

Island Fling



MAY/JUNE, 2003

Vancouver Island Scottish Country Dance Society

P.O. Box 30123, Saanich Centre Postal Outlet

Victoria, B.C. V8X 5E1 Canada

Affiliated with the RSCDS, Edinburgh, Scotland

Welcome to new members of the Executive Committee

President	James Scott	370-2359
1st Vice President and Publicity	Ann Whittaker	478-4760
2nd Vice President and Membership	Mary Roberts	385-1082
Secretary	June Robinson	477-8317
Newsletter Editor	Christine Rushforth	477-0340
Treasurer	Merle Peterson	477-8331
Social Convenor	Jan Thorsen	380-5154
Teacher Representative	Joan Axford	474-1018

Web address: www.viscds.ca

NEW PRESIDENT'S CORNER

As most of you know by now I started this term with what a few members felt were inappropriate remarks. Apologies and explanations have been forwarded to those who were offended. (see Public Apology in this issue). Since that time I have received many calls of support and understanding from attendees at the AGM.

I must first thank Thelma and the past executive for a job well done and look forward to helping direct the Society in a progressive and exciting programme of Scottish Country Dancing.

Since the worst kept secret in Victoria came to light that I may accept the position of President numerous members of our Society have approached me and asked that I look into expanding our relationship with the Victoria Branch. Your executive will certainly be discussing that at our first meeting. Annual dues are another priority topic. As Thelma said we must sometimes make unpopular decisions for the good of the whole Society

I used the word "changes" at the AGM and that raised a few eyebrows. This does not mean wholesale changes, but subtle and minor changes for the good of all members of the Society. All decisions of any major nature or affecting the Society or members at large will be put to the general membership before they are finalized. This being said "Those who do not participate in the process can expect no say in the outcome."

I was, as were most attendees at the AGM sorely disappointed at the turnout. Forty three including the executive out of one hundred and sixty five eligible members showed up. I realize there is illness and travel and a few other legitimate reasons for not being able to attend but this is YOUR Society and without your

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important input and support it makes it very hard to know which direction you, the members of the Society, want us to go.

It is hoped that this monthly Newsletter with Christine at the helm will be a conduit of information from your executive to the general membership. Communication is extremely important and I hope you all take time to contact myself or one of the executive by phone, e-mail, or snail mail with your concerns, suggestions, complaints, and we will endeavour to answer you within a few days of the following executive meeting. Your communicate will be published (if appropriate) in the following Newsletter so that all can see the question and the results. If you see or attend something you like, tell everyone. If you see or attend something you don't like, tell us.

I am looking forward to working with our tireless teachers and of course our class reps who keep us dancers up to scratch on the latest news. See you on the floor.

James Scott President

Apology

At the AGM on April 24th I was asked to accept the position of President of VISCDs. It appears that my nervous and bad attempt at public speaking for the first time in many years failed badly.

The basis of this impromptu talk was to inform members that I intend to make subtle and small changes over the next three years, while, at the same time attempt to open doors that have been closed for a number of years. It apparently came out to some people at the AGM in a different light than was my intent. In no manner or way would I belittle the previous executive. I have to work and dance with you for what I hope are many years to come.

My comments were said through the fog and nervousness of public speaking without notes that of course will not happen again. I can only hope that we can get past this and keep our Society the viable and dynamic social outlet that we have.

James Scott.

RSCDS MEMBERSHIP - your dues are due

Membership in the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society for 2003-2004 is now due. VISCDs belongs as a group, but in the past, some people have also chosen to take individual memberships. If you would like to join or renew, please send a cheque for \$40 made payable to Mary Roberts (3891 Savannah Ave. Victoria B.C. V8X 1T6) by June 15 2003. I shall buy one bank draft for the total amount in pounds sterling and sent it to Edinburgh. If you have any questions please call me at 385-1082. Thank you.

Mary Roberts

COME SUMMER DANCING

Don't let your reels go rusty or your strathpeys shrivel, join us for Summer Dancing at St. Martin in the Fields Church Hall, 550 Obed St. at 7:30 p.m. on these 2003 dates:

Friday, June 6
Friday, June 13
Friday, June 20
Friday, June 27

Friday, July 4
Friday, July 11
Friday, July 18
Friday, July 25

Friday, August 1
Friday, August 8

Only \$5.00 per person and all dances will be briefed. A dance program booklet is available from Bob Anderson. Everyone welcome.

EXECUTIVE COLUMN

The first Executive meeting for the new executive was held on May 13th. All members attended. A new format that allows for a swifter and clearer coverage of items on the agenda for the meeting was introduced by the President and was accepted by the members.

