



The Leeds Branch Newsletter

Children's Festival 2006



Future Newsletters

The Branch welcomes your news, stories, views, questions etc... Please send all copy for future newsletters to Stella Summers. Her e-mail address is stellaian@sums4.fsnet.co.uk Copy should be with her at least three weeks before publication for the November, February and May issues, and early July for the August issue.

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If for some reason you don't receive any copy of the Branch newsletter please contact Brenda Burnell on 0113 267 6655.

dancers young and old. Our thanks to Fiona who would certainly like to come again as she thorough enjoyed herself.

The musician once again was our very own Ian Slater who besides playing superbly all afternoon played once again for us in the evening. The MC was once again "yours truly".

On Saturday 18th March around 100 children plus parents and friends gathered once again at the West Park Centre for our Annual Children's Festival.

It was a very enjoyable afternoon with all the children showing their enthusiasm as they danced. My thanks to all their teachers who must have a mammoth task making sure they know all the figures and dances.

Our adjudicator for the afternoon was Fiona Turnbull who gave some very good advice and pointers to

The Leeds Branch Friday class excelled themselves this year by dancing the Reel of Five. Thanks to Brenda for her time and patience teaching them.

Thanks to Kathie Dosell for acting as Scribe, Val Hall for the refreshments, the Tuck Shop team, Stella Summers on the door and to anyone else who helped on the afternoon. We look forward to our next Festival in March 2007 which will be our 30th.

Jean Dyson

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Subscription to this Newsletter can be taken out at £3.00 for 4 issues for non Leeds Branch Members.

Contact Brenda Burnell for details and form.

The Branch web site is www.rscdsleeds.org.uk Why not give it a try.

Leeds Children's Festival 2006

I am always delighted to take part in a children's festival. In March I had the privilege adjudicating at the 2006 Leeds Festival. I prefer non-competitive festivals as they allow the teacher to include every dancer without having to discriminate against the less able. It was especially pleasing that a large audience of family and friends gathered to watch their efforts and to join in the social dances.

There were teams from several places in the northeast and all ages. Everyone was dressed smartly and was eager to show how well they could dance.

From Darlington Terry Chater's beginner's team attracted an Ohh! response as eight tiny dancers aged from six years and upwards took the floor for "The Dhoon" .

The Leeds Branch Friday Group had the Wow! Factor as they performed a challenging dance with four young ladies and one young man; "The Reel of Five". This is a demonstration dance incorporating strathspey and highland steps.

Between these two extremes were another ten teams of varying experience and abilities who all performed with enthusiasm and skill. For even the most confident dancer, courage is required to perform before so many other knowledgeable dancers and in front of an adjudicator who is about to make comments on the team's performance.

Two teams did not have a full team of eight but they managed to dance well despite this limitation. I was sorry to learn that one team had been unable to appear due to difficulties with transport. In these days with new regulations on Child Protection, many teachers experience difficulty travelling with young dancers. I believe every dancer should have the opportunity of dancing socially with dancers from other classes and towns. . I would encourage all branch members and parents to be aware of the problems and look for ways of helping your teachers to provide this vital encouragement.

Scottish Country Dancing should always be challenging and fun and at this festival there were plenty of opportunities for both.

Fiona Turnbull (Richmond Branch RSCDS)

An Invitation!

Once again the White Rose Festival of Scottish Country Dancing is being organised by the RSCDS Leeds Branch with strong support from the Leeds SCD Club. This year it is to be on Saturday 8th July, 2.00pm to 5.00pm, followed by a social dance from 7.00pm to 10.30pm.

It will be located at the Gateways School, Harewood. Robert Whitehead and the Danelaw Band will be providing the music along with Ian Slater, accordion, and Alan Harrison, pipes.

Helpers are needed for a variety of tasks, setting up, reception, marshalling, clearing away, and so on. It would be appreciated if anybody who is able to help either on the day or before it would contact Don Andrews, Lesley Tompkins, or Lesley Enoch: contact details below.

