

# SCOTTISH Country Dancer

  
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Dance Scottish



No 21 OCTOBER 2015 RSCDS Members' Magazine



# RSCDS EVENTS

## 86th Annual General Meeting & Conference Weekend 2015

**Dates:** 6 – 8 November 2015

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

- Friday evening Dance – Luke Brady's Band
- Saturday class - Angela Young, with musician Frank Thomson
- Saturday evening Ball – David Cunningham's Band
- Sunday class – Jimmie Hill, with musician Mo Rutherford

Online booking is available at [www.rscds.org/article/agm-conference-weekend-2015](http://www.rscds.org/article/agm-conference-weekend-2015) hard copy booking forms are available on request from HQ.

## Winter School 2016

**Dates:** 21 – 26 February 2016

**Location:** The Atholl Palace Hotel, Pitlochry

**Director:** Janet Johnston

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

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

Classes are offered at Intermediate, Advanced and Very Advanced levels, subject to demand; a Musicians Course will also be held.

Winter School is now full – to be placed on a waiting list, please email Moira Thomson, Events Manager, at [moira.thomson@rscds.org](mailto:moira.thomson@rscds.org).

## Spring Fling 2016

**Dates:** 15 – 17 April 2016

**Location:** Learmonth Travelodge, Edinburgh

Teachers – Tom Ibbotson, Janet Johnston, Antoine Rousseau

Musicians – Adam Brady, Lindsey Ibbotson, Matthew MacLennan

Further details are available at <http://springflingedinburgh.wix.com/springfling> and online booking is open at <https://www.rscds.org/article/spring-fling-2016>

## Summer School 2016

**Dates:** 17 July – 14 August 2016

**Location:** University Hall, St Andrews

**Director:** Jim Stott

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

Online booking will open shortly on the RSCDS website



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*Scottish Country Dancer* has another new editor – the fourth – taking over from Rosemary Coupe. I am sure I speak for all our members in thanking Rosemary for producing six very interesting and informative issues and to do that from Vancouver cannot have been easy. Rosemary found articles with a different slant, reflecting her North American background.

After twenty issues and moving into its second decade now is a good time to take stock of the magazine. *Scottish Country Dancer*, first published in 2005 aimed, under Jimmie Hill and then Andrew Kellett's editorship, to inform members of what was happening in the Society at headquarters, in Scotland, worldwide and within the branches, in an attractive and readable way. It is produced by members for the members and is still, for a large number of members, their main form of communication with the Society. When the magazine lands on your doorstep are you pleased to see it? What is the first thing you turn to? How would you like to see the magazine improve and would you be able and willing to help achieve that? It has been suggested that we feature a puzzle – crossword puzzle, SCD or, indeed, Scotland-related word quiz. Would any of our members or readers volunteer to take this on? There are, after all, only two issues a year!

We always welcome items of interest from our readers or, indeed, from anybody with an interest in SCD but please remember we are limited in space and may need to edit your contribution. I began as editor by wondering how on earth we were going to fill 32 pages but following the deadline for contributions I have discovered the problem is too much material! Apologies to anyone whose contribution has been reduced or not included in this issue.

This brings me to the quality of some of the items submitted. Guidelines for submissions are published on the website. We are always looking for action photographs which illustrate the 'fun, friendship and fitness' that we all know is what Scottish country dancing is all about. Mobile phones are great for taking photos for immediate results but the quality generally is not good enough for reproduction in the magazine. Photographs need to be at least 500 kb in size and we need to have a little background, i.e. who is in it, where it was taken, was it a special occasion? Please remember if submitting photographs of children you need to obtain consent for them to be published.

Two events occurred in September as we were getting the magazine ready to go to the printers: a Flash Mob in Aberdeen, when over 50 dancers took part and a 24-hour ceilidh sponsored by STV throughout Scotland and elsewhere to raise money for disadvantaged children. We have a report by Liz Fraser, our Marketing Officer on the STV appeal on page 9 and on the Flash Mob on page 10.

*Marilyn Healy*



*The view from the band (Michael Greenwood)*

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Cover photo: Alex South and Tessa Johnston, from Charlotte, North Carolina, taken during a photo shoot at St Andrews. Photo: Michael Greenwood

The next issue of *Scottish Country Dancer* will be published in April 2016. Please send your contributions and advertisements to the relevant email below before 1 February 2016.

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# News from Coates Crescent



By Michael Greenwood

## Branch Awards update

Once again a number of Branch Awards have been presented to those individuals who have made a contribution to their branch or to Scottish country dancing in general. Listed below are the members who have received Awards since October 2014 – congratulations to you all!

Belfast	Ruth & Ronnie Barnes
BHS Border	Eithne Noakes
Croydon & District	Thomas Dunsmore
Doncaster & District	Patricia Dixon
Forres	Neil M. Grant
Forres	Margaret McKillop
Leeds	Alan Harrison
Leicester	Doris Buchanan
Los Angeles	Aase Hansen
New York	Thomas Marshall
New Zealand	Iain Boyd
New Zealand	Romaine Butterfield
Orange Country, California	Shirley Saturensky
Seattle	Calum Mackinnon
Seattle	Edna Mackinnon
Sydney	Anne Kennedy
Tokyo	Norikazu Arita
Toronto	Janette Todd
Twin Cities	Janet McKernan
Twin Cities	Joy Gullickson
Twin Cities	Roberta Williams
Vancouver	Jean Wagstaff
Washington	Fred Eustis
Windsor, Ontario	Griff Evans
York & N Humberside	Diana Edwards
York & N Humberside	George Edwards
York & N Humberside	Joyce Cochrane
York & N Humberside	Rosemary Robins

## Elections to Management Posts

Profiles of nominees for this year's management elections are listed on the website. Elections will only be held where there are more nominations than places available.

Convenor, Membership Services Committee (1 x 3 years)

Convenor-elect, Education & Training Committee (1 year, + 3 as Convenor)

Management Board (3 x 3 years, 1 x 1 year)

Education & Training Committee (3 x 3 years, 1 x 2 years)

Membership Services Committee (2 x 3 years)

Youth Services Committee (2 x 3 years)

## Headquarters staff

Gillian Wilson was appointed Executive Officer in August, assuming the role from Elizabeth Foster. To read more about Gillian see page 7.

Caitriona Carson who has worked for the Society since August 2014, mainly on CLG-related matters has left for a permanent position. We wish her the best of luck in the future.

## Appointment of Treasurer

The Society is pleased to announce the appointment of William (Bill) A Cant to the vacant post of Treasurer. To read more about Bill see page 7.

## New Editor

Welcome to **Marilyn Healy** as the new Editor of *Scottish Country Dancer*. Many members will remember Marilyn was the Society's archivist from 2005-2012 and regularly contributed news about the archives and the material in it.

We thank Rosemary Coupe for her work and commitment to the magazine and the fantastic issues she produced.

## Motion to AGM 2015

Following a detailed review of current operations and recent deficits, the Management Board has reluctantly decided that a further increase in the members' annual subscription is needed. A motion proposing an increase of £2 to £20 will be presented to the AGM. Further details have been sent to Branch Secretaries to inform committee discussions.

## Dr Alastair MacFadyen

Dr Alastair MacFadyen died on 20th July 2015. Alastair would joke that he was 'past everything' – Branch, International day and weekend-school teacher; Summer School teacher and Director; examiner; archivist; co-author and author of the biographies of Miss Milligan and Mrs Stewart; Vice Chairman; Chairman and, until recently, President of the Society.

Alastair will be missed. Many members have contacted Headquarters with stories about Alastair, wishing to convey their condolences and we would like to thank everyone who has been in touch.

For an obituary, see page 29.

## Archive Project Update

The archive is now accessible online via the Society website. Orla O'Brien and Alan Macpherson have digitised a large number of items which are now available to browse. This will be an on-going initiative as we continue to receive new material.

To access the archive online visit the News section of the website for login instructions.

For more information on the RSCDS archive see page 20.

## JMMF

We would like to remind members that funds are available from the Jean Milligan Memorial Fund if you would like to hold an event or promote the Society in a positive manner. Submissions are accepted throughout the year and application forms and conditions are on the RSCDS website.

## Website

Throughout the past year we have continued to develop the website and a number of issues that have arisen are being rectified. Branches have been circulated with more detailed instructions of how to navigate the online database, update Member details, and establish a presence on Social Media. We are currently in the process of launching the Membership Renewal System that will make the process of subscription payment more straightforward. All feedback regarding the website is welcome as it will help us make it more effective and improve our understanding of what is most important to our members.



# From the Chairman



by Jim Healy

Travelling around the UK and the Continent in the last few years, I have been struck by the number of new dancers I have met aged between 40 and 60. These dancers have found an activity they thoroughly enjoy but which is not an all-consuming passion. I constantly hear our members refer to the *greying of the Society* or *our members are getting older*. And yet, as one veteran band leader said to me recently, "the dancers I see today are still the same average age as they were when I started playing umpteen years ago!" We are fewer, the statistics are unequivocal, but we are renewing. As one member recently said to me, "Why is there so much pessimism in the Society?" Yes, the Society is changing and we have lost members, but it is still lively and developing in many branches.

Indeed, reading this magazine in draft, I was struck by the level and range of activities from the many branch reports, including branches around the world who danced

*Kelly's Kaper* in support of the Scottish Television annual appeal for children, as well as in the Flash Mob in Aberdeen. And I know there is even more going on, so let's trumpet our successes.

The changes from the past are well-known. Dancers join a social group that meets one night a week. Few of the group members attend social dances. SCD is an activity that you do for a few years, at most, and then move on to something else. Technique is accepted as part of the discipline but, in many cases, it is not high in the ranking of elements that make up dancing; fun and sociability rate much higher. The Society seems to have little relevance to this activity, until the group needs a new teacher. The changes, however, profoundly affect the financing of the Society which has been built on a basis of many members not paying very much, certainly not as compared with other similar organisations. Regrettably, there are no simple answers and the Board has spent a considerable amount of time discussing the implications and ramifications. It is intended that the thrust of these discussions will be rolled out at the Conference weekend for review and comment by the members.

Despite the optimism above, each year sees the passing of some more of the Society's 'worthies'. Tributes are given elsewhere but I cannot close without mentioning Alastair MacFadyen. Reading through the many tributes to him, one word came through time and again. That word was gentleman which summed him up perfectly.



Flash Mob in the Union Square Shopping Centre in Aberdeen

# Education & Training Committee



by Sue Porter, Convenor

The diversity of areas covered by the Education and Training committee means that life is never dull nor without something to do. Since my last report, Ruby Wilkinson has overseen a successful Summer School in St Andrews with increased attendance once more. There was a buzz during a sold-out week 2 and members of the musicians' course formed the band in the Younger Hall. Thank you, Ruby, for three wonderful years of Summer School. We now welcome Jim Stott who takes over as Director of Schools and look forward to Winter School in 2016, co-ordinated by Janet Johnston.

I am pleased to announce the appointment as probationary examiners of Ellie Briscoe, USA; Douglas Mills, New Zealand and Mervyn Short, UK. Congratulations

to all the candidates worldwide, who successfully undertook teacher training courses this year and thank you to their course tutors, musicians and examiners. Without them, we would not have future RSCDS teachers to encourage us to take part in this wonderful hobby.

The Medal Tests for young dancers are as popular as ever. We are currently working to produce a 'junior leadership' award to provide an optional link for young dancers between Grade 5 and the first level of the Dancing Achievement Award (DAA). Details will be published on the website when they are confirmed

The DAA is beginning to attract more dancers wishing to have their personal dancing assessed. Aberdeen and London branches ran courses in June and more were held at Summer School. Other branches have also expressed interest for this autumn.

E&T and Membership Services have collaborated on several one-off projects.

The Unit 2 Examination Prescribed dances have been filmed and will be a useful visual aid for candidates and their tutors. The dances for Book 49 have also been filmed and our thanks go to all the dancers and those who directed them (Jean Martin for Unit 2 and Jim Stott for Book 49). You can find all of these on the RSCDS YouTube channel. The Core Repertoire, which includes dances suitable for consideration when devising dance programmes for less experienced dancers, is being revised. We have also started planning Book 51 of dances suitable for young dancers, see page 7.

Scholarships for Candidate courses, Youth and General scholarships to attend Summer School in St Andrews in 2016 are available, details available from Moira Thomson [moira.thomson@rscds.org](mailto:moira.thomson@rscds.org). The closing date for applications for scholarships for Summer School 2016 is **Friday 13th November 2015**.



# Membership Services Committee



by Philip Whitley, Convenor

The dances for Unit 2 of the Teacher's Certificate are now available to watch on the **YouTube** site. These are intended for exam candidates, and for anyone who wishes to see how to do the dances, or simply to watch for pleasure. In three weeks since they were uploaded, they have had thousands of views which indicates the level of interest and by the time you read this the dances in Book 49 will also be available. The dances have been professionally filmed, in high definition and feature all twelve dances from multiple viewpoints.

**Digital Downloads and Streaming** A major project recently has been preparation of existing recordings for sale as digital downloads. The first batch went live in mid-August (Books 38 to 49) and tracks are available to purchase from all major retailers (Amazon, iTunes, Google Play etc.) and also streaming sites such as Spotify and Deezer. All RSCDS recordings should be available by early 2016. We are in the process of making all dance books available

to purchase electronically direct from the RSCDS shop site: Book 49 and the revised Graded Book were the first to be available and others will follow in due course.

**Combined Book and DuK Recording** The next combined volume books 25 – 30 in A5 will be on sale at the AGM and conference weekend. The DuK recording (winners of the "Strictly Scottish Dance Music for the Future" competition) featuring a mix of previously unrecorded Miscellany dances, and listening tracks chosen by the band, will also be available at the same time.

**Spring Fling Book and Children's Book** We are about to select dances submitted for the "Spring Fling" competition (Book 50). Forty six dances were submitted and a shortlist of twenty five will be selected, out of which we aim to choose eleven for inclusion, along with the winning dance chosen at Spring Fling 2015. The book will be available at Summer School 2016; Scott Band will record the accompanying CD which will build upon the Book 49 recording and include listening tracks.

Luke Brady will record a CD of Miscellany dances with listening tracks along similar lines to the DuK recording, which will also be available at Summer School 2016.

Details of a call for dances for The Children and Young Dancers Book (Book 51) is on page 7, so I will say nothing other than good luck to anyone submitting a dance.

Future Project. As I demit office a number of projects are under active consideration. In particular more filming for YouTube. If the YouTube channel features new material more regularly it will receive more views, which should in turn lead to more dancers engaging with us. By creating our own content this may encourage branches to submit suitable footage for consideration."

And finally, this is my last column before demitting office so all that remains is to say "so long, farewell, auf wiedersehen, goodnight..." it's been emotional (Julie Andrews and Vinnie Jones in the same sentence – who'd have thought it?).

# Youth Services Committee



by Roy Bain, Convenor

How time flies when you are enjoying yourself. In the northern hemisphere classes are already getting under way again.

We had about 80 dancers in London for Spring Fling 2015. Planning for SF16 is well advanced and registration is open. SF17 will be held in Bonn, Germany over the weekend of 28-30 April 2017. Alternatively, you could register for AWEsome (the Southern hemisphere version of SF) to be held in Lower Hutt, New Zealand during the weekend 29-31 January 2016. The Spring Fling 2015 Dance Competition attracted forty six dances and was won by Samantha Burton of London. Late in September we will be testing more of them for inclusion in Book 50. I say "we" as the whole Society, although this is a Membership Services responsibility and we would like to thank them for their support in this venture.

