



**The Royal  
Scottish Country Dance  
Society**

**Toronto Branch  
Silver Jubilee  
1957 - 1982**

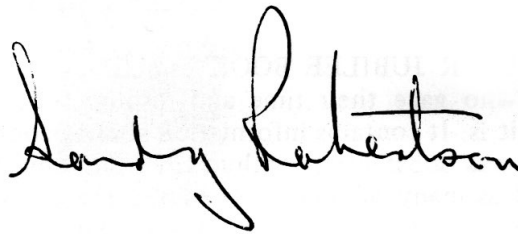
## PREFACE

During the past 25 years, Scottish Country Dancing has given hours of pleasure and fellowship to the members, and has provided evidence to the Toronto community of its Scottish Canadian heritage.

As part of our Jubilee activities we felt that before memories of all these years were lost, we should record them in a permanent form. The Executive Committee authorized the publication of a history of the Toronto Branch as a commemorative book recording activities during the past quarter century.

The text of the SILVER JUBILEE BOOK has been compiled from Executive Committee minutes, Branch reports and other material gathered in response to an appeal to members for memories of their Groups.

Our tradition of Scottish Country Dancing is flourishing, and it is our hope that this History will be of interest to dancers, who will maintain the tradition in the future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "A.A. Robertson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "A" and a long, sweeping underline.

A.A. Robertson, Chairman,  
The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society  
Toronto Branch

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Committee for this History included Frances Gray, Chairman, Ronald Smith, Gil Rich, Bill Stoddart and Nel Martyn. Ex Officio members were Sandy Robertson and George Conolly. Co-opted members were Donald Holmes, Marian Holmes, and Dick Simon.

Inevitably, the workload was carried by a few committee members without whose drive and dedication, the job would not have been completed with such facility.

Frances Gray for co-ordination and research,  
Donald Holmes for writing and editing,  
Marian Holmes for proofreading and typing,  
Dick Simon for graphics and layout.

Our thanks and appreciation to them for bringing this Jubilee project to such a successful conclusion.

A.A.R. 1982.



## EDITOR'S NOTE

This SILVER JUBILEE BOOK establishes the endeavours of multifarious people who gave their time and resourcefulness to make this Branch the success it is. It contains information about people whose contribution to the Branch was substantial, enthusiastic, and sincere. The writers and editors credited as many of them as possible, and any omissions are unintentional.

A writer of history must deal with a great many matters of which he has little or limited first-hand knowledge. That he has been guilty of some errors and omissions will become apparent after publication. If the readership is discerning, the writer will note them with gratitude. Furthermore, the writers and editors worked within the limitations imposed by the availability of information, space, and ultimately publication time.

A living tradition, like a living language, does not remain unchanged through twenty-five years; and our tradition, the Scottish Country Dance tradition, needed and received a great deal of retouching from the memories of the people who perpetuated it to make it available in this Silver Jubilee souvenir.

**PATRON OF THE SOCIETY  
HER MAJESTY, QUEEN ELIZABETH II**



*(Photograph kindly loaned by the Society)*

*Miss Jean C. Milligan, Co-founder of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society, voted Scotswoman of the Year for 1973. (Photograph kindly loaned by the Society)*



*The Co-founders Miss Jean C. Milligan, and Mrs. Stewart of Fasnacloch, 1927 (Photograph kindly loaned by the Society)*

In 1923 two ladies sat in an office in Glasgow wondering if anyone would be interested in their plan to revive the traditional dances of Scotland and make Scotland a dancing nation once more. Little did they dream that after fifty years the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society would be known and loved all over the world. It seems to those who shared the first anxious, yet thrilling, days an almost unbelievable miracle.

## THE FORMATION OF THE SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE SOCIETY

Mrs. Stewart had danced Scottish dances all her life and was sad to see that in 1923 they were almost forgotten or, when danced, were danced roughly and incorrectly. Taking with her a collection of dances, she interviewed Mr. Black of Paterson's Publications, hoping to get some of her dances published and seeking advice about how to form a Society.

Mr. Diack told her of an earlier effort to popularize Scottish Dancing — The Beltane Society — formed in 1913 in Glasgow but killed by the outbreak of war. There was, he said, a Miss Milligan who had been a founding member and a collector of dances and music for that Society, and if Mrs. Stewart wished he would contact her. Mrs. Stewart was happy to meet Miss Milligan. Since they were both eager to perpetuate Scottish Dances, they combined their knowledge and met to discuss the formation of a society. Mr. Diack promised if they were successful Paterson's Publications would back them financially and publish a book of 12 dances and music. A meeting was held in November, 1923, in the Athenaeum, Glasgow, attended by a number of well-known people and societies who had been specially notified and a large number of interested people from Glasgow and District. It was unanimously decided to form a Society, to print a book, and to hold a class as soon as possible. Thus the Scottish Country Dance Society was formed, and in 1951 His Majesty King George VI gave permission for the Society to become known as the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society.

Excerpted and paraphrased from the **Royal Scottish Country Dance Society Golden Jubilee 1923-73** Brochure published 1973.

### TORONTO BEGINNINGS

Scottish Country Dancing in any organized form was unknown in Toronto before the Second World War, until Matthew Sutherland, an experienced Scottish Country dancer, came to Toronto in the late 1940's. He was one of a group of four Edinburgh dancers chosen to go to the Palace of Holyrood House when Miss Allie Anderson was asked to teach Scottish Dances to The Queen, who was then Princess Elizabeth. Prince Philip, Princess Margaret, and their friends were also in attendance.

In Toronto, Mr. Sutherland found some dances— Petronella, Waltz Country Dance, Strip the Willow, and Eightsome Reel — were performed at the Cairngorm Club, the Gaelic Society, and other Scottish Clubs, but none was danced in the traditional manner stipulated by the Scottish Country Dance Society.

Mr. Sutherland, with his wife Annie, formed a group in Earls Court Hall on Lansdowne Avenue in the fall of 1950. Among its early members were Lillie Stephenson, Essie Stoddart, Isa Wright (Wilson), Margaret Rogerson and Isa Stirling. This group soon began to demonstrate at Scottish Clubs. While at Woodbridge, the group met Bill Watson, a good pianist who later formed a band with Ed Brydie.

*Matthew Sutherland  
Toronto's First Scottish Country Dance Teacher  
Picture taken at the Granite Club*



In 1951, Donald Fraser started the Falconer Hall Group. This group later ended with President Bissell's retirement in June, 1971.

**The Gay Gordons Scottish Society** is directly descended from the Clan Gordon, an affiliate of The Order of Scottish Clans. The Clan Gordon #330 was founded at Woodbridge on October 4, 1951, and encouraged the development of Scottish dancing and other cultural activities from that date. The first social function sponsored by the Clan featured a demonstration of country dancing directed by M. Sutherland on February 21, 1952

On a motion by Bill Murray, Clan Gordon #330 was dissolved in April, 1958, and the name of the social group which evolved from the Clan's activities was changed to "The Gay Gordons". The aim of the Club was "... to develop and foster Scottish dancing and traditions". At monthly dances and annual balls, sponsored by the club for many years, emphasis was placed on teaching and encouraging Scottish dancing of all types. Other activities sponsored by the Club included the provision of bagpipes, drums, kilts and instructors for the formation of a pipe band from members of the Wood-bridge Boy Scout troop.

In November, 1961, again on a motion by Bill Murray, the name of the organization was changed to "The Gay Gordons Scottish Society" and in December of that year, he was appointed to teach Scottish Country Dancing to the members.

While the Society continued to organize annual ceilidhs, Burns Suppers and twice-monthly dances, the dance programmes from that time were composed of Scottish Country Dances approved by the R.S.C.D.S.

In 1966, the Gay Gordons moved from Woodbridge to Willowdale, and since then Doris Hofmann has been the teacher. Doris organized a team which danced in two Canadian National Exhibition Scottish World Festivals and at senior citizens' homes and hospitals in the Metro Toronto area.

**In 1954**, Isa Wright (Wilson) went to the Boston Branch Weekend at Pinewoods where she met Ena Culm (Smith) and Bob Smith (from Hamilton). During that Fall, the Hamilton Group of Scottish Country Dancers was invited to a party in Toronto. That successful party marked the beginning of endless visits between these two groups.

In the Fall of 1954, Alex Hay, an excellent teacher, arrived from Scotland with four experienced dancers – Jack Geddes, Eddie MacDonald, Alex MacGregor and Charlie McIntyre – and founded the Riverdale Group at Playter Hall on Danforth Avenue. Evelyn McGaffrey, a pianist, and Dave Muir, a violinist with Tim Wright's Scottish Country Dance Band in Edinburgh, provided the music.

**1955-1956.** In September, 1955, Don Sutherland and Isa Wright (Wilson) sent out notices of a meeting to be held in Moore Park House to try to form a Branch of the R.S.C.D.S. This meeting was well attended, but as the group was without a certificated teacher (certification is a requirement for Branch status), it became an AFFILIATED Group of the R.S.C.D.S. George MacDonald of the Gaelic Society was elected Chairman; Donald Fraser, Vice-Chairman; Vic Scott, Secretary; and Isa Wright (Wilson), Treasurer.

**Rosedale.** On December 11, 1955, Professor Ronald Smith started the Rosedale Group, which was one of the founding groups in the Toronto Branch. When the Riverdale Group disbanded, its membership joined Rosedale. May Mitchell, a Riverdale member, assisted Ronald Smith with the teaching duties at Rosedale until 1980.



*Rosedale Presbyterian Church Board Room has been the location of the Toronto Branch Executive Committee Meetings for many years*

In the early years of the Branch, Rosedale did a great deal to popularize the dancing in the Toronto area. Today, 1982, it still enjoys a "social group" reputation and is well-known for its friendliness and hospitality. Everyone who visits is made most welcome. It used to dance throughout the summer, but stopped this activity when dancing at Edwards Gardens became a Branch event.

Rosedale holds an annual June picnic in Craighleigh Park on the Monday nearest to mid-summer; should the weather be inclement, the church hall becomes the centre of activity. In spite of the fact that a picnic was selected as an alternative to an end-of-season dance, a musician is always engaged for this event. The Christmas Dance is also a popular, well-supported annual event.

In 1960 and for three or four ensuing years, the Toronto Branch held a service in Rosedale Church for the commemoration of Robert Burns (January 25).

The Rosedale group participated in the Rosedale Presbyterian Church Centennial Celebrations in 1975 by dancing "The Sailor" and "The St. John River" under the direction of May Mitchell.

In 1980, Rosedale held a party to celebrate the twenty-five years' continuous teaching service Ronald Smith has given. In addition the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society also honoured him by publishing "The Reivers" in Book 23, "Make Up the Quarrel" and the "Rosedale Reel" in the Centennial Book. Professor Smith composed these three dances.

