



BRANCH NEWS DECEMBER 2015

New Season Welcome Dance, Swansea, 19 September 2015

This was the third year that the RSCDS has organised this start of season dance in Swansea using the hall at St Paul's Church. The committee decided to use this dance as a way of sharing recapping duties, with Sue, Tony, Fran and Pat each taking it in turns while Alison J handled the general MC duties.

The dance programme consisted of well-known favourites, with nothing too taxing after the long summer break. The evening went off quite well and everyone I spoke to afterwards said they had enjoyed themselves.

There were about thirty dancers present, with approximately five-sixths of those being members of the Branch. In 2014 there were thirty-five dancers, so numbers were slightly down, which is a bit disappointing. It would be good if dancers would let us know what would entice them along. The date? The programme? The location and venue?

Thank you to those of you who did attend, brought delicious food and supported the very successful raffle.

Tony Harland

Llandovery Dancing Weekend, 22-24 October 2015

Another year had flown by and it was the Residential Weekend again. This was Irene Williams' last time of doing all the work – along with Alan Williams - to make the weekend a success.

The preparation includes finding the musician, identifying a teacher, taking bookings for the hotel, and allocating rooms. The work continues with sorting out menu choices, decorating

the hall and - oh! I almost forgot - developing the dance programme for both Friday and Saturday evenings. There is an awful lot of work and in recognition of this, Irene was given a lovely bouquet of flowers.

James Gray and Jamie his wife came over from Norway to participate in the wonderful weekend. The teaching was brilliant. Jamie selected some interesting dances not often danced in South Wales, many of them from her local area in the United States. Jamie has an admirable style of teaching, challenging the dancers in such a way that they do not know they are being challenged. She was gentle with us, not too much step practice on Saturday and Sunday mornings following the previous evening's dancing and talking into the wee small hours. It was great to welcome James back to play for us. The music he selected was fantastic. I had forgotten how good he is. He is much in demand, playing all over the world. He and Jamie left Wales heading for Vienna and then later in the year for Portugal. James and Jamie have a rapport that I have not experienced with any other teacher and musician. They "bounced off each other". I could have just stopped and listened and watched them.

There were a couple of minor problems with the food and the lack of hot water but on the whole a successful and enjoyable weekend was had by all.

Do we do it again next year? Well, the hotel has been booked. I hope that a goodly number of you will be able to join us.

Conor Farmer



The RSCDS AGM Weekend at Perth **6-8 November 2015**

Alison Littlejohn and I were privileged to attend the Society AGM again this year as South Wales delegates, participating in a small way in the running of the Society. There were a number of people from South Wales present: Carol Walton, Kate & Alex Gray, and Graham Tough (who was staying locally and was able to join the dances on Friday and Saturday evenings).

The purpose of being in Perth was the AGM, but dancing at the Bell Centre was a very close second. The opportunity to dance with several hundred dancers was something that I would not have missed.

The dances were all RSCDS dances, some of which I had not danced before. All were enjoyable even the ones I sat out and then wished I was dancing them. The men in their kilts almost outshone the women. Considering the number of dancers I did not see any two tartans the same. This is a great tribute to the tartan weavers and kilt makers.

The main event, the AGM itself, took place on the Saturday afternoon. The meeting saw Scrolls of Honour presented to Jim Cook (International Branch), Stuart Adams (Edinburgh Branch), and John & Jenifer Kelly, (San Francisco Branch). The final scroll was presented to George Meikle. All scrolls are well deserved BUT the one for George was especially welcome. George has been a great supporter of the South Wales Branch, playing for the Festival for more years than I can remember. (Well done, George.)

There were no elections for the various committees of the Society as there were not enough candidates. The only motion debated was a proposal to

raise the subscription by £2. There was a passionate debate from both sides of the argument. Initially, most speakers opposed the motion, then one person spoke in favour and a roll of supporters followed. This year the Society used an electronic system to register the votes, but they also used a paper version just in case. I guess they were not 100% confident that the electronic system would work. The result was that the motion was approved 184 in favour, 145 against and 2 abstentions. A full report will be prepared for the South Wales AGM in June 2016.

