



rscds
Dance Scottish

Scottish Country Dancer



RSCDS EVENTS

Summer School 2015

Dates: 26 July – 23 August (note that this is later than usual, due to the Open Golf Championship)

Location: University Hall, St Andrews

Director: Ruby Wilkinson

- Attend as resident or non-resident, for any one or two weeks of the four
- Morning classes at all levels, and optional afternoon classes/sessions
- Social dancing every evening, with a ceilidh one evening each week
- Unit 2 & Unit 3 courses in weeks 1 & 2 respectively; Unit 5 course in weeks 3 and 4
- Musicians' course in week 2
- Young Dancer Week – in week 2, 12–15 year olds may attend, with a chaperone, and join in the regular classes and activities.

(All classes and courses are subject to demand)

Online booking is available on the website:

www.rscds.org/article/summer-school-2015.

86th Annual General Meeting & Conference Weekend 2015

Dates: 6 – 8 November 2015

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

Friday evening dance – Luke Brady's Band

Saturday class – Angela Young with musician Frank Thomson

Saturday evening dance – David Cunningham's Band

Sunday class – Jimmie Hill with musician Mo Rutherford

Online booking will open on the website at the end of April; hard copy forms are available from HQ.

Winter School 2016

Dates: 21 – 26 February 2016

Location: The Atholl Palace Hotel, Pitlochry

Director: Janet Johnston

Teachers – John Wilkinson, Heather Cowan, Ron Wallace, Janet Johnston

Musicians – Jim Lindsay, Bill Ewan, Ian Robertson, John Renton

Classes are offered at Intermediate, Advanced and Very Advanced levels, subject to demand.

Following a successful introduction at Winter School 2015, a Musicians' Course will be held.

As always, a highlight of the week will be the Ball at Blair Castle.

For more information contact Moira Thomson at moira.thomson@rscds.org.

Online booking will open at 9 am BST on 1 September.

Spring Fling 2016

Spring Fling 2016 will take place in Edinburgh.

Watch the website for more details and online booking.

Available now:


The Manual of Scottish Country Dancing

Third Edition PDF - you can now purchase this bible of SCD as an electronic download from the RSCDS Shop.

Prescribed Dances for Unit 2

You can now purchase the Prescribed Dances as an electronic download from the RSCDS shop.

You can choose to have your electronic download delivered -

 to your inbox

 or on a USB stick to your front door!

2015

Coming soon: for Summer School 2015

Book 49

12 brand new, unpublished Scottish country dances.

CD "Book 49 Plus"

the music for Book 49 with a twist - recording by Jim Lindsay and his Scottish Dance Band.

Editorial

When you look at the Contents for this magazine, one thing you may notice is that we have no Letters page. Our 13,000 members must have opinions: on the future direction of the RSCDS, favourite formations and dances, changes in conventions or etiquette, or any other SCD talking point (even complaints!) in your part of the world. We look forward to being deluged with letters next time.

When you have written your letter, you may pick up your drawing pen. The RSCDS is inviting entries for a T-shirt competition (see page 9), and your T-shirt may be worn at next year's Summer School and beyond! In this issue you'll also find the T-shirt collage announced some time ago. Thanks to all those who submitted their photos. However, please don't confuse these with the T-shirts we want for the competition. The competition T-shirts can include pithy text, but their main aim is to celebrate SCD.

The Duke of Atholl, President from 1924 to 1957, believed in the power of the country dance 'movement' not only to restore traditional dancing to Scotland but also to benefit Scottish society at large. Specifically, he saw country dancing as a way of overcoming the class divisions so strong in the industrial cities of his day, since rich and poor alike could take part.

As suggested by the articles in this issue by Agnes Borbely and Maria Tsvetoukhina, SCD can still help to build bridges, not only within a single society, but between nations and cultures. The extraordinary success of the International Branch over the last decade attests to this as well. The social communities we create can cross political boundaries!

Among other articles in this issue, you'll find the thoughts of a well-known Scottish folklorist who took SCD teacher training at Jordanhill College, guidelines for dem teams from two experienced leaders, an insider's view of helping to make a BBC television show, some first-hand memories of the great dance deviser Hugh Foss, and an intriguing proposal for new technology applied to dancing.

Guidelines for submissions to this magazine are now published on the RSCDS website. In particular, we love receiving action photos, but these need to be at least 500 kb in size for reproduction in the magazine, and provide some written context.

Since this will be my last issue as editor, I'd like to thank the members of the Editorial Board over the past six issues for their help and support, also the staff members in Edinburgh, and Dougie Gibson for his design expertise.



Musicians' view of dancing at Winter School

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Cover photo: Dancers at the AGM Photo: Janet Finlayson

The next issue of *Scottish Country Dancer* will be published in October 2015. Please send your contributions and advertisements to the relevant email below by 1 August.

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News from Coates Crescent

An update from Michael Greenwood, our new Digital Marketing Communications Officer

Branch anniversaries in 2015

Congratulations to the following branches, who celebrate significant anniversaries this year. We wish you many more years of happy dancing!

Scotland	Aberdeen	1925	90
Scotland	Dundee	1925	90
Scotland	Perth & Perthshire	1925	90
Scotland	West Renfrewshire	1925	90
Scotland	Hamilton & Clydesdale	1935	80
England	Manchester	1935	80
Scotland	Gatehouse of Fleet	1955	60
England	Sheffield	1955	60
England	Bournemouth	1965	50
USA	San Francisco	1965	50
Canada	St Catharines	1965	50
USA	Northern Virginia	1975	40
USA	San Diego	1975	40
USA	Twin Cities	1975	40
USA	Washington DC	1975	40
England	York & North Humberside	1975	40
USA	New Mexico	1985	30
USA	Phoenix	1985	30
England	Cornwall	1990	25
USA	Orlando	1990	25
Russia	Moscow	2005	10

Results of 2014 management elections

Management Board members: Bernie Hewitt, Tom Halpenny, Isobel McMillan (3 years)

Education & Training Committee members: Sue Ronald, Elaine Cameron (3 years)

Membership Services Committee members: Tom McKinlay, Keith Rose (3 years)

Youth Services Committee members: Emma Allsop, Raphaëlle Orgeret (3 years)

Board & Committee membership for 2014–15

The full list is as follows (the Chairman, Chairman Elect and Executive Officer Elizabeth Foster may attend any committee or other meeting, without a vote):

- **Management Board**
Jim Healy (Chairman, Convenor of Board)
Helen Russell (Chairman Elect)
Sue Porter (Convenor, E&T)
Philip Whitley (Convenor, MS)
Roy Bain (Convenor, YS)
Vacant (Treasurer)
Richard Austin, Luke Brady, Tom Halpenny, Elizabeth Harry, Bernie Hewitt, Craig Houston, Isobel McMillan, Jim Stott, Rachel Wilton
- **Education & Training Committee**
Sue Porter (Convenor)
Ruby Wilkinson (Schools Director)
Helen Brown, Elaine Cameron, Pat Harrower, Les Lambert, Sue Ronald, Anne Smyth, Angela Young
- **Membership Services Committee**
Philip Whitley (Convenor)
Ian Muir (Music Director)
Maureen Daniel, Linda Gaul, Anselm Lingnau, Helen McGinley, Tom McKinlay, Keith Rose

- **Youth Services Committee**

Roy Bain (Convenor)

Anne McArthur (Convenor Elect)

Emma Allsop, Adam Brady, Lindsey Ibbotson, Louise Macdougall, Raphaëlle Orgeret, Rachel Shankland

Vacancies and appointments in 2015

Management positions available this year are listed below; nomination forms will be available on the website or from HQ from 24 April. In addition to completing the form, members must submit a profile outlining their relevant skills and experience. Guidelines on the reverse of the form indicate what should be included, but those considering standing for election are **strongly** advised to read the role descriptions for Board and Committee members available on the website, at www.rscds.org/article/legal-administrative. Nomination forms, profiles and photos must be received by 11 September 2015.

Membership Services Convenor – to succeed Philip Whitley from November 2015. A role description and nomination form will be included in the April mailing; please note that the submission date is 11 September 2015.

Education & Training Convenor Elect – to shadow Sue Porter from November 2015 and assume the Convenor role in 2016. A role description and nomination form will be included in the April mailing; please note that the submission date is 11 September 2015.

Education & Training Committee Vacancies: 3 members for 3 years

Membership Services Committee Vacancies: 2 members for 3 years

Youth Services Committee Vacancies: 2 members for 3 years

* **Summer School Depute Director** – for Summer School 2016 and 2017

* **Winter School Co-ordinator** – for Winter School 2017

* Role descriptions and nomination forms for these two posts are available on the website (as a News item), or can be requested from julia.parr@rscds.org.

Headquarters staff



Michael Greenwood was appointed Digital Marketing Communications Officer in November and is already heightening the online presence of the RSCDS through social media, and developing the website and branch communications. Michael hails from Toronto, Canada, has settled in well to HQ and boasts a Scottish country dancing granny!

A parting note from Elizabeth Foster



Six and a half years on from my appointment in December 2008 as the first Secretary/Executive Officer of the Society, it is my intention to retire at the end of June 2015. During my period in office, along with staff changes, HQ renovations and continued growth in events such as Summer and Winter School, there have been many new and exciting dance developments and initiatives. I hope you enjoy re-visiting some of these in my article in this issue of the *Dancer*. I wish the Society all the best in years to come whilst I hope to spend more time hill walking, sailing and, of course, Scottish country dancing.

A message from Elspeth Gray

'I have been amazed by the number of cards and messages wishing me well in retirement, and was quite overwhelmed by the cheque presented to me on 10 January. A huge thank you to everyone who contributed and sent messages; I really appreciate your kindness and generosity. I wish you all, and the RSCDS, the very best for the future.'

Scrolls of Honour 2014

At AGM 2014, John Wilkinson presented Scrolls of Honour to **Jerry Reinstein** (Paris), **Jack Rennie** (Los Angeles) and **Helen Russell** (E&T Committee, York & N Humberside). Congratulations to all.



L to R Helen Russell, John Wilkinson, Jerry Reinstein, and Jack Rennie
Photo: Janet Finlayson

Company Limited by Guarantee

At AGM 2014, by more than the necessary two-thirds majority, branch delegates approved the Management Board motion to change the legal form of the RSCDS. As of 1 April 2015 the RSCDS, in addition to being a Registered Scottish Charity, will be a 'Company Limited by Guarantee'. This change will have little effect on day-to-day operations but will bring about changes with regard to Branch Delegates (who now become the 'company lawmembers'). There will also be some changes to voting procedures at the AGM, but branches will now be able to exercise their full voting power, since delegates can appoint proxies.

RSCDS-sponsored awards

Scots Trad Music Awards, December 2014, Inverness



Catriona and Gary with the award
Photo: Louis DeCarlo

This year, as RSCDS representative, **Gary Coull** had the honour of presenting the trophy for 'Instrumentalist of the Year' to accomplished harpist and songwriter **Catriona McKay**.

National Association of Accordion and Fiddle Clubs (NAAFC) Festival, March 2015, Falkirk

This year, as RSCDS representative, **Alan Macpherson**, Honorary Archivist, presented the RSCDS Dance Scottish trophy to fiddler **Catherine Speight** from Anstruther.

Hearty congratulations to Catriona and Catherine!



Catherine and Alan with the award
Photo: Roy Walker

Archive project update

We are now halfway through the archive project and a great deal has changed since June. The archive office has been refurbished and an additional 24 metres of shelving have been added, although this is filling up fast! We have been fortunate to receive several accessions during the last year, including a large number of LPs, significantly increasing our music collection. The cataloguing and digitisation project is progressing well with over 5,000 digitised images created so far. The oral history project has received an enthusiastic response from many branches as well as individual members keen to contribute. We would also very much like to encourage branches and members to send dance trails from their local areas.

Jean Milligan Memorial Fund

All are encouraged to apply for funding to support events that foster dancing, new membership or just the spread of dancing awareness and knowledge. New and innovative projects are particularly welcome. Applicants should outline the proposed financial structure of the event or project. The guidelines for applying to the JMMF along with the application form are available on the website. The JMMF is intended to be used to support the aims of the Society, so the scope is large!

Dance revisions

The Colonel (Leaflet Book):

Bars 25–26 should read '... pass by the right to face first corners.'

Cuillins of Skye (Leaflet Book):

At the end of bar 20, 1st couple finish in second place on own sides.

Miss Gibson's Strathspey (Leaflet Book):

Bars 17–24 should end '... to finish in the middle of the set, facing opposite sides.'

New Director of Music: Ian Muir



Ian's interest in music began at a young age. He played the accordion at school when he was 12, and for dances with his own band by age 14. At 17 he was invited to join McBain's Band, participating in broadcasts for Radio Scotland, a country dance series for schools with the BBC, and playing for the Royal Ballet School, including a performance on stage at Covent Garden. In 1986 he formed his own band, Craigellachie, which continues to be well received both in the UK and abroad with engagements in Europe, New Zealand, Australia and Oman.

Ian spent 22 years as a school teacher, Head of Music, and later Head of the Performing Arts Faculty in a Basingstoke comprehensive school where encouraging creativity and arts appreciation was an important part of his role.

Ian moved into Local Authority Support and currently works as a Senior Schools Adviser. His professional role demands good communication and leadership skills, as well as the ability to challenge, support, advise, and encourage collaboration. These are skills which the Musical Director will find invaluable.

The initiatives Ian has set for himself as Music Director include:

- Completing the recording of all the *Miss Milligan's Miscellany* dances;
- Considering how the RSCDS can run further training for musicians who might be interested in playing for classes;
- Encouraging more young bands to play for SCD.

We are excited to have Ian as our new Musical Director and look forward to the experience and wisdom he will bring to this role. Congratulations Ian!

From the Chair



by Jim Healy

Just before handing over the chairmanship, John Wilkinson said to me, 'It doesn't matter how long you shadow, nothing prepares you for the real thing!' And you know – he was right! It has been an interesting few months indeed since the AGM in Perth.

The main issues to be addressed were known, but progressing them has thrown up various challenges. For example, take the 'Company Limited by Guarantee' change. All was approved and coasting along to a satisfactory introduction on 1 April when along came our bankers and decided that we had to change our accounts!

More pressing issues, however, include the imminent retirement of Liz Foster and the lack of a Treasurer since William Whyte stood down. There has been difficulty in finding a Treasurer. No applications have been received and numerous direct contacts have been unproductive. The stumbling block seems to be the perceived time commitment which reflects the very substantial workload that William took on. The role is being reassessed, resulting in more of the accounting work being taken on by our professional advisers, rather than

a volunteer Treasurer. Other functions have been redistributed and happily William has agreed to stay on as Chairman of the Investment Panel. A point raised at the most recent AGM, and one which will be closely monitored, is whether we are maximising the amount of Gift Aid.

Meanwhile the search for Liz Foster's replacement is under way. Undoubtedly, it will be a challenge to source and attract an individual with the appropriate background, level of experience and blend of skills to undertake a role with such an expansive remit, from managing HQ operations to working with and supporting the various committees, Management Board – and of course the Chairman.

The Board continues with its strategic review. Given the structural reduction in membership, a new funding model may be deemed more appropriate. Various Board members will look into the issue and prepare discussion papers on a range of options.

And finally, to end on a cheerier note, I have been made very welcome at a number of branch dances in Scotland, and I have received several invitations to attend upcoming branch anniversaries when I look forward to meeting and dancing with friends old and new.

Membership Services Committee

by Philip Whitley, Convenor



It has been business as usual over the past few months. I wish to publicly thank every committee member over this period: their independence of thought and willingness to take the initiative really does make my job as convenor so much easier. They have often completed tasks before I have asked them to do so, and I cannot thank them enough.

