



The Reel



Published by the LONDON BRANCH of the ROYAL SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE SOCIETY
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MAY TO AUGUST 2014

Scottish Country Dancing –
For fun, fitness and
friendship



Above: The new logo was recently launched for Spring Fling London 2015, to be held over the weekend of 17-19 April 2015 (see p4).

Left: Young dancers from all over the South-East, and further afield, enjoyed a stimulating days teaching and music at the Youth Workshop, held in Cambridge on Saturday 18 January, with Mervyn Short, Kate Gentles, Muriel Johnstone and Keith Smith (see report p4).

DANCING TO THE MUSICIANS

Saturday 17 May 2014
7.00 – 10.30pm

Doors open at 6.30pm

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

Ian Robertson & the Musicians

(Musicians Course Details on p8)

Pelorus Jack	41/1
Maxwell's Rant	18/10
Margaret Parker's Strathspey	31/3
Inchmickery	14 Social for 2000/7
Mrs MacPherson of Inveran ... Bon Accord/15	
Miss Gibson's Strathspey	Leaflet 18
John of Bon Accord	33/5
Hooper's Jig	MMM 34

Flowers of Edinburgh	1/6
Hamilton House	7/10
Sugar Candie	26/9
A Trip to Bavaria	Leaflet c1960
The Wild Geese	24/3
Culla Bay	41/2
Duke of Perth	1/8

Admission includes light refreshments
RSCDS members £10.00, Non-members £12.00
Students (with student card) and Spectators £5.00
All children under 16 free
All tickets to be purchased on the door
All dances will be recapped

SUMMER WEDNESDAY DANCE

Wednesday 28 May 2014
7.00 – 10.00pm

Doors open at 6.30pm

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

Sandra Smith & Christina Hood

The Grassmarket Reel	5 for 2009/2
It's nae Bother	Graded 2/13
The Minister on the Loch	4 for 2008/2
My mother's coming in	15/1
Grant's Reel	14/2
A Trip to Glasgow	Leaflet 1
Duke of Perth	1/8

Good Hearted Glasgow .. Garden Fest'1 Lflt	
The College Hornpipe	20/12
Gramachie	MMM 28
Fisherman's Reel	Dunblane Holiday Bklt
12 Coates Crescent	40/5
Inchmickery	14 Social for 2000/7
The Reel of the 51st Division	13/10

Extras: Kendall's Hornpipe (Graded 1/22), The Sailor (24/4), The Wind on Loch Fyne (Dunedin 1986/5)

Admission includes light refreshments
RSCDS members £9.00, Non-members £11.00
Students (with student card) and Spectators £5.00
All children under 16 free
All tickets to be purchased on the door
All dances will be walked through

LONDON BRANCH AGM AND JUNE JIG

Saturday 14 June 2014
AGM: 6.45 – 7.30pm

(see notice p3)

Dance: 7.30 – 10.30pm

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

Green Ginger

The Starry Eyed Lassie	23/11
Cramond Bridge	London 79/4
The Braes of Breadalbane	21/7
Hamilton House	7/10
Neidpath Castle	22/9
The Castle of Mey	Diamond Jubilee/2

Good Hearted Glasgow ... Garden Fest'1 Lflt	
John McAlpin	3 for 2007/2
General Stuart's Reel	10/3
Major Ian Stewart	35/4
Culla Bay	41/2
Ladies' Fancy	13/12
The College Hornpipe	20/12
The Minister on the Loch	4 for 2008/2
Mrs MacPherson of Inveran . Bon Accord/15	

Admission includes light refreshments
RSCDS members £9.00, Non-members £11.00
Students (with student card) and Spectators £5.00
All children under 16 free
All tickets to be purchased on the door
All dances will be recapped

CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

I am writing this in recovery mode on the morning after our Family Day and Spring Dance on Saturday 29 March, while at the same time other Branch members are enjoying one of our Highland classes. It is greatly to the credit of London Branch that we offer such a variety of dancing to all ages and to all levels of skill, and my thanks as always to the Committee members, Vice-Presidents and friends who make all these events happen. I should probably be delighted that there were twice as many dancers at the Family Day than at the evening dance, but the evening attendance was low. That was a surprise after record numbers came to our Winter Wednesday in February. Does that tell us something about the future of Saturday night Scottish country dancing in central London? I hope not, because the big Saturday night dance has a special thrill, and it is where all the hard work in classes pays off.

Turning to classes, things are looking up. Jane Rose is doing a great job with the Basic Skills Class. Giving more experienced dancers the opportunity to learn from a different teacher each half term is proving popular, and Jeni Rutherford attracts good numbers to the Wednesday afternoon class. But we need to do more if we are to secure the future of RSCDS-style dancing in London.

With this issue of *The Reel* members will have received a copy of our Annual Report for 2013-14, and our Priorities for next year. What we must do above all else is get more people dancing. More young people would be good, but anyone young enough to dance is very welcome. Opening a new beginners' class and focusing more publicity at the non-Scottish dancing public are top priorities, alongside providing dances and classes for our existing members to enjoy. These are relatively modest ambitions, but there is a limit to what we can do with the resources available to us. We are not short of money (though we have to use it wisely) but what we need is people. The more members who volunteer to get involved in our future, the better. Think about it. At the very least please renew your membership as a demonstration of your belief that fun, friendship and fitness are values worth preserving in the 21st century. What is more, we are proposing that the cost of membership (or to be precise that part of your membership fee that is retained by London Branch) should come down. If you think that's a good idea, or if you don't, come to the AGM and vote.

I hope to see you at one of the many events that London Branch is organising over the next few months, especially the AGM. Come with your ideas for taking the Branch and SCD in London forward. Please speak up, but stick to the point. The AGM precedes our dance on Saturday 14 June and we don't want it to overrun. We all want to get on with enjoying the dancing, which is what the RSCDS has given to us.

See you on the dance floor.



Andrew Kellett

ROYAL
SCOTTISH
COUNTRY
DANCE
SOCIETY



Patron H.M. The Queen

Chairman – John Wilkinson

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Thelma-Jane Robb, Lena Robinson,
Margaret Shaw, Anna Twinn, Elaine Wilde

Co-ordinators:

Classes: Margaret Shaw, Lena Robinson
Day School:..... Margaret Catchick
Dances: Marjory Reid
Demonstrations: Elaine Wilde
The Reel: Jeremy Hill
Youth: Marjory Reid

Non-Executive roles:

Bookstall: see p8
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The Reel Business Editor: Jeff Robertson
The Reel Assistant Editor: Katy Sweetman
Subscribers:..... Wilson Nicol
Webmaster: Meryl Thomson
Website: www.rscdslondon.org.uk

Objects of London Branch

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

- 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.

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CREDITS

Many thanks to all our contributors, including the following for providing the photos in this edition:

Anna Gruebler: p1
Stephen Webb: p2, p6, p10 (1&2), p11 (8&9), p13 (Maureen), p14 (Valerie)
From Jeremy Hill: p3
John Drewry: p7
From Bernard Dixon: p8
Marjory Reid: p10 (3)
Roger Brown: p10 (4)
Janet Smith: p10 (5)

Ian Thomson: p11 (6)
Pete Williamson: p11 (7)
Jo Graham: p13 (Pam)
Helen Danby: p13 (Clem)
Andy Wiener: p14 (WWHSS)
From Jim Cook: p15
Iris Ronayne: p20 (left)
Claudia Carrington: p20 (right)
Joan Marshall: p20 (bottom)

Thanks also to Stephen Webb for additional reporting and co-ordination around the clubs.

LONDON BRANCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

14 June 2014

The AGM of the London Branch of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society will be held at St. Columba's Church (Lower Hall) Pont Street, London SW1X 0BD on Saturday 14 June 2014. All members of the Branch are welcome to attend. Tea and biscuits will be served at 6.30pm and the meeting will commence at 6.45pm. There will be dancing immediately after the meeting, commencing at 7.30pm approximately. Supper will be served during the interval of the dance.

Agenda

1. Apologies for absence
2. Approval of the minutes of the 2013 AGM
3. Matters arising from the minutes
4. Report on the Branch's activities 2013-14
5. Treasurer's report and statement of accounts
6. Appointment of Honorary President and Honorary Vice-Presidents
7. Appointment of Officers and Management Committee
8. Appointment of delegates to the Society's AGM
9. Appointment of Auditors
10. Motions
11. Any other business

Note 1: As the number of nominations does not exceed the number of places available, there will not be an election under item 7. Nominations for the appointments at items 6, 8 and 9 will be taken from the floor at the meeting. One motion has been submitted and will be voted upon at the meeting.

Note 2: The report (item 4) has been sent to members with this issue of *The Reel*. The accounts and the minutes of the previous meeting will be available at the AGM. Members can see them in advance by applying to treasurer@rscdslondon.org.uk and secretary@rscdslondon.org.uk respectively.

Motion (Proposed by the Management Committee)

With effect from 1 July 2014 the London Branch fee will be £4.00 a year for members who choose to receive *The Reel* in electronic format (as an email containing a link to the pdf file held in the website hosting area) rather than in hard copy through the post. Members can continue to receive *The Reel* in hard copy by paying the existing Branch fee of £6.00 a year if based in the UK (£12.00 if based elsewhere in Europe and £15.00 in the rest of the world).

This will coincide with a £2.00 a year increase in the RSCDS subscription agreed at the Society's AGM in November 2013. This means that the annual cost of RSCDS membership through London Branch will be:

- £22.00 (£18.00 RSCDS subscription plus £4.00 Branch fee) for members who choose to receive *The Reel* in electronic format only, irrespective of where they live,
- £24.00 (£18.00 RSCDS subscription plus £6.00 Branch fee) for UK-based members who receive *The Reel* through the post,
- £30.00 (£18.00 RSCDS subscription plus £12.00 Branch fee) for European-based members who receive *The Reel* through the post, and
- £33.00 (£18.00 RSCDS subscription plus £15.00 Branch fee) for members in the rest of the world who receive *The Reel* through the post.

Discounts apply of £8.00 for members aged 12 – 17, £3.00 aged 18 – 25 and £3.00 for each of two members living at the same address. Members of other branches can become 'second members' of London Branch by paying the appropriate fee.

OPEN AIR DANCING

The Bandstand, Kensington Gardens

Once again the Branch will be running informal open air dancing sessions during August in Kensington Gardens (by the bandstand near the Round Pond) on the following dates:

Saturday 16 August 2014

Saturday 23 August 2014

Music by **Kafoozalum**

Saturday 30 August 2014

Music by **McBain's Duo**

Time: 2.00 – 4.00pm

An MC will guide everyone through a programme of popular dances and there will be easier dances for beginners and children. Bring some friends and a picnic and enjoy dancing to some wonderful music.

Please do come along!

Teachers' Certificate Course

The RSCDS Branches in the Southeast are planning to combine in the autumn to run courses leading up to the RSCDS teaching examinations. Whether you already have some of the units, or are considering starting out on the journey to become a RSCDS teacher, the Co-ordinating Committee would like to hear from you, so they can assess the demand for a course and the most suitable location. Please send your details to the secretary, George Ferrier, george2542@hotmail.co.uk as soon as possible and certainly by 24 May.

COMMONWEALTH GLOBAL CEILIDH

Saturday 21 June 2014

7.00 – 10.30pm

Doors open at 6.30pm

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

Craigievar

This is a great chance to share with your friends and family the fun of Scottish music and ceilidh dancing which will span the globe on 21 June celebrating the forthcoming Commonwealth Games to be hosted by Glasgow in the summer.

The programme will include the *Gay Gordons*, *Britannia Two Step*, *Pride of Erin Waltz*, *The Dashing White Sergeant*, *Canadian Barn Dance*, *The Eightsome Reel*, *St Bernard's Waltz*, *Virginia Reel*, *Strip the Willow* and many others, including three new dances to celebrate the Commonwealth Games (see *The Reel* 287).

No experience necessary – all dances will be called. No need to bring a partner.

Admission includes light refreshments: £10.00

Students (with student card) and

Spectators £5.00

All children under 16 free

All tickets to be purchased on the door

EDITORIAL

How did you come into Scottish country dancing? Did you attend classes as a child? Were you exposed to it at school and decided to carry on, or take it up again later in life? Did you happen to come across it at a village fête or Freshers' Fair and were curious to find out more? Were you taken to a function and got hooked? Did you wander in to a village hall and wonder what was going on? Was that first experience about perfecting the steps and formations, or just about having fun?

I am sure, like me, many of you will have had conversations with friends or colleagues from outside the SCD world, and explained the 'underworld' of dancers just round the corner and all over the world enjoying themselves enormously with a hobby that can keep them fit, socially active and mentally stimulated for years. Once past the initial "do you dance over swords?" and "do you wear a kilt?" there is a natural curiosity, and in some cases an interest in trying it out. Let's get them along to our events.

Through Children's Classes, Youth Workshops, Ceilidhs, Open Air Dancing, new classes and other activities we continue efforts to open up the world of Scottish dancing to as many people as possible. After all, they are all missing out on what we know is a fantastic activity. What else could we be trying, and how could you help?

Jeremy Hill

RSCDS Headquarters Update

- The new website went live on 10 February – there were a number of teething issues but these should be resolved by now, so if you are having difficulty please do not give up; contact HQ for help and it will work for you!
- The financial outlook for the end of year (March 2014) is better than expected;
- There will be a survey of Branches to try to identify factors involved in the increase or decrease of member numbers in individual Branches;
- A generous donation of approximately £240,000 has been received. Such non-specific donations/legacies are placed in the Development Fund. Guidelines and application forms for access to this fund, as well as the Jean Milligan Memorial Fund, are on the website under Funding Sources;
- The fee for Affiliated Groups will be increased by the same proportion as the subscription fee;
- The bid to the 'Celebrate' Lottery Fund, to obtain finance to support Branches running Commonwealth Ceilidhs, has been successful; Branches will be receiving more information shortly;
- The bid for money from the Heritage Lottery Fund for an archive project has also been successful. There will be an article about it in the *Scottish Country Dancer*;
- Work continues on a follow-on pack to *Jigs and Reels*, aimed at secondary school children;
- All exam documents have been updated and are now on the website;
- The next Management Board meeting is on 10 May.

Rachel Wilton

FOCUS ON YOUTH



Friday 17 – Sunday 19 April 2015

Friday 17	7.30pm 'Nice and Easy' dance in West London, open to all ages.
Saturday 18	Morning and afternoon classes for ages 12-35. Beginners to very advanced, followed by optional classes for Highland/Birling/Ladies' Step. Musicians' Workshop hosted by RSCDS London Branch lead by Jim Lindsey. Open to all ages. 7.00pm 'Dance to the Musicians', co-hosted by London Branch, open to all ages. St Columba's Church Hall, Pont St, London SW1X 0BD.
Sunday 19	10.00am Judging entries for the new dance book 1.30pm Buffet Lunch

Dance Competition

As part of Spring Fling London 2015 we are holding a competition for young dancers to devise Scottish country dances to be published by the RSCDS. Entries can be submitted by anyone of Spring Fling age (12-35) from anywhere in the world, with or without original music.

A shortlist of dances will be judged by those attending Spring Fling during this workshop. The winning dance will be named 'Spring Fling'. The remaining dances will be considered for a book. Online submission form available from May 2014. The closing date for submissions is Monday 15 December 2014 via SFDance@rscds.org

For further information contact Elaine Davies
rscdsspringfling2015@yahoo.co.uk
Web: www.rscdsspringfling.wix.com



The London Branch Facebook page is constantly updated, with information, photos and news. It can be found at www.facebook.com/pages/RSCDS-London-Branch/207567162643075 or via the QR code shown. Please visit the site and add your comments and photos!



