

# DUNDEE REEL

No 1

Newsletter of the Dundee Branch of The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society

January 1995

1925

70th Anniversary

1995

A warm welcome to all members and friends on the historic occasion of our 70th Birthday. The newsletter contains present day news and a dance diary as well as some material from our archives which we hope will be of interest to you.

The title of our newsletter was chosen from the dance of the same name. This is a well known dance which first appeared in the Border Book and it is popular at Old Time dances in the Dundee area as well as at Scottish Country dances. It is interesting to note that one of the objectives of the RSCDS in the beginning was that each branch took note of variations in a particular dance in its locality (see opposite). Whilst variations in dances occur in different country areas with Old Time dances, notably the Lancers and Gay Gordons, such differences have largely disappeared in the RSCDS branches. One notable exception is indeed the Dundee Reel.

Many of us are dependent on our wee green books as an aide memoire at dances and this gives the Border Book version of the Dundee Reel - a 40 bar jig. After the initial reels of three on the side, the first three couples dance right arms across followed by left arms across. In Dundee, there is a circle to the left instead of right arms across, followed by left arms across. In addition, the Dundee version has an extra 8 bars with a second reel of three (1st couple on opposite sides) before the advance and retire. Yet another variation, occasionally seen, is a retire and advance instead of advance and retire. This obviously requires space and, hopefully our dances will remain too popular to allow this variation!

The following abstract is from the minutes of the first meeting of the Dundee Branch:

*At a meeting held in Mathers' Rooms Dundee on February 9th 1925 at 4.30 pm, approximately fifty persons attended an address given by Mrs Stewart (Fasnacloich) Honorary Secretary of the Society.*

*In the absence of Dr. Angus McGillivray, Dr. A.E. Kidd took the chair. He explained that since Edinburgh and Glasgow had formed Branches of the Society it was felt that Dundee might follow suit. Mrs Stewart explained the aims and objects of the Society in the realm of research into the Country Dances of Scotland. She also explained that the formation of local branches was with the object not only of practising the dances but also each member investigating the various differences of perhaps the same dance in different areas.*

*It was then explained that local Branches made all their own arrangements and were self-supporting. Classes under the auspices of the Branches were to be taught by members who have passed the Teacher's Certificate standard.*

*Following upon Mrs Stewart's address Dr. A.E. Kidd moved from the Chair that 'Dundee form a Branch of the Scottish Country Dance Society' and this was seconded by Miss Sharp of Balmuir.*

Dr. Angus McGillivray was elected President and Miss Sharp Vice President.

The term Royal in the title was granted by King George VIth in 1951.

**70th Anniversary Dance and Buffet, Angus Hotel**  
Sat 4th Feb, 1995. 7.30pm.  
David Cunningham's Band

Tickets (£10) from:  
Mrs Hazel Hall,  
Seal House,  
The Old Harbour,  
Tayport, DD6 9AZ.  
Tel: 01382-552239

Circassian Circle	1 R	Gavin's Reel	R
Wild Geese	24 J	*Alice Mann's Strathspey	S
Miss Milligan's Strathspey	S	A Trip to the Drakensberg	38 J
Baldovan Reel	R	Glens of Angus	23 R
Dundee Reel	BB J	Robertson Rant	S
Dundee Whaler	S	Tribute to the Borders	L J
Earl of Mansfield	R	Saltire Society Reel	L J
*Joe Foster's Jig	J	*Butterscotch and Honey	S
Frae a' the Airts	S&R	J. B. Milne	R
Summer Wooing	38 R	Broun's Reel	1 R

\*Instructions available

# RSCDS AGM: Perth Nov 1994

Perth and Perthshire Branch were the hosts for the 1994 AGM, held in the Gannochy Sports Complex. The social and business events were well organized, the Complex being well able to accommodate the large numbers of dancers attending. The Friday night ball went with a swing to the sound of Jim Berry and his Band and the Saturday night dance was most enjoyable with music by Muriel Johnstone's Band, which included the unusual but pleasing sound of a flute. Muriel Johnstone's Band has recorded the music for the new RSCDS Book (38) and has also released Volume IV of A Dancer's Miscellany. Many dancers also attended a class after the Saturday morning Open Forum, taken by Linda Gaul of Pitlochry.

