15 - 17 June, with musician Ian Robertson, joined by fiddler Rosie for the evening dance. The morning session was for beginners and the afternoon for intermediate and advanced. The evening dance was great fun with great music. On the Friday evening there was an enjoyable easy dance using CDs. The weekend finished on Sunday with the traditional barbecue.

Every Autumn **Göteborg Branch** arranges a Saturday Workshop. We always try to finish with a fun dance, when brains are exhausted and feet can't execute intricate sequences any more. Last autumn, the dancers from Göteborg and Copenhagen were asked to bring along a hat of any kind, and scarves. The workshop ended with *The Melbourne Cup*, devised by Cathy McLeod, RSCDS South Queensland, for the horse race which is important to

the whole Australian nation. The dancers were very keen to exhibit their various hats. Plastic champagne glasses were provided and the dancers danced *The Melbourne Cup* with great zeal, taking every chance to make the dance as hilarious as possible.

In **Russia** winter promises to be warm and friendly in Siberia again in 2019, as after the weekend taught by Andrew Nolan this year, next year promises Jim Stott's workshop. He is travelling to Novosibirsk via Saint Petersburg and Moscow and will teach three weekends at different venues in February. The streaming of the Newcastle Festival in February allowed all Russian dancers to follow not only the successful performance of the Russian team, but also the other displays and events. That inspired one club to organize a local festival in the Urals region with six participating teams of adults and two of children. We look forward to the 2019 festivals in Newcastle and Kazan, part of the Moscow Branch Spring School. A new source of information for Russian dancers was launched this year. The *Russian SCD Newsletter*, now in its third issue, provides information, articles, interviews and reports as well as *Dance of the Issue* section – a recently devised dance.

Canada East

Correspondent: Elaine Hoag

elaine.hoag@gmail.com

In April **Montreal Branch** members, Holly Boyd and Don Nemiroff, were presented with awards from the Quebec Thistle Council in recognition of their many years of dedication to Scottish country dancing. To mark the 60th anniversary of the Branch, Holly Boyd coordinated the production of a book of dances devised by and for Montreal Branch members. The book is accompanied by a CD entitled *Encore une Foix* with music by Montreal musicians Laura Risk (fiddle) and Nick Williams (keyboard). The Spring Tea dance provided the perfect occasion to enjoy Laura and Nick's music 'live' and to enjoy an anniversary cake featuring a design devised by Montreal dancer Angela Yeo-West. The same design appears on the cover of the new dance book.

April also featured Tartan Day celebrations across Canada. On April 7, members of the **Toronto Association** danced at historic Gibson House, the 19th century residence



Holly and Beth with the amazing cake!

of Scottish immigrant, land surveyor, farmer, politician and rebel David Gibson. The following week, **Ottawa Branch** and the **Ardbrae Dancers of Ottawa** honoured the tartan, marching with the Sons of Scotland Pipe Band from Confederation Square to Parliament Hill, where Scottish country dances were performed alongside Highland dances.

USA East Coast

Correspondent: Eilean Yates

edgyates@gmail.com

Pinewoods Camp, located near Plymouth, Massachusetts, serves the traditional dance and music communities during the summer months. This rustic magical camp is situated in a forest between two ponds with open air dance venues and cozy cabins. Each year Boston Branch offers two sessions of SCD at Pinewoods. So what brings people to come to Pinewoods? You might want to try it in 2019 after reading the views of some 2018 participants:

A new dancer: 'I feel like I found another family, and if I happen to meet these dancers anywhere else I will be welcomed as kin. The feeling is we are here to have fun, and we do it through dancing.'

A first time musician on staff: Pinewoods is made up of people from all walks of life, and when they come here the outside world is forgotten. It is something they hold sacred and is left untouched by modern life. I am revitalized and inspired by everyone's passion.

A long-time local participant: *The Pinewoods experience is Scottish immersion, intensity, the teachers, the music, the surroundings and the fellowship.*

A teacher: *Walking on paths through the woods to teach in open air dance pavilions, looking out to pine trees, working with top class musicians, and cooling off after class in the freshwater ponds are all part of the magic of Pinewoods.*

Northern Virginia Branch presented dedicated teacher, Maria Ward, with the Branch Award during its annual Burns Night Dance. For over 30 years, Maria has worked tirelessly with grace and good humor to make the Branch and its events successful – even when she has been exhausted, ill, or busy with other commitments. She has been a constant welcoming, smiling, and encouraging face for newcomers. As a teacher, she emphasizes the fun and social aspects of country dancing, making it less intimidating for everyone. Maria prefers to work quietly behind the scenes, but she makes sure things get done!

The Midwest Scottish Weekend was held for the second time in Beaver Dam, Wisconsin, in June. The drive through the lovely Wisconsin countryside made a relaxing approach to the busy and invigorating weekend. Dancers from Ohio, Iowa, Illinois, Wisconsin, and other states experienced outstanding teaching and music. The incomparable Tim Wilson of San Francisco taught, rapped, sang, entertained, and was delightful in every way. Mady Newfield, our local teacher, taught a 'dancing with the whole body' class that was very well received. Reel of Seven musicians Andy Imbrie and Deby Benton Grosjean grooved along the entire weekend. These tireless musicians kept our feet moving and our spirits high throughout every minute. A music workshop included non-dancers from more than 40 miles away who came to learn Scottish styling from Andy and Deby. The post-Ball ceilidh included poetry, song, a hilarious counting game, and jam sessions by a variety of talented attendees, not just the hired musicians! Many said this was the best year ever.

North America West Coast

Correspondent: Roberta Gotfried
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The **Vernon (BC Canada) Scottish Country Dancers** held a very successful workshop and ceilidh in April in Paddlewheel Park Hall, on the waterfront of Okanagan Lake. This is the 22nd annual workshop for the associated group. They are grateful to

the Jean Milligan Memorial Fund and the RSCDS for assistance in covering the costs of the workshop, which was taught by Bob Anderson, with music by Mary Ross on the accordion, both of Victoria, BC.

The 'best ever' **Catalina Workshop and Weekend** was held by the four Southern California branches in May. The fabulous workshop teachers were local teacher Marjorie MacLaughlin, and Antoine Rousseau from Paris, and the wonderful musicians were Andy Imbrie (piano) and Judy and Ian Nicolson (fiddle and accordion). The best ever Catalina ceilidh kicked off the weekend after a home-cooked Mexican dinner on Friday evening. One of the highlights at Catalina is the formal ball in the 'casino', a circular art deco ballroom, overlooking the Pacific. This year many dancers were inspired by the 20s theme, dressed in flapper outfits, with men sporting top hats. Dancers were grateful for the cool ocean breezes during classes and our grand march through town, led by piper John Cahill. The Catalina workshop and weekend happens every few years. Stay tuned!

Youth Weekend West was organized by young dancers from Santa Rosa and Petaluma, California and held in Santa Rosa, California, in May, and was an 'awesome success'. Teachers Linda Henderson and Marjorie MacLaughlin challenged the dancers with interesting traditional and new dances. And what a slate of musicians who played for evenings and classes: Annie Turano, Gary Thomas, Ian Davoren, Jared Bailey, Joseph Vasser, Lisa Doyle, Raphaella Brown, William McTaggart, and Zane Luper! The weekend closes on Sunday with a rousing *Petronella*, as energetic as the dancing at the Friday opening dance. Wherever you live in North America, encourage your young dancers to attend this fabulous weekend next year – there is nothing like it!

Japan

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Tokyo Branch invited David Queen for a Weekend School in Nikko in May with musician, Hiroko Kokai. David taught his classes energetically; about 70 dancers concentrated hard, and enjoyed his good-humoured teaching. On the afternoon of the second day, David played his fiddle, and gave a talk about himself, his family and his friends. It was a marvellous weekend.

The Tokyo Scottish Bluebell Club, one of the groups in Tokai Branch, gave a dancing performance, 'Bluebell On Stage' as a celebration of their 35th anniversary in June.

The ticket applications greatly exceeded the seating capacity. The story this time was of a father and daughter's encounter with Scottish dance and music while travelling in Scotland. All dances, country, highland and step dances were performed by Bluebell members. Dances derived from the place of each scene were chosen, such as *The Twenty-First of September* in Inverness. Music was performed by Bluebell musicians active on the world stage: piano, fiddle, bagpipe and singer. They also gave a lecture on Scottish music. The travellers started by enjoying the ball at the Edinburgh Assembly Rooms, then the demonstrations at St Andrews' Younger Hall. They learned from a dancing master in his period costume in Blair Castle, were excited by a highland dance competition at the Braemar Gathering, visited Queen Victoria, met Prince Charlie and Flora MacDonald in Inverness and Skye in 1745-46; and danced with Miss Milligan and Mrs Stewart in Glasgow in 1923. In Alloway, the daughter performed a step dance to a song by Robert Burns and watched the Haggis ceremony. Lastly, they enjoyed the highland and country dance displays at the Edinburgh Military Tattoo.

Tremendous applause was given by the audience including those new to Scottish culture. For *Auld Lang Syne*, performers and audience joined hands and sang together.

The Bluebell Ball on July 1 started with a Grand March led by pipers. For the last 35 years, the final dance has been *The Eightsome Reel*. This day was no exception, and many excited cheers reverberated around the hall.



The 'Bluebell on Stage' dancers



South Africa

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Pretoria Branch continues to hold monthly socials. The programme for these fun evenings is a mix of RSCDS dances and popular locally devised dances such as *City of Christchurch* and *Road to McGregor*. In February dancers participated in the fourth Knysna Celtic Festival. We shared the joy of dancing in the Ceilidh on the Friday evening, as well as during the Highland gathering on Saturday, with informal sessions and a display during the lunch break. As soon as we started to dance *The First Rain of Spring* it started to rain.

Cape Town Branch supported a fund-raising initiative of 'Christine and The Kilts' with a short display during a concert at the Artscape Theatre in March. The concert billed as 'Koeksusters and Kilts' provided an opportunity to showcase Scottish country dancing to a different audience.

Dancers and members, primarily from the **Fish Hoek Club**, joined the Girl Guides Cape West at a fun family event in April. They worked to break a Guinness World Record by stringing together over 120,000 plastic bottle tops, which were then given to Operation Smile to raise funds for cleft lip and palate operations. One of the two dances chosen for our display was *Mrs Stewart of Fish Hoek* which provided an opportunity to explain and celebrate the link between Scottish country dancing and the Girl Guides. The Guides, Brownies, Rangers and their families were invited to join us for some easy dances.

The Bergvliet Scottish Country Dance Club celebrated its milestone 60th Birthday in style, by hosting a Ball in Kelvin Grove's Ballroom on 9 June. This happy occasion included a full programme of dancing to music provided by the recently formed Cape Town Scottish Dance Band, led by accordionist Leon Oosthuizen. (Leon has just returned from attending the Musician's Course at Summer School.) In addition to the dancing and meal there was a Highland dancing display and young dancers from Elgin gave a display of what they have been learning in their Scottish country dance class with a local take on *The Flying Scotsman* and *The Radical Road*.

Australia

Correspondent: Caroline Donald

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The **43rd Australian Winter School** was a great success and is reported on page 14.

Tasmania held its first DAA course in June with wonderful results. Taught by Sally Ord, five candidates improved their dancing skills, with three distinctions being awarded. It is an excellent way to reward dancers for their achievements. Examiners Morag Napier and Anne Kennedy from Sydney stayed on and taught the Hobart general class the following evening.

Scots on The Rocks was delighted to give dancers from Sydney, Newcastle and Canberra an opportunity to be taught by Chairman, Helen Russell, in May. The attendance was very encouraging. Helen's 'Controlled Abandon' workshop focussed on phrasing, covering, engaging with your

partner and controlling the 'extremities'! Music provided by Iain McKenzie was, as always, a great way to give the dancers extra lift.

Helen also met members of **Sydney and Hunter Valley Branches** at a question-and-answer session. Members had submitted a variety of questions, which she answered with an amazing amount of detail, giving us lots of wonderful ideas for the future. For example, some branches have taught dancing in the military as physical training and run ceilidhs as part of mess dinners. Moscow contacted their local British Embassy to offer displays, ceilidhs and dance classes. People were attracted by local dance classes after school pick up or at weekends, with activities to occupy or include the kids. Soon to be available is the 'Ceilidh in a box' aimed at schools, or other organisations, to do their own fund-raising by holding a ceilidh.



Musicians Jared Bailey, Ian Davoren, Zane Luper, and Raphaella Brown playing for the combined Sunday morning class at Youth Weekend West.

