



MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
April 27, 2019
Crescent School, 2365 Bayview Avenue, Toronto, Ontario

1. Welcome to the AGM

Liz Clunie, Chair, welcomed everyone to the eighteenth Annual General Meeting of the RSCDS Toronto Scottish Country Dance Association at Crescent School. The meeting began at 8:45 p.m.

2. Appointment of Scrutineers

Liz Clunie identified Ken Adamson as the Parliamentarian, and Jane Robinson and Michael Taylor as Scrutineers. A count of members identified that 68 were present, providing a quorum. There were 6 non-members present.

MOTION: Paul Muther moved that non-members were welcome to remain for the duration of the meeting; Seconded by Keith Bark. CARRIED.

3. Adoption of the Agenda

MOTION: John Clark moved that the Agenda be adopted; Seconded by Theresa Malek. CARRIED.

4. Acceptance of the Minutes of the 2017 Annual Meeting

MOTION: Theresa Malek moved the 2018 Minutes be approved as circulated; Seconded by Fiona Alberti. CARRIED.

5. Business Arising

Liz Clunie noted that there was no business arising from the Minutes to be addressed.

6. Reports from the Board

a) **Chair:** Liz Clunie provided the following report:

As Chair, I sincerely thank fellow Board members for their assistance and dedication in the past year. One of the challenges that we have been presented with this year is that of locations for events. We have had to cope with using three different locations instead of Broadlands for Sunday events. Thanks to all those who were affected for your patience and flexibility and it looks like we will be able to return to Broadlands for the coming season.

A major location change was that for the Tartan Ball. Despite some initial concerns, the Old Mill Hotel proved to be a fitting substitute for the Royal York. Another potential change is that for monthly dances in view of the fact that Crescent School is increasing their fees. Alternate solutions are being explored and we hope that we can provide a suitable location at a price which will encourage dancers to attend the monthly events.

Maintaining membership levels is a challenge throughout RSCDS and that is one of the Toronto Associations Strategic Goals in our five-year plan along with ensuring a continuing supply of teachers and encouraging members to become volunteers. Without volunteers we could not function, and our



thanks go out to all who devote time and energy in organising and running all our activities throughout the year.

Special mention has to be made of a couple of Convenors who have served the association for many years. Forbes Duncan has convened Monthly Dances since 2006 and is now passing on that mantle on to Max Fothergill. Stella Henderson has headed up the Demo pool for 5 years and is grateful to Caroline Lensen Gentles for taking her place. Forbes and Stella, you have gone above and beyond the call of duty for which the Association is very grateful. Catherine MacLean, unfortunately for us, is relocating to Nova Scotia so Sue Ann Bryce will be taking on the role of Branch Classes Convenor.

A group of dancers who do not necessarily receive recognition as volunteers but certainly volunteer a massive amount of time, resources and energy are the teachers. Stepping down as long serving members of the Teachers' Panel are Teresa Lockhart, Maureen Richardson and Deirdre MacCuish Bark. Our thanks to them and all teachers for your dedication.

The Toronto Association shows appreciation of volunteers at a special dance and RSCDS also recognises those who make a contribution to the society. This year Margaret Rieger was successfully nominated for the RSCDS Branch Award not only for being a former treasurer and chair but for her continued involvement with several committees and overall support of our dancing community. The RSCDS also awarded Deirdre MacCuish Bark the Society Scroll of honour at the November AGM for her huge contribution to the dance community locally and worldwide.

Encouraging youth participation and youth membership is an ongoing aim, but it is of particular importance in view of Toronto hosting the 2020 Spring Fling. Plans for the event are well underway and a series of classes specifically for Millennials have been held to attract young dancers in that 18-35 age range.

If you have accessed the dancescottish.ca website in the last week you will have seen a vibrant new landing page directing people who have seen the Brigadoon advertisement in the Shaw Festival programme to our site and rscds.org. Thanks to all who have worked on this special project and all other projects and events throughout the year to promote interest in and enjoyment of Scottish country dancing.

b) Treasurer:

Wendy Fulton reported that the financial audit had been prepared this year by the accounting firm of Williams & Partners of Markham, Ontario, in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. The audited statements have been duly approved by the Board at the March 13, 2019 meeting. The statements were posted to the Association website. Copies of the Audited Statements had been distributed to the assembled members.

Wendy Fulton reported that we finished the year of 2018 with a loss of approximately \$4,000. This was partially due to expenses at our final Tartan Ball at the Royal York, as well as the ice storm that forced the cancellation of the April 2018 Volunteer Appreciation Dance – but not some of the costs. Other losses were incurred on the other monthly dances as paid attendance did not cover the regular costs. Losses from the November Workshop and Dancing in the Park were largely offset by the Gently Used Clothing Sale and the 50/50 draw. Various Association classes provided revenue to offset some of these losses.



Wendy thanked the Finance Committee of Margaret Rieger, Gary Maidlow, Keith Bark, Paul Muther and Kevin Moloney.