Book 49 will be available in July 2015. It includes twelve previously unavailable dances and formations that have never featured in RSCDS dances (The Rose and The Celtic Reel). The accompanying CD by Jim Lindsay contains five additional tracks including selected *Miss Milligan's Miscellany* dances unrecorded by the

RSCDS. We are investigating releasing the music of the dances in 8, 16 and 24 bar phrases for the benefit of teachers with no recourse to live music; this is still at the exploratory stage, but if we can do it in time for July we shall do so.

The 3rd Edition of the *Manual* is now available in electronic format from the shop site and we will be releasing other electronic publications over the coming months. We intend to do the same with our recorded music. The 3rd Edition of the *Manual* will also be available in electronic format on an RSCDS branded memory stick for sale at Summer School. If successful, we will investigate expanding this to other publications.

Due to resource constraints we have postponed work on the second volume of the *Imperial Dances* until Summer 2016. This is regrettable, as the sales of the first volume far exceeded our

Breaking News:

Scottish Television Appeal 2015

Remember the Commonwealth Ceilidh – all about fun, fitness and community?

Everyone with an appetite for more might consider participating in the STV (Scottish Television) Appeal 2015 – and gaining important TV exposure for SCD at the same time!

Having noticed the RSCDS as a result of the media-friendly 2014 Ceilidh, STV approached the RSCDS to be a partner in raising money to help disadvantaged children and young people in Scotland – and New York Branch and London Branch are already on board.

Funds are raised through sponsorship and donations for a well-known Scottish celebrity to dance Scottish with participating groups (last year it was dance Zumba). TV footage will be shot over the next six months, culminating in a televised danceathon over one weekend in September.

The RSCDS will devise one new signature dance for the event and, as for the Commonwealth Ceilidh, support participating groups with event guidelines and programme suggestions.

As more information becomes available, it will be circulated as widely as possible through traditional and social media, and you will be able to register your event on the RSCDS and STV websites.

Last year £2,610,427 was raised to support good causes. It would be wonderful if RSCDS branches and groups could help to increase this figure – and increase the number of people Scottish country dancing worldwide at the same time.

expectations, but we will strive to publish this as soon as we can.

Other publications for release over the next eighteen months include a revised *Index to Formations and Movements*, the next edition of the **combined A5 books** (*Books 25 to 30*), and further CDs of the remaining unrecorded *Miscellany* dances. I will update you on these in my final convenor's report in October 2015, but we intend that some of these products should be available in time for the AGM and Conference Weekend, 2015.

Finally, one observation: olive branches should be accepted in the spirit in which they are offered; and one quotation, 'People generally see what they look for, and hear what they listen for' (Harper Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird*).

I wish you all the best in your dancing.

Youth Services Committee



by Roy Bain, Convenor

At the AGM 2014 in November, Anne McArthur was elected as Convenor-elect and will assume the Convenor's role later this year. I welcome Anne to her new role, but there is no real need as she has been active with YSC since its inception in November 2011. She has been instrumental in the birth of the School Accreditation Scheme and is now chairing the Children in Education Working Group.

Spring Fling 2015 will be held in Hounslow, London, on 17-19 April. Currently we have 60+ registrations, so we are almost fully booked. For further details see rscdsspringfling.wix.com/springfling.



Anne McArthur

Spring Fling 2016

will take place in Edinburgh and then back to Europe for 2017 with central Germany being the probable location.

Our **Dance Competition** in association with SF London has attracted 46 entries from devisers of various ages. To trial the dances and report on their 'danceiness' we have 34 groups busily dancing their socks off as they interpret the devisers' instructions. All reports should be submitted by 22 March. The final trial will be held on Sunday 19 April at the final session of Spring Fling with Gillian Frew, London, putting the Spring Fling dancers through their paces and selecting the winning dance. Our thanks to Elaine Davies of London for the original suggestion and to the devisers, their teachers, and the trial groups. Good luck to all devisers!

Our **Jigs & Reels** resource continues to flourish, and with the launch of the School Accreditation Scheme we have another avenue into the education system. The

Children in Education Working Group is finalising the big brother to *J&R, Dance Trad*, and this should be launched later this year.

We have other plans in the early stages of development which we shall report on next issue.

Our **UK youth workshops** are becoming popular and we hope to identify locations outside the UK where we can organise others. In the meantime, we are planning for Perth and Oxford later this year, with Newcastle and Manchester in 2016. In addition, our involvement with UK universities steadily improves.

Our Dance Competition allowed us to make contact with **Young Dancer groups** around the world. Are you part of a Young Dancer group? Are we in touch with your group? If not, send us your contact details and some info about your group as we would love to hear from you.

Education & Training Committee



by Sue Porter, Convenor

As ever, after a wee respite in December E&T activities started in full swing at the turn of the year.

The **examinations cycle** began in New Zealand at their Branch's Summer School, to be followed by examinations in SE England, Boston, New Jersey, Atlanta, Vancouver, Moscow, Edinburgh and then Summer School in St Andrews. Including the recently sat Unit 1 paper, some 170 candidates will be examined by our 19 examiners worldwide. Our thanks go to them for their work and dedication, and in particular to Helen Frame, who has decided to put away her examiner's hat. Due to the number and locations of examiners, E&T has decided to call for experienced tutors interested in becoming examiners to come forward for consideration. Further details are on the website under 'Continuing Development', and the closing date for applications is **Friday 15 May 2015**.

By the time you read this, **Winter School 2015**, with its capacity filled, will have passed and we will be thinking towards 2016 with Janet Johnston at the helm. For the first time this year a music course is running alongside the dancing courses at Winter School.

Summer School numbers are up from this time last year, a good sign as due to the golf open in St Andrews the school is a week later than normal. Week 2 is nearly full and will encompass the family week and musicians' course. The candidate classes are almost full. This year the Dancing Achievement Award (DAA) course classes will be run as morning classes. Only one level will be offered per week: Week 1 Intermediate, Week 2 Advanced, and Week 3 Very Advanced.

Once more, **scholarship applications** for candidate courses, youth and general scholarships were all over-subscribed and some eligible dancers have been disappointed. I wish to appeal to branches or individuals to consider sponsoring a one-week scholarship or part of a

scholarship. Details of how to go about this can be obtained from Moira Thomson: moira.thomson@rscds.org. The closing date for scholarship applications for Summer School 2016 will be **Friday 20 November 2015**.

In November, at the start of the Conference Weekend in Perth, the **3rd Teachers' Conference** attracted 76 teachers from all over the world. In the morning we heard presentations on 'Teaching Resources on the Internet' from Anselm Lingnau, and an update on changes to the examination system and the new Dancing Achievement Award from me. After lunch, 'The School Accreditation Scheme' from Anne McArthur was followed by Helen Russell and Irene Bennett discussing the *Dance Trad* and *Jigs & Reels* packs for schools. We then put on our dancing shoes for a session from Mervyn Short, accompanied by Angela Young, on a selection of dances from the *Imperial Dances* and *Dances to Song Tunes*.

Here's to happy dancing wherever you may be!

Young Dancers' Page

Young People's Day of Dance

In January 2015, around 30 dancers braved the wintry conditions to attend the fifth workshop facilitated by the RSCDS at the University of Leeds. The workshop was organised jointly by the Leeds University Union SCD Society and RSCDS Leeds Branch.

The workshop had two classes: intermediate and advanced. The morning's advanced class was led by Craig Houston with accordionist Adam Brady. Alasdair Brown led the intermediate class with violinist Christina Hood. After a delicious buffet lunch, the teachers and musicians swapped over for another hour of dancing. The final session of the workshop offered a choice between Highland and ceilidh.

In the evening, the group joined the Leeds Branch for their monthly branch dance to Ian Slater's music. Local members were delighted to have such a strong turnout of 'youngsters' in their midst, and the energy and standard of dancing were high.

Future Days of Dance will be held on October 3 in Perth with Luke Brady's SCD Band and on November 21 in Oxford with teachers Alice Stainer and Raphaëlle Orgeret and musicians Chris Oxtoby and Jeremy Hill.

Heather Cook



Leeds workshop

Scottish Universities Scottish Country Dance Festival (SUSCDF)

The RSCDS has supported SUSCDF for a number of years now. This year the Festival was held in St Andrews and we decided to offer a workshop for those keen to do even more dancing.

During the day, 23 young dancers were put through their paces by Helen Russell and Luke Brady. It was a fantastic class with all dancers mixing very well and enjoying a high level of dancing.

As if that wasn't enough, for the evening dance the workshop dancers were joined by hundreds more students from all over Scotland. The dances were interspersed by original choreographed displays, with groups dancing to The Beatles and Disney's *Frozen*.

After the success of this event we hope to support many more like it.

Rachel Shankland

Lyon Branch Kids Go to Newcastle

On February 13, eleven children from Lyon travelled to Newcastle to join the Newcastle RSCDS International Festival. None had been to Britain before, and few had been on a plane. They discovered fish and chips on the Friday night and had a very busy Saturday, performing four dances in the festival and also dancing in the Lyon Branch display. They were very proud to be given badges and certificates to take home. It was a weekend they will remember for a long time. They would like to thank RSCDS Newcastle for organising such a child-friendly festival and the RSCDS for the grant they received to help them with travelling expenses.

Raphaëlle Orgeret



Lyon dancers

North Ayrshire Children's Day of Dance

On 28 November, 543 children from 22 primary schools in North Ayrshire participated in a Children's Day of Dance in the Magnum Sports Centre, Irvine. The day was spread over two sessions, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Susan and Shona Macfadyen provided fabulous live music.

For each school, the day represented a culmination of weeks of practice, aided in some cases by twelve volunteer instructors from the North Ayrshire Branch. The schools had also been provided with DVDs showing all eleven dances, CDs of the music, and instructions for each dance. Overall, 39 Branch members, including some from East Ayrshire, helped on the day.

As a result of this successful day, one of the schools now hopes to enter the dance section in the Ayr Music Festival in 2015.

John Coy



North Ayrshire Day of Dance
Photo: Irvine Times, Ayrshire Weekly Press, Romanes Media Ltd

Kilmarnock & District Branch's Children's Day of Dance

Kilmarnock & District Branch held its first Children's Day of Dance in the Grand Hall Kilmarnock on 19 November 2014.

Two sessions, each lasting approximately two hours, were held and a total of over 500 primary children from 18 East Ayrshire schools participated. They danced a mixed programme of Scottish country dances and ceilidh dances to music provided by George Meikle.

David Pinkerton, Chairman

Dancing with Brownies

Brownies in Hexham and Roker have had a taste of SCD this term in working towards a new badge developed by Girl Guiding Scotland.

The SCD badge requires the girls to carry out two, three, or four challenges, depending on their age, from a choice of fourteen. The 3rd Hexham Brownies chose:

- To make up a poster to promote the fun, fitness and friendship you can gain from SCD;
- To find out about your family's own tartan or design a tartan for your unit;
- To learn dances.

They learned two dances, the *Clydeside Reel* and *Wheels around the World*, then demonstrated them to their parents.

About 20 girls gained the badge, including one wheelchair dancer, and all seemed to enjoy the experience.

This badge has allowed us to bring SCD to a new audience, and we hope to be involved in a larger Guiding event in February.

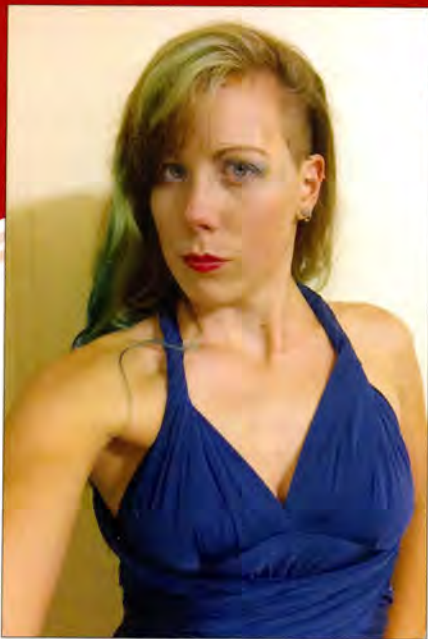
Rebecca Foxon

Tweedbank and Hawick Ceilidh

Following six weeks of lessons from Lyn Bruce and Margaret Pritchard, students from Tweedbank and Hawick Schools took part in a St Andrew's Day ceilidh on 26 and 28 November respectively. All pupils enjoyed themselves together with parents, grandparents and family friends who danced along with the children and made their day all the more enjoyable.

Margaret Pritchard, Youth Co-ordinator
Roxburgh, Selkirk & Peebles Branch

A Love Letter to Scottish Dance



Canadian Tara Mactavish is taking the third year of a Celtic Studies degree at Glasgow University. In her *Scot Trek* blog, she writes of her adventures in Scotland.

resist, so I bade a fond farewell to the rest of my team and called it a night.

Looking back at that night, I remember thinking 'How great is this?' each time I turned and found a partner my age, eager to dance. I haven't felt that since my first Youth Ball when I was 13, where I remember endless laughter, or when I attended the West Toronto Ball at 14 and was intimidated by the adults.



GUSCD members

There's something wonderful about dancing more than once a week. Something exhilarating about learning new techniques and formations, about discovering how little you've been challenged and how far you have yet to go.

Every time I think of returning to Canada my heart aches. I remember that there will be no university Scottish dance teams, no university balls, and no post-dance pub hangouts. I truly feel that this style of dancing is something more people my age could benefit from: social, wild, energetic, and fashionable. I think we could all stand to see more young men in kilts!

I have now danced as David Bowie with Sweeney Todd. I have painted my face and reeled with a masked Alice in Wonderland. These things can happen when you dance with people your own age, these injections of youth into a timeless art form.

In November, I joined the Glasgow University SCD Club committee and practised for the first 'demo' of the year, which would be performed at SUSCDF (Scottish Universities Scottish Country Dance Festival – or Suss the Duck) in St. Andrews. It's hard to spend five days a week with other dancers and not realise that they are fantastic.

I'm grateful for the five practices we had, as the dance was a beautiful, insanely complicated creation choreographed to the *Frozen* song 'Let it Go'.

We performed. It was amazing. I keep thinking of the applause, the adrenaline, the feeling of being a part of something so special, and I smile. The evening seemed to end too soon after our performance.

I was fortunate to be offered a place to stay by a fellow dancer I'd met Scottish dancing in St. Andrews in 2011. The promise of a proper bed was too good to

I'll say it once again: Thank you, Scottish dance. And thanks to everyone whom I've met in classes and balls, whom I've been taught by, or with whom I have shared a spin or two across the dance floor. You're the reason I'm smiling tonight.

For Tara Mactavish's entire blog article see scotttrekblog.wordpress.com/2014/12/01/all-that-glitters-suss-the-duck/.

This excerpt from Tara's blog was published in the December 2014 issue of the Toronto Association newsletter *Set & Link*. Thanks to the editor for permission to reprint.



We are pleased to launch our T-shirt design competition. There are two categories and two winners; the competition is open to all, with a special category for under 12s where the winning design will be printed onto children's T-shirts. We look forward to seeing what interesting, original and exciting designs you create to help celebrate Scottish country dance and what it means to you.

The prize:

- The winners will each receive a £25 shop voucher to be redeemed in the RSCDS shop in person or over the phone.
- The winners will receive a free T-shirt with their winning design.
- The winners will receive acknowledgement on our website and through social media.