44th Australian Winter School 7th-13th July, 2019



The RSCDS Melbourne & District Branch Inc extends a warm invitation to all dancers to meet at University College, University of Melbourne, Parkville, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia for a fun filled week of Scottish Country Dancing with great teachers and musicians. Further details can be obtained from:

Jo Reed (Secretary)
familyreed@bigpond.com

Christine Freeman (Convenor)
chrisfree@optusnet.com.au

Website: melbourne2019ws.com

INTERVIEW

Lorn Macintyre



Lorn outside his house 'Tobermory'



Dunstaffnage Castle near Oban

If you have ever attended Summer School, you will probably know Lorn and Mary Macintyre, well-known country dancers from St Andrews. Lorn studied at Stirling University, then did a PhD on Sir Walter Scott. He worked as a freelance writer and journalist and spent years in BBC Scotland as a senior researcher and scriptwriter in television. He is also a distinguished novelist, short story writer and poet. All his life Lorn has been steeped in Scottish culture. In this interview with editor Jimmie Hill, Lorn tells of his experience of all forms of dancing in Scotland: ceilidh, reeling, country and ballroom dancing. There are few dancers today with his wide perspective.

You are a Highlander, Lorn. Do you come from a Gaelic-speaking family?

I come from Taynuilt in Argyll, not far from Oban. My father was a Gaelic speaker. He spoke to me and my brothers in Gaelic and we got some in school. We lived in Dunstaffnage House at Connel. My mother had been brought up there and my grandmother looked after the local laird, a bachelor, Angus Campbell, the 20th Captain of Dunstaffnage and Hereditary Keeper of Dunstaffnage Castle.

Were your first memories of dancing from Dunstaffnage?

Yes, and it was a very romantic memory. Dunstaffnage – Angus was referred to by his title – was a very frequent Steward of the Argyllshire Gathering in Oban. And of course it was a very exclusive gathering – only the scions, or descendants, of local landowners were members – even if they no longer owned any land. On the morning of the Highland Games, Angus would send my brother and myself across to a bog to pick bog myrtle – the plant badge that Campbells wear in their bonnets. That was the bog where he would bury a new kilt for a year to toughen the fibres – unheard of today. Then we would



Angus Campbell, Hereditary Keeper of Dunstaffnage Castle

all go to the Oban Games with him in his Rolls Royce. He was a very bad driver, so I sat in the back with my grandmother and my brothers clutching on to each other for dear life in this immense and beautiful car. I remember when I was about five or six, standing on my grandmother's doorstep watching Dunstaffnage going to the first ball on the first day of the Gathering. He was sitting in the back of the Rolls, swathed in tartan. Round his lace jabot was the golden key, the insignia of the Custodian, the 'Marnichty', of Dunstaffnage Castle. He was off to Oban to dance reels all night. At dawn he would return and my grandmother would ask him who he had danced with. I remember one dance card where he had danced *Scottish Reform* with the notorious Margaret, Duchess of Argyll. I well remember these conversations about what dances he had danced and with whom. Apart from *Scottish Reform*, you had *Hamilton House*, the *Foursome* and *Eightsome Reel* and the 'flatties' – those were the dances where your feet were firmly on the floor, quicksteps, foxtrots and waltzes. Very early on this instilled in me an admiration for the glamour of dancing.

Today we call people like Angus Campbell 'reelers', but they would never have referred to themselves like that, would they?

Oh never, but they danced the dances and in the style of the people we today call 'reelers'. I remember interviewing Jimmy Shand and he told me he could take his timing from their feet. They maybe weren't doing the steps like us, but they had very good timing, and they certainly knew where they were going in dances. There would be hundreds in the Argyllshire Gathering

Hall. You also had the Northern Meeting in Inverness and the dances up at Braemar. You couldn't buy a ticket for these balls or dances and you couldn't just turn up. It was very exclusive and only for the likes of Dunstaffnage and the aristocracy. These families had been dancing for generations. They might invite the local doctor or lawyer. The lawyer Mackinnon in Oban would be invited because he did the business of the Gathering.

What was different when you moved to Tobermory?

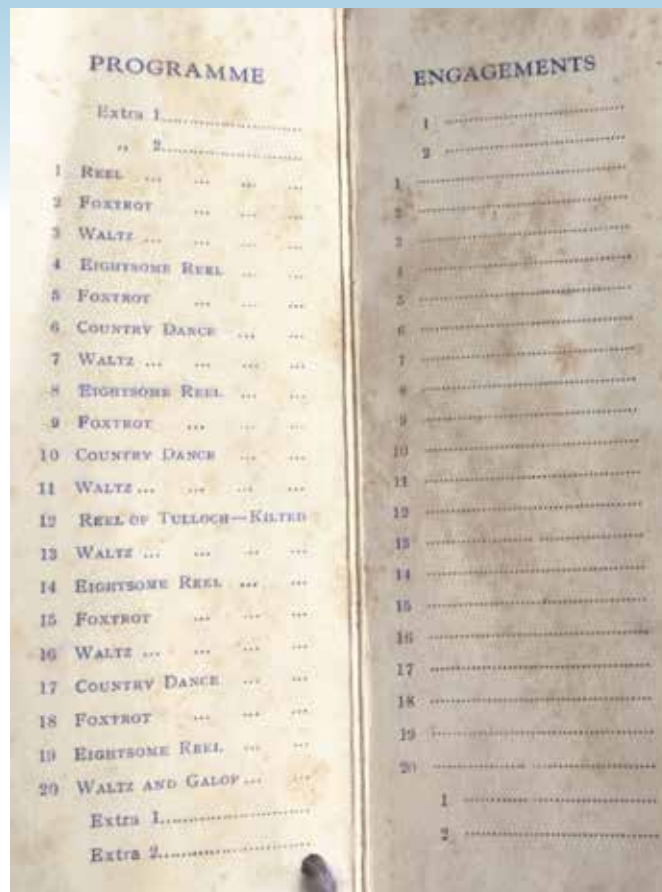
We had to move to Mull when I was in my teens in the late 50s when my father became the Manager of the Tobermory branch of the Clydesdale Bank. There was no 'country dancing' on Mull. There was what today we call 'ceilidh dancing'. I can remember when I was 16 being in a set for the *Quadrilles* with Bobby Macleod's wife, Jean. Bobby was one of the most famous of all bandleaders. We danced the *Quadrilles*, the *Foursome*, the *Lancers* – a lot of dances that nowadays are not danced. I remember very clearly doing the *Lancers* as a young boy. I found it very complicated but you were dancing with adults who knew it inside out. To us it was just dancing; some people called it country dancing. The most marvellous thing about it was the music – Bobby Macleod and his fiddler, Pibroch Mackenzie. They would be playing at a dance somewhere on Mull every week of the year. And those halls were full of very good dancers. Calling a dance was unheard of!

Were there any strathspeys?

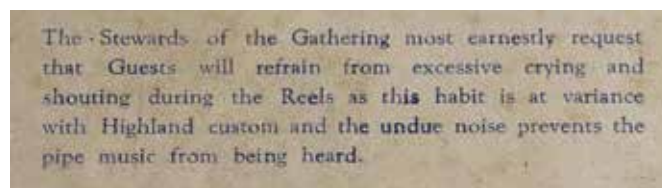
No, not even the *Glasgow Highlanders*. But there was the *Schottische*. On Mull you had this wonderful transition: pipe tunes like *Major Manson of Clachantrushal* or *Donald Macleod's Farewell to Oban* would become tunes that you could dance the *Schottische* or the *Canadian Barn Dance* to. The music became very closely associated with the dances. The schottisches, in particular, were very closely associated with Gaelic tunes. And for a Gaelic Waltz you would get *Fàgail Liosmòr* – Leaving Lismore. You still find this to an extent in Glasgow in the remnants of the big Highland Associations. I think growing up in a place where there was such a close connection between the dance and the music affected me very deeply. Of course my father was a very clever and cultured man and a fanatical Gael! In his office he would spend a whole morning talking to an old woman who had not a penny in his bank, while outside there would be some irate landowner demanding to speak to Macintyre, the Manager, wanting to increase his mortgage because his mansion house was leaking! With a childhood spent between Dunstaffnage and Tobermory I grew up between two cultures.

Were you taught dancing at school?

Yes, we were very fortunate. Our teacher was Ford Spence, one of Jean Milligan's best dancers and one of her International Team. It was Ford who brought country dancing to Oban High School and to Oban itself. He had been a student of Miss Milligan's in the 1930s. But it was what we now call ceilidh dancing which attracted the big numbers. You could have 300 people dancing in the Corran Halls in Oban. And it was the same when I went to work in Glasgow. You could call me a fanatic! I would go to the Riverside Club from 8 till 9.30 for ceilidh dancing, then get a taxi out to Bearsden for the second half of a Scottish country dance till 11, then take another taxi in to the Henry Wood Hall where John Carmichael would be playing for a Highland Association dance till 2 in the morning. Some nights I danced 40 dances. Dancing is something people get totally caught up in. Mary and I had an astonishing friend in Glasgow called Jimmy McMahon. He danced 6 nights out of 7! He would have one partner on a Monday night at the Plaza for ballroom, another on Tuesday night at the Highlanders Institute for Scottish and yet another on a Friday night at the Barrowlands Ballroom. Mary loved waltzing with him – his timing was perfect.



The programme of the Argyllshire Gathering in 1947



Message to dancers on the back of the 1947 dance card

So when was your first contact with the RSCDS?

It was when I was working in Glasgow. I went along with Mary, who had been doing it for a while. At the beginning Scottish country dancing is difficult. You have to learn the dances before you go to a dance. It's not like ceilidh dancing at all. In the summer we go to every Thursday night dance in the Younger Hall, but we are more heavily involved with reelers now. If you go back to the days of Angus Campbell and the Argyllshire Gathering, you would only have three or four country dances at a ball. Today's reelers are adding country dances to their repertoire. One night a group asked me for my favourite strathspey, so we taught them *Gang the Same Gate*. They love *Nottingham Lace*. This is very significant for the RSCDS. Way back in 1936 Jean Milligan was interviewed in *The Scotsman* – she wanted to reach out to what she called the 'county set'. She wanted them to come in to the SCDS. She knew there was a large reservoir of potential recruits out there, and it is the same today. Both in Scotland and in the UK as a whole, there is a renewed interest in reeling. If you go to the wedding of a young reeler today, they are dancing the same dances as our young country dancers. Reelers go on 'location dances'. They go to the Dean Bridge in Edinburgh to dance the strathspey of the same name. They go to the shores of Loch Coruisk to dance *The Kelpie of Loch Coruisk*. At the big reelers' charity ball in the Younger Hall in April, they are dancing *Mairi's Wedding*, *Nottingham Lace*, the big strathspeys – there is now no dance that the reelers will not tackle.

I understand that the numbers of men and women are more or less equal at reelers' dances.

Yes, everyone comes with a partner. I think they have a basic rule that they should have a partner because they don't want to take someone else's partner and deprive them. A couple ask another couple to dance. And many of them are wearing pumps. Of course, if you go to one of their dances, you have to fit in with their style of dancing, but they are assimilating many of our dances. It seems to me that numbers in the RSCDS are static but reelers are in the ascent. People like to think that the Queen was a country dancer. She wasn't – she was a reeler. Ysobel Stewart came from that tradition. It existed long before 1923. If you go online and look at the Oban Times, you will see the Stewarts' names on the list of those attending the balls in Inverness and Oban. Mrs Stewart was a Campbell from an aristocratic family which was very involved with Gaelic language and culture. She was John Lorne Campbell of Canna's aunt. She brought a very different tradition to the Country Dance Society – a much older tradition than Jean Milligan. The itinerant dancing masters who would have taught the likes of Mrs Stewart were teaching reeling. And of course there was a strong military element in the tradition. Many of the sons of these landed families were army officers in the Second World War. It must have been very poignant in 1946 at the Argyllshire Gathering for a young woman who had her sights set on marrying a particular young man from the previous gathering in 1938 to find that he was no longer there. When I was in the BBC we tried to get permission to film at the Gathering but it was not possible. Apparently, one year when Princess Margaret was there, someone took pictures without permission. So that meant no filming.

Were you at the BBC in the days of the White Heather Club?

No, I came after that. One of the great sadnesses of the White Heather Club was that around 300 programmes were made and today they only have 8 tapes. Somebody binned them. At that time there was a much stronger Scottish element on television – you had people like Moira Anderson, Kenneth McKellar, and Calum Kennedy. Bands like Bobby Macleod and Jimmy Shand played in the theatres and not just in Aberdeen, Glasgow and Edinburgh. Rothesay had a summer season with a resident band all summer in the Winter Gardens, but today is there a Scottish band who can make a living out of playing? I doubt it. One of the amazing facts from the 50s and early 60s is that Bobby Macleod could play for 900 dancers in the main St Andrews Hall in Glasgow – with more people outside clamouring for tickets. The Highlanders Institute in Barclay Street would be packed any night there was dancing – and they were good dancers. Then the heyday of the ceilidh scene at the Riverside Club in Glasgow was the 80s. I reckon on a Friday and Saturday night in Glasgow you could have 25,000 people out in the dance halls. Lex Keith, the bandleader, once told me that his band were never allowed off stage without playing *The Royal Empress Tango*. Out in the islands the *Schottische* was the most popular dance – because it used local pipe tunes.

I wonder where the RSCDS fits into this amazing dance scene.

