

RSCDS Toronto

SET & LINK

Robert Burns—Memorial Rug

www.dancescottish.ca

From the Chair...



Liz Clunie

The December Family Dance was an enjoyable way to start Christmas celebrations. Some made it very much a family affair by having three generations on the dance floor—living proof that SCD is a wonderful activity for all ages.

Now we are into the New Year and eagerly anticipating the Tartan Ball in February. There was a lot of sentiment expressed over the end of our 55-year tradition of holding the ball at the Royal York Hotel. Ball convener Laurie McConachie and her committee devoted many hours in the search for a replacement venue, and they have come up with a very fitting choice in the Old Mill. It might not have the same opulent history as the Royal York, but it certainly has an interesting history, starting in 1914 as a tea room adjacent to the ruins of the last saw mill built on the banks of the Humber River. Over the years, it has undergone many additions and renovations to become a high-demand location for elegant dining and dancing and thus a very suitable venue for our 56th ball. Make sure you join us to witness a new chapter in our RSCDS Toronto history. Check out more on the Old Mill story at:

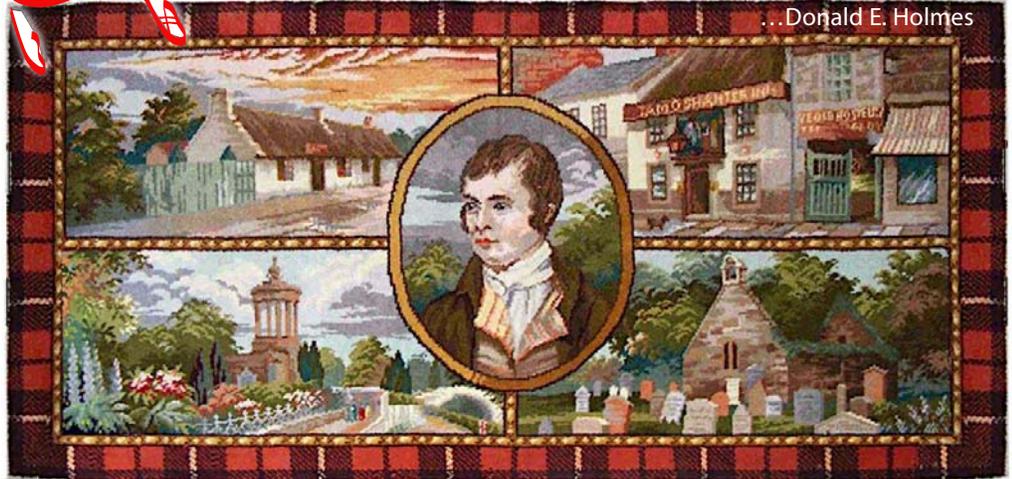
www.oldmilltoronto.com/about-us/history/

Although May 2020 seems a long way off, planning will continue throughout 2019 in preparation for the Toronto *Spring Fling 2020*, a weekend event primarily held for dancers aged 12 to 35. Fringe events will also be available for dancers over 35. The Fling has never before been held outside Europe, so the Society invited Toronto to take on the challenge. Stay tuned for more news about this exciting opportunity to promote Scottish dancing in North America. Meanwhile, check out the RSCDS Paris website to learn what will be happening in April this year at *Spring Fling 2019* in Paris:

www.springfling.rscdsparis.fr/

Scholarships covering residential and course fees are available but only for those under 35. Pity! April in Paris would be a great way to celebrate the end of our winter.

Liz



...Donald E. Holmes

Last January, Sandy Matthews offered a Burns carpet for sale to any member of the Toronto Association. The carpet, by William C. Gray & Sons Ltd. of Ayr, Scotland, was about 40 years old, cleaned, and included wall mounting hardware. When I investigated its history in Scotland and in Canada, it appeared that the carpet was infinitely more valuable than her asking price. Here is a description of the four quadrants and the centre medallion.

The Burns rug was designed and manufactured by William C. Gray & Sons Ltd., in Ayr, Scotland. The company operated from 1876 to 1974, and the 5.3x3-foot rugs were produced on two hand looms. The design drawings are held in the Archives of the University of Glasgow.

The centre medallion features Burns himself as a young man. After all, he was only 37 years old when he died. This half-length portrait of Burns, framed within an oval, is based on a portrait of Burns by Alexander Nasmyth. The portrait has become the most well-known and widely reproduced image of Scotland's Bard. Nasmyth's painting was commissioned by publisher William Creech, and was to be engraved for a new edition of Burns' poems. He is shown fashionably dressed against a landscape, evoking his rural background in Alloway, Ayrshire. Burns and Nasmyth had become good friends, having been introduced to each other in Edinburgh by a mutual patron, Patrick Miller of Dalswinton. Nasmyth, pleased to have recorded Burns' likeness convincingly, decided to leave the painting in a slightly unfinished state. The other four quadrants mark significant sites in his life.

