

SCOTTISH Country Dancer


rscds
Dance Scottish

The Members' Magazine of the RSCDS

No 25 October 2017



Summer
School

RSCDS EVENTS

TEACHING CONFERENCE

3 November 2017, 1030 – 1630, Bells Sports Centre, Coaching Hall, Perth

This event is open to all teachers, qualified or not. Discussions on Unit 4 and mentoring; music and dance programmes; basic teaching qualification; inclusive dancing. Full programme on the website.

88TH AGM and CONFERENCE WEEKEND

3 – 5 November 2017, Bells Sports Centre, Perth

Friday dance: Scott Band; Friday Ceilidh: Triple Trouble Ceilidh Band; Saturday Ball: Colin Dewar

Saturday class: Andrew Nolan and George Meikle

Sunday class: David Queen and Rodger McAndrew

GLOBAL YOUTH WEEK

19 - 29 January, 2018

A week of country dance activities aimed at young people.

WINTER SCHOOL 2018

18 – 23 February 2018, Atholl Palace Hotel, Pitlochry

Teachers: Mervyn Short, Helen Russell, Lindsey Ibbotson, Paul Plummer

Musicians: Ian Muir, Judith Muir, Muriel Johnstone, Judith Smith

SPRING FLING 2018 GLASGOW

20 – 22 April 2018

Teachers: Carol-Ann Knox, Alasdair Brown, Fiona Brunk and Caroline Holmes

Musicians: Matthias Rank, Adam Brady, Susan MacFadyen and Màrtainn Skene

SUMMER SCHOOL 2018

15 July – 12 August, University Hall, St Andrews

- Attend as a resident or non-resident, for any one or two weeks of the four
- Morning classes at various levels and optional afternoon classes/sessions
- Social dancing every evening, with a ceilidh one evening each week
- Unit 2 and 3 courses in weeks 1 and 2
- Unit 5 course in weeks 3 and 4
- DAA courses: Advanced week 2, Very Advanced week 3, and Intermediate week 4, subject to demand
- Class musicians' course in week 1 for those who want to play for classes. The musicians' course for ensemble playing in week 2
- Starters / re-starters' class in weeks 2 and 4, subject to demand
- Young Dancers' Week and Junior Summer School in week 3 for 8 – 15-year-olds



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Editorial

One of the most rewarding aspects of being appointed editor of *Scottish Country Dancer* is the number of Society members who contact me. Thank you to everyone who has been in touch.

Editing the magazine is a team effort of the Editorial Board. I would like to thank Jean Martin, who co-edited the Spring Issue with me, and introduce our new member, Caroline Brockbank, who is taking over responsibility for *From Around the World*.

Every editor's nightmare is not having enough material, but I am happy to report that I have been inundated with material. I would like to thank everyone who sent things in and apologise to everyone whose piece did not make the final edit.

When I edited *Issue 1* back in the Autumn of 2005 I expected to receive lots of *Letters to the Editor*, so great had the clamour been by members for more say in Society affairs. In actual fact, we received only four, none of which was contentious. I can only think you were saving yourselves for this issue as we have a full three pages. The four main topics are central to where we are today as an organisation: how to attract both new dancers and new members; Scotland's place within the Society; whether to continue publishing new dances or not; and our teaching style vis à vis the older dancer.

When *Scottish Country Dancer* began, the internet as we know it today was in its early days. Facebook was only launched in 2004, the year before *Issue 1*. Today members have access to the RSCDS website, e-newsletters, Facebook, and our YouTube channel, not to mention Branch and AG websites, Facebook pages as well as the thousands of posts from individual members. It has become clear that it is time to re-think who communicates what and by what means. In future, this might mean that something that has been in the magazine moves to the website. It would be good to hear members' views.

Earlier this year I was at the Bonn weekend. It was incredible! With excellent attendances both at the Fling and the Fringe, superlative organisation, and ideal venues, the three evening dances were electric. I felt it essential that this model weekend be shared with everyone.

There is only so much pre-planning that the Editorial Board can do. When an article about schoolchildren representing Scotland in Paris in 1950 arrived in my inbox, I knew it had to go in. When you read about Dorothy Cairns' experiences when she was only 15 years old, I am sure you will be as moved as I was. It also gives us an interesting insight into Allie Anderson of Edinburgh Branch, whose contribution is relatively little known.

I am often asked about spelling and grammar. Our policy is that the magazine is written in British English. Any contributions from speakers of American English remain in American English.

Finally, the over-riding impression I get as Editor is how much we owe to the thousands of devoted members worldwide quietly running events which promote our dancing.

Jimmie Hill, Edinburgh

Cover:

All ready to dance in the Younger Hall, St Andrews, during Summer School.

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The next issue of *Scottish Country Dancer* will be published in April 2018. Please refer to *Notes for Contributors* on the website. Send materials for inclusion to the editor: mag.editor@rscds.org no later than 1 February 2018.

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

Editor

Jimmie Hill

Editorial Board

Caroline Brockbank, Fiona Mackie, Jean Martin and Mike Greenwood.

Publisher

The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society
12 Coates Crescent, Edinburgh, EH3 7AF

Website

www.rscds.org

Telephone

0131 225 3854

Email

info@rscds.org

Graphic Designer

Its All Good

The Haughs, Cromdale, Grantown on Spey, PH26 3PQ
info@itsallgood.org.uk t: 01479 870 435

Printer

J Thomson Colour Printers Ltd,
14-16 Carnoustie Place,
Glasgow
G5 8PB



The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society is a Scottish charitable company limited by guarantee. Registered Office: 12 Coates Crescent, Edinburgh EH3 7AF
Charity No. SC 016085 Company No. SC 480530



News from Coates Crescent

Mike Greenwood

Branch Awards

Listed below are all those members who have received Branch Awards since October 2016 – congratulations to everyone!

Aberdeen	Sheila Bain
Bannffshire	Lindsay Gauld
Cape Town	Heather Hodgson
Cape Town	Gill Loubser
Cape Town	Campbell Tyler
Carolinas	Eilean Yates
Castle Douglas	Mary Grierson
East Lothian	Ann Routledge
Helensburgh and District	Ann Thorn
Helensburgh and District	Helen Rodger
Liverpool	Helen Dorrington
London, Ontario	Anne and Alasdair Campbell
New Zealand	Janet Flavel
New Zealand	Katherine Hoskyn
Nova Scotia	Coleen Putt
Ottawa	Charlie Inglis
Pretoria	Terry Lynne Harris
Roxburgh, Selkirk and Peebles	Margaret Pritchard
Somerset	Pat Morland
Vancouver	Rebecca Blackhall-Peters
Winchester	Wendy Mumford

Elections to Management Posts

The following are the nominees for this year's management elections:

Management Board (5 places)

Lucy Fallon	Roger Brooks
Sue Ronald	David MacDonald
Paul Youtlen	Linda Gaul
Theresa MacVarish Clark	

Membership Services (no election necessary)

Peter Avery Angela Young
Peter Knapmann sole nominee as Convenor-elect

Education and Training (no election necessary)

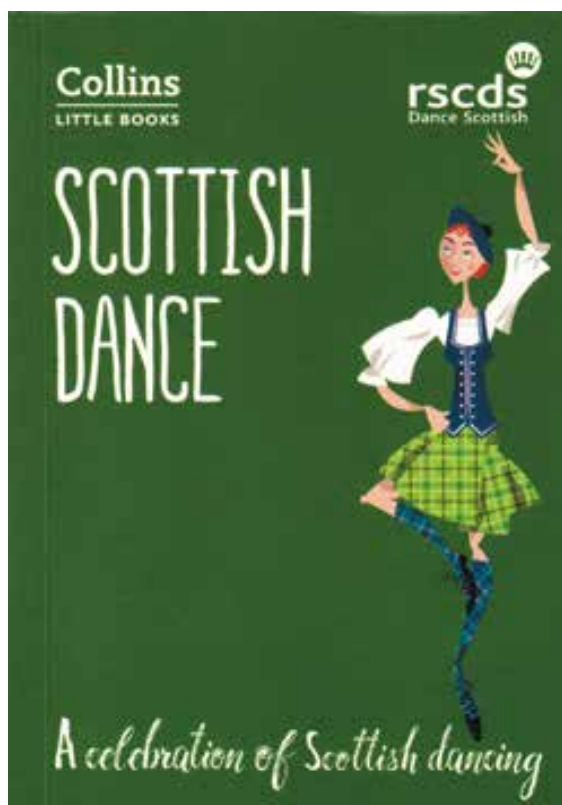
Deborah Leary Anne Taylor

Youth Services (no election necessary)

Olga McIntosh

Motion to AGM 2017

'The Management Board proposes that for the year from 1 July 2018, the basic full annual subscription shall be maintained at £20 and that other memberships will be based pro-rata on this rate.'



Little Book of Scottish Dance

Many will be familiar with the Collins book first published in 1996. Harper Collins approached the Society with a view to a new version but with a greater emphasis on informal dancing: 'the sort of dances that might be encountered at informal ceilidh and wedding dances'. Membership Services have produced the contents and the book is now published in an attractive new format. There are easy round-the-room dances, straightforward country dances, and some more challenging dances. The book is aimed at people who are not experienced dancers and the instructions are accessible. Order your copy (£6.99) from the RSCDS bookshop.

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 are on the website under 'JMMF'. There are 3 deadlines for applications: 15 November, 31 May, 30 September.

The Video Project

On behalf of Membership Services, Chris Ronald reports on the Society's Video Project:

Dancers who want to find out how a dance goes have several choices. The Scottish Country Dance Database (SCDDDB), which lists over 17,500 dances, has cribs and diagrams for many of the

more popular dances, and links to videos for a growing number of them. For many dancers, watching a video has become the preferred way of learning or brushing up on a dance. While not being a substitute for the original instructions, videos can also help people who are preparing to teach a dance. While videos exist already for numerous dances, they vary greatly in quality, and do not always show the dance as the deviser intended. This may not be an issue at a social dance, where dancers' main concern is to have fun, and many of the existing videos are indeed taken at social dance events.

Given the value of videos to the dancing community, we have decided to make it possible to view (through our YouTube channel) a good quality video of every dance published by the RSCDS. The aim will be to show the dance accurately and to portray the joy of dancing. The aim will not be to show perfect technique; there are plans for a parallel project that will cover steps and formations.

Over the years, there have been several initiatives to create good quality videos of RSCDS dances. In this way, the Society does already have videos of the dances in *Books 32 to 46, The Scotia Suite*, and some of the dances published in the magazine. There are plans to convert them into digital format, after which they will be uploaded to the web. We are also making and uploading videos of all new dances published by the RSCDS; this has been done since *Book 49* and we plan to continue to do this.

After counting all the above videos, there remain roughly 600 dances published by the RSCDS for which we would like to see good quality videos. We believe that some branches and other groups may enjoy contributing to this, and we are inviting groups to contact us with expressions of interest. We have in mind that each group that is accepted would undertake to produce videos of the dances in one or more complete RSCDS books. The criteria for acceptance of a group would include:

- Having dancers able to perform the dances to a good standard; the inclusion of younger dancers would be an advantage; dancers must be willing to have their names mentioned along with the video.

- Having the required dance space and technical (videoing) facilities. The Society may be able to make a modest contribution towards costs, such as hall hire.
- Having a certificated teacher who is versed in the 2013 Manual to oversee the dancing aspects of the project locally; technical advice will be available on interpretation of the dance instructions.

Interested branches and other groups should contact the Membership Services Committee, which will send you a detailed questionnaire to help us determine whether the group has the required facilities, etc. Neighbouring branches and/or groups are encouraged to work together to form a combined team. All enquiries to info@rscds.org.



Workshop & Grand Ball in Italy

Scottish Country Dance
9-11 February 2018

rscds
RSCDS Headquarters, Edinburgh

Teachers:
Annie Rossese RSCDS Paris Branch
Olga Ivanova RSCDS Moscow Branch
Marian James Gray

Levels:
Beginners, Intermediate, Advanced

Venue for Workshop:
Dancarta, via Cal. Sereim, 11
Macerata (PS)

Venue For Grand Ball:
Chiosetta San Marco, via San Marco
Macerata (city centre)

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From the Chairman



Helen Russell

As I meet and speak to RSCDS members they raise many thought-provoking topics. Two recent and connected questions have been: why do so few people dance when it is such a physically and mentally satisfying activity? Why do so few men dance? The

number of men dancing varies from country to country and may reflect different social and cultural norms. In some parts of Scotland and in Canada, there are more men dancing than I encounter elsewhere. I suspect that there is still a tradition and social acceptance of men dancing in Scotland and for first and second generation emigrants. I enjoy dancing with any other dancer, but I know that many women would love to have a greater choice of male partners. People, men in particular, may be reluctant to dance for a variety of reasons and will say they are too busy or too un-co-ordinated. Perhaps they are also influenced by negative perceptions, or just too scared.

A psychologist once wrote that to dance well, one needs good health, poise, co-ordination, stamina, strength, athleticism, rhythm, balance, suppleness, speed, an ability to predict and react to the movements of others (especially for partnered dancing), and style. Interestingly enough, all these things are also what make a good fighter. Yes, even style is useful, for it intimidates opponents. (On reflection, I can say I have seen such behaviour on the ballroom floor, just failed to recognise it for what it was!)

I would argue that the converse is also true. Taking up dancing will also develop and enhance these physical qualities. The academic, Dr Peter Lovatt, who has done research into dance, uses the phrase 'dance confidence' and has measured this in the different genders for a range of ages. Amongst other things, he concluded that people dance for social bonding and enjoyment, but I think we already knew that. What is interesting is that he says that dance confidence 'spills into other areas of life' and can enhance learning in other areas. In that case we should be trying to teach as many children as possible to dance.

In the past, I have run 'men only' classes... think *The Eight Men of Moidart* and the *Reel of the 51st Division*. A short course aimed at the non-dancing spouses of keen dancers can also be a good way of integrating, mostly men, into the local dance community.

There are many ways we can make dancing accessible and let potential dancers taste success and pleasure. To encourage this, the recently launched matched funding scheme offers your branch an opportunity to plan a new initiative to encourage new dancers by offering matched funding of up to £250 to run it. Why not think of something that will produce Dance Confidence (DC) in the people in your area?



Men's team at the 2017 Newcastle Festival Photo: Michael Nolan

Youth Services Committee

Anne McArthur, Convenor



Anne McArthur with a member of Junior Summer School.

