



Summer
2025

RSCDS Calgary Branch Newsletter



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

At the end of May, we held our AGM where we welcomed some new members to the board. Thank you to Bre Soliman and Nancy Laing for agreeing to volunteer their time to the Branch over the next year.

I would especially like to thank one board member who has served their maximum five consecutive years on the Board and one general member who helped with the bookkeeping over the past few years.

First, I would like to acknowledge Doreen Herdman. Doreen volunteered to take over the bookkeeping tasks to help Nancy out a couple of years ago when she was doing both the secretary and treasurer portfolios. Doreen's help made it possible for Nancy to focus on some of the other administrative tasks that needed to be done while we were a few members short on the Board. Since we had a full slate this year, Kathy felt that she could handle all the treasurer's duties herself and we gave Doreen back her precious time so that she could spend more time enjoying her dancing, curling and golf.

Now, I would like to acknowledge Don Hunter. He has served on the board as a director for the last five years. He was instrumental in getting our billboard signs up around the city after the pandemic and continued to do this year after year. Also, Don was the one who curated the fabulous meals at our workshops by booking the caterer, picking the food choices and making sure that everything was there on time for when we needed it.

I would also like to thank everyone who served on the board last year. It was a busy year, and our

events could not happen without everyone on the board pitching in and helping.

Just because summer is here and our regular weekly classes have finished for the season, doesn't mean that dancing or dancing related activities have stopped. The Branch is hosting summer classes at Scarboro Community Hall on Monday evenings until the end of August, with a variety of local teachers taking turns teaching the classes. Cross and Thistle are hosting technique classes on Tuesday evenings until July 22, where each evening one dance is broken down and built back up again. A few of our dancers are off to weeklong schools to hone their technique and we wish them safe trips, great dancing, tremendous music, meeting new friends and seeing old friends. Have a great time at Australian Winter School and TAC Summer School.

We are also very excited to about our Fall One Day Workshop to be held on October 18, 2025. Fred DeMarse (California) and Linda Henderson (California) will be teaching us. Mary Ross (Victoria) and friend will be playing for classes. At the evening dance, Mary and Friend, will be our band. Registration forms will be out soon.

Finally, I want to pass on my best wishes to Jim Adamson after announcing his retirement from teaching earlier this spring. I've known Jim since I was a young girl and have danced with him for about 45 years. If it wasn't for Jim, I'm not sure that I would be teaching today. He gave me my first manual for Scottish Country Dancing and a few of my first books and cassettes for dancing. Later in the newsletter you can read about how much he has done for dancing in the Calgary area over the last



Find fun, fitness &
friendship with Scottish
country dance!

60+ years, and we are all grateful to him for his dedication to SCD. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

Yours in dancing,

I look forward to dancing with all of you at our classes and events over the next few months.

Sharon Barker

BRANCH MEMBERSHIPS

It is now time to renew your RSCDS Calgary Branch membership. The membership year runs from July 1st to June 30th each year and we start accepting renewals at the May AGM. This year, membership dues have increased to \$30/year, as voted by the membership at this year's AGM.

Why Join the RSCDS Calgary Branch?

Our Branch receives charitable gaming funds raised with the support of the AGLC. This funding is used to help with hall rentals and insurance for your weekly classes allowing your weekly class fees to stay low. The funding is also used to support our members attending workshops in Alberta – up to \$200 per workshop!

Being a Branch member covers the cost of membership in The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society (RSCDS), the worldwide organization of which Calgary is a Branch. As a member of RSCDS, you have an account to log into the 'My RSCDS' section of the rscds.org website.

New Members

We would like to welcome the following new members:

Brian and Jessica M.

Jessica T.

Thank you for joining us!

Be sure to take advantage of all your membership benefits: <https://rscdscalgary.org/membership-benefits/>. For the latest information on classes, events, and more, check out our website at <https://rscdscalgary.org/>.



Download the New Member's Membership Guide:

https://mcusercontent.com/5ec57552b339d6fcide5f6c53/files/45601477-b820-aa5d-be4a-2bc6f61eaeff/New_Members_Welcome_Pack_2024.pdf

See you on the dance floor!

BRANCH NEWS

Jim Adamson's Retirement

This May, Calgary's longest serving Scottish Country Dance teacher, Jim Adamson retired from teaching classes at the Calgary Scottish Country Dance Society – St. Barnabas.



Growing up in Scotland, he did some dancing when he was in Scouts and as well in school as it was part of the curriculum in those days. He said that it involved old style dances and footwork. He was in the army for a period but did not dance at that time.

Jim came to Canada as a young man in 1962. He lived with his sister Ena for the first year and would often babysit for her when she went to her Scottish country dance group. In December of 1963, the St. Barnabas group needed a fourth man for a demo group that would be performing at the old Colonel Belcher Hospital. Jim was brought in for the occasion and from there kept on dancing. It was in January of 1964 that he met and became lifelong friends with Graham Sewell.

