

RSCDS WELLINGTON REGION NEWSLETTER



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Editor: Désirée Patterson – editor@wellingtonscd.org.nz

President's Column

From Rod Downey, President



Since my last report:

Clubs – I attended the Capital City, Ngaio, Tawa and, of course, Johnsonville final nights. Excellent attendances and great spirit. Nice to see some new faces also!

Lower North Island Centenary Ball

What a great event! Over 130 people attended. The region web site <https://wellingtonscd.org.nz/>

has a lot of information and photos from this event.

At the ball, I was very pleased to present a **Region Appreciation Award**, to **Edith Campbell**. The citation notes her nearly 60 years of service and teaching for the Region, the founding of Seatoun Club, teaching at many levels and being involved in significant organisation, both regionally and nationally. *Well done Edith!!*

New Dancers' Celebration – Carterton Club ably hosted this at Wairarapa College on 7 October, and had more than 80 dancers, with 30 of them being new dancers. We danced to Aileen, Hilary and Jason's music and a great night was had by all. Poor old Carterton Club had to move around 1600 chairs on the day, with non-dancing partners and children called upon.

Many thanks also to Diane Bradshaw for taking the NDC preparation classes.

Archival Project – There has been a lot of work on this excellent project, with lots of archival material posted on the region website, such as [videos](#) here. This material

was great for Edith's citation, and also as a basis for historical material for the Lower North Island Centenary Ball. Many thanks to Lorelee Hyde, Philippa Pointon, and Kristin Downey for their continuing work. Special thanks to John Patterson, who has digitised cassette tape recordings of old region music by Tom Barnes and John Foden (donated by Sono Barnes).

Region AGM – We held the AGM on 7 November and welcome on the committee new Secretary Brenda Vale, and farewell, with many thanks, Jeanette Watson and Michele Miller. They head off to the Summer School Committee amongst their many other services to SCD. The other committee members from 2023 have generously agreed to continue. They are Elaine Lethbridge, Elaine Laidlaw, Janice Henson, Debbie Stephens (treasurer), Bruce Chapman, Edith Campbell, Lynne Scott, Aileen Logie, and Zoe Attwood.

Coming up:

Hogmanay – Be There! One of the fun things to do on New Year's Eve is to go to a Hogmanay. Chris Totton and Anna Verhaegh have kindly volunteered to organise Hogmanay at Crofton Downs School, which is a fantastic venue with lots of parking. Music will be provided by Iain Matcham and Jean Malcolm. The programme is later in HCH and is on the [region website](#). Dances will be walked where necessary. If you have not been to one, [here](#) is a link to the 2018 Hogmanay with a video of one of the ceremonies.

Planning for 2024 – Lots of stuff for the diary. Many thanks to all the clubs for getting their 2024 dates in for the planning meeting of 12 December. It was much

appreciated, especially by Elaine Lethbridge, who prepares the Region Calendar!

Summer Dancing – The committee has agreed to have Summer Dancing again in 2024, at the Old Government Building on Lambton Quay – Tuesdays 23 & 30 January, and 6 & 13 February, at 7:00-8:45pm. Note the **earlier time**. Thanks to Chris Totton, who has agreed to take over from Edith as the coordinator.

Club Beginners' Classes – The following clubs are offering beginners' classes in 2024. **Carterton** (Mondays 29 Jan-18 March), **Capital City** (four Thursdays from 8 Feb), **Linden** (four Mondays from 5 Feb), and **Johnsonville** (three Mondays from 9 January). Great stuff!

Another Centenary Event – First Book Centenary Dance Day: 27 April, St Johns Church Hall. Following the success of the Early Wellington Dances Day, we have been approached to have another similar day. Following a suggestion from Edith, we will have another afternoon – this time of Historical RSCDS Dances, because **2024 will be the centenary of the publication of Book 1**. We'll include only dances from the very early books published up to 1930. We seldom dance from those books, so this will be a fun opportunity! Fantastic tunes in those early books, and fun, usually not too complicated dances, with some quite unusual.

Visiting Tutor and Teachers' Weekend and Workshop – Easter 2024 in Wellington, Friday 29 -Sunday 31 March. With the visit of well-known and highly regarded UK tutor **Graham Donald**, there will be a very exciting weekend during Easter 2024. This will include a public class on the 29th (7.30-9.30pm), and a region dance on the 30th, 7.30-11.30pm, with music by *Strings Attached*. More details later in HCH. **Venue:** Hutt Intermediate School, 7 Kauri Street, Lower Hutt.

Region Classes – In 2024, the region will be running the following classes:.

Basics: *Diane Bradshaw* – Tuesdays 7, 21 May, 4, 18 June, 2 July; **Intermediate:** *Catherine McCutcheon* – Tuesdays 14, 28 May, 11, 25 June; and **Advanced:** Tutor to be advised – two Saturdays 17 and 31 August.

Thanks to Janice Henson for agreeing to become class coordinator this year when Aileen is away on travels in Scotland.