London University Class

London Branch's university class at University College London (UCL) continues to engage younger dancers and also to give our own young teachers a chance to teach a regular class. It is run in conjunction with the UCL Folk Society, which provides students with access to folk music and dance in the London area. They have also formed a ceilidh band, which played at the Folk Society's first ceilidh in December.

The class is held on a Monday evening at UCL, Gower Street (opposite Euston Square underground station). The teaching team consists of Charlotte Sandifer, Judith Jones and Gillian Frew, with Lindsey Jane Rousseau co-ordinating and Ian Cutts playing for the class. If you know any students who might be interested, or for more information, please contact Elaine Davies at laneypops83@yahoo.co.uk

WE CAN HELP YOU AFFORD IT

The RSCDS and the London Branch continue to see the importance of supporting the teachers, musicians and dancers of the future. As such, funds are earmarked for scholarships, for young people (up to the age of 25) to attend RSCDS Residential Schools as a dancer or as a musician; and for any member attending Summer School with a view to taking the RSCDS Teaching Certificate. London Branch also has funds available to give support to any event promoting Scottish country dancing among young people.

Don't be shy about asking for assistance. We are a charity and we are here to help you improve your skills and enjoyment of Scottish country dancing, and to support you in passing on your enthusiasm and knowledge to the next generation. If you think you might benefit from a scholarship pick up the phone or drop an email to any member of the Branch Committee, or you could start with our Secretary, Margaret Catchick, via secretary@rscdslondon.org.uk

DEMONSTRATIONS

As well as encouraging the public to join in Scottish dancing at our open air events in Kensington Gardens, we also want to show them some typical dances from our Saturday night programmes. If you would like to take part in one or more of these short demonstrations,

- your dancing technique is of a reasonable standard,
 - you are comfortable dancing most of the dances on the RSCDS core repertoire (look under Resources on the RSCDS website), and
 - when you dance, your enjoyment of dancing is written on your face
- please contact our secretary, Margaret Catchick, secretary@rscdslondon.org.uk

LEEDS FESTIVAL

The Branch will also be taking a group to dance at the Leeds Festival (non-competitive) on 12 July 2014. All are welcome to join us – it would involve a couple of rehearsals before the event. Branch members interested in participating, or who would like more information, are asked to contact Anna Twinn, chrisandanna.twinn@btopenworld.com

Children's Class

The Branch children's monthly class continues on Saturday mornings, as follows:

17 May 10.15 – 11.30am
Upper Hall, St Columba's Church, Pont Street,
London SW1X 0BD
14 June 10.45 – 12.00pm
The Caledonian Club, 9 Halkin St, London
SW1X 7DR

Teacher: James Fairbairn
Class Price: £3.00

Newcomers are always welcome!

For further information please contact either
James Fairbairn at st48@btinternet.com or
07930 949599 or
youthcoordinator@rscdslondon.org.uk

RSCDS Youth Workshop in Cambridge

We were treated to some winter sunshine on the day of the RSCDS Youth Workshop in Cambridge, Saturday 18 January. It was fantastic to meet so many other young dancers arriving from as far afield as Colchester, Oxford, London and Bolton, which definitely put my 15 minute cycle to shame! We had lots of dancers with different levels of experience, from those who had been dancing for many years to someone who was dancing for the first time on the day. I was very impressed by how well he coped with the dances, some of which were quite complex – certainly much better than my own first attempts a few months earlier...

The morning and early afternoon classes were split into advanced and intermediate levels, led by Mervyn Short and Kate Gentles. During the sessions there was a good balance between finessing our technique and enjoying the dances. The chance to become more familiar with some of the dances for the evening's Cambridge Branch Winter Dance was also much appreciated. The wonderful music provided by Keith Smith and Muriel Johnstone helped us along in each dance, and their humorous – and appropriate – interjections were some of my favourite moments from the day. I certainly don't think I would otherwise have found a link between *Star Wars* and Scottish country dancing!

Later in the afternoon we were split into Highland and Ladies' Step classes. It was my first exposure to Highland dancing, and those of us with less experience had fun attempting our own variations on the standard steps. The eight-person sword dance that we put together at the end was particularly enjoyable, and I've since discovered that the mention of weaponry certainly gets people interested in Scottish dancing.

The evening's Winter Dance was a great way to finish off a great day. Many people stayed on after the workshop, and were joined by dancers from around Cambridge. Again the music from Keith and Muriel was excellent, setting the mood for each dance even if our feet couldn't quite keep up after a long day.

Many thanks to the organisers involved in bringing both events together, from the Youth Services Committee and Cambridge & District RSCDS. A special mention must go to Joanna Camus and Shirley Walsham, who managed to feed 40 people for lunch despite an assortment of unexpected calamities!

Wendy Niu
(see photo p1)

Set yourself a fun challenge Join a Scottish Country Dancing Class

We have
classes for...

CHILDREN monthly classes in central London

email James Fairbairn: childrensclass@rscdslondon.org.uk for details or see p4

ADULTS every **Wednesday evening** during term time, 7.00 – 9.00pm
at Park Walk School, Park Walk (A on map), King's Road, Chelsea, SW10 0AY
RSCDS members £9 per night (non-members £10 per night)

See p4 Membership on how to join the RSCDS

(The school is served by buses 11, 19, 22, 49, 319 and 328.

Nearest Underground: Station: Sloane Square. Parking is available at the school)

Lower Hall for steps, formations and easy
dances with **Jane Rose**

Musicians Ian Cutts & Jane Ng

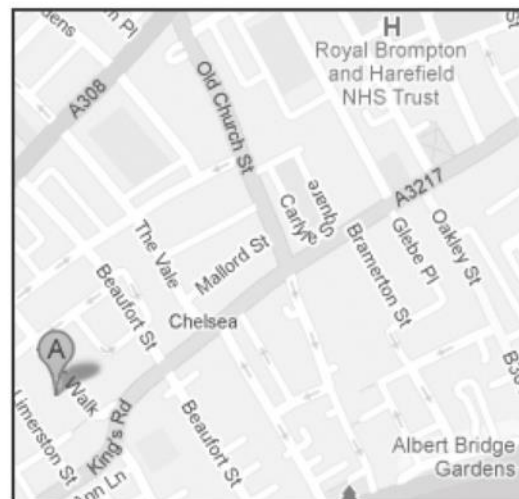
Term dates same as for the
Upper Hall Classes

Upper Hall for more experienced dancers
wishing to improve their technique with

Lindsey Jane Rousseau

(30 April - 21 May)

Musician Sandra Smith



Summer General Classes in the Lower Hall. Suitable for all abilities except
total beginners. A fun evening with a different teacher and musician each week

Teacher: Jane Rose and Musician: Sandra Smith (4 June)

Teacher: Simon Wales and Musician: Peter Jenkins (11 June)

Teacher: Samantha Schad and Musician: Peter Jenkins (18 June)

Wednesday afternoons with Jeni Rutherford dancing to recorded music
2.30 – 4.30pm at St Columba's Church Hall, Pont Street, London SW1X 0BD
(Nearest Underground Stations: Knightsbridge, Sloane Square and South Kensington)

Classes £5 per class. Term dates 30 April - 2 July (half term 28 May)

Suitable for dancers with some knowledge of basic steps and formations

email Jeni Rutherford: jrutherford@freeuk.com

**For further details of all classes, please email either
Margaret or Lena at: classes@rscdslondon.org.uk**

FUTURE BRANCH EVENTS

Except where noted, events take place:

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

Time: Evening dances 7.00 – 10.30pm (doors
open at 6.30pm)

SEASON 2014-15

Saturday 13 September: Evening Dance

Strathallan

DAY SCHOOL

Saturday 18 October 2014

Paddington Academy, Marylands Road,
London W9 2DR

**Teachers: Graham Donald, Pat Houghton,
Di Rooney and Lindsey Jane Rousseau**
**Musicians: Barbara Manning, Judith Muir,
Sandra Smith and Micah Thompson**

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

Musicians' Workshop led by **Ian Muir**

Evening Ceilidh: **Craigellachie**

Classes to suit everyone

Full details in *The Reel* 289

Wednesday 29 October: Autumn Wednesday
Dance (7.00 – 10.00pm)

Sandra Smith and Christina Hood

Saturday 22 November: Family Day (no evening
dance) **Barbara Manning and Ian Cutts**

Saturday 6 December: Christmas Dance

Craigellachie

Saturday 10 January: Burns' Supper and Ceilidh
Dance **Caledonian Reelers**

Wednesday 18 February: Winter Wednesday
Dance (7.00 – 10.00pm)

Sandra Smith and Jane Ng

Saturday 21 March: Family Day and Evening
Dance **Kafoozalum**

Friday 17 – Sunday 19 April: Spring Fling,
incorporating on Saturday 18 April: Musicians'
Day and Evening Dance (see p4)

Jim Lindsay and the Musicians

Saturday 13 June: AGM and June Dance

Barbara Manning and Callum Mitchell

Saturday 31 October: RSCDS London Branch
85th Anniversary Celebration Dance

Craigellachie

Times and bands to be confirmed in future
editions of *The Reel* and on the Branch website

MEMBERSHIP

London Branch membership brings benefits including reduced rates at Branch events and receiving *The Reel*, while RSCDS membership includes the bi-annual dance publication, *Scottish Country Dancer*.

Current RSCDS London Branch membership rates are £22.00 per annum for UK based members (£28.00 for Europe; £31.00 elsewhere). These rates will be discussed further at the London Branch AGM (see notice on p3). Any change would take effect from 1 July 2014.

Discounts apply of £8.00 for members aged 12-17, £3.00 aged 18-25 and £3.00 for each of two members living at the same address. Members of other Branches can join London Branch for £6.00 per annum if they live in the UK (£12.00 in Europe and £15.00 elsewhere). Membership forms can be downloaded from the Branch website. Membership applications and enquiries should be sent to the Membership Secretary, Gaynor Curtis, 60 Bishops Wood, Woking GU21 3QB, 01483 721989 or membership@rscdslondon.org.uk

South East Region Teachers' Association

An interesting SERTA workshop took place at Finchampstead Memorial Hall on the 16 March led by Anselm Lingnau. Anselm is responsible for the software feature development and database of Strathspey Server (www.strathspey.org) and recently has begun supporting the RSCDS with their website and database development. Outlining his enthusiastic interest in many aspects of Scottish country dancing, his tremendous commitment to the cause soon became evident and infectious as he talked and used some interesting dances to invigorate the mind.

The morning session looked at the various Scottish country dance resources now available on the internet, and how you might go about setting up one's own website and publishing information on it. He emphasised that setting up a website is now relatively cheap and easy, but maintaining it becomes an essential and onerous chore if the information is going to be valued by others. "There is nothing worse than an out-of-date site!"

"The internet can be made to work for you in three major ways: keeping in touch, publishing reference information and selling stuff". Anselm quickly reviewed typical SCD-related websites that exemplified his point: specific sites including the RSCDS site, the Strathspey Server, The Grand Chain and YouTube, and, more generally, social media websites, a map of SCD group locations worldwide and other event calendars.

While being very positive about the gains to be achieved, he also warned of the responsibility to respect the legalities such as copyright, the use of images without permission, ensuring information is sustainable, accurate and up-to-date. The content must also be backed up securely, when you consider the extensive time and effort that has been expended entering data.

Valuable information has been entered on people, dances, tunes, publications, albums, and dance formations in databases that lend themselves to tabulating and reproducing related information for use by dancers, teachers, musicians, and event organisers, while archiving information for eternity. Even music can be documented using formatting tools such as 'ABC' to scribe musical notation easily in a form similar to sheet music.

As recording techniques have moved on there are valuable assets available to Scottish country dancing that reduce the burden of preparing dance sessions. There is the ability to find appropriate sheet music and pre-recorded tracks with associated information, and to "rip" them into MP3 files on portable memory sticks or computer tablets. Such facilities enable any club to source and play their music at the appropriate tempo with the minimum of equipment, but he warned, you must still invest in quality loudspeakers to reproduce the sound. (*Ed: see also article on p8 on use of music in clubs*).

The afternoon session drilled down into the details of the topics overviewed during the morning session, and highlighted the current data entry commitment and future opportunities that might be achieved with a few more volunteers researching and entering data into the Strathspey Server. If you are interested in such tasks for the good of Scottish country dancing, then please approach Anselm and offer your services via the Strathspey Server. Much of the work involves rationalising information, reviewing videos and does not necessarily require technical expertise.

All in all it was a thoroughly informative and enjoyable day.

The next workshop will be on 28 September in Hemel Hempstead, led by Sue Porter.

Gordon Anderson



Anselm Lingnau from Frankfurt visited to give an informative and stimulating talk on the use of the SCD Database resources.

The Call of Home by Ian Robertson

When I was asked to write a critique of Ian Robertson's recently published book of compositions, *The Call of Home*, I was a little reticent. Criticising someone's compositions is every bit as bad as criticising their children! However, I needn't have worried. What a pleasurable experience I had playing through all 47 of Ian's tunes in the book. His grounding and experience in the Scottish dance band scene shine through in the feel of the reels and jigs, whilst his understanding of the fiddle stands out in the slow airs and pastoral strathspeys.

The tunes in the book show a great variety of styles and moods from the very 'dancey', *The Other Left and Mischief Right Through*, to the poignancy and emotion in *Memories of Jimmy Thom* (this tune captures my thoughts of the accordion playing farmer from Guildtown in Perthshire, who always sought to encourage young musicians) and the title tune *The Call of Home*. I also particularly like the fact that there is a section in the book that gives the background story to all of the tunes. It's always a bonus to know the context in which a tune was composed – and some of the reasons clarify early misconceptions (*Plastered Again?*).

In short, I would recommend this book to anyone with an interest in accordion or fiddle music. Ian's compositions fit well with both and I can see many appearing in the repertoires of the Scottish dance bands in the near future, as well as with fiddle groups across the country.

I know there will be more than a few appearing in my sets shortly. Well done Ian, an excellent addition to any musician's library!

Nicol McLaren, Glencairn Scottish Dance Band

HELP NEEDED

The Reel is very fortunate in receiving a good number of contributors of photographs of dancing, dancers and dancing events. Sadly, they cannot all be accommodated. We are seeking someone with an interest and/or expertise in assisting with editing and layout of photographs in the preparation of *The Reel*. Please contact editor@rscdslondon.org.uk if you might be interested.

Scottish Country Dancing: the Great Post-War Transformation

Like many other dancers, I was aware that our country dance heritage had gone through dramatic changes in the middle of the 20th century (see letter from Stephen Webb in *The Reel* 283) and was interested to investigate this further. Approaching matters chronologically, I started reading through dances published by the RSCDS. These books are the treasure trove of dances that Miss Milligan and Mrs Stewart rescued from probable oblivion. Their aim, stated in 1923, was "to practice and preserve Country Dances as danced in Scotland." In the early 20th century, country dancing had been perilously close to disappearing, but by dint of their researches Miss Milligan and Ysobel Stewart succeeded in rescuing this heritage. The happy result of their work was the revitalization of country dancing in the UK and, gradually, around the world.

Starting from Book 1 (published in 1924) I read through dances culled from the numerous collections issued by publishers and dancing masters from the 17th through to the mid-19th century. I also came across many dances gathered from older persons across the Scottish countryside and in the Borders. Without doubt this fascinating collection is a wide-ranging and evocative snapshot of the dancing past.

