



rscds
Dance Scottish

Scottish Country Dancer



Forthcoming RSCDS Events

Summer School 2010

Dates: Sunday 25 July – Sunday 22 August 2010

Location: University Hall, St Andrews

Director: Margo Priestley

There is still limited availability for each week, but please note that some classes will not run due to lack of demand:

- there will be no Teaching Skills or Tutoring Skills classes in any week
- there will be no Advanced Senior classes in any week
- Beginners' classes will run in weeks 2 and 3 only

You can attend as resident or non-resident, for any one or two weeks of the four.

You can get further information and book online through our website, www.rscds.org or, if you do not have internet access, you can book by calling Headquarters on 0131 225 3854 on Mondays to Fridays, between 10.00am – 4.00pm.

81st Annual General Meeting & Conference Weekend 2010

Dates: Friday 5 – Sunday 7 November 2010

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

- Friday night ball – Neil Copland's Band
- Saturday night dance – Colin Dewar's Band

Other aspects of the weekend are still being finalised – further details and booking form will be available on the website, www.rscds.org, in April, and programmes and cribs will be downloadable from the website later in the year.

Winter School 2011

Dates to be confirmed – please look for information on the website in late May. Booking and payment will be available online through our website, www.rscds.org

Spring Fling 2011

Dates and venue to be confirmed – please look for information on the website in late May. Booking and payment will be available online through our website, www.rscds.org

Instructional DVDs

Scottish Country Dancing
and Performance Dancing
with the Red Thistle Dancers

Easy to follow instructions for
steps, figures, and dances!

For more information
or to order, visit:
www.redthistledancers.org

Celebrating 60 years of Scottish Country
Dancing in the North East of England,
the Newcastle upon Tyne & District Branch
of the RSCDS presents a

Diamond Jubilee Ball

On Saturday 26 June 2010 8pm to 1am

with dancing to Colin Dewar & his Band
Buffet Meal - Dress Formal

The Lancastrian Suite,
Lancaster Road, Dunston, Gateshead NE11 9JR
(Just off the A1 near the Metro Centre)

£25 RSCDS members £28 Non members

Tickets & information from

Sheila Trafford	01670 512568
Veronica Thomson	01665 670807

www.rscds-newcastle.org

**RSCDS
New Zealand Branch Inc.
Annual Summer School**

28th December 2010 - 6th January 2011

*Dunedin - Edinburgh of the South
Come and enjoy dancing, music and fun
Celebrate Hogmanay - NZ Style*

For application forms and further information, contact :
The Secretary, RSCDS New Zealand Branch Inc.
P.O. Box 743, Wanganui 4540, New Zealand
Phone : +64 6 340 4743 - Fax : +64 26 2550 4790
email : sect@rscdsnz.org.nz
Web : www.rscdsnz.org.nz

There is a bias towards history in this issue of *Scottish Country Dancer*, with major articles by our President, Alastair MacFadyen, on the *Hill Manuscript* and our Archivist, Marilyn Healy, on the work of Tom and Joan Flett. The Editorial Board makes no apology for this. The results of the members' survey published in issue 8 told us that readers thought items on the history and cultural background of SCD were more interesting than any other topic covered in the magazine, and we aim to please. There is also a sense that history is being made in these pages. Elizabeth Foster, the Society's Executive Officer, writes about the RSCDS strategy which signals a new way of pursuing our objectives, and we learn that Scottish soldiers serving in Afghanistan have devised a new dance. Will it become as popular as *The Reel of the 51st*? Both remind us that Scottish dancing, like everything else, moves on and, though the past may be interesting, the business of the RSCDS lies in the present and in the future.

It is therefore a real pleasure to read about the many and varied SCD activities taking place all over the world, and the huge efforts made by our members to attract people into Scottish country dancing and to share their enthusiasm with new generations of dancers. Several contributors to the magazine highlight Dance Scottish Week as an ideal opportunity for promotion, recruitment and reminding less active members just what the RSCDS has to offer. Do, please, share your experiences, not just of DSW but of all your SCD successes, celebrations and even failures, because we can learn from the past. Some branches provide us with a steady stream of information, while others never feature in the magazine. We want to hear from you all, and remember that a good quality photograph speaks a thousand words.

Good luck and happy dancing.

The next issue of *Scottish Country Dancer* will be published in October 2010. Please send your contributions to the editor by 1 August.



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Cover picture: Soldiers of The Black Watch dance *The Kandahar Reel*, which they devised while on active service in Afghanistan. See page 23 for the full story. Photo is Crown Copyright

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News from Coates Crescent

Elspeth Gray brings you up to date with developments at Headquarters.



2009 Elections

Results of the elections for management posts at the 2009 AGM were as follows:

Members of Management Board

3 years – Keith Stacey, Elaine Wilde

Convenor Elect, Education & Training Committee

Diane Rooney

Convenor Elect, General Purposes & Finance Committee

There were no nominations.

Members of General Purposes & Finance Committee

3 years – Colin McEwen

Members of Education & Training Committee

3 years – Margaret Baker, Gillian Frew, Andrew Nolan

Members of Membership Services Committee

3 years – Frank Thomson, Sheila West

Management Board and Committee membership for Nov 2009 – Nov 2010

Management Board

Alex Gray (Chairman)

Ruth Beattie (Chairman Elect)

Helen Russell (Convenor, E&T)

William Whyte (Convenor, GP&F)

Pam Gillies (Convenor, MS)

Elizabeth Foster (Executive Officer/Secretary)

Lyn Bryce, Roderick McLachlan, Isobel McMillan, Lorna Ogilvie, Ross Robertson, Lindsey-Jane Rousseau, Andrew Smith, Keith Stacey, Elaine Wilde.

Elspeth Gray (Minute Secretary)

Education & Training Committee

Helen Russell (Convenor)

Diane Rooney (Convenor Elect)

Margo Priestley (Schools Director)

Deb Lees (Youth Director)

Margaret Baker, Malcolm Brown, Ann Dix, Graham Donald, Gillian Frew, Andrew Nolan, Sue Porter, Anne Smyth.

Craig Jackson (Secretary to the Committee)

General Purposes & Finance Committee

William Whyte (Convenor)

Aad Boode, Sue Duckett, Marjorie Hume, Robert McColl, Colin McEwen.

Shona Coyle (Secretary to the Committee)

Membership Services Committee

Pam Gillies (Convenor)

Marilyn Healy (Archivist)

Maureen Rutherford (Music Director)

Bill Austin, Helen Beaney, Anne Carter, Jacquie Riddell, Frank Thomson, Sheila West.

Moira Thomson (Secretary to the Committee)

(Note: the Chairman and Chairman Elect may attend any Committee or other meeting, without a vote)

2010 Elections

Members are encouraged to put themselves forward for election to the Board or to one of the Committees. The next elections will be held at the AGM in November 2010. Details of the posts that will be available and nomination forms will be circulated to Branches and posted on the website – keep an eye out for them or contact Headquarters for more information.

Staffing

We have been delighted to welcome Moira Thomson as a permanent member of staff. She is responsible for administration of the examinations and medal tests, and also Spring Fling, and has recently taken on the role of Secretary to the Membership Services Committee. On a sadder note, however, we have said goodbye to Kate Lawrie, who has decided to return to Australia. She has worked with the Society for almost 10 years and will be much missed, but we wish her a very happy – and warm – retirement. Liz Foster is taking the opportunity to review staffing requirements and allocation.

Website and Database

By the time members receive this magazine, the new website and database should be up and running. A short-term “fix” for the synchronisation difficulties with the online database was not going to be cost-effective, so it has in fact been redeveloped and streamlined alongside the website. Branches will of course be given full details of how to access your members’ data. We hope that members will find the new website easier to navigate and look forward to your feedback to help us develop it even further.

DSW 2010 Photographic Competition

HQ is supporting a number of events in Dance Scottish Week (DSW) 2010. A new

venture this year, aimed at encouraging wider participation in DSW, is a photographic competition. Between 1 April and 30 June, branches and members are being asked to submit photographs of Scottish country dancers taken against recognisable monuments, landmarks and/or symbols of their countries. We hope that this will have wide appeal and generate entries from around the world.

Submissions will be published on the members section of the new website. Photographs selected for use in the competition will be held until Dance Scottish Week in September, when a different photograph will be published each day on the home page. Children and young people will be asked to identify where the photograph was taken and to name the nearest RSCDS branch.

Prizes will be awarded in age groups, up to 18 years old. The photographs selected for the competition will be credited and rotated on the home page during the forthcoming year. As we are looking for high resolution images, photographs should be taken on a quality digital camera – no mobile phones, please! Entries should be emailed, in jpeg format, marked “Photograph” in the subject line, to: info@rscds.org

SCD mentors

The Traditional Arts Working Group in Scotland (TAWGS) which took evidence from, among others, our President, Dr Alastair MacFadyen, has called for country dancing mentors to help safeguard Scottish traditions. Scottish Culture Minister, Fiona Hyslop, gave her support, and our Executive Officer, Liz Foster, issued a press release backing the Minister’s wish to find ways of enabling individuals to pass on their skills and expertise to a younger generation and to help them experience the fun and enjoyment of Scottish country dancing.

Development Officer

The RSCDS has obtained a grant from the Scottish Arts Council to engage a part-time Development Officer to help Scottish branches get children and young people involved in Scottish country dancing. We are delighted that Susan Rhodes has taken up the role. You can read about her on page 10.

The RSCDS would welcome donations and bequests from its members.

Your gift will enable us to develop innovative projects to assist the Society worldwide and help keep Scottish country dancing a popular recreation.

Your subscription funds today’s expenditure, your donation helps look after its future.

From the Chair



by Alex Gray, Chairman

This is my third *From the Chair* in *Scottish Country Dancer*, which means I am nearly three-quarters of the way through my term of office. Time flies! Being Chairman has provided opportunities to meet members from all over the world, to realise how large the circle is of people who enjoy our form of dance and to talk with members. The recent Falkirk Branch weekend at Crieff Hydro was a highlight, a great weekend with over 400 dancers participating in one of three dancing streams, and left Kate and me with many happy memories.

However, not all things that come your way as Chairman are enjoyable. You have to be prepared to face up to the challenges arising from the modern world's rapid rate of change and evolution. At the regional forums held since I became Chairman (Scotland, TAC and New Zealand) many members have taken the opportunity to inform me what is good and bad about the Society and its activities. We have responded with immediate action where

appropriate and possible, and fed other ideas into the Strategic Plan 2010-13, where members can see the concerns we are addressing. The Strategic Plan will shape our development over the next 3 years and will be used by Management Board and Committees to structure meetings. Issues being addressed include how overseas members become more involved in the Society's governance, and making the website more informative and accessible. Alongside the Strategic Plan, the Marketing Plan and Communications Strategy will support branches in promoting the Society and improve communication across branches, members and Headquarters.

It is easy for me to say positive things, but how do we assure members that action will follow? In her article on page 7, Liz Foster (Executive Officer) describes her preparation of the Strategic Plan. A determined lady, Liz wants to see it succeed, which should ensure its implementation! The real proof, however, is in the coming months.

I am aware also that a number of members feel the structure of the Society needs to change further, even though the outcome of the branch survey in May 2009 resulted in a consensus for the status quo; in particular, there is a range of views on the

current membership structure. We are open, therefore, to continuing this debate and to receiving constructive and realistic ideas from local groups, which will serve also to preserve the functions and services of the Society valued by the membership. We will publish suggestions on the website to generate discussion, and to inform a Working Group of Management Board members, who will continue to focus upon this aspect of the way forward.

Feedback from members clearly shows appreciation of Board representation at regional conferences and we plan to hold future conferences in Scotland, England, Europe and Australia (at the Australian Winter School in 2010).

Two new branches have been formed in Lyon and Northern Italy. Kate and I spent a great weekend with Lyon Branch, who invited us to teach at the workshop celebrating their first anniversary. The participants' vibrant enthusiasm throughout the weekend created a great atmosphere. We wholeheartedly welcome them and the Northern Italy members to the Society. We also enjoyed the Manchester Branch 75th Anniversary Ball.

Kate and I look forward to meeting and dancing with members at events we will be attending in the coming months.

From the Management Committees



General Purposes & Finance Committee

William Whyte,
Convenor

We are now approaching the end of our financial year and as usual the end result is difficult to forecast with any precision. At the time of writing the inflow of subscriptions is better than last year (but there are still some laggard branches!) and the rate of decline in membership numbers seems to have abated this year. It is pleasing to note that a number of members are taking advantage of the new joint adult membership. The Society has been successful in obtaining a grant to fund a Development Officer for a year to undertake a specific project (see page 10). The

investments are showing positive gains after the steep falls suffered last year. We have had very good news on the VAT front, payments now received add up to a net benefit of £185,000 after all the intermediaries are paid. This money goes into reserves, and has enabled us to fund the website update (an item not in the original 2009-10 budget) costing some £20,000.

The use of the Jean Milligan Memorial Fund to complete the musical recordings of our books is close to conclusion with the recordings of Books 7 and 17. This completes the set so the mission is accomplished.

The combination of good news and not much bad news means that the operational financial accounts will show a balanced outcome, plus or minus £10,000 (disregarding the

investment in the new website) but certainly the overall total of assets will be appreciably larger. The Society is therefore in an enviable, sound financial position.

Nothing stays the same and the role of the GP&F Committee is no longer as relevant as it was when the current management structure was agreed at the AGM in 2001 and then implemented in the following year. With the installation of an Executive Officer, the need for more focused, time-limited working groups and permanent expert panels, the idea of GP&F meeting four times a year and doing what it used to do is no longer practical nor indeed effective. The officers of the Society and the Board are working on how to adapt the structure with the target of presenting proposals at the next AGM. See you there!



Education & Training Committee

Helen Russell,
Convenor

I am sure that many of us who went to school in Scotland remember being taught to dance by teachers who had attended Jordanhill or Dunfermline College. This, of course, was part of Dr Milligan's legacy. She ensured that many Physical Education teachers studied for the first part of the RSCDS teaching qualification during their time at college. The result was that SCD was taught in every Scottish secondary school, in many primary schools and much further afield as teachers emigrated and started to teach dancing.

Since then, the curriculum for teacher training courses in universities and in schools has changed significantly. The last generation of teachers who were trained to teach SCD has now reached retirement. So that these skills are not lost from Scottish

schools the RSCDS is piloting a programme of Continuous Professional Development for Scottish teachers. Based on models of successful practice from Aberdeen, Glasgow and Helensburgh, the Society is training a selection of its own teachers, many of whom have backgrounds in education and training, to deliver basic SCD teaching skills to trainee and qualified teachers in Scottish schools. In this way it is hoped that eventually we can ensure that many schools will contain an enthusiastic member of staff competent to teach SCD. Any school or university wishing advice or training should email cpd@rscds.org for more information. After the initial pilot, the intention is to make such training available as widely as possible. I know that there are RSCDS teachers all over the world with the skills to train others.

Having had the great privilege of attending both Australian Winter School and New Zealand Summer School in 2009, I was most heartened by the work being done to encourage young dancers in the Southern Hemisphere. It was delightful to watch

children and young people take part confidently in all the activities of a residential school. I hope that parents, dancers and teachers all over the world will continue to support the recruitment of our next generation of dancers.

