

# SCOTCH CIRCLE

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November 2011

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

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## Message from the Chair

Greetings! As this issue goes to press the festive season looms on the horizon, but the dancing year is not quite over. Details of the Gentle Dancers annual picnic on 25 November and three remaining Canberra socials (26 and 30 November and 3 December) are included herein; and to add to your enjoyment of the 42 different dances on the programs for these events you may care to have a look at the **Ten Commandments for Balls and Socials (King James version)** - the publishers of this document comment that although the commandments were probably not carried down from Mount Schiehallion on shortbread tablets, you will not make a mistake by trying to adhere to them. And speaking of that famous mountain, see Jenny Wanless' article on the Schiehallion Experiment.

Also inside you will find information presented to the Branch AGM about Branch activities for the financial year ended 30 June 2011, and the state of its finances as at 30 June 2011. At the AGM the existing secretary, Alan McCulloch and treasurer, Mary Gellatly, were once again available for re-election to the Branch committee, as were other extant committee members Glenys Bishop and David Ayre, and all were duly re-elected. Also elected were new committee members Jenny Gallagher and Madeleine Johnson.

At its meeting on 4 November, the new committee established a **working group** comprising David Ayre, Alan McCulloch and myself to:

- Examine the financial feasibility of conducting the Australian Winter School in Canberra in 2014; and
- Investigate possible venues for accommodation and classes.

The group has commenced work.

Finally, we mourn the loss of Harold Friend – born 4 April 1920; died 12 October 2011 – who, by his presence, enlivened Scottish country dancing in Canberra and District for nearly thirty years. Our thoughts and condolences are with Clare Hughes. He will be missed.

Jack Arthur

**Society AGM and Conference Weekend 2011**  
(For more information visit [www.rscds.org/](http://www.rscds.org/) )

- 212 delegates (representing 113 Branches, and holding 307 votes) were present;
- Scrolls of Honour were presented to several members. Also receiving a Scroll, but not present at the AGM, was Ann Archdeacon (Queensland);
- Member subscriptions will remain unchanged for the 2012-2013 year;
- There were 488 dancers at the Ball on Friday, with music from The Ian Muir Sound, and the program devised by Berks/Hants/Surrey Border Branch;
- On Saturday, there were 542 dancers, with music by The Lothian Band, and the program devised by Vancouver Branch.

**Remaining Events 2011**

**Friday 25 November: Branch Gentle Dancers Annual Picnic**

For details contact Jessie Middlemiss by email [tmi04138@bigpond.net.au](mailto:tmi04138@bigpond.net.au)

**Saturday 26 November: Burns Group St Andrews Night Social**

8 pm at St Andrews Church Hall, Forrest. Music by Bob McInnes and Rhonda Langford  
Admission: \$10. A small plate for supper would be appreciated.

Program: The Loch Ness Monster; St Andrews Fair; MacDonald of the Isles; Catch the Wind; Laggan Bay; The Royal Wedding; The Piper and the Penguin; The Kelloholm Jig; Wisp of Thistle; The Saltire Society Reel; Culla Bay; The Sailor; Pelorus Jack; Will ye no' Come back Again; Meeting of the Waters  
Recaps: <http://www.rscds-canberra.org/texts/BurnsStAndrew.doc>

**Wednesday 30 November: Branch end-of-year Social**

7.30 pm at St Andrews Church Hall, Forrest; Admission \$4 members (\$5 non-members)  
A small plate for supper would be appreciated. All dances will be walked through.

Program: The Raven's Dance J; The Royal Yacht Britannia R; Balquidder Strathspey S; St Andrews Fair J; Society Piper R; The Jordanhill Strathspey; Whiteadder Jig J; Ayrshire Craig R; City of Belfast; The Dancing Man R.

Recaps: <http://www.rscds-canberra.org/texts/Branchendyearrecaps.doc>

**Saturday 3 December: Combined Belconnen SCD and SCDC  
Christmas Social**

7.30 pm at St Andrews Church Hall, Forrest (NOTE NEW VENUE FOR THIS EVENT) with music by Strathmannan; Admission \$10.

