



The Reel

rscds
London Branch

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Scottish country dancing -
For fun, fitness and
friendship



2025 Summer Fun

Above and Below: RSCDS London Branch and MacLennan Scottish Group at the White Rose Festival in Leeds -12 July 2025



In This Bumper Issue

Branch Matters (pp2-5)

Chair's report, AGM report and accounts, membership, dances, classes listings and reports

London Visits the White Rose Festival (pp6-7) Reports

London Branch Day School Teachers, musicians and programme (pp8-9)

On and off the Dance Floor (pp10-11) In pictures

The Story behind the Dance (pp12-13)
The Lady of the Lake

20th Anniversary of the Gay Gordons (p14)

Exam Success (p15)

Reports from Iris Ronayne and Armaiti Bedford

Music Matters (p16) Dave Hall reviews the CD for Book 54

News Round up (p16) Dancing in Little Chalfont, Basic Skills Course in Sussex

Lives Remembered (pp17-18)

Frank d'Souza, Penny Burton, Daniel Capron, Andrew Cockett

Clubs and Societies (pp18-20)

Forthcoming events and listings

Where is This? See p3...



Issue 334 should be with UK based members by 22 November 2025 unless delayed in the post.

Contributions for *Reel* 334 should be sent to arrive by and preferably in advance of 19 October 2025 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



As I write this, summer has definitely arrived with two heatwaves so far and drought orders already in place. Hopefully given the wet winter and reliance on ground extraction that will not be extended to London.

The RSCDS Management Board has completed its strategic consultation and published a blog 'Shaping the Future of the RSCDS-Together' which addresses a number of operational aspects.

The website will be rebuilt to be more engaging and user friendly. It is estimated that this will reduce costs by £20,000 a year.

A modern membership system will be implemented which will, for example, enable you to update your own data and preferences. As you will realise all members of the London Branch are also members of the RSCDS and any system which reduces the number of times data is recorded and reduces inconsistencies will be an improvement. It may even be possible to use the RSCDS system to replace the variety of communication systems which are currently operated independently by each local association. Not only could this reduce the administration time spent by volunteers, but this might mitigate the escalating software costs as charity discounts disappear.

The RSCDS image will become more welcoming and new partnerships will be built with other organisations.

The benefits of membership will be clarified and refreshed to become relevant and appealing. At the same time the roles of volunteers, the RSCDS generally, the local associations and affiliates when dealing with members will be defined.

It is planned to launch changes by the end of the year with a communication on priorities and plans by the autumn.

Elsewhere in this edition of the *Reel* (pp6-7) there is a report on our involvement at the White Rose Festival in Leeds where London was represented by three sets from the Branch and MacLennan Scottish Group. Despite the heat (and negotiating a slippery grass slope) the teaching from Pat Davoll, Judith Jones and Simon Wales and organisation by Joanne all paid dividends and all the dancers had fun and put in an excellent performance.

By the time you read this, we will have been dancing in the open air again at Kensington Gardens. As you know this is a less formal affair than the White Rose Festival involving simple and ceilidh dances with the opportunity for a picnic and a chance to interact with the potential dancers in the park.

This year our new season dance will be on the evening of the Day School on 18 October. Historically this has taken place several weeks earlier and we are hoping to increase attendance by holding the dance after our autumn class season has started and allowing a gap after the popular Summer Tuesdays season. This also has the added benefit of dancing to the massed band created by the attendees of the musicians' course. There are more details elsewhere in this edition of *The Reel* (pp8-9) but it would be great to see you on 18 October at the Day School, the New Season Dance or both.

Thank you to everyone who volunteers, teaches or provides music throughout the London Branch. Thanks also to you, our members, for supporting us and Scottish country dancing in London.

Branch AGM and Annual Accounts: Simon Wales, Treasurer



The AGM duly took place on Saturday 14 June 2025 at St Columba's Church and was followed by the End of Season Dance.

The 2025 AGM passed by pretty much the same as the previous ninety four 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). The Treasurer's report and appointment of account checker were also agreed.

The motions (unusually there were two!) on accepting a revised and updated constitution (available on the Branch website) and on increasing subscriptions were also agreed. The Committee had recommended an increase in subscriptions because they were not even covering the cost of producing and distributing *The Reel*.

Bang on time we finished, and with chairs pushed back, enjoyed the End of Season Dance to the brilliant music of Adam Brady.

The Treasurer presented his 23rd set of annual accounts which showed the Branch's net worth at 31 March 2025 to be:

	2025	2024
General Fund	55,861	61,028
Ireland Fund	2,669	3,344
Anniversary Fund	2,069	2,069
Helen Brown Fund	5,000	5,000
Teaching Awards	600	600
Total net worth	£66,199	£72,041

There was a net operating loss of £7,992 and an unrealised gain on investments of £2,150. The Committee had approved this budgeted expenditure, investing in the future of the Branch. This was slightly higher than budgeted, because of two exceptional items: a social media marketing project, and a one-off loss on the Day School.

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.

Another appeal will be launched to Life Members, to help offset some of the costs associated with *The Reel* in lieu of receiving an annual subscription from them.

ROYAL
SCOTTISH
COUNTRY
DANCE
SOCIETY



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Chair: Gary Coull

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Objects of London Branch

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

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

London Branch Matters

Membership and *The Reel* Subscription Rates from 1 July 2025

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

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.

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>)	£20	£29	£34	£56	£5	£5
<i>The Reel</i> by post (UK)	£22.50	£31.50	£36.50	£61	£7.50	£7.50
<i>The Reel</i> by post (Europe)	£28.50	£37.50	£42.50	£74	£15	£15
<i>The Reel</i> by post (Rest of the World)	£31.50	£40.50	£45.50	£80	£20	£20

Where is This?

Answer to 'Where is This?' on p1: **The Glenfinnan Viaduct** was constructed out of mass concrete under an Act of Parliament to the design of engineers Simpson & Wilson; and built by 'Concrete Bob' aka Robert McAlpine and sons. Work commenced in January 1897 and it was opened on 1 April 1901. It is 30 metres above the River Finnan and has 21 arches and cost £18,904 to build (£3.2m today).

The railway from Fort William to Mallaig was the West Coast Railway extension. This line is considered one of the most picturesque journeys in Scotland even before the 'Hogwarts Express' became popular.

The dance *Glenfinnan Gathering* (R3x32) is by Roy Clowes in the Green Lochan Book. This reel is danced with 3 men and 6 women arranged as 3 lines of 3 up and down the room, men in centre with woman each side, all facing second man in the middle, who represents Bonnie Prince Charlie.

With thanks to Stephen Webb.

Do you have any dance related photos?
Email: editor@rscdslondon.org.uk

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

Autumn Wednesday Dance

Wednesday 29 October 2025

7.00 - 10.00pm

Doors open at 6.30pm

St Columba's Church, Pont Street
SW1X 0BD

Dave Hall

The Loch Ness Monster 6x32 R
Cumberland Reel 4x32 J
Muse Cottage 3x32 S
Blue Bonnets 8x32 J
The Highland Rambler 8x40 R
Bridge of Nairn 8x32 S
St Andrew's Fair 8x32 J
Round Reel of Eight Sq 88 R

Flowers of Dunbeg 5x32 R
Tribute to the Borders 8x32 J
Seann Truibhas Willichan 8x32 S
Easy Peasy 8x32 R
New Year Jig 8x32 J
The Silver Grey 3x32 S
EH3 7AF 8x32 J
The Deil Among the Tailors 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

Dates for 2025 - 2026

18 October 2025 - Day School, Musicians' Workshop and Dance
29 October 2025 - Autumn Wednesday Dance
13 December 2025 - Christmas Dance
10 January 2026 - Burns Ceilidh Dance
18 February 2026 - Winter Wednesday Dance
18 April 2026 - Combined Societies' Dance
27 May 2026 - Summer Wednesday Dance
13 June 2026 - End of Season Dance



Christmas Dance

Saturday 13 December 2025

6.45 for 7.00 - 10.30pm

Doors open at 6.30pm

St Columba's Church, Pont Street
SW1X 0BD

Dave Hall and his Band

Miss Allie Anderson 8x32 J
The Music Makars 8x32 R
Sugar Candie 8x32 S
Major Ian Stewart 8x32 J
The Hyperactive Reel 8x32 R
The Water of Leith 4x32 S
Les Remparts de Séville 8x32 J
Tempest in a Teacup 3x64 R

Chased Lovers 8x32 J
John of Bon Accord 8x32 R
The Sauchie Haugh 8x32 S
Inchmickery 5x32 J
The Piper and the Penguin Sq 88 R
The Balmoral Strathspey 4x32 S
Best Set in the Hall 8x32 J
Sleepy Maggie 8x32 R

Extras:

Tap the Barrel 3x32 R
The Jubilee Jig 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

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

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: 24 September -
10 December**

Half-term: Wednesday 29 October

General Class

Maria Fidelis School, Drummond Crescent,
London NW1 1LY

Wednesday 7.00-9.00pm

With teachers

**Pat Davoll, Rose Kreloff &
Catriona Bennett
and class musicians**

**Ian Cutts, Adam Brady, Erica Banks &
Heather Jeffery**

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

Fee: £8 per class for RSCDS members
£10 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

With teachers

Pat Davoll, Peter Knight and Rose Kreloff

Recorded music, live music from
Barbara Manning on 10 December

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

Visitors welcome

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

Children's Class

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

**Sunday 28 September, 9 November
1.00 - 2.15pm**

Term fee £10 per child, £20 per family
rscdslondon.org.uk/children

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

**teacher Judith Jones with recorded music
live music from Dave Hall on 10 December**

Wednesday

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

Beginners' Course 2025

Maria Fidelis School, Drummond Crescent,
London NW1 1LY

Wednesday 7.00 - 9.00pm

8 October - 3 December

8 week course introducing basic Scottish
country dance steps and formations

**Teaching team led by James Fairbairn 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 and end of term joint
session with General class

Improvers' Course 2026

Maria Fidelis School, Drummond Crescent,
London NW1 1LY

Follow on to Beginners' course
8 weeks from 21 January 2026

Wednesday 7.00 - 9.00pm

Monthly Classes

The Tuesday Social

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

**Tuesday 30 September, 28 October,
25 November, 16 December
7.30 - 9.30pm**

**with teachers Gill O'Dell & Judith Jones
plus class musician Adam Brady**

The Tuesday Social is aimed at people in
their 20s and 30s who love to dance, or
would like to learn. This monthly session
combines live music with some teaching,
lots of dancing and a social break to relax
and chat with a glass of wine or soft drink.

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

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

Fast Paced Social Class

Maria Fidelis School, Drummond Crescent,
London NW1 1LY

**Tuesday 23 September, 21 October,
18 November, 9 December
7.00 - 9.00pm**

**With guest teachers: Dave Hall,
Samantha Schad, Jeremy Hill and
David Queen**

plus class 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.

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

Technique Class

Maria Fidelis School, Drummond Crescent,
London NW1 1LY

**Tuesday 7 October, 4 November,
2 December
7.00 - 9.00pm**

**with guest teachers Jan Collings,
Simon Wales and Pat Davoll**

plus class 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.