Frequently asked questions

1. "Our regular teacher has retired/left. I've been left in charge, but I am not a teacher and don't really want to sit the examinations. What help can you give me?"

There are many dancers who may find themselves in charge of a class or club, but who do not wish to undergo the rigours of an examination candidate course to gain the formal RSCDS teaching qualification, comprising Units 1 to 5. For those people there now exists Unit 0. This is an outline of a course in basic SCD teaching skills which can be delivered anywhere in the world. One of its major attractions is that it does not involve sitting an examination. Several branches already offer this type of course, so we have compiled many of their good ideas to make Unit 0.

2. "What is a mentor supposed to do?" Ask no more.....a document containing further guidance and a training outline for Unit 4 mentors is now on the website.



Membership Services Committee

Pam Gillies,
Convenor

Work has been continuing on the new book of dances to be published this year – working title "Book 46". Our thanks go to the 91 branches that have been involved in evaluating the submissions. The final selection of dances and music has been made, and we are on track for having both book and CD ready for Summer School 2010.

The new Graded Book 2 is almost ready to go to the printer, and the music has been recorded, so again we should have both book and CD ready in good time for Summer School.

Jean Martin and a team of reviewers from around the world have been working on the compilation of Books 13-18 in A5 format, and that will shortly be in print.

The Committee has been looking into making a limited number of tracks available as digital downloads; the potential distributor has provided a draft contract, which is being carefully reviewed, and we hope to see some progress in that area very soon. Another innovation is that we are now selling our CDs through a record shop in Perth, Scotland – Concorde Music Shop, website <http://www.concordemusic.com/>. But don't forget that you will very soon be able to order and pay for RSCDS goods online through our own new web shop!



Ladies' Step

Mrs Tih West taking a Ladies' Step class at St. Andrews in the 1950s. Do you recognise any of the students?

Since the early days at the RSCDS Summer School in St. Andrews, the form of dance known as "Ladies' Highland", then subsequently as "Ladies' Step", has been nurtured by very gifted teachers and enjoyed by enthusiastic dancers, who relish the opportunity to explore the challenge, complexity and grace of this form of dance.

The RSCDS is in the process of collecting and publishing both the dances and the music for some traditional and modern step dances. With generous help from Dr Ron Nedderman, who collated and edited his late wife, Susan's, notes, the first part of this project came to fruition in 2009 with the publication of 15 dances and the accompanying sheet music in *The St Andrews Collection of Step Dances*. The next part of the project will involve publishing a second book and a CD of the music for both books by Muriel Johnstone and Keith Smith. This will be an excellent resource for step dancers and step teachers and will also be a delightful listening experience.

If you have enjoyed dancing or teaching Ladies' Step please support the project by buying the first volume. *The St Andrews Collection of Step Dances* is available from Headquarters.



RSCDS Strategic Plan 2010-13

by Elizabeth Foster, Secretary/Executive Officer

Background

On my appointment in December 2008, I was asked to develop an organisational "strategic plan" for 2010-13. I am a great fan of strategic plans!

A strategic plan is a tool used by managers to describe and set targets. By carefully listing what you expect to achieve over a three year period, your performance against the plan can be tracked and monitored internally and externally, as the strategic plan is a public document.

The strategic plan offers other benefits. In an organisation like the RSCDS, where so much work is taken forward by volunteers, the plan can help to ensure that energy and effort is directed towards achieving maximum impact, where the outcome is greater than the sum of the parts. In addition, for a worldwide organisation, the plan provides public accountability and the opportunity for improved communication both within and external to the RSCDS.

The Strategic Planning Process

To develop a strategic plan, it is usual to begin by re-visiting the organisational aims and objectives and by looking inside the organisation for areas of strength and weakness; then to look outside the organisation to identify challenges (eg. as presented by competitors) and opportunities for development (eg. the current upsurge of interest in all forms of dance).

The RSCDS exists to:

...promote and develop Scottish country dancing worldwide for the benefit of present and future generations...

and aims to achieve its objectives by:

1. promoting and encouraging Scottish country dancing for all ages and abilities;
2. providing technical support to Scottish country dancing by maintaining high standards of teaching, training musicians and publishing relevant supporting information; and
3. supporting and widening the network of RSCDS branches and other Scottish dance groups who share our objectives.

Within the RSCDS we have passion, commitment and energy but we also have an ageing membership and a variable level of success in attracting new and younger members.

Outside the RSCDS, the environment is challenging in terms of financial markets and competition for leisure activities from

other agencies and bodies, not to say with what is deemed to be "cool" by the younger generation at any point in time!

The RSCDS Strategic Plan 2010-13

In deciding upon what should be included in the RSCDS strategic plan 2010-13, a wealth of comments and views from the membership was available; collated over the last two years, in response to questionnaires and focus groups, and from sessions held at branch and regional conferences.

With all this in mind, the RSCDS Board agreed six main action areas for 2010-13:

1. Increasing public profile and awareness of the work and role of the RSCDS;
2. Extending access to SCD across Scotland and worldwide;
3. Continuing to work to maintain and improve standards in SCD;
4. Increasing the membership and improving membership services;
5. Identifying opportunities to diversify RSCDS income;
6. Continuous improvement in organisational management and governance, including risk management.

The RSCDS Strategic Plan for 2010-13 spans a relatively short period of time and, within that, the greatest amount of detail pertains to the financial year 2010-11. You can read how the RSCDS intends to address each of the six main action areas in detail by accessing the strategic plan on the RSCDS website at www.rscds.org

As mentioned above, however, you should be confident that the strategic plan is a working tool not a tablet of stone, and does not preclude other activities happening alongside it. Indeed, stabilising the membership must be addressed over a longer period of time, whilst providing efficient, appropriate and cost-effective member services is an ongoing concern.

The RSCDS Membership

Whilst membership can be increased only at the local level, 2010 will see a number of actions being taken to support branches in this endeavour; including the provision of improved and accessible publicity materials, a more effective media presence, initiatives to engage more children and young people in Scottish country dancing and to increase the local availability of teachers, and a commitment to supporting Dance Scottish Week on a global scale. In addition, a review will begin of the constitutional basis of the RSCDS, the Licence Agreement, and the membership structure with worldwide focus groups being encouraged to submit ideas for consideration.

Membership Services

Providing efficient and appropriate services to members is an ongoing concern. To this end, the Membership Services Committee has been tasked with keeping in touch with the perceived usefulness of services being provided by the RSCDS, and is expected to consult formally with the membership and branches alternately, on a two year cycle. Clearly, ideas and concerns will be welcomed outside this two year framework, but a commitment is being made to this regular review of services and to taking cognisance of the views expressed. With the launch of the new website in the early part of 2010, an improved membership database, on-line events management system, shop and support for social networking sites and information exchange, communication should be substantially and noticeably improved.

The Content of the Strategic Plan

As indicated above, the content of the Strategic Plan was informed by members' views, and the RSCDS Board, Committees and staff team worked to develop the Action Plans on each area identified by the Board. The Summary Table below provides a quick guide to where the main work is located with respect to each action area.

Action Area	1	2	3	4	5	6
Board/HQ	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
E&T	Pink	Pink	Pink			
GP&F						Green
MS	Blue			Blue		

The RSCDS Strategic Plan 2010-13, along with a Marketing Plan and Communications Strategy, is available on the website. The first formal progress report to the membership will be made at the AGM in November this year. This strategic plan signals a new, more rigorous and inclusive way of pursuing RSCDS objectives, with much of the work spearheaded by the volunteer members of the Board and Committees. Much also depends upon the active engagement of local branches and members.

I hope you enjoy reading about the work to which the RSCDS is committed over the next 3-4 years. I look forward to working with you and to receiving your comments, which should be forwarded to info@rscds.org with *RSCDS Strategic Plan 2010-13* in the subject heading.

Dance Scottish Week

by Ruth Beattie



Dance Scottish Week was introduced in 2007 following the first Scottish Branches Conference. Initially, DSW was perceived as an initiative to encourage new membership, but now its purpose is to promote Scottish country dancing worldwide, to provide a focused week of activity for the enjoyment of all dancers, to engage with other organisations and to stimulate political interest. Measuring increased membership worldwide is not easy but if every branch were to increase membership by three or four the outcome would be significant. Having participated in DSW over the last three years I have no doubt that the various activities have been enjoyable and worthwhile.

My memory returns to the Homecoming Ball held in Edinburgh last year. It was a sell-out and throughout the evening the atmosphere was happy and relaxed. We had wonderful music from David Cunningham, and MCs who delighted everyone with their lively approach and clear re-capping. Dancers joined us from the furthest corners of the UK, from America and from Japan. To celebrate the occasion a special Homecoming cake was cut by Anne Thorn, who devised the new *Homecoming Dance*. But perhaps the icing on the cake was an invitation to our Society members and

representatives of other organisations to attend a reception at the Scottish Parliament on 17 September hosted by Richard Lochhead, the Member of the Scottish Parliament (MSP) for Moray. There we had the opportunity to speak with MSPs about how SCD sits at the heart of the Scottish Parliamentary "Healthy Living" agenda. We also watched a display by the RSCDS Youth Demonstration Team accompanied by Mo Rutherford and Luke Brady. Among the dancers was Gary Coull, who is also a local councillor in Keith, and was instrumental in securing the reception. We hope to repeat the event this year.

And now we look forward to DSW 2010. We have returned to our format of holding a launch event and a closing event. We are delighted that Aberdeen Branch is hosting the launch on Friday 17 September and Ayr Branch the closing dance on 24 September. Details are on the website. There are weekday events awaiting confirmation. There will be another colouring competition for children and a photographic competition. Most importantly, we urge you all to join in. Projects do not have to be high profile to be successful. Good luck and best wishes for an enjoyable and stimulating promotion of all we strive to achieve for our Society.

Richard Lochhead MSP addressing guests in the Garden Lobby at the Scottish Parliament accompanied by Alex Gray, RSCDS Chairman. Also visible is one of our new RSCDS banners.



A view from London Branch

by Angela Young

"Why don't we try something different for Dance Scottish Week?" "How about dancing *Eightsome Reels* around London for publicity?" "We could hold a Freshers' Week event". And so the ideas kept flowing as the Branch Committee engaged in some blue sky thinking about how to exploit DSW.

Our aim has been to attract people to the fun, sociable way of keeping fit through SCD, as well as showing that it is a family activity. By using existing events combined with new ventures we have tried to cater for all levels, while making sure we publicise dancing opportunities in London as widely as possible. Our marketing strategy is on the Branch website as "Dance Scottish Week Factsheet" (www.rscdslondon.org).

The midweek "Open House" is the opportunity for everyone to get dancing: novices finding out what to do in the middle of the *Eightsome*, regular dancers trying out Ladies' Step, fledgling dancers exploring a technique session, or parents bringing children to dance in family groups. The evenings are very informal, with wine and light refreshments served throughout. Committee members and class regulars are there to answer questions and hand out flyers, MCs call ceilidh and simple country dances, various classes perform short demonstrations and around the room are photos and posters showing our year's activities. It's a great way of bringing the different Branch classes together and reminding members what is on offer, and some newcomers definitely want to learn more.

We have also ventured out from the centre of London to hold a ceilidh in Wimbledon. This attracted local people who were prepared to try SCD for the first time because it was happening on their doorstep.

DSW has made a huge difference to the way we start our dancing year, we are looking out much more than we are looking in, and we'll be thinking about how DSW can help us into the future, "How about dancing *The Flying Scotsman* next to the actual train at Kings Cross Station?"

Dance Scottish Week 2010

Friday 17 – Saturday 25 September

We depend on you!

Let us together make Dance Scottish Week 2010 the biggest yet!

It would be wonderful if the Society could afford to take out full-page advertisements in national newspapers worldwide. It would be great to see adverts on television, but as this is not possible the Society depends on branches and clubs worldwide to recruit new dancers and new members. Dance Scottish Week in September is our chance to promote Scottish country dancing to the general public, wherever we are in the world. If the dates do not quite fit your situation, feel free to hold your own DSW whenever you want! Make every week Dance Scottish Week!

Here are some of the ideas which have worked in the past:

- Demonstration in different parts of your town
- A free taster workshop for children and/or adults
- A ceilidh dance for the general public (no pumps please!)
- An interview in your local newspaper
- Invite your local newspaper to a class
- A dance for all the groups in your area
- A 'bring a friend' dance with an easy programme

We are helping you.

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Tell us what you are planning.

Email us at HQ so that we can put your DSW events up on the website. Wherever you are, please make sure your group is involved.

Friday 17 September in Aberdeen

The opening Scottish event is the North East Dance, organised by Aberdeen Branch, with Colin Dewar playing in the MacRobert Hall, Robert Gordon's College. Tickets £10 from Lynn Wood (01224 636128) or email lwood@technip.com

Programme: *It's Just for Fun, General Stuart's Reel, Balmoral Strathspey, The Elphinstone Jig, Milton's Welcome, The Trysting Place, Tribute to the Borders, The Inimitable Derek, The Minister on the Loch, The Earl of Mansfield, The Machine without Horses, The Dream Catcher, Invermeill House, The Nurseryman, Gang the Same Gate, Blooms of Bon Accord, The Laird of Milton's Daughter, The Silver Tassie, Maxwell's Rant, Follow me Home*

Friday 24 September in Ayr

The Scottish event at the end of DSW is the South West Dance, organised by Ayr Branch, with Ian Muir's band in the Concert Hall, Troon. Tickets £8 from Wilma Brown (01292 315558) or email ayrbranchsec@aol.com

Programme: *Welcome to Ayr, The Sailor, Autumn in Appin, Ladies' Fancy, Portnacraig, The Braes of Breadalbane, It's Just for Fun, The Silver Tassie, General Stuart's Reel, Pelorus Jack, Minard Castle, Culla Bay, The Kelloholm Jig, Polharrow Burn, Cape Town Wedding, Todlen Hame, The Gentleman, Montgomerie's Rant*

Let's all support Dance Scottish Week 2010



Dancers enjoying a London Branch Open House during Dance Scottish Week.

Scottish Branches Conference

6 February 2010 Dunblane

by Jimmie Hill

More famous for Andy Murray than the RSCDS, Dunblane was the venue for the fifth Scottish Branches conference. Lorna Ogilvie welcomed everyone, pointing out the initiatives to have emerged so far from the SBC: Dance Scottish Week, Marketing Officer, Schools Liaison Officer, new corporate identity, Dance Scottish logo to name but five.

Alex Gray began by reviewing recent developments and outlined challenges, followed by Liz Foster, who gave an enthusiastic and informative presentation of the new Strategic Plan, explaining in plain English how she saw it as a "flexible tool" rather than set in stone. She also outlined the structure of the new website.

The afternoon focused on education and training with a presentation by Helen Russell, who linked future plans with specific objectives in the Strategic Plan. Jimmie Hill then concentrated on Scottish schools with proposals to train RSCDS teachers who were also schoolteachers to run training courses for primary and secondary teachers. He then brought delegates up to date on proposals for Dance Scottish Week 2010.

So what did the delegates and members think during the discussion sessions? There was unanimous agreement on the need for Dance Scottish Week to continue – and with flagship events but not necessarily in the major cities. Recruitment of new dancers was seen as a year-round priority with an emphasis on accepting all dancers, whatever their level of ability. It was stressed that teachers of beginners classes must make learning fun. There was overwhelming support for our high-quality magazine. Of the 44 feedback forms returned, all wanted the conference to continue.

