

# RSCDS Toronto

[www.dancescottish.ca](http://www.dancescottish.ca)

From the Chair...



Louis Racic

**As the S&L submission deadline approaches**, I am perplexed - What do I write about?

I am tired of writing about COVID. I am unable to write about the recent survey results as they are not yet completed. The survey started the day this submission was due. So that will have to wait.

I can always write about my early halcyon days as a dancer. It is now exactly thirty years since Joanne and I started Scottish country dancing. We had been to Scotland as part of a tour of Great Britain. We became enamoured of all things Scottish. When we learned about SCD classes in Toronto, we jumped at the chance. I had done some folk dancing in my teens so I was keen to try. Joanne was not a dancer and thought she would not be any good at it, but she was game to try. We signed up for branch classes at Hodgson Public School. We had so much fun. Bob Millar was our first teacher. He was a beautiful dancer and told us many stories, including one of dancing for the Queen. He was often irreverent, but we had such a good time laughing. If we were slow off the mark or missed our cue to join in the dance, he would refer to us as "standing there like pork waiting for stuffing". Boy, did we laugh a lot.

This was an entirely new world for us. It was exciting, and we always looked forward to our classes. Once we started going to social groups and monthly dances, the world opened up even wider. At that time there were five balls a year that we would attend. This was so different - none of my non-dancing friends went to a single fancy dress ball a year let alone five. We have had so much fun over the years and have met many people who became our friends. For now, it is the virtual dance floor, but I look forward to the day when we can dance in person once again. Happiness is Scottish country dancing.

...Louis Racic

## what a donkey can teach us about connections

Modestine was a donkey. She was Robert Louis Stevenson's boon companion for his 1878 *Travels with a Donkey in the Cévennes*. You may wonder... what has this to do with Scottish country dance? The connections are many, and varied across time and place.

Modestine's 140th *Âne-iversaire* was in 2018, when celebrations were held along RLS's route — 200 km across the mountainous terrain of southern France. Hikers retraced the route and the local Scottish country dance group (Clan McBedoin ;-)) did demos in towns along the way. The story is beautifully told, and wonderfully illustrated, on Reuben Freemantle's [scottish-country-dancing-dictionary](#). A lady named Erika Ritzau, who lives in the region, devised a 40-bar strathspey, *Modestine's Romp*, which she, members of Clan McBedoin, and visiting dancers from Canada performed at a *fête* in the marketplace of Carpentras, in Provence. Video of the event was posted on YouTube and linked on Reuben's Dance Dictionary website. Suddenly, for reasons best known to YouTube, the video became unavailable. What to do? Reuben got in touch with Erika.

The video was shot on a smartphone, posted to YouTube by Zoe Hawnt and since deleted from her phone, so reposting was not an option. Luckily, Zoe's mother-in-law, SCD teacher, Louise McGillivray, in Edmonton, was given a copy. Louise was one of the visiting dancers, and in the video, dancing with her son (a treasured moment). But Louise had neither video experience nor a YouTube account. Reuben, in England, asked if I could help and put me in touch with Louise and Erika.

Through Google Drive, the video was transferred to me, and I was able to process and repost it to YouTube's satisfaction. Thus was [video of Modestine's Romp](#) restored to the public realm. The dance is interesting, the video is charming, and it has great emotional significance to the dancers involved. Importantly, it embodies joy in community prior to the pandemic, especially since the *fête* in question was Association Day, dedicated to welcoming newcomers to the region.

In September's S&L, Arlene Koteff wrote of connections and links. Here, then, are links between France, England, and Canada; between Toronto and Edmonton; between a giant of Scottish literature and a humble creature still remembered and honoured more than a century later.

SCD teacher, Elizabeth Ghent (who trained in Toronto) commented on YouTube: "A delightful dance tribute to *Travels with A Donkey in the Cévennes*. It took me back to my schooldays when I became a fan of Robert Louis Stevenson and first read this book. I looked it up in *Dance Dictionary* and discovered how popular the RLS trail has become. SCD always full of surprises!"

Elizabeth's comment prompted me to read the book, and I found it fascinating. RLS was competent in French (if not in camping and donkey management), and well versed in the significant history of the region — upon which he makes mordant commentary. The book can be downloaded free from various sources.

Another link: long-time supporters Andy and Susan Lipchak would wish me to mention [The Donkey Sanctuary](#) in Puslinch, near Guelph.

