



Scottish Country Dancing
For Fun, Fitness & Friendship



RSCDS Ribble Valley Newsletter

August 2024
Issue 75



From the Chair

What a fantastic 30th Anniversary Summer Dance we had last Saturday, several dancers expressed their enjoyment and exhaustion, for a great evening of music and dance. Although I have to admit going wrong on a couple of dances that I know very well. I'll put it down to being distracted by the quality of the music and dancing.....and not turning 60. I'd like to thank Sandy Nixon and his Band for the music and everyone for coming and making it a great evening, there are several photos from the night later on in this newsletter. We had a few familiar faces missing at the last minute and I send sincere best wishes to everyone who couldn't make it.

All the beginners classes have now finished, however we still have social dancing every Wednesday at Christ Church, Fulwood, which continues all year through. Sunday beginners classes start on 6th October at Euxton and Monday beginners classes start on 23rd September at Fulwood, there are more details on the website and on the back page of the newsletter.

We are now working on the programme for the next dance on 26th October.....just like dancing we only have a small pause to catch our breath, then we're off on the next dance!

Thank you all, especially the committee for your support.

Happy Dancing Sandra

Sending Condolences

We are saddened to inform our readers and members of our branch of the recent passing of people associated with Scottish dancing in our area:

Margaret Allen

Peter Hedingham—Although not a dancer, Peter attended many trips and was also a superb raffle ticket seller at the Hogmanay dances, which we thank him for.

Our thoughts are with their family and friends at this difficult time.

Inside this issue

History of our branch	2
History cont.d.....	3
30th Anniversary	4
Summer Dance	5
Trip to Belfast.....	6&7
Teacher Spotlight	8
Classes information	9
Committee Members	9

Special points of interest

- **Facebook page** : https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100084280723762&locale=en_GB
- **Website:** www.rscdsribblevalley.org.uk



History of RSCDS Ribble Valley Branch

Written by Catherine Walsh (Archivist)

A little bit of history was created on the evening of Friday 16th May 1994 with the formation of the Ribble Valley branch of the RSCDS. The inaugural dance was held on Saturday 6th August 1994 and was a complete sell out. This was a tremendous start for the branch and a firm launching pad for the future.

In its first year, not only were members dancing regularly they were also active in branch walks in the Ribble Valley area and beyond, including locations such as Malham and Pen-y-Ghent. Walks were often followed by hot pot suppers prior to dancing the night away.

In April 1995 a weekend trip to Inverness proved to be the first of many wonderful and certainly memorable Scottish dance weekends which have continued to this day.

The first Burns Night Dinner Dance took place on Friday January 26th 1996 at the Barton Grange Hotel and remained a most enjoyable occasion for many years thereafter. Hogmanay dances were a similar social highlight originating on December 31st 1994.

Throughout the first year and to this day the Ribble Valley branch has welcomed beginners to Monday night classes and Sunday afternoon classes, a strength which is still of significance today.

Over the years our branch members have danced far and wide also supporting dance societies throughout the north west and further afield. The Ribble Valley weekend trips to Scotland have remained a highlight of the dancing year. The branch archives catalogue the chronology very thoroughly. How many trips did you go on? To this day these action-packed weekends remain full of fun, friendship, food, foolery and the odd 'faux-pas!' Superb organisation, attention to detail and breadth of experiences combine to make these weekends an outstanding success.



Watch out Inverness, here we come!

Ten years on and the Ribble Valley branch celebrated with a 10th Anniversary Dance at Chorley Town Hall with a champagne reception and dancing to the Ian Thompson Dance Band.

At this point in time the branch continued to flourish with a membership of almost ninety and regular Monday and Wednesday evening classes. All groups throughout the history of the branch have been supported by a variety of teachers who each in turn bring their own individual flair and talent to the society. At this time day schools were an addition to the dancing calendar whereby invited teachers led sessions to develop and further improve dancers' skills and abilities. Throughout this decade of dance communication to members was a strength due to regular newsletters and dancing events.





The strength of the dance calendar continued into the next decade and enjoyable occasions included a Commonwealth Ceilidh at Goosnargh Village Hall in June 2014 as well as regular dances in Spring, Summer and Autumn. At whatever time of year, a society dance was never far away and this remains the case.