However, those who dance the modern repertoire and read these early books may well be surprised. Many dances have very simple figures and progressions. The most common formations were rights and lefts, back to back, advance and retire, balance in line, circles, corner, partner, corner, partner, and right and left hands across. My abiding impression was that these early dances were rather sedate and circumscribed, lacking in flow and rarely challenging the confines of the set. A major factor influencing this restricted approach was the prevalence, in the past, of the two-couple dance; there is a limit to what two couples can do and the result often seems to lack the fluidity of a wider canvas.

After the 1939-1945 war, the RSCDS recommenced its work. This country dancing that they had put their stamp on became hugely popular, and this era might be called a golden age for country dancing, though still based largely on the traditional dances. However, we know that our present treasury of country dances has exploded beyond that original heritage. We now have thousands of new dances. How and when did this change happen?

The dancing scene was considerably altered in the 1950s when a new breed of dancer appeared. For the first time we see the seeds of a desire to create new country dances. The redoubtable Hugh Foss (1902-1971) was the first to develop this approach and once we read his wartime history we can understand why: Foss had been a top-flight code-breaker, who, in 1934, helped to break the Japanese Naval Attaché cipher and who also, during the Second World War, was part of the Enigma-breaking team at Bletchley Park. Hugh

Thurston, born in 1922, was of a similar intellectual bent. He was a cryptographer/mathematician and, moreover, a student of ancient astronomy. Both of these men clearly had a passion for complex patterns and sequences.

Foss and Thurston were the intellectual standard-bearers of this new movement and in the 1950s and 1960s they influenced other aspiring dance devisers such as James Cosh, Bob Campbell, Derek Haynes, Roy Clowes, John Drewry, Douglas Henderson and Roy Goldring.

What a creative time this was! These devisers initiated exciting new formations and interactions

modern dances. Book 23 (1967), with a further 12, shows a similar bending to the new era. From then onwards RSCDS books would contain an ever-increasing number of new dances. The golden era, which the society had orchestrated, was to be enriched by this new approach.

Probably the most significant characteristic of these early devisers is that they were not dancing teachers, nor primarily dancers, but of a mathematical bent, interested in creating patterns and exploiting spatial possibilities. Consequently, they approached the country-dancing scene with fresh eyes. Foss's influence can be felt very clearly here. Commenting on his contribution to the Enigma code-breaking success, he wrote, "The methods I used were geometrical." Well, a definition of geometry gives us "A branch of mathematics which studies shape, size, the relative positions of figures and the properties of space." No wonder this code-breaker's influence on country dancing was prodigious!

Amongst Foss and his colleagues there also existed great communality and mutual encouragement. Whilst they nearly all published their own collections of dances, Foss himself being almost a paterfamilias, published others' dances in his Glendaroch Sheets. Elsewhere, Bob Donald, Roy Clowes and their spouses, latterly the founders of the Scottish Dance Archives, were similarly active, testing and publishing promising new dances. Other factors contributing to the success of the dances were word of mouth and the engine of popularity. Great dances, as we all know, spread like wildfire!

It would be a mistake to consider these newcomers as outright iconoclasts, since they were well-acquainted with the traditions of country dancing. In 1954 Thurston wrote his erudite *Scotland's Dances* in which he examined and traced highland, step and country dancing. Foss launched *The Reel* for the London Branch in 1951, and wrote his *Notes on Evolution in Scottish Dancing* (published in 1973), in which he praised the RSCDS's achievements. Moreover, the Society's stylistic contribution was acknowledged. Thus, Thurston confessed to admiring "the ... elegant and artistic manner taught in the RSCDS."

From the 1960s onwards we see these two cultures working together more and more. The RSCDS would power ahead, teaching and publicizing Scottish country dancing around the world. At the same time its publications helped to popularize new formations and dances. The passion for devising dances, started by Foss and all the others, has been taken up everywhere. Great new dances may be broadcast via the RSCDS or, equally, in our internet age, can flash around the world and survive on their own merits. These early devisers would surely approve!

Rosalind Zuridis

With thanks to Bob Donald of Scottish Dance Archives and Stephen Webb of London Branch

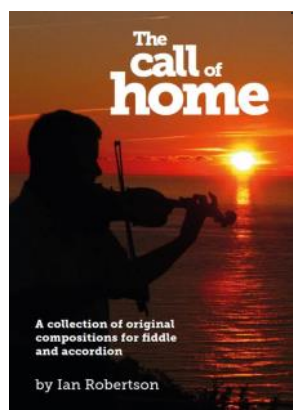


Prolific dance deviser and first editor of *The Reel*, Hugh Foss.

amongst the dancers, thus rendering the set infinitely more supple and dynamic: Cosh's *Mairi's Wedding* (1959) engages the whole set with its four successive half-diagonal reels, creating a flowing, interlocking of the whole set; Drewry's dynamic *Bratach Bana* (1968) involves the whole set via half reels on the side and across, pick-up trajectories and a vivacious finale of diagonal rights and lefts.

Others followed, such as Derek Haynes's *My Heather Hills* (1966) with its innovative spinning opening, and its fast and furious use of diagonals, and in 1967 came Foss's magnificent five-couple *Polharrow Burn*, where the top and bottom couples, exploiting the drama of the long set, fly to each others' positions, then reel dizzily back to place. Other revolutionary formations created in this period include the tournée, the spurtle, the rondel, set and link and the snowball chain. Sparkling ideas were permeating the country dancing scene.

Miss Milligan and her colleagues clearly felt the impact of this new wave. In RSCDS Books 22 and 23, we see, for the first time, a move away from collecting the past towards the appreciation of new dances. Book 22 (1963) contains 12



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The Andrew Rankine Years

“New Year attraction! First Visit to London – Andrew Rankine and His Band,” said the October/November 1957 issue, *The Reel* 39, announcing a dance in the Porchester Hall on 3 January 1958. It was the beginning of a long association between Andrew and the London branch of the RSCDS, as well as the Scottish Reel Club and London Highland Club.

Today’s readers will know Andrew Rankine principally as the composer of tunes that are among the most frequently recorded and broadcast Scottish dancing melodies of all time. They include *Donald Iain Rankine*, which Andrew wrote for his youngest son by his first wife Shelagh; *Angus MacLeod*, named after the co-founder of the Clan MacLeod Pipe Band in Liverpool; and *The Weaver and his Wife*, for Lochcarron-based tartan weaver Neil MacKay and his wife.

Older London Branch members will recall dancing to the band (then consisting of Andrew, Ken Park on fiddle, George Darling on drums and me on piano) in the Porchester Hall during the 1970s and early 80s. I still remember many appreciative comments from dancers from those years, who said that the swinging style of the band contrasted with Jimmy Shand’s more staid approach (though I never went along wholly with this analysis).

As I wrote in the sleeve notes for *Reflecting Rankine*, the CD made by Iain MacPhail and friends a few years ago, Andrew was a bundle of paradoxes. A staunch traditionalist, inspired originally by Jimmy Shand, he was also a restless innovator. He introduced into Scottish dance music the accordion’s electronic bass, firstly by experimenting with a Cordovox in the mid-1960s, and then through modifications to his Hohner Morino piano accordion carried out by Malcolm Dix. Andrew’s arrangements and harmonies, influenced by those of the Bobby MacLeod Band, were highly distinctive.



Former pianist with Andrew Rankine and His Band, Bernard Dixon, with partner Kath Adams.

What I remember most vividly from my years with Andrew is his innate rhythmicity and musicianship. His playing style, too, was paradoxical – bouncy and driving but also relaxed, a crucial combination in the very best dance music from whatever tradition.

Andrew was born in Aberdeen on 28 May 1932, but lived in Menstrie, Clackmannanshire when he began broadcasting in 1951. After moving in 1963 to Whitley Bay and then Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Andrew was closely involved with the Newcastle RSCDS Branch. *Drumelzier*, for Andrew’s second wife Marj, and *Hogmanay Jig* were written as the original tunes for dances devised by the branch stalwart Chris Blair. *Mary and Maurice Cooper* were Secretary and Chairman. London links include *James Forrester Rankine* (Andrew’s oldest son), the original tune for *The Dance of the Diamonds* devised by Graham and Fay Cattell. Together with *Highland Diamond* and *A Tribute to Lindsay Ross*, these were recorded on the band’s last LP, issued in 1984 by the London Highland Club.

When Andrew died, on 11 December 1985, he and Marj had been running the Scottish Heritage Center in Long Beach, California, for two years. Both there, where Andrew played regularly for the Orange County, California, branch of the Society, and in Scottish circles throughout the UK, he is remembered warmly as an exceptionally talented accordionist, bandleader, composer and arranger who introduced new dimensions to Scottish country dance music.

Bernard Dixon

Bernard would be grateful to hear from any reader of The Reel who has one or more photographs of the Andrew Rankine Band during the period mentioned when they were playing in London. Please send via editor@rscdslondon.org.uk

Old Music, New Media?

In The Reel 287 we asked readers to provide information on how they are managing music for their clubs/classes, given the range of different options available. The results make for interesting reading, as follows:

Two main alternative forms are in use – CDs and digital (typically MP3) files. Clubs continuing with CDs are mainly doing so for two reasons: they have several teachers or MCs, and it is therefore necessary to have a single approach that can work for everyone, using the club set of CDs; and/or they have found it the easiest (or possibly only) way to adjust the speed of tracks (but see below). Clubs are using variable speed CD players to allow speed adjustment of CDs, ideally without adjustment of pitch or degradation of sound. Stanton professional CD players were recommended, with digitally controlled speed adjustment. Coomber players were also mentioned.

For convenience, or flexibility, several clubs have taken the plunge, generally through the enthusiasm of one or a few members, and transferred (‘ripped’) all their potentially thousands of tracks to a computer. WinAmp was suggested for this, as well as the more common iTunes. Adjusting the title and metric information can be a laborious but important task, to get consistency of naming and information, and, once done, allows very easy cataloguing and access to exactly the track required. Those reliant on CDs also find they have to maintain databases of the dances so teachers know where to look, in Excel or, dare I say it, on paper.

Once on the computer other tools become available for adjusting tracks and storing for future use, including CoolEdit (now Adobe Audition). Another option suggested is the Amazing Slow Downer. This app allows adjustment to any track on the go, and exists in versions for iPad, iPhone, computer and Android devices. Some clubs are then burning these adjusted tracks back to CD or minidisks for reproduction on the club system.

Depending on the range of dances required, accessing direct from the full list on an iPod or computer may make sense; others have created playlists for an evening’s dancing, or single MP3 CDs with the core repertoire of dances. The amplification options are multiplied by the inclusion of portable docking stations: I myself ran an evening in a church hall recently where the amplification system was set up already with a 3.5mm lead; I was able simply to plug in my iPod and start.

The iPod option, particularly when combined with a remote control, can be very flexible, but sometimes leads to problems of tracks running into each other. One approach suggested is to intersperse tracks with a ‘silence’ track of 30 minutes. The playlist can be left running while the next dance is introduced, and, when ready, the track advanced to the next dance.

As noted in the original article, the number of new CDs coming onto the market has reduced, but most clubs are continuing to seek out recordings. RSCDS Headquarters and specialists such as Music in Scotland are sources for much of the source material, as well as the bands or sponsoring groups themselves. Music available through streaming sites, such as Spotify, and download sites, such as emusic and iTunes, is often not aimed at the dancing audience, and given its largely historic nature, perhaps of less practical value to the modern dancer, though some interesting alternative tracks may be found. I downloaded Iain MacPhail’s classic album *Argyll’s Fancy* from emusic, and with the use of the speed adjustment tools mentioned above, perhaps their recording of *Flowers of Edinburgh* (3’59” in its original form) might actually be danceable! At Anselm Lingnau’s recent presentation to the SERTA (see p6) he suggested that the facility to download single tracks from the RSCDS may soon be upon us.

As well as adjusting speed and volume, the more ambitious have used a number of means to create bespoke tracks, such as medleys for demonstration purposes, and 6x and 10x tracks to accommodate variable numbers of dancers. Garageband was one option put forward for this purpose, with tips on creating a good outcome (same band, matching of key and volume etc.).

In the end, as commented by Steve Johnson, who as well as being a dancer and musician has worked with a number of clubs on their ‘digital strategy’: “even given all the technological possibilities above, I agree that live music is far better. Live musicians can respond to an MC, to dancers and to the atmosphere in a club in a way that recorded music never can.”

Thanks to Steve and all the other contributors for their thoughts.

Jeremy Hill

WANTED: BOOKSTALL MANAGER

Over the years Branch members have received an excellent service from our Bookstall: new publications, advice about recordings, and uncovering obscure leaflet dances. As reflected in the article above, we are in a new technological age of access to material and information through the internet, and the purchase of books and music direct from RSCDS HQ and other suppliers. Despite these changes we still believe there is room for a personal service, and we are currently looking for a new London Branch Bookstall manager. The first task for the new manager, along with the Committee, is to think about the role of our Bookstall in 2014 and beyond. We don’t want to replicate what others already do, but we believe there is a place for the Bookstall in our plans.

Please contact Margaret Catchick at secretary@rscdslondon.org.uk if you may be interested in getting involved with the Bookstall.

Partaking in a Piece of History

Visitors to the Jane Austen Centre in Bath, as well as having an opportunity to dress up (see The Reel 287), will see an introductory video that features footage from a Historical Dance. They may find they recognise the band: Green Ginger – Ian and Meryl Thomson on violins and Cas Sloan on keyboard – have for some years played for historical dance as well as Scottish country dance events. Here they describe some of the differences they observe from the stage.

The historical dances that we play for cover music from about 1770 – 1915, so the first difference is the wide variety in music and musical styles. We might have to play a country dance, cotillion, polonaise, march, waltz, minuet, polka mazurka, mazurka or a quadrille. They all have accents to mark the particular step at different places in the bar of music. The music itself can range from a simple sixteen bar country dance tune to the six different pieces of music that make up the quadrille – the music for which was purloined from opera, orchestral pieces, requiem masses, songs and ragtime and edited (sometimes oddly) to fit the needs of the dance. It is constantly challenging to play.

SCD has a large repertoire of dances complete with music – written and recorded – and with instructions. Given a SCD programme, we have first to find the original tune, then suitable alternative ones. That meant buying a lot of music when we started out (expensive!), though we now have a large amount to draw on. Other musicians have always been generous and given us hard-to-find music. For historical dances we have to hunt in museums, libraries, private collections, second-hand bookshops, on fans and online. Fortunately, more and more digital collections are appearing.

An MC at a Scottish dance will recap the dances, sometimes allowing a walk-through for new or difficult dances. The MC at an historical dance has a bigger problem. There is very little recorded music, so there are not the popular and well-known dances common to Scottish. This means the dances have to be taught or walked through at the ball. Occasionally there is a workshop before a ball, where the harder dances are gone through. We play for a Regency Ball in the Guildhall in Bath for about 150 beginners. They are not only beginners, but, in addition, a lot are non-English speakers, which is a challenge to the MC. Fortunately, dancing can rely on the non-spoken help, a smile or wave to indicate “here!”, a demonstration of a more complicated movement. Everyone enjoys themselves and the lack of linguistic comprehension does not appear to hinder anyone. The same as Summer School...

We need to have the historical dances programmes months early. There is a lot of input from musicians for the event. Since the music is not recorded it helps the Dancing Master to have sound bites to work out the way the dance and music fit. Sometimes we meet the MC and go through things, which is the fast way; otherwise it means relying on the sound bite to judge speed, length and style, and this then flies backwards and forwards as adjustments are made.