Scottish country dance can take us places we never imagined.... Rob Lockhart



drawing by Bernard Deubelbeiss

# Classes Zooming Back

## TUESDAY EVENINGS:

Erin Mills / Bloorlea ~ From Sept 14 ~ 8 p.m. 60-90 mins  
Keith Bark and Arlene Koteff teach week about.  
All are welcome. Contact: [Keith](#) or [Arlene](#)

Alma Smith's Social Classes ~ From Sept 14 ~ 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.  
Alma teaches social dancing for dancers with some SCD  
experience. Contact [Alma](#)

## WEDNESDAY EVENINGS:

Humbercrest ~ From Sept 15 ~ 8 p.m. ~ 60-90 mins  
Deirdre MacCuish Bark teaches. All are welcome.  
Contact: [Deirdre](#)

Glenview ~ Starts Oct 13 ~ 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.  
Moir Korus teaches social dancing for dancers with some SCD  
experience. Contact [Erica](#)

## THURSDAY EVENINGS:

Alma's Beginner Classes ~ From Sept 16 ~ 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.  
Classes include step practice and teaching of basic figures and  
dances. New dancers welcome. Contact [Alma](#)

Basic Technique ~ Starts Oct (date TBA) 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.  
Keith Bark teaches basic technique for Levels 1 and 2.  
Contact: [Keith](#)

## FRIDAY MORNINGS:

Alma's Beginner Classes ~ From Sept 17 ~ 10-11 a.m.  
This is a repeat of Alma's Thursday evening classes.  
New dancers are welcome. Contact [Alma](#)

## FRIDAY EVENINGS:

Woodglenn ~ From Sept 17 ~ 8 p.m. ~ 60-90 mins  
Deirdre MacCuish Bark teaches.  
All are welcome. Contact: [Deirdre](#)

## SATURDAY AFTERNOONS:

Alma's Scottish Step Classes ~ From Sept 18 ~ 2 - 3 p.m.  
Full dances will be taught over a number of weeks. Classes  
include teaching of traditional Highland Steps, in the Ladies  
Step Dance style. All are welcome. Contact: [Alma](#)

## SATURDAY MORNINGS:

Rosedale Children's Class ~ Start date TBA  
Contact: [Moir Korus](#)

# Dancing in Person

## MONDAY EVENINGS:

Scarborough ~ From Sept 27 ~ 7:30 - 9:30 p.m.  
Westview Presbyterian Church, 233 Westview Blvd, East York  
Teacher Nigel Keenan, and a quorum of eager Scarborough  
dancers, have decided to resume dancing in person.  
Contact: [email Nigel](#) or call 416.762-3060

### Note this vital information:

- ◆ Proof of full vaccination against COVID-19 is required.
- ◆ Mask or shield required while dancing.
- ◆ All other protocols and practices are detailed in an extensive .pdf document, with an introduction in authentic Nigellian prose. Download: [Scarborough-SCD-protocols.pdf](#)

## Important information regarding the Society's AGM in Perth

The RSCDS is holding its 92nd [Annual General Meeting in Perth](#) on Saturday, November 6. This year, delegates and observers are attending in person (subject to Scottish Government restrictions), and *there will be no Zoom link* allowing members to spectate. However, they plan to record the meeting and upload it to [rscds.org](#) for viewing following the event.

One of the motions our delegates (members of the TA Board) will vote on is the proposal to increase the basic full annual Membership Subscription from £18 to £25 per annum from July 1st, 2022. Other membership subscriptions, including Toronto Association subscription fees, will be "based pro-rata on this amount".

Sadly, the pandemic has resulted in the cancellation of many events that normally contribute to RSCDS finances. A significant deficit remains. There is more detail on the Society website.

Also see the Toronto Association Membership Director's comments in "Response to a Reluctant Renewer" on page 4.

## Tutor Shadows...

When Teacher Candidate classes are able to resume, the candidates will soon recognize two new tutor shadows: David Booz and Alma Smith.

## Teachers' Pet Dances: David Booz



David Booz

It is so hard to pick my favourite five — such a small number of dances, and my 'short list' is quite long. However, here are a few highlights:

[Roaring Jelly](#) (J8x32, HUGH FOSS, *GLENDARROCH*) is a bit different but not difficult, with a great set of music from the Bobby Frew Four\*. This dance is "all right".

