

# RSCDS Ribble Valley Newsletter

January 2025  
Issue 77



## From the Chair

Happy New Year everyone, I hope Father Christmas was kind. You are never too old to get a little excited at what's inside a wrapped present!

A big well done and thank you goes to Peter and Tracey for organising the Hogmanay Dance and to you for making it an excellent evening. I hope everyone enjoyed bringing in the New Year together and I've received nothing but positive comments from dancers with one person summing it up as 'Tremendous'. You can't get more positive than that.

Our heartfelt condolences go to Lucy, Julian, Joan and John at the birth of their stillborn baby daughter, and granddaughter Holly Elizabeth. May your angel always be with you.

**Ceilidh Workshops:** We are trying a new initiative this new year to try and encourage interest in Scottish dance by offering two ten week Ceilidh dance workshops. We are advertising these as dancing and fitness classes to try to attract those looking to lose a few pounds after Christmas! Hopefully they will enjoy the music and dance so much they'll want to continue by joining our Sunday and Monday classes. So, if you have friends or family you think would like to join us please pass on details of these workshops given later on in this newsletter.

**Booklet of Dances:** I wanted to capture some dances written by our members over recent years which have not been published elsewhere. I was very conscious that these dances have come and gone and if we aren't careful will disappear never to be danced again. Also as 2024 was our 30th year I thought it was a good excuse to publish these dances in a small booklet in celebration of Ribble Valley Branch reaching its 30th year. The experienced members of the committee warned me that this would be a massive task but I blindly walked into it with ignorance and enthusiasm. The booklet is now complete and going to the printers, they were right, it has been a massive task and I am now no longer ignorant nor enthusiastic to do it again, but it has been a hugely enlightening experience and I'm excited to share around 15 dances with you and anyone else who wants to share in our Anniversary booklet of dances. I'm hoping we will have the booklet available to all from the end of this month!

Joan Thompson is also looking for volunteers to take part in making videos for all these dances so please let her know if you are interested.

**Wednesdays:** As I hinted in the last newsletter we are looking at ways to improve your dancing experience on a Wednesday evening. I don't want to be prescriptive to people taking classes but then again I want you to go home having had a good time. So, we're introducing more members nights where you can pre-select your favourite dances and we will also be doing more dances from future dance programmes. As they say 'Rome wasn't built in a day' and I hope you'll continue to provide feedback and suggestions.

Happy Dancing Sandra



## Inside this issue

Hogmanay .....	2
Ceilidh Classes.....	3
Teacher Spotlight .....	4
Christmas Parties.....	4
What's in a Name? .....	5
Doris McCartney.....	6
Scottish Dance Archives.....	7
Classes information .....	8
Committee Members.....	8

## 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

# Hogmanay Celebrations held at Samlesbury Village Hall.

**Samlesbury Village Hall** was the place to be this Hogmanay, as many came together to celebrate the New Year with a night filled with Scottish dancing, games, and much more. The event, which also marked the 30th anniversary of Ribble Valley, was a joyous occasion for families and friends.

The evening kicked off with lively Scottish dancing, where dancers took to the floor to enjoy traditional dances with a couple of new dances written by the host to be enjoyed. The infectious energy and spirited music set the tone for a night of fun and festivity.

In addition to dancing, the celebration featured a variety of games and quizzes that kept everyone entertained. Novelty acts added an extra layer of excitement, showcasing corny jokes and bringing smiles to the faces of all attendees.

One of the highlights of the evening was the Jacob's join, a communal feast where everyone contributed a dish. The spread was impressive, with a wide array of delicious foods that catered to all tastes. It was a wonderful opportunity for guests to share their culinary creations and enjoy a meal together.

The hosts of the event were nothing short of entertaining, ensuring that the night ran smoothly and that everyone had a great time. Their enthusiasm and warmth were evident throughout the evening, making the celebration even more special.

A raffle with super prizes added an element of anticipation and excitement. Lucky winners walked away with fantastic rewards. Thank you to Margaret for running this in memory of her husband Peter, who had organised this for many years. Proceeds of £140 from the raffle and the Christmas card donations, went to St Catherine's Hospice—a very worthy cause.

As the clock struck midnight, the hall was filled with cheers and well-wishes as everyone celebrated the arrival of the New Year. The Hogmanay celebration at Samlesbury Village Hall was a memorable event, bringing everyone together in a spirit of camaraderie and joy.

Here's to many more years of wonderful celebrations and to the continued success of Ribble Valley!



*Star comedian*



*See Facebook or website  
for more photos*

## New Ceilidh Classes Bring Joy and Fitness to Chorley and Fulwood

Whittle-le-Woods (Chorley) and Fulwood have become the latest hotspots for an exciting new activity that is sweeping the community off its feet—literally! The recently launched ten-week Ceilidh classes are drawing in enthusiastic participants eager to learn the lively art of Ceilidh dancing.

