

The
Scottish Country
Dance Society
Bulletin.

No. 11.

MARCH 1937.

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Photo by]

[Morgan

The Late Mrs ANNIE SHAND.

Lady Davina Kynoch has consented to become an Honorary Vice-President of the Society. It is interesting to note that delegates to the B.R.C.W. Conference held recently gave voice to the proposal to place in County Down a Dance Hall and that they expressed strong disapproval of the same.

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Editorial.

Members of the Society will have received the news of Mrs Shand's death with very deep sorrow and regret. The Society has suffered an irreparable loss. Mrs Shand was a gifted and accomplished pianist, and her gracious personality and never failing interest in the Society and its members endeared her to us all.

Her abilities as a pianist were known to thousands of admirers throughout the country by means of gramophone records and broadcasting. Mrs Shand started her musical career at the age of five, and while still a young girl her musical abilities brought her services into demand all over her native district of Old Meldrum.

Her music was always greatly appreciated by the late King and Queen Mary. Her first appearance before Royalty was eight years ago.

It seems impossible to think of the Summer School without Mrs Shand. At St Andrews she was not only the musician but an enthusiastic and keenly interested member of the Course. She will be greatly missed.

The Annual Summer School of the Scottish Country Dance Society will be held in University Hall, St Andrews, from August 2nd to 16th.

As usual classes will be held in the morning, and the afternoon will be left free for golf, bathing, etc.

Full particulars of the School which is open to members and non-members of the Society will be found on page 11 with the application form.

Two more dances, Teviot Brig and Dumbarton's Drums, have been republished in leaflet form and are issued with this number of the Bulletin. The music has been arranged by Mr Wiseman.

It is very satisfactory to note that four new branches were formed in the autumn. They are Kirkcudbright, North Ayrshire, West Lothian and Glenkens.

There are also several new Affiliated Societies—South Auckland Caledonian Society, The Halifax St Andrews Society and the Nottingham Scottish Country Dance Club.

Lady Dorothea Ruggles-Brise has consented to become an Honorary Vice-President of the Society.

It is interesting to note that delegates to the B.B.C. Youth Conference, held recently, gave votes of 69 per cent. to the playing of Scottish Country Dance Music, and that they expressed very strong disapproval of crooners.

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting.

The 13th Annual General Meeting of the Scottish Country Dance Society was held on Saturday, 14th November 1936, within the St Andrews Halls, Glasgow.

Lord James Stewart Murray presided, and over 300 members were present. Apologies were intimated from Sir John Lorne MacLeod and Mrs Law.

The Minutes of the last meeting were read, approved and signed.

The Annual Branch and Financial Reports having been circulated amongst members were taken as read.

The Chairman said that the year had been one of steady and gradual progress. The movement had made very good headway in the past thirteen years, and the Society had helped to make Country Dancing part of the national life. At the moment great stress was being laid on the physical fitness of the nation. Lord James suggested that among the schemes for keeping the nation fit Scottish Country Dancing should be included.

The Chairman thought that work among children was very important, and that particular attention might be paid to the teaching of dancing to young boys. Dancing taught to them when young helped to prevent self consciousness, and should be a help to their dancing in the ball room in later years.

The Chairman intimated that since the publication of the Annual Report four new Branches had been formed. They were Kirkcudbright, North Ayrshire, West Lothian and Glenkens.

Mrs Stewart (Vice-President) moved the adoption of the Annual and Branch Reports. Miss Milligan seconded. These were adopted.

Mrs Stewart said that the progress made by the Society was very satisfactory, and that she felt that there was now enthusiasm throughout the country. She thought that the formation of four new Branches in the last few months was particularly satisfactory.

Mr Low moved the adoption of the Financial Report. Mr Forbes seconded. The report was adopted.

Mr Low congratulated Mr Terras on his year's work, and urged that Secretaries of Branches should send in their subscriptions as soon as possible.

The Chairman made reference to the loss suffered by the Society by the resignation of Miss Forgan.

The members expressed their appreciation of the work done by Miss Forgan for the Society. The Chairman stated that Mrs Gow Brown's name had been put forward by the Executive Council for the post of Secretary.

Mr Punched proposed that Mrs Gow Brown be appointed Secretary. Mrs Bruce seconded the proposal. The meeting agreed to the proposal.

Election of Office-Bearers.

