



Final events of the 2025-26 season - Summer Wednesday dance on 27 May 2026 (above) and End of Season dance on 13 June 2026 (below)



In This Bumper Issue

Branch Matters (pp2-7)

Chair's report, AGM report and annual accounts, membership, dances, classes listings and reports, Day School notice

Where is this? (p3)

Round and About (pp8-9)

Reports from KASS, Maidenhead, Cambridge and Maidstone, White Rose Festival

On and off the Dance Floor (pp10-11)

In pictures

Music Matters (p12)

Jeremy Hill reviews Leonard Brown's recent CD and Dave Hall reviews Liam Stewart's CD for the Carnforth Collection Vol 1

Letters to *The Reel* (p13)

In Memoriam, hands, dress, from the archives

The Story behind the Dance (pp14-15)

Why change tunes?

RSCDS Management Matters (p16)

Management Board, Re-branding

75 years of the Reel (p17)

Review of issues from 25, 50 and 75 years ago

A Life Remembered (p17)

Doris Young

Clubs and Societies (pp18-20)

Forthcoming events and listings

Where is This? See p3...



Issue 338 should be with UK based members by 28 November 2026 unless delayed in the post.

Contributions for *Reel* 338 covering December 2026 - April 2027 to be sent in advance of 18 October 2026 by email to editor@rscdslondon.org.uk

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

From the Chair: Richard Clarke



When I sent in my copy for the last edition of the Reel the hot topic in the news was peace talks in the Middle East; four months later the region no longer tops the headlines notwithstanding the situation appears unchanged. Instead, the men's football World Cup dominated the news for several weeks sandwiched between excited comments on predictable local government elections and the selection of a new Labour Party leader and Prime Minister. As I write, every news broadcast starts with speculation on the plans of the new cabinet creating a climate of uncertainty. Heatwaves impact daily lives as even those who thrive on sunshine cope with transport cancellations and water restrictions - some readers will be hoping for an early autumn.

Unfortunately leading up to our summer break, a number of classes were cancelled due to planned transport strikes. Frustratingly several of these were called off after our go- or no-go deadline which we need to cancel teacher and musician bookings and communicate to potential attendees. We formally ended the dancing year on 13 June with the AGM and End of Season dance, but some classes continued after this and we also attended the White Rose Festival in Leeds on 11 July. The class programme starts again at the end of September. In the meantime, there are weekly dances organised by our friends at Summer Tuesdays at St Columba's Church and our own informal dances in Kensington Gardens during the afternoons of 15, 22 and 29 August.

By now you should have been notified by RSCDS at 12 Coates Crescent of their new membership records system. To access this, you log in with your email address, click the 'forgot password' button and then follow the instructions to finalise the records. New features will be released progressively once the task of importing existing members' records is successfully completed. You may notice 12 Coates Crescent have introduced new branding and this will be incorporated into London Branch communications once we have the graphics package. Later in 2026 you will be able to use the new membership system to subscribe for a paper copy of *Scottish Country Dancer* - the digital copy will continue to be included in the annual membership fee.

At our committee meeting on 29 May the main item of business was approving the charity accounts for the year to 31 March which are available in the 'About us' section of the website in the AGM folder. Operational losses have reduced to in line with budget as the initial cost of investing in new classes has stabilised with overheads largely covered by the membership fee. A contribution from some surpluses on dance events - particularly the Burns Ceilidh reduces the deficit on classes. The main area of ongoing financial attention is the cost of publishing and distributing *The Reel*. This publication creates an historic archive of Scottish country dancing and dancers in the London area, includes general information on SCD and also functions as a diary update. Ten years ago, it attracted commercial advertising, but this has mainly moved online and with the cost of printing and postage increasing, losses on *The Reel* are increasing. Many members are content with an electronic copy, but we know the paper version is important to some. To contain the costs the Committee decided to change the quarterly publication cycle to three copies a year with additional pages to maintain the overall coverage on Scottish country dancing in the London area.

Branch AGM and Annual Accounts: Simon Wales, Treasurer



The AGM duly took place on Saturday 13 June 2026 at St Columba's Church and was followed by the End of Season Dance.

The 2026 AGM passed by pretty much the same as the previous ninety five AGMs, thanks to the expert

chairing skills of Richard Clarke and the amount of preparation beforehand.

The review of the season was adopted, the President, Vice-Presidents, Officers and Committee were all voted in (see full list to the right). Three new members were welcomed to the Committee - Cecil Cox, Rowena Jackson and Heather Jeffery, which means that we have a full committee for the first time in many years. Sadly, Wendy Morris has left the committee and we wish her well and offer our grateful thanks for her support. The Treasurer's report was adopted and the meeting agreed that the Committee would appoint an independent examiner, following Helen Ives decision to step down.

The meeting finished with time for socialising, then, with chairs pushed back, we enjoyed the End of Season Dance to the brilliant music of Adam Brady.

The Treasurer presented his 24th set of annual accounts which showed the Branch's net worth at 31 March 2026 to be:

	2026	2025
General Fund	62,225	55,861
Ireland Fund	2,569	2,669
Anniversary Fund	2,069	2,069
Helen Brown Fund	5,000	5,000
Teaching Awards	400	600
Reel Appeal	1,813	0
SE Branches	333	0

Total net worth £74,409 £66,199

There was a net operating loss of £4,175 offset by an unrealised gain on investments of £9,539. The Committee had approved this budgeted expenditure, investing in the future of the Branch.

Looking forward

We have committed once again to spending some reserves on organising activities aimed at younger dancers, developing our classes, better publicity and promotion of all events, and providing financial assistance to younger dancers and potential teachers.

We have reluctantly decided to print three issues of the *Reel* in future in order to save costs. For many years the *Reel* has been subsidised by other income - the Branch subscription does not even cover the cost of printing and distribution.

ROYAL
SCOTTISH
COUNTRY
DANCE
SOCIETY



Patron: HM The King

Chair: Gary Coull

HEADQUARTERS

12 Coates Crescent, Edinburgh EH3 7AF

Tel: 0131 225 3854

info@rscds.org

rscds.org

LONDON BRANCH

Hon. President

Andrew Kellett

Hon. Vice Presidents

Mary Barker, Margaret Catchick, Jim Cook,
Jenny Greene, Rita Marlow,
Danielle Reinstein, Lindsey Rousseau

Chair

Richard Clarke

Tel: 020 7582 0934

chair@rscdslondon.org.uk

Vice Chair

Vacant

vicechair@rscdslondon.org.uk

Hon. Secretary

Vacant

secretary@rscdslondon.org.uk

Hon. Treasurer

Simon Wales

Tel: 01622 761753

treasurer@rscdslondon.org.uk

Committee

Joanne Lawrence (Classes Convenor)

Margaret Shaw (Dances Convenor)

Cecil Cox, Elaine Davies, Rowena Jackson,

Heather Jeffery, Thelma-Jane Robb,

Mel Rowland

Non-Executive roles

Hon. Archivist..... Simon Wales

Membership & Subscribers .. Gaynor Curtis

The Reel Editor Simon Wales

The Reel Business Editor.... Jeff Robertson

Web Admin Joanne Lawrence

webmaster@rscdslondon.org.uk
rscdslondon.org.uk



facebook.com/RSCDSLONDON



[@LondonRSCDS](https://twitter.com/LondonRSCDS)



YouTube.com/RSCDSLONDONBranch



Registered charity:1067690

Objects of London Branch

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

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

London Branch Matters

Membership and *The Reel* Subscription Rates

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

As a member of RSCDS London Branch, you enjoy the following benefits: reduced rates at London Branch classes, dances and events; three issues per year of *The Reel*; 10% discount on items from the RSCDS online shop and two issues per year of the RSCDS magazine *Scottish Country Dancer*. UK Members wishing to pay by direct debit may do so by completing a payment mandate by going to rscdslondon.org.uk/join-us. Overseas members should use the methods outlined below, and check the Europe or Worldwide postal rate with the Membership Secretary if they wish to receive a paper copy of *The Reel*.

Membership category	Junior 12-17 years	Young Adult 18-24 years	Adult 25 years +	Adult Joint (2) 25 years +	2nd Branch	<i>The Reel</i> only (subscription)
Electronic (eReel)	£21	£29	£35	£62	£5	£5
<i>The Reel</i> by post (UK)	£23.50	£31.50	£37.50	£67	£7.50	£7.50

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

Day School Dance - see p7

This will be our new season dance
Saturday 17 October 2026

Where is This?

Answer to 'Where is This?' on p1:

Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum was built in 1901 for the Glasgow International Exhibition. It was designed by Sir John Simpson and Edmund Milner Allen and sited at the West End of Glasgow in Kelvingrove Park. It is Scotland's most visited museum. The imposing red sandstone building features 22 galleries and an organ where lunchtime recitals are given. I did hear our Ken Martlew playing the organ there. In 2023 in recognition of the birth of the RSCDS in Glasgow, the Society held its Autumn Gathering in the nearby Kelvin Hall.

In 1960 Mary Isdale MacNab of Vancouver (1889-1966), see p18 *Scottish Country Dancer* No. 33, collected (and rearranged) a strathspey called *Kelvingrove* and this was published as the third dance in her 6th set. It is a 144 bar dance arranged in four figures for four couples in a square formation and was more a display than a social dance. Readers are invited to view the video of London Branch demonstrating this *tour de force* with great aplomb, see my.strathspey.org dance 3428. There is also a popular ceilidh 16 bar dance called the *Kelvingrove Two Step*.

With thanks to Stephen Webb.

Email: editor@rscdslondon.org.uk with any dance related photos.

Autumn Wednesday Dance

Wednesday 28 October 2026

7.00 - 10.00pm

Doors open at 6.30pm

St Columba's Church, Pont Street
SW1X 0BD

Chris Oxtoby

Highland Fair 8x32 R
Mr Michael Bear's Reel 8x32 R
Seann Truibhas Willichan 8x32 S
St Andrew's Fair 8x32 J
Maxwell's Rant 8x32 R
The Byron Strathspey 3x32 S
Yorkshire Rose 8x32 J
The Highland Rambler 8x40 R

New Year Jig 8x32 J
Flowers of Dunbeg 8x32 R
The Wind on Loch Fyne 3x32 S
Light and Airy Sq 88 R
The Barmkin 8x32 J
Miss Gibson's Strathspey 8x32 S
Flowers of Edinburgh 8x32 R
Granville Market 8x32 J

Extra:

The Sailor 8x32 R

Admission includes light refreshments

RSCDS Members £18, Non-members £21
full time students (with card) and
spectators £11
Children (under 16) free

Tickets available online and on the door

All dances will be recapped / walked through
Crib available at rscdslondon.org.uk



Christmas Dance

Saturday 19 December 2026

6.45 for 7.00 - 10.30pm

Doors open at 6.30pm

St Columba's Church, Pont Street
SW1X 0BD

Ian Robertson and his Band

Airyhall Delight 8x32 J
The Reverend John MacFarlane 4x32 R
Mrs Hamilton of Wishaw 8x32 S
Jennifer's Jig 8x32 J
Flight to Melbourne Sq 4x32 R
Argyll Strathspey 8x32 S
Follow me Home 8x32 J
The Paisley Weavers 3x32 S
Peat Fire Flame 8x40 R

The Luckenbooth Brooch 8x32 J
The Braes of Breadalbane 8x32 S
Trip to Timber Ridge 8x32 R
The Galloping Carousel 4x32 J
Portincaple Oak Sq 32 S + 32 R
J B Milne 8x32 R
A Trip to the Drakensberg 8x40 J
The Orchards of Co. Armagh 3x32 S
The Montgomeries' Rant 8x32 R

Extras:

General Stuart's Reel 8x32 R
Joie de Vivre 8x32 J

Admission includes Christmas fare
and a glass of wine

RSCDS Members £24, non-members £27
full time students (with card) and
spectators £14

Children (under 16) free

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

Those with Highland/Evening Dress are
encouraged to wear it

Crib available at rscdslondon.org.uk

Saturday 6 September 1951 - Frewer's Band Royal Scottish Corporation - Fetter Lane Members only Price: 4s

Future Dates

Scottish Reform 3 - 1
Monymusk 11 - 2
The Montgomeries' Rant 10 - 1
Dalkeith's Strathspey 9 - 6
Lord Rosslyn's Fancy 15 - 6
The Camp of Pleasure 15 - 4
Eightsome Reel 2 - 12
Foursome Reel 3 - 11

Hamilton House 7 - 10
Glasgow Highlanders 2 - 3
Lamb Skinnet 14 - 12
Jessie's Hornpipe 8 - 9
The Braes of Busby 9 - 8
Duke of Perth 1 - 8
La Tempete 2 - 1
Waltz Country Dance 4 - 8

17 October 2026 - Day School/Musicians Workshop
17 October 2026 - New Season Dance
28 October 2026 - Autumn Wednesday Dance
19 December 2026 - Christmas Dance
16 January 2027 - Burns Supper & Ceilidh
17 February 2027 - Winter Wednesday Dance
2 June 2027 - Summer Wednesday Dance
12 June 2027 - AGM & End of Season Dance

London Branch Classes



Set yourself a fun challenge join a Scottish country dance class

We have classes for...

