

Light and Airy



Scottish Country Dancers of Winnipeg

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A Word from the Chair....

At time of writing, Don is taking time to mourn the passing of his brother Jack. Our thoughts are with him.

Editor's Notes

So many passings, either recorded or remembered in this issue. It could get a person down, especially at this time of year. On the other hand, we have the happy news of the arrival of Jane's granddaughter – see below, information about next spring's workshop, and excellent contributions from our class correspondents. For me, it's those that really make an issue, and I always look forward to getting them.

Peter

2015/16 Dance Season

9 September Wednesday	Open House St Paul's, 8 PM	No charge
Week of 14 September	First term classes begin	
30 November	St Andrews Social, 8 PM, St Paul's	Admission \$5
Week of 14 December	Last first term classes	
Week of 11 January 2016	Second term classes begin	
23 January 2016	Burns Dinner, at 17 Wing	Ticket \$50
Week of 11 April 2016	Last second term classes	
22-24 April 2016	Branch Workshop and Ball, at 17 Wing	

Events will be added to the Calendar as they are scheduled.

Class Notes

Fort Garry (Monday)

Sheila Careless, our teacher candidate, had more than three stooges when she taught the Fort Garry Class, which usually has three sets of four couples, who have fun learning, dancing, and socializing, no matter what they are called. Sheila taught well, with clarity and the right balance of thoughtfulness and humor, stating that our Chairman, Don Johnson, will have 32 - 33 years of tenure like the convener of the Newcastle Festival for which the dance we learned - The Festival Man - was named.

Peter taught three dances the first evening Sheila taught – Hooper's Jig; the strathspey Lord Selkirk by Jo Hamilton that appears in the Branch's Prairie Gold Book, compiled in celebration of RSCDS Winnipeg's Golden Jubilee; and the reel Mrs. Macleod, which appeared in the Juvenile Pupil's Assistant of 1827. I think many of us in the class felt like juvenile pupils who needed a lot of assistance to

master this dance. I also think that through our teacher's and dancers' persistence, we mastered the dance. Remembering it will be another story.

The step practice provided by Sheila during her second session of tutelage helped us learn the Lass of Livingston, a dance of classic formations. The beautiful music for this dance was from the 1700s. The SCDS published the dance in a 1930s booklet, which was before the society became the Royal SCDS. During this evening, Peter patiently taught us John Drewry's Hunter's Moon. The first full moon after the Harvest Moon is the Hunter's Moon. The brilliant Hunter's Moon was illuminating the night as we learned this beautiful dance with a formation new to us – la baratte – it means the churn and is based on a figure from quadrilles danced in earlier times in Acadia. We ended the evening dancing the Wild Geese – many of which I saw flying to Fort Whyte on my walk at sunset.

On Monday night, October 19 – Election Day – the Fort Garry Class held an election on Scottish

independence. We learned two dances – one written in favor of independence; the other opposed to independence – then voted on which we liked the best. The majority ruled, favoring the dance – **No**. I must say that the **Yes** dance was fun to learn also. We ended our evening by dancing **Scotland United**.

The class appreciates Peter's tutelage as he prepares us to host the first class social of the year. The dance program for November's social appears in this issue. Scottish Country Dancing is worthwhile for its own sake. It's fun. It lifts the spirit. It helps our minds and bodies function optimally.

The Fort Garry Class extends their condolences to Don Johnson, whose brother passed away on October 26, 2015. Our thoughts and prayers are with Don and his family.

Barbara LeBow

Technique (Tuesday)

Formations covered during our first October class were the knot, the men's chain, and an interesting variation of setting and turning corners. Those moving up from the basic class were introduced to the knot for the first time. Learning this figure was facilitated by having the newcomers paired with experienced dancers. During the course of the evening, Joyce selected two dances by the Derek Haynes - Galeforce Wind and Miss Gibson's Strathspey. Both of these dances kept dancers busy and entertained with figures flowing smoothly from one to another. Joyce closed out the evening with a dance entitled Bill Clement MBE. We learned that Bill Clement received an MBE for his contributions to piping and Scottish country dancing. This dance had an interesting variation of setting to, and turning corners, which had us perplexed to start with but once we had sorted out the confusion, the dance itself was fun.

The evening of October 20th saw a reduction in attendance possibly due to post election exhaustion/celebration/depression/confusion. However, those who attended were in for two treats. The first was learning the dance named

the Lairds' Chain, written by Peter McClure who was also present that evening. He informed us that he wrote the dance to teach reels of four. The dance flowed very nicely from one figure to the next. The second treat was a repeat of Bill Clement MBE, which we had danced in an earlier class, but this time we danced to bagpipe music also composed by Bill Clement. In our last class of October, Joyce coached us through the "circulating allemande" for three couples as part of the Flower of Glasgow. Joyce continues to remind us of the finer points of footwork and figures.

