

TARRY AWHILE

MKRSCDS December 2014

Welcome to your last Tarry Awhile of 2014.

I am happy to see a few new faces in class and to see children encouraging their parents to dance.

We could do with even more new dancers, so if you have any ideas that might bring them in please don't keep your ideas to yourself - speak to one of your committee.

I am sorry to say though that Annette has resigned as Chair of our committee in readiness for her impending move to the Isle of White. - we're going to miss her. Until the next AGM I've taken on the role in an Interim capacity.

Jan

Dance Evaluations

The branch undertook to evaluate 6 of the new dances entered for inclusion in Book 49. This is a more manageable number than we had for the previous book but still involves a lot of work for our teachers, so thank you to Sarah and Marie. Our results are in the table below.

Milton Keynes Branch		RSCDS DANCE EVALUATION FOR BK 49	
DANCE No	TEMPO	SCORE	COMMENTS
11	B	3.6	Most didn't like turn & twirl in bars 25-28 -too busy
32	S	3.2	Rose progression interesting and different -could look very elegant with practice
34	J	3.1	People enjoyed this one—flowed well
42	M	1.8	Could be good introduction to medleys for beginners but not 8 times through
43	B	3.3	Again turn & twirl for elder members not good and final 8 bars nmade several feel dizzy. Very long turn in bar 21-24
60	S	3	Celtic reel interesting but needs lots of space to get phrasing correct

Hall Reopening Event

Bradwell Hall celebrated the opening of the refurbished hall on 27th September. Rita kindly organised a group of children to dance for the occasion which everyone present enjoyed. Thank you to Rita, the children and other dancers who went along to support on the day.

Autumn Fling

This was an unexpectedly eventful event! Pleased to say that Rita was not seriously hurt when she fell, although those present certainly had cause for concern at the time. The head shaped dent in the wall will soon be repaired too.

22 adults and 4 children enjoyed the dancing so it was a successful evening and we'll be doing it again . Our thanks to Terry for the programme and for being MC on the night.

New Music System

I'm sure you will have noticed our investment in a new music system. Thanks to Sarah for her research. The new player should put an end to the jumping tracks we had been experiencing.

Discussion Online

There was recently a discussion on a Scottish Dance Forum about whether or not to have recaps at dances. Many people contributed their thoughts and opinions. Recaps are no substitute for learning the dance and should never turn into a 'mini teaching session', but are they a useful prompt before the dance starts?

What are your thoughts?

Forthcoming Events & Dates

The last class of 2014 will be on December 15th. Do add any favourite dances you would like to dance that night to the list on the table. We'll make this a Christmas Social evening, so please bring a small plate of food to share.

Jan & Rita's Hogmanay Dance is again at Gt Brickhill on December 31st.

Over the festive period, Oxford have a dance on Monday 29th and the Harrow Ball is on Friday 2nd December.

Silver Cross continue to hold a regular dance on the first Saturday of the month.

Tickets are now available for our own **MK Ball** on **March 14th** with Susan MacFadyen's Band.

Classes will recommence on January 5th 2015 and will continue until the June Socials start, with the exception of 6th April, 4th and 25th May.

Our AGM will be on 20th April. A long way off yet but please do give some thought to whether you would join the committee then.

If you'd like tickets for Hogmanay or the MK Ball, or more information about one of the other events come and speak to me. Jan

**Merry Christmas and a
Happy, Healthy New Year**

Thank you to Rose Barbour for the two following reports from her attendance at the RSCDS AGM and Youth Forum

RSCDS 85th AGM



This was my first AGM and I very much enjoyed the surprise of the Office bearers being piped in. The Presentation of Scrolls of Honour involved a special delight in the form of seeing Helen Russell honoured, as I used to attend her class in Hull some 20 years ago. I have fond memories of her talking my non-dancing husband through Culla Bay, without him realising it was actually quite a difficult dance - a testament to her patience and skills!

The Minutes of 2013 AGM were accepted.

Our Chairman, John Wilkinson, highlighted that we are all growing old together and reflected on how many of us will be celebrating the 100th anniversary in 10 years' time. He stressed the importance of making links with schools, universities, lobbying politicians, and changing our attitudes. He thanked headquarters staff - in particular Elizabeth Foster and Elspeth Gray - and expressed his best wishes to his successor, Jim Healy.

