



The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society
New Zealand Branch Incorporated

ANNUAL REPORT

2023

President's Report

As I begin to write my report, I thought about all that has happened in New Zealand over the last 4 years. My term as president began on 1st January 2020 and life was going along as normal. Then not only New Zealand but the world was hit by Covid-19, and for many of us we, or family, friends and neighbours have been affected by some of the other events listed below;

- Floods hit – Marlborough, Nelson, Upper North Island, Hawkes Bay area, Lower South Island, Central Otago
- Cyclone Gabrielle
- Earthquake hits Geraldine area

If I missed any areas out my apologies.

The Covid-19 pandemic meant two summer schools planned for Christchurch had to be cancelled. The New Zealand Branch AGM was held via Zoom for the first time. When we were all able to resume dancing many clubs had reduced numbers. Our junior classes in many areas have not recovered and are in recession while others have returned and are steadily growing.

Auckland held the first Summer School in 2022/2023, with Liz Hickey at the helm, who along with her team, set about organising the school. I am sure all who attended will agree it was a great school.

This year marked the Centennial of the Society and the Regions have been holding balls to mark the special occasion.

Some of the dances I attended: North Shore Combined Ball, Nelson's 70th, Napier's 70th, Glendarroch's 60th, Lower North Island Centennial Ball, Nelson, Marlborough, West Coast Centennial Ball.

While attending the various celebrations I took the opportunity to visit the clubs in those areas. Some of those clubs were Clive, Manawatu, Seatoun, Tawa, Ngaio, Lower Hutt, Capital City, Wellington Tuesday Class and some clubs in Christchurch when visiting my family. It is great to meet and talk to new dancers and catch up with dancers who have been dancing for a while.

To all the clubs and regions who invited me to share their special anniversary dances thank you. I enjoyed meeting your members and hearing the new dancers telling me how they started and how much they enjoy dancing.

Visits to other regions are made easier by the generosity of our dancers who open up their homes. They provide a room, food, and transport to and from not only the dance, but also the airport. I would like to acknowledge all of you personally, however, I would be embarrassed if I missed anyone out so to all who have provided me with a room to sleep, food to eat, and transportation - thank you. Thank you for your kindness and your friendship, it will always be remembered.

At the AGM 2024 the Management Committee says goodbye to Andrew Patterson who has been our Information and Technology coordinator for 7 years, Nicole Trewavas who has been our Youth coordinator for 3 years, and Lesley Nicol who has been our Treasurer for 1 year. Thank you all for your hard work and support.

Thank you to Debbie Roxburgh, Joy Dick, Jeanette Watson, and Su Marshall for your hard work and support and I am sure you will all continue to work hard for the members of the New Zealand Branch.

Lastly to all the members thank you for your support and for your feedback.

Linda Glavin

Vice-President's Report

Documentation: During 2023 the remaining Management Committee job descriptions have been reviewed. The revised job descriptions for President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Education and Training Coordinator, and Youth Coordinator have been made available prior to being tabled at the 2024 AGM. All job descriptions are available on the NZ Branch website.

The Branch Guidelines and general documentation are included in a continuous review process with relevant sections being updated as processes change.

Thanks to extensive work by Liz Hickey, during and after the Auckland Summer School, the Summer School Guidelines have been expanded and updated. These will be invaluable to future Summer School Organisers.

Strategic Planning: The Management Committee has been working to take a more planned and considered approach to its work. To help achieve this, we developed Strategic aims for the NZ Branch and Strategic priorities for 2022-2023. These can both be found on the NZ Branch website

Branch Schools: I have been liaising with the organisers of future Summer Schools, especially the Nelson 2023-2024 organiser Doug Mills. I am pleased to report that we have confirmed schools in Wellington 2024-2025 organiser Ann Oliver, and Christchurch 2025-2026 organiser Graeme Plank.

Debbie Roxburgh

Communications, Publicity and Membership Coordinator's Report

Well, 2023 has certainly been an exciting one with myriad events held around the country to celebrate the RSCDS Centenary year. It has been a joy to share as many of these events as I could via the NZ Branch Facebook page – and to have so many people comment, react and engage with these posts. It feels like we're getting a real online community going to support our off-line activities.

Membership has just been completed at time of writing and our current numbers stand at 670 members. This is a small increase over 2022/23. The 69 new members signed up at this time, plus those who joined through the year, are enough to have arrested the backwards slide of last year. It would be easy to see RSCDS membership fees as an 'optional cost', but we only have to look at the latest RSCDS book (53) and the inclusion of two beloved NZ devised dances, as well as the inclusion of the Pick-Up 52 project in the 'Dance Scottish Together' e-newsletter to be reminded that we really are part of an international organisation that includes Aotearoa within their purview.

