



Orange County Ceilidh



Newsletter of the Orange County Branch of the RSCDS

Volume 43, No. 7

January/February 2025

Visit our website at www.rscds-oc.org

“For naught can cheer the heart sae weel, As can a canty Highland reel” — Robert Fergusson

Greetings from the Chair

The holiday season is upon us once again! I hope all members had an enjoyable Thanksgiving holiday with family and friends. I am especially thankful for my Scottish dancing friends and the enjoyment (and good exercise) that dancing provides.

Next up on the schedule is our annual Christmas Ball on December 14th. I hope we will see you there to dance to the delightful music of Flindrikin. We will have a plentiful buffet supper at the first break and a few enticing opportunity prizes.

The combined LA, OC and SGV branches will celebrate the 265th birthday of Robert Burns on his actual birthday – January 25, 2025, with our annual Burns Supper & Ball at the Torrance Woman’s Club. Please join us for a fabulous evening of good food, good friends, and great dancing to the music of Andy Imbrie and Caroline McCaskey. Reservations are required for this event. You can find the flyer with the reservation form in your local class or on our branch website. In years past, a toast to the queen (or king) was a part of the ceremony. See page 3 for a very interesting toast provided by Doug Macdonald at the 2000 Burns Ball.

Looking ahead, some Orange County dancers will be dancing at the annual Cerritos International Friendship Festival on February 1. And I hope you will be able to attend the 50th anniversary celebration of the San Diego branch on March 29-30. Visit www.dancescottishsd.org/50th-anniversary/ for details and reservations.

Looking very far in the future, the Southern California Interbranch committee will be hosting a Catalina Workshop and Ball at the famous Avalon Casino Ballroom May 1-3, 2026 (yes, that’s 2026 – that’s how far in advance the ballroom books up). Teachers and musicians are still to be confirmed but put the date in your calendar now. Event chair Doris Fisher is collecting donations to help keep the cost down. An LA member has put up \$1000 to be matched by other members. If you’d like to contribute, contact Doris at doris.fisher@gmail.com!

Happy holidays to everyone,

Terri Speakman, Chair



Orange County Classes

MONDAY

Columbus Tustin Recreation Center
17522 Beneta Way, Tustin
Intermediate: 7:30 – 9:30 p.m.
Connie Walker: samanthasem@yahoo.com
Pat Zschoche: swisslassie@hotmail.com

WEDNESDAY

Columbus Tustin Recreation Center
17522 Beneta Way, Tustin
Basics: 7:00 – 8:15 p.m.
Beginner: 8:15-9:30 p.m.
Connie Walker: samanthasem@yahoo.com

FRIDAY

Columbus Tustin Recreation Center
17522 Beneta Way, Tustin
Experienced: 7:30 – 9:30 p.m.
Pat Zschoche: swisslassie@hotmail.com

Note: Classes require enrollment through Tustin Parks and Recreation (www.tustinca.org)

The Next Big Event

Burns Supper & Ball

January 25, 2025,

5:00 p.m.

Torrance Woman's Club

Music by Andy Imbrie

& Caroline McCaskey

Calendar of Events

(see branch website rscds-oc.org for flyers of upcoming dances)

HERE

December 2024

- 14 Andrew Rankine Memorial Christmas Ball, Grand March 7:00 p.m., Buffet supper at first intermission. Tustin Senior Center, music by Flindrikin

January 2025

- 25 Burns Supper and Ball hosted by Orange County, Los Angeles and San Gabriel Valley branches, 5:00 p.m., Torrance Woman's Club; music by Andy Imbrie and Caroline McCaskey. Reservations required by Jan 13.