This column will be used to inform the general membership of VISCDs of pertinent information coming from the meetings. Members in good standing are invited to contact the President or Secretary with concerns, questions or suggestions that will enhance the smooth operation of our Society. The (Q &A) will be inserted in this column when appropriate following the meeting of the executive.

From the May 13 Meeting

Due to the ever-rising costs of hall rentals and the scarcity of same the Executive, after much thought and agonizing and with good numbers from the treasurer, have no choice but to raise the fees for the coming year.

The new fee structure will be:

Annual Membership \$30.00.

Full year classes \$80.00.

Half year classes \$45.

Drop in fees will remain at \$5.00.

The books are open at those times as stated in Part 17 of the Constitution for any interested member in good standing.

Gaming Funds Grant

The Treasurer is applying for the grant again to help offset the cost of the workshop weekend.

Class dates 2003/2004

Class dates are set, as are venues. It was mentioned that with the school closures and costs possibly going up again that we may have to make some changes in this item. Stay tuned.

Demonstration Team

Thelma has offered to provide a Demonstration Team Column each issue in which she will let us know where our Demonstration Team will be performing etc.

From the AGM

Extended classes later into May. Voted NO

Cancel Ball Practices the four Wednesdays before the Ball. Voted NO

Drop In Fees

A modified check list will be provided to class reps in order that they may have a easier and more accurate accounting for dancers who pay drop in fees. This new format is still to be worked out and will be ready for the Fall start of classes.

Your input

Much more was discussed and answers and solutions are being followed up by each Executive Member. Please take advantage of the Q & A section and we will endeavour to answer you ASAP. This is YOUR Society. Your input pertaining to the society as a whole is extremely important. As I stated on the President's Corner "If you do not participate in the process you can expect no say in the outcome."

Any and all proposals for NEW Business from the members MUST BE IN WRITING to the President **no less than 7 days** prior to the executive meeting. Next Executive meeting Sept 2nd.

Have a great summer.

Jim Scott President

SPRING FLING FUN

The final social dance of the year, Spring Fling, was held at St. Martin In-the-Fields on May 3. There were 47 dancers in attendance, which gave more room to dance. Liz Gray put together and presented an enjoyable program, including some challenging "straight in" dances. The hall was decorated with spring flowers brought by some members, and a maypole as a centrepiece, brought by Thelma Bell. At intermission, Liz Gray presented the outgoing members of the executive, Thelma Bell, Maxine Dell, and Ruth Slavin, with beautiful bouquets in appreciation of their efforts. The executive presented Thelma Bell with a bunch of tulips, in recognition of her services as president for the past three years. Door prizes, appropriate for the season, were plants, including a Mexican cigar plant, donated by Merle Peterson. The intermission snacks were provided by the executive, and were well received, judging by the speed with which they disappeared. All in all, a most enjoyable evening, and a fitting finale for the social season. *Jan Thorsen*

TIP OF THE HAT

A big thank you to the Throonie Night teachers who provided delightfully varied, engagingly different, and just plain fun dance program at the six Throonie Nights attended by all levels of dancers. It was really enjoyed and quite a change from the classes and Ball of the previous month. Thanks for all the effort. To those who missed them, as the man in the television advertisement for the National Post says: "God, you're missing a lot" *Grateful Dancers (Merle Peterson)*

DEMONSTRATION TEAM NEWS

The President has assigned me the new task of writing a column for our Demonstration team.

At present, we have 15 dancers, 10 ladies and 5 men, occasionally joined by Lisa Gray, highland dancing and Jamie Orr piping. Joan Axford is our ingenious instructor.

The club has just this week purchased material for us to make new dresses. The present ones have been used so extensively that most have lost their original pattern and are literally falling apart. Besides that, they crease very badly and never look crisp no matter how much we iron them.

Janet Rice and I spent a day in Vancouver doing the rounds of wholesalers getting samples of material then my sister and I went back again and purchased it. That is true dedication to the cause to drive in that dreadful traffic across the ocean, twice. We are trying for Folk Fest to have at least some of the dresses ready. Our performance time for that is Saturday, July 5th at 12:30 p.m.

So far this month we have performed or will be performing for the St. Andrews and Caledonian Society on May 1st, Victoria Highland Games May 18th and the New Bay Centre May 22nd at 6:00 p.m.

We all put a lot of time and hard work into the team and always appreciate it when we see some of our club members come out to watch us perform. We try to never turn down an engagement if we can possibly make it as this is our way of promoting our heritage, culture and the Vancouver Island Scottish Country Dance Society.

