



The Reel

Published by the LONDON BRANCH of the ROYAL SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE SOCIETY
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No 268

MAY to AUGUST 2009

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SUMMER PICNIC DANCE

Saturday 27 June 2009
2.00 – 6.00 pm

Orchard Lawn, Polesden Lacey
David Hall and his Band

Cumberland Reel	1/11
Lord Elgin's Reel	26/5
Maxwell's Rant	18/10
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Joie de Vivre	39/2
The Silver Tassie	Leaflet
Virginia Reel	Collins p281
Hooper's Jig	MMM2
The Birks of Invermay	16/2
The Dashing White Sergeant	3/2
Machine without Horses	12/12
The Montgomerie's Rant	10/1

* instructions on the Branch Website

We are pleased to advise that the Summer Picnic Dance is returning to Polesden Lacey (RH5 6BD) by courtesy of the National Trust. Admission to the dancing will be £7.00, dancing children £1.50. The National Trust have generously offered to waive entry charges to the site for non-members of the NT (except car parking which costs £2.50) PROVIDED those dancers send their names to Jeff Robertson **BY 6 June**. Otherwise non-NT members will have to pay the normal NT admission of £7 to the site. NT members of course have free admission and car parking. For further information contact Jeff Robertson on tel 01903 245718 or email jtr@ctg.co.uk or chairman@rscdslondon.org.uk.

If the weather is inclement a decision will be made by 10am on 27 June and the dance will be held at Effingham Community Sports Centre, Lower Road, Effingham, Surrey, KT24 5JR. Call 07843 380757 for decision. If the dancing is at the sports centre, it will start half an hour later to allow the band to set up.



Above:
President Mary Stoker
with Vice-Presidents
Owen Meyer and
Rosemary Tilden at
the March Branch

Stella Booth

We send our very best wishes to Stella Booth, one of our Vice-Presidents following her stay in hospital with peritonitis. She is now back home after a short convalescence feeling fine and ready to renew her active life at 91. Dancing keeps you fit! We are pleased that our picnic dance is returning this year to Polesden Lacey where Stella and her husband started it all in 1980.

BRANCH DANCE

June Jig

Saturday 13 June, 2009

St. Columba's Church Hall, Pont St, SW1X 0BD
7.00-10.30pm

Frank Reid and his Band

The Kelloholm Jig	Leaflet
The Ladies of Dunse	26/11
The Gentleman	35/5
Joe MacDiarmid's Jig	5 for 1982
Peggy Dewar	38/1
Anna Holden's Strathspey	42/2
The Starry Eyed Lassie	23/11
The Golden Wedding Strathspey	33/4
Meg Merrilees	1/5
The Happy Meeting.....	29/9
Catch the Wind.....	45/5
Argyll Strathspey	35/3
MacLeod's Fancy	33/3
The Clansman.....	32/8
Moment of Truth.....	37/2
Quarries' Jig.....	36/3
S-Locomotion.....	41/8
The Saltire Society Reel.....	Leaflet

Admission: £7.50 members,
£8.50 non members £2.00 Children
Members' children admitted free.

MUSICAL MAY

Dance to the Musicians

Saturday 9 May 2009
7.00-10.30pm

St. Columba's Church Hall, Pont St. SW1X 0BD
George Meikle and the Musicians

Jubilee Jig	Leaflet
John of Bon Accord	33/5
(featuring the original tune by George Meikle)	
Wisp of Thistle	37/4
Old Nick's Lumber Room	26/6
Preston Mill	45/7
Seann Truibhas Willichan	27/9
Well Done Jack	29/3
Margaret Parker's Strathspey	31/3
The Reel of the 51st Division	13/10
Miss Allie Anderson	Leaflet
Back to the Fireside	38/4
Up in the Air	20/2
Joie de Vivre	39/2
West's Hornpipe	5 for 1965
Cape Town Wedding	39/4
The Starry Eyed Lassie	23/11
Culla Bay	41/2
Mrs MacLeod	6/11

Admission £7.50 members,
£8.50 non members, £2.00 Children,
members' children admitted free.

Issue No 269 will be with UK based members by 22 August 2009 unless delayed in the post. Contributions for that issue should be sent preferably by email to editor@rscdslondon.org.uk. Postal contributions should be sent to Wilson Nicol, 14 Great Woodcote Park, Purley, Surrey CR8 3QS to arrive by **25 July 2009**. **Note the earlier date.** (Issue No 269 will arrive by 28 November 2009).

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

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Once more our AGM is upon us and members will find the Branch Annual Report enclosed with this issue of *The Reel*. There will not be an election for the Committee this year but all places should be filled. Please take the time to look at the Annual Report and tell us what you think. Even if you are not able to attend the AGM in person we would still value your contribution.

Our March dance was the culmination of another successful Family day when we enjoyed the lively music of The Strathallan Band. Sandy Walker received his Branch Award from Mary Stoker, our President, who brought an added sense of occasion to the evening. As a departure from the norm, we also held a raffle draw and are most grateful to MyTartan.com for kindly donating prizes of such quality.

This year marks our return to Polesden Lacey on 27 June and we are all looking forward to dancing on the newly created Orchard Lawn. I understand that there is a memorial seat in the Loggia of Polesden Lacey House in honour of our former President Alex Westwood.

It hardly seems possible that a year has passed since I took over as Branch Chairman. Thanks for this go largely to the hard working members of the Committee who do so much to keep the Branch flourishing. There will be some new faces on the Committee next season and with their hard work and your support the Branch can continue to thrive and build on its past success.

Jeff Robertson

LOST MEMBERS

Mrs Bunty Collinson, a life member of the Society and the Branch who lived at Sedlescombe East Sussex, has died.

Sometimes the only indication that members have changed their address is when *The Reel* has been returned by the Post Office. If any reader can shed further light on the following, please let the Membership Secretary know.

Life Members Mr & Mrs L Bradley of 14 Shelley Crescent, Heston, Hounslow Middlesex. Annual member Miss R W R Stewart of 56 Meadvale Road, Ealing.



EDITORIAL

When I mentioned in the last Reel that a programme of pre-1946 dances was a great success, I tried it out at our local club recently. The general consensus was favourable but more exhausting. The interesting fact is that all of the dances that evening still appear, although not together, on general dance programmes. Dancing is a living art and thrives on change so it is not unexpected that style and content over 60 years has developed. There are new figures; the choreography has become more sophisticated and the incidence of pas de basque has declined. How many of the newer dances include poussette in reel or jig time? Choreography is all about the smooth fitting of patterns so it is not surprising that our more successful dance compilers have mathematical or analytical minds, yet as Miss Milligan said 'dancing should always be taught as a fun, spontaneous movement, not the solving of a mathematical problem'.

Wilson Nicol

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM of the London Branch of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society will be held at St. Columba's Church (Upper Hall), Pont Street, London, SW1 on Friday 12 June 2009. Tea will be served at 6.30pm and the meeting will commence at 7.30pm. There will be dancing after the meeting.

AGENDA

- 1 Apologies for Absence
- 2 Approval of minutes of the 2008 AGM
- 3 Matters arising from the minutes
- 4 Report on the year's Branch Activities
- 5 Treasurer's Report and Statement of Accounts
- 6 Appointment of Honorary President and Honorary Vice-Presidents
- 7 Appointment of Officers and Committee of Management
- 8 Appointment of Auditors
- 9 Election of Branch Delegates to the Society AGM
- 10 Any other business

Note: Nominations for the appointments at items 6, 8 and 9 above will be taken from the floor at the meeting.

End of Year Branch Accounts

By the end of May, the Annual Accounts of the Branch should have been approved by the Committee. It will not be possible to circulate them to all members before the AGM on 12 June but if members would like prior sight of them, they should email the Treasurer, Simon Wales, at simon_wales@talk21.com or send a stamped addressed envelope to him (address in the next column).

COMMITTEE AFFAIRS

During the coming quarter, the London Branch Committee will meet on 7 May and 25 June. Suggestions for items to be discussed should be sent to the Secretary at least two weeks before the dates of the meetings.

SOCIETY AGM 2009

The AGM of the Society will be held in Perth on 7 November 2009 during the Conference weekend 6 - 8 November.

The London Branch will elect its delegates at the Branch AGM on 12 June. Please advise the Secretary, Stewart Murray, if you would be willing to be present at the Society AGM as a Branch delegate. Delegates are required to vote as directed by the Branch Committee. There will be a small contribution towards the travel expenses but all other arrangements are the responsibility of the delegate. Application forms for function tickets during the Conference weekend should be available on the Society website from 13 April. This is a great opportunity to meet dancers from all over the world, to attend two wonderful dances and to see the Society at work. In addition to the formal business of the AGM itself, a Members' Forum will be held on the morning of Sunday 8 November.

Warning – since another large conference is concurrent with ours this year, book your accommodation early!

ROYAL
SCOTTISH
COUNTRY
DANCE SOCIETY



Patron - H.M. The Queen
President – Dr Alastair MacFadyen
Chairman – Alex Gray

HEADQUARTERS:

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email: info@rscds.org.
www.rscds.org.

LONDON BRANCH

Hon. President:
Mary Stoker

Hon. Vice-Presidents:
Mary Barker, Stella Booth, Ellen Garvie,
Jenny Greene, Marie Jamieson,
John Laurie, Owen Meyer, Rosemary Tilden.

Chairman:
Jeff Robertson

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Hon. Treasurer:
Simon Wales,

Flat 6, 86 Worcester Rd, Sutton,
Surrey SM2 6QQ.
Tel: 020 8643 0952.
email: simon_wales@talk21.com

SUB-COMMITTEES

Youth:.....Andrew Kellett, Angela Young
Classes:.....Moirra Strutt, Gillian Bloomfield,
Margaret Catchick (Day School), Pamela Ellam,
Lena Robinson, Margaret Shaw
Dances:.....Jeff Robertson, Gillian Bloomfield,
Margaret Catchick, Margaret Shaw,
Angela Young
Demonstrations:..James Fairbairn, Angela Young
Publicity:.....Michael Nolan, Wilson Nicol (Reel),
Rita Marlow*, Meryl Thomson*(website)

Open-air Dances:.....James Fairbairn,
Jeff Robertson

Membership:.....Gaynor Curtis*
Bookstall:.....Ian Anderson*

Central Council of Physical Recreation:
Marie Jamieson*, Simon Wales.

Hon Archivist:.....Iris Anderson*

S E Branches:.....Simon Wales,

Combined Societies:.....Jeff Robertson

*Indicates a non-Executive Committee member.

Website
www.rscdslondon.org.uk

Objects of London Branch

To advance the education of the public in the London area in traditional Scottish Country Dancing, in particular by:

- a) preserving and furthering the practice of traditional Scottish Country Dances;
- b) providing or assisting in providing instruction in the dancing of Scottish Country Dances;
- c) promoting the enjoyment and appreciation of Scottish Country Dancing and Music by any suitable means.

News from the RSCDS Management Board

On 21 February I arrived at 12 Coates Crescent early in the morning again, ready for my second Management Board meeting.

A lot of work goes on in between meetings and the email exchanges are rapid and comprehensive. We had already discussed, electronically, some pressing issues; about membership; whether there should be a membership category for children; about the rather antiquated IT systems at HQ and how the office could become more efficient with a low cost but effective on-line system, etc. All these discussions seem to be very democratic and inevitably involve consultation with sub-committees or with branches.

The agenda for the Management Board meeting itself was lengthy. A good amount of time was spent looking at the trend in membership of the Society. It will not surprise anyone that the pattern across the branches is variable. This is illustrated with a variance of a 100% increase in members of one branch to a decrease of 45% in another. The overall trend however is that a decreasing number of dancers joined the Society last year. Explanations could be many, but the Society realises the need to look closely at the benefits of membership and re-examine how new members can be attracted and existing members retained. I am sure that there will be some consultation with branches about any emerging ideas.

Regional conferences for Scottish dancers seem to be a successful way of communicating with members and the Scottish conference, the New Zealand conference and the regional Teachers Association conference in Canada were reported on. At all these conferences there is usually a focus engaging young dancers and this is reflected in the planning for the AGM in November. Dancers in Europe should be aware of the Kaleidoscope conference near Geneva in July, which offers another opportunity to talk about the future of Scottish dancing and also to enjoy some social dancing.

A short paragraph or two here cannot fully reflect the discussion of a meeting which lasts more than six hours! I can say though that time was not wasted and the email exchanges have continued apace over the weeks since the meeting. The Chairman and staff at HQ work hard for all members of the Society – just as our Chairman and Committee in London do their best to reflect the interests of our members here.

Lindsey Jane Rousseau

THE LONDON BRANCH 80th ANNIVERSARY BALL

Preliminary announcement

Saturday 30 October 2010

Hammersmith Town Hall
with its fine sprung floor and
superb wood panelled interior
7.00pm Carriages 12.30am

The Craigellachie Band

Tickets: £40.00 per person includes
champagne and dinner.

Come and join everyone attired in their
finery celebrating a special anniversary in
this magnificent London Hall.

Look out for further details in
future Reels

**It is not too soon to put the date in
your diary**

DANCE SCOTTISH WEEK

12-19 September 2009

Dance Scottish Week is an international initiative by the Society in Edinburgh and it is hoped that branches around the world will participate by organising events (large or small) that will encourage newcomers to experience and hopefully take up Scottish dancing. This year, the week runs from Saturday 12 to Saturday 19 September. The Society is organising a ball, supported by Homecoming Scotland, which will be held in Surgeons' Hall, Edinburgh, on Friday 18 September, from 7.00 - 11.30pm, with music provided by David Cunningham and his Band. Tickets cost £35 and are available from the Society headquarters.

The Society has asked branches to submit information about any special activities or events which they are organising in association with Dance Scottish Week. Any affiliated groups in the London region may if they wish submit details of their events to the Branch Secretary, Stewart Murray, for inclusion in the Branch's submission to the Society.

London Branch Events

The London Branch is building on the success of last year's events. Plans are at an early stage but will include Open Air dancing at Kensington Gardens on 12 September, an Open House taster evening Wednesday 16 September, a Youth workshop and a Branch dance on Saturday 19 September, and an outreach activity on the weekend of 12-13 September. Look out for details on the Branch website and in the next Reel.

South East Dance Diary 2009 – 2010

Diary season! How would Scottish Dancing in the South East function without the annual Diary? So let's have the information for 2009/2010 please. Events should be entered on the standard form which can be downloaded from the Branch website. If you do not have access to the website please complete the following details for each event:

Day; Date (dd, mmm yy); Venue (town - and hall as well if this is somewhere special); Band, recorded or type of event (e.g. a day school); Contact name and telephone number, plus email and website addresses if available.