The election of Office-Bearers for 1937 was as follows:—

Chairman—Mrs Hamilton Meikle.

Vice-Chairman—Lord James Stewart Murray.

Six Elected Members—Miss Anderson, Mrs Bruce, Miss Dow, Mr Drummond, Miss Milligan, Mr Punched.

Proposed Alteration and Addition to the Constitution.

That Rule 4 be revised as follows:—"The Annual Subscription shall be 5s. Life Membership Subscription, £3, 3s. Members who have paid an Annual Subscription for four consecutive years may become Life Members on payment of £2, 10s., and those who have paid for ten consecutive years may become Life Members on payment of £1, 10s."

That Rule 10 should read:—"An Annual General Meeting of the Society shall be held in November . . ."

That the following Rule be added to the Constitution:—"An examination for Teacher's Certificate shall be open to Members of the Society only, and there shall be no entrance fee. Candidates must not be less than 18 years of age. They shall be examined first in Book I., and having passed the test enter for Book II. examination. No one who fails in an examination may take it again for three months. The form of the examination shall be (a) Practical, candidates must be able to dance correctly and teach the dances according to the standard set up by the Society. (b) Theoretical, candidates must be able to answer questions on the dances. This part of the examination may be either written or oral, and demands a full knowledge of the details of technique and formation of the difficulties and faults which may be corrected, and of the methods whereby the correct spirit and deportment is gained."

The alteration to Rule 4 and to Rule 10 was approved by the meeting.

The addition to the Constitution was slightly amended and reads as follows:—"No one who fails in an examination may take it again for three months, unless in the case of a candidate being able to provide evidence of at least ten hours attendance at instruction under an approved teacher since the date of the failure."

The following words were added after Book II. examination—"or any other series of dances chosen by the Executive."

Place of Annual General Meeting, 1937.

It was unanimously decided to accept the invitation of the Aberdeen Branch to hold the Annual General Meeting in Aberdeen in 1937.

This ended the business.

Mrs Annie Shand.

To those of us who attended the General Meeting of the Society in Glasgow in November, it seems almost incredible to think that we shall never again have the delight of dancing to Mrs Shand's playing. By her death, on November 28th, the Society has lost a most ardent supporter, and we of the Aberdeen branch feel her loss most keenly.

From the founding of the Society until two years ago she worked for its interests with unflagging zeal. No exertion was too hard for her if it was undertaken in the cause of Scottish Country Dancing; nothing delighted her

more than to be asked for her help, and she was always willing to turn out in fair weather or foul to come and play in some remote country village or for some struggling Guide Company. Her enthusiasm, indeed, led her to overtax her strength, and in March 1935 she had to give up her work. This period of enforced idleness was a misery to her, but through it all she retained her intense interest in our doings, and after every meeting and every party some of us had always to go "to tell Mrs Shand all about it." It was a joy to everyone that she recovered sufficiently to be able to attend last year's Summer and Autumn Schools, and to play for us again in her own inimitable fashion. She was so much more than merely a Scottish Country Dance pianist—she was an artist. Her knowledge of the dances and of their technique was profound, and this knowledge enabled her to give to each separate dance its own special lilt and rhythm.

One thing we have to be thankful for—that she was able to make records of so many of our dance tunes. Modern Science has earned our gratitude by making it possible for future generations to hear the finest Scottish pianist of our day, while those of us who knew and loved her can switch on our gramophones and see, in fancy, her charming smile as we hear the blithe beat of Petronella or the stately measures of Glasgow Highlanders played by her magic fingers.

M. F. B.

Progress of the Society.

A very steady and active interest has been taken in the Society in the past year, both nationally and internationally.

At the exhibition arranged by the International Archives of Dance, in Paris this month, Scottish Country Dance publications and informative literature are displayed along with that of nineteen European countries.

In this way it is hoped that the work of the Society will become better known.

Many interesting letters have been received from Affiliated Societies. The Sydney Scottish Country Dance Circle have had an interesting year. Many country dance evenings have been enjoyed, and demonstrations of various dances have been given and greatly appreciated. During the summer it is hoped to have dances in the open air, and that news reels will be taken of them.

Those of you who read the article on the Shanghai Reel Club, that was published in a recent Bulletin, will be interested to learn that two members of the Shanghai Club have been attending classes in Glasgow, so that they may return to Shanghai with knowledge of the latest dances, and of the standard of dancing set up by the Society.

