

# 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! As this issue goes to press the festive season is almost upon us, but the dancing year is not quite over. Details of the Gentle Dancers annual picnic on 30 November and the two remaining Canberra dancing socials for the year (28 November and 1 December) are included herein.

At the AGM, secretary, Alan McCulloch and treasurer, Mary Gellatly, were once again available for re-election to the Branch committee, as were other extant committee members David Ayre, Glenys Bishop and Madeleine Johnson; all were duly re-elected. Also elected was new committee member Tonyia Watson. Thanks to retiring committee member Jenny Gallagher.

The Branch committee has decided to increase class fees, with effect February 2013, from: \$4 (members) and \$5 (non-members); to: \$5 (members) and \$6 (non-members). In reaching this decision, the committee noted, firstly, that the present class fees have remained static for many years but costs have increased; and, secondly, that for the past few years the Branch would have made a loss were it not for the receipt of interest on our bank deposit account. Finally, the committee considers that, although the 2014 Winter School Working Group is budgeting for a "break-even" financial result, difficulties always attend the best attempts to accurately forecast one of the key elements of such a budget, namely, the number of likely attendees. The committee feels that, up to a point, a smaller number of actual applications to attend the school than the number forecast in the budget should not jeopardise the conduct of the school. The small increase in class fees will provide a modest financial buffer against the possibility that the school does incur a less than "break-even" outcome.

The committee is concerned about a perceived lack of interest amongst the readership of Scotch Circle. See inside the short article "Scotch Circle: It's Future?" Consequently, we are seeking the services of a new editor whose mission would be revamp this publication into one which is perceived to be and is in fact clearly distinguishable from its sister publication, the Branch Email Newsletter. If you are interested and would like to know more, or have any comments to make about the article, please let me know.

I wish you and yours all the best for Christmas and the New Year and look forward to seeing you all again in February 2013, refreshed and ready for dancing.

Jack Arthur

## Scotch Circle: It's Future?

I have become aware of a growing perception among the membership that of the two Branch publications, Scotch Circle and the Email Newsletter, the latter has become much more valued than the former as a source of information about SCD activities in Canberra & District. The Branch website has also become a major source of relevant information. Furthermore, members appear to believe that there is little to be read in Scotch Circle that does not also appear in the newsletter or on the website. Again, the newsletter is seen as being a more timely publication because it comes out monthly, whereas Scotch Circle is issued quarterly. Finally, it is being said that, apart from those few members who still receive their copy in paper form through the ordinary mail (rather than by email), some members no longer read their copy of Scotch Circle.

I think, and the committee concurs, that these criticisms have some validity. It seems to me that Scotch Circle was originally conceived as serving at least two purposes: firstly, as a source of information about local SCD activities; but, secondly, as a means of stimulating interest in SCD generally by, for example, publishing relevant articles and editorials, and stimulating discussion and the exchange of views among the membership through written comment and correspondence. The first purpose (information) has been duplicated, in a more timely way, by the newsletter and the website, but the second purpose is no longer being fulfilled.

**What to do?** The first, and in my view, preferred option is to aim to revamp Scotch Circle - so that it fulfils this second purpose. However, we believe this would require, firstly, a new, activist editor who has the inclination, energy, knowledge and time: to seek out and publish relevant material; to stimulate and encourage discussion among the membership; and to engage in any other activity which would assist fulfil this second purpose. Secondly, the readership would need to play its part by contributing material to the editor. Thus, I invite expressions of interest from anyone amongst the readership who may be interested in taking up this role, even on a trial basis.

The second option, would follow if the first option fails, that is, should a new editor with the relevant attributes not be forthcoming. This would involve merging Scotch Circle into the newsletter as a quarterly special issue of that publication.

The third, and least desirable, option would be to let things roll on as they are.

What do you all think? Send me an email with any thoughts you may have.

Jack

## Remaining Events 2012

### **Wednesday 28 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: Golden Bracken (R); Andrew and Gordon's Jig (J); Mary Hamilton (S); Salute to Miss Milligan (R); The Bees of Maggie Knockater (J); Miss Milligan's Strathspey (S); Liquid Assets (J); The Whistling Wind (J); Jim Dougal of Eyemouth (S); Mary Erskine (H).