Term Dates

For regular Wednesday weekly classes:

General Class

Mixed Ability Dance Group

Richmond Beginners & Improvers

Autumn term: 23 Sept - 9 December

Beginners' Course 2026

Maria Fidelis School, Drummond Crescent,
London NW1 1LY

Wednesday 7.00 - 9.00pm
7 October - 2 December

8 week course introducing basic Scottish
country dance steps and formations

Teachers: James Fairbairn and Grace Hill
with class musicians

Fee: £80 per 8 week course
for RSCDS members,
£96 for non-RSCDS members

Course includes 8 lessons, entry to Autumn
Wednesday dance plus end of term joint
session with Intermediate class

Intermediate

Maria Fidelis School, Drummond Crescent,
London NW1 1LY

Wednesday 7.00 - 9.00pm

With teachers

**Pat Davoll (fortnightly), Jan Collings,
Catriona Bennett, Ken Martlew and
Armaiti Bedford**

with class musicians

A class to consolidate and build on basic
skills and technique

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

Improvers' Course 2027

Follow on to the Beginners' Course,
running for 8 weeks from 20 January 2027

Children's Class

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

With teacher Gill O'Dell
recorded music
Sundays 1.00 - 2.15pm

11 October, 8 November, 13 December

£5 per child per class (maximum £10 per
family per class)

The London Branch runs a large
number of classes throughout the
year.

Some of these are regular classes
during term-time; others are
specialist classes in advanced
technique and classes for young
people

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

Beginners and Improvers

Richmond Library Annexe, Quadrant Road,
Richmond TW9 1DH

With teacher Judith Jones
and recorded music
with live music from

Heather Jeffery on 9 December

Wednesday class

Beginners 7.00 - 9.00pm

Improvers 7.30 - 9.30pm

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

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

Mixed Ability Dance Group

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

Wednesday 2.30 - 4.30pm

Teachers

**Pat Davoll, Peter Knight, Roy Southall and
Rose Kreloff**

Recorded music, with live music from
Barbara Manning on 9 December

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

Visitors welcome

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

Class Musicians

Our Maria Fidelis and monthly adult classes
all enjoy music from one of our class
musicians: Erica Banks, Adam Brady,
Ian Cutts, Heather Jeffery and
Antonia McClintock

Monthly Classes

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

Social Classes

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

For anyone who loves to dance or would like
to learn

Our monthly social classes combine live
music with some teaching, lots of dancing
and a social break to relax and chat. No
need to bring a partner, everyone dances
with everyone else.

The Tuesday Social, 7.00-9.30pm
for dancers in their 20s and 30s

**29 September, 20 October, 23 November,
15 December**

with teachers **Gill O'Dell and Judith Jones**
with musician **Adam Brady**

The Thursday Social, 7.00-9.30pm
for dancers of all ages

12 November, 17 December

with teacher **Murrough Landon**
and class musician

Technique Class

Maria Fidelis School, Drummond Crescent,
London NW1 1LY

**Tuesday 6 October, 3 November,
1 December**

7.00 - 9.00pm

With guest teachers: **Ken Martlew,
Pat Davoll and Armaiti Bedford**
with musician **Heather Jeffery**

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

Fast Paced Social Class

Maria Fidelis School, Drummond Crescent,
London NW1 1LY

**Tuesday 22 September, 13 October,
17 November, 8 December**

7.00 - 9.00pm

With guest teachers: **David Queen,
Sam Chad, Kate Gentles and
Joan Desborough**
with musician **Adam Brady**

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

London Branch Classes

Classes Round-up: Joanne Lawrence



RSCDS London Branch has enjoyed an active year of weekly, monthly and ad hoc dance classes ranging from our well attended and enthusiastic Beginners' courses to Technique and Fast Paced Social Dance classes for more advanced dancers, and including special monthly sessions for younger dancers and for children.

We have a regular programme of weekly classes during term time at St Columba's, Pont Street (Mixed ability, Wednesday afternoons), Richmond Library Annexe, near Richmond Station (Beginners/Improvers, Wednesday evenings) and Maria Fidelis School, close to Euston Station (Beginners' course and General class, Wednesday evenings). The 8-week Beginners' course at Maria Fidelis will begin on Wednesday 7 October and we welcome all new dancers. All other weekly classes will resume after the summer break on 23 September.



Mixed Ability Class at Pont Street in festive mood!

The Maria Fidelis General class represented the next step for dancers who have completed the Beginners' and Improvers' courses and wish to continue their dancing lessons. From September, it will be known as the Intermediate class as we think this better describes the aims of the session. We encourage any Beginners' course alumni, or anyone who has some knowledge of the basic steps and formations, to join us at the Intermediate class at Maria Fidelis.



Massed ranks of the Improvers' Class with teacher James Fairbairn front centre, and musician Ian Cutts back right brandishing his trusty fiddle!

Also below, in action in the dance studio at Maria Fidelis School



Last season we introduced an annual rota of invited guest teachers to offer our monthly Technique class (for intermediate and more advanced dancers) the same opportunity to benefit from the best of the different teaching styles available, as already enjoyed by the Fast-Paced Social dance class (for advanced and very advanced dancers). This has worked very well: we are delighted that we can offer the same again in the 2026-27 season and we are grateful to all our guest teachers who have enhanced London teaching in the past 12 months.



Fast Paced Social Class under the watchful eye of teacher, Jeremy Hill

In 2022 we introduced The Tuesday Social, a monthly dance session for people in their 20s and 30s. Located at St Columba's, Pont Street, this session includes some teaching but prioritises enjoyment of dance and includes plenty of time for socialising to support our younger dancers in meeting and dancing together. Many Tuesday Social dancers extended their involvement from the monthly session to weekly and other classes as well as participating wholeheartedly in multiple Branch and RSCDS events. We were delighted to welcome three Tuesday Social dancers to the RSCDS London committee at our AGM in June.

Building upon the Tuesday Social's success and responding to requests for a similar relaxed session for older dancers, we plan to launch the Thursday Social in November this year. It will follow a similar format to the Tuesday Social but will be open to (adult) dancers and would be dancers of all ages. The first class will be led by Murrough Landon, with music from Adam Brady. Check the website or email classes@rscdslondon.org.uk for up-to-date information.

Children's class

The 2025-26 season has been a very positive one for Children's Scottish dancing in London. In September we relaunched our Children's class and it has flourished ever since. Classes typically welcome 20 plus children aged 4-12 each month. Teacher Gill O'Dell is supported by willing helpers including young Richmond and Surbiton dancer Sophie Gilmore, new Branch committee member Rowena Jackson, and longstanding supporter Rona Black.

New season classes resume on Sunday 11 October.

Thanks to the teacher and musicians....

Because of our extensive group of fabulous teachers and musicians, we can look forward to another year of stretching, enjoyable and sociable dance classes. To all the talented people who have made possible and enhanced our weekly classes and monthly sessions - thank you! You know who you are, but for the benefit of everyone else, we thank teachers Armaiti Bedford, Atsuko Clement, Catriona Bennett, Christine Jeffery, Dave Hall, Gill O'Dell, Grace Hill, James Fairbairn, Jan Collings, Jenny Kendrick, Jeremy Hill, Joan Desborough, Judith Jones, Kate Gentles, Ken Martlew, Lindsey Ibbotson, Lindsey Rousseau, Mervyn Short, Pat Davoll, Peter Knight, Rose Kreloff, Roy Southall, Sam Schad, Saskia Frisby, Simon Wales, William Williamson, and musicians Adam Brady, Antonia McClintock, Barbara Manning, Dave Hall, Erica Banks, Heather Jeffery, Ian Cutts, Ken Martlew, Neil Esslemont.

To learn more about our classes, check rscdslondon.org.uk/classes or email classes@rscdslondon.org.uk

We look forward to seeing you at a class soon!

RSCDS London Branch Day School and Musicians' Workshop 2026

Saturday 17 October 2026

Maria Fidelis School, Drummond Crescent, London NW1 1LY

This year the classes will be Very Advanced, Advanced and Intermediate level:

Very Advanced - Participants must be able to execute all steps and formations to a very high standard, demonstrating good phrasing, handing and covering. In addition, dancers must be able to assimilate instructions quickly, keep up with the pace of the class, and sustain a high level of performance throughout both sessions.

Advanced - Participants must be of a high standard, have sound knowledge of all steps and formations and be able to execute them accurately. In addition, dancers should also be able to assimilate instructions quickly and be able to maintain a good level of performance throughout both sessions.

Intermediate - Participants should have a good standard of dancing and a sound knowledge of steps and formations and be aiming to improve their personal technique. Beginners are encouraged to join our Beginners' class in Euston or Richmond (see p4).

NB: Class allocations will be confirmed at the Day School. London Branch and teachers reserve the right to allocate participants to classes as they see fit.

Teachers



Gary Coull



Mathias Ferber



Jan Collings



Ian Robertson

Musicians



Adam Brady



Barbara Manning



Jeremy Hill

Day School Programme

Time	Activity		
10.00 - 10.30	Enrolment and coffee		
Morning session	Class	Teacher	Musician
	Very Advanced	Mathias Ferber	Jeremy Hill
	Advanced	Gary Coull	Adam Brady
	Intermediate	Jan Collings	Barbara Manning
	Musicians' Workshop	Ian Robertson	
12.30 - 2.00	There is no cooked lunch this year ue to low take-up in recent years. However, there are good facilities for packed lunches, as well as a wide range of pubs and cafes in the local area.		
Afternoon session	Class	Teacher	Musician
	Very Advanced	Gary Coull	Adam Brady
	Advanced	Jan Collings	Barbara Manning
	Intermediate	Mathias Ferber	Jeremy Hill
	Musicians' Workshop	Ian Robertson	
4.00 - 4.30	Tea, coffee and biscuits		
Optional classes	Class	Teacher	Musician
	All sorts of <i>poussettes</i>	Mathias Ferber	Jeremy Hill
	A boozy afternoon	Gary Coull	Adam Brady
	Dances from the evening programme	Jan Collings	Barbara Manning
	If you do not wish to do anything too active, you may prefer to enjoy some free time before the evening dance. The choice is yours.		
6.00 - 9.00	Evening dance with ceilidh items. Dancing will be to Ian Robertson and the Day School Musicians, for programme see p3. Tickets are available in advance online, or on the door. All dances will be recapped/walked through.		

Musicians' Workshop Led by accordionist, fiddler and band leader, Ian Robertson, this will take place in both the morning and afternoon. The workshop is open to players with a suggested minimum of Grade 5 and is principally aimed at giving musicians a grounding in the skills and techniques required in playing for dancing. It will cover such areas as: pleasing the dancers, regardless of your playing ability level; inspiring the dancers through drive and lift; exploring ways to enthuse the dancers through tune selection, arrangements and interpretation; performing as a group; maximising your enjoyment in playing for dancing.

Applications for the Day School or Musicians' Workshop may be made online via the [Branch website](#), or please email Joanne Lawrence on classes@rscdslondon.org.uk

CLASSES TO SUIT EVERYONE - DON'T MISS IT!

Gary Coull - Aberdeenshire

Gary began dancing at the age of 10 in Dufftown, Scotland with Jessie Stuart as his teacher and gained his full teaching certificate in 2013. Gary has taught at various weekend and day schools in Scotland, Europe, North America and Australia including RSCDS Summer School, the 40th anniversary weekend of the Stockholm Branch, TAC Summer Schools in Vancouver and Halifax and the Sydney Winter School.

