



WAIBOP NEWS



Issue December 2021

RSCDS NEW ZEALAND BRANCH INC
WAIKATO/BAY OF PLENTY REGION

Scottish Dancing - FUN, FITNESS, FRIENDSHIP!

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1. President's Pen



For those of you who don't know already, I am still your President but there are some changes to the team. Bill Jacob, Sophia Kilgour and Ruary Laidlaw have stepped down. They have all done a sterling job and I thank them for all that they have done for the Region. Robyn Howes (Lochiel) is our new treasurer, Agnes Algra (TA) is the new newsletter editor, Shelley McConnel (Ham Scot) is looking after the Facebook page and Jeanette Lauder (Tokoroa) has taken up the reins of Youth Coordinator. Welcome to you all.

Many of you will already know that Bill Jacob has recently been diagnosed with cancer and is undergoing chemotherapy. Please keep him and Maureen in your thoughts and prayers.

Dancing has certainly been thin on the ground this half of the year and how Covid-19 will play out over the next year is yet to be seen.

I've been having a close look at the Covid Protection Framework. My reading of it is that we will be able to dance at all the light colours, as long as we have a vaccine certificate requirement, at both club nights and Dances. At RED the number of attendees would be capped at 25.

However, when considering the Covid risk factors it is clear that Scottish Country Dancers are an at-risk vulnerable group and energetic SCD with hand holding is not without risk in itself. The last article I read was about the '[25 Year difference](#)'. The risk of hospitalisation and death from Covid increases as we age but the Pfizer vaccination reduces the risk to that of an unvaccinated person 25 years our junior. For many of us that is still a significant risk. I would urge you all to be as careful as you can and especially to not attend dancing if you are at all unwell.



We will have to live with the virus as a country but each of us will have to make the decision about what that will look like for us.

I wish you all a very Merry Christmas.

Jill Littlewood

2. Editorial

This has been another extraordinary year. It started off well and then gradually turned to dust and ashes!

Next year each club will have to make decisions around keeping its members safe from Covid, and its variants, using the new traffic light system. We will all have to get used to making changes to our lifestyle.



As Jill has said, Agnes Algra from the Te Awamutu Club will be the new Editor of The WaiBop News next year. A big thankyou to her from me for being willing to take it on, and a big shout out to Shelley McConnell also for putting her hand up to take on management of the WaiBop Facebook page.

The NZ Branch has sent out an email to all the RSCDS NZ Branch members asking them to make submissions as to what they consider should be Future Strategy for the NZ Branch for the next 4 years. If you have received the email, then now is your opportunity to have your say. Check your inbox.

For years I always thought that "Partick Thistle Nil" was its actual name.

A Merry Christmas to you all and a Happy New Year!

Ruary laidlaw



3. Teachers' Talk, Heather Johnston, Training and Education Coordinator



For those teachers who were not able to attend the Region Zoom AGM, and who have had a look at the Draft Region Calendar, will have noted two **Core Dance Day Workshops** scheduled to take place in 2022 and are possibly wondering why.

For starters, our Core dances, which were carried over from 2020, have not had a huge airing again this year, and most of us were tired of having had to keep those same Cores on the boil for two years. It was definitely time for a change! The Core Dance Day was to have taken place on Saturday 27 November 2021 but as we all know that didn't happen. As that scenario looked most likely early in November, I put the following Proposal to the AGM:

That: The Teachers' Workshop, generally held in March, should become the Core Dance Day.

This became a Motion which was seconded and subsequently passed.

Those attending the March 2022 Core Dance Day (which is to combine with the Teachers' Workshop) will therefore set the Cores for the 2022 Dancing Year. At the end of 2022 we will, all going well, get back into the cycle of holding the Core Dance Day in November and setting dances for 2023.

For those clubs whose Annual Dances are to be held in the early part of the year, this might mean that there are no Cores for you to slot into your programmes. However, I don't think we need to lose sleep over that!

The NZ Branch has had to cancel the Christchurch Summer School again this year which was a devastating decision for the organising committee to have to make. The news was also devastating for those who had booked to go to Summer School, and probably none more-so than Robyn Dowdle who was to have done her Part 1 - Units 2 and 3 Teachers' Certificate exams.

As there is still a great deal of uncertainty hanging over the next few months, the NZ Branch Management Committee, after considering the implications of the Summer School cancellation, has decided that the Exam Classes will be postponed until Summer School 2022-2023.

This 12 month time lapse must be a huge blow to Robyn. Having "been there, done that" with Teachers' exams, I really feel for Robyn as she will have to keep her exam work up to scratch for another 12 months, a far bigger ask than trying to keep Core dances on the boil!



