

Light and Airy



Scottish Country Dancers of Winnipeg

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www.rscdswinnipeg.ca

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Important Dates

Winter Term 2021

No Dance Events Scheduled As Yet

Winter/Spring 2021 ? – RSCDS dancing resumes in some format?

Committee of Management 2020/21

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A Word from the Chair of COM

Recently I received the annual seed catalogue from the gardening store I deal with. Other years I didn't pay too much attention to it when it arrived, but this year I've taken it much more seriously. Not that I have a huge garden planned for 2021, but because the catalogue reminds me that better days are ahead, that this winter of pandemic will come to an end, that so much we have to deal with now will, in good time, become a thing of the past. For these many months it was hard to plan for much of anything but now the distant light of hope is beaming brighter and we can dare dream and plan again.

All of us have missed dancing together, missed our classes and socials, missed visiting with our fellow dancers. With the recent advent of vaccines, the possibility of conditions improving sufficiently for us to resume our dance activities is on the horizon, albeit still a long way off.

Until that longed for time when we can meet again and dance again, I encourage you to keep alive within you the spirit of Scottish dancing by exploring the weekly *Dance Scottish at Home* emails, as well as watching the various dance offerings on YouTube.

I want to wish you and yours a very Happy Christmas and let us all hope for a brighter, healthier, safer New Year. As the Queen reminded us in her message several months ago, we will meet again!

Don Johnson

Have you heard?

“Branching Out” Walks

We are still waiting for the opportunity to be able to organize another walk as a way to get together safely. COM will let you know when the next walk might happen.

Membership

Thanks again to all who completed and sent in Registration forms. I have put together the 2020-2021 Registration List and sent it out to those who have registered.

You can still register. The registration form is available on the RSCDS Winnipeg Branch website (<http://www.rscdswinnipeg.ca/>). We are only accepting registration fees (\$60) for now as we still do not know when we might be able to resume any classes.

Doug Durnin
Membership

Ron Wallace - RSCDS Scroll of Honour Recipient

Headquarters in Scotland receives requests each year from Branches around the world submitting names of members that they feel have made significant contributions to their branch and larger community. From that list headquarters chooses several to present with the RSCDS Scroll of Honour. This year was no exception. One of the recipients is Ron Wallace who has a Winnipeg connection through dancing/teaching.

Ron Wallace is an internationally renowned teacher and deviser of Scottish dance. He teaches Country, Highland, and Step Dance to students of all ages in the San Francisco Bay Area and travels extensively throughout the U.S., Canada, and Europe, where he leads workshops and judges competitions. His dancers perform at local festivals and events, as well as international dance festivals in the U.S. and Europe.

Ron is also an accomplished performer of bagpipe, with many years of experience as an award-winning Pipe Major and as a teacher of bagpiping to students in his North Bay studio. His expertise and life-long passion for the history, music, and dance of Scotland inspire and inform students, dancers and audiences alike.

Ron completed his preliminary teaching exam here in Winnipeg in 1975 while living in Minneapolis MN. As a highland dancer, highland dance teacher, piper, adjudicator, Scottish Country Dance teacher, and Ladies Step Dance teacher, he certainly is the go to person for anything dance and music related. While living an 8 hour drive from Winnipeg he made many trips here for dance events, from adjudicating at highland games, bringing his dance students up to competitions, teaching at our workshops. I made a road trip with him to the Saskatchewan Branch workshop at Fort Qu'Appelle one year. He joined us in November of 1982 on a bus trip of Winnipeg dancers who all attended the workshop in Thompson where he was the teacher. We arrived in Thompson at 4am and at 9am he was ready to go and taught the whole day. Ron has taught at our workshops as well. He has been a great friend of the Winnipeg Branch and helped keep a bond between the Twin Cities and Winnipeg throughout his time in Minneapolis from the weekends at Itaska State Park to the Renaissance Festival. He now lives in California and has been teaching on line since the start of the pandemic. Ron is known worldwide and has been invited to teach at summer school in Scotland and many other places in the world.

Congratulations Ron on receiving this prestigious award.

Cheryl Durnin

From the Classes.....

Condolences to Clare McMahon on death of her husband Ian McMahon in early December. Ian had been ill for some time and has now journeyed to his eternal campground. We are saddened by your loss.

Getting to Know

Editor –Let’s continue along those lines! I invite one and all to write a note about their experiences in SCD. You might include how you first heard about the dancing, when you started, what you most enjoy about SCD, and memorable times. And what have you been doing during this time away from dancing? Have you taken up a new hobby, or gotten back to one you had set aside? Did you work on any projects about the home or cottage?

Sharron McGregor Bettess

I have been Scottish Country Dancing for six years. I was attracted to it because of my Scottish heritage and a book I was reading on brain health, which listed dancing as a stimulating activity for the brain (it sure is!).

I had always assumed I was 100% Scottish (a McGregor father and a Fraser mother). Turns out, not true. As a child I learned the Highland Fling from a friend who was taking lessons, and had a Scottish penpal from Ayrshire, and knew all the words to my grandmother’s Harry Lauder records, so Scottish Country Dancing was a good fit.