New Dancers' Celebration 2024 – Saturday, 12 October, Knox Church Hall. Lower Hutt (in conjunction with Upper Hutt) have kindly agreed to host the 2024 New Dancers' Celebration. Linden will host in 2025, due to 2024 Summer School commitments. There will be two preparation classes on Tuesdays 1 and 8 October.

Summer School 2024 – Wellington Region will be hosting Summer School at the end of 2024. Preparations are well

under way. This will be a great opportunity for local dancers to experience a Summer School, which will be at Scots College. We will be seeking help for gofers and baking, etc, from the local clubs. This should be a great event. More details in the new year, but please keep this in mind for 2024!

If you want to contact the committee, email me president@wellingtonscd.org.nz, or the region secretary Brenda Vale wellington@dancescottish.org.nz.

We are all in a team together!

Edith Campbell: Wellington Region Appreciation Award

From Lorelee Hyde

A major highlight of the [Lower North Island RSCDS Centenary Ball](#) in Palmerston North on 4 November, was Wellington Region President Rod Downey presenting a tribute to Edith Campbell to great acclaim, in recognition of the generous giving of her time, teaching, creative and organisational skills to the Wellington Region over decades.



Wellington Region President Rod Downey presenting Edith Campbell with her Wellington Region Tribute (Photo: Lorelee Hyde)

Edith Campbell has given over 60 years in the service of Scottish Country Dancing. She has taught at many national and regional events and at all levels, including Summer Schools in 1964, 1970 and 1978, and Region Schools and Classes at all levels, including training teams for major demonstrations.

She has served on the organising committees for major regional and national events, such as Summer School 1970, the [Wellington Region RSCDS Golden Anniversary Ball in 1973](#) and the [Wellington Region Diamond Jubilee Ball at Government House in 2012](#).

Edith has taught in the Wellington Region for at least 59 years, including 10 years at Wellington Club, and, with her husband Bruce, established the Seatoun Club where she has taught for over 45 years, having previously taught a children's class there.

She has served continuously on the Wellington Region Committee since at least 2002. Beyond this, Edith has been heavily involved in promoting all things Scottish throughout the Region, especially through her efforts in the Scottish Interest Group, playing her harp at many Region and Branch occasions, providing the calligraphy for the Region 60th Celebration, and through her many writings about Scottish Country Dancing and things Scottish, especially in her column *The Spurtle-wielder*, continuously in **Harbour City Happenings** since 1993.

As part of this year's RSCDS Centenary Events, the unique [Early Wellington Dances](#) event in April celebrated the role of the extended RSCDS Wellington Region as the well-spring of Scottish Country Dancing in New Zealand. Edith was one of four long-time tutors from the Region who taught dances from the early days of Scottish Country Dancing in the Lower North Island. She taught her dance *To Ane An' A'* (The Harbour City Collection) and *Govandale Reel* devised by Jim Lean (The Morison's Bush Collection).

In addition to receiving her tribute at the Lower North Island RSCDS Centenary Ball, Edith was one of seventeen long-standing tutors who were honoured by each briefing a dance at this celebration – she briefed *Catch the Wind*, the popular dance devised by Romaine Butterfield.

Congratulations Edith, and thank you for over 60 years of service to Scottish Country Dancing.

Lower North Island RSCDS Centenary Ball A once-in-a-lifetime experience

From Lorelee Hyde

Over 130 people keen to dance and socialise filled the floor at the Lower North Island RSCDS Centenary Ball at the College Street School Hall in Palmerston North on 4 November to celebrate the Centenary of the RSCDS.

The RSCDS Hawke's Bay, Rangitikei and Wellington Regions combined to host this exceptional Tri-Region Ball to celebrate the role of the extended region from Hawke's Bay to Whanganui through to Wellington as the well-spring of Scottish Country Dancing in New Zealand.

Stunning floral arrangements, prepared by local dancers, brightened up the hall and decorated the front of the stage. Bunting provided by Johnsonville and Napier Clubs streamed overhead. Portraits of the two co-founders of

the RSCDS in 1923—Miss Jean Milligan and Mrs Ysobel Stewart—graced the wall behind the band.



The Balmoral Dance Band – Sharlene Penman, Anne-Marie Forsyth and Iain McKenzie

Dancers from as far afield as Auckland, the Waikato and Invercargill, including RSCDS New Zealand Branch President Linda Glavin from Blenheim and President Elect Debbie Roxburgh from Whanganui, came to enjoy the 19 dances on the programme.

Almost all New Zealand devisers who have had dances published by the RSCDS had one dance included in this programme (14 dances). The remaining five were well-known RSCDS dances including homages to Miss Jean Milligan and Mrs Ysobel Stewart.

A high-spirited Grand March, piped in by Nicole Trewavas (followed by a young learner from her pipe band) and directed by Michael Laidlaw, set the scene for an evening of fun and celebration. It was a wonderful treat to dance and listen to fabulous music from *The Balmoral Band*—Sharlene Penman (Christchurch), Anne-Marie Forsyth (Auckland) and Iain McKenzie (Queensland).