Let's hope that COVID will be kinder to us next year, and that we can have a dancing year similar to those of old especially now that most of us are VACCINATED!

Heather Johnston

4. Youth - Jeanette Lauder

JAMs

I certainly didn't link into the Region's AGM on zoom expecting to take on the role of Youth Coordinator for the region again but somehow that is what has happened. I will try to follow on from Sophia's term but realise that I don't quite have the perspective of youth these days! As well as a big thank you to Sophia for her representation of youth and her enthusiasm in the coordinator role I also thank Jill Littlewood for the support provided as Sophia moved into the role two years ago.

It is always great to see, and hear of, the progress of JAMs. I first met Sophia at a Lochiel dancing event and we were both surprised to meet again at her primary school where I worked for a time with one of her classmates. That was in 2008. As well as her dancing progress I am pleased to now congratulate her on her recent academic success as Senior Dux at Waikato Diocesan. I wish her well as she moves to study in Auckland and hope she finds time to continue her interest and enjoyment of Dancing Scottish.

With the Covid-19 effect taking hold just after The Tokoroa Annual Dance there is not too much to report in terms of dancing. The photo here shows some of the Tokoroa JAMs at that dance. Some JAMs have kept in touch with each other digitally and at times in person. JAMs in the Tokoroa Club can look forward to meeting up socially next weekend and if they get in some dancing that will be a bonus. Let's hope there are many more opportunities for more dancing in 2022.



Magdalene, Augustine, Petronella,

Sophie,

Erike,

Robyn

Jeanette Lauder

5. Music - Lynne Hudson

What a wonderful time we live in! One minute we feel we can see the light at the end of the tunnel and then suddenly a bend appears – Omicron! However, we will round that curve and get to the end of the ride with our usual No8 wire attitude and so it is with our local SCD musicians world at present.

With the Labour Weekend Musicians Matangi Workshop and Dance cancelled, we had a pleasant couple of days meeting that weekend on Zoom and played the music that had been on the programme

for the combined bands Sunday afternoon dance. (The beauty of Zoom is that you can play along, and no one can hear if you suddenly “play in the cracks”!)

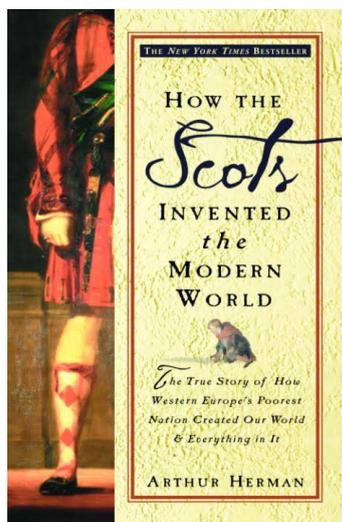


Bourach Mor continues to have fortnightly Zoom practices getting ready for a private gig they have booked for early January. On Friday nights several members of the band Zoom in and play along with the Auckland Fiddle Club musicians. This is great for improving sight-reading skills, learning new tunes and catching up for brief chats.

All SCD musicians are looking forward to being able to be together so we can again get “all round sound”.

6. Book Review

" **How the Scots Invented the Modern World**" by Arthur Herman (Historian and Author). Published by Crown Publishers, New York 2001.



" How the Scots Invented the Modern World " belongs to Antanas Procuta and has been circulating amongst a few Cambridge SCD club members; I was lucky enough to be one of them as the title intrigued me. It didn't disappoint. With Scottish ancestry in my blood (as many kiwis have)and knowing almost nothing about that connection I thought it might shed some light on that fascinating land called Scotland.

Not only do I have fragmented knowledge of my Scottish background but also of the origins of the unique Scottish culture and the evolution of its recent history. This book has it all in bucketloads. If you are looking for an easy, light read forget it. As an avid fictional reader, it was refreshing to engage my brain and senses in this factual, intense well-researched expose.

November 2021 marks 250 years since Sir Walter Scott was born. As the Scottish Country Dancer magazine has revealed 6 country dances were published in Edinburgh in

1820, all with a link to his novel " The Heart of Midlothian ". It is fitting then that Sir Walter Scott is quoted: " I am a Scotsman: therefore I had to fight my way into the world ".