Hilary Hayles

Basics of SCD (Wednesday)

A favorite saying of Cheryl is, "In this dance, stuff happens". Well, Cheryl certainly keeps stuff happening in our classes on Wednesday evenings. In our last class of October, she managed to find the perfect dance, "Jig to the Music" to utilize the last micro second until the clock struck ten. Even though Wednesday is for beginners, all members of the class this year have had some former experience, so Cheryl is able to review and build upon techniques that were introduced last year, such as rights and lefts, poussette, allemande, and reels.

As we walked through the Selkirk Settlement, written by Christine Wallace, Cheryl explained that the chase in the first part of the dance signified the walls of the settlement – an image that helped dancers keep the figure square. Another dance we have practiced is the Clydeside Lassies - a neat, simple, but busy and fun dance, which gave us the opportunity to become reacquainted with the poussette and rights and lefts. It was a two couple dance in three couple sets, so kept us very busy. Googling for the dance name "Call the Sheep to the Hills" is futile. It took me a while to figure out that you have to search for "Ca' the Ewes Tae the Knowes" (drive the ewes to the knolls). This dance gave us the opportunity to review the allemande in strathspey time. On the same evening, we were able to practice the allemande in quicktime as we learned Lady

Catherine Bruce's Reel. If you were absent October 28th, you missed Cheryl's very stylish witch's hat!

Hilary Hayles

Branch News

A New Arrival!

Congratulations to Jane Nattrass on the arrival of her first granddaughter, McKenna Kate, born to Jane's daughter Stacey and husband Damian Brown on 19 October. A beautiful healthy baby, a sister for Max and Jackson. We'll leave it to Jane to show you photos.

SAVE THE DATE

WORKSHOP AND DANCE WEEKEND

APRIL 22 – 24, 2016

The 2016 Workshop and Dance Weekend will be held on April 22 to 24, 2016 at the Officer's Mess 17 Wing. We are pleased to announce that the teachers for the workshop will be Kay Munn of Ontario and Betsy Brydon of Saskatchewan.

The weekend is still in early planning stages, but at the moment we are planning a Ceilidh for Friday evening, for 2 classes on Saturday - one in the morning and one after lunch. Each class will be 1 1/2 hours long. There will be two separate classes (2 levels) in both the morning and afternoon sessions and the teachers will alternate between the classes.

The Sunday morning class will also be 1 1/2 hours and will be a combined class with both teachers, followed by brunch.

A dinner and dance will be held on Saturday night.

We are planning that the Registration form will allow greater flexibility to attend the separate events of the weekend for those wishing to do so.

It was suggested that if we were to offer to billet out of town guests, it may increase attendance. We already offer to billet the teachers. If you

would be willing to host an out of town guest for the weekend, please contact Gerri at wpstem@mts.net. Let me know by December so that we can put the offer in our promotional material in January.

Gerri Stemler, Chair, Workshop Committee
2016

Alan Blanchette

February 8, 1955 – September 22, 2015

Alan passed away quickly at his home on September 22.

Alan joined the Winnipeg Branch in 1965 as a 10 year old in the Children's Class. The Children's Class teachers of that era were Monique Henderson, Marge Krip and Christine Wallace, and they all developed a cherished, lifelong connection with Alan.

Alan progressed in SCD quickly and participated in all that the Branch had to offer: classes, workshops, demonstrations, bus trips to Thompson, Mug Pub, parades.

He obtained his Preliminary Teachers' Certificate in 1973 at St. Andrews and his Full Certificate in Winnipeg in 1974. David Williams' comment of the exam: "he just taught the whole Bible (Won't You Join the Dance) in 1/2 hour." However, this was the time that Alan's career with Air Canada was starting so he unfortunately couldn't commit to teaching on a regular basis. Alan did maintain a connection with the Branch, and never refused a request to dance with us or to sing and perform for us.

This 10 year old boy evolved into a wondrously talented, multifaceted man who still had a love of Scottish Country Dance. Just recently, we had been discussing dance technique and the merits of the jette, and bewailed the fact that neither of us could do it anymore.

Ron Krug's words: firstly, a generous friend, then a talented musician, gardener, chef, entertainer, host, handyman, and a thousand other things.

Maureen Burnham

The following was sent by Christine's sister, Alison Masson. Thinking back, 24 October was a lovely day here ...

Service for Christine October 24th 2015

We woke to a wet and windy morning which did not bode well for an outdoor gathering but by 10 o'clock the weather had improved and stayed dry for the rest of the day.

The Reverend Helen Cook arrived and we drove with Julia and Andy and girls to the cemetery at Colinton Parish Church, close by the Water of Leith. Apart from my children and grandchildren and those of Alistair and Mary, our Wallace cousins Ian, Jane and Maureen were also present. Maureen's husband Jimmie, Ian's son David and Jane's daughter Katie were with them. Many of us were wearing Wallace tartan scarves and ribbons, a poignant touch.

