

Island Fling

December/January 2025/2026

Vancouver Island Scottish Country Dance Society

c/o 3290 Woodburn Avenue

Victoria BC V8P 5B9

Affiliated with the RSCDS, Edinburgh, Scotland

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Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for the next newsletter is **March 15th**. Please submit material to Ray Fischer at ray@fischerperry.com.

In This Issue: 2025: That's a wrap.

Have something you'd like to share with the rest of the club? Send me a note!

President's Comments, October 18th 2025:

I still have some of those catchy Christmas dance tunes from this afternoon's Social running through my head. It was tempting to sing along, if only I could remember dance formations and song lyrics at the same time! It was wonderful to see so many of Sheila's beginner's class attending the social, it is always delightful to see new dancers on the floor.

I suspect the dancing recess will seem to be stretching on eternally by the time classes start up on Jan. 5th. It is a good thing we have the New Year's Celebration supper and dance to break up the hiatus! Our Burns' Night Social is also on the horizon.

I wish all of you a happy and revitalizing holiday season and look forward to seeing you in the new year.

Thank you all for making the VISCDs such a great community!

Respectfully,

Kathryn Knowles



Teachers' Corner - A Thank you

As we approach a new year of teaching, the teachers would like to thank all the dancers for coming to class and working hard. We appreciate your enthusiasm. We especially appreciate our class reps and the Social Committee (Lori, Sheila, Ellen, and Donna) who make our lives so much easier.

This fall we have purchased a new sound system to ensure all dancers can hear the instructions. We are grateful for executive approval to purchase and the donations from members to finance the cost. It has been a challenge to get all teachers working with the system and connecting to our lap top computers and the software we use to play the music. Thank you for your patience.

We are pleased to have the Gordon and Louise team back teaching on Tuesday afternoon. Thank you to Anita for covering for Gordon this fall.

Demonstration Team

The team is preparing for Burns performances. If you would like to see them, come to the Kirk Hall on Sunday, January 25th at 2pm. They will be performing their latest routine and dancing to the singing of the Gaelic Choir.



Stolen off the internet, just because we need some AI generated Highland Cows playing bagpipes — *ed.*

Local Scottish Country Dance Events

Dates for 2025/2026 Socials, all at City Light Church Hall.

The cost is \$25 for socials with live music, and \$15 for other socials.

Burns' Social Jan. 31, 2026 at 7:30PM
Valentine's Social Feb. 21, 2026 at 2:00PM
Spring Fling March 21, 2026 at 7:30PM

Workshop & Ball April 11th, 2026



Out-of-Town Scottish Country Dance Events

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

Jan 24th [Burns Supper](#)
Jan 30th [Vancouver Ceilidh](#)
Feb 21st [Love to Dance Scottish Workshop & Dance](#)
Feb 27th [Vancouver Ceilidh](#)
March 21st [Glenayre Spring Dance](#)

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

March 14th [Branch Tea Dance](#)

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

Mar 21, 2026 [Portland Workshop & Ball](#)

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

Feb 13th - 15th [Edmonton Caledonian Workshop and Ball](#)
Mar 14th [Calgary Spring Mini-Workshop](#)

2025

A look back on some of the events of the season so far, starting with the most recent.

New Year's Eve

Fun, food, friends. What else do you need to wrap up the year? Photos Ray Fischer & David Morrical



Christmas Social

The Christmas social was a festive and welcoming afternoon, with enough dancers to make up seven sets and many people dressed in cheerful holiday attire. The hall was beautifully decorated, and the program featured plenty of Christmas tunes that added to the seasonal spirit. There was something for everyone, with some dances offering a beginner-friendly option on one side of the hall and a more advanced version on the other. Many dancers from the beginner's class attended and did very well, and a mid-program break for delicious sandwiches and treats was thoroughly enjoyed. - Jessica Moloney

St. Andrew's Social

Like the St. Andrew's Cross on the Saltire, Gael Forester and Joan Axford devised a dance program with symmetry.

The first dance was It's All Right where formations had everything using the right hand or going to the right and the last dance, was mostly all left (Left-Handed Fiddler). Dancers needed to know their rights from lefts for the rest of the dances otherwise they formed the Knot.

David Morrical won the best Scottish dressed person with his full kit and Scottish flag sash. His prize is free admission to the next social.

The hall was filled to capacity with beginners and advanced dancers and Thursday class provided goodies that filled 3 tables. - Barbara De Leebeck



Free Open House: September

We had lots of visitors this year, many of whom continued with Sheila's beginner's class, thanks to a segment on CHEK news during the highland games.



Class Descriptions – September 2025

Information about the different classes:

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. Here are some tips on the formations you should be ready to dance at each level:

- For the Experienced Social, you should know the basic and intermediate formations without a reminder
- For the Daytime Social class, you should have danced the basic formations and be ready to put them into a dance
- For the Intermediate class, you should know the basic formations without a reminder

Basic Formations: Advance and retire, Hands round, Hands across, leading and dancing down and up, Rights and lefts. Casting, Back to back, Pousette, Allemande, figures of 8, know your corners, Promenade, Figure 8, Grand chain, Ladies' chain and simple reels of three and four

Intermediate Formations: The Rondel, The Knot, Reels of 3 on opposite side and own side, Corners pass and turn, Double triangles, Rights and lefts for 3 couples, Pousette right round (Strathspey pousette), Half pousette, Set to corners and partner (Hello-good bye), Set and link, Set and link for 3 couples, Set and rotate, Men's chain, Reels of 3 and 4 (side, across, diagonal)

For all classes the hall rental begins 15 minutes before class to allow for set up and getting your shoes on.

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

Experienced social for dancers with a good knowledge of the basic and intermediate formations and who wish to dance more challenging dances and formations.

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

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 Class - Thursdays 7:30 - 9:30 pm, Teachers: Gael Forster and Joan Axford

For dancers who know the basic formations and want to expand their repertoire, this class will teach a range of formations, work on phrasing, handing 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, Folkoria, 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 or text Joan Axford at 250-415-2540 or email at joanaaxford@gmail.com.