I have just returned from Junior Summer School where Marilyn Watson, Jayne Riddet, Joana Stausberg and I had an amazing week with 26 enthusiastic young people aged 8 – 11. It was hectic – dancing, doing crafts, playing games. 18 young people undertook their introductory medal test. Everyone participated in a show dance for the Friday ceilidh. The senior and experienced dancers were filmed for the *Book 51* video. We had a couple of family ceilidhs during the week which were well received with a request for family weekends. This is one of the Business Objectives for Youth Services and will be discussed in due course. Last year we had the dance, *Pudsey Bear*, the music download, the score and the offer of stickers for those groups who were raising money for Children in Need. This will again be available from September on the website.

Youth Services have a further three development grants each worth £500 available for sustainable youth activities. The application forms will be on the website in September with a closing date of 31 December, 2017. Tell us why your project for young dancers should get our support. The winners will be announced at the end of Global Youth Week.

Global Youth Week 2018 will be 19 – 29 January. Over the last two years we've seen youth ceilidhs, 'bring-a-young-friend-along', whisky nights, dance weeks in schools, workshops, dancing in disguise and more. If you upload photos or videos of your events you may even win a prize.

New in 2018, Global Youth Week will launch the first ever virtual festival of Scottish Country Dance in October 2018. We are not going to spoil the surprise, but if you are curious about what it is start collecting friends for a display competition.

Spring Fling 2018 is in Glasgow 20 - 22 April. The accommodation and the halls are booked. Look out for further details on www.springfling2018.com

Education & Training Committee



Malcolm Brown, Convenor

The review of the Teacher Training process has made significant progress in three areas. Members of the committee, including our two examiners, have looked at the current system and syllabus and have proposed certain minor changes.

Another group is gathering video material to determine how we can use it for training purposes, and use modern communication technology to assess dancing and teaching. A third group, including two members of the committee based in North America, has developed the outline for a new qualification, currently called the Basic Teaching Qualification. In addition to the basic qualification, additional special training courses and qualifications in areas currently not included in our teacher training will be developed.

This has been a very busy year for our examiners and exams, and we have utilised nearly all of the examiners in the Northern Hemisphere at least once. There were 10 candidates who came from all over Russia to take Unit 2 and 3 exams in a city nearly 500 miles east of Moscow. The Society helped to reduce the cost of this course to the candidates and to Moscow Branch by giving a development grant to help pay for the cost of the course. Glasgow Branch held a very successful Unit 2 and 3 course for their young dancers, with the examiners having a marathon session of examining some 14 candidates over two days.

Reports on the tests for the Dancing Achievement Award have highlighted a need to update the marking sheets and the syllabus, so that eventually achieving a certain level in the DAA will be equivalent to obtaining a pass of the Unit 2 dancing exam.

Medal Tests are continuing to be popular, especially in Scotland, but tests have also taken place in Corbridge, Kent and in Toronto. And we seem to be in a continuous cycle of finding assessors who are available and who do not have to travel too far.

We have decided to hold a Teaching Conference this year on the Friday of the Conference weekend. We decided to hold an additional conference this year to enable as many people as possible to hear about the new teaching qualification, and to contribute towards its development. If you are a teacher, or just interested in teaching, please join us – there is no need to have passed any certificate!

Summer School this year was very special – the young people's class was nearly twice as large as last year, for the first time we had two different music courses, and a number of people who lived locally were able to join in the morning classes.

Scholarships are important in enabling more people to attend our schools, and we are most grateful to an Australian member and others who have provided finance to fund two additional summer school scholarships for young dancers, named in memory of Alastair Aitkenhead, ex-Chairman and examiner. Application forms for these, or any of the other scholarships, can be found on the website, and should be received by 16 November.



Duncan Laidlaw, Elaine Laidlaw, Katharine Hoskyn and four JAMs who had achieved their Gold Bar in New Zealand Branch Medal Tests

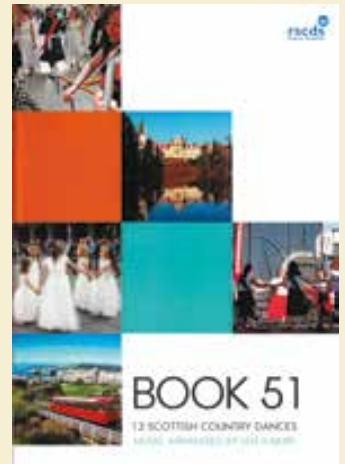
Membership Services Committee



Anselm Lingnau, Convenor

Once more Summer School has come and gone, and with it the publication of this year's new *Book 51*, together with its accompanying CD recorded by Ian T Muir and his band. All of these have been very well received, and if you didn't pick up a copy in St Andrews, the RSCDS Shop will be happy to oblige! The book is also available as a PDF file, and by the time you're reading this, the music should be on iTunes, Amazon, Spotify etc. We're also working on videos for YouTube (which have been recorded at Summer School) and 'teaching tracks' for *Book 51* – bite-sized pieces of the original tunes for classes without live music.

HarperCollins' *Little Book of Scottish Dance* was produced with our help and is now available wherever books are sold. If you're looking for a 'stocking filler' for friends, relations, or colleagues who might be interested in taking up Scottish country dancing this could fit the bill.



Work is proceeding apace on next year's *Book 52*, the final dances for which are just now being selected, and we're putting the finishing touches to the new combined A5 edition of *Books 31–38* and the revised and corrected combined A5 edition of *Books 19–24*, both of which should be available at the Conference Weekend in November. The video project is ramping up – see page 4 for further details. And you shouldn't yet give up on the *Index of Formations and Movements*; we will get that out eventually. In the meantime, a new edition of the *Index to Dances*, current up to and including *Book 51*, is available as a free download from the RSCDS web site.

Owing to complaints from several members about too many new dances, there will not be a *Book 53* in 2019. Instead, we're looking into publishing a 'best-of' book of popular dances from the RSCDS repertoire and other sources that should be interesting to new dancers, possibly with corresponding recorded music. We're also conducting an online survey to decide what sort of dance books, if any, the SCD community thinks the Society should publish in the future. In the meantime, feel free to let us know what you think!

The new website for the Society is coming along strong and Membership Services continues to take an active role in its development. We're convinced that a good website is a fundamental service that the Society should provide to its members and the SCD community at large and we hope to do much more with the new one than is possible with the current one.

If you come to the Conference Weekend in Perth, be sure to look us up at the Membership Services table, which will be staffed by committee members on Saturday, or feel free to stop us for a chat during the day or between dances at the ball or social dance! Or send e-mail at any time to info@rscds.org or convenor@msc.rscds.net. Looking forward to hearing from you!

From around the World

As usual, it has been a busy six months! Can we remind all branches and groups to be in touch with the correspondent listed at the beginning of their region with news which all dancers everywhere might be interested in. If you are somewhere which is not covered, please be in touch direct with Caroline Brockbank at caroline@ceilidhkids.com

Australia

Correspondent: Caroline Donald
tgandcmd@ozemail.com.au

Adelaide recently hosted the 42nd Australian Winter School. The Branch held their annual ball the night before the school started, so benefitted from the company of a number of visiting dancers and musicians, the Ian Robertson Trio. Report on page 18.

Canberra and District Branch dancers performed at the National Folk Festival, where the theme focused on South Australia and the Northern Territory. The dancers called their display *Reeling on the Ghan*, the Ghan being the railway which takes its name from the Afghan camel drivers who arrived in Australia in the 19th century and helped explore the country's remote interior.

Queensland Branch has been celebrating its 40th Birthday with an anniversary lunch attended by 130 past and present dancers, and a great weekend of dancing at the seaside resort of Caloundra. A ceilidh was held for three dancers achieving their 80th birthdays – Ossie Draper, Bernie Platzer and Bob Morrison.

The **Sydney Branch** Winter Ball, held in June, was a wonderful success, with visitors from as far away as Dublin, and fantastic music by Iain McKenzie. The first Australian session of the DAA was held in Sydney in March. Taught by Trish Nicholls, who was shadowed by Diana Hastie, a group of extremely diligent and interested dancers were assessed at the Intermediate level. The course was held over 5 weeks and by the end of week 3 the dancers had bonded as a team, and the improvement in their



Canada 150 Red and White Dance Party at Toronto's St Clement's Social Group

dancing technique and teamwork was evident. Everyone agreed that the course was not only successful but also enjoyable.

Canada East

Correspondent: Elaine Hoag
elaine.hoag@gmail.com

Nova Scotia Branch began its 35th anniversary celebrations with a Royal Tea Party on 7 May followed by the launch of *Spark O' Water* – a book of dances written by and for Nova Scotia Branch members – with a CD by Muriel Johnstone and Keith Smith.

In **Montreal** on 8 April, Canada's oldest Highland Regiment, the Black Watch, organized a military tattoo to commemorate the 375th anniversary of the founding of the city, the 150th anniversary of Canadian Confederation, and the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge in WW1, in which many Canadian soldiers lost their lives. French Canadian, Irish, English, and Scottish dancers represented

the Fleur-de-Lys, Shamrock, Rose, and Thistle found on the Montreal city flag. Dancers from the Montreal and Ottawa Branches, and the Ardrae Dancers of Ottawa, collaborated to showcase Scottish country dancing. Later in April, the Quebec Thistle Council bestowed an Auld Alliance Award on long-standing Montreal Branch member Jodie Hebert, who was recognized as having made a significant contribution to the advancement of Scottish tradition and culture in Quebec.

Toronto's St Clement's Social Group held a 'Red and White Dance' on 24 June, in honour of Canada's 150th anniversary. Participants wore Canada's colours and kicked up their heels to a programme of dances, each associated with a particular Canadian province or territory. Favourites included the *Canadian Barn Dance* and the *Maple Leaf Rant*. The 'red and white' theme naturally led to a strawberry shortcake feast at the end of the afternoon!

Europe

Margaret Lambourne
margaret.lambourne@ziggo.nl

Remco Knooihuizen reports that **The Swilcan SCD Group** of Utrecht organised their annual Nunspeet Weekend in February. Teachers were Deb Lees and Margaret Lambourne, with music by Perth musicians, Maureen Rutherford and Neil Copland. The intermediate and advanced groups of dancers were treated to 4 classes, one with each combination of teacher and musician, as well as a joint class to start and end the weekend. Brains were in gear for dances like *Carrick Castles*, *Portincaple*, and *Fife Ness*. With Deb Lees and other guests playing together with Maureen and Neil for the Saturday Ball, the varied and lively music made for a great atmosphere, topped off with the traditional 'bitterballenpauze'.



The first Australian DAA class in Sydney

The **Schiehallion Group** in Roosendaal had an evening dance in March with musicians Wil van de Berg and Kees Mook. In May the **Swilcan** had an afternoon workshop taught by Margaret Lambourne with musicians Edwin Werner and Ilona Stitz and an evening dance.

At the end of March **Brussels Dance Scottish** organised a weekend in Spa taught by David Queen with musicians James Gray and Andrew Lyon. The dance venue was in a magnificent hall with a good floor and acoustics. During the weekend we had an opportunity to have a walking tour of Spa and some of the men went to watch the motor racing at the famous Spa track. The dancing season closed with the **Luxembourg Weekend** taught by Deb Lees with music from the Braes of Wansbeck Band.

Stockholm Branch finished its 40th anniversary year with an extra anniversary ball in January 2017, organized to give a second chance to members who had not been able to attend the main celebration in June last year. The special guest of the day was our former member, the lecturer in dance at the University of Limerick, Ireland, Dr. Mats Melin, who presented a beautiful panorama of Scottish dance and music. He also showed some most inspiring films which he had taken of dancing in Scotland. Several members had also brought photos from the past 40 years for an improvised exhibition. It is interesting that the two Swedish branches, **Stockholm** and **Gothenburg** both celebrated 40 years last year. Congratulations to Lise Ruckert, a founder member and teacher of Gothenburg Branch who celebrated her 80th birthday earlier this year. Lise is *The Everlasting Flower* of the dance devised by Gunnar Numeus.

Japan

Correspondent: Momoyo Suzuki
momo-gon@mbj.nifty.com

Tokai Branch celebrated its 20th Anniversary Weekend School at Lake Hamanain in Shizuoka Prefecture in March. Classes were taught by Graham Donald, Craig Houston, Yoshiki and Kaoru Oyama. Two musicians, Akiko Kasama and Kana Ohtake played for the classes and the ball, and accompanied the various classes with a total of 140 dancers. There was a lecture by Masako Okada, a music lecture by Kana Ohtake, and an optional tour and ceilidh. Yoshiki Oyama is a past chairman of Tokai Branch, the First Convenor of the Japan Examination Committee, and an experienced teacher. He has issued a book, *Historical Background and Episodes of Scottish Dance*, which had been serialised over 20 years in the Branch newsletter. The Anniversary seemed the ideal opportunity to collect the articles into a book. Most of the stories are accompanied by an illustration or photo. It is wonderful for Japanese dancers to read about their hobby in their own language.



Ruri Aoyama playing for the ball at Tokyo Branch's Weekend Photo: Angela Young

Tokyo Branch held a three-day Weekend School in May in Nikko with about 100 participants, but which included only four male dancers! The teacher was Angela Young and the pianists were Hiroko Kokai and Ruri Aoyama. Everyone concentrated their energies on dancing in wider sets than usual and with longer steps, using the covering, phrasing and eye contact that Angela taught in her classes. On the afternoon of the second day, everyone was fascinated by her talk about her personal history and experience, and how she related music and Scottish country dance. On the first night of dancing, Angela and Hiroko played four-handed on the piano for some dances. For the ball, Hiroko played the piano, Angela and her husband Graham Berry played keyboard and Ruri joined them playing a recorder in some parts of programme. Nobody expected such splendid music for dancing!

New Zealand

Correspondent: Sue Lindsay
wee-davy@xtra.co.nz

In April the **Auckland Region** celebrated their 60th Anniversary with an Afternoon Tea and an informal dance. In July they held a Ball. The **Otago Region Easter School** was held in Cromwell. Queen's Birthday Weekend School was hosted by the **Rotorua Club** from the Waikato/Bay of Plenty Region. The Junior members held their bi-annual camp in Masterton in April.

Several clubs within the **New Zealand Branch** have celebrated milestones this year; 60th for St Andrews Club in Invercargill and Balmoral Club in Oamaru, 40th for Tokoroa Club, 30th for Hoon Hay Club in Christchurch and 15th for Opotiki.