**Weston.** Georgina Finlay formed an adult class in Weston in 1955 and taught it for two years. The cost at that time was 25¢ per person, per class. A neighbourhood children's class, started on the front lawn of her house, led to the formation of a children's class in September, 1960, in Weston Presbyterian Church where it continues. Some of these original children attend Mrs. Finlay's adult class.

In 1973, an adult class began at Weston Presbyterian Church; it still thrives although it has moved to different locations in Weston. Within this adult class, a beginners' adult class was formed in 1977. Douglas Stephen has been teaching this class since 1978.

**1956-1957.** At a meeting of the Affiliated Group of the R.S.C.D.S. in April, 1956, George MacDonald resigned and was replaced by the following committee: Donald Fraser, Chairman; James Stoddart, Vice-Chairman; Lindsay Kilner, Secretary; Isa Wright (Wilson), Treasurer; and Matthew Sutherland, Teacher-Advisor. One hundred and fifty-two dancers attended the committee's first ball on November 16, 1956, in the War Amputees' Building. Bill Watson and Ed Brydie provided the music.

**Oakville.** Early in 1956, four couples met to work up a "demonstration" for a private party. Three of the couples had not danced before. The fourth, John and Sheila White, had learned under Jack McConachie in London and he prepared them for the great event. Their enthusiasm was such that they decided to form a group immediately and to operate under the aegis of an active local organization Oakville Arts and Crafts. Because they were relatively remote from Toronto and Hamilton, they affiliated with Edinburgh in 1960 and have maintained that status ever since.

Victoria Hall had the best floor in Oakville's 26 years' experience and they met there until its demolition in 1963. Over the following years the dancers met in church halls, the old and new YMCA and school halls for a total of ten locations. The floors of some were tile on concrete (dreadful on the feet and legs); others were rough boards where it was usual to start the evening by hammering in protruding nails; others were well-sprung wood. At the present time the group uses Oakwood School which has a fair floor.

John White taught until 1958 and when he had to step down because of business responsibilities, he placed the load squarely on Bob Campbell. Over the years they have been served by the following teachers: Joan Miller, Robin Matheson, Esther Williamson, Anne Harrison, Neil Harrison, Jean Yeats, Gladys McLellan, Jim Stephen and Doug Wilkes. The current teaching responsibilities are shared by Anne and Neil Harrison and Bob Campbell. The children's class is taught by Cathie Bartlett who succeeded Helen Bell.

By 1961, the group felt competent enough to hold a big dance and they entertained 16 sets in Victoria Hall where Ed Brydie provided the music. Cost of the tickets was \$1.50 per person! Further dances were held in 1962 and 1963; the latter year was their last in Victoria Hall. Oakville's annual ball began in 1966. The tickets that year were \$5.00 – in 1982 they are \$20.00.

This group provides a social dance once a month in addition to instruction and practice on the other evenings. Whereas there were nights in the very early years when not a single dancer turned up, Oakville now stands 5-6 sets.

**Petronella.** The Petronella Club, formed in September, 1956, consisted of twenty-four children of the Thornhill United Church Junior Choir. As a result of a Home and School Demonstration at Henderson Avenue Public School in May, 1957, by those children, interest in this social medium

sufficient to start an adult club which first met in September, 1957. The founders were Alan and Maureen Foster who named the club after Dance I from Book I.

The Fosters, who were active in Thornhill United Church, composed the following "history" early in the club's Operation because the idea of dancing as a suitable activity had to be justified to church officials. Here then are their reasons for the choice of Scottish Country Dancing as a medium promoting good fellowship and animated friendship.

The extreme clannishness and sensitivity of Scots has been responsible for the development of a remarkable degree of clarity and precision of speech, and also a high degree of self-control.

From this it follows that these laws of behaviour must prevail at Scottish gatherings. Taking into account also the vigour and fiery Spirit of the race and elastic suppleness of the Highlandman, we find evolved over the years an unequalled form of social grace – Scottish Country Dancing.

This form of dancing promotes:

1. Good health through vigorous exercise.
2. Good manners – they are part of the format of the dance.
3. Exhilarating gaiety through movement in time to stirring music.
4. Friendly co-operation of both sexes participating together.
5. Self-control of mind and body.
6. Satisfaction in physical achievement.
7. Mental stimulus – there's a lot to learn and the exercise stimulates the brain.
8. Happiness through the fulfilment of the natural desire to enjoy the exhilarating fellowship of others, and also to exercise one's mind and body.

Furthermore, Scottish Country Dancing can be enjoyed by people who have never danced, and yet they can aspire to technical heights akin to ballet if they so desire. They can find their own level without interfering with the enjoyment of others.

### *Dancing 'Glasgow Highlanders' at Rosedale*





The Fosters led the club until 1964 when they moved to California. From October, 1964, until the spring of 1970, Leslie and Elaine James were the group leaders. Since then the leaders and teachers include Lizbeth Rodger, Cathy Beattie (Shields), and Mary Rae. The group presently meets in Royal Orchard Public School under the leadership of Janette Todd.

**1957-1958.** At Pinewoods' Weekend in July, 1957, Jack McKelvie from New Hampshire informed the visiting Toronto dancers that he was bringing Miss Jean Milligan over later that year. Isa Wright (Wilson) expressed the wish that Miss Milligan attend the Toronto Ball in November, and that the Toronto group would pay her travelling and hotel expenses. Upon Miss Wright's return to Toronto, the Affiliated Group was informed that Miss Milligan had been invited, and the question was asked – which no one today would need to ask – “Who is Miss Milligan?” Miss Wright explained that Jean Milligan was a co-founder of the R.S.C.D.S. and that this would be an opportunity to have her examine candidates for Teaching Certificates. Classes were started and arrangements made for Miss Milligan to come to Toronto in September. The money for her visit was raised by holding dances with the catering provided free by the ladies of the groups. Sufficient funds were raised, and Mr. and Mrs. Paul Baker offered the hospitality of their home to Miss Milligan.

Those who received Certificates during Miss Milligan's first Canadian visit were Anne MacLeod, Alex MacGregor, Eddie MacDonald, Matthew Sutherland, John Wevers and John Gowans. Coll Black obtained his Certificate at St. Andrews earlier that summer.

In September, 1957, while attending an afternoon tea-party held in her honour at the home of Essie and Jim Stoddart, Miss Milligan declared the Toronto Group a BRANCH of the R.S.C.D.S. This declaration assumed official status in Edinburgh, Scotland, on October 7, 1957. The Affiliated Group Committee formed in 1956 became the first Branch Committee.

In November, 1957, a Ball was held at the Granite Club through the kindness of Bob MacMillan. The Guests of Honour were Miss Milligan, Miss Carmichael from Boston, Jack McKelvie and John Wilson. This dance was the first “official” one of the Branch. Earlier that summer, a demonstration team under the direction of Matthew Sutherland performed at the Canadian National Exhibition. The third precedent for the year was the establishment of monthly dances – the first took place in September, 1957.

A committee under the direction of John Wevers was appointed to draw up a constitution. It was decided that, since several groups existed before the Branch was recognized, each group should retain autonomy and that individual group members should become Branch members. Two of the original groups supported the Branch well; they were Earls court who met in Bathurst Street Baptist Church, and Rosedale who met in the Rosedale Presbyterian Church. Coll Black led a group in St. Paul's Anglican Church; and Georgina Finlay, one in Weston. Anne MacLeod, assisted by Betty Anderson, started a children's group in Rosedale. Under the tutelage of Coll Black, Calvin Presbyterian Church started a group in 1957. It was in Calvin and St. Paul's that all monthly dances were held before they moved to Deer Park School.

The programme, OPEN HOUSE, televised a Branch demonstration team in June, 1958. Other demonstrations throughout the year included Music Day at the Canadian National Exhibition, Hilltop Lodge Old Folks' Home, and a Tattoo in Hamilton's Civic Stadium on July 25, 1958, where four teams participated in a display of Scottish Country Dancing. Finally, the Branch Newsletter was established with three issues published during the year.

**Calvin** Scottish Country Dance Group is now in its 25th year of social dancing. It was in the summer of 1957 that members of Calvin Church were invited to join the dance at Rosedale, although Dr. Herron had been approached earlier by Lindsay Kilner to start a group at Calvin. That first taste of the joy of Scottish Country Dancing fired the imagination and determination of Margaret Birnie, Ed Mason and Forbes Brown to begin a group at Calvin in October, 1957. They obtained the services of Alex McGregor.

The whole purpose of formation was to provide fellowship and activity for members of the congregation as well as the community and, at the same time, to acquire new Church members from those who joined the dancing. This two-way street has remained open and evidence of the church's gain shows in the members still active and in the additions to the choir.

When Alex McGregor was transferred to the DEW Line, Calvin obtained the services of Matthew Sutherland, a member of professional demonstration teams in Scotland, and an instructor to members of the Royal Family. Many of the recordings now in our possession are collector's items donated by Matthew before he gave up instructing.

Coll Black, the instructor at St. Paul's, agreed to take over the teaching task at Calvin as well. When St. Paul's could no longer accommodate the dancers the two clubs joined maintaining the Calvin name.

The group continued to flourish under the high calibre of instruction maintained by Coll Black, and the monthly dances sponsored by the Toronto Branch were held in the Lower Hall at Calvin until it could no longer accommodate the numbers.

From the beginning, Calvin has been fortunate to have live music for most of its classes. Stan McKee, a former Calvin Church member, was stalwart in providing the correct tempi during the earlier years. Ed Brydie, Alex Jappy, Stan Hamilton, Bobby Frew, Larry Pitchko have all played for them. Don Bartlett and Anna Robertson are the present musicians.

Calvin's greatest influence has been the inspiration of its instructor, Iain Macfarlane, one of the finest Scottish Country Dance instructors in North America. At the time Iain took over instructing, the group was invited to take part in the T.V. programme “On the Scene”. Televised live on March 17, 1961, from the top floor of the Church's Education Wing, the show was chaired by Al Boliska and Rex Loring and included the singing of Wishart Campbell as a special feature.

Calvin is fortunate to have Isabelle MacPherson conduct a beginners' class in the Upper Hall. Sessions are held in the fall and winter and as many as two dozen students attend the classes. They graduate into social dancing from time to time. Isabelle (a charter member of Calvin) capably moulds new dancers for the pleasures of “the reels and jigs”.

Sandy Bain, Gil Rich, and Doug Bowers have also instructed at various times and Calvin is indebted to them for their patience.

When Iain announced his "retirement" from Calvin after twenty years, Frances Gray, a fine instructor, agreed to take the responsibility.

Calvin members are grateful to their Minister, Dr. Herron, for his unflagging support of this community endeavour from its inception.



*Geneva Park Weekend, 1971  
Miss Jean Milligan with Iain and Cathie Macfarlane*

**The Strathspey and Reel Club**, which ran for about two years, was formed in 1957/58 by Olga and John Scott Gowans (who was, at that time, Branch Treasurer).

Dancers from all parts of the city met every other Saturday night in Bathurst Street United Church Hall at Bloor and Bathurst, the same location chosen for Miss Milligan's class on her first visit to Toronto.

