

SCOTTISH country dancer

The

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Semple Travel Dance Holidays

12 November 06

MARY & TREVOR HOWARD
with Ian Muir
Scottish Country Dance
Praia Da Rocha, Algarve
7 nights
5 Star Algarve Casino
www.solveverde.pt
LIMITED

21 February 07

COLIN DEWAR
& His Scottish Dance Band
Scottish Country Dance
Paphos, Cyprus
7 nights
4 Star Imperial Beach
www.louishotels.com
LIMITED

22 February 07

MACENMUIR
Scottish Country Dance
Calpe, Costa Blanca
7 nights
4 Star Diamante Beach
www.unitursa.com
JUST ANNOUNCED

3 March 07

BARRY STEELE
with Marian Anderson
Scottish Country Dance
La Cala, Costa Blanca
7 nights
4 Star Gran Bali
www.grupobali.com
LIMITED

17 March 07

MARGARET HARRIS &
MARGARET MASTERTON
Scottish Country Dance
Benidorm
7 nights / 14 nights
3 Star Poseidon Palace
www.hotelesposeidon.com
JUST ANNOUNCED

9 June 07

MARIAN ANDERSON
Scottish Country Dance
Seefeld, Austria
7 nights
5 Star Tummlerhof
www.tuemmlerhof.at
JUST ANNOUNCED

13 March 07

JULIE MOTT
Calgary Stampede Line Dance
Paphos, Cyprus
7 nights
4 Star Avanti
www.avantihotel.com
AVAILABLE

13 October 07

IAN MUIR
Scottish Ceilidh Cruise
Queen Mary II
6 nights
Transatlantic - New York
JUST ANNOUNCED

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RSCDS Newcastle Branch

CALLING ALL YOUNG DANCERS!

Can you make up a Scottish Dance? If so, please enter our free
competition! Just follow these simple rules:

- Devise a Scottish country dance for young people.
- It can be a reel, a jig or a strathspey.
- Give it a name and, if possible, tell us a story about it.
- Individuals, or groups can enter.

Send your dance to the Branch Secretary:

Mrs S Trafford, 'Talisker', 2 Benridge Moor, Morpeth NE61 3SD
by 31st December 2006.

The best dances will be published by RSCDS Newcastle Branch.

Spring Fling Oxford 2007

Fri 30 March – Sun 1 April

Friday evening Ceilidh • Saturday night dance
Country, highland, ladies step, quadrilles classes

Teachers: Angela Young, Ilona Velichko, Jeremy Hill, Ellis
and Chris Rogers

Musicians: Cas Sloan, Chris Oxtoby, Ian and Meryl
Thomson

Evening dances open to all

Application forms from
RSCDS, 12 Coates Crescent, Edinburgh EH3 7AF
info@rscds.org



Editorial

Two years ago, when *Scottish Country Dancer* was in its planning stage, we felt that it should not simply be a glossier version of the old *Bulletin*. There was a feeling that it should be a true members' magazine. We hope that members feel that we have achieved this.

However, it has become increasingly obvious that *Scottish Country Dancer* is the only means of communication with all members. Not all members are in branches, and even branch members may live hundreds of miles away from their home branch. It is also clear that not all members use the members' section of the RSCDS website.

We hope you like the picture of the young dancer on the front cover. He is one of thousands of Scottish primary school-children who learn country dancing in school, sometimes from their own class teacher, but very often with the help of RSCDS teachers and helpers country-wide. On pages 12/13 we feature the unique work done by Scottish branches and members, year in year out, within the education system, and usually with little official national recognition. What they achieve is remarkable.



Outgoing chairman Stewart Adam, attending a Scottish Schools Festival this year.

Since the last issue one of the most significant things to happen has been the Dunblane Conference of Scottish branches. The one-day conference showed the commitment of our branches to take a long hard look at themselves and country dancing in Scotland today. We hope members worldwide will find the report of interest, and will all take part in Dance Scottish Week next September.

As usual it is always exciting to hear from our Correspondents world-wide and, in this issue, news of our friends in New Orleans. We have a fascinating article on *The Eightsome Reel* from Rosemary Coupe of Vancouver.

As editor, it was a great privilege to interview Bill and Hope Little for this issue. Although much of our concern at present is about the future of country dancing, Bill and Hope represent much of what is valuable about our heritage. We hope you will find their long experience fascinating.

Finally, we hope you will forgive us that this issue has appeared a little later than planned. Like you, we are all volunteers!

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Jimmie Hill

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Jean Martin, Oluf Olufsen

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Cover picture: Young dancer from Hillington Primary School, Glasgow, at the Kelvin Hall in March.

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News from Coates Crescent

Elspeth Gray and Irene Bennett bring you up-to-date with highlights of what has been happening in Headquarters, with news from the Management Board and the Committees.

Three Dances 2006

Included with this issue is *Three Dances* 2006. This is the first implementation of the Society's new publishing strategy, which was agreed at the same time as the decision to replace the subscription copy with this members' magazine.

The database again! Members' details

First of all, thank you to all the branches who checked through the database extracts that were sent out in June this year, and sent in details of amendments and additions. These have all been included, and, hopefully, this edition of *Scottish Country Dancer* will reach even more members direct than the last one. For the time being, please continue to send notification of any changes in member details to Headquarters. However, a further development is now being planned which we hope will make the process a lot easier for everyone. That is a facility for branches to update their own members' data online via the website. The technical aspects and costs are still being investigated, but we hope to be able to tell you more very soon.

The 'default option' for us is to send a copy of the magazine to every member, but we do now have the facility to arrange for only one person in a multi-member household to receive the magazine – please just let Headquarters know if you want to do this.

Multiple membership

Once again, in checking and preparing the data for distribution of this issue, it has become clear that we still have some anomalies where people are members of more than one branch, and appear on more than one branch listing. Please remember that although you can join as many branches as you like, your 'primary' branch – the one through which you pay your Society subscription fee – is the only one that should list you as a member for the purposes of the Society database. Branch secretaries please take note!

Staff

This last year has not been the easiest of times for Headquarters staff. Between people leaving and long-term sickness, Headquarters has not been at full strength most of the year – and at times, well below! However, we hope that the next six months will see the office fully staffed again.

Website

Work has been progressing behind the scenes with the Website Project Working Group. The first priority is to refresh and update the design, in line with the updated logo and 'house style', and to make the site better organised and easier to navigate – progress should be visible by the end of the year.

House style

An updated RSCDS logo has been approved by the Management Board and work is now under way to redesign all of the Society's stationery, etc. Once that has been done, it is planned to make the logo available to all branches on CD, with guidelines as to how it should be used. More information on page 19.

RSCDS Tartan

The Society now has its very own officially registered tartan. It was designed by David Normand-Harris, in conjunction with designers at House of Edgar. More information in the next issue. In the meantime, we have kilt-weight tartan available for sale (£26 per metre), and very handsome lambswool scarves (£15 each). We plan to order a supply of lightweight tartan material, and are working with a supplier to provide the tartan in silk.

Annual Conference Weekend and AGM 2006

We look forward to welcoming many of you to Aberdeen from 3-5 November 2006. The outline of the weekend is similar to last year, but with one or two significant changes. To get the weekend off on the right note, we begin with a welcoming drink and the Ball on Friday night, with the *Lothian Scottish Country Dance Band* providing the music. On Saturday morning, the two discussion groups that have run in recent years – *The Floor is Yours*, for members, and the *Branch Forum*, for branches – have been combined to form the 'Members' Forum'. Bristol Branch, whose suggestion this was at last year's discussion group, are arranging the session. It will comprise discussion in smaller groups, coming together to share ideas and views in the final part of the gathering. Other options on Saturday morning are a class, to be led by Helen Russell with Peter Shand accompanying, or a local bus tour. The AGM itself will be held on Saturday afternoon, after which everyone can relax

with Frank Thomson's band at the Saturday dance. There will again be events on Sunday morning; a meeting of all Management Board and Committee members, a meeting of Youth Co-ordinators, a meeting of International Branch members, and a workshop 'Formations with a Twist' led by Malcolm Brown, with Mo Rutherford providing the music.

AGM Elections

It is regrettable that in *Issue 2* of *Scottish Country Dancer* we did not mention nominations for election to management positions. It is unfortunately too late now for anyone who is interested in the process for this year, but it is perhaps worthwhile outlining the timescales for future years.

- Nomination forms, and information about the vacancies for election, are usually made available in mid-April. Copies are sent to all branch secretaries, and the form can be downloaded from the website.
- Completed forms (with a proposer, seconder, and ten additional members' signatures) and candidate profiles must be returned to Headquarters 8 weeks before the AGM – usually the first week in September.
- Voting papers and candidate profiles are sent to Branch Secretaries around the last week of September.

Any member of the Society aged 18 or over is eligible to stand for election. Contact Elspeth Gray at Headquarters if you would like any further information.

Trustees' Report and Financial Statements

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

The Constitution and Rules: proposed changes

Four years into the new governance system, the Management Board, after wide consultation, considered it necessary to revise the Constitution and Rules to further improve the management of the Society.

The main changes to be presented to the Society AGM in November this year for approval are:

- Reducing the elected members of the MB from 18 to 12, which was the number most requested when the Draft Constitution was sent for comment. This will make the meetings more efficient and less costly. The total number on the Board will thus be 17 with the Chairman, Chairman-Elect and the 3 committee convenors.

- Reducing the minimum number of MB meetings from 6 to 4, which experience suggests is sufficient and can be coordinated better with the other Committee meetings. This will also reduce considerably the cost of meetings. With the full Board on e-mail, much more is currently being done by electronic communications and by inexpensive conference calls rather than physically attending meetings.

- Electing the Directors (eg Summer School, Archivist, Youth) rather than being MB appointments – also requested by many who commented on the draft.

- Changing the number of delegates. Currently a branch is entitled to one delegate for each 50 members. The proposal is to allow one delegate per 50 members *or part thereof*. The minimum of two delegates remains. This new system is considered to be fairer on medium-sized branches. For example, a branch with 140 members would now be entitled to three delegates.

- Improving the succession of Management Committee convenors by instituting a convenor-elect position.

- Taking into account the new Scottish charities legislation being introduced, thus giving certain advantages. The proposed revision would make it easy to incorporate, should the Society decide to do so later.

A complete review of the proposed changes with explanatory notes has been distributed to all branches and will be posted on the Society website.

News from E&T

- New procedures for the positions and appointments listed below have been agreed. Detailed information and the relevant application form for each are available from HQ or from info@rscds.org.

- Revised procedures for nomination to the list of approved teachers and musicians for RSCDS Schools have now come into effect.

- Revised procedures have been approved for the appointment of Co-ordinator of Winter School 2008 and Depute-Directors of Summer School 2007.

- The deadline for applications for new examiners in the UK and Europe has passed. Applications for overseas examiners close on 16 February 2007.

- The Committee has devised a scheme to give teachers with the potential to be examiners opportunities to gain experience at Summer School – mainly that of tutoring – which they may not be able to do locally. The scheme, which is similar to a scholarship-award, will come into effect at Summer School 2007. Candidates are required to submit applications by 24 November, 2006.

- A questionnaire about the possibility of running regular training courses for tutors of examination classes other than at Summer School, is being circulated to branches. Responses from as many branches as possible will be greatly appreciated.

- The process of reviewing the new examination system will start with an examiners' seminar at Summer School 2007, followed by Society-wide consultation with a view to implementing any modifications early in 2008.

Technique Sub-Committee

The Management Board has set up a small sub-committee to answer enquiries of a technical nature, including how to perform specific dances. The committee comprises three members nominated by Education & Training (currently two of these are examiners), and two members nominated by Membership Services. It is chaired by a member of the Management Board. Questions should still be sent initially to Headquarters, preferably by e-mail to info@rscds.org, so that they can be forwarded to the sub-committee.

Schools – hail and farewell!

Thanks and congratulations to Linda Gaul, the retiring Schools Director. Welcome to John Wilkinson, her successor as from November 2006. Linda's very successful three-year term of office has seen a number of changes at Summer School, and no doubt John will make his mark too. He will have a challenging first year as, due to refurbishment works, the School will not have access to the usual accommodation at University Hall. We will, instead, be based at St Salvator's Hall. Dates for Summer School 2007 are:

Week 1	starts 22 July
Week 2	starts 29 July
Week 3	starts 5 August
Week 4	starts 12 August

Application forms will be available in December from branch secretaries, Headquarters, or the website.

Winter School 2006 was very successful once again, having been co-ordinated by Robert Mackay. His successor, Helen Russell, is already hard at work with preparations for Winter School 2007.



Linda Gaul and John Wilkinson

Youth Director

Thanks and congratulations are also due to outgoing Youth Director, Sue Porter. Sue has been tireless in her involvement in many activities and events with, and for, young people. Jayne Brown from Dumfries takes over this November.

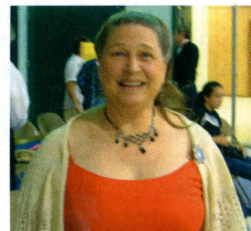
Spring Fling

The Spring Fling – for everyone aged 16-35 – continues to go from strength to strength. A great time was had by all in Newcastle-upon-Tyne (see page 18), and plans are under way for the next one in Oxford from 30 March – 1 April 2007. Application forms will be available shortly, and can be downloaded from the website.

And finally

Welcome to a new branch!

Brenda Sleight,
Secretary of
The Carolinas
Branch.



Congratulations to our members in The Carolinas Branch, covering North and South Carolina (picture on page 17). They had their inaugural meeting in July.

From around the world

We are delighted now to have a correspondent in South America. Welcome to Marcela Galve in Buenos Aires in Argentina and all dancers in the area. All members, branches and groups: please contact your correspondent with news and views you would like him or her to mention in the next report. Your correspondent needs information from you!

Africa

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

By the time you read this we will have had teachers exams in South Africa for the first time since 1998! There were two candidates from Pretoria and two from Johannesburg. Africa's only examiner, Margo Monteith of Johannesburg, was one of the examiners and Elma McCausland came out as the other. Elma also taught classes in Johannesburg, Pretoria and Cape Town. The musician was Ken Martlew. Ken gave an exam candidates' workshop in Pretoria, played for the exams and for Johannesburg and Pretoria classes and taught at the Lynfrae Group in Cape Town. We are very grateful to Ken for his generous offer to combine playing for SCD with a holiday in South Africa.

More excitement in Cape Town! The Cape Town Ball, with music by Marian Anderson and her Band, took place on Saturday 9 September at the Kelvin Grove Ball Room. Tickets sold out quickly and it was a great event, with dancers from home and abroad. Live SCD music is a rare treat in South Africa. It's a thrill and an honour to have musicians like Ken Martlew and Marian Anderson and her Band visit us!

Asia

Correspondent: Arthur McNeill
amcneill@cuhk.edu.hk

Hong Kong has continued with its usual activities. As reported in *Issue 2*, the number of regular dancers is smaller than before due to changes in the ex-pat community. On a more encouraging note, the number of Chinese dancers has increased. However, some of the new members have a strategic purpose in learning to dance, such as imminent marriage to a Scot or an invitation to a highland ball. Hong Kong's workaholic culture also makes it difficult for people to commit themselves to a regular weekday evening of Scottish country dancing. But when the local dancers turn up for a social dance, they play extremely hard, dance themselves stupid – and say how much they regret their busy schedules which don't permit more dancing!

We were very sorry to learn that Kate and Bruce Gentles who set up a group across the border in Shenzhen are returning to the UK. We hope the group will continue. Meanwhile, former Hong Kong dancer, Gertrude Layton, is working hard to establish a new group in Penang. I would be very pleased to hear reports from any other groups in the region.

Australia

Correspondent: Sam Heron
sususe@powerup.com.au

The Australian RSCDS scene is invigorated by a number of children's classes. These are run by teachers with even more enthusiasm than is normal, and give all participants a real buzz. Supporting the children's classes is *Treble J*, the Journal for Junior Jiggers. This is published four times a year, and contains news, reports and photographs from the various classes. It is the kids' opportunity to see their words in print. It also shows them that they aren't the only ones – there are kids in all parts of Australia like them, learning a little more about self-expression and a pleasant aspect of Scottish culture.

