

Kiwi News

RSCDS NZ Branch Inc.

Editor: Désirée Patterson editor@dancescottish.org.nz

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April 2023

President's Report



This year, the weather dealt a devastating blow to the North Island. Cyclone Gabrielle left many families, businesses and townships cut off, homes damaged, farm stock lost and crops destroyed. The New Zealand Branch and dancers are here to help in the best way we can. Please let us know if there is anything we can do to assist.

This year the Society celebrates its Centennial, and Branches around the world, including New Zealand Regions and clubs, are planning how to celebrate this wonderful occasion.

Registration forms for the Nelson Summer School are now up on the <u>website</u>. The organiser is Doug Mills, and he has a great team helping to ensure we all have a wonderful time. The New Zealand Branch offers Grants (previously know as Scholarships) to attend Summer School: two for JAMs; one for an adult dancer with five years' experience or less; one for an adult dancer with six years' experience or more; one for a musician; and one for a teacher undertaking training. To be eligible for a Grant you must be an RSCDS member at

the time of applying and at the time the Grant is being taken up. Applications can be found on the New Zealand Branch website and must be received on or before 30 June 2023.

Dancers will be aware of the recent passing of Mary Ronnie. Mary's contribution to the Branch and to dancing in general was vast and spanned many years. Her passing will leave a big gap in our lives. I would like to express our gratitude to Gregor Macaulay from Dunedin who kindly represented the Dunedin Ceilidh Club, the Otago Region and the New Zealand Branch at Mary's funeral.

Please take care and look after each other, it has been a difficult start to the year for many.

Linda Glavin, RSCDS NZ Branch President



From the Branch

MAC News (Management and Coordinators)

Introducing the NZ Branch Committee for 2023

President Linda Glavin
Vice President Debbie Roxburgh

Secretary Joy Dick Treasurer Lesley Nicol

Coordinators

Su Marshall Communication/Publicity/Membership

Jeanette Watson Education and Training Andrew Patterson Information Technology

Nicole Trewavas Youth

This year, the team will be busy working on the strategic planning needed to move to 'one person one vote'; 100 years of Scottish Country Dancing celebrations; and 'Pick up 52' to name a few.

Could Regions or Clubs who are celebrating an Anniversary or holding a Centennial Ball please email me the date they will be held? This will allow me to plan to attend and to include, where possible, visits to local clubs, either before or after the special dances.

Linda Glavin, Branch President

NZ Branch Delegates for RSCDS AGM 2023 – advance notice

In 2023, there will be a change to the distribution of New Zealand's entitlement of delegates to the RSCDS AGM. The entitlement of any Branch is based on its RSCDS membership. In 2022, New Zealand was entitled to fourteen delegates, which were distributed among the regions in a manner loosely based on the number of RSCDS members in each region. The change in 2023 will be that each region will appoint one delegate only, with the remainder of the entitlement made up of members of the NZ Branch Management Committee. The change is in response to the recommendation provided by the Society on how to appoint delegates to its AGM, namely, in the first instance to seek among the Branch Committee and then among Branch members.

Further information about selection of NZ Branch Delegates to the RSCDS AGM in November will be sent to each region later in the year.

Joy Dick, Secretary, NZ Branch

Visiting Melbourne and environs?

Are you visiting the Melbourne area and wish to keep dancing while there, but don't know where to find any information? NZ Branch has received a copy of the Melbourne & District Branch Directory for 2023. The booklet holds information about clubs, classes and events. You can also find the information online at https://www.rscdsmelbourne.org.au/home, but if you prefer to read a print copy, do not have access to a computer or can't find what you want to know, please contact Joy (email: secretary@dancescottish.org.nz; mob 0277 762 397; or ph 06 329 4111).

Joy Dick, Secretary, NZ Branch

Information Technology

The Branch domain, dancescottish.org.nz, was finally moved to a new hosting service in January, but the changes are all in the background, so everything (email and website) should appear to be carrying on as before. However, I did take the opportunity to discontinue the old domain, rscdsnzb.org.nz, so any attempt to reference it will now be unsuccessful. The intention to do so was announced in February 2022 and the domain has been monitored for the past year. In the rare instance of it being used, the individual has been notified and advised to refer to the correct domain.

