

Light and Airy



Scottish Country Dancers of Winnipeg

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www.rscdswinnipeg.ca

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Important Dates

Fall Term 2020

No Dance Events Scheduled As Yet

Fall 2020 – (hopefully) RSCDS dancing resumes in some format

?????? – “Branching Out” Walk – location??? - postponed due to new restrictions

Committee of Management 2020/21

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Vice-Chair:	Shirley Tinsley	204-256-3835
Secretary:	Sharyl Eaglesham	204-888-6662
Treasurer:	Sharron Bettess	204-256-2248
Social Secretary	Linda Wingert	204-889-6319
Asst. Soc. Secretary:	Barbara Lambert	204-256-8738
Publicity:	Joyce Cormack	204-224-2291
Membership:	Doug Durnin	204-253-4213
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A Word from the Chair of COM

The other day, as I was scrolling through the list of searched for items on my YouTube, I spotted “*The Glasgow Highlanders Scottish Country Dance*”. I abandoned what it was I was looking for and began to open up the various offerings related to this dance.

It was a wonderful pastime to watch *The Glasgow Highlanders* videos from many different locations. My initial interest in that dance had been fueled by the teaching video we received in the early days of the pandemic, a video that took the viewer through the intricacy of its unique setting step. As the various videos show, it is a step easily accomplished by some while others clearly struggle with it.

One video in particular was from the Aberdeen and North East Scotland Music Festival in 2017. It began with a demonstration team dancing *Lady Susan Stewart’s Reel*, which was then followed by *The Glasgow Highlanders*. Great music, strong, confident dancing, it was time well spent watching this talented group bring to life two excellent dances.

Until we can dance again in person, I encourage you to explore the wealth of recorded dances available on YouTube, as well as the weekly presentations sent by email to us from the Society. It’s good to use these and other resources to keep alive within us the joy and the spirit of Scottish Country Dancing.

Your Committee of Management organized a social gathering in September, which a good number of our members attended. To further maintain our connections with each other, we are now launching a walking group which you and your friends are most welcome to join. There is more about this in the email sent out last week and in this edition of the Light & Airy.

I hope you will consider joining us.

All the best to you and yours.

Don Johnson

Have you heard?

“Branching Out” Walks

Greetings from the Committee of Management! We have been reflecting on the great success of the gathering in the Park in September and thinking of new ways of continuing to connect, while keeping COVID precautions a priority. The committee agreed that our Branch enjoys music, being active and socializing. With this in mind, we met at St. Paul’s parking lot for “**Branching Out**” Walks on Friday, October 16th and Sunday, October 18th. Music was available to enjoy as we gathered and headed along our route led by Sharon Bettess. We dressed for the weather including our masks.

We were hoping to get out for more walks but with Winnipeg restricted to gatherings of 5 or less for at least two weeks, we won't try another walk until that is lifted.

We'll send out an email notice for the next one!

From Sharyl Eaglesham

Just finished our first "Branching-Out" walk with 12 dancers/walkers. I have to admit that the -1c temperature made me question the outdoor walk. Then I remembered that I sometimes feel the same about going out in the evening to dance class – but never regret it once I am there. I didn't regret today's walk either – good exercise with great people.

It's disappointing to hear that the COVID numbers are going up and this makes the possibility of dancing together soon, unlikely. I generally feel like I am doing well with the "new normal", and then sometimes I get feeling very uneasy, unsure or unhappy.



I have a little check list of "Quarantine Questions" (*by Dr. Marie Murphy – Glasgow University*) that I refer to when I need some direction:

- What am I grateful for today?
- Who am I checking in on or connecting with today?
- What expectations of "normal" am I letting go of today?
- How am I getting outside today?
- How am I moving my body today?
- What beauty am I either creating, cultivating, or inviting in today?

I think the "Branching-out" walk checked off a couple of boxes on the list. I am very grateful for the dancing friendships developed over the years and look forward to any moments that we can get together in the future.
Stay healthy & Stay Safe.

Membership

Thank you to all those who completed and send in Registration forms. So far I have recorded 41 folks and have emailed to acknowledge and confirm email addresses. 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

From the Classes.....

Autumn Greetings on behalf of the Fort Garry Social Class to all members and to my fellow dancers in the social class!

It was great seeing members of all classes at our fall visit in Assiniboine Park and at the time of writing this we can look forward to meeting again at our upcoming “Branching-Out” walk. Thanks to our COM for working hard to plan these get-togethers as a means for us to stay connected and to those providing the music we love at them.

