

SCOTTISH country dancer

The Members' Magazine of the RSCDS

No 5 October 2007



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From around the world

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From the Chair

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Editorial

Thank you Jimmie! Sadly Jimmie Hill has stepped down as editor of *Scottish Country Dancer* after successfully piloting the magazine through its first four issues. We are all grateful to him. Looking back it's amazing that for so many years we thought we could manage without a publication such as this. In a very short time *Scottish Country Dancer* has become part of the RSCDS landscape.

No one could replace Jimmie and no one has. A whole team is now in place to continue his good work. The new editor has seven years' experience with *The Reel*, there is a new face and some familiar names on the Editorial Board, we have engaged the professional design services of Dougie Gibson and the Chairman, Chairman Elect, Secretary and Convenors will act collectively as publisher overseeing everything. The new team will continue to rely on the expertise of our Headquarters staff, but above all it will be you, the members, who determine the content of the magazine. Without your contribution *Scottish Country Dancer* will be nothing. Please let the editorial team know what you think, and send us your ideas, comments and news. We will certainly read and be influenced by everything you submit, even if we cannot print it all.

We are determined to publish the magazine at designated times of the year. This issue should reach you in October, in time for the Society's AGM. There will be another issue in April. To achieve these regular publication dates we shall set deadlines for contributions, so material for the next issue should be with the editor by 1 February. That's a long lead-in time, but we hope to reduce that with experience. However a twice yearly magazine with a worldwide distribution is not the place for hot off the press news; check the website for that.

Our publication schedule means that we cannot report on Dance Scottish Week in September, which we are sure has been a great success. Do let us know what your branch or club did during the week, and in the next issue we will share everyone's ideas so we can make the next Dance Scottish Week even better. Turning to this issue we mark the retirement of Lord Mansfield as Honorary President of the Society, we look again at the life and times of Francis Peacock and, with an eye to the future, we celebrate the continuing success of Spring Fling, our annual event for young dancers, and the first performances of the new, youthful RSCDS demonstration team.

Happy dancing!

REMEMBER

The next issue of *Scottish Country Dancer* will be published in April 2008. Please send your news, photographs, letters and comments, especially about Dance Scottish Week, to the editor by 1 February 2008.

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Cover picture: Scone Palace, Perthshire
by kind permission of the Earl of Mansfield.

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News from Coates Crescent

Elsbeth Gray brings you up-to-date with highlights of what has been happening at Headquarters. Elsewhere in the magazine you will find news from the Chairman and the Committee Convenors.

Hon. President

As notified in the last issue, the Earl of Mansfield is standing down after thirty years as President of the Society – there is an interview with Lord Mansfield on page 10 which we hope you will enjoy reading. Lord Mansfield has been a wonderful supporter of Scottish country dancing and the RSCDS, and has made a great contribution to the Society over the years. His wisdom and guidance will be very much missed. Following lengthy consideration, the Management Board has invited Dr Alastair MacFadyen to take on the role of President, and we are delighted to say he has accepted. His appointment will be proposed to the AGM in November. Dr MacFadyen has held a number of roles within the Society over the years – examiner, archivist, chairman – and we look forward to hearing more from him in the next issue.

Members' Room at Headquarters



12 Coates Crescent has once again seen a lot of activity in terms of maintenance and upgrading of facilities. Central heating has been installed throughout, which will be much more efficient and cost-effective than the old (in some cases, ancient and out of order!) storage heaters that were previously in place. In addition, refurbishment of the large room, known in recent years as the Board Room, has now been completed to make it look less like a meeting room and to create a more attractive space to greet members and visitors. If you are in Edinburgh any time, please come in and see it for yourself! Our opening hours are 10.00am – 4.00pm, Monday to Friday, or other times by arrangement.

House Style Update



In June, we sent out to all Branches a disk containing the new logo in a variety of styles and formats, together with guidelines for their use. Hopefully Branches will by now have begun to incorporate the new logo into their own materials. If any Branch has not received the disk, or if you have any queries that are not covered in the guidelines, please just let us know.

Members' Database

In the last issue, we said that the facility for Branches to access and update their own members' data online would be ready by June 2007 – unfortunately, that has not been possible, as there have been several glitches that we are determined to iron out completely before turning the system over to Branches. We are hopeful that all will be finalised very shortly, however, and that details will be sent out to Branch secretaries by the time this magazine is distributed.

Life Members

Several Life members have contacted Headquarters to request copies of the magazine, as they were apparently not on the distribution list. We sent a letter to Life members with the first edition of *Scottish Country Dancer*, asking if they wished to continue to receive the magazine or not, and we subsequently annotated our database accordingly. However, when Branches take on the online maintenance of their members' details (see above), Branch secretaries will be able to do that themselves. We would therefore urge Branch secretaries to check with their own Life members if they wish to receive the magazine.

Scottish Branches Conference

At the very successful conference for Scottish Branches that was held in February 2006, delegates indicated that they would be interested in the event being repeated, with more focus on particular issues that had been identified. We contacted Scottish Branches earlier this year to identify the preferred format for the next conference, and the conclusion was that it should be a one-day event, in Edinburgh. We can now confirm that the date will be 9 February

2008, at the Cluny Centre in Morningside, Edinburgh, and we will be writing to Branches shortly to confirm this and to take arrangements forward. Whereas the Society met the cost of holding the initial conference in 2006, with the exception of travel expenses, Branches will be asked to meet the costs of the 2008 conference.

Communication with Headquarters

I suspect it will be no surprise to many of you that communication with Headquarters – whether by letter, email or phone – has increased greatly in recent years. We receive around 30 emails per day to info@rscds.org, and in addition most of the staff team receive between 20-40 emails directly. Of course, we also receive correspondence by mail; this varies hugely, and can be anything from 3-30 letters per day (in addition to the “regular” mail items such as orders, subscription and affiliation payments, invoices, application forms, etc). We are aware that, at times, it has taken longer than we would like to respond to communications. Where an urgent response is requested, we will of course continue to do our best to meet that expectation. If an immediate response is not made, we will at least issue a standard response to communications, so that correspondents know that their letter/email has been received. That response will outline to which individual/s or committee the communication has been passed. If it is a general query that will be dealt with at Headquarters, a response will be made within six weeks. If it is a query that needs to be dealt with by a committee, the date of the next meeting of the relevant committee will be given and a full response may not be provided until after that date, although the Convenor of the committee may choose to respond more quickly. I should add that we are always pleased to hear from members! We are simply trying to be more systematic in responding.

Branch Awards Update

Branch Awards were introduced in 2005, as a way of recognising Branch members who had given outstanding service, and have proved a great success. If Branches decide to make an award, they complete the appropriate form and send it to Headquarters, and a certificate is issued for the Branch to present to the individual/s concerned at an appropriate time. Unlike the Scroll of Honour, there is no “approval” process, Branches simply need to tell us they wish to make an Award and why, and the certificate is provided. In *Scottish Country Dancer* No. 3 we listed all

recipients to date; below are the names of all those who have received an Award since issue 3 and up to the end of August 2007 – congratulations to all!

| Name/s | Branch |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| Irene Bennett | St Andrews |
| Jenny Bradley | Nottingham |
| Major Olly Davidson | Birmingham |
| June Dey | Detroit |
| June & John Dey | Windsor (Ontario) |
| Jean Dyson | Leeds |
| David & Molly Farmer | London Canada |
| Rene Gibson | Stonehaven |
| John & Anne King | London |
| Joe & Judy McDougall | Seattle |
| Lilian Meiklejohn | Inverness & District |
| Jimmy Mitchell | Duns and District |
| Ross & Kay Morrison | Seattle |
| John Reeve | London |
| Robert Rushton | North West Craven |
| David & Bessie Smith | Kingston (Ontario) |
| Walter Sutherland | Aberdeen |
| Yvonne Tredgett | Leeds |
| Viv Vedat | Gatehouse of Fleet |
| Eileen Watson | Aberdeen |
| Peter Wright | Bristol |

Branch anniversaries

Congratulations to the following Branches, who all celebrated significant anniversaries this year. Well done, and here's to many more years of happy dancing for you and your members!

- 80th Clackmannanshire, Stirling
- 75th Falkirk

- 60th Belfast, Dumfries, Dunfermline, Peterhead
- 50th Nairobi, Roxburgh Selkirk & Peebles, Toronto
- 25th Isle of Islay, Pretoria, Sutton Coldfield

Spring Fling 2008

Are you between 16-35? Get the dates for next year's Spring Fling in your diary now! It will be held in Glasgow, from Friday 28 to Sunday 30 March 2008. Application forms are now available from Headquarters or can be downloaded from our website.

Looking back at Summer School 2007

John Wilkinson, Schools Director, has written on page 15 about his experience of directing Summer School for the first time, but here is a brief summary.

Numbers attending each week were:

- Week 1 203
- Week 2 171
- Week 3 186
- Week 4 226

74 people came for two weeks, and the remainder attended for one week only. The Musicians' courses were well attended, with 15 people in week 2, and 10 in week 4. This year we also had an Examiners' Seminar running during week 1; this was an opportunity for our examiners from all over the world to get together to discuss matters relating to

the examination system. As John mentions in his article, the School was not in its customary venue this year, as refurbishment work is being carried out, but instead was based at St Salvator's Hall, with a number of attendees also staying at New Hall or David Russell Hall. This was not ideal, but those of us based at St Salvator's were certainly made very welcome. In addition to members from all corners of the UK, we were very happy to welcome members from the following countries this year: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, China, France, Germany, Hungary, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Russia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The Netherlands, Ukraine, USA.

And looking forward to Summer School 2008

- Week 1 starts 20 July
- Week 2 starts 27 July
- Week 3 starts 3 August
- Week 4 starts 10 August

Application forms will be available from Headquarters or the website in December 2007. It is very much hoped that we will be able to return to our usual "home" of University Hall, but that will not be confirmed until after this magazine has gone to press. Watch the website for confirmation!



The RSCDS Examiners at their seminar in St Andrews during the first week of Summer School



Back Row: Bruce Frazer; Lesley Martin; Ian Hall; Morag Napier; Brenda Burnell; Ann Dix; Noeline O'Connor; Helen Russell (Interim Convenor of Education and Training) and Peter Clark.

Front Row: Elinor Vandegrift; Johan MacLean; Frances Gray; Christine Mair; Marilyn Watson (Provisional Examiner); Elma McCausland; Geoffrey Selling; Margo Priestley; Helen Frame; Jean Martin; Craig Jackson (RSCDS Examinations Officer)

Inset: Mary Murray (who could not attend the seminar).

From around the world

Once again we have reports from our correspondents around the globe. We welcome Christiane Orgeret as our new Europe correspondent and we are grateful to Eilean Yates for temporarily filling the North America - East Coast berth

Africa

Correspondent: Terry Lynne Harris
harriltl@unisa.ac.za

Pretoria Branch's 35th anniversary ball takes place on Saturday, 6 October 2007 at the Wingate Park Country Club in Pretoria, with live music provided by Muriel Johnstone and Keith Smith. Johannesburg Branch has been helping to raise the necessary funds to bring these two excellent musicians out to South Africa. Thank you Jo'burg! Bill and Atsuko Clement will also be attending the ball and Bill will play his bagpipes - another treat! Live SCD music is a rare occurrence in South Africa and the ball promises to be a great event. Pretoria Branch's 35th anniversary book of dances is due out in October to coincide with the ball.

In March the SCD group in Grahamstown demonstrated at a cultural evening in a private home - one with a very large lounge! The dancing was very well received and the dem team managed to entice spectators into two sets of six for the Cumberland Reel, which was enjoyed most enthusiastically by some Ugandans attending the event. The Grahamstown group is very small, so they were delighted to have six dancers good enough to do a demo, the first time in many years.

Asia

Correspondent: Arthur McNeill
amcneill@cuhk.edu.hk

Early summer appears to be the season for large-scale celebrations. In Hong Kong, the local dancers teamed up with other groups to put on a public performance of Scottish music and dance at the invitation of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre. Although Hong Kong has a large international community, over 95% of the local population are native speakers of Cantonese. How can Scottish country dancing be made accessible and attractive to them? On this occasion, a bilingual approach was adopted, with texts carefully prepared by Jean Young and translated by Anne Lee, who discovered that her English-Chinese dictionary was of limited use when trying to explain the significance of The White Cockade and The Reel of the 51st! Long hours were spent trying to capture the spirit of the dance in Chinese, ensuring

that little was lost in translation. This well received, high-impact event was the result of six months' liaison by dance secretary, Joseph Schembri, with the Hong Kong Cultural Centre.

Meanwhile in Indonesia, the 30th Jakarta Highland Gathering took place, an event which claims to be the largest of its kind in the southern hemisphere. The Gathering has a separate section for Scottish country dancing and the RSCDS usually sends a judge to guarantee fair play. Unfortunately, the recent terrorist attacks in Jakarta and Bali have made it increasingly difficult for the organizers. This year, dancing was included, but only dancers from Indonesia took part. It is hoped that more teams from around the region will participate in the coming years. Enquiries should be addressed to Susan Whistler (susanwhistler@centrin.net.id).

Australia

Correspondent: Sam Heron
sususe@powerup.com.au

The annual Winter School of Scottish Country Dancing (Canberra 30 September to 7 October 2007) continues to be a must for dancers. The dance chatter at the moment in Australia is about the Canberra WS and important things like which ceilidh item to perform. It is the highlight of the year for many and has almost a cult following. "Schools" are where friendships are renewed annually and where new friends are met and there is an excitement about this annual pilgrimage to "wherever" to see old friends. It is a time when dancers enjoy dancing in classes with others at a level consistent with their own abilities while being taught by selected teachers. It also enables the eight Australian Branches to meet to discuss issues of national interest with mutual agenda items able to be reconciled and ATA, the Australian Teachers' Alliance, does likewise. The first Winter School in Australia was held in Hunter Valley in NSW and since then it has developed into a must have, must go, must enjoy event. Dancers from all over Australia enjoy the companionship of likeminded people. In 2008 it is Queensland's turn for a week of dancing to be held at a venue on the beach on the famous Gold Coast. In 2009 Adelaide, South Australia will host the "School". Dancers from around the world are

welcome to join us, perhaps as part of a holiday. See <http://www.rscds.org.au/> for more information.

Europe

Correspondent: Christiane Orgeret
ochristi@gmail.com



Dancing in Lyon

EUROPE? How can one deal with such a wide-ranging topic without disappointing the great majority of European readers? I don't know, so please help me. If you would like a comment about a past or future event organized by your group/branch to be published in this column, do let me know...

