



Milton Scottish Country Dance Club

25th Anniversary

1964 - 1989

TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY
SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE CLUB (MILTON) BRISBANE

Twenty five years have now passed since the first meeting of the Scottish Country Dance Club (Milton) Brisbane. It is my intention to try to record something of the Club's history in this booklet as we gather to celebrate this occasion.

On the 31st August 1964, we had our first class at Milton in the lower hall of the Christ Church of England, Hale St, Milton. Not being attached to any Scottish organization, it was difficult to decide upon a name. We originally settled on The Brisbane Scottish Country Dance Club. However, since there was already a group known as the Scottish Country Dance Society of Brisbane, they suggested we alter our name as they were too similar, so we then changed our name to The Scottish Country Dance Club (Milton) Brisbane.

S.C.D AS IT WAS THEN

I first began S.C.D Dancing in 1959 when I was persuaded by my sister Pauline to make my debut at the fourth Clan Mc Kenzie Highland Ball. I belonged to this group for six years. During that time I took part in many S.C.D displays, trained debutants for three years and taught dancing also for three years. Clan Mc Kenzie group came about as a result of the conducting of the Highland Ball. Mr Alex Mc Kenzie the founder belonged to the Presbyterian Church in Bulimba and had encouraged the young people of the fellowship to attend the Ball.

Dissatisfied with their attempts at the Scottish dances done at the Ball, a young woman of the fellowship by the name of Jean Winn suggested that they get together to practice. This eventually evolved into a regular meeting under her instruction and so were the beginnings of Clan Mc Kenzie S.C.D Club as we know it today. As the practices were basically run in preparation for the Ball, it was not quite as we know our Clubs today. Before the Ball we would have up to 100 people attend and after the Ball we sometimes just managed a set. Out of these Ball practices however, a core of young people remained and we became a demonstration set of which I was a part. I mentioned earlier the group known as The S.C.D Society of Brisbane. This also was a demonstration set conducted by Mr Neil Mc Kenzie the son of Mr Alex Mc Kenzie. This group used to meet for practices in the home of one or other of the dancers and was not conducted as the club we know it to be today.

My enthusiasm for S.C.D was such that I made up my mind to attend a Summer School in New Zealand about which I had learned from my debut partner Graham Shirley, a New Zealander. Graham was a Veterinary Science student who had come to Queensland University with Alistar Cunningham. Both of these young men and their parents had been involved in the early years of the New Zealand S.C.D Society. I first attended the Summer School in Dunedin in 1963 where I did a teachers course under the

direction of Mildred Clancy. The following year I managed to persuade only one other Brisbane dancer to attend the Summer School, this time in Wanganui, and that was Alex Perry. I sat for the Preliminary Test which was the first for New Zealand as Mrs Florence Lesslie an examiner of the R.S.C.D.S had come to reside in N.Z. I passed this test and returned again in 1965 to Summer School - Napier where I sat the Full Certificate and passed becoming the first Australian to gain their certificate at the first examinations held in N.Z. This time I was accompanied by six other dancers. We returned again next year to Christchurch, Lincoln College Summer School, seven in all.

After my first trip to N.Z. it was clear to me that we needed something the same as was happening there to keep the interest in S.C.D. Clan Mc Kenzie and the Brisbane Society were the only active S.C.D groups in Brisbane. As Clan Mc Kenzie was intended mainly in the interest of the Ball and Brisbane society were mainly display, I decided to form a basic S.C.D Club. As I had observed, Clan Mc Kenzie attracted a lot of people for the Ball and after the Ball the interest died. Lots of people returned next year but a lot would not. Some people expressed their tiring of the same set of dances, so I took a chance and started the Milton group doing different dances from those done before. I was also a square dancer at the time and many square dancers helped form the basis of the Club.

EARLY ACTIVITIES

In our first year we conducted a day school (24/7/65), a week-end school at the Southport Methodist Young People's Camp (4/9/65) where the teachers were Mrs Betty Gearey and Mr Jack Seton. Club badges were procured, designed by Pat Prendergast and a decision made to acquire a record player with a variable speed. Until then I had used my own player etc. The raffle was introduced - each member donating something for a raffle each week. I called the first committee meeting on the 11/11/64 where we drew up a Constitution and became affiliated with the N.Z society. We held a second and third week-end schools in 1966 and 1967 at the Tallebudgera Fitness Camp where Mrs Gearey was tutor. Bernie Kennedy did the cooking with the assistance of Mrs Olive Hill. Our fourth week-end school in 1968 was held at Camp Warrawee, Petrie where Bernie once again did the cooking assisted by Jim South. Bernie had been a chef in his time and fed us well with the likes of hot scones, jam and cream, soups, roast meals and haggis which he became a master of.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

