

# *Light and Airy*



**Scottish Country Dancers of Winnipeg**  
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**Volume 57, Number 4**

**January 2026**

## ***Important Dates***

### **Dancing in 2026**

Monday, January 5 – evening classes start 7:30 – 9:30 at CPUC

Thursday, January 8 – afternoon classes start 1:30 – 3:30 at CPUC

Sunday, January 11 – Step Dance Class (7 – 8:30)

Saturday, January 17 – Burns Social

Sunday, February 1 – Challenge Class *\*note change of date\**

Sunday, February 22 – Challenge Class

Saturday, March 14 – Friends Spring (Ceilidh) Social

Sunday, March 22 – Challenge Class

Thursday, April 2 – last afternoon class

Monday, April 6 – last evening class (Easter Monday)

Saturday, April 18 – Dance Workshop

Monday, May 4 – Wind-Up Social

Thursday, May 21 – AGM

Note: all events are held at Churchill Park United Church (CPUC) 525 Beresford Ave. unless otherwise stated.

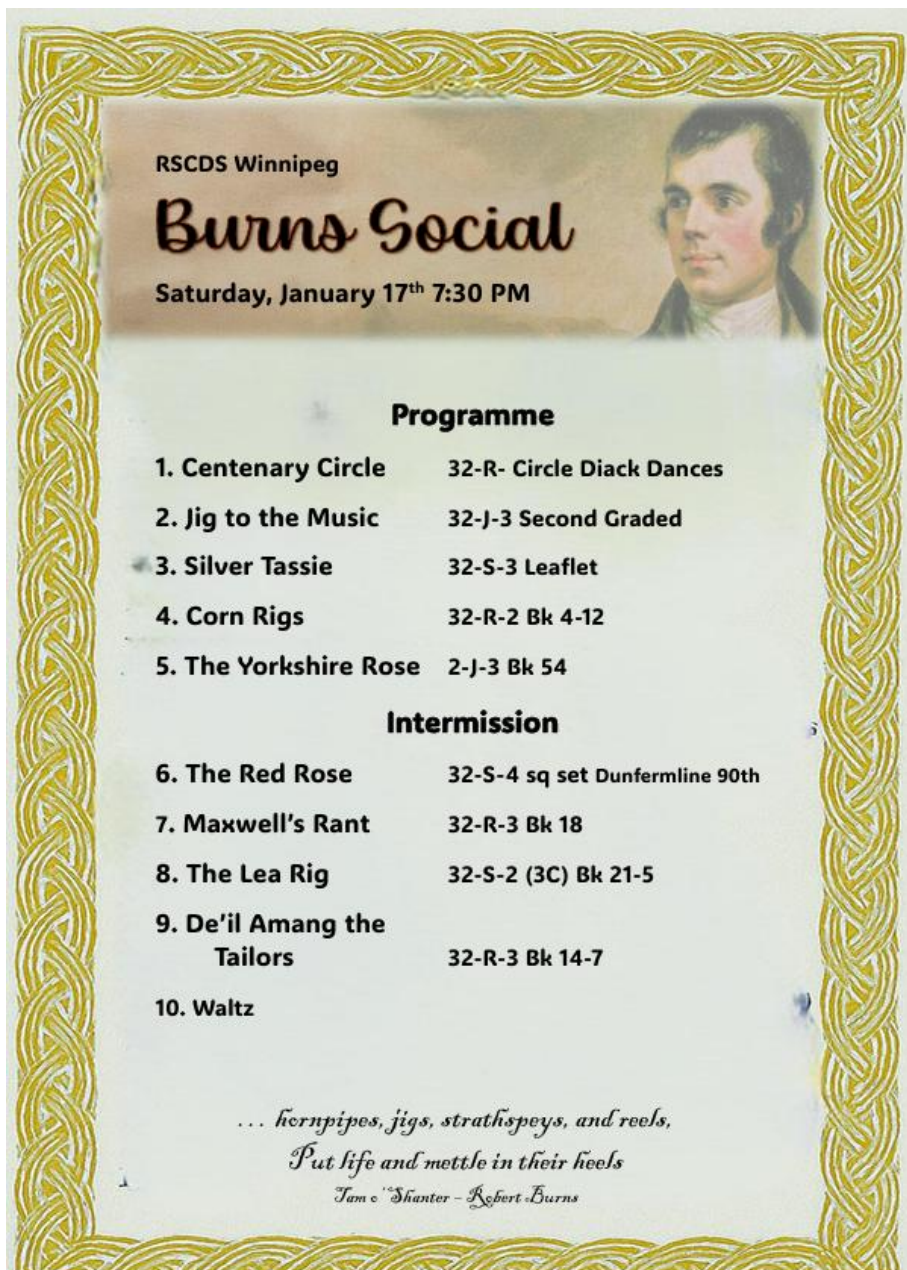
## *A Word from the Chair of COM ....*

Heather Robbins

Next COM meeting – January 6

## *Have you heard?*

## *Burns Social Program January 17, 2026*

A flyer for the RSCDS Winnipeg Burns Social, dated Saturday, January 17th at 7:30 PM. The flyer features a portrait of Robert Burns in the top right corner and is framed by a decorative yellow Celtic knot border. The program is divided into two sections: Programme and Intermission. The Programme section lists 10 items, including Centenary Circle, Jig to the Music, Silver Tassie, Corn Rigs, The Yorkshire Rose, Circle Diack Dances, 32-J-3 Second Graded, 32-S-3 Leaflet, 32-R-2 Bk 4-12, 2-J-3 Bk 54, The Red Rose, Maxwell's Rant, The Lea Rig, De'il Amang the Tailors, and Waltz. The Intermission section lists 5 items: 32-S-4 sq set Dunfermline 90th, 32-R-3 Bk 18, 32-S-2 (3C) Bk 21-5, 32-R-3 Bk 14-7, and Waltz. At the bottom, there is a quote from Robert Burns: "... hornpipes, jigs, strathspeys, and reels, Put life and mettle in their heels" and the signature "Tam o' Shanter - Robert Burns".

RSCDS Winnipeg

# Burns Social

Saturday, January 17<sup>th</sup> 7:30 PM

**Programme**

1. Centenary Circle	32-R- Circle Diack Dances
2. Jig to the Music	32-J-3 Second Graded
3. Silver Tassie	32-S-3 Leaflet
4. Corn Rigs	32-R-2 Bk 4-12
5. The Yorkshire Rose	2-J-3 Bk 54

**Intermission**

6. The Red Rose	32-S-4 sq set Dunfermline 90th
7. Maxwell's Rant	32-R-3 Bk 18
8. The Lea Rig	32-S-2 (3C) Bk 21-5
9. De'il Amang the Tailors	32-R-3 Bk 14-7
10. Waltz	

*... hornpipes, jigs, strathspeys, and reels,  
Put life and mettle in their heels  
Tam o' Shanter - Robert Burns*

## *And more Burns ...*



*Robert Burns Day  
January 25, 2025*