February 2025

- 8 Branch Beginner Dance, 7:00 p.m., Tustin Senior Center, recorded music

March 2025

- 8 Branch Afternoon Dance, 4:00 p.m., Tustin Senior Center, music by the SO-CALedonians

THERE

December 2024

- 31 L.A. Branch Hogmanay Dance, 5:00 p.m. El Segundo Woman's Club (**revised location!**), recorded music

February 2025

- 15 San Gabriel Valley Branch Ceilidh, 4:00 p.m., St. James Episcopal Church, South Pasadena music by the SO-CALedonians
- 22 LA Branch Beginner Dance, 7:00 p.m., First Christian Church, Studio City, recorded music

March 2025

- 15 San Gabriel Valley Branch Tea Dance, 4:00 p.m., Church of Our Saviour, San Gabriel, recorded music
- 22 LA Branch Beginner Dance, 7:00 p.m., Torrance Cultural Arts Center, recorded music
- 29-30 San Diego Branch 50th Anniversary Weekend. Visit www.dancescottishsd.org/50th-anniversary/ for full details and reservations.

ELSEWHERE

February 2025

- 14-16 Aloha Winter Weekend, Honolulu, HI. Music by the Humuhumunukunukuapua'a and Strathspey Society Band ; Teachers Bruce Herbold and David Newitt. More info at RSCDSHawaii.org
- 16-21 RSCDS Winter School, Pitlochry Scotland

April 2025

- 4-6 Washington DC Branch Capital Weekend. Teachers Graham Donald and Tracey Applebee, music by Thistle House. www.capitalweekend.org
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Minutes of the COM of November 10, 2024

Meeting Highlights:

- **Treasurer's Report:** Current balance in the checking account is \$11,924, of which the Scholarship Fund balance is \$2298. Membership to Scotland and insurance will be paid this month. It was approved to move the bank account to US Bank.
- **Membership:** 2024-2025 membership is currently 29 members and 37 associate members.
- The cost to rent the Tustin Senior Center will increase by \$2/hr to \$63/hr.
- We are signed up to participate in the Cerritos International Festival of Friendship on Feb. 1.
- The Intermediate class at Columbus Tustin will move from Monday evenings to Tuesday evenings starting next March. Discussion is underway to start a new basics class on Monday nights in Huntington Beach.
- Christmas Ball: Flindrikin is confirmed as musicians; Pete and Line will supply hospitality for Ron and Gary and Connie Walker will house Lisa. Connie will also provide transportation for the musicians. Edie will prepare opportunity baskets.
- We will have the same monthly dance schedule as 2023-24 – no dance in January, April, August or October. The March dance will again be an afternoon dance at 4:00 and the SO-CALedonians will be invited to provide the music.

The next Committee of Management meeting will be held on February 2, 2025. Copies of the full minutes of the meeting are available from Recording Secretary Randi Kraemer.



Celebrating November and December birthdays

Orange County Ceilidh

Toast to the Queen Burns Supper, January 22, 2000

It is traditional on these occasions to present a toast to the Queen. We in the RSCDS toast her particularly as the Patron of our Society. It is by virtue of the Queen's patronage that the Society can call itself Royal. But, to be truthful, the Queen's role as Patron does not have a lot of day-to-day impact on the Society. In actuality, the Queen's duties as Patron don't occupy a large portion of her time. She doesn't go to class regularly, and, although she has visited Headquarters in Edinburgh, she doesn't come in to work every day.

But it is appropriate, particularly this year, to remember the one occasion on which the royal connection made a fundamental difference to the direction of the Society.

It was before the Society was Royal; it was just the Scottish Country Dance Society back then. And it was before the present queen was on the throne. The king was George VI, and his wife was another Queen Elizabeth, who had been born into the minor nobility as Lady Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon.

Neither George nor Elizabeth had been raised to be King and Queen. George was the younger brother of the heir to the throne, and was expecting to live out his life as the Duke of York. It was only when his older brother, Edward VIII, abdicated the throne to marry the woman he loved, that George and Elizabeth were forced, somewhat unwillingly, into the role of monarchs.

Neither was particularly fitted for, or comfortable with, the role. George had a bad stutter, and both of them were painfully shy in public situations. Their subjects, too, did not know quite what to make of their somewhat awkward new sovereigns. It wasn't until their decision to remain in London during the worst of the German blitz that they won the virtually universal respect of their subjects.

As most dancers know, another story of heroism which came out of that war was the story of the British soldiers who, during their time in a German prisoner of war camp, devised a dance in order to maintain a part of their heritage under very difficult conditions. That dance was "The Reel of the

51st Division". After the war, this episode came to public attention. Dancers worldwide expressed the opinion that this new dance should be published as part of the Society canon.