Please will you reconfirm any of the coming season's dances that are already on the Branch website: <http://www.rscdslondon.org.uk>

We use a code to indicate certain features of some events. Please therefore say if it is: – in the afternoon, a ball, children's dance, suitable for the less experienced, in the open air, a special supper (e.g. Burns Night), tickets need to be booked in advance, or a special anniversary celebration.

Please send the form or details to Caroline Hamilton by email to diary@rscdslondon.org.uk or by post to Caroline Hamilton, 31 Boundary Road, Eastcote, Pinner, Middlesex, HA5 1PW. Email messages will be acknowledged once received.

The Diary is provided by the London Branch free of charge. It will be distributed with the September copy of *The Reel* to all London Branch members in the London area. Others, including any who may subscribe to *The Reel* but do not live in the London area, can get a copy by sending a large sae to the Editor.

Input as soon as possible please but by the end of June at the latest.

Caroline Hamilton

DANCE SCOTTISH

Branch Dance

A New Season dawns
Saturday 19 September 2009
7.00 - 10.30pm.

St. Columba's Church Hall, Pont St. SW1X 0BD
Gordon Shand and his Scottish Dance Band

The Jubilee Jig Leaflet
The Ladies of Dunse 26/11
Gramachie MMM1
Joie de Vivre 39/2
The Homecoming Dance 5/2009
Golden Harvest London 75th Ann
Hamilton House 7/10
The Lea Rig 21/5
The Montgomeries' Rant 10/1

St Andrews Fair 5 for 1982
The Westminster Reel
..... 45/1/London Diamond Jubilee
Sauchie Haugh Leaflet
The Wild Geese 24/3
Preston Mill 45/7
The Valentine 5/2009
Muirland Willie 21/9
Strathmore 43/5
The Duke of Perth 1/8

Admission £7.50 members,
£8.50 non members,
£2.00 Children,
member's children admitted free
£5 Youth Workshop Attendees.

FUTURE BRANCH DANCES 2009-2010

28 November **Kafoozalum**
19 December Christmas Dance
Ian Muir, Prestwick
16 January Burns Night
Frank Reid
27 March **Strathallan**

WE CAN HELP YOU AFFORD IT!

The RSCDS and the London Branch offer scholarships mostly to young people (up to 25 years) to attend RSCDS Residential Schools as a dancer or as a prospective teacher or as a musician. In addition any member can apply for a scholarship to attend Summer School with a view to taking the RSCDS Teaching Certificate. London Branch also has funds available to give support to any event promoting Scottish Country Dancing among young people.

Don't be shy about asking for assistance. We are a charity and we are here to help you improve your skills and enjoyment of Scottish Country Dancing, and to support you in passing on your enthusiasm and knowledge to the next generation. If you think you might benefit from a scholarship pick up the phone or drop an email to any member of the Branch committee, or you could start with our Secretary:

stewart.murray@btinternet.com
or youthcoordinator@rscdslondon.org.uk.

There are events happening all year round such as Spring Fling, Winter and Summer Schools.
Think about it. — We want to help.

WINTER SCHOOL 2010

Details of the RSCDS 2010 Winter School are due to be circulated by the Society on 10 July 2009.

CLASSES

Come to class, meet old friends, make new ones, improve your dancing and have fun!

Class	Day	Time	Location	Teacher / Musician
BEGINNERS	Wednesday	6.30 - 8.00	Marlborough School, Sloane Avenue, SW3 3AP	Moira Strutt / Jane Ng
POPULAR	Wednesday	8.00 - 9.30	Marlborough School, Sloane Avenue, SW3 3AP	Lindsey Rousseau / Ian Cutts
TECHNIQUE	Wednesday	7.00 - 9.00	Marlborough School, Sloane Avenue, SW3 3AP	Maureen Campbell / Ken Martlew
GENERAL	Wednesday	2.30 - 4.30	St. Columba's Church Hall, Pont Street, SW1X 0BD	Jeni Rutherford
DEMONSTRATION	Tuesday	<i>For details contact James Fairbairn, 01865 512308</i>		Angela Young / Sandra Smith

Summer term starts week commencing 20 April, ends week commencing 18 May to be followed by five general classes. Wednesday evening classes cost £35 for five week term.
The cost per session is £8. Newcomers are not charged the first class they attend.

New!

Student Discount for Evening Classes

Any student under 25 in full time education is eligible for a discount of £1 per session for London Branch evening classes. Please request this when registering for the class.

SUMMER CLASSES

This year there will be five general classes each with a different teacher and musician on Wednesday evenings at Marlborough School, Sloane Avenue from 7.15-9.15 p.m. starting on Wednesday 27 May until 24 June. Cost £6.00 per class. Come and try the different styles of teaching and playing: the classes are suitable for all abilities

The teachers are: **Gaynor Curtis, Christine Hastie, Bar Martlew, Brian Pierson, and Angela Young**

and the musicians: **Dave Hall, Andrew Nolan, Barbara Manning, Sandra Smith, and Angela Young.**

Further information from Moira Strutt.
classes@rscdslondon.org.uk

KENSINGTON GARDENS

Following the popular support that we received last year for our extended season in Kensington Gardens, the Royal Parks have again allowed us to book four Saturdays in August and September for open air dancing by the bandstand. We will be dancing on Saturdays 22 & 29 August and 5 & 12 September which coincides with the launch of Dance Scottish Week 2009.

The timing is from two till four o'clock each afternoon and we will have music from a lively band to dance to and a friendly caller to guide everyone through the dances. The Dem Team will do a brief display during the pause at three. We hope that veterans recalling past pleasures will want to support the events again. If you have not been before then it is a lovely way to spend a couple of hours on a sunny afternoon, alone or *en famille*, possibly sampling some of the other pleasures to be had in the park as well, such as the Diana memorial playground with its new café, the Albert Memorial, the Italian Gardens, the Round Pond and the Serpentine Gallery.

There are trees for shade and lots of grassy space on which to establish camp. Do remember to bring your own water and refreshments and even a sun hat or parasol. There are loos quite close by at Palace Gate. You can park on meters in nearby streets and tube access is from High Street Kensington, Gloucester Road, Queensway or Bayswater stations.

James Fairbairn

SOUTH EAST CLASSES LIST

London Branch will again be publishing, free of charge, a list of Scottish dancing classes in the south and east. If you wish your class(es) to be included, please send or confirm details, including your group name, venue, day, time, class standard, contact name and telephone number to Stewart Murray, 139 Cottenham Park Rd, London SW20 0DW or preferably by email to stewart.murray@btinternet.com. The printed list is distributed with the September Reel, with subsequent changes being included on the version that can be downloaded from the Branch website. To be included in the printed list, you must submit your information by **no later than Monday, 27 July (and preferably earlier)**.

A June Weekend in Richmond?

The course leading to the Teaching Certificate Examinations is well under way; a conscientious, hard working group of prospective teachers are meeting regularly in Richmond.

Saturday 20 June and Sunday 21 June are the days for Units 3 and 5 of the examinations, the teaching parts, and we shall need at least 16 people to be a volunteer class on Saturday afternoon and most of Sunday. Each candidate is required to teach for either 30 minutes (Unit 3) or 40 minutes (Unit 5) and we would like sufficient dancers to be able to keep changing people in so that no one is too tired. It is an interesting and worthwhile exercise, you do not need to come for the whole time and you do not need to be a very experienced dancer. Refreshments will be provided and a sandwich lunch on Sunday.

Please send your name to Moira Strutt email classes@rscdslondon.org.uk or tel 020 8748 6711, or to Rachel Wilton email wiltonrachel@hotmail.com. Tel 0208 8587729.

NEW MEMBERSHIP RATES

A revised list of membership categories and rates was agreed at the Society AGM in November to take effect from 1 July, 2009. They are:

- ◆ Youth (12 - 18) at 50% of full adult rate, and receiving Membership card and magazine
- ◆ Young Adult (18 - 25) at 80% of full adult rate, and receiving Membership card and magazine
- ◆ Adult Single (25+) at full adult rate, and receiving Membership card and magazine
- ◆ Adult Joint (two people residing at the same address) at 80% of two full adult rates, and receiving Membership card each and a single copy of the magazine.

DAY SCHOOL

Advance Notice

Saturday, 19 October 2009

Lady Margaret School, Parsons Green, London, SW6 4UN

Teachers:**Johan McLean, David Hall Deb Lees, Craig Houston**

Musicians: **Robert Mackay, Barbara Manning Judith Muir, Jeremy Hill**

Plus a choice of optional classes at the end of the afternoon

Musicians Workshop led by:**Ian Muir**
Evening Ceilidh: **Ian & Judith Muir**

Classes to suit everyone. DON'T MISS IT!!
Full details in the next Reel

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FAMILY DANCE ENTHUSES CHILDREN

The last Saturday in March saw children, parents, grandparents and friends fill the Lower Hall at St. Columba's Church for the London Branch Family Day.

Around 30 young dancers – from beginner level through to those who have been dancing for a number of years – took part in the morning class. To the lovely piano music of Jean Harrison they worked on basic technique, while getting to know one another, and for the beginners it was a time to find out and learn what they would need later on!

Then after a lovely lunch it was time for the afternoon dance to the music of Strathallan. New faces arrived, raffle tickets were sold, cakes were enjoyed – and of course dances were danced! Over eight sets enjoyed favourites from *The Flying Scotsman* to *Cumberland Reel*, with some trying out those more tricky dances such as *Petronella* and *Espie McNabb* for the very first time.

The Branch is grateful to all those who make the Family Day such a success – in the kitchen or counting sets – you make the day the success it is for the children. The feedback is so positive, and all looking forward to the next event in November – and we'd love to see you there too.

Angela Young

DEMONSTRATION TEAM

The Dem team has been busy over the winter. Since December we have fulfilled 13 engagements, doing displays and, where required, inviting and organising audience participation:

Our performance at the Annie Lennox gig was peopled by showbiz personalities. Zöe Ball and Fat Boy Slim shared our dressing room. They were pleasant and unpretentious and enthusiastically joined in all the general dancing. The charity auction raised £205,000 for Oxfam!

The Fiddlers' Rally (organised by Ian and Ann Robertson) has been an annual fixture for 23 years but was a first for us and meant that the team were dancing on stage front watched by an audience of close to 1000. We did two displays, the second dancing to the orchestra of around 80 fiddlers and assorted other instrumentalists. It was a bit nerve-wracking but we learned from the experience and the merging of dance with the music (much of it written for dancing, of course) added a new dimension, which we believe was appreciated by audience and musicians alike.

Our recent gigs have allowed us to rub shoulders with a remarkable cross-section of the British public, with equal enjoyment. Just two examples: the young boys at the Cherry Trees School (all excluded from normal primary schools) were exuberant but, admittedly carefully monitored by their teachers, well behaved and joined in with glee. What a contrast with the plush crowd at the Four Seasons' Spa who were equally exuberant and participative though fuelled in some cases by not merely high spirits.

We were disappointed for the first time for several years not to bring any trophies back from Newcastle, though our ladies team were a close second in their section and both teams recorded high marks, the separation of the top three teams in each section being a matter of a point or two.

All our classes and events are supported by a variety of musicians. I would like to thank our pipers Roger Huth and Neil Esslemont; also Rob Alderton, Ian Cutts, Rod Dorothy, Dave Hall, Peter Jenkins, Elspeth Hanson, Ian Robertson, Judith Smith, Sandra Smith and Angela Young.

James Fairbairn

FOCUS ON YOUTH

Children's Classes

London

The Branch Children's Class continues in the Summer term on Saturdays 30 May, 13 June, and 18 July, 10.30-11.30 at St. Columba's Church Hall, Pont St SW1X 0BD.

Teacher:Angela Young

Musician:Jean Harrison

£2.00 per child (including drink).

Adults welcome to stay.

Newcomers always welcome!

Buckinghamshire

Chiltern Children's Scottish Dance Club continues. There are classes with both Country and introductory Highland Dancing on Tuesday evening for 'Improvers' and Wednesday evening for 'Wee ones' and 'Beginners' with teachers Joan Desborough and Ann Robertson. Details from Ann on 01296 630682.

Medal tests

We wish all young dancers taking the RSCDS Medal Tests in London on 2 May the very best of luck!

Family Day – Saturday 28 November

St. Columba's Church Hall, Pont St SW1X 0BD

11.30-12.45 Children's Class

1.00pm Lunch provided for all dancers

2.00-4.30 Family Dance with Kafoozalum (dances will be talked and walked through)

Everyone is welcome for all or part of the day.

More details in the next issue, or contact

youthcoordinator@rscdslondon.org.uk.

LONDON BRANCH YOUTH WORKSHOP

Saturday 19 September

Following last year's successful afternoon, London Branch will be holding a Youth Workshop from 1.30 - 4.30pm at St. Columba's Church, Pont Street. The teacher will be **Angela Young**, and the musician **Gordon Shand**. Light refreshments will be supplied from 1pm. As last year, the plan is for those attending the workshop to take part in a display at the evening Branch Dance, having enjoyed a pizza dinner together. There is no charge for the workshop and there will be a reduced evening dance ticket cost of £5 for those attending the workshop. To register interest or for more details, please contact Angela Young on email aady@mac.com.

From The Reel Dec 1961

BEGINNERS' SYLLABUS

We publish below a list of 46 dances. It is a list compiled, recommended and used by Bill Ireland as a logical sequence in which to teach dances to beginners. Faults you may find in it, he says, but it works. It depends on your beginners how long it takes to get through the list, but it would be exceptional to do it in a year (in addition to the usual irresistible requests).

Petronella

Corn Rigs

Cumberland Reel

Jessie's Hornpipe

Linton Ploughman

Come Ashore Jolly Tar

Dashing White Sergeant

Eightsome Reel

Mrs. Macleod

Circassian Circle

Waltz Country Dance

Merry Lads of Ayr

Duke of Perth

Mrs. Grant's Fancy

Monymusk

Lamb Skinnet

Jenny's Bawbee

Deil amang the Tailors

Rakes of Glasgow

Hamilton House

Tartan Plaidie

Fight about the Fireside

Scottish Reform

La Tempête

Reel of 51st Div.

The Camp of Pleasure

Meg Merrilees

Lord Hume's Reel

Dumbarton Drums

The River Cree

Dalkeith's Strathspey

Duke of Atholl's Reel

WORK HARD, PLAY HARD!

On the morning of Saturday 28 March, 30 children from the Chiltern Scottish Dance Club and RSCDS Milton Keynes Branch took their medal tests in Wendover, Bucks. Alex Gray, Chairman of the RSCDS, was the assessor and did a great job putting the children at ease and encouraging them to enjoy their dancing rather than worrying about the assessment. The teachers are sure the children danced better as a result and now await the outcome. The results will be published in the next edition of *The Reel*.

