



the reel

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FEBRUARY TO MAY 2004

BRANCH A.G.M.

Friday 18th June 2004

All members are encouraged to attend the Annual General Meeting of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society London Branch, which will be held at St Columba's Church (Lower Hall), Pont Street, London SW1 on Friday 18th June 2004. Tea will be served at 6 p.m. and the meeting will begin at 7 p.m. There will be dancing after the meeting.

This is your chance to contribute to the work of the Branch by participating in a review of the past year and planning for the next year, which is our 75th anniversary season. Any member may propose a motion for discussion at the AGM. These must be signed by the proposer and seconder and be sent to the Branch Secretary (see page 3) to reach her by 27th March. Any topic may also be raised at the meeting under 'Any other business'. The agenda, including any motions submitted in advance, will appear in the next issue of *The Reel*.



Former Branch Secretary Margaret Shaw (right) passes information to recently elected Secretary Pamela Ellam

You may like to consider standing for the Committee or nominating someone. Nominations for the offices of Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Hon Secretary and Hon Treasurer and eleven ordinary members of the Committee must reach the Secretary by 27th March. Nominations must be signed by the proposer and seconder and by the nominee, all of whom must be members of the Branch. If necessary, a postal ballot paper will be sent to Branch members with the May issue of *The Reel*.

The present office holders and Committee members, and the dates on which they joined or last rejoined the Committee, are as follows:

Chairman	Owen Meyer	1999
Vice-Chairman	Rachel Wilton	1993
Secretary	Pamela Ellam	2000
Treasurer	Simon Wales	2003

Daniel Capron 2000; Margaret Catchick 2003; Peter Knight 2001; Lindsay Merriman 2003; Davinia Miln 2000; Jeff Robertson 1999; Margaret Shaw 1998; Caroline Sloan 1996; Meryl Thomson 2002; Cherry West 2003; Angela Young 2000.

All the above are eligible for re-election to the Committee.

If you have any queries about the AGM, contact Owen Meyer (see page 3) or any Committee member.

JOIN US AND THRIVE, WE'LL BE 75!

We shall be celebrating our 75th anniversary from September 2004 to July 2005 and we hope that all dancers will be able to join us at at least some of the following events:

- 10th, 11th and 12th September 2004: **Weekend School** (see page 5)
- Saturday 18th September 2004: **Dance** (British/French joint celebration – Paris Branch 20th Anniversary + the Entente Cordiale 1904 *)
- Saturday 16th October 2004: **Day School and Ceilidh**
- Saturday 30th October 2004: **Ball** (tickets in advance)
- Saturday 13th November 2004: **Family Dance**
- Saturday 13th November 2004: **Dance** (Guest Night – Other Branches' Anniversaries)
- Saturday 11th December 2004: **Christmas Dance**
- Saturday 15th January 2005: **Burns' Night Ceilidh Dance**
- Saturday 12th February 2005: **Musicians' evening**.
- Saturday 19th March 2005: **Children's Event and Evening Dance** (Pont St users participation)
- Saturday 16th April 2005: **President's Lunch** (invitation only †)
- Saturday 21st May 2005: **Dance** (Guest night – South East Groups and Branches)
- Saturday 11th June 2005: **Garden Dance**

Each event will have something special for this anniversary year so please come and celebrate with us.

* We hope to welcome visitors from France and are looking for hosts for the night of Saturday 18th September 2004. Please contact Lindsay Merriman if you can help, tel: 020 8693 2182, e-mail lindsaymerriman@hotmail.com

† The President's Lunch will be for senior members of the Branch who will apply for their invitations – details in a future *Reel*.

Rachel Wilton

YOUR SOCIETY SEEKS YOUR VIEWS

A consultation document on the subject 'Should the Society be a Branch-based Organisation or a Member-based Organisation?' is being sent to all Branches and members. It was intended to be sent to all London Branch members with the last issue of *The Reel*. As some members reported that they did not receive it, a simplified version is printed on the next page. If you would like a copy of the original document, please ask Owen Meyer or download it from the Society website, www.rscds.org.

Please consider the presentations made by Jimmie Hill and Andrew Smith and the comments made by members at the meeting and send your views and comments both to HQ and to the Branch Secretary by **29th February 2004**. (All contact details are on page 3.) Send your submissions by e-mail if possible, preferably as a .doc or .rtf attachment, but feel free to use conventional post if e-mail is inconvenient. The Management Board felt that it had to put a closing date of the end of February on returns to allow time to formulate any proposals for the 2004 AGM.

Ball at the Hurlingham Club on Saturday 30th October 2004

Application forms will be available with the next edition of *The Reel*.

We hope to include a distillation of London Branch members' responses in the next issue; please let us know if you do not want your comments published.

Daniel Capron
on behalf of London Branch
Committee

CONSULTATION

Should the Society be a Branch-based Organisation or a Member-based Organisation?

This is a simplified version of the consultation document (see page 1).

Different figures have been quoted for the proportion of members who are HQ members. According to HQ, in January 2004 there were 1,493 HQ members, about 8 per cent of the total membership.

Background to Request

In response to letters from a number of Branches on membership and subscription issues, the new Management Board set up a Working Group at its first meeting in November 2002 to consider all aspects of membership and to make recommendations to the Board. The Working Group developed a number of options for consideration, but the Board could not reach a consensus on any recommendation for the 2003 AGM. The Board decided therefore to consult members on the fundamental question of whether the Society should be a Branch-based or member-based organisation.

