

SCOTCH CIRCLE

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

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Message from the Chair

Greetings,

I trust that you enjoyed the festive season, whether at home or away, and are refreshed after the summer break. The new dancing season is getting underway, several classes resuming in the first week of February, in the wake of one particularly enthusiastic group which started up mid-January. Other classes will commence later this month and in March. Details of these classes and social functions are included inside.

Your attention is drawn particularly to the Branch's first major social event of the dancing year, the BBQ and Dance at the village of Hall (showgrounds pavilion) on Saturday, 5 March - see inside for further details. Come along with family or friends to enjoy a convivial get together Aussie BBQ style. Catch up on all the news. Then put on your dancing shoes and dance to the accompaniment of great music from Strathmannan. All dances will be recapped and walked through as required.

This issue also contains an update of dances which occur frequently in dance programmes and, to commemorate 25 January - the anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns - a short piece on the "Immortal Memory" of Scotland's national bard.

VALE

It is with great sadness that we report the death of Jim Lowe. Jim had been a longstanding enthusiast of Scottish country dancing. For many years he and his wife Margaret attended SCD classes together in Canberra - at all the clubs at various times, and often at more than one club at the same time - and were regularly seen together at most socials and balls. Jim served on the Branch committee for a number of years. He had suffered a stroke and been in nursing home care for the past several years. We extend our sincere sympathies and condolences to Margaret and the family.

BRANCH CLASSES 2011

All Branch classes will again be held at St Andrews Church Hall, Forrest.

GENERAL CLASS

The regular Wednesday general class will commence on 2 February, 7.30 – 9.30 pm, and for the first three months will be under the direction of Ann Parkinson.

GENTLE DANCERS CLASS

Jessie Middlemiss will be taking the Friday afternoon class (2-4pm) when it resumes on 18 February.

BEGINNERS COURSE

The Branch is planning to conduct another eight-week course of classes for beginners, on Wednesday evenings from 6.00 – to 7.15 pm. A **free class** on Wednesday **2 March** will precede the course proper and this will also be the registration session for the course. The fee for the eight weeks will be \$50 payable in advance at the registration session. The eight-week course will commence on Wednesday 9 March. Elaine Arthur will be the teacher.

Anyone interested in attending this course is invited to seek further information and obtain a registration form by contacting Jack Arthur, by telephone 6254 7879, or by email jarthur@apex.net.au Please bring the registration form with you to the free class.

The Branch reserves the right to cancel the course if there is insufficient interest shown at the free class. If this case arises, any fees already collected will be refunded in full.

BRANCH OCCASIONAL CLASS

This class, which operated successfully during the first and second semesters of 2010, will be offered again in first semester 2011, and will be taken by Elaine Arthur.

The primary aim of the class is to encourage dancers to maintain and enhance their dancing skills. The emphasis will not be on learning new or difficult dances; rather, the class will work on polishing formations and improving aspects of technique such as phrasing, covering, handing, deportment and teamwork. Step practice will be to the point and not excessive. These Monday, 6 - 7 pm, classes will be held:

7, 21 March – for occasional classes

(4, 11, 18 April – for persons interested in display dancing at the National Folk Festival, Easter)

2, 16, 30 May – for occasional classes

For further information contact Elaine by telephone (6254 7879), or email:

Elaine.Arthur@apex.net.au

SCD DISPLAY AT BUNDANOON HIGHLAND GATHERING

Bundanoon will be holding its 33rd Annual Highland Gathering on Saturday 2 April. As in previous years there is to be a massed display of Scottish country dancing, with dancers expected from Sydney, Nowra, The Southern Highlands of NSW and, hopefully, Canberra. The dances chosen for this year's display are:

Maxwell's Rant 32R 3C RSCDS Bk 18; Kendall's Hornpipe 32J 2C RSCDS Gr Bk; The Marquis of Lorne 32S 3C RSCDS Miscellany; Espie McNabb 32J RSCDS Miscellany; The Reel of the Royal Scots 32R 3C RSCDS Lflts; The Dashing White Sergeant (audience participation)

Any persons interested in participating should contact Elaine by telephone (02 6254 7879) or by email: Elaine.Arthur@apex.net.au . A practice will be arranged closer to the date.



RSCDS CANBERRA & DISTRICT BRANCH BBQ AND DANCE
SHOWGROUNDS PAVILION, HALL VILLAGE
SATURDAY 5 MARCH 2011
MUSIC BY STRATHMANNAN
FROM 6.00PM
DANCING STARTS 7.30PM
COST \$10
BYO Food and Drink - BBQs provided