The Australian Teachers' Association was recognised by Headquarters in 1992. Its name changed in 1999 to the Australian Teachers' Alliance (ATA) and it became an affiliated group. When setting up ATA it was agreed that the most efficient way of operating would be that each three years the executive duties would be carried out by members of ATA from one of the Australia branches. The aims of ATA are: to promote the aims of the RSCDS; to foster excellence in teaching; to assist in on-going professional development; and to stimulate cooperation among teachers. The group has over the years run residential training courses for RSCDS examinations. These have catered for those teachers living in remote areas and unable to attend a branch course. Refresher courses for those already teaching have been offered as have tutor courses for those training candidates for RSCDS examinations. Unlike TAC in Canada, ATA does not run day, or residential courses. It publishes three newsletters a year for its members. ATA is invited to hold its AGM during the annual winter school held in Australia.

Europe

Correspondent: Tess Edelman
info@ceilidhdance.org

A SCD tour of Italy: start in Turin (Scealta-Si), cross over the widest part of the 'Italian boot' and you come to Vicenza (Scotias Shores), then you hit the Adriatic and Trieste (Robin Hood), a dive down the centre to Rome (Greenlands), then a jump back towards the Adriatic and Udine (Pordenone) for a new group, up towards the lakes and the Como group. Some are mixed dance groups; others are progressing from Scottish ceilidh to SCD. Como plan to make traditional dance a family and school project – and are well supported by local authorities to fund workshops. A little nearer my area is the special ethnic region of Occitania or the *Langue d'Oc* – an area which straddles Cuneo in Italy to Nice in France with its own language and culture, traditional land of troubadours and poets. The group Echi di Strada (Street Echoes) has a fantastic summer meeting place up in the mountains of Cuneo between Italy and France. As usual, it is one person's enthusiasm for Scotland that keeps the group going.

I've just returned from a warm welcome in Vienna – one of the great attractions of SCD is to join in a local evening and feel really welcome! Jim Cook of London Branch has been 'training around' Europe and he is the current expert on little-known groups. Jim reports the very active dancers and workshops in north and south Germany. He travelled from Rechberg to Freiburg and onto the northern parts of Germany: Greifswald (where?) and then on to Lubeck, Hamburg, Ruegen. He comments on the high level of dancing, enthusiasm and welcome which he found there. Jim says that many dancers come from a university background and that the work situation makes people very mobile. They then spread the SCD tradition as they move around.

Japan

Correspondent: Tom Toriyama
Tomtori@aol.com

English is a major problem for Japanese dancers. A magazine like *Scottish Country Dancer* can be very difficult to understand. We wondered if, perhaps, the branches in Japan could produce a Japanese edition



of the text! It would be a waste of time and effort for each branch to translate the contents of the magazine separately. Following discussions with the three branches, it was agreed that the contents of the magazine be divided into three. Each branch would translate one part and send it to the other two branches. To make the translation work smoothly page format, fonts to be used and translations of words such as 'Society', 'MB' and 'General Purposes and Finance Committee' would be agreed. The printing and distribution to members for the combined edition would be each branch's responsibility. Thus all members in Japan could receive a Japanese version of the magazine at the end of June. This procedure would be routine in the future. A Japanese version of the *Manual* would be our next project.



Japanese dancers and translators would like all articles in the magazine to be written in simple English. We do not wish to read novels in the magazine! We ask all contributors to the magazine, please think of RSCDS members whose native language is not English!

The examinations in Tokyo, February to May, held jointly by the three Branches, were a great success. Thanks to the excellent tutoring of Bruce Frazer, Jean Martin, Yoshiki Oyama and Shigeko Egarashi, all of the candidates were able to improve their dancing and teaching abilities during the training courses. The results were very good, most candidates passing. We express our gratitude to over 200 volunteers from the branches and the joint organising committee. The collaboration of the three branches was welcomed very much by the whole Society. After Unit 1, a candidate said to

us "I have just answered James IV instead of George VI to a question in the test!" Remembering foreign names is very difficult for us!

New Zealand

Correspondent: Marjorie M. Crawford
jaymarcrawford@actrix.co.nz

While writing this in June, we are in the depths of a very cold early-winter 'snap' here in New Zealand, but some warming news is on the horizon. Late last year, New Zealand Branch announced that, in tribute to Peter Elmes' Scottish Country Dance Band, it would underwrite a project to record, produce and distribute a CD of music by the band. The band has contributed greatly to SCD in New Zealand over many decades and each member of the band is very committed to encouraging and mentoring other (particularly young) musicians to grow the depth of talent here in New Zealand. Peter has a real talent for choosing exactly the right sets of music, and some of his lovely tunes along with other New Zealand tunes (all for New Zealand dances) will be included on the CD.

The CD will be available towards the end of this year from the Branch's Record Shop. Instructions for the only unpublished New Zealand dance will be included on the CD sleeve – and all other local dances are available from the Branch Book Shop. See the Branch website: www.rscdsnz.org.nz. To whet your appetite, there are dances from New Zealand: *Seton's Ceilidh Band*, *Thistle Hall*, *Feshiebridge*, *Catch the Wind*, *The Five Row Reel*, *Mary Bain's Wedding*, *Glenlmond Reel*, *On the Quarter-Deck*, *Wild Mountain Thyme*; plus *Mr William Brown' Reel*, *The Laird of Milton's Daughter*, *Elisabeth Hunter's SP*, *Bonnie Brux*, *Cadgers*, and *The Hunting Horn*.

North America – East Coast

Correspondent: John Middleton
jjceilidh@sympatico.ca

The past few months have been extremely busy along the eastern seaboard of North America. The Thistle School of Scottish Country Dance (pictured above), which is held in the mountains of North Carolina at Lees-McRae College in Banner Elk, completed its 26th year of continuous operation in July. This School performs a most important function as it provides a meeting-ground for dancers and teachers

in the south-east and south-central regions of the USA. Many of these dancers are fairly isolated. Many of the participants journey for over two days to participate, and this is one of the few times during the year when they can dance with people outwith their own group.

Attending Thistle once again were several members of the group which is centred in New Orleans and suffered through the fury of Hurricane Katrina. At the end of my report you will find some of the thoughts from Laurie McConnell of the New Orleans members on just how important the friendships formed in SCD were in the aftermath of that storm. We hope that you find them of interest.

In other news, an announcement has been made regarding the Flora MacDonald Ball to be held in Red Springs, North Carolina on October 7th, 2006. The Ball is to be held in conjunction with the Flora MacDonald Highland Games and is being arranged by two members of the New York Branch. Distance is of no import when it comes to the enjoyment of Scottish country dancing! The TAC Summer School was held at Wilfred Laurier University in Waterloo, Ontario this year. Teacher examinations were held in conjunction with the Summer School this year with candidates attending from across Canada and the United States.

New Orleans

The *New Orleans Scottish Country Dancers* are dancing in a different place. The usual Friday night spot, with the great wooden floor, is not available now. It was flooded due to Hurricane Katrina. The dancers are so happy to be together again that the concrete floor they dance on now really isn't that bad!

E-mail was a blessing. The dancers located one another and kept in contact. Dancers were spread throughout Louisiana and Mississippi with others in Alabama and all the way to North Carolina. Little did we know that it would be almost 2 months before many of us would be able to go home or able to find out if we even had a home left to go back to. My husband Rick and I ordered ghillies first thing when we arrived in Highlands, North Carolina. We had the opportunity to dance with several groups in that area. We were welcomed as family.

We had something fun and familiar to do – something that didn't change in our lives – after all a petronella is the same everywhere you go! Dancing was not only social, it was also therapeutic.

It will be a long time before New Orleans recovers, but it will never be the same. It will be a long time before some of the dancers recover. They won't be the same either. But we still have each other and music to dance to. I'm sure somebody is in the midst of composing a 32 bar reel for 3 couples called *Katrina's Wrath* right now. (Laurie McConnell)

North America – West Coast

Correspondent: Rosemary Coupe
rcoupe@rscdsvancouver.org

Several West Coast branches take their geographical location very seriously, holding their workshop weekends within sight and even sound of the Pacific. Over thirty years ago, San Francisco dancers fell in love with Asilomar (Refuge by the Sea), an area of protected beachfront land on the Monterey Peninsula. They have held annual weekends there ever since, strolling to class through pine trees, in sight of the surf and sand. The buildings at Asilomar were designed by Julia Morgan, an early architect renowned for her use of wood and stone. The Ball is held in the beautiful Merrill Hall, and as Kathleen McAdam writes, "There is something magical about dancing on the sprung wooden floor, the band up on the stage, our class banners hanging from the rafters of the vaulted roof, and spectators watching from the balcony."

This September the Seattle Branch will hold its 32nd weekend at Fort Worden, a 19th-century fort which once guarded the entrance to Puget Sound. Many people stay in Officers' Row, gracious wooden houses with high ceilings, dining tables long enough for a Victorian family, and living-rooms still described as 'parlours'. Between classes, dancers can stroll across the parade ground, and some brave people take a chilly dip in the sea at midnight.

The Southern California branches (Los Angeles, Orange County, San Diego, and San Gabriel Valley) will go even further out to sea next May when they hold an Interbranch Workshop and Ball on Catalina Island, off the coast from Los Angeles. This weekend will feature a ball in the art deco ballroom of a historic casino.

A rocky coast and a view of the Olympic Mountains are the background for the Vanisle group's annual ball in Victoria BC, held at the Esquimalt naval base. For this year's 30th Ball, Muriel Johnstone and Keith Smith played heavenly music.

Another 30th anniversary ball will be held this December by the Austin SCD Society, Texas. Finally, the Los Angeles Branch celebrated their 40th anniversary in April with a dinner and dancing to the excellent "Music Makars". Many former members attended, and everyone admired the display of scrapbooks from the earliest days of the Branch.

South America

Correspondent: Marcela Galve
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BASCDancers, Buenos Aires Scottish Country Dancers, began in 2005 as a group of people interested in promoting SCD in Buenos Aires. We gather to dance and learn about the history of the dances. BASCDancers is an Affiliated Group.

So we decided that the group should have a name and a logo. We did not want the group to be identified with the address where we practise once a week or with the teacher's name or with any nickname that could have been associated with this group. So we had several brainstorming sessions in which different suggestions were put forward. We definitely agreed that 'Buenos Aires' had to be in it. We also wanted the word 'dancers' to appear, to stress the fact that we are a group of people who meet to dance. Because of this we also agreed that a pair of ghillies was going to illustrate us. And this is how eventually we arrived at the name and logo you can see today. The logo? An artistic way to represent a ghillie whose laces form a set of dancing couples. Just let your imagination fly and you'll see them!



BASCDancers is now organising a 'Folk Get Together' where dances, folk tales and songs will form part of an entertaining programme for what will, surely, be a wonderful autumn afternoon! Promise to tell you about this next time.

From the Archive

Marilyn Healy has discovered the generosity of a member of the original 1923 Research Committee – Lady Dorothea Stewart-Murray.

A recent addition to the archives is *The Biographical Dictionary of Scottish Women*, published this year by Aberdeen University Press. The book has taken five years to produce and has more than 800 profiles of notable Scottish women including an entry for Jean Callendar Milligan. We did suggest that Mrs Stewart also merited an entry, not only as co-founder of the Society, but mainly for her contribution to the Girl Guide movement in Scotland, but the Editors obviously thought otherwise.

Another entry relevant to the Society, and a woman many of our members may know little about, is that for Lady Dorothea Stewart-Murray (married name Ruggles Brice), eldest daughter of the 7th Duke of Atholl and sister of the 8th and 9th Dukes. Her brother, Lord James Stewart Murray, the 9th Duke, was the first Chairman of the SCDS from 1924-7 and again from 1933-6.

Lady Dorothea was a member of our first Research Committee, established in December 1923, because of her interest in and knowledge of Scottish music, a passion which continued throughout her life. Her family had been patrons of the Scottish musical tradition for generations and the fiddler Niel Gow was among their protégés. She began collecting Scottish music and songs while still at school and the music of Niel Gow and his family formed a large part of her collection. One of the earliest, if not the first, donation to the Scottish Country Dance Society's 'library' came from her in October 1925 when she gave a complete copy of Niel Gow's *Collection of Reels and Strathspeys and Country Dances* and a copy of Nathaniel Gow's *Repository*. She made further donations and in 1935 presented the Scottish Country Dance Society with a copy of MacGlashan's *Collection of Scottish Music*. These books are now in the Archive.

Lady Dorothea was made an Honorary Vice President of the Society in 1937, but died the same year. Her large collection of Scottish music, song and poetry manuscript material was donated to the Sandeman Library (now the A K Bell Library) in Perth, on condition that it be known as the Atholl Collection and kept intact. It remains an important research resource for Scottish traditional musicians.

Publishing news

Jim Healy, Membership Services Convenor, outlines what is new in CDs and books.

New CDs

- *Book 14* (£10), recorded by James Coutts, a young bandleader rapidly gaining admirers throughout Scotland and further afield, making his first recording for us.
- *Book 35* (£10) recorded by Neil Copland.
- CD of music for the Medal Tests (£13) – recordings of all the dances either once or twice through as required for the tests. It is also useful for teachers in any class. A booklet with the descriptions of the dances for the Medal Tests (£5) is also available.

New books

- Summer School saw the publication of the final *Pocket Edition* of Books 42-45 (£3).
- *Index to Formations and Movements in Scottish Country Dances* (£10). This is a revised and much-expanded edition of the previous *Formations Index*, including all the formations listed in Chapter 6 of *The Manual* as well as a series of steps and formations, such as *lead down the middle, cross over and cast off (or up)*. It notes where a formation varies from the standard description and includes references to other features such as 'clap' 'turn under the arm' and 'dance under

arch(es)'. The second part of the *Index* lists the dances in alphabetical order, and sets out the formations and movements they contain in the order that they appear in the dance. The new *Index* is available in A4 in a spiral-bound edition or unbound, but hole-punched, to fit in *The Manual* folder.

Re-prints

A number of books with music have been out of print for some time. Books 4, 5, 15, 17, 32 and 36 have been re-set and re-printed in A4, but are otherwise unchanged from the preceding versions.

In the pipeline

The music for *Book 27* has been recorded by Frank Thomson and the CD will be available at the Conference Weekend. Also, by that time, it is expected that the new *Standard Terminology*, replacing the current *Glossary*, will be complete. Dance movements can be difficult to put into words. The aim of this booklet is to standardise descriptions of movements and formations. The plan is to accompany this booklet with a re-issue of *Miss Milligan's Miscellanies* in one A5 volume, using the revised standard wording.

Check your edition

One of the many advantages of the change to small print-runs is that errors that have crept in can be corrected quickly. The most recent version of the *Index to Scottish Country Dances* was first published in 2005; since then small errors have come to light and have been corrected in the latest copies. These are:

The Reivers – given as a jig, whereas it should be a reel. *Trip to the Drakensburg* – should be *A Trip to the Drakensberg*. *Last of the Lairds* – described in *Book 22* as a reel but is given as 6/8 time.

Book 13, reprinted in 2005, describes *Bridge of Nairn* and *Ladies' Fancy* as reels, whereas they are strathspey and jig respectively and are correctly listed in the contents as such.

And one change that many of you have already noted, in *Book 45*, the barring for the first phrase of dance No. 6, *Sands of Morar*, should read Bars 1 – 8, and not 1 – 4.



Money matters

Historically, country dancing was taught by professional dance teachers, who often also provided the music. Today the situation is different. Jim Healy is often asked what is standard practice.

One of the questions regularly asked of the Membership Services Committee is how much should a branch pay teachers and musicians. There is no definitive answer as the circumstances of each class, social evening or organised dance are different.

For example, a technique class might involve a great deal of preparation by the teacher but not by the musician, while a more general, social evening, could be completely the reverse. Add to this that the Society operates in many countries where local market practices have to be taken into account.

Things were easier once. On 11 February 1929, a note was sent to all branch secretaries:

"All recognised teachers of the Society are entitled to receive as remuneration the sum fixed by the Society i.e. 10/6d per hour, irrespective of the size of the class. Any modification must be a matter of arrangement between the teacher and those organising the class."

Readers of a certain age, raised in the UK, will have immediately translated 10/6d as half a guinea. For those with a different (and post decimal) background, it represents just over 50p. Not very much by today's standards, but in 1929 that was equivalent to £21.27 an hour. Interestingly, this is at the lower end of current rates paid by local authorities in the UK for less experienced teachers of music and dance.