North America West Coast

Correspondent: Roberta Gotfried
rgotfried@alum.vassar.edu

In addition to our annual weekends and workshops, we are looking forward to the Catalina Island weekend, with an opportunity to dance in the circular

ballroom with the Pacific Ocean surf all around. Teachers will be Elaine Brunken, Marjorie MacLaughlin, and Antoine Rousseau, with musicians Andy Imbrie, Judy Nicolson and Ian Nicolson.

South Africa

Correspondent: Heather Hodgson
heather.hodgson@uct.ac.za

Pretoria Branch, 45 years old this year, will hold a ball to celebrate on 14 October. They will also be commemorating this milestone with the publication of a new book of dances – *Happy Blues*. Pretoria have formalized their monthly socials and have been holding them regularly. There was a meeting of a significant number of South Africa's Scottish country dance teachers at a Fish Hoek class in July, when Pretoria Branch teacher, Wouter Joubert, and his daughter, Liebet, attended.

In an effort to sustain the generally improved level of dancing achieved through last year's DAA process and assessments, **Cape Town Branch** has been conducting a monthly series of technique classes, taught by Gill Loubser, Campbell Tyler, Heather Hodgson and Kim Mills. The aim is to ensure that all dancing is done in a fluid and graceful manner, with keen attention to precise phrasing, accurate footwork and covering. The regular 'No Walk No Talk' evenings remain popular. Dancers from the Branch enjoyed evaluating dances for possible inclusion in *Book 52*. Other branch activities have included a repeat of the Introductory Course, preceded by a 'Bring a Friend Social' to attract possible candidates for the course. Cape Town dancers are looking forward to sharing the dance floor in the Kelvin Grove Ballroom with visitors from around the world, and dancing to a live band in October, when the 'Dancing in New Places' event arrives in our city. The classes will be taught by Pat Houghton, with music provided by George Meikle and James Gray.



On the eve of the Carolinas Branch AGM, Eileen Yates was presented with a Branch Award.

USA East Coast

Correspondent: Eileen Yates
edgyates@gmail.com

Thistle School celebrated its 37th year in July. Here are some thoughts from a first-time 'Thistler', Glenda Jarel. "Throughout the week the founder, Betty Lee Barnes, directed the school's traditional activities centered around teamwork, fellowship and fun. I thoroughly enjoyed the inclusive atmosphere created by the staff and students and I felt I was part of this really special Thistle family. Dancers, coming

together year after year in a beautiful and peaceful setting, create the synergy that is Thistle School. I'm already looking forward to next year".

There was further excitement when Betty Lee Barnes was awarded the prestigious Agnes MacRae Morton award for outstanding contributions by a Scot or a person of Scottish descent who has helped to promote Scottish heritage at the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games. Many of the dancers were fortunate to be there to see her receive the award. Further north dancers had the opportunity to attend Pinewoods. See page 18. At the Loch Norman Highland Games in April a Carolinas Branch award was presented to Eileen Yates for 'her sustained commitment to bringing the joy of Scottish country dancing throughout the Carolinas and elsewhere and providing growth experiences for teacher development and for her many and varied services'.

The eighth annual **Midwest Scottish Weekend** was held at the new site of Wayland Academy in Beaver Dam, Wisconsin in June. Participants from seven states, including California, enjoyed a lovely weekend, with outstanding teaching and music. Our teacher, Stella Fogg, was an absolute delight. Her 'Scottishness' made the dancers experience the heart of Scottish country dancing. Chandi McCracken, awarded the Bob Blackie Scholarship at the 2012 TAC Summer School, taught advanced technique and ways to incorporate Highland steps into country dances. The musicians were Elke Baker and

Liz Donaldson. A specialized 'dancing above the waist' class of techniques for keeping the whole body dancing was well-received. Saturday evening began with a reception and splendid banquet, followed by a short stroll behind the piper across the leafy campus to the ball. The gym was cleverly transformed into a Scottish landscape, with 'thistles' masking the basketball hoops.

South America

Correspondent: Marcela Galve
galvemarcela@gmail.com

Buenos Aires Scottish Country Dancers have been represented at Summer School for four years running now and so, with the aim of improving dancing skills, a group of advanced dancers took extra lessons to improve and learn new figures. In the past months we held workshops dedicated to dance devisers John Drewry and Derek Haynes. January this year found us celebrating Burns Night with a ceilidh organised by the South American Piping Association where BASC Dancers were honoured to select the dances and do the recapping. Those members lucky enough to travel around the world danced with the Hungarian group in Budapest earlier this year and, for the first time in our history, one of us attended Spring Fringe in Bonn. For the rest of 2017, we are planning to have a Halloween tea party in October and a day out at the Delta of Paraná River (city of Tigre) with a Rowing and Dancing Day, all this crowned with our traditional End of the Year Party: The Happy Meeting.



The enthusiastic dancers of the Buenos Aires Scottish Country Dancers (BASC)

How we time CD tracks

How does your teacher choose which CD track to use in class? One of the criteria is speed. Too slow and dancers become tired. Too fast and you can't execute the steps. Recently, timings on Society recordings for an 8 x 32 reel have varied by half a minute. Current Music Director Ian Muir clarifies the issues.



Ian Muir teaching at Summer School

Over the years there has been much discussion around the correct speed for dancing and, in particular, the speeds of the Society's CDs. The track timings are declared on CD sleeves and now with the advent of the Digital Download era, the timings also appear on the various

download websites. What many probably do not realise is that these track timings have been calculated from the actual track time of the original recording and include the silence before and after the chord. There has been no uniform application of the length of this silence across all of the Society's CDs due to the inclusion of it via the software used in the editing and mastering processes.

As I was preparing the files of the Society's CDs for the new Digital Downloads, this became very apparent and I was surprised to see this unfold as I delved deeper. Not only was this use of silence inconsistent across the CDs but sometimes was inconsistent on individual discs. If dancers and teachers were using the declared timings on the LP and CD sleeves as their basis for making a judgement about a track's particular speed, this could lead to the wrong judgement being made.

The Society has therefore adopted a standard timing of tracks (from *Book 49* onwards) and all published track timings are now from the beginning of the first chord to the end of the last chord. Furthermore, all artwork associated with the Digital Downloads available from various websites

are also treated in the same manner. To give some examples, *Petronella* on the CD for *Book 1*, originally declared as 4:35, became 4:30; *Dumbarton Drums* from *Book 5* went from 4:34 to 4:27. There are countless other examples, including one where the track time actually lengthened! *Alltshellach* from *Book 23* went from 8:33 to 8:41.

'Does this matter?' I hear you ask. Some would say definitely, whilst others would say not at all. What you can now be certain of, however, is that the same principle of the timing of the tracks on CDs and on all of the artwork associated with the Digital Downloads, as described above, has been applied. In the process of creating the files for the Digital Downloads the Society has also taken the opportunity to update, or in some instances include, meta-tagging of the files so if you have a sound system that reads this information then you should now see the dance title and the sequence displayed. As for the declared timings on other websites, such as iTunes, these are still generated automatically and include all of the inconsistencies already described. If we had decided to standardise the track timings by standardising the silences then this would have been a bigger job than even this exercise and would have meant re-mastering every CD! I hope that dancers and teachers alike find this a useful addition to the information that is currently available.

First timers at Winter School

Eilean Yates of the Carolinas Branch writes about going to Winter School for the first time.

A dinner conversation last year prompted a discussion on Winter School and why go to a winter location where travel might be a problem. Having been to St Andrews, this would be a totally new experience. It would be fun to try a hotel weekend. The shorter time is another incentive for older folks and the Ball in Blair Castle would be something extra special. There were a few questions that caused some apprehension. Would the level of dancing be too high? What class to sign up for? Would people be friendly to newcomers?

Arriving at the venue as a 'newbie' is always a bit nerve-wracking, but we received a warm welcome in the hotel foyer. It would have been nice if the first timers were identified on their name tag so that people could be extra welcoming. It would also have been helpful if everyone's name badge had where they came from – always a good conversation opener.

The welcome reception and the assigned seating for the first dinner were excellent

ideas. It is so easy at events where many of the participants have been before for a new person to feel a trifle lost. This was not the case at Winter School. The first social was short and comprised totally familiar dances so there was plenty of time to adjourn for the lively and varied soiree. It was a great place to unwind.

The school had a very relaxed atmosphere; the schedule not over-taxing; with plenty of time to relax after morning classes. There were plenty of afternoon activities if one wished to participate. The trip to Scone Palace was very interesting especially since it was closed to the public in winter. Those of us who went backstage at the Festival Theatre had a very informative session. The gin lovers had a chance to spend some time gin tasting another afternoon.

The highlight of the school was the Blair Castle Ball. We all headed out in buses for Blair Atholl for a wonderful night of dancing. The music was a special thrill. The opportunity for those of us who

live abroad to dance to bands like Jim Lindsay's does not come along very often and never fails to excite. With music like that who could feel tired? The ballroom setting had a unique feel with all the antlers round the walls. Part of the dancing was streamed live by RSCDS and you can imagine my surprise the following morning to have a friend in the USA comment on Facebook that he had recognised my sparkly dress and had seen me dancing!

Pitlochry is a lovely town and a good location for the school. Having spent most dance schools in college dorms it was a treat to enjoy the comfortable rooms and food in the Atholl Palace. The huge breakfast buffets deserve special mention. I encourage people to attend Winter School. The sign-up sheet for 2018 was already long even before we all left, so be sure to sign up early as soon as registration opens. I hope you will all have as good a time as I did. Luke Brady did a very good job as Director and to all the teachers, musicians and those who helped in the organisation – well done!

A Historic Trip to Paris in 1950



On Wednesday 19 March 1950 an article appeared in the *Edinburgh Evening News*, "French will see them dance the reel." The previous evening ten 15-year-old Edinburgh schoolchildren and three adults left on the overnight sleeper to London on their way to Paris to represent Scotland at the jubilee celebrations of the International Federation of Schools Correspondence and Travel Organisations, a body which, since 1929, had promoted school exchange visits between different European countries. The trip was the idea of the EIS, Scotland's main teachers' union; it was organised and funded by Edinburgh City Council's Education Department.

The ten children had been chosen from over 80 who had applied. From the beginning of January they had been taught by Allie Anderson, Principal Teacher of PE at James Gillespie's High School for Girls, and Winnie Richardson, teacher of geography and PE at Portobello High School, both of whom accompanied the children to France along with Susan Inglis, the well known pianist. The boys wore kilts and white shirts and the girls wore clan sashes with their white frocks, which had been made by the sewing staff at Gillespie's. Before boarding the train, the children took part in Mae Brown's Tuesday night series *The Way to Dance* on BBC radio, in front of an invited audience of parents, friends and the general public.



Dorothy Cairns

Dorothy Cairns (née Wilson), now in her early 80s and living in Stranraer, has been a country dance teacher for over 60 years. Taught by Allie Anderson and Winnie Richardson, examined by Jean Milligan, Dorothy took both her certificates when she was 19 with only a few months between when she was told to go away and teach a class! Dorothy was one of the 15-year-old Gillespie girls who danced in the team. This is her memory of the trip.

"As the red light in Studio 1, BBC, Queen Street, Edinburgh, came on and remained steady, a deafening silence replaced the noisy confusion of the previous five minutes. Over the microphone came the gravelly, rather plummy tones of the announcer introducing *Kate Dalrymple* and ten frantically excited fifteen-year-olds stood poised ready to dance to the music of Tim Wright's Scottish Country Dance Band and to receive tuition from Mae Brown. It is difficult to believe, but at that time she taught, on radio, a weekly dance on the predecessor programme to *Take the Floor*. Later that evening the children were to board the London sleeper at Waverley Station en route for the Newhaven-Dieppe channel crossing and a train to Paris. This was their last rehearsal after months of practising country dancing. It was March 1950, only five years after the War, during which life had consisted of bombs, blackouts, rationing and austerity. Life was still pretty grim. As one of these 15-year-olds I remember the occasion as a life-changing event. A love of SCD was born and remains deep-rooted in my octogenarian soul.

These lucky children were the chosen few from Edinburgh schools who had struggled through the eliminating rounds to earn a place in a team of youngsters being sent on a trip to Paris to demonstrate our national dances at the jubilee celebrations of FIOCES (Federation Internationale des Organisations et Correspondance et d'Echanges Ecolaires). Councillor William Fyfe, Chairman of the Edinburgh Corporation Education Committee, along with Director of Education, Mr J B Frizell, himself a keen country dancer, had persuaded that Committee to sponsor the team with three

accompanying adults to represent Scotland at what turned out to be a very prestigious event. It included dancing before an audience of 4000 in the Sorbonne, along with participants from England, Holland, Belgium, Brazil, USA, French colonies and French regions, out of which the Scottish team was voted the best. The children were called back on to the platform to lead the vast crowd in the singing of *Auld Lang Syne*. There was also a Civic Reception at the Hotel de Ville, a reception by UNESCO, and attendance at a glittering social function of the Caledonian Society of Paris, at all of which they were asked to demonstrate their skills in Scottish country dancing to very appreciative audiences.

Tea was taken at the Scots Kirk Manse, the home of Rev Dr Donald Caskie, the 'Tartan Pimpernel', whose fame and daring during the War was only a few years past, and a man whose courageous exploits had already given him hero status in these young minds. Caskie was Minister of the Church of Scotland in Paris before the war. He refused to return to Scotland and instead worked with the French Résistance to help repatriate around 2000 allied servicemen. He was captured by the Germans, imprisoned, and survived the war only to return to his post in the Scots Kirk in Paris. It was said that one way he confounded his captors was by speaking his native Gaelic.

For children educated during the Second World War, whose experience of foreign travel was absolutely nil, this trip was like opening Pandora's Box. Unbelievable treasures poured forth. There was the first sight of the Eiffel Tower, the Louvre, the Arc de Triomphe, strolling down the Champs Elysées and visiting Versailles, though, since this was done on 1 April our teenage minds were more occupied with playing tricks on one another than concentrating on the Hall of Mirrors. The success of the visit was epitomised by the sound of hundreds of people standing on the platform of the Gare St Lazare singing *Auld Lang Syne* before the happy band of kids, and three adults, boarded the train for the return journey to Scotland.



Turning with both hands during a rehearsal

We are grateful to the Evening News and Johnson Press for permission to use these photographs and to Edinburgh Branch for providing copies.



