

Scottish Country Dancer



NY

RSCDS New York Branch December 2011

Form or Format or How Do You Like Your Dance Class Served Up?

Do you sometimes feel that you never see the same dance twice? Are there times when you can't hope to get to grips with the geography of a dance let alone dance it with good technique? Have you been disappointed at a party or ball because your set broke down in an unfamiliar dance?



Being confident that you know where to go gives a feeling of accomplishment and enables you to focus more on dancing the dance well and really listening to the music. This dancing year our Branch is experimenting with a prescribed list of 55 dances, many of which will be worked on in class and appear on party programmes throughout the year. It is hoped that dancers will become familiar with the dances and that this will contribute to their overall progress and enjoyment. Guidelines for the initiative, and the actual list of dances with cribs, are available on our website (<http://www.rscdsnewyork.org/dancelist20112012.html>), and hard copies can be picked up at classes.

The format we are using is very similar to that used with great success for over thirty years by the Santa Gabriel Valley Branch and other branches in California. One third of the dances on the list will be replaced annually, so if you have a favourite dance be sure to mention it to a teacher for consideration in next year's selection. Every attempt is made to vary the difficulty of dances, providing something for everyone, and to include a good balance of dance formations.

But, this is an experiment. Nothing is written in stone and we can assess how we are getting on during the year and hopefully develop a system we are all happy with. Let us have your feedback. Tell your teachers your thoughts about the system, both good and bad, and most importantly, familiarize yourself with the dances so that you are able to relax at parties and balls and have a really fun time!

Sue Ronald



Help promote the New York Branch by joining our group on **Meetup** -
[http://www.meetup.com/
The-New-York-
Scottish-Country-
Dancing-Meetup-Group](http://www.meetup.com/The-New-York-Scottish-Country-Dancing-Meetup-Group)

UPCOMING EVENTS

December	31st	Hogmanay at Westchester
January	19th 2012	Burns Night
February	16th	End of 2nd Series
February	23rd	3rd Series begins
February	25th	Cranbury Workshop & Tea Dance
March	24th	Rerr Terr
April	14th	Tartan Day Parade
April	26th	End of 3rd Series
May	3rd	AGM (No charge for dancing)
May	10th	4th Series begins
May	18 - 20th	PAWLING
June	2nd	Westchester Ball
June	18th	Joint End of Season Party with Scotia
June	23rd	SUMMERDANCE
July	12th	Summer dancing begins



Welcome the New Year with
 Westchester Scottish Country Dancers
 at our
Hogmanay Celebration
 Our 48th year
 Doors Open—Informal Refreshments—8:30
 Dancing Begins—9:00



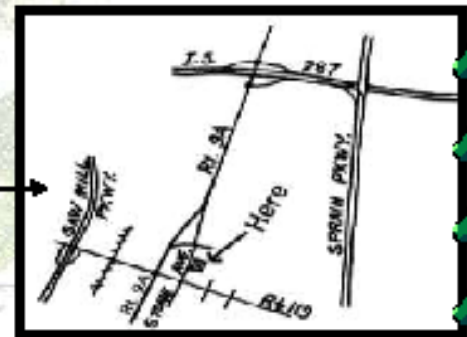
Hugs & Champagne—Midnight

Celebrate the Start of 2012 with a Delicious Buffet—12:15

For information, call:
 Charlotte Holton 914-263-3452
 Teresa Perez 914-909-0616
 Email: scottdancers@optonline.net

The Community Center
 10 North Stone Avenue
 Elmsford, NY

Price \$20



Places are limited so please send your check off now to:
 Mary Zagami, 1636 Williamsbridge Rd Bronx, NY 10461

I (we) plan to attend: New Year's Eve
 A check for \$_____ is enclosed payable to WSCD

Name(s) _____
 Address _____
 Please give us a phone number to call if there are any changes _____

The RSCDS AGM, 4-6 November, 2011

Although Sue and I have been spending quite a lot of time in the UK in recent years, we shied away from going to any official RSCDS events, having heard reports about the RSCDS being rather stiff and formal. However, last year – when the RSCDS annual general meeting was in Perth – we took the plunge, and somewhat to our surprise, we enjoyed the experience, so we decided to go to the AGM again: this year it was in Glasgow.

