



The Reel

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Scottish country dancing - for fun, fitness and friendship



A full Allum Hall on Sunday 12 March for the Branch's Centenary Tea Dance

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Issue 325 should be with UK based members by 26 August 2023 unless delayed in the post.

Contributions for Reel 325 should be sent to arrive by and preferably in advance of 16 July 2023 by email to editor@rscdslondon.org.uk

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

From the Chair: Joanne Lawrence



I began writing with a confident flow of words, which faltered when I realised that I was reproducing, almost word for word, my report from 2022. It is too easy to lapse into saying and doing the same things year on year. Nothing wrong with that but, as we know, changes can happen whether we welcome them or not.

An excellent example of continuity is, of course the RSCDS Centenary, and London Branch celebrated this in style with its Centenary Tea Dance on 12 March (reports p7), impeccably MCd by Andrew Kellett with wonderful music from Ian Robertson and his Scottish Dance band, an abundance of cakes, fabulous ceilidh items and a toast from Society Chair, William Williamson. The Society Centenary Ball followed in Edinburgh on 24 March, attended by many London dancers (report p10), and there are many commemorative events still to come.

Other Branch dances have continued to be well supported with our Winter Wednesday dance and the Combined Societies' dance, this year hosted by St Columba's Dancers, both attracting good numbers.

However, post Covid changes have affected some aspects of Branch life. Working patterns have changed, meaning fewer people in town during the week and thus less available for centrally based classes. Our Richmond class is flourishing, as are our Wednesday afternoon class and The Tuesday Social. We want to widen our appeal to beginners, to continue to support our Park Walk Improvers and Technique Class members and to provide greater opportunities for more advanced dancers. We will talk in more detail about plans at our AGM on 10 June.

The Covid-influenced shift in working patterns appears also to have affected venue availability, making it difficult to find accessible venues at affordable prices for regular classes and all but impossible for more complex events. This has inhibited plans for our day school in October (report p4) although work continues to find a solution for later in the season.

On a more positive note, our Dancing Achievement Award (intermediate level) course is underway and we hope to run a similar course for advanced dancers next season.

More changes, as Meryl Thomson and Caroline Hamilton retire after more than 20 invaluable years as webmaster and south-east dances co-ordinator (see below and p3). Our new website, courtesy of Chris Collings, will be launched in time for the new season.

We look forward to the Summer Wednesday and End of Season dances as well as our Open Air dancing in Kensington Gardens (this year on 12, 19 and 26 August - see p3 for details).

The Branch AGM will be on 10 June this year. Pending ratification at the AGM, we have a few personnel changes, not least welcoming Wendy Morris, who dances at Surbiton and with the Wednesday afternoon class, as committee member. Jim Cook, who supported the Branch magnificently as Chair 2019 - 21 and Vice Chair 2021 - 23, will demit at the AGM and committee member Richard Clarke will become Vice Chair in his place. Margaret Moore is unable to continue as classes convenor due to ill health. We wish her a swift and complete recovery. My thanks to Margaret, to Jim and to all the committee members for everything they have done and continue to do.

Thanks also to Rachel Wilton for the warmth and wisdom she brought to her 10 years as Branch President and to former Society and Branch Chairman, Andrew Kellett, who takes over as President after the AGM. Rachel leaves large (metaphorical) shoes to fill, and we are fortunate to have a successor of Andrew's calibre.

Finally, thank you to all our teachers, musicians, MCs, caterers, webmaster, organisers, dancers and everyone who does so much to keep us all dancing.

Branch Website

RSCDS London Branch was one of the first RSCDS Branches to have its own website. For this we are indebted to Meryl Thomson who, with husband Ian, took on the role of webmaster in 2000, registered our domain name rscdslondon.org.uk in 2002 (we previously used a freeserve hosting service) and has developed and maintained the website ever since. After 20+ years of providing clear, accessible, up to date information about London Branch activities, plus several valuable archives, Meryl has decided to retire as webmaster. We are truly grateful to her, and to Ian, for their commitment, connections, experience, and flair for design which have added such value to Branch activities for so long. Thank you both.

It was always going to be hard to find someone to follow precisely in Meryl's footsteps and so, we decided not to try. Instead, with the great support of Chris Collings, who has developed several new sites for Scottish dance groups in the south-east, we are working on a new website which will retain the information from the old in an easy to update format and add some new facilities such as simpler payment methods. We are very fortunate, both in having the input of Meryl and Ian for so long and in the generosity of Chris in giving his time and expertise to help us move into a new phase.

We will demonstrate the new website at the AGM and aim to switch over from the old site after classes finish at the end of June.

ROYAL
SCOTTISH
COUNTRY
DANCE
SOCIETY



Chair: William Williamson

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[YouTube.com/
RSCDSLONDONBRANCH](https://YouTube.com/RSCDSLONDONBRANCH)



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 from 1 July 2023

As a member of RSCDS London Branch, you enjoy the following benefits: reduced rates at London Branch classes, dances and events; four issues per year of *The Reel*; 10% discount on items from the RSCDS online shop and two issues per year of the RSCDS magazine *Scottish Country Dancer*. Members wishing to pay by direct debit may do so by completing a payment mandate either by clicking on the appropriate link in the table to the right of this text (for electronic *Reel* readers) or by going to rscdslondon.org.uk/membership-page. Membership may also be purchased by Credit/Debit Card or PayPal or by cheque payable to RSCDS London Branch by going to the same page. New members should also complete the membership application form on the [London Branch website](https://rscdslondon.org.uk). 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.

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

Membership category	Junior 12-17 years	Young Adult 18-24 years	Adult 25 years +	Adult Joint (2) 25 years +	2nd Branch	<i>The Reel</i> only (subscription)
Electronic (<i>eReel</i>)	£17	£25	£30	£48	£4	£4
<i>The Reel</i> by post (UK)	£19	£27	£32	£54	£6	£6
<i>The Reel</i> by post (Europe)	£25	£33	£38	£66	£12	£12
<i>The Reel</i> by post (Rest of the World)	£28	£36	£41	£72	£15	£15

End of Season Dance

Following the Branch AGM

Saturday 10 June 2023

Doors open at 6.15pm

AGM 6.45 - 7.30pm

7.30 - 10.30pm

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

Adam Brady

Miss Allie Anderson 8x32 J
Milton's Welcome 8x32 R
The Gentleman 8x32 S
The Roselath Cross 8x32 J
Lady Susan Stewart's Reel 8x32 R
The Robertson Rant Sq 80 S
Inchmickery 5x32 J

Mrs Stewart's Jig 8x32 J
Clutha Sq 4x48 R
Anna Holden's Strathspey 8x32 S
The Laird of Milton's Daughter 8x32 J
None so Pretty / London Pride 8x40 R
Neidpath Castle 3x32 S
The Montgomerie's Rant 8x32 R

Extras:

Kingussie Flower 8x40 R
Diamond Jubilee 4x32 J
Miss Gibson's Strathspey 8x32 S

Admission includes light refreshments

RSCDS Members £14, non-members £16
full time students (with card) and
spectators £8

Children (under 16) free

Tickets available on the door - cash or card
All dances will be recapped/walked through

Crib available at rscdslondon.org.uk

South-east Dance Diary

Our thanks to Caroline Hamilton who has managed the south-east dance diary so well and for so long.

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

New Season Dance

Saturday 16 September 2023

7.00 - 10.00pm

Doors open at 6.30pm

St Columba's Church, Pont Street
SW1X 0BD

David Hall and his Band

Hooper's Jig 8x32 J
None So Pretty / London Pride 8x40 R
Culla Bay 4x32 S
Ladies' Fancy 8x32 J
Glastonbury Tor 8x32 R
Miss Gibson's Strathspey 8x32 S
The Starry Eyed Lassie 8x32 J
Scott Meikle 4x32 R

The Laird of Milton's Daughter 8x32 J
The Royal Yacht Britannia 8x40 R
John McAlpin 8x32 S
The Jubilee Jig 8x32 J
The Saltire Society Reel 8x32 R
Neidpath Castle 3x32 S
The Kelloholm Jig 8x32 J
The Reel of the Royal Scots 8x32 R

Extras:

General Stuart's Reel 8x32 R
Sugar Candie 8x32 S
Tribute to the Borders 8x32 J

Admission includes light refreshments

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

Children (under 16) free

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

Crib available at rscdslondon.org.uk

Dates for 2023 - 2024

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

RSCDS Membership Rates

The Society element of the membership subscription will be increasing by £1 from 1 July 2023 as a result of the decision taken by the AGM last November. The new rates are in the table above.

The RSCDS membership year runs from July to June and there are some of our members who pay in June for that new year so direct debits and paypal payment rates will be changed in June.

At the AGM, the London Branch delegates voted against the increase, but it was felt necessary to increase to help the Society regain a better financial basis following the lean years when Summer School and Winter School could not run and generate surpluses. The Society also needed to recoup the £2 reduction which, also against our counsel, was voted through a couple of years previously.

The good news is that London Branch rates still remain amazingly good value at just £6!

Open Air Dancing

Saturdays 12, 19 and 26 August

The Branch plans to run informal open air dancing during the summer in Kensington Gardens (by the bandstand near the Round Pond) on Saturdays 12, 19 and 26 August 2023 from 2.00 - 4.00pm.