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

London Branch Class News: Joanne Lawrence

Three years ago, we knew that we needed to make some changes to our classes' offerings. Our weekly sessions provided beginners, improvers and technique classes in Chelsea and Richmond, as well as an afternoon class at St Columba's. But, apart from the annual Day School (run so effectively for many years by Margaret Catchick) we had less to offer more experienced dancers and were struggling to retain beginners, particularly younger people. Part of the challenge was the age profile of our regular classes. Any young person walking through the door was surrounded by delightful but undeniably older dancers, which could be intimidating.



Tuesday Social Group dancers in St Columba's Church Upper Hall

And so, we decided upon an experiment, **The Tuesday Social**, a monthly dance session for people in their 20s and 30s. It would be centrally located at Pont Street, with a young teacher and class musician. It would include some teaching but prioritise enjoyment of dance, and it would include plenty of time for socialising so that younger dancers could meet and gain confidence in dancing together.

With thanks to Gill O'Dell and Adam Brady (the original teacher and class musician), plus Judith Jones (who has supported the group so well more recently) the group has flourished and now takes charge of its own administration. Many Tuesday Social dancers have also attended weekly classes, created a formidable team for the St Columba's Quiz, 16 went to Spring Fling, 8 to the White Rose Festival and a good number are heading to Summer School.



Tuesday Social Quiz Team at St Columba's amply supplied with refreshments for the brain!

Our next challenge was to provide for more experienced dancers and in September 2023 we launched the **Technique** class, for intermediate and more advanced dancers, and the **Fast Paced Social Dance** class, for advanced and very advanced dancers. Both classes used the dance studio at our new venue Maria Fidelis School, whose convenient location close to Euston and Kings Cross stations made the classes more accessible to a wider range of dancers, teachers and musicians. The classes started off well but, after 2 years, we feel that it is time to ring the changes a little.

The **Fast Paced** class has benefitted from a strong rotation of guest teachers, each bringing something new to the monthly session. Our plan is to continue with this pattern but to encourage the inclusion of a little more technique at the start of a session, in addition to a stretching range of less familiar and more challenging dances. Our guest teachers in the autumn term will include Dave Hall, Sam Schad, Jeremy Hill and David Queen, with Atsuko Clement, Kate Gentles, Mervyn Short, Pat Davoll and William Williamson joining the rota in early 2026.

The **Technique** class has been ably taught by Pat Davoll (with music from Heather Jeffery) since its inception. However, we think that the intermediate and more advanced dancers might also benefit from a range of teaching styles and therefore, for this season, we will introduce a similar series of guest teachers, including Pat Davoll, Grace Hill, Jan Collings, Kate Gentles, Simon Wales and Catriona Bennett. We are grateful to Pat and to Judith Jones, who have developed an outline curriculum (based on RSCDS guidance) from which teachers can select formations and a shared file with details of what has been covered in previous classes to help planning.



Technique Class at Maria Fidelis School

Our **Beginners'** classes continue to flourish, both in Richmond and at Maria Fidelis with representatives of both classes joining the London White Rose Festival team. A new **Beginners'** course, led by James Fairbairn, will launch at Maria Fidelis in early October, whilst Judith Jones will resume her popular weekly session in Richmond from late September. Similarly, the regular Wednesday general classes at Maria Fidelis and St Columba's begins in late September.



Mixed Ability Dance Group end of term class at St Columba's Church

The final three **General** classes of the year traditionally have guest teachers, and this year we finished the season off with classes from Saskia Frisby, Dave Hall and Catriona Bennett.



Final General Class of the season at Maria Fidelis School, with Catriona Bennett teaching (left)

Our other 'new' class of recent years has been a monthly **Children's** class on Sunday afternoons. Begun in early 2024 in partnership with St Columba's Church, whilst class attendance has been variable due to pressure from the dancing families' other weekend activities, conversations over the summer have encouraged us to continue with Autumn term classes on 28 September and 9 November. We have a core of keen families, and we hope to build from there. If you have children, grandchildren or other family and friends who may be interested, contact classes@rscdslondon.org.uk or register via the website.

Our aim is to offer a broad range of classes to suit every level of confidence, fitness or experience. If you would like to learn more about Scottish country dancing, do come along and join in the fun. Or, if you are already a regular attendee, consider bringing along a friend or two in the new season. They will be assured of a warm welcome!

For term dates see p4.

London visits The White Rose Festival, Leeds

From the organiser: Joanne Lawrence

It began with a committee discussion. RSCDS London had run a successful intermediate DAA (Dancing Achievement Award) course in 2023, but a proposed Advanced course evoked minimal interest. London Chair, Richard Clarke noted similarities with ballroom dancers, commenting that whilst those dancers' interest in dance awards had also declined, they were motivated by working towards events. I had attended the White Rose Festival previously, as part of the MacLennan Scottish Group (MSG), and had enjoyed the challenge of working as a team, aiming to perfect dances without the pressure of competition. And so, an idea was born - we would take a London team to the 2025 festival.

The idea's appeal was enhanced by the White Rose's 2024 introduction of an integrated programme with dances aimed at beginners as well as the more challenging dances. So, we put a call out to all London dancers and were delighted by the level of response from all ages and levels of experience.

We had a great turn out for the March introductory session and the plan took off. We worked in cooperation with MSG, who prioritised demonstration dances, inviting the more experienced London dancers to their practices led by Simon Wales. Judith Jones and Pat Davoll led the London practice sessions at Maria Fidelis School, to which MSG dancers were also welcomed. In all we fielded 3 sets at the festival, RSCDSL A, RSCDSL B and MSG. We mixed and matched between the sets, with the objective that less confident dancers were supported, the more experienced were suitably stretched, and everyone got an occasional rest.

There was a lot of learning going on and not just the beginners, who tackled unfamiliar formations with determination and increasing confidence. As organisers, our learning curve included scheduling practices, arranging sets, sorting car shares, evening meals, team kit orders, hotel bookings - all good experience for future events.

The Festival weekend itself was great fun. Dinner for 28 on Friday, a morning practice at a local school, before piling 32 people into 8 cars to the festival field. There we set up our gazebos (essential given the heat), enjoyed our picnics and prepared to dance. Hearing the announcer welcome 'all the London teams' to the opening grand march was a proud moment. It felt very collaborative - supportive partners imbuing confidence in those newer to dance, who then cheered on the demonstration sets. The teamwork continued afterwards with a super-fast deconstruction of the gazebos, an evening dance where the experts encouraged the less confident to try more challenging dances (shout out to the Tuesday Social dancers who tackled Nottingham Lace and Midnight Oil) and an after party back at the hotel (if you have ever wondered how many people can party in a Premier Inn bedroom - the answer is 'at least 28').

Massive thanks to everyone, dancers, teachers, supporters, organisers, who made RSCDS London's trip to the White Rose Festival 2025 such an enjoyable experience. If you are interested in joining a future team - let us know at:

classes@rscdslondon.org.uk

From a seasoned performer: Alison Raisin

For a number of years, July has meant the White Rose festival in Leeds. This year the invitation went to all London Branch members so with the MacLennans we took a team of 30, including beginners and intermediate dancers.

As a MacLennan, I was involved in the demonstration dances, as usual pretty fiendish and due to my shattered wrist I had not danced between March and shortly before the festival, so I had the challenge of fitness and only two practices to learn the very challenging demonstration dances. The afternoon dancing was for teams and had a fairly standard social programme with dances suited to everyone, from beginners/children to advanced. Interspersed were the dem dances. We always prefer dancing outside but this year the heat and humidity was a real challenge. Luckily, we had gazebos for shade and a good supply of watermelon but still went through a lot of water. As ever we had an excellent band, who also played for the evening social dancing. The highlight for me was seeing so many less experienced dancers joining in and enjoying the weekend.

From the teacher's perspective: Judith Jones

The White Rose Festival was a steep learning curve for me as I had not attended anything like it before, let alone as a teacher. We had a great response to the invitation to join the Festival, enabling us to field two London Branch sets as well as boosting the MacLennan Scottish Group dancer numbers.

We had a very wide range of experience in the group, and I am happy to say that Pat Davoll took on teaching the more complex dances, leaving me with the easier ones. We worked to ensure that sets were balanced and that less experienced dancers were partnered by more experienced dancers to keep confidence up. Between the practices, a number of Zoom calls with Pat and Joanne went into getting this bit right.

Of course, a dance is easy if you know it and some London favourites were included in the sets, such as *Shiftin' Bobbins* and *Belle of Bon Accord*, alongside *Fyffe's Fancy* and the *Rare Bird*, which proved more of a challenge to learn. With the dance being held on grass we focused on phrasing and covering rather than footwork and spent some time on the *rondel* and *espagnole* which were new to some dancers.

On the day I was so grateful that we had cut a set from some dances as the weather was glorious but baking hot, so nobody I think danced more than ten sets or fewer than seven, and all seemed happy with the balance. That is alongside impromptu practices before some dances were announced.

For me it was a most enjoyable event, and I feel friendships have definitely been formed through this event. Also - nobody seemed to be stressed about the evening dance - we just took it in our stride! And all to fabulous music by Ewan Galloway.

From the keen, but apprehensive: Ella Fairman and Mel Rowland

When I first suggested to Melanie that we should join the RSCDS London contingent going to the White Rose Festival, we were a bit nervous but I'm really glad we did. We had a wonderful time in Leeds, with lots of fun dancing, socialising and getting to know our fellow dancers.

Saturday morning there was time for a final practice. It provided a much-appreciated opportunity to go over the dances we were worried about.



All smiles! Melanie, Ella and their Richmond class teacher, Judith

It was a gloriously sunny day, with a nice breeze, and I was very pleased I had brought my big sun hat and sunscreen. We helped set up gazebos before finding ourselves a spot in the shade. I admired the sensible people with their camping chairs, but glad we at least had brought a picnic blanket to sit on. Joanne put up the dance lists, so we could check who was in our set for each dance (brilliant idea, we used it loads, thank you). We had just enough time to get our dancing shoes on before lining up for our very first grand march with the other festival dancers onto the dance field. Melanie and I were slightly apprehensive, but it was absolutely fine, just follow the leader and we ended up in the right dancing square.

We were off! Our first dance was *Summer Assembly*. We made it to the end of the dance with no mistakes, walked off nicely in pairs only to almost slide back down the slope when returning to the gazebos! After that, we chose to leave the field after each dance by walking up the more gentle slope rather than the quicker but steeper route back to the gazebos. I grabbed a quick drink of water before lining up for the next dance with my new partner - Judith. Dance followed dance!

After dinner, we changed into dresses for a fabulous evening of dancing and socialising. The cherry on top was the delicious tea and cakes served during the interval.

London visits The White Rose Festival, Leeds



Eagerly awaiting the next dance

From the new dancer's perspective: Irene Cowper

If you had said, a year ago, that I would be attending a Scottish country dance festival in the Yorkshire countryside, I would have reckoned you had had a dram too many. Add to that, galloping sideways making train whistle noises? No way! But here I was, on a beautiful July day, a gentle breeze blowing across a sports field lined by trees, surrounded by ripe wheat and overseen by wheeling kites, about to do just that.

