

Helensburgh & District RSCDS



UPDATE

<http://www.helensburgh-rscds.org.uk>

This year's nominated
main charity:

Help for Heroes

Happy Birthday to Margaret and David



Margaret cuts her cake at a celebration with the Helensburgh Scottish Country Dance Club



Silver Acorn award: this prestigious award has been given to David to celebrate 70 years' service to the Scouting movement.

His wife, Dorothy, had asked Anne Thorn to write a dance, for David, to celebrate his eightieth birthday. The dance is named, appropriately, The Silver Acorn. A strathspey for 3 couples in a triangular set, it depicts, in its formations, the many activities in which David is involved; the original music is Partens in His Creel, a favourite of Dorothy.

It was a delight to dance The Silver Acorn in the company of David, wearing his award, and Dorothy in attendance!



David and Dorothy await the chord

Two members of the Branch, Margaret Brown and David Reid, celebrated their eightieth birthdays, recently.

To celebrate the occasion, members of the Helensburgh Scottish Country Dance Club presented Margaret with a bouquet of flowers at their Xmas party night. The cake was led in by Richard Maudsley playing Happy Birthday on his pipes.

On the same night, David Reid brought along his

Inside this issue:

Happy Birthday	1
Message from the Chairman	2
Cove & Kilcreggan	2
Society AGM/ Conference	3
Message from Nan Dearie	3
An excerpt from.....	3/4
From our own Correspondent	4
Annual Ball	4
Christmas Dance	5
The Ball	5
Christmas Tree Festival	5
Tea Dance	5
Diary & Classes	6

Committee

- ◆ Chairman Isabel Bone
- ◆ Secretary Irene Smith

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- ◆ Treasurer David Reid
- ◆ Secretary 2 Helen Bain

Message from the Chairman

How quickly this session has gone and we are now in the throes of Christmas. Branch classes have held informal parties which I was pleased to attend; the General class, I am happy to report, currently boasts three new Branch members: Elaine, Frances and Catherine; and the Beginners' class has welcomed Cathy. I have not managed to visit as many of the classes as I had intended but, hopefully, I can catch up with the non branch classes in 2015!

Since the start of the session, the Branch has been busy hosting the Mini Charity Dance, the Annual Ball and the Christmas Dance. Our mini charity, nominated by Rona Dickson, was FABED (families affected by eosinophilic disorders). Unfortunately, Rhona could not attend the function but sent a letter of thanks which was read out to the supporters, on the night. Her daughter also sent a heartfelt letter of appreciation which moved all who were there. We raised around £450. Well done to everyone!

In November, we were well represented at the AGM in Perth. I have never danced in the company of so many people! With around 550 dancers in attendance, the experience was amazing: so many sets containing dancers from around the world - gaining access to a set was, in my opinion, rather like joining a bus queue in Italy! The business meeting gave Irene Smith and me the opportunity to act as delegates for the Branch. I can commend this event to you, even as a once in a lifetime experience.

While our functions run well, the attendances are not always as great as we would like: the Annual Ball was attended by 60 dancers. The committee has the same job to do, regardless of numbers, and while we break even on most events, we would feel better if we could attract more dancers, especially to the ball. There is regular debate, in the Branch, as to how we should address this. Is it the formality of the occasion, its expense or something else which we have not identified and need to recognise? As secretary to one of the non branch classes, I know how difficult it is to sell tickets to non branch members. If we can't attract them to our functions, how can we attract them to join the Branch?

Our Youth coordinator, Roy Bain, retired at our AGM in June. Unfortunately, the vacancy is not yet filled. The Junior Dance is scheduled for January and the Day of Dance for February. Irene Smith and I have elected to cover these events, but this is a stopgap and not a long term solution. These events ensure that children have a platform on which to celebrate their achievements in dancing. Surely, these children are the future of our branch: they may not join up in the near future, but I am convinced that dancing in the early years leads on to a return, although it may be ten or twenty years further down the line! We must keep them going. Our children's classes are small in their numbers but, what they lack in size they more than make up for in enthusiasm and loyalty, thanks to Helen Rodger!

Please give some thought as to how we can do this. As a Branch, we will support and assist a new Youth Coordinator. The Members' Dance will be our first function in 2015. I urge you to support this. If you haven't got a ticket, then please buy one at the door and bring along a sweet or savoury dish. We have a real treat in Deirdre Adamson's Band and our own catering is second to none. I personally enjoy the

opportunity to meet up with fellow dancers at the beginning of a new year.

I also look forward to meeting you, when taking the floor at our Annual Charity Dance and, of course, the Helensburgh Weekend.

But in the meantime, I wish you all a happy Christmas and a happy and healthy new year.