At Summer School we had our Young Dancer get-together in the Party Room each Monday. It was nice to meet dancers from around the world, especially those involved with the Dance Competition or organising SF17.

As I write this I am about to head for Aberdeen where Emma Allsop is preparing a FlashMob of about 50 dancers to descend on the Union Shopping Mall. Many thanks to Aberdeen Branch for their support and to Frank Thomson for playing for this venture.

In September *Dance Trad* will be launched at the Scottish Learning Festival in Glasgow. A new resource pack for secondary schools is a sixty page book with descriptions of sixteen Scottish country dances and fourteen ceilidh dances. It comes with two CDs of music and two instructional DVDs.

Two workshops are planned: one in Perth, Scotland in October and the other in Oxford, England in November. In February next year, we will be in Warwick for the Inter Varsity Folk Dance Festival, with

other workshop venues being planned for 2016 – watch the website for details.

**YOUR** Youth Services Committee is here to help develop youth groups around the world. **DO YOU** run a University or younger age SCD group? Please get in touch and let us know where you are and what you are doing – we would love to hear from you at [ysc@rscds.org](mailto:ysc@rscds.org)

This is my last report and I would like to thank the YS committee members past and present for all their hard work and support over the last 4 years. It has been a pleasure to work with the young dancers to help implement their plans and aspirations. It has also been a pleasure to be in contact with so many dancers and teachers around the globe, all trying to do the same thing – maintain and develop SCD for generations to come. My experience over the last four years convinces me our Society is in good hands, despite the gloomy few. I now hand the YS baton over to Anne McArthur to lead the committee for the next three years. Good luck Anne.



# Who's Who?



## Gillian Wilson was appointed Executive Officer in August

I am delighted to be working for the RSCDS. During the last four weeks I have begun to learn about the many different activities which enable so much to be achieved through voluntary efforts in Scotland and around the world. Staff at HQ are here to give support in raising the profile of Scottish country dancing. It was inspiring to spend a day at Summer School and see the happiness and enjoyment of people there and the international nature of our Society.

Moving to the RSCDS has been a real change for me – my background and interests are in international social justice and development as well as in environmental campaigning, working at organisations including NIDOS (Network of International Development Organisations in Scotland), Friends of the Earth Scotland and Refugee Action. I also spent some time working in Nigeria and studied in Sri Lanka. I grew up in India where my parents worked and where I learned Scottish country dancing - on and off. My father is a Glaswegian and during our summer holidays we met up with other families with a Scottish heritage and enjoyed 'Caledonian nights' with Scottish country dancing, pipe playing and stories. While training to be an agriculturalist I even joined the Young Farmers Scottish country dance demonstration group in Market Harborough – though I was often the one nervously making mistakes! I love the music and dance which lifts the spirit, makes your feet eager to tap and your face smile. I often attend ceilidhs and though my technique leaves much to be desired I always come away happy and tired. I shall have to learn more technique ...

Even though this is a very different area of work for me to be working in professionally, I hope I can bring my skills and experience of managing, partnership building and working with people to my

work at the RSCDS, to help strengthen what it is already doing and help it grow and diversify. Please get in touch to let us know when we do things you value and make suggestions for things that need improving. I look forward to 'meeting' many more of you face to face or digitally and working with you all to make my contribution alongside the rest of the staff in HQ.



## Bill Cant

**Bill Cant** volunteered to become our new Treasurer (a decision he claims he may regret). He qualified as a Chartered Accountant and sub-sequently worked with a multinational pharma-ceutical company and the insurance company, General Accident. He is able to present and explain financial figures to colleagues and associates in a clear and understandable fashion.

Bill works as an investment manager with Thorntons Investments in Dundee, Scotland. His job involves managing portfolios of investments such as shares for private individuals and charitable trusts. As a result he looks forward to sitting at the other side of the desk with Standard Life explaining to him how the Society's portfolios of investments are performing.

When he was at Aberdeen University, or qualifying as a CA in Edinburgh 40 years ago, rather as now, Scottish country dancing was not particularly cool, although he had enjoyed ceilidh dancing and the music at school. Later, when he was working in London he thought he would try Scottish country dancing.

To that end he attended a beginner's class in Chelsea no less! It was taught by Owen Meyer, a superb and patient teacher. So much so that the next year he returned, still attending the beginner's class, but staying on for the intermediate class. That was very fortunate as

also attending the intermediate class was a young research scientist from Fraserburgh whom he later married.

The Cants are a dancing family. Bill and Mary are to be found at dances anywhere within travelling distance of Dundee, Perth, Blairgowrie, Pitlochry and St Andrews. Recently their daughter, Christine, moved to Aberdeen to university and subsequently to work there and she has enjoyed being part of the vibrant SCD scene in Aberdeen where Mary and Bill have attended some super dances. This summer, to celebrate a birthday they went to a dance in Edinburgh where they were joined by their son, James.

## New Book for Young Dancers

Education & Training and Membership Services invite RSCDS members to submit dances for consideration for a new book to be published in 2017. The book will be aimed at young dancers (aged 5 - 16 years) suitable for children's festivals, teaching younger dancers and also for social dance programmes for less experienced dancers of all ages.

The dances can have been previously published or be newly devised. We are looking for a mix of jigs, reels and strathspeys based on RSCDS formations.

The principal requirement is that the dances are suitable for children's festivals so all dances should consist of **32 bars** and be danced progressively either **4 times through for four-couples in a longwise or a square set; or 8 times through for two or three-couples in a four-couple longwise set.**

No more than one dance per deviser will be selected for inclusion in the final book, but a maximum of two dances per deviser can be submitted for selection. The closing date is Friday 25th March 2016 via the RSCDS.docs site (this can be accessed by typing the following into your web browser: <http://eval.rscds.net/p/book-51/>).

For further information please contact us at [book51@rscds.org](mailto:book51@rscds.org)





## New RSCDS Youth Branch



Cast an eye around most dance floors and it is clear that Scottish country dancing has a problem attracting and retaining young dancers. A common trend is for young dancers to enjoy dancing in a children's or university group,

but to stop when they move away. Another issue is that if these dancers join a local branch class they often become a minority, which can be discouraging and isolating.

The formation of nationwide events such as Spring Fling in Europe, Youth Weekend West in Canada and the US, and JAM Camp in New Zealand show that young dancers are dedicated to Scottish country dancing but feel the need to connect with each other. However, roughly half of the dancers who attend Spring Fling are not actually members of the RSCDS.

The Youth Services Committee was formed to address these issues, and after four years of investigation and interaction with young dancers, including at the AGM Youth Forum, this is their first major global strategy. The branch proposal and application were carefully considered and approved by the Management Board and a close link will be maintained with the Youth Services Committee.

As a non-local branch, the Youth Branch will provide a natural transition between groups of young dancers and RSCDS branch classes. In addition, young dancers will become connected around the world, encouraging them to meet other dancers their own age, for example at youth workshops, and, most importantly, to keep dancing.

There is an understandable concern amongst local branches that the Youth Branch might deplete their own young members. However we actively encourage dancers to remain primary members of their existing local branch and to join the Youth Branch as secondary members for an extra £3 per year. We hope our primary member base will come from keen dancers of university age who are not currently linked to another branch. Those outside the young dancer age range (12-35) who would like to receive branch news

and information, such as youth group coordinators or just those who are young at heart, can keep in touch by becoming a branch supporter.

By providing young dancers with a sustainable communication network and AGM voting rights we are allowing them to shape and ensure the future of the RSCDS. However, more importantly, we are creating a worldwide community of like-minded individuals to share and maintain our love of Scottish country dancing.

*Lindsey Ibbotson*

[www.rscds-youth.org](http://www.rscds-youth.org) @rscdsyouth

## 2015 Hoppit JAM Camp

Young dancers from around New Zealand gathered near Matamata in mid-July for a JAM packed weekend of dance, fun and friendship. With the Hobbiton movie set being close by there was no doubt that the weekend would focus on all things Hobbit.

Four classes, each relating to a Hobbit family, were put to work by five fabulous teachers. As well as four dance class sessions, the Tooks, the Gameeys, the Proudfoots and the Bagginses each experienced a music session to give them an understanding of the music that enhances Scottish country dancing. The JAMs (or Junior Associate Members) also had the experience, new for many of them, of having a musician play for several of their class sessions.

The social events of camp revolved around the Hoppit theme with 'The Bag End Bash' as Friday night's opening social, a Hobbiton tour after classes on Saturday prior to 'Bilbo Baggins' Eleventy-first Birthday Party' and 'The Return Journey' as Sunday's closing Ceilidh. The hall decorations on Saturday night even featured a Hobbit home thanks to the talents and efforts of one of the band members.

Medal Tests sat prior to camp on the Friday afternoon meant the candidates could focus on the rest of camp free from the stress that accompanies these tests. They have since all learnt that they have each earned the Medal or Bar they had worked towards.

Our young dancers, who ranged in age from 6 to 19 years, all seemed to gain much from the camp. All 79 of them left the camp tired, happy and with renewed enthusiasm for Scottish country dancing. Thanks go to the many adults who had accompanied them to camp and helped out in so many ways to make the camp a success.

Congratulations to the New Zealand Branch on the holding of the 10th JAM Camp – with camps having been held biannually since 1997 this is part of the reason why there is such a strong following of SCD amongst our younger generation.

## My week at Summer School 2015

This was my first year at Summer School in St Andrews. I was very nervous at the start but soon felt welcome as all the people were so kind. We went to our rooms and I was amazed at how clean and tidy they were. After unpacking I went to a meeting where we were given details of what we would be doing during the week. I was in Advanced group 1 which was quite a challenge!! We were given a pack with our timetable for the week with details of all the classes.

My first class was country dancing and it was very enjoyable. I had Linda Henderson as my teacher for the first few days and Lyn Bryce for the second part of the week. The next class was Highland and I was fortunate to have the opportunity to be part of the demonstration team on the Thursday night. It was hard work but a lot of fun. I did step dance in the afternoon which was very exciting as it is one of my favourite types of Scottish dancing.

The social dances in the evening were very enjoyable because everyone came together until about 10:30 pm and had a lot of fun dancing. On the Friday night we had a Ceilidh where I performed a step dance by myself. It was fab!!! We were all very tired when we got home.

I can't wait to experience the summer school next year and would recommend it to anyone 12-16 who is thinking of coming.

*Keely Smith, age 12.*



*Keely (left) and Hannah from Bournemouth Branch visiting 12 Coates Crescent before Summer School*



# 24-hour Ceilidh Challenge

Raising funds for children's charity

By Liz Fraser RSCDS Marketing Officer



The STV (television) Children's Appeal, which raises money for children in Scotland affected by poverty, took a spin round the dance floor this month. Working in partnership with the RSCDS and sponsors The Royal Bank of Scotland and Optical Express, TV broadcaster and personality Lorraine Kelly signed up for a marathon 24-hour ceilidh.

Kicking off at the High School of Dundee on Friday 11 September at 2pm, Lorraine and co-fundraiser Maxine Jones, jiggled and reeled around Scotland, concluding their marathon dancethon 24 hours later against the iconic backdrop of Edinburgh Castle in the leafy setting of Princes Street Gardens.

So, how did the RSCDS become involved with this worthwhile cause which helps to raise money for disadvantaged children and young people?

Remember last summer's Commonwealth Ceilidh which saw thousands of people around the globe participating in one massive ceilidh? In many ways the STV Big Challenge followed on from that success; something which was not lost on the television company as they approached the Society for talks on partnering their 2015 Appeal.

John Wilkinson, RSCDS past Chairman, devised a signature dance, 'Kelly's Kaper' and the music was composed by band leader and RSCDS Director of Music, Ian Muir. After the marathon ceilidh an STV spokesperson said; "It was great to go to so many events where 'Kelly's Kaper' was being tried out by all ages and all types of groups who really went to the effort to learn it". If the dance is unfamiliar to you and you would like to give it a go, the recorded track, dance instructions and a video is available on the RSCDS website.

As with the Commonwealth Ceilidh, the campaign culminated in a 24 hour dancethon. You didn't need to be a member of the Society or a Scottish country dancer to take part as the dance was devised to be as accessible as possible. However,

the campaign would not have been so successful and expansive, engaging many people, without the involvement and commitment of RSCDS Branches and members. To you all – well done. Your efforts were noted and much appreciated by STV. Here is one such compliment; "Thank you to the RSCDS groups for their energy and enthusiasm and for their fantastic support for the Appeal".

Lorraine and Maxine received a tremendous welcome wherever they popped in for 'a wee dance' or to visit a group. Indeed Lorraine credited the warm reception, hospitality and zeal for lifting her whenever she felt her energy levels flagging.

Lorraine's official route, which was filmed for broadcast in October, saw her joining ceilidhs and visiting groups in Dundee, Dunfermline, Crombie, East Whitburn, Glasgow, Loch Lomond, Oban, Perth, Stirling, Larbert and Edinburgh. In addition to these stops on her itinerary there was much activity around the country and, thanks to the RSCDS network, the Appeal resonated far beyond Scotland. From Aberdeen in northern Scotland to Kirkcudbright in the south; from London and Peterborough in England; to Brussels and Hong Kong overseas. A truly international effort, which was reminiscent of the Commonwealth Ceilidh.

So thank you if you, or your Branch, signed up for the Challenge. People played a part in so many ways; Branches staged specific events; included 'Kelly's Kaper' in an existing class or dance programme; helped out or led the dancing at a community gathering; individuals supported an event simply with



Maxine Jones and Lorraine Kelly allemande

their presence or by collecting donations. You should feel proud, knowing that you have made a real difference to the lives of some young people in Scotland. In its first four years, the STV Children's Appeal has raised over £8.2 million. This enabled the charity to make 297 donations, large and small, to projects across all 32 local authority areas in Scotland, providing much needed support to over 37,000 children.

Ahead of the Challenge Lorraine said: "I'm delighted with the response to this year's ceilidh challenge. We've had individuals and community groups along with organisations such as the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society (RSCDS) and Girlguiding UK sign up to host their own fundraising events."

At the time of going to press we eagerly anticipate the live broadcast which is being aired in mid-October. Only then will we learn the total amount raised by Lorraine's Ceilidh Challenge. Thank you to those who have sent HQ or STV videos, footage and photos of your event. We shall be compiling an album to reflect the fun and diversity of your fundraising activities. For now, we are delighted to share some images here to give you a flavour of the action-packed big ceilidh.



Photographs by Grant Bulloch, Edinburgh Branch.



# Spring Fling - London 2015



*Maddie and Will Macdonald do their homework.*

Our adventure began when we arrived in London for a day of museum and exhibition hopping from Sensational Butterflies at the Natural History Museum to the Red Arrows flight simulator at the Science Museum until later we registered for Spring Fling. It was great to see faces we knew from Summer School.

The welcome dance on Friday evening was co-hosted by Chiswick Scottish Country Dance Club. Seventeen fun dances later with wonderful live music provided by the Borderline Band and a delicious supper – we were back in SCD full swing! Thank you to Chiswick SCD for a thoroughly enjoyable evening.

