

Island Fling



March 2024

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

Executive Committee

President	Kathryn Knowles	250 598-3490	viscdspresident@shaw.ca
1st Vice President and Publicity	Hilary Fedoruk		
2nd Vice President and Membership	Barb Currie		
Secretary	Dawn Schell		
Newsletter Editor	Ray Fischer		
Treasurer	Martha Morrison		
Social Convenor Committee	Ellen Campbell		
	Donna Clements		
	Sheila Eaglestone		
	Lori Morrison		
Teacher Representative	Joan Axford		

In This Issue: The Valentine's social, the origin of Tartan Day in BC, and ... who turned out the lights?!?

President's Reflections, March 2024

Today is the first day of spring! The recent weather has certainly been providing that feeling of warmth and encouragement that the season embodies.

Our "50th Anniversary of the VISCDS" workshop and ball on April 6th, is two weeks away!

Our AGM is on Monday April 15th at 7:30PM at 550 Obed Ave. The meeting will, of course, be followed by dancing!

We are looking to welcome two new members to the executive, as both Dawn Schell, our secretary, and Barb Currie, our membership person, are stepping down. Please consider putting your name forward for either position.

Although our regular classes are coming to an end for this year, the spring classes and summer dancing will be following very closely.

My thanks go out to everyone who helps keep the society running and the dance opportunities happening! Your efforts are greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,
Kathryn Knowles

Check out our Facebook group: **Vancouver Island Scottish Country Dancers.**

It will have dates, latest photos, latest events, and occasional videos.

You can also share your own news and photos.

Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for the next newsletter is **May 19th**. Please submit material to Ray Fischer at ray@fischerperry.com.

Photos and writings are welcome from all.

Class Descriptions – Spring 2024

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, and work on phrasing and handing. We will cover 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 and 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.

Class Reps

Monday: Barbara De Leebeeck
Susan Baxfield

Tuesday afternoon: Lori Morrison
Martha Morrison

Tuesday evening: David Morrical

Thursday: Louise Perry
Susan Morrical

Teacher's Corner

Scottish Country Dancing is lots of fun and sometimes challenging. Our classes are set up in levels so that dancers can learn at an appropriate pace. It is important for our dancers to encourage newcomers to the class and for new dancers to be ready to join the class. Therefore, if you are considering joining a new level class, please speak with your current teacher and the teacher in the class you would like to attend. Once moving to the new class, dance with experienced class members, and attend regularly as that is the best way to feel comfortable with the new formations and dances. Experienced dancers are always welcome to attend a lower-level class, especially helping out in the basic class.

In general, as your dancing develops, please speak to your teacher at any time about whether you would be ready for the next level class. We like to see dancers move to a new class or add an additional class (at no additional charge!) when they are ready for the next step.

– Joan Axford

Membership

The Vancouver Island Scottish Country Dance Society has 106 members. We welcomed five new members this year. Several former members returned to dancing after a break due to Covid. It was great to see how quickly they picked up the dances again. We also enjoyed having two snowbirds with us for the winter. We hope to see Kathy and George again next year.

Thank you to our fabulous Class Reps for keeping us informed of all upcoming events and for organizing the volunteers for the social their class was responsible for. A special thank you to Lori for compiling the announcements every week so all the classes get all the info.

– Barb Currie,

Remembering Thelma Bell

Oh, what a lady. She spoke her mind and was loyal to the core. When Thelma set out to do something, it got done, and if she needed help you did not say no. Thelma was a kilt maker for many pipe bands. For the VISCDS, she was a member of the ball committee, executive, and a past president. She enjoyed traveling to workshops in Halifax, Fort Warden, and Asilomar. She danced with the demo team for many years and was the deviser and seamstress for many of our costumes. At our upcoming ball we will dance Thelma's strathspey, a dance written to recognize her many contributions to our group. We understand she was very pleased that we were dancing her dance at the ball. When she retired from dancing she joined the Gaelic choir.