An MC will guide everyone through a programme of Scottish country and ceilidh dances. Everyone with or without experience of Scottish dancing is very welcome.

Bring your family and friends, or just bring yourself (and a picnic if you wish) and enjoy dancing to some wonderful music.

Admission is free. Please put the dates in your diary and do come along - we look forward to seeing you there! If the weather is bad, we may have to cancel the dancing. Please check our website rscdslondon.org.uk or Facebook page facebook.com/RSCDS.

London Branch Classes



Set yourself a fun challenge join a Scottish country dance class

We have classes for...

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.

Park Walk Primary School

Park Walk, London SW10 0AY

Summer Term 2023

Wednesdays 7, 14 and 21 June

7.00 - 9.00pm

Summer General Class

Catriona Bennett & Adam Brady

Dave Hall & Adam Brady

Kate Gentles & Adam Brady

Three opportunities to consolidate technique and general dancing skills acquired during the year

Fee: £7 per class for RSCDS members, £9 per class for non-RSCDS members

Underground: South Kensington, Sloane Square

Free on-street parking available after 6.30pm (Chelsea match days 10.00pm) in nearby streets

Buses: 11, 22, 19, 49, 328, 319, 345
Park Walk is in the [Ultra Low Emission Zone](#)

No entry into the school before 6.40pm
No smoking or vaping on school premises

Autumn Term 2023

Wednesdays 20 September -
29 November

Christmas Party - 6 December

Half-term Wednesday 25 October

Day School 2023

RSCDS London Branch traditionally holds its Day School and Musicians' Workshop in October and this year was to be no exception. However, we have encountered serious barriers in organising the 2023 event. Many venues report challenges in finding weekend staff and as a result some no longer wish to hire for just one day a year. Those that are willing have raised their prices dramatically beyond our budget.

We still hope to arrange a Day School but it will not take place in October 2023. We welcome any local knowledge which might help us to identify a suitable space (email classes@rscdslondon.org.uk).

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.

St Columba's Church

Upper Hall, Pont St, London SW1X 0BD

Summer Term 2023

Wednesdays 7, 14 and 21 June

2.30 - 4.30pm

Autumn Term 2023

Wednesdays 20 September - 6 December

Half-term Wednesday 25 October

Mixed Ability Dance Group

led by Simon Wales with music from
Barbara Manning on 21 June

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

Visitors welcome

Fee: £10 per session to recorded music,
£2 non dancers

Underground: Knightsbridge, Sloane Square

Buses: 19, 22, 137, 452, C1

Pont Street is in the [Ultra Low Emission Zone](#)

Richmond

Richmond Library Annexe, Quadrant Road,
Richmond TW9 1DH

Summer Term 2023

Wednesdays 7, 14 and 21 June

7.30 - 9.30pm

Autumn Term 2023

Wednesday 20 September - 6 December

Half-term Wednesday 25 October

Beginners and Improvers

with teacher Judith Jones
with music from Dave Hall on 21 June

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

Fee: £6 per class to recorded music

Underground/Train: Richmond

Buses: H37, 65, R68, R70, 110, 190, 371,
419, 490

Dance Scottish - the Tuesday Social

Upper Hall, Pont St, London SW1X 0BD

Tuesdays 27 June, 26 September,
24 October, 14 November and
19 December

7.00 - 9.30pm

The Tuesday Social

led by Gill O'Dell / Judith Jones

with music from Adam Brady

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

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

Fee: £10 per session

including refreshments

Underground: Knightsbridge, Sloane Square

Buses: 19, 22, 137, 452, C1

Pont Street is in the [Ultra Low Emission Zone](#)

Fast Paced Social Dance

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. Check the Branch website for date and location.

Families in London Dance Scottish



We are hoping to relaunch this soon, but in the meantime for requests for children's activities

eg birthdays / ceilidhs please contact :

classes@rscdslondon.org.uk

Letters to the Reel

40 bar angst

I was sorry to read in Reel 323 about the angst apparently caused to musicians when playing 40 bar dances. I shall bear this in mind when making up programmes and limit the pain. I understand the difficulties, forensically expounded by Hugh Foss, but I must say that in *Mairi's Wedding*, for example, I get a kick out of the repeat of part B for the circle at the end. Lots of pieces of classical music have parts repeated at the composer's express instructions, so why not with Scottish dance tunes? I wonder what James B Cosh would have had to say about it.

That said, I read with great interest Meryl Thomson's well-researched article on the origins of the dance and tune for *None So Pretty / London Pride*, also 40 bars long. I have to wonder what on earth was in the minds of the members of the publications committee of 1957 when they came up with the version we dance today, which seems to bear only a tenuous relationship to the historical descriptions. It clearly need not occupy 40 bars. And how does their version square with the first aim of the Society - 'To practise and preserve Country Dances as danced in Scotland'? Curiously, I cannot find any of the three original 1923 aims of the Society on the RSCDS website. Have they been discarded? I think we should be told.

James Fairbairn

Be wary of the 40 bar dance

I read Meryl's scholarly piece on *None So Pretty* with interest, especially the section headed '40 bar dances'.

40 bar dances are a fact of Scottish country dance life, so musicians must adapt 32 bar tunes to make a set of alternates, more or less successfully, as Meryl comments. For example, the tune *Siege of Ennis* has 8 bar A music and 16 bar B music, and if played ABB is a reasonable match to *Mairi's Wedding* because bars 9-24 in the dance form a 16 bar figure. *Siege of Ennis* might not be a good match to other dances.

However, it appears that some dance devisers may not appreciate by how much a 40 bar dance limits choice of alternate tunes, especially for strathspeys which are frequently 2x16 bars. In addition, clubs that use recorded music will know that the choice of 40 bar recordings is limited compared with 32 bar recordings.

Overall, I think dance devisers should consider carefully before going ahead with a 40 bar concept.

Colin McEwen

We are always happy to consider any correspondence for inclusion in the *Reel*, so if you are moved to comment on any aspect of dancing, music etc then please do get in touch. The letters column has always been a place for lively controversy, and we would like to think that that spirit still remains.

Email: editor@rscdslondon.org.uk

Repeating the original tune

I would like to thank Stephen Webb for his letter highlighting the tendency of some Scottish dance bands not to play the named tune for a dance the last time through. I have also noticed this tendency and I also find it unhelpful. The tune for most dances is strongly associated with the movements and acts as a kind of cue. I suspect most dancers would find it very strange to start dancing, say, *Mairi's Wedding* or *De'il Amang the Tailors* to any other tune. Bringing back the named tune at the end wraps it up neatly and is also a reminder to the dancers that it is nearly the end.

I have been in several sets lately where the band played a different tune at the end, and the dancers (sometimes including me!) didn't realise it was the end. There are lots of rousing tunes, and I can understand why a band might want to finish with one, but if it is not the tune associated with that dance it feels wrong and can be off-putting.

We do not necessarily have to stick to a convention just because it is traditional, but in this case I for one believe there is a good reason for it and I would rather keep it!

Samantha Schad

Respect or Disrespect

Scottish country dancers are so lucky to be able to dance to great music. Jean Milligan said, 'dance with your soul' but I also say that musicians, and we have plenty of really good ones, play with their soul. Seeing the band enjoying playing for our dancing is a treat in itself. It is a highlight during an evening when the band leader says a few words of thanks to the dancers expressing how much the band has enjoyed playing for us. It is two-way - the band plays well, we dance better. There is no doubt great tunes played well, lift flagging limbs to new heights.

As dancers we generally know the dance programme in advance and in many cases know the lead/concluding tune that goes with it. As said before, some bands do not like the associated tune and just play what they like. A pity, but as a captive audience what can the dancer do but go along with it. Many bands out of respect will play the first eight bars of the tune after the dance is announced by the MC. This is helpful to the dancer who is reminded of the tempo even if the expected tune has been changed.

The way it works is: dancers are invited on to the floor by the MC who confirms the next dance's name, the lined-up dancers are then anxious to know what number they are in their set. Top man/couple is expected to count down. What I feel is disrespectful to the band and dancers is if the counting down is started ahead or worse during the playing of the introductory eight bars, often counting over the music when dancers cannot always hear their number or listen to the music. I say simply wait a moment, listen to the introductory music (it takes seconds) and when the dancers are paying attention, start the counting down. Am I wrong?

Stephen Webb

Branch Committee Report: Mel Rowland



The Committee met online on 17 March 2023. Chair, Joanne Lawrence began by thanking everyone who had helped to make the RSCDS Centenary London Branch Tea Dance held at Allum Hall in

March such a success.

Really positive feedback has been received from many of the attendees and it was wonderful to be able to welcome RSCDS Chair, William Williamson, to celebrate the event with us. Joanne confirmed that many of the Branch events held in 2023 had done well in terms of the number of attendees. It is hoped that this encouraging trend continues into the new season.

Treasurer, Simon Wales, then provided an update on the Branch finances and outlined the 2023-2024 budget. The likely outturn for 2022-2023 was that there would be a net cost to the Branch, for various well understood reasons. The Committee supported the budget proposals agreed by the officers and convenors at the Convenors' meeting (held on 8 March), reflecting the continued investment in the future of the Branch. We are planning to spend some of our reserves in supporting new classes, making funds available for teacher training, and encouraging younger dancers to apply for the funds available. There would need to be a concerted effort to attract commercial advertising back to the *Reel* to offset the likely cost to the Branch thanks to the declining amount of dance and dance society related advertising.

