

Island Fling



January 2014


Vancouver Island Scottish Country Dance Society
PO Box 30123, Reynolds RPO
3943C Quadra Street, Victoria BC V8X 1J5, Canada
Affiliated with the RSCDS, Edinburgh, Scotland

Web address: www.viscnds.ca

Executive Committee

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January Presidents Corner



Our club remains in a financially strong position this year with substantially less attrition in membership than in former years. Consequently we have been able to devote more resources to the promotion of Scottish country dancing. Since the community papers no longer provide free space for public announcements, we have decided to publish ads in some of their papers. We are fortunate to have Hilary Fedoruk as our Publicity Director this year as she has strong creative and design skills allowing us to develop better promotional materials. We have been putting free event listings on the web sites of the print media, though these online calendars are often poorly designed and are not heavily used. Gael Forster is now working on creating a Facebook page for our club which will provide another avenue for promoting our club. If you have any thoughts on other ways we could distribute information on our events please let me know.

Bob Anderson put together a great program for our November St Andrews Social. We were having such a great time that there were almost three sets remaining when we wound up with “Early in the Morning” and which we had to repeat so everyone got a chance to dance it. Then came the sparkling Christmas Social with a program put together by Joan Axford and Gordon Robinson and danced with great vigor to the joyous music of Mary Ross. My favorites were the energetic “Jennifer’s Jig” and the lovely strathspey “Sandy’s Scotch Broth” devised by Gail Sibley.

The New Year’s dance and potluck supper was a smashing success with up to five sets on the floor and some twenty people still remaining as we rounded off the evening at midnight with “Mairi’s Wedding”. I would like to thank my organizing committee consisting of teachers Sheila McCall, Penny Catton and Ed Pitkin along with Janet Bailey who provided overall coordination of all social aspects of the evening including assisting and giving direction in the kitchen, and Edith Chapman who organized the potluck supper. A team of fourteen volunteers made sure that everything ran smoothly throughout the evening. Thank you all!

I hope you have had a lovely Christmas season with family and friends and I wish you all a happy and prosperous new year.

Dora Dempster, President

Newsletter

Deadline for the next newsletter is January 26, 2014. Please send submissions to enchapma@shaw.ca.

Dance Days Victoria

VISCDS will hold a ceilidh and dance on Saturday, February 1 at the Dance Victoria Studio, 2750 Quadra Street, from 8:00 – 10:30 pm. Admission is \$5.00. Music will be provided by the Elastic Ceilidh Band with guest musicians Gavin Duncan and Ian Johnston, and there will be a few ceilidh acts in between the dances. We encourage all our members to attend this event and to invite anyone who might like to try Scottish Country Dancing to join us for the evening.



Membership

This is a reminder to members who are paying their class fees in half-year installments that January to April fees are now due. Please give these fees (\$60.00) to your class rep, or to Membership Secretary Rick Deegan. Thank you!

Edith Chapman for Rick Deegan

Drop-In Fees

You'll find the opportunity to buy 10 drop-in classes for \$60.00 on the membership form; please be sure to mark Punch Card, and it will come to you through your class rep. Cards do not expire, and more can be purchased as yours run out.

Class Representatives 2013-2014

Experienced Social	Sylvia Sinclair Terry White	250-595-6171
Basic	Margaret Chapman Theresa Harbidge	250-598-9534
Daytime Social	Janet Jones Pat Warman	250-480-4146
Intermediate	Ellen Campbell Heather Shave	250-592-3938
Beyond Basic Social	Karen Strawn-Samis Robin Gubby	250-383-7383

Vancouver Island Scottish Country Dance Society 2013-2014 Classes

All classes (except the afternoon class) run from 7:30 to 9:30 pm

Dancers should consult with their current teacher before moving to a more advanced class. All dancers are encouraged to dance in other classes below their level as this helps less experienced dancers progress faster and makes the classes more enjoyable. Dates for classes are available on the website.