Breakfast was followed by a dash to St Mary's church hall for the class. Rachel Shankland and Andrew Nolan our teachers put us through our paces, helping us improve our techniques in a fun way,

*We have two reports from young dancers who attended Spring Fling this year. Will and Maddie Macdonald, who were awarded a half scholarship each to attend and Benedikt Schlotmann, who was awarded one to himself! They seem to have had a ball.*

choosing interesting dances. Our favourite dance was the '8 of diamonds.' The hours flew by and a leisurely lunch in the sunshine was much needed. Dancing shoes on again for a Highland Class taken by Kathleen Gilbert. To be taught by a professional Highland dance teacher rather than our Mum and YouTube was brilliant! We needed to get back to basics and learn good habits. A full class of 30 dancers were all keen to learn or perfect Barracks Johnnie and the 4 step fling. Kathleen was a fun and inspiring teacher.

Coming out of the tube at Knightsbridge on Saturday evening and seeing all the expensive sports cars parked outside Harrods was exciting. Then we entered a new underground world beneath St Columba's church in the middle of central London where the dance, co-hosted by London Branch, was to be held. The hall was packed, every chair taken – then the music, provided by the students who had been practising on the musician's course, began...what a treat! The music was exciting with a lively choice of tunes which put a spring into everyone's step. This is what makes Scottish dancing great fun! There were lots of calls for encores and the band obliged, much to

everyone's delight. It was a marvellous evening.

Sunday, the last day – would our feet make it through the final part of the weekend? The morning was spent dancing through and scoring the seven dances short-listed for the Spring Fling Competition Dances – mine was not among them. The dances submitted from all over the world to be ranked, had some interesting ideas, twists and formations and made the morning a lot of fun. The winner, Dance 14, was devised by Samantha Burton from London. A group photograph and lunch, courtesy of London Branch, concluded the weekend.

We said our farewells and headed home. Maddie worked out that we had danced for 14.05 hours over the course of the weekend!

We had a brilliant weekend, huge thanks to the RSCDS Youth Services Committee and Elaine and Katie for their hard work, attention to detail and thoughtfulness.

*Will & Maddie Macdonald, aged 15 and 13*

It was my first time in London and my first Spring Fling. And both of them were a great experience.

My roommates were friendly and we went to the welcome dance. At the dance I was unsure at the beginning because in Bonn I've only danced for one year. But there were always helpful people to help me and show me the right way.

On Saturday, there was the Beginners workshop with Heather and Rachel as teachers. We were a small group, about six people, but we all learned something new and could improve. The Highland Steps afternoon class was very fast and a bit crazy because it was different from the "normal" steps. In the evening, there was the ball at the local Church of Scotland with great music, friendly dancers and countless dances.

So what was the best experience of this weekend? The dancers, the workshops or London? I really don't know because there are so many new memories. I hope to see some of the dancers again at the Spring Fling in Edinburgh next year.

*Benedikt Schlotmann*

## Flash Mob



On 5 September over 50 Scottish country dancers took part in a Flash Mob in the Union Square Shopping Centre in Aberdeen. A flash mob, for those who may not be familiar with the term, is when a group of people suddenly assemble in a public place, coming from all corners, perform an apparently spontaneous activity and then quickly disperse. A memorable Flash

Mob took place in a square in Spain in July 2012 when an orchestra appeared, one at a time, played Beethoven's Ode to Joy to an appreciative crowd of all ages and then walked away!

Of course, a 'spontaneous activity' is not always as spontaneous as it might seem and in this case Emma Allsop and members of Youth Services Committee put a lot of effort into recruiting and encouraging Scottish country dancers to be in the right place at the right time – well done and thank you. Frank Thomson – who just happened to be in the vicinity with his accordion – was in the right place at the right time and provided the music.

Thank you also to everybody who took part and in particular members of Aberdeen Branch who also gave support and encouragement. Well done to everybody.

*Marilyn Healy*



More of Flash Mob can be seen on our Facebook page



# Celebration of Culture



Yellowknife group

**Members of Edmonton (Canada) Caledonian Branch were invited to take part in the 30th anniversary of the Metis dancers in Alberta and the Northwest Territories. Louise McGillivray describes the multi-cultural celebration.**

In June 2015, members of Edmonton (Canada) Caledonian Branch participated in two shows celebrating the role of Scottish dancing in the dancing of the Metis culture.

The Metis (whose culture is a mixture of First Nations and European, primarily Scottish and French) have incorporated elements of all those cultures into their music and dancing. The Edmonton Metis dancers, celebrating their 30 year anniversary this year, invited Scottish, French and First Nations dancers to join in a gala anniversary celebration concert at the Royal Alberta Museum in Edmonton on June 16th. Both adult and youth members of the Edmonton Caledonian branch participated in that concert, following several rehearsals with the Metis dancers.

On June 20th, six Edmonton Scottish country dancers joined the Metis and First Nations dancers in a special celebration of culture in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories for National Aboriginal Day. Yellowknife is located on the north shore of Great Slave Lake, 1500 km north of Edmonton and 400 km south of the Arctic Circle. In Yellowknife, at the summer solstice (June 21st) the sun sets near midnight and rises at about 3 a.m. It doesn't really get completely dark! That's why northern Canada is often called *The Land of the Midnight Sun*.

At both shows, the different cultures separately performed their dances, and also participated in dances involving dancers from all the cultures. One dance began with a First Nation Friendship Dance (a round dance danced to drums and singing) and then moved into a Metis

dance, performed to fiddle music. That dance included (in our terminology) a grand chain (which the Metis call weaving the sash) and an allemande hold as we danced off the stage. The Scottish dancers also joined with the Metis dancers – doing one of their favourites – *Drops of Brandy*. That dance? It was *Strip the Willow* to us!

A common sight during this entire process was dancers in little groups comparing steps, learning each other's steps, and admiring the various traditional attire and styles of clothing. Safe to say, the most elaborate outfits were those of the First Nations – our bright shirts and tartan sashes simply couldn't compete with eagle-feather head-dresses and deer skin tunics!

The Scottish country dancers performed several medleys to profile the scope of

SCD – our strathspey step being quite unique among the dancers. The Metis do many of their dances to lively jig music which is very familiar to us. One of our dances included couples in promenade hold, dancing a reel of three. Who knew that we were also forming the infinity symbol as we danced? That exact same figure is done by the Metis dancers – to honour the infinity sign which symbolizes both the existence of the Metis people forever, and the coming together of the cultures that make up the Metis people. The Metis flag has a blue background with a white infinity symbol (highly evocative of the saltire). We even had one of our dancers (a former Highland dancer) join a Metis lad in a sword dance to complement his "belt dance" (an obvious take-off from the Scottish sword dance).

The trip to Yellowknife for all the dancers was sponsored by the North Slave Metis Alliance – which paid airfare, hotels, meals, and even provided an honorarium for our branch. We felt very special and pampered – and the warm and welcoming reception we received from the 3000+ audience was very gratifying.

There is a very small (but very keen) SCD group in Yellowknife and we were able to include one of their dancers in our performance. And those Yellowknife SCD dancers toured us all around – showing us the sights, making sure we ate fresh caught whitefish at a popular local restaurant, and were taken to the best store to buy moccasins and mukluks (fur boots).

The dancers thoroughly enjoyed the cultural exchange, friendship and excitement of visiting Yellowknife – a never to be forgotten experience. And best of all, we've been told that they enjoyed our dancing so much that they want us to come back next year!



Grand Change Metis style



# Interview with Raphaëlle Orgeret



Raphaëlle Orgeret

**I hear Lyon Branch is going to celebrate its 30th anniversary next year.**

Ah, no, it is the 30th anniversary of the Lyon group – the Branch was only formed 6 years ago, but the original group was a small international folk dance group. Scottish country dancing was only a part of what they did, but gradually it became a larger part of the group's activities. Originally, there was a Scottish class once a month. It then became fortnightly, then weekly, and eventually the Scottish group became independent of the folk dancers.

**How many of your branch are here this summer?**

Most of them, actually! There are only two branches in France, Paris and Lyon, so we have members from the southern part of the country, and even from Geneva. There are about 30 here at Summer School this year. We meet on Friday evenings with an average attendance of about 24, spread through the different levels. I also teach a children's class in the school I work in. I am going to start a new class for those who leave primary school. Otherwise, they will just stop dancing.

Raphaëlle Orgeret is a primary school teacher from Lyon and teaches in the Lyon Branch. She has taught at Summer School for three years. Her classes are proof that young dancers attract more young dancers. Jimmie Hill interviewed her this summer at the end of her teaching in Week 1.

**When did you start Scottish country dancing?**

I started here at Summer School when I was 15. My mother danced, but when I was a young teenager, I didn't want to do any dancing at all! I had a pen friend in Edinburgh and when my mother came to St Andrews, I went to stay with her. I think 1998 was my first year. I had done a bit of dancing before, but my mother insisted I went into the elementary class. For the next three years my mother insisted I stayed in the intermediate class – to get a good grounding in technique.

**Why did Scottish dancing become so popular in Lyon?**

It was very gradual. I think it was helpful that I was young and was able to attract other young people. We all became friends. I think that the more young people you have, the easier it is for even more to come. We don't just dance – I organise parties, even holidays together, and have always tried to give them the idea that this is not just a zumba class where you turn up and that is that – this is something else, something more social. Some are more interested in the social aspect than in the

dancing. They all keep coming because we do fun things. I give them challenges. One of the best is the Newcastle Festival – preparing for it really motivates young people. They like meeting other young dancers from different areas and preparing for a festival definitely improves people's dancing.

**Aren't there dangers in creating a demonstration group within a relatively small branch?**

Yes, there are two sides to it. I am very aware of having a group of committed, young, strong dancers who practise outside the branch classes, but I also do my best to make sure we get on very well with everyone else in the branch – that is important. Everybody understands why we do it and they all accept it. I am sure some of my young dancers would have stopped dancing if they did not have the motivation of the demonstration team. I think they like the fact that I am quite a demanding teacher.

**You said you didn't want to dance when you were a teenager.**

Well, it was more that – like any other teenager – I didn't want to do what my mother was doing. I wanted my own friends. I used to play volleyball and enjoyed competing. I am a very competitive person. I like winning and to start with I felt that Scottish country dancing couldn't offer me that.

**So, what are your impressions of Summer School now?**

I don't know anyone who has not enjoyed it. It's like a summer camp for adults. In some ways, it is a very peculiar place – as if it is out of time! There could be a war outside, but you wouldn't know about it! All you think about is having fun, dancing, and meeting new people. I used to be very shy and coming here gave me confidence. Everybody told me how well I was doing,



Members from France at Summer School 2015





Raphaëlle at Spring Fling

so when I left after that first year, I really felt good about myself. That is something Scottish country dancing has given me and something I will always be grateful for.

### What was it like coming to St Andrews to teach for the first time?

Stressful! Coming as a teacher and coming as a dancer are two very different things! I am more used to it now. I like to teach in Week 1 when it is quieter. You can't party all night if you are teaching. But now in Week 2 I am attending as a dancer, so I can party as much as I want!

### Are you surprised at how few young Scots come to St Andrews?

No, not surprised – because I have always known that. I would be surprised if suddenly huge numbers of young Scots did start coming, but I would be pleased. I taught for a year at Falkirk High School and I keep in touch with some of the students I taught there. They don't understand why I am involved in Scottish country dancing! They would never do it. They tell me that country dancers are a bit formal. One of my friends, who is a music teacher, was playing recently at a wedding where there were some country dancers. They asked him to play for a particular dance for them. They got so cross when he made a mistake – even after he had explained he was not used to playing for country dancing. What IS good, however, is that there are now some young Scots teaching and playing at St Andrews. So, there is hope. But there are still some people who don't like dancers clapping when they go down the middle and back. Week 1 was rather conventional, but I know all my dancers in Week 2 will be shouting and clapping – we need to encourage people to be spontaneous and have fun. I am sure years ago Summer School was just as wonderful, but times have changed. In France we do not have the image problem which you have here in Scotland. People come along with no preconceived ideas. They stay because they have fun. And of course Scotland has a good reputation

in France – the kilt, bagpipes, rugby and the whole Celtic thing. French people love Scotland.

### What makes a good country dance teacher?

I think it depends a lot on the class you have! I can tell you what I do with my class in Lyon, but if I had an older social class, I would do something completely different. A good teacher adapts. When you put your teacher's hat on, you become someone else. I direct my class. I tell them what I expect. With young people I work a lot on technique whereas with other classes I would concentrate on the upper body more. To me technique is more important than geography – at least to start with. In Lyon we have a two and a half hour class, starting with technique then moving on to complicated dances. I think it is important to give individual criticism to everyone – even older dancers appreciate it. I am fairly strict, but I joke a lot and make them laugh. Every year I do a technique workshop. I take 8 dancers at a time for an hour and people who come to that want individual criticism. We do one dance in that hour, but we do all the steps individually, then another 8 people come for the next hour – like a doctor's surgery! When people come to my class they either like it and stay, or they leave.

### Is there a particular teacher who has had a big influence on you?

Anita Mackenzie – she was my first teacher here at St Andrews. I really enjoyed her teaching. She motivated me and everyone really enjoyed themselves. In those days the beginners class had the same teacher all week.

### To many of us in Scotland you are one of the 'young Europeans'. What is it about our dancing that appeals to so many young people in Europe?

Every country has a different approach to dancing. French folk dancing died out and is now starting up again. An important factor in Lyon was the number of local teachers of

English who started coming along. I think they saw it as part of the cultural side of their work, but I can't think of anything else my dancers have in common except perhaps a lack of preconceptions. Young Scots do country dancing in school, and many tell me it's not for them. My dancers come along with no previous experience.

### What could the Society be doing to make dancing more attractive to young people?

It doesn't take much – just one or two young people who are enthusiastic and want to include other young people! I'm now on the Youth Committee and I am going to try to organise a worldwide Youth Week – during that week everyone will try to bring young people along. If everyone in a group brings their young grandson, or nephew or niece or neighbour all on the same day, then maybe something will click. That's the start of an idea. We are going to try that in Lyon in January and see if it works. It is a constant struggle to find new dancers. I am now one of the oldest in my team. If an 18-year-old comes to my class, he doesn't see me as a young person. With an age range of 16 to 35, the RSCDS has a distorted idea of what youth is. I am old to that 18 year-old! I get on well with people in their 20s, but in 10 years time I will need them to do the same for the younger ones. That's why we have 14 people in Lyon doing Units 1 – 3. At the moment I am the only certificated teacher teaching in the branch. We need more young teachers.

### Finally, what are your two favourite dances?

It varies, but at the moment I like *The Gentleman* and *The Deil amang the Tailors!*



Dancing at Summer School with Luke Bauer



# CeilidhKids - now aged eight and a half

Caroline Brockbank

*In Issue No. 8 Caroline Brockbank wrote about her project to introduce her own children, then aged 4 and nearly 3 to family-centred ceilidh dancing. I asked Caroline, now that her children are older, how the enterprise was progressing and discovered that the original members have graduated from CeilidhKids but been replaced by a new 'generation' of dancers. It has also expanded and CeilidhKids Glasgow is up and running. As Norah Dunn, whose obituary appears on page 29 put it, "Catch 'em Young" [Editor]*

My children are indeed older. I began CeilidhKids as a six week project for them and their friends when they were aged four and nearly three. Now my daughter is at high school, shortly to be joined by her brother and CeilidhKids is a full time job. When I re-read the original article, written after we had been going for only two and a half years, I was surprised to find that the basic premise is almost the same after all these years and whilst the idea has expanded, it has deviated very little from the original concept.