This club was ostensibly social, but under John's expert teaching and leadership, approximately 50 dancers strove to attain the standard of dancing he set. Live piano music was supplied by Stan McKee.

Many members of the club still enjoy dancing with the R.S.C.D.S. in Toronto and other parts of the world. The Strathspey and Reel Club can truly be counted as one of the cradles of Scottish Country Dancing in Toronto.

**1958-1959** Membership: 176. Seven adult and one junior group met regularly during the season. They were: Rosedale, St. Paul's Anglican, Riverdale, Calvin Presbyterian, Falconer Hal], Petronella Club, Strathspey and Reel Club, and the Rosedale Juniors who had 65 associate members. Classes of instruction for Beginners and Elementary dancers, organized under the auspices of the Branch, continued during the latter

part of 1958 and into the early part of 1959. John Scott Gowans, the teacher, was accompanied by pianist, Stanley D. McKee. These well-attended classes were held at Rosedale Presbyterian Church Hall. In January, 1959, a regular weekly class began for Branch members who wanted to obtain teaching certification in Scottish Country Dancing. Anne MacLeod instructed this class of seven candidates, two of whom already held their Preliminary Certificate (Test).

The Annual Ball was held on November 14, 1958. Sandy Bain and John Scott Gowans were Masters of Ceremony for the 174 dancers who enjoyed the music of Ed Brydie and his Scottish Country Dance Band. The Guest of Honour for the occasion was Jeannie Carmichael from the Boston Branch.

**Etienne Brûlé School, Etobicoke.** This class was started in 1958 by Jess Bryden and some friends, and continued for about three years.

**Fallingbrook** Scottish Country Dancers began in 1958 under the leadership of Ken Inglis, with Vi Knight acting in an administrative position. They met regularly on Friday evenings in Fallingbrook Presbyterian Church Hall. The rate of growth, however, was slow but there was an immediate improvement with a change of location to Regent Heights Public School, Scarborough, in April, 1979.

From 1967 to 1974, the special event each year was a "Burns' Night", which provided an enjoyable evening for well over 100 people. However, the duties and responsibilities proved too onerous for so few people and this event was suspended for five years and reinstated in 1980.

The most successful event in Fallingbrook's history was the 1981 Spring Ball held at the Balmy Beach Club. The Bobby Frew Trio provided the music.

The teachers have been Ken Inglis, Ted Doran, Frances Gray, Donald Robertson and Lalla Anderson.

**1959-1960.** Membership 231. After being moved from Rosedale Presbyterian Church Hall, the Bathurst Street United Church Hall became the second home of the Branch classes. John Scott Gowans, Sandy Bain, and Ian Rodgers taught these Thursday classes and Stan McKee and Bob MacDonald supplied the music.

Miss Milligan revisited Toronto in September and again in November conducting candidate examinations. She was the house guest of Mr. and Mrs. P. Baker during her Toronto visit.

The Toronto Branch Annual Ball attracted 200 dancers on November 13, 1959. The Guests of Honour for the evening were His Honour, the Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario, Keiller MacKay, and Mrs. MacKay. Upon receiving his invitation, His Honour thought he would be mixing with "a rowdy lot" (referring to the men who would attend); however, during the evening he said, "They all turned out to be gentlemen after all." Stan Hamilton and the Clansmen supplied the music for this Ball at the Granite Club (on St. Clair Avenue West); it was the Third Branch Ball.

The Branch published four issues of its Newsletter during this season.

**1960-1961.** Membership: 338 (232 Adults; 106 Junior Members). Seven adult groups and one junior group met regularly:

Rosedale (adult and junior), Calvin, Riverdale, Petronella, Don Mills, St. Andrew's and Falconer Hall.

Classes of instruction for beginners, intermediate and advanced dancers were organized under the auspices of the Branch: however, they were poorly attended. The advanced class discontinued early in February, principally because of the difficulty of obtaining a hall, and secondly because the Branch executive decided to hold a Teachers' Candidate Class under the direction of John Cowans. Fifteen candidates attended the class, two of whom had already passed the Preliminary Test.

A concert was held on April 29, 1960, in the Maurice Cody Hall, but it operated at a loss. The Central Committee then decided to discontinue this type of enterprise.

His Honour, the Lieutenant-Governor, and his wife were once again Guests of Honour at the Annual Autumn Ball, the Ball that was socially although not financially successful. By contrast, the Branch sponsored six socially and financially successful monthly dances. The Branch received additional social recognition as two demonstration teams appeared on television, one of which was the Calvin team.

As a result of growth of the Branch, the secretarial duties became concurrently involved and time-consuming. The secretary, Margaret Cook (Gilbart), recommended that two secretaries be appointed — one to record Minutes and deal with correspondence; the other to deal with Newsletters, programmes, and Miss Milligan's proposed visit.

The membership decided at the Annual General Meeting that since the dates of the Branch Ball and the St. Andrew's Ball were so close, both societies suffered; subsequently, the membership agreed that the Branch Ball would be held in January or February thereafter commencing in 1963.

**Don Mills Group.** This group was formed in the 1960-61 season by John Wevers who was one of the founding members of the Teachers' Association (Canada). They started dancing in St. Mark's Presbyterian Church in Don Mills, later moving to the Norman Ingram School, and since 1974, have danced in Banbury Community Hall.

Mrs. Isobelle Fuller has been the secretary-treasurer for the past eighteen years.

**Lakeshore** Scottish Country Dance Group – Mimico, New Toronto, and Long Branch – was in existence as early as 1960 with the class at that time having been taught by Sandy Bain. In 1961, Jean Anderson took over the teaching and continued until 1978. The classes were originally held in West Point, New Toronto, and latterly in the John English School and Lakeshore Community Centre in Mimico.

Over the years, these dancers contributed to the dancing scene in Toronto by producing a good standard of dancing, deep respect for the music and form of dance, and dancers who became certified teachers. Some of these teachers formed active clubs of their own.

From this group, the still-active Jean Anderson Dancers, was created. Its first main show, "A Breath of Scotland" at the Royal Alexander Theatre, Toronto, in 1964, was one of its many fulfilling and interesting dance experiences.

**Presteghn Heights Church.** Ian and Betty Rogers and Lil and Douglas Campbell tried to organize a class in the east end at Presteghn Heights Church. This class ran for about three months only.

**Scarborough** group was started to fulfil a need within the community. It was organized in 1960 by Tom and Margaret Cunningham. Jean Smith, who attended the first meeting, tells that she managed to convince a young accordionist to play for them – he was Alex Jappy. He and his wife, Ruth, are presently active in the Vancouver Branch of the Society. Scarborough meets in Glen Ravine School where it has done since it began, and it has grown to become one of the largest within the Toronto Branch – its present membership is 120.

In 1970, John Christie took over the teaching duties from Tom Cunningham. John is known for his mass demonstration teams at the Gala Day performances; and in addition, he teaches the Beginners' Class for the Toronto Branch.

The Scarborough dancers engage in social activities such as an annual car rally, a curling bonspiel, cross-country skiing, and family skating nights. The annual ball is held in March in the beautiful setting of the St. Lawrence Hall in Toronto.

**1961-1962.** Membership: 385 (308 Adults; 77 Junior Associate members). During a special meeting at Deer Park School on Saturday, April 14, 1961, the following revision was made to the Constitution:

"Delete Article 11, which now states that the Central Committee shall consist of the elected Executive and one representative from each group, plus a member at large,"

and substitute the following article:

"The Committee shall consist of the members of the Executive and six other members, elected at the annual meeting of the Branch. One of the elected members shall be a teacher, active in the Toronto area and holding a certificate of the Society. The President shall be a member of the committee, ex-officio, for one year."

The fifth Annual General Meeting of the Toronto Branch was held on Wednesday, April 25, 1962, at Rosedale Presbyterian Church. Eighty-eight people were present. Along with the Minutes of the previous year, the above recommendation was moved, seconded and adopted.

Angus J. McKinnon had by then formed a band and wished to be considered for future engagements. The other two bands at that time were led by Stan Hamilton and Ed Brydie.

Branch classes were held at Deer Park School. The standard of dancing was improving, the result of instruction given by Iain Macfarlane, Ian Rodgers, and Sandy Bain. The number of children dancing increased phenomenally, and credit for this increase goes to John Gowans, Hughina Wilson, Georgina Finlay, Margaret Michje, Evelyn Watkins (Clarke), and Jean Anderson (Branch Class for Children).

An extra monthly dance, bringing the number to seven, was organized to help raise funds for Miss Milligan's visit. Miss Milligan was the Guest of Honour at the first of these monthly dances held in the Auditorium of Deer Park School. The ticket price was raised to \$1.50 for members and to \$2.00 for non-members.

One hundred and eighty-six members and friends attended the sixth Annual Ball held in the Granite Club on Friday, November 17, 1961. The Guests of Honour were Miss Jean C. Milligan and General Sir Neil M. Ritchie and Lady Ritchie. Demonstration teams at the ball were under the leadership of Anne MacLeod and Iain Macfarlane.

The first weekend school organized by the Toronto Branch was held in Collingwood, Ontario, from October 6-9, 1962. One hundred and fifteen people attended.

**George G. Armstrong Group** was originally "St. Andrew's and St. George's", in honour of its founder's contribution, and the name was changed to "George C. Armstrong" in 1969. Mr. Armstrong, assisted by Matthew Sutherland, taught from September, 1961, to April, 1969. David Grant was the leader and contact person from 1977 to the present, and he along with his wife, Betty, taught from 1969 to the present. They assumed this teaching position upon the retirement of Bill Murray who instructed from 1969 to 1977.

The group's shield, designed and painted by Edgar Hanson, combines St. Andrew's and St. George's crosses on the top and the Armstrong Heraldic coat of arms (blue and white stripes) on the bottom.

The Armstrong group has actively supported the Toronto Branch in many ways, especially in the encouragement of Branch membership. In addition, George Armstrong produced the first five long playing **Stan Hamilton Clansmen Records**. When there were only a few dances within the Toronto Branch, the Armstrong group catered to this need to have a focus for the dancers. The Island Fling, begun in 1964, continues as an annual June event.

Two dances per year were held at the Old Granite Club (December and February or March), and two parties at the Royal Canadian Yacht Club (June and September). The Granite Club dances – begun in 1962 – culminated with the Farewell to the Old Granite Club Ball in 1972 because the Club was slated for demolition later that year. In 1973, the group held two dances at the New Granite Club (January and March), but the ballroom floor was unsatisfactory. The next home was the Crystal Ballroom of the King Edward Hotel where from 1974 to 1979 the Crystal Ball was the feature event. Since the King Edward underwent extensive renovations, the present location became the Clubhouse in the Royal Yacht Club, This dance became known as the "Mainland Fling" in 1980.

Four Armstrong members became Branch chairmen: George Armstrong, Donald Pyper, David Grant, and Bill Stoddart.