We booked a room in a smallish hotel on Sauchiehall Street (we can just about pronounce Sauchie Haugh now!) close to the Kelvin Hall, where all the weekend events were to take place. We had time to do little more than change into our finery before we were ferried in four coaches to the Glasgow City Chambers for a reception with the mayor (called the Lord Provost).

Unfortunately we didn't get to meet the Lord Provost, as he was out of town, but we had the pleasure of drinking his wine and walking around his magnificent marble building. This was obviously built in Glasgow's heyday, in the 19th century, when Glasgow was a thriving industrial center.

This reception was followed by the AGM Ball, in the Kelvin Hall. The Ball attracted about 500 dancers and the dancing was of quite a high standard. More important, the dancers were having fun, and it was good to see the dancers (especially the younger ones) did not feel inhibited about adding the occasional embellishment (twiddles, etc.) No-one was looking at them disapprovingly!

On the Saturday morning there was a question and answer session with the RSCDS Chairman and other officers. Sue and I took this opportunity to urge the RSCDS to make greater efforts to involve overseas members, and to look into ways of making the official dance descriptions available at more reasonable prices than at present.

The afternoon was taken up by the AGM itself¹, where new officers for various committees were elected, mostly unopposed. We were struck though by the lack of nominees for these positions. It is worrying that, either through lack of interest or time, members do not feel able or willing to make the

commitment to contribute to the work of the RSCDS in this more formal way.

In terms of finances, the Treasurer reported that Society is in a strong position, both in terms of its annual profit and loss figures and its overall balance sheet. That is to say, the Society's reserves are greater than they have ever been, and its income in the foreseeable future appears able to meet projected expenditure. While all very satisfactory, there is a vital underlying challenge for the Society – its membership is continuing to fall consistently and the overall demographic make-up is skewed away from the young.

With one exception, the motions this year were not contentious. Membership subscriptions were held at £15, and a new committee to look exclusively at youth issues (including the annual Spring Fling event) was formed. There was a longer discussion about the motion from Toronto about funding of examination centres. There was in essence broad support for the notion that central subsidy of the crucial work of training teachers was a good thing. But the details of how best to subsidise the process, particularly whether support to the candidate him/herself was more important than to help the organising centres, and whether satisfactory mechanisms

already existed to do this, more strongly divided opinion. There was a sense that more work needed to be done to define precisely what Headquarters should and could do to help, and how best this could be administered. We supported the idea of putting more resources into training teachers, noting that only 2 per cent of the RSCDS HQ budget is spent on this item at present. The motion was defeated but we hope the Education and Training Committee will go away and address the important issues it



Evelyn and Jean from the Boston Branch admire the City Chambers marble

raised.

Once again, it was an enjoyable weekend, and interesting to see how the Society is governed. It was great to see a few sets of enthusiastic young dancers at the evening functions, enjoying the dancing and each other's company. But their relatively small numbers combined with clear indicators of ageing membership and declining interest in running the organisation sharpen the concern that recruiting new members and cultivating their passion for Scottish country dancing is the central challenge – and that is true for us in New York as much as in London or anywhere else.

Chris Ronald, 3 December 2011

¹ This account of the AGM meeting itself draws heavily on the report by David Hall published in the most recent edition of the London Branch newsletter, *The Reel*.

There's hope for us all!

From: www.archive.scotsman.com

Country Dancing Festival, 20 March, 1950

DANCING at the two-day Scottish Country Dancing Festival in the Music Hall, Aberdeen, which ended on Saturday night, was "back to the most excellent standards of pre-war", according to the adjudicator, Miss Jean Milligan, of Glasgow.