The Burns Cottage in Alloway, pictured at upper left, is the place of his birth on January 25, 1759. His father, William Burnes, built this two-roomed clay thatched cottage in 1757. [Note the variation in spelling of the father's surname.] The cottage was the target of a failed arson attack in 1913 by two early Scottish suffragettes – Fanny Parker and Janie Allan – both of whom were imprisoned, went on hunger strike, and endured force feeding until amnesty was granted to suffragettes.

Tam O' Shanter Inn (1749), at upper right, is the inspiration for Burns' famous poem, *Tam O' Shanter*, published in 1791. It's a 224-line spirited narrative poem in brilliantly handled eight-syllable couplets based on a folk legend of a farmer, Douglas Graham, of Shanter Farm, Carrick.

The Brig O' Doon, at bottom left, is easily Scotland's most iconic, romantic wedding venue. The ancient bridge is also the setting for the climax of *Tam O' Shanter*, wherein Tam, being chased by a witch, must reach running water, which witches cannot cross. Tam's gray mare, Meg, clatters o'er the Brig O' Doon just as a witch snatches off the poor pony's tail.

Alloway's Auld Haunted Kirk, at bottom right, opened on April 20, 1236, and by 1740 was also used as a school. Burns was baptized there in 1759. His parents, William Burnes and Agnes Brown, are buried in the Kirkyard—the very "Auld Kirk" where Tam, the hero of *Tam O' Shanter*, hears the devil paying weird and wild music on the pipes!

*Kirk Alloway was drawing nigh,
Where ghaists and houlets nightly cry.*

*Tam viewed a scene of Warlocks and witches in a dance,
Of hornpipes, jigs, strathspeys, and reels,
Put life and mettle in their heels.*

*A winnock-bunker in the east,
There sat auld Nick, in shape o' beast;
with music provided by the devil himself.*



A few of these rugs exist in Ontario. All are in excellent condition and have never been walked on; complete with their original jute backing, these treasured rugs have hung gracefully on living room walls and some are for sale from Scottish country dancers.

...Donald E. Holmes

Special Events

Special Tartan Ball Practices

Sunday afternoons ~ 2 to 4 p.m. Jan 27, Feb 3, Feb 10
Parkway Forest Community Centre, 55 Forest Manor Road
See page 3 for information about this and other practices.

3rd Annual Great Canadian Kilt Skate



Sunday, January 27 ~ 1:00 p.m. - 3:00
Nathan Phillips Square (Toronto City Hall)
This is a uniquely Canadian and undeniably Scottish way to have fun during winter. This year in Toronto the event will include Scottish Clan and Society information tents around Nathan Phillips Square. Free hot chocolate and shortbread. Don your kilt; skate!

Highlands of Durham's Burns Celebration



Friday, February 1
Royal Cdn. Legion, 177 Queen St., Port Perry
Cocktails at 6 pm, dinner at 7 pm.
"An Evening of Musical Immortal Memories" with Stewart Bennett, Susan Ryman, and Lynn Swanson. Toast to the Laddies & Lassies by Athol Hart and Beth Hart. Special Guests: Scugog Mayor, Bobbie Drew, and Scugog Councillor, Lance Brown (ex CFTO TV).
Tickets \$60: Wee Tartan Shop 905.985-6573 or Alan Graham: 5alan8b1graham@gmail.com

South Simcoe's Valentine Workshop & Tea Dance

Saturday, February 9 at 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Knox Presbyterian Church, 160 King Street South, Alliston



Warm up your winter with a wonderful day of SCD in Alliston with teachers Alma Smith and David Booz. A full day of activities with two classes, an afternoon tea dance, snacks, lunch and a light supper. Registration is limited to 50 people. Carpool with your friends! Music (Laird Brown & Don Wood) and the Love of your Life (SCD) is the best way to beat the winter blues. Tickets: Maureen Richardson schoolmarm1975@hotmail.com



Ellie Briscoe



Catherine Reid



Arlene Koteff

West End Workshop & Tea Dance

Saturday, March 23
Turner Fenton School in Brampton

SAVE THE DATE - The teachers will be Ellie Briscoe from Alexandria, Virginia; Catherine Reid from Hamilton; and Arlene Koteff from Toronto. More details in the February issue.

Tartan Ball Dances



Programme by Deirdre MacCuish Bark

Date: Saturday, February 16

Place: The Old Mill, Toronto

Music: Scotch Mist Tickets: www.dancescottish.ca/Tartan_Ball.html

The Ferry Louper	8 x 32 J	Goldring, 24 Graded & Social
The Birks of Invermay	8 x 32 S	RSCDS Book 16
The White Cockade	8 x 32 R	Preston, RSCDS Book 5
The Glasgow Highlanders	8 x 32 S	Gillies, RSCDS Book 2
Les Ramparts Des Séville	8 x 32 J	Latour, RSCDS Book 50
The Australian Ladies	8 x 32 R	Campbell, Glasgow Assembly

1st Interval

The Happy Meeting	6 x 32 J	RSCDS Book 29
Balgeddie Reel	5 X 32 R	Brandon, Memories Of Fyfe
Bob Campbell	8 x 32 S	Drury, Canadian Book
The Chequered Court	8 x 32 J	Brown, RSCDS Book 42
The Ruby Rant	8 x 32 R	Walduck, RSCDS Book 49

