

## **Directors' Report**

**RSCDS Toronto Association – 2018 Annual General Meeting**

**April 28, 2018**

The following is a compilation of Board's Vice Chair and Directors' annual reports – for 2017-18, the year we have celebrated our 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Please take a moment to read about the many activities and accomplishments of your RSCDS Toronto Association over this past 2017-18 dance season. A shorter version will be presented at the 2018 Annual General Meeting on Saturday, April 28, 2018.

### **Vice Chair (Liz Clunie)**

Arrangements are underway for a re-evaluation of the 2012 Strategic Plan, and the development of a 2018 plan. An application has been submitted to Management Advisory Services for the provision of a facilitator to provide consultation services. If possible, meetings will be held in the summer months.

We continue to maintain contact with the Police Services Board concerning the list of contact people with reference to the Toronto Association Child and Vulnerable Persons Policy.

Thanks to the staff at Broadlands Community Centre, we managed to juggle a very hectic schedule of events to take place at the facility including demo pool practices, special classes, Tartan Ball practices, Dancing Achievement Award preparatory classes and various meetings.

### **Membership & Volunteers (Wayne Fraser, Director)**

Wayne reports that there has been a slight decrease in membership for the 2017-18 year. The number of full members with voting privileges stands at 340 (down from 362). Junior memberships with no voting privileges stands at 14, and Keep-in-Touch associate members at 19, brings the total count to 373. The organization welcomed 34 new members this year and that number is consistent with new members joining in each of the past three years.

The annual retention rate for new members has been about 70 percent since 2013. The continuing and diligent attention of our members to welcoming new dancers at Association events has been a significant factor in that retention. Other factors include the New Member Packets, The New Members' Tea, extra practices for the Tartan Ball and the Social Group teachers' support in promoting RSCDS Toronto events and encouraging new members to attend.

Sixty-five (65) percent of memberships were secured on-line through PayPal this year and there has been an increase in members renewing earlier. Everyone is encouraged to renew membership by the September 30th renewal deadline to be included in the count submitted to the Society Headquarters. This count determines the number of votes the Toronto Association will hold at the Society's AGM. With 340 members, we currently hold 7 votes, 350 being the next threshold.

The Toronto Association continues to benefit from a committed, hard-working body of volunteers who give generously of their skills and time. The Volunteer Appreciation Dance and the Volunteer Awards both endeavour to celebrate that generosity. This year, the Dance was cancelled due to inclement weather and we will endeavour to find a make-up date to enjoy the programme devised by Jane Robinson. The 2018 Volunteer Awards will be presented at this year's AGM to Ken Adamson, Christy and Bill Barber, and Ken MacKinnon for their contributions to their Social Groups and the Association.

## **Directors' Report**

**RSCDS Toronto Association – 2018 Annual General Meeting**

**April 28, 2018**

There has been a very positive response to our Signature Dance, *The Toronto Volunteers*, devised by Deirdre MacCuish Bark. The winning programme of the Dance Devising initiative for our 2019 Volunteer Appreciation Dance has been devised by Theresa Malek, and the winner of this initiative for 2020 is yet to be announced. Notwithstanding our current efforts to celebrate and attract volunteers, it is still important we continue to pinpoint new ways and means to encourage volunteer participation.

Wayne would like to thank the members of his Membership & Volunteers committee that includes Nancy Duffy, Rosalind Gilbert, Susan Heximer, Margaret Rieger and Jane Robinson.

### **Communications (Andrew Henderson, Director)**

Andrew reports that our newsletter, *Set & Link*, was published 10 times this year and emailed to all members, as well as to branches around the world. The editorial group of Donald Holmes (editor), Rob Lockhart, Judy Williams, and Marian White continue to dedicate their time and skill to determining content, soliciting articles from contributors and editing the final copy, resulting in a very informative and interesting newsletter for us all.

Thanks are also extended to Muriel Nicoll, who has looked after mailing the print copies of *Set & Link* and Rob Lockhart, who handles the emailed copies and manages our website ([dancescottish.ca](http://dancescottish.ca)). Teresa Lockhart has also worked on the "Youth Scene" encouraging young dancers to submit articles.

As Communications Director, Andrew works with the *Set & Link* team, relaying major Board decisions and concerns. Examples this year included an outline of the funding possibilities available from the RSCDS Toronto Association and the Emergency Procedures at RSCDS events. Andrew also liaises with Elaine Hoag in Ottawa and Jimmie Hill in Edinburgh, providing articles highlighting Toronto Association activities for the Scottish Country Dancer magazine. The April 2018 edition included two articles regarding our 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations.

Rob Lockhart continues to liaise with Reuben Freemantle who runs the Scottish Country Dance Dictionary website. The majority of Toronto videos get embedded there and continue to be helpful to the world-wide SCD community.