The day was altogether positive and brought to a fitting end with an overview by Jean Martin who had been 'circulating' throughout the day. Quite dizzy she must have been!



Once again a children's colouring competition was held in conjunction with Dance Scottish Week. Entries were submitted from all over the world and winners were selected from four age categories. These were:-

8 years - Asuka Kouketsu (Saitama, Japan)

9 years- Molly Carter (Isle of Skye)

10 years- Jenna Donovan (Dunfermline)

11 years - Davina Foucar (Lisburn, Northern Ireland)

Congratulations to everyone who took part. Sadly, there is only room to show Davina's entry.

Who's who in the RSCDS



Deb Lees
Youth Director

In June 2009 I was appointed to the position of RSCDS Youth Director for three years, taking up the post in November, after the AGM. I began Scottish country dancing at Newcastle University as an 18 year old student – one class and I was hooked, going to my first dance four days later!

I still live and work in Newcastle as a Paediatric Speech and Language Therapy service manager. I started SCD teaching at the University class, obtaining my full certificate in 1987. I currently teach two weekly classes, both have younger dancers and musicians regularly involved. Teaching at day and weekend schools is always a great privilege, especially those with a youth focus, and it has been a challenge as well as a pleasure to lead

SCD groups at traditional music and dance festivals around the world. I am also a caller for two Northumbrian based bands and enjoy playing whistles at local music sessions.

In the RSCDS youth encompasses children and young adults up to age 35 worldwide – a very big spread – and my work as Director will include a review of the medal tests, the application of good practice in child protection and helping younger musicians and teachers to develop their skills. I will be supported by the Education & Training Committee and, in particular by the Schools Liaison Officer (Irene Bennett) and the Youth Demonstration Team Co-ordinator (Margo Priestley). In addition I am very keen to promote the sharing of good ideas.



Margo Priestley
Schools Director

I began Scottish country dancing at primary school in Fife. I moved to Edinburgh and in 1970 I decided I wanted to dance again and joined Edinburgh Branch. As a member of the demonstration team I competed at festivals, danced in the Branch show 'An Edinburgh Fancy' and of course took part in trips overseas.

I gained my teaching certificate in 1977 and started going to Summer School at St Andrews, which I thoroughly enjoyed. Since then I have taught all levels of classes for the Branch, and I have had great pleasure teaching at many day schools at home and abroad as well as Summer School. I am also an examiner for the RSCDS.

Schools are a vital part of the Society and I am committed to maintaining the traditions and standards along with the all important social aspects of dancing. In my new role as Director I hope I can encourage more people to experience the same pleasure and enjoyment I have had from being part of the RSCDS family.



Development Officer

by Susan Rhodes

I was delighted to be offered a year contract working part-time until March 2011 as Development Officer for the RSCDS on a Scottish Arts Council-funded project. The project aims to support Scottish branches interested in engaging children and young people with SCD. If the pilot is successful, the learning will be shared across the organisation. The project is part of a wider RSCDS strategy to recruit more young dancers through Scottish schools, with broader links to health, exercise and reducing obesity. I'm really looking forward to getting started and to working with RSCDS branches.

I lived in the Netherlands for 10 years on a 20 metre two-mast gaff ketch. In the 2007 summer holidays we sailed across to Scotland but didn't sail back again! My daughter, Emma (10), is now more Scottish than Dutch, and is enjoying learning traditional music and SCD. Husband Hans doesn't join in though, his 500 left feet make him a liability on the dance floor!

As a musician and keen dancer, I am loving being here too. I have worked privately as a music teacher with children of all ages, and have played in many folk bands over the years. I also have a lot of experience working in schools, currently as volunteer 'choirmaster' at my daughter's school, and with Oban Strings (primary schools' orchestra). In addition to my passion for music and dance, I worked for many years as policy officer and researcher for various non-profit and governmental organisations, researching, developing and promoting

good practice in child and family services.

I'm looking forward to hearing from all branches about their work in engaging young dancers and I'm keen to be a good 'spider in the web' by sharing this information across the organisation. I'm not sure if 'spider in the web' translates well from Dutch; it means being a good point of contact, being a source of knowledge about activities, and making connections between the various strands across the network. I'm also keen to hear from any Scottish branches interested in setting up activities for children and young people. Later in the project, I hope to be able to offer more in-depth support to several branches to help them establish activities for young dancers, and build links with other local traditional dance and music initiatives.

I'm looking forward to starting work, getting in touch with branches, hearing about your activities and having the opportunity to meet with as many Scottish branches as possible in the course of the year. I'll also keep all branches informed about the project via the website. Secretly, I'm hoping that the project will improve my own dancing skills. Unlike my husband, I don't have 500 left feet, but I still never quite get it right! I'll be in touch again soon and do feel free to contact me – a word of welcome is always nice when you start something new.

PS I'll be working mainly from home (boat!). My contact details are:

Tel: 07516 355 969

Email: devofficer@rscds.org

AGM & Conference Weekend 2009

by Helen Beaney



Recipients of the RSCDS Scroll at the 2009 AGM were (left to right) Jean Sim (Education & Training Committee) Isabelle Macpherson (Toronto Branch) Barbara Peel (Membership Services Committee) and Dorothy Hamilton (Glasgow Branch). Scrolls were also presented locally to Patricia Coyle (St. Catherine's Branch) who was pictured receiving her award in the previous issue, and to Jean Conway, Elizabeth Wilson and Geoffrey Selling.

The RSCDS Conference Weekend, including the 80th AGM, was held in the Bell Sports Centre, Perth on 6 - 8 November 2009. The event opened with a wine reception, while a piper managed to make himself heard above the sound of over 550 dancers greeting friends, some of whom they had not seen since last year. After a warm welcome from the Provost of Perth, the Ball got under way. The formal dress of most of the dancers, swathes of RSCDS tartan round the walls, the programme devised by Pretoria Branch and the music of David Cunningham (Jnr.) and his Band all combined to make a great atmosphere. So efficient were the MCs and line counters that there was even time to fit in an extra dance.

Throughout Saturday morning and early afternoon the RSCDS shop and an assortment of branch tables did a roaring trade in books, CDs and accessories. In the morning there was a choice of a general dance class led by Sue Porter to the music of Mo Rutherford, which about 100 dancers attended, or a question time session with a panel consisting of the Chairman, Chairman Elect, Executive Officer and the Convenors of the three Committees.

During this latter session, many questions were asked, the vast majority of which were interlinked – the favourite topics being those hardy perennials: how do we get (and keep) more members and what do we (particularly overseas members) get for our subscription money? There were many useful contributions, from the floor as well as the panel, and my only grouse was that the five people in the row behind me saw fit to mutter to each other all the way through the session. Alex Gray emphasised that the Management Board, Committees and Headquarters staff welcome helpful ideas on subjects such as how to make

members feel involved, both at branch level and within the Society as a whole, for example volunteering their skills, taking part in inter-branch discussions and conferences and "test-driving" new dances for publication. Membership Services would be happy to receive suggestions for discussion topics and other activities for future conference weekends (although the proposal of a ceilidh to replace the Saturday night dance was not well received). Liz Foster has co-ordinated discussions with branches that have suffered a dramatic fall in membership, and also with those whose numbers have increased, in the hope of learning the causes. One of the features of the new website will be a members' forum where we will be able to share experiences and discuss ideas.

The AGM was the first at which delegates could represent more than one vote (up to three), so a coloured card system was in place and there were three counts for each motion and amendment. The Management Board motion bringing the Constitution and Rules into line with a motion passed at the



Jean Conway (Canberra and District Branch) with Jack Arthur, Branch Chair, at an event in Nowra, Australia to celebrate the award of her Scroll.

2008 AGM was approved with one amendment, from Leicester Branch, regarding the circumstances in which a trustee could be removed from the Board. The votes for committee members were cast and counted before the meeting started. A summary of the meeting and the Executive Officer's report are on the website.

The programme for the Saturday evening dance was prepared by Royal Tunbridge



Elizabeth "Bunty" Wilson (East Angus Branch) receiving the Scroll from Irene Bennett, former RSCDS Chairman.

Wells Branch and the music was by Jim Lindsay and his Band. I have had one of his CDs (not dance music) for 20 years and this was the first time I have danced to his playing live. It was worth the wait! A similar number of dancers to the previous night enjoyed it just as much as the Ball.

Sunday morning began with a meeting for all members of the Management Board and Committees. Then there was a range of options: a class taught by Johan MacLean, with music by Robert Mackay, for those who still had energy left; a Youth Forum or a meeting of the International Branch. Unfortunately, the planned Musicians' Forum had to be cancelled. Lunch was arranged, for those who had requested it, and then everyone wended their way home. I booked the same accommodation for 5 - 7 November 2010 before I left, so I look forward to seeing you all again for the 81st AGM and to help Perth celebrate the 800th anniversary of King William the Lion granting the city its charter.



Geoffrey Selling (Delaware Valley Branch) with his RSCDS Scroll.

News in Pictures



The RSCDS is one of the sponsors of the Scottish Traditional Music Awards. In 2009 the Award sponsored by the Society was presented by our President, Alastair MacFadyen, to the young musicians of the Caledonian Canal Ceilidh Trail. Each summer the Highland Council organises a series of ceilidhs and dances along the Caledonian Canal from Fort Augustus to Inverness and taking in Loch Ness. It is a wonderful opportunity for young musicians to play for dancing and improve their skills. One of the events last summer was a dance run by Irene Whyte (Inverness Branch).

The photograph shows the Ceilidh Trail musicians: (front row) lead musician Cameron Kellow and, on guitar, student musician Alasdair Taylor; (back row) with the fiddle, student musician Euan Smilie and, with the Award, singer Rachael MacDonald and trainee lead musician and fiddler, Rachel Campbell



Dancers from the Aberdeen Branch Airyhall Children's Class performing at the Eastgate Shopping Centre, Inverness in October 2009 as part of the Centre's Homecoming celebrations. Later in the afternoon they danced for delegates at an international Homecoming conference at the Eden Court Theatre.



Long serving Nottingham Branch members at the Golden Jubilee Dance.

Nottingham Branch celebrated its Golden Jubilee on 13 June 2009 when over 100 dancers plus George Meikle and the Lothian Band came together in a night to remember. David Page, Chairman of the Branch, reports that the RSCDS continues to flourish in Nottingham with two classes and a demonstration team, whose members play their part in publicising Scottish country dancing. The Branch looks forward to dancing on into its second half century.



In Northern Ireland, the Helen's Bay class, which is part of Belfast Branch, celebrated a golden anniversary in December. The class was started in 1959 by Jean McCadden and she has taught the class for all of those 50 years. Pupils past and present gathered for a ball in December with Iain MacPhail and his Band. They were entertained by a delightful demonstration of two dances (*Ian Powrie's Farewell to Auchterarder* and *Over the Dee; Over the Don*) by the Holywood children's class, which is also taught by Jean.

Elizabeth Cameron, President of Belfast Branch, presented Jean (*on the right*) with a Branch Award to mark her contribution to Scottish country dancing over so many years.



Vi Johnston, a founder member of Peterhead Branch, and a regular reader of *Scottish Country Dancer*, celebrated her 100th birthday recently. She remarked, "I read the magazine from beginning to end. It keeps me in touch with what's happening in the Scottish country dance world. It also brings back happy memories of over 70 years dancing and the many friends I made over the years. I remember too Miss Milligan's classes when she came to Aberdeenshire – she definitely made sure you knew how to dance!"



Teachers and musicians at the RSCDS Winter School in Pitlochry, from left to right, Ann Dix, Gordon Simpson (fiddle), Margo Priestley, John Johnston, Jennifer Wilson (piano), George Meikle (Winter School Director/accordion), Sue Porter and Bill Ewan (piano).



One of the RSCDS Youth Team's Year of the Homecoming performances was at the opening ceilidh for the Royal National MOD 2009. This, the 106th MOD, was held in Oban on 9 October. The MOD is Scotland's premier festival to celebrate the music and culture of the Gaelic language.

Photographs by Gordon Porter.



The RSCDS Youth Demonstration Team performing at the MOD 2009 in Oban.

Over the end of September and beginning of October the International Branch held its second weekend school, this time in Dunfermline. Around 80-90 dancers from all over the world came together for a weekend of dancing preceded by a couple of days sightseeing. There were classes for all levels of dancing ability taught by David Queen, Patrick Chamoin and Stella Fogg - UK, France and USA respectively - plus a ceilidh and a dance. The IB Committee would like to thank Dunfermline Branch, who co-hosted a fun weekend, at which lasting friendships were forged by many who were there. The next IB weekend will be in two years' time. The photograph shows members of the International and Dunfermline Branches enjoying a dance with music provided by IB members, John White, Andrew Lyons, Phillippe Kocian and Andrew Knight.

The RSCDS commissioned a new trophy for the National Accordion and Fiddle Club Festival held in March at Falkirk. The competition was open to solo fiddlers and accordionists of any age, to promote the playing of Scottish country dance music for dancing and to encourage musicians to work with dancers for their mutual enjoyment. The cup was presented to the winner, Susan MacFadyen, by our President, Alastair MacFadyen (no relation). The picture shows the adjudicators, Sandy Nixon and Mo Rutherford, with Alastair MacFadyen, Susan MacFadyen and RSCDS Chairman Elect, Ruth Beattie.

Photograph by Alan MacPherson.



Matthew and Nicole Cutler, professional dancers from that other SCD (BBC TV's Strictly Come Dancing) visiting the RSCDS stand at Move It, an international dance exhibition held at Olympia in London.

The Dance Notebook of Frederick Hill of Alford, 1841

by Alastair MacFadyen

Frederick Hill's Book of



Quadrilles & Country Dances Etc. Etc. March 22nd, 1841

Hammersmith and the Earl of Erroll

On 30 October 2010, I will be joining the members and friends of RSCDS London Branch to celebrate the 80th anniversary of the Branch in Hammersmith Town Hall. On that occasion I will be very aware that I am within a short walking distance from St Paul's Church, Hammersmith, to where Daniel (a'Taylor') and Charlotte Louisa Hill brought their son, Frederick, for baptism on 11 June 1815. 25 years later, by then resident with his younger brother, Hugo Russell Hill, in the Aberdeenshire village of Clatt, Frederick Hill compiled his detailed record of 74 dances. This manuscript record is now regarded as one of the most significant pieces of documentary evidence available for anyone interested in Scotland's traditional dancing. Although unaware of it at the time, my first encounter with this important document occurred many years ago.

I consider myself exceedingly fortunate that at an early age I was introduced by an inspirational teacher, Mrs Ethel Double of Aberdeen and Carlisle, to a traditional diet of Scotland's dances. It included the country dances, the highland step dances, *Highland Fling* and *Sword Dance*, as well as the highland reels, *Threesome*, *Foursome* and

Eightsome. I have a particular memory of our teacher's announcement, at the start of a new season of classes, that we were to learn a new step dance. We were immediately captivated by the dance as it was so different from the step dances learned so far. Especially appealing was its percussive character and we practised assiduously to master its single and double trebles in preparation for the closing class display. The dance to which I refer is the now very familiar solo step dance, *Earl of Erroll*, which, as I became aware much later, was passed on to me and my classmates immediately following the teacher's summer visit to the RSCDS Summer School at St Andrews where it been taught to her for the first time by Mrs Tibbie Cramb of Aberdeen.