Two dances have been composed in honour of the teachers: "The Armstrong Rant" for George and Rena Armstrong, and "The Island Fling" for David and Betty Grant. The Grants jointly taught the Branch Advanced class in 1981 and are one of five husband and wife teaching teams.

**Oshawa and Port Hope.** No report available.

**1962-1963.** Membership: 533 (387 Adults, including 6 life members, and 146 Junior Associate members).

The seventh Annual Ball was held at the Lord Simcoe Hotel on Friday, November 2, with 162 people attending.

Collingwood Weekend was held over Thanksgiving – October 5-8, with 95 attendees.

In the past two years, membership increased enormously. It is apparent that all the effort expended by Matthew Sutherland, Isa Wright, Coll Black, Lindsay Kilner and George MacDonald several years ago and later supplemented by Jack Geddes, Anne MacLeod, John Gowans, and Iain Macfarlane bore its fruit. From 1955-1957, the influx of Old Country Scots formed the nucleus of the Branch, In 1962-3, with immigration reduced to a trickle, only one-sixth of what it was in 1956-7, the Toronto Branch maintained impetus from the developing interest among the Canadian Scots. This development seemed only natural since Toronto, in terms of racial origin, is perhaps the fourth or fifth largest city of Scots in the world; therefore, it was concluded that there would be a further substantial expansion in membership here.

The inpouring of new members called for tolerance and assistance from the more experienced dancers. At the same time, it required continued interest and concentrated effort on the part of the newcomers so that they would dance proficiently as soon as possible. The advice of Squadron Leader Douglas Henderson when he visited Toronto in the Fall of 1961 was: "Never forget that you yourself were once a beginner". How true his words are today; how inexorable as time and experience separate us from our first dancing endeavours

Iain Macfarlane, Tom Cunningham, Grace Clark and Jack Geddes conducted highly successful Branch classes, and a candidate teachers' course to decrease the shortage of teachers in the Toronto area which at that time continued to be serious.

George C. Armstrong's Report to the Annual General Meeting stated: "If you will give your Branch your wholehearted support, we can put on functions that no other Branch in North America can equal since none of them has our number, resources or facilities. However, if you choose to withhold your support or give it elsewhere, our success can only be partial." His advice echoes the sentiment and co-operation upon which the Toronto Branch continues to operate.

**Mississauga.** This group started in 1962 with David Izatt as teacher. Jessie McCready, who succeeded David Izatt, taught them for several years before her return to Vancouver. Jess Bryden, the current instructor, assumed the teaching in 1980. Mississauga, together with several other groups from the west end, was instrumental in establishing the Annual West End Ball generally held at the Skyline Hotel. This relaxing and successful spring Ball began in 1971, and continues with great popularity.

**York University – Glendon Campus.** Many dancers who attended Falconer Hall became involved with the York University Group at the time that Falconer was disbanded as a result of Dr. Bissell's retirement. At that time, Glendon campus was an extension of the University of Toronto and it was there that Clara Thomas and Edith and Carmen Giles who were associated with York University invited Margaret Gilbert (Cook) to become the teacher of that group. Mrs. Gilbert taught there from 1962, until 1965. Joyce McCaffrey took over the teaching for the following year, and subsequently Peter Gray taught until he became too ill to continue. They disbanded around 1968 since other groups were being formed within the Glendon vicinity.

**Halton.** Filed no report.

**Thornhill Beginners.** Filed no report.

**1963-1964.** Membership: 634 (507 Adults, including 6 Life members, and 127 Junior Associate members). The 120 new members marked the Branch's largest membership increase in a single year.

The Toronto Branch Weekend changed its location this year – 1963 – to Geneva Park Convention Centre. Geneva Park has continued to be the location since that date. Attendance at the new location increased to 124 people, an increase of 29 over 1962.

The Toronto Branch Annual Ball was named the "Tartan Ball" and was held for the first time at the Royal York Hotel on March 13. The superstitions and fears about Friday the 13th, triskaidekaphobia, were disproved. It was the most successful to date of the Toronto Branch balls, with 294 people attending. The Royal York Hotel has continued to be the locale of the Tartan Ball since 1964.

**Port Credit.** No report available.

**St. Giles** started in January, 1963, at St. Giles Presbyterian Church. Lambeth Road, Etobicoke. The Etobicoke Press advertised the formation of a new R.S.C.D.S. group to start in St. Giles Church at the beginning of January, and an enthusiastic group of beginners attended the first night. These people were ably instructed by Bill Murray and Iain Lang who were supported by the attendance of several experienced and well-known dancers from the Toronto Branch: Matthew Sutherland, Jess Bryden, and Jean Anderson.

Bill Murray persuaded his beginners not to attend functions of the Branch until they attained a reasonable dancing standard; consequently, it was in their second year that members began to join Branch activities. However, some of them went on to contribute to the Branch by becoming members of the executive

executive or teachers. Some of these people include Harold Savidge, Bill Philip, and Caroline Gorski on the executive, and Wes Clindinning as a teacher.

The average attendance during its most successful period was four sets and the dancers ranged from sixteen to sixty years.

After Iain Lang received his Teacher's Certificate, he taught the group. In 1964, the members donated the St. Giles Quaich for the best strathspey in the Children's Festival. After several years, membership dwindled to the point that it was no longer possible to continue.

**Unionville.** In 1963, Mr. and Mrs. Donald Deacon asked Helen Walton to form a Scottish Country Dance group in Unionville. Helen Walton, who received her full teaching certificate that year, agreed, and from that year to the present time, the Unionville R.S.C.D.S. dancers meet weekly in the small basement of Central United Church.

It started and remains a small and happy group, but throughout the years enthusiasm for the Scottish dance in all its forms continues undiminished.

During these nineteen years, the highlight was participation in the Scottish Tattoo at the Canadian National Exhibition.

Unionville remains without a flamboyant history, but it is nonetheless a happy, tightly-knit unit.

**1964-1965.** Membership: 633 (511 Adults, 10 Life members, and 112 Junior Associate members).

The first Toronto Branch Children's Festival was held in Ryerson Public School on Saturday, February 6, 1965. Trophies and medals were donated for the various age groups. From the many letters received, it appears that both the participants and spectators enjoyed this occasion.

Three Scottish Dance bands exist in the Toronto area: Angus J. MacKinnon, Stan Hamilton, and Ed Brydie. At the Annual General Meeting, the membership expressed sincere appreciation for their high-quality music.

*Tartan Ball 1981*



1965-1966. Membership: 684 (580 Adults, 104 Junior Associate members).

A Demonstration Class was held this year under the direction of Isabelle MacPherson who was assisted by John Dempster and Robert Millar. The teams danced at twenty-eight performances.

The New City Hall in Toronto was opened on September 13, 1965. Three sets of dancers demonstrated Scottish Country Dancing before an audience of fifty thousand. One of the dances performed was "New City Hall" composed by Iain Macfarlane in honour of the occasion.

Branch Classes, Monthly Dances, Geneva Park Weekend, Tartan Balls, Executive Committee meetings, Newsletters and Demonstrations were now all firmly established functions of the Toronto Branch. The second Annual Children's Festival was held in Deer Park Public School on Saturday, February 19, with an increased and vibrant response.

**Children's Festival.** The first Children's Festival organized by the Toronto Branch was held in 1965. Prior to that year, an annual festival was held in Hamilton under the auspices of the Kiwanis organization at which children's teams of Scottish Country Dancers from the Toronto and Hamilton areas competed.

The Toronto Branch executive established a committee in 1964 to organize a Children's Festival in the Toronto area for 1965. By year's end, the Committee chaired by Gil Rich had obtained accommodation in Ryerson Public School and the administrative arrangements for the Festival were well in hand. In addition, the need to recognize the winners of competing teams in the three age categories was essential and various organizations had been approached. Prior to the first Festival which took place in February, 1965, the Bank of Nova Scotia, Christie Brown & Company Limited, the St. Giles Scottish Country Dance Group, and George C. Armstrong of St. Andrew's and St. George's Scottish Country Dance Group responded with handsome trophies. The first Festival with sixteen teams from the Toronto and Hamilton areas competing was considered successful.

The following year, the Festival was held again in Deer Park Public School in February. The Festival Committee arranged for the Festival to be opened by N.A. Sweetman, Superintendent of Toronto Public Schools, Nineteen teams from the Toronto and Hamilton areas competed and the second Festival proved to be a happy, felicitous event.

The third Toronto Festival in 1967 was also held in Deer Park Public School and the competing teams increased to twenty-six. The President of St. Andrew's Society of Toronto, Paul L. Baker, a Scottish Country Dancer himself, opened the Festival.

Expanded facilities at Northview Heights Secondary School helped to accommodate over 1,100 competitors and spectators at the 1971 Festival. The 1973 Children's Festival was held in Newtonbrook Secondary School where for the first time two gymnasiums were used. In 1976, the Branch Chairman opened the Festival, The number of competing teams increased to forty-nine and over five hundred spectators attended the event. With such increases, schools with larger gymnasiums were located to accommodate the Festival.

Trophies presented to the Toronto Branch for Festival competition now total ten:

The Toronto Branch Trophy: for the best team of Novice Dancers

The St Giles Church Group Quaich: for the highest scoring "9 and Under Team"

The Williamson Cup: for the "9 and Under Team" showing the best effort but not winning any other trophy

The Christie Brown Trophy: for the "10-12 Team" scoring the highest points

The Kelvingrove Trophy: for the highest scoring "13-15 Team"

The Meta Anderson Trophy: for the best strathspey in the "13-15 class"

The Bank of Nova Scotia Trophy: for the highest scoring "16-17 Team"

The Frances Gray Award: for the best strathspey in the "16-17 Team"

The Hamish Falconer Trophy: for the team showing the best spirit, teamwork and deportment

The George C. Armstrong Trophy: for the team dancing the best jig or reel but not winning any other major trophy.

In recent years the Toronto Festival has been held at Newtonbrook Secondary School, where two gymnasiums, rooms for changing and practice, and parking facilities are suitable.

The Festival in Hamilton eventually became the sole responsibility of the Hamilton Branch of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society and has flourished along with the Toronto Branch Festival.

**1966-1967.** Membership: 725 (584 Adults, 141 Junior Associate members).

The Branch Demonstration Team danced at Massey Hall for the show "This is Scotland".

The 1967 Annual General Meeting held at Deer Park Public School, Ferndale Avenue, Toronto, also included dancing, which the Chairman unapologetically stated was to entice people to attend the meeting. A charge was made for the dance, but not for the meeting.

Gil Rich chaired a committee for a function called A Day of Scottish Country Dancing (Gala Day) planned for Saturday, May 13, 1967. It is interesting to note that this "day" was a result of the withdrawal of the Hamilton Branch from the Kiwanis Festival in Hamilton and the resultant lack of opportunity for adults to dance competitively or as demonstrators to be critiqued without adjudication. "Gala Day", now established as an annual event, alternates between Hamilton and Toronto.

