



# Kiwi News



## President's Report

Dear Dancers

I hope you and your families are all well and adjusting to the new normal.

For many of us, we will be back dancing at our clubs; sadly for Christchurch and Strathallan club members, their clubs are no longer able to continue. I would like to thank all the dancers and teachers of both clubs for their support of Scottish Country Dancing and the RSCDS.

While our dancing year will be shorter than normal, it is good to see we have Balls, Birthday Dances, and Open Nights still to come.

We will all be aware that the NZ Branch Summer School for 2020/2021, which was to be held in Christchurch, has been postponed until 2021/2022. This will mean that our AGM for 2021 will be slightly different, as we will be using Zoom. Details of how to join the meeting will be advised later.

Lastly, while New Zealand currently has Covid-19 under control, I would encourage us all to keep up the high standard of hygiene – washing our hands regularly, staying at home if we are unwell, keeping a note of where we have been, and looking after each other.

*Linda Glavin, RSCDS NZ Branch President*

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## From the Branch

### Branch AGM

Nominations and notices of motion for the AGM 2021 need to be received by the Secretary (by email or by post) on or before 31 August 2020.

Numbers of delegates to the RSCDS NZ Branch AGM will be advised to Region Secretaries later this week.

### Dance Scottish - a Summer Celebration

The New Zealand Branch contributed to this virtual alternative to the St Andrew's Summer School with a number of YouTube clips and a promotion for the next New Zealand Summer School (Christchurch

2021-2022). Andrew Kellett, RSCDS President, remarked, "The rest of the Scottish dancing world is looking enviously at New Zealand as ... you are dancing again without restrictions."

*Michele Miller, RSCDS NZ Branch Secretary*

### Scam Alert!

Be aware that there has recently been a spate of emails claiming to originate from the President of NZ Branch. You are unlikely to be fooled by "Please send me some iTunes vouchers", but "Please contact me" could trick you into a reply. The odd-looking email address, such as [executivecommitte767@gmail.com](mailto:executivecommitte767@gmail.com), usually gives the game away.

*Andrew Patterson, IT Co-ordinator*

## RSCDS NZ Branch Shop

At present the shop has a new CD from the Dewhursts, called **"Short & Sweet"** which has 21 tunes for Reels, Jigs, Strathspeys, a Medley and a Waltz in a variety of lengths.

Also available is **"Robertson: a Musical Heritage"**, a new CD from Ian Robertson and Muriel Johnstone – a great sound.

**Thirty Popular Dances Vol. 2 Book and 2 CDs**, released in November. Currently taking orders. This consists of a book of 30 dances and two CDs to go with it. Part 1 is a new recording and Part 2 is a re-release of RSCDS archive recordings.

The full range of CDs in stock, and the tracks on each, are listed in the catalogue on the Branch website.

The book catalogue is also available on the Branch website.

**For all enquiries please contact Sue Pearson:**

Email: [shop@dancescottish.org.nz](mailto:shop@dancescottish.org.nz)

NZ Branch Website

Snailmail: C/- 21 Stafford Street,  
Wanganui 4501

## News from around the Regions

### Rotorua

During lockdown, our small club kept in contact a few times with Zoom. It was great to see everyone, even if only virtually. We reluctantly decided to cancel our ball for this year (it was due to be held at the end of July).

Once Level 1 was reached, we decided to restart our club nights. However, just before lockdown, we had been looking for a new venue as our current one was becoming quite run-down and unappealing. We had found a suitable venue but didn't have the opportunity to trial it. So our first night back was trialling our new venue – which we absolutely love! It is the Lakes Performing Arts dance studio on Hinemoa Street. The venue is clean, tidy, fantastic dance floor and soap and toilet paper in the bathrooms – yeah!

We also trialled our kids' club there the following week, so our current children could spread the word over the school holidays. A big thank you to Lynn who has kindly offered to continue tutoring for this class. We will restart these after the holidays.

We are all really happy to be back dancing. However, our numbers are quite low so we are planning "free-beginner month August" to see if we can get some newbies.

*Sally-Anne Christensen, Club President*

### Opotiki

Opotiki Club has the newly decorated Waitohi Settlers Hall to enjoy dancing in. Fresh paint and new curtains, so bright and welcoming.



Opotiki Club's freshly decorated venue

We have held two of our regular Thursday night dances post-lockdown, and we are all taking pleasure in each other's company and laughter again.

