

Promoting Scottish Country Dancing in the London area

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**THE ROYAL SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE SOCIETY
LONDON BRANCH**

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at St Columba's Church, Pont Street
on Saturday, June 9 2018

SUBJECT TO RATIFICATION

Present: Margaret Catchick (Chairman), Simon Wales (Treasurer) Deborah Ainger, Alun Alesbury, Julia Alesbury, Mary Barker, Maureen Campbell, Daniel Capron, Jim Cook, Pamela Ellam, Tony Ellam, Richard Goldring, Jenny Greene, Jeremy Hill, Grace Hill, Chris Hood, Alan Holliday, Jan Jones, Peter Jordan, Roger Keeling, Andrew Kellett, Katy Kendall, Natalie Maude, Anne Milligan, Anne Montminy, Alan Poh, George Potts, Joan Nesbitt, Mary Pritchard, Marjory Reid, Jerome Reinstein, Danielle Reinstein, Lindsey-Jane Rousseau, Thelma-Jane Robb, Lena Robinson, Irene Spooner, Rachel Wilton

Apologies for absence:

Helen Brown, George Ferrier. Catriona Bennett, Elizabeth Bennett, Alan Ip, Jenny Kendrick, Wendy Kellett, Peter Knight, Joanne Lawrence, Willie Lawrence, Peter Luke, Owen Meyer, Christine Meyer, William Morris, Wilson Nicol, Jeff Robertson, Mary Robertson, Philippe Rousseau, Margaret Shaw, Rosemary Tilden, Hamish Todd, Stephen Webb

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks

Margaret Catchick, in the Chair, welcomed the members present and thanked them for attending the meeting.

2. Minutes of 2017 AGM

On a motion proposed by Daniel Capron and seconded by Marjory Reid, the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 10 June 2017 were approved.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising

4. Report on the Branch's activities 2017-2018

The Chairman summarised the Branch Report 2017-2018 which had been circulated in advance of the meeting

Despite a general fall in attendance at our events this had been a satisfactory year for the Branch.

Although our Christmas Dance and Burns Night Ceilidh were very successful, attendance at our other dances had been disappointing. Attendance at classes also had varied. The Beginners Class in Richmond was doing well and the Mixed Ability class at Pont Street was a successful class. However, the Wednesday evening classes held at Park Walk have not been so well attended and the Committee has therefore decided to reduce the number of classes held at Park Walk to two retaining the the Beginners Class and merging the Intermediate and Advanced Classes into a general Technique Class. The Children's Class has been re-launched as a Family Class; the administration of the University of London and UCLU Folk Society Class has been taken over by UOL and the Demonstration Group has grown in numbers and has performed at several occasions. Membership has unfortunately once again fallen, partly due to the decline in the number of Life Members, but we will use our best efforts to promote membership and retain current members. The Reel has taken on a fresh look and is now an all colour publication run by an Editorial Team. Members and non-members are also kept informed of our activities via the website, social media and e-updates. The Branch Bookstall has been present at most events.

The Chairman expressed thanks to all those who have played for our dances and who have taught and played for our classes throughout the year.

Finally the Chairman thanked all those, both on and off the Committee, who had helped the Branch with its activities throughout the year.

The Chairman invited comments from the floor on the Branch Report.

Daniel Capron raised the question of whether London Branch could learn from the successes that other Branches had had in recruiting new members or promoting SCD in their area as published in the Scottish Country Dancer. In particular whether we should perhaps consider a Ceilidh Class that Aberdeen Branch had achieved success with. The Chairman advised Daniel that the Committee had discussed the question of a ceilidh class at the beginning of last year but had rejected the idea. We would however discuss it again at an upcoming meeting. Lindsey Rousseau pointed out that UCL had tried a ceilidh class but found that it wasn't classes they were after but ceilidhs. Marjory Reid advised that there had been interest in ceilidhs by those attending the Open Day at the venue for the Family Class. In response Simon Wales advised that we ran a ceilidh in November and about only 30 people came. It was suggested that perhaps we could include a few ceilidh dances in our dance programmes and this would be considered by the Committee.

Deborah Ainger wondered whether it would be useful to have a form available at our classes to discover how people found out about our classes. The Committee will take this on board.

