



Scottish Country Dancing  
For Fun, Fitness & Friendship



# RSCDS Ribble Valley Newsletter

October 2024  
Issue 76



## From the Chair

What a fantastic year of Dances we've had in this our 30<sup>th</sup> year and it was fantastic to have William and Linda Williamson with us for what was his final event as Chairman of the RSCDS. I particularly want to thank many of you for entering into the spirit of the Halloween Theme and making it such a fun occasion. An extra special thankyou goes to Sarah Horne for gifting us a photobook of 30 years of Ribble Valley RSCDS. It will be available on loan to everyone to take home and reminisce.

The RSCDS are holding their AGM on the weekend of 2<sup>nd</sup> November and I have already been part of a 'zoom meeting' consultation with Branches. This is something we have not had before and the new Chief Operating Officer, Jon Berridge, is keen to continue this contact. He found it very useful and so did we. It was particularly useful to hear what other Branches are doing to encourage new dancers and what barriers and hurdles they have had to overcome. I will make sure you receive a copy of any feedback as soon as I get it.

### Classes

Both Joan's (Sunday) and David's (Monday) beginners/returners classes have started again. Following advertising in the Leyland, Buckshaw and Euxton area Joan has had 10 new dancers, but despite advertising on Facebook, Monday's class has not seen any new dancers start this year. That said the Monday night dancers are keen to learn more and David is focusing his teaching on more formations and technique, we are also looking at putting on Monday classes through the summer to provide continuity and consistency.

Wednesday Classes.....what can I say, I recognise we need to look at the format of these going forward as numbers are dwindling, but how and what we do to address this needs to be discussed and agreed. If you have any comments or suggestions please feel free to contact me either in person or by email – Sandra.lloyd@live.co.uk or any of the committee members, we value your opinion and above all we want the Branch to succeed and thrive.

### Christmas parties and Hogmanay

Classes finish with Christmas parties on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup>, Monday 16<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> December, starting again in the New year on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup>, Monday 6<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2025.

The Hogmanay programme has been finalised. Tickets will be on sale soon once Judy has had chance to print them and Mark has recovered from ticking off names and collecting monies after the Autumn Dance.

Happy Dancing  
Sandra

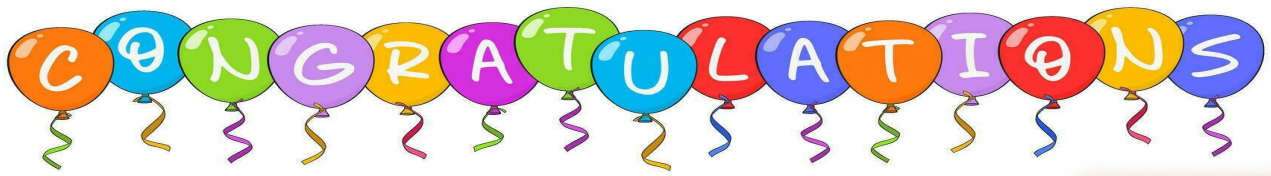


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## Special points of interest

- Facebook page : [https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100084280723762&locale=en\\_GB](https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100084280723762&locale=en_GB)
- Website: [www.rscdsribblevalley.org.uk](http://www.rscdsribblevalley.org.uk)
- Registered charity no. 1061492



## Peter Holmes



Two years ago, Peter started the Core Training Instructors (CTI) programme under the guidance of David Queen and we are delighted to let you know that he has PASSED with flying colours.

Peter has been teaching at the Monday class over the course of those two years. Over the summer break a special class was held where Peter had to be videoed and assessed. The instructors course requires a lot of hard work from both Peter and David. Sandra (Chairman) wants to thank them both for their hard work and especially Peter for his motivation and determination to succeed. Peter was David's first student under the new CTI programme and said, "Peter has worked extremely hard over a period of almost 2 years and has developed his teaching skills over that time. I am absolutely delighted and very proud of his achievement in attaining the standard required to be an instructor of Scottish Country Dancing."



At the autumn dance, Peter was presented with his certificate from William Williamson (Chairman of the RSCDS). This was a surprise for Peter and he was thrilled to have received his certificate from such an important person in the society.

Peter stated that after two years of hard work including step practice in the lounge (nearly wearing out the carpet); learning how to break formations down to be able to teach them effectively and committing to memory more dances than he cares to remember, it was a relief to find out he had passed. "I also want to thank David Queen for all of his help, support and mentorship over the last two years."

Well done Peter—we are all looking forward to your many forthcoming classes where you'll teach us some great dances—hopefully some of yours too!



One of our original branch members celebrated a milestone birthday a few week's ago—Happy birthday John—our latest octogenarian!

Thank you Sandra for finding this very apt poem that encapsulates how many of us feel at a dance!