The Scottish country dance community in the 60's and 70's in Calgary was a vibrant and active scene. There were a number of clubs around the city and several people received their teaching certificates from none other than Miss Milligan herself. While she was in North America and passing through to Vancouver, she agreed to come to Calgary for a visit. She was quite surprised that there was such a SCD community in Calgary.

In 1965 Jim started teaching two classes for children in Acadia and Montgomery. However, the city structured the class with a drop in model which did not serve as well for continuous learning.

In 1973, Jim was granted his preliminary teacher's certificate, and in 1979 he was granted his full teaching certificate.

Jim started a dance group on his own and between 1969-1972 taught adults old style SCD in his basement. At this same time, the Calgary Scottish games people asked Jim to help with the dances necessary for a ball program. He eventually had to stop teaching classes in his basement as it was so popular that he ran out of room. When the group moved out of his basement, it became the South Calgary Scottish Country Dance Group and this ran until 1993.

In 1982, Jim took over as teacher for the Grace Scottish Dance group, otherwise known as Grace Presbyterian dance group, from Mary Di'Amico. This group ran from 1979 until the COVID closures of 2020.

In the late 80's, he was approached by St. Barnabas to be their head teacher but did not accept at first as they wanted him to audition for the role. He thought it was a bit much to be asked to audition given that by that time not only was he a certified teacher, but he was also training other SCD candidates to become teachers. Eventually St. B accepted that he was more than qualified for the role and in 1989 took on the position of teacher.

From 1989-1993, he taught three Scottish Country Dance groups - South Calgary, Grace Presbyterian, and St. Barnabas. He was also a working member of the St. Barnabas committee that put on the Banff workshops which

ran from 1974 to 1995. Jim was a member of the committee that would eventually form the Calgary branch of RSCDS in 1976.

Jim has had a life membership with RSCDS since 1965.

Throughout the many years of teaching he has always enjoyed doing this and has had no regrets. When asked about his favorite dance, it is not so much an individual dance, but rather the dance style of strathspey, which when done well is the most beautiful of the dances.

We wish Jim all the best in his retirement and hope to see him come out to the occasional St. Barnabas potluck social or wherever he would like to join in.

Summer Dancing

A reminder that summer of dancing starts Monday June 2nd and will run every Monday evening from 7:30 – 9:30 until August 25th. Some dances for our Fall Workshop will be covered. Latest info can be found of the [Summer Classes](#) tab on the website:

<https://rscdscalgary.org/classes/>

Please remember to park in the parking lot by the tennis courts on 15th Ave.

Cross and Thistle Technique Class

Cross and Thistle will be holding its annual summer technique class, for dancers with **at least one season of dance experience** wanting to improve their personal technique. It will include all aspects of good technique – teamwork, phrasing, footwork, formations, handing, and deportment, while learning one or two dances per evening. Individual feedback will be given. Please wear comfortable clothing and dance shoes and bring a water bottle. Hand sanitizer will be provided. For more information, contact Sharon at crossandthistle@hotmail.com.

Tuesdays 8:00 – 10:00 pm from May 20th – July 22, 2025 at the Haysboro Community Association.

The cost is \$6 per class, or \$48 for the semester (2 free classes).

Canmore Highland Games

The Canmore Highland Games will be held this year on the weekend of August 30th and 31st. We are looking for volunteers to staff the RSCDS Branch booth. Please contact either Janet Newediuk or Sharon Barker at president@rscdscalgary.org if you can help out for a couple of hours. Janet is also helping to coordinate rides to Canmore, so please let her know if you need a ride or can share a ride.

Calgary One-Day Fall Workshop

RSCDS Calgary branch is planning a full one day workshop and evening dance for Saturday, October 18th, 2025. Our teachers will be Linda Henderson and Fred DeMarse, both of California, while our musicians will be Mary Ross and Friend from Victoria. Please watch the newsletters or check your emails for more details and registration as they become available.

DANCE SPOTLIGHT

Each newsletter will highlight a dance, one that may be very familiar, or included in an upcoming event or just because it is unique or special in some way. This month we look at **The De’il among the Tailors**.

<https://my.strathspey.org/dd/dance/1582/>: The De’il among the Tailors is a 32 bar reel for 3 couples in a 4 couple set. The deviser of the dance is unknown, but it appears in Book 14 which was published by RSCDS in 1947. The title refers to a table game of skittles, involving nine small skittles (pins) to be knocked down by a ball on a string attached to an arm. “Amang” is Scots for “among”.

