

In Step

the newsletter of



September 2015

Good Wishes

We were so sorry to hear of Forbes's fall and send our very best wishes to him and Pam.

We are delighted to hear that Lily is making a good recovery and send best wishes to her and John.

Congratulations to Patrick in Cork on the birth on 15th June of his granddaughters, Tara and Maeve.

Our deepest sympathy to Judy on the passing of her father in July.

Congratulations and best wishes to Hazel and Liam who celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary on 3rd September.

Helen's parents would like to thank everyone who sent them good wishes on their Golden Wedding Anniversary.

Websites

Thanks to Daniela, the Club has a lovely new website at <http://www.dublin-scd.com/>. If you have high quality photographs of past events, or suggestions for other content, she would be pleased to receive them. As I didn't know Daniela was doing this, I had created a site at <https://dublinscdclub.wordpress.com/>. I have now turned the latter into my personal dance site and blog which you can follow by clicking the link part-way down the right hand column.

~ Helen McGinley

Cork Burns Supper Dance 2015

The 41st Cork Burns event took place in the Carrigaline Court Hotel on Saturday 21st February and was attended by a Dublin contingent that included Hazel, Liam, Helen and Jack, John and Lily, Dorene, Maeve, Ruth, Alan, Mary and Pat.

The haggis having been duly piped in, addressed and dispatched, all were welcomed by John Scott-Baird. An excellent buffet supper was followed by toasts to the 'Immortal Memory' and 'the Lassies' with the usual humorous reply on behalf of the latter.

While the above had been underway the Shandon Ceili Band had been tuning up and were ready to launch into the dance programme in their own inimitable style. All of the dances had been danced by the Dublin Group over the past couple of years so it was a case of renewing acquaintance with that Dashing White Sergeant...the Eightsome Reel (where would Cork be without it?)...Postie...J.B. Milne...Mairi and her wedding...visiting EH3 7AF...making a Trip to Bavaria...ranting with Robertson...chasing Pelorus Jack and, finally, meeting the Duke of Perth. Dances were called by Barbro, Maureen, Anne, Patrick and John Scott-Baird.

Sadly, numbers were slightly down this year but despite this the Dublin Group could feel that it was well worth the trip and look forward to Cork Burns 2016.

~ Pat McCullen

Belfast Branch weekend 2015

RSCDS (Belfast Branch) organised a smoothly run weekend school and seminar at Enniskillen Collegiate Grammar school on 1st – 3rd May this year. This was a new venture held in collaboration with the local Fermanagh SCD group and involved considerable effort by a special committee chaired by Aileen Patterson of Belfast Branch.

The splendid hill-top school facilities were made available by permission of its Head-mistress and Board of Management, and a welcoming civic reception was laid on for participants by the recently constituted Fermanagh and Omagh Council whose Chairman attended.

Music for the event was provided by the David Oswald Scottish Dance Band with instruction by the good-humoured and patient Angela Young and Ruth Clarke.

The event attracted over 100 participants, including a Dublin contingent of eight (Hazel, Helen, Ingrid, Dorene, Daniela, John, Pat and non-playing captain Liam Convery).

Matters commenced on the Friday evening with a fast-moving ceilidh, involving several new

dances, which rapidly fostered a congenial atmosphere, despite deteriorating weather conditions outdoors. (These mattered as the “wee ten minute walk” estimated by the hotel receptionist for the distance between the school and the Belmore Court Hotel proved to be rather optimistic!)

Saturday was a day of wind and rain. An initial general class for both beginners and experienced dancers focussed on fundamental step, timing and formation practice. Thereafter separate classes for beginners and for experienced dancers took place. A further class for more advanced dancers (gluttons for punishment!) took place in the afternoon.

The poor weather impacted on an optional afternoon visit to Tempo Gardens at the invitation of the owner, Sir John Langham. To compensate, Sir John opened the normally private historic Manor House and provided refreshments.

Highlight of the weekend was the Civic Reception and Dinner Dance on the Saturday evening. Having welcomed the participants, the Chairman of the Council wished them every success with their event and trusted that they would return to Fermanagh in the future. Thanks were expressed to the Grammar School Board and Staff and to the organising committee for their work.