It is sometimes difficult to work out how long a movement will take, seeing how the dance and music fits. Instructions are not easy to interpret, and we have occasionally played for a dance and still not been convinced that what has happened is right. Some instructions are quite clear, and some are funny. One cotillion includes a command to ‘threaten with one finger’ as part of the dance. The dance is called *La Sorciere* which may explain it. *Grizzly Bear*, requires dancers to growl at their partners, and the *Ostrich Stomp* to bury their heads in the sand!

Speeds for historical dances are generally slower than those for Scottish; however, in both cases we have to adjust slightly to allow for the standard of the dancers – whether they are getting tired, the state of the floor and other variables. Occasionally we have to add a few extra bars, when dancers have taken longer than they should to finish a pattern, and sometimes an emergency stop, hoping that we will all finish in the same key. There are a few guidelines for speed. Our favourite, for the last movement of the Lancers, is “at the speed of a trotting horse”. This caused Meryl and Ian some consternation; Cas wanted to know what type of horse. So we looked at contemporary pictures of the Lancers to work it out. Research can have odd moments.

The costumes add instant atmosphere. They are not from the local fancy dress shop, but beautifully made. This includes underclothes and corsets. How do we know? We once had to play for a rehearsal prior to a demonstration on a hot day. The dancers had to keep their costumes pristine for performance, so they rehearsed in shifts, tights and corsets.

The ladies keep their hair in rags and rollers for workshops and their hair pieces and wigs on wig stands placed out of the way, under chairs. Blank-faced and bodiless, they are disconcerting when you catch a glimpse of them.

At the Guildhall dance people turn up in their costume for the workshop. They have hired clothes and want to see if they can move in them. Once, when the longwise sets had been made up, four handsome young men in hussar uniforms came through the door. Young ladies’ heads turned, there was a sharp intake of breath from them and, briefly, it became the Meryton Ball, with the younger Bennet sisters on the look out for officers.

At the same workshop there were two young boys from the USA. Most of their costume fitted, but their top hats were held up only by their ears bent at right angles. The hats soon vanished, but the lads danced all afternoon and all night, taking turns dancing with their little sister, who, shy to start with, was bounding up and down the set in the last dance, *Sir Roger de Coverley*, screaming with excitement.

Film crews seem attracted to the Regency Balls in particular. We have seen costumed cameramen from Japan galloping down a set following and filming some dancers. The announcement that the crew will be filming leads to such a patting of curls, doing up of waistcoat buttons and straightening of cravats! On one dreadful occasion, the cameraman put a microphone next to the fiddles and during the evening the house sound system kept shorting, so, as well as the music, the film has a back track of Meryl and Ian wondering where in the room the fault was. Also, once, the keyboard had to be disguised with old oak kitchen units by Meryl’s handy brother-in-law, so as not to offend the film crew’s sensibilities by being out of period.

Where to finish? There may be differences in the steps, style and music, but dancing is a social event with the same pleasures of seeing friends, the achievement of a dance well done, the happiness and well being from the exercise. The music can be different, but not always; there are a lot of ‘historical’ Scottish dances with beautiful tunes, just waiting to be danced. A challenge?

And – which do we prefer playing? A misquote, perhaps will answer: “How happy could we be with either, Were t’ other dear charmer away!”

Green Ginger

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MUSICIANS’ DAY

Saturday 17 May 2014

This year our musicians’ workshop will be led by **Ian Robertson**.

It will take place at St Columba’s Church, Pont Street, London SW1X 0BD with coffee from 10.30 for an 11.00am start.

This is for all musicians who want to learn more about playing for SCD, with the opportunity to play for the Branch Dance that evening.

All musicians are welcome to come along and join in.

Members £22, Non-members £25

For further information and an application form please contact Pam Ellam lonsec@yahoo.co.uk or 01992 812723.

Application forms are also available to download from the website www.rscdslondon.org.uk

New RSCDS Publications

Book 48 and the Third Graded Book of Scottish Country Dances, with accompanying CDs, are due to be available at Summer School 2014 (see also Letter p12), together with The Imperial Book Vol.1.

THE DANCING WORLD



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3

1. RSCDS Bath Branch 66th Annual Ball, 15 February 2014, held at The Guildhall Bath. The opening dance, *The Machine without Horses* (see report p14).
2. Chiswick SCD Club Band Night, 2 March 2014: Frank Thomson from Aberdeen (with Bob Parsons, drums) gave the dancers some super music to dance to.
3. RSCDS London Branch Family Dance, 29 March 2014: Dancers from The Upland Dancers, Bexleyheath, provided a demonstration of the *UNICEF Circle* during the afternoon dance.
4. Orpington and District Caledonian Society Ceilidh, February 2014: Dancing *Laird of Lochmaben* are (left to right): Elisabeth Leishman, Paula Dyke, Deirdre Wilden (obscured), Liz Sutton, Mike Talbot, Maggie Talbot, Linda Scothern, Margaret Briggs, Joan Kinnear (see report p16).
5. U3A Class, East Preston, Sussex: On handing over the class, relocating to France, hard-working *The Reel Business* Editor Jeff and wife Mary Robertson are honoured by being presented with a celebratory cake and a specially written Ode (see p15).



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6. View from the Stage – The Dance Society London (the UK branch of the Societa di Danza) Victorian Ball at Fulham Town Hall, 2010, as seen from the stage by Green Ginger (see article p9).

7. Berkhamsted Strathspey and Reel Club, Club Evening, 1 April 2014: Long-time members Colin and Carol Johnston celebrate with club members their 50th Wedding Anniversary with a Blessing and Renewing of their Vows conferred by club member Revd Janet Ridgway.

8. Berkhamsted Strathspey and Reel Club 62nd Highland Ball held at Ashlyns School, 8 February 2014: Colin Duncan sets to Wendy Carse in *Gang the same Gate*.

9. Maggie Adamson, twice winner of the Glenfiddich Fiddle Competition, was guest fiddler for the evening with Nicol McLaren and the Glenraig SD Band.



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Taking the Lead

Dear Jeremy,

The other day I was looking at my 1951 first edition of *Won't You Join the Dance?* – as one does – and reading the formation described as “Down the Middle and Up”. It says, “the couple joining right hands dance down the middle...the man must lead the woman”. In *Introducing SCD* in 1968, also by Jean Milligan, and still under the heading “Down the Middle and Up” JM adds, “On the first step, they dance slightly down and towards each other to join hands.” The new Manual, described as the Third Edition, published May 2013, calls this formation “Lead down the Middle and Up” and in the introductory paragraph says, “If dancers ‘lead’ down the middle, right hands are used. If dancers ‘dance’ down the middle, nearer hands are used.” No mention, erroneously I believe, of dancing slightly down and towards each other to begin.

The use of the verb ‘to dance’ down the middle has resulted from a development in modern dance devising. The 1772 dance *The Machine without Horses* from Book 12 clearly asks that the first and second couples ‘lead down’ and then ‘lead up’ to the top. The term second couple ‘to dance’ to the top as used in the description is meant simply as that: to dance – with no hidden agenda. We see from this that leading down right hand in right hand and in this case casting around is simply a matter of phrasing when it comes to when to drop right hands and re-join them. I believe that there is a greater feeling of both elegance and control when right hands are given as opposed to nearer hands.

The modern trend is to describe every down the middle and up, or cross over, say, below third couple, as a ‘lead down’ and every lead down with a cast off or up as a ‘dance down’. I contend that if a deviser wishes for the dancers to use nearer hands in a pattern as with reflection reels of three then ‘nearer hands given’ should be stated. This too, I believe, should be how down the middle and up should be described where nearer hands are required. To use the word ‘dance’ in this specific manner is to corrupt its true meaning. JM described the formation as “Down the Middle and Up”. Shouldn't the Society be returning to this clear description in *The Manual* and as teachers simply add ‘leading/nearer hands joined’ as required by the dance description? If it was good enough for Jean Milligan, shouldn't we as dancers remember simple is best?

Happy dancing,
Stephen Webb

P.S. Could I ask teachers to refrain from teaching ‘down the middle and back up’? Surely ‘and up’ is sufficient unless, of course the teacher requires the dancers to retire!

Children's Corner

Dear Editor,

I find it such a shame that young dancers are not given more encouragement to read *The Reel*. I myself have thoroughly enjoyed *The Reel* and believe it would be very good to include a Children's Corner! Some of the things you may wish to include are a short cartoon, a Scottish story and, or course, information about dances suitable for youngsters. I understand that it may cause a lot of trouble finding sources and people to supply these things. Are there other youngsters such as myself, and their parents, who would be prepared to help?

Zoe Hill

Please contact editor@rscds.londong.org.uk if you might be interested in contributing to such a Corner of *The Reel*.

RSCDS Publications and Pilling Diagrams

Dear Jeremy,

A response to Stephen Webb's article “Can we Trust Dances in Diagram?”

The issue of including Pilling-style diagrams in future RSCDS publications was discussed at the October 2013 Membership Services meeting. It was unanimously agreed by the Committee that this is something we would like to do. To this end we have been investigating the feasibility of incorporating diagrams in both Book 48 and the Third Graded Book, due for publication this summer. I am pleased to say that Keith Rose, who produces diagrams for the Strathspey Server website, has very kindly fulfilled this task, and both Book 48 and the Third Graded Book will contain dances in diagrammatical form, as well as the usual RSCDS Standard Terminology.

Kind regards,
Philip Whitley

Convenor, Membership Services Committee

The Little Green Book

Dear Jeremy,

With reference to Stephen Webb's letter in *The Reel* 287, it is no wonder the diagrams are drawn from a man's viewpoint – F.L. Pilling was a man. It definitely appears to have been designed to fit into a sporrán. I bought my first copy at an open air dance in Holland Park in about 1976. Howard and Stella Booth were then running the branch bookstall. I had asked in advance for one to be put aside for me, and Howard produced it from his sporrán.

Nevertheless, this orientation does not seem to cause many problems, possibly because women dance on the men's side much more often than the other way round. It is also the view seen by an MC standing on stage.

Pilling used to be very reliable provided it was used as intended, as an *aide-mémoire*. It was never designed for use when teaching, as it does not claim to include every detail. For example, it does not show the entry to the reel of four in bars 17-24 of *Alltshellach*. However, reliability seems to have declined somewhat in recent years. Although the little green supplement mentioned by Stephen contains mainly newly published dances, it also corrects a number of errors that slipped past the proof-readers of the Eighth Edition. This was probably due to the increasing number and complexity of dances, which must make very hard work for the Pilling committee.

Even so, Pilling diagrams are an excellent form of dance shorthand, and dance instructions are notoriously difficult to put down in writing. Stephen's suggestion of putting them in RSCDS publications alongside the written instructions is a good one. Although it is no longer necessary to take a Pilling to dances regularly, as cribs are usually available, it can be read quickly and is therefore a useful standby in case of a lapse of memory when MCing. The book is now available in both sporrán size and large print.

It would also be helpful if the RSCDS could encourage the producers of written cribs to work towards a standard format, as there are currently several styles in use.

Elizabeth Bennett

Popular Programmes

Dear Jeremy,

Stephen Webb (Letters, *The Reel* 287) is right to question the validity of statistics on dancing. It will perhaps help him and others to know that I started making the lists simply so that the group I was with overseas had some guidance about selecting dances to learn. This ties in with the point made by Elizabeth Bennett, also in *The Reel* 287, about the compromises needed in order to produce a dance programme. My theory was that, if my group learnt dances that were popular ones, we would be better placed if we wanted to dance elsewhere.

I could have done as Stephen suggested and kept a record of the dances advertised in *The Reel*, but typing the names of all the dances would have been a chore. By using the email advertisements, all I had to do was a quick cut-and-paste. I don't know how many events and dances are advertised in *The Reel* over a year, but the emails for last year covered over 110 events, and had nearly 2,200 dances. Those large numbers meant I was happy that the statistics gave a valid indication of what was popular. I wasn't interested in which dance was the first choice; indeed, I didn't draw a line at, for example, the 31 dances that appeared 15 times or more – all I wanted was some guidance. Now that I'm back in the UK (and no longer have a requirement to keep lists!), I have proved to my satisfaction that this has worked. For my use, any scepticism is unfounded.

So far so good, for my needs, but the statistics also showed a problem, and that is the sheer number of dances there are, as you highlighted in your editorial in *The Reel* 286, supported by John Carswell (Letters, *The Reel* 287). At the events advertised by email, there were 481 different dances. Some 200 dances appeared only once, and another 80 appeared only twice. As the organizers of these events seek publicity, they are presumably inviting attendance from outside their regular group. Why then the appearance of so many dances that are danced at just one or two events? I imagine that no one goes to every event advertised by email, but by including obscure dances in our programmes we are likely to deter all but the most dedicated.

I have probably done about 500 different dances in the years that I've been dancing, but can you imagine the impact on potential beginners if we told them the variety of the dances they would be expected to learn? And that the RSCDS is encouraging the introduction of even more dances? There will always be people who want to invent dances, and clearly this has to be a good thing: some of today's popular dances are not very old, and dancing would not be so much fun if they did not exist. However, I don't think it is helpful to experienced dancers or beginners, particularly beginners, that the RSCDS is currently in the business of commissioning new dances.

I think we are in danger of forgetting that this is not how dancing was done when it was more popular. Look for example at the article on Monday Socials (*The Reel* 285) – imagine the reaction today at an RSCDS dance if every programme started and ended with *The Eightsome Reel*!

Maybe the problem of decreasing attendance is not that society has changed, perhaps it is that we have become too specialist – dare I say elitist?

Yours sincerely,

Iain Ross

LIVES REMEMBERED

Cecily Pamela Cook (née Large) (7 April 1929 – 1 February 2014)

Cecily Pamela Large, known to all as Pam, was born in Gainsborough, Lincolnshire. We remember Pam as a tall elegant lady with a passion for Scottish country dancing. She taught classes on the Sussex coast, primarily in Chichester, Bognor Regis, Rustington and Brighton. Latterly she taught two classes in East Preston: an intermediate class, and a U3A class for beginners, where she was both loved and respected.

Pam had attended Gloucester College and taken a course in Institutional Management, which included catering, and her baking skills were to be enjoyed by all. Although quite private, she was a strong, determined and positive person, who was kind and thoughtful, and took the class till the very end, sitting when she could no longer stand. Together with her husband Ron, she made the classes into special friendly events, with many parties where Pam's tasty baking became legend. She would give out seasonal treats to the class, with diabetic sweets as an alternative to those who needed them. Pam and Ron also encouraged and took groups round to all the local dances.

In 1960 Pam moved to Australia where she lived for thirty years, first in Newcastle and then Brisbane. There were regular visits back to Britain, including visiting the Isle of Man, her mother's native home, where she retained close family ties.

Pam joined the RSCDS in 1979, passing her Preliminary Certificate in 1986 and Teacher's Certificate in 1989 as a member of the South East Queensland Branch. Always very fit and competitive, Pam won trophies in golf, was a good swimmer, a prolific knitter and a great letter writer. Her younger sister Margaret had moved to the USA, where Pam and Ron were married 21 years ago, before moving to Worthing.

Over the years, Pam devised many Scottish country dances, and one of these, *The Gardeners' Fantasia*, which was published in RSCDS Book 46, has been performed all over the world. Sadly, Pam died on 1 February 2014. She will be missed by the many whose lives she touched.

Jeff Robertson



Clement Moxham Robertson (19 May 1923 – February 2014)

Clem was born in Newburgh, Fife, Scotland, and died aged 90 at home on the Isle of Wight, following a long illness. He began his working life as a potato and raspberry picker in Fife, and at the Tay Salmon Fisheries Company. But he was not distracted from his studies and, aged 19, he achieved his first Bachelor of Science degree in General Science from London University. He went on to obtain a degree in Chemistry, before studying with the Open University for further degrees in Mathematics and Geology after he retired.