Having started classes last autumn, the teaching and encouragement from the London RSCDS Branch meant I felt ready to sign up for the 69th Leeds White Rose Festival. I was curious, too, to discover what it was all about. What went on? What was the point?

Certainly, a lot of preparation went on, including extra practices with designated partners and many a colour-coded spreadsheet from our Classes Convenor, Joanne, as well as information from the Festival committee. It meant that on the day everything was in place, as if effortlessly.

We started with a final practice in a nearby primary school, then headed for Gateways School to pitch camp - setting up gazebos and picnic things. A grand parade led by piper Alan Harrison escorted us to our places, each set occupying a square marked out with white paint. Then Ewan Galloway's musicians took over as the dancing commenced.

The schedule included massed (for everyone), demonstration (for experts) and Highland (for the strong-calved) dances. I had chosen just ten dances - I wanted time to watch the other groups. It was a colourful display, with each of the 21 teams from across the country coordinated in a distinctive style, whether by T-shirts or tartans.

At one point, events took a dramatic turn when the musicians' gazebo blew off. In true heroic style, the band played on, although the accordion needed wrapping in a blanket to prevent over-heating. As shadows lengthened, the outdoor dancing was rounded off with an exuberant whole-field *Dashing White Sergeant*. After packing up we caught our breath, ready for the evening dance.

All the groups, and further guests, mingled to form sets in a huge sports hall. As always, I was struck by the kindness and generosity of experienced dancers who guided me with gestures, whispers and the occasional strong arm, through unfamiliar routines. Inspired, too: one day I will dance *Nottingham Lace*!

The experience has definitely improved my dancing. I have started to interpret the dance cribs which are useful at-a-glance references. Another time, I would stress less about my festival dances and gen up on the evening schedule.

And now I understand what a fabulous opportunity the White Rose presents to dancers of all ages and nationalities and proficiencies to develop and show off their skills, to socialise and to celebrate and keep alive Scottish dancing traditions.

Dancing Under Sunny Yorkshire Skies: My White Rose Festival Experience: Malcolm Davis, one of the Tuesday Social group

As one of eight dancers from the RSCDS London 20s & 30s social group, I had the privilege of joining the Branch's delegation of 3 sets (totalling around 30 dancers) to this year's White Rose Festival near Leeds. Having personally only started my Scottish Country Dancing journey around 2 years ago, I'd spent months both relishing and dreading this weekend and its marvellous opportunity to showcase all of our skills amongst teams from across Northern England and Southern Scotland.

The organisation of the trip by RSCDS London was exemplary from start to finish. Taking the train up from London, we had comfortable accommodation together in Leeds - where from my room I could even glimpse the fabled Headingley Cricket Ground. Several group members who had driven up by car then generously ferried the rest of us between our accommodation and the wonderful venue of The Gateways School in Harewood for the main event.

The festival was blessed with glorious weather - hot and sunny but with a refreshing breeze that made the afternoon's dancing very pleasant, with shade and refreshment available for when we were not dancing. The weather did provide one moment of drama when a sudden gust blew the band's marquee over! Luckily it was during the break, so no one was injured and with typical Yorkshire pragmatism, equipment was repaired and the band ready to play on by the time the break ended! Our dances, though challenging, all went near perfectly (as far as I could tell at least) thanks no doubt to the many rehearsals we had conducted back in London, and it was deeply satisfying to see our preparation pay off on the day. My wholehearted thanks to Pat Davoll, Judith Jones, Simon Wales and Joanne Lawrence for all their hard work (and patience) in teaching and organising these practice sessions.



Seven Tuesday Social dancers enjoying the sun

A highlight of the day for me was watching the expertly performed demonstration and Highland dances, showcasing the incredible skill and artistry that many far more experienced Scottish country dancers than myself can achieve. Later on, the evening social dance in the school's hall provided a friendly and relaxed atmosphere where we could mingle freely to dance, talk, make new connections and catch up with people from across the Scottish dancing community.

The warmth and enthusiasm of everyone involved, from the impeccable organisation of the festival by the Leeds Branch to the spirited performances throughout the day, has left me already looking forward to returning to the White Rose Festival next year. It is events like these that make being part of the RSCDS family such a joy, and for me personally, the camaraderie amongst a surprisingly large 20s & 30s social group contingent added an extra spark of energy and friendship to what was already an exciting adventure in the heart of Yorkshire.



And of course it was that group who were the last to leave the after party. Spot the host in the background! - Ed.

RSCDS London Branch Day School and Musicians' Workshop 2025

Saturday 18 October 2025

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. They must also be able to illustrate good phrasing, handing and covering and be able to maintain this 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 (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



Graham Donald



Raphaëlle Orgeret



Faye McNeil



Ian Muir

Musicians



Adam Brady



Barbara Manning



Heather Jeffery

Day School Programme

Time	Activity		
10.00 - 10.30	Enrolment and coffee		
Morning session	Class	Teacher	Musician
	Very Advanced	Raphaëlle Orgeret	Heather Jeffery
	Advanced	Graham Donald	Barbara Manning
	Intermediate	Faye McNeil	Adam Brady
	Musicians' Workshop	Ian Muir	
12.30 - 2.00	A lunch may be purchased including meat and vegetarian options plus salads and dessert. Alternatively, there are facilities for packed lunches or pubs and cafés in the local area.		
Afternoon session	Class	Teacher	Musician
	Very Advanced	Graham Donald	Barbara Manning
	Advanced	Faye McNeil	Adam Brady
	Intermediate	Raphaëlle Orgeret	Heather Jeffery
	Musicians' Workshop	Ian Muir	
4.00 - 4.30	Tea, coffee and biscuits		
Optional classes	Class	Teacher	Musician
	MacNab Dances	Raphaëlle Orgeret	Heather Jeffery
	Personal Critique	Graham Donald	Barbara Manning
	Dances from the Evening	Faye McNeil	Adam Brady
	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 Muir and the Day School Musicians, for programme see p9. Tickets are available in advance online, from Joanne Lawrence or on the door. All dances will be recapped/walked through.		

Musicians' Workshop Led by accordionist and band leader Ian Muir, 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. NB the school has kindly offered to lend us keyboards, please advise when booking if you would like to borrow one.

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

Application forms are also obtainable at Branch dances or from your class teacher

CLASSES TO SUIT EVERYONE - DON'T MISS IT!

RSCDS London Branch Day School and Musicians' Workshop 2025

Graham Donald

Graham joined the RSCDS when living in his home city of Edinburgh, and he danced with the Demonstration team there for several years. He has also been invited to teach at a number of day and weekend schools around the world and is an examiner for the RSCDS.

He is very keen on promoting the teaching of Scottish Country Dancing and is currently Convenor-Elect of the Education and Training Committee of the RSCDS. Graham thinks it is very important for qualified teachers and instructors to continue to develop their teaching skills after they have qualified and believes that we can always improve our teaching.

Dancing is a huge source of fun and friendship, and it is always great to meet new friends and renew old acquaintances.

Having been unable to teach last year, Graham is really looking forward to coming back to teach for London Branch once again.

Faye McNeil (Mather)

Faye started dancing at the age of six and has never looked back! After attending classes on the Wirral, she was hooked and moved to Edinburgh for university (and, of course, the dancing!).

She now shares her love and enthusiasm for Scottish Country Dancing through teaching, whether in Edinburgh, at various workshops, at the RSCDS Summer School, or, most recently, at Spring Fling. Faye very much looks forward to teaching in London, combining technique, teamwork, and dances with something different that she hopes everyone will enjoy.

Raphaëlle Orgeret

Raphaëlle was introduced to Scottish dancing by her mother and attended Summer School for the first time in 1998. She was hooked and has not stopped dancing since. She passed her teacher's certificate in St Andrews in 2008, teaches her Branch class in Lyon and a children's class there too. For several years she coached a team for the Newcastle Festival comprising friends from across Europe and called it the International Team. She then coached her own Lyon Branch team for the competition. She has been the Branch chair since 2016 and organises weekend schools and other events for the Branch. Her Branch has a very important proportion of teenagers, who keep her on her toes!

Raphaëlle has taught at various RSCDS events such as Summer School, Winter School or Spring Fling as well as workshops across Europe. She was lucky enough to teach as far as Australia, TAC or California and says, "These experiences have been wonderful, I have met so many lovely people and danced to incredible musicians. I am very much looking forward to meeting you all!"

Outside dancing, she is a primary school teacher.

This will be our new season dance

Saturday 18 October 2025

6.00 - 9.00pm

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

**Day School Musicians led by
Ian Muir (Prestwick)**

Good Hearted Glasgow8x32 J
The Flowers of Edinburgh..... 8x32 R
The Birks of Invermay8x32 S
Tribute to the Borders8x32 J
Clutha 4x48 R
Autumn in Appin4x32 S
The Chequered Court 8x32 J

Shiftin' Bobbins 8x32 R
Slytherin House8x32 S
Best Set in the Hall 8x32 J
Bohemian Reflections 8x32 R
Capetown Wedding8x32 S
Bill Clement MBE.....8x32 J
Mrs MacLeod 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
Crib available at rscdslondon.org.uk

Ian Muir (Prestwick)

Ian started playing accordion at the age of eight and progressed through the British College of Accordionists exam system under the tutelage of Jim Hutcheon. He began playing professionally in 1978 and appeared with many Scottish variety artistes including Peter Morrison, Alistair McDonald, Calum Kennedy and Andy Stewart to mention just a few.

Ian played lead accordion with Kenny Thomson and the Wardlaw Scottish Dance Band before forming his own band in 1984. He has regularly recorded for BBC Radio Scotland's *Take the Floor* and even presented the programme when Robbie Shepherd was on holiday.

He has travelled extensively, playing for Scottish dance events all over the world, including Winter School in Australia, Summer School in New Zealand, Asilomar weekend in California and many times in Canada for TAC, Edmonton weekends and Vancouver 50th Anniversary.

Ian has recorded several Scottish country dance albums, Old Time dance and solo accordion albums. His two most recent recordings were made in Canada with his friends in the Tartan Ties Band (Judi Nicolson, Kathy Fraser Collins and Fred Collins). For 28 years Ian tutored at the prestigious Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (formerly Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama) until retiring in 2022.

Ian is the current RSCDS Music Director Designate and is very much looking forward to new challenges ahead.

Barbara Manning

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 technique 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

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 the past ten years 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.

Heather Jeffery

Heather is a geneticist by day and Scottish dance enthusiast by night! During her PhD studies, she joined the Oxford University Scottish Dance Society in 2017 as a necessary escape from her time in the lab, and she has only grown more enthusiastic since, and can now be found at Reading St Andrew's Scottish Dancing Society.

Whilst we were all locked up during the pandemic, Heather took her existing classical training (DipABRSM) and began to play Scottish tunes and send them out to a growing list of family, friends and supporters. When we were all allowed to meet again, and after she had got her fix of dance, Heather decided she would like to play some of these tunes with an audience and so began playing for dances.

She now plays regularly for RSCDS London classes and is a member of Ian Robertson's Scottish dance band which plays for many ceilidh and country dance events around the region.



