

RSCDS WELLINGTON REGION NEWSLETTER



Volume 22 No. 1

March 2019

President's Column

From Melva Waite, President



Happy New Year to all Region members. With such a sunny dry start to the New Year, what are we in for, going forward ... Lots of dancing of course!

Hogmanay at Knox Church, Lower Hutt, was a great way to start the 2019 year, followed by

four evenings of summer dancing on the lawn at the Old Government Building. Both these events need organisers, helpers, tutors, musicians, and of course the dancing members, so a huge thank you to everyone involved for making these events so enjoyable for all who attended.

Clubs that have held introduction classes in February have had a great response. I do hope the clubs have taken contact details of these new potential members. Please ask them "how did you hear about SCD"? This information would be of great use when the region is looking into the best way of advertising for next year. Meanwhile, as all clubs are now underway, I ask that we all welcome our new members, be encouraging and patient as they learn to enjoy and understand our enthusiasm.

Again this year we are holding Region classes for four levels. The first two levels are **Basics** and **Beyond Basics**, consisting of six fortnightly classes for each level, beginning in May. Members in these classes

will be able to understand, reinforce, then enhance aspects of music, steps and formations, to gain a solid foundation before moving through to more demanding dances.

Upper Intermediate and **Advanced** classes will again be held over a day each in August and September. Please watch your notice board or our website for all information regarding these two classes.

Down Memory Lane will be an afternoon of dancing for intermediate level and above, consisting mostly of dances from earlier books. Elaine Laidlaw is very excited to be hosting this afternoon which will bring back memories and the realisation of how our dances have changed over the years. Keep Saturday 25th May free for this afternoon.

As I said in the beginning, lots of dancing – but what a fun, friendly way to get fit! Do encourage and be aware of our new members coming to club each week. Encourage them to attend other clubs and the Region classes. You were once in their shoes and think of what you have gained over the years.

Take care of yourself and those dancing feet to enjoy the year ahead.

Subscriptions are due for Harbour City Happenings 2019

Subscription forms will be included with this issue.

Printed copy and postal delivery: \$10.

Email delivery: \$5

From the Editor

Harbour City Happenings is published four times a year – in March, June, September and December. Each four issues constitute one *Volume*. Up to now, for some unfathomable historical reason, the numbering of each Volume's issues has started with the June issue each year, rather than March. This does not make sense to me. So with this issue, I am re-setting the numbering, with **March 2019** being **Volume 22, No. 1**.

This will also tidy up the administration of subscriptions, which will run from March to December, rather than from June to March.

Subscribers will still be receiving their March issue, along with a call to re-subscribe.

Désirée

Steps to grow

From the Spurtle-wielder

It is amazing that across the sky is speeding an imperceptible speck – a probe into space! How many years of study by how many people have been dedicated to acquiring the knowledge to create such an object? The mind boggles when considering the calculations made by ancient civilisations – their buildings a visible testament to them. Recent archaeological discoveries in Orkney show the inhabitants of 'Scotland' were well advanced in this field (before Stonehenge) when the Egyptians were building the pyramids. Knowledge spreads in different ways and speeds.

The Romans' conquests covered a lot of ground introducing their language of Latin. They did not go far into the land of the Picts – "Caledonia" as they called it. Our "Minister on the Loch"* – Rev. Robert Walker, sometime minister of the parish of Cramond on the outskirts of Edinburgh (about 1760), did not know that under his feet was a large Roman fort – uncovered 200 years later. (You can visit the remaining outlines of it.) There is a story that Pontius Pilate was born in Fortingall in Perthshire, but that was almost certainly a fabricated joke, maybe by an aristocrat who counted Kipling and Tennyson as friends. The dates really do not add up!

Although the Roman Empire fell, Latin certainly continued as an international language – a vibrant part of many curriculums; it still is used in many fields, particularly for naming things. For centuries,

it opened doors throughout the 'known world', so that many Scottish scholars became prominent teachers, giving the country a fine reputation. The thirst for education spread even further through all levels of the country's population, with John Knox's leadership, when in 1560, his *First Book of Discipline* was presented, proposing that every parish should have a school so that all children should be educated, including of course elements of religious (Presbyterian) instruction. Parliament, concerned however that this would give the Church undue influence, did not implement the suggestion – but the seed had been sown. Schools did start up and by 100 years later, it is estimated that 90% of parishes in the Lowlands and south and east Highlands had a school. The Education Act in 1696 laid out how it was to work.