Having done the hard work in the morning, the children and parents had the chance to relax and enjoy themselves in the afternoon at a Children's Ceilidh. Ann Robertson from the Chiltern Scottish Dance Club called the dances and her husband Ian Robertson provided the music along with Rob Alderton on piano.

"We had over a hundred children and parents at the ceilidh and I loved every minute of it" said Ann. "All the photos I have seen show smiles on the faces of the dancers and those watching! After the ceilidh, a couple of parents of young children said that their child now understood what the dance classes were all about - FUN!"

The combination of the medal tests followed by the ceilidh worked extremely well. After the children had worked so hard in the morning, they could let their hair down in the afternoon. The two clubs are already planning to do the same thing again next year.

More information about the Chiltern Club is available from Ann Robertson on 01296 630682. Information on the RSCDS Milton Keynes Children's Class is available from Rita Scott on 01908 631512.



Ann Robertson

IRENE CAITHNESS (GRANT)

Miss Milligan's Strathspey Ballerina writes about the early days:

I went to primary school in Dunfermline and while there one of the teachers, Miss Chisholm, went to the first Summer School in St. Andrews in 1927. She came back full of enthusiasm, picked a team from school, taught us skip change of step and the dance *The Triumph* (Book 1). We were then entered into a festival that was to be adjudicated by Miss Milligan in the Adam Smith Hall in Kirkcaldy. I cannot remember if we had boys dancing or girls in sashes as boys – but the girls wore white dresses. When we got there we very nervously watched proceedings from the gallery of the hall. I don't know if we were too much in awe of this important lady, or probably we were just not good enough, but Miss Milligan only gave us 3rd place out of 5! Afterwards she spoke to us all very encouragingly, urging us to keep dancing. Had she spoken to us before rather than after, we might have danced more happily for 'such a nice lady'! That was in 1928, I was 6 and as it transpired, this was the start of a long and happy friendship with Miss Milligan.

I next met Miss Milligan 14 years later in 1942 when she came to Dunfermline College of PE as an Examiner of both certificates. She had come to ensure that our dancing and teaching would pass, which was something she carried out at various colleges throughout Scotland.

Whilst Miss Milligan was watching the dancing there was an extra girl, so I was asked to sit out whilst she danced. Miss Milligan indicated that I should sit beside her – an undreamed of honour! Whilst she watched the dancing, eagle-eyed, we had a very friendly chat where she asked my name and where I came from. Prophetically, we all danced *Red House* from Book 7, which was the name of the house my husband and I have lived in, in St. Andrews, for the last 50 years, and where Miss Milligan was a frequent visitor during the summer schools!

I came to teach in St. Andrews in 1945 where I joined the Branch class and also attended my first of many Summer Schools. I was delighted to be taught by Miss Milligan with her quest for precise happy dancing. I remember that if we made mistakes, she would sometimes say, very sadly – if gold will rust, then what will iron do!

At that time, as well as dancing from the new book we had a visit from Mrs MacNab from Vancouver who had a selection of dances which I think were said to have been taken out to Canada years before and she was now returning them. Dances such as *Bonnie Anne*, *Hebridean Weaving Lilt* and *Rouken Glen* – all very pleasant to do, but seldom danced now? We were also taught Ladies' step dances by Mrs Tibbie Cramb who was a beautiful dancer and a very good teacher of such dances as *Scottish Lilt* and *Rose of Benbecula*.

Between 1949 and 1952, after auditions and the international team was chosen, there were dance festivals in Venice, Nice, Holland, Le Mans and Paris and my life became more involved with country dancing. Through being in the team, it was a great privilege and honour to get to know Miss Milligan, to admire her energy and her never ending pleasant friendship as she met and greeted all the dignitaries from so many countries at so many official meetings. Many times she must have been very tired, but always appeared to have boundless energy. Luckily there were two members in the team with fluent French who helped out if required, as she happily recognised her lack of expertise in French and Italian! It also gave me the opportunity to become acquainted with one of Miss Milligan's travel tips, which was to put blotting paper on your chest and sit on brown paper to avoid sea sickness. This, however, had limited effect on our piper Bill Clement who, on boarding a small boat in Nice

for a gentle sail down the coast had to abandon ship before even leaving port!

The following year, in 1953, the team was due to go to Barcelona, but since it was scheduled for only a week before my wedding I decided I'd better not go! Happily, Miss Milligan arrived back in time for the wedding along with Miss Hadden and some of the team. She gave us a pair of engraved, initialled silver napkin rings which we've used daily for over 50 years now.

About the same time as I first met Miss Milligan, Anna Pavlova was appearing at the Edinburgh Empire Palace Theatre (now known as the Edinburgh Festival Theatre) and my mother took me across from Dunfermline to see her dance – an unforgettable experience. Looking back at that time, I had seen two remarkable ladies: Pavlova, who with her dancing all over the world inspired a generation of young girls to become ballet dancers and Miss Milligan, with her vision of preserving and promoting Scotland's national heritage of music and dance through her enthusiastic energy and inspired leadership, succeeded in spreading country dancing all over the world.

JESSIE STUART Queen of the Dance

Many of our readers will have either met or have heard of Jessie Stuart, the Dufftown dance teacher. A recent article entitled *The Dancing Quine** in the March 2009 Scots Magazine sheds light on her widespread travels taking classes in dancing. There is not room here to reproduce the whole of the very interesting article but there are some very pertinent quotes which are worth more general airing. Jessie maintains that Scottish country dancing is essentially social dancing – you dance to mix with other people and enjoy yourself. Many of the figures we use in Scottish dancing are shared by many countries but the reel and its patterns are uniquely Scottish. On the founders of the Society, Jessie has this to say: "They did a tremendous amount of work on old manuscripts and gathering information on local variations of the dances but it is their interpretations of the formations which appear in modern books and define our dances, some of which have no resemblance to the original scripts." As the popularity of SCD increased, its success was not just due to the figures "You need to have the music. It's the music that brings the dance to life." Bands are like whisky: it's not so much that there are bad bands, as that some are better than others. Though some dancers take SCD very seriously, they are far outnumbered by ordinary folk who come to dance as best they can. "You don't need to wear ballet shoes or full formal dress to enjoy the night." It is getting pleasure out of dancing that is even more important. Jessie's classes are fun despite all the serious work she encourages. "People don't enjoy something which is too structured. You've to make it entertaining and encourage them. You get the best out of people when they are relaxed and having a wee bit of fun." Her welcoming nature is reflected in the reel written for her – *Jessie Stuart's Welcome to Dufftown* – and there is a cracker of a tune written by Graeme Mitchell of Huntly specially for it.

(*A quine is the Aberdeenshire term for a young woman)

The Reel's Dancing Correspondent

Jimmy McIntosh

Reports on the memorial service for Jimmy McIntosh can be viewed on the Branch web site www.rscdslondon.org.uk

A FURTHER CALL FROM NEW ZEALAND

After visiting New Zealand in 2007, I knew that I would return, so decided to go to their Summer School in Christchurch in 2008. I was rather apprehensive travelling alone but I need not have worried as everyone was very friendly and helpful – starting with two Glasgow policemen who carried my luggage and escorted me to the Airport Premier Lodge. I explained that I was not under arrest!

It is a rather long and tedious journey via Dubai and Sydney but well worth it when you arrive. I left on 24 December and arrived two days later, so Christmas Day disappeared with no festivities as I was flying with Emirates.

The school started on 28th and followed similar lines to the St. Andrews Summer School with classes in the morning and social dancing in the evening. Graham Donald was the visiting teacher from the UK and took the very advanced technique class: I opted for the very advanced low impact class for those who did not wish to be so energetic, but we were! It was taken by Debbie Roxburgh from Wanganui and was most enjoyable. All the dances taught were unknown to me. I was delighted to be invited to teach a Ladies' Step Dance Class one afternoon. A group of nearly 40 ladies and one gentleman turned up to learn *The Pas de Trois for the Misses Glennie*. I was so fortunate in having Muriel Johnstone play for my class. Six of the ladies did the dance at the ceilidh at the end of the week. The musicians playing for the classes also played for the evening dances. They were Muriel Johnstone, Cathy Fraser, Duncan Smith and Iain MacKenzie from Australia, and Sharlene and Anne-Marie from the North Island.

The Hogmanay Dance and President's Ball were a little more formal and held in the lovely hall at the Boys' High School. As usual the musicians continued to play into the early hours after the evening dancing – do they not need to sleep?

After Summer School I travelled north to Hanmer Springs then on to Havelock, Nelson, Motueka and Kaikoura before returning to Christchurch. Driving was easy with little traffic even though it was holiday time, and I stayed in a number of lovely motels. From Havelock I went on the mailboat cruise delivering mail and supplies to outlying areas on Marlborough Sound – a great day out. In Nelson I met a school friend who flew over from Wellington, and went to a dance in Richmond arranged by Christine and Noleen – two ladies I had met at Summer School.

Motueka is on the edge of the Abel Tasman National Park – no roads beyond Kaiteriteri, access only by boat or on foot!! The scenery in all these areas is varied and quite stunning – similar to NW Scotland in places. The weather was also perfect – blue skies, sunshine and temperatures in the high twenties.

On return to Christchurch I stayed with Margaret McMurtry, a dancing friend. We had a day trip to Akaroa, a lovely spot on the Banks Peninsula. On my last day in New Zealand I went up in the gondola to see Christchurch and the surrounding area from above.

It was a wonderful holiday – nothing went wrong! I experienced great hospitality and friendship. I'd love to return and although it is a long way it is well worth it.

London Branch member, Andy Nicol, is organising the Summer School at the end of this year in Auckland and would be delighted to have lots coming from the UK!

<http://ssakl.rscdsnz.org.nz>

Jenny Greene

See picture of Jenny on centre pages

CORRYVRECHAN

The word "Corryvrechan" comes from the Gaelic meaning 'speckled hollow' and is the name of a fearsome whirlpool situated between the islands of Scarba and Jura in the Inner Hebrides, off the west coast of Scotland. The movement of the swirling waters has many similarities to the figures found in Scottish dances so it is no coincidence that there is a Scottish dance display team with the same name.

With a varied repertoire including Country, Highland, Hard Shoe, Hebridean and Shetland styles, combined with innovative choreography and colourful costumes, Corryvrechan draws dancers from across the country.

The lively spirit of their displays is in no small measure due to the successful marriage of dance and music, a union which has long been a strength in the world of Scottish traditional arts. The team is proud of its own expert musicians and of its long and continuing tradition of working with some of the best Scottish musicians in the UK.

Although Corryvrechan is focussed on entertaining audiences with its unique choreography and challenging programmes, the team's fundamental aim is to share Scotland's wonderfully varied dance heritage and, through their affiliation with CIOFF, they have represented the UK at major festivals all over the world for nearly 20 years.

However, after showing off Scottish dance and music through Folk Festival performances around the world, Corryvrechan is at last holding their first UK concert, in Somerset, this June. Their "Scottish Spectacular" promises to give the audience a real taste of Scotland with an uplifting combination of dance, music and song from all regions of the country. Look out for the advert on page 17 and be sure to get your ticket early!

And if you can make it to Somerset this summer, why not stay for a while? The UK's West Country offers visitors a wonderful mix of beautiful coastlines, delightful villages and wild countryside with several areas of outstanding natural beauty.

Mike Innes

JEAN MILLIGAN

the tireless champion of SCD

The co-founder of the RSCDS, Miss Jean Milligan was indeed a remarkable woman. She was in her mid thirties when the Society was founded in 1923 and was still directing the Annual St. Andrews Summer School in 1977 at the age of 91, just after she had been granted honorary degree of Doctor of Laws from the University of Aberdeen. In 1973 she was elected Scotswoman of the year on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Society. It was claimed that resulting from her frequent international travels to visit her SCD 'family' she probably knew more people in the world than Her Majesty the Queen – and she had an incredible memory for people's names. Spreading the SCD gospel internationally was superb marketing by her – and these visits continued until well into her eighties. In 1975 she had a five week trip to North America experiencing frozen rivers and snow in Canada while visiting New Brunswick, Toronto, Vancouver then in the USA to Los Angeles, Washington and New York where the temperatures was in excess of 30°C. At one stage, after a class of 275 dancers in Toronto she was driven for 8 hours in a car to New York for another class! Returning to Glasgow, all in one week she examined teachers at Jordanhill on Monday and Tuesday, then to Craiglockhart College in Edinburgh for the same purpose on Wednesday and on Thursday to the Society offices to continue preparing for the Summer School. By Friday she was back home dealing with a mountain of correspondence following her American tour, then back to Edinburgh for a finance meeting on Saturday – and all this at the age of 89!

We have been able to contact Irene Caithness (Grant), Miss Milligan's 'Strathspey Queen' who has written on the previous page about her friendship with Auntie Jeannie as she was known by her dancing 'family'.

The Editor

DO YOU KNOW YOUR WEBSITE?

On your Branch website you can:

- Read past copies of *The Reel*
- Download application forms for Branch events such as the Day School
- Download flyers of dances and events to distribute
- Download a calendar of the year's events
- Read your Chairman's Blog
- Find out up to date information about classes and dances
- Download crib sheets for Branch dances
- Read the notice board and news page containing items that are not in *The Reel* but might be of interest to members
- Find links to other Branches and other SCD groups from all over the world, bands, other Scottish organisations, other dancing organisations
- Look at what the bookstall has for sale – dance books, CDs and even Branch sweatshirts.
- Look at the up to date South East Classes list and Dance Diary
- Look at the Musicians' page for information about workshops in the South East
- And see PHOTOGRAPHS, PHOTOGRAPHS, PHOTOGRAPHS of past events

You can spend many happy hours perusing the site, and you have to keep looking because it is constantly updated and you do not want to miss anything!

How fortunate are we that Meryl Thomson spends time and creativity providing a site that is admired worldwide.

Rachel Wilton



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BANDS



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George Meikle



We welcome George Meikle, the brains behind "Originally Ours" to lead our musician's workshop in London on 9 May.

George and his father took up the accordion together, and by the age of fourteen George

was playing for general dances and weddings. After a few years on second accordion with the Strathearn Dance Band, he formed the Lothian Scottish Dance Band. Now, twenty five years later, the band's musical talents are recognized, and requested, throughout the dancing world. One of the features which makes the Lothian Scottish Dance Band so special is their particularly close involvement with the dances, not just the dancing. As George says "One thing I have always tried to do is to try to play the correct original tune, wherever possible, for any dance on a programme. As there are well over 14,000 dances, it is no mean task that musicians face in trying to keep up to date with new dances and tunes." While playing at the RSCDS Summer School in 2002 he thought there ought to be an easier way to carry round all the music books and leaflets issued by the Society. He set about compiling in a single book all these originals. This is now available from the RSCDS entitled *Originally Ours*. It includes information on those dances that are medleys, round the room dances, square set dances and those that start with two chords. It also has a comprehensive index at the back of the book which allows any dance title or original tune to be easily found.