A packed Younger Hall at the RSCDS Summer School in St Andrews - were you there?



Summer Wednesday Dance at St Columba's - 28 May 2025



London Branch Team at the St Columba's Church Quiz Night



Summer Wednesday Dance at St Columba's Church - 28 May 2025



Another set lining up ready to dance in Leeds



Members of Chiswick Scottish Country Dance Club with their newly qualified teacher, Iris Ronayne, in the centre with her certificate



Summer Wednesday Dance at St Columba's Church - 28 May 2025



Dancers massed on the sports field at Gateways School, Leeds

The Story behind the Dance - The Lady of the Lake: Meryl Thomson

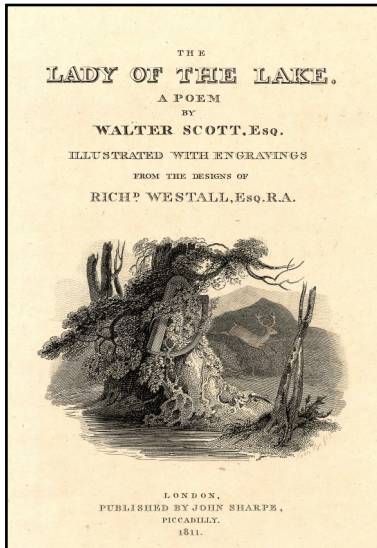


A series of articles from Meryl Thomson delving behind the history of some of our dances and their music. This time she looks at a dance associated with a novel by Sir Walter Scott.

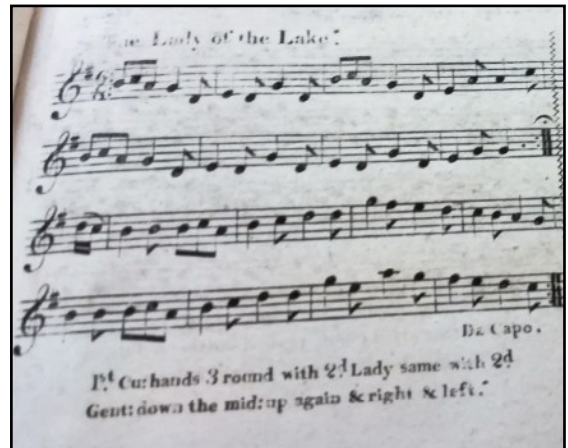
Sir Walter Scott first published his grand poem *The Lady of the Lake* in 1810, some 215 years ago. The poem has the romantic theme of love, war and a magical element, set in the Trossachs region of Scotland. Much has been written about the poem and its author. Indeed, the

RSCDS produced a book and CD of music associated with Sir Walter Scott in 2021 - rscds.org/shop/product/books/sir-walter-scott-the-heart-of-mid-lothian/

Back in 1970, the RSCDS published the dance *The Lady of the Lake* or *The Water Kelpie* in Book 25. The tune used is taken from William Morrison's *Collection of Highland music* dating from 1813. They took the trouble to annotate this as a Hornpipe. There is no apparent connection with this tune to the dance previous to this RSCDS version. RSCDS Publicity Committee minutes from 1969 mention that they were considering a book of traditional dances which would need certain amendments to the text and, "Miss Milligan indicated that she had several suitable dances for consideration and also that she had a few submitted by Miss Cramb". In the minutes for February 1970 it was noted that the dances had been chosen and *Lady of the Lake* is listed separately from the reels as a hornpipe which was obviously considered an important distinction. Previously it was minuted that for Book 24 Miss Milligan was in charge of sorting the music so one can assume she was the person responsible for choosing the music for Book 25.



The publication and immediate popularity of Scott's poem in 1810 (he sold over 20,000 copies) led to a flurry of dances being named *The Lady of the Lake*. I have at least 20 sources for such dances. The first to the post seems to be James Platts in his *Popular Dances No 10* from c. 1811. His dance instructions read *Hands 3 with the 2nd Lady - Lady same with the 2nd Gent - lead down the middle up again - Allemand & swing corners*. This suggests a 48 bar dance and the music, annotated as composed by J Platts, is a reel. Robinson's *24 Country Dances for the year 1811* has a different dance and tune, but again a 48 bar dance and a reel rhythm. By 1812 more versions start appearing - Wheatstone's *24 Country Dances for 1812* includes a 32 bar dance with yet another reel rhythm tune.



William Campbell, publishing in London, jumped on the bandwagon in his *27th Book of New and Favorite Country Dances, & Strathspey Reels* c. 1812 and was the first version to use the tune with which the dance became associated for the rest of the nineteenth century (see above). His dance reads: *The 1st Cu. Hands 3 round the 2nd Lady the same with the 2nd Gent. Down the middle up again & right and left*. The music is in jig time and played for a 24 bar dance ABA. The publishing house of the Thompson family printed the same 24 bar dance instructions and tune in their 1814 collection. Hime and son, publishing in Liverpool in 1817 printed a version in their *No 22 Collection of Popular Dances* which has a different dance but uses the same tune, albeit the wrong way round with the B music first (see below)

No. 8. Lady of the Lake
or
The Water Kelpie
(Hornpipe)

Muirtown House W. Morrison

DESCRIPTION

1 - 2 1st couple giving right hands, cross over to the opposite side and face down. 2nd couple face up. (Fig. 1.)

3 - 4 1st man sets to 2nd woman while 1st woman sets to 2nd man.

5 - 8 1st man turns 2nd woman $\frac{1}{4}$ times with left hands, while 1st woman turns 2nd man $\frac{1}{4}$ of a turn. 1st couple join right hands and all set in line of 4 across. (Fig. 2)

9 - 10 1st man turns 2nd woman $\frac{3}{4}$ of a turn with left hands, while 1st woman turns 2nd man $\frac{1}{4}$ times to positions as for bars 3 and 4. (Fig. 1.)

11 - 12 1st man sets to 2nd woman while 1st woman sets to 2nd man.

13 - 16 1st couple, giving right hands, cross back to place and set.

17 - 24 1st couple lead down the middle and up.

25 - 32 1st and 2nd couples allemande.

Fig. 1. Fig. 2.

End of Bar 2 and Bar 10 TOP

End of Bar 6 TOP

S.C.D.25.

THE LADY OF THE LAKE.

The Gentleman lead out the Two Ladies and set, the Ladies do the same, leading out two Gent: lead down and up and Allemande.

The next version of the dance seems to be found in the manuscript *Contredanses à Paris* from 1818. This handwritten notebook, now kept at the National Library for Scotland, has two versions of the dance instructions but no music. *The Lady of the Lake (Old Way)* is a 24 bar dance -
1st Cu: down middle up again & leave off - 8 b.
1st Cu: and 2d Cu: down the middle and up again facing each other the whole way - 8 b.
These two Cu: Poussette - 8 b.
In all - 24 b.
Of course in going down the 2d time the 1st Cu: and the 2d Cu: in coming up dance backwards.

This is the version which later becomes established with the tune first printed by William Campbell. The second version, called *The Lady of the Lake New Way* or *La Poule* or *News from Portugal* is essentially much of *La Poule*, the third quadrille in Edward Payne's *First Set of Quadrilles* which was published in

around 1815. The original Edward Payne quadrille *La Poule* has the first lady and her opposite cross over, tapping right hands, and then dance back giving left hands to form a line of four in the centre. They set holding hands, half promenade to opposite places, the opposite gent and lady advance and retire, back to back, the two head couples advance and retire and half rights and lefts to place. The *New Way* instructions are designed for a longways set and therefore Payne's instructions had to be adapted.

The *New Way* instructions read:

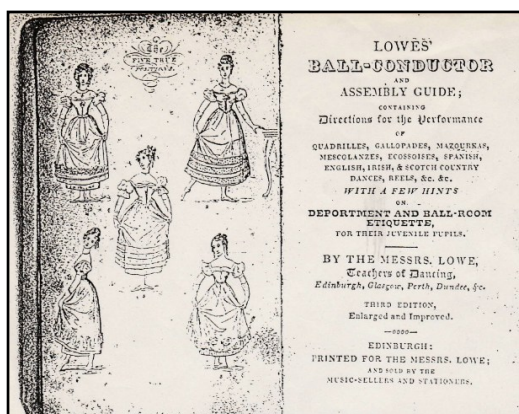
1st G change sides with his partner giving right hand - 4 b.
Then he turns her quite round with left Hd which he retains and gives his right hand to 2d Lady. His Partner at same time gives her right hand to 2d G. - 4 b.

All four set, (across the dance) in a line as in La Poule - 4 b.
Promenade with contrary partners into 1st & 2d Cu: places exchanged, wheel in and set - 4 b.

Poussette (2d Cu: only 3 turns 1st Cu: four) - 8 b.

In all - 24 b.

The Lady of the Lake continues to appear in various collections



printed by Thompson and Button and Whitaker amongst others in the early nineteenth century. There is still a variation in the dance instructions and music until Joseph Lowe publishes in the 1830s. His *Ball-Conductor and Assembly Guide* from 1830 contains a section of English Country Dances and *The Lady of the Lake* is found there, the same dance as in the Old Way version in *Contredanses à Paris* but with no music. However, by the time Lowe's *Selection of Popular Country Dances* was printed in 1853 he had included the by now usual jig tune (see below). This combination was beginning to become established in the repertoire. Lowe mentions in his journal that Queen Victoria, Prince Albert and some of their eldest children danced *The Lady of the Lake* country dance on Wednesday 28 December 1853 during a lesson he was teaching them at Windsor Castle.

Where then did the RSCDS get their version of the dance? They could have had the simple 24 bar dance which became the standard version through to the end of the nineteenth century. Mr Boulogne's *The Ballroom* of 1827 (from where such

dances in RSCDS Book 1 as *Merry Lads of Ayr* and *The Nut* were sourced) also has this version and *The Lady of the Lake* was still being printed in collections like Mozart Allan's 1880 *Reference Guide to the Ballroom* or David Anderson's *Ball-Room Guide* c. 1897 from where the RSCDS had in all likelihood taken many of the early book dances. However, they did not pick this version.

The *Hill Manuscript* of 1841, which is also the source of several RSCDS dances, includes a version which is related to the *New Way* instructions found in *Contredanses à Paris 1818* (the version based on *La Poule*). The RSCDS version seems to be closest to

the *New Way* instructions. The RSCDS chose to add in a lead down and back (which appears in *The Hill MS* instructions) and also changed the poussette figure to an allemande. Adding in the lead down and back makes the dance 32 bars.

What is strange to me is the choice of tune used by the RSCDS. Of course the obvious problem is that the jig tune which had become associated with the dance is only 24 bars and would not really work played for a 32 bar dance. If you repeat the A music you end up with AABA which is rather too much A music and playing ABBA does not sound right musically for the tune. Interestingly, *The Hill MS* states that the rhythm is a 6/8 jig for a 32 bar dance but has no music, so we do not know which tune he had in mind.