The RSCDS and Step Dancing

It is, I believe, not always sufficiently well acknowledged and appreciated just how much has been achieved by our Society for Scotland's tradition of step dancing. Although primarily dedicated to its aim to promote the Scottish country dances, it has not neglected other aspects of Scotland's dance heritage.

In its presentation of the Annual Report and Accounts to the SCDS AGM of 1927, the Executive Council referred to the first

Summer School at St Andrews and noted the successful reel classes taught by "Mr John Reid of Newtyle, Forfarshire". Dancie John Reid, who was a regular teacher of step dancing at St Andrews until his death in 1942, was a surviving 20th century example of the old-style peripatetic dancing master, a familiar figure in many parts of Scotland from the mid 18th century. Since those early Summer Schools, many excellent teachers have been recruited to keep up this tradition of step dance teaching not only at St Andrews but also at classes and workshops organised throughout the world by RSCDS branches and groups. Like so many Society members of my vintage, at my early Summer Schools, I was privileged to receive tuition in highland step dancing from Bobby Watson of Aberdeen and from Mrs Tihi West of Elgin, both former pupils of a renowned dancer and teacher, Johnnie Pirie of Aberdeen.

It was during my first visit to St Andrews in the 1950s that I first witnessed the graceful and elegant demonstration of ladies step dancing in the splendid setting of the University's graduation hall, the Younger Hall. Amongst the dancers was Tibbie Cramb from whom, subsequently, I heard the story of the discovery of the Hill MS in Aberdeenshire in the late 1940s and learned about the part it had played in her own enthusiastic efforts to revive a form of step dancing now known universally as 'ladies step dancing' with its characteristic soft balletic style of performance. This is a story frequently related to RSCDS members who respond to the appeal of ladies step dancing and has been retold in a recent RSCDS publication entitled *The St Andrews Collection of Step Dances*. This attractively presented and informative publication contains directions for 15 dances, 6 of them deriving from the Hill MS, including the *Earl of Erroll*, together with their musical accompaniments. Whilst it is agreed that the successful revival of ladies step dancing is a significant aspect of the 20th century history of the RSCDS and a testimony to our Society's encouragement of Tibbie Cramb and her many disciples, it does not account fully for the historical importance which attaches to the Hill manuscript.

Frederick Hill and His Notebook

The details of Frederick Hill's life during his first 25 years are still a mystery which might yet be unravelled with further investigation. In the meantime, questions such as 'What brought him from the south east of England to rural Aberdeenshire?' or



'What were his reasons for compiling his dance notebook?' can only be matters for speculation. Like his father, he was a tailor, the trade from which he made his living for the entire duration of the Scottish chapter of his life. Alford, near Aberdeen, was his home for most of that time and he died there in 1903.

In some respects, his notebook has aspects in common with other similar 19th century dance manuscripts but in other regards it is uniquely different. It is precisely dated and it is apparent that it is locally focused on Aberdeenshire. The compiler's experience of, and familiarity with, the contemporary dances of his locality is evident throughout the notebook. The dance content is extensive, detailed and varied – country dances, cotillions, quadrilles, reels - and, unlike other contemporary manuscripts, it includes the instructions for the 12 high or step dances which were the inspiration for Tibbie Cramb's pioneering work. The many country dances included are of particular

interest to RSCDS members and while their titles might be readily recognised, their described method of performance can differ from the familiar versions of today.

The notebook has been meticulously assembled with great attention being given to the setting out of the content, which in some instances is embellished with simple scroll work. The handwriting of the text is neat, well formed and legible, but despite that and the helpful musical guidance given with regard to tempos and phrasing, reconstructing the dances described can be challenging owing to the use of obsolete dance terms. Attempts at reconstruction of the step dances and the country dances have been made and some of these have been adopted by the RSCDS for publication.

Frederick Hill has bequeathed to the present a unique and invaluable record of the dancing repertoire of rural Aberdeenshire at the beginning of the Victorian era. While his notebook can be considered to draw attention to the differences between then and now, it, nevertheless, serves to reinforce awareness of the dancing links between the 21st and 19th centuries and is further supportive evidence for our claim to be practitioners of Scotland's traditional dances.

Publication of the Notebook

Convinced of the value of this document for anyone interested in any or all aspects of Scottish traditional dancing, the Hill Manuscript Group (Alastair MacFadyen, Anita Mackenzie and Alan Macpherson) was formed to consider ways of making it more widely known and available. Following consultations with the descendants of Frederick Hill, who have retained ownership and custody of their ancestor's notebook, it was decided to publish a facsimile copy of



the manuscript, prefaced by an illustrated explanatory commentary.

Inevitably, with such projects, the time taken to reach final completion was much longer than initially anticipated. This was due chiefly to the many hours which had to be spent 'cleaning' the manuscript digitally so that the best possible level of legibility might be achieved. The Hill MS Group began with a limited first printing of their book all of which was quickly sold out. A second and last impression is now available and anyone interested in obtaining a copy can find details at www.hillmanuscript.com or from Hill MS Group, c/o Dr A MacFadyen, Tigh na Mara, Newton, Strathlachlan, Argyll, Scotland, PA27 8DB.

The response to the publication, from all over the world, has been very gratifying and the members of the MS Group are very pleased that they proceeded with their plan to give wider publicity and easier accessibility to the dance material recorded by Frederick Hill. For me personally, the culmination of the project was the realisation of a long-held ambition. To see the manuscript in print finally, was just as satisfying as the moment of realisation, all those years ago, that at last I had perfected the single and double trebles of the *Earl of Erroll!*



BBC Children in Need 2010

by Deb Lees, Youth Director

The BBC Children in Need appeal raises millions of pounds each year to make a positive change to the lives of disadvantaged children and young people across the UK. Pudsey Bear is the appeal's mascot and he will be making an appearance at a Scottish dance event in Dumfries on 23 October this

year. Iain Hale and Sue Petyt are the driving force behind 'Dance Scottish for Pudsey', a non-competitive festival in the afternoon followed by an evening dance to Robert Whitehead and his Band. Teams entering the festival will need to dress to represent the dance they present or alternatively come as Pudsey! The aim is to raise money for the BBC Children in Need appeal, but it will also publicise Scottish dancing on a national level. Visit the website www.dancescottishforpudsey.org for more information and details of how to enter.

I know that money is raised for Children in Need at many Scottish dance events across Britain. Several years ago branches participated in 'Children Dancing for Pudsey' for which Maureen McNeil from Glasgow wrote a dance, *A Jig for Pudsey Bear*, with a tune composed by David Ross. Do get in touch if you would like a copy.

I would love to hear about any Pudsey events that you have planned for 2010. I am hoping to get information on the RSCDS website so that people are aware of your event and can support it. Please contact me via moira.thomson@rscds.org

Interview with Sophie Rickebusch

Jimmie Hill interviews Sophie Rickebusch, secretary of the International Branch, and recently qualified teacher.



Sophie teaching in Poland in 2009

Why did I think you were Swiss?

I was born and grew up in Vevey, Switzerland, but my father is French and my mother English.

But you are living in Edinburgh now.

Yes, I am currently working at Edinburgh University for three years, doing post-doctoral research in landscape ecology at the School of GeoSciences. It's all about climate change and that sort of thing.

When did you start Scottish country dancing?

I started when I was 23. My mother had learned Scottish country dancing at boarding school in England. She had enjoyed it, so we both went along to the local group at the Scots Kirk in Lausanne. When I first went along, it was just a social group with no teaching of technique. When the teacher returned to Scotland, our new teacher was RSCDS qualified. Up till then I had enjoyed the patterns and the figures, but my own dancing started to develop with the RSCDS-style teaching. That's when I started going to workshops outside the Lausanne area. I then realised there was this huge community of

Scottish dancers all over the place. When my work took me to Zurich, I joined both the local groups. It was a great way to get an immediate social life. One of the teachers encouraged me to go to Summer School, where I took my preliminary certificate under the old system, then went on to do Unit 5 under the new one. While I was qualifying, I was very lucky to have a group to teach in Zurich, but then I moved to Grenoble where the group already had a teacher. Now I am in Edinburgh where there are lots of qualified teachers!

How did it feel arriving in Edinburgh?

It was a bit like Christmas! You can dance every night of the week here – and often with live music. When I first arrived, I went out four or five nights a week, but I have calmed down a bit and realised there is more to life!

You obviously know a lot of the young Europeans who dance.

Yes, I've been to workshops all over Europe. When you live on the Continent, local groups tend to be small and because they don't have many events, people travel a lot to balls and workshops. From Zurich I used to go to

Germany quite often. It's the only opportunity you get to dance to live music and meet some of the better-known teachers from Scotland.

Am I right that SCD appeals to younger people in Europe?

I think that is true in Germany and France, but in Switzerland the groups have been going for longer, having grown out of church social groups, but, having said that, the Lausanne group now has younger people too.

What is the appeal of SCD in Europe?

It's partly the whole Celtic/Scottish/Irish cultural thing. People see SCD as a bit exotic. Here in Scotland SCD is definitely not seen as exotic. People here are more attracted to salsa or whatever. Quite a lot of the younger people dancing in the Scottish universities are not actually Scottish. They are often Europeans over here for a year. They then go back home and get involved in SCD groups in their own country. Some are English language teachers who come over here for a year, then take dancing back to their classes at home. Today in Poland you can see new groups starting up in the same way as the German groups

started some years ago. Some groups do a mixture of Scottish and Irish dancing. Quite a lot of dancers are mathematically-minded and they like the geometry of SCD. But there are others who like the social aspect where you get to dance with lots of different people in one night. Generally speaking, I do think that the European groups like the more complicated dances.

Do the mathematically-minded mix well with the social dancers?

That is a tricky question! I don't like stereotypes, but I think some of the mathematically-minded are shyer, so they need the social dancers to ask them to dance – and I include myself in the former category! If we were all mathematically-minded, we might end up sitting round the room, desperate to do all these complicated dances, but terrified to ask each other while the social dancers rush onto the floor and don't care if they go wrong. Seriously though, I do think one of the great appeals of SCD is meeting such a variety of different people.

So, am I right in thinking that many of the young European dancers are in Higher Education?

Yes, I think the vast majority are and I have noticed that many of the young dancers here in Edinburgh are from England or Europe and have come via a university background – as have many of the young Scots. I think many young Scots are simply not exposed to traditional country dancing – as opposed to ceilidh dancing. I also think that there is so much on offer for young people today compared with the older Scots who dance, who probably started when there was much less to do in the evening.

What is the attitude in Europe to our ceilidh dances?

I think we rarely do them. Some groups who specialise in complicated dances often don't know them or even some of the basic country dances – especially dances from the early books. You meet people who rarely do a quick-time poussette, a very common figure in the traditional dances.

As a younger teacher, where do you think the production of our music is going?

I no longer use CDs if I can plug my laptop into the sound system. I would like to be able to buy the tracks I want, rather than have to buy a whole CD. I may only use one or two tracks from any one CD. I think more and more teachers are using laptops or MP3 players in class and, with the right software, you can speed up or slow music down. I find this particularly useful when doing step practice. Perhaps it will not be too long before

all our music is downloadable and CDs are a thing of the past, like records and tapes.

You are secretary of the International Branch.

Yes, we've just had our second IB weekend, this time in Dunfermline. The first was in Estonia, which helped the local group a lot. They got the chance to dance with people from different countries. Some of the younger members of the Estonian group have since been to Spring Fling.



Sophie dancing with the RSCDS demonstration team in France in 2007

How do you see the role of the IB?

A lot of people who were formerly Headquarters members now have a voice. They can now become more involved in the Society AGM. I see one of my main roles as secretary to pass information quickly from HQ to our members. We work mostly through email so it is easy to let our members know very quickly what is happening at HQ. I think we attract members because of that. Of course some new people join us when they want to attend Summer School. A lot of our members are from the Continent where there are relatively few branches. One thing the IB can do is reach out to areas where there is very little SCD activity.

What can the RSCDS do to attract more young people?

Spring Fling was a step in the right direction, but perhaps it should be advertised more outside the Society. I think young people expect more from the social side of dancing. I also think the performance aspect could

play a bigger role. The Youth Dem Team idea could be expanded. If we think what attracts young people to other styles of dancing, we might find some ideas. For women, for example, Latin dancing frocks are much more glamorous than the Scottish white ones. I think that image should be changed. On the other hand, some young people are attracted by the traditional tartan image. On the whole young men who start SCD are happy to wear a kilt, but what women should wear is a much more personal and tricky question. Another thing the Society could think about is targetting the younger teenager. I could imagine a Summer Camp for secondary-age people which combined sport and dancing. SCD could also fit into the kind of activity holiday I myself went on when I was at school.

Spring Fling defines 'young' as between 16 and 35. Is that realistic?

I know what you mean. A normal sixteen-year-old would naturally socialise with other sixteen- or seventeen-year-olds – not thirty-five-year-olds, but today people study much longer than they used to so it is quite normal for someone to be at university in their early 30s. When I was at Spring Fling for the last time at 35, I did feel the gap between the twenty-year-olds and myself was getting too big – time to "retire" before I started looking like a granny! I think it is good at Spring Fling to have some older people, who have a little more experience and might act as role models. It seems to be an age group that works – given the people we are attracting at present. If there were 200 people wanting to attend, then it might be an idea to split them into a younger and an older age group.

What is the perception of the RSCDS among the young people you meet?

They see it as the main source of information and training and appreciate the way the Society has kept the tradition going. They are also quite happy to debate issues of how SCD has developed on Strathspey, but most recognise the contribution the RSCDS has made. Summer School, like Spring Fling, is very important for young people who perhaps dance in a small group miles from any other dancers. They come home from St Andrews really enthusiastic. Many will never have experienced such excellent teachers, musicians, and bands and all in the space of one week.

Finally, what is your favourite strathspey and reel or jig?

I think *Chequered Court* would be my first choice for a fast one and *Autumn in Appin* would be the strathspey.

From around the world

Our regular regional correspondents are joined in this issue by Neville Pope (Australia) and Valeria Corradin (Europe) to bring you news of SCD activities and personalities all over the globe.

Africa

Correspondent: Terry Lynne Harris
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Irene van Maarseveen, who was a long-standing Pretoria Branch member and teacher until her move to Belfast in the province of Mpumalanga in May 2008, married her partner, Sid Jones, on Saturday, 16 January 2010. A group of dancers from Pretoria drove to Belfast for the day to attend the wedding. The church service was followed by a garden reception. During the reception, eight of the Pretoria dancers surprised Irene by dancing *A Highveld Wedding*, which was written specially for Irene and Sid by Pretoria teacher, Wouter Joubert. The music for the dance was also written by Wouter and specially recorded by Ken Martlew (UK musician and teacher).

SCD in South Africa had a couple of overseas visitors: Becky Sager of Marietta, GA (USA) spent a holiday in Cape Town in November and danced with the Lynfrae SCD Group and Helen Houghton-Carr of Oxford (UK) danced with the Grahamstown SCD Group while on a work visit there in October. It's always a delight to have overseas dancers visit us. Are there RSCDS members planning a trip to the Soccer World Cup? If so, remember there are SCD groups dancing in Pretoria, Johannesburg, Midrand, Cape Town (6 groups) and Grahamstown.

