



rscds  
Dance Scottish

# Leeds Branch Dancers' Newsletter

Registered Charity No. 1072452

60TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE - NOVEMBER 2022



Our recent September Day School taught by Ramona Rank (née Zohm) from Germany

## RSCDS Leeds Branch 60th Anniversary Year

According to records an application to form a Branch of the Society was made in February 1962. The RSCDS Leeds Branch was formed on 21st June 1962 at a meeting held at 7.30pm at Bentley Lane C. P. School, Meanwood Road, Leeds 6; this was for the purpose of electing Officers and Committee, and formulating a Constitution and Policy.

It was nice to be able to meet up again after the pandemic for our Anniversary Year. We have held our usual Branch dances, afternoon tea dances, Musicians' workshop with Sandy Nixon, a day workshop trialling dances from book 53 for Head Office and of course it was lovely to have the White Rose Festival back. Our most recent event was the September Day School held at St Chad's, taught by Ramona Rank (née Zohm) from Germany.

Our main celebration event will be our 60th Anniversary Ball at The Riley-Smith Hall, Tadcaster, starting at 7pm with a wine reception. I look forward to seeing you all there. On page 2 you will see the reasons for the programme choices.

### THE BALL PROGRAMME

#### Maxwell's Rant

R 8x32 - RSCDS Book 18

#### The Chequered Court

J 8x32 - RSCDS Book 42

#### The Garry Strathspey

S 4x32 - Twenty-two SCD

#### All the Eights

J 8x32 - Leeds Golden Collection

#### The Black Mountain Reel

R 5x32 - RSCDS 30 Popular Dances Vol 2

#### An Ilkley Gift

S 8x32 - Goldring, Auld Friends Meet

#### Anniversary Reel

R 4x32 - RSCDS Book 36

#### Ian Powrie's Farewell to Auchterarder\*

J 128 square set - RSCDS 30 Popular Dances Vol 2

### INTERVAL

#### South from Oban

J 8x40 - Leeds 10

#### Scott Meikle

R 4x32 - RSCDS Book 46

#### The Rose of the North

S 8x32 - Leeds Silver Jubilee

### Newsletters

This will be the last printed Newsletter. Many of the old Newsletters are on the [Branch Website](#). I am looking to find the full set of Newsletters that I produced.

If you have any old print or pdf versions of the missing Newsletters, especially the early ones please contact me.  
Catherine Livsey [cllivsey@gmail.com](mailto:cllivsey@gmail.com)



### 60th ANNIVERSARY BALL Saturday 19 November 2022

The Riley-Smith Hall, 28 Westgate,  
Tadcaster LS24 9AB

Wine reception 7.00pm  
Dinner 7.30pm  
Dance begins 8.15pm  
Interval serving tea coffee and dessert 9.30pm  
Dance resumes 10.00pm  
Carriages 11.15pm

Dancing to the Ian Muir Scottish Dance Band  
Formal dress preferred

#### Father Connelly's Jig

4x64 - Drewry, Donside Book

#### The Highland Rambler

R 8x40 - RSCDS 30 Popular Dances Vol 2

#### Jacqui Watson's Strathspey

S 3x32 - Leeds Golden Collection

#### The Aviator

J 8x32 - RSCDS Book 52

#### The Deil among the Tailors\*

8x32 - RSCDS Book 14

\* These dances will not be recapped or walked

The Branch website is [www.rscdsleeds.org.uk](http://www.rscdsleeds.org.uk)  
where you can find old newsletters and articles on the history of Leeds Branch and Leeds Club.

# Choosing the 60th Anniversary Ball Programme

**Maxwell's Rant** was danced at the Branch's first ball on 26 October 1962. Dating back to 1755, it surely counts as an old favourite.

**The Chequered Court** is a Duncan Brown dance. We are delighted that Duncan will be teaching our September Day School 2023.

**The Garry Strathspey** is Sharon's choice. It expresses our gratitude to Sharon for leading the committee in organising this ball.

**All the Eights** is from the Leeds Golden Collection. We couldn't have our 60th Anniversary Ball without a dance devised by Brenda Burnell. Thank you, Brenda, for all you have done for the Branch.

**The Black Mountain Reel** is here in recognition of Derek and Maureen Haynes. It was also danced at our 20th Anniversary Ball.

**An Ilkley Gift**, which appears in a collection entitled Auld Friends Meet, is a reminder of the warm welcome always extended by the Ilkley class.

**Anniversary Reel** was danced at our 30th and 50th Anniversary Balls. I wonder why.

**Ian Powrie's Farewell to Auchterarder** appeared on the programme of the 10th Anniversary Ball. I used to attend dances in Auchterarder, where I.P.F.T.A. was almost always on the programme, so I confess to a personal soft spot for the dance.

## Interval

**South from Oban** from our 10th anniversary publication makes its fourth Leeds Anniversary Ball appearance tonight.

**Scott Meikle** with music by his father, George Meikle, reminds us of the many occasions when George has filled the hall with great music and turned a regular social dance into something special.

**The Rose of the North** was danced at our 40th and 50th Anniversary Balls. It is chosen as a tribute to Roy and Doreen Goldring and to Muriel Johnstone.

**Father Connelly's Jig** adds a John Drewry dance to our programme and a smile to our faces.

**The Highland Rambler** is a favourite with our less experienced dancers. It appeared in the Leeds Branch Silver Jubilee Book and was enjoyed at our 40th Anniversary Ball.

**Jacqui Watson's Strathspey** was created by Noel Watson for his wife, Jacqui, and was published in the Leeds Golden Collection. Many of us will remember dancing this dance with Jacqui.

**The Aviator** is a modern favourite. I watched from the stage as it was danced at our 2019 Joint Ball, an occasion I recollect with affection.

We end as we began in the 18th century. **The Deil amang the Tailors** closed our 50th Anniversary Ball and will end our ball tonight. No doubt it will add vigour to many future dance programmes.

**Safe journey home**

*Marion Walbank*

# The early days of Scottish Dancing and the Leeds Branch

The Scottish Country Dance Society was set up after the First World War by Miss Jean Milligan and Mrs Stewart of Fasnacloch. They believed that Scottish Dancing was losing its dignity and courtesy, and they wanted to preserve traditional techniques, preserve the old dances, and to teach. The 'Royal' was added in 1951 to become the RSCDS.

## Scottish Dancing in Leeds

There has long been a strong base of Scottish Dancing in Leeds, and the Leeds Scottish Country Dance Club was formed in 1951. It was supported by the Leeds Caledonian Society, and its members were drawn from a class organised by Leeds Education Committee. The purpose of the Club was to organise social dancing in Leeds. The Club was affiliated to the RSCDS.

## Leeds Branch

The Leeds Branch of the RSCDS was formed in 1962 by some of the Leeds Scottish Country Dance Club members, who wanted to have a closer relationship with the Society.

They believed that they all benefitted from the RSCDS either directly or indirectly, through its teaching and its safeguarding of the traditional dances. The Branch was not intended to be competitive with, but complementary to the Club - they have both flourished side by side now for nearly 60 years until the Club closed its door for the final time in 2021. There is a full history of the club on the [Branch website](#).

