



The Reel

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Scottish country dancing - for fun, fitness and friendship

We wish all our readers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



Starting the new season in style

Top: A huge crowd turns out to enjoy the music and dancing in Kensington Gardens, 12 August 2023

Below left: Kensington Gardens dancing before the deluge, 26 August 2023

Below right: New Season dance with David Hall and his Band at St Columba's, 23 September 2023



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Issue 327 should be with UK based members by 24 February 2024 unless delayed in the post.

Contributions for Reel 327 should be sent to arrive by and preferably in advance of 14 January 2024 by email to editor@rscdslondon.org.uk

The opinions expressed by contributors in *The Reel* do not necessarily reflect the official position of the RSCDS, nor of the Branch.

From the Chair: Joanne Lawrence



I have always liked autumn. Ever since my first year at school, it has represented fresh starts, new opportunities, and the promise of good things to come. Ahead of the formal start of the 2023-24 season, RSCDS London enjoyed three fabulous afternoons of dancing in Kensington Gardens. We had over a hundred attendees on our first afternoon and an excellent number braved the rapidly approaching thunderstorm on the final day (it ended in a formidable deluge, but we got a lot of good dancing in first!) It has been wonderful to welcome several new dancers from those sessions to our regular classes and we look forward to dancing with them as the season progresses.

We did not achieve quite such good numbers at the official New Season dance on 23 September, despite the promise of great music from Dave Hall and his band. This seems a perennial issue and we are looking into how best to celebrate the new London dancing season in future years.

In the last edition of the *Reel*, I mentioned the planned changes to London Branch classes. These have got off to a very promising start and you can see more information (plus photos) on p5. I also mentioned our struggle to find a suitable venue for the London Branch Day School and Musicians' Workshop 2023. We have had to accept that it is just not meant to be this year. Once out of our usual October slot it was almost impossible to find a date that did not clash with another group. However, we have booked Maria Fidelis School for Saturday 19 October 2024 and look forward to relaunching this important event in style next season.

We are delighted that serTA is to run a Basic Skills teaching course in the New Year (see p13). This two day course aims to develop the skills needed to MC dance sessions and is a great opportunity for groups in London and the South-east to build expertise in this important area.

RSCDS London Branch was honoured to represent Scottish dance groups at a recent St Columba's Congregational away day. As part of a panel of representatives from different secular groups regularly meeting at St Columba's, we were able to express how important St Columba's is to the Scottish dancing community and to make connections with other groups. One outcome of this has been a request from a member of the congregation for children's classes and we hope to work with them to make this happen.

By the time you read this we will have enjoyed our Autumn Wednesday dance and many of us will have travelled to Glasgow for the RSCDS Autumn Gathering and AGM (see report on p11). Meanwhile, we will have danced and played music in groups throughout London, the South-east, and further afield. One of the joys of Scottish country dancing is welcoming visitors to our classes and events and being welcomed ourselves when we dance on our travels. I look forward to dancing with you at the London Christmas dance on 16 December and at our Burns ceilidh dance on 13 January 2024.

Branch Committee Report: Mel Rowland



The first committee meeting of the new season was held by Zoom on 1 September. Chair, Joanne Lawrence, welcomed new member, Wendy Morris, onto the committee, and thanked Richard Clarke for taking on the role of Vice Chair, following the resignation of Jim Cook at the AGM in June. She was pleased to announce that Margaret Moore, who had stepped down from her role as Classes Convenor, due to illness, was now able to resume committee involvement. The committee members voted to co-opt her.

Richard Clarke, in his role of Vice Chair, agreed to undertake a review of the Branch's policies. He will share any policies which need updating with the committee, for discussion at future meetings. Once approved by the members, the policies will be uploaded to our website.

Due to the current vacancy on the Committee for a Classes Convenor, Joanne presented the classes report and outlined the exciting changes planned for the 2023-24 season. A new venue, Maria Fidelis School located in Euston, will be used instead of Park Walk and several new classes will be held there: the monthly Fast-Paced Social class for Advanced/Very Advanced dancers; the monthly technique class for Intermediate dancers and the eight-week course for Beginners. The committee hoped that the central location of Maria Fidelis School will help to attract dancers from across London, and beyond, to the variety of courses being offered by the Branch. The booking of class teachers and musicians for the season is almost complete, and Joanne was pleased to announce that two new musicians, Heather Jeffery and Erica Banks, have agreed to join the Branch's pool of musicians.

Thanks to the hard work undertaken by Margaret Shaw, our Dances Convenor, the Branch dances for this term are all planned, with the musicians and MCs booked and the flyers printed. This season, it is London Branch's turn to organise the Combined Societies Dance. Committee members discussed the feasibility of holding the dance together with a musicians' workshop in spring 2024. The date and plans for the dance will be finalised shortly.

The final item on the agenda was the Branch's communications. Feedback on the new website has been extremely positive. Treasurer, Simon Wales, reported that more people were using the online links to pay for classes and branch membership and as a consequence the use of Paypal had been discontinued. The Branch continues to expand its use of social media platforms and new committee member, Wendy Morris, volunteered to support the Branch's publicity.

ROYAL
SCOTTISH
COUNTRY
DANCE
SOCIETY



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Objects of London Branch

To advance the education of the public in the London area in traditional Scottish country dancing, in particular by:

- preserving and furthering the practice of traditional Scottish country dances;
- providing or assisting in providing instruction in the dancing of Scottish country dances;
- promoting the enjoyment and appreciation of Scottish country dancing and music by any suitable means.

London Branch Matters

Membership and *The Reel* Subscription

As a member of RSCDS London Branch, you enjoy the following benefits: reduced rates at London Branch classes, dances and events; four issues per year of *The Reel*; 10% discount on items from the RSCDS online shop and two issues per year of the RSCDS magazine *Scottish Country Dancer*. UK Members wishing to pay by direct debit may do so by completing a payment mandate either by clicking on the appropriate link in the table to the right of this text (for electronic *Reel* readers) or by going to rscdslondon.org.uk/join-us Overseas members should use the methods outlined below.

The new rates for RSCDS membership through the London Branch are as follows:

Membership category	Junior 12-17 years	Young Adult 18-24 years	Adult 25 years +	Adult Joint (2) 25 years +	2nd Branch	<i>The Reel</i> only (subscription)
Electronic (<i>eReel</i>)	£17	£25	£30	£50	£4	£4
<i>The Reel</i> by post (UK)	£19	£27	£32	£54	£6	£6
<i>The Reel</i> by post (Europe)	£25	£33	£38	£66	£12	£12
<i>The Reel</i> by post (Rest of the World)	£28	£36	£41	£72	£15	£15

Membership may also be purchased by credit/debit card or by cheque payable to RSCDS London Branch by going to the same page. New members should also complete the membership application form here: rscdslondon.org.uk/join-rscds-london. Membership/subscription enquiries and cheque payments should be addressed to the Membership Secretary, Gaynor Curtis, 60 Bishops Wood, Woking GU21 3QB, 01483 721989, membership@rscdslondon.org.uk Any reader who receives a paper issue of *The Reel* may send their email address to Gaynor Curtis and receive an electronic copy too at no extra charge. Those receiving an electronic copy are asked not to pass this on, unless it is to someone they feel might like to help support the Branch by becoming a member or subscribing.

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Christmas Dance

Saturday 16 December 2023
7.00 - 10.30pm
Doors open at 6.30pm
St Columba's Church, Pont Street
SW1X 0BD

Strathallan

The Happy Meeting 8x32 J
The College Hornpipe 8x32 R
Miss Eleanor..... 3x32 S
Muirland Willie 8x32 J
Clutha Sq 4x48 R
Miss Milligan's Strathspey 8x32 S
Quarries' Jig 8x32 J
Mrs MacPherson of Inveran 8x32 R

The Flight of the Falcon 8x32 J
The Rutland Reel..... 8x40 R
Sugar Candie..... 8x32 S
Farewell to Balfour Road..... 96 J
Sleepy Maggie 8x32 R
Montparnasse 4x32 S
Ian Powrie's Farewell to Auchterarder 128 J
The Deil Amang the Tailors..... 8x32 R

Extras:

Black Mountain Reel 5x32 R
Campbell of Laphroaig 8x32 M
Postie's Jig..... 4x32 J

Admission includes Christmas fare and a glass of wine

RSCDS Members £22, non-members £25
full time students (with card) and
spectators £12

Children (under 16) free

Tickets available online and on the door
All dances will be recapped

Those with Highland/Evening Dress are
encouraged to wear it

Crib available at rscdslondon.org.uk

South-east Dance Diary

The diary is continually updated and all societies in the South-east may submit details of their functions via a form on the new website or by email to: diary@rscdslondon.org.uk

Burns Ceilidh Dance

Saturday 13 January 2024
7.00 - 10.30pm
Doors open at 6.30pm
St Columba's Church, Pont Street
SW1X 0BD

Caledonian Reelers



with MC James Fairbairn

A great opportunity to enjoy with your friends and family a traditional Burns Supper along with the fun of Scottish music and Ceilidh dancing

Dances will be a selection of all the usual favourites including:

Gay Gordons, Canadian Barn Dance,
The Dashing White Sergeant,
The Eightsome Reel, Virginia Reel
and Strip the Willow (Orcadian style)

All dances will be walked through
No experience necessary

Admission includes haggis supper
(vegetarian option available)
with a glass of wine

RSCDS Members £22, non-members £25
full time students (with card) and
spectators £12
Children (under 16) free

Tickets available on the door - cash or card

Remaining dates for 2023 - 2024

16 December 2023 - Christmas Dance
13 January 2024 - Burns Ceilidh Dance
14 February 2024 - Winter Wednesday Dance
29 May 2024 - Summer Wednesday Dance
8 June 2024 - AGM and End of Season Dance

Winter Wednesday Dance

Wednesday 14 February 2024
7.00 - 10.00pm
Doors open at 6.30pm
St Columba's Church, Pont Street
SW1X 0BD

Chris Oxtoby

EH3 7AF 8x32 J
A Highland Welcome 6x32 R
MacDonald of the Isles 3x32 S
Inchmickery..... 5x32 J
Maxwell's Rant 8x32 R
Sugar Candie..... 8x32 S
Lady Catherine Bruce's Reel 8x32 J
Flowers of Edinburgh..... 8x32 R

Hedwig's Reel 8x32 R
The Starry Eyed Lassie 8x32 J
Up in the Air..... 8x32 S
Scott Meikle 4x32 R
Granville Market 8x32 J
Jean Martin of Aberdeen..... 3x32 S
The Galloping Carousel 4x32 J
The Deil Amang the Tailors..... 8x32 R

Extras:

The Barmkin Sq 88 R
The Sauchie Haugh 8x32 S
The Moray Reel..... 8x32 J

Admission includes light refreshments

RSCDS Members £17, non-members £20
full time students (with card) and
spectators £10

Children (under 16) free

Tickets available online and on the door
All dances will be recapped

Crib available at rscdslondon.org.uk

The Reel Advertising Rates:

Per column centimetre, three columns per page: Black and white, but including colour logo: £6. Full colour: £8.50

All advertisers receive a free copy of the *Reel*.