The Pretoria Branch was very saddened by the death of Jenimarie Davidson, life member of the RSCDS and one of the original members of the Pretoria Branch.

She had attended the weekly dancing in Pretoria and the Branch misses her cheerful presence.

Asia

Correspondent: Liz Hammerton
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The Urban Dance Workshop has become an annual festival in Hong Kong, sponsored by John Swire & Sons Ltd., the parent company of Cathay Pacific. Dancers from many ethnic groups and nationalities are invited to demonstrate their form of dance and offer the public the chance to join in.

This year, our "Pied Piper" from the HKSAR Red Tartan Pipe Band enticed a good crowd of dance enthusiasts and Saturday afternoon shoppers away from other dance areas and the shopping mall. Two dances, *Cumberland Reel* and *The Reel of the 51st*, were introduced by Arthur McNeill and then demonstrated by the Highlanders team. The team was made up of volunteers from two dance groups; the Reel Club, which has been in existence for over fifty years, and the fledgling Chinese group led by our very first Chinese RSCDS instructor, Stephen Li. The local male dancers seemed to have inherited their kilts from taller people but this in no way impeded their ability or enthusiasm for the dances.

With two fully qualified instructors present, Arthur being fluent in Scots and Stephen being fluent in Cantonese, the subsequent workshop was conducted bilingually, which was just as well as most participants spoke very little English and even less Scots!

After a bit of a scramble, six sets were formed by members of the audience, all very keen to experience this 'new' style of dancing. The walk-through went fairly smoothly with instruction in both languages and a little assistance from members of the Highlanders in each set. Everyone was ready for the 'Reel' thing. It was a resounding success and all the participants finished breathless but elated at having executed the dance pretty much flawlessly.

Australia

Correspondent: Neville Pope
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Australia in January is hot and this year some of the capital cities experienced temperatures of 40° C and over. It's the time for holidays so for the most part, Scottish country dancing has a small recession during January. Those groups who do dance throughout the year have now found it necessary to introduce "hot weather policies", when a temperature of over 35° C at 6 pm means there will be no dancing that night.

Canberra Branch will be holding a special event in March to remember Barbara Monahan, who was an accomplished country dancer and served in many roles for the Canberra Branch before her untimely death in March last year. Her obituary quoted Fred Astaire, saying "when you danced with her you stayed danced with".

Tasmania will have a Day of Dance in March in their midlands - an opportunity for the widely-dispersed dancers in Tasmania to dance together. Tasmania isn't part of the Winter School cycle in Australia, but this year they have organized a Dance Tassie tour in February, touring by day (chocolate factories and restaurants!) and dancing by night.

Adelaide Branch is busy planning for the 35th Australian Winter School in July. Places are still available at the time of writing. A link to Winter School information can be found on the web at <http://www.rscds.org.au/> giving access to the brochure and registration form. Craigellachie will be visiting Adelaide for the School and also playing for their Annual Ball on 3 July. Come for the Ball and stay for the School!



Dancers at the Urban Dance Day in Hong Kong



The Peterborough beginners class in Canada had a record attendance this year.

Canada – East

Correspondent: Keith Bark
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It is with great sorrow that I write this report. In January, North America lost one of its most respected teachers, John Middleton. He will be sorely missed, and a tribute to him appears on page 29. On a more pleasant note, December and January have been busy months for the many dance groups. There have been numerous Christmas Dances, Hogmanay Balls and Burns Suppers; lots of celebration and no lack of enthusiasm on the dance floor. The Peterborough, Ontario group which began in the late 1940s has had its largest beginner class ever this year, nearly doubling the total membership of the group. How we wish in the larger towns and cities that we could also report significant growth in membership. Toronto currently has four Level 1 (beginner) classes, most of which are thriving. The challenge is to get these new dancers involved with other Branch activities and social classes.

I am very pleased to announce that two teachers in the area were recipients of the Scroll of Honour this year, Isabelle MacPherson of Toronto and Pat Coyle of Niagara Falls (St Catharines) Branch. They are both being honoured at events in their local areas. Pat received her scroll at the TAC Summer School in Shawnigan Lake, Vancouver Island – presented by Alex Gray – and Isabelle received hers at the Society AGM.

TAC will be running its Summer School in Waterloo, Ontario this year from Sunday August 8 through August 15. It is always a fun event with excellent tuition provided by several experienced teachers. Full details can be found on the TAC web site www.tac-rscds.org If you are thinking of a holiday in Ontario round that time, consider adding in the TAC Summer School to your itinerary.

Europe

Correspondent: Valeria Corradin
Valeria_Corradin@diesel.com

The Northern Italy Branch is the most recent addition to the RSCDS family. Two associations, Scotia Shores and Associazione Culturale 8Cento, who had been co-operating since 2007, came together to form the Branch.

The 8Cento group has been working in Bologna since 2000 on different aspects of culture, such as literature, music and historic dances. The group is affiliated to the RSCDS and, thanks to Alessia Branchi who built up the group, has lots of people who enjoy dancing. Scotia Shores was founded by Valeria Corradin in 2000. It promotes Scottish and Irish dancing through courses, workshops, evening balls, competitions and demonstrations.

Working together in the Northern Italy Branch the two groups want to:



The Scotia Shores demonstration team performing in Asiago, near Vicenza.

Dancers at the Grand Ball in Bologna on 30 January 2010, held during a weekend workshop with Helen Russell.



- help all the little groups in Italy who love Scottish country dancing but who do not have enough support or don't know how to get information about courses or how to get in touch with the RSCDS
- organise workshops of Scottish country and Highland dancing throughout the year for all levels with qualified teachers
- promote Scottish country dancing with evening dances
- support people training for exams

With these ideas the Northern Italy Branch aims to grow and encourage more people to enjoy Scottish country dance. If you want to get in touch with us:-

Scotia Shores: www.scotiashores.com
info@scotiashores.com
(HQ in Vicenza) - Valeria Corradin

8Cento: www.8cento.org
info@8cento.org
(HQ in Bologna) - Alessia Branchi

Japan

Correspondent: Tom Toriyama
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Ruth Beattie and Jim Rae visited us as adjudicators for dancing and piping respectively at the Tokyo Highland Games in October. Before and after the Games both teachers conducted very fine classes in Tokyo and we enjoyed dances from the Glasgow and Dumfries repertoires. Jim also gave us a stimulating day involving discussion as well as dancing.

During the first three days of New Year in Japan huge numbers of people visit shrines and/or temples to pray for practical utilities such as family's safety, health, money, marriage, examinations etc. With the stimulus of live music, dancers from Tokyo and Saitama Branches enjoyed themselves very much and expressed their wishes for happy dancing during 2010. Our musicians enjoy playing and their efforts are appreciated by our dancers!

In March Tokai Branch held a 3-day Weekend School at the city of Numazu, in Shizuoka prefecture, with visiting teacher

Diane Rooney. Tokyo Branch's Weekend will be held at the beginning of June with teachers and musicians from Japan. Both occasions will be reported in the next issue.

The ten days from 29 April will be a most exciting period for us. In addition to tutors and candidates, more than 200 members of the three Japanese branches will be involved as organisers, dancers, musicians, interpreters, arrangers of venues and providers of refreshments at RSCDS examinations. The Joint Japanese Committee for Examinations has overall responsibility and since 1989 there have been six occasions when we have organised teachers' examinations. After Exams 2010 we hope to see many newly qualified teachers!

Tokyo Branch produced a CD to mark its 25 Anniversary last year. The Branch researched the copyright position for all the tunes that were used and paid charges to MCPS-PRS via JASRAC (Japanese Society for Rights of Authors, Composers and Publishers). The amount paid was low because the recording was for non-commercial usage.

New Zealand

Correspondent: Janet Favel

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Tuis, wekas and pukekos (names of birds, native to New Zealand) attended the very successful JAM (Junior Associate Membership) camp held in October 2009 in Masterton, north of Wellington. 62 young dancers from around New Zealand took part in the weekend, along with 25 enthusiastic adults, who were there ostensibly to work hard but more likely to take part in the fun. Four teachers, three musicians, and seven committee members aided and abetted the activities. 39 of the young dancers took their medal tests, from Bronze to Gold Bar, with a 95% success rate. A design for a JAM flag, created by one of the young dancers, was displayed for the first time at the camp.

The progress that the young dancers make in dancing, and their enjoyment and friendships developed through JAM camps, were shown when over 40 JAMs registered for the annual NZ Branch Summer School, which this year was held in Auckland. A set of Senior JAMs entertained us just before midnight struck at Hogmanay, performing a fiendishly complicated dance devised by one of their number.

There were a few older dancers at the school too, over 260 of them from all over the world, converging on the Akoranga campus on the North Shore. The accommodation was ideal for a summer school, with the village layout making it easy to visit friends and to attend the odd party. The full range of dance classes meant there was something for every level of ability and experience, and the music class led by Ian and Judith Muir gave New Zealand musicians the experience and enthusiasm to play for dancing.

On New Year's Day, after minimal sleep, a number of brave dancers travelled north to Waipu to attend the annual Highland Games. As well as enjoying the range of entertainment, food, and stalls, our dancers were pleased to see well known fiddlers John Smith and Lynne Scott gain 1st and 3rd places respectively in the fiddle competition, which was judged by Keith Anderson of the Craigellachie band.

Thanks and congratulations are due to Andy Nicol and his team for a wonderfully organised and very friendly summer school. Now we're looking forward to the next New Zealand Branch Summer School, which is to be held in Dunedin. Maybe we'll see you there?

South America

Correspondent: Marcella Galve

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As we mentioned in the previous issue our teacher has had the honour to carry out a

three-day workshop at Rosario, the second largest city in Argentina. The dancers there have created a group willing to dance seriously and contacted BASCDancers to learn a few challenging figures. This, of course, is very complimentary to our group in Buenos Aires because since 2005 we've built up relationships and we are considered to be the reference point for SCD in Argentina; we are really proud and thank them all.

As usual in November we organized our Happy Meeting. This is a dancing evening to enjoy the most popular dances of the year voted by our members. On this occasion we danced quite a few dances related to the Scottish poet Robert Burns. And we closed 2009 with a ceilidh in which we were delighted by poetry, dancing and games - a really good opportunity to share some time with friends.

BASC Dancers have had visitors from Vermont and Paris this year. We are happy to make new friends abroad and give all of them a warm welcome if they happen to come to Buenos Aires. We are now at a new address, a refurbished house in downtown Buenos Aires, and so if you are planning to come to South America, do pop in for some SCD and meet a bunch of good friends. For more information contact www.bascdancers.com.ar

USA - East Coast

Correspondent: Eilean D Yates

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SCD is flourishing in our area and groups and branches are busy preparing for their annual workshops and balls. Raleigh hosted a Valentine Dance in February. In March the Atlanta Branch's annual Spring workshop took place at Unicoi State Park in N. Georgia. Florida is planning a Spring Fling at Cocoa Beach, and in April the Loch Norman Games will be the venue for their 17th Gala and Welcome Dance. The annual Capitol Weekend in Washington will also be held in April.

2010 promises to be an exciting year for the Thistle School of SCD which will celebrate its 30th anniversary. The week-long event takes place in July at Lees McRae College in Banner Elk in the North Carolina mountains. The school is looking forward to welcoming back Jimmie Hill from Edinburgh as one of the guest teachers. Jimmie has been on the staff twice before and his classes and enthusiasm were enjoyed by all.

John Middleton had been a teacher at Thistle (with his wife J'ina) for many, many years and we were very sorry to hear about his death. He will be sadly missed.



Youth dancers perform at the New Zealand Summer School

North America - West Coast

Correspondent: Alan Twhigg
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Dance groups along the West Coast are doing fine. One event that deserves a special mention is the "1st and 25th Dinner Dance" hosted by the newly formed RSCDS Southwest Washington State Branch and the Vancouver USA Scottish Country Dancers on April 17, 2010. It is an interesting way to commemorate 25 years of dancing as well as a new start.

On the same theme, the Orange County Branch in southern California is sponsoring a Silver Wedding Anniversary Ball on April 10. What makes this event unusual is that the anniversary is shared by three couples, all dancers of long standing: Renee Boblette and Bob Patterson, Jan and Frank Cannonito, and Pete and Line Anderson.

From British Columbia comes word that the Victoria Branch has started a Saturday morning family class. They ran it as a pilot project in the Fall, publicizing it only among

dancers and their families, and it was a success with about a dozen participants: children aged 5 to 14, parents, grandmas, and an aunt. The Branch generously subsidizes the project, so participants pay only \$3 per class for the whole family. The winter session started recently and because the class is advertised more widely the class has gained a father and two daughters who are all new to dancing. The group hope to run a Spring session in April and May, perhaps with a field trip to a children's workshop in Vancouver.

The San Francisco Branch has run family classes in recent years, one as a monthly adjunct to a regular adult class, and another as a regular Friday night feature with its own approach: the class is split up in the first part of the evening, with one teacher taking the adults and another the children. In the second half, the age groups combine for social dancing.

There was a potentially calamitous incident at the San Francisco Branch weekend last October, when one of the dancers collapsed

in cardiac arrest. Fortunately, several medical professionals were on the dance floor and immediately sprang to her aid. An ambulance was called and the Branch's newly purchased automatic defibrillator was brought into use. The dancer was conscious by the time the ambulance arrived, and after surgery and rehabilitation, she is dancing again. The purchase of the AED was money well spent.



Dawn Dorsey and Bob Messner received Branch Awards at the Atlanta Branch Spring Workshop Weekend.

A Trip to Russia

With thanks to Patrick Chamoin, Guy Lawrence and Mikhail Smagin



The Highland class in Moscow. Photograph by Mikhail Smagin.



The historical ball in Yekaterinburg. Photograph by Fiona Grant.

Moscow Branch, one of our youngest RSCDS branches, organised a weekend teaching trip last November, with country and Highland dancing classes plus an evening dance. The Jean Milligan Memorial Fund (JMMF) gave financial support to Patrick Chamoin from Paris, a well-known teacher and dancer, to make the trip. Less well-known is that Patrick speaks Russian! That came in handy when coaching the class musician who had never played Scottish music before.

Having made the journey from Paris to Moscow (2,500 km) it seemed sensible for Patrick to use his time productively, so he travelled on to Yekaterinburg, in the Urals, only another 1500 km! There his usual country and Highland tuition was complemented by a historical ball, with all participants dressed in 19th Century costumes.

Scottish country dancing is already established in various regions of Russia, even as far as the borders with Asia. Guy Lawrence, an SCD enthusiast from England, travels regularly to that area and has encouraged its development. Scottish country dancing is now spreading throughout Russia and this tour was designed to give added impetus to that trend. In Russia dancing is an important part of the culture and as the average age of the participants in Patrick's classes was around 25 the potential for development is high.

This trip was a good example of financial aid from JMMF enabling Scottish country dancing to be promoted far and wide. A trip by Sophie Rickebusch to Poland in autumn 2009 was another example of JMMF support for "missionary" work.

Joan and Tom Flett

by Marilyn Healy, RSCDS Archivist



Tom Flett

Some of our members will know about the work of Joan and Tom Flett and the research they did into traditional dancing in Scotland. Their first book was published in 1964 as *Traditional Dancing in Scotland*, republished in 1985. Based on thorough research, it charts the background to social dancing from the recollections of people in Scotland up to approximately the outbreak of World War One. It is now out of print. Joan and Tom also wrote a series of papers on the background and development of the Scottish country dance for the School of Scottish Studies at Edinburgh University. We have copies of *Traditional Dancing in Scotland* and the articles in the archives.