2nd Interval

Light and Airy	8 x 32 J	Campbell, RSCDS Book 4
City of Belfast	3 x 32 S	Mulholland, RSCDS Book 48
Scotia Sea	8 x 32 R	Goldring, RSCDS Scotia Suite
The Lea Rig	8 x 32 S	RSCDS Book 21
Reel of the 51st Division	8 x 32 R	Atkinson, RSCDS Book 13

Extras

The Jubilee Jig	8 X 32 J	RSCDS Golden Jubilee
Jean Martin of Aberdeen	8 x 32 S	Johnstone, 3 Dances for 2006
Mairi's Wedding	84 x 40 R	Cosh, 22 SCDs

All dances will be briefed only.

Please make the Tartan Ball SCENT FREE. Several dancers are allergic.



Volunteer Awards:

Does your Social Group have special people who volunteer all the time? Are there people your group could not do without? Is there someone in the Toronto Association you think is indispensable? RSCDS Toronto wishes to honour those people.

The Toronto Association asks you to show your gratitude to someone who has given extensive and exceptional unpaid service by nominating them for a Volunteer Award. Nominations may be made by the Board, Social Groups, or by individual RSCDS TA members.

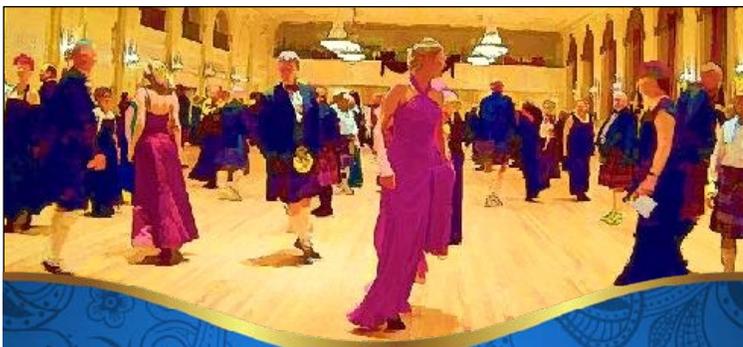
At the Volunteer Dance April 13, 2019, we will display the names of those who have contributed their time and energy to Toronto Association committees, and we will present framed certificates to those chosen to receive a Volunteer Award.

The criteria plus a list of previous recipients can be viewed on the website — Members' Home page, under VIPs.

The deadline for submissions is **February 28, 2019.**

Please send nominations to Louis Racic at louis.racic@gmail.com

56th Tartan Ball News



Feb. 16
The Old Mill - Brule Ballrooms

Ticket sales are now underway

The ticket prices remain the same as last year:

\$135 for members

\$150 for non members.

\$115 for members attending their first Ball,

\$115 for youth (under 30), or non-dancers.

Order your tickets online: www.dancescottish.ca/Tartan_Ball.html

Paper Application Form: www.dancescottish.ca/2019-Tartan-Ball.pdf

(Or contact Laurie McConachie, laurie-m@rogers.com)

Tartan Ball Practices

Parkway Forest CC: Sundays, Jan. 27, Feb. 3 & 10

Barbara Taylor will prepare newer dancers for the ball. 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Parkway Forest CC, 55 Forest Manor Rd.

You **must** reserve with Laurie McConachie:

Info: laurie-m@rogers.com

Calvin: Tuesdays, 7:30-9:30

Jan. 29: Dances that follow the 2nd Interval

Feb. 5: Dances that follow the 1st Interval

Feb. 12: Dances before the 1st Interval

Calvin Presbyterian Church, 26 Delisle Avenue

Info: vickyzeltins@gmail.com

Glenview: Wednesdays, 7:30-9:15

Feb. 6: First half of the programme

Feb. 13: Second half of the programme

Glenview Presbyterian Church, 1 Glenview Avenue

Info: v.fisher@sympatico.ca

St Clements: Monday, Feb 11, 6:30-9:30

Teresa Lockhart will dance you through the entire ball programme, in order.

Bishop Strachan School, 298 Lonsdale Road

Info: teresa.lockhart@rogers.com

Spectators

Admission to the Tartan Ball, or any portion of the ball, is restricted to those who have purchased a ticket to the ball. There is no balcony or viewing area in the ballroom. Non-dancers are welcome to attend the ball, provided they have purchased a 'non-dancer' ticket, which includes the reception, dinner, and participation in the grand march before the dancing starts. Non-dancers may remain at their tables after dinner to watch the dancing and socialize.

Extra Practices

Barbara Taylor will teach three extra practices for newer dancers so you will feel well prepared for the Ball. The price each week is \$7.

The venue is a brand new facility, near Sheppard & Don Mills Road, and it has a beautiful dance studio! You must reserve by emailing

laurie-m@rogers.com

Dates: Sunday afternoons, 2-4 p.m, Jan. 27, Feb. 3, Feb. 10

Place: Parkway Forest Community Centre, 55 Forest Manor Rd.