MOTION: Wendy Fulton moved that the membership accept the audited financial statements for the year ending December 31, 2018 as presented; Seconded by Deirdre MacCuish Bark. CARRIED.

MOTION: Wendy Fulton moved that the accounting firm of Williams & Partners of Markham, Ontario be appointed Auditors for RSCDS Toronto Scottish Country Dance Association for the 2019 fiscal year; Seconded by Keith Bark. CARRIED

c) **Secretary:** Nancy White reported the following on behalf of the Board Directors and Committees:

This is a short summary of our Directors' Reports to acknowledge all the great work undertaken this past Dance Season. Copies of our "long form" are on the tables and will also be posted on the Website.

Louis Racic as Vice Chair, reports that our approved Strategic Plan has identified three key goals to address as the Board moves forward with workplans - increasing the availability of skilled teachers, increasing membership and encouraging volunteerism. Louis has also been coordinating Volunteer Appreciation this year. The Volunteer Appreciation Dance devised by Jane Robinson was cancelled last April due to an ice storm but was made-up in September, and earlier this month we held this year's appreciation dance devised by Theresa Malek. That evening it was announced that a new programme devised by Jane Robinson will be danced at next year's dance. Volunteer Awards were given to Anne Anderson, Chris Elliot and Donalda MacDonald for their contributions to their Social Groups and the Association. A Branch Award was also presented to Margaret Rieger for her long support of the Association.

Membership, under Bill Barber, reports that our voting membership has decrease to 291 this year and total membership currently stands at 317. 27 new members joined this year. Most new people joining the Toronto Association come to us through "word of mouth". We attempt to retain new members through the genuine encouragement of new members at Association events. As well, we provide New Member Packets, a welcoming New Members' Tea, and extra practices for the Tartan Ball.

Communications, under Andy Henderson, published our *Set & Link* newsletter ten times this year and maintained a current website. Thanks goes to Donald Holmes, and Rob Lockhart and team for keeping us all informed and up to date. Rob Lockhart continues to post dance videos on the Scottish Country Dance Dictionary website, often as the sole video exemplar of a specific dance. This is especially helpful to the world-wide SCD community and spreads the profile of RSCDS Toronto. This past November, the annual Social Group Liaison meeting was held between the Board and the Association's affiliated Social Groups. Representatives of 14 of our 21 Social Groups attended. Issues discussed included declining attendance (mostly age/health related) and the increases in facility rentals.

Programs is under Irene Bailey. This portfolio includes:

- the Toronto Workshop: Convenor Christy Barber
- the Monthly Dances: Convenor Forbes Duncan
- the Tartan Ball: Convenor Laurie McConachie
- and Dancing in the Park: Convenor Dave Drewett



The Workshop and Afternoon Dance held at Branksome Hall drew 148 participants. The teachers this year were Andrew Smith from the University of Kansas, USA, Sara Posen from St. Catharine's and our own Association teacher, David Booz. Live music for all the classes was provided by musicians Laird Brown, Don Wood, Don Bartlett and Fred Moyes. A new initiative, taught by Moira Korus, focused on drawing in absolute beginners, and was very successful!

Monthly Dances were held in October, December, January and March, in addition to the two Volunteer dances mentioned earlier held in September and April, and the Tea Dance held with the Workshop. Over all attendance was down for Monthly Dances as illustrated in the graphic table provided in last month's *Set & Link*. Many thanks to Forbes for gathering this information as it gives an overall picture of the fluctuation of numbers attending the dances.

The Tartan Ball, with Guest of Honour, Past Chair Deirdre MacCuish Bark, was enjoyed by 140 participants at our new venue – the Old Mill Toronto Hotel. Some changes were made to the event due to the change in venue, but feedback is that it was an all-round success and enjoyed by everyone.

And finally, under Programs, this year's Dancing in the Park had good turnouts of both membership and newcomers every Tuesday in June, with good weather each evening. There were enough dancers each evening for approximately eight sets.

Education & Training, under Tony Szeto offered classes at Level I, II and III, Extension, as well as one special dance afternoon at Banbury. Many of the new dancers that participated in Association programmed events have become Association Members. Thanks go to Catherine McLean, Class Convenor and Class Representatives. Thanks too, to Teresa Lockhart, Teachers' Panel Chair, and her Panel, for undertaking the creation of engaging dance programmes. The 2018-19 monthly dance and Tartan Ball programmes were devised by Deirdre MacCuish Bark and Dancing in the Park dances in June 2018 were devised by Tony Szeto.

Tony organized Unit 1 Teacher Certificate exams in October and February this year. Six candidates wrote and passed these exams. Tutored by Jean Noble, who was assisted by Moira Korus, five candidates are now enrolled in Units 2 and 3 and two in Unit 5, with testing scheduled in May. The dedication of the candidates, teachers and volunteer dance students, fondly called stooges, is greatly appreciated.

Last fall, the Society asked if we would be willing to run a North American Spring Fling in May 2020. After investigations, co-leads Moira Korus and Halyna Sydorenko, assisted by Keith Bark's budgeting experience, have presented a workable proposal for the event which has been approved by the Board.

