

## **Minutes of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society (RSCDS) NZ Branch Annual General Meeting 2025**

Held on Wednesday 1 January 2025 at Scots College Hall, 1 Monorgan Road, Strathmore Park, Wellington, commencing at 1:30pm

### **PRESENT (36)**

**Management Committee (5):** Debbie Roxburgh (President), Lesley Nicol (Vice-President & Acting Treasurer), Jeanette Lauder (Youth Coordinator), Jeanette Watson (Education and Training Coordinator), Joy Dick (Secretary)

### **Delegates (21):**

*Auckland-Northland:* Katharine Hoskyn, Patrick Henley, Trish Henley, Winston Sweatman, Sandra Wyeth

*Canterbury:* Liz Hickey, Doreen Pearey, Graeme Plank

*Nelson-Marlborough-West Coast:* Noleen Harper, Vicky Heslop, Dianne Johnston

*Otago-Southland:* Ruth Taylor

*Rangitikei:* Elaine Godfrey, Paul Roxburgh

*Waikato-Bay of Plenty:* Wayne McConnel, Shelley McConnel, Andrew Patterson, Jeanette Patterson

*Wellington:* Debbie Stephens, Joy Tracey, Elaine Lethbridge

**Others (9):** James Scott, Ivan Roxburgh, Linda Roxburgh, Anna Verhaegh, Mike Ross, Doug Mills, Alison Trotter, Margaret Cantwell, Andrew Oliver

**Guest (1):** Fiona Miller

**OPENING:** The President welcomed everyone to the 57th Annual General Meeting, thanking them for giving up their afternoon and declared the meeting open. The President reminded attendees to ensure they signed the attendance register if they had not already done so. The President reminded participants “the business that we are doing at the AGM is to foster the enjoyment and promotion of Scottish country dancing. This is also a General Meeting managing matters of concern to the Branch. Any members of the Branch can speak and raise questions at the meeting.” The President also reminded participants that the aim was to run the meeting as efficiently as possible, but also to be friendly and inclusive.

There were three items to be included under Other Business; Summer School Scholarships, Music Advisor Job Description and RSCDS events. Two additional items were submitted from the floor; voting reporting and AGM processes.

Time-keepers were Ivan Roxburgh and Linda Roxburgh; scrutineers were Doug Mills and Ivan Roxburgh.

**GREETINGS:** New Zealand Branch had not received any greetings.

**APOLOGIES:** – Lydia Hedge, Su Marshall, Ian Marshall, Elizabeth MacDonald, Hazel Fish, Fiona McCutcheon, Margaret Bailey Allison, Linda Glavin, Lynda Aitcheson, Sue Lindsay, Sharlene Penman, Elaine Laidlaw, Ruth Budden, Quentin Currall, Ruth Currall, Emily Currall, Anne Shepherd, Ronni Cullen, Isabel Jackson, Sharon Plank, Janet Stephenson, Maureen Sullivan, Chris Totton, Glenice Saunders, Ann Oliver, Katherine Uren, Andrew Uren, Sue Pearson, Ian Pearson, Hannah Roxburgh.

THAT apologies be accepted.

Moved by Debbie Roxburgh Seconded by Shelley McConnel CARRIED.

**BEREAVEMENTS:** The following members of our dancing community passed away in 2024. In alphabetical order they were;

Penny Allen, Pat Angel, Peter Armstrong, Edith Campbell, Jean Denne, Waillin Elliott, Pam Godfrey, Elizabeth Hartwell, George Lambert, Fred Margetts, Allan Mason, Bronwyn Maysmor, Kathleen McLean, Noeline McQueen, Neville Miller, Randy Skelton, Ian Taylforth, Betty Thom, Brenda Wheatley.

The President asked all attendees to stand for a minute's silence.

