

SCOTCH CIRCLE

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RSCDS Canberra and District Branch Incorporated
GPO Box 1795, CANBERRA ACT 2601

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Chair's Message

Happy New Year to you all ~~

The dancing year is now upon us with all classes starting first week of February and it was great to see and hear that all classes were well attended on the first evenings. I am also sure everyone appreciated some of the cooler summer days we had, with rain, where all our energy was not used up in trying to stay cool.

There were many of us catching up with each other over the summer break either on the 25th December, New Years Eve or enjoying each others company at a picnic lunch. Some of the Canberra dancers went to Wellington to partake in the summer school. To me it reinforces how we can make wonderful friends because what we do is look at branch websites, their calendars, our diaries, bank balances and think, yes, I want to go to that, I know people who are going and it will be fun!

This year we have put in place another beginners course which will be held on the north side of Canberra, at the Church of Christ in Ainslie and already have some beginners willing to try out the steps. The class will be run at the same time as the general class and as the year goes by there will be interaction between the two classes. The committee would also like to run a 'come and try' evening. We need willing people to come along. Can we all think of someone to encourage to partake in an enjoyable evening?

The Wednesday branch class will very soon have a new sound system as the Winter School came out financially a wee bit in front, so it was decided to put that profit back into some equipment for the branch class which would benefit the dancers. Our treasurer is doing all the research on which music system will be best.

Our Canberra Ball will be held on Saturday 30th August, and we will be heading back to the Albert Hall, right in the centre of Canberra. On the 21st November 1958 the SCDCC held its first ball, four years after the club was founded. There is room for dancers coming from near and far and billets will be available. I don't know how anyone would be able to pass up a great night dancing to the music of our local musicians, Strathmannan, and of course the weather will be still be on the cooler side, so you won't be hot under the collar.

I hope I have enticed all of you who read this to start marking your calendar for the months ahead and the committee is looking forward to a busy and fun year.

Can I add one last paragraph?

In December of last year I received some not very pleasant news regarding my health. I would like to take this opportunity to say thankyou from the bottom of my heart to everyone who came to visit me in hospital, at home, sent cards from everywhere, delivered flowers, baked cakes and shortbread, drove me all over Canberra and just kept me company. To the New Zealand summer school committee who refunded my summer school fees in full and even Air Zealand who gave me a full credit on my non refundable, non reissueable, uninsured air ticket across the Tasman! Who were the majority of these very kind people? Scottish Country Dancers who are now keeping me so busy I won't have time to go back to work. Their support and kindness I feel I will never be able to repay. There were times where my sons were run off their feet making cups of tea and answering the phone. But, did they mind? Not at all, they appreciated all of you coming to visit. The good news is ~ I am so much better and getting healthier every day. So good in fact that right in time for the new year of dancing I am back on the floor. I really don't know how this happened just when the dancing season was taking a break ~ timing, all a mystery!

Barbara

Branch News

Branch Awards

RSCDS (Edinburgh Headquarters) recently announced a new scheme by which individuals who have made outstanding contributions to SCD can receive appropriate recognition. The main criteria for the new "RSCDS Branch Awards" are that recipients should have upheld the objectives of the Society over a period of years, shown sustained and exceptional commitment to the promotion of Scottish Country Dancing, and been responsible for some notable achievements in relation to Scottish Country Dancing and/or its music.

Branch Committee members who were appointed at our Annual General Meeting in October 2007 were unanimous in wishing to submit two cases to Headquarters as one of the first acts of the new Committee. Both Elaine Arthur and Bruce Clark, we believed, met the criteria admirably, and so we sent away for nomination forms and prepared the necessary citations. It is with great pleasure that we can announce that Headquarters has approved both cases. Bruce was presented with his Branch Award at the "Welcome Social" on 16 February, and Elaine (who was overseas at that time) will be presented with hers at the next Social, the Burns SCD Group "Burns Celebration" on 8th March.

Here are the citations:

"Elaine Arthur's many contributions to Scottish Country Dancing Australia-wide, and to the Canberra and District Branch in particular, culminated with the hugely successful 32nd Australian Winter School, convened by her and held in October 2007. There can be few Scottish Dancers in Australia who are better known, loved and respected than Elaine. Some quotations from the unprecedented flood of congratulatory letters she received after the Canberra School are in order, as they not only express much of the basis of this nomination very eloquently, but also represent tributes from quite independent senior members of the SCD community in Australia. "Congratulations on a smooth and happy School. All ... who attended are still raving about their fabulous week and will measure all other [Schools] against this one to see if they come close – a daunting task." "Everything about the School was fantastic. A million congratulations..." "We offer our warmest congratulations on a most successful, happy and enjoyable Winter School." There can be no doubt that Elaine orchestrated a very special SCD occasion, and we believe that this achievement in its own right thoroughly justifies nomination for a Branch Award. However, we want to emphasise that the recent School was merely the peak of a most distinguished career of service to SCD in Canberra and District over several decades, and it is for the combination of recent and long-term contributions that the Branch Committee unanimously recommends her for an Award."