As well as the day schools and week-end schools we also held Halloween Parties. We held many socials in our hall with the committees always working very hard together to produce very successful evenings. We were able on many occasions to have live music with the Gunning Trio - John (Accordian), and Phyllis Gunning

(Piano) and Phyllis's father (Fiddle). Most of our Christmas Parties have been held on club nights in the hall except for one where we took a boat trip to Bishop Island having a meal on board and dancing in the hall on the Island before returning to town. Activities outside the club were also on our list. We had held car washes to raise funds for records and bar-b-que's, progressive dinner parties. We had tennis club for club members and a weekly casket ticket. In early years we were invited to join the square dancers on many of their club outings and car rallies. In later years when hiring the hall for a Saturday night social was impossible, we took our social activities to club outings. These have taken us many places on bus trips and boat trips etc. These include a trip to the North Coast, Mary Cairn Cross Park, Flaxton, Big Pineapple, Glass House mountains, Maleny, Mount Tambourine, Maroon Dam, Numinbar Valley, Thunderbird Park, Boomerang Factory, Bishop Island, Russell Island, St. Helena Island, trip on the Brisbane River, and a steam train trip to Grandchester. We have held social dances at the Caboolture Historical Village 1987-88 and made bus trips to Maryborough Day School and Toowoomba Pipe Band competitions and in September 1987 held a week-end away at Neranwood Camp. The Club has been involved in many displays of S.C.D which include churches, Warana, Toc-h, old people's homes, hospitals, weddings, the Cleveland Yacht Club, the Market Club, the Adventurers Club, the UK Club, the German Club, the

Caledonian Club, Masonic Lodge functions, school fêtes, Freeps, the Commonwealth Games and Expo. In August 1966, a group of us attended the Newcastle Highland Ball and in 1967 a team representing our club took part in a S.C.D competition in Inverell where we were successful in gaining first place. Together with these marathons was a trip to Roma in June 1969. A group of dancers left Brisbane at 5.30 am arriving in Roma to dance at a church fête at 1 pm. We were billeted overnight and returned to Brisbane on Sunday. In June 1968 we began Advanced classes in the Alliance hall, Taringa which we conducted for several years and for many years whilst in the Milton hall conducted Beginner's classes for the first two months of the dancing year.

VISITORS

Over the years we have welcomed many visitors to the club both from overseas and other interstate and local clubs. No-one has ever been refused entry to our club and a warm welcome has always been offered. We have welcomed visitors from all states in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, America, England, Scotland and Holland. Invitations to other S.C. dancers from other clubs to join us in our social activities have always been extended. We have had the pleasure of being taught by people such as Mirth Smallwood, Jack Seton, Andrew Gillies and many other well-known teachers.

CHANGES

In twenty-five years many dancers have passed through the club. The reasons have been many and varied. The club has been a meeting place for couples who have eventually married. Other changes in the club have been costs. The cost of our first class was 2/- (20 cents) per night - club membership 10/- (\$1.00). Today our costs are a \$1.50 per night and club membership \$5.00. This still provides a reasonably priced evening's entertainment. In general, numbers have been maintained in the club. We have experienced only one low period in our numbers which was around the time of 1972-73.

ADVERTISING

We have tried it all! Taking every opportunity in early years we have had photographs and interviews in the paper, adverts in the local rag, car stickers, posters in shop windows, displays at every conceivable place or function. The most satisfactory of all has been by word of mouth. However, new suggestions are always welcome and no doubt we will continue to try.

BRANCH

Milton Club has played a part also in the formation of the S.E. QLD Branch. In 1971 I made a suggestion to the committee that we invited the other S.C.D clubs of Brisbane to take part in an "open night" idea where each month all clubs would visit a nominated club to try to



FOUNDER, DIRECTOR, TEACHER OF THE MILTON S.C.D CLUB

PHYLLIS SOUTH



CURRENT CHAIRMAN OF THE MILTON S.C.D CLUB

JAMES SOUTH

build a liaison between clubs. This was the beginnings of the S.E.QLD Combined Clubs Committee which operated for eight years before the formation of the Branch in 1977. Jim South was President and Senga Freeland Secretary (S.C.D Society Brisbane) for a span of ten years in total. To Senga in particular and Jim and the supporting committee members the Branch is indebted for the firm foundation that was laid. The Winter School conducted in 1980 was a credit to them and their committee and one that went down in Australia's history of Winter Schools.

For many years I had put forward a suggestion to Milton Club to conduct a S.C.D Ball from April 1967. Not considered to be secure enough financially it was shelved each time. However, after the formation of the Combined Clubs Committee my suggestion eventually materialized and the Branch has conducted a Ball for many years now. On the formation of the Combined Clubs Committee the Milton week-end school became a combined week-end school.