Thelma Bell.

LOST - One VISCDS metal teapot, may have been in circulation somewhere, sometime, during Ball weekend. If anyone has any clues as to its present location, please contact Jan Thorsen, 380-5154.

ALSO LOST - One large red plaid tablecloth, last seen at the Valentine's Social. It may have been taken home by someone for laundering. Again, any information as to its current whereabouts would be welcomed by Jan Thorsen, 380-5154

PITLOCHRY 2004

I have been approached by about ten dancers who have expressed interest in getting more information about the 2004 Winter school. News at present is sketchy, but I'll try to summarize the current situation. Please be aware that there are some assumptions in my calculations, particularly regarding air-travel costs.

As yet, the only information on the Winter School at Pitlochry is for the last (Feb 2003) School. The web site is www.rscds.org/events/WinterSchool If you have Adobe Acrobat 5 you can download the Application form as a pdf. For anyone without access to this programme, I can photocopy the details. Owing to the lack of information on next winter's proceedings (the deadline for registration for the 2003 event was 30 September 2002), I am writing from information received on the internet, supplemented handsomely by details from Walter Roots, to whom I owe a great deal for his thoughtfulness.

The School has been held since 2000 in mid to late February (2003 was held 20-25 Feb) and almost all the activities take place at the Atholl Palace Hotel in Pitlochry. Participants gather for dinner on the Thursday evening and stay through to breakfast on Tuesday morning. Walter indicates that this is a fine hotel, set in its own park, about 10 min walk from the centre of town. "It is well run, very comfortable and congenial and the food is excellent with

a menu of 5 or 6 choices at each meal".

The School is limited to about 140 participants. Classes at intermediate, advanced and very advanced (defined in the brochure on the web) are held in the mornings with optional dance-related activities from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. each afternoon. On Monday evening there is a Ball at Blair Castle, transport provided. Programmes for all the social evenings and the Ball are sent out in November. Dances are briefed, but not walked through. Membership of RSCDS is required to attend. Many of us will need to pay an extra \$30 (I think) to be members.

I am in contact with a travel agent to get details of fares. A group fare is for 12-15 people, but this is being confirmed. However, the group fare idea might not be the best way to approach this, since we would all be required to travel *and return* together. I know from speaking to many of those interested, that you want to stay in the UK for longer once you are there and others want to be back within a week. The Air Canada debacle has not helped, but there is likely to be a seat sale announced in the fall.

Walter and Monica paid about \$760 inclusive (each) with Air Canada/British Midland to fly Vancouver/Heathrow/Glasgow return. I expect fares would be in the same ballpark or about 10% higher. The bus/ferry to Vancouver

airport was \$32 and transport by bus to Pitlochry was about \$30 (roughly £12.50).

The Winter School (2003 rates) including dinner, bed and breakfast course fees, afternoon activities, transport to Blair Castle and Ball was £280, and lunches at the hotel ranged from £1.50 to £4.00 depending on choice. A deposit of £50 is required by Sept 30. Walter does not think this will increase greatly. Conversion to \$Cdn at say \$2.3 = £1, would have a cost for the school of \$690 for the heartiest eaters.

Assuming the same order of airfare and a minimal increase in school and hotel costs, the total for the trip would be about of the order of \$1750, but I believe it is necessary to stay out of the country for 7 days to get the lowest fare. For those going elsewhere this would not be a problem. For those staying only a week, two extra nights accommodation are required. There was accommodation at the hotel both before and after the school for £40 (~\$100) per person per night, again for dinner, bed and breakfast. This is a bargain compared to prices elsewhere. Thus for the week-long dancers the cost is about \$1950.

If you are interested, please send me an e-mail at amcauley@uvic.ca. I'll keep digging to find out airfares, and will contact Pitlochry for details of the 2004 School.

Thanks to those who have shown interest so far.

