

Island Fling



March 2021

Vancouver Island Scottish Country Dance Society
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Affiliated with the RSCDS, Edinburgh, Scotland
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Executive Committee

President	June Robinson	250-477-8317	viscdspresident@shaw.ca
1st Vice President and Publicity	Louise Perry		
2nd Vice President and Membership	Barb Currie		
Secretary	Betsy Lockhart		
Newsletter Editor	Edith Chapman		
Treasurer	Sue Langridge		
Social Convenor Committee	Ellen Campbell		
	Donna Clements		
	Sheila Eaglestone		
	Lori Morrison		
Teacher Representative	Gordon Robinson		

President's Report

Well, a year ago, March 14, 2020 is a day I remember well. It was the evening of our "mini ball" in preparation for our annual workshop and ball.

At this time the information regarding the impending virus pandemic, which became known as COVID-19, was coming in fast. Teachers and dancers were supposed to be at various spring workshops and events that weekend. Gordon and I were to be in Portland, Ore. for Gordon to teach at their workshop. The pandemic had already hit Washington State and finally there was an 11th hour call from Portland that their event was cancelled, followed by the announcement of no non-essential cross border travel to the USA. That settled it for sure. As I announced the final dance of the evening, thanked everyone for coming, I remember saying it could be a while before we dance together again. I thought – summer dancing or maybe even as late as the fall. Little did we know.

One year later we are still not dancing together! After a very difficult, but in some ways illuminating year, we are now looking forward with hope as the vaccines are being administered to thousands of people and perhaps we will soon be able to dance again. Plans are currently on hold for meeting as a group to dance outside or even the resumption of our beloved summer dancing at City Light Church Hall. Information and Public Health directives coming out this spring will guide our decisions. The precautions we have taken all of this year may continue to be in place for a while yet to ensure we can dance together safely. We hope that day is coming soon!

June Robinson

Newsletter Delivery

For the duration of the Covid-19 crisis, the Island Fling is available only electronically. The only exception is if you don't have access to email or the Internet, in which case, your newsletter will be mailed to you. When we are able to have in-person classes again, you may elect to receive a paper copy, which will be delivered to the class in which you register. Please indicate your choice on the membership application form. If you later change to another class, let the class rep know.

Summer Dancing

Plans are afoot to have social dancing during the summer, sometime during July and/or August. Programs have been made up. Everything depends on the progress of the immunization project and whether or not the hall is available for use. Stay tuned – further information will appear in the next newsletter.

Get prepared for Dancing - Zoom Classes:

Your executive is sponsoring classes every Monday night at 7:30 p.m. on Zoom. We now have most of the technical glitches out of the way, thanks to Gordon Robinson. It is a great opportunity to connect with other dancers. Even if you just watch the class, it reminds you of the steps and formations and of course gets your toes tapping to the music. The Zoom application is free to download and works on both a PC and a MAC computer or even your I-phone. June Robinson sends out a weekly e-mail on how to access the class.

With vaccinations on the way, getting ready to come back to class is a good plan.

Hope to see you on the next Zoom screen.

Joan Axford

Postponement of the AGM

Due to the on-going disruption to our dancing year, caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, the Executive has postponed the AGM, which is usually held in April, until September. Also due to the disrupted dance year 20-21, it was discussed and voted on at the Executive meeting on March 23 that the members currently serving on the Executive have agreed to stand again for their positions for next year. At this point in time, that is the following members: President - June Robinson; 1st VP - Louise Perry; 2nd VP - Barb Currie; Treasurer - Sue Langridge; Secretary - Betsy Lockhart; Newsletter Editor - Edith Chapman; Social Convenor- Lori Morrison; Teacher Rep - Gordon Robinson. Notice for the meeting will be sent out to the membership in August and other relevant information will also be in the summer Fling newsletter.

June Robinson, President

Victoria Highland Games and Celtic Festival

The highly successful 157th Highland Games and Celtic Festival were held last September on the Craigflower Manor property, following all the rules for Covid-19 protocol. The Games were livestreamed on CHEK News and Victoria Highland Games Association (VHGA) facebook sites. No spectators were present on the property; only participants and Games coordinators were on site and the total number of people never exceeded 50 people at any time.

The 158th Games and Festival will be held at a date and location to be announced. For further information on these Games and Festival, as well as a look-back at last year's events, check the VHGA's website: <https://victoriahighlandgames.com/games/>.

Edith Chapman

Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for the next newsletter is **Sunday, May 23, 2021**. Please submit any material to Edith Chapman at enchapma@shaw.ca. Sincere thanks go to Sarah Kell, who submitted the puzzle that appears at the end of this newsletter. Answers will appear in the next newsletter.