The "Floor is Yours" discussion session at the 2003 Annual Conference (previously known as the AGM weekend) served as a starting point for this consultation. Two members of the Management Board gave presentations. Simplified versions of these follow, together with a summary of comments from the floor.

Presentation by Jimmie Hill –

The Case for a Branch-Based Society

This debate is about the central constitutional issue of where the power and the responsibility for this Society lie. Should it be collectively with the branches or individually with the members? I believe that the arguments for keeping power with the branches are compelling.

We can draw lessons and analogies from whoever we like: the National Trust, An Commun, the Kirk – all are pointless! The RSCDS is unique in how it has developed and how it functions. We are country dancers and anything which distracts us from our country dancing aims and objectives is not relevant. How we can best organise dancing is the purpose of this debate. I believe the people who are best qualified and able to run the show are our branches.

Every member of a branch has been recruited by that branch. The vast majority of members are loyal first and foremost to their local branch. They know and are loyal to the RSCDS through their branch. Their pride in the RSCDS largely derives from their branch. Involvement with the Society and an interest in helping it develop come later. This has been my own experience and I believe that of the majority of our members.

All growth comes through branches. The branch is the fundamental building block of the Society. Whenever a new branch is formed, the Society gains new members. And when a branch is failing, it is the Society which shares the loss. We stand and fall together.

It is right, then, that the branches should have control.

One of the great strengths of the RSCDS is that we all work for the good of the whole and no single individual or pressure group can benefit or dominate. A one-member-one-vote system has superficial attractions, but it will necessitate postal voting for every single member, at huge and unnecessary cost, but far more importantly it

has the danger that a small number of individuals will come to dominate.

We are having this debate because we have allowed a situation to develop over the years where a small proportion of our membership are members direct with Headquarters. It is ludicrous that we are even contemplating such fundamental change in order to accommodate a small minority. I am confident that we can provide a structure – a home for our HQ members which will enfranchise them in the same way as branch members – and at the same time keep the Inland Revenue happy. We should look for a solution to the HQ members' issue – not allow that issue to dictate a fundamental change to our branch-based system.

This issue has been complicated by linking it with the idea of HQ communicating direct with members and not using the branches to distribute books, bulletins and newsbriefs. But these issues are not linked. The single issue before us today is about where the power lies. It is a constitutional issue. Where your bulletin comes from, whether HQ has a register of members, these are not even mentioned in the constitution. They are not the issues before us now.

Most organisations would be green with envy at the attendance and interest in our AGM. Our system of branch delegates works. In my living memory it has done nothing silly or irresponsible. No individual has dominated. We have shown we are capable of radical management reform. I urge you not to contemplate removing power from the workers in order that a small number of individuals can exercise their personal vote. A Society run by individuals will weaken the link between branches and headquarters and thus it will weaken the Society itself – not because power will be removed from branches, but because collective responsibility will be removed from the people who do the work day in day out. One-member-one vote would be costly – not only financially – but more importantly, it would split the Society.

Presentation by Andrew Smith –

The Case for a Member-Based Society

In 1923 when the Society was founded, it was essentially Scottish with initially a handful of Branches. At that time running the Society via Branch representation was a reasonable proposition. Since then there has been a significant increase in the number of members and Branches, most impressively outwith Scotland. Now there are 166 Branches worldwide. The Society is now a Scottish charity in line and Branches are legally independent Local Associations formed by members of the Society.

So we now have a Scottish charity with a world-wide influence. I want to retain that influence, as I see our international involvement as very important. Some overseas members in particular would like an opportunity for greater input to the running of the Society if it is to remain relevant to them. There is a risk of the break-up of the Society if we do not address this issue. It is suggested that this can only be done effectively if we have "one-member-one vote". Waiting is not an option: we have to decide soon.

The Scottish Charities Voluntary Organisation gives advice on forming and running Scottish charities, and either "Membership" or "Partnership" organisations could apply. It suggests that in an organisation like ours, which is run principally via an AGM, the members should be **directly** electing the management team. In their terms, the Society took the decision

to be a "Membership" organisation at the AGM in 2000, and in effect abandoned the "Partnership" type of organisation that had Branches as the "key partner bodies" with rights of representation through non-elected members on the former Executive Council, and with Branch control of voting. We have a hybrid at present and many of our members are not happy. Furthermore, HQ members are still disenfranchised. This is not satisfactory.

The Branches are essential if the Society is to flourish. All that is questioned is their continued role in the management of the Society. Is it reasonable that the Branches effectively control the Society? Surely it should be the **members** who run it? It strikes me as illogical that while members propose me as a candidate for the Management Board, Branches vote on the matter.

Many of us have at some time said that most people "Just want to dance." I believed it was the case until spring 2003 when a questionnaire on membership and communications was put to a large group of members in Bristol. The **majority** were interested in some measure of participation in the running of the Society, "at least by voting for candidates/AGM motions by post." There was also a considerable readiness to pay a higher subscription, ranging from £15 - £20.

As long as members feel disenfranchised, unappreciated or uninvolved, many will object to a higher subscription. Although we may lose some on cost grounds we may not necessarily lose them from dancing, and the subscription increase would probably be within the range in the survey.

