

# Light and Airy



## Scottish Country Dancers of Winnipeg

P. O. Box 175, Winnipeg, MB R3C 2G9

[www.rscdswinnipeg.ca](http://www.rscdswinnipeg.ca)

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Volume 42, Number 5

February 2011

### Committee of Management 2010/11

<b>Chair:</b>	Wendy Land	774 5877
<b>Vice Chair:</b>	Pat Clubb	774 2796
<b>Secretary:</b>	Jean Highmoor	832 8117
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Joan Curle	254 6697
<b>Light and Airy Editor:</b>	Barbara LeBow / Heather Ferguson	452 2898 / 795 2337
<b>Social Secretary:</b>	Donna Robinson / assisted by Sharon Plaitin	253 2519 / 661 1257
<b>Assistant Social Secretary:</b>	Betty Poole	888 3173
<b>Membership:</b>	Debra Forrest	284 4667
<b>Publicity:</b>	Scott MacRae / Reg Curle	885 7111 / 254 6697
<b>Demonstration:</b>	Agnes Brydon	837 7346
<b>Library:</b>	Reg Curle / Scott MacRae	254 6697 / 885 7111
<b>Teacher's Rep.:</b>	Christine Wallace	478 1026

### From the Chair....

Those present on January 29th for the Branch's tribute to Christine Wallace, and the presentation of the RSCDS Scroll of Honour, will agree that it was a most memorable event. From Past Chair Shirley Tinsley's remarks, which drew attention to Christine's many contributions, through to the presentation of the Scroll by Shirley, Lynn McClure and Margaret Zadworny, the Demonstration Team's dancing of *Christine's Scroll*, and Quinton McNaught's reading of greetings from Christine's family and friends around the world, the evening was full of unforgettable moments. The COM has received a very gracious note of thanks from Christine.

Many people worked very hard to ensure its success. The Scroll Committee, chaired by Shirley Tinsley, did a splendid job of insuring the tribute to Christine was done with grace and flair. *Christine's Scroll*, a strathspey devised by Peter McClure to honour Christine, was beautifully danced by the Demonstration Team. The Social Committee and their helpers made sure we had a fine-looking hall and a wonderful supper, and that all the Burns rituals were appropriately observed and all the mechanics were taken care of. Warmest thanks to all!

This month the COM approved funding to explore the feasibility of a proposed RSCDS Bicentennial Project. The project is conceived of as a binder of teaching and learning materials to introduce Scottish Country Dancing to elementary students, integrated with a study of the Selkirk Settlers. Positive feedback has been received from Department of Education specialists who have assured us that the project would meet curriculum goals in Social Studies, Phys. Ed., Music and Art. We are receiving assistance from a consultant recommended to us by the education department and a former dancer who is retired from the archives branch. They are helping the Committee to refine its ideas and develop a budget. If a decision is made to go forward with a project that requires significant funding, this will be brought to the Spring AGM for further discussion.

The Nominating and Teacher Selection Committees are being formed. Please consider taking a turn at serving on the Committee of Management next year. It is a rewarding way to contribute to the well-being of the Branch and the preservation of Scottish Country Dancing in Winnipeg!

*Submitted by Wendy Land*

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### **2010/11 Dance Season**

<b>Saturday February 19</b>	Ceilidh – St. Stephen"s and St. Bede"s Church
<b>Monday March 7</b>	Class Social (hosted by the Fort Garry Social class)
<b>Thursday April 7</b>	Class Social (hosted by the Basic class)
<b>Saturday April 16</b>	Mug Pub Ceilidh – Silver Heights United Church
<b>Week of April 18</b>	Last classes of winter term
<b>Saturday April 30</b>	Workshop and Dance - St. Stephen"s and St. Bede"s Church and Silver Heights United Church
<b>Sunday May 1</b>	Teachers Workshop - St. Stephen"s and St. Bede"s Church
<b>Wednesday May 18</b>	AGM

Please note: All dates are subject to change – please check the calendar each month. All socials are at St. Paul"s Church Hall at 8:00 pm unless otherwise noted. For class socials, the admission charge is \$5; others are as noted.