Committee members next turned their attention to the sub-committee convenors' reports. Plans to hold the Intermediate Level Dancing Achievement Award (DAA) have now been finalised and classes are due to start in April at the Richmond Library Annexe. Another exciting development is the proposed introduction of a Fast Paced Social Class. We hope to hold ad hoc classes in the spring / early summer with a view to becoming regular monthly classes from September if they prove popular. The class is going to be aimed at advanced / very advanced dancers. Once details have been finalised, they will be advertised through our usual forms of communication.

The last main agenda item discussed at the Committee meeting was the Branch AGM to be held at Pont Street on 10 June, followed by the End of Season dance. Once again, the AGM will be available on a live stream for those unable to attend in person. (Details of the link are provided in the AGM notice on p11.)

Branch Treasurer, Simon Wales is busy finalising the end of year accounts, which together with the review of the Branch's year (see p11) and other AGM documents, will be available to Branch members, prior to the AGM, on our website. Any member wanting an advance copy of the accounts can email treasurer@rscdslondon.org.uk to ask for a set to be sent when ready.



CD Review: Dave Hall



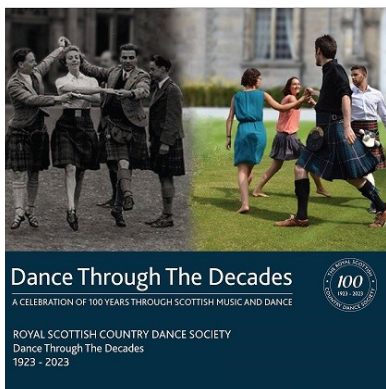
Dance Through the Decades, A Celebration of 100 Years through Scottish Music and Dance: Gordon Shand and his Band CD (£13.50 plus P&P) from rscds.org/shop/product/music/dance-through-the-decades

Flowers of Edinburgh (8x32R), Rakes of Glasgow (8x32S), Ladies' Fancy (8x32J), None so Pretty (8x40R), Neidpath Castle (3x32S), The Old Man of Storr (8x32R), Gothenburg's Welcome (8x32J), Anna Holden's Strathspey (8x32S), Scott Meikle (4x32R), Farewell to Balfour Road (96J), Kickin, Two Steps, Scottish Waltz, Marching to the Palace, 2/4 Marches, 6/8 Marches

What a super idea to pull together a selection of dances from across the 100 year history of the RSCDS. And, the CD has been put together with great care, delivering a cover with lovely photos and lots of information about the dances.

Choosing Gordon Shand and his Band means we are assured of lively, exciting and very accurate playing. There is the driving rhythm to make dancing lots of fun and plenty of intricate band arrangements to keep the listener interested. Gordon's distinctive (button box) sound and style on lead provides that familiar brightness and lightness to the melody, and with Graham Berry (piano) and Gordon Smith (drums) responsible for rhythmic discipline we can be assured of complete comfort in that department.

Interwoven between these are some innovative harmonic approaches, and a slightly different timbre with Duncan Findlay's guitar/banjo, that contribute to what I would describe as the more modern end of the Scottish Dance Band genre. Robert Menzies' fiddle blends excellently with the lead accordion, and Jim Lindsay is the perfect choice to make these more complex arrangements sound that much easier than they actually are. The choice of tunes is a good mix of the traditional and more contemporary, with plenty of Gordon's own material too (especially on the extra listening tracks at the end). A very enjoyable listen, and plenty to supplement collections for those needing recorded music for dancing.



Burns Birthday Festival Dinner: Joan Blake

The Burns Club of London was delighted to welcome Scottish Country Dancers from RSCDS London branch and others, and London reelers to their sold-out dance themed Burns Birthday Festival Dinner at the Caledonian Club in January.



RSCDS Chair, William Williamson and Linda Williamson at the Caledonian Club

We were thrilled that the all-singing, all-dancing wonderful Doomhamer and Burnsian William Williamson proposed the Immortal Memory.

Scott Wightman (UK High Commissioner to Singapore while I was there) called in on his way to a Washington Burns event to address our haggis with aplomb! David Macdonald (dancer I met at Summer School from Aberdeen) toasted our lassies with resounding support from many a laddie who could remember youthful croonings over the 'delightful Isla' St Clair, who charmingly entertained us with words and song in proposing the toast to the laddies.

Past President Bill Henry donned his nightgown for Burns' *Holy Willie's Prayer* and Alain English gave us *Handsome Nell* (Burns' first poem written some 250 years ago) and *A Man's a Man for a' That*.

Cheers resounded and we all went off to the full dance floor and the tunes of Neil Esslemont's pipes, Dave Hall on accordion, David Mitchener on keyboard and Andy McBride on drums, with Past President James Fairbairn our MC.

Bands

CALEDONIAN REELERS

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

THE FRANK REID SCOTTISH DANCE BAND

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

serTA

The serTA (South-east Region Teachers' Association) Teachers' Course is well underway with half the lessons now complete. We are delighted that all the Part 1 candidates passed their Unit 1 written exams and all the Part 2 candidates had their Unit 4 Records of Teaching approved.

We are now looking forward to the teaching exams, Unit 3 and Unit 5 on Saturday 24 June 2023. These will be held at the Kings Langley Community Centre WD4 8ET (easy access from M25 J20, free car parking and also walking distance from Kings Langley station, mainline from Euston).

We welcome volunteers of both intermediate standard and experienced dancers (no beginners please). In return we offer free classes, excellent music from Judith Muir and free tea, coffee and biscuits!

We are looking forward to having new teachers in the south-east but they need dancers to teach in their exams first. It will be the candidates who are being examined, not any volunteers.

If you would like further information or to sign-up to come for all or part of the day, please contact Brian Rose

bcrose115@gmail.com



Burns Club of London President, Joan Blake under the portrait of Robbie Burns

Celebrating the Society Centenary Part 1

We have been celebrating the Society centenary in style and over the next 4 pages we capture the spirit of those events.

London Branch Tea Dance 12 March 2023



After a bit of Czech and Slovak folk dancing some years ago I was looking for a new type of dancing. I attended Simon Wales' workshop at Dance Around the World in October 2019 and thought this seemed to tick all the boxes - I like the music, style and it is accessible. Since then, Scottish country dancing has exceeded all my expectations, it is fun, challenging, good exercise and social. There are classes and events all over and I have met so many genuinely nice people and made new friends with a shared interest.

Also, it is so good for my mental health, even when I'm feeling out of sorts as I was on the way to the Centenary Tea Dance, seeing friendly faces, hearing the music and engaging in some dancing always gives me a lift! It was wonderful to see so many dancers old and new from far and wide coming together for such a special event, and as I get to know more people in the dancing community I'm never alone, people are so friendly and welcoming.

I'm really very grateful for this new part of my life.

Stuart Matousek
London Branch Intermediate Class dancer

Surbiton Scottish had the most amazing time at the Tea Dance! Fantastic to meet up and dance with so many old friends on such a sociable occasion. We loved the themed dances, the band, the food - it was all perfect. Lots of compliments on the lovely spread from the Surbiton attendees - and particularly for the ceilidh items. Such an impossibly high standard - just like going to a Scottish concert with dancing in between! The demo set of Bonnie Anne was just flawless and the fiddle solo from Ian Robertson was simply mesmerising. We enjoyed David Lowe singing *London Pride* before we danced *None So Pretty / London Pride* and it was a real added bonus when William Williamson sang for us. Altogether the most spectacular event. We were completely buzzing on the way back in the car - and that's what Scottish country dancing is all about!



Surbiton & District Caledonian Society members

Surbiton meets every Thursday evening and is a growing club. We've welcomed 7 new dancers since January and are always looking for new ways to encourage people in and then retain them! Our motto is 'Joy through dancing'.

Wendy Morris
Treasurer, Surbiton & District Caledonian Society

surbitoncaledonian.co.uk



Croydon RSCDS members celebrating with us

2023 is a big year for Croydon Branch being our 70th anniversary as well as the RSCDS centenary. London's Centenary Tea Dance offered a chance to practise celebrating in advance of our own birthday in December so an intrepid group of us made our way north of the Thames to Elstree where a warm welcome awaited us. With lots of friends to catch up with, Ian Robertson's excellent band providing good music to go alongside a well-planned programme and Andrew Kellett to keep us in order, it was a happy group of dancers who made their weary way home that evening.

Alison Raisin, RSCDS Croydon Branch Chair

RSCDS Winter School February 2023: Celia Bangham and David Lowe



A first-time arrival at the RSCDS Winter School is not unlike a first-time arrival at RSCDS - so many people, so much to learn. You receive a gold star on your name tag. Classes the next day, in our case the minimum, intermediate standard are a return to normality. They are well-paced and have excellent teachers and musicians. A warning to newbies, though: study the dances in the Sunday evening Social Dance carefully, for there is, for this one, no walk-through session, it is straight in with one-minute recaps.