## OPEN FORUM:

### IMPACT OF NEW CHARITIES LEGISLATION

Up until 1990, there was no Charities legislation in Scotland, but this changed with the passing of the Law Reform (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Scotland) Act 1990. At the Open Forum, Mr. Andrew Dobson gave a talk on the effects of this on the RSCDS. He pointed out that, as a charity, the Society was not run solely for its members but its charitable objective was the advancement of Scottish Country Dancing.

The implementation of the act is the responsibility of the Scottish Charities Office, which is a division of the Crown Office, operating under the authority of the Lord Advocate. Following the 1990 act, accounting requirements were set out in the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 1992. Assuming the RSCDS remains a charity, Headquarters would be governed by trustees, the Chairman of whom would be the Chairman of the Society. Headquarters suggest that branches would have autonomy (eg Dundee Branch could become RSCDS Dundee), with committee members becoming trustees of the Local Association. In effect, the relationship between branch and HQ would appear to be maintained much as before, although affiliated groups would be affiliated to a Local Association rather than to Headquarters. Further information is contained in page 11 of the Bulletin.

### BULLETIN

Reports from branches are to be reintroduced into the Bulletin. It is hoped this will be possible for the 1995 issue and certainly will be included in time for 1996.

### DANCE MUSIC RECORDINGS

Headquarters has a large stock of records of music for earlier books, so if you require music, buy, don't borrow! It has been decided that it is too costly to

provide new recordings in 3 formats, therefore records will no longer be produced, the recordings being available in future on tape and compact disc.

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

At the AGM, the Earl of Mansfield was appointed as President of the RSCDS. Honorary Vice-Presidents appointed were: Miss Florence Adams; The Duke of Atholl; Sir Donald Cameron of Lochiel KT; Lieut. Col. M. Muriel Gibson; the Hon. Peregrine Moncreiffe of Moncreiffe.

#### Election of Office Bearers:

Chairman.....George Lawson (Glasgow)  
Vice-Chairman.....Bill Clement (Dumfries)  
Six Elected Members.....Alastair Aitkenhead,  
Dorothy Hamilton, Alan Mair, Christian Catto, Norah  
Dunn, Stuart Adam.

Unfortunately, two resolutions regarding the appointment of Trustees (relating to the new Charities legislation) and the length of term of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, could not be discussed for procedural reasons, both being drafted without due consideration to constitutional requirements.

The 1995 AGM will take place in Troon on 4th November. Our Branch Secretary will have application forms if any member wishes to attend. Dundee will be hosting the AGM in 1996.

---

### NONCOMPETITIVE FESTIVAL OF DANCE

The festival will take place in the Northern College of Education on Sat 25 March at 1.45 pm and consists of demonstrations and massed dancing for teams of adults and children, to Colin Dewar's Band. It is well worth a visit (spectators 80p). Colin and his band are also in action at the Blyth Hall at 7.30 at the Festival dance, which is always popular so be sure to get your tickets early.

---

### Dundee Branch Committee 1994-1995

	Tel No
Chairman.....Alice Mann	454466
Vice-Chairman.....Nancy Robinson	01241-855641
Secretary.....Hazel Hall	552239
Treasurer.....David Watt	477667
<b>Committee Members (Retiral Date)</b>	
Mary Currie (1997)	532144
Jean Taylor (1997)	01592-756822
Mary Cant (1996)	580415
Ina Guthrie (1996)	542727
Joe Burke (1995)	730765
Gwen Stone (1995)	642268

Mr Neil Logue, Tayside Region Assistant Director of Education, has graciously accepted the position of Honorary President.