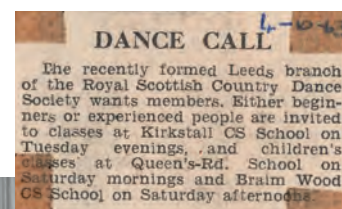


*Miss Jean Callander Milligan*



*Mrs Ysobel Stewart of Fasnacloch*

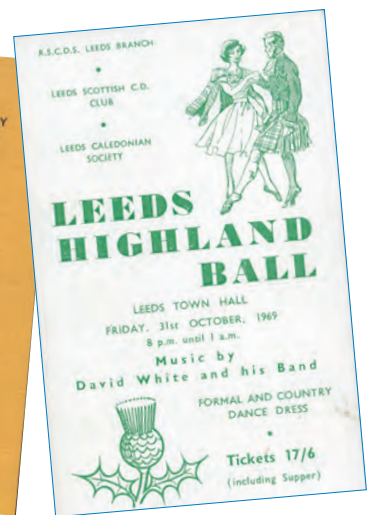
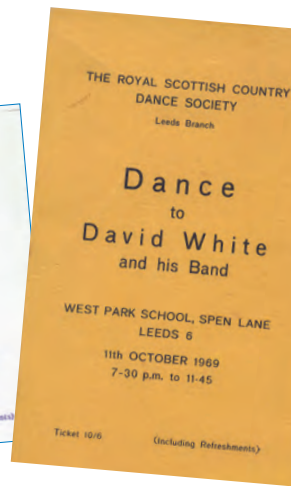
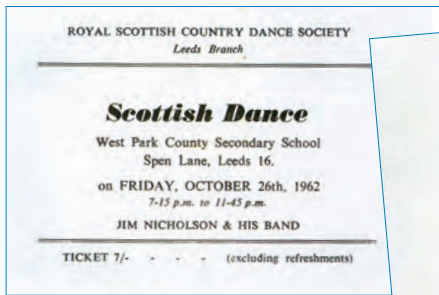
The Branch took over the teaching and demonstrating of Scottish dancing, while the Club continued with social dances.



*Advert from The Yorkshire Post 4.10.1963.*

*Picture of a Branch Class 1963*

The Branch has also proved itself successful at running enjoyable and lively social dances with live music every month of the dancing season.



Early dance tickets, more on the first Branch dance on page 8.

## Founder members were

Dr William Cunningham,  
Mr T Hammond Jack,  
Miss Mair Pinnell,  
Miss Shirley Shields

## Original members included

Peter Clark (Secretary),  
Brenda Burnell (Committee Member),  
Diana Ashworth,  
Ian Clark,  
Jo Fogden,  
Audrey Hinchliffe



Some of the founders and original members of the Branch at the 50th Anniversary celebration.

# Important dates in the early years of Leeds Branch



Dr William Cunningham, a founder member and 1st Chairman of the Branch. Sadly I can't find any pictures of Mr T Hammond Jack.

## The First Committee

President: Mr T Hammond Jack  
Chairman: Dr W Cunningham  
Secretary: Mr PJ Clark  
Treasurer: Miss DM Todd  
Committee: Miss MC Swowden  
Miss S Shields  
Mrs B Burnell  
Miss M Pinnell  
Mr H Storey  
Mr W Wood

### 1962

21.6.62 Inaugural meeting  
26.10.62 Friday - first dance at West Park School with Jim Nicholson

### 1963

2.3.63 Day School - Miss Milligan and Rene Fidler  
Evening Dance at Braim Wood School  
21.3.63 Thursday - dance at Abbey Grange School with Jim Macleod  
5.10.63 Dance at West Park School with Jim Nicholson

### 1964

8.2.64 Day School at West Park School with Winnie Wadsworth and Andrew Grant  
Dance with Bernard Dixon  
2.7.64 Dortmunders visited  
18.7.64 Mystery Car Run  
Dance at Burnsall Hall

17.10.64 Day School with Winnie Wadsworth, Rene Fidler and Duncan Macleod  
Dance with Strathedin SC Band (Jim Nicholson)  
This is Scotland  
1964 Ceilidh - 250 attended

### 1965

1965 Dr Cunningham retired and moved to St Andrews  
Easter - Peter Clark married Pat and moved to West Hartlepool  
May 65 Team visited Dortmund  
29.5.65 Dance with Bobby Harvey  
16.10.65 Day School with Rene Fidler, Bill Clement and Jeannette McSpornan  
Dance with Strathedin Scottish Country Dance Band  
Nov 65 Teacher's Certificate exam - Mrs Gudger and Mina Corson (Kathleen from Nelson)

## 1966

- 12.2.66 Ceilidh
- March 66 Dr Scott retired and moved to Lymmington
- 24.4.66 Weekend Course in York with Florence Adams, and Bill Hamilton
- 6.5.66 Dance with Jimmy Blair
- 21.5.66 First Children's Festival at Primrose Hill
- 2.7.66 Highland Games at Roundhay Park  
Dortmunders visit
- 15.10.66 Dance with Jimmy Blair



First Children's Festival at Primrose Hill, the Advanced Section dance "The Braes of Breadalbane"

## 1967

- 11.2.67 Ceilidh
- 18.3.67 Children's Festival
- 17.3.67 Breath of Scotland at West Park
- 21.3.67 Breath of Scotland at Harrogate, Royal Hall



Bill Hamilton and Mrs Draper (one of the pianists), Miss Adams with some of her class and Miss Fidler with a group from her class at the Weekend School April 1967



Mr W Wood (Stage manager) Avis (a solo dancer) Flight Lieut. Angus Grant (MC), Breath of Scotland Harrogate

- April 67 Weekend School at York with Rene Fidler, Florence Adams and Bill Hamilton
- 5.5.67 Dance with Jim MacLeod
- 17-22.5.67 Visit to Dortmund
- 8.7.67 Irish visit to Festival
- 22-23.9.67 Highland dancing Vera Seddon
- 6-7.10.67 Music course - Nan Main
- 14.10.67 Day School - Andrew and Vera Grant  
Dance - Jim MacLeod

## 1968

- 21.2.68 Breath of Scotland - Harrogate  
Breath of Scotland - St Chad's
- 15.3.68 Dance Jimmy Blair
- 30.3.68 Children's Festival
- 26-28.4.68 Weekend School at York  
Bill Hamilton, Vera Seddon, Rene Fidler
- 10.5.68 Friday - dance - Bobby Harvey
- 30.6.77 Dutch visit
- 25.10.68 Highland Ball - Town Hall - Jimmy Blair

## 1969

- February 69 This is Scotland
- 29.3.69 Children's Festival
- 3.5.69 Breath of Scotland
- 23.5-1.6.69 Visit to Dortmund

## 1970

- 17.1.70 Dance - Andrew Rankine
- 21.3.70 Children's Festival
- 15.5.70 Friday - dance - The Olympians
- July 70 Visitors from Paris

## 1971

- 3.4.71 Children's Festival
- 25-26.3.71 Breath of Scotland - Library Theatre, Bradford
- 7.5.71 Friday - dance - Bobby Crowe
- July 71 Visitors from Sweden

## 1972 - 79

- 13.10.72 Highland Ball  
Breath of Scotland
- 30.6.73 Visitors from Germany
- 74 Spring Concert
- 75 Visitors from Belgium
- 16.6.75 Visit to France
- July 76 Visit to Germany
- 77 Visit to Sweden
- 79 Visit to Dortmund
- 79 Children's Festival

## 1981

- 21.3.81 Children's Festival
- 19.9.81 Day School - Mary Stoker
- 23.10.81 Highland Ball
- 24.10.81 Half Day Highland School - Derek Haynes

## 1982

- 23.1.82 Burns' Celebration Dance Danelaw
- 20.3.82 President's Choice Dance The Lothian Band
- 2-4.4.82 Scarborough Weekend - Johann MacLean, Alastair MacFadyen
- June Visit to Lille
- July-August Visit to Orebro
- 18.9.82 Day School - Derek Haynes
- 22.10.82 Highland Ball - Bobby Crowe
- December Ceilidh

## 1983

- 19.3.83 President's Choice Dance - David White
- 15-17.4.83 Scarborough Weekend  
Bill Zobel, Johann MacLean
- 11.6.83 21st Birthday Dance - Danelaw
- 24-31.7.83 Visit from Hollandse Dansgroup, Hoogwoud
- 21.10.83 Highland Ball - Bobby Crowe