Duties can be arranged so that helpers can dance as well as helping, but a few non-dancers would be particularly welcome!

Don Andrews: **01535 605065**
donald@hbandrews.fsnet.co.uk

Lesley Tompkins: **0113 281 1279**
ltompkins8@msn.co.uk

Lesley Enoch: **0113 277 7113**
l.enoch@btinternet.com

Sat 17th June 2006 7.30pm

SOCIAL DANCE

West Park Centre, Spens Lane

Music: George Meikle & the Lothian Band
M.C: Catherine Livsey

Admission: £6, Non-member £7, Full time Education £3,
Children under 11 £2, Spectators £1

Programme

The Happy Meeting	J32 x 8	Book 29
The Deil Amang the Tailors	R32 x 8	Book 14
Seann Truibhas Willichan	S32 x 8	Book 27
Muirland Willie	J32 x 8	Book 21
Swiss Lassie	R32 x 8	Book 39
Winding Nith	S40 x 4	Johnstone
Mrs Stewart's Jig	J32 x 8	Book 35
Johnnie Walker	M64 Sq set	Whisky Collection (Robson)

INTERVAL

La Flora	J32 x 8	Book 27
Mairi's Wedding	R40 x 8	Cosh
The Duchess Tree	S32 x 8	Brodie Book (Drewry)
The Diamond Jubilee	J32 x 4	Book 31
The Westminster Reel	R32 x 6	Book 45
Gang the Same Gate	S32 x 8	Book 36
Luckenbooth Brooch	J 32 x 8	Glendaroch Leaflet 28 (Dickson)
Duke of Perth	R32 x 8	Book 1

Extras

A Trip to Bavaria	R32 x 4	Collins
General Stuart's Reel	R32 x 8	Book 10
The Plantation Reel	R32 x 5	Pinewoods Book 2 (Moretti)
Cherrybank Gardens (3 couple sets)	S32 x 3	Bankhead Book 1 (Drewry)
Kendall's Hornpipe	J32 x 8	Graded

Getting the Measure of it

Approximately thirty musicians attended George Meikle's course at the Methodist Church Hall, Adel, Leeds, on 18th February. The format for the one-day course was to prepare the music for the twenty sets of tunes which George intended to use for the dance that evening. George invited as many as would to join him in playing for this.



A variety of instruments were played, including accordions, fiddles, a double bass, an oboe and a keyboard. After the first set of tunes, George commented

on how easily this group of people, who had never played together before, were able to gell as a large band, and this spirit of harmony and constructive work continued throughout the day.

I think that the course was both challenging and encouraging for all involved, whatever their ability. The format provided a vehicle for a wealth of tips about playing for Scottish dancing, including stopping and starting, judging and maintaining the tempo and how to work with teachers and dancers.

A superb three-course lunch was provided by Brenda Burnell and her wonderful group of volunteers. A warm 'thank you' is owed to them, and to everyone else who worked so hard to make this day possible.

Finally, heart-felt thanks are due to George Meikle who gave us such a stimulating day. Approximately ten stayed on to join him in playing for the evening dance – a highly enjoyable experience, with George as the safe anchor. When playing for our own dance group's practice the following day, our musicians' group all felt that our playing had gained a great deal from the day before.

Brian Campbell 'Press to Play'

International Week in Pontefract

A group of Branch members again went to St Wilfred's School in Pontefract to take two workshops in Scottish dancing.

Some of the participants were rather reluctant to join in but we had everyone on the floor before they realised it and had two busy sessions dancing simple dances with the help of our more experienced dancers. Thanks to all who helped.



Leeds Branch Note

Follow discussions about recapping it as been agree by the Leeds Branch Committee to try recapping dances at the next few branch dances. Please let committee members have your views on this, so we can decide whether it is worth continuing the recapping next season.

Scarborough Weekend 2006



(Held at The Clifton sorry no, The Crown and sometime The Royal)

We didn't know what we were in for, but it was most certainly fun.