To recap, CeilidhKids provides 'Scottish dancing for children and families in the Edinburgh area'. In fact I concentrate mostly on pre-school children and those slightly older, as the Society (among others) does an excellent job for 7 year olds upwards. Children aged 3-5 year old need an adult to partner and guide them, as very young children cannot follow instructions quickly enough - one adult needs to be able to dance with two children, sometimes with a baby strapped in a baby carrier on the front, so dances need to allow for this. The success of a dance must never rely on anyone being in the right place at the right time, as little ones lose interest, wander off, or have their own ideas about how a dance should go. Most of our dances are adapted from the standard ceilidh / SCD repertoire (Gay Gordons, Flying Scotsman, Swedish Masquerade). Some can be done almost exactly as written (Prince of Orange), and some we have written ourselves, such as the Birthday Circle. However, I was amused to see 'Jenni's Roundabout Dance' which we wrote ourselves in the first year, reproduced almost exactly



*The Reid family dance 'en famille'*

in 'Jigs and Reels' as 'Happy Hoops' – great minds think alike!

The original members of the group outgrew the family classes years ago. Recently, however, some of my 'graduates' have joined the Edinburgh Branch Children's class and it is lovely to see their skills developing. I have started running an annual New Year school-age family ceilidh to try and bring the graduate families together at least on an occasional basis. It's also wonderful to get feedback from parents who have been to weddings and have been surprised and delighted to find how confident their children are on the dance floor, having learned the basic concepts at our classes.



*CeilidhKids celebrates its 5th birthday*



Given that all of this has to be fitted in to the rest of life and being a Mum, I began to find that my weekends especially were becoming crammed with bookings for parties, fundraisers and so on. So I now have a part-time assistant. Whilst not an experienced Scottish dancer, Dawn Claire is a champion ballroom dancer with children of her own and is used to teaching children. So I wrote her a 'manual' and delivered a crash course in the correct terminology, and now she helps me out by running occasional parties at weekends when my diary is just too packed.

As I mentioned in the original article, CeilidhKids probably works better in cities with a large, transient population than in small family-oriented rural communities where dancing is already part of the local tradition. I had taken a few bookings in Glasgow, where the welcome was warm and enthusiastic but the commute was stressful and time-consuming. So I was thrilled when Mireia Anon-Rebollo, a local Scottish country dancer was keen to get involved, and together we launched CK Glasgow! We began in October 2014 with an introductory ceilidh. Since then Mireia has run sessions in nurseries and through the Gaelic school. She tells me 'The overall feedback from staff and parents was that it was an amazing idea. The children had learned rhythm, dance patterns and had lots of fun (one mother confessed that the best part of her child's nursery report was how good and attentive he was during CeilidhKids sessions)! Word is spreading, leading to several fundraising ceilidhs in the area, and Mireia is planning to run monthly family dances.

Being used to the RSCDS model of practising and perfecting SCD, it has surprised us both that families are often reluctant to attend a weekly class, preferring instead (like many Scots) to dance only for special occasions. So whilst I run three weekly classes in different parts of Edinburgh, only one of these is currently well attended. I spend the rest of my time running far more popular one-off events such as fundraisers, birthday parties, or going into schools, nurseries, Brownie packs and so on to run a session for Burns' Night or St Andrew's Day. Some of them have been particularly memorable, such as the Father's Day Takeover at the National Museum of Scotland, or last summer when we organised our own pre-schooler-friendly version of the Commonwealth Ceilidh.

One of the huge advantages of living in Edinburgh is the immediate availability of the Fringe Festival, in which it became obvious



Lewis and his Mum practise their slip step'

that CeilidhKids should participate. We began modestly in 2010, sharing a venue with Edinburgh RSCDS and running seven ticketed family workshops. Two years later, in partnership with the Free Fringe Festival, we began running workshops by donation and in August 2015 we will be running 46 free family sessions across three different venues in the city. It is exhausting, hot and chaotic, but great fun and massively popular.

In recent years social media has been my friend and I find Facebook is an excellent way to spread the word amongst the local Mums' network. It has also allowed me to link up with other groups across the globe, and I have been approached by many people with similar ideas and projects, although usually on a smaller scale. It's been great to share ideas and feel that we have allies elsewhere! Thanks to all our Facebook likes and Twitter followers – we're very happy to make new friends so have a look for us <https://www.facebook.com/CeilidhKids> or on Twitter @CeilidhKids or, for our Glasgow friends, <https://www.facebook.com/glasgowck> @GlasgowCK

Happy dancing!

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# The World of Scottish Country Dancing



## Is this the largest ever demonstration of Scottish Country Dancing?

The photograph was taken at the European Cup Final at Hampden Park, Glasgow in May 1960. Attendance at the match was officially 127,621 but folklore has it that attendance was nearer 134,000!

The final was between Real Madrid of Spain and Eintracht Frankfurt of Germany - Madrid won 7-3. It is widely regarded as one of the greatest football matches ever played.

It is believed that some people went to watch a football match but photographs taken at the time show there were at least three, probably four teams of Scottish country dancers dancing to a pipe band and whose footwork was surely equal to the likes of Di Stefano and Puskas who merely scored Madrid's goals! The first woman in this picture is Winnie Urquhart. (Thanks to Patrick Murray of Glasgow Branch who sent in photographs taken at the event).



Kris and Mike McGinnis, long-time members of Los Angeles Branch showing the joy of Scottish country dancing. Kris has been on the Branch management committee for several years and Mike is the sound engineer for the branch and other southern California branches at live music events.



Some of the 66 children who enjoy Scottish country dancing at Queen Victoria School in Toronto. See *From around the World*, p.22



When Sandra Crosby advertised *Non-Competitive Scottish Dance Classes* in 1980 she worried that no one would turn up. In fact thirty-six prospective young dancers were waiting for her and since then the Inverglenn Scottish Dancers, based in Vancouver B.C. has grown in numbers and reputation. Before long they were invited to take part in festivals in Washington, at Expo '86 in Vancouver and overseas in Scotland, at the White Rose Festival in York, the Assembly Halls in Doncaster, travelled to Perth, Australia and danced at the Beltaine Festival in Spain.

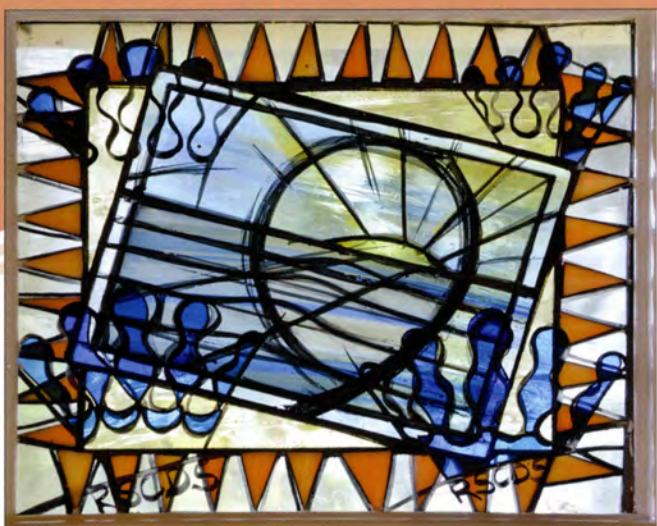


Dancers at Duns & District annual May Weekend when over 50 local members were joined by more than 100 visitors from all over the UK. Once again, it was a great success with visitors planning to return again next year.

Sandra stresses that Scottish dancing is more than performing on the big stage. It teaches poise, encourages self-confidence, responsibility and commitment and is something the students will enjoy all their lives, wherever they travel (Chris Herbert). See [www.inverglenscottishdancers.com](http://www.inverglenscottishdancers.com)



# Summer School 2015



One of the stained glass windows erected in the Covered Way that runs between Lumsden and Old Wing at University Hall in St Andrews. The windows were commissioned in 1996 to celebrate the centenary of University Hall and recognise the university's significant connections and partnerships with international organisations. The windows were designed by Linda Cannon of Glasgow.



Filming the demonstration dances following the dance at the Younger Hall in week 2



Tom McKinley and Aliéor Latour



The Musician's course in week 2



Stan Grycuk and Jamie Pressley have a birl



Dancers show their appreciation of the band

All photographs by *Michael Greenwood*



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# Digital Communication

By Michael Greenwood

Since my appointment as Digital Marketing Communications Officer in November 2014 there has been a significant push to increase the digital presence of the RSCDS. Through a dedicated Online Communications Strategy the Society has begun to enhance its many Social Media profiles (notably Facebook and Twitter), communicate more regularly with Branches and Members through a dedicated RSCDS Newsletter and use the website to disseminate important information. In addition, the Society has created and posted documents on the website that will assist members in becoming more comfortable connecting with the Society online.

The Social Media profiles of the RSCDS have steadily increased over the past year and this is due to regular postings, communicating with members in a new medium, and networking with like-minded organizations. Facebook and Twitter numbers are up significantly, and the Society is beginning to communicate and network with members and interested dancers in a new way.

An interesting statistic that I have



come across through Facebook Insights is the demographic of our followers. It seems that 18% of our Facebook 'friends' are between the ages of 55-64; how about that! See chart above.

## Engagement is the Name of the Game

The Society is trying to improve communications online by establishing itself on as many Social Media platforms as possible, using the Newsletter as a way to disseminate interesting news, stories and information, and helping members use our online database; thus increasing our network. We need to find ways to communicate with our members that they are comfortable with and that may mean finding new ways to connect.

The way we communicate, the content we create, and the material we disseminate has to be engaging or our online audience will lose confidence and the Society will not be able to properly utilize the many powerful online platforms available.

Our Online Communications Strategy develops continuously. The stats we receive show how effective our efforts have been. Increasing our digital presence is an essential part of not only connecting with members worldwide in real time, but also taking the Society to new places and connecting on levels we have not previously tried. Though we can be active on Social Media and heighten our communication efforts, it really depends on you, the members. If you are not online and engaging with us digitally (email, Social Media, website, etc.) then our Online Communications Strategy will need to be simplified and we could potentially squander a very important way of connecting with members and sharing our passion of Scottish country dancing with the world at large.

There are documents on the RSCDS website that help you through the process of using our online database and signing up with Facebook and Twitter. Get online and let's make Scottish country dancing go viral.

## RSCDS Branch Secretaries Facebook Group

By Tom Halpenny

Following earlier Branch Secretaries' workshops, Headquarters launched the Facebook Group in March 2015 to expand the discussion worldwide and enhance communication with branches.

The aim of the group is to examine the role of Branch Secretaries, and is intended for current Secretaries and those who may be interested in taking on the role. It is an opportunity for Branch Secretaries to meet each other and network to learn what is going on in the wider environment. Secretaries are encouraged to participate and can introduce topics for discussion if they wish. We expect topics to include:

- The role of Branch Secretaries in the modern environment?
- The most effective way to distribute information to our members?

- Information sharing - what works well, what can be improved?
- What good practices can be shared among Branches?

The "closed" group content is visible only to the participants, and you only need a Facebook account to participate. Moderators post topics and ask questions in order to stimulate discussion. Members provide the content. Facebook is designed for people with minimal technical knowledge and is easy to learn and use. Members may sign up but use Facebook for no other purpose.

Secretaries from 20 percent of the branches, representing 21 percent of RSCDS members, initially joined. We are getting to know one another and sharing ideas. Digital Marketing Communications

Officer Mike Greenwood is responsive to topics that involve HQ. Communication is faster than individual or group emails.

Several branch secretaries initially declined to join the group because they are not interested in Facebook, and some suggested we open the group to other branch representatives. So, we are extending our invitation to any branch representatives.

If you would like to join the group, please visit the following URL:

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# Overheard on the Web



**Chris Ronald** reports from the Internet beat. If you're curious about the discussions on the Strathspey list, you can subscribe yourself by visiting [www.strathspey.org](http://www.strathspey.org)

Dwindling numbers is a concern to a number of SCD groups I know, so I followed a recent discussion on the ECD (English Country Dance) list on good ways to expand a dancing community. In that discussion, one group that had succeeded in reversing a decline explained they had done a lot of little things, which made a difference when added together.

Particularly important was to be welcoming to newcomers. The group had trained a large proportion of their regular dancers to actively seek out newcomers as partners. They made sure the door sitter had time to converse with each person at sign-in time. And they try to remember names and say goodbye by name when the newcomer leaves, and they make sure to tell their newcomers at 'announcement time' that they are very welcome.

Also, one of the organizers started an online discussion among the regular members. He explained that "the main thing it did for us was to raise the consciousness of the community. After enough people have reminded each other that the future of the

dance depends on bringing in new people, the attitudes on the dance floor do tend to shift."

And here are some of the other ideas:

- Pile on the extras: Pot-luck snacks at the break; going out for food as a group before or after the dance; ride-sharing, etc. In this vein, one successful group "had a budget to pre-stock the snack table with good stuff: watermelon, dolmas, cookies, and even popsicles.
- Set up hooks to bring in young people. A youth discount works somewhat (we set the bar at 30 or younger), but only if you get the word out, so you need people in the local youth scene to pass the word along. What really works for bringing in young people is just hooking that one magic personality who is a magnet for bringing all of his or her friends.
- Proselytize at other dances. When you are at a Contra dance, say, talk to people there and ask them whether they'd be interested in trying English. If they've heard it isn't as much fun, let them know it's fun in a different way. More interesting figures, more of the lingering

glances and such, and not so much spinning. Then make sure when they come, they have a good time.

- Another group had found that the single most effective tool for bringing in new dancers who return is to ask their regulars to bring friends. They ran a 'bring a friend for free' campaign for 3 dances in a row and hounded their regulars to take advantage of the offer.
- A dance organizer added "The importance of welcoming newcomers and making sure that they are partnered with dancers who know how to help and how to smile cannot be overstated. If they feel secure and confident, they come back. If they are marginalized and made to feel that they are unworthy, they vote with their feet. It all comes back to a definition I've seen applied to contra dancers: New dancers will dance with anyone. Intermediate dancers will only dance with each other and hotshots. Hotshots will only dance with each other. Great dancers will dance with anyone, but especially with beginners.

So, what type of dancer are you?

## The Story of Parliament – and the RSCDS



Rachel Wilton and Elaine Davies hold 'The Story of Parliament'!

The RSCDS was invited to contribute a profile of its work for this book. Rachel Wilton and Elaine Davies of London Branch, who attended the book's launch received a warm welcome from all involved. Rachel Wilton writes about the reception.

The Cloisters of Westminster Abbey, London – what a splendid and fitting setting for the launch of a beautifully produced book – *The Story of Parliament: Celebrating 750 years of parliament in Britain*. Fitting because the Cloisters give visitors access to the Chapter House, where the earliest House of Commons is known to have met in the mid-13th century.

The book is produced by The History of Parliament Trust in partnership with the publisher, St James' House and written by a team of experts on parliamentary history. It presents a comprehensive illustrated account of parliamentary politics, charting

the rise of Parliament in Britain over the centuries and exploring how it has been instrumental in shaping the country as we know it today. It also includes chapters on key areas of life in modern Britain, celebrating success stories of public and private organisations: The Society was featured in a full page section under the heading 'The dance network that's sustained a reel revolution' describing the RSCDS's role in preserving and developing our dance form.

More than 300 guests included representatives of all the organisations whose profiles were included in the book as well as prominent historians, politicians and senior public figures. The launch provided an opportunity to mingle and spread the word amongst at least some of the guests about the work of the RSCDS.

A copy of the book is at Headquarters for members to see and the section on the RSCDS can be seen on the RSCDS website. It is a large and attractive volume with many illustrations and very readable.



