

Light and Airy



Scottish Country Dancers of Winnipeg

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Committee of Management 2014/15

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A Word from the Chair....

Dear Friends,

A Happy Autumn to you all. By now the first few weeks of classes are behind us, the steps and dance patterns we set aside last spring are coming back into use, and hopefully any sore muscles caused by the resuming of dancing are now easing. It's nice to have the summer break but it is also good to get back into the habit of regular classes and it is always delightful to see and visit with our fellow dancers. I might add, regular attendance at class helps us dispel any cobwebs from our minds and the mystery of reels and petronellas and three couple

knots becomes less confusing and much easier to do. And, of course, our teachers are always ready to guide us through the joys and challenges of the interesting dances they have chosen for us.

I sincerely hope you have a satisfying and enjoyable year of dancing. Thanks for being a member of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society, Winnipeg Branch. We are glad you are with us.

Don Johnson

2014/15 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 | to be confirmed |
| Week of 11 April 2016 | Last second term classes | |
| 22-24 April 2016 | Branch Workshop and Ball, at 17 Wing | to be confirmed |

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

Class Notes

Fort Garry (Monday)

Classes are well underway for another year of dancing and attendance on Monday nights has been excellent with 3 sets out each week. It is wonderful to see everyone again and it seems we all enjoyed our lovely summer. We welcome Tara Newton, Sharon Bettess and Bruce Marshall, who have moved up from the Basic class, as well as Barbara Yuill (who has returned after an absence of many years), Shirley Tinsley and Claire McMahon. It is great to have new dancers.

This week we danced the Harvest Moon, a dance devised by John Drewry, which was most appropriate given the amazing harvest moon and lunar eclipse that we were fortunate to view. Peter has included dances that remember people who have made a contribution to the Branch over the past number of years. The first one was The Laird's Chain, one of a pair which he devised in honour of Adam and Rena Laird's Diamond Anniversary. Another lovely dance was Christine's Scroll which he devised to honour Christine Wallace who received a Scroll from headquarters in recognition of her contributions to the Winnipeg branch as well as the Scottish country dancing in general. We also did the Selkirk Settlement devised by Christine Wallace in honour of the Bicentennial of the Selkirk Settlers in 2012. This last dance is on the branch CD Prairie Gold and we really enjoyed dancing again to the music of Scotch Measure.

One night we were pleasantly surprised and thrilled to greet a guest, Meaghan McDonald, who was visiting the city and found us through the website. Meaghan is a member of the International Branch and it seems she lives in London and Dundee. She travels quite a bit with her work and wherever she goes she looks for a local dance group and takes a group picture. She was born in Port Arthur but you would not know it by her beautiful accent. I believe that we are the first group she has danced with in Canada. The evening that she was with us we danced "The Shetland Shepherdess" devised by Ron Wallace when he was in Oslo. I asked her if she had danced in Oslo and was not surprised when she said yes. Scott asked her if she had been on the cover of our magazine and she said yes, although I have been unable to confirm this. She is an excellent ambassador for SCD which she feels is the

best activity one can be involved in. No matter where you go in the world you can find a dance group!

Joyce Cormack

Technique (Tuesday)

Fourteen dancers attended the first Tuesday technique class of the season on September 15th. We reviewed the allemande and grand chain, and Joyce taught us the rondel figure, which was new to some of the dancers. An easy and lively dance was the Ambassador's Reel from the Vienna Book of Scottish Dances that Joyce acquired when she attended a teacher's class in Scotland. We danced The Haar on Skye and learned that a haar is a cold sea fog common on the east coast of Scotland.

September 22nd saw four new dancers moving up from the basic class. A strathspey entitled "The City of Belfast" kept newcomers reeling as they sought to grasp the espagnole figure. Twelve dancers showed up for the third class of the season in which Joyce emphasized accurate counting in the grand chain and ladies chain so we could render a polished version of the busy Mrs. Stewart's Jig. Things slowed down a little with the very sedate Glasgow Lasses, a dance from 1748. Accurate foot positions when dancing and the finer details of hand positions during all figures are continually being emphasized. Due to uneven numbers, Joyce is doing a great job of directing us through new dances while being someone's partner.

Hilary Hayles

Basic (Wednesday)

So nice to see familiar faces from last season, and also a few who have been absent for a year or two. It's been fun to catch up on people's summer activities, and to get back to dancing. Cheryl has been working on the basics of the travelling steps, and also the use of arms and hands in the context of various formations. Dances such as Lady Lucy Ramsay and Kendall's Hornpipe (a jig! Who knew?) have challenged our grasp of the formations, and our ability to "think ahead". We look forward to more.

Branch News

Summer School 2015, Farmville, Virginia

Last year when I went to Summer School in Colorado it was for 2 exams. Other than meals and the ball at the end, we didn't have too much to do with the regular Summer School schedule. So this year I wanted to go to Summer School with no pressure of exams just to see what it was like. It was fabulous! Lots of fun.