What we're looking for:

- A bold, eye-catching design that can easily be replicated. The design will be used on a T-shirt, and possibly on other merchandise later.
- The design may reflect the SCD community and how it unites and inspires us.
- The design may reflect, promote or celebrate SCD, and can include any elements you like: the people, dances, music, performances etc.
- You may incorporate the RSCDS logo in your design. If you wish to request a logo pack, please contact HQ as indicated below.
- You may include text in your design.
- Your design must be suitable as an image for the front of a white or black T-shirt (no sleeve or back images please).
- Your design must be original, and can be hand drawn, painted artwork, or electronically designed.

Be creative and have fun!

The deadline for entries is 29 May 2015; for full details on how to enter and the terms and conditions visit our website at www.bit.ly/RSCDScompTShirt.

But Does She Dance?



Elizabeth Foster, Secretary/Executive Officer, looks back over her term of office

In 2008, shortly before I took up the new appointment of Secretary/Executive Officer of The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society, I was asked to attend the AGM. I was introduced from the floor as having a background in research, organisational development and business management in the public and voluntary sectors. Whatever expectations I may have had about my new post, however, I was left in no doubt as to what was really important when I overheard the loud whisper from two rows behind, 'Aye, but does she dance?'



I also had an early introduction to the 'psyche' of the Society. Tasked with creating and implementing a strategic plan to 'take the Society forward', I was approached later at that same AGM by a member who advised me that 'turning the RSCDS around would be like trying to save the Titanic'. Six and a half years on, I harbour no doubts that, with appropriate concern for correct form, it is the practice of SCD which is the heartbeat of the Society.

In November 1923, following a fallow period in the history of country dance, the Society was formed to 'practise and preserve country dances as danced in Scotland'. At that time, preserving tradition was seen as essential for the revival of SCD and became synonymous with the Society. Some 20 years later, country dancing again was curtailed, by World War II. Whilst held as prisoners of war, however, a group of Scottish officers used country dancing to keep their morale alive, resulting in *The Reel of the 51st Division*, the first newly-devised dance to be published by the Society. This break with tradition was followed not only by HRH Princess Elizabeth becoming Patron of the Society in 1947, but also by King

George VI bestowing the title 'Royal' on the Society in 1951.

In 1952, a new constitution was drawn up and, around the same time, the wording of the main aim of the Society was changed to the more progressive and developmental 'preserve and further the practice of traditional Scottish country dances'. The post-war resurgence of interest in SCD was followed by an expansion in the RSCDS network of branches and affiliated groups and included groups attached to British embassies, Caledonian Societies and churches, as well as international folk dancers. Membership of the Society peaked in 1990 at an estimated 28,000 worldwide, with 157 branches and 539 affiliated groups.

Over the next 20 years, membership of the Society steadily declined. In March 2014, the figure stood at 13,087, with 165 branches and 323 affiliated groups worldwide; still a substantial organisation. The challenge is how to sustain this membership and, if possible, increase it. Many more people engage in SCD than join the Society. Even more people dance Ceilidh to celebrate marriages, births and other special occasions. Every Scottish country dancer knows that SCD can be great fun, helps fitness and, by its social nature, provides the opportunity to make new friends; so why yet another decline in the popularity of SCD and in the membership of the RSCDS?

External contributing factors are often beyond control: world economics, rates of exchange, competition from other dance forms and genres becoming 'unfashionable' or 'uncool'. As indicated above, SCD has faced all of these in the past. The Society preserves tradition through its books, CDs, and DVDs, as well as its teacher training system. It also recognises the need for change and development: to stay 'fresh' with the infusion of new ideas, partnerships and collaborations.



AGM 2013

Factors internal to the organisation are also significant, and there is no doubt that Society members are its greatest strength. In 1997, the Society decided to retain its charitable status, committing all of its members to the overriding objective of furthering the cause of SCD. To ensure this happens, communication across the membership must be timely, efficient and effective. Over the last six and a half years, considerable investment has been made in new publications, the website and new technology: the Annual Review; the interactive database; on-line meetings, event booking and shopping; the YouTube channel, Facebook, Twitter and ezines; downloadable publications and music. In 2015, with the support of a Heritage Lottery Fund grant, the contents of the Society Archive will be fully catalogued, digitised and accessible at the touch of a button.

Organisational 'culture' ('how we do things around here') is highly significant to success. For the Society, this means the extent to which members work together to further the cause of SCD and, thereby, work effectively in the best interests of the Society. Two branch surveys on membership suggest that direct personal contact is the most effective way of increasing the numbers dancing, and of recruiting new members: if each of our 13,000 members successfully persuaded one friend or neighbour to join the Society, the number of dancers and members would double overnight!



Liz Foster

Direct recruitment also takes place locally in branches and affiliated groups: offering a free introductory SCD class and running a Ceilidh have both met with success. To help with recruitment, HQ has freely made available eye-catching leaflets and posters targeted at different age groups, with templates for local customisation and a Health Strategy Pack, backed up with scientific evidence on the health benefits of SCD.

Children and young people (CYP) are the dancers (and Society members) of the future. Classes have successfully engaged preschool children. External grant aid has made it possible to collate worldwide experience on how to interest CYP in SCD and to share this wisdom on the RSCDS website which, in turn, has linked groups of young dancers across the globe. In the Society's 90th year, a collaboration with Girlguiding Scotland produced a new SCD Challenge Badge for Brownies and Guides worldwide. 'Pilots' or innovative ideas can be tried out anywhere in the world and the results, experience and learning can be shared instantly.

For primary schools, *Jigs & Reels*, first published in 2012, provides a progressive programme of SC dances for teachers of CYP, backed up by CPD opportunities for all teachers. A companion volume, *Dance Trad* for secondary schools, will be published later this year, whilst the RSCDS Schools Accreditation Scheme has attracted interest from as far afield as Italy.

HQ can also assist in raising awareness about SCD and the public profile of the Society. In its 90th year, young dancers demonstrated *Olympic Fusion* (a mix of



The Radical Road, June 2014



Olympic Fusion, June 2013

SCD with other dance genres and music) at the opening of the mini-Olympics in Edinburgh. Between Christmas and New Year, *Controlled Abandon*, a documentary on SCD in the 21st century, was shown primetime on BBC1. Perhaps most spectacularly, on 21 June 2014, the Society collaborated with Creative Scotland and Glasgow 2014 to deliver a 24-hour global



Health Strategy launched October 2012

Commonwealth Ceilidh celebrating the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow.

Some six and a half years on, it is my intention to retire from the post of Secretary/Executive Officer on 30 June 2015. During this period, I have worked with four chairmen. As early as the AGM in 2009, I was cheered to hear another member continue the Titanic analogy, saying that, although there may still be 'icebergs' ahead, 'progress has been made', and the Society now seems to be on a more 'even keel' and 'heading in the right direction'.

I have taken this opportunity to reflect upon what has been achieved over the last six and a half years in the long history of the Society and, for the record, I do dance Scottish, I am a keen sailor and I expect to increase time spent doing both in my retirement. I genuinely believe a bright future awaits the Society if collaborative effort can come to the fore. I would urge all Scottish country dancers to begin planning now for what will surely be a spectacular celebration of the centennial year of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society in 2023.

I look forward to seeing you on the dance floor!

Elizabeth Foster,
Secretary/Executive Officer



The Pride of Dunblane celebrates Olympic Gold in August 2012

Dancing with Hugh Foss



Hugh Foss (left) dancing the Hebridean Weaving Lilt Photo: London Branch Archives

The release of the film *The Imitation Game*, set at Bletchley Park, together with the RSCDS republication of *Dances to Song Tunes*, has focussed our attention again on Hugh Foss, cryptographer, dance deviser, dance publisher, and dance historian. Robert Lambie danced with Foss in the 1960s, and here he remembers those times.

It is Summer School, the early sixties, and it is the men's Highland class. One of the oldest men in the room is distinctly tall, and is also one of the neatest in his footwork, his style being quiet and understated, but very accurate. He has grey hair, and a red (ginger) beard, now greying, and behind his very ordinary spectacles bright, keenly observing eyes. His kilt and jacket are of the Shepherd or Border tartan, which is a small black and white check; the effect is quite grey. Anyone who knew him will recognise the description, but they would know that he was no grey personality. Everything was carefully considered, and he had a reason for all that he did. For example, his tartan was one specifically suitable for him, an English man with no clan connections.

Hugh's dancing was always precisely correct, but he was also polite and courteous, with great patience for those who got lost in the geography of a dance, quietly but effectively helping them by explaining in simple terms until they understood. He had little in the way of 'small talk', but if you were interested in the history or the theory of country dancing, he was full of real factual information.

I knew the official line of the RSCDS on the history and theory of SCD fairly well, and it left me with questions unanswered. Hugh Foss had the answers, complete with chapter and verse for the references to back them up.

The late Dr Milligan, then just 'Miss', but

VERY unofficially known as 'Auntie Jean', was wonderfully enthusiastic and a brilliant salesperson. She was warm and friendly to me, too – and she reminded me of my grandmother! She evidently noticed my interest in Hugh's explanations on how CD started, and how it developed into both ECD and SCD. She told me he had dangerous ideas, and that I was to be wary of him.

Hugh's ideas won out though, and soon he was visiting Leeds University SCD club to enjoy dancing and socialising with us as we tried and enjoyed his dances, especially *Belhaven* and *The Celtic Brooch*. He seemed to enjoy the company of the students, and we certainly found him as inspiring as the best of our lecturers.

At this time John Drewry was living in Whitehaven and he was also listening to Hugh's ideas, and starting to produce the resulting dances. There were 'Foss Dances' being held in various places as well as those in Hugh's home town of Dalry, and I recall one in South Shields which we attended complete with our six-month-old daughter.

Hugh's dances in or near Dalry were to Peter White's band, and they were very good though as all was new and interesting, they were mentally as well as physically tiring.

Latterly, I saw that Hugh was teaching his dances while sitting down, but still he held his dancers spellbound, trying to work out the new ideas he was feeding us.

There were no obvious signs of age such as forgetfulness and suchlike, so his death in 1971 seemed to come out of the blue; but obviously, his sitting down had been significant. Very kindly, his wife sent me some of his books including his (modern) copy of Playford's first book of dances, as a tangible memory of him.

Hugh taught the ladies of the Dalry branch of the Scottish Women's Rural Institute, trying out his dances with them. One of the ladies is now in the branch that I teach, still going strong! Needless to say, she is used to trying new and unusual dances – they have recently become adept at triple time dances, especially Playford's *Up with Aily*.

So, enjoy the original (old) country dances, enjoy the new ones, and go forth trying ideas that have not yet been thought of – that is what Hugh Foss encouraged us to do.

Editor's note on Hugh Foss and *The Imitation Game*

Scottish country dancers may have been disappointed that *The Imitation Game* failed to depict Hugh Foss, with his unusual height, cryptographic brilliance, and alleged eccentricity. The omission is understandable: Foss is best known for his work on cracking the Japanese codes. He was a career cryptographer, joining the Government Code and Cipher School in 1924. Helped by his fluency in Japanese, he broke two Japanese military codes in the mid-1930s, also the time when he began Scottish country dancing with the Chelsea Reel Club.

However, Foss also had dealings with the Enigma code. The early Enigma machine was developed for commercial use, and ironically Foss was given the job of assessing it for use by the British. He reported that its code could be broken. In 1938, Foss was one of several British cryptographers who met with the Polish developers of the 'bomba' (forerunner of Turing's 'bombe') which made significant progress in decoding the more complex German military Enigma. In 1940 Foss temporarily worked with Turing at Bletchley Park, and it was Foss, using a method developed by Turing, who first broke a whole day's worth of German naval messages. As a result, 8 May 1940 became known as 'Foss's day'.

Once Japan entered the war, Foss became head of the Japanese section at Bletchley Park, and Turing went on to perfect his method of decoding Enigma messages on a large scale, as cinema audiences everywhere know.

Dancing Cheek to Cheek: A Glimpse of Scottish Dance



The dancers with Ian Robertson, fiddler, and Lucy Worsley and Len Goodman Photo: Chris Twinn

Last year, dancers in the UK may have seen the BBC documentary *Dancing Cheek to Cheek: An Intimate History of Dance*. The second of the three episodes contained an all-too-brief segment on SCD, thanks to the participation of the London Branch. Andrew Kellett tells the story of the filming.

'We want to show some Scottish country dancing on national television. Can you help?'

Yes, as a branch of the RSCDS, it's our role to bring SCD to the attention of the public.

'Good. The recording is in six days' time.'

The conversation is in late July. Our classes have stopped for the summer, families are away on holiday, keen dancers are at St. Andrews or dance festivals abroad and others are at the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow. Even for a branch the size of London, finding a team of experienced demonstration dancers plus musician(s) with that amount of notice is not easy. There won't be time for a rehearsal.

'Also we want to interview you about Queen Victoria's interest in Scottish dance.'

The person you really want to speak to is the RSCDS Archivist. I know a bit but I am not an expert.

'You'll do.'

Then, with two days to go:

'Can you find a kilt to fit the celebrity presenter [very approximate measurements provided] and, by the way, we have hired a small hall for the recording. If it rains the roof will leak.'

Expenses?

'Sorry, our budget has run out.'

Surely showbiz was never meant to be like this. There we were, eight dancers from the RSCDS and Ian, our fiddler, on a thankfully dry Monday evening, introducing ourselves to Lucy Worsley, the renowned TV historian, and Len Goodman, head judge from the BBC's astonishingly successful *Strictly Come Dancing*. The aim was to record a short segment for a series on the history of dance, *Dancing Cheek to Cheek*, which would explore why Queen Victoria loved to dance with Prince Albert and their family at Balmoral. We had to explain that while we could trace our dances back to the nineteenth century and beyond, our style of dancing was not that of Queen Victoria. The producer didn't seem to mind, so the camera (an impressive piece of kit) started to roll and we were off.

A couple of times through *Mrs MacLeod* (a dance taught by Joseph Lowe, Queen Victoria's dancing master) and a quick run through some basic steps for Lucy and Len before they joined us in an *Eightsome Reel* (a precursor of which, *The Reel of Eight*, was a favourite of Victoria). Finally, the interview with Lucy involving ten or twelve questions on Queen Victoria, but trying to emphasise in the answers that Scottish dancing is alive today and is about fun, fitness and friendship as well as tradition.

It was all over in less than two hours, and then the wait. We were in the hands of the editor. What would make the final cut; would it be the missed foot position or the stuttering reply to a question? On 24 November we found out: some nice shots of the opening dance (even if the music was out of sync), Len getting into his kilt, Len flashing in his kilt, a couple of quotes from Joseph Lowe's journal and 24 bars of the *Eightsome*. What would the great British public think of that?

Well, I think we came across as a jolly group. We all seemed to be enjoying Scottish dancing so that was a plus; and lots of people at work, in the street and even at the barber's said, 'Saw you on the telly', so the public did notice SCD. I would like to report there was a massive increase in numbers at beginners' classes the following week, but I cannot. Hopefully, though, the broadcast will have planted a seed in the minds of some people.

Thank you to the dancers, especially Anna Twinn who ensured we got the right number in the right place, to Ian Robertson for his terrific playing on the day, to the members of Sidcup and Orpington Caledonian Societies who lent us their kilts, and to RSCDS Archivist Alan Macpherson for his advice. I hope you all agree that it was worth it. Finally, sincere apologies to Jim Healy. The on-screen caption describing me as RSCDS Chairman was not my idea.

Editor's note: All three episodes of the documentary are now available on YouTube. The SCD segment may be seen at www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q24RXdzT1oM, beginning at 36' 40".



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<http://scottishcountrydancingchannelislands.blogspot.com>

Interview with Margaret Bennett



Margaret Bennett, originally from Skye, is one of Scotland's leading folklorists and traditional singers. She trained to become a teacher at Jordanhill College in Glasgow; then,

inspired by the legendary Hamish Henderson, she studied folklore at Memorial University of Newfoundland, after which she spent a year in Quebec as a folklorist for Canada's Museum of Civilization. From 1984 to 1996 she lectured at The University of Edinburgh's School of Scottish Studies and she now teaches traditional song at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. Following her brief appearance last year on the BBC programme *Controlled Abandon*, Jimmie Hill interviewed her to learn more about her views on country dancing.