# The Archive

Alan Macpherson reports on recent acquisitions to the archive

The Society's archive at Coates Crescent has undergone a major upgrade during the last year made possible by a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The progress of the project has been reported regularly and there has been a heightened interest in the work of the archive from members. The bulk of the archive catalogue is now available online but members should know that it is a work in progress and like 'painting the Forth Bridge' it will never be truly complete as donations and deposits are happening all the time. These new items have to be examined, recorded and catalogued and this, of course, all takes time, and so by the time one acquisition has been completed there is always another batch occupying the "to do" shelves. As an example of this, I have noted some of the more substantial accessions from the last year on which we are currently working.

**William Hamilton Legacy** comprising the late Bill Hamilton's large collection of



recorded music and several very detailed photo diaries which record Society activities abroad during the 1950s-60s.

**Dr. Alastair MacFadyen Legacy** including diaries of teaching and examination tours, 1983 – 1993; research notes, correspondence and other material relating to the Lowe family; Francis Peacock, James Grahamsley-Atkinson; Thomas Murphy's MS (1890) and W F Gilles. This includes various correspondence relating to 'Dance With Your Soul'.

**Barry Priddey** comprising 75 volumes of dance descriptions taking up some five metres of shelf space..

**Morningside SCD Club** has deposited their records covering a period of about 50 years.

Other, smaller donations include a substantial number of gramophone records of Scottish music donated by various members; A shawl knitted by Miss Milligan; oral histories gathered as part of the Archive Development Project and a video Interview in 2014 with Dr A MacFadyen.

I hope that, with the increased awareness of the archive through the development project, the membership will appreciate that the archive is more than just a room for file storage but very much a working part of the Society's structure."

## N. I. & Scottish Seminar

At the Belfast Branch weekend and seminar in May, John Wilkinson, immediate past Chairman, Craig Houston of the Management Board and Helen McGinley of the Membership Services Committee led a question and answer session. They found that there was a great deal of confusion about what the Society does and how it functions. For example, many of those present were unaware that:

- branches were autonomous local associations
- most conceded that the current licence agreement is in need of review;
- many were unaware of the roles of The Management Board and Committees;
- as a result of c), few knew that there were vacancies on the Management Board and most committees.

Craig and Helen gave detailed accounts of the work of the Board and the Membership Services Committee and both stressed the need for members to come forward to fill vacancies. Everyone present was asked to examine their own skill set and to consider whether this could be of benefit to the Society.

The biggest confusion, however,

surrounded an almost mythical understanding of the former Executive Council with a view that it had provided a better means of communication with the Branches and Branches have since lost the ability to be involved. There was also a suggestion that the decision to move to a Management Board was a somewhat arbitrary decision if not 'on a whim'. Nothing could be further from the truth. The decision to recast the structure was the result of long discussions arising from changes in Scottish legislation and, in particular, the creation of the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR).

As a result of those discussions, it became clear that our 'Branches' did not meet the technical definition of a Branch and if we continued down that route we would be required to produce combined accounts incorporating all of the branches, the tax position would be horrendous with different not for profit rules in many countries and all UK Branches and HQ would be liable for VAT on their combined revenues with resulting quarterly returns. That had to be avoided and, on legal advice, paid for largely personally by our President, Lord Mansfield, the current

system of a Board and Committees was introduced with the relationship between Local Associations defined in Licence Agreements. The term 'Branch' was retained as an acceptable historical anomaly and the Branches continue to have a significant say in the Society through their AGM delegates.'

An explanation was then provided regarding the recent decision to become a company limited by guarantee (CLG). Most were not aware of the unlimited liability of Charity Trustees and did not appreciate fully what this could entail. That having been made clear, there was unanimous support for CLG. This led to a discussion of proxy voting with some believing that this could see branches having a greater feeling of being in control of the decision making process - a return to the perceived glory days of the Executive Council.

In summary, this was an enlightening session for most and it was felt that many more members would benefit from an explanation of the history and reasons for where we are and how we are.

*Compiled from reports, Editor*



# From around the World

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

## United Kingdom

### Cornwall Branch Celebrates 25 years

The idea to form a branch in Cornwall was agreed on the long train journey from Edinburgh to Truro in 1990 following Polly Barton's success in attaining her full certificate that year at Summer School. It meant that Cornwall now had two teachers Polly and Sheila Harvey-George – a prerequisite for forming a Branch at that time.

To celebrate our 25th anniversary the Cornwall Branch invited past and present dancers to attend the AGM and social dance held in June. Several members of the original committee: Polly Barton, Sheila Harvey-George and Mary Miller attended and congratulatory messages were received from founder members unable to attend the celebration. Cornwall Branch has awarded three Branch awards since 2008 and we were delighted that two of the recipients, Sheila Harvey-George (2008) and Brian Stock (2010) were present to participate in our celebration. Our current chairman Val Dawson and first chairman Mary Miller cut the celebration cake.

*Rosalind McLaughlin, Membership Secretary*

### Manchester Branch

The Manchester Branch is the second oldest branch outwith Scotland and this year celebrated its 80th Anniversary.

The highlight of the year was an Anniversary Dance held in Eccles Town Hall in May. A good crowd of people attended which included some of the life members of the branch and dancers from neighbouring branches.

The programme consisted of well-known dances and two "home-grown" dances, *Val's Juniper Strathspey*, devised by Branch Chairman Helen Freer and *Grey Cairns of Camster*, devised by Branch Secretary Rob Kinnon-Brett. The music was excellently provided by Luke Brady & his band and added to the great atmosphere.

## Australia

Correspondent Sandra Bell  
[gasbell@bigpond.com](mailto:gasbell@bigpond.com)

Queensland Branch hosted Australia's 40th Winter School from 5-10 July with

Ruby Red as the theme and 130 dancers and musicians celebrated the 'Ruby' event at Cromwell College, University of Queensland. Visitors from six overseas countries joined the fun, and five different classes allowed for differing skills and competencies, with Mervyn Short (UK), Tim Wilson (USA), David Williamson (New Zealand), Christine Freeman (Victoria, Australia) and Elspeth Lacey (New South Wales, Australia) as teachers. Each class had a musician - Iain McKenzie, Sharlene Penman, Anne-Marie Forsyth, Lynne Scott, Bruce Mitchell and Emma Nixon – and Ian Aitken to wake us in the morning with the bagpipes and lead us into the Ball. The theme for the Ball was "40 Shades of Red" and dancers rose to the occasion with reds of many a hue. Dances at the Ball included the very recently published *The Ruby Rant*, written for the occasion by Francis Walduck, and *Brisbane River Reel*, by the late David Le Brocque, first performed in the same hall 14 years before.



*The devisor dancing The Ruby Rant at the Winter School Ball*

2015 has been busy for **Melbourne & District Branch** members with visiting dancers from the USA in April; a Beginners Course with a follow-up course planned later in the year; and a very popular Bring a Child day in June, attracting a large number of all ages who participated in ceilidh and country dancing. In July, Mervyn Short, taught a variety of dances to a large enthusiastic class.

Renowned Scottish dance musicians David South and Matthew Robertson celebrated twenty years of playing together at a mid-year social organized by the Box Hill

Group and a weekend school was held in September at Amberley with teachers Anne Kennedy (Sydney) and Elaine Arthur (Canberra.)

In February **Adelaide Branch** members danced at the Mount Barker Highland Games with the temperature over 30! A well-attended Day School for less experienced dancers was held in March with experienced dancers coming along after lunch to boost numbers.

Branch members have travelled far and wide with six attending the International Branch weekend in Denmark and five enjoying the Winter School in Brisbane.

**Sydney Branch** opened the dancing year in February with a Day of Dance and a "Know Your Dance" social was held in May with NO walk-throughs! To their credit the dancers had done their homework and this led to a great night and plenty of laughter. A teaching course, held in conjunction with Hunter Valley Branch, culminated with the examinations at the end of June. During their visits, Noeline O'Connor (NZ), Elinor Vandegrift (USA) and Tim Wilson (USA) each taught classes for the Branch. What luck for Sydney dancers to experience three teachers of such calibre!

**Canberra and District Branch** dancers participated in a display of Scottish country dancing at Canberra's National Multicultural Festival in February, and an outstanding display of dances from Iain Boyd's *Lord of the Rings Collection* at the National Folk Festival at Easter. A workshop for beginners at the Folk Festival attracted an enthusiastic group of around 100 dancers.

Canberra also contributed two sets of dancers to the massed display of SCD at the annual 'Bundanoon is Brigadoon' Highland Gathering.

A successful Unit Zero course in March 2015 was held by **Hunter Valley Branch**, with five people learning the basics of teaching dancing. The Branch is delighted to report that Jan McCudden has become a fully fledged teacher.

A Day of Dance in May, focused on dances devised by Iain Boyd from New Zealand with teachers Anne Kennedy, Belinda



Robertson and Ros McKie. In June, Iain himself came over with his wife Noeline O'Connor and a special Branch class was held at Gosford. That was a rare treat!

**Western Australia Branch** is enjoying another busy year. Monthly Hops have continued and it is great to see some new members coming along, as well as visitors from interstate and overseas. We recently held a Day of Dance which was taught by Mervyn Short who made a stopover on his way to Brisbane. We have our dinner dance to look forward to, with musicians, Chris Duncan and Catherine Strutt coming from Sydney to play for the evening and plans are also underway for celebrating the Branch's 40th Anniversary next year.

## Canada East

**Correspondent Elaine Hoag**  
[elaine.hoag@gmail.com](mailto:elaine.hoag@gmail.com)

In 2015, **St Catharines** celebrated its 50th anniversary as a Branch. They have much to celebrate! The Branch has been growing steadily over the last five years, doubling its membership by exploring new ways of recruiting dancers and learning from the experiences of other Branches and Affiliates. With their "New Concept" Ball in May 2015, St Catharines welcomed a bright future in which the sterling goals of "Friends, Fun, Fitness" would be achieved in new ways in a spirit of inclusiveness. The Entertainment Group plays a crucial role in recruitment, most recently dancing at the Niagara Folk Arts Festival at the end of May.



Members of St Catharine's Branch which celebrated its 50th anniversary ...

**The Toronto Association** continues to attract a large number of young dancers. In April, the Association held a Youth Ball in which young people from the Toronto area joined friends from nearby Buffalo in New York State for a fun evening of dance with live music and a sit-down meal.



Young dancers enjoying the Youth Ball

Children at Queen Victoria Public School in Toronto dance three times a week in the school's main foyer during their lunch break. In April they held a Scottish Country Dance Assembly and showed their dancing skills to over 350 fellow pupils. The children are aged 7-8 years and in multi-ethnic Toronto come from countries as diverse as: Tibet, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, China, India, the Middle-East and Hungary. Many speak little or no English and Scottish country dancing has become a common language to this group of young dancers. One parent commented, "Now I've seen everything: a Filipino teacher instructing children from Nepal in Scottish country dancing" (see photograph p.16)

Members of the **St Johns (Newfoundland) Branch** have performed at various events and festivals around the Avalon Peninsula throughout the summer, despite cold, damp weather (not unlike Scotland!). They hope to attract new dancers at a "taster-session" at the Newfoundland and Labrador Folk Festival.

## Europe

**David Foreman**  
[davidjforeman@outlook.com](mailto:davidjforeman@outlook.com)

Once again the village of Méaudre in south-east France was the venue for the Méaudre Reel Scottish Dance Club's sixth annual weekend of dance. The teachers, Laure Gardelle (Lyon) and Tom McKinlay (Paris) drew the best from dancers both in class and at the Friday and Saturday evening dances with support from musicians Seonaid Lynn, Roddy Johnstone and David Foreman from Scotland and Diana Sarran from Lyon. Students from Roddy's music class joined in on Saturday evening. Méaudre Reel Club puts a lot of effort into the development of its young dancers and they were much in evidence during the weekend. In July the young dancers from Méaudre Reel visited Edinburgh. Sophie Marchand writes:

"We have just spent a wonderful week in



Young dancers from Méaudre Reel Scottish Dance Club in Edinburgh (Sophie Marchand)

Edinburgh and, back home, our heads and hearts are still full of Scotland! What did we enjoy most? We couldn't say. How can we compare our stay in the wonderful Merchiston Castle School, the visit to the Royal Yacht, the Treasure Hunt at Cramond organised by our Scottish friends, the walk to Arthur's Seat, the dancing and demonstration in Princes Street Gardens, the mini-Highland Games our Scottish friends planned and the final ceilidh in the grand setting of the Merchiston main hall?

Sincere thanks to those who gave financial support (including a grant from the RSDCS), those who gave prizes for our tombolas, the musicians who played for free and our Scottish friends who chauffeured us during the week. Thank you all!

## Japan

**Correspondent Kaoru Oyama**  
[kaoru.oyama@mbe.nifty.com](mailto:kaoru.oyama@mbe.nifty.com)

In spring, Urawa Scottish Country Dance Group invited Mary Murray to teach and held a pre-40th Anniversary Weekend. She also taught some workshops for Saitama Branch and folk dancers and that met with a favourable reception.

On 3-5 May, Tokai Branch's Weekend was held at Hakone. Duncan Smith and Catherine Fraser from Australia were the guests. Some 70 participants were lucky to enjoy the live music, dancing and hot springs.

Tokyo Branch held a very successful Weekend School on 9-10 May at Nikko near the world heritage site, Toshogu. 103 participants learned dancing and the basic spirit of SCD under the energetic guidance of Atsuko Clement. They also celebrated the presentation of a Branch Award to Norikazu Arita from Gifu.

Saitama Branch will celebrate its 15th anniversary with a Weekend on 28-29 November at Nikko featuring Iain and Helen Russell, Iain MacPhail and Andrew Knight.





*Yoshiki Oyama teaching pas de basque to students at Kyoto University*

Preparations for a full Teaching Certificate course under the joint sponsorship of all Japanese Branches in May 2016 have started with the Japan Examination Committee. We are sure that producing newly qualified teachers will give new power to our SCD world.

Most teachers are facing dancers aging or are having difficulty in teaching folk dancers using the RSCDS method. We should keep up our efforts to encourage young people to dance SCD with its good points like teamwork and courtesy.

## New Zealand

**Correspondent Sue Lindsay**

[wee\\_davy@xtra.co.nz](mailto:wee_davy@xtra.co.nz)

On Saturday 25 July 2015, Iain Boyd was presented with a RSCDS New Zealand Branch award at one of his dance parties where a group of his friends were gathered to try some of his recently devised dances. (See photo.)

Recently, the Junior Associate Members (JAMs) held their bi-yearly camp just outside of Matamata in the Waikato/Bay of Plenty region. This was the 10th New Zealand JAM Camp and had 79 registered JAMs, accompanied by 33 adults with 5 teachers, 3 musicians and 7 committee members of which 2 were JAM members.

The weekend of the 10 -12 July 2015 was one of the coldest in Matamata for many



*Iain Boyd with his Branch Award awarded by New Zealand Branch*

years so the JAMs did what all dancers love to do, they danced and they danced. On Friday afternoon 14 candidates were examined for their medal tests and in the evening the Opening Night dance was held. This enabled the JAMs to catch up with old friends and to meet new ones.

Teachers for the weekend were Susanna van der Gulik who had danced in the Waikato/Bay of Plenty region as a JAM and now lives in Wellington; Katherine Hoskyn from Auckland who has taught many young dancers; Antanas Procuta from the Waikato/Bay of Plenty region; Cairistiona Tait from Melbourne, Australia who came with high expectations for her class and she wasn't disappointed; and Lynne Scott who took music sessions with each class. Three musicians provided music for the classes – Ruth Budden, Virginia Mathieson and Lynne Hudson. Classes were held in the mornings and on Saturday afternoon all boarded one of three buses and headed off to Hobbiton where part of the Lord of the Rings films were shot – very enjoyable but very cold!