How wide has the consultation been within your Branch to determine who would be your Branch delegates? How wide has the discussion been within your Branch on issues before recent AGMs and on candidates for election to the Board and Committees? How much dialogue has there been between overseas Branches and those UK-based members who represent them? What feel do delegates have for the views of the **members** in those Branches, as opposed to those of whoever gave them instructions? How much input have the majority of members had to the new system?

I believe that getting the majority of our members involved in the Society, even in a small but very important way, will lead to a revitalisation of the Branches, because our members will feel more involved and more valued. Bristol members clearly appreciated the fact that their views were sought.

Summary of Comments from the Floor

One speaker reported that only a minority of dancers in his area were members. Many were on fixed incomes and would like a reduced subscription. They would not mind having no vote and receiving no documents.

One speaker felt that there should be more votes for members. He suggested that a scheme should be considered under which the Branch gathered proxy votes from its members.

One speaker supported one member one vote (OMOV), but was concerned that few would bother to vote. There was a need to create an informed electorate.

Three speakers expressed concern about the likely high additional cost of administering OMOV and maintaining central membership records. Most members would not be interested in voting as individuals and receiving all the

(Continued on page 3)

BRANCH MATTERS

I hope that you have all had an enjoyable Christmas and New Year break.

We have had two very enjoyable dances recently. The Christmas Dance was attended by nearly 180 enthusiastic dancers, enjoying the excellent music of the Craiggellachie Band, and the Burns' Supper and Ceilidh in January continued to be enjoyed by many to the music of Frank Reid. Lots of new faces were seen and it is hoped that some of them will have discovered the joys of Scottish Country Dancing.

Our Family Dance in November seemed to take on a new lease of life. We hope that more members with young families will attend the Children's Dance in March. It is important that we encourage the young to join in the fun.

Following the Consultation Document and the summary in this *Reel*, the Branch Committee would like to hear the views of as many of our members as possible regarding the Branch v. Members proposal currently being debated. We would like our members' views communicated to Headquarters in Edinburgh.

We are still looking for ideas for the 75th Anniversary celebrations, though as you can see, many exciting functions are being planned. Some members may come up with ideas we haven't thought of.

Owen Meyer



Two happy London Branch stewards, Daniel Capron and Margaret Catchick, at the Society AGM in November

(Continued from page 2)

extra paperwork and CVs of the candidates.

One speaker disagreed with Jimmie Hill's contention that OMOV would destroy the Society.

One speaker pointed out that, although membership of the Management Board had been opened up to all Society members, relatively few had bothered to stand in Society elections. Members could get involved if they wanted to.

One speaker supported OMOV fully. She wanted to be able to put forward her views and have these reflected on the decision-making body. It was not always possible to do this through Branches and Branch delegates. Nowadays people, especially young people, look for more professionalism and will pay. They want to get involved.

Two speakers commented that some Branches do not always pass on information to members.

Another speaker pointed out that it is not only HQ members that are disenfranchised at present. Many Branch members also feel disenfranchised.

MANAGEMENT BOARD REPORT

15th November 2003 Meeting

As usual, the Management Board Reports are sent to Branch Secretaries and then put on the website.

Communication, a subject of interest and concern to many dancers. A working group has been set up to produce a discussion document for the next meeting on 14th February 2004; consideration will be given to the purpose of publications, who is communicating with whom, what is being communicated. It will include points made at the AGM about Branch interaction and will look at short, medium and long term aspects of policy. A suggestion of Branch 'zones' with notice boards, will be explored. It was agreed to investigate the implications of setting up and maintaining an entire membership data base.

Awards: It was agreed to take forward the idea of Branch awards for services at Branch level.

The Annual General Meeting: (which is now part of the Annual Conference weekend). The Management Board recorded their thanks to the organisers, Perth Branch, and the 13 participating Branches who did the work that resulted in a very smoothly run weekend. London Branch contributed the Saturday night dance programme (John Laurie), the Saturday night MCs (Andrew Kellett and Simon Wales), Saturday morning's class teacher (Jenny Greene) and several stewards during the day. This year's Annual Conference will be held in Edinburgh and the Branch Forum will be organised by Toronto Branch with Boston Branch.

VAT: The Treasurer said the final settlement negotiations were still continuing but should be completed by the next meeting in February.

I apologise to anyone who was expecting to read about the new examination structure. This was for the February meeting – my mistake.

Happy dancing!

Rachel Wilton

Would YOU like to serve on the Management Board or one of the three Committees?

One of the aims of the new management structure was to open the doors of committee work so that any member of the Society who was interested could stand for election. The Newsbrief of May 2003 clearly states that 'any member of the Society aged 18 years or over can stand for election'. At the RSCDS Annual General Meeting six places on the Management Board are up for election, two places on General Purposes and Finance, two places on Membership Services and three places on Education and Training.

If you would be interested in standing for nomination, send for the required form from Headquarters – address in next column. You will need to find a proposer, seconder and 10 Society members to sign the form; all the other information you need will be sent to you.

Any questions to Rachel Wilton.
Tel. 020 8858 7729,
e-mail. wiltonrachel@hotmail.com

ROYAL SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE SOCIETY



Patron - H.M. The Queen

HEADQUARTERS:

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e-mail: info@rscdshq.freeserve.co.uk
www.rscds.org

LONDON BRANCH

Hon. President

Mary Stoker

Hon. Vice-Presidents:

Mary Barker, Stella Booth, Ellen Garvie,
Jenny Greene, Marie Jamieson,
John Laurie, Rosemary Tilden.