Wilson Nicol

The Berks, Hants, Surrey Border Branch hold their Annual Day School for Dancers and Musicians at Fleet on 14 March

THE MUSICIANS' DAY

Once again our tutor, Nicol McLaren, worked so hard in the morning that by lunchtime we were exhausted. Nicol's programme, including two sets of Shetland tunes, was seriously difficult to play, almost impossible when practising at home it seemed, but very beautiful music. Our numbers were down compared with preceding years. So we had to play with extra effort. We worked, practised and worked again, to get something the dancers would enjoy in the evening. At the end of the afternoon we were shattered beyond exhaustion. 'How can we cope this evening,' I asked myself.

The Moment of Truth arrived: when we were about to play I looked down at the dancers with a feeling of dismay. I personally knew over 50% of them. Then came the Musician's Prayer: Please help me not to screw up, but let the excellent musicians carry it through. We did. The feedback was terrific. The tempo was fast, BUT the dancers liked it. One well known Hebridean lady dancer said it gave her lift even when tired out after the dancing classes throughout the day. So Mr Pianist, if you thought "Too fast, far too fast", go and ask the dancers their opinion. We musicians enjoyed playing for you dancers. Those sluggard absentee musicians take heed and book next year for 13 March, 2010. Come and work to give the dancers what you enjoy playing and they enjoy dancing to. Get Cool.

John Nicholson

MUSICIANS' DAY

There will be an all-day workshop on 9 May at St. Columba's Church, Pont St for musicians who would like to play for the dance in the evening. The dances have been especially chosen for the music and it will be a wonderful evening of music and dancing.

The workshop will be led by George Meikle and all musicians will be very welcome to join in.

For further details and for the set of music in advance of the day contact Jeff Robertson, tel 01903 245718 or email jtr@ctg.co.uk.

NEW RECORDINGS

The **New Recordings** column has unfortunately been held over until the next issue of *The Reel* due to the current indisposition of John Laurie. However, there will be a full review of several new recordings including Ian Robertson's new CD advertised in the last Reel, and a CD from Perth Branch by James Coutts and his Band in time for the beginning of the new season in September. We wish John a speedy recovery.

30th ST. ALBANS FIDDLE RALLY



Stephen Webb

Rally organiser Chris Walker with leader Barbara Manning

The 30th Fiddlers' Rally in St Albans Girls School on 27 March 2009 organised by the St. Albans & Mid Herts Caledonian Society was celebrated with over forty musicians from all over the south east of England. The programme of well chosen Scottish dance music enabled the musicians to relax and enjoy playing to a very receptive audience. The evening was enhanced with solos by Stuart Forbes on the fiddle and two pieces of Scott Joplin music on the piano by thirteen year old Joel Bamigboye. The Rally is well known for its welcoming atmosphere and for the opportunity over sticky bread and a cup of tea in the interval to meet friends and acquaintances. The audience in the balcony were not so fortunate this year in the raffle as they usually are!

Funds raised at the evening were donated to the Cancer Treatment and Research Trust which has raised over £1.5M to fund an improved treatment unit and on-going research at Mount Vernon Hospital which benefits patients in the North London and Hertfordshire area.

Chris Walker who has organised the Rally since the beginning in 1979 says that several thousand pounds have been raised at the Rallies over the years for local and national charities.

The next event in St. Albans for Scottish music enthusiasts will be on Friday 9 October 2009 when Deirdre Adamson, one of Scotland's leading accordion soloists, will be playing at a meeting of the Hertfordshire Fiddle and Accordion Club. Details of the evening and of the 2010 Rally can be obtained from Chris Walker on 01727 822143 or by email mail@cwalker3707.fsnet.co.uk

BRIDPORT SCOTTISH DANCERS

It was a dark and stormy night. The band, Craigellachie, warmed up. The wine was poured. The guests started to arrive and there was excitement in the air. It was time for The Bill Allan Memorial Ball. Dancers from as far afield as Cheltenham, Bristol and France had gathered in Bridport, Dorset, and were eager to start the festivities.

The Bridport Scottish Dancers had decided to hold their 10th Annual Ball on 17 January 2009 in memory of a founding member, Bill Allan. Bill had grown up in Dunfermline and started dancing whilst living in London in the early 1960s. However, it was only when he moved to Dorset that his dancing career began in earnest. He obtained his teacher's certificate in 1976 at St. Andrews,

and taught regularly for the local South Dorset Caledonian Society meetings in Weymouth. In 1995 he sought fresh challenges and helped to set up Bridport Scottish Dancers with the assistance



William 'Bill' Allan

of fellow teacher, Ann Prior. Their combined techniques obviously were popular as the group still get an average of four sets at their weekly meetings.

Bill remained a member of the RSCDS London Branch for his entire life, and was often seen at residential weekends in southern Britain. He was eager to encourage new dancers, relaxing his partner with his charm and humour. We at Bridport will remember how he would sing along to the music, and how he could make enjoyable the most stressful moments on the dance floor. One lady commented that he was 'a cross between Father Christmas and Sean Connery'. His widow, Kathleen, continues to be involved with the group, although sadly she can dance no longer. The Ball was considered a resounding success, with Craigellachie on top form. There were two dances on the programme written for Bill Allan: *Bramley House* (a strathspey) and *Playing the Field*, a jig in a square formation devised by Sue Tyler of RSCDS Exeter Branch. Both were well received. A raffle drawn during the interval raised £205 that has been sent to the RSCDS. It is to be used to help young dancers to attend Summer School, the Spring Fling or other suitable events.

Kate Kinnear

ST. VALENTINE DANCE

On Saturday 14 February Peter Collis held a Valentine's Dance in Harrow as a celebration of his late wife Gillian whose birthday would have been St. Valentine's Day. The many guests brought food and raffle prizes enabling over £300 to be sent to the Willen Hospice that cared for Gillian in her last days. The music, dance programme (which included *Wembley's GEM*) and atmosphere were just as Gillian would have liked them to be, dancing the evening away to the Craigievar Band with guest accordionist Iain MacPhail from Edinburgh. Peter and his late wife have been London Branch members for many years.

In the photo (right) Craigievar Band Leader Stuart Forbes (fiddle), Alex Forbes (double bass) and Iain MacPhail on accordion with MC Jim Henderson

Fay Golding



Fay Golding who died in Edinburgh in December aged 82 was an elegant dancer, an excellent teacher and one of the best MCs I have ever seen.

She started Scottish dancing in London in the 1950s in Bill Ireland's class but then moved to Edinburgh where she taught mathematics. This was one of the things that made her such a good MC. If a dance was complicated she drew the pattern of the dance in the air with her hands.

I first met her when Robert Mackay was organising the Edinburgh weekends from 1980. They were enormous fun and the standard of teaching and dancing was very high so that the Cairngorms and other London dancers attended the weekends year after year. Fay taught at the weekends and was one of the MCs.

I then met Fay when I first went to St. Andrews Summer School. At that time the certificated teachers and very advanced were put together in the first class and I remember joining Fay and Hugh McTurk for refreshing gin and tonics after our efforts.

Fay often came back south to teach at the London Day School, Borders Branch, the Argylls weekend and the Isle of Wight.

In 1997 Fay came with Dorothy Leurs to the Cairngorms Hogmanay weekend at Maidstone Police College and in subsequent years at New Hall School. We had a Ceilidh evening and Fay usually had an amusing outfit to downplay her natural elegance.

Fay was a delightful and entertaining person who will be greatly missed.

Mary Barker

The South-East Essex Scottish Society 1909 - 2009



The Society formed in 1909 held its first official function, a Burns Supper, on 25 January of that year.

It was therefore most appropriate that The South-East Essex Scottish Society celebrated the start of their Centenary Year with a Burns Supper.

At Runnymede Hall, one hundred and fifteen members and friends including Her Worship the Mayor of Southend-on-Sea, Councillor Mrs. Gwen Horrigan, enjoyed this special event.

The Society was delighted to receive a letter from Buckingham Palace in which Her Majesty The Queen sent her best wishes to all concerned for a most enjoyable evening.

The Haggis was piped in by Mr Bob Dobney, then passionately addressed by Mr Graham Easton. The toast to "The Immortal Memory" was given by Mr Stephen Jones. Mr Tom Craig, a past president of the Society, proposed the toast to The Lassies, and an equally enjoyable reply was given by his wife Mrs. Joan Craig. During the evening three of Burns's songs were performed by Mrs Marilyn Leedham and Mrs Isobel Brown.

A very enjoyable evening ended with a selection of Scottish Country Dances and the playing of a pipe tune called S.E.E. 100, composed by Mr Bob Dobney especially for the occasion. Before finishing with "Auld Lang Syne" our President thanked the organising committee for helping to make the evening such a success.

Mrs Jean Mackay



Stephen Webb



‘Easy and Enjoyable’ Branch Dance 28 March 2009

1. London Branch Award recipient retired Branch Piper Sandy Walker to whom Mary presented the award and also complimented on wearing a perfect kilt!
2. Jeff Robertson, our Chairman, greets visitors Amy and Linda Banner from New York
3. Penelope Coate agrees through her smile that SCD is great fun
4. The exciting playing of Chris Oxtoby on accordion with Ann Stonehouse (part of Strathallan) added greatly to the enjoyment of the evening's dancing
5. Jeremy and Grace Hill lead Dennis and Diana Tucker whilst dancing the allemande in *Miss Allie Anderson*
6. Wrapped up well ready to leave on a cold snowy night a big thank you goes to Rose and Stuart Kreloff the main organisers of the Watford & West Herts Scottish Society's St. Valentine's Dance held in Bushey for an excellent themed evening .





9



7



8

Milton Keynes 30th Anniversary Ball40

7. The youngest member of Milton Keynes RSCDS, Sara Baker, cuts the 30th Anniversary Cake

New Zealand Summer School

8. Jenny Greene spotted at the New Zealand Summer School Ball

Combined Societies Dance

- 9. Three hands across is danced in The Royal Yacht Britannia
- 10. Bob Parson's leads Lindsey Jane Rousseau up the middle in the figures of eight in *Neidpath Castle*
- 11. A full hall of dancers, dance the grand chain in the strathspey *Neidpath Castle*
- 12. Versatile dem. dancer Catriona Bennett helping with the interval food

All pictures except 7 and 8 by Stephen Webb



11



12

DANCING IN ANTARCTICA



It all started with an article in *The Reel*, about our esteemed Chairman of the RSCDS, Alex Gray. The article stated 'The only continents he has not danced in are the Arctic and Antarctic.'

That's when I had my Great Idea.

I had already booked an Antarctic expedition with Naturetrek Holidays so I had the opportunity, but search as I might I couldn't find an RSCDS Branch down there and I wasn't too sure about my feet surviving the ice wearing those little princess pumps, either.

What to dance was easy. We were due to visit the South Orkneys, scene of William Speirs Bruce's 'Scotia' expedition in 1902/4. The centenary of this journey was commemorated recently by the publication of the RSCDS and Scottish Geographical Society's 'Scotia Suite' of music and dance, so *The Piper and the Penguin* was the obvious choice.

OK, so I couldn't dance it on my own, but in the hopes of persuading some of my fellow passengers to join me in this madcap scheme I squeezed into my already overfilled suitcase a CD and the dance instructions.

There were 40 of us aboard the *Grigory Mikheev* which set sail from Ushuaia in January. I broached the idea with the Naturetrek tour leaders and got the distinct feeling that they don't often get requests of this nature. They recovered very quickly and gave the plan their blessing. Scottish dancing was to be included in the programme of events.

My appeal for support was well received, and two volunteers admitted to having danced Scottish at school. The next task was to explain to the uninitiated the arcane mysteries of Scottish Country Dancing and to arrange a practice.

First you have to understand that the *Grigory Mikheev* is not a luxury liner. It is a small converted research vessel, 200ft length with a 12ft draught, and doesn't aspire to a ballroom

therefore rehearsal space is at a premium. In fact there isn't any unless you count the aft deck in a calm sea. (The forward deck is ALWAYS too windy.) Nevertheless I am blown over – metaphorically, thank goodness – when, on the sudden call from the captain that conditions are right and it is safe to dance on deck, sixteen; yes, exactly sixteen people turn up to join in the fun. Two whole sets; it was beyond all my hopes. We had quite a sizeable audience, too.

Next problem? Music. We don't have a portable CD player on board so although we have heard the music through the bar speakers – yes, there is just room on the ship for a bar – for our practice on deck we have to dance to the count. What an amazing amount of talent! Sixteen people who can count to eight and



know their right hand from their left. Well, most of the time. Not only that, they had to negotiate around columns, capstans, oil-drums and various other items of a nautical nature. All this took place after we had crossed the Antarctic Convergence; technically I can claim to have danced in Antarctica. But I was not satisfied. We had to dance on 'Bruce's Land'.

Our planned itinerary took us to Laurie Island in the South Orkneys, the very island where William Bruce set up his meteorological station in 1902. When he left in 1904 the British refused to fund any further research there so he offered it to Argentina who have been running it ever since, the longest operational research station in the Antarctic. Weather permitting, we were due to land there and my secret wish had been that this was where we would be able to perform our dance.

However as we approached the Island it became clear that there was no way we could dance on that terrain; what wasn't covered in 'Bergie bits' (the official term for boulders of ice!) was either loose shale or frozen rock. The Argentinean research staff were friendly and welcoming but neither their English nor our Spanish was up to explaining our desire to dance. Also the fur seals were rather feisty and

we didn't want to distress the penguins with their young.

We saw 'Ormond House', the stone hut that the 'Scotia' crew built and lived in while they were working here and four of us did a rather quick 'right hands across' while no one was looking!

By now everyone was as keen as I was to achieve our aim. Those who weren't dancing were engaged upon the technical problems of playing the music. We asked around the crew but no one had a portable CD player so my CD was converted to MP3 format; lots of MP3 players around, but no speakers. Two gallant passengers had brought their laptop with them and nobly volunteered its services. Maybe I should explain how we get from our ship to these islands.

Donning wellies, waterproofs and lifejackets, we climb down the gangway to the Zodiacs, inflatable dinghies, waiting below. Then we bounce over the freezing cold Antarctic Ocean. The Zodiac drivers run the dinghies up the beach as far as they can and we scramble out, trying to time our jumps to match the ebb and flow of the raging foam. Not always successfully. Is this the sort of environment you would willingly offer up your precious laptop? We couldn't take the risk.

When we landed on Beak Island, part of the Antarctic peninsular, on the 15 January 2009, everything looked good. There was a sloping shale beach, but we felt sure we could cope with the incline; no great big boulders and the only 'Bergie bits' were at the water's edge; although many a dem. team back home might have balked at it as a suitable venue. Best of all, it was uninhabited, apart from the penguins – there had to be penguins. But what to do about the music? Nothing for it but to go *a capella*.