Program

1. Maxwell's Rant	(8x32R) 3C (4C set)	RSCDS Bk 18
2. The Frisky	(8x32J) 3C (4C set)	RSCDS Bk 26
3. The Silver Tassie	(8x32S) 3C (4C set)	RSCDS Lflt
4. Napier's Index	(8x40J) 3C (4C set)	RSCDS Bk 45
5. The Summer Assembly	(88R) 4C (sq set)	RSCDS Bk 35
6. Sands of Morar	(8x32S) 3C (4C set)	RSCDS Bk 45
7. A Capital Jig	(8x32J) 3C (4C set)	RSCDS 5/2009
8. The Black Mountain Reel	(5x32R) 5C (5C set)	D Haynes, Carnforth 3
9. Fair Donald	(8x32S) 3C (4C set)	RSCDS Bk 29
10. Mrs Stewart's Jig	(8x32J) 3C (4C set)	RSCDS Bk 35
11. Barbara's Strathspey	(8x32S) 3C (4C set)	RSCDS Bk 46
12. The Reel of the Royal Scots	(8x32R) 3C (4C set)	RSCDS Lflt

[Note: Anyone with a portable BBQ that could be brought along should please contact Jack, 6254 7879 or jarthur@apex.net.au]

ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF ROBERT BURNS

KATE O' SHANTER'S TALE – A MODERN RESPONSE TO THE TOAST TO THE LASSIES

It is claimed by some Burns enthusiasts that most Scots, when asked “What is Scotland’s national day?” will say 25 January, the anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns. On this view, patron Saint Andrew and his day, 30 November, will hardly rate a mention. I am not sure that this is the case but it is true that every year on or about this date in January thousands of Burns Suppers are held around the world. They honour his memory and the legacy of poetic works he left to future generations. Two of the lighter moments on these occasions are given by the remarks made by the Proposer of the Toast to the Lassies and those of the Responder. The (male) Proposer is supposed to poke gentle fun at the female sex, but conclude on a complimentary note. The Responder, nowadays often a woman, then has the chance to get even by taking men to task for their shortcomings, especially their “chauvinism, drinking and abuse of woman’s love for them”.

Kate o’ Shanter’s Tale is a modern Response to the Toast to the Lassies. It is based on, and requires just a little knowledge of, *Tam ‘o Shanter – a Tale*, which is Burns’ best narrative poem, and which is probably the work of his that is most often recited at a Burns Supper. So bear with me while I briefly recap Tam’s Tale, after which you shall have this delightful response to a Toast to the Lassies.

Tam o’ Shanter tells the story of a man who stays too long, and drinks too much, and flirts with the landlady, at a hostelry in the township of Ayr before setting out, drunk, in stormy weather on his good horse Meg (sometimes called Maggie) bound for his farm:

Whare sits our sulky, sullen dame, [Tam’s wife, Kate]
Gathering her brows like gathering storm,
Nursing her wrath to keep it warm...

She prophesied that, late or soon.
Thou would be found, deep drown’d in Doon,
Or catch’d wi warlocks in the mirk, [darkness]
By Alloway’s auld, haunted kirk.

Sure enough, passing by the kirk and graveyard on his way home, Tam came upon:

Warlocks and witches in a dance:
Nae cotillion, brent new frae France,
But hornpipes, jigs, strathspeys and reels,
Put life and mettle in their heels.

At first he watches unseen. Tam is particularly taken with the young witches, who are clad only in cutty sarks (short underskirts), but he gives himself away when he voices his admiration of their energetic efforts. He is pursued home but, riding furiously, arrives safely thanks to Maggie who, however, loses her tail. The poem ends with a warning:

Whene’er to drink you are inclin’d,
or cutty sarks rin in your mind,
Think! Ye may buy the joys o’er dear:
Remember Tam o’ Shanter’s mare.

Here now is the Response to the Toast to the Lassies, which gives a new twist to the tale by surmising what might have happened after Tam arrived home.

KATE O’ SHANTER’S TALE
And whaur do you suppose was Kate [where]
When market days were wearin’ late
While Tam frequented wretched dives
And fooled around with landlord’s wives
And rode poor Meg through mud and ditches
And had an eye for handsome witches
Played ‘Peepin’ Tam’ at Alloway
And yelled and gave himself away
And fled from there amid the din [noise]

*While Maggie barely saved his skin!
Whaur was Kate? No whaur you think!*

*Kate slaved awa the live-long day;
They had so mony bills to pay
The twins just had tae have some shoes
And Tam had spent that much on booze
She does the wash she mends the clothes
And what all else – God only knows
She keeps the hoose all neat and trim
And makes the lunch for ploughboy Jim
A neebour lad they hire by day
Who does the work while Tam's away.*

*She herds the sheep and cattle too
Feeds hen, milks cows, and when that's through
She maks the cheese and butter tae
For Tam tae sell on market day
Though truth to tell, it's hard to say
Tam drinks the proceeds half away.
But to our tale*

*Tam won hame that night at four
When Maggie found the stable door
Tam tumbled senseless on the floor
Tae sleep it aff eight hours or more
His dreams went through that ride again*

*He tossed and turned 'mid hail and rain'
At noon Tam woke from his lowly bed
And saw Meg's rump above his head
An awful thought came to his brain
Oh God that wisna hail and rain!*

*He struggled slowly to his feet
He was not clean he was not neat
He scraped off what he could and then
He made his way from But to Ben
And stood dumbfoonert!*

*What the Hell!
Kate had gone, the twins as well.
But she had left a note for him
I've sailed to Canada wi' Jim
And we expect to settle doon
In a nice wee ferm near Saskatoon!*