Come and join us for our social on 8th August to Celebrate the Joy of Dancing!

*Sue Stillwell*

### Levin

During the lockdown, the Levin SCD club was quite active with its communication to members. I sent out a regular communication to everyone as a way of letting all our dancers know that I was thinking of them and always available by phone, text or email. I received some lovely messages back.

A couple of our committee members came up with 'ADAD – A dance a day'. This included the instruction, video clips and some history, which

they sent out five days a week for the first month. From there, another two members followed on, so we now have enough dances to last us for the rest of the year.

Our third couple are giving us an “international block buster”, inspired by the RSCDS.

Using artistic licence, they have crafted a tale using three types of dance titles: ones we know, ones we have never heard of, and the others – well, we wonder what the deviser was thinking when naming the various dances. We are now looking forward to chapter five.

A small group of us have been dancing since Level 3, learning some challenging dances, and polishing up on our briefing skills. The committee have also used Zoom to catch up. Now we are back dancing again.

With less than a month to go for our proposed annual dance, we decided to cancel it for this year, but we are planning for the same time next year.

*Jaki Williams*

## **Tawa**

Only two weeks into the new dancing year, it became obvious that the Covid-19 pandemic had arrived, so our club decided to suspend club nights from 19 March, anticipating the lockdown.

During the lockdown, members were kept in touch with each other through our weekly emails. Without any dancing news to report on, members contributed by sharing other items of interest and by responding to a series of “questions of the week” – ranging from when and why they started dancing, to books read and recommended, to favourite lockdown recipes, and primary school memories. We also had a very successful photo competition, for which participants sent in a photo of themselves as a small child, and members had to guess who was who.

Tawa Club started up again on 25 June. As we had farewelled our much-loved teacher of 38 years, Maureen Robson, upon her retirement at the end of last year, our new teacher, Catherine McCutcheon, had barely started to make an impact on the club in the two weeks before we went into lockdown. So now we are finally able to enjoy her completely different, but no less wonderful, style

of teaching. It looks like 2020 will be a good dancing year after all. Here’s hoping, anyway.

*Désirée Patterson, Tawa Club Secretary*

## **Blenheim**

About 10 years ago, I was a Morris dancer. It had become the custom in our town to meet with the Scottish Country Dance Club once a year; one year we hosted them and the next they hosted us. We each tried to dance the other club’s kind of dancing.

If you have ever Morris danced, you will know it is about flat feet, originally in boots, strong, though accurate, gestures and any hand gripping is real gripping. Instructions are called throughout the dance. It originated in peasant dance and is hearty and loud. We loved it.

Imagine us at the combined evenings trying to get off our heels, put out our hands politely and, hardest of all, to keep quiet during the dance.

However, the time came when knees and feet no longer stood up to the rigours of Morris and three of us decided to try Scottish instead. Could we enjoy dancing in a more ladylike manner? How would we remember the moves when they were not called out?

Well, we have now been dancing with the Blenheim Scottish Country Dance Club for seven years and enjoying it in a different way, but just as much as Morris. Those combined evenings where we tried each other’s dancing paid off. Dancing was the winner.

*Miriam McNamara, Blenheim Club President*

## **Johnsonville – into lockdown and out again**

Despite the lockdown, the last few months have been full of activity for Johnsonville club.

On 16 March we celebrated St Patrick’s Day. Club members turned out in force (and in green) for what turned out to be our last club night before dancing was suspended.

It was a good night to look back on, starting with a set of Irish reels for *A Trip to Ireland*, and finishing with *Irish Rover*. It was also fun to have another opportunity to dance [The Coleraine Rant](#), written by tutor Rod Downey for last year’s St Patrick’s day celebration.

Rod searched out lively music in Irish style, bringing a flavour of Ireland to well-known Scottish country dances devised around an Irish theme. Supper co-ordinator Elizabeth Ngan supplied a super supper with a green theme – ranging from healthy minted-green-pea dip and corn chips, to delicious green-wrapped Easter eggs. It was a good send-off to a dance-free life for the next three months.

With no idea how long we might be unable to hold club nights, we felt we needed to do something to keep our dancing community engaged. We made the decision to keep producing our weekly newsletter, much along the lines of RSCDS HQ's *Dance Scottish at Home* – though obviously on a much smaller scale.