The egalitarian nature of Scottish society was demonstrated in that both girls and boys were to receive the schooling. Teachers (mostly new University graduates) were paid by the local property owners – a kind of burgh tax – though pupils were expected to pay something if they could; financial assistance was often available so that no child was held back because of a lack of money. The expectation was that the boys would continue to higher levels of study. Any bright 'lad o' pairts' would go off to university, usually equipped with a bag of oatmeal to sustain him for the term!

Not surprisingly, one subject familiar to these teachers that they passed on, was Latin, along with other basics. The Scots' literacy was widely recognised (the system introduced in England was based on quite different principles). In 1855, marriage registers in Scotland record that 87% of husbands and 77% of wives were able to actually sign their names!

The wider the scope of one's reading, the greater the hope of understanding how other people's lives 'work'. Scots are to be found in virtually every corner of the globe, but their style is to observe and learn how that 'corner' works and then to participate in its activities in an effort to share what knowledge they have to enhance them rather than to impose 'alien' ideas. How important it is to *listen*!

Latin scholars had a common language which gave them a kind of community to explore new ideas. The literacy-rich Scots had the wherewithal to rationalise meaningful philosophical discussion and give it practical applications. Scottish Country dancers are part of a world-wide community which not only shares the enjoyment of music and the exhilaration of joyful movement increasing the physical and

mental well-being of the world, but also affords the opportunity for the coming together of lively minds to exchange thoughts on a multitude of topics. The decibel level of talk between dances is always high!

It is exciting to see that, while Scottish influence permeates to the furthest ‘corners’, the trend is also happening the other way – people from these ‘corners’ are coming to the source areas and we are having the pleasure of seeing many from other ethnic backgrounds also gaining pleasure and strength by participating with us! In view of recent events, what wonderful elements on which to build and grow understanding and trust – much more than just sociable interaction!

** The Raeburn painting is entitled “The Skating Minister” (on Duddingston Loch); his father was minister of the Scottish Kirk in Rotterdam so he probably acquired his skills on its frozen waterways!*

From the Branch Recordshop

From Dorothy Wilson

Not a lot of information re CDs to add to what I wrote in my Recordshop Newsletter March 2019. However, good news is always worth repeating!

The most recent new release is **Frank Thomson’s** recording to mark **Dunfermline’s 90th Anniversary**.

So, let me tell you a little bit about this band leader. Frank is a much respected and well-known accordionist who has been around the music scene for many decades. An Aberdonian, he has had years of experience playing for local classes and dances as well as for classes at St Andrews Summer School. He has made many RSCDS recordings, broadcasts with Radio Scotland's *“Take the Floor”* and indeed, has played for the Royal Family at Balmoral and also for the late Queen Mother at her residence, Birkhall. He remains very popular and much in demand.

If you like your music in strict tempo, with a good, strong beat, you will enjoy this CD. Only three of the 16 tracks are 8x32 length; the remainder are an interesting range, e.g. 3x40 Jig, 4x40 Strathspey, 4x40 Reel, 6x32 Strathspey. Here I might add, while I love his jigs and reels which are full of energy, two of the four strathspeys on this disc left me wishing he had put a bit more “urge” into them – he has used well-known Scottish ballads and, while lovely renditions and pleasant listening, the other two strathspeys were much more to my liking! For full details please refer to my March 2019 Newsletter or

visit the NZ Branch Website. The price of this CD is \$30-00.

Further down the pipeline, there are two or three CDs scheduled for 2019, one of them is being recorded by Jim Lindsay to be entitled **“Recorded Highlights”**, and another by the *Glenraig SCD Band* (Nicol McLaren), and will be for dances already published, but for which the music has not till now been recorded. For the present, I have no other details.

Just a reminder that the Society has decided not to produce a CD in 2019. I do, however, have a few copies of **“Music for Book 52”**, recorded by Jim Lindsay, still in stock at \$30. This has really proved a best seller, so if you have not yet got a copy, I would be pleased to receive your order.

The Branch Recordshop will have CDs on display and for sale at the Queen’s Birthday Weekend School in Katikati 1-3 June – what a delightful location for a weekend away. I visited Katikati (with Sheila Burdett) a few years ago and we just loved the murals.

