
THE SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCER

Volume 15, Issue 3

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Manager's Message

Geri Stuart

Hello Everyone!

I think we had lots of fun at our Fall, Down Under, Dance and if you weren't there, you missed out! Thank you to all who helped out. Now we have to look ahead to the dinner/dance and start planning what you can do to help. With Marge and Fred gone all the help you can give is greatly appreciated! The holiday season is upon us and I know everyone will be busy with his or her own families. But just make sure you take time for yourself and enjoy, too! In fact, talk your friends into taking time for themselves and come to a class. Let me know: should we have our last class be a ceilidh? See you in class!



A Birthday Demo

John Shaw

On Saturday, October 24, the Vancouver USA Scottish Country Dancers answered an invitation to give a demonstration of Scottish dancing at a birthday party. The "birthday boy" was none other than Mike Carmichael, a candidate for the 17th legislative district here in Clark County. The theme of the party was "Scottish" -- there were Scottish foods and refreshments, music, a piper, and a Grand March.

The dance group performed THE GALLOWAY HOUSE (in honor of our hosts), and followed this with the stately strathspey, LA RONDE. Then, the dancers invited the audience to join in some simple dances, beginning with THE KINGSTON FLYER. And, wow, did they participate! There were at least three complete sets -- over 30 people -- "flying" about the hall in time to the music. We all enjoyed ourselves, *and* we appreciated the opportunity to introduce more people to Scottish Country Dance.

Anne and Jeff Thomas create the "Broominator"

Scotch broom gave Anne and Jeff Thomas a mutual mission.

Anne, a Conservancy office volunteer, and Jeff, a professional animator, put their diverse skills together to support the Conservancy's prairie restoration efforts. As a reward for the hard-working Scotch Broom Attack Team -- volunteers who tackle the tough task of removing the non-native weed from the Puget Sound prairies -- Anne and Jeff created a badge of honor: a "Broominator" T-shirt. After many hours of brainstorming, Jeff created the Broominator character -- a determined weed whacker in a Scottish kilt. The Broominator motto: "Scotch broom. It should be kilt."

-Judith Starbuck (from *Nature Conservancy*)



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The Scottish Country Shop, in Portland, has some Lady's Tartan Sashes in the Washington State Tartan. The sashes have a finely finished look, with a 5-knot fringe. Priced at \$54 each.

I came across this on the "Scottish Country Dance resource pages", on the World Wide Web at <http://www.tardis.ed.ac.uk/~ibb/scd/SCD>

The Two-sex Scottish Dancer

I'm a two sex Scottish Dancer and may seem rather dim,
 But I never spend one evening as a full time her or him,
 I change my sex from dance to dance, my corners always alter
 It's really not surprising I occasionally falter.
 The old and simple dances I can manage very nicely
 And I can learn a new dance and do it most precisely,
 But when it comes to next week I don't know if I can
 For I learnt it as a woman and dance it as a man.
 And so you men who have the luck to always stay the same
 When female gentlemen go wrong be sparing with your blame.
 I'll add a postscript to this tale -- one comfort I have got
 When both the women change their sex it doesn't show a lot!

Patricia Batt

Exploring Burns

By John Shaw

My mother is not particularly Scottish -- if you traced her family back to the mid 1700's, you would find they came from what is now Germany -- but she loves the poems of Robert Burns. I remember her sharing his poems with me throughout my childhood.

One of our favorites was TAM O' SHANTER, the tale of a poor fellow who, while in town on a market day, stays too late and drinks too much, and then on his way home has a close encounter with -- well, I don't want to give it all away!

Lately, I've been rereading this poem, digging deeper into its interesting vocabulary, and just delighting in the images Burns uses to tell the story.

Take just the first verse, for example, in the box to the left.

From the Oxford English Dictionary, I found that *chapman* is related to the German word *kaufman*, meaning "a merchant", and *drouthy neibors* are neighbors suffering a "drought", hence in need of a drink; *bousing* is now our modern word *boozing*, to "drink to excess, or for goodfellowship", and *fou* could be "full" or "drunk". The word *unco* (related to *uncouth*) can mean "very", as it does in this verse, or "strange", as it is used in a later verse when Tam sees "an unco sight!" (Hmmm, what *does* he see?)

This verse ends with some of my favorite imagery! You can just imagine the trouble waiting at home for the fellow whose mate waits up for him while he tarries at a tavern, and she sits "gathering her brows like gathering storm". Does he know the Scottish word for "doghouse"?