## 1984

- 17.4.84 President's Dance  
The Lothian Band

## Children's Festival

- 30.3.84 Scarborough Weekend  
-1.4.84 Anna Holden, Bill Zobel
- 8-11.6.84 Visit to Alkmaar, Holland
- August 84 Visit to Norway
- 15.9.84 Day School  
Margaret Anderson
- 19.10.84 Highland Ball - Danelaw

## 1985

- 85 Scarborough Weekend  
Bob Grant, Dorothy Leurs

## 1986

- 11-13.4.86 Scarborough Weekend  
Bob Grant, Dorothy Leurs

## 1987

- Children's Festival  
Beckett Park
- Silver Jubilee
- Visit from Sweden and Holland

## 1989

- Sept 89 Day School - Beckett Park



# Leeds Branch members awarded

## Leeds Members who have received the Society Scroll

**Brenda Burnell**, Awarded 2000, presented March 2001 in Leeds

**Roy Goldring**, Awarded 2001, presented at the Society AGM in Perth

**Avis Harrison**, Awarded 2006, presented December 2008 in Leeds

## Leeds Members who have received the Branch Award

**Jean Dyson**, Awarded 17 March 2007 at the Children's Festival

**Yvonne Tredgett**, Awarded 17 March 2007 at the Children's Festival

**Alan & Susan Carr**, Awarded 19 February 2011 at the Branch Dance

**Don Andrews**, Awarded 17 September 2011 at the Branch Dance

**Irene Dracup**, Awarded 15 September 2018 at the Branch Dance



*Five Photos of Overseas Visits*

## Branch Award made jointly by Richmond and Leeds Branches

**Terry Chater**, Awarded 11 July 2009 at the White Rose Festival

## Former Leeds Member who has received the Society Scroll, Nominated by Membership Services Committee

**Barbara Peel**, Awarded 2009 - presented at the Society AGM in Perth

# Scottish Country Dancing in the 1950s

I first had a taster session of Scottish country dancing before I went to college in 1951 when a group of dancers came to our Rover/Ranger group from the University of Leeds. Although the formations were similar to the English country dancing ones they seemed more demanding. After the dancing the group told us about their classes starting again in October and also about a summer school that was held in St Andrews. As my sister and I were going to Scotland, I thought I would investigate. I did so and saw Miss Hadden who told me I could attend as a non-resident. That meant I could join in the evening dancing and sit in 2 classes. This was wonderful! I saw how the steps were being taught in the classes and was able to enjoy dancing too. There were no more classes over the summer but I found out more about them before I left for Balls Park Training College, Hertford, in September.

I had already joined the London Branch of the RSCDS. In early 1952 it was arranged for me to attend my first London dance at Fetter Lane. Sadly the King died just before and the dance was cancelled as a mark of respect. I did make the next dance and how I enjoyed dancing with good dancers – feet turned out, accurate 3rd positions, everyone knowing the dances and all seemed to be enjoying themselves. The most memorable thing about this evening was the first dance I ever did to band music. It was Miss Mary Douglas. It isn't often on a programme nowadays but I still have a soft spot for it – no pas de basque, just 48 bars of basic formations.

MISS MARY DOUGLAS				8x48 J	
	1 2 3 <b>CHAIN</b>	↔			

Wilson, 1816, RSCDS Book 10.11 3C/4C longwise set.

In summer 1952 I went to St Andrews for two weeks and spent a week in the beginners' class. There I met a dancer of similar age and we decided to ask if we could transfer to the Very Advanced class for the second week (there were no other classes in between!). We were allowed to do so and enjoyed it very much. It was our introduction to Miss Milligan as teacher and the wonderful sprung floor of the Younger Hall. Both were amazing experiences! Miss Milligan always inspired me to dance my best. The floor is the best I've ever danced on - you never get tired on it. As standing couple the floor just moved up and down in a magical way. At this Summer School I picked up some more teaching tips from the teachers there. I also started 'stooging' for the exams and learnt more from doing that. Then back to college for my final year, fitting in as many London dances as I could. Miss Wingate, the Principal of Balls Park Training College, was very keen about us being back in college on time. If we were late we were gated for two weeks. She took her 'in loco parentis' very seriously as we were all under 21 and had not come of age!



The Younger Hall, St Andrews

I returned to college for my second and final year. I took over the dance club which became the Scottish Country Dance club for the year. In the summer term we decided to take a team to Harpenden Highland Games. I asked Miss Wingate if we could and she agreed but we couldn't use the college name. We finally went as the 8 counties as we all came from different ones. The set dance was The Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh. We didn't win but had a wonderful day out.

I finished college in 1953 and followed my summer routine and went to St Andrews again. There I made my decision not to take any Scottish Country Dancing exams at Summer School but to try my luck in Manchester.

My day-time teaching involved hearing all 48 children in my class read every day. Activities were put out in the morning and reading took over resulting in every child being able to read before leaving our infants school!

So on Wednesdays I left school, caught the bus to town and then caught the steam train to Manchester. Another bus to the school where the classes were held.

Mrs Queenie Gibb was our teacher and Ivy (I forget her surname) was the pianist. There were 3 ladies - Jessie, Marjorie and me in the class plus a young man (who sadly was not successful in the exam).

We each taught each other every week but I can't honestly say that I enjoyed the classes. I used to sit on the train and wonder why I was doing this. I came back to Bradford on the last train along with the newspapers, milk churns and post. My mother met me off the train and we walked home together.

## I have a few outstanding memories of that Preliminary Test class and what happened with the travelling:

- On one of those return journeys two large men came and sat in my compartment, asked a few questions and then fortunately fell asleep. Unfortunately one was sitting by the compartment door (it was a corridor train) and had his feet on the opposite seat. When I was sure they were both asleep I climbed over the legs and went to the guard's van for the rest of the journey.
- As I had a very quiet voice I was put at one end of the hall where we had the class and my 'class' at the other end! It was awful but it seems to have worked.
- The most traumatic evening still gives me goose-bumps to think of it. I left the class and went to the bus stop, but all the buses were full and went straight past. Eventually one stopped and two people got off. I got on. The bus only went to the Town Hall, not the station. I discovered on my journey that Manchester City had been playing at Maine Road which was just near the school. When the bus reached the Town Hall I was first off and I ran. I've never checked how far it is but I arrived at the station just as the train did. It was on the farthest platform. So down under the subway I ran. As I got on the train it moved. I couldn't breathe properly until we reached Stalybridge!!

Exam day arrived and I caught the bus to Rochdale where it was to take place. There were lots of people there buzzing around. The candidates were taken to a classroom where we drew lots for the order of teaching. I was number 1. We first did the dancing of our prescribed dances. Then back to the classroom. The questions for the written paper were on the blackboard and everyone started writing. I went to teach! I was given a book and told to look through the dance on the open page. It was "I'll Mak' Ye Fain to Follow Me" and then go and teach it. It had basic formations and a chase but I've never met it on a programme. I only did step practice and 16 bars of the dance when Miss Milligan stopped me.

*continued overleaf*

It was enough and my written paper too. I passed my Preliminary Test.

I enjoyed another trip to Summer School and then it was back to daytime teaching.

The Full Certificate class started again in Manchester with a few changes. Jessie, Marjorie and I were joined by another young man who also failed in his exam. Classes were held on Friday evenings with Miss Ada Booth as our teacher and Ivy was back to play for us. We were also back in the same hall.

My travel arrangements were adjusted and I travelled by train from Leeds via Huddersfield - a much quicker journey and uneventful too. I could then catch a night service bus back to Armley and stay with my sister and her husband.

The classes were not so memorable this time but were enjoyable as the set dances were more demanding, as was the teaching!

The exam followed on with Miss Milligan in charge. Again I drew number 1 and had to teach the 'stooges'. These were children as they arrived early. I was told to teach them Lord Roslyn's Fancy (one of our set dances). I was in my element. All went well and again after step practice and just as before after the first 16 bars I was stopped. The only adverse comment was my hair. It has never been long but I had it tied up in bunches which bobbed up and down when I danced. Since that date I've always kept it short.