You must have done Scottish country dancing at Jordanhill.

I remember it well! Dance was a compulsory part of primary school teacher training in those days. I had really wanted to be a crofter but, having suffered from polio as a child, I wasn't going to be strong enough, so becoming a primary teacher was an obvious choice. Despite my disability, I was fascinated by dance. We had all done country dancing at school. I can still remember dancing to a wind-up gramophone in the gym at Portree – a lovely organic sound! Jordanhill didn't use a gramophone – they had a real live pianist, a Miss Peterkin. I can still hear the teacher shouting, 'Thank you Miss Peterkin, AND!' It was all so uniform. There was a big difference between what we were taught and the village hall dances I was used to on Skye. I remember swotting for my dance exam. We had to use *Books 1–9*, which I bought second-hand, and I remember thinking nine was enough for any mortal! I remember the examiner giving me a row in the middle of my practical exam. I wanted to refer to your posterior and I used the 'wrong' word. It wasn't a rude word and it wasn't 'bahoochie' either, but I was told I should not have referred to it at all! It was a very daunting experience, but I passed nevertheless. It may well have been Miss Milligan herself, but I can't remember. Although we all knew that this style of dancing was different from what we were used to, we were all very familiar with the idea of 'doing things properly' in all areas – even the way we spoke. Heaven help the poor girls from Greenock or Fife or Kilmarnock – they were sent for speech training! We lived in a world of 'correction', so we never questioned the way we were being trained to teach country dancing.

You once wrote that getting the RSCDS style of dancing into the teacher training colleges was 'the ideal system for correcting an entire nation'.

Well, I do remember thinking what a tremendous publicity machine this RSCDS was! There must have been about 500 girls every year all taking the RSCDS certificate and going out all over the country. From an early age I had been very conscious of the traditional

culture all around me. My mother sang and my father played the pipes. We would go to ceilidhs – and there was no dancing at ceilidhs – the dancing started after the ceilidh had finished when the chairs were pushed back. I remember the elderly people – their dancing had such grace. They danced in such a natural way. They never worried about their feet and they certainly didn't wear pumps or kilts.

You must admit the RSCDS has been very successful!

It's amazing. I am filled with admiration for what the RSCDS has given to people. I meet people on my travels abroad and for some it is the only really cohesive group they belong to. When you watch people dance, something happens to them. You can criticise the RSCDS for its standardisation, but it has given so much pleasure to the world. Miss Milligan knew there were variations in dancing in Scotland, but she decided there would only be one way. You can either see that as power or the abuse of it! She was very much of her day. You see it in the history of Highland dancing and piping too – people forming power centres and dictating rules. I am even being asked today how to grade exams for traditional music! People have this inclination to standardise.

Have you seen our current *Manual of Scottish Country Dancing*?

I saw it when I was in America and I thought why would any mortal want to get into this! But this happens in other areas too. Anything that has been institutionalised starts to require ways of measuring success and achievement. However, I think when you concentrate too much on technical matters, the joy goes out of it.

If you can put your ethnologist's hat on, is a dance devised on the other side of the world a Scottish country dance?

I would have to accept it as it's offered – in the way people accept *Highland Cathedral* as a Scottish bagpipe tune even though it was composed by a German. It's probably telling us that there are more people in the world who want to be Scottish than there are Scots! I went out to Germany to do a solo Gaelic concert and wondered if I would have an audience. It was packed, standing room only! I find abroad that people think there is something noble about the Scots. They want to wear the whole nine yards. Unfortunately, people see Scottishness as Highlandness.

But the whole kilt thing isn't Highland!

You're right, but they see the whole of Scotland as the Highlands. I wonder if they are searching for something that is missing in their own highly sanitised cultures and what they find in Scottish culture is a sense of community, honour, loyalty, and in our dancing they find elegance and grace. In the case of country dancing their loyalty is to the RSCDS. I have seen people's faces change when they dance. Everyone should go to the Keith Folk Festival. I have never seen such stunning natural dancing.

What do you think of the division into ceilidh and country dancing?

It never used to exist. I don't like the way the word ceilidh has been commandeered to mean dance. You know as well as I do that a ceilidh never used to mean a dance. I wrote the definition of 'ceilidh' for *Grove's Dictionary of Music*. [See facing page.]

Country dancing used to be more an integral part of Scottish social life. It has become something much more complicated, hasn't it?

Whenever you start to 'set standards' in whatever activity, it does change it. And it's worth remembering that, however successful she was, Miss Milligan did not wipe out the village hall style of dancing. Most Scots are bilingual. They say house in school and

hoose outside. It's the same with dancing. But you have to hand it to Miss Milligan. To achieve what she achieved you had to be single-minded.

What do you think that future generations will think of our country dancing?

I think the rest of the world will keep it alive. Like other Scottish institutions, they are more important abroad than they are in Scotland. I think it will survive, but I think it will become even more international. It's fascinating how many emigrants to the US changed their names to Scottish ones! Scottish is a very respectable thing to be! (said with a twinkle in her eye!).

Margaret Bennett's Definition of 'Ceilidh'



Céilidh (Scottish Gaelic), céili (Irish Gaelic) means 'a visit'. Traditionally, in Gaelic Scotland, Ireland and emigrant communities overseas, it denoted any household gathering of family and friends, pre-arranged or impromptu, including neighbourly 'dropping in'. Céilidhean, now Anglicised in the plural to 'céilidhs', were the main form of entertainment, especially when limited daylight restricted the time for outdoor work. The long evenings were spent around the fire, which

till the 1920s was in the middle of the floor of most thatched cottages. Every neighbourhood had homes known as taighean céilidh, 'céilidh houses' [sing. taigh céilidh] whose occupant(s) were tradition-bearers – storytellers, singers, and/or custodians of traditional knowledge. The céilidh was not only the Gaels' main source of entertainment, but more importantly, was the setting in which every aspect of oral tradition was handed down from one generation to the next. Participants could expect songs, stories, music on the pipes, fiddle, accordion or trump, and dancing; exchanges of proverbs, riddles, jokes, pranks, tongue-twisters and folk-etymology; discussions about place-lore, customs, beliefs, traditional knowledge of medicine (human and veterinary), plant-lore, weather-lore, animal husbandry, hunting, fishing, navigation, and craft-lore of every kind. A strict code of conduct was observed in the taigh céilidh: performers expected silence and complete attention, though hands were frequently occupied knitting, carding, twisting rope or any craft that could be done in dim light and restricted space. With the migration of Gaels to cities, the céilidh [céili] was adopted in urban areas to mean a social gathering for songs, music and dance, and, though originally held in homes, it shifted to the more formal setting of halls. By the 1920s céilidhs were re-imported to Gaeldom, denoting village-hall concerts in Scotland and dances in Ireland. The revised usage became more confused by increased movement between Scotland and Ireland, till, eventually, the expectations of a céilidh in Lowland Scotland became dancing. A new phrase, 'céilidh dancing', is rapidly replacing 'village hall dancing' (couple dances, sets of reels, strathspeys, or jigs), or 'country dancing' as popular trend reclaims for 'ordinary people' their own dances, which, since 1923, have been standardised by the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society. Today, with the advent of television, the taigh céilidh is virtually extinct though Gaels still use céilidh simply to mean a visit.

Margaret Bennett ©

The Kandahar Reel



The Spring 2010 issue of *Scottish Country Dancer* contained a report of a new dance, devised by serving officers of The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland, while on active service in Afghanistan. Capt. Andy Colquhoun wrote a short article giving the background to the dance he devised with his cousin Lt Rob Colquhoun. This led to the RSCDS publishing a booklet giving the original instructions as devised for the reeling tradition as well as a version more suited to the RSCDS style of dancing. The booklet was launched at the Scottish Parliament and many dancers will be familiar with the photographs of our young dancers with seven serving soldiers in full dress uniform.

The booklet, costing £4, was launched that autumn with £2 from each sale going to ABF The Soldiers Charity, which gives lifetime support to both serving and retired soldiers and their families in times of need.

We are delighted to announce that recently a cheque was sent to ABF for £2,452 representing sales of 1,226 copies to date. Another cheque for £250 was sent representing sales at The Northern Meeting. This makes a total of £2,702 raised by the booklet sales.

Jimmie Hill

After a highly successful 2013 weekend



The Zurich Scottish Country Dancing Club

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Bobby Munro



Showing the Joy of Dance: Demonstration Teams

Demonstrations are the public face of our pastime. Many dancers have taken part in a dem, whether to show people how much fun SCD can be, to bring pleasure into the lives of seniors, or to perfect the disciplined art of dancing. Dem team leaders have to balance many aims, so we asked two experienced leaders for their thoughts on planning and managing a performance. Deb Lees teaches the Newcastle and District Branch demonstration team and has regularly led teams for the Dunedin Dancers in Edinburgh. Linda Gaul has led a number of teams in Perthshire. Our photos show some of the colourful, eye-catching costumes which have replaced uniform white dresses.



London Branch Demonstration Team Photo: Elaine Davies

Over the years I have had the pleasure and privilege of preparing different groups of dancers to demonstrate our music and dance to others. SCD is a great social activity, but it doesn't always translate easily to performance that will engage the audience and even encourage them to have a go themselves. And the very act of performance, the knowledge that you have an audience, can often destroy the fun, social elements that we need to communicate.

The purpose of the demonstration helps shape the type of performance. A competitive SCD festival will have a knowledgeable audience and require demonstration of technical skill and more complex dances or choreography. Providing entertainment at a local fete or community event may be a recruitment opportunity, and the audience needs to be able to relate to what they see. Here, simple dances with the focus clearly on having fun may be more engaging than a perfectly executed, complicated display. Taking part in a traditional dance festival alongside groups from other countries requires a different approach again, as your dancers and musicians may not all dance or play together regularly and may have different abilities and experience. Knowledge of venue, performance type and length

may be incomplete, and building flexibility into the planning is essential (as are good humour, tact and the ability to keep all your performers happy with their share of the action!).

Whatever the type of performance, I have found some general principles that work to create a sense of fun and also allow the audience to experience the distinctive music, formations and steps of SCD.

Dance selection has to be influenced by the mix of dancers and ability levels, and playing to the strengths of individuals and of the group as a whole will result in a confident and happy team. A large amount of material, including choreographed displays that tax the memory, is likely to have the opposite effect, but this risk may need to be taken for a dance festival requiring several varied performances. I like to pair people so that more experienced dancers can provide support and to mix partners across different dance sets just as we do in social dancing.

Creating dance medleys to show different dances and tempos in the same performance set is common and can be great fun for the dance leader and the performers. I prefer dances with clear, simple figures that show off the patterns

and the interaction between dancers, for example reels of four with the dancers really working together. Having everyone moving all the time can be confusing whereas the 'stop-start' of supporting couples can be fascinating for people who do not do SCD. 'How do they know when to start?' is a question that I have been asked more than once. Circles can be particularly effective, a formation that I often use to create a 'rabbit out of the hat' moment and leave the audience wondering how one shape became another, for example linking two sets or changing orientation.

Transitions between dances in choreographed medleys need to be simple and as close to the original as possible. Chase and promenade come in very handy for transitions, but sometimes my dancers complain that they no longer know the correct last few bars of a dance when doing it in a social dance! I do like to use stand-alone dances and couple or ceilidh dances as well as the medleys. Getting the balance between familiar, straightforward and new or more challenging material can be difficult, and the expectations of your performers as well as the perspective of your audience need to be considered.

Moulding the dancers into a demonstration team is easier if the group dances together regularly. If not, ideally I like to have a general practice to introduce the dances and get to know people a little. I have learned to be clear on expectations including communication channels, practice attendance and the point when people will be expected to know their dances without walk-throughs. If it is not a regular class I tend to focus on what can be changed or developed within the context of the demonstration practices; this is likely to be things like posture, phrasing, use of hands and awareness of other dancers rather than foot positions and finer points of technique. I encourage people to communicate both verbally and non-verbally during demonstrations and let the audience see the smiles and interaction.



Dunedin Dancers, Edinburgh Photo: Anne Burgess



Vancouver Branch Demonstration Team Photo: Stuart Somerville

If you are lucky enough to have live music, work with your musicians as early in the planning as possible to get the music and dance to complement each other. I aim for variety in music and dance across the performance, and discussion with the musicians as a core part of the team is key to achieving this. Musicians can suggest tunes and arrangements to complement your choreography. Many tunes for popular dances are not easy to play, and I like to check out the music before finally deciding what dances will be included. Musicians are very exposed during performance and they must be confident and comfortable with what is being performed. Watching how dancers react to different tunes and then discussing this with the musician can make the difference between a good and a great performance. When the music really lifts the dancers this will bring out the best in your team and will not be lost on the audience.

Above all, demonstrations need to be enjoyable, not stressful. If the dancers and musicians are really having fun, it will show on their faces and be transmitted to the audience. Whether competitive or not, local or away from home, once all the practice has been done the role of a dance leader is to communicate confidence in the team. Possibly a pre-performance 'team talk' to let them know that you totally believe they will do a great job. And remember, 'It's Just for Fun'!

Deb Lees



Airyhall Dancers, Aberdeen

To be in the Dem Team – the high point of a Scottish country dancer's life! Why do we do it?

I think there are basically two distinct kinds of demonstration:

- Those where we try to persuade others to come and join us, which are usually done for free or very minimal expenses;
- Those for entertaining the public whether they are interested in the dancing or not! We are usually paid more for these, although from the organisers' point of view we are still pretty cheap.

For the first kind of demonstration I use simple dances where the audience can see the formations and are less likely to be intimidated by complex manoeuvres. Down the middle and up, hands across, set and cross over, grand chain and circles are patterns which are all easy to see and understand. Reels of three can look very complex if you don't understand the anatomy of the figure.

The choice of dancers is also important: they must be confident enough to display their enjoyment of the dance and the music but the perfect execution of the steps is less important. Dress is also important with not too much formality. We want folk to think, 'That's looks fun, I could do that', not 'That looks brilliant, but I couldn't possibly do it!' Then, of course, we have to find something to get the audience to join in!

The more spectacular dances I keep for the entertainment type of demonstration. Here the audience need to be dazzled by our

expertise and impressed by our technical skill. The dances need to have a wide variety of figures and formations but not have everyone moving all the time! We need 'light and shade' in our own dancing as well as in the choreography. Dances of different tempi can be linked together by adapting the last or first figures and the orientation of the set can be varied; imaginative planning can give some interesting pictures using well-known dances. However, I would rather have simple dances done well, with good phrasing and good handing and with the dancers looking relaxed and happy, than complex dances where everyone looks so worried, trying to remember what comes next.

Then, of course, there are the scary events when you are dancing for an audience of knowledgeable and critical dancers! When you have put every ounce of skill and energy that you possess into your performance, nothing prepares you for the moment when a dancer in the audience says, 'Oh, I didn't know you were in the team – I never look at faces, only at the feet.'

For any demonstration the choice of music is vital. On most occasions I was lucky enough to have real music, therefore able to have original tunes for all the dances and extra bars added for transitions. When a musician was not available, finding or splicing recordings is the only option and many are more expert at producing these than me!

Some of the physical factors beyond our control also affect the choice of dances. Is the performance outside; what kind of floor; how much space; is it on a platform or in the round? Then there are choices based on dances' names relevant to the event or the location – even with so many to choose from, it is sometimes hard to find just the right dance for the occasion.