Who could resist the appeal of a story like that?

Well, what the histories of the Society will not generally emphasize is: The Society could resist it. Notwithstanding public opinion, they weren't inclined to make an exception to their longstanding tradition of publishing only dances from old manuscripts of the 18th and early 19th centuries.

But then the Queen spoke up...

"Well, I don't see why you can't make an exception.", she said. I'm paraphrasing here, since I wasn't there. We'll probably never know if this was just an offhand whim or a deeply held conviction, but one of the benefits of royalty is that even those offhand whims have the force of majesty behind them. Scottish though they were, the ladies of the society were still loyal subjects of the crown, and thus, "The Reel of the 51st Division" appeared as dance #10 in Book 13, called the Victory Book, published in 1945.



Contrary to the fears of the Society, this action did not open the floodgates to the introduction of modern dances. Eighteen more years went by and eight more books came out before another contemporary dance appeared in a Society book. In the meantime, the devising of new dances, which had always been going on to some degree, gradually gained acceptance. More and more devisers took to publishing their own dances: James Cosh, for instance, published "Mairi's Wedding" in 1954. Finally, in 1963, the Society published Book 22, which was made up entirely of dances of modern devising. Dance # 1 in that book was "The Reel of Mey", which is on our program tonight, and could legitimately be said to be the second modern dance published by the Society.

It is interesting to speculate on the current state of dancing if the queen's opinion had not carried the day. John Drewry would be a pensioner dancing in his local class in Aberdeen. The Society, after publishing 40 books of dances from old manuscripts, would probably be starting to seriously worry about how many old manuscripts were still around. We wouldn't have the Rondel or the Knot; we wouldn't have the Tournée.

2024 Asilomar Weekend



Left: A record number of attendees from southern California

Below left: Musicians Dan Emery, David Courret-Knight and Dave Wiesler of Thistle House

Below right: the Orange County branch attendees



It's not an unmixed blessing as you can see, but I think that no one today would argue that the dancing is not a richer art form by virtue of being a mixture of the old and the new, of the traditional and the modern.

We would also have missed out on a peculiar form of genius. People like James Cosh, Roy Goldring, Derek Haynes, Hugh Foss, and Bob Campbell, although they might be well remembered by their local branches, would not have made a contribution which will literally live as long as the dancing does. It is satisfying to know that when the next century rolls around, dancers, maybe right here in Dabney Hall, will welcome it with "Mairi's Wedding" and "Let's Have a Ceilidh" and maybe even "St. Nicholas Boat", as well as "Corn Rigs" and "The Lea Rig".

And talk of centuries is appropriate here: Queen Elizabeth, that former Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon, who played such a fundamental part in starting it all, will celebrate her 100th birthday on August 4 of this coming year. So, I would invite you to join me in a toast to Queen Elizabeth, the patron of the Society ... and to Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother.

Doug Macdonald



Welcome to new members Kathryn Moseley and Valerie Schmidt.

Orange County dancers Pat Zschoche, Steve Bryan, Flora Morgan, David Morgan, Connie Walker, Connie Learn and Karen Kerman dressed as "Toast to the Mousies" at the LA Halloween dance.



Orange County Ceilidh

Lachin y Gair

Years have roll'd on, Loch na Garr, since I left you,
Years must elapse ere I tread you again:
Nature of verdure and flow'rs has bereft you,
Yet still are you dearer than Albion's plain.
England! thy beauties are tame and domestic
To one who has roved on the mountains afar:
Oh for the crags that are wild and majestic!
The steep frowning glories of dark Loch na Garr!

—Lord Byron 1807

Romantic era poet Lord Byron craves the scenic area of his youth and childhood in Highland Aberdeenshire. *Lachen y Gair* or Dark Lochganar, written in 1807, describes the land of Lord Byron's adventures and how he misses it. The poem also forms the basis of a song later composed by Beethoven.

Geographically speaking, Lochnagar is one of 11 summits in a Grampian Mountain ridge, rising spectacularly above Deeside and the Royal Balmoral Estate. Given the close proximity to the estate, many royal links exist. Queen Victoria reputedly hiked to the peak in 1848.