A few revisions to membership renewal have been necessitated by recent changes to the NZ and HQ databases and these are now underway. In addition, the process is being streamlined with the prospect of responsibility being handed over to its rightful owner, the Membership Coordinator. Rest assured that the changes will not affect the process carried out by Regions and Clubs but, if you have any suggestions from

the coalface, this would be an ideal opportunity to make them known.

Andrew Patterson, IT Coordinator

Bernice Kelly Bequest

Bernice Kelly was a longstanding member of the NZ Branch, and active in the Wellington Region. She was also a hugely influential figure in dieticians' training in New Zealand. When she died in 2021, she left a substantial sum to the NZ Branch to be used for the support and education of SCD teachers. Once probate had been granted, the Management Committee started to consider appropriate uses of this bequest.

The first 'cab off the rank' was announced at the 2023 AGM – this is in the support of teaching candidates. The Branch will invest in their teaching commitment by paying exam or CTI fees for them. This is not a significant amount per person (less than NZD100 per exam) but it mounts up over the full course, and the Committee agreed that the candidates are investing their time and energy in learning to teach, so the bequest should be used to invest in them.

A very productive discussion amongst teachers was also held at the Auckland Summer School on how the Branch could support and assist teachers. See elsewhere in this edition of Kiwi News for a report on those discussions. If you have any other suggestions, please contact the NZ Branch Education & Training Coordinator. Watch this space for further announcements on uses for this fund.

Jeanette Watson, Education and Training Coordinator

Teaching Exams

Congratulations to Annie Christie (Rangitikei) who passed her Unit 1 (written) exam in October 2022, and to those teaching candidates who successfully passed exams at the Auckland Summer School: Unit 2 (own dancing) — Sharon Plank (Canterbury) and Maureen Sullivan (Wellington); and Unit 3 (teaching) — Quentin Currall, Emily Currall (both Otago), Janet Stevenson (Auckland), Veronica Cullen (Rangitikei), Sharon Plank (Canterbury) and Isabel Jackson (Hawke's Bay). Watch for these candidates practising their skills in your region, for their Unit 4 (teaching record) work, over the next two years.

Grateful thanks also go to Annie's invigilators (supervisors), and all those who danced with the exam class for Unit 2, or "stooged" for the Unit 3 exams – I hope you learned something new, or at least enjoyed yourselves. Your time and patience were hugely

appreciated by the candidates and the Branch in supporting the candidates in their endeavours.

If you're interested in starting your teaching journey, please let me know at <code>education@dancescottish.org.nz</code>. The next Unit 2/3 course won't be offered by NZ Branch until 2025 so you've got lots of time to think about it, and obtain your Unit 1 pass for which exams are held every March and October. The next Unit 1 exam will be held in October 2023, but you'll need to apply and start studying before then — aim for 1 August 2023 to have made your decision to start and let me know, so you can begin your 12-week study course.

If you're not sure about this commitment, you might like to look at the other <u>teacher development courses</u> available – there's the Core Training for Instructors (CTI) course offered by the RSCDS, or let me know if you're interested in having a Basic Teaching Skills course held in your region. Whatever type of teaching you're interested in, the Teachers Preparation class at Nelson Summer School might be a good starting point.

Jeanette Watson, Education and Training Coordinator

Teachers' Forum, 31 December 2022

Teachers were asked to bring their ideas, requests, complaints, and feedback – and they did! Thanks to everyone who participated so freely and honestly.

The main themes discussed were:

- Revitalising clubs after the soul-sapping Covid years
- Bringing younger people into the SCD community
- Branch support for SCD teachers

Revitalising clubs: there were lots of different ideas swapped, but the main message was to try something new – using the same methods will only get the same results. Some new ideas to try included:

- Change the time for dancing, so city workers don't have to go home before they come out to dancing – if they are not yet committed dancers, they may not bother. Perhaps think about making the session shorter, or divide it up in different ways;
- Can your beginner sessions be at the same time and in the same hall as the regular club sessions? Once the habit is established, newer dancers may find it easier to keep coming;
- Arrange for new dancers to get a ride with other club members – this helps with transport costs and makes it easier to get out of the house;
- Keep in close touch with new dancers, but without hassling them – make them feel valued and part of a new community;