### **Friday 30 November: Branch Gentle Dancers Annual Picnic**

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

### **Saturday 1 December: Combined Belconnen SCD and SCDCC Christmas Social**

7.30 pm at Macquarie Primary School, Bennelong Crescent, Macquarie. Music by Bob McInnes and Jane Ellis. Admission \$10 (small plate appreciated).

Program: The Laird of Milton's Daughter (J); The Lords of the Wind (R); The Daffodil (S); Follow Me Home (J); Salute to Miss Milligan (R); Jim Dougal of Eyemouth (S); Major Ian Stewart (J); The Bonnie Tree (S); Fahyda (H); Dancing Dolphins (J); John McAlpin (S); Society Piper (R); Blooms of Bon Accord (R); City of Belfast (S); The Nurseryman (J); Mairi's Wedding (R).

## Visiting Teacher: Great Class

On 10 October, thirty-five or so dancers experienced a great physical and mental workout from visiting UK teacher Craig Houston, and learned some new dances. Craig commenced the class by giving dancers a solid warm-up, including a round-the-room dance, one couple facing another, which contained several basic formations. He then took the class through a session of step practice and other exercises aimed at enhancing basic dancing skills and technique, and suggested that practising these exercises at home would result in some real improvements to dancing performance. Craig devoted the rest of the evening to working through - carefully and patiently - three dances, two of which are from the St Andrews Branch Platinum CD. The first of these, The Bejant Royal, a 48 bar reel for three couples in a four-couple set, was devised to mark Prince William's first year at St Andrews University, when, following tradition, he would have been known as a "bejant", the equivalent of a freshman/fresher at other universities. The second of the Platinum CD dances was Irene Bennett's Strathspey and the final dance was Sleepy Maggie. The dancing concluded with an excellent cool-down, followed by supper.

### Tea Dance to Evaluate 10 dances for Possible Inclusion in RSCDS Book 47

A good roll up of dancers enjoyed themselves on the afternoon of Saturday 10 November, as they worked their way through 10 new dances which were identified by a number rather than a name. Dancers were asked to learn and dance each one in the order shown in the table below and give each a score before dancing the next one. A score of zero indicates "would not at all like this one on a dance program", while a score of 9 indicates "must have this one on a dance program". After the 10<sup>th</sup> dance, each dancer was asked to pick a favourite. At the conclusion of the dancing many stayed on to share some food and have a chat.

The result of the process is summarised in the table below.

Dance	Type	Score										Teacher	Favourite
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9		
1. Dance 96	J 3C 4C set				1	7	11	12	12	4		Ann	
2. Dance 280	S 3C set					4	5	11	13	13	1	Jan	3
3. Dance 210	R 3C 4C set				1	4	3	7	15	16	1	Jessie	8
4. Dance 281	S 2C 4C set	3		1	9	5	6	8	6	6	3	Sandra	2
5. Dance 116	J Sq set	2	1	3	6	7	7	8	7	4	2	David	3
6. Dance 286	S 3C 4C set						4	11	13	15	2	Ann	3
7. Dance 208	R 3C set			2	1	4	5	9	15	6	6	Fiona	4
8. Dance 292	S 4Cset					2	7	6	11	12	7	Bruce	6
9. Dance 209	R 3C 4C set				5	8	9	9	8	4	2	Elizabeth	
10. Dance 97	M 3C 32S+32R 4C set				1	2	1	10	9	13	9	Jack	15

In all, 47 score sheets were compiled (31 at the Tea Dance, plus 16 at two sessions where the teachers learned the dances). The score boxes show the total number of dancers who awarded each dance the score indicated. Taking Dance 96 as an example, no dancers awarded a score of 0, 1, 2 or 9; one dancer awarded a score of 3, seven gave a score of 4, eleven a score of 5, twelve a score of 6, twelve a score of 7, and four a score of 8. In the Favourite column, nobody chose Dance 96 as their favourite, three chose Dance 280, eight chose Dance 210, and so on down the column.