He is currently the Chair of the RSCDS. Gary loves a dance with a birl, enjoys dancing *strathspeys* (especially ones with a *poussette*) and thinks the most important thing about Scottish country dancing is having fun! By day Gary works for the University of Aberdeen, is married to Joanna and has two children, Bess and Flora.

Mathias Ferber - Paris

Mathias started Scottish country dancing as a teenager, first in Switzerland and then in France. He has been constantly traveling for SCD events around the world.

Since 2012, he has been a regular teacher with the Paris Branch, teaching many classes and workshops with equal passion, from beginners' classes to the most demanding high impact levels.

At all levels and for all audiences, he enjoys digging into the details that can add extra beauty and fun to the dance.

This will be Mathias' first time teaching in London and we are very pleased that he will be with us.

Jan Collings - Herts and Borders

Jan was an enthusiastic tap, ballet and modern stage dancer as a child and later discovered the joy of Scottish country dancing and teaching others.

She is a member of the serTA committee and keen to promote quality teaching in the South-east of England.

Jan teaches regularly at Lucy Clark SCDC, based in Wendover, Bucks and a number of other clubs in the South-east of England, including London Branch.

She has also taught workshops abroad in Barcelona and Cadiz. She enjoys watching students blossom and grow in confidence in their dancing skills and learning to work as a team with other dancers.

Jan is looking forward to teaching at the London Day School in October.

Day School Dance

This will be our new season dance

Saturday 17 October 2026

6.00 - 9.00pm

Sports Hall with sprung floor
Maria Fidelis School, Drummond Crescent,
London NW1 1LY

**Day School Musicians led by
Ian Robertson**

The Laird of Milton's Daughter.....	8x32 J
Maxwell's Rant	8x32 R
Miss Gibson's Strathspey	8x32 S
Miss Allie Anderson	8x32 J
Red House.....	8x40 R
The Minister on the Loch	3x32 S
Waverley	8x48 J

The Montgomeries' Rant	8x32 R
The Orchards of Co. Armagh	3x32 S
Gaelforce Wind.....	8x32 J
The Saltire Society Reel.....	8x32 R
The Silver Tassie	8x32 S
The Starry Eyed Lassie	8x32 J
The Deil amang the Tailors	8x32 R

There will also be short ceilidh items -
any offers will be gratefully received!

Admission includes light refreshments

RSCDS Members £17, Non-members £20
full time students (with card) and
spectators £10
Children (under 16) free

Tickets available online and on the door

All dances will be recapped/walked through
Crib available at rscdslondon.org.uk

Ian Robertson - Aylesbury

Ian is from Buckinghamshire and comes from a family steeped in Scottish music. His great-grandmother was a fine pianist who is known to have played piano for the great fiddler-composer James Scott Skinner before the turn of the 20th century.

Ian is a familiar face on the Scottish dance scene. He is most often seen now leading his own band on accordion although he regularly plays fiddle with a variety of leading musicians. A regular at RSCDS Winter and Summer Schools, he has played for weekend schools, functions and festivals across the UK and throughout the world.

An accomplished composer, Ian has 2 volumes of tunes in print. Embracing the modern world, all of his compositions are now available for free download on his website.

Head over to ianrobertsonmusic.co.uk for more information.

His most recent solo fiddle recording was released in 2019. The CD entitled "Robertson: a musical heritage", is a collection spanning three centuries with all of the tunes written either for a Robertson, or by a Robertson.

Barbara Manning - London

After many years as a keen Scottish country and highland dancer, Barbara Manning turned her classical music training to band use over 35 years ago, and since then has accompanied dancing in many parts of the UK and Europe, the USA, Ukraine and Russia, besides visiting Summer School both as a dancer and musician. She has played for numerous day schools and London Branch classes and has featured on recordings and with McBain's Band on Radio Scotland's *Take the Floor* from St Columba's, Pont Street and on the Earls Court Radio Show, besides playing on stage at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden for the Royal Ballet School's Annual Performance in 1985.

She currently plays mainly with the Silver Cross Band and in a duo with Ken Martlew, besides featuring solo on either piano or fiddle. In November 2016, Barbara was delighted to receive from the National Operatic and Dramatic Association the personal award of Vicki Avery for Service to Amateur Theatre.

Adam Brady - London

Growing up on the east coast of Scotland, traditional music and dance have formed an integral part of Adam's life. Adam began playing the accordion and piano at five years old and first started playing for country dancing at ten years old. Since first playing for local classes for RSCDS Dundee Branch, Adam has had the pleasure of travelling throughout the UK, Europe, US, Canada, Japan and Australia playing for classes, dances and music workshops.

We are very fortunate to have Adam as a regular London Branch class musician. Adam has been an invited musician for the RSCDS Summer School for more than a decade and has also played for the RSCDS Winter School, Spring Fling and AGM Weekend. Alongside his older brother, he has recorded and released five albums of country dance music as well as two recordings for the RSCDS.

Jeremy Hill - London

A versatile musician, Jeremy can often be found playing the piano for dance classes, in dance bands, and accompanying singers and instrumentalists.

Having started dancing seriously at University, Jeremy first played Scottish music after moving to London in 1988. Since then, he has juggled his playing with his enjoyment of dancing and teaching.

For many years he has played at dance Day Schools across the UK and Europe, as well as at the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society's Summer School in St Andrews (where he also runs a choir).

Jeremy has had several stints on the London Branch committee, and edited *The Reel* from 2012 to 2017.

He currently serves on the RSCDS Management Board as Convenor of the Membership Services Committee.

KASS 75th Anniversary Dance: Helen Cole

On **Saturday 18 July**, KASS marked its 75th Anniversary with a special afternoon dance, bringing together dancers from across Kent and welcoming visitors from further afield to share in this memorable milestone.

Guests were greeted by the stirring sound of the bagpipes and welcomed with a glass of Pimm's before enjoying the opportunity to catch up with friends old and new. The dance programme celebrated KASS's history with a selection of popular dances from the 1950s, when the Association was first formed, alongside dances representing KASS groups from around the county.

Music from the Strathallan Band provided the perfect accompaniment throughout the afternoon, while a beautifully decorated anniversary cake and a delicious, shared buffet added to the celebrations.

The success of the event was made possible by the dedication of many volunteers, committee members and supporters, whose hard work behind the scenes ensured everything ran smoothly. From planning and organising the event to recapping dances, serving refreshments, selling raffle tickets and helping with the many practical tasks throughout the day, every contribution played an important part in making the celebration such a success.

The enthusiasm, generosity and support shown by everyone involved created a truly memorable afternoon, celebrating not only 75 years of KASS but also the friendships, music and dancing that continue to bring people together.

For more information about KASS, including details of local groups, social dances and forthcoming events, visit kass.org.uk.



Past Chairmen of KASS at the dance. Left to right: R Alan Finch, Pat Gill, Angela Campbell, Helen Cole, Andy Whannell, Alison Ede, Kay Cross

Cambridge Scottish Society: Donald Wilson

Cambridge Scottish Society held its 90th Anniversary Ball at the William Collyn Centre in Girton, Cambridge on 2 May, 2026.

A near capacity crowd of sixty-five members and friends enjoyed a lively evening of twenty dances to the splendid music of Robert Whitehead and the Danelaw Band, who have been Society friends and favourites for over forty-five years.

At a brief photoshoot before the interval, the chance was taken to record those present and the cutting of the anniversary cake which was served out later with a wee dram.



Maidenhead SCDC 75th Anniversary: Jane Courtier

To celebrate the club's 75th Anniversary (1951 - 2026) our usual afternoon May Tea Dance was combined with invitations to former members to attend, join in, watch and reminisce.

Almost everyone joined in the round the room opening dance, *A Highland Welcome*, familiar to all Maidenhead members as it was devised by Bill Forbes who taught us for many years. Dancing continued with the lively playing by Ian Muir (who had as usual flown down from Prestwick) with Keith Anderson and Bob Parsons.

A side room had a display of club memorabilia including newspaper cuttings from the 1950's and 60's showing that the club was very active with dances held in Maidenhead Town Hall and demonstrations such as at the Royal Windsor Rose Show. The club has always been innovative holding the first Ball in the area, having fancy dress evenings and initiating the more recent trend for Tea Dances.

At the interval everyone sat down for afternoon tea provided by club members. Keith Lobley, a member from the late 1960's, cut the special 75th anniversary cake. Photographs were taken including the band with our MCs Diane Hoskins and Carol Berry, a line-up of 8 former chairmen, and all our members, former members and friends from local clubs.

The dance programme was a mix of easy (so that those whose dancing had lapsed could join in), historical (*Todlen Hame* chosen as it was published in RSCDS Book 16 in 1951 the year Maidenhead Club was founded) and club favourites like *Kilkenny Castle*, *The Falkirk Lass* and most suitably *Anniversary Reel*.



Past Chairmen - Left to right: Rex Pearse, Alan Pfeiffer, John Fletcher, Diane Hoskins, Muriel Wilson, Jane Leach, Rebecca Pearmund, Jane Courtier

Cobtree Scottish Dancing Group: Simon Wales

Cobtree Scottish Dancing Group, based in Maidstone, gave a very warm welcome to Ian Muir of Prestwick to play for our dance on Saturday 20 June - and it was not just the welcome that was warm, in the middle of one of the hottest spells on record!

Grove Green Community Centre was packed for this sell-out occasion, made all the more special because Esther Barford sponsored Ian Muir, in memory of her late husband, Richard, known to us as Dick. Advance sales were to members of the club and the remaining tickets were sold out within half an hour of general release!

The programme featured many of his favourite dances, MC'd by Helen and Brian Knell and Simon Wales. The programme also featured a scintillating solo piece from Ian. Esther's generosity meant that we were able to make an even bigger donation to our charity, Maidstone Mencap.

As usual, the refreshments were on a shared supper basis and far too abundant and delicious to cram into the allotted time on the programme! Thanks to all for their contributions.

Preparations are underway for the 2027 and 2028 dances!

London Branch visits the 70th White Rose Festival, Leeds

Following on from the successful participation at last year's White Rose Scottish Dancing Festival in Leeds, members of London Branch once again made the journey north to join in the festivities.

On Friday 10 July a team of 19 sprightly London dancers and one supporter checked-in at the prestigious Premier Inn, Headingley for a two-night stay. We met that evening at 7.30pm for a team-building social get-together in the restaurant, with everyone ready to devour their pre-ordered meals. As the menu options were as varied and as interesting as Saturday's dances, this could have resulted in the equivalent of a set collapsing but luckily Joanne had a crib sheet of everyone's choices, and the meals were effortlessly choreographed to their right positions!

Saturday morning, we had a final 2-hour dance practice at a local primary school 5 minutes' walk away, then went back to the hotel to change into our crisp new white London team t-shirts and we were soon ready to leave in pre-assigned cars to The Gateways School, Harewood. On arrival, we immediately staked our place on the school field with 3 gazebos, bought years before the easy pop-up varieties available today, but nevertheless expertly and quickly erected.

The festival was officially declared opened by RSCDS Chair-Elect Sebastian Wanless; the Grand March music was played by piper Alan Harrison, and the dancing started promptly at 2pm. With joyful, uplifting music from the Màrtainn Skene Trio and a field full of dancers from 20 English and Scottish clubs, the field was practically bouncing, though admittedly not quite to Younger Hall standards. I am sure I saw a few worms popping up to say hello! A good mix of dances meant all levels of dancers were catered for; interspersed with some energetic Highland dancers showing off their talents, the afternoon flew by. As we were currently in the middle of a heat wave, concerns had been raised about people overheating, but luckily the temperature had dropped a few degrees and with a welcome breeze, and plenty of water we all danced to the end of play!

After a delicious high tea, the evening dance started at 7pm, again with music from the Màrtainn Skene Trio. By this time, we were all feeling a wee bit tired but thankfully all the dances were walked through which helped our frazzled brains!

We were back at the Premier Inn for the after party in Simon's room, in time to watch England win through to the World Cup semi-finals, though with a few Scots, a Dutchman and one Mexican in the room, celebrations were somewhat muted!

A big thank you to RSCDS Leeds Branch, Joanne Lawrence for being our chief organiser and our dance teachers, Simon Wales, Pat Davoll, and Judith Jones. If you are interested in joining us at next year's White Rose Summer festival on Saturday 10 July, and want to experience fun, fitness and friendship on another level you will be most welcome. Dance practices will take place in May and June 2027. More information will be posted early next year once the decision is taken whether to participate.