- Provide new dancers with handouts of what they've learned, or send internet links to watch;
- Keep an eye on how other club members are interacting with new dancers, and encourage a warm welcoming environment;
- Get newer dancers to sit out a more complicated dance – they will learn by watching and will have a rest, while the more experienced dancers can feel valued and challenged;
- Advertising needs to be done every year, in as many places and by as many methods as your group can think of. It may take two or three or more mentions before someone follows up on the idea. Newspaper advertising can be effective but is expensive perhaps provide an editorial piece with a photo about a noteworthy SCD event, as well as paying for the advert; mailbox drops might seem easy, but are not usually effective; try various different social media outlets; use tartan to make any advert eye-catching, making them creative and fun-looking; use local free methods such as Neighbourly, library or supermarket noticeboards;
- Ask your new dancers how they heard about Scottish dancing, or why they decided to come – use that information to focus your advertising next year;
- Promote the health and fitness benefits of dancing consider advertising in waiting rooms of medical practices, dentists, physiotherapists, and staff rooms of hospitals or schools;
- Consider the best demographic to focus your efforts on – younger people have so many other choices, perhaps re-focus towards empty nesters, former Highland dancers, Kindergarten mothers, others who may be lonely and looking for a fun activity, instead;
- Get dancers interested in the context of Scottish dancing give the history of the dances, talk about the musicians or the devisors, or Scottish heritage.

Juniors: For those interested in establishing or revitalising children's dancing classes, ideas included:

- Offer a one-day activity within a children's holiday programme, repeat it occasionally (not every holiday period). This will help out the programme staff in filling their programme, doesn't commit parents to turning up each week for a longer course, and gives the children a base to work from;
- Consider getting alongside your local Cub/Scout/Girl Guide/Brigade leaders or local home-schooling associations to provide an activity occasionally or regularly for their group.

Branch support: Ideas raised included:

 Communications Coordinator to add some information to the Kiwi News on Scottish heritage, background for dances, background of the RSCDS, etc, for members to read, and teachers to use with their clubs:

- E&T Coordinator to organise a Teachers' Weekend, preferably regularly, in order to get teachers together to talk and swap ideas, using an overseas tutor if possible. The weekend could include a 'teaching to clubs' session (the E&T Coordinator is 'on the job'!)
- Branch support would also be useful for teacher travel /accommodation for such a weekend. (Funding guidelines are being developed for this and other applications for support.)

Please email education@dancescottish.org.nz with your feedback from reading this article, your suggestions for club revitalisation or needs for Branch support.

Jeanette Watson, Education and Training Coordinator

Step by step towards Live Music

Live music for dancing brings a sparkle to everyone's eyes! Some of New Zealand's SCD clubs have regular live music to dance to. Others enjoy it on special occasions, a few times a year. But to maintain the tradition, what's really needed, is to encourage musicians in many more clubs around the country.

So first — **Step One**: Find your musicians! Canvas your dancers — is anyone interested in exploring SCD music? Or perhaps there's a partner or friend who is not a dancer, but who has musical skills that could be tapped? Ask local music teachers, too: playing for dancing can be a great outlet for untapped skills, or they may have students with good ability. If you can, find two musicians who can play together (e.g. piano and fiddle).

Step Two is to allow them to build skills and confidence at a reasonable pace. Having new musicians play for just ONE part of the evening will reduce the scare factor on both sides. I suggest starting with playing a warm-up march, say, once a month. Here's where your Music Adviser can help, by providing music suited to the instruments and the skill level on offer, and possibly some remote or in-person coaching. Remember to applaud their efforts, and offer gentle tips for improvement.

Step Three: As confidence and knowledge grow, you can gradually increase the amount of playing done. Maybe your fledgling musicians can manage a warm-up march twice a month? If your club does waltzes for stretching, add a waltz to the mix. Again, ask for help with finding music.

Step Four: Add in a straightforward jig or reel, that will follow on from the march/waltz. To begin with, don't expect the correct lead tune, and don't assume that an

easy dance has an easy-to-play tune. That's often not the case! I can supply generic, easy-to-play sets appropriate to your musicians. This is a good time to introduce "8 bars, please. Ready ... And ...".