## A TRIP TO LUOYANG

It began with a notice in the August 2011 Scotch Circle to see if Canberra dancers were interested in participating in a cultural (mostly dance) festival in a little known Chinese city during September the following year. And after much organizational effort and many hours of dancing practice a group of 16 dancers and 3 supporting friends left Sydney on 19 September 2012 bound for Luoyang, Henan Province, China - 830 km SW of Beijing and 1035km NW of Shanghai. There were 13 dancers from Canberra (Colin Allum, Glenys Bishop, Jan and Bruce Clark, Mary Gellatly, Brian Gunning, Neville King, Elizabeth Low and her young daughter Eibhlis, Alan McCulloch, Hua-Jun Ni, Antonella Salpietro and Joo-Hua Teo). In addition we were fortunate to be joined by 3 dancers from Sydney (Adrienne and Bill Unger and Deborah Baker) who travelled to Canberra for multiple practices. We were also very fortunate to have Adrienne's expertise as a seamstress and costume designer. She and Glenys coordinated the selection and sourcing of the team's uniforms. After an initial hiccup, caused by the cancellation of our planned flight from Guangzhou to Luoyang, we all arrived, met our guide Peggy, and spent the night of 20 September in the comfortable Quanjude Hotel.

The next day we were taken by bus to a large stadium for a rehearsal of the Opening Ceremony of the 2012 Luoyang Heluo Cultural Tourism Festival. This was regarded by the organizers as the key event because of the presence of VIPs and because it would be televised. There was much milling about as busloads of groups arrived with multi-coloured costumes of all sorts. 43 overseas groups from 25 countries were involved. Jan and Bruce Clark developed our dance programs and for the Opening Ceremony we had 2 ½ minutes doing Kings Croft (3 two-couple sets in a rotating Y formation) followed by a strathspey, Gypsy Dreams. Later that day we moved on to a city park where, on a large red carpet stage, we performed our long program of 10 dances connected by transitions. This was an ambitious program because we had to dance continuously for 20 minutes. It went well (except that Elizabeth suffered a bad Achilles strain just at the end) and the large crowd seemed to enjoy our dancing particularly Maskin Rung in a 7 couple set.

Day 2 began with the Opening Ceremony which was quite exciting with the stadium filled with VIPs and other guests on one side and a large group of school students on the other. The students were armed with clappers and this combined with music, announcements in rather loud Chinese, and flashing disco-style lights over the 30m x 30m stage made for a dramatic entrance and dancing time. This was followed by a Marching Parade where we repeated our short program at 6 or 7 stops along one of the major roads. The road had been blocked off and a carpeted area created at each intersection along the 1 ½ km route. By the end we were exhausted and our dancing shoes well worn. Fortunately there was a plentiful supply of bottled water because it was quite warm.

We repeated our short program once more at a visit to the House of the Chancellor in the village of Huangcheng, Shanxi Province. When not dancing we had a busy program of sightseeing. A particularly notable site we visited was the Longmen Grottoes which is listed on the World Heritage.

All in all we had a wonderful visit to Luoyang. We enjoyed performing, seeing so many other groups from around the world, and the excellent local touring program that was provided for us. Food, accommodation, transport and Peggy our guide were all very good.

Thanks are due to everyone involved for their persistent dedication to this project including non-dancers Adrian Ankiewicz, John Wells and Yu Ni who accompanied us throughout including the Marching Parade and helped by carrying belongings and taking photos and videos of our journey.

For those interested the following links will take you to videos of the whole Opening Ceremony, our bit of it and part of our long program:

<http://tv.cntv.cn/video/C39499/VIDE100138906313>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dlb9auhs0x4&feature=plcp>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UZYstP8z34Y&feature=plcp>

Colin Allum and Jan Clark



The team outside the stadium where the Opening Ceremony was held and between performances during the Marching Parade



## **From David Currie: A Personal Tribute to James Coward**

Many of us have lost a great friend in the sudden passing of James Coward. I must have first met him in Canberra in the 1960s on the dance floor. We both loved Scottish Country dancing. I was soon to learn he had lost one leg below the knee. But that didn't stop him enjoying and mastering our type of dancing.

In 1991 I was teacher of the Burns SCD class in Canberra and I was asked if we would care to entertain the residents with some of our dancing. This I accepted and it was a happy occasion. So much so, they invited us back later that year.

We must have impressed with our show because other homes sent invitations. I decided to find out who would be interested in dancing by asking for volunteers from the class. I got a good response. One of them was James Coward who was a member of my class. The offer from James surprised me but it should not have.