The trauma of this class was still awaiting us when it finished. We took our exam at Easter time and heard nothing from Headquarters until Whitsuntide! Then we all got the wrong certificates. Eventually it was all sorted and we were all Fully Certified.

You may wonder why we didn't communicate more with each other but very few people had phones and only the doctors in Leeds had cars - how life has changed.

*Brenda Burnell*

*An article taken from "The First Fifty Years of the Leeds Branch of the RSCDS" a booklet compiled by Brenda Burnell for the 50th Anniversary of the Branch in 2012.*

## The Piano

When we finally found a 'home' for our Branch dances and held our two dances each year with live music, we discovered we were not allowed to use the grand piano in the hall - it was kept locked.



West Park School was a girls' school and the Headmistress took care of her school and expensive pieces of equipment within it. This presented us with a problem as to where to find a piano for visiting bands. I'm not sure who contacted the Congregational Church just up Spen Lane but we were allowed to use theirs. This meant on Saturday afternoons Peter Walker borrowed a trolley from work (he worked in a hospital) and with a gang of fit young men it was duly loaded and trundled along Spen Lane and unloaded in time for the visiting band and the evening dance. Of course it had to be returned in a similar fashion ready for Sunday morning!

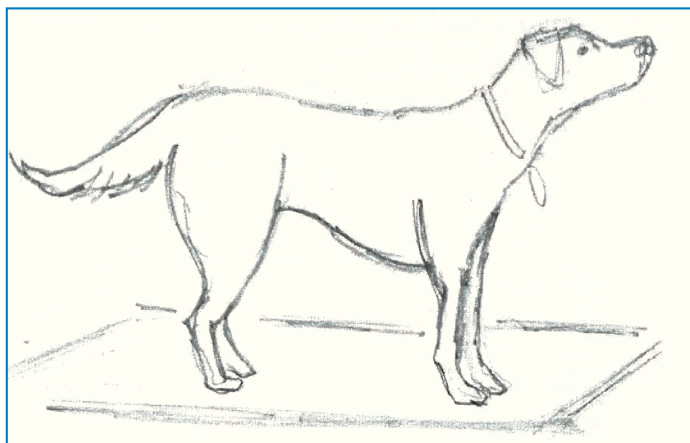
Having done this many times, the church finally gave us the piano! After our absence from dancing at West Park (caretaker trouble) we returned to find the piano still at the back of the stage. Sadly now it has long gone.

*Brenda Burnell*

## Did you know?

That the first branch dances always started with the National Anthem? This was the case with all public functions at the time.

Later on the national anthem was played at the end of events. The David White Band, a regular band from the north east in the 60s and 70s, would just play part of the national anthem before their signature tune "Cock of the North" at the end of the dance. David's dog, Shandy, who always travelled with them, would obediently stand for the national anthem.



*Shandy at attention*

In the early days of the Leeds Branch there were two proper dances with bands a year, in October/November and May. There were additional monthly dances to records once a month, the

3rd Saturday in a month, to fit around the two monthly dances held by the Club. When cheap holidays abroad became available the May dance was discontinued due to lack of attendees. The Foursome Reel would always be on the major dance programmes.

In its heyday the evening dance after the Leeds Festival (now the White Rose Festival) took place in two separate venues with bands at each venue. There would be 500 dancers dancing in the Refectory at Leeds University and a further 700 dancing at Beckett Park. Now there are far few dancers but so many more dances to learn and choose programmes from!

*Brenda Burnell*



*Some Branch members in 1963, the Branch had 190 members.*

# Jim Nicholson and his Scottish Dance Band

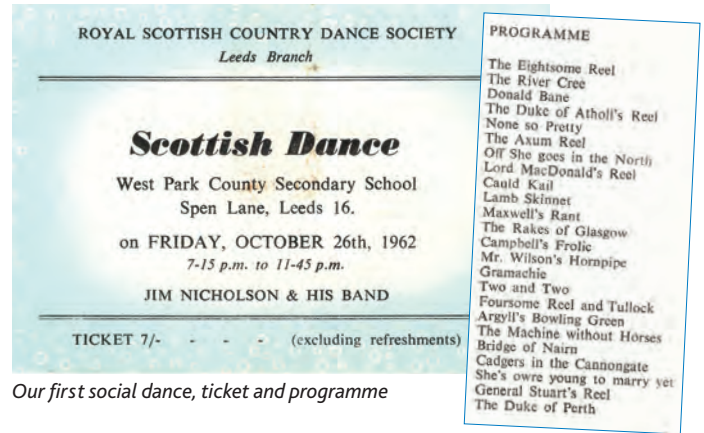


Marion pictured in front of the painting of Stac Polly with a copy of "Rufus" and the "Crown of Ghillies" logo.

At our very first social dance, music was courtesy of Jim Nicholson. Here, as in so much, the Branch was indebted to the Leeds Scottish Country Dance Club, for it was at the Club's Hogmanay Ball in 1951 that Jim was first introduced to Scottish country dancing. A young man in his twenties, he was at the stage of finding out what he wanted to do with his life. He shifted his career direction to take up graphic art and, after one attempt at Strip the Willow (when, incidentally, he fell and broke his wrist), he became a Scottish country dance fan.

Jim was brought up in Otley (Prince Henry's Grammar School) and later worked and studied in Leeds, but promotion took him to Edinburgh and, from a questionable start into dancing in 1951, he was a member of the RSCDS International Team touring South Africa in 1960. Oh, and not satisfied with that, he formed a Scottish Dance Band, returning to West Yorkshire in 1962 to wow the Leeds crowd at the Branch's first dance.

His band produced two recordings in 1963. The first EP, Scottish Country Dances Vol 5, gives the line-up: Jim Nicholson (Accordion), Roy Dick (Fiddle), Iain MacPhail (Accordion), Ken MacDonald (Piano) and Gordon Young (Drums). The tracks are The Fireside Reel, White Heather Jig and Janet's Delight. Does anyone have a copy? Volume 6 features Hooper's Jig and The Marquis of Lorne. The cover informs us that "The original tunes, Miss Milligan's own choice, are recorded here by a band specialising in playing Scottish Country Dance Music for dancing, correct in tempo and expression." There is even a quote from Won't you Join the Dance?!



Our first social dance, ticket and programme

By 1964, Jim had stepped down and Roy Dick was leading the band, now renamed The Strathedin Scottish Country Dance Band. Iain MacPhail took over in the late 60s.

Also in 1964, Jim Nicholson became the first artistic designer for the National Trust for Scotland. NTS members may recall that sudden improvement in the appearance of publications and exhibition panels. The man who was to become the Trust's art director had come a long way from the young man who designed "Rufus", the kilted owl, for the Leeds SCD Club. Mind you, Rufus has stood the test of time, as has the "Crown of Ghillies" logo Jim created for the RSCDS, which Catherine Livsey updated in 2006 when on memberships committee designing the current RSCDS logo. This proved quite controversial with Jim Healy and Catherine having many discussions with the management board, but that is another story.

Jim also took up landscape painting, as you will have realised by the picture heading this piece. When I saw in Brenda's booklet marking our fiftieth anniversary that Jim Nicholson played for the first Branch dance, it seemed unlikely that a Yorkshire accordionist and a Scottish artist could be one and the same, but slowly the pieces fitted together.

When my parents gave me this painting of Stac Polly, they had no idea that it had a connection with Leeds.

Marion Walbank



Image is from [Discogs website](http://Discogs website)



# Alistair remembers

## When were you dancing in Leeds?

From 1976 to 2001, a quarter of a century. And then last summer, to my complete surprise, the Leeds Branch invited me back to open the White Rose Festival. Ten years ago, I wrote two pages for Brenda Burnell's *The First Fifty Years of the Leeds Branch of the RSCDS*. I confess that my memory was better then than it is now. This time, there were all these friendly faces that I certainly recognized, but could I put a name to them?