Throughout its history and to this day the society would not have flourished without the creativity of members who bring their talent in

writing dances for publication, original ideas and piping prowess. A huge debt of gratitude is reserved for the bands and musicians who continue to play at our dances and gatherings, many of whom travel long distances to accompany us.



In the next dancing decade, as the branch continued its development from strength to strength no-one could have predicted the challenge it was faced with in the Covid 19 global epidemic. As we all locked down and 'stayed at home' the determination and ingenuity to keep in touch resulted in 'virtual' rather than authentic events. Things done virtually included a Not Montrose Trip Ceilidh, a virtual musical extravaganza, a Purple Party, Not the AGM Ceilidh, Not the Ball

Ceilidh, and a Bank Holiday Ceilidh. Also, a traditional ceilidh became a virtual one as did a virtual Halloween Ceilidh. St Andrew and Hogmanay were also given 'Not' Status and were danced virtually also.

All these on-line events were the key to the well-being of our members in months of lockdown and isolation. Once again, our network of talent both musically and culturally showed its flair. How glad we were to return to dancing



normality and a squirt of sanitiser.

The trials and tribulations of lockdown enabled members of the society to re-think and re-focus on ways to move forward from the Covid era. Our dancers now benefit from a newly developed website and Facebook page with all the digital opportunities offered. This was unheard of thirty years ago. Our new-look Branch Newsletter reflects a vivid and vibrant dance community moving together towards the next dancing decade.



The social interaction, the physical and mental exercise of Scottish Country Dancing has sustained the Branch for the last thirty years and will continue to do so into our next dancing decade.

30th Anniversary Summer Dance held at Broughton Club. Music by Sandy Nixon & Band

First class attendees!

Original Branch Members

Super music.

In a delightful celebration, the 30th anniversary summer dance for the Ribble Valley branch of RSCDS took place at the usual venue: Broughton Club. The event was a resounding success, bringing together dancers, music enthusiasts, and friends alike.

Jeff Middleton, welcomed everyone in to the hall with his wonderful bagpipes. The heart of the evening was the exceptional music provided by Sandy Nixon and his talented band. Their lively tunes set the perfect rhythm for the intricate steps of Scottish country dances. From reels to strathspeys, the melodies resonated through the hall, inviting everyone to join in the merriment.

The turnout was to capacity, with many branch members attending. Dressed in kilts, tartans, and summer dresses, they swirled and twirled across the wooden floor. Laughter and camaraderie filled the air as old friends reunited and new connections blossomed.

Between dances, guests enjoyed sharing stories, and reminiscing about past gatherings. The sense of belonging was palpable—a testament to the enduring spirit of Scottish country dancing.

And what's a celebration without sustenance? An excellent buffet had been arranged: from chicken wings to cheesy potatoes (& everything in between!), the culinary offerings delighted the taste buds and fueled the dancers' energy. Past and present chairmen cut the specially ordered cake, which was shared out and enjoyed with a refreshing cup of tea!

As the evening drew to a close, heartfelt thanks echoed throughout the hall. To the dedicated committee, the musicians, and every participant who contributed to the event's success: "Thank you!" Your efforts made this 30th anniversary summer dance a night to remember.

Whether you were spinning on the dance floor, tapping your toes to the music, or simply soaking in the atmosphere, this celebration embodied the joy and unity that Scottish country dancing brings to our community. Here's to another 30 years of tradition, laughter, and excellent music with RSCDS Ribble Valley!

Chairmen— Past & Present



What a great night!

*See Facebook or website
for more photos*

A Trip to Belfast!

Submitted by Judy Grimsy

When Sandra first suggested going to the RSCDS Belfast group's Weekend School in May, my first reaction was Really? Then it soon became Why Not! And so the decision was made to attend my first overseas dancing event.

The programme for the Weekend School was a Friday evening dance consisting of nice'n'easy familiar dances, then on Saturday there were two classes, a morning advanced class and an afternoon general class, finishing with another dance in the evening. With the tutor being our own David Queen and the music provided by the David Oswald Band (who played for the dance in Glasgow on last year's branch trip and also recorded one of the CDs for the recent RSCDS Book 53) it promised to be a fun event.