As mentioned above, the original tune used by the RSCDS, *Muirtown House* was published by William Morrison. He acknowledges that this is one of four tunes composed by a Gentleman, with a footnote which reads, "Of whose numerous acts of experienced humanity the Author of this Collection shall ever retain the most lively sensations of gratitude." He was probably referring to his patron Major H R Duff - there are examples of other tunes written for the Duff family in Morrison's collection.

Hugh Duff was born in 1771 in Inverness, had eleven children and died at Muirtown in 1832. Sources online reveal that he was in the 35th Dorsetshire Regiment of Foot in 1789 and saw action with the 37th Hampshire Regiment. Apparently he was held as a prisoner of war in a church crypt for a year, after which he refused to enter a church. In later life he was the first man in Inverness to own a carriage and to wear a top hat. He was so proud of this that he commissioned a portrait of himself wearing said article as seen in this very image!

He married Sarah Louisa Forbes in 1798, a lady who was apparently considered very beautiful. A family history, *The Book of the Duffs*, available to read online at archive.org/details/bookofduffs_02tayl/page/519 mentions that she had a duel fought over her which happened to be the last recorded one in Scotland:

"The incident took place at a military ball at Inverness in 1798 when that eccentric and unpopular Highland Chief, Colonel MacDonnell of Glengarry approached Miss Forbes and reminded her she had promised him the last country dance. She had no recollection of such a promise, and told him she was engaged for it to Ranald MacDonald. Glengarry took himself away, but, in a little returned and informed the lady the Ranald MacDonald, yielding to I know not what pressure or threats, had given up the dance to him. Miss Forbes naturally resented this discourteous treatment and replied that she would dance with neither of them. Glengarry refused to take her answer as final and tried to argue with her, whereupon a grandson of Flora MacDonald, a young man named MacLeod intervened on her behalf and suggested the lady could determine herself whom she would dance with. Later in the evening high words passed between Glengarry and MacLeod and the gallant Chief eventually struck the youth over the head with his cane. A duel ensued a day or two later, on the beach between Fort George and Ardersier, and MacLeod fell at the first fire. Glengarry had to stand his trial in Edinburgh for murder, and only the skill and eloquence of his counsel, Henry Erskine, saved him."



Incidentally, I have not found any examples of a version of *The Lady of the Lake* linked with anything called *The Water Kelpie*. It is not clear why the two were associated in the RSCDS title for the dance, other than due to the magical theme of Scott's poem. Does anybody have further information?

There is nothing in the RSCDS minutes to suggest why Miss Milligan or A N Other decided on this particular tune. *The Lady of the Lake* does not appear much at all on dance programmes nowadays sadly! The dance does appear more frequently on historical dance programmes however, where 24 bar dances are more common and dancers enjoy the novelty of dancing backwards down the set and back to the much more lively and memorable jig tune. You can hear a recording of this tune at greenginger.bandcamp.com/track/the-lady-of-the-lake-7x24-jig

20 Years of the Gay Gordons: Daniel Capron

Very sadly Daniel did not live to see this article published, although when he wrote it, he specified it should appear in this edition of the *Reel*. Thank you, Daniel, for your dancing legacy. (See obituary by fellow Gay Gordon, Murrough Landon on p17)

I first had the idea of a Scottish country dance group for gay people and their friends in the late 1990s. I chose a name for the group, the Gay Gordons, after the well-known ceilidh dance. But at that time, I did not put the idea into practice.

In 2005 I attended a self-help course. As part of this course, I had to undertake a project, and I decided my project would be setting up the Gay Gordons. The course organiser was supportive and gave me useful advice on publicity. At around the same time I met John Tyler, who wanted to teach gay people Scottish country dancing. I realised that he would be a big asset to the Gay Gordons because he was a fully qualified teacher of Scottish country dancing, having done the teacher training provided by the RSCDS, passed the examination – the examiner was Miss Jean Milligan herself – and received the teachers' certificate. He remained the group teacher for ten years and proved to be an inspirational teacher who could get complete beginners up to demonstration standard in a few years.

The first dance of the Gay Gordons was on Saturday 22 October 2005 at St Columba's Church in Pont Street, Knightsbridge. It was followed by seven classes and a second dance, a Christmas ball.

The early years

Weekly classes resumed at the Unity Church in Islington in January 2006. One participant writes of this time, "for a few years, I was there every week and what a lovely group it was. The classes became enormously popular helped in part by the very successful ceilidh dances we held. The group was as much a social group as it was a dance class and after class people used to troop down to a burger bar for food and a beer. We generally would take over the upstairs seating area, there were that many of us attending. John Tyler's knowledge of Scottish dance and his easy relaxed teaching style along with the fun of dancing and the friendliness of the group are some of the reasons it was such a pleasure to attend. I have very fond memories of the people I met there."

A second weekly class started in September 2007 on Mondays for more experienced dancers and continued until 2011.

The Gay Gordons held a weekend workshop at Monkton Wyld, a community house in Dorset, and following the success of that had a full week of dancing in May 2009 at Laurieston Hall in Scotland, and each year thereafter. Murrough Landon writes, "I went along to the first of those Gay Gordons weeks in May 2009 – and have been to every one since. From then on, I was completely hooked and am now happy to dance with anyone, gay or straight, in the UK or elsewhere." These residential courses continue to this day, although Laurieston Hall is no longer available, and they now last about four days.

The Gay Gordons took part in Pride in London and with the local Gay Gordons in Manchester and Edinburgh; also in Brighton, Cornwall Pride in Truro and Belfast. One Gay Gordon recalls a visit to Rome: "Pride was postponed as the visit of President Bush closed down the city centre for security. However, we did dance at the old dog racing track, which was an Arts Centre, and elsewhere in the city with the local pipe band. We also danced at Mr Leather Italy finals. We danced with the finalists in all their leather gear as well as a dem."

There were many dance demonstrations, for example at gay weddings and birthdays; on Burns Night at a pub in Islington; at a garden party in Purley organised by the Croydon Area Gay Society; and at the Highland Games in Harpenden. There were also cabaret items at gay nightclubs.

Some Gay Gordons started going to RSCDS dances. This could cause an adverse reaction, particularly if a large group attended. I recall an acquaintance that I had regarded as a kind man making a hurtful comment on one such occasion.

In 2008, RSCDS London Branch held a dance, partly to honour the 90th birthday of their President, Mary Stoker. Gay Gordons were there and danced a full set of men. Mary was not happy and said, "Men dancing with men, I'd cut that out right away!" A sign of the times which have changed!

A group of Gay Gordons used to attend one of the RSCDS open-air dances in Kensington Gardens each summer. Some brought provisions for a picnic. The group continued dancing after the event had officially finished. This tradition has continued to the present day. It was at one such occasion, on 12 August 2017, that I met the man who became my husband. On another occasion, 31 August 2013, four men of the Gay Gordons joined with four ladies of the RSCDS dem team to give a demonstration.

In 2012 the Gay Gordons were affiliated to the RSCDS, at the suggestion of the then Chairman Elect of the Society. Gay Gordons Edinburgh were affiliated at the same time and Manchester shortly after. Thus, the Gay Gordons were recognised as reputable Scottish country dance groups.

The tenth anniversary and after

The Gay Gordons held a ceilidh on 28 November 2015 to celebrate their tenth anniversary. I wrote an account in *The Reel* 295, p12, where there is also a photo of John Tyler and me cutting the cake. But we faced challenges. Some dancers had moved away from London; and we had lost the use of the Unity Church in Islington.

Another hall was found in Islington and there was a relaunch ceilidh there on 28 September 2016 followed by classes each Wednesday. Roy Southall was the main teacher, Richard Clarke was his deputy, also responsible for providing recorded music and taking the money at the door.

In May 2107 there was a residential week in Sedbergh and in the same month in 2018 and 2019 there were 5-day residential events at Cober Hill near Scarborough.

COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic caused a lockdown in March 2020, and all dancing stopped. But there were social meetings on Zoom each week. In September 2020, classes resumed with masks worn and social distancing, keeping two metres ideally from other dancers and avoiding physical contact such as taking hands. At the first such class there were 18 dancers, including some non-GGs. There were three further classes before further restrictions made them impossible in mid-October.

In May 2021 classes resumed under the same restrictions. Then during August, the Gay Gordons ran dances on Tuesdays to replace the very popular 'summer Tuesdays' dances.

The present

After COVID-19, the Gay Gordons resumed holding classes on Wednesdays 7.30-9.30 pm during school terms. They also run a ceilidh each autumn and a 5-day residential event each May. The next ceilidh is on Saturday 25 October 2025 with the Caledonian Reelers and our regular caller, Simon Wales, and celebrates the Gay Gordons' 20th Anniversary.

Conclusion

Much has been achieved. The lives of those attending Gay Gordons classes and social dances in London, Manchester and Edinburgh have been enriched as they have learned to enjoy Scottish country dancing. Some have developed to demonstration standard. The annual intensive residential course of Scottish country dancing attracts dancers from across the UK. As with other dance groups, a social network has been created in which friendships develop. Gay Gordons have also been welcomed into other Scottish country dance groups in London, and it is now accepted for two men to dance together. Thus, the Gay Gordons have promoted Scottish country dancing and helped make it more inclusive.

Recently Murrough Landon, one of the Gay Gordons, devised and published four books each of twenty Scottish country dances. Many are dedicated to his dancing friends.

For more information about the Gay Gordons see their website thegaygordons.org



Cober Hill Group in 2023

London Branch has made some money available to make grants to encourage new teachers, and London dancers Iris Ronayne and Armaiti Bedford were awarded grants to help offset some of the costs of their training. Here are their reports of their experiences - if you feel that you can follow in their footsteps then please get in touch. First from Iris Ronayne...:

I went to a Ball in Alum Hall, where Armaiti Bedford encouraged me to join her in her journey to become a Scottish country dance teacher. This is where my journey began in January 2023.

We all need to increase the Scottish country dance community with helping new dancers to come on board and catch some of our passion. I live in southwest London and our local clubs are struggling with numbers. It is difficult to engage teachers, and I had already begun thinking about what I could do to contribute in my local area. I had always thought that dancers would be selected and chosen to become teachers, so I listened attentively, when Armaiti encouraged me to apply to join the RSCDS teacher training course with Jane Rose, which is organised by serTA (South East Region Teachers Association). If I needed to teach beginners anyway, it did make sense to learn the skills to do it properly with good quality teaching. Apply for the course, and go for the challenge if you have danced for a few years.

The positive environment and camaraderie under the firm and very helpful guidance of Jane Rose instilled the belief that I could improve step-by-step, follow the system and become a Scottish country dance teacher.

The team of dancers and teachers at the Coronation Hall in Whelpley Hill near Berkhamsted made me feel welcome and I felt well supported, with expert advice and inspiring examples. Four of us were attempting Unit 2/3 and five others were now preparing for Unit 5. We learned alongside and with them and I was very impressed by the quality of the skill exercises and the teaching of steps and formations. They were very confident, and I was inspired to achieve their level of competence. Here in London, you would know Murrough Landon, who was one of the five. He became my mentor for completing the second part of the course.

What does it take to become Scottish Country Dance Teacher?