“Bruce Clark is hereby nominated for a Branch Award in recognition of his outstanding service through twelve years continuous service as Honorary Secretary (1995-2007) to the Canberra and District Branch. Throughout this period he not only performed the duties of Branch Secretary with exemplary diligence, but also initiated, coordinated and contributed to many of the general SCD activities in the District, including a Winter School and countless Socials, demonstrations and other outreach activities. In addition, he pioneered and developed our class for Beginners into a flourishing programme through which many of our dancers have been recruited and enthused to become long-term participants, some to the extent of serving on the current Branch Committee. His contributions thus involve both dedicated administrative duties and inspirational teaching. We believe that it would be most appropriate to acknowledge them by way of a Branch Award. Moreover, because he recently stood down from his long-standing position as Secretary, it is timely to submit the nomination now. Our nomination is presented unanimously by the 2007-8 Branch Committee”

In presenting the Branch Awards to Elaine and Bruce we thank them for their wonderful contributions over the years.

*Barbara Monahan, on behalf of
the RSCDS Canberra and
District Branch Committee*



Bruce with his Branch Award after the presentation by Barbara at the Hall Social, 16 Feb 2008

Club News

Burns Scottish Country Dance Group

Celebrating Robert Burns

Burns SCD Group is holding a Celebration of Burns on Saturday, 8 March at 8.00 pm at St Andrews Church Hall, Forrest. Music by Strathmannan. Cost \$10.

Program: Corn Rigs Bk 4, The Starry-eyed Lassie Bk23, The Gentleman Bk 35, Maxwell's Rant Bk18, Kelloholm Jig RSCDS Left, The Poet and His Lass D Drewy-Stoney Wood, Twa Rogueish Een Drewy/Rondel, Alloway D Bell/Road to St Andrews, Silver Tassie RSCDS Lft, The Ayr Promenade Goldring/24Graded, All for Mary Goldring/12 More SCD, The Lea Rig Bk 12, Farewell the Bonnie Banks of Ayr Skelton/ Kiwi, Tam O'Shanter Priddey/Tan O'Shanter Bk

Clare Hughes

Secretary, Burns SCD Group

friendly@homemail.com.au

Sydney Branch Workshops

All Day Workshops organised by Sydney Branch will be held at Mittagong on Saturday 17th May and Saturday 16 August 2008. For further details contact Helen Wales, 02/4861 6471 or email: eilidhmarg@hotmail.com

Southern Highlands Scottish Country Dancers Social

The Southern Highlands Scottish Country Dancers Annual Social will be held on Saturday, 6th September 2008. Programme tba.

Canberra Ball 30 August 2008

On Saturday, 30th August 2008 the four Canberra SCD groups will be holding the Canberra “combined” Ball in the historic Albert Hall. Come along and enjoy the evening of dancing to the music of Strathmannan. Have a glass of champagne, a bite to eat and pleasant conversation with many friends.

We are very privileged to be able to return to the hall in the heart of Canberra with its wonderful wooden floor and perfect ambience with space for many sets, and of course the day before the start of Spring!

Don't forget to mark your diaries for the 30th August and watch this space for more information. If you know of anyone coming from interstate billeting will be available. Contact Barbara on 6287 2023 if you require billeting or just for any more information.

No Need to be Scottish!

ANU Library staff who dance every Tuesday lunchtime in University House with The Black Mountain Reelers (see below) entertained their fellows at the ANU Library Christmas Party in December. They performed the reel “The Breakdown” and the strathspey “Cherrybank Gardens” in the elegant setting of the Great Hall. It was a truly international display!



Tessa (England-Ireland), Lekha (India), Deveni (Papua-NewGuinea), Joo-Hua (Malaysia), Renata (India-China), Hua-Jun (China) (l-r, countries of origin in brackets).

The Black Mountain Reelers

Although many Scottish Dancers in Canberra know about the group that meets every Tuesday lunchtime in the Australian National University, not many recognise it by its original title. The Black Mountain Reelers group was started by Les Cumming in the early 1980s. The ANU was, at the time, encouraging staff to be more active, so Les thought he would help by starting a lunchtime Scottish Country Dancing group.