For adverts and enquiries on pricing contact
Jeff Robertson:

businesseditor@rscdslondon.org.uk

Send Forthcoming Events adverts to Willie Lawrence at: danceads@rscdslondon.org.uk

London Branch Classes



Set yourself a fun challenge join a Scottish country dance class

We have classes for...

Term Dates

Class Christmas Parties

Maria Fidelis and St Columba's
13 December 2023
Richmond 6 December

Spring Term 2024

For our regular Wednesday weekly classes:

General Class, Mixed Ability Dance Group
Beginners and Improvers (Richmond)

Wednesdays 10 January - 27 March
Half-term Wednesday 14 February

General Class

Maria Fidelis School, Drummond Crescent,
London NW1 1LY

7.00 - 9.00 pm

with teacher **Simon Wales**
and live music

A class to consolidate and build on basic skills and technique whilst developing a deeper knowledge of dances in a social environment

Fee: £8 per class for RSCDS members
£10 per class for non-RSCDS members

Underground: Euston, Euston Square,
King's Cross, Warren Street

Buses: 14, 18, 24, 27, 29, 30, 46, 68, 73, 88, 134,
137, 168, 196, 390, 205, 214, 253

Mixed Ability Dance Group

Upper Hall, St Columba's Church,
Pont Street, London SW1X 0BD

led by **Simon Wales** with recorded music
and live music from **Barbara Manning**
on 27 March

2.30 - 4.30pm

A low impact social activity suitable for dancers with at least some knowledge of basic steps and formations

Visitors welcome

Fee: £10 per class for RSCDS members
£12 per class for non-RSCDS members
£2 non dancers

Underground: Knightsbridge, Sloane Square
Buses: 19, 22, 137, 452, C1

The London Branch runs a large number of classes through the year. Some of these are regular classes during term-time; others are specialist classes in advanced technique and classes for young people.

All classes are now bookable by the term online, and credit cards are taken on the door. Check rscdslondon.org.uk for the most up to date information, or contact classes@rscdslondon.org.uk for details of any of our classes.

Beginners and Improvers

Richmond Library Annexe, Quadrant Road,
Richmond TW9 1DH

teacher **Judith Jones** with recorded music
and live music from **Dave Hall**
on 27 March

Beginners 7.00 - 9.00pm
Improvers 7.30 - 9.30pm

An introduction to basic steps and formations for new dancers while supporting others to develop their technique and general dancing skills

Fee: £7 per class for RSCDS members
£8 per class for non-RSCDS members

Underground/Train: Richmond
Buses: H37, 65, R68, R70, 110, 190, 371

Improvers Course 2024

Maria Fidelis School, Drummond Crescent,
London NW1 1LY

8 week course

Wednesdays 17 January - 13 March
Half-term Wednesday 14 February

7.00 - 9.00pm

Continuing work to develop confidence in basic steps and formations

Fee: £80 for RSCDS members
£96 for non-RSCDS members

Families in London Dance Scottish



We are hoping to relaunch this soon, but in the meantime for requests for children's activities eg birthdays/ceilidhs please contact : classes@rscdslondon.org.uk

Monthly Classes

Tuesday Social

Upper Hall, St Columba's Church,
Pont Street, London SW1X 0BD

Tuesdays 19 December, 23 January 2024,
27 February, 26 March, 16 April

7.00 - 9.30pm

led by **Gill O'Dell**
with music from **Adam Brady**

The Tuesday Social is aimed at people in their 20s and 30s who cannot commit to a weekly class, but who love to dance, or would like to learn. This monthly session combines live music with some teaching, lots of dancing and a social break to relax and chat with a glass of wine or soft drink

No need to bring a partner, everyone dances with everyone in this friendly, fun and sociable way to dance

Fee: £10 per session for RSCDS members
£12 per session for non-RSCDS members

Fast Paced Social Class

Maria Fidelis School, Drummond Crescent,
London NW1 1LY

Tuesdays 12 December, 16 January,
20 February, 19 March, 23 April

7.00 - 9.00pm

With guest teachers and musicians

A lively and sociable class, covering more advanced formations and complex dances. The pace will be quick, assuming advanced knowledge of steps and formations, and aims to make more complicated dances feel comfortable and fun

Fee: £10 per class for RSCDS members
£12 per class for non-RSCDS members

Technique Class

Maria Fidelis School, Drummond Crescent,
London NW1 1LY

Tuesdays 5 December, 9 January,
6 February, 5 March, 2 April

7.00 - 9.00pm

with teacher **Pat Davoll**
to recorded music

A technique class for dancers who have a good working knowledge of the steps and formations and who are looking to develop their technique, confidence, style and enjoyment of the dance

Fee: £10 per class for RSCDS members
£12 per class for non-RSCDS members

Classes update

In the previous edition of the *Reel*, I wrote about the new classes planned for 2023-24. We are now a few weeks into the term and are, so far, delighted with how the classes have been progressing.

St Columba's Pont Street

Wednesday afternoon dancing is a decades long tradition at St Columba's and the autumn term got off to an excellent start with teacher Simon Wales and our many regular attendees joined by several new dancers and others who have returned after a long break.



Our other St Columba's class, **The Tuesday Social** for dancers in their 20s and 30s, continues on the fourth Tuesday of the month. Now in its second year, we have been delighted to welcome new faces and to see many of the regular dancers at other London Branch classes and events too.

Maria Fidelis, Euston

We have been made extremely welcome at our new central London venue, Maria Fidelis School, near Euston Station. The improved transport links have enabled a wider range of people to join classes and the shorter journey home has encouraged several to stay for a drink together after classes too.

Our new **Fast Paced Social Dance** class, for advanced and very advanced dancers, and **Technique** class, for intermediate and more advanced dancers, have both attracted 3 sets for their monthly sessions.

Sam Schad launched the new **Fast Paced Social Dance** season as the first of a series of invited guest teachers. Jeremy Hill, Kate Gentles and Dave Hall will take a class each this term, all supported by Adam Brady as class musician.



Pat Davoll is leading the **Technique** class, initially with recorded music, although we are working to build the number of musicians playing for London classes in future.



The Maria Fidelis **General** class, led by Simon Wales, is working well in its new format, typically welcoming two or more sets of improvers and more advanced dancers to its weekly session.



Meanwhile the 8 week **Beginners' course** got off to a great start with twelve new dancers joining Jenny Kendrick and Adam Brady in the drama studio at Maria Fidelis.

We are fortunate in having live music at our weekly Maria Fidelis classes. Adam Brady and Ian Cutts continue to support on keyboard and fiddle respectively and we look forward to welcoming new-to-RSCDS-London musicians Heather Jeffery and Erica Banks later this term.

Richmond class

We have extended the Richmond class, led by Judith Jones, so that beginners and newer dancers have some dedicated time to look at basic steps and formations before improvers join at 7.30pm. Everyone then dances, and enjoys a short tea break, together until 9.00 pm when the beginners are invited to sit and watch. Improvers then have until 9.30 pm try more complicated formations, dance with fewer walkthroughs and thus build confidence for going out to other events. The new times are working very well with a number of existing dancers also self-selecting as beginners to benefit from the extra support. Dancers at all levels may then convene in the pub after the class finishes.



Thank you to everyone - teachers, musicians, helpers and dancers - for supporting this important part of RSCDS London life so well.

Autumn Wednesday Dance: Simon Wales



A number of years ago, someone on the committee had the bright idea of having a dance on the half-term Wednesday evening to encourage those who attend classes to put into practice what they have learnt.

These evenings have been increasingly successful post COVID-19, but the Autumn Wednesday dance held at St Columba's on 25 October was hailed by many as probably the most successful yet.

The programme is maybe slightly easier than the Saturday dances in order to boost the confidence of the less experienced - but the more experienced dancers can derive just as much pleasure from dancing easier dances well.



On this occasion we had record attendance from our classes - Richmond Beginners and Improvers, the Maria Fidelis General class, the Tuesday Social dancers and a lively and enthusiastic group from our new Beginners' course attending

their first ever social dance, plus dancers from Surbiton, the Gay Gordons, Chiswick and other London groups. One beginner spoke for many saying what a wonderful evening they had had, with support, dancing far more than they had expected.

Add to the mix the helpful and friendly experienced dancers, committee members and teachers (two of whom, Judith Jones and myself, acted as MC), glorious music from Ian Robertson and interval sustenance provided by Margaret Shaw and Lena Robinson, plus the welcoming presence of Willie Lawrence and Sarah Shaw on the door and we had a recipe for success.

The pictures speak for themselves, and the standard of dancing was great - roll on the next one!



Reflections on Summer School 2023

First time attendees from Lucy Clark Dance Club



Jill and Derek Armshaw

We started Scottish country dancing as beginners in January 2022 by joining the Lucy Clark Dance Club. Encouraged by our positive experience at Lucy Clark and an enjoyable time at Oxford RSCDS Day School, we rather naïvely signed up to attend the intermediate class at the RSCDS Summer School. We approached St Andrews with a mixture of excitement and apprehension.

2023 is not only the centenary of the RSCDS, but the 90th year that Summer School has been held in St Andrews. Summer School is held over 4 weeks, we attended week one from 16-23 July. More than 150 dancers from all over the world of all ages and abilities were welcomed to week one by Jim Stott, Summer School Director, whose Aberdeenshire sense of humour and friendliness quickly put us at ease.

Summer School is based at University Hall with classes taking place in a variety of venues in the town. The daily schedule is classes 9.30 am - 12.30 pm, optional extension activities 2.00 - 4.00 pm, social dancing walk throughs 4.15 - 5.15 pm, and in the evening a varied programme of social dancing, ceilidh, music and on two evenings formal dancing at Younger Hall. Almost all dancers stayed in university halls of residence, and we ate together at University Hall. The standard of accommodation and food was very good and a huge improvement on our time at university. St Andrews is a beautiful town and there was free time to explore and enjoy the beach and famous golf club.

