



WAIBOP NEWS



Issue: November 2018

RSCDS NEW ZEALAND BRANCH INC
WAIKATO/BAY OF PLENTY REGION

Scottish Dancing - FUN, FITNESS, FRIENDSHIP!

Letter from the President

Greetings to you all, and with my greetings comes my thanks for the opportunity, and privilege to have been your Region President for the past four years. It is a role that I have both enjoyed and taken much pleasure from.

The Key Objective for the Waikato/Bay of Plenty Region's President (as described in the Job Description) is to: "Provide the Waikato/Bay of Plenty Region's Management Committee with leadership and direction to maintain continuous focus on the **Vision**, the Vision being: "To promote the growth and enjoyment of Scottish Country Dancing (SCD) in the Waikato/Bay of Plenty Region."

To this end, my main aim as Region President was to liaise with, and visit the clubs to articulate the Waikato/Bay of Plenty Region's vision, and during my four years in this position, I have visited every club in the Region. I'm not sure that I articulated the vision as well as I might have, but I know from the feed-back during and following these social evenings, afternoons or mornings, that my visits were appreciated and, as one club teacher put it, " ... made her little group of dancers feel that they were a part of the bigger picture." I have also had an opportunity to meet dancers who for one reason or another do not attend other club's annual dances, and that to me has been one of the highlights because they too share this passion of SC dancing, even though it is only on their own little patch.

My visits have also been quite thought provoking as I have been constantly reminded of how lucky we are at the Tauranga Club in having such a hearty club membership. Many of our clubs, do not have enough dancers to make up even one set, and this is week after week, not just on occasional weeks. I take my hat off to the teachers of these clubs as they have to think out, and plan programmes of dances that do not require a 4 couple set, or they improvise with less than 3 couples (meet Bill Brown or Jane Jones, our regular Tuesday night ghosts!) so that those who do turn up, **do** get to dance rather than just practise formations or steps. I have asked myself, Why do these teachers do it? Answer: Because they share the same passion for traditional Scottish dance as those of us who are fortunate enough to teach at bigger clubs. I salute you! The Region salutes you!

We are an ageing population, of that there can be no doubt. How can we turn this around? Do we market ourselves effectively? or at all? What initiatives do clubs, committees or even individuals put in place to attract new members especially those of the younger set? Do we need to get out to the wider community with events that show-case SC dancing? Are such events purely for entertainment or do we actually push for the types of events that allow for recruitment? To quote Helen Russell, the retiring Chairman of the RSCD Society: "We all know that SCD is the ideal activity; we just need to convince more people!"

To those of you who organised Club dances, Day Schools, a Weekend School, Hogmanay or "extra-curricular" dances just for the sheer "hell of it" may I say a big thank you! To all club members may I also say a big thank you for your continued attendance at club nights and annual dances. You are the folk who keep us, your teachers, turning up every week to share the passion of Scottish Country Dancing.

In closing, I would like to thank those who have served on the Management Committee during my tenure. To those who are standing down, may I extend to you the Region's, and my personal grateful thanks. To those who are staying on, a very big thank you for maintaining continuity.

As Region President, this will be my final letter. It will also be Glenna's final Newsletter as she too is standing down from her role as Communication and Publicity Coordinator. Thank you Glenna for some very interesting reads. These Newsletters help to maintain contact across the Kaimais.

May I wish you all a safe and happy summer break. If you are going to Summer School I wish you happy dancing with friends old and new, and to all of you, along with your loved ones, I wish a very merry Christmas, and the best of health, happiness and prosperity for 2019.



It has been a great pleasure serving the Waikato/Bay of Plenty Region as President and I thank you all for your support of me during my four year tenure. I look forward to meeting you all on the dance floor again next year.

Yours in dancing, **Heather Johnston** Region President (Retiring)



Te Awamutu 50th Ball

On Saturday, July 28, 2018 the Kio Kio Hall was alive with the beautiful sound of Scottish Country Dance music played by the awesome band, Glenfiddle. We were a bit worried about numbers as there were a large contingent of dancers overseas, but, we needn't have worried as people came to support the club and join in a lively evening's dancing. A few past members were able to attend which included Dawn Spence who had been part of the club from its conception so it was great to have Dawn dancing at the 50th celebration. All in all a very enjoyable evening was enjoyed by all who attended.

Dawn Spence and **Jean Robertson**, who had both been tutors at Te Awamutu Club, cut the cake.



Hamilton Scottish Spring Fling



Hamilton Scottish celebrated the arrival of Spring with a Spring Fling Dance at their Club night on 19 September.

Dancers came dressed in their spring finery, or dressed as the titles of Spring like dances. "The Bees of Maggie Knockater" featured both in dress and dance. Other dances included "Breath of Spring" and "The First Rain of Spring". Pam managed to turn several well known dance titles into more spring like forms.