[Argyll Strathspey](#) (S8x32, ROY GOLDRING, *BOOK 35*) is a flirty strathspey that finishes with the challenge of the dreaded Tournée! We danced this in Younger Hall when I was at St Andrews years ago and it was wonderful to see the whole hall half-turn and twirl.

[A Bottle of the Best](#) (J8x32, KERITH GLENNIE, *DOOKIE BOOKIE*) tells the story of making a bottle of sparkling wine, which always entertains the dancers. A great dance for a combined class with everyone dancing (and laughing) together.

[Spirit of the Dance](#) (S8x32, IRENE PATERSON, *TAC 50TH*) starts with the lovely Tourbillon and flows beautifully. It was devised by my friend Irene in memory of the lost, lamented, Bob Blackie. This is another dance with a lovely set of tunes.

[Blooms of Bon Accord](#) (R4x32, JOHN DREWRY, *DEESIDE 2*) is, in my opinion, the best dance in the repertoire. I danced this many times with the Finlay Scottish Dancers and loved every minute. The symmetry is magic, and since you stay with your partner you can support a less confident dancer. When I am dancing to the great recording from Don Bartlett\*\*, you cannot wipe the silly grin off my face.

\* Bobby Frew Four with Ian Powrie, in *The Edinburgh Castle Reel* CD

\*\* Don Bartlett & The Scotians, in *Triumph and Play Favourites* CD

## From the Toronto Star... (circa 1980s)

**Country traditions:** Teams of dancers performing at the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society's gala on Saturday will rekindle memories of younger days back in Scotland. Shown going through their paces are the Georgina Finlay Scottish Country Dancers.

From the left in the front row are Catherine Seagrave, Kellie Macgregor, Isobel Fraser, and Margaret-Ann Phillips.

Back row left to right: Blair Gerrie, Doug Phillips, Andrew Collins, and David Booz.



## Teachers' Pet Dances: Alma Smith

My favourite dances are often dances to my favourite music. There are, of course, many to choose from, but these come to mind.

[Ian Powrie's Farewell to Auchterarder](#), (J128, SQUARE SET, BILL HAMILTON, *30 POPULAR DANCES, VOL 2*)

Once learned, never forgotten, and I hereby apologize to all my past partners for this dance who had to listen to me humming along to the music during the promenade figure. I have happy memories of doing this dance in demonstrations when I danced in Georgina Finlay's group many years ago.

[Fisherman's Reel](#) (R5x32, 5C SQ SET, SUE PETYT, *DUNBLANE HOLIDAY*)

I love the music from the Highlander Music CD, Volume 6, and I just cannot stand still while that music is playing.

When going to teach a class, I always take the music for Fisherman's Reel, just in case the numbers are such that a five-couple dance would work best (and I generally hope that I am needed to dance too).

[Seann Triubhas Willichan](#) (S8x32, THOMAS WILSON, *BOOK 27*)

I love pastoral style music for strathspeys and Bobby Brown's music for this dance from the *Celtic Fire in the Music* CD is wonderful. The dance is simple enough for everyone, including beginners, to relax and enjoy the music.

[The Reel of the 51st Division](#) (R8x32, JIMMY ATKINSON & PETER OLIVER, *BOOK 13*) Not just a great dance, with great music, but a great history to the dance. What more could you want!

[The Wingrove Strathspey](#) (S4x32, PETER AVERY, *THE GEORDIE DIAMOND*)

The dance was written to mark the 21st anniversary of the Wingrove Scottish Country Dancers, in Newcastle upon Tyne. It represents the warm welcome new dancers receive when joining the group, as a new couple is brought in after every eight bars of the dance. I like to think it works for all dance groups, where newcomers are warmly welcomed.

Peter also wrote [The Music Will Tell You](#), in Book 41, and *John Cass*, in Book 49. [John Cass](#) is another fabulous five-couple dance.



Alma Smith



# It's time to... **re-MEMBER** ... Membership status begins Oct 1st



Membership maintains our vibrant community of Scottish country dancers, especially under current circumstances. The Society is doing great things to keep dancers educated, trained, and connected worldwide. The Toronto Association Board is monitoring developments and preparing for the 2021/22 season when we go

back to dancing. Fun, fitness, and friendship will once again prevail — and won't we be HAPPY to embrace new dance opportunities with music and friends.