Dorothy

PO Box 612, Blenheim 7240
recordshop@dancescottish.org.nz

Wellington Region Hogmanay 2018

From Lorelee Hyde

On a very warm summer’s night, a great contingent of dancers saw the New Year in at the Wellington Region Hogmanay on 31 December in Lower Hutt.

Organised by Chris Totton and his team, the MCs for the evening were Diane Bradshaw, Rod Downey, Jeanette Watson and Chris.

We danced the night away to fine music from Iain Matcham on the fiddle, Jean Malcolm on the keyboard and Terry Bradshaw on the drums.

Popular dances included the old favourite *Hooper’s Jig*, the toe-tapping reel *Scott Meikle*, and *The Kissing Bridge* devised by local Romaine Butterfield. *Autumn Tidings*, a jig devised by Iain Matcham and danced to tunes he composed and played, also proved a hit. The more experienced dancers enjoyed taking up the challenge of dancing *The Cashmere Shawl*, devised by Iain Boyd, another local.

Just before midnight, the ceremony for welcoming in the New Year began with Johnsonville Life Members John and Aline Homes taking on the roles of Old Father Time and the Sweeper.

While they swept out the old year, the band treated us to a rendition of the haunting original version of *Auld Lang Syne*.

As Vice President of the Wellington Region, Rod announced the arrival of the First Foot – the first person to come across the threshold in the new year, carrying gifts of coal for warmth, salt or money for wealth, shortbread for sustenance and whisky for good cheer.



First Foot raises a toast to the RSCDS (Photo: Lorelee Hyde)

Led by a piper, First Foot Alastair McCarthy walked a circuit around the hall before presenting the gifts to Rod as the representative of the RSCDS. The First Foot then raised a toast to the RSCDS and welcomed in 2019!

After wishing each other Happy New Year, it was time for the dancers to tackle the final three dances – the *Eightsome Reel*, *The Robertson Rant* and *Seton's Ceilidh Band*.

VUW Scottish Interest Group

meets on the 28th day of the month Feb-Oct, 7.15 for 7.30pm start (unless stated otherwise). VUW Law Faculty, Old Government Buildings, Lambton Quay

- Thu 28 March: *Charles Cameron, architect extraordinaire to Catherine The Great*
- Sun 28 April – **3.00pm** *Bigger than the Bayeux?* Modern tapestries designed by Scotsman Andrew Crummy (*Mt. Felix* collection was recently at Expressions, Upper Hutt).
- Tue 28 May: *The Wellington Botanic Garden - Celebrating 100 years*. Manager David Sole

Visitors welcome; no charge, no university connections needed. www.wellyscots.wordpress.com

Thoughts on Nelson Summer School

By Brenda Vale

Arriving for the first dance
we were welcomed at the door;
we managed several pas de basque...
perhaps not more than four.

The hall for morning classes
had a very springy floor,
just perfect for some pas de basque
that shook us to our core.

With our lovely teacher Rachel
we had a good rapport;
she made us do some pas de basque
then made us do some more.

Hogmanay was very hot
sweat oozed from every pore,
we did a dance with pas de basque
and then we did some more.

The suppers were delicious
(I hope they weren't a chore).
My room-mate dreamed of pas de basque
with every single snore *

And finally it's over—
our feet are really sore;
it comes of doing pas de basque
and more and more and more.

So next year when it's Cambridge
with reels and jigs galore
if there's a lot of pas de basque
I'm bringing my claymore.

* zzz, zzz, zzz—zzz, zzz, zzz—zzz, zzz, zzz...

Summer Dancing 2019

From Pat Reesby

Dancing on the lawn proved a hit this summer. Last year, the venue for Summer Dancing moved from Lower Hutt to Wellington City, and for the first time, people danced 'on the lawn' outside the Old Government Buildings in Lambton Quay. It was such a success (especially with fine weather for all four evenings) that the same venue was chosen this year.

For the last two Tuesdays in January and the first two in February, people danced from 7.30 pm until 9 pm, the programme chosen by a different tutor each time. This year, the tutors were Catherine McCutcheon, Edith Campbell, Chris Totton and Iain

Matcham. Dancers from as far north as Waikanae attended, and ranged from those who've been dancing for many years to more recent converts. Pedestrians often stopped to watch, and passengers in the occasional passing bus gazed from the windows.