From here, move onto more easy jig and reel tunes. Strathspeys can be more of a challenge to learn, with their complex rhythms and melodies, so start with just one tune used for step practise. Before long you will have live music to dance to at your club!

Further musician development can be had at most Weekend Schools and at Summer School – the Musicians' Class. There is a Summer School Scholarship for promising musicians. Muriel Johnstone's book "A Guide to Music in the Teaching of Scottish Country Dancing" is a great resource. Get it via the Branch Bookshop. In addition, there are groups that meet casually to play Scottish music in Auckland, Palmerston North, Wellington and Christchurch. Ask for contact details.

There are also articles for dancers, tutors, and musicians in the <u>Music section</u> of the Branch website. These are well worth dipping into for reading on a range of music-related topics. In particular, read "Encouraging your Local Musician" for more tips.

Key points: praise the effort, not the result; move ahead at a comfortable pace; encourage further musical development; maintain contact with the Music Adviser.

Lynne Scott, Music Adviser, music@dancescottish.org.nz

RSCDS NZ Branch Shop

Coming Soon:

- RSCDS Book 53
- Glasgow Branch 100th Anniversary book
- Tokai Branch 25th Anniversary book and CD
- Fields of Gold Pretoria 50th Anniversary book
- Two Score + 2 for 2022 (tunes by Muriel Johnstone) book

Advance orders are welcome for the above items.

Recent additions to stock:

"Dance Through the Decades" – RSCDS CD of 10 tunes + 6 more tracks

"Friday Night Fun at the Stagger Inn" - book and CD

"The Argentine Collection 2020" - book and CD

"Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II" - book and CD

"Newcastle Upon Tyne & District 70th Anniversary" – book and CD

"Compilation of Books 39 – 44" - A5-size RSCDS books "Sir Walter Scott, Heart of Midlothian" book and CD

"The Bovey Collection" – book by Duncan Brown

"Wellington Region 60th Anniversary" book

"Creative in Lockdown" - a 4th book by Gaye Collin.

Also available are:

- CDs for Books 50, 51 and 52
- CD Music for Scottish Dances by Mary Isdal MacNab
- CD Thirty Popular Dances Vol 2, Part 1 and 2
- The Carlingwark Book of SCDs and 3 CDs by Bill Little, Castle Douglas.
- The Musicians' Wedding by Gaye Collin and CD by Marian Anderson.

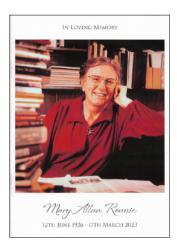
Book and CD catalogues are available on the Branch website, or if you can't see what you need, contact me.

For all enquiries please contact Sue Pearson:

- email shop@dancescottish.org.nz
- NZ Branch Website
- snailmail C/- 21 Stafford Street, Whanganui 4501

News from around the Regions

A Tribute to Mary Ronnie – delivered by Gregor Macaulay



Beyond her professional career, in addition to travelling and knitting, Scottish country dancing was one of Mary's chief passions.

I am speaking today, not only as a representative of Dunedin's Ceilidh Scottish Country Dance Club, where Mary danced even after

having hip and knee

replacements, but also on behalf of the New Zealand Branch and the Otago Region of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society.

Mary began dancing in the early 1950s in a class held at the University of Otago, run largely by Margaret Dunbar, a Scottish physical education teacher, with the aid of a pianist. The class was the origin of the Dunedin Scottish Country Dance Club, but that faded when Margaret Dunbar left Dunedin and access to University facilities ended. However, Peggy Hudson, a Scottish war bride, had arrived in Dunedin in 1953 and founded the Southern Cross Scottish Country Dance Club, which survived until 2011. Mary joined that club, and she

shared a friendship with Peggy for 70 years – and the same distinctive hairstyle for most of that time.

When Scottish country dancing began to be properly organised at regional and national level later in the 1950s, Mary helped to establish, and became secretary-treasurer of, the Otago/Southland Association. It was a force for unifying the many scattered clubs from Invercargill to Oamaru. As Mary said, "travelling for Saturday open nights became a regular feature of life for many of us" — although I expect Mary would actually have said "many of uzz".