A magnificent corrie or cauldron dents the lofty northeast face and cradles a lochan at its base. The name *Lochan na Gaire* or Lochnagar originally referred to this lochan, translating to “goat lake” or the “little lake of noisy sound” in English. *Beinn Chìcochan*, probably the Scottish Gaelic name for the mountain, means “breast-shaped mountain”. The true summit is called *Cac Càrn Beag*, meaning “small cairn of feces”. However, another explanation suggests *cac* is a corruption of *cadha* or slope, which renders the name “little cairn of the slope”.

Whatever tag is given to this location, it remains a popular venue in any season. Cliffs are renowned for ice climbing, with skiing in the surrounding gullies. The peak is a Munro (above 3000 feet), and hillwalkers enjoy the challenge, as well as majestic waterfalls and peaceful Loch Muick. “For sheer variety this must be

Orange County Ceilidh

one of Scotland's very best day walks.” Nick Drainey in the October 2013 *Scots Magazine* recommended Dark Lochnagar in his “Take A Hike” monthly column.

Conservation goes hand-in-hand with the recreation as Lochnagar gives its name to the “Deeside and Lochnagar National Scenic Area”. This includes two designated areas of special protection for breeding dotterels (small water bird in plover family) and golden eagles.

There are a total of four Scottish country dances that bear the name Lochnagar. “Dark Lochnagar,” a 32-bar strathspey for 2 couples was devised by Iain Boyd and is published in Scottish Country Dance Archives. It features a unique beginning of set and link twice and then both the Little Spiral and Big Spiral are used to progress. Another 32-bar strathspey by John

Drewry is known as “Lochnagar” or “The Royal Mountain”. As an avid hill-walker, John Drewry devised dances after many sights in the natural world. This particular dance was published in his collection “Summer” in 1986.

Derek Haynes featured Lochnagar in a reel devised in 1991 and published in Carnforth Collection of Scottish Country Dances. This 32-bar reel includes a nifty figure of turning all your corners alternately—1st, 3rd, 2nd, and 4th—to end in double triangles.

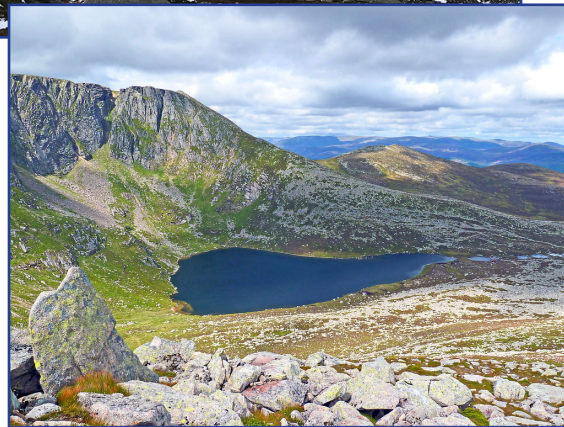
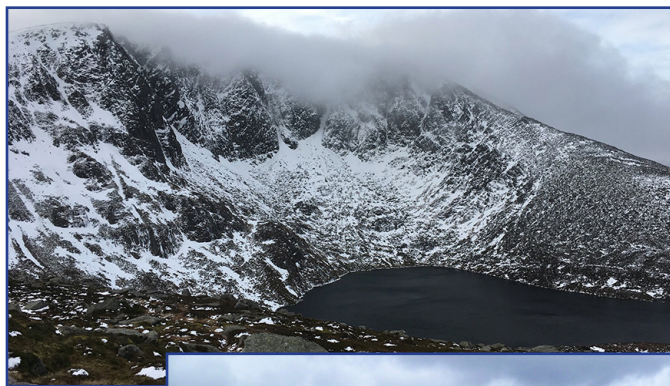
Charles Ryer devised a 40-bar jig to complement Lochnagar and its royal links. “Royal Lochnagar” was published

in 2014 in “A Whisky Sampler”.

A distillery located near Balmoral Estate on the south side of the River Dee produces the Royal Lochnagar single malt whisky; a fitting tribute to “The Royal Mountain.”

