

The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society



ST ANDREWS BRANCH

SPRING NEWSLETTER 2009

After the excitements of our 70th Anniversary, this was expected to be a quieter year - but it has not proved to be so for your hard working Committee. One new venture has been a joint promotion of SCD, with the Byre Theatre, at the theatre, on alternate Monday afternoons.

We began our 71st season unusually early, with a visit from the new Honorary President of the RSCDS, Dr Alastair MacFadyen, who gave us a memorable talk on the early days of Scottish Country Dancing. We were delighted to be among the first Branches to welcome our new President after his appointment. For the occasion, the Branch decided against using any of our usual halls, and hired, instead, the New Golf Club in Gibson Place. This proved an excellent venue for the talk, and the refreshments provided afterwards, by the Club, were much appreciated. The attendance far exceeded your Committee's hopes, and this is something we might well do again - if anyone has any suggestions please let the Committee know.

Also unusually, I am delighted to be able to congratulate a Branch member, Moira MacKenzie, on passing Unit 3 of the Society's teaching examinations. This gives Moira a teaching qualification equivalent to the old Preliminary Certificate. St Andrews does not have a good record of producing its own future teachers from within, and so it is hoped that many will follow where Moira has led. Details of how to go about it can be obtained from any of the Branch members holding the Full Certificate teaching qualification.

Last year saw a record weight of paper enclosed with the Autumn Newsletter - yet this mailing is even heavier! I hope that it will all be read carefully, particularly the proposed new Branch Constitution. The need for a new version was brought about by changes in the organisation of both the Society, and the Branch, over the last 7 or 8 years. Ratification requires a 2/3rds majority on the 16th of April, and I hope to welcome as many of you as possible on that night. Please note the number of vacant posts listed on the Agenda, through retirements and resignations; nominations for all of them will be accepted from the floor. Our Membership Secretary, Rose Cunningham, will be resigning at the meeting, and the Branch thanks Rose gratefully, for her many contributions over the years.

Members should note that our next Half Day School will be held on March 27th 2010, in the Town Hall. Our teacher will be Andrew McConnell, our musician Robert Mackay, and our band James Coutts. More details will appear in future Newsletters...

John M Sturrock, Chairman

End of Season Dance

This will take place, for all three Classes, in the Victory Memorial Hall, on Thursday 19th of March, at 7.30 p.m. The programme, as at Christmas, will be suitable for everyone. It is included with this Newsletter mailing. The Branch has seen another big influx of new dancers on Tuesday evenings at the Town Hall. It is hoped that as many as possible will be present to welcome them to their first End of Season Dance, and that their experience of Branch Dancing will be a very happy one. Live music will be provided by the Class Musicians, and there will be Shared Refreshments, as usual. There was

maybe some distrust of a free dance at the end of the Christmas term - perhaps charging £3 this time will increase the attendance !

Technique Classes

Following last year's successful experiment of running two Technique Classes in the Spring, this will be repeated on Thursdays 26th of March and 2nd of April. Our teacher will, again, be Bruce Frazer - who, this time, needs no introduction - and there will be live music provided by our regular class musicians, including Stewart Warrender. This will be open to all, and it is hoped for a large attendance, but members are reminded that a Technique class is a step up from any of the classes we provide during the regular terms, and consequently is not suitable for inexperienced dancers. The accent will be on improving steps, timing, and phrasing of formations. It is hoped that they will be seen as something for all Branch members to aspire to...

May Dances

Last year, the Branch repeated the staging of five May Dances instead of the former Spring Classes. With five experienced Musicians and MCs, the evenings were very successful. Accordingly, May Dances will be held on all 4 available Thursdays this year, in the Victory Memorial Hall, from 7.30 p.m. to 9.30 p.m. The cost will be £3 per evening.

The evenings are : -

7th May : Luke Brady and Alice Oliphant.

14th May : Stewart Warrender and David Taylor.

21st May : Gary Sutherland and Linda Gaul.

28th May : John White and Irene Bennett.

Sadly, there will again be only four Thursdays, in May, next year...

Summer Dances

As before, the Branch is running four Summer Dances on the four Tuesdays during Summer School, when we welcome visitors from every corner of the world who like to 'Meet The Locals' on their 'night off'. The details and programmes are included separately with this mailing.

Headquarters News

Members are reminded that our Secretary maintains a **RED** Folder containing all communications from Coates Crescent. This is available at every Victory Memorial Hall evening for inspection. By prior arrangement, it may also be viewed at the Town Hall and Boys Brigade Hall classes.

Top Tip

Our Secretary also maintains a **BLUE** Folder, accessible as above. This contains details of most of the local Dances within travelling distance of St Andrews. Members may like to know, however, that they can obtain details of Dances throughout the country from the website **SCD Events in Scotland** - which can be very useful when travelling. This is updated daily, and contains up-to-the-minute details of cancellations, hall & band changes, sell-outs, and so forth. It is most easily accessed from the RSCDS website www.rscds.org by clicking through the levels to the 'Events' index page. Bookmarking advised !

70th Anniversary CD

At the time of writing, we have just completed our 727th sale !

Remember... Remember... 16th April...