Mary's professional concern that copyright was being breached every time dance instructions were copied or duplicated led her, and other members of what had become the Otago Region of the New Zealand Scottish Country Dance Society, to set up a mail-order bookshop and she was Bookshop Keeper from 1965 to 1973. The job then passed to her brother Jim and his wife Mavis. Jim was possibly an even more enthusiastic dancer than Mary, dancing almost every night each week in the days when there were more clubs in Dunedin than there are now. Mary also ran the New Zealand Branch Record Shop from 1974 to 1984.

In the 1960s, Mary was one of the first teaching certificate candidates to be examined in New Zealand and she became one of the most successful and popular teachers in this country. She served as South Island Vice President of the New Zealand Scottish Country Dance Society in 1958 and of its successor, the New Zealand Branch of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society, from 1968 to 1972. She was then New Zealand Branch President for 1973 and 1974. She organised at least three national Summer Schools for dancing in Dunedin and was awarded Life Membership of the New Zealand Branch in 2003 and the RSCDS Scroll of Honour from headquarters in Scotland in 2004.

Mary was an imposing figure on the dance floor, erect, smiling, with impeccable technique and phrasing and a formidable memory for dances. She was an ideal partner, who supported rather than criticised less skilled or confident dancers. She appreciated the fellowship and friendship of other dancers, joining local clubs wherever she lived – she commented once that, when she moved from Dunedin to Wellington, "the community of Scottish country dancers gathered me in". Now, she has been gathered in again, this time to the communion of saints, although it has been said that old Scottish country dancers never die - they just move to the bottom of the set. Those of us who were privileged to be her fellow dancers remember Mary and her considerable service to Scottish country dancing in New Zealand with gratitude and affection.

Picton Club

As I write this, we have only been dancing for two weeks.

At the beginning of the year, we thought we would try to encourage new members. We put an article in the local paper as well as a regular weekly notice, we did mailbox drops, and put posters around town advertising a six-week beginners' course.

We have tried to get new members before, but we had not offered a special course for them. This time, people were asked to register so that we could get an idea of how many to expect, if any. You can imagine our surprise when we received 13 enquiries.

The first night 12 people showed up and the next week 12 again, but a different 12. Some just came along on the night without registering. If they all come, we could expect 15 in total.

They have learnt three easy dances and some simple formations. They repeat one of the dances when the main class arrives an hour later with the more experienced dancers joining in. Our hall has never been so full for the weekly class!

On our first night, we welcomed a chap from the UK. He had been walking past the hall and heard the music. He was invited in to watch but said he was on his way to somewhere else. However, he came back and stayed for the evening. He was a dancer from Penrith in the UK.

The second week, we welcomed a fellow dancer from Nelson who had been spending a week in Picton for his wife's 60th birthday. Good choice. Picton is a great place! *Lynda Aitchison*

Rangiora Club

The Beginners' class at Rangiora SCD Club started on 6 March with eight new dancers. The following week there were 10 new dancers. The advertising blitz has paid dividends. The most effective medium was the local weekly paper, The Northern Outlook, which has a "What's On?" column, for free advertising of community events. In addition to this, we advertised in the District Council's community e-newsletter, "Chatter". The four supermarkets in Rangiora provide a notice board for free advertising with handwritten notices. At least one new dancer came to us via this advertising. We advertised in the local "Coffee News", which is found in every coffee outlet. Another local newsletter, The "Woodpecker" (for the Woodend community), was also approached for free advertising. All the schools (eight of them) in the Rangiora town area and four of the

retirement villages were delivered an advertising flyer. We also put on a demonstration for a local Girl Guides Club. We now have to work hard at keeping these new dancers so that we may all enjoy our Annual Dance which will be held on 20 May 2023 at the St John's Church Hall in Church St., Rangiora, at 7.30pm.

Bob Devlin

Burnside Scottish Dance Club

Burnside Scottish Dance Club, in Christchurch, started the year well with some dancers from other clubs joining us for the first night. Two new dancers have been attending and we have loved that.

We are looking forward to a great year, with some special events happening during that time.

Margaret Birse, President, Burnside Club

Tawa SCD Club

Last year, we found that while the Tawa RSA Hall was large enough for our needs, it was rather cavernous and very cold in the winter time, and when it rained, we had to dance around a bucket that caught the drips from the leaky roof.