In 1940, Clem joined the civil service as an analytical chemist, where his work included developing explosives. He was deputy chief scientific officer at the Royal Arsenal's chemical inspectorate department in Woolwich and much of his work was Quality Control.

A keen musician and clarinetist, Clem met his wife Margaret when he joined the Catford Co-operative Orchestra for whom she played violin. They were married in the spring of 1951 in Lewisham and had children, Janet and Ian. They both enjoyed Scottish country dancing and also some Highland dancing and both sang in Gaelic choirs in the 1970's and 1980's.

To be with family, Clem and Margaret retired to Shanklin, Isle of Wight in 1987 and joined several local organisations, including the Isle of Wight Caledonian Society. They were regular attendees at classes, both very good dancers in their day with impeccable phrasing. Clem danced with the White Heather display team and on occasion he would rehearse the choir, whilst Margaret accompanied on the piano. Clem served on the committee in 1989, always contributing his wisdom, and he devised the crib sheets for the Society (in the days before internet cribs) for the St Andrew's Night Ball and Burns' Night Dance. Clem was elected as President of the Isle of Wight Caledonian Society 1992-94 and later, in recognition of his considerable contribution to the success of the IW Caledonian Society, he was given Honorary Membership.

Clem enjoyed very many things in life, including classical music, forming and singing in choirs, geology, walking in the hills, cycling and, of course, his family. Clem had a real zest for life and Margaret was the love of his life. She sadly died in 2009.

Clem's family and friends described him as patient, kind and a true gentleman. The last few years of his life he was not able to continue dancing, but continued to produce the crib sheets for the Isle of Wight Caledonian Society dances. He will be much missed by the many friends through dancing who have known him over the years. We will remember him as we live our lives to the full.

Judy Valvona



Clem proposing the Toast to the Lassies at the IOWCS Burns' Night in 2010.

Maureen Gibson Joyce (née Ainsworth) (28 August 1950 – 25 March 2014)

The Scottish country dancing communities in Hertfordshire, Essex and Dorset have all gained much from Maureen's teaching and will be sad to know that she passed away after a valiant battle against cancer.

Maureen was born and grew up in SW Scotland, the only daughter amongst five siblings. She loved Scottish dancing from an early age, and even volunteered to help at the local classes in order to pay for her own: a tradition of helping and teaching she continued until very recently.

She and her first husband moved south to Harlow in the early 1970s where, in years to come, she started first MCing and then teaching. She took the Teachers' Prelim course in 2002/3 with the RSCDS Cambridge Branch (tackled with due conscientiousness despite a difficult time family-wise) and became Fully Certificated in June 2005. Maureen taught at several clubs including High Wyche, the Roding Reel Club, Bishops Stortford and the SE Herts SCDS, at all levels. She particularly enjoyed teaching annually at an HF (Holiday Fellowship) holiday in Brecon where she wrote *The Other Left* – as teachers are often heard to say, "No, the Other Left (hand)!", published in *The Berkhamsted Diamond Collection*.

Maureen became a good friend to the members of Berkhamsted S & R Club, dancing and teaching there on many occasions. She also helped at SERTA, and at Teacher Training Courses in Cambridge and Hemel Hempstead. Latterly she had personally taught three Unit 0 (Basic Teaching Skills) courses very successfully.

In February 2009, serendipity stepped in, when Frank Joyce took up a last minute place that became available at Winter School. Romance appeared and it didn't take long for Frank to persuade Maureen to move down to Crewkerne. Despite one or two set-backs, they finally married last November 2013 – a magical day organised entirely by Maureen's three daughters, Alison, Wendy and Gemma. To mark the occasion, they were presented with a new dance and accompanying music composed by Sandy Nixon, entitled *A Winter School Romance* (see www.berkhamstedreelclub.org).

Having arrived at Crewkerne, Maureen was immediately snapped up and made welcome by the local Dorset clubs at Bridport and West Camel teaching until she entered the local hospice. She thought that if she couldn't retire to Scotland, then Dorset was a very fine second choice!

Maureen was never happier than when she was dancing, especially doing a good birl to Sandy Nixon's band!

Jane Rose



CLUB AND OTHER NEWS

Are Ceilidh Dances the Future for Watford SS?

Immigrant Scots in Watford were probably feeling a bit lonely and homesick when they founded the Watford and West Herts Scottish Society in 1919. The objectives they set for the society were to keep alive the traditions of "Auld Scotland"; organise social and other gatherings; and to develop friendly relations among local Scots.

The club had its hey day between the 60s and the 80s, when Scottish country dancing was very popular. Today things are different. Despite running a successful ball and Burns' Night each year, the membership, like that of many other Scottish Societies, is dwindling and aging. Despite great efforts to recruit beginners to our dance class, very few new members have joined recently.

So, what lies ahead for the Watford Scottish Society? Do we gradually wind things down and give up gracefully, or do we test out new activities that fit with our constitution? After much consideration we decided to take a risk and follow the latter option, and start hosting Scottish ceilidh dances; following the model of the Ceilidh Club at Cecil Sharp House in London: big venue, full band line-up, caller, and (hopefully) lots of people having a wild time! We were not seeking converts to Scottish country dancing, we were simply wanting to reach out to a broader demographic, including young people, and do a Scottish thing for its own sake!

So we held our first Ceilidh Dance, in November 2013 at the Bushey Academy. About 60 people attended, including a large number of under-25s! Quicksilver played super-lively tunes, and Malcolm Ferris Lay did the calling. His witty and good-humoured style really added to the evening. Encouraged, we decided to try again, and recently ran our second night, a Spring Fling Ceilidh at Watford Grammar School for Girls, with the same band, and MC. This time we had a slightly smaller attendance, about 50.



Young dancers enjoying Spring Fling Scottish Ceilidh dance, Friday 21 March

What is astoundingly clear is how much fun people have had at these two events. There were non-stop smiles all round, and everyone told us how good it was, and that they really want to come back again.

Financially the situation is less good. With a £12 entry price, and with the numbers attending, we have made a significant loss on both occasions. However, with such positive feedback we hope that the numbers will start to rise enough to break even, and we are therefore planning another ceilidh to mark the Scottish Independence Referendum in September (see advertisement on p16). Tickets will be on sale at Summer Tuesdays and elsewhere.

Andy Wiener, Watford and West Herts Scottish Society

Bath's Fantastic Annual February Ball

The Ball took place in the magnificent Banqueting Room of the Guildhall, Bath: elegant Adam-style interior, original colour scheme, glittering chandeliers and portraits that were hung there when it was opened in 1778.

This year, the dancing began with *The Machine without Horses*, published six years before the Banqueting Room was opened, and the programme included more demanding dances such as *Nottingham Lace*. Dancers came from Bristol, south Somerset, Dorset and London, as well as Bath itself. Until a few years ago, there was no walking-through or recapping at the ball, but the Branch brought them in, to make it more attractive to more dancers, and because ticket sales were beginning to fall; a controversial move at the time that is now welcomed. We learn so many dances that some quick revision can be helpful and we enjoy a dance more, the more confident we are that we can do it successfully.

Ever popular band, Hugh Ferguson and Dalriada, were on their best form. There was, as always, a plentiful and excellent 3-course cold buffet supper followed by coffee. RSCDS Bath Branch is willing to subsidise the cost, keeping tickets at a modest £25 each this year. Being able to dance in the beautiful surroundings of the Guildhall makes this event special for dancers and worth travelling to.

"Excellent dance", "A lovely evening" "...loved the venue". Those were some of the comments from an opinion survey to find out what dancers thought of this year's ball and how to improve it in future. Overall, 98% said that they enjoyed the evening very much. Dancers wanted no radical change, and we look forward to returning to the Banqueting Room again in 2015.

Matthew Clements (see photo p10)

Valerie – You will be missed!

Valerie Twining (as in Twining's Tea) was born in Knightsbridge. After leaving school she was attached during WWII to a special department in the Foreign Office. After the war, Valerie became a milliner with her own Chelsea showroom in Cadogan Place.

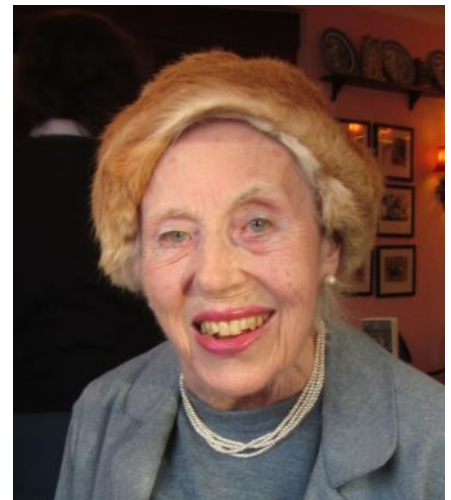
She began dancing in 1973 (some might say late in life), after joining The Victorian Society of London. When this society had an outing that included SCD, Valerie was hooked.

Having spent most of her life in London, she was delighted to learn that SCD was to be found just around the corner from where she was then living in Knightsbridge.

For the past 40 years she has been a member of and regular attendee at most club's dances held in St Columba's Church, which included over the years the Chelsea Reel Club (now disbanded), Little Ship Club, London Highland Club, RSCDS London Branch, St Columba's Dancers, The Scottish Clans Association of London (now disbanded), and Summer Tuesdays. Not confining herself to London, she also danced out of town, and attended dances and balls anywhere from Eastbourne to Cheltenham, when she always looked most elegantly dressed. Valerie, who has just celebrated her 90th birthday, remains in good health if a little frail, but has now moved permanently out of town. She shut her Knightsbridge front door for the last time on 4 March, to take it a little easier in Arundel nearer to her god-daughter.

So, especially for us dancers, she will be greatly missed. She had the ability to tackle the most demanding of dances, hardly putting a foot wrong, and was even rather partial to the odd bit of birling! To Valerie, from all her dancing friends, we say good luck for the future, and thanks for the memory!

Stephen Webb



Valerie Twining on her 90th birthday.

SOUTH EAST DANCE DIARY

The diary is available through the Branch website at www.rscdslondon.org.uk and is regularly updated. If you don't have internet access and would like a hard copy of the latest version please send a SAE to Caroline Hamilton, 31 Boundary Road, Pinner, Middlesex HA5 1PW.

All societies in the South East are invited to submit their functions for inclusion in the diary by emailing Caroline Hamilton at diary@rscdslondon.org.uk or by post to the above address.

An Ode To Mary And Jeff

A jolly Sussex couple
Renowned for Scottish Dance,
Decided they would run away
To go and live in France.

They bought a lovely villa
In need of renovation,
And packed all their belongings up,
Prepared for emigration.

But there was just one problem
That was standing in their way,
They couldn't leave the super friends
They'd met through U3A!

For over all the winter months
They'd formed a special bond,
As they'd performed their jigs 'n' reels
And taught the allemande!

Despite the lure of croissant
And freshly baked baguette,
They wondered how to cope
Without their U3A pousette!

Altho' they drooled at Beaujolais
Maturing in its cask,
Surviving would be hard
Without their Worthing pas de Basque!

Though cross the channel beckoned
And they should be on their way,
How could this pair survive
Without East Preston's grand Strathspey?

While they were looking forward
To the taste of French fromage,
They knew it would be tough
When U3A said "Bon Voyage"!

And tho' they were excited
By adventures which were foreign,
They felt unsure how Frenchmen
Would respond to his large sporan!

Yet both were quite aware
That they had a sense of guilt,
For neither had disclosed
What was underneath the kilt!

But finally their travelling steps
Led on to pastures green,
They waved goodbye to Gill and Trish
To Judy, Bill and Jean.

Said "Au Revoir" to Jackie,
And to Julia, Janet, Sue,
To Kate and Bibs and Cathy,
Rosemary, Roger, Barbara too.

Unplugged their CD player
And tartan rug did pack,
As all the dancers raised a glass
And toasted "Haste ye back!"

We wish you every happiness
In all your future plans,
You know that we will be secure
In Natalie's safe hands.

May love and laughter follow you
And happiness as well.
Watch out, we may pop over soon
To dance our petronelle!

Janet Smith
Arun East U3A
Scottish Country Dancing Class
East Preston 14 February 2014

(See also photo p10)

HUMPTY-DUMPTY IN ST PETERSBURG

Tuesday, 4 February 2014, found me heading east by train from London to Stockholm, followed by a night ferry crossing to Turku in Finland. As Rachel Wilton reported on page 13 of *The Reel* 286, I helped initiate the first group in Finland as a consequence of a weekend school in Turku last summer. I now successfully taught the fledgling group in three sessions over a weekend, so as to consolidate the basics which they had been learning. But, thereafter, temptation beckoned. Only two more trains would get me to St Petersburg to dance with the Humpty-Dumpty School, something that has been on my wish-list for ages.

At first glance, the timetable indicates a five and a half hour train journey from Helsinki to St Petersburg, yet only one and a half hours to return! Thus I became aware of the two hour time difference beyond Finland (let alone the four hour difference from London), which meant that winter daylight happily extended into the early evening in St Petersburg.

Allemande
practice at
the Humpty-
Dumpty
School, St
Petersburg,
Russia



After arriving at St Petersburg's Finlyandski rail station, I crossed a bridge traversing the very wide, and totally frozen, River Neva. But I was not destined to experience the "minus 20" I had been warned against. So wandering the city in my kilt on dancing days was not a problem.

The Humpty-Dumpty School

On the Monday evening I headed by metro into the suburbs and easily found the purpose-built dance studio for that evening's country dance class for the Humpty-Dumpty School's newer dancers. Teachers Nadezhda Alkimovich and Ekaterina Yarmarkina put us through our paces, with petronella turns and the allemande being particularly featured. Then Wednesday evening found me at the School's Highland class being taught *The Highland Fling*, and steps of *The Sword Dance (Gillie Chalum)*, by Sergey Kargapoltsev, a session which stood out for its clarity, accuracy and joyful atmosphere...and hard work. As I distributed copies of *The Reel*, I was asked if I was going to write an article? And so I have taken the hint!

These classes are part of the Humpty-Dumpty Dance School, a name which begs the question, "Why this name?" Sergey explains:

The Humpty-Dumpty Dance School is a Celtic dance school in St Petersburg, which teaches traditional Irish, Scottish and Breton dances. Humpty-Dumpty is the English name of the Shaltay-Boltay Club, the place in which folk groups started playing Celtic music. In 1999, regular classes in Celtic dance were started here. So the name Humpty-Dumpty is a tribute to this club and the community of folk musicians and dancers. The name was first used in summer 2002 during the Festival Interceltique de Lorient, and became the official name of the newly established school. The choice of name also attempts to be all embracing, avoiding quasi-Irish names.

Dividing the school into independent units began in 2002, with the School working in full since 2003. Scottish dancing began to be taught in 2007, thanks mostly to the efforts of the RSCDS Moscow Branch and teacher Catherine Fenogenva.

Anybody interested in Celtic culture can be a student. As the School is amateur, its doors are open to all. But we aspire to a professional level of teaching. Our teachers are people for whom the teaching and popularisation of Celtic dances is a significant part of their life. The School's activities have made significant progress in popularising and teaching Celtic (especially Irish) dances in St Petersburg.

At the moment, the School conducts classes in SCD, Scottish Ceilidh, Ladies' Step Dancing and Highland Dancing. It also performs demonstrations at events in the cultural life of St Petersburg (e.g. at concerts, festivals, presentations, some official occasions) and also corporate and private parties. It has become a tradition to take part in St Petersburg's *Days of Scotland*.

