

Light and Airy



Scottish Country Dancers of Winnipeg
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Volume 53, Number 5

February 2022

Important Dates

Dancing in 2022

?? February 3 to April 7 – Thursday afternoon class at Churchill Park United Church

A Word from the Chair of COM

Well, here we are again, another January without a Burns celebration and we all know the reason why we cannot gather to honour Scotland's greatest poet. Last year at this time we had hoped the worst would be behind us, and we still hold to that hope, but we're just not quite there yet.

It isn't possible to gather together to hold a branch celebration but there's no reason why a family or a few friends can't assemble to remember Robbie's birthday. To lift a toast or two to the Immortal Memory, cook up some neaps and tatties and a generous sized haggis, recite some poetry and listen to some good Scottish music, an event touched with memories of past celebrations and hopes for next year.

With all the trials and tribulations of these past two years, with constantly changing regulations, hopes fulfilled then hopes dashed, we might find ourselves relating to the plight of the wee mouse Burns portrays in his poem *To a Mouse*. Here are verses you might wish to ponder and perhaps use for your own Burns celebration, rendered in the Standard English Version.



To A Mouse On Turning Up Her Nest with the Plough

*Small, sleek, cowering, timorous beast,
Oh, what panic is in your breast!
You need not start away so hasty
With a hurrying scamper!
I would be loath to run and chase you,
With a murderous spade!*

*I'm truly sorry that Man's dominion
Has broken Nature's social union,
And justifies that ill opinion
Which makes you startled
At me, your poor, earth-born companion
And fellow mortal!*

*I doubt not that you may steal;
So what? Poor beast, you must live!
An odd ear from twenty four sheaves of corn
is a small request:
I'll get a blessing with the rest,
And never miss it!*

*Your tiny housie, too, is in ruin!
Its feeble walls the winds are strewing!
And nothing now, from which to build a new
one
Of foliage green!
And bleak December's winds ensuing
Both bitter and keen!*

*You saw the fields laid bare and wasted
And weary Winter coming fast,
And cosy here, beneath the blast,
You thought to dwell,
Until crash! the cruel plough passed
Right through your cell.*

*That tiny heap of leaves and stubble
Has cost you many a weary nibble!
Now you are turned out for your trouble
Without house or home
To endure the Winter's sleety dribble,
and frosty cold.*

*But Mousie, you are not alone
In proving that foresight may be vain:
The best laid schemes (plans) of mice and men
Go oft astray (oft go awry)
And leave us nothing but grief and pain
Instead of promised joy!*

*Still, you are blessed, compared with me!
Only this moment touches you:
But oh! I backward cast my eye
On prospects turned to sadness!
And though forward I cannot see,
I guess and fear!*

Take care, stay warm and healthy, and all the best until we meet again.

Don Johnson

Have you heard?

January Meeting of COM

There was a COM meeting January 5 held via meet.google. The current status of hall availability was the main topic discussed. We are able to continue dancing at Churchill Park United Church on Thursday afternoons from January 13 to April 7. A survey will be sent out to see how many dancers are planning to attend. If numbers are insufficient for a viable class we can cancel on a week by week basis.

We are still in contact with St. Paul's Church regarding access to their hall but no word has been given as to timing. We are also pursuing Churchill Park for a class on Monday evening.

Class fees were set at \$60 for the term or \$10 per class as a drop-in fee to a maximum of \$60.

Getting to Know ...

Gerry Mayes

Gerry Mayes was a long-time member of the Winnipeg branch who became a teacher and shared her love of dance with us for many years.

On a sunny cool December afternoon, I had the opportunity to visit Gerry Mayes and reminisce over her years of Scottish Country dancing.

Gerry shared that she started SCD in 1967 when her husband Bert was taking an evening course and she looked for something she could do solo on the same night. She found, quite by accident, a class that was taught by Agnes Price and when told you don't need a partner joined at once. She danced at Kelvin High School in a classroom until Christmas and the class then moved to Norwood. Gerry was hooked on dancing and when Bert's class finished she kept on dancing.

Over her many years dancing Gerry made many lasting friendships.

Gerry danced in social classes and on the demonstration team. Notably in 1984 she was part of the group that danced for the Queen. Not so notably she tripped on some stairs and pulled muscles in her arm. I believe she left the arena with her arm in a homemade sling.

Gerry danced in the Fort Garry class Monday and the Norwood class on Wednesday. She left the Norwood group when she joined the demonstration class as they both met the same night. In the demonstration class it was decided that the ladies should have long white dresses to wear. Maureen Burnham, the teacher at the time, brought a bolt of material to class for the ladies to have dresses made. Gerry says she wore her dress at many dance events with her sash.

Gerry shared her memories about the start of the band. How John Trevenan brought the musicians together. Adam Laird was the director of the band playing piano. Gerry and her husband Bert were good friends with the Lairds and Bert was invited to bring his violin and join the Scotch Measure band. Gerry no longer had to go to a dance event solo! Adam and Bert shared a love of the music and played together quite often when the Mayes and the Lairds got together for dinner.

Gerry danced both nationally and internationally. She attended Summer School in Halifax for two summers and she and Janet Campbell went to England to visit Peter and Lynn McClure. While there they joined in a summer dance festival. Gerry shared it was So Much Fun!

Gerry and Peter McClure started the Thistle Club, a chance for dancers to meet on a Saturday evening to try dances not often done in regular classes. The events were published ahead of time so dancers could prepare for the evening. These evenings were a big hit for several years.

Gerry also taught a Children's class at the school where she taught Kindergarten. She advertised in the school and set rules. If you don't behave in class you would be asked to leave and not allowed to return. There was no cost to the join and she volunteered her time.

