

# Island Fling



**October 2023**

Vancouver Island Scottish Country Dance Society

c/o 3290 Woodburn Avenue

Victoria BC V8P 5B9

Affiliated with the RSCDS, Edinburgh, Scotland

**Web address:** [www.viscds.ca](http://www.viscds.ca)

## **Executive Committee**

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Social Convenor Committee

Ellen Campbell

Donna Clements

Sheila Eaglestone

Lori Morrison

Teacher Representative

Joan Axford

**In This Issue:** Live links!, out and about, mind your manners, the RSCDS and Sheila turn 100? No, hang on ...

## **President's Comments, October 2023**

What a lovely start we have had to the dancing year! A few new members were gained from the Bring a Friend nights in September, we had two well attended socials, and classes are vital and energetic.

The weather, generally, has been spectacular with crisp fall days and brilliant starry nights, interspersed with several spectacular storms. I do find the need to pull out the toques and gloves for my morning walks these days.

Our next socials include an afternoon dance for St. Andrew's on November 18<sup>th</sup>, the Christmas Social on December 9<sup>th</sup> (with Mary Ross playing) and the "Golden Oldies for Golden Oldies" during the afternoon class time on December 12<sup>th</sup>.

Classes run up to, and including, the week of December 4<sup>th</sup>.

Respectfully,  
Kathryn Knowles

**Check out our Facebook group:** It will have the latest dates, latest photos, latest events, and occasional videos.  
**Vancouver Island Scottish Country Dancers.**

## **Newsletter Deadline**

The deadline for the next newsletter is **December 17<sup>th</sup>**. Please submit any material to Ray Fischer at [ray@fischerperry.com](mailto:ray@fischerperry.com).

**Notes from the editor:** If you're viewing this online you can now click on blue underlined links and your browser should take you to where there's more information. If you wish to contribute photos or commentary, send it along - no promises, tho'

## Class Descriptions – Winter 2023

### **Experienced Social - Mondays 7:30 - 9:30 pm, Teacher: Bob Anderson.**

Experienced social for dancers with a good knowledge of all common formations who wish to dance more challenging dances and formations.

### **Daytime Social-Tuesdays 1:15 – 3:15 pm, Teachers: Louise McGillivray and Gordon Robinson**

This is the class for those who prefer a daytime class. We learn/review formations, work on phrasing, covering, handing and the “teamwork” in Scottish Country dancing. We do old and new favourites, and dances from upcoming socials. A friendly group that would love to have you join them, regularly or occasionally!

### **Basic Class - Tuesdays 7:30 - 9:30 pm, Teacher: Sheila McCall.**

In the Basic class you will learn the five steps used in Scottish Country Dancing. You will learn basic formations and become familiar with the concept of sets, progression, and teamwork while you experience the joy of moving to lively Scottish music. You don't need to come with a partner, just come and join us for fun evenings as you learn.

### **Intermediate - Thursdays 7:30 - 9:30 pm, Teachers: Gael Forster and Sarah Kell**

For dancers who want to move beyond basic formations and expand their repertoire, this class will teach a range of formations, work on phrasing, handling and learn a mix of traditional favourites and newer dances at the basic and intermediate levels. For more experienced dancers, this will be an opportunity to review dance formations in a social dance setting. Dances from upcoming social programs will also be included.

### **Demonstration Team – Teacher: Joan Axford**

VISCDS also offers a demonstration team to perform at community events as part of the ethnic culture in Victoria. The team dances at seniors' residences and centres, the Highland Games, Burns celebrations, Folkloria, Greekfest, etc. It is an opportunity to share our dance and music, and to encourage others to join our group. Each year, the team learns a new routine. You do not have to be an expert dancer. The team is always welcoming new members. If you like being part of a team and attending community events, this could be for you. The team meets on Tuesday at 7:30 pm about twice a month. For more information, please call Joan Axford at 250-474-1018 or e-mail at [joanaaxford@gmail.com](mailto:joanaaxford@gmail.com).