Well, the short answer is that it doesn't. It's a different thing. It's more formal and it costs a lot to get kitted out. In essence a ceilidh dance is a spontaneous thing. At Summer School you see people who have been studying the dances for weeks, then the music starts, they get terrified, and it all goes out of their head! They have wee bits of paper stuffed around their clothes – as if they are cheating in an exam! There's a lot of learning involved compared with the other more spontaneous forms of dance.

Of course so many of the ceilidh dances are only 16 bars.

And an eight times 32 bar reel can have not 4 figures but 8 half-figures! It can be too much for the brain. The other thing about a ceilidh dance is often you are dancing intimately with your partner – as one. Think of the big Drewry dances. There's a lot to remember.

So, are these more complicated dances part of Scottish culture?

Well, they are one aspect of it for a particular segment of society. I know all these dances have signature tunes but many lack the amalgamation of dance and culturally specific music which you get in ceilidh dancing. A Mull band will play different tunes from a Lewis, Ayrshire or Aberdeen band for the *Canadian Barn Dance*. Outer Hebridean music is different from Inner Hebridean, which, in turn, is different from mainland. And you wouldn't find a piper playing at a country dance.

I danced to the pipes when I taught in Washington a few years ago. The band was Thistle House. Dan Emery started playing the pipes during a strathspey and the whole room cheered! It became a different dance when the pipes started.

And there are so many wonderful pipe strathspeys, but it's not just the tunes, it's also the background to the tunes. My very favourite tune is *Mrs H L Macdonald of Dunach*. She was a very romantic figure – from Skye and one of the last Gaelic-speaking aristocrats. She had a house outside Oban above Loch Feochan. Can you imagine dancing in her house to Willie Laurie or John McColl? Two of the world's greatest pipers. We celebrate the War Poets such as Wilfred Owen, but we forget Willie Laurie's pipe tune, *The Battle of the Somme*, which he wrote while he was in the trenches. It commemorates one of the most terrible battles in which tens of thousands of men died on both sides. That Retreat is just as great an achievement as any war poem.

I can see what you mean about the RSCDS reaching out to reelers, but what will they make of our repertoire?

There are too many dances, too many books. The great dances of the past are hardly danced today. Not dancing a dance is a way of discarding it. We are replacing our tradition with what people see as 'challenging' dances. People don't do these modern dances for the sheer enjoyment of dancing – they do them for something like sport. You have won your way through the dance. You've got through *The Dancing Master* without making a mistake! Some of the simpler dances give people more psychological pleasure because they don't have to worry about where they are going next. I had a friend in Glasgow who danced in the demonstration team. In the middle of one dance, he shouted to his partner, "What do I do next?"; she shouted back, "Wait and see!". I see people at a dance at Summer School and they look scared!

What has fear to do with our dance culture?

Not much! It's not the fault of the dancer. He doesn't necessarily have our cultural background. He doesn't know that spontaneity is the essence of good dancing. Making dancing more complex detracts from its spontaneity – unless you have the mind of a mathematician. Where you are born is an accident of birth. When I think of growing up with Angus Campbell of Dunstaffnage spending a day painting our Easter eggs and hiding them in the rhododendrons for us to find on Easter morning, giving us history lessons, telling us ghost stories, I realise what a marvellous childhood I had. And my father, who was a champion Highland Games athlete, trained me and my brother Kenny to be pole vaulters. That is the kind of childhood you cannot buy and dancing was right at the centre of our culture.

Winter School in Australia

Winter School in Australia is organised each year in rotation by one of the seven Branches. Lynne Scott and Neville Pope report on this year's – the turn of Hunter Valley Branch.

The beautiful area of Port Stephens, Australia

Morning classes with live music are mostly compulsory with a variety of afternoon events: music talks, singing, wine tasting, a foot care talk, optional dance classes, public dancing on the foreshore, and a bus trip to the historic Australian Newcastle. The afternoons also included teachers' courses. Whether on the dance floor, in class, at meals or on the bus, helpful camaraderie was everywhere. The Welcome Social opened with a *Welcome to the Country* given by Uncle John, an elder from the Indigenous People of the area. There was a strong contingent from France, Raphaëlle Orgeret and Tom McKinlay and over two sets from New Zealand. The final night

Ball fell on 14 July and the hall was magnificently festooned with French flags and decor in red, white and blue. As Port Stephens is a holiday destination, the fancy dress night had *The Resort* as its theme. Another night brought us dances from non-Scottish genres! For the Caledonian Night there was an afternoon practice for locals and a number of them joined us for the evening ceilidh.

Chris Duncan and Catherine Strutt played on the opening night and then the Balmoral Band for most of the evenings. Tutors were Debbie Roxburgh from New Zealand, Bill Unger of Australia, and Tom and Raphaëlle. Anne Kennedy and Ros McKie taught the teachers' classes. Winter School has always enjoyed its parties and this year was no exception. The midnight curfew worked well, but the final night was an entirely different matter. The musicians left about 3.30am!

Defining moments of the school? For the musicians, the enjoyment of playing together. Many identified the friendly, supportive atmosphere; but for some unfortunate folk, the hour spent in a malfunctioning lift en route to the final party, will be a major memory! Nevertheless, the organisers deserve a big clap for their work: not an easy task, but very well done! So if you are thinking about going to Winter School in Melbourne next year, don't hesitate.



Informal dance at Australian Winter School

Recruiting Success

New Zealand Beginners' Class

Our story begins a few years ago when the Lower Hutt SCD Club committee decided we would have a serious go at attracting beginners. We found a suitable hall 'close' to our normal hall – on the same evening and at the same time as our club night. Our reasoning was that if they could get to the hall at that time, on that day, it was likely that they would join us at the end of the course. Our theory was that if we can get a group of dancers starting together and work with them away from the experienced dancers, they would gel as a group and they would not feel isolated when they join the main group.

Support materials

As the 10-week class progressed, we began searching for additional visual support resources. There was very little available. Most of the time, we had to direct them to YouTube videos that included the relevant formation, but often didn't show the formation clearly – often recorded at balls or demonstrations with the following problems:

- too many sets on screen
- panning from one set to another
- poor technique in demonstrations
- repeat performance not always matching the first

However, we encouraged them to watch videos, to give them more confidence about the sequence of formations, our club website providing a link to the SCD Dictionary. They proved to be a useful learning tool for some of them. So we decided to video ourselves dancing steps and formations to help those who learn visually. We were confident that we had access to a large enough pool of dancers to allow us to produce videos that would provide good examples to help them with their 'homework'. After an afternoon video session, we put them up on our club website. We then contacted other New Zealand teachers and dancers from outside our area to run a professional eye over our first efforts. We were stunned when they spoke of directing their own beginners to our club website along with some suggestions on improvements. Our 'Beginner Formations and Steps' are now starting to appear on the SCD Dictionary website. If you have beginners who could benefit from this programme, go to the website, down to SCD Miscellany and then the Instructional Videos section. An exercise that started as a means of helping our own people progress as quickly as possible may now be of use to other beginner groups throughout the world. Just for the record, that first beginners course attracted 28 dancers. Many stayed only a few weeks. We kept six and one is currently on our committee; two moved to Melbourne and are still dancing. Our recent course attracted 14 and we have kept eight. That is one complete set to add to our existing four or five weekly.

Damon Collin, Lower Hutt, New Zealand

Scots in Argentina



Buenos Aires city centre

Marcela Galve is the Secretary of the BASC (Buenos Aires Scottish Country Dancers). To many people it may seem strange that our dancing is popular with Argentinians, but to many Scots over 100 years ago, particularly from the Highlands and Islands, 'the Argentine' was a place which offered work, prospects, and a future.

Scottish roots in Argentina go back to 8 August 1825, when the sailing ship *Symmetry* arrived on the coast of Buenos Aires carrying the first colonists from Leith. Commanded by Captain Samuel Smith, the *Symmetry* brought 45 couples, 42 single men, 14 single women and 79 children to a rich agricultural area in the province of Buenos Aires called Monte Grande, an area under the patronage of John and William Parish Robertson. In *Records of the Scottish Settlers in the River Plate and their Churches* its author, James Dodds, relates that the first Scottish settlers were very much amused by landing from boats onto queer-looking horse carts with large wooden axles and enormous wheels. Some of the immigrants settled in Patagonia; most worked in agriculture. During the voyage, an anonymous passenger wrote a poem: *Tam O'Stirling* which was published in the book: *From Caledonia to the Pampas* by William Grierson. Grierson is a well known surname in Argentina. Cecilia Grierson, granddaughter of William Grierson was the first female medical doctor born in this country.

In the late 1800s and the early part of the 20th century adverts appeared in Scottish newspapers for shepherds to work in South America. Some stayed for a while then went back home; some settled and married locally. The settlers, mainly Presbyterian, soon founded their own churches. Apart from St Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Buenos Aires, dating back to 1829, there are records of ten Presbyterian churches in other parts of the country.



The SS Symmetry on which the Scots sailed

Argentina owes its Football Association to a graduate of Edinburgh University from the Gorbals in Glasgow, Alexander Watson Hutton, a teacher and sportsman who believed that sport was a vital element in education and good health. Football is the most popular sport in Argentina so the fact that a Scot founded the AFA,

Argentine Football Association, is very important to us. Hutton also founded one of the most prestigious schools, the Buenos Aires English High School in the Belgrano neighbourhood. There are many bilingual schools in Argentina where Scottish traditions are taught through music and dancing. In most of these schools highland dancing is taught. Scottish country dances are taught in quite a few – especially in primary schools.

Buenos Aires has four pipe bands. They raise funds for charitable causes through the promotion of Scottish culture: the St. Andrew's Society of the River Plate founded in 1888; a country dance demonstration team; and Fir Chis, a Gaelic Choir (Ceòlraidh) – the only choir in Latin America singing in Scottish Gaelic.

Argentina is also the only country in Latin America with a qualified Scottish country dance teacher. BASC Dancers, founded in 2005, is an affiliated group with weekly classes, workshops, and ceilidhs. Throughout the year Buenos Aires celebrates Scotland in many different ways. Every January we gather for a Ceilidh on Burns' Night, when in spite of the Summer temperatures (95°F), we address the Haggis and eat it; we dance Scottish country dances and some dancers entertain the audience with highland dancing as well. March marks the start of the 'Buenos Aires Celebra', a series of events organised by the City to celebrate the diaspora of Eastern and Western communities that have contributed to make up Argentina. March is the time to celebrate Scotland when one of the most important avenues in Buenos Aires is closed to traffic and people gather around a stage to hear the pipes and see Scottish dancing. There are stalls that sell neeps and tatties, whisky and Scottish crafts. There are also a couple of 'Caledonians' during winter organised by the pipe bands and in October BASCDancers celebrates its Scottish Hallowe'en party with hands round danced withershins and ghosts in the sets. The year is crowned with a Scottish country dance Christmas party in the south of Buenos Aires, Adrogué, a city very near Monte Grande, the area of the first Scottish settlers. Argentina takes pride in having the largest Scottish community outside the English-speaking world, with an estimated 100,000 people claiming Scottish ancestry, and, as you can see, their legacy is still celebrated to this day.

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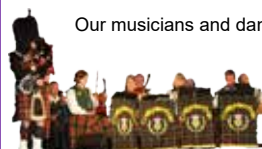
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The Junior Class at St Andrews Summer School, taught by Marilyn Watson, Anne McArthur and Joana Stausberg.



Sophie Marchand with the Méandre Reel dancers in Edinburgh before they danced in Princes Street Gardens.



Past Chairman, Linda Gaul, pouring a well-deserved drink for Jim Stott, Summer School Director.



Enjoying TAC Summer School in Minneapolis are Tiffany Clede with the Bailey brothers, Ethan, Levi and Jared.



Jill Pope took this picture of dancing down the middle at one of the social dances at Australian Winter School 2018.



The musicians at the Atlanta Branch weekend at Unicoi: Nicholas Williams, Julie Gorka, Laura Risk and Mara Shea.



Summer School teacher, Samuele Graziani from Bologna. He taught the intermediate and advanced classes.



Teacher, Janet Johnston, and musician, David Oswald, working together during class at Summer School.



Tokyo Bluebell Club members dancing in their spectacular June performance, 'Bluebell on Stage', to celebrate 35 years.



Handing over a cheque for £1000 to the Stornoway RNLI from all the dancers at the Stornoway Weekend in the Outer Hebrides.