I hope everyone is staying well and coping with these very different covid times. I continue to enjoy daily long walks and observing nature in our own backyard. An update from my last report in the spring regarding the expectation of the return of two great horned owls to our willow tree.....we had not just 2 but 6! They are currently still glaring down at us all day long, hooting at dusk, and as well there are many squawking geese which most would detest but we love! Throughout these covid months we have taken several day long road trips including north to the Interlake region, east to the Whiteshell, south to the Pembina Hills and most recently west to Spruce Woods Provincial Park and Spirit Sands. It's great to enjoy our own beautiful province at a time where other travel is either impossible or not recommended.

Recently several of us “old timers” in the branch got together via Zoom to celebrate the special birthday of a long time former branch member Iona McPhee. Many of you will remember her. She is now in her 90's and doing great.

I have been able to continue volunteering a bit for the WHS at an outdoor event which was enjoyable and most importantly benefitted the animals in their care.



There is one last thing I would like to mention. I owe a debt of gratitude to one of our social class teachers Maureen Burnham and to our fellow dancer Helen Barnes. A while back I had mentioned to Maureen that I had returned to playing the piano during this pandemic following a long hiatus due to job, marriage, children, grandchildren, etc. etc. Maureen suggested I talk to Helen Barnes who both plays and teaches piano. Helen in turn put me in touch with a retiring piano teacher who just happened to be selling her many piano books. Consequently I was able to obtain my missing Royal Conservatory of Music graded piano books which I had so foolishly thrown out in my younger days. As a result I am now playing many of my old examination pieces, learning new ones, and going forward, even contemplating possibly attaining my teaching certificate if only for my own personal goal and satisfaction. Thank you Maureen and Helen!

My apologies for this being lengthy and mostly about “me” but with our inability to dance I do not know what is going on in the lives of other members. So perhaps we can all contribute our own stories to the L&A in the coming months. It will be an interesting read for us and I'm sure it will make Doug our editor very happy!

Meanwhile stay healthy, happy and safe!

Marilyn Piniuta
Fort Garry Social class

Wow! Dance days are free, and every other day of routine ‘out there’ activities. A new way of living for all of us. Searching, searching, searching. Discovering new things to do and old things we never got around to. As with many other things, this has so affected our RSCDS Community. We’ve had to find new ways of staying fit to avoid aches, pains and weight gains. Search for new ways to exercise our nimble brains. When we see you again will we remember your names?

A couple of sweet young ladies have been leaving care packages on our front step. When I told my daughter she said “Dad, they’re your granddaughters”. Sharon’s started wearing her finest clothes around the house. She told me not to get any ideas, she was only doing it as they may be out of style by the time she gets out again.

At the moment we are missing out on so much because focus is fixed on so few things. Can you imagine Covid-19 and Donald Trump vanishing the same day? Media would be scrambling.

I sit here tonight listening and watching our son Spencer resurrecting his skills as DJ FunkyBeek, Friday Night Fever on facebook and Twitch from his condo in Vancouver. Until further notice facetime and Zoom are the only ways we will see each other. A poor substitute for real life, but thankfully this technology allows us communicate with family and friends.

One good thing about all this, my round-tu-it is shrinking.

In closing, for Sharon and I, RSCDS is more than just about dancing. We miss our community and friendships we are blessed with. May we all get together again soon, creaking back into shape.

Meanwhile stay safe and remember, your eyes will reveal your smile.

Ray Plaitin
Technique class

Observing Nature

Note from editor: Our daughter Ainslie lives in New Jersey and works in Manhattan. She has been working from home since early March and will continue so for quite some time to come.

When the world slowed to a halt this past spring on account of the COVID-19 pandemic, my morning commute—normally a 1.5 hour, 10 mile trek by bus, subway, and foot—transformed overnight into a nature walk. Void of the perils of public transportation and the inconveniences of traffic snags and disgruntled commuters, my morning stroll has become a sacred part of my pandemic life. Carving out this time to stop to smell the roses, as it were, it has been remarkable to observe the multitude of creatures that inhabit my local neighbourhood. Rabbits, ducks, geese, voles, cardinals, orioles, squirrels, groundhogs, mice, rats...much can be seen when one tucks one's phone in one's pocket and looks around! My family has taken to calling me "Snow White" and will inquire about my "Snow White Moments". On one particular morning of excitement, an inquisitive squirrel snuck into our house and surprised my husband at work in his basement office. I was promptly informed that going forward, I, Snow White, was to refrain from bringing any more outdoor creatures into the house.

