



**Royal Scottish Country Dance Society
Perth and Perthshire Branch
Scottish Charity No: SC024464**

Minutes of the meeting of the 87th Annual General Meeting of the RSCDS Perth and Perthshire Branch held in Kinnoull Church Hall, Perth on the 7th September 2021 at 7.30 pm.

1. Chairman's Remarks

The Chairman welcomed everyone to this face to face AGM, noting how good it was to see everyone 'face to face' this year.

There were 26 attendees and as such this AGM was quorate.

2. Apologies

Apologies had been received from 30 Members. (In order to protect the privacy and security of our members and supporters, names of individuals have been removed; the full minute of the meeting is recorded elsewhere).

3a. Minute of the AGM, September 2019

As the 2020 AGM was not quorate, the Minute of the 2019 AGM could not be approved at that time, hence it's inclusion in this Agenda. This meeting reviewed and approved the Minute of the 2019 AGM.

3b. Minute of the AGM, October 2020

The minute of the 2020 AGM were taken to be an accurate record, and subsequently approved by the AGM.

4. Matters arising from the Minutes of the October 2020 AGM

None.

5. Secretary's Report

See addendum for Secretary's report.

Esma Morrison asked if it was possible to watch Jim Lindsay's concert as some members had not been available on the night. It is not available on Youtube, so Sue

agreed to investigate a re-run of this for interested members. Sue noted that it couldn't be hosted on her wifi as it wasn't fast enough to avoid synching delays.

6. Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts

See separate Report.

Judith went through the Trustees Report highlighting the reserves of £7,000 which could be used in helping to re-start activities after the disruption in dancing due to Covid, as well as for future replacement of Coomers as all but one are now pretty old. Thanks to John Graham for acting as our Independent Examiner.

A question was raised regarding the £500 against the 95th Anniversary Dance which did not happen (2b Charitable Activities 2019/2020). Judith confirmed that this was a £500 deposit with the Station Hotel, and they had agreed to carry this forward to the 2022 Branch Ball.

7. Management Report

See addendum for Management Board report.

Lorna Ogilvie advised further regarding the Honorary President post being put into abeyance. Instead it was planned for 7 or 8 Celebrity Ambassadors to be approached for comments / short videos regarding their experiences of Scottish Country Dancing, and these could then be used in marketing SCD.

8. Adoption of Reports

The AGM adopted the Trustees Report, the Secretary's Report and the Management Board Report (proposed by Betty Blair and seconded by Rod Purcell).

9. Branch Subscription

It was proposed that the Branch subscription for 2022/2023 should remain unchanged. This was agreed by the AGM.

10. Honoraria

The Secretary and Treasurer left the room.

The AGM agreed that the Honoraria for 2021 /2022 would stay the same as for 2020/2021. This would be £425 to the Secretary and £300 to the Treasurer. It was also agreed that for new incumbents of these roles this would move to an expenses basis.

The Secretary and Treasurer returned to the room.

11. Election of Officers

The Chair and Secretary were eligible for re-election and were prepared to stand again. Judith had decided to stand down, but in light of the fact no replacement had been found she agreed to stay on for one further year. In light of no other nominations the AGM agreed that the following officers be elected for 2021 / 2022:-

Chair: Allana Creighton
Secretary: Sue James
Treasurer: Judith Borup

The position of Vice Chair remains vacant.

There had been two proposals for Committee members, namely Jane Rattray (proposed by Allana Creighton, seconded by Rhoda Purcell), and Morag Lindsay (proposed by Rae Farrow, seconded by Liz Hamilton). Both were elected unanimously.

There remained one vacant Committee Member position.

Thanks were extended to Rhoda and Janice for completing their terms of office as Membership Secretary and Committee Member respectively. Thanks to Rod and Susan for their work over the year, and for agreeing to continue as Highland Gateway Editor and Website Manager respectively.

12. Appointment of Independent Examiner

Thanks was extended to John Graham for his work as the Independent Examiner for the Branch. He had agreed to continue with this, and it was proposed that £50 would be offered to John in recognition of this work. This was approved by the AGM.

13. Motions

No motions had been submitted to the Branch Secretary.

14. AOCB

Sue James observed that the Committee had decided the August Quiz was to be the last and that there would be no further outdoor dancing due to the weather. This leaves 5 to 6 weeks with no activity before the planned resumption of normal classes in the second week of October. Would the Committee consider running something in-between to bridge this gap and thereby maintain the interest that had been generated. Janice MacDonald then went on to expand on this. It was agreed that the Committee would look into running a trial / introductory indoor class.