The dance teaching was excellent. Classes were hard work, both physically and mentally, but good fun. Lasting three full hours, with only a short mid-morning tea break, we worked on basic steps and formations under the guidance of one teacher for the first half of the week and another for the second, allowing us to benefit from their different teaching styles and perspectives. Music for the classes was provided by a pianist, again one for the first half of the week and another for the second. Grateful thanks to Anne Robertson and Andrew Timmins for their expert and patient teaching, and to Moira Reekie and Niols Jannerod for their beautiful accompaniment. We were fortunate to have Muriel Johnstone and several other musicians perform throughout the week.

Most attendees were experienced dancers. There were thirty intermediate dancers in our class and nine beginners. Everyone else attended the various advanced or very advanced classes; many of the people we met had been dancing for decades. At first this made the evening social dancing feel daunting, as it seemed that everyone else was much more accomplished and experienced, but the organisers, teachers and experienced dancers were very encouraging and helped us join in the social dancing. Special thanks to Jane Rose for spending time with us and supporting us during the more formal dancing at Younger Hall. On the Thursday evening in addition to the impressive spectacle of extremely accomplished dancers we were delighted by an interlude of demonstration dancing including a display of Scottish Step.

Throughout the week the music and musicianship at the heart of the Summer School was a real joy. Live music was everywhere; in addition to accompanying the classes and the social dancing, some of the staff and student musicians could usually be found jamming in the 'party room' often late into the night, and there was a marvellous gala concert in the Byre Theatre on Friday evening to mark the RSCDS centenary year. The week culminated on the Saturday evening with social dancing in Younger Hall and a hearty rendition of Auld Lang Syne. Our classmates were now friends, and we raised a glass of whisky in a local bar to toast our first RSCDS Summer School and an amazing week of immersion in Scottish country dance and music.



William Williamson MCing the Centenary concert, Friday 21 July 2023

Centenary concert

When I arrived at Summer School, week one, we were given a ticket to Royal Scottish Country Dance Society Concert, Byre Theatre Auditorium.

This proved to be the very biggest and best part of the whole week.

It started with the MacFadyen sisters, Susan and Shona, playing an opening selection of modern tunes. Shona was then joined by Martainn Skene and his cello who took us back one hundred years to that period.

Tributes were paid to other musicians with video and photo backdrops on the big screen behind. I was particularly thrilled to see a video of Robert MacKay playing so beautifully. I remember Robert from holidays where he could always give details of the history and origin of any tune he played. Andrew Nolan introduced this video and then played a set of Robert's tunes.

A group of current pianists performed a lovely sketch where they came on stage individually and played separately but also together. Perhaps that is what is called a 'session'. It was incredible. To a non-musician, like me, it was mind blowing. How skilled are our musicians.

Another highlight was the 'Dancing through the Ages'. Somehow a group of videos of different places from all over the world, with dancers of different decades, were shown and the music exactly matched the formations and rhythm of the music played. If only my/our dancing could come together in such a perfect way. Several times William Williamson and Luke Brady, MCs for the event, commented on how the music comes before the dance. The music certainly carries us dancers.

After the interval a tribute was paid to the big bands with a medley from Scott Band and his Band and David Oswald's Band. Then Muriel Johnstone paid tribute to all the pianists who have supported teachers and dancers at the RSCDS Summer School (which is celebrating 90 years). She named over 50 pianists that she has known and worked with. She played a selection of tunes followed by Peter Shand, Angela Young and Andrew Nolan. Beautiful music. A further tribute was paid to Musical Directors, including George Meikle, Maureen Rutherford, Muriel Johnstone, Ian Muir and of course our current one, Luke Brady. Then we had a video of Jim Lindsay playing *Root Beer Rag*. How does Jim Lindsay play so magnificently? To end, those directors present entertained us just like the *Two Ronnies*. Fantastic.

The Finale was all the musicians on stage playing the *Eightsome Reel*. Shame we had no space to join in. The only thing missing was the dancers appearing in the background as on *Strictly Come Dancing*. Even that happened as Muriel invited William to dance with her.

How lucky was I and the rest of the audience to enjoy such a spectacle from our fine musicians. Thank you so very much and I do wish more of you could have experienced it too.

I am honoured to be part of the RSCDS.

Fran Bramham, RSCDS Brighton Branch and Mid Sussex Scottish Dancing Group



CD Reviews: Jeremy Hill



Auld Friends Meet: Muriel Johnstone and friends CD (£20 P&P), book of dances and music (£20 hard copy or £15 e-book) from scotscores.com

Dances: collected from Roy Goldring's Leaflet Dances (see scotscores.com/product/auld-friends-meet/ for full details)

There is little argument that Roy Goldring is one of Scottish country dancing's great dance devisers, but many of his dances have not had wide circulation. It is therefore a particular pleasure that Muriel Johnstone has put together this publication, bringing together 59 dances that were previously only available in leaflets or small booklets, and gathered friends and great musicians to present a splendid two-disc recording to accompany them. Only a handful of the dances were familiar to me, and I look forward to exploring the wide range included in the book.



Muriel's friends here comprise: Jim Lindsay (accordion), Ian Robertson (fiddle and accordion), Keith Smith (fiddle) and Gordon Smith (drums), and with that list we immediately we know we are in excellent hands. Alongside Muriel on piano, they have combined in multiple different ways, and the variety makes it a disc you may just want to listen to, at the same time listening carefully to try to work out who is playing on each track!

Muriel supplied a good number of original tunes for the dances, alongside other modern composers including Nancy Dickson, Bobby Crowe and Jim Johnstone, plus some traditional tunes and fiddle greats such as William Marshall, Joseph Lowe and Robert Mackintosh. With 31 tracks across the two discs, in order to reflect all 59 dances, they have "combined dances with similar styles of tune and have used all of the suggested music with [their] own choices of alternative tunes where needed to make up sets." It is very effective in doing so, though perhaps if you knew an original well for one of the dances, or were looking to teach it, you might be surprised to find it popping up in the middle of a set, rather than at the beginning and end.

I particularly enjoyed the track for *The King Over the Water*, with delightful intertwining of the two fiddles (also incorporating the tune for *The Chequered Hall* and several other of Muriel's tunes). Similarly, the two accordions on *The Unicef Circle* includes some second box work where I fancy it is Jim enjoying himself. Muriel is of course always great to listen to and Gordon the perfect rhythmic foil. Whether for listening, or exploring the range of dances, this is highly recommended.

Bobby's Favourites: Jim Lindsay & His Scottish Dance Band. CD £17 from Steven Crowe 07510 522269

Dances: *Captain MacBean's Reel* (4x32R), *Miss Cahoon's Reel* (4x48J), *The Reel of the 51st Division* (4x32R), *Duke of Atholl's Reel* (8x32J), *Buchan Gate* (4x32R), *The Braes of Mellinish* (3x32S), *Hamilton House* (6x32J) plus sets of jigs



This beautiful recording pays direct tribute to Bobby Crowe, one of the greats of Scottish dance music in the second half of the twentieth century, but indirectly to a whole generation of bands and players from the 1950s to the 1990s. Jim Lindsay, himself a key member of Bobby's band from his teenage years, here presents favourite sets of tunes played in Bobby's band, many of which reflect Bobby's own experiences with other musicians and bands.

There is more history gathered together in this recording than I can do justice to in this review, including in the CD cover photos of and notes on some of the many bands that Bobby led and the sets of tunes. Bobby Crowe's importance in RSCDS and dancing circles certainly deserves this recognition, as the house band of Summer School for many years, with the Olympians Scottish Dance Band, including the distinctive sound of Dougie Maxwell on trumpet, and then his own band, and a dozen recordings for the Society, which still stand the test of time.

The Olympians are honoured here in a repeat of the set for *Buchan Gate* that the band recorded in 1983 (like a London bus, after 40 years with no recordings, this dance is also on the above recording of Roy Goldring dances!). Jim is joined here by the classy team of David Hume (second accordion), Gillian Ramsay and Maureen Rutherford (fiddle), Graham Berry (piano), John Sinton (bass) and Malcolm Ross (drums). Like Jim, Malcolm was a key member of Bobby's band in the early 1990's and also provides a link to one of Bobby's key influences, through his father Lindsay.

Lindsay Ross's set for *Captain MacBean's Reel* is another highlight on the disc, featuring the *High Level Hornpipe*, a tune on which Bobby cut his teeth. Like most of the dances, it is presented as 4x32, and these would be ideal encore tracks, but it is designed primarily as a disc to listen to, with great variety of tunes, tempi, arrangements and top quality playing throughout. One other track to draw attention to is a Slow Air & Reel *The Crowe Ladies*, tunes by Ron Kerr written for Bobby's daughter and wife, and here featuring the mellifluous clarinet of granddaughter Gemma.

Son Stevie suggests the highest praise from his father in the control room would have been "that is more than acceptable". It most certainly is!

Becoming an MC:

Joanne Lawrence

What is the secret of a successful dance evening? The dances themselves, obviously, an entertaining mix of jigs, strathspeys and reels, carefully chosen to meet the tastes and abilities of the attendees. Then the right music, to lift everyone's hearts and speed their feet in enjoyment of the dance. The venue will ideally have a good floor, enough space, transport links and a welcoming atmosphere. There are many other factors to consider, catering, set up, promotion - all important but, perhaps most important of all is the choice of MC.

A good MC will set the tone of an evening, making the dancers feel welcome, the musicians at ease and everyone working to deliver the event appreciated. MCs are responsible for the timing, keeping everything moving and, where recaps and walk throughs are part of the process, providing clear and timely guidance.

We have been extremely fortunate in London, due to the many excellent teachers and experienced dancers who have, for decades, guided us through dance programmes with warmth, humour and authority. However, we cannot afford to rest on their laurels. As some now step back from regular MCing, so RSCDS London Branch, and the many other Scottish country dance groups around London and the South-east, must look to see who might follow in their footsteps.

No matter how good the dancer, it is not just as simple as stepping up to the mic and launching into a recap. There is a definite art to MCing. Teachers learn many of the skills needed during their rigorous training. For the rest of us, thankfully, there is also support in the RSCDS Basic Teaching Skills programme which focuses on the key skills necessary to guide dancers and manage dance groups and events.

serTA (South East Region Teachers Association) is planning to run the RSCDS Basic Teaching Skills course in early 2024. RSCDS London Branch is delighted to support this 2-day course (14 January and 4 February 2024) which will concentrate on MCing at local groups and at bigger events. It is a great opportunity to work with fellow dancers, learning from each other and developing the skills (and survival techniques!) to become a good MC. See advert on p13 for more information.

Those who attended the last course said:

"The course showed me the importance of delivering clear instructions using standard terms. The more I did, the easier it got. It gave me confidence as I picked up and became fluent in the use of standard terms so that dancers could understand and respond quickly and comfortably. It helped to improve my own dancing too."