Saturday night the band Bourach Mor provided the music and adult dancers from the Waikato/Bay of Plenty region came to dance with the JAMs attending the camp. Sunday lunchtime came and it was time to say goodbye to all the friends the JAMs had met, leaving them looking forward to Summer School in Auckland at the end of the year and the next JAM camp in 2017 in the Wellington region.

## North America West Coast

**Correspondent Roberta Gotfried**

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While dancers here are in the midst of commemorating 50 or more years of SCD on the West Coast of North America, we also realize that there are many dancers who would not recognize those early days. Our younger dancers have been busy and two events for Youth Dancers were held recently.

Youth Weekend West is an annual dance weekend held since 2003 on the west coast of North America. In 2015 the event was held in Victoria, BC, Canada from 1-3 May and the workshop was attended by 32 young dancers. The weekend consists of

a ceilidh, a ball, Scottish country dancing workshop classes and elective classes. This year the SCD workshop classes were taught by Louise McGillivray and Gordon Robinson and lovely music was provided for the ceilidh by Mary Ross and for the ball by The Tartan Players. The workshop participants chose between swing dancing and Morris dancing for their elective classes. In 2016 Youth Weekend West will be held in Seattle, Washington and details will be posted on the website [www.youthweekendwest.com](http://www.youthweekendwest.com) as they are available.

Further south in Santa Rosa California, the first Santa Rosa Youth Workshop and Ball was held on 11 July. The idea for the event arose during the Asilomar weekend in 2014. If you have attended Asilomar you will not forget the set of young people at the end of the weekend dancing Petronella and Magic of Merrill in Merrill Hall. Those young dancers had the idea to host a youth dance event and they made it happen.

It was a small event -- two classes of one set each taught by Bruce Herbold and Mary McQuilliams. For the ball the attendance blossomed to about 5 sets with dancers of all ages coming from around the San Francisco Bay area. The entire event was planned and executed by the young dancers. Music was provided by Ron Wallace (recorder/ bagpipes), Gary Thomas (piano), Eric levins (cello / bass) and James MacQueen (fiddle). Ann Rodier, one of the event organizers, and James MacQueen – both youth dancers and musicians – took turns fiddling and dancing throughout the Ball. Young teachers from the San Francisco branch briefed at the Ball, and a barbecue completed the successful day. We are looking forward to more events like these!

## Russia

**Correspondent Maria Tsvetoukhina**

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Three days of February public holidays gave Russian dancers an opportunity to come to Saint Petersburg again to meet and get acquainted with Anselm Lingnau, an enthusiastic teacher of the Frankfurt SCD Club and a pianist, a dance deviser and a composer, who has already published three books of dances and tunes. He also runs [www.strathspey.org](http://www.strathspey.org) (a social networking site for Scottish country dancers) and currently serves on the RSCDS Membership Services Committee. During classes of different levels Anselm taught nearly twenty challenging and interesting dances, including one specially devised for the weekend and Anselm's first visit to Russia. It's a strathspey Nevsky Prospect, named after the main thoroughfare of Saint Petersburg. Anselm dedicated it 'to the dancers in St Petersburg, who invited him to teach a workshop'. The first class of the last day of the weekend was aimed at choreography and in an hour and a





*Dancers at the annual dance weekend in Victoria BC, Canada in May*

half a volunteer demonstration team of 16 dancers learned and performed a new dance and Anselm unveiled some secrets of a display dance creation.

Spring months were rich in exciting events held by **RSCDS Moscow Branch** in cooperation with Shady Glen School. The participants of a traditional Moscow Spring Ball enjoyed dancing and live music, provided by Anatoly Isaev and Vladimir Volkov, in the very warm and friendly atmosphere of St. Andrews Anglican Church. During the interval the dancers admired the music wonderfully performed by young students of the Central music school (the P.I. Tchaikovsky Moscow State Conservatory), playing the harp and violin. In May Nizhny Novgorod hosted the 3rd Spring School, short in duration but full of events. Participants came from across Russia from Moscow to Vladivostok and from Murmansk to Krasnodar. Over five days, teachers (Helen Russell, Lindsey Ibbotson, Mylene Fraser, Sergey Alferov) and dancers from all over Russia enjoyed classes in Scottish country dancing, Highland dancing and Ladies' step. Newcomers were encouraged to join more experienced dancers at Social and Ceilidh dancing and everyone, participants or spectators, enjoyed the Ball, attended Highland dancing, SOBHD competitions, and supported display teams from Moscow, Cheboksary, Nizhny Novgorod, Krasnodar and Perm at the Dance Festival. Four candidates had a chance to take the Unit 5 course with Helen Russell as a tutor and successfully passed the Teacher's Certificate Part II exams. UKA exams also took place.



*Dancers from across Russia listen intently at the 3rd Spring School in May*

Nizhny Novgorod passed on the baton of spring schools to the next city and in June this year's candidates, having gained full certificates, welcomed fellow dancers to Cheboksary to take part in a Scottish weekend with a parade, workshops, social dancing, sightseeing, boat and pedalo reels of three across Cheboksary Bay.

On 3rd October 2015, **RSCDS Moscow Branch** and the St Andrews Church are pleased to invite friends and fellow-dancers again to celebrate the Branch's 10th anniversary.

## South Africa

**Correspondent Heather Hodgson**  
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Dancers from both the **RSCDS Cape Town** and **Pretoria Branches** converged in the coastal town of Knysna in February for the inaugural Knysna Celtic Festival. It was a great weekend of dancing, piping, highland games and a concert. We got the chance to share the joy of Scottish country dancing with two demonstrations and technically we brought traffic to a halt when we marched with the pipe bands through the main street, which caused the national freeway to be closed! We danced in a brewery at the ceilidh on the Friday night - yes, everyone had a hop in their step!

**Pretoria Branch** has been holding regular socials including a successful winter social



*Members of Pretoria group with the banner preparing to march through the main street.*

which featured the locally devised medley 'City of Christchurch' on the programme.

There have quite a few dancing events in **Cape Town** since the last report to fill our dancing diaries. These included a social to mark the end of the branch introductory and intermediate courses, Tartan Day Dance, Mandela Day dance and the 58th Birthday party of the Somerset West Club. It was a delight to see three generations of the Campbell family in the same set enthusiastically dancing 'Duke of Perth' at the Somerset West party, giving us hope that dancing will continue for many years to come in the fairest Cape.

We have also enjoyed hosting visitors from Japan, USA, Australia and the UK. Tom Kerr taught us some of his dances and challenging new formations from his book during a short holiday in Cape Town and we were introduced to a local favourite dance 'Gordon's Cider Press' by our American visitors. A dancing highlight for many was when Morag Napier was a guest teacher at a Bergvliet Club class and taught us 'Napier's Index' while Keith, in whose honour the dance was devised, organised the sound.

Among other events the next few months will see us holding our annual Women's Day dance and dancing the 'Road to McGregor' for a Spring ceilidh to be hosted by the local club in the country village of McGregor a few hours drive from Cape Town.

Many of us had a memorable experience with the Ayrshire Fiddle Orchestra during their concert tour to South Africa in July. After all, it is not every day that one gets to dance 'Dashing White Sergeant' and the 'Gay Gordons' backed by an entire youthful orchestra. It reminded us how much we miss out on with having to rely on recorded music for classes and socials.

We'd be delighted if you followed us on Twitter [@RSCDSCapeTown](https://twitter.com/RSCDSCapeTown) and [@RSCDSPretoria](https://twitter.com/RSCDSPretoria).

## USA East Coast

**Correspondent Eilean Yates**  
[edgyates@gmail.com](mailto:edgyates@gmail.com)

This has been a very busy and exciting summer for dancing in the South East. The 2015 TAC Summer School and the Teachers' Conference/AGM weekend were held at Longwood University, Farmville, Virginia situated about one hour from Richmond. Deirdre Bark, Keith Bark, Barbara Youngman and Eilean Yates headed the committee for the Teachers' Weekend. Fiona Miller, Summer School Director, and her team of Sandy Gallamore, Gail Michener and Caroline Jimenez did a wonderful job leading the week-long school. Sue Porter came over from Scotland and was joined by Robert McOwen, Terry Harvey and Rebecca Blackhall-Peters as the teaching staff. Neil Barron also made the trip across





Some of the group after the night's dancing in Mitchell's brewery

the ocean to join Kathy Fraser Collins, Fred Collins, Don Wood, Judi Nicolson and Etienne Ozorak to provide wonderful music for classes and for the evening events. With such a wealth of talent everyone attending had the opportunity to experience a truly wonderful week of dancing and music. In addition to all that, Ron Wallace guided thirteen aspiring teachers in a 3 day Basic Teaching Skills Course. Ron is, as all who have the pleasure of knowing him are well aware, a many-talented person and was the piper for the Grand March at both Balls.

These were not the only summer schools held this year. Scottish Pinewoods 2015, held in the woods of Plymouth MA, had some excellent teachers including Graham Donald from Leeds, UK, Kathy Giacoletti, and Linda Henderson. Barbara McOwen was the director of music. Assisting her

in providing the music were Anne Hooper, Tom Pixton, Terry Traub, Robert McOwen and Campbell Webster. Further South in the North Carolina mountains, Thistle School, founded and directed by Betty Lee Barnes, celebrated its thirty-fifth session. Jimmie Hill was the guest teacher from Scotland and was ably supported by Eilean Yates, Janet Lois Walker, Jeff Corrigan, J'Ina Middleton, Keith Bark, Deirdre Bark and, of course, Betty Lee herself. Luke and Adam Brady provided exciting music for the Ball, the evening dancing and for classes with Pete Campbell also playing for class work.

With all these week long events coming so close to each other it is hardly surprising that many of the dancers are now taking a well earned rest and looking forward to gearing up again for the fall season. How fortunate we have been to have a summer so filled with joyous music and dance.



Dancers attending the TAC AGM weekend

## Iberian Gathering in Madrid

Susana Page

The Iberian Gathering was held this year in Madrid in March. Once again it proved to be the perfect occasion to bring together not only dancers from the groups in Spain and Portugal, but also many dancers from ten other countries, including Abu Dhabi and Vancouver.

The Gathering was organised this time by the Schiehallion Group of Madrid. The teacher and MC for the weekend was Jessie Stuart – a long-time friend of the group – and the Craigellachie band, well known at the Iberian Gathering, contributed once more with their great and lively music.

Organizing the weekend seemed a huge task for a small group like Madrid, but as so often happens with SCD, enthusiasm, teamwork and a desire to do things the best possible way played a decisive role in the final outcome.

Finding a hotel in Spain with a timber-floored ballroom big enough for a large number of participants is practically impossible. In the past the group decided to hold the event away from Madrid but



even so, we always ended up dancing on marble or carpet, so you can imagine our joy when we found a hotel with a real wood dance floor, at an affordable price, and in Madrid of all places!

The weekend started with a welcoming drink. The hotel had agreed to keep the bar open for an hour each night after the dances, which added to the atmosphere and helped to foster friendships. Lastly, the sun was kind enough to shine the whole weekend, which was the icing on the cake!

Morning classes with Jessie were delightful, her lessons included, among other dances, *Jacqui Watsons Strathspey*, *The Courage Reel*

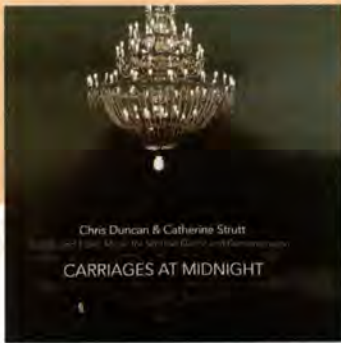
(with the Espagnole, how very appropriate!), *The Reel of the Gordon Highlanders*, *The Dowry Bride* (including photographs of the bride!) and *Findlater Castle*.

Compiling the dance programs for both nights did not present too big a problem for the organizing committee, as this is always decided in part by consensus among the Iberian groups. Each year, the groups submit 3 jigs, 3 reels and 3 strathspeys each to the organizing committee and the final decision rests with them. The resulting programmes are quite balanced in the end although not many 5 couple dances are included as most Iberian groups have only a few members.

The participants were pleased with a venue that was so close to the town centre; many of them took the opportunity to look around, have some tapas and enjoy the gorgeous weather after the morning classes.

We would like to thank all the participants who came and helped to make this great weekend possible.





## Carriages at Midnight

A new CD by Chris Duncan and Catherine Strutt

After a long wait, it has finally arrived, a Scottish Country dance CD from a dynamic duo from down under!

Things to consider when purchasing a new Scottish Country Dance CD:

- Who is playing?
- What are the dances on the CD?
- What tunes are used?
- How is the music played and arranged?
- How is the music recorded? (balance etc.)

Here's my response:

1) Catherine Strutt playing piano and Chris Duncan playing fiddle combine to produce an exciting tapestry of music that begs you to dance!

2) Of the 12 tracks, the first six have been previously recorded, but you might discover that you will want to switch to a new rendition! Of those, *The Inimitable Derek* and *The Trysting Place* have only a couple of recordings available. The real surprise for me was the inclusion of *The New Rigged Ship*. It has been recorded so many times and yet with one listening, it will be getting plenty of use in the future. *The Nurseryman*, *Anna Holden's Strathspey* and *Catch the Wind* round out the list of previously recorded dances. Then the new material: *Alasdair's Reels* is an 8 x 32 set of Alasdair Fraser tunes and will be an extremely popular set of reels to pep up an evening. Dr. Neil S. MacLeod opens with another Alasdair Fraser tune and continues with traditional tunes that give us another wonderful set of strathspeys for that "any good" category. *The Elusive Muse* is a three times through jig by Tim Wilson of the San Francisco Branch RSCDS. There are two demonstration sets on this CD that will be very helpful for those groups without musicians to support their performances. They include dance on/off and introductions to each rhythm change. The CD concludes with *Auld Lang Syne* and a Polka.

3) There is a delicious assortment of traditional and modern tunes! The tune choices are great for dancing

4) The playing is terrific with inventive lead tunes. Scottish country dance musicians sometimes "spice up" music with the employment of devices from other dance forms. On this CD that is kept to a minimum with the exception of contra dance style of piano, especially on reels. Chris and Catherine are masters of their instruments and together produce a sound that ranges from restrained to explosive. It might take more than one hearing to get the bow and curtsey for *The Inimitable Derek*, but it is a nice change and surprise!

5) This is a very piano-strong recording and to this listener, more fiddle in the mix would have been more satisfying.

This recording makes me want to teach these dances again! I enjoyed the CD and recommend it!

Ron Wallace, San Francisco Branch

## The Leeds Golden Collection CD Neil Barron and his SCD Band

A brief appreciation from a fellow musician.

It's not often I sit down and listen to a disc of dance tunes from end to end. I find it too difficult to suppress the urge to get up and dance. Alone, and amongst the living room furniture, that is just too frustrating.

So I was surprised that what I had intended as a toe-dipping session of short snippets from Neil's latest recording for *The Leeds Golden Collection*, turned out to be almost an hour of happy listening calling for the exercise of much self-control – just a little involuntary foot tapping and only an occasional travelling step foray around the armchairs. After a cup of tea and a brief rest I played it through again just to make sure my initial assessment was accurate.

And it was. This must surely be the best CD Neil and his band have ever produced.

