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MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
April 29, 2017
Crescent School, 2365 Bayview Avenue, Toronto, Ontario

1. Welcome to the AGM

Deirdre MacCuish Bark welcomed everyone to the Sixteenth Annual General Meeting of the RSCDS Toronto Scottish Country Dance Association, in the 60th year of the Toronto Branch of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society. The AGM was held at Crescent School on Saturday, April 29, 2017. Deirdre MacCuish Bark, the Chair of the Toronto Association, chaired the AGM. The meeting began at 8:45 p.m.

2. Appointment of Scrutineers

Deirdre MacCuish Bark identified Ken Adamson as the Parliamentarian, and Keith Bark and John Holmburg as Scrutineers. Membership count identified that 85 members were present, providing a quorum. There were 7 non-members present, whose attendance during the meeting was accepted by the assembly.

MOTION: Theresa Malek moved that non-members were welcome to remain for the duration of the meeting. Seconded by Jane Robinson. CARRIED.

3. Adoption of the Agenda

MOTION: Chris Elliot moved that the Agenda be adopted as circulated. Seconded by Liz Clunie. CARRIED.

4. Acceptance of the Minutes of the 2016 Annual Meeting

MOTION: Liz Martin moved that, as amended (the name of the scrutineer should be recorded as John Holmburg), the 2016 Minutes be approved as circulated. Seconded by Louis Racic. CARRIED.

5. Business Arising

No comments arose regarding the three items on the Agenda:

- a) Early membership applications were appreciated by the Board
- b) PayPal usage by the membership has increased
- c) Bylaws, Procedures and Operations ('Yellow Book') is now posted on website

6. Reports from the Board

a) Chair:

Deirdre expressed appreciation to Jan Shaw (Gravenhurst) and Trudy Goff (Scarborough), for managing the kitchen for our monthly dances over many years.

She also thanked the members of the TA Board for their support and their time to keep the organization smoothly running, with special thanks to the Secretary, Nancy White, for keeping everyone on track during meetings.

It has been a pleasure working with the Directors and their Committees. Stepping down are Maureen Richardson (Education & Training), Wayne Ellwood (Communications), Paul Barber (Marketing), and John Clark (Past Chair).

As a Branch of the RSCDS, Toronto is one of 159 Branches worldwide, and is the third largest, following New Zealand and London, England. Toronto is the largest of the 50 Branches in North America.

This past year, the Society has been developing a Strategic Plan. Branches and Teacher Associations were consulted. Deirdre was included, as Chair of the Toronto Association (TA), in discussions at both the initial 2015 meeting in Perth, Scotland and in subsequent meetings, correspondence and conference calls. The RSCDS Strategic Plan was distributed to Branches worldwide, inviting discussion and comment. Consideration was given to possible impact on both the Toronto Association and on the international stage. Deirdre was also involved through her participation in TAC (Teachers' Association, Canada). The TA gave feedback on its activities and priorities over the next three years; and the TAC covered teaching strategies, website access, as well as offering assistance in any way. Gillian Wilson of Coates Crescent went through the Strategic Plan document answering questions.

An important point raised was collaboration among Branches and Affiliated Groups. This is already being done here through the Southern Great Lakes Group, initiated by Margaret Rieger, and including Branches from Ottawa to Buffalo to London, Windsor and Detroit. These Branches meet, through conference calls and/or in person, once or twice a year. The most recent meeting agenda included: Branch Cooperation, Standards of Teaching, Dance Programmes, celebrations for Canada's 150th, the visit from Andrew Kellett, Chair Elect of the RSCDS, and the Society AGM.

Deirdre and Keith attended the Society AGM, held annually in November, usually in Perth, Scotland. They vote on motions, following direction from the TA and from the Southern Great Lakes Group. One important point was how the membership money paid to the Society is spent, and this was discussed at the Social Group Meeting held in November.

b) Treasurer:

Wendy reported that the financial audit had been prepared again this year by the accounting firm of Williams & Partners of Markham, Ontario, in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. The audited statements have been duly approved by the Board at the March 16, 2017 meeting. The statements were posted to the Association website. Copies of the Audited Statements had been distributed to the assembled members.