Rehearsing Rouken Glen in Gillespie's School

The adults referred to were, first, Miss Allie Anderson, who was one of the earliest members of RSCDS and a contemporary of Jean Milligan. Professionally, she taught PE at James Gillespie's High School in Edinburgh and, with Florence Lesslie, was the deviser of *The Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh* and *Prince Charles of Edinburgh*. The jig, *Miss Allie Anderson*, devised by Mina Corson, was inscribed to her. Second was Miss Susan Inglis, accomplished pianist who often played at Summer School, and third was Miss Winnie Richardson, (later Mrs Wadsworth) stalwart teacher of the Edinburgh Branch and by day a geography teacher at Portobello High School. With experience and hindsight, it seems an amazing undertaking for these three spinsters to chaperone a bunch of red-blooded teenagers to Paris in the springtime!

Exactly fifty years later, in the year 2000, I had the strong desire to arrange a reunion of these ten youngsters and I contacted Robbie Shepherd. He enthusiastically broadcast the gist of this article on his radio programme and we excitedly awaited a response. None came. Had they all hung up their dancing shoes long ago? Did the haunting minor tones of the *Reel of the 51st* no longer rouse memories? Were the stamping feet of the *Hebridean Weaving Lilt* forgotten? I don't suppose I will ever know, but I do know that one out of these ten children has enjoyed a lifetime of delight in Scottish country dancing. Thanks to Allie Anderson".

Dorothy Cairns, Stranraer

Dorothy can still remember the dances the teenagers danced: *Ladies Fancy*, *Reel of the 51st*, *Hamilton House*, *Montgomeries' Rant*, *The New Rigged Ship*, *The Haughs of Cromdale*, *Rouken Glen*, *the Eightsome Reel*, *Prince Charles of Edinburgh*, *Monymusk*, *the Duke of Perth*, *the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh*, *Waverley*, *the Gates of Edinburgh*, and *the Hebridean Weaving Lilt*.

There is no record of this visit in the RSCDS archive, but it was historic. Europe had not long come out of the most appalling period of war: individuals, families, communities, towns and countries were still coming to terms with what had happened; food

was in short supply; rationing was still a fact of daily life. Edinburgh City Council's Education Department was committed to schools exchanges in order to build relationships between young Scots and the youth of Europe. On their return to Edinburgh Allie Anderson sent a report to the Edinburgh Education Committee, thanking them for 'their courageous support of the proposal to send a team of children to demonstrate our national dances. We feel that the risk, financial and otherwise, was completely justified by the reactions and appreciation of the various audiences before whom the children danced.' The main performance by all the teams had lasted over five hours. Allie reported that the Scottish team was judged the best and 'in accordance with the French custom, our children were recalled to the platform at the end of the performance to lead the vast audience – 4,000 in the Sorbonne – in singing *Auld Lang Syne*. This they did with great gusto, and by the end of the second verse, with their expressive miming had the entire audience on their feet lustily singing something in many languages but with the traditional actions!' They also gave a demonstration at the Lycée Molière of fifteen dances. They wore full highland evening dress as well as less formal wear.

The team were invited to join in social dancing with the Scottish Reel Club. This meeting turned into a minor demonstration as the club had no regular teacher, and so they were delighted to be shown the *Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh*. Allie records that the favourite dances at all the team's demonstrations were the *Hebridean Weaving Lilt* and *Prince Charles of Edinburgh*. The most glittering social function the children attended was their display for the Caledonian Society of Paris where they danced for over two hours to a distinguished audience of Scots and French. They also attended receptions at the headquarters of UNESCO in the Avenue Kléber, and at the Hôtel de Ville, the City Hall of Paris.

Dorothy mentioned that the children were entertained by the famous war hero, Rev

Dr Donald Caskie, the Church of Scotland Minister in Paris. He gave them a tea party in the manse to which all the host families were invited and to thank them for their hospitality. The children attended morning service at the Scots Kirk where they met a party of girls visiting from Laurel Bank School in Glasgow.

The trip was carefully planned so that the children would experience life with a French family and practise their French. Allie wrote that for the months prior to the trip, they had all been studying French 'arduously'! For the last few days they were together at the Lycée Janson to give them the experience of communal life in a French boarding school.

Reading Allie's report is quite moving as she records that 'their hosts and hostesses had nothing but praise for their young guests, and pleased us greatly by commending their courtesy, tact and adaptability. They were most loth to part with them and the farewell scenes were tearful in the extreme. On the morning of our departure on the platform of the Gare St Lazare the French and Scots together sang *Auld Lang Syne* for the last time and while the send-off was hilarious, there was obviously genuine regret at the departure of the Scots. Each of us found our luggage increased by the most generous gifts of foodstuff. Allie finishes her report – 'it was a most enjoyable experience and an interesting change of pupil-teacher relationship.



Allie Anderson with two of the children on board the ferry to France

A well-deserved retirement

In March of this year Bill Little retired after 67 years as the teacher at Castle Douglas and District Branch. In this article Michael Paul, branch secretary, recalls his recent conversation with Bill about his life in Scottish country dancing.

Bill was born near Ringford, in the Stewartry of Kirkcudbrightshire, in 1923: the year in which the RSCDS was founded. He first started dancing at the age of 10 at primary school in Kirkcudbright under the instruction of Miss Reid and Miss McMyn, before progressing to Kirkcudbright Academy, where he continued dancing under the tuition of Willie and Peggy McKell, both of whom were friends of Miss Milligan. Appropriately enough, the first dance Bill learned was *Petronella*, dance 1 in *Book 1*, which was surely an excellent introduction to pas de basque. Bill immediately fell in love with both the music and technique of country dancing.

Following his service in the RAF during the war, Bill returned to Kirkcudbrightshire and danced at Glenlochar, where his father was in charge of the barrage. It was then that he decided to become a teacher. He was tutored by Jessie Dougan, obtaining his first certificate in 1947 and his second in 1949. Once qualified, he taught at Glenlochar, Laurieston, Gatehouse of Fleet and at Castle Douglas. It was a time before TV and the internet, when people had to make their own entertainment. Every village had its dancing class and, in consequence, needed a teacher.

In 1950 the Castle Douglas and District Branch of the RSCDS was formed and Bill became its teacher, perhaps not anticipating that he would remain so for 67 years! In due course he received a Branch Award from both the Castle Douglas and Gatehouse of Fleet branches and in 1990 was awarded the Scroll of Honour at the AGM in Troon, receiving it from the late Earl of Mansfield, President of the Society. Bill's view of teaching is that the most important aspect of dancing is that it should be fun at all levels and always engender friendship. In a small branch there will be a range of abilities and these must all be catered for. These twin themes of fun and friendship emerged constantly in his conversation.

As his reputation spread, Bill became more than a local branch teacher. Castle Douglas Branch entered teams for many local and national festivals, including Edinburgh and Carlisle as well as Dumfries, Galloway and Ayr. Bill also began teaching country dancing in local schools and indeed still regularly adjudicates at the Wigtownshire Primary School dance competition for teams of equal numbers of boys and girls. These activities led in their turn to invitations to act as an adjudicator, in which role he has continued right up to the present. When asked what he would look for in a junior competitor or team, he laughed and emphasised the need to encourage young dancers and to build on what was good, rather than to find fault. As ever, his philosophy is that dancing should be fun and that the young are the lifeblood of the Society.

As an excellent dancer himself, in due course Bill became a tutor and then examiner for teacher candidates. During his time at Castle Douglas he has tutored 13 successful candidates, who have provided a pool of qualified teachers much to the benefit of other branches and clubs throughout southwest Scotland and beyond. Invitations to tutor and examine candidates overseas soon followed and Bill found himself in demand in many countries, including Canada, America, Australia, the Netherlands and Japan. To his regret he has had to decline invitations to New Zealand on the grounds that they fell around Christmas, a time which he would always reserve for his family in Castle Douglas. His view of the standards abroad – very high and perhaps sometimes better than in Scotland for the reason that, as he puts it, "abroad, Scottish country dancing is treated as a special subject in its own right, whereas at home it is something that we just do". Food for thought.

In the late 1940s Bill attended his first Summer School and there met his late wife, Hope. In the early days he attended classes taken by Miss Milligan herself and he recalls that these were very



Bill with Valerie McGoldrick and Helen Wemyss

popular, with upwards of ninety pupils. There were, however, only three principal classes on offer. This, he says, is one of the great differences between then and now. Possibly at the instigation of Miss Milligan, Bill was later invited to become a Summer School teacher himself and was kept busy not just with morning classes, but also with afternoon walk-throughs, old time dancing and calling the social dances in the evenings. All this required considerable preparation and at that time teachers usually attended for two consecutive weeks. It was thus with some relief that he and Hope (herself a teacher of ladies' Step Dance) would return to Castle Douglas at the end of their tour of duty.

Not content with dancing, teaching, tutoring, adjudicating and examining, Bill is also a deviser of new dances, thirty of which he has recently collected and published in his *Carlingwark Book*. His dances mostly commemorate his friends, pupils and events around the southwest of Scotland and in them he often demonstrates a fondness for the strathspey and also for dance forms other than the common 8x32 bars. The music always comes first, he says, and dictates the dance, not vice versa: composition involves much more than linking some likely-looking formations and then casting around for a tune! Are there too many new dances these days? He thinks not, since people will always want to mark significant events through the medium of dance, although he does not believe that new dances always last.

In addition to his dancing career Bill has been the organist at Crossmichael Kirk for the past 65 years and still conducts the annual carol service at Carlingwark near his home. When the Society celebrates its centenary in 2023 Bill fully intends to be there to see it. When asked for his closing thoughts, he modestly offers his thanks to the many members, past and present, who have given him so much fun and friendship during his long career in Scottish country dancing locally, at Summer School and abroad; and also to his fellow teachers, examiners, adjudicators and musicians.

Branch Anniversaries

Clackmannanshire 90

One of the oldest branches in the Society, Clackmannanshire Branch celebrate their 90th with a dance in Alloa Town Hall. They are holding an Anniversary Tea a week later so that branch members past and present can get together and reminisce. Clackmannanshire Branch have organised the very popular Summer Dancing in Alva since 1985, attracting visitors from near and far. The branch has compiled the programme for the AGM Ball in Perth in November and it is hoped that several members will attend. Clackmannanshire have produced at least one Society Chairman over the years – Mrs Hamilton-Meikle of Brankstone, Bogside by Alloa in 1938-39.

Lesley Ross

St Andrews 80

St Andrews Branch was formed in 1937 when the Fife Branch became three separate branches: St Andrews, Kirkcaldy, and Dunfermline. There was a Branch Lunch in May with RSCDS President, Jean Martin, as guest speaker. In addition to the weekly branch class, St Andrews runs an annual ball as near as possible to St Andrews Day and the popular Tuesday dances during Summer School.

Jonathan Wilson

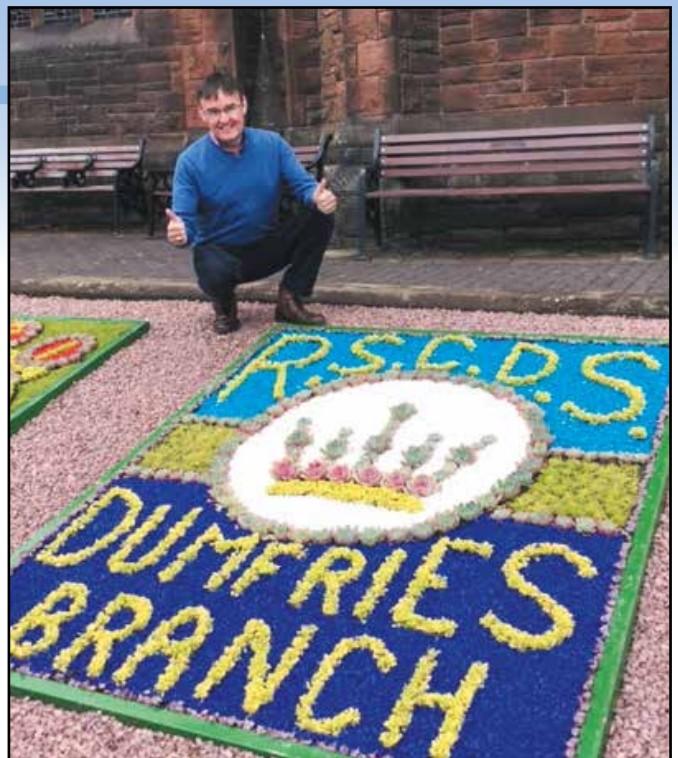
Dumfries 70

In 1947 a group of enthusiastic dancers met in Dumfries to discuss the possibility of forming a Branch of the Scottish Country Dance Society, before it became 'royal'. This they did, and this year the Branch celebrates 70 successful years. Dumfries Branch hosted the AGM of the Society on a number of occasions and was one of the few places that could accommodate all dancers in the one hall. This was the Drill Hall, now the Loreburn Hall. Dancers from the Branch have represented the Society at International events right back to the days of the International Team. The Branch has provided demonstration teams for local events and also visited overseas. Members have also played their part in central committees of the Society. Membership numbers have remained at around 100 for many years and this is due to the first class teachers the Branch has. Dumfries Branch is fortunate to have many qualified teachers who work on a rota basis. Promoting good dancing and music has always been a feature of the branch. Over the years many fine musicians have accompanied the dancers and this continues today with George Meikle playing for the classes. Two general classes, with an extra beginners class when required, are held weekly and a technique/demonstration class monthly. For the 70th anniversary, the branch held a Ball in September and will hold an afternoon tea dance in the spring of 2018. Dumfries and Galloway Council has honoured the branch with a floral display in the centre of Dumfries.

William Williamson

Peterhead 70

In September 1947 the Peterhead Branch of RSCDS was formed. Over the years the class has seen many successful teachers and musicians share their love of Scottish country dancing with members and held annual dances each year. In September the current committee and teacher Jim Stott held a tea party for previous teachers, members and musicians as well as current members. This celebration was a fantastic opportunity to celebrate our 70th anniversary, the branch's heritage and celebrate the achievements and contributions made to the Branch over the



William Williamson gives the thumbs-up to the floral display in the centre of Dumfries.

years by everyone involved. A time to meet and reminisce with old friends while watching or joining in with current members dancing. A special mention to Jim Stott the current teacher of the class who has devised a dance to celebrate this very special occasion. We also look forward to welcoming dancers from other local clubs to celebrate further our 70th anniversary at our club's annual dance on 16 March.

Paula Donnelly

Toronto 60

The RSCDS Toronto Association celebrates 60 years since Miss Milligan granted it official RSCDS branch status on 7 October 1957. Over time the branch grew from 180 members to over 1,300 in the heydays of the late 70's. Many of Toronto's members have contributed personal time to the Society and 13 members have received the Society's Scroll of Honour. The Toronto Association currently has 362 members and over 20 affiliated Social Groups, making it the second largest SCD branch in the world. We are holding a celebratory 60th Anniversary Dance on 25 November with guest of honour Andrew Kellett, RSCDS Chair Elect.