My first thought was that I could not accept James' offer. The Society in Edinburgh would be most upset if they were to find out we were showing off our dancing in public with a one-legged man in the set. James offer occupied my thoughts for the rest of the day. I soon started to think why not accept him.

James was accepted into the team. One of his earliest appearances was at Calvary Hospital. At the end of our show, a lady sitting in a wheelchair thanked us and singled out James for special mention. "James has been an inspiration to us." After what that nice lady said, I knew I had made the correct decision to include James in our team.

Invitations began to multiply. By the year 2001, we were kept very busy with 52 performances. In something like eight weeks we must have danced twice because we didn't dance in January or December in that year. Poor James, poor team. What a slavedriver I must have been. I learnt to knock back invitations from there on.

Many of our invitations were repeats having been there before. One such occasion was at Farrer Goodwin Village. I was busy preparing for our show when a lady came up to me and asked "Is that man dancing today?" I never questioned who 'that man' was because I knew it had to be James she was talking about. I believe there were many more residents like that lady, who came to marvel at what James was doing.

This is a tribute to the late James Coward for all the help he gave me over the 18 years. In total we gave 559 performances and James topped the list with 482. It is terribly important I also thank the other 75 dancers who helped fill the sets many of whom have also passed away.

**Calendar of Events 2013**  
(Some dates are tentative and may change)

<b>15 Jan</b>	Black Mountain Reelers resume at 12.30pm, Molly Huxley Room, University House. Contact Jenny Wanless 62813892 <a href="mailto:jennifer.wanless@gmail.com">jennifer.wanless@gmail.com</a>
<b>4 Feb</b>	Branch Beginners Course commences 6.00 pm at the Burns Club, Kett Street, Kambah. Contact Jack Arthur <a href="mailto:jarthur@apex.net.au">jarthur@apex.net.au</a> or 6254 7879
<b>5 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>6 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>7 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>9 Feb</b>	Multicultural Festival
<b>11 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>15 Feb</b>	Branch "Gentle Dancing for Gentle Dancers" first class, 2 pm 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>23/2 or 2/3</b>	Branch BBQ: Showgrounds Pavilion, Hall
<b>15 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>29Mar-1Apl</b>	(Easter) National Folk Festival
<b>6 April</b>	Bundanoon Highland Gathering
<b>8 April</b>	Branch occasional class commences.; a series of six, weekly classes at St Andrews Church Hall, 6 - 7 pm
<b>13 April</b>	Nowra SCD Group Social Dance, St Andrew's Church Hall, Nowra
<b>26 April</b>	Belconnen advanced social class
<b>4 May</b>	Branch "Tea Dance"
<b>24 May</b>	Belconnen advanced social class
<b>June?</b>	Monaro Caledonian Society Annual Ball, Cooma
<b>29 June</b>	Belconnen SCD 37 <sup>th</sup> Birthday Social.
<b>26 July</b>	Belconnen advanced social class
<b>10 Aug</b>	ACT Centenary Scottish Ball, Albert Hall
<b>24 Aug</b>	Belconnen advanced social class
<b>14 Sept</b>	Bateman's Bay Spring Social. Music by Bob McInnes and Rhonda Langford
<b>18 Sept</b>	Branch AGM
<b>Sept?</b>	Marengo SCD Social.
<b>21 Sept</b>	Belconnen advanced social class
<b>29 Sept – 6 Oct</b>	38th Australian Winter School, Western Australia. Venue to be confirmed. Application forms available from 3 December 2012 from: the website: <a href="http://members.westnet.com.au/trevanne/rscdswa">http://members.westnet.com.au/trevanne/rscdswa</a> or email: <a href="mailto:38thWinterSchool@westnet.com.au">38thWinterSchool@westnet.com.au</a>
<b>Oct?</b>	Far South Coast SCD Group, Bermagui Weekend.
<b>25 Oct</b>	Belconnen advanced social class. Final for year
<b>Nov</b>	Burns SCD Group St Andrew's Night Celebration
<b>27 Nov</b>	Branch End-of-year Social
<b>29 Nov</b>	Branch "Gentle Dancing for Gentle Dancers" class annual picnic
<b>7 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, 25 January 2013*  
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