Chairman:

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50 Bunby Road, Stoke Poges,
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Hon. Treasurer:

Simon Wales,

14 Blakes Green, West Wickham,
Kent BR4 0RA. Tel: 020 8777 8915.
e-mail: simon_wales@talk21.com

SUB-COMMITTEES

Children: Rachel Wilton, Angela Young.

Classes: Margaret Shaw, Margaret Catchick, Lindsay Merriman, Owen Meyer, Caroline Sloan.

Dances: Peter Knight, Davinia Miln, Cherry West, Angela Young.

Demonstrations: Jeff Robertson, Gaynor Curtis* (Class Secretary).

Publicity: Daniel Capron, Rita Marlow*, Lindsay Merriman, Jeff Robertson, Meryl Thomson.

Open-air Dances: Davinia Miln,
Margaret Catchick.

Membership: Owen Meyer

Bookstall: Ian Anderson*

Central Council of Physical Recreation:
Marie Jamieson*

Hon. Archivist: Iris Anderson*

Southeast Group: Peter Knight

Combined Societies: Peter Knight,
Owen Meyer

Branch Website Meryl and Ian* Thomson

*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.

BRANCH DANCES

BEGINNERS' DANCE

Saturday 20th March 2004

7.00 - 10.30 p.m.

St. Columba's Church Hall, Pont Street, SW1.

Green Ginger

The Happy Meeting	19-9
Nice to See You	40-3
Grant's Reel	14-2
Middling Thank You	15-8
Miss Flora's Favourite	Graded
Rakes of Glasgow	11-11
Espie McNab	MMM 1-14
Sleepie Maggie	11-5
Joe MacDairmid's Jig	5 SCDS 1982-3
The Laird of Milton's Daughter	22-10
Round Reel of Eight	27-7
Monymusk	11-2
St. Andrew's Fair	5 SCDS 1982-2
The Reverend John MacFarlane	37-1
She's Ower Young to Marry Yet	14-8
The White Cockade	5-11
EH3 7AF	40-6
The De'il Amang the Tailors	14-7

Admission £7 members, £8 non-members,
£2 children, but members' children admitted free.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Branch Dances in 2003-2004 season.

Saturday 22nd May **David Hall**
St. Columba's

Saturday 12th June **Craigellachie**
Polesden Lacey

For dances in 2004/2005 season see page 1.

Children's Corner

CHILDREN'S DAY

Saturday 20th March 2004

St. Columba's Church Hall, Pont St. SW1.

11.30 a.m. - 1.00 p.m. Children's Class £1
2.00 - 4.30 p.m. Children's Dance £2

After the success of last year's class the Branch will hold children's classes for children and young people before the afternoon dance. Please come and join us. Lunch will be provided between the class and the dance for all those attending.

Dancing to the music of Green Ginger

Nice to See You	R	40-3
Leap Year	J	Graded 1
Johnny Groat's House	R	18-1
Kendall's Hornpipe	J	Graded 22
Highland Fair	J	Graded 6
Long Live the Queen	R	MMM 1
A Jig for Mrs Dunn	J ..	Children's 8
Round Reel of Eight	R	27-7
The Dhoon	J ..	Children's 1
Le Papillon	J ..	Children's 2
The British Grenadiers	R	MMM 1
Lady C. Bruce's Reel	R	MMM 1
Cumberland Reel	J	1-11
Kelso Races	R	MMM 1
Espie McNab	J	MMM 1
The Dashing White Sergeant ..	R	3-2

CHILDREN'S IDTA EXAMS

Saturday 6th March 2004

St. Columba's Church, Pont Street, SW1.

Further details from Rachel Wilton.

Tel: 020 8858 7729,

e-mail: wiltonrachel@hotmail.com.

SUMMER SCHOOL IS OPEN TO ALL!

18th July to 15th August 2004

Based at University Hall in beautiful

St. Andrews, Fife.

Four + 1 week courses: dancers can attend either as resident or non-resident, for just one week or more!

- Morning classes for all levels, including beginners.
- Optional afternoon classes, and a variety of other activities and events.
- Two musicians' courses will be held during weeks one and three.
- Social dancing every evening, with a ceilidh each Friday evening.

Further details and application forms from RSCDS Headquarters or the Branch Secretary (address on page 3), or Class teacher.

THE CAMBRIDGE SPRING FLING (16 - 35s)

Saturday and Sunday 16th - 18th April 2004

Organised by young people for young people

- Teachers - **Duncan Brown** and **Debbie Lees**
- Musicians - **David Hall** and **Angela Young**
- Residents - RSCDS members £50.00, non members £55.00.
- Non residents - RSCDS members £25.00, non members £30.00.
- Accommodation, including most meals, is in a Youth Hostel.
- Classes for beginners and experienced dancers, other optional classes, social dancing in the evening. (Saturday evening dance open to all, tickets £6.00).
- Highland and Ladies' Step classes will be available on Sunday afternoon.

Full payment required by 19th March 2004.

Places are limited so please apply as soon as possible.

Application forms from the RSCDS website www.rscds.org youth section or from Headquarters, details on page 3.

COME AND HAVE FUN!

BRANCH BOOKSTALL

At your service

Books and CDs for Scottish Dancers

Mail order from Ian Anderson,
104 Whitedown Lane, Alton, Hants
GU34 1QR. Tel: 01420 84599

e-mail: ian.g.anderson@ukgateway.net

10% reduction on RSCDS publications and recordings bought by members.