The supper supplied by club members was much enjoyed by everyone.

Katikati Club—Very First Tea Dance!

On Saturday, 6th October, the Katikati Scottish Country Dance Club held their very first Tea Dance, at the Pahoia Community Hall, at Pahoia Primary School. A beautiful, spacious, and relatively new hall. The evening started at 4.30pm with lots of nibbles before dancing started at 5.00pm. A great time to hold a Tea Dance, as the dancing finished about 9.15pm, plenty of time for dancers to get home without missing too much sleep.



Very many thanks to all of our devoted Scottish Country Dancing friends from right around the Waikato, Bay of Plenty Region, and from Auckland. We were thrilled to have six sets dancing at our very first Tea Dance, and to have so many people enjoying the dancing right to the end.

We are very grateful to all who provided such a wonderful supper, and particularly the newer dances from both the Mount Maunganui and Katikati Clubs who volunteered to help in the kitchen, and ensured that the

suppers were spot on, and the kitchen left spotless at the end of the evening. The night would not have been so successful without an excellent programme and briefing by our devoted tutor, Lynne Hudson.

Thank you everyone.



Tokoroa



The Tokoroa Club was lucky enough to have the Muirs play at their Annual Ball. The members would like to thank all the regional dancers who supported them on the night. I hope you enjoyed the music and dancing as much as we enjoyed your company.

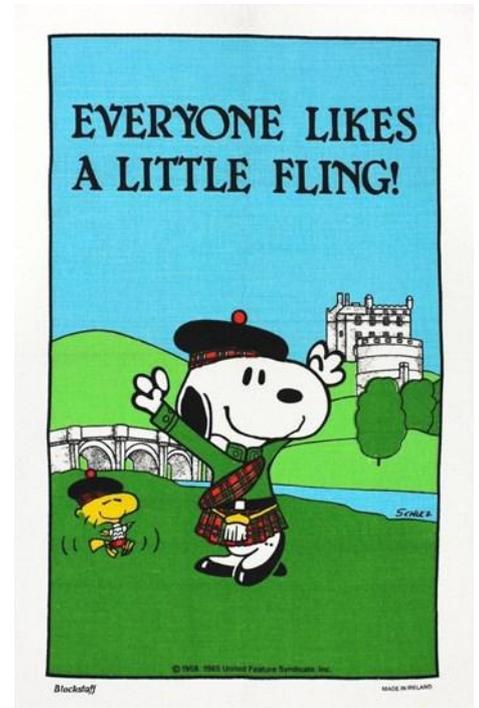


Our final night this year is Thursday December 6th.

Tauranga Social Evening



Thames



Cambridge Ball



Opotiki

We have had an enjoyable year of dancing.

A successful Social was held in May and we had a lot of fun decorating our hall with leaves, fruit etc all in keeping with our Harvest theme. We even had a bottle of whisky in the display, -it was empty of course!

We have started to have a combined night with Balmoral Club on the first Thursday of the month at Nukuhou Hall and we all enjoy dancing in a bigger group. It is lucky that there is a hall about halfway between our 2 small clubs that we can use.

Our biggest challenge this year was when our two Teachers went overseas and their holidays overlapped. There was going to be one Thursday without either of them. We can brief some dances by ourselves we said! Jan left music and crib notes and with a big smile said "See you in September Jean will be back soon" Well we did have fun that night- we took it in turns to brief the dances- which we managed pretty well. We did however struggle with matching the right music to the dance, and several of our dances finished before the music....or had not quite finished when the music did. Our laugh muscles were well exercised that evening!

We were SO pleased when our teachers returned- both having had much deserved holidays.

We will end a great year of dancing with a combined social with the Whakatane and Balmoral Clubs on the 29th November. If you are in the area please join us.

Queen's Birthday Weekend School—Katikati 2019

Next year's Queen's Birthday Weekend School will be in Katikati, situated in the Bay of Plenty, on SH 2 between Tauranga and Waihi. Katikati enjoys an agreeable climate and is a major Kiwifruit and Avocado growing area.

Classes will include;

- ◆ Elementary
- ◆ Intermediate/Mainstream
- ◆ Advanced Low Impact
- ◆ Advanced Technique
- ◆ as well as Musicians

Make a note in your diary to join us 1st to 3rd June, 2019, in the Mural Town of New Zealand.