## They used to call you Zebedee.

No-one did this last visit. I was grateful - I never liked the nickname. I thought all dancers should dance as lightly as they could. Several years after I left Leeds, the Banffshire Branch celebrated its 75th anniversary, and we actually were invited to dance before the Queen at Balmoral. After the performance, she worked her way round the room, and spoke to each of us, and when she came to me she said, "Your spring!"

## How much of your time was spent dancing?

I meet some pensioners who can find time for dancing five or six nights a week, but I had a full-time job, which involved homework. For much of my time in Leeds I attended the Advanced Class, taught the Harrogate Saltire class, and taught the Leeds University students' class. It was a nice mix of experience, and part of what the reality of the Branch was, an overarching organization, where not all our dancing was done in formal Branch classes and dances. I haven't mentioned overseas trips and Glenlee and the occasional Highland class.

## Tell me about these other classes.

The Harrogate Saltire dancers were a lovely group, though I felt the committee and I were pulling in different ways. I wanted to teach dancing, not dances, and to hand down the ancient dances of Scotland. The committee would give me a dance programme full of the latest fashionable dances, normally difficult ones - they liked a challenge - and between us we got enough of our own way to have a good time. I am so glad that after me the Saltire Society had Betty as teacher, who actually could teach, and no-one could fall out with her.

## And what about the students?

A student class is a delight. As a laddie from Scotland, I learned Scottish Country Dance in the Oxford University Scottish Dance Society. My mother was so pleased. She had been a dancer until she met my father. I was badly taught at Oxford, just by the Society committee - the big

boys. But then I went to do research at Cambridge, where the student Strathspey and Reel Club had an advanced class, taught by Susan Nedderman, who took me in hand. The class was in a room with a wall of mirror, and you really learn by seeing if your feet are doing what you think they are doing. And I went several times with Susan to Summer School in St Andrews. For years and years I went to the Inter-Varsity Folk Dance Festival, and in those days most universities had student SCD societies. I can remember announcing the Oxford and Cambridge Highland Ball at an IVFDF and at once the President of the Leeds University SDS leapt up with the details of their ball at half the price. Nowadays very few English universities have Scottish Dance societies, and I am so proud that Leeds is one of them. Well done, Alan, my successor as teacher!

## You were three times Secretary of the Leeds Branch

If you really enjoy an activity, you should do some of the practical work in the background that keeps it going. I'm sure I quite enjoyed being secretary, but the real joy was the dancing. And I can say honestly that coming back to that great Festival and lovely dance in the evening at

Harewood was by far the best thing that has happened to me since COVID.

*Alistair Mason*

## Alistair

One of my memories of Alistair is when I was tasked with teaching the MacNab dances to the advanced class. We were doing the Hebridean Weaving Lilt. Alistair was 1st man and we were doing the Winding the Bobbin bit of the dance where 1st Man stands still while 4th woman leads a string of dancers around him in a spiral. They wound around him so tightly he couldn't get out and lead the string out clockwise to reform the circle. All I could see was his hand in the air and cries for help coming from the centre. He managed to get out by me asking for everyone to loosen the bobbin. We all then fell about in fits of laughter. I always enjoyed having Alistair in class; he always helped make a lovely class atmosphere through his lovely spirit and humour.

*Catherine Livsey*



*Alistair learning the Folk-dances of Sweden*



# It started with a Ceilidh and morphed into Scottish Country Dancing

My introduction to Scottish Country Dancing started with the ceilidh class at a Cookridge Community Centre (OPAL) in August 2021. I have attended a number of events in the past (family parties, weddings etc) where ceilidh dances have formed a part of the evening and enjoyed them. So when I saw the advert, for these classes I thought, "why not?" I have to say, had I seen an advert for Scottish Country Dancing, I'm not certain I would have enquired.

After 8 weeks this class morphed into a Scottish Country Dancing class. I and others continued with the classes and as beginners were invited, (free of charge) to the Saturday evening dance in October. Those attending from the ceilidh class were expecting to observe and experience the dancing environment. How wrong we were. Being asked to dance was a little daunting but we were encouraged to do some of the easier dances and were kindly helped (what seemed every step of the way) by experienced dancers. We all enjoyed the evening and expected to attend further Saturday dances.

The following Saturday dance in November, I was expecting something similar to the last one, this time being charged half price as I wasn't expected to join in many of the dances.

I assumed I'd be attempting a third to half of the programme but those there were having none of that. I think I danced all but the most difficult dance on the programme. The enthusiasm and acceptance of other dancers meant I had an absolute ball. My abiding memory of that evening is of a dance with hands coming at me to turn or be redirected, fearing what might happen if I missed one! It'll be full price entry from now on I thought.

I attended a number of "Christmas" dances including the ones at Askwith and Ilkley where I met new dancers and "volunteers" who helped at the OPAL ceilidh class that I hadn't seen for some months. The Ilkley Christmas dance may have been the first time I met Don.



*Don and Branch Musicians: On the 13th October the Thursday evening class was lucky enough to be treated to music from the Branch Musicians. It was wonderful to have more than four sets there to enjoy it.*

Then, just after Christmas, I caught Covid again, which in itself was fairly routine but unfortunately what happened after was not. One of the few things I was able to cope with was watching RSCDS dance videos on YouTube. I was very keen to get back to dancing and probably started too early, something later confirmed for me at a dance in Askwith. But you never know until you try.

It is unfortunately still with me and apparently will be for some time, currently affecting my short term memory. So if you see me looking vacant at any point, particularly mid-dance, you know why!

I have continued to attend dances and other events including the new dance appraisal day in May and my first White Rose Festival. I had a great day (thanks to all involved) where once again, all of my dance strategies came into play! I look forward to next year's events and any opportunity to dance the Flying Scotsman!

Someone asked me a while ago which of the activities that I take part in is my favourite? I had to be careful here as the enquirer isn't an RSCDS member, however my response was Scottish Dancing for a number of reasons. The deciding factor however is that it is probably the only activity I undertake which is truly collaborative, well at least when done correctly.

For the present I'm still struggling with poussettes; just when I think I've got it, I realise I haven't.

Hello-Goodbye setting instills dread whenever I see it on a dance card. I continue to perfect the art of "spotting the gap and moving to it", which is particularly effective when your partner is in the right place. And occasionally I do my own thing and sometimes do nothing at all.

## Favourite Dances so far?

### Minister on the Loch

**The Highland Rambler** (It appears I'm in good company with this one. One evening prior to the Festival, Don felt the need to instruct dancers to "take it steady" prior to practising it!)

**192 Miles Home** (at one time, from either Manchester or Yorkshire, for me, it was 218 miles home).

Dare I say **1314**?

But definitely not the **Golden Pheasant**.

I would like to thank all of the teachers, including fellow dancers, who have helped, encouraged and directed me over the last year, whether formally or as part of regular dancing, especially Irene (Dracup), for great instructions and whose patience appears to have no bounds.

I would also like to thank all Christines, but in particular, Christine Parker-Jones for her support, encouragement, provision of attire and patience, the last of which seems only to be matched by that of Irene.

Finally, thank you all for your acceptance, time, patience and encouragement I have received over the last year or so. I hope that will be the case for the coming years and that I am able to provide this to others in the future.

