

SCOTCH CIRCLE

Vol 35 No 1

February 2015

RSCDS Canberra and District Branch Incorporated
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Vale Gael Howell

Gael died on 20 January 2015 peacefully at Mercy Hospice, Ponsonby, New Zealand. She and her husband, Robert, lived in Canberra in 2012 and 2013, during which time they regularly attended Branch classes and socials. Sadly missed.

First Week in February 2015: SCD Classes in Canberra RESUME

Tuesday 3 Feb: Belconnen Scottish Country Dancers, Macquarie Primary School, Bennelong Crescent, Macquarie, 8:00-10:00pm. Contact Colin Allum (02) 6258 0009 or colallum@optusnet.com.au

Tuesday, 3 Feb: Black Mountain Reelers, in the North Canberra Baptist Church, 17 Condamine Street, Turner (opposite Turner Primary School) NOTE CHANGE OF VENUE FROM LAST YEAR; lunchtime class from 12:15pm. If dancing in daytime would suit you our new venue offers easy off-road parking and a good floor: you are most welcome to join us for this our 25th year of Scottish country dancing! Contact Jenny Wanless, (02) 6281 3892 or jennifer.wanless@gmail.com

Wednesday 4 Feb: Canberra Branch General Class, St Andrews Church Hall, State Circle, Forrest, 7:30-9:30pm. The half-hour, pre-general class session from 7:00-7:30pm for “intermediate” dancers, will not start until 18 February. Contact Alan McCulloch alan.mcculloch@netspeed.com.au

Thursday 5 Feb: Scottish Country Dance Club of Canberra, North Canberra Baptist Church, 17 Condamine Street, Turner (opposite Turner Primary School), 8:00-10:00pm, preceded by a half-hour session from 7:30pm for intermediate dancers. Contact Jan or Bruce Clark (02) 6288 2487 or bruce.clark@inet.net.au

Friday 6 Feb: Canberra Branch, Gentle class for gentle dancers, St Andrews Church Hall, State Circle, Forrest, 2:00-4:00pm. If daytime dancing appeals, this class would suit you. Contact Jessie Middlemiss tmi04138@bigpond.net.au

Other Upcoming Events and Classes February/March

13-15 Feb: National Multicultural Festival, Civic

Under the guidance of Jan Clark, dancers will be performing displays at the festival: on Saturday 14th at 4:40 pm; and on Sunday 15th as part of a "Scottish Concert" from 1-5 pm. For information about the location of the displays contact Alan McCulloch alan.mcculloch@netspeed.com.au

Saturday 28 Feb: Branch Picnic

This year we return to the Pavilion at the village of Hall for our annual beginning-of-year picnic and social dance. Bring your own food and beverages for the picnic (no BBQ this year) which will commence at 6:00pm. Dancing will run from 7:30 until about 9:30pm, followed by a light supper. The program, which has a Burns theme, is shown below (with notes). A program without notes and a recap sheet can be downloaded from the Branch website www.rscds-canber.a.org Admission \$15; Music by Strathmannan. All dances walked through as required.

Wednesday 4 March: At St Andrews Church Hall, State Circle, Forrest, from 6:00-7:00pm. The Canberra Branch will run a **FREE, introductory class for new dancers**. Then, subject to a sufficient number of dancers enrolling and paying a \$60 fee at the conclusion of the free class, an eight-lesson course will run, one lesson per week, from 11 March to 6 May. Contact Jack Arthur at jarthur@apex.net.au

Friday 13 March: Belconnen Scottish Country Dancers Advanced Social Class, Macquarie Primary School, Bennelong Crescent, Macquarie, at 8pm. The class will be taken by Peggy and TJ. The program may be downloaded from www.rscds-canberra.org and hard copies will be available at local classes.

Expressions of Interest Sought

Saturday 11 April: Bundanoon Highland Gathering

The following dances have been chosen for the massed Scottish country dance display at the Bundanoon Highland Gathering. If you would like to be part of this display please contact Elaine on elaine.arthur@apex.net.au or 6254 7879. Practices will be arranged nearer to the date of the Gathering.