The Branches of the Society in England are thriving and show a keen interest in their classes.

There has been an increase of membership from England, and many letters have been received asking for information about dances and publications.

This is the first year that the Society has been officially recognised by Wales. Scottish Country Dancing is to be included in the curriculum of an Easter School, to be held at Cardiff, at which Miss Milligan has been invited to teach.

Though nothing of outstanding importance has occurred in the work in Scotland, since the issue of the last Bulletin, progress has been steady. The formation of four new branches was very satisfactory, and most of the branches report an increase in membership.

There is no doubt that public interest in Scottish Country Dancing is growing, and that the dances occur more frequently in the programmes of the ball room.

Scottish Country Dancing in Relation to Physical Fitness.

All who are interested in raising the standard of the health of the nation will have been aware that, in the last few months, public attention has been focussed on plans for improving the fitness of the nation. To quote the News Leaflet issued by the Central Council of Recreative Training :—"For the first time in this Country physical education has received attention from all quarters, Government departments, education and medical authorities, voluntary organisations and individuals, showing a steadily increasing interest in its development. It is well, however, to remember that the 'awakening' is not so meteoric as it appears; it has sound foundations, for it is the outcome of the untiring work of organisations and individuals during the past thirty and more years."

The Scottish Country Dance Society has played its part in this work, and there is an increasing demand for knowledge of the dances, and more and more people are taking part in the practice of them. They do give satisfactory exercise to all ages, and are exhilarating and pleasant to dance.

In order that the present 'drive' may bring about lasting progress physical training must not be pigeon-holed and treated as a separate entity; it must be linked up with other pursuits and developed in proper conjunction with all general factors such as nutrition and hygiene, which can assist in the improvement and maintenance of the best possible functioning of the body, thereby aiding growth and character.

Only in this way can recreative physical training, connoting all forms of physical recreation—*e.g.* gymnastics, dancing, games, sports, swimming, hiking, camping, organised play to take its true place as an integral part of the general scheme of that education which continues throughout life.

Lasting development will depend on balance, on quality as well as quantity."

In Scotland it is hoped that the Scottish Country Dance Society, and all similar organisations, will continue to promote improved national health.

Co-operation and co-ordination of effort are essential.

Autumn School at Glasgow,

November 1936.

The widespread interest and enthusiasm of the members of the Scottish Country Dance Society was again evidenced in the large attendance at St Andrews Halls on November 8th and 9th.

Autumn School was a Summer School in miniature. Opportunity was given to study and practise any of the dances of the Society's publications; examinations were held (with most satisfactory results). There were meetings of Publications and Executive Council Committees, and at the Annual General Meeting of the Society members there was undoubtedly a record attendance.

The business of the School was carried through most successfully, but it was the pleasure of it that was outstanding.

Glasgow more than maintained its traditional genial spirit of kindness and hospitality. The Executive Council were entertained to lunch in the Grand Hotel, and the Council's appreciation was eloquently expressed by the Chairman, Lord James Stewart Murray.

The Exhibition of "Scottish Arts" was novel, clever and entertaining. With the rise of the curtain, we in the audience were transported to the Western Isles to witness occupations, customs, song and dance in the true rhythmic setting of olden times. The memory of the late Mrs Kennedy Fraser must have been recalled to many that afternoon.

After a jolly tea there was dancing, the ball room was crowded, but all were happy dancing to the strains of Mr Reid's famous band.

As we look back on Autumn School we cannot but recall Miss Milligan's class on Book XI., where we heard Mrs Shand play for the last time. We will long remember Mrs Shand being conducted to the piano by Miss Milligan, and how she played "Glasgow Flourish" in her own inimitable style. The Society mourns the loss of a great friend and musician, but it possesses a heritage and memory that will never die.

M. M. DOW.

The Rakes of Glasgow.

When a new book of dances is published some of us are greatly interested not only in the actual dances but also in their names and history. We want to know all about the people and places they are called after, and by whom they were composed, and when and where.

Who or what were the Rakes of Glasgow? We do not know—but the old Scottish word "rake" or "raik" has several meanings, according to Jamieson, in 1808, in his Dictionary of the Scottish Language, and is not connected with the English term "rake" in the Hogarth sense at all.

