



THE REEL NEWS

Volume 19, Issue # 3 January 2013

**ROYAL SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE SOCIETY
LONDON, CANADA BRANCH
P.O. Box 33012, 900 Oxford Street E.
London, ON N5Y 3J7**

RSCDSLONDONCANADA.org
calendar, forms, programs, contacts and links

Google "YouTube" + "Scottish Country Dancing"
for videos of SCD.

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Next Newsletter	Submissions due*	Available
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* to Elizabeth < ebright@uwo.ca >		

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Dorothy Sample

Our fall season of dancing ended with a very successful Christmas Dinner Dance. There were 114 people in attendance. Some members brought their friends and family. Many of them chose to do the polka, foxtrot and waltzes which were added to the program.

As usual, the music of the Scottish Accent Band was magnificent. We thank Helen Bell for her initiative in finding a new venue and working to make the evening a gala event.

We have welcomed 17 brand new dancers to our Branch this fall. They are all enthusiastic and are learning dance skills. Just think of all the new partners that seasoned dancers may now choose!

We owe **everything** to our **teachers!** Week by week, they plan lessons to reinforce our skills and to challenge us to higher achievement. Please be respectful.

Each class has only **one teacher.** Please direct your questions to that teacher, listen to instructions, do your best to follow them, and refrain from talking to other dancers during the lesson.

I will just mention the next two social events – Winterfest on Sunday, Jan. 27 and our annual Workshop Weekend on Feb. 22nd and 23rd. The Workshop is a time of concentrated learning which will be especially helpful to new dancers. Save these dates and plan to attend. Details of these special events are found elsewhere in the newsletter.

Happy New Year to All !

I know that another term of great dancing is underway. See you on the dance floor.

COMMITTEE of MANAGEMENT

MEMBERS

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Needed:

2013-2014 Committee of Management Members

The Committee of Management (CoM) consists of 9 members elected by the Branch members at the Annual General Meeting (AGM), plus a teachers' representative chosen by the Branch teachers; all are volunteers. As of 2013, there will be only a Past Chair or a Vice Chair, either of which will serve as chair of the Nominating Committee.

The positions up for election at the AGM on May 15th 2013 are **Treasurer**, **Publicity Coordinator** and **Newsletter Editor**, each for a two year term. Job descriptions are available to give prospective candidates a better idea of what each position entails.

If you are interested in more information about serving on the CoM in one of these positions, please contact **Gayle Frisa** (contact information in list above).

The CoM meets about 10 times a year and assists in planning the Branch events. The success of these events is dependent on the rest of the Branch members volunteering as needed and being directly involved.

Consider serving on the Committee of Management. It is a great way to get to know other members and to be an important part in keeping our Branch active and vibrant.

NOTICE of AGM and AGENDA ITEMS

AGM - May 15, 2013

According to the Branch Constitution: "The agenda of items to be discussed at the meeting will be available to the members 21 days prior to the meeting."

Any member who wants an issue discussed at the Annual General Meeting must provide notice of this to the Committee of Management **by April 17th**.

BRANCH NEWS

Condolences

Ella Thomson, Helen Bell's mother and a long-time member of our Branch, died peacefully January 14. Our thoughts are with Helen and Maurice and their family at this difficult time.

"It is with a heavy heart that I announce the passing of my beloved wife **Catherine Martin-Auksi** in the early hours of Tuesday, January 15th at Glendale Crossing Nursing Home. Catherine danced with the Branch from 1990 to 2006." *Peter Auksi*

Catherine and Peter were recipients of the 2010 Branch Award. Our sincere condolences go out to Peter.

We are sad to report the passing of **Rev. Fred Neill**. Members will remember his attendance at events in the 90s.

Get Well Wishes

Slyva Nisbet had hip surgery in December. **Norine Gilkinson** is recovering from a bad fall. We wish each of them a speedy recovery.

Thank You letter from **Mary Pate**
(see previous newsletter for details and picture of gift)

Dear Dorothy.

Please convey my heart felt thanks to everyone for their contribution toward the lovely original painting of Springbank Park which was presented to me at the Ceilidh. I know many of you were not at the dance therefore I just wanted to make sure I did not miss thanking everyone very much, also to let you know how much I appreciate the kindness and best wishes to Allan and me as we begin a new journey of life in Scotland.

When we finally get settled in the house this lovely gift will be in a special place to remind me of my many years of dancing with all of you. I will miss everyone for our social time together. All being well I hope to be back for the ball in May next year. I wish you all a happy dancing year.

Mary

Sandra Elizabeth Evans

Judy Sloan

Music Legacy In her will, Sandra left a legacy to the Branch. The Committee of Management has decided to apply this to the purchase of a new music machine for use at the classes. There will be a plaque attached recognizing Sandra's contribution.