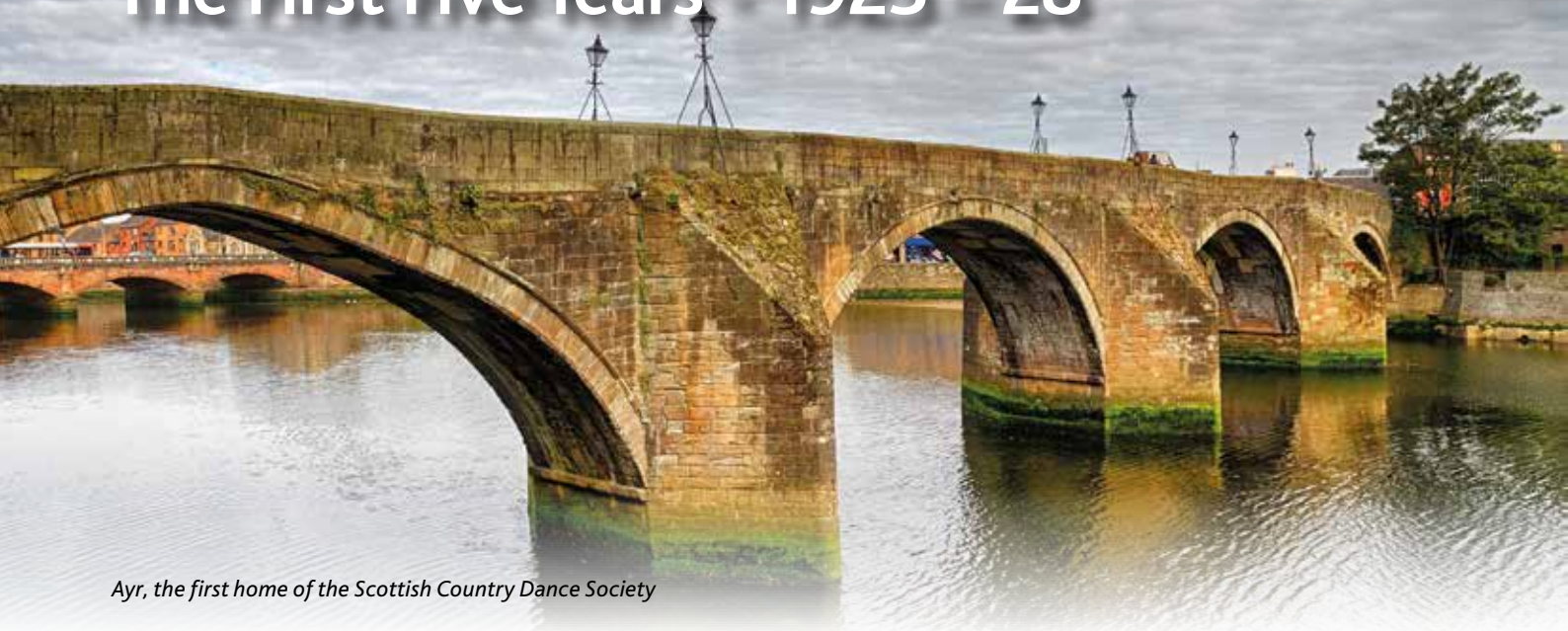


Socialising at Summer School at St Andrews, making new friends from all over the world - this is what it is all about!



Concentrating on a fun exercise in the Junior Class at St Andrews!

The First Five Years - 1923 – 28



Ayr, the first home of the Scottish Country Dance Society

In the last issue we reported on the Inaugural Meeting of the SCDS, but what happened next? Jimmie Hill uncovers more details of the early development of the Society.

First press reports

The only newspaper to report our Inaugural Meeting was the *Aberdeen Press and Journal*. A year later the St Andrews Society of Edinburgh 'noted with satisfaction that the movement initiated by Mrs Stewart of Fasnaclloch for the revival of Scottish country dances had made great progress'. They hoped that 'Scottish country dances would now be taught in the schools'.

The first meetings

By 1928 we had 10 branches and 1500 members. The early Executive Committee had got down to business with a vengeance! At its first meeting it was agreed Francis Bissett would draft the Constitution; Mrs Stewart would be responsible for recruiting members; and a book of 12 dances would be published. Three committees were set up: a Research Committee, whose two most significant members were Mrs Stewart herself and Lady Dorothea Ruggles-Brise, eldest daughter of the Duke of Atholl and a lifelong music collector; a Publications Committee, made up of Messrs Stewart, Milligan and Diack; and a Dancing Committee, whose immediate aim was to get classes up and running in different areas of Scotland. *Book 1* was published a month later. By the end of February 1924 we had 155 members, each paying an annual subscription of five shillings, and it remained the same until 1967. By June membership numbers had doubled to 350 and there had been Scottish country dance sections in the Edinburgh, Glasgow, Perth and Stirling Music Festivals. There is some hint of Edinburgh/Glasgow competition at the June meeting when it was reported that the standard at the Glasgow Festival had been very high, but in Edinburgh it had 'not proved satisfactory'. This was crossed out in the minutes and replaced with a comment to the effect that the Edinburgh dancers had not made so much progress because 'they were waiting for the publication of a definite standard.' This resulted in Mr Diack's proposal for a Teachers' Certificate. They decided there and then to have a teachers' examination in three months' time with Mr Diack, Miss Milligan and Mrs Stewart as the examiners 'with power to issue certificates'. 37 candidates sat the exam with only one failing. The early examinations were based on each individual book, very different from today. Following that first examination, they decided that teachers should be paid ten shillings and sixpence per hour – twice the annual subscription. How many teachers are paid £40 per hour today?

Quarterly meetings

Executive meetings took place quarterly, initially chaired by Francis Bissett, but more often by Lord James Stewart Murray. They were held in Mr Bissett's office in Glasgow, or in Edinburgh at 12 Melville Street, not far from Coates Crescent. Unlike our present-day Board our early founders dealt with nothing except dancing, teaching, examining, music and books. The agreement on the constitution appears to have gone through easily. Each branch could send one member to the Executive. Six more members were elected at the AGM. This number did not change even into the 1990s when there were hundreds of branches.



Lord James Stewart Murray

The first branches

As today the Society was dependent on its branches to recruit and teach. Glasgow and Edinburgh were the first, followed in 1925 by Perth, Dundee and Aberdeen, then Renfrewshire, Stirlingshire, West Dunbartonshire, Clackmannanshire and Moray – ten in five years. Miss Milligan and Mrs Stewart were very important in this. Miss Milligan taught the first Glasgow class of 60 out of which the branch was formed. Edinburgh followed soon afterwards. *The Scotsman* reported the inaugural meeting of Aberdeen Branch in 1925 in which the Bishop of Aberdeen and Orkney told the meeting that 'our country dances had behind them that intangible, indefinable, yet living force of national sentiment and patriotism.' He exhorted the new branch 'to see that these dances were taught to all the young people in the schools'. Later that year Charles Murray, one of our finest Scots-language poets, was honoured on his retirement. During his speech he said he was 'glad to observe that a Society had been formed in Aberdeen for the purpose of promoting the old country dances'. He wished it all success.

The books

Unlike today, our first books were not published by us but by Patersons. They printed them, stocked them, advertised them, sold them and distributed them. Each member received a free copy, paid for by the Society at a 40% reduction of the published price. On all other copies sold, the Society received a generous royalty. This meant we had no capital outlay and no risk. Regrettably, we have very little information about how the dances and tunes were chosen. Miss Milligan tells of dancing while Mrs Stewart played the chanter, then she would play the piano while Mrs Stewart danced. It appears the two ladies made most of the decisions between them. By 1926 all three committees had been rolled into one, made up of Messrs Milligan, Stewart and Diack! By the AGM of 1928 four books had been published with *Book 5* ready for publication. One book which few today are aware of is the *Festival Booklet*. This was written by Miss Milligan, edited by Mr Diack and published by Patersons in a series aimed at teachers for festivals. It is a small booklet giving advice to dancers and teachers on steps, formations and dance style, a very early Manual. Michael Diack was instrumental in organising the recording of the tunes for Books 1, 2 and 3 on gramophone records on the Beltona label.

The importance of Music Festivals

At the Inaugural Meeting the importance of teaching children was recognised. Reach the children and you have reached teachers, parents, aunts and uncles, and neighbours. Mr Diack's involvement with the festivals convinced him of the need to train teachers and set standards. In October 1925 he proposed a two or three-day conference for teachers. In the 1920s the annual Music Festival was a major event in nearly all large towns in Scotland. They were reported locally and the larger ones such as Glasgow and Aberdeen were reported nationally. Enter Miss Milligan, the consummate publicist! All adjudicators must address the audience and she used these opportunities to great advantage. She had a captive audience and could be relied on for a good quote. After the Perth Festival in 1926 *The Scotsman* reported her saying that the children learn from these dances 'courage, resolution and spirit, and at the same time personal control.' At Aberdeen in 1928, the *Press and Journal* reported, 'Jean Milligan was enthusiastic as usual. She is adept in the gentle art of mixing praise and blame and no judge could have been more exhaustive or helpful in comment, encouraging in tone.' In Dundee in 1928 she told the audience that there was a popular misconception that country dances were for the lower classes and are 'rough'. She said the best example of country dancing was *The Flowers of Edinburgh* where the partners chase each other and she added, 'the fun is endless'. In 1928 the *Sunday Post* reported that 'Jean Milligan made the surprising intimation that in Scottish Folk Dancing she did not approve of kilts being worn.' The following day the *Dundee Courier* continued this debate by reporting her as saying that it was the SCDS itself which had decided this. She maintained that 'when little girls get into kilts they begin to do step dancing. Could they think of their mothers or grandmothers raising their knees high and exaggerating their steps?' In all her comments at the festivals it is clear that Miss Milligan wanted to see dancers enjoying themselves and interacting socially. 'Happy faces mean light feet', is typical of her. Her comments on one team at Perth in 1927 were, 'steps nicely carried out, but lacked gaiety'. She said she did not want to see 'beautiful demonstration dancing'. Earlier in 1928 the *Arbroath Herald* reported her saying, 'spirit is the whole point of the dance and spirit does not come from speed.' Miss Milligan used every opportunity afforded by the festivals to promote the benefits of country dancing. In Aberdeen in May 1926 the *Press and Journal* reports her telling the audience not to 'waste their time in other dances'. One wonders if she did not also raise a few hackles.

A hobby for girls and women

From the outset Mrs Stewart had involved the Girl Guide movement. As early as April 1924 the GGs included country dance teaching at a weekend training course. The Women's Rural Institutes (WRI) took it up quickly and asked for classes in all their branches. At the 1926 Perth Festival Jean Milligan announced, 'the girls just leaving school are the people we are trying to get hold of' and in Aberdeen the same year she told the audience, 'I am sorry to say that I have not seen any boys dancing in Aberdeen!' The following year she commended the growth of country dancing in the WRI as many girls joined them when too old for the Guides. Reports of country dancing often appeared in the women's sections of the papers. This, unfortunately, says something about the public's perception of country dancing.



Park Circus today - elegant and leafy

Staff and premises

The early Society was a modern treasurer's dream – no staff and no premises! During this period Mrs Stewart ran the Society from her home at 3 Park Circus, Ayr. In a later letter she confirmed that she had had the idea for the Society while walking along Princes Street in Edinburgh. It was then born in Glasgow but she was to write in 1961 that Ayr was its 'cradle'. It was not until membership passed the 1000 mark that the need for a paid assistant was clear. Miss Winifred Forgan of Ayr was employed part-time in 1928 at a salary of £3 per month.

Finance

With few overheads, the Society was funded out of members' subscriptions. Branches, on the other hand, did not have the system we have today of a local membership fee. In the first few years branches applied to the Society for small grants to cover their expenses – typically five or ten pounds and usually repaid. In 1926 it was decided that 5% of the annual subscription should be given back to branches, raised to 10% from 1928. Events were budgeted to break even. The first Summer School in 1927 made a loss of just under £5 while a year later it made a profit of over £7. Teachers' fees made up over 10% of the Summer School budget. By the AGM of 1928 the Society had £400 cash in the bank, c.£20,000 in today's money.

Finally

The main impressions we get from those early years are the hard work and connections of Mrs Stewart, the indefatigable enthusiasm of Jean Milligan, and the commitment of busy people such as Francis Bisset, Michael Diack, Miss Ross, Miss Dalmahoy, and Lord James Stewart Murray. With hindsight, what they were doing was attempting to build a Scottish cultural identity after the huge loss of life in WW1 followed by the flu epidemic of 1918-19, which, worldwide, killed even more people than the war itself. What they constantly state as their aim is to introduce traditional Scottish country dances into the repertoire of the mainstream ballroom. In that aim they failed. What they started, however, formed the basis for the RSCDS of today.

I am grateful to Alan Macpherson, Society Archivist, for his patience in answering all my questions and to the National Library of Scotland and Edinburgh City Library.

In my Opinion



Campbell Tyler in Cape Town

Campbell Tyler, Cape Town

Is Scotland essential to the survival and flourishing of Scottish country dancing in the 21st century and to what extent does it need to be part and parcel of what we teach? My context is Cape Town, a city that received thousands of Scottish emigrants after WW2, resulting in a thriving Scottish country dance community of over 200 dancers in the 1960s. Numbers have slowly diminished, and at our last major function we were able to

muster just over 50 dancers. There has been huge internal rural immigration. Emigration from Scotland has slowed to a trickle, so where do we look to replace retiring dancers, never mind growing overall numbers? And what is the product we are trying to sell: exercise, sociability, health that resists the onset of old age, foot-tapping music, Scottish culture?