Willie Lawrence

"I found the course very helpful. It gave me a structure for analysing dances, useful advice on being an MC, and helped me to understand more about the music and working with a musician. I also liked that the group was encouraged to share knowledge, ask questions and discuss ideas."

Armaiti Bedford



A full hall of dancers at our Autumn Wednesday dance at St Columba's Church, enjoying the music of Ian Robertson on stage



Orpington Caledonian Society's celebration of the RSCDS Centenary on Saturday 14 October 2023, featuring past and current Presidents Mike Talbot, Helen Cole (KASS Chair), Ginny Colenbrander, Angela House, Hadyn Davies and Angela Campbell - with guest MC Simon Wales and Bob Parsons and Ian Muir on stage



Martin Roberts, Sue Lyons, Peter Knight, Margaret Shaw, Lena Robinson, Jane Fisher and Thelma-Jane Robb on board Triana



Master of the Triana, Peter Knight enjoying a sundowner in Corpach Marina



Margaret Shaw on board Triana, never far from the music



Summer School Week Four 2023 demonstration team, with London Branch's Elaine Davies middle row, right



The massed ranks of London first and second Branch members at the RSCDS AGM Ball, in Kelvin Hall, Saturday 4 November



London Branch hosting a Summer School party

The Story behind the Dance: Meryl Thomson



A series of articles from Meryl Thomson delving behind the history of some of our dances and their music. This time, as Burns night approaches, she turns her attention to *Corn Rigs*.

Robert Burns and dancing amongst the corn

Looking ahead to the New Year and the coming Burns season, including our own RSCDS London Burns Supper and Ceilidh Dance on 13 January 2024, I thought I would take a look at an RSCDS dance associated with the great bard.

The RSCDS dance *Corn Rigs* from Book 4, published in 1927, is an example of a dance set to an ancient Scots tune, although the dance as danced today is not as old as its tune.

The song *Corn Rigs*, also known as *The Rigs of Barley* is one of the best known of Robert Burns' works. This romantic piece talks of Lammas night in the harvest season which, as a farmer, would have been important to Burns. Corn rigs are a traditional form of crop drainage where fields are ploughed into ridges so any excess water could run off into the furrows in between. For those wanting to read the verses of the song, visit robertburns.org/works/30.shtml.

IT was upon a Lammas night,
When corn rigs are bonie,
Beneath the moon's unclouded light,
I held awa to Annie:
The time flew by, wi' tentlefs head,
Till 'tween the late and early;
Wi' sma' persuasion she agreed,
To see me thro' the barley.

Burns wrote this in or around 1782 and it was included in the first of his works to be printed, his 'Kilmarnock Edition' titled *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* published by John Wilson in 1786. Burns had been considering emigrating due to personal and financial difficulties but the success of this publication persuaded him otherwise. Although only 612 copies were initially printed, they sold out very quickly, encouraging Burns in his writing endeavours.

The song was set to the tune *Corn Rigs are Bonie*. The tune was adapted from another tune called *Sawney Was Tall and of Noble Race* which was a mock Scotch song in the comedic play *A Virtuous Wife or Good Luck at Last* written by Thomas d'Urfey in 1679.

(96)

Sawney was tall. Longways for as many as will.

Honour to the Preference, then to your wo. Lead up forward and back.
Then the 1. cu. change places and go back to back, then cross over and meet below the 2. cu. and fet to one another. This ends the first Strain of the Tune played twice over.
The 1. cu. go the Figure of 8 round the cu. above them and fet to one another, then the man turn both hands with the wo. next above him once round, and his wo. do the like with the man next below her. This ends the last Strain played once.
Then the 1. cu. go the Figure of 8 round the cu. below them, then meet and turn both hands once and an half round. This ends the last Strain played twice.

John Playford's Dancing Master 1679

The tune was probably written for the play by Thomas Farmer. A transcription of the play is available online from the University of Michigan. This tune was also used by Allan Ramsay



The Gentle Shepherd - David Wilkie 1823

in his pastoral play *The Gentle Shepherd* in 1725 for a song called *My Patie is a Lover Gay*.

Although no music is shown in d'Urfey's manuscript, the likelihood is this was the same tune as found in works by John Playford.

Corn Rigs are Bonny

Orpheus Caledonius 1733

1733 (with words taken from Ramsay's version of the song and given the title *Corn Rigs are Bonny*) and Frances Barsanti's *A Collection of Old Scots Tunes* from 1742 as a slow air.

Strangely, there seem to be very few examples of a dance associated with this tune after the middle of the eighteenth century. I have not found an example after Walsh's 1760 version

Corn rigs are bonny

Francis Barsanti - A Collection of Scots Tunes 1742

(which is the same dance as previously) until Thomas Wilson publishes three new versions in his *A Complete Companion to the Ballroom* in 1816. Usually a popular tune such as this would produce any number of associated dances in country dance collections of the 1760s - 1820s. Wilson takes pains to inform the

CORN RIGGS * (Scotch)

Allegro

SINGLE FIGURE (Tune played straight thro')
The 3 gent: turn the Ladies right & left at top, lead down the middle up again & allemandez.

OR THUS Set & hands across quite round with 2^d Cu: set & back again lead down the middle up again & set to the top Cu: set

DOUBLE FIGURE (Each strain repeated)
Set & half right & left with 2^d Cu: set, & back again, promenade 3 Cu: whole pousette, & set 3 across & set 3 in your places

* This tune tho a very popular Country Dance is frequently used as a Hornpipe to which Class it properly belongs

reader that the tune "is frequently used as a Hornpipe to which Class it properly belongs" - others class the tune as a Scotch measure. None of these versions of the dance bear any relation to the dance published in RSCDS Book 4.

Wilson's Companion to the Ballroom 1816

Pocket Companion for Young Ladies and Gentlemen published in Edinburgh in 1830 which includes the first appearance of a chasing figure. The dance appears in the section for Scotch Dances and the instructions are:

First couple chassé two couples, the Lady goes up behind the middle, = This is repeated, only that the Lady goes up behind the Gentlemen, and the Gentleman up the middle, -

CORN RIGS.

First couple chassé two couples, the Lady goes up behind the Gentleman, and the Gentleman up the middle, = This is repeated, only that the Lady goes up the middle, and the Gentleman behind the Gentlemen, = pousette, = six hands half round and back again.

W Smyth - Pocket Companion 1830

This is repeated, only that the Lady goes up the middle, and the Gentleman behind the Gentlemen - pousette - six hands half round and back again.

In the same year R Hill, based in Lincoln, publishes his *A Guide to the Ballroom* and gives a 16 bar version of the dance which is the same as Wilson's 1816 first option for a single figure.

The dance then seems to vanish again from Victorian era publications. Some have suggested this is due to the lyrics of the song being considered too racy for Victorian sensibilities. Of course, country dances had become less popular in the ballroom with the advent of the quadrille and the waltz, while only old favourites such as *La Tempete*, *Scotch Reel* and *Highland Reel* are seen in dance manuals from the 1850s onwards. Unusually, even sets of *Caledonian Quadrilles* which used many of the popular Scotch songs such as *My Love is But a Lassie Yet*, *The Campbells are Coming*, *The Lass o' Gowrie*, *Charlie is my Darling*, *Scots Wha Hae* etc, do not use *Corn Rigs* in their selections. However, *Corn Rigs* turns up again in *David Anderson's Ballroom Guide* of 1890 (Glasgow) with similar instructions to W Smyth from 1830.

The *EFDS Community Dance Manual Book 3* originally published 1954, contains a version of *Corn Rigs*, collected from villages in Northumbria. This is the same as the RSCDS dance in the last 16 bars, but the first 16 bars differ, matching the W Smyth version above but adapted for a duple minor set by only chasing round one couple and adding setting to use up the music. Unlike the RSCDS dance there is no full figure 8 round 2s in bars 9-16 and a rant or double step is suggested to be used throughout, apart from the lead down.

No. 12.— CORN RIGS (Reel)

MUSIC.	DESCRIPTION.
Bars. 1-4	First couple cast off, on their own sides, for four steps.
5-8	First couple turn inwards and dance up again to places. (See Fig. 1).
9-16	First couple dance a figure of eight round the second couple thus—First woman passing in front of her partner. (See Fig. 2.)
17-20	First couple lead down the middle,
21-24	and up again.
25-32	First and second couples poussette.
	Repeat, having passed a couple.

There does not appear to be any other published version which matches the RSCDS dance, especially with the inclusion of a figure of eight around the second couple. The original Book 4 stated the dance was collected in the Border Country. The fact that there are so many versions of the dance within different publications suggest that the dance was probably danced with local variations throughout the UK.

Corn Rigs as published in RSCDS Book 4

What is fascinating is how the *Corn Rigs* tune came to be strongly associated with Scotland but was not used in any of the Caledonian quadrille sets that were so popular in the nineteenth century. The dance mysteriously disappears from most Victorian printed editions and even an important work such as Surenne's *National Dance Music of Scotland* (1851) does not include the tune, although the *Athole Collection* of 1884 does. Perhaps this is a case of the song being so popular that its so-called racy lyrics precluded its use in the ballroom.

Some other items of interest related to the dance to end with. The film *Scotland Dances*, produced by the RSCDS in 1957, whimsically shows dancers energetically dancing *Corn Rigs* at a fair speed in a corn field to music sung by Kenneth McKellar - Hugh Foss's critique in *Reel 50* is fun to read. In *Reel 64* Bill Ireland, then teacher of the London Branch demonstration class, produced a list of 46 dances he felt could be danced logically in order by beginners - *Corn Rigs* is number 2 on the list. [Archive.org](http://archive.org) has a recording of *Corn Rigs* played by the National Folk Orchestra for dancing which is interesting to listen to as this is a snapshot of how country dance music was being played in 1946 on recordings.

I looked through back issues of *The Reel* and *Corn Rigs* seems to appear on Branch dance programmes 13 times since 1955, with the most recent being in 2016. Perhaps there is an opportunity for *Corn Rigs* to appear again on dance programmes?

Let's see what can be arranged - Ed.