**Bloorlea Beginners** enjoyed an eleven-year history (1966-1977) under the instruction of Jess Bryden and her assistant, Pat Carter. It discontinued when Jess Bryden moved to Orangeville.

This group, under the same name, reformed and is presently taught by Mary Rae.

**East York** Scottish Country Dancers were formed in the fall of 1966 by Bob Millar (instructor) and John Moss (secretary) and met at Plains Road School, East York. In September, 1973, the group moved to Parkside School where it still meets every Wednesday evening.

East York has been fortunate to have live music for classes since its first night. Stan McKee was class pianist during the 1966/67 season, and Elma Grech became class pianist in 1968, and has continued with the group ever since.

From the beginning, East York was well represented on the Executive of the Toronto Branch, and involved in all Branch activities. Three past Chairmen of the Toronto Branch came from its membership: David Pogson, Jim Kynoch and Frances Gray. Many of the teachers currently teaching groups in the Toronto area started dancing with the East York Group. Today (1982), ten fully certificated teachers and five preliminary teachers still attend to enjoy an evening of social dancing.

Apart from its teaching/social aspect, East York is noted for its demonstration activities. The first demonstration team was formed in January, 1967, and danced at the Borough of East York's Centennial Ball, January 6, 1967. The ladies on the team were resplendent in copies of 1867 ball gowns; the team danced the first official performance of Canada's Centennial Dance. "The Saint John River". Since that date, they have danced in Gala Days, Caravan, Scottish World Festivals, and every known Scottish function in the Toronto area. A feature of their demonstration activities is their Concert Party, which regularly performs at hospitals and Senior Citizens' Homes throughout the year.

**St. Andrew's, Brampton.** Marjorie Coulter brought Scottish Country Dancing to the city of Brampton when she placed an ad in a local newspaper to find out how many people were interested in learning Scottish Country Dancing.

This group began in November, 1966, meeting in different schools at first, then in the St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, hence its name. After ten years in that location, the rent rose to \$30.00 per night so the group was forced to find new premises but decided to keep the St. Andrew's name. The first teacher was Margaret Dempster. The sixty adult members now dance at Loafer's lake Recreation Centre, and are taught by Jean Yeats and Jim Stephen.

**1967-1968.** Membership: 751 (610 Adults, 141 Junior Associate members)

Membership within the Branch continued to increase so that in the 1967-1968 season fifteen clubs met regularly in the Toronto area. The monthly dances resultantly moved from Deer Park to the more spacious Hodgson School.

As increased membership fosters additional activity, so new activities attract interest, incite curiosity, and yield new members. Conjointly we grow. The Toronto Branch Demonstration team trained by the accomplished director, Isabelle MacPherson, danced at Expo in June, 1967. When Isabelle relinquished her responsibilities with this team, Jean Anderson assumed its instruction in September, 1967.

That same month, Mina Corson conducted examinations for the candidate teachers. Following Mrs. Corson's return to Scotland, Miss Jean Milligan wrote: "I am indeed proud of the Toronto Branch, which is one of our very best from every point

of view. Mrs. Corson was greatly struck by the standard of dancing in Canada, but especially in your area".

**Summer Dancing:** For some years, Tom Cunningham from Scarborough arranged with the Metropolitan Toronto Parks Department for outdoor dancing at Edwards Gardens during June and part of July. Many of our members and hundreds of spectators enjoyed these weekly evenings of Scottish dancing. At the conclusion of dancing in the summer of 1967, Mr. Cunningham requested the Branch to assume responsibility for this activity. A Branch committee arranged dancing in the park for 1968 and succeeding years. The dancing was to occur on five Tuesdays in early summer.

At that time, a tribute was made to Tom Cunningham for his efforts during the past three years. The work of the committee succeeding him had been considerably lessened because of the excellent co-operative spirit which existed between him and the Metropolitan Parks Department. The Richmond Hill group was started in September, 1967, by Frances Gray and Doris Hofmann. They met every Friday evening at Richmond Hill High School. Since 1968 until the present time they meet on a fortnightly basis with Doris as teacher. Because of school permit difficulties, they moved to McConnachie Public School in 1969, and then in 1970 to Walter Scott Public School on Markham Road where they have danced regularly ever since.

Since Richmond Hill alternates dancing dates with the Gay Gordons, many of its members have been dancing regularly in both places. More recently a number of dancers from the Aurora and Newmarket groups have become regular members and add an interesting geographical variety. Richmond Hill dancers thus come from as far as Newmarket in the North, Markham in the East, Rexdale in the West, and Willowdale in the South.

Doris Hofmann taught except for two seasons: in 1972 when Grace Knox supplied and in 1981 when Frank Seeley took over the teaching.

**White Heather Dancers.** Filed no report.

**1968-1969.** Membership: 633 (473 Adults, including 19 Life members, and 160 Junior members).

Eighteen Adult groups met regularly. Teams from East York and Lakeshore – Bob Millar's and Jean Anderson's – demonstrated on behalf of the Branch. Miss Jean C. Milligan visited in October, 1968, but there were no exams conducted at that time; however, she taught a class of 180 some of the dances from the new Book 24.

**Lothian Dancers.** See A.S.T.A., p. 20.

**1969-1970.** Membership: 664.

Twenty Adult Social Groups met in the Toronto area, and ten Children's Groups, nine of which participated in the Children's Festival.

Summer dancing continued to grow in popularity, as did the number of interested spectators. Unfortunately, inclement weather hampered the previous year's efforts at Edwards Gardens and blocked attempts to bring Summer dancing to the West End in the Marie Curtis Park.

Margaret McLaren was the Guest of Honour and teacher at Geneva Park. Miss McLaren, a teacher and examiner from

Society Headquarters, conducted examinations of teacher candidates during her tour.

This year the traditional date of the Children's Festival was changed from February to April to allow more time for team preparation.

The membership amended Article 4 (Dues) of the Constitution to revise the framework under which membership dues could be changed. The amendment permitted dues to be changed from time to time rather than remain at the fixed rate of \$2.00. Article 26 requires one year's notice for constitutional change.



*General Sir Neil M. Ritchie, G.B.E., K.C.B., D.S.O., M.C.  
Former Patron of the Toronto Branch*

**Tribute to a Patron:** Ten years ago, two distinguished gentlemen became patrons of the Branch: Dr. Claude Bissell, President of the University of Toronto, and General Sir Neil Ritchie, a native son of Scotland who played a major role in World War II. Sir Neil indicated that, because of his advanced age, he was unable to do full justice to his office. Therefore, the Executive reluctantly accepted his resignation. In appreciation of Sir Neil's association with the Branch, the Executive Committee authorized and purchased a Perpetual Clock for him. He graciously consented to have a dance composed in his honour.

**Newtonbrook.** In the Spring of 1969, Betty Thompson, who was teaching children Scottish Country Dancing in Thornhill United Church, under the auspices of the Petronella Scottish Country Dance Club, was approached by some ladies at Newtonbrook United Church, where Betty is a member, to organize a similar activity at Newtonbrook United Church.

Shortly after the children's class started, Betty was asked by Kathy Beattie, who loved the Scottish Country Dance music, to consider starting an adult class; thus in September, 1969, the first

meeting of the Newtonbrook Scottish Country Dancers took place, with only eight people present. From the minutes of this first meeting, we know that the film **Scotland Dances** was shown. Betty gave a talk on Scottish Country Dancing and the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society. A short introductory lesson on the basics of Scottish Country Dancing followed and two dances were taught and danced with verve A "Leap Year Jig" and "Cumberland Reel". The Newtonbrook group at the beginner level was launched. It was an R.S.C.D.S. Toronto Branch group from its inception.

During the first few weeks it grew rapidly from the original 8 to 24 members. Twelve Newtonbrook dancers attended the 1970 Tartan Ball and in May, 1970, they performed "The Winding Road" at the Toronto Branch Gala Day.

Since its beginning, Newtonbrook continues to perform at many functions, and enthusiastically supported the Scottish World Festival at the Canadian National Exhibition. The group now has 48 regular members and meets on Monday nights in Newtonbrook United Church Hall at 53 Cummer Avenue, Willowdale. This hall has a fine wooden floor and bright atmosphere; the group is spirited and friendly and all dancers can be assured of a hearty welcome.

Betty Thompson, the organizer and teacher of the Newtonbrook Group, is a well-known teacher of Scottish Country Dancing in both Canada and the United States. She, in conjunction with Jean Yeats and Bob Blackie, was instrumental in organizing the Teachers' Association (Canada) Summer School of Scottish Country Dancing, at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, in 1973 and 1974, and directed the Summer School in 1975 and 1976. This Summer School grew rapidly and now is held at Brock University, St. Catharines, Ontario, where dancers from many parts of the continent gather every August to devote themselves to Scottish Country Dancing under the tutelage of the finest Canadian and Scottish teachers. They also enjoy dancing to the music of excellent Scottish Country Dance musicians.

**Thorncliffe Park** was initiated by Isobel Crookston, and was originally a small, private group. Grace Harris was invited to teach them when they first met at Thorncliffe Park Apartments, then in Thorncliffe Park Library, and now in Thorncliffe Park Public School.

The Shield, created in honour of Mrs. Crookston, is draped with her tartan (Davidson) as a lady would wear the sash. It also signifies that the group has had and still has a lady teacher.

**1970-1971.** Membership: 704 (683 Adults and 21 Life Members).

Our former patron, General Sir Neil Ritchie, visited us during the Ball at Geneva Park Weekend where "General Ritchie's Reel", a dance composed in his honour by Bob Campbell, was demonstrated.

The visiting teacher from Headquarters, Doris Robertson, conducted a specially arranged class.

Miss Milligan visited Toronto in connection with the Teachers' Association annual weekend. A limited itinerary, combined with illness, prevented her from being the Branch's official guest. However, in recognition of her Visit a small private reception was held in her honour. This remarkable lady, a Co-founder of the Society, now in her mid-eighties, has



retained all her spirit and perceptiveness. She spoke highly of her "Toronto family".

Attendance at Monthly Dances, an average of 210, was the highest on record for the Toronto Branch this past season. The Valentine's blizzard attracted 249; and the January monthly dance, 319.

The format for the Tartan Ball was changed this year with regard to the meal. The Chairman, Donald Pyper, and his Tartan Ball committee, were instrumental in changing from a buffet to a served meal. This feature was largely responsible for the continued success of the Tartan Ball.

**Aurora** Scottish Country Dance Club. From the humble beginnings in a friend's basement, the Aurora Club was officially organized in 1970 at the Aurora Highlands Golf Club by its founder and first teacher John Brown. The Golf Club was an ideal place to dance and have a drink after the dance. After three years, costs increased and problems developed so that the Club became nomads for a year, dancing in church basements and public halls. In 1975, the Club found a home at the St. Andrew's College where it remained until the fall of 1981. At that time Aurora affiliated with the Toronto Branch of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society and Jack and Sandra Millar became the teachers. This year, 1982, they moved to Devine's Drive Public School.