The walk-throughs on subsequent afternoons, combined with some of the dances taught in the morning classes, make the remaining Socials and the final Ball less fraught overall, but the week is a big learning experience, with over sixty dances, the great majority of them new to us. It feels at times, on a musical analogy, like learning ten new songs from scratch, by heart, each day. We are given good advice: choose your dances carefully and maybe sit out a few! Advice not always followed, but our thanks to the many more experienced dancers who tolerantly nudge us through the moves and sequences. We intermediates flesh out an idea as the week goes on for an RSCDS SatNav, fed into an earpiece (acknowledge co-driver, move diagonally to the right, giving way to the driver coming from the left, take the third exit and in ten feet reach the opposite side of the road. Halt momentarily.) A calling app adjustable to the speed of the music could immensely simplify life in the earlier stages of learning.

But this perhaps overstates a sense of intellectual effort. Pitlochry itself is an attractive town in an equally attractive surround. There are many scenic walks around the hotel, for example to the Black Spout waterfall. There are interesting talks too, about the 18th century Scottish violinist and dance composer Niel Gow, featured in a poem by Robert Burns and an introduction to the *Dance through the Decades* CD. There is a whisky tasting. On the Wednesday evening there is a ceilidh in which the musicians come to the fore.

A week in a comfortable, all-facilities hotel, dancing several hours a day assisted by first-class teachers and musicians and meeting a wide range of interesting people from all over the world is what it sounds like: great fun. And let us not forget the first-class organisation that lies behind it all, which means that everything runs smoothly. Inevitably the setting and the sheer sense of occasion at the final Ball in Blair Castle stand out, but we take many memories away from the week.



Celebrating the Centenary...



Spring Fling participants



Branch Centenary Tea Dance at Allum Hall



RSCDS Chair William Williamson and London President Rachel Wilton cut the Centenary cake



Branch Chair, Joanne Lawrence at the Tea Dance



RSCDS Chair William Williamson with London's Ivor Frank at the Centenary Ball



Auntie Elaine Davies with niece Anja at Spring Fling



London Branch members in their finery at the Centenary Ball in the Assembly Rooms, Edinburgh

Celebrating the Society Centenary Part 2

Spring Fling 2023: Katy & Ed Davies



Ed, Katy and Anja Davies

UK, 8 European countries, Canada and Argentina. There was also a fringe running alongside the fling event. It started with a Welcome Dance on Friday night with Ewan Galloway's Scottish Dance Band. Meadowbank Stadium was a great location for the weekend. It was lovely seeing all our friends from both events and to see so many new faces. Approximately 180 dancers at both evenings.

On the Saturday morning there were country classes for different abilities, followed by the afternoon specialty classes, which were taught by Abigail Brown, Alasdair Gray and Deb Lees with musicians Shona MacFadyen, Susan MacFadyen and Ewan Galloway. The specialty class choices were Scottish Step Dancing, Highland for Scottish Country Dancers and Around the World with Unusual Formations. Everyone really enjoyed the classes they chose.

The Saturday night Spring Fling Ball with Jim Lindsay's Scottish Dance Band had a roaring 20s theme with fancy dress encouraged. Everyone looked fantastic and fully embraced the theme. We were piped into the hall which really surprised Anja, her face was a picture! We had a brilliant night!

It was a different experience for us as parents, but just as enjoyable. On both evenings we got the chance to really take in the music, as we weren't dancing every dance! We, along with her Auntie Elaine, took it in turns to bounce Anja around looking on at the dance floor and the music was fantastic! We really didn't know how Anja would take to it, but the only time she was upset was when the music stopped! Anja made lots of new friends and thank you to everyone who held her, so we could dance. She also met Atlas who is only one week older than her! Hopefully they will meet on the dance floor in the future and possibly dance with the younger people from this year's event at her first Spring Fling when she is 12!

The Sunday morning challenge was a great chance for the Spring Flingers to socialise with dance related challenges. We were split into random teams and some of the challenges included: guessing and dancing the dance from listening to the music; we were given place names that appear in dance names and then plotting them on maps; we were given a dance to 'dance backwards' and we had to decide how to interpret the instructions. As you can imagine it was great fun. Finally, we had lunch and said our goodbyes. Special thanks to the committee: Rachel, Faye, Amy, Kai, Bethany, Felicity and Andrew who made the whole weekend run so smoothly and enjoyably. Well-done team! Once again thank you to London branch for contributing towards our brilliant trip! The three of us had an amazing time.

This centenary year the RSCDS Spring Fling weekend was in Edinburgh. We were delighted to attend as a new family of three! This was our first holiday with our baby girl Anja, who was 7 weeks old at the time. We would like to thank the London Branch for their financial support towards such a memorable occasion. Like other dancing couples who have children, we wanted Anja to experience the love for dancing even if, for now, it was just watching and listening to the enjoyment people have for Scottish music and dance, until she finds her feet!

This year's Spring Fling was attended by 103 12-35 year-olds travelling from all across the



Centenary Ball: Joan Blake



Last summer I took myself off to Edinburgh Branch's Platinum Jubilee Ball held in Greyfriars Kirk, my first dance in a church. Being a Branch dance, I wondered if I would know anyone there but of course I did - I found myself sitting next to a London Branch member and to another dance friend who happens to be the editor of the *Scottish Country Dancer*. It was a great occasion. From my rooftop digs, I had a view into elegant rooms with enormous swag chandeliers. "I would like to dance there!", I thought - at the

Assembly Rooms.

I booked as soon as I heard about the RSCDS Centenary Ball tickets being on sale, and for the Edinburgh Branch Friday dance and the Saturday centenary concert.

Those arriving early in Edinburgh went to another local class on the Thursday (have shoes, can dance) and were put through their paces in non-stop dancing which turned out to be good training for the weekend!

On the night of the Edinburgh Centenary Branch dance, the sunny day skies were replaced with torrential rain. Those lucky enough to have their taxi turn up, arrived in good time; others had to take a pragmatic sprint along Princes Street! The Branch had taken a calculated risk in moving to St Cuthbert's Church and hoping the dance floor was big enough for all those with tickets once the pews were removed. It was perfect! The floor was kind and did not wear our feet out before the big night, fabulous music from Ewan Galloway's six-piece band, fizz, cake and of course a very good dance programme.

We were greeted by a piper at Canongate Kirk at noon on the Saturday. Some dancers had managed to join the Coates Crescent open day to see the displays and to be served tea by our Chair and still join the concert in time.

The music was sublime, played by some of the greatest dance musicians: Muriel Johnstone and Peter Shand on piano, Pete Clark and Tim Macdonald on fiddle in the beautiful church of Holyrood and Edinburgh Castle. The sheer joy seen in the musicians' faces was the icing on the cake. We loved it as much as they did!

The atmosphere of the Friday dance with UK, European, both North and South American dance friends set the scene for the grand RSCDS Centenary Ball attended by 400. Some had already danced at the Assembly Rooms years ago, at least one in front of our late Queen (how special was that!) All were in their best bib and tucker with both the music room and ballroom comfortably full and dancing to the wonderful music of Marian Anderson in one room and David Oswald in the other. Alasdair Macleod who was featuring on *Take the Floor* that night played for both the Friday and Saturday nights.

We had party bags on arrival by way of a souvenir programme and an RSCDS Centenary whisky glass. There was more fizz and cake and speeches of course. All so warm and friendly. There were endless recappers to ensure they could also take advantage of the dancing through the decades dance programme. Dancers could choose and move between the two dance rooms and bands. The evening finished for me with catching *Auld Lang Syne* and *God Save the King* in both rooms.

It was just all so jolly, and we all got to dance under the row of enormous swag chandeliers which go into infinity in the huge mirrors at the ends of the room. A weekend I will never forget.



Dancers, and chandeliers, in the Edinburgh Assembly Rooms

RSCDS London Branch Annual General Meeting Saturday 10 June 2023 at 6.45pm

The Annual General Meeting of the London Branch of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society will take place on Saturday 10 June 2023 in the Upper Hall, St. Columba's Church, Pont Street, London, SW1X 0BD from 6.45-7.30pm, followed by our End of Season Dance.

All members and friends of the Branch are invited to attend both the AGM and the End of Season social, although only members may vote at the AGM. We hope to live stream the AGM again this year for those unable to attend in person.

Please check rscdslondon.org.uk/rscds-london-branch-agm/ for details.

Please join us for this short (45 minutes) meeting, learn about what London Branch has been doing and be part of its plans for the future.

Share your thoughts and ideas: the Branch committee welcomes your thoughts on the running of the Branch, throughout the year as well as during the AGM discussions. Please email secretary@rscdslondon.org.uk

There will be a number of changes to the Branch management committee for the 2023-24 season. Two committee members have decided to step down this year - Jim Cook, our Vice Chair and Margaret Moore, our classes convenor. We thank them both for the hard work they have done to support the work of the Branch.

Following the call for nominations, which closed on 31 March 2023, fewer nominations were received than committee places available. There will therefore be no election in 2023. Joanne Lawrence, Simon Wales and Mel Rowland will continue in their roles of Chair, Treasurer and Secretary respectively. Richard Clarke will take over the role of Vice Chair. Margaret Shaw, Elaine Davies, Thelma-Jane Robb, Adam Brady and Dave Hall have all agreed to continue in their current committee roles. We welcome new committee member Wendy Morris.