### **ROLL CALL**

The President noted the AGM uses delegate voting, which means that the dancers in each Region are represented by nominated delegates. There were 21 delegates present, representing all 8 Regions. The number of votes allowed per Region, based on the number of NZ Branch Members in each, is as follows, with a total of 37 possible votes if all Regions fully participated in the voting:

- 12 Auckland (5 delegates; 2 with 3 votes each, 3 with 2 votes)
- 6 Canterbury (3 delegates - 2 votes each)
- 1 Hawkes Bay-East Coast (no delegate present, appointed a proxy)
- 3 Nelson-Marlborough-West Coast (3 delegates; 1 vote each)
- 2 Otago-Southland (1 delegate with 2 votes)
- 3 Rangitikei (2 delegates; 1 with 2 votes, 1 with 1 vote)
- 4 Waikato-Bay of Plenty (4 delegates; 1 vote each)
- 6 Wellington (3 delegates; 2 votes each)

**LIFE MEMBERS:** The Vice-President welcomed to the meeting NZ Branch Life Members Debbie Roxburgh and Doug Mills.

**VISITOR:** The President welcomed to the meeting RSCDS Management Board trustee Fiona Miller from Alberta, Canada.

### **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS AGM**

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 January 2024 were sent to Members earlier in the year and are published on the Branch website.

THAT the minutes be taken as read.

Moved by Debbie Roxburgh                      Seconded by Joy Tracey                      CARRIED

THAT the minutes are a true and correct record of the meeting.  
 Moved by Debbie Roxburgh                      Seconded by Liz Hickey                      CARRIED

### **BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES:**

There were no matters arising.

### **ANNUAL REPORTS**

The President's and Treasurer's reports were considered individually; the remaining Management Committee reports were considered as a group.

#### **President's Report**

The President added to her report that NZ Branch recognises members who make significant contributions at the national level, and reminded participants of the importance to acknowledge contributions at the regional level. The President encouraged participants to go back to their own regions to consider appropriate ways to put that into effect. There were no questions from the floor.

THAT the President's Report be accepted.

Moved by Debbie Roxburgh                      Seconded by Elaine Lethbridge                      CARRIED

### Treasurer's Report and approval of the Annual financial Statements

The Acting Treasurer, Lesley Nicol, advised the Treasurer's report was in the AGM papers sent to each member in November 2024. The auditor's report and audited final financial information (which are on the NZ Branch website), were emailed to all delegates on 22 December and a copy was available in the AGM papers given to each region. Lesley noted the slight increase in member numbers, but as more members took the option of email membership, there was a reduction in total fees paid. Other points of interest included: Nelson Summer School's profit of around \$4000; the Easter Teachers' Weekend was so successful, the loss was only \$256; the good year for revenue from interest; the considerable increase in cost of postage and printing; increase in insurance cost which was modest compared to personal insurance increases as NZ Branch cover is for public liability only.

Questions and comments from the floor included: the extent of public liability insurance cover – region events/Summer Schools are covered, regions need to approach Management Committee for details; strong appreciation for the Teachers' Weekend; an accounting query regarding an omission, but it turned out no omission had been made.

THAT the Treasurer's report be accepted.

Moved by Lesley Nicol

Seconded by Liz Hickey

CARRIED

THAT the financial statements be accepted.

Moved by Lesley Nicol

Seconded by Joy Tracey

CARRIED

### Management Committee Reports

**Communication, Publicity & Membership:** Debbie Roxburgh advised Su Marshall was not able to attend and had nothing to add to her report.

**Information Technology:** Debbie Roxburgh advised Fiona McCutcheon was not able to attend, but reported Fiona is looking at making subtle changes to the way information is presented on the website with the aim of making information even easier for members to find.

**Youth:** Jeanette Lauder advised her emphasis had been on building communication between groups, and thanked those groups supporting young dancers. Jeanette encouraged participants to advise her of any young dancers in their clubs as RSCDS offers free Junior Membership for children under 12-years-old. Jeanette is also working on JAM committee guidelines and aims to initiate region events to help build numbers as the initial step towards a JAM camp.

**Education and Training (E&T):** – Jeanette Watson spoke to the Bernice Kelly (BK) bequest which is for training and development of teachers. The bequest is already funding exam fees, but some CTI candidates may have missed out if they registered directly with RSCDS. The bequest has also contributed to candidates' expenses. The Easter Teachers' Weekend was planned to be substantially supported by the BK bequest, but enrolments were considerably greater than expected; in the end, little support was necessary. Plans for BK bequest support include the Tutors & Mentors class at Summer School 2025-26, and roll-out of the 'How-to' workshop held in Canterbury 2024. E&T encouraged ideas from Regions on how the BK bequest could support teacher training and development according to the needs of any Region. The intention is to use the bequest in a manner which is different from customary Branch support (e.g., venues for exam classes). From the floor came the comment that Waikato & Bay of Plenty hosted a workshop like that in Canterbury; the BK bequest would have supported it if E&T had known of the event.