Program: A Capital Jig J; Mary Erskine H; Fair Donald S; Summer Wooing R; The Duke of Atholl's Reel J; Suenos Stone R; Cherrybank Gardens S; Best Set in the Hall J; Scott Meikle R; The Bonnie Tree S; Kendall's Hornpipe J; Shiftin' Bobbins R; The Flower of Glasgow S; The Lords of the Wind R; The Black Swans of Narrabeen J; Butterscotch and Honey S; The Reel of the Royal Scots R

Recaps: <http://www.rscds-canberra.org/texts/ChristmasSocialrecaps.doc>

**TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR BALLS AND SOCIALS  
(KING JAMES VERSION)  
(With acknowledgement and thanks to Frankfurt SCD Club)**

These may not have been carried down from Mount Schiehallion on shortbread tablets, but anyway, you will not make a mistake by trying to adhere to them:

1. Thou shalt not overestimate thyself when asking people to dance, lest thou beest embarrassed if the set breaks down six times out of eight because of thee;
2. Thou shalt dance now and then with other people than thy spouse or immediate tribe – possibly even with someone from the other table or yon wallflower from the outer reaches of the hall;
3. Thou shalt not walk on the floor too early, neither shalt thou do this alone, for lo! The MC will announce the dance when it is time, and even in Scotland it takes two to dance;
4. Thou shalt join a set at the bottom and not in the middle (especially if it may have already been counted), lest thou not cause much wailing and gnashing of teeth before the dance has even started;
5. Thou shalt count the lines if thou art the top man, for the knowledge of one's station in the set produces good will in all men (and women!);
6. Thou shalt look at thy partner during the dance and not at thy [crib sheet], so that she (or he) may remain friendly towards thee and thou mayest ask her (or him) to dance again;
7. Thou shalt not hinder thy neighbour's dance by returning from thy Down-the-middle-and-up on bar 9, blocking forever the centre of the set with extra twiddles and hand-clapping during a half diagonal reel of four, or otherwise not acting as a team player;
8. Thou shalt honour thy musicians, that thy dance may be long into the night and they might even repeat a dance that thou hast liked. But similarly shalt thou help the MC; clap both loudly and long, but remain on the dance floor if thou wilt do that dance again or clear it speedily if not;
9. Thou shalt not chide, lest thou be chided – for verily, nobody hath appointed thee (of all people) judge of thy neighbour's dancing ability or outlook on what is enjoyable. If thou must chide people, become a dance teacher and chide them in thy class; at balls and socials it is an abomination;
10. Thou shalt enjoy thyself – in spite of these commandments – and help others enjoy themselves, too;
11. Other dancers will be commented upon on thy way home.

**RSCDS Canberra & District Branch Inc**  
**Annual Report for the year ending 30 June 2011**

The Branch conducted the following classes during the year:

- The regular Wednesday evening general class was taken by several teachers on a rotational basis. These classes continued to be well supported;
- The weekly Friday afternoon gentle dancing class attracted a regular group of dancers who enjoy dancing in the afternoon;
- The Monday evening occasional class enabled dancers to brush up and improve their dancing skills; and
- Two eight-week courses for beginners have been conducted during calendar year 2011 and several dancers from these have joined the general class.

On the social calendar, the Canberra Ball in August 2010, a joint venture of the Branch and other Canberra SCD clubs was enjoyed by nearly 80 dancers. The post-2010 AGM social dancing, the end-of-year social held on the final Wednesday evening class for 2010, and the annual Branch picnic organised by the Friday afternoon class rounded out calendar year 2010. The Branch BBQ and Social Dancing at the Pavilion, Hall Showgrounds, was the opening social event for calendar year 2011. The Tea Dance in May was also a great success. More than 50 dancers attended and it raised a substantial sum for Scottish country dancers in Sendai, Japan who had been adversely affected by the earthquake and tsunami in that region. The Tea Dance was also the setting in which Brian Gunning was presented with a Branch Award in recognition of his outstanding service to Scottish country dancing in the Canberra and District area. Congratulations, Brian.

We also performed several dance displays: at Floriade; the Old Bus Depot Markets, Kingston; the National Folk Festival; and the Bundanoon Highland Gathering. Deserved congratulations go to Elaine who tutored the dancers, and the dancers themselves who gave their best, enthusiastically and cooperatively, and demonstrated to the public just how enjoyable a pastime Scottish country dancing can be.