Helen welcomed us all and we sang O God of Bethel with Mary leading us. Particularly for the children present, Helen explained the purpose of the service. Alistair gave a eulogy on behalf of Christine, speaking as her 'favourite' brother! He remarked that he had last stood on this spot back in 1966 to bury our grandfather and then there were no huge trees close by. (And many of us silently thought, no women either.) Mary read My Love is like a Red, Red Rose to mark Christine's love of Robert Burns. I knelt to place the casket in the open grave (with the gravedigger standing by as it did look as if the dimensions were insufficient!) I think I had expressed reservations about being able to get back on my feet and I lost count of the pairs of hands which suddenly appeared to offer help! Flowers were laid by the grave – a distinctly Scottish theme with many sprigs of heather and stems of thistles. Helen gave a benediction and the service ended with the singing of May the God of Peace Go with Us, sung to the tune of Ae Fond Kiss. And then all was quiet.

We came back to Frogston Avenue for an amazing buffet lunch which the daughter of a school friend had prepared. We had a busy afternoon catching up with family news and

looking at photographs, particularly in the album of Christine's visit for a belated 70th birthday celebration in 2010. The younger family members led by Anna, Alistair's granddaughter and the eldest of that generation, enjoyed some very inventive games which required little adult intervention until the noise got beyond toleration level!

Eventually everybody was gone by 6.30pm and various grandparents were delegated to babysit while the 'middle' generation reassembled in town for supper together – 15 in all I'm told.

I hope Christine would have approved of our farewell – there were solemn and some difficult moments but it was truly a celebration of the life of a very special person.

Alison



**Christine
- buried with her Wallace grandparents
Colinton, October 24th 2015
May the God of peace go with us
As we travel from this place;
May the love of Jesus keep us
Firm in hope and full of grace.**

Looking For ...

The Branch has (or had?) several photo albums – pictures of events, people At present, these can't be found. If you have seen them

recently, or know where they are, please contact Maureen Burnham.

St Andrews Social

The Fort Garry Social class will host the first Branch social dance of the season:

St Paul's Church Hall
Monday 30 November
Dancing 8 – 10 PM
Snacks to follow
Admission \$5

Programme

The Highland Fair	32J2	Gr Bk
The Lairds' Chain	32S2	Lflt
Corn Rigs	32R2	Bk 4
St Andrews Fair	32J3	5/82
Lord Selkirk	32S3	Pr Gold
Mrs MacLeod	32R3	Bk 6

Interval

The Wild Geese	32J3	Bk 24
Flower of Glasgow	32S3	Bk 46
Selkirk Settlement	32R2	Pr Gold
Bill Clement MBE	32J3	Bk 47

For those who may be interested, we tried something different this time. We used the “dance lists” feature of the Strathspey database to compile the list of dances for the November social. If you'd like to see what's possible in this context, go to www.strathspey.org and click on “database”. On the “dance lists” panel, click on “more lists”, then put “Winnipeg” in the filter box on the upper right of the page (to avoid searching through the 2000 or so lists to find ours). Click on the name of the list to open; then you can use the tabs at the top of the list to get downloadable cribs, some diagrams, also downloadable, or videos. Watch a video by clicking on its image. You won't find diagrams or videos for our “local” dances – but we know those anyway. We'll be interested in any feedback you may have.

Here and There...

Scottish Country Dance Ghillies and pumps

www.avriel.com

Your one stop shoe shop for all your dancing needs.

Clan Info and Scottish Shop

www.scotclans.com

Out of Town Events

Asilomar Weekend Workshop

13 – 15 November, 2015

50th Anniversary of this workshop!

Five teachers, including Elaine Brunken and Ruth Jappy

Info and forms at www.asilomar.rscds-sf.org

Toronto Workshop and Afternoon Dance

14 November 2015

Details and forms at

www.dancescottish.ca/Workshop.html

Regina SK

27 November 2015

St Andrew's dinner and ceilidh

Tickets \$30, must be purchased by 22 November

Info from

reginascottishcountrydancers@gmail.com

Minneapolis-St Paul. MN

5 December 2015

Annual Failte Dance

Info at www.rscds-twincities.org/failte.html

Aloha Winter Weekend

12-14 February 2016

Honolulu Hawaii

Details and forms at www.rscdsHawaii.org

(In case you were planning a winter holiday!)

Important Dates

COM meetings: Next meeting 2 December, 2015

Next L&A: Deadline for the December issue will be 4 December, 2015. With COM meetings returning to a familiar schedule (first Wednesdays), L&A deadlines will go to the following Friday.

Members are encouraged to submit articles, pictures or information of interest to Branch members. Please send submissions for the *Light and Airy* to Peter McClure
joptmc@cc.umanitoba.ca.

This and several past issues of the *Light and Airy* are posted on the Branch website www.rscdswinnipeg.ca.