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### **From the Editors**

January"s editorial focused on practicing dance etiquette by looking at your partner. We"ve noticed that, most of the time, dancers are employing good etiquette by looking into the eyes of the other dancers, acknowledging them with their eyes and smiles, instead of looking and smiling at the floor.

February"s etiquette goal is to improve covering and handing. If we are moving up or down or across the set at the same time as others, then move with them. It gives them and you a sense of belonging to the whole, becoming a social unit, increasing enjoyment of the social aspects of dancing. To cover well, the whole set needs to be conscious of the whole group, requiring communication with the eyes and with the hands.

Miss Jean Milligan wrote voluminous instructions in the use of hands; typical of these is the following:

"In all formations it is advisable to give hands freely and wherever possible, as not only is it helpful, but it adds greatly to the social feeling of the dance. It also helps to maintain the shape of the set and to keep the lines straight."

We can communicate much with our hands. In a circle, we can indicate that we are going to drop hands by giving a little squeeze to a member of the opposite sex, saying goodbye as well. When we change places with a member of the opposite sex in Rights and Lefts, the Fort Garry class is being taught to "Hold, Smile, Release, and Pass On." When men change, they can hold hands firmly and look into each other's eyes as if to say, "I'm going to dance with your partner next time."

Lead, assist, and help the others by giving hands and you will enjoy dancing even more.

Communication with your eyes, your hands, and by doing things jointly with others holds a set together and makes Scottish Country Dancing an enjoyable social event.

### **To Members of the Winnipeg Branch**

Thank you all for the wonderful evening accorded me on the occasion of my receiving the RSCDS Scroll of Honour. The memories of this special event will remain with me always, enhanced by the gift of the album containing the letters and cards of congratulation, and the photos taken that same evening.

The Scroll itself is magnificent and will be framed appropriately as a gift from the Branch. Then to have a Strathspey devised for the occasion was beautiful. I cannot end without mentioning the delicious cake decorated with the Saltire flag and thistles. I am well aware of all the time and effort given by so many people before and during this occasion to make it so memorable for me.

As you know the RSCDS Winnipeg Branch is very dear to me and I thank you all from the bottom of my heart.

*Sincerely,  
Christine Wallace*

## **Health and Safety**

St. John Ambulance Volunteer Personnel attended at the RSCDS Burns Social, held at St. Paul's Anglican Church on January 29, 2011. The Branch was trying out having an AED on site at an event that included people from outside the Branch as well as members.

They thoroughly enjoyed the dancing as did everybody else! It was their advice to the COM that we have members who are CPR certified in attendance at such events rather than have an AED. As long as we have quick access to 911, we should be well prepared for any critical event.

To this end, we will try and sponsor a CPR training session at St. Paul's, probably on a Saturday morning or afternoon. The training sessions are now very „pithy“ and only take about 2 hours. We will be canvassing the classes for those who may be interested.

*Pat Clubb, Vice Chair*

## **Upcoming Events**

### **RSCDS Winnipeg Branch Social**

*March 7, 2011*

The Fort Garry Social Class will be hosting the Branch Social on Monday, March 7, at St. Paul's Church Hall. Dancing will start at 8:00 pm.

### **Social Program**

Jubilee Jig	32J3	RSCDS Leaflet
Christine's Scroll	32S3	Leaflet
The Sailor	32R3	Book 24
A Capital Jig	32J3	RSCDS 5 for 2009
Invercauld's Reel	32S3	Book 11
Mrs. Macleod	32R3	Book 6
Montgomerie's Rant	32R3	Book 10
MacDonald of the Isles	32S3	Haynes Glendarroch 8
Rory O'More	32J2	Book 1
Baldyquash	32R3	Drewry Stonybrook 1
Waltz		

The crib notes for the dances are available on the Branch website.

## **February Ceilidh**

*February 19, 2011*

Last fall's ceilidh was much enjoyed by both members and guests and, as a result, we are doing it again! The Branch will be hosting another ceilidh on Saturday, February 19th at St. Stephen's and St. Bede's Church, 99 Turner Avenue in St. James. Doors will open at 7:30 pm and dancing will begin promptly at 8:00. Donations for the food table would be appreciated.

The evening's program will feature simple dances that everyone can enjoy, interspersed with some light entertainment, and include lunch and refreshments. All of this will cost you just \$5.00 at the door...not bad for an evening out in the dead of winter!