Nancy White

The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society, Bath Branch

70th Anniversary Celebration at Westonbirt House

Saturday 24th March 2018
10.30 am to 6.00 pm

Morning Day School with Barbara Savill, music by Ian Robertson
Luncheon, Anniversary Tea Dance with Ian Robertson and his Band
£25 per person

Westonbirt House (GL8 8QG) is situated in the Cotswold Hills close to M4 Junction 18
Plenty of parking
You are welcome to bring your own wine for lunch, if you wish

Tickets from Margaret Webb mawebb58@gmail.com
Information from Anne Jarrett 01225 722309

 www.rscdsbath.co.uk
Registered Charity No. 1074609



The RSCDS



Left: Milngavie Primary School demonstrating for at the Newcastle Festival (Photo: Michael Nola)
 Centre: Dressing up at Pinewoods (Photo: Ross)
 Right: Strathspey travelling at Summer School; Australian Winter School; Poussetting in the You





for a local community club; Glasgow's Alba team (n); two junior dancers at Summer School. (Parker); allemandes and jetées at Spring Fling (Jim Lindsay, Judi Nicolson and Ian Robertson at Langer Hall.



Pinewoods

Pinewoods is the Summer School of Boston Branch. For many dancers it is a fixture in the US east coast Scottish country dancing calendar. Laura DeCesare gives us a taste of what it is like.



Three Pinewoods dancers in the pine woods! Photo: Ross Parker

Nestled away in the woods of southeastern Massachusetts, Pinewoods Camp welcomes folk-dancers and musicians with its tree-lined paths, open-air dance pavilions, and crystalline freshwater ponds. For nine days in mid-July, the camp is home to Scottish country dancers from all over the world. The Boston

Branch hosts a weekend, followed by a week-long session at this picturesque venue. Dancers arrive on Friday afternoon; some leave on Monday morning; some stay to welcome new campers who have come just for the week. Each day dancers wake to the sounds of a piper, who wanders the camp and reminds sleepers that it is almost time to come to breakfast. The first period of the day features classes at different levels. Each subsequent period includes several offerings that range from social dancing to Highland for all. At any given time, a dancer may choose to attend a class or take some time to relax, socialize, or swim.

A delicious dinner precedes the evening dance, which features the talents of approximately half a dozen world-class Scottish dance musicians. Dancers fly about the floor with controlled abandon, and twice in the week they do so in formal ball wear. One evening features a fancy-dress dance. In 2017 the theme was *Out of this World*. Many dancers created costumes from their favorite science fiction series, while others wore sparkling antennae that bobbed with each pas de basque. The main pavilion shone with fairy lights and decorations designed and created by the dancers.

Scottish dancers play as hard as they work, and the fun never stops after the last dance. We adjourn to the after-party, which often includes pick-up jamming and dancing late into the night. Many arrive having refreshed themselves with a post-dance dip in the pond, while others have spent that time decorating and preparing food. The whole experience is filled with magic, joy, and friendship. Many come year after year. We welcome our newcomers and invite them to become part of this vibrant, warm, devoted, and fun-loving community. It is truly a time and place like none other.

42th Australian Winter School

Our winter is their summer; their winter is our summer. Neville Pope reports on the annual Winter School of the Australian Branches.



Reeling at the Winter School Ball Photo: Jill Pope

About 120 dancers, teachers and musicians gathered in Adelaide in early July for the 42nd Australian Winter School. Our theme was *A Dancing Tour* and the school was held in Hahndorf in the Adelaide Hills. Hahndorf was founded early in the state's history by a group of German emigrants and retains a strong German character.

Ian Robertson's trio, with Judi Nicolson and Jim Lindsay, provided music for the school, sharing the music space with Balmoral (Australia and NZ). Our teachers were Robert McOwen (USA), Wayne McConnel (NZ), Audrey Emmett (Western Australia) and local teachers Jean Dodds, Barbara Lupton and Andrew

Timmins. This year, we were able to run a youth class, supported by a grant from the JMMF. We had 5 young people, aged 10-14, with an occasional extra, and some of these will now join one of the regular Adelaide classes for a short time each week. Mornings were taken up with formal classes and afternoons with a variety of classes, including, of course, some German dancing led by German expatriate, Mechthild Timmins. Wednesday afternoon was touring time and people didn't have to go very far as Hahndorf is very much a tourist town with plenty of art and craft galleries as well as curiosity and coffee shops. Evenings included socials, a games night, a ceilidh, and a formal dinner, finishing with the ball. Dancers from Tasmania led the social on the Tuesday night bringing dances with a German flavour and dancers from Melbourne led the Thursday night social. Having others to compile and recap the social programs meant different dances and new faces up front, including one of our youth class. The Thursday night also included a demonstration of *Domino Five* by the Youth Class.



St Andrews 2017

As usual Summer School at St Andrews was highly successful. Jean Martin spoke to Summer School Director, Jim Stott. Here is a personal view from Jim with some typical quotes from a selection of participants.

The comments I have had about this year's Summer School are very heartening for me and the rest of the Summer School team: Mervyn, Rachel, Moira and the other members of staff at Coates Crescent. This year 715 dancers attended from 37 countries. In week 3 there were 60 young people between the ages of 8 and 18 and the atmosphere was great. Anne McArthur and her team ran an excellent week of activities for Junior Summer School and parents were very appreciative of the care their children received.

Yes, there were challenges: creating programmes for the evening dances which allow people of different experience and ability to enjoy social dancing; ensuring there were enough staff available to train three teams of dancers for the filming of *Book 51*, as well as a separate demonstration team; and not least a poorly plumbed toilet and the roof of the Chequered Court collapsing the day before the School began!



Concentrating on the musicians' course

This year health forms were introduced (a requirement of Health and Safety legislation) and they proved to be a godsend when on five occasions people had to be taken to hospital in Dundee or to the minor injuries clinic in St Andrews.

The afternoon walking tours of St Andrews were greatly appreciated and the bus tour to Falkland Palace was over-subscribed. People commented that things are more relaxed and Summer School is now more inclusive. The atmosphere in the Younger Hall was 'alive' on the Thursday evenings. I am really proud of that.

The skills I learned as a Headteacher definitely came into play when organising Summer School and I loved it! Planning for the next year's event began the minute we left University Hall on the last morning of Week 4. Do come and join us in 2018.

'I have just returned with my granddaughter from week 3. I have nothing but praise for the organisation, teaching, comfort and events of the last week.'

Angela McCleery

'Please can you convey to all the team at Summer School last week, a very big thank you for a super week of dancing, fun and friendship. It was my first time and I had a fantastic time. The organisation was amazing and the food and facilities excellent.'

Bridget Hague

'Summer School was wonderful due to the hard work of the dedicated organising team; thoughtful, careful planning was obvious giving the best result possible.'

Please pass on my thanks to Jim, to Rachel, to all involved (including the office staff) for the huge commitment that delivered such a very happy Week 4 for dancers and staff. I know I thoroughly enjoyed SS; the atmosphere was super-welcoming, meeting friends and making new contacts, all good. Time now for you all to relax and refresh, knowing that you have inspired 700+ people from across the world to return to another St Andrews SS!

Anne Kennedy, Australia

'Having danced for more than 27 years, I attended Summer School Week 4 for the first time. What a pleasure to dive into all those stories and lives of other people, to experience the classes and lovely ballroom nights plus the atmosphere of St Andrews, a town full of history and pure Scotland. I'll come back!'

Victor Lehmann, Germany



Summer School Director, Jim Stott, with his second fortnight Depute, Rachel Shankland

Focus on Technique



Technique is more than good footwork

Margo Priestley, Edinburgh Branch

We are taught that dance technique includes accurate footwork, good use of hands, phrasing, covering and the use of the correct step or steps for specific movements.

We are told that country dance is a form of social dancing. Sometimes this is forgotten. Do we always thank the set as well as our partners at the end of a dance? Do we always thank the musicians? While waiting for sets to be made up, just a friendly word with the person next to you does not go amiss. Or do we stand in silence, ignoring the people on either side, until the music begins?

Hands are important. They are given primarily to add to the social

aspect of the dance and as a help to other dancers, especially on slippery floors. When you give a hand to someone, do you look at them at the same time?

So many of us are not phrasing correctly. Take, for example, the allemande and promenade for three couples: all three couples on bar one dance a step diagonally to the right. How many times is this forgotten at a dance? Listening to the music is the secret of phrasing. Isn't it just magic when the music and our movement come together?

Covering is an awareness by each dancer of his/her own position in relation to that of the other dancers in the set. Looking at your partner in casting off and casting up is one example that adds to the enjoyment of the dance. How many people dance down the middle and back without as much as a glance at their partner? As Elinor said in the last magazine, where is the social feeling without eye contact?

Accurate footwork is perhaps not as achievable as we get older, but Scottish country dancing still gives us endless pleasure, and I am sure that this was what Miss Milligan wanted.

In Our Opinion

Stability and evolution within Scottish country dancing

David and Avril Quarrie, International Branch



David and Avril as we have never seen them before!

Stability is important in the areas of dance technique and terminology and has allowed SCD to spread throughout the world and for it to be possible for anyone to dance anywhere. We have danced in several countries with dancers for whom English is a foreign language. Although socialising takes place in a mixture of languages, the dancing has almost always been taught in English, which we feel is very important. As teachers we sometimes use the local language in order to explain a teaching point, and also to ensure that urgent commands such as "the other left hand" are rapidly understood during the dance. We also avoid terms such as "wheel" instead of "hands across" since it can easily be confused with "reel", particularly by a non-native English speaker.

Evolution is what keeps SCD vibrant and alive and prevents it from stagnating and dying out. We believe that we should encourage new dances to be written (because that also encourages new tunes to be composed), and let evolution decide which will eventually become part of the repertoire. The community of dancers is evolving as older members leave and new ones enter, so every effort must be made to attract and welcome the latter

while still accommodating the former. We attended the Spring Fling Ball in Bonn this year, and the energy and enthusiasm of the youngsters was awe inspiring and infectious. Many of them dance just because they love the music, the dance form and sociability rather than having any Scottish heritage. This, along with events such as Youth Week, make us very optimistic that the growth and spread of SCD can be maintained if efforts continue to introduce youngsters to it throughout the world.

Most of the small groups that we've danced with or taught in have not had live music. We used to teach from records, then cassette tapes, then CDs and now from an iPad. We would certainly like more music to become available for purchase electronically as well as in the form of CDs.

We have become enthusiastic users of the Strathspey Database so wish to thank Anselm Lingnau and the many others involved in this project. We find it very useful as dancers, teachers and organisers. We use Dance Lists to help communication between the various teachers sharing a class and to give the dancers advance notice of what's going to be taught so they can prepare themselves by looking at the crib sheets and videos.

We try to avoid teaching from cribs since they don't include the details that are provided by the original instructions. However, using a crib is sometimes the only option a new teacher in a small group has access to. Purchasing the original sources is very expensive, and many of them are no longer in print. We strongly support the ongoing efforts to make the RSCDS published dances available in electronic (eBook or PDF) form, and would also encourage the Society to explore possible mechanisms whereby other published dances could be made available in electronic form, provided copyright issues can be resolved. We expect that such access would involve a cost, and should also be available for individual dances so that new teachers can build up a repertoire of the most useful for teaching purposes, as well as the most popular as those evolve.

We have several shelves of dance books and folders containing leaflets that we constantly reference. Additional folders contain scanned copies of individual dances so we can easily take the necessary ones along to class with us, and we have a private database of PDF files corresponding to these for future reference. We'd certainly be very interested in electronic versions of these so that we could go to class with everything we need on a single portable device.

Scottish country dancing has played a major role in our lives. No matter where we've been we've found like-minded dancers who have become our friends and have enriched our lives with enjoyment, exercise and sociability. We owe heartfelt thanks to the RSCDS since without it our lives would have been much poorer.

Back to our roots in Glasgow!



The Society began in Glasgow in 1923. Spring Fling and its sister event, Spring Fringe, are in Glasgow from Friday 20 April till Sunday 22 next year. Both events have facebook pages. Contact springfling2018.com if you are under 35 and fringeinglasgow@gmail.com if you are over 35. Leanne Benton and Sabina Lawrie are members of the team organising Spring Fling 2018. They have been dancing for years and are part of the vibrant young dancers' scene in the city. Joana Stausberg, one of the Bonn Weekend organisers, asked them how things are going.

When we met at the Newcastle Festival this February, I was amazed at the number of dancers who came over from Glasgow. Can you tell us a little about the Glasgow dance scene?

Newcastle was certainly an exercise in logistics! I think overall we took about 80 dancers from Glasgow. The Glasgow dance scene at the moment is really exciting. We have three main groups working together – our University group, Alba (the alumni group), and Glasgow branch. Our main focus is making SCD fun and welcoming for everyone – whether they are beginners or experienced, love social dancing or competitions. And we are bringing in lots of new, young dancers so we keep growing year after year.

How do you recruit new dancers?

We bring in dancers from all ages and stages, but our biggest intake each September is usually the Glasgow University club's beginners class – where our teachers manage something like fourteen sets of new faces each academic year. We have put a lot of energy into encouraging new beginners over the past few years, which means that as they quickly progress we move them up to our other classes too.

One of our biggest strengths in Glasgow at the moment is that the three largest local groups work together. We have classes that cater to each stage and set of interests. The University group, with the support of Alba, brings in new, young dancers through Beginners and Intermediates. Together with

the Branch we also run a Joint Venture Advanced class (JVA). We try to co-ordinate our events and classes to match what each group needs so that we can support each other. It's not always easy to timetable so many things but very worth it! We are finding that having young teachers is also really important for keeping young dancers. All our working together has led to our local Branch supporting a group of dancers from JVA sitting the RSCDS teaching exams, which is fantastic news for the future of all dancing in Glasgow and beyond, and something we hope to continue to build on this year and in the future.



Sabina Lawrie and Leanne Beeton

Why did you start dancing, and what keeps you going?

Sabina: I'm motivated by sharing the joy of dancing! I think one of the main strengths of SCD is that it can be danced by lots of different people and it really has the ability to bring people together and be truly social.



I particularly enjoy teaching beginners and enabling people to discover their own love of dance.