Gerry competed her teacher training in 1991 along with Peter McClure. Doug Durnin was her dance partner. The final exam night was a very blustery March evening with much heavy wet snow and yet there were still enough dancers who made it out to be the class stooges. We are hearty Manitobans after all.

Gerry taught dancing for 19 years mostly at the Fort Garry class where she developed many good relationships. Gerry retired from teaching in 2010. The following is a tribute from the 2010 L&A written by John Giesbrecht on Gerry's retirement

"Over the last few weeks Gerry Mayes has led us through a number of her personal favourite dances and what a joy it has been. Of course, the entire class was in a mood to indulge Gerry, after the announcement of her retirement from teaching. Our "snow day" make up class on April 26th became a tribute to Gerry for her thirty-five years of contribution to RSCDS and the Winnipeg Branch. Branch Chairperson Shirley Tinsley, gave a very touching farewell speech along with a bouquet of flowers on behalf of the branch. We will miss Gerry's innate charm, wit and graciousness as a teacher. Some people spread joy by leaving a room, but with Gerry, a palpable joy enters the room with her. Gerry commands great respect in the Winnipeg Branch as the attendance numbering around fifty at this event attested. This was a great evening of celebration."

It was a lovely time to reminisce over a cup of tea and a perfect time to share Gerry's dance story of her time with the Winnipeg Branch.

Cheryl Durnin



Secrets to Inner Peace

If you can start the day without caffeine,
If you can always be cheerful, ignoring aches and pains,
If you can resist complaining and boring people with your troubles,
If you can eat the same food every day and be grateful for it,
If you can understand when your loved ones are too busy to give you any time,
If you can take criticism and blame without resentment ,
If you can conquer tension without medical help,
If you can relax without alcohol,
If you can sleep without the aid of drugs,

Then You Are Probably
The Family Dog!

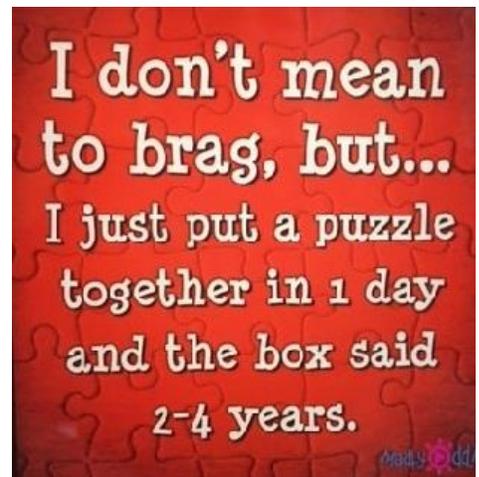
And you thought I was going to get all spiritual

From the Classes ...

Thursday Afternoon

In response to the survey sent out to members, there were not enough dancers willing to commit to dancing in January to make for a viable class. The decision was made to cancel the afternoon classes for January. This will be re-examined to possibly return to dancing in February.

Shirley Tinsley



Upcoming dancing ...

The **2022 TAC Summer School** is scheduled for July 24 -31, 2022 at Mount Royal University in Calgary. A great line-up of teachers and musicians is organized.

Registration Opens Early March!



Get ready ... get set ... and plan to join the fun at

2022 TAC Summer School
Mount Royal University, Calgary, Canada
July 24-31, 2022

Welcoming, supportive classes
For dancers of all levels
Basic | Intermediate | Advanced

Daily classes | evening social dances | formal ball and banquet |
evening after parties | ceilidh | silent auction

Teachers
Raphaëlle Orgeret (France)
Robert McOwen (USA)
Jeanne Moody (USA)
Barbara Johnston (Canada)

Musicians
Judi Nicolson, Fred Collins,
Ian Muir, Kathy Fraser Collins,
not pictured:
Terry Traub, Mary Ross

 tac-rscds.org
Sponsored by Scottish Country Dance Teachers' Association (Canada)

From the editor's desk ...

In this issue we have some dancing memories from Gerry Mayes. Thanks to Cheryl Durnin for spending time with Gerry to record these stories.

**Handle every Stressful situation like a dog.
If you can't eat it or play with it,
Piss on it and walk away!**

Some Out of Town dance events are listed for those wishing to plan their travels.

Stay safe, and stay healthy!

Doug Durnin, Editor
Douglas.Durnin@umr.umanitoba.ca

Here and There...

Some Out of Town Events

If you have an internet connection, browse for RSCDS & city. 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.

Winter, 2022 - dance classes hopefully resuming/continuing in various centers. Check local branch websites for specific details as restrictions permit dancing together in person.

April 2022 – Lethbridge Scottish Country Dancers 25th Weekend Workshop

June 10-12, 2022 – Beaver Dam, Wisconsin – Midwest Weekend Workshop

July 8-16, 2022 – Boston, Mass. – Pinewoods Scottish Sessions

July 17 – July 30, 2022 – Mount Royal Univ. Calgary – TAC Teacher Candidates Course

July 22-24, 2022 – Mount Royal Univ. Calgary – TAC Summer Teachers' Conference Weekend

July 24 – 31, 2022 – Mount Royal Univ. Calgary – TAC Summer School

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

[RSCDS Vancouver](#)

[RSCDS Toronto Branch](#)

[RSCDS Ottawa](#)

L&A Submissions

Next L&A: March 2022

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 or to the editor at Douglas.Durnin@umr.umanitoba.ca Deadline for submissions: February 13. This and past issues of *Light and Airy* are available at: www.rscdswinnipeg.ca