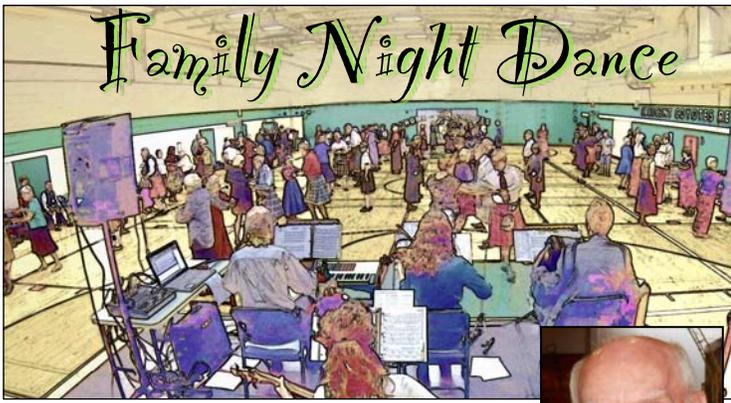
Something New: A post-ball collation

Something new! This year, the Tartan Ball committee invites you to linger and wind down from the dancing with a wee snack and some sociability before you go.

The Tartan Ball Committee looks forward to welcoming everyone to the dance floor on February 16.

...Laurie McConachie, Tartan Ball Convenor





Our Family Night Dance for 2018 was once again a fun evening with wonderful music, good dancing, and a feast at the interval supplied by our hosts, Humbercrest, Glenview, and Petronella. Our attendance was less than normal, but a very wet night may have convinced some of the less hardy to stay home in front of the TV.



The 127 who did attend were treated to a wonderful night of dancing. Thanks to Deirdre for the programme, and to Don Bartlett & The Scottish Heirs for the music. Santa showed up again, handing out treats to the children and those who are young at heart. It was a great way to start the festive season.



We also said Thanks and Farewell to our resident Kitchen Elf, Jan Shaw, who retired after 32 years of organizing the food offerings at monthly dances, in our various locations: Hodgson Public School, Forest Hill Collegiate (where we moved to accommodate increasing membership), and latterly at Crescent School. In recent years, Jan has been driving in from Gravenhurst to serve us! Thank you, Jan.

Our next dance is earlier than usual — January 5, 2019 at 8 p.m. — at Crescent School with music by Scotch Mist.

... Forbes Duncan

[Fun fact: in 1975 the January monthly dance had 355 dancers!]



Devise a Dance Programme for the 2021 Volunteer Appreciation Dance

The dance deviser contest has been a success. The winner of the 2020 competition will be announced at the Volunteer Dance on April 13, 2019. Once again, the Board is requesting submissions for the 2021 Volunteer Appreciation Dance.

Are you interested in devising the dance programme for the 2021 Volunteer Appreciation Dance? Criteria and guidelines for devising programmes will be sent to those members expressing an interest in participating. To those who have previously submitted programmes, consider revising your original and resubmitting it. Programme submissions must be received by April 15, 2019. For more info contact:

Maureen Richardson: schoolmarm1975@hotmail.com
or Louis Racic: louis.racic@gmail.com

Drawings from Sara Posen's Scottish dance class for young children



fifty-fifty draw

At the December Monthly Dance, Alison Booz won \$140.50 in the 50/50 draw.

Congratulations!

These Teacher Candidates passed their Unit 1 Exams:
• Suzanne Batt • Tara Bolker • Kathryn Bralten • Kathryn Lecocq

**Toronto Workshop
Convenor Needed**

After 7 years on the committee, and two years as Convenor of the Toronto Workshop and Afternoon Dance, I would like to mentor someone with the committee for the 2019 workshop, anticipating they will assume the role of Convenor the following year. Our committee is a committed team, and we have a lot of fun preparing for this important annual event. Consider joining us.

Info: Christy Barber 416 489-2384 barber72@sympatico.ca

**The Demo Pool
Needs a New
Convenor.
It could be
YOU!**

The Demo Pool urgently needs a Convenor. We are again looking for a volunteer to take over the position of convenor of the Demo Pool, as Stella is definitely stepping down at the end of this demonstration season.

Please contact Stella at stellahenderson820@gmail.com

Mairi's Wedding: Song & Dance



Isabel Bernaus, Artistic Director



(L-R) Erica de Gannes, Sheena Gilks, Fiona Alberti, Max Fothergill, Kendra Beliveau, Bill Barber, Dorothy Lothian, Donald Holmes