Ginny Colenbrander



Left to right: Ginny Colenbrander, Chair Elect
Sebastian Wanless, Tamara Wanless



The massed ranks of the RSCDS London Branch team,
ready for action!

What a delightful way to spend a summer Saturday!

It was a hot and sunny afternoon but with a gentle and occasionally gusty breeze. Kites (the bird variety) soared overhead. When not dancing in our designated square on the huge playing field in front of us, we could rest and relax under the gazebos. As a novice dancer this was happily quite frequent. I was scheduled to dance in the easiest nine of the 22 dances and was tactfully and gently guided by an expert partner and tolerant fellow-dancers through each of them.



One set taking up position on the field...

I approached the evening dance with more apprehension as there had been no rehearsals and no amount of crib and video preparation can yet prepare me for the speed of recollection and the adjustment to different dancing positions required for even the simplest new dance. Happily, a number of kind people from the London and other Branches helped me out again and I was able to bumble around all but the most difficult.

The evening was neatly rounded off with England's 2:1 win over Norway, shared with the whole group of us at the after-party - young, old, expert and novice, all friendly and welcoming.

Thank you!

Alison Williams



That after-party celebrating a wonderful day and England's
defeat of Norway in the World Cup quarter-final

Out and about...

...on and off the dance floor



Maidenhead SCDC 75th Anniversary Dance - 10 May 2026



Around 60 past (and a few new) members came with their recollections and danced to the fabulous playing of Chris Oxtoby. The evening ended all too quickly with us all feeling a deep sense of gratitude to Peter Knight for having set sail in 1972. Like *The Fighting Temeraire*, the Little Ship ended its days in a blaze of glory.



Berkhamsted Strathspey and Reel Club celebration of London Branch member Andrew Brown's 70th birthday held on the 2 June - Andrew and Marjorie Brown (centre) with their son Callum and Ian Robertson



White Rose festival - in action on the field



A moment of repose for Lena Robinson and Pat Davoll at the Leeds Festival



KASS 75th Anniversary Dance - with Strathallan Band on stage



Music Review: Jeremy Hill



The A to Z of Scottish Dance Music: Leonard Brown Scottish Dance Band double CD (£19.99 on CD or USB plus P&P, or £17.99 to download) from leonardbrownaccordions.co.uk/shop

Angus Reel (128R), *Bees of Maggie Knockater* (4x32J), *Caddam Wood* (5x32R), *Dancing in Perthshire* (4x32S), *Edinburgh Mixture*, *Farewell to Balfour Road* (96J), *Glasgow Reel* (8x32R), *Hamilton House* (8x32J), *Inverness Country Dance* (8x32R), *John Douglas Polka*, *Kandahar Reel* (10x32R), *Library of Birmingham* (4x40S), *Mrs. MacPherson of Inveran* (8x32R), *Nottingham Lace* (96R), *Orchards of Co. Armagh* (3x32S), *Postcode Dance - EH3 7AF* (8x32J), *Queensland Twosome* (8x32R), *Royal Deeside Railway* (8x32R), *Streets of Milan* (8x32J), *Two-step alla Boston*, *Ullapool Ferry* (4x32R), *Virginia Reel* (4x64R), *Warm Up Waltz*, *X Marks the Scot* (8x40J), *Ysobel Stewart of Fish Hoek* (8x32S), *Zytglogge* (8x32R)

Two years on from his debut Scottish country dance recording, Leonard Brown has returned to the studio, with a brand-new six-piece line-up and a bumper offering of 26 dances that merits its place in any collection.

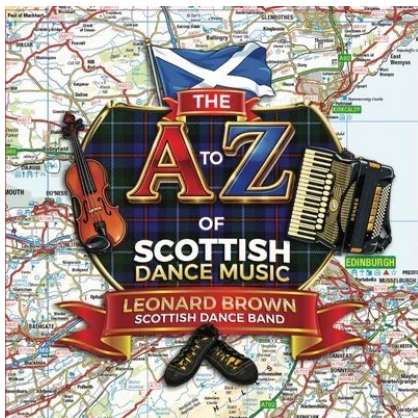
To start with the band: on this occasion, Leonard is joined by Jim Lindsay (harmony accordion), Graham MacKenzie (fiddle), Graham Berry (piano), Suzanne Gray (double bass) and Gordon Smith (drums), so it is no surprise that there is great playing all through, arrangements that provide plenty of interest to tickle the ear from all the players, clean, well-balanced sound and excellent tempi.

The album concept is of 26 tracks, each with a location or landmark attached to it. All of the well-matched supporting tunes also have location or landmarks attached to the title, and the majority of sets use different tunes for every turn of the dance. Only *The Glasgow Reel* returns to the original at the end. That creates enormous variety resulting in 132 different locations/landmarks in total, and is a common approach now, though it misses the opportunity to give the dancers any sort of steer, as the traditional ABCDBCDA approach to tunes may have done.

A quirky variation to this thinking is applied for *EH3 7AF*. Five tunes are played ABCDBCDE, but the each is arranged without a cadence/close at 32 bars, making a transition into the next tune each time. Only after seven turns is there a break before going in *Cleveland Park* for the final turn. Elsewhere, musically I was also particularly taken with *The Queensland Twosome*. Though the dance may be unfamiliar, it shares its original tune with *Miss Jessie Dalrymple's Reel* (not generally popular with bands!), to which Leonard has added a superb range of fiddle tunes.

Both dances and tunes draw on traditional and modern sources. Half the tracks are reels, and a good number fall into the 'busy' category, which may make it less suitable to listen to end-to-end, but the playing is wonderfully consistent. Some of the dances may be useful additions to a library, including a set of tunes for *Zytglogge*, first recordings for many years of some, such as *Caddam Wood*, and strong alternatives to some recent recordings, such as *Dancing in Perthshire* from RSCDS Book 54. *X Marks the Scot* features, devised by London's Murrough Landon, though not in this case with his suggested tune of *The Waggle o' the Kilt*.

If any further encouragement may be needed, crib sheets are provided for all the dances in the beautifully put-together booklet.



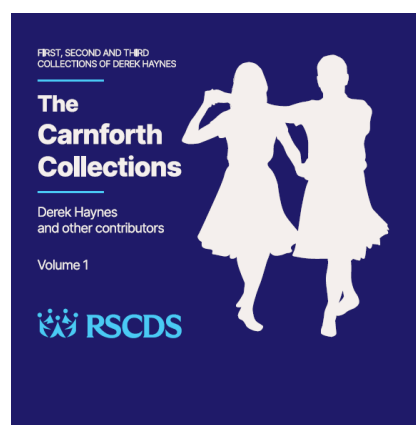
Music Review: Dave Hall



The Carnforth Collections, Volume 1: Liam Stewart and his Band double CD (£20 or £18.00 for RSCDS members) and book (£15/£13.50) plus P&P from shop.rscds.org/ or available to download from iTunes

The Tattie Bogle (8x32J), *Lochnagar* (8x32R), *Blervie Castle* (4x32S), *Joan's Jig* (4x32J), *The Newby Circle* (5x32R), *The Fireside Strathspey* (8x32S), *Yan, Tan, Tethera* (8x32J), *Ray Milbourne* (4x32R), *The Corner House Jig* (8x32J), *Black Donald* (6x32J), *The Sleeping Warrior* (4x32S), *The Celtic Cross* (4x48R), *My Heather Hills* (3x48J), *The Craven Strathspey* (8x32S), *The Spey In Spate* (3x32R), *MacLeod's Tables* (8x32J), *Miss Stevenson's Fancy* (6x32S), *Maureen's Reel* (8x32R)

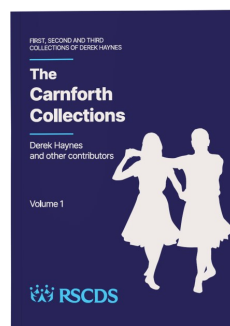
This is a really excellent recording to complement the RSCDS's initiative of publishing all of Derek Haynes' dances from the Carnforth Collections. It is a very good listen and will provide first class music for those using it for dancing.



The outstanding accordion talent of Liam Stewart has surrounded himself with some top Scottish band musicians. Leonard Brown enhances the band sound with plenty of well-considered harmony and arrangements that mark the ensemble as progressive in overall sound without distracting at all from the Scottish traditional genre. I really enjoyed the lead accordion/fiddle mix, showcasing sympathetic and very accurate fiddle playing from Gillian Ramsey. With a rhythm section of Graham Berry on piano and Gordon Smith on drums, it would be hard to find a more experienced and competent duo.

So, with a top-drawer line up, there are 18 of the dances to look forward to, all with plenty of energy and a nice mix of tunes. Liam has included a selection of his own tunes and I also enjoyed the selection of strathspeys written by Ian Robertson, one with a London connection. *Ray Milbourne* is a favourite dance of mine and Liam plays a great set of tunes, though I did miss the final parts of Iain MacPhail's wonderful melody for Ray. I should also note the fantastic rendition of *The Spey in Spate*, Scott Skinner's exciting fiddle melody which is not a simple play for the accordionist.

All in all, a recording I would strongly recommend for dancer and listener alike.



The Carnforth Collections book also available from the RSCDS website.

shop.rscds.org/shop/?_categories=books

In Memoriam

I was very sorry to learn of the passing of both Sandra Smith and Peter Luke. The articles in the last edition were a nice reflection of two people who contributed significantly to the London Branch. Perhaps you might indulge me a few reminiscences of my own, building on the theme that in both cases there was a most interesting and kindly person behind the familiar figure at Branch events.

Peter was a legend of the London Demonstration Team and long-serving Branch Treasurer long before I came to London. My memories of him were very much ones of fun, kindness and love of dancing. Pete also loved the music. I was most honoured when he asked my band to play for his 'special' birthday dance at Pont Street those many years ago. I have plenty of memories of late-night trips back towards Reading after a night of dancing in London; I lived not so far from Pete and he was very generous with his lifts. The trips seemed to pass very quickly as he was always very much a chatterbox.

I worked with Sandra extensively over many years: she played for the Demonstration Class for the full five years that I taught it, she played for some demonstrations, a number of times as pianist in my band, and also accompanied singers at some Scottish events. Sandra was an accomplished professional pianist. She could play anything you put in front of her and did not seem remotely fazed by the array of complicated tunes and bar number sequences that were often required. Slightly disarmingly, she could multitask during a class but would always be ready to play when the 'ready and' came. I think it is fair to say that Sandra might have appeared a bit reserved, even stern at times, but I got to know over the years as a wonderfully kind, humorous and immensely capable person.

The Branch has lost two of its great servants. But the memories of what they did and who they were are very positive and I am certainly thankful for having known them.

Dave Hall



A Bygone Age, Not Forgotten

Congratulations Meryl, on producing a mine of information sources in *Reel* 336 reflecting your extensive knowledge of early Scottish dances. It's a bit like all roads lead to Rome when one asks where did the Book 1 dances come from? They are the foundation of the Society's beginnings. It would be interesting to know which of the many early 19 century publications that Jean Milligan and Ysobel Stewart had access to. You suggested David Anderson and Mozart Allen. Quadrilles could so easily have made an appearance, but they might not have fitted in with these early Scottish dancing ideals.

I enjoyed reading the various quotes which reflect a bygone age and the values they held dear. Genteel, young ladies and gentlemen, elite society, breeding - how delightful it all sounded - if you had a place in society and of course money! It astounds me that dancing masters and publishers could make enough money to exist, such must have been the proliferation of dancing.

Well done, your efforts in producing another insightful and interesting article does you credit and is yet another source of information for such interested parties such as myself.

Stephen Webb



Hands: a weighty question!

May I be permitted an addendum to my letter published in the last *Reel*? Making mention of the value of good handing to the enjoyment and execution of a dance well, brings my thoughts to the dancer that cannot seem to appreciate that in turning, giving a single hand, two hands in two bars using skip-change of step or more relevantly using *pas de basque* steps that it is essential to give weight to get round.

It can be most disconcerting when taking a dancer's hands in a turn, only to find that they become elastic and seemingly come away from their body making getting round in time with the music almost impossible!