This brings me to a question which SCD dancers are often asked in my part of the world: "Why do you choose to practise a form of dance which bears no resemblance to your own?" In St Andrews, I tried to get some of the French, Swiss, German, Italian and Hungarian pilgrims to tell me what it is in SCD that attracts them. Some were able also to share their experience of what usually draws their compatriots to it.

First impressions are that every person has his or her own reason(s) for starting SCD: people will come because they prefer dance to yoga or tennis; because the SCD club is nearer home than the Irish one; because they know or would like to know somebody who dances; because they need exercise and the day and time suit them; because they read an article in a local paper or have fun at a ceilidh. Many, however, will give up quite quickly. Some stay, though: why?

They may have a personal or cultural link with Britain: teachers of English, descendants of Scots, Brits who have lived locally for years, people with experience of life outside their own country are more likely to become steady members but, except in groups founded or run by English-speaking expats, they are a minority.



Dancers and musicians in Hong Kong

Of course these ingredients are often combined: a number of folk dancers become interested in Scottish dancing and form a group, bringing their network of friends into it; several French groups started this way. Their reasons "You can join without bringing a partner"; "the music is so lively!"; "it's a mental challenge as well!"

Indeed, learning Scottish dancing is an abstract activity for a European: these are not people's national dances, they have no childhood memories, early emotions or habits attached to them. The Duke of Perth has to be memorized, just like any other series of figures. When SCD becomes part of one's heritage, it is by mutual adoption, not birth... It becomes an acquired skill through hard mental and physical work and the reward is a sense of achievement. This is especially true of young people, who make up a large proportion of dancers in Europe.

The social aspects of SCD are highly rated, be it dancing technique or the friendly atmosphere. All those questioned said how important it had been to feel accepted and made welcome when they were beginners. A major concern for those who were teachers was to balance demanding technique and mutual acceptance between dancers of mixed ability - tensions may arise between over-achievers and social dancers!

Allegedly, many members only attend the events of their local groups. Overcoming the language barrier means a double challenge but once dancers have experienced being taught SCD in English by visiting teachers, they become interested in brushing up their school English, in attending events organized by other groups, in going to Summer School. Alice Murphy was our special RSCDS missionary: she inspired many dancers who would never have stepped out of their little groups without her.

The exam system is another opportunity to enlarge one's life, build new projects... Thanks to it, there are now many excellent European teachers but unfortunately the cost of attending Summer School can be prohibitive for many.

The international scope of the RSCDS is certainly its best asset in Europe. The

core of its influence there is the Summer School. Every single person I have met on a dance floor in Europe said the same thing: involvement with the RSCDS begins in St Andrews, where you discover another dimension of SCD altogether.

South America

*Correspondent: Marcella Galve
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BASC Dancers have welcomed a few new members in the last six months, due probably to the wise decision not to stop dancing lessons during the Southern Hemisphere Summer break. This period was also enriched by the presence of visitors from abroad, which definitely proved an interesting experience for the group.

In May, following last year's custom, we had a Walking and Dancing Day on an island located in Tigre, on the Delta of the river Paraná. BASCDancers learnt a few more dances on that occasion and had the chance to polish certain figures as well.

As usual, in July, our teacher attended the Summer School at St Andrews. This allows for a continuous updating of the group, which strengthens the bonds with Scotland and SCD despite the long distance!

We would like to take this opportunity to remind prospective visitors to Buenos Aires that BACSDancers meet every Friday from 7.30 to 10.00 pm. Those interested in joining us please do not hesitate to contact us.

Japan

*Correspondent: Tom Toriyama
Tomtori@aol.com*

Japanese dancers were shocked by the sudden death of Fusako Oi, Tokyo Branch Chairman, in early April. She had been conducting a vigorous class only the previous day. Her talents and original ideas had been of significant help in advancing Branch activities. Her family, to whom our sympathy is extended, and Tokyo Branch, have lost a great lady. She will be missed by all!

Tokai Branch celebrated its 10th Anniversary at their Weekend in May. The teachers were Masako O Naito (Marchan) and Yoshiki Oyama, with music provided

by Fred Moyes. 80 people enjoyed three days of dancing. Tokai also had Simon Scott teaching their Weekend in September at Yufuin, famous hot springs in Kyuushuu region. 100 participants had great fun dancing, relaxing in the hot springs and sightseeing. Next January Tokyo and Saitama Branches will each hold a New Year Dance. Tokyo is to have their Weekend in February with teachers Robert and Barbara McOwen. An International SCD Festival, organised by Atsuko Clement and friends, will be held in early April at Hakone, another well-known hot-spring resort, with Bill Zobel, Muriel Johnstone and Keith Smith. Details from atsukoclement@aol.com Come and enjoy Hakone!

MCs at events in Japan usually have a walk-through for all dances, even a simple one such as Rakes of Glasgow. It is only a short time since SCD became widespread in Japan and most group leaders like a walk-through to remind dancers of the patterns and formations. On the other hand some programme planners think that, since there is to be a walk-through of each dance, they can introduce non-popular dances such as The Lanes of Au and other way-out dances. This can lead to situations where, because there is a mixture of inexperienced and experienced dancers, chaos can ensue! The organisers may boast of the success of an event because of the number of dancers. If there had been only re-capping the numbers attending may well have been halved.

New Zealand

*Correspondent: Marjorie M Crawford
jaymarcrawfors@actrix.co.nz*

Warmest greetings once again to RSCDS members world-wide from a very cold New Zealand (perhaps this has something to do with our proximity to Antarctica?) It's winter here at the moment, of course, but we also extend our support to our fellow country dancers around the world who have been experiencing the most unexpected and harsh weather - at a time when things should be better! I am pleased to advise members of the Society that the New Zealand Branch has taken a leap forward - in what is considered to be a 'world first' - in the training of Scottish country dance teachers. We have launched a web-based

learning environment to prepare candidates for the RSCDS teaching certificate examinations and aim to provide access to teaching certificate courses for candidates in all parts of the country. Since we ceased holding residential courses at the annual Summer School, we have struggled to solve the issues of distance and isolation.

With the introduction of a new modular structure for RSCDS examinations, it was decided to implement a new training course structure that combines both on-line learning and face-to-face courses. The Unit 1 course will be conducted fully on-line - enabling candidates to interact with each other and their course tutor, whilst still meeting the demands of their busy working lives.

Courses for units 2, 3 and 5 will prepare candidates on-line prior to the examination taking place. This will give candidates the opportunity to make the most of the face-to-face course time.

The Branch has elected to offer courses via a virtual learning environment (VLE) because it can be accessed from anywhere with an Internet connection. The Branch now has 19 candidates enrolled in a mix of all five units, with candidates coming from throughout New Zealand and from Australia.

The VLE utilises the Moodle open-source course management system used by more than 2,000 universities, community colleges, schools and other educational organisations around the world.

The New Zealand Branch enjoyed another "first" this year - and was delighted that Brownyn Corps (aged 18) was awarded a Scholarship to attend Summer School at St Andrews. Bronwyn thoroughly enjoyed her week at St Andrews and she hopes to return there sometime to renew the many friendships she made.

North America - East Coast

Correspondent: Eilean D Yates
meyates@aet.net

Greetings from a sweltering North Carolina where temperatures have been record breaking highs - 104 degrees Fahrenheit - for several days. Most of the groups have been resting for the summer and are now gearing up for the fall.

The recently formed Carolinas Branch completed its first successful year with the AGM at the Loch Norman Games weekend in April. Since the branch covers a geographical area 450 miles east to west and 350 miles north to south it is logistically difficult to meet monthly. The management committee meetings are set up to coincide with established dances at Charleston, Greensboro, Raleigh, Loch Norman near Charlotte and Banner Elk. This way attendance is easier.

Thistle School of Scottish Country Dance at Banner Elk in the North Carolina mountains celebrated its 27th year in July. This school provides an important opportunity for dancers and teachers to get together to share ideas and enjoy meeting and dancing with those from other areas. Many lasting friendships have been made at Thistle! Bobby Brown and his band once again provided the music for the Ball. His special brand of music is such a treat for dancers in the south east and his attendance is much enjoyed each year. No matter how tired are the feet, all are revived and raring to go when his music starts. He brings out the best in all dancers.

(We are very grateful to Eilean for providing this report. Sadly, John Middleton, our usual correspondent, was unable to write a report for this issue because of a family bereavement. Our sympathy goes to him and to J'ina on the loss of J'ina's mother, who, until relatively recently, was still dancing.)

North America – West Coast

Correspondent: Rosemary Coupe
rcoupe@rscdsvancouver.org

Scottish country dancers must flourish in harsh Canadian winters, as the province of Alberta now has three RSCDS branches, one more than neighbouring BC. In September 2006 the Edmonton Caledonian Country Dance Society became the Edmonton Caledonian Branch. The group was first formed in 1969 as the University of Alberta Scottish Country Dance Society, and changed its name in 1982 when it expanded beyond the university.

Another long-lived Alberta group has celebrated a quarter-century of dancing. The Lethbridge Scottish Country Dance Club, linked to the Medicine Hat Branch

held a weekend dance and music workshop for its 25th anniversary on April 13-15, 2007. Among the 104 people at the ball were dancers from five Canadian provinces, one Territory, and three US States. The past and current members of the Lethbridge Scottish Country Dance club in attendance included nine people from the first class held in the Fall of 1981: seven retired dancers, one current dancer, and one of the Club's original teachers, Fiona Miller, who has taught continuously at the Club for 25 years.

TAC Summer School is one of the most hallowed institutions in the Canadian world of Scottish country dancing. Traditionally held in Ontario, the Summer School has now moved to the West Coast three times, most recently in July 2007. The School was fully enrolled by January, and 225 fortunate people from Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Europe and North America converged for a memorable week of dancing and music at Shawnigan Lake School on Vancouver Island. The dining hall at Shawnigan with its soaring timbers could have been made for Harry Potter, so we were not surprised to be greeted by a huge "Welcome to Hogwarts" banner. Inevitably, Harry Potter provided the theme for the costume night, and Septimus Snape made a chilling visitation to capture first prize.

TAC, or Teachers' Association (Canada), will celebrate 50 years of existence in 2008. It provides many services to teachers and dancers, including the highly efficient ordering services, TACBooks and TACSound, and the quarterly bulletin TACTalk. Congratulations, TAC!

Dancers from Europe at the Newcastle Festival



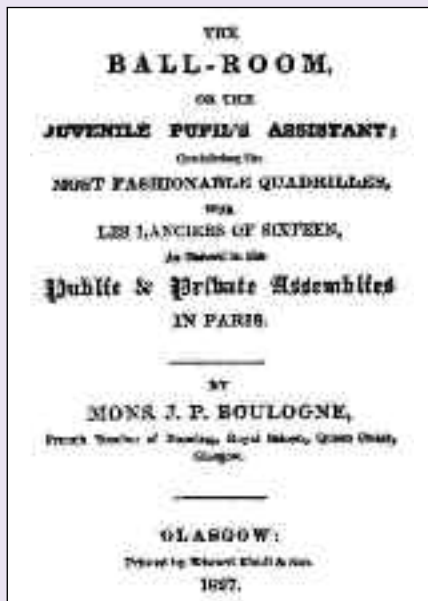
The Archive

By Marilyn Healy



The Peel Index

The Peel Index is an important resource in the Society's Archive. It is a card index system with approximately 2-3,000 references to the location in libraries and archives of old books and manuscripts of country dances, music, teachers, musicians and newspaper articles. It was compiled by Barbara Peel.



The Boulogne Book. The book has 48 pages and includes instructions for 212 dances. It was one of the earliest "pocket editions" and measures 2½ inches by 3½ inches.

When Alastair MacFadyen was first appointed as the Society's Honorary Archivist in 1979 he wrote in The Bulletin that 'a very important section of the Archives will include the sources of traditional Scottish country dances, and here again I am seeking the assistance of interested members'. Barbara had always been interested in history but her specific interest in the history of country dancing began in the mid 1970s, shortly after moving to Boston Spa in Yorkshire where the British Library has a lending library and reading room. Alastair asked her if she could trace a copy of 'the Boulogne book', referred to in JP & TM Flett's Traditional Dancing in Scotland, Hugh Thurston's Scotland's Dances and also by George Emmerson. It was clear that this book was the source for a large number of dances in the early books including Petronella, Duke of Perth, Merry Lads of Ayr, The Triumph, Flowers of Edinburgh, Mrs McLeod and Circassian Circle among others. The book's full title is The Ball-Room, or the Juvenile Pupil's Assistant. As it happened the library did not have a copy but Barbara, having 'got the bug', continued to search for it in alternative

locations. Eventually Mrs Stewart's copy of the book turned up in Coates Crescent!

During the 1980s Barbara researched a monograph: Dancing and Social Assemblies in York in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries, published by the National Resource Centre for Dance at the University of Surrey in 1986. Most of her research centred around York, a major social centre during the 18th century, using both the public reference library and the city archives. It was during this work that she began to catalogue the books and resources she had used. That was how the index began but it continued, and continues, to grow.

A major source of information was the British Union Catalogue of Early Music printed before the year 1801, in two volumes by Edith B Schnapper, published in 1957. This catalogues the music publications held in over one hundred libraries throughout the British Isles but is now, regrettably, out of print. Other sources, apart from the known major collections in the National Library of Scotland, the British Library and the Mitchell Library in Glasgow, included Leeds, Manchester and Cardiff Public Libraries and she unearthed items in less likely places such as the libraries of Durham Cathedral and York Georgian Society.

Barbara would be first to agree that the index is not comprehensive and there are many more sources of dances and music to be identified. The index is currently being transferred to an electronic version and, when complete, will be available on the Society web-site for access by members and researchers but this is a long-term plan. It is hoped that, eventually, members will be able to meet Alastair's request for information by adding further details of sources relating to publications, newspaper and periodicals as well as information about teachers and musicians.

As we continue to revise the books of dances, information from the Index has enabled us to up-date and expand the sources given in the recently revised Miss Milligan's Miscellany from three to twenty-eight dances. Since it was issued we have already been told of the source for The Lads of Saltcoats. With a total of seventy-seven dances in the volume, that still leaves nearly fifty dances for which we do not know the source and any information members can provide will be welcomed.

Any information can be sent to the Archivist at HQ.

Programmes

Branches usually hold formal dances or balls to mark special anniversaries. Here is the programme for Pretoria's 35th Anniversary Ball (10 years as a club and 25 years as a branch) at the Wingate Club on 6 October 2007.

Good Hearted Glasgow, The Button Boy, The Braes of Breadalbane, Knotwork, The Barmkin, The Gentleman, Joe MacDiarmid's Jig, Jean Martin of Aberdeen, Pelorus Jack, The Reel of the 51st Division, EH3 7AF, The Saltire Society Reel, The Dream Catcher, Gothenburg's Welcome, Miss Johnstone of Ardrossan, A City in Bloom*, The Robertson Rant, James Gray, The Wind on Loch Fyne, The Reel of the Royal Scots.