Alex McAuley

COMING EVENTS -- LOCAL

- May 24 '03 ANNUAL GAELIC CHOIR CONCERT** sponsored by the Victoria Gaelic Choir. 7:30 p.m. at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Kirk, Douglas at Broughton. Featuring well-known award winning fiddlers Ivonne and Kalissa Hernandez as guest performers. Information/tickets email bobannebell@shaw.ca or phone 477-1980.
- June 6 '03 SUMMER DANCING** St. Martin in the Fields Church Hall, 550 Obed at 7:30 p.m. \$5.00 per person. All dances briefed. The time, location and cost are the same for each week of Summer Dancing. Program of dances available from Bob Anderson.
- June 13 '03 SUMMER DANCING**
- June 14 '03 WORLD DAY OF DANCE**
- June 20 '03 SUMMER DANCING**
- June 27 '03 SUMMER DANCING**
- July 4 '03 SUMMER DANCING**
- July 11 '03 SUMMER DANCING**
- July 18 '03 SUMMER DANCING**
- July 25 '03 SUMMER DANCING**
- Aug 1 '03 SUMMER DANCING**
- Aug 8 '03 SUMMER DANCING**
- Sept 8 '03 VISCDS OPEN HOUSE** 7:30 p.m. Mackenzie School
- Sept 15 '03 CLASSES BEGIN THIS WEEK**
- Oct 18 '03 HARVEST SOCIAL** Brentwood Hall
- Nov 15 '03 ST. ANDREW'S SOCIAL** St. Martin in the Fields
- Dec 13 '03 JOINT VISCDS/RSCDS CHRISTMAS SOCIAL** Cadboro Bay United Church Hall
- Jan 17 '04 BURN'S SOCIAL** St. Martin in the Fields Church Hall
- Feb 21 '04 VALENTINES SOCIAL** St. Martin in the Fields Church Hall
- Mar 27/28 '04 VISCDS BALL WEEKEND**

OUT OF TOWN EVENTS

- June 3-16 '03 NORTHERN LIGHTS OF SCOTLAND TRIP** Scottish Dance trip to the remote Orkney and Shetland Islands. Contact Ken McFarland Toll Free (800) 822-3435 or e-mail farlands@ptialaska.net or #E323, 3875 Geist Rd., Fairbanks AK 99709-3549 US.
- June 20-22 '03 CHEMAINUS HIGHLAND GATHERING** check web page at www.highlandgathering.ca or call Darrel Byron at 250-246-4492.
- July 11-14 '03 PINEWOODS (MA) SCOTTISH SESSIONS** contact betty Allen 781-849-3512 eallenscd@bid.net or MaryEllen Scannell 781-593-5949 scannell@gis.net www.rscdsboston.org
- July 13 to Aug 10 RSCDS SUMMER SCHOOL**, University Hall, Kennedy Gardens, St. Andrews. Tel: 0131 225 3854 e-mail info@rscdshq.freeserve.co.uk
- July 20-25 '03 CELTFEST 2003** sponsored by the Pacific Institute of Piping and Celtic performing Arts. This summer school is at Shawnigan Lake School. Information, phone 250-758-0208.

July 27 to Aug 3

TAC SUMMER SCHOOL, WATERLOO. Teachers include Helen Frame, Scotland, Gail Michener, Music Bobby Brown, Laird Brown, Elma Grech. Contact Betty Roman gaudete@buffnet.net

Aug 10-17 PRAGUE SCD WEEK

Aug 22-30 VALLEY OF THE MOON SCOTTISH FIDLING SCHOOL Northern California Redwoods. Instructors include Alasdair Fraser, Laura Risk, Hanneke Cassel, Linda Danielson and Muriel Johnstone. Contact 415-655-4355 vom@monitor.net
www.valleyofthemoon.org

Aug 29-31 TAC AGM WEEKEND MANCHESTER NH Contact J'ina Middleton
jmiddlet@interlynx.net

Sept. 12-14 FORT WORDEN DANCE WORKSHOP 2003 - Come Fly With Us. Fort Worden State Park, Port Townsend WA Celebrate the centennial of aeronautics with dancing. Check out the website for an online application form at www.rscds-seattle.org Teachers Bruce and Jo Hamilton (Menlo Park CA) and Ruth Jappy (Delta BC). Musicians Muriel Johnstone, Laura Risk and Calum MacKinnon. Learn English, Step, Shetland dances as well as Quadrilles and Intermediate and Advanced Scottish Country Dances. More information from the web site or from the Registrar 10008 NE 120th Lane #C-202 Kirkland WA 98034 ftwordenregistrar@earthlink.net Chairman [Peter Zarich@csi.com](mailto:Peter_Zarich@csi.com) 425-771-2973.

Oct 6-19 '03 CHINA A journey to the classical sites of China for Scottish Dancers and other congenial travelers. Organized by Ken McFarland. Information: (800) 822-3435 or (907) 456-7556.

Feb. '04 PITLOCHRY WORKSHOP, If enough dancers are interested, a party might go from Van Isle to the workshop. I would welcome expressions of interest from dancers. We'll need about 20 or so to approach Air Canada for special group status. *Alex McAuley* (595-1607 or amcauley@uvic.ca)

DEADLINE FOR NEXT NEWS LETTER, Aug. 1, 2003

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