*Wendy Land*

## **Mug Pub Ceilidh**

*April 16, 2011*

The Demonstration Team will be hosting a Mug Pub Ceilidh on Saturday, April 16, 2011, at Silver Heights United Church, 199 Garrioch Avenue in St. James. The traditional ceilidh will include singing, dancing, music and storytelling. Doors will open at 7:30 pm and the entertainment will begin at 8:00.

Watch for further information in *the Light and Airy* and on the Branch website.

## **Workshop 2011**

*April 30, 2011*

The annual one-day workshop will be held on Saturday, April 30th, with guest teachers Elinor Vandegrift from Seattle, Washington and Robin Lynch from Winnipeg. Class musicians will be Ron Krug (piano) and Ken Natrass (accordion).

Classes will be held at Silver Heights United Church and St. Stephen's and St. Bede's Church (across the street from each other). There will be a dance in the evening, with music provided by Scotch Measure.

Registration information will be available on the Branch website and in the next issue of the *Light and Airy*.

## **Teachers Workshop 2011**

*May 1, 2011*

A Teachers Workshop will be held on Sunday, May 1, with guest teacher Elinor Vandegrift from Seattle, Washington. This workshop is open to all teachers, teacher candidates, those who are presently teaching without a certificate, and those who may be thinking about taking their Teacher's Certificate.

The proposed agenda is for a "working brunch" to be held in a nearby restaurant, followed by a class at St. Stephen's and St. Bede's Church from 1:00 to 4:00 pm. Registration forms will be available in late February.

## **Event Reports**

### **Burns Social**

*January 29, 2011*

Our annual Burn's social was well attended by 75 people. As usual, the wonderful music of Scotch Measure added to the enjoyment of the dances. After Kirby McRae piped in the haggis, carried by Darryl Newediuk, Anne Morrison poured the traditional drams of scotch. We were then treated to a rousing rendition of *Address to A Haggis* by Ian Ross. Later in the evening, David Kroeker gave a wonderful speech on *The Immortal Memory*. The evening finished off with a fine array of food, including haggis, neeps and tatties.

This year's event was special in that a Scroll of Honour was presented to Christine Wallace. The presentation was made by Shirley Tinsley, Lynn McClure and Margaret Zadworny, on behalf of HQ in Scotland. In honor of the occasion, the Demonstration Team performed a new dance devised by Peter McClure. The dance is a strathspey called *Christine's Scroll*. Many of Christine's friends attended, including a contingent from Kenora. Messages of congratulations were read throughout the evening by Quinton McNaught.

A varied dance program was set and briefed by Christine and Joyce Cormack, Maureen Burnham, Cheryl Durnin and Margaret Zadworny. Thanks to Sheila Somers, Dwayne Cutler and Bob Poole for all the hard work with the decorations. A thank you to the COM and Teachers Committee for the food, and a final big thanks to all who stayed to clean up and wash dishes when we had no hot water or dishwasher.

*Donna Robinson & Betty Poole*

## Demonstration Team

Upcoming demonstrations:

Supper Club, St. Saviours	February 16
Deer Lodge	May 26
MB Highland Gathering (Selkirk)	June 18
Pavilion of Scotland	August 2

Thank you to Peter and Lynn McClure and Shirley Tinsley for joining us at several demonstrations. Their music and singing is very much appreciated by the audience.

*Agnes Brydon*

## Class Reports

### Fort Garry Social Class

A psychologist deemed the third Monday of January to be the most depressing day of the year, because of post-Christmas bills, cold temperatures, and lack of sunlight; but there we were, when Peter McClure mentioned it, with our smiling eager faces! In the first classes of the term, Peter had us starting off with dancing the *Welcome Circle*, then enjoying dances such as the *Silver Tassie*, which includes doing the Rondel, and working on some challenges, such as *The Buchen Eightsome Reel* in a square set. The dance, *Baldyquash*, took me a while to get, but it is a great little dance! Apparently, Etta Gibson found a finger post on a road north of Old Meldrum with this name that tickled her imagination, and this dance by John Drewry was written in her memory.