The Chairman asked that any ideas for attracting new members be sent to the Committee for consideration.

There being no further comments, the Chairman asked for someone to propose and second the adoption of the Branch Report for 2017-2018. Jerry Reinstein proposed and Danielle Reinstein seconded the adoption of the Report which was duly carried.

Our Priorities for 2018-2019 had also been circulated in advance of the meeting. Summarising the Chairman said that our priorities for the coming year are to:

1. Encourage more people to enjoy the benefits of SCD by increasing the public profile of RSCDS London
2. Launch a new Beginners Class in another area of London
3. Build on the success of the Family Taster Classes

The Chairman advised that we would do all we could to achieve these aims but we would also require the help and support of our members

5. Treasurer's Report

Simon Wales, Treasurer, presented the accounts for the year to 31 March 2018. He began by apologising that the tight timescales and Reel publication dates made it impossible to circulate these to all members before the AGM. He noted that changes in SORP regulations last year had meant that the Accounts were now presented in a different format and that last year's accounts also had to be amended to comply with these changes though it did not affect the figures presented in last year's accounts.

The accounts for the year ending March 31 2018 showed a net incoming resource figure of £1,466 - after an unrealised loss on investments of £1,811. This also included planned expenditure from our legacy funds of £996.

Classes

Fees, less hire of halls, less teachers and musicians expenses: £15,069 - £9,635 - £9,394 = £3,960 deficit. This was within budget, and was accounted for almost entirely by the heavy losses on the technique, and basic classes. The Day School made a healthy profit of £710.

Youth Activities

Income less expenditure: £105 - £319 = £214 deficit. The costs reflected the support from the Branch for new family taster sessions, and the Committee has decided to relaunch the family sessions in 2018-2019. The Anniversary Fund for youth outreach remained largely unspent, and was being earmarked for the relaunch of the children's classes.

Dances

Income less expenditure: £8,201 - £6,589 = £1,612 surplus. Christmas and especially Burns night dances did well again this year, but some other dances still attracted too few dancers. The dances held on the half-term Wednesday evening were still proving popular and were nearly covering their cost. An attempt to build on the success of the Burns ceilidh by running a ceilidh dance in November attracted too few dancers and made a loss.

Publicity and The Reel

The net cost of publicity this year was £671 - after the Twining fund contribution of £996 to the cost of open air dancing. The Reel made a profit of £1,056 after the apportionment of the Life Members' Appeal.

Bookstall and other trading

This generated a small surplus of £86 and there was no need for further write-offs of old stock.

Demonstration team

This appears as "fundraising activities" i.e. £1,962 - £1,552 = £410 surplus which is over budget.

Administration Costs

The only other figure to comment on were the admin costs (£561) up on last year. This was made up as follows:

Postage and secretarial	£ 240	Insurance	£ 120
AGM	£ 101	Examiner	£.100

Thanks to the hospitality of Peter Knight and Margaret Shaw, there were no costs for Branch committee meetings this year

Donations and Legacies

Donations and Legacies raised a further £1,614 for designated funds, and £400 to support the Reel in the Life and Long Term members fund. Most donations benefited from the tax reclaim from HMRC for gift aid.

The Treasurer advised that the Branch was very fortunate to have the various bequests enabling us to tackle projects in the knowledge that we have sufficient funds to back them up. Open Air dancing in Kensington Gardens was funded by the Twining legacy which was now exhausted, with the Bill Ireland fund remaining largely untouched.

Membership

Membership income remained steady, and our Branch share of subscription income was maintained at £2,298.

Investment Income

Investment income from Charifund Units was up, and contributed to a total of £2,268.

The Treasurer expressed his thanks to his fellow officers and convenors, who were always on top of their paperwork and enabled him to keep the accounts on the straight and narrow. As ever, the biggest thanks were due to Robert Elliott, the independent examiner, who does so much to pull these accounts together.

As there were no further comments, the adoption of the accounts was proposed by Mary Barker, seconded by Jeremy Hill and approved by the meeting.

6. Confirmation of the Appointment of Honorary President and Honorary Vice President

- a. The Chairman proposed that Motion 3 under item 10 on the Agenda, allowing for the term of office of the Branch President to be extended beyond five years, be taken at this point on the Agenda. The meeting agreed.