Keep in tune

Isabel Bone

Cove & Kilcreggan

The first dance in the local calendar was The Halloween Dance run by Helen Bain and the C & K class. This year, the dance was held on 31 October, Halloween night, and fancy dress was well worn. Each costume represented a dance and part of the fun was working them all out.

On arrival, we were met by the Daffodil and the Domino Five while the Piper and the Penguin sold us raffle tickets! As a representative flew in from Maggie Knockater, a squaw from the River Strathspey sailed in alongside the Trimariner and the Sailor; Bobbins were being shifted in the Grassmarket; and Auld Nick sent a spectator to keep an eye on the proceedings.

Music, by the Best of the Bands, accompanied the dancers in a good spirited evening.



Even Santa was there!



Society AGM/ Conference Weekend 2014

A Message from Nan Dearie

The RSCDS AGM was again held at the Bell's Sports Centre in Perth and the weekend began for Roy and Helen Bain and Irene Smith attending a Teachers' Association Conference on the Friday. A variety of topics were covered including updates on the changes to the Examination system and the introduction of the Dancing Achievement Awards, teaching resources on the internet, the schools accreditation scheme and an update on the Jigs and Reels publication. The session finished with a practical session, dancing some of the dances from this year's new publications.

I Bone and I Smith were the delegates representing the Branch at the AGM on the Saturday afternoon. The main item on the agenda was the change in status of the Society to become a Company Limited by Guarantee and was agreed by the members.



Joan and Jenny - two starry eyed lassies

13 members from Helensburgh Branch attended the weekend enjoying the dancing on the Friday night to Matthew McLennan and joining 570+ dancers at the Saturday night Ball to dance the night away to music provided by Nicol McLaren. All the dances are now called making the events available to everyone. It is quite a sight seeing so many dancers in one space enjoying themselves.

The Saturday morning class was led by Paul Plummer with Andrew Nolan providing the music.

Also running on Saturday morning was an Open Forum to discuss 'Increasing Membership' which H Bain and I Smith attended. No one seems to be able to come up with a solution. For those dancers left standing the Sunday morning workshop was led by William Williamson and Muriel Johnstone provided the music.

Also on Sunday morning, there was a brief meeting of current and new members of the Management Board and Committees.

A Youth Forum had 2 guest speakers: Doris Young from Airyhill Dancers, Aberdeen and Raphaëlle Orgeret, Lyon Branch, to discuss how they maintain successful youth groups in their areas.

Irene Smith

Fri 7th November,

Isabel and I arrived in Perth and checked into our Hotel at 4.30pm. We had a nice, but quick, dinner with the rest of the "Gang" and then off to the Social Dance. I was taken by surprise at the huge number of people in the hall but everyone was so cheerful and friendly and I was soon at ease and enjoying the atmosphere - a few familiar faces in the crowd (Oban and Dunfermline). The music by Mathew McLennan was fast but very good and a good programme too. Didn't hit the hay until about 1.30 - tired but happy - looking forward to tomorrow.

Sat 8th

Ready for breakfast at 9am, refreshed and raring to go. A bit of retail therapy in Perth in the morning.

The AGM in the afternoon - again a sea of faces in the hall. As the meeting went on, the sheer scope and international aspect of the RSCDS really hit home, all belonging to one big Club - very uplifting.

Back to the hotel for dinner then off to get spruced up for the Ball. Everyone dressed for the occasion; it was a sight to see. Again, the atmosphere was of fun and enjoyment. The music by Nicol McLaren was fantastic. - very impressed by the young people - boy can they fly! A great night was had by all.

Arrived back at the Hotel in the early hours - couldn't sleep - sore feet and still on a high.

Sunday 9th

After breakfast and saying all our "Goodbyes" we set off for home - arriving late afternoon, after a pleasant stop at Baxters in Blackford.

Tired but happy. I enjoyed the whole week-end - company, music and the fun atmosphere. I'm already looking forward to next year.

Why don't you join Nan and me next year? Ed

The following is an excerpt from an appreciation penned in 2010 by a member of New Zealand Branch on the award of the Society Scroll:

It is a great honour to receive this award from the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society and I wish to convey my sincerest thanks to both the Society and the New Zealand Branch.

To receive such an award is a very humbling and overwhelming experience. Having been involved in dancing for the past 40 years, I have to say that I have enjoyed many many moments, happenings, and events. - - - -but for any organisation to develop and grow into the future it must have young people coming through the ranks - or else it will simply fade and die.

The work that the Society does on behalf of all dancers is truly outstanding and often goes without reward, just simple criticism. It should be remembered that without the work of the Society over the past I doubt very much that we would have the worldwide family and network that we have today, and the ability to dance the same dance, the same way, anywhere in the world to music we recognise.