Monday	Experienced social	Bob Anderson
Tuesday	Basic	Gordon Robinson
Wednesday afternoon	Daytime social	Pat Blair
Wednesday evening	Intermediate	Joan Axford
Thursday	Beyond Basic Social	Bob Anderson

Burns Social
January 18, 2014
7:30 pm
City Light Church Hall
Music by Elastic Ceilidh Band
\$15.00



Dance name	Bars type	Level	Core	Source
The Jubilee Jig	8 x 32 J	B	C	RSCDS Leaflet
The White Cockade	8 x 32 R	B	C	RSCDS Book 5
The Silver Tassie	8 x 32 S	I	C	RSCDS Leaflet
Farewell to Auchterarder	1 x 128 J	A	C	William Hamilton
Shiftin' Bobbins	8 x 32 R	B	C	Ormskirk Book
The Lea Rig	6 x 32 S	B	C	RSCDS Book 21
Jennifer's Jig	8 x 32 J	I	C	Silver City Book
Bratach Bana	8 x 32 R	A	C	Bon Accord Book
The Saint John River	4 x 32 S	B	C	New Brunswick Coll
Coming Through the Rye	8 x 40 J	I		San Francisco Coll V 2
A Trip to Bavaria **	4 x 32 R	I	C	J Macgregor-Brown
The Gentleman	8 x 32 S	I	C	RSCDS Book 35
The Machine Without Horses	8 x 32 J	B		RSCDS Book 12
The Peat Fire Flame	8 x 40 R	A	C	Bon Accord Book
"Deer" Friends	8 x 32 S	I	C	St Martin Coll
Joe MacDiarmid's Jig	4 x 32 J	B	C	RSCDS Book 5 for 82
Extras				
The Belle of Bon Accord	4 x 32 S	I	C	Deeside Book
Maxwell's Rant	8 x 32 R	I	C	RSCDS Book 18
** No Briefing				
Hosted by Monday Social Class				

January Open House

About 50 dancers, including 18 guests, braved a rainy night to attend our recent Open House. Teacher Gordon Robinson led everyone in a number of easy dances, including "The Barmkin", "Joe MacDiarmid's Jig" and "St John River". Sheila Eaglestone oversaw the refreshments; and Membership Secretary Rick Deegan had forms ready for anyone who wished to join. It was a lively, upbeat evening. Sincere thanks to Gordon, Sheila and Rick, and to all the experienced dancers who helped our guests through their first experience of Scottish Country Dance. To all our newest members: "Welcome to the Dance"!

Edith Chapman

"The country dance form can be thought of as an exquisite vessel, in itself beautiful in shape, yet highly abstract. We can choose to fill this vessel with whatever meaning we like. If we like, we can pursue a particular friendship; we can rejoice in a sense of community; we can see in the music and the dance the highest of these, and greater than all of them."

-- Carl Wittman (1943-1988), on English and Scottish country dancing



Valentine's Tea Dance
February 15, 2014
City Light Church Hall, Obed Avenue
1:30pm - 4:30pm
Cost: \$10.00

Dance name	Bars type	Level	Source
Stepping it Out	4x32J	1	Graded & Social Dances Vol 2
Sugar Candie	8x32S	2 C	RSCDS Book 26
The Montgomeries' Rant	8x32R	3 C	RSCDS Book 10
Mrs. Stewart's Jig	8x32J	2 C	RSCDS Book 35
John MacAlpin	8x32S	3 C	RSCDS Leaflet – 3 Dances by Hugh Foss
Maxwell's Rant	8x32R	2 C	RSCDS Book 18
Postie's Jig	4x32J	2	R. Clowes Ormskirk Bk 5
Gang the Same Gate	8x32S	3 C	RSCDS Book 36
Salute to Miss Milligan	8x32R	3	J Drewry - Canadian Bk
The Pines of Pitlochry	8x48J	4 C	S. Firth SCD Archives No 77
BREAK			
The Quaich	8x32S	3	J Drewry - Rondel Bk
Mairi's Wedding	8x40R	2 C	James Cosh – 22 + 2 SCD
The Luckenbooth Brooch	8x32J	3 C	J. Dickson – Glendarroch Sh 28
The Flower of Glasgow	3x32S	2	RSCDS Book 46
A Trip to Bavaria	4x32R	3 C	J. MacGregor-Brown – Collins Ref Bk
Glavya	6x32J	2	J Drewry - Canadian Bk
MacLeod's Fancy	4x32J	4 C	RSCDS Book 33
Auld Lang Syne	8x32S	3	RSCDS Book 27
Cool Down Waltz			
Hosted by Wednesday Afternoon Social Class	Please bring your own cup, plate and cutlery.		