As it's just a few minutes' walk from Wellington railway station, the venue is a handy one, with quite a few choosing to travel by train. There's also plenty of parking.

The atmosphere has been friendly and fun, with warm, dry weather prompting many to dance barefoot, and no annoying prickles in the grass. A gusty wind on the final night was the signal for a move to the student common room, and this proved a very acceptable dancing venue, with the added interest of having to manoeuvre around pillars.

A donation box was passed around each week, and after expenses, the proceeds have gone to the JAM fund.

Here's a link to the *Reel of the 51st Division* on the first night of summer dancing: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LFZLR-YrL4Q&t=190s>

The statue in the foreground commemorates Peter Fraser, New Zealand Prime Minister from 1940 to 1949. He was born in Hill of Fearn, a small village in the Scottish Highlands, and married Janet Kemp (née Munro) of Glasgow. They were a highly regarded couple in Wellington, and some consider Peter Fraser to have been our finest leader. The statue shows him leaning into the wind, perhaps as he prepares to walk across to Parliament.

Daytime Dancing

From John Homes

Late last year, we heard that Gaylia Powell, from Ngaio Club, was organising some sessions of dancing during the afternoons, for those who would be able to so attend. The sessions would be for experienced dancers, taught in the first instance by Catherine McCutcheon, on two Tuesday afternoons a month, at St John's Church Hall, Johnsonville.

I was able to attend three of the four sessions last year. The first session was straightforward enough, with dances well within the capabilities of most dancers with a couple of years' experience. But this was just Catherine's evil plan to lull us all into a false sense of security. From the second session, the gloves were off. Some of these dances were *hard*. They were good, enjoyable dances once you could

get them down and going, but it was a tough time getting there.

Catherine told us that she would not be looking at what our feet were doing, presumably as long as they got us to where we were supposed to be. This was just as well, because often we were using all our brain power to work out where we needed to go, leaving none to consider the manner of our going.

There have been two sessions so far this year.

Catherine has not attempted to break us in gently, but has thrown us into some really difficult dances from the beginning.

When I say that the dances have been hard, this is in the sense of "Ensure-Brain-Is-In-Gear-Before-Engaging-Feet". They have not been more physically demanding than a lot of the dances popular at Saturday night events, and none of them have been prolonged memory tests.

With all these mentally demanding dances, one might expect a fair number of mistakes. Mistakes were made, some of them by me. However, a good sense of humour on everybody's part has meant that the mistakes could be laughed about, and then onwards, to the next mistake.

If you are wondering whether these sessions might be for you, what would you need? You will need a fair amount of dancing experience. For most people, about four years minimum would be needed, and that is, of course, four years of dancing regularly, not just time since you started. It would pay to check with Catherine and your club tutor.

Although the dances are not (usually) *very* physically demanding, you will need a certain level of physical fitness to get through them.

While footwork is not an issue as long as you can get to where you need to be, you will be expected to show a good understanding of phrasing and covering, and to dance fast or slow as the dance requires.

Last but not least, you will need a sense of humour. Mistakes *will* be made, some of them by you, and you will need to be able to laugh at them.

More about Daytime Dancing

From Désirée Patterson

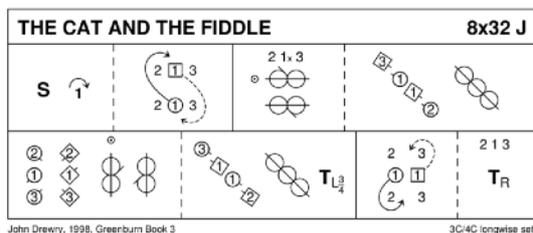
There are now two options for daytime dancing.

While the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month are for experienced dancers, a new group has started

on the 3rd Tuesday, for “independent dancers”, i.e. dancers of intermediate level and above, who know the common formations.

Recently, the first of the “independent dancer” sessions attracted 24 dancers, from at least eight clubs. It is obviously a very popular venture. Catherine McCutcheon, who leads these sessions, insists that they are not “classes”, but are just opportunities to enjoy some social dancing in the daytime, especially good for people who are reluctant or unable to go to an evening class. The focus is on popular dances, including some from upcoming dance programmes.