Piper Nicole Trewavas with a young learner from her pipe band



Lower North Island past and present tutors, from left: Melva Waite, Maureen Robson, Val Mitchell, Catherine Edwards, Joy Tracey, Chris Kelly, Catherine McCutcheon, Ann Oliver, Jeanette Watson, Ronni Cullen, Debbie Roxburgh, Andrea Wells, Elaine Laidlaw, Margaret Bailey-Allison, Philippa Pointon, Rod Downey, Diane Bradshaw, Chris Totton, Elizabeth Ferguson, Edith Campbell, Michael Laidlaw, Dot Morgan, Elaine Lethbridge, Barbara Gill, Lyn Picone, Isabel Jackson (Nicole Trewavas was working in the kitchen).

Twenty-seven past and present tutors from the Lower North Island attended the Ball. Seventeen long-standing tutors were honoured by each briefing a dance at the occasion. Linda Glavin briefed *Petronella* while Debbie Roxburgh took on the task of overall MC'ing of the evening, including introducing each tutor.



Enjoying *Oriel Strathspey*, devised by Ian Simmonds, published in RSCDS Book 32

A highlight of the celebration was Rod Downey presenting a Tribute to Edith Campbell to great acclaim, in recognition of the generous giving of her time, teaching, creative and organisational skills to the Region over decades. Congratulations Edith—see more about her over 60 years of service to Scottish Country Dancing in a separate article in this publication.

Before supper, Rangitikei Region President Glenice Saunders, Wellington Region President Rod Downey and Hawke's Bay Region President Isabel Jackson cut the celebratory RSCDS Centenary cake, to be enjoyed by all at supper. The delicious spread was organised and prepared by Nicole Trewavas and members of the Celtic Spirit Pipe Band as a fundraiser for the band. There was such an abundance of

food, we enjoyed a second supper at the end of the night.

This celebratory evening of dancing ended with the energetic *The Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh* in memory of Her Majesty, our immediate past Patron.

As Rod commented, "*It is not often the RSCDS has a Centenary, and I believe this has been a wonderful showcase of all the good things about Scottish Country Dancing. We have also celebrated the rich history of Scottish Country Dancing in New Zealand.*"

Considerable work is needed to make sure an event like this is a success. Thanks so much to the Tri-Region committee for working together to organise this once-in-a-lifetime experience—Rod Downey, Jeanette Watson, Michele Miller (Wellington Region), Glenice Saunders, Nicole Trewavas, Mary Hawkes (Rangitikei Region), and Isabel Jackson (Hawke's Bay Region); the RSCDS New Zealand Branch for a grant to support the night, enabling us to have the wonderful Balmoral Band playing; and Rod



Glenice Saunders, Rod Downey and Isabel Jackson cutting the celebratory RSCDS Centenary cake

Downey and Iain Boyd for preparing extensive notes on the devisers and the dances selected for this evening.

Thanks also to the decorators of the hall, including beautiful floral arrangements; all those who helped with the hall set-up and packing-up; Debbie Roxburgh for MC'ing this special night of dance; Ian and Sue Pearson for welcoming dancers to the Ball; Michael Laidlaw for organising the Grand March; Nicole Trewavas for her piping and providing supper together with members of the Celtic Spirit Pipe Band; the briefers who entered the spirit of the occasion, especially as a number of dances were not well-known; Duncan, Mary and Alastair McDonald for equipment and technical expertise; Pat Reesby for videography; and Lorelee Hyde for communications, posters, website stories, historical research and photography.

And special thanks to all the dancers who supported the night, some coming a long way, but all entering the spirit to make the night a memorable occasion.

[See more about the dances, the devisers, and photos and videos](#)

All photos by Lorelee Hyde. [View all of Lorelee's photos and download if you wish](#)

Grand March

From Michael Laidlaw

I was asked by the Wellington Region President to marshall the Grand March at the combined Wellington, Rangitikei, Hawkes Bay Regions' RSCDS Centennial Ball. Against my better judgement (I have done this once before and ended up with the most important person right on the side of the final line instead of the middle), I agreed.

How hard can it be? You just stand at the centre front of the hall and with a gentle hand movement indicate to each couple or group of couples as they come up the middle to turn alternately right or left to return to the bottom of the hall and join up with the couple(s)

approaching from the other side of the room. The trick, as I found out after my earlier experience is, on the last return, to direct couples to the opposite side of the room to bring the original first couple into the centre. To be absolutely sure of this, I trialled it on a club night with four couples.

So, on the night, OMG! they are leading in on one side of the hall instead of coming up the middle, presumably because the main doors to the hall are not in the middle. This will be a problem! So frantic arm waving attempts to get them to move over to the centre eventually succeed (no subtle hand indication here!). Whew! But wait there's more – many couples ignore my indication of which direction to turn resulting in more aggressive hand and arm waving – and some just carry on the way they started.

Thankfully, somehow the march ended with the required *high heid yins*, more or less, in the right place in the front row.

Will I do it again if asked? What do you think!