At that time the Reelers were using a hall at the Arts centre. We started 1990 with the bad news that fixed seating was being installed in the room, so we were homeless. For several months we danced where we could, in foyers and suchlike, until Charles Hocart came to our rescue. Charles obtained permission for us to dance in University House. For a little while we danced in whatever room was not otherwise occupied, until we were allowed to use the Molly Huxley Room on a regular basis. There we have stayed.

Jenny Wanless has led the group since Les Cumming retired from dancing, with much appreciated help from Jim Lowe (and several other teachers who have “filled-in” from time to time).

The Reelers are now affiliated to the Scottish Country Dance Club of Canberra.

Jenny Wanless

50 Years Ago: The First Scottish Ball in Canberra

Scottish Country Dancing in Canberra reached an auspicious landmark 50 years ago on 21st November 1958 with no less than 18 sets on the floor in the Albert Hall for the first ever SCD Ball in the city. Here is the late Bob Clark’s description of how the first Ball was organised, and a view of the 1958 ticket.



“Quite often we saw Scottish balls advertised but on attending them we found that they were Scottish in name only. The only thing Scottish about them was the appearance of a pipe band and a short display of Highland dancing. Sometimes the programme included the Eightsome Reel and/or Dashing White Sergeant and the music for the Scottish dances was usually provided by a piper who generally had no idea of tempo or number of bars required for a dance and played until he ran out of breath. We decided then to organise a real Scottish ball with at least half of the dances Scottish and a band to play for all the dances.

First thing was to get a band together which could play Scottish music. Bob Morrow knew two other Scots who were familiar with this music and got them together as a three piece band. Next task was to select the dances for the programme so that the band could select appropriate music and practice together. By this time the Burns Club had moved to its new building but still had the lease of the old premises in Wentworth Avenue which we hired for beginners classes to teach

the programme dances. For several weeks we were dancing twice and sometimes three times each week. The great day came on 21 November 1958 when we held our first ball in the Albert Hall. The result far exceeded our expectations. There were 18 sets on the floor for most of the dances. Many came from Cooma attracted by the novelty of dancing to live music. Several came from Sydney attracted by the large number of Scottish dances on the programme. Out of a programme of 25 dances we had 13 Scottish. At that time it was customary to have a guest of honour at a formal ball so that year we had the Secretary of the Interior as guest and in 1959 we had Dame Pattie Menzies. The custom was dropped after that. Members of the committee wanted to take part in the dances instead of dancing attendance on a VIP”.

(from “50 Years and still Dancing”, by Bob Clark, available in full on the SCDCC page at www.rscds-canberra.org)

For Sale

Mens’ Kilt, Hunting Fraser, Ancient Colours, to fit 36-inch waist. Please contact Mr Walter Percy, 10 Bangalay Crescent, Rivett ACT. Phone 6288 5151.

Cherry Blossom Dance Tour of Japan - Spring 2008

(It’s probably too late to book now, but here’s the info anyway):

International Gathering of Scottish Country Dancers

Teachers: Bill Zobel & Muriel Johnstone

Musicians: Muriel Johnstone (piano), Keith Smith (fiddle), Kiroko Kokai (piano)

Course 1: Saturday 29-Sunday 30 March 2008 in Kyoto

Course 2: Friday 4–Sunday 6 April 2008 in Hakone (hot spring area)

Kyoto 5 nights, Hakone 3 nights, Tokyo 3 nights.

Between courses 1 and 2, sightseeing in the old capitals of Kyoto and Nara, travel by bullet train to Mt Fuji area with Lake Cruise. Following Course 2 travel to Tokyo

Provisional Cost 29 March – 9 April *£1300 - £1500.

Plus other options according to your availability, such as:

Option A: Sendai (NE Japan) 9-11 April. Sea cruise amongst islands in Matsushima, visit local craft centre, and join with local dance group in the evening. Provisional cost *£350.

Option B: Matsumoto (Japan Highlands) 11-13 April. Matsumoto Castle & walking tour of town, Highlands and old villages. Join with local dance group in the evening. Provisional cost *£350.

Option C: Narita (Tokyo International Airport) 13-15 April. Narita Temple, join with local dance group in the afternoon, farewell dinner. Provisional Cost *£300
15 April depart from Narita Airport unless you wish to stay longer.

*Cost will depend on numbers attending, and does not include flights to Japan.