The classes, which are open to all skill levels, are a great way to stay active and meet new people. Participants are thrilled with the energetic atmosphere and the opportunity to engage in a fun, social activity that also offers a fantastic workout.

One attendee of the Chorley class, shared her excitement: “I’ve never tried Scottish dancing before, but this first class has been so much fun! It’s a great way to lose weight and I’ve already made so many new friends.”

The classes are designed to be inclusive and welcoming, ensuring that everyone, from complete beginners to seasoned dancers, can enjoy the experience. The instructors (Peter & Michael) are passionate about sharing their love for Ceilidh dancing and are dedicated to creating a supportive and enjoyable environment, supported by their partners: Tracey & Rose. Other members of the committee have also lent a helping hand on the night.

With the popularity of these classes, it’s clear that Ceilidh dancing is more than just a way to stay fit—it’s a vibrant community activity that brings people together. Whether you’re looking to improve your fitness, learn a new skill, or simply have a great time, the Ceilidh classes in Whittle-le-Woods and Fulwood are the place to be.

Don’t miss out on the chance to join in the fun and experience the joy of Ceilidh dancing for yourself! Chorley Ceilidh class is fully booked up but there are places available at the Friday class @ Christ Church Hall, Fulwood. See Website, Facebook or telephone for more details.



*Super Ceilidh dancing.*

## Teacher Spotlight: Peter Holmes



My journey to becoming a dance instructor began as a quest for a new activity to share with my wife, Tracey, after our children had all gone off to university. We decided to try a Sunday dance class that had been advertised on the back of the church magazine: this quickly became an enjoyable weekly activity.

As our interest grew, we joined Linda and Bill's Tuesday Ceilidh class, where we honed our skills and deepened our love for dancing. Our dedication and enthusiasm did not go unnoticed, and we were invited to join the Monday class, an all-abilities group (at the time) that provided a supportive environment for dancers of varying experience levels.

With each new class, my confidence and proficiency increased. By the time we both moved to the Wednesday class, we were familiar with more complex formations and felt more at ease on the dance floor. My passion for dancing continued to flourish.

My involvement with RSCDS Ribble Valley extended beyond just dancing. I became an active member of the committee, contributing to the organisation and promotion of dance events. My efforts in running the social media pages (Facebook and setting up the new Website) helped to grow the community and attract new members. And more recently, starting a brand new Ceilidh class. Eager to further my commitment to the dance community, I decided to take the next step by training on the CTI course to become a certified dance instructor. This decision marked the culmination of my journey from a curious beginner to a dedicated and skilled instructor, ready to inspire others with my love for dance.

## *Christmas Party Fun*

2024 weekly classes drew to a close with the annual Christmas parties. Lively tunes were danced to at all the classes. One attendee stating that this was the best Christmas party ever! Jacob's joins always go down well with a variety of food (both savoury and sweet) on offer. Classes return in 2025. See next page for photos.



## WHAT'S IN A NAME? Part two Submitted by David Stoney

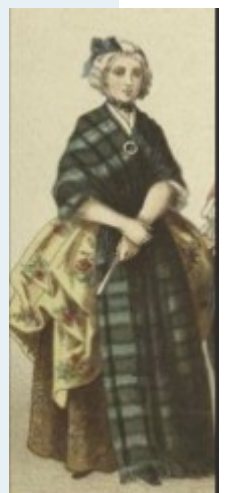
**THE GLENGARRY HOMESTEAD** This dance is named after a 'heritage' farmhouse in Queensland, Australia. ( 'Heritage' for goodness sake: it was built around 1900! ) .

But Glen Garry is in the Western Highlands of Scotland, not in Oz. The connection is, sadly, the notorious 'clearances' - when cash-hungry landlords (mostly Scots, I'm afraid) evicted the entire population of the glens, to be replaced by more profitable sheep. Many highlanders took ship to 'the colonies' in search of a better life, where they named their settlements after their lost homelands.

**MAIRI'S WEDDING** Written because the tune ( the song, originally in Gaelic, was written in 1934) is much too good not to dance to. Known and loved by all Scots everywhere. I mention it because Billy Connolly's, er, 'thoughts and reminiscences' are well worth seeking out on You tube.

**THE WEE COOPER O' FIFE** It's an old, distinctly non-PC, traditional Scots song, about a cooper (barrel-maker) who somehow acquired a 'gentil' (posh) wife. So posh that she refused to do all the tasks ( spinning, baking, brewing, etc ) that a wife in those days was expected to do. He couldn't thrash her, because of her posh family, so he put a sheepskin on her back, and thrashed that! When I learnt the song in the 1950s the consensus was, serve her right! The nonsense refrain is iconic: '*Nicketty nacketty noo noo noo*'

**THE MACHINE WITHOUT HORSES** Sounds like it should refer to a motor car, but it can't, because it's a very old dance, and the motor car hadn't been invented. One story claims it refers to a proposal for a self-propelled sedan chair. The idea was ridiculed by Dr Johnston, who pointed out that the user would have to work twice as hard in order to move the chair as well as himself!



