



BRANCH NEWS FEBRUARY 2018

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WALK-THROUGH DANCES IN JANUARY

Finding the best format for event in our far-flung Branch is always tricky, especially for a slightly “specialised” event such as the annual Walk-Through Dance for experienced dancers. This year we again tried two separate occasions, one in South-East Wales and the other in West Wales, this time only a week apart, and with different programmes.

The formula seemed to work, although – ironically - we seem to have by and large failed to entice the geographical middle ground! (We can't win, can we?) We attracted 18 dancers in Morganstown, and 24 in Whitland. Conor and I attended both events, and we also had two intrepid stalwarts in Sue and Chris, who travelled both east and west. I think the numbers indicate that through this way of doing things we reached more dancers in their own localities than we would have managed to achieve by holding one single event. I can't imagine that we'd have had nearly forty attendees in any one venue.

Thank you to everyone who came along, and also to the Committee members who supported.

As an organiser of events I always find it difficult to gauge success. Certainly, if the warmth of the “thank-you”s on both nights and the lovely appreciative e-mails afterwards are anything to go by, both evenings were much enjoyed. A request that we repeat the occasion next year was loudly applauded.

Any further feedback would of course also be welcome. And unless you tell me otherwise, I'll try to hatch out some creative ideas for 2019.

Alison Jackson

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Recent fliers sent out electronically (or attached to the hard copies of this Newsletter for those not on e-mail) draw members' attention to several events this year that we hope you'll find enjoyable.



The first is a double event being held simultaneously in the East and West of the Branch – **Newcomers' Dances on Saturday 10 March from 7:15 until 10:00 pm in St Fagans and Whitland**. Please round up all your newer dancers, and also come along to help them through – and maybe learn a thing or two yourself!



The next is the **Big Thank You** event to mark Kate and Alex Gray's imminent departure from South Wales after more than forty-five years of living, working, raising a family - and dancing, teaching, producing books and CDs, serving on the Committee, and generally making a major contribution to Scottish Country Dancing in our Branch, as well of course as worldwide. The said family will also be present in force at the event, not least because Kate and Alex's son James (as part of the “Scottish Measure” band) will be providing the music. This will take place on **Saturday 24 March from 5:30 pm till just after 10:00 pm in Morganstown Village Hall**. Alex has devised a mixed programme of dances that should have something for everyone. Dancers past and present, non-dancers, family and friends, children – all are welcome. No charge – just contributions to the supper table, please. And no raffle, as we felt it would be inappropriate for a personal event of this nature.



The third event to mention is our **annual Ball**, which this year is returning to the **Paget Rooms in Penarth, with Marian Anderson and her band** playing for us. The date is **Saturday 28 April, 7:30 – 11:00 pm**. Tickets will be available very shortly, and there is a discount for tickets purchased by 17 March.

If for any reason you have not received the fliers about any of the above, or if you need any further information, please contact Alison or Conor.

Alison 07811 082510 jacksonaj@talktalk.net
 Conor 07812 569744
conorfarmer52@googlemail.com



RAFFLES

At the last meeting the Committee had a debate about holding raffles at Branch events. It was generally felt that we should try to conduct these more briskly, so that we do not impinge too much on dancing time. In order to avoid prolonging the supper-break through the selling of raffle tickets, it was agreed that these would – as far as possible - be sold as dancers arrive for the evening. Graham Tough has also devised a computer-based method of selecting winning tickets, which may also speed things up and which was tried out for the first time at the New Season Dance in September.

Graham himself has continued to ponder the issue of holding raffles at dancing events, and has put forward some arguments to support his view that these should be abandoned by our Branch, at least at events where there is live music. In the following column his comments are set out. These may well provoke a debate about the issue – the Committee would love to hear from you about what you think. Indeed, I would happily print a range of views in the next Newsletter if anyone cares to write in.



This is Graham's piece:

I've been to two dances recently, neither of which had a raffle. I didn't realise until the end of the dance that a raffle hadn't taken place. When I mentioned this to others no one said they missed having a raffle.

The first was a Ball in the elegant Cheltenham Pump Rooms with Nicol McLaren's Band. What a waste of dancing time it would have been sitting through a raffle for prizes no one wants or needs.

There are arguments for and against holding a raffle.

AGAINST:

- *Wastes good dancing time;*
- *Band may lose their momentum, and some of us older dancers begin to seize up;*
- *Some people (usually committee members) have to give up their time to sell tickets, prepare them for the draw, etc. – not fair on them.*

FOR:

- *Keeps the cost down.*
(I don't follow. What's the difference between spending, say, £20 on a ticket and £3 on raffle tickets and a £23 ticket and no raffle? A bit like cheap Ryanair flights!)

