

Helensburgh & District RSCDS



UPDATE

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

67th AGM
Thursday 17th May 2018
7.30pm
Helensburgh Parish Church
Hall

Day of Dance



Pupils dancing under the arch.

The Day of Dance that the Branch runs jointly with Active Schools for P7 children attending Helensburgh and Lomond schools was due to be held on the 2nd March but due to the weather had to be postponed. It was eventually held on Tuesday 20th March but unfortunately two of the schools were unable to participate due to other commitments. However over 230 children attended either a morning or an afternoon session held in the Victoria halls in Helensburgh.

The children had all been practising their dances and didn't want to miss a day out from school! They all appeared to enjoy themselves judging by the smiles, laughter and noise. Helen Rodger was the MC to give the instructions and to encourage the youngsters on to the floor but this was almost un-necessary as the children were ready to dance all of the time. Members of the Branch came along either for the whole day or for one of the sessions to help as stewards. Many thanks to them for giving up their time. It is always a hard day but worth it to see so many young people enjoying themselves.

Irene Smith

Inside this issue:

| | |
|--|---|
| Day of Dance | 1 |
| Letter from the Chairman | 2 |
| Gift Aid Christmas Tree Festive Christmas Dance | 3 |
| Members' Dance Charity Dance Afternoon Tea Dance Gentleman Jim | 4 |
| Margaret Irvine David Reid Our 40th Weekend School | 5 |
| Our 40th Weekend School cont | 6 |
| Crieff 2018 Youth | 7 |
| Diary & Classes | 8 |

Committee

- ◆ Chairman Pam Fennell
- ◆ Secretary Irene Smith

Telephone 01436 810336

irene.colin@btinternet.com

- ◆ Treasurer David Reid
- ◆ Secretary 2 Helen Bain

Letter from the Chairman

Our 2018 Spring term of Scottish Country Dancing Classes should be retitled the Winter/ Spring Term. As I am writing this report the snow showers although light, and the flakes melting as they land, have been persistent since early morning and the temperature outside was pretty chilly when walking this morning.

The first "Spring " function was the Member's Dance which was on the 12th January. We chose Rhu Hall as a trial venue as we knew it had been refurbished in 2017, and we were looking for an alternate venue for St Joseph's after the very cold night we spent there in 2017 at the Member's Dance. Remember dancing in our coats? (n.b. The heating system at St Joseph's now works.)

The Rhu Hall was warm to begin with but unfortunately it had been turned down too early and became cold before the interval. There was a good turnout of members and the food produced by them excellent. We had great music from James Coutts and a good programme. So all in all, as usual, we did enjoy the evening.

The afternoon tea dance in the Helensburgh Parish Church halls was very well attended and the programme was interesting. A huge vote of thanks was given to Dorothy and David Reid, and their helpers (the Murrays) for organising the dance. The profits from the Tea Dance were for Branch funds. An independent retiring collection raised money for Save the Children Fund.

I am delighted to report a very successful Charity Dance. There was good turnout of dancers from many Branches, super music from the Ian Muir Sound, many donations of fantastic raffle prizes for Cancer Research UK and we raised just over £1000. Mark Cavana from our local Cancer Research charity shop came to draw the raffle and then he talked at the interval, which was very interesting, before he presented the first five prizes. The supper was really good too!



Circle round and back

Having started this with a winter 'story', here is the follow up about the real snow we had starting Tuesday 27th February! Its endurance over the next few days caused classes to be cancelled as well as the Day of Dance for primary school P7s!

Three Dances, out with Helensburgh, which members had arranged to go to were also cancelled but luckily they have all been rescheduled, especially the Day of Dance and Jimmy MacMillan's Memorial Dance. Jimmy was a special teacher many of us knew from the Summer Dancing in Westerton, and is sadly missed.

As classes have had their last party class of the term, which I hope you have all enjoyed, let us hope that Easter brings spring like weather and that March having "roared in like a lion slips out like a lamb": in preparation for our Ruby anniversary Weekend.

The organisation for this is well underway in the capable hands of Helen Cameron and her sub-committee. It has been so well supported, that the sale of tickets has ceased. So we are looking forward to an exciting weekend, with many visitors including, Jean Martin of Aberdeen (the RSCDS President) Helen Russell (the RSCDS Chairman) music by Frank Thomson and his Band (also from Aberdeen) and Marian Anderson's Band and, last but not least teacher Janet Johnston from Edinburgh (those of us who were at the Oban Weekend enjoyed her two classes on the Saturday morning - she has a beguiling humour!)