To quote further from " How the Scots Invented the Modern World ". From the preface: " People of Scottish descent are usually proud about their history and achievements. Yet even they know only the half of it. They can recite many names and details in the familiar story of their people. "Braveheart" William Wallace, Robert the Bruce, The Arbroath Declaration and Mary Queen of Scots; Robert Burns and Bonnie Prince Charlie. They point out how James Watt invented the steam engine, John Boyd Dunlop the bicycle and Alexander Fleming penicillin. Yet no one else seems to pay much attention. The point of this book is that being Scottish is more than just a matter of nationality or place of origin or clan or even culture. It is also a state of mind, a way of viewing the world and our place in it. The Scottish mentality was a deliberate creation, although it was conceived by many minds and carried out by many hands. The history of Scotland in the 18 and 19th centuries is one of hard-earned triumph and heartrending tragedy, spilled blood and ruined lives as well as great achievements. In 1700 Scotland was Europe's poorest independent country.....yet the story of how this culturally backward nation rose to become the driving wheel of modern progress is not only largely unknown, it may even be inspiring. For if you want a monument to the Scots, look around you."

My father and paternal grandmother both had huge influences in our family. When the church played a larger role in society than it does today they were regular attendees of the Presbyterian Church; discipline, stoicism, academic achievement, precision, black and white attitudes were traits that I now realise weren't just personal to them and random characteristics but endemic features harking back to a formidable Scottish heritage that was brought to New Zealand (in the 1800s) and the rest of the world.

To reinforce the fact of looking around us for the Scottish influence, our hearty congratulations to Sophia Kilgour (whose father is Scottish!!) for achieving Dux of Waikato Diocesan for Girls 2021. More Scottish genes of influence i.e. hard work, sacrifice, discipline!

"How the Scots Invented the Modern World" is a book highly recommended for anyone interested in recent Scottish history i.e. the last 400 years.



7. Letters to the Editor

1. A Response to the last newsletter's editorial - Andy Patterson



Ruary's article on dance programmes prompted me to look through the eleven programmes that were planned by clubs in our region during 2021. Dances from recent publications feature 43 times overall, with 9 of them in just one programme of 18 dances! One or two might merit an appearance but it is the uncritical inclusion of new dances, at the expense of those which are more well-known, that seems to lie at the heart of the issues raised by Ruary.

I really believe that, if we continue to feed this appetite for new dances, we will do lasting damage to Scottish country dancing as they begin to overshadow other dances on our evening programmes. The search for novelty means that these dances often abandon the traditional formations and time is spent teaching intricate dances which are new to everybody. Then, when it comes to the evening itself, attendees demand walk-throughs of dances with which they are unfamiliar.

The demand for variety can easily be satisfied from the wealth of dances which are firmly established in the SCD repertoire. Many of these, of course, are modern dances which have stood the test of time, but traditional dances also have an important part to play. Not only are they likely to be more suitable for our newer dancers, but they have a character of their own which is more in keeping with the essential flavour of Scottish country dancing.

Where I might disagree with Ruary is that, with the exception of 'beginners dances', I think that programmes should reflect the broad spectrum of SCD and include one or two dances with the more accomplished dancer in mind. A well-balanced programme with a mix of dances (traditional/modern and basic/advanced) should provide something for everyone from the raw beginner to the most experienced.

Andy



2. Letters to the Editor - Laura Dickmans

'Fun, Friendship and Fitness' as well as loving to dance are the reasons I joined Scottish country dancing. It's the combination of these three elements that bring joy to a club night or a ball. I have often found going to a ball to be a stressful time, especially in my earlier years. It's no to make a mistake in a dance and mess whole thing up for everyone else. I don't mind if I make a mistake and can regain rhythm of the dance but that doesn't work



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when the dance is too complex. Over the years I have enjoyed Beginners balls the most because the dances are mostly known and not too difficult. So it's easy to have fun and enjoy the dancing itself. Personally I also find it difficult to hold the whole sequence of a briefing in my mind although I realise that this is not true for everyone. During a briefing I have to repeat the first three instructions in my mind instead of hearing the briefing and hope that the rest will follow as the dance progresses. Dare I say that I would love each dance to be called throughout from first couple leading to fourth couple's turn to lead. Imagine my delight when I read that this was common practice in the early days of Scottish country dancing. What if every dance at a ball was pure joy?

Laura

3. Letters to the Editor - Gwyneth Arnold

I have been a member at Hamilton Scottish, for 17 years, having spent 13 years+ in Auckland's North Shore. Great clubs there.



Gwyneth Arnold in the centre wearing blue white

The frustration with Covid-19 is that living alone one needs to get out of the house (AND garden) as we need physical company, the telephone only partially satisfying. As for next year, I am not sure for how long we will be able to meet normally, as we need to be in Level 1.

On-line classes have no appeal as all alone again.

As for my favourite dances, I have so many.

Attracting new dancers as well as JAMS I suspect people are too tired to come out in the evening if they have been working all day. Young people are often burdened with excessive homework, especially for the diligent (in my opinion, that is).

