

WAIBOP NEWS



Issue: April 2016

RSCDS NEW ZEALAND BRANCH INC
WAIKATO/BAY OF PLENTY REGION

Scottish Dancing - FUN, FITNESS, FRIENDSHIP!

Letter from the President

Whew! What a summer! When Bruce and I decided to relocate to Tauranga from Auckland in 2005, he assured me that the former did not experience the same humidity as the latter. He had grown up here, so I had no reason to doubt him. Now, I'm not so sure. Hot days I can stand; hot humid days not so much. Real energy-sapping stuff! However, the heat and humidity didn't stop a group of 9 raw beginners turning out on the first Monday night in February in response to our advertisement, to experience SC dancing for the first time. Two months later most of them are still sticking with it, with a couple more joining the group, and we at the Tauranga Club are very happy to have them join our ranks.

Most clubs were up and running at the beginning of March, although some did start earlier I believe. I hope you all managed to "survive" those hot, sticky days, and that your dancing year has started well. Hot or not, remember that a good warm-up for those muscles is still very important before re-launching into an energetic activity such as ours, especially after the summer stand-down that most of us have had.

We all know that, as well as being good fun, Scottish Country dancing is good for our general fitness, but did you know that it also offers protection against dementia. In January I was sent a link to a very interesting article. The article, while acknowledging the health benefits of dancing, discusses the growing evidence that stimulating one's mind by dancing can ward off Alzheimer's disease and other dementia. Not all forms of dancing will produce the same benefit, but forms that require making split-second decisions help to maintain our cognitive abilities, and SC dancing surely fits into that category. Go to the link below - the article makes an interesting read.

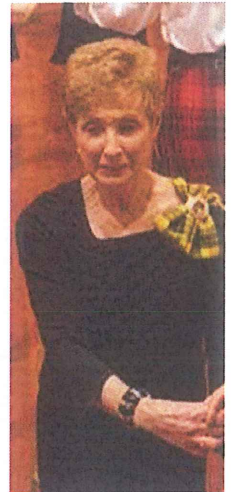
<http://socialdance.stanford.edu/syllabi/smarter.htm>

The Rotorua Club hosted the first of our annual Club dances and this year marks an important mile-stone for them as they celebrate their Diamond Anniversary. Ahead of the dance, and at the same venue, we held the first of our Region meetings. We ratified a policy giving affiliation rights to all SCD organisations within our Region. It was good to see some of you at the meeting, and later, on the dance floor as we joined Rotorua in their celebration!

And finally, if you were fortunate enough to have newer dancers join your club this year, remember to make them feel welcome and included, and share the passion!

Yours in dancing,

Heather Johnston
Region President



2016 Core Dances

<u>Reels</u>				
Anderson's Rant	MMM 1 - Page 2	8 x 32	3c in 4c set	also 2015
Summer Assembly	Book 35 - 8	1 x 88	4c Square set	
Crom Allt	Graded Bk 3 - 4	8 x 32	3c in 4c set	
<u>Jigs</u>				
Alan J Smith	Book 45 - 3	8 x 32	3c in 4c set	also 2015
Newburgh Jig, The	Book 48 - 1	8 x 32	3c in 4c set	
Laird of Milton's Daughter, The	Book 22 -10	8 x 32	3c in 4c set	
<u>Strathspeys</u>				
Paisley Weavers, The	Graded Bk 3 - 5	3 x 32	3c set	also 2015
S-Loconation	Book 41 - 8	4 x 32	4c set	
Haar on Skye, The	Graded Bk 3 - 7	8 x 32	3c in 4c set	

Mt Maunganui Club

Mount Maunganui Club celebrated 30 years this year, the inaugural committee meeting having been held on 3 April 1985. Carol and Geoffrey Thompson were among those attending that meeting. Several of the original members are still regular attendees at club and one of the original tutors is still the tutor at the Club. Geoffrey Thompson and Mac Taylor were the first tutors and Geoffrey is still our tutor.