In an attempt to arouse new interest, I went to a rural community 70km outside Cape Town to work with a group of high school youngsters, teaching them dances like *The Flying Scotsman* and *The Radical Road*. They have no connection with Scotland; their context is South Africa. The first thing I did when I started was to point out that they lived in an area called Elgin and told them very briefly about how this pointed to a strong Scottish heritage. I told them they were going to learn dances that the Scots do. Why did I bother? Why didn't I just carry on and teach them the dances? Here are my reasons.

1. I wanted to introduce them to a complete experience, not just the dancing but all the added features that make SCD what it is, including that it is danced internationally.

2. Scottish dancing is intimately linked to the idea of the ceilidh, a unique tradition that means just about everyone from an area can get up and dance *Strip the Willow*, *the Gay Gordons* and *Dashing White Sergeant*. In my view our dancing takes all but one of its best attributes from the ceilidh: great music, social interaction, exercise, a levelling of the playing field, a common dancing language and immediate accessibility – all attributes that resonate in the community. The door to Scottish country dancing for them is through the ceilidh. The exception is the intellectual challenge of our current repertoire.

3. So much of Scottish language, culture and history is embedded in so many of our dances. For my students it is a window into a different world. I hope that one day they might visit Scotland, dance there and see for themselves where it all evolved.

4. We made tartan belts as part of their uniform; when they saw a video of the *Radical Road* the boys wanted to know if they could also wear that 'thing' – a kilt. We must not underestimate the pulling power of tartan and kilts; it is a major selling point for us.

5. The support the RSCDS gives us. I am immensely grateful for the Virtual Festival, Spring Fling, the articles about dance in Scottish schools, the Commonwealth Ceilidh videos, the Manual etc. (I acknowledge that there is significant non-Scottish input in all this, but it is in Scotland that this becomes viable.)

So I will continue to attempt to introduce Scottish dancing into that rural community. I will link it with all things Scottish, because that enriches the product, provides exotic variety, fires the imagination, and paints pictures of the little guy fighting the odds. For me, when we demonstrate, we are demonstrating Scottish culture as enriched by the international input and that is usually how it is received.

I am not in any way trying to discount the huge contribution of people outside Scotland. Scottish country dancing is at a crossroads – to survive it needs to adapt to the modern taste. It may well lose its Scottishness in the process and be carried forward by an international organisation driven by the young people of the Continent and elsewhere. But for me SCD is inextricably Scottish and hopefully will remain so.





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Spring Fling

Leanne Beeton reports from the Glasgow Fling organising committee.

With 144 dancers from 20 countries the Glasgow Spring Fling was an unbelievable event and, even looking back, we are not quite sure how it happened. The Fling is a fantastic event on the youth calendar.

The Friday night dance was a perfect opener for the fun of the weekend. Susan MacFadyen and her band set us up perfectly with great tunes alongside some great callers and some traffic cone hats. Saturday morning got the feet and brains in gear with classes from intermediate through to very advanced. With something for everyone, we were all in need of a local delicacy – Tunnocks tea cakes, of course! In the afternoon we had a choice of Highland, Popular Variations, and challenging dances from Alasdair Brown. At the evening dance tired feet and aching muscles were a distant memory as Màrtainn Skene and his band kept 350 of us going well into the night. Sunday morning offered everything from dance devising, choreography writing, personal critique, popular variations and stretching sessions. We all had a final couple of dances together, then a well-deserved buffet before heading off to our different corners of the world. For those who stayed for the Sunday night, there was a ceilidh in the stunning Oran Mor in the heart of Glasgow’s West End, with cracking music from Fife-based band, Adin Graham. As usual the whole event was a team effort: the local committee, HQ staff, our stewards, and Glasgow Branch. We are already looking at plane tickets for Paris next year!



Perfect arms at Spring Fling!

Spring Fringe

Muriel Bone chaired the Spring Fringe sub-committee of Glasgow Branch.

Can we organise a Fringe in 2018? This was the question for the Glasgow Branch Committee back in 2016. Happily the answer was ‘Yes’ as 2018 is the 95th Anniversary of our branch. Questions came to mind: would our own dancers support a whole weekend event? Would dancers come from other parts of Scotland, the UK and overseas? By early April, we had 190 dancers from nine countries!

Serious planning started early in 2017. When the Fling was last in Glasgow the Fringe did not exist! So, it was helpful to receive advice from the Bonn organisers, Headquarters and others. Initial tasks were to identify venues and hotels, all within walking distance, and close to the Fling, in Glasgow’s leafy West End. After that it was on to inviting teachers, musicians plus lots of publicity. Then there were the booking arrangements, finances, catering, printing, duty rotas, merchandise – the list just kept growing! Our teachers, Heather Cowan and William Williamson, gave us interesting and entertaining classes at two levels. In the afternoon they kept us busy with Glasgow-themed dances and a Ball walk-through. Accordionists John Carmichael and Ian Muir (Prestwick) provided great music. The Sunday morning classes were something different – quadrilles and ceilidh dances with Peter Knapman, with Alan Ross on accordion. After all the hard work, it was rewarding to receive lots of compliments from dancers who enjoyed themselves and mentioned the warm Glasgow welcome and friendliness – an essential ingredient for any SCD event.



Don't you wish you had been there!



Those cones!



William Williamson teaching - great lines!

Scottish Schools

500 children at the Glasgow Schools Day of Dance

The 13th Glasgow Day of Dance took place on 28 March at Bellahouston Sports Centre with two sessions over the morning and afternoon. In total there were just over 500 children from 23 schools. Each session began with a parade of school banners, and a welcome from invited guests including Eva Bolander, the Lord Provost of Glasgow, RSCDS President Jean Martin and Chairman Helen Russell. Eva Bolander is Swedish, an SNP Councillor, and the current Lord Provost of the city. She herself began Scottish country dancing in Sweden, and now plays the bagpipes. Walter Proven was the MC. The children danced to John Carmichael's Band – a five-piece with John himself, Ian Muir, Derek Hamilton, John Sinton and Patsy Reid – a superb line-up! It was a pleasure to watch so many children enjoying themselves and having fun! Favourite dances included *The Round Reel of Eight*, *The Dashing White Sergeant* and *The Flying Scotsman*. During the afternoon we had a surprise visit from Bonnie the Seal, the official mascot of the 2018 European Championships which took place in Glasgow and Berlin in August.



Some smart dancers in front of John Carmichael's five-piece band

As always the many helpers from Glasgow Branch, including some of our new younger members who have come to us via Glasgow University Scottish Country Dance Club, came along to help keep the children on track and offer encouragement. This support is essential to the success of the event, making it a day for the children to remember. Glasgow Branch is very grateful to Andrea Crawford from Glasgow City Council Education Department who continues to support the Festival along with her PE Team.

Fiona McDonald

Banffshire Branch Scottish Country Dance Festival

In 2016 the last Biennial Moray Music Festival took place. Members of the Banffshire Branch had done so much work in schools over the years that the committee decided to hold our own Country Dance Festival. We received some funding from the old Music Festival plus £250 in matched funding from the Society. We also applied to Tesco and were delighted to be awarded £1,000. Walkers, our local biscuit makers, also supplied snack packs of their biscuits for the competitors.

On 14 March 2018 our Festival came to fruition. The Town Hall in Elgin rang to the sound of 15 primary schools who had entered, three youth organisation teams consisting of Rainbows, and three adult teams. More than we had hoped for. We had 36 teams of three dancers taking part in the *Dashing White Sergeant* competition, and Jim Stott, our adjudicator, had his work cut out

to choose the best teams. Frank Thomson from Aberdeen played all day for us and the children thoroughly enjoyed their day. Many schools came for the day out with packed lunches. The day finished with the adult teams and it was a pleasure to sit back and watch some lovely dancing.

We had two large and very old trophies to award and these went to Milne's Primary School, Fochabers, and runner up was Mosstowie Primary School, Miltonduff, near Elgin. These trophies had originally been awarded in the 1930's and had been lost for several years following the war. Now they have been recycled and the schools are delighted with them. No plastic in sight!

Anne Taylor, Banffshire Branch

Knockando Silver Medals lead to a new class

Eight pupils from Knockando Primary School, a rural school in Moray, have been awarded their silver medals for Scottish country dancing under the Schools Accreditation Scheme. They learned six dances from *Jigs and Reels* during their weekly activity time and performed at the school concert and in front of other pupils. The dances were *A Reel for Jeannie*, *The Loch Ness Monster*, *A Jig for Mrs Dunn*, *Knockando Welcome*, *The Brudenell Jig*, and the *Circassian Circle*.

Mrs Taylor started the classes for the whole school last November, then handed over to Bill and Rosemary Legge.

The children are very enthusiastic about dancing and have asked about the possibility of an evening class. Some adults have also enquired about learning to dance. As a result we are starting a class in Aberlour for children, young people and adult beginners.

Rosemary Legge

230 Children at Helensburgh Day of Dance

The annual Day of Dance that Helensburgh and District Branch runs jointly with Active Schools and Live Argyll was due to be held on 2 March. Due to bad weather, it had to be postponed. Eventually, after a lot of re-organisation it took place later in the month. 230 children attended either a morning or an afternoon session held in the Victoria Halls, Helensburgh. The children had been practising the dances in their own schools and were keen to show what they could do. The dances were all taken from the *Jigs and Reels* pack that the Branch had helped to fund to ensure all the schools had copies. Helen Rodger was the MC to give the instructions and to encourage the youngsters on to the floor, but this was almost unnecessary as the children were ready to dance all the time. It is always a hard day for our branch volunteers but worth it to see so many young people enjoying themselves.

Irene Smith





Young Dancers

News of young dancers is edited by Joana Stausberg. Please send her news of your youth events to ysc.rscds.org

Youth Weekend West in Santa Rosa, California

Youth Weekend West

Dancer and musician Jared W. Bailey writes about the Youth Weekend West, Santa Rosa, USA.

It was a great honor to play for Youth Weekend West this year in Santa Rosa. It was so much fun not only playing for the Welcome Ball and classes but also watching the youth in the classes absorb so much and grow in their dancing. It was so easy working with and playing for the teachers during their sessions!

Every time I attend any workshop as a dancer, I can say that at least my own dancing improves, and no matter how much I think I know already, I always learn more! Easier transitions, better phrasing, more sociability, finer technique, more efficient ways of communicating.

It's very important, I think, that the teachers and the musicians are relaxed during the class, and at the Youth Weekend West, we sure were! It's important because it allows for better communication, more fun and just an overall great time! It also allows the students to relax and retain more. Youth Weekend West was a great success!

North America

Amélie, Aymeric and Elizabeth tell us about their dancing experiences in North America.

You all have experience of dancing in different countries. What's special about dancing in the USA?

All: The music is different – no accordion – and most classes have live music, at least on the West Coast. There are many groups, and people are willing to travel to go to dance events. Scottish dancing is, for many, a way to connect with their Scottish heritage.

Tell us about young dancers in the US.

All: Young people don't have prejudices against Scottish dancing. They see it, they think it's fun and then they do it. There's no stigma.

Elizabeth: From an East Coast perspective, I think there are a lot of families that dance as a family. Lots of children join in.

Amélie: On the West Coast, young dancers often have their own groups, and don't mix that much.

Aymeric: Young dancers get drawn in very quickly, also with teaching and music. We tend to improve quickly!

How did you start dancing, and what kept you going?

Elizabeth: I studied in Britain and went to a ceilidh, which was great. When I moved to Washington, DC, I looked for activities to meet people, thought of ceilidh dancing, and found SCD. I showed up at class, and that was it. I never stopped.

Young Dancers' Week, St Andrews

Week 3 of Summer School was Young Dancers' Week.

This is what some of the young people said:

I was surprised that so many people came from all over the world. Emily, 14

The most exciting thing was meeting new kids who also loved this dancing. Ayla, 16

The most exciting thing was when we were getting filmed for Book 52 and when we performed Ship Ahoy. Seraphina, 11

I loved the dem team performance. Emma, 16

I'll never forget how we did Trip to Timber Ridge in a 5-couple set, switching the top of the set for every turn. Julia, 17

I'll come back because I enjoy SCD, and Summer School is a great place to meet new friends. Edward, 11

I really liked this amazing feeling that everyone loves the same thing as you do. Emma, 16

I love Scottish dancing. Adèle, 9



The 12 - 18 year olds at class in the Younger Hall

The Méaudre Reel

For its 10th anniversary in May, the Méaudre Reel, the club in the French Alps, celebrated with 103 dancers (aged 7 to 85). Cécile, who started dancing in Méaudre 11 years ago, and is now 17, wrote *A Ten Year Reel* to celebrate the occasion. In July the club came to Scotland, thanks to Agnes Grant's scholarship. The children returned, heads and hearts full: dancing in the Younger Hall; dancing in a dem beside the RSCDS set in Princes St Gardens; pas de Basque on St Andrews beach? All unforgettable memories!