There are 5 Units to master and complete:

Unit 1 is a one hour written exam covering questions about the history of Scottish country dancing, the RSCDS, the structure of steps, formations and dances, instrumental musicians over the centuries, music structure, programmes and teamwork. My unit 1 exam was supervised in March 2023 at Ian and Emma Stewart's house.

Unit 2 is examining your ability to dance a selection of 12 dances to perfection with correct footwork, transitions and poise. We did our unit 2 dancing exam together as a team with the help of local teachers, who completed the set for us in June 2023 in Whelpley Hill. Our examiners were Mervyn Short and Jim Stott.

Unit 3 only lasts half an hour and examines the ability to teach a 16 bar phrase in either reel, jig or strathspey time with all steps, transitions and formations needed, which are selected from around 100 examples. The 16 bars are given three days before the exam so that there is enough time to prepare a lesson plan and practice. Our unit 3 exams were in June 2023 in Kings Langley and 3 sets of local dancers stooed for us as beginners. They had to do what we taught, not what they thought was right!

This was the first part of the teacher training course and consisted of 10 all day dancing and teaching days. These days were tough, but also very instructive and enjoyable under the expert guidance of Jane Rose and all throughout with live music played by Judith Muir. I was not on my own preparing for the first part of the RSCDS teacher training course, organised by South East Region Teachers Association, my fellow aspiring teachers were Armaiti Bedford from London and two women from Barcelona: Carolyn Adrain and Raquel Fernandes.

Unit 4 is a record of all teaching since Unit 3 and a detailed written report of at least 6 lessons for beginners I had taught, where, when and what I learned along the way. I submitted this in December 2024.

Unit 5 felt like I had upgraded to a higher level. We participated

in 10 all day dancing and teaching days in Hertfordshire led by Jane Rose and our musician was Ken Martlew. Everybody gets a turn to teach, evaluate and stooze for each other. The mock exam was particularly helpful and I am very grateful to the many local dancers, who came to support our teaching efforts. I remember them all being very helpful and smiling back at me, which helps a lot with the nerves. My Unit 5 exam itself was only 40 minutes of teaching the complete dance *The Bonnie Links* with all steps, transitions and formations needed for it. We were privileged to have three complete sets of local dancers and live music by Ken Martlew in Kings Langley. I am forever grateful to them for their support in creating a near perfect atmosphere to teach in.

This was the second part of the teacher training course, which I completed in June 2025. The examiners were Helen Russell and Alasdair Brown. I actually really enjoyed the process, and I now feel confident to teach Scottish country dancing at any level, knowing, that I am following a proven and streamlined international RSCDS system and standard. I look forward to all the new dancers.



Unit 5 exam: Jane Rose seated (centre) with Ken Martlew behind. The four candidates, Raquel, Carolyn, Armaiti and Iris are seated alongside Jane, surrounded by some of the volunteer students

...and from Armaiti Bedford:

My gratitude to the London Branch and South East Herts SCD Society for offering bursaries towards the RSCDS teachers' course - the financial assistance this provides is very helpful, as is the ethos behind it - a recognition of the importance of training teachers to help continue the tradition and joy of Scottish country dancing.

So, a big thank you to London Branch for your grant of £100 towards the cost of my Unit 5 course, and to South East Herts for covering the exam fees totalling £150 over the course.

A massive thank you too to all those who have helped during the past three years - class members at Hertford, Cambridge and Chiswick while I was in training, Ian Stewart for being my mentor, all helpers during the teachers' course, serTA for running the course, everyone who stooed during exams, our four examiners (Mervyn Short, Jim Stott, Helen Russell, Alasdair Brown), and all those who were kind enough to encourage me along the way. There is an adage about it taking a village to raise a child ... seems it takes a whole Scottish dance community to train a teacher!

As for the course, I found it intensive, challenging, enjoyable and immensely worthwhile. I feel fortunate to have been able to have taken the course locally under Jane Rose's kind and expert guidance, with Judith Muir and Ken Martlew as our skilled musicians. My very grateful thanks to all three of them.

It has been an absolute pleasure to share my teacher training journey with Iris Ronayne, Carolyn Adrain and Raquel Fernandez, and I am so pleased that we have all passed. As a teacher, I hope to pass on both the skills and the joy of Scottish country dancing.

Congratulations to all the successful candidates from RSCDS London Branch. May your classes be full and your students attentive!



Music Review: Dave Hall



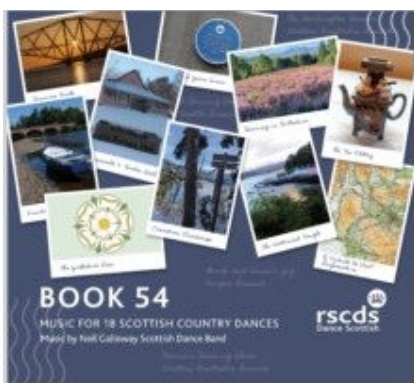
RSCDS Book 54 - Music for 18 Scottish Country Dances by Neil Galloway Scottish Dance Band
2 CDs (£16.67), book (£15) plus P&P available from shop.rscds.org/category/bk54/

CD1: *The Yorkshire Rose* (8x32J), *Dancing Forth* (8x32R), *Dancing in Perthshire* (4x32S), *Mark and Susie's Jig* (8x32J), *Miss Lucy Clark* (3x32S), *Tullynessle and Forbes Hall* (3x32S), *A Tribute to West Renfrewshire* (8x40J), *A Hundred Years Since* (8x32R), *Kinclaven Bridge* (4x32S), *Kathy's Fascinator* (3x32J), *Donna's Dancing Shoes* (8x32R), *The Darlington Dancer* (2x40S+2x40R)

CD2: *The Watnish Tangle* (8x32J), *A Driving Reel* (3x32R), *Thank You Patricia* (8x32S), *The Tea Pottery* (1x96J), *Canadian Landscape* (3x32S), *Merry Mayhem* (8x32R), *Warm-up March*, *Cool-down Waltz*, *Set of Jigs* (3x32J), *Set of Strathspeys* (3x32S), *Set of Reels* (3x32R)

The set of two CDs of dance music to complement the new RSCDS Book 54 is a really super product. The music will certainly help get dancers onto the floor and contribute to promoting the dances in the new book. Not only that but this is top quality Scottish dance music by some of the best in the business.

Neil Galloway is a Scottish accordion champion, lynchpin of David Cunningham's Band with his fabulous rhythmic playing and from elite accordionist lineage in Fife. As such, he is a perfect choice for the Society's latest recording and is surrounded by some great players in this setup. I had the luxury of his music for my most recent classes at Summer School, and it was a pleasure.



The CDs cover all the dances in the book and a bit more, with some helpful tracks for warm up, cool down and a general set each for strathspey, jig and reel. There is a great selection of tunes, spanning the traditional repertoire to the more modern composers - it makes for an interesting and eclectic mix. The recording production is good quality, and I particularly enjoyed the lead accordion/fiddle blend driving the melody forward. Susan Gordon's fiddle playing sings out nicely. The rhythm section as you would expect is very secure with the subtle, but very enjoyable, creative touches on piano from Graham Berry really adding to the overall effect.

Thanks to Neil and all the band for a fine job, and to the RSCDS for pulling together a product that will be a good purchase for dancers and listeners alike.

And from the new convenor of Membership Services - Jeremy Hill

Taking up the role as Convenor of Membership Services from Angela Young in November, it has been my job to marshal the resources needed to continue the activity and pull together all the aspects of Book 54: the book itself, of course, including design work, standardisation of dance terminology, figures and Pilling-style diagrams, photos and background information; the music, recording and CD information; videos from all the Branches; publishing; distribution; marketing and social media and so on. A huge number of people have been involved, going back to the testing of dances by Branches and clubs in 2022, from which twelve further dances were chosen, plus six representing the first six Branches of the Society.

One of the dances is Miss Lucy Clark, remembering a key Buckinghamshire dancing figure of the 1950s and 1960s.

Dancing in Little Chalfont: Rose Kreloff

What does it take to make a dancer's perfect afternoon?

Here's a surefire recipe:

The wonderful music of Ian Robertson, served at 95% speed
A splendid selection of afternoon tea treats

A mixed programme of accessible and more challenging dances

Three sets of enthusiastic dancers

Some very supportive non-dancing guestsand two cheerful MCs



Little Chalfont - 29 May 2025

The Little Chalfont section of Gerrards Cross and Chalfonts Scottish Dancing Club held its second very successful afternoon tea dance on 29 May. It was greatly enjoyed by all.

The Group meets every Thursday afternoon to enjoy dancing at a slightly slower pace and without the need to drive at night. New and experienced dancers always welcome, see gxchscottish.org for more details.

Basic Skills Course: Issy Baker & Lorraine McAleenan

Stepping into Teaching: A Weekend of Scottish Dance & Smiles in Sussex!

What do you get when you mix seven enthusiastic dancers, one passionate tutor, and a sunny Sussex village? A weekend full of rhythm, laughter, and a whole lot of Scottish flair!

Dancers from all over the south-east came to East Preston for a dynamic two-day Basic Teaching Skills course. Under the expert eye (and nimble feet!) of the ever-inspiring Mervyn Short, and with the encouragement and cheerful support of leaders and volunteers from Hurstpierpoint, Brighton and Horsham groups, the group embarked on a journey to transform from dancers into confident future teachers.

The weekend was not just about perfecting the pas de basque - it was a deep dive into the art of teaching itself. From mastering warm-ups and cool-downs to learning how to break down steps, recap dances so people do not panic mid-reel, and build a programme that keeps the energy high and the smiles wide - every moment was packed with practical wisdom and joy.

There was a lot of support, loads of encouragement, and plenty of time to practice, mess up and try again.

And let us not forget the fun! Between the dancing and shared tea breaks, new friendships formed, and confidence bloomed. Whether you are thinking of leading your own class or just want to understand the magic behind the scenes, this course is a brilliant first step.

So, to all our fellow Scottish dance lovers: if you have ever thought about taking the lead, we can not recommend this weekend enough. Lace up your ghillies - the dance floor is waiting!



Sussex Class with Mervyn Short

The Amersham club was renamed after her death and continues to thrive (now based in Wendover). The dance itself was written by London Branch member Valerie Farr, wife of Bill Farr, one time leader of McBain's Band, who played for some 160 dances that Lucy organised, over a period of 13 years! Ian Robertson did his early dancing with the Club, and it is his tune that accompanies the dance, with a video supplied by Herts & Borders Branch now available on YouTube.

I hope you enjoy the great range of dances in the book, with several nods to traditional figures and historical references, and look forward to seeing you on the dance floor.

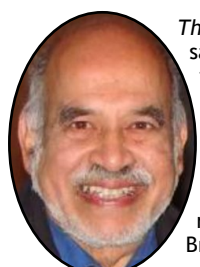
Lives Remembered

Unfailingly friendly

from Emma Dixon

Frank Emilian d'Souza

20 July 1942 - 1 July 2025



The Reel is greatly saddened to announce the death of Frank D'Souza. Frank suffered an episode of encephalitis in the summer of 2023, from which he never fully recovered, and died in Brighton on 1 July 2025.