I simply loved the Burns Social (not too long for me), am happy for Christine Wallace, and appreciated all the work in putting it together! When Ian Ross mentioned about "wannabe Scots", I identified with that. I come from a Mennonite background and we were historically nomadic, with no home country, but still strong traditions, one of which is food dishes. I'm sure there's room for a person to have two cultural/ethnic connections!

Gerri Stemler of the Social Class has always enjoyed preparing foods, loves *talking food*, and even has a daughter who is a chef. She received a contemporary Scottish cookbook this Christmas, which has led to a nostalgic journey into her childhood. Back then, she spent much time with her grandmother, who prepared all the traditional

foods such as tattie scones, mince and tattie, oatmeal pudding, tattie soup, *with always a pot on the stove*. Her grandmother came from Bo'ness near Linlithgow and immigrated in 1925. Next on Gerri's list to try is Black Bun pastry with currants, raisins, spices and more.

Class member Donna Robinson comes from the area around Killarney/Boissevain, Manitoba (which is where I grew up as well though I never knew her). She moved many times and had to adjust to seven schools! She is fully Scottish and says one grandfather was born in Turriff in the highlands. She has a son who is a chef, and he and his wife are expecting their first child in May. It is Donna's daughter's 2-year-old child that she babysits full-time. When not running after her grandchild, Donna also enjoys making all manner of foods. We're all so appreciative of her labours of love for the RSCDS social events! As well as enjoying being part of the Demonstration Team here, she also takes part in a bowling league once a week.

*Blessings to you,  
Rose Klusowski*

### Technique Class

At this time of year our class numbers fluctuate from week to week, making it challenging for our teacher to plan a class. Perhaps we could mention it if we plan to be away so they can plan the dances appropriately. Bad weather or the call of warmer temperatures is taking a toll on our number of dancers. Several people have been away or are planning a trip so we'll have some experiences to hear about when they return.

Margaret has been working on old and new material. She has planned dances using older patterns, such as hello/goodbye settings and corner/partner/corner/partner. She also spent quite a bit of time going over the patterns needed for a new RSCDS dance which is getting widely popular, *The Kandahar Reel*. The fast pace of the dance made it a challenge but like any dance we can only feel more comfortable as we do it a few more times.

Christine Wallace sent me background information on the dance from a book called "The Kandahar Reel" which was published jointly by the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society and ABF The Soldiers' Charity (Scotland). Bars 1 - 12 represent the meeting of the team members,

bonding individuals into a team, and the mutual teamwork required to get an operation off the ground. Bars 16 - 28 represent both the double rotor Chinook helicopters that brought them in and out of each operation and the single rotor Black Hawks that so often extracted casualties during an operation. The high tempo of the dance reflects that they were often told to give "all you can and another half again". In Afghanistan, a mission depended on giving above and beyond to achieve success in a high tempo operational environment. At the end, the dancing couple joins hands and gallops (dance) to the bottom of the set while the new couple begins. This represents the soldiers running off the Chinook after a successful operation.

The dance was written by two serving army officers of The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion of the Royal Regiment of Scotland, as a tribute to their fallen comrades. Capt. A.J. Colquhoun and Lt. R.J. Colquhoun devised the dance in September 2009 while on active service in the Kandahar region of Afghanistan.

We look forward to continuing to improve our dancing technique with practice in both footwork and dances.

*Joan Curle*

## **Basic Class**

Welcome to my first *Light and Airy* report on behalf of the Basic Class. Thanks to Joyce for taking on the task during the first term.

Members of the Basic Class came back to dancing a week early after the holiday break to make up for a missed class in November. Our numbers continue to be small but we are all learning new dances and improving our step technique. A big thank you goes out to all the experienced dancers who have come out to class to help us and ensure we have enough people for our sets.

With the introduction of reels, there have been some interesting moments during class but we continue to practice, practice, practice. In January, we focused largely on becoming familiar with many of the dances listed on the program for the Robert Burns social on the 29th.

We're now working on learning new dances for the March 7th social and continuing to work on improving our steps and patterns.

Several members from the Basic Class will be heading out to Niverville along with more experienced dancers and teachers on February 11th to share our love of Scottish Country Dancing with people from that community – more on that next month.

## *Getting to Know You*

In previous newsletters, you've met all the new members of the Basic Class. In this newsletter you will get to know a little about the two returning members from last year's Basic Class – myself and husband Dwayne.