Anniversaries



Chairman Helen Russell with husband Ian and members of Herefordshire Branch

Herefordshire Branch 50th

On 5 May Herefordshire Branch held the final event of its 50th Anniversary year with a Ball in the superb Town Hall in Hereford. Our Chairman, Jennifer Davies, warmly welcomed everyone, especially Society Chairman Helen Russell and her husband, Ian. Mark Gradon, son of one of the Branch's founding members, was also able to join us. The Ball opened with the *Grand March* then led into *Ian Powrie's Farewell to Auchterarder*. Our band of choice for the evening was Sandy Nixon who indicated how much his band had enjoyed their first visit to Hereford. Helen gave an inspiring speech which was well

received and encouraging for our newer dancers. We welcomed many friends from far and wide – Birmingham, Wales, Cheltenham, Gloucester and Bristol and from Devon and Cornwall to Scotland and local clubs. The dances were selected for their titles suitable for the occasion; others had a local connection, e.g. the reel *Henderson in Hereford*, written by John Drewry in honour of Douglas Henderson, who was based in Hereford, and Douglas Henderson's own strathspey, *Blue Mess Jacket*. For those with the energy we ended with *The White Heather Jig* and a chance to birl.

Margaret Campbell

Bath Branch 70th

Bath Branch celebrates its 70th anniversary this year. More than 80 people, from Auchterarder to Yeovil, attended an anniversary celebration in the 19th century splendour of the Great Hall of Westonbirt House, Gloucestershire, on 24 March. The day began with a class taught by Barbara Savill, followed by lunch, then an afternoon of dancing. It ended with tea and cakes made by branch members. Music was provided by Ian Robertson and his band. Bath Branch was originally the Bath and West of England Branch. As well as Bath, members came from Bristol, Cheltenham, west Wiltshire and central Somerset, until they formed branches closer to home. Jean Milligan attended the 10th anniversary Ball. During one of the dances, she decided that the band was playing the wrong tune, so she went straight up to them and gave them the benefit of her advice. The band and the branch survived the shock. During the first 30 years, the Branch had a high membership probably because the headquarters of the Admiralty were here. Many members were in the Navy or the Admiralty. They moved around Britain and the world, and brought their traditions with them. Bath Branch now has 50 members, runs classes on two days per week and has links with two country dance classes.

Matthew Clements

News

Old branch gets new name

The Lorn (Argyll) Branch has changed its name to the Oban and Lorn Branch. Everyone knows where Oban is; not everyone knows that the district is known as Lorn.

Sue Porter

Cheltenham Branch Family Dance

On 9 June Cheltenham Branch held another dance for friends and family. People started to arrive, visitors from abroad, children with parents and grandparents, and a group from Abingdon looking to encourage children to dance. It was a great fun afternoon, with about 35 adults and children joining in. It was lovely to meet up with others who realise how important it is to encourage children to become involved, if we want to keep Scottish country dancing alive and well.

Anne Walker

Three Score Years and Ten

This year, Barbara White, Cheshire Branch, celebrated 70 years as an RSCDS member. She started dancing aged 8, taught by her Scottish gym teacher in Bath. Barbara and her sister were founder members of Bath Branch and remember Miss Milligan's visit. She and her husband, Tom, moved to Cheshire and were founder members of Cheshire Branch. To mark her 60th anniversary as a member, Stuart Ross devised *Barbara White's Strathspey*. On her 70th anniversary she received a letter from Jean Martin, President. Barbara still attends a weekly class. One of the first dances she was taught was *Petronella* and it remains a favourite.

Anne MacDonald

St Andrews

Another highly successful Summer School took place in St Andrews with a total of 618 dancers. Junior Summer School had nine young people and there were 18 in the 12 – 18 group.

Jim Stott

Belfast Branch: April Afternoons

Like many others, Belfast Branch is always looking for ways to attract new members, particularly the young. We decided to create a mini-series of classes during April, held at the family-friendly time of 2 pm on a Saturday afternoon, and branded them 'April Afternoons'. To keep it affordable, we charged a nominal fee of £1 per head. HQ approved a matched funding application which enabled us to proceed with the project. We printed flyers and distributed them. We created an 'Event' on Facebook. On each of the four afternoons we had enough for several sets to enjoy fun and simple dancing, ably led by Lucy Mulholland, familiar to many as the deviser of *City of Belfast*, who has a real talent at teaching young ones. Many of the younger attendees were the children or grandchildren of existing members. The laughter and enthusiasm were wonderful, and the sight of grannies and grandpas partnering their grandchildren, taking exercise together, sharing the fun and passing on the love of dancing to the next generation definitely made the whole venture worthwhile.

Linda Harley, Belfast

Letters to the Editor



Any opinions expressed in the letters below are personal to the writers and do not reflect the views of the RSCDS or the Management Board.

Dear Editor

Mrs Stewart of Fish Hoek

'Mrs Stewart was a **grand lady** who did much to **advance** Scottish country dance before **retiring** in Fish Hoek'. This was the sentence that my wife, Heather, made up to help her remember the sequence of formations in *Mrs Stewart's Jig* when she was doing her teachers certificate. Grand chain, ladies' chain, advance, retire. I am sure that almost all readers of this magazine are aware that the Mrs Stewart mentioned here is Ysobel Stewart, one of the founders of the RSCDS. Much is known about the later years of Miss Milligan, but Mrs Stewart's final years make up only one paragraph in Dr MacFadyen's book *An Album for Mrs Stewart*.

15 October 2018 marks 50 years since Mrs Stewart's passing, which would make this an appropriate time to reflect on the last years of this grand lady. Mrs Stewart moved to Fish Hoek in 1955. It is unclear why, but it has been suggested that she was in search of a warmer climate to alleviate the symptoms of the rheumatism that she suffered from. At that time, Fish Hoek was a small seaside village on the outskirts of Cape Town, South Africa. It now forms part of the city of Cape Town. It has a fine beach, and is situated in a mountain valley which isolates it from the busyness of the rest of

Cape Town. It is a relaxing corner of False Bay, well suited to retirement with beaches on two sides and mountains on the other two. The valley even has its own Scottish country dance club.

Mrs Stewart spent the first five years of her stay in Fish Hoek at 10 Fifth Avenue, which was owned by her cousin Captain Ernest Ruddell and his wife. In 1960 she moved into her own house, together with a friend, a Mrs D De Beer. This house, known as Protea Cottage, is situated at 151 Kommetjie Road. It is a spacious house and would have been on the edge of the town at the time, and still has great views of the mountains. Mrs Stewart commented on this view in a letter to Miss Hadden shortly after she moved in. Given the similarity of the vegetation and mountains to those found in Scotland, I am sure she would have felt very much at home.

Mrs Stewart was no longer dancing when she came to South Africa, but stayed in touch with the happenings in Scotland by writing letters and receiving visits from Society members. She also received visits from local RSCDS members, including Mr Malcolm Foggo and his wife Winifred. Mr Foggo, the Chief of the Cape Town Caledonian Society, was also a dancer and RSCDS life member, as was his wife. One can only imagine the scope of their conversation on matters Celtic.

Mrs Stewart passed away on 15 October 1968. I have long searched unsuccessfully for her grave site, but I have recently learned that her remains were cremated in the Maitland Crematorium two days after her passing. I have found no record of where her ashes were buried.

Mrs Stewart's legacy lives on in Cape Town. Not only is the Cape Town Branch of the RSCDS still going strong, but Fish Hoek continues to have a strong connection to Scottish country dance. Two of the largest clubs in South Africa have Fish Hoek connections – the teacher of one, Kim Mills, resides in the town, whilst the Fish Hoek club, taught by my wife, Heather Hodgson, holds its classes each Monday at the intersection of the two roads in which Mrs Stewart used to live, about 50 metres from Captain Ruddell's House. The local primary school is also piloting Scottish country dance as an extra-mural activity. These classes are taught by teacher Heather Carson.

How about joining us in marking the 50 years since this grand lady's passing on the 15 October 2018 by dancing one of the dances remembering Mrs Stewart: *Inverneill House*, *Mrs Stewart's Jig*, *Ysobel*, *Autumn in Appin* or *Mrs Stewart of Fasnacloich*, or perhaps even one of the dances remembering the last decade of her life: the local favourite *Mrs Stewart of Fish Hoek* (RSCDS Pretoria, Happy Blues) or the recently published *Ysobel Stewart of Fish Hoek in Book 52*. And if you ever visit Cape Town, why not come and dance with us? I will be happy to show you where Mrs Stewart spent her retirement.

Andrew Hodgson, Fish Hoek SCD Club

Dear Editor

Leaving Dances Early

I read with great interest Ian Robertson's Opinion piece in the April 2018 edition about people leaving dances early. I agree with him on all counts and would like to add a few other thoughts.

- It might help if dance organisers divided the programme unequally between the two halves: for example, nine and seven, as people generally have more energy before the break.
- Place 'difficult' dances mostly in the first half and ensure the second half includes no more than one challenging dance, and put it near the beginning. The remaining



Mrs Stewart moved to Fish Hoek in the southern suburbs of Cape Town. This panoramic view of the town shows how close the beach is.

six or so should be relatively easy so that the brain is not overtaxed at the same time as the feet.

- Keep the interval short: a combination of stiffening joints and too much food and drink is not conducive to an active second half. The downside is less time to relax and talk to people.
- If the dance venue is such that many people arrive by public transport, the dance needs to finish earlier than if everyone comes by car or is staying on the premises (weekend schools). That needs a combination of a shorter programme, shorter interval and earlier start time. The last of course brings problems of its own: more people arriving late, so that the dance does not really get into full swing until half way through the first half. Some groups deal with this by offering free welcome drinks, or placing the easiest dances at the beginning of the programme.
- Finally, MCs could help by keeping things moving, ensuring sets are counted promptly and efficiently, not getting hung up on straightening lines, refraining from delivering mini-lectures on the origins of the dance or the dance deviser, and, above all, being more selective with encores. Pity the poor second-half MC who has to curtail the programme because his or her first-half counterpart got carried away by the general enthusiasm and allowed too many encores. Those who shout loudest are generally those with the most energy and who will not leave the floor early in any event. I think there is a case for announcing in advance which dances will, and will not, be encored, and sticking to it. That would mean the timing could be more precise and those who are flagging in the second half, or even the first half, could sit out dances which they do not really want to dance twice. But that is really another topic!

Julian Mason, International Branch

Dear Editor

Encoring Dances

Why do we repeat three and four-couple strathspeys? Using a rough guide, a 3 x 32 strathspey runs for about 3.11 minutes; a 4 x 32 strathspey about 4.12 minutes; and an 8 x 32 strathspey about 8.14 minutes. If we are programming the shorter dances to conserve energy or save time, then repeating them pretty much defeats the purpose as twice through *Culla Bay*, for example, takes about 8.24 minutes. Hardly a saving in energy or time.

If we are programming them because we like the dances, they provide variety in the programme and can break up an 'eight times everything' programme, then why repeat them? Nothing is sadder than hearing the

MC plaintively asking 'do you want to do it again', and half the dancers saying No and leaving, then having to reluctantly come back on the floor and dance again. Some of these dances we love but only once. The second time through *Culla Bay* can seem like an endurance exercise sometimes. Contrast that with *Scott Meikle*, which we always repeat. Why is that? The combination of dance and music is fabulous, but somehow it seems a short dance, although at about 2.25 it is probably average length. Twice through is about the same as an 8 x 32 reel, but it seems shorter. Please MCs, sometimes we are just applauding because we loved that time through the dance but don't feel the need to re-dance it.

Fiona Bullivant, New Zealand Branch

Dear Editor

40th Anniversary

It is 40 years this year since Miss Milligan died. I joined the RSCDS in 1976 and attended Summer School for the first time in 1978. I looked forward with some trepidation to meeting her. It was not to be. She was taken ill a few days before I travelled to Scotland and died while I was there. Summer School was stunned. I remember someone saying that it was appropriate that she should pass away while her Scottish dance family was gathered together.

Elizabeth Bennett, Croydon Branch

Dear Editor

Cultural and Historical Context

I have been following the correspondence regarding Scottish country dancing in Scotland, triggered by the letters from Bob Taylor and John Carswell. It is difficult to disagree with many of the sentiments expressed in the responses to these letters that appeared in the last issue of the *Scottish Country Dancer*. However, they do seem to be missing one essential element: this concerns the cultural and historical context. Why do people take up Scottish country dancing? Is it merely an interesting activity that appeals or is a degree of cultural involvement important: hence, is the Scottish bit relevant or merely incidental? This cultural link may be multifaceted: being Scottish, living in Scotland, Scottish heritage, liking Scottish music etc, but whatever it is I don't see how it can be ignored.