*Paul Cryer*

### Paul you are not the only one who didn't like the Golden Pheasant.

As part of my Highland Dancing School I ran sessions for adult dancers to take their BATD medal tests in Scottish Country Dancing. For the Gold level the prescribed dance was the Golden Pheasant. Most of the class was made up of Branch members, one of them being Nigel Campbell, a former Branch Treasurer and committee member. He had an expetive to describe The Golden Pheasant (unfortunately I can't repeat it here); he hated the dance with a passion. It is not an easy dance to make look nice ([See the crib](http://my.strathspey.org)). on my.strathspey.org

If you want to find out a little bit more about Nigel, his Obituary is in issue 36 of the Branch Newsletter <http://www.rscdsleeds.org.uk/Newsletter/RSCDS%20Newsletter%2036.pdf>

*Catherine Livsey*

# Scottish Country Dancing in Japan

Watching the Olympics from Tokyo this summer made me wonder whether people know how popular Scottish Country dancing is in Japan.

It all began when two Japanese men appeared at Summer School in the 1950s. Miss Milligan welcomed them, and was always pleased to enlarge her family of Scottish dancers. The gentlemen had heard how well organised the RSCDS was and wanted to know more. I don't remember the men dancing but by the end of their stay they had gone out and bought kilts. Miss Milligan was on tenterhooks as to the tartan they had chosen - Black Watch. Sadly the memories of the recent war and the Japanese treatment of the prisoners of war were painfully remembered.

With these sad memories behind us, we established good relations with the dancers that came to Summer School. I remember a few things that happened but not necessarily in the right order:

- I was in a class when the first three ladies came to class. They were late having got lost when trying to find the Holy Trinity Church hall which is more obscure to newcomers. They greeted the teacher in the usual manner – hands together, bowing. The teacher returned the greeting – the ladies returned it again! Eventually the teacher stopped the bowing and got the ladies into the class.
- I was at Summer School when Atsuko Clement first attended. She had no English and followed Duncan Macleod while she was there. The next I knew was that she had bought a flat in Edinburgh and was living there and was welcomed into the Edinburgh Branch. Her English improved and she was able to take her teaching certificate. Some of you will have met her

at Summer School or teaching a day or weekend school prior to lockdown. Atsuko was always eager to learn and the result was accuracy added to her natural grace. She later married Bill Clement, the Society piper, and they lived in a lovely apartment in Edinburgh.

- One Japanese dancer I felt really sorry for was an exam candidate. I was stooging for her exam. Unluckily, the dance she was given to teach was "Rachel Rae" which is a reel. Fortunately, after a tricky introduction all went well and she taught a good lesson.
- I was lucky enough to have a Japanese pianist to play for the class I was teaching at Summer School. Hiroko admired the way Muriel Johnstone plays so her playing was very similar. She had good tempo and put emphasis where it was needed to fit a dance and her English was good too. I really enjoyed that week.

## A couple of things I heard about after I stopped going to Summer School – one may astound you as it did me:

1. I heard from teachers who had been to Japan to teach, the daily routine was morning classes 9-12 and then afternoon classes 1-5 and evening classes 6-9. Add on to that a possible 1½ hours travelling each way which makes for very long days.
2. Atsuko was organising groups to spend time at Summer School and then a week touring Scotland, but these will have been put on hold with the recent travel restrictions.

The Scottish Country Dancing world has definitely benefitted from its interest in Japan. Long may it continue!

Brenda Burnell

## Beecham got it wrong about dancing

*I found this article when I was looking for things for this Newsletter. It was written by Andrew Marr for The Daily Telegraph dated 19.4.2006.*

Sir Thomas Beecham was right generally, but not always. At least I think it was he who advised, "Try everything once, except incest and folk-dancing". No, don't worry, it's just the dancing I'm talking about.

An Easter break in central Scotland found us in the hotel each evening reeling, Gay Gordoning, stripping numerous willows and the rest of it.

Now that all political utopias lie in ashes and disgrace, country dancing may be the best definition of - well if not socialism, then at least the good life left.

Here, in the brief community of one of those great Victorian "hydropathic" institutions, you get everyone - the old, the young, the fat, the unwell, teenagers, tycoons and retired teachers, all whirling round together. It is the absolute antithesis

of cool. Nobody's sneering or left out. This is not for couples or exhibitionists. It doesn't involve great natural rhythm, so it isn't intimidating.

Small children are being swung round by grannies; beautiful young women are dancing barefoot with old baldies. And very soon everyone is grinning. Beecham, I suspect, was thinking of handkerchiefs, bladders on sticks and bells. But proper country dancing should be prescribed on the NHS.



image from: <https://www.viator.com/tours/Oban/Scottish-Ceilidh-Dancing/d4255-76392P1>



# Dancing in the Land of the Dragon

*One of my favourite memories of doing the Branch Newsletter was when I received a letter from a former dancer with the Branch, Dorothy Haley. It contained the following article and a donation of £50.00 for the Branch to use to encourage younger dancers. (This article appeared in Issue 53 in May 2009). It is always lovely to hear of the pleasure Scottish Country Dancing gives people. For me it was my saviour when my marriage ended.*

Many, many years ago, I was a fanatical dancer with the Leeds Branch in the early years of its vital enthusiasm.

I have always felt quite international, I'd been in the Leeds Team on exchange visits to Sweden, Germany and Holland, with midnight receptions at the British Embassy – I'd danced round American cities whilst on an educational study tour – I'd sweltered through demonstrations in Australia – but September 2008 brought me the greatest international surprise of all. Tibet and China were the prelude to a visit to the Olympic Site in Beijing – but naturally we had to pop into Xian to pay a visit to the Terra Cotta Warriors. The first day in Xian, fighting fit, we performed our Tai Chi in a park in the shadow of an ancient pagoda at 8.30am – by 9 o'clock I was exhibiting my strength by ringing the huge, ancient bell from one of the Chinese Dynasties, and by 10am I was sauntering along the ramparts of Xian's great wall. Funny, thinks I, the altitude of 13,000 feet in Tibet must have seriously affected my hearing. Could that possibly be Scottish Dance Music? Frantically, I raced to peer over the battlements, and lo and behold, miles below in an ornamental

garden, pranced a group of Chinese Scottish Dancers, heeling and toeing to Scottish music instead of the usual Chinese stringed instruments.

I rallied my gang of fellow tourists, and as the music stopped we yelled our loudest and wildest, and to our joy, the dancers turned, and looked up, and waved & waved & waved. This was, for me, one of the great highlights of the tour. Sadly, unless we had abseiled down hundreds of feet, there was no chance of contacting them, and we sadly had to move on along the path of the "tourist track."

I just managed to take this snap, but forgot to use my zoom lens at a moment when it looked like a highland fling!

So I've not only to thank the Leeds Branch for this special thrill, but also for the happy, exciting years when I danced with you, and we were all young, full of beans and vitality, and life in the Leeds Branch was great.

It's now thirty years since I came down south, and dancing here has never been the friendly joy it was up north, where Scottish Dancing seemed to take over our lives. Happily, I am a life member, and over the years I have kept a track on the Branch through the Newsletter and also snippets from Brenda, and it always gives me joy when I read about all your activities, which keep the Branch so alive and prospering.

My dancing days ended at Grassington one dark night when a coach decided to change my destination from the Branch Christmas Dance at 7.30pm to an operating table at Airedale at 8.30. The first time I had missed the dance despite the 250-mile drive to be with you all.

But I still get a thrill when I hear the sound of Scottish Dance Music – I learned to walk again to the rhythm of "Scotland the Brave," and when I go to my hydrotherapy class to keep me mobile, underwater my feet can still do step practice with a rather neat pas de basque, with my feet at the correct angle, even though I can't manage to perform on dry land.

So many thanks to the Leeds Branch - for my happy dancing years with you – for keeping me in touch with your newsletter – for friendship and laughter, and for the fact that whenever I hear Scottish music, my feet start tapping, and I'm a dancer once again.

*Dorothy Haley*



## Fond Memories of West Park

Some of my happiest times being part of Leeds Branch were the wonderful Branch dances held at West Park. It was such a great venue and in the early days the floor was packed.