To make the most of the visit we decided to fly from Manchester to Belfast City airport, travelling out on Friday morning and returning Monday morning, allowing Sunday free to do some sight-seeing.

Eventually the time came for the weekend. Sandra picked me up at 05:45 on Friday and we reached the airport in good time for our 08:30 flight. On arrival at Belfast City we soon found the airport bus which took us into the centre of Belfast. After finding somewhere to leave our bags, we headed to City Hall to catch one of the hop-on hop-off buses and spent the next 90 minutes travelling around Belfast enjoying the sights with interesting and entertaining commentary from the guide. Afterwards we had lunch in the famous Crown Bar, before collecting our bags and catching the bus to our hotel where David & Cathy were also staying. We also met Lucy Mulholland, the devisor of City Of Belfast.

Arriving for the Friday evening dance, the hall was buzzing and it was lovely to see some familiar faces, including former branch members Ed and Trish Reid, amongst the many dancers attending from England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales. All the dances were walked through as they were recapped, allowing everyone to be confident of at-

tempting even unfamiliar dances. With excellent and lively music from the band it was a great start to the weekend. After returning to the hotel we grabbed a refreshing beverage from the bar before retiring to catch up after our early start and to prepare for the full day of dancing on the Saturday. It was only at breakfast that we found out that everyone else had been outside catching the Northern Lights!



Meeting Rowan



For the Saturday morning advanced class, David gave us a fun and entertaining class with his usual patience and enthusiasm, including some dances he has taught on a Wednesday night. After a lovely lunch and a wander round the church grounds we were ready for the afternoon general class. Again David's teaching was appreciated and enjoyed by all. David introduced us to a new dance he had written for the weekend, "A Belfast Welcome" an 8x32 strathspey, which was also the Tutor's Choice on the evening programme.

We also met Rowan the Sheep, the RSCDS Youth mascot, who had travelled up from Dublin while visiting branches and groups around the world to celebrate the centenary of the RSCDS. After the class we had time to get back to the hotel, relax a little bit before getting changed ready for the Saturday evening dance. There was a lovely programme of dances, all excellently recapped and walked through for the benefit of lesser experienced dancers. Again the band was superb, the music keeping our tired feet dancing to the end.

On Sunday we headed back into Belfast to visit the Titanic museum which gave a fascinating history and timeline of the ship and her ultimate demise. The self-guided tour included The Shipyard Ride, a fun theme-park type ride around a virtual shipyard, and admission on board the SS Nomadic, the last surviving White Star Line ship.

And so it was time to return home, with another early start as the taxi picked us up at 06:45 to take us back to the airport to wait for the 09:30 flight, arriving home before midday.

How to sum up the weekend? The RSCDS slogan "Fun, fitness and friendship" certainly applied, a thoroughly enjoyable time spent with great company.

But I think David's dance title "A Belfast Welcome" says it all. We were welcomed to Belfast by everyone we met, and I look forward to returning one day.



Titanic museum from SS
Nomadic

Thanks and Speedy Get Well Wishes—Chris Waddington

As Chris Waddington steps down from the committee, we want to thank him for all he has done. His work as ticketing secretary was always completed with great efficiency and attention to detail. It was lovely seeing Chris back at the AGM following a period of ill health and then briefly dancing at a local dance. Chris has all of our best wishes for continued improvements to his health and hope to see him on the dance floor again very soon.

Branch T-Shirts

To help celebrate our 30th Anniversary, branch T-Shirts are available. A selection of T-shirts and polo shirts with the branch logo on can be seen at the classes. These can be tried on and colours seen. A folder is available with all of the order details. Please pass money and orders to Jill or Judy in an envelope.

Our latest teacher in the spotlight: David Queen

Scottish dancing is in my blood as my dad was the local dance teacher and my mum was his musician, in fact he taught her to dance in his beginner's class and then married her! Dad was a founder member of RSCDS Southport Branch in 1947 and was also Hon. Piper to the Preston Caledonian Society for many years. We were a very musical family and with my brother and sister we used to travel to Preston regularly to do Queen family Ceilidhs when we would dance and play, some of our branch members still talk to me about these evenings from over 40 years ago!