The question is also posed as 'how much does a band cost?' Again, it is unanswerable in general terms as it will depend on time and distance to travel to the event – to say nothing of the composition of the band. Booking a band for an event half an hour's drive from Fife where a number of well-known bands are based is one thing; it is quite another when you are asking that same band to travel somewhere that will take up three days of their time. As an indication, however, and purely in UK terms, the Musicians Union rates (which are currently being reviewed)

can be translated simplistically as £80 for each band member for a three-hour gig and £100 for four hours. The actual amounts are not so straightforward because of questions of set-up time and so on, but they will do for this purpose. In addition, of course, for the far-flung gig there is the question of reasonable and realistic travelling costs, accommodation and food.

Nothing in these comments should be taken as a recommendation as to rates which should be paid to teachers, class musicians or bands and, obviously, outside the UK these measures are wholly inappropriate. However, the concept of looking at comparable rates paid by education authorities for similar skills and Musicians Union (equivalent) tariffs for musicians might be borne in mind when the question is raised in your branch and the caution in the 1929 notice still holds as to the 'arrangement' between organisers and teachers or musicians.

Interview: Bill and Hope Little

This summer, the editor spent a very enjoyable afternoon in Castle Douglas interviewing two of the Society's best-loved and respected teachers.

When did you start dancing?

Bill: I started dancing at Johnstone School, Kirkcudbright, with a Miss Reid and Miss Barbara McMyn, when I was 10, 73 years ago! I age with the Society! When I went to the Academy I was taught by the gym teachers, great friends of Miss Milligan, Peggy and Willie McKell. When I met Peggy latterly, she was bent double with arthritis. "Aye", she said, "it's all the fault of all that strong strathspey work!"

Hope: I first danced as soon as I could walk. My mother had grown up in Alloa and was very keen. Her father was a Highland dance judge. She sent me to a dancing school when I was 5. That was what they called 'fancy dancing', mostly ballet, but she saw to it that I could do the *Highland Fling* and the *Sword Dance*. I didn't do any country dancing as a child because we moved to England. After school I took up ballet properly. My first main contact with country dancing was in a club in the Presbyterian church in Southsea, run by Dr Atholl Robertson, well known to Miss Milligan. I think they 'had words' occasionally! He was a beautiful dancer, but Highland inclined! He spotted me and



Dr Robertson, Miss Milligan, Bobby Watson

asked if I would partner him for a *Foursome Reel*. I nearly died on the spot, never having danced a *Foursome* in my life! A lady told me to pass her by the left shoulder. Those were the only instructions I got! I duly passed by the left shoulder and then instinct seemed to tell me what to do. I got back to where I started, then fixed my eye on the man opposite and whatever he did, I did! Half-way through I saw the doctor doing a Highland travelling step – step close, cut behind, in front, quite low down – so I duly cut feet, came back again and did the next Highland step, whatever it was! I greatly enjoyed it. It was Dr Robertson who encouraged me to go to Summer School.

When was your 1st year at Summer School?

Hope: It was before the war – sometime in the mid-30s. There used to be a train from

Leuchars to St Andrews. When we got into the wee train for St Andrews, it sat and it sat and didn't move. My sister asked what we were waiting for. 'The fish,' came the reply!

Bill: I think I went first in the late 40's. My teaching certificates are 47 and 49. I had been for some years before I met Hope.

What was summer school like then?

Hope: There were three one-hour classes each morning when I was there first and not much of a break between! By the third hour, we were so exhausted, I can remember the teacher saying to the fourth couple, "You can sit on the floor till you're needed!" For my certificates, there wasn't the intense teaching there is today with so many more dances and formations. All I learned in my certificates were the dances and technique. We danced while Miss Milligan and two other staff members watched us. There was an oral exam – no written exam. You just sat there for about 10 minutes while two members of staff fired questions at you! The next day we were told we would be teaching. I had never taught in my life. I was petrified when I heard my own voice! You weren't told till you were in the room what you had to teach! I was praying for technique because I knew I could do that, and what do you think I got? *Strip the Willow!* I was so angry. I was dying to teach technique and there's no technique in *Strip the Willow!* I had them running round the room! I think they gave me that to teach because I was the youngest!

Is it true, Hope, that you were taught by Dancie Reid?

Hope: Oh yes, in the afternoon. He was a very old man, probably in his 70s. He used to stand holding the door of the Commonn Room open as we came in. He bowed to each one of us and said, "Good afternoon, my lady." I could never make up my mind whether this was old-fashioned Highland courtesy or just to remind us that he was really used to dealing with the aristocracy! Miss Milligan was in the class and I think she was just as scared of him as we were.



'Dancie' John Reid

What was his class like?

Hope: I have to say it was a wee bit Highland-flavoured. His mainstay was *Blue Bonnets*. I think he always taught the ladies



that to break them in! It wasn't a very big class. He had an odd accent. He never said "pas de basque", he said "paw paw". And when he taught the shuffle, he used to say "cross the buckle, cross the buckle". He wasn't the clearest of teachers because he would say, "Do you do it like this? or Do you do it like this? No, you do it like this!" And you had to sort that out for yourself! Some were good at it and some were not! I enjoyed his classes because I liked the individual dancing. We did *The Lilt* and one or two gentle fling steps, keeping our leg lower because we were ladies. He kept it lower because we were ladies. He was marvellous. He played his violin as he danced. He demonstrated the back-step once, playing his fiddle all the time and keeping himself very upright. He always wore a kilt. He had his own band which played at the ball in the Younger Hall.

What are your early memories of Summer School, Bill?

Bill: Everybody wanted to be in Miss Milligan's class. Hers was a huge class in the Younger Hall – 90 dancers and she saw everything that went on. The second class was taken by a Miss Price. We called her 'T' because all she did was technique and we wanted to get on and dance! We got skip change, pas de basque, strathspey setting and travelling till we were really out for the count! She only ever did one dance per class at the very end!

Were Miss Milligan's classes similar?

Bill: No, she usually managed to teach two or three dances in one lesson – never more than four. One thing she would do – particularly as she got older – was to get some of the best dancers to demonstrate a step up and down the room. She would only really concentrate on one step per day.

What was the atmosphere in her class like?

Bill: Well, we really all looked up to her as the big white chief! You were thrilled to be in her class. She came down to Castle Douglas to take a class the year the *Graded Book* came out. She taught with the book folded in the middle. It was *Lady Catherine Bruce's Reel*. Well, she taught us a bit of that, perhaps the first 16 bars – then she digressed to tell us about her Glasgow classes, about the doctors who came to relax after a hard day's work – and then she went on to bars 17 to 32, but in telling us the story, she had inadvertently turned over a page, so we got the second half of another dance! When I got home, I dived for my copy of the *Graded Book* to find this good dance that I'd missed!

It turned out to be one half of one dance and one half of another!

Hope: One thing I remember was the people who used to rise up high on their toes before a dance began. Well, that was Highland and anathema to both country dancing and ladies step! I used to spend ages if I had a lot of Highland dancers trying to get their heels down! Of course, in the early days, there were very few people from outside Scotland. Most people came by train, sending their luggage on in advance. We used cabin trunks and when we arrived at University Hall, the porter would help us to our room. We all ate together in the Old Dining Room with Miss Milligan's table up on the platform. If you wanted a cup of tea after the evening dancing, there were no electric kettles. People brought or hired their own methylated spirit stove and boiled water on them in their room! The corridors reeked of methylated spirits!

How did you start teaching Ladies Step?

Hope: I think they always had difficulty in getting people to teach it. Tibbie Cramb taught for years. I loved her classes and learned a lot from her. She had done a lot of research, and latterly, learnt many dances from Miss Cruikshanks. Miss Cruikshanks was very old and very arthritic when Tibbie met her. She used to hang on to two chairs and show Tibbie the steps. Most of the dances she taught were very old like *Flora Macdonald's Fancy* or *The Village Maid*, or ones that the travelling teachers had made up for the children they were teaching in whatever stately home they were in. Then one year Miss Milligan asked me to teach. I was surprised, but very thrilled. So I began my teaching, more or less based on what Tibbie had taught me. I remember Miss Milligan saying to me, "Now you won't do any airy fairy things!"

Bill: And when Miss Milligan said that, she meant she wanted traditional steps.

Hope: One year I came up against a class with one or two militant ones in it! For the Younger Hall demonstration, I announced that we would do *Flora* – "Oh, we've done that!" they said. I suggested another one – "We've done that, too!" I forget what I eventually did, but when I got home I decided I wouldn't be faced with that again! From that moment on, I made up my own dances in the old tradition. This is what the travelling dancing masters did. I think I carried on the same tradition. So whenever I announced what we would be doing from then on, their eyes opened! So, they couldn't say "Oh, we've done that!"

What goes through your mind when you devise a new dance?

Hope: Well, being ballet trained, I could not compose a dance unless I had the music in my mind. I used to spend hours looking for music that hadn't been used before. A good example is the music for my dance, *The Ladies of Threave*. Peg Rae found a tune she thought I would like: *The Lament on the death of the Revd Archie Beaton*, composed by John Mason, the leader of the Scottish Fiddle Orchestra. Peg did an arrangement and I used it for *The Ladies of Threave*. There was a

little bit in it that you could have a pause in the dancing. A little later it happens again. I knew when I devised the dance that it would make the audience think, "that fits the music." Miss Milligan liked it.

I wonder what she would think today of all the new country dances?

Hope: Yes, I wonder too. I think when I see them that people sit and think, "how can I twist this round to make it new?" One thing sticks in my head – crown triangles. It's not awful, but I just felt it was somebody thinking, "I'll do something different." And then the dance with the allemande upside down! I just think, why? You never do the poussette the wrong way round! I don't like novelty for its own sake. I don't mind new formations so long as they fit in with the dance. That's why I thoroughly approve of John Drewry's dances. They flow. There's never an awkward turn. People say, "Just look at the length of his instructions!" I thoroughly approve of that because how many times have you been confronted with a dance and you don't know whether a couple stay in the middle or go to the sidelines before they start the next bit? He dots every 'i' and crosses every 't'. That's why they're so lengthy. Then you can do the dance the way he wants it.

What other memories do you have?

Bill: One of the attractions used to be Tihi West with her daughter Wendy teaching old time dancing.

Hope: She was known as Tihi, but her real name was Elizabeth. She had learned from Mrs Victor Sylvester and could do a brilliant impersonation of her.

Bill: One thing I remember when I started teaching was the social dancing on arrival day (Monday from 5–6pm in the Common Room). Which teacher was to take it wasn't decided in advance. Miss Milligan would just pick whoever was around. Of course the Glasgow and Edinburgh teachers knew this and kept away, but I was new and was told, "Willie, you'll just take the get-together class today." So I had to choose dances I knew!

Do you have any special memories of demonstrations?

Bill: Well, one Saturday during Summer School she required two teams, one to go to the Aberfeldy Cattle Show and the other to go to Crieff Highland Games. I was in the Crieff team along with Florence Lesslie, Innes Russell, and Alice MacLennan. It poured all the way there. We had to do a couple of dances on the Highland Dancing stage. The boards were soaked so they had brought cinders to try to make it danceable. When we were due to go on, there was a cycle race round the perimeter and we had a terrible job getting Kitty MacLachlan across!

Hope: One thing about the early exams. Miss Milligan never used her pianist, who in those days was Miss Jenny Waddell. She always used Mrs Annie Shand, a very, very old lady. She was very much revered by Miss Milligan downwards. The rumour was that if you didn't make a personal thank you to Mrs Shand when you finished your exam, you failed! I never found anybody brave enough to test the rumour!

Bill: I was informed by Hope that when she had to play music in reel-time, she always played *The High Road to Linton*. And of course the tune says, one two three hop, two two three hop and of course skip change is hop one two three – so it was a death trap! And all the people who taught skip change using it, failed! One year when there were nine candidates, seven failed because Mrs Shand gave them *The High Road to Linton* for their skip change practice. If they wanted to teach, they should have realised this.

Do you think it's more difficult today to become a teacher?

Bill: Yes, and examining at TAC was in many cases of a very high standard and better than anything I saw in the UK.

Hope: One thing I disagree with today is the time teachers spend on warming up.

Bill: Yes, Duncan Macleod used to make it clear to people to arrive early and do their own warm-ups before the class. All I do is pliés in first and second position and then an exercise to get them down for strathspey work. Nowadays, teachers get you in a circle and go on and on! I remember one class in America where one of the dancers stopped it all by saying, "If ye dinnae stop this noo, ye're gonnæ hae us killt before we dae the dancin'!" I thought, absolutely true! They've overdone it.

What's your favourite dance?

Bill: That's difficult! Probably two old ones: *Montgomerie's Rant* and *Monymusk*. But there are so many new dances with lovely tunes.

Hope: One memory I have is of Bobby Watson dancing in the Common Room. They had done something to the floor and the surface was like glass. We were absolutely forbidden from putting anything on it. We slid all over the place! But Bobby Watson got up and did a dance. He skimmed round the room with never a slip, perfect. We all pounced on him afterwards to find out what he had put on his shoes. He had rubbed the soles with castor oil! The following day the entire school descended on the shops demanding castor oil! The rumour went round the town that something awful had happened at Summer School as everyone was on castor oil!

Bill: One thing I remember was when the formation *set and link* first appeared. It was in Alex Hay's dance *The Dean Bridge of Edinburgh*. Alex never intended that hands be held for the linking – even for a little bit of bar 3. You see, Miss Milligan only had a small number of people going over dances that were selected. It was their interpretation of Alex's instructions that we have today.

So where do you think it's all going?

Bill: Well, in the 50s there was a good number of *young* people at Summer school, but here in Castle Douglas today there are fewer young people dancing. Of course, there's more for young people to do today. I'm all for it being taught in primary schools.

Photographs: Dr Robertson, Miss Milligan and Bobby Watson (the Archive); Thanks to Bill and Hope for the picture of themselves with Jo Hamilton from California and also for the signed photograph of Dancie Reid.

Scottish schools and the RSCDS



Quietly and unobtrusively, branches and members of the RSCDS in Scotland are involved with the education system through their local schools: teaching country dancing; helping schoolteachers teach; and helping to organise festivals and days of dance. This work is seldom given the publicity it deserves. In this feature we give a flavour of the contribution the RSCDS makes in seven different parts of Scotland. Many more branches are involved in their local Music Festivals and in running Country Dance Festivals. We hope to cover these in a future issue.



The Annual Ayrshire Days of Dance

"Brilliant! Fantastic! I loved it! Excellent! Better than Highland dancing. You get to do all different dances. We got to meet new people. Fun-packed! Exciting!" These were just some of the many comments recorded in 2005 by primary school pupils from all over Ayrshire who attend the two separate Days of Dance held annually in November. The venues are the Magnum Leisure Centre in Irvine and the Concert Hall in Troon. Both halls offer a new and thrilling experience as they are large enough to accommodate the 1,500 junior dancers who, along with their hard-working teachers, eagerly attend each year.



The three Ayrshire branches of the Society (Ayr, Kilmarnock and North Ayrshire) provide volunteers and teachers to assist, not only on the day, but in the preparation of the youngsters. Our branches participate by sending out instructions and music on CD as well as running workshops for the schoolteachers themselves and going into the schools on a weekly basis to give support and guidance. In South Ayrshire, the schools also very much appreciate Ayr branch subsidising their expenses.

Both events, with live music from local SCD bands, consist of a mixture of ceilidh and simple country dances including *The Gay Gordons*, *The Dashing White Sergeant*, *St Bernard's Waltz*, *The Happy Meeting*, *Joe MacDiarmid's Jig*, *Ladies' Fancy*, *A Reel for Jeannie*, *Espie McNabb* and *The De'il Among the Tailors*, with *The Piper and the Penguin* becoming very popular year on year. (Oluf Olufsen)

Angus Primary Schools

Now in its ninth year, the annual Children's Dance for Angus Primary Schools is held every March. Over 400 children from 28 schools take part. This year Sue Porter, RSCDS Youth Director,

opened the event. The dances were: *The Gay Gordons*, *The Dhoon*, *Watson's Reel*, *Espie McNabb*, *The Dashing White Sergeant*, *The White Cockade*, *Simon's Dance*, *A Jig for Mrs Dunn*, *Rabbie's Reel*, *Virginia Reel*, *Joe MacDiarmid's Jig*, *A Highland Welcome*, *A Reel for Jeannie*, *Flowers of Edinburgh* and *The Flying Scotsman*.

The day is financed by a grant from the Angus Council Community Grant Scheme. The Angus Active Schools group were very helpful, as they have primary coordinators in each of the clusters of primary schools. They encouraged more schools to participate, and dealt with the disclosures necessary for our volunteers.