(*Devised especially for the Ball by Irene van Maarseveen with music composed by Wouter Joubert.)

Sutton Coldfield celebrated 25 years with a dance on 16th December 2006 at the Arthur Terry School, Four Oaks. Music was provided by the David Anderson Band and the programme was:-

The Wild Geese, Inverneill House, Silver Tassie, The Cooper's Wife, Swiss Lassie, St. Columba's Strathspey, The Chequered Court, The Outer Circle, Sands of Morar, Spiffin, Cherrybank Gardens, The Saltire Society Reel, The Grumpy Gentleman, The Flower o' the Quern, Anniversary Tensome, Its Just for Fun, Kinfauns Castle, Major Ian Stewart, The Cashmere Shawl, Ian Powrie's Farewell to Auchterarder.



Seen at St. Andrews during the summer. This is surely unfair. Our older members are much more sprightly.



Interview with Lord Mansfield

On 21 August Linda Gaul and Jean Martin interviewed Lord Mansfield at Scone Palace. He is to retire as Honorary President of the RSCDS at the Annual General Meeting in November, having served in that capacity for 30 years. Throughout, Lord Mansfield has been a staunch supporter of the Society and a constant source of advice and assistance. Apart from his family, his estate and his business, his other interests include travel and cultivating orchids.

Did you dance from an early age?

I started to dance in the middle '30s and my first dancing class was composed of children who came from all over the county. I think the parents took it in turns to have the dancing class and give them tea. Our teacher was Dancie Reid who came over from Forfar.

Do you remember what he looked like?

Yes, I don't know if he was short or tall but then I was a boy of 4 or 5. He had a very kind face which was something that endeared itself to the children and he used to arrive and say, "How do you do?" to the parents and then he'd call us all up, the children that is, and get us in a long line. He'd then say, "Gentlemen, make a 'boe' to the ladies." For some time we didn't understand what he meant but eventually we did and we had to do our little bows and the girls were supposed to do little curtseys but I don't think they did somehow. I don't know why but it might have been more difficult for them. Then we got on with the lesson. He used to explain what he was doing and then teach us the pas de basque or whatever it was. I remember that he had a fiddle which he used to play at the same time as he danced and taught. He did the three things beautifully too. It was amazing wasn't it?

What sort of dances did you learn?

He taught us dances but some of them I've never done much since. The Cumberland Reel, for instance. He was very keen on The Cumberland Reel and a sort of a jig. I think really what he was doing was teaching us a little something of each tempo so that we could carry it on as we wanted to. We did the real basic stuff – a pas de basque, and an easy sort of Highland Fling and something a little bit more ornate for the boys when we got into the middle of the Foursome. I can't remember doing the Eightsome. I'm not going to say it didn't happen. It probably did but it may not have been in the class for the very youngest.

So, did all your family dance?

Yes, and the whole of Perthshire was very keen. That, of course, was why my mother was so keen for me to be in Dancie Reid's class. We had bills for the dancing classes but we've a new archivist and so I haven't been able to put my hands on them. I had thought you might like to see them.

Did you continue dancing in the army?

Oh, before that. I went to Eton College. The Scottish boys were very keen on doing Scottish country dancing on Sunday nights when we were allowed to. We'd a gramophone and we used to go and dance in one of the halls. Because I'd had this very good grounding and I knew all the dances I was the president of the organisation for two years. It was great fun. Eton is a marvellous place because they don't oversee everything you do. They let you get on with it and as long as it's respectable and you seem to know what you're doing they don't interfere. Anyway, I was asked if we would do a series of demonstrations for the Workers' Educational Association. Goodness knows what Scottish country dancing had to do with the WEA in Slough! They have a dance now on St Andrew's Night at Eton. But when I was there it was just after the war and the headmaster was a very dour sort of man. I went to see him and asked him if we could resuscitate the ball on St Andrew's Night and he was outraged. He wouldn't let me and he said, "English dancing is immoral and Scottish dancing is unnecessary!"

So dancing didn't feature during your stint in the army.

No, not really. You see, I was in Malaya at the time of the emergency but we didn't have any proper headquarters - just a farm or a rubber plantation, so you couldn't have the formal functions with dancing. We were there fairly early - about 1949. I took out a detachment of guardsmen from the 2nd Battalion Scots Guards, about 40 or 50 of them. I was aged 18 and very youthful and all these chaps had fought in the last war and they

were battle-hardened and I was in charge. Oh, dear! It was very good for me I dare say, but I think they thought that they'd seen much more of life than I had, which was quite true.

Did you have a long period in the army?

No, I was very lucky. Until 1 January 1949 everybody who was called up was there at His Majesty's pleasure so you got no inkling how long you would be in the army. But in 1948 Parliament had passed an act saying that conscripts could be retained in the army for 18 months and then they had to be released. Our batch of 6 officers was the very first to be affected by this ruling and so I was released on 7 July 1950, which was my birthday. To get us back from Malaya to London they hired one of those Liberator bombers. They were huge and more especially they had a very long range. It trundled westwards and it took 5 days and nights! We went to somewhere in India called Moripoor. I've never known where it is. They chose bases, you see, as it was quite safe to land there and then the second night we stayed at Habbaniyah, a huge military base to the west of Baghdad. Then the third was in the Canal Zone, the fourth was Malta and the fifth night we landed at Lyneham. The Liberator had no pressurisation; it didn't even have sprung seats, just canvas ones. I thought I was going to be deaf for the rest of my life. It was marvellous to get back and we came up to London and were de-mobbed. That happened at the Goudge Street underground station, which was tremendously deep. The lift wasn't working and there weren't any escalators either so one thought one had earned one's de-mob after all that! So that was that. Not very Scottish, I'm afraid, except that I was pleased to be in the Scots Guards.

What made you choose a legal career?

Immediately after the army I went to Oxford – to Christ Church. Well, I had thought that I would follow in my father's

footsteps and do a little light farming. And so when I was going up to Oxford my father asked what I was going to read. And I said I hadn't really thought – perhaps a little bit of economics and some agriculture and all those sort of nice things. Well, he was very cross at this and said, "No you're not. You have got to become qualified at something and be able to earn your living at it because Europe is full of landowners who have been dispossessed. If it happens to us how are you going to keep a wife and children or do anything?" So I acknowledged the worth of his advice though I wasn't very pleased. I did want to be my own boss, though, and so I went to the bar. You've nobody to rely on or depend on other than yourself. I've never regretted it either.

Was becoming involved politically an automatic step after that?

Yes. That's quite true. I didn't actually want to be involved in politics until it sort of happened.

It came about because I was working away at the bar and not doing anything to do with politics, just getting on with what was very enjoyable work and I was earning quite a lot of money. I could do all sorts of interesting things like becoming a private pilot. I got my private pilot's licence and Scone aerodrome isn't far from here. I can't remember the name of the sitting MP, but I think he died unexpectedly and the question of who was going to succeed him arose. The next

thing that happened was that they wanted to shoe in Sir Alec Douglas Home. My father suggested I put my name forward and I said I didn't really think I wanted to but I would see. Eventually I did, really to provide a bit of opposition and there were two or three other people including George Younger. We all had to go to Crieff and were interviewed one by one. They were very suspicious of the fact that I was living in London so somebody said, "Would you undertake to come up to the constituency every weekend and nurse it?" And thinking of the fact that I was a young father and had a good legal practice in London, I said "Well I won't come up every weekend but I certainly would come up when anything dire has happened or needs me." The selection panel didn't like that much. George Younger was given Ayr and Sir Alec got Perthshire. I never tried again. I had liked the idea of it because it was Perthshire. Anyway that was my only attempt at the House of Commons. Then my father died very soon after.

So the Commons was out, anyway?

Yes and I went to the House of Lords. I didn't think I was going to have very much of a career there but I thought I would go and make a little speech and it would be rather amusing because of my legal experience. Anyway it went very well and the next thing that happened was that I was summoned by Edward Heath, whom I did not particularly like. He invited me and my wife to 10 Downing Street. We

were all lined up to have a little chat with him - he did have good information on everybody and asked the right questions. When it came to my turn he said, "Why have you, a Scot, come to the English bar?" I thought that was absolute cheek so I said, "Because the money's better!" I well remember that. He was furious! However, not long after - it was a weekend and I was in Scotland - his private secretary made contact and he said, "Stand by for a call from the Prime Minister." I thought it was a joke and we were all having lunch – a shooting lunch – and suddenly somebody shouted "The Prime Minister for William," and everybody howled with laughter. It was most unlikely that the call was from him. I went and picked up the receiver and Heath answered it. There was no doubt it was him: he had a quite unmistakable voice. He wanted to put my name forward to Her Majesty to be a member of the European Parliament. I said I wasn't going to answer him in the middle of a shooting lunch, and it was agreed that I would ring his private secretary on the Monday. He, Edward Heath, said it would take up something like 15 days in the year and that didn't sound too bad. In fact the first year I was there it took 63 days and the second year it was over 80. I thought that it was unfair on my wife and my children and my legal work was almost non-existent. I had really to sever my connection with my colleagues and by that time I had quite a large practice and

Lord Mansfield with some of his Chairmen. Back row (left to right) Alastair Aitkenhead (1988-91), Stewart Adam (2004-06), Alan Mair (2000-02), George Lawson (1994-96), Bill Clement (1996-98), Alastair MacFadyen (1985-88). Front row: Linda Gaul (1998-2000), Jean Martin (2002-04).



they didn't particularly want me to go because the more work you have in a barristers' chambers the more you get. So I was a bit worried about that and I said to Lord Carrington, who was the leader of the Conservative peers in the House of Lords, that I wasn't sure that I wanted to go on much longer because I thought it was too much all round. And he said, "Do come back on to the Opposition front bench." I replied, "Right, you've got your man."

But that wasn't the end of your political career.

No, Mrs Thatcher asked me to join her government and be George Younger's Number 2 in Scotland. I was Minister of State at the Scottish Office, which was great. I thoroughly enjoyed that. I got on very well with George Younger and I had my own little world to look after and it was a very happy time until the next General Election in 1983.

Is that when you were involved with agriculture and fisheries?

Yes, it was a very worthwhile time. And I was also Minister in charge of Tourism, which was marvellous because I could go anywhere and do anything. I'd never been to Orkney and Shetland so it was really very pleasurable to go and work with the people there. It was great. And I did a bit for the milk farmers and all was happy but after the 1983 General Election, Mrs T, to my chagrin, asked if I would go to Northern Ireland because they wanted me to do the same thing with their milk quotas that I had done in Scotland. That didn't work out so well and then I took quite ill which was when my political career came to a rapid end.

And did you dance much during that period?

Not all that much. Of course, there was a bit of social dancing and that was it. We continued to go to the Caledonian Balls and the Perth Ball or balls, because there were two in those days: the Tuesday and the Thursday in Perth Week. We went up to Aberdeenshire to the Aboyne Ball sometimes and to the Donside in Inverurie two or three times. And then, of course, Skye was a favourite. My wife enjoys dancing too. She's very good at it. She's got a good sense of rhythm.

Were you invited to be our Hon. President by Miss Milligan?

No. It would have been by the Secretary, Miss Gibson. I have to confess that I never met Miss Milligan. I don't think she was very well, although I do know that she proposed that I be appointed Honorary President at the 1977 Annual General Meeting. I attended my first AGM in Glasgow in 1978 and she had died in

the July of that year. I understand that she was an amazing 90 year-old, still teaching almost right up to the end.

Tell us about your involvement with the RSCDS.

Well, in my first year of the presidency there was a change proposed to the constitution. It was a very long and difficult meeting and I was chairing it! I thought, 'Goodness me, what have I let myself in for?' The meeting took place at Jordanhill College of Education, Glasgow. Of course there was the other very long one only a few years back but that was here at the Bell's Sports Centre when we were there until half past six! But by that time I knew about things and could take it in my stride. Jordanhill was more a baptism of fire and there were some very angry people at the meeting! But I've always enjoyed myself and I think in fact to have somebody who is slightly detached from the everyday goings on of the Society can be a help when things get tricky. It can be quite difficult at times when you think that someone appears to have a relatively small role to play and suddenly you realise that they represent hundreds of people on the other side of the world. One has to be jolly careful. I have always thought that the RSCDS is a well-run organisation and people are very particular about any changes to the constitution or whatever. The number of people who attend the meetings speaks for itself. I was always very pleased to give any advice when I was asked to and to attend meetings at Coates Crescent.

Do you have any dancing stories connected with the Society?

Well there may be a quite extraordinary link with one of my ancestors. I was sitting next to that very nice lady who was the RSCDS archivist at a lunch before an Annual General Meeting. I think she had retired and was reading History. In the course of her researches she had come across information about an ancestor of mine - Lord Stormont - who was Ambassador to Paris just before the French Revolution. He was a very keen dancer and Marie Antoinette got interested in this, or so the story goes, and she requested that Lord Stormont come to the court to teach Scottish country dancing. The French were not pleased; in fact they were furious!

Have your visits to Summer School in St Andrews been a regular feature?

I've gone when I've been summoned! I'm invited regularly and indeed they usually give me a choice of dates, which is very kind. I drive over and they are very good and Elspeth knows that I'm keen on a dram before anything very much happens. We have a great jaw. I do feel

rather guilty that I'm not in a kilt and that I'm not able to dance, though.

The RSCDS has celebrated several anniversaries now. Is there an event you remember in particular?

There was the day that we had the celebration in Edinburgh in the City Chambers when the Queen came. That was quite a highlight. Well, I was very keen to let as many people as possible loose on the Queen and I think it worked very well. Some people said later, "Why didn't you do this or get that?" However, I thought it went off very well and everybody had just the right part to play. We had people divided into groups and people from the various branches in the UK and around the world spoke and then the young people danced extremely well. They were very good. And most of the dances were quite comprehensible. There are some real 'thunderers' aren't there?

The Earl of Mansfield is a very popular dance though it's quite tricky.

It appeared not long after I became President and I understand it's great fun to dance. I think the tune is much older and I'm very fond of it. I'm slightly saddened by the fact that, when I was a good deal younger, the tune was regarded by pipers as a very good warming-up tune to get the fingers going. The result of that was if somebody said, "Is there a tune you'd like the band to play?" one had no hesitation in saying The Earl of Mansfield's March and they struck up but in the last few years it doesn't seem to be the standard warming up march. I don't know why.

Over the 30 years of your Presidency you must have met many RSCDS people.

That's true but it was the chairmen and the others who had official positions I had most dealings with and I got on very well with them all. I certainly can't remember quarrelling with anybody! I think I've met you, Linda, on more occasions than almost anybody else. You've always been in positions of authority.