Andrew has provided reports via e-notes to Social Group attendees throughout the year, on major decisions and important issues discussed by the Board after the monthly meetings. In support of further communications, Andrew also organized a Social Group Liaison meeting in October 2017, which was attended by representatives of 12 of our 21 associated Social Groups. Issues discussed included maintaining dance skills in the form of a DAA class, succession planning for teachers and, at this group's suggestion to assist struggling Social Groups, the Board will consider applications for financial support.

### **Program (Louis Racic, Director)**

It has been a successful year for the Toronto Association run programs. Thanks to everyone who has come out to our events this season. It has been another season of great music, dancing, fun and fellowship!

## **Directors' Report**

RSCDS Toronto Association – 2018 Annual General Meeting

April 28, 2018

### ***Monthly Dances***

The TA opened the monthly dance season in October with live music by Don Bartlett and the Scottish Heirs. We had 93 dancers, which was 25 more than the year before. The dance was cut short due to a power outage. Don Bartlett and the Scottish Heirs played for the December Dance, where attendance was 142, about the same as last year. Everyone who came had a great evening of music, dance, hospitality and a special visit from Santa.

Scotch Mist played at the January dance where attendance was 83 dancers 12 less than in 2017. It was a great evening. Scotch Mist played at the March 'beginner' dance, which had 153 dancers attend, about the same number as last year. Thanks to all our members and the 27 beginners who attended the 2018 March dance. It was a wonderful fun filled evening. The April Volunteer Appreciation dance was cancelled due to the ice storm. Thank you for your continued support.

### ***Tartan Ball***

On February 17, 2018, the Association held our 55<sup>th</sup> Tartan Ball at the Fairmont Royal York Hotel. It was a great way to celebrate the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Branch, as well as that of three of our affiliated Social Groups. It was an exciting night with 180 paid attendees and 193 seated for dinner, great food, wine and fabulous music. Our Guest of Honour, Rev Arthur MacRae gave a heartwarming speech.

The dancing was electric thanks to the music of Scotch Mist and the enthusiasm of the dancers. Our attendance was higher than last than last year. No doubt a combination of the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year and the knowledge that this would be the final year the ball would be at the Fairmont Royal York Hotel. It has been an enjoyable stay at the hotel. Next year will be the 56th Tartan Ball. We will continue to make dancing memories. Come join us. The fun is contagious!! Your attendance will help keep this tradition going!

### ***Dancing in the Park***

We had four successful evenings of Dancing in the Park (DITP). The four dances were held on the four Tuesdays in June from 7 p.m. to dusk at Edward's Gardens. The music was provided by Scotch Mist. The weather did not cooperate for all of the four nights. We had a good turn out from both the membership and first-time dancers, which is very encouraging. This is one of our most successful outreach programs.

While the Association uses the proceeds from our 50/50 draws toward this event, your donations are necessary to cover the high costs of DITP. The City of Toronto does not permit us to charge an entry fee for this event. If you enjoy DITP, please come out to dance at Edwards Gardens and donate what you can.

### ***The Toronto Workshop***

The November 2017 workshop was successful with an attendance of 134 dancers at Branksome Hall. Feedback received was very positive. The teachers this year were Jim Stott from Aberdeen, Scotland, Marion Hamilton from Kanata (RSCDS Ottawa) and our own Association teacher, Maureen Richardson. The Gently Used Clothing Sale, held for the 10<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, was again a great success bringing in \$1,400. Live music for all the classes was provided by musicians Laird Brown, Don Wood, Don Bartlett and Fred Moyes.

## **Directors' Report**

**RSCDS Toronto Association – 2018 Annual General Meeting**

**April 28, 2018**

Thank you to all the volunteers who contributed their time and effort to make Toronto Association events happen.

Louis would especially like to thank the Program Conveners – Forbes Duncan, Laurie McConachie, David Drewette and Christy Barber and their committees who organize these events. The Association is very fortunate to have such hard-working teams. Please support them and your organization by dancing, volunteering or attending events as often as you can.

### **Education and Training (Tony Szeto, Director)**

#### ***Association Classes***

In Fall 2017, Levels 1, 2, and 3 were offered at Eastminster, with 15, 33, and 14 attendees respectively. Level 1 was also offered at St Leonard's, with 28 attendees. In Winter 2018, Eastminster offered Levels 1, 2, and 3 again, with enrolments being 18, 21, and 6 so far. Among these attendees, 6 are new to Level 1, and 4 to Level 2. At St Leonard's, Level 1 has an enrolment of 21, of whom 7 are new. Extension Classes will continue for 8 weeks during April and in May at Eastminster. Currently 24 have enrolled. There will be four Tuesdays in June of Dancing in the Park, giving new dancers another social experience. A Level 2 Class was offered in Aurora at Victoria Hall in January 2018. The class was terminated after the first two weeks due to insufficient attendance. An alternative strategy may be needed to stimulate growth in SCD in north GTA.