**Black Creek.** Dancing began in the summer of 1970, for children from low income families living in Ontario Housing. The classes, started by Duguld Bowers and later taught by Ed Wilson, were held in the Black Creek Library for ten years. The adult classes were for the parents of these children, some single parents, and later, for couples. After ten years in that location, classes were held for a short time at Downsview Library, but are presently conducted in St. Philip Neri Church Hall.

Few people attended until the advent of the Branch's participation in the Canadian National Exhibition when the two and one-half sets increased and maintained seven sets.

**Islington.** This class was founded in October, 1970, by Leslie and Elaine James. It met in Islington United Church for six years. When more space was required, the group moved to Bloorlea School in October, 1976, where it continues.

Since 1971, Islington has held two dances a year. The Spring dances were originally planned for beginners and less experienced dancers, and the Christmas Dances featured varied themes and programmes such as a Canadian Composers' Night, a Bob Campbell Night, Unfamiliar Treasures from R.S.C.D.S. Books, a Foss-Cosh-McConachie Night, Drewry Nights 1, 2 and 3, and Tartan Ball Favourites from the past 15 years.

This year, 1981-82, expansion included an early class, taught by Nel Martyn, in steps and formations. It is open to beginners and anyone wishing to practise and improve basic technique.

**1971-1972.** Membership: 749 (727 Adults, 22 Life members).

For seven years, summer dancing was held at Edwards Gardens. This year, 1971, signified the end of the Edwards Gardens' location and the 1972 location will be Sunnybrook Park.

Three overseas visitors were with us this year: Duncan Macleod, Bill Hamilton, and finally Miss Milligan who was the Guest of Honour at Geneva Park. To honour her, Pat Kincaid composed the dance "The Thistle and the Trillium".

James Kynoch expressed appreciation on behalf of the Branch to J.W. Glendinning who, for many years, faithfully audited the Branch's financial statements.

**Armour Heights.** At the request of the Scottish Minister of the Armour Heights Presbyterian Church this group was formed, and it met from 1971 to 1976. Pat and Bob Waugh, members of the congregation, were the teachers. It was started principally for children on Saturday mornings and expanded to include an adult class during the week.

**1972-1973.** Membership: 924 (874 Adults, 50 Junior Associate members).

Overseas guests during the year were Mina Corson, who taught at the Geneva Park Weekend, and Anna Holden who conducted a general class on November 9, 1972, at Hodgson Public School.

The Fiftieth Anniversary of the Society, celebrated at the Toronto Branch Tartan Ball, was the most ambitious venture to date. A total of 630 dancers dined in the Concert Hall and danced in the Canadian Room, a precedent which continued from that year.

The officials of the Canadian National Exhibition extended an invitation to the Branch for a mass demonstration of Scottish Country Dancing in the 1973 Scottish World Festival at the C.N.E. grounds, Toronto. Nearly all the groups were involved in preparing for this mass demonstration.

Attendance at the January Monthly Dance, which is traditionally Beginners' Night, soared to 319 dancers, matching the January, 1971 figure.

A Special Meeting, attended by approximately 220 members, was held on March 10, 1973. The purpose was to add a new class of member to the Toronto Branch. The new title is "Honorary Life Member of the Toronto Branch"; this title will be conferred on all who have served or will serve as chairman of the Executive Committee at the conclusion of their term in office. The motion was carried by an overwhelming majority.

**Erin Mills** group was started by Wesley and Brenda Clindinning to fill a social need in the entirely new community of Erin Mills. It grew rapidly as the result of radio advertisements as well as from Wes Clindinning's teaching. Jean Hamilton continues this excellent tradition by teaching the more experienced dancers and Douglas Stephen, the beginners.

**Oshawa.** Tony and May Mennell, who moved from Toronto to Oshawa early in 1971 and found they were missing too many nights of dancing owing to the distance from Toronto and bad weather, advertised in the Oshawa Times, obtained a hall and had their first dance meeting in September, 1972. They danced in the Rotary Hall, moved to other locations, but returned to the Rotary Hall which is now their "home". Two or three sets meet each week, a remarkable achievement since most of the members of "motor city" work in shifts.

*Jean and Jim LeFevre,  
Sandra Binns and Coll Black  
Demonstration Team 1956*



*His Honour, J. Keiller McKay,  
Lieutenant Governor of Ontario  
opening the Toronto Branch Ball, 1959.  
With His Honour is Donald Sutherland,  
Chairman of the Toronto Branch*



*Elma Grech and David Pogson  
Scottish Country Dancing at the  
St. Andrew's Ball, 1973*



*Hughina Wilson's Children's Class  
Fallingbrook Presbyterian Church,  
1970.*

**Parkview** started in 1972 at the request of the Principal of the Vocational school who had seen Scottish Country Dance performances and thought it should be added to the night school curriculum. At that time there was also a class for people wishing to learn to play the bagpipes. The first teacher was Wesley Clindinning who conducted the class for approximately four years. The group was then taken over by Jean Noble, and since 1981 has been under the direction of Kathleen Kynoch.

**1973-1974.** Membership: 1,020 (953 Adults, 46 Junior members, and 21 Life Members).

Toronto Branch celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the Society on November 3, 1973. Miss Milligan was voted Scots-woman of the Year for 1973. On behalf of the members, the Chairman, James Kynoch, wired a congratulatory telegram to Miss Milligan on her achievement.

On July 12, 1973, the 50th Anniversary Ball of the Society was held in Edinburgh, Scotland. This memorable occasion was attended by the Patron of the Society, Her Majesty The Queen; His Royal Highness, The Duke of Edinburgh; Her Royal Highness, The Princess Anne; Miss Jean C. Milligan; and the Right Honourable Lord Macdonald, the newly-elected President of the Society. Twenty Toronto Branch members attended. Tickets for this elegant event were made available to all branches throughout the world on a pro rata basis.

An extra event on our calendar this year was the Scottish World Festival held at the C.N.E. Grandstand from August 16 to 19. The Immediate Past Chairman, Don Pyper, was instrumental in the Branch's participation in the Festival Tattoo. This was the Branch's biggest undertaking to date. Two hundred Metro Toronto dancers practised for this event with their respective group leaders. Outside rehearsals in May were very cold and wet, but despite the weather all two hundred dancers and "spares" turned up. Twenty-five teams danced for four consecutive nights. To the music played by Stan Hamilton and his Band, the dancers marched onto the field from four directions to form the St. Andrew's Cross. Then they danced "The Triumph" and "The Silver Tassie", after which they formed a large circle around the field and danced "The Quarter Eightsome". The finale was a spectacular 200-hands round followed by the march-off to the East and West ends of the stadium. This was a first-class performance of Scottish Country Dancing and Scottish dance music. The C.N.E. officials were delighted with the performance.

Miss Milligan was unable to attend the 1973 Geneva Park Weekend owing to her sister's illness, but she did send an excellent representative – Mina Corson. An illuminated scroll suitably worded, making Miss Milligan an Honorary Life Member of the Toronto Branch, was accepted on her behalf by Mrs. Corson. The "Glasgow Assembly", a dance medley composed by Bob Campbell of Oakville in honour of Miss Milligan, was demonstrated by a team of dancers trained by Bob Millar. A specially-bound volume of the dance produced by David Pogson was accepted by Mrs. Corson for Miss Milligan.

On November 3, 1973, the 50th Annual General Meeting of the Society was held in Glasgow, Scotland. A ball to celebrate the occasion was held that evening. Some of the Toronto Branch members attended the event, and among them were the Vice-Chairman of the Branch, David Grant and his wife, Betty. During the proceedings, David officially presented

Miss Milligan with the scroll making her an Honorary Life Member of the Toronto Branch. She was elated with this scroll and commented to David that "we were being far too good to her". On the same evening, the Ontario Jubilee Ball, under the Chairmanship of Peter McBryde, was taking place in Kitchener-Waterloo. This was a joint venture of the branches and affiliates in southwestern Ontario. Over four hundred dancers attended about half of whom were from the Toronto Branch. Stan Hamilton and the Flying Scotsmen provided the music. A tape recording of Miss Milligan's voice replying to a toast in her honour was played over the public address system. This enjoyable ball celebrated a memorable occasion, and paid tribute to the Society's Co-founders who worked diligently to pursue and to realize their dreams.

Ray Fraser chaired the Children's Festival, where a record of fifty-four teams entered competitively.

This year's visiting teachers were Derek Haynes from Lancaster, England, on October 18, 1973; and Margaret Anderson from Ayr, Scotland, on May 17, 1974.

**Group Shields.** The suggestion was put forward by Ted Doran that the Social Groups should have individual shields, and it was hoped that they would be ready for the 1974 Tartan Ball. Fourteen groups responded enthusiastically, and had their shields ready to display at the Ball. Members were invited to submit designs for the Toronto Branch shield. The winning design, chosen by the Executive Committee, was submitted by Bob Campbell of Oakville.

**Tartan Ball.** Six hundred and forty-four dancers attended the 1974 Tartan Ball. James Kynoch, the Chairman, presented the Past Chairmen of the Branch with illuminated scrolls proclaiming them as Honorary Life Members in the Toronto Branch and recognizing their distinguished service. Guests of Honour were Commissioner Ray Bremner, President of the St. Andrew's Society of Toronto, and Major Currie of the Toronto Scottish Regiment.

**Hillcrest** started in 1973. Jean Noble was interested in starting a group and upon a suggestion from Duguld Bowers, librarian at Black Creek, asked at the North York Library on Leslie Street if they would be interested in accommodating Scottish Country Dancing in that Library. The Library expressed interest and Hillcrest started with one set. By the fall of 1974 there were five sets of dancers. Now there are four sets of beginners each Tuesday and eight sets of experienced dancers.

This group is strictly a social one. Many of the dancers are members of the Toronto Branch and also attend the Branch classes.

Hillcrest has demonstrated at Senior Citizens' Homes, the Royal York Hotel, and Thornhill Country Club.

**Newmarket.** In 1973, Alan Moffatt, Social Chairman of the Newmarket Legion Branch 426 Pipe Band, founded the Newmarket group, to provide a social evening for the bandsmen and their wives since pipers spend so much of their time "huffing, puffing, and lubricating". Christine Birch was asked to organize and to teach the group which at first was limited to the members of the band and their wives but this limitation was too restrictive and all interested people were invited to join. Christine and Ken Birch retired



*Ed. Brydie and his band*



*Bobby Brown & 'Scottish Accent'*



*Stan Hamilton and 'The Clansmen',*



*The Bobby Frew Trio*



*Don Bartlett and The Scotians*



*Stan Hamilton, George Armstrong,  
Bobby Brown, and Bobby Frew, 1963.*

to Florida in 1977, and since then, the dancers continue to succeed under the tutelage of Vida Hamilton.

The **Orangeville** group started in the 1973-1974 season as a result of local interest for people who wanted a class in their town without having to drive into Toronto for Scottish dancing. Demonstrations by the dancers were given at Fall Fairs and local functions.