This year attendance through the winter months has been excellent with two to three sets each night. The new dancer numbers have remained constant and these dancers are enjoying mixing with the more experienced members on club night.

Several club members attended the Tauranga Queen's Birthday Weekend School.

The committee organised a ceilidh on July 22nd with dances to Robert Burns's song tunes on the occasion of his death (July 21 1796) complete with haggis, neeps and tots of whisky.

Club members regularly attend dances and balls throughout the region.



Carol and Geoffrey Thompson

Hauraki/Thames Club

The Club has combined with the White Heather group that dance on Tuesday afternoons.

The year has begun very well with four new people arriving for our beginners' session on Thursdays. Tuesday afternoon dancing in St. James Hall Pahau Street Thames (3.30-5.30pm) continues with good attendance, as does our Thursday evening Club Night (6.30 - 8.30 pm) in Thames Citizens' Band Room Queen Street, so we feel we are in 'good spirit'.



Some members enjoyed joining in with other clubs for dancing at the Paeroa Highland Games, which is a fun day out.

We appear to have become a "permanent item" for the Robbie Burns night at the local retirement village where, once again, we were invited to join celebrations for dinner and welcoming the Haggis before dancing for them. Something all seem to enjoy and some very happy when invited to 'have a go'.

Thames have a weekly Saturday Market so it is intended to "dance on the green" in the market area (Pollen Street north/Pahau Street) which could attract a few more members but at least give folk an idea what Scottish Country Dancing is all about.

Rotorua Club Ball



Rotorua Club celebrated their 60th year with a well attended dance on Saturday 16 April.

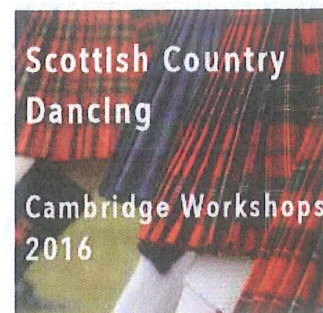
Even after a very positive but lengthy meeting, which finished as the meal was about to start, (not enough time to even pop across the road to the pub, which is our usual inbetween time!) people had the energy to dance the night away.



Past and present members

Cambridge Club

Cambridge had beginner classes scheduled for March-April, and a very impressive flyer was distributed. Please note this is to be repeated in July-September, and they welcome any beginners from other clubs to join in.



Workshops over eight sessions at Beginner level for school-age students (Middle School age & older) and adults.

2 March - 20 April 2016
and
27 July - 14 September 2016

Paeroa Highland Games & Tattoo 13 February



30 dancers from the region along with branch president David Williamson and wife Frances attended the Paeroa Highland Games and Tattoo.

The weather was fine, we danced outdoors surrounded by Clan tents and Celtic stalls. Very much social dancing, and newcomers joined in. It was fun to have a place alongside the pipe bands highland dancing, wood chopping. The dancers congregated under a pergola chatting and sharing food.

As evening fell we migrated to the showground, many of us occupying a mini grandstand, as the tattoo progressed we shared a

few toasts thanks to Sam Shute who brought his whisky along. The Tattoo included two men's sets dancing the reel of the 51st division. They looked good and had a fun working as a team on the turf—which was not level due to the holes left by the caber tossing. It was fun to be part of the event, and spend time with people from around the region.



Queen's Birthday Weekend School

Six weeks out...

The School has been extended from a Saturday-Sunday School to a Saturday-Sunday-Monday morning weekend school, and a JAM class has been added in.

Glenfiddle is providing the music for the Ball, the Sunday evening Social and – with other musicians joining in - for all four dance classes (typically two musicians per class). Lynne Scott is taking a music class on the Sunday morning, and Lynne and Sharlene Penman are together providing a music comprehension class for dancers. The latter class is gratis to all Weekend School attendees.

We have some external funding that has allowed us to headquarter the school at the Cambridge Town Hall, and the other three halls for classes are all in dancing distance.