Later in this poem, Burns mentions forms of Scottish Country Dancing, but I'll leave that for another issue.

Do you have an item of Celtic interest you would like to see in print?

You can contact me in any of the following ways:

By mail:

John Shaw - SCD
 PO Box 2438
 Battle Ground, WA 98604-2438

By email: bcjs@pacifier.com

Have You Ever Wanted To Buy A Castle?

The Leslie clan chief David Leslie, Earl of Rothes, has decided to sell Leslie Castle in Aberdeenshire. He had hoped another clan member would buy it, but the deal fell through.

Now the castle is going on the open market. If you know any rich relatives interested in buying a Scottish castle and title, contact **Bart Moore**: he can get the address of the clan head in the USA for more details.

Tam O'Shanter (first verse only)

By Robert Burns

When chapman billies leave the street,
 And drouthy neibors, neibors meet;
 As market days are wearing late,
 And folk begin to tak the gate,
 While we sit bousing at the nappy,
 An' getting fou and unco happy,
 We think na on the lang Scots miles,
 The mosses, waters, slaps and stiles,
 That lie between us and our hame,
 Where sits our sulky, sullen dame,
 Gathering her brows like gathering storm,
 Nursing her wrath to keep it warm.

The October Walk-About Dance (or Fall, Down Under!)

By John Shaw

The Fall Dance of the Vancouver USA SCD Society was held Saturday evening, October 17, at the Marshall Center. The theme this year was "Australian", presenting dances from Australian or New Zealand composers or with an otherwise "down under" bent. The decorations by Tom and Liza Halpenny supported this beautifully -- posters of kangaroos, crocodiles, Sydney's opera house, great white sharks, and other Australian icons.

Fiddler Ellen Hansen, who kept us stepping briskly, provided the live dance music, while Geri Stuart, as "master of ceremonies", briefed all the dances. And oh! what dancing! We had dancers of all levels of experience, trying all the dances in a great spirit of adventure and participation.

After we gave everyone a great big **Welcome!**, we went on a **Scottish Jaunt** around the dance floor, which warmed us up for

the walkabout of **Australian Ladies**, the featured dance of the evening. Somewhere along the route, we flirted our way through the **Flowers of Edinburgh**, ducked and flew through **Postie's Jig**, caught our breath during **Monymusk**, and got reacquainted in the circle of **Guid to Ken Ye**. Then, warmed up by half, we danced the **Half and Half**, strathspeyed in honor of **St. John**, whooped it up in **Jessie's Hornpipe**, and were left reeling by the **Folksy Fivesome**. The traditional **Oslo Waltz** completed our evening of dance.

We capped the evening with a round (several rounds?) of wonderful desserts and "finger foods" of great variety.

Many thanks to all who helped with organization, decoration, dance selection and teaching, food and drink prep, and table and chair setup, and the myriad details that make an event work. It couldn't have happened without your dedicated efforts, and we applaud you all

Calendar of Events

- Nov 14 Portland SCDance Party: 7:30 PM, Tigard Grange, Tigard, OR.
- Dec 12 Portland SCDance Party: 7:30 PM, Odd Fellows Hall (next to Tigard Grange), Tigard, OR.
- Dec 16 Last class of fall term, Vancouver USA SCD - Shall we have a ceilidh?
- Jan All month: Display window at Fort Vancouver Library- call Geri at 834-3757 with ideas!
- Feb 20 Dinner Dance, Lupke Center
- Mar 13 Portland SCD 20th Anniversary Dinner/Ball at Portland State University. Live music by Fiddlesticks and Ivory; workshops during the day, teachers Mary Murray and Simon Scott from Vancouver, BC. For more info, contact Don (503) 692-5963
- Apr 17 Spring Dance, Vancouver USA SCD

A Survey

Would you please answer the following questions and return this A.S.A.P. to class or to **Geri Stuart**, 1647 NW 26th Circle, Camas, WA, 98607. We know many people have other activities on Wednesday evenings and we'd like to determine if this might be one way to get more new people to join us.

If Parks and Recreation is agreeable, should we change class night in Vancouver to Thursday's? ___Yes ___No

If we did change classes to Thursday's, would you still be able to come? ___Yes ___No

Is there anything you can think of that would encourage more people to join our classes?