There were no further questions or comments.

THAT the reports from the four Coordinators on Management Committee be accepted.

Moved by Debbie Roxburgh

Seconded by Debbie Stephens

CARRIED

## ELECTION OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The names of the nominees and the nominators and seconders as given in the AGM papers were read out one at a time.

Debbie Roxburgh vacated the chair; Lesley Nicol as Vice-President assumed the chair.

**President:** Debbie Roxburgh – nominated by Elaine Laidlaw; seconded by Glenice Saunders  
As there was only one nomination, the Vice-President asked if it was the wish of the meeting that Debbie Roxburgh be President of the New Zealand Branch for 2025.  
AGREED WITH ACCLAMATION

Debbie Roxburgh resumed the chair.

**Vice-President:** Lesley Nicol – nominated by Glenis Cameron; seconded by Liz Lusher  
As there was only one nomination, the President asked if it was the wish of the meeting that Lesley Nicol be Vice-President of the New Zealand Branch for 2025  
AGREED WITH ACCLAMATION

**Secretary:** Joy Dick – nominated by Jaki Williams; seconded by Gae Stephenson  
As there was only one nomination, the President asked if it was the wish of the meeting that Joy Dick be Secretary of the New Zealand Branch for 2025  
AGREED WITH ACCLAMATION

**Education and Training Coordinator:** Hazel Fish – nominated by Jeanette Watson; seconded by Quentin Currall  
As there was only one nomination, the President asked if it was the wish of the meeting that Hazel Fish be Education and Training Coordinator of the New Zealand Branch for 2025  
AGREED WITH ACCLAMATION

**IT Coordinator:** Fiona McCutcheon – nominated by Elizabeth Ferguson; seconded by Nicole Trewavas  
As there was only one nomination, the President asked if it was the wish of the meeting that Fiona McCutcheon IT Coordinator of the New Zealand Branch for 2025  
AGREED WITH ACCLAMATION

**Communication, Publicity and Membership Coordinator:** Su Marshall – nominated by Mike Ross; seconded by Ian Marshall  
As there was only one nomination, the President asked if it was the wish of the meeting that Su Marshall be Communication, Publicity and Membership Coordinator of the New Zealand Branch for 2025  
AGREED WITH ACCLAMATION

**Youth Coordinator:** Jeanette Lauder – nominated by Robyn Howes; seconded by Jill Littlewood  
As there was only one nomination, the President asked if it was the wish of the meeting that Jeanette Lauder be Youth Coordinator of the New Zealand Branch for 2025  
AGREED WITH ACCLAMATION

**Treasurer:** No nomination was received as at 31 August 2024, but a nomination for Debbie Stephens was received on 28 September 2024 – nominated by Catherine McCutcheon; seconded by Sharlene Penman. A copy of Debbie Stephens's profile was distributed to each region.

The President called for further nominations for Treasurer from the floor. No nomination was put forward. Comments and questions included: the specific skill set required by any incumbent; the low number of nominations received for any role in any year; reassurance that Management Committee supports any new member while acknowledging some roles are more

complex and technical; suggestion from the floor that NZ Branch consider paying for external support or advice for those technical roles and those in the regulatory area to the extent of considering paid roles; Management Committee to review nominees' qualification and seek advice if necessary.

As there was only one nomination for Treasurer, the President asked if it was the wish of the meeting that Debbie Stephens be Treasurer of the New Zealand Branch for 2025.

AGREED WITH ACCLAMATION

Management Committee of the NZ Branch for 2025 was declared to be - Debbie Roxburgh, Lesley Nicol, Debbie Stephens, Hazel Fish, Fiona McCutcheon, Su Marshall, Jeanette Lauder and Joy Dick. The President congratulated all successful nominees.

**Handover to incoming E&T Coordinator:** Jeanette Watson would continue in the E&T Coordinator role with Hazel Fish as her shadow until completion of Unit 5 exams' administration.

### **INTERESTS REGISTER**

The President explained the 2022 Incorporated Societies Act requires organisations to maintain a register of interests held by Officers that may conflict with the purposes of the organisation. The information in the Interests Register must be read out at the AGM. Since NZ Branch is not yet registered under the 2022 Act, it is not obliged either to maintain a register or read out its contents, but Management Committee decided to conduct the practice before re-registration under the 2022 Act. The sole item on the register related to employment conditions set by one Officer's employer, which require the employer to be notified of any hint of financial irregularity in any situation.