More on None So Pretty: Ian Cutts

The Reel issue 323, March 2023, had an interesting article by Meryl Thomson about the dance *None So Pretty*, and particularly the substitute tune given in RSCDS Book 19, *Johnny in the Nether Mains*, which was published by Nathaniel Gow in 1801 and by John and William Gow in 1804; both of these were reproduced in facsimile in the article. This tune had been published earlier by William McGibbon in his *Collection of Scots Tunes* of 1742, under the title *Jamaica* (and marked "brisk")



McGibbon's use of the title *Jamaica* alerts us to the fact that an earlier, simpler version of the tune was included by John Playford in the fourth edition of *The Dancing Master* (1670), as *Jameko*:



The French soon caught the country dancing bug, and Raoul-Auger Feuillet's *Recueil de Contredances* of 1706 includes another version of the same tune, as *La Bonne Amitie*, with the barlines written so that the phrases begin mid-bar, in accordance with French musical sense:



Comparing Feuillet with McGibbon, it is easy to see the similarities, but McGibbon kept the title *Jamaica*.

An article by W Bruce Olson in *Folk Music Journal* 1973 no. 4 discussed the history of the tune *Jamaica*. Many different words may have been sung to it: "I am a lusty lively lad", "There was a maid as I heard tell, which fell in desperation", "Wet and weary". "Two Toms and Nat in Council sat", "My love is to Jamaica gone" (*Jamaica* was taken from the Spanish in 1655), and "My Love is gone to Bohemia", perhaps a reference to the Thirty Years' War 1618-48.

RSCDS Autumn Gathering: Simon Wales

Glasgow was glorious in its autumn colours as delegates and many others travelled there for the weekend of 3 - 5 November for the Autumn Gathering and 94th Annual General Meeting, approaching the end of the Centenary year.

As customary, there was a dance Friday and Saturday evenings - and the music and programmes were a joy both evenings. There were classes on both mornings, and a session for delegates to meet informally their Branch Management Board contact.

All events took place in the Kelvin Hall, the business meeting taking place on Saturday afternoon. The formal part of the meeting included the adoption of the Annual Report and Accounts, and discussion on the motions - the meeting decided by two to one to increase the Society element of the subscription by a further £2. London Chair, Joanne Lawrence, spoke against this, but our delegates were in the minority. The constitutional amendments to update the language of the Articles of Association and Rules and Procedures were carried virtually unanimously.

Unfortunately, there were not enough candidates to fill most posts, but in the contested election for the Youth Services Committee, Beth Fairbairn and Lucy Phillips were elected. Jeremy Hill was unopposed for the post of Convenor Elect of Membership Services Committee, and Linda Williamson as Convenor Elect of Youth Services Committee.

We need more volunteers for Committees next year in Edinburgh!

Dancers Ahoy: Peter Knight and Margaret Shaw



Margaret and Peter aboard Triana

We have a 43 foot motor yacht, Triana, which we keep in Whitehaven, Cumbria (*The Cumberland Reel*).

We set off in early June with Martin Roberts and Sue Lyons, both dancers, round the Mull of Galloway (*Bonnie Galloway*) which was quite rough, we were rolling around a lot. Then on to a small village, Port Patrick, and on to Troon (*The Troon Medley*), past Ayr (*The Merry Men of Ayr*) and into the Clyde (*The Banks of Clyde*). We were sorry not to see *Waverley*, the only remaining ocean going paddle steamer, but we imagined seeing *Clutha* (the original tune is *The Bow Legged Bosun!*) as she sailed up and down the Clyde. We passed Cumbrae (*The Cumbrae Reel*) as we made our

way to Greenock, which is the closest marina for Glasgow (*Glasgow Country Dance* and *The Rakes of Glasgow*).

Thelma-Jane Robb and Lena Robinson came for the day, so we sailed across to Bute to have lunch with Jane Fisher, who used to dance and play the fiddle in London, with her friend Charlie, who also plays the fiddle. After lunch we took them round the island, stopping in the *Kyles of Bute*, drifting while Jane and Charlie played for us, and passing boats! We dropped them off in Rothesay (*The Rothesay Rant*) and back to Greenock, where Thelma-Jane and Lena left us to go back to Glasgow.

Martin and Sue left us, and Peter's son, Nick, joined for the next leg. Into Loch Fyne, it was very calm, so no *Wind on Loch Fyne*, through the Crinan Canal, past the Sound of Luing to Oban. One day in Oban there was a rainbow over *McCaig's Tower*. While in Oban we went by road to see some friends who live on Seil Island, crossing *The Bridge over the Atlantic* to get there. The marina for Oban is just opposite on the Isle of Kerrera, where we left Triana for a week so as to come back for a granddaughter's wedding (*Haste to the Wedding*).

On our return, Peter's sister Anne joined us for the main event, going through the Caledonian Canal. We went north through Loch Linnhe, passing Appin (*Autumn in Appin*) to Corpach, close to Fort William, to enter the canal. A lovely trip, but the weather was very misty (*Scotch Mist*), up Neptune's Staircase and finally through Loch Ness, but didn't see *The Loch Ness Monster!* To Inverness for *The Inverness Country Dance*.

Another change of crew; Martin and Sue came back for the return trip through the canal. We called at *Drumnadrochit* to see Urquhart Castle. The weather was lovely, so we had a good view of Ben Nevis. We stayed a few days in Corpach so that we could take the gondola up the Nevis Range, wonderful views. While in Corpach, David and Wendy Bowen came on board for a drink; he is a well known box player from Kirkwall and played for us.

On our way south, we passed between Lismore (*A Trip to Lismore*) and Morven (*The Maid of Morven*) and on to Tobermory (*Tobermory Bay*). On our way back to Kerrera we passed the imposing Duart Castle. Our last crew change was Peter's daughter Lucinda and her husband Russell, for the return trip back to our home marina.

The weather was quite blowy, force 6, with the *Whistling Wind* in the yachts' rigging, but we had a window early in the morning, so we slipped our moorings, heading south, keeping well clear of *Corrievreckan*, a well known series of turbulent overfalls that can be horrendous.

We then headed up to the village and marina of Ardfern for the night. Princess Anne was there (*The Princess Royal*), and we also saw some old friends who used to dance in Dulwich, before retiring there. Back through the Crinan Canal and on to Troon again; a bit bumpy, but not too bad. Next day we passed Ardrrossan (*Miss Johnstone of Ardrrossan*) on our left and Arran (*The White Stag of Arran*) on our right, then it was past *Ailsa Craig*, where granite is quarried for curling stones, round the Mull of Galloway (to repeat *Bonnie Galloway*), much calmer this time, but still a bit rough, and into the *Solway Firth* to go home to Whitehaven, arriving on 1 September. A wonderful summer!

[More pictures on p8](#)

Dancing Down Under: Janet Jackson

Last year in September my daughter, her husband, the two grandchildren (then aged 4 and 2) and a dog (aged 3), decided to move to New Zealand. Painful for me, yet for them, this was the beginning of a special experience and an adventure. The family settled quickly and they are enjoying their new home. The more so because the community made them feel welcome.

Come March 2023, I could not wait to see the family. We stayed for five amazing weeks. My thanks to Jim Cook, then Vice Chair of the London Branch of the RSCDS, who guided me to the Scottish Dance groups in NZ. Lucky too that Napier and Parkvale were near to me. Out came the dance shoes and that was me ready. My thanks to Isabel Jackson, Cheryl McConnell, and Dot Morgan who welcomed me, as did the group members who gave me a lift. Wonderful



women. Being with the groups was a real treat for me and a joy to meet other new dancers. Thanks to them all. It gave me the chance to keep up with my dancing learning. It gave me a glimpse into their insight, of their community, kindness and support. I am looking to hear more of the NZ dancers. I felt at home. Thank you all!

You may be wondering why I took so much time to write this. Well, it was partly because I simply wanted to hold on to the experiences of NZ and being with my family. Also it seemed right to wait until our UK summer was at its end too - it was not generous weather for the UK this summer! This then brings us to their first year in Upside Down... (I still can't get the time right).

And comes another extra special part: The Napier Scottish Country Dance Club of New Zealand, celebrated its 70th Anniversary on 26 August 2023. From their Facebook page, it looks like people enjoyed a great event. I decided to join in solo and went through each of the 16 dances (some were new to me, others I have danced, though often needed a reminder). Finally, my congratulations to the Hawkes Bay and East Coast in New Zealand. Time now to prepare for going back to New Zealand again.

serTA 2023 success: Jane Rose

serTA recently organised another course for dancers wishing to become accredited RSCDS teachers and is delighted to announce that all candidates were successful.

The candidates travelled from near and far, but included four RSCDS London Branch members: Part 1, Armaiti Bedford and Iris Ronayne and Part 2 now Fully Certificated, Murrough Langdon and Liz Mason. The other candidates were Part 1, Raquel Fernandez and Carolyn Adrain (both RSCDS International Branch from Barcelona) and Part 2, Jan Collings (Herts and Borders) Caroline Catterall and Christine Jeffery (Oxfordshire). Very many congratulations to them all.



The musician for the course was Judith Muir of Craigellachie and the course tutor was Jane Rose. Many dancers from the South-east volunteered to dance in the exam classes on 25 June and we thank them all.

If you are interested in becoming a teacher, Jane is happy to chat about what is involved. serTA may be running another course starting early in 2025. It is hard work, with long classes and homework, but oh so rewarding, with individual critique and useful tips and practical advice on how to teach our wonderful Scottish country dancing.

The next serTA workshop for anyone who teaches a group (whether RSCDS qualified or not) will be held on Sunday 17 March 2024. (See advert on p13 for contact details).

Letters to the Reel

More on Circassian Circle

In issue 324 June 2023, Meryl Thomson pointed out that there are two completely different dances known as *Circassian Circle*, one regarded as Scottish and the other as English, having no connection between them except that both were ultimately derived from the First Set of Quadrilles.

The 'English' Circassian Circle is nowadays considered to be the traditional dance to finish an evening's dancing. But when Peter Kennedy re-visited Northumberland in 1954 recording the traditional dances and music, more than one respondent told him that Circassian Circle was the usual *starting* dance. The piccolo player Billy Ballantine told him: "Now, this is a very old tune I learnt from my uncle when I was only a boy. He was a melodeon player, and they always played it at the beginning of a dance, generally for the *Circassian Circle*, I think, to put all the people in a good humour for the rest of the night. Naturally the title of the tune is *Good Humour*."

Ian Cutts, London

Traditional v Modern?

I always enjoy reading Meryl's articles in *The Reel*, but none more than her contribution to the last issue 'Where have all the old dances (and their traditional tunes) gone?' which certainly struck a chord with me.

Just as modern tunes may lack the character of traditional tunes, much the same can be said for modern and traditional dances. The absence of the latter from so many of today's programmes diminishes Scottish country dancing and gives it a quite different perspective from the viewpoint of the newer dancer.

We are fortunate that Scottish country dancing has evolved through the likes of John Drewry and Hugh Foss. Their original ideas have provided a fresh impetus which has added to our enjoyment but, as Meryl points out, the onus is on programme devisers to get the balance right.