Members from Carnoustie Branch, Forfar Branch, and East Angus Branch go into the schools from January to March to help teach the dances. Some lucky schools have a member of staff able to teach the dances. The problem we anticipate in the future, as the effort to expand the scheme to more children takes effect, is lack of sufficient volunteers.

The Montrose Sports Centre is not big enough for the numbers involved. For the second year running, we had to limit the number of children per school to 16. It is obviously desirable not to turn children away, so we are planning next year to have two venues. We hope that this expansion will lead to more children taking up SCD in adult life. East Angus Branch would also like to stimulate SCD activity in the secondary schools and try to encourage schools to form out-of-hours SCD clubs.



Our advice to branches yet to initiate SCD in schools would be that it is essential to bring the local Education Department and the Active Schools groups on board. This essential activity is an area where the RSCDS can cooperate very fruitfully with local authorities. (Mark Noble)

The Fife Schools Festival

The Fife Schools Scottish Country Dance Festival began in November 1979 with 2,000 participants. Over the years the festival has developed and grown until in 2005 10,000 (yes, ten thousand!) children took part. The festival is open to primary and special schools of which there are 146 in Fife and of these 125/130 regularly take part. As the festival has developed, support for classroom teachers has increased. Staff from the PE Department of the Fife Visiting Teacher Service visit all schools on a regular basis. Immediately after the October holiday fortnight the PE staff are timetabled to do a block of four or five weeks of SCD prior to the November festival. Before the PE staff arrive, the schools will have received a package which includes instructions for the dances, a CD of the music and a video of the dances performed by members of the PE department. Simplified versions of some dances are included so that less experienced children can participate. The festival is non-competitive with the emphasis on having fun. Representatives from local branches of the RSCDS are invited to the seven venues throughout Fife to help and join in. There is no other local authority in Scotland with this commitment. It would be wonderful to see the example set by Fife replicated nationwide. (Irene Bennett)

Glasgow Schools Day of Dance

Glasgow Branch has always had a tradition of providing a variety of events for children. Primary school projects, a competitive festival, dancing for Pudsey, days of dance, were all part of their programme. With changing priorities, limits on teachers' time, and competition from other interests, attendance began to decline. A different strategy was required. After conversations with Johan Maclean, new plans were discussed.



The idea of a large event to promote and stimulate interest in primary schools began to emerge. The Branch is totally indebted to Johan for making the necessary links with the Education Department PE Manager, Christine Watson, who was very interested in the ideas. A small committee was formed and agreement was reached that the Education Department would organise the event in partnership with the Branch. Part of the strategy was to provide in-service training for the primary school teachers, undertaken in the autumn, who were subsequently supported by the Branch teachers. Christine Watson and the committee organised all the details for a day which was to result in a triumph for everyone concerned. 9 Branch teachers worked for weeks, mostly with children with no previous knowledge of country dancing, to bring about the spectacle that took place on 14th March. There was an huge sense of relief when, as the music struck up, rousing cheers nearly lifted the roof off the Kelvin Hall!



floor. Their excitement was infectious. Children who had said "I can't do that one" in the morning, were saying by the afternoon: "I want to try it". And then there was *The Dashing White Sergeant!* One of our guests, a distinguished senior member of the Society, surveying the scene before him, was heard to mutter: "What are the bets?" But it was all masterminded so well by MC Les Lambert, assisted by the many helpers that it proved to be the ultimate triumph of the day. Reported on BBC television news, it was a day in the life of 700 children, a day which they will never forget. (Ruth Beattie)



Dunoon

South Argyll Branch cooperate with their local authority when around 300 primary schoolchildren come together in March every year for an afternoon of country dancing in Dunoon. For six weeks, starting in January, members of the branch go into schools to teach the children.

Lanark

On the Friday nearest to St Andrews Day Lanark Branch organise an afternoon of dance for over 150 local primary schoolchildren every year. A branch teacher goes into the schools and prepares the children and helpers from the branch organise the sets on the day itself. (Mary Jamieson)



Stewartry Days of Dance

The Stewartry of Kirkcudbright is a small area of South West Scotland with three small RSCDS branches. Starting eight years ago with around 100 children from 11 primary schools, there are now 280 children from 18 out of the 20 primary schools in the area who come together in three venues with three teachers for a day of learning and dancing on the Thursday nearest Burns' Night. Branch teachers and members are closely involved. All the schools involved say the children love the whole experience. (Mary Burney)

(Photographs by Andrew Ross with parental permission at the Glasgow Primary Schools Festival, March 06.)

The Eightsome Reel

Rosemary Coupe, Vancouver Branch, fascinated for years by *The Eightsome*, has written a detailed history of the dance. This article is a summary of her research, showing that the origins of the dance go back much further than many realise.

A national dance

The *Eightsome Reel* is a fusion of opposites. Enshrined as one of the national dances of Scotland, it is of relatively recent origin. It gives a perfect opportunity for the *individual* display of dancing prowess, contained within a *communal* dance. It is a dance of the ordinary people, of high society, and of the Scottish regiments.

The quadrille meets the reel

The *Eightsome* is rooted partly in the polished French quadrille and partly in the native Scots reel. Its progenitor, *The Reel of Eight*, was a quadrille in form and reel in name only. The 'reel' component of the *Eightsome* grew as the dance developed, with the quadrille component, the chorus figure, surviving to 'frame' the reel and give it an aristocratic elegance and more of a social spirit. The main influence in the development of the dance was a romantic Scottish nationalism, emanating from the upper classes, in which the music, dancing and culture of the Highlands came to stand for the spirit of Scotland itself.

Historical coincidence

An interesting coincidence of dance history is that the reel and the quadrille both became fashionable at the same time. Early nineteenth-century writers mention 'quadrille-mania' hitting the country. Quadrilles became popular when the end of the Napoleonic Wars allowed people – and dances – to come and go freely across the Channel once more. Dancing masters rushed to Paris, and hurried home again to spread the new quadrille gospel.

The romance of the reel

In a broad sense, reels owed their popularity to the Romantic spirit of the age and its new interest in native traditions of music and dance. A definite factor in the widespread use of reel music for social dancing of all kinds was the presence in Almack's London assembly rooms of the Gows' band with their powerfully expressive music. While some dancing masters crossed the Channel to Paris to learn quadrilles, others drove post-haste to Edinburgh to learn reels.

The earlier Reel of Eight

The Reel of Eight, later incorporated into *The Eightsome Reel*, consisted of quadrille figures probably danced to reel music. In two sources separated by almost a century, *Contre-Danses à Paris* 1818, and Mozart

Allan's *Ballroom Guide*, c.1910, it has the same four figures: eight hands round; first ladies then men giving hands across in the middle, their other hand joined with their partner; set and turn partners; and grand chain. This sequence is familiar, of course, as the opening and closing frame of the modern *Eightsome Reel*.

Caledonian Quadrilles

The prestige of quadrilles in the early nineteenth century made them enormously popular and led to a market demand for novelty. As Ellis Rogers writes, they were set to the popular tunes of the day, and so-called Caledonian or Hibernian sets were danced to Scottish or Irish tunes. By mid-century, however, genuine Scottish content entered the quadrille.

Queen Victoria helped set the fashion for things Scottish when she swathed Balmoral Castle in tartan and employed the dancing master Joseph Lowe to teach reels to her children and – in suitable privacy – to herself. Lowe's diary for 30 September 1852 includes this passage:

"Got to Balmoral by twelve o'clock, was asked to the Drawing Room, met the whole party again, and had a regular practicing, everything the same as the day before. I taught them the Reel of Eight. Her Majesty thought it great fun and entered quite into the spirit of it."

H.D. Willock published his *New Caledonian Quadrilles* in Glasgow c. 1860. His set of five quadrilles is an interesting cultural fusion, danced in reel time alternating with strathspey. The dancers use standard quadrille steps for the reel sections and strathspey steps for the strathspey sections. Many of the figures are standard quadrille ones, but two of the quadrilles contain reels of four. In the fourth quadrille, each man in turn dances an 8-bar solo, foreshadowing *The Eightsome*.

Birth of the Eightsome

The modern *Eightsome Reel* seems to have been invented not by dancing masters, but by aristocrats with time on their hands and a romantic view of Scotland's past. Early allusions to the dance associate it with the balls held in conjunction with Highland Games, themselves deliberate revivals of

ancient Highland culture seen through upper-class Victorian eyes. A web history of the Skye Games, founded in 1877, describes the Skye Gathering balls in Portree as "*an essential part of the Highland country house itinerary, a couple of sleepless nights of reels and kilts and sparkling gowns, enjoyed by those who retired afterwards to the lodges and stately homes of Skye . . .*" The best-known account of the birth of *The Eightsome* appears in RSCDS Book 2, its probable source being the Duke of Atholl, coincidentally then President of the Society:

It is said that this dance was worked up by the late Earl of Dunmore [a member of the Murray family] and several friends from their recollections of "Round Reels". They spent a week in the early 70s evolving this dance at the time of the Atholl Gathering Ball. Later that season, or possibly the following year, it was introduced at the Portree Ball, and at Perth. It caught on throughout the country, and is now danced in all parts of Scotland.

Dance programmes

In 1885 *The Eightsome* appeared twice on the dance programme of the Northern Meeting. Thenceforth, it became a fixture on the programmes of all the big Highland balls. The 1913 Northern Meeting programme included five *Eightsomes*! These balls were often attended by house parties. One reason for the dance's popularity may have been that all members of a house party could dance in a set.

Development of the Eightsome

Given the association with the Highland Games and Gatherings patronized by the aristocracy, a fusion between the ballroom quadrille and the traditional reel seems natural. The many versions of the dance found in published sources between approximately 1886 and 1910 show that it did indeed catch on throughout the country, but the distinctive symmetrical structure of the dance took some time to develop. The earlier versions are much closer to conventional quadrille structure. They do not incorporate the full 32 bars of *The Reel of Eight*, but they do repeat a section of this dance as a chorus figure, interspersed with setting, turning, and reels of three.

The earliest surviving version of the dance occurs in David Anderson's *Ball-Room Guide*, published in Dundee in 1886. The ancestry of the dance is clearly indicated in its title, *Scotch Reel Quadrille*, or *Reel of Eight*. The



dance begins with eight hands round and back, then the double hands across with ladies giving right hands across, then gentlemen left hands across. Top lady then sets to and turns her partner and then bottom gentleman, and these three dance a reel of three. The entire 32-bar pattern (including hands round and hands across) is repeated with each lady taking her turn. It is repeated again for each man, the only change being that the hands across begins with men giving left hands across, then ladies right hands across. Anderson's 1891 edition adds the instruction "top lady in the centre, seven hands round and back", and similar instructions for each dancer in turn. This brings in the element of solo display familiar from earlier quadrilles. The dance is further lengthened in Anderson's 1894 version, with a 16-bar grand chain being substituted for the 8-bar "eight hands half round and back to places". Thus the overall length has grown from 8 x 32 (256 bars) in 1886 to 8 x 40 (320 bars) in 1891 and to 8 x 48 (384 bars) in 1894.

Just join in!

The very popularity of the dance meant that minor variants soon arose. A late Victorian teacher advises his readers to "be observant, and be prepared to join in any of the small changes you may meet". One variant mentioned is in the opening circle, which goes to the left only in some versions, but to the left and back in others.



That 16-bar grand chain!

The length of the grand chain also varies: 8 bars in the *Skye Eightsome*, but 16 bars in most of the others. Because 16 bars is quite long for a grand chain, further variants arose. One mentioned is that dancers may wheel with their partners when they meet in the chain, while another suggests that dancers should balance for 2 bars when they meet partners in the chain.

Interestingly, the version of *The Eightsome* collected by Mats Melin in Strath Halladale, Sutherland, in the 1990s also interrupts the chain with setting to partners. *The Buchan Eightsome* solves the problem effectively by allowing 8 bars for half a grand chain, 8 bars for the women's hands across, 8 for another half chain and 8 for the men's hands across.



Different ending

Anderson (1891) and various other sources all mention a conclusion to *The Eightsome* which seems to have been fairly common, especially at the end of a programme: the dancers divide into two sets of four and dance *The Reel of Tulloch* and *The Foursome Reel*.

Solo steps

The solo dancers in *The Eightsome* are free to choose their own setting steps. Four writers describe a total of sixteen different steps, with the same step sometimes appearing under different names, and different ones recommended for men and women. The *pas de basque* appears in three of the sources, as does the *high cut* (designated as a man's step). One writer designates the *pas de basque* as a ladies' step. The dance was danced at high speed. One source recommends a metronome speed of as high as 136 – in contrast to the 112 currently suggested by the RSCDS. One can understand one comment from 1900, "Woe betide you if for one moment you lose your presence of mind."

Music for The Eightsome

From the start, the music played for *The Eightsome* was a traditional reel. Anderson's 1886 and 1891 *Ball-Room Guides* specify, "Soldier's Joy, played a little slow". Sets of reels compiled for the dance appear in the two pamphlets associated with the Highland Gatherings, the *Blair Atholl Eightsome Reels* and the *Skye Eightsome*. Blair Atholl gives five different sets of tunes for the violin, and *The Skye Eightsome* gives four

sets of reel tunes for the piano. The publication of so many alternative sets is not surprising when one considers that up to the mid-twentieth century, *The Eightsome* might appear several times on a dance programme. Certain tunes, however, are strongly associated with the dance. *The De'il among the Tailors*, *The Fairy Dance*, *The Wind that Shakes the Barley* and *Mrs Macleod* recur often. These published sets of tunes also associate *The Eightsome Reel* with the quadrille, since they follow the precedent of publishing sets of Scottish tunes for quadrilles. At the same time, the changes of tune as each new solo dancer went into the middle must certainly have helped to build excitement. One commentator writes, "I remember the sort of surge and crescendo as the first man went into the middle, especially to Rachel Rae".

Appeal of The Eightsome

So for Scots living in an urban, industrial society, this new dance became redolent of a proud national past. It was created by a wealthy elite and promoted by dancing masters who often taught in the houses of the gentry. Much of the appeal of *The Eightsome* probably lay in the freedom it gave for individual self-expression and the exhibition of dancing prowess. The early Twentieth century dance teachers encourage their readers (particularly men) to build their own repertoire of steps so they may call on different steps at will. One teacher writes, "The chief charm of Reel dancing lies in the variety of detail introduced by the individual dancers." Whereas the setting in the traditional reels was reciprocal, the setting steps in *The Eightsome* were placed in a new context of improvisation and display, overtly competitive for men at least. Of course the steps demanded skill and much practice, and apparently private Eightsome Reel Clubs were formed for this purpose.

The Eightsome today

There is no question that today *The Eightsome* is one of the iconic social dances of Scotland along with *Strip the Willow* and *The Dashing White Sergeant*. Outsiders see it as a baffling, intricate and highly rule-bound ritual. Both views of the dance are seen in the films *Whisky Galore* (1949) and *Tunes of Glory* (1960). In the postmodern world, a cultural icon like *The Eightsome* asks to be parodied, as it was in *Four Weddings and a Funeral* (1994). At Carrie's high-society wedding, every bit of kitsch Scottish culture is in sight: the castle, the bagpipes, the kilts, the outsized cairngorms, the sashes. The outrageous Gareth, overdressed for the occasion, throws himself into the dancing with frenetic energy. This *Eightsome* is pure artifice, its garishness exposed by the unadorned truth of the funeral scene which follows. Romantic Scottish nationalism has lost its charm!

Illustrations supplied by Rosemary Coupe. The photograph is the hills above Blair Castle in Perthshire, 'home' of the *Eightsome*.



The Society



Clockwise from top left: perfect arms in the Seniors Class at St Andrews; Dundee children with Neil Grant adjudicating; young dancers at St Andrews; Belfast Branch looking swell; Jean Martin and Bruce Frazer with candidates in Japan; Isabella Rae receiving her Branch Award in West Lothian; two first-time dancers at Summer School allemanding.



on Camera



High jinks at Winter School; enjoying a joke at Summer school; Ottawa's 40th Celebrations; Ingrid, Marlon and Suzie at Chicago Branch's 25th celebrations; The Carolinas Branch founding members after their inaugural meeting; Robert Mackay, Murel Johnstone and Peter Shand concentrating at Pitlochry, children in Castle Douglas after their medal tests.



Spring Fling 2006

Seonaid Anderson reports on this year's Spring Fling which took place in Newcastle at the beginning of April.

