

THE SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCER

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Manager's Message

Hello Everyone!

I'm sure you're all looking forward to more sunny weather and are starting to plan your summer. We don't have much on the schedule but if you're interested in participating in any demos that come up, please let me know before classes end.

I'm afraid we need more members and more people to participate in the community events we're asked to demo/participate in. If we don't "spread the word" about our group, I believe it will die.

We are also having our A.G.M. (Annual General Meeting) the last Wednesday in May in Vancouver. If you have anything to bring up or need to be there to vote on anything, PLEASE come. One of the items is changing the day of classes due to schedule conflicts for the teacher in the fall. Tuesday would be a better night. Come and let us know how that would work.

Looking forward to seeing you on the dance and demo floors.

Spring into Space! Dance

(but look before you leap)

Our Spring Dance was great fun, as I'm sure everyone will agree. It was held Saturday evening, April 17, at the Marshall Community Center in Vancouver. The theme this season was "Spring Into Space", which many folks supported with costumes, decorations, and posters of an *other-worldly* nature. (My personal favorite poster was the famous photo, taken by the Hubble telescope, showing several hundred *galaxies* in one very small section of sky -- whew!)

The costumed dancers were a diverse group: there were Trills (a la Deep Space Nine), some of our favorite Martians, some dancers who appeared ~~weird~~ alien, and some who just looked Scottish! And who can forget that fellow dancing the elegant **Wind on Loch Fyne** strathspey, with his (fake) eyes dangling from his spectacles? (Yeah, Tom!)

Many, many thanks to our musicians, fiddler Ellen Hansen with Lisa Scott (our teacher!) on the piano, whose music launched our earthbound feet into Scottish orbit!



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*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

On the Road with SCD

By John Shaw

A couple of weeks ago I had an opportunity to take my SCD interest "on the road", to San Diego.

While preparing for this family vacation, I found a Web page for the San Diego branch of the RSCDS. This page listed class times, dates of social dances, and e-mail addresses of someone to contact for more information. (I've found it is

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On the Road (cont.)

always a good idea to double-check info one finds on the Web, since it can easily get out-of-date.)

Through a series of informal e-mails, I obtained corrected class information (!) as well as a hearty invitation to drop by.

I was so encouraged, I decided to take my kilt. So, how do you pack a kilt? Looking through back issues of this newsletter -- you *do* save your newsletters, don't you? -- I found an article regarding the care and feeding of kilts, which answered this very question. I laid the kilt out flat, rolled it from side to side keeping the pleats straight, and then wrapped the roll in a plastic bag. And it worked! My kilt unrolled on each end of the trip with nary a wrinkle.

It is a delightful experience to walk into a room full of strangers, and instantly have something in common with each of them.

We (my family, and three friends we convinced to "give it a try") dropped in on their intermediate class on a Friday evening, at the Casa del Prado in San Diego's Balboa Park. The dancers were a jovial group and welcomed us right in. As it happened, several beginners showed up that night, so Joey Perry (one of

the teachers) ushered them into another room and gave them a spirited introduction to SCD. Instead of teaching several easy dances, Joey taught one dance first as a jig, with quick-change-of-step, and then again as a strathspey. During the breaks the novices peeked in to see how the experienced dancers were doing.

Rob Sanders taught the intermediate class. The program consisted mostly of dances scheduled for their May 15 Ball. *Miss Milligan's Strathspey* was the only dance I recognized. Other dances included *Pelorus Jack*, *MacDonald of the Isles*, *Border Lassies*, and *Let's Have a Ceilidh* -- this last one was especially memorable for the number of different figures they managed to squeeze into one dance! There was a lot of dancing, laughter, and even a few mistakes (which only added to the fun!).

Both classes rejoined near the end, and danced together *It's Not Rocket Science*. What a fun way to reward the beginners!

Planning a vacation? Check out possible RSCDS branches along your itinerary, and take along your kilt, or at least your willingness to dance, on your next trip. If you have already done so, please share your experiences in our newsletter!

Calendar of Events

- May 14-16 **Vancouver BC Annual Workshop and Ball**, at the Whistler Convention Center, Whistler, British Columbia. For information contact Ken Bennett at 604-435-2834, or email at kbennett@istar.ca.
- May 26 **Annual General Meeting** of Vancouver USA SCD, 9pm at the Marshall Center (right after the class)
- May 31 **Deadline for reservations for "Dancing in Scottish Castles" trip.**
- June 2 **Official Last day of Spring SCD class in Vancouver - But!** classes will continue "unofficially" through the end of June.
- June 10 **Deadline for Applications to Seattle's Fort Worden Weekend.**
- July 23 - August 4 **Dancing in Scottish Castles**, and sightseeing Scottish castle gardens. A fantasy vacation for Scottish Dancers organized by Ken McFarland. More info in this newsletter. Final payment for reservations is due **May 31, 1999.**
- Sept 10-12 **Seattle Branch Fort Worden Weekend SCD** classes at all levels and cape Breton dancing. Contact Sig Brown (206) 243-8110 e-mail: RightFromStart@msn.com. Information: <http://www.SeattleRSCDS.org>.

Like Ripples on a Pond

submitted by Van Hord

His name was Fleming, and he was a poor Scottish farmer. One day, while trying to eke out a living for his family, he heard a cry for help coming from a nearby bog. He dropped his tools and ran to the bog.

There, mired to his waist in black muck, was a terrified

boy, screaming and struggling to free himself. Farmer Fleming saved the lad from what could have been a slow and terrifying death.