We have updated the Welcome Pack to send out to new members, based on the pack used by Edinburgh. This not only provides a modern facelift to the Welcome Pack, but ensures a cohesive look with HQ, and again reminds us that we are part of a worldwide community.

During the year we made the decision to join the MAC News and Kiwi News in to one publication and I believe this has ensured all the MAC updates have been more widely read. Making our communication more open and two-way just makes good sense.

I am indebted to Désirée Patterson for all her work in editing the Kiwi News and the Scottish Country Dancer magazine. Bringing it all together is a mighty job and she makes it look easy.

I also send thanks to our outgoing IT Coordinator, Andy Patterson, for his patience in guiding me through the curlicues of navigating our membership databases.

Su Marshall

Treasurer's Report

At the time of writing the Accounts have yet to be audited, they are complete but may require a couple of small adjustments.

This has been a more stable and normal year for dancing in New Zealand. Many clubs have gained new members and some former members who retreated on account of the Covid pandemic have returned. However, membership has decreased by nearly 11% from 2021/22. Fortunately, the increase in the Branch Service fee to \$55 has resulted in an increase in the fees collected.

The increase in Branch Service Fee income reflects the return of pre-Covid fee level. The Adult single fee (not email) was \$55 in 19/20, \$30 in 20/21, \$45 in 21/22 and \$55 in 22/23.

Financial Membership Numbers	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Adult Joint	54	47	42	33	32
Adult Joint Email	152	154	163	172	141
Adult Single	146	127	106	97	75
Adult Single Email	357	375	376	406	382
NZ Branch Life	7	8	8	8	8
RSCDS Life	5	5	6	5	4
RSCDS Life Email	6	6	5	5	4
RSCDS Life Family	3	2	1		
Young Adult (18-24)	1	2	2	1	1
Young Adult Email (18-24)	5	6	7	5	6
Totals	736	732	716	732	653

The Auckland Summer School went ahead with 127 registered attendees and 97 dancing in morning classes. The Auckland Summer School made a profit of \$127.07.

After delays caused by cancellation of the previous two Summer Schools, Unit 3 exams were held at the Auckland Summer School.

Scholarships that had previously been granted for attendance to Christchurch Summer School were carried forward and combined with the Auckland Summer School Scholarships.

The President has been able to resume travel and attend a few Regions' functions this year, and so has made use of the President's Travel Budget. Being the Centenary of the Society, Management Committee made a grant of \$400 available to each Region for help with organizing a Centenary event. Most Regions took up this offer, as shown in the Other Branch Event Costs.

Management Committee was able to meet in-person at mid-year. All members (excluding two residents) travelled to Palmerston North in July for a highly productive weekend.

Because of rising inflation in the country and increased bank interest rates, we have had a significant increase in the interest earned on Term Deposits.

The IT Coordinator recommended we change our Web Hosting supplier, which involved a one-off cost to transfer the data. We have started using Zoom for more meetings, which incurs a Zoom Subscription.

Kiwi News postage is lower because there was prepaid postage carried forward from last year. Kiwi News printing is higher because it includes expenses not claimed last year.

Lesley Nicol

Education and Training Coordinator's Report

Teacher Development

Planning is underway for a weekend workshop for teachers and others interested, in 2024 at Easter (29 Mar to 1 Apr). A venue is booked and accommodation pencilled in. A tutor and musician have been invited. Teachers have been asked to register their interest so we know there is sufficient interest to continue. Further details will be available later in 2023.

Discussions have been initiated with the RSCDS E&T Coordinator on offering of a Tutors and Mentors course at the 2025/26 Summer School.

Discussions with the Australian Teachers Association (ATA) are underway to maintain a more coordinated teacher development approach on this side of the world.

Examinations

7 candidates took their Unit 3 exams (plus two Unit 2 re-sits) at Auckland Summer School - a big thank you to the Unit 3 candidates who helped out as extra bodies in the Unit 2 set. Well done to the candidates for persevering in the face of the cancellation of their Christchurch exams, and congratulations on the passes achieved. This coming Summer School offers a Teacher Preparation class, with a Unit 3 re-sit/Unit 5 class in Wellington in 2024/25. Candidates will be doing their Unit 4 teaching record in the meantime.

Congratulations to the 2 candidates who have achieved Unit 1 passes already and good luck to those 5 others due to take Unit 1 in Oct 23 and Mar 24. A great 'pipeline' of new teachers coming through.

Core Training for Instructors

The Branch has provided feedback to the RSCDS on this new initiative (launched Oct 21). This scheme offers a different pathway for people interested in teaching at club level and who do not have the time or footwork to go through all the steps leading to full certification as a teacher. The concept of a less formal and less intensive training course is a good one, but there continue to be some further improvements to make. The Branch does not yet get information on who from New Zealand is doing the course, and who has passed. Further information on the course is available on the RSCDS website.