Just as a point of interest, there are a few Branch dancers who will be attending this Weekend for the 40th time, incredible but true. You are all going to enjoy this weekend whether you are attending the whole weekend, the Ball, the dance, Janet's class or her Sunday morning presentation at the coffee morning.

You will all have the information about the AGM by now, remember it has changed from September to May. This year it is on the 17th of May.

You will also have noted that David Reid has retired as treasurer and that Anne Beavan, who dances at the Branch General Class, is taking over from David. Sincere thanks to David for his commitment as Treasurer for the last 18 years and all his work for the Branch in the Committee too.

I will finish with my usual message to you all, "remember that although Classes are finished, there are Dances in other Branches throughout the summer." If you are at all interested please phone me to find out where and when and what cars are going.

Happy dancing, Pam.

Changes to Gift Aid

Gift Aid is a scheme through which the government support registered charities by returning to them the income tax already paid on gifts or subscriptions by supporters of the charity. The only requirement is that the donor must certify that the gift or subscription has been paid from income on which they have paid tax. The declaration is made once and continues automatically until cancelled by the donor; no further admin is required from the donor. At present the rate is 25%, so on every £28 single subscription the charity can reclaim £7 and on the £48 subscription £12. 40 single members and couples helping in this way realise c£300pa. A recent change in the rules has allowed claims to be made by members who do not themselves have taxed income but who have a partner (husband, wife etc.) who does. This would allow a number of our members who have previously been unable to help the branch in this way to do so. I hope that those in this position will now consider signing a form available from class reps or any committee member.

David Reid

Christmas Tree Festival

The Branch once again decorated a tree for the Annual Christmas Tree Festival in The United Reformed Church. The Festival ran during the second week in December and more trees were on display this year compared to previous years. The Branch wish to thank Irene Smith, Irene Fairbairn and Isabel Bone for decorating the Branch tree.



A Touch of Tartan

Christmas Dance



Sandy Nixon's band provided the music for the Annual Christmas Dance in Cardross Parish Church Hall on Saturday 9th December. The dance was very successful and attended by 65 dancers both locals and from further afield. Many of those who previously were unable to attend due to other Christmas events on Friday evenings appreciated the change to a Saturday. A lovely supper was provided by the Couples' Class.



Chasing the Eclipse

Members' Dance

Our Members' Dance took place on Friday 12th January in a new venue, Rhu Community Hall. Unfortunately numbers were down due to illness but members thoroughly enjoyed the music of the James Coutts Duo. Members once again provided a lovely supper. The only downside of the evening was an issue with the heating system timer but, after consulting the hall keeper, Roy Bain managed to re-set it.

Charity Dance

Over 80 dancers, both local and visitors, attended the Charity Dance on Friday 16th February. Dancers thoroughly enjoyed the vibrant, tuneful music of Ian Muir and Neil McMillan. Mark Cavana, manager of our local Cancer Research UK charity shop gave a very interesting talk and presented the first five raffle prizes. Over £1,000 was raised for the charity which is superb.



Mark Cavana



Gentleman Jim



At our last AGM Dorothy Reid told members that Ardarden Garden Centre intended to dedicate a bench to Jim Murdoch. Jim had lunched at Ardarden every week for years and was fondly thought of by the Montgomery family who own the estate.

Some Branch members made a donation towards the memorial bench and it is now to be found beside the pond in the garden. The plaque is aptly dedicated to "Gentleman Jim."

Afternoon Tea Dance



A good number of dancers attended the afternoon tea dance which took place in Helensburgh Parish Church Hall on Wednesday the 7th of February. The dance was organised by Dorothy and David Reid with music provided by Graham Murray.

The afternoon dance provided a welcome opportunity for those who are unable to get out in the evenings to go to a dance and those who attended enjoyed the afternoon get together.

Friends

Friends are those rare people who ask how we are -

And then wait to hear the answer.