Whatever your ability or preference—ice climbing or Scottish country dancing—an association with Lochnagar and its peaks is sure to be memorable.

Karen Kerman



Some Unwritten Rules of Scottish Country Dancing

Definitions:

Facts: As written in a form not likely to change, for example: the instructions for a published dance. Rumors and hearsay are sometimes mistaken for facts.

Dogma: Considered rules from high authority, *e.g.* RSCDS Headquarters. May vary in time and interpretation. Sometimes written, sometimes promulgated verbally, with varying success.

Common Practice: Although not dogma, the way things are usually done. Local variations may exist, giving arguments about what is “right”. These are the Unwritten Rules.

Examples of Common Practice:

Hands Across: No rule on whose hands are on top. Some areas say first woman’s hand is on top (*ed.*: common in LA/OC). I prefer hands to be

taken as they are raised, so the hands on top are those that raised them first. Hands are taken across, not clumped in the middle. For three hands across, all join in “shake hands” grip.

Setting in Line: If there are 3 people, the middle person’s hands are up. Alternatively, for setting or circles, it’s “thumbs right” where each person has left hand palm down and right hand palm up. (Common in LA/OC)

Final Circles: Any couples standing out are invited to join in a final circle. Sometimes all sets in a line join in one very large oval.

Casting Off: On a crowded floor, casting off can mean collisions with the next set over. To help, the man lets the woman from the next set go in front.

Five Couples: If an extra couple “shares a round” with the fourth couple, the fourth couple stays in second place after their first round of the dance and the fifth couple starts at the top.

Mel Briscoe

Alexandria, VA 1998



Andrew Rankine Memorial Christmas Ball

December 14, 2024, Doors open 6:30 p.m., Grand
March 7:00 p.m., Buffet supper at first intermission
Tustin Senior Center, 200 C Street, Tustin
Live music by Flindrikin
Cost: \$40 Dancers; \$30 Non-dancers

GRAND MARCH

Bill and Rajeev's Wedding Jig	J B	Lajoie/Spark O' Water
Toast to the Mousies	R I	Book 53
Miss Jane Muirhead of Dunsmuir	S B	Winter/Dunsmuir
The Ship in Full Sail	J A	Forbes/Craigievar 2
La Famiglia Graziani	S I	Landon/Woodhall 3
Crom Allt	R B	Goldring/RSCDS Gr 3
Welcome to Ayr	J I	Book 47
The House Keys of Lisbon	S A	Landon/Woodhall 4
The Cranberry Tart	J I	Glasspool/RSCDS 30
Midsummer Moon	S B	Moody/Salute to SD
Blooms of Bon Accord	R I	Drewry/Deeside 2
The Pawling Porch	R B	Brunken/Moments
The Wild Geese	J B	Book 24
The Peat Fire Flame	R A	Drewry/Bon Accord
The Calican Scot	S B	Tague
Best Set in the Hall	J I	Book 46
Scott Meikle	R I	Book 46

Burns Supper and Ball

January 25, 2025, Supper 5:00 p.m., Dancing 6:30 p.m.
Torrance Woman's Club, 1422 Engracia Ave., Torrance
Cost: \$80; no tickets at the door
Music by Andy Imbrie and Caroline McCaskey

Come Under My Plaidie	J B	Book 10
The Kissing Bridge	R I	Book 47
The Dundee Whaler	S B	Clowes/Ormskirk 1
Best Set in the Hall	J I	Book 46
Pinewoods Reel	R A	Book 53
Burns Night	J B	McOwen/Boston 50th
Toast to the Mousies	R I	Book 53
The Falkirk Lass	S B	Book 53
Niles Roberts Farewell	J A	Book 53
The Glengarry Homestead	S I	Brenchley/Kang Paw
The Magic of Merrill	R I	Ramshaw/SF Dances
The Cranberry Tart	J I	Glasspool/30 Pop V2
Lady Dumfries	R B	MMM 1
The Library of Birmingham	S A	Book 49
Chased Lovers	J I	Book 53
The Deil Amang the Tailors	R B	Book 14

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February Branch Beginner Dance