Burns Night January 25, 2021

The first ever Zoom VISCDS Burns Night was held on Monday, January 25, 2021. Hosting the event was president of the society, June Robinson, with technical support provided by Gordon Robinson. June welcomed the audience of about 50 people mostly VISCDS members and visitors from the Nanaimo club. The first item on the program was a violin selection by Tony Lambert and Gordon Robinson playing “My Love is Like a Red, Red Rose”

This was followed by the beautiful voice of Anita Mathur singing “Ye Banks and Braes” and “Coming Thro’ the Rye”. Anita submitted her pre-recorded performance but joined the group in person later in the evening. What would a Burns Night be without Burn’s poetry and a lovely selection of “Flow Gently Sweet Afton” was provided by Sue Langridge.

One of the highlights of any Burns evening is the “Address to the Haggis”. Alex McAuley (photos below) did the honors in his Glaswegian brogue and the “Address” was delightful. Here was Alex, in the comfort of his own home with a choice of knives at the ready to cut the haggis in his own kitchen. There are some benefits to Zoom after all. He and Sally informed me there was haggis to eat for days after, a benefit or not of a Zoom Burns evening, depending on your culinary preference. To wash down the haggis, we welcomed back Robin Gubby for a whisky tasting. It was a very informative presentation with Robin’s extensive knowledge of whisky and distilling procedures.

June Robinson gave a toast to the Immortal Memory of Robert Burns. A little known fact about Robert Burns is that he was a Scottish Country dancer. Attending dance class in a small village near the farm where his family worked provided young Robert with an introduction to Scottish social life. Again the whisky was brought out for the toast to Robert Burns.

Part way through the evening the technology enabled us to break out into chat rooms with a small number of participants to have a “chat” with fellow dancers.

YouTube videos helped to round out the evening with one of ice dancers in Scottish attire dancing a fabulous routine to “Auld Lang Syne”. The Greater Victoria Police Pipe Band entertained us, also via YouTube, with a performance from the Pacific Tattoo several years ago. The evening concluded with more chat from the participants in the gathering and with the singing of “Auld Lang Syne” lead by Anita Mathur.

The whole evening went off as well as could be expected and we were able to celebrate Burns Night 2021. However, we certainly hope that next year we can meet in person and have a traditional Burns celebration together!

June Robinson



Photos – Martha Morrison



2021 TAC Summer School in Calgary

We're going virtual!

We can't meet in person this year,
but we're excited to announce there will be a
'virtual' Summer School in July.

Check the TAC website for ongoing updates and details

tac-rscds.org

Scottish Country Dance Teachers' Association (Canada)

Robbie Burns Celebration

Last year, the month of January was very busy for the demonstration team but this year, we just had one request from Sandringham Care Centre. We have been dancing there for the past 5 years and did not want to disappoint but needed to do this COVID style. So Jamie Orr and I attended on the afternoon of January 25. The weather cooperated and it was a sunny afternoon. Jamie and I were on the patio appropriately socially distanced from each other and from the residents and staff inside. Jamie piped a number tunes and then played for me to dance the Scottish Lilt. They could not see my feet but that was probably for the best. Then the staff bought in the haggis to Jamie's piping the tune "A Man's a Man". Jamie did a fine job of the "Address to the Haggis" and we left them enjoying their afternoon tea, shortbread and haggis.

Joan Axford

Bratach Bana – the title of a mouth music, waulking song. It literally means 'of white flags', or 'of white banners'. The words are taken from the song's first line "A mhic Iarla nam bratach bàna" which means "O son of the Earl of the white banners". Waulking songs are Scottish folk songs, traditionally sung in Gaelic by a group of women waulking the newly-woven tweed cloth, to soften it by banging it on the table or other surface. Simple, rhythmic songs were sung to accompany the work. The dance is a reel. Words to the song may be found in the website below.

- information from <https://www.scottish-country-dancing-dictionary.com/bratach-bana.html>.

- a performance of Calum Kennedy singing 'Bratach Bana' - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P7r62ZW7RvQ>.

St. Patrick's Day Ceilidh!

With a warm welcome from June, our Ceilidh in honour of St. Patrick's Day started off with a Sing-a-long of old favorites with Mary Ross. (When Irish Eyes are Smiling, My Wild Irish Rose and The Wild Rover) which nicely set the tone for a festive evening.

We continued with Nicola Theim dancing for us the "Irish Washer Woman" step dance via video. Nicola is the granddaughter of Janet Rice. Many of you will remember Janet and her late husband Graham as long time members of Van Isle and of our dem team and also past Ball Chairman. Nicola is a multi-medal winner across Canada and Scotland and was delighted and honoured to be selected to dance at the Edinburgh Tattoo in 2019. She recorded this video of an Irish Jig based on the Irish Washer Woman just for us. It was an impressive performance and we thank Nicola and her family for sharing with us.