A rake is a path or track, especially a rough path over a hill used by sheep and cattle. A route up Scafell in Cumberland is called Lords Rake. A cattle-raik may mean not only the path but the whole pasturage over which the cattle "raik" or range at large.

A rake may also mean a journey, walk or course, and a person who wandered or roved about was termed a raik or rake.

Can anyone tell us more about the history of the dances? We feel so curious about these men and women of a bygone age whose names are handed down to us by poet and musician. Some may be well known, but of the others we know—nothing.

M. M. RUSSELL.

The Luadh.

(Waulking of the Tweed.)

There is a popular fallacy that the Highlander is a gloomy personality. Nothing is further from the truth, though in the more outlying districts of the Highlands and Islands the religious form of worship practised has a repressing and depressing effect on what is naturally a joyous people.

The Highlander could hardly be dull for music entered into the small communal life very largely. The tasks of the pastoral life with primitive implements were monotonous and heavy, so labour liltts were sung to lighten these tasks. Hence we have milking croons, churning liltts, spinning and weaving songs, rowing songs, the cronan or cradle song, and rare old songs which mothers sung gently and lovingly to the sleeping child whom she wished to waken.

The most spectacular and gayest of all were sung at the Luadh or waulking of the tweed.

Let us begin at the very beginning and follow the history of a piece of home spun.

The village holds a "Fank" or a gathering of the sheep from the common into an enclosure called a fank, and this is the centre of activity for the time being. All and sundry from the laird down, the church being represented by the ministers, law by the policeman, tourists and everyone interested come along to look on or express opinions as to the weight of the year's "clip." After the sheep are shorn the crofter's wife takes a hand in the manufacture of the home spun. She has prepared a large pot of vegetable dye from lichens, bracken, fronds, roots, heather, leaves or may be soot which, combined with certain other ingredients, gives a lovely orange shade with great depths of colour. Into this the fleece, after being washed to rid it of tar, is put and allowed to remain till the desired shade is obtained. The fleece now having been dyed and dried is rolled between two wooden instruments, not unlike the dairymaid's wooden "hands" used to shape the butter, only they are covered with wire teeth which tease or fluff the wool into little rolls. The crofter's wife now sets up her spinning wheel and proceeds to spin the carded rolls into wool. The wool, having been made into neat "rollocks" or longish shaped "bobbins," is passed on to the weaver and he weaves the web on his hand loom.

The bringing home of the web from the weavers causes excitement. Has the dye been a bonnie one? Has the wool been of an even thickness? Then

the housewife prepares for further work upon the tweed. The web is sewn together at the ends and is made into a large ring of tweed which is put into a tub of diluted ammonia to soak. Girls and women from neighbouring crofts come to the "luadh" or, in English, the waulking of the tweed. The first part in the work is for two barefooted girls to tuck their skirts between their legs, enter the tub to tramp or "post" the tweed to the chorus work of the other helpers who sing a song with a very marked rhythm. When the tweed has been tramped sufficiently two sticks are passed through the web and the water wrung out. The workers now take their places on either side of a long improvised table with the owner of the web at the head of the table to supervise the work, direct operations and "lift" the songs.

The work consists of beating the tweed on the table to the accompaniment of songs with a very marked rhythm, and on a strong beat the handfuls of tweed are passed on to the next singer, so that the web is kept in more or less perpetual motion. Usually each worker sings a verse and the chorus is "lifted" by the others. Now we see one good use for Gaelic songs with the traditional innumerable verses! Often the songs are of a personal nature, and if there is an extempore singer her services are in great demand, for then are revealed the love affairs and failings which any may have, till at last the girl who is being teased, if she is so endowed, bursts into song in defence of the young man who is the butt of the joke.

This work is hard, the web may measure twenty yards or more and is wet, so quick and slow songs alternate but all very rhythmical. An occasional rest is taken when a song will be sung with a different rhythm, possibly a lament or a slowly moving boat song or an old tale may be told.

A consultation now takes place between the knowing ones. The tweed is measured in finger lengths, eight going to the yard, and is felt for thickness. The cailleach or old woman may decide that the tweed is not thick enough yet, and that it will take two more songs or three more verses only. That being done it is examined and loose ends of wool cut off, the ends of the web cut apart, and the whole piece of cloth smoothed out and folded into a web. Then the clapping song is sung. A worker stands on either side of the table and brings her hands from above her head with all the strength she can on top of the folded tweed. The tweed is "clapped" alternately by each girl, the other workers standing by singing the clapping song and ready to take their turn.