The Society do their work superbly and we all owe the tireless workers of the Society a great deal of gratitude, be they

employed staff or the countless volunteer workers that they have – and not just in Scotland, but throughout the world. I know many will be pleased that the Society are currently looking at alternative methods of distributing its material – down loadable music, instructions, and books - ready for your iPad or Tablet. Video's are already available on Youtube and Facebook. This is a long way from the days when we had to balance a coin on the head of the Record Player to stop the needle jumping as we were dancing – I am sure many here will recall this happening, if not doing it. This is evolution, and all part of the work of the Society. Work that we all have a vested interest in supporting. What a wonderful organisation we can all contribute to and proudly be a member of, and encourage all other dancers to do the same. The Society would not have got here – 90 years later – without the support of its financial members.

From Our Own Correspondent....



As I finished off the last edition, I mentioned our youth workshop in Aberdeen. Early start Saturday morning to be in Edinburgh for 9.45. Helen came with me as we had an invitation to a friend's Ruby wedding celebration in Dundee. So, while I went to the Management Board meeting Helen took the train to Dundee. I managed to leave Edinburgh about 4.00, collect Helen from the Ruby wedding in Dundee and head for Aberdeen. The dance venue was about a 10 min walk from the hotel, however I decided to be lazy and take the car – big mistake – it took about an hour to arrive at the dance, most of the time spent trying to find a parking spot, eventually found space in a cul-de-sac, outside a pub and on double yellow lines !!!!!!!!!!! We enjoyed the second half of the dance and no parking fine.

The next week I had a meeting in Dunfermline to discuss a possible demonstration in Norway, then into HQ for a meeting to plan Spring Fling London. On the Friday Isabel, Irene and I had a meeting with the Argyll councillor responsible for Culture – discussions ongoing.

After that it was preparation for the Society AGM and our Youth Forum on the Sunday morning. It can be a long weekend. Early start to be in Perth for the Teachers' conference on the Friday, dance in the evening, a Spring Fling meeting at 9.00am on the Saturday, helping to man a youth stall till 12.00, lunch with the Society Scroll recipients then into the formal AGM, quick change and off to the Ball. We were delighted that Jenny and Paddy Trust attended again this year and also Isabel Bone and Nan Dearie attended for the first time.

22nd November was a return to Edinburgh for a Management Board meeting. The following Saturday we had a workshop in St Andrews to coincide with the Scottish Universities SCD Festival Ball, however the diary was far too full to attend. We were in St Andrews the following weekend for their Ball, up early Saturday morning to be in HQ for 9.15 for our Youth Services Committee meeting. We now have a full complement of six, plus my successor, the convenor-elect.

December of course is the season of class parties and we have had our share of those over the last couple of weeks. Due to the amount of time involved with the YSC I stepped down as Youth Convenor at the Branch AGM and therefore have had no involvement with the local schools. I am pleased to see that our Schools Day of Dance will continue. All local schools have our excellent resource pack – Jigs & Reels and I understand that all are teaching SCD. The Society also launched a new scheme over the summer – School Accreditation Scheme. Schools can work to achieve either Bronze, Silver or Gold standard. I am hoping to have this presented to our local Head Teachers at their meeting in January.

To One and All – have an enjoyable Festive Season.

Roy



Annual Ball

There were just under 60 dancers at our Annual Ball in the Victoria Hall on 12 November. The Chairman was pleased to welcome visitors from Glasgow, St Andrews and Taunton as well as local visitors and Branch members.

A buffet dinner was served by Siona Garden and a vote of thanks was given to the caterers.

After dinner, dancers took the floor to the music of George Meikle and his band. A lively programme ensued and locals were eager to put their newly learned talents to the test with *Vintage Simon* and *The Outer Circle!*

Special thanks are extended to all committee members who helped set up the hall, in the afternoon. It is noted that we need to recruit local helpers, for next year, as most of the current committee members live outside Helensburgh and have no time to return home before the ball.



One of our loyal visitors, David, balances in line with Margaret at the end of the evening for the Reel of the 51st Division

Christmas Dance



A Christmas Ceilidh - and the hall is full at the beginning of the evening.

A change of venue for The Couples' Class, when they hosted the Christmas dance, in Cardross Church Hall, on Friday 12 December.

The Chairman welcomed 70 dancers, including visitors from Bearsden & Milngavie, Dumbarton, Glasgow and East Kilbride as well as our own local visitors and Branch members.

Once again, as in previous years, the dancers were delighted to take the floor to the music of Sandy Nixon; and to dance The Cuckoo Clock to the band playing!



The Ball

Remember the blizzard last Saturday week?
The night of our Christmas Ball.
We all had a wonderful evening
Though I only just got there at all.

I was dressed in my best and the car wouldn't start,
But my very kind neighbour, Old Nell,
Pushed me for nearly a mile down the road,
And waved me goodbye as she fell.