## Local Scottish Country Dance Events

Unless otherwise noted, events are at City Light Church Hall, 550 Obed Avenue  
Start time is 7:30 pm unless otherwise noted.

<b>Nov. 18<sup>th</sup></b>	St. Andrew's Social, 2pm to 5pm, program <a href="#">here</a>
<b>Dec. 9<sup>th</sup></b>	Christmas Social, program <a href="#">here</a>
<b>Dec 12</b>	“Golden Oldies for Golden Oldies”. 1:15pm to 3:15 pm
<b>Dec 31<sup>st</sup></b>	New Year's Dinner and Dance. 6pm to 11pm
<b>Jan 27<sup>th</sup></b>	Robbie Burns' Social
<b>Feb. 24<sup>th</sup></b>	Valentine's Tea. 2pm to 5pm
<b>April 6<sup>th</sup></b>	Workshop and Ball!
<b>April 24<sup>th</sup></b>	Spring Fling

## Out-of-Town Scottish Country Dance Events

<b>Nov. 11<sup>th</sup></b>	Vancouver Branch <a href="#">Lady Aberdeen Tea Dance</a> . 1:15pm.
<b>Nov. 11<sup>th</sup></b>	Seattle Branch <a href="#">November Monthly Dance</a> . 2pm to 5pm
<b>Nov. 18<sup>th</sup></b>	Vancouver Branch <a href="#">St Andrew's Ball</a> . 6pm
<b>Dec. 16<sup>th</sup></b>	Seattle Branch <a href="#">Christmas Ceilidh and Silent Auction</a> . 6pm



## Class Reps

Monday: Barbara De Leebeeck  
Susan Baxfield

Tuesday afternoon: Lori Morrison  
Martha Morrison

Tuesday evening: David Morrical

Thursday: Louise Perry  
Susan Morrical

## Membership Report – Barb Currie

Thank you to all the members who have paid their membership dues and class fees in September. Membership fees are allocated to expenses such as website, insurance, Zoom and office supplies. Class fees cover the hall rentals and the teachers' salaries. If you haven't signed up yet, there is still time to do so. Forms for 2023/24 are available on the VISCDS website and at all classes. It is sometimes necessary to contact members directly in case of cancellations and other emergencies. If your contact information changes, be sure to let the Barb Currie, the Membership Director, know. If you have lost your name tag, please let me know and I can order a new one for you for \$9.00.

Membership Numbers to Date  
Total paid up membership: 89  
Youth members: 3  
Life members: 9 Teachers: 7

### Teacher's Corner

#### Dance Steps/Technique

Dancing the Scottish country dance steps as designed with good technique certainly enhances the appearance of the dance but also makes the dancing easier. We do less technique/step practice in our classes today than in the past, but our teachers do encourage the improvement of dancing the steps.

Miss Milligan, one of the founders of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society encouraged more the enjoyment of the dance than perfect footwork in the Scottish Country Dance Manual called "Won't You Join the Dance":

*Good technique should never stand out. It should be part of a beautiful whole. The object of achieving correct and beautiful technique is to make it possible to dance with ease and flight and happy abandon. It should not occur to the onlooker, "what beautiful technique" or "such correct steps" but, "what a beautiful dancer."*

So practice the steps, but more importantly look to the social aspect of the dance which includes teamwork, phrasing, deportment, use of hands and having fun!!

– Joan Axford

### Golden Oldies for the Golden Oldies

#### SAVE THE DATE

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

1:15 – 3:15 pm

We all have friends out there that "used to be" Scottish Country dancers and wished they still were. But those new complicated dances just became too hard for our older feet, knees and brains and those folks stopped coming.

But, they would still love to come and do a few EASY, FAMILIAR dances, enjoy the music, and socialize with all the folks from dancing.