When I returned home after Thursday class I had a message from Yvonne to phone her back and when I did, well what a shock!!! She had received a message from The Clifton at 6.30pm that evening to say that our booking had been cancelled due to the hotel being closed because of some sort of internal problem (a bug) and that they had arranged for us to spend the weekend at The Crown. The mind boggled. In my mind's eye I could see Yvonne with a red-hot communication instrument frantically 'phoning all over the country to tell her weekenders the change of venue. It didn't take much imagination to see that the difficulties of making those 'phone calls were many. People were either already on their way, were out, had moved, gone dancing – all sorts, but as ever, she got things organised.

When I picked up Brenda, Val and Mairi, they were as amazed as I had originally been. Val's husband printed us off a route to where we were going, fully believing we were heading for the Royal. Still, off we went and duly arrived at The Crown. Although they had a car park, they kept it whereabouts and entrance very much under wraps. No one knew where it was which meant the streets outside were jam-packed full of vehicles that looked remarkably as if they belonged to Scottish Country Dancers, which they did. The weather was foul and by the time we had found a parking space and unloaded, everyone was soaked, but awaiting inside was warmth, efficiency, a very nice

welcome and beautiful rooms – whether to the front or rear of the building. The place was lovely and clean, certainly my bed was exceedingly comfortable with a sprung base and good mattress, which was made up with crisp white pure cotton sheets, whose coolness was very welcome after a hard evening's dancing. There were lashings of hot water whenever the hot taps were turned on and fluffy white towels to finish the bath routine. We soon found out the staff were blessed with good senses of humour and would try to do their utmost to provide for our every need. And so to dinner, which was superb, piping hot, even though it was self-service this was swiftly carried out, and devoured in pleasant surroundings, then on to the dance.

Our teacher for the weekend, Andrew McConnell, was well known to us as was our musician George Meikle. We knew with these two it was going to be a good weekend wherever we were. The evening dances were mostly well known and very popular and although our ballroom was rather small, we made up sets both on the wooden floor and the carpet, which was surprisingly comfortable to dance on. We took it in turns to dance on each surface and the evening went by with a great deal of enjoyment, the atmosphere being good from beginning to end.





Saturday morning's class went with a swing and we did some lovely dances. Andrew's relaxed way of teaching with George's lovely music made the class wizz by and it was lunchtime before we knew where we were. The weather had improved and a very pleasant stroll around town and along the prom was most enjoyable, then it was time to head back for dinner and more dancing. Although dinner was not served as quickly as it had been the evening before, it was appreciated that the staff had had to accommodate 50 odd extra guests a such short notice and also deal with a wedding party.

That was another bolt out of the blue!!! The ballroom area at The Crown had been booked for a wedding party for nearly twelve months in advance, which meant that during Saturday, Yvonne and Derek had to do some hard searching for a ballroom big enough to hold us all and at very short notice. It had been suggested that they tried The Grande, which they did. As a ballroom there was loads of space with chairs placed all round, but it would have needed Maggie and Kim, of TV fame, with their fur edged rubber gloves and team of expert cleaners to make the place habitable for the evening so - it was turned down. Our intrepid two, Yvonne and Derek that is, really pulled out the stops and found an unoccupied ballroom at The Royal. (Val's husband was right, we did finish up there for a while). So on a booked coach (without horses), we were all transported in our finery to The Royal's plush surroundings. Although small, the ballroom provided us with dancing space and again a good time was had by all with George working the miracle of getting tired and aching feet wanting to dance with his wonderful music.

Then once more we were transported back to the Crown to settle down for the night. Talk about Cinderella, she had nothing on us!!!

Sunday morning blossomed with lovely weather again, but there were a lot of the more mature of us who could not raise a foot, yours truly included, let alone dance at that time and unfortunately therefore, the morning class was somewhat depleted. Thank goodness Andrew is a very understanding teacher. Unfortunately Kristina, who had come for her very first Scarborough school, had a very nasty accident finishing up with a broken foot. This resulted in the attendance of paramedics and an ambulance, and some more intricate organisation to get this lady back home to Leicester. With the aid of a couple from Sheffield, arrangements were made to take her and her car to Sheffield where she would be met by her son, who would then take her home to Leicester. We found out later that once home, Kristina had her foot put into Plaster of Paris and we all knew it would take a few weeks for it to heal. We hope that she will be fit and well for our next school. It would be a shame if this accident should stop such an enthusiastic dancer from joining us again.