**Membership Period: October 1 — September 30**

**Membership Categories:** (other options on Membership Forms)

- Single Adult: \$68
- Joint Membership: \$126
- Young Adult (18-34 yrs): \$43
- Under 18 yrs: \$0
- Life Members: \$0
- Keep-in-Touch (Set&Link by email): \$25

**Payment options** — We have three easy ways to RENEW your membership and/or to join us in this worldwide community. We recommend fast and easy Interac e-Transfer. It's convenient, and it avoids transaction fees.

## 1. **Interac e-Transfer**

Easy, if you do online banking. Transactions are usually free, and it avoids a 3% fee for TA. Sign in to your on-line bank account and, if you are a new user, register for Interac e-Transfer. Add RSCDSTA@gmail.com as a recipient, and complete the payment.

## 2. **PayPal** (PayPal also accepts VISA and MasterCard)

There is a 3% transaction fee to RSCDS Toronto.

## 3. **Membership-form-paper.pdf**

Download, save, print, complete (with pen; *NOT* on screen), and post with your cheque to:

Membership Director, 12 Markwood Cres, Toronto M9C 1L2

**NEW MEMBERS:** Use any of the 3 payment options. You will be warmly welcomed.

**Privacy Policy:** Your personal data will only be used for RSCDS Toronto Association and RSCDS (the Society) purposes and will not be shared with other organizations.

**Images:** Notice will be posted at events where photos and/or video may be taken. Please inform the event convenor if you do not wish your image to be used.

...Carol Ann Boothby

## Response to a Reluctant Renewer



Membership fees are due, and I wondered why we are being asked to pay membership fees when we aren't even sure we will be dancing. I sent my enquiry to Carol Ann Boothby, our new Membership Director. Here is her succinct reply.

Understanding what the Branch membership fees cover, for example, the various organizational and administrative activities that make our dancing possible, made opening my very tight wallet a little easier. Her response leaves me with an impression that Membership is being well managed and open to communication with its members. Wow!

...Teresa Lockhart

Hi Teresa,

Thank you for your email. Your questions are valid, and I appreciate the opportunity to research and prepare a response. In order for the Toronto Branch to change membership fees, it must be voted on by the membership at the Annual General Meeting in April. The Financial committee meets the previous fall to determine membership fees. Their recommendations are then brought to the Board for discussion. There were no changes proposed for the membership fees last year. Both in the fall of 2020 and at the time of the 2021 AGM, the expectation was that dancing would resume in the 2021-2022 season. That is still the expectation.

We are planning events for this season, including both dances and dance classes. We will hold them when it is safe to do so. If possible, they will start later this fall. The events will differ from the ones we ran

pre-pandemic as we will need to follow the safety protocols and venue restrictions that are required. We certainly expect to be running in-person events in the new year and certainly before the membership year end on September 31, 2022. A 'Welcome Back' dance will be free for all members.

Some of the expenses our membership fees cover:

- Headquarters Fees (Single £18/\$32, Joint £29/\$51). These fees are expected to go up next year.
- Administration
- Annual General Meeting
- Communications and Publicity
- Core Activities
- Demonstration Team
- Insurance
- Life Memberships
- Professional Fees

The paragraph below is from our treasurer's report at the AGM, April 2021. It shows the financial committees' commitment to transparency and a clearly stated goal.

*"The Board's goal for many years has been that program and education events be financially self-sustaining, while funding communication, outreach, governance and administrative matters through annual membership fees. This somewhat elusive ideal allowed us to make rapid changes in compliance with COVID restrictions in March 2020 and allows for our ongoing budget planning for the day when we can get back dancing with little disruption to the health of Toronto Association."*

... Carol Ann Boothby

# The Birth of a Dancer



Tristan now

The article by Andrew Collins about the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the 512some\* brought back many memories. August 17, 1991, was also the day that our son, Tristan, was born. Just to further complicate an already busy day, he decided to make his appearance four weeks early to help celebrate this momentous event in the history of the Toronto Branch.

Proceedings happened very quickly and unexpectedly the evening of the 16<sup>th</sup>, and we hurried to our local hospital, luckily only a few blocks away. After practically no labour, a 4 ½ lb. Tristan "slip stepped" out at about 7 a.m. on the 17<sup>th</sup> at Northwestern General Hospital in Toronto (recently torn down to build more condos). After the usual post-partum procedures and visiting, Blair returned home to notify family and get ready for the 512some. He then rushed down to the CNE with Tristan's older sisters. Our class (York SCD), and dancing friends at the CNE were thrilled to hear about the birth, especially Esther Goodfellow, who shortly afterward presented us with a tiny T-shirt for Tristan with 512some on the front.