By working together by giving weight the turn can be smoothly executed and dancers placed in the correct position to continue with the next move.

When these elasticated dancers are asked why they do not give weight they have told me either they are not aware of its importance or it is a form of self-preservation. In my view, injuries are more likely if both dancers do not work together in turning. But am I alone with these views?

Stephen Webb



Ladies' Dress

Why is it that men have a distinct form of dress for Scottish country dancing and other Scottish activities, but women do not. After many years and much thought, I have adopted the following solutions.

Daywear

Calf length tartan skirt and plain blazer style tweed jacket. I had the latter made, wore it out after about 10 years and had to have it copied! It can be worn with plain skirts on non-Scottish occasions, so is doubly useful.

Evening

Traditionally white dress and tartan sash. White dresses are rather impractical, and suitable ones are difficult to find in shops. My solution is the same tartan skirt as above, worn with a velvet waistcoat and dressy blouse.

Elizabeth Bennett

A matter of personal taste surely.... nowadays, most dancers of either sex will be most comfortable dancing in less regimented clothing, especially given the heatwave of the last few months, and the likelihood of this being repeated each summer!

Formal dress has its place at the most formal Balls, or at the request of the organisers of the event - Ed.



Extract from a letter from Sue and Tony Staples from 50 years ago:

We thought your readers would be interested in the fact that our group has now been granted Branch status. Our official title is Royal Tunbridge Wells Branch.

As you will guess, it is very thrilling to be the first Branch to be formed in Kent. In the few weeks that we have been operating, in a lovely school hall, we have enrolled over 40 RSCDS members, and our roll is nearing the 60 mark, with some life members from London or Headquarters attending classes each week with us....



Extract from a letter from Vice President, Dr Ellen Garvie from 25 years ago:

As one of the older regular readers of *The Reel* I would like to comment on Elizabeth Bennett's letter in the last issue.

Looking back, I find that the size of print and general layout used in *The Reel* have not changed since September 1951 (Issue no.1). In December 1957 (Issue no. 40), the blue ink used in earlier numbers was changed to black. There can have been little complaint over 50 years when no other changes have been made. I find the style and quality excellent. I know of other people well past their three score years and ten who had no difficulty reading *The Reel*.

The Story behind the Dance - Why change tunes?: Meryl Thomson



A series of articles from Meryl Thomson delving behind the history of some of our dances and their music. This time she looks at some dances where the RSCDS chose a different tune from the original, but why?

While looking for historical dances for a Waterloo-themed Regency ball a while back, I came across the dance *The British Heroes* which seemed appropriate to the theme. The dance comes from Longman and Broderip's *Third Selection of the most favorite country dances, reels etc c. 1790*. To hear the tune you can listen to our recording of it at greenginger.bandcamp.com/track/the-british-heroes-6x32-jig

I recognised the tune from playing it many years ago for the RSCDS dance *Scotland* which was published in Book 31 in 1983. This 32 bar jig is very rarely danced today - it is for two couples in a four couple set. The RSCDS version uses the same tune as *The British Heroes* but calls it *The Scotch Hero's Reel*.

The dance *Scotland* originates from Playford's 1698 edition of *The Dancing Master*. The RSCDS dance is basically the same as the Playford version with slight rearrangement of the figures. What is apparent straightaway, however, is that the Playford dance was danced to a 9/4 slip jig style of rhythm which means there are three beats in a bar rather than the two found in a 6/8 jig like *The Scotch Hero's Reel*. The Playford tune is a four bar A music repeated and 4 bar B music repeated.

Playford 1698

The Longman and Broderip *The British Heroes* tune, but with different dance figures, also appears in David Rutherford's *Compleat Collection of 200 of the most celebrated Country Dances both old and new Voll 2* from 1759 (see image below). Here called *The British Heroe*, the dance is also very different from the Playford (and RSCDS) version, it starts with reels on opposite and then your own sides and is for three couples rather than two.

Another version appeared in William Campbell's *Fifth Collection of the newest & most favorite Country Dances and Reels c. 1789*. Here called *The British Hero*, the tune is the same as Longman and Broderip and Rutherford, but again a different dance for three couples.

At some point the tune starts being known as *The Scotch Hero's Reel*. The dance (different again) appears in Thomas Skillern's *Compleat Collection of 204 Reels and Country Dances Vol 1* from c. 1780.

The tune also appears under the name *The Female Hero* in *A Selection of Scotch, English, Irish and Foreign Airs Vol 1* by James Aird published around 1782 and as *Cox's Maggot* in the John Roose manuscript of c. 1850.

Why did the RSCDS choose to use a different tune from the original used by Playford? The reason appears to be the fact the original was a slip jig in 9/8 time (more on this later). There are several dances where the RSCDS changed the rhythm from the original and I thought I would look at a few of these as examples.

From Rutherford's Compleat Collection

Firstly, *The Sutters of Selkirk* from Book 18, a 32 bar reel for two couples in a four couple set published in 1955. The dance was first published in Daniel Wright's *Compleat Collection of Country Dances 1740 as Sulters of Sellkerke*. The RSCDS dance follows the original pretty accurately. Where the difference comes is in the tune and number of bars.

As can be seen from the image, the original is in 3/4 time and each of the A and B strains are 12 bars, giving a 48 bar dance. The dance flows when danced to this music. The RSCDS chose to change it to a reel, using the tune *The Randy Wives* of *Greenlaw*, found in Kohler's Violin

repository from the 1860s. While a decent tune in its own right, this double time reel is very different from the flowing 3/4 rhythm of the original.

Our second dance is *Pretty Polly* from RSCDS book 28 published in 1977. The original is found in Playford's *Dancing Master 1710 as Pretty Poll*. The original tune is a 3/2 hornpipe for, unusually, a 23 bar dance played AA (each 5 bars) B (8 bars) A (5 bars). The RSCDS chose to change the rhythm of this dance to a strathspey and use

the tune *Miss Rose* published in the *Athole Collection* in 1884 for a 32 bar dance. The feel of a 3/2 hornpipe is very different from a strathspey.

Another RSCDS dance with an original 3/2 hornpipe tune is *The Highland Lass* from Book 30. Taken from Playford's *Dancing Master 1718*, this 24 bar dance has slight amendments from the original. This is mostly due to fitting 24 bars of 3/2 time into 32 bars of reel time. Eight bars of 3/2 is the same number of beats as twelve bars of reel time. This led to the RSCDS dance losing the

final half figure with the 3s and leading up through the top and turning, changing this to casting up to 2nd place and all three couples turn RH.

The RSCDS dance *Woo'd and Married and A'* from Book 16 is taken from Thomas Wilson's *A Companion to the Ballroom 1816* (see image top of next page). The original dance used by the RSCDS (the double figure) is 32 bars in length but in fact the tune found in Wilson's *Companion* is a 9/8 slip jig which has as many beats as 48 bars of jig time. The RSCDS use the same tune but alter it to make a jig (6/8) time version.

WOOD & MARRIED & A (Very Old Scotch)

Allegretto

SINGLE FIGURE (Each strain repeated)
Swing with right hands (round the 2nd Cu); then with left ... & set corners ...
OR THUS Set & change sides with 2nd Cu; set & back again ... lead down the middle up again & allemande ...

DOUBLE FIGURE (Tune played twice thru with repeats)
Hands 6 quite round & back again ... promenade 3 Cu ... whole poussette ... & set 3 across & set 3 in your places ...

the bar and this was adapted and forced into 6/8 time to fit the standard skip change step.

Finally, the dance *Miss Margaret Hill* appears in *Miss Milligan's Miscellany* as number 59. This appears to be rather a standard 32 bar dance in jig time: 1st lady sets advancing to second man and then turns the third, 1st man does the same - they lead down the middle and back - 1s and 2s dance an allemande and end facing first corners to turn corner partner corner partner. However, when studying the source of the dance, more becomes apparent. The original is found in the publication *Le Sylph - An elegant Collection of Twenty four Country Dances, the figures by Mr Wilson, for the year 1814*. The collection was published by the firm Button and Whitaker who printed arguably the most collections of any publisher in London during the early nineteenth century. The dance *Miss Margaret Hill* appears as the first in the collection under the name *Miss Margaret Hill's Waltz*. The tune is 48 bars played as AABCC. Instructions are by Thomas Wilson - Wilson provided instructions for dances in several of the Button and Whitaker collections under the *Le Sylph* title. One thing to note with Thomas Wilson instructions is that he often used short formations, his lead down and back in jig or reel time took four bars of music rather than eight, as did his allemande. This has led to many of the RSCDS dances being adapted as 40 bar dances instead of 32. The other feature of Wilson's work is that he usually gives the option of two or three versions of the dance to fit the one tune. In *Margaret Hill's Waltz*, Wilson provides a single figure but also gives an alternative:

Single Figure - 1st Lady sets to 2nd Gent: & turns 3rd - 1st Gent sets to 2nd Lady & turns the 3rd - down the mid: up again allemande - & swing corners OR Hands 3 on the Ladies side & the 2nd Lady passes under to her place - hands 3 on the Gents side & the 2nd Gent passes under to his place - down the mid: up again half poussette - thro' the bottom & lead outsides - see www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Jpz5rEQqmw for the second option and to hear the tune.

The RSCDS version was taken from Wilson's first option of instructions. However, why the change from waltz to jig? The original waltz tune is a pretty 48 bar waltz and fits the dance nicely.

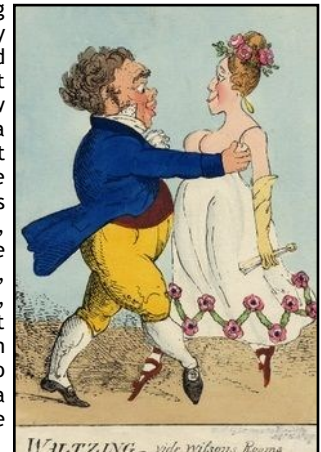
What is the common factor with all these dances?

The originals, whether in waltz, hornpipe or slip jig rhythm all have three beats in a bar. This poses the question of which step do you dance? Historical dancers are used to dancing country dance waltzes in sets - they are common on historical dance programmes today. However, 3/2 hornpipes and 9/8 slip jigs are less frequently encountered. 9/8 dances must have been popular since tunes in this rhythm appear in many collections and tune books including those of the Gow family. Having an uneven number of beats in the bar however creates a problem with setting. Scottish Country dancers rarely come across dances in triple time in their dance repertoire.

In his 1800 collection, *Ten New Fashionable Irish Dances*, dance master Alexander Wills obviously feels the need to explain how to dance 9/8 rhythm dances. He states: "N.B. Ladies finding great inconvenience in dancing 9/8 tunes for want of proper steps, particularly the Dusty Miller...A Wills is happy to inform them that the best method of executing the above dance, with ease and elegance, is by making use of the following three steps, to the Original figure: to the cast off and down the middle, make use of the double Irish footing; for the corners, the running step, and for the setting, one double footing step, and one back step with each foot". He goes on to add, "Finished Dancers may add as a Variety,

the single Irish footing, the running footing: and for setting, one double Irish footing, and three Irish shuffles. All 6/8 tunes must be danced with the addition of one cut, to the double Irish footing, going down the middle; and the running step for the other parts of figures".

Quite how popular these steps actually were in the Regency ballroom is unknown. Thomas Wilson in his *Companion to the Ballroom 1820* gives a scathing analysis: "Tunes in 9/8 time, as they require, what are technically termed Irish Steps, of which the present Majority of Ball Room Dancers know no more of than they would of a Dance described by the most abstruse Egyptian Hieroglyphics, are always preferred by such Dancers as are capable of performing them, having by such Means a scope for the display of their Abilities". He adds, "When one of these Dances is called, it is sometimes the Case, that part of the Company sit down, from Inability to perform it; and to conceal their Inability...declare it a 'monstrous ugly Dance'. The Majority of the Dancers...for want of the proper Steps...are generally seen hopping about out of time in the most grotesque Manner, lifting up their Legs in various Directions...resort to some ridiculous clownish antics; and sometimes even introduce a wry Face, to make the Company laugh. ...Could these Dancers see themselves...they would never repeat such an Exhibition of bad deportment; and if they were determined to dance, would get Instructions and perform like a Dancer".