All in all, taking into consideration the things that did go wrong, it was a smashing weekend. The general ambience and humour that came to the fore during the time spent in Scarborough this year just goes to show that really good things can come out of adversity. Top marks and all thanks to Yvonne for her ability to turn things around and get things going. I had a great time and am looking forward to 2007 no matter where the weekend is held, but 2006 will be one that will be talked about for a long time to come.

Kathie D.

Adel Tea Dance

"Have you ever thought about Scottish Country Dancing - I think that you would enjoy it". No I hadn't, but it sounded good, so almost two years ago I took a deep breath and arrived at Susan and Alan's class on Monday afternoon, and I am so glad that I did - I love it.

Along with a couple of other rookies I was given a very warm welcome and much positive encouragement. Susan and Alan both seem to be blessed with a good sense of humour, and patience by the ton, both qualities have been pushed to the limit since I have been learning, they were obviously born to teach. The more expert dancers in the class have made me very welcome and I quickly felt to be one of the team. Since then I have enjoyed the social tea dances and found my first Saturday evening social dance both great fun and a steep learning curve, so much so that I am heading for St Andrews in August - so "Have you ever thought about....."

Judy Depledge

Snippets from the Strathspey Website



There was a long e-mail commenting on the Children's Festival of Scottish Dancing at Glasgow's Kelvin Hall on 14th March 2006.

700 primary schoolchildren took part in a Scottish Dance Festival at the above venue. The event was organised by the Education Department, P.E. people and Schoolteachers. The success of the venture was down to the RSCDS Glasgow Branch teachers who went into the schools to teach the dances. Everyone worked together to coordinate dates, times, dancing etc.

The 700 children were organised into 2 groups (red and yellow) to allow all the teams a chance to dance. The dancing was fun and good-humoured rivalry was apparent among the teams.

News in Brief

Those of you who will have been amused and enjoyed Pat Batt's Scottish dancing poems, will be sad to hear of her recent death. If you haven't read any of them, they are well worth a read when things are not going so well!

Maureen Watson was recently presented with a Branch Scroll by North West Craven Branch. Maureen was in the first certificate class that the Leeds Branch ran and has taught continuously ever since with both children and adults. A great reward for her continued dedication to Scottish country dancing – our congratulations.

Following a few years later Ron Bradbury joined our exam classes and he too has continued teaching in Halifax and later in Sutton Coldfield where he and Pat moved. The Branch there rewarded him with a Scroll - well done Ron.

Big Thank You

After many years of running the Branch Shop Yvonne Tredgett as decide the time as come to give up this job.

We would like to thank her very much for all her hard work and dedication over many years.

We now need someone to take on the shop. If you would like to run the branch shop then please contact Roy Goldring. Tel 01943 601373

The writers of the article were very impressed by the huge success of the festival and above all by the enthusiasm of the children. Dancing techniques were by no means perfect but the happiness was enormous. The correspondents ended with a plea to the RSCDS Headquarters to "loosen up" and bring the dancing back to the people.

Reply to the above original article

RSCDS member reported success following a Weight Watchers programme whose members were told to take more exercise. She introduced Scottish Country Dancing and this resulted in at least 12 members taking it up as a hobby, going to socials et.c. They had found a new lease of life finding new friends and interests; it had made a huge difference to their lives.

She felt that she had brought dancing to the people. The Website may be found on strathspey@strathspey.org

Leeds as you will see in this Newsletter recently held its own very successful Children's Festival. The Branch Demonstration Team present a Ceilidh evening to various groups, and we also run The White Rose Festival, so perhaps we are doing our bit to bring dancing to the people.