EH3 7AF	32J 3C	Book 40	Twice through.
Hedwig's Reel	32R 3C	2nd Graded Book	Twice through
Invercauld's Reel	32S 3C	Book 11	Twice through
Highland Fair	32J 2C	Graded Book	Three times through (i.e. all couples, middle couples, all couples)
The White Cockade	32R 3C	Book 5	Twice through

Other Matters

Answer to Quiz in the 4 January 2015 Newsletter in connection with 25 January 2015 anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns

What is the missing word in the title of the Burns poem "To a ..."
 (A) House (B) Grouse (C) Louse

The answer is of course (C) Louse

Not “*To a Mouse*” as one or two writers suggested, as “Mouse” was not given as one of the clues.

Burns wrote “*To a Louse*” on seeing one on a lady’s bonnet in Church. The first line is:

“*Ha! Whare ye gaun, ye crawlin’ ferlie?*” [going, crawling, marvel]

“*To a Mouse*” contains the much quoted passage beginning: “*The best laid plans o’ mice and men...*”

“*To a Louse*” contains another gem:

“*O wad some Power the giftie gie us*

To see oursels as ithers see us!

It wad frae monie a blunder free us.

An foolish notion;

What airs in dress an gait wad lea’e us.

An ev’n devotion!”

Postscript to a review (in the November 2014 Scotch Circle) of Rosalind Zuridis’ article “Scottish Country Dancing: the Great Post-War Transformation”.

The entire article can be found, and downloaded from the RSCDS London Branch website.

The answer to the question (Who devised set and link?) is, I believe, Alec Hay (New Zealand). The formation appears in at least two of his dances published in the mid-1960s:

“*The Dean Bridge of Edinburgh*” (Bk 23) and “*Hay’s Australian Ladies*”.

And, of course, the real name of “*A Weel Kent Dance*” is “*Roaring Jelly*” by Hugh Foss, one of the leaders of the Great Post-War Transformation.

Notes on Dances for the Branch Picnic and Dance, 28 February 2015

There is more than a flavour of Robert Burns in the dance program, as can be seen below.

1. Linton Ploughman (J8x32) 2C (4Cset) RSCDS Bk 5

Burns was also a farmer and, as such, has been often dubbed the ploughman poet.

2. The White Cockade (R8x32) 3C (4Cset) RSCDS Bk 5

The name Burns gave to this Jacobite ballad.

O he’s a ranting, roving lad.

He is a brisk an a bonny lad.

Betide what may, I will be wed,

And follow the boy wi the White Cockade

3. The Silver Tassie (S8x32) 3C (4C set) RSCDS Leaflet

The name of another Burns Jacobite ballad.

Go fetch to me a pint o wine,

And fill it in a silver tassie;

That I may drink, before I go,

A service to my bonie lassie;

4. Twa Rogueish Een**(J8x40) 3C (4C set)****Rondel Bk**

This Burns poem has been described as a simile of smiles; all verses end with the same last line. The first verse:

*On Cessnock banks a lassie dwells,
 Could I describe her shape and mien;
 Our lassies a' she far excels –
 An' she has twa sparkling, rogueish een.*

5. Burns' Hornpipe**(R4x32) 4C set****RSCDS Bk 27**

It is unclear whether Burns himself ever danced. He certainly socialised. It is possible that when he visited Edinburgh in the mid-18th century he may have encountered Scottish country dancing during its heyday.

6. The Lea Rig**(S8x32) 2C (4C set)****RSCDS Bk 21**

A Burns love song

When o'er the hill the eastern star

Tells bouhtin time is near, my Jo.

And owsen frae the furrow'd field

Return sae dowf and weary, O,

Down by the burn, where scented birks

Wi dew are hangin clear, my Jo

I'll meet thee on the lea-rig,

My ain kind dearie, O!