Wellington Region New Dancers' Celebration 2023 — A festive celebration!

From Lorelee Hyde

The New Dancers' Celebration is one of the biggest events in the Wellington Region, celebrating those who have taken up Scottish Country Dancing in the past three years. So it proved for this year's celebration with more than 80 dancers, including 30 newer dancers, taking to the floor on Saturday 7 October in the Wairarapa College Hall in Masterton.

Hosted by Carterton Club, with former Wellington Region President Elaine Laidlaw as MC, the evening was full of smiles and laughter as the more experienced dancers helped the newer ones enjoy the programme of relatively well-known and easier dances with a scattering of those we've not encountered as often.



The Grand March, which was piped in by Nicole Trewavas (Photo: Lorelee Hyde)

Dancers came to the event from throughout the Wellington Region and we welcomed others from the Rangitikei and Hawke's Bay & East Coast Regions.

The wide expanse of floor in the hall allowed plenty of room for flowing sets and beautiful covering. An orchestra pit at the top of the hall was thoughtfully roped off with balloons and plants so we didn't end up going down through the hatches while vigorously setting!



Taking advantage of the large expanse of floor (other than the roped-off orchestra pit!) to enjoy St Andrew's Fair

With 2023 being the RSCDS Centenary Year, the programme included three dances with connections to the RSCDS:

12 Coates Crescent, the address of the RSCDS office in Edinburgh; *The Jubilee Jig* published by the RSCDS in 1973 to commemorate the Golden Jubilee; and *Mrs Stewart's Jig* to honour one of the co-founders of the Society.

A dance of regional significance was the strathspey *The Halfway House*, devised by Elaine Laidlaw. The dance is a tribute to the Community House in Britannia Street, Petone, where the Wellington Region Committee meets. It is published in *The Wellington 60th Anniversary Collection*.



Dancing *The Halfway House*, devised by Elaine Laidlaw

Throughout the evening, we danced to rousing music from Aileen Logie, Jason Morris and Hilary Ferral. Popular dances included *Anderson's Rant*, *Flowers of Edinburgh*, *Mrs Stewart's Jig* and the last dance, *The De'il Amang the Tailors* (such fabulous music to dance and clap along to!).

A bounteous supper provided by Carterton Club and experienced dancers who came along was warmly welcomed by all, following the fabulous evening of dancing.

Running an event like this takes a lot of time and organisation. Carterton Club had previously got everything in place for the New Dancers' Celebration in 2021. Just before the dance, the country went into a Covid lockdown which meant the event was cancelled. Thanks so much to Elaine and Michael Laidlaw, and their club members, for taking the time and spending the energy to put on this festive celebration this year.

Photo credit: Lorelee Hyde. See more of Lorelee's photos at <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjAXKiv>

NZ Branch Teachers' Workshop, Easter 2024 (29 Mar-1 Apr) – and there's a class and dance for everyone!



From Jeanette Watson

Whether you're certificated, or brief some dances at club nights, or somewhere in between, come and learn more about teaching SCD from Graham Donald – who's been working with the RSCDS on tutor training courses, so he really knows his stuff! The workshop is being held at Hutt Intermediate School – very handy for Wellington people. Music will be provided by Sharlene Penman.

The workshop will cover a range of teaching topics, spread over four sessions (Sat to Mon). The Music session on Saturday afternoon is open to musicians as well, and will concentrate on what teachers and musicians need to know to communicate effectively with each other.

And just so no-one is left out, the workshop will start with an all-comers public class on Friday evening, giving Graham the opportunity to demonstrate a number of teaching skills, which participants can analyse (and hope to emulate!) over the weekend. Live music by Aileen Logie and Hilary Ferral.

A public dance on Saturday night will have a programme devised by the organising committee, with briefings by workshop participants, with Graham as MC. Live music by Lynne Scott, Sharlene Penman, plus one.

Registrations are open now for the Workshop, Class, and/or Music session. See NZ Branch website <https://dancescottish.org.nz/tw2024> for more information, and links to the registration forms.

Grist to the mill – depth of joy to the dance

From the Spurtle-wielder

The appearance of our unicorns at a couple of recent events caused comment. These beasts are of course the supporters of the Coat of Arms of Scotland. Though the Lion Rampant on the shield had been used before by

Scots monarchs as a heraldic symbol, William I adopted it as his emblem; however the appellation 'William the Lion' was given to him later – in his lifetime he was nicknamed 'the Rough'. In his long reign, 1165-1214, he was embroiled in several wars on his own and others' behalf. He was captured by Henry II of England and forced to swear allegiance to him. In earlier years he had visited the English Court, but then had a quarrel with Henry and he was the first to sign a treaty with France – the start of "The Auld Alliance". Richard the Lionheart, Henry's successor, wanted money for a crusade, so William bought back Scotland's freedom from him! William was an effective king – *"settlements and feudalisation were extended, new burghs founded, criminal law clarified, the responsibilities of justices and sheriffs widened, and trade grew. [He is] credited with founding Arbroath Abbey, the Bishopric of Argyll was established (c. 1192) in the same year as papal confirmation of the Scottish church by Pope Celestine III".* [Quoted from Wikipedia]

In 1222, William's son Alexander II used the Lion Rampant as the Royal Standard of Scotland. James I used a single unicorn on some occasions, but James V used two as supporters on his seal – Mary Queen of Scots also did on her Great Seal (the first monarch to do so).