The labour is now finished and the men folk make their appearance to pass a verdict on the work. The piper or fiddler also makes a timely entrance, and the workers take their positions on the barn floor for the Scotch Reel. The ceilidh is now started with food for the tired, but happy workers who are now to enjoy the "ploys" of the night, regardless of the dark night outside and the many stumbling miles over moorland which separate the various homes from this croft where the kindly communal work took place.

M. DUNLOP.

[Those of us who attended the Autumn School in November will read the above article by Mrs Dunlop with much interest, remembering how we enjoyed the entertainment in which she played a very important part with great success.]

Copies of the following Dances which have been published in Leaflet Form are for sale, price 2d. each.

Circassian Circle.	The Punch Bowl.
Corn Riggs.	The Waltz Country Dance.
Dashing White Sergeant.	The Merry Dancers.
Duke of Perth.	The Eightsome Reel.
Flowers of Edinburgh.	Greig's Pipes.
Glasgow Highlanders.	The White Cockade.
Petronella.	Jenny's Bawbee.
Scottish Reform.	Teviot Brig.
Speed the Plough.	Dumbarton's Drums.

Names and Addresses of Office-Bearers.

Executive Council.

Chairman—Mrs Hamilton Meikle, Brankstone, Bogside, Alloa.

Vice-Chairman—Lord James Stewart Murray, Cuil-an-Duin, Ballinluig.

Mrs Stewart, Camserney Cottage, Aberfeldy, Perthshire.

Miss A. Anderson, 16 Warriston Crescent, Edinburgh.

Mrs Bruce, 5 Rubislaw Place, Aberdeen.

Miss M. M. Dow, Training College, Dundee.

Mr J. Drummond, Daniel Stewart's College, Queensferry Road, Edinburgh.

Miss Jean Milligan, 19 Rosslyn Terrace, Glasgow, W. 2.

Mr Frank Punchard, 54 Mitre Road, Glasgow, W. 4.

And Representatives of Branches.

Secretary—Mrs M. Brown, Thornhill, Corstorphine, Edinburgh.

Treasurer—Mr R. T. Terras, British Linen Bank, Galston, Ayrshire.

Terms of Membership to Scottish Country Dance Society.

Annual Subscription 5/-

Life Membership Subscription £3, 3/- or £2, 10/-

to those who have paid their annual subscription for four years. Those who have paid for ten years may become Life Members on payment of £1, 10/-

SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE SOCIETY
SUMMER SCHOOL.

The Eleventh Annual Summer School of the above Society will be held at University Hall, St Andrews, Fife, from 2nd to 16th August 1937.

Two weekly courses will be held as follows :—

FIRST COURSE. Monday, 2nd August to Monday 9th August.

SECOND COURSE. Monday, 9th August to Monday, 16th August.

If there is room early applications will be considered for the whole fortnight, and a decisive answer given after the closing date.

Applications are only taken for a week or a fortnight.

TERMS :—

RESIDENTS. 3½ guineas per week, plus a registration fee of 5/- which must accompany the application form. Non-members of the Society pay an extra 10/- per week.

NON-RESIDENTS. 1 guinea per week, 4/- per day, 2/- per class.

Classes will be held from 9.45—1 o'clock daily on all eleven books. A reel step class will be held from 5.30 to 6.30 p.m., and there will be social dancing each evening at 8.30 p.m. The afternoons are free for bathing, golf, etc.

Examinations for Teacher's Certificate will be held at the end of each week.

NOTE. Please report at the Secretary's Office on arrival between 3 and 5 o'clock on Monday, 2nd August and 9th August. The first Country Dance Class will be held at 5.30 p.m.

In the event of any member being prevented from attending, the registration fee will be refunded if notice of withdrawal is sent to the Secretary before 12th July.

TO BE SENT IN BY 19th JUNE.

TO THE SECRETARY, S.C.D.S.,
THORNHILL, CAIRNMUIR ROAD,
CORSTORPHINE, EDINBURGH.

Please reserve a room for me at the Summer School at St Andrews, from

..... to (Please fill in dates).

Name

Address

I should like a room near

I would share a room with

My Registration Fee of 5/- is enclosed.