- *I have heard it argued that people like the raffle.*

(How true is this? Several people I've asked have said they would rather dance, especially with a live band, than have a raffle. Perhaps a larger sample of regular dancers ought to be asked their views.)

There are branch funds available to cover any deficit that may arise from no raffle.

Graham Tough



REMINDER

All functions in South Wales are listed on the Web Site.

www.rscds-southwales.org.uk

Detailed information about each Branch event is also posted as soon as it becomes available. Club event details are also posted if they are sent to me.

If there's anything else you think should be on the site please let me know.

Fran Smith (Web Manager)



LISTINGS FEB – JUNE 2018

Sat 10 Feb: Bristol RSCDS Newcomers' Dance, Oatley Hall, Bristol BS9 3UN, 7:00-10:30, dancing to Strathallan. Tickets £12. Details Helen Watkins 01275 464239. See Bristol website.

Sat 17 Feb: Regular St Andrew's Club third Sat of the month dance at Scout & Guide HQ, Swansea, 7:15 pm. Details Jim & Jan jimnjan@ntlworld.com

Sat 3 March: Regular first Sat of the month dance in Letterston, Pems. Details Pat Rye 01646 698463 ryedp@hotmail.com

Sat 3 March: Cardiff Cal Soc regular first Sat of the month dance, Whitchurch Scout Hall, Cardiff. Details Conor Farmer 07812 569744 conorfarmer52@googlemail.com

Sat 10 March: Branch Newcomers' Evening Dances in two venues simultaneously:
i) West Wales – Whitland Town Hall
ii) South-East Wales – St Fagans Hall
Details: see flyer, or Conor Farmer 07812 569744 conorfarmer52@googlemail.com

Sat 17 March: Regular St Andrew's Club third Sat of the month dance at Scout & Guide HQ, Swansea, 7:15 pm. Details Jim & Jan Proudfoot 01792 299443 jimnjan@ntlworld.com

Sat 24 March: "Big Thank You" social event & dance for Kate & Alex Gray. Morganstown Village Hall, 5.30 – 10:00-ish. Music by Scottish Measure. No charge. Details: see flyer, or Conor Farmer 07812 569744 conorfarmer52@googlemail.com



Sat 7 April: No dancing in either Letterston or Cardiff

Sat 14 April: Cardiff Cal Soc regular first Sat of the month dance, (but this month held on 2nd Sat!) Whitchurch Scout Hall, Cardiff. Details Conor Farmer 07812 569744 conorfarmer52@googlemail.com

Sat 21 April: Regular St Andrew's Club third Sat of the month dance at Scout & Guide HQ, Swansea, 7:15 pm. Details Jim & Jan Proudfoot 01792 299443 jimnjan@ntlworld.com

Sat 28 April: Annual Ball, Paget Rooms, Penarth CF64 3EG, 7:15 for 7:30 – 11:00 pm. Marian Anderson Band. Ticket only (£19 members, £22 non-members, early purchase discount). Contact: Jean Elliott 01994 419505 jean.ell1@btinternet.com

Sat 5 May: Regular first Sat of the month dance in Letterston, Pems. Details Pat Rye 01646 698463 ryedp@hotmail.com

Mon 7 May: Cardiff Cal Soc Bank Holiday dance, Whitchurch Scout Hall, Cardiff, 7:30 – 10:00 pm. Details Conor Farmer 07812 569744 conorfarmer52@googlemail.com

Sat 12 May: Gloucester Scottish Society Summer Dance, Ribston Hall High School, Gloucester GL1 5LE, 7:00 – 11:00 pm. Pam Latham 01452 306857 pj259@talktalk.net

Sat 19 May: St Andrew's Club third Sat of the month dance at Scout & Guide HQ, Swansea, 7:15 pm - but not the regular one! **Music by Sandy Nixon's Band – tickets only.** Details Jim & Jan Proudfoot 01792 299443 jimnjan@ntlworld.com

Sat 2 June: Summer Dance, Morganstown Village Hall, Cardiff CF15 8LE. Music by Ian Muir of Prestwick with Bob Parson on drums. Tickets £10. Details Conor Farmer 07812 569744 conorfarmer52@googlemail.com

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

Sat 16 June: Branch AGM, Scout & Guide HQ, Swansea, 4:30 pm, followed by regular Swansea dance

Sat 23 June: South Wales Festival, Brecon/Sennybridge. Details to follow in next Newsletter and flier