As you come to the end of your long tenure as President, is there anything you'd like to say to RSCDS members?

Well, it has to be "Keep dancing!" It's such good exercise for the mind as well as the body and it's great fun. The RSCDS is a marvellous organisation and I would like to extend my very best wishes for the future to dancers worldwide.

From the Chair

Irene Bennett, Chairman



The Chairman's Chain

When I received the chain of office in November 2006, I noticed that the badge was approaching its fiftieth anniversary. The inscription denoted that it had been gifted in 1957 in memory of Alice Hutchison, Dundee. I thought it would be interesting to research its history.

The following information was found in Bulletin No. 36. At the AGM, held in Largs on 2 November 1957, a presentation was made to the Executive Council of a Chairman's Badge of Office by Mr Hutchison of Dundee in memory of his wife Alice.



Alice Hutchison (nee Crighton) and her sister Helen were members of Dundee Branch in the 1930s. In 1937 Helen became Secretary, a post she held until the 1960s. Alice was a teacher of physical education,

chairman of the Branch from 1945 to 1951, taught the Branch advanced class until 1956 and was a member of the Executive Council from 1949 – 1955. Alice Hutchison had been instrumental in keeping the enthusiasm of the Branch alive during the war years. The Branch minute which records her untimely death on 22 February, 1957 states "Her sparkling personality endeared her to all who knew her."

At the 40th AGM, held in Dumfries on 1 November 1969, the Chairman, Mr J. L. Lochhead, received a gift from Duns and District Branch of a silver gilt chain, with alternating lozenges of saltire and thistle motifs on which to hang the Chairman's Badge. Until that time the badge had been suspended on a ribbon neckband. The Branch minute records that " because of the lack of hotels and suitable halls the Branch would never be able to act as hosts of the Annual General Meeting and this would be a means of showing our appreciation of the work done on our behalf by the Society."

I am indebted to Helen Lawrenson (Dundee Branch) and Ruby Wilkinson (Duns and District Branch) for allowing me access to their Branch records. This demonstrates how important it is for Branches to record significant events and how fascinating it is for us to read these accounts.

Summer School

Summer School 2007 has recently finished. Although there was an enforced change of accommodation because of the renovation work at University Hall, nevertheless it would seem that the school has been as enjoyable as ever. I was fortunate to have had the chance to attend

the opening reception on the four Sunday evenings and some of the social dances each week. I have been greatly heartened by the number of members who have approached me, eager to let me know how much Scottish country dancing means to them and how enjoyable the Summer School experience is. During one of the evening receptions, I received, on behalf of the Society, Maguy Paillet's collage "The Blue Lady", which Maguy has bequeathed to us, to be hung in the Chequered Court, University Hall, during Summer School. Summer School was such an important and enjoyable part of her life she could think of no better home for her painting. Maguy has also left a small legacy specifically to support young people.

We have also received a framed photograph of May Yarker with the Queen Mother, taken in the Castle of Mey. This has been gifted to us by May's family. I was holidaying in Thurso in June and visited May's daughter, Denise Imrie, who presented me with the photograph. Denise and her husband, Mike, showed me round May's studio.

New Members for Committees

Every year there are vacancies on the Management Board and all the committees. In common with other organisations we are finding it is becoming increasingly difficult to fill vacant positions. The General Purposes and Finance Committee have operated without a full complement during the current year. If you think you have the necessary expertise to serve on one of the committees, but are uncertain what this might entail, please speak to someone already serving on the committee. In this way you would find out exactly what experience is required. I know there is a lot of expertise out there because of the number of well-organised, efficiently-run Branches there are.

New Editor



I am pleased to welcome the new editor of *Scottish Country Dancer*, Andrew Kellett. Andrew served on the Editorial Board of the first four editions and I wish him well in his new role.



On behalf of the Society, Irene receives Maguy Paillet's collage "The Blue Lady" from Christiane Orgeret, secretary of "Groupe de Danses Ecossaises de Lyon - La Chanterelle"

Membership Services Committee



Jim Healy, Convenor of Membership Services, describes new books, CDs and other services produced by the RSCDS.

The most important development in recent months has been the introduction of a new web-based catalogue, which is the result of a considerable amount of work by William Whyte. There are a few teething problems, particularly in updates, but these are being addressed and we are sure that the catalogue will make it easier for all members to see what is available.

The revised Standard Terminology has been used in two completed projects led by Jean Martin. The first is Book 21, which has been revised in A4 format with the music arrangements reset in a clearer style by George Meikle. The second is the publication of Miss Milligan's Miscellany in a single volume. This is not a revision as such but the wording has been updated to bring it in line with modern practice and, with advice from the Technique Sub-Committee, some anomalies and inconsistencies in the various editions of the original publications and the first and second

editions of the Miscellanies have been resolved. As a result of these two projects some suggestions have been made for revisions to the Standard Terminology to allow a little more flexibility. This will be looked at again in the coming year.

Somewhat belatedly, but very welcome, is Muriel Johnstone's A Guide to Music in the Teaching of Scottish Country Dancing. This is intended more for musicians than dancers but it contains a wealth of information of considerable interest to any teacher fortunate enough to have a class musician.

Notes for Tutors by Lesley Martin is out of print and requires updating to reflect the new exam system. However, much of the advice continues to be valid and Membership Services has combined with Education & Training to produce an interim document that can be downloaded from the website.

The Macnab Dances have been reprinted in a single A4 volume. It is mainly a facsimile copy of the former two volume version but with the addition of The Duke of Gordon's Welcome to Aberdeen, omitted from the original. To complement this volume a recording of The Macnab Dances (2 discs) has been made. This is a re-issue of the original Muriel Johnstone Ensemble CDs plus two new tracks, The Duke of Gordon's

Welcome to Aberdeen, to match the updated edition of the book and video, and, following a number of requests, an encore of The Earl of Erroll's Reel at a slightly faster tempo. The two additional tracks are by David Cunningham multi-tracking on accordion, piano and bass. Also available is The Macnab Dances in Diagrams by Angus Henry which uses an extended Pilling-type notation.

New recordings also now available are:-

- Book 13 (2 discs) played by Neil Barron
- Book 34 plus 3 Dances 2006 played by Ian Muir

We are continuing to develop a relationship with the tartan manufacturers to create a range of accessories in the Society's tartan. Ladies' sashes have already proved popular and more are on order. In addition, new lines in fitted T shirts for ladies and a T shirt and polo shirt for men with embroidered logo were introduced at Summer School and sold well. A large size shoe bag/CD carrier with embroidered logo is also available, and we are reviewing the range of items suitable for younger dancers. There will be more news about RSCDS merchandise in the next issue of *Scottish Country Dancer*.

Reviews of Muriel Johnstone's book and the two new recordings are on page 26.

General Purposes and Finance Committee



Lawrence Boyd, Convenor of GP&FC, has some important announcements

Trustees' Report and Financial Statements

Copies of the Trustees' Report and Financial Statements together with the auditors' report are sent to all Branch Treasurers and Branch Delegates in October of each year, prior to the Annual General Meeting. The report and statements are then proposed for adoption at the AGM. Members who wish to consult a copy should contact their Branch Treasurer or Branch Delegates. Headquarters members should contact the Society directly. The report and financial statements will be posted on the Society website www.rscds.org within two weeks of their approval at the AGM in November.

Increase in Subscriptions

The Management Board and the GP&FC have resolved to devote more resources to ensure that future generations are able to enjoy Scottish country dancing in the way that we do now. Therefore, as convenor of the GP&FC and with the support of the Management Board, I will be proposing at the AGM an increase in the basic subscription from £10 to £15. This is the first increase since 2002 and is needed now to cover the rise in costs over the last five years. However our focus must be on the future, in a worldwide context, encouraging and supporting local initiatives but also providing the central, 21st century framework for Scottish Country Dancing. While we appreciate that most members also have the costs of local branch membership, £15 to support a worldwide society is still modest in comparison with other comparable organisations. The Management Board is actively investigating the effective management

of costs, creating efficiencies and maximising investments where possible. The formal resolutions will be sent out in due course for the Annual General Meeting but it is important that members are aware that Trustees are increasing their emphasis on the future well-being of Scottish Country Dancing.

Gift Aid

The RSCDS is now registered under the UK Gift Aid scheme. This means that the Society can reclaim 28p in every pound that it receives from donations providing you pay an amount of UK income tax or capital gains tax at least equal to the tax we reclaim. All you need to do is make out a very simple declaration, which you can obtain from Headquarters or download from the website. If you pay higher rate tax you can get tax relief at the higher rate by including the donation on your tax return. So now the RSCDS can benefit even more from the UK taxman.



Education and Training Committee

Helen Russell, Interim Convenor of E&T, reports on RSCDS courses and qualifications

Applicants for adjudicator training

Applications are invited for selection for a two day adjudicator training course to take place in Dumfries in early 2008. This course will be limited to eight participants. If there are more than eight suitable applicants, another course will be run. Details about the application procedure, the criteria for selection, the proposed outline of the course and the application form available from Craig Jackson at HQ. Details below. The closing date for applications is 31st October 2007.

Applicants for selection to become an examiner

Applications are invited from the UK, Europe and especially from overseas for selection to become an examiner for the RSCDS. Details about the application procedure, the criteria for selection and the application form are available from Craig Jackson at HQ. Details below. The closing date for applications is 30th November 2007.

Applicants for tutor training.

Applications are invited for a two day tutor training course that will take place in Reigate, Surrey on Saturday 13th & Sunday 14th April 2008. Details about the application procedure, the proposed outline of the course and the application form are available from Craig Jackson at HQ. Details below. The closing date for applications is 14th March 2008.

Craig Jackson, RSCDS Headquarters, 12 Coates Crescent, Edinburgh EH3 7AF. Tel: 0131 225 3854. E mail: craig.jackson@rscds.org

Some readers may find the growing number of courses and qualifications offered by the RSCDS a little confusing. The following definitions may be helpful.

RSCDS Teacher

A dancer who has passed the RSCDS Teaching Certificates parts 1 and 2

RSCDS Medal Test Assessor

A teacher who has been selected and trained to assess the RSCDS Medal Tests for Young Dancers

RSCDS Adjudicator

A teacher who has been selected and trained by the RSCDS to adjudicate at competitive and non-competitive festivals for both young people and adults.

RSCDS Mentor

An experienced RSCDS teacher who supports and advises candidates undertaking Unit 4 of the RSCDS Teaching Certificates.

RSCDS Tutor

An RSCDS teacher of considerable experience who tutors examination candidates for the award of the RSCDS Teaching Certificates

RSCDS Examiner

An experienced RSCDS tutor who has been selected and has undergone induction training in order to examine candidates for the RSCDS Teaching Certificates.

John Wilkinson, Schools Director, shares his thoughts after experiencing his first Summer School in charge

Summer School is an immensely enjoyable experience for everyone involved, but for the Director it also brings many challenges. With University Hall unavailable because of refurbishment we had to use more remote halls for accommodation, and it also meant that we were deprived of three good dancing spaces. I am grateful to all the students and staff who attended Summer School for their patience and understanding in coping with these difficulties with a smile.

Other local problems cropped up during the four weeks, including unresponsive piano keys, missing piano stools, caretakers who were late and door keys that went astray. How did we cope before mobile phones?

I am very conscious of the cost involved in attending Summer School and I try hard to keep the fees at a reasonable level. Classes with fewer than twelve dancers are not really viable, so some of the Highland as well as some Ladies Step classes had to be combined this year. I hope that won't be the case in future, so I do encourage you to enrol for these classes next year. Incidentally, I think it is time we came up with a more attractive and inclusive name for what we commonly refer to as Ladies Step classes. Suggestions, please, to the Convenor of Education and Training.

Some members were unhappy with the social dance programmes this year. I believe that at Summer School we should be dancing some of those dances that do not appear frequently on branch programmes, otherwise they will disappear from our repertoire altogether. However I do listen to what you say and I shall include more popular dances on Summer School programmes in future.

We do need to find more teachers and musicians for Summer School. I appeal to all readers of *Scottish Country Dancer* to put forward the names of teachers and musicians who could inspire and enthuse us. If you know of suitable candidates please ask HQ for details of the nomination procedure.

Summer School is a considerable team effort involving Headquarters staff, committee members, teachers, musicians and volunteers without whom it would be impossible to organise. I am most grateful to you all. It is the students, though, that give Summer School its special magic and it was particularly pleasing to welcome so many first timers this year. They comprised 25% of the overall attendance, and they will be very welcome back next year along with the regulars and members who have not been to Summer School for a while. It is well worth the journey to St Andrews.

I have written mostly about the challenges, but the position of Schools Director is really an extremely rewarding experience, especially when so many of you come to thank me personally for the wonderful time. Thank you for making it so enjoyable for me.



John at the head of the table with some of the staff from week 2 at Summer School. Left to right: Jim Rae, Lesley Martin, Fiona Turnbull, Geoffrey Selling, Sue Porter, Ruby Wilkinson, Mervyn Short, Margo Priestley, Fred Moyes, George Meikle, Ann Dix, Jean Martin, Anne Smyth.



The Society



Top: all action at the Dunoon Festival. Bottom, left to right: Kate Lawrie and Jill Henderson enjoying a break from duties at Summer School; Irene Bennett dancing at the Bristol Branch ball; whose hands?



On Camera



Top, left to right: Sophie and John in Lorient; Mary Wilson, a member since 1955 and still dancing three times a week, is presented with a bouquet on her 90th birthday by the Chairman of Dumfries Branch; a happy ending at Spring Fling. Centre: the team in Lorient. Bottom, left to right: a floral display to mark the 60th anniversary of Dumfries Branch; Nigel Carter, Life President, cuts a cake to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Herefordshire Branch; a banner designed by local school children in honour of the 25th anniversary of the Isle of Islay Branch.

Francis Peacock (part 2)

by Dr Alastair MacFadyen



2007 marks the 200th anniversary of the death of one of country dancing's greatest teachers: Francis Peacock of Aberdeen. In the second of two articles, Dr Alastair Macfadyen describes the contribution that Peacock made to the social and cultural life of Scotland in the 18th century and the legacy he gave to Scottish country dancers of today.

Publication by Subscription

On 21st November 1805, Francis Peacock was at his George Street town residence in Aberdeen and it was there that he inscribed a copy of his recently published *Sketches Relative to the History, Theory and Practice of Dancing*. This inscribed and dedicated copy was for his patroness and principal subscriber, Jane Maxwell, Duchess of Gordon, wife of Alexander, 4th Duke of Gordon. Having completed the *Sketches*, the dancing master adopted the customary practice of inviting subscribers to pledge themselves to a purchase prior to printing. There were 171 responses to his invitation and these are alphabetically listed on the last few pages of the book.