Above numbers bode well for the ongoing health of Toronto Association insofar as the City of Toronto is concerned. North of the city appears to be a challenge in terms of recruitment and advancement of new blood. Sincere appreciation goes to our new Convenor, Catherine Maclean, for coordinating the classes, and to the many volunteers who helped with the registration and weekly sign-in, as well as joining sets on the dance floor to even out numbers.

#### ***Outreach Ambassador Training***

In March 2018, 10 dancers attended a session where they learned how they could introduce the joy of SCD to folks unfamiliar with the dance form. Maureen Richardson led the workshop to great acclaim. Everyone enjoyed the experience. Participants received helpful material to get them a good start. Some had an opportunity to practice with their classmates as stooges. In their feedback, participants asked for repeats in the near future.

#### ***Dancing Achievement Award Preparation Class***

In April 2018, 26 dancers attended a Dancing Achievement Award Preparation Class (DAA-prep). Participants reviewed steps and formations with a view of improving personal dancing and executed a number of dancers in a way that would prepare them for a DAA exam. A highly positive experience was enjoyed by all. Kudos to Moira Korus and Maureen Richardson for an informative and fun course.

#### ***Youth Events***

A number of Youth Events were held during the season with Moira Korus as Convenor. The Family Ceilidh, held in October was well attended and enjoyed by all. The programme was devised by Gavin Keachie. Maureen Richardson was MC. The Youth Ball is scheduled for Saturday May 5<sup>th</sup>, at Cummer Avenue United Church. The programme has been devised by Teresa Lockhart. Keith Bark will be MC. Looking further down the road, Youth Committee has entered into discussion with the Society to

## **Directors' Report**

RSCDS Toronto Association – 2018 Annual General Meeting

April 28, 2018

explore the possibility of mounting Spring Fling in Canada in 2020, which would draw international participation.

### ***Teachers' Panel***

The Teachers' Panel met twice this year to cover off several responsibilities including selecting a devisor for the 2019/2020 programmes for the Monthly Dances and the Tartan Ball, and Colin Philip for the 2019 Dancing in the Park programme. The Panel also reviewed the 2018/2019 programmes devised by Deirdre MacCuish Bark, and suggested names of teachers for next season's Association Classes, and the 2018 November Workshop.

Tony would like to thank the Teachers' Panel Chair, Teresa Lockhart, for her work on the Panel. Other teachers making up the Panel include May Divers, Deirdre MacCuish-Bark, Paul Maloney, Maureen Richardson, Tony Szeto, and Vicky Zeltins.

### ***Broadlands Sunday Afternoon Dances***

Three Special Classes were held at Broadlands this season so far and were well attended. One more will take place in May 2018. We are grateful for Blair Gerrie, May Divers, Keith Bark, and Deirdre MacCuish Bark for their special themes.

### ***Special Events/ Outreach***

Maureen Richardson and Moira Korus jointly and separately introduced SCD at a number of children classes during school hours in Toronto as well as north of GTA. Toronto schools visited include St. Bonaventure Elementary School and Our lady of Guadalupe. Children ranged from age 4 to 13. We hope that some of our budding Outreach Ambassadors will increase our reach in schools and other organizations such as YMCA/YWCA and community centres in the near future.

Gala Day took place in April and attracted a huge attendance. This event takes place more or less every second year under the auspices of E&T. It is an occasion for Social Groups, Demo Pool, and other groups to show off their talents, and to catch up with old friends and make new ones.

### ***Scholarship***

RSCDS Toronto has established a Scholarship for TA Members who wish to pursue a Teacher Certificate in the 2018-2019 season. A worthy candidate has been selected, whose identity will be revealed at the AGM. The offering of a scholarship may be repeated in future, subject to availability of funds

### ***Teacher Candidate Class***

Toronto Association last held a Teacher Candidate Class in 2012-13. We are pulling out all the stops to mount a course in 2018-19. The class has been advertised in *Set & Link* as well as our website. Potential candidates are urged to consider taking the course. Toronto Association needs new teachers.

### ***Executive Committee***

Tony appreciates the advice and support from Moira Korus, Teresa Lockhart, Catherine MacLean, and Maureen Richardson.

## **Directors' Report**

RSCDS Toronto Association – 2018 Annual General Meeting

April 28, 2018

### **Marketing (Lyn Barsevskis, Director)**

Lyn reports that her committee worked throughout the year developing ideas and initiatives to attract new dancers to Scottish country dancing – continuing to undertake what was successful in the past and taking on some new approaches.