### A Tale of a Mouse

While we were practicing for a dance demonstration, a little field mouse appeared beside the stage in the basement of our local legion. Not sure if he was disturbed by the bouncing on the floor from our dancing; or intrigued by the smell popcorn on the floor from our snack. Unfortunately for him he was noticed and the alarm was sounded and the young bartender came to deal with the unwelcome member. Not sure who was more frightened, the mouse or the staff person with her broom. Seeing that this moment could erupt into a frenzy, I stepped in with the dustpan. Our little spectator was swooped up and ushered out into the cold November evening.

When the door closed, I couldn't help but think of Burn's poem "To A Mouse":

An' cozie here, beneath the blast,  
Thou thought to dwell—  
Till crash! the cruel coulter past  
Out thro' thy cell.

While the poor wee beastie was hoping for the promised joy of some popcorn, "the best made plans of mice and men oft go awry" and he found himself looking for a new home. But the staff and dancers were very grateful for my humane mousing skills. To acknowledge this act, I was presented with a certificate by Ellen Graham making me an "Honourary Member of the Loyal Order of Mice". Thank you.

Sharyl

Burns poem "To a Mouse" is included at the end of the newsletter – both the original and translation. ed.

## *Looking Back ...*

## *And what is a Burns event without Haggis ...*

The Haggis Season has begun!  
All over Scotland every gun  
Is lifted down with loving care,  
Though some prefer the haggis snare.  
Then, hidden in the Highland heather,  
Great hairy clansmen crouch together.  
Then having laid the haggis bait,  
That's a life-like haggis on a plate,  
One calls out loudly, "Look there, the noo!"  
That means a haggis is in view.  
It's flying upside down and low.  
The guns all fire, but they're too slow,  
'Cause though it's old and rather fat,  
They're awful hard to shoot like that.  
And as it flies off in the mist  
The hairy clansmen shake their fists  
And shout their curses to the crags  
[And stuff their bait back in their bags. ]  
So another haggis gets away  
To live until next Hogmanay.  
And that's the reason it's so rare—  
This strange, traditional Scottish fare.



### ***From the Classes ...***

The final class featured a number of dances enjoyed during the term, finishing early so as to have time to enjoy socializing while nibbling on various treats.

### **Monday Class**



## Thursday Class

Some wore their Christmas attire – sweaters, ties, scarves, pins, etc.



And all enjoyed the evening.



On a whimsical note, we have several duplicate names in our dancing family.