Finally, two sets of the Antarctic Demonstration Team, clad in their unique costume of wellies, waterproofs and life jackets, performed *The Piper and the Penguin* to the rousing strains of *Scotland the Brave* in front of an audience of some fifteen or so rather bemused Adelle penguins.

Maybe the footwork was a little shaky, maybe the tempo was a little erratic, maybe the Purists would feel that the giving of hands was not as elegant as it could be, and certainly the covering left a lot to be desired but we enjoyed it, we have danced in Antarctica and I feel sure Miss Milligan would have approved.

So Alex, the race is on. Which of us will be first to dance in the Arctic?

Barbara Sharp
Leicester Branch

There is an opportunity to view our performance on Youtube, Go to
www.youtube.com/watch?v=WJg7XP7iXio

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COMBINED SOCIETIES' DANCE



Above:

A veritable cornucopia of MC talent managed proceedings (from L to R) Meg Harman, Peter Knight, Mary Robertson, Jim Cook, Maureen Campbell, Elizabeth Bennett, Jeff Robertson, Brian Pierson and Nigel Borsbery at the front.

together representing St. Columba's Dancers, Little Ship Club, RSCDS, Hosts LHC and Clans Association of London

The very successful Combined Societies' Annual Dance was hosted this year by the London Highland Club at St. Columba's Church Hall on 7 March. Over 100 dancers enjoyed a varied programme assembled and MC'd by members of the Highland Club, the London Branch, the Scottish Clans Association of London and the Little Ship Club to fine music by Ian Robertson and his band. This highly successful annual event brings together the dancing fraternity of the main Scottish Dancing groups in London to experience some of the dances, which might not be part of their own club's repertoire.

Right: Elspeth Hudson on Fiddle with Rob Alderton on Keyboard and Ian Robertson Band Leader played great music for the evening



Stephen Webb

THREE SCORE YEARS AND TEN



Tam O' Dancer

A Tale of Dancing Folk by Auld Nick

As tardy members trickle in
An' chatty dancers raise a din
The faithful few have cleared the floor
And brought the music from the store
Auld Nick in kilt with cloven hoof
Lets oot a roar to raise the roof
For lads and quine wi' unco noise
To grab a partner o' their choice.
Wi' sets complete, oot comes Jack's book
In case the teacher needs a look
To chivvy up his errant mind
Wi' hints and help o' any kind.

Cross, cast and turn to second corner
Watch out, Charles, you do not turn her.
Stop, stop we'll hae tae start again
I wish you'd hearken what I'm sayin'
Now Jean, are you a pseudo man?
If so you'd better wear a ban(d).
This time the dance and music clicked
As if the best teams had been picked.

As teacher glow'd amazed and curious
The mirth and fun grew fast and furious
The music loud and louder grew
The dancers quick and quicker flew
They reel'd, they set, they cross'd and castit
Auld Nick's ears were fairly blasted.

But then a dance the Irish Rover
Caused but a few a spot of bother
Rights and lefts upon the skew
With corners one and corners two
But J B Milne is easy meat
The music activates the feet
If left is right and right is wrong
It's not because the teacher's thravn
So heed my words you worthy folk
My anger's often just a joke!

Earlier this year that maestro among the teachers, callers and organisers of the Scottish country dancing fraternity, Peter Knight, celebrated his 70th birthday. Many will know Peter from his time at Dulwich, Hurlingham and Little Ship to name just three where he has guided dancers with patience, dexterity and just occasional exasperation. At the Little Ship dance in Pont Street, Peter was presented with a magnificent chocolate cake in the shape of the Little Ship crest by Caroline Alcock. There was a turnout of some 80 Little Shippers with fine music by Dave Hall. Davinia Miln had arranged a special cabaret act. Chairman Stuart Thom congratulated Peter on his tremendous contribution to Scottish country dancing over the years and presented him with an engraved silver tray from Little Ship. Amazingly it was Peter's seventh party!

Stuart Thom

Picture (above left):

Received by Stuart the Chairman, Caroline presents Peter with his Little Ship 70th Birthday cake which was then enjoyed by all

BRANDED GARMENTS

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On light garments the logo will be as above, but with a gold crown and silver lettering on the darker garments. Please continue to support your Branch.

Jeff Robertson



RSCDS Oxfordshire Branch Open Air Summer Dance held at Wolfson College, Oxford in August 2008



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All pictures on this page: Stephen Webb

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Southampton

Re:Recapping

Dear Wilson,

I would be interested to know how many years John Reeve has been dancing: I suspect a considerable time. Personally I am in my fourth year and appreciate a recap of the dances. I agree that some of the dances are done in class, with a Minicrib to assist, but to go into over twenty dances without a reminder is very daunting to a new dancer, especially if you have to start. Whilst in line waiting for the dance to start I often see people grasping for their cribs. In my opinion the evening should be a social, to meet dancers from various areas, and encourage new dancers. I have been to many classes where members do not attend weekend dances as they have not got the confidence without a recap. If 20 minutes is lost due to recapping is that such a problem if it encourages more people to come to dances?

Yours sincerely

John Russell

Newburgh

Recapping

Dear Wilson,

I was interested to read John Reeve's letter in the last edition of *The Reel*, giving his opinion of MCs recapping every dance. I would like to share my thoughts on the matter. I am not a dancer, but a musician, and from my point of view, I find the practice of walking through dances before the music begins much more irritating than simple recaps. This behaviour seems to be on the increase, and while it is easy to blame dancers for not doing their 'homework', surely more responsibility must lie with MCs for allowing and even encouraging it to happen.

I have played at many dances where no recaps are given (or on occasion a brief, concise summary of the dance is read out) and find that this works very well most of the time. Rarely do the dancers ever forget the dance, and major disasters are extremely uncommon. However, I have also played for dances where virtually every dance is walked through. This is incredibly tedious from the band's perspective, and in some cases (e.g. *The Dreamcatcher*) the walkthrough can take longer than the dance itself. I am of the opinion that this is totally unnecessary, save for perhaps the odd obscure dance, or one which has been devised locally with which those from further afield may not be familiar. In this case however, most dance organisers should include dance instructions when sending out programmes well before the event, and be sensible enough not to include more than one or two on a programme.

Unfortunately this does not always happen in practice; recently I played at a dance where I had not even heard of 14 out of the 20 dances on the programme. Learning dances should be done during classes, not at a social dance.

Evidence of the lack of necessity of walk-throughs (and indeed detailed recaps) is clearly seen when the MC makes a small mistake in calling the dance. Virtually everyone in the hall immediately shouts out to correct the error – because they all know the dance already! And further proof of this revealed itself to me just last week when, running out of time for the last dance of the evening, we the band decided to start playing immediately after the sets had been counted, and before the MC could take the chance to walk the (very well known) 128 bar dance all the way through. Everyone made it to the end unscathed, and we finished the programme on time!

This of course is just the opinion of a musician with no dancing skills (ask anyone who's seen me try!), and I would be interested to hear the thoughts of others.

Graham Berry

Kings Lynn

Recapping Dances

Dear Wilson,

How heartily we agree with John Reeve's sentiments expressed in his letter about recapping dances! It seems that for many people the days of doing a little 'spadework' before a dance have gone. How often now we hear the words 'A dance is a social occasion and one should not have to think too hard!'

We believe it is commonly known as 'dumbing down!'

Mary and Adair Andrews

Ashted

Ceilidh MC

Dear Wilson,

I am sorry that Elizabeth Bennett (Reel 267) had to air her discontent about the MC at the Ceilidh Dance in this manner. Suffice it to say, we pride ourselves on the quality of our excellent MCs in this area, who are very caring of the dancers.

To address the particular issue she raises, it is not possible to get on to the stage from the hall, therefore the MC would have to leave the hall, and thereby lose contact with the dancers. As it happens, the MC in question is experienced in spotting problems at the bottom of the hall and walks down to rectify them and offer assistance. She is also aware that if someone is tired it is unkind to press them to join the dance, but will make up three or five couple sets.

People also have to take responsibility for themselves, and not try to join an activity which could be dangerous for them. Scottish dancers are normally able to decide what their new knee, hip, heart by-pass, etc. can cope with.

Gill Russell

Surbiton

Dance Scottish

Dear Wilson

I am reluctant to dampen Chris Hood's enthusiasm for involving other Scottish organisations in Scottish Country Dancing, but the fact is that they regard the kind of dances done by the RSCDS as poncy. Comunn Gaidhlig does not have dances at its ceilidhs (the word means "visit" basically).

At the London Feis the year before last there was an evening of reels, jigs and strathspeys played by the fiddlers in the bar, but in the gym there was only step-dancing, to the bewilderment of the solitary chap who turned up in a kilt expecting to do SCD.

I remember remarking to a prominent member of the RSCDS that it seemed a pity not to take advantage of the presence of the fiddlers at the feis, to arrange an occasion on which "... to the trembling string the dance gae'd through the lighted ha' " Reaction: nil.

Perhaps the antipathy is mutual.

Iain Donnell

Editor's note:

Iain has since been in touch and was pleased to hear about our Feis London invitation for London Branch RSCDS to work in conjunction with Feis London during Dance Scottish Week 2009.

Oxford

Singing Scottish

Sir,

John Laurie (Letters, Reel no. 267) quibbles with my description of Nicky Spence as the new Kenneth McKellar (the latter still with us, incidentally). If Mr Spence ever achieves (and I hope he does) the instant name recognition and association with the songs of Scotland, not least those of one R. Burns, that KM does then he and his commercial entourage should be well pleased. To illustrate my point, I could have said the new Robert Wilson, but few, if any (Mr Laurie and you, Sir, excepted) would have known to whom I referred.

As to their respective merits as singers, I believe Mr Spence should not be averse to such a comparison. KM was a graduate of the Royal College (Mr Spence of the Guildhall) and was good enough to sing oratorio with Joan Sutherland under Sir Adrian Boult. He generally eschewed opera and while he may have been somewhat limited in his range and repertoire, I believe that what he did well he did supremely well and I have yet to hear a better rendering of *O, my Luve's like a red, red rose* than his 1962 recording. I should be happy to lend it to Mr Laurie.

James Fairbairn

Bracknell

Dancing Terminology

Dear Wilson

In the last issue of *The Reel*, there was a letter from Stephen Webb regarding the variety of terms used in dance descriptions, especially the "wrong" or "opposite" side of the set. I should like to rectify the misconception of Stephen and no doubt of other dancers that the RSCDS may not be interested in consistency.

The latest edition of the Society's Standard Terminology for use in the description of Scottish Country Dances is the revised 3rd edition November 2007. This states (page 1- 10) "If a dancer is not dancing on his/her own side of the set, it should be stated that the dancer is on the 'opposite' side."

In recent years the RSCDS has been working on using the standard terminology to update dances published by the Society. In 2007 a new edition was published of Miss Milligan's Miscellany (77 dances now in one book.) In 2008 Books 1 - 6 were updated and published in a single collective edition and later this year, Books 7 - 12 will be available, also in a collective format. It is hoped that similar updating will continue for further books. However, it will be some considerable time before all the books containing variations in description will be updated & no doubt even longer before we all get into the habit of using a more standardised terminology (old habits die hard!).

Ann Dix

Worcester Park

'Recaps'

Dear Wilson,

With reference to John Reeve's letter, I think recaps should be as brief as possible and should preferably be given from memory, but should include the whole dance. Someone may have forgotten the last figure. There are so many dances these days that dancers need all the help they can get. Avoid recapping well known dances if at all possible, and warn beginners about very difficult ones. I have seen programmes with the complicated dances marked, and a note that they were suitable for experienced dancers only and would not be recapped.

Elizabeth Bennett

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Hove, Sussex

Dress for Country Dancing

Dear Wilson,

Ian Cutts is perfectly correct in his reasons for wearing trousers for Scottish Country Dancing. I must however disagree with him regarding one or two small points.

The kilt was an item of Highland Dress. However, in the evenings the gentry changed into formal attire. This applied throughout the highlands and the lowlands as well as England. At Balls and Assemblies the dress code was strictly enforced. The Duke of Wellington was refused admission to an Assembly because he arrived wearing trousers instead of the mandatory Knee breeches and hose with a white cravat. As most of our dances date from the 18th and 19th Centuries, possibly we should wear knee breeches and hose when performing them. The lower classes always wore their everyday attire as they could not afford the cost of formal dress. Miss Elizabeth Grant described dress at Church in the Highlands thus:

"Few save our own people sat around; old gray haired rough visaged men that had known my grandfather and great grandfather, black, red and fairer hair, belonging to such as were in the prime of life, younger men, lads, boys-- all in the tartan. The plaid as a wrap, the plaid as draper, with kilt to match on some, blue trews on others, blue jackets on all, that was the style of the male part of the assemblage. The women were plaided too, an outside shawl was seen on none, though the wives wore a large handkerchief underneath the plaid, and looked picturesquely matronly in their high white caps. A bonnet was not to be seen among them, no young highland girl ever covered her head; the girls wore their own hair neatly braided in the front, plaited up in Grecian fashion behind, and bound by the snood, a bit of velvet or ribbon placed rather low on the forehead and tied between the plait at the back. The wives were all in homespun, homedyed, lincay woolsey gowns, covered to the chin by the modest kerchief worn outside the gown. The girls who could afford it had a Sabbath day's gown of like manufacture and very bright colours, but the throat was more exposed, and generally ornamented by a string of beads, often amber or a bit of black ribbon. Some had to be content with the best blue flannel petticoat and a clean white jacket, their ordinary and most becoming dress, and few of these had either shoes or stockings; but all had the plaid, and they folded it round them very gracefully."

It is doubtful if anybody below the Highland line wore the kilt prior to the visit of King George IV. Miss Elizabeth Grant wrote:

"The King wore at the Levee the highland dress. I daresay he thought the country all highland, expected no fertile plains, did not know the difference between the Saxons and the Celts. However, all went off well, this little slur on the Saxons was overlooked, and it gave occasion for a good laugh at one of Lady Saltoun's witty speeches. Some one objecting to this dress, particularly on so large a man, whose nudities were no longer attractive, 'Nay,' said she, 'we should take it very kind of him; since his stay will be so short, the more we see of him the better.' Sir William Curtis was kilted too, and standing near the King, many persons mistook them, amongst others John Hamilton Dundas, who kneeled to kiss the fat Alderman's hand, when, finding out his mistake, he called out 'Wrong man. By Jove,' and rising, moved on undaunted to the larger presence."