Depictions of unicorns are to be found as early as in Babylonian and the Indus civilisations. The Scottish heraldic portrayals have gold chains draped around them, referring to the legend that only kings have any power over them. However, believed to be the strongest of all animals, it was said that it could only be humbled by a virgin maiden. With its white horse-like body and single spiralling horn, the unicorn is a symbol of purity, innocence and power, which can be related to more spiritual qualities than most of the other mythical creatures. The legend also tells that their horns can purify poisoned water, such is the strength of their healing power. These elements fit well with the perception of Celtic thinking, which seems to have had quite a spiritual basis.

The name Celts apparently did not apply to a single tribe but rather a collection of people, initially maybe from Asia, but spreading across central Europe. They were obviously physically strong: they traded with the Greeks, looted Delphi, even sacked Rome in 390 BC, and connected with Alexander the Great. However, despite their military prowess, these Celtic tribes – along with their language – were wiped out, except for those in remote, often mountainous locations, e.g. Scotland, Wales, Ireland, Brittany, and the Pyrenees.

For long they preferred oral rather than written records of their history, so a lot of detective work has been required, but it seems that elements of their ancient knowledge have remained – possibly tied in with their

strong affinity with nature, fostered by the Druids and reflected in their belief in an afterlife. Maybe the phenomenon of 'the second sight' is part of that?

Legends of the arrival of Christianity include a visit from Joseph of Arimathea, but certainly missionaries spread the word, and a church was formed and widely followed. Its simple primitive format conflicted with, and later lost out to, that of the Roman style. The Roman churches' missionaries in the 6th century found that, particularly in the north, there were already lots of Christians, largely through the efforts of the Culdees (not monks, but recluses), followers of Columba on the island of Iona.

So it is not surprising that the mythical unicorn appealed to these Celtic Scots. Unicorns feature on many buildings and mercat crosses throughout the country.

Another thing which features everywhere is tartan: early writers report the Celts had a tradition of "*wearing brightly coloured clothes* (the forerunner of tartan?), *some used blue dye from the woad plant to paint patterns on their bodies. Their usual attire would include a tunic and a belt, as well as a long cloak and trousers* (probably the first to wear such things) *which were fastened by a 'fibula' (brooch).* Celtic jewellery was beautiful and quite intricate.

All these bits and pieces are part of Scotland's rich tapestry – the 'soul' with which RSCDS founder Jean Milligan entreated dancers to imbue their participation in this excellent activity!

Tuesday afternoon dancing in 2023

From Pat Reesby

This year, 2023, has been another good year for Tuesday afternoon dancing, with a record attendance for the final 'general' session on 21 November – 51 people turned up!

We've now been meeting for five years, starting in late 2018 when Gaylia Powell, then living in Wellington, realised that many people were keen to learn challenging dances and formations not always possible on club nights. A separate group would give them a chance to dance with people from around the region and with similar ability and experience.

A weekday evening was the first thought. However, local clubs already meet every night of the week except Tuesdays, and that's when Wellington Region committee meetings and Region classes are held. So it would have to be a daytime group, which would disadvantage those with work or other commitments during the day. On the other hand, a daytime group would benefit those who'd rather not go out at night.

St John's church hall in Johnsonville was available and has proved an excellent venue. Our first tutor was Catherine McCutcheon, and in 2019 she was joined by Melva Waite, Maureen Robson and Rod Downey.

By popular demand, a 'general' group was introduced that year, catering for people of intermediate level and above. General group attendees are 'independent', not always having to rely on a partner. But they don't necessarily hanker after mind-bending dances and formations seldom, if ever, done again!

This general group has been very popular, with Catherine as our regular tutor. And most 'advanced' dancers attend 'general' sessions as well.



The general group dance *The Reel of the 51st* (Photo: Pat Reesby)

The advanced group meets on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month, while the general group meets on the third Tuesday ... and on the fifth Tuesday too, when there is one.

We've been lucky in that we've had no shortage of local tutors willing to teach us. This year, Catherine took a few advanced sessions as well as her regular general ones. Our other advanced group tutors this year have been Gaye Collin, Iain Boyd, Rod Downey and Damon Collin. And next year, our tutors will include Diane Bradshaw for the first time.

As well as teaching, Catherine makes name tags for new arrivals and also arranges for local musicians to play for



Catherine and the band – Ann, Mary and Lynne – at the last session for 2023 (Photo: Pat Reesby)

us occasionally. We've had live music on three occasions this year. Many thanks to Lynne Scott, Sharlene Penman, Aileen Logie, Ian Telfar, Mary McDonald and Ann Goodbehere. You've given our dancing an extra spark.