One of my early memories of a Branch Dance at West Park was when I was a lot younger and keen on wearing the latest fashions. I thought I was the bees' knees in a burgundy dress with a fairly tight skirt; it wasn't too bad for the country dancing but when I got up to dance the Foursome Reel and 1/2 Tulloch I did a leap at the end of the first Strathspey figure of eight and the skirt split half way up the side seams. It did make it easier to dance in for the rest of the evening.

*On the next page (13) is a history of West Park from Issue 67, December 2012.*



*Members past and present enjoying the Branch 50th Anniversary dance at West Park.*

# The History of West Park



West Park County Secondary School opened in 1952 as a mixed school with 1,600 pupils. In 1960 Moor Grange School was built on the other side of the Ring Road and the boys moved there leaving West Park as an all girls' school. It became West Park Girls' High School. It was in 1962 that our association with the school started.

The first Branch committee looked round Leeds for a suitable hall in which to hold our monthly dances. They found two schools with suitable halls. One was West Park and the other was Braimwood on Wetherby Road. Both these schools were relatively new and had sprung hall floors suitable for Scottish dancing. It was the intention to use these halls alternately for our dances and on Miss Milligan's first visit to Leeds we held the Day School at West Park and then moved to Braimwood for the evening dance. The latter had a very pleasant hall but had one small drawback. It was built with the stage along the long side of the hall and not conventionally as West Park was. So West Park became our 'home' for the monthly dances. In the early days most of these dances were to records but twice a year we had a band - in October and May.

When the children's class was established we were able to use West Park for that on Friday evenings. All continued smoothly for us for many years and we always had good caretakers. The first one lived in Queenswood Drive and moved into the caretaker's house when that was ready. He was followed by a very big man and we established a good relationship with him too. The last caretaker, before things started to change, was a wonderful man and I was very sad to see him go. His wife had been left a house on the south coast and they decided to move into it.

Things began to change. A new caretaker came, the school had closed as a school and the caretakers' contracts were changed. The children's class moved into one of the gyms as the hall was used for something else on Friday evenings. There are two full sized gyms both with sprung floors in the block as you drive into the car park. When the school closed it became a computer centre for training teachers to teach computing to children. The computers were mainly housed upstairs along the long corridor where we have been coming in from the car park. During the time West Park was the computer centre several schools were bussed into the building while asbestos was removed from their own school.

All continued as before for our dances until the caretakers' contracts were changed. They had always been paid overtime for evening and weekend work but the new contracts obliged them to work ten sessions a week and these could be morning, afternoon or evening any day of the week. The newly established caretaker took advantage of this and did not do Friday evenings or weekends but went off in his caravan to Blackpool each weekend. The children's class was moved to Hawksworth Wood School where it continued to be until the children's was wound up. A new venue had to be found for the now well established Branch dances. To begin with we moved to the James Graham Hall at the Training College at Beckett Park. We used this lovely oak panelled hall for several years.

It had a good floor and was about the same size as West Park. We also had to use other halls including St Margaret's Church Hall in Horsforth where we celebrated our 30th birthday.

Meanwhile things were happening at West Park. Computers were going missing and eventually the caretaker disappeared too. Negotiations were made over many months and eventually we were allowed to go 'home' for our monthly dances. The school had been neglected and was, to say the least, dirty. A few of us went early on Saturday evenings to clean the place before our dances. Eventually a good caretaker arrived and the place regained some of its former cleanliness. Other organisations were using the buildings and gradually improvements were made.



West Park's stage was the second biggest in Leeds and the site attracted Opera North who practised there. Later Northern Ballet moved in and made use of the two gyms. The Youth orchestras practised there and the Friday evening/Saturday morning Music Centre grew making more use of the buildings. Other Community organisations were also making use of the place. I remember going to one meeting there for leaders of various groups when everyone was astounded that we had been using West Park for so long!

With very little warning West Park was closed because of a major electrical fault. After two previous attempts this latest problem saw the end of the West Park Centre and along with Moor Grange and Braimwood schools it was flattened and the land sold for more development. We have had our ups and downs over the years there but mostly it was a happy association and I'm glad we were able to celebrate our 50th birthday there in June 2012.

*Brenda Burnell*



*Mair Pinnell (founder member) and Peter Clark (first Branch Secretary) cutting the anniversary cake made by Yvonne Tredgett.*

# Farewell to the printed Newsletter

I planned to finish producing the print Newsletter when I got to 100 issues, but because of Covid I only got to 96, which was the February 2020 Issue. I had already suggested we should start using Mailchimp to produce digital newsletters. It was agreed that I would produce one final 60th Anniversary issue.

My first production of the RSCDS Leeds Branch Newsletter was in October 1996 and I produced 4 editions a year for about 25 years. Here are a few of the most memorable items I included in the Newsletters. This is only a fraction of the numerous interesting articles I was kindly sent, so thank you to anyone who has ever contributed. It has been a pleasure to read them all. In the first edition was a poem "A Beginner's Plea" which I think is as relevant today as it was in 1996, that is apart from the white dresses; thankfully a lot of teams have moved away from these.

Here it is:-

## A BEGINNER'S PLEA"

Be kind, be considerate, be caring for  
the new ones on the scene

When a reel becomes a hazard and you  
feel you'd like to scream

Remember when you were learning and  
never thought you'd know

How long it took to allemande and that  
strathspeys must be slow

The feet, the hands, the eyes, the head  
must all do things in time

When just to find your partner is the  
major thing in mind!

We look the same in snow white frocks,  
in kilts and pumps and tartan socks

But some are old hands, some are new  
with lots to learn, so before you do -

Frown or growl, or push or pull, sneer or  
snarl, remember too

That once, perhaps, long, long ago you  
were new and didn't know

Your heart would thump, your brain  
would freeze

Your legs would knock about your  
knees

You knew you were the only one who'd  
mess the reels up one by one!

So be kind, be considerate, be caring for  
the new ones on the scene

Then clubs will grow in numbers which  
was Miss Milligan's Hope and Dream!



The Heartbeat team - The ladies from L to R Barbara Caldicott (Sorry Barbara I couldn't find an original with a full image of you), Chris MacDonald, Brenda Andrews, Heather Williams (Craven), Catherine Livsey, Margaret Campbell, Christine Parker-Jones, Mary Yates. Men from L to R Adrian MacDonald, Ray Williams, Don Andrews, Alan Smith, Alan Carr, Nigel Campbell, Gerry Yates and Ian Ashton.

In 1998 the Society celebrated its 75th anniversary. How time passes; next year it will celebrate 100 years! I remember going to many anniversary dances in England and Scotland but probably my favourite was the "The Do at the Dome", being a Yorkshire Lass. It took place on Saturday 18th April at Doncaster Dome, organised by Yorkshire and close-to-Yorkshire Branches. There were over 400 dancers all dressed in their finery. The music was provided by the Muriel Johnston band - six wonderful musicians. I have a CD with some of the music recorded live at the event. What a great sound it was. Full report in Issue 8 May 1998.

Leeds Branch taking part in the filming of Heartbeat was a particular highlight. We all got dressed and our make-up was done in portacabins in a field near the hall. Unfortunately, it was a rainy day, so it was a very funny sight, seeing us all walking across the mud dressed in raincoats and outdoor shoes with plastic head scarves to get to the hall for filming. All the ladies were also trying to hold their long dresses up as much as possible to avoid them getting muddy. It was also very slippery and trying not to fall in the mud required great agility, so it was a good job we were all dancers. Oh, the joys of being famous and filming! The episode called "the Long Weekend (S10 E16) aired in February 2001. You can see it on YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7K08GLDMqHw>. There are only small glimpses of us considering the filming took all day; I think

it was quite late at night when we finished. I would be interested to know how many of you can spot.