She was greatly missed when she retired from dancing and will be remembered for the person she was.

- Sue and Rob Langridge, and Joan Axford

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.

- April 6th** [Workshop and Ball!](#)
April 15th VISCDS *Annual General Meeting* and dance
April 23rd Spring classes start, through May 28th with teachers Louise McGillivray and Anita Mathur
April 24th [Spring Fling](#)
May 2nd Thursday Socials start, through May 30th.
May 11th The Orr's [50th anniversary Dance](#), 2pm to 5pm. Tentative
May 18th & 19th [Victoria Highland Games](#)

Out-of-Town Scottish Country Dance Events

Nanaimo

- April 21st** Spring Social Dance, 1:15pm at the Pleasant Valley Social Centre. Find them on Facebook for further details.

Vancouver (for full calendar see [here](#))

- April 7th** [Glenayre Spring Dance](#), Port Moody. 2pm
April 20th [Vancouver Diamond Jubilee Ball](#). 5:15pm until whenever
April 26th [Vancouver Ceilidh](#). 7pm to 10:30
May 4th [White Rock 70th Platinum Anniversary Tea Dance](#), Vancouver. 1pm to 5pm
May 26th [Fort Langley Tea Dance](#). 1pm to 5pm
June 14th & 15th [ScotFestBC](#) – BC Highland Games, Coquitlam.

Seattle (for full calendar see [here](#))

- April 13th** [Afternoon Tea](#) Dance. 2pm
April 18th RSCS Seattle 2024 Annual General Meeting. 6pm to 9pm
Oct 4th to 6th [Fort Worden Workshop](#)

Calgary (for full calendar see [here](#))

- May 25th** Calgary Branch AGM & Dance

Red Deer

- April 5th & 6th** [Red Deer One Day Workshop](#)



You're invited to
RSCDS Vancouver's
Diamond Jubilee Ball


60 rscds-vancouver anniversary

with these fine musicians from Scotland
Marian Anderson and Max Ketchin



Saturday April 20, 2024
Members \$125 (non-members \$135)
Scottish Cultural Centre, 8886 Hudson Street
Reception - Dinner - Grand March - Soiree

Details at <https://rscdsvancouver.org>

Dance program in the January/February White Cockade



Valentine Tea Social, February 24th, 2024

WOW, WASN'T THAT A PARTY!!!

Forty-six dancers enjoyed the afternoon dance with a theme of "Scottish Country Dancing Love Story" created by Louise McGillivray. There were 17 dances on the program with characters in costume and the story narrated by Louise. The Lass of Richmond Hill, Mairi, (Heather Hermanson) lives with her best friend Bell of Bon Accord (Lori Morrison) in the Red House before she gets married. Mairi's father John McAlpin (Cindy Remington) gives her permission to get married and we all danced to Haste to the Wedding and Mairi's wedding. The other characters in the story were the Sailor (Anita Mathur), the Gentleman (Jane Matthews), the Minister on the Loch (Kathy MacIsaac), Pelorus Jack (Martha Morrison) and Miss Milligan (Joan Axford).



Anita briefed the Sailor dance and talked about her sailboat visiting Germany, Quebec, and Ecuador. She introduced the three Pearson College students, Konrad Hartung from Germany, Beatrice St. Louis from Quebec, and Edgar Quinones from Ecuador and each of them said hello in their native languages.

Joan Axford talked about Miss Milligan and briefed Miss Milligan's Strathspey.