February 8, 2025, Dancing 7:00 p.m., recorded music
Tustin Senior Center, 200 C Street, Tustin
Cost: \$15 Members; \$18 Non-Members

SPECIAL BEGINNER SECTION

All Things Nice	J B	Ronald/Form. Found.
Easy Peasy Rights and Lefts	J B	Collin/Musicians' Wedd
Skye Time	R B	Skipper/Leaflet
Star Trek	J B	
The Dhoon	J B	Hamilton/SCD Children
Ferry Boat	R B	Hunt/Let's All Dance

EXPERIENCED SECTION

Welcome to Ayr	J I	Book 47
The Pawling Porch	R B	Brunken/Moments
Scotch Mist	S A	Drewry/Summer 9
Glastonbury Tor	R I	Book 47
The Calican Scot	S B	Tague
Maitland to Manchester	J I	Wallace,Thomas/SF
The Waipu Wanderers	J B	West/Whangarei
Porchester Hall	S I	Meyer/London Jubilee
The Ship in Full Sail	J A	Forbes/Craigievar 2
Bill and Rajeev's Wedding Jig	J B	Lajoie/Spark O' Water
Smiling Lila	R I	Bartlett

March Afternoon Dance

March 8, 2025, Dancing 4:00 p.m.
Tustin Senior Center, 200 C Street, Tustin
Cost: \$18 Members; \$20 Non-Members
Music by the SO-CALedonians

Alan J. Smith	J B	Book 45
Smiling Lila	R I	Bartlett
Porchester Hall	S I	Meyer/London Jubilee
The Dancing Master	J A	Drewry/RSCDS 30 Pop
Ardnahoe	S I	Robertson
The Lass of Richmond Hill	R B	Turnbull/Graded 2
Best Set in the Hall	J I	Book 46
Starry Night	R I	Harmon/50 Yrs LA
The Falkirk Lass	S B	Book 53
The Cranberry Tart	J I	Glasspool/30 Pop V2
The House Keys of Lisbon	S A	Landon
Hedwig's Reel	R B	Phillips/RSCDS Gr 2
Burns Night	J B	McOwen/Boston 50
The One O'Clock Canon	R A	Book 47
Glasgow Lasses	S B	Book 34
The Roselath Cross	J I	Book 41
Glastonbury Tor	R I	Book 47

OC BRANCH SCHOLARSHIPS

Revised 2020

The Branch has established a scholarship fund to encourage the development of Scottish Country Dancing teachers, dancers, and musicians in Orange County, and to provide opportunities for Southern California Scottish Country Dancing dancers to experience high quality live music both as listeners and as dancers.



To be eligible for a dance scholarship, the applicant must be a current member of the Orange County Branch and be presently attending class regularly for at least one year. Preference will be given to applicants interested in pursuing teacher training.

To be eligible for a musician scholarship, the applicant must be a resident of Southern California, have demonstrated an interest in playing Scottish Country Dancing music, and should play an instrument relevant to Scottish Country Dancing, such as accordion, fiddle, keyboard, piano, recorder, etc.

Applications are available on the branch website and at branch dance classes. Applicants must provide information on how the funds will be used and will need to provide documentation of attendance. Requests must be received at least 30 days before the funds are needed. Awards will be limited to a total of \$500 a year. Requests and awards will be confidential. Scholarships will be granted without attention to race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, color, nationality, ancestry, age, or place of origin.

The dance scholarship is in honor of Orange County Branch founding member and long-time dancer Dorothy Craik. The musician scholarship is in honor of Andrew Rankine, a noted accordionist, composer and renowned Scottish Country Dancing band leader.



If you are interested in applying, send your application to Scholarship Committee, c/o RSCDS-Orange County Branch, 8361 Castilian Dr., Huntington Beach, CA 92646 or email to chair Terri Speakman at tjspeakman@verizon.net.

If not deliverable, return to:

The Orange County Branch of the
Royal Scottish Country Dance Society
8361 Castilian Dr., Huntington Beach, CA 92646

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Thanks to all contributors!

**THE ORANGE COUNTY CEILIDH IS
PUBLISHED 6 TIMES PER YEAR.**

Deadline for the March/April *Ceilidh* is
February 1, 2025.