Please state your Branch when ordering.

N.B.: The Bookstall Stocklist is available on the Branch Website.

RSCDS SUMMER SCHOOL - MY FIRST TIME

I was a bit intimidated about the prospect of going to RSCDS Summer School for the first time. I grew up in St. Andrews so I knew it was a lovely place for a holiday and my mother had offered us accommodation, but would it be worth using up our family summer holiday time on? Would it be fun? Would my husband and I end up in the right class? What would we do with our two year-old daughter whilst we danced? Were we fit enough? Were we good enough to enjoy the social dances in the evenings?

One of our teachers gave us a photocopy of an article in *The Reel*, which convinced us that our daughter would be well catered for in the University nursery (Rainbow Nursery, Fife Park, St. Andrews, tel. 01334 470642) whilst we went to the morning classes. Booking a place for her was straightforward and the nursery was very inexpensive (by London standards!). My mother agreed to look after our daughter in the evenings and we'd heard that the nursery staff might also do some baby-sitting. So we took the plunge and sent off our application forms.

And it turned out to be more fun than either my husband or I had hoped. So in case you are wondering whether or not to go to the Summer School this year, here are a few thoughts.

- If you follow the guidelines the RSCDS sends out, you will find it hard to put yourself in the wrong class. But be honest about what you can do; it is frustrating for everyone if you are in a group that you cannot cope with. However, even if you are one of the more proficient in your class, you will still learn a lot. In fact, you can't fail to improve your dancing at the Summer School.
- Despite being not very fit, and not usually dancing more than once a week, I found it fairly easy to cope with both the morning dance classes and most of the evening social classes without any sore muscles or stiff legs. We didn't dance in the afternoons but we felt wonderfully healthy by the end of our week!
- It's astonishingly good value as a summer holiday; £90 each for all the classes, live music in every class, evening dances, and afternoon activities. We can't speak for the university accommodation but everyone seemed to be too busy enjoying the dancing to be lounging about in their rooms anyway.
- The classes were great. Learning about dancing and learning to dance correctly is immensely satisfying. Our teacher was very exacting: no one was allowed to sit down or talk while he was giving instructions and he had a very sharp eye for straight lines and correct footwork. However, questions were always welcome and no class passed without a laugh. The end result was loads of fun as well as a feeling of making progress.
- There was absolutely no danger of not enjoying the social dances in the evening - everyone was friendly, welcoming and tolerant, despite the fact that we are not advanced dancers. No one goes without a partner because everyone goes to St. Andrews determined to dance as much as possible. This means you get the opportunity to dance with some wonderful dancers which is a great thrill. I attempted dances that I would have thought far beyond my ability because I had so many partners who led me seamlessly and delicately through them.

Going to RSCDS Summer School was undoubtedly a good summer family holiday. I think it could become addictive - you've been warned!

Sarah Hughes

BRANCH CLASSES

Join a class, make new friends, meet old friends, improve your dancing and enjoy yourself.

Class	Day	Time	Location	Teacher / Musician
ELEMENTARY	Wednesday	6.30 - 8.00	Marlborough School, Sloane Avenue, SW3	Gaynor Curtis / Jean Harrison
POPULAR S.C. DANCES	Wednesday	8.00 - 9.30	Marlborough School, Sloane Avenue, SW3	Lindsey Rousseau / Ian Cutts
TECHNIQUE	Wednesday	7.30 - 9.30	St. Barnabas' & St. Phillip's School, Pembroke Mews, W8	Angela Young / Ken Martlew
DEMONSTRATION	Tuesday	7.15 - 9.15	<i>For details contact Gaynor Curtis, 01483 721989.</i>	Ann Dix / Sandra Smith
GENERAL (Central)	Wednesday	2.30 - 4.30	St. Columba's Church Hall, Pont Street, SW1	Jeni Rutherford

This term ends in the week beginning 22nd March 2004. Next term starts week beginning 19th April 2004, and ends in the week beginning 17th May. All enquiries about classes to Margaret Shaw, 020 7329 2847.

HIGHLAND CLASS

Thursday 4th March.
7.00 p.m. - 9.00 p.m.

Essex Hall, 1-6 Essex Street, London WC2.

Teacher: **Malcolm Ferris Lay**
Musician: **Judith Smith**

£6 per class.

Further details from Malcolm,
tel: 01279 425081 or

e-mail malcolm@williamsonmagor.com.

LADIES' STEP DANCING CLASS

Sunday 28th March 2004
10.45 a.m.-12.45 p.m., 2.00 - 3.45 p.m.

The Guide Hall, Wallington Green,
Wallington, Surrey.
Details from Jenny Greene, 17 Redclyffe Court,
Worcester Road, Sutton, Surrey SM2 6JG
tel. 020 8642 5008.

This is your last chance to attend one of Jenny's Ladies' Step classes, as she is moving to Crieff after Easter.

THE WEDNESDAY TECHNIQUE CLASS

The Wednesday Technique Class has been running under its new name for just over a year now and has built up a strong core of members who come to the class each week. As well as those who are able to make it there every Wednesday, there are a large number of dancers who attend when they are able, including on occasions visitors from overseas.

Last year the class concentrated on formations – when they first appeared in RSCDS published dances, also modern dances that they appear in and how they have changed over the centuries. This year we have been concentrating on footwork and variations on formations. We've also danced entire books of dances to find out why some are more popular than others in one book – Sunday Morning from 5 Dances for 1982 definitely gave us all something to think about!