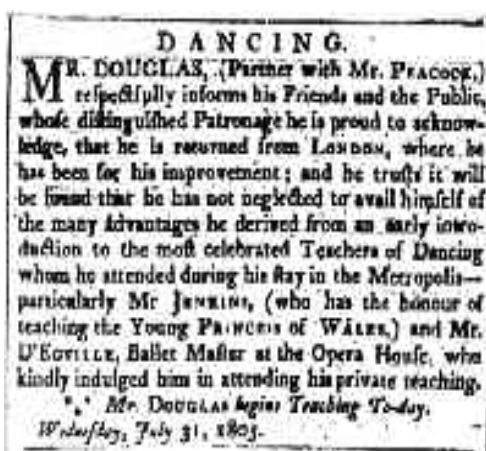
Francis Peacock's inscription, 1805

A Diverse Social Mix

In addition to the Duchess of Gordon, there are other members of the titled and gentry classes represented in the subscribers' list. Included also are academics, lawyers, physicians, clergymen, merchants, soldiers, musicians, book sellers and teachers of dancing. This interesting and diverse social mix is a reflection of the widespread respect and admiration for the author as well as of the importance attached to dancing in the social life of early 19th century Scotland.

Amongst the teachers of dancing listed, there is Mr. Peacock's assistant, James Douglas, who, at the recommencement

of his teaching in July 1805, advised the Aberdeen citizens, via *The Aberdeen Journal*, that during his recent stay in London he had had the benefit of instruction from the most celebrated teachers 'particularly Mr. Jenkins' In London in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, the success enjoyed by George Jenkins and his son as teachers



Aberdeen Journal, 1805

of 'Scotch Dancing' is an indication of the inroads which the Highland Reels, described by Francis Peacock in Sketch V of his book, were making into the ballrooms south of the border.

A possible link with the RSCDS is provided by the name of subscriber John Cruickshank of Fyvie. Almost certainly, this is the teacher of dancing who was the grandfather of Flora Cruickshank of Peterhead. As the practitioners of Ladies Step dancing will be aware, it was from Miss Cruickshank that the RSCDS member and dedicated reviver of solo step dancing for ladies, Mrs. Tibbie Cramb of Aberdeen, acquired the solo dance, *Flora Macdonald's Fancy*. It will also be well known that the express wish of Miss Cruickshank was that Flora should continue to be danced in the style in which it had been communicated to her by her father, the Peterhead dancing master, George Cruickshank.

Reelin' Bailies

The most generous of the named subscribers was Aberdeen Town Council. No doubt to demonstrate their support and encouragement of a worthy citizen,

the councillors agreed to the purchase of twenty copies. This was a decision which seems to have caused some amusement in Aberdeen as the following few lines by an anonymous versifier show:

**God prosper long our Lord Provost,
Town Clerk an' Bailies a';
An grant that in their reelin' fits,
Doup-scud* they winna fa.**

* Fall heavily on the buttocks

The Dancing Duchess

As already mentioned, the most eminent of Mr Peacock's subscribers was the Duchess of Gordon, a spirited and vivacious lady who retained her youthful exuberance until the end of her life. Admired for her beauty and wit, she



Jane, Duchess of Gordon

exercised considerable social, cultural and political influence in Edinburgh and in London, which she visited frequently and where she became a confidante of members of the royal family and of the government. At her Edinburgh drawing-room parties, she entertained the capital's literati and invited Robert Burns to join them when he was in the city. She was impressed and charmed by the poet and once confessed that he was the only man 'to set her off her feet' with his conversation.

There are many stories about the more unconventional episodes in the

colourful life of the Duchess. The most frequently recounted relates to her efforts to assist her son, the Marquis of Huntly, with recruitment to his newly formed regiment, The Gordon Highlanders. Draped in tartan, she went about the countryside on horseback and, with the King's shilling clenched between her teeth, invited volunteers to retrieve the coin and be rewarded with a kiss. Although later denied by one of her daughters, this incident has now become so integral to the history of The Gordon Highlanders that it would be a pity to discredit it!

It is as an enthusiastic and accomplished dancer that the Duchess of Gordon is best remembered. She was a familiar figure at the public assemblies in Edinburgh and often organised her own private balls and dance parties. She is credited with introducing Highland Reels into the London ballrooms and at one ball in the capital, she and her partners, including William Pitt, the Prime Minister, danced Reels until three in the morning. A witness to this event observed: 'Amongst such Scotch carousings what chance has an Englishman of success!'

Protégés of the Duchess

In view of her love of dancing, it is not surprising that the Duchess readily offered her patronage to the teachers and musicians of her favourite recreation. She admired the musical

achievements of the celebrated Gow family and had particular praise for the sons of Niel Gow senior. In her judgement, they had 'softened the wild vivacity of Highland music without materially deviating from its character' and she hoped that the same could be done for dancing. The renowned fiddler and composer William Marshall, employed as the house steward at Gordon Castle, also enjoyed the benefits of ducal encouragement. In tribute to their patrons, the names of the Duke and Duchess and of their family are liberally scattered throughout the titles of the many reels, jigs and strathspeys composed and published by the Gows and by Marshall.

The thoughts of the Duchess about the benefits of dancing as a social accomplishment – 'for health, agility and grace' – were very much in harmony with the hints 'thrown out' by her protégé Francis Peacock in the Sketches. Similarly, the style of teaching and dancing favoured by George Jenkins, the London teacher of 'Scotch Dancing,' who has been mentioned already and whom she also took under her wing, seems to have matched her own style – 'easy without negligence, exactness without stiffness, elegance and grace without pomp or ostentation'. In his *New Scotch Music* c. 1793, a collection of his own compositions, George Jenkins also gave due acknowledgement to the Duchess and her family in the titles of his tunes and amongst them is the now well



The Kinrara grave and monument of the Duchess of Gordon

known strathspey, The Marquis of Huntly's Highland Fling.

The Duchess of Gordon died in April 1812 and, in accordance with her wishes, was buried in a favourite spot close to the river Spey. Her Kinrara burial place, marked by a granite monument, is in Badenoch, an area in the vast Gordon estates noted for its scenic beauty.

Depiction of the Duchess of Gordon recruiting for The Gordon Highlanders



In Conclusion

His precise origins and where he spent the twenty or so years before settling in Aberdeen, are aspects of the life and career of Francis Peacock which remain an unsolved mystery. Of course, there are hints and clues and these suggest time spent in London, possibly also in Edinburgh and that he may have had links with the north-east of England. However, lacking any firm evidence this can only be speculation. Having in mind the dancing master's own advice about the necessity of avoiding 'too great avidity' (see Part 1 of this article), I will refrain, on this occasion at any rate, from adding anything further to this speculative debate. In any case, the absence of any certain information about his early life does not in any way detract from the outstanding and memorable contribution which Francis Peacock made to the social and cultural life of 18th century Aberdeen or diminish the significance of the legacy which he has bequeathed to us as guardians and advocates of Scotland's traditional dancing in the 21st century.

Trip to Lorient

by Luke Brady



The RSCDS Team in Lorient. Back row (left to right) Luke Brady - musician (Dundee) Mike Innes (Bristol) Christian Lubac (Lorient) Alasdair Gray (Edinburgh) John McCann (Newcastle) Jim Healy - tour organiser (Perth). Front row (left to right) Katy Bromberg (Edinburgh) Helen Watt (Oban) Jenny Russell (Dumfries) Heather Carmichael (Edinburgh) Sophie Rickebush (Grenoble) Kirsten Ferguson (Newcastle) Rachel Shankland (Dumfries)



Proof that we were there

Linda Fabiani opens the Scottish Pavilion at the festival



On Friday, 3 August a team of dancers representing the Society left from Scotland, England and France to dance at the Festival Interceltique in Lorient, France.

Despite a missed train and other hiccoughs, the team eventually met up in time to prepare together for the opening of the Scottish Pavilion on the Saturday evening. After an introduction by the contemporary pipe group Red Hot Chili Pipers, Scotland's Minister for Culture, Linda Fabiani, formally declared the Pavilion open and the team danced the first public performance of a specially commissioned dance, A Trip To Lorient devised by Ian Brockbank with newly composed music by George Meikle.

For the rest of the weekend, at the invitation of Visit Scotland, the team put on afternoon workshops, demonstrating some dances and bringing people on to the floor for others. They also introduced another dance by Ian – Festival Interceltique – a social mixer which went down well with all levels of dancer.

So enthusiastic were the team, that a group got together at breakfast to suggest that they do more demonstrations, and more challenging ones at that. Many of us would say they had never seen Membership Services Convenor Jim Healy, happier than then!

Aside from dancing, the team, many of whom had never met beforehand, got to know each other and socialise in the wonderful atmosphere of the Lorient festival and the French speakers in the

team found themselves helping the others in some unusual situations, further improving team spirit. Over the weekend, music was composed, dances devised and friendships made. Perhaps at no point has the Society moniker For Fun, For Fitness, For Friendship, been so appropriate.

On the final day of our visit, the Minister returned and the team managed to encourage her Diary Secretary onto the floor to join in the dancing. The Minister herself needed no encouragement and very obviously enjoyed the break from other duties.

The trip improved the Society's links with the Scottish Executive and Visit Scotland, and allowed a group of young and enthusiastic dancers from far and wide to gather together to represent the Society and Scotland.

Thanks go to the organisers, particularly Rhona Chalmers, who put so much time and effort into the groundwork for the trip, but in the end, because of work commitments was unable to join us and Marilyn Healy who stepped in at the last minute. Jim Healy (and Marilyn) ensured that the team were where they needed to be all the time and did the worrying for all of us.

A wonderful time was had by all, an experience that will always be remembered and an event that members of the Society were proud to have taken part in.



Spring Fling 2007

Participants at Spring Fling 2007, reproduced by kind permission of The Reel

RSCDS Youth Director, Jayne Brown, reports on the Society's work with young dancers

Spring Fling is an annual RSCDS event for young dancers organised by young dancers. It is held at a different venue each year and in March 2007 it went further south than ever before, to Oxford. Dancing was held at Cheney School with accommodation in the local Youth Hostel. The event was most successful with approximately 65 - 70 dancers attending the various workshops. Classes were geared for beginners, intermediate and advanced dancers offering technique and social dancing skills in Scottish country dancing, Ladies Step, Highland, Quadrilles and choreography. Throughout the weekend the beginners and intermediate classes progressed enabling

them to join the advanced dancers for the combined choreography workshop on the final morning. The dancers were divided into teams and, after some coaching, each was given the task of putting together a Scottish Dance display. The tutors, Angela Young (Advanced, Ladies' Step and Choreography) Ilona Velichko (Beginners and Intermediate) Jeremy Hill (Intermediate, also playing for Ladies Step) Sara Latto (Highland) and Ellis and Christine Rogers (Quadrilles) all gave excellent classes with positive feedback. Superb music from Karl Sandeman, Chris Oxtoby and Green Ginger (Ian and Meryl Thomson and Cas Sloan) accompanied the dancers throughout the weekend, also playing for the Ceilidh and the Saturday evening dance. Alice Stainer and her team did a wonderful job organising the event, which was

supported by the Oxford Branch. The weekend concluded with a farewell lunch and time to exchange contact details along with a promise to meet up again at the next Spring Fling.

Youth Demonstration Team

A series of workshops is being organised for young dancers (16 - 35) to give them the opportunity to be considered for a national demonstration team, along the lines of the group that performed in Lorient. A workshop is being held in Aberdeen in October, another is being organised in Bournemouth in November and there are plans for one in the Leeds area early in 2008.

For more details contact Headquarters.

Medal Tests for Young Dancers

Since their introduction in 2004, the RSCDS medal test assessments for young dancers have been growing in popularity. The purpose and aim of the assessments is to help teachers to provide structured and progressive learning for pupils and to encourage young people to maintain and develop their interest in Scottish Dance and to improve their standard of dancing.

In 2004 there were 55 successful candidates, this increased in 2005 to 358, and continued to develop in 2006 to 558. So far this year there have been 413 successful candidates.

Tests have taken place in London, South Argyll, Chatham, Ayr, Aberdeen, Falkirk, Edinburgh, Stonehaven, Dundee, Leeds, Darwin, Castle Douglas, Lochaber, Wigan, Perth, Newcastle, Irvine and Dumfries.

A panel of assessors is in place. They all enjoy watching young people dancing their best and having fun at the same time. They certainly try to ensure that the tests are not an ordeal for the candidates or for their teachers and parents. Teachers wanting a copy of the syllabus or wishing to enter candidates for the tests should get in touch with Headquarters.



Successful candidates from Duns and District Branch were presented with their certificates at a family ceilidh in August 2007

A Branch and A Club



Toronto Branch

From the late 1940's there had been Scottish dancing in Toronto, but the first group to follow RSCDS teaching was formed in 1950. There were no certificated teachers at that time, a prerequisite for Branch status, and Toronto therefore was granted affiliated status. In 1957 Miss Milligan visited Toronto and conducted Teacher examinations, resulting in the awarding of several full certificates. Miss Milligan immediately granted Branch status, and Toronto has flourished ever since.

Toronto is structured differently from most branches, likely because it started with a number of independent groups. Presently there are 27 of these social groups plus six groups for children and young people. These are run by either the teacher or a committee. As a result, in addition to Branch events, dancers are also invited to support special events organized by specific social groups; e.g., Christmas and end of season dances.

The Branch offers seven classes at various levels, including three Beginners' classes in different areas of the city, accessible by public transit and providing instruction relatively "near home" for our new dancers. Once "hooked" they are usually eager to travel to other classes and events outside their own area.

Toronto has an annual workshop in November with teachers from near, mid-distance and far away. We also have monthly dances from October to April where all the social groups can intermingle. The highlight of the year is the formal Tartan Ball, held at the Fairmont Royal York in mid-February, at which Irene Bennett will be the Guest of Honour this anniversary year. In addition a May Ball provides an opportunity for less experienced dancers to attend a

more formal function, a practice introduced over 30 years ago by teachers of several West Toronto groups. It is always very well attended.

We try both to enlarge our presence and to give some community service by performing demonstrations at various city festivals, Tartan Day, and many retirement homes and care facilities. June brings Dancing in the Park to live music provided by Bobby Brown and the Scottish Accent, which combines the joy of dancing in a lovely outdoor setting (the grass is not so lovely!) and entertainment to the general public. A number of retirement homes bring their residents to enjoy the evening.

This year we are getting involved with the Burns Society and are trying to form alliances with the other Scottish groups in the area. We hope we can work together for our mutual benefit.