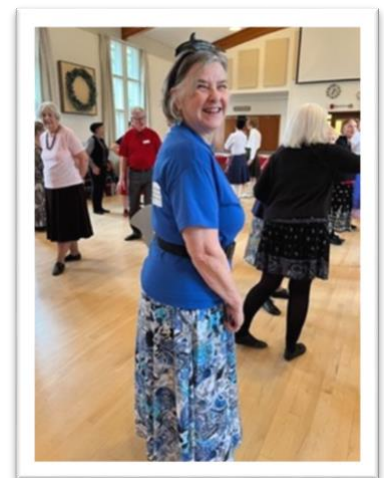
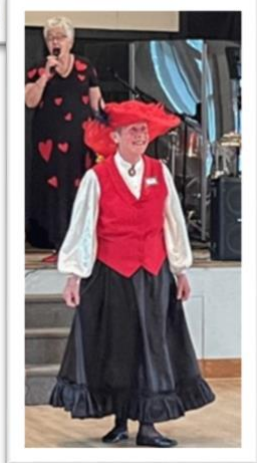


Louise briefed all the rest of the dances which included a total of 49 other dances in her story along with some great props she had made. It was brilliant! (*ed.: see next page*)

The dance was hosted by the Tuesday afternoon class with 2 tables full of delicious goodies and lots of helpers for set up and clean up. The 50/50 was won by Davide Walde who very kindly donated it back to the club.

A GOOD TIME WAS HAD BY ALL.

– Lori Morrison



Photos: Barb Currie

A Scottish Country Dancing Valentine Dance Love Story

This is the story of a lovely young lass named Mairi. Our story begins in the small town of Richmond Hill, not far from the City of Belfast. Although her name was Mairi, everyone just called her the **Lass of Richmond Hill (R)**.

Where Mairi lived, there were lovely gardens all around. There was The Enchanted Garden and one called Cherrybank Gardens, and everywhere Mairi looked there were flowers. There were Flowers of Edinburgh, Flowers of Glasgow and even The Roses of St. Martins.

In the middle of all these lovely gardens, Mairi lived quietly in a very nice **Red House (R)**.

But living in that big house, Mairi was very lonely, so she was thrilled when her best friend **The Belle of Bon Accord (S,Ball)** moved in with her.

The house was situated by the Waters of the Leith (a major wetland in that area) and there were lots of migratory birds, especially **Wild Geese (J, Ball)**.

When the Laird of Milton's Daughter came for a visit, the three lassies travelled to **Polharrow Burn (R)** to enjoy the scenery.

The Lass and the Belle lived quiet and happy lives – exemplifying simple **Joie de Vivre (J, Ball)**.

They didn't really think about Romance, deciding to accept Come What May. But, one day, **The Sailor (R, Ball)** swaggered in to upset their plans.

And shortly after that, in a Machine without Horses, **The Gentleman (S)** showed up.

The lassies were quite taken by these handsome lads and were often heard to say to them, Kiss me Quick me Mither's Coming. As you can imagine, things started getting fairly **Frisky (J)**.

They were both just Starry-Eyed Lassies, but they didn't make it easy for the lads and the courting began to look like they were trying to **Catch the Wind (R)**.

Now Mairi hadn't shared her romantic involvement with her parents. When her father (**John McAlpin**) arrived for a visit, he was concerned that she was Ower Young to Marry yet.

However, John **McAlpin (S)** was eventually convinced to give his permission for the marriage.

So, before you knew it, it was time to **Haste to the Wedding (J,Ball)**.

Oh, what a wedding they planned! Like most weddings it would be a great opportunity for Auld Friends to Meet. The reception was to be held in Midsommer Common, and they invited all their Deer Friends. The Haggis Hunters were hired to cater the reception. They served Sandy's Scotch Broth, and the wedding cake was made with Butterscotch and Honey and decorated with Sugar Candie.

Of course, they called for the **Minister on the Loch (S)** to perform the ceremony.

They had hoped to hire Seton's Ceilidh Band, but they were booked. So, they decided to use recorded music from **Miss Johnstone of Ardrossen (R)**.

Muirland Willie and Ruby Wilkinson were invited, but, well, you know with those two, it was complicated, so we're not sure they did any Dancing for Pleasure. But if they did it was sure to be the Best Set in the Hall.

Every wedding seems to have at least one person whose behaviour is not the best. In this case, both Montgomery and Maxwell started ranting, but luckily **Pelorous Jack (J)** showed up to guide them out of the hall.