Andy Patterson, Rotorua, New Zealand

Where is This?

Answer to 'Where is This?' on p1.

Chris Hood writes:

Most readers will know the John Drewry dance, *Bees of Maggiecknockater* with its busy bee-like alternating reels. Maggiecknockater is a little place on the boundary between Moray and Banffshire and here is a 1920s black and white photo of its post office (shut down in 1940). You may be able to make out a well-dressed couple keeking in at the window on the left. They are my grandparents.

Until the early 1970s there was large apiary which was well known in the region. The meaning of Maggiecknockater is loosely translated from the Gaelic *Magh An Fhucadair*, 'field of the fuller' or 'plain of the hilly ridge'. (Ed)

Do you have a dance related photo?
Email: editor@rscdslondon.org.uk

Lives Remembered

A stalwart Scottish dancer from Janice Creagh

Jean Mary Smith Simpson
1 June 1934 - 25 May 2023



Jean was born near Falkirk and Scotland remained very dear to her all her life.

At the end of the war the family moved to Whitton where Jean went to secondary school and discovered her love of science. She went on to teach biology at Drayton Manor, a large secondary school in Ealing, rising to be Deputy Head.

Jean was also a qualified Scottish country dance teacher and an active member of both the RSCDS London Branch and BHS Borders branch where she served as Vice Chair. She taught for many years with Shepperton and Oatlands societies and was also a stalwart member of Richmond Caledonian Society, where she could be seen taking the entry money just a few weeks before she died. She also belonged to serTA, the South-East Region Teachers Association - she met with them as recently as March this year. She looked forward eagerly each January to a Burns Supper or two and liked nothing better than being invited to address the haggis!

Jean would turn up at class with a programme of dances, each manoeuvre committed to memory - and never with a piece of paper in her hand! And we betide anyone who raised a hand on bar 8 that should not be have been raised until bar 9! But many from her classes are still dancing, and still loving it, and are grateful for what she passed on.

Another great love of Jean's throughout her life was travel. She relished early visits to Peru and India and even taught a memorable Scottish dancing class in Madras on one occasion. She went on to visit Bali, Brazil, Kenya, Tanzania, Kashmir, Borneo, Burma and the Galapagos!

Jean had many labradors over the years and a highlight of her year was her annual visit to Crufts. All her dogs were given Gaelic names, except the last one, Missy, who, Jean said, was her lifeline during COVID-19. Missy is now happily settled with Jean's godson.

In her last years, Jean battled stalwartly to overcome various health issues and accidents. Nevertheless, it is admirable that she kept her independence, driving herself to visit friends, find open spaces for Missy, and to keep up with her dancing and flower arranging societies.

Forthcoming Events

BERKHAMSTED STRATHSPEY
AND REEL CLUB



72nd Highland Ball

Saturday 10 February 2024
7.00 - 11.30pm

Ashlyns School Grand Hall HP4 3AH

Ewan Galloway and his
Scottish Dance Band

Programme: New Year Jig, The Westminster Reel, Miss Milligan's Strathspey, Berwick Johnnie, Angus MacLeod, Seann Truibhas Willichan, The Starry Eyed Lassie, The Falls of Rogie, Miss Eleanor, The Black Bear, Flight to Melbourne, Kendall's Hornpipe, The Foundling, Farewell to Balfour Road, 1314, The Laird of Milton's Daughter, Scott Meikle, The Gentleman, Mrs Stewart's Jig, Mairi's Wedding Extras: Maxwell's Rant, Linton Ploughman, The Reel of The Royal Scots

Tickets £30.00 Advance booking only

Welcome drink, hot supper with vegetarian option, bring your own drinks

Applications and bookings

Bookings contact: Simon Cummings
01494 782695 or

treasurer@berkhamstedreelclub.org

berkhamstedreelclub.org

Highland Ball Practice

Saturday 3 February 2024
10.30am - 5.30pm

Potten End Village Hall HP4 2QG

Tickets £5 on door Bring a packed lunch:
morning and afternoon coffee/tea provided

serTA
Dance Scottish

South East Region
Teachers Association

RSCDS Basic Teaching Skills Course

Sundays 14 January and 4 February 2024
10.00 am - 4.30 pm

Whelpley Hill Coronation Hall
Nr Hemel Hempstead HP5 3RJ

Tutor: Jane Rose
Musician: Ken Martlew

The course will concentrate on MCing
at local groups and at bigger events

For further information
please see our website
or contact Jane Rose: sertascd@gmail.com

sertascd.org



Basic Teaching Skills Course -
January 2022

Forthcoming Events

RSCDS BERKS/HANTS/
SURREY BORDER BRANCH



Day School

Saturday 9 March 2024

Weydon School, Farnham GU9 8UG

Teacher: Kate Gentles

Class Musician: Jeremy Hill

Musicians' Day School: Ian Robertson
Evening dance with Day School musicians

Contact Paul Plummer
chairman@rscds-bhs.org.uk

Branch May Ball

Saturday 18 May 2024

7.30 - 11.30pm

Venue tbc

Ian Muir and the Craigellachie Band

Contact: Fiona Albinson
secretary@rscds-bhs.org.uk
rscds-bhs.org.uk

GERRARDS CROSS &
CHALFONTS SCOTTISH
COUNTRY DANCE CLUB



Tea Dance

Sunday 21 January 2024

2.30 - 5.45pm

Colston Hall, East Common,
Gerrards Cross SL9 7AD

Ken Martlew and Barbara Manning

Programme: Kelburn's Reel, Welcome to Ayr, Seattle Landing, Currie Mountain, Farewell to Balfour Road, Lochnagar, Slytherin House, Vive La Danse, The Bon Viveur, Berwick Johnnie, The Anniversary Reel, Rose of the North, The Flight of the Falcon, Wicked Willy, Tartan Rainbow, Kamo Karousel, Mrs MacPherson of Inveran

Tickets £15.00, under 30s £8.00, from
tickets@gxchscottish.org
or call Roger on 07771 709771

Please bring a small plate of food for the bring and share tea

Rehearsal

Saturday 13 January 2024
10.00am - 1.00pm at the venue
Tickets on the door £6.00

gxchscottish.org

Bands

CALEDONIAN REELERS

Well established three-piece SCD band, consisting of accordionist, fiddler and drummer. Caller/piper can also be supplied. Available for RSCDS dances, ceilidhs, weddings, reeling. Anywhere, anytime for your function. Please contact Derek Chappell 01206 764232/ Mary Felgate 07866 757401 for further information or derek_chappell@aol.co.uk

THE FRANK REID SCOTTISH DANCE BAND

For Scottish country dances, ceilidhs, weddings and reeling. Any size of band from one to five. Despite moving to Scotland, still interested in gigs in the south, particularly Friday/Saturday combinations. Tel 07860 104653 or reel@frankreid.com

THISTLE CLUB

Hogmanay Dance

Saturday 31 December 2023
8.00pm - 12.30am

Gt. Brickhill Hall, Rotten Row MK17 9BA
Ian & Judith Muir

Programme: The Findlays' Jig, Scott Meikle, MacDonald of the Isles, The Reel of the 51st Division, Ecclefechan Feline, Sands of Morar, The Wind that Shakes the Barley, Iona Cross, The Orchards of Co. Armagh, Blooms of Bon Accord, Farewell to Balfour Road, Maxwell's Rant, Pelorus Jack, The Belle of Bon Accord, Staircase In Styria, Fugal Fergus, City of Belfast, Miss C. M. Barbour, The Wild Geese, The Garry Strathspey, The Castle of Mey, St Bernard's Waltz, The Bees of Maggieknockater, The Highland Rambler

Tickets, booked in advance, £15
Bring and share supper

Contact Jan Jones 07877 153259 or
jangeverybusy@gmail.com
thistleclub.co.uk

RSCDS MILTON KEYNES BRANCH

44th Annual Dance

Saturday 9 March 2024
7.00 - 11.00pm

Wing Village Hall, Leighton Road LU7 0NN
(Additional parking across the road or side streets)

Strathallan

Programme: Lady Catherine Bruce's Reel, The Lochalsh Reel, Annan Gold, The Nurseryman, Summer on the Beach, Cape Town Wedding, Spiffin', City of Stirling Reel, The Water of Leith, Linton Ploughman, Catch the Wind, The Elephant's Stampede, Bridge of Nairn, Staircase In Styria, Chased Lovers, The Paisley Weavers, The Australian Ladies, Saint Columba's Strathspey, The Bees of Maggieknockater, The Reel of the 51st Division

Tickets £17
Bring and share supper - tea and coffee provided

Contact Jan Jones: 07877 153259
Email: jangeverybusy@gmail.com
rscdsmk.co.uk

RSCDS CROYDON & DISTRICT
BRANCH



Anniversary Band Dance

RSCDS Centenary and
Croydon & District Branch
70th Anniversary

Saturday 9 December
7.30 - 11.00pm

Purley URC Hall, Brighton Road
Purley CR8 2LN

Strathallan

MC Pat Davoll

Buffet Supper

Tickets £18 in advance only from
rscds.croydon.treasurer@gmail.com
rscdscroydon.org.uk

LONDON HIGHLAND CLUB

Centenary season continues

Christmas Dance

Saturday 2 December 2023

Keith Smith, Anne-Laure Latour and guest
David Hall



MC Rose Krelloff

7.00 - 10.30pm



Lower Hall, St Columba's Church, Pont
Street, London SW1X 0BD

Programme: The Shetland Shepherdess, Orpington Caledonians, Broadway, The Aviator, The Australian Ladies, Chasing the Eclipse, Frank Bennett's Jig, Miss Johnstone of Ardrossan, Schiehallion, The Laird of Milton's Daughter, Catch the Wind, The Spirit of the Dance, The Cranberry Tart, Nottingham Lace, Linnea's Strathspey, James Gray, Toast to the Mousies, The Orchards of Co. Armagh, Cramond Bridge, The Irish Rover

Tickets £18, LHC Members £15
Price includes buffet supper
For tickets, email
tickets@londonhighlandclub.co.uk
or call Roger Keeling 020 8656 7884

Programme and cribs are on our website
www.londonhighlandclub.co.uk

President's Ball

Saturday 17 February 2024

Robert Whitehead & the Danelaw Band



HARROW & DISTRICT
CALEDONIAN SOCIETY



New Year Ball

Friday 5 January 2024
7.30 - 11.30pm

Allum Hall, 2 Allum Lane, Elstree WD6 3PJ

Ian Muir and the Craigellachie Band

Programme: New Year Jig, Toast to the Mousies, Linnea's Strathspey, The Shetland Shepherdess, The Royal Yacht Britannia, Bonnie Galloway, The Castle of Mey, The Orchards of Co. Armagh, James Gray, The Rutland Reel, Seton's Ceilidh Band, Foxhill Court, A Trip to Edinburgh, The Lochalsh Reel, City of Belfast, Macleod's Fancy, Polharrow Burn, The Water of Leith, The Dancing Master, Glastonbury Tor