Tutor Rod provided information to keep people in dancing mode, learning more about formations, viewing dance videos, and practising their footwork. Club members Désirée Patterson, Elena Lark, Maureen Sullivan and Moira Broughton generously offered their time as video subjects demonstrating reels, reels and more reels.

Secretary Robert Vale drew on his time in Scotland to bring us interesting items on places Scottish, with a focus on the Glasgow area. John Homes continued his 'Dances Done at Club' segment, searching out interesting facts relating to familiar dances and Kristin Downey and Lorelee Hyde played their part in the background.

Perhaps the most entertaining part of the newsletter was the [Scottish Connections](#) segment, made up of articles contributed by club members. We learnt about people's family histories, choice of tartan sash, beloved items such as Scottish songbooks, and memories of childhood. We honoured our longstanding members and Life Members, and delved into [the club's history](#).

Once NZ reached Level 1, we were back dancing, holding our first club night on June 15. It was hard to know how many people would return to club, so we were really pleased to have 4 sets on that first night back, including some of our beginners.

This year's beginners had only been dancing for seven weeks (having started in February) when we had to shut up shop, and they were concerned they had forgotten much of what they'd learnt. To re-build their knowledge and confidence, Rod has been starting club nights early to focus on basic skills and it's really nice to see them doing so well.

Those skills stood them in good stead for their first night dancing to live music at Johnsonville's recent [Live Music & Tartan Night](#) on 13 July. The event was to have been on 6 April at Onslow College gym, with all Wellington dancers invited to attend. It was cancelled, then the hall became unavailable post-Covid, and our current club venue is too small to invite others – so we had a fine night dancing 'at home' instead, with rousing music from musicians Aileen Logie, Hilary Ferral and Jason Morris.



Jason, Aileen and Hilary (photo: John Patterson)

The next dancing event on the club calendar will be our [shared annual dance with Capital City club](#), join us if you're in town. It's an easy [programme](#) to make it a relaxed night for all, with most dances walked. Lynne Scott, Sharlene Penman and Richard Hardie will bring us great music and a fun night for everyone – new dancers included.

Hard copy hint: go to <http://www.johnsonvillesc.org.nz/history/> to read 'Scottish Connections' and 'History' articles.

*Kristin Downey, Johnsonville President*

## Greymouth

After discussion with our members and an excellent affirmative response from them, the Club decided to change our dance meeting from Monday night 7-9pm, to a Friday afternoon from 1.30 – 3.30 pm.

*Gloria Glen, Secretary*

## Canterbury Region

Two clubs have made the serious decision to close permanently after the COVID-19 shutdown. Falling

numbers have forced this decision on both Strathallan Club from Timaru, and Christchurch Club. Strathallan Club advised that David Draffin had been their tutor for more than 52 years, a sterling performance.

Christchurch Club will hold a final (farewell) dance to celebrate their more than 60 years of dancing, with old and new favourite dances, on the afternoon of Sunday 26 July.

## Otago Region

Dancing activities ended suddenly in Otago, as elsewhere, in late March (except for some online suggestions for mental and physical exercises to be done at home under lockdown), but are now beginning to resume.

A particular disappointment was the cancellation of the Region Easter School for this year. However, it has been deferred for one year and will now be Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> to Monday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

A reminder to those who have kept their registrations from 2020 to (re)book their accommodation. And an invitation to anyone who didn't register for 2020 but would like to come in 2021 to do so (and again, make sure you book your accommodation early). Registration forms can be found on the Lawrence SCD website ([lawrencescd.wordpress.com](http://lawrencescd.wordpress.com)) or from Quentin Currall ([lawrence@dancescottish.org.nz](mailto:lawrence@dancescottish.org.nz)).

Gregor Macaulay

## Other Interesting Stuff

### Dance books to give away

I have been doing some tidying up in our wardrobe and discovered these books: a full set of the RSCDS A4 books 1 - 27.

Is there anyone out there who would like them? Free of charge to a good home!

Damon Collin, [collindg57@gmail.com](mailto:collindg57@gmail.com)

### Musicians in Lockdown

What did NZ's SCD musicians do when we were not able to play for your dancing? We wrote music!

I decided to create a Lockdown Composition Challenge. Musicians were sent the first bar or so of a strathspey, and invited to complete the tune. The completed sheet music was then put into Dropbox, so that we could all see it, play it, and pick our favourites. Then we all voted – using Google forms – for a) the best tune, and b) the best tune title.