I started dancing at the age of 5 and took my teaching Certificates in 1991 & 1993 in the same class as Joan Thompson. I was soon teaching regularly at Southport Branch, when a young lady called Miss Catherine Ann King joined my class to learn to dance and, just like my parents, the teacher married the pupil. In this case, a Queen married a King! I taught my first day school for North West Craven Branch in 1995 and since then I have been fortunate to have been invited to teach all over the UK and Europe and across the world in such diverse locations as Japan, Russia, New Zealand, Canada and the USA. I was invited to be a musician at RSCDS Summer School in St Andrews in 2003 and then as a teacher from 2008 and I have taught there ever since including a spell as Depute Director between 2019 and 2023. I have also taught at Winter School and Spring Fling (twice each) and will be teaching at the Spring Fringe event this year in Cambridge (for those considerably older than 35!).

Cathy and I joined Ribble Valley Branch in 1995 a year after its formation and I started teaching the Monday class in the early 2000s. We were also members of Heather Mixture in the early years. As well as Scottish Country Dancing, Cathy and I taught a Ladies step class at Goosnargh for a few years. I had to take a break after 2012, when we needed to spend more time at home looking after elderly parents, but I was delighted to be invited back to teach my old Monday class again in 2022.

Returning Committee Member—Rose John

Due to Chris' retirement from the RSCDS Ribble Valley's committee, a space became available for a willing volunteer. After a little persuading, Rose very kindly and enthusiastically volunteered—she has previously been part of the committee so knows full well what it entails. At the first committee meeting, Rose contributed greatly to the many points up for discussion. Thank you Rose.

Future events:

[Autumn Dance](#), Sat 26th October 2024, 7pm at Broughton Club, music by Ewan Galloway.

[Hogmanay](#), Tuesday 31st December 2024, 8pm at Samlesbury Village Hall, recorded music.

[Nice & Easy Dance](#), Friday 7th March 2025, 7.30pm at Broughton Club, music by Robert Whitehead.

[Scottish Trip](#) : Dunfermline. Thursday 27th March—Sunday 30th March 2025.

[Spring Dance](#), Sat 26th April 2025, 7pm at Broughton Club, music by Nicol McLaren

[Summer Dance](#) , Sat 9th August 2025, 7pm at Broughton Club, music by Ewan Galloway

Classes Information

Monday classes The beginners & all-abilities class runs every Monday at Christ Church Hall, Fulwood, at 7.30 p.m., except Bank Holidays. This class has a break for a short period during the summer (approximately 8 weeks). Classes start again on Monday 23rd September.

Wednesday classes The Intermediate and Social class runs every Wednesday at Christ Church Hall, Fulwood, at 7.30 p.m. (*This class does not break for Summer*)

Sunday classes The beginners' class, runs on Sundays at Euxton Community Centre, 2.30 to 4.30 p.m.

New Season will start on 6th October 2024 this is an ideal time for new people to start as they go back to the very beginning. However, there is an additional summer social on Sunday 22nd September @ 2.30pm.

Classes run until around Easter, with a possibility of social dancing once a month through the summer period— this will be confirmed in 2025.

Our 30th Anniversary celebrations continue with a Halloween themed Autumn dance, where we will welcome the RSCDS Chairman: William Williamson—hope to see you all there.

This year's committee

Chairman: Sandra Lloyd, tel. 07989 139355.

Hon. Secretary: Michael John, tel. 01772 713018. (Address 42 Marina Drive, Fulwood, PR2 9SB.)

Hon. Treasurer: Stephen Brown, tel. 01772 748034.

Committee:

Jill Burrows, tel. 01253 890046.

Judy Grimsey (Membership Secretary), tel. 01772 716301.

Peter Holmes (Online Media Administrator) tel. 07724 875543.

Tracey Holmes, tel. 07742 699490.

Rose John, tel. 01772 713018

David and Margaret Stoney, tel. 01257 241585.

Catherine Walsh, tel, 07837 654222.

Mark Youlton, tel. 07944 344360.

Joan Youlton, tel. 07944 344360.

Editor: Tracey Holmes

If you have any articles that you would like to be included in future newsletters, please either pass them to me in a class or email holmestracey37@gmail.com