The Treasurer, Wendy Fulton, reported that despite losses on the 2016 Dancing in the Park, Monthly Dances, and Tartan Ball, the TA finished the 2016 fiscal year with a substantial excess of revenue over the expenses, due to success of Association classes. Subsidy is also available for the Youth Ball and other Youth activities.

Wendy would like to thank the Finance Committee for their assistance over the years, and welcomed Keith Bark, who joined the committee this winter.

MOTION: Wendy Fulton moved that the membership accept the audited financial statements for the year ending December 31, 2016. Seconded by Jean Noble. CARRIED.

MOTION: Wendy Fulton moved that the accounting firm of Williams & Partners of Markham, Ontario be appointed Auditors for RSCDS Toronto Scottish Country Dance Association for the 2017 fiscal year. Seconded by Ken Adamson. CARRIED

c) Secretary: on behalf of the Board Directors and Committees:

Wayne Ellwood, standing in for Nancy White, gave a summary of the reports from the Board's Directors. A full report was posted on the Website and distributed to the membership at the AGM.

Vice Chair: Jean Lindsay reports that, with the membership's approval of the Procedures Manual at the 2016 AGM, the "Yellow Book" has been completed, and is available for viewing on the website. Jean has also been working on plans to celebrate our 60th Anniversary this year, so look forward to more news about this in the coming months.

Membership & Volunteers Director: Wayne Fraser reports that our voting membership stands at 362. There were 37 new members this year and the retention rate of last year's new members is about 60%. At our April Volunteer Appreciation Dance, Volunteer Awards were presented to Joan Wood, May Ralston and Glenna McDonald. Everyone enjoyed the dance programme devised by Theresa Malek, winner of our first dance programme deviser initiative.

Communications Director: Wayne Ellwood thanks the editorial team that publishes our *Set & Link* Newsletter ten times a year. The core group of Marian White, Judy Williams, Donald Holmes, Rob Lockhart, Teresa Lockhart and editor Carole Bell, celebrated their 10th anniversary working together this year – quite an achievement. Thanks also to Rob for all the effort and care he puts into maintaining our website.

This past November, the annual Social Group Liaison meeting was held between the Board and the Association's affiliated Social Groups. Issues discussed included succession planning for teachers, support for smaller dance classes, broadening the perceived Toronto-centric focus of the Association, and marketing strategies to boost participation and membership.

Program Director: Louis Racic reports that it has been a successful year for Toronto Association programs. This portfolio includes: the Toronto Workshop, Convenor Mike Morris; Monthly Dances, Convenor Forbes Duncan; the Tartan Ball, Convenor Laurie McConachie; Dancing in the Park, Convenor Dave Drewett.

The Workshop and Afternoon Dance drew 113 participants. Many noted how much they enjoyed this year's new venue – Branksome Hall – and the teachings of Linda Henderson from California, Alicia Manson from Oakville, and our own Vicky Zeltins. Monthly Dance attendance was down a bit this year from last, but our March Beginners' Dance welcomed 27 new dancers. The Tartan Ball, with Guest of Honour, John Fraser, was enjoyed by 178 dancers. This participation was down from last year and resulted in a minor financial loss for the event. However, extra Tartan Ball practices for 'newer' dancers is an initiative to support attendance. And, finally, this year Dancing in the Park was actually held "in the park" every Tuesday in June and was enjoyed by everyone.

Louis thanks the musicians of Scotch Mist, and Don Bartlett and the Scottish Heirs. As always, we are very grateful for our talented musicians!

Education and Training Director: Maureen Richardson saw success offering classes at locations in Toronto and Aurora, as well as special dance afternoons at Broadlands. Many of the new dancers participated in Association-programmed events and have become Association Members. Thanks to Glenna McDonald, Convenor for organizing class venues and coordinators.