I arrived in Richmond, Virginia late Friday night for the TAC AGM weekend. My luggage, however, decided to take the scenic route and stop off at Providence, Rhode Island. Thankfully the prodigal luggage returned to me late Saturday evening. Not having my luggage on Saturday meant a trip to Walmart to buy something for the ball Saturday evening. Not much at Walmart to wear to a ball which is why Cinderella probably didn't shop there. It was on the way back from Walmart that I saw the Sears store. Seeing as I needed a driver to take me around, I thought I should probably just be happy I got something to wear for Saturday night.

Anyway, back to Summer School. On the weekend we had teachers workshops and a ball on Saturday night. Regular Summer School registrants arrived on Sunday. Then we had classes each morning for the next week. There were a few levels of classes from intermediate, which included some basic dancers, to advanced. They also had a social class. In the afternoons, there were other classes to choose from. One could go to the ball rehearsal class where they would go over 3 or 4 dances (they don't walk the dances at the ball). Other classes that were offered were 'special formations', Wes Clindinning dances, or personal technique classes to name a few. Wed afternoon they offered 2 different tours. I didn't take part in those. I took the time to just relax in my room. There

was a social every evening except Wed evening was ceilidh dancing and music and Friday night was a ceilidh of performances (no participation dancing).

The classes were great thanks to the teachers. The teachers this year were Sue Porter (Scotland), Terry Harvey (US), Robert McOwen (US) and Rebecca Blackhall-Peters (Canada). Of course having live music for every class and every dance was a treat. The band was a group of musicians that came together for the week. They were Kathy Fraser-Collins (keyboard), Fred Collins (drums), Neil Barron (accordion), Etienne Ozorak (accordion), Judi Nicolson (fiddle) and Don Wood (bass guitar). There was also Mary Ross who was the first ever Bobby Brown Scholarship recipient.

The week ended off with a ball on Saturday night. Imagine being on the dance floor with 120 other people! It was thrilling to dance with so many sets on the floor. I loved how the sets interacted with each other. For example, if I was casting off behind my line, I would take hands with the dancer from the set behind me as they cast off behind their line. We were all aware that we were not the only set on the floor. It was also neat to see an all-male set for the Reel of the 51st Division.

Next year Summer School will be back in Canada from July 31 to Aug 5. My son got engaged a couple of weeks ago. They are both teachers so are planning a summer wedding. I gave him the dates for summer school because I said I would hate to miss the wedding! ☺. I would love to have some company come with me from Winnipeg. So start saving your pennies and join me on the dance floor in Sherbrooke, Quebec on July 31st.

Sheila Careless

Ed. Note: For those new to SCD, or if you just haven't thought about it before, this is really worth considering. Sheila has given a great, and accurate (from my recollection) description. It is nice to go with others you know, and the tip about taking a break mid-week is a good one. Think about Summer School for next year!

Open House

Approximately forty attended the Open House at St Paul's on September 9. A mix of returning members and newcomers "trying out" enjoyed a programme prepared and enthusiastically presented by Cheryl, and refreshments provided by the Branch social reps Bob and Betty. Reg put out a display of books and CDs, and Joan made a selection of used items available for sale. It made a very good beginning to the new season.

Alternative Dance Evening

Bruce Marshall is organizing an evening to explore some other dance forms:

Old Time, English country, and French country dancing;
St Mark's Lutheran Church
Cambridge near Corydon
Saturday 14 November 2015
7:30 – 10:30 PM
Admission \$7
Light refreshments included

See Bruce for more information.

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 | Lft |
| 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 |

Survey of Members

There was quite a good response to the survey circulated earlier in the summer – 52 members responded. Our thanks go to Gerri Stemler for organizing the survey and collecting the results. A brief summary follows.

Level of the class was the most common reason mentioned for choice of class. A smaller, but still significant number cited day of the week. There was relatively little interest in an afternoon class.

Members felt very positively about the contribution of Branch socials. Most attend when they can; time conflicts are the most common reason for missing a social. There was little interest in replacing class hosted socials with dances on another night. While there was interest in having extra nights of dancing, there was no majority opinion about what night should be used.

A clear majority of respondents attended the 2015 workshop. Among those who did not attend, time conflict was the most common reason, while some mentioned the cost. Most respondents favour continuing to hold workshops. While a full weekend workshop was the preference of the largest number (35%), that was not a majority. Other preferences were divided between one day workshop, less formal event, and alternate years. The COM has opted for the full weekend in 2016, and assuming that options are provided of choosing parts of the package (e.g., Saturday only), that seems to cater to a majority of the preferences expressed.

Regarding the Burns dinner and dance, the dinner and dance at 17 Wing was the most preferred, although not by a majority. Smaller numbers preferred other options, although there was a majority in favour of some form of catered dinner. Discussion at COM reflected a hope that the event could be modified to appeal to a broader audience.

Summary prepared by Peter McClure

Here and There...

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Out of Town Events

Medicine Hat AB

30 October – 1 November 2015

40th Weekend Workshop

Teachers: Gordon Robinson (Victoria), Irene Townshend (Edmonton), Jody Williams (Carp, ON)

Details and forms at <http://nonprofit.memlane.com/scottish/>

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

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 4 November, 2015

Next L&A: Deadline for the November issue will be 11 November, 2015. With COM meetings returning to a familiar schedule (first Wednesdays), L&A deadlines will go to the following Wednesday.

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.