Chair: Joanne Lawrence (2017)

Vice Chair: Richard Clarke (2022)

Hon. Secretary: Mel Rowland (2019)

Hon. Treasurer: Simon Wales (2003)

Committee:

Margaret Shaw (2007) Elaine Davies (2009) Thelma-Jane Robb (2011) Adam Brady (2022) Dave Hall (2022) Wendy Morris (2023)

Agenda

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Approval of the Minutes of 11 June 2022
3. Matters arising from the Minutes
4. Report on the Branch Activities 2022-2023
5. Treasurer's Report and Statement of Accounts
6. Confirmation/Appointment of Honorary President and Honorary Vice Presidents
7. Appointment of Officers and Committee of Management
8. Appointment of Account Checker
9. Motions for discussion
10. Appointment of Branch proxy delegates to the Society AGM
11. Any Other Business

Annual Report: Joanne Lawrence

This report prepared by the Management Committee will be presented to the AGM on Saturday, 10 June 2023. Members' comments are welcome at the meeting or any time - secretary@rscdslondon.org.uk

Our priorities for the 2022-2023 season were to build on the previous season's work in recovering from the COVID-19 enforced break, to develop events attractive to younger dancers, increase the number of musicians playing for branch activities and to celebrate the Centenary of the RSCDS in style.



Branch Committee and Officers at the Centenary Tea Dance

We certainly achieved our Centenary objective with a wonderful afternoon of dance, ceilidh items and cake at London's RSCDS Centenary tea dance in March.

Later that month many London dancers journeyed to Scotland to celebrate again at the RSCDS Centenary Ball in the Edinburgh Assembly Rooms.

We launched the Tuesday Social in September 2022. This monthly dance and social session for people in their 20s and 30s has regularly attracted 2-3 sets with several dancers also joining our weekly classes at Park Walk.

Numbers attending dances have held up well this season, gradually increasing as more people returned to dance post COVID-19. The use of social media has supported wider attendance, drawing dancers in particular to our Open Air dancing in Kensington Gardens, to the Tuesday Social and to our Burns Supper, which attracted 180 attendees.

Our Wednesday afternoon class at St Columba's, Pont Street and our Beginners/Improvers Class in Richmond are both flourishing, and we have introduced live music to the end of term sessions for these classes, in addition to the weekly classes at Park Walk in Chelsea.

However, post COVID-19 changes have affected some aspects of Branch life, not least changes in working patterns meaning fewer people available for classes in town during the week. Venue costs have increased dramatically, making it difficult to find accessible venues at affordable prices for regular classes and all but impossible for more complex events. We have been unable to secure an affordable venue for our day school in October although work continues to find a solution for later in the season.

We are working to widen our appeal to beginners, to continue to support our Park Walk Improvers and technique class members and to provide greater opportunities for more advanced dancers with monthly teaching sessions in accessible locations.

We have, this term run an intermediate Dancing Achievement Award course, and hope to run an advanced course next season. We are also exploring options to provide training for MCs in the London area and have been delighted to see the progress of the 2023 serTA teacher training cohort.

Branch communications play a vital role in keeping members informed, not least *The Reel*, edited by Simon Wales, and the branch website, managed for more than 2 decades by Meryl Thomson. Meryl obtained our domain name and developed the website to the reliable source of information upon which we depend.

She has decided to retire at the end of this season and will be greatly missed. We are hugely grateful to Meryl, and to Ian, for all their support over so many years. We are grateful also to Chris Collings who has developed our new website, to be demonstrated at this year's AGM and launched once classes finish at the end of June.

We will continue to use a range of other communication tools, including eUpdates, Facebook, Twitter, MeetUp and of course personal face to face contact, to keep members and friends of RSCDS London informed and to engage interest in Scottish country dancing activities throughout London.

As the 2022-23 season draws to a close, I would like to thank all those who have contributed to make it a success.

Rachel Wilton is stepping down after ten years as Branch President and, on behalf of the branch, I offer heartfelt thanks to her for the warmth and wisdom she brought to the role. She leaves large (metaphorical) shoes to fill, and we are fortunate to have a worthy successor in Andrew Kellett, former Society and Branch Chairman, who will take over as President after the AGM. Jim Cook, who supported the branch magnificently as Chair 2019-21 and Vice Chair 2021-23, will demit at the AGM and committee member Richard Clarke will become Vice Chair in his place. Margaret Moore is unable to continue as classes convenor due to ill health. We wish her a swift and complete recovery. We have a few committee changes, not least welcoming Wendy Morris, who dances at Surbiton and with the Wednesday afternoon class, as committee member. My thanks to Jim, to Margaret and to all the committee members for everything they have done and continue to do. (NB: all appointments pending approval at the AGM).

Finally, thank you to all our teachers, musicians, MCs, caterers, webmaster, organisers, dancers and everyone who does so much to keep us all dancing.

The Story behind the Dance: Meryl Thomson



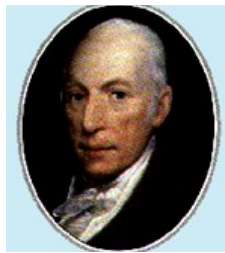
A series of articles from Meryl Thomson delving behind the history of some of our dances and their music. This time she turns her attention to some popular ceilidh dances, often danced at weddings and other celebrations, particularly Burns Nights, such as the one run by London Branch each year. There will also be an opportunity to dance some of these at the open air dancing in Kensington Gardens.

A brief history of some popular ceilidh dances

Ceilidhs are popular throughout the United Kingdom and beyond. A typical ceilidh evening might include dances like *The Gay Gordons*, *The Cumberland Reel*, *Cumberland Square Eight*, *Canadian Barn Dance*, *The Swedish Masquerade*, *The Virginia Reel*, *St Bernard's Waltz*, *The Dashing White Sergeant* and end with *The Eightsome Reel* or a *Circassian Circle*.

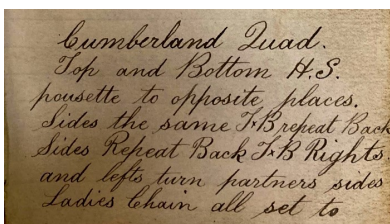
Looking into the sources of some of these dances I have found many have interesting and sometimes surprising origins.

The Gay Gordons is a popular starting dance at many ceilidhs. This dance is thought to have been named for the Gordon Highlanders regiment, first raised by Alexander, 4th Duke of Gordon (right) in 1794. The dance is definitely not that old. In 'The Thistle No 53' Dr Norman Mackenzie notes "The Gay Gordons is a 20th-century novelty dance, and the steps in it could occur in a dance originating anywhere from Russia to the USA (the 'picture-frame' handhold used being particularly popular in German folk-dances of the Rheinlander type, in American versions of the *Varsoviennne*, and in some styles of Hopak kolom in the Ukraine)." The great fiddle player James Scott Skinner wrote a tune called *The Gordon Highlanders March* in 1915 which very soon became known as *The Gay Gordons*. There is also a suggestion that there was a *Gay Gordons* dance in 1907. Coincidentally, there was also a musical comedy of the same name which opened at London's Aldwych Theatre on 11 September 1907 and was a great success. Could the dance be related in some way to this musical?



The dance *Cumberland Reel*, or *Vulcan's Cave*, I have previously commented on in the [RSCDS Burns Night from Home 2021 video](https://youtu.be/qOUTZkQzae8?t=492) which you can watch here - youtu.be/qOUTZkQzae8?t=492

The *Cumberland Square Eight* is a popular dance, especially because of the galloping across and back during the dance and the basket figure.



The dance *Cumberland Quadrille* appears in the handwritten notes of Thomas Murphy, c.1830s, now held in the Mitchell Library, Glasgow.

The instructions appear to be a precursor of

the current dance - *Top and Bottom Highland Scottische pousette to opposite places. Sides the same. Top and Bottom repeat Back, Sides repeat back. Top and Bottom Rights and lefts turn partners sides Ladies Chain all set to corners, Balance & turn partners, grand Chain half round, promenade to places all waltz*. This was a single quadrille - quadrille being a historic term for a dance for 4 couples in a square set.

The *basket* or *wreath* figure gradually appeared as an option in various quadrilles, one example as seen on right from Thomas Hillgrove's *A Complete Practical Guide to the Art of Dancing* published in New York in 1864.

BASKET FIGURE.
This figure is generally danced in place of the second or last figure in the quadrille.
MUSIC—Life let us Cherish—Six parts.
FORWARD TWO—Same as the first set, 16 bars.
BALANCE—Same as the first set, . . . 8 bars.
LADIES TO THE CENTER, 8 bars.
The four ladies forward to the centre and back (four bars), forward again and stop—join hands—and stand close together in the centre. (Four bars).
GENTLEMEN, HANDS ROUND ON THE OUTSIDE, 8 bars.
The four gentlemen join hands on the outside of the ladies, and dance round to the left (four bars) and then back again, finishing on the left of their partners (four bars.) Here the music should pause, while the gentlemen raise their hands, holding fast, and the ladies, keeping hold of their hands, stoop, pass backwards, and rise on the outside of the gentlemen's arms, forming a Basket or Wreath, each lady being careful to keep on the right of her own partner.
ALL BALANCE, 8 bars.