Summer school will start a week later with some other changes - musicians' course will be offered in week 2, which will also be the fall week where 12-15 year olds will be welcomed with their families. The closing date for scholarships is 22 November and Winter school has a waiting list.

Education and Training Committee:
Fees for medal tests have increased for the first time in 5 years. We welcomed 75 teachers, finishing with some dances from the latest book and dances to song tunes. Hope to have examination and other courses advertised on the website.

Membership and Services Committee:

Book 49 to be published at summer school will be the last numbered book for a time, in order to let new dances bed in. 2015 will see publication of updated index to formations and movements.

Looking to refresh the core repertoire. Full complement of 6 members and the convenor elect. Further events will be in St Andrews, then Leeds and Oxford amongst other places. London Spring Fling - suggested a competition and submissions to close on 10 November. Have been working closely with Membership Services. Youth groups around the world - Australia New Zealand, Russia and Jamaica are all trialling dances. Commonwealth Games - involving a lot of hard work & resulting in many contacts. Jigs and Reels is now available. Working Group is working on adult version. The suggestion was made that young dancers should perhaps have their own branch. A lot of work has gone into exploring this & a proposal will be going forward in the near future.

Trustees Annual Report and Accounts: Net worth stands at £1.02M. Significant donations and legacies have been received. These will be used as a development fund for future activities. Otherwise there would be a deficit of £39K. General fund results include another exceptional item of pension fund accrual. A surplus in the general fund is unusual. Income from publications, shop, etc. means that, financially, the year was very successful. We received a recent legacy of £44K. Summer school in 2014 met its contribution target.

RSCDS at headquarter level cannot apply for gift aid, apart from donations made to the society, although many branches do.

Item 10.1

Motion was carried to basic subscription to remain unchanged at £18 per annum.

Item 10.2

To change the legal form of the RSCDS to Company Limited by Guarantee. This is the culmination of 4 years' work. Company limited by guarantee is the best constitutional arrangement. The RSCDS cannot sue anyone or be sued; only an individual can. Trustees and officers and their assets are personally involved. Legal advisors say that in 20 years time all charitable organisations will have to be incorporated.

The Toronto option was tabled -to defer going forward to the GLC until changes are made to articles. Voting at AGMs would no longer be dependent on physical presence (proxies can even be given to the Chair with instructions and one person could be a proxy for several countries). This would involve revising articles in preparation, although these are relatively minor changes - e.g. 'A delegate needs to be present' will need to be changed to 'needs to be represented'.

The majority of votes were against the amendment.

90/207/15 - for/against/abstentions.

Motion 10.2.1 that RSCDs should become a CLG once articles and rules & procedures been agreed at a future AGM.

260/43/11 - carried.

10.3 constitutional changes:

10 3.1 - that the appointment of a President shall be optional. Carried.

10.3.2 - that the number of trustees shall be listed to a maximum of fifteen. Will even split between office bearers and memos. All offices are not always filled and this might increase competition. Carried.

10.3.3 that the Archivist shall report to the Management Board. Carried.

10 3.4 that the Membership Services Committee shall be renamed the Publications Committee. It was stated that its current remit is unmanageable. Delegates asked who would ensure that we work to recruit new members. Functions such as marketing are covered by paid headquarters staff (e.g. Digital communications person) , although it was pointed out that we may not be able to pay salaries in the very long-term. Membership Services Committee tends to have attracted people with publications skills, but it was questioned as to whether members (and teachers) require more dances. 117/175/15 Falls.

10.3.5 That the Management Board may make amendment to the Rules & Procedures and report to the AGM, making the Board 'agile to respond to change'. Falls

10.4 New Zealand motion. That members holding a full teaching certificate be entitled to receive numbered dance books free of charge. Falls.

Office bearers appointments confirmed.

Confirmation appointment of President if a suitable individual is identified.

Confirmation of Jim Healy as Chairman.

Elections

Chairman Elect - Helen Russell

Convenor Elect Membership Services- no candidate

Convenor Elect Youth Services - Anne MacArthur

7 Members of Management Board - 3 Tom Hathaway, Bernie Hewitt, Isobel Macmillan

3 Membership of Education & Training - Elaine Cameron, Sue Ronald

2 Members of Membership Services - TomMcKinley, Keith Rose

2 Members of Youth Services - Emma Alsop, Raphael Orgeret.

Thanks proposed for William as first Convenor of Finance.