For application form and further information, please contact:

Atsuko Clement, 14 Queensberry Brae, Thornhill, DG3 5AQ, Scotland, UK

Email: atsukoclement@aol.com Tel/fax +44-1848-330-671

Murray's Excellent Adventure in the Yukon Territory and Alaska

Some of you will be aware that in June July August of 2007, I undertook a trip to the Yukon Territory and Alaska, visiting at first, Whitehorse, in the Yukon Territory (after an all day series of flights from St. Johns in Newfoundland, Canada): then, by 4-hydrojet catamaran, which travels up to speeds of 30 knots, a four hour cruise down the Yukon River, from Dawson City, of Klondike Gold Rush fame, I came to Eagle City which is just inside the USA border, on the mighty Yukon River.

I stayed in Eagle a week, during which time, I went on an all day guided tour conducted by the Eagle Historical Society, of Fort Egbert, nearby Eagle, which was used by the US Army in the fracas with Canada and Japan, which developed over the seal fur trade in the Bering Sea; the two countries almost were at war. US Army officer there, constructing an overland telegraph line from Valdez, on Prince William Sound, was then Lt. Billy Mitchell, fresh out of West Point, later a Lt. General.

I received the newsletter recently of the Eagle Historical Society, I had joined during my visit, as a member, and I share with you a few paragraphs; life on THE River.

“How long is it since you have driven on a gravel or dirt road where you live? If you have ever visited Eagle, you know that all the streets here are gravel.....The fact is that a majority of people in Eagle want the road situation left the way it is. It came to light earlier this year that the State,....., was planning to come into Eagle this summer and pave the two main streets..... Anyway, a vote was taken to tell the paving agency that the citizens of Eagle do not want their streets paved.....So, the roads in Eagle are still narrow, dirt and dusty, but the city really does a good job of watering to keep the dust down.....

Another flurry of activity accompanied this year's city elections. Due in part to the above mentioned pavement issue, tensions were running high coming into the October 2nd elections.....Anyhow, the result was the highest voter turnout probably ever recorded for a city election, with over 70 voters weighing in.....

An elder from the Native Village passed away this fall.....To his many friends and family members—We all mourn your loss.....

We had a beautiful warm, but not too hot, summer in Eagle! There were a few days in the 80's, but mostly the weather was sunny and pleasant. This is the first year my wife had a greenhouse, and it produced wonderfully. We were surprised to be harvesting tomatoes and zucchinis into September, the weather was so warm!and now have not had temperatures above freezing since beginning of October, along with a couple of inches of snow upon the ground. Believe me, there were some cold days of moose hunting on the river there at the end of September....”

*Murray Rowden-Rich
26th January 2008*

A Little Scottish Humour (thank you Sandra)

“Slips that Pass in the Night” by May Motherwell

(Believe it or not, these actually appeared in various Scottish church bulletins):

- This afternoon there will be a meeting in the south and north ends of the church. Children will be baptised at both ends.
- Tuesday at 4p.m. there will be an ice cream social. All ladies giving milk, come early.
- Wednesday the Ladies Liturgy Society will meet. Mrs. Johnson will sing ‘Put Me In My Little Bed’ accompanied by the minister.
- Thursday at 5pm there will be a meeting of the Little Mothers Club. All those wishing to become little mothers please meet the minister in his study.
- This being Easter Sunday, we will ask Mrs Johnson to come forward and lay an egg on the altar.

- The service will close with 'Little Drops of Water'. One of the ladies will start quietly and the rest of the congregation will join in.
- On Sunday a special collection will be taken to defray the expenses of the new carpet. All those wishing to do something on the new carpet, come forward and get a piece of paper.
- The ladies of the church have cast off clothing of every kind and they may be seen in the church basement on Friday afternoon.
- The rosebud on the altar this morning is to announce the birth of David Alan Belzer, the son of the Rev. and Mrs Julius Belzer.
- Tonight's sermon: What is Hell? Come early and listen to our choir practice.



SCD Events between now and the May Scotch Circle

8 Mar: - Burns SCD Group Burns Celebration, 8.00pm, St Andrews Church Hall, Forrest, with music by Strathmannan. \$10. Haggis, Neeps and Tatties provided, small plate appreciated. Programme: Corn Rigs Bk 4; The Starry Eyed Lassie Bk 23; The Gentleman Bk 35; Maxwell's Rant Bk 18; Kelloholm Jig RSCDS Lflt; The Poet and His Lass Drewry – Stoney Wood 2; Twa Rogueish E'en Drewry – Rondel; Alloway D Bell Road to St Andrews; Silver Tassie RSCDS Lflt; The Ayr Promenade Goldring 24 Graded; All for Mary Goldring 12 More SCDs; The Lea Rig Bk 21; Farewell the Bonnie Banks of Ayr Skelton Kiwi; Tam O'Shanter Priddey Tam O'Shanter.