### **APPOINTMENT OF BANK SIGNATORIES**

THAT the bank signatories be the four Officers of the New Zealand Branch - Debbie Roxburgh, President; Lesley Nicol, Vice President; Joy Dick, Secretary; Debbie Stephens, Treasurer. Any two can approve online transactions.

Moved by Lesley Nicol                      Seconded by Joy Tracey                      CARRIED

### **NOTICES OF MOTION**

The President reminded the meeting that as with any AGM, there is a timing and speaking processes. A Notice of Motion, which has been moved and seconded, is put to the meeting. Attendees then have an opportunity to ask questions or speak by raising their hand. Voting then follows.

The maximum time allocations were advised; proposer 4 minutes, seconder 3 minutes, speakers 2 minutes, right of reply 3 minutes for both proposer and seconder. If they wish, seconds may waive their speaking rights, also proposers and seconds may waive their right of reply. Timekeepers had been asked to ring a bell 30 seconds before the maximum time allowance and at the end of the maximum time.

**Voting by delegates;** the President advised the meeting was trialling a change in procedure. Instead of the past practice whereby individual delegate cards were counted by scrutineers, each region had been supplied with three laminated sheets (FOR, AGAINST, ABSTAIN), a whiteboard pen and cloths. Region delegates were asked to write the number of votes in each category on the relevant sheet. Scrutineers were asked to add the number votes in each category.

## **FINANCIAL NOTICES OF MOTION** (see Appendix A: AGM 2025 papers for details)

### **1. Appointment of an auditor or reviewer (delegate voting)**

The President explained the AGM papers held a Notice of Motion to appoint Cross Financial Services as auditor. Recently, however, Management Committee received information that Cross Financial Services would no longer be able to act as auditor. Consequently, Lesley Nicol would propose an amendment to be put to the vote; if passed, the amended motion would be put to the vote.

The proposed amendment was as follows;

THAT Management Committee be given the authority to appoint a new auditor for the 2024-2025 financial year.

Proposed by: Lesley Nicol

Seconded by: Debbie Roxburgh

Voting: FOR: 36 AGAINST: 0 ABSTAIN: 0

The amended Notice of Motion (which had the same wording as the amendment) was put to the vote.

THAT Management Committee be given the authority to appoint a new auditor for the 2024-2025 financial year.

Voting: FOR: 36 AGAINST: 0 ABSTAIN: 0

The President declared the amended Notice of Motion took effect.

Agenda items 2-5 under Financial Notices of Motion were subject to individual voting. The President explained as in the previous year, online voting results were held until the AGM to allow postal votes to arrive. Postal votes had been counted on 1 January 2025 by the scrutineers and had been added to the online votes for each Notice of Motion. The combined results would be published on the NZ Branch website. There were 684 members who were eligible to vote; 199 voted (29%).

The Secretary read out each of the questions from the voting paper and announced the number of votes For, Against, Abstain at each question. A summary statement at each Notice of Motion and amendment is given below.

### **2. Determination of Membership Fees for 2025/26 (Q1)**

THAT the New Zealand Branch Service Fee for 2025/26 for all forms of membership increase by \$1 compared to the fees as agreed at the AGM 1 January 2024. The New Zealand Branch fee is added to the RSCDS fee to obtain the total fee paid by members.

Voting: FOR: 183 AGAINST: 14 ABSTAIN: 2

### **3. Management Committee expenses + 2 amendments (Q2A to Q2F)**

The President reminded the meeting that the Notice of Motion had two proposed amendments. Members were asked first to vote on each amendment; then to vote on the motion, assuming it had been amended as necessary to reflect the outcome of voting on amendments. The final motion had four possible forms depending on whether neither, one, the other, or both amendments was/were passed.

Because this vote happened online or by post before the AGM, members' votes on all four possible forms of the final motion were required, even though only one of those would be the actual one that reflected the outcome of the voting on amendments and would, therefore, be the one presented at the AGM.

### **Reminder of the original Notice of Motion**

THAT 100% of the Summer School Accommodation cost be reimbursed for each Management Committee position. To offset the increase, Honoraria for each Management Committee position

would be discontinued. This would apply for the financial year (1 September 2024[sic] to 31 August 2025[sic]).