Waikato-Bay of Plenty Region
Queen's Birthday Weekend School
1st – 3rd June 2019
 To be hosted by
 Katikati Scottish Country Dance Club
 at Katikati, Bay of Plenty

Music by Bourach Mor and others
 Ceilidh Theme: Nibble Nibble
 (the meaning of Katikati)



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RSCDS AGM Voting for Management Positions

Thank you to those who responded to Lynne Hudson and Glenna James, regarding your views on who should be chosen for the Education & Training Committee for RSCDS. Liz Douglas is our delegate for the meeting in Scotland. Here is the breakdown of total NZ Branch votes received:

Education & Training Committee Convenor Elect:

- Sue Ronald 5 votes
- Anne Taylor 3 votes

Education & Training Committee:

- Muriel Bone 8 votes
- Sue Porter 8 votes
- Deb Lees 7 votes
- Elaine Brunken 3 votes
- Ute Hoppmann-Lacour 1 vote
- Anne Robertson 1 vote



Letters to the Editor...

One More Couple Please

I think that MCs have to take a firm line at Clubs' Annual Dances/Balls when the last set on the floor is one couple short of the four that they need. The whole process grinds to halt as pressure is put on people sitting out - sometimes for quite a period of time.

In these situations I think the MC is entitled to say, "Each couple join onto another set to make 5 couple sets", or "Dance it as a three couple set" or "I am afraid you have to sit down".

People sitting out for whatever reasons should not be made to feel guilty about not getting up to solve the problem.

Swampy

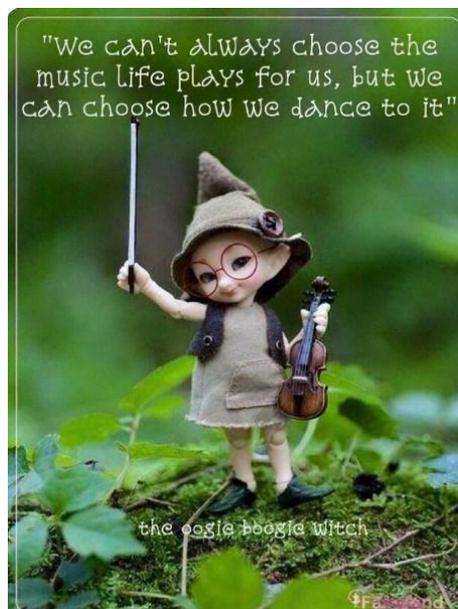
Spatial Awareness

To the novice Scottish Country Dancer the basic concepts appear to be a whole new world. Locations or movements such as "Top of the Set", "Down the Middle", "Cast off", "Lead or Dance down (or up)" set in train in the mind of the novice a confusing set of new rules to follow. This is on top of foot positions, left/right hand, reel time, strathspey time, where/when to hop etc. And then there are Schiehallion Reels, The Knot and lots of other seemingly alien formations. I often think that when dancing there are multiple things to occupy the mind: which formation to do; which hand to use, which step to use; which way to face; phrasing; keep track of where your partner is; interact with others in the set and of course SMILE!

All of this can lead to brain overload resulting in a loss of enjoyment for everyone. Two key aspects will help in keeping you on track: Keep it Simple - concise instructions; Spatial Awareness - the ability of the mind to work in four dimensions - three dimensional figures plus time. Being in the right place at the right time and relying on others to do the same. Even simple formations require a visualisation of concept - right hands across and left hands back is easy enough but still requires the awareness of what, where and when. Then there are formations such as diagonal rights and lefts, meanwhile moves such as the first 16 bars of Muirland Willie, "dolphin reels" and many other dances that require knowledge of third and fourth corners. Bars 9-16 of Bauldy Bain's Fiddle is an excellent example of satellites orbiting around in space.

It really doesn't matter what the other dancers in the set are doing or where they are, so long as you have in mind that Spatial Awareness of where you should be and when, most of the time the dance will flow. And if all else fails, just keep moving to the music and SMILE!

Bill Jacob



Coincident with SCD classes starting up, I viewed a TED Talk video titled "The first 20 hours how to learn anything" by Josh Kaufman .

I was curious to apply the four steps to learning the Scottish dancing skill in classes. Perhaps I will have an opportunity to observe how much Scottish dancing a fresh brain can actually learn in 20 hours.



The TED Talk began by observing that it takes 10,000 hours, which is around 5 years of a full-time job, to reach expert-level performance. However with only 20 hours of **focused practice**, we can rapidly become good at performing any skill.

The speaker outlined the four steps to rapid skill acquisition in order to practice intelligently and efficiently, to invest 20 hours in the most effective way possible. He then demonstrated how he applied the steps to learn to play the ukulele.

1 Deconstruct the skill

Identify exactly what you want to be able to do when you are done, and break down the skill into smaller pieces. Decide which pieces are more important, then practice those first.

"Most of the things that we think of as skills are actually big bundles of skills that require all sorts of different things. The more you can break apart the skill, the more you're able to decide what are the parts of the skill that will actually help me get to what I want? And then you can practice those first. If you practice the most important things first, you'll be able to improve your performance in the least amount of time possible."