## 1994 ROYAL MILITARY TATTOO: A DANCER'S PERSPECTIVE

'Would you be willing to put a team in to the Edinburgh tattoo this year?'. 'That sounds like a good idea - I don't see why not'. . and that is how it all began. Four months of hard work, the creation of 15 new demonstration outfits, a lot of laughs, some memorable moments and a few we would rather forget. I would like to share a few of them with you.

When the set of instructions arrived, invitations were extended to members of the advanced and general classes and practices began. It was immediately clear that this was dancing but not 'as we knew it'. A five minute medley of a reel, waltz, strathspey and jig with the set constantly changing from longwise to square to diagonal to single file!! All this starting with 128 hands round and back. After a couple of difficult sessions, we discovered that some of the symbols for men and women on the instructions were the wrong way round. The dancers fell about laughing while Hazel, our teacher, tore hair by the handful.

The instructions also laid out down the dress to be worn, dress jackets for men and velvet tunics trimmed with lace, long white skirts and red pumps for the ladies. Helen Beat became Wardrobe Mistress, supervising the making of the outfits. The results were impressive and the Dundee Branch was always one of the best dressed in the Tattoo.

At last the evening of our first live performance. . . we arrived at Redford Barracks in good time thanks to our transport convener Freda, who organized a car rota and would brook no dissent among drivers nor deviation from the transport plan. We all changed in the camp cinema. The men were quite coy, some even sneaking off to the toilets to change whilst the ladies threw off clothes with gay abandon. Busses dropped us off in Johnstone Terrace and we selfconsciously brandished our ID cards whilst the Police smiled indulgently and waved us through. They clearly felt that any terrorist prepared to go to these lengths. . . . deserved to get in!

The Tattoo celebrated the Gordon Highlanders history and the dancers were to take part in a ball given by the Duchess of Gordon before the call to arms at the Battle of Waterloo. The drums and pipes strike up and we are on. . . careful to maintain station with the dancers opposite, we move forward into the lights and the wash of sound from the audience. Miraculously the circle forms and we are off. Quickly it is all over and the men run off to war. For the finale all the performers massed on the esplanade in the shape of a stag's head, the emblem of the Gordon Highlanders. The lights were dimmed and the music swelled as the choir sang 'A Gordon for Me'- a truly memorable

moment. All too soon we heard 'Donald Blue' for the last time and our involvement with the Tattoo ended but we carried away some great memories:

Nancy, our vice-chairman, mounting an assault on the Sergeant's mess then the Officer's mess to 'sort out' transport arrangements to the Castle;

Helen, our Wardrobe Mistress, taking on the role of wardress as she marched her charges, in columns of two, at 11 pm on a Saturday night, through central Edinburgh looking for a missing bus;

the rehearsal when we took advantage of a convenient pile of horse droppings to mark our position on the Esplanade.

As I waved goodbye to the other dancers after the final performance, I just caught a snatch of someone saying, 'Next year. . . . .'

### DEMONSTRATIONS

The outfits made for the Tattoo have provided the Demonstration team with a 'new look' which has been much admired. In September, the team helped provide entertainment at a ceilidh in Kinfauns Castle for a party of walkers from Germany. It was a very successful night and they were appreciative of the dancing, some joining in enthusiastically. Others were happy to sit and watch, being suddenly afflicted with sore legs or ankles when asked to dance!

The team also led the dancing at a ceilidh in the Officer's mess at Leuchars. It was an exhausting night for the dancers but the efforts were much appreciated.

If you hear of any function where the services of the Demonstration team may be required, get in touch with the Secretary. The team usually provides entertainment in return for a donation to the Branch.

### LETTER TO THE EDITOR

From the Dance Floor



I wonder if any of your readers can explain one of life's mysteries: Scottish Country dancers recognise and smile at other dancers in their set during a dance but ignore them as soon as the dance is finished. The band plays the final chord, you bow or curtsy to your partner, then turn to thank the other members of the set and they are gone! I thought at first that this was a reflection of my dancing, but it happens in other sets. So why do dancers leave their sets without thanking the other 2, 3 or 4 couples in the set????