Start reaching out to those folks because there is a social planned just for them (and of course anyone else who wants to join!). Dust off those old membership lists, and send emails, make phone calls letting everyone know that a fun, relaxed, no stress afternoon of dancing is coming up.

Just after the VISCDS Christmas dance, there will be an afternoon social featuring old favourites, lots of walking to the dances, lots of visiting, and perhaps some refreshments.

Did we mention that the program will be easy, relaxed, and familiar? (at least to us golden oldies)

And make sure you offer to drive them (if needed) or do whatever it takes to get them out to this fun dance.

– Louise McGillivray and Anita Mathur

## A Dancing Tour of Scotland

Our own Susan and Fiona Morrical were dancing their way across Scotland this past summer and have provided us an entertaining story of their adventures. Too big to include here in its entirety, but you can read it on our web site at <https://viscds.ca/cms/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/A-Dancing-Tour-of-Scotland.pdf>.

## **A Dancing Tour of Scotland**

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Fiona and Susan headed to Scotland at the end of April for a 2-week whirlwind visit to see the glens, mountains and wild places, as well as to enjoy some Scottish Country Dancing!



-In the Scottish Borders with Eildon Hills in background; above -some soggy Fairy Pools on Skye

We started in Glasgow, where we joined the local Westerton SCD club for their wrap-up class for the season. There we were treated to a warm welcome, tea and cake, and an entertaining class that included *Polharrow Burn*, which was royally bungled by every set. We also learned the *Bonnie Tree*, a very pretty strathspey.

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VANCOUVER ISLAND ROYAL SCOTTISH COUNTRY SOCIETY

N E W S L E T T E R

November 1979

There comes a time in every class,  
No matter what they're graded,  
When for a spell confusion reigns  
And confidence is faded;  
A mass of tangled, formless folk  
Where once they moved as one,  
And in the midst the cause of it  
Is staring at someone.  
Just listen and you'll hear it  
Around the whole earth's span,  
The question echoes through the halls,  
"WERE YOU THE LADY OR THE MAN?"

## Life membership for Sheila McCall

It was my pleasure to award Sheila McCall with a Lifetime Membership in the VISCDs at the RSCDS 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dance on September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Sheila has contributed significantly to the promotion of Scottish Country Dancing in our community. The beginner dancers have been blessed with her patience, and encouragement for 26 years now! It is a treat to have Sheila's inclusive, dignified, and elegant example in our midst!

Sheila took up SCD in 1989 when she was newly widowed and had moved to Victoria to start a new life. While visiting Chemainus that summer, Sheila watched a team of dancers from the Victoria Branch of the RSCDS, perform some traditional dances on the stage in the park. She could see the patterns in the dances and thought "I can do that". After attending an open house she was committed.

She became a teacher, earning her Preliminary Certificate in 1995, followed by the Full Certificate in 1997, when she started teaching the basic class. I was in her first class, along with Alan and Catherine Thomson, and Sarah Kell. Sheila started the tradition of the Beginner's Dances in 1998 to further involve the new dancers.

When the Branch folded in 2012, Sheila soon started teaching for the VISCDs. Sheila shares her joy of dancing with her class members and hopes they will love the dance as much as she does.

Sheila told me she had always wanted to dance. I'm so glad that dream of hers has come true!

— Kathryn Knowles



We had a lovely 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary dance Saturday afternoon.



A friendly chap in a kilt oversaw the dancing.



There were some who wore their TAC anniversary tees – Martha in a 50<sup>th</sup>, Robin in a 100<sup>th</sup>, and elsewhere a 65<sup>th</sup>.





**Pictured L to R :** Anita Mathur, June Robinson, Gordon Robinson, Louise McGillivray, Martha Morrison, Gael Foster, Fiona Warman, Pat Warman. Also attending summer school was Susan Fraser.