Because of the weather the band arrived late
Except for the chap on the drums,
He had attempted some do-it-yourself
And managed to damage both thumbs.

There was something not right with the heating,
And at first we all thought we would freeze,
But during the evening the temperature rose
To a tropical ninety degrees.

But we did have a wonderful evening,
Though the gentlemen might not agree,
They couldn't get into their cloakroom
As the caretaker mislaid the key.

It was rather a pity the President's wife
Should measure her length on the floor,
The dress she was wearing revealed quite a lot,
And then she revealed a lot more!

An envious rumour is going around
That our vol-au-vents tasted quite funny.
It was only six people who didn't feel well,
And what do they expect for their money?

But we did have a wonderful evening,
Maybe the M.C. had a tankful,
But it wasn't his fault he announced "Cradle Song"
And the band struck up "Rest and be Thankful".

We had a good set for "Schiehallion" –
We all clapped and shouted "ENCORE"! –
But one of the fellows attempted high cuts
And had to be helped from the floor.

I do wish the tea-urn had not sprung a leak,
And it does seem a shame that my gown
Was totally ruined by plaster and dust
When part of the ceiling fell down.

And that was the end of the evening,
And this is the end of my rhyme
I know there were some minor hitches,
But we all had a marvellous time!

From *Pat Batt's Party Pieces Vol 3*

Christmas Tree Festival

The Branch is taking part, again, in the annual Christmas tree festival in United Reformed Church, West Princess Street, Helensburgh.

All trees are sponsored by local organisations. The festival ends on Sunday.



Update wishes you a Happy Christmas and Happy Dancing in 2015!

Tea Dance

Wednesday 4 February 2015
2pm—4pm

United Reformed Church Hall
West princes Street

Ticket £5

For your Diary

Members' Dance	09 January 2015	Victoria Halls	Deirdre Adamson
Tea Dance	04 February 2015	UR Church Hall West Princes St	Best of the Bands - CDs
Charity Dance	21 February 2015	Victoria Halls	David Oswald
Junior Dance	tbc	Victoria Halls (Pillar Hall)	tbc
Weekend Ball	27 March 2015	Hermitage Academy	James Coutts
Weekend Class	28 March 2015	Hermitage Academy	Jenny Greene (teacher) Heulwen Hall (musician)
Weekend Dance	28 March 2015	Hermitage Academy	Martainn Skene
Weekend Coffee Morning	29 March 2015	The Commodore Hotel	Jenny Green & Heulwen Hall

Branch Classes

General and Ceilidh

Geilston Hall, Cardross
Mondays
8.00 - 10.00

Teacher: Roy Bain 01436 842695
Starts: 05 January 2015
Cost: £30 per term

Couples

Hermitage Academy
Thursdays
8.00 - 10.00

Teacher: Helen Bain 01436 842695
Starts: 08 January 2015
Cost: £30 per term

Beginners / Improvers Class

Guide Hall, John Street
Thursdays
8.00 - 10.00

Teacher: Helen Rodger
Starts: 08 January 2015
Cost: £30 per term

Junior Classes

Guide Hall, John Street	Guide Hall, John Street	Kilcreggan Primary	Rhu Primary School	St Joseph's Primary
Tuesday 3.45 - 4.30 (5 - 7 yrs) 4.30 - 5.15 (7 - 9 yrs)	Wednesday 4.15 - 5.15 (10yrs +)	Tuesday 3.00 - 4.00	Wednesday 2.20 - 2.50	Monday 3.15 - 4.00 Tuesday 1.00 - 2.00
Teacher: H Rodger 07930156225 Starts: 06 January 2015 £20 per term	Teacher: H Rodger 07930156225 Starts: 07 January 2015 £20 per term	Starts: t b c	Teacher: Irene Smith 01436 810336	Teacher: Irene Smith 01436 810336

Other adult classes in the area

Cove & Kilcreggan SCD Class

Cove Burgh Hall
Tuesdays 10.00 Teacher: Helen Bain 01436 842695
Starts: 06 January 2015

Helensburgh SCD Club

Pillar Hall
Tuesdays 8.00 Teacher: Anne Thorn 01436 677474
Starts: 06 January 2015

Wednesday Morning SCD Class

John Street Guide Hall
Wednesdays 9.45 Teacher: Helen Rodger 07930156225
Starts: 07 January 2015

Luss SCD Club

Luss Village Hall
Wednesdays Teacher: John Maccallum 01436 673521
Starts: 07 January 2015

Thursday Afternoon SCD Club

Scout Hall, John Street
Thursdays 2.00 Teacher: Douglas Thomson 01436 679192
Starts: 08 January 2015

Rosneath SCD Club

Rosneath Primary School
Thursdays 7.30 Teacher: Douglas Thomson 01436 831602
Starts: 08 January 2015

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