Please note: the financial year should have read 1 September 2025 to 31 August 2026. This was an error brought forward from the papers for NZ Branch AGM 2024.

**First proposed amendment relating to NZ Branch Management Committee Expenses (Q2A)**

THAT the original Notice of Motion be amended by inserting the words “...and meals” after ‘Summer School Accommodation’ and before ‘cost be reimbursed’, so the motion would read: “..... that 100% of Summer School Accommodation and Meals cost be reimbursed for the following branch positions.....”

Voting: FOR: 135 AGAINST: 54 ABSTAIN: 10

**Second proposed amendment relating to NZ Branch Management Committee Expenses (Q2B)**

THAT the first line of the original Notice of Motion be amended to read: “”.....that 50% of the Summer School Accommodation cost be reimbursed for the following branch positions.....”

Voting: FOR: 73 AGAINST: 111 ABSTAIN: 14

The President once again reminded the meeting that members voted on ALL of four possible outcomes, but only one would be reported at the AGM; that is, the amended motion reflecting the outcome of voting on the two amendments.

The Secretary read out the amended motion.

THAT Management Committee proposes that 100% of the Summer School Accommodation and Meals cost be reimbursed for the following branch positions. To offset this increase the Management Committee proposes that the Honoraria for the following Management Committee positions be discontinued.

- a) President
- b) Vice President
- c) Treasurer
- d) Secretary
- e) Communications, Publicity and Membership Co-ordinator
- f) Education and Training Co-ordinator
- g) Information Technology Co-ordinator
- h) Youth Co-ordinator

Voting: FOR: 126 AGAINST: 58 ABSTAIN: 15

The President declared the amended Notice of Motion took effect.

The President added that if anyone present was interested in the results of the other three possible outcomes, they could see the Secretary after the meeting closed or wait for the appendix to the 2025 AGM minutes (See Appendix B for results of all questions in the 2025 AGM individual voting paper).

**4. Honoraria for non-Management Committee position holders (Q3)**

THAT the annual honorarium for 2024/25 for each non-Management Committee position holder remains the same as accepted at the AGM on 1 January 2024.

Voting: FOR: 188 AGAINST: 6 ABSTAIN: 5

**5. President’s Travel Budget**

**New Zealand Branch President’s Travel Budget (Q4)**

THAT the President’s travel budget for the 2025 calendar year remains the same as accepted at the AGM on 1 January 2024.

Voting: FOR: 191 AGAINST: 6 ABSTAIN: 2

**New Zealand Branch President's Travel Budget (Q5)**

THAT the President's Travel budget be increased by 10% annually.

Voting: FOR: 102 AGAINST: 79 ABSTAIN: 18

The President explained that since two motions on the same subject had passed, the increase of 10% would be put into effect from 2026 onwards, which meant that no Notice of Motion for the President's travel would be put forward for the next AGM.

**Matter arising from the Financial Notices of Motion for AGM 2025**

The President explained it was brought to Management Committee's attention that there was an error in the Notice of Motion for Management Committee expenses presented to the 2024 AGM. A paper had been prepared outlining what took place and indicating the dates that should have been in the motion. The paper included a retrospective amendment and was distributed (see Appendix B for details). Delegates were asked to consider the paper and its retrospective amendment; then the amendment would be put to the vote and if passed, the amended motion would be put to the vote.

**Retrospective amendment to Notice of Motion (see Appendix C for details)**

THAT that the amendment to correct dates be accepted

Proposed by: Lesley Nicol Seconded by: Vicky Heslop

Voting: FOR: 35 AGAINST: 0 ABSTAIN: 0

The amended Notice of Motion was put to the vote.

THAT in the financial year 2024/25, reimbursement to Management Committee position holders for attendance at summer meetings and the AGM remains the same as accepted at the AGM on 1 January 2023.

Voting: FOR: 36 AGAINST: 0 ABSTAIN: 0

The President advised the meeting Management Committee would undertake to consider ways of simplifying how dates are expressed on Notices of Motion in order to reduce the chance of similar errors in future.

**OTHER NOTICES OF MOTION**

The President reminded the meeting item 1 was subject to individual voting; item 2 was subject to delegate voting.

**1. Reregistration of NZ Branch as an incorporated society (Q6)**

THAT NZ Branch reregisters as an incorporated society under the Incorporated Societies Act 2022 and shall do so before April 2026.