Tom Flett died in 1976 at the early age of 52 but his systematic and carefully researched work is as relevant today as it was when first published. I went to Sheffield to meet Joan Flett to talk to her about their research and she told me how they met and how they went about collecting material for their work.

Tom's parents were Scottish - of Viking extraction - but moved to London for his father's work. Tom was sent to Highland

dance lessons at the age of seven and at first was unenthusiastic, but when he found that the dancing master was six feet tall and an ex-Pipe Major of the Scots Guards he became hooked and danced all his life. Joan and Tom met at primary school, went their separate ways in secondary school but met again at the Wembley Scottish Society in London, of which his parents were founder members. Tom and Joan shared an interest in Scottish dancing and both read as much as they could about traditional dances and the occasions for dancing. They were married in 1948.

While in London they went to Glasgow-born Jack McConachie's class. Jack McConachie's research of the David Young manuscript: *A Collection of the Newest Country Dances Performed in Scotland* dated 1740, in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, was published as *Scottish Country Dances of the Eighteenth Century*, in 1960.

Tom was a mathematician and went on to become a research student at Cambridge. There he met Hugh Thurston who had also been a Ph.D. student in mathematics and whose book *Scotland's Dances*, probably the first in-depth study of the history of Scottish dancing, was published in 1954. While he was at Cambridge, Tom taught two classes, the University SCD group and a class in the town.

Tom was offered a lectureship at the University of Liverpool and was a member of the mathematics department there from 1950-1967. He also ran an exhibition team, the Marlowe Scottish Dancers which had a wide repertoire of dances, including Gaelic, Scottish solo dances and Westmorland clog dances, that Tom had collected on his travels. He was a highly regarded teacher and had a remarkable ability to show not only the steps of a dance but the style of the tradition as well. The Marlowe Dancers competed at the Llangollen Eisteddfod, an annual international music festival in Wales, and also danced at the International Folk Dance Festival at the Albert Hall, London in 1950. *The RSCDS Bulletin* records that a team from Edinburgh Branch danced at the same Festival.

Joan commented, "In 1950, we were living on Merseyside, where there were fifty one Scottish societies and each year, a ball was held at the old New Brighton Tower Ballroom, where two thousand people took the floor. The first year we went, there were

variations in the style of dancing and, in particular, several versions of the *Eightsome Reel*. The next year, the programme was sent out in advance and everyone danced exactly the same version of the dances. The Fletts began to ask themselves "Was dancing really like this?" "Did everyone all over Scotland really perform their dances in exactly the same way?" "Did they really wear ghillie shoes, which enabled them to point their toes so beautifully?"

In 1953 they went on holiday to the Outer Hebrides and discovered that while the islands had been visited by folk song collectors nobody had done any work on collecting dances there. In fact dances that had been thought to have been lost were known to older people on the islands. They published an article in the journal of the English Folk Dance and Song Society with the results of their research into nine of these dances. Later that year they visited the Borders where Ion Jamieson had collected dances and they found that this was the only part of Scotland where dances had been collected in a systematic way. A large number of the dances Ion Jamieson had collected were included in *The Border Book*, compiled by Elizabeth MacLachlan and published in 1930. Some of his dances were also included in the books of the then 'Scottish Country Dance Society' with the source given as "collected in the Borders".

The Fletts' first daughter, Lindsay, was born in 1954 and thereafter during the university vacations Tom made regular visits to Scotland and systematically covered the mainland, the Hebrides, the Orkneys and Shetlands for about three weeks at a time while Joan stayed at home and continued to read as much as she could about the background and traditions of dancing in Scotland. At first Tom travelled by bicycle but later he could get around by car. His main method of collecting was to try to meet everybody in a village or glen over the age of 70 and get them to talk about their memories of the occasions when people danced - perhaps at weddings - and ask them what they danced, how they danced and how they were taught. He talked to old dancing masters and to the families of old dancing masters. He found them very helpful in unveiling the development of traditional dancing in Scotland. Later he turned his attention to folk dancing in England.

The Kandahar Reel or The Duke of Rothesay's Kandahar Reel

by Captain Andy Colquhoun



The Kandahar Reel performed for the first time in the Black Watch Officers' Mess.

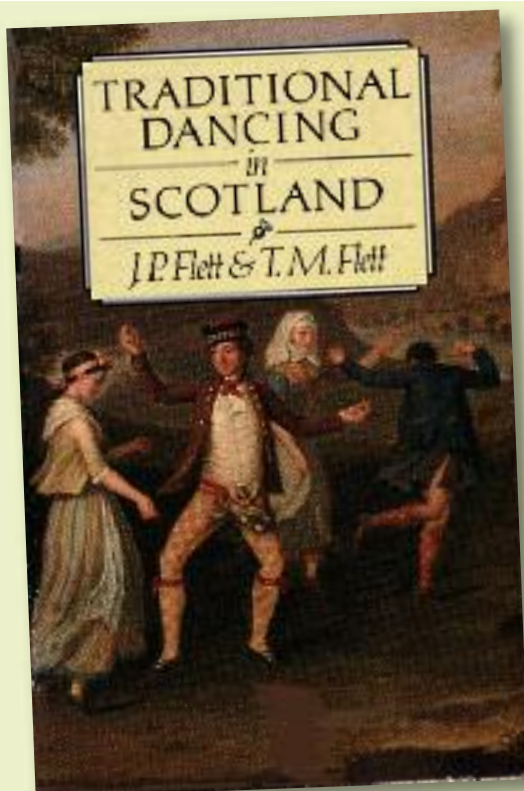
RSCDS members will be familiar with the story of how *The Reel of the 51st Division* was devised during the Second World War. In 2009 the Black Watch, 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland, were serving in Kandahar, Afghanistan. Two officers, Capt. Andy Colquhoun and his cousin, Lt. Rob Colquhoun, decided to compose a reel that

reflected their tour. Ideas were scribbled in notebooks during operations and when back in Kandahar the reel was put together over a couple of late evenings in their tents. Coincidentally Major Ali Hempenstall, a grandson of one of the men who devised *The Reel of the 51st*, was also serving within the Battalion during the summer.

The Kandahar Reel reflects the incredible teamwork required to run and support military operations. The first half of the reel sees the team building towards the focus of the dance – a series of four person teapots (right hands across). These represent both the double rotor Chinook helicopters that brought soldiers in and out of each operation and the single rotor Black Hawks that so often extracted their casualties during the operation.

The reel was first danced as a demonstration set during a ball at the Black Watch Officers Mess in December 2009 to mark the Battalion's homecoming. It was then danced for the Duke of Rothesay when he visited the Battalion to hand out Afghanistan campaign medals in January 2010. The devisers hope that this energetic reel will be danced widely in recognition of the efforts of the Black Watch during summer 2009, in support of those soldiers who returned with life changing injuries and in memory of those soldiers who did not return.

The RSCDS is currently in discussions with the devisers regarding publication of the dance.



The cover of the Fletts book shows a detail of A Highland Wedding at Blair Atholl 1780 by David Allan in the National Galleries of Scotland.

During the course of writing *Traditional Dancing in Scotland*, the Fletts conducted a correspondence with Mrs Ysobel Stewart, one of our co-founders, about her early memories of dancing and how she had learned to dance. Following publication of the book, she wrote to them congratulating them on the thoroughness of their work expressing the view that the book would make "a notable contribution to Scotland".

In the mid 1960s Tom was offered a visiting professorship in Seattle for one year and there they renewed a friendship with Mary Isdale MacNab, a Highland dance teacher in Vancouver and supporter of the emerging RSCDS branch there. They had already met at Jack McConachie's class in London, which Mrs MacNab regularly visited. Mrs MacNab also collected dances from a wide range of Scottish traditions and sources and she told Tom about the background to her research and taught him some of the dances she had collected.

In the final move of his career Tom was

appointed Professor of Pure Mathematics at the University of Sheffield where, in addition to gaining an international reputation in mathematics and publishing research papers, he found time to write four articles on *The Scottish Country Dance Its Origins and Development* and *The History of the Scottish Reel as a Dance-Form* for the School of Scottish Studies at Edinburgh University.

Joan published *Traditional Step-Dancing in Scotland* in 1996, giving the historical and traditional background to solo dancing all over Scotland and including instructions for fifteen dances. It includes an appendix on Step-Dancing in Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, written by Frank Rhodes. It is still in print and is available from Headquarters. Copies of the Fletts' article in the EFDSS journal and their correspondence with Mrs Stewart are held in the RSCDS Archives. We have approached the School of Scottish Studies to find out if we can make Tom's articles more widely available to our members.

Paddy Ba or Pas de Basque?

Jimmie Hill, teacher of English and SCD, tackles the tricky area of pronunciation in Scottish country dancing.

In the last edition of *Scottish Country Dancer* a correspondent urged us to pronounce *basque* in *pas de basque* as the French do. Having learned the *paddy ba* from my Scottish Jordanhill-trained primary teachers, this made me think about which is correct. And therein lies the problem – that word ‘correct’. When I worked abroad, students would ask about the ‘correct’ way to pronounce this or that word. For the vast majority of words, native speakers are agreed on how they should sound, but there are some grey areas. Do you say *controversy* with the stress on the first or second syllable? All good dictionaries sanction both. Living languages are in a constant state of development. English has evolved out of its Anglo-Saxon roots, incorporating elements of the Celtic languages which existed here before the Germanic peoples arrived in the 5th and 6th centuries. The Normans brought Old French in the 11th century, adding thousands of their words to our stock. Since then, English has taken words from all over the world. Some come into the language and are ‘anglicised’. In English we are happy to talk about *Brussels* and *Copenhagen*. Nobody objects that we have invented these anglicisations of perfectly good French and Danish words, *Bruxelles* and *København*, while we wait for our flight at *Milan* airport home to *Edimburgo*.

Where English uses a foreign word unchanged, there are two approaches to its pronunciation. When we use Spanish (*Çervantes*, *Mallorca*, *paella*) some people use the Spanish pronunciation, some anglicise it. There are many more examples from French (*bête noire*, *cause célèbre*, *raison d’être*), where people who know how to use the expressions would tend to use a French pronunciation, usually conscious that they were being slightly pretentious, often to humorous effect. And this brings us neatly back to *pas de basque*. Some SCD terms are French in origin. It is as ‘correct’ to anglicise and talk about a *paddy ba*, or a *pas de ba* as it is to use the French pronunciation *pas de basque*. The same is true for *allemande*. Some people pronounce it to rhyme with *demand*; some rhyme it with the French *monde*. Some use the German pronunciation ‘sh’ at the beginning of *schottische* while others use the anglicised ‘sk’ sound. Some rhyme *promenade* with

lemonade and some with *Baghdad*. Interestingly, we all pronounce *tourbillon* with a ‘y’ sound for the double ‘l’, but we do not use a French ‘r’ – unless we actually are French or really are being pretentious! Similarly, the *tournee* tends to have a Scottish or English or American or Australian ‘r’ rather than a French one. Languages borrow and adapt constantly. When quadrilles came from Paris around 1816, they were danced by the upper classes, who kept the French terminology: *chaîne des dames*. It was not long, however, before the dances were being danced by all social classes, who quickly resorted to ladies chains!

One area where pronunciation is more, but not always totally, clear-cut is that of the names of dances. I consulted a number of Scottish friends for their views. Here are some of them:

The dance and the song are *Auld Lang Syne*. The *auld* may rhyme with *bald* or *Ronald* but not with *old*. The sound at the beginning of *syne* is ‘s’ not ‘z’. Pronounce it ‘zyne’ and you take the consequences – even worse than pronouncing *loch* as *lock*! Just keep practising *The Sauchie Haugh*, which has a Scottish ‘ch’ in the middle of *Sauchie*, the *Haugh* rhyming with ‘haw’, or some might argue ‘loch’. There is no dew in *Adieu mon ami* – pronounced à la française. In *The Braes of Tulliemet* the stress is on the first syllable of *Tulliemet*, not the last. In *The Duchess of Buccleuch’s Favourite*, the pronunciation is ‘bukloo’ with the stress on the *loo*. In *Ca’ the Yowes tae the Knowes*, the first word can be ‘caw’ or ‘ca’, depending on dialect, but *yowes* rhymes with *knowes*,

which has a similar vowel to ‘house’. Lady Home, famous for her jig, has the same pronunciation as the Prime Minister of the same name, rhyming with ‘spume’. In *From Scotia’s Shores We’re Noo Awa* the final word rhymes with ‘law’ and not with ‘spa’. The stress in *Bedrule* is on the second syllable. *The Guidman of Balangigh* is the ‘gidman’ of ‘balangee’. Scots tend to pronounce *Fergus McIver* ‘maceever’ rather than ‘mackayver’, but *chacun à son goût!* *Bonnie Stronshiray* ends ‘eera’ not ‘ayray’. The *Braes of Balquhider* is like ‘balwhidder’. *Lochaber* has the stress on the second syllable. The Perthshire village of Dowally in *The Bob o’ Dowally* is pronounced ‘owly’ – like the adverbial bird. There is a Scottish ‘ch-as-in-loch’ in the middle of *Collichur*. *Clutha* does have a ‘th’ sound because the dance was not called after the Gaelic name of the River Clyde, but after the Clyde ferries, whose names (Clutha Nos 1 – 5) were themselves an anglicisation of the Gaelic. So purists beware! In *A Trip to Mallaig* the stress falls on the first syllable of that west coast railhead. Many Scots pronounce *The White Cockade* to rhyme with ‘lad’ rather than ‘spade’. We mustn’t forget the redoubtable *Mrs Cholmondeley* and her reel. She is ‘chumley’. Finally, *Miss Janet Laing* is a Laing – not one of the whisky Langs. And just to confuse everyone outwith Scotland, a Scottish MC might announce the next dance as *The Floo’ers o’ Edinburgh*, which just makes up life’s rich tapestry! If you have a dance and are not sure how it is pronounced, please do not email the editor or me! Buttonhole a Scot at a dance near you!

Re-published here is the letter from the previous issue with apologies to Christine for the error last time.

Dear Sir,

As a linguist, I am frequently irritated by the use of the words “pas de bas” to describe the pas de basque, and I was particularly surprised to find this solecism on page 24 of *Scottish Country Dancer 8*. I can understand that non-French speakers describe the step as “pas de basque step”, not realising that they are actually repeating the word “step” (pas = step) but am I missing something when they ask me to do the “stocking step” (bas = stocking)? Please let’s pronounce basque in full.

Yours,

Christine Evans



Spotted recently on a SCD trip to Cyprus - the purrfect technique for a pas de puss or a pussette. Photograph by John Grimsey.

Technique Doctor

by Christine Mair

Covering

Covering is rarely mentioned in The Manual yet it has assumed considerable importance as an indicator of good dancing, providing enormous satisfaction to dancers and observers alike.

When the movements of dancers are matched exactly along parallel or mirrored tracks, covering is achieved, ideally as a consequence of **accurate phrasing**.