Over the summer, I had a wonderful extended visit with my parents in Winnipeg. I maintained my morning ritual, often venturing along the Seine River trail in South St. Vital. On one memorable occasion, I set out on my walk, heading east down John Bruce Road and across the Seine River walking bridge. The morning was clear and bright, the sun warm on my face as I admired the floral mural that graced the span of the bridge. As I gazed across the serene river, I wondered if the family of deer that I had seen several days prior might also be out enjoying the tranquility of the morning. I was startled out of my reverie by the sound of bikes on the river trail. Three cyclists came careening through the trees, the first two making a sharp turn to follow the trail, while the third, ill-fated cyclist missed the turn and went over his handlebars and headfirst into the river with an impressive splash. As he sat up in the shallow, murky waters, his bike atop him, his friends inquired as to his well-being (evidently pride was the greatest casualty). Though I didn't stick around to help pull him from the muddy water, I can only imagine that he had an uncomfortably soggy trip home.

So, might I suggest that we all pay a little more attention to the natural world around us, as we just never know what wildlife we may encounter.

Ainslie Durnin

There's always music for us

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

Joyce Cormack enjoying Dance Scottish at Home

We are wondering if any of you have been following the weekly classes from Headquarters every Wed at 1 PM Wpg time. It would be interesting to know how many members are following these classes and perhaps you could send me a quick email if you are participating in the classes?? At this crazy time in which we live, I imagine many of us are missing our favourite activity - Scottish Country Dancing and, of course, also missing the connection with our fellow dancers.

For those of you who have not been following the classes, I would encourage you to take a look and give them a try. Every week there is a different teacher from someplace around the world and it is quite interesting to experience the different teaching methods. Every class begins with a warm up and ends with a cool down and every guest teacher has his/her own routine some of which are related to the movements in the dance that is taught.

These classes began April 8 and have been weekly ever since. All of these online classes are on the RSCDS Headquarters web site under dance Scottish and to date a total of 27 classes are available online. The dances range from basic steps and formations to more complex dances and include 2 C or 3 C dances as well as step dances that are a solo activity. (Hint from Peter - who discovered that you don't have to suffer through all the 20 min or so of chat before the class begins - just set your pointer at the 20 min mark or so to get the start of the class. Maybe everyone knew that, but I had to discover it.)

I am sure that you will prefer some classes over others but you may find out that doing these online classes is a bit of a workout and better than the alternative which is no dancing at all. Who knows, you may become way more proficient and confident and will be ready to dance when classes resume sometime in the future. I am envious of those who have two dancers in a household and do not have to dance with a ghost. I have heard that there is a couple in our branch who learn a new dance every day and dance every day!

I particularly enjoyed the class on July 15 with the teacher from Italy. Great footwork, interesting dance (The Trysting Place) and when we were ready to dance the 32 bars his family (spouse, daughter and young son) joined him and they danced it in the 2 C set twice through. He also said that the family dances every day.

Perhaps you may not have enough room to dance in your home? I have no problem doing the

lesson in my wee kitchen. You may not do a skip change of step as you would if you were in a hall but at least you will be practicing the step and learning the formations which will come in handy when we return to dancing, hopefully in the not too distant future.

If you have problems accessing the classes or have any questions, don't hesitate to give me a call. Happy Dancing!

From the editor's desk

It is still quiet on the local dance scene except for the questions about when, where, and how we might get back on the dance floor.

Thank you to those who took a bit of time and sent me a note on how you have been getting along.

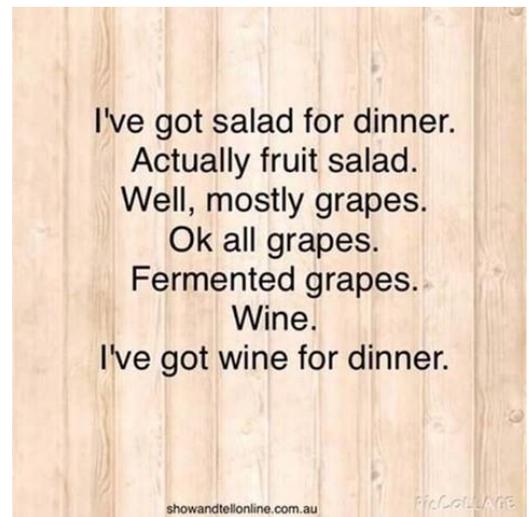
The registration form can also be found on the RSCDS Winnipeg website on the first page or (<http://www.rscdswinnipeg.ca/index.html>) under Members/Newsletter.

The COM has continued to reach out to connect with dancers by having a “Branching Out” Walk. If well received, this will be repeated perhaps at a different venue. Information will be sent via email. With new gathering restrictions now in effect for Winnipeg, further walking events will be organized when we can have more than 5 persons together.

In the meantime – stay safe!

Ps. I helped prepare dinner the other day. I was in charge of salad and found this recipe. Works for me!

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



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.

So we wait.

L&A Submissions

Next L&A: December

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: November 14. This and past issues of *Light and Airy* are available at: www.rscdswinnipeg.ca