Valentine's Day

February has long been celebrated as a month of romance. St. Valentine's Day, as we know it today, contains vestiges of both Christian and ancient Roman tradition. The Catholic Church recognizes a number of saints named 'Valentine' who were martyred for their beliefs. One such martyr is said to have fallen in love with the young daughter of his jailer. Just before his execution, he sent her a letter signed 'from your Valentine'.



Some believe that February 14 is the anniversary of Valentine's death or burial; others, that the Christian Church placed St. Valentine's feast day in the middle of February in order to "Christianize" the pagan celebration of Lupercalia, which was a fertility festival.

Valentine greetings were popular as far back as the Middle Ages, though written Valentine's didn't begin to appear until after 1400. Valentine's Day began to be commonly celebrated around the 17th Century. By the mid-18th Century, it was customary for friends and lovers to exchange small tokens of affection or handwritten notes. By 1900 printed cards began to replace written letters due to improvements in printing technology. In the US nowadays, women purchase approximately 85 percent of all valentines.

Edith Chapman

St Andrews Social

Amid white and blue decor, 44 people danced the night away at the St. Andrew's Social on November 16, 2013. It was hosted by the Beyond Basic class. The dance was a great success thanks to a terrific program put together by Bob Anderson. "Dream Catcher" was a big favourite. Even the challenging dance "Early in the Morning" was attempted and successfully danced. People did not want the night to end, hoping for just one more dance.

Congratulations to Pat Warman who won \$31.50 in the 50/50 draw.

As usual, the buffet table was piled high, with special help from Dave Mullett who brought three things including a huge apple and rhubarb cobbler. Everyone had lots to eat to maintain strength for the remaining dances. Special thanks to Sheila Eaglestone and to the Beyond Basic class for making this dance such a lovely evening.

Karen Strawn-Stamis

Christmas Dance

The 63 dancers who were greeted with a smile by Susannah Andersen as they paid their admission to our Christmas dance thank all those who gave us such a wonderful evening. Thanks to Joan Axford and Gordon Robinson for giving us such an enjoyable program and to the wonderful Mary Ross for once again blending familiar Christmas melodies into the dance tunes to make the music so much fun. The hall was full with regularly 7 sets and sometimes 8 if everyone was up dancing. Sheila Eaglestone and her helpers Theresa Harbidge, Janet Bailey, Rhonda Gait and Rosemary Balfour did a great job organizing the kitchen. For the first time 3 tables were needed to hold all the food! As we ate, the demo team presented a lovely, graceful candle-lit performance for our enjoyment. The 50/50 draw was won by Catherine Mick who received \$41. A great start to the Christmas festivities!

Hilary Fedoruk

Hogmanay Potluck Dinner and Dance

Hogmanay 2013 has arrived, heralding a soon-to-be new year called 2014. While some 45 Scottish country dancers bustle about, eating, chatting, and dancing, your roving reporter is on the scene, asking people what made them choose to come to this event tonight. Dancing? Festivity structure? Camaraderie? Let's find out!