Yes, indeed I have travelled, currently still in Ashburton where I have spent the last nine weeks helping my daughter who suffered a broken shoulder with torn ligaments etc., in a skiing accident (fell over a snowflake!) I have been the family chauffeur. Hilary never married but is the legal guardian for two children, now 18 and 15. Fortunately, she was able to continue teaching (history and English, secondary) as could stand/sit and being left-handed was able to write on the whiteboard. I return to Hamilton on Saturday and am very much looking forward to it.

While here I have been in touch with Jill and Grietje, the former having given me the name of the one-time Ashburton secretary, Elizabeth Temple. I gave her a ring and we had a very interesting chat. Elizabeth told me that the club more or less closed down in 2019 but managed to keep going for another year but as only six or seven turned up, if they were lucky, sometimes only four or five, they finally closed. Elizabeth also told me that she is sure Timaru has closed down as well, more or less for the same reasons. Timaru is an hour's drive south of Ashburton.



Times are changing rapidly. We need to be very conscious of how and why.
Gwyneth (Arnold)

8. Advertisement - Sandra

A full male dancing outfit is available, reasonable offers. Fancy shirt, cravat, waistcoat, jacket (with silver buttons), socks, flashes, dark kilt (believed to be Stewart tartan), sporran, dirk and size 10 shoes. Hardly worn. Would fit a medium sized man about 5' 10".

(Owner, John Stewart previously Mount Maunganui Club - is vague on sizing)



Phone Sandra. 027 404 2930

9. Obituaries

Howard McNally



Howard Mc Nally passed away peacefully in his sleep, 23rd August 2021, at the Linda Jones Retirement Village in Hamilton, aged 84.

Howard was a past President of the New Zealand Branch, The WaiBop Region and the Lochiel Club.

He was a staunch supporter of Scottish Country Dancing in NZ.

He will be sadly missed by his partner Glenys Pearce, his family and his many dancing friends throughout NZ

Graeme Hall



It is with sadness that we let you know that Graeme Hall passed away at home this morning, 8th September.

Graeme had such an influence on the Tokoroa Cub's existence over many years. He was a keen supporter of SCD and contributed much to the club's success over many years. Many will know that he served over 40 years as the Club President. During that time, he also served two stints as Waikato Bay of Plenty Region President.

We have many fond memories of Graeme and sent our condolences to Genny and family.

Jeanette Lauder

Fiona Paton



It is with sadness that Te Awamutu Club inform the region of the passing of Fiona Paton on Tuesday, November 30, 2021 following a short illness.

Fiona had been a member of the club since the club was formed in the late 70s and joint tutor from 1984 until about 2007. She continued to dance until she hung up her dancing shoes in 2011.

From then Fiona was still involved with our club helping with suppers at our annual dance until 3 years ago.

A service will be held on Friday, December 3 at 11am but due to covid number restrictions attendance is by invitation only. Family plan to hold a memorial service a bit later which will be an open invitation.

Thank you, **Agnes Algra**

USMAR, Shelley Gail.



For those of you who have made bookings for the Hinuera Hall over the years, you will no doubt be saddened by the Death Notice of Shelley Usmar as below. I have sent a card to the Usmar family on behalf of the Region.

Heather Johnston

Passed away peacefully at Home, surrounded by loved ones on 5 November 2021. Loving wife to Ted, adored Mum to Jared and Rachel and a very special Nana to Tyler. All communications to : The Usmar family to 6 Tamihana Street, Matamata

10. 237 Social Dances for MCs

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1-ZB7rQip7B5ov-pA1rB5NqZOhMa tb- wuxR74YmQk0/e dit?ts=5be3e6d3#gid=122006433>

11. What's on

| Event | Date | Details |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| Cambridge End of Year | 19th December 2021 12:30pm \$5 + plate | See https://waibopscd.org.nz/events |

Any articles or letters for future publication should be sent to ruarylaidlaw@gmail.com

12. Committee Contacts

Region Officers:

President: Jill Littlewood president@waibopscd.org.nz

Secretary: Colleen Gunn secretary@waibopscd.org.nz

Treasurer: Robyn Howes treasurer@waibopscd.org.nz

Education/Training Coordinator: Heather Johnston, PO Box 16211, Bethlehem, Tauranga 3147, education@waibopscd.org.nz

Membership Coordinator: Robyn Howes membership@waibopscd.org.nz

Communication & Publicity Coordinator: Agnes Algra communication@waibopscd.org.nz

Youth Coordinator: Jeanette Lauder youth@waibopscd.org.nz



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