Whatever we do when demonstrating our favourite pastime, it is our enjoyment of the dance, the music and the company of other dancers that we must put over, from the first step to the last chord.

Linda Gaul

Example of a demonstration medley from Linda Gaul

One of the sets we did a lot at Blair Castle, with an accordion player, was:

The Duke of Atholl's Reel (3 times, all, middle couples, all), using last 4 bars to turn into square set;

The Robertson Rant, using the promenade to get into a longwise set;

Portnacraig (3 times) all 4 couples turning right hand on last 4 bars with extra music to dance off.

Blair Atholl is the HQ of Clan Donnachaidh, to which the Robertsons belong.

Portnacraig is a hamlet beside the River Tummel, and I wrote the dance for a friend who was the Catering Manager at the nearby Pitlochry Festival Theatre.

Won't You Join the Dance ... Project?



Joseph Bell proposes a new and ingenious way to apply technology to our dance experience.

There are many helpful videos of Scottish country dancing on YouTube, but they have limitations. They cannot be edited to remove background noise, or to view the dance from above or change the point of view after the dance is done, and it can be difficult to slow them down to emphasise a key point.

Videos using 3D animation would have features that are difficult to produce with a camera and a set of dancers. With this technique, every dancer can have perfect footwork, with each one in time with the beat, and each couple wearing a unique colour for their tartans and dresses. Since 3-D animation is a computer model, it is possible to use slow motion and a camera view that changes as needed to explain the dance. All the dancers could be young and fit and come in standard sizes, a dance briefing or training can be added at the start of the dance, and corrections can be made to the video.

Learning SCD can seem overwhelming to new dancers as they try to assimilate a whole new vocabulary and complicated steps and formations, and to dance in time with the music. Each dance is briefed with a stream of words, and any distraction means that some dancers will miss instructions. If a walk-through is done before each dance, it consumes much of the time that could otherwise be used for dancing.

It would be easier to review a dance quickly and have the dancers remember it if they viewed a 3-D animation that combined a briefing and one progression of the dance with the music. More people might try SCD if they saw videos that both explained the dance and showed a perfect performance.

Just imagine what could be done with 3-D animation of human figures:

- Combining the dance movements, music (with the beats counted), and a view of an entire set dancing in time with the beats can give dancers a more accurate mental model of the dance than if each dancer has to create this model in their own mind.

- Camera views can be from anywhere in the set, even from the point of view of specific dancers, as needed to best explain the dance.
- The camera view can look straight down from above the dancers, if needed, for dances with reels and complex figures, with arrows and symbols used to highlight important points as the narrator discusses them.
- Music is added electronically, instead of being played in a large room with background noise. The video animation is generated from a 3-D computer model, so random spectators would never be able to block the camera view.
- Detailed videos with teaching of the dance could be used for classes, or by dancers who cannot attend regular classes, or to help new dancers feel more confident and improve quickly.
- Motion capture could compare student's footwork to the footwork of a top dancer, for review with an instructor, leading to faster improvement for students.

How do we make it all happen?

So far I've described what could be done with 3-D animation of SCD and some of the reasons why it would be helpful, even revolutionary, as a way to teach and enjoy the dances.

The cost of creating this kind of 3-D animation is surprisingly low (under \$600 US, or under £400) with currently available technology, if volunteers can be found with the skills and dedication needed to develop the animations.



Software for motion capture



Motion capture for animation using Kinect

The technical details

Motion capture can be done using Microsoft Kinect with iClone 5 by Reallusion Inc. The Kinect sensor array collects the motion data in real time. No special clothing or markers are required to measure positions or motion with Kinect. The motion data are applied to standard models of human beings that include equations of motion to get the physics correct for a realistic dancer.

The motion data can be edited into an actual dance and copied multiple times to create all the dancers needed in a virtual set. The iClone 5 program (or iClone 6, which does not yet work with Mocap) from Reallusion Inc. provides this editing capability. More information on the software and hardware is available at www.reallusion.com/iclone/.

The details of clothing and appearance are handled by templates that are applied to the standard human models. Some commercial templates are available, but they seem expensive, and templates developed by the project could be better adapted to modelling SCD. For example, templates could be developed to apply faces to the virtual dancers from pictures of well-known SCD figures like John Drewry.



Standard clothing templates



Commercial templates with Scottish attire

What happens next?

If you are interesting in helping with this project, please contact Joseph Bell at SCD3D.Project@gmail.com. Visit www.ClanBell.org/dance.html for more information and updates.

Joseph Bell dances with the Atlanta Branch of the RSCDS. He is also Vice President and National High Commissioner for Clan Bell – North America.

Two Unusual SCD Events



Evening dance, Győr

The Link between Budapest and Vienna

Although Vienna is just 243 kilometres away from Budapest, connected as they are by the River Danube, in my mind Vienna is still a 'foreign city' outside our own country's boundaries. Historically it was on the other side of the Iron Curtain for us Hungarians, but now we are starting to realise that it is really not so far away.

Scottish dancing has done a lot to bring people from these two capital cities closer. The Budapest Scottish Dance Club is always looking for new opportunities for SCD and so we were very enthusiastic when, at the initiative of Bexi Wepner (from RSCDS Vienna Branch), two RSCDS certified teachers, Bexi and Gabor Turi (from Budapest), agreed to teach at a joint dance weekend on 26–28 September 2014 in Győr, Hungary, and we were able to get Silke Grosholz to fly to Győr from Germany to play for the dancing. The town of Győr is situated at an equal distance from Vienna and Budapest. It was highly appropriate too that a joint activity should be held in 2014, exactly 25 years after the very first floods of people from the Eastern bloc started to pour over the Hungarian border into Austria, the first break in the Iron Curtain.

So, with financial support from the Susi Mayr Fund of the International Branch, we were able to hold the first Vienna-Budapest SCD Weekend, with 35 Hungarian, 11 Austrian and 2 British participants. As the name suggests, we would like to make such joint weekends a tradition, including dancers from the groups in Salzburg, Bratislava and Prague.

How do we benefit from such a workshop? It is amazing how much better people can dance and pay attention when they feel they have to show how prepared they are. Getting to know another teaching style and learning new dances are a plus as well. Such a weekend also offers a bigger choice of partners, more interesting formations, and a nice atmosphere in the evenings when you can sit down for a chat or just have a good laugh. The more the merrier, as they say!

All this is why we are looking forward to our next international event, the SCD Weekend and Ball, to be held on 24–26 April 2015 in Budapest, with Janet Johnston as teacher and David and Scott Cunningham as musicians. Of course, dancers from Vienna will be there and we will again meet our extended family. In 2013 our ball had over 70 participants from abroad, but this year we are expecting to host more than 100 dancers from 12 countries.

Agnes Borbely, Chairman of the Budapest Club



Austro-Hungarian cake

The International Lermontov 200 Festival

2014 marked the 200th anniversary of the birth of the great Russian poet Mikhail Yuryevich Lermontov, a descendant of the Scottish Learmonth clan. The International Lermontov 200 Festival celebrated the work of the poet and his Scottish roots, especially in the person of his legendary antecedent Thomas 'the Rhymer' Learmonth. Events took place in Russia, Scotland and throughout the world, all patronised by representatives of the family.



Mikhail Yuryevich Lermontov

During the Festival's Scottish part in October, a bicentenary tartan 'Lermontov 200' designed by the Lermontov family was presented at the Scottish Parliament. On 3 October in the Town Square, Earston (Ercildoune) – birthplace of Thomas the Rhymer – a monument to Mikhail Lermontov was unveiled, created by a Russian sculptor of Scottish stone and Russian bronze. Cultural events, concerts and exhibitions also took place in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Moffat.

Celebratory events continued in several Russian cities, including a St. Petersburg section organised by the 'Trip to Skye' Scottish Dance Club and the RSCDS Moscow Branch, supported by the Lermontov family and the Gaelic Scientific Society. Events included lectures, a storytelling session, sightseeing tours of the places connected with the poet's life in the city, and a series of SCD workshops.

The Festival reached its climax on 18 and 19 October with the Dance Weekend and Lermontov's Ball, with over 70 participants coming from twelve cities, including those as far afield as Minsk and Vitebsk (Belarus). The classes with Patrick Chamoin of Paris and live music by Sofia Petkevich made the weekend a real dancing holiday. After two SCD classes on Saturday the participants had a chance to take a sightseeing walk in a surprisingly sunny St. Petersburg. In the evening the Blue Ball Room was ready to welcome beautifully dressed dancers for the Lermontov's Anniversary Ball. The marvellous piano and violin music played by White Heather Band musicians Anna Kovaleva and Maria Karachevskaya (Moscow), MCing by Patrick Chamoin and Yulia Tkacheva, and old and new friends dancing together created a wonderful atmosphere of joy and happiness which lasted much longer than just the four hours of the Ball.



SCD class with teacher Patrick Chamoin

The organisers were impressed to see so many dancers travelling such a long distance and to realise how highly motivated they were. On behalf of the Organising Committee, I pass on thanks and appreciation to the participants from Moscow, Nizhny Novgorod, Yaroslavl, Vologda, Perm, Voronezh, Cherepovets, Kostroma, Saint-Petersburg, Minsk, and Vitebsk. We look forward to seeing you all again as well as meeting new friends from other clubs and schools dancing SCD in Russia and abroad.

And of course we thank Mikhail Yuryevich Lermontov for such a wonderful occasion to dance together!

Maria Tsvetoukhina

In My Opinion

Helen McGinley defends new publications by the RSCDS.

I am increasingly hearing that 'We don't need any more books of dances'. I disagree. Indeed, one of the purposes of the RSCDS, as defined in our Constitution, is 'to publish or cause to be published descriptions of Scottish country dances...'. From the very start of the Society, James Michael Diack of Paterson's Publications Ltd. was involved in promoting this aim.

One reason given is that every book contains some unpopular dances, but this is nothing new. How many dances in *Book 25*, to give a random example, have you seen on a programme recently? Yes, there are plenty of good old dances but there are lots of good new ones too. Scottish country dancing is a living tradition and our Society should reflect that. Can you

name one single dance that is enjoyed by every dancer you know? I don't think I can.

Campbell Tyler produces lists showing the frequency of dances appearing on the programmes submitted to him. Currently, the top two are one very old dance and one relatively new one, which shows that both can be equally popular: *The Montgomeries' Rant* was written in 1749 and published in the Society's tenth book (1935); *Pelorus Jack* was devised in 1993 and appeared in *RSCDS Book 41* (2000).

Some books are published for a specific reason. The book of Hugh Foss dances set to song tunes has been reproduced because it was out of print. The RSCDS has acquired the copyright for the dances published by the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing and is translating them into standard terminology to make them more accessible. The *Third Graded Book* was a response to requests from teachers for more

strathspeys for children and for dances which introduce specific formations to less experienced dancers. It has already been favourably received. Many of these dances are not new but are being made available to dancers around the world who might not otherwise have encountered them.

In recent years, dances have been rigorously tested before being accepted for publication by the RSCDS – first by branches around the world and then the shortlist by a group of experienced dancers available in a given place on a particular day. The numbers of submissions in each competition show that plenty of dancers do still want their dances to be published by the Society.

Devisers will continue to write dances regardless of the Society's policy, so why should the best not be collected and published for all to enjoy? I would consider it an honour if one of my dances were to be accepted for a new RSCDS book.

Bobby Brown Music Scholarship



As an individual performer, member of two SCD Bands, Musical Director of the internationally renowned fiddle troupe The Cape Breton Symphony and leader of The Scottish Accent, Bobby Brown was a leading proponent of SCD and traditional Scottish music in Canada, the United States, Britain and Europe for over fifty years. He gained many awards recognising his 'outstanding contribution to the preservation and performance of traditional Scottish

music': the RSCDS Scroll of Honour, an RSCDS Branch Award and an acknowledgement of his fifty years of playing from the National Association of Accordion and Fiddle Clubs.

Bobby was also actively engaged in the perpetuation and expansion of this Scottish heritage. He encouraged young Canadian musicians to learn and preserve the songs and tunes of the Scottish tradition, giving many workshops for musicians during TAC Summer School, Thistle School (North Carolina) and elsewhere. His great concern with maintaining the standards of 'real' Scottish music, as opposed to what many consider the real thing, led him to take on the onerous job of tutor, teaching young musicians what makes for really good traditional Scottish music. He was an engaging teacher and eagerly instructed participants in the subtle idiomatic nuances of the music.

Bobby devoted his life to the playing, researching, recording and teaching of Scottish dance music. He loved playing and Scottish music was in his soul.

Robert (Bobby) Watt Brown passed away in May 2011. In his memory, the Teachers' Association (Canada) is initiating the Bobby Brown Music Scholarship, which will provide funding towards the registration for one musician to attend:

- An apprenticeship/internship program at TAC Summer School

- A music course at TAC Summer School
- A music course at a TAC-recognised SCD event.

Funds donated in Bobby's memory can be sent to the Secretary of the TAC. Please check our website for further information: www.tac-rscds.org.

Fiona Miller

23rd International Folk Dance Festival
18 - 26 July

Visiting groups:
Ensemble Folklorique 'Le Point d'Alençon' - France
Thüringer Folklore Tanzensemble Rudolstadt - Germany
Gruppo Folk 'A Pacchianeddra Sansustisa' - Italy

19 July Falkland Palace
20 July Edinburgh - Parliament
21 July Perth
23 July Edinburgh - The Mound
24 July Church Hill Theatre performance
25 July Stirling Castle

for more information go to www.dunedindancers.org.uk

A Gallery of Scottish Country Dance T-Shirts



Thanks to the T-shirt wearers and photographers in Frankfurt, Maryland, New Zealand, San Francisco, Seattle, Sydney, and Vancouver, not to mention the clever designers.



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From around the World

Our regular correspondents and occasional reporters keep us up to date with SCD activities everywhere. We like to hear from all corners of the SCD world, so please send your reports to the correspondent for your area (email addresses below). If your area does not have a correspondent, you can write directly to Jean Martin at jean.m.martin@googlemail.com, and perhaps volunteer to become one of our correspondent team. Thanks to all contributors to this issue, and welcome to our new correspondent from Russia.

United Kingdom

Dundee Branch 90th Anniversary

On Monday 9 February 1925, at 4.30 pm, a meeting was held in Mathers' Rooms, Mathers' Hotel, Dundee, with the purpose of forming a Branch of the Scottish Country Dance Society in the city. Ninety years later to the day and hour – on 9 February 2015, at 4.30 pm – a group of Committee, teachers and guests met at the same venue (now Malmaison Hotel, Dundee) to celebrate that inaugural meeting.

Mrs Stewart of Fasnacloch had been asked to address the meeting, which was chaired by Dr Alexander Kidd, the Senior Medical Officer for Dundee. Others present at the meeting were Dr Angus MacGillivray of MacGillivray (Dundee's chief eye surgeon, and Chieftain of the Clan MacGillivray), who became first President of the Branch; Miss Nora Sharp of Balmuir (like Mrs Stewart, an enthusiastic Guider); and Miss Margaret (Meta) Dow, who taught Physical Education at Dundee Training College, and became one of the first three teachers in Dundee Branch. Meta Dow was a lively, graceful dancer, whose influence on dancing in Dundee – and on her students – cannot be overstated.

On 9 February this year, we presented the manager of Malmaison with a certificate to commemorate the hotel's part in Dundee history. I read from the original Minute of the first meeting, and we shared tea and anniversary cake (iced by our Honorary Vice-President, Helen Beat).

Other events are planned for the rest of 2015, but we were glad to get together on the actual anniversary, to remember all those who had brought about the founding of the Dundee Branch.