Leanne: My main motivation at the moment is teaching and development. Alba and the university club run really successful mentoring and peer support structures for our teachers and we put a lot of work into making sure our classes and teachers always have a focus and feel supported. I've been teaching our Alba children too, which I absolutely love! Being involved in all of that makes it hard to not keep going.

Glasgow will host Spring Fling 2018 - what are you looking forward to most and what is most annoying with the preparations?

So far the hardest part has definitely been deciding how much pizza we need to order! Also – trying to get an entire committee to decide on which t-shirts to order. Who knew there were so many shades of blue? Seriously though – the biggest difficulty for Glasgow so far has been adapting how we plan to cope with a deadline so far in advance. We are used to working on the timescale of academic years – so we rarely organise logistics this far ahead. We're all really excited about hosting Spring Fling next year. The most fun part is looking forward to so many young dancers gathering together. Our aim is to bring together all the enthusiasm and energy we have for young SCD in Glasgow at the moment and send it home with everyone who travels here to join us.



Basecamp to HQ! The Bonn Weekend

This year's Spring Fling in Bonn, along with its Fringe event, were very well attended, superbly organised, and serve as a model for a youth event. Joana Stausberg, Tim Hoffmann and Uta Hasekamp tell us how it was done. Some participants give their reactions.

Why Germany? Why Bonn?

At the end of Spring Fling in Lyons three years ago, a very sleepy German said "Let's do this at home some time." Fast forward to Bonn, 2017. 300 participants from 25 countries at Spring Fling and Spring Fringe. There were ten of us, spread throughout Germany, to organise it. Why Bonn? First, three of us are based there. The locally-based organisers were invaluable when it came to looking for dance halls and accommodation and doing all the groundwork. The first attempt to get gymnasiums as dance halls was not successful. We were surprised that mentioning the RSCDS – an organisation we've always thought perfectly respectable – did not have the desired effect. Fortunately, the sports club where the Bonn SCD group is a member came to the rescue and opened the bureaucratic doors, signed contracts and let the Fling use their bank account. The second reason for Bonn was the local group and their friends, who helped a great deal. Usually, you only see the organisers. But behind the scenes we had over 40 helpers, taking care of around 200 different tasks. Without them, the event would not have been possible. And yes, we had long lists for all the people and tasks (we are German, after all!). Here are some of the things the helpers did: prepare dessert for 300 hungry dancers; buy and transport 2160 water bottles (later spend three hours putting them into the reverse vending machine to obtain the bottle deposit); decorate a 1000-square-metre hall; stuff more than 50 thank-you Haribo haggises; drive teachers and musicians to and fro; organise tea breaks; do pro bono work as a professional sound technician; take photographs; cheer the organisers up... While some local organisers are a must-have, don't think

you can put your feet up if you're not on site. You do the registration and budget planning, coordinate scholarships, create dance programs and take good care of the musicians and teachers. And if the organisational work is not enough for you, you can also play or teach at the event (don't do this unless you want to go completely nuts, though).

Amazing venues

Our local committee members found the most awesome locations. First and foremost, the BaseCamp, a vintage indoor caravan site for the Flingers, a comfy hotel for the Fringers, the huge hockey hall with a sprung floor for the evenings and five gymnasiums for the classes, all within walking distance of each other.

Advertising

We did quite some advertising: we printed flyers, set up websites, used social media and had fun shooting a gummy bear dance video (the highlight of our advent calendar). For over a year we told everyone who didn't run away to come to Bonn. It worked so well that the Fling was able to rent the whole BaseCamp so that people could dance in front of their caravans all night.

The experience

How did we experience the weekend? We thought it was gorgeous. There were, of course, a number of hiccups: among others, biscuits kept dis- and reappearing; a kettle blew a fuse during the Friday social; and some of the sound systems were set up



Caravans with patios, railway carriages – an inspired choice of venue!



a little later than just in time. But this did not really matter. The teachers and class musicians were brilliant; the classes were challenging; and a highlight was the Fling Display on Sunday morning. The Kids Course invented a dance (which required no dancing, although some moving of the feet was involved). Most of all, we loved the evening dances. The musicians were terrific and willing to encore so many dances. For the *Tanz in den Mai* (dance into May as the Sunday was April 30), we had the most amazing *Maibaum* ever! And all the dancers were so very enthusiastic: pure bliss on their faces, pure bliss to watch! Thank you to everyone involved. It was a fantastic experience, a lot of work, but even more fun.

What the Fling people said:

The hostel was absolutely amazing. The dancing and teaching were brilliant. I have never been at a dance when so many dances were encored. Truly phenomenal!

Melissa, Edinburgh.

An amazing opportunity to meet and dance with people my own age.

Julia, Australia

My feet have never hurt that much, but it was more than worth it!

Manuel, Munich.

Can't wait for Glasgow, 2018.

Aileen, Munich

My first Spring Fling and it was fabulous. I made so many new friends. Perfect!

Jarla, Germany

It was the coolest event I have ever participated in.

Jula, Germany

Great stuff – only a bit confusing what language to choose when talking to people!

Michael, Germany

Very well organised, impressively large, great fun.

Edmund, Cambridge

What a wonderful, joyous occasion!

Jacqui, Cambridge

An unforgettable experience!

Dorina, Prague



Lena Oetzel and Laura Schröder from Bonn.

Photo: Michael Schillo

I was over-filled with emotions. I met many old friends from all over the world.

Kseniia, Prague

It was awesome!

Anton, St Petersburg

And the Fringe:

The historic SCD-event in Bonn, maybe the largest number of participants ever in Germany, was absolutely fabulous - the locations, music, teachers, choice of dances and most of all the feeling of so many of us sharing the joy of it irrespective of nationality, age or other possible "barriers". Thanks to everybody involved in making it so memorable!

Eva Schiedrum, Friedberg, Hesse

Fantastic atmosphere, brilliant teachers, inspiring music, exhilarating dancing, friendly faces, great organisation - the Spring Fringe had it all! Thank you Bonn.

Clare Nash, Strasbourg.



Well done to Joana Stausberg and the whole team!

Young Dancers

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

Kirov, Russia

Oh, the things we wouldn't have done if not for Scottish country dancing! When our friends Olga and Katya from Nizhny Novgorod suggested Spring Fling, we were worried that our dancing or language skills would be inadequate. Fortunately, we did agree to go! One of us spent a week and a half before Spring Fling visiting dancers in Budapest, Vienna and Salzburg, feeling more and more confident every day thanks to their warm welcome, and the other went direct to Bonn.

Spring Fling definitely was the brightest event of these holidays. We would end each sentence with 'and that was amazing!' We loved the chance to feel the character of the city not as tourists, but through talking to the Bonn dancers. New to us were many exciting things: dancing that lasted till midnight; a fiddler playing for class; and a cheering chorus of dancers in the first bars of *The Glasgow Reel*. And it was truly touching to be in the same hall with devisers of some of our favourite dances.

This relaxed and friendly atmosphere, everyone being so caring and accepting, radiating happiness with a touch of mischief, having fun and twirling in joy, made us truly feel a part of the international dancing family. Now we know we can find people to dance with at any place in the world that has a SCD club, and in any of these places we will never feel alone.

Anastasia and Olga, Kirov

New Zealand JAM Camp

The New Zealand JAM (junior associate members) Camp happens every two years and is for all JAMs from the age of 6 with parents and adult helpers encouraged to attend. The latest Camp was held in the middle weekend of the April school holidays this year with 108 in total, of whom 87 were JAMs.

The JAM Camp is hosted by the Regions so can be anywhere on North or South Island. The 2017 camp was in Masterton in the Wairarapa, north of the Capital, Wellington. The theme this time was Thistle Be A Fun Camp. Accommodation is usually dormitory style at a local boarding school or in cabins at a camp site. In this safe environment JAMs are free to socialize outside class. This year we had a games room on site for anyone to use. At the previous JAM Camp in 2015 we had outdoor hot pools at the camp site.

The JAM Camp started just after lunch on Friday with medal tests. After dinner the first evening event this year was a ceilidh allowing JAMs to demonstrate their many other talents as well as some dancing. Each evening finishes with supper before bed.



The New Zealand JAMs!

On the Saturday morning there were 4 classes for different age groups. In the afternoon we went to the local Ten Pin Bowling Alley, which also has bumper cars. There was live music for the Saturday evening ball and many dressed in thistle colours – purple and green. The younger dancers went to bed after supper at 9 and the senior JAMs and adults continued with some very energetic dancing. Where do they get their energy?

There were classes again on the Sunday morning and after lunch there was a combined class followed by afternoon tea prior to departure. It is great to know that we will most likely see them again at the next JAM Camp which will be held in the Auckland Region in July 2019.

Diane Bradshaw, NZ Branch Youth Co-ordinator

250 in Helensburgh!

On 3 March 250 children attended either a morning or afternoon session of the Day of Dance in Helensburgh. The Helensburgh and District Branch worked with local schools, having provided them all with the Jigs and Reels pack.

The children, accompanied by teachers and helpers, were keen and eager to start and knew their dances with everyone enjoying themselves judging by the smiles and the laughter. Helen Rodger and Irene Smith from the branch were the MC's to encourage the youngsters on to the floor but this was unnecessary as the children were ready to dance all the time. Members of the branch came along to help as stewards, many thanks to them for giving up their time. It is always a hard day, but worth it to see so many young people enjoying themselves.



Helensburgh Day of Dance

Young dancers in Lyon and the Alps

Do you know what happens when a blue skirt dances with a red and white one? It just works very well! What's this all about? Méaudre is a little village in the French Alps, now a well-known spot for Scottish country dancing. We are in touch with the nearest branch in Lyon and we decided with Raphaëlle Orgeret to do all we could to encourage children to dance. Lyon has a small group of children dancing in blue skirts. Our children are dressed in red and white skirts. They all met in Lyon in November, having a good laugh with Paul Plummer – though he was a bit desperate to be understood (the class was in English). However, what they understood wasn't important because they all realised they weren't the only ones in France to practise this strange and unknown sport. The children met again in May at our annual weekend in Méaudre in the children's class. We had noticed that the children did not mix in Lyon, being a bit shy, so we just changed the rules: "Now take a partner, but be careful, a blue skirt with a red and white one!" And it just worked. Corinne Hilpert of Lyon branch, was their MC and they really enjoyed it. They were saying, "how old are you?" – "8" – "How lucky you are: in Lyon we cannot start dancing before the age of 9!" We meet again in 2018.

Letters to the editor



Dear Editor

Attracting new dancers

Recent discussion has focused on the issue of attracting new dancers and more importantly retaining them. This is not an issue unique to the Society but to all forms of dancing. As people increasingly find competition for their free time

outside work and family, one finds that dancing is not often at the top of the list of potential activities.

When a branch class in the centre of Sydney closed, some like-minded individuals stepped in and created an Incorporated Association to run a class to fill the gap, *Scots on The Rocks*. Running beginner courses with certificated teachers illustrated the need to give newer dancers an opportunity to dance in a relaxed environment and the opportunity to share what they had learned with friends and family.

To facilitate this *The Chaotic Ceilidh* was created and over the last ten years the ceilidhs have been a tool for recruiting potential dancers. The ceilidhs have a mix of new dancers, Scottish expats, those curious as to what Scottish country dancing is about and experienced dancers. The ceilidh staples of *Dashing White Sergeant*, *Strip the Willow* and *The Gay Gordons* are mandatory. Other simple dances such as *The Dhoon* and *The Sausage Machine* are also popular. By slightly modifying Society dances to ensure the dancing couple finish at the foot of the set, the ceilidh dancers are also exposed to dances such as *Petronella* and *The Flowers of Edinburgh*.

Another side of *The Chaotic Ceilidh* has been its profitability allowing *Scots on The Rocks* to raise funds outside the Society. These funds are then used to promote SCD through demonstrations in the National Capital, workshops, and scholarships for teachers and dancers alike. It also allows for advertising and other opportunities in the promotion of SCD that may need to be subsidised or don't generate funds. However, they are part of a broader strategy to keep SCD alive in the Sydney area.

Whilst ceilidhs may not be every Scottish country dancer's idea of promotion or recruitment, the experience of *Scots on The Rocks* is that a diverse strategy is needed to compete with the many distractions facing today's under 40s – in order to recruit the dancers of tomorrow to keep the Society moving well beyond the Centenary of 2023.

Michael Darby – RSCDS International Branch

Dear Editor

New members or new dancers?

If you are reading this, the odds are that you are, or near, retired, female, a member of the Society and living in the English-speaking world. It is unlikely that many thirty something, non-members will come across this journal, or many male dancers as they are fast becoming a rare breed, certainly in the NW of England.

The conundrum the Society faces is recruiting, not new members but new dancers. The Society is not set up as a recruiter. Branches have a contract with the Society to maintain standards and be legal, not to recruit. An affiliated group or club is often simply a gathering of dancers who enjoy each other's company. There are twice as many affiliated groups as branches, but the Society has no idea how many dancers there are turning out week in

week out up and down the land in affiliates nor is it even aware of the very existence of groups who have no formal links? If the Society folded, I suspect that these happy souls would carry on dancing regardless.

We must be clear what we mean by "member"; there is card-carrying membership of the Society and local membership of a group or club. We are all members in the latter sense and the Society must urgently demonstrate that it embraces every member, card-carrying or not. Too many of those with only local club membership cannot see the point of Society membership, but without them there would be a lot less dancing.

Membership of the Society fell from near 30,000 in 1989 to just over 11,000 in 2016. 19,000 fewer subscriptions at £20.00 a time. Not only does this impact on social dancing but it adds up to a huge fall in operating income and the Society is fast approaching the loss of critical mass. The figures speak for themselves. Fewer than ten branches out of 160 worldwide managed to increase membership in the same period while in major towns and cities membership halved.

Before you persuade a prospective Society member to write a cheque, you have had to recruit and nurture him or, more likely, her. They don't arrive the first night begging to join the Society. Branches have no formal link with affiliated groups but both should be obliged in their contract to work together and take a leadership role in their area supported by an over-arching coordinated promotion effort at HQ with a single mission to increase the number of local members. All else must take a back seat.

The Society, its members and local members need to acknowledge the scale of the situation and then pitch in to the debate with whatever contribution we can offer to revitalise Scottish Country Dancing in our heartlands. We are all part of the solution; we surely don't want to be the last generation of Scottish country dancers?