As the drama and excitement of so many dancing together at the CNE unfolded, another drama was evolving at Northwestern. After Blair left, and as the nurses continued to do their checks, they determined that Tristan couldn't breathe properly. They did a quick X-ray and found that his lungs were crushed by his intestines, and he was rushed by ambulance to the Hospital for Sick Children where he underwent surgery to correct a diaphragmatic hernia. They pushed his intestines back down into his abdominal cavity, but left it to nature to sort out the jumble of other organs which had been displaced. He was in ICU for about a week and came home after about four weeks. It took a couple of years for his lungs to expand to 'normal' capacity.



Tristan: piper, 2005 Youth Ball

We started him learning the chanter/bagpipes at a young age to help strengthen his lungs. He had follow-up visits at the Hospital for Sick Children until he turned 18. Over the years they did various tests to see if he had any residual effects from the lack of oxygen to his brain. We think he turned out just fine...and so did the 512some!

...Blair & Patricia Gerrie



Tristan then

1603113 ICU Aug 18/91  
GERRIE BABY BOY  
17 OR 91



Dear Editor...

RE: Branch exchange copies of Set & Link —

Thank you for the issues of Set&Link. The Canadian dancing life appears very lively even though there is no dancing.

... Prab Gondhalekar, Isle of Wight SCD

RE: Remembering the 512some — A sincere note of thanks for including the articles regarding the 512some. It's hard to believe that 30 years have gone by.

I can't remember ever reading Esther's report, a most interesting read — and to think that all was accomplished without the aid of a computer.

Her forté of course was public relations and fund raising. She certainly made use of all the contacts she had access to.

Again, many thanks,

...Bill Goodfellow

RE: Remembering Jean Hamilton —

So very sorry to hear! Such great memories of her and Gordon and all they did for SCD!

...Kathy Fraser-Collins & Fred

Jean was a kind and gracious lady. I will miss her.

...Don Bartlett

I am truly sad about Jean's passing. Jean and Gordon were good friends of Mom and Dad, and I remember them visiting the cottage with their westie(s). Jean was generous in hosting significant birthday dance programs for Betty and David, and she welcomed dancers to her home for "pubs". I found a dance that Jean devised for Dad when he was an Olympic torchbearer. [shown below]

Jean was so enthusiastic about dancing, and the community of connection that was possible. Let's hope there will be a memorial where her "community" can celebrate her.

...Christy Barber

## DAVID FROM THE DANCING

### a.k.a. THE TORCH-BEARER

32 bar jig for 3 couples in a 4 cpl set

Devised by Jean Hamilton, 2009 for David Grant, an Olympic Torch Bearer

- 1-8 1s+2s+3s circle 6H round & back
- 9-16 1s+2s+3s dance a progressive Grand Chain, 1s end in 3rd place facing out
- 9-10 1s cross RH
- 11-12 1s change places LH on side with 2s
- 13-14 1s+3s change places RH while 2s cross RH
- 15-16 1s cross LH while 2s & 3s change places LH. 3 (2) 1
- 17-24 1s cast up behind own lines to top x4, then joining nearer hands, dance dn middle to 3rd pl.  
On #23-24, 3s Cross RH to opposite sides.
- 25-28 3s+2s dance RH across ½ way, all SET;
- 29-32 All Turn RH once round

### Legend:

- #1-8 One of the Olympic rings
- #9-16 The handing of the torch from sea to shining sea
- #17-24 Bearing the Olympic Torch on your designated route
- #25-26 A wee glimpse of Scotland in the St. Andrew's Flag
- #27-32 A Celebration and Coming Together with family and friends!







# The Marlborough Reel

Devised by ... Routhie\*

This dance is from an early edition of *The Reel*.  
Marlborough School was the location of  
RSCDS London Branch classes.