It had been noted earlier that two of our long standing Branch Teachers had decided to retire over the Summer, namely Christian Catto and Rhoda Purcell. Allana expressed the Branch's thanks for their long service to the Branch, and both were presented with flowers and a card.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending, and was thanked in turn for chairing.

There being no further business the AGM ended at 8.15pm.

5. Secretary's Report

And so to the year of COVID! Last October I don't think any of us would have thought that the Branch would not get to dance together until the following August, but from the Secretary's viewpoint, it has been a very busy year despite the lack of dancing. Having managed to get 90% of the Membership onto emails, this has proved very useful communication wise, although some members way well have got sick of the sight of emails from me!

After the successful 'Design a Dance' competition last Summer, it was decided to compile the entries into a 95th Anniversary Book of Dances, with all Members receiving a copy early in the year, with extra numbers being printed for general sale. Thanks to Allana Creighton for all of her work on this.

I am very much aware that we are not as much in touch with our non-email Branch Members; as such we sent Christmas Cards to all of them this year, which was well received. We also sent out a paper copy of the first Branch Quiz with their copies of the '95th Anniversary Book of Dances'.

February saw our first Branch Quiz by Zoom, with another five to follow. Cryptic clues to the names of dances was the theme, with two of these having some musical hints from Neil and Mo. A regular following plus some occasional attenders made this into a good monthly event, with some regular front runners score wise while others were definitely more challenged! Thanks to our Quiz Devisers Sue James, Rod Purcell, Margaret Macarthur, Christian Catto, Neil Copland and Mo Rutherford.

May saw the delivery of the Mug Bags to all Branch Members. Made by Janet Macdonald and Rhoda Purcell, they were originally intended to be distributed at the 95th Anniversary Ball. Due to the latter's postponement it was decided to deliver the Mug Bags by hand giving the opportunity to catch up with members as well as ascertain their feelings regarding a return to dancing. There was good feedback regarding the Mug Bags so a big 'Thank You' to Janet and Rhoda, plus the Committee for delivery.

As a result of a request to Members for activity ideas, it was decided to ask everyone to send in details of their 'Favourite Dances', with the aim of collating Members favourites ready for a return to dancing. With some clear front runners in the responses and a wide variety of other dances it has made a good collection for later use. Thanks to Liz Hamilton and Christopher Smith for their suggestions, and to Rhoda Purcell for collating all the responses.

August was our first go at an On-line Concert with Jim Lindsay. Possibly not as well attended as we had hoped, it was an evening of great music, ranging from familiar Scottish Country Dancing to other well-known tunes, plus the tune written for 'Highland Gateway' last year's winning dance. This certainly got us in the mood for dancing again, so thanks to Janice MacDonald for arranging this.

July was to be our first Outdoor Dancing event, but due to poor weather this was postponed to a fortnight later. Jane Rattray put us through our paces with some well-chosen dances to minimise contact, and it was lovely to see so many people for real. After another bad weather cancellation we achieved a second outdoor session with quite a few new attendees, so it was good to see the enthusiasm for a return to dancing by members. Additionally we had a few enquiries from the public about our activities, so a

further potential benefit. Many thanks to Jane for her MCing, as well as the Committee for sorting the other arrangements.

Although we haven't been dancing over the last year there have still been enquiries reference our activities. These have ranged from Children's classes to Adults, beginners as well as experienced dancers.

Over the course of the year we have lost two long standing members namely Dora Evans and Dorothy Reid; I am sure many of you will have a variety of happy memories of these two ladies.

And so to our Teachers and Committee. Two of our Branch Class Teachers decided to retire over the Summer, namely Christian Catto and Rhoda Purcell. They have both been running their respective classes for many years so will undoubtedly be missed by their Class Members. Together with Rae and Linda Gaul they have kept in touch with their respective Classes throughout the pandemic. Fiona Goudie and Judith Borup have kindly agreed to take the Perth Wednesday and Thursday evening classes going forward and dates / times have been agreed starting in October, all of course being subject to changes in COVID restrictions, and will be posted on the website imminently.