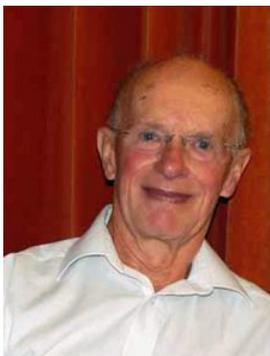
Margaret Irvine



Sadly Margaret Irvine passed away at the beginning of March. She arrived in Helensburgh in the 1970s and the then Margaret Walker continued to participate in one of her most passionate hobbies - Scottish Country Dancing. She undertook her Teaching Certificate and when the Branch were looking for teachers to teach Scottish Country Dancing in primary schools she took over from Helen Bain at Colgrain Primary in 1974. Margaret thoroughly enjoyed teaching the children at Colgrain. She set up the Colgrain Dancers who represented the school by undertaking demonstrations at a number of local events and also abroad in Helensburgh's twin town Thouars. The Colgrain Dancers also participated in a number of Festivals including the Glasgow Music Festival, the Greenock Festival and other festivals further afield. They brought back a number of trophies to the town and Margaret was very proud of their efforts. When she married Bob Irvine the pair of them continued to promote Scottish Country Dancing with children in the local area.

Anne Thorn

David Reid



David Reid, a familiar face at our dances, unravelling yards of red tartan (carefully ironed by Dorothy) to disguise the front of the stages at various halls or pinning up the dance programmes, has decided the time has come for him to step down as our Treasurer. After counting the pennies and banking the pounds for the last eighteen years he feels it is now time to

take a back seat.

David took over as treasurer eighteen years ago to 'fill a gap' and has been looking after the Branch finances ever since. Trying to keep the books straight is not always an easy task when invoices and bills are late in coming in after events especially when we have been raising money for charities when we cannot send out cheques to them until all our bills are paid.

David has devoted time and energy to the task of Treasurer, not always an easy one, and I would like to add my thanks along with our Chairman Pam Fennell to him for his work for the Branch.

Irene Smith

Our 40th Weekend School

With 39 years of experience behind us we should know how to organise a Weekend School, shouldn't we? Well, of course we do - they have all been successful. However this year is special. This is our 40th, so we need to do something special and that means more work and more cost. We began by supporting our hard working Weekend Secretary with a small sub-committee - that's organised, so where do we start?? Prepare a **Budget**. How many can we expect? At least 80 on previous years' experience. Will we manage 100 because it's "Special"? We update calculations from previous years to improve income and then keep a close watch on costs as we progress. **Publicity**, put it on the web, design & print flyers - Oh special flyer, need to make it different. 40th!! That's Ruby - ruby coloured flyers? Yes, and that leads to ruby being the base for many decisions by our sub Committee - web page, flyers, tickets, posters, napkins, napkin rings & flower decorations, all with a ruby influence. Our **design guru** provides option after option. Do we like the thistles or not? Do we prefer this font or that font? Decisions, decisions. Oh and remind the teachers there's a dance called "The Ruby Rant."



40th Anniversary – we need to celebrate with some “sparkling”, but there is a ban on alcohol at events in the school, even though it was accepted for about 36 years! What can be done – we write to the Provost (and all local councillors) asking for the ban to be lifted. After a few weeks we are advised that we are allowed a glass of wine with our meal – approved by the Provost, the Legal Dept. and the Head Teacher, now we need to think about what wine we would like and can afford.

The Teachers had devised the dance programme for the Weekend along with the other Branch events, before all this “Special” thing came about. They have amended it to include “The Ruby Rant”, then added “The Anniversary Reel”, “Janet’s Cup of Tea” and finally, at our Chairman’s suggestions “Far North Queensland” all for different reasons. By then we had reached the deadline to publish the Programme, so **no** more changes.

The initial Flyer is updated with final info on Teacher & Musicians, circulated as far and wide as we could. It was sent out on our email lists for “Friends of Helensburgh”, UK Branch Secretaries, and every SCD email address that we could lay our hands on. Printed copies were handed out at Summer School, and the Budapest Weekend, Our “travelling folk” circulated flyers everywhere they went – Troon, deepest Argyll, Glasgow, Greenock, Hamilton, Pitlochry, Crieff, Braco, Callander...

While all this is going on our Catering Convenor is talking to local caterers to see what they could offer. What menu? What can we afford? How many will attend? We need a Celebration cake - who will bake and who will decorate? What size – well how many will attend – it’s a chicken & egg situation – we do not know how many will attend therefore what size of cake we need. On two occasions we have had to request an increase in size!