In September we had a Gala to open our 50th Anniversary celebrations. One room was full of memorabilia, display boards and videos. The afternoon was a drop-in to encourage our former members who no longer dance to come and celebrate with us, to see scenes from the past and renew acquaintances. The evening dance followed, with music by Bobby Brown and the Scottish Accent. Our signature dance for the 50th, with a new tune specially composed by Bobby, was unveiled there, demonstrated by a set of our young people. This dance resulted from a competition for which nineteen dances were submitted; these have been published in a book entitled "Golden Gillies". A 50th Anniversary book was also produced, reflecting on Branch history, its special events and outstanding participants.

Other events and special additions to annual events will be featured throughout

the Anniversary year (September 2007 to August 2008). We would like to encourage any of you who are travelling this way to come and help us celebrate. Details of events are on our website, www.rscdstoronto.org or you can contact Jane Robinson at 416-463-5016 or janer1@sympatico.ca. We would love to have you join us.

What will the next 50 years bring? We have a wonderful group of young people who are beginning to attend adult events as well as their own. Four went to St. Andrew's Summer School this year, one on scholarship. As we promote SCD more widely we are attracting keen older people. The future looks bright as we continue to spread the word of the joys and benefits of Scottish country dancing.

Jane Robinson

Dunedin Dancers



Scottish country dancing (SCD) is generally believed to be an amalgam of several styles of dancing, including folk dancing. Indeed, many argue that SCD is folk dancing, and several SCD groups attend International Folk Dance Festivals throughout Europe and beyond. However, not many SCD groups were formed specifically to organise their own International Folk Dance Festival, which is why Dunedin Dancers was started in Edinburgh in 1970.

Members of the Edinburgh University New Scotland Country Dance Society attended several folk dance festivals abroad in the 1960s, and they wanted to repay the hospitality that they had received at those festivals. So they organised their own Festival in Edinburgh

in 1971, attended by folk dance groups from Belgium and Germany. The members soon discovered that organising a folk dance festival, providing accommodation and food for about 100 foreign dancers, was hard work and expensive!

Nevertheless, it must have been worth it, because Dunedin Dancers has organised a Festival every second year since then, hosting dancers from 19 European countries in that time, including seven Eastern European countries, as well as groups from England and Wales. Folk dance groups from Austria, the Czech Republic and Lithuania participated in the most recent Festival, the 19th, in July 2007.

During this Festival, all four groups presented performances of their dances outdoors at Falkland Palace in Fife, at Peebles in the Scottish Borders, and in Stirling Castle, as well as on the Mound and outside the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh. The highlight of the Festival was the indoor performance in the Church Hill Theatre in Edinburgh; this was almost sold out, as usual.

Dunedin Dancers' performances included Highland and Scottish Step Dancing, as well as Scottish country dancing. For formal performances, the ladies wear an elegant long dress which was designed by members of the group but based on a 19th century Scottish costume.

Between Festivals, about 40 or 50 of the 200 members of Dunedin Dancers meet every week in Edinburgh for social Scottish country dancing, led by a different member of the group each week. Here members try out little known dances and dances from other areas, as well as their own favourites. The group also organises an annual Assembly (a traditional Scottish name for a Ball or formal gathering) and two informal dances each year.

The dancers dance regularly at conferences and weddings, usually encouraging the participants to join in, both to promote the fun of Scottish country dancing but also to raise money to help pay for the Festival.

Dunedin Dancers also meet socially throughout the year, with occasional walks, theatre visits, archery for beginners, skittles evenings, and dining out at local restaurants. While the original members all came from Edinburgh University, membership is now open to everyone who can dance. Many members retain their membership even when they move away from Edinburgh, and now live in England and Wales, with some in Germany, New Zealand and America!

For more information about Dunedin Dancers, visit their website at www.dunedinancers.org.uk.

Peter Edwards

Dancing Matters (1)

Observations on the RSCDS Allemande by Dr Alastair MacFadyen.



These few observations have been prompted by the reprint, in the previous issue of this magazine, of the description of the allemande included in the Foreword to SCDS Book 2 (1925). With arms crossed behind their backs, the couples were required to accomplish the figure with eight pas de basque steps. The only dance in the book with an allemande was Delvine Side, a strathspey dated c.1790.

Following on from the successful publication of Book 1 in 1924, our pioneering predecessors set about preparing for a second book of country dances. Having almost exhausted the supply of known and orally collected dances, they resorted to dances which had survived only in manuscript or printed book form. I have always assumed that it was at this point they encountered, for the first time, the term, allemande, with which, evidently, they were unfamiliar. It is not amongst the formations described by Jean Milligan in her Festival Booklet: The Scottish Country Dance (1924), the Society's first manual until replaced in 1951 by Won't You Join the Dance. Miss Milligan often told us that it was her mother (an elderly lady by the 1920s) who enlightened her about the allemande but it is not certain if Book 2's description of it was based exactly on Mrs. Milligan's recollection of the dancing experiences of her early life in rural Roxburghshire or not. What is certain is that it did not endure long.

The reconstruction of dances and their figures from the written or printed word is a complex and difficult exercise especially when the reconstructors have a limited knowledge of the context in which the dance was originally danced and a limited acquaintance with the historic terminology used to describe the dance. So a dance or figure revived in this manner can lack credibility when introduced into a modern context and a process of experimentation and adjustment is often required to make it more acceptable.

Book 2's allemande method was repeated again in Book 3 (1926) but in the following year, it was supplanted in Book 4 by the now very familiar version of the formation. The change came about as a result of a Conference in Edinburgh on 22nd October, 1926. It was attended by delegates from the six branches then formed and the purpose of their meeting was to discuss and clarify a number of points raised by Books 1 – 3. For example, it was decided that in future 'the setting in slow time should not be the pas de basque, but should be a step suitable to "Strathspey" music – the "Common Schottische" step'. With regard to the allemande, the present positioning of the arms replaced the previously used method and instead of the pas de basque eight 'one, two, three, hop' steps were to be used. Whilst the brief report of the Conference did not spell out the reasons for the recommended changes, the raising of the arms over the lady's head in the allemande is reminiscent of the elaborate interlacing of the arms of the 18th century allemande couple dance.

The early history of the RSCDS allemande is further evidence of the fact that there are few absolutes in dance and that, like all aspects of dance, our particular type and style of social dancing is the product of a continuously evolving process. It would be advisable to keep this fact in mind always as we continue with our determined efforts to guarantee a secure and lasting future for Scottish country dancing.

Dancing Matters (2)

Technique Doctor by Geoffrey Selling. Geoffrey is a well known North American guest teacher, tutor and RSCDS examiner, as well as being co-author of the Handbook for Scottish Country Dance Teachers.



At a recent Summer School dance, having just completed a classic but simple strathspey with an energetic young partner, she asked me, "Can we do a "fun" dance next time?" I knew that by "fun dance" she meant one with a new formation, or a challenging transition or something more unusual than the plain vanilla strathspey we'd just done. With more than 13,000 published dances (according to Keith Napier) and more coming every day, increasingly many people want to learn that next new formation or clever bit of choreography, rather than focus on dance fundamentals. To some extent, that's understandable; novelty has always been attractive.

Yet when danced with good technique and attention to the nuances of the formation, even a simple movement like set and cross over can become the occasion for beautiful and fun dancing. In our thirst to learn the next clever dance, many of the simpler movements get neglected and are simply used as fillers or set-ups for the more challenging movements. Here are some technique tips to make those simple movements just as exciting as that new formation or intriguing dance.

Advance and Retire: All too often, the lines are wavy and the hands joined erratically, with the dancing couple almost dragging their neighbors forward. The dancing couple should aim to stand just behind the supporting dancers rather than in a straight line. With arms very fully extended and palms upward, they can "lead" the others in and out. This makes the supporting dancers feel attended to and gives purpose and structure to the formation. It looks very grand!

Set and cross: Instead of phrasing this evenly, dancers should aim to do most of their crossing on bar one, using the second bar to turn into place, and begin joining hands for the next setting. This can make set and cross look very dynamic. Otherwise, everyone arrives at different times and there is much groping for hands, sometimes too late for the setting.

Lead down the middle and up: I often notice that dancers "attach" themselves to their partner by the right hand, and head down the middle, side by side, as if their partner was merely a prop. As the dancers curve in to join hands, make eye contact at the start and from time to time during this entire movement. The leading dancer (usually the man) should attend to his partner with eyes and head, so that

the partner actually feels led. Avoid the opposite tendency to "stare" at your partner for all eight bars. That feels and appears unnatural. Additionally, if the leading hand is fully extended, it draws the dancers forward so that the movement gains a kind of "urgency" that makes the formation more fun and energizing. A similar awareness of partner also enhances the allemande and knot where people often dance with no real social contact between them, save the obligatory hands.

Hands around and back: So many dancers let the hands fall well below shoulder height and sometimes as low as the waist. This formation is so exciting in all tempos when the hands are really lifted and kept at shoulder height (compromising between those of different heights). Shoulder height hands lift the posture and give the circle energy and unity. Also, dancers are less likely to slip because the higher hands require better grips and more strength.

Hands across and back: Many dancers "stick" their hands in the middle and make a messy pile of fingers, which feels so unsatisfying. Try always to take the diagonally opposite hand in a "shake-hands" grip. This unifies the movement, gives everyone someone to hold onto and makes the formation look like a "hands across." After all, that's its name!

Turn and cast: Since the twos are usually required to step up during the cast, it's necessary for the first couple to complete their turn and be back out to the sides, heading into their cast at the end of the second bar. This is both challenging and fun, and more importantly, leaves first place open for the dancers stepping up.

Set and cast: When casting off, the man must anticipate slightly to prepare his right foot for the cast. The woman must anticipate similarly when casting up. All too often, dancers "over-anticipate" by setting for one bar and whipping the body around on the next. The movement gains elegance and social spirit if one maintains eye contact with a partner for the whole two bars, even as the lower body begins a slight turn to anticipate the cast. It's more fun that way! The same is true of setting to corners. Even if the first couple must begin their movement towards their second corners on bar two, maintain that eye contact with the first corner for both bars. It will make your corner feel danced with, instead of "abandoned."

'Dancing' down or up the set: In shorter movements when the dancers will

separate, we usually give inner hands. Frequently, as the dancers separate, they push away from each other with those nearer hands, and the hands go well above the shoulders in what almost appears like a "throwing" movement: not pretty! Strive to keep the hands at shoulder height throughout these partings and the movement looks social and gracious.

Stepping up or down: All too often, this is either forgotten or resembles a kind of shuffling movement to get out of the way in the nick of time. Make stepping up part of the dance! Catch your partner's eye just before the movement, then rise to the balls of the feet and step up right on the beats of the music. Keep your body parallel to your partner's rather than facing diagonally up. Suddenly, stepping up becomes social and elegant, even in quick time.

Balance in line: When dancers actually make a line, they can't see each other. Instead, stand slightly back of the line, forming a kind of W. This allows dancers to see and greet each other with just a slight turn of the head, rather than an awkward turning and leaning.

Summing up: In looking over these points, I am struck that none of these technique points is about footwork, but rather about phrasing, handing and upper body control. Even the less athletic and the newer dancers can learn these nuances that so improve their dancing. By paying attention to the frequently danced and more ordinary movements, our beloved Scottish country dancing can be even more joyous and social (and fun!).

Clear out your attic!



In the last issue we asked if anyone could identify the people in this photograph taken at Summer School in the 1960s. *Scottish Country Dancer* readers went one better and even recalled the name of Bobby Watson's poodle! For the record we have: Bob Blackie, Maxime, Bobby Watson, Joan Dorrian, Cathy MacLaren, Georgina Finlay and Marie Dillon.

Overheard on the web

Chris Ronald of New York, our web-watcher, has been scanning the debates on the Strathspey List. Eyes, smiles and beginners have caught his attention. If you want to subscribe to the Strathspey yourself go to www.strathspey.org



How much eye contact?

RSCDS-style dancing may be quite standardized, but one area in which one can see great differences is in the matter of eye contact. A teacher in Scotland commented that "older, RSCDS-like people" in Scotland seem to dislike much eye contact. He had attributed this to British reserve until he took part in an English country dancing workshop. Here he found that the women had no problems at all in making eye contact. He concluded that his assumption that British people don't look because it isn't polite was not correct. He felt perhaps there had been little emphasis on looking at your partner in the RSCDS teaching of 30 to 40 years ago.

Most contributors to this discussion agreed that the amount of eye contact was due mostly to the way dancing was learned, rather than something innate or cultural. A teacher in Canada said that eye contact seemed to vary from one SCD group to another, even within the same town. He didn't think the age of the dancers was as much of a factor as the style of the group and their particular teachers. He felt that the dancers who gave more eye contact tended to have a better awareness of their partners and to become better dancers.

A teacher in France added "there's a big difference between a quick and friendly smile as you turn or pass someone in the dance, and the expressionless stare of people who've been taught, in some dance class or other, that they have to have eye contact." He stressed that a smile had to be spontaneous, but agreed that "it can be disappointing in some dance groups when you feel your partner would be as happy dancing with a broomstick, for all the attention they pay you."

Looking at other dancers in a spontaneous, natural way seems to come easily to some people and not easily to others. As the teacher from Scotland said "sometimes you just know that the person looking at you is just

going through the motions and doesn't really mean it." One teacher said he asks his class to "twinkle" as they pass: he defined that as an "aren't-we-having-fun" type of smile.

The question then came up as to whether a smile or laugh is part and parcel of eye contact. Evidently not. The teacher in Scotland (again) said he did not smile a lot, and sometimes got told off for not smiling enough. He pointed out that he didn't like "the synchronized swimming kind of smile stuck on your face at all costs" and added that some dances - for him - simply weren't smiley dances: for example, Gang the Same Gate.



Another point of view was that smiling is a natural facial expression if you are enjoying yourself. This contributor said: "I look at my partner, because he's the one I'm dancing with (and with the rest of course too). I smile or laugh, because I'm enjoying dancing and being alive. I smile to my partner because I want him or her to share something."

So... are you a smiler or a twinkler?

Is dancing fun for beginners?

This reminds me of another discussion. While debating what attracts beginners, one dancer commented on how boring and tedious SCD can be at first, with 15 minutes of a class "wasted" on overdone warm-ups like "rolling your head" and "shrugging your shoulders". Replies came from many parts of the world to say that it doesn't have to be like that. A teacher in England was surprised to hear that newcomers were

put through that sort of warm up. Another teacher said "such things are banned around here. We try to get them moving, mixing, even laughing. No, we do not use RSCDS Book 1; my inspiration is English country dancing, round dances, ceilidh dances." He explained that his approach was initially to give the dancers an idea of the spirit of social dancing, with the details to be added later. Another teacher said "shoot me for treason" but we're in a competitive market place and need to put more emphasis on moving and less on standing around. Several other teachers advocated very simple dances for the warm-up. One advocated The Dhoon (Children's Book) as the first dance, as people invariably get their right and left mixed up and all end up having a good laugh. "If they laugh, they're enjoying themselves and they're more likely to come back" she said.