Earlier it appeared as a figure called *the wreath* in the aptly named *Basket Cotillion* from John Cole's *Selection of Favorite Cotillions No 1* published in Baltimore in 1822.

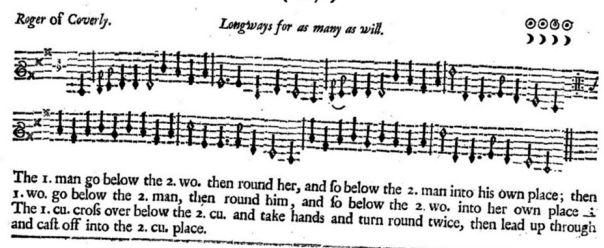


The Swedish Masquerade. This dance, popular at Scottish ceilidhs and English barn dances, is a couple dance in three parts danced to march, waltz and reel time. These types of dances were popular in Scandinavia and its origins are probably from the *Danish Masquerade* dance.

In 1768, Christian VII, King of Denmark, (right) held a masked or masquerade ball in London. A letter from Benjamin Franklin to William Franklin in 1768 states "The King of Denmark at present engrosses all the Conversation. That young Monarch gains daily on the Affections of this Nation by his great Affability and Condensation, and the Pleasure he appears to take in every thing he sees, and in every Amusement and Entertainment contrived for him here."

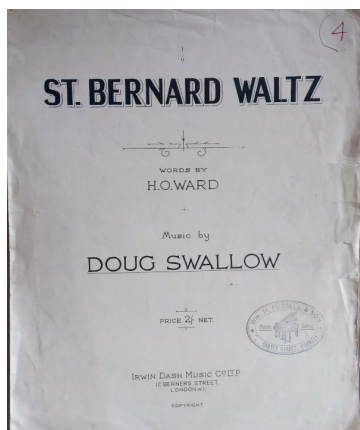


The Virginia Reel is a staple at most ceilidhs, often played to American sounding hoedown tunes. The original dance is old - dating back to the 17th century. Under the name of *Sir Roger de Coverly* (sic) this became one of the so-called 'finishing dances' at many balls and dances. It appears in various volumes of Playford's *Dancing Master as Roger of Coverly* (sic), although this is a different dance from the later versions and the tune is written in 9/4 rhythm which feels different to the later 9/8 slip jig used for the dance and which is found in early 19th century manuals including Thomas Wilson's various publications, where he suggests Irish steps should be used, although not specifying which ones. The dance crossed the ocean to America in the mid-nineteenth century, became known as *The Virginia Reel* and lost the tie with the 9/8 slip jig rhythm, being danced to any good reel music. This dance was also known as *The Haymakers* in Scotland and danced to 6/8 jig rhythm. And who was Roger de Coverly? There is a suggestion that this might refer to a knight from the era of Richard I called Richard Calverley.



Joseph Addison and Richard Steele created a daily publication in 1711 called *The Spectator* and featured a character called Sir Roger de Coverly who was an endearing elderly country gentleman with Tory leanings and who said his grandfather invented the dance!

The Pride of Erin Waltz. This pretty round the room waltz originated in Leith, Edinburgh around 1911, devised by Professor Charles S Wood who was a dance teacher and officiated in the ballroom there. Another old time or sequence dance, this was popular from Ireland to Australia. Although not originating in Ireland, despite the name, it was adapted in that country to fit the Irish style of dancing and was introduced into Australia in the 1930s, appearing in a succession of dance manuals throughout the 20th century. The dance has stayed as a popular item on many ceilidh dance programmes.



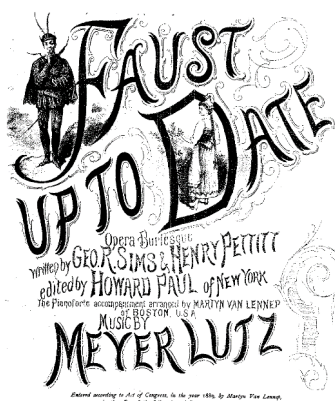
The St. Bernard's Waltz.

This dance is an old-time sequence dance which had words by H O Ward to music from Doug Swallow and was published in Glasgow in the 1930s. Some say the dance was created as early as 1913 by a gentleman called Billy Smith. A description appeared in *Dancing Times*, January 1937, quoting the London Star, 30 November 1936: "First honours for a new dance for the Coronation go to Douglas Swallow, jovial band leader

at the Locarno, Streatham. Called 'St. Bernard' it is an ingenious yet simple combination of the Blues, Fox-trot, Veleta, and old-fashioned Waltz, with a tempo slightly faster than the last named". This description bears an astonishingly close resemblance to the 'St. Bernard' of the North but starts with the wrong foot.

The Dashing White Sergeant. Again, I talked about this dance and the happy coincidence of its being muddled with another, La Belle Florence, which was discussed in a video for the Burns Night at Home 2021 which you can view here: <https://youtu.be/qOUtZkQzae8?t=3705>

The Canadian Barn Dance was the child of a dance popular in the 19th century - *The Pas de Quatre* or *Barn Dance*. James Scott Skinner describes in *The People's Ballroom Guide* of 1905 how the dance hails from America and was brought over the Atlantic by Mr K M Sellars, Professor of Dancing in Glasgow and Ayr. He goes on to add, "The music first played to the dance in this country was the *Pas de Quatre* from *Faust Up to Date* published in 1889." In America it was danced to the melody *Dancing on the barn-floor*.



In the dance manual *Modern Etiquette in Public and Private* published by Frederick Warne in 1886 it says "Every one tried to learn it at once, it spread through London like wild-fire, and the dance became the rage. The steps are simplicity itself, but the movement is so lively and the effect so pretty, that young people have welcomed it as an agreeable change from the more formal dances." Interestingly, in Geoffrey D'Egville's 1919 dance manual *How and What to Dance*, the instructions for the *Barn Dance* and *Canadian Three Step* are next to each other on the page. Could, like with the *Dashing White Sergeant*, the dances have been linked, this time with Canadian being added to the Barn Dance name?

The Circassian Circle. A dance of this name appears in RSCDS Book 1 but is not the same as the ceilidh dance now called *The Circassian Circle*. The RSCDS dance is an adaptation of the first figure of James Paine's *First Set of Quadrilles* published around 1815 (also the first quadrille of the *Caledonian Quadrilles*, first published in 1823). The dance is in a round the room format rather than a square set. The round the room format with couple facing couple is called a *Circassian Circle* in G M Chivers' *The Modern Dancing Master* 1822. Chivers gives a selection of figures to be danced in this formation including one very similar to the RSCDS dance. The tune chosen by the RSCDS is a hornpipe with the earliest origins probably from around 1850.

The formation is now also known as a *Sicilian Circle*. Thomas Hillgrove published a dance manual in 1857 called *The Scholar's Companion & Ball-Room Vade-Mecum* where he describes a dance he calls *Sicilian Circle* which has instructions basically the same as the RSCDS *The Circassian Circle*. Hillgrove has something to say about how this was danced in 1850s New York: "This dance was formerly a great favorite at all public balls, but is now very seldom danced, on account of the rude manner of performing it. For, instead of setting to their partners and turning in places, or passing once and a half round in the

promenade, the majority of our rude dancers rush off with a gallop, sometimes passing more than half the length of a ball room, and are frequently at a crowded ball unable to find the places where they left off. When properly danced, however, it is a very social dance."

The ceilidh dance *Circassian Circle* also derives from a quadrille figure described by David Willock in his *Ball-Room Guide* (Glasgow c.1860). After 1875, the *Flirtation* figure, as it became known because the couples change partners on each turn, was becoming more commonly danced as the final figure of the First Set of quadrilles. James Scott Skinner in his *The People's Ballroom Guide* of 1905 says the *Flirtation* figure is "A most enjoyable figure, particularly when there are eight couples in each set." The practice of dancing quadrilles with 8 couples seems to have been followed in Scotland and it is easy to see how this extended to the large circle now used at ceilidhs for *Circassian Circle*.

What we can see is that a ceilidh is made up of dances from a wide variety of sources. Several have countries in their names that suggest a different origin from the actual source; some have their beginnings in quadrilles, the most popular dance form in the 19th century; others developed from the growing trend for sequence and ballroom dancing for couples in the 20th century. Whatever their origins, these dances continue in their popularity, enjoyed by generations of dancers everywhere in a sociable setting.

From the Archives: Hugh Foss



In this centenary year, with the celebrations in full swing, it seems appropriate to reprint extracts of a 1973 publication by Hugh Foss, entitled *Notes on Evolution in Scottish Country Dancing*, particularly the section entitled *The Future*. A view of the Society on its 50th anniversary. Hugh Foss was London Branch's Chairman and also the first editor of *The Reel*. Some of the language may seem a bit archaic now...

Here are some of my hopes for the future of country dancing. I expect many others will share at least some of them.

First I hope that the Society will flourish for a very long time. The golden age of Scottish country dancing, by the way, is now.

To many members the Society means Miss Milligan and Miss Milligan means the Society. She seems to combine the jobs of directress, chief instructress and travelling saleswoman. She has personally sold country dancing all over Scotland and England and has just visited America... The Society could not have got to where it is now without her. My only hope about Miss Milligan is that she will live for ever.