I have had many happy memories of taking part in the Newcastle Festival. The Branch entered teams in the adult ladies, adult mixed and junior classes for many years. There are many articles over the years documenting our achievements. The highlight was in 2006 when the Ladies' Team were the outright winners, we had shared the trophy the previous year. I was so proud to have coached this team. The dances we won with were the jig Woo'd and Married and a' from Book 16 and the strathspey Alltshellach from Book 23. We also took part in the demonstration section for a number of years. That year 16 dancers performed a medley of four dances: a reel, Culvain, Roy Goldring's strathspey Memories, and the 'quickies' Macleod's Fancy and The Creel, all to some toe-tapping music selected



The winning Ladies team

continued over leaf

from the more modern end of the Celtic tradition! This went down very well with the audience, which was what really counted, but the judges chose a more traditional performance by the Dunedin Dancers as the winner. I think we were ahead of our time as in more recent years the demonstration class at the Newcastle Festival has been won by choreography to modern music namely the Russians' football themed one. This was also the case the year before when we danced my favourite demonstration of those I choreographed, "the Flavours of Red" (You can see us dancing it on YouTube <https://youtu.be/ODJRxE5DDE>). This also caused a stir. Our outfits were different; not the traditional white dresses, but red skirts and black tops for the ladies with black shirts for the men. The intro to the dance had a narrative instead of just a list of the dances we were to dance, and the music was modern.

We Are 375 Years Old! In Issue 51 November 2008 was a lovely article about five Branch members celebrating their birthday at the October Branch dance. Jean Dyson opened the evening by reading her poem:-

October is a special month  
 For five Branch members here  
 And so we thought we'd celebrate  
 And bring a little cheer  
 There's Brenda, Ivy, Reg, Val and me  
 Make up the Famous Five  
 And if you add our ages up  
 It comes to 375  
 We've picked our favourite dances  
 We hope you all agree  
 But if you don't, don't say a word  
 Just put the blame on me  
 So now we'll start our dance tonight  
 With music so supreme  
 Please welcome our musicians  
 Andrew Lyon and David Queen

I remember Jean and Reg very fondly, spending many committee meetings at their house in Otley, and coming home with a jar of Reg's famous jam.



Jean Dyson with the band David Queen and Andrew Lyons



One of the many demonstration teams I danced with where I would dance both Highland and Country. Alan Harrison often piped and danced too. I am grateful to all the dancers I taught who agreed and volunteered to take part in all the demonstrations I organised. We had a lot of fun in the process.



Irene and myself demonstrating the Gay Gordons for everyone to join in at the Light Night in Leeds.

The Newsletters have also included numerous reports on demonstrations the Branch has taken part in. One rather peculiar demonstration was when Irene, myself and a team of dancers were asked to perform at the Light Night in Leeds. We ended up dancing in a marquee on Briggate on a cold October evening, where the theme was recapturing a lost summer.

My favourite demonstrations were the ones we did for number of years at Rogerthorpe Manor (Badsworth, Pontefract) Burns evenings, when we danced for our supper. It was lucky we could still stand to dance one year after the pudding of Whisky Trifle; or should I say a bowl of whisky with cream on top. On one occasion I had the honour of sitting next to Ian McCaskill the weather man on the top table as he was the guest speaker giving the toast to Burns. He was a very interesting person to sit next to and was very taken with the dancing being a Scot.

I have a lot more memories of Leeds Branch news stories. There are so many I could write a book about them, and maybe I will do that in the future, but for now I am running out of space. There have been so many articles to recall, but here are a few I have not managed to mention.

- Branch Dances,
- Day Schools and Workshops, including Highland and the Musicians' Workshops,
- The Leeds Branch Children's Festival and the younger dancers' exploits in England and Scotland.
- Class activities eg Brackenwood class Burns Night,
- The weekend schools, Scarborough and Malhamdale
- St Andrews Summer School trips
- And of course the White Rose Festival

Forgive me if I have forgotten anything; the Branch has done so much that was memorable. If you do want to find out more about the Branch's history in the newsletters I have had the pleasure to produce, most of them can be found on the Branch website <http://rscdsleeds.org.uk/newsletters.html>

Catherine Livsey



Dancing at Rogerthorpe Manor

# DATES, DATES, DATES

## 2022

### Afternoon Tea Dance

Monday, 12th December

Time: 1:45 - 3:45

Venue: West Park United Reformed Church, Spen Lane, Leeds LS16 5BD

Music: Ian Slater  
MC: Don Andrews

[Further details](#) on the Branch website

### Branch Dance

Saturday, 17th December

Time: 19:30 - 22:30

Venue: St Chad's Parish Centre, Otley Rd, Leeds, LS16 5JT

Music: Geroge Meikle  
MC: Alan Fox

[Further details](#) on the Branch website

### Hogmanay Dance

Thursday, 29th December - Leeds  
Hogmanay Dance

Time: 19:30 - 22:30

Venue: West Park United Reformed Church, Spen Lane, Leeds LS16 5BD

Music: Ian Slater  
MC: Don Andrews

[Further details](#) on the Branch website

## 2023

### Branch Dance

Saturday 21st January

Time: 19:30 - 22:30

Venue: St Chad's Parish Centre, Otley Road, Leeds LS16 5JT

Music: Ewan Galloway  
MC: Alan Horsfall

[Further details](#) on the Branch website

### Musicians' Workshop

Saturday 11th February

Time: 9:30 - 16.15

Venue: St Chad's Parish Centre, Otley Rd, Leeds, LS16 5JT

Course Leader: Kevin Lees

[Further details](#) on the Branch website

Full details on our website [www.rscdsleeds.org.uk](http://www.rscdsleeds.org.uk), where you will find dance programmes, dance reminders, links to videos of these dances, and application forms for day schools and weekends.

## Leeds Branch Shop

**Shoes:** Ghillies, ladies' pumps and ballet shoes and the increasingly popular Jags.

**Books and CDs:** From Head Office, Branches, Clubs and individuals from around the world. Over 100 of the books are available in PDF format and include some freebies.

Visit [www.rscdsleeds.uk](http://www.rscdsleeds.uk) for full details.

If you need any help or would like anything else not currently in stock, email us at [sales@rscdsleeds.uk](mailto:sales@rscdsleeds.uk).

All profits are retained by the Branch.

**Please support your Branch shop!**

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## Classes

### Autumn Term

5 September to 15 December 2022

### Spring Term

9 January - 30 March 2023

### Summer Term I

17 April - 25 May 2023

### Summer Term II (selected classes),

5 June - 6 July 2023

### Fees: £5.00 per class

or ten class ticket £35 for (for Branch members only) All fees half price for those in full time education. First class free for newcomers.

### Monday Afternoon

**1.45 to 3.45pm** (General/Beginners)

West Park United Reformed Church, 317 Spen Lane, Leeds, LS16 5BD

Teacher: Don Andrews

### Monday Evening

**7.45 to 9.45pm** (Experienced)

Calverley Conservative Club, Victoria Street, Calverley, LS28 5PT

Teacher: Catherine Livsey

### Thursday Afternoon

**2.00 to 4.00pm** (General)

(**2.30 to 4.30pm** on third Thursday of each month)

St Margaret's Church Hall, Ilkley, LS29 9QL

Teacher: Don Andrews

**Thursday Evening** throughout the year (Formerly St Columba's Dancers and Lidgett Park class)

**7.00 to 9.30pm** (General/Beginners)

West Park United Reformed Church, 317 Spen Lane, Leeds, LS16 5BD

Teachers: Don Andrews, Irene Dracup, Alan Horsfall

### Further Information

[www.rscdsleeds.org.uk](http://www.rscdsleeds.org.uk)

For further information and details, application forms, dance cribs and the Branch shop etc.

You can now follow the Branch on Twitter and Facebook

Twitter: [www.twitter.com/RSCDSLeeds](https://twitter.com/RSCDSLeeds)

Facebook: [RSCDS Leeds Branch](https://www.facebook.com/RSCDSLeedsBranch)