On another occasion when the Lord Mayor of London, Sir William Curtis, arrived at the Levee in full Highland Dress, a member of the Scottish nobility looked closely at him, examined his Dirk, and the said "Och, mon, fahrs ye speen?"

It was the Sobieski Stewarts, who shortly afterwards spread the idea that all Scots should copy the Royals and wear the Kilt. They persuaded Clans, septs and families to adopt a Tartan. This in turn led to some anomalies as in different parts of Scotland different families adopted the same pattern number (thus Hunter, Galbraith, Russell and Mitchell tartans are identical, even though the families responsible for the original adoption were in no way related). It was in the middle of the nineteenth century that the idea of *sewing* pleats into the kilt made it a more practical garment, which did not require careful folding whenever it was worn. This aided its wide spread adoption so that it became Scotland's national garb for men of all classes.

Wearing black for formal functions arose when the Court fell into mourning the death of Prince Albert. Times change, David Anderson in his Ballroom Guides specified that at Balls Gentlemen should wear a black suit with a clean white shirt. This of course did not affect the lower classes. Wearing white tie suits dropped out of fashion during the first world war, when it was deemed unsuitable whilst so many were dying in action. Black tie was considered more suitable, hence the dinner jacket became the accepted evening wear for functions. (In Brighton up until the second war one of the Clubs wore dinner jackets at weekly assemblies and white tie at the monthly dances, during the war this changed to lounge suits for weekly assemblies and black tie for the monthly dances).

When Tom Flett travelled round Scotland collecting old dances in the early part of the last century, everybody was wearing trousers for dancing. He always insisted that the men in his Scottish dancing demonstration teams wear trousers. But of course many men were unable to afford the luxury of formal attire. (In 1965, in parts of Yorkshire once each year all the working men purchased a blue serge suit, wearing it for one year as Sunday best, the following year for going out in the week and the final year for work; after which it was thrown out).

Early photographs of members of the RSCDS frequently show the men dancing in trousers. When I commenced dancing in Scotland about the only person to wear the kilt was the piper. In 1957, I attended a ball in Kilmarnock, at which nobody was wearing a Kilt. By 1964, however, everywhere in the country men were wearing kilts (for dances and classes) and the ladies white dresses with tartan sashes for dances. Nowadays the ladies no longer wear white and only wear sashes on formal occasions, whilst many men wear trousers to their regular classes.

Wearing the Kilt is a reflection of changing fashions and the elimination of class distinctions.

John W. Mitchell

Bracknell

To recap or not to recap

Dear Wilson

There is much with which I agree of what John Reeve has said in his letter printed in the last issue of *The Reel*. Since John is so against recaps, I have no doubt that this will come as a great surprise to those who know that I have an appalling memory for dances! (I have what I term 'a 5-minute memory'.) However, the comment John makes that a great deal of recaps are poorly given, is the point with which I agree, rather than his suggestion that there should be no recaps.

With a few exceptions, I cannot remember a dance without a quick recap and after all we encourage learning dancing rather than learning dances. Yes, we can rely on reading a crib in between dances, but then this reduces the sociability of the occasion and after all that surely is one of the greatest benefits of Scottish country dancing. I believe recaps should be short and succinct and each one a true aide memoire, not a case of teaching the dance. I am convinced that we all enjoy dancing much more when the majority of dancers are fairly comfortable with how the dance goes, rather than if those like me cannot remember it. If the recap is short and succinct then very little time is wasted and many more people enjoy the actual dance.

This brings me on to a point I feel strongly about and that is what seems to be the almost universally current practice of calling for extra dancers to make up sets. Often this occurs when there is only one couple in line already and three more couples are being called for. I believe that there should be a request for the extra couples, but if the set is not made up quickly, then those already there should, if possible, be assigned as 5th couples in other sets, although they may choose to sit out. Too often there is a distinct bullying attitude, when calling for extra couples and often people feel obliged to get up when they really do not wish to do so. This frequently occurs when the dance is more complicated or the extra dancers are less experienced. The result is that these extra dancers may go wrong and, to add insult to injury, are then blamed for spoiling the dance.

Let's not forget that dancing is for fun and this should include the social interaction on and off the floor.

Ann Dix

John Reeve adds: I do so agree with your last point, Ann. Sometimes they even call for extra dancers when they can see, looking round the room, that there are no more dancers there!

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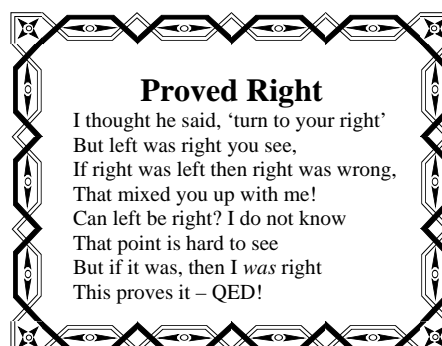
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Worcester Park

The Wearing o' the Kilt

Dear Wilson,

I would like to take issue with Ian Cutts. You do not have to be Scottish to wear the kilt. Kilts are not even unique to Scotland – there are Irish, Cornish and Greek versions. Even the Ancient Egyptians wore a form of kilt. This throws doubt on the theory that it was invented by an English ironmaster in 1730. Would the English have bothered to ban it after 1745 if it had been a recent invention?

There are plenty of tartans to choose from that are not associated with a particular clan. There are district tartans and commemorative tartans. The RSCDS recently registered its own. Hugh Foss apparently wore the black and white Shepherd's Check. My husband's kilt is in the Jacobite tartan. This is a genuinely old pattern, and after the Union of the Parliaments in 1707 it was worn by nationalistic Lowlanders as a protest against the loss of Scottish Independence.

The article states that the frontispiece to Thomas Wilson's ballroom guide shows dancers wearing normal ballroom dress for the country dance. This misses the point. SCD does include some Highland steps – examples include Highland Schottische, Glasgow Highlanders and the 8 bar solos in the middle of an *Eightsome Reel*. It is difficult to dance this type of step in trousers, as the raised foot catches the opposite trouser leg. This would not have been a problem in Thomas Wilson's time, as men would then have worn knee breeches for evening wear.

Robert Burns could not have worn a kilt if he wanted to. He lived from 1759 to 1796, for much of which time it was illegal! The kilt has become the symbol of Scotland. It is recognised all over the world, and is acceptable dress at Royal Ascot and Buckingham Palace garden parties. The Royal Princes wear it when they are in Scotland. I think the audience would be very disappointed if the gentlemen in the demonstration team wore black dinner suits. Highland dress is expensive, but it is possible to obtain it secondhand, and it lasts for many years. Peter Forrow gave details of how a kilt can be repaired, and I have a newspaper cutting on the London Highland Club noticeboard about someone who has worn the same tweed kilt jacket since before WW2. My husband had to replace his evening jacket a couple of years ago, after about 25 years, but some of the silver buttons off the old one are now on an Aboyne waistcoat belonging to our daughter. Highland dress is thus very environmentally friendly.

It is not obligatory to wear the kilt for SCD, but it is the appropriate form of dress, and I hope that I have persuaded Ian Cutts to change his mind.

Elizabeth Bennett



Stephen Webb

SCOTTISH NATIONAL DANCE COMPANY

1 Lakeside, Earley,
Reading, Berks, RG6 7PG.

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choice, choose*

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For your Scottish Dance needs

Stafford

Highland Dancing

Dear Editor

I thought you may be interested in my Highland Classes experience. I am so glad that I found these classes run by the London Branch RSCDS. I have been very impressed with the value for money, the quality of teaching and the variety we have covered in each lesson.

Value for money – we are made to keep going so every moment of the two hours is used apart from a couple of 30 second breaks to take a sip of water. It is wonderful to have live music, too.

Teaching – We warm up slowly (just like in a ballet class) and then warm down again at the end. I think that is very important. David, the teacher, is clearly a talented and light footed dancer himself and that is important too because we can actually SEE what we should look like (though I have a long way to go before I can be so precise in my foot placement). He is having to cope with a class of mixed ability and manages this beautifully. The only comment I would make is that it is a good job we have all done some dancing before because the pace of progress is high (for me anyway!) and remembering all the steps is not easy. By the end of the class I feel truly worked out mentally and physically! Not a bad thing.

Variety – I think we shall end up having learned three Highland dances. This is an unexpected bonus because I was imagining we would be concentrating on one. Instead we should all be able to do the *Highland Fling*, *Sailors' Hornpipe* and *Foursome Reel*.

The other bonus is the really nice group of people – a pleasure to be in a class with them. Margaret Shaw mentioned the possibility of a half day Highland Class perhaps one weekend in the summer. Several of us have already expressed interest though we think we would need a break or breaks in the four hours to catch our breath. It might also be helpful to be very clear about how much dancing participants should have done previously.

So thank you again. I am delighted to have been able to attend. Very well worth the journey down from Stafford.

Sue Lownds

DANCE EVENTS



LONDON HIGHLAND CLUB

Forthcoming attractions to be held at St. Columba's Church Hall, Pont Street, London SW1

Fridays: Upper Hall 7.30-10.30pm
Saturdays: Lower Hall 7.00-10.30pm
unless otherwise stated

Saturday 2 May **Green Ginger**
Saturday 6 June **David Cunningham**

7.00-11.00pm. Summer Ball

Fri 24 - Sun 26 July..... *Camping Weekend*

Saturday 5 September **Stradivarius**

Friday 9 January 2010..... AGM

All dances will be talked or walked through on request, except Summer Ball (Recap)

For further details contact: Frank Bennett on 020 8715 3564, e-mail fb.lhc@blueyonder.co.uk, or Roger Waterson on 020-8660 5017. You can also telephone our "Dial-a-Programme" service on 020 8763 8096 to hear our programme, or leave a message. Everyone is welcome at all our functions, so please come along and join us for an enjoyable evening. Please visit our website at www.londonhighlandclub.co.uk for the latest news and programmes of our dances

LONDON HIGHLAND CLUB

Saturday 6 June 2009

Summer Ball

St Columba's Church, Pont Street

7.00 to 11.00 pm

David Cunningham

Programme: Moffat Weavers, Bratach Bana, Flower o' the Quern; Father Connelly's Jig, Ray Milbourne; Summer in Assynt, Craven Jig, Music Makars, Indian River Strathspey, The Wee Cooper of Fife, Pelorus Jack, The Wind on Loch Fyne, None So Pretty, Strip The Willow, John McAlpin, Earlstoun Loch, Kelloholm Jig, Drumelzier, The Montgomerie's Rant, Ian Powrie's Farewell to Auchterarder..

Dances will not be walked through at this dance

Tickets: (Including finger buffet refreshments)

LHC Members in advance £13.00.

Non Members in advance £15.00.

All classes on door £17.00.

Highland or evening dress preferred.

All enquiries to Frank Bennett 020 8715 3564, e:fb.lhc@blueyonder.co.uk or Roger Waterson

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DANCE EVENTS

Club de Danse Ecosaise de MONTPELLIER, FRANCE

21st ANNUAL BALL and OUTING
Weekend of 13-14th June 2009

David Hall & his Scottish Dance Band

Dancing, eating, drinking, more dancing
followed by a jolly sea-side outing with even
more eating and drinking.

Rendezvous with sunshine and social warmth.
Contact: William Whyte +33 467 868 919 or
wlwhyte@btinternet.com

Our 2008 photograph gallery plus the 2009
booking form is available on our website...
<http://dansecossaisemp.free.fr/>

RSCDS OXFORDSHIRE BRANCH

Open Air Summer Dance

Saturday 22 August 2009

2.30 - 6.30 p.m.

Wolfson College Lawn, Linton Road,
Oxford, OX2 6UD
(indoors if wet)

Dancing to recorded music

Programme will be published on our website
Tea and Biscuits provided

Tickets £3.00 in advance (£3.50 on the day)
(see photo on page 13)

The Annual Ball will again be held at the superb
venue of

Headington School, Oxford, OX3 7TD

Saturday 24 October 2009

Ian Muir and The Craigellachie Band

Programme and ticket details in next issue

Contact: Trisha Rawlings, tel. 01869 340830

Email: trish@rawlings50cc.plus.com

www.rscdsoxfordshire.org.uk



RSCDS BERKS/HANTS/ SURREY BORDER BRANCH

Beginners Class

Thursday 23 April 2009

for 6 weeks starting at 8.00pm (first lesson free,
then £20 for the remaining 5 lessons)

All Saints Church Hall, Fernhill Road,
Blackwater GU17 9BN

Teacher: Anne Whillis

Contact: Anne on 01252 673301 or
chris.brown2007@ntlworld.com

May Ball

Saturday 16 May 2009

Ian Muir & the Craigellachie Band

Emmbrook School, Wokingham, Berks RG41 1JP

Contact Shirley Ferguson 01276 501952

Summer Open Air Dance

20 June 2009

2 - 4.30pm

South Hill Park, Bracknell RG12 7PA

If wet the event will held at St Sebastian's
Memorial Hall, Honey Hill, Nine Mile Ride,
Wokingham RG40 3BA

All dances will be recapped.

Contact: Fiona Albinson 0118 9789181

Details of events on - www.rscds-bhs.org.uk

Want to Advertise in *The Reel*?

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ment will reach up to 2,000 readers,
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Contact Jeff Robertson,

Tel 020 7730 9633

or 01903 245718. email: jtr@ctg.co.uk.



BERKHAMSTED STRATHSPEY AND REEL CLUB

Spring Dance

Saturday 16th May 2009

7:30 to 11:30pm

Boxmoor Playhouse, St John's Road,
Hemel Hempstead HP1 1NP

Craigievar Scottish Dance Band

Programme: St. Andrew's Fair, Australian
Ladies, Margaret Parker's Strathspey, Flight of
the Falcon, Polharrow Burn, Jean Martin of
Aberdeen, The Phantom Piper, J.B.Milne, Indian
River Strathspey, Ian Powrie's Farewell to
Auchterarder, Mrs Stuart Linnell, Hooper's Jig,
The Dundee Whaler, The Kelloholm Jig, Miss
Johnstone of Ardrossan, The Dream Catcher,
Rest and be Thankful, The Rose of the North,
Miss Allie Anderson, The Irish Rover.

Admission by Programme - £7.50

Licensed Bar - £1 corkage fee if you bring your
own drinks.

Bring and share supper. Raffle.

Details and tickets from: Mrs Janet Halse,
1 Highcroft Road, Felden, Hemel Hempstead,
Herts HP3 0BU, tel: 01442 246381.

e-mail: janethalseuk@btinternet.com

www.berkhamstedreelclub.org



FUN FOR ALL SCOTTISH CEILIDH DANCING

with

Clan Donnachaidh

(Robertson . Duncan . Reid . MacRobert . Roy .

Inches . Maclaggan . McInroy . Collier .