- 1-4 1st couple and 2nd lady dance three hands round with 2nd man running around the outside of the circle (clockwise) desperately scrambling for a space.
- 5-8 1st couple and 2nd man dance back, this time with 2nd lady running around (anti-clockwise).
- 9-12 1st couple cross over, 1st man giving right hand, 1st lady giving left. Fumble with hands for half-bar of music. Repeat movement, this time 1st lady gives right hand, 1st man gives left.
- 13 1st couple leap quickly into the place where they would have been had they cast off a place.
- 14-16 1st man scowls at 2nd man; 1st lady kicks 2nd lady.
- 17 2nd couple, grudgingly, move up one place.
- 18-24 1st man sets to partner who stares blankly up the set. 2nd couple shuffle guiltily (Highland Schottische setting without taking feet off the floor) in case they are supposed to be doing something. 3rd couple shrug their shoulders. 1st man catches his 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 on whichever side seems least surprised to see you.
- 33-34 1st man leads down the middle and up again to collect partner whom he forgot the first time.
- 35-39 1st couple lead down taking longer and longer steps and gaining speed all the time.
- 40 1st couple remember they should have turned back but are now going too fast to stop and hit the wall at the end of the room.
- 41-42 1st man scrapes splattered partner off the wall and both limp back up to the top of the set.
- 43 On the way back they discover 4th couple have died of boredom.
- 43-44 Meanwhile, 2nd couple move down one place, bump into 3rd couple who are now moving up. Both couples collide with 1st couple who have now reached the top of the set.
- 45-48 1st and 2nd couples form a nasty conglomeration in the middle of the set. (Advanced class might try a poussette).
- 48½ 1st man holds 3rd lady's right arm round her back to attempt to reach 2nd man. (Advanced class might try Rights and Lefts).

Repeat having passed at least one of the couples.

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



# Why Would CTI be for Me?

CORE TRAINING FOR INSTRUCTORS (CTI) is a new way to expand your Scottish country dance horizons by applying what you have learned to teach and encourage others and to spread the joy of Scottish country dance.

Over the last few years, the Education & Training Committee of the RSCDS (I serve on the committee), has been busy developing a CTI curriculum as an alternative to the more rigorous Unit (full Certificate) system. CTI is geared to those who aim to teach social or general classes. You learn on the job as an apprentice to a qualified CTI Trainer. This is less time-consuming, less expensive, does not assess personal footwork, and has no exam stress because there is no actual exam for Trainee Instructor. All you need is a class of willing dancers, an existing leaderless class, or a shared class. The class, the trainee, and the CTI Trainer all work together.

Your Trainer is an experienced, fully-qualified teacher who has completed the RSCDS CTI Trainer Course and who will help you develop a list of core skills and goals over a period of up to two years. The Society website has a wealth of information.

[www.rscds.org/learn/teacher-training/core-training-instructors-cti](http://www.rscds.org/learn/teacher-training/core-training-instructors-cti)

Have a glance at the [Trainee Syllabus](#). When you apply to the RSCDS, you are sent a list of qualified CTI Trainers from which you may choose.

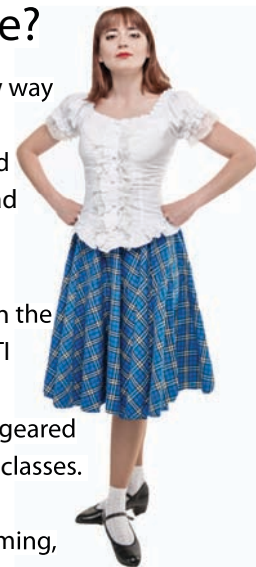
Videos are used as a teaching tool to record classes, which is especially useful if the Trainer is absent or lives at a distance. In fact, video is part of the final submission, along with your lesson plan and the Trainer's feedback form. Once your Trainer has agreed that you have achieved your goals, you are awarded the status of Instructor of Scottish Country Dancing.

CTI does not replace the full certificate Unit system, but it is a less demanding alternative. At a later date, when time and circumstances permit, an Instructor may choose to pursue the Unit system.

Come join us!

...Deirdre MacCuish Bark

[Deirdre is one of four  
qualified CTI Trainers  
in North America]



a new way of training teachers  
for social and general classes

Deb Lees' video introduction to  
CTI... Core Training for Instruction:  
<https://youtu.be/coOAqbqSY-k>

# Dance: The Great Superpower

Dancing bolsters physical and mental health by helping to prevent falls, improve posture and flexibility, lift mood, and ease anxiety. It sharpens the mind, increases aerobic power and strength, builds social bonds, and can reduce pain and stiffness. It improves brain function and enhances spatial memory.

Muscles in our legs and glutes benefit directly from dance as do our hips, lower back, and abdomen. Some dance forms also work the arms and upper body, e.g., Highland dance, Break dance, ballet, and many folk dances.