That seemed to go down well. So then we did a jig. And then a reel, followed by a waltz and an air. Altogether 47 tunes were submitted, from 14 contributors. There was one duplicated title: *Jig for Jacinda* (!!).

Would you like to hear the tunes? The winners have been recorded and are available in the [Musicians' Corner](#) on the Branch website, along with the sheet music. They are:

- *Solitary Confinement* - by Virginia Matheson
- *Camberwell Junction* - by Natalie Scott
- *Old friends Reel* - by Lynne Scott, and *Roll-On Reel* - by Virginia Matheson
- *The Bloomfield Waltz* - by Mary McDonald
- *Air of Change* - by Virginia Matheson, and *A Pinprick of Light* - by Lynne Scott

And the winning tune titles:

- *Corona Coronach* - by Aileen Logie
- *Melancovid Jig* - by Wayne McConnel
- *Loch Doon Hornpipe* - by Duncan McDonald
- A triple tie for the Waltzes: *Hameldaeme* - by Lynne Hudson, *Pandemonia* - by Lynne Scott, and *A Cup of Kindness* - by Natalie Scott
- *Air of Change* - by Virginia Matheson

Our dance musicians are a clever lot!

Lynne Scott, RSCDS NZ Branch Music Adviser

### Ceol Alba – the music of Scotland

Ceol Alba is a group of people who love playing Scottish music for their own enjoyment, rather than as performers.

The article below, by convener Lynne Scott, was first published on [Johnsonville SCD Club's website](#), and is reproduced here with their permission.

#### The origins of Ceol Alba

I started Ceol Alba at the beginning of 2007. The impetus grew from my involvement in the Scottish Country Dance community in Wellington, where I

have been dancing and playing for some years – I really love playing for dancing.

But aside from playing for dances, there was literally nowhere else where folk could get together and play tunes on a regular basis. There was, at the time, an annual fiddle school, and the Irish community had a couple of pubs in Wellington where you could go and join in if you knew the tunes. But Irish music is mostly very different from Scottish, and I know what I prefer!

The name *Ceol Alba* was suggested by a member of the [Gaelic Club](#) who came along to see what was going on. I have been told since that we neither spell nor pronounce it correctly (!) but I've opted to leave it as it is. It means 'the music of Scotland'.

Initially we met twice a month, but this settled into a monthly meeting (fourth Friday) pattern fairly quickly. Our gatherings vary in size, from maybe only two or three, up to a high of 22. That one has never been repeated! In fact, recruiting members is an ongoing challenge. Some have been superbly loyal, but it's always good to see some new faces.

You can see from the tunes on [the website](#) that I try to cover the gamut of styles in Scottish music, not just jigs, reels and strathspeys. I've been a bit slack about keeping the music on the website up to date, but I still send out a new tune, almost every month.

Meetings usually consist of the group playing the new tune over several times, and I will suggest technical tips to fiddlers and accordionists to help make it more playable (I play fiddle, accordion and piano). Then, as we're usually in a circle, we go round the circle, each in turn choosing a tune or a set that they'd like to play. I keep the speeds to the level of the less able most of the time, though I'll let the fiddlers have their head on occasion!

I've been adamant that the club is just that – a club for people to enjoy playing Scottish music under as little pressure as possible. We don't do performances or play for dancing.

However, when a need for a Ceilidh band arose in about 2008, by then I had a pool of musicians who had a common repertoire and were keen to put themselves forward. So the dance band [Schiehallion](#) was formed. It's had a pretty stable line-up from the start: accordion (me), two fiddles, flute, drums, piano and guitar. We play several times a year for weddings, parties, or socials, teaching the dances and playing lively tunes for the punters.

In fact, we were in Dunedin right at the end of February, to play at Larnach Castle for a group of Reelers who were travelling in NZ. I'm so glad we got that in before the world turned upside down! It was enormous fun.

*Lynne Scott*

## Just for fun ...

### Muirland Willie

When I became Branch editor, a couple of years ago, Elaine Laidlaw gave me custody of a box of back copies of *The New Zealand Dancer*, going back to 1957. "In case you need to find something to fill a gap", she said. Well, such a situation has now arisen, with a very sparse amount of news to fill up this issue of *Kiwi News* – thanks to there having been no dancing for three months during the lockdown.

I spent a pleasurable few hours browsing the old copies of the *NZ Dancer*. Lots of interesting articles, lots of names and photos of youthful dancers who are now some of our precious teachers. Most of the articles that would have been interesting to include, were rather too long for *Kiwi News*.