Tickets, including refreshments, £24 if paid by 29 December and £26 thereafter

Juniors and non-dancers half price

Advance booking only, please

Contact Jim Henderson, 07752 133652 or
jwh698@gmail.com

Spring Dance

Saturday 16 March 2024

Ian Muir (Prestwick) and Bob Parsons

harrowscottish.org.uk

Forthcoming Events

RSCDS OXFORDSHIRE BRANCH

Burns Night Supper & Dance

20 January 2024
7.00 - 11.00pm

Benson Parish Hall, Sunnyside, Benson,
Wallingford OX10 6LZ

Ian Muir and the Craigellachie Band

Programme: to be published on our website

Tickets £20 including haggis supper

Contact: Helen Houghton-Carr
07531 469213 or

events.rscdsxfordshire@gmail.com
rscdsxfordshire.org

Day School & Dance

17 February 2024

Dragon School, Oxford OX2 6SS

Teachers: Raphaëlle Orgeret, David Hall,
Alice Stainer

Musicians: Jeremy Hill, Ken Martlew,
Barbara Manning

Tickets: Whole day and evening £34
Morning or afternoon £12.00 each
Evening dance £18.00

Evening dance 7.00 - 10.30pm
including finger-food buffet

Strathallan Band

Programme: Maxwell's Rant, Light and Airy,
The Birks of Invermay, James Gray, Lady
Dumfries, Radcliffe Square, Old Nick's
Lumber Room, The Minister on the Loch,
The Sailor, The Happy Meeting, The Piper &
the Penguin, The Silver Tassie, Major Ian
Stewart, Summer Wooing, Triple Happiness,
Follow Me Home, Mrs MacPherson of Inveran

Dances will be recapped

Applications available from our website

Contact: Helen Houghton-Carr
07531 469213 or

events.rscdsxfordshire@gmail.com
rscdsxfordshire.org



www.rscdsxfordshire.org

READING ST ANDREW'S SCOTTISH DANCING SOCIETY

75th Anniversary Ball

Saturday 3 February 2024
7.00 - 11.00pm

The Abbey School, Kendrick Road, Reading
RG1 5DU

Ian Muir and the Craigellachie Band

Programme: EH3 7AF, Mr Iain Stuart
Robertson, Triple Happiness, The
Zoologist, The Recumbent Stone, Kilkenny
Castle, Blooms of Bon Accord,
Gothenburg's Welcome, The Water of
Leith, The Cuckoo Clock, The Aviator, The
Rutland Reel, Chasing the Eclipse, John
Cass, Findlater Castle, The Spirit of the
Dance, Ian Powrie's Farewell to
Auchterarder, Bratach Bana, Miss Eleanor,
The Falls of Rogie

Tickets: £25 includes welcome drink and
supper with wine

Contact: Katy Kendall, 0118 996 8548 or

sasdco1@gmail.com
scottishdancingreading.org



MAIDENHEAD SCOTTISH DANCING CLUB

Highland Ball

Saturday 13 January 2024
7.00 - 11.00pm

Manor Green School, Elizabeth Hawkes
Way, Maidenhead SL6 3EQ

Ian Muir (Prestwick) and his Scottish Dance Band

Programme: Shiftin' Bobbins, A Capital
Jig, The Silver Grey, Muirland Willie,
Fraser's Favourite, The Gentleman, Itchy
Feet, Polharrow Burn, Something in the
Air, The Deil among the Tailors, Quarries'
Jig, The Ladies of Dunse, The Wind on
Loch Fyne, Chased Lovers, Queen's View,
Balmoral Castle, On Suilven in Summer,
The Swan and the Tay, Follow Me Home,
The Highlandman Kissed His Mother (MMM)

Tickets £24

Advance booking only

Price includes supper and a welcome drink

Please notify us of any special dietary
requirements when ordering tickets

Contact Jane Courtier, 01628 628372 or
secretary@maidenheadscottishdancing.org.uk
maidenheadscottishdancing.org.uk



RSCDS CHELTENHAM BRANCH

The Cheltenham Ball

Saturday 13 January 2024
7.00 - 11.00pm

Cheltenham Town Hall
Imperial Square, Cheltenham GL50 1QA

Ian Muir and the Craigellachie Band

Programme: The Machine without Horses,
Scotland's Gardens, Scotch Mist, Napier's
Index, The Ullapool Ferry, The Silver
Strathspey, The Dancing Master, City of
Belfast, Trip to Timber Ridge, Gaelforce
Wind, The Countess of Dunmore's Reel,
Sands of Morar, The Aviator, The Kissing
Bridge, Culla Bay, Bratach Bana, The
Flower o' the Quern, Best Set in the Hall,
The Reel of the Royal Scots, *Extras:* Miss
Johnstone of Ardrossan, The Starry Eyed
Lassie

Tickets £25, students £15
Supper included
Advance booking only

Contact: tickets@rscdscheltenham.org
rscdscheltenham.org

MID SUSSEX SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCERS

Annual Dance 2024

Saturday 10 February 2024 7.00pm

The Rawson Hall, The Street, Bolney
RH17 5PF

Ian Muir and the Craigellachie Band

Programme: Good Hearted Glasgow, The
Cumbrae Reel, Linnea's Strathspey, Crossing
the line, The Earl of Mansfield, The Water
of Leith, Les Remparts de Séville,
Nottingham Lace, The Orchards of Co.
Armagh, Best Set in the Hall, Orpington
Caledonians, Father Connelly's Jig, The
Dream Catcher, Bratach Bana, The Fitting
of Lorn, The Roselath Cross, Saint
Columba's Strathspey, The Ruby Rant,
Neidpath Castle, Gaelforce Wind

Tickets £17 (Dancers), £7 (Non-dancers)

Cheques payable to: Mid-Sussex Scottish
Country Dance Club

Please bring a plate to share

Squash, tea and coffee provided

Contact Fran Bramham, 01903 416969
Text 07833 713969

franmssd@gmail.com

Other Scottish Country Dance Organisations

To update your information in Other Scottish Country Dance Organisations contact editor@rscdslondon.org.uk

This is the third issue of the current cycle for *Reel* 324 - 327 and £30 is now overdue

If you wish to cancel, or pay by bank transfer, please contact treasurer@rscdslondon.org.uk

If you require your information to also be changed in the SE Classes Listing on our website please contact

Jan Collings seclasses@rscdslondon.org.uk or call on 07803 923036

ABINGDON SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE CLUB Dancing most Mondays,
7.45-10.00pm, September - June at Northcourt Centre, Abingdon, near
Oxford. All welcome. Details: secretary@ascdc.org.uk or
abingdonscdc.wordpress.com

ADDLESTONE & DISTRICT SCOTTISH SOCIETY Meets Wednesdays
8.00-10.00pm September-May at St Mary's Church Hall, Church Road,
Byfleet KT14 7NF. Details: Val Clack, 01932 845869 or
addlestonscottish.org.uk

BERKHAMSTED STRATHSPEY & REEL CLUB Meets in Potten End Village
Hall, HP4 2QG. Social dancing: Tuesdays 8.15pm September-May,
Saturday: gardens June/July. Classes: Intermediate and Advanced
Mondays 8.00pm, Beginners Tuesdays 8.15pm. Details: Petula Martlew
01442 261525 or berkhamstedreelclub.org

BOURNEMOUTH BRANCH RSCDS Meets at The Scottish Hall, 80/82
Shelbourne Road, Charminster, Bournemouth BH8 8QZ every Wednesday
morning, 10.00am-12 noon. Details: Margaret Robson, 01202 698138 or
jl.robson@ntlworld.com

BRIGHTON BRANCH RSCDS Classes for beginners, intermediate and
advanced, country and highland, adults and children.
Details: Rod Burrows, 01903 783053 or chair@rscds-brighton.org.uk or
rscds-brighton.org.uk

BRIGHTON & HOVE SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE CLUB Meets Thursdays
7.45-10.15pm at Moulsecoomb Hall, Brighton. Details: Carol Catterall,
01273 564963 or bhscdc.org.uk