The Irish Rover wasn't invited, but he showed up anyway and true to form raised many a Silver Tassie before he was seen Toddling Home late in the evening.

And of course, **Miss Milligan** was a special guest, and they did her **Strathspey(S)**.

The groom planned the honeymoon, and although he tried to keep the destination a secret, we believe they planned a Trip to Bavaria.

Mairi's Wedding (R, Ball) was the social event of the season.



TARTAN DAY

April 6, 2000 was a very special day for the Scots in Victoria. At long last, after six years of effort from the Joint Scottish Council, the Proclamation that April 6th. is to be designated 'Tartan Day' in perpetuity was made. Many members of the Scottish organizations witnessed the proclamation in the 'House'. The Minister, The Right Honorable Ian Waddell and the Speaker of the 'House' invited "The Scots" to a reception afterwards. A photograph was taken with the Minister handing a copy of the Declaration to Gerry Dunn of the Scottish Joint Council. Gerry faithfully wrote letters all these years, having no success from the Government agent in charge. He has to be commended for his faithfulness and his perseverance. Thanks must be given as well to Jim Gibson, of the Time Colonist, as after being notified of the delays, and having the facts and some statistics about the importance of this to the Scottish Heritage that is here, he took the time to call the Minister a few days before the Declaration took place.

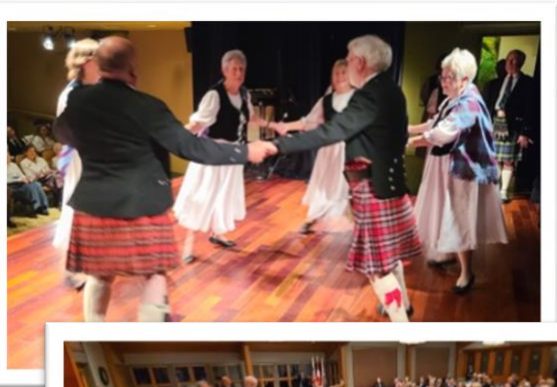
Thank you's as well for all those folk who year after year, showed determination as they sat in the 'House' every April 6th. to show support for the passing of the declaration.

To each of us we should receive a renewed faith, that everything is possible when we work towards a common goal.

(From an e-mail from Nancy Irvine Wylie, Vice President of the Joint Scottish Council and a director in the Scottish Cultural Society.)

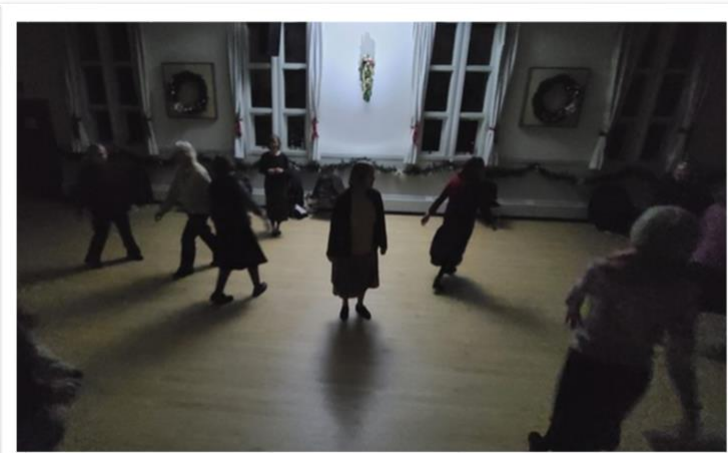
And a few more photos ...

The demonstration team at a few Burns' night events in January.



Driving to class down Obed Street in January my first thought was: "Everybody took down their Christmas lights!" Then we arrived at the church, and all was dark. The power was out.

Well, dark-ish. The glow of flashlights lit the windows. We went in and Gael's laptop and speaker had batteries, so for as long as they lasted, we danced.



Alas, or maybe for the good, the church has said that in the future, if there is no power, there shouldn't be dancing.

– Ray Fischer