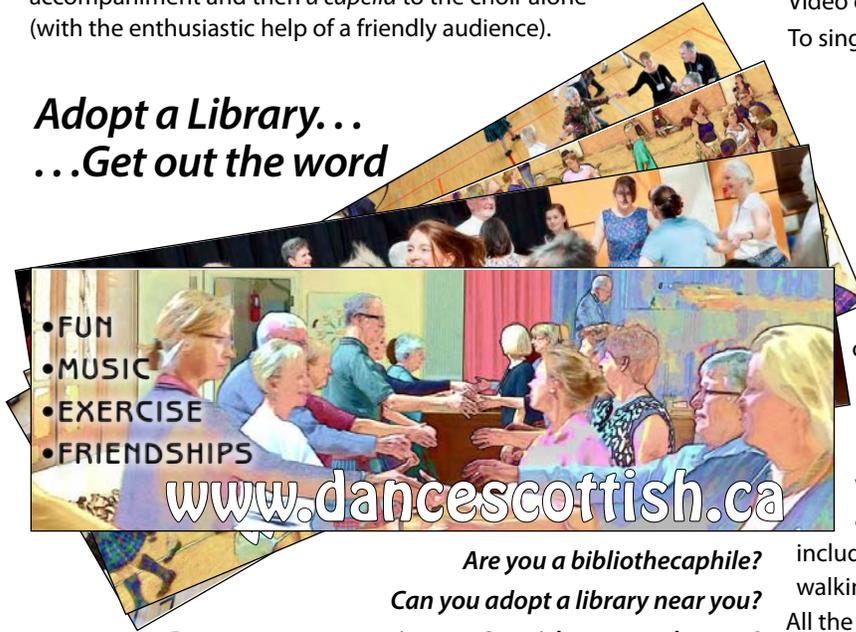
How often have you danced Mairi's Wedding and your fellow dancers began to sing along? That customary relationship of dance with song was upended on Saturday, December 15, as Gunars Rundan piped a set of eight dancers to the steps of the chancel of Eastminster United Church, and they merrily danced *Mairi's Wedding* while the 75-member Common Thread Community Chorus sang the lyrics, partly to piano accompaniment and then *a capella* to the choir alone (with the enthusiastic help of a friendly audience).

The event was initiated by the Rev'd Bob McElhinney (at right), retired minister of Newtonbrook United Church and a former Scottish country dancer, and facilitated by Stella Henderson, who recruited Demo Pool dancers to assist Donald Holmes in forming a set to rehearse and perform at Eastminster. Proceeds of the performance go to support the choir.

Video of the performance: https://youtu.be/xNQ_rFECnNg

To sing with Common Thread: www.commonthreadchorus.ca

Adopt a Library... ...Get out the word



- FUN
- MUSIC
- EXERCISE
- FRIENDSHIPS

www.dancescottish.ca

Are you a bibliothecaphile?

Can you adopt a library near you?

Do you want to recruit more Scottish country dancers?

Volunteers are needed to adopt a nearby library (or community centre) to advertise our RSCDS Toronto lessons and events. The Marketing Team has produced attractive bookmarks (8x2½") which have our website address and information about beginner classes and we'd like to place them in neighbourhood Libraries.

This requires permission from the Head Librarian of each Branch, and since it's *your* library... and we are a *non-profit* organization (it's vital to mention this)... we'd like you to handle the negotiations and resupply the Library from time to time.

Please contact Lyn barsevskis@gmail.com with your name and your library for a supply of bookmarks to distribute. Or download: www.dancescottish.ca/bookmarks-for-library.pdf

Word-of-Mouth is the most powerful marketing tool there is...

Please remember to share your love of Scottish country dance with friends, neighbours, baristas... Classes start in early January.

~ Step it up in 2019 ~

The Mental and Physical Health Benefits of Frequent Dance

A 21-year study of senior citizens by the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York City, and published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, wanted to see if physical or cognitive recreational activities influenced mental acuity.

They discovered some activities had a significant beneficial effect, while other activities had none.

They studied cognitive activities such as reading books, writing for pleasure, doing crossword puzzles, playing cards, and playing musical instruments. The physical activities studied

included playing tennis or golf, swimming, bicycling, dancing, walking for exercise, and doing housework. All the physical activities had cardiovascular benefits but only one — dancing frequently — offered reduced risk of dementia.

- Bicycling and swimming - 0%
- Playing golf - 0%
- Reading - 35% reduced risk of dementia
- Doing crossword puzzles at least four days a week - 47%
- Dancing frequently - 76%.

Thus, dancing *frequently* offered the greatest risk reduction of any activity studied, cognitive or physical. So, shall we see you at the January Monthly Dance?



The full study is posted here: www.goo.gl/kgSi1n

Board Bulletins

Nominations: Board Positions

Here's a chance to shape the destiny of RSCDS Toronto! Several positions on the Board of Directors are open, but members are reminded any position can be proposed. Elections to the Board take place at our AGM, April 27.

If you are interested in serving on the Board, or wish to suggest someone, contact a member of the Nominations Committee. Download a Nomination Form from the website (Members' Home Page) or ask Nancy White. Submit form to Deirdre MacCuish Bark or Nancy White by: **February 20.**

All Board positions imply commitment to at least two consecutive one-year terms.

The Vice Chair position should be filled by someone who:

- has previously served as a member of the Board,
- has been a former Executive member,
- has been a Convenor or,
- has been a Committee Chair.

The incumbent Vice-Chair is expected to fill the position of Chair, with a two-year commitment in each role.

More info: Secretary, Nancy White nawhite15@gmail.com or Nominations Comm. Chair, Deirdre MacCuish Bark: barkd@rogers.com 905 822-1707

AGM Motions Deadline: Feb. 10



Feb. 10 is the deadline for submission of motions from the membership for the 2019 Annual General Meeting. Submissions must have the support of 10 full members as indicated by their signature.