The evening continued with more music: Irish fiddle tunes performed by Tony Lambert, Irish airs on the small pipes played by Jamie Orr, and a Irish Trivia Game put together by Louise Perry with interesting bits of information about St. Patrick, Ireland, and an Irish/Scottish dance connection with Canada: Wes Clindinning, Scottish dance teacher.

We then had our own Irish Dance lesson; it was entertaining to try and copy Joan Axford's instructions . . . kicking up one's heels was harder than it looks! An eye opener indeed. The next video starred the youngest, cutest Irish dancer – he couldn't have been more than 4 years old – dancing a jig. Thank you to Robin Gubby for sharing this! More music followed with Mary Ross and Deg Klektau performing a lovely medley of Irish songs.

Our entertainment concluded with a bit of socializing and one last video (thanks to Robin) of The Parting Glass, then an Irish Blessing to send us on our way read by June Robinson.

Louise Perry



March 12, 2021 – A Retrospective

It's been a year since the world started to shut down due to Covid-19. The basic class Mini Social was to be held on March 14, 2020. Do we go ahead or not, there was lots of discussion on whether we would do so. It was decided to go ahead, and 37 dancers came. After each 3 dances everyone was encouraged to wash or sanitize hands, not knowing that would become a basic habit. At the refreshment break, the snacks were handed out with tongs, no touching the food until after it was on your plate. It was a good evening, who thought it would be our last indoor dancing for more than a year.

The RSCDS has kept us dancing in our living rooms with weekly classes on Zoom, taught by teachers from all over the world. They also continue with a weekly podcast, to listen to dance music, hear about the history of dances, jigsaw puzzles, and other puzzles. Not realizing how long this was to go on, a new one is now put out every two weeks with alternate weeks repeating older episodes.

On the local club level, Gordon had us distance dancing in the park in the fall until it got too wet. He was also able to organize some teachers to record teaching a dance or two at the Obed Hall until the hall was shut down. In recent weeks, Joan and Gordon have been teaching from their homes. It does keep us moving so that we won't forget how to do formations and dances before we start up again, hopefully this fall.

June keeps us connected with emails, and Ceilidhs on Zoom. Other clubs, such as Seattle and Calgary, also offer Zoom classes. Now that vaccines are being rolled out, the world should open up again in the next few months.

So, until we can dance safely together again, as Dr. Bonnie Henry says:

Be kind, Be calm, Be safe.

Sheila McCall

Down Memory Lane

With no prospect of the return of social dancing we tend to look backwards. Do you have a memory of a certain Ball, dancing in another country, a demonstration etc? If you do, please share it with us in a paragraph or two.

In honour of Saint Patrick's Day here is a memory from Sue Langridge: *The Leprechaun Frolic*. In March 1978, the Victoria Branch held a splendid event at the Garth Homer Centre entitled the Leprechaun Frolic. The hall was filled with the maximum number of dancers, some having come a fair distance. The main attraction was that we were to dance to the music of the Cabbage Band, also called the Berkeley Scottish Players. This was a newish group of young musicians from Berkeley, California who had their own style of music. As we were beginning dancers we had been used to music led by accordions so this was a different sound. Fiddles, a piccolo, a hammered dulcimer filled the hall with music and energy. As the musicians were also dancers, it was not unusual to see some of them joining a dance and then hopping back on the stage to play the next tune.

In the picture some of you may recognize the man in the centre back. He is Robert McOwen who has since been a guest workshop teacher here in Victoria. He still dances as lightly as he did then.

Sue Langridge



In Memoriam

It is with deep regret that we announce the passing of four former dancers who were well-known to Van Isle members.

Jack Vlug, from Powell River. For many years, Jack taught classes in the local schools from Grades 1 – 6, plus an adult's class. He always supported Van Isle workshops and Balls, and was a gracious partner. Many of our current and former members who knew Jack remember him with pleasure. In 2018, Jack received a Vancouver Branch Award for his many years of dedication to Scottish Country Dance. Our sincere condolences go to his wife Myrna and their family.