The 2017-2018 Toronto Association's Marketing Committee consisted of two groups of members: the "Marketing Committee Executive" and the "Friends of the Marketing Committee" who are not expected to attend the Marketing Committee meetings (but are always invited!) but have taken on a specific project/ duty and report to the executive group. Lyn is grateful for the many on her Committee that have volunteered their ideas, skills and enthusiasm in promotional activities throughout this year, and she hopes all have been noted with our Volunteer Appreciation initiative.

The Marketing Committee had a hand in promoting Toronto Association events such as Association Classes, Dancing In the Park, Dance Dufferin Grove, Family Ceilidh, Pizza Day and Gala Day. Opportunities to promote Scottish Country Dancing have also been taken at events organized by others including Canada's Culture days in September, Aurora's Multicultural Day, the National Ballet's Sharing Dance Day, Sir John A's Great Canadian Kilt Skate, and Tartan Day, with plans as well to attend the Orillia Scottish Festival in July 2018.

Events have been promoted through the Association's website and *Set & Link* and the distribution of a wallet-size foldout pamphlet outlining the benefits of SCD. Promotion has also been included in Metroland Media publications BLOG TO, SNAPD and NOW, and networking with other organizations such as Saint Andrews Society, Clans and Scottish Societies of Canada (CASSOC), Community Folk Arts Council of Toronto and the City of Toronto website "Festivals and Events" to appear in those organizations' media.

This year, instead of volunteers braving the weather to distribute postcards to promote Association classes, the committee set-up postcard delivery via Canada Post which was very successful. 2,000 postcards were delivered! The committee is also exploring new electronic means of reaching potential dancers through "Facebook" and "Meetup". The later website provides a platform to invite current non-dancers who are exploring the internet for fun activities, to join the us at beginner-friendly Social Groups who have registered their class.

### ***Culture Days***

This year's Culture Days event in Toronto was held in September 2017 at The Church of St Barnabus on the Danforth. Sue Ann Bryce was the Convenor, Keith and Deidre were the teachers, program devisors and provided many of the display boards. Ellen Mole was the Piper. Wayne Fraser coordinated the "Ambassador Gang" of Susan Heximer, Rosalind Gilbert and Wayne. Teresa Lockhart coordinated refreshments and Stella Henderson coordinated the Demo Pool members to help. Rob Lockhart coordinated handouts and the video display. Lyn Barsevskis and Kendra Beliveau were the Meetup Coordinators. It was a very successful day with a lot of "walk-in dancers" and some Culture Day enthusiasts had planned their tour of Culture Day activities to include Scottish Country Dancing on the Danforth! Everyone left with information about adult beginner classes and classes for youth.

## **Directors' Report**

**RSCDS Toronto Association – 2018 Annual General Meeting**

**April 28, 2018**

Maureen Richardson was the Convenor, Teacher, Program Devisor and coordinated refreshments for Richmond Hill's library site's Culture Days. The Greeters and Meetup Coordinators were Andy and Stella Henderson. Alex Seto was the Piper. Stella Henderson coordinated some Demo Pool members to assist Celtic Connections Dancers. Rob Lockhart coordinated handouts. Although the dancers and the piper had fun it was not considered an optimum venue to encourage the general public to participate. A different venue is being considered for September 2018.

### ***Demonstration Pool***

During the dance season from September 2017 to June 2018, the demo pool will have performed 14 paying demos. There were five cancellations due to influenza outbreaks at the venues, but three were able to be rescheduled. There were five non-paying demos: Dancing in the Park 2017, Church of the Ascension Summer Fair, Zoomer Show, Gibson House Tartan Day Celebration and Gala Day. The demo fees received to date in 2018 amount to a total of \$1640.

Lyn would like to thank Convenor Stella Henderson for managing the many bookings, and Moira Korus, for taking the pool through its paces. Moira is "retiring" and Arlene Koteff will be our next Demo Pool Teacher. Thanks too, to all those coordinating the music and programmes for the specific events. As well – a special thanks to all those participating in the pool, sometimes travelling considerable distances to locations out of the city, or travelling considerable distances into the city from locations outside!

The Demonstration Pool has a new Convenor structure that should help share the workload. Thank you to May Webster who will be coordinating the "west" events. The Dress Committee is active again. The Zoomer Show was a new addition in 2017 and was both a good opportunity for outreach and resulted in the Demo Pool gaining some valuable new members. Please consider becoming a member of the Demo Pool as a Dancer, Sewer, Coordinator or Convenor!

---

This concludes the Directors' Report for the 2017/18 Dance Season. Thanks once again to everyone who has convened, taught, devised, sat on committees, lent a hand or simply came out to enjoy Scottish Country Dancing!

See you on the dance floor!

Submitted by:

Nancy White, Secretary, RSCDS Toronto Association

April 2018