With the temporary halt in Scottish Country Dancing Festivals brought about by the war, they had had to start practically from the beginning when the war ended, she said. "The dancing will never be quite right however, until we have the men taking part," she added. "I have been pleased to see such fine men taking part tonight. The whole object of the Festival is to keep up the standard and to get the men back on the floor, making Scotland a dancing country again."

Her main criticism at the session was that many of the dances were done too fast. She advised competitors to take the proper time, saying: "I am sure there were many in the audience who said, 'That's not for me.' Dances should be such as could be done by an 80 year-old!"



Highland Wedding at Blair Atholl, 1780 by David Allan

"This was painted after Allan's return from Italy, and was the first of his many Scottish genre subjects. Neil Gow, the celebrated violin player, composer and collector of music, takes his place amongst the musicians; Gow's services were retained by the Duke of Atholl, for a fee of £5 a year.

The tartan worn in this picture was done so illegally, for highland dress had been proscribed after the Jacobite rising of 1745 in an Act not repealed until 1782."

- National Galleries of Scotland



Auld Lang Syne

Anne Lowenthal, Branch Archivist



...early days at the New York Branch

New York Scottish dancers have kicked up their heels on many a dance floor since the Branch's early days, back in March 1954. It was then that a group of New Yorkers attended a Scottish Nationality Weekend held at Folk Dance House, which had been established in 1951 by Michael and Mary Jane Herman as a Manhattan school and center for folk dancing in the old Humphrey-Weidman Dance Theater. The Scottish weekend was a special event, at which Jeannie Carmichael and a group of dancers from Boston demonstrated and taught Scottish country dancing. As Freddy Sverdlove would later recall, "Never had we seen such grace, such beautifully precise footwork, or such feeling of flight. The impact of that weekend has not yet left us." Inspired by that experience, the New York dancers began to meet at Folk Dance House to practice, and the following spring, Jeannie Carmichael began to come to New York every other week to teach. Thus Folk Dance House became the first home of what would become the New York Branch.

Soon the group moved to the Downtown Community School, a progressive, cooperative school founded in 1944 by a group of parents and educators. Jean Tufts of New Hampshire and Stanley Greenberg alternated as teachers for the Scottish dancers.

Then, in September 1956, the first Scottish dance classes were held at the McBurney YMCA, on West 23rd Street, with Jeannie as teacher and director and Stanley as president. Three years later, in 1959, the New York

group was officially recognized as a Branch of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society. McBurney would be the Branch's home until October 1996, for nearly four decades. It was a happy arrangement, and dancers still fondly reminisce about McBurney. But times change, and a heartfelt good-

"Never had we seen such grace, such beautifully precise footwork, or such feeling of flight. The impact of that weekend has not yet left us."

bye was the lead story in *The Scottish Country Dancer* of January 1997:

Our Last Night at McBurney

"October 24, 1996 was our last dancing night in the auditorium of McBurney YMCA where we had been dancing for 38 years. It was sad to leave McBurney, but move on we must!

"Not too many people from those early days came to our party, but present were Freddy Sverdlove, Charlotte Lindner, Morris Duchin, Joan Treble, Estelle Ellis, and representing Olga Meyer was her friend Grace Kaut. Emma and Les Wiltshire came down from their home in the Berkshires. On hand were four past presidents [Emma Wiltshire, Sheila Wilson, Ann Hankins, Jim Ferguson] and Louis Perez, our current president. Emma, our second president, took over from the first president, Stanley Greenberg... It was good to see friends of the Branch at this party. The champagne corks popped amid much gaiety and good wishes for the transition to our new home. The Swedish Dance-Group came down to join us in a toast

and to wish us well at W. 63rd Street. . .

"We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who made the evening memorable. A great many thanks to Fergie and Louis for the herculean job of finding and negotiating with the West Side YMCA, "our new home." Thanks to the Executive Board and teachers Committee for approving the move! Thank you Miriam Zwerin, Sheila Wilson and Sally Freedman for working out the details, and thanks to all the dancers who will come to make this move successful!"