Links with St Petersburg

These days, when we Scottish dancers hear the name St Petersburg, we automatically think of the Book 46

dance *Links with St Petersburg* devised by Malcolm Brown. It was tempting to ask Malcolm about the story behind the dance. Malcolm explains:

In the sixth form at school, we scientists were obliged to take an arts subject for a year. I decided to study Russian. Hence I have been interested in all things Russian ever since, and had a strong desire to visit St Petersburg.

Time passed, and I seemed to meet more and more people who had visited St Petersburg on cruises, who said what a wonderful place it was. In early 2008 we were asked to teach at a weekend in Florida, when we managed to tour part of the state, including a visit to 'St Petersburg'. By then I had concluded that this was probably as close as I was going to get to the one in Russia! But at St Andrews that year I met some young Russians, and I asked Sergey where he was from: "Russia!" "Yes, but where in Russia?" "St Petersburg!"

Suddenly, in late 2008, I received an email asking me if I would come and teach at their festival in St Petersburg in February 2009. Not surprisingly, I jumped at the chance. I thought that I would devise a dance to take with me, so that the Advanced Class would have something new to learn. I came up with the idea of changing Set & Link for Three into a two couple version (I had forgotten that Milton Levy had already come up with the idea, calling it "Set and Cross Link"). As my lesson plan was based on variations of Set and Link, the dance title suggested itself. I was very pleased on returning the following May to find that they had put it on the ball programme. Since then I have been twice more, stayed in assorted accommodation in the city, and made many new friends. One of my hosts has even come to visit us with her daughter. So now I really do have *Links with St Petersburg*.

Links from St Petersburg

Alas, it was time for me to return home. To avoid the hassle of getting a Belarus transit visa, my west bound journey started towards Finland. But I am happy to report that during my two and half day journey home, all my "Rail and Ferry Links FROM St Petersburg" worked a treat.

Jim Cook, Sergey Kargapoltsev, Malcolm Brown

The Annual Eastbourne Weekends of the Croydon Branch: Every year the Croydon Branch holds a weekend school at Eastbourne on the second weekend in November, which begins on a Friday evening with a sherry reception; this is followed by dinner and then social dancing in the ballroom. Saturday evening also plays host to a second dance. Last November we were joined by members of the local dance group, who came to dance with us on both evenings. Catriona Bennett MC'd on Saturday and it fell to me for the Friday. There are classes on both Saturday and Sunday mornings from 9.30am to 12.30pm; we have a coffee break around 11.00am and for Remembrance Sunday we then observe two minutes' silence.

For this Eastbourne 2013 weekend our teacher, Angela Campbell from Orpington, gave us excellent tuition on both mornings with a variation of formations and new dances for all of us; it is always a challenge with a class of many different dancing abilities, but Angela made sure that everyone gained something from it. On Saturday afternoons, for many years, committee member Ian Lunt has organised a short walk, normally about three miles within the local area. Alas, yet again this year it had to be cancelled due to the bad weather, so a few of us decided instead to go to the theatre for the Saturday film matinée. We also hold a short session in the afternoon for anyone who wishes to walk through dances for the evening programme. We had dancers attend from Orpington, Bristol, Ashford and our regular friends from Jersey, many of whom have been coming for a number of years now, and as the weekend came to a close we began to look forward to Angela returning to teach us again one year hence.

What of the history of our weekend? The first Branch weekend was held in 1977 at Barton-on-Sea. We moved to Eastbourne the following year to the Sandhurst Hotel, the format was as it is now, with two classes and two evenings of social dancing. Teachers have included those from our local Croydon classes, such as Andrew Gillies, and Ron Mackey, but since 1999, at the instigation of the Chairman, Tommy Dunsmore, we have invited teachers from outside the local area, starting with Ann Dix from the BHS Border Branch, and also including Rita Marlow, Jenny Greene, Dennis Tucker, Wendy Mumford, Pat Davoll, Simon Wales and Rachel Wilton. Mary Stoker taught in 1979 and John Drewry in 1982. In the early days we also had Phyllis Draper as pianist, but for the past 28 years we have used recorded music. Also in 1999 we moved to our current hotel, The Cumberland, which has a sea view and can accommodate up to seven sets.

There have been many memorable happenings, but the year the whole Eastbourne Piping Band descended on the hotel, collecting for Children in Need was one
(continued on facing page)

MiniCrib 2014: In an article in *The Reel* 259, in March 2007, Stewart Murray wrote an excellent account of the work done by Charles Upton of Deeside Caledonian Society in producing Minicrib. For those not in the know, Minicrib is a database of brief recap notes for Scottish country dances. In essence, it is a document template for use with Microsoft Word. Users simply search for a dance by name in the database, click on the 'Insert' button and, as if by magic, the dance instructions, in abbreviated form, are printed on the page. Whether just one dance is required or the whole programme for a ball or dance, Minicrib makes the task very easy.

In 2007, Charles stated that he was "past his sell-by date" and was looking for volunteers to take over the running of Minicrib. Unfortunately, nothing came of that, until December 2013, when a small group of dance colleagues from Deeside Caledonian Society and RSCDS Wirral Branch finally allowed Charles to 'hang up his ghillies' by taking on the task. The MiniCrib Team have set up a new website (www.minicrib.org.uk) and updated the versions of MiniCrib available including a version for 32 bit or 64 bit Word running on Microsoft Windows 32 bit or 64 bit (essentially something for everyone using Word 97 right up to Word 2013). A PDF version is available, which should work on almost any device, including Android devices, and it is hoped that by the time you read this there will be a working version of MiniCrib for use on Apple Mac with most versions of Word. MiniCrib is updated about every 4-6 weeks with corrections and new dances added. The website offers other facilities, so why not take a look?

David Haynes, The MiniCrib Team

Ceilidh at Orpington and District Caledonian Society: Once a year, in the dark month of February, Orpington and District Caledonian Society let their hair down with a riotous ceilidh put on by members and friends. Our Thursday Social Dancing opens its doors at Petts Wood Memorial Hall to the Monday Beginners' and Improvers' Class for a varied programme of acts interspersed with dancing. This year the Monday folk excelled themselves with a new dance devised to tax their dancing skills, but also their talent for dressing up, inspired by the current fascination with healthy and unhealthy food: 'The Great British Mix Up' (a tribute to *The Great British Bake Off*) was a lively demonstration of a new 4x32 bar ceilidh-type reel or jig entitled *All Mixed Up* in which partners kept together, but frequently danced with new couples.

The Wednesday monthly advanced dancers showed their skills in the more serious *Laird of Lochmaben*. Other items were solo Burns songs and the lively, twenty-strong Acafellas Barbershop (who interrupted their normal practice session to entertain us); we danced *A Trip to Bavaria*, only to be entertained later by a masochistic spoof German Schuhplattler, with Kentish variations; recitations and music hall songs kept the audience amused; and a reduced *Cinderella* had us in hysterics, with a well-endowed cast of cross-dressers following the traditional story, all ending happily for the 'glamorous' couple. The ninety members/dancers/friends/participants all left with glowing memories of their own favourite moments of Scottish country dancing, plus lively home-grown entertainment.

Roger Brown (see photo p10)



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worthy of note. Then there was 2008 when the hotel boiler split and flooded the electrics in the cellar, leaving us without heating, water or lifts. The hotel offered everyone the chance to be rehoused at other hotels, but stoically nearly everyone stayed put. For our 50th Anniversary, we had Jenny Greene teaching (when she introduced us to quadrilles) with Jean Harrison on piano and McBain's Band playing for our Saturday evening dance. Croydon Branch is now in its 60th Anniversary Year, which began with our Eastbourne Weekend and will finish with a ball on 26 April 2014.

From all the comments and articles written in our newsletters, it is obvious that each year everyone enjoys the weekend and I would like to say a big thank you to all who have taught us, each bringing their own unique style and skills, for all their hard work in ensuring each weekend is a success and to all the dancers from near and far who continue to support us – we look forward to seeing you again next November in Eastbourne!

Pauline Cashmore, Croydon Branch

WATFORD AND WEST HERTS

SCOTTISH SOCIETY

Farewell to Scotland?

Scottish Ceilidh Dance

Come to a Scottish Ceilidh to mark the Independence Referendum
You need no experience of dancing, only an appetite for a lively and energetic night out!

Saturday 27 September 2014

7.30 – 11.00pm

Dame Fuller Hall,

The Watford Grammar School for Girls,

Lady's Close, Watford WD18 0AE

Quicksilver

Caller: Malcolm Ferris Lay

Tickets £12.00 (£10.00 for under-25s)

available via Eventbrite or

Contact Andy Wiener 07900 317720

www.facebook.com/WatfordScottishCeilidhs

CHARITY DANCE

Saturday 30 August 2014

7.30 – 11.00pm

Breaks Manor Youth Centre, Hatfield

Popular Scottish Country Dances

Tickets £5.00 plus shared refreshments and raffle

Contact Davina Taunton

davinaht@ntlworld.com

RSCDS CAMBRIDGE & DISTRICT BRANCH

Tea Dance

Saturday 10 May 2014

2.00 – 5.00pm

Chesterton Community College,

Cambridge CB4 3NY

Barbara Manning

Tickets £8.00 (Students £6.00)

including cream tea

Dancing on the Green

Saturday 8 June 2014

2.00 – 5.00pm

Christ's Pieces, near Emmanuel Road,

Cambridge CB1 1JW

Dancing outdoors to recorded music, weather permitting

Free of charge

Annual Dance

Saturday 18 October 2014

7.30 – 11.30pm

Impington Village College,

Impington, Cambridge CB24 9LX

Luke Brady's Scottish Dance Band

Contact Lindsey Ibbotson, 07977 905291 or lindsey.ibbotson@gmail.com

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

LONDON HIGHLAND CLUB

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



Saturdays: Lower Hall 7.00 – 10.30pm unless otherwise stated

Saturday 10 May: Combined Societies Dance hosted by London Highland Club

Alasdair MacLeod

Saturday 7 June: Summer Ball (see below)

Saturday 6 September: President's Night
7.00 – 11.00pm **Craigievar**

Saturday 4 October: **Colin Dewar**

Summer Ball

Saturday 7 June 2014

7.00 – 11.00pm

Ian Muir of Prestwick

Programme: The White Heather Jig, Maxwell's Rant, Scotch Mist, Tribute to the Borders, Blooms of Bon Accord, Miss Gibson's Strathspey, Inchmickery, Swiss Lassie, Neidpath Castle, The Jubilee Jig, The Milltimber Jig, Culla Bay, The Recumbent Stone, Joe MacDiarmid's Jig, Dalkeith's Strathspey, The Barmkin, Father Connelly's Jig, 12 Coates Crescent, Happy Returns, Ian Powrie's Farewell to Auchterarder

Tickets include finger buffet refreshments

* LHC Members in advance £14.00

* Non Members in advance £16.00

All classes on the door £18.00

* Advance booking price is only available on orders received by midnight 4 June

For tickets contact Frank Bennett,
020 8715 3564 or fb.lhc@blueyonder.co.uk

If you have highland dress, you are invited to wear it

Programmes & cribs are now available on our website:

www.londonhighlandclub.co.uk

For further details contact: Catriona Bennett on 020 8544 5558 or cmb84scd@gmail.com
Everyone is welcome at all our functions, so please come along and join us for an enjoyable evening.

BERKHAMSTED STRATHSPEY & REEL CLUB

Spring Dance

Saturday 17 May 2014

Victoria Hall, Tring

HP23 6AA

(Sprung dance floor – large car park nearby)

Strathallan

Programme available on website

Tickets £12.00

Raffle, Bar, Bring & Share Buffet

Day School

Sunday 16 November 2014

Abbots Hill School, Hemel Hempstead HP3 8RP

Classes for all levels of dancers

For details of these and other events please visit

www.berkhamstedreelclub.org

or contact Gerry Elliott via

events@berkhamstedreelclub.org



RSCDS BERKS/HANTS/ SURREY

BORDER BRANCH

Branch Ball

Saturday 17 May 2014

Emmbrook School, Wokingham
RG41 1JP



Ian Muir and the Craigellachie Band

Programme: The Machine without Horses, The Peat Fire Flame, Linnea's Strathspey, Mrs Stewart's Jig, The Sailor, The Gardeners' Fantasia, MacLeod's Fancy, Mrs Stewart of Fasnacloich, Margaret Parker's Strathspey, Follow Me Home, The Zoologist, The Reverend John MacFarlane, Salute to the Borders, EH3 7AF, Orwell Lodge Strathspey, Anniversary Reel, S-Locomotion, Bon Voyage, The Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh

Contact Gordon Anderson 0118 961 7813

Summer Dancing

Wednesdays from 11 June to 20 August 2014

8.00 – 10.00pm

Our Lady Queen of Heaven Church Hall,

Frimley, GU26 6EL

Contact Shirley Ferguson 01276 501952

Afternoon Tea Party

Sunday 6 July 2014

Carnation Hall, Chavey Down Road,

Winkfield Row RG42 7PA

2.30 – 5.30pm

Ian & Judith Muir

Contact Deborah Draffin 01344 776831

Visit our website on www.rscds-bhs.org.uk

IAN & VAL MCFARLANE

cordially invite their dancing friends to another

Scottish/English Dance

Sunday 29 June 2014

4.15 – 8.00pm

The Beaconsfield School, Wattleton Rd,

Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire HP9 1SJ

Chris & Julie and Nick Dewhurst (3D)

www.staffordfolkplayers.co.uk/3d.htm

Contact Ian & Val McFarlane, 01494 672782 or

www.mcf107.com



CHISWICK SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE CLUB

Midsummer Magic

Open Air Dance

Sunday 29 June 2014

5.30 – 9.00pm (Dusk)

Chiswick House Grounds, London W4 2QN

The Frank Reid Scottish Dance Band

Programme: A London Celebration, Joie de Vivre, Seann Truibhas Willichan, Scott Meikle, A Strathspey for Bar, Jessie's Hornpipe, Best Set in the Hall, The Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh, The Machine without Horses, Da Rain Dancin', Whiteadder Jig, The Wind on Loch Fyne, Postie's Jig, The Craven Twelvesome, The Minister on the Loch, Seton's Ceilidh Band, The Montgomeries' Rant. Extras: West's Hornpipe, Kendall's Hornpipe, Monymusk

If it rains, dancing will move to the Marquee, in the grounds of Chiswick House.

Bring your own picnic and water

Tickets in advance only:

Before 10 June 2014

Members £10 Non-members £12 Students £6

After 11 June 2014:

Members £13 Non-members £15 Students £8

Non dancers £5

Tickets from: tickets@chiswickscottish.org.uk

www.chiswickscottish.org.uk

RSCDS LONDON BRANCH 85th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION DANCE

SAVE THE DATE
Calling all Dancers!

To celebrate the Branch's 85th Anniversary,
we will be holding a Celebration Dance on
Saturday 31 October 2015

Look out for further information in
The Reel and on the Branch website.