When Jack Millar moved to Toronto in 1975, the teaching duties were taken over by George Douglas who is the present teacher. The original classes were held in the basement of the Orangeville Library, but later relocated in Spring Brook Elementary School where they are still held.

**Trinity** which is taught by John Hurd started in September, 1973, and meets in Seeley Hall, Trinity College, at the University of Toronto has grown from an average of one set to six sets each week.

**1974-1975.** Membership: 1,054 (954 Adults, 8 Honorary, 30 Life and 62 Junior members).

Monthly dances were moved to Forest Hill Collegiate to accommodate the increasing membership. Three hundred and fifty-five dancers attended the January dance. The Branch achieved two new records this year with the Geneva Park attendance at 183 and the Tartan Ball attendance at 660.

**St. Andrew's, Pickering,** started on September 25, 1974, in St. Andrew's Church Hall, Pickering, with eight people in attendance. Maureen Knight was the teacher. In September, 1975, the Club moved to Lincoln Avenue Public School and the membership increased to twenty-four. In September, 1976, Vi Knight assumed the teaching duties. This group still meets at Lincoln Avenue Public School and the current membership is thirty-nine. It hosts two special functions throughout the year: a Christmas dance and an end-of-season dance. On both occasions many Torontonians are present to dance the "Pickering Reel" among other favourites.

**1975-1976.** Membership: 1,051 (933 Adults, 29 Life, and 97 Junior members).

For the second time, Toronto Branch R.S.C.D.S. members danced in the Scottish World Festival of the Toronto Canadian National Exhibition. David and Betty Grant were guests of the C.N.E. Bob Millar co-ordinated the arrangements for the 1976 Scottish World Festival; he worked with Chairman-Producer, David Grant; and members, John Christie, Wes Clindinning, Grace Harris, and Frances Gray.

Life Membership in the Society was discontinued this year and replaced with "Long-Term Membership" of fifteen years' duration. A constitutional revision permits current Life Members the privilege to retain that status within the Toronto Branch.

At the 1976 Tartan Ball, James Kynoch was presented with an illuminated scroll.

**A.S.T.A.** The Association for Scottish Traditions and Arts is a non-profit organization sponsoring Scottish events. It was formed mainly to "improve the image of Scottish culture in Canada".

The Association was formed in 1975 by a group of individuals – Scots, Scots Canadians, descendants of Scots and Scots at heart – who wanted to mount a good Scottish Pavilion in Metro Caravan Festival. Disappointment with countless Scottish shows, some coming from Scotland itself, showing the same narrow aspect of Scotland, and a conviction that far better could be done with local talent, imagination and organization were the motivation for forming a new Scottish group.

The vast problems with organizing a pavilion were known to a small group involved in an early venture in Scarborough Community Centre. This experience was now consolidated by a most heartening response to an appeal for help to plan, build, and run the pavilion, help which stemmed greatly from the City's Scottish Dance Groups. Having thus mustered its army, the Association went on to create the five years of Perth Pavilion which won, in all, nine awards from the Central Caravan Committee. Since the days of those first work parties, so many people have given so much to A.S.T.A. that to write a complete history is impossible. But two outstanding factors can be mentioned as putting A.S.T.A. on its feet: the titanic efforts of the Lothian Dancers to organize, construct, run bars, serve liquor, cook food, serve food, as well as dance; and the enthusiasm and humour of Wally King. Without them, the first A.S.T.A. pavilion would not have materialized.

Mention too must be made of the trust that was given by the many to the few who, as rank amateurs, were trying to introduce new methods of presentation and material not widely used. It says much for the comradeship of the group in those early days.

Since 1975, the Association has been active continuously. As well as the five years of Caravan, it has produced other events as large as the Harbourfront weekend and as small as the many Senior Citizens' entertainments. The latest developments have been the incorporation of the Association into a non-profit organization, the formation of an advanced dancing class, the production of a traditional Scottish "panto" called "Alladie" and the planning of a new Harbourfront event.

**1976-1977.** Membership: 1,203 (1,026 Adults, 29 Life, and 148 Junior members).

Thirty-five Social Groups met in and around the Toronto area.

Although children's dances had been held at different times, it was during David Grant's term of office as Chairman that "Family Night" was established. Since then, Family Nights have been popular and well attended.

Participants in the Scottish World Festival danced: "Wild Geese" (three times through); "Drumelzier" (twice through); and "Round Reel of Eight" (finishing in one large circle, plus eight bars more, and then march off). The second segment contained: "Reel of the 51st Division" (twice through); "Salute to the Piper" (48 bars, plus bumpkin), and "sunburst" march off.

**Bayview Glen.** No report available.

**Bramalea.** This Club was formed in September, 1976, primarily because of the large number of Scottish people who lived in the Bramalea area. It began with eight members who had done some dancing and twelve others who had never danced Scottish Country Dancing, and for nearly six months they



OFFICE OF  
 THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR  
 QUEEN'S PARK  
 TORONTO  
 M7A 1A1

February 12, 1979.

*Dear Mrs. Gray:*

Just a note to thank you very much for inviting me to the Tartan Ball on Saturday, and giving me such a good time. I may say it was certainly my impression that everyone else was having a wonderful time, too. It really was an outstanding evening, and I do congratulate everyone concerned with the arrangements.

Thank you, too, for the beautiful bouquet of red carnations. They add a lovely splash of colour to our home, and I am sure must be helping to cheer up my husband, who is recovering, but slowly. He very much appreciated the card, and was so sorry that he could not be at the Ball on Saturday.

*With kind regards to my dancing  
 companions*

*Sincerely  
 Pauline M. McGibbon*

Pauline M. McGibbon,  
 Lieutenant-Governor.



*The Honourable Pauline M. McGibbon  
 OC, B.A., LLd., D.U., D. Hum.L., B.A.A. (Theatre), Hon. F.R.C.P.S. (C).  
 Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario  
 Tartan Ball - 1979*

danced only “The Sailor” and “Monymusk”. They have gradually improved, however, and now can depend on at least two sets every Monday night. The aspect of the Club which sets it apart from most others is that it has a surplus of men. They are a most friendly, social group who like to dance.

**1977-1978.** Membership: 1,239 (1,111 Adults, 30 Life, and 98 Junior members).

In June, 1977, the Chairman, on behalf of the Branch, sent a telegram to Her Majesty the Queen, Patron of the Society, congratulating her on her Silver Jubilee. The following reply was received from Buckingham Palace:

“I am commanded to convey to you and the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society, Toronto Branch, the sincere thanks of the Queen for your kind message for loyal greetings, on her Silver Jubilee, which Her Majesty much appreciates.”

In July, 1977, Miss Milligan was honoured with a Doctor of Laws degree from Aberdeen University in recognition of her work for Scottish Country Dancing.

Miss Milligan declared the Toronto Branch the largest R.S.C.D.S. Branch in the world; this announcement was made at the Society’s Annual General Meeting in November.

The Branch was represented in the Clans and Scottish Societies’ Booth at the Canadian National Exhibition during the Scottish World Festival in August, 1977.

An original Canadian oil painting by Kay Bowman was presented to Geneva Park in September, 1977, for their courteous service and hospitality extended to the Toronto Branch during the past ten years that the Annual Weekend was held there. The painting was much appreciated. The 2'x3' untitled landscape depicting the Georgian Bay area hangs in the Geneva Park Conference Centre. [\[view painting\]](#)

Two teachers visited from Scotland: Margaret Anderson, who conducted a well-attended class at Hodgson School, and John Drewry, who, during this visit, kindly gave the Toronto Branch Executive permission to print many of his dances in book form. Sandy Robertson arranged for the publication and sale of The Canadian Book of Scottish Country Dances which is well-known and subsequently required numerous reprintings.

On January 9, 1977, the Toronto Branch was once again invited to participate in the Scottish World Festival. Twenty-four teams expressed their willingness to perform. Bob Millar accepted the invitation to be Festival Co-ordinator.

The Toronto Branch is now a Group Member of the Clans and Scottish Societies of Canada, an organization that coordinates and publicizes items of Scottish interest in articles from one clan to another via AN DROCHAID (which means The Bridge). One of its events is the Kirkin’ o’ The Tartans celebrated in St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church, among other Toronto Churches.

At the 1978 Tartan Ball, an illuminated scroll was presented to David Grant for his service to the Branch as Chairman. This marked the third such occasion for the presentation of the scrolls.

**Avonmore Dancers, Orangeville.** Jess Bryden formed this group in 1977 when she moved from Toronto to Orangeville. It continued until 1979 when Mrs. Bryden returned to Toronto.

**Malton.** This all-ladies group started in 1977 as a result of ladies wanting to dance whereas their husbands were interested in soccer. The teachers were Margaret Loudon, Joyce Urquhart, and Ann Donlin.

They amalgamated with Ruth Lynch’s class that met at the John D. Parker School on Tuesdays: it consists of three sets of dancers. Interest in this group is growing. It is still, as in its beginning, all-female.

**St. Margaret’s Church.** At the request of the parents from Grace Harris’ children’s class, the St Margaret’s Church Adult Beginners began in 1977. Mrs. Harris teaches the class.

**1978-1979.** Membership: 1,325 (1,166 Adults. 30 Life, 129 Junior members).

In the summer of 1978, we were all saddened to hear of the death of Dr. Jean Milligan, Co-founder of the Society. She died on July 28 at the age of 92. She was a “grand old lady” who was loved and respected by all who knew her. Her life-long interests were in Scottish Country Dancing and Music, and through these interests made us “one large family”. She engineered Scottish Country Dancing into its present form – a jubilant social conglomeration of people from all walks of life for the enjoyment and pleasure of both the dance and its music. For her unique achievement we remember her.

The Chairman, Frances Gray, and her husband, Neil, represented the Branch at the One Hundredth Anniversary party of the Canadian National Exhibition. All party guests attended this fabulous occasion in century-old costume. It was also during this time that the Chairman and her husband attended a reception and dinner with the Earl and Countess of Caithness. Mrs. Gray and Donald Campbell of the Clans and Scottish Societies of Canada accompanied the Earl and Countess, riding onto the field in the open landau and watching the Festival from the Royal Box.

Later that same evening, the East York Demonstration Team danced for the Duke and Duchess of Hamilton and the Earl and Countess of Caithness at a ceilidh organized by the Clans and Scottish Societies.

In addition to Branch classes at Hodgson, a second location commenced in 1978 at the request of West End Toronto teachers.

The 1979 Tartan Ball on February 10, was another highlight in the history of the Branch. For the first time, we were privileged to have as our guest, Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario, Pauline McGibbon. Her presence lent supreme dignity and natural charm to the evening. It was a truly moving moment when Stan Hamilton and the Flying Scotsmen voluntarily played “Will ye no’ come back again”. The M.C.’s were John Christie and Wes Clindinning. The occasion was organized by Sandy Robertson and his excellent committee.