Send motions to: Nancy White nawhite15@gmail.com

Motions received will be posted 30 days prior to AGM.



Video of The Glorious 1024some

Paul Barber has digitized and posted video from 1993 of the 1024some. Here's what the event was about, according to Laird Brown:

"I was asked if I had any memorable dance moments and the one that sticks with me the most is dancing at the SkyDome/Rogers Centre, trying to set a Guinness World Record with the largest RSCDS organized dance, the 1024some. The pipes were playing, the dancers were on the field, and the Dome roof opened. What an incredible feeling!"

Paul's video is posted here: <https://youtu.be/O96XWcNCRic>



Association Classes

New Classes begin in January. Whatever your level, beginner or improver, there is a class for you. All dancers, except for first-session beginners, must be members of RSCDS Toronto. The ten-week classes are \$100 (cheques payable to "RSCDS Toronto"). Classes Convenor:

Catherine MacLean 416.996-1136 birchpoint123@gmail.com

All classes are 7:30 - 9:30 p.m.

Level 1 Beginner Classes: Dancers learn basic steps of Scottish country dance and a variety of common formations. These elements are combined in learning simple dances that incorporate steps and formations taught.

Mondays: Jan. 7 - Mar. 18 (No class on Feb. 19 - Family Day)

Teacher: May Divers at St. Leonard's Anglican Church*

Thursdays: Jan. 10 - Mar. 14

Teacher: Colin Philip at Eastminster United Church*

Level 2 Intermediate Classes: These classes build on steps and formations learned at the beginner level and introduce more complex formations. Dancers grow confident in their skills and enjoy the challenge of interesting dances.

Thursdays: Jan. 10 - Mar. 14

Teacher: Sandra Scott in the Auditorium, Eastminster United Church*

* Location Addresses:

*St Leonard's: 25 Wanless Avenue (nr Lawrence subway station)

Class Representative: Cheryl Catt cherylcatt47@gmail.com

*Eastminster: 310 Danforth Avenue (2 minutes west of Chester station)

Class Representative: Anne Bishop anne.e.bishop@outlook.com 647.234-4631



South Simcoe SCD group tried something different to attract new dancers. Through local businesses and elementary schools (Grades 5 to 8), we promoted an eight-week programme (Oct 8 to Dec 7), offering family-friendly Scottish country dancing to families, including children aged 10 to 16 years of age.

From 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., participants were introduced to the basic steps and formations of Scottish country dancing, and we did simple dances. Participants were invited to stay for our regular session from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. It was delightful to have most of the new dancers stay for the remaining two hours. Each evening's programme was easily adapted to accommodate our newcomers.

Over the course of the eight weeks, we had thirteen newcomers, nine of whom came for the majority of the eight weeks. The final week was our Christmas Dance on Friday, December 7. The energy of the three twenty-something young people was contagious. We all had a good time, and we look forward to seeing our newcomers on Friday evenings in the New Year.

... Maureen Richardson

Rabbie Burns—Some Lesser-known facts

Robert (Rabbie) was the eldest of the eight children born to William Burnes and Agnes Brown. His siblings were Gilbert Burns, Agnes Burness, Annabella Burness, Isabell Burns, William Burness, John Burness, and Isabella (Burness) Begg. Note the variant spellings. Rabbie spelled his surname Burness until the family changed the name to Burns in 1784, the year his father died. The name Burns was common in Ayr at the time. Both parents are buried in the Auld Kirk churchyard.



Rabbie's mother Agnes sang traditional Scots songs to her growing family, and they had a house guest — Betty Davidson (widow of Agnes's cousin). Burns wrote of Betty that she "cultivated the latent seeds of Poesy" in the wee boy Robert. Betty was unlettered and superstitious, and she regaled the children with what Burns recalled as "the largest collection in the county of tales and songs concerning devils, ghosts, fairies, brownies, witches, warlocks, spunkies, kelpies, elf-candles, dead-lights, wraiths, apparitions, cantraipts, giants, enchanted towers, dragons and other trumpery."

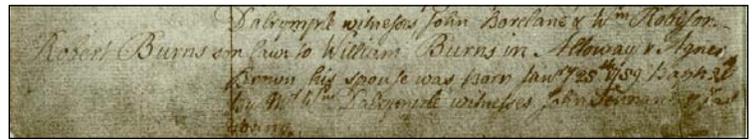
Robert acquired a reading knowledge of French and Latin and he read Shakespeare, Milton, and Dryden. He alienated many of his friends by enthusiastically supporting the French Revolution. He embraced, and was part of, the Scottish Enlightenment, and its interest in the progress of a civil society. Burns' favourite book after the Bible was a novel, *The Man Of Feeling*, by Henry Mackenzie (pub. 1771). He carried that book until it fell apart and then replaced it. [It's still available: [Oxford University Press, 2009.](#)]

In 1786, Rabbie fell in love with Jean Armour, whose father forbade her from marrying Burns even though a child was on the way. However under Scots law mutual consent followed by consummation constituted a legal marriage. Two years later, in Mauchline, Ayrshire, he married Jean Armour in April 1788; they had nine children, the last born on the day of his funeral.