We are planning for 60-70 attendees to the School, and around 80-90 for the Saturday evening Ball, and the registrations at this point are approximately 30; primarily in Doug Mills' Technique class and Mary's Advanced Social class. We would like all class numbers to improve significantly, and especially for the JAM and Elementary classes, and would appreciate the region clubs assisting in promoting the school.

As noted above, there are to be four dance classes: JAM's (aimed at mid-capability JAMs) Beginners/ Elementary, Technique, & Advanced Social, along with a musicians' class, and the music education class for dancers. With the club tutor's signed approval, advanced JAMs can register for other classes while still paying the JAM fees.

Branch President and wife, David and Francis Williamson, are joining the school for the whole weekend.

Balmoral/Awakeri Club

John Webb advises that this was the article that appeared in their local paper—a very good write up and advertising...

Dance Scottish Month

Sue Lindsay, Communications and Publicity Co-Ordinator for the RSCDS NZ Branch is planning to hold a Dance Scottish month in June 2016 to encourage new members into Scottish Country Dancing.

If you opt into this initiative, the Branch will provide posters and brochures so that you can use these as part of your advertising. Suggestions that you may or may not wish to consider are:

- Shop displays close to where you dance
- Banners
- Displays with public involvement
- Running a Ceilidh
- Putting an article in your local free paper

After you have held your event, she would like a report on what you did, how successful it was (or not) and report in the Kiwi News.

...Hamilton Scottish are running a Ceilidh Friday 10 June.....



Country dancing – oh, contraire

SCOTTISH COUNTRY dancers from the Edgumbe, Awakeri, Whakatane and Opotiki groups got together last weekend for a night of dance and socialising at the home of Jean and Jerome Smithson in Opotiki.

They had special guests, the New Zealand president of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society David Williamson and his wife Frances from Christchurch.

Since starting the new Awakeri group that was meeting at the Awakeri War Memorial Hall last year, John Webb says numbers have grown and the group has consolidated.

However, they have moved to a new hall and are now meeting in the Presbyterian Hall in Edgumbe on Monday evenings.

Along with the other Scottish country dancing groups in the Eastern Bay,



they performed at the dance festival held at the opening of the Whakatane Summer Arts Festival in January.

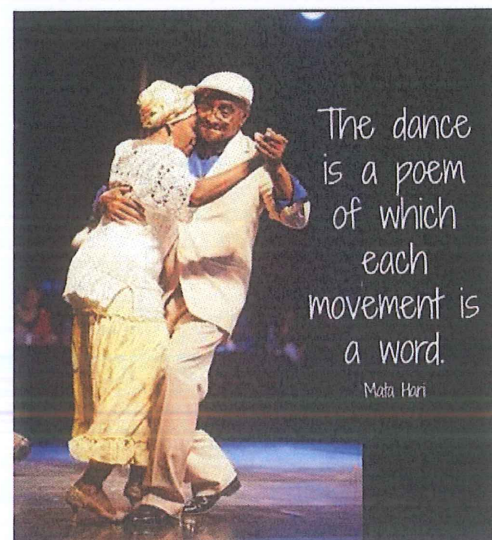
He urges anyone who would like to join in for fun, fitness and friendship to get in touch.

"New people of all ages are welcome. Couples or singles. It would be nice to see more men involved," Mr Webb said.

He said the "country" in country dancing is not to do with sheep and cattle and fields, but comes from the French word contraire, meaning opposite, as in dancing opposite to your partner.

It includes jigs, reels, Strathspeys and much more.

Mr Webb can be contacted on 07 3049149.



Scottish sayings.....