But, to leave personalities and come to trends and so forth: some people grumble that the Society has over-emphasised technique and made dances so precious and difficult that they are no longer the enjoyable romps they always used to be (always, in this instance, meaning say 1890 - 1920). In other words they complain because the Society has changed the second best dances into the best ones. ... If you want the best dances, the Society has them. I hope they won't become second best for a long time yet.

The Society does not suggest that all dancers must have perfect technique before they can be let loose on a dance. It is quite easy for anyone - or almost anyone - to pick up enough about the steps to be able to enjoy the dances at the first class they attend. They don't have to learn the minuet first.

What the Society does emphasise is that social spirit of the dances. It does not want people to dance without ever looking at their partners. Nor does it like ungraceful or hideous gestures. I hope the dances will continue to be social and popular.

There might be a danger that with so many dances to choose from we will drift into dancing mere permutations of figures announced by an MC. I should hate to see that, but I don't think we have reached that stage yet. Today we use figures from lots of different periods, so there is much more variety. So I hope that the Society will dredge up more peculiar figures from the past (as it did for *Books 17, 18 and 19*), and that new dances will be invented with new figures.... new figures developed from the old.

Lives Remembered

Larger than life

from Daniel Capron



Nicholas Demetriou
26 December 1952 - 5 February 2023

The death of Nicholas comes as a shock as he was a larger-than-life character.

Nicholas used to appear at dances at St Columba's and elsewhere in full formal Highland dress with personal touches such as a large jewelled pectoral cross and painted fingernails. For many years he brought his mother with him in a wheelchair. Although she did not dance, he sought to make her part of the group. If there was a circle for Auld Lang Syne, she would be in the circle in her wheelchair and Nicholas would push her into the middle with other participants.

About five years ago his mother died. He went on dancing, but according to friends he never got over it. After the early death of his brother, she was his only close relative.

Nicholas was always cheerful and engaging. He loved hearing others' life stories wherever he went. He himself had Greek Cypriot parents but went to a Roman Catholic school.

A dancing friend writes, "My main memory of him is when my daughter and I met him by chance on a very crowded station platform. He then came with us on the train and when I told him we were going to London to celebrate my daughter's 16th birthday he promptly got up, got everyone's attention and started singing Happy Birthday to her."

In recent years he was a member of a Scottish country dancing club in Eastbourne. He also attended Scottish country dancing classes in Brighton. And he attended the Gay Gordons residential events at Cober Hill near Scarborough, bringing his cello with him. He was a very proficient cellist, having played all over Europe with a major orchestra. One of the Gay Gordons describes him as 'a beautiful gentle man'.

On 5 February, after dining with friends, he had a heart attack, collapsed and died outside Bowes Park station. For him it seems a good way to go. For us who knew him, colour has gone out of our lives.

An inspirational dancer

from Helen Dean



Elizabeth Dean
21 May 1933 - 9 March 2023

Elizabeth was born in Prudhoe, Northumberland and moved to Gosforth in 1967 where she met Stuart her future husband. They were married in 1968 and moved to Waterlooville, Hampshire in 1971. It was here that she and Stuart started Scottish dancing which became Elizabeth's lifelong passion.

In 1982 Elizabeth gained her teaching qualification at St Andrews which led to her running classes in Chichester and Havant well into her eighties and in 1992 she was part of a team that came third at the Highland Gathering in Jakarta. From 1995 - 1996 she had the honour of being elected as Chief of Portsmouth and District Caledonian Society, a role she took very seriously.

There is no doubt that Elizabeth inspired other generations to dance as she encouraged her son to become a Highland dancing teacher and her granddaughter regularly attended social dances with her.

Elizabeth was a well-loved member of the Scottish dancing community who will be remembered for being first on the dance floor and for being the life and soul of the ceilidh.

She will be sadly missed by her friends and family.

A courteous partner

from Samantha Schad



Bob Schad
2 November 1926 - 17 November 2022

When Bob went to St Andrews in his 79th summer he thought he might play a bit of gentle golf (at Cupar, where it is cheaper). In fact, his wife, Carole, had signed him up to the Beginners' Class at Summer School! A mathematician and a lifelong sportsman, Bob took to Scottish dancing with natural aptitude and enthusiasm. For the next 15 years he danced regularly in Croydon and the south London area, at classes and social dances. He was pleased that he always knew the right way to go in a reel! He was a popular partner as he was unfailingly courteous and always enjoyed his dancing.

Bob was born in Cheam and attended Hurstpierpoint School during the war, followed by Christ Church, Oxford, where he got a modest maths degree and a hockey blue. He subsequently played hockey for England. During National Service in the RAF he discovered a love for teaching (he was too short-sighted to fly planes so he taught navigation to cadets instead) and went on to teach maths (and quite a lot of sport) at Whitgift School in Croydon for almost 50 years. Having reluctantly retired from cricket at 80 he took up golf for another decade or so. He played competitive bridge and also taught it at evening classes.



He was kind, witty, intelligent and courteous, and is much missed by all his family, three generations of whom are pictured above, from left to right, Samantha Schad, Bob Schad, Beth, James and Fergus Fairbairn and Carole Schad in the St Andrews Town Hall during the RSCDS Summer School.

Where is This?

Answer to 'Where is This?' on p1. Ivor Frank writes:

It seems eminently fitting in this our Centenary year that the RSCDS logo is the crown and it was here at Dunnottar Castle near Stonehaven that the crown jewels of Scotland were successfully saved for the nation and hidden away from Cromwell's advancing army in the seventeenth century in the redoubt of then powerful Earls Marischal. It is also 100 years since the nearby Stonehaven and Dunnottar war memorial was unveiled in 1923.

It can be a bleak and blustery ruin to visit on Aberdeenshire coast 160 foot above rocks in the North Sea.

A more amenable visit is to the SCD Dictionary and crib, to view the elegant *Dunnottar Castle* (S3x32), by John Drewry, which crib includes a demonstration danced at the castle in 2017.

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

Forthcoming Events

RSCDS OXFORDSHIRE BRANCH

Annual Ball

Save the date!

Saturday 28 October 2023

Ian Muir and the Craigellachie Band

Venue to be confirmed

Full details at a later date in *Reel* 325 or on our website

Contact: Helen Houghton-Carr
events.rscdsxfordshire@gmail.com or
 07531 469213

rscdsxfordshire.org



www.rscdsxfordshire.org

READING ST ANDREW'S SCOTTISH DANCING SOCIETY

Summer Dance

Saturday 17 June 2023

7.00 - 10.30pm

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

David Hall Duo

Programme in *Reel* 323 and on website

Tickets £15

Please bring a plate of food to share for
supper

Contact: Katy Kendall, 0118 996 8548 or

sasdc01@gmail.com
scottishdancingreading.org



THISTLE CLUB

Musicians' & Dancers' Workshops and Dance

Saturday 2 September 2023
 10.30am - 4.30pm & 7.30 - 10.30pm

Wing Village Hall, LU7 ONN

Teacher: Angelika Schmidkonz,
 Musician: Judith Muir
 Musician Tutor: Ian Muir

Workshops: Musicians £20, Dancers £16,
 Evening Dance £10 or £24 for both
 bring your own lunch and shared buffet
 contribution

Programme: EH3 7AF, Anne McArthur,
 Festival Fling, The Elusive Muse, Tulloch
 gorm, Anniversary Reel, Mrs Stewart's Jig,
 Here's A Hand, Minard Castle, The Last of the
 Lairds, Clutha, Jimmy's Fancy, Cramond
 Bridge, Airie Bennan, The Singing Sands, A
 Capital Jig, Mrs Macleod

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

SUMMER TUESDAYS

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

Superb bands every Tuesday throughout
 the summer

Tuesday 27 June - Tuesday 12 September
 2023

7.30 - 10.30pm

Admission £15 (Payment by card only)

Details of bands and programmes can be
 found at:

summertuesdays.org

For further information contact:

summertuesday22@gmail.com

LONDON HIGHLAND CLUB



Forthcoming dances to be held
 at St Columba's Church, Pont
 Street, London SW1X 0BD

Saturdays: Lower Hall 7.00 -
 10.30 pm unless otherwise stated

Sat 3 June 2023: **Summer Ball** (see below)

Sat 14 October 2023 **Centenary Ball**
 Frank Reid

Summer Ball
 Saturday 3 June 2023
 7.00 - 11.00pm
 Ian Robertson

Programme: The Moffat Weavers, Orpington
 Caledonians, Neidpath Castle, Torridon
 Lassies, Nottingham Lace, The Cashmere
 Shawl, Midnight Oil, The College Hornpipe,
 Schiehallion, The Rothesay Rant, The
 Plantation Reel, Joie de Vivre, Indian River
 Strathspey, Ramadan-ce, The Dancing
 Master, The Gentleman, Angus MacLeod, The
 Machine Without Horses, Montparnasse, The
 De'il Among the Tailors

Ball Tickets: Including buffet refreshments
 * LHC members in advance £15.00
 * Non-members in advance £17.00
 Unbooked tickets on the door (cash only)
 £20.00

* Advance booking price is only available on
 orders received by midnight
 Monday 29 May 2023

For tickets contact: rogerkeeling@f2s.com or
 020 8656 7884

All applications will be acknowledged
 If you have Highland dress, you are invited to
 wear it

Further details are on our website:
londonhighlandclub.co.uk

Everyone is welcome at all our functions, so
 please come along and join us for an
 enjoyable evening

The Reel Advertising Rates For adverts and enquiries on pricing contact Jeff Robertson: businesseditor@rscdslondon.org.uk

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Other Scottish Country Dance Organisations

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

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

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

If you require your information to also be changed in the SE Classes Listing on our website please contact
 Jan Collings seclasses@rscdslondon.org.uk or call on 07803 923036.