A ceilidh start

On the first weekend in April young people from all over the UK – and some from further afield – gathered together for a hectic but enjoyable weekend of SCD. After tea, a ceilidh started the weekend off in good style and ensured we all got to know each other. The drinking (sorry socialising!) that followed made sure we got to know each other even better!



Morning classes

Saturday morning dawned with some of us having had decidedly more sleep than others. After a walk to the school, the length of which depended on how lost you got en route, the morning saw us in classes with Deb Lees taking the less experienced dancers, while Malcolm Brown took the more experienced people through their paces. A leisurely lunch in the sun followed, then we had a choice of trying Northumberland Ranting or

Highland Dancing with Deb or Shona Harper respectively, with something to challenge everyone in each class. Some people then had a practice for their performance that night at the Sage Centre, where the Scottish Fiddle Orchestra happened to be appearing. Others walked through the dances for the evening dance; some shopped; some slept.

Evening dance

The evening dance was held in the 'social sauna' of Blackfriars Hall with music by Phill Jones and Ceol na h'Alba where we were joined by a number of local dancers. More socialising followed – I'm still campaigning for the photos of Twister that night to be burned!

Sore feet

As usual, Sunday saw some of us suffering from sore feet and a lack of sleep. However, Malcolm and Debs re-organised the classes and started rehearsing us for a performance to the other class with excellent music from Patricia Cass and Gillian Stewart to inspire us to keep going. After a short break, chocolates were provided to sort us into different teams for a SCD quiz. After a bit of debate we had all the answers, and had to pick one of the answers to dem – no mean feat when you don't get any time to practice!

The chairman arrives

We were joined at this point by the Chairman Stewart Adam. We don't think it was coincidence that it was lunch time! Lunch was described in our course info as a buffet, but there was enough food to feed an army, thanks to the people from RSCDS Newcastle Branch, who had also kept us supplied with juice and biscuits all weekend.

Ready for Oxford?

It was a great weekend. We've already got the minibus booked for the drive to Oxford next year. See you on Friday 30th March!



In my opinion

by John Laurie

John Laurie started dancing at the age of 5 in Lochearnhead in Perthshire. He has lived in London for most of his working life. He was London Branch Chairman from 1981 till 1984 and is now a Vice-President. John is the longest-serving editor of the Reel – 13 years and 52 issues! He has run the St Columba's Monday Dancers club in Pont St for more years than he cares to remember! He has also helped produce country dance recordings for various bands. John served on the Executive Council, and the Publications and General Purposes committees.



Original tunes

In my opinion an original tune should not be played as an alternative for other dances. But what is an 'original' tune? In *Book 1*, all but one of the dances have tunes of the same name. The tune for the *Duke of Perth* first appeared in the *Drummond Castle Manuscript* of 1734 while the dance did not appear until *The Ballroom* of 1827. The dance *The Merry Lads of Ayr* was in the same *Ballroom*, but the tune by John Riddell dates back to 1776. Did the dance devisors simply like the tunes and name the dances after them? Fast forward to *Books 12* and *13* and we see that many of the dances and their tunes come from the same sources. So are these tunes proper originals? Nevertheless, most of the tunes in books up to *Book 21* were chosen by 20th century committees for 18th century dances. Forward again to *Book 44* and there has been considerable discussion because well-known modern tunes in the repertoire of our bands have suddenly become originals: *Mrs Agnes Ritchie* (*Starlight*) and *Major Thomas of Cairnleith* (*The Wishing Well*). Perhaps they should have asked some of our excellent musicians to compose new tunes. Incidentally, Major Thomas was a dog!

But common sense must prevail. It would not be acceptable to play originals for popular dances such as *The Sailor*, *Maxwell's Rant*, or *The Braes of Breadalbane* as second or third tunes for other dances. There are, however, many good originals for dances which are rarely done and we ought to hear them, for example: *Roxburgh Castle* and *Jenny*

Dang the Weaver. In fact, a few lesser known originals have appeared as alternatives in recent Society recordings. Finally, it is, I believe, wrong for an original, specifically composed for a particular dance, to be 'stolen' (if that's not too strong a word) and used for another dance as its original. This has happened with the original for my own dance, *Fraser's Favourite*, being chosen as the original tune for *The Dunivard Reel* on a recent non-Society recording.

Well-known originals

I feel sad and even annoyed when bands on radio and CD do not play the correct and well-known originals for popular dances such as *The Dashing White Sergeant* and *Circassian Circle*. I even heard a band who did not play the very distinctive original for *Shiftin' Bobbins*. Why do they not simply say 'a set of reels or jigs'?

Strathspey or not strathspey!

We should not blame contemporary dance devisors for suggesting tunes for strathspeys which are not genuine strathspeys. The Society began the trend with *The Lea Rig* and *Seann Truibhas Willichan*. Whether we like it or not, they are here to stay and new slow air/pastorals are currently being composed. There are three fine ones by Andrew Knight on Alastair Wood's CD for *Book 31* on the *Autumn in Appin* encore track.

Which came first?

Most of the tunes in the *Graded Book* are

well-known songs, but they were nearly all dance tunes before the songs were written. Not in that book, but the best known example in this genre is the jig *The Caledonian Hunt's Delight* slowed down for Burns' song *Ye Banks and Braes!* Jimmy Shand recorded it in 1971 as the second tune for *Hooper's Jig*.

Workshops

In my opinion the terms 'social dancing' and 'workshop' should be deleted from our dancing language. All dancing should be 'social'. What is wrong with *classes*, *dances and balls*? I accept that there is a modern definition of 'workshop', but it includes intensive discussion. How much discussion is there at a day school? Let us stick with *day and weekend schools* and *musicians' courses*.

Book 46

In my opinion *Book 46* will be issued in due course! There was some discussion at the 2005 conference weekend about publishing books without music. Issue no 1 of this magazine included two dances to mark Eileen Watt's retirement. Are the tunes available to all musicians? I feel there will be other occasions when a new dance is called for. Is *Issue 1* going to be available to dancers in ten or twenty years time? The Society decided some years ago that there would be no more leaflet dances, or dances for a particular year, as all future dances would be in numbered books. So, *Book 46* it must be in due course!

(Photograph courtesy of Stephen J. Webb)

Teachers' Associations

TAS

Scottish teachers now have their own teachers' association – Teachers Association Scotland (TAS). The founding meeting took place in Edinburgh on September 9th. The chairman is Marjorie Macrae with Peter Clark as Secretary/Treasurer and Margot Priestley as Workshop Organiser. (Further details from Peter on 01540 662346 or clarks@ukonline.co.uk)

SERTA

Under the auspices of the South-East Branches Committee, teachers in the SE of England have formed the South-East Regional Teacher's Association (SERTA). (Further details from Mervyn Short on 01903 715068 or nyvrem2@onetel.com)

The logo

Updated logo

Every organisation periodically reviews the way it presents itself to the outside world. Our 'crown of ghillies' logo was first introduced in 1981 and although it is very clever to an insider, it means nothing to a non-dancer. The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society is a long name. It was decided to concentrate on RSCDS. The other guideline set down was that the 'crown' should be included as part of the logo. The final element was to add what is known as a strapline. 'Dance Scottish' was originally used for the children's teaching pack and was chosen as it identifies what we do, continues something already in place and allows for the development of specific themes such as 'Dance Scottish for fitness/fun/etc.' Change is always difficult but we are sure it will grow on you. Jim Healy, Membership Services



The Dunblane Conference

On 11 February, a freezing cold day, representatives of 29 Scottish branches gathered in Dunblane to discuss the state of country dancing in Scotland and the state of the RSCDS. Former Chairman, Jean Martin, summarises the day.

Facing the facts

Chairman Stewart Adam opened the conference, attended by representatives from 29 Scottish branches. The atmosphere was cheerful despite members having to face up to some unpalatable facts.

Session 1: SCD in Scotland Today

Dr Alastair Macfadyen opened the first session with amusing anecdotes and pertinent comment on the past and current situation in Scotland.

Some negative reporting in the media had not helped the cause of SCD and he commended the Management Board for supporting the Conference. Quoting J F Kennedy he warned against "comfortable inaction."

Jimmie Hill then spoke of the need to be pro-active and gave various instances where SCD and the RSCDS were no longer in the public eye. He also felt that there was a danger that Scottish issues had been and were being overlooked within the Society. The same message as Alastair had given came across – 'dignified silence is no use' – we must start the long fight back to raise the profile of SCD in Scotland.

From the ensuing group discussions the main point made was that the priority should be to get more people dancing rather than increasing RSCDS membership. Too often branches were concerned with organising events for their existing membership. More dancers are needed before we can have more members!

Session 2: Schools and young people

Sue Porter, Youth Director, gave an overview of the situation, explaining that in some areas SCD is part of the primary school curriculum; in other areas dance is an extra-mural activity with permanent staff or RSCDS teachers taking classes. Sue believes that a SCD programme for schools should be developed on a national basis. Many branches have classes for school-aged children, though only a few run dances for them. There are very active SCD groups in five of the Scottish universities. Sue urged us to work with and encourage them.

The Fife Model

Irene Bennett explained that every November the teachers from the visiting PE service organise a non-competitive festival which is open to all primary and special schools in Fife. She astounded the conference when she said that some 130 of the 146 primaries take part each year with up to 12,000 children attending over a period of 10 days. At each venue and for each session an RSCDS representative attends.

The Ayrshire Model

The 3 Ayrshire branches work with the local education authorities to organise Days of Dance. The branches provide instructions for dances, a CD of music, and offer to help teachers with preparation for the events. Helen Frame reported that on average 1,700 children take part each year.



John Wilkinson, Anita Mackenzie, Irene Bennett and Linda Gaul smiling – and freezing!

Schools Development Officer

Ruth Beattie spoke of various initiatives at national level which should provide an opportunity for us to become involved: the national priorities in education highlight the importance of sport, music, dance and drama; the need to tackle obesity – the active schools programme; the 'Arts for All' review. Ruth's main point was that to fulfil its task of promoting SCD in schools the RSCDS needs a Schools Development Officer to co-

ordinate the work we already do and to expand that further with official approaches to relevant authorities and organisations.

Dancing for Young Adults

- Sinclair Barbour runs a very successful group of teenage dancers in Thornhill, a village in the Borders. He offered some very interesting pointers: hold classes for boys for the first couple of weeks before asking the girls along; use quite complex dances to keep minds active; slip in the technique – never start with it; use young musicians where possible and arrange demonstrations, festivals and trips abroad. In his senior class of 50 only 15 are over the age of 24! His message on working with young people – "understand them, involve them, make it fun and active."

There was general support for the idea of a Schools Development Officer though some felt that a Public Relations Officer might be more important. Branches should be encouraged to hold family nights, to train more young teachers and inter-branch co-operation should be the norm. Above all, listen to what young people are saying!

Session 3: Promotions and marketing

This session, chaired by Irene Bennett, took the form of a panel discussion with Anita Mackenzie, Linda Gaul and John Wilkinson. The initial presentation was made by Anita, who first spoke of the differences between promoting a product or service you were happy with by advertising and holding special events and marketing which takes you right back to the research stage. Do we need to spend more on promotion or do we need to update what we're trying to achieve, to re-define and re-present what we are offering? Her proposal was a 10-point marketing plan for the RSCDS.

1. Re-define what we want to achieve for SCD in Scotland.
2. Consolidate the support of our existing membership.
3. Research new target groups and what they want.
4. Set target-group priorities, such as beginners or young people, say, for the next 2 years.
5. Prepare special programmes for these groups and invest money in planning and promoting activities.
6. Modernise our name, our image and perception of ourselves, and our Society to appeal to the groups identified.
7. Employ a marketing professional at HQ to work with the branches at a national level.
8. Have a high profile launch of the campaign.

9. *Throw all our enthusiasm, commitment and experience behind the action plan.*
10. *Evaluate what we have done every 2 years and make the appropriate adjustments to the campaign.*

A wide-ranging discussion followed with the other members of the panel providing input. The areas covered were – What are we promoting? The RSCDS or Scottish country dancing? Is a marketing post essential in the 21st century? Should we have a snappy trading name? Would RSCDS do? After all who remembers what ICI stands for?

There was general agreement that Anita's plan was a good one and that we should have a professional marketing officer. The present difficulty of promoting SCD through the media, particularly television, was recognised. At a local level it was necessary for branches to be more pro-active and to be more forward-looking and to have specific target groups in mind for the various classes, workshops and socials on offer. Changing our image was a difficult task. Opinions were divided on dropping the word 'Royal'. Most felt that it should be retained, but that a snappier trading name would be an asset. Inviting Scottish celebrities to be Vice-Presidents was popular.



Delegates from the North East.

Session 4: Possible future projects

Let's Dance Scottish Week

Jean Martin's question to the members was, "Does your winter programme start with a flourish or a whimper?" She suggested the RSCDS in Scotland should promote a *Let's Dance Scottish Week* every September. A national campaign would be needed, but its success would depend on branches because it's at local level that recruitment takes place – HQ does not recruit a single member.

A Charity Week

Pam Gillies spoke of her involvement from 1997 with Children in Need. After a successful first event in Glasgow *A Jig for Pudsey* was devised and the dance has been used ever since. The Management Board supported the idea and nationally 36 groups were involved in 2005. As a result a lot of interest in SCD has been raised among young people.

Does a Demonstration Team have a role?

Helen Frame first queried the purpose of a demonstration. It is our shop window and a demonstration must have a positive image of people enjoying themselves: it is where the Branch meets the public. Above all the demonstration must be appropriate for the situation.

Other Projects

Jimmie Hill pointed out that most workshops are aimed at people who are already dancing. He advocated beginners' workshops and a rolling beginners' class throughout the year as we limit our market by making people fit into 'terms'. 'Call back in September' is no incentive to take up a hobby. He advocated a more relaxed approach to teaching beginners to avoid a high drop-out rate. He suggested that members might want to petition the Scottish Parliament – after all if we don't lobby for SCD in schools, no one else will!



Home-made soup and hot drinks kept everyone going!

Conclusions

It was left to Jean Martin to summarise what had been a very full day. She identified priorities for action and recommendations:

Priorities for Action

- *Appointment of a Marketing Officer*
- *Formulation of a Schools Strategy*
- *Appointment of a Schools Liaison Officer*
- *Organisation of a Dance Scottish Week annually in September*
- *Promotion of CPD training for schoolteachers*
- *Targeting of specific groups – beginners and young people*

Recommendations

- *Develop a new name and logo for Scotland*
- *Work more closely with other organisations such as STDT*
- *Liaise with traditional music and dance groups*
- *Promote combined activities with other organisations e.g. Scotia Book*
- *Investigate alternative sources of funding*
- *Gain more media coverage*
- *Organise summer camps for young people*
- *Promote demonstrations by young dancers*

A Jig for Pudsey Bear 17th November 2006 BBC Children in Need Appeal 2006

Our *Jig for Pudsey* in November 2005 raised the sum of £5,600 with certificates being issued to all participating branches and children's groups. 37 branches and groups responded to our advert in *Scottish Country Dancer* last year.

We had many success stories. One branch who raised sufficient interest now have a children's class. Another Society member managed to involve the staff at the Council Offices where she worked – and had them dancing.

Please ring or e-mail Headquarters for further information.

Dance Scottish Week 10 – 15 September 2007

An initiative of the Dunblane Conference. Calling all members, clubs and branches everywhere! The idea is that this will become an annual event to raise the profile of Scottish country dancing, and will give an impetus to the recruitment of beginners. We all need new dancers and we need them now! A full programme of events, both national and local is being developed. Please put these dates firmly into your diary. There will be more information in the next issue of *Scottish Country Dancer*.

A branch and a club



RSCDS Belfast Branch

1946 – 2006

The Belfast SCD Society was created on 12th December 1938 under the tuition of Miss Boyd. In order to become a branch, dancers were encouraged to take the examinations, despite the difficult war years. Miss Milligan's biography, *Dance with Your Soul*, refers to one of the early teachers, Miss Nan Shaw, who went to great lengths to qualify during 1940.

'In order to visit Scotland, Miss Shaw had to obtain a travel permit and was obliged, for security reasons, to carry her country dance books in an official envelope complete with large blobs of sealing wax. The difficult journey was not in vain, for the examination was successful and Miss Shaw was charged by Miss Milligan "to go back and keep teaching," which, of course, she did.'