The “experienced dancer” sessions, on the other hand, have been designed to “*extend those who have mastered the ordinary and who desire the different, clever, weird and brain bending*”. As John Homes described above, the dances have been wonderfully challenging. Catherine has selected fun dances, with each session having a theme based on interesting variations of standard formations. Some of the themes enjoyed so far are variations on reels, tandem reels, Allemande, poussette, hello-goodbye setting, half reels and spurtles. The latest theme – half reels and spurtles – certainly was a brain bender!



Time and venue for all sessions: 12:45 – 2:45 pm, at St John’s Anglican Church Hall, Bassett Street, Johnsonville.

St Patrick’s Day celebrations at Johnsonville

From Kristin Downey

Johnsonville dancers were treated to a night of Irish-themed dances and grand tunes on Monday 18th March – only a day late for St Patrick’s day. New and not-so-new dancers took up the challenge to “wear green for St Patrick’s day”, and filled the hall with many shades of green and a lot of enthusiasm. Supper continued the theme with green-coated chocolate, and corn chips and guacamole on offer, thanks to supper co-ordinator Elizabeth Ngan.

Region Classes

Again this year, the Region will be running two series of six fortnightly classes from May to July.

Venue: St David’s Multicultural Hall, Elizabeth Street, Petone

Basics – For dancers with little experience.

Teacher: Melva Waite

7:30 pm – 7 & 21 May, 4 & 18 June, 2 & 16 July
(1st and 3rd Tuesdays)

Beyond Basics – For dancers with approximately two years of dancing experience.

Teacher: Diane Bradshaw

7:30 pm – 14 & 28 May, 11 & 25 June, 9 & 23 July,
(2nd and 4th Tuesdays)

Registration forms will be available from your club secretary, and on the Region website, <http://www.wellingtonscd.org.nz>

Advance Notice

There will also be a day class each for Upper Intermediate and Advanced dancers in August and September. The venue for these will be the Ngaio Town Hall.

Upper Intermediate – Teacher: Graeme Plank, from Christchurch

Saturday 10 August, 9:30 am-3:30 pm

Advanced – Teacher: Debbie Roxburgh, from Wanganui

Saturday 21 September, 9:30 am-3:30 pm

Tutor Rod Downey searched out a programme of interesting and fun dances with Irish names or Irish connections, and paired them with thumping good Irish music. *The Goat Fell Gallop* got us all laughing as we galloped, then it was on to *Rory O’More* (thank you Edith for that suggestion), *Lady Glasgow*, *The Wild Geese*, *City of Belfast*, *St Patrick’s Day* (of course), *The Orchards of County Armagh*, and *The Irish Rover* to finish.

We also danced the “world premiere” of Rod’s newest dance *The Coleraine Rant*. (For instructions see <http://www.johnsonvillesc.org.nz/2019/03/19/the-coleraine-rant/>)

It was written for the occasion, as a beginner-friendly dance featuring poussette, and it got the thumbs up. The title gives a nod to Coleraine in



Johnsonville dancers wear green for St Patrick's Day (Photo: Loralee Hyde)

Ireland, and New Zealand's famous Te Mata Coleraine wine.

This year more than 20 new dancers have become members of Johnsonville club. This was a great opportunity to share another aspect of SCD with them, through the fun atmosphere of a theme night. For our longer-standing dancers there was the excitement of some novel dances and new and different music. Visitors from Capital City club added to the occasion, together with a foreign exchange student who bravely took the floor for her first go at SCD. The bonus for everyone was the experience of trying out a newly devised dance hot off the press. Thank you Rod for delivering a programme which had something for everyone.



Johnsonville's new dancers for 2019 (Photo: Loralee Hyde)

See more of Loralee Hyde's photos of our beginners and St Patrick's night celebrations at <http://www.johnsonvillescld.org.nz/2019/03/19/start-2019/>

Waikanae Club

Our year ended with the news that the hall we dance in may not be available to us for all of this year, and at that time we did not know if we would even have it in February. This meant a great deal of work (rather than Christmas shopping) to find a

suitable hall that would be available on Friday evenings. No easy task, I can assure you. Some of the halls were very proud of the fact they now had carpets on the floor. Schools, like ours are full to overflowing and need the halls for extra classrooms. Council halls are subject to cancellation at the last moment. Luckily we have use of our hall for now.