Our Weekend Secretary sent invitations to the Society President (Mrs Jean Martin) and also the Society Chairman (Mrs Helen Russell) and both agreed to come and help us celebrate.

Registrations started to arrive in November 2017, continued over the Festive period and by mid-January we had 44 registrations. At the same time last year we had about 5 – a sign of things to come? Yes, we have closed Registrations (about 2 weeks early) at approx.

150 dancers for both the Ball and the Dance and 190 dancers in total attending over the Weekend.

Decoration for the Gym and the Dining Room is moving along - a mix of “Ruby” and “Yesteryear” There have been a few “sewing bees” being held, table décor planned and prepared, wall programmes & reminders of yesteryear printed etc. etc. etc.

Oh – the wine – we investigated, purchased 3 different wines within our budget as a trial, and just by chance, a few members came together and discovered they were about to “blind taste” 3 sparkling wines. A short time, and some discussion later, the decision was made on which wine we would serve for our Toast.

As you read this we will be ready, after a lot of hard work, to Celebrate 40 years of the Helensburgh Weekend School.

Our thanks to all the Weekend Secretaries who, over the years, have helped build the Weekend, and to our many SCD friends who attend year after year.

Also a VERY Special “Thank You” to Mrs Mary McIntosh, Branch Secretary in 1978 / 9 when the foundations for the Weekend were laid and to Mrs Helen Cameron, Weekend Secretary 2018, and her ever expanding team for this year’s event.

Anon

**RSCDS
Helensburgh & District
67th AGM**

**Helensburgh Parish Church Hall
Colquhoun Street
Helensburgh**

**Thursday 17th May 2018
7.30p.m.**

Followed by dancing until 10 p.m.

**Helensburgh SCD Club
Spring Classes
Starting Tuesday 17th April 2018
8 p.m.
Pillar Hall—Victoria Hall
Teacher –Anne Thorn**

Crieff January 2018

When Roy, Helen, Nan, and I set out on our journey, weather conditions were not great. It was snowing in many areas on route to Crieff, but with Roy's capable hands at the wheel we proceeded on our journey. The scenery was quite spectacular. As temperatures were very low, the snow was clinging to the conifers like curtains. It was really beautiful - a real winter wonderland. Approaching Crieff Hydro the skies looked very laden and, just as we arrived at the hotel, serious snow began to fall on the already thick snow.

Once checked in we met up for wee drink and then it was time to put on the glad rags.

The evening began with a glass of Fizz in the ball room where everyone mingled, meeting up with well kent faces from other branches in Scotland. It was very sociable.

We then made our way into the dining room to our allocated tables where we were able to chat to the other dancers at our table. We were then called forward to the serving area to make our choices for our evening meal having been served our starters by the staff. The meal was very nice with lots of choices.

The dancing began with a Grand March which is always a very colourful sight with all the dancers in their finery. The dances taking place in the ballroom weren't re-capped so Nan and I danced a couple of dances, which we knew, and then proceeded to the drawing room where the dances were re-capped. There was also a Ceilidh taking place downstairs in the Ferntower Suite. The bands were as follows: Marion Anderson, David Oswald, and Gordon Shand.

Nan and I enjoyed the dancing very much in the Drawing Room. David Oswald was playing and Anita McKenzie was re-capping the dances - a great night of dancing.

Sadly for Nan the evening ended not so well. Her foot caught on the carpet during the eight hands round in Ian Powrie's Farewell To Auchterarder, and she fell very awkwardly.

Nan had a very uncomfortable night and as we didn't know if any serious damage had been done, I thought it best that she see a doctor first thing in the morning.

Helen came along and sat with Nan, while Roy and I went down to Reception. We were able to ascertain that like many areas now, there are no GP call outs. NHS 24 was our only option but I must say they were great and very efficient.

The decision was made by them to send an ambulance to take Nan to Perth Royal where

they would be able to check her out.

On arrival at Perth Royal Nan was taken immediately to an assessment area. They were very kind and also very efficient, as was the Ambulance service. The two chaps were so nice and chatty putting us, especially Nan, at our ease. We were there most of Saturday. Thankfully Nan had no broken bones but had ligament, and tissue damage which was very painful and has kept Nan at home for a few weeks.

She was discharged about 4.30, whereupon Roy, and Helen, who had been standing by at the Hotel to hear from us, came and picked us up to return to the Hotel.