The 1946 minutes of the Belfast SCD Society record the proposal to become a branch. Branch status was conferred on 9 November that year. Miss Milligan came to the first weekend school in September 1947. During the '50s and '60s she made several return visits to examine, teach at weekend schools and attend the Branch's 10th Anniversary celebrations.

Belfast Branch also played its part in the extension of Scottish dancing in NI with Miss (Lottie) Kane taking classes in Whitehead and Portrush, before and also after, they too became branches.

Traditionally, dances were formal affairs with women wearing evening gowns or white dresses. The dancers must have had good stamina as tickets show dancing from 7.30 pm to 1.00 am and include up to 24 dances! A majority of the 1960s programmes show *The Eightsome Reel* as the supper dance and the final dance of the evening was *Highland Schottische*. Analysis of 47 past branch programmes reveal *Montgomery's Rant* as the most frequently included dance.

Music for classes was mainly provided by the Misses Gertie and Marie Brady. As *The Belfast Scottish Country Dance Players*, they, accompanied by a drummer, generally provided music for dances during the '50s through to 1981. In 1951 the legendary Jimmy Shand was the first Scottish Dance Band to which members danced. From 1981 George Fleming and his band ventured across and were for many years the only band prepared to cross the Irish Sea because of 'The Troubles'. Other bands followed in the '90s and today bands are invited over at least once a

year, whilst CDs and tapes are used in classes and at social dances.

Branch membership has fluctuated over the years. In 1947 there were 42 members. By 1952 this had increased to 140. The BBC's *White Heather Club* had a major influence in encouraging the growth of Scottish dancing and throughout the '50s and '60s and the branch grew to almost 500 members. Weekend schools were held in both the Autumn and Spring in the late '60s, as well as annual dances.



Belfast members at St Andrews

The onset of significant terrorist activities in Belfast from 1969 had a major effect on the Branch, for whilst many members wished to continue dancing, some of the schools where classes were held were closed to evening use. Travelling across Belfast was not easy though many a checkpoint possibly appreciated the novelty of several kilted drivers in succession producing driving licences from their sporrans! The size of the branch effectively halved. Nonetheless, dancing continued even though membership dropped to about 200 and social dances were held in the city centre in the War Memorial Hall. New classes were extended into areas surrounding Belfast and continue there today. By our Golden Jubilee in 1996 the Belfast Branch had 279 members and ran seven classes. As the older generation of dancers retire from dancing it has been a challenge to attract similarly enthusiastic beginners and branch numbers again dropped to virtually 200, but are slowly creeping up again. Currently, Belfast has a membership of 248, including 24 fully qualified teachers. Ten branch classes are held in the Greater Belfast area.

The branch holds an annual St Andrew's Dance, several Fun Dances, as well as an End of Season Dance and alternates with Portrush Branch in organising a weekend school each Spring. Belfast members also enjoy going to the AGM events, taking

part in Summer School and visiting other classes, including those in the Republic and beyond.

As a result of the enthusiasm of a number of members we are able to support a children's class. During the past year further promotion of Scottish dancing continued with an adult beginners' class, attracting 24 new dancers. It is hoped they will continue dancing. *Article collated by Pamela Emerson. Photograph of Lucy Mulholland's children's class.*

Rose of Barcelona

Barcelona, capital of Catalunya, has a population of two million. The Barcelona group was created in December 1997. We are a small but happy gathering of people who dance every Monday in the Old Town, The Ciutat Vella. We have been 'adopted' by a Catalan cultural society and have the pleasure to dance in its venue.

How this group was created is quite funny. I had danced in Paris with the 'Tartan Plaidie' (now Paris Branch) and when I settled in Barcelona – my home city – I looked for a group to dance with. There was none. In 1997 I went to St Andrews and looked for contacts in Spain. I got in touch with the Madrid group leader Jeronimo Maeso. He simply said, "There is no group in Barcelona? Create it yourself!" Jeronimo and his group came to Barcelona to help me. We had an enormous ceilidh. I put adverts on the internet, in Scottish pubs, folk centres, English magazines, and people began to come. The Madrid group gave me books and cassettes and helped me so much. I want to thank them all!

I immediately asked for RSCDS affiliation and chose the name *Rose of Barcelona* for two reasons: the clan Rose is almost the only one not to have fought with its neighbours; and the rose is our St Valentine's flower (*Sant Jordi*) even if the clan Rose flower is rosemary! Our group now has 20 members, mainly Catalan. Years ago we had a visit from a Glasgow group and I said to 'my' group, "I've never met them before, but you'll see that we can dance together without any problem."

I think that not very many people here have any idea what SCD is. Some people from other groups wonder how it is that the Barcelona group attracts young men. The average age is 35 and we have lots of young men! My theory is that in Catalan dances we have men with little skirts jumping in the air! *Gloria Rubió*

Dancing matters

Technique doctor

Teacher and examiner, Brenda Burnell, shares her views on teaching the allemande – with lessons for us all!

The hazards of teaching an allemande

When I see dances with an allemande appear on a programme, I cringe! I feel this formation has so many things in it that can go wrong and they very often do.

The allemande hold

First there is the hold. We all know how we should take hands and lift the right one over the lady's head to be held just above her shoulder – and certainly not resting on it. What then are the left hands doing? The man should be leading the lady with her hand in his just above waist level. We check this hold each time we dance an allemande and we have progressed. Now we need the detail and phrasing: out diagonally to the ladies' side on bar 1; turn to go across on 2; go across on 3 and... then down on 4. I am reluctant to mention 'and just going down on 3' because if you give dancers an inch, they are inclined to take a mile. We turn into line on 5 and make sure we have progressed as we do so. The climax of the allemande comes on 6 as the men take the ladies to the centre of the set and each man lifts his arm right over his partner's head so that she faces him and then everyone retires to the sidelines on 7 and 8.

Success!

Now we dance it – hands in promenade position ready to lift the right one over as the formation starts, second couple neatly tucked in behind first couple. I've told the class (and musician) we're dancing the allemande in strathspey time. It isn't quite as good as when we walked it because I forgot to remind the men to take small steps as they are on the inside of the curve so the allemande takes more room than two couples normally have. I always blame the men for misshapen allemandes so there is a further need to show exactly what first man must do to keep the allemande in shape. I show that he must turn on the spot on 2 and again on 5 where second man must do the same. We go back to our original places and this time it is much better. We try it from the new positions and dance it straightaway with the music, but the new top couple must just have been following the original first couple without listening to the words of advice. Show, walk and dance again with more success, but what has happened to the arms? They are not quite so well positioned as we first established. The leading hand has come up and lacks any leading quality. One last try and with the music we can dance it. It is unbelievably good! We have changed places and dance it again – brilliant. Now we can go on to the dance. Yes, it all works well and the dance and allemande are successful.

Job satisfaction

Inwardly I feel pleased about it and go home, knowing the class has learnt to dance a good allemande. Maybe next week the class could do that dance again and go on to allemande in quick-time. Next week's lesson is almost planned and I sleep contentedly.

Reality sets in

The following week I use the plan. Instead of going on from last week's lesson, we have regressed. The arms are poor and the big man in the class looked as if he was hanging his small partner out to dry! Ah well, we go back over all the things we did last week and learn to dance a good allemande AGAIN!

How do your do?

Eileen Watt's Reel

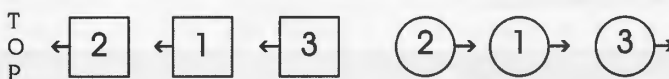
In Issue 1 we published *Eileen Watt's Reel*, devised by our new Schools Director, John Wilkinson. It is a very interesting and original three-couple dance in a three-couple set. John would like to point out that the second couple step up on bars 3 and 4. Some dancers have asked for clarification of the reel of four in tandem in bars 17 – 24. We hope dancers and teachers will find the following slightly more explicit instructions with diagrams helpful:

At the end of bar 16, the dancers are arranged as follows:



- All six dancers dance the track of a reel of four.
- 2nd man and 3rd woman dance the reel as individuals.
- The two dancers at either end dance the reel 'in tandem'. For them, the lead changes as they curve round at the opposite end.
- The two dancers dancing as individuals (who started back to back in the centre) do not pass each other on bar 24, but pull back right shoulder so that *all three women are facing up and all three men are facing down*.

If you remember that at the end of the reel the four dancers who danced in tandem are back in the same positions, women facing up and men facing down, **but** the two who started back-to-back have swapped places, then you won't go wrong. Positions at the end of the reel are:



If all six dancers finish bar 24 in a straight line in the middle, they are then ready to chase clockwise back to their own sides for bars 25 – 28. Enjoy!

Reel of three in tandem

Following on from the discussion on *Eileen Watt's Reel*, here are the instructions from *The Manual* for the reel of three in tandem.

In tandem indicates two dancers moving simultaneously, one behind the other. Reels in tandem can be danced on the sidelines or across the set, the latter usually with corners. The couple in tandem always begin from the centre position of the reel. (but not in *Eileen Watt's Reel*!)

The pattern of the reel is the same as an ordinary reel of three with the following difference: when the dancers in tandem loop round the ends of a reel, the leading dancer dances slightly wide to allow the dancer behind to take the lead. The loop is completed with the new leader and the pattern of the reel continues.

Who's who?

Irene Bennett

Irene Bennett becomes Chairman of the Society at the November AGM. Like most Scots, Irene started country dancing at primary school and thereafter in the Girl Guides. While training as a teacher at Moray House College in Edinburgh, she took her RSCDS teaching certificate with Miss Nancy Arnott as tutor.



Irene joined St Andrews Branch in 1964 and, over the ensuing years, served on the committee in a number of capacities: branch secretary, treasurer and chairman (twice), as well as being a keen, committed member of the branch demonstration team which, subsequently, she trained. She initiated the tradition of a branch day school and set in motion a most successful Children's Day of Dance – a precursor to, and undoubtedly the foundation stone of, the acclaimed Fife Children's Festival of Dance.

Irene's polished, stylish teaching has been widely enjoyed at Summer School and at day and weekend schools throughout Britain and Europe.

In St Andrews, where Irene lives, anyone seeking advice or guidance on Scottish dance knows that she is the person to approach. Whether it be the Tayforth Universities Officer Training Corps dancers (whom she advises) or someone looking for assistance in devising a charity ceilidh programme, all, sooner or later, consult Irene.

Such approachability coupled with her consummate knowledge of and passion for the dance, in addition to her fine communication and administrative skills, makes Irene a worthy successor to the role of Chairman of the RSCDS. We wish her well in her term of office.

David Normand-Harris

David Normand-Harris, Convenor of the Education and Training Committee, hails from Skye and has participated in Scottish country dancing since his schooldays. While at the University of St Andrews, he trained and was a member of the Celtic Society demonstration team.



At his first Summer School he took his Preliminary Certificate with Florence Adams as his tutor and Jean Milligan as the main examiner. That arrangement was to be repeated later when he sat his Teacher's Certificate.

After a career spent largely in Adult Education, latterly at senior management level, David is now able to devote more time to Scottish country dancing and to the Society. He was in the habit of spending half the year in the US and half in the UK. Since becoming Convenor he spends more and more time in Scotland.

All his many kilt hose have been knitted by David himself and one of his ambitions is to train as a kilt-maker, though for the moment E&T takes up too much time to allow him to pursue that activity! In that connection, however, a tartan for the RSCDS has just been approved by the Management Board, the design being one of ten submitted by him.

The specific goals he has set for E&T are three-fold – to ensure that the new examination system works smoothly and successfully, to revise the Dancing Proficiency Assessment and to introduce a scheme of continuing professional development for all RSCDS teachers. David's personal goal is to keep fit enough to be in the Fully Certificated class at Summer School for some years to come!

Re-printed

Dancing on the NHS!

The following appeared in *The Daily Telegraph* in July this year. The author is Andrew Marr, the famous political journalist, television presenter, and Scot.

An Easter break in central Scotland found us in the hotel each evening reeling, Gay Gordoning, stripping numerous willows and the rest of it. Now that all political utopias lie in ashes and disgrace, country dancing may be the best definition of – well, if not socialism, then at least the good life left.

Here, in the brief community of those great Victorian 'hydropathic' institutions, you get everyone – the old, the young, the fat, the unwell, teenagers, tycoons and retired teachers, all whirling round together. It is the absolute antithesis of cool. Nobody's sneering or left out. This is not for couples of exhibitionists. It doesn't involve great natural rhythm, so it isn't intimidating.

Small children are being swung round by grannies; beautiful young women are dancing barefoot with old baldies. And very soon everyone is grinning. Beecham, I suspect, was thinking of handkerchiefs, bladders on sticks and bells. But proper country dancing should be prescribed on the NHS!

© *The Daily Telegraph*

Programmes

From Hamilton, Scotland, to Hamilton, Ontario Hamilton and Clydesdale Branch

This is the programme for the branch dance on 21st April this year. The band was George Stirrat's SCD Band.

Marigold, Baldovan Reel, Two Roses, The Irish Rover, Spiffin, The Swelkie, Rose of St Andrews, Rest and Be Thankful, Waggle o' the Kilt, Trip to Bavaria, Cherrybank Gardens, Seton's Ceilidh Band, Tiptoe and Sway, Airs and Graces, Maxwell's Rant

Hamilton Ontario Branch

The Canadian Hamilton's programme, devised by Andy Fallas, is from April this year. The band was Bobby Brown and the Scottish Accent.

Machine Without Horses, The Dancers' Wedding, Sugar Candie, Fire and Ice, Culla Bay, The Sailor, Hoopers Jig, Margaret Parker's Strathspey, Hamilton Hospitality, The Starry Eyed Lassie, Rhonda's 40th, Maxwell's Rant, Catch the Wind, Wisp of Thistle, Hamilton Steel, Neidpath Castle, Joie de Vivre, Reel of the Royal Scots

Letters to the editor

The Dunblane conference

Dear Editor

I was the East Angus Branch delegate to the 'Let's Dance Scottish' conference in Dunblane in February. Clearly, the objective to get more people on the dance floor performing SCD is one we should all be trying to help. As newly elected Chairman of the Branch, I have asked our committee to consider the ways in which our small branch, with limited membership and funds, can contribute.

I was very encouraged by the message that, 'What matters is not the Society, but SCD itself'. This implies to us that we should be cooperating more with the local SCD clubs. We are, therefore, intending to try and seek alliances with these clubs to hatch schemes to bring more people onto the dance floor.

Another subject discussed at Dunblane, that has not thrived in our area is beginner's classes. There have been several initiatives here in the past which have petered out for lack of support. This is symptomatic of the general fall-off of SCD activity in Scotland, and which stimulated the Dunblane conference. We are therefore going to try new times and formats in an attempt to find a formula that will lead to a sustainable beginners' programme.

The Dunblane Conference has certainly had an effect on thinking in this Branch.

Mark Noble, East Angus

Dear Editor

What an excellent idea the Dunblane conference was – a well thought through day and excellent presenters. Well done!

The discussion group I was in was very well managed with everyone being given an opportunity to say their piece and no one was allowed to hog the limelight.

The topics which 'hit my spot' were: our image and name (does RSCDS put people off?); the wearing of white dresses (oh SO old-fashioned and who looks good in white unless they are under 30?); and the marketing of the Society. We had a brilliant presentation (from Anita Mackenzie) on how we should be approaching our marketing.

It was a brilliant day. I look forward to the next one.

Lynn Wood, Aberdeen

If you feel strongly about an issue to do with either Scottish country dancing or the RSCDS, keep your letter short and to the point. E-mail mag.editor@rscds.org or write to him c/o Headquarters.

Glasgow Highlanders

Dear Editor

I was delighted to see Dr MacFadyen's article on the *Glasgow Highlanders*. I hope it will be part of a regular series, rather than an occasional one. The Society has been rather slow to communicate with its members and there must be quite a few dances to tell us about eg *Cadgers*, *Wild Geese*, *Lamb Skinnnet* etc.

It is one of the few strathspeys I am passionate about and I regret it is not done more often. When it is done, it is treated as a four-couple 32 bar strathspey which seems a very complicated way to do it.

From Flett, we learn that all the dancing masters of the 19th century had it on their programmes: how did they teach it and how was the dance originally written by the deviser? When I first learnt the dance, there was no question about having a four-couple set. Couples just formed up opposite each other and off you went after one chord.

It really is a dance for all occasions, even the ceilidh scene, and I hope everyone will have it on their programmes this season as 'longways for as many as will' and played, perhaps, six times.

If I could really have my (practical) way, it would be a round-the-room dance, with the second couple on the inside and leading round the room anti-clockwise and back again!