Why the devil should be among the tailors, remains a mystery although it has been suggested that a tailor’s devil is a pressing iron and the title refers to its use by a number of tailors who traditionally sit in a circle on a large workbench.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Devil_among_the_tailors: On 15 August 1805, a play called “The Tailors: A Tragedy for Warm Weather” dealing with the then recent wage disturbances between master tailors and journeymen, was presented at the Haymarket Theatre in London. The tailors took exception to this satire on their craft, staged a riot both inside and outside the theatre in protest at this satire on their craft, overwhelming the special constables who had been stationed after threats were received by the theatre manager; a troop of Life Guards (the most senior regiment of the British Army) was called in and sixteen prisoners were taken. The Life Guards did their job so effectively that it was likened to a skittle ball ploughing through the skittles. Thereafter, the game of Table Skittles (or Bar Skittles) was often referred to as ‘Devil Among the Tailors’.

Further detail on the tailor’s riot:

<https://pasttense.co.uk/2020/08/15/today-in-london-theatrical-history-1805-tailors-offended-at-anti-tailor-play-riot-haymarket-theatre/>

Here’s a video of Last dance of RSCDS Summer School 2022. Younger Hall, St Andrews, Scotland:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EgShm5XeKMA>



THE DE’IL AMANG THE TAILORS

- 1- 8 1C+2C set and dance RH across ½ way,
set and dance LH across ½ way back to place
- 9-16 1C lead down the middle & back to top
- 17-24 1C & 2C dance the Allemande
- 25-32 2C + 1C + 3C circle 6H round and back.

THE DEIL AMANG THE TAILORS				8x32 R
1 2 S RA	2x 1x S LA	↔	1 2 A	2 1 3 6

Dale's Collection, 1799, RSCDS Book 14.7

3C/4C longwise set.

NEWS FROM RSCDS HEADQUARTERS

Health Strategy Webinar

The March issue of the **Dance Scottish Together** newsletter mentions a webinar presented by the Health Strategy Working Group on the physical and mental health benefits of Scottish country dancing and music. Click [here](https://rscds.org/blog/health-benefits-scottish-country-dancing?mc_cid=fe24885c40) to find buttons to download the presentation and access the 20 minute YouTube webinar:

https://rscds.org/blog/health-benefits-scottish-country-dancing?mc_cid=fe24885c40

Episode 13 of “The Blether”

Have you read the April edition of the **Dance Scottish Together** newsletter? In it you will find a link to episode 13 of The Blether (monthly RSCDS video) featuring an interview with our own Sharon Barker and Fiona Miller (who taught us at our 2023 Spring Mini-Workshop) about a TAC project they have been working on to compile an Index of John Drewry dances. Have you ever danced a dance that has amazing “flow” from one formation to the next? It was probably a John Drewry dance.



Click here for the interview: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4TUC9Zq-IVo>

For more info: <https://tac-rscds.org/index.php/special-topic/index-of-john-drewry-s-dances>

This 2014 obituary gives a short but interesting account of Drewry’s life and contributions to Scottish Country Dancing: <https://www.scotsman.com/news/obituaries/obituary-john-drewry-scottish-dance-deviser-and-academic-1532036>

Join a Zoom Event: Launching Book 54

Book 54 is a collection of 18 Scottish country dances featuring 6 dances from branches marking their centenaries and 12 dances selected from those considered for Book 53 (RSCDS’s Centenary), together with tunes selected or specially composed for the book. The Neil Galloway Scottish Dance Band has recorded a double album of the music, which will also be available to download from iTunes and Amazon music in July.

Book 54 will be released on 15th July. Are you curious? Join one of the two Zoom Session webinars to be held on **Sunday 29th June** to introduce the book and recording. <https://rscds.org/events/book-54-launch> There are two sessions: 9:00 BST (British Summer Time) is 2:00 AM in Calgary, and 18:00 BST is 11:00 AM in Calgary. Choose carefully!

- See dance videos from branches and dancers around the globe
- Hear musical previews from the brand-new recordings
- Stories, photographs, people and places
- Get insights from the Membership Services Committee and contributors

**Early Bird Registration starts
February 15**

**SUMMER SCHOOL IN
CANADA!**

AUGUST 3-10, 2025

**Bishop's University
Sherbrooke, Quebec**

**For dancers of all levels
Partial week attendance options**

Teaching Staff

Rebecca Blackhall-Peters, BC Canada

Linda Henderson, California USA

Andrew Nolan, UK

Cecily Selling, Pennsylvania USA

Music Director

Gary Thomas, California USA



**Register online at
tac-rscds.org**

**Scottish Country Dance
Teachers' Association (Canada)**



BRANCH GROUP DISCOUNT

This year, we're excited to offer a special discount for groups of six or more dancers from the same branch attending in the same week.