Thomas Wilson by
G Cruikshank 1817

While 9/8 dances might cause a problem with regard to steps and some of the dances above have an unusual number of bars in the A or B music, what is strange is why the RSCDS did not take the opportunity to include country dance waltzes in their repertoire. Waltz rhythm dances, for example, were being danced in the Regency ballroom from around 1790 within longways sets, see regencydances.org/paper013.php# for a more detailed analysis. There are many dances in waltz rhythm published in dance collections through to the early 1820s, after which couple waltzing started taking over from waltzing within a longways set.

The only waltz time dance the RSCDS published is *Waltz Country Dance* in Book 4, however this is a round the room dance for couples rather than a longways set formation. The original was published in Mr Boulogne's *The Ballroom in 1827 as La Guaracha*. Of course, including waltz rhythm for longways sets would have required a different step and historically waltzes used any number of arm positions, leaving it up to the couple to decide which they preferred to use. Lowes' *Ball-Conductor & Assembly Guide* from 1822 published in Glasgow showed eight waltz holds and G.M. Chivers, in his various publications from 1818 onwards, offered 16!

Perhaps an anecdote from *Contredanses à Paris 1818* throws some light on the reason for the lack of waltz dancing in Scotland: "With regard to waltzing, it was the rage in Scotland, but only for a very short period, not exceeding two years; Nor can any reason be given for its disuse, excepting a ludicrous circumstance which made some noise at the time after which waltzing almost immediately died away, and has never since been revisited.

The Earl of Wemyss had a waltzing party to which several persons of distinction were invited and among others some military officers. One of these being Monsieur Volendon, and having a sort of Lady-face, got himself dressed as a female, unknown to the whole party; with the exception of his friend who introduced him as Lady Corstophine. No such noble lady had ever been heard of before, by any of their party; but as her ladyship seemed handsome, and was elegantly dressed, she was of course well received. The waltzing accordingly went on; but in the course of it, Lady Corstophine fell on the floor on her back, and her partner right over on his face above her. Her party were instantly thrown into confusion and the waltzing stopped for that evening. From that evening waltzing fell into disrepute and completely died away!"

I think it is important to see that the examples above illustrate how the RSCDS sometimes changed dances (and tunes) to suit their own purposes. I personally think it a pity that despite doing a great job of sourcing many earlier book dances from historic dance collections, country dance waltzes, in particular, were largely ignored. Dancing these in a longways set can be a great pleasure and I think the RSCDS missed an opportunity to include them in their dance repertoire.

RSCDS Management Board Highlights

The RSCDS Management Board met on 27 June to review progress on membership, finance, fundraising, governance, events and strategic development.

Finance

The Board approved the 2025/26 Financial Statements and Trustees' Report following a clean audit, and updated volunteer expense rates in line with HMRC guidance. For the first time since 2019, the Society reported an operating surplus. While this strengthens the Society's position, the Board remains mindful of inflation and long-term sustainability. The improved financial position has enabled a review of key issues, including membership and magazine provision.

Membership Magazine

Recognising the Society's improved finances, the Board agreed that printed magazines will be available at a subsidised cost of £3 per copy during 2026/27, rather than the previously announced £6. Members will be able to order copies through their Branch or via the new Membership Management System. The arrangement will be reviewed in early 2027.

Fundraising and Development

The Board reviewed progress on the developing fundraising strategy. Priorities include:

- Strengthening the Friends of the RSCDS scheme.
- Expanding grant funding.
- Supporting Branch fundraising.
- Building relationships with corporate supporters and major donors.
- Improving Gift Aid processes.
- Introducing optional online donations.

Governance and AGM Business

The Board approved measures to strengthen governance and volunteer support, including:

- A budding framework for new volunteers.
- Improved nomination and election processes.
- Streamlined nomination forms.
- Revised committee nomination requirements.

Proposed changes to the Society's Rules and Procedures will be presented at the 2026 AGM.

Events and Activities

Planning for Summer School 2026, Autumn Gathering 2026 and Winter School 2027 is progressing well. The Board agreed that the Summer School Director's term may be extended for up to three years to improve continuity and reduce annual recruitment. Preparations for the Autumn Gathering in Dumfries are on track, with work continuing to improve travel information for attendees. The Board also noted the launch of *The Carnforth Collections* and plans to expand RSCDS merchandise.

Supporting Branches

Development continues on a suite of Branch Toolkits covering:

- Branch sustainability
 - Marketing and recruitment
 - Class development
 - Safeguarding
 - Volunteer support
 - Promoting the health benefits of Scottish country dancing
- Targeted support is already being provided to some Branches using these resources

Looking Ahead

Key priorities for the coming months are:

- Continuing consultation on future membership models
- Progressing the Teacher Training Review
- Completing the rollout of the new Membership Management System
- Delivering Summer School and Autumn Gathering 2026
- Expanding fundraising and Branch support activities

The Board thanked members, volunteers, Branches and committees for their continued contribution to Scottish country dancing.

RSCDS Re-branding: Gary Coull, RSCDS Chair



One of the privileges of serving as Chair of the RSCDS is seeing first-hand the passion, commitment and friendship that exists throughout our worldwide community. Wherever I travel, I meet people who care deeply about Scottish country dancing and about ensuring it continues to flourish for generations to come.

That is why I was so pleased to see the culmination of many months of work with the launch of our refreshed brand and new website. While many people will naturally notice the new logo first, this project has never really been about changing how we look. Instead, it has been about changing how effectively we tell our story.

Our Society has an extraordinary heritage. For over a century, the RSCDS has preserved, promoted and shared Scottish country dancing across the globe. We should be immensely proud of that achievement. But celebrating our heritage doesn't mean standing still. If we want future generations to experience the same enjoyment, friendship and sense of belonging that we have all found through dancing, we need to present ourselves in ways that feel welcoming, relevant and accessible to today's audiences.

Throughout the rebranding process, we were determined not to lose sight of who we are. Our music, our dances, our traditions and, above all, our people remain at the very heart of the RSCDS. What has changed is the way we communicate those values. I believe our refreshed identity better reflects the energy, warmth and vibrancy that anyone who has ever walked into an RSCDS class or dance will immediately recognise.

The launch also marks the beginning of a much wider transformation. Alongside the new branding comes a redesigned website, with further improvements still to come as we introduce our new Membership Management System. Together, these developments will make it easier for members to engage with the Society while helping newcomers discover everything that Scottish country dancing has to offer.

Projects of this scale don't happen without an enormous team effort. I would like to thank everyone who has contributed along the way - from our staff at 12 Coates Crescent, to the volunteers on the rebrand, website and Membership Management System working groups, our creative partners at Touch, and the many members who shared their ideas and feedback throughout the process. This new chapter belongs to all of us.

Of course, a new brand is only ever a starting point. Its real value lies in how we use it.

So, my challenge to every member, Branch and group is simple: embrace it. Explore the new website. Use the new branding in your own publicity as it becomes available. Share our videos and social media posts with your friends and family. Tell people why you love Scottish country dancing and invite them along to a class or event.

Each of us is an ambassador for Scottish country dancing. Every conversation, every social media post, every leaflet handed out and every new dancer welcomed through the door helps to build our future.

Our refreshed identity gives us a wonderful platform. Now it is up to all of us to use it with pride, confidence and enthusiasm as we continue sharing the friendship, fun and unique spirit of Scottish country dancing with the world.

Given the complexities and timescales, the new artwork and templates had not been rolled out in time for this edition of *The Reel* so watch out for the next one!

75 years of *The Reel* - Simon Wales

This edition marks the 75th anniversary of *The Reel* - here are the mastheads of the editions from 75, 50 and 25 years ago - September 1951, September 1976 and September 2001.



Reel 1 was just two pages, edited by Hugh Foss (also the President), consisting mainly of listings of dances (12 Branch dances in the year), and classes (11 weekly classes and a certificate class) run by the Branch. The two other organisations' events listed were the Scottish Counties Ball at the Mayfair Hotel with Skinner's Band and cost 27/6. (£1.37), and the Chelsea Reel Club Ball at Chelsea Town Hall with Reg Flower's Band. Membership rates were 5 shillings for annual and three guineas for life! Branch dances 4 shillings - see p3 for programme!



Reel 137 with a much more familiar masthead and Branch logo! Branch Chairman - P. Alexander Westwood.

Six pages edited by Rita Marlow, who chaired the Propaganda Committee! Adverts had made an appearance all for dance shoes, seven other organisations, and 40 'back page adverts' from Clubs and societies in the area. Four bands were advertising. Monthly dances were now 60p (having been decimalised 5 years previously). Seven weekly classes, costing £6 or £7 for the year (about £56 in today's money). 2 dances a year at Porchester Hall, and open air dancing at Holland Park.



MEMORY HOLD THE DOOR (John Buchan) OLD MEN FORGET (Duff Cooper)

Bill Ireland, with his long membership of the London Branch, writes about the Branch's history covered by the period of "The Reel"...

Reel 237 with 16 pages, still all in black and white, but with pictures, edited by Jim Cook. Branch Chairman - Simon Wales. 16 commercial advertisers for clothing, shoes and music schools, 9 bands advertising, 64 clubs and societies on the back page and 24 of them advertising their dances. Membership was £12 pa (about £26 at today's rate), but life and long-term membership had been suspended.

There were five weekly classes, but also occasional Ladies Step, Highland, Teachers' Workshops, and Children's events were all advertised.

This reel welcomed Peter Knight as a new committee member, but bade farewell to Judy Berry (now Hall) and Jenny Greene.

A Life Remembered

A good Aberdonian

from Angela Young

Doris Stuart Young

8 December 1935 - 5 June 2026



Doris, Mrs Young, as she was known to generations of Airyhall Dancers in Aberdeen, and Angela's mum as she often referred to herself at London dancing events, had an amazing life of over 90 years and Simon has asked me to write a little bit for the Reel about her dancing life.

She was born and grew up in Aberdeen. Outside of school mum joined the Brownies and then Guides at Ferryhill South Church. She learnt to dance, taking part in the first Aberdeen Scottish Country Dance Festival after the war, winning 'The Medal' with Guider and Teacher Doris Sefton, and fellow Guide and life-long friend Elma Donald (later McCausland).

In 1956, at just 20 years of age, mum started work as a Medical Secretary to Dr Andrew Wyllie, the Physician Superintendent at the Royal Cornhill Hospital. For mum, working at Cornhill was more than a job, she also became involved with activities for the patients - and, most importantly, it is where she met Dad, who also worked there.

In the 1960s, Mum was an Assistant Guider with Lilian Emslie and the Mannofield Guides before starting the 9th Company at Airyhall School, encouraging and teaching the guides to dance. While she danced in Aberdeen Branch teams and the St Nicholas Dancers, with Lilian's twin Norma and lifelong friend Olive. The St Nicholas Dancers were trained by Tibby Cramb, and as well as country dances, Mum loved the step dances that Tibby taught them, perfectly accompanied by pianist Nan Main. Being a member of the St Nicholas Dancers was about far more than dancing. Socialising together included days out, walks and picnics for dancers and families.

As a new young mum, she started country dance teaching and continued dancing in demonstrations. In 1971, she signed up to take her RSCDS Full Certificate with teacher Lesley Martin - and a few weeks later, realised she was pregnant again. As a good Aberdonian, Mum said she had paid her money so continued the classes and sat her test. It was a good job that Miss Milligan just asked her to dance a strathspey as a few weeks later my brother Keith was born.

Mum became a country dance Branch teacher first at Harlaw and then Airyhall, continuing to teach Branch classes for over 50 years. She served at various times on the RSCDS Aberdeen Branch committee - as she said to "liven things up". She thoroughly enjoyed teaching the Beginners' class and being an RSCDS Medal Test Assessor. Her experience putting forward over 1,000 medal test and dancing achievement candidates stood her in good stead. The Airyhall dancers were a huge part of Mrs Young and Kenny's life - Friday classes, Aberdeen Festivals and of course bus and train trips to Newcastle.

Mum was also incredibly supportive of London Branch, becoming a second Branch member, attending dances when in London, including summer dancing at Polesden Lacey, supporting London Branch teams at the Newcastle Festival, and she loved spending time with the dancing friends who supported me when I came to live in London.

Over the last few weeks, it's been lovely to read cards and messages with memories of mum - especially the messages from guides and dancers that say how much Mrs Young taught them beyond dancing, public speaking, skills for life, inclusivity and a determination to do their best whatever they tackle, while giving space for everyone to shine.