The next day, a fancy carriage pulled up to the Scotsman's sparse surroundings. An elegantly dressed nobleman stepped out and introduced himself as the father of the boy Farmer Fleming had saved. "I want to repay you," said the

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Ripples (cont.)

nobleman. "You saved my son's life."

"No, I can't accept payment for what I did," the Scottish farmer replied, waving off the offer. At that moment, the farmer's own son came to the door of the family hovel.

"Is that your son?" the nobleman asked. "Yes," the farmer replied proudly.

"I'll make you a deal. Let me take him and give him a good education. If the lad is anything like his father, he'll grow to a man you can be proud of."

And that he did. In time, Farmer Fleming's son graduated from St. Mary's Hospital Medical School in London, and went on to become known throughout the world as the noted Sir Alexander Fleming, the discoverer of Penicillin.

Years afterward, the nobleman's son was stricken with pneumonia. What saved him? Penicillin.

The name of the nobleman? Lord Randolph Churchill. His son's name? Sir Winston Churchill.

Someone once said what goes around comes around. When you help someone else you are bringing joy into your life also.

**Dancing in Scottish Castles**

From a brochure by Ken McFarland

Dear Dancer:

You are invited to join me this summer on one of my best trips ever: a combination of my classic and exciting "Dancing in Scottish Castles" now combined with a Scottish Gardens tour, that offers daily visits to enchanting castles and botanic gardens. This lovely combination will bring a full sense of romance to your visit to Scotland.

Since I first offered this trip in 1989, I have been adding more castles and enhancing the itinerary. This year I have added Castle Menzies, home of some of our best-loved dances (such as Montgomeries' Rant), and this trip includes dance evenings at seldom visited venues, such as Hopetoun house and Dalhousie

Castle. These great halls are the places where Scottish Country dances were done, so it rings true when we dance them there again.

This year I am celebrating 10 years of vacations especially for dancers by offering special trips at bargain prices, so this trip uses 4-star hotels throughout and is an excellent value for the dollar.

To each trip I bring the essence of independent travel by building in lots of free time and opportunities for individual exploration on a daily basis, which is what I have done on this trip. Daily visits to gardens offer you the option of exploring on your own, or with a new found friend. And evening meals become a real delight when you can share experiences with others.

On every trip I invite local dancers to join us whenever possible, introducing dancers from across the Atlantic. It's also possible that we may be able to add other dancing events as we hear about them in Scotland. The anticipated result is that you would meet dancers from both sides of the Atlantic, and carry home new friendships at the end of the trip. (As well as ideas for your own garden!)

I probably will not offer this trip again for a few years, so I hope that you are able to join us for a great time.

Happy dancing!

BOOKING AND PAYMENT INFORMATION

A non-refundable deposit of \$375 is required to guarantee space. All space is on a first served basis. The final payment of \$1400 is due in the office on **May 31, 1999**. Only checks are accepted for payments.

I try to keep things simple. To book, please contact me at the phone number below. I will then need your deposit and the following information with it:

- Name and postal mailing address
- Telephone numbers: day and evening and best time to reach you
- Email address is very helpful
- Need a room mate or prefer a single?
- Closest airport
- Any health issues that might impact on your participation?
- I like to get a list of dances that you might want to do in the evening (preferably RSCDS dances).

Some of you may remember hearing this dance briefed in class a few weeks ago. This dance has many "figures" I'm sure will be familiar to us all! It is reprinted from the March 1999 issue of the *Tartan Tattler*, the newsletter of the Victoria Branch of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society.

The Marlborough Reel, devised by Drouthie Ruthie.

Tune: "Oh, sorry, Nicholas, I thought you had the music ready!"

- 1 - 4 First couple and second lady dance three hands around with second man running around the outside of circle (clockwise) desperately scrambling for a space.
- 4 - 8 First couple and second man dance back, this time with second lady running around (anti-clockwise).
- 9 - 12 First couple cross over, man giving right hands, lady giving left. Fumble with hands for ½ bar of music. Repeat movement, this time lady gives right, man gives left.
- 13 First couple leap quickly into the place they would have been in had they cast off a place.
- 14-16 First man scowls at second man; first lady kicks second lady.
- 17 Second couple, grudgingly, move up one place.
- 18 - 24 First man sets to partner who stares blankly up the set. Second couple shuffle guiltily (Highland Schottische setting without taking feet off the floor) in case they are supposed to be doing anything. Third couple shrug shoulders. First man catches partner's eye.
- 24 - 28 Reel of four down one side; reel of two down the other.
- 29 Agitated whispering followed by -
- 30 - 32 Reel of three whichever side seems least surprised to see you.
- 33 - 34 First man leads down the middle and back up again to collect partner whom he forgot the first time.
- 35 - 39 First couple lead down taking longer and longer steps and gaining speed all the time.
- 40 First couple remember they should have turned back but now going too fast to stop and hit wall at end of room.
- 41 - 42 First man scrapes splattered partner off wall and both limp back up to top of set.
- 43 On way back discover fourth couple have died of boredom.
- 42 - 44 Meanwhile, second couple move down one place, bump into third couple who are now moving up. Both couples collide with first couple who have now reached top of set.
- 45 - 48 First and second couples form a nasty conglomeration in middle of set (Advanced class might try a Pousette).
- 48½ First man holds third lady's right arm and partner's left arm while partner twists her other arm round her back to attempt to reach second man (Advanced class might try Rights and Lefts). Repeat having passed a couple, but dancing couple stand still and gaze into space for first six bars, top or resting couple leap in above them on bars 1 - 2 then slink back into own set on bars 3 - 4.

[And No, I don't have the Pillings diagrams for The Marlborough Reel. -Ed.]