Whit's fur ye'll no go by ye! - *What's meant to happen will happen.*

Skinny Malinky Longlegs! - *A tall thin person.*

Speak o' the Devil! - *Usually said when you have been talking about someone - they usually appear.*

Failing means yer playin! - *When you fail at something at least you're trying.*

Mony a mickle maks a muckle! - *Saving a small amount soon builds up to a large amount.*

We're a' Jock Tamson's bairns! - *We're all God's children, nobody is better than anybody else - we're all equal.*

Dinnae marry fur money! - *Don't marry for money - you can borrow it cheaper.*

Is the cat deid? - *Has the cat died? Means your trousers are a bit short - like a flag flying at half mast.*

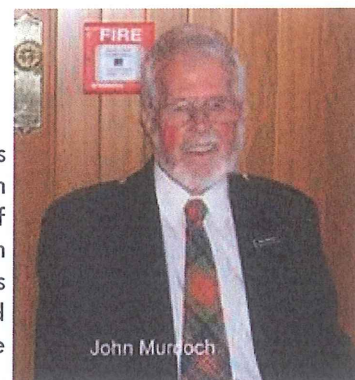
What's On in the Region:

- **Saturday 7 May**—Lochiel Ball (7pm); Matangi Hall, Tauwhare Road, Hamilton
- **Sunday 15 May**—Tokoroa Tartan Tea Dance [JAMs/Beginners] (2pm); Amisfield School, Moffat Road, Tokoroa
- **Saturday 21 May**—Opotiki Dance (1.30pm); Waitohi Hall, State Highway 2
- **Sat-Mon 4-6 June**—Queen's Birthday Weekend School, Cambridge
- **Friday 10 June**—Ceilidh (Hamilton Scottish) (7pm); YWCA, Pembroke St, Hamilton
- **Saturday 25 June**—Tauranga Ball *tba*

Obituary—John Murdoch

[23-04-30 to 28-10-15]

John Murdoch left Dumfriesshire, Scotland, aged 23 years bound for New Zealand. His father had died leaving John (a teenager) to run the family farm, and he had served in the Home Guard during the war. However after the deprivations of the war, tales of adventure in the antipodes beckoned. Arriving by sea in 1953, he worked as a farm manager near the Kaipara Harbour. His first connection with the Waikato was in 1955 as a shepherd for a sheep breeding project with the Ruakura Research Station. He returned with his young family in 1961 to share milk at Pukekura near Cambridge, where he farmed for a further 22 years.



John's acquaintance with Scottish country dancing began at this time, as Dianne had joined the Cambridge Scottish Country Dance Society. John joined as well and became a proficient Scottish country dancer himself. John served as treasurer of the Cambridge Scottish Country Dance Society from 1985 - 2001, and as President between 1979 and 1981. He was treasurer for many of the Weekend and Summer dancing schools hosted in the Waikato. Latterly he was most often seen helping out as the welcoming face on the door at the Cambridge club's annual events. John was made a life member of the Cambridge club in 1999. When occasion required it, John drew on his cultural heritage growing up in Robert Burns' country by delivering the Selkirk Grace and the Address to the Haggis. Being dark and handsome, he was a popular 'First Foot' in the local farming district for Hogmanay. Once he had 'hung up' his dancing shoes, he would later recall many happy times spent at Scottish country dancing events – be they weekends away, parties, dinners, or community events. A shy man, John valued the friendships and long relationships afforded by these occasions.

John was quietly active in the farming community and local sports groups in the Monavale area. He supported his children in their various pursuits and loved to travel. He also enjoyed a dram, a bet on the horses, going to the theatre, and grew a fine crop of potatoes. His was a simple but well-lived life and he was always the gentleman. He was a great support to Dianne in her role as tutor of the Cambridge Scottish Country Dance Club and was aptly described by Howard McNally as the 'strainer post to Dianne's fencing wire'. He eventually succumbed to advancing frailty from chronic illness and left us on 28 October 2015. His family were very touched by the Guard of Honour provided by Scottish Country Dancers at his funeral. John is survived by Dianne, his wife of 59 years, four children (Fiona, Craig, Andrew and Iain) and eight grandchildren.