Before the Club started we held our annual social get-together, a wonderful barbecue at Craig and Sharon Burleigh's home. How lucky that their home used to be a wedding venue, so plenty of tables, chairs crockery etc. and they are happy to share it with us.

We had an excellent response to our Beginners' classes with 21 people giving it a go. We have had over a set of new dancers attending each week since then. We have had visitors from Norway and it was lovely to see Lynne Hudson (from Te Puke) one evening when she was in the area visiting family. The club is feeling really energised.

However, it is with sadness that we report that our Life Member, Pam Heffernan, passed away in November. We will miss her.

Please note that our **annual dance** will be now be held on **June 8th**, a change to the original date.

For sale

Sutherland light wool tartan. Two pieces each 92 cm (length), 137 cm (width of fabric). Enough material for a kilt. Make an offer. carolyn.rait@gmail.com



MUSICIANS!

INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT
SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE MUSIC?

You're invited to a

SCD Music Workshop with Lynne Scott, NZ Branch
Music Adviser

Sunday 16 June, 10.00 – 4.00 (BYO lunch)
Belmont Domain, Lower Hutt
Cost: \$10

The Workshop will cover how music is structured
for SCD; the basics of playing jigs, reels and
strathspeys for dancing; and basic band technique.

Come and play your fiddle, piano, accordion or
flute, or just come to listen. For other instruments,
please enquire.

To register, please contact Lynne on
music@dancescottish.org.nz, or phone 021 846596



WAIKANAÉ SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE CLUB

Warmly invite you to attend our annual dance on
Saturday 8 June 2019 at 7.30pm
At the Paraparaumu Memorial Hall,
Cnr Tutanekei Street and Aorangi Road, Paraparaumu
PROGRAMME TO BE SENT OUT LATER



Down Memory Lane
An afternoon of dances from earlier books with
Elaine Laidlaw
Saturday 25 May, 1-4 pm
St John's Anglican Church, Johnsonville

Closing date for the next issue

Saturday 15 June 2019

Johnsonville Tartan Night

Johnsonville School, Morgan Street
7.30pm, Monday 8 April 2019

Music by Lynne Scott, Mary McDonald, Heather Elder

Bev's Delight	(J)	B McMurtry – Devil's Quandary
Corn Rigs	(R)	4/12
The Marquis of Lorne	(S)	Miscellany II
The Australian Ladies*	(R)	R Campbell – Glasgow Assembly
Argyll's Fancy	(J)	Graded
The Reel of the 51st	(R)	13/10

Supper

The Merry Oddfellows	(J)	Miscellany I
Delvine Side	(S)	2/9
One for All*	(R)	R Downey – Golden Bear Coll
The De'il Amang the Tailors	(R)	14/7

Our first Tartan Night of the year is designed to give new
dancers the opportunity to dance to live music. Dancers in their
first year are welcome to join us.

- Adult \$4.00 Student \$0.50
- Members please bring a small plate
- Dances marked * are unsuitable for dancers
who started this year but otherwise fine for all
- Most dances walked



NGAIO SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE CLUB

Invites You to Join Us for Our Annual Dance

Ngaio Town Hall, Ottawa Road, Ngaio
Saturday 4 May 2019 at 7.30pm

Admission	\$15.00
RSCDS Members	\$12.00
Spectators & Juniors	\$ 5.00

Programme

R	Maxwell's Rant	Book 18
J	The Laird of Milton's Daughter	Book 22
S	Bill Little's Strathspey	Graded 3
J	Hoopers Jig	MM 1
R	The Montgomerie's Rant	Book 10
S ***	Triple Happiness	Book 52
H	Mary Erskine	Graded 2
S	The Paisley Weavers	Graded 3
R ***	Mr. William Brown's Reel	Galloway
R	The Deil Amang the Tailors	Book 14

Supper

J	Pelorus Jack	Book 41
S	The Robertson Rant	Book 39
R ***	The Irish Rover	Cost
J	A Capital Jig	5 for 2009
S	City of Belfast	Book 48
R	Scott Meikle	Book 46
R	The Reel of the Royal Scots	RSCDS Leaf

***Experienced Dancers

Music provided by Aileen Logie
Don McKay and Hilary Ferral

