

Light and Airy



Scottish Country Dancers of Winnipeg

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Important Dates

Winter Term 2021

No Dance Events Scheduled

Spring 2021 ? – still hoping RSCDS dancing resumes in some format?

2021 Summer School in St. Andrews - has been cancelled

TAC Summer School 2021 in Calgary - has been cancelled.

A Word from the Chair of COM

It was early on the morning of Monday, 25th January when an email arrived from a friend of mine in Lethbridge. The message was simple but heartfelt. “*Happy Robbie Burns Day*” she wrote. I had almost forgotten the day but she hadn’t. My friend is not a Scottish Country dancer, nor is she involved in any Scottish organizations. She remembered the date because years ago, during my University days to be exact, I used to host a Burns day party for my friends. In a second email she reminded me that she had her first and only taste of haggis at one of those parties, a culinary delight she has refrained from ever since!

Those Burns parties were actually just an excuse to have a party, but I suspect that if he was with us these days, Robert Burns would heartily concur with that sentiment for I’m sure Burns loved a good party.

Heaven knows we need a good party these days, an opportunity to reconnect with one another, a chance to warm up our dancing muscles and move to the music. And we know that time will come, we know that we will gather again in classes and at social events. We know we will once again celebrate Robbie's birthday, toast the Immortal Memory and taste the Haggis.

Until that time, I leave you with the words we would have heard if we could have assembled for that special birthday in January.

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

Don Johnson

Address To A Haggis

*Fair fa' your honest, sonsie face,
Great Chieftain o' the Puddin-race!
Aboon them a' ye tak your place,
Painch, tripe, or thairm:
Weel are ye wordy of a grace
As lang 's my arm.*

*The groaning trencher there ye fill,
Your hurdies like a distant hill,
Your pin wad help to mend a mill
In time o' need,
While thro' your pores the dews distil
Like amber bead.*

*His knife see Rustic-labour dight,
An' cut ye up wi' ready slight,
Trenching your gushing entrails bright,
Like onie ditch;
And then, O what a glorious sight,
Warm-reekin, rich!*

*Then, horn for horn, they stretch an' strive:
Deil tak the hindmost, on they drive,
Till a' their weel-swallow'd kytes belye
Are bent like drums;
Then auld Guidman, maist like to rive,
Bethankit hums.*

*Is there that owre his French ragout,
Or olio that wad staw a sow,
Or fricassee wad mak her spew
Wi' perfect sconner,
Looks down wi' sneering, scornfu' view
On sic a dinner?*

*Poor devil! see him owre his trash,
As feckless as a wither'd rash,
His spindle shank a guid whip-lash,
His nieve a nit;
Thro' bluidy flood or field to dash,
O how unfit!*

*But mark the Rustic, haggis-fed,
The trembling earth resounds his tread,
Clap in his walie nieve a blade,
He'll make it whistle;
An' legs, an' arms, an' heads will sned,
Like taps o' thrissle.*

*Ye Pow'rs wha mak mankind your care,
And dish them out their bill o' fare,
Auld Scotland wants nae skinking ware
That jaups in luggies;
But, if ye wish her gratefu' prayer,
Gie her a Haggis!*

Have you heard?

This is stupid. I just tried to make my own hand sanitizer and it came out as a rum & coke.~~~~~

RSCDS logo Masks

The Committee of Management values your dedication to the branch and we look forward to the day when we will be dancing together again. COM has arranged for, ordered, and delivered a facemask with the RSCDS Dance Scottish logo to our members to keep you safe. The masks are washable, and re-usable with three layers for added protection. Once we can return to dancing, our masks will be as vital as our dance shoes!

If you would like to purchase more masks at \$10.00/mask, please contact: Chery Durnin at durninch@gmail.com.



We trust you will appreciate this RSCDS memento and when you use it will remember fellow dancers and know that we are thinking of you.

Take care, stay safe.

RSCDS Committee of Management

Cancellations

Summer School 2021

With regret, Board members were unanimous in making the difficult decision to cancel the 2021 Summer School in St Andrews, Scotland.

TAC Summer School 2021

Regrettably, the TAC Executive has decided to cancel the 2021 TAC Summer School planned for Calgary.

HOWEVER! They're going virtual!

“We can't meet in person this year, but we're excited to announce there will be a 'virtual' Summer School in July.”

Check the TAC website for ongoing updates and details

tac-rscds.org

From the Classes.....

A Big Thank You!

I know all branch members join me in thanking our Committee of Management for the kind gesture of giving masks to everyone, complete with the RSCDS logo, and even personally delivering them to our homes! This thoughtful gesture is much appreciated.

Marilyn Piniuta

Since we can't go out much -
Place a glass of wine
in each room.
Now move room to room on your
own personal wine tour!

Getting to Know

Editor –Do you have a dancing story to share? Let's continue along those lines! I invite one and all to write a note about their experiences in SCD. 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?

Jean Miller

JEAN, THE DANCING MACHINE (What I used to be called) – 50 YEARS ON MY TOES

I started Scottish Country dancing at school in Edinburgh when I was 12 in 1956. It was part of our physical education. Our first dance was “Petronella” and I danced it in my phys-ed clothes - navy blue knickers and white blouse. I didn't Scottish Country dance again until I emigrated to Canada and after I was married in 1968. Jim and I were asked to join the Srathcona Social Group in Burlington, taught by Arthur & Jean Douglas. We danced with them and often danced at the Hamilton monthly dances with live music by Stan Hamilton or Bobby McLeod – great! We were transferred to Montreal in 1975 and danced in Point Claire at a class taught by John Bowie-Dixon. Then in 1977 we were transferred again to Winnipeg and didn't know a soul there. We joined the Winnipeg Branch intermediate class run by Maureen Burnham, moving

up to Advance with Christine Wallace. We were immediately involved with “Mug Pub” at Folklorama and that was a busy time as we had two small children and had to get a babysitter every night for a week. It was so much fun and we were on a “high” all week. We met so many great people. One group we called “the girls” that was initiated by Janis Platts, a very enthusiastic and energetic person. We often attended a lot of workshops.