Donnachie . McRobbie . Stark . Duncanson .

and others)

Saturday, 24 October 2009

7.00 - 10.30 pm

St Mary's Church Garden Hall
30 St Mary's Road, Wimbledon, SW19 7BP

Easy parking in the area

MC: Peter Knight

Dances chosen from the COLLINS BOOK
Tickets £15.00 (include a welcome glass of wine
and supper) and information from:
robbo73@talktalk.net or 020 8542 2280

Corryrechan presents

"A Scottish Spectacular"

on

Saturday 20 June 2009 at 7.30pm and

Sunday 21 June 2009 at 2.30pm

in

Shipham Village Hall, Shipham, Somerset

Tickets £10 (£8 Students)

from Mike on 07880 741505

HAYES & DISTRICT SCOTTISH ASSOCIATION

Annual Ball

Saturday 7 November 2009

Craigellachie Band

Programme and details in the next issue
Enquiries: Margaret Wallace Tel 020 8560 6160
Email: margaret@ianwallace.fsnet.co.uk
Website: www.hayesscottish.org.uk

Ian & Val McFarlane

Sunday 5 July 2009

4:15 - 8pm

Ian & Val McFarlane cordially invite their
dancing friends to another
Scottish / English dance

Superb music from **Mollie and Ali**

The Beaconsfield School, HP9 1SJ

01494 672782 www.mcf107.com

RSCDS CAMBRIDGE BRANCH

Tea Dance

Saturday 9 May 2009 from 2.00 to 5.00 pm.

Chesterton Community College, Cambridge

Dancing to **Ken Martlew**

Afternoon tea with scones

Bring the family for fun and easy dances

Open air dance

Sunday 7 June 2009 from 2.00 to 5.00 pm

Anglesey Abbey, Lode, Cambridge

Dancing to recorded music

Bring family and friends for a great day out

Annual Dance

Saturday 17 October 2009 7.30 to 11.30 pm

Chesterton Community College Cambridge

Dancing to **Craigievar**

Details: www.rscds-cambridge.org

RSCDS MILTON KEYNES

Picnic Dance

Sunday 21st June 2009 - 2pm until 5pm

at Stoke Goldington Village Green

Dancing to Ian Robertson

Enquiries and tickets at £3 each

Jan Jones 07877 153259 or

jange@verybusy.co.uk

SOUTH EAST HERTS SCDS

Summer Dance

Saturday 13 June 2009

7.00 to 10.00pm

Cottered Village Hall,

Cottered, Herts.

Beating Retreat Event

Sunday 6 September. 2009

The Castle Grounds

Hertford.

2.00 to 5.00pm

51st Annual Ball

Saturday 21 November 2009

Castle Hall,

Hertford.

7.30 to 11.30pm

Details for above events from :

Maureen Ainsworth 01279 434342

e-mail :- maureen.ainsworth@hotmail.co.uk

ST ANDREW SOCIETY (LONDON)

(Wimbledon and District Scots' Associaton)

Affiliated to the RSCDS

Will be holding its Centenary Ball on

Saturday 20 March 2010

Wimbledon High School, Mansel Road,

Wimbledon

David Hall and his Band

Full details will be in the next Reel.

Enquiries to Elizabeth Bennett. 020 8715 3564.

lizbennett@blueyonder.co.uk

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Branch order your copy of *The Reel* from

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London's Red-Nosed Scottish Country Danceathon

It was a night of "Dance Funny for Money" as members of the London Branch Dem Team (pictured right) turned their weekly Kensington class into a hilarious non-stop dance marathon lasting one and a half hours without a break.

Brainchild of teacher Angela Young, the sponsored event raised £639.20 for Comic Relief and was a complete 'hoot' for everyone taking part. She said "This has been a fantastic effort and we've been happy to be able to support Comic Relief. The dancers have really shown what stamina they have and how Scottish Country Dancing is not only great fun but keeps you really fit". Thanks to everyone who worked to achieve not only this excellent result but the publicity it gained for the team and the London Branch

The Demonstration Team has continued to share its skills and promote Scottish Dancing at various functions, care homes and schools in London throughout the year. They took part in the Newcastle Scottish Country Dance Festival on Saturday 14th February and plan to travel North again in July to take part in the White Rose Scottish Country Dance Festival in Leeds.

Michael Nolan



MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the RSCDS and London Branch costs £19.00 per annum for UK based members (£19.50 for Europe; £21.50 elsewhere). There is a discount of £3 for members under the age of 25 and for each of two members living at the same address. Current members of other Branches can join London Branch for £4.00 per annum if they live in the UK (£4.50 in Europe and £6.50 elsewhere).

London Branch membership brings benefits including *The Reel*, while Society membership includes the bi-annual dance publication, *Scottish Country Dancer*.

Membership applications and enquiries should be sent to the Membership Secretary, Gaynor Curtis, 60 Bishops Wood, St. Johns, Woking, Surrey GU21 3QB. tel: 01483 721989.

AN ARRESTING SUBJECT! OR IS IT?

When in France it is an offence not to produce identification in the streets when asked. Here if your sporrán is a recent one, i.e. after 1994, and is made of sealskin or other endangered species then a license demonstrating lawful killing is required. There was also talk in February last year of defining only hand-made wool kilts made in Scotland as Scottish kilts and bladed instruments if carried can be against the law. Did you read last October that a gardener was arrested for carrying a garden scythe in his van as it was thought to contravene knife crime legislation? Tradesmen are however allowed to carry bladed tools for their work and the case was dropped. I recently signed a petition to influence legislation over the carrying of the broadsword for Highland dancing events. Fortunately, the legislation when enacted accommodated this by banning only the carrying of swords and knives with curved blades, which of course the broadsword isn't!

On exiting Knightsbridge underground station, on my way to dance at St. Columba's in London, the other week, I espied two policemen and seized the opportunity. 'Excuse me Officer,' I said, 'you know the law! Getting a sideways glance in return, I then asked, 'Is it an offence to carry a Skean Dhu in the street?' Imagining if I produced mine, it would immediately be confiscated and I would be marched down to the station for questioning with the serious consequence of missing the dance: I kept it concealed! 'No Sir,' was the reply, 'as long as you are wearing a kilt at the same time it is considered as ceremonial and is not an offence' I had my answer and proudly put my Skean Dhu down my sock and with due thanks went on my way. As I walked along I could not help thinking that with the perceived rise in knife crime just how easy it could be for an opportunist mugger to simply whip it out of my sock and worse, then use it! In future, with this in mind, I think I shall not wear the Skean Dhu out and about until I arrive at the dance – well, you can never be too careful, can you?

Stephen Webb

OTHER SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE ORGANISATIONS (overflow from next page)

ST. COLUMBA'S CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, Pont Street. Scottish Country Dancing most Mondays from Oct to May, 7.15-10pm. Admission free except for six 'Band Nights' when tickets cost £7 inc. supper (Burns Night £10). Beginners welcome and there is a step practice usually on the third Monday of the month. Further details: Bob Harman: 020 8642 7192, bobandmegharman@aol.com.

ST. JOHN'S SDC WOKINGHAM: meet every Thurs 8-10.15pm Sept to June at St. Sebastian's Hall, Nine Mile Ride, Wokingham. All standards welcome. Sue Davis 01344 774344, 2 Larkwood Dr, Crowthorne. Also Childrens' Class Sats. 9.30 - 11.00am at the Parish Hall, Crowthorne, Deborah Draffin 01344 776831.

ST. NINIAN'S SCOTTISH DANCERS, Luton meet every Wednesday, September to July 8.00-10.00pm at St. Ninian's UR Church, Villa Road, Luton, Beds. Contact: Pat Hamilton, 01462 671156 or Sheila Harris, 01525 875060.

SEVENOAKS REEL CLUB meets every Tuesday from September to May, 8.00-10.00pm at Kippington Church Centre, Kippington Rd, Sevenoaks. Details: Penelope Fisk, Sunnysbank Cottages, 15 Maidstone Road, Riverhead, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 3BY. Tel: 01732 457327.

SHENE SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE GROUP meets every Wednesday from mid-September to May 8.30-10.30pm, in Barnes. Further info: Further info: Denise Haugh, 4 Burdett Ave, SW20 0ST, 020 8946 8572, email dhaugh200@btinternet.com.

SIDCUP & DISTRICT CALEDONIAN ASSOCIATION. Dancing on Wednesdays from 8.00-10.15pm throughout the year at Hurst Community Centre, Hurst Road, Sidcup, Kent. Details: Pauline Cameron, 7 Wayne Close, Orpington, Kent BR6 9TS. Tel 01689 838395.

SOUTH DORSET CALEDONIAN SOCIETY. Dancing at St. Edmund's Church Hall, Lanehouse Rocks Road, Weymouth, Dorset, Wednesday, 7.30-10.00pm. Details from Miss Valerie Scriven, 13 Fenway Close, Dorchester Dorset DT1 1PQ. Tel: 01305 265177.

SOUTH EAST ESSEX SCOTTISH SOCIETY. Dancing Fridays, 7.30 to 10.30pm, St. Peter's Church Hall, Eastbourne Grove, Southend (near hospital). Tuition 7.30-9.00pm. Details Mrs Edna Carroll, 01702 428974.

SOUTH EAST HERTS SCDS. Classes in Hertford, Sept to May: Inter/Adv Tues 7.45pm, Bengoe School, Hertford; Beginners Thurs 7.30pm, Millmead School, Hertford. Demonstration Alt. Mons 8.0pm, St John's Hall, Hertford. Details: Mrs Maureen Ainsworth, 01279 434342.

SOUTHWICK SCD CLUB meets Thursdays 8.00-10.15pm at Southwick Community Centre, Southwick, W. Sussex. Details: Brenda Hinton, 01273 595017.

SURBITON & DISTRICT CALEDONIAN SOCIETY. Dancing every Thursday at 8pm. September to June at St. Mark's Church Hall, Church Hill Road, Surbiton. Details: David Horvill, 32 Wolsey Road, Sunbury-on-Thames, Middx TW16 7TY. 01932 784866. surbitoncaledonian.co.uk.

THE SCOTTISH CLANS ASSOCIATION OF LONDON meets at St. Columba's Church, Pont Street, London SW1, every Tuesday from October to end of May for Scottish Country Dancing, 7.00-10.00pm. Details: Tom Symington, 020 7834 7151 or 020 7828 6792.

TUNBRIDGE WELLS BRANCH RSCDS. Beginners/intermediate classes on Tues 7.30-10pm and advanced classes Thurs 8-10pm at St Augustine's School, Wilman Road, Tunbridge Wells. Details: Sue Bush, 33 St Luke's Road, Tunbridge

Wells, TN4 9JH. Tel: 01892 615269, website: www.rscdstunbridgewells.org.uk.

WALLINGTON, CARSHALTON & DISTRICT SCOTTISH ASSOCIATION hold weekly adult Classes for, Intermediate and Advanced levels on Monday evenings. Details from Mrs Maggie Westley, 30 Stanley Road, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4LF. Tel: +44 (0) 20 8647 9899, website: westley3148@tiscali.co.uk. www.wallingtonscottish.org.uk.

WATFORD & WEST HERTS SCOTTISH SOCIETY. General and Beginners/Improvers Classes at Bushey Community Centre, High Street, Bushey WD23 1TT. Thursdays from 8.00-10.00pm. Details: Stuart Krelhoff, 60, Tunnel Wood Road, Watford WD17 4GE. 01923 492475, reel@WatfordScottish.org.uk.

WAVERLEY SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE CLUB meets at Holy Trinity Church Hall, Winchester, every Thursday from September to the end of June, 8.00-10.00pm. Details: Mrs Pat Mumford, 02380 252570.

WEMBLEY & DISTRICT SCOTTISH ASSOCIATION Mondays 8.00pm. Dance Class. The Church of the Ascension, The Avenue, Wembley, Middx. Details: Mrs Pam Crisp, 19 Compton Place, Watford. WD19 5HF. Tel: 0203 078 0018.

WINCHESTER BRANCH RSCDS Classes Tuesdays 8.00-10.00pm. Club night (all abilities) Wednesday 8.00-10.00pm. Both evenings take place at St. Peter's School, Oliver's Battery Rd North, Winchester. Details: Wendy Mumford (teacher), 20 Blendon Drive, Andover, SP10 3NQ. 01264 363293, wendy@mumford.com.

WITHAM & DISTRICT CALEDONIAN SOCIETY. Dancing every Wednesday 8.00-10.00pm. The Centre, UR Church, Witham, Essex. Details from Maureen Manson, tel: 01206 210927.

OTHER SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE ORGANISATIONS

ABINGDON SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE CLUB Dancing most Mondays, 8.00 - 10.15pm, Sept to June at Northcourt Centre, Abingdon, nr Oxford. All welcome. Details/map: www.geocities.com/absdcd or Rowena Fowler, 01865 361129.

ADDLESTONE & DISTRICT SCOTTISH SOCIETY meets Wednesdays 8.15-10.15pm September to May at St Mary's Church Hall, Church Road, Byfleet, KT14 7NF. Details from Val Clack, 01932 845869. www.addlestonescottish.org.uk

ALDRINGTON (HOVE) SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE GROUP meet every Tuesday 8.15-10.30pm, September to June. Details from John Steer, 57 Hangleton Rd, Hove, E. Sussex BN3 7GH. Tel: 01273 416893.

BERKHAMSTED STRATHSPEY & REEL CLUB meets in Potten End Village Hall. Social dancing: Tuesdays 8.15 September to May, Sat. gardens June/July. Classes: Mondays 8pm: Intermediate and Advanced, Tuesdays 8.15: Beginners. Contact: Judy Roythorne, 1, Pine Close, North Road, Berkhamsted, Herts HP4 3BZ Tel. 01442 875496 www.berkhamstreedreelclub.org

BOURNEMOUTH BRANCH RSCDS meets every Friday at St. Mark's New Church Hall, Wallisdown Road, Talbot Village, Bournemouth. Newcomers and Beginners 7.00-8.30pm. Improvers/Intermediate 8.45-10.15pm. Weekly children's classes. Technique class by invitation - alternate Wednesdays. Details from Margaret Robson, 24 Upper Golf Links Rd, Broadstone, Dorset BH18 8BX. Tel: 01202 698138.

BRIGHTON BRANCH RSCDS. Classes for beginners, intermediate and advanced, country and highland, adults and children. Details from Ray on 01273 684417 or Bill on 01273 731927. www.rscds-brighton.org.uk

BRIGHTON & HOVE SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE CLUB meets Thursdays 7.30-10pm at Balfour Junior School, Balfour Road, Brighton. Details from Carol Catterall, 01273 564963.

BURNS CLUB OF LONDON holds lively meetings in central London, usually including live music, on second Monday of the month as well as a superb Burns Supper. Details: Jim Henderson 020 8954 2586. jimhendersonuk@aol.com.