Dance can express culture. It's a way that other people can have respect for, knowledge of, and give importance to traditions and norms. Dance reflects the society in which it exists and provides a form of social affirmation and a means of expressing national or tribal loyalty and power.



For a Willowdale Group of Artists event, I was coaxed into wearing this fustanella\*, and to dance to the music of *Zorba the Greek*.

Albanians and Greeks wear Fustanellas (pleated white skirts loosely resembling kilts), while performing the popular Syrtaki dance to the music of *Zorba the Greek*. Persians, and later, Scots and Irish adopted distinctive clan kilts — of which we are proud.

Dances from anywhere in the world demonstrate the power of the culture and history replete with music, costume, movement, and pride. If dance accomplishes this much, could dancing be the greatest superpower of all? I long to return to the dance floor. Even this table seems ready to take a step or two.

...Donald E Holmes

Island Preserve Company, New Glasgow, PEI →

Any activity that forces us to do several things at once is complex. Walking is good for us, but then walk a little faster and start counting backward from one hundred. That's pushing your brain. Instead of merely walking, imagine doing choreographed steps and complicating the patterns by stepping in time with others, all the while listening to music and the instructor telling you which way to move. This is your brain on dance. These things simultaneously push the brain in different ways and force our grey matter to develop new neuropathways. Combined with costume and music, dance tells stories and creates social bonds. The Powwow, Corroboree, Grass Dance, and the once popular Sun Dance told Indigenous people's stories. The more recently created Jingle Dance, together with its distinctive accompanying dress for Indigenous women, adds to their changing and emerging history.



# Holy Haggis, Batman!



In the *Detective Comics* of August, 1953, the Lord of Batmanor castle in Scotland dies, but right before his demise, he writes his last will and testament, in which he cedes his castle to Batman in the hope the great detective could solve the mystery of gold that went missing four centuries prior.

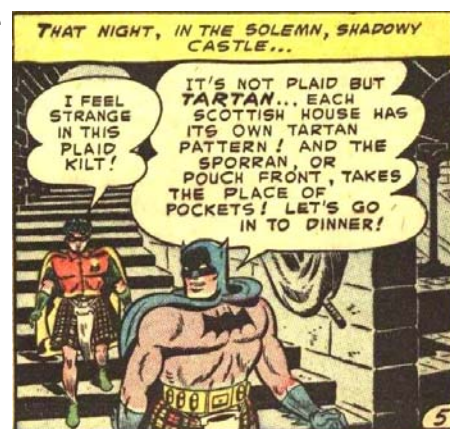
Batman and Robin travel to Scotland and start looking for the lost treasure. Meanwhile, an American criminal who

knows the location of the gold places all sorts of traps for the Dynamic Duo. In the end, his plan to snaffle the gold for himself fails, and he is captured by Batman and Robin. They turn over the castle and the treasure to the Scottish government and then they return to Gotham City.

...from Facebook, [Curious and Unusual Tartans](#) or visit [their website](#)

P.S. The Batman Facebook posting prompted this comment from Cheryl Gowing, of the Scottish American Society of South Florida:

"Did you know Bruce Wayne is named after Scottish hero Robert the Bruce, who, according to the comics, turns out to be Batman's ancestor."



# Scottish Spaceport about to launch



The first spaceport in Britain will be in the north of Scotland, on the A' Mhòine peninsula northwest of Tongue village, in Sutherland. Construction is set to begin in late 2021, with a first launch as early as 2022. The spaceport will be owned by Highlands & Islands Enterprise and will employ about 40 people directly and 400 indirectly. The remote location is ideal for placing small satellites into Sun-synchronous and polar orbit. The spaceport will host the Orbex Prime rocket launch vehicle. [more info](#)



# Events & Aspirations

## Oct 9-10, 2021: ~ October Weekend Workshop

After a 18-month COVID-19 hiatus, we are delighted to be hosting a workshop and social dancing weekend. The weekend is open to intermediate and advanced dancers for a smooth return to dancing. Teacher: Corrine Hillpert. All dancers require a *Pass Sanitaire*. Info: [rscdshawaii.org/october-advanced-week-end-2021/](https://rscdshawaii.org/october-advanced-week-end-2021/)