### **TAC SUMMER SCHOOL 2023**

#### **HALIFAX, Nova Scotia**

Dancers from VISCDS attended the Teachers Association of Canada annual summer school held at Dalhousie University in Halifax, July 28 to August 6. The summer school began with Scottish country dance teachers from all over Canada, the USA, the UK and other countries attending a weekend workshop which included the AGM. On Sunday evening the six day workshop began for all Scottish country dancers with a welcome dance. Classes began on Monday morning for dance levels from basic to advanced. Each afternoon a variety of dance activities were offered and each evening there was a short program of social dancing. This amounted to a minimum of 5 to 7 hours of dancing per day. Those whose feet held out were in top shape by the end of the week!! Mid-week provided a break from dancing with an historic bus tour of Halifax or the chance to sightsee or shop. A very entertaining Ceilidh night with skits and music was held on Thursday evening. The week concluded with a banquet and ball on Saturday night. Nova Scotia experienced severe weather events this summer including fires and torrential rains. Luckily the TAC event dates avoided that weather but there were some very warm days in Halifax. Organizers of the event were pleased to see so many dancers attend from the west coast. Plans are under way for next year's summer school which will be at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ontario. Please note that although the organization is called the Teacher's Association of Canada, the event is for **all** Scottish country dancers. It is a great time with wonderful teachers and musicians and a chance to meet friends old and new! Information for registration for next year will be out in 2024 from the TAC website: <https://tac-rscds.org>.

June Robinson


The RSCDS has come out with updated dance etiquette. I'm happy to report that these guidelines are already the norm in Victoria, but here they are anyway. If you'd like to see what the BBC had to say you can read their article at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-67193609>



The RSCDS Guide to...


# SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE ETIQUETTE

We want everyone to have a great time when they're out dancing. Here are some of the ways we can help to create a safe and comfortable place to dance.



## 1. BE INCLUSIVE


**There's room for everybody in Scottish Country Dance**  
We want every dancer and musician, of every level of experience, to feel comfortable and safe at our events. We welcome everybody regardless of gender/gender identity, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, religion, physical appearance or employment status.



**Women's side, Men's side or both**  
We encourage all dancers to explore dancing on both sides of the dance. While you may develop a preference for one side, being able to dance on either side is a useful skill. Be aware that you may want to clarify with someone which side they would prefer to dance on when you ask them to dance, just to avoid confusion.

## 2. BE RESPECTFUL

**Don't give feedback**  
Unless they specifically ask for feedback, don't correct people's dancing on the social dance floor and leave it to the teacher in class.




**Mind your language**  
Don't be inappropriate. Do not use sexist, homophobic, transphobic, ableist or racist language.

## 3. DANCE SAFE

Keep your eyes open on the dance floor and be aware of the other dancers and sets around you. If you accidentally bump into or hit someone, **SAY SORRY** and **MAKE SURE THEY ARE OK**.

**Add variations safely**  
Many people enjoy adding extra birls, twirls and spins... no one like being crashed into or lost in a dance they thought they knew. Only add variations **YOU** can dance **SAFELY** within the musical phrase and when you are sure others in your set will not be confused by the embellishment. If your variation requires other dancers to change how they dance the dance, ensure you have their prior agreement.



Read more about safe spaces and our code of conduct on our website  
**rscds.org**  
Adapted with permission from and thanks to Swing Patrol London.

## 4. RESPECT BOUNDARIES

Always respect people's personal boundaries. They are different for everybody. If someone tells you that you are making them uncomfortable, listen to them and respect their need for personal space.

**Look out for each other**  
If you feel harassed or are made to feel uncomfortable, contact the event director/organiser immediately. If you see someone who looks uncomfortable or upset, ask them if they are ok and see if they need your help. **REMEMBER, NO MEANS NO!**

**It's ok to say no**  
If you don't want to dance with someone, you can say "no, thank you" and you don't need to explain. You may then ask or say yes to someone else, if you want to. You can stop dancing with anyone at anytime.

**When someone says no**  
If you ask someone to dance and they say no, respect the decision and ask someone else. No one is obliged to dance with you.

THE ROYAL SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE SOCIETY  
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