As bands go it is one of the biggest, with six accomplished players – sadly, a number rarely to be heard at most club events. The result is a very pleasing, full, homogenous sound. The balance is excellent and the disc has been well engineered by Stuart Hamilton at Castlesound Studios. The piano and drums are pleasantly discreet and the inclusion of Bill Craib's double bass gives the overall sound an enhanced depth with very little loss of clarity. Alasdair MacLeod on second box shows good

judgement on the weight of that off-beat emphasis so essential to the rhythm of the music which gives us all such a buzz, and I particularly enjoyed Marie Fielding's violin playing. She shows such a strong sense of rhythm and her intonation is faultless, blending with the accordion in a way we do not often hear. Usually there is either too much fiddle or none at all. With all due respect to Neil I feel that he might have let her have her head a little more often. The opportunity of hearing such fiddle playing in Scottish country dance music does not come too frequently.

Neil is at his best throughout and never drops a shoe. He leads well and his playing, without being too intrusive, has great clarity and dominates just as it should. In particular I found the music for the strathspey, *Candyfloss* and the reel *Jovial Jack* most enjoyable and invigorating.

There will rarely, if ever, be agreement on tempi – it's all far too subjective – so I will leave you free to make up your own minds. For me they are here spot on. But this is a CD to be listened to as well as danced to, and all concerned in its production are to be congratulated.

Rodney Mount

## The Leeds Golden Collection

The Leeds Golden Collection provides variety and a good mix of three, four and eight times through dances, suitable for all levels of dancers. The dances also provide differing formations which are appropriate for the experienced and the inexperienced. *Charles Ogden's Jig* is suitable for dancers learning corners followed by reels of three with their corners. By contrast *Golden Arc* is an interesting dance but quite challenging and more suitable for advanced dancers. *Jacqui Watson's Strathspey* includes a variety of reels and set and rotate for three couples making it interesting and attractive. *All the Eights* is a good teaching dance and again provides an excellent example of a variety of reels within one dance. *A Twinkle in his Eye* could be regarded as a good display dance incorporating a four couple set and link. And a dance that will appeal to younger dancers is *Nifty Ninety* which is fun, demanding and not for the faint-hearted. All dancers will love *Scarborough Castle* which is a graceful strathspey including a two couple knot and corners pass and turn. A challenge for all is *The Cooper Children* which could become as popular as its forerunner *The Wee Cooper of Fife*.

Marilyn Watson, Bournemouth Branch



# Letters to the editor



Marilyn Healy

## Yet more dances

Dear Editor,

When I read Helen McGinley's opinion piece about the publication of new dances, I was astonished -- not because she defended their publication, as there must be some people who share her view, but because she seemed to ignore the essential point that there are too many dances. Of course, nearly all of the new dances are danceable, most are good, and some are really very good. But the same can be said for the thousands of dances that already exist. (I heard an estimate that there are ten thousand dances in the SCD tradition!). Given the published dances, we could devise an evening's dance programme a hundred or thousand times over, not repeat a dance and satisfy every possible requirement except the requirement that the dancers know the dance.

When I started dancing in the 1970s, it was unheard of to recap a dance at the local weekly club. Now it is usual to have a walk through at the weekly club and a recap at the special dance on the Saturday. These aids to the memory are all but essential. They take up time; the dance is spoilt because even experienced dancers don't quite remember the dance; and more sets break down because they lack a critical mass of knowledge. Sometimes MCs even go so far as to call the dance during the dance: if this abomination is necessary then the phrasing and execution of the dance must have been lost as phrasing and execution requires anticipation. The society went some way to recognising that the large number of dances was causing difficulties when it published its list of dances for a core repertoire in 2008.

My own theory is what the beginner finds impossible in week one, but doable after six months, the improver finds easy after two years and the experienced dancer finds downright boring after five years. There is therefore continual pressure to find something new. Our community has dealt with this by devising new figures and combinations of figures. However, this has become self-defeating. I propose another approach: namely to incorporate new steps - the traditions of highland dance and ladies step would be obvious sources.

Helen McGinley has a valid point in saying that SCD must be a living tradition: but for

the time being we need another way of expressing the creative urge.

*Kenneth Evans, Surrey*

Dear Editor,

I am sure that most dancers feel that we have too many books of new dances and it is not good for dancing in the long term. It therefore came as a surprise that at the last AGM there was a motion for a Publications Committee that I presume would produce yet more dance books. As the answer was "NO" to the idea it seemed quite out of order in the last Country Dancer for a member of the Membership Services Committee to submit and have published weak arguments for new publications.

It may be too late to stop Book 49 but anything beyond should be put on the back-burner until we decide the purpose and frequency of publications today. This is quite different to the situation when the Society started and did such a good job in publishing dances already being danced. Following the AGM is there still a mandate to publish?

Perhaps once the moratorium on publications has been lifted we could think about 'a History of Scottish Dance in a 100 dances' for publication in 2023!

*John Carswell*

## Won't You Join the Dance project

Dear Editor,

At first reading the article by Joseph Bell appears quite innovative. Technology is ever increasing in scope, and I do believe we should expand and grow, keep up with the times, continuously go forward trying new ideas.

One word of caution; in retrospect, turning to my own teaching experience through the years, we need to consider the impact on dancer confidence when they view "perfect" footwork and steps delivered by video. We used the Red Thistle Dancers video when it was first released, showing only the portion depicting feet and legs performing foot positions and steps, to a mixed class of dancers. Their reactions were almost immediate - I'll never be able to dance like that - why continue dancing (SCD) if that is what is expected! I hastened to explain (and wrote a newsletter article) that we all dance within our own physical abilities. I do not and will not "compare student's footwork to the footwork of a top dancer" under any circumstances.

Some of Bell's ideas are good and useful

for dancers learning/seeing a given dance and its progression. The existing animated YouTube video, Danciemations, shows dances from the side view and from over the top looking down, depicting each couple in a different colour is very helpful. Bell's ideas expand on this, with possible widening, more useful results.

Bottom line—I truly believe we all would do well by keeping in mind that Scottish country dancing is a Social Activity, encompassing people of all ages, including all abilities, being considerate, fair and equitable to everyone.

*Margaret (Marge) van Noos*

## Dundee Branch 90th anniversary

Dear Editor,

I read with interest the article regarding the above anniversary. My mother Elsie Robertson was a member of the branch in the 1950's. She was a member of the team called the Claverhouse Dancers, along with Isobel Tait, George Mechan, Betty Stevenson and Bill Clement. Other names have gone from memory. She also gained her Teacher's Certificate c.1954.

My main reason for writing is to say how many memories have surfaced of those early days. My grandmother and I were always given tickets to Kidd's Rooms in Lindsay Street, Dundee, to view the Annual Ball Grand March, Oh, the glamour of the ladies in floor length dresses, elbow length gloves, and the men in their kilts, all gliding over the floor to the magnificent music, such memories. The whole spectacle made a lasting impact, an amazing few hours for a wee Dundee lassie.

I am a member of the Inverness Branch of the RSCDS. Having come back to dancing after quite a few years and can now understand how much my mother enjoyed being part of the Society.

*Elsbeth Gimson (Elsbeth Robertson)*

## Lady Dancers' Dress

Hello Editor,

Your last issue invited Letters to the editor so here goes.

Sometimes, at Scottish dance events, especially where the "general public" are present, I feel uneasy about how "un-Scottish" an event can look. All too often, if it were not for a couple of gents in kilts it would not "look Scottish" at all. The ladies - always in the vast majority - hardly ever seem to feature tartan in their clothing for the night. Is there any reason for ladies



avoiding "a touch of tartan?" Or is it just my limited experience of Scottish dance events?

The dem team photos all have tartan sashes or panels in their outfits, as did the traditional Long Whites. Other teams were shown wearing non-tartan clothing, but with a tartan sash trailing. So ladies clearly have no great problem about being seen in tartan. I really am wondering if there is any actual reason for the lack of tartan in their non-team clothing.

I am sure that there is neither practical reason nor lack of ingenuity preventing ladies from incorporating some tartan into any item in their wardrobe. So, please, whether as teams or individuals, may we ask the ladies to increase the visibly Scottish element of our gatherings by wearing a touch of tartan?

*Gerry Jones, Liverpool Branch.*

Dear RSCDS,

I have been a Scottish country dancer since the 70s (or maybe late 60s), member of RSCDS since then, and former member of the MacLeod Dancers. I was initially attracted to the white dress and tartan sash that was the traditional "uniform" of lady dancers, be they on a team or attending a special dance.

What happened to that? To me, to see male dancers all traditionally dressed and their female partners looking like they walked in off the street (sans ghillies to boot) and joined in, is disappointing to say the least. I have mostly Scottish blood in my background (the others also being other Celtic), it makes me very sad.

*Patricia Anderson, Tucson AZ*

## S-Locomotion

Dear Editor,

At the recent AGM we were invited to dance the strathspey from book 41, which was incorrectly announced as "Ess-Locomotion". The deviser, the late Ken Jones of Sheffield Branch wrote this dance in honour of our Branch President, Paul Bond. Ken knew that Paul had a passionate interest in steam engines and assumed, wrongly as it happens, that these were the type which hauled trains; hence "Locomotion". However, he realised that by preceding this word with the letter "S", he could point out that Paul, always a stirrer, but now getting elderly, caused, wherever he went, a "slow commotion"!

*Joyce and Hugh Porteous, Sheffield Branch.*

## E-Book Publishing

Dear Editor,

I write to you to endorse the medium of e-books as the future in dance publications. The International Branch of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society released

a book of new dances this spring, entitled **World Wide Weavings**. The book contains 14 dances written by IB members from all over the world. The dances in this book are the result of an invitation sent to all Branch members to submit original dances to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the formation of the Branch.

The IB Committee decided to try e-publishing because we have a worldwide membership and we wanted to overcome the high cost of postage. Publishing our book by this method allows anyone to order it online and receive the book either as a download (electronically) or have it mailed in paperback format to their home. The benefits of e-publishing include the removal of work and costs to mail printed copies.

In the spirit of cost cutting and optimal use of current technology, perhaps the Society should consider an e-book format for its future publications?

*Fred DeMarse, International Branch*

## Terminology

Dear Editor,

I trust correspondence is still open on the subject of 'the' formation in 'Best Set in the Hall', 'Peter White' etc (Overheard on the Web, SCDer, April 2015).

I agree that it is not sensible to call a formation after the dance it first appears in (as you say Petronella turns & Inveran reels being the exception). Too many dancers worry that if they do not know the dance being referred to they will not cope with the formation.'

Having devised several dances using the formation under discussion, I decided to call it 'Corners Pass & Rotate' - CPR for short. In my opinion that name does give an indication of what the formation consists. Also it fits in with the RSCDS naming of other corner formations - Corners Pass & Turn being one.

In my teaching I have found that dancers grasp the formation in question more easily if taught it first in strathspey tempo, before moving to the faster tempi. In reel & jig time, some who have not had the benefit of learning in the slower tempo can become a case for CPR - NOT 'Corners Pass & Rotate' but 'Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation'.

On another matter, I would be interested in readers' views on the descriptions used when dancers are on the 'other' side of the set, i.e. after set & cross. I have heard many teachers use 'wrong' side, but I ask how can it be the wrong side when one is meant to be there? Some teachers use 'opposite' side but if dancers start on their own side of the dance, then set & cross to the 'opposite' side, when they set & cross back to own side, technically they are on the opposite side again! I can foresee difficulty with

any description when the dance starts with couples on the 'other' side of the set, i.e. 'Blooms of Bon Accord'. I always use 'partner's' & 'own' side. What say you out in reader-land?

Yours in dance

*Frances Wallace, Melbourne, Australia*

## T-shirt competition



*Under 12's category - Megan Pescod*

There were two winners in our competition to design a T-shirt, announced in Issue 20: Christine Clede from Houston, Texas and Megan Pescod from Fort William, Scotland who won the under 12 category. Congratulations to both our winners and thank you to everybody who submitted a design, it was very difficult to pick the winners.

The winning designs were printed on T-Shirts and sold at Summer School. The winners received a gift certificate for the online shop, some great gifts, and of course bragging rights for years to come!



*Competition winner - Christine Clede*



# Obituaries



## Dr. Alastair MacFadyen past president of The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society

**Born:** Carlisle 1936

**Died:** Glasgow 2015

Alastair MacFadyen was unique. Anyone who knew him will agree. He was a distinguished figure in the world of Scottish country dancing and many people benefited from his unwavering encouragement, guidance, support and friendship.

With the exception of Dr Jean Milligan, the co-founder of the Society, no one has made a more significant contribution to the work of the RSCDS. He undertook, with total commitment and distinction many roles in the Society: teacher; tutor; examiner; archivist; Summer School Director; Chairman and, finally, President.

Alastair travelled the world as an ambassador, teaching, examining and speaking extensively about Scottish country dancing. He was always willing to share his knowledge and was interested in people, listening carefully to what they said.

Following university in Liverpool, Alastair spent 3 years in Spain, studying for his doctorate in history. Earlier, as an 18-year-old, in 1954, Alastair first made the journey to St Andrews, to the Society's annual Summer School, where he met Miss Milligan. This was a journey he was to make nearly every summer for the rest of his life.

Alastair said, "My dancing fate was sealed in 1966 when I came to Glasgow to join the staff of Jordanhill College of Education". He joined Glasgow branch of the Society, saying later, "I knew so many people there, it was more like coming home!" From then on he devoted much of his free time, knowledge, and boundless energy and enthusiasm to promoting Scottish country dancing. He was asked to join various committees and was soon appointed to the Executive Council of the Society.

Alastair was elected Chairman of Glasgow branch in 1980. He was involved in all aspects of branch activities and organised several concerts under the title 'A Glasgow Flourish – A Miscellany of Dance, Song, Verse and Music'.

Alastair accepted an invitation to become the Society's first Honorary Archivist in 1978. He relished this opportunity. As a student of history he was taught that 'an archive is the essence of a nation's heritage' and he believed this also applied to an organisation like the RSCDS. Unsurprisingly, Alastair recently gifted his personal archive collection to the RSCDS.

Alastair compiled biographies for the Society's co-founders. In 1983, with Florence Adams, he published 'First Lady of the Dance' for Miss Milligan, and in 1988 he compiled 'An Album for Mrs Stewart'. In 1985 Alastair was elected Chairman of the Society.

Alastair was an excellent teacher, although modest and self-effacing. He would always say he was very fortunate to have experienced the inspirational teaching of Miss Milligan and others who were equally gifted. What gave him most personal satisfaction was his teaching contribution to the RSCDS. He was convinced that teacher training was the best way to ensure the future of Scottish country dancing.

Throughout his life Alastair paid tribute to musicians for their invaluable contribution to Scottish country dancing. He delighted in what Scott Skinner referred to as 'the heavenly partnership of music and dance'. Alastair was a superb, elegant Scottish country and highland dancer, and he derived great pleasure from dancing socially.

An emissary of the RSCDS, Alastair represented the Society with great dignity and taught in many countries including extensive tours of Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United States. No one could be more inspirational, charismatic and vital than Alastair when teaching, lecturing, giving a talk or merely telling a story. He was a great raconteur!

While he enjoyed travelling abroad, Alastair was always happy to come home to his cottage on Lochfyneside and his beloved garden.

In the 1990's Alastair was appointed Director of the Society's Summer School at St Andrews University, and in 1996 he was awarded the RSCDS Scroll of Honour.