Vote of thanks - Robert Mackay.

Meeting closed at 17:13

Rose Barbour

RSCDS Youth Forum following 85th AGM

Youth workshops have been held in Cambridge, Glasgow and Aberdeen and others planned, as well as Spring Fling. There is a Youth Forum webpage : accessed via ABOUT US; then YOUNG DANCERS

The idea of a Youth Branch (12-35 years) has been mooted and the Management Board is favourable. The intention is that it will not cost much to join. Membership will be worldwide i.e. you can be a member of your Youth Branch AND your Local Branch. There will be no need to join Headquarters.

Accreditation - Ann McArthur & Jim Stott
Jigs & Reels (use ampersand) forms the core of the scheme with all the dances. It forms a good basis for someone who has never taught before. It starts off with easy formations. There's a glossary. It includes warm-ups, step practice, formations and dances. There are three levels - bronze, silver and gold. Anyone can do the bronze. However it has proved quite difficult to get a named person in a school who will take responsibility. For gold it needs to be embedded into the school. There is no external assessment for bronze or silver. Jigs & Reels can be bought for £45 on the website and a range of posters will soon be available too. A second pack - Dance Trad - is set to follow Jigs & Reels. It will have a section on ceilidh dances, a country dance section and a creative section, for devising your own dances. It was pointed out that it's harder to get access into secondary schools, as it can fall under various remits - PE/drama etc. Filming is currently being carried out for Dance Trad (ceilidh dancing in the NE of Scotland).

Doris Young then spoke she s an experienced teacher of children and young people. She expressed the view that it's iMportant to get children dancing, even if they're not members of the Society. She had previous experience as a Guide and Guide Trainer, but got increasingly involved in Scottish Country Dancing. She has around 40 pupils a week aged 6-16 years and they take part in the Aberdeen Festival. They stopped doing the Dundee one as they kept winning. (George Watt - Chairman of Dundee Branch - later said that they'd be welcome and can win as much as they want.) Doris also took the girls to Newcastle and reflected that it's not just about the winning team - it was about the enjoyment of all. From this has evolved the Airyhall Dancers. They meet on a Sunday - once every 2 to 3 weeks.

They meet in the early evening - as timing is important. Sadly there are no boys involved.

Friday night has been chosen for the children's class - this is good timing because they can relax at the end of the week. Older girls come and dance with the younger ones and this provides encouragement and shows the parents how dancers can progress. Graded Book 3 is a programme made for this.

The gap between primary and secondary needs to be addressed and email is useful here.

We watched a short video of the Airyhall Dancers. Doris has changed her approach - less strict, girls now call her Doris.

Raphael Orgeret from Lyons:

The Lyons Branch is a small one with 65-70 members, with a third under 35 years of age.

Spring Fling took place in Lyons and this went well with 80 dancers coming from all over. Raphael also uses Newcastle Festival a lot and started an international team about 10 years ago, which meets every year in a different city. Next year she will be taking two children's teams to the festival and is organising a teachers' certificate. Summer

School has always been important and small grants have been made available. Funds were made available to cover half the cost of people attending Summer School, which led to the setting up of the Branch and this is to be repeated this year. Raphael commented tat it's important also for young people to learn how to mix with older people. She acknowledged that it's not easy to dance with children and that people don't get the same out of it. She suggested that 6-7 years is probably the minimum age at which to get children involved. In Lyons the children join in for an hour and then it's the adults. It's important to also give the adults a space - it's a question of negotiating and compromise. One Lyons Branch member posts information on the French website - www.onvasortir.fr

Spring Fling helped to get young people involved and Raphael's advice is to give them a project - the more exciting and difficult the better. It's crucial to take local circumstances into account - e.g. the presence of a University in the town etc. People tend to get involved with their own generation, at least to start with. We need to capture their imagination and creativity. For young Scots she suggested that this perhaps involve their sense of national identity? For others it can be important to be different and stand out.. Financial assistance is important and making events affordable. Subsidising individuals can mean they enjoy themselves but it's crucial that we enable them to go back the next year. Social networking affords great opportunities, although, for young people, there can be a tendency to try things out and move on.

However, it's important to get older members involved in this too. Scottish Country Dancing offers a great opportunity in our increasingly fragmented society for people if different ages to come together and share in an enjoyable activity.

Rose Barbour