Sandra Elizabeth Evans joined the London Branch in Sept. 1981, with Bill McLennan as her first teacher at St. George's Public School. Later she danced with Doug Clarke's class at Ryerson Public School. Sandra and I attended many out-of-town events and especially enjoyed our times at TAC Summer School at Brock University. For many years, Sandra was the London Branch Newsletter Editor.

About 1990, she was diagnosed with MS and eventually had to give up the dancing she loved. She continued to be interested in people and happenings within the Branch and even attended a few social dances in her wheelchair.

Mount Hope became her home and she made many friends among the caregivers and residents there. Sandra passed away peacefully on July 4, 2012. She was 62.

RECENT EVENTS

Men's Dance, November 16, 2012

Scott MacCrone



Alasdair Campbell, convener of the Men's Dance, welcomes everyone to the evening and the start of the dancing.

It's fun. . . it's social. The Men's Dance was a grand opportunity to enjoy an evening of Scottish Country Dancing with lively jigs and reels and the distinctively Scottish, and very stately, Strathspey, following a familiar pattern, standard formations and an occasional odd twist.

The evening began at 1800 hours with a reception in the foyer or what some would call the cloak room. An extremely small room, however it serves the purpose – greet old friends and meet new ones. Out-of-town dancers travelled from Ailsa Craig, which was once the 2nd largest cattle shipping centre in Canada. Learned that dancing!

Dinner is served. Ladies first on men's night? Really!

Lots of great main course selections; well done men!

Not to be out done, the ladies' salads and desserts were amazing.

Anticipation mounts. A few words from our organizer, Alasdair Campbell a few more from our Chairman, Dorothy Sample. Dancers don dancing shoes while Catherine Shaw (Pat Sajak) and John Shaw (Vanna White) entertained us with the draw. Some would say the fix was in when Alastair seemed to win most of the prizes. Was it luck or lots of tickets? Anyways, lots of laughter.

First Dance Announced. A highlight for the experienced dancers, but for us beginners – take a deep breath and have faith that the weekly lessons and the practice in the kitchen around the dog pays off. Dancers are greeted by the excellent music and sound of Mr. Fred Moyes.

The dancing begins. Sets are counted; the dance is briefed; the musician plays a chord; bow and curtsy and the evening's dance programme began. The dance floor was extremely crowded due to the excellent turn out. Remember toe down in strathspey and the skip step first in skip-change for the jigs and reels. Oops, too much to remember. Mistakes made, but there is always support from the more experienced dancers. The fun went on into the "wee sma' hours", well 2300 hours.

Thanks to Alasdair for organizing the Men's Dance. It was a wonderful evening of good fun, good food, and good times dancing with friends and new acquaintances.

Christmas Dance, December 15, 2012



Helen Bell, organizer, welcomes all to the Christmas dinner, dance and festivities.

Over 100 members and guests gathered at the Polish Combatants Hall for a gala Christmas Dinner and Dance. The Hall was decorated in appropriate Christmas fashion, and many of the guests were as well. People chatted during an excellent dinner, which was followed later in the evening by coffee, tea and cheesecake. Have to keep the energy up for dancing.

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The Scottish Accent kept everyone moving and even provided a polka, foxtrot and waltz for those who didn't know the Scottish dances and others who just wanted to slow down a bit.

Door prizes included Scottish Accent CDs and a ticket to the Annual Workshop (see p 4). Catherine Shaw's draw featured many lovely, seasonal items.

A big Thank You to Helen for finding the new location for this event and taking care of the arrangements.

Hogmanay, December 31, 2013

Hogmanay, or the Scottish New Year, was celebrated in grand style by members and guests at St. Michael's and All Angels Church. The dancing, arranged and briefed by Catherine Shaw, was traditional and not-so-traditional with non-Scottish dances for those non-SC dancers attending.

There were no street parties and fireworks as is tradition in Scotland, especially Edinburgh (google 'hogmanay/ Video: Edinburgh celebrates hogmanay' to get some idea of these events). However, the London Branch hogmanay was still a great celebration of an ancient Scottish tradition.

Some information for those not totally familiar with this Scottish celebration,

Hogmanay is the Scots' word for the last day of the year or the celebration of the New Year in a Scottish manner. Nobody knows for sure where the word 'Hogmanay' comes from. It may have been from Gaelic or from Norman-French.

Historically, Christmas was not observed as a festival and Hogmanay was the more traditional celebration in Scotland. The winter solstice holiday tended to be at New Year when family and friends gathered for a party and for exchanging presents.

Burns' 'Auld Lang Syne'* is sung to celebrate the New Year at the stroke of mid-night and not just in Scotland. The Guinness Book of World Records lists 'Auld Lang Syne' as one of the most frequently sung songs in English.

To sing 'Auld Lang Syne', people join hands in a circle. At the beginning of the last verse, everyone crosses their arms across their breast, so that the right hand reaches out to the neighbour on the left and visa versa.

At Hogmanay, people welcome friends and strangers with hospitality and a kiss to wish them a 'Guid New Year'.