Voting: FOR: 189 AGAINST: 0 ABSTAIN: 10

The President explained the next motion and its amendment involved alterations to the constitution and were therefore subject to voting by delegates. The Constitution states that the quorum is not less than two-thirds of the votes available to be cast at the meeting (section 9.1). 37 votes were available; therefore the quorum was 25.

**2. NZ Branch Constitution – amendments to reflect changes to the Incorporated Societies Act + 1 amendment**

The Secretary as proposer of both the Notice of Motion and its later amendment explained that all listed alterations were minor, that many (and more consequential) required alterations to the Constitution had already been completed and accepted at previous AGMs. Items a) to e) were details listed in Section 26 of the 2022 Incorporated Societies Act as being necessary for a



compliant Constitution, items g) and h) were implicit, and items f) and i) were part of the 2022 Act, not listed in Section 26, but were items which had the potential to be overlooked by future Management Committee members if not stated in the Constitution. Discussion included advocacy of item f) removal as well as strong support for its inclusion particularly as its wording did not specifically refer to the year of the Act.

The amendment was put to the vote.

THAT items f) to i) inclusive be added to the list of 'Proposed amendments to the NZ Branch Constitution'.

Voting: For: 36 Against: 0 Abstain: 0

The amended motion was put to the vote.

THAT the NZ Branch Constitution be amended to reflect the Incorporated Societies Act 2022 (the new Act) by increasing the list under the heading 'Proposed amendments to the NZ Branch Constitution' to items a) to i) inclusive.

Voting: For: 36 Against: 0 Abstain: 0

The President declared the amended Notice of Motion took effect.

## **FUTURE SUMMER SCHOOLS**

### **Christchurch 2025-26 (Graeme Plank, Organiser)**

Graeme Plank reported arrangements were well advanced with 3 overseas musicians and 1 overseas teacher confirmed. Accommodation would be single secure rooms in a refurbished College House. Brochures and website for information and registration were imminent.

The President invited the Vice-President, Lesley Nicol, to speak to the document titled "Future of Summer Schools" which was distributed with the AGM papers and invited feedback. At the time of distribution and the current meeting, there was no confirmed location or organiser for Summer School 2026-27. Further discussion in regions was encouraged for ideas on future summer schools. Lesley had received two replies – one which described similar experience in running multi-day schools, had found a remotely-located organising committee was unable to address local issues in a suitable manner, and therefore favoured a model of central funding but with local organisation. The second, while pointing out that timing of Summer School during a family-focussed holiday period may be an issue, also acknowledged there still appeared to be demand despite the timing, and raised the following issues; consideration of a shorter school; the aging of the current pool of attendees and experienced organisers; general difficulty in attracting and retaining new dancers; consideration of co-organising, i.e., one experienced organiser working with a much less experienced organiser/dancer.

Discussion included the following;

- Scots College has proved to be an excellent venue, consider alternating Wellington and Christchurch (i.e., College House) with organising committee made up of location-dependent roles (e.g., assessing class venues) and location-independent roles (e.g., treasurer, website, communication), any profits to be shared with the region; a concern would be the potential for 'sameness', however this has not proved to be an issue for St Andrews; Nelson Summer Schools shown to be an example where the venue was 2 hours' travel from the organiser's residence
- Consider carefully how much the dancing community values Summer Schools; if Summer Schools disappear from the calendar for a period, the risk is they may never resume
- High registration numbers overall at Wellington; high number of first-time and overseas registrations; all evidence of returned enthusiasm for multi-day schools in the dancing community; committee worked hard to attract first-timers and dancers in general; tried many different approaches - seemingly successfully; Scots College apparently in favour of hosting an event over the New Year period; concern would be the potential for

- exhausting local support
- New Year period has proved to be an issue for tourist destinations such as Nelson; multi-day events in such locations could be shorter; cost of such locations could be viewed as a barrier
- Multi-day events have become shorter with time (Summer Schools were once a fortnight long; reminder that the longer the event, the expense per night reduces; current length preferred; Hogmanay must be part of Summer School; consider promoting in the wider community Hogmanay as a special event
- The high range of registration types at Wellington was greatly appreciated; acknowledgement of the resulting organisational challenges
- All feedback to be collated for distribution to regions with request for further input

## **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **1. RSCDS events\* (Fiona Miller, RSCDS Management Board Trustee)**

Fiona Miller expressed congratulations on NZ Branch's 57<sup>th</sup> AGM and its associated Summer School, and brought greetings from TAC (Teachers' Association (Canada)). Recently, Fiona had attended a TAC meeting which asked similar questions about multi-day events.