I was in the “Scottish Entertainers”, who were mostly from the demo team. We danced and sang at various seniors homes and other venues. We became a very close-knit group and socialized a lot, just like the “girls” group.

In 1998 I moved to Halifax, Nova Scotia with my son David and joined the dance group in Dartmouth, taught by John Wood and also the Halifax group with Colleen Putt. Everyone was friendly and like Winnipeg it didn’t take long to meet people.

I joined the demo team taught by John Wood and danced at the highland games, Tartan Day and the Ethnic Festival, a small version of Folklorama. We travelled to all parts of Nova Scotia. My “swan song” was to dance at the Halifax International Tattoo in 2009 for 3 minutes, but what a thrill. Better Tattoo than in Edinburgh!

When I retired in 2003, I spent 6 months with my sister in Australia and danced there and the following 6 months in Britain I danced in Princes St. Gardens, Edinburgh – the ultimate I would say dancing under the shadow of the castle to a live band and fellow dancers along with tourists from around the world. When I was a teenager there was no way I would be caught dancing there – too square!

In 2011 I moved to Barrie, Ontario to be closer to my daughter Mandy and her family and joined the Barrie Branch, taught by Bill & Sue Scott. This was a nice little group. We also danced at Tartan Day, Scottish Festival in Orillia plus other demos when needed. Like everyone I haven’t been dancing lately due to Covid-19.

To conclude I would say dancing is the best way to make good friends and I did.

Glen Colquhoun

Why Did I Ever Get Involved With Scottish Country Dancing

How did I get involved in Scottish Country Dancing you ask? Wasn’t my choice.

Heather and I attended what turned out be the last year of Mug Pub. We really enjoyed the evening, and on the way out there was a sign-up sheet for those interested in taking classes. I tried to keep going past it, but Heather stopped and cajoled me into signing the sheet. I agreed on one condition – I was not going to wear those (politically incorrect) shoes. Her father was from Scotland, as was her mother’s parents so she knew what we were getting into, but I had no clue.

Our first class was fairly large, probably about 4 sets, of beginners and second year dancers. We relearned how to skip as children, tried to do some skip change and did what I see now is a simple dance, but was very confusing and difficult at that time. And in spite of the instruction to choose another partner for the next dance, Heather and I tried to always dance together.

It didn't take too many classes before I realized my shoes were weighing me down, so I reluctantly bought a pair of gillies saying to Heather 'I'll buy the gillies, but I won't wear a kilt' . What a difference. My feet were weightless and I could jump higher, if not better, and I began to enjoy the dance.

A few years later, there was a large demonstration dance at Minto Armouries for which they were recruiting dancers, offering to supply kilts to those men who hadn't any. Once again, under duress, Heather made me do it. And a warning to all men wearing a kilt for the first time, be careful how you sit down on a cold metal chair. Well, once I enjoyed the freedom of dancing without pants, I had to have a kilt, so bought the outfit from the person who had loaned it to me.

Heather and I have been dancing now for over 30 years and it's the best decision I ever made (joke). During that time we have had opportunities to dance at demonstrations, performances, etc., but best of all, we've met and danced with really great people. Can't wait to see you all again.

David Kroeker

In 1969, I shared a house in Wolseley with one David Williams, a Scottish Country dance teacher and one of the founders of the Winnipeg RSCDS. Every Wednesday evening, his entire class showed up at 10:30 – a 24 thrown on the floor, partying, and laying waste to any thoughts of sleep I may have had.

Result: if you can't beat 'em, join 'em!

Supplemental #1: Involved in nearly every Folklorama Mug Pub event over it's 20+ years as a bartender, dancer, actor. What a blast!!

Supplemental #2: In following years as I searched out work across Canada, each city where I landed had an SCD group that took me in as one of them. As a newcomer in town, I enjoyed the great social life offered. I eventually trained to become a teacher and was able to give back what I received as being part of this magnificent group.

Supplemental #3: Upon returning from Montreal some 30 years ago, I met Debbie at a Winnipeg SCD dance weekend. Two years later, at the same weekend, M/C Pat Wright announced our engagement! --- And the rest is history!

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.

Online dancing



Join the RSCDS Online Class – keeping moving and connected!

Get ready to dance with us from your living rooms, kitchens, spare rooms, offices – wherever you have room to move – and connect with dancers from around the world.

A class every week.

From the editor's desk

Thank you to Jean Miller, Glen Colquhoun, and David Kroeker for their stories about joining Scottish Country Dancing. It seems Mug Pub is a common thread! I hope more of you will consider forwarding a note about your start in SCD, 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.

**Smoking pot and skipping school had me in trouble constantly.
Now weed's legal and schools closed ... damn kids are livin' the dream.~~~~~**

Still no classes available locally. Just online possibilities.

In the meantime – stay safe!

Doug Durnin, Editor

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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.

July 25 – August 1, 2021 - CANCELLED - TAC Summer School and Candidate Classes,
Calgary AB

And a bit further/farther off for planning:

Sept 25 - Oct 2, 2022 - Australian Winter School 2022: Originally Scheduled for Sept 2020
<https://winterschool2020.com>

Unfortunately, dance branches and groups are waiting to see how dancing might resume.

L&A Submissions

Next L&A: April

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: March 13. This and past issues of *Light and Airy* are available at: www.rscdswinnipeg.ca