In formations such as allemande, poussette, promenade, rights and lefts, where detailed instructions are included as to how the phrasing is to be managed, covering should be automatic. However, since dancers are individuals with differing shapes, sizes and dancing skills, they can only be certain of covering if they **watch each other**.

In movements where phrasing is less clearly defined and, therefore, open to interpretation, the watching element assumes greater importance, but should be as natural and subtle as possible, not distracting from the appearance and sociability of the dance. Looking to the right when turning by the right, curving right or travelling clockwise, and to the left for the opposite, is easy and unobtrusive.

Natural covering occurs where movements do match exactly. When the phrasing of movements that do not match is altered in order to achieve covering, the covering is **contrived**.

To illustrate the difference between natural and contrived covering, let us consider the covering of reels of three.

Where partners have the same roles as each other in the reels (e.g. reels on the sidelines, beginning with first couple facing down, second and third couples facing up, whether parallel or mirrored), natural covering occurs.

However, in reels such as those after set to and turn corners, partners (excluding 1st man and 1st woman, who are travelling in opposite directions), will cover with each other across the dance only if they both adjust the natural phrasing of their own reel.

Let me explain.

For convenience, we will call the dancers in each reel A, B and C where A and B begin by facing each other.



Natural phrasing of reels of three involves A moving swiftly into the reel, while C hangs back, allowing A to pass in front.

First corners are A's in the reels described, while second corners are C's. So, 2nd woman is C, who hangs back, while 2nd Man is A, who hurries in. Similarly, 3rd woman is A, while her partner is C. In order to cover, an A with a C, both A and C must alter the natural phrasing.

This covering can be achieved, but it is **contrived** rather than **natural**, covering taking precedence over accurate phrasing.

How do the B's cover with each other, given that they are travelling in opposite directions? They reflect each other's movements, acknowledging each other as they pass through the centre. Could A's and C's not cover in the same way i.e. first corners acknowledge each other as they pass through the centre, then second corners?

For those who like to dig below the surface, the application of Hugh Foss's theory of

regular crossing offers fascinating opportunities for covering.

As the dancers stand in their straight lines up and down, or across, the dance, they are not equally spaced along the track of the reel that they are about to dance. When A dances into the central position and C hangs back, equal spacing is achieved and all of the dancers can then dance at the same speed throughout the remainder of the track readjusting to their original line by A's slowing down and C's accelerating to place, unless, as Foss often arranged, the reels flow into the next figure.

The model allows for exact positions to be described for each movement in the reel. There are six key positions, each 1/3 of a loop of the figure of eight apart. Each time the dancers move through these positions (at the end of each bar in six bar reels) they form a diagonal line.

To demonstrate this, tie three knots in a piece of string so that the knots are equally spaced around a circle. Now, twist the string to form a figure of eight. Pull the string round your fingers and watch the diagonal line appear each time one of the knots lies in the central position. Even better, make two equally sized figures of eight with your string, lay them side by side and move the knots carefully round, one place at a time, watching where the diagonal lines appear. These diagonal lines are clearly visible when natural dancers instinctively phrase reels by achieving equal spacing

The illustrations show diagonals for:

- i. *parallel reels (same direction – equal spacing achieved after first move)*
- ii. *mirror reels (half way – only one couple comes shoulder to shoulder at any one time)*
- iii. *parallel reels (opposite direction – end of bar 2. Remember A and C are partners)*

Using Hugh Foss's model, covering of reels of three is achieved by following clearly defined phrasing. The model supports the concept of covering with the dancer with the equivalent role who, in reels of three in opposite directions, is not your partner!

Covering is a worthwhile goal, and achievable by all. It reflects accurate phrasing, along with, to quote The Manual, "an awareness by each dancer of his/her position in relation to that of other dancers".

It should not be achieved, however, at the expense of accurate phrasing and inclusive social dancing.

Happy covering!

In my opinion

by Gary Coull



Gary dancing with Mo Rutherford, RSCDS Music Director, at the Conference weekend 2009.

On re-reading the interview with Sinclair Barbour in *Scottish Country Dancer 8*, and drawing on my own personal experience, I have come to the conclusion that while technique is a key aspect of Scottish country dancing in the RSCDS world, it is certainly not the be all and end all. I have spoken out on the need to encourage young people to dance since I joined the Society at the age of 16, and many people I speak to say exactly the same thing. However, speaking about it and making it happen are two very different things. I remember being at the first Scottish Branches Conference and during one of the break-out sessions the topic of how to get more young people dancing was raised - a common discussion point in the RSCDS. The whole room looked to me for the answer and the answer I gave them was very simple, "Make it fun."

Sinclair said in his interview, "Perhaps if I insisted on more technique, they wouldn't have as much fun or enthusiasm." I accept that not concentrating on technique is difficult to avoid. I see myself do it when I teach a primary school class or a Girl Guide troop preparing for the local dance festival. Instead of trying to get them interested in taking up Scottish country dancing, I am drilling, "Hop, step, close, step," into their heads and, "Make sure your feet close up in third," all just to impress an adjudicator. For 10 - 14 year old dancers the intricacies of technique are boring. We need to get youngsters hooked on dancing before we spend loads of time on technique. Miss Milligan said, "Dancing is a joyous thing and must never be so drilled and detailed as to lose the natural gay social spirit." I think

that's what we need to remember with youngsters in particular.

I am passionate about encouraging young people to take up dancing but I am just as passionate about encouraging new adults. One way in which we can do both is through Dance Scottish Week. I feel that on a national and international level, and particularly in Scotland, the RSCDS needs to put more resources behind this initiative so there is a more high profile campaign aimed at people who don't know what Scottish country dancing is. I realise that there may be a few gasps from people outside Scotland who are reading this when I say "particularly Scotland". However, I say it with good reason. While Scottish country dancing is done all around the globe it did originate in Scotland and has many distinctive Scottish characteristics. However in Scotland it has slipped behind other forms of dance and many youngsters and adults in Scotland do not know about Scottish country dancing.

It is a sad state of affairs that we are losing such a huge part of our heritage, and we need something like Dance Scottish Week to get us back on the radar in Scotland. Dance Scottish Week gives us a prime opportunity to take Scottish country dancing to the non-dancing world. Instead of organising balls and dances for those of us already in the RSCDS or organising a "come and try session" we need to go out to the public. We need to promote ourselves to everyone out there and to do that we must come up with new, imaginative and out of the ordinary ideas. With the Society making a big national push and the branches making a big

local push, hopefully we would see new dancers "springing up" all over the place. At the same time we should make sure that we are promoting Scottish country dancing the pastime and not the RSCDS the organisation. It's the same as my earlier comments about young people and technique - get people hooked on dancing first then encourage them to join the Society. That way we may keep them longer.

I fully recognise that membership is a huge issue for the Society, not just recruiting new members but also maintaining the current numbers. Obviously without a membership the Society would not be able to function practically or financially. I believe that a centralised membership would help with this problem. This is where memberships would be dealt with by HQ with a percentage of the fee coming back to branches. HQ would deal with renewals meaning that branches could focus their efforts on recruiting new members rather than renewing current ones. It would also mean that a member would get a full year's membership whenever they join. A centralised membership would allow us to use direct debits as a method of payment, which in other organisations usually means that members stay longer.

Quite often we get tied up in running the Society and debating opinions over how best to move the RSCDS and Scottish country dancing forward. However we should all remember why we dance - for fun! Through Scottish country dancing I have met some great people and enjoyed opportunities I never thought I would have experienced. These are really the things that make Scottish country dancing such a wonderful hobby.

Strip the Willow world record attempt

RSCDS Banffshire Branch, in association with the Scottish Traditional Boat Festival, will be attempting a world record for the greatest number of people dancing *Strip the Willow* simultaneously on 26 June 2010 at around 5.00 p.m. on the harbour, Portsoy, Aberdeenshire. Information at www.stripthewillow.org

Overheard on the Web



Chris Ronald (New York) reports on two of the debates raging in cyberspace among Scottish dance enthusiasts.

Etiquette

Several groups have posted guidance on etiquette at balls and socials. Three in particular caught my eye:

- the Twin Cities Branch (<http://www.rscds-twincities.org/etiquette.html>),
- Ian Brockbank's 'Grand Chain' site (<http://www.scottishdance.net/scd/tips/Etiquette.html>)
- the Frankfurt SCD Club (<http://www.frankfurt-scd-club.org/etiquette>)

From the Twin Cities:

- It is customary to dance with many different partners throughout the evening. If possible, try to partner at least one person with whom you have never danced before (SCD is all about meeting new people) – and of course, ask them their name and where they are from.
- Beginners shouldn't be afraid to ask more experienced dancers to dance. Experienced dancers are strongly encouraged to invite beginners to dance, as they are often shy about asking more advanced dancers to partner them.
- Notes on Helping Others:

It's great if you are able to help your partner or other dancers in the set through a dance, but be judicious. No one likes to be bossed around, and no one wants to be pushed.

Don't assume that if someone makes one mistake they need you to cue them through the entire dance.

The best way to help is through subtle techniques like making eye-contact.

While a few quiet verbal cues from one's partner can be much appreciated, avoid getting into a situation where everyone in the set is shouting out directions.

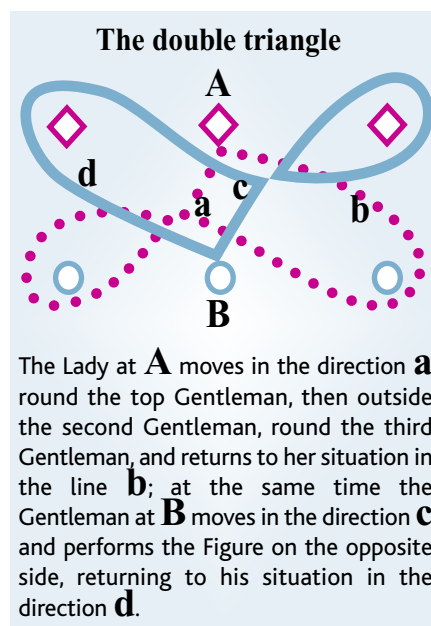
After each dance is completed, thank your partner and the other dancers in your set.

The Frankfurt SCD Club has devised a tongue-in-cheek "Ten Commandments for Balls and Socials". Here are three of their 'commandments':

- Thou shalt not overestimate thyself when asking people to dance, lest thou beest embarrassed if the set breaketh down six times out of eight because of thee.

- Thou shalt not chide, lest thou be chided – for verily, nobody hath appointed thee (of all people!) judge of thy neighbour's dancing ability or outlook on what is enjoyable. If thou must chide people, become a dance teacher and chide them in thy class; at balls and socials it is an abomination.

- Thou shalt enjoy thyself – in spite of these tedious commandments – and help others enjoy themselves, too."



Historical Accuracy of dances

The strathspey list is blessed with several contributors knowledgeable about the history of country dancing. They are ready to respond when someone asks a question like: how was this dance actually done in the eighteenth century? It's a difficult question to answer as most dance instructions tended to be cryptic.

An example is the descriptions of dances in the *Menzies manuscript*: www.strathspey.org/history/menzies.html.

Thanks to research carried out by dance enthusiasts over the last 50 years or so, we have much more information than was available to Miss Milligan.

Thus, we now know that the vast majority of the dances in the earlier RSCDS books were country dances that were part of the British (i.e. not specially Scottish) repertoire of dances. If they were included in a dance book, it may be because the tune or the dance title had a Scottish connection. For

example, William Marshall (1748-1833) was a noted composer of the "strathspey reel", a distinctively Scottish rhythm. These days we play those tunes more slowly than was the case in Marshall's day, but we still enjoy dancing to many of them: Earl of Angus and Arran, for example, which is the tune for *Sugar Candie*.

This is not to say there were no distinctively Scottish steps or formations. For example, the sequence of 'set to corners followed by reels of three on the sides' appears frequently in dances in Scotland, but not elsewhere in Britain. The foursome reel is very much Scottish, too, of course. But most of the formations that appear in the older RSCDS books are part of the wider British heritage. What is intriguing is that several of the best known formations have been interpreted by the RSCDS (Miss Milligan) in unique ways that accentuate the differences between the RSCDS style and other British country dance styles.

This can be illustrated with two examples. The first is double triangles. We now know from books such as Thomas Wilson's *'Complete System of English Country Dancing'* (1815) that this figure was actually two loops danced around one's corners.

(See www.strathspey.org/history/wilson-doubletri.png). The second is the allemande. As one subscriber explained, it was a movement (not a figure) of "simply turning one's partner into place under the man's arm", taking two bars of music. This subscriber had studied the old publications and added: "A matching test of RSCDS dances resulted in the fact that more than 95 per cent of our dances were unambiguously different from the original publications cited in our books."

No-one suggested we should change the way we dance, however. As one regular subscriber put it: "Whether it is historically accurate, and whether other styles are closer to what people danced here 150 years ago is neither here nor there to my enjoyment. I choose this style over the others on its intrinsic qualities, not because I think in any way it has the best claim to validity or Scottishness." Dance styles evolve or die out, the RSCDS style has evolved in a certain way, and it has become popular all over the world. And no doubt it will continue to evolve. Can you foresee the next changes?



The Diamond Jubilee Collection (Book and CD) Inverness & District Branch

www.invernessrscds.co.uk

Colin Dewar and his Band

As an enthusiastic fan of Colin's music it was a pleasure to be asked to review this book of fifteen dances and the accompanying CD that celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Branch. The sound is lively, clean and, in the majority of cases, well paced with a mixture of modern and traditional tunes. The choices of supporting tunes blend well with the originals and sustain the choreography of the dances. Overall the dances chosen for this project flow well, with enough twists on standard figures to maintain the interest of more experienced dancers.

The contents page summarising the dances in terms of style, length and the number of repeats is particularly useful for busy teachers as suitable dances can be chosen quickly for classes.

The mixed ability group I teach enjoyed all the dances they have tried, including the delightful, three-couple strathspey *Up & Down Ben Nevis*. This contains a traditional group of figures, nicely balanced with a twist as the threes are the dancing couple setting off up the Ben! The excited chatter was an indication that the class had a great time dancing Pat Clark's *The Telford Hornpipe*. This dance has a slightly different three-couple allemande which begins by facing down the set and I would defy anyone to sit still when listening to this music.

The strength of the tunes for *Miss Irene Whyte's Strathspey* are a pleasure to listen to and drive this dance forward. I particularly liked the original tune and *Reith's Clarinet* by J S Skinner. The music for the jigs *Bellfield Park* and *The Diamond Celebration* are nicely paced and provide impetus for the dances. For those who want a more challenging jig, *Fireworks* contains an interesting 16-bar figure called Catherine Wheels which will entertain the more advanced dancer. The disk finishes with a fine set of reels for the five-couple dance *The River Ness*.

In conclusion this excellent CD and book of lively dances will provide a very useful addition to the repertoires of branches and teachers.

Di Rooney, Cheshire



Graded and Social Dances 3 by Roy Goldring

www.scotscores.com

Accompanying CD by Jim Lindsay and Muriel Johnstone

As a long-standing admirer of Roy Goldring's dances and Muriel Johnstone's music, I approached this book and CD set with very high expectations. I was not disappointed.