Other Scottish Country Dance Organisations

Continued from p15

- CAMBERLEY REEL CLUB** Dancing every Tuesday 8.00pm at St Paul's Church Hall, Church Hill, Camberley. Details: Jackie Cresswell, 01252 616289 or info@camberleyreelclub.org.uk
- CAMBRIDGE SCOTTISH SOCIETY** Scottish country dancing and other events. Dance Circle meets every Thursday 8.00pm from September-June. Details: Rachel Schicker, 01223 364557 or camscotsoc.org.uk
- CHELTENHAM BRANCH RSCDS** General class/Club Night Mondays 7.30-9.30pm with a separate Beginners' Section fortnightly at St Luke's Church Hall, St Luke's Place, Cheltenham GL53 7HP. Details: Lesley Taylor, 07712 578622 cheltscdssec@gmail.com
- CHISWICK SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE CLUB** Meets on Sundays 7.00-9.00pm in the Oddfellows Hall, Parkshot, Richmond TW9 2RG for social dancing. Beginners' courses are offered 6.00-7.00pm, please book in advance to secretary@chiswickscottish.org.uk. Details: Iris Ronayne, 07767 842670 chiswickscottish.org.uk
- CROYDON & DISTRICT BRANCH RSCDS** Branch class in Coulsdon: General, including Beginners with technique Fridays 7.30-10.00pm Coulsdon Methodist Church, Brighton Road, Coulsdon CR5 2BE. Details: Alison Raisin, 07732 746238 or rscds.croydon.chairman@gmail.com or rscdscroydon.org.uk
- EPHING FOREST SCOTTISH ASSOCIATION** Club nights: Mondays (all year) 8.00-10.00pm at St Barnabas Church, 127 Snakes Lane East, Woodford IG8 7HX; Thursdays (all year) 8.00-10.00pm at St John's Parish Hall, High Road, Buckhurst Hill IG9 5RX. Details: Angela Ross, 020 8504 3376 or angelaross87@hotmail.com or efsa.org.uk
- EPSOM & DISTRICT CALEDONIAN ASSOCIATION** General dancing Mondays, 7.30-10.00pm, Tweddle Hall, St Andrew's URC, Northey Avenue, Cheam SM2 7HF. Teacher: Pauline Cashmore, 020 8686 9362. Details: Dorothy Pearson, 01737 551724
- FARNHAM SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCING CLUB** Dancing every Tuesday at 8.00pm, September-end of April at Memorial Hall, Babbs Mead, Farnham, Surrey GU9 7EE. Details: Anne Lester, 01252 782927 or lesteranne@ymail.com or fscdc.co.uk
- FLEET SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE SOCIETY** Dance in Fleet URC Hall, 25 Kings Road, Fleet GU51 3AF on alternate Saturdays from 7.30-10.00pm, September-May. Details: Anne Lester, 01252 782927 or info.fleetscds@gmail.com or fleetscds.co.uk
- GERRARDS CROSS AND CHALFONTS SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE CLUB** Meets at Memorial Centre, East Common Road, Gerrards Cross SL9 7AD on Tuesdays in term time from September-July, 7.30-10.00pm and also in Little Chalfont Methodist Church Hall, Chalfont Avenue, Little Chalfont HP6 6RD on Thursdays from 2.00-4.00pm. Visitors and beginners welcome. Details: Roger Stubbs, 01494 873063
- GREENFORD AND DISTRICT CALEDONIAN ASSOCIATION** Meets at British Legion Hall, 182 Oldfield Lane South, Greenford UB6 9JS. Thursdays 8.00-10.00pm. Details: Janet MacPhail janetmcp@mail54@gmail.com
- GUILDFORD SCDC** Meets at Onslow Village Hall, Wilderness Road, Guildford GU2 7QR most Mondays at 8.00pm from September-June. Details: 01483 414385 or gscdc.org.uk
- HARROW & DISTRICT CALEDONIAN SOCIETY** Classes Wednesdays 8.15-10.15pm, St Albans Church Hall, Norwood Drive (off The Ridgeway), North Harrow. Also a variety of other activities. Details: Sheena Henderson, mail@harrowscottish.org.uk or 07719 985025 or harrowscottish.org.uk
- HERTSMERE REEL CLUB** Monthly dances on third Saturday (except August and September) 7.30-11.00pm, Tilbury Hall (URC), Darkes Lane, Potters Bar EN6 1BZ. Details: Margaret King, 020 8440 3236 or margaret.king4@hotmail.co.uk
- LONDON HIGHLAND CLUB** Meets regularly at St Columba's Church, Pont Street, London SW1X 0BD. Details: londonhighlandclub.co.uk
- LUCY CLARK SCD CLUB** Meets Thursdays at the Wendover Memorial Hall, Wharf Road, Wendover HP22 6HF. Beginners' class 6.45-8.00pm, Social Dancing 8.00-10.00pm. Details: Liz Mitchell, 07947 000368 or lucyclarkscottish@gmail.com or lucyclarkscottish.org
- MAIDENHEAD SCOTTISH DANCING CLUB** Meets every Tuesday 8.00pm at St Piran's School, Gringer Hill, Maidenhead, Berks SL6 7LZ. Last Tuesday in the month is Social Dancing evening. Details: Jane Courtier, 01628 628372 or maidenheadscottishdancing.org.uk
- MEDWAY AND DISTRICT CALEDONIAN ASSOCIATION** Dancing Mondays Bredhurst Village Hall, 1.30-3.45pm; Thursdays Brompton-Westbrook School, Gillingham ME7 5DQ, 8.00-10.00pm. Beginners welcome. Details: Lyn Sutton-Jones, 07831 154038 or medwaycaledonians.co.uk
- MID SUSSEX SCOTTISH DANCING GROUP** Mixed ability group meets every Tuesday in Hurstpierpoint Village Centre BN6 9UY 7.45-10.30pm. Details: Fran Bramham, franmssd@gmail.com
- MILTON KEYNES BRANCH RSCDS** Mixed ability class meets Mondays 8.00-10.00pm. Bradwell Village Hall, Milton Keynes. Details: Jan Jones, 01908 378730 or jange@verybusy.co.uk
- NORWICH BRANCH RSCDS** Branch class in Norwich on Mondays from September-May/June. Beginners from 7.00-8.15pm and general dancing 8.20-9.30pm. Details: Sue Petty, 01603 741639 or secretary@rscds-norwich.org.uk
- ORPINGTON & DISTRICT CALEDONIAN SOCIETY** Dancing every Thursday 8.00-10.15pm at Petts Wood Memorial Hall, BR5 1LA. Beginners'/Improvers' Class every Monday 8.00-10.00pm at Crofton Halls, York Rise, Orpington BR6 8PR. Details: Deirdre Wilden, the_wildens@yahoo.co.uk 07879 860463 or orpingtonscottishdancing.com
- OXFORDSHIRE BRANCH RSCDS** Dancing on Thursdays throughout the year in Oxford. Details: Margaret Spiceley, 07985 962781 or secretary.rscdsoxfordshire@gmail.com or rscdsoxfordshire.org
- READING ST ANDREW'S SCOTTISH DANCING SOCIETY** Dancing at St Andrew's URC, London Road, Reading RG1 5BD from September-May, Wednesdays 7.30-10.00pm (general), 1st and 2nd Thursdays of each month 8.00-10.00pm (advanced). Details: Duncan Barnet, 0118 956 9289 duncanbarnet@gmail.com or scottishdancingreading.org
- REIGATE SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE CLUB** Meets most Mondays 8.15-10.15pm, September-May at the Redhill Methodist Church Hall, Gloucester Road, Redhill, Surrey RH1 1BP. Details: Wendy Mitton, 01737 766244 or wmitton517@btinternet.com
- RICHMOND CALEDONIAN SOCIETY** Meets at the Oddfellows Hall, Parkshot, Richmond, every Wednesday evening at 7.30pm from mid-September to mid-June. Details: 07802 442435 or richmondcaledonian.co.uk
- ST COLUMBA'S CHURCH OF SCOTLAND**, Pont Street, London SW1X 0BD. St Columba's Dancers meet most Mondays from October to May, 7.15-10.00pm. Admission free except for Band Nights when a charge will be made. Details: Willie Lawrence, 07798 640551 or stcolumbasdancers@gmail.com or stcolumbasdancers.org
- ST JOHN'S SDC, WOKINGHAM** Meets every Thursday 8.00-10.15pm September-June at St Sebastian's Hall, Nine Mile Ride, Wokingham. All standards welcome. Details: Kate Thomson, 0118 986 0681 sec.stjohns.scdc@gmail.com Also Children's Class Saturdays 9.30-11.00am at the Parish Hall, Crowthorne. Details: Deborah Draffin, 01344 776831
- SIDCUP & DISTRICT CALEDONIAN ASSOCIATION** Dancing on Wednesdays from 7.30-10.00pm throughout the year at Hurst Community Centre, Hurst Road, Bexley, Kent. Details: Jenny Gavin, 020 8856 4522
- SOUTH EAST ESSEX SCOTTISH SOCIETY** Dancing Fridays, 7.30-10.15pm, St Peter's Church Hall, Eastbourne Grove, Southend (near hospital). Tuition 7.30-9.00pm. Details: Graham Easton, 01702 587808 or graham.easton@btinternet.com or seess.org.uk
- SURBITON & DISTRICT CALEDONIAN SOCIETY** Dancing every Thursday at 8.00pm from September-June at St Mark's Church Hall, Church Hill Road, Surbiton. Details: Jane McNicholas, secretary@surbitoncaledonian.co.uk
- TUNBRIDGE WELLS BRANCH RSCDS** General ability class on Tuesdays from 7.30-9.30pm at St Augustine's School, Wilman Road, Tunbridge Wells TN4 9AL. Details: Colin Simpson, 01892 832712 or rscdstunbridgewells.org.uk
- WATFORD & WEST HERTS SCOTTISH SOCIETY** Beginners/Improvers Class at Nascot Wood Recital Hall, Nascot Wood Road, Watford WD17 4YS Mondays from 8.00-9.30pm and General/Beginners Class at All Saints' Church Hall, The Green, Croxley Green, Rickmansworth WD3 3HJ Thursdays from 7.30-10.00pm. Details: Stuart Kreloff, 01923 492475 or reel@watfordscottish.org.uk
- WEMBLEY & DISTRICT SCOTTISH ASSOCIATION** Dance Class Mondays 8.00pm. The Church of the Ascension, The Avenue, Wembley, Middlesex. Details: Mrs Caroline Hamilton, 020 8866 2378 or info@wdsa.co.uk
- WEYMOUTH SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCERS** Dancing at Radipole and Southill Community Centre, Radipole Lane, Weymouth, Dorset DT4 9SS. Thursdays, 7.00-10.00pm. Details: Judie Seymour, 01305 833660
- WINCHESTER BRANCH RSCDS** Classes Tuesdays 7.30-9.30pm. Club nights 1st and 3rd Wednesdays 7.30-9.30pm. Both evenings at St Peter's School, Oliver's Battery Road North, Winchester. Details: Wendy Mumford (teacher), 01264 363293 or wendy@mumford.com
- WITHAM & DISTRICT CALEDONIAN SOCIETY** Dancing every Wednesday 8.00-10.00pm. Hatfield Peverel Village Hall, Hatfield Peverel CM3 2HW. Details: Audrey Kennedy, 01376 513567 or amkenedy148@gmail.com

Credits: Many thanks to all who contributed to this issue of *The Reel*, including the following for providing photos:

p1: Kensington Gardens - Joanne Lawrence (JL); New Season Dance - Petar Petkovic (PP); Where is this - from Chris Hood. p2: Joanne Lawrence - from herself; Mel Rowland - from herself. p3: Caledonian Reelers - Simon Wales (SDW). p5: all pictures (except Richmond) - JL; Richmond class - Judith Jones; Autumn Wednesday - SDW and JL. p6: Jill and Derek Armshaw - Liz Mitchell; Summer School concert - Fran Bramham. p7: Jeremy Hill - from himself; CD covers - from Muriel Johnstone and Jim Lindsay. pp8-9: Autumn Wednesday Dance - SDW; Peter and Margaret at sea - Sue Lyons; London Branch at the AGM - PP; Orpington Caledonian Society - Tony Atlinson; RSCDS Summer School demonstration team - Jim Stott; Summer School party - Elaine Davies. pp10-11: Meryl Thomson - from herself; Burns poem extract - National Library of Scotland, CC BY 4.0; The Gentle Shepherd - National Library of Scotland, CC BY NC; All others - from Meryl Thomson; More on *None So Pretty* - from Ian Cutts. p12: Margaret and Peter - Sue Lyons; Dancing Down Under - from Janet Jackson; serTA 2003 - from Jane Rose. p13: Jean Simpson - Neil Kirby; serTA course - from Jane Rose.

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