Two Heather's, Shar(r)on's, Cheryl/Sharyl's. And THREE Donald's – Don, Donny, & Donald.

## ***Challenge Class***

DATE CHANGE -

Please note that the date for the next Challenge Class has been moved from Sunday Jan. 25, 2026 to Sunday February 1, 2026 due to the demonstration with Brochan Lom on Jan 25th.

Cheryl

## ***Step Dance Class***

The Scottish Step dancing that I will be teaching is a soft shoe version of “Traditional Scottish Ladies Step Dancing” that has been danced for hundreds of years. There are many modern dances that have been devised for solo performance, and small group performances that include ladies and men.

The soft shoe step class would be for dancers who are competent with Scottish Country dance steps.

The steps that are used include some Highland, Scottish Country and Ballet type movements.

There is only one class scheduled at this time Sunday January 11, 2026 starting at 7 pm at CPUC. Dancers can try the class and if there is a consensus to continue we will then plan for future classes on a monthly basis.

Cheryl Durnin

## ***2026 Spring Workshop***



***Save the Date***  
**RSCDS Winnipeg 53rd Annual Workshop**  
**One Day - April 18 2026**



**Instructor: Alan Twigg**  
**California**

**More information to come**

## ***CANCELLATION POLICY FOR SNOW DAYS***

The COM has agreed to the following policy for cancellation of classes, when necessary because of inclement weather conditions:

- A decision to cancel that day's class will be made no later than 3:00 pm on Mondays & 9:00 am on Thursdays.
- An email will be sent out to all members as soon as possible.

IF THE WEATHER IS NASTY, PLEASE CHECK YOUR EMAIL BEFORE HEADING OUT TO CLASS.

If you do not have access to email, please let your class teacher know and leave a phone number where you can be reached. If in doubt, please call your class teacher. If you cannot contact your teacher, then call the chair of COM.

Note: This policy will also apply to extra or special classes and socials that are not on a class day.

## ***Helpful Links***

Most of us started Scottish Country Dance from ground zero. The various steps and techniques and formations and dances sound like a foreign language from time to time. Therefore, we certainly identify with the steep learning curve! Even the more experienced dancers sometimes need help and more information to figure out or review different dances, formations and progressions.

The RSCDS Winnipeg Branch website (<http://www.rscdswinnipeg.ca/>) has links to a number of online dance websites with a variety of resources for SCD.

## ***from the editor's desk ...***

Wow! End of dancing for the fall term.

It is timely to include the snow day cancellation policy in this issue. I just spent two hours behind my snowblower clearing the driveway after our blizzard. Definitely a snow cancellation day except classes ended last week. More snow is expected later today although not so much. Definitely a White Christmas in Winnipeg!

This is the L&A issue coming to you before our Burns Social (Jan. 17) and as such brings you the social programme, a story about a wee mouse, and of course Haggis. Thank you to the contributors.

Dancing will resume after the Holidays (Jan. 5 & 8) to help in wearing away the Christmas turkey & treats. Be sure to keep the **Dancing Dates** handy to see what is happening in addition to the regular weekly classes.

Merry Christmas to all!

Doug Durnin, Editor

[Douglas.Durnin@umr.umanitoba.ca](mailto:Douglas.Durnin@umr.umanitoba.ca)



## The PUN / FUN Corner:

**What does a thesaurus eat for breakfast?  
A synonym roll!**

## *Here and There...*

## *Some Out of Town Events*

**February 7, 2026 – Toronto, ON – 60<sup>th</sup> Tartan Ball** returning to the Royal York Hotel.

**July 18 -August 2, 2026 – Medicine Hat, AB** -TAC Candidate Courses

**July 24 - 26 – Medicine Hat, AB** -Teachers Conference Weekend (TCW)

**July 26 – August 2 – Medicine Hat, AB** -TAC Summer School

Planning to travel? If you have an internet connection, browse for RSCDS & city for dancing where you are going. For instance, RSCDS Toronto hosts workshops and monthly dances and has links to dancing events all over the world. Almost every city in Canada has an RSCDS group. Many have a Facebook site as well.

Here are links to some branch sites:

[RSCDS Winnipeg Branch](#)

[RSCDS Saskatchewan Branch](#)

[RSCDS Calgary Branch](#)

[RSCDS Edmonton Caledonian Branch](#)

[RSCDS Medicine Hat Branch](#)

[www.lethbridgescottishcountrydance.org](http://www.lethbridgescottishcountrydance.org)

[RSCDS Vancouver](#)

[RSCDS Toronto Branch](#)

[RSCDS Ottawa](#)

## *L&A Submissions*

**Next L&A:** February 2026 Deadline for submissions: January 22.

Members are encouraged to submit articles, pictures or information of interest to Branch members.