Instead of asking people to 'bring a plate' for Catherine's final combined/general session this year, we accepted Elaine Lethbridge's offer to supply strawberries and cream/icecream, and two cheeseboards. These went down extremely well. Many thanks, Elaine, for a great idea.

The door fee for Tuesday afternoon dancing is \$5. Because we don't operate under the structure of a club, there's no membership fee, and people turn up as and when they can. Roll on 2024!

To find out more, call Pat: 021 0271 6195

Capital City Social Afternoon

From Charles Burden

In November 2023, Capital City Club held a well-attended Social Afternoon with over four full sets. The event was to invite friends and family, to introduce them to Scottish dancing. Attendees included a large group of students from Jeanette's Scottish dance evening class at the Wellington Community Education Centre. A programme of all easy dances was enjoyed by all. The music was provided by Lynne Scott, Mary and Duncan McDonald.

Next year, Beginners' classes will be held on four Thursdays from 8 February, 7:30-9:30pm, at the Newtown School Hall.

For information call:

Peter 021 756 068, or Juping 021 079 7771

Johnsonville – lots of action to finish the year

From Kristin Downey

Johnsonville members managed to pack a lot into the last months of our dancing year, with lots of opportunities to dress up for formal and fun occasions.

New Dancers' Celebration – In early October, 19 J'ville members travelled to Masterton for a fantastic night of dancing at the New Dancers' Celebration. Carpooling and overnight stays gave us welcome opportunities to spend time together on and off the dance floor.

Halloween – Johnsonville's Halloween celebrations followed at the end of the month. Almost five sets enjoyed Rod's programme of themed dances, Aileen and Hilary's atmospheric music and some amazingly creative supper treats.

Members really got into the spirit of the occasion, costuming and decorations get better every year! And once again, we were privileged to hear from club bard, Aline Homes, recreating the *Legend of Tam O'Shanter*.



Elizabeth Ngan produced some amazingly creative supper treats for Halloween Night (Photo: Kristin Downey)

Lower North Island Centenary Ball – Less than a week later, 22 Johnsonville members were off and travelling again, this time to Palmerston North for the very special Lower North Island RSCDS Centenary Ball. Again carpooling and overnight stays, and this time our tartan bunting travelled with us to help decorate the hall.

In his role as Wellington Region President, Johnsonville tutor Rod Downey was on the organising committee, briefed a dance, and was one of a triumvirate of presidents who had the honour of cutting the cake. He also presented Edith Campbell with her Region Award.

Club member Jeanette Watson was a co-organiser, and also briefed a dance, as did past Johnsonville members Philippa Pointon and Margaret Bailey-Allison. Club member Lorelee Hyde was responsible for communications, photography and much more. A great event, especially for five of Johnsonville's newer dancers, who experienced the spectacle of a Grand March and a grand Scottish country dancing occasion for the first time.

AGM club service awards – The highlight of the club AGM was the presentation of the club's [2023 service awards](#). This year, we gave awards across the spectrum of service.

Allison Kay and John Markham were recognised for their long service on the committee as they step down this year. Maureen Sullivan received an award for her continuing service on the committee, and especially for event co-ordination. We also acknowledged Aline Homes' long-standing floral artistry and more recent bardic creativity. Finally, we honoured two members of the club's supper team – Elizabeth Judge and Maura Beattie (also a committee member).

Tartan and Final Night – Eight sets and a four-piece band had the hall buzzing, club members enjoyed free entry, and no need to bring a plate as the club catered the supper. [Photos and videos bring the night to life](#). Lynne Scott, Cassandra Bahr, Sam Berkahn and Thomas Nikora

brought us a great night's music to accompany Rod's excellent programme, with a mix of dances old and new, easier and a little more tricky!

Presentations were made to tutor Rod and trainee tutor Maureen to thank them for the time and energy put into teaching us during the year. Thanks also to 2023 guest tutors Jeanette Watson and Catherine McCutcheon, and to the more than twenty visitors from other clubs who made this such an extra-special night to end the dancing year.

Christmas lunch – Every year it seems more people come along to relax and enjoy our last social occasion of the year. On Wednesday 13 December, 25 of us coffee-ed, lunched, chatted and whiled away a bit of a chilly afternoon at Café Thyme in Churton Park – definitely not a day for eating outdoors. Kristin was presented with a card and voucher in appreciation of the work she does for the club as president, a very nice surprise.



Johnsonville's president, Kristin Downey
(Photo: John Homes)

Linden SCD Club

From Vicky Ryan

Classes and events have continued uninterrupted over this year, ably encouraged by our club tutor Ann Oliver. Our club has also been supported by guest tutors. Over the course of this year, Diane Bradshaw and Andrea Wells have both taught successful blocks of classes, which have been well received.

We have had the pleasure of Aileen Logie playing for us on several occasions this year, and Aileen and Hilary Ferral played for our final night on 6 November. This was a great night, well attended by club members and visiting dancers, and rounded off with a delicious supper and social catch-ups.