Outreach / Marketing, under Lyn Barsevskis continues to explore new ways of attracting new dancers to our Association classes and events. Networking with other related organizations and the use of social media platforms such as *Facebook* and *Meetup* are key to encouraging new dancers to join us. Kudos to Lyn and her team, for thinking outside the box and securing a quarter page advertisement in the Shaw Festival program regarding Scottish Country Dancing using the Brigadoon production as the trigger.

The Demo Pool performed 13 paying demos and 4 non-paying demos so far this year – three more are scheduled. The demo fees received to date amount to a total of \$2260. Thanks to Stella Henderson, as



Convenor, for managing the coordination of bookings, event coordinators and available dancers from the Pool.

This concludes the summary of the Directors Reports.

MOTION: Nancy White moved that the Report from the Board Directors be accepted; Seconded by Marie Duncan. CARRIED

7. Report of the Nominations Committee

Chair of the Nominations Committee, Deirdre MacCuish Bark, explained that due to health concerns, our Chair, Jean Lindsay, recently stepped down and the slate of officers was amended and posted two weeks ago to reflect Liz Clunie, Vice-Chair stepping into the position of Chair. This left the position of Vice-Chair vacant. However, Louis Racic has agreed, just this past week, to take this position. The slate therefore has both Chair and Vice-Chair, and the nominations Committee will be looking for a member to fill the position of Program Director as soon as possible.

8. Election of the Board of Directors:

As required by the By-laws of the Toronto Association, a slate of Directors is elected at the AGM of the RSCDS Toronto Association. The slate for the RSCDS TA Board is as follows:

Chair: Liz Clunie
Vice Chair: Louis Racic
Secretary: Fiona Alberti
Treasurer: Wendy Fulton
Director, Programs: Kevin Moloney
Director, Communications: Andrew Henderson
Director, Membership: Bill Barber
Director at Large - Marketing: Ron Macnaughton
Director at Large - Education and Training: Tony Szeto

Deirdre MacCuish Bark confirmed that no other nominations had been received by the Secretary and declared the slate of nominees acclaimed. Liz Clunie welcomed Fiona Alberti, Kevin Moloney, and Ron Macnaughton to the Board and thanked Irene Bailey, Lyn Barsevskis and Nancy White for their contributions on the Board.

9. New Business

a) Revision of Yong Adult Membership Category:

MOTION: Bill Barber moved that the Young Adult membership be extended to member applicants eighteen (18) years to under thirty-five years and that the annual fee for everyone applying for this category be \$43; Seconded by Louis Racic.

Discussion: Bill Barber outlined that this age category (25 – 34 years), often burdened with debt, need encouragement to become members. As an Association we are also trying to promote involvement by this age category in light of the upcoming Spring Fling. Keith Bark pointed out that this categorization will put Toronto out of sync with the Society. We will still need to pay full membership fee to the Society for anyone over 25 years this will take someone's care in accounting. Ron Bell asked if there



was a way to keep new dancers / members engaged over the summer so that they come back. Liz responded that we do run Dancing in the Park in the early summer and lists of interested participants are contacted in early fall regarding classes. The Motion was then restated:

MOTION: Bill Barber moved that the Young Adult membership to extended to member applicants eighteen (18) years to under thirty-five years and that the annual fee for everyone applying this category be \$43; Seconded by Louis Racic. CARRIED

b) Procedure Manual Revisions:

Nancy White outlined how there come to be revisions to the Procedure Manual outlining 1) the changes needed related to the motion to change the Young Adult membership category; 2) that the Volunteer Coordinator duties have been transferred to the Vice-Chair position; 3) that additional changes better reflected our existing Committee structure; and 4) “for the purpose of Insurance coverage” was added to explain the need for affiliated groups to inform the Board of scheduled events.

MOTION: Nancy White moved that the revisions to the Procedure Manual as present to the Membership be approved; Seconded by Lyn Barsevskis; CARRIED

c) Honorary Life Membership

Louis Racic acknowledged it has been our custom to provide outgoing Chairs with an Honorary Life Membership. Jean Lindsay has served on the board for six years, initially as Program Director before assuming the position of Vice Chair followed by Chair. During that time, she served on the 2012 Strategic Planning Committee and the subsequent 2017 review. She also dedicated many hours to review the Yellow Book.

MOTION: Louis Racic moved, to acknowledge Jean Lindsay for her dedication and contributions to the RSCDS Toronto Association, that she be awarded an Honorary Life Membership; Seconded by Andy Henderson; CARRIED

Louis Racic noted that Jean could not be at the AGM to receive this award. He noted that instead of a certificate we would be presenting her a pewter quaich at a later date and extended best wishes to her.

10. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm.

MOTION: Keith Bark moved that the meeting be adjourned. Seconded by John Clark. CARRIED

Submitted by
Nancy White, Secretary
April 29, 2019

Liz Clunie, Chair

Date