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GHILLIES GAB



February 2012

THE PUBLICATION THAT KEEPS YOU IN THE GRAND CHAIN

Welcome to the first edition of the RSCDS Calgary Branch Newsletter. Our aim is to inform you of RSCDS activities, special events and society information. We shall feedback on past events and advise you of any forthcoming events. No dancing shoes required, cast your eyes over the content and enjoy!

Past Events

On January 15 2012, a team of RSCDS dancers successfully performed at the opening of the recently built Genesis Centre in the NE of Calgary. The Genesis Centre promotes community wellness and is not only a venue for sport and recreation, but a place which caters to the diverse interests of the community. Thank you to the dancers who volunteered, we certainly had a good turn out.

Demonstration at the Genesis Centre



Robbie Burns Night was hosted on January 21 2012 at Confederation Park 55+ Activity Centre. The event was a fun filled evening and included Modern Dancing on the programme as well as Scottish Country Dancing. Non dancers were encouraged onto the floor to participate in the reels and jigs!!! Music was provided by Mercat Cross, and with a bustling attendance of 120 people, the evening was a huge success. Thank you to all the hard working people who assisted behind the scenes and to Janyne and John Betram for organizing.

For Friends, For Fun, For Fitness



A recent study found that dancers aged 60 to 85 who performed reels and jigs were more agile, had stronger legs and could walk more briskly than people of the same age who took part in other forms of exercise.

Future Events

Workshop and Spring Fling

When "Spring is in the Air" what better way to celebrate than to join us for our Workshop and Spring Fling. Trade your winter coats and boots for your dancing shoes, and head out to Confederation Park 55+ Activity Centre on March 31 2012. The day will commence with a workshop for beginners/intermediate dancers, and following on from lunch, will continue for intermediate/advanced dancers. The Spring Fling will commence with Cocktails at 5:30pm and dinner to be served at 6.00pm. Members and Non members are invited to attend, please join us and dance the night away to the music of Mercat Cross. Whether you join us for the Workshop only, or for the evening of dancing, or both, we look forward to seeing old and new friends. For more information regarding cost, programme, ticket purchase etc, please visit our website www.rscdscalgary.org, where you will also find information regarding other future events.

Tradition of Scotland

Cheese Scones

Ingredients:

- 6oz (180g or 1½ US cups) self raising flour
- 1oz (30g or ¼ stick) butter
- 1 large egg
- 2 or 2½ tbsp milk
- 4oz (125g or one stick) grated cheese (use whatever strength you prefer)
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp mustard powder
- Cayenne pepper to taste

Method:

Mix the flour, salt and pepper together. Rub in the butter and then mix in the cheese. Beat the egg and add in the milk; add mixture to the dry ingredients to make a soft, elastic dough. Roll out the mixture on a floured surface but not too thinly. Cut into round shapes and place on a well greased tray. Brush the top with milk and sprinkle a little extra cheese and pepper on top.

Bake in a pre-heated oven on a high shelf at 220C/425F/Gas Mark 7 until golden brown.



Serve warm with butter and extra grated cheese if you wish to indulge - and enjoy the butter melting in your mouth from the warmth of the scone - Delicious!

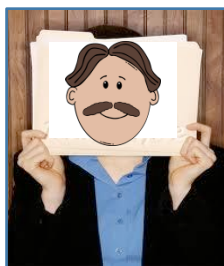
Congratulations to our Royal Patron



This year marks the Diamond Jubilee (60 years reign) of HM Queen Elizabeth II. In 1947 her Majesty became Patron of the Scottish Country Dance Society. In 1951, her father, George VI, conferred the designation "Royal". Upon succeeding to the throne in 1952, HM Queen Elizabeth graciously re-confirmed her patronage and the use of the title, Royal Scottish Country Dance Society.

Over the years she has shown a great interest in the organization, and is herself a country dancer. There are various commemorative products on sale in the UK to recognize this momentous occasion.

The Ladies Man



I'm a two-sex Scottish Dancer, and may seem rather dim,
But I never spend one evening as a full time her or him.
I change my sex from dance to dance, my corners always alter –
It's really not surprising I occasionally falter.
The old and simple dances I can manage very nicely,
And I can learn a new dance and do it most precisely.
But when it comes to next week I don't know if I can,
For I learnt it as a woman and dance it as a man.
And so, you men who have the luck to stay always the same,
When female gentlemen go wrong be sparing with your blame.
I'll add a postscript to this tale – one comfort I have got:
When both the women change their sex it doesn't show a lot.

Poem: by the late Patricia Batt

The mosquitoes, or midges, as they are known in Scotland may have caused the jumping that developed into Scottish Country Dancing.

Newsletter Contributions



We would appreciate any suggestions, or news you may have towards making this newsletter interesting and enjoyable. Contributions in the form of announcements, news or articles for the newsletter are welcome and should be sent to Anne Angus at kenanne.angus@gmail.com.

The deadline for contributions for the next issue is : Monday 27 February 2012.

Dancing Etiquette



Though it can be done informally, there is a strain of formality running all through modern Scottish Country Dance. The extent to which etiquette is observed varies from group to group and also depends on context (it is more relaxed in a class than at a party, and very closely observed at a formal ball).

Dancers of either gender may ask their partner to dance. It is expected that if you arrived with a partner you will dance the first dance with them, and one other on the program (either the last dance or one favourite), and dance with others for the rest of the evening.

It is considered bad manners to start forming up sets for the next dance before it has been announced. Wait until either it is announced or the band has played the first few bars of the tune. Do not walk through a set of dancers – walk around instead.

When forming sets on the dance floor, join the set at the bottom-- don't try to crowd in "wherever".

The first man in each line of dancers should do the counting – count down the line telling each couple clearly what position they are in their set. If your partner is late coming into the line, stand on the men's side of the set during the count. This ensures that one line holds the right number of people.

Each dance will begin and end with the musicians playing a chord, which is used to acknowledge one's partner: gentlemen give a shallow bow, ladies a shallow curtsy.

It can be fun to embellish the dance if you are confident with your dancing and with the dance. Remember you can put other dancers off by doing this. Be particularly courteous to beginners – they find the whole thing confusing enough anyway without you going out of your way to complicate matters.

When the dance finishes, thank your partner and your set. The dancer who did the asking then escorts their partner off the floor.

Did you Know

The Strathspey is a music and dance form that is unique to Scotland. It is common in piping, and is one of the three main forms in Highland and Scottish Country Dancing. The Strathspey was originally conceived for the fiddle, using a peculiar bowing technique that would produce its characteristic "scotch-snap" rhythm; many newer strathspeys were written in the 18th and 19th centuries.