

"IN STEP"

Newsletter of the Dublin Scottish Country Dance Club.

November 2009

It is nearly Christmas (as a reminder - just over five weeks away!!) and I am only now getting around to sending out the Newsletter. Apologies for the delay.

As usual, dancing resumed in September after a mixed summer. I think we were all glad to meet up again for the happy and enjoyable dancing we have every Thursday night. Hazel was our teacher in September, Helen in October and John is teaching this month. We are tremendously lucky to have three teachers and two musicians, all very talented and good at what they do, giving the club their time and expertise every Thursday night. I am sure I can say on behalf of all the dancers, a sincere thank you – we love you all.

Judy's Annual Charity supper in aid of the Hospice.

Judy held her annual charity supper in aid of the Hospice. She brought a delicious supper for us all to enjoy with our cup of tea. She made a collection for the Hospice. She also collects from another group and between the two the functions she raised €320. Well done again Judy. A lot of hard work goes in to this venture, which is always greatly enjoyed. Many thanks for all you do year after year in support of this most deserving charity.

Dancing at Margaretholme – Blair Halliday

Friday the 13th. November was a good evening. We had been invited to dance for the residents in Margaretholme.

Bill Colvin, in introducing us, said "I doubt if we will invite the dancers back, as the last time had to be cancelled due to icy conditions and tonight we are nearly flooded out!"

We were rather depleted numerically - only nine of us were there to do demonstration dances. Hazel, Liam, Rory, Ruth, Florrie, Pam, Meadhbh, Marie, and Alan Corsini. Forbes had come along to support us and danced with the residents. Blair was there but is still unfit to dance.

There was a varied program of dances, which were well received. It was notable that the number of residents who danced had declined. However, those who did dance enjoyed the experience.

There were some people there for the first time as they had only recently moved in.

Wedding Bells

In August, Jenni married Adrian Gaffney in Scotland. We wish them many happy and healthy years together.

New Babies

Congratulations to **Violetta** and **Andrew** on the birth, last May, of their son **Robert**
Congratulations to **Florrie** and **Blair** on the birth of their second grandchild **Clara** (11 months).
Also congratulations to **Meadhbh** and **Harry** on another grandson named **Harry** (8months).
Love to all the Mummies and Daddies. We wish all these babies a happy and healthy life.

Homecoming – Liam Convery

Rory, Helen, Ruth, Meadhbh, Hazel and Liam



The RSCDS participated in the very successful year long country wide initiative entitled Homecoming Scotland 2009. This was aimed at encouraging expatriate Scots to return to the auld country and enjoy themselves.

We went to Edinburgh for the weekend 18th/19th September and joined up at the College of Surgeons Venue for a very high powered formal Highland Ball on the Friday Night. The “buzz” was great and our party danced the night away. I was limited to strathspeys but enjoyed the occasion nevertheless. We were received by Alex Gray and his wife - well known to John and Helen. He is the Chairman of the RSCDS. Later in the evening Meadhbh was his partner for a dance. Afterwards, we were glad to have a short walk to our hotel near by to wind down over some refreshments with Rory and Ruth who were staying with Rory’s parents. On Saturday we drove north and had a contrasting ceilidh in the Town Hall of Pitlochry organised by the local RSCDS Branch.

Colin Dewar’s band provided very stimulating music for the event. The place was packed and the dancing furious at times. The lines of the dance, tightly organised at the start, became a little frayed during the evening. Despite this, the participants, which included a large group of Japanese speakers (they use the diagrams in Pillings rather than the usual English language cribs) came from all over central Scotland as it was the final fling of the season. I enjoyed watching one “hearty” man with a low centre of gravity giving an exhibition of high speed centrifugal birling which produced an impression of delight mingled with terror on the face of his partners.

Church Ceilidh - John Gibson

Despite (or was it because of) a rather disappointing turn-out last year, our Committee decided to offer another fund-raising ceilidh to the Church and the date chosen was 26th September. This turned out to be very fortuitous timing as the new Minister of York Road, Chris Kennedy, had been installed only three weeks previously. He and his wife, Sally, were delighted to have a social occasion so soon after they arrived, at which to get to know a few more people, within both the Church and the Dancing Club.

The majority of those attending from the Church were members of the *Saturday @ 5* congregation who after their service had a meal in the manse. This congregation comprises mainly people from the younger age groups, and the representation from the, generally, older Sunday congregation was a still somewhat disappointing, although a number of members who were unable to attend did make a contribution. However, the good news was that those who came along had a wonderful evening of dancing with everyone taking part, irrespective of experience.

As well as the music and dancing, of course, the range of sandwiches and tray-bakes, provided by both our members and the Fellowship Group from the Church, helped to make a most enjoyable social occasion. I think it would be fair to say that the Church would be pleased to repeat the event in future years – with the object being to have a fun evening.

If I can now 'switch hats' to that of Session Clerk, I would like to add my thanks to those already expressed by the Church Secretary. As I have indicated, the social aspect was as important as the financial – but the donation of £401 was most welcome in these far from easy times. So, thank you to Judy and John for the music which adds so much to the enjoyment of the dancing; to Hazel for calling for the whole of the evening; to all of you who provided sandwiches and tray-bakes; and finally to everyone who took part. Haste ye back!

Trips to Headquarters – Helen Beaney

A year ago, at the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society AGM, I was elected to the Membership Services committee for a two year term. When my friend Jean first broached the subject a few years ago, I was reluctant, but after some consideration I decided it was time to give something back to an organisation that has given me so much. I started dancing 25 years ago, and have been a member of the RSCDS since 1992 (and it was at a Scottish Country Dance class that my parents met in the first place). During that time I have danced in numerous places in five different countries. I can go somewhere without knowing a single dance on their programme, but if I can read a crib sheet, or dance with someone who does know it, I can dance it too, because a reel of three, right hands across, etc. is the same all over the world. That would just not be possible if there was no overall standards body.

Membership Services has five all-day meetings in Headquarters each year, plus a short meeting the morning after the AGM, and I have brought work home from every meeting. Sometimes it would be something the whole committee is working on, when it might just be a document to read, or ideas to ponder before the next meeting. Once it was a couple of DVDs to watch and assess to see if they were suitable for the RSCDS to sell (they weren't – they were truly awful!). Most often it has been new publications for proofreading. The Society has produced a booklet called *Standard Terminology*, which aims to make life easier for dancers whose native language is not English. To this end, the older books are being rewritten in standard terminology, and Jean, Jim and I are currently working on the reprint of Books 13-16.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my first year on the committee, where I have been made very welcome. It is good to feel that I can be useful to such an international organisation in return for the huge pleasure its activities and members gives me.