The Chairman advised that five years ago the Constitution had been amended to limit the term of office of the Branch President to five years (previously there had been no limit). The Committee felt that we had an excellent President in Rachel Wilton and would like to see her term extended. This would not, however, be a limitless term but one that would be reviewed annually by both the Branch Committee and the President and the appointment confirmed at the Branch AGM. The Committee therefore proposed that point 6 of The Rules relating to Office Bearers be amended as follows:

“The Honorary President shall be appointed annually for a period of up to five years which shall run consecutively. This period of appointment may be further extended on a yearly basis at the Annual General Meeting of the Local Association”

Marjory Reid proposed and Maureen Campbell seconded the motion which was carried unanimously,

Returning to the published order paper, Jerry Reinstein proposed the appointment of Rachel Wilton as President for a further year and this was seconded by Katy Kendall and carried unanimously.

- b, Simon Wales proposed Mary Barker, Jenny Greene, Owen Meyer, Rosemary Tilden and Wilson Nicol as Vice Presidents. Maureen Campbell seconded the motion which was unanimously passed with only the Vice Presidents abstaining.

7. Appointment of Office Bearers and Committee of Management for 2018-2019

The Chairman announced the nominations which had been received for Officers and Committee members as follows

Officers: Margaret Catchick (Chairman), Simon Wales (Treasurer), Joanne Lawrence (Secretary)

Committee: Elaine Davies, Jenny Kendrick, George Potts, Jerry Reinstein, Thelma-Jane Robb, and Margaret Shaw

As the number of nominations was less than the number of available places on the Committee, there had been no need for a ballot of members and those named above would serve on the new Committee.

8. Appointment of Independent Examiner

On a proposal from Mary Barker, seconded by Daniel Capron, the meeting unanimously approved the appointment of Robert Elliott as Independent Examiner.

9. Appointment of Branch Proxy Delegates to Society AGM

As the Society was now a company limited by guarantee Headquarters believe that Branch Delegates should be members of the Committee. As it was unlikely that all members of the Committee would be attending, the Chairman asked for names of those who would consent to being on the Proxy List for the AGM in November 2018. Being on the list did not guarantee that they would be required as a Proxy. The following agreed to their names being put forward:

Jim Cook
Jenny Greene
Rachel Wilton

The Chairman thanked those volunteers accordingly.

10. Motions

- a. Simon Wales explained the reason for the need to amend Clause VII ‘Receipts and Expenditure’ of the Constitution. As there were no comments regarding the motion Jim Cook proposed its adoption which was seconded by Jenny Greene and approved unanimously. The second sentence of Clause VII ‘Receipts and Expenditure’ of the Constitution will therefore now read:

“All cheques drawn on the account must be signed in accordance with the current mandate”

- b. The Chairman explained the reasons behind the motion to amend point 3 of The Rules regarding Membership and Subscriptions. As there were no comments from the floor with regard to this Rachel Wilton proposed the adoption of the motion which was seconded by Maureen Campbell and carried unanimously.

Point 3 under Membership and Subscription will therefore now read:

“Any member whose subscription is three months in arrears shall be deemed to have resigned”.

11. **A.O.B.**

- a. Andrew Kellett, Society Chairman Elect, expressed his thanks to the Committee of London Branch for all their hard work in trying to keep Scottish country dancing alive. He said that some Branches were doing well while others were not doing so well and that we had to look around for new ideas, capitalising on what was good and replacing the not so successful. He felt that one of the ways of achieving success would be for new people with fresh ideas to join the Committee.
- b. As there were no other comments from the floor, the Chairman said she was pleased to announce that HQ had supported the Committee’s decision to nominate Jeremy Hill for a Branch Award which had been introduced by HQ to recognise members who had given exceptional service to the Branch. The Chairman asked Rachel Wilton, Branch President, to present the award to Jeremy Hill and the presentation was greeted with much applause. The full Citation will appear in the next issue of The Reel

12. **Date of Next Meeting:** Saturday, 8 June 2019 at 6.45 p.m.

There being no further business to discuss the Chairman declared the meeting closed.