For auld lang syne we raise a dram to John and his family and reflect on the words from Tam O' Shanter (one of John's favourite works of Robert Burns) "...Pleasures are like poppies spread; you seize the flower, its bloom is shed.."

Region Secretary....

Another Region meeting done and dusted! Our Region does not have many meetings (3) compared to others, nor do we need to have subcommittees. It is a good indication of how well we communicate (usually) amongst ourselves and through the office bearers to sort out any issues we might have during the year. I think a vote of thanks should go to the President, Treasurer and coordinators, who do a great job behind the scenes, as volunteers! The Region is fortunate to have such people, who have not only done the job for a year, but all put their hand up for another year...

I know a lot of clubs are struggling with numbers each week, and the tutors have a thankless job of putting a programme together beforehand, counting the numbers in the door, throwing away the programme and improvising on the spot to adjust for the feet on the floor...more volunteers doing a great job! Do you as dancers understand how much work goes into one club night's dances?

Appreciate and acknowledge your dancing community as you attend clubs and balls, not just your particular friends.

Glenna James

No More Books!

Is it about time that the RSCDS no longer insisted on publishing a new book of twelve dances every year? There was a period, just a few years ago, when new books were abandoned in favour of leaflets (including the re-publication of existing dances) but, sadly, the moratorium did not last and we are now back to the annual charade.

The RSCDS itself has already published about 800 dances and this does not even include the numerous Branch publications. There is plenty of scope here for the most ardent enthusiast, particularly when some of the most popular dances are to be found among the 14,000 dances which are published elsewhere.

There is no doubt that the RSCDS did a brilliant job in reviving and publishing the traditional dances of Scotland. These have provided a firm basis for the development of SCD with new dances and formations from the likes of Drewry and Foss, as well as the RSCDS itself. It is clear that Scottish Country Dancing would be very much the poorer if it had remained unchanged since 1960. The problem with the latest books is, I believe, due to a change of emphasis.

Was: "Here is a great dance, so let's publish it".

Now: "We need to publish a book, so let's write some dances to put in it".

It is noticeable that some of the most popular dances of recent years (Pelorus Jack, Scott Meikle, City of Belfast, Culla Bay, Sands of Morar) were not written specially for the RSCDS book, but were already popular having been published by the devisor some years earlier.

The result is that many new dances achieve a short-lived popularity and then simply disappear. How many dances from Book 44 would you seriously consider for inclusion on a dance programme nowadays? Conversely, many of the traditional dances are disappearing from our repertoire to the detriment of us all and, in particular, to recent converts to whom many of these dances will remain unfamiliar.

There will still be occasions when it would be appropriate for the RSCDS to publish a book of dances. Book 50, for example, might be justified as a way of encouraging our young dancers and another opportunity might arise at the time of the centenary in 2023. If publications were to be limited in this way, the cry "there are too many new dances nowadays" might be heard less often and there might be less demand for briefings when attending a dance.

Andrew Patterson

ATTUNEMENT

'To be in a state of accord, harmony, in a sympathetic relationship' *Webster's*

Attunement is that good feeling enjoyed by a group of two or more who have successfully completed a task or activity together.

In tune; in harmony; in synch; in the zone together; on the same page; thinking with one brain

As in...

- Sharing a walk or hike
- Preparing for a meal together
- Getting the children off to school
- Singing in a choir

In Scottish Country Dancing it's the joy of dancing in a set where each couple performs the steps and formations with grace, flight, phrasing and elegance - always being in the right place at the right time. Followed by applause, 'Well done', 'Thank you' and that good feeling.

For me it's the culmination of lessons, classes, summer schools and keeps me dancing.

What a pleasure for our Learners when they too reach this stage.

Let's all help them to attain this happy state - one dance at a time!

Chris Ingram

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Secretary: Glenna James, 3/697 Teasdale St, Te Awamutu (07) 870 3447 secretary@waibopscd.org.nz

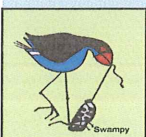
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