Roger Brooks, Lancaster Loyne Affiliated Group

Dear Editor

Scotland's place

When is a Scottish country dance not a Scottish country dance? I collect all the ingredients that make up a Melton Mowbray pork pie, take them home to Buckie and bake the pie exactly as it is done in Melton Mowbray, what I end up with cannot be called a Melton Mowbray pork pie. It may, at best, be described as 'a pie in the style of a Melton Mowbray pork pie'. As with Arbroath Smokies and Stornoway Black Pudding, the title is guaranteed in law.

Is a dance in the style of a Scottish country dance, devised by a non-Scot living outside Scotland, a Scottish country dance? I define a non-Scot as someone who has no connection with Scotland either through birth, employment, residence or by any other acceptable recognition. John Drewry, that most prolific and innovative Scottish country dance deviser, was an Englishman from Leicestershire, so he certainly knew all about Melton Mowbray pork pies! But John spent the greatest part of his life working and living in Scotland. And so it is that he and many others have a legitimate claim to the adjective *Scottish*. Today, by publishing a dance and calling it a Scottish country dance, the RSCDS appears to confer 'Scottishness' on it, irrespective of origin.

I believe that the Society has lost its way. We have now gone far beyond what our founders originally intended, which was to

'practise and preserve country dances as danced in Scotland' – an incomparable cultural legacy which has attracted worldwide enthusiasm. Most of the dances and much of the music we now publish do not originate in Scotland.

Secondly, the RSCDS has been expanding its profile as an international organisation. This is, at best, a somewhat misguided perception of our objectives. At worst, it undermines the Society's unique selling point – our essentially Scottish roots. While the expansion of Society membership worldwide is genuinely good news, the perceived threat to our roots is certainly not.

There is a view that all branches of the Society are the same. Not so. Scottish country dance and its music have been an integral part of Scotland's social fabric for centuries, embracing external influences but always returning to the great musical talent within its boundaries and without which there would simply be no dance. Of course Scotland's branches are different to all others as our history tells. How could it be otherwise? Scots need to send out a strong reminder that the RSCDS is Scottish, has been from its beginning, and always will be. Part of being Scottish is that we welcome everyone into our 'family' with open arms.

I trust that this letter will not be seen as divisive, but as a contribution to the debate on Scotland's place within the RSCDS.

Bob Taylor, Buckie

Dear Editor

A Scotland Branch?

Remember our aim? 'Practise and preserve traditional dancing as danced in Scotland by whatever means'. It is time we looked at the 'means'. I wonder if our decline could be linked with a decline in the Society's 'Scottishness'. Are today's branches, teaching, publications, AGM weekend, etc, fit for purpose in 2017?

Dancing in Scotland is different from everywhere else for many reasons. Here we have a 24-hour vibrant Scottish culture. Here and nowhere else country dancing means different things: country, reeling, old tyme and ceilidh – it is still an important part of social events like weddings. Most Scots get some exposure at school; there is television and radio with 80,000 thousand tuning in to BBC Scotland's *Take the Floor* on a Saturday night; we have accordion and fiddle clubs and The Royal National Mod – a week of singing, dancing and drinking. If there can be International and Youth Branches, should there perhaps be a Scotland Branch?

I still believe the most likely place to find new members in any number is here in Scotland. But there are problems! Even today it is still considered a female activity. It was not helped by seeing pictures of men in white socks and pumps doing skip change in *Strip the Willow* in the recent BBC programme about us. The RSCDS style of dancing remains rather feminine and effete. There are good, if sad, reasons. The First World War decimated the Scottish male population. That great upheaval meant that women had to get on with the dancing.

Headquarters and the AGM remain in Scotland, but I am concerned that so much of Scottish dancing has moved away: Spring Flings abroad, dances with weird totally un-Scottish names, tunes with no hint of Scottishness, committee members and office bearers who are not based here any more. Scotland seems to have been marginalised. Why are dancers in Scotland no longer prepared to do more?

All members must be more flexible and less selfish and should be asking if the Society is doing enough for Scottish dancing here in Scotland, its homeland, and not what they can get out of it where they happen to be.

John D Carswell, Linlithgow

Dear Editor

Dance Style

I read Jimmie Hill's article about Nathaniel Gow's Dance Band in Issue No 24 with interest. When writing of dance style, he states "Miss Milligan and her contemporaries decided that we would hold our arms at around shoulder height. Contemporary illustrations of the 18th century show arms down and this was how the dancers danced." This is likely to have been because costume affects the way people move. The tight corsets worn by women in the 18th century would have made it difficult for them to raise their arms very far, and if the women could not raise their arms, then neither could the men with whom they were dancing. I once watched a demonstration of historical dancing at the Central Council for Physical Education 'On Show' festival at the Royal Albert Hall. There were two sets dancing the same dances, one dressed in early 19th century costume and the other as in the mid 19th century. The difference in dance styles was noticeable, particularly the footwork, as the set illustrating the earlier period wore flat shoes and the later set wore heeled ones.

Although raised arms are more elegant, the height needs to be comfortable for all participants in a figure. I have heard two descriptions of the best way to accommodate dancers of differing stature - either 'shoulder height of the shortest person' or 'in between shoulder heights'. I prefer the former, as it is clear and precise. I remember an occasion when I was dancing with my daughter, who was about 10 years old at the time and very small for her age. We had to dance hands across with a much taller couple, who gave hands so high that my daughter was unable to join in with the figure. I expect that this difficulty had not occurred to them, however the result was hardly very sociable.

There can also be other problems with arms and hands, from taking hands with fingers pointing to the ceiling to the *Egyptian frieze* effect in strathspey circles. We need to be prepared to adapt, for instance substituting promenade hold for allemande hold if a dancer has stiff shoulders and letting go hands at the top of an arch if the couple going under the arch are much taller than those making it. This is much easier to achieve than correct footwork, and makes dancing pleasanter for everyone.

Elizabeth Bennett, Croydon and London Branches

Dear Editor

New dances

Discussion about whether new dances should be published annually by the RSCDS seems to have become a regular feature in the *Scottish Country Dancer*. Of course, one of the Society's tasks is to preserve the traditional dances and keep them alive through the activities of our various dance groups. However, another, no less important task is to secure the future of SCD. Much has already been done to this end, as can be seen from the increasing popularity of SCD around the world, the countless number of groups in many different countries and the involvement particularly of young people. We recently took part in the Spring Fringe in Bonn, where so many young dancers came together for the Spring Fling. How wonderful it was when in the evenings more than 300 dancers of all ages took to the floor together – a fantastic experience!

Regarding the dances, there are undoubtedly many older dances that create a lively and enthusiastic atmosphere. It could be argued that there must surely be something for everyone among the thousands of dances that exist already. But when you see how well some of the most recently devised dances – for example from *Book 50* – have been received at various dance events,

and the high spirits they generate among young and old on the dance floor, who could possibly draw a line and say that there are enough dances and the RSCDS should not actively contribute towards increasing their number?

It is fortunate that this matter was not a subject of debate in the past (or at least no such decision was made). For how much less rich would SCD be without, for example, the many brilliant and in some cases relatively recent dances by devisers like John Drewry or without some of the newly invented formations that have now become firmly established in the repertoire! Just as the many young dancers represent the future of the RSCDS, both the traditional dances and new creations are equally important for ensuring our future development. The mixture of old and new dances, as well as old and young people, is exactly what makes SCD so appealing!

Perhaps it is not necessary for the RSCDS to bring out a new book every year. But RSCDS dance books should definitely continue to be published! And why not every year? Nobody is forced to purchase every book. In any case, the Society should certainly not wait until 2023 as was indirectly suggested in a reader's letter in the last edition of the *Scottish Country Dancer*. If the new dance books and accompanying CDs have become a main source of income for the Society, there must evidently be a large number of people who welcome the publication of new dance books. The programmes of diverse dance events clearly show that almost everywhere there is a highly varied and attractive mixture of old (sometimes very old!), more recent and brand-new dances. In our opinion, that is just how it should be, isn't it?

Geraldine and Holger Schuckelt, Oberlichtenau, Germany

Dear Editor

Winter School

As a member of the 'American contingent' and part of the group from the San Francisco Branch, I would like to thank the staff of the RSCDS, the musicians, teachers, and participants for making our time at Winter School 2017 truly special. We felt most welcome and enjoyed the experience immensely. Everyone was friendly, the classes excellent, the music amazing, and the dancing truly enjoyable. Making a pilgrimage to Scone Palace for our personal tour just added to the experience. It was a lovely day with our excellent tour guide on the coach ride through the countryside – even if you guys do drive on the wrong side of the road.

Mark Caplin, San Francisco, CA

Dear Editor

Older dancers

Just a couple of days after the April issue dropped through my door – with its letters regarding the importance of footwork – I attended a dance which is held every month in a hall not far from where I live. Many of the 40 or so dancers travel for an hour or more to get there for the sheer pleasure of spending an evening with like-minded people who want to enjoy themselves. The average age is over 70 with 30 or 40 plus years of experience. Most still dance regularly in their local clubs and societies where footwork may or may not receive a lot of attention, but the important thing for all of us is to enjoy the range of dances, usually 18 in number, the music and the chance to dance freely and without judgement on how well we are doing it. Age and illness have, unfortunately, taken their toll on many of the participants, with the resultant reduction of mobility and

flexibility, but everyone is on his or her feet for pretty well every dance and we get around with much laughter and good cheer. I agree that, in an ideal world we would all be executing perfect pas-de-basques and strathspey travelling steps, and that's a great foundation for younger folks who are just starting out or for those in demonstration groups, however it is not the be-all-and-end-all for what is essentially social dancing and we oldies should not be made to feel that we are failing at what we love to do. P.S. I'm with Elinor M Vandegrift on the eye contact topic - that is essential for social dancing!

Ann Cameron, Fylde Scottish Country Dancing Society, Lancashire

Dear Editor

Older dancers

I am happy that some experienced dancers believe they benefit from step practice. The post-beginner dancers in this part of Ontario are largely over 60 and don't change their footwork despite attending many classes and several workshops. The only time I am aware that I changed my footwork was many years ago when my sister pointed out that I was doing a two-beat pas de basque, and the other time was after I was asked to join a demonstration team where it was felt appropriate to point out individual faults. In classes there are generalized comments, which, I suspect, most dancers believe are directed at someone else not them. I recently attended a class for Exercise instructors teaching seniors. This introduced me to exercises which are known to be risky. Two pertinent points to Scottish country dancing were:

- Avoid walking with toes pointed inwards or outwards, as this sends the knee out of proper alignment.
- Avoid Back Twisting such as doing hip swings, rotations or swivels (e.g. avoid that lovely ideal strathspey setting step.)

I queried that some of us have been doing this for a long time without injury, and the response was that this may be OK, but especially seniors new to an exercise program are at risk of injury with these moves. With so many dancers coming to Scottish country dancing in their senior years in this part of Canada, I maintain my position of there being too much emphasis on perfect footwork, especially with seniors, so that only a fairly brief review is sufficient for experienced dancers.

Patrick Capper, Clinton, Ontario

Dear Editor

Belfast Branch

Many congratulations to the Belfast Branch on their 70th anniversary. I have vivid memories of being taken as a child to some of their dances by my parents, Margaret and Victor Burns. Mum and Dad loved Scottish Country dancing and made the 28 mile round journey every Friday evening to dancing at the Belfast branch. My father went on to qualify as a Scottish Country dance teacher and ran a number of classes. Sadly my mother passed away in August 2008 followed by my father in February 2009.

Since then I have taken up Scottish country dancing and attend the Sutton Coldfield branch. Although I doubt I will become as proficient as my father (I have started rather late), I am enjoying it and hope to do so for years to come.

Susan Rice, née Burns

Reviews



The Reel of Seven Live in New Zealand

The Reel of Seven, Andy Imbrie's San Francisco-based band, refer to themselves on their website as "Not your typical Scottish Country Dance band." If the Reel of Seven were, say, a pizza, it would be the kind with mango, jalapenos, four cheeses (including goat), an un-named vegetable from Fiji, and some exotic spicy smoked pepperoni.

Setting the pizza metaphor aside for the moment: This CD is a high-energy live recording made at the RSCDS Summer School in Auckland, New Zealand. The immediacy of a live recording, with background sounds of happy dancers, makes you feel like you are right in the midst of it. Reel of Seven, which has eight members on this recording, has a big sound. There is nothing like masses of fiddlers, and particularly when they are precise and well-coordinated as they are here. When they break into harmonies, it's a lovely rich sound. Not unlike the four cheeses, they blend beautifully.

As a pianist myself, I listened closely to Andy Imbrie, pianist and band leader. His playing is wonderful; it's full of harmonic complexities but without clutter. His bass lines, sometimes very chromatic, are the chutes and ladders that drive the music and support the melody. He leaps into Cape Breton style when the tune calls for it, and stays out of the way when a solo needs the spotlight. He artfully layers the sounds (revealing his classical training and technique), rather than pounding out all notes with equal noisiness. The strathspeys are graceful; he does a wonderful job balancing the need for delicateness and romance with the tension of the strathspey figures.

Cellist Renata Bratt has a few lovely solos on this CD. I wanted to hear more! Renata is a well-known fountain (nay, an explosion) of creativity and improvisation, so she seems under-utilized. Her out-of-the-box solo (cello and percussion) in the last track shows what she can do with some free space.

I found the tune choices interesting and fun. If you are a person who prefers their pizza plain with cheese, this may not be the recording for you, because it's full of non-traditional piquancy. There are Québécois tunes (in their defense, I'd say they are darned good dance tunes), Broadway tunes, and contra dance tunes. On the other hand, there are plenty of traditional recordings of *Mairi's Wedding*, so maybe there is room for one that includes *Get Me to the Church on Time* and *Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend*. The band's sound (and tempos, in some of the reels particularly, some of which edge up towards 116-118) sometimes leans towards contra dance style. It's a spicy hot recording - enjoy!

Julie Gorka, North Carolina

RSCDS Book 50 CD – Scott Band and his SCD Band

Anyone who depends on recorded music will surely pounce on this CD with glee. Scott Band and his SCD Band provide a generous sixteen tracks, among them sets of tunes that go through three, four, six and eight times, with 32, 40 and 48 bar sets – a real pick-and-mix for any occasion, whether or not they will always be used for the allotted dances.

As *Book 50* is subtitled 'Spring Fling' it comes as no surprise that this CD begins in style with the music for *The Spring Fling Reel*. A set of high-octane MacPhail reels complement the original tune; a fitting set for a dance written by and appealing to energetic younger dancers.