2 Learn enough to self-correct

Learn just enough that you can practice and self-correct as you practice. Learning becomes a way of getting better at noticing when you are making a mistake, then doing something different. This helps to avoid procrastination.

3 Remove practice barriers

Eliminate distractions like television, the internet, things that get in the way of doing the work. Use a little bit of will power to remove the distractions.

4 Practice at least 20 hours

Most skills have an initial frustration barrier. We don't like to feel stupid. Committing to practice 20 hours overcomes the frustration barrier, to stick with the practice long enough to reap the rewards. The major barrier to skill acquisition isn't intellectual -- it's emotional.

Let's apply the steps to learning the Scottish dancing skill in classes.

1 We can deconstruct the skill into four areas:
Learn the five footwork steps.

Skip Change of Step	Slip Step	Pas de Basque Setting Step	Strathspey Traveling Step	Strathspey Setting Step
Footwork Steps				

Learn 25 frequent formations that are components of a dance, amongst those listed here:
<http://my.strathspey.org/dd/formation/>

Learn phrasing: the ability to dance the steps in time with the music and perform a formation within the defined phrase of music and to transition smoothly from one formation to the next; and **covering:** awareness of our position relative to the other dancers, in order to synchronize matching movements and clearly define the pattern of the dance.

Learn dancing with the entire brain: intellectual and emotional.

We want to invest maximum time moving to get the feeling of the dancing skill. Focus on the leading and supporting dancer roles while learning a dance. Learn how to retain 32-bars of four 8-bar formations in our short-term memory.

Advance and Retire	Allemande	Back to Back	Cast	Chase
Figure of Eight	Grand Chain	Hands Across	Hands Round	Ladies' Chain
Lead/Dance Down/Up	Poussette	Promenade	Reel of Four	Reel of Three
Rights and Lefts	Set	Balance in Line	Double Triangles	Petronella Turn
Set and Link	Slip Down/Up	Stepping Up/Down	Turn / Cross Over	Turn Corners and Partner

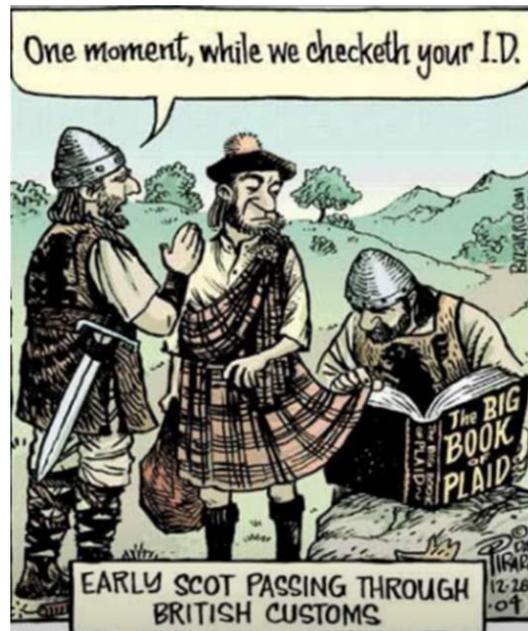
2 The dance classes give us an opportunity to practice and self-correct as we practice. We expect to make mistakes. Learning how to recover from a mistake is a useful skill; dancers feel they are growing and want to continue learning.

3 Form a routine to attend the dance classes to learn the dancing skill, and have fun interacting with our fellow dancers.

4 Embrace the growth mindset and know that we expect to feel uncomfortable to learn the new skill at the beginning. Fear of feeling stupid or looking stupid is a significant reason why over 95 percent of the public do no dancing of any kind. Let's learn Scottish dancing -- it only takes 20 hours.

What's On:

- **3 November AGM**
(Tirau Cooperating Church Hall @ 1pm); Dancing ; Dinner and socialising at Loose Goose, Tirau
- **10 November Mt Maunganui Dance**
(Te Puke Baptist Church Hall @ 4.30pm for 5.00pm)
- **24 November Core Dance day**
tba
- **28 December—5 January Summer School**
(Nelson/Stoke)



Editor...

Well it's time to say goodbye to my newsletters and to the position of Communication & Publicity Coordinator, I have really enjoyed putting the newsletters together and hope you have enjoyed reading them too. Please consider having a go on the Region Management Committee, it is a great way of "giving back" to dancing and also getting to know the wider picture of NZ Branch and Headquarters in Scotland. Plus you might actually enjoy the role as I did! Welcome to the new Coordinator, whoever that may be.

I would like to extend my thanks to the Management Committee—I have enjoyed getting to know you all better, and especially to Heather Johnston the President, who I worked with over the 3 years as Secretary and the 4 years as C&P Coordinator. Well done Heather—you have earned your "rest", although with other hats on as Tutor at Tauranga Club and Core Dance Day organiser, I'm sure you will have plenty to do still....

Glenna James

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