10 March:- Albert Hall 80th Birthday Celebration, all day programme, with a dance in the evening including SCD items, details available at:
<http://www.rscds-canberra.org/texts/Albert-Hall-80.pdf>

14 Mar: - Belconnen SCD Advanced Social - 8pm Assembly Hall, Macquarie Primary School, Bennelong Cr, Macquarie, led by Peggy, TJ and Fiona.

21-24 March: - (Easter) National Folk Festival, see <http://www.folkfestival.asn.au>

29 March: - Monaro Caledonian Society Tartan (Cooma) Ball. Cooma Ex-Servicemen's Club, 29 March 2008, 6.00pm for 6.30pm, music by Strathmannan. Programme: Summer Assembly, Duke of Atholl's Reel, Miss Milligan's S'Pey, Mairi's Wedding, Wild Geese, Monymusk, Pelorus Jack, Seton's Ceilidh Band, Barn Dance, Minister on the Loch, Australian Ladies, Posties Jig, Neidpath Castle, Clutha, Pride of Erin, Roaring Jelly, Alison Rose, Corn Rigs, Hooper's Jig, Cherrybank Gardens, Trip to Bavaria, Follow Me Home, Culla Bay.

5 April:- Bundanoon Highland Gathering. The dances this year are The Duke of Atholl's Reel, Anna Holden's Strathspey and The Highland Rambler.

12 April: - Shannon Darcy Memorial Dance for Scottish Dancers combined with Folk Dance Canberra, at Hackett, 114 Maitland St (Old Hackett Primary School), 7.30pm. All dances will be taught (Scottish and Folk), please bring a plate with supper. Further information from Sue Miller 6281 6314 or John Wanless 6281 3892.

18 April: - Belconnen SCD Advanced Social - 8pm Assembly Hall, Macquarie Primary School, Bennelong Cr, Macquarie, led by Jill and David

3 May: - Branch Hosted Dinner and dance

10 May : - Bush Dancers Display Group's Gala Ball at the Albert Hall, with group concession price of \$14 per person for Scottish dancers. Information about the Gala Ball is available at <http://members.pcug.org.au/~lcourt/tbdball.htm> Contact: Barbara Court, ph 6161 2426, EMail LCourt@pcug.org.au

16 May: - Belconnen SCD Advanced Social - 8pm Assembly Hall, Macquarie Primary School, Bennelong Cr, Macquarie, led by Elaine and Sheelagh

17 May: - All day workshop organised by Sydney Branch to be held at Mittagong. Enquiries to Helen Wales - phone 4861 6471 or by email to eilidhmarg@hotmail.com

31 May: - Nowra Scottish Country Dance Group 33rd Annual Ball, Nowra School of Arts, 6.30 pm for drinks and savouries, 7.30pm Grand March. Music by Bob McInnes and Rhonda Langford. \$35 - includes 2 course buffet dinner (BYO Drinks). Tables of 8 will be available. If

you have a group of 8 people, let us know if you would like us to reserve a table for you.. Billets will also be available on request. It would be appreciated if you would pay for your tickets by 16 May 2008 as numbers need to be finalised with the caterers. **Programme:-** Joe MacDiannid's Jig J 4x32 5 SCD 1982; The White Cockade R 8x32 RSCDSBk5; Glasgow Lasses (3cpl set) S 6x32 RSCDSBk34; Guid to Ken Ye (2RR) R 4x32 Hunter Valley; Buffet Dinner; The Summer Assembly (Sq Set) R 1 x 88 RSCDSBk35; Ladies Fancy J 8x32 RSCDSBk 13; Sands ofMorar S 8x32 RSCDSBk45; Polharrow Burn (5 cpl set) R 5x32 RSCDS Leaflet; CauldKail M 8x32 RSCDSBk9; The Laird of Milton's Daughter J 8x32 RSCDSBk22; The Whistling Wind R 8x32 RSCDS Bk36; Jean Martin ofAberdeen (3 cpl set) S 3x32 3 for 2006; Tea/Coffee; The Duke of Atholl's Reel (3 cpl set) J 6x32 RSCDS Bk 16; The Australian Ladies R 8x32 Glasgow Assembly; The Dream Catcher (Sq set) S 1 x96 Bk45; Cumberland Reel J 4x32 RSCDSBk 1; EH37AF J 8x32 RSCDSBk40; Neidpath Castle (3 cpl set) S 3 x32 RSCDSBk22; Seton's Ceilidh Band J 4x64 The Morison's Bush Collection; Mairi's Wedding R 8x40 22 SCD & + 2 Others
ENQUIRIES & TICKETS: Jean Conway or Heather Bardsley. 02 44415496

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Closing date for next Scotch Circle – Thursday 1 May 2008

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