With a six-piece line up of two accordions, fiddle, piano, bass and drums this recording has an impressive full band sound. The strong bass line provides a great solid rhythm and several spine-tingling chord progressions, with occasional embellishments from bass and piano, especially for the already-popular strathspey *There's Something About Thirty*. Occasionally the fiddle can come across as having a rather piercing quality in the higher register, so if using this CD as part of a multi-band mix, you may need to adjust the volume or graphic equaliser settings for the comfort of the dancers' ears.



The two sets of 6x32R, whilst being precisely the same length (3mins 30) nevertheless provide an interesting contrast. *The Doonhamer Delight* is the flashier of the two, whilst *A Trip To Applecross* requires less finger-knitting on the part of the musicians, but both are equally enjoyable and danceable. Meanwhile the minor-key *Dots and Dashes*, the original tune for *Double Trouble Triangles*, is beguiling – anything danced to that music would undoubtedly be a thrill.

The jigs on this CD are rock-solid – the tunes for *The Wandering Wallaby* are especially familiar, and their cheeriness and simplicity reflect the dance itself. I feel that in general it is the reels and strathspeys that impress more than the jigs, but *Tam's Hunting Horn*, used as the fourth tune for *Dancing Spirit*, is given a freshness and energy which really catches the ear.

Mathilde is a Delight manages to transcend the soporific dreariness often reserved for slow air sets, and is indeed a delight for listener and dancer alike. The selection of tunes and the delicacy of their treatment here keeps one alert and actively engaged, rather than, as so often with slow airs, sending everybody into a torpor.

Not satisfied with the content of *Book 50* alone, we are also offered four bonus tracks. The *Polka* and *Continental Waltz* are great fun, though teachers should make sure they read the CD insert carefully and not inadvertently use one of them for the dance whose book number corresponds to the track listing! *Odd Thoughts* is an interesting choice, and gives the band free rein to play some of the most beautiful music in the repertoire. It is perhaps understandable that this fourth bonus track is a strathspey, given the scarcity of strathspeys in *Book 50* itself, and the brevity of those it does offer. Perhaps a reflection of the tastes of many of those who frequent the Spring Fling...?

Caroline Brockbank, Edinburgh

Sadly missed

On 12 March, 2017, two founding members of Vienna Branch, Gordon Murray and Alice Rutherford, were tragically struck down by a taxi in a street in Vienna, a huge blow to both families and to the Branch.

Gordon Murray (1947 – 2017)

Gordon Murray was a Scottish country dance musician. Gordon was the first Chair of Vienna Branch. He remained Chair for ten years, coordinating the weekend schools which the Vienna Branch hosted. Outside country dancing, Gordon was a very eminent music professional. Canadian by birth, he was a professor of harpsichord at Vienna's University of Music and Performing Arts. He performed regularly, taught in four languages, recorded, and inspired his students.

Ann Murray, Vienna Branch

Alice Rutherford (1927 – 2017)

Alice Rutherford was a founding member and the first Treasurer of Vienna Branch. Austrian by birth, she married Bill Rutherford, a dashing British Officer, whose family roots were Scottish. In latter years Alice joined the branch for social evenings and was always the life and soul of the party.

Ann Murray, Vienna Branch

Jean Sim (1918 – 2016)

Jean Sim was born at Victoria Farm, near Muthill, Perthshire. She had to walk four miles to the nearest school. Jean graduated MA from St Andrews University and became a teacher at McLaren High School in Callender. Jean was a regular pianist at Summer School. In the 1960s she accompanied Margaret Prentice on teaching tours in Europe. Jean maintained that the greatest influence on her musical life with the Society was Dr Alastair Macfadyen, a life-long friend. She accompanied him on many overseas tours, notably to Australia and New Zealand and she was often heard to say that New Zealand was her second home. She had the ability to 'play by ear' and that, combined with a music education made her an outstanding accompanist. After she retired, Jean devoted her musical talent to serving her local church and to playing for the RSCDS.

Vera Davidson (1922 – 2017)

Vera Davidson, Honorary Vice-President of Edinburgh Branch, died in May, one month short of her 96th birthday. She took her first certificate with Allie Anderson and her full certificate with Jean Milligan. She taught at Summer School from the late 40's through to the early 90's. Vera was an adjudicator and examiner. She was awarded the Scroll of Honour in 1995. While living in Kent, she was involved in the early days of Tunbridge Wells Branch. Vera kept very good health until the last 3 or 4 years. On my last visit to her in the hospice a few days before she died we walked along the corridor and she did a strathspey travelling step and a few pliés, much to the amazement of the staff.

Robert H. Mackay, Edinburgh Branch

Trevor Rayner (1942 – 2017)

Trevor was a Yorkshireman. He was sent as an Excise Officer to the Western Isles where he spent most of his working life. He was the deviser of numerous dances. He was on the committee of Skye Branch when it made the proposal for the Society to start a Winter School. Since emigrating to New Zealand, he formed the Clive Group of 'experienced and mature dancers'.

Isabel Jackson, Napier SCDC, New Zealand

Colin Laing (1929 – 2017)

A little over a week after the Auckland Region of the New Zealand Branch celebrated its 60th Anniversary, dancers were saddened to hear of the passing of Colin Laing. He was the first Secretary and Treasurer of the Auckland Region of the New Zealand Scottish Country Dance Society. He held several offices in the region over the 60 years. In recognition of his long and faithful service, life membership of the Auckland Region was conferred on him in 1980.

Katherine Hoskyn, New Zealand

Margaret (Peggy) Parker (1923 – 2017)

Peggy started dancing in 1955 in Carlisle and soon joined the committee. She must have held virtually every committee role and was a very active member. Margaret always danced with beginners. She was Branch President for 6 years and despite many years on committee encouraged new approaches. Roy Goldring devised the *The Quaker's Daughter* for her. She loved *Margaret Parker's Strathspey*, pretending to herself that it had been written for her!

Jane Atkins, Carlisle and Border Branch

Stanley Wilkie (1926 – 2017)

After national service Stanley Wilkie trained as a PE teacher at Woolmanhill College, Aberdeen. In 1949 he was appointed teacher of PE at Knox Academy, Haddington, where he remained until his retirement. Stanley danced with the Edinburgh Branch Demonstration Team for many years, appearing in *The Kilt is My Delight*, the *Edinburgh Fancy* and other TV programmes and films. He presented a team of dancers at the Remembrance Day Service in the Royal Albert Hall for which he devised a special dance *The Red Poppy*. Stanley taught classes for Edinburgh Branch, became a tutor, adjudicator and examiner, and received the Scroll of Honour. He was an energetic lively man who enjoyed life to the full.

Dorothy Leurs and Bob Grant, Edinburgh Branch

Kevin Connolly (1926 – 2017)

Following the death of his father in the London Blitz, Kevin's mother moved the family to Edinburgh, where he started dancing. He danced in the Edinburgh Branch Demonstration Team and appeared on television in *The Kilt is My Delight*. One of 'Miss Milligan's Boys', he was part of the international team, touring Europe and South Africa. He emigrated to Australia in 1959 and was instrumental in the forming of the Mornington Peninsular Branch. He became President of the Melbourne Branch and organised the dancing for Jimmy Shand's tour to Victoria. Kevin taught at St Andrews and when Jean Milligan visited Australia, she appointed Kevin and Les Cumming as the first two Australian examiners. He was awarded the Scroll of Honour in 1996.

Ruth Connolly, Melbourne Branch

Margaret Sim

In 1960 Margaret started dancing in Sydney. She started a class in the school in which she worked as librarian. Her great enthusiasm was encouraging young people to dance. She was a founding member of the Sydney Branch Teachers' Liaison Group and was a keen supporter of the Australian Teacher Alliance, becoming its Chairman. Always an enthusiastic supporter of the Society, Margaret served on the Sydney Branch Management Committee, becoming Chairman in 1995. She was presented with a Branch Award in 2007 and had a dance *The Mentor* devised for her by Brian Charlton, published in *Book 47*. She received the Scroll of Honour in 2012. A remarkable lady.

Morag Napier, Sydney Branch

Day School Diary - October 2017 – July 2018

Day School Diary is compiled by John Sturrock. Please send details to john.m.sturrock@btinternet.com.
Issue 26 will cover April 2018 to March 2019.

October 2017

- 16 – 20 Lamont SCD Group, Dance Holiday, Torquay, Devon
- 19 – 21 Dancing in New Places, Weekend School, Cape Town, South Africa
- 19 – 22 Kuckucksnest, Autumn Course, Schluechtern, Germany
- 20 – 23 Auckland Region Weekend School, New Zealand
- 20 – 22 Houston Branch, Workshop, Houston, Texas
- 20 – 21 Ardbrae Dancers, Ottawa Fall Workshop, Canada
- 21 Thistle Club, Day & Musicians' School, Eindhoven, Netherlands
- 21 London Branch, Day School, Paddington, London
- 27 – 29 Westbury Scottish Club, Weekend School, Torquay, Devon
- 28 New Haven Branch, Nutmeg Workshop, Southbury, Connecticut, USA
- 28 Sheffield Branch, Day School, Sheffield
- 28 Cheshire Branch, Intermediate Day School, Tarporley

November 2017

- 03 – 05 RSCDS AGM Classes, Perth
- 10 – 12 Croydon Branch, Weekend School, Eastbourne, East Sussex
- 11 Toronto Branch, Day School, Toronto
- 11 Bristol Branch, Day & Musicians' Day School, Henleaze, Bristol
- 11 Lyon Branch, Day Class, Lyon, France
- 11 – 12 Winter Workshop, Mougins, Côte d'Azur, France
- 17 – 19 San Francisco Branch, Asilomar Weekend, California
- 18 Norwich Branch, Day School, Norwich
- 18 Carlisle & Border Branch, Half Day School, Carlisle
- 19 Berkhamsted Reel Club, Day School, Hemel Hempstead
- 22 – 26 Kuckucksnest, Very Advanced November Course, Schluechtern, Germany
- 24 – 26 Lyon Branch, Weekend, Lyon, France
- 25 – 26 Zurich SCD Club, Weekend Course, Zurich, Switzerland

December 2017

- 01 – 03 SCD Weekend, Curia, Portugal
- 01 – 03 Leeds Branch, Weekend, Malhamdale, Yorkshire
- 28 – 05/01 New Zealand Branch, 50th Anniversary Summer School, Wairarapa

January 2018

- 19 – 21 Falkirk Branch, Weekend, Crieff
- 20 Méaudre Reels, Galette Workshop, Vercors, France
- 27 Lyon Branch, Day Class, Lyon, France

February 2018

- 02 – 04 York & North Humberside Branch, Weekend School, Harrogate
- 03 Carlisle & Border Branch, Half-Day School, Carlisle
- 03 Cornwall Branch, Half-Day School & Dance, Fraddon, Cornwall
- 03 – 04 The Swilcan SCD Group, Weekend, Nunspeet, Utrecht, Netherlands
- 09 – 11 Northern Italy Branch, Weekend, Marostica
- 09 – 12 Advanced Dance Holiday, Torquay, Devon
- 16 – 18 Hawaii Branch, Aloha Winter Weekend, Honolulu, Hawaii
- 16 – 18 Edmonton Branch, Weekend School, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada
- 16 – 18 Isle of Wight Weekend School

- 17 Freiburg SC Dancers, Midwinter Workshop, Freiburg, Germany
- 17 Oxfordshire Branch, Day School, Oxford
- 18 – 23 RSCDS Winter School, Atholl Palace Hotel, Pitlochry

March 2018

- 01 – 04 Kuckucksnest, Spring Course, Schluechtern, Germany
- 03 Schiehallion, 20th Anniversary Class, Roosendaal, Netherlands
- 03 Lyon Branch, Day Class, Lyon, France
- 03 Birmingham Branch, Half-Day School, Birmingham
- 03 Somerset Branch, Half-Day School, Somerset
- 09 – 10 Lorn (Argyll) Branch, 57th Weekend School, Oban
- 10 BHS Border Branch, Day & Musicians' School, Fleet
- 16 – 18 24th Iberian Weekend, Santa Eulalie, Algarve, Portugal
- 17 Geneva SCD Club, Spring Workshop, Dardagny, Switzerland
- 17 Tunbridge Wells Branch, Day School, Paddock Wood, Kent
- 23 – 25 Leeds Branch, Scarborough Weekend, North Yorkshire
- 23 – 25 Cornwall Branch, Weekend School, Newquay, Cornwall
- 24 Bath Branch, Day School, Tetbury, Gloucestershire
- 24 Dundee Branch, Day School, Dundee
- 24 Lyon Branch, Advanced Day Class, Lyon, France
- 24 Newcastle Branch, Day School, Heddon-on-the-Wall
- 29 – 02/04 Kuckucksnest, Easter Course, Schluechtern, Germany
- 30 – 02/04 Ross-on-Wye Weekend, Herefordshire

April 2018

- 06 – 08 Dancing in New Places, Nikko, Japan
- 06 – 08 Helensburgh Branch, 40th SCD Weekend
- 13 – 15 Weekend Workshop, Oldenburg, Germany
- 20 – 22 RSCDS Spring Fling, Glasgow
- 20 – 22 RSCDS Spring Fringe, Glasgow
- 21 Brussels Dance Scottish, Day School, Brussels
- 21 Aberdeen Branch, Day School & Dance, Aberdeen
- 27 – 29 Lyon Branch, SCD Weekend, Lyon, France
- 28 Cheltenham Branch, Day School, Cheltenham
- 28 Argyll SD Group, Day School, Crowthorne, Berkshire

May 2018

- 07 – 09 Dancing in New Places, Bucharest, Romania
- 11 – 12 Cumbrae SCD Association, Millport Weekend, Isle of Cumbrae
- 11 – 13 New York Branch, 55th Pauling Weekend, New York
- 18 – 19 Isle of Skye Branch, 30th Isle of Skye Weekend, Portree
- 18 – 20 Duns & District Branch, Weekend School, Duns
- 18 – 21 Whitsun SCD Course, Munich, Germany
- 25 – 27 Méaudre Reels, 10th Anniversary Weekend, Vercors, France

June 2018

- 01 – 03 Dancing in New Places, Rovaniemi, Finland
- 15 – 17 International Weekend, Le Chardon du Dauphin, Grenoble, France
- 15 – 17 Stornoway Weekend, Lews Castle, Stornoway, Outer Hebrides
- 27 – 01/07 Kuckucksnest, Summer Course, Schluechtern, Germany

July 2018

- 08 – 15 Australia, 43rd Winter School, Shoal Bay, NSW
- 15 – 12/08 RSCDS Summer School, St Andrews



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