The year finished for Linden with our traditional club end-of-year dinner. This was fantastically attended, and a great way to celebrate another successful year for the club. We look forward to what 2024 brings for Linden SCD Club and our members – hopefully another uninterrupted year, with many opportunities for dancing and socialising with friends near and far. We wish everyone a healthy and

happy summer, and hope to see many of you on the dance floor next year.

Lower Hutt SCD Club

From Elizabeth Ferguson

Lower Hutt Club had a successful Final Night with live music provided by Iain Matcham and Jason Morris. Our two young tutors, Andrea Wells and Chris Totton, have done an amazing job, and we look forward to them teaching the club again in 2024.



Teachers and musicians on the final night: Andrea, Iain, Jason and Chris

2024 marks 70 years since the club was first established. We have been dancing in the same venue at the Epuni Community Hall all that time.

Our special dance will be held on **Saturday 7 September, 2024**, at Knox Church Hall, High Street, Lower Hutt.

We would love to see many previous club members join us for this special event, so if you know of past Lower Hutt members, please let us know. You can contact Elizabeth Ferguson on 021 934 428.

Our club is continuing to grow in membership after the Covid slump and we are so fortunate to have several young dancers join us on club nights. These are members of our JAM class who are now old enough to join the adults for dancing.

We are looking at ways of increasing our JAMs class membership. Our Family Nights in the school holidays have been a huge success and we are looking forward to having some of them join in with the JAMS next year.

Certainly, these dance nights plant a seed for Scottish Country Dance participation, whether it be now or in the future.

Next year, JAMs classes will be taught by Iain Matcham, at 6:30-7:30pm on Monday nights (Contact 027 232 2727).

Ngaio SCD Club

From Wendy Donald

Ngaio Club finished the year with a good number of happy dancers, although lamenting the length of time, until next year, to start dancing again! Our final night was a great success, enjoyable and fun, with the programme that our tutor Melva Waite had planned for us, of dances familiar to us and including several club favourites. We had invited other local clubs and were glad to have them join us for a fun evening of dancing with live music from musicians Aileen Logie and Hilary Ferral, aka *The Cranberry Tarts*. We finished with supper, and much conversation!

We have 2024 planned and all the bookings made. We start the year with Beginners' Classes on Thursday 7 March at 7.30pm, for four weeks, at our usual venue Khandallah Presbyterian Church Hall, 33 Ganges Road. This is a chance for men and women, teens and adults of all ages, to come and have a go! Our members will be glad to be dancing again, and other more experienced dancers will be most welcome too.

Season's greetings and our best wishes for a relaxing holiday time, to return refreshed and ready for another year of dance and fitness, friendship and fun!

Tawa Club

From Désirée Patterson

In the last three months of the dancing year we had live music on three occasions. In September, we welcomed Sharlene Penman, who was up from Christchurch for Lynne and Aileen's birthday dance, and she and Lynne offered to play for our club night. Then, only a week later, we had our planned Tartan Night, for which Lynne, Thomas Nikora and Sam Berkahn provided the music. This happened to be Thomas' birthday, so after a plentiful supper, we all sang *Happy Birthday* to him.



Tartan night – Lynne, Thomas and Sam (Photo: John Patterson)

With eight sets on the floor, our final night for the year was a highlight. As well as 34 of our own members, we enjoyed hosting more than 30 visitors from Ngaio, Johnsonville,

Lower Hutt and Waikanae clubs. *The Cranberry Tarts* – Aileen Logie and Hilary Ferral – kept us all energised, and Catherine did a wonderful job briefing the dances and managing to be everywhere on the floor where a bit of extra help was needed.

The following week, 15 Tawa members attended Ngaio's final night, where Aileen and Hilary were again providing the music. Since Ngaio and Tawa both dance on Thursday nights, we usually confer together on our final night dates, so that we can attend each other's final fling.

Our very last club event for the year was the annual potluck dinner – again held at John and Désirée's home. With 28 people there, it was a bit of a squish, but thankfully the weather was perfect – not too hot, not too cold, and for once, no wind or rain – so some could drift outside onto the deck. We even managed a few dances on the deck after dinner.



Maxwell's Rant on the deck (Photo: John Patterson)

Next year, we will not be running beginners' classes. Our tutor Catherine McCutcheon has had an extremely busy year: not only was she teaching us at Tawa, but she also taught the general afternoon dancing group all year, as well as some of the advanced group sessions. AND she will be teaching the advanced class at Summer School, so she will need a well-deserved break from teaching, before starting up club nights again in March.

Thank you for your dedication, Catherine!

Waikanae Club – A final night and a farewell

from Shirley Kalogeropoulos

Waikanae Club's final night for the year was attended by around 30 dancers, including several visitors from other clubs. Special thanks to *The Cranberry Tarts* – Aileen Logie and Hilary Ferral – for their wonderful music. A theme of "nature" was not particularly obvious but became clear as Romaine wove her story around the dances, with the help of appropriate props.

Sadly, this was Romaine's last evening with the club as she has decided to retire from teaching SCD.