Ray Perkins. Although a member of the Victoria Branch, Ray always supported Van Isle events as well as Bob's summer dancing, and many of our long-time members will remember him. Ray passed the Preliminary Test under the old RSCDS teacher training system, and he substituted as teacher for the occasional class as well as briefing dances at various socials. He also served as Branch Membership Secretary for several years. Ray found a number of cd players suitable for teaching SCD, before the teachers switched to using laptop computers. One of Ray's prized possessions was his Morris Minor, aka 'The Pumpkin'. Ray, his car (decorated) and several dancers appeared in the Oak Bay Tea Party Parade on at least one occasion. Our condolences go to his family and friends.
- Sincere thanks to Bob Anderson and Joan Axford for their help with this notice.

Walter Roots. As far as local SCD history is concerned, Walter and his wife Monica go back a long way! They were members of a select group who danced in Stuart Walker's class which he ran out of his basement. This class had been going for a number of years when I started dancing in 1970. When Van Isle was formed, the class became members, although it continued to run separately from the rest of Van Isle – so Walter and Monica are Charter Members of Van Isle. They became active members of Van Isle when Stuart retired from teaching.

Walter and Monica were involved in many aspects of the running of Van Isle. They were members of the dem team, and Monica was a gifted teacher. They continued to be involved in SCD after they moved to Galiano Island; Walter, apparently, was dancing up until the pandemic. In recognition of their services to SCD, Walter and Monica were awarded Life Memberships in Van Isle. We extend our condolences to Monica and their family.

Edith Chapman



Photo – June Robinson

MICHELLE CAMPBELL MEMORIAL

A lovely lady with a big smile and gentle manner. I first met Michelle when I attended her Scottish Country Dance classes at the Juan De Fuca Seniors Centre about a year or so after we moved to Colwood in 2009. Unfortunately, there were not enough dancers to keep the classes going so they only lasted a short time.

I got to know Michelle quite well when she was living at Aberdeen Hospital after her stroke. I found out she was there one day when we were visiting another friend, so once a week I popped in to have a visit with her and we had some great chats about many things.

In her career days, she was an Occupational Therapist and she helped many struggling families.

Michelle was a very good artist, particularly painting pictures of beautiful flowers. Her work was on display and for sale at the Fernwood Café on Saltspring Island. Her mother and sister Avril lived on Saltspring and she was very close to both of them. Michelle had 2 cats that she adored and Avril was looking after them for Michelle. Her best days were when Avril would come over and take Michelle over to her place for the day so she could be with her beloved cats.

In her glory days she spent a lot of time in her yard full of fruit trees and flowers. She loved gardening and listening to the birds sing.

SCD brought Michelle much happiness and she talked about many performances she danced with the Demonstration Team. She joined the Dem Team in 1997 and danced with the team until 2014. She loved the dancing and was always ready to participate. She was keen to learn new routines and participated in step dancing as well. The photo below is her dancing between Jamie Orr and Lorne Duncan at Folkfest with a big smile. With her artistic skills, she was great at helping with costumes for skits.



The beautiful picture and history of her time with the Dem Team is courtesy of Joan Axford. She will be remembered by those who knew her. Rest in peace, Michelle.

Lori Morrison

More Laws of SCD

Pauline's Principle

If you are ready to begin on the next repeat of the dance, it isn't your turn.

Corollary

If you are not ready, it *is* your turn.

Laws of Set Drifts

Sets will drift sideways towards the walls, either because of magnetic attraction or the natural slope of dance floors.

EVENTS – LOCAL Scottish Country Dance Events

All our traditional classes and social events have been cancelled until further notice. We are working on events that can take place virtually. Virtual SCD classes are held via Zoom on most Monday evenings. Stay tuned for other events!

Programs for the various socials will be posted on our website, once we are able to dance again.

OUT OF TOWN Scottish Country Dance Events

2021

- Jul 3rd – 9th** RSCDS Atlanta and Carolinas Branches. Blue Ridge SCD School, Appalachian State University Campus, Boone NC, CANCELLED. Info - <https://www.blueridgesds.org/>.
- Jul 25th – Aug 1st** TAC Summer School 2021, Calgary Alberta, in-person CANCELLED, School to be held virtually. See notice in this issue.
- Jul 18th – Aug 15th** RSCDS Summer School, St Andrews, Scotland, all sessions CANCELLED. Info - <https://www.rscds.org/events/summer-school-2021>.
- Oct 29th – 31st** RSCDS San Francisco Branch Asilomar Weekend, Asilomar Conference Grounds, Pacific Grove CA. Likely subject to the status of the Covid situation at the end of October. Info - <https://sfasilomardance.wixsite.com/asilomarweekend>.

FREE TO A GOOD HOME

Robin Gubby has two jackets he would like to give away.



Prince Charlie jacket



Braemar jacket

Both jackets are size 38 – 40 short. The Prince Charlie has a waistcoat to go with it.