There were also differences of opinion on when beginners should start going to weekly or monthly social dances. One contributor thought the presence of beginners on the dance floor could spoil the fun of the experienced dancers who like to be able to "dance with their peers". Others disagreed. They felt that anything that looks like exclusion would put newcomers off. A dancer in the USA said she liked "going to monthly dance parties after only a month or so - sure we could only dance two or three dances, and those clumsily, but everyone was having so much fun it was infectious and a great incentive". Another suggested that beginners be offered a discount to take account of the fact that they would only be getting into a few dances.

Moreover, as another contributor said, many of the 'experienced' dancers (however defined) may soon be glad of the tolerance of the current new dancers, if they stick at it. He pointed out: "as we try to enjoy the dancing beyond our respective sell-by dates, so it behooves us to invest some time and effort and tolerance in encouraging them now, rather than regarding them as some lower form of life."

Amen to that!



Reviews



CD for Book 13 RSCDS CD062 £10

**Neil Barron & his Scottish
Dance Band**

It is a pleasure to welcome the new recording of the Book 13 dances by Neil Barron and his Scottish Dance Band.

Book 13 is a long book, with twelve dances, four of which (two strathspeys and two jigs) are 8x48. No wonder that the original 1989 recording by Bobby Crowe filled one and a half LPs. We now have two CDs in a single case, with all dances complete.

The six-piece band produces a full, deep and well balanced sound throughout. Neil Barron is accompanied on second accordion by Alastair Wood but these two masters seem almost self-effacing in their desire for tight ensemble. Marie Fielding, on fiddle, is well to the fore throughout and plenty is heard from the piano, played by Pam Wilkie. Bass and drums, too, can be clearly identified but are never obtrusive. The whole effect is of excellent balance and great team-work.

There is a good mixture of traditional and modern tunes in the reels and jigs, six of the newer tunes being Neil Barron's own compositions. For all the strathspey sets he sticks to the originals and other old or traditional tunes. All these are strathspeys with a real urge on the downbeat to encourage a strong travelling step.

Neil's choice of tempi will probably please most dancers. The reels and jigs range between 4mins 38secs and 4mins 41secs for 8x32, which is comfortable for dancers aiming at good footwork but not a drag for those less preoccupied with their feet. For my personal taste his strathspey tempi are a little on the brisk side, but classes tell me that brisk is better because it is far less tiring, so I should think that the speeds on these tracks will be welcomed by most. A striking feature of all Neil's tempi, both fast and slow, is that they are rock-steady from beginning to end on each track.

Not all dances in Book 13 are popularly performed but the tracks for The Duran Ranger, Barley Bree, Ladies' Fancy and The Reel of the 51st will have strong appeal, the last named including two of Neil's own tunes which go with a splendid swing.

If I have one mild criticism of this collection it is that it perhaps lacks light and shade, but this is a quibble. These discs are loaded with eminently danceable music, full of lift and drive, with a full, balanced sound and beautifully played. Most dancers and teachers will, I am sure, love it.

Dennis Tucker



CD for Book 34 RSCDS CD 063 £10

Ian Muir & his Band

Ian Muir and his five piece
Scottish Country Dance

Band provide the music for this CD which consists of eight Scottish Country Dances plus three dances published in 2006. Overall an excellent CD and a must for every teacher. Good tempo and straightforward playing with a very good beat. Sticking very much to tried and tested tunes. A good sound and a well made up band all playing well together.

This CD has some lively jig and reel tunes which will make everyone want to dance. C'est L'amour has a jaunty tune which suits the dance and encourages dancers in the mood of the name. I like the original tune which has a definite beat and adds to the liveliness of the dance. Glasgow Lasses, with many favourite tunes and a strong beat, would be good for use in class. A fine selection of tunes for Royal Albert Country Dance and Niel Gow's Farewell to Whisky make you want to dance, though they are not danced very often in my area. Tunes for the New Scotia Quadrille take you back in time to when the Quadrille was originally danced and the bright tunes give you the feel of the dance. I would like to see the Encore follow track 6. Open the Door to Three has a good tempo and a nice set of tunes with good changes in the music and fits in well with the figures in the dance. Jean Martin of Aberdeen changes the tempo to strathspey and features the fiddle and some unfamiliar tunes which grow on you the more you listen to them and seem to suit the dance as it flows from one figure to the next. The final dance on the CD, The Inimitable Derek, is fast moving and fun to dance, although the original tune by Donald Ridley is unfamiliar it suits the dance.

There is something for everyone in this CD whether for listening to or for use with your class.

Irene Whyte

A Guide to Music in the Teaching of Scottish Country Dancing by Muriel Johnstone £5

I know that the author of this new publication, Muriel Johnstone, will need absolutely no introduction to the vast majority of the readership as she served the Society as musical director for many years. Having been asked to carry out a review, I thought I would find it to be a somewhat daunting task.



No need to worry, as this guide, amounting to approximately 30 very full pages, is full of useful information which I am sure will

prove of interest to musicians, dancers and teachers alike and will be an essential read for those preparing for certificate examinations.

The two main chapters cover:-

"Historical Information", comprising three sections covering "instruments", "publishing" and "musicians & composers" and:-

"The Use of Music in Teaching" which has sections covering "Types of Tunes used for Dancing", "Musical elements affecting the dance", "Music for Step Practice" and "Available Music Collections".

The Historical Information chapter makes a fascinating read with a lot of useful background information as to the instruments and the various early collections of music. The section I found most fascinating in this chapter is the one giving a great deal of useful background information on the musicians from early days up to the 20th century.

It would be so easy for this guide to have become a boring read, but it is to Muriel's credit that she has managed to maintain the reader's interest throughout. Rather than putting it down, I found myself reading on looking for the next little snippet of useful information. It is amazing what you don't know even after nearly 40 years in the business!

Hopefully this publication will make dancers realise that there is a lot more to being a musician than sitting churning out tune after tune. The only problem is that there is now absolutely no excuse for getting it wrong!

With the music, Ready.....And! go and buy a copy, you will enjoy it!

George Meikle

Willie Macpherson - The Elgin Fiddler Available from musicscotland.com

Whereas most fiddlers will know the name Willie Macpherson, the only real connection with *Scottish Country Dancer* is that of his composition "Brumley Brae" the original tune for "Swiss Lassie." The dance, devised by Rosie Betsche, arrived without a tune, and on submitting "Brumley Brae" to the music committee, I



In my opinion

By Fiona Grant

was delighted when it was chosen for the dance, as I hope Willie would have been, especially at the prospect of it being danced to around the world. It is instantly recognised, a real must for a dance to become popular.

It was thanks to Willie in 1973 that I was introduced to Strathspey & Reel Society playing, opening a whole new world of Scottish music other than the strict tempo music I played for dancing. It was a privilege to have witnessed the inspiration and above all, the passion Willie had for our traditional music, drawing out the best in everyone, young or old, fortunate enough to have been taught by him.

His untimely death just a year later robbed the music world of a very fine musician, composer and dedicated teacher. It goes without saying how pleased and enthusiastic I was on hearing about the book in its early stages.

Published by Willie's son, Fraser, who originally envisaged a booklet, the project grew, due to the enthusiasm of so many friends & musicians, resulting in a unique and beautifully presented book on the fascinating life of Willie Macpherson, complete with interesting graphics and beautiful photographs to accompany the origins of his twenty compositions.

The music is geared to the fiddle player and not easy! Apart from the "Brumley Brae" I feel as a pianist, I can only do justice to the strathspeys "Effie Glasgow of Longmorn" and my personal favourite "Mrs Fraser Macpherson's Strathspey" which I hope will be used by the Society as an original should a tune be required.

After a little persuasion, Fraser agreed to a recording to accompany the book. The Elgin Strathspey & Reel Society is to be congratulated on rising to the challenge of such a demanding programme with some fine ensemble playing, culminating in tracks from the archives by the maestro himself.

Whether musician or dancer, this book/CD are well worth purchasing with full credit to all involved for producing such a fitting tribute to this talented man.

Who knows what other gems we could be dancing to had he been given a little longer. Joy is more joyful given a tune.

Jennifer Wilson

Fiona Grant of Bristol Branch longs to get her feet tapping and birl in the middle of a favourite old dance.

A remarkable feature of Scottish country dancing is that it is one of the few activities in this day and age that is cross-generational. Everyone nowadays does things with their peer groups, from the time we take our babies to toddler groups to arranging bus tours for the retired. Scottish country dancing can bridge these generational gaps, and Granny can teach wee Jimmy to join the dance, while Mum and Dad actually have some time together, even if it is only to dance a pousette! I wonder if those of us on organising committees should take more note of this and make sure we run a dance where we bring our neighbours, their children, Uncle Tom and all to the dance?

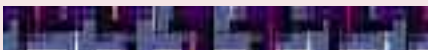
What else can we do to attract more participants? Scottish country dancing has been decreasing in popularity over the last couple of decades, and it would be sad if we lost what has been developed over the last 80 or so years. Since Mrs Stewart and Miss Milligan founded the RSCDS, Scottish country dancing has not just been preserved but has evolved and developed, but I wonder if it has become an exclusive preserve of aficionados, and we are in danger of losing many of the aspects which once made it so popular. The RSCDS and the Highland dance organisations have had a huge influence on the development of dance in Scotland over recent decades, and I admire how these organisations have promoted, preserved and developed particular dance forms. At the same time I regret the division into specialism which has meant that nowadays you go to a country dance, or a ceilidh dance or an old time dance, but rarely to a dance which brings together an opportunity to dance all these forms, as used to be the case at the beginning of the 20th century. In my Granny's teenage dancing days before the First World War, the Saturday dance programme would have on it old Scotch Reels (Reel of 4), country dances (Petronella, Flowers of Edinburgh), quadrilles (eg: Caledonians, Lancers) and circle dances (Highland Scottishe, Barn dance, waltz).

Not only was there plenty of variety in the programme, but there was less emphasis on doing things exactly uniformly and it was easier for

newcomers to join in. The rules and regimentation developed over the second half of the 20th century has, I think, taken away the spontaneity and improvisation which used to characterise Scottish dances earlier in the century, and can still be glimpsed in Shetland reels, Cape Breton sets and at ceilidh dances where dancers can develop an individual style within the broad outline of the dance and the cadence of the music, by introducing their own preferred ways of stepping and birling. Maybe we should have "workshops" interpreting the music with birls, twirls and stepping!

The current fashion for devising ever increasing numbers of dances which are full of complex figures and half figures, with every member of the set doing interlinked travelling formations (meanwhile bits) has its place, but I find these "pattern" dances only need rhythm, not music for performance. I miss having the freedom to step out or have fun devising a twiddly bit with a partner, all of which is possible with older, "simpler" dances, but out of order in pattern dances where there is no space for interpretation of the music. At the same time, I can understand and appreciate what dancers mean when they say they like the dance to flow, but I often long for the excitement of some unexpected change of direction, transition, or even better, an un-choreographed adjustment to the expected pattern. I genuinely like it when the dancing couple either by design or mistake enter a reel unconventionally, and then the whole set laughs and adjusts to get back into the swing of the dance. Sometimes during an evening's programme of taxing modern dances, I can't help but notice a robotic seriousness on the faces of the dancers as they concentrate on the performance of a memorised pattern of movements. So different from when the sets get carried away during a very familiar old dance when we have brain space to listen to a set of tunes that just won't let the feet stand still. Let's put more dances from Books 1 to 15 on our dance programmes!

Nuff for now....on with the dance.



Day school diary

All branch and club secretaries are invited to send in details of schools and workshops direct to mag.editor@rscds.org. Include date, event and teachers. Issue 6 will cover day schools from April 08 - July 09. Please submit your forward dates even if you have not finalised who is teaching. You can add details in the following issue. Compiled by John Sturrock. For contact details regarding these events please refer to branch or club websites.

Oct 07

- 5 - 7 Argyll Scottish Country Dancing Group, Weekend School, Ilminster. *Mary Murray*
- 6 Swilcan SCD Group, Day School, Utrecht, Netherlands
Margaret Lambourne
- 6 York & North Humberside Branch, Day School. *Stewart Adam*
- 6 - 7 Houston & District Branch, Weekend, Houston, TX. *Marianna Harvey*
- 7 The Hague Branch, Day School, Den Haag, Netherlands
- 13 London Branch, Day School & Musicians School. *Linda Gaul, Graham Donald, Irene Edgar, Keith Smith*
- 13 Ribble Valley Branch, Day School
Pat Houghton
- 13 Scottish Chanterelle, Day School, Lyon, France. *Patrick Chamoin*
- 13 Thistle Club, Eindhoven, Day and Music School, Netherlands
Kate Gentles, James Gray
- 13 Kamloops SCD Club, Fall Workshop, Kamloops, BC. *Barbara Johnston*
- 13 - 14 Ottawa Valley Weekend, Almonte, Ontario
Ron Wallace, Fiona Miller, Keith Bark
- 13 - 14 Weekend Workshop, Lvov, Western Ukraine. *Eithne Noakes*
- 18 - 21 Schluchtern, Germany, Autumn Course
Carola Fischer
- 19 - 22 New Zealand Branch, Weekend School, Auckland Region, Takapuna
David Ayre, Damon Collin, Janet Flavel, Doug Mills, Duncan Smith, Andrew Timmins
- 26 - 28 Rechberg International Weekend, Schwabisch-Gmund, Germany
Eric Finley
- 27 Sheffield Branch, Day School
Janet Johnston

Nov 07

- 2 - 4 Kingston Ontario Branch Weekend Workshop, Kingston, Ontario
- 2 - 4 San Francisco Branch, Weekend Workshop, Asilomar, California
Emily Evans, Fiona Grant, Eileen Hsu, Duncan MacKenzie, Marjorie McLaughlin, Shenna MacQueen
- 9 - 11 Croydon Branch, Weekend School, Eastbourne. *Wendy Mumford*
- 9 - 11 North Virginia Branch, Weekend, Arlington, VA. *Jessie Stuart, Ellie Briscoe*
- 10 Toronto Branch, Workshop
Stewart Adam, Ruth Jappy, Keith Bark
- 10 - 11 Scottish Chanterelle, Weekend School, Lyon, France. *Avril & David Quarrie*
- 17 Bristol Branch, Day School. *David Hall*
- 17 Norwich Branch, ½ Day Workshop, Wymondham, Norfolk
Eric Finley, Jean Martin
- 17 Swilcan SCD Group, Day School, Utrecht, Netherlands. *Baz Broekhuizen*
- 17 - 18 Scotia Shores, Weekend School & Musicians School, Vicenza, Italy
Helen Russell, James Gray
- 21 - 25 Schluchtern, Germany, November Course. *Jenny Greene*