It might all sound like hard work but the class is also about fun and enjoying dancing. Most weeks if you walked past the school, you would hear a lot of laughter. A quote book might be started in 2004 for classic comments such as – "Where do I put my chest in this two-handed strathspey turn?", and "I don't think it is pulling back my left shoulder, I think it's pushing my right one forward!"

It's a very sociable class. The stalwarts retire to the pub each week for a well earned drink, and we've enjoyed several end of term dinners together where food, wine and dancing talk make us a lively addition to any restaurant (but we haven't been thrown out of anywhere yet!)

Last term we were lucky enough to enjoy the music of both Ken Martlew and Peter Jenkins. Maybe I'm biased, but I really enjoy this class. I'm looking forward to the challenges the dancers bring me in 2004.

Angela Young,
Teacher

DANCING PROFICIENCY ASSESSMENT/ SUNDAY TECHNIQUE CLASSES

The Band Hall, Coram's Fields,
93 Guilford Street, London WC1
7th March 2004.
11.00 a.m. - 1.00 p.m.

Teacher: **Angela Young**
Musician: **Judith Smith**

Assessment day 4th April

Musician: **Ken Martlew**

Please phone Margaret Shaw on 020 7329 2847 if you wish to take part.

GENERAL CLASSES

Dates for your diary

We hope to be able to offer five Wednesday General Classes at Marlborough School in June, but at the time of going to press we have not received confirmation from Marlborough School.

For more information contact Margaret Shaw,
tel: 020 7329 2847, or
e-mail peterknightqueensquay@yahoo.co.uk.

WEEKEND SCHOOL

10th - 12th September 2004
The Royal Agricultural College,
 Cirencester, Gloucestershire.

A dancing weekend to celebrate the start of the 75th Anniversary of the founding of London Branch.

Teacher: **Mary Murray**
Pianist: **Robert Mackay**

Saturday night dance: **Green Ginger**
Cost £165 en suite.

Further information and application forms from
Helen Brown, 6 Wells Drive,
London NW9 8DD, tel: 020 8205 0958.

SUBSCRIBE TO THE REEL

If you are not a member of the London Branch order your copy of *The Reel* from

Rita Marlow, 17 West Farm Close, Ashtead,
Surrey KT21 2LH,
tel: 01372 812821,
e-mail: rusmar.ashtead@virgin.net.

The annual cost for individual subscribers is £4 if resident in the UK, £4.50 for other European residents and £6.50 if resident elsewhere. There are special rates for bulk orders. Remittances in sterling please, payable to RSCDS (London Branch).

HAVE YOU RECEIVED YOUR REEL?

If you ever fail to receive your issue of *The Reel*, please advise our Membership Secretary, Owen Meyer, 50 Bunby Road, Stoke Poges, Bucks SL2 4BP, Tel: 01753 643461, so that the matter can be investigated and rectified. Thanks.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the RSCDS and London Branch costs £14.00 per annum for UK based members (£14.50 for Europe; £16.50 elsewhere). 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 annual dance publication, Bulletin and Newsletters. Membership applications and enquiries should be sent to the Membership Secretary, Owen Meyer, 50 Bunby Road, Stoke Poges, Bucks SL2 4BP. Tel: 01753 643461.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

White dresses

London

Dear Daniel,

Following the various letters that have appeared in the last few editions of *The Reel* regarding white dresses and the London Dem Team, we have been asked to respond as members of the team. We have been very interested in all the comments that have been made, and put together they sum up the issue which has been facing the team for a number of years.

At present the ladies in the team have both short and long white dresses, the decision of which to wear depends on the type of occasion at which we are dancing. If it is a summer outdoor function we will wear our short dresses; if it is a formal dinner we wear our long white dresses. All dresses are made from the same material and pattern – a 1950s wedding dress pattern!

Hopefully none of us looks like “a sack of potatoes” in either dress but we are interested in bringing the look into the 21st century.

Whilst we are considering informal alternatives such as plain T-shirts and tartan skirts, we do still need a formal demonstration dress and so far we haven't come up with an alternative solution to the long white dress.

- The dress needs to be made from a fabric that we can easily get access to in the years to come for replacement dresses.
- The colour and fabric need to withstand washing over a period of time without fading.
- The pattern needs to be relatively simple so that the members of the class can make it, at the same time as being suitable for all the ladies in the class.
- The finished dress needs to be able to travel miles by bus, tube, car, train and arrive looking pristine and crease free.
- And the colour needs to match with a variety of Tartan sashes, as well as complimenting the men's formal attire.

No mean feat for one dress to achieve!

As a team we have spent many hours

discussing this and have as yet not solved it. However if we do, I'm sure you will see the result at Branch functions and in the meantime if anyone has any brilliant ideas please get in touch with us.

Janet Rudge and Angela Young,
London Demonstration Team

Worcester Park, Surrey

Dear Daniel,

I was interested to see that all the letters in *The Reel* 246 regarding ladies' dresses appear to have been written by men! White dresses seem to have fallen out of favour for ordinary dancers. My 19-year old daughter Catriona and I wore them to the Watford Ball in April, but hardly anyone else did. Apart from being difficult to find, particularly if you are around five feet tall (ours were both originally made for me) they tend to be high maintenance. If they are washable they are likely to be tricky to iron, and if not they are likely to need dry-cleaning every time they are worn.