Moira Korus, Convenor for Youth Events, including the Youth Workshop and Youth Ball, also taught, with the help of Barbara Taylor, 27 dancers working towards the Intermediate Dancing Achievement Award. Teresa Lockhart, Chair of the Teachers' Panel, along with members of the Panel, and our roster

of teachers have been instrumental in creating engaging dance programmes, encouraging both the social and technical aspects of Scottish Country Dancing for the Association.

Marketing Director: Paul Barber continues to explore ways of attracting new dancers, exploring opportunities with social media and posting advertisements for Culture Days, Classes, Dancing in the Park, and the Family Ceilidh.

The Demo Pool performed 16 demonstrations this season. Thanks to Stella Henderson, as Convenor, for managing all these bookings, to those that teach and coordinate demos, and to the many dancers that volunteer their time and talents.

This concludes the summary of the Directors Reports.

MOTION: Wayne Ellwood moved that the Report from the Board Directors be accepted. Seconded by Andrew Henderson. CARRIED

7. Report of the Nominations Committee

Chair of the Nominations Committee, John Clark, thanked his committee of Keith Bark, John Holmburg, and Susan Clark.

8. Election of the Board of Directors:

Deirdre MacCuish Bark declared the slate of nominees acclaimed. The RSCDS TA Board is as follows:

Chair: Jean Lindsay
Vice Chair: Liz Clunie
Secretary: Nancy White
Treasurer: Wendy Fulton
Director, Programs: Louis Racic
Director, Communications: Andrew Henderson
Director, Membership: Wayne Fraser
Director at Large - Marketing: Lyn Barsevskis
Director at Large - Education and Training: Tony Szeto

9. New Business

a) Honourary Lifetime Membership:

Jean Lindsay thanked Deirdre MacCuish-Bark for her service to the RSCDS TA and presented her with a plaque.

MOTION: Wayne Fraser moved that Deirdre MacCuish-Bark, Immediate Past Chair of the Toronto Association, be awarded Honourary Life Membership of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society, Toronto Association in recognition of her years of service to the Association, culminating in her years as Chair. Seconded by Ron MacNaughton. CARRIED

Wayne Fraser presented Deirdre with a framed Certificate. Deirdre expressed her appreciation.

b) Strategic Plan Report:

Jean Lindsay delivered a summary of the Strategic Plan. In 2012, a Steering Committee met with Ron Purcell of Ron-Cell Marketing to develop a Strategic Plan for the Toronto Association.

The Committee worked under the leadership of then Board Members: Margaret Rieger, Chair; John Clark, Vice Chair; and Jean Lindsay, Program Director.

The purpose of creating the Strategic Plan was to thoughtfully and constructively assess the current and future dance environment and create goals and objectives that would support the Association in continuing to be a vibrant organization.

Ron Purcell volunteered his services as a consultant under the auspices of Management Advisory Services. For a donation, this service provides not-for-profits and charitable organizations with consulting services as requested.

As the project manager, Ron facilitated a series of meetings with the Board, as well as members. The outcome was a confirmation of our Mission Statement and the development of the Strategic Plan, articulated as a series of Goals and Objectives.

An article about this process was published in the February 2013 Set & Link.

Over the years that followed, several changes have been implemented to address action items that were identified in the Strategic Plan.

Now, 6 years later, in 2017, the Board has done a review, Goal by Goal, of this Strategic Plan and is happy to report that there have been many achievements. Numerous objectives have been met and continue to be relevant. However, others have yet to be addressed, or are now in need of realignment given our new Board structure.

COMMENT: Keith Bark pointed out that the process did not include teachers, who should be included. There is a diminishing number of teachers and dancers interested in becoming teachers.

c) Welcome to New Board

Jean thanked the Board and welcomed new directors to the Board. She stressed the importance of volunteerism, and the need for everyone to promote Scottish Country Dancing by distributing available marketing materials whenever the opportunity presents itself.

10. Adjournment

MOTION: Keith Bark moved that the meeting be adjourned. Seconded by John Clark. CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 pm.

Drafted by Maureen Richardson
April 30, 2017

Submitted by
Nancy White, Secretary
April 28, 2018

Jean Lindsay, Chair

Date