Frank Emilian D'Souza was born in 1942 in Karachi, then part of India, and came to England as a teenager after his father Terence was called to the bar in London. The family settled in Clapham, and Frank spent most of his life in the capital before moving to Cambridge - which he regularly described as 'Paradise' - in 2019.

Frank was unfailingly friendly, fun and full of joy. Although he was a latecomer to Scottish country dancing, discovering it only in his sixties, he embraced it with a quite startling degree of enthusiasm. He danced in local groups in Wimbledon, Surbiton and Chiswick, at Summer Tuesdays, at the London Highland Club, and at countless other one-off events. If a dance programme appealed, he thought nothing of travelling from his home in Kingston to Essex, Cambridgeshire, Kent, Hampshire or Sussex to attend. Frequently arriving by bike, he would greet his fellow dancers with bicycle clips in hand and twinkling eyes, smiling broadly as he waited for the music to begin.

Frank was a particular fan of the teaching and calling of Jim Cook, whom he credited with introducing him to Scottish dancing at an event in St Columba's, Pont Street. He urged one friend: "If you ever spot a venue at which the legendary Jim Cook is teaching, cancel everything and get to it!" On another occasion he told a friend that, although he was suffering from a cold, he would still attend Wimbledon Reels that night because "cancellation and Jim Cook are mutually exclusive concepts".

No one who knew Frank will ever forget the almost daily emails he sent, copied to friends far and wide. These were often about Scottish dancing, sharing news of the latest event, urging attendance at a far-flung venue, or forwarding videos of a particular dance. But he also kept up a constant stream of correspondence with a number of MPs and apparently half the presenters on Radios 3 and 4 - some of whom, much to his delight, would occasionally respond. Such responses were, of course, shared extensively with his network.

Frank will be much missed. He is survived by his daughters, Melanie and Katie, and his two granddaughters.

No-one who met Frank could forget his sense of decorum and his enthusiastic spirit. His emails were full of purple prose and shining intelligence - Ed.

The Beginners' Friend

from Geoff Burton

Penny Burton

25 May 1951 - 19 June 2025



My wife, Penny Burton was born in Barking and brought up in Dagenham, Essex. She started Scottish Country dancing there in 1974 or 1975. She danced at Abbs Cross, Leigh on Sea and Upminster among others. In the

summer of 1976, she added Summer Tuesdays to her list of locations. She kept a detailed diary of dancing from 1975 until her last dance on 6 June 2025.

I first danced with her on 1 January 1977 at the London Highland Club new year dance, *The Baldovan Reel*. By that time, she was coming to London quite regularly and our dances became more frequent as she was a joy to dance with. In November I was asked to make up a foursome for a dance in Essex, and we never looked back. We danced two or three times a week and met up on most other days to walk around London.

Penny always made everyone feel that they were a pleasure to dance with. Always a friendly smile even when things went wrong. She loved a good birl, and we birlled a lot. Penny also had so much patience with beginners wherever she went and was much admired for it.

We were married in 1979 and settled down in Barnet, and continued dancing in London and Essex and elsewhere. In 1982 we moved to Sussex when starting a family. We continued dancing in London, just not so often. The growing family led to dancing becoming very sporadic until it stopped in the early 1990s.

In 2004, we discovered a local English dance club and then a Scottish dancing club only five miles from where we lived, when a couple who did both, recognised our birling style. This led to our return to London, at the LHC Ball in 2006. It was challenging as there were new movements and new dances to learn. Soon we were dancing all over Sussex and into Kent as well as Saturday dances in London plus of course Summer Tuesdays. Three evenings per week became the norm.

In 2013 we signed up for the Budapest bi-annual weekend. We attended again in 2015, 2019 and 2023. We also went on a Dancing in Different Places weekend to Zakopane in Poland.

With the ending of COVID-19, Penny and I managed 5 days without family last year back in Perth where we managed six nights dancing out of nine. Our last dance was City Lights on 6 June this year, demonstrating our birling.

She died as a result of cancer and complications caused by the chemotherapy. Scottish dancing will not be the same without her.

A Pioneer

from Murrough Landon

Daniel Capron

30 June 1945 - 19 May 2025



Many of those who dance at St Columba's will have memories of Daniel Capron who died in May 2025 after a short illness, just over a month before his 80th birthday.

Daniel started dancing in 1972 and was a long term member of London Branch RSCDS, Little Ship Club and St Columba's Monday dancers among others. He was editor of *The Reel* from 2002 to 2005, a former Treasurer and also ran the Branch bookstall for many years.

For most of his time dancing in London, he was expected to dance as a man - but he also wanted to be able to dance with other men. Daniel had experience of this only in Ballroom and Latin dancing where there is a strong LGBT+ community which has been running classes and evening dances since the 1980s.

Both Daniel and John Tyler, an RSCDS qualified teacher, had long wanted something similar for Scottish country dancing and had discussed this together. The idea remained a dream for many years but in 2005 Daniel decided to take action to launch the Gay Gordons: organising an opening ceilidh; finding a venue for a series of classes leading up to an evening of country dances; and recruiting people (including me) to join in. The group was an immediate success, largely thanks to John Tyler's inspirational teaching, but it had needed Daniel's organising impetus to get started.

After members of the Gay Gordons started dancing at St Columba's and other venues, insisting on being able to do some dances with each other, it gradually became accepted that two men could dance with each other. Daniel was pleased that the RSCDS invited the three Gay Gordons groups to affiliate to the society in 2012 and especially that the latest RSCDS etiquette guide encourages us to dance on either side and to ask anyone else to dance.

In his personal life Daniel was also quite a pioneer. He was the first man I knew who got married to another man after meeting his Swedish first husband at a time when the UK did not yet have a gay marriage law. He is still the only man I have known who got divorced, married another man and divorced again.

Apart from Scottish and other dancing, Daniel was also keen on travel, poetry and singing. When I first met him, at a gay community event in 1994, he sang love songs from South Pacific in celebration of his imminent first marriage in Stockholm.

I enjoyed his company on many other occasions but am especially grateful that he recruited me to Scottish country dancing. So, before he died, I devised a dance for him which is called *Thanks to Daniel*. I was pleased he was able to see the hastily filmed video, but sad I will no longer see those occasional flashes of his big smile.

Lives Remembered

Compassionate and caring

from Helen Beach

Andrew Cockett

20 March 1938 - 27 June 2025



Andrew was born in Middlesbrough, the youngest son of Harry and Phyllis. He had two older siblings, Ann and Tony. In 1951, when Andrew was a teenager, the family moved to Doncaster. Andrew had wanted to stay in

Middlesbrough to finish his education and had suggested that he lived with their next-door neighbours, but his parents refused on the basis that they were a bit too fond of the drink!

After qualifying as a chartered surveyor, he got a job with the property department of British Rail based in York and was then promoted to a position in Leeds. He approached British Airways in 1962, and persuaded them to interview him, offering to pay his own expenses to travel down from the north! Needless to say, he got the job and spent the rest of his career there, rising to Director of Properties for the west.

Andrew met Robert Mackay at the Edinburgh Festival. The pair became good friends and had a holiday touring the Highlands of Scotland. They ended up in Oban, where Andrew first saw, and fell in love with, Scottish country dancing. When he returned to London he found a class at the local church hall in Kensington and quickly became hooked. He used to go up to St Andrews for RSCDS Summer School and it was here, in 1978, that he met Tom Steele, a teacher at Hamilton Academy with family in Dornoch. Andrew and Tom had a long-distance relationship for a while, but eventually Tom moved to London, and they bought a house in Chiswick. Tragically, Tom died in 1992.

Andrew joined the RSCDS London Branch committee in 1987 as Vice-Chair, having previously helped the Committee in a non-executive capacity and was Chair 1990-1993. Alongside this, he was active in groups such as the Cairngorms and Argyll Scottish Dance Group.

He retired in 1996 and decided to return to his Yorkshire roots, moving to Harrogate in 2006. He threw himself into his new surroundings, joining bridge clubs, music groups and the gay walking group. The first time he joined a walk, he took some headphones because he did not think anyone would talk to him! He continued his Scottish country dancing, through which he met Marcel and Alison Boughton. A close and enduring friendship was formed.

Andrew was introduced to Kenneth by a mutual friend, and Kenneth eventually moved in with Andrew in Harrogate and they celebrated their civil partnership in 2015. Andrew and Kenneth had a close and loving relationship.

Andrew had always loved to travel and found in Kenneth an enthusiastic partner.

Particular favourites were Madeira and Gibraltar, which they visited many times. Andrew was always grateful that they had found each other, albeit later in life. During his last eight months, Kenneth was a constant advocate for Andrew's health and wellbeing. He visited Andrew in hospital and later the nursing home almost every day and never ceased to try and improve Andrew's quality of life.

Andrew was a kind, loving and compassionate man. He was generous with his time and possessions - his house was always available for friends and family to stay in, and after retiring, he volunteered at the Citizens Advice Bureau in London, and as a guide at Harewood House when he moved to Harrogate. He would offer support to anyone who needed it and always seemed to know the right thing to say.

Throughout his life, he had a positive impact on so many people and the memories we all have of him should bring us comfort at this time. He will never be forgotten.

Memories of Andrew

I have incredibly fond memories of Andrew and Tom. When I moved from Aberdeen to Milton Keynes, it was Tom who invited me to play for London Branch and who requested me as a pianist at various Day Schools.

However, Andrew and Tom did much more than that - they looked out for me, as I moved from home for the first time, dinner was always included with time to chat through how things were going, as was the use of the washing machine. They also both advised when I went to buy my first flat in London - which areas to look at, going through schedules from estate agents, advising on freehold and leasehold, and the difference with the English system. I also know just how much my parents appreciated all the support that they gave me and the reassurance it gave them as I started out on life away from home - something I also remember with real gratitude - **Angela Young**

We have many happy memories of dancing with Andrew in London and also enjoying his hospitality. He particularly liked to have dancers back to his flat in Ladbroke Grove for supper after balls at Porchester Hall. His speciality at that time was kedgeriee but we had to dance his favourite dance *Red House* before we could eat! - **Margaret Shaw**

Andrew was Chair of London Branch when I first joined the Committee. He was always unfailingly polite, organised and encouraging of a new Committee member. He also talent spotted - encouraging Rachel Wilton onto the Committee for which we will always be grateful! - **Simon Wales**

Andrew was Secretary of the Argyll Scottish Dance Group for many years, organising weekends away and Day Schools. He had great attention to detail, always looking to improve and enhance the events. His love of Scottish country dancing was infectious and his personality of warmth and friendship set the tone for the Argylls - **Anna Crawford**

Forthcoming Events

HARWELL SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE GROUP

Harwell & Abingdon St Andrew's Ball

Saturday 22 November 2025

7.00 - 11.00pm

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

The Craigellachie Band

Programme: Welcome to Ayr, Swiss Lassie, The Duchess Tree, Harlequin, Polharrow Burn, The Glengarry Homestead, The Pines of Pitlochry, The Robertson Rant, Farewell to Balfour Road, Trip to Timber Ridge, The Piper and the Penguin, Midsummer Common, Seton's Ceilidh Band, The Rutland Reel, S-Locomotion, The Flying Spur, Mr Iain Stuart Robertson, Five Couple MacDonald of the Isles, The Zoologist, The Reel of the 51st Division