Helen Lawrenson
Archivist, Dundee Branch



Dr Angus MacGillivray



Aberdeen Festival team 1950s

Aberdeen Branch 90th Anniversary

A heading in *The Press and Journal*, the local newspaper for the North-East of Scotland, on 17 October 1925, read 'Country Dancing Revival – Bishop Deane and the Oldest of the Arts'. What followed was a description of the inaugural meeting of the Aberdeen Branch at the Palace Hotel the previous evening. 50 people attended with Bishop Deane presiding and Mrs Stewart of Fasnacloch explaining the main aims of the Society to an enthusiastic audience.

Lord Glentanar became the first President of the Branch and other notable North-East folks soon joined up, including Lord and Lady Aberdeen and Charles Murray (writer of *Hamewith*). Miss Milligan assessed 14 teacher candidates in December and all passed. By the end of the year there were 99 members and arrangements made for two classes, each of one hour, to be held weekly.

In 1928 an Advanced Class was instituted and by 1930 four classes were operating. Each class was extended to two hours and the cost was 1/- per member and 1/6 for non-members, not inconsiderable amounts at that time.

The Branch continued to flourish and in 1937 the Autumn School, known to us as the AGM, came to Aberdeen for the first time. It has returned on numerous occasions since.

The first mention of classes for young people is in 1946, and by 1952 four Branch children's classes were held. Today the Branch runs five classes for children and

young people and six adult classes from beginners to demonstration level, with summer and winter socials, as well as two main dances during the year.

Many active members of the Aberdeen Branch have contributed hugely to the RSCDS and to SCD in general. They include Annie Shand, Nan Main, Isobel Cramb (Tibbie), Bobby Watson, John Drewry, and Lesley Martin. Others, perhaps less well known internationally, have also helped the Branch to flourish.

To celebrate our 90th year, two major events are planned. On 16 October there will be a Dinner Dance in the Treetops Hotel with Frank Thomson and his band providing the music, and we hope to welcome dancers from near and far. For our own members, particularly those who may no longer be able to dance, an afternoon Tea Party on 18 October will be held in the same venue.

Jean M Martin



Aberdeen Festival team 2014



Gerrards Cross dance

Afternoon tea dances are becoming very popular in the **South-East of England**. They are generally held on a Sunday afternoon with the intention of encouraging newcomers to join in with more experienced dancers. A successful recent dance was the Gerrards Cross annual bring-and-share tea dance on 18 January. Ken Martlew and Barbara Manning were joined by Bobby Reid on drums, and about 60 dancers filled the friendly hall. Six o'clock soon came round – SCD makes time pass quickly, far too quickly on occasions!

Stephen Webb

Australia

Correspondent Sandra Bell
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Melbourne & District Branch held a ball to mark their 45th Anniversary on 1 November 2014. Over 100 attended this night to remember, with dancing to Matthew Robertson, Colin McLeod and Ginny Botha on fiddles, Julia Arnold on keyboard and Athalie Brooks on double bass. The President, Mary Buckingham, presented Certificates of Appreciation to members who had contributed significantly to the Branch over many years.

On 6 November the Branch demonstration team danced at the Immigration Museum in the Scottish Festival to mark the opening of the *Scots Wha Hae* exhibition. This celebrated the 200th anniversary of the first formal migration from Scotland to Victoria and was developed in collaboration with the Victorian Scottish community.



Melbourne Dem Team dancers

Saddened to hear of the death of John Drewry, a number of **Adelaide Branch** members enjoyed an impromptu afternoon of dancing organised by Jean Dodds to enjoy some of John's more challenging dances. The 'Transverse Rotational Knot' proved a particular challenge for some!

The Branch Ball was held in August, with Chris Duncan and Catherine Strutt playing, and October saw a Branch Social and a pleasant afternoon evaluating dances for *Book 49*.

Canberra Branch hosted a very enjoyable Winter School in October. Always a good evening at Winter School is the costume night, and the 2014 theme was 'Dance in Blue'. Canberra dancers will take part in a couple of displays in February and also the Easter weekend.

Western Australia Branch held a very successful Dinner Dance last September. This was a great opportunity to dress up and enjoy dancing to fantastic live music from accordionist Iain McKenzie, who came from Queensland for the weekend. 2014 finished with a Christmas Hop.

On 14 January 2015, **Queensland Branch** celebrated the 90th birthday of Flora Powell, who was born in Scotland on 17 January 1925. Flora learnt to dance at school and began dancing again in Queensland in the 1980s. She attended Queensland's first Winter School in 1984 and has subsequently danced at many Schools interstate. Flora is a good example of the mental and physical health benefits of SCD!

Sydney Branch had a busy 2015 culminating in the presentation of a Branch Award to Anne Kennedy. For more than three decades Anne has been, and continues to be, an inspiration to dancers in Sydney.



Anne Kennedy receiving her Branch Award, with teachers' group chairman Margaret Sim and President Aidan McElduff

On Saturday 11 October – Launceston Show Saturday – the **Launceston (Tasmania) Caledonian Society Scottish Country Dancers** celebrated 60 years of continuous dancing at an Assembly attended by dancers from throughout the state. Show Saturday was the day the class was started, and it has always been marked by an Assembly. The original teachers, Arnold and Peggy Arthur, led the class for 28 years. Since their retirement the class has been taught by Betty Laverty.



June Peters, member of the original Launceston 1954 class, cuts the cake

Canada East

Correspondent Elaine Hoag
elaine.hoag@gmail.com

Scottish country dancers everywhere celebrate Hogmanay and Rabbie Burns Day, but this year the **Kingston Branch** added a third celebration to their January roster: the 200th anniversary of the birth of Sir John A. Macdonald, Canada's first prime minister. Glasgow-born Macdonald emigrated to Canada as a young child and his family settled in Kingston, a city to which Macdonald retained close ties all his life. As part of a week-long festival, dancers from the Kingston Branch joined visual artists, musicians, film-makers, authors and historians, each group introducing Canadians to different aspects of Macdonald's life and times. On Macdonald's birthday, January 11, almost 100 Kingston dancers and newcomers were on the floor, 'dancing Scottish'.

The **Toronto Association** also drew a huge crowd to their drop-in ceilidh held this September during Canada's 'Culture Days', a country-wide event promoting Canada's multicultural heritage. With a piper outside the church hall, men in kilts and a glorious, sunny Saturday afternoon, it wasn't long before scores of curious visitors were getting the hang of 'rights and lefts' and enjoying a first-hand taste of SCD. Toronto's Family Ceilidh on October 25 attracted a smaller but equally enthusiastic crowd, as kids, parents and sometimes grandparents joined in the revelry.

Two other groups in Ontario celebrated significant anniversaries in the Fall of 2014. The **Ardbrae Dancers of Ottawa** marked their 50th anniversary with a



Toronto Association dance at 'Culture Days'

workshop weekend in October followed by a gala dance and concert. The **Hamilton (Ontario) Branch**, founded in 1954 and the second oldest in North America, are celebrating their 60th birthday and will spread their festivities over the whole of the 2014–15 dancing year.

Finally, the **Windsor (Ontario) Branch** will celebrate 50 years of dancing in 2015 with two main events. In March, they will co-host a Border City Workshop event with friends, neighbours and fellow dancers from Detroit USA, just across the river from Windsor. Teachers are Doug Schneider and Lara Friedman-Shedlov, with music by Fred Moyes. On October 24, the Annual Ball at Roseland Golf & Curling Club will mark the anniversary.

Japan

Correspondent Kaoru Oyama

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Last autumn, the topic of the Scottish independence referendum was widely reported in the media in Japan and everybody watched with interest. Now most Japanese know some of the historical background, the structure of the Union Jack or at least where Scotland is. Naturally we, Japanese Scottish dancers, held our breath to see how things would go.

The national broadcaster has televised a serial TV drama for six months about a Japanese man and his Scottish wife. This man, Taketsuru, studied in Scotland about a hundred years ago and made the first Japanese-made malt whisky. Many people were attracted by their strenuous effort and married love and the viewing figures were more than 20%. Now everyone knows *Auld Lang Syne* is originally not Japanese but Scottish! Thanks to the media, Japanese people are more and more interested in Scotland.

Tokyo, Tokai and Saitama Branches each held a class for *Book 48* in late summer. Many earnest dancers went to the classes and enjoyed the new dances. But many dancers think fifteen dances in an annual publication are too many to learn.

The 32nd Japan Scottish Highland Games were held in October in a rainstorm. Scottish visitors seemed to be indifferent to

bad weather, but there were few Japanese spectators. Helen Russell judged a SCD competition, and we were grateful that she also gave a talk to interested people on the new *Manual*. For us, the *Manual* means a lot and we always turn to it.

Saitama Branch held a dancing weekend in November in preparation for its 15th Anniversary in November 2015. Some 70 participants learned four MacNab dances which they will demonstrate at the Anniversary. Helen and Ian Russell and Iain MacPhail will be invited.

2015 started with the New Year Dance of **Tokyo Branch** on 4 January. 82 participants enjoyed dancing and the live music in a friendly atmosphere.

In May, **Tokai Branch** will hold a three-day Weekend at Hakone, inviting Duncan Smith and Catherine Fraser from Australia who met with a hugely favourable reception on their last visit. It will also include a music class and some classes by Branch teachers.

New Zealand

Correspondent Janet Favel

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Ingredients of a successful Summer School:

- **A range of classes** with enthusiastic teachers providing challenging and interesting dances. One is a tutor from Scotland via Japan who teaches elegant Ladies' Step dances.
- **More dancing:** evening functions, with programmes put together by knowledgeable MCs, and music provided by inspiring musicians, who keep you dancing when you're quite sure you can't dance any more. Yet more dancing in the beautiful Botanic Garden, and at the after-parties featuring creative versions of old and new favourites.
- **Significant dates to celebrate:** you see the old year out and the new year in; you dance until 1.30 am, then you return to your residence and dance some more.
- **Formality:** the President's Ball sees everyone looking splendid in their finery as the Grand March enters the hall.
- **Friendliness:** you find yourself talking



Dancing in the Garden, NZ Summer School

to your neighbours in the dinner queue, and you enjoy dancing with those people later that evening.

- **Opportunities for JAM interaction:** dancing and generally hanging out with dancers your own age, and testing yourself in the JAM medal tests.
- **Fun:** laughs in class, at the antics of MCs and musicians at the evening functions, at the Mock Court, where serious civil cases are considered and offenders appropriately punished.
- **Warm sunny weather,** allowing you to get out and enjoy local attractions like native flora and fauna at Orokonui Ecosanctuary, albatrosses on the Otago Peninsula, historic and beautifully preserved Olveston House, and cafés and restaurants in The Octagon.
- **Performances to enjoy:** the varied talents of your fellow dancers and musicians at the Musical Soirée and the Ceilidh. And being welcomed to the Ceilidh by the piper on the battlements.
- **The School venue:** Knox College magnificently refurbished and retaining its long (by New Zealand standards) history.
- **Music:** at class, at the evening functions, at the music class. Also bursts of music coming from rooms all over Knox College where impromptu practice sessions are taking place.
- The opportunity to do it all over again next year, at the 2015–16 Summer School in Auckland.



Tokai Branch class in Nagoya



Music class and friends play for the final night, NZ Summer School

North America West Coast

Correspondent Roberta Gotfried

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We are in the midst of celebrating the golden anniversaries of three of our branches up and down the Pacific Coast. The **San Francisco Branch** has just commenced celebrations with a weekend full of activities centred round the annual Valentine's Ball. The Ball was attended by 165 people, who enjoyed dancing to music by Fiddlesticks and Ivory, with lively arrangements by talented bandleader Lyle Ramshaw. The festivities began in Berkeley on Friday at a class filled with dance favourites through the five decades since the branch was founded. On Sunday, the musicians with friends and dancers celebrated with a jam session, the musicians sharing their talents on a variety of instruments playing music of their own choosing. Celebration of the 50th anniversary will continue to be the theme at San Francisco events throughout the year.



Founding San Francisco members Kathleen McAdam and Eugene Bissell dance at the Ball

As San Francisco's year of golden anniversary celebrations is commencing, the **Vancouver Branch** will have completed a year of celebration with a Golden Jubilee Gala on March 21 with the music of the Torridon Scottish Dance Band featuring guests Ian Muir and Judi Nicolson. Many of us are looking forward to joining in their celebration.

The **Los Angeles Branch** is making plans for its Golden Jubilee in April 2016. Forty years is also worthy of a big celebration, and the **San Diego Branch** will hold a ball on October 17 with music provided by Muriel Johnstone and Judi Nicolson. Keep these events in mind as you plan your travel!

Russia

Correspondent Maria Tsvetoukhina

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In March 2014 Russia's capital celebrated 21 years of Scottish dancing. On the initiative of three Scottish businessmen, Mike Mackie, Stuart Thom and Tom Crozier, the St. Andrew's Society was established in Moscow in 1993. The foundation of Moscow Scottish Country Dance School

(now RSCDS Moscow Branch) and the beginning of Scottish dancing in Moscow date back to that year. On 9 March 2014, the Moscow Branch and musicians from Misty Mountains Band organised a Ball dedicated to the 21st anniversary. Scottish dancers from Moscow and many other Russian cities (St. Petersburg, Voronezh, Perm, Yaroslavl, Kostroma, etc.) came to celebrate this date and dance *Moscow Reel*, presented to the Branch by Malcolm Brown.



Moscow March Ball

A 2nd Spring School was held by RSCDS **Moscow Branch** in the ancient Russian city of Vladimir from 1 to 4 May 2014. About 90 people from 15 cities attended the School including the teachers, Helen Russell, Malcolm Brown and Mervyn Short. The programme included SCD classes at intermediate and advanced levels, Ladies' Step and Highland dance classes, a DPA level 2 course and examination, as well as social events and the Ball. Also, for the first time in Russia a Dance Festival was organised. Five teams from Moscow (RSCDS Moscow Branch and Shady Glen Dance School), Cheboksary (Lights of Beltaine Dance Group), Krasnodar (Sinn Araon Dance School) and Nizhny Novgorod (Quick Scotch Dance School) took part in the main competition and one more team from Moscow joined them for the show competition. The Adjudicator for the Festival was Malcolm Brown.



Spring School in Vladimir

At the end of June Moscow Highland and National Dance Competitions were organised by Shady Glen School. All dancing events operated under the rules of the Scottish Official Board of Highland Dancing and were judged by Delma Wilson.

The annual St. Andrew's Ball took place in Moscow on 30 November 2014 to commemorate the common patron saint of Scotland and Russia. This time it was co-

organised by RSCDS Moscow Branch and Trianon historical and social dance studio (a Societa di Danza association member). A famous Moscow piper and Glasgow College of Piping Senior Certificate holder as well as a BCC accordionist, Anatoly Isaev, created the atmosphere of the evening. Dancers from all over Russia and abroad came to meet in Russia's capital to make this atmosphere friendly.

We are looking forward to meeting dancers again at Burns Night celebrations or in Nizhny Novgorod in late April 2015 at the 3rd Spring School with a wide variety of SCD, Highland Dancing and Ladies' Step classes, exams, competitions, socials and a ball.

South Africa

Correspondent Heather Hodgson

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Dancers from the **Pretoria** group had a very successful Spring social in September and also gave a demonstration to Volkspele members. (Volkspele is a folk dance tradition of Afrikaans-speaking South Africans and directly translated means 'folk-games'.) September saw dancers from **Cape Town** travelling to the village of McGregor to join the dancing group there for our annual fun weekend of dancing.