RSCDS OXFORDSHIRE BRANCH Afternoon Summer Dance

Saturday 23 August 2014
Davenport House Lawn, Headington School,
Oxford OX3 0BN
(indoors if wet)
Recorded music

Annual Ball

Saturday 25 October 2014
Headington School, Oxford OX3 7TD
Ample free parking & on the London to Oxford
bus route. Bus stops near to the school.
Ian Muir and the Craiggellachie Band

Full details in *The Reel* 289 or from
www.rscdsoxfordshire.org.uk
Contact Trisha Rawlings, 01869 340830 or
trish@rawlings50cc.plus.com

JERSEY CALEDONIAN SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE GROUP

29th Annual Dance Weekend
Thursday 22 – Sunday 25 May 2014
Thursday Night
8.00 – 10.30pm

Run through some of the dances on the weekend
programme. Includes refreshments

Saturday Morning
10.00am – 12.30pm

Walk throughs

Saturday Evening Ball
7.00 – 11.30pm

Includes a buffet supper and a glass of wine

Sunday Evening Dance
7.00 – 11.30pm

Includes a buffet supper and a glass of wine
Dancing two nights to

Strathallan

Tickets £40.00 whole weekend
£35.00 until 28 February 2014

For more information on
flights and accommodation
visit the Jersey Tourism www.jersey.com or
01534 448850 for a Jersey Tourism Brochure
Contact Joy Carry, 01534 862205 or
chanjoy@jerseymail.co.uk
Alan Nicolle, 01534 484375 or
alan.nicolle88@gmail.com
scottishcountrydancingchannelislands.blogspot.co.uk

THE REEL

The Reel is published four times a year by the
London Branch and posted free to all Branch
members. Non-members may subscribe to be on
the mailing list, and Clubs can negotiate bulk
copies for their members. Enquiries to Wilson
Nicol, see advert on p7. The Branch AGM (see
p3) will also be discussing electronic
subscriptions to *The Reel* at reduced rates.

Articles and advertisements for *The Reel*
should be sent to the Editor, address at the foot
of the front page. **Advertising rates are £13.00
per column inch in black and white, £19.50
per column inch in colour.** Enquiries to the
Business Editor: Jeff Robertson or
businesseditor@rscdslondon.org.uk



ARGYLL SCOTTISH DANCING GROUP

Weekend

Dillington House, Somerset

Friday 3 – Sunday 5 October 2014

**Teachers: William Williamson,
Aileen Napper**

Musicians: Robert Mackay, Judith Smith

The weekend will include a dance both Friday
and Saturday nights to music from Judith Smith
and Gillian Cummins

For booking contact Dillington House,
Ilminster, Somerset TA19 9DT or 01460 258613

For further information and brochure email
dillington@somerset.gov.uk or visit
www.dillington.co.uk
argyllscottishdancinggroup.org.uk

OTHER SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE ORGANISATIONS

ABINGDON SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE CLUB. Dancing most Mondays,
8–10.15pm, Sept to June at Northcourt Centre, Abingdon, nr Oxford. All
welcome. Details: Morag Liddell, 38 The Holt, Abingdon OX14 2DR
moragian@sky.com or www.abingdonscdc.wordpress.com

ADDLESTONE & DISTRICT SCOTTISH SOCIETY meets Wednesdays 8.15–
10.15pm September to May at St. Mary's Church Hall, Church Road, Byfleet
KT14 7NF. Details: Monica Johnson, 01276 472756 or
www.addlestonscottish.org.uk

BERKHAMSTED STRATHSPEY & REEL CLUB meets in Potten End Village
Hall, HP4 2QG. Social dancing: Tuesdays 8.15pm September to May, Sat.
gardens June/July. Classes: Intermediate and Advanced Mondays 8pm,
Beginners Tuesdays 8.15pm. Details: Gerard Elliott, 10 Dinmore,
Bovingdon, Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP3 0QQ, 01442 832753 or
www.berkhamstedreelclub.org

BERKS/HANTS/SURREY BORDER BRANCH RSCDS. Technique Class,
alternate Mondays, starting on Monday 9 September 2013, 8–10pm
Finchampstead Memorial Hall RG40 4JU. Details: Shirley Ferguson,
01276 501952. General Class, every Wednesday, starting on Wednesday
12 September 2012, 8–10pm, Our Lady Queen of Heaven Church Hall,
Frimley GU16 7AA. Teacher: Mervyn Short. Details: May Sloan, 01428
604868

BOURNEMOUTH BRANCH RSCDS meets every Friday at St. Mark's New
Church Hall, Wallisdown Road, Talbot Village, Bournemouth 7.30–10pm.
Alternate Wednesday Technique class, by invitation. Details: Camilla Beaty,
Flat 4, 85 Alumhurst Road, Bournemouth, Dorset BH4 8HR, 01202 540120

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
www.rscds-brighton.org.uk

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

CAMBERLEY REEL CLUB. Dancing every Tuesday 8pm at St. Paul's Church
Hall, Church Hill, Camberley. Details: Janet Walton, 32 Moulsham Lane,
Yateley, Hants GU46 7QY, 01252 875511

CAMBRIDGE & DISTRICT BRANCH RSCDS. Classes for all grades. Details:
Lindsey Ibbotson, 07977905291 or lindsey.ibbotson@gmail.com

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

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

CHELTENHAM SCOTTISH SOCIETY. Dancing most Friday nights 7.30–
10pm from October to end May, at St. Andrew's URC, Montpelier Street,

Cheltenham. Details: Mrs Doreen Steele, 45 Dark Lane, Swindon Village,
Cheltenham GL51 9RN, 01242 528220 or mbsteele45@aol.com

CHELMSFORD: SANDON SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE CLUB meets on
Monday evenings 8–10pm at Springfield Park Baptist Church, Springfield
Park Road, Chelmsford CM2 6EB. Beginners welcome. Details:
Esther Wilkinson, 01206 240132 or ewilkin@gmail.com or
www.sandonscotdance.org.uk

CHISWICK SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE CLUB meet on Sundays 6–
9.15pm, September to June, in the Upper Hall at St. Michaels & All Angels
Church, corner of The Avenue and Bath Road, London W4 1TX (turn right
out of Turnham Green tube station, 70 yards). Check
www.chiswickscottish.org.uk for beginners and experienced dancers' start
times and all activities. Details: Heather Nolan, 01784 256549
or secretary@chiswickscottish.org.uk

CRAWLEY SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCING CLUB meets Thursdays 8–
10pm September to June at Milton Mount Community Hall, Milton Mount
Avenue, Pound Hill, Crawley. Details: Mrs Lee Pratt 01403 269439 or
chrisp@fastnet.co.uk or www.crawleyscdc.btjck.co.uk

CROYDON & DISTRICT BRANCH. Branch classes in Coulsdon: General,
incl Beginners with technique (Fri); Advanced & Improvers (Wed). Details:
Sue Hassanein, 01737 355168 or suehassanein@btinternet.com or
www.rscdscroydon.org.uk

EPPING FOREST SCOTTISH ASSOCIATION. Club night Mondays (all year)
8–10pm at Christchurch Parish Hall, Wanstead Place
Wanstead, E11 2SW. Details: Angela Ross, 020 8504 3376 or
angelaross87@hotmail.com or www.efsa.org.uk

EPSOM & DISTRICT CALEDONIAN ASSOCIATION holds weekly adult
dance classes for beginners and intermediate/advanced levels (September
to March), including informal dances. Details: Dorothy Pearson, 366
Chipstead Valley Road, Coulsdon CR5 3BF, 01737 551724 or
pearson2902@tiscali.co.uk

FARNHAM SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCING CLUB. Dancing every Tuesday
at 8pm, September to May at the Memorial Hall, West Street, Farnham,
Surrey. Details: Mrs Annette Owen, 19 Park Prewett Road, Basingstoke,
Hants RG24 9RG, 01256 959097 or www.fscdc.co.uk or
annetteowen@hotmail.co.uk

FLEET SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE SOCIETY dance in Church Crookham
Memorial Hall in Hampshire on alternate Saturdays from 7.30–10.30pm,
September to May. Details: Morna Partridge, 01252 711992 or
morna.partridge@btinternet.com

GERRARDS CROSS SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE CLUB meets at
Memorial Centre, East Common Road, Gerrards Cross on Tuesdays from
September to June. Beginners 7.30pm, General 8.15pm. Details: Celia
Stuart-Lee, 01753 884217 or info@gxscottish.org.uk or www.gxscottish.org.uk

OTHER SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE ORGANISATIONS

- GREENFORD AND DISTRICT CALEDONIAN ASSOC.** meet at the British Legion Hall, Oldfield Lane, Greenford. Visitors welcome. Tuesdays 8–10.30 p.m. Details: Mrs P. Crisp, 19 Compton Place, Watford, Herts WD19 5HF, 0203 078 0018
- GUILDFORD SCDC** meets at Onslow Village Hall, Wilderness Rd, Guildford GU2 7QR most Mondays at 8pm from September to June. Details: 01483 456091 or www.gsdc.org.uk
- HAMPSTEAD & DISTRICT SCOTS' ASSOCIATION.** Dancing on Tuesdays Sept–June from 8–10pm in The Parlour, Trinity Church, Methodist and United Reformed, 90 Hodford Road, Golders Green, London NW11 (Entrance in Rodborough Road). All welcome. Details: Miss Joan Burgess, 503A York Road, London SW18 1TF, 020 8870 6131
- HARPENDEN SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCING CLUB** meets every Tuesday at 8pm at Lourdes Hall, Southdown Road, Harpenden. Classes on Thursdays from 8pm. Details: Val Owens, 29 Palfrey Close, St. Albans, Herts AL3 5RE, 01727 863870
- HARROW & DISTRICT CALEDONIAN SOCIETY.** Classes Wednesdays 8.15–10.15pm, St. Albans Church Hall, Norwood Drive (off The Ridgeway), North Harrow. Details: Jane Forbes, 7 Buckland Rise, Pinner HA5 3QR, 020 8428 6055 or www.harrowscottish.org.uk
- HAYES & DISTRICT SCOTTISH ASSOCIATION** meets Fridays 8–10pm, September to July in Hayes, Middx. Beginners and experienced dancers welcome. Details: Margaret Wallace, 020 8560 6160
- HERTSMERE REEL CLUB.** Monthly dances on third Saturday (exc. Aug & Sept) 7.30–11pm, Tilbury Hall (URC), Darkes Lane, Potters Bar. Details: Margaret King, 0208 440 3236
- ISLE OF THANET SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCERS** meet Wednesdays September to June at Holy Trinity & St. John's C. of E. Primary School, St. John's Road, Margate. Beginners 7–8pm. General 8–10pm. Details: Mrs Linda McRitchie, 60 Bradstow Way, Broadstairs, Kent, 01843 869284
- JERSEY CALEDONIA SCD GROUP.** Details: Joy Carry, Les Arbres, Rue des Cateaux, Trinity, Jersey JE3 5HB, 01534 862205 or chanjoy@jerseymail.co.uk Alan Nicolle, 01534 484375 or alan.nicolle88@googlemail.com or Brenda Gale, 01534 862357 or scottishcountrydancingchannelislands.blogspot.com
- LONDON HIGHLAND CLUB** meets regularly at St. Columba's, Pont Street, SW1X 0BD. Details: adverts in *The Reel*, Catriona Bennett, 33 Pains Close, Mitcham, Surrey CR4 1BY, cmb84scd@gmail.com or 020 8544 5558 or www.londonhighlandclub.co.uk
- LUCY CLARK SCD CLUB** meets Thursdays 8pm, Oldhams Hall, Great Missenden. Details: Dick Field, Stonefield House, Clappins Lane, Naphill, Bucks HP14 4SL, 01494 562231
- MAIDENHEAD SCOTTISH DANCING CLUB** meets every Tuesday 8pm at St. Mary's R.C. School, Cookham Road, Maidenhead. First Tuesday in the month is Social Dancing Evening. Details: Jane Courtier, 16 Ostler Gate, Maidenhead, Berks SL6 6SG, 01628 628372 or maidenheadscottishdancing.org.uk
- MAIDSTONE (COBTREE) SCD GROUP** meets every Wednesday 7.30–10pm at The Grove Green Community Hall, Maidstone. Details: Dick Barford, 55 Northumberland Road, Maidstone ME25 7JG, 01622 685984
- MEDWAY AND DISTRICT CALEDONIAN ASSOCIATION.** Dancing Thursdays 8–10.15pm at St. Mary's Island Community Centre, Chatham. Beginners welcome. Many other activities. Details: Liz Bowden, Meadow Cottage, Green Farm Lane, Lower Shorne, Gravesend, Kent DA12 3HL, 01474 822919
- MEOPHAM SCD CLUB** meets every Monday evening from September – June at 8.15–10.15pm at the Village Hall Meopham. Details: Mrs Jane Whittington, 5 Coldharbour Rd., Northfleet, Kent DA11 8AE, 01474 359018
- MILTON KEYNES BRANCH RSCDS.** Mixed ability class Mondays 8–10pm. Bradwell Village Hall, Milton Keynes. Details: Jan Jones, 52 Aintree Close, Bletchley, Milton Keynes MK3 5LP, 01908 378730 or jange@verybusy.co.uk
- NORTH HERTS REEL CLUB.** Dancing most Wednesdays during school term, 8.15–10.15pm from September to May at St. Thomas' Church Hall, Bedford Road, Letchworth SG6 4DZ. Informal Saturday dances. Details: Mrs Jennifer Warburton, 17 Victoria Road, Shefford, Beds SG17 5AL or 01462 812691
- NORTH KENT SCOTTISH ASSOCIATION.** Dancing 7.45–10pm. most Wednesdays at Barnehurst Golf Club. Beginners welcome. Details: Nigel Hewitt, 227 Knights Rd, Hoo, Rochester, Kent ME3 9JN, 01634 254451
- ORPINGTON & DISTRICT CALEDONIAN SOCIETY.** Dancing every Thursday 8–10.15pm at Petts Wood Memorial Hall. Beginners'/Improvers' Class every Monday 8–10.15pm at St. Pauls, Crofton Road, Orpington. Details: Hadyn Davies, 020 8658 9188 or hadyndavies@gmail.com
- OXFORDSHIRE BRANCH RSCDS.** Dancing on Thursdays throughout the year in Oxford. Details: Patricia Rawlings, 29 Frances Road, Middle Barton, Chipping Norton, Oxon OX7 7ET, 01869 340830
- READING ST. ANDREW'S SCOTTISH DANCING SOCIETY.** Dancing at St. Andrew's URC, London Road, Reading, RG1 5BD from 8–10pm, September to May, Tuesdays (elementary), Wednesdays (general), 1st Thursdays of each month (advanced). Details: Margaret Spiceley 0118 978 7181 or sascdo1@gmail.com or www.scottishdancingreading.org
- REIGATE SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE CLUB** meets most Mondays 8.15–10.15pm, September to May at the Redhill Methodist Church Hall, Gloucester Road, Redhill, Surrey RH1 1BP. Details: Wendy Mitton, 01737 766244 or wmitton517@btinternet.com
- RICHMOND CALEDONIAN SOCIETY** meets at the Oddfellows Hall, Parkshot, Richmond, every Wednesday evening at 8pm from mid Sept. to end of May. Details: 020 8943 3773 or www.richmondcaledonian.co.uk
- SANDERSTEAD URC SCOTTISH DANCE GROUP.** Dancing Tues 8pm at Sanderstead URC Hall, Sanderstead Hill, S. Croydon. Details: Graeme Wood, 01883 627797 or gwood@gna.cc
- ST COLUMBA'S CHURCH OF SCOTLAND,** Pont Street, SW1X 0BD. Scottish country dancing most Mondays from Oct to May, 7.15–10pm. Admission free except for six Band and Burns' Nights when a charge will be made. Beginners welcome and there is a step practice usually on the third Monday of the month. Details: Denise Haugh, 020 8392 2920 or dhaugh200@btinternet.com or www.stcolumbasdancers.org
- ST JOHN'S SDC, WOKINGHAM** meet every Thurs 8–10.15pm Sept to June at St. Sebastian's Hall, Nine Mile Ride, Wokingham. All standards welcome. Details: Sue Davis 2 Larkwood Dr, Crowthorne, 01344 774344 or alan.suedavis@gmail.com Also Children's Class Sats 9.30–11am at the Parish Hall, Crowthorne. Details: Deborah Draffin, 01344 776831
- SCOTTISH ASSOCIATION FOR WALLINGTON, CARSHALTON & DISTRICT** hold weekly classes for all levels of dancers on Monday evenings from 7.30–9.30pm at Collingwood School, Springfield Road, Wallington SM6 0BD. Details: Maggie Westley, 020 8647 9899 or 07956 937157, or westley.maggie14@gmail.com
- SEVENOAKS REEL CLUB** meets every Tuesday from September to May, 8–10pm at Kippington Church Centre, Kippington Rd, Sevenoaks. Details: Philip Howey, 53 Asher Reeds, Langton Green, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN3 0AR, 01892 862094 or philip.howey3@virginmedia.com
- SHENE SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE GROUP** meets every Wednesday from September to May, 8.15–10.15pm, in Barnes. Details: Fiona Jack, 07780 671021 or jack_fiona@hotmail.com
- SIDCUP & DISTRICT CALEDONIAN ASSOCIATION.** Dancing on Wednesdays from 8–10.15pm throughout the year at Hurst Community Centre, Hurst Road, Bexley, Kent. Details: Jenny Gavin, 48 Eastbrook Road, Blackheath SE3 8BT, 020 8856 4522
- SOUTH DORSET CALEDONIAN SOCIETY.** Dancing at St. Edmund's Church Hall, Lanehouse Rocks Road, Weymouth, Dorset, Wednesday, 7.30–10pm. Details: Miss Valerie Scriven, 13 Fenway Close, Dorchester Dorset DT1 1PQ, 01305 265177
- SOUTH EAST ESSEX SCOTTISH SOCIETY.** Dancing Fridays, 7.30–10.30pm, St. Peter's Church Hall, Eastbourne Grove, Southend (near hospital). Tuition 7.30–9pm. Details: Janice Rose, 01702 585473
- SOUTH EAST HERTS SCDS.** Classes in Hertford, Sept to May: Inter/Adv Tues 7.45pm, Hollybush School, Hertford; Beginners Thurs 8pm, Guide Hut, West Street, Hertford; Demonstration 2nd Mon 8pm, St. John's Hall, Hertford. Details: Diana Ross, 01920 870189
- SOUTHWICK SCD CLUB** meets Thursdays 8–10.15pm at Southwick Community Centre, Southwick, W Sussex. Details: Julie Howell, 63 Mile Oak Rd, Portslade, Brighton, East Sussex BN41 2PJ, 01273 415778 or Julie@howell.name
- SURBITON & DISTRICT CALEDONIAN SOCIETY.** Dancing every Thursday at 8pm from September to June at St. Mark's Church Hall, Church Hill Road, Surbiton. Details: David Horwill, 32 Wolsey Road, Sunbury-on-Thames, Middx TW16 7TY or www.surbitoncaledonian.co.uk
- TUNBRIDGE WELLS BRANCH RSCDS.** Beginners/intermediate classes on Tues 8–10pm and advanced classes Thurs 8–10pm at St. Augustine's School, Wilman Rd, Tunbridge Wells TN4 9AL. Details: George Daly, 1 Broadwater Rise, Tunbridge Wells, TN2 5UE, 01892 534512 or www.rscdstunbridgewells.org.uk
- WATFORD & WEST HERTS SCOTTISH SOCIETY.** General and Beginners'/Improvers' Classes at Bushey Community Centre, High Street, Bushey WD23 1TT. Thursdays from 8–10pm. Details: Stuart Krelhoff, 60 Tunnel Wood Road, Watford WD17 4GE, 01923 492475 or reel@WatfordScottish.org.uk
- WELWYN GARDEN CITY SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE CLUB** meets Wednesdays 8–10pm September to June at Lemsford Hall, Lemsford Village, Welwyn Garden City. All welcome. Details: Douglas Wood, 01582 469928 or welwyn.scdc@uwclub.net
- WEMBLEY & DISTRICT SCOTTISH ASSOCIATION.** Dance Class Mondays 8pm. The Church of the Ascension, The Avenue, Wembley, Middx. Details: Mrs Pam Crisp, 19 Compton Place, Watford WD19 5HF, 020 3078 0018
- WIMBLEDON.** St Andrew Society (London): 'Wimbledon and District Scots' Association. Dancing Tuesdays 8pm at Holy Trinity Church, 234 The Broadway, Wimbledon SW19 1SB. Details: Miss Alison Raffan, 2 Erridge Road, Merton Park, London SW19 3JB, 020 8540 1755 or araffan@googlemail.com or www.standrewsoclondon.net
- WINCHESTER BRANCH RSCDS.** Classes Tuesdays 8–10pm. Club nights 1st and 3rd Wednesdays 8–10pm. Both evenings at St. Peter's School, Oliver's Battery Rd North, Winchester. Details: Wendy Mumford (teacher), 20 Blendon Drive, Andover SP10 3NQ, 01264 363293 or wendy@mumford.com
- WITHAM & DISTRICT CALEDONIAN SOCIETY.** Dancing every Wednesday 8–10pm. The Centre, UR Church, Witham, Essex. Details: Beryl Munro, 01621 850838 or beryl.munro@btinternet.com