[folding, darling]

[oxen]

[dull]

[birches]

7. Cutty Sark**(J8x32) 3C (4C set)****RSCDS Bk 40**

After the witch, Nannie, in *Tam O' Shanter*: one of Burns' most well-known poems. A summary of the relevant part of the tale follows. The main character, Tam:

- On his way home, on a dark and stormy night, riding his faithful horse Maggie, after a long session of revelry at the local hostelry;
- Coming upon a grotesque performance of warlocks and witches, in a graveyard, which he watches in silence and out of sight; they are playing music, and singing and dancing, during the course of which coffins open and skeletons rise up to join in;
- Mesmerised by the dancing of the leading witch, Nannie, who presently undresses to just her short undergarment, known as a cutty sark;
- Finally, can keep his silence no longer and roars out: 'Weel done, Cutty-sark!'

And the rest of the tale can be found by reading the poem.

8. Duncan Gray**(R8x40) 3C (4C set)****Rondel Bk**

A Burns poem of wooing culminating in marriage.

Duncan Gray cam here to woo

(Ha, ha, the wooing o' it)

On blythe Yule-night when we were fou

(Ha, ha the wooing o' it) ...

[drunk]

9. The Minister on the Loch**(S3x32) 3C set****RSCDS Leaflet 4/2008**

A modern dance devised for the well-known SCD pianist and resident of Edinburgh, Robert Mackay. There is a tenuous connection between Burns and the name of the dance, which is also the name of a painting by the 18th century Scottish painter Henry Raeburn. The painting shows the Reverend Robert Walker skating on a frozen loch in Edinburgh. Walker was a Church of Scotland clergyman who preached in Edinburgh during the time that Burns visited that city. Burns and Walker were also born in Ayrshire: Burns in Alloway in 1759; Walker 10 miles away in Monkton about four years earlier. It is not known if they ever met, or if Burns ever attempted the ‘Darling Diversion’.

10. The Starry Eyed Lassie**(8x32) 3C (4C set)****RSCDS Bk 23**

The inclusion of this dance connects with the theme of the Great Post-War Transformation described in the previous issue of *Scotch Circle* and mentioned above in this one. The dance appears in RSCDS Bk 23, the second of two books of ‘modern’ SCDs published by the Society in the early 1960’s as the first tangible signal that it was acknowledging the new, post-World War 2 generation of new devisers. It is also one of four of the 12 dances prescribed by the RSCDS as examination dances for trainee teachers, which appear in this ground-breaking book. The other three are: *Alltshellach*, *Miss Hadden’s Reel* and *Mrs Hamilton of Wishaw*.

11. City of Belfast**(S3x32) 3C set****Belfast Diamond Jubilee**

The celebration of the anniversary of the birth of the great bard is alive and well in Belfast, where a sell-out Burns Supper was held at the Ulster Reform Club, 4 Royal Avenue, on Thursday, 22 January 2015.

12. The Australian Ladies**(R 8x32) 3C (4C set)****Glasgow Assembly Bk**

A team of eight dancers from the Hunter Valley won an SCD competition in Sydney in 1965. The ladies in the team photograph sent to Bob Campbell, Ontario, inspired him to write this dance. The ladies were Elma See, Jean Conway, Margaret Gray and Lorraine Dyal.

For Sale - Men’s Kilt and Jacket with some accessories

Black Dress Jacket and Waistcoat 44”

Blue Day Jacket 44”

Dress Sporran

Dress Belt

Kilt (Murray of Atholl) waist 48-50”, length 23”

Kilt (blue – very much like a Gordon or Campbell of Breadalbane) waist 48-50”, length 23”

For more information contact Elaine Arthur elaine.arthur@apex.net.au or phone 6254 7879.

Scotch Circle is published by RSCDS (Canberra & District) and the Committee reserves rights of editorial control. The closing date for next *Scotch Circle* is Friday, 17 April 2015.

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