Dancing was also a good choice because I have always been very physically active. I ran four marathons – earning a bronze medal in the Masters category in my last one. I also cross-country ski, snowshoe, canoe and hike.

Another healthy brain activity is learning a new language, and I have been learning Scottish Gaelic at Duolingo.com over the last year – a good COVID activity, encouraged by my friend Karen from the Basic class. It’s a complicated language. Here’s an example. The word “the” is “am” if the following noun starts with B,F,M, or P; “an” for a noun starting with any of the other consonants, and “an-t” if the noun starts with a vowel. And that’s just for masculine nouns. I haven’t gotten to feminine nouns yet (it took me the full year to get to the word “the” in my lessons and you can probably see why.)

I became a pharmacist and worked in many different places – Riverview Health Centre, Manitoba Health, the College of Pharmacy, Winnipeg Technical College and Rexall. I have been retired for six years.

I have been married to Brian for 51 years, have two children, three grandchildren (plus one grandcat) and two great grandsons, all living nearby. I am so lucky.

I wish you all a safe and healthy holiday season and look forward to seeing you sometime soon. And I am SOOOOOOOO looking forward to being able to dance again.

A Visit with Rena Laird

Writing this in early December; not very cold yet, but the days are growing shorter, and it's nice to remember the long warm days of summer. In early July, we visited Rena Laird at her home, now in Bright Water, off Wilkes. It was a perfect summer day, almost too warm. We couldn't visit inside due to pandemic restrictions, but the facility had a patio with umbrellas to shade the tables. One of the staff brought us coffee, and we spent a pleasant hour. Of course, Jessie had to come along - Rena is fond of dogs, and loves to see Jessie. We take a few biscuits and Rena is very generous in doling them out. We tell Rena that hers is the only home where Jessie always gets a warm welcome!

Lynn & Peter McClure



ALS Manitoba Fundraiser

I would like to thank all who so generously donated to ALS Manitoba in memory of my mom Doreen Mennie. I am hopeful that next year I will be able to invite all of you to an ALS ceilidh event where we can dance, be entertained, enjoy each other's company and raise some funds for ALS Manitoba.

This year I donated a gift card to one lucky donor. The draw was made today for a \$25 Sobeys gift card and the lucky winner is Joyce Wright.

Thank you again to all who donated. Your donation makes a difference in the lives of those with ALS and their families.

Cheryl Durnin

There's always music for us

The headquarters website continues to have weekly classes to keep us interested. Look up The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society info@rscds.org for the weekly Dance Scottish at Home. It also contains a number of links to follow to open up the various goodies they have included such as the link to the online classes, At Home Podcasts, and more.

From the editor's desk

Thank you to those who sent me a note on how your activities over the past while. I hope more of you will consider forwarding a note possibly including how you started dancing, what you like about the activity, how you have been keeping busy since the shutdown took place. Have you started or resumed any hobbies or projects? I can include them in future issues of L&A.

The registration form can also be found on the RSCDS Winnipeg website on the first page or (<http://www.rscdswinnipeg.ca/index.html>) under Members/Newsletter.

Still no classes available. Perhaps New Zealand & Australia might be the first to resume classes. That would be a bit of a commute for a Wednesday evening dance class!

In the meantime – stay safe!

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

**If I had only known in March it would
be my last time in a restaurant,

I would have ordered dessert.**

Here and There...

SCD Books and Music

Anyone interested in buying books of Scottish country dances or recordings of SCD music should be aware of TACBooks and TACSound, two services maintained by Teachers' Association Canada (TAC). You can look at their catalogues on the TAC web site www.tac-rscds.org. If you want to order any items, please do it via the Branch Librarian, as there are discounts available to Branches, but not to individuals.

Scottish Country Dance Ghillies and Pumps

www.avriel.com Shoe shop for dancers.

Clan Info and Scottish Shop

www.scotclans.com

SCD Online

In case you didn't know about these sites:

Royal Scottish Country Dance Society, Edinburgh, Scotland: <https://www.rscds.org>
A great site to link to other branches and everything in the world of Scottish Country Dancing.

[The Inter-City Scot](#) - lists events across Canada and the United States. For other parts of the world, use the link to SCD groups on the Strathspey site www.strathspey.org to find contact information.

Strathspey www.strathspey.org has a database where you can search for info about dances (including cribs and videos when available), music (some clips), people and more. Also, there is a link to the Strathspey e-mail list, in case you'd like to join an online mailing list about SCD.

SCD Dictionary www.scottish-country-dancing-dictionary.com has info about steps and formations. We don't really need that, we get it in our classes; however, sometimes a video may help, and SCD dictionary has videos for steps and formations. Also, there is info about dances, as on Strathspey.

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.

EVENTS STILL HAPPENING (AT THIS TIME)

There are online classes but that is all. Unfortunately all dance branches and groups are waiting to see how dancing might resume.

L&A Submissions

Next L&A: February

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: January 9. This and past issues of *Light and Airy* are available at: www.rscdswinnipeg.ca