I would suggest that a better solution for ladies is a tartan skirt. These are easily available, and can be dressed up or down with different blouses and blazers or cardigans according to the occasion. I have a plain green tweed jacket which I find extremely useful as I can also wear it with plain skirts on non-Scottish occasions. I have my club badges in the lapel and these attract some interest from non-dancers (good publicity).

As far as the demonstration team is concerned I would suggest that the ladies wear the Aboyne dress. Judging by photographs in the Autumn 2003 'The Scots Voice' (Royal Scottish Corporation Newsletter) this is already worn by the McLellan Scottish Country Dancers, and was worn by the London RSCDS team at an Epsom Caledonian Association garden party a couple of years ago, when the white dresses accidentally got locked in someone's garage.

Yours sincerely,

Elizabeth Bennett

DEMONSTRATIONS

With the festive season approaching, the demonstration class anticipated a lively catalogue of events. These included performances at Lee Abbey near Earls Court and the National Trust for Scotland Party at Pont Street which were very much appreciated. Our thanks to musicians Neil Esselmont and Peter Jenkins for their support and enthusiasm at Lee Abbey and also to Simon Wales whose calling contributed greatly to the enjoyment of the evening. At the Branch Christmas Dance, the Team gave a faultless performance of Ann's New Book Medley to the accompaniment of Ian Muir and the Craigellachie Band.

Our sincere thanks go to our teacher Ann Dix assisted by Joan Desborough and particularly to our class musician Sandra Smith.

We are pleased to offer a warm welcome to Kate Sweeney, our latest addition to the class.

As I write, future items include the usual flurry of activity around Burns time, the Newcastle Festival at Gateshead on 14th February 2004 and Richmond Caledonian in March.

We are reviewing publicity material for the website to include quality action pictures of the team, with video extracts where appropriate. Suitable still images will also be used for promotional leaflets.

We are always keen to welcome dancers of an advanced standard so anyone interested in joining the team please get in touch with Jeff Robertson on 01903 530750, 020 7730 9633 or e-mail jtr@ctg.co.uk.

Jeff Robertson

McNaughtons Advert

SCROLL OF HONOUR RECIPIENTS

The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society presented its Scroll of Honour, the highest award given by the Society, to seven new recipients at its Annual General Meeting in Perth in November 2003. Here are the main points of the citations read out by the Chairman at that meeting:

DEREK HAYNES

Derek Haynes began Scottish Country Dancing in 1953 and in 1954 joined Liverpool Branch where he became a Branch teacher, committee member and treasurer. He passed his Full Certificate in 1958 and has been teaching ever since. As well as taking a regular class in his home area, Derek teaches at many day and weekend schools throughout the UK. He regularly attends Summer School and usually teaches both Country and Men's Highland dancing. He also taught at the first RSCDS Winter School at Pitlochry.

Derek has also taught at numerous weekend schools in Belgium, France, Holland, Spain, Norway and Sweden, and undertaken teaching tours of the USA, Canada, Japan and Australia. One of Derek's strengths is his ability to teach technique at ALL levels. Some technique is always introduced at his classes but at the same time he makes the dancing FUN.

Derek has danced in and trained demonstration teams, and is well known as a solo Highland dancer winning many medals at various Highland Games. He is also well known as a deviser of Scottish Country dances, and he has published several Collections of Dances in aid of cancer charities. RSCDS published his first dance, Neidpath Castle, in 1963, Miss Gibson's Strathspey in 1979 and the Clansman in 1984.

NORA KINDNESS

Nora Kindness is awarded a Scroll of Honour in recognition of her many years of dedicated service and outstanding loyalty to the RSCDS, for her contributions in preserving the standards and traditions of Scottish Country Dancing, and for her joyous encouragement of young and old alike to increase their knowledge and enjoyment of Scotland's heritage of dance and music.

A founding member of the Scottish Dance Society of Cincinnati in 1958, Nora Kindness has done everything she could to encourage and promote Scottish Country Dancing in Cincinnati. She became the group's teacher within the first few meetings and in order to improve her own high standards of teaching and dancing, travelled to Canada to attend classes and workshops, when none were available nearby. In 1967 she obtained her RSCDS Teacher's Certificate. Throughout the subsequent decades she has encouraged and mentored over a dozen teachers in Ohio alone. Over the years she has continued to attend workshops and classes world-wide, and spent this past summer at the TAC Summer School dancing and networking with other teachers and dancers from around the world.

Nora Kindness can rightfully be credited with the establishment of RSCDS groups and branches throughout the Midwest. In Ohio (Columbus, Cleveland, Dayton and Cincinnati), Kentucky (Louisville and Lexington), Indiana (Madison and Indianapolis) and Tennessee (Nashville).

ROBERT H MACKAY

Robert Mackay has played the piano at Summer School since 1977 for all levels of classes and also for demonstrations in the Younger Hall. Along with Muriel Johnstone, he ran courses for musicians on many occasions and has given music talks regularly at Summer School. He has played the piano for two official RSCDS teaching tours throughout the whole of Australia, including the Australian Winter School in Brisbane, at three New Zealand Summer Schools, for weekend/day schools in San Francisco, Vancouver, Netherlands,



Left to right: Derek Haynes, Duncan MacLean, Nora Kindness and Robert Mackay at the AGM. The other three received their scrolls at local ceremonies. [Thank you, TACTALK, for this photo.]