As usual in November, groups have been practising for, and performing at, Caledonian Society functions for St Andrews Night. This was followed by a hectic couple of weeks of year-end parties, after which dancers in South Africa put away our shoes for part of the hot summer. The Pretoria Branch and Fish Hoek Club start again in January and February respectively, but most classes and clubs only resume dancing in March. Dancing in the dark has taken on a new meaning for us recently as a number of these events have occurred during electricity load-shedding. We may need to consider adding the dance 'We've Nae Electric' to our core repertoire of dances!

Some sad news from our region: Rose MacMillan, RSCDS Scroll recipient, passed away in September 2014. Rose was a Cape Town teacher for a number of years and served on the Branch committee in many capacities including Chairman. She was also a tutor for teacher candidates.

Dancers from around the country are gearing up to participate in Knysna's first ever Celtic Festival to be held at the end of February. This will include a ceilidh and country dancing display in addition to traditional Highland Games and a street march with massed pipes and drums.

A reminder if you are visiting South Africa to pack your ghillies as we are always delighted to welcome visitors from other countries. For further news visit our website, www.scds.za.net.



Cape Town performance group

USA East Coast

Correspondent Eilean Yates
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Dancing continues to thrive along the East Coast with many exciting events and workshops. The **Northern Virginia Branch** hosted Scottish Weekend XXVI in September at Timber Ridge Camp near Winchester, Virginia. Bill Zobel, Marjorie McLaughlin and Terry Harvey were the teachers and Muriel Johnstone was the featured musician. In November the Branch held Argyle Weekend XXXVI in Alexandria. Linda Gaul and Sandy Gallamore taught the classes with Liz Donaldson, Elke Baker, Ralph Gordon and Anne Hooper playing for them.

Further south Margo Priestley, former RSCDS Summer School Director, and Jim Stott, Management Board member, came over to teach at the **Charlotte Group** dance and workshop in October. Marian Anderson and her band provided some outstanding music for the event.

The **New York Branch** held its 42nd Jeannie Carmichael Ball and Brunch weekend in November in the grounds of the US Military Academy at West Point. Hanneke Cassel was the fiddler with Dave Wiesler on piano.

In Spring we can look forward to **Atlanta Branch** Spring Workshop at Forrest Hills Mountain Resort and Conference Center. Jimmie Hill will be continuing last year's theme of traditional Scottish country dancing as it was before RSCDS standardised and recorded it. Pete Campbell, Mara Shea and Julie Gorka have been busy researching old manuscripts for more old-style dance music.

2015 marks the 59th Anniversary of the **Boston Branch** Highland Ball weekend to be held 17–19 April. Dancers can enjoy a Friday Welcome Dance, a Saturday Ball and a casual Sunday Brunch. The Loch Norman Highland Games dance weekend with dances Friday and Saturday as well as dancing at the field will be held the same weekend. By popular request Luke and Adam Brady will make a return trip from Scotland to provide exciting and dynamic music.

TAC Summer School and the Teachers' Conference/AGM weekend 2015 will be held at Longwood University, Farmville, Virginia, situated about one hour from Richmond airport. This will be an opportunity for dancers in the south to attend TAC closer to home.

USA Midwest

The participants at the **2014 Midwest Scottish Weekend** didn't let a little bit of rain ruin their weekend! With the stirring music of A Parcel of Rogues (Susie Petrov and Calum Pasqua) spirits were high, from the Friday night welcome dance through the Sunday morning workshops. Teacher Rebecca Blackhall-Peters encouraged us all to rise to our best, and we were happy to oblige. Since we gathered on the 70th anniversary of D-Day, we honoured its memory in class with *Reel of the 51st Division*. The Chicago, Madison and

Milwaukee organisers are looking forward to the 2015 Weekend. Join us June 5–7 at picturesque Beloit College in Beloit, Wisconsin, with teacher Linda Henderson and musicians Katie McNally and Neil Pearlman.

The **John Muir Branch** (Madison, Wisconsin) have added a British flair to recent balls. At the 2014 'Madton Abbey' ball, guests included a cardboard cast from the popular Downton Abbey television series. In March 2015 we took a time-travel journey back to eighteenth-century Scotland, drawing our theme from the *Outlander* novels and television series. Period costumes, quizzes on related history and characters, and themed décor have provided added entertainment for ball participants.

A young **Chicago Branch** member, Tim Macdonald, recently won the National Scottish Fiddle Championship. He will be competing in the Glenfiddich Fiddle Championship in October and regularly plays for the Loch Michigan class. The same class has also been conducting biannual Geek Week events including Star Wars and Tolkien themed classes, complete with costumes, music, and themed dances written for the occasion by Sue McKinnell. In the spring, the class will have its Harry Potter Geek Week event.

Nancy McClement, Priscilla Argove and Stephanie McDaniel



Happy dancers in the rain at Midwest Weekend



90

Twelve anniversary dances celebrating ninety years of RSCDS Edinburgh Branch

also including Ian Powrie's Farewell to Auchterarder

Our new book and CD, recorded by Graeme Munro and his band is now available -

with 12 new dances written by Branch members and friends, most of the dances have new tunes written especially for them by some of our Branch musicians.

This is a must for every collection.

Book £6; CD £12
 Combined price £15

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Overheard on the Web



Chris Ronald reports from the Internet beat.

If you're curious about the discussions on the Strathspey list, you can subscribe yourself by visiting www.strathspey.org.

Popular dances

If you would like to find out about the dances others are doing around the world, the best place to look is 'Campbell's Lists', on the International Branch website, rscds-ib.org/index.php/campbelltylerlists. Managed by Campbell Tyler in Cape Town, these lists are compiled from dance programmes submitted from all over the world. Since he began this initiative in 2008, Campbell has captured about 1500 dance programmes, from over 350 clubs and branches. Perennially at the top of the list is *The Montgomeries' Rant*, and currently the fastest climber seems to be *Best Set in the Hall*. To keep the list up to date, Campbell depends on our support. Please help by emailing him at campbell@tyler.co.za.

Best Set in the Hall

On hearing about the latest update from Campbell Tyler, one subscriber to the Strathspey list asked, 'What makes *Best Set in the Hall* so popular? It is a dance that takes lots of practice and cannot be learned from a briefing on the day of the dance.' Campbell suggested it could be 'the novelty of turning your back on your corners after setting to them. It is counter-intuitive, slightly flirty, and gives a great sense of achievement when you get it right.' He added, 'I hope that the 8-bar sequence will soon get a formation name that will stick so that we can shorten the briefings!'

And that was when the discussion got interesting and a bit heated. One suggestion was 'The Pantomime Dance' (as in 'It's Behind You!') and another said 'The Air Hostess Figure' (as in 'The nearest exit may be behind you.') Other creative suggestions included 'the Paisley figure' and 'set and switcheroo'.

We learned that in some parts of California, the figure is called 'set to and spurn corners', which some contributors in other parts of the world thought might be useful as well as amusing. Others were 'not amused': they enjoyed the pun on set to and turn corners, but they didn't like the notion of 'spurning' someone in the official name of a figure.

Contributors from New Zealand explained that the figure was invented by Alec Hay

in 1976 and published in the dance *Peter White in 20 Scottish Country Dances, Book 1*. To honour the deviser, it was suggested that the name should be 'the Peter White movement' which is its name in at least some parts of New Zealand. As usual in such discussions, there was no consensus, with some teachers pointing out that it is generally unhelpful to refer to figures by the name of the dance where they first appeared (Petronella Turns and Inveran Reels being exceptions that, perhaps, prove the rule).



Switcheroo



Graphic by Sue Ronald

Unwelcome help during a dance

Echoing some earlier discussions on the Strathspey list, an experienced teacher had recently attended a workshop and commented, 'There were at least two or three times this weekend when I was the recipient of unsolicited and fairly unhelpful help during a dance.' She felt there was 'nothing worse than seven other people shouting instructions or pulling at you the whole way through a dance, when all you really needed was a simple shoulder gesture.' She was interested to know how other teachers dealt with the issue of helping.

Among the responses, a notable comment was: 'My philosophy has always been to help people with a discreet hand gesture for direction or a slight movement of the head, a quiet vocal reminder, and of course eye contact and always a smile.' Another response mentioned a Square Dance teacher who has three simple rules that he constantly tells his classes: 1. Move to the beat (of the music); 2. Move forward (keep moving); and 3. Do not give or take advice (just go where **you** need to go). The teacher depends on 'angels' to help student dancers learn the figures, but 'his rules require the angels to only help visually. If the dancer fails to move with you, just leave them, and this will help them learn.' The teacher 'humorously tells new dancers that the experienced dancers give the worst advice, so don't listen to them. The teaching method helps new dancers to relax and gradually learn to think for themselves, and develops a culture for experienced dancers to help one another properly.'

Books and CDs

Leeds Branch recently announced that their shop had been updated. While the shop stocks the range of RSCDS books and CDs, they specialise in supplying books and CDs from other branches, devisers and bands from all over the world as well as shoes and various other SCD related items. Purchases can be made online and can be shipped internationally. See rscdsleeds.uk.

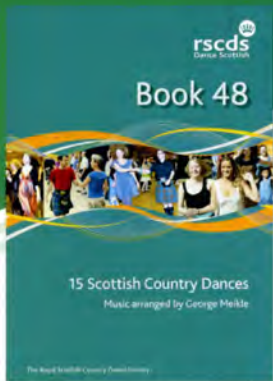
The San Francisco Branch also operates an online 'bookstore', selling books and CDs as well as two instructional DVDs showing the basic steps and formations as well as dances, produced by The Red Thistle Dancers, a local demonstration team. See rscds-sf.org/oldbookstore/.

As readers of this magazine know, the RSCDS shop (rscds.org/shop) offers the full range of RSCDS products.

A comprehensive range of both RSCDS and non-RSCDS items is stocked by the Teachers' Association (Canada) through TACBooks and TACSound. See tac-rscds.org/.

Also, some dance devisers are now using online publishing services such as lulu.com where the dance descriptions can be purchased as eBooks or in their printed form. This is a cost-effective way of keeping old dance books in print, as well as producing new ones.

Reviews



RSCDS Book 48

My first impression was that many dances in *Book 48* were easy to execute for most dancers. This book consists of five dances each of jig, reel and strathspey, and contains a good balance of three, four and five couple dances. All include some new formations which appear in the recently revised RSCDS *Manual* such as espagnole and set and rotate for three couples as well as the traditional basic formations.

Each of the three branches in Japan held a workshop for *Book 48* last autumn. Many dancers had already enjoyed the contents of the book. *City of Belfast* was first published in the *60th Anniversary Book* of the Belfast Branch and was devised by Lucy Mulholland. This strathspey provides us with well-balanced formations and phrasing. The final formation, espagnole, devised by John Drewry, has been enjoyed for many years, but this is the first time it has appeared in an RSCDS book.

The Tri-Mariner, devised by Ann Dix, has a movement picked up by each couple in turn which flows into a three-couple promenade. Less experienced dancers can enjoy this dance, while advanced dancers appreciate its interesting combination of formations.

Monica's Way is characterised by a tandem diagonal reel of four. Wide corner curves made through 1st and 4th positions make this fun for dancers and also for observers.

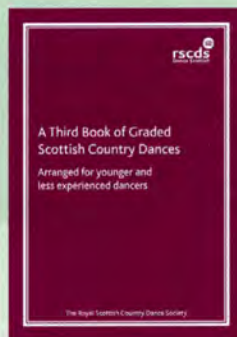
In addition to these dances, *The Rutland Reel* is a favourite dance. We can enjoy the flow of ladies' chain and men's chain danced to the lively reel music. *Lady in Red* is a graceful jig for five couples. We can dance comfortably to music with a tempo that is neither too fast nor too slow.

There are fifteen dances in this book, a large number to assimilate and appreciate. In my view, ten or twelve dances are sufficient. I was surprised to find diagrams at the end of the book, although Pilling books have been familiar to us for many years as a companion for dancers. Including diagrams in RSCDS publications is useful and, like cribs, they provide a convenient reminder.

Overall *Book 48* provides an interesting selection of dances which dancers everywhere are sure to enjoy.

Yoshiki Oyama, Tokai Branch

Available from RSCDS www.rscds.org/shop



A Third Book of Graded Scottish Country Dances

The cover says 'for younger and less experienced dancers', but this book of 14 dances was enjoyed by our general class of mixed ability dancers and we have chosen several for our social dance programmes.

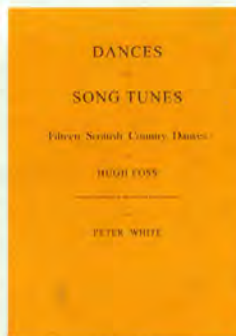
As teachers, it is excellent to have at our fingertips a book of dances chosen to help the teaching of specific formations (all listed for quick reference). The 'dance flow' is good in all of the dances, but there is still the challenge of correct phrasing to make the dances interesting and give emphasis to each teaching point.

Our personal favourite is what we consider the most challenging dance in this book, *The Compleat Gardener*. This features two formations which have become popular in our area, set and rotate and corners pass and turn. However, our favourites for emphasising teaching points as well as our class's enjoyment of the dance were *The Captain's House* (reels of three on the side into half diagonal reels of four), *Out of Thin Air* (tournée and turning corner and partner), *The Paisley Weavers* (grand chain and ladies' chain), and *Karin's Strathspey* (two-couple knot and reels of three on the side). *Craighleith* can be enjoyed by everyone at any time! There are more formations, all listed in the back of the book together with diagrams of all the dances, for those who prefer that shorthand notation to 'see' the dance shape.

Our class enjoy dancing to the CD for this book. The musical arrangements must have been an absolute 'tour de force' by George Meikle. Although some of the tunes were already allocated to the dances, George has supplemented them with some lovely tunes, but, as usual, all played with a delightful tempo and impetus. A great book that we feel could have 'held its own' last year, had it been chosen as the only new book of 2014.

Ian and Liz Stead, Chesterfield Caledonian Dance Class

Available from RSCDS www.rscds.org/shop



Dances to Song Tunes by Hugh Foss

Accompanying CDs by Iain Cathcart and his Band

Hugh Foss's book *Dances to Song Tunes*, originally published in 1966, has recently been reprinted by the RSCDS as the first in a series of occasional historical reprints of books by significant dance devisers. There are two accompanying CDs recorded by Iain Cathcart and his Band.

The book contains 15 dances – five jigs, five reels and five strathspeys – of varying difficulty. Most of them have the most common SCD format of three couples in a four-couple set. *My Mither's Aye*

Glow'rin' Owre Me is also listed as such in the Contents, but is actually a two-couple dance. The figures used are standard movements such as reel, figure of eight, chase, hands around and rights and lefts. This may not sound very spectacular, but Hugh Foss has combined the figures in such a way that there is always something unexpected waiting for you. It is these arrangements which give the dances their special charm and at the same time make them so challenging.

Teaching preparation may take somewhat longer than usual, as the descriptions have not been converted into standard RSCDS terminology. Although some helpful notes are provided at the end of the book, I would have appreciated an additional, completely revised RSCDS version.

Our group especially enjoyed the strathspeys, including the unusual *Somebody*, a 5x16 round-the-room dance. *John of Badenyon* is for more advanced dancers and, once you have managed to remember what happens in the long but very fluent 48 bars, it will have you under its spell. The less complicated *Castles in the Air* has an interesting chain and circle at the end. For those who like meanwhile figures, the book provides many examples which demand precise dancing and good orientation, such as in the reels *Hey, Johnnie Cope* and *The Gallant Weaver*.

As the book title suggests, Hugh Foss was clearly inspired by the music. In the case of *John Grumlie*, where the break in the figure sequence after 24 bars matches the original tune, it gets a bit confusing when some of the other tunes have different phrasing.

The music by Iain Cathcart and his Band is a real gem. True to the promise of the book title, each dance has a different Scottish traditional song tune for every repetition, ranging from Burns' songs to music hall favourites. The excellent tempi, spirited playing and delightful arrangements make for really cheerful, light-hearted dancing.