Highland Day School

About 15 (it varied a bit during the day) Highland dancers gathered at the Adel Methodist Church Hall on Saturday 13th May. The level of experience ranged from skilled 'performance' dancer to raw novice, but such was Catherine Livsey's skill as a teacher that all gained in competence and confidence throughout the day.

The focus of the day was the Highland dance programme for the White Rose Festival: the Fling, the Scottish Lilt, The Strathspey, Reel, and Half Tulloch (The Foursome Reel), and The Shepherd's Crook.

After a gentle warm-up - to Madonna - we set to work on four steps of the Fling. Catherine taught the first and last shedding steps, as those are obligatory, and chose Toe-and-Heel and Rocking for the other two, covering them in some detail and looking for some degree of precision. Even (perhaps especially!) the experienced dancers had their faults addressed! We then added another step, Cross-over, as an alternative, and as a result of 'mastering' that selection of steps we were able to go through The Shepherd's Crook in its entirety.

After a DIY lunch, and with a few more dancers, we set to work on the 'Foursome Reel', which meant we had to add Highland travelling steps and some reel setting steps to our repertoire, as well as learn the sequence of the dance. Great fun, but literally pretty breathtaking, and it sadly left us rather short of time for the Scottish Lilt. However we did have time for a quick run through Circle, Balance, Pas de Basque and Round the Leg steps and to dance it all through.

With the exception of The Shepherd's Crook, all dances were performed to the pipes, and that in itself was a new but worthwhile experience for some.

As a warm-down, a couple of members went on in the evening to Avis Harrison's excellent social dance at St Chad's!

Festival at Southport



At the beginning of February a small group of dancers travelled again to Southport for the Wigan Young People's Festival. The afternoon's dancing took place in the lovely Floral Hall (it still has a beautiful sprung ballroom floor). The children danced in groups according to their ability and some groups aspired to dancing quite complicated solo dances. The music was played by Ian Slater and everyone enjoyed a busy afternoon. The parade of all the teams (and this year our Branch team did have their own name-board) brings everyone together for the presentation of the certificates. It is always exciting deciding whose turn it is to fetch them from the stage. When all the certificates have been collected, sets are formed for the final dance - Dashing White Sergeant - and this ends when the net of balloons drop gently down on the dancers.

We look forward to returning next year for their 21st Festival.



Ian Johnson

As many members will have heard, Ian Johnson died recently. Ian and May regularly came to Leeds to dance, from their home in Scarborough. It was always a pleasure to see them and to have such fine and thoughtful dancers in the set. Our condolences go to May and family.

Ian Johnson - A Tribute

Ian Johnson died on the 2nd of April in Dundee. It is especially sad that he was aged only fifty six. Born in Lerwick in the Shetland Isles he never lost his love of Scotland and things Scottish. Indeed it was Ian and May's intention to retire to Scotland before being so tragically struck down by the fatal disease which he bore with fortitude optimism and cheerfulness.

Having been in the army and the CSOS he was far travelled and indulged his hobbies abroad, outdoors the Maclehoose Trail in Hong Kong and wearing out boots in Ascension Island. It was in Bahrain that he met May whom he married in Scotland. Scottish Country Dancing started in the Bahamas progressing to Balls in Hong Kong. Returning to this country they resumed dancing in

Scarborough making regular trips to Leeds to dance at the Club and the Branch and elsewhere.

That he was keen is apparent in the distance travelled and he brought to dancing the enthusiasm and thoroughness that he applied to his many other interests; music, photography and computers; combining them to great effect

He was unstinting in his concern for others and his generosity knew no bounds I am sure that we all have been enriched for knowing him. That he was well regarded by his fellow dancers was evinced by the number who bade him farewell. Our deepest and sincere sympathies go to May.

Phyllis Milner

Phyllis died recently at the age of 89. Phyllis, and her late husband Wilf, were enthusiastic walkers as well as dancers. The Milner walks were justly popular.

At their peak, Phyllis and Wilf danced three or four times a week and were "regulars" at the Branch and Leeds Club dances. They were a lovely couple and friends to many people.