Our programme and cribs can be seen at:

my.strathspey.org/dd/list/57425/

Tickets £27 per head

(£20 for students and spectators)

Email: Treasurer@harwellscdc.mno.org.uk

for further information

Or use the QR Code to buy a ticket or a concessionary ticket



Ticket



Concession

Please enter your name(s) and any special requirements (e.g. diet) in the Note field harwellscdc.mno.org.uk

ISLE OF WIGHT

Weekend School

Friday 13 - Sunday 15
February 2026



Teachers: Raphaëlle Orgeret
and Eric Finley

Class Musicians: Ian and Judith Muir

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-2026

Credits: Many thanks to all who contributed to this issue of *The Reel*, including the following for providing photos: p1: Leeds from Steve and Antoneta Kelly, Joanne Lawrence (JL) and Rowena Jackson (RJ); Where is This? - Stephen Webb. p2: Richard Clarke - Christopher Bowen; Simon Wales - Petar Petkovic. p5: Tuesday Social - JL and RJ; Technique Class - Willie Lawrence (WL); Mixed Ability - JL; General Class: WL. p6: Leeds - Ella Fairman. p7: Leeds - RJ and Ernesto Alvaredo. p8: Teachers and Musicians - from themselves. pp10-11: Summer School - RSCDS; Quiz - from JL; Chiswick - from Iris Ronayne (IR); Summer Wednesday - JL and Simon Wales; Leeds - RJ and JL. pp12-13: Meryl Thomson - from herself (MT); The Lady of the Lake - Walter Scott Image Collection, Edinburgh University - public domain; Lady of the Lake - RSCDS Book 25 - from MT; The Lady of the Lake dance - Thompson 24 Country Dances for the year 1814 - VWML from MT; The Lady of the Lake - Hime No 22 Collection of Popular Dances - archive.org - public domain; Lowe's Ball-Conductor - from MT; The Lady of the Lake - Lowe's Selection of Popular Country Dances - from MT; Picture of Hugh Duff - from The Book of the Duffs - archive.org - public domain. p14: Cober Hill - from Murrough Landon. p15: Exam Class - from IR. p16: Dave Hall - from himself; Album Cover - RSCDS; Little Chalfont - Rose Kreloff; Sussex Class - from Lee Pratt. p17: Frank d'Souza - from Katie d'Souza; Penny Burton - from Geoff Burton; Daniel Capron - from Murrough Landon. p18: Andrew Cockett - from Alison Boughton.

Forthcoming Events

RSCDS HERTS AND BORDERS



Book 54 Workshop

Sunday 5 October 2025

2.00 - 5.00pm (doors open 1.30pm)

St Stephens Church Hall

St Albans AL1 2PT

Teacher: Jeremy Hill

Musician: Ken Martlew

Future Triple Decker Workshops

Sunday 23 November 2025

Christine Jeffery and Ian Robertson

Sunday 25 January 2026

Lindsey Ibbotson and Tom Ibbotson

Sunday 1 March 2026

Saskia Frisby and Catriona Stewart

Sunday 17 May 2026

Mervyn Short and Adam Brady

rsdsherts@gmail.com

rsdsherts.org/branch-events

RSCDS OXFORDSHIRE BRANCH

Annual Ball

Saturday 25 October 2025

7.00-11.15pm

The Manor Preparatory School, Abingdon
OX13 6LN

Ian Muir and the Craigellachie Band

Programme: Joie de Vivre, More Bees a-Dancing, Sugar Candie, The Scallywag, The Wind on the Heath, Scotch Mist, Gaelforce Wind, The Orchards of Co. Armagh, Toast to the Mousies, Mrs Stewart's Jig, Lady Dumfries, Cape Town Wedding, Roaring Jelly, MacDonald of Keppoch, Summer Wooing, Montparnasse, Pelorus Jack, The Reel of the 51st Division

Extras: Neidpath Castle, West's Hornpipe

Tickets £24 (spectators £12)

Practice Dance: Sunday 19 October 2025
2.30-5.30pm at Cumnor Village Hall
OX2 9QF

Contact: Helen Houghton-Carr,
07531 469213 or

events.rscdsoxfordshire@gmail.com

rscdsoxfordshire.org

Advance notices

Burns' Night Supper & Dance

17 January 2026, Benson Parish Hall,
OX10 6LZ

Ian Muir and the Craigellachie Band

Day School & Dance

21 February 2026, Cherwell School
(North Site), Oxford OX2 7EE

Strathallan Band



www.rscdsoxfordshire.org

LONDON HIGHLAND CLUB

New Season Ball



Saturday 11 October 2025

7.00-11.00pm

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

Colin Dewar & his Scottish Dance Band

MC: Rose Kreloff

Programme: Bratach Bana, Chased Lovers, The Bon Viveur, Swiss Lassie, Midnight Oil, The Orchards of Co. Armagh, Orpington Caledonians, Inchmickery, The Gentleman, Anniversary Reel, Yan, Tan, Tethera, Nottingham Lace, Kinclaven Bridge, The Kelloholm Jig, The Australian Ladies, Chasing the Eclipse, The Elephant's Stampede, The Dundee Whaler, Follow Me Home, The Highland Rambler

Dances will be recapped

Tickets in advance (until end of Wed 8 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 & a glass of fizz)

For tickets email

tickets@londonhighlandclub.co.uk

or call Roger Keeling 020 8656 7884

Programme and cribs are on our website

londonhighlandclub.co.uk

Forthcoming LHC event

Saturday 1 November 2025

Autumn Dance

The Craigellachie Band

LUCY CLARK SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE CLUB

Christmas Dance

Saturday 13 December
2025

7.00 - 11.00pm

Wendover Memorial Hall Wharf Lane
Wendover Bucks HP22 6HF

Ian Robertson and his band

Programme: EH3 7AF, The Lass of Richmond Hill, Cherrybank Gardens, The Festival Man, Miss Lucy Clark, Asilomar Romantic, Quarries' Jig, A Gin and Tonic, The Rutland Reel, Good Hearted Glasgow, The Fireworks Reel, Girardet House, The Golden Sun of Early Spring, Polharrow Burn, The Scallywag, Jean Martin of Aberdeen, Scott Meikle, Trip to Timber Ridge

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 on
01494 451374

Further information and cribs available on
our website



ST COLUMBA'S DANCERS



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

Dancing on Monday evenings

7.15 for 7.30pm

Band Nights 2025-26

27 October 2025 - Ian Robertson

1 December 2025 - Dave Hall

26 January 2026 - (Burns Night) Frank Reid
Band

23 March 2026 - Chris Oxtoby

18 May 2026 - (End of Season Dance) Keith
Smith & Anne-Laure Latour

Entrance Fee on Band Nights: £14

Burns Night: £17

Recorded music on other Monday evenings

Charge only for tea and biscuits in the
interval

Contact: Willie Lawrence

stcolumbasdancers@gmail.com

stcolumbasdancers.org

THISTLE CLUB

Musicians' & Dancers' Workshops and Dance

Saturday 6 September 2025

10.30am - 4.30pm & 7.30 - 10.30pm

Wing Village Hall, LU7 0NN

Teacher: Violaine Eysseric

Musician: Dave Hall

Musician Tutor: Susan MacFadyen

Workshops: Musicians £22, Dancers £20

Evening Dance £13 or £30 for both

Bring your own lunch and shared buffet
contribution

Programme

my.strathspey.org/dd/list/55186/

Hogmanay Dance

Wednesday 31 December 2025

8.00pm - 12.30am

Gt. Brickhill Hall, Rotten Row, MK17 9BA

Chris and Julie Dewhurst

Programme

my.strathspey.org/dd/list/57705/

Tickets booked in advance £17

Bring and share supper

Contact Jan Jones 07877 153259 or

jangeverybusy@gmail.com

thistleclub.co.uk

BERKHAMSTED STRATHSPEY & REEL CLUB



Dancers' Day School

Sunday 16 November 2025

10.00am - 5.00pm

White Hill Centre, White Hill, Chesham,
Bucks HP5 1AG

A 5 minute walk from Chesham
Metropolitan line station

Teachers: Andrew Nolan and Grace Hill

Musicians: Ian Robertson and Jeremy Hill

Tickets Full day £28.00 Half day £16.00

Online booking form and full details:

berkhamstedreelclub.org/day-school-booking-form-2025

Or contact: Simon Cumming on
01494 782695 or

treasurer@berkhamstedreelclub.org

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* 332 - 335 and invoices for £30 have been sent and are now overdue for payment.
If you wish to cancel, 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@ascsc.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 addlestonescottish.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, Charnminster, 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
- CHELTEMHAM 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
- EPHING FOREST SCOTTISH ASSOCIATION** Club nights: Mondays (all year) 8.00-10.00pm at St Barnabas Church, 127 Snakes Lane East, Woodford IG8 7HX; Thursdays (all year) 8.00-10.00pm at St John's Parish Hall, High Road, Buckhurst Hill IG9 5RX. Details: Angela Ross, 020 8504 3376 or angelaross87@hotmail.com or efsa.org.uk
- 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 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 janetmacphail54@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, Darkes Lane, Potters Bar EN6 1BZ. Details: Margaret King, 020 8440 3236 or margaret.king4@hotmail.co.uk or hertsmereandtallyho.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** Meets Thursdays at the Wendover Memorial Hall, Wharf Road, Wendover HP22 6HF. Beginners' class 6.45-8.00pm, Social Dancing 8.00-10.00pm. Details: Liz Mitchell, 07947 000368 or lucyclarkscottish@gmail.com or lucyclarkscottish.org
- MAIDENHEAD SCOTTISH DANCING CLUB** Meets every Tuesday 8.00pm at St Piran's School, Gringer Hill, Maidenhead, Berks SL6 7LZ. Last Tuesday in the month is Social Dancing evening. Details: Jane Courtier, 01628 628372 or maidenheadscottishdancing.org.uk
- MEDWAY AND DISTRICT CALEDONIAN ASSOCIATION** Dancing Mondays Bredhurst Village Hall, 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: Deirdre Wilden, the_wildens@yahoo.co.uk 07879 860463 or orpingtonscottishdancing.com
- OXFORDSHIRE BRANCH RSCDS** Dancing on Thursdays throughout the year in Oxford. Details: Margaret Spiceley, 07985 962781 or secretary.rscdsoxfordshire@gmail.com or rscdsoxfordshire.org
- READING ST ANDREW'S SCOTTISH DANCING SOCIETY** Dancing at St Andrew's URC, London Road, Reading RG1 5BD from September-May, Wednesdays 7.30-10.00pm (general), 1st and 2nd Thursdays of each month 8.00-10.00pm (advanced). Details: Duncan Barnett, 0118 956 9289 duncanbarnet@gmail.com or scottishdancingreading.org
- RICHMOND CALEDONIAN SOCIETY** Wednesdays 8-10pm with beginners' classes from 7pm during term time. Oddfellows Hall, Parkshot, Richmond TW9 2RG. Details: Iris Ronayne, 07767 842670 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
- 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 3HJ 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

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

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