# Sending Condolences

We are saddened to inform our readers and members of our branch of the recent passing of Doris McCutcheon. Thank you to Stephen for writing about her life.

**Doris** 5th January 1935 - 31st October 2024

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As a child, Doris McCartney (as she was) lived in Crossmichael, a village 4 miles from Castle Douglas, then in Kirkcudbrightshire. She started dancing at a very young age, her teacher was Bill Little. One incident stands out - Miss Milligan came to give a class somewhere nearby, and said "Where's my friend from Castle Douglas?", meaning the 13-year-old Doris. She wanted Doris to show the class how to do a particular thing properly.

Later, Doris became part of what was called the International Team, a display team (organised by the RSCDS, and under the leadership of Miss Milligan) travelling round different countries doing demonstrations. The team visited South Africa in 1955, when Doris was 20, and there is a photo of the team in South Africa in the recent re-publication of Books 1 to 6. Doris was 19 when she was selected for the team. She took pride in the fact that on the occasion of her selection, she was the only one to be unanimously chosen by the whole selection panel. She admitted to me that, while she was on the team, it was the only part of dancing she cared about; later in life, she "just wanted to dance", as most of us do, and did in fact do so until a week before she died.



Doris married Milne McCutcheon when she was 27. The local newspaper reports at the time referred to her as a famous local dancer. They lived in Glasgow for two years, then moved to Lancashire. In 1978 she took over the teaching of the local-authority class in Penwortham, this class going independent a few years later. From 1986 she also taught the advanced class at Southport Branch, first temporarily on account of Roy Clowes's illness, then permanently after Roy's death. Milne McCutcheon died four years ago. Doris is survived by her son Peter, now a retired policeman, and by her granddaughter Anna.



## Part 2—Scottish Dance Archives 436 (Found by Michael John)



### 2. The “Dance Archives” website

As the separate entry for [Bob Donald](#) explains, during the 1970s, as well as helping to run Scottish Dance Archives, Bob was involved in other activities. In particular for a few years, under the name “[Hugh Foss \(Formby\)](#)”, Bob and his wife Mamie ran a mail-order business, originally started by [Hugh Foss](#) himself, for the distribution of sheets and books for dances not connected with the RSCDS.

Bob and Mamie ceased running this service around 1980, that role then being taken up by others, but partly as a result of running “Hugh Foss (Formby)”, Bob and Mamie ended up with an impressive collection of hardcopy SCD instructions, including some material that had become hard to find, such as the [Glendarroch sheets](#), originally published by [Hugh Foss](#) in the late 1960s and featuring dances by him, [Derek Haynes](#), and others.

When web-based online information sources started up, around the year 2000, Bob and Mamie seized this opportunity in two ways. First, they set up the website [www.dancearchives.co.uk](http://www.dancearchives.co.uk) which provided two things: an online index to their hardcopy dance collection, and online transcripts for the instructions of about 250 selected dances. Those online transcripts were prepared individually by Bob, not without effort, and in some cases, such as those for the [Glendarroch sheets](#) just mentioned, the transcripts were far more readable than the typed originals.

Also, having by now moved from Lancashire to Edinburgh, Bob and Mamie then donated their hardcopy dance material to the music department of Edinburgh Central Library, for use as reference material, and it is now known there as the Donald Collection.

In 2020, RSCDS London Branch agreed to take over the Donalds’ online website. The full contents were then accessible on the link: <https://www.rscdslondon.org.uk/scottish-dance-archives/> but in a subsequent reorganisation of the London Branch website the link was changed to: <https://www.rscdslondon.org.uk/donald-collection/> which has a variety of search features. NB All other URLs on the site were changed so there may be some broken links remaining.

However, despite the similarity of name, in most cases the 190 dances published via the Scottish Dance Archives scheme in the 1970s are NOT among the dances with instructions available online through the new website. More details of those online instructions can be found there. The duplicate of the list can be found in our database too, visit: <https://my.strathspey.org/dd/publication/1668/>

Thank you Michael for the very interesting information.

## Future events:

[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

[Autumn Dance](#), Sat 17th October 2025, 7pm & Broughton Club, music by TBC

## Classes Information

Monday class 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.

Tuesday Class: Ceilidh class initially runs for ten weeks at Whittle-le-Woods School Hall (PR6 7PS) 7:30-9:30pm

Wednesday class 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*)

Friday Class: Ceilidh class initially runs for ten weeks at Christ Church Hall, Fulwood 7:15-9:15pm

Sunday class 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.

Correction from the last issue: John Thompson is not an original member of Ribble Valley Branch, but has been a member for over twenty years.

## Tickets out soon for the Nice and Easy Dance—Friday 7th March

### 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.

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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)