Those of us who live and dance in Scotland cannot help but be aware that Scottish country dancing is only part of our dancing heritage: other social Scottish dances exist. There are also a number of country dances that belong to the pre-1923 Scottish dance repertoire that are still danced regularly outwith RSCDS circles that are part of Scotland's historical and cultural fabric. It is the relationship between country dancing

and other Scottish social dancing that perhaps makes Scottish country dancing in Scotland a wee bit different. We all dance Scottish as part of a continuous spectrum of dance and music. At one extreme we might find a very informal ceilidh whilst at the other, formal demonstration standard country dancing. Most of us, however, dance somewhere in the middle. For the long term benefit of traditional social dancing in Scotland the RSCDS needs to recognise this reality. It could be argued that Scottish country dancing can be treated as an isolated activity, thus making other social dancing irrelevant to the development of Scottish country dancing: to me this view misses the point about the place of country dancing in a Scottish context. This does not make dancing here more worthy than elsewhere: we just need to recognise that the cultural context and the specific challenges in Scotland are different.

The challenge for the RSCDS is to enable Scottish country dancing to continue to develop in a way that allows the enthusiastic dancer to be accommodated, wherever they live. At the same time a closer relationship with the wider dancing public in Scotland should be encouraged, so that the occasional dancer here sees the RSCDS as a friend and force for good. Whatever we do we should never lose sight of our historical and cultural roots. The importance of this can be encapsulated in a quote by Phil Cunningham about music but which seems to me to be equally relevant to dancing: 'Playing music is a bit like travelling in time, it evokes emotions and wakens memories, but it also connects us to people and communities who played and shared the music in another time'.

Peter Knapman, Glasgow Branch

Dear Editor

Scotland

Bob Taylor and I wish to thank members for reading our letters and in particular those who took the trouble to write in. We very much regret that some members still do not understand that dancing is not the same the world over. In Scotland it is different and is more than just fun, fitness and friendship. There is no other country where it is taught in schools. Yes, the RSCDS is global but it has a Scottish base which is surely part of its appeal; we have a Scottish name and men dance in the kilt. We are concerned that Management, in its apparent desire to retain overseas membership at all costs, is now demonstrating as its aim the preservation of the Society, rather than the preservation of Scottish country dancing and its music.

We are concerned about an excess of new dances in recent years which has led to a change of style in both our dances and

dancing. The change of repertoire is obvious from any AGM dance programme. Nothing stands still, but we may wish to ponder, for example, why so many dance devisers are not Scottish, James Cosh (*Mairi's Wedding*) being the great exception!

In case anyone thinks that we have only seen dancing in Scotland, both of us have been dancing for a long time and widely – in Africa, England and New Zealand. We do value the global appeal of the RSCDS, but insist on its unique Scottishness.

John D Carswell, Linlithgow
Bob Taylor, Buckie

Dear Editor

Serious Society Issues

To lose one Executive Officer may be regarded as a misfortune; to lose three, in as many years, looks like carelessness, to misquote Oscar Wilde. The Chairman posted a plea for patience whilst the process to find a successor to fill the post, vacant since May, grinds on. Meanwhile, ordinary, non-speaking, non-voting members may have been interested in the job description and salary offered to applicants and a clarification of the contradiction between the duty imposed on the Management Board, by the Articles of Association and Rules of Procedure, to 'appoint a Secretary' – and the recently adopted title of 'Executive Officer'. They are quite different roles and any change should have been approved as an amendment to the Constitution at a General Meeting.

The decision to include a breakdown of membership numbers in the April edition of *Scottish Country Dancer* is welcome although the figures are a year out of date due to the failure to address synchronising accounting and membership years. Gains and losses would also be helpful to see whether retention or recruiting needs effort. Membership, rise or fall, is the only test of whether the Management Board's Business Plan is working. The Chairman will hopefully address the issue at the AGM, set out proposals for bringing years into line and, most importantly, outline the means of ensuring that members have a forum to be able to scrutinise the Board other than through the archaic delegates system.

Roger Brooks, North West Craven Branch

Dear Editor

A Picture worth a Thousand Words

Jean Milligan would often use the phrase, "a picture is worth a thousand words". She was referring to the value of demonstrating rather than verbal description. In her later years she would invite a class member to demonstrate the step or formation being taught. This always conveys so much to the class. Today, with a YouTube video dancers

can learn and practise in the privacy of their own homes and arrive at an event fully prepared to dance, negating the need even for an MC. I am told that a lot of dancers learn dances in this way, rarely resorting to the written word or diagram.

We are used to checking the 'footnotes' section on RSCDS dances in *The Manual* for any additional guidance. For *The Middleton Medley* no such advice is given. The complexities of dances often occur in timing the transitions to ensure flow. In this 'modern' dance from *Book 22* the last 16 bars are in pas de basque – not stated but implied and this requires skilful dancing to accomplish. But had I assessed it correctly? I could find only one video and watched firstly with anticipation, then disbelief and eventually disappointment. It was an amateur recording by a roving cameraperson filming at a clearly unprepared dance club. The dance had been filmed about four times through and each time the dance was performed slightly differently at transitions and on some occasions when the critical movement came, it was missed. I use this story to ask what control or vetting there is on the web to ensure only helpful material is posted and not the misleading stuff I saw. It seems anything can be put on the web! The RSCDS has been diligent in ensuring proper interpretation of dances as each new book is released and even preparing videos. I understand the RSCDS is currently videoing all Society dances to ensure a consistency of interpretation. So it would seem they are in the best position to be the body to vet all videos of Scottish dances (not just RSCDS dances) before being posted on the web. A video which has been approved by the RSCDS would then get to use a symbol denoting this. This role could be delegated to branches. This is just a suggestion but it does seem that viewers of videos are apt to believe what they see! I hope your readers agree – something should be done.

Stephen Webb, London Branch

Anselm Lingnau, Convenor of MS, comments:

Stephen is right that 'substandard' videos can be misleading, but the Society is obviously not in a position to inspect all videos of dances before they are posted to a site such as YouTube, over which we have no control.

The Red Poppy Project

South Western Scottish (SWS), is a team of 20 dancers from the south west of England who meet once a month for an advanced technique class with their teacher Anita Wilson. SWS has recently been working to recreate an unusual 128-bar medley for eight ladies and four men in a square set which was first performed in the Albert Hall before

the Queen at the Festival of Remembrance in November, 1986, broadcast by the BBC. The dance was *The Red Poppy*.

The late Stanley Wilkie, of Edinburgh Branch, had been commissioned to create the dance in commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the Battle of The Somme, and he also trained the display team. The BBC archive recording shows a magnificent staging for the performance, with a smartly dressed team dancing to the music of a military band and marching off at the head of a pipe band to finish. The commentator announced: "*The Band, Pipes and Drums of the 1st Battalion King's Own Scottish Borderers are joined by the dancers of the Glasgow and Strathclyde Universities Officer Training Corps. Now enter the dancers wearing the Mackenzie kilts and the red Erskine skirts. They come from the Glasgow and Strathclyde Universities Officer Training Corps and they too have a link to the Battle of The Somme, which as you can see they weave poignantly into their dance The Red Poppy. On the 1 July, 1916, the ranks of B Company, the 17th Battalion the Highland Light Infantry were filled with young men from Glasgow University: within minutes almost all were killed. This then is a dance in their honour.*"

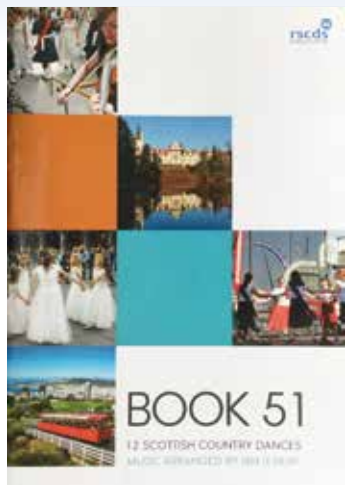
Sue and Vic Tyler, ISCA Scottish Dancers in Devon, contacted Mr Wilkie who supplied the dance instructions. They performed *The Red Poppy* on a few special occasions in the intervening years, with their final one in November, 2014, the centenary of the start of WWI. SWS want to continue this tradition.

We filmed our team dancing *The Red Poppy* this autumn and the resulting video will be posted on YouTube in October. The video is dedicated as a small contribution from Scottish country dancers to the special commemorations marking the 100th anniversary of Armistice Day which have been planned around Remembrance Day 2018. We hope very much that you will now want to access *The Red Poppy* display video from links that we intend to make available on social media.

Chris and Julie Dewhurst offered to create the music for our display. Chris describes the music as a medley of tunes by James Scott Skinner, whose playing career extended into the 1920s, thus including the era commemorated in the dance sequence. The medley comprises 64 bars of strathspey (*The Iron Man* and *Castle Spynie*) and a 64-bar reel (*The Queen's Welcome to Invercauld*). It will be recorded next year by Chris Dewhurst and his band. The Society Archive has no record of the historic BBC performance. We welcome contact from any of the former members of Mr Willkie's 1986 GSUOTC team.

William Morris, South Western Scottish

Does your branch have a new book which you would like reviewed? If you teach a class and are interested in reviewing books of dances from a teaching point of view, please be in touch via mag.editor@rscds.org



Book 51

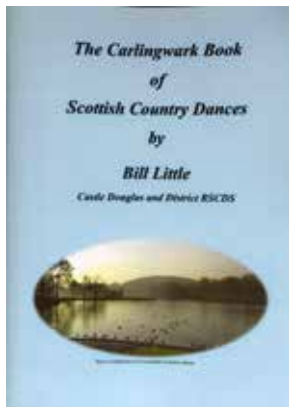
The call for submissions for *Book 51* requested dances suitable for young and less experienced dancers. The five jigs, four reels and three strathspeys, come from Europe (including England), New Zealand, and the US, one devised by a teenager and several associated with children's classes. Two are for two couples in a longwise set; two are for four couples; one is for a square set; the others are for three couples in a four-couple set. None of the dances is complicated, nor contains more than two major formations, so they are suitable for less experienced dancers. They may not be particularly exciting for advanced dancers but that was not the aim of this book – after all, it follows on from a book of dances devised for experienced, fit, dancers – and they would provide suitable contrast to more complicated dances on event programmes.

New Year Jig was devised to teach reels of three and *Hello-Goodbye* introduces set to corners and partner. *Bohemian Reflections* contains a ladies' chain; in *Fair Enough* there is a two-couple allemande; *Holyrood Strathspey* has corners pass and turn and reels of three; *The Somerset Children's Reel* has a double figure of eight; and rights and lefts feature in both *Come What May* and *Pluto's Head*. Both *The Edinburgh Toy Shop* and *Save the Children* require the first couple to know who their corners are.

And for the *Young Ones* and *Summer on the Beach* are probably more suited to children than adults – in the former, all four couples dance constantly, but if taken gently it works as a good warm-up mixer in a large circle; in the latter, 1st and 4th couples have 4 bars' rest, 2nd and 3rd couples dance for all 32 bars. However, I like the 'story' attached to the latter, and particularly the 'meanwhile' representing children jumping over the waves. An unexpected influx of beginners means this

book has had great use in Dublin in recent months, and, all in all, it 'does what it says on the tin' and is a useful addition to most teachers' repertoire.

Helen McGinley, Dublin, International Branch



The Carlingwark Book of Scottish Country Dances

By Bill Little

Bill Little or 'Willie' as he is known to his friends and neighbours in Galloway, is a much loved and respected dance teacher both locally and internationally. Bill was for many years a teacher at Summer School along with his wife, Hope, who taught Ladies' Step. *The Carlingwark Book* brings together a lifetime of work by Bill and has been long awaited. It is thanks to Bill's close friends that this book has been published for all to enjoy. The dances carry the names of places in Galloway such as *Threave Strathspey*, *Port William Lass* and of course *Bonnie Gallowa*'. Other dances are named after friends from the local area or the wider dancing world. Many of the dances in the book are for four couples displaying Bill's passion for sociability and teamwork. There are fourteen strathspeys, ten jigs and six reels. All of the dances have original tunes by well known musicians such as George Meikle, Ian Holmes, Gordon Shand and Ian Kirkpatrick as well as some traditional tunes. Bill's work overseas also features in the book. In particular, *Light of Hope* was devised after his visit to Japan. The tune of the same name was composed by Tatsuya Yamauchi after seeing the devastation of the earthquake and tsunami in Japan. The way Bill has devised his dances reflects his often stated maxim that, 'Any movement in Scottish country dancing should be done elegantly'. All of the dances are accessible, irrespective of a dancer's experience.

Bill's passion for dancing has been passed on to many 'Galloway Lads and Lassies' over the years. This is reflected in the number of dances linked to the very successful Days of Dance held for

young people in Wigtownshire. Three fine recordings by a trio of today's best known bands accompany the book. Bill's love for Scotland, his home area of Galloway and his friends and fellow dancers is apparent in this book of dances. I am sure Bill's only wish is that we enjoy and dance them well.

William Williamson, Dumfries Branch

The Carlingwark Collection CDs

CD1: James Coutts

CD2: Scott Band

CD3: Ian Muir

These three recordings to accompany Bill Little's *Carlingwark Collection* will prove a wonderful addition for any teacher or collector of country dance music. The recordings are intermixed with additional marches and waltzes, which will most certainly be used for warm-ups and cool-downs. For my personal taste, I would have preferred fewer strathspey airs throughout all three CDs.