DATES, DATES, DATES

The many dances arranged locally are listed in the Yorks & North East Scottish Country Dance Diary.

JUNE 2006

17th Social Dance (Strawberries & Cream)

West Park Centre 7.30

Music: George Meikle & the Lothian Band MC: Catherine Livsey

JULY 2006

1st Charity Dance

The annual dance in aid of the Marie Curie Charity will be at the Civic Centre, Otley. Neil Barron has promised to play. Doreen and Roy Goldring will be happy to take bookings for tickets. Tel 01943 601373

8th White Rose Festival

The Gateways School, Harewood 2-5pm

Music: Robert Whitehead & the Danelaw Dance Band

MC: Gerry Yates

Social Dance

The Gateways School, Harewood 7- 10.30pm

Music: Robert Whitehead & the Danelaw Dance Band

MCs: Alan Carr & Don Andrews.

Tickets for the social dance are limited. Contact Brenda Burnell Tel 0113 2676655 to order yours, £8.50 including supper.

Ask your class teacher about dancing at the White Rose Festival or contact Catherine Livsey 01484 306637 (Eve & Weekends) email catherine@cld-design.co.uk

Full details of these events will be circulated at Branch dances during the summer and posted on the Branch web site, www.rscdsleeds.org.uk.

Classes

Summer Term 2006

Short: WC 24th April to WC 22rd May.

Fees: £2.50 per class, £9 single class, £19 any class.

Long: WC 24th April to WC 3rd July.

Fees: £2.50 per class, £22 single class, £40 any class.

Classes

Monday Afternoon

1.45 - 3.45 - General/Beginner

Adel Methodist Church Hall

Gainsborough Avenue, Adel, Leeds 16

Teachers: Alan and Susan Carr

Monday Evening

7.45 - 9.45pm - Advanced

Calverley Conservative Club,

Teacher: Catherine Livsey

Tuesday evening

7.45 - 9.45 Intermediate/Beginner

Adel Methodist Church Hall

Teachers: Catherine Livsey

Wednesday evening

7.30 - 10.00 - General/Beginner

Holy Trinity Church Hall

Knaresborough contact Malcolm Frost

for venue 4th Wednesday of each month 01423 872686

Teachers: Ann Baranyai and Malcolm Frost

Thursday evening

7.45 - 10.00 - General/beginner

Brackenwood Community Centre,

New Building, Lidgett Lane, Leeds

Teachers: Brenda Burnell/ Stella Summers

Friday evening - children

5.30 - 7.00 re-commencing again

after Spring Bank

Hawksworth Wood Primary School,

Broadway, Leeds 5

Teacher: Brenda Burnell

Sunday afternoon

1.45 - 3.45

4th June 2006.

Askwith Village Hall.

Experienced dancers interested in demonstration work and innovative dances. All Welcome

Teacher: Catherine Livsey

For more information see www.rscdsleeds.org.uk

Branch Programme

Two contrasting remarks have been made recently about Branch Dances. One suggests that challenging dances should be included regularly; another remarked that dancers should not be required to do a lot of homework before setting out.

The main aim for any MC should be to produce a programme, which is likely to result in a happy social evening where the dances complement the music. There should be a core of familiar dances which most people can manage, on the other hand a bit of spice - a challenge if you like - can enliven the proceedings. Space may be found for one or two new dances, which may or may not be complex. A balanced programme should include a wide variety of dances.

It isn't only recently devised dances which are unfamiliar. Some, which were programme regulars in the '60s and '70s, have been edged out by more recent favourites. Can you remember when we last danced The Birks of Invermay or The College Hornpipe? One possibility is for the Branch Committee to prepare a list of dances which used to be programmed regularly and which can still give pleasure. MCs could then be asked to consider including one or two in their programmes.

Any ideas or suggestions about programmes would be welcome. I would like to keep the rule which we have had for some years, that RSCDS dances should comprise three quarters of each programme. There are now lots to choose from and there is still room for some non-Society material

Roy Goldring