"Come on, ask anyone in this room: the reason everyone came is to dance." It's certainly the cure for itchy feet as one dancer said "we haven't had a chance to dance for THREE weeks!" "My wife understands that this is my first love, so after we had a nice dinner, she went to see a movie and I came here!" "Each year we attend a party with some friends, just some chit-chat after dinner and this year we thought – no - let's DANCE- and it's been great!" Dancing IS great. What's more, it has a way of working its way, serendipitously, into out of towners' schedules. A Comox dancer wanted to come and buy art supplies in Victoria while the Nelson visitor made her trip to the Island coincide with the dance. Two dancing friends from White Rock coincidentally found themselves on the Island at the same time, and quickly checked to see if there were a dance - and – what luck: they found it!

The event, it seems, has a character of its own, which was the drawing card for many. "Having come before, it's always great fun"; "The food is always great, and it's a nice programme"; "if you want another reason, it's the most reasonable event in town that's not an old fashioned street party". Well, Victoria *almost* has the weather for a street party, but would it feature Martinelli's special bubbly? "It feels safe, particularly if you're driving, and you know you'll hit at least three Counter Attack blocks on the way home." In addition, we are apparently "a nice group of people with no drunks throwing up in the bathroom". "It's great to come to a party with no drunks and nobody in hobnail boots stepping on your feet." [At this point, my toes cringe...]

What is New Year's Eve without camaraderie? "It's wonderful to have our whole class here"; "A chance to reacquaint with people, good food, nice programme"; "Actually I came to finish a conversation I had been having about a boat..." (indeed, that qualifies as a social connection!). For some it was a friends and family event: "something we could all enjoy together". Another found her usual group disinclined to have a party this year, leaving her as a Hogmanay Orphan: saved by the dance! That rang true: I recalled moving to Victoria one December, and how surprised my coworkers were that "you've just moved here, and you have something to DO on New Year's Eve?" Yes, I do, because where there's dancing, there is a ready-made social set!

Thanks to all who organized this amazing Hogmanay party, probably best encapsulated by the first comment on record: "It's reasonably priced, good exercise, good people, and FUN." Let's frolic forward to a 2014 filled with dancing, festivity, fellowship, and fun!

Anita Mathur

VAN ISLE WORKSHOP & DANCE *Celebrating 40 years*

Saturday, March 29, 2014

2014 marks the 40th anniversary of the club which we will be celebrating with our workshop and social. As it is such a special date, we would like to invite past members to join us on that evening. The music will be wonderful so even if they do not want to dance they can visit with old friends and listen to the music. The committee would like to contact past members so if you know of someone who is no longer dancing, please provide us with their name and contact information so we can formally invite them to join us at this special event. You can e-mail the information to Joan Axford at jaax@shaw.ca or give it to your class rep or a committee member and they will get it to Joan.



We have a copy of the history of the club which we will have on hand as well as some other items to bring back memories. If you have some memorabilia or other materials we could display, please let a committee member know.

Before you put away your favourite cookie recipes after the holidays, please consider baking an extra dozen or two and set aside for March 29. We would like to offer homemade treats at the luncheon and will offset your ingredients cost if you are able to supply some baking.

We have a line for offering and requesting billets on the registration form but some local dancers may benefit from some carpooling. Not only does this give you someone to arrive with but we can be greener and consider on parking spaces too. Please chat with your fellow dancers and see if you can offer a lift or if you can find a chauffeur and save you any concerns with unfamiliar or night time driving. A committee member or your class rep could also suggest connections based on locale if requested.

We look forward to another great workshop and dance. All the details are on the website.