*Forgive me, Tam, and don't be sore
I couldna take it any more
I have tae find a better day
Before I slave my life away
Don't fash yourself aboot the twins
I might as well confess – they're Jim's*

[worry]

*Now wha this tale o' truth shall read
Ilk man and mothers son tak heed
Just try tae lead a sober life
Remember Tam o' Shanter's wife*

[every]

FREQUENT DANCE LISTS

Campbell Tyler compiles lists of frequent dances from a database of dance programmes submitted to him from around the world. He has been recording programmes from events held since 1 January 2008. At this time last year he had 600 dance programmes recorded and now has 700. Of these 700 programmes, Scotland has contributed 198, the Rest of UK 219, USA 101, Australia 74, Europe 40, Canada 22, New Zealand, 18, South Africa 18 and Japan 15. See the the website of the RSCDS International Branch, www.rscds-ib.org for more detailed lists, such as the 500 most frequent dances overall or the 50 most frequent dances on Australian programmes etc. Here are the current “Top Twenty” dances overall:

Place	Previous Place	Dance Name	Occurences in 700 programmes
1	1	Mongomerie's Rant	151
2	2	Mairi's Wedding	145
3	3	Pelorus Jack	144
4	4	Minister on the Loch	119
5	10	Joie de Vivre	108
6	5	Maxwell's Rant	106
7	6	Reel of the Royal Scots	106
8	7	Miss Johnstone of Ardrossan	105
9	9	Hooper's Jig	104
10	8	De'il Amang the Tailors	103
11	12	Irish Rover	97
12	13	Wild Geese	94
13	11	Bratach Bana	93
14	14	Shiftin' Bobbins	92
15	16	Neidpath Castle	90
16	15	Reel of the 51 st Division	89
17	17	Dream Catcher	88
18	26	Napier's Index	85
19	24	MacDonald of the Isles	82
20	19	Machine without Horses	82

Calendar of Events 2011

1 Feb	Belconnen SCD: first Tuesday class for 2011, Macquarie Primary School, Bennelong Cres, Macquarie. Contact: Colin Allum 62580009 or email colallum@optusnet.com.au
2 Feb	Branch General class commences 7.30pm at St Andrew's Church Hall. Contact Alan McCulloch 6288 5670 (ah) or by email alan.mcculloch@netspeed.com.au
3 Feb	SCDCC first Thursday classes for 2011 at The Church of Christ, corner of Limestone Ave and Grimes St. Ainslie. Contact Jan Clark 6288 2487 or by email: jan.clark@iinet.net.au
14 Feb	Burns Group first class for 2011: at St Andrew's Church Hall, Forrest. Contact Beverley Sproule beverley.sproule@bigpond.com
18 Feb	Branch “Gentle Dancing for Gentle Dancers” first class for 2009, 2pm Fridays, at St Andrew's Church Hall, Forrest. Contact Jessie by email:

	tmi04138@bigpond.net.au
2 March	Branch course for beginners. Registration and free class
5 March	Branch BBQ Showgrounds Pavilion, Hall Village
7 March	Branch occasional class, first session. Contact Elaine 6254 7879 or elaine.arthur@apex.net.au
18 March	Belconnen SCD advanced social class, 8pm, Macquarie Primary School, Bennelong Cr, Macquarie. Contact Elaine as above
2 April	Bundanoon Highland Gathering
16 April	Burns SCD Group Social
22-25 April	(Easter) National Folk Festival
29 April	Belconnen advanced social class
14 May	Nowra SCD Group 34 th Annual Ball
21 May	Branch "Tea Dance"
27 May	Belconnen advanced social class
4 June	Monaro Caledonian Society Annual (Cooma) Social
25 June	Belconnen SCD 36 th Birthday Social.
9-16 July	36th RSCDS Australian Winter School, Nelson Bay. WS Secretary Helene Taylor Tel: 02 4967 4219 Email: ivene@idl.com.au Registrar Michelle Cobb Tel: 0413 061 210 Email: shellc_82@yahoo.com Convenor: Marney Wilson Tel: 02 4961 0678 Email: marney_w@yahoo.com.au
29 July	Belconnen advanced social class
Aug?	Burns SCD Group Spring Hop.
13 Aug	Bateman's Bay Winter Social
20 Aug	Canberra Ball
26 Aug	Belconnen advanced social class.
14 Sept	Branch AGM
17 Sept	Marengo SCD Social.
23 Sept	Belconnen advanced social class
7-9 Oct	Far South Coast SCD Group, Bermagui Weekend.
28 Oct	Belconnen advanced social class. Final class for year
Nov	Burns SCD Group St Andrew's Night Celebration
25 Nov	Branch "Gentle Dancing for Gentle Dancers" annual picnic
30 Nov	Branch end-of-year social
3 Dec	Combined Belconnen SCD and SCDCC Christmas Social

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Closing date for next Scotch Circle – Friday, 29 April 2011

Contributions and requests for electronic version to June Browne at ceilidh@bigpond.com.au