THE SOUTH FAMILY

It was S.C.D that took me to Scotland where, on the way I met my husband Jim. Jim was a Steward on the passenger liner Arcadia on which I travelled. Jim has been President of the Milton S.C.D club since the beginning of 1970. Our son David born December 1969, our daughter Moira born September 1972, and daughter Helen born July 1975 have all attended class as soon as Mum

was on her feet again. I developed quite an art in nursing a baby or pushing the pram and teaching at the same time. All of them have "helped" with the running of the club. From the age of approximately 3 years, we have "used" them to take a place in a set to enable someone to dance. Most people from those early years will remember David trying to do an allemande correctly when only reaching up to waist level in height. All of them have contributed to the club from David with his music, to the girls with their dancing and the helping hands in getting us all to dancing on time. The children have contributed to week-end schools, ceilidh's and demonstrations both in Brisbane and other parts of Australia. At the age of 9 years David played the piano for Glenys Mills at Canberra Winter School when the tape malfunctioned. Club members have shown an interest in them as they have grown up over the years. Many of the club members are "Aunty" and "Uncle". Several of our dancers are God parents to the children, Ronda and Peter Ovenden, Nan and Johnny Kelly and the late Bernie Kennedy.

MUSIC

As we are so far removed from Scotland, the availability of recorded Scottish music and the lack of Scottish musicians is a problem of some magnitude. However, Milton Club has always managed to have a very comprehensive supply of music. As I mentioned earlier I used my own small player to begin with and then we purchased a variable speed turntable and speaker for £90. We then advanced

to a reel to reel tape recorder and then later a cassette deck and at present we have a variable speed cassette player. To compliment this we have also had the advantage of the musical skills of David South. From the age of 4 years he has been playing piano taking lessons from the age of 7 years. He has the ability to play by ear as well as read music. He has been contributing towards our club since he was around the age of 8 years and has taught himself the piano accordion from the age of 10 years and today is a very accomplished player. His father has encouraged him to do this taking a small part in the weekly classes. It has been an asset on bus, boat and train trips where we have had sing-a-longs and danced outdoors. On occasions of our Halloween parties, socials and Christmas parties David has written music for others to join him in a band and these people were Cathy McLeod, Christopher Swain, Keith and Liz Roxburgh, Glenys Abrahams, and Quangchu Chan a student of the University. David is at present studying for a Bachelor of Arts in Music.

ASSISTANCE

My husband Jim has been my loyal support since we first met and in many ways has endeared himself to our members with his humour and tireless work for the club. While I was unable to conduct class when hospitalized and other occasions when Jim was working shift work, I was ably assisted by Margaret Stanley who is now Mrs Margaret Greer and Mrs Nan Kelly. Many other people have

assisted taking the class including Denise Cikes, Bernard Knowles, Helen Wallace, Robyn Craig, Carmel Mackinnon, Cathy McLeod and Bob Birrell on other occasions. As we acknowledge the twenty-five years the club has been operating I would also like to acknowledge the assistance I have received from the elected committees, individual dancers, the recognition by other clubs, my family and my husband. I trust that you will find the following information about the club of interest. It is my hope that the club will continue to function for many years to come. Happy dancing!

PHYLLIS SOUTH
CLUB DIRECTOR.

FIRST CLASS AT CHRIST CHURCH MILTON

31st August 1964

FIRST COMMITTEE MEETING OF MILTON CLUB

11th November 1964

WEEK-END SCHOOLS

Southport Methodist Young Peoples Camp
27th July 1965

Tallebudgera
1st-2nd October 1966

Tallebudgera
October 1967

Camp Warrawee
1968

DAY SCHOOL

24th July 1965
2nd July 1966

WEEK-END AWAY AT NERANWOOD CAMP

September 1987

WINNERS OF THE INNERAHAVON SHIELD AT INVERELL

1967

TEAM MEMBERS

Margaret (Greer) Stanley	Norman Hill
Phyllis (Nurser) South	Charles Adamson
Jan (Glossop) Costin	Glenys Lawson
Linda Grieg	Denise (Abercromby)

DEMONSTRATION IN ROMA - TEAM 1969

Phyllis South
Nan Kelly
Jean Dutton
Pat Prendergast

Jim South
Charles Adamson
Glenys Lawson
Denise (Abercromby) Cikes

CLUB PRESIDENTS

Gary Hardy	1964-66
John Hutchinson	1966-67
Norman Hill	1967-68
Charles Adamson	1968-69
Deane Watson	1969-70
Jim South	1970-

CLUB TREASURERS

Deane Watson	1964-66
Margaret Stanley	1966-68
Alex Murray	1968-69
Judy Bevan	1969-71
Denise Abercromby	1971-77 Sec/Treasurer
Bernard Knowles	1977-87
Cathy McLeod	1987-

CLUB SECRETARIES

Bev Walters	1964-66
Denise Abercromby	1966-80
Gretchen Evans	1980-82
Trish Swain	1982-

CLUB DIRECTOR

Phyllis South 1967-

NEWCASTLE BALL

13th August 1966