Conor Farmer

Listings

Thurs 31 December 2015: Cardiff Cal Soc Hogmanay Dance in Rhiwbina Memorial Hall, Cardiff, 8:00 until after midnight, £5. Details Conor Farmer 07812 569744 conor@farmer199.fsnet.co.uk

Sat 2 January 2016: Regular first Sat of the month dance in Letterston, Pembro. Details Pat Rye 01646 698463 ryedp@hotmail.com

Sat 2 January 2016: Cardiff Cal Soc regular first Sat of the month dance, Whitchurch Scout Hall, Cardiff. Details Conor Farmer 07812 569744 conor@farmer199.fsnet.co.uk

Sat 9 January 2016: RSCDS S Wales Branch Walk-Through Dance for experienced dancers, Morganstown Village Hall, nr Cardiff, **7:00 pm start**. Details Alison Jackson 07811 082510 jacksonaj@talktalk.net

Sat 23 January 2016: Burns Nights in Cardiff and Swansea:

Cardiff Cal Soc Dancers Dinner Dance – details Conor Farmer as above

Swansea Supper & Dance – details Jim Proudfoot jimnjan@ntlworld.com

Sat 6 February 2016: RSCDS S Wales Branch Afternoon Workshop & Tea Dance, Letterston. Details Pat Rye 01646 698463 ryedp@hotmail.com

Sat 6 February 2016: Cardiff Cal Soc regular first Sat of the month dance, Whitchurch Scout Hall, Cardiff. Details Conor Farmer 07812 569744 conor@farmer199.fsnet.co.uk

Sat 6 February 2016: Bristol RSCDS Newcomers' Dance, Westbury-on-Trym. Music by Chris Dewhurst. Details Lorna Coles 01275 854782 lorna.coles@btinternet.com

Sat 13 February 2016: Ross Reel Club Valentine's Dance. Larruperz Centre, Ross on Wye Music by Ian Slater. Details Ann Wilkinson 01989 763182 ann.b.wilkinson@googlemail.com

St Andrew's Night Supper

Our St Andrew's Night Supper was held on Saturday 28 November at Mozart Drive, Port Talbot. We cooked for thirty-seven, including four who were working in the kitchen.

The evening is an opportunity to meet old friends, some of whom are no longer able to dance but like to keep in touch and chat about old times. However it is a lot of work for the committee, preparing the soup, haggis, mince, neeps & tatties, the fruit salad & the trifles. Then the front of house work: the meeters, greeters and wine waiters.

We were again grateful to the Guides and Guiders for serving the food quickly and efficiently, then clearing away and washing up. Several of them sampled the haggis and all had dessert. When they had finished they came out to enjoy two dances, assisted by able partners.

I would like to thank all committee members and helpers. The kitchen staff were Ann Morgan, Alison Jackson and Andrew Smith. (I also helped a little.) The people setting up the hall and subsequently serving drinks were Pat Rye, Alison Littlejohn, Sue Faragher Downes and Tony Harland. Thanks to Alison L for providing the table decorations, to Pat and Alison L for recapping, and to Tony for acting as MC. I would also like to thank Alan Williams who provided the music. (If I have forgotten to thank anyone I'm sorry but let me know and I'll give you a mention next time.)

For the evening to be a bigger success we do need more people to join us. If you were there this year please try and bring a friend next year. If you were not there try and attend next year to support the event.

Conor Farmer

Note from the editor: Remember Branch events coming up in the New Year – particularly the **Walk-through Dance on 9 Jan in Morganstown (see flyer sent out along with this Newsletter) and the **Afternoon Workshop and Tea Dance on 6 Feb in Letterston**. The Walk-through Dance is aimed at more experienced dancers, but please don't feel intimidated – come along and give it a try. There'll be lots of support. The Workshop on 6 Feb, taught by Alex Gray of Cardiff, will be targeted mainly at beginners and intermediate dancers, but more experienced dancers are most welcome as well – and your help will be much appreciated. Meanwhile**

A very Happy Christmas and a Guid New Year tae ane an' a'!