- £25 off Summer School fees for each member of the group
- Group room allocation

Book before the 21st February and get more discount with our Early Bird prices! For more information and details on how to book using the group discount, contact the office at events@rscds.org.

Summer School is an action-packed four weeks of dancing in the historic town of St Andrews. Come and join with dancers from around the world and be led by some of the best Scottish Country Dance teachers and musicians.

Throughout the week dancers will be taught by different teachers, enjoy live music, and learn in a new venue so you can experience first-hand the world class atmosphere Summer School has to offer.

www.rscds.org/events/summer-school-2025

CLASSES

Branch Supported Classes – Summer 2025

Mondays

- ✠ SUMMER DANCING – 7:30pm – 9:30pm
 - ✠ Runs from June 2 – August 25, 2025
 - ✠ Scarboro Community Association - 1737 14 Ave SW
 - ✠ Contact: secretary@rscdscalgary.org

Tuesdays

- ✠ CROSS AND THISTLE TECHNIQUE CLASS - 8pm – 10pm
 - ✠ Runs from May 20 – July 22, 2025
 - ✠ Haysboro Community Centre - 1204 89th Avenue SW
 - ✠ Contact: Sharon Barker 403-701-3218 crossandthistle@hotmail.com

Other Area Classes

- ✠ ST. ANDREW-CALEDONIAN SOCIETY
 - ✠ For more information see: <https://standrewcaledonian.ca/classes/scottish-country-dance/>
- ✠ CANMORE SENIORS ASSOCIATION
 - ✠ Contact: Margaret Boyle mboylecanmore@gmail.com

Fall / Winter Class News

The Fall **Cross and Thistle Class** as well as the **Beginners Class** at Haysboro will resume on September 23rd and run every Tuesday until December 16th.

The **Douglas SCD Club** classes will start up again on September 9th and run every Tuesday until December 9th, for a total of 14 classes. The winter 2026 session will start on January 13th and run until May 26th, for a total of 20 classes.

The **Confederation Park** classes will resume on September 11th and run every Thursday until December 11th, for a total of 14 classes. The winter 2026 session will start on January 8th and run until May 28th, for a total of 21 classes.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Within Calgary – Branch Events

- ✚ **CALGARY ONE-DAY FALL WORKSHOP** – Saturday, October 18 2025
 - ✚ Hosted by: RSCDS Calgary Branch at St. Barnabas Church
 - ✚ Watch the website for details as they become available

Within Alberta

- ✚ No events known at this time

Outside Alberta

- ✚ **BLUE RIDGE SCOTTISH DANCE SCHOOL** – Week of July 6-12 2025
 - ✚ Hosted by: Blue Ridge Scottish Dance School, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC, USA
 - ✚ For more information see: <https://www.blueridgesds.org/>
- ✚ **RSCDS SUMMER SCHOOL** – Weeks during July 13 – August 10 2025
 - ✚ Hosted by RSCDS HQ
 - ✚ For more information see: <https://rscds.org/events/summer-school-2025>
- ✚ **TAC SUMMER SCHOOL** – Week of August 3 – August 10 2025
 - ✚ Hosted by Scottish Country Dance Teachers' Association (Canada) (TAC)
 - ✚ See: <https://tac-rscds.org/index.php/tac-summer-school/2025-summer-events-information>
- ✚ **FORT WORDEN WORKSHOP** – October 3-5 2025
 - ✚ Hosted by RSCDS Seattle Branch
 - ✚ For more information see: <https://rscds-seattle.org/fort-worden/>
- ✚ **RSCDS IB DANCE WEEKEND** – October 16-19 2026
 - ✚ Hosted by: RSCDS International Branch
 - ✚ For more information see: <https://www.rscds-ib.org/index.php?page=14>

RSCDS International Branch

Time to start preparing for the next big IB Dance Weekend

Where: Hotel Tagawa, Nagano, Japan (<https://hotel-tagawa.co.jp/>)

When: 16-19 October 2026

(Dinner & Welcome Dance on 16th ~ Morning class & lunch on 19th)

Musicians: Ian and Judith Muir, Isle of Wight, UK

Teachers: Linda Henderson, California, USA and
Yoshiki Oyama, Chiba, Japan

Estimate of Cost (These costs are an estimate and subject to change):

IB Members in en-suite Western-style rooms JPY77,000+£170 (currently £650/€765)

Japanese Dancers in traditional rooms about JPY63,000

(not all traditional rooms have a private shower/bath but all have a washbasin and toilet)

The Hotel has a public Onsen.

SEE YOU ON THE DANCE FLOOR!



Charitable gaming funds raised with the support of



We gratefully acknowledge the support of
the Province of Alberta through



*Royal Scottish Country Dance Society
Calgary Branch*

secretary@rscdscalgary.org
www.rscdscalgary.org