We were lucky that Mum, and Dad, gave my brother and me those life lessons and opportunities ten-fold, and are incredibly proud of the legacy with young people that Mum has left.

Airyhall Delight, written by Doris, is the first dance on the Branch Christmas dance programme.

Forthcoming Events

BERKHAMSTED STRATHSPEY & REEL CLUB



Day School

Sunday 15 November 2026

10.00am - 5.00pm

White Hill Centre, Chesham HP5 1AG

Parking available, nearest station Chesham (Metropolitan Line)

Teachers: Paul Plummer & William Williamson

Musicians: Jeremy Hill, Ken Martlew & Barbara Manning

Tickets: Whole day £30, morning or afternoon £16.00

Tea, coffee and cold drinks provided, bring your own lunch

Applications and bookings

Contact: Simon Cumming

1 Fullers Close, Chesham, Bucks HP5 1LU

01494 782695

bookings@berkhamstedreelclub.org
berkhamstedreelclub.org

THISTLE CLUB

Day School and Dance

Saturday 5 September 2026

10.30am - 4.30pm & 7.30 - 10.30pm

Wing Village Hall LU7 0NN

Teacher: Florence Burgy

Jim Lindsay and the Workshop Musicians

Day school £20, Dance £14 or £32 for both

Bring your own lunch.

Bring and share supper

my.strathspey.org/dd/list/63533/

Contact: Jan Jones 07877 153259 or

jangeverybusy@gmail.com

thistleclub.co.uk/events/

ABINGDON SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE CLUB



Abingdon & Harwell Ball

Saturday 21 November 2026

7.00 - 11.00pm

Old Mill Hall, School Lane, Grove, Oxon OX12 7LB

The Craigellachie Band

Programme: The Ferry Louper, Lady Sophia Lindsay, Canadian Landscape, Jennifer's Jig, Polharrow Burn, Miss Gibson's Strathspey, The Dancing Master*, The Orchards of Co Armagh, The Cooper's Wife, Irish Rover, The Hunting Horn, Peat Fire Flame*, Belle of Bon Accord, John Cass, Sueno's Stone, Macdonald of Keppoch, The Falls of Rogie, A Prairie Crocus, City Lights, Mrs Macpherson of Inveran

Extras: Swiss Lassie, Scott Meikle, Maxwell's Rant

Tickets £28, in advance only, supper and teas/coffees included

Dances marked * will be walked through. All other dances will be recapped

Contact: Helen Gant

chairman@ascdc.org.uk

For tickets contact: Julia Twaits

treasurer@ascdc.org.uk

abingdonscottish.wixsite.com/abingdon

LONDON HIGHLAND CLUB



New Season Dance

Saturday 3 October 2026

7.00 - 10.30pm

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

Ian Muir & the Craigellachie Band

MC Caroline Hamilton

Programme: Pelorus Jack, Culla Bay, Summer Superstars, Jennifer's Jig, Langholm Fair, Ray Milbourne, The Waternish Tangle, Dagmar's Fancy, Mairi's Wedding, Welcome to Ayr, The Singing Sands, Dance with Mother, The Dancing Master, Deer Friends, The Countess of Dunmore's Reel, The Water of Leith, Chased Lovers, The Highland Rambler

Dances will be recapped

Tickets £20, LHC members £17

students' concession £10

Pay online in advance, or at the door by card or cash

includes refreshments

For tickets, email

tickets@londonhighlandclub.co.uk

or call Roger Keeling 020 8656 7884

Programme & cribs are on our website

londonhighlandclub.co.uk

LONDON HIGHLAND CLUB

Halloween Ball

Saturday 31 October 2026

7.00 - 11.00pm

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

Susan MacFadyen's Scottish Dance Band

MC Rose Kreloff

Programme: Yan Tan Tethera, MacDonald of the Isles, Toast to the Mousies, Jim's Haberdashery, Glenoe, Nottingham Lace, The Tattie Bogle, Slytherin House, City Lights, The Ambassadors' Reel, The Wooden Horse, John of Bon Accord, Scotch Mist, The Cranberry Tartelette, The Earl of Mansfield, The Silver Grey, Torridon Lassies, Tartan Rainbow, The Flight of the Falcon, Trip to Timber Ridge

Dances will be recapped

Tickets in advance (until end of Wed 28 Oct) £25, LHC members £22 or at the door £30, students' concession £10

Pay online, or at the door by card or cash (includes buffet supper & glass of fizz/soft drink)

For tickets, email

tickets@londonhighlandclub.co.uk

or call Roger Keeling 020 8656 7884

Programme & cribs are on our website

londonhighlandclub.co.uk



Forthcoming LHC event

Christmas Dance

Saturday 5 December 2026

Ian Robertson's Scottish Dance Band

RSCDS OXFORDSHIRE BRANCH

Annual Ball

Saturday 24 October 2026

7.00 - 11.15pm

The Manor Preparatory School, Abingdon OX13 6LN

Ian Muir and the Craigellachie Band

Programme: Granville Market, Orpington Caledonians, The Braes of Breadalbane, The Compleat Gardener, Polharrow Burn, The Dream Catcher, The Hazel Tree, The Flower of Glasgow, The Castle of Mey, Flora's Fancy, John of Bon Accord, The Silver Tassie, James Gray, Balquidder Strathspey, The Champagne Reel, The Paisley Weavers, The Nurseryman, The Deil Among the Tailors

Extras: Neidpath Castle, West's Hornpipe

Tickets £24 (spectators £12)

Practice Dance: Sunday 18 October 2026

2.30 - 5.30pm Cumnor Village Hall OX2 9QF

Contact: Helen Houghton-Carr 07531 469213

events.rscdsoxfordshire@gmail.com

rscdsoxfordshire.org

Advance notices:

Burns Night Supper & Dance

16 January 2027

Benson Parish Hall, OX10 6LZ

Ian Muir and the Craigellachie Band

Day School & Dance

20 February 2027

Cherwell School (North Site), Oxford OX2 7EE



RSCDS CROYDON & DISTRICT BRANCH



Weekend School

Friday 13 - Sunday 15 November 2026

Cumberland Hotel, Grand Parade, Eastbourne BN21 3YT

Teacher: Joan Desborough

Music: Ian & Judith Muir

Reserve now, pay in October

Contact: Roger Keeling

rscds.croydon.treasurer@gmail.com

rscdscroydon.org.uk

ISLE OF WIGHT



Weekend School

Friday 19 - Sunday 21 February 2026

Teachers: Eric Finley and Alice Stainer

Class Musicians: Ian and Judith Muir Ali McCann

Band for evening dances

The Craigellachie Band

Further information from

Catherine Packwood-Bluett 01980 621322

iowsdwe@hotmail.com

craigellachie-band.co.uk/isle-of-wight-weekend-school-2027

Forthcoming Events

READING ST ANDREW'S SCOTTISH DANCING SOCIETY



Annual Ball

Saturday 6 February 2027
7.00 - 11.00pm

The Abbey School, 17 Kendrick Road,
Reading RG1 5DU

Ian Muir and the Craigellachie Band
Programme: tba

Tickets £30 including reception drink and
supper with a glass of wine

Contact: Katy Kendall 07890 153294 or
sasdc01@gmail.com
scottishdancingreading.org

ORPINGTON & DISTRICT CALEDONIAN SOCIETY

Autumn Dance

Saturday 10 October 2026
7.30 - 11.00pm

Petts Wood Memorial Hall BR5 1LA

Craigievar

Programme: orpingtonscottishdancing.com

Tickets £14.00

Bring and share supper

Tea/coffee provided
but please bring a mug

Contact: Ginny Colenbrander 07751 303610
v.colenbrander@btinternet.com

LUCY CLARK SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE CLUB



Christmas Dance

Saturday 12 December 2026
7.00 - 11.00pm

Wendover Memorial Hall, Wharf Lane,
Wendover, Bucks HP22 6HF

Ian Robertson and his Scottish Dance Band

Programme: The Shetland Shepherdess,
The Old Man of Storr, The Gentleman,
Torridon Lassies, Beeswing, The Ruby
Celebration Strathspey, The Watnish
Tangle, MacDonald of Keppoch, Toast to the
Mousies, The Milngavie Maestro, Orpington
Caledonians, Canadian Landscape, The
Edinburgh Toy Shop, The Black Mountain
Reel, The Compleat Gardener, Chasing the
Eclipse, Follow Me Home, The Deil Among
the Tailors

All dances fully recapped

Tickets £25.00

Welcome glass of fizz and supper included

Order tickets via our website
lucyclarkscottish.org/events

Alternatively contact: Ann Higginbottom
01494 913220

Further information and cribs available on
our website

Practice afternoon

Saturday 5 December 2026, 2 - 5pm
venue as above

£5 for the afternoon
including tea and cake

ST COLUMBA'S DANCERS

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



Social Dancing on Monday evenings

7.00 - 9.30pm

Band Nights 2026 - 27

7.30 - 10.00pm

2 November 2026 - Antonia McClintock &
Catriona Stewart

7 December 2026 - Ian Robertson Band

25 January 2027 - (Burns Night) Strathallan

22 March 2027 - (Combined Societies Dance)
Keith Smith & Anne-Laure Latour

24 May 2027 - (End of Season Dance)
Adam Brady & Heather Jeffery

Entrance Fee on Band Nights: £14

Burns Night & Combined Societies Dance:
£17

Recorded music on other Monday evenings
Charge only for tea and biscuits in the
interval

Contact: Willie Lawrence
stcolumbasdancers@gmail.com
stcolumbasdancers.org

MAIDENHEAD SCOTTISH DANCING CLUB

New Year Dance

Saturday 9 January 2027
6.00 - 10.00pm



Carnation Hall, Chavey Down Road,
Winkfield Row RG42 7PA

Ian Muir (Prestwick) Trio

Programme: New Year Jig, J. B. Milne,
Slytherin House, Staircase in Styria, The
Lochalsh Reel, Up and Down Ben Nevis,
Napier's Index, Let's Have Music and
Dance, The Orchards of Co. Armagh, Trip to
Timber Ridge, The Castle of Mey, The Hazel
Tree, Portincaple Oak, Findlater Castle,
The Immigrant Lass, The Gentleman, The
Sallywag, Glen Alva, Butterscotch and
Honey, A Safe Journey Hame

Dances will be walked through once

Tickets £24.00

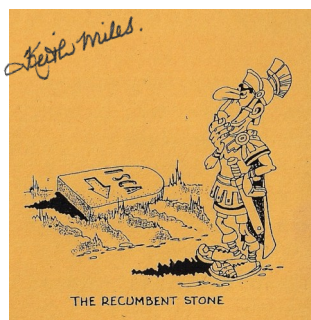
Advance booking only

Price includes supper and a welcome drink
Bring your own wine

Please notify us of any special dietary
requirements when ordering tickets

Tickets from: Jane Courtier
01628 628372 or
chairman@maidenheadscottishdancing.org.uk

maidenheadscottish.wixsite.com/maidenhead



Bobby Munro
DANCE SHOES



BOBBY'S BACK!

**The Original
Highland
Dance Shoe**

bobbymunrodanceshoes.com

South-east Dance Diary

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

diary@rscdslondon.org.uk

The Reel Advertising Rates:

Per column centimetre, three columns per
page: Black and white, but including
colour logo: £6. Full colour: £8.50
All advertisers receive a copy of *The Reel*.

For adverts and enquiries on pricing
contact Jeff Robertson:

businesseditor@rscdslondon.org.uk

Send Forthcoming Events adverts to
Willie Lawrence at:

danceads@rscdslondon.org.uk

Credits: Many thanks to all who
contributed to this issue of *The Reel*,
including the following for providing
photos: p1: Summer Wednesday dance and
End of Season dance - Simon Wales (SDW);
Where is This? - Stephen Webb (SJW). p2:
Richard Clarke - Christopher Bowen; Simon
Wales - Petar Petkovic. p5: Joanne
Lawrence - from herself; Classes pictures
- Joanne Lawrence (JL). p8: KASS
Chairmen - from Helen Cole; Cambridge
Scottish Society - Reggie Thomson;
Maidenhead Chairmen - Mark Courtier. p9:
Leeds Festival - Ben Colenbrander, Ernesto
Alvaredo. pp10-11: Maidenhead - Mark
Courtier; Andrew Brown - Chris Twinn;
Leeds Festival - SDW & JL; Little Ship Club
- Stephen King. KASS Dance - from Helen
Cole. p12: Jeremy Hill and Dave Hall -
from themselves; CD covers - from the
bands. p14-15: Meryl Thomson - from
herself (MT); Scotland - from MT public
domain; The British Hero - from VWML -
public domain; Sutters of Selkirke - from
MT; Pretty Poll and The Highland Lass -
from MT public domain; Woo'd and
Married and A' - from MT public domain;
Wilson print - by G Cruikshank 1817,
courtesy British Museum. p16: Gary Coull -
from himself. p17: Doris Young - Angela
Young. p19: cartoon - permission Joan
Miles.