**I have learnt these dances as much as I can  
I am dancing as a Lady but revised it as a Man!  
I'm smiling, I'm extending, I'm bending my knee,  
I'm looking at everyone, it's social you see.  
I've finished the dance, now wasn't that nice?  
Oh no! I've forgotten to do the thing twice.**

**By Anne Graham, RSCDS Belfast Branch**



## Sending Condolences

We are saddened to inform our readers and members of our branch of the recent passing of Tom Burrows. Tom was a very well known member of our society for many years until ill health meant he could no longer take part in the dances and the annual trip. Many will remember Tom as the life and soul of the party. Many moons ago, he danced with Heather Mix and he was renowned for his many jokes and his green dressing gown on all of the earlier trips, until he could no longer remember his own jokes!

Our thoughts are with Jill, his family and friends at this difficult time.

To remember her husband, Jill is currently planning a memorial dance in his honour. It will be on Saturday 12th April 2025 with Sandy Nixon and his band playing. All will be welcome, where we will be raising money for a dementia charity. Hopefully you will all attend to remember Tom or just to enjoy the dance and the music.

### **Over the next few issues there will be a regular feature: WHAT'S IN A NAME? Submitted by David Stoney**

Dances, obviously, have names. But where did they come from? Some reference places *'The Bonnie Hurdies o' Glen Oxter'* : others, people: *'Sandy McDangle's Fareweel tae Auchterturra'*. And you will have heard about the Reel of the 51st Division many, many times. But a few names have stories that are worth a second look. Here are a few. (\*I just made these names up. Sorry!)

#### **GRAMACHIE**

How do you pronounce this? What does it mean? It *looks* as if it's Gaelic, but there is no such word. Nor is it a place name. But there is a phrase in Irish Gaelic: *'a gra mo chroi'*, which is a term of endearment. Literally 'love of my heart'.

So my bet is, this is the origin. And it's three words, not one, and so should be pronounced:

*'GRA-ma-CHEE'* with the ch soft, as in 'loch'. Not, puhlease, as in 'Charlie' as That Video would have it.

#### **BUTTERSCOTCH AND HONEY**

Sounds sweet and lovey-dovey, doesn't it? But no, it's a quote from a tongue-twisting Bothy Ballad about a Harvest Home celebration, where a pig escaped, got drunk and caused chaos. (McGinty's Meal and Ale - which is the tune it's danced to)

It comes from a nonsense line at the start: *'This is no a song o' love, and its no a song o' money, and there's nothing very pitiful, and nothing very funny, but there's Hieland Scotch, and Lowland Scotch, and butterscotch, and honey..'* And so on, for an interminable number of verses.

Very romantic. There's more, but you get the drift.

## Halloween Themed Autumn Dance held at Broughton Club.



Music by Ewan Galloway



*Super music.*

We celebrated our 30th anniversary with a spectacular Halloween-themed Scottish country dance on October 26th, 2024. The event was a resounding success, bringing together members and guests for an evening filled with lively music, delicious treats, and unforgettable moments.

As part of our 30th Anniversary events, William Williamson (Chairman of the RSCDS) had been invited to join in with the celebrations—of course this meant that another special cake had to be ordered! William and his wife thoroughly enjoyed the evening and were seen dancing the night away with our members, even getting into the spirit by dressing up too!



The highlight of the evening was undoubtedly the excellent music provided by Ewan Galloway and his band of spooky men! His masterful accordion playing set the perfect tone for the night, with a mix of traditional Scottish tunes and some haunting (specially created) Halloween favourites. The dance floor was never empty, as dancers joined in the fun, creating a vibrant and energetic atmosphere.

In addition to the fantastic music, the event featured an array of delicious cakes made by the talented members of the Ribble Valley branch. These homemade treats were certainly a hit, offering a sweet complement to the evening's festivities: from classic shortbread to decorated Halloween-themed cakes.

A heartfelt thank you goes out to all the dancers who participated and made the evening so memorable. Their enthusiasm and joy were truly infectious. The success of this event is a testament to the dedication and passion of the Ribble Valley branch members. Looking forward to the next one: Hogmanay.





Delicious cake!



To celebrate 30 years Sarah gifted a photo story book –thank you



Presentation of our 30th Anniversary Certificate from the RSCDS Chairman



See Facebook or website for more photos

## 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. Don't our models look the part!



## Our latest teacher in the spotlight: Jeff Middleton

Having agreed to provide a short article to explain Why I became a teacher, I now realise that it was quite a long drawn out process and it is still evolving. It will probably take several short articles and like many worthwhile pursuits, it is a journey and not a destination, so let's start at the beginning.

It began with my wife Jean (there is always a persuasive woman involved) who started dancing about 30 years ago when Ken and Lavinia Morris started a new branch of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society (RSCDS), The Ribble Valley Branch.

At first I was reluctant to get involved with the Dancing but Jean made me see the error of my ways and I joined the beginners class at Longridge. I was told that I was good at doing the steps, which I didn't understand, I was just doing what I was told by the teacher. If the teacher said point your feet in a certain way then I just did it. Doesn't everybody?