This book of Roy Goldring's dances was published posthumously having been commenced by Roy and then completed by his widow Doreen. The book includes dances of varying difficulty and set type. Dances have been grouped into jigs, reels and strathspeys, starting with the easiest in each group. There are dances for 2 couples, 3 couples and 4 couples in 4-couple longwise sets, as well as dances for 5-couple longwise sets, 3-couple sets and square sets. This variety provides something for all dance groups and teachers. The graded ordering of the dances makes it particularly useful for programme planning or for someone needing to make a rapid alteration to an evening's dancing. The final dance in the book, *Branches Together* (written shortly before Roy's passing), brings the collection to a fitting conclusion.

As one would expect from a book of Goldring dances, the instructions are clear, unambiguous and well-presented. The dances generally contain straightforward formations that have been linked in interesting ways. An attribution for many dances has been provided, along with the reason that Roy wrote or associated the dance with a particular person. Interestingly one dance, *Caerlaverock Castle*, has previously been published in *The Scotia Suite of Scottish Country Dances* under the title *Bruce's Men*. The lead tune differs between the two publications, with both composed by Muriel Johnstone.

Most of the tunes for the dances are traditional or composed by Muriel Johnstone. The match between music and the dances is near perfect. The music carefully reflects the phrasing of the dances, providing impetus or flow when needed. The tempi are appropriate for dancing. A rather pedantic suggestion to anyone producing a CD – the provision of track numbers beside each dance on the outside of a CD cover facilitates track selection.

In her note at the beginning of the book

Doreen Goldring writes "...I hope that my final selection would have met with his (Roy's) approval and will provide enjoyable dancing for many". The book is in keeping with the high standard set by Roy's previous publications. The dances and accompanying music will certainly be enjoyed by many, as they "Reel On".

Katharine Hoskyn, New Zealand



Dance for Joy CD by Reel of Seven

www.reelofseven.com

When I opened this CD and played it I thought, "Oh this is different", and it certainly is. The band has an unusual line up of eight musicians who describe themselves as a "group of friends who love to play music together" and includes fiddles, piano and, uncommonly, an oboe and a cello, without an accordion in earshot. The music gets the feet tapping and makes you want to get up and "dance for joy" to the lively reels and jigs. Every time I listen to the tracks I notice something different in the harmonies and then parts of a tune get stuck in the brain and you are humming them all day. I like the cello and the oboe, they add a new dimension.

The strathspeys grow on you the more you listen and the waltz with its haunting melody calms you down a bit to start again. What really comes through is that the band are really enjoying themselves. The cover picture, with happy young people dancing in the sea surf tells you everything. If I had to make a suggestion it would be with the insert. I would have preferred to have the tunes listed first so it is easier if you want to know which particular tune is being played. There are some new dances which I'm looking forward to dancing, if the music is anything to go by. These include *Kathleen McAdam's Scroll* (8x32j) *Blue Moon Rendezvous* (8x32j) and *The Magic Of Merrill* (8x32R). There are also quite a few new tunes to me, sprinkled amongst many well known favourites. Nevertheless these new tunes have become favourites in a very short space of time.

Some might find the music a bit too busy for teaching, however the music is joyful and just makes you want to join in and have a ball. So for social nights, it is a must, unless of course, you get the chance to dance to Reel of Seven live.

Margaret Davidson, Dumfries

Letters to the Editor



Terminology

Dear Editor,

Nobody seems to bother about terminology these days. The word "centre" seems to have crept into everything.

Miss Milligan used to say that Highland steps were performed in the "centre" of an *Eightsome Reel* because the dancers were equidistant in a circle, but that we went "down the middle" of a longwise set. Now the "centre" seems to be used for any kind of set, even "down the centre and up". It is used in our new books and *The Manual* (e.g. bar 5 of *The Knot*) even our Technique Doctor uses it in *Scottish Country Dancer 9*.

Will the "middle" ever come back?

Yours,

Norah Dunn (Ayrshire)

Yehudi Menuhin

Dear Editor,

I was interested to read the article in *Scottish Country Dancer 9* about the BBC television programme recording the meeting between Yehudi Menuhin and my father-in-law, Hector MacAndrew. It was the highlight of Hector's life, and he was always amused by a comment made towards the end of the programme.

Yehudi Menuhin was sitting in the middle of the front row of fiddlers and was a bit apprehensive about playing the Scottish music when Sandy Milne, the leader of the Banchory Strathspey and Reel Society, and who was also conducting all the societies who were there, turned to him and announced in broad Doric: "Dinna worry Mr Menuhin. There's a lot of guid players roon about ye".

Yours,

Marjory MacAndrew

Dance etiquette

Dear Editor,

I read the letter about dance etiquette in *Scottish Country Dancer 9* with interest.

One thing not mentioned in the letter, which I would like to see, is gentlemen escorting their partners on and off the dance floor. It doesn't seem to happen much nowadays.

To improve dance etiquette I would suggest that teachers and MCs at larger dances have a duty to point out bad etiquette when they see it. I am sure this would make a big improvement.

Yours,

Ray Hunter (Lincoln, England)

Obituaries



John Middleton

John was born in Banchory, Aberdeenshire and was brought up, along with three brothers, in Peterhead before emigrating with

the family to Canada in 1952. He was introduced to Scottish country dancing as a less than enthusiastic child, but it became a lifelong passion.

John aided his mother in establishing a SCD group in London, Ontario, before his teaching profession took him to Hamilton, Ontario. Dancing there, he met and married J'ina as he studied for and passed both RSCDS teacher examinations in 1961.

Over a period of thirty years, John served the Teachers' Association (Canada) in almost every executive position and as candidate tutor, both locally and at TAC Summer School. On the TACNotes Committee, just as in his classes, questions I asked were always answered thoughtfully, kindly and in a way that was open for discussion.

400 – 500 people attended John's memorial service, including school teachers, church members and dancers, some from as far away as the Quebec border in the east (400 km), from Windsor in the west (300 km) and from the United States. That, in itself, was a great tribute to John, who taught adult, children's and candidate classes, as well as

workshops throughout North America and beyond. He obviously left his students with strong feelings of appreciation and respect. A SCD teacher colleague remembers starting in his class as a sixteen-year-old in a mainly adult group. She found his well-attended class challenging but always great fun. In 1998 he was a very worthy recipient of the Society's Scroll of Honour.

John was a true gentleman and a gentle man, with a rare sense of fun and mischief, never complaining or even mentioning his lifelong struggle with asthma-related health problems. He will be greatly missed by us all.

Pat Coyle, St Catharines (Ontario) Branch



Pipe Major John Johnston

John was born in Northern Ireland and learned to play the bagpipes as a member of the Boys' Brigade. He taught at the College of Piping in Glasgow, and was Pipe Major of the Clelan Memorial Pipe Band for forty years before becoming Pipe Major of the Leicester Seaforth's. As a dancer he was taught by Miss Milligan and he gained his

Preliminary Teaching Certificate at St. Andrews. Miss Milligan appointed him as the first official piper for the 7.00 a.m. reveille during the four weeks of Summer School. He also taught the afternoon piping classes for thirty years, and his room at St. Andrews was known as "The Piper's Cave". Piping, teaching, composing and dancing, John travelled the world during a long and busy career, including a tour of South Africa as a dancer with the official RSCDS team. In later years he danced for a short while in Leicester. At the age of 79, he began writing in the Ulster-Scots dialect, which has been likened to Burns' Lowland Scots, and two volumes of his short stories were published by the Ulster Scots Language Society.

Pamela Hood, Leicester

Also sadly missed...

Carol Porter, Northern Virginia Branch, dancer, teacher and gracious hostess. She could not stress enough the importance of good eye-contact. Her celebration dance will be held in Northern Virginia on 28 August.

Charles "Charlie" Kennedy attended Summer School in the 1950s. A miner himself, he taught Scottish country dancing in the Bowhill Miners' Institute to large classes of children, teenagers and adults. In 1958 Charlie organized a dance tour of Russia from Moscow to the Black Sea. This was followed by several dance trips to Czechoslovakia.

Day school diary

Entries for April to Dec 2010

Compiled by John Sturrock. For further information about these events please refer to branch or club websites. Issue 11 will cover day and weekend schools from November 2010. Please send details to mag.editor@rscds.org

April 10

- 24 Cheltenham Branch, Day School, Cheltenham, England
Mervyn Short
- 24 South Wales Branch, Day School, Bridgend, Wales
Graham Donald
- 24 Argyll Day School, Crowthorne, Berkshire, England
Paul Plummer, Raphaelle Orgeret, Jane Rose
- 24 Leeds Branch, Highland Day School, Leeds, UK
Catherine Livsey
- 30 - 01/05 Portrush Branch, Weekend School, Portrush, Northern Ireland
Craig Houston
- 30 - 02/05 East Lothian Branch, Weekend, Atholl Palace Hotel, Pitlochry, Scotland
Graeme Davie
- 30 - 02/05 Avalon, Weekend Workshop, Catalina Island (CA), USA
Elaine Brunken, Eric Finley, Marjorie McLaughlin

May 10

- 01 Winnipeg Branch, Workshop, Winnipeg (MB), Canada
Ron Wallace, Margaret Zadworny
- 07 - 09 London Branch, 80th Anniversary Weekend, Swanwick, Derbyshire
Graham Donald
- 07 - 09 Cumbrae SCD Association, Weekend, Millport, Gt Cumbrae, Scotland
Helen Frame
- 13 - 16 Munich Scottish Association, Weekend School, nr Munich, Germany
David Queen
- 17 - 20 Dance Course, Nyiregyhaza, Hungary
Jim Cook
- 21 - 22 Isle of Skye Branch, Weekend, Portree, Isle of Skye, Scotland
Maureen Haynes
- 21 - 23 Duns and District Branch, Weekend, Duns, Scotland
Janet Johnston, Craig Houston
- 21 - 23 New York Branch, Pawling Weekend, Hopewell Junction (NY), USA
Alex Gray, Ellie Briscoe, Rebecca Roman
- 21 - 23 Stoney Lake Weekend, Lakefield (ON), Canada
Carole Skinner
- 21 - 24 Scottish Dance Weekend, Szeged, Hungary
Eric Finley, Bill Zobel, Muriel Johnstone, Keith Smith
- 24 - 28 Dance Course, Nyiregyhaza, Hungary
Jim Cook

June 10

- 04 - 07 Te Awamutu SCD Club, Weekend School, Otorohanga, NZ
- 05 Lyon Branch, Advanced Day School, Lyon, France
Patrick Chamoin
- 05 Cincinnati Branch, Workshop, Dayton (OH), USA
Elaine Brunken, Tracey Applebee
- 05 Swilcan Scottish Country Dancers, ½ Day School, Utrecht, Netherlands

- 05 - 06 Clivis, Workshop, Turin, Italy
Avril & David Quarrie
- 10 - 13 Central Germany Branch, Teachers' Weekend, Schlüchtern, Germany
Graham Donald
- 11 - 13 Midwest Scottish Weekend, Beloit College (WI), USA
Ellie Briscoe
- 12 Luxembourg SCD Club, Summer Course, Cultural Hall, Luxembourg
- 18 - 20 Isle of Arran Weekend
Jimmie Hill, Janet Johnston
- 25 - 26 Silver State Dancers, Weekend Workshop, Truckee (CA), USA
Tim Wilson
- 25 - 27 Highland Mist Dancers, Workshop Weekend, St Louis (MO), USA
- 30 - 04/07 Kuckucksnest Summer Course, Schluchtern, Germany
Eric Finley
- 30 - 04/07 Kuckucksnest Musicians Course, Schluchtern, Germany
Keith Smith

July 10

- 04 - 09 Thistle Summer School, Banner Elk, North Carolina, USA
Keith & Deirdre Bark, BettyLee Barnes, Jeff Corrigan, David Giliam, Jimmie Hill, Janet Walker, Eilean Yates
- 04 - 11 35th Australian Winter School, North Adelaide, Australia
Jim Rae, Elinor Vandegrift, Cathy McLeod, Barbara Hamlyn, Noriel Tarca
- 09 - 17 Boston Branch, Pinewoods Camp, Cape Cod (MA), USA
Linda Gaul, Charlie Inglis, Martin Mulligan, Jennifer Stephenson, Carolyn Buractaon
- 25 - 22/08 RSCDS Summer School, St Andrews, Fife, Scotland

August 10

- 08 - 15 TAC Summer School, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada
Alex Gray, Jean Dodds, Alan Twigg, Gail Michener, Pat Coyle, Colin Philip
- 09 - 15 Kuckucksnest Holiday Course, Schluchtern, Germany
Carola Fischer, Martin McWilliam
- 21 - 26 Dance Course, Molines in Queyras, France
Tess Edelmann

September 10

- 10 - 12 Seattle Branch, Fort Worden Workshop, Port Townsend (WA), USA
Sharon Barker, Janet Johnston, Gordon Robinson, Tim Wilson
- 11 Dumfries Branch, Day School, Dumfries, Scotland
John Wilkinson
- 17 - 19 Gothenburg Branch, International Weekend, Valand, Sweden
- 18 Ayr Branch, Day School, Troon, Scotland
Graham Donald

- 18 N W Craven Branch, Day School, Whittington

October 10

- 01 - 03 Argyll Weekend, Dillington, Somerset, England
Mervyn Short, Jessie Stuart
- 01 - 03 Saskatchewan Branch, 30th Weekend, Carlyle (SK), Canada
Simon Scott, Gordon Robinson
- 02 York Branch, Day School, Stockton in the Forest, Yorkshire, UK
Deb Lees
- 09 Lyon Branch, Day School, Lyon, France
Patrick Chamoin
- 14 - 17 Kuckucksnest, Autumn Courses, Schluchtern, Germany
Anika Lange, Carola Fischer
- 16 London Branch, Day School, London, UK
- 22 - 24 Western Australia Branch, Weekend Workshop, Cockburn, Australia
- 29 - 31 Rechberg International Weekend, Schwabisch Gmund, Germany
Muriel Johnstone, Bill Zobel
- 29 - 31 Medicine Hat Branch, Weekend Workshop, Medicine Hat, Canada
Bob Anderson, Janyne Bertram, Robin Lynch

November 10

- 12 - 14 Lyon Branch, Weekend Course, Lyon, France
- 12 - 14 Croydon Branch, Dance Weekend, Eastbourne, UK
Pat Davoll
- 17 - 21 Kuckucksnest November Course, Schluchtern, Germany
David Queen
- 27 - 28 SCD Group Basel, St Andrews Night Course, Basle, Switzerland

December 10

- 27 - 04/01 Silvester Course, Gemund, Germany
Rudi Spagele, Ute Pitzal, Sjoerd van Leersum
- 28 - 06/01 New Zealand Branch, Summer School, Dunedin, NZ
Fiona Bullivant, Lois McEwan, Margaret McMurtry, Trish Nicholl, Lesley Nicol, Maureen Robson, Anne Smyth, David Williamson, Katharine Hoskyn, Jim Lindsay

SCD FESTIVALS

June 10

- 26 South Wales Festival, Raglan Castle, Wales

July 10

- 10 56th White Rose Festival, Harewood, Leeds, England

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wiltonrachel@hotmail.com or 020 8858 7729.

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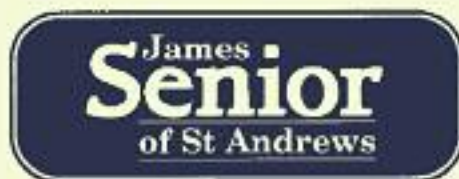
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