Rhoda Purcell has now been doing the Membership Secretary role for 5 years and has decided to step down; thanks for all her hard work over this time. Janice MacDonald has now completed her 3 years as a Committee member and has offered to take over from Rhoda, and is currently 'in training', thanks go to Janice. Susan Black has been busy getting the Branch website refreshed and everyone can see the results of her hard work, thanks to Susan. And thanks to Rod Purcell for continuing to produce the Highland Gateway magazine, not an easy task, particularly when we are not dancing! Thanks also go to Judith Borup for her 3 years as Treasurer, especially her diligence in keeping the Accounts straight, and to all of the rest of the Committee.

From my perspective, despite no dancing, it has been a whirlwind of activity ... twelve Email Updates which seem to be well received, six Committee Meetings, various Branch email communications and reminders about our virtual, and more latterly 'face-to-face', events. Additionally the Branch's Health and Safety Risk Assessment Document has been updated twice to reflect changes over the last few years, as well as those which are COVID related.

In conclusion 'Thank You' to the Committee and Branch Members for their support during my second year as Branch Secretary. Hopefully we will all be able to resume 'face to face' dancing in the near future!

Sue James
07/09/2021

7. Management Board Report

As Linda noted at last year's Branch AGM meeting, the Board has continued to meet virtually since last October. Since September last year there has been 5 virtual meetings, and the next meeting is planned for 25 September 2021.

Unfortunately, the Autumn Gathering Perth in November 2020, Spring Fling in Aberdeen in April 2021, and Summer School in July/August 2021 all had to be virtual events. The cancellation of these major events had a major impact on the finances of the Society as will be seen from the accounts for the year to June 2021 which will be presented to the Society AGM in Perth later this year. There will also be an impact on the accounts for the year to June 2022 as a result of the lack of revenue from Summer school 2021.

Due to the COVID restrictions, it has been difficult to produce any new publications and recordings but there is a new book and associated recording planned for launch at the Autumn Gathering in Perth in November this year.

Dance Scottish at Home continued to be a huge success and very popular with members across the globe over the last year. It has recently "taken a holiday" during the Summer months, however, a new style of member communication will be launched in the Autumn to reflect that, at that time, there will be gaps in the availability of physical dancing activities in some parts of the world.

Despite no physical meetings of the Board, it has still been a very busy year for both the Management Board and all Committees.

The Board had to take a long hard look at the finances of the Society given the impact of lockdowns, and these discussions took up a large part of the meetings over the early months of 2021 whilst the budget for 2021/22 was being considered. We also worked with an Interim Marketing Director to create an updated Marketing and Communication Strategy which would be rolled out in phases once dancing was given the green light to resume. This work also included the preparation of guidance to issue to Branches and Groups on what steps need to be considered when dancing would resume. As we all now know, that green light to resume indoor dancing was given by the Scottish Government on 9 August and many Branches have now started planning to resume their local classes in the coming weeks. The pace of pick up across the world is reflected in the resumption of dancing activities being at different stages depending on local COVID restrictions across the globe.

A new volunteer Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer for Scotland has been appointed in line with our updated Safeguarding policy.

Work on the Scottish Schools project has had to be paused since March 2020 as schools are not allowing any visitors into their buildings under Government restrictions. It is hoped that this project can be resurrected in the coming months in order that the time limited funding that has been awarded can be appropriately utilised rather than returned to awarding bodies.

There has been much discussion about identifying a replacement for Jean Martin as Society President as Jean has indicated that she will step down from that role at the Autumn Gathering in November. An announcement on the future of this role will be made in due course.

Work is beginning to pick up around the planning for the Society's Centenary year in 2023, and a number of events are currently at the planning stage. More information on these will be available in the coming months as details are firmed up.

The Autumn Gathering will be held in Perth in November 2021 assuming that restrictions are not reimposed. Planning is also picking up for Winter School in Pitlochry in February 2022, Spring Fling in April 2022, and Summer School in St Andrews in July/August 2022. Things have been feeling a lot more like normal and it has been very exciting to be planning to hold events rather than cancelling them!

There have also been a number of staffing changes/role realignments at 12 Coates Crescent as 2 members of staff were made redundant at the end of last year. This difficult decision was part of the cost cutting measures implemented to deal with the large budget deficit caused by the cancellation of all our major events during 2020. We have also recently appointed a new Marketing Officer to take forward the roll out of the new Marketing and Communication Strategy as we re-emerge into the new "normal" times.

Neil Copland,
27 August 2021