Only one teacher in New Zealand has become a Trainer for this new scheme, yet. I encourage other eligible teachers to look at doing the Trainer qualification, so that NZ Branch can offer those dancers interested in taking the CTI qualification a Trainer without any "time-difference" issues!

The Branch now pays candidates' exam fees – including for CTI and CTI Trainer courses.

Music

Lynne Scott, the Branch Music Advisor, continues her great work to encourage musicians to play for Scottish Country Dancing, and personal mentoring activities at Upper Hutt and Capital City clubs, advising on programme, providing suitable music, arranging and supervising rehearsals and supporting performances.

She has also written articles for the Wellington Region newsletter, Kiwi News and NZ Scottish Country Dancer on the 2022/3 Musicians Course at Auckland Summer School, a summary of regular live music in Wellington clubs, a guide to encouraging musicians into your club, and "A Day in the Life of a SCD musician". Lynne has also updated the Musicians' Register on the Branch website.

Lynne has taught Musicians Courses at Auckland Summer School, and musicians' sessions at King's Birthday Weekend school and Labour Weekend School. She has consulted with the E&T Coordinator and organizing committees on the Musicians Class for Nelson Summer School, the Exam Musician and international musicians for Wellington Summer School, and the 2024 Teachers' Workshop.

She is available to consult on any tune they can't find, temporary keyboards for use, and modern devices to play dance music, or any other music-related question you may have.

Jeanette Watson

Youth Coordinator's Report

At the Auckland Summer School 2022-2023, the JAM committee had an impromptu JAM meeting as all were present. The most significant outcome from our discussion was the JAM membership fee. The annual fee has been set at \$5 per JAM since JAMs in NZ started back in the late 1990s and we felt the fees needed to increase to reflect current costs. The annual JAM membership fee currently now stands at \$15 per JAM or \$25 for a family with 2 or more JAMs.

We planned to hold an event for the JAM/Youth to celebrate the RSCDS centenary but unfortunately, we had expression of interest from only 6 people meaning we were unable to go ahead and continue to plan the event.

We are unable to hold medal tests or 'camps' as there are insufficient numbers in the JAM/Youth category to make it worthwhile. Melbourne asked New Zealand if we would be interested in running AWEsome/Southern Fling/Spring Fling in the Southern Hemisphere next year, but we declined as we do not have the "manpower" or sufficient number of dancers in that age-group to organise the event. For example, I was the only New Zealander to attend the event held in Sydney October 2022.

The RSCDS now offers a 'Youth Membership' for ages 12-17 years, costing £13. This is something we as the NZ Branch may need to consider offering. This is also another reason why we increased the JAM fee so it wouldn't be too big of a shock if we decide to go that way. How that will look, I am unsure.

Membership: Many regions and clubs are struggling to attract young dancers and many JAM groups are still in recess. If the JAM membership stays low, the next Youth Co-ordinator could do all JAM committee roles – i.e., membership and Jigs and More. A medal test coordinator is not required at this stage.

Nicole Trewavas

Information Technology Coordinator's Report

The role of IT Coordinator was created six years ago in order that day to day responsibility for all technical issues could be assigned to a single individual, allowing other members of the Branch Management to focus on their particular tasks. A single point of contact, where appropriate, may also have resulted in improved communication with Regions, Clubs and individual members. An additional benefit of this structure is that it opened up the possibility for further development and organisational changes which might not otherwise have taken place, particular examples being the relaunch of the Branch website and a major overhaul of RSCDS membership renewal.

While such projects have now largely settled down, they provide a firm basis for further improvements. The year began by moving the hosting of the Branch domain, dancescottish.org.nz, to my preferred NZ-based provider which should enable the IT Coordinator to respond promptly to any issues which effect the availability of the website and email services. This was also an opportunity to close down the previous domain name, rscdsnz.org.nz, which has been inactive for several years. Other developments have been carried out in cooperation with the Vice President and Coordinators, such as extensions to the scope of the website, implementation of new requirements related to Incorporated Societies and a strategy for ensuring the accuracy of the membership database.

Alongside such developments and the core activities which have occupied most of my time, my final year in the role has been one of consolidation and planning the handover to my successor on 1st January 2024.

Andy Patterson

Shopkeeper's Report

There has been a steady flow of requests for books and CDs during the year. The sales have, however, been boosted in the last couple of months by the release of the new book from the RSCDS and accompanying CDs, to commemorate their 100th anniversary.

The shop didn't manage to attend any weekend schools this year due to my being overseas in the middle of the year when I would usually have attended the Queen's Birthday Weekend School in the Waikato/Bay of Plenty region.

The main trading for the year came from Summer School in Auckland and the recent issuance of commemorative Book 53 and CDs.

The shop is looking forward to Summer School in Stoke, near Nelson where I will have a range of recently published books and CDs available for purchase.

Sue Pearson