Gael Forster on behalf of the organizing committee

Program for Social, March 29, 2014

Grand March

Good Hearted Glasgow *	8X32J	B	Peter Knapman
The Lass of Richmond Hill	8X32R	B	RSCDS 2nd Graded Book
Auld Friends Meet	8X32S	I	Auld Friends Meet
The Pines of Pitlochry	8X48J	A	Archives #77
The Flowers of Edinburgh	8X32R	B	RSCDS Book 1
The Robertson Rant **	1X80S	A	RSCDS Book 39
Roaring Jelly	8X32J	I	Glendarroch #6
Wisp of Thistle	8X32S	B	RSCDS Book 37
Mairi's Wedding	8X40R	I	Cosh, 22 SCD

Break

Joe McDiarmid's Jig	4X32J	B	RSCDS 5 for '82
Miss Gibson's Strathspey	8X32S	I	RSCDS Leaflets
Bratach Bana	8X32R	A	Bon Accord Book
Pelorus Jack	8X32J	I	RSCDS Book 41
Cherrybank Gardens	3X32S	I	Bankhead Book 1
The White Cockade	8X32R	B	RSCDS Book 5
Best Set in the Hall **	8X32J	A	RSCDS Book 46
Staffin' Harvest	4X32S	I	RSCDS 4 for '78
The Reel of the Royal Scots	8X32R	I	RSCDS Leaflets

Waltz

* briefing only ** no briefing

A Brief History of the Vancouver Island Scottish Country Dance Society

Scottish Country Dancing (SCD) in Victoria started in the early to mid 1900's with the various local expatriate Scottish societies, such as the Sons of Scotland and the St Andrews and Caledonian Society, who did their favourite dances at their social events. In time, a group dedicated to SCD was formed and the Victoria Scottish Country Dance Society (VSCDS) was flourishing by the late 1950's. It became affiliated to the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society (RSCDS) in late 1962 or early 1963.

In late 1972, the then VSCDS President, Gerry Dunn, asked for and was granted permission to form a Branch of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society and, at their Annual General Meeting in May 1973, the Victoria Branch of the RSCDS came into being. Fran Clermont was President of VSCDS in the late 1960's. So much of the early history of what later became the Vancouver Island Scottish Country Dance Society (VISCDS) is linked to the events surrounding Fran Clermont and her co-founding of the Society. When Edith Chapman started dancing in the fall of 1970, Fran Clermont and Katie Dunn were her first teachers.

Another teacher with VSCDS was Stuart Walker, the second of the two co-founders of VISCDS. In the mid 1960s he left VSCDS and began to teach his class from his home, preferring to work on his own. He recognized Fran's talents and encouraged her to train as a teacher. In 1971, Fran passed the Preliminary Test for teachers. She left VSCDS that year and eventually taught for the Vancouver Island Group (later becoming VISCDS). For a while, Fran taught SCD out of Stuart's house. Fran's class at this time was a rather motley bunch who preferred to have fun rather than working hard to maintain the standards of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society (RSCDS) in Edinburgh. Stuart Walker's dedication to the RSCDS standards and traditions of teaching encouraged Fran to go to St Andrew's Summer School in Scotland where she attended in 1973. There she was examined by Miss Milligan and subsequently received her full teaching certificate that year.

In 1974, a group of dancers from Fran's and Stuart's two classes decided to organize a more formal group, with Fran and Stuart as teachers. Both classes were part of the new group which they named Vancouver Island Scottish Country Dance Society. This name was used even though the group did not become a formal society for several years. Ian Stoddart became the first President of the Society. Stuart continued with his class, still in his basement, and Fran moved her own class to the Monterey Seniors' Centre, where it remained until the early 1980's. For awhile, these classes were known as the Oak Bay Group.

From 1974 onwards the name Vancouver Island Scottish Country Dance Group was used and quickly became colloquially known as the 'Van Isle'. In 1975 the Van Isle group applied to RSCDS in Scotland for affiliate status and with the help of Stuart Walker's association with Miss Milligan, this was granted on 3rd April 1976. However, it was not until April 1979 that the group applied and received official registration as a society under the British Columbia Societies Act (*Societies Act*, R.S.B.C. 1960), henceforth to be known as the Vancouver Island Scottish Country Dance Society or VISCDS. According to Fran Clermont, the name 'Vancouver Island' was selected because the group worked with Bert and Marg Mitchell from Duncan. Bert is well known for devising the beautiful strathspey, Staffin' Harvest.