But this poem – "Muirland Willie" – appealed. Most of us have will have danced this at some time, and been panicked by the confusing moves of the 1s, 2s and 3s. This poem says it all! I found it in the 1971 issue of *The NZ Dancer*.

#### [Muirland Wille](#)

Tae start ye off we'll hae a dance  
Sae simple it's downright silly.  
So take yer partners and form yer sets  
We're gonna dae "Muirland Willie".  
The first couple cross and go below third  
And cast up tae second place,  
While the seconds set and cross over tae third,  
Just watch ye don't fa' on your face!  
At the same time, the thirds cast and sprint up  
the back,  
And cross at the top, ain't this gay?  
The fourth couple staun' like two pieces o'  
stookie,  
And try no' tae get in the way.

By now ye'll have noticed ye're on opposite sides,  
 So set and cross back tae yer ain.  
 The seconds are noo in the third couple's place,  
 Ye'll see this if ye've got hauf a brain.  
 So they bash up the back, and cross at the top,  
 Just like the third couple did yince.  
 As ye undoubtedly see, it's a very fast dance,  
 No' to be done after tatties and mince.  
 Meanwhile the seconds, who are really the firsts,  
 Set and cross over tae third.  
 The thirds, ye'll remember, were last in first place,  
 It's sae simple it's really absurd.  
 So they cross below third and cast up tae second,  
 And hurry ye huvnae a' day,  
 The fourth couple staun like two pieces o' stookie,  
 And try no' tae get in the way.  
 Then a'body sets, and cross back tae yer sides,  
 This dance is yin o' oor best yins.  
 Ah'll just carry on and tell you the rest  
 As I'm sure ye'll no' ha'e any questions.  
 So now the first couple, wherever they are,  
 Lead up to the top and then set.  
 Then the firsts and the seconds all do a formation  
 That's commonly called a poussette.  
 Can anyone tell me how tae do that?  
 If ye can, then ye're really a winner –  
 Which one o'ye said, "A poussette is a cat  
 That's recently finished its dinner?"

\* \* \* \* \*

**Ashhurst & Manawatu Scottish Society SCD Clubs  
 Combined Dance**  
**Sunday 16 August 2020, 1.30pm**  
 Whakarongo Community Hall, cnr Stoney Creek Rd & Napier Hwy,  
 Palmerston North

**Live music by 'Airs and Graces'**  
 RSCDS members \$15.00, non-members \$18.00, others \$5  
Raffles available (theme – Made in NZ)  
 See the programme on the NZ Branch calendar [here](#)  
**All welcome!!**

## Events coming up ...

**JOHNSONVILLE & CAPITAL CITY  
 JOINT ANNUAL DANCE**  
 7.30pm Saturday 22 August  
 Ngaio Town Hall, Ngaio, Wellington



Music by  
 Lynne Scott, Sharlene  
 Penman & Richard Hardie

Most dances walked





## Auckland Region

### August – October 2020

**Visiting Auckland or Northland?**  
*See our Facebook for amazing landmarks in the region  
 (or you could even like/follow our page!)*

**Want to know what's going on?**  
*See our region website  
 aucklandscd.org.nz or northlandscd.org.nz  
 or contact us on info@aucklandscd.org.nz*

**Club dances:**

Hibiscus Coast: 8 August  
 St Heliers: 22 August  
 Waiheke Island: 26 September  
 Whangarei: 3 October  
 Howick: 11 October  
 Innes: 17 October

Waiheke's event is a special acknowledgement of 40 plus years of their club dancing their anniversary and a remembrance of their past teacher Wanda Cowley.

**Region Events**

September 5: Spring Dance to welcome new dancers to the region - with class in the afternoon taken by Gail Schofield and Elaine Goldthorpe

September 13: Very advanced class (morning) and Advanced class (afternoon) with Fiona Bullivant

For details - see our website or our Facebook page.



### GLENDARROCH SCD CLUB

Invites you to our dance on  
26 September 2020  
2:00 – 5:00 pm

At Carlton School Hall, Carlton Ave,  
Wanganui

Light refreshments to follow

Music by Scottish Saltire Band



### Tawa SCD Club Annual Dance

Saturday 3 October, 7:30 pm

Ngaio Town Hall, Ngaio, Wellington

Music by

Aileen Logie, Hilary Ferral and Jason Morris



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