In Volume 1 James Coutts and his band provide the solid sound that one has come to expect from him. Everything feels wonderfully compact but never rigid. While the jigs may be on the slightly brisk side for some, there is a copious amount of swing, which gives them a delightful jovial quality. The reels are slightly more sedate but certainly not lacking in energy. *75th Anniversary Reel* is a definite highlight with wonderful Jim Johnstone and Neil Barron alternatives. The *Kirkcall Strathspey* injects a needed dose of punch.

Scott Band brings together a six-piece for Volume 2, providing the album with a superbly robust sound. Gillian Ramsey on fiddle provides an excellent additional texture. The fiddle is present at the forefront of the mix. The entire album is crisp and tidy with some brilliant alternative tunes. It was wonderful to hear some rousing Gordon Patullo and Bill Black tunes brought into the mix – the bread and butter of any accordionist from the North East.

The Ian Muir quartet in Volume 3 is my personal favourite. The mix, playing and arrangements all feel so effortless and natural. Across all the rhythms, Ian and the band ensure that everything feels sleek and polished, with the reels proving especially rousing. This CD contains five strathspeys, three jigs and two 4x32 reels, plus a waltz and a march. A cracking 8x32 reel may have been nice for both the band and listener to sink their teeth into! But this is a tiny complaint against what is an excellent recording.

Adam Brady, Youth Branch

Sadly Missed

We would appreciate it if obituaries for inclusion in the next issue were sent from Branch or Club Secretaries. As this issue was going to press we heard of the sad passing of two important figures from London Branch, Wilson Nicoll and Owen Meyer. Their obituaries will appear in the Spring Issue.

Sam Heron, Queensland

Sam Heron, husband of the current Chairman of Queensland Branch, was Branch Chairman from 1992 to 1998 and an enthusiastic Scottish country dancer, a great optimist, always keen to support those in need. A Commemoration of his Life was held on 22 May with over 200 present. A group from Sam's Cleveland Club danced a 7-couple dance that Sam had devised for the passing of a friend entitled *Our Missing Friend*, followed by five sets dancing three of his favourites.

Bryan Hacker, Queensland Branch

Greg Reznick, San Francisco

Dance was always a part of Greg's life. He danced his way through college and then followed his parents from international folk dance over to Scottish country dancing in the mid 1990's. Greg actively volunteered in the San Francisco Branch for more than eighteen years, serving on the Branch Committee, as sound engineer, webmaster and more recently, as editor of the branch newsletter. A founding member of the dance troupe, New World Dancers, Greg served as the class manager. He taught the Crockett and Portland classes. He was an active contributor to the Asilomar Weekend for many years and was a core teacher for the 2014 Weekend. As the Asilomar Fundraising Chair, he focused on establishing the Asilomar Fund. Greg received the Branch Award in 2016. In June, New World Scottish Dancers hosted a Remembrance Dance where friends and family traveled from near and far for an afternoon filled with remembrances, music and dances devised by, or for, Greg and Olga – a poignant and fitting tribute to an amazing person who leaves a huge gap in the Scottish country dance scene.

The Asilomar Committee, San Francisco Branch

Eddy West, New Zealand

Eddy was a well-known deviser of dances, many of which were included on dance programmes throughout New Zealand and overseas. *Kamo Karousel*, *Beach Dancer* and *The Ivy Leaf* are his best known dances. Eddy published many dances and was one of the earliest devisers to publish dance instructions on the internet. He began dancing following encouragement from a member of his tramping club, whose mother was a SCD teacher. He was a stalwart of all the clubs he belonged to, always willing to take an active part on the committee. His organisational talent also benefited the Auckland Region of the New Zealand Branch. He was President in 2001/2 and also served on the committee on many occasions. Eddy avoided the limelight. At the 1990 Commonwealth Games opening ceremony, however, he was the banner-bearer who led the Scottish country dance team into the auditorium. He is sadly missed by his family and friends, who have greatly appreciated messages from dancers throughout New Zealand and overseas. Eddy's legacy lives on in his dances.

Katharine Hoskyn, Fiona Bullivant and Esther Mackay

Roger Waterson, London

Roger Waterson, for many years a well-known and popular figure in the Scottish dancing scene in London and the South East, was a barrister by profession, having studied law at Magdalen College, Oxford. It was there he took up both Scottish country and highland dancing and was for a time President of the Oxford University Scottish Society. As a solo accordionist, Roger often played for dances and demonstrations in and around London

and in 1971 he joined the Caber Feidh band. This popular band travelled all over the south of England fulfilling engagements most weekends for more than four decades. Roger's enthusiasm for highland dancing led him to join Jack McConachie's Highland Class at the Royal Scottish Corporation Hall in Fetter Lane. Here, in the late-60s, he met up with Graham Cattell from the London Highland Club. Roger became LHC Treasurer and so began a 50 year commitment. During the following years he held various offices with the LHC – Treasurer, Committee Member, Vice-President, President from 1994 until 2013, then again a committee member until shortly before his death. At the beginning of the 1970s the Royal Scottish Corporation sold their premises, leading to the formation of the Combined Societies' Committee with the task of seeking an alternative venue. Roger was appointed Chairman and it was largely due to his endeavours that the RSCDS London Branch, the London Highland Club and many others found a new home at St. Columba's Church in Pont Street. Roger will be sadly missed by all who knew him. He was a kindly and generous man; a staunch and loyal friend steadfast to his many commitments, who gave willingly of his time and abilities but asked for little in return.

Graham Cattell, Chief of the London Highland Club

Mary Ross B.E.M., Inverness

Mary was introduced to Scottish country dancing in her native Banffshire at the age of 16. She moved to Inverness and became a member of the Inverness Branch in 1962 and brought her enthusiasm for dancing into the branch. In Nairn she started three children's classes and one adult class. Always interested in furthering dancing she started a children's class in the Hilton area of Inverness. Sometime later she also took on a class at North Kessock. Mary also devised a dance *Up and Down Ben Nevis* which was published in our 60th Anniversary Book. For many years Mary organised dances in aid of various charities and is noted for the active part she played in country dancing through the Highlands. For all her work she was honoured with the B.E.M. in 2017. John Drewry devised the strathspey *The Boyndie Knot* published in *Bankhead Book Book 3* for Mary and her husband Jonathan's 40th wedding anniversary as they had been married in Boyndie Kirk near Banff. Mary will be fondly remembered by her many friends in the Highlands.

Irene Whyte, Inverness Branch



Day School Diary

The Day School Diary is compiled by Ian Brockbank. Please send details to ian@scottishdance.net. Issue 28 will cover the period from April 2019 to April 2020

October 2018

- 6 Leeds Branch Highland Workshop
- 12-14 Ottawa Branch Weekend
- 13 Swilcan Book 52 Workshop, Utrecht
- 13-14 Nova Scotia Branch Workshop, Dartmouth
- 19-21 Sutton Coldfield Branch Weekend
- 20 London Branch, Day School
- 20 Exeter Branch Half-Day School
- 20 Thistle Club Workshop, Eindhoven
- 26-28 Asilomar Weekend, San Francisco
- 27 Sheffield Branch Day School

November 2018

- 2-4 RSCDS AGM Conference Weekend, Perth
- 9-11 Croydon and District Branch Weekend
- 9-11 Northern Virginia Branch Argyle Weekend
- 10 Toronto Association Annual Dancers Workshop
- 10 Bristol Branch Day School
- 10 Swilcan Drewry Workshop, Utrecht
- 11 Toronto Teachers Ass. Afternoon Workshop
- 17 Norwich Branch Day Workshop
- 17 Vlaams Caledonische Society Day School
- 18 Berkhamstead Strathspey and Reel Club Day School, Hemel Hempstead
- 24 Cheshire Branch Advanced Day School
- 24 Edmonton Branch St Andrews Workshop
- 30-2/12 Leeds Branch Malhamdale Weekend

January 2019

- 18-20 San Francisco Branch Weekend Workshop

February 2019

- 1-3 York and North Humberside Branch Weekend
- 2-3 Swilcan Nunspeet Weekend, Utrecht
- 16 Oxfordshire Branch Day School
- 15-17 Edmonton Branch Annual Workshop Weekend
- 17-22 RSCDS Winter School, Pitlochry

March 2019

- 2 Somerset Branch Day School
- 2 Inverness and District Branch Day School
- 8-9 Oban and Lorn Branch Weekend
- 9 Derbyshire North East Branch Day School
- 15-17 Atlanta Branch Unicoi Spring Workshop
- 16 Royal Tunbridge Wells Branch Day School
- 16 Leeds Branch Musicians' Workshop
- 16 Swilcan Dance Workshop, Utrecht
- 16-22 Leeds Branch Scarborough Weekend
- 23 Toronto West End Workshop
- 23 Brussels Workshop
- 23-24 Pittsburgh Workshop Weekend, Pittsburgh, PA
- 24 Toronto West End Teachers Workshop
- 29-31 Helensburgh and District Branch Weekend
- 30 Frankfurt SCD Club Day School
- 30 San Diego Branch Workshop

April 2019

- 6 Geneva Spring Workshop, Dardagny
- 13 Swilcan Dance Workshop, Utrecht
- 19-21 RSCDS Spring Fling and Spring Fringe, Paris
- 26-28 Winnipeg Annual Workshop, Winnipeg
- 27 Cheltenham Branch Day School

May 2019

- 3-6 International Branch Weekend, Utrecht
- 10-11 Millport Weekend, Isle of Cumbrae
- 17-19 Duns & District Branch May Weekend
- 17-19 New York Branch Pawling Weekend
- 25 Swilcan Summer Workshop, Utrecht

June 2019

- 7-9 Midwest Scottish Weekend (Chicago / Madison / Milwaukee), Beaver Dam
- 7-10 Vienna Branch 30th Anniversary Weekend
- 14-16 Stornoway Weekend, Outer Hebrides
- 28-30 New Mexico Branch Workshop, Las Vegas

July 2019

- 1-13 Boston Branch Pinewoods Camp
- 14-11/8 RSCDS Summer School, St Andrews
- 26-28 TAC Teachers' Weekend Conference and AGM, Calgary
- 29 - 2/8 TAC Summer Dance Week for all, Calgary

More News

TAC

In July TAC celebrated its 60th anniversary with a very successful Teachers' Conference Weekend held at the University of Minnesota, followed by a week of dance classes for dancers of all levels, beginners to experienced. Almost 100 dancers, from seven countries, enjoyed the teaching of Antoine Rousseau, Ellie Briscoe and Jody Kulas, with music provided by members of Tullochgorum and Scotch Mist, led by Music Director Barbara McOwen. A great time was had by all! Join us in 2019 in Calgary, Canada!

Linda Pettengill

TAS

The Teachers Association Scotland had a very successful Spring Workshop in Helensburgh in April, and a packed Autumn Workshop in August. Over 70 teachers were taught *Book 52* by Eric Finley and Andrew McConnell, with Muriel Johstone playing. This year TAS has partly funded one young teacher to do Units 2 and 3 at Summer School as well as giving scholarships to six young dancers to attend Spring Fling.

Susan Mackay

Raising money for charity in your raffle

Do you wish to raise money for charity? Sue Porter of Oban and Lorn Branch reports that there is a misconception among UK branches which themselves have charitable status that they cannot do this. If a Branch wishes to support a local group, such as the High School Pipe Band or the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, they can do so by holding a raffle. The name of the recipient group must be announced before any tickets for the raffle are sold. ALL money from the sale of the raffle tickets must be given to the group as advertised. The amount raised from the raffle must not be included in the income/ expenditure relating to the event. If a branch has charitable status, it cannot take money out of its own funds to give to the group, but it can raise money as long as the above rules are observed. Raising money at events is an excellent way of raising the profile of country dancing in your area.

Sue Porter

Scottish Country Dance Teachers' Association (Canada)
SUMMER DANCE WEEK FOR BASIC TO ADVANCED DANCERS
TEACHERS' CONFERENCE WEEKEND • AGM



Mount Royal University • Calgary, Alberta, Canada

Summer Dance Week • For All Dancers

28 July – 4 August 2019

A full week of Scottish Country Dancing for basic to advanced dancers, to fabulous music, with world class teachers & musicians, in beautiful Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

Join us for:

- 6 morning dance classes
- a variety of afternoon classes
- 4 evening social dances
- a ceilidh
- a formal banquet and ball
- fun with old friends and new

Teachers

Jimmie Hill - Edinburgh, Scotland, UK
Linda Henderson - California, USA
Geoffrey Selling - Pennsylvania, USA
Moira Korus - Ontario, Canada

Musicians

Andy Imbrie - Music Director
with

Reel of Seven

Teachers' Conference Weekend • AGM

26 – 28 July 2019

Jimmie Hill - Teacher
Deby Benton Grosjean &
Andy Imbrie - Class Musicians

Dancing Achievement Award Courses for Dancers & Assessors

29 July – 2 August 2019

See the website for event details.
Registration will open March 1, 2019.

www.tac-rscds.org



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