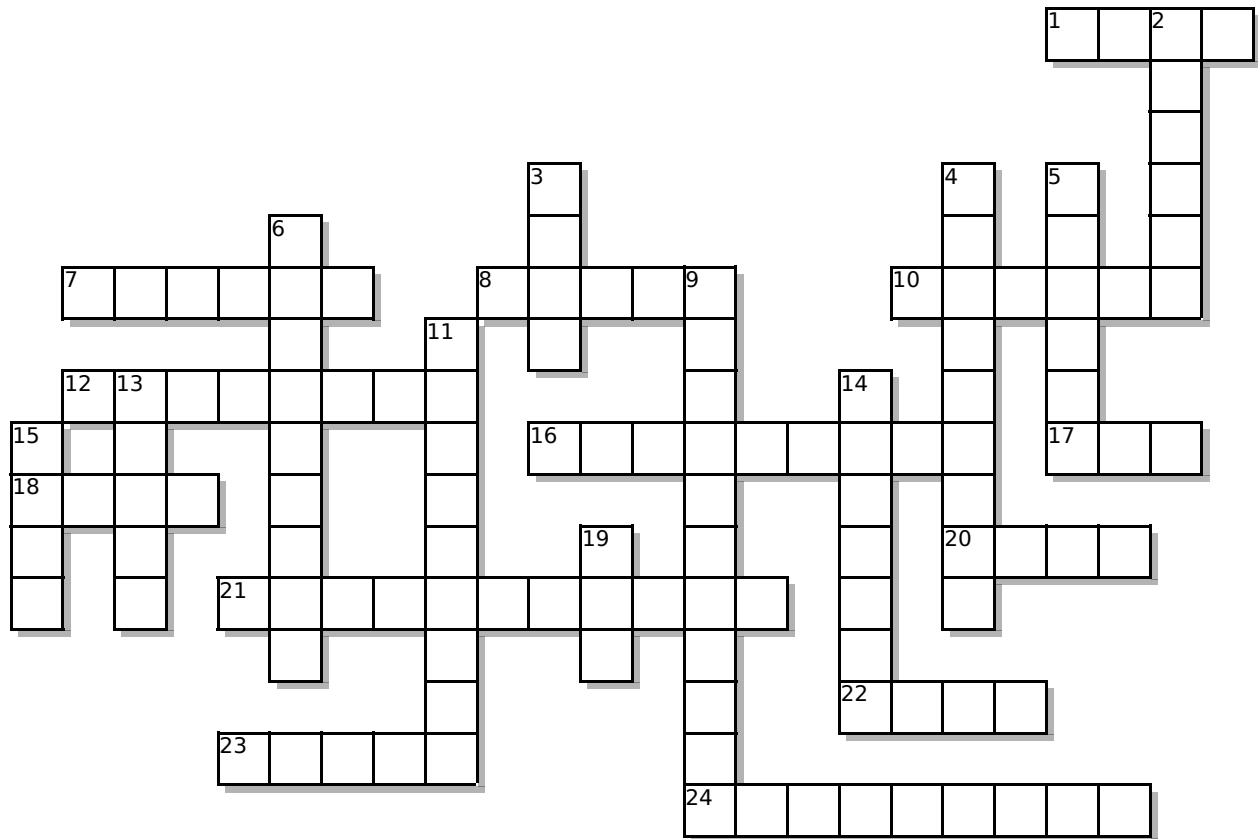
Robin is looking for a 42 short jacket. Is there anyone out there who can help him out?

Contact Robin Gubby, phone 250 595-6813; cell 250 891-6813.

BE CALM ♥ BE KIND ♥ BE SAFE

VISCD Crossword

New Year's Eve 2018



ACROSS

- 1 Talk on and on and on
- 7 The name of the crescent where HQ is located.
- 8 Rights and -----
- 10 The usual name for reflection reels
- 12 A founder of the RSCDS who has a strathspey named after her.
- 16 Another name for Aberdeen
- 17 Scots "not"
- 18 Scots "old"
- 20 A creek in Scotland
- 21 Some people think this dance is called Bonnie's lingerie
- 22 Valley in Scotland that lent its name to an elegant dance style
- 23 A chain found in some dances
- 24 RSCDS headquarters is in this city.

DOWN

- 2 He wrote an index of dances
- 3 Many dances use this name regardless of the time signature
- 4 A Scotsman's dagger
- 5 Saint in the fields
- 6 The proper name for "Roaring Jelly"
- 9 Dance that recalls cotton candy (2 words)
- 11 A visiting dancer's description of Butchart Gardens
- 13 Where MacDonald dances
- 14 The dancers across from you who are not your partner
- 15 a young woman
- 19 A type of dance done by Scots and Irish