The move to the West Side YMCA, at 5 West 63rd Street, went off smoothly. Not long afterward, however, the Branch was on the move yet again! *The Scottish Country Dancer* for January 1998 carried this front-page news: "Our space at the YMCA on w. 63rd Street is being demolished to make room for a multi-storied, multi-rise apartment dwelling on top of the existing YMCA building." Headlines announced "RSCDS New York Branch Announces a New Location. Every Thursday at 7:30 PM you will find us at Holy Cross School."

The School has been hospitable to the Branch for fourteen years, available not only on Thursdays but also on occasional Saturdays for special events. The facilities are spacious, with the main floor gym and the basement space serving our needs for both dancing and meetings. The Times Square location has been convenient--and it provides a culture shock as one confronts the throngs after an evening of Scottish music and dancing!

Will history repeat itself? Might the Branch someday be looking for a new space?



COOKING CORNER

This is an invitation to share your favorite Scottish recipes and food traditions. Feel free to give feedback (not sure if that pun was intended) I'm looking for a Christmas Pudding recipe.
Please email me at: Suetrapp@msn.com

Shortbread

"Wonderful" Joe Orbek

½ cup sugar—I used Sucanat*
½ cup butter—salted
½ cup butter—unsalted
2 cups all purpose flour—use King Arthur or a "hard wheat" flour
1 egg yolk

Cream sugar, butter, and egg yolk, preferably with a wooden spoon

Add flour a little at a time

Combine well until mixture forms a ball

Roll dough on a lightly floured surface to ½ inch thickness

Cut into desired shape with cookie cutter or knife and prick with a fork

Place on cookie sheet lined with parchment paper

Bake at 325°



The length of time cooking depends on the thickness...9-10 minutes for small cookies. Thicker rectangular ones take more like 15-20 minutes. The bottom will be slightly toasted and the color pale. It's a challenge!

*Sucanat is non-refined cane sugar that has not had the molasses removed from it like refined white sugar. It will give the shortbread a speckled caramel color.

Pawling 2012 Save the Date!

May 18-20



Keeping up with... Hisako!

"This summer I went to Pinewoods, and I had a happy time dancing with some NY Branch members. After RSCDS Sessions at Pinewoods I visited Rhode Island to celebrate my relative's marriage. Enjoying the wedding ceremony and party I traveled to beautiful places along the east coast.

The life of victims hit by the Great East Japan Earthquake 3.11 has been improved little by little, though there are still some problems including radioactive contamination.

Tommy, my grandchild is now two years old. He likes singing, dancing and speaking."



RSCDS Tokyo Branch



Autumn End Ball in Akabane, with the Akabane demonstration team



Grandson Tommy



Pinewoods

A guy is 72 years old and loves to fish.

He was sitting in his boat the other day when he heard a voice say, 'Pick me up.'

He looked around and couldn't see anyone.

He thought he was dreaming when he heard the voice say again, 'Pick me up.'

He looked in the water and there, floating on the top, was a frog. The man said, 'Are you talking to me?'

The frog said, 'Yes, I'm talking to you. Pick me up then, kiss me and I'll turn into the most beautiful woman you have ever seen. I'll make sure that all your friends are envious and jealous because I will be your bride!'

The man looked at the frog for a short time, reached over, picked it up carefully, and placed it in his front pocket.

The frog said, 'What, are you nuts? Didn't you hear what I said? I said kiss me and I will be your beautiful bride.'

He opened his pocket, looked at the frog and said,

'Nah, at my age I'd rather have a talking frog.'

(I wonder how many of our men of a certain age would concur?!)



Tucson Celtic Festival & Scottish Highland Games



Jesse wearing Munro tartan



Thank you

Dear Friends,

I thank every one of you, every day, for your cards and letters and well wishes. They make all the difference in the world, and I am so gratefully appreciative.