I wish to thank a number of other people:

- the committee, for their labour of love freely given, without which the Branch could not operate; David, Elizabeth, Glenys, Hisako, and particularly Alan as Secretary and Mary as Treasurer;
- the teachers, for all the time and effort they put into preparing and delivering lessons which were at once interesting, varied and, above all, fun (Ann, David, Elaine, Elizabeth, Jan, Jessie and Sandra);
- June, for her work in connection with *Scotch Circle*;
- Brian, for his ongoing service to the Branch in producing the monthly e-mail newsletter and maintaining the Branch website.
- The membership, for your support of classes and functions during the past year.

JA

**RSCDS Canberra & District Branch Inc**  
**Treasurer's Report for the year ending 30 June 2011**

Once again, I am pleased to present my report on the finances of the Branch. The Auditor's Report, the profit and Loss Statement and the Balance Sheet report are attached [NOT INCLUDED HERE. A COPY IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST]. The profit for the year was \$230.56, compared to a profit of \$398.13 for 2009-2010. This year's profit includes prepayments of 2011-12 Membership Subscriptions of \$483 (\$560 prior year). Bank Interest this year was \$883 compared to \$424 last year, the variance relates to maturity dates of our Term Deposit.

During the year the Branch purchased a set of RSCDS CDs for teachers' use. This was a one-off expense of \$661.15. Another significant payment during the year was a donation of \$1,820 to the Sendai Tsunami Victims relief Appeal. These funds were the proceeds of the Tea Dance, and included generous donations from members, Strathmannan and from other Scottish Dancing clubs from Canberra and NSW.

The number of financial members for 2011 was 46, comprising 10 Annual Joint Members, 33 Annual Members, and 3 Half-Year Members. During the last financial year the Branch was fortunate to have recruited nine new members. At 12 September [2011] there are 41 financial members. The Branch's finances continue to remain strong.

**Mary Gellatly**

## The Schiehallion Experiment

Our son David and his wife Cathy spent six days cycling around the Isle of Skye in July, then followed that with riding by Tummel and Loch Rannoch and Lochaber etc. They danced a Schiehallion reel in the shadow of the mountain of that name and David sent me the web link.

At various times some of our dancers of appropriate ancestry, such as Bob Galloway and Allan McCulloch, have mentioned this experiment. So here, for the rest of us whose school or university physics classes did not include it, is some information.

The Schiehallion Experiment was an 18<sup>th</sup> century effort to determine the mean density of the Earth. It was funded by the Royal Society, and was conducted in 1774 at this mountain in Perthshire, Scotland. The experiment involved measuring the tiny deflection of a pendulum due to the attraction of a nearby mountain.

The deflection angle of a pendulum would depend on the relative densities and volumes of the Earth and the mountain. If the density and volume of the mountain could be ascertained, then it would be possible to work out the density of the Earth. In turn this would yield approximate values for the other planets, their moons and the Sun, as relative ratios had already been determined.

Isaac Newton had thought of such an experiment to provide evidence for his theory of gravitation, but rejected the idea as impractical. A French team actually tried to perform the experiment in very difficult circumstances in 1738, at Chimborazo, a 6,268 metre volcano in Ecuador. They detected a deflection of 8 seconds of arc, but did not come to a conclusion.

In the 1770s a group of British scientists including Joseph Banks and headed by the Astronomer Royal, Nevil Maskelyne, decided it was worth trying again. In order to make the measurement possible and the computation easier the search was on for a single and symmetrical mountain, away from a mountain range. Schiehallion was only 1,083 metres, but stood alone, and its symmetrical east-west ridge simplified the calculations, while its steep northern and southern slopes allowed the pendulums to sit close to its centre of gravity.

The surveyors took thousands of bearings to points around the mountain to ascertain its shape. Charles Hutton, the surveyor, divided the mountain into vertical prisms, and hit on the idea of interpolating a series of lines of equal altitude at set intervals on the map – thus inventing contour lines, to the future benefit of many an engineer and bushwalker.

The density of the Earth turned out to be much greater than the density of the mountain, and Hutton suggested that the Earth must have much denser material, probably metallic, occupying about the inner 65% of its diameter.