Yours in time to the music,  
Patrick Bass

EDITOR: Mary Cant, Balmure, Fowlis Easter, Dundee,  
DD2 5LP. Tel. 01382-580415.

Comments, letters or information on dances from members or others are appreciated.

# Dance Diary



This list is intended as a guide and it is possible there may be changes due to unforeseen circumstances, so check before going. If anyone is organizing a dance, please inform the editor (Mary Cant 01382-580415) to prevent clashes with other dances. Dances at 7.30 unless otherwise indicated.

		VENUE	BAND	INFORMATION
<b>JANUARY</b>				
Sat 21	NEWPORT	Blyth Hall	Jim Berry	Dundee Branch RSCDS
<b>FEBRUARY</b>				
Sat 4	DUNDEE	Angus Hotel Dundee Branch 70th Anniversary Dance	David Cunningham	Tickets from Dundee RSCDS Tel. Mrs Hall 01382-552239
Fri 17	CUPAR	Corn Exchange	Jim Berry	Ceres
Sat 18	PERTH	Perth Academy	Jim Berry	Perth Branch Day School
Fri 24	BROUGHTY FERRY	East Kirk	Maple Leaf	8 - 11 pm
<b>MARCH</b>				
Sat 4	ST ANDREWS	Holy Trinity Church Hall	Maple Leaf	Girl's Brigade
Fri 10	SCONE	Douglas Memorial Hall	Maple Leaf	
Sat 11	FOWLIS EASTER	Village Hall	Maple Leaf	Mrs Henderson 01382-580207
Thu 23	COUPAR ANGUS	Town Hall	Jim Fairweather	
Fri 24	CUPAR	Corn Exchange	Maple Leaf	Mr Bertram 01334-652988
Sat 25	NEWPORT	Blyth Hall	Colin Dewar	Dundee RSCDS Festival
Fri 31	PERTH	Lesser City Hall	Jim Berry	Charity
<b>APRIL</b>				
Thu 6	FORFAR	Reid Hall	Maple Leaf	Forfar RSCDS
Fri 7	NEWBURGH	Tayside Institute	Jim Berry	
Wed 19	MONTROSE	Town Hall	Maple Leaf	
Sat 22	ABERDEEN	Northern College	Jim Berry	Aberdeen Branch Day School
Sat 22	INVERNESS	Bught Sports Centre Highland Ball	Drummond Cook and friends	Joyce Sutherland Tel. 01343-541852
Wed 26	PERTH	City Hall	Maple Leaf/J. Berry	M. S. Charity
Sat 29	DUNDEE	Maryatt Hall Dundee University Highland Ball	Colin Dewar	Tickets from Mary Currie Tel. 01382-532144
<b>MAY</b>				
Sat 6	BROUGHTY FERRY	St Stephen's & West Kirk Hall	Colin Dewar	7.15-9.45 Children's Dance
Sat 6	PITLOCHRY	High School	Maple Leaf	
Fri 12	CARNOUSTIE	Beach Hall	Maple Leaf	
Sat 13	DUNDEE	Balgay Kirk Hall Tullideph Rd, off Lochee Rd	David Anderson	Dundee Branch RSCDS 'Easy' dance for newcomers & experienced dancers
Fri 26	DUNDEE	Craigiebank Church	Maple Leaf	
<b>JUNE</b>				
Sat 10	NEWPORT	Blyth Hall		Dundee Branch Club
Fri 30	PERTH	City Hall	Strathspey & Reel	Perth RSCDS
<b>AUGUST</b>				
Sat 12	ST ANDREWS	Holy Trinity Church Hall	Jim Berry	
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>				
Fri 8	CUPAR	Corn Exchange	Maple Leaf	Charity
<b>OCTOBER</b>				
Sat 14	BROUGHTY FERRY	St Stephen's & West Kirk Hall	David Anderson	Dundee Branch RSCDS
<b>DECEMBER</b>				
Fri 15	CUPAR	Corn Exchange	Maple Leaf	Mr Bertram 01334-652988