Background – for a long time, TAC held a week-long school in the same location, run by volunteers with minimal honoraria; attendees gradually dwindled to those living nearby. TAC chose to rotate through four venues, but some local committees eventually said they did not wish to run the school every four years. Similarly to NZ, exams held with angels (i.e., stooges) required; some great locations but insufficient numbers of angels. Scotland Summer Schools – gone from 2 x 2 weeks to 4 x 1 week. Now anticipating a big loss, one of the accommodation halls is increasing the fees by 30%; RSCDS is now thinking seriously about the number of events it will host; also thinking of ways to attract attendees from somewhere else. Proportion of overseas attendees has increased over time – but given most RSCDS members live outside Scotland, considering how to attract more overseas members to attend. Review committee is considering how to do things differently, Scottish country dance is a living tradition but need to remember to be open to everyone as it evolves and grows. RSCDS has two paid positions but otherwise like everywhere else, also relies on volunteers.

\* Topic brought forward as it followed on from the previous item.

### **2. SUMMER SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIPS:**

The following people were awarded scholarships in 2024:

5 years & under dancer	Mary Mojel	Auckland/Northland
6 years & over dancer	Anna Verhaegh	Wellington
YAM (Young Adult) dancer	Helen Oliver	Wellington
Teaching Certificate	Janet Stevenson	Auckland/Northland
2 JAM Scholarships	Cameron Seabright	Wellington
	Aila Stephen	Wellington
Musician	Andrew Uren	Auckland/Northland

There was a significant increase in the number of applications in 2024 across all categories except for the musician category.

### **3. MUSIC ADVISOR JOB DESCRIPTION**

The President advised the Music Advisor job description had been updated and was published on the NZ Branch website for all to read. The Music Advisor is appointed by NZ Branch Management Committee, therefore is not subject to membership voting via delegates. The President took the opportunity to advise Management Committee is seeking expressions of interest for taking up the role as Lynne Scott is stepping aside after 10 years of service. Participants were encouraged to spread the word in the regions. Communication of the invitation for expressions of interest would be made more widely upon Su Marshall's return from overseas. Expressions of interest to be received by end of February, and a decision would be

made by the end of March. Lynne Scott is present at Wellington Summer School and is willing to talk to anyone about the role. Lynne has strongly expressed the view that it is a role to be developed as the incumbent wishes and has contributed to the updated job description. Lynne will be presented with an award at the President’s Ball on 2 January 2025.

The meeting expressed the view that during her tenure, Lynne had gone above and beyond any potential expectation.

**RSCDS Subscriptions Account:** From the floor came the query whether the Subscriptions Account could be used to absorb the increase in membership fee given the 2024 Financial Reports showed the account held over \$7000. Lesley Nicol explained the Financial Report gives the situation as at 31 August 2024. An exchange rate of \$2.07 was used to calculate the RSCDS portion of the 2024/25 membership fee; when it came to paying RSCDS, the exchange rate had risen to \$2.23. The RSCDS Subscriptions Account had been used to pay the difference, with the outcome that the Subscriptions Account now held only \$1300. The floor accepted the idea to use the Subscriptions Account to absorb fee increase was no longer feasible.

**Voting reporting:** The topic had been satisfactorily dealt with during the meeting.

**AGM processes:** Notices of Motion, including those from Management Committee, are due by 31 August in any one year. From the floor came the suggestion that Management Committee alert members what it had in mind before submitting its Notices of Motion, thus potentially reducing the number of amendments. A comment from the floor explained that another organisation reviewed amendments as they arrived, rolling them into a single amendment where feasible. Some amendments have wording issues – a suggestion was to use an independent person to review any such issues, and provide advice on how to clarify the intent. Management Committee had already discussed the latter suggestion and had resolved to institute independent advice to make sure the intent of any amendment be captured.

**CLOSING:** The President thanked everyone for their attendance and participation. The President advised the date and venue for the next Annual General Meeting of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society New Zealand Branch Incorporated will be notified to members in November 2025; date and venue likely to be 1 January 2026, at the Christchurch Summer School venue.

The meeting was declared closed at 3.44pm.

These minutes are a true and correct record of the meeting.

.....President

.....Secretary

.....Dated