Germany, Switzerland and Denmark as well as all over Scotland and England and for official teaching tours of Norway and Ireland.

Robert Mackay became a life member of RSCDS in 1960 through the Edinburgh Branch. He has danced in demonstration teams, played for classes in the Branch at all levels, organised the Edinburgh Residential Weekend School, served on the Edinburgh Branch Executive Committee and organised courses for pianists on behalf of the Branch.

He served on the Executive Council of the RSCDS from 1979 to 2002. He has been Convenor of the Publications & Research Committee and of the Music Sub-Committee. He also served on the Finance and Constitution Sub-Committees.

Robert Mackay has performed Scottish Country Dancing on television and been presented to Her Majesty the Queen (our Patron) on three occasions. Last year he was interviewed on television and radio on the subject of Scottish Country Dancing.

DUNCAN MACLEAN

Duncan MacLean has been a member of Glasgow Branch for over fifty years. He regarded himself as a 'late starter' to Scottish Country Dancing, joining the Society in his 30s. Very quickly, however, he became a certificated teacher and took responsibility for teaching Branch classes. He soon became a member of the demonstration team. He remained a member of the team for over twenty five years, becoming not only teacher but also convenor of the demonstration group.

He negotiated visits to international folk festivals in France, Belgium, Holland and Germany, as well as arranging many events in Glasgow and throughout Scotland. During these visits he was a dancer and a musician, frequently playing his pipes for the team. In particular Duncan was responsible for arranging a team to participate in the 'Glasgow Week' in Hamburg in 1974 and in 1972 led the team from Glasgow which danced in 'Yehudi Menuhin's Welcome to Blair Castle'. These events brought Scottish Country Dancing to a wide audience.

Despite declining health and his stated intention to retire from active teaching and dancing, Duncan devotes much time to visiting events and dances, not only in Glasgow but also in other parts of Scotland, participating when he can.

GARY MORRIS

Gary has been a dancer continuously for more than 50 years, starting in Hastings under the influence of Madge Laing during the 1950's. He passed his Teacher's Certificate at St Andrews in 1962 at the age of 23. Gary has been an inspiration and role model to male dancers in New Zealand. He always dances with precision and style.

Over the last 40 years Gary has taught at an endless number of Region classes, Day and

Weekend Schools. His profession required him to travel extensively around New Zealand, and he always made a point of attending local clubs and classes and sharing his enjoyment of dancing with dancers and teachers. Gary is currently supporting the establishment of a new club in Carterton, north of Wellington. He has taught at many New Zealand Branch Summer Schools, Australian Winter Schools, and in Canada, South Carolina, USA and London Branch. He has also tutored many groups of teachers, both in New Zealand and Australia, for their Preliminary Test and Teacher's Certificate examinations. In 1991 Gary was appointed a Society examiner. He has conducted examinations in New Zealand, Australia and Japan.

For over 30 years Gary has been a member of the New Zealand Branch Reference Technical Committee, recently replaced by a Teacher's Panel in 1999, and served on this panel becoming Convenor in 2001. Gary also convened the sub-committee responsible for the publication of three books of dances in New Zealand. He has devised several popular dances, the best known being The Reverend John MacFarlane (Book 37).

MORAG NAPIER

Morag Napier has taught classes at all levels for Sydney Branch since 1974. The emphasis of her teaching has always been on Society published dances and correct technique. She has taught at various weekend Schools and at six Australian Winter Schools. She has taught in Wellington and Auckland, at Branch weekends, and at the NZ Summer School in 2001/2. She conducted weekend workshops for teachers in Melbourne, Adelaide and Queensland and convened several courses for tutors in certificate classes. She trained three groups of teachers for their Preliminary Test and then for their full certificate. Since 1990 Morag has been an RSCDS examiner.

Morag is the secretary and driving force of the Sydney Teachers liaison group since its inception 30 years ago and mentor to many of the Sydney teachers, particularly on technique. Morag was a member of the organising committee of four Australian Winter Schools hosted by Sydney Branch, responsible for teachers, classes, and grading of dancers. She was chairman of organising committee for 2002 Winter School.

KEITH NAPIER

Keith Napier created and published an Index of Scottish Country Dances, including both RSCDS and non-RSCDS sources. A feature of the index was the figure index, allowing a teacher to find a dance with a nominated figure, dance type and difficulty of dance. The first edition was published in 1976, and the fifth in 2002 covered over 9,500 dances. The index is available on the Internet.

Keith taught several classes and was MC for many socials during the 1970s and 1980s. Recently he has supported his wife Morag and other Sydney teachers in the provision of recorded music. He was "Mr Music" for the three groups trained for the Preliminary Test and Teacher's Certificate by Morag.

Keith was chairman of organising committee for three Australian Winter Schools in Sydney and on the committee for the 2002 school. He is currently secretary of the Branch.

Meanwhile in the Netherlands, Hans van Zon of Leidschendam, who received the Society's scroll of honour in 1991 and was the first Dutchman to do so, has received a royal decoration: he was appointed Member of the Order of Orange Nassau. The local paper 'Het Krantje' reports that Hans van Zon has, for the 45 years' existence of The Hague and District Branch, held without interruption the unpaid positions of dance teacher, secretary, treasurer and editor of the Branch newsletter. (Thanks to Richard Tremaine of Boxgrove, Sussex, for this information. Ed.)