- 22 - 23 Clivis SCD Society, Weekend School, Torino, Italy. *Jim Cook*
- 24 - 25 Zurich SCD Club Weekend Course, Geroldswil, Switzerland. *Atsuko Clement*
- 24 - 25 Scottish Country Dance Group of Monaco, Weekend, La Turbie, Monaco
Ken Martlew
- 25 The Hague Branch, Advanced Day School, Den Haag, Netherlands
Patrick Chamoin

Dec 07

- 15 Scottish Chanterelle, Day School, Lyon, France. *Patrick Chamoin*
- 28-6/01 New Zealand Branch, Summer School, Wellington. *Helen Frame, Noeline O'Connor, Doug Mills, Romaine Butterfield, Pam Perkins, Yvonne Gray, George Meikle*

Jan 08

- 12 Scottish Chanterelle, Day School, Lyon, France. *Patrick Chamoin*
- 12 - 13 Weekend School, Essen, Germany
Eric Finley

Feb 08

- 2 Carlisle and Border Branch, Day School
Ann Dix
- 9 Paris Branch, Day School and Ball, Paris, France
- 9 - 10 Scottish Chanterelle, Weekend School, Lyon, France
Mervyn Short, James Fairbairn
- 9 - 10 Swilcan SCD Group, Weekend School, Nunspeet, Netherlands
- 16 Oxfordshire Branch Day School, Oxford
Helen Russell, Andrew McConnell, Dennis Tucker
- 16 Freiburg Scottish Country Dancers, Day School, Freiburg, Germany
Carola Fischer
- 21 - 26 RSCDS Winter School, Pitlochry, Perthshire

Mar 08

- 1 Birmingham Branch, Day School, Birmingham, England
- 1 NW Craven Branch Day School, Whittington
- 6 - 9 Schluchtern, Germany, Weekend School
Carola Fischer, Sjoerd van Leersum
- 8 Somerset Branch, Day & Musicians School, Keinton Mandeville, Somerset
David Hall, Neil Copland
- 8 Berks, Hants, Surrey Border Branch, Day & Musicians School
Linda Gaul, Allison Russell, Alan Davis, Ian Muir, Keith Anderson
- 8 Swilcan SCD Group, Day School, Utrecht, Netherlands. *Jaap Hellinghuizer*
- 14 - 15 Lorn (Argyll) Branch Weekend School, Oban. *Janet Johnston*
- 15 Royal Tunbridge Wells Branch, Day School. *Mervyn Short, Marilyn Watson, Eric Finley*
- 20 - 24 Schluchtern, Germany, Easter Course
- 22 - 24 Paris Branch, International Weekend, Reims, France. *Mary Murray*

- 27 - 30 Schluchtern, Germany, Weekend School (Highland). *Janet Johnston*
- 28 - 30 RSCDS Spring Fling, Glasgow
Alasdair Brown, Craig Houston, Margo Priestley
- 29 - 30 International Weekend School, Kyoto, Japan
Muriel Johnstone, Keith Smith, Bill Zobel

Apr 08

- 4 - 6 Helensburgh & District Branch, Weekend School. *Janet Johnston*
- 4 - 6 International Weekend School, Hakone, Japan
Muriel Johnstone, Keith Smith, Bill Zobel
- 4 - 6 Leeds Branch, Weekend School, Scarborough. *Ann Dix*
- 5 St Andrews Branch, Day School, St Andrews, Fife. *Pat Houghton*
- 5 Swilcan SCD Group, Day School, Utrecht, Netherlands
Sjoerd van Leersum
- 19 NW Craven Branch Day School, Ingleton

May 08

- 2 - 4 Toronto Branch, Youth Weekend East, Peterborough, Ontario
Cathy Bertics, Rebecca Roman, Colin Philip
- 2 - 5 Far North Queensland SCD, Weekend School, Cairns, Australia
- 16 - 18 New York Branch, Pawling Weekend School, Hopewell Junction, NY
Jean Martin, Ron Wallace, Bill Zobel
- 16 - 18 Duns & District Branch, May Weekend
Margo Priestley, Les Lambert
- 17 St Andrew's Church, Day School, Brussels, Belgium. *Pat & Peter Clark*
- 24 Scottish Chanterelle, Advanced Day School, Lyon, France. *Patrick Chamoin*
- 31 Swilcan SCD Group, Day School & Ball, Utrecht, Netherlands. *Jaap Hellinghuizer*

Jun 08

- 12 - 15 Central Germany Branch, Weekend School, Schluchtern, Germany
Sue Porter

July 08

- 06 - 13 Queensland Branch, 33rd Australian Winter School, North Palm Beach
- Summer School runs from 20 July to 17 August
RSCDS Summer School, St Andrews, Fife

Sept 08

- 13 Lochaber Branch Day School, Fort William
- 20 Ayr Branch, Day School, Troon
- 20 NW Craven Branch Day School, Whittington

Oct 08

- 24 - 26 Rechberg International Weekend, Schwabisch-Gmund, Germany
Pat Houghton

Nov 08

- 15 Norwich Branch, ½ Day Workshop, Wymondham, Norfolk

Dec 08

- 28-05/01 New Zealand Branch, Summer School, Christchurch

Obituaries

George Lawson



George Lawson's passing on 17th April 2007 has brought great sadness not only to members of Glasgow Branch but also to the very many Society members who knew him. George was a much respected and committed figure in the Scottish country dancing world. Even in his early days in Fife, after qualifying as a teacher, he never missed an opportunity to establish a Scottish country dance class where one was not already available. That enthusiasm extended throughout his entire life. He taught a wide range of classes in Glasgow, and his 'Paisley Mondays' were enjoyed by many for over 40 years. Teaching apart, George gave much to Glasgow and to the Society worldwide. In the Branch he was both Chairman and Treasurer twice and danced with the Demonstration Group. He served until his death as Honorary President. In that role he was not a passive figure, and despite ill-health he took an active interest in ongoing activities. He was also Society Chairman, a position he felt deeply honoured to hold, an adjudicator, an examiner, and a loyal envoy of the Society wherever his expertise and presence were requested. As a teacher of the Certificate class in Glasgow he ensured, through his students, that country dancing reached as many people as possible.

As well as looking forward George was deeply committed to maintaining historical records for both Branch and Society. He insisted that significant events should be recorded, as well as the names of the committees which promoted them. He was also the stimulus for most of the youth events which continue to flourish in Glasgow today. Indeed he attended the Festival for children in March this year shortly before his death. We are grateful for his genuine and enthusiastic support for any new projects he considered worthwhile.

George will be remembered for his dry humour, his tolerance, his astute observations and his quiet dignity. He was a father figure who will be sorely missed. Throughout his life in all his country dance activities, to which he gave his many gifts, he was always most graciously supported by his wife Nan. To Nan, Jennifer, Stuart and his family we extend our sincere sympathy at this very sad time.

Ruth Beattie

David Normand-Harris



The death of David Normand-Harris on 22 June 2007 brought much sadness to our Society. David, at the time of his death, was the Convenor of the Education and Training Committee. It was especially poignant that David's article on the tartan he designed for the Society appeared in the publication of issue No 4 of the magazine, coinciding with his death. David and I were at school together in St Andrews in the 1950s, but I did not meet up with him again until he

reappeared in the RSCDS within the last ten years. He was a character one did not easily forget. David's contribution to the work of the Education and Training Committee was impressive. He was a meticulous man, with a dry wit, who enjoyed, equally, intellectual conversations and small talk. David was dedicated to furthering the work of the RSCDS. He is remembered by those who knew him with great fondness. This was demonstrated at the recent Summer School in St Andrews, when, on Sunday evenings, those who had known David personally were invited to gather and celebrate David's life by sharing with each other their memories of him.

Irene Bennett

Maguy Paillet



Maguy would have been at Summer School this year, as she had been for the last fifteen years, had cancer not got the better of her in four short months. She remained her smiling, elegant self until the very end, enthusiastically taking part in balls, classes and day schools as late as June. As convenor of the Lyon demonstration group in France she set up a successful show and spoke to a large audience the day before she was taken into palliative care. Brave, beautiful and tenacious, she showed us what the "spirit of the dance" can truly mean.

Maguy was a professional artist, and her collage *The Blue Lady* was presented to the RSCDS on her behalf on 30 July 2007. She also left funds to the Society to help young dancers.

Christiane Orgeret

Miss Fusako Oi

Tokyo Branch Chairman, Miss Fusako Oi, passed away very suddenly on 5 April 2007. Miss Oi was a devoted Chairman, working tirelessly for the branch and its members. She attended Summer School on a number of occasions, embodying the spirit of Miss Milligan's "international family". Miss Oi was a talented and enthusiastic teacher, designer, embroiderer, dressmaker and musician. She will be greatly missed.

Atsuko Clement

May Yarker



May Robertson Yarker was born in Greenock and began Scottish country dancing at the age of five. She continued to dance until her 90th birthday and loved everything connected with it. She joined the RSCDS in 1958 and qualified as a teacher and examiner. She taught and examined at Summer School for many years, and she travelled abroad to teach in Kenya, Sweden, Denmark, USA and Canada.

Examination work was her passion. At Ilkley College in Yorkshire she introduced the RSCDS Teaching Certificate. When she moved to the south coast she continued to train future RSCDS teachers. In 1995 May was awarded the Society Scroll of Honour, and in Book 42 the RSCDS published the dance *May Yarker's Strathspey* by Roy Goldring.

May trained at Glasgow College of Art and was an accomplished enamelling artist. She had a working studio at her home in Thurso. The Queen Mother saw some of her work at the annual Caithness Artists' Exhibition and later visited her studio. On learning that May was a Scottish country dance teacher, the Queen Mother invited her to the Castle of Mey for tea. When talking about the *Gay Gordons*, May told the Queen Mother about the progressive version of the dance. In no time at all, the Queen Mother and May were dancing round the drawing room to Her Majesty's sung accompaniment.

May's love of colours was reflected in her teaching of Scottish country dancing. She was always bright and encouraged a happy, social spirit. Wherever she went, laughter and fun accompanied her.

Bill Clement

Readers will be saddened to learn that Roy Goldring (dance deviser) and Stan Hamilton (band leader) died in September 2007. Obituaries will appear in the next issue.

Forthcoming RSCDS Events

78th Annual General Meeting and Conference Weekend

2 – 4 November 2007

Location: Bell's Sports Centre, Hay Street, Perth

- Friday night ball with David Cunningham and his Band
- Saturday night dance with Marian Anderson and her Band
- Saturday morning class with teacher Mervyn Short and pianist Rodger McAndrew
- Members' Forum on Saturday morning led by Bristol Branch
- Specially arranged bus trip to Scone Palace on Saturday morning
- Sunday morning workshop – "Are these the instructions?", with teacher Peter Clark and pianist Pat Clark
- Musicians' Forum on Sunday morning led by Angela Young

Further information and application form available from RSCDS Headquarters or on the website at www.rscds.org

Winter School

21 – 26 February 2008

All places have been taken.

26 February – 2 March 2009

(dates provisional)

Location: The Atholl Palace Hotel, Pitlochry

Co-ordinator: to be confirmed

Application forms will be available in June 2008 – please check with RSCDS Headquarters or on the website at www.rscds.org for exact dates of availability and submission date.

Spring Fling

28 – 30 March 2008

Location: Glasgow

Co-ordinators: Jayne Brown (Youth Director) with a team of young people from Glasgow and members of Glasgow Branch

- for people between the ages of 16-35
- classes from beginners through to advanced level

- teachers will be Alasdair Brown, Craig Houston and Margo Priestley

Further information and application forms are now available from RSCDS Headquarters or on the website at www.rscds.org

Summer School

20 July – 17 August 2008

Location: University of St Andrews, (hall of residence to be confirmed)

Co-ordinator: John Wilkinson

- come for any one or two weeks of the four, as resident or non-resident
- morning classes for all levels including beginners
- optional afternoon classes
- social dancing every evening except Friday, when there is a ceilidh
- two musicians' courses will be held, dates to be confirmed

Further information and application forms will be available from RSCDS Headquarters or on the website at www.rscds.org in December 2007.



Teachers' Association (Canada)

Affiliated with the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society

Celebrating our 50th Anniversary in 2008

www.tac-rscds.org

- ◆ An Association of Scottish Country Dance teachers located mainly in North America and with a world-wide membership
- ◆ Promotes and encourages excellence in the technique and social enjoyment of Scottish Country Dancing.
- ◆ Membership is open to RSCDS members who hold the Society's Preliminary part 3 or Full part 5 certificates

Membership Services

- ◆ **TACTALK**
Quarterly magazine with articles on many aspects of Scottish Country Dancing, book and recorded music reviews, teaching hints, etc. Subscription information for non-teachers available through the Corresponding Secretary.
- ◆ **ANNUAL RESIDENTIAL SUMMER SCHOOL** (1 week)
Classes, socials, ceilidh, banquet and ball, afternoon activities. Candidate courses offered on alternate years.

- ◆ **TACSOUND**
(catalogue available) Sells and produces recorded music for dancing. Recorded music: available for RSCDS books. Instructional videos: available.
- ◆ **TACBOOKS**
(catalogue available) Sells and publishes printed materials pertaining to Scottish Country Dancing.
- ◆ **AREA REPRESENTATIVES**
Area representatives provide local networking, contacts and support.
- ◆ **OUTREACH PROGRAMME**
Provides sponsorships, grants to new groups or events, advice, and encouragement to new teachers.
- ◆ **AGM ANNUAL WEEKEND**
A teachers weekend held in North America with a Guest teacher each year. Classes, banquet and ball. Annual General Meeting in afternoon.
- ◆ **TAC WEBSITE AND FORUM**
We have our own website at the above address. TACForum is set up to help teachers communicate on dance matters and pass information.

- ◆ **Corresponding Secretary (for all general inquiries)**
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**RSCDS
New Zealand Branch Inc.
Annual Summer School**



28th December 2007 - 6th January 2008

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Wellington**
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For application forms and further information, contact:
The Secretary, RSCDS New Zealand Branch Inc.
P.O. Box 743, Wanganui 5015, New Zealand
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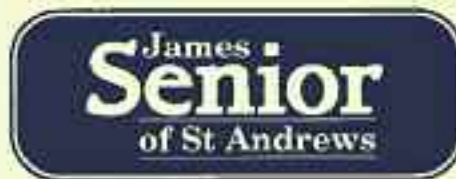
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