One of Foss's most famous dances, *The Wee Cooper o' Fife*, is also included in the book. Why not try this book for yourself and see if there are any more hidden treasures destined to become old favourites? You will soon be dancing and singing along to the splendid music. I for one am certainly looking forward to the next book in the series.

Kirsten Steinbach, Freiburg, Germany

Available from RSCDS www.rscds.org/shop

Obituaries



Bobby Crowe

In late 2014 Scottish dance music and, above all, Scottish country dancers lost another 'name'.

Bobby Crowe passed away only a few hours after returning from an accordion and fiddle club meeting in Perth. So ended a life dedicated to Scottish music.

Bobby was far more than an accordionist, he possessed a rare gift: he 'had the message' as his many musical colleagues would confirm. He could express Scottish music with all the finer dynamic nuances which give it an authentic heart and soul, a dimension which in my very humble opinion is rapidly being lost.

Dancers of all genres within Scottish dance, but particularly country dancers, owe so much to Bobby who lived for playing music for dance, producing music which was infinitely honed to the perfect speed, barring and phrasing to suit the choreography. In addition were his meticulous choice of tunes to match the mood of each dance and, of course, the intrinsic musicality of his numerous compositions.

In the Summer of 1950, at the age of seventeen, Bobby got together with some local lads of a similar age to form a band: Eric Gray on accordion, David Findlay on piano, Dougie Maxwell on trumpet, and Tom Robertson on drums. After lots of practising, the embryonic 'Olympians' played at a dance in Guardbridge village hall in October 1950. They subsequently passed an audition for the BBC, broadcasting for the first time on the very popular *Scottish Dance Music* programme in May 1952.

Soon after this, Bobby and Eric Gray were 'called up' for National Service (two years' compulsory conscription into the armed forces, which was the law at the time). On returning from serving his country, he formed his own very successful band with which he gave so much pleasure for so many years, to dancers and listeners alike, at dances, on broadcasts, and through countless brilliant commercial recordings.

It would be wonderful to think that the next time you are enjoying the dance *EH3 TAF* or any one of Bobby's many popular tunes, you simply reflect for a moment on the man who brought so much enjoyment to so many over the past six decades. Bobby's memory will live on in this musical legacy and his spirit in every step you dance.

David Cunningham Snr.



Sheila at a Pawling weekend

Sheila Wilson

A native of Insch in Aberdeenshire, Sheila emigrated to New York as a young woman. She soon joined the New York Branch, and for the next 50 years contributed an incalculable amount of time to promoting SCD.

Since gaining the RSCDS Preliminary Certificate in 1973, Sheila was a mainstay of the teaching staff of the Branch: a tremendous resource for all teachers and dancers on dance books, dance descriptions and recorded music, and a mentor to more than one generation of teachers. Her opinions were valued, her approval coveted, her friendship cherished.

Sheila was known far beyond New York, as she served from 1971 until recently as Secretary or Registrar of the Branch's two most important annual events: the Pawling Weekend workshop and the Jeannie Carmichael Ball. As the 'queen' of the Pawling Weekend, Sheila helped ensure consistently high standards, bringing teachers from the UK, Canada and the US. Newcomers at the weekend often commented on the warm welcome they received from her.

Sheila was active for many years on demonstration teams and helped found an Affiliated Group, Scotia Dancers. She served on the Branch Executive Committee continuously from 1978 to 2010, and filled almost every office. On being elected President in May 1982, she was referred to in the Branch Newsletter as the 'tireless toiler'. As long-time Membership Secretary, Sheila was often the first point of contact for visitors or newcomers, and always made them welcome. Sheila was also a 40-year member of the Teachers' Association of Canada (TAC) and a lively presence at numerous TAC Summer Schools.

Sheila was deeply devoted to Scottish dance, music and heritage, and helped inspire countless dancers. She will be sorely missed.

Chris Ronald

Alice Mann

Alice B. W. Mann was a well-known figure in SCD, in Dundee, in Scotland and beyond. She was a beautiful dancer, and also taught dancing, played the piano for dance classes, and served not only on the Committee of the Dundee Branch but also on the Executive of our world-wide organisation.

Alice earned her teaching certificate in 1953. The following year she was selected for the International Dance Team of the RSCDS. While the Team were dancing in Norway, senior members of the RSCDS realised that Alice was a skilled pianist, and she was asked to play for classes at Summer School in St Andrews – a role she

carried out (to great acclaim) for many years thereafter.

Alice also taught the Demonstration Class in Dundee and was several times Chairman of the Branch.

In 1989 she was awarded the Society's Scroll. Alice loved our national dancing and when asked once what she liked best – dancing, playing or teaching – Alice beamed and replied, 'All of it!'

RSCDS Dundee Branch

Mary Stoker

Mary Stoker was born in 1918. She was educated at Dunfermline College of PE, Scotland, and moved to London in 1949. She taught Branch classes for nearly thirty years, and day and weekend schools throughout the world as well as working regularly on the staff at Summer School. Mary was London Branch President from 1996 to 2014 and was awarded the Society's Scroll of Honour in 1997. Many RSCDS members will have very fond memories of happy times in Mary's classes.

Andrew Kellett

Nan Lawson

Born in Buckhaven, Fife, in 1930, Nan became a dancer in her teens. She taught and danced in the Glasgow area for very many years, and devised many dances. Nan was proud to support her husband George during his term as Chairman of the Society, accompanying him to events both abroad and at home. In 1998 they were jointly awarded the Scroll of Honour, and later Nan was appointed as Honorary President of Glasgow Branch. Nan will be sadly missed, not only for her dedication to teaching and the work of the Society, but also for her gentle, unassuming manner, her caring attitude and her genuine interest in everyone she met.

Ruth Beattie

John Laurie

John Laurie (London Branch) died in September 2014 while on holiday in Scotland. He had served on the RSCDS Executive Council and the Publications Committee, and he devised *Fraser's Favourite* (leaflet 1976). He edited the London Branch newsletter *The Reel* from 1978 to 1991 and continued to contribute music reviews up to his untimely death. He was an Elder at St Columba's Church of Scotland, Pont Street, London, where he ran the Monday evening Scottish dancing for many years. John was a great enthusiast for SCD and its music. He will be sorely missed by his huge number of friends.

Andrew Kellett

Ken Nattrass

We are sorry to inform members that Ken Nattrass, well-known Canadian musician and leader of the band Scotch Measure, died in March. An obituary for Ken will appear in the October issue.

Day School Diary

May to November 2015

Compiled by John Sturrock. For more information about these events, please refer to branch or club websites. Issue 21 will cover day and residential schools or workshops from November 2015. Please send details to john.m.sturrock@btinternet.com.

May 15

- 01 – 02 Islay Branch, Weekend, Islay, Scotland
Anne Robertson, Ian Muir
- 01 – 03 Belfast Branch, Weekend School, Enniskillen, Co. Fermanagh, NI
Angela Young, David Oswald, Graham Berry
- 01 – 03 Youth Weekend West, Victoria, BC, Canada
Gordon Robinson, Louise McGillivray, Mary Ross, Tartan Players
- 01 – 03 Méaudre Reel, Annual Workshop, Méaudre, Vercors, France
Laure Gardelle, Tom McKinlay, Roddy Johnston, Seonaid Lynn
- 02 Blenheim Day School & Dance, Blenheim, New Zealand
- 08 – 09 Cumbrae SCD Association, Millport Weekend, Great Cumbrae, Scotland
Janet Johnston, Frank Thomson
- 09 Swilcan SCD Group, ½ Day School, Utrecht, Netherlands
Margaret Lambourne
- 09 LAG Tanz, Day School, Villingen, Germany
Birgitta Gindele, Harald Bailer, Wolfgang Müller
- 15 – 16 Isle of Skye Branch, Weekend, Portree, Isle of Skye, Scotland
William Williamson, David Cunningham
- 15 – 17 New York Branch, 52nd Pawling Weekend, Hopewell Junction, NY, USA
Jim Stott, Marjorie McLaughlin, Fred DeMarse, Laird Brown, Jim Stevenson-Mathews
- 15 – 17 Duns & District Branch, 61st May Weekend, Duns, Scotland
Anne Robertson, Gary Coull, Marjorie Ballantyne, Marian Anderson, Graham Bell, Gordon Brown, James Coutts
- 16 – 17 Lyon Branch, 'How to Teach SCD', Lyon, France
Patrick Chamoin, Aymeric Fromherz
- 22 – 25 International Branch, Weekend School, Copenhagen, Denmark
Gary Coull, Jessie Stuart, Ron Wallace, Ian Muir, Craigellachie
- 22 – 25 Whitsun Course, Munster, Germany
- 29 – 01/06 Tauranga SCD Club, Weekend School, Tauranga, New Zealand
Jeanette Lauder, Antanas Procuta, Diane Bradshaw, Neil Horne, Kathryn Deroles, Damon Collin

Jun 15

- 05 – 07 Freiburg SC Dancers, Advanced Weekend, Freiburg, Germany
Ron Wallace, Muriel Johnstone
- 05 – 07 Midwest Scottish Weekend, Beloit, IL, USA
Linda Henderson, Katie MacNally, Neil Pearlman
- 12 – 13 Luxembourg SCD Club, Weekend School & Ball, Kirchberg, Luxembourg

- 12 – 14 Kuckucksnest, Teachers' Course, Schlüchtern, Germany
Ron Wallace
- 13 Columbus Workshop & Ball, Columbus, OH, USA
Mel Briscoe, Dave Wiesler, Mara Shea
- 19 – 20 Peterborough Branch, Weekend School, Peterborough, Cambs, England
Graham Donald, Sue Ronald, Ian Slater, Marion Turnock, David Page, Debbie Hammond
- 26 – 28 Scots Bonnet SCD Weekend, Saint Quay Perros, Brittany, France
Leslie Lambert, Ian Robertson, John Dudley
- 27 SCD Karlsruhe, Midsummer Walkthroughs & Ball, Karlsruhe, Germany
Dirk Sidow, Christine Moos, Ilona Stitz, Edwin Werner
- 29 – 03/07 Dance Break, Torquay, Devon, England
Wendy Mumford

July 15

- 05 – 10 35th Thistle School of SCD, Banner Elk, North Carolina, USA
Jimmie Hill, Eilean Yates, Janet Lois Walker, J'ina Middleton, Jeff Corrigan, Elizabeth Lee Barnes, Keith & Deirdre Bark, Luke & Adam Brady
- 05 – 11 40th Australian Winter School, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia
Christine Freeman, Elspeth Lacey, Mervyn Short, David Williamson, Tim Wilson, Iain McKenzie, Charlene Penman, Anne-Marie Forsyth, Lyn Scott, Emma Nixon, Bruce Mitchell
- 08 – 12 Kuckucksnest, Summer Course, Schlüchtern, Germany
Avril & David Quarrie
- 10 – 13 Boston Branch, Pinewoods 1, Plymouth, MA, USA
Kathy Giacoletti, Linda Henderson, Graham Donald, Barbara McOwen
- 13 – 18 Boston Branch, Pinewoods 2, Plymouth, MA, USA
Kathy Giacoletti, Linda Henderson, Graham Donald, Barbara McOwen
- 24 – 26 TAC Teaching Skills Course, Farmville, VA, USA
Ron Wallace
- 26 – 02/08 TAC Summer School, Farmville, VA, USA
Sue Porter, Rebecca Blackhall-Peters, Terry Harvey, Robert McOwen, Kathy Fraser-Collins, Neil Barron, Fred Collins, Judi Nicolson, Etienne Ozorak, Don Wood
- 26 – 23/08 RSCDS Summer School, St Andrews, Fife, Scotland

Aug 15

- 24 – 28 Valley SC Dancers, Workshops, Wolfville, Nova Scotia, Canada
Duncan & Maggie Keppie
- 28 – 02/09 The Flying Scotsman SCDG, Weekend Workshop, Salzburg, Austria
Ron Wallace, Jim Cook, Sarah-Jane Summers, James Gray, Sue Bollans, Silke Grosholz, Liam Smith

- 29 TAS Workshop, Broxburn, West Lothian, Scotland

Sept 15

- 05 Thistle Club, Day & Musicians' School, Wing, Bucks, England
Jim Healy, Jim Lindsay
- 11 – 13 Seattle Branch, 41st Fort Worden Weekend, Port Townsend, WA, USA
Pat Houghton, Rebecca Blackhall-Peters, Sandy Gallamore, Gordon Robinson, Andy Imbrie, Deby Grosjean, Calum MacKinnon, Ralph Gordon
- 12 Lochaber Branch, Day School & Dance, Fort William, Scotland
Bill Zobel, Muriel Johnstone, David Cunningham
- 18 – 20 Scottish Weekend, Highview, West Virginia, USA
Antoine Rousseau, Janet Walker, Ellie Briscoe, Jim Lindsay
- 18 – 21 Malta Dance Holiday, St Julians, Malta
Tom McKinlay, Phill Jones, Sue Jennings
- 19 Leeds Branch, Day School, Leeds, England
Di Rooney, Ian Slater
- 19 Ayr Branch, Day School & Dance, Troon, Scotland
- 25 – 02/10 Menorca Dance Holiday, S'Algar Hotel, Menorca, Spain
Maira & Keith Stacey
- 26 Ribble Valley Branch, Day School & Dance, Samlesbury, Lancashire
Eric Finley, Andrew Lyon

Oct 15

- 02 – 04 Argyll SD Group, Weekend & Musicians' School, Dillington, England
Robert Mackay, Judith & Ian Muir
- 02 – 04 Marhamchurch S Dancers, 20th Weekend, Bude, Cornwall, England
- 03 – 04 Paris Branch, Advanced Weekend School, Paris, France
Margo Priestley
- 04 – 09 Dance Week, Sidmouth, Devon, England
Tony Payne
- 10 LAG Tanz, Day School, Villingen, Germany
Birgitta Gindele, Harald Bailer, Wolfgang Müller
- 17 London Branch, Day School, London, England
- 17 Thistle Club, Day & Musicians' School, Eindhoven, Netherlands
- 17 - 18 Nova Scotia Branch, Workshop, Halifax, NS, Canada
Charlie Inglis
- 22 – 25 Kuckucksnest, Autumn Course, Schlüchtern, Germany
Carola Fischer, Silke Grosholz
- 24 Houston & District Branch, Workshop & Ball, Houston, Texas, USA
Robert McOwen, Judi Nicolson, Ian Nicolson, Lisa Scott
- 31 Sheffield Branch, Day School, Hope Valley, England
Jean Martin, Phill Jones

Nov 15

- 06 – 08 RSCDS AGM Weekend, Perth, Perthshire, Scotland
13 – 15 Croydon Branch, Eastbourne Weekend, Eastbourne, England *Mervyn Short*
13 – 15 San Francisco Branch, Asilomar Weekend, CA, USA
Jimmie Hill, Ruth Jappy, Elaine Brunken, Jeff Corrigan, Fiddlesticks & Ivory
18 – 22 Kuckucksnest, Advanced November Course, Schlüchtern, Germany *David Queen, Stefan Schatz*
21 Norwich Branch, Day School, Norwich, Norfolk, England
Les Lambert, Bob Shakespeare
28 – 29 Zurich SCD Club, Course & St Andrew's Night Ball, Zurich, Switzerland *Pat Houghton, Muriel Johnstone, Ian Robertson*

SCD Festivals

Jun 15

- 27 South Wales Branch, Festival, Brecon, Wales

July 15

- 11 61st White Rose Festival, Harewood, Leeds, England
Neil Barron, Alan Harrison, Ian Slater

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