In the summer of 2009, Dwayne and I were looking for some social activity to fit into our schedule that we could do together. We looked at ballroom dancing, some fitness ideas and even some cooking classes. Then we saw an ad in our community paper, *The Lance*, for an upcoming Fall Social for Scottish Country Dancing. We attended that social in September 2009 and had no idea what to expect. We were warmly welcomed and ended up enrolling in the Basic Class before the end of the month. Needless to say we were hooked.

A year and a half later, and after attending two workshops, we think we finally are getting it and feel much more comfortable attending socials and participating in dances we are still learning. With 5 grandchildren (and a sixth on the way), a home-based business and many other commitments, Thursday's dance class is always a welcome refuge. Upcoming socials and workshops are marked in our calendars months in advance to ensure we don't double book.

We attended the Saskatchewan Branch's workshop in October at Kenosee Lake and it was a fabulous experience – we hope to participate in another one in a future year.

Hope everyone has a great February – I know we're looking forward to the Ceilidh on the 19th.

*Sheila Somers*

## ***Here and There***

### ***Life in the 1500s***

As we grumble about the weather, snow clearing and water main breaks, it is helpful to reflect on our comforts compared to those in the 1500s.

Most people got married in June because they took their yearly bath in May, and still smelled pretty good by June. However, since they were starting to smell, brides carried a bouquet of flowers to hide the body odour. Hence, the custom of carrying a bouquet when getting married.

Baths consisted of a big tub filled with hot water. The man of the house had the privilege of the nice clean water, then the other sons and men, then the women and finally the children. Last of all, the babies. By then the water was so dirty you could actually lose someone in it, which led to the saying, "Don't throw the baby out with the bath water!"

Houses had thatched roofs – thick straw, piled high, with no wood underneath. It was the only place for animals to get warm, so all the cats and other small animals (mice, bugs) lived in the roof. When it rained, it became slippery and sometimes the animals would slip off the roof. Hence the saying, "It's raining cats and dogs."

There was nothing to stop things from falling into the house. This posed a real problem in the bedroom where bugs and other droppings would mess up your nice clean bed. A bed with big posts and a sheet hung over the top afforded some protection. That's how canopy beds came into existence.

The floor was dirt. Only the wealthy had something other than dirt. Hence the saying, "Dirt poor". The wealthy had slate floors that would get slippery in the winter when wet, so they spread thresh (straw) on the floor to help keep their footing. As the winter wore on, they added more thresh until when you opened the door, it would start slipping outside. A piece of wood placed in the entrance-way was called a "thresh hold".

In those old days, people cooked in the kitchen with a big kettle that always hung over the fire. Every day they lit the fire and added things to the pot.

They ate mostly vegetables and did not get much meat. They would eat the stew for dinner, leaving leftovers in the pot to get cold overnight and then start over the next day. Sometimes stew had food in it that had been there for quite a while. Hence the rhyme: "Peas porridge hot, peas porridge cold, peas porridge in the pot nine days old."

Sometimes they could obtain pork, which made them feel quite special. When visitors came over, they would hang up their bacon to show off. It was a sign of wealth that a man could "bring home the bacon". They would cut off a little to share with guests and all sit around and "chew the fat".

Those with money had plates made of pewter. Food with high acid content caused some of the lead to leach onto the food, causing lead poisoning death. This happened most often with tomatoes, so for the next 400 years or so, tomatoes were considered poisonous.

Bread was divided according to status. Workers got the burnt bottom, the family got the middle, and guests got the top, or the "upper crust".

Lead cups were used to drink ale or whiskey. The combination would sometimes knock the imbibers out for a couple of days. Someone walking along the road would take them for dead and prepare them for burial. They were laid out on the kitchen table for a couple of days and the family would gather around and eat and drink and wait and see if they would wake up. This is the origin of the custom of holding a "wake".

England is old and small and the local folks started running out of places to bury people. So they would dig up coffins, take the bones to a bone-house, and re-use the grave. When re-opening these coffins, 1 out of 25 was found to have scratch marks on the inside and they realized they had been burying people alive. So a string was tied on the wrist of the corpse, and led through the coffin, up through the ground and tied to a bell. Someone would have to sit out in the graveyard all night (the "graveyard shift") to listen for the bell. Thus someone could be "saved by the bell" or was considered a "dead ringer".