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Yours Aye
Bobby Munro



Below: Octogenarian celebrates with Broadswords: London Branch member Robert Bateson celebrated his 80th birthday in style with a dance for 130 dancers from all over the South East of England, held on a wet and windy January night on the aptly named flat plains of Normandy, Surrey. Sheila Oviatt-Ham, Kevin Hill, Ian Bryson and Robert himself, danced the *Argyll Broadswords* to much applause (left), and there were delicious birthday cakes made by Rose Waddell, duly cut and distributed (right). Also at the event were Robert's elder brothers Fergus and George, co-founders of the Berkhamsted Strathspey and Reel Club.



Below: John and Jo McKenzie celebrated their golden wedding anniversary earlier this year, and, after dancing *The Golden Wedding Strathspey*, they were presented with a rose bush and cake – they are also keen cyclists! John is the hard working, and often under-appreciated, secretary of the Tally-Ho Dancers in North Finchley.



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The Reel



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www.rscdslondon.org.uk

No 288

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MAY TO AUGUST 2014

Scottish Country Dancing –
For fun, fitness and
friendship

Addenda

Unfortunately, various items in the published edition of *The Reel* 288 were curtailed during the production process. With apologies to the authors, they are printed below in full:

LONDON BRANCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 14 June 2014 (p3)

The AGM of the London Branch of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society will be held at St. Columba's Church (Lower Hall) Pont Street, London SW1X 0BD on Saturday 14 June 2014. All members of the Branch are welcome to attend. Tea and biscuits will be served at 6.30pm and the meeting will commence at 6.45pm. There will be dancing immediately after the meeting, commencing at 7.30pm approximately. Supper will be served during the interval of the dance.

Agenda

1. Apologies for absence
2. Approval of the minutes of the 2013 AGM
3. Matters arising from the minutes
4. Report on the Branch's activities 2013-14
5. Treasurer's report and statement of accounts
6. Appointment of Honorary President and Honorary Vice-Presidents
7. Appointment of Officers and Management Committee
8. Appointment of delegates to the Society's AGM
9. Appointment of Auditors
10. Motions
11. Any other business

Note 1: As the number of nominations does not exceed the number of places available, there will not be an election under item 7. Nominations for the appointments at items 6, 8 and 9 will be taken from the floor at the meeting. One motion has been submitted and will be voted upon at the meeting.

Note 2: The report (item 4) has been sent to members with this issue of *The Reel*. The accounts and the minutes of the previous meeting will be available at the AGM. Members can see them in advance by applying to treasurer@rscdslondon.org.uk and secretary@rscdslondon.org.uk respectively.

Motion (Proposed by the Management Committee)

With effect from 1 July 2014 the London Branch fee will be £4.00 a year for members who choose to receive *The Reel* in electronic format (as an email containing a link to the pdf file held in the website hosting area) rather than in hard copy through the post. Members can continue to receive *The Reel* in hard copy by paying the existing Branch fee of £6.00 a year if based in the UK (£12.00 if based elsewhere in Europe and £15.00 in the rest of the world).

This will coincide with a £2.00 a year increase in the RSCDS subscription agreed at the Society's AGM in November 2013. This means that the annual cost of RSCDS membership through London Branch will be:

- £22.00 (£18.00 RSCDS subscription plus £4.00 Branch fee) for members who choose to receive *The Reel* in electronic format only, irrespective of where they live,
- £24.00 (£18.00 RSCDS subscription plus £6.00 Branch fee) for UK-based members who receive *The Reel* through the post,
- £30.00 (£18.00 RSCDS subscription plus £12.00 Branch fee) for European-based members who receive *The Reel* through the post, and
- £33.00 (£18.00 RSCDS subscription plus £15.00 Branch fee) for members in the rest of the world who receive *The Reel* through the post.

Discounts apply of £8.00 for members aged 12 – 17, £3.00 aged 18 – 25 and £3.00 for each of two members living at the same address. Members of other branches can become 'second members' of London Branch by paying the appropriate fee.

From LETTERS (p12)

Popular Programmes

Dear Jeremy,

Stephen Webb (Letters, *The Reel* 287) is right to question the validity of statistics on dancing. It will perhaps help him and others to know that I started making the lists simply so that the group I was with overseas had some guidance about selecting dances to learn. This ties in with the point made by Elizabeth Bennett, also in *The Reel* 287, about the compromises needed in order to produce a dance programme. My theory was that, if my group learnt dances that were popular ones, we would be better placed if we wanted to dance elsewhere.

I could have done as Stephen suggested and kept a record of the dances advertised in *The Reel*, but typing the names of all the dances would have been a chore. By using the email advertisements, all I had to do was a quick cut-and-paste. I don't know how many events and dances are advertised in *The Reel* over a year, but the emails for last year covered over 110 events, and had nearly 2,200 dances. Those large numbers meant I was happy that the statistics gave a valid indication of what was popular. I wasn't interested in which dance was the first choice; indeed, I didn't draw a line at, for example, the 31 dances that appeared 15 times or more – all I wanted was some guidance. Now that I'm back in the UK (and no longer have a requirement to keep lists!), I have proved to my satisfaction that this has worked. For my use, any scepticism is unfounded.

So far so good, for my needs, but the statistics also showed a problem, and that is the sheer number of dances there are, as you highlighted in your editorial in *The Reel* 286, supported by John Carswell (Letters, *The Reel* 287). At the events advertised by email, there were 481 different dances. Some 200 dances appeared only once, and another 80 appeared only twice. As the organizers of these events seek publicity, they are presumably inviting attendance from outside their regular group. Why then the appearance of so many dances that are danced at just one or two events? I imagine that no one goes to every event advertised by email, but by including obscure dances in our programmes we are likely to deter all but the most dedicated.

I have probably done about 500 different dances in the years that I've been dancing, but can you imagine the impact on potential beginners if we told them the variety of the dances they would be expected to learn? And that the RSCDS is encouraging the introduction of even more dances? There will always be people who want to invent dances, and clearly this has to be a good thing: some of today's popular dances are not very old, and dancing would not be so much fun if they did not exist. However, I don't think it is helpful to experienced dancers or beginners, particularly beginners, that the RSCDS is currently in the business of commissioning new dances.

I think we are in danger of forgetting that this is not how dancing was done when it was more popular. Look for example at the article on Monday Socials (*The Reel* 285) – imagine the reaction today at an RSCDS dance if every programme started and ended with *The Eightsome Reel*?

Maybe the problem of decreasing attendance is not that society has changed, perhaps it is that we have become too specialist – dare I say elitist?

Yours sincerely,
Iain Ross

From CLUB AND OTHER NEWS (p14)

Bath's Fantastic Annual February Ball

The Ball took place in the magnificent Banqueting Room of the Guildhall, Bath: elegant Adam-style interior, original colour scheme, glittering chandeliers and portraits that were hung there when it was opened in 1778.

This year, the dancing began with *The Machine without Horses*, published six years before the Banqueting Room was opened, and the programme included more demanding dances such as *Nottingham Lace*. Dancers came from Bristol, south Somerset, Dorset and London, as well as Bath itself. Until a few years ago, there was no walking-through or recapping at the ball, but the Branch brought them in, to make it more attractive to more dancers, and because ticket sales were beginning to fall; a controversial move at the time that is now welcomed. We learn so many dances that some quick revision can be helpful and we enjoy a dance more, the more confident we are that we can do it successfully.

Ever popular band, Hugh Ferguson and Dalriada, were on their best form. There was, as always, a plentiful and excellent 3-course cold buffet supper followed by coffee. RSCDS Bath Branch is willing to subsidise the cost, keeping tickets at a modest £25 each this year. Being able to dance in the beautiful surroundings of the Guildhall makes this event special for dancers and worth travelling to.

"Excellent dance", "A lovely evening" "...loved the venue". Those were some of the comments from an opinion survey to find out what dancers thought of this year's ball and how to improve it in future. Overall, 98% said that they enjoyed the evening very much. Dancers wanted no radical change, and we look forward to returning to the Banqueting Room again in 2015.

Matthew Clements (see photo p10)

From FORTHCOMING EVENTS (p17 and p18)

LONDON HIGHLAND CLUB

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

Saturdays: Lower Hall 7.00 – 10.30pm unless otherwise stated

Saturday 10 May: Combined Societies Dance hosted by London Highland Club
Alasdair MacLeod

Saturday 7 June: Summer Ball (see below)

Saturday 6 September: President's Night 7.00 – 11.00pm
Craigievar

Saturday 4 October:
Colin Dewar

Summer Ball

Saturday 7 June 2014

7.00 – 11.00pm

Ian Muir of Prestwick

Programme: The White Heather Jig, Maxwell's Rant, Scotch Mist, Tribute to the Borders, Blooms of Bon Accord, Miss Gibson's Strathspey, Inchmickery, Swiss Lassie, Neidpath Castle, The Jubilee Jig, The Milltimber Jig, Culla Bay, The Recumbent Stone, Joe MacDiarmid's Jig, Dalkeith's Strathspey, The Barmkin, Father Connelly's Jig, 12 Coates Crescent, Happy Returns, Ian Powrie's Farewell to Auchterarder

Tickets include finger buffet refreshments

* LHC Members in advance £14.00

* Non Members in advance £16.00

All classes on the door £18.00

* Advance booking price is only available on orders received by midnight 4 June

For tickets contact Frank Bennett,

020 8715 3564 or fb.lhc@blueyonder.co.uk

If you have highland dress, you are invited to wear it

Programmes & cribs are now available on our website:
www.londonhighlandclub.co.uk

For further details contact Catriona Bennett on 020 8544 5558 or
cmb84scd@gmail.com

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

RSCDS OXFORDSHIRE BRANCH

Afternoon Summer Dance

Saturday 23 August 2014

Davenport House Lawn, Headington School, Oxford OX3 0BN
(indoors if wet)

Recorded music

Annual Ball

Saturday 25 October 2014

Headington School, Oxford OX3 7TD

Ample free parking & on the London to Oxford bus route. Bus stops near to the school.

Ian Muir and the Craigellachie Band

Full details in *The Reel* 289 or from www.rscdsoxfordshire.org.uk
Contact Trisha Rawlings, 01869 340830 or trish@rawlings50cc.plus.com