Following an excellent dinner, social dancing commenced. The programme of 16 dances included nine that had been regularly danced by the Dublin group over recent years and seven that had been danced only more recently in preparation for Enniskillen. Time, as so often, led to a shortening of the programme somewhat, but most participants were eager for more to the end.

On Sunday morning a special RSCDS seminar brought the weekend school to a close and participants expressed their appreciation of the efforts of the organisers, teachers, band and all who had contributed to its success.

~ Pat McCullen

“Getting to Know You - Better” was the title and theme of the Seminar held on the Sunday morning of the Belfast Weekend School this year.

After dancing on Friday evening and Saturday morning, afternoon and evening, it would have been tempting to stay on in bed for an extra hour or two, but I felt I should be there for the 10.30 start. And it was worth it!

The seminar was led by John Wilkinson, Immediate Past Chairman of the RSCDS, with the purpose of giving information about the RSCDS and getting feedback from those attending. John was very informative, covering topics such as structure, functioning and role of the Society.

Over the past three years or so, the Society has been working hard to adopt a new legal structure and this finally came into being on 1st April this year. RSCDS is no longer a member association but a company limited by guarantee. One of the main benefits of this is that the Trustees will no longer be personally liable for the debts of the Society – an important consideration in these days of expensive litigation. It also means that Branches are autonomous bodies, using the RSCDS logo under licence. However, although certain procedures will change, the intention is to continue to operate in the same way as in the past, and there shouldn't be any impact for us as members of an Affiliated Group.

Although John led the seminar and did most of the speaking, members of Society Committees who were present commented at appropriate points. Helen, who is a member of the Membership Services Committee, spoke of the books which she and the Committee had been preparing for publication.

Other topics included the need to encourage the younger generation to take up Scottish Country Dancing and how the Branches and Affiliated Groups had a most important role to play in this regard. Contact with universities and colleges was mentioned as a possible way forward.

In the 1990s there was a rule that a Group needed two qualified teachers in order to become a Branch. I was amazed to learn that the rule had been dropped some years ago. What one needs to do now is to show that the Group could keep up standards and have a plan to grow. It had always been a dream of mine that we could become a Branch and this change would make it more achievable, but I think that we would have some work to do before that could be realised. Perhaps we should discuss it, however.

Finally, the RSCDS is world-wide organisation keeping alive an important Scottish tradition. It also allows those of us who dance to go virtually anywhere in the world and join similarly-minded folk in dances which, even if we do not know them, are made up of steps and movements we do know. It is therefore worthy of our support and I would encourage all members to join the Society, either through the affiliation process, or better still, through the International Branch.

~ John Gibson

Linda Mae and Patrick's visit

On Wednesday 10th June, nine couples had an extra night's fun dancing when Linda Mae Dennis and Patrick Hogan visited from Washington. We were delighted to have Mary Tan and Tony Graham, Patrick O'Hara, Mary O'Brien and Tom from Edinburgh all here, and to have Linda Mae teach us two of her favourite dances.

Royal Hospital

On Sunday 30th August, a team of dancers, ably led by Hazel, entertained patients and visitors at the Royal Hospital, Donnybrook. As always, John and Judy's music was much enjoyed and more wheelchair users than ever before joined in the dancing.

Annual Dance Programme 2016

Before the summer break, we invited you to submit the names of up to three dances you would like to see on the annual dance programme for our 50th anniversary. Ten people made suggestions and Hazel and John came to the planning meeting armed with a few ideas. Six dances were requested by more than one person so these were accepted without discussion and we had promised you that at least one from everybody's list would be used. We thought it would be nice to include one dance written by each of the current teachers and one by Aad (our most recent teacher before we three took over). With the addition of one dance from the latest RSCDS book, we had our list of twenty – seven reels, six strathspeys and seven jigs. All that remains before we make the programme public is to dance a few of them over the next few weeks to remind ourselves how they feel so we can be sure that we do want to include them.

~ Helen McGinley



Hazel and Liam celebrating 50 years of wedded bliss

Photo by Ruth Hughes