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

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

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

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

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

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

CAMBERLEY REEL CLUB Dancing every Tuesday 8.00pm at St Paul's Church
 Hall, Church Hill, Camberley. Details: Jackie Cresswell, 01252 616289 or
info@camberleyreelclub.org.uk

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

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

Other Scottish Country Dance Organisations

Continued from p15

CHELTHENHAM SCOTTISH SOCIETY Dancing Friday nights 7.30-10.00pm at St Andrew's UR Church, Montpellier Street, Cheltenham GL50 1SP. Details: John Marshall, duracellbunney@tiscali.co.uk cheltenhamsscottishsociety.org or jockjigging.webador.co.uk

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

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

EPSOM & DISTRICT CALEDONIAN ASSOCIATION General dancing Mondays, 7.30-10.00pm, Tweddle Hall, St Andrew's URC, Northey Avenue, Cheam SM2 7HF. Teacher: Pauline Cashmore, 020 8686 9362. Details: Dorothy Pearson, 01737 551724

FARNHAM SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCING CLUB Dancing every Tuesday at 8.00pm, September-end of April at Memorial Hall, Babbs Mead, Farnham, Surrey GU9 7EE. Details: Anne Lester, 01252 782927 or lesteranne@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 at Memorial Centre, East Common Road, Gerrards Cross SL9 7AD on Tuesdays in term time from Sept-June, 7.30-10.00pm and also in Little Chalfont Methodist Church Hall, Chalfont Avenue, Little Chalfont HP6 6RD on Thursdays from 2.15-4.15pm. Visitors and beginners welcome. Details: Roger Stubbs, 01494 873063

GREENFORD AND DISTRICT CALEDONIAN ASSOCIATION Meets at British Legion Hall, 182 Oldfield Lane South, Greenford UB6 9JS. Thursdays 8.00-10.00pm. Details: Janet MacPhail janetmcp@phail54@gmail.com

GUILDFORD SCDC Meets at Onslow Village Hall, Wilderness Rd, Guildford GU2 7QR most Mondays at 8.00pm from Sept-June. Details: 01420 362530 or gscdc.org.uk

HARPENDEN SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCING CLUB Meets every Tuesday at 8.00pm at Lourdes Hall, Southdown Road, Harpenden. Details: Val Owens, 01727 863870 or rscdsherts.org/harpenden

HARROW & DISTRICT CALEDONIAN SOCIETY Classes Wednesdays 8.15-10.15pm, St Albans Church Hall, Norwood Drive (off The Ridgeway), North Harrow. Also a variety of other activities. Details: Sheena Henderson, mail@harrowscottish.org.uk or 07719 985025 or harrowscottish.org.uk

HERTSMERE REEL CLUB Monthly dances on third Saturday (exc. August and September) 7.30-11.00pm, Tilbury Hall (URC), Darkes Lane, Potters Bar EN6 1BZ. Details: Margaret King, 020 8440 3236 or margaret.king4@hotmail.co.uk

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

LUCY CLARK SCD CLUB Meets Thursdays at the Wendover Memorial Hall, Wharf Road, Wendover HP22 6HF. Beginners' class 6.45-8.00pm, Social Dancing 8.00-10.00pm. Details: Liz Mitchell, 07947 000368 or lucyclarkscottish@gmail.com or lucyclarkscottish.org

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

MAIDSTONE (COBTREE) SCD GROUP Meets every Wednesday 7.30-10.00pm at The Grove Green Community Hall, Maidstone. Details: Dick Barford, 01622 685984

MEDWAY AND DISTRICT CALEDONIAN ASSOCIATION Dancing Mondays Bredhurst Village Hall, 1.30-3.45pm; Thursdays Brompton-Westbrook School, Gillingham ME7 5DQ, 8.00-10.00pm. Beginners welcome. Details: Lyn Sutton-Jones, 07831 154038 or medwaycaledonians.co.uk

MID SUSSEX SCOTTISH DANCING GROUP Mixed Ability Group meets every Tuesday in Hurstpierpoint Village Centre BN6 9UY 7.45-10.30pm. Details: Fran Bramham franmssd@gmail.com

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

NORWICH RSCDS Branch class in Norwich on Mondays from September-May/June. Beginners from 7.00-8.15pm and general dancing 8.20-9.30pm. Details: Sue Petty, 01603 741639 or secretary@rscds-norwich.org.uk

ORPINGTON & DISTRICT CALEDONIAN SOCIETY Dancing every Thursday 8.00-10.15pm at Petts Wood Memorial Hall, BR5 1LA. Beginners'/Improvers' Class every Monday 8.00-10.00pm at Crofton Halls, York Rise, Orpington BR6 8PR. Details: Deirdre Wilden the_wildens@yahoo.co.uk 07879 860463 or orpingtonscottishdancing.com

OXFORDSHIRE BRANCH RSCDS Dancing on Thursdays throughout the year in Oxford. Details: Margaret Spiceley, 07985 962781 or secretary.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 Barnet, 0118 956 9289 duncanbarnet@gmail.com or scottishdancingreading.org

REIGATE SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE CLUB Meets most Mondays 8.15-10.15pm, September-May at the Redhill Methodist Church Hall, Gloucester Road, Redhill, Surrey RH1 1BP. Details: Wendy Mitton, 01737 766244 or wmitton517@btinternet.com

RICHMOND CALEDONIAN SOCIETY Meets at the Oddfellows Hall, Parkshot, Richmond, every Wednesday evening at 7.30pm from mid-September to mid-June. Details: 07802 442435 or richmondcaledonian.co.uk

ST COLUMBA'S CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, Pont Street, London SW1X 0BD. St Columba's Dancers meet most Mondays from October to May, 7.15-10.00pm. Admission free except for Band Nights when a charge will be made. Details: Willie Lawrence, 07798 640551 or stcolumbasdancers@gmail.com or stcolumbasdancers.org

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

SIDCUP & DISTRICT CALEDONIAN ASSOCIATION Dancing on Wednesdays from 7.30-10.00pm throughout the year at Hurst Community Centre, Hurst Road, Bexley, Kent. Details: Jenny Gavin, 020 8856 4522

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

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

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

WATFORD & WEST HERTS SCOTTISH SOCIETY Beginners/Improvers Class at Nascot Wood Recital Hall, Nascot Wood Road, Watford WD17 4YS Mondays from 8.00-9.30pm and General/Beginners Class at All Saints' Church Hall, The Green, Croxley Green, Rickmansworth WD3 3HJ Thursdays from 7.30-10.00pm. Details: Stuart Krelloff, 01923 492475 or reel@watfordscottish.org.uk

WEMBLEY & DISTRICT SCOTTISH ASSOCIATION Dance Class Mondays 8.00pm. The Church of the Ascension, The Avenue, Wembley, Middlesex. Details: Mrs Caroline Hamilton, 020 8866 2378 or info@wdsa.co.uk

WEYMOUTH SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCERS Dancing at Radipole and Southill Community Centre, Radipole Lane, Weymouth, Dorset DT4 9SS. Thursdays, 7.00-10.00pm. Details: Judie Seymour, 01305 833660

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

WITHAM & DISTRICT CALEDONIAN SOCIETY Dancing every Wednesday 8.00-10.00pm. The Centre, United Reformed Church, Witham, Essex. Details: Audrey Kennedy, 01376 513567 or amkenedy148@gmail.com

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

p1: Tea Dance - Joanne Lawrence (JL); Dunnottar Castle - Ivor Frank. p2: Joanne Lawrence - from herself. p5: Mel Rowland - from herself. p6: Dave Hall - from himself; CD cover from the RSCDS; Burns Club pictures - both from Joan Blake. p7: Stuart Matousek - from himself; Surbiton Caledonian - Peter Kendrick; Croydon RSCDS - from Alison Raisin; Celia Bangham and David Lowe - from themselves. p8: Spring Fling - Ryan Johnston Photography ryanjohnston.co; Tea Dance dancing and Joanne Lawrence - Catriona Stewart; Cake cutting - JL. p9: Centenary Ball - from Ivor Frank; Spring Fling - from Katy Davies; Centenary Ball - from JL. p10: Spring Fling - from Katy Davies; Centenary Ball - both from Joan Blake. p11: Branch Committee - from JL; pp12-13: The Story behind the Dance - all Meryl Thomson; Hugh Foss - from RSCDS Archives. p14: Nicholas Demetriou - from Kay Skinner; Elizabeth Dean - from Helen Dean; Bob Schad - from Samantha Schad; Schad family - Susan Koffler-Sluijter.

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