There is an Australian connection not only because Banks was involved, but also because the whole expedition had been generously funded and provided with the best equipment available, by the Royal Society. The money was available because the King had handed over to them the unspent funds from the Transit of Venus expedition, Cook's first voyage.

As for Schiehallion reels, there may be no connection, although it is tempting to think the reels represent people wending their way up a steep mountain on zigzag tracks – maybe the surveyors carrying their heavy equipment.

Information from Wikipedia. Jenny Wanless

**Calendar of Events 2012**  
(Some dates are tentative and may change)

<b>1 Feb</b>	Branch General class commences 7.30 pm at St Andrew's Church Hall. Contact Alan McCulloch 6288 5670 (ah) or by email <a href="mailto:alan.mcculloch@netspeed.com.au">alan.mcculloch@netspeed.com.au</a>
<b>2 Feb?</b>	SCDCC first Thursday classes at The Church of Christ, corner of Limestone Ave and Grimes St. Ainslie. Contact Jan Clark 6288 2487 or by email: <a href="mailto:jan.clark@iinet.net.au">jan.clark@iinet.net.au</a>
<b>7 Feb</b>	Belconnen SCD First Tuesday class. Contact Colin Allum 6258 0009 or email <a href="mailto:colallum@optusnet.com.au">colallum@optusnet.com.au</a>
<b>13 Feb</b>	Burns Group first class at St Andrew's Church Hall, Forrest. Contact Beverley Sproule <a href="mailto:beverley.sproule@bigpond.com">beverley.sproule@bigpond.com</a>
<b>17 Feb</b>	Branch "Gentle Dancing for Gentle Dancers" first class, 2pm Fridays, at St Andrew's Church Hall, Forrest. Contact Jessie by email: <a href="mailto:tmi04138@bigpond.net.au">tmi04138@bigpond.net.au</a>
<b>25/2 or 3/3</b>	Branch BBQ: Showgrounds Pavilion, Hall
<b>7 March</b>	Branch course for beginners. Registration and free class
<b>16 March</b>	Belconnen SCD advanced social class, 8 pm. Contact Elaine Arthur 6254 7879 or email: <a href="mailto:elaine.arthur@apex.net.au">elaine.arthur@apex.net.au</a>
<b>March?</b>	Burns SCD Group Social
<b>6-9 April</b>	(Easter) National Folk Festival
<b>21 April</b>	Bundanoon Highland Gathering
<b>27 April</b>	Belconnen advanced social class
<b>12 May</b>	Nowra SCD Group 34 <sup>th</sup> Annual Ball
<b>19 May</b>	Branch "Tea Dance"
<b>25 May</b>	Belconnen advanced social class
<b>June?</b>	Monaro Caledonian Society Annual Ball, Cooma
<b>23 June</b>	Belconnen SCD 37 <sup>th</sup> Birthday Social.
<b>27 July</b>	Belconnen advanced social class
<b>18 Aug?</b>	Canberra Ball
<b>24 Aug</b>	Belconnen advanced social class
<b>12 Sept</b>	Branch AGM
<b>Sept?</b>	Marengo SCD Social.
<b>21 Sept</b>	Belconnen advanced social class
<b>30/9-6/10</b>	37 <sup>th</sup> Australian Winter School, Dookie, Vic. WS Secretary: Jo Reed <a href="mailto:familyreed@optusnet.com.au">familyreed@optusnet.com.au</a> or <a href="http://www.rscdsmelbourne.org.au">www.rscdsmelbourne.org.au</a>
<b>Oct?</b>	Far South Coast SCD Group, Bermagui Weekend.
<b>26 Oct</b>	Belconnen advanced social class. Final for year
<b>24 Nov?</b>	Burns SCD Group St Andrew's Night Celebration
<b>25 Nov</b>	Branch End-of-year Social
<b>Nov?</b>	Branch "Gentle Dancing for Gentle Dancers" class annual picnic
<b>1 Dec</b>	Combined Belconnen SCD and SCDCC Christmas Social

*Scotch Circle is published by RSCDS (Canberra & District) and the Committee reserves rights of editorial control*

*Closing date for next Scotch Circle – Friday, 27 January 2012*

*Contributions and requests for electronic version to June Browne at [ceilidh@bigpond.com.au](mailto:ceilidh@bigpond.com.au)*