Submissions for the *Light and Airy* can be sent to the Branch e-mail address: [info@rscdswinnipeg.ca](mailto:info@rscdswinnipeg.ca) or to the editor at [Douglas.Durnin@umr.umanitoba.ca](mailto:Douglas.Durnin@umr.umanitoba.ca)

This and past issues of *Light and Airy* are available at: [www.rscdswinnipeg.ca](http://www.rscdswinnipeg.ca)

## To a Mouse – Robert Burns (1785)

<u>The original Scots</u>	<u>English translation</u>
<u>Wee, sleekit, cow'rin, tim'rous beastie,</u> <u>O, what a panic's in thy breastie!</u> <u>Thou need na start awa sae hasty,</u> <u>Wi' bickering brattle!</u> <u>I wad be laith to rin an' chase thee,</u> <u>Wi' murd'ring pattle!</u>	<u>Little, sleek, cowering, timorous beast,</u> <u>Oh, what a panic is in your breast!</u> <u>You need not start away so hasty</u> <u>With bickering prattle!</u> <u>I would be loath to run and chase you,</u> <u>With murdering plough staff!</u>
<u>I'm truly sorry man's dominion,</u> <u>Has broken nature's social union,</u> <u>An' justifies that ill opinion,</u> <u>Which makes thee startle</u> <u>At me, thy poor, earth-born companion,</u> <u>An' fellow-mortal!</u>	<u>I'm truly sorry man's dominion</u> <u>Has broken Nature's social union,</u> <u>And justifies that ill opinion</u> <u>Which makes you startle</u> <u>At me, your poor, earth-born companion</u> <u>And fellow mortal!</u>
<u>I doubt na, whiles, but thou may thieve;</u> <u>What then? poor beastie, thou maun live!</u> <u>A daimen icker in a thrave</u> <u>'S a sma' request;</u> <u>I'll get a blessin wi' the lave,</u> <u>An' never miss't!</u>	<u>I doubt not, sometimes, that you may thieve;</u> <u>What then? Poor beast, you must live!</u> <u>An odd ear in twenty-four sheaves</u> <u>Is a small request;</u> <u>I will get a blessing with what is left,</u> <u>And never miss it.</u>
<u>Thy wee bit housie, too, in ruin!</u> <u>It's silly wa's the win's are strewin!</u> <u>An' naething, now, to big a new ane,</u> <u>O' foggage green!</u> <u>An' bleak December's winds ensuin,</u> <u>Baith snell an' keen!</u>	<u>Your small house, too, in ruin!</u> <u>Its feeble walls the winds are scattering!</u> <u>And nothing now, to build a new one,</u> <u>Of coarse green foliage!</u> <u>And bleak December's winds ensuing,</u> <u>Both bitter and piercing!</u>
<u>Thou saw the fields laid bare an' waste,</u> <u>An' weary winter comin fast,</u> <u>An' cozie here, beneath the blast,</u> <u>Thou thought to dwell—</u> <u>Till crash! the cruel coulter past</u> <u>Out thro' thy cell.</u>	<u>You saw the fields laid bare and empty,</u> <u>And weary winter coming fast,</u> <u>And cozy here, beneath the blast,</u> <u>You thought to dwell,</u> <u>Till crash! The cruel coulter passed</u> <u>Out through your cell.</u>
<u>That wee bit heap o' leaves an' stibble,</u> <u>Has cost thee mony a weary nibble!</u> <u>Now thou's turn'd out, for a' thy trouble,</u> <u>But house or hald,</u> <u>To thole the winter's sleety dribble,</u> <u>An' cranreuch cauld!</u>	<u>That small heap of leaves and stubble,</u> <u>Has cost you many a weary nibble!</u> <u>Now you are turned out, for all your trouble,</u> <u>Without house or holding,</u> <u>To endure the winter's sleety dribble,</u> <u>And hoar-frost cold!</u>
<u>But, Mousie, thou art no thy lane,</u> <u>In proving foresight may be vain;</u> <u>The best-laid schemes o' mice an' men</u> <u>Gang aft agley,</u> <u>An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain,</u> <u>For promis'd joy!</u>	<u>But Mouse, you are not alone,</u> <u>In proving foresight may be vain:</u> <u>The best-laid schemes of mice and men</u> <u>Go oft awry,</u> <u>And leave us nothing but grief and pain,</u> <u>For promised joy!</u>

Still thou art blest, compar'd wi' me  
The present only toucheth thee:  
But, Och! I backward cast my e'e.  
On prospects drear!  
An' forward, tho' I canna see,  
I guess an' fear!<sup>[6]</sup>

Still you are blessed, compared with me!  
The present only touches you:  
But oh! I backward cast my eye,  
On prospects dreary!  
And forward, though I cannot see,  
I guess and fear!