John D Carswell, Linlithgow

Dear Editor

It was most interesting to read the article on The Glasgow Highlanders. This is my favourite Scottish country dance. I was pleased that it appeared in the favourite dance competition. Just a pity it does not appear on more ball programmes.

Doris McCutcheon, Preston

Attacked on New Year's Day

Dear Editor

I was very sad to read the above article in *Issue 2*. In the '70s I worked in a teacher training college in the PE Department. Free movement in leotards was the order of the day – not country dancing!

Here in Cyprus Greek country dancing is alive and well – both for the tourist trade, but also in the family. Most of the larger villages have a group. Scottish dancing is also alive out here, but we have the problem of people starting in their 60s.

Thanks for a really good magazine.

David Brazell, Paphos, Cyprus

The wee pocket books

Dear Editor,

I was somewhat confused by Bruce Frazer's letter in *Issue no.2* regarding the decision to discontinue the Pocket Editions. His first point seemed to be that one only has to look at the number of people using *Pilling* to see that the Pocket Editions are popular. I have tried hard, but fail, to see the connection. *Pilling* offers a short-form aide-memoire to hundreds of dances and fits conveniently in a sporran. A complete set of Pocket Editions runs to over 800 pages and only covers RSCDS dances. Bruce subsequently refers to books produced by Derek Haynes. That is precisely the point. These books are produced in A6, a modern standard format, which is almost 50% larger than the Pocket Editions.

The decision on the Pocket Editions may be regrettable but the fact of the matter is that the 3 x 5 inch format is a historical quirk that now costs substantial sums to produce in small runs. The best quote we could get would have meant Pocket Editions having to be sold at about £10 a copy to be viable. Those who lament the passing of the Pocket Editions already own them and do not buy new ones except for the occasional replacement. We sell only small numbers of the larger books but these do have the benefit of giving the full music score. The large books can also be converted readily to the A4 size in which small print runs are much more economic.

Jim Healy

Summer School Director

Dear Editor

Please allow me to take this opportunity to thank all the dancers and musicians who attended Summer School 2006 for their most generous contributions to my retirement gift. I was quite overwhelmed each week as I opened the envelopes presented to me on the Saturday evenings. Thank you all very much indeed.

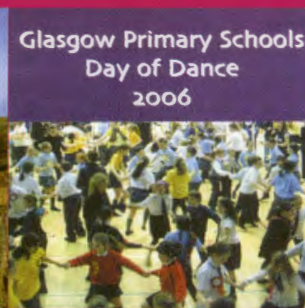
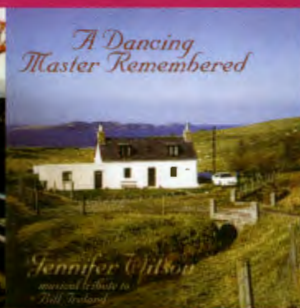
I really enjoyed my time as Director and found it a most interesting and rewarding experience. It was a great pleasure to get to know so many members and to work with so many talented teachers and musicians.

My very best wishes go to my successor, John Wilkinson, and I am sure that Summer School will improve and develop under his leadership.

Over the coming year I intend to spend more time with my grandchildren, make improvements to my garden and do lots more dancing!

Linda Gaul, Pitlochry

Reviews



Dancing Forth Too

Doreen McKerron, Pete Clark, Anne Evans, and Wendy Weatherby EBCD 002

Available from <shop@rscdsedinburgh.org>

Dancing Forth Too, published by Edinburgh Branch in 2004, is a collection of dances all with an Edinburgh connection, with music composed by Doreen McKerron. Doreen herself features on piano, Pete Clark on fiddle, Anne Evans on flute and Wendy Weatherby on cello – all extremely talented solo musicians. It is a unique sound, very well balanced musically and I would defy dancers not to be inspired to dance when they hear it. Anyone who has heard Doreen play knows just what a special treat it is to dance to her playing. I particularly like the way the different instruments 'take the lead' in turns to play the melody giving light and shade to the phrasing. For me *Dancing forth too* evokes happy memories of dancing for many years with the Edinburgh branch.

Dancing Forth Too has some beautiful reel tunes which I now use for teaching steps at my children's class. There is a lovely lift for flight in skip change, perfect tempo for pas de basque and a lightness that says heads and eyes up. *Corstorphine Fair*, a jig devised by the late Margaret Hunter reminds me of dancing at Corstorphine Fair, the Edinburgh suburb's annual Gala day and having to avoid slipping on the worms. Again, beautiful light playing. A lovely easy dance for children and adults. *Edina's Pride*, devised by Alex Gray for the Diamond Jubilee of the Edinburgh Branch, reminds me of dancing at a reception at the magnificent Signet Library on a carpet. You could hear a pin drop as we glided from the newly devised *Swirl* into hello goodbye setting. The cello particularly encourages that 'down' on the first part of a strathspey step. *Strictly Scottish* reminds me of dancing in the Edinburgh Branch show for a week as part of the Edinburgh International Festival. The excitement of the last night, the last dance, that extra burst of adrenaline and Doreen's fabulous music to keep you going through one of Bob Grant's amazing dance creations. These 4 are from a selection of 15 dances and what's even better is that all the instructions for the dances are included in the booklet within the CD.

So whether it's for listening to on a long car journey, using at a class or social, or

you just need to brighten your spirits, try to get hold of a copy of this CD and I'm sure you will not be disappointed.

Heather McKenna, Aberdeen Branch

A Dancing Master Remembered

A musical tribute to Bill Ireland

Jennifer Wilson (piano)

Bob Masson (drums) JWPCD01

Available from <www.musicinscotland.com>

A Dancing Master Remembered is a showcase for Jennifer Wilson's considerable talents, pianist, arranger and dance musician. Fans of solo piano for SCD, and of Jennifer herself, will be delighted with it.

The CD is a tribute to her friend, the late Bill Ireland, London Branch and Summer School teacher. Included are sets for 15 dances: 5 jigs, 6 reels, and 4 strathspeys. Jennifer offers a mix of traditional dances and modern dances by Foss and Drewry. It is particularly nice to have a piano recording for *The Braes of Breadalbane*, featuring strathspeys by Scott Skinner.

Jennifer's playing is brilliant as she treats us to some amazing feats in tunes like *Clancy's Salsa* by G. Carmichael (*College Hornpipe*), *Mr. Martin* by J.S. Skinner (*Braes of Breadalbane*), and the splendid Robert Mackintosh jigs, *Lord Drighorn* and *Miss Russell of Blackhall*, not to mention William Marshall's *Mr. Morison of Bognie*. Her reels are splendid – light, free-flowing, energetic, and full of joy.

The CD is really a solo piano offering even though drummer Bob Masson plays throughout. I didn't find the drums to be a problem, but would have enjoyed hearing Jennifer by herself from time to time. As a teaching CD, the tempos are steady, and the treatments rock-solid. Jennifer's arrangements suit the dances very well and offer the largest number of tunes possible in each set. It is exciting to hear what she is going to play next.

I thoroughly recommend this highly danceable CD as an excellent addition to any teacher's library. It offers classes a chance to dance to a splendid musician and to experience the flavour of an evening in the Younger Hall. One can imagine Jennifer playing piano on the stage alone and loving every minute of it!

By Liz Donaldson, Bethesda, MD. Liz plays piano in various Canadian bands, including *Terpsichore*
www.lizdonaldson.com

Glasgow Primary Schools Day of Dance DVD (pal)

14th March 2006, The Kelvin Hall

Available from <ruth.beattie@virgin.net>

We all enjoy attending a Ball, but, as adults, we are restrained in expressing our excitement – not so the children on this recent DVD from Glasgow Branch. The buzz of anticipation is evident from the first moment. Every face is lit up with excitement and pure pleasure. The music of John Renton and his band is almost drowned out by the clapping and chatter of the excited youngsters. 700 children from 35 schools took part in a dance organised by Glasgow Branch. The City Council Education Department co-operated fully and, in accordance with legislation, every child had written permission to be filmed.

The DVD is divided into three sections: a parade of banners, introductions, and the dances. There is also an excellent commentary. The introductions are short but sufficient. It is the dancers who make this worth viewing. Children are seen counting bars and controlling their impatience as they wait for the next musical phrase. Their smiling laughing faces will long remain in my memory.

The pace is lively as only brief sections of each dance are shown: total duration 28 minutes. Inevitably at a live event there are minor glitches in sound and continuity, but these are easily overlooked in the incredible enthusiasm generated by the dancers. I would recommend it is seen by every RSCDS member, PE specialist and education authority. It will remind us all of why we love SCD. This DVD illustrates that traditional SCD can be a living, vibrant part of the future in Scotland and beyond. Young people will respond given the right approach. RSCDS branches must encourage the next generation by making learning fun. Do not let this be a one-off experience for these Glasgow pupils or for the young people in your area. Use this as an example of what can be achieved by co-operation and determination. Congratulations to Glasgow Branch!

Fiona Turnbull

If you would like to review a CD or DVD, please e-mail mag.editor@rscds.org

Overheard on the web

Since the last issue Chris Ronald of New York Branch has been keeping a close eye on the hot topics on Strathspey – the forum for Scottish country dancers and musicians to exchange information over the Internet. The list is maintained by Anselm Lingnau, in Frankfurt, Germany. To subscribe, go to www.strathspey.org.

To cleek or not to cleek...

...that is the question. A recent discussion about hand grips revealed differences of opinion about hand grips – what is safe and what is not. We learned, for example, that the thumb grip is commonly seen in some country dancing circles. The RSCDS adopted the 'shake hands' hold. In tight turns, the shake-hand grip can become a 'cleek' with the twisting of wrists. Other grips that were mentioned are the elbow grip and simply linking arms.

One regular subscriber mentioned that, as a young man dancing (non-RSCDS) in Scotland, linked arms was the most common, followed by the cleek, followed by the thumb grip. He added, "The handshake hold was only used by what seemed then to be the overly genteel." On the safety issue, some felt quite strongly that the thumb hold and the cleek could be dangerous if one of the dancers slipped, while others thought any of the methods was safe provided dancers were taught the right way to do it and everyone used the same method.

The original question on this subject came from someone who had done *Postie's Jig* with a 'vintage dance' group in the US, and was 'irritated' because the group liked to make the turns with an elbow grip. This evoked the following response from a dancer in Scotland, "That's common enough among dancers around here. Some dancers seem to see it as a challenge for the number of spins they can do in the available time. If they're not endangering the set (too much), what does it matter?"

(Many teachers discourage the 'cleek' hold referred to above as they have seen the pain it can cause! Ed.)

Young people

The topic of how to attract younger people, how to dispel the RSCDS's stuffy image, etc, is never far from the minds of 'Strathspeyers.' Our hearts were warmed earlier this year by reports of a festival in Glasgow, where 700 Primary 5 children (aged 10) were to be seen doing country dances. More information on this is on page 12, 13 and 26 of this issue, and if you have the internet, you can see it at www.rscdsglasgow.org.

Sell their ghillies?

Another lively discussion was provoked by a subscriber who, in a 'brutally honest' moment, suggested that some dancers might do better to "sell their ghillies" if they couldn't master the rhythms of SCD. Several teachers replied to say how they relished the challenge of helping dancers like these, and the reward of seeing them finally make a breakthrough. I loved the following story. "This reminded me of a girl, aged about 8, who came to one of my classes many years ago. She was bright and intelligent, but her skip change was right-close-right-close-right, left-close-left-close-left, and at the end of the season, 33 classes later, it was still the same. I thought that would be that, but no, back she came, aged 9, right-close-right-close-right, left-close-left-close-left. She was one of the most regular attenders I ever had. And back she came aged 10, right-close-right-close-right, left-close-left-close-left. I used to lie awake at nights wondering what to try next. The class had a live musician and there were many possibilities. Back she came aged 11 – and, one night, launched into the most perfect skip change you ever did see in an 11-year-old, topped by the most wonderful smile on her face. I'd like to report that she is now a mainstay of some far-flung Branch, but if so, I do not know, because I never saw

her again after that night. Whether she is now in SCD or not, I'm sure she is a success, because she had learned that, with perseverance, one can achieve almost anything."

Dolphin reels

One of the longest postings ever came from a teacher in Connecticut, hoping to resolve a dispute as to the use of the word 'tandem' to describe the reels in dances such as *Pelorus Jack* where first couple swap places every four bars. He recognized that the deviser of *Pelorus Jack*, Barry Skelton uses the term 'tandem' himself in *The Dolphin Book*. He felt that 'tandem' was best reserved for those situations where dancers strictly follow one another, as in *Ferla Mor*, and this seemed more in keeping with the dictionary definition of tandem. It was pointed out that the latest edition of *The Manual* accepts Barry Skelton's use of the term.

The question remains as to how to differentiate between reels of three where first couple, acting as a unit, swap places and those where they don't. Some suggested 'shadow reels' for reels where there is no overtaking. Others suggested 'tandem reels' for the no^o overtaking type and 'tandem reels with changes of lead' for those with overtaking. It was noted that this could entail a change in the definition in *The Manual*, and several contributors chided the Society for not foreseeing this problem when the new *Manual* was being prepared. In practice, many dancers will continue to refer to the overtaking reels as dolphin reels, or falcon reels – after *The Flight of the Falcon*, by Barry Priddey. As often happens, the discussion ended on a light note. One joker suggested we think of it as 'someone out driving, the man is leading and gets lost, so the woman will have to navigate and show how it is done. Half-way through the man thinks he has got it and takes over again and the same thing happens – the woman has to save the day. They all go round the roundabout and end up almost where they started!'

What's in a name?

The Cuillins of Skye (*Four Scottish Country Dances for 1978*)

This picture of The Cuillins, the mountain range on Skye, was sent in by David Page of Nottingham Branch. There are several theories about the name. Gaelic place-names tend to be topographical, so, it might come from the Danish *kjolen*, meaning 'high rocks'. On the other hand, 'Cuillinn' is Gaelic for 'holly' – just what the peaks look like from a distance. Romantics like Sir Walter Scott thought they were named after Cuchullin, the famous Celtic warrior.



Branch Awards

The introduction of Branch Awards in 2005 met with widespread approval! A total of 107 Awards have been issued. We thought it would be good to list all the recipients to date. Here they are, and congratulations to all of them.