*Reprinted from the Resource Centre for Manitobans who are Deaf-Blind (RCMDB) Newsletter, Winter 2009*

## **Noisy Neighbours**

Donald MacDonald from Scotland went to study at an English University and was living in the hall of residence with all the other students there. After he had been there a month his mother came to visit him.

"And how do you find English students, Donald?"

"Mother," he replied, "they're such terrible noisy people. The one on that side keeps banging his head on the wall and won't stop. The one on the other side screams and screams all night."

"Oh Donald, how do you manage to put up with these awful noisy English neighbours?"

"Mother, I do nothing. I just ignore them. I just stay here quietly and play my bagpipes."

*Reprinted from the Vancouver Ceilidh Dance Newsletter*

## ***Out of Town Events:***

### **Vancouver, BC**

March 19, 2011

RSCDS Vancouver Branch

Heather Ball

Musicians: Bobby Brown & the Scottish Accent

Contact: Mary Ann McDevitt at

mamcdevitt@shaw.ca

### **Lethbridge, AB**

April 1-3, 2011

Lethbridge Scottish Country Dance Club

Lethbridge Scottish Dance and Music Workshop

Teachers: Patricia Houghton, Ron Wallace, and Sharon Barker

Musicians: Ron Krug, Ken Natrass, and Gary Thomas

Contact: Fiona Miller at 403-329-3582

### **Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN**

April 9-10, 2011

RSCDS Twin Cities Branch

35th Annual Grand Ball Weekend

Music: Barbara McOwen and Sherry Ladig

Music workshop taught by Barbara McOwen on Sunday

Contact: smarsalis@gmail.com

<http://www.rscds-twincities.org/annualball.html>

### **Beloit, WI**

June 10-12, 2011

Chicago, Madison and Milwaukee Scottish Country Dance groups (RSCDS Cincinnati)

2nd Annual Midwest Scottish Weekend

Teacher: Terry Harvey

Special class by Sue McKinnell

Music: Barbara McOwen and Terry Traub

Contact: Diana Hankes at 262-679-8522 or

Mady Newfield at 630-584-0825 or

MidwestScottishWeekend@gmail.com

### **Prague, Czech Republic**

June 10-13, 2011

RSCDS International Branch Workshop

Teachers: Eric Finley, Craig Houston, Margaret Lambourne

Music: Akiko Kasama, Andrew Knight, Andrew Lyon, Keith Smith

Special guests: Ron Wallace and Gary Thomas

The workshop will be followed by a week of dancing and sightseeing in Prague and the Czech Republic with Ron Wallace and Gary Thomas

Contact: Susi Mayr at

ibworkshop.prague@gmail.com

### **Columbus, OH**

June 11, 2011

Heather „N“ Thistle, Columbus RSCDS

Workshop and Ball

Teacher: Bruce Hamilton

Music: James Stevenson and Mara Shea

Contact: Laura Russell at 614-906-1704 or

LRussell942@gmail.com or Jim & Donna

Ferguson at 740-439-3974 or

JFergie@roadrunner.com

### **Sherbrooke, QC**

July 24-31, 2011

TAC Summer School

Bishop University

Teachers: Bill Zobel (BC), Eric Finley (Scotland), Fred DeMarse (CA), Mervyn Short (England), and Patricia Houghton (Scotland)

Musicians: Muriel Johnstone (BC), Keith Smith (Scotland), James Gray (Norway), Bobby Brown (ON), Laird Brown (ON), and Elke Baker (MD)

Contact: Jody Williams at [jwilliams@storm.ca](mailto:jwilliams@storm.ca) or

visit the TAC website at [www.tac-rscds.org](http://www.tac-rscds.org)

Be sure to check the Inter-City Scot website for information on dancing events in other cities.

The website can be accessed through a link on the Branch website under “Members”.

## ***Important Dates:***

**COM meetings:** the first Wednesday of the month from October 2010 to May 2011.

**Next L&A:** Deadline for the March 2011 issue is **March 4, subject to change.**

Contributors are requested to send their submissions either in Word (.doc) or .pdf format, or typed directly into an email message.