Overseas guests during the year were Michael Diack, Chairman of the Board of Paterson’s Publications, who arrived unexpectedly one Saturday morning in June. He was entertained by the Chairman taking him to the Georgetown Highland Games. Readers will associate his name with the R.S.C.D.S. books. Secondly, Claire Goodman, a teacher from St. Andrews Summer School, visited last fall. Thirdly, Duncan Macleod, Chairman of the Society, accompanied by his wife



*The Earl and Countess of Caithness, Donald Campbell – Chairman of The Clans and Scottish Societies of Canada, and Frances Gray – Chairman of the Toronto Branch, at the Scottish World Festival, Canadian National Exhibition, 1978*

Sheena visited us. Duncan taught a special class at Bishop Strachan School. The last visitor of the year was Nancy Arnott, who was on a North American Tour for the purpose of conducting Teacher Candidate Examinations.

A happy rapport exists between the Toronto Branch and the Teachers' Association (Canada). The T.A.C. organizes the Examiner's Tour on behalf of all North American Branches of the Society.

George Burnett was appointed official overseas delegate for the Toronto Branch, and in this capacity attends the Annual General Meetings of the Society in Scotland.

The Branch purchased a new public address system capable of being heard in an arena, if necessary.

The Branch donated a sum of money to the Jean C. Milligan Memorial Fund; this sum amounted to \$1.00 per member and was presented to Duncan Macleod during his recent Canadian visit.

**Leaside.** The Leaside Scottish Country Dancers were formed in 1978 by Jean Anderson to offer dancers the opportunity to become involved in an in-depth study of technique, formations, and Scottish music as it relates to Scottish Country Dancing. The group is enthusiastic and growing. These dancers are the nucleus of the "Jean Anderson Dancers". The classes are held at the City Ballet Studios in Leaside.

**1979-1980.** Membership: 1,366 (1,246 Adults, 120 Junior members)

Toronto Branch members hosted guests from New Zealand and held a dance in their honour on October 5, 1979. Following the Scottish Country Dancing, the New Zealanders entertained with some Maori dances. It was a distinct pleasure to meet these visitors who shared a common interest in Scottish Country Dancing.

This year heralded several major changes. For the first time, the Children's Festival was non-competitive on a trial basis since a number of the children's teachers requested a non-competitive format. In the second place, Stan Hamilton's four-piece band (which formed in 1977 as the result of the dissolution of "Stan Hamilton and The Flying Scotsmen") played for the last time. However, Toronto dancers were still fortunate to have excellent music supplied regularly by four bands – The Ed Brydie Band, The Bobby Frew Trio, The Scotians, and The Scottish Accent; and by three pianists – Don Bartlett, Elma Grech, and Anna Robertson.

**Glenview.** The late spring of 1979 brought several like-minded people together to begin the search for dancing facilities in North Toronto. An advertisement was put in the monthly Newsletter for a teacher who could and would cope with "all levels of dancing". After several months of frustration, a home and a teacher were found.

September, 1979, heralded the formation of "The Havergal Scottish Country Dancers" with Bill Stoddart as teacher. During the first year, three sets of dancers met every Thursday enjoying the large new gymnasium at Havergal. Unfortunately, the tile floor proved too much for their legs and feet.



Therefore, they resumed their search for a “sprung wood” floor in the summer of 1980. The Glenview Presbyterian Church (Thursdays at 8:00 pm.) is the present home. Glenview’s attendance averages five sets and the membership is sixty-four.

**1980-1981.** Membership: 1,323 (1,103 Adults, 28 Life, and 192 Junior members).

The visiting teachers this year were Nancy Arnott and Margaret McLaren who were on an Examination Tour. Examinations were centralized, with Toronto hosting its own candidates in addition to those from Buffalo, Detroit, Hamilton, London, Sarnia, and St. Catharines.

The Toronto R.S.C.D.S. has been characterized by a spirit of adventure, adventure that caters to the dancers’ wishes even for brief periods of time. Such was the case with the West End Branch class that terminated this year owing to lack of support; the Gala Day that failed to materialize because of insufficient interest; and the Children’s Festival that reinstated competition after one year of non-competition. These endings were counter-balanced by one equally resplendent “first” – this year Frances Gray received an illuminated scroll for her chairmanship service; she was the first woman to be Branch chairman.

*Mrs. John B. Aird, wife of the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, and Sandy Robertson – Chairman of the Toronto Branch opening the dancing at the Silver Anniversary Tartan Ball.*



*Joyce Frew, Bob Campbell, Bobby Frew, and Dorothy Campbell  
Photograph taken at the Geneva Park Weekend, 1971*

**L.S. Beattie.** This class was started in September, 1980, at the request of the North York Board of Education as part of Continuing Education. It meets every Wednesday from 7 to 9 pm. in L.S. Beattie School on Drewry Avenue, North York. The instructor is Doris Hofmann. During Doris’s absence from September to December, 1981, Lizbeth Rodger taught the class.

**1981-1982** – Twenty-fifth Year. Membership: 1,279 (1,087 Adults, 12 Life, and 149 Junior members).

The Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario, The Honourable John Black Aird and Mrs. Aird attended the Jubilee Tartan Ball at the Royal York Hotel on February 13, 1982. Representatives from the Toronto Scottish Regiment, St. Andrew’s Society, and The 48th Highlanders also attended the dinner. During the dinner, Bill Stoddart, Past Chairman, received an illuminated scroll and Frances Gray presented highlights from the history of the Toronto Branch.

After the dinner in the Concert Hall, the Head Table guests were piped to the Canadian Room where Mrs. Aird and Sandy Robertson opened the Tartan Ball with a waltz.

His Honour and Mrs. Aird and Mr. and Mrs. Robertson observed the dancers enjoy the favourite dances from the previous twenty-four Tartan Balls.

The Toronto Branch continues to grow in membership and in activity and this year marks the beginning of an East End Branch Class for Beginners. This class, taught by John Christie in Scarborough, runs in addition to the classes at Hodgson Public School.

**John A. MacDonald.** In the fall of 1981, a night school course for beginners was mounted by the Scarborough Board of Education. Jean Noble teaches the two sets of dancers who attend regularly on Thursday evenings.

**Woodsworth.** On September 15, 1981, fourteen people met for the first time for dance instruction by Vi Knight. Since that time membership has increased to twenty-nine, averaging seventeen dancers weekly. Mrs. Knight conducts a steps and formations; class followed by social dancing. They meet on Tuesday evenings at J.S. Woodsworth Senior Public School, 120 Sedgemount Drive, Scarborough.



*Silver Jubilee of the Toronto Branch, Tartan Ball, 1982.  
The Honourable John Black Aird and Mrs Aird  
(centre, both photographs)*



## CHAIRMEN OF THE TORONTO BRANCH

|             |                           |
|-------------|---------------------------|
| 1957 – 1958 | Dr. Donald Fraser         |
| 1958 – 1959 | Mr. George L. MacDonald   |
| 1959 – 1960 | Professor Ronald M. Smith |
| 1960 – 1961 | Mr. Donald Sutherland     |
| 1961 – 1963 | Mr. George C. Armstrong   |
| 1963 – 1965 | Mr. Iain Macfarlane       |
| 1965 – 1967 | Mr. J. Reid McAlister     |
| 1967 – 1969 | Major Gil P. Rich         |
| 1969 – 1971 | Mr. David N. Pogson       |
| 1971 – 1973 | Mr. Donald G. Pyper       |
| 1973 – 1975 | Mr. James Kynoch          |
| 1975 – 1977 | Mr. David R. Grant        |
| 1977 – 1979 | Mrs. Frances M. Gray      |
| 1979 – 1981 | Dr. William B. Stoddart   |
| 1981 –      | Mr. Alasdair A. Robertson |

## VISITING TEACHERS FROM BRITAIN

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Miss Jean C. Milligan  | 1957, 1959, 1962, 1963, 1965<br>1968, 1970, 1971, 1975, 1977 |
| Mr. Douglas Henderson  | 1962   |
| Mrs. Mina Corson       | 1967, 1972, 1973, 1975                                       |
| Miss Margaret McLaren  | 1969, 1981   |
| Miss Doris Robertson   | 1970   |
| Mr. Duncan Macleod     | 1971, 1979   |
| Mr. Bill Hamilton      | 1971, 1974   |
| Mrs. Anna Holden       | 1972   |
| Mr. Derek Haynes       | 1973   |
| Miss Margaret Anderson | 1974, 1977   |
| Mr. John Drewry        | 1977   |
| Miss Claire Goodman    | 1978   |
| Miss Nancy Arnott      | 1979, 1981   |

## SOCIAL GROUP FORMATION DATES

|      |  |      |  |
|------|--|------|--|
| 1950 | Matthew Sutherland Dancers (EarlsCourt)  | 1967 | Richmond Hill; White Heather Dancers   |
| 1951 | Falconer Hall  | 1968 | Lothian Dancers  |
| 1954 | Riverdale  | 1969 | Newtonbrook; Thorncliffe Park  |
| 1955 | Coll Black Group; Matthew Sutherland Group; Rosedale; Weston (1955-1957)                 | 1970 | Aurora; Black Creek; Islington   |
| 1956 | Oakville; Petronella   | 1971 | Armour Heights (1971-1976)   |
| 1957 | Calvin; Strathspey & Reel Club   | 1972 | Erin Mills; Oshawa; Parkview School  |
| 1958 | Étienne Brûlé School (1958-1961); Fallingbrook; St. Paul's; Rosedale Juniors; Willowdale | 1973 | Hillcrest; Newmarket; Orangeville; Trinity; Weston   |
| 1960 | Don Mills; Lakeshore; Presteign Heights Church (3 months only); Scarborough              | 1974 | St. Andrew's (Pickering)   |
| 1961 | George C. Armstrong (originally St. Andrew's & St. George's); Oshawa & Port Hope         | 1975 | A.S.T.A.   |
| 1962 | Halton; Mississauga; Thornhill Beginners; York University                                | 1976 | Bayview Glen; Bramalea   |
| 1963 | Port Credit; St. Giles; Unionville   | 1977 | Avonmore Dancers (1977-1979); Malton (1977-1982) – now amalgamated with John D. Parker School Group; St. Margaret's Church Group; Weston Beginners |
| 1966 | Bloorlea Beginners; East York; St. Andrew's (Brampton)                                   | 1979 | Glenview (previously named Havergal)   |
|      |  | 1980 | L.S. Beattie   |
|      |  | 1981 | John A MacDonald Group; Woodsworth   |

Several of the above groups are no longer in existence;  
the dates of disbandment are unknown

## CHILDREN'S GROUPS

Aurora  
Brampton  
Campbellville  
Don Mills  
Fallingbrook (disbanded)  
Leaside (disbanded)  
Newtonbrook  
Oakville  
Rosedale  
St. Clement's  
Thornhill (Petronella) (disbanded)  
Thornhill  
Weston

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