Excerpt from report by Merle Peterson, 2007



In Memoriam – Jack Alexander



Anyone who is familiar with the popular Scottish music of the last fifty-plus years will remember the Alexander Brothers – Tom and Jack, and they will be saddened to know that Jack passed away in early November, 2013. Tom played the accordion and Jack played piano and did the vocals. They had many 'hit' recordings but their rendition of "Nobody's Child" ensured their fame. They toured extensively and their shows were always well-received. They were awarded MBE's in 2005 for their services to the world of music.

Edith Chapman

COMING EVENTS – LOCAL Scottish Country Events

2014

- January 18th 2014 Robbie Burns Social. Elastic Ceilidh Band will be playing. The program is in this issue.
February 1st, 2014 Dance Days Ceilidh, Dance Victoria Studios, 2750 Quadra Street, \$5.00, 8:00 – 10:30 pm.
February 15th 2014 Valentines Tea Dance (Saturday afternoon).
March 29th 2014 Workshop and Social. See article and program in this issue.
April 26th 2014 Spring Fling Social.

All Socials take place from **7:30 to 10:30 pm** Saturday evening with the exception of the **February 1st ceilidh** which will take place from **8:00 – 10:00 pm**; and the **February 15th Tea Dance** which will take place in the afternoon from **1:30 to 4:30 pm**

All socials will take place at the City Light Church Hall, Obed Avenue, with the exception of the Ceilidh on February 1, and the Workshop and Social in March.



OUT OF TOWN EVENTS

2014

- Feb 7th – 9th** Ottawa Ardbrae Ball Weekend. Music by Laird Brown and the Scottish Accent Band. Info: www.ardbrae.org.
- Feb 8th** RSCDS San Francisco Branch Valentine's Ball 2014. Music: Muriel Johnstone and Keith Smith. Further info and flyer: <http://www.rscds-sf.org/>.
- Feb 14th – 16th** RSCDS Hawaii Branch Aloha Winter Weekend. www.rscdshawaii.org/home/workshop/.
- Feb 15th** RSCDS Vancouver Branch "Love to Dance" Workshop and Tea Dance. Further info: <http://www.rscdsvancouver.org/calendar.html>.
- Feb 21st – 23rd** RSCDS Edmonton Branch Annual Workshop and Ball. Info: www.rscdEdmonton.com.
- Feb 22nd** Comox Valley SCD Group Snowdrop Social. Further info: www.cvscottishcountrydance.org/.
- Mar 8th** RSCDS Portland Branch Workshop and Ball, Portland OR. Info: www.portlandscottishdancers.org/workshop.
- Mar 14th – 16th** St Giles, Calgary Annual Workshop and Ball. Teachers are Armin Busse, Evelyn Nixon and Bernadette Thill. Music by The Mercat Cross. Further info: www.rscdsCalgary.org.
- Mar 15th** Port Alberni St Patrick's Tea Dance. Music: Mary Ross. Cost tba. Time to be confirmed. Further info: Leslie Holland, superdoc6@shaw.ca, or 250 723-0516.
- Mar 22nd** RSCDS Vancouver Branch Heather Ball at Gizeh Shrine Temple (a fabulous sprung floor). Info: <http://www.rscdsvancouver.org/calendar.html>.
- Apr 4th – 6th** RSCDS Ottawa Branch 48th Annual Ball Weekend. Info: www.rscdsottawa.ca.
- Apr 12th** Nanaimo SCD Group Workshop and Tea Dance. www.nanaimoscd.com.
- Jun 28th** RSCDS Seattle Branch and Friday Harbor Dancers Puget Sounds Crossroads, Afternoon Dance, Grange Hall, Friday Harbor. Further info later.
- Jul 27th – Aug 3rd** Teachers' Association (Canada) – TAC Summer School, University of Northern Colorado, Greeley CO. Info and registration form: <http://www.tac-rscds.org/summer-school>. Register now.