In addition to his literary activities, Robert worked as a tax inspector in excise service from 1789 in Ellisland, Dumfriesshire, until his death on July 21, 1796. He had fallen into depression, drank heavily, and died of rheumatic fever. A sad end, but his legacy lives on.



The Burns memorial in St Michael's Churchyard, Dumfries.



Birth and Death of Robert Burns

January 25, 1759 - July 21, 1796

This is an image of the original entry in the parish register of Alloway recording the birth and baptism of Robert Burns. It can be found in the National Records of Scotland* (*Parish register of Alloway, NRS reference OPR 578/4, page 17*). The transcript of this notice which declares him to be the lawful son of William Burns and Agnes Brown reads:

*Robert Burns son law: to William Burns in Alloway & Agnes Brown his spouse was born Janry 25th 1759 bapt: 26th
By Mr Wm Dalrymple witnesses John Tennant & Jas Young*

Following his death, and because he did not leave a will, according to the National Records of Scotland, the trustees of his estate planned to publish his complete works. Proceeds from this endeavour were to support his widow Jean Armour and his children. The four-volume anthology, *The Complete Poetical Works of Robert Burns: With Explanatory and Glossarial Notes; And a Life of the Author*, was published in 1800, with further editions put out in future years. It included a biography of the poet by Dr James Currie. That biography has been criticized for exaggerating Burns' excessive drinking.

*The National Records of Scotland (NRS), a government department, is responsible for the census of Scotland, information and statistics about the population of Scotland, civil registration, and the national archives. It was formed in 2011 when the National Archives of Scotland and the General Register Office merged. The website is <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk>

...Marian White



Dear Editor...

Helping beginners become confident dancers

My first teacher, Jean Noble, was not only wonderfully positive about the joys of dancing, but she also, in pre-Internet days, gave out copies of dances on upcoming programmes. I struggled to move salt and pepper shakers around my kitchen table to figure out dance patterns, to find time to practise, and especially to overcome the panic when the music started. I did the dances I could figure out and disappeared for the others. I'm lucky that experienced dancers were gracious enough to dance with a hesitant beginner like me.

Many of us try to reciprocate by asking beginners and trying our best to help them. Great to see the joy of successfully doing a dance. I think a factor in people staying with dancing is success on the floor. I know several who have given up SCD; in discussions, people's frustrations in moments of confusion were factors.

It seems to me, in the last decade dances have become more complex. New RSCDS books have innovative dances with new patterns. While many are beautiful, they go far from the basic steps which are taught in beginners' classes.

I often ask other dancers if they are going to some upcoming event. I've been told by several that they looked at the programme and don't have time to learn the unfamiliar and seemingly hard dances. The programme arranger of a Ball with declining attendance decided to just put her favourite dances on the last ever Ball. Numbers jumped because people liked the programme with Blooms, Bonnie, Mairi, etc.

Scottish dancing is a wonderful activity with exercise, mental, and social stimulation. I'll never do all 15,000 dances devised so far. While some new dances are interesting, I especially enjoy the happiness of moving across the floor in the familiar patterns of the many popular Scottish dances.

...Ron Macnaughton

Upcoming Events: NEAR

Jan 5 - **January Monthly Dance** ~ Scotch Mist will play, and this will be a fine chance to sharpen the performance of several Tartan Ball dances, including the magical, but daunting, *Glasgow Highlanders*. At Crescent School, 2365 Bayview Ave. Dancing starts promptly at 8 p.m. Cribs with video links at www.dancescottish.ca (What's on Near tab).

Jan 12 - **Ladies' Step Class Begins** ~ (see advert at right).

Jan 20 - **Shifftin' Bobbins Goes Highland** ~ Donald Holmes joins the group to teach basic Highland steps, and a few of the simpler steps that can be used in *Glasgow Highlanders*. Attire: Kilt or knee length skirt. 2 - 4 p.m. at Parish Hall, Grace Church-on-the-Hill, 300 Russell Hill Road at Lonsdale.

Jan 27 - **Great Canadian Kilt Skate** ~ Join Canadians from coast to coast in this dafty, and drafty, celebration of winter and Scots heritage. Free. 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 at Nathan Phillips Square. There will be hot chocolate and shortbread.

Feb 1 - **An Evening of Musical Immortal Memories** ~ Highlands of Durham SCD celebrate Burns with food, music, oratory, and perhaps a wee dram. Tickets are \$60 from The Wee Tartan Shop 905.985-6573. Royal Canadian Legion, 177 Queen Street, Port Perry. Starts at 6:00.

Feb 9 - **Valentine Workshop & Tea Dance** ~ Join your South Simcoe friends-in-dance for a workshop with teachers David Booz and Alma Smith, and music by Laird Brown and Don Wood. Lunch and a tea dance follow.