CAMBERLEY REEL CLUB. Dancing every Tuesday 8pm at St. Paul's Church Hall, Church Hill, Camberley. Details from Rhoda Finch, 20 Redcrest Gardens, Camberley, Surrey GU15 2DU. Tel: 01276 681820.

CAMBRIDGE & DISTRICT BRANCH RSCDS. Classes for all grades. Details from Tony Garrick, 29 Illingworth Way, Foxton, Cambridge, CB22 6RY. Tel. 01223 510201. email: anthony.garrick@ntlworld.com.

CAMBRIDGE SCOTTISH SOCIETY ScottishCountry Dancing and other events.. Dance Circle meets every Thursday 8pm from Sept to June. Details www.camscotsoc.org.uk or Rachel Schicker 01223 364557.

CHELTHENHAM BRANCH RSCDS Advanced class Mondays 7.30 -9.30pm. General class Thursdays 7.30-9.30pm. Bettridge School, Cheltenham. Also a Beginners class. Details: Margaret Winterbourne, 01242 863238.

CHELTHENHAM SCOTTISH SOCIETY. Dancing most Friday nights 7.30 to 10.30pm from October to end May, at St Andrew's Church Hall, Cheltenham. Details: Mrs Doreen Steele, 45 Dark Lane, Swindon Village, Cheltenham, GL51 9RN. Tel: 01242 528220, mbsteele45@aol.com.

CHELMSFORD: SANDON SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE CLUB meets on Monday evenings 7:30-9:30pm at the Hayward School, Maltese Road, Chelmsford. Beginners welcome. Details from Esther Wilkinson, email: ewilkin@gmail.com or tel. 01206 240132. www.sandonscotdance.org.uk

CHISWICK SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCING CLUB in the Upper Hall at St Michael's & All Angels' Church, corner of The Avenue and Bath Rd. (turn right out of Turnham Green Tube), W4. Sundays until 29 Jun. 6 Jul Midsummer Madness in Chiswick House grounds. Restart 14 Sep. Beginners 6.00 - 7.00, General Class 7.00 - 9.15. all levels welcome. Details: 020 8743 9385 (aftn's) also www.chiswickscottish.org.uk

CIRENCESTER SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE CLUB meets most Wednesdays 8:00 - 10:00pm September to end June at the Bingham Hall, King Street, Cirencester. Details Mr A.E.L. Bush, Lake View House, Withington, Glos. GL54 4 BN. 01242890454, tmbush@btopenworld.com

CRAWLEY SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCING CLUB meets Thursdays 8.00 to 10.00pm September to June at Milton Mount Community Hall, Milton Mount Avenue, Pound Hill, Crawley. Details: Mrs Pip Graham, 57 Milton Mount Ave, Pound Hill, Crawley, W. Sussex RH10 3DP, tel: 01293 882173.

CROYDON & DISTRICT BRANCH: Branch classes:- General, incl Beginners with technique Coulsdon (Fri). Advanced (Wed) Coulsdon. Other classes in the area: Beginners: Reigate & Selsdon (Tues): Gen: Reigate (Mon): Advanced: Reigate (Thurs.). Details: Dorothy Pearson 01737 551724, www.rscdscroydon.org.uk

EALING SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE CLUB meets Thurs. 8-10pm. September to May at St Andrew's Church Centre, Mount Park Road, Ealing, W5. Details: Rena Stewart, 56 Meadvale Road, Ealing, W5 1NR, tel: 020 8998 6419.

EPPING FOREST SCOTTISH ASSOCIATION Club night Mondays (all year) 8-10 pm at Woodford Green Prep School, Glengall Road, Woodford Green, Essex IG8 0BZ. Details: www.efsa.org.uk or Lee Noble 020 8505 3032 leenoble@waitrose.com.

EPSOM & DISTRICT CALEDONIAN ASSOCIATION. holds weekly adult dance classes for beginners and intermediate/advanced levels. (September to March), including informal dances. Details from Dorothy Pearson, 366 Chipstead Valley Road, Coulsdon CR5 3BF. Tel 01737 551724

FARNHAM SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCING CLUB. Dancing every Tuesday at 8.00pm, September to May at the Memorial Hall, West Street, Farnham, Surrey. Details from Mrs Annette Owen, 47 Beauclerk Green, Winchfield, Hook, Hants RG27 8BF. Tel: 01252 845187.

FELTHAM & DISTRICT SCOTTISH ASSOCIATION meets Tuesdays 8.00pm, September to mid-July at the White House Community Centre, The Avenue, Hampton. Details from Ann or Paul Brown, tel: 01784 462456 or mobile 07801 160643. Email: p@ulfbrown.co.uk

FLEET SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE SOCIETY dance in Church Crookham Memorial Hall in Hampshire on alternate Saturdays from 7.30-11.00pm, September to May. Full details from Vikki Spencer, 24 Park Hill, Church Crookham, Fleet GU52 6PW. Tel: 01252 691922.

GERRARDS CROSS SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE CLUB meets at Memorial Centre, East Common Road, Gerrards Cross on Tuesdays 8 to 10pm, end of September to June. Details: info@gxscottish.org.uk or from Mrs B MacKenzie Ross 01494 874604.

GREENFORD AND DISTRICT CALEDONIAN ASSOC. meet at the British Legion Hall, Oldfield Lane, Greenford. Visitors welcome. Tuesdays 8.00 to 10.30 p.m. Details from Mrs P. Crisp, 19 Compton Place, Watford, Herts WD19 5HF. Tel: 0203 078 0018.

GUILDFORD SCDC meets at Onslow Village Hall, Wilderness Road, Guildford most Mondays at 8.00pm from September to April. Teacher Paul Plummer, 01252 404639.

HAMPSTEAD & DISTRICT SCOTS' ASSOCIATION Dancing on Tuesdays Sept.-June from 8.00-10.00pm in Elderkin Hall, Trinity Church, Methodist and United Reformed, 90 Hodford Road, Golders Green, London NW11 (Entrance in Rodborough Road). All welcome. Details: Miss Joan Burgess, 503A York Road, London SW18 1TF. 020 8870 6131.

HARPENDEN SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCING CLUB meets every Tuesday at 8.00pm at Lourdes Hall, Southdown Road, Harpenden. Classes on Thursdays from 8.00pm. Details from Phil Bray, 25 St. Olams Close, Luton, Beds LU3 2LD. Tel: 01582 617734.

HARROW & DISTRICT CALEDONIAN SOCIETY. Classes Wednesdays 8.15-10.15pm, St.Albans Church Hall, Norwood Drive (off The Ridgeway), North Harrow. Details of these and other activities from Jane Forbes, 7 Buckland Rise, Pinner HA5 3QR. Tel: 020 8428 6055.

HAYES & DISTRICT SCOTTISH ASSOCIATION meets Fridays 8-10pm, September to July in Hayes, Middx. Beginners and experienced dancers welcome. Details: Margaret Wallace, Tel: 020 8560 6160.

HERTSMERE REEL CLUB. Monthly dances on third Saturday (exc. Aug & Sept) 7.30-11.00pm, Tilbury Hall (URC), Darkes Lane, Potters Bar. Details: Mary Fouracre, 171 Dunraven Drive, Enfield, EN2 8LN. Tel: 020 8367 4201.

HESTON & DISTRICT SCOTTISH ASSOCIATION. Thursdays 8.15 to 10.15pm. September to July, tuition followed by social dancing. Also monthly Saturday dances and ceilidhs. All at Heston Methodist Church Hall. Details from Mrs Rosemary Mitchell, Tel: 01784 254401.

JERSEY CALEDONIAN SCD GROUP. Contacts: Helen McGugan, La Pelotte, La Rue a Don, Grouville, Jersey JE3 9GB Tel/Fax 01534 854459; Alan Nicolle 01534 484375, alan.nicolle88@googlemail.com; or Brenda Gale 01534 862357. See blog: www.scottishcountrydancingjersey.blogspot.com.

ISLE OF THANET SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCERS meet Wednesdays September to June at Holy Trinity & St. John's C. of E. Primary School, St. John's Road, Margate. Beginners 7.00-8.00pm. General 8.00-10.00pm. Details: Mrs Linda McRitchie, 60 Bradstow Way, Broadstairs, Kent. 01843 869284.

LEIGH-ON-SEA CALEDONIAN DANCERS meet every MONDAY except Bank Holidays and during July/August at St James' Church Hall, Elmsleigh Drive, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 4DP from 7.15 - 10pm. Tuition given. Contact Rob on 01702 354414 or www.leighcaledonian.info.

LEICESTER BRANCH RSCDS meets Thursdays, Holy Cross Centre, Wellington St., Leicester. 4 classes - Beginners, Intermediates, Social, Advanced. 7.30-8.30p.m., followed by Social dancing until 10p.m. Also Tuesdays 1.30-3.45p.m. General class at same venue. Contact: Mrs. Pamela Hood 0016 2753886, jdjimps@talktalk.net.

LONDON HIGHLAND CLUB meets regularly at St. Columba's, Pont Street, SW1. Some major functions held at other London venues. Details: adverts in *The Reel* or contact Frank Bennett, 12 Lingfield Road, Worcester Park, Surrey KT4 8TG. 020 8715 3564. Dial-a-programme service: 020 8763 8096. www.londonhighlandclub.co.uk

LUCY CLARK SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE CLUB meets Thursdays 8.00pm, Oldhams Hall, Great Missenden. Details: Dick Field, Stonefield House, Clappins Lane, Naphill, Bucks HP14 4SL. Tel: 01494 562231

MAIDENHEAD SCOTTISH DANCING CLUB meets every Tuesday 8.00pm at St. Mary's R.C. School, Cookham Road, Maidenhead. First Tuesday in the month is Social Dancing Evening. Details: Jane Courtier, 16 Ostler Gate, Maidenhead, Berks SL6 6SG, 01628 628372. maidenheadscottishdancing.org.uk.

MAIDSTONE (COBTREE) SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE GROUP meets every Wednesday 7.30-10pm at The Grove Green Community Hall, Maidstone. Details from Jane Masters, 251 Robin Hood Lane, Blue Bell Hill, Chatham, Kent ME5 9QU. Tel. 01634 864007.

MARKET HARBOROUGH SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE SOCIETY. Dancing at Fairfield Road School, Fairfield Road, Market Harborough. Tuesday 7.30-10.00pm. Details: Mrs Connie Elphick, "Lazonby", 9 Little Lunnon, Dunton Bassett, Lutterworth, Leics LE17 5JR. 01455 209446.

MEDWAY AND DISTRICT CALEDONIAN ASSOCIATION. Dancing Thursdays 8.00-10.15pm at St. Mary's Island Community Centre, Chatham. Beginners welcome. Many other activities. Details: Liz Bowden, Meadow Cottage, Green Farm Lane, Lower Shorne, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 3HL. tel 01474 822919.

MEOPHAM SCD CLUB meets every Monday evening from September - June at 8.15-10.15pm at the Village Hall Meopham. Details from Mrs Jane Whittington. 5 Coldharbour Rd. Northfleet.Kent.DA11 8AE, 01474 359018.

MID SUSSEX CALEDONIAN SOCIETY. Events throughout the year at various venues. Members of SASS. Classes held before St. Andrews/Burns. Contact David Anderson, 8 Tindal Close, Burgess Hill, West Sussex, RH15 0LB. 01444 244854, madaanderson@hotmail.com

MILTON KEYNES BRANCH RSCDS. Mixed ability class Mondays 8.00- 10.00pm. Bradwell Village Hall, Milton Keynes. Details: Jan Jones, 52 Aintree Close, Bletchley, Milton Keynes. MK 3 5LP. 01908 378730, jange@verybusy.co.uk

NORTH HERTS REEL CLUB. Dancing most Wednesdays 8.00-10.00pm. from September to May at Roccroft School, Stotfold. Informal Saturday Dances. Details: Mrs Jennifer Warburton, 17 Victoria Road, Shefford, Beds. SG17 5AL. Tel: 01462 812691.

NORTH KENT SCOTTISH ASSOCIATION. Dancing 7.45-10.00pm. most Wednesdays at Barnehurst Golf Club. Beginners welcome. Details: Nigel Hewitt, 227 Knights Rd, Hoo, Rochester, Kent, ME3 9JN. Tel. 01634 254451.

ORPINGTON & DISTRICT CALEDONIAN SOCIETY. Dancing every Thursday 8.00-10.15pm. at Petts Wood Memorial Hall. Beginners/Improvers Class Every Monday 8.00-10.15pm at St. Pauls, Crofton Road, Orpington. Details: Pam. French, 20 Beaumont Road, Petts Wood, Orpington, Kent, BR5 1JN. 01689 873511.

OXFORDSHIRE BRANCH RSCDS. Dancing on Thursdays throughout the year in Oxford. Details: Patricia Rawlings, 29 Frances Road, Middle Barton, Chipping Norton, Oxon OX7 7ET. Tel: 01869 340830.

READING ST. ANDREW'S SCOTTISH DANCING SOCIETY. Dancing at St. Andrew's URC, London Road, Reading from 8.00-10.00pm. September to May, Tuesdays (elementary) and Wednesdays (general). Details: Rita Cane, 45 Beech Lane, Earley, Reading RG6 5PT. Tel: 0118 975 7507, www.scottishdancingreading.org.

RICHMOND CALEDONIAN SOCIETY meets at the Oddfellows Hall, Parkshot, Richmond, every Wednesday evening at 8.00pm from mid Sept. to end of May. All welcome. Information contact 020 8977 4304.

SANDERSTEAD URC SCOTTISH DANCE GROUP. Dancing Tuesdays 8.00pm Sanderstead URC Hall, Sanderstead Hill, S. Croydon. Details: Graeme Wood, 01883 627797 or gwood@gna.cc.

ST. ANDREW SOCIETY (LONDON). The Wimbledon and District Scots' Association. Dancing Tuesdays 8.00pm at Wimbledon Community Centre, St. Georges Road, Wimbledon, SW19. Details: Miss Alison Raffan, 2 Erridge Road, Merton Park, London, SW19 3JB. or Elizabeth Bennett 020-8715 3564, lizbennett@blueyonder.co.uk. www.geocities.com/standweosclondon.

This listing overflows onto previous page



Stephen Webb

Above:

The first ever RSCDS Dance Proficiency Assessments took place on Sunday, 8th March 2009 with a group of dancers from the Berkhamsted Strathspey & Reel Club and the Watford and West Herts Scottish Society, all members of the London Branch. The course had been ably led by Ken Martlew, helped by Bar Martlew and Jane Rose, with accompaniment from several musicians. On the day, the examiners were Bruce Fraser and Angela Young, with music from Jeremy Hill. 17 dancers took Level 1 and two took level 2. Everyone enjoyed the experience.

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