The Hotel were very caring bringing Nan her meals to the room, beautifully presented. On Nan's insistence we were to go to the dance on the Saturday night. Roy, Helen and I went down to the dance after making sure that Nan was as comfortable as she could be, being now on painkillers.

I can't speak for Roy and Helen, but my heart wasn't in the dance as I was concerned about Nan and was also very tired. The re-capped dance was in the Ferntower Suite downstairs, which was crowded, and very hot, therefore I am really unable to give a proper account of this venue. Having spoken to other dancers who were there they all seemed to have enjoyed the evening.

On a finishing note Nan is now on the mend, dancing a few dances, but taking it gently.

Irene Fairbairn

Youth

Youth is not a time of life...its a state of mind.

Nobody grows old by merely living a number of years;

People grow old only by deserting their ideals.

Years wrinkle the skin, but to give up enthusiasm wrinkles the soul.

Worry, doubt, self-distrust, fear and despair...these are the long, long years that bow the head and turn the growing spirit back to dust.

Whether seventy or sixteen, there is in every being's heart the Love

Of wonder; the sweet amazement at the stars and the star-like things

And thoughts; the undaunted challenge of events; the unfailing,

Childlike appetite for "what next?" and the joyous game of life.

You are as young as your faith, as old as your doubt.

As young as your self-confidence, as old as your fear.

As young as your hope, as old as your despair.

For Your Diary

| | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Social Dance | 27 April | 2018 | Hermitage Academy | Sandy Nixon |
| AGM | 17 May | 2018 | Helensburgh Parish Church | Best of the Bands |
| Autumn Dance | 19 October | 2018 | Helensburgh Parish Church | Màrtainn Skene |
| Cove & Kilcreggan Afternoon Dance | 24 October 2pm - 5pm | 2018 | Cove Burgh Hall | Best of the Bands |
| Annual Ball | TBC November | 2018 | TBC | TBC |
| Members' Dance | 12 January | 2019 | Helensburgh Parish Church | TBC |
| Charity Dance | 15 February | 2019 | Victoria Halls | Ian Muir |
| 41st Weekend Ball | 29 March | 2019 | Hermitage Academy | Marian Anderson |
| 41st Weekend Class | 30 March | 2019 | Hermitage Academy | Teacher TBC |
| 41st Weekend Dance | 30 March | 2019 | Hermitage Academy | Glencraig (Nicol McLaren) |
| 41st Weekend Coffee Morning | 31 March | 2019 | Commodore Hotel | Teacher TBC |

Branch Classes

General

Helensburgh Parish Church
Mondays
8.00 - 10.00
Teacher: Roy Bain 01436 842695
Starts: 1st October 2018

Couples

Helensburgh Parish Church
Thursdays
8.00 - 10.00
Teacher: Helen Bain 01436 842695
Starts: 4th October 2018

Junior Classes

Guide Hall, John Street

Tuesday

4.00 - 5.00 (5 - 10 yrs)
Teacher: H Rodger 07930156225
Starts: 18th September 2018

Guide Hall, John Street

Wednesday

4.15 - 5.15 (10yrs +)
Teacher: H Rodger 07930156225
Starts: 19th September 2018

Other adult classes in the area

Cove & Kilcreggan SCD Class

Cove Burgh Hall
Tuesdays 10.00 Teacher: Helen Bain 01436 842695
Starts: 2nd October 2018

Helensburgh SCD Club

Pillar Hall
Tuesdays 8.00 Teacher: Anne Thorn 01436 677474
Starts: 25th September 2018

Wednesday Morning SCD Class

John Street Guide Hall
Wednesdays 9.45 Teacher: Helen Rodger 07930156225
Starts: 26th September 2018

Thursday Afternoon SCD Club

Scout Hall, John Street
Thursdays 2.00 Teacher: Douglas Thomson 01436 679192
Starts: 27th September for 2 weeks then break until 25th
October 2018

Rosneath SCD Club

Rosneath Primary School
Thursdays 7.30 Teacher: Douglas Thomson for further
information contact Aileen Couper on 01436 831602
Starts: 27th September 2018 for 2 weeks then break until
25th October 2018

EDITOR Anne Thorn
TEL 01436 - 677474
E-MAIL am_thorn@hotmail.co.uk