'First Footing' – the 'first foot' in the house after midnight is still very common in Scotland. For good luck, the first footer should be a dark-haired male. Fair-haired ones are not welcomed as they are a reminder of the ancient Viking invasions. To first foot a household empty-handed is considered grossly discourteous, never mind unlucky!

* may be translated into English literally as "old long since", or more idiomatically, "long, long ago", "days gone by" or "old times".

UP-COMING BRANCH EVENTS

Winterfest Sunday, January 27

Coldstream Community Centre, 10227 Ilderton Road (a map will be posted on the Wednesday class bulletin board)

Music will be provided by Fred Moyes and his Electronic Ensemble.

3:00pm: Doors open for indoor activities, such as playing cards, board-games, etc. (bring your favourite). Weather permitting, enjoy outdoor activities like hiking, cross-country skiing, skating in the Conservation Area, just across the road from the Community Centre.

5:30pm : Formal Festivities will begin with the Piping in of the Haggis.

Meal: The main course will be provided by the Committee of Management (and helpers).

Everyone else please bring:
- either a salad or a dessert to share.
- your own dishes, cutlery, mugs, etc.

Tickets for 'The Shaw Draw' will be available before and after the meal.

7 - 7:30pm to around 9:30 pm : Dancing
Dance briefs are available on the website.

Winterfest happens around Robbie Burns Day, Jan. 25. To celebrate this, the dance program includes several dances whose title or theme come from his poems.

Ceilidh, Annual Workshop and Dance *Marel Fielding*

February 22 and 23 are dates you won't want to miss!! The London Branch Ceilidh and Workshop are some of our flagship events of our dancing year.

Friday February 22
Ceilidh - Byron Legion on Commissioners Rd West at 8pm.

This is a fun evening when talented (and somewhat talented) Branch members share their gifts of song, skits and readings. Let us know what you or a group of you would like to perform and our MC for the evening will be glad to slot you into the program.

We also dance a little and of course have a delicious late lunch!

This is also an evening where you might like to invite friends and spouses to join us and see what fun we have. Our workshop teachers often join us so you will have an opportunity to meet them informally.

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Saturday, February 23 Workshop and Dance are in the grand setting of the Great Hall of Western University.

The teachers are **Ian Souter** and **Carole Skinner**. Both were born in Scotland but now live in Hamilton and Toronto, respectively. Both have taught extensively across North America. Ian taught here five years ago; this is Carole's first time with us. They tell me they were pleased to have been invited to teach.

This is an opportunity for all levels of dancers to hone their skills as we have two groups for teaching - more than two years dancing and less than two years dancing. As we often welcome dancers from other branches this is a chance to meet enthusiasts from the surrounding area.

Registration forms are available on the website.

July 28 - Aug 4 Summer School Dancing

The TAC summer school will be held at Mount Allison University in Sackville, New Brunswick. The school offers classes for all levels of dancers and a variety of events during the week.

SCD teachers: a Teachers' Conference weekend from July 26 to 28. Teachers who have tutored before or are interested in becoming a tutor can attend a 6 day course held at the same time as the Summer School.

First time attendees and those working toward teacher qualification may apply for a Branch bursary to help with registration.

Registration is online at www.tac-rscds.org.

OUT- of - TOWN EVENTS

- for more details contact the website of the individual chapters

February	Sun 3	Windsor Winter Dance - Scottish Club on Tecumseh Rd.
	Fri 15	Ottawa Valentine Social Parkdale United Church
	Sat 16	Toronto 50th Tartan Ball with The Scottish Accent - Royal York Hotel,
	Thur 21	Buffalo Party Night
March	Sat 9 7:30 pm	Toronto Beginners Night Dance , with The Scottish Accent - Crescent School
	8:00 pm	Kitchener Monthly Dance - Historic St. Paul's Church, Kitchener
	Fri 15	Ottawa March Social - Parkdale United Church
	Sat 16 8:00 pm	White Cockade Mar. Dance - McNab Presbyterian Church 116 McNab St. Hamilton
	Sat 23	Toronto West End Workshop TBA
	Sat 30 5:00 pm	Blair Ball with The Scottish Accent - Waterloo Regional Police Association Contact: Liz Reckers blairball@glairscottishcountrydancers.ca or 519-740-3789
April	Sat 6	Toronto Tartan Day Dance Location: TBA <i>Hope to break the Guinness Book Record for Strip the Willow. Held by Scotland (1914 dancers).</i>
	Sat 13	Sarnia Spring Dance
	1-4 pm	Buffalo Tea Dance 1 - 4 p.m.
	Fri 19	Ottawa Pre Ball Dance - Parkdale United Church
		Ottawa Annual Ball TBA
	Sat 20 8:00 pm	White Cockade AGM & Dinner Dance - McNab Presbyterian Church 116 McNab St. Hamilton
	Sun 21	Ottawa Post Ball Brunch Tom Brown Arena