*Love,
Sheila Wilson*



Joe Orbek

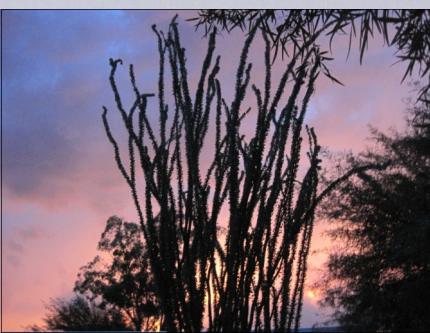


1950-2011

He was Magic

Dear Dance Family,

You will notice some new additions to the cooking. I hope these categories will elicit



newsletter is not However, about me... It has been a big year, a long year, a magical year. I experienced 4 seasons in Arizona with the desert in bloom, the "monsoon", the waves of migratory birds, the triple digit heat of summer. I travelled to Baja California with Joe to see the

whales, and witnessed how precious and brief our time is.

Many thanks to Chris, Sue, and Anne for their contributions. I wish everyone a season of peace, love, joy, light...and dancing!

Love, Sue

newsletter: a. humor and b. more interest and participation. This favorite Scottish recipes. This about me, it's about YOU!



SCENES FROM BAJA!



NEW YORK METROPOLITAN AREA DANCE GROUPS

www.rscdsnewyork.org

	<i>Location</i>	<i>Day and Time</i>	<i>Contact</i>	<i>email</i>
New York City	RSCDS New York Branch Holy Cross School 332 West 43rd Street (bet. 8th & 9th Aves.) Manhattan	Thursdays, 7:30 PM	Sheila Wilson 212-849-8282	info@rscdsnewyork.org
	Scotia Dancers Madison Avenue Baptist Church 30 East 31st St. Manhattan	Mondays, 7:00 PM	Ann Hankins 212-634-8084	
Brooklyn	Brooklyn Scottish Country Dancers Homecrest Presbyterian Church Avenue T & E. 15th Street Brooklyn, NY	Tuesdays, 7:30 PM	Nancy Pryce 718-376-8303 Dave Goldberg 516-295-2327	Alectum@aol.com grebdlog@verizon.net
Nassau County	Nassau County Scottish Country Dancers Temple Tikvah 3315 Hillside Avenue New Hyde Park, NY 1/2 block west of Herricks Rd.	Thursdays, 7:30 PM	Ann Smith 631-271-5740 Dave Goldberg 516-295-2327	hplever@nyc.rr.com grebdlog@verizon.net
Smithtown Long Island	Epenetus Smith Brush Barn Route 25 East of Route 111 Smithtown, Long Island	Tuesdays, 7:30 PM	Ann Smith 631-271-5740	
New Jersey	RSCDS New Jersey Branch Main Auditorium, Meadow Lakes Retirement Community Hightstown, NJ	Mondays, 7:30PM	Bart Jackson 609-936-0891	
	RSCDS New Jersey Branch Church of the Atonement Highwood Ave. & Engle St. Tenafly, NJ	Tuesdays 8:00PM	Elaine Enger 201-567-8727 Ken Van Acker 973-595-5629	
Westchester	Scottish Country Dance Society Of Westchester Elmsford Community Center 10 North Stone Ave. Elmsford, NY 10523	Wednesdays 8:00PM	Naomi Lasher 914-941-7358 Teresa Perez	naomilasher@gmail.com scotdancers@optonline.net

The RSCDS New York Branch publishes *Scottish Country Dancer NY* two times a year. The editor reserves the right to edit materials for reasons of clarity, style or space. Editors of other newsletters may use this material. Please credit author and source.

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If you would like a paper copy please contact Sue Trapp at the address below.

In order to get the RSCDS magazine "SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCER" from the headquarters of the RSCDS in Edinburgh, you must pay your RSCDS membership by the end of September. You will get two issues for the year, one of which will contain dances.

Individual subscription for this newsletter is \$7 per year.

Contact Wendy Pally, the Membership Secretary at: membership@rscdsnewyork.org

Correspondence, including announcements of dance events for your area, should be sent to the editor:

Sue Trapp, 37 1/2 St. Marks Place, Apt B3, New York, NY 10003

email address: info@rscdsnewyork.org or suetrapp@msn.com.