Jean tells me that I have an unfair advantage when it comes to dancing because I was born with my feet in first position.

So I started dancing and soon graduated to the intermediate class which was lead by a young David Queen. I realise that I have not got very far with the tale of how I became a teacher but I think it is important to provide the background information. For now let's just say that more will be revealed in the next chapter and that Stephen Brown will be implicated in what comes next!

On second thoughts, why keep Stephen in suspense. The thing is, it was at the time when Ken & Lavinia left and went to live in Braemar for a year and Stephen decided to run a class on 'how to teach formations'. About half a dozen of us enrolled. I remember Stephen saying the best way to teach somebody is to show them what to do. When it came to my turn to show the class and demonstrate a particular formation, a figure of eight or something, I was criticised by one of the class members for not finishing iwithin the eight bars. I needn't have worried as Steven soon put them right telling them that bringing the feet together at the end of a formation was done at what would be the beginning of bar nine – geddit? No. Think about it, instead of 'hop, step, close, step, **hop**' it becomes 'hop, step, close, step, **together**'. The together happens on what would be the hop of bar 9, or bar 1 of the next formation. This is all getting a bit too much, so I really will finish by saying thank you Stephen for putting your stamp of authority on my early attempts at teaching formations. Jeff



## Scottish Dance Archives 436 (Found by Michael John)

This entry primarily concerns the publication scheme known as “Scottish Dance Archives” under which 190 newly devised Scottish Country dances from numerous devisers were published in the years 1972-81. All these dances have separate entries in this database, and are linked with this publication entry.

However, it is easy to confuse this scheme with the much more recent “Dance Archives” initiative, especially since both activities heavily involved one person, [Bob Donald](#). An explanation of the separate Dance Archives will therefore be found at the end of this article.

### 1. *Scottish Dance Archives*

[Roy Clowes](#) and [Bob Donald](#), both active dancers, dancing teachers and dance devisers in the Merseyside area, launched the scheme in 1972, to help aspiring devisers of new SCD to get their dances publicised and distributed.

This initiative came at a time when just a few major devisers of new Scottish Country dances had become well known, notably [Hugh Foss](#) (who had just died) and [John Drewry](#) in the UK, and also some other devisers elsewhere such as [Robert Campbell](#) and [Marie Boehmer](#) in Canada. Numerous other devisers had new dances to introduce, but lacked an easy way to issue them, since producing printed booklets was time-consuming and expensive.

At the same time, the RSCDS itself, despite having experimented with the publication of new dances in the 1960s, in Books 22 and 23, seemed to have turned its back completely on new dances, and in its more recently issued books had reverted to publishing dances taken exclusively from historical sources. (That policy was eventually reversed starting with Book 31 in 1983.)

Under the Scottish Dance Archives scheme, Roy and Bob accepted submissions of new dances, and helped the devisers by practical testing of the dances and their instructions. The finished dances, selected for widest appeal by Roy and Bob, were then distributed to interested subscribers in groups of ten loose foolscap sheets twice yearly, starting in September 1972.

Production costs were minimised by the sheets being typed on stencils and duplicated, with strathspeys, reels, jigs and medleys printed on orange, pink, blue and white paper respectively. Occasionally other (yellow) sheets were also distributed, covering teaching and discussion topics, and also a few demonstration “set dances” and Highland dances.

Roy and Bob had hoped that after “releasing the dam”, the early flood of newly devised dances would slow to a trickle, but the flow of new submissions never eased, this being an early phase of what we now call “the dance explosion”. Consequently they decided to close the scheme in 1982, after ten years in which they had published 190 new Scottish Country dances.

A little before that, the SDA team had used a growing surplus of cash from subscriptions to finance a weekend dance school in Liverpool in 1978, with several eminent teachers and musicians contributing. Some of the material from those sessions was then subsequently circulated to SDA subscribers as the very informative booklet “Notes on teaching Scottish Country Dancing”.

By its close, nearly ninety different dance devisers had contributed to Scottish Dance Archives, mostly with just one submission each, but a few had contributed several times, including [Derek Haynes](#), [Barry Priddey](#), [Douglas & Lisbeth Henderson](#), [Sam Firth](#), [Tony Bulteel](#) and [Anne Large](#). A scan of the dance list will also reveal several other well-known dance devisers, including some from Canada, New Zealand and the USA, and both the founders [Roy Clowes](#) and [Bob Donald](#). Several of the dances were later re-published by their devisers in their own collections, but for some dances, the SD Archives manuscripts remain the original source, for example [The Pines Of Pitlochry](#) and [Mr George Gray's Reel](#).

**Thank you Michael for finding this very interesting article—watch out for part 2 in the next newsletter.**

## Future events:

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 may continue through the summer.

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.

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

Please keep Wednesday 11th December free as Peter will be running a practice evening for Hogmanay. Hope to see many of you 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.

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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](mailto:holmestracey37@gmail.com)