Knox Presbyterian Church, 160 King Street South, Alliston. Tickets: Maureen Richardson schoolmarm1975@hotmail.com

Feb 16 - **The 56th Annual Tartan Ball** ~ Dancers come from far and wide to attend this elegant signature event, and this year we have a beautiful new location, the historic Old Mill. Tickets: www.dancescottish.ca/Tartan_Ball.html

March 9 - **March Monthly Dance (Beginners' Night)** ~ Scotch Mist will play; all dances will be briefed and walked. Eager beginners will abound, and experienced dancers will be eager to help. At Crescent School, 2365 Bayview Ave. Dancing starts promptly at 7:30 p.m. Cribs with video links at www.dancescottish.ca (What's on Near tab).

March 23 - **West End Workshop & Tea Dance** ~ Teachers: Ellie Briscoe, Catherine Reid, Arlene Koteff.. Music by various musicians and Scotch Mist for the tea dance. More info anon.



RSCDS Toronto Association Board of Directors

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Upcoming Events: FAR

Jan 9 - **RSCDS Kitchener-Waterloo Burns Celebration** ~ Enjoy a traditional Burns feast with Haggis. After food and entertainment, do some good old Scottish Country Dancing (suitable for all levels). Info: www.rscds.kitchener.on.ca

Jan 26 - **Oakville SCD Robert Burns Celebration** ~ Join us in Oakville to celebrate Robbie Burns including a traditional Haggis supper. Music and dancing to follow. Music by Best of the Bands. \$25 and cash bar. Tickets: Alicia Manson manson@globalserve.net 905 849 7180

Feb 9-10 - **Ardbrae Dancers of Ottawa Triple-B weekend** ~ Ball, Buffet, and Brunch. Music by Torridon SDC Band. Hospitality for out-of-towners. At the beautiful Glebe Centre, 175 Third Avenue. Info: Bob Anglin anglin7576@rogers.com

Feb 17-22 or Feb 25- Mar 4 - **The Sunday Class in Madeira** ~ The first week we mostly dance to CDs. The second week features live music on 5 evenings, and impromptu entertainment by Alex Hodgson. Our band is the wonderful Marian Anderson & Her Scottish Dance Band. Info: amandapeart@thesundayclass.org.uk

Mar 1-3 - **Belleville Workshop and Ball** ~ Belleville dancers cordially invite you to our workshop weekend. Our teacher is the legendary Atsuko Clement, so mark the date and book early. The Friday Social, Saturday classes, and Ball are all at the Masonic Temple with its fine wooden floor. Info: David Aston david.aston@kos.net

Mar 29-31 - **Madison Scottish SCD Ball Weekend** ~ Great Hall, Memorial Union, UW-Madison Campus. Musicians: Elke Baker and Liz Donaldson with Dave Mullen. Teachers: TBA. www.madisonscottishcountrydancers.org

Apr 13, 2020 - **Weekend Away in Chambéry** ~ A dance weekend for advanced dancers in the French Alps. Teacher: Ron Wallace. Music: Sarah-Jane Summers (fiddle) and James Gray (piano). Info: www.rscdsparis.fr

T.A.C. Summer School ~ 28 July - 4 Aug ~ Calgary, Alberta

Teachers: Jimmy Hill • Linda Henderson • Geoffrey Selling • Moira Korus
Music: Andy Imbrie & Reel of Seven ~ **Place:** beautiful Mount Royal University
Info: <https://tac-rscds.org/index.php/tac-summer-school>

DEMO POOL PRACTICE DATES

Broadlands is closed for renovation. Our new home is Banbury CC, 120 Banbury Road, Don Mills

- Jan 6 ~ 1:30-3:30 p.m. ~ Banbury Banquet Hall
- Jan 13 ~ 2-4 p.m. ~ Banbury Banquet Hall
- Mar 3 ~ 12-2 p.m. ~ Banbury Banquet Hall
- Mar 31 ~ 2-4 p.m. ~ Banbury Lounge

Royal Scottish Country Dance Society Events

Winter School
17-22 February 2019
Atholl Palace Hotel, Pitlochry, Scotland
 5 days of dancing and music with...
 • Amazing teachers • Talented musicians
 • Friends from all over
 • A formal Ball at Blair Atholl Castle
www.rscds.org/news/winter-school-2019

Summer School
21 July ~ 11 Aug, 2019
St Andrews University, Scotland
 Your choice of 4 weeks dancing & music with
 • Amazing teachers • Talented musicians
 • Friends from all over
 • Dance in legendary Younger Hall
www.rscds.org/article/book-now-for-summer-school-2019

Ladies' Step Classes

- Jan 12 & 19 • Feb 2 & 23 • Noon to 1:15
- March 2 & 9

Rosedale Presbyterian Church, 129 Mount Pleasant at South Drive
 Info: Moira Korus
 Teacher: Alma Smith

~ Attend a Board Meeting ~
 Members of RSCDS Toronto are welcome to attend Board meetings (i.e. sit in, and silently observe). Please arrange your visit with Nancy White nawhite15@gmail.com

Upcoming Dates:

- Mon, Jan 14
- Wed, Feb 13
- Wed, Mar 13



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