

# Island Fling



## October 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.viscdis.ca](http://www.viscdis.ca)

### Executive Committee

President	Kathryn Knowles	250 598-3490	<a href="mailto:viscdspresident@shaw.ca">viscdspresident@shaw.ca</a>
1st Vice President and Publicity	Hilary Fedoruk		
2nd Vice President and Membership	Jane King		
Secretary	Linda Carmichael		
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:** Classes Start!

### President's commentary, October 2024

Autumn Greetings all!

I am presently looking out at the gorgeous fall foliage of the Japanese Maple overhanging our back deck and thinking about the menu for our Thanksgiving turkey dinner. That, and the fact that I have occasionally turned on the heat to ward off the chill, has me convinced that summer is now over. One of the benefits of autumn is that dancing is back in full swing!!

Classes have resumed, and numbers are increasing as people get back into their fall schedules. It is very encouraging to see a sizable group of new dancers in the Tuesday evening

class. I hope they are feeling as welcomed as I was when I first joined.

Our first social is coming up soon and will be much anticipated after the hiatus since Summer Dancing finished. The program has something for all levels of dancers. I hope to see you there.

My thanks go to all those that keep our society running; the teachers, the executive, the class reps, the social committee, those who volunteer their time and donate food at events, and everyone who shows up to classes and socials. I am proud to be a part of this warm and dynamic group.

With gratitude,  
Kathryn Knowles

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

### Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for the next newsletter is **December 15<sup>th</sup>**. Please submit material to Ray Fischer at [ray@fischerperry.com](mailto:ray@fischerperry.com).

## **Teacher's Corner**

### **Congratulations – You made the right choice in joining Scottish Country Dancing!**

Excerpts from the RSDS <https://rscds.org/about/health-strategy/health-benefits-scd>

The benefits of dancing extend beyond the physical to include the maintenance of cognitive function and the social value of involvement in a community of dancers. The physical benefits of Scottish country dancing in particular have been demonstrated for older women by a research team from Strathclyde University in Glasgow, Scotland. A summary of these researchers' findings is cited below:

*“The effects of long-term participation in Scottish country dance on body composition, functional ability, and balance in healthy older females were examined. Participants were grouped into dancers and physically active non-dancers (ages 60–70 and 70–80 for both groups). Physical activity, body composition (body-mass index, skinfold thickness, waist-to-hip ratio), functional ability (6-min walk distance, 6-m walk time, 8-ft up-and-go time, lower body flexibility, shoulder flexibility), and static balance were measured. Younger dancers and physically active non-dancers had similar 6-min walk distance, 6-m walk time, and 8-ft up-and-go time results; however, while older dancers performed similarly to younger dancers, older physically active non-dancers performed poorer than their younger counterparts ( $p < 0.05$ ). Body composition and static balance were the same for all groups. Regular physical activity can maintain body composition and postural stability with advancing age; however, Scottish country dance can delay the effects of aging on locomotion-related functional abilities.”*

Overall, findings suggested that dancing has a positive effect on our quality of life, body image, and mood. It also found that dance could reduce both anxiety and depression. Interestingly, dancing was the only physical activity associated with a reduced risk of dementia.

Overall, Scottish country dancing is a fun activity for new and experienced dancers of all ages to make friends, increase their physical fitness levels and improve their general mental well-being.

– Joan Axford

## **Class Descriptions – Fall 2024**

**New!** For all classes the hall will be open **15 minutes before the start** of class. Tuesday classes are now 90 minutes.

### **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 – 2:45 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 - 9:00 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](mailto:joanaaxford@gmail.com).

## Local Scottish Country Dance Events

The Demonstration team will be dancing at **Winterfest** at the Royal BC Museum on **November 30 at 11:00 am**. Come down and enjoy the festival activities and support the team.

We have [details](#) for next year's **Victoria Workshop and Ball!** Registration opens in January

Dates for Socials, all at City Light Church Hall.

St. Andrew's	Saturday, November 16 <sup>th</sup> , (afternoon) 2:00 PM
Christmas	Saturday, December 14 <sup>th</sup> , 7:30 PM
New Year's Eve	Tuesday, Dec 31 <sup>st</sup> , 6:00 PM
Burns' Night	Saturday, February 1 <sup>st</sup> , 7:30 PM
Valentine's	Saturday, Feb. 22 <sup>nd</sup> , (afternoon) 2:00 PM
Spring Fling	Saturday, April 26 <sup>th</sup> , 7:30 PM

Cost is \$20 for socials with live music, and \$15 for other socials.

## Salt Spring Island Dancing

*I reached out to our friends on Salt Spring Island and heard back from Gina. – ed.*

Our club is always happy to welcome visitors to our Monday night dancing.

We meet at **All Saint's Church** in Ganges with the following schedule:

6-6:30	Step and formation practice for new dancers and everyone that wants the practice
6:30-8:00	Mixed dancing
8:00-8:30	Challenge dancing for experienced dancers.

