

Wellington Region Celebrates Hogmanay

From Loralee Hyde

On a warm Wellington evening, dancers from around the Region and from further afield welcomed in the New Year at the Wellington Region Hogmanay on 31 December 2021 in Lower Hutt.

Thanks to Elaine and Michael Laidlaw and their team for organising this great social event after another challenging year with dancing constantly disrupted by Covid lockdowns and restrictions.

We welcomed RSCDS New Zealand Branch President Linda Glavin, Vice President Debbie Roxburgh with Paul, Communication and Publicity and Membership Coordinator Sue Lindsay and Youth Coordinator Nicole Trewavas. Others from outside the Region included Sue and Ian Pearson from Whanganui along with Doug Mills and Lynda Aitchison from Marlborough, and Dorothy Wilson from Blenheim.

Thank you to MC Damon Collin for leading us through the dances during the evening—and for sharing points about some of the more unusual dance origins or names.

We danced the night away to lively music from the band led by Aileen Logie on the accordion, with Jason Morris (keyboard), Hilary Ferral (fiddle) and Terry Bradshaw (drums). One toe-tapping tune that particularly appealed to the dancers was *The Magic of Merrill (The Reel of Seven)* played for *The Amateur Epidemiologist* devised by Wellingtonian Andrew Oliver. This dance is included in the [Wellington Region Covid-19 Collection](#).



Dancing *The Amateur Epidemiologist* with deviser Andrew Oliver in the set on the right

Popular dances included *Scott Meikle*, *The Water of Leith* and *Violynne*. The more experienced dancers took up the challenge of dancing *The Flower of Glasgow* and *The Aviator*.

A highlight of the evening was Linda Glavin presenting Debbie Roxburgh with an RSCDS New Zealand

Branch Life Membership. Congratulations Debbie for receiving this award—well-deserved after her many years of contributions to Scottish Country Dancing.

With Moggie Grayson (75 years, congratulations Moggie) and Jason Morris having birthdays on the night, we celebrated by singing *Happy Birthday* to rousing music from the band.

Before midnight, Damon led a singalong of Scottish songs. Last year we'd moved to the 21st century with the words being projected on to a screen. Unfortunately, the hall's projector had been stolen so we reverted to the old way of using printed copies!

The ceremony for welcoming in the New Year began with the Old Year and the Sweeper sweeping out the old year while we sang *Auld Lang Syne*.

Wellington Region President Ann Oliver 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.



Toasting the Wellington Region – First Foot Jason Morris, Region President Ann Oliver, Piper Nicole Trewavas and MC Damon Collin

Followed by piper Nicole Trewavas, First Foot Jason Morris walked a circuit around the hall before presenting the gifts to Ann. The First Foot then raised a toast to the RSCDS Wellington Region and we welcomed in the new year of 2022.

After wishing each other Happy New Year, it was time for dancers to tackle the final three popular dances—the *Eightsome Reel*, *Culla Bay* and *De'il Among the Tailors*. A fitting start to a new year of dancing!

[See all the Hogmanay photos](#)