Other Scottish Country Dance Organisations

To update your information in Other Scottish Country Dance Organisations contact editor@rscdslondon.org.uk
This is the second issue of the current cycle for *Reel* 336 - 338 and payment of £30 for this cycle is now overdue.
If you wish to cancel for the next cycle, please contact treasurer@rscdslondon.org.uk

ABINGDON SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE CLUB Dancing most Mondays, 7.45-10.00pm, September - June at Northcourt Centre, Northcourt Road, Abingdon OX14 1NS. All welcome. Details: secretary@ascdc.org.uk or Abingdonscottish.wixsite.com/abingdon

ADDLESTONE & DISTRICT SCOTTISH SOCIETY Meets Wednesdays 7.30-9.30pm September-May at St Mary's Church Hall, Church Road, Byfleet KT14 7NF. Details: Brenda Walton, 01483 829097 or 07747 025175 or addlestonscottish.org.uk

BERKHAMSTED STRATHSPEY & REEL CLUB Meets in Potten End Village Hall, HP4 2QG. Social dancing: Tuesdays 8.00pm September-May, Saturday: gardens June/July. Classes: Intermediate and Advanced Mondays 8.00pm, Beginners Tuesdays 8.00pm. Details: Jon Mole 07956 572925 or classes@berkhamstedreelclub.org

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

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

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

CAMBERLEY REEL CLUB Dancing every Tuesday 8.00pm at St Mary's Church Hall, Park Road, Camberley GU15 2SR. Details: Jackie Cresswell, 01252 616289 or info@camberleyreelclub.org.uk

CAMBRIDGE SCOTTISH SOCIETY Scottish country dancing and other events. Dance Circle meets every Thursday 8.00pm from September-June. Details: Rachel Schicker, 01223 364557 or camscotsoc.org.uk

CHELTENHAM BRANCH RSCDS General Class/Club Night Mondays 7.30-9.30pm with Beginners' Section fortnightly at St Luke's Church Hall, St Luke's Place, Cheltenham GL53 7HP. Advanced class fortnightly on a Tuesday. Details: Lesley Taylor, 07712 578622 cheltscdssec@gmail.com

CHISWICK SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE CLUB Meets on Sundays 7.00-9.00pm in the Oddfellows Hall, Parkshot, Richmond TW9 2RG for social dancing. Beginners' courses are offered 6.00-7.00pm, please book in advance to secretary@chiswickscottish.org.uk. Details: Iris Ronayne, 07767 842670 chiswickscottish.org.uk

CROYDON & DISTRICT BRANCH RSCDS Branch class in Coulsdon: General, including Beginners with technique Fridays 7.30-10.00pm at Coulsdon Methodist Church, Brighton Road, Coulsdon CR5 2BE. Details: Alison Raisin, 07732 746238 or rscds.croydon.chairman@gmail.com or rscdscroydon.org.uk

EPPING FOREST SCOTTISH ASSOCIATION Club nights: Mondays (all year) 8.00-10.00pm at St Barnabas Church, 127 Snakes Lane East, Woodford IG8 7HX; Thursdays (all year) 8.00-10.00pm at St John's Parish Hall, High Road, Buckhurst Hill IG9 5RX. Details: Angela Ross, 020 8504 3376 or angelaross87@hotmail.com or efsa.org.uk

FARNHAM SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCING CLUB Dancing every Tuesday at 8.00pm, September-end of April at Memorial Hall, Babbs Mead, Farnham, Surrey GU9 7EE. Details: Anne Lester, 01252 782927 or lesteranne@gmail.com or fscdc.co.uk

FLEET SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE SOCIETY Dance in Fleet URC Hall, 25 Kings Road, Fleet GU51 3AF on alternate Saturdays from 7.30-10.00pm, September-May. Details: Anne Lester, 01252 782927 or info.fleetscds@gmail.com or fleetscds.co.uk

GERRARDS CROSS AND CHALFONTS SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE CLUB Meets Tuesdays 7.30-10.00pm in the Gerrards Cross Memorial Centre SL9 7AD and Thursdays 2.00-4.00pm in Little Chalfont Methodist Church Hall, HP6 6RD. Beginners and visitors welcome. Details: Suzanne, 01923 283730 or gxchscottish.org

GREENFORD AND DISTRICT CALEDONIAN ASSOCIATION Meets at St Thomas the Apostle Church Hall, 182 Boston Road, Hanwell W7 2AD. Tuesdays 8.00-10.00pm. Details: Janet MacPhail, 07787 925022 or janetcmacphail54@gmail.com

GUILDFORD SCDC Meets at Onslow Village Hall, Wilderness Road, Guildford GU2 7QR most Mondays at 8.00pm from September-June. Details: 01483 414385 or gscdc.org.uk

HARROW & DISTRICT CALEDONIAN SOCIETY Classes Wednesdays 8.00-10.00pm, St Albans Church Hall, Norwood Drive (off The Ridgeway), North Harrow. Also a variety of other activities. Details: Sheena Henderson, mail@harrowscottish.org.uk or 07719 985025 or harrowscottish.org.uk

HERTSMERE & TALLY HO REEL CLUB Dancing on Thursdays at 8.00pm from September to July in the hall behind Christ Church, 620 High Road, Finchley N12 0NU. Also some Saturdays 7.00pm at Tilbury Hall URC, Darks Lane, Potters Bar EN6 1BZ. Details: Margaret King, 020 8440 3236 or margaret.king4@hotmail.co.uk or hertsmereandtallyhorc.wordpress.com

LONDON HIGHLAND CLUB Meets regularly at St Columba's Church, Pont Street, London SW1X 0BD. Details: londonhighlandclub.co.uk

LUCY CLARK SCD CLUB Social dancing from 8-10pm every Thursday at Wendover Memorial Hall, Wharf Road, Wendover HP22 6HF. Separate beginner and intermediate classes run from 6.45-8.00pm. Details: Liz Mitchell, 07947 000368 or lucyclarkscottish@gmail.com or lucyclarkscottish.org

MAIDENHEAD SCOTTISH DANCING CLUB Meets every Tuesday 8.00pm at St Piran's School, Gringer Hill, Maidenhead, Berks SL6 7LZ. Last Tuesday in the month is Social Dancing evening. Details: Jane Courtier, 01628 628372 or secretary@maidenheadscottishdancing.org.uk or maidenheadscottish.wixsite.com/maidenhead

MEDWAY AND DISTRICT CALEDONIAN ASSOCIATION Dancing Mondays Bredhurst Village Hall, Hurstwood Road, Bredhurst ME7 3JZ, 1.30-3.45pm; Thursdays St Thomas of Canterbury Church Hall, 63 London Road, Rainham, ME8 7RH, 8.00-10.00pm. Beginners welcome. Details: Julian Grayland 07770 380592 or medwaycaledonians.co.uk

MILTON KEYNES BRANCH RSCDS Mixed ability class meets Mondays 8.00-10.00pm. Bradwell Village Hall, Milton Keynes. Details: Jan Jones, 01908 378730 or jange@verybusy.co.uk

ORPINGTON & DISTRICT CALEDONIAN SOCIETY Dancing every Thursday 8.00-10.15pm at Petts Wood Memorial Hall, BR5 1LA. Details: Ginny Colenbrander 07751 303610 or orpingtonscottishdancing.com

OXFORDSHIRE BRANCH RSCDS Dancing on Thursdays throughout the year in Oxford. Details: Margaret Spiceley, 07985 962781 or secretary.rscdsxfordshire@gmail.com or rscdsxfordshire.org

READING ST ANDREW'S SCOTTISH DANCING SOCIETY Dancing at St Andrew's URC, London Road, Reading RG1 5BD from September-May, Wednesdays 7.30-10.00pm (general), 1st and 2nd Thursdays of each month 8.00-10.00pm (advanced). Details: Duncan Barnett, 0118 956 9289 duncanbarnet@gmail.com or scottishdancingreading.org

ST COLUMBA'S DANCERS Meet most Mondays October - May, 7.00-9.30pm in St Columba's Church, Pont Street, London SW1X 0BD. Admission free except for Band Nights when a charge will be made. Details: Willie Lawrence, 07798 640551 or stcolumbasdancers@gmail.com or stcolumbasdancers.org

ST JOHN'S SDC, WOKINGHAM Meets every Thursday 8.00-10.15pm September-June at St Sebastian's Hall, Nine Mile Ride, Wokingham. All standards welcome. Details: Kate Thomson, 0118 986 0681 sec.stjohns.scdc@gmail.com Also Children's Class Saturdays 9.30-11.00am at the Parish Hall, Crowthorne. Details: Deborah Draffin, 01344 776831

ST MICHAEL'S SCDC, SOMERSET Meets Thursdays, 7.30-9.30pm, Davis Hall, Howell Hill, West Camel, Yeovil BA22 7QX. Details: Elspeth Wright, 07972 125617 or stmichaelscdcclub.org

SIDCUP & DISTRICT CALEDONIAN ASSOCIATION Dancing on Wednesdays from 7.30-9.30pm throughout the year at St John Fisher Hall, Thanet Road, Bexley DA5 1AP. Details: Jenny Gavin, 020 8856 4522

SOUTH EAST ESSEX SCOTTISH SOCIETY Dancing Fridays, 7.30-10.15pm, St Peter's Church Hall, Eastbourne Grove, Southend (near hospital). Tuition 7.30-9.00pm. Details: Graham Easton, 01702 587808 or graham.easton@btinternet.com or seess.org.uk

SURBITON & DISTRICT CALEDONIAN SOCIETY Dancing every Thursday at 8.00pm from September-June at St Mark's Church Hall, Church Hill Road, Surbiton. Details: Alan Ip, secretary@surbitoncaledonian.co.uk

TUNBRIDGE WELLS BRANCH RSCDS General ability class on Tuesdays from 7.30-9.30pm at St Augustine's School, Wilman Road, Tunbridge Wells TN4 9AL. Details: Colin Simpson, 01892 832712 or rscdstunbridgewells.org.uk

WATFORD & WEST HERTS SCOTTISH SOCIETY Beginners/Improvers Class at Nascot Wood Recital Hall, Nascot Wood Road, Watford WD17 4YS Mondays from 8.00-9.30pm and General/Beginners Class at All Saints' Church Hall, The Green, Croxley Green, Rickmansworth WD3 3JH Thursdays from 8.00-10.00pm. Details: Stuart Kreloff reel@watfordscottish.org.uk

WEYMOUTH SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCERS Dancing at Radipole and Southill Community Centre, Radipole Lane, Weymouth, Dorset DT4 9SS. Thursdays, 7.00-10.00pm. Details: Graeme Dickson, 07831 819414

WINCHESTER BRANCH RSCDS Classes Tuesdays 7.30-9.30pm. Club nights 1st and 3rd Wednesdays 7.30-9.30pm. Both evenings at St Peter's School, Oliver's Battery Road North, Winchester. Details: Wendy Mumford (teacher), 01264 363293 or wendy@mumford.com

WITHAM & DISTRICT CALEDONIAN SOCIETY Dancing every Wednesday 8.00-10.00pm. The Labour Party Hall, Witham CM8 2EE. Details: Audrey Kennedy, 01376 513567 or amkenney148@gmail.com

The Reel is printed by Kall Kwik, Hemel Hempstead
kallkwik.co.uk/hemel 01442 247777



The Reel is provided as part of the membership benefits of RSCDS London Branch or through a subscription to the magazine.

If you are not already a member or subscriber, please consider joining the Branch or subscribing to the magazine to help support RSCDS London Branch.

Details of membership and subscription options can be found on page 3 of this magazine.

You can subscribe for as little as £5 a year.