So at the start of this year, Tawa Club members were delighted to move into our new venue at the Tawa Bowling Club, which is spacious and airy, has a good floor and a great kitchen, and a lovely powerful heater.

We widely advertised our Beginners' classes — on Facebook pages of many communities is our area, and by asking members to leave flyers in places such as their local supermarkets, cafés, hairdressers, and the like. We had 15 hopefuls turning up for the four-week course in February, seven of whom have continued to attend club nights, including one keen new dancer who was willing to join our club's committee.

We are looking forward to having our Annual Dance in June – a bit earlier in the year than in previous years. It will be held on **Saturday 10 June, at the Ngaio Town Hall.** Do join us, if you happen to be visiting Wellington at that time.

Désirée Patterson, Secretary, Tawa SCD Club

Isla Bank SCD Club

We are on the lookout to purchase a variable speed CD player. Is there anyone out there who would be willing to sell us one they no longer need?

Please contact Rae Fraser, Secretary, 1 Herbert Street, Riverton. Ph. 027 600 2737.

RSCDS Centenary Celebrations

Waikato/Bay of Plenty Region

RSCDS Centenary Ball

Saturday 6 May, 6:30 pm Matangi Hall, Hamilton

This is an opportunity for us to celebrate 100 years of RSCDS by dancing dances published through the decades and a number of those devised by NZers, all to the live sound of **Glenfiddle**.

We would love you to dress formally to celebrate and rediscover that tartan sash!

Lower North Island – Combining Wellington, Hawke's Bay and Rangitikei Regions

RSCDS Centenary Ball

Saturday 4 November, 5:30 pm

College Street School Hall, Palmerston North

Music by Balmoral Band

Begins at 5:30 pm, so people have time to commute to the Ball and return to Wellington/ Hawke's Bay/Whanganui if they wish.

Online registration will be available soon.

Find out more at Wellington Region website

Canterbury Region

Celebrate RSCDS 100 Years

Dine and Dance

Saturday 13 May 2023

at the Hornby Club, 17 Carmen Road, Christchurch Dinner starts at 5:30 pm, Dancing starts at 7:30 pm

Music by The Reel Fiddlers

Download the poster

Tickets must be purchased by 1 May 2023

Enquiries to Region Secretary:

rscds.canterburyregion@gmail.com Ph: 021 622 471

Other upcoming events

Waikato / Bay of Plenty King's Birthday Weekend School



Saturday 3 and Sunday 4 June 2023

Matangi Hall, Hamilton

We, at Lochiel SCD Club, would love you to come and dance with us.

https://kbwe.waibopscd.org.nz/

The Ball is Lochiel's 65th and the theme for the Ceilidh is 'Royalty'.

We would love you to dress in your finery, releasing your inner King or Queen!



Tawa SCD Club Annual Dance 2023

We invite you to join us

Saturday 10 June, 7:30 pm

Ngaio Town Hall, Ottawa Road, Ngaio

Music by Aileen Logie, Hilary Ferral and Jason Morris

Te Awamutu SCD Club 2023 Afternoon Tea Dance

Saturday 22 April, 1:30 pm Kio Kio Hall, Ellis Road, Kio Kio Adults \$15 – JAMs/Spectators \$5 Download the programme <u>here</u>.

Linden Scottish Country Dance Club

Invites you to join us at our

Annual Dance 2023

7.30pm, Saturday 1 July 2023

Ngaio Town Hall Ottawa Rd, Ngaio, Wellington

Entry

RSCDS members \$15, non-members \$12 Spectators and juniors \$5

Music by Aileen Logie's Band Aileen Logie, Hilary Ferral, Jason Morris

> linden@dancescottish.org.nz www.lindenscd.org.nz



Ashhurst SCD Club Intermediate Day Class Tutor — Jeanette Watson Saturday 29 April 2023 10.00am-3.00pm (morning tea from 9.30am, afternoon tea from 3.00pm) Whakarongo Hall, cnr Stoney Creek Rd & Napier Hwy, Palmerston North Entry fee: \$15 (includes morning & afternoon tea); BYO lunch Suitable for talented beginners, dancers of 1+ years' experience, and especially dancers who came to the day school &/or evening dance on 29 May 2021 Contact Joy — ashhurst@dancescottish.org.nz; ph 0277 762 397