Ian Anderson (London)	Peter Elmes (New Zealand)	Duncan MacKenzie (Vancouver)	Isabella Rae (West Lothian)
Carol Anderson (Sutton Coldfield)	Donald K Emery Jr (Florida/Norlando)	George Main (York)	Jean Reid (Southport)
Ron Arrowsmith (Vancouver)	Susan Ferguson (New York)	Jean Mair (Banffshire)	Elsbeth Rennie (Vancouver)
Margaret Baker (Oxfordshire)	James Ferguson (New York)	Sheila Mannall (Newcastle)	Elfriede Rollo (London, Canada)
Jean Baker (Liverpool)	Betty Fleming (Detroit)	Margaret Martin (East Lothian)	Dorothy Rosemond (Sydney)
John Baker (Bath)	Chiiko Fukushima (Tokyo)	Lesley Martin (Aberdeen)	Mary Ross (Inverness & District)
Janie Barr (Kilmarnock & District)	Laurie Galley (Birmingham)	Jean Martin (Aberdeen)	Walter Rutherford (Banffshire)
Flora Bennie (Lanark)	Eddie Garratt (Norwich)	Anita Mathur (Victoria)	Betty Rutherford (Banffshire)
Matt Billmers (Boston)	Brenda George (York)	Junko Matsushashi (Tokyo)	Sally Salvesen (Newcastle)
Meyer Billmers (Boston)	Michael George (York)	Gina McAuslan (Isle of Islay)	George Senyk (Orlando)
Laura Billmers (Boston)	Ann Gibb (St Andrews)	Kath McCulloch (Gatehouse of Fleet)	Onie Senyk (Orlando)
Ted Blaschke (Atlanta)	David Gibb (St Andrews)	Mary McIntosh (Helensburgh)	Anne Sheach (Isle of Skye)
Marilyn Blaschke (Atlanta)	Fay Golding (Edinburgh)	Vera Mckechnie (W. Renfrewshire)	Jean Sim (Helensburgh)
Paul Bond (Sheffield)	Bob Grant (Edinburgh)	D. A. S. McMillan (W. Renfrewshire)	Moira Stacey (Doncaster)
Dulcie Bond (Sheffield)	Lisa Greimel (Vienna)	Janette McSpornan (Dunfermline)	Hellen Stephen (Vancouver)
Ron Bradbury (Birmingham)	Brian Haeckler (New Haven)	Chrissie Michie (Forres)	John S Sturrock (St Andrews)
Helen Brown (London)	Jean Harrison (London)	Clarice Middleton (Richmond)	Arnold Thurling (Sydney)
Rodney Burrows (Brighton)	Ron Hewinson (South Wales)	Tony Morris (Royal Tunbridge Wells)	Charlie Todd (St Andrews)
Andrew Butchart (Bedfordshire)	Jimmie Hill (Brighton)	Barbara Morris (Royal Tunbridge Wells)	Patricia Torr (Milton Keynes)
David Campbell (South Wales)	Andrew Imbrie (San Francisco)	Mary Murray (Vancouver)	Dennis Tucker (Oxfordshire)
Nigel Carter (Herefordshire)	Alex Jappy (Vancouver)	Shiela Nicol (Annan)	Catherine Twigg (Helensburgh)
John Cass (Newcastle & District)	Ruth Jappy (Vancouver)	George Ogilvie (Saskatchewan)	Susan Tyler (Exeter)
Mary Cooper (Newcastle & District)	Margie Killeen (Mid Argyll)	Eileen Orr (Royal Tunbridge Wells)	Victor Tyler (Exeter)
Rosemary Coupe (Vancouver)	Kathy Lawmon (Brighton)	Margaret Parker (Carlisle)	Rita Waddell (Forfar)
Cooks Dauth (Pretoria)	Patricia Lemmon (Banffshire)	*Annie Parker (Kilmarnock)	Marilyn Watson (Bournemouth)
Helen Davidson (Forres)	Walter M Ligon (Atlanta)	Tom Pixton (Boston)	Maureen Watson (NW Craven)
Irene Dickson (East Lothian)	Willie Little (Gatehouse of Fleet)	Carol Porter (Northern Virginia)	Mary Wattum (Vancouver)
Nancy Duncan (London, Canada)	Wilma Logan (Dunfermline)	Rhoda Purcell (Peterborough)	Lyn Wilson (South Wales)
Sylvia Edie (Croydon & District)	May Loudon (Vancouver)	Rodney Purcell (Peterborough)	

Photograph project

Everyone knows how difficult it is to photograph country dancing. Jim Healy describes another initiative from Membership Services.

A picture paints a thousand words, but only if it is a good one! In 2000 the Marketing sub-committee hoped to produce a Calendar and Branches worldwide were asked to submit photographs featuring SCD against a typical local background. Not enough photographs were received and the plan foundered.

Dancing is not an easy activity to photograph. SCD has the added challenge that it is a group activity and a good photograph has to include all the participants. It is difficult to get close enough without interrupting the dancers and interesting shots can appear so unexpectedly that they are easily missed. To judge by some photographs, SCD is a very serious affair.

The Society is in constant need of photographs, for the magazine, the website, publicity brochures and for distribution to the press. Membership Services has set up a 'photograph project' to cover all events run by the Society to get formal and informal photographs that show that SCD is friendly, elegant, for all ages and fun. We had a photographer at last year's AGM in Perth and were pleased when

the Editor chose to include sixteen of the photographs in Issue 2 of the magazine.

We recently approached Scottish Ballet for advice and they directed us to Andrew Ross. He was a dancer with the company until he retired recently due to injury. He had been a pupil at the Royal Ballet School where he was taught SCD by the late Bill Ireland, so he understands what we do.

We asked him to go to the Glasgow Primary Schools Day of Dance in March where he took what he considers 'some' photographs: we received about 200, after Andy had cut out 'a few'! Some of these were excellent and have been passed on to the Schools involved. We also asked Andy to spend a day at Summer School, took him round some of the classes in the morning and had a session in the afternoon when we concentrated on the formations that should make for good photo opportunities. Following that session, we received 5 CDs with about 600 pictures – we are still sorting through them. We plan to have a selection on display at the Conference Weekend and at next year's Summer School. We would like to thank everyone who took part in any of the sessions.

Video project

Bruce Frazer describes a personal initiative to film devisers.

Have you ever wondered what the Braes of Breadalbane or Culla Bay look like or what a dance deviser looks like, what prompted them to write the dance? I had the idea to create a photographic record of dance titles for others to share, but I then thought it would be even better to ask devisers of newer dances to share their thoughts on video. Devisers supported the project and I am in the process of building up a library of interviews and related background shots. Dancers too have been keen to participate so I have now completed a number of short videos with more to come. There are many reasons why dances are devised and it is interesting to hear what has inspired them. It can be a person, an event, or simply a favourite formation. Inspiration can occur at strange times – would you believe when sipping sherry in a bath? Choice of title can also be surprising

If you would like to share an interesting tale or dance in a team, do get in touch. I cannot promise instant stardom but there is some fun in providing an archive for the RSCDS and interest to the families of dancers.

Day school diary

All branch and club secretaries are invited to send in details of all schools and workshops direct to mag.editor@rscds.org. Include date, event and teachers. Issue 4 will cover day schools from February 07 till July 08. Please send in your forward dates even if you have not finalised who is teaching. You can add details in the following issue. Compiled by John Sturrock. For contact details, please refer to branch or club websites or the Directory of Secretaries.

You will notice in this issue that we have added the dates of Festivals of country dancing. We ask anyone involved in festivals to let us know the dates of those festivals which include country dancing for adults. Dates of festivals which are exclusively for children should be sent to the Youth Director. At present we regret we do not have the space to include the dates of Branch and club dances and balls. What do members think?

Oct 06

- 7 York & North Humberside Branch, Day School
Helen Russell
- 13-15 Hamilton (Ont.) Branch Weekend School
Irene Bennett, Ian Patterson, John Walton
- 14 Stirling Branch, Day School
Janet Johnston, John & Ruby Wilkinson
- 14 Thistle Club, Eindhoven, Day & Music School
- 14 Ribble Valley Branch, Day School
- 20-22 Lyon Branch, Weekend
Bill Zobel
- 20-22 Croydon Branch, Eastbourne Weekend School
Wendy Mumford
- 21 London Branch, Day & Music School
Elma McCausland, Mervyn Short, Owen Meyer, David Hall
- 21 South Shore Scottish Country Dancers, Workshop, Nova Scotia
Duncan Keppie
- 27-28 Victoria (BC) Branch, Annual Workshop
Ruth Jappy, Bob Anderson
- 27-29 Rechburg International Weekend
Helen Frame
- 27-29 Asilomar, Weekend Workshop
Cathy Bertics, Elaine Brunken, Bruce Herbold, Doug MacDonald, Arthur McNair, Angela Young
- 28 Sheffield Branch, Day School
Margot Priestley

Nov 06

- 3-5 Tokai Branch, Weekend School, Hiroshima
- 3-5 Kingston Ontario 40th Workshop
- 10-12 Northern Virginia Branch, Weekend School
Elaine Brunken, Ruth Taylor
- 10-12 Bonn, Weekend School
Kate & Alex Gray
- 11 Bristol Branch, Day School
Janet Johnston
- 11 Toronto Association, Workshop
John Wilkinson, Carol Howe, Georgina Finley
- 18 Norwich Branch, Workshop
Ann Dix, Frank Finley
- 22-26 Schluchtern, Germany, November Course
Eric Finley
- 25 Builth Wells, Day School
Fiona Grant

Dec 06

- 1-3 Leeds Branch, Weekend School
Christine Macdonald
- 28-5/01 New Zealand Branch, 50th Summer School, Dunedin

Jan 07

- 13-14 EMO-Dancers, Essen, Day School
Duncan Brown

Feb 07

- 3 Freiburg, Day School
- 9-11 York and North Humberside Branch, Weekend School, Harrogate
Eric Finley
- 10-11 Cheltenham Branch, Weekend School
Margot Priestley
- 17-18 Tokyo Branch, Weekend School
Ann Dix
- 22-27 RSCDS Winter School, Pitlochry
Helen Russell, Mervyn Short, David Queen, Bill Zobel

Mar 07

- 3 Newcastle-upon-Tyne Branch, Day School
Eric Finley, Helen Russell
- 10 Berks/Hants/Surrey Border Branch, Day & Music School
Linda Gaul, Alison Russell, Alan Davis, George Meikle
- 10 Leicester Branch, Day School
Rachel Wilton, Doris Buchanan
- 10 Somerset Branch, Day & Music School
Jean Martin, Mo Rutherford
- 10 Hamilton (Ontario) Branch, Workshop
- 17 Derbyshire N.E. Branch, Day School
Peter Clark
- 18 London Branch, Shetland Workshop
Mats Melin
- 30-1/4 RSCDS Spring Fling, Oxford
Angela Young, Ilona Velichko
- 30-1/4 Helensburgh and District Branch, Weekend
Jimmie Hill
- 31 St Andrews Branch, Day School
Alison Russell

April 07

- 5-9 Schluchtern, Germany, Easter Course
Janet Johnston
- 13-15 Leeds Branch, Weekend School
- 13-15 Lethbridge, 25th Weekend Workshop, Alberta
Rebecca Blackhall-Peters, Mairi Hand, Robert McOwen
- 27-1/05 Budapest, Weekend School
Eric Finley

May 07

- 11-13 Cumbrae SCD Association, Millport
Linda Gaul, Jimmie Hill
- 18-19 Isle of Skye Branch, Weekend
Jimmie Hill
- 18-20 New York Branch, Pawling Weekend

Jun 07

- 8-10 Isle of Arran Weekend
Alison Russell, Jimmie Hill
- 8-10 Chicago Branch, Weekend Workshop, Beloit, Wisconsin
- 8-14 Thistle School, Banner Elk, North Carolina

July 07

- 4-8 Schluchtern, Germany, Summer Course
Malcolm Brown
- 22/7 RSCDS Summer School, St Andrews 19/08
- 25-29 Nova Scotia Branch, International School, Halifax
Mary Murray, Robert McOwen, Joe Wallin, Duncan & Maggie Keppie, Merrill Heubach
- 29-5/8 TAC Canada, Summer School, Vancouver Island
Eric Finley, Ron Wallace, Jean Noble

Sept 07

- 8 Lochaber Branch, Day School
Bill Zobel
- 28-30 International Branch, Tallinn, Estonia, Workshop
- 29 Ayr Branch, Day School
- 30/9-32nd Australian Winter School, 7/10 Canberra

Oct 07

- 13 London Branch, Day School
- 27 Sheffield Branch, Day School

Nov 07

- 17 Bristol Branch, Day School
David Hall
- 17 Norwich Branch, Workshop

Dec 07

- 28/12-5/01 New Zealand Branch, Summer School, Wellington

SCD Festivals 06-07

February 07

- 10 Newcastle Festival, Gateshead

March 07

- 2-3 Aberdeen Festival
- 2-4 IVFDF, Edinburgh
- 9-10 Ayrshire Festival

July 07

- 7 The White Rose Festival, Leeds

End-pieces

West Lothian's 70th

Congratulations to West Lothian Branch celebrating their 70th birthday this year. Celebratory events are already under way with a Reunion, a 70th anniversary book, an Anniversary Dance in September and the Branch Weekend in Blairgowrie in October.

A Tribute to Derek Haynes

Saturday 28 April 2007. An afternoon workshop and evening dance of dances devised by the late Derek Haynes. The workshop will be taken by Maureen Haynes. Further information from 01387 810958. Sold out already!

Well-done Cheltenham!

On the World Day of Dance in April Cheltenham Branch held a very successful Newcomers Dance. Many present had been dancing for under 2 years and some only for a few months.

New Scotland

Edinburgh University New Scotland SCD Society will be celebrating its 60th anniversary in 2007. Events are planned for the end of May. Former members are invited to get in touch via the NS website or direct to Stewart Adam at sadam@tesco.net.

Dumfries Branch and Thornhill SC Dancers



Following a dance on 16 June a cheque for £300 was presented to Sinclair Barbour of the Thornhill Scottish Country Dancers towards the £14,000 needed to take the 20-strong group of young dancers to China in October. Congratulations to the Thornhill group, one of four representing Europe at the 5-day International Folk Arts Festival in Shanghai.

Dancers smash world record

22nd July saw RSCDS dancers from the SE of England taking part in a multi-cultural dance extravaganza in Trafalgar Square, broadcast on BBC TV. The climax was an attempt to break the world record for the number of different dance genres dancing their own movements simultaneously to the same music. There was synchronized swimming in the fountains! The mind boggles!

Ottawa's 40th

May this year saw Ottawa Branch celebrating its 40th Anniversary. The Branch held three special functions: the Annual Ball, renamed the Ruby Ball for the occasion; dancing on Parliament Hill; and a variety night 'Here's tae us'.

The second of these deserves some mention. Permission was obtained from the Parliament of Canada to dance on Parliament Hill to the 53 bells of the Peace Tower Carillon on 8 May. The Dominion Carillonneur played *Hooper's Jig*, *The Saltire Strathspey* and *The White Cockade* while four sets of dancers danced.

And from Sam Heron down under!

A Scottish country dancer was walking along a beach in Scotland after a storm. He saw a bottle sticking out of the sand and picked it up. As he rubbed it to read the label, a genie appeared. "Sir"

the genie said, "I have the power to grant you one wish." "Grand!" the dancer replied. "All my life I have wanted to visit my cousins in Canada, but I am afraid of flying. I get seasick easily on a ship. My wish is that you would build me a bridge across the Atlantic to Canada. The genie gasped. "You must be daft! Such a scheme would create an environmental disaster of global proportions. It would require more building materials than are available on the planet. It would bankrupt the economies of most nations. This is utterly impossible. Surely there is something else you must want!" The Dancer thought for a moment. "Well then, my wish is that you would grant me the ability to do the pas de basque and poussette so I can impress my teacher." The genie stared out to sea for quite some time. He then looked down and asked, "Now did you want that bridge to have two lanes or four?"

Featured dances

There has been a lot of support for the idea of 'Featured Dances' which branches and clubs are encouraged to include on ball and social dance programmes. This is the list for 2006/07. We hope you manage to fit some of them on to your dance programmes this year.

DANCE	BOOK	TYPE	BARs
Campbell's Frolic	15: 3	Jig	8 x 32
The De'il among the Tailors	14: 7	Reel	8 x 32
The Dream Catcher	45: 9	Strathspey	1 x 96
The Gates of Edinburgh	15: 5	Reel	8 x 32
Inverneill House	35: 2	Reel	8 x 32
Jimmy's Fancy	14: 11	Strathspey	8 x 32
Lamb Skinnnet	14: 12	Jig	8 x 32
Major Ian Stewart	35: 4	Jig	8 x 32
Round Reel of Eight	27: 7	Reel	1 x 88
Seann Triubhas Willichan	27: 9	Strathspey	8 x 32

Obituaries

Jean Hewat

Jean Hewat who died in February was Hon. President of the Roxburgh Selkirk & Peebles Branch. She had been actively involved in Branch activities for many years and had served in various capacities on the Branch Committee. She took adult classes for 20 years in Kelso, but her particular enthusiasm was teaching children. She is remembered for the Children's classes she ran in Kelso for about 30 years, her involvement in Children's Dance Festivals in the Borders and for the Children's Balls which were very popular. Jean, with the support of her husband Sandy, who was also a Society member, was greatly committed to Scottish country dancing. In her later years she enjoyed recalling occasions where her 'dancing girls' had excelled. She will be remembered with great affection by all her friends. (Alison Smith)

May O'Brien

Cork SCDC were saddened by the death this summer of May O'Brien, enthusiastic club member and secretary. In the past May had danced with York and North Humber side Branch and in other areas of NE England. Sympathy is extended to her family and friends in Cork. (Maureen Chevens)

Lesley Terry

It is with great sadness that we heard of the sudden death of Lesley Terry on 14th September. Lesley was a very active member of the RSCDS Bristol Branch, holding posts on the committee as well as encouraging new and old dancers to enjoy Scottish dancing. Lesley will be greatly missed by the branch and all who knew her in the Bristol area, at Summer School and wherever she danced. Our thoughts go out to Andrew Smith and Lesley's family at this time.

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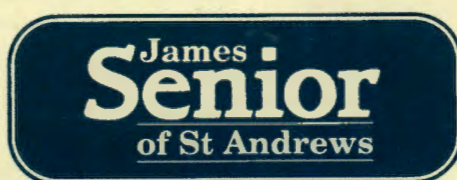
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