Romaine obtained her teaching certificate in 1966, is a Life Member of the RSCDS, and received an RSCDS Branch Award in November 2014. She has been tutor of the Waikanae Club since 2016, and before that, for many years taught the Island Bay Club (now Capital City).

She has devised many dances, four of which have been published by the RSCDS, the most of any New Zealand deviser. Two of her dances were on the night's programme – *The Wayward Butterfly* and *Joy Be Wi' You*.

Not everyone knows however, that Romaine is also an **arctophile** – a collector of teddy bears. From time to time, various bears have visited the club and entertained us with their stories. So, it seemed fitting to introduce her to **Finley**, who although small, brought with him best wishes and thanks from everyone in the club.



Romaine with Finley

John Smith – Fiddler

From Chris Ingram (Christchurch)

Many dancers will remember John Smith, who played in Peter Elmes' Band for many years.

On 23 October, Jo and I visited John Smith last week in the Whitby Bupa Care Home. He was so pleased to see us, still with it and played a few tunes as well. He had his 84th birthday on 19 November.

He's bravely and cheerfully managing life in the ward – happy memories of playing his fiddle in New Zealand, Australia and around the world.



John and Chris reminisce with their fiddles

Beginners' Classes in 2024

Carterton – Mondays, 29 Jan-18 March, 7:30 pm
Johnsonville Club – Mondays, 12, 19, 26 February, 7:30-9:30pm, Khandallah Town Hall. \$5 per session, contact Robert 021 163 9649, johnsonvillescddc@gmail.com
Linden – Mondays, four weeks from 5 February. Tawa Baptist Church Hall, Main Road, Tawa.
Lower Hutt Club – JAMs classes, Mondays, 6:30-7:30 pm, Epuni Community Hall, Mitchell Street, Lower Hutt
Capital City Club – Thursdays, 8, 15, 22, 29 February, 7:30-9:30 pm. Newtown School Hall, Mein Street, Newtown. \$5 per week, or \$18 for four weeks
Ngaio Club – Thursdays, four weeks from 7 March, 7:30 pm. Khandallah Presbyterian Church Hall, Ganges Road, Khandallah

Summer Dancing 2024

Tuesdays 23 and 30 January; 6 and 13 February
7.00pm – 8:45pm

On the front lawn
 Old Government Buildings (VUW Law School),
 55 Lambton Quay, Wellington (near Railway and Bus Stations) |
 Parking is available in the grounds

If it's wet or too windy, dancing will be cancelled, as there is no indoor alternative.

Check www.wellingtonscdd.org.nz for cancellations.

Gold Coin Donation



RSCDS Wellington Region First Book Dance Day

Celebrating 100 years since the publication of Book 1

Saturday 27 April, afternoon (time tba)
St John's Church Hall, Johnsonville

Fun early dances – Published up to 1930

Calling MUSICIANS !

INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT
 SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE MUSIC?

You're invited to an introductory

SCD Music Workshop with Lynne Scott, NZ Branch Music Adviser

- Sunday 25 February 2024,
- 1.30 – 4.30pm
- 11 Edwin Street, Belmont Domain, Lower Hutt
- Cost: \$5
- Bring: your instrument, a music stand if you have one

The Workshop will cover how music is structured for SCD; the basics of playing jigs, reels and strathspeys for dancing; and basic band technique. You do need to be able to read music fairly fluently.

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 021 846 596

WELLINGTON REGION

HOGMANAY 2023

BAND: IAIN MATCHAM, JEAN MALCOLM

ENTRY: \$15 RSCDS, \$18 NON-RSCDS, \$5 JAMS & SPECTATORS
 + SMALL PLATE FROM ALL

8PM START AT CROFTON DOWNS SCHOOL, CHARTWELL DR

NEW YEAR JIG	J	BOOK 51
THE BORROWDALE EXCHANGE	R	CARNFORTH 2
THE BYRON STRATHSPEY	S	DEESIDE BOOK
JUBILEE JIG	J	LEAFLETS
PELORUS JACK	R	BOOK 41
THE SHORES OF SOLWAY	S	CARNFORTH 6
ORPINGTON CALEDONIANS	R	BOOK 49
GARY MORRIS	J	MORISON'S BUSH
BUTTERSCOTCH AND HONEY	S	ALEXANDER LEAFLETS
MR WILLIAM BROWN'S REEL	R	GALLOWAY ALBUM

S U P P E R

ANDERSON'S RANT	R	MMM
MONADH LIATH	S	BANKHEAD 6
THE KISSING BRIDGE	R	BOOK 47
GRANVILLE MARKET	J	2ND GRADED BOOK
CITY OF BELFAST	S	BOOK 48
THE REEL OF THE 51ST DIVISION	R	BOOK 13

H O G M A N A Y C E L E B R A T I O N S

THE EIGHTSOME REEL	R	BOOK 2
THE ROBERTSON RANT	S	BOOK 39
SETON'S CEILIDH BAND	R	BOOK 53

ALL DANCES MAY BE WALKED AS NEEDED