In July 2007 Alastair was invited by Her Majesty the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh to the Palace of Holyrood House to attend a Royal Reception which

acknowledged individuals who had made 'a significant contribution to Scottish life and culture'. Alastair attended another Royal Reception at the Palace in 2013. This event was to present Her Majesty with a bound copy of the Society's publication of a book of dances to celebrate The Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

In November 2007 Alastair was invited to become the Honorary President of the Society and served as President with distinction for 6 years until, with great sadness, he retired due to ill-health in November 2013.

During his 79 years, Alastair touched the lives of so many; always the perfect gentleman, a unique combination of wisdom and wit!

Alastair will be greatly missed. However, those privileged to have known him will remember him with affection and respect for his outstanding ability.

*Anita and Stuart Mackenzie, and  
Johan MacLean*

**Editor's Note:** Anita Mackenzie interviewed Alastair in a film about his dancing life entitled: *Interview with Dr Alastair MacFadyen* which is available on the RSCDS web-site. He was also interviewed by Jimmie Hill for *Scottish Country Dancer*, Issue No. 6 in 2008. Copies of back issues of the magazine are available on the web-site.

A Memorial Dance is also being planned jointly by the Society and Glasgow branch in Glasgow in February 2016. Details will be announced on the RSCDS and Glasgow Branch web-sites.

## Norah Dunn (1913–2015) Helensburgh Branch

Norah trained as a PE Teacher and Physio-therapist at Dunfermline College and gained her RSCDS Teacher's certificate in 1934.

Norah taught various classes in the Helensburgh area and in 1943 she started a children's class, still active today. While teaching the class she wrote a book 'Catch 'em Young' with tips and ideas for teaching children to dance. When she was leaving Helensburgh district in 1975 the children of the class devised a dance for her 'A Jig for Mrs Dunn', published in the Children's Book in 1981.

In 1952 she played a leading part in the revival of the Dunbartonshire West Branch, which had closed during the war and was revived as Helensburgh and District Branch. The Branch held its first "Junior Dance" in 1957 for children aged 5-16 years and in 1958 she was the first teacher of the branch's Couples Class, both of which are still running.

Norah taught at Summer School from 1967 and became an Examiner in 1974. She

*Continued on page 31*



# Day School Diary

## October to February 2017

Compiled by John Sturrock. For more information about these events please refer to branch or club web sites. Issue 22 will cover day and residential weekend schools, workshops plus festivals from May 2016. Please send details to [john.m.sturrock@btinternet.com](mailto:john.m.sturrock@btinternet.com).

### Oct 15

- 17 London Branch, Day & Musicians' School, London, England  
*Joan Desborough, Deb Lees, Antoine Rousseau, Samantha Schad, Jeremy Hill, Barbara Manning, Judith Muir, Andrew Nolan, Nicol McLaren*
- 17 Thistle Club, Day & Musicians' School, Eindhoven, Netherlands  
*Fiona Mackie, Robert Whitehead, Danelaw Band*
- 17 - 18 Nova Scotia Branch, Fall Workshop, Halifax, NS, Canada  
*Charlie Inglis, Colleen Putt*
- 22 - 25 Kuckucksnest, Autumn Course, Schlüchtern, Germany  
*Carola Fischer, Silke Grosholz*
- 23 - 25 Houston & District Branch, Workshop & Ball, Houston, Texas, USA  
*Robert McOwen, Judi Nicolson, Lisa Scott*
- 24 Roxburgh, Selkirk & Peebles Branch, Day School, Melrose, Scotland  
*Anne Smyth, Gordon Brown, Stuart Anderson*
- 31 Sheffield Branch, Day School, Hope, Derbyshire, England  
*Jean Martin, Phill Jones*
- 31 Monklands Branch, Day of Dance, Airdrie, Scotland  
*John Johnston, George Meikle*

### Nov 15

- 06 - 08 RSCDS AGM Weekend, Perth, Perthshire, Scotland  
*Angela Young, Jimmie Hill, Frank Thomson, Mo Rutherford, Luke Brady, David Cunningham*
- 06 - 08 SCD Weekend, Chemnitz, Germany  
*Tobias Hüniger, Marie Stanzel, Iva Ryskova, Silke Grosholz*
- 06 - 08 Northern Virginia Branch, 32nd Argyle Weekend, Alexandria, VA, USA  
*Linda Henderson, Ellen Teres, Dave Wiesler, David Knight, Dan Emery*
- 13 - 15 Croydon & District Branch, Weekend School, Eastbourne, England  
*Mervyn Short*
- 13 - 15 San Francisco Branch, 50th Anniversary Asilomar Weekend, CA, USA  
*Jimmie Hill, Ruth Jappy, Elaine Brunken, Alan Twigg, Jeff Corrigan, Judi Nicolson, Andy Imbrie, Fiddlesticks & Ivory*
- 14 Bristol Branch, Day School & Musicians' School, Bristol, England  
*Deb Lees, Judith Muir, Ian Robertson*
- 14 - 15 SD Cote d'Azur, Winter Workshop, Mougins, Cannes, France  
*Di Rooney, Luke Brady*
- 15 Berkhamstead S&R Club, Day School, Hemel Hempstead, England  
*John & Ruby Wilkinson, Catriona Bennett, Ken Martlew, Barbara Manning, Chris Walker*
- 18 - 22 Kuckucksnest, Advanced November Course, Schlüchtern, Germany  
*David Queen, Stefan Schatz*

- 21 RSCDS Youth Workshop, Cumnor, Oxford, England  
*Raphaëlle Orgeret, Alice Stainer, Chris Oxtoby, Jeremy Hill*
- 21 Norwich Branch, Day School, Norwich, Norfolk, England  
*Les Lambert, Bob Shakespeare*
- 28 - 29 Zurich SCD Club, Weekend & Ball, Zurich, Switzerland  
*Pat Houghton, Muriel Johnstone, Ian Robertson*
- 28 - 30 Saitama Branch, 15th Weekend School, Nikko, Japan  
*Ian & Helen Russell, Andrew Knight, Iain MacPhail*

### Dec 15

- 04 - 06 Leeds Branch, Weekend School, Malhamdale, Yorkshire, England  
*Rachel Wilton, Phill Jones*
- 04 - 06 Dancing-in-Portugal, Weekend School, Curia, Portugal  
*Jamie Berg, James Gray, Sarah-Jane Summers*
- 18 - 20 Northern Italy Branch, Workshop & Ball, Bologna, Italy  
*Bill Zobel, Muriel Johnstone*
- 28 - 05/01 59th New Zealand Summer School, Mt Wellington, Auckland, New Zealand  
*Kathryn Deroles, Dianne Bradshaw, Beverley Young, Ruth Budden, Rebecca Blackhall-Peters, Maureen Robson, Debbie Roxburgh, Lois McEwan, Wayne McConnel*

### Jan 16

- 15 - 17 Falkirk Branch, Crieff Hydro Weekend, Crieff, Perthshire, Scotland  
*Marian Anderson, David Oswald, Gordon Shand*
- 16 London Branch, Musicians' Ceilidh Workshop, London, England  
*Ian Robertson*
- 30 Chester Caledonian SCDS, Workshop, Penyffordd, Wales  
*Trish Reid*
- 30 Leeds Branch, Musicians' Workshop, Leeds, England  
*Keith Smith*

### Feb 16

- 05 - 07 York & N.Humberside Branch, Weekend School, Harrogate, England  
*Alasdair Brown*
- 05 - 08 Kuckucksnest, February Course, Schlüchtern, Germany  
*Silke Oexmann, Wolfgang Müller*
- 06 Inverness Branch, Day School, Inverness, Scotland  
*Andrew Nolan, Jennifer Wilson*
- 06 - 07 Swilcan SCD Group, Nunspeet Weekend, Netherlands  
*Gary Coull, Margaret Lambourne, Matthew MacLennan, Màrtainn Skene*
- 12 - 14 Hawaii Branch, 38th Aloha Winter Weekend, Honolulu, Hawaii  
*Linda Henderson, Humuhumunukunukuapua'a*
- 19 - 21 Edmonton Branch, 46th Weekend Workshop & Ball, Edmonton, AL, Canada  
*Sharon Barker, Ruth Jappy, Linda Henderson, Ian Muir, Judi Nicolson*

- 19 - 21 Isle of Wight, Weekend School, Shanklin, Isle of Wight, England  
*Anne Smyth, Antoine Rousseau, Robert Mackay, Ian Muir, Craigellachie*
- 20 Oxfordshire Branch, Day School, Oxford, England  
*Pat Houghton, Eric Finley, Dennis Tucker, Barbara Manning, Jeremy Hill*
- 20 Freiburg SC Dancers, Workshop & Ball, Frieburg, Germany  
*Avril & David Quarrie, Sue Bollans, Edwin Werner, Ilona Stitz, Christine Moos*
- 21 - 26 RSCDS Winter School, Atholl Palace, Pitlochry, Scotland  
*Janet Johnston, Ron Wallace, John Wilkinson, Heather Cowan, Ian Muir, Jim Lindsay, Bill Ewan, Ian Robertson, John Renton*
- 27 Cheshire Branch, Day School, Tarporley, Cheshire, England  
*Catherine Livsey*

### Mar 16

- 03 - 06 Kuckucksnest, March Course, Schlüchtern, Germany  
*Anika Lange, Edwin Werner*
- 05 Somerset Branch, Day & Musicians' School, Somerton, Somerset, England  
*Helen Russell, Barbara Manning, George Meikle*
- 05 Birmingham Branch, ½ Day School, Selly Oak, Birmingham, England  
*Chris Dewhurst*
- 10 - 13 Kuckucksnest, Intermediate Spring Course, Schlüchtern, Germany  
*Carola Fischer, Silke Grosholz*
- 11 - 12 Lorn (Argyll) Branch, 55th Weekend School, Oban, Argyll, Scotland  
*William Williamson, Peter Shand, George Meikle, David Cunningham*
- 11 - 13 Bristol Branch, Dance Weekend, Dawlish Warren, Devon, England  
*Pat Houghton, Ian & Judith Muir*
- 11 - 13 22nd Iberian Weekend, Jerez de la Frontera, Spain  
*Sjoerd van Leersum, Marian Anderson*
- 12 BHS Border Branch, Day & Musicians' School, Fleet, Hants, England  
*Les Lambert, Andrew Nolan, David Hall*
- 12 Newcastle Branch, Day of Dance, Heddon-on-the-Wall, England  
*Ruby Wilkinson, Patricia Cass, Braes of Wansbeck*
- 18 - 19 St Giles SCD Club, Workshop & Ball, Calgary, Alberta, Canada  
*Donna Angus, Gordon Robinson, Irene Townshend*
- 18 - 19 Space Coast SC Dancers, 33rd Spring Fling, Cocoa Beach, Florida, USA  
*Sandy Gallamore*
- 19 Tunbridge Wells Branch, Day School, Paddock Wood, Kent, England  
*Paul Plummer, Joan Desborough, Lindsey Ibbotson*
- 24 - 28 Kuckucksnest, Advanced Easter Course, Schlüchtern, Germany  
*Janet Johnston, Anselm Lingnau*



26 - 28 Paris Branch, International Weekend, Vichy, France  
*Graham Donald, Muriel Johnstone, Ian Robertson, Jim Lindsay*

#### Apr 16

- 01 - 03 Helensburgh Branch, 38th Weekend School, Helensburgh, Scotland *Heather Cowan, Màrtainn Skene, Marian Anderson, David Oswald*
- 01 - 03 Leeds Branch, Weekend School, Scarborough, Yorkshire, England *Graham Donald, George Meikle*
- 02 Vancouver Island SCD Society, Workshop, Victoria, BC, Canada *Linda Mae Dennis*
- 08 - 10 Lyon Branch, 30th Anniversary Weekend School, Lyon, France *Roberta Gotfried, Fred DeMarse, Sharlene Penman, Lynne Scott, John Roxburgh*
- 08 - 10 Cornwall Branch, Residential Weekend, Newquay, Cornwall, England *Duncan Brown*
- 15 - 17 RSCDS Spring Fling, Edinburgh, Scotland
- 15 - 17 Dancing in New Places, Weekend School, Nikko, Japan *Pat Houghton, Yoshiki Oyama, James Gray, Kana Otake*
- 22 - 24 SCD Weekend, Oldenburg, Germany *Bill Zobel, Muriel Johnstone*
- 23 Argyll SD Group, Day School, Crowthorne, Berkshire, England *Maureen Haynes, Tom Ibbotson, Robert Mackay, Chris Oxtoby*
- 23 Cheltenham Branch, Day School, Cheltenham, England *Helen Russell, Keith Anderson*
- 23 Leeds Branch, Highland Workshop, Leeds, England *Catherine Livsey*
- 15 - 17 RSCDS Spring Fling, Edinburgh, Scotland
- 30 Brussels Dance Scottish, Day School & Dance, Kraainem, Belgium *Raphaëlle Orgeret, Luke Brady, Adam Brady*

*continued from page 29*

served on the Executive Council for many years and was awarded the Society Scroll in 1989. Norah was Chairman and later President of Helensburgh Branch. She will be sorely missed.

*Roy Bain*

#### Sadly missed...

##### Renée Campbell (1925-2015)

Renée danced with the Caledonian Society in Brussels in 1961 and took an instant liking to Scottish dancing. She started the Saint Andrews Church Scottish Country Dance in Brussels in 1973. Renée was always very welcoming towards new dancers and with patience and dedication she introduced many people to Scottish country dancing. In 2002, she was awarded the Scroll of Honour. We enjoyed her company as a teacher, dancer and a friend and we will always keep her fondly in our memory. *Anne Scobie-Power & Jette Rossen (for Brussels Dance Scottish)*

##### Ken Natrass, Winnipeg Branch

Well-known musician and leader of the band Scotch Measure. Ken played at SCD weekends across western Canada and at TAC and was tireless in arranging tunes to suit dances for workshop balls. We miss his gracious presence and his excellent musical skill. *Ron Krug*

##### Dorothy Rosemond, Sydney Branch (1917-2015)

Sydney Branch report, with great sadness, the passing of Dorothy Rosemond, the last surviving Branch founding member. Dorothy began SCD in 1936 and attended her last weekly class days before her death. She taught at many Branch and club classes as well as Girl Guide and school groups and was a hard working supporter of all Branch activities. At 98 years she was an amazing lady and will be fondly remembered by many as their first teacher.

##### Agnes Macmichael, West Lothian Branch

It is with great sadness we have to report the death in June 2015 of Agnes Macmichael. She was an enthusiastic member of the RSCDS, a branch member for 40 years and served as a teacher and committee member. After her family, dancing was Agnes' main passion. In recognition of her work she was presented with the Branch Award in 2013.

Agnes will be sadly missed and leaves a large gap in the dancing scene in the Lothians. *Marjorie MacRae*



**RSCDS San Francisco  
Asilomar Weekend**

**Save the Date  
October 28-30, 2016**

[asilomar.rscds-sf.org](http://asilomar.rscds-sf.org)



**SITUATION  
VACANT**

**Old Time Dance Tutor Required  
Dufftown Scottish Country Dance Club**

Jessie Stuart has decided to retire from teaching the old time dancing in Dufftown. Therefore we are on the lookout for a new tutor. This could either be an individual or a couple. We run one old time social each month (excluding December) and four dances a year.

If you are interested, or would like more information, please contact the club secretary Gary Coull on 01542) 888471 or on [garycoull@hotmail.com](mailto:garycoull@hotmail.com)

[www.dufftowndanceclub.com](http://www.dufftowndanceclub.com)



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