Our big, and open to the public, event of the year is our **Robbie Burns' Night Dinner and Dance** on Saturday, January 18<sup>th</sup> at the Fulford Hall on Salt Spring. Musicians Mary Ross and Janette Polson will be playing for our dancing pleasure. It is a traditional and fun evening of food, speeches, dancing, and general merriment.

More information will be coming out In December on our Facebook page and/or our site:

<https://sites.google.com/view/ssiscdc/home>

## Out-of-Town Scottish Country Dance Events

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

Nov 3 <sup>rd</sup>	<a href="#">North Shore Dance Scottish Fall Tea Dance</a>
Nov 11 <sup>th</sup>	<a href="#">Lady Aberdeen Tea Dance</a>
Nov 23 <sup>rd</sup>	<a href="#">Dance Around the World</a>
Nov 26 <sup>th</sup>	<a href="#">Fort Langley St Andrews Dance</a>
Nov 30 <sup>th</sup>	<a href="#">St Andrew's Ball</a>

Apr 26<sup>th</sup> [Heather Ball](#)

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

Nov 9 <sup>th</sup>	<a href="#">Tea Dance</a>
Nov 23 <sup>rd</sup>	<a href="#">"Dance Around the World"</a>

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

Dec 31 <sup>st</sup>	<a href="#">Hogmanay</a>
Mar 15 <sup>th</sup>	<a href="#">Calgary Spring Mini-Workshop</a>

Lethbridge, AB

April 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> [Lethbridge SCDC 2025 Workshop & Ball](#)

## Open House

The 2024-2025 year of dancing kicked off September 10<sup>th</sup> with this year's open house. We had 24 guest dancers and 15 members who came along to help. Sheila expertly guided us through the Cadborosaurus Jig, Hospitality Jig, Scotch Tangle, and Redbud Strathspey. There was lots of laughing around the room as the beginners learned the figures and the advanced dancers rapidly forgot them.

Everyone must have had a good time as the basic class in the second week had 15 new and mostly new dancers, along with some helpers. Anyone who would like to come dance on Tuesdays would be greatly appreciated, as it helps to have a few more experienced dancers keeping the figures moving along. Even after dancing for this long, it's always exciting to watch new people discovering how much they love it too!

– Fiona Warman

*So much fun that nobody remembered to take any photos! – ed.*

## A Harvest Social

A rainy autumn Saturday found the VanIsle club dancers inside enjoying the first social of our dance season. Joan Axford prepared a program of familiar dances that didn't tax our minds too much, and kindly briefed the dances as well. Some of our new beginner dancers were enticed to come to and experience why we all enjoy Scottish country dancing: they bravely stepped up and beyond their comfort level! We all had a good laugh in the chaos of the Triumph, and several of them were also introduced to Enchanted Garden and the perennial club favourite: the Reel of the Royal Scots. The Thursday Intermediate class hosted the evening, and I believe this was the social with the greatest number of Nanaimo bars per dancer on the dessert table. Our regular social committee members were astonished to find David M and Tony in the dishpit – largely due to overlap from the 3 circulating signup lists that managed to go missing...

Susan Morrical



Photos: Ray Fischer

## Greek Fest

At the end of August our demonstration team performed at Greek Fest. There was the usual dazzling show of reels and strathspeys, but very few photos as the picture-taker was one of the performers and there was little opportunity to take any photos. A good-sized audience was present for the show, and we coaxed a good dozen-plus people onto the stage, all that would fit, for an easy dance.



## From History



"Mademoiselle," said he to one of them, "straighten your chest, draw your back in, hold your shoulder-blades in position. Raise your chin, which should not be buried in your collar. That is right! Make your shoulders less prominent, make your chest project. Now, allow your arms to fall gracefully on your gown; bend your knees, draw the left foot back. Remain bent a little longer as a sign of respect, which you owe to your old professor. I have given lessons to queens, mademoiselle, and

they were very polite. Raise yourself now, slowly, while drawing back the right foot, the point of which should be put down before the left. Begin again. That is a perfect bow."

### CORN RIGS.

First couple chassé two couples, the Lady goes up behind the Gentleman, and the Gentleman up the middle,—This is repeated, only that the Lady goes up the middle, and the Gentleman behind the Gentlemen,—poussette,—six hands half round and back again.

Dance 'cheat sheet' from 1830

Our annual family picnic with dancing will be at Willows Park on Sunday, August 22, from noon to 3 p.m. (It was originally planned for the 29th but the park wasn't available). Bring your friends to try out the fun of SCD, enjoy a picnic and just socialize.

Except for the 22nd, dancing on the Legislative lawns continues on Sundays (1:00 - 2:30 p.m.) until the end of August. The intent is to show the general public something of the fun and fellowship of Scottish Country Dancing. Ned Easton's initiative made the idea a reality, with the help of Linda McDonald and many other dancers. People are joining in and it's proved to be a popular addition to the Inner Harbour scene.

Members of the Demonstration Team had a busy time with a series of engagements in the week of Canada Day, culminating in a major presentation at Folkfest. For that, they were joined by Lisa Gray and Shawn Hutchings, and all in all the group put on quite a show!

From Barbara Watt's "President's Corner" in the Island Fling of August 1999.