## Nov 27, 2021: ~ Shiftin' Bobbins' St. Andrew's Celebration

**EVENT NOW WAIT-LISTED** ~ We hope to dance to live music, subject to prevailing regulations. A "nice 'n easy" programme of well-known dances, walked through, will ease us back to dancing. To place your name on the standby list, email: [shiftinbobbins@gmail.com](mailto:shiftinbobbins@gmail.com)

## 2022: Feb. 18-20 ~ Aloha Winter Weekend, Honolulu

*Aloha nui loa* from RSCDS Hawaii. Join us for an event-filled weekend of dance lessons, social dances, and a ceilidh, with live music by The Humuhumunukunua'ia and Strathspey Society Band. Teacher: Jeanne Moody, San Diego. Info/registration at: <https://rscdshawaii.org/workshop/>

## 2022: Nov. 5 ~ 100 years of Dancing in Waterloo Region

Kitchener-Waterloo Branch was established in 1960; Blair Scottish Country Dancers group was established in 1980. Add those legacies together and we can celebrate 100 years of dancing in Waterloo Region. We hope this event will be real, not virtual. Info: <https://www.rscds.kitchener.on.ca/>

## Grace Notes



### Gerry Gray

12 January 1951 ~ 16 September 2021

Gerry danced with the Eglinton Assembly in Toronto. He arrived from Scotland as an infant and took his first dance lesson at age 4, and he did all forms of dance. He left school at age 16 to join the legendary Montréal folklore troupe Feux-Follets. With them, he appeared on the

*Ed Sullivan Show*. He also toured for a year with Les Grand Ballets Canadiens' rock opera *Tommy*. Gerry later moved to P.E.I. where he established a dance group that continues to this day.

## Errata... RE: A Bouquet For May (in Sept 2021 S&L)

Recommended music for the dance should be: *My Love is Like a Red, Red Rose* by Marian Anderson on her *Robert Burns Dances* album.

## RSCDS Toronto Association Board of Directors

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## Royal Scottish Country Dance Society

### Autumn Gathering + AGM 2021

November 5, 6, 7

The next Autumn Gathering event in Perth will go ahead, subject to Scottish Government restrictions.

<https://www.rscds.org/events/autumn-gathering-2021>

### Planning for Resumption

Soon, we hope...

Considerations for resumption of in-person dancing are ongoing. To read current advice, please visit:

<https://www.rscds.org/blog/return-dancing-scotland>

### 100th Anniversary of RSCDS

November 26, 2023

Big plans are afoot to celebrate this historic milestone. Branches are encouraged to develop their own projects.

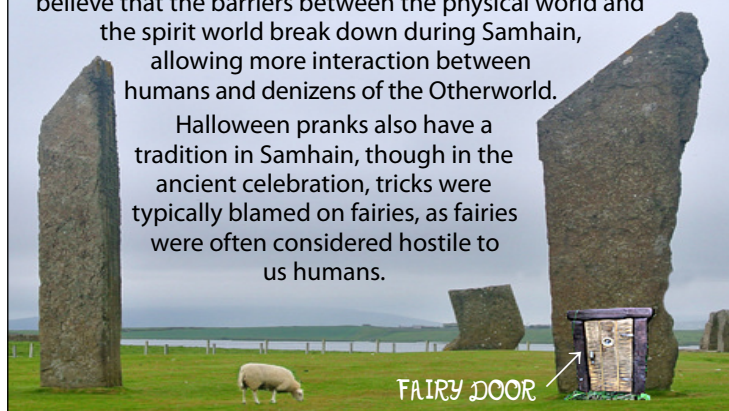
[www.rscds.org](http://www.rscds.org)

## WISHING YOU A HAPPY SAMHAIN!

Samhain (a Gaelic word pronounced "SAH-win") is a pagan religious festival originating from an ancient Celtic spiritual tradition. Samhain marks the beginning of the Celtic year.

In modern times, Samhain is celebrated from October 31 to November 1 to welcome in the harvest and to usher in "the dark half of the year", ie the beginning of the winter season. Such transitions are potent times: Celebrants believe that the barriers between the physical world and the spirit world break down during Samhain, allowing more interaction between humans and denizens of the Otherworld.

Halloween pranks also have a tradition in Samhain, though in the ancient celebration, tricks were typically blamed on fairies, as fairies were often considered hostile to us humans.



### Scheduled Dates of Board Meetings, 2021-2022 season

Oct 4	Nov 8	Dec 9	Jan 5	Feb 7
Mar 10	Apr 6	May 9	Jun 9	