



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

**Minutes of the meeting of the 88<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of the RSCDS Perth and Perthshire Branch held at the Robert Douglas Memorial Institute, Scone on the 6<sup>th</sup> September 2022 at 7.30 pm.**

## **1. Chairman's Remarks**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the AGM, and thanked the Committee for their hard work and support over the last year.

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

## **2. Apologies**

Apologies had been received from Netta Berry, Jean Black, Susan Black, Margaret Breckenridge, Neil Copland, Morag Dunn, Rae Farrow, Pat Fraser, Kathleen Frew, Linda Gaul, John Graham, Margot Graham, Jenny Green, Margaret MacArthur, Theresa MacVarish Clark, Linda Magill, Pamela Malton, Sheena McNaughton, Rosalind Morrison, William O'Driscoll, Margaret Paterson, Anne Patrick, Brian Rose, Jane Rose, Mo Rutherford, Rhona Walsh, Charles Wiggetts and Ishbel Wiggetts.

## **3. Minute of the AGM, September 2021**

The minutes of the 2021 AGM were taken to be an accurate record, and subsequently approved by the AGM, (proposed by David Carswell and seconded by Janice MacDonald).

## **4. Matters arising from the Minutes of the September 2021 AGM**

Item 5. Jim Lindsay's concert was re-run in January, with Dundee Branch members joining us for the evening.

Item 14. Two indoor Branch Classes were run on Saturday afternoons in September and October before the re-start of indoor Branch Classes in mid-October.

## **5. Secretary's Report**

See addendum for Secretary's report.

## **6. Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts**

See separate Report.

Judith went through the Trustees Report advising that while all classes had made losses this was as expected and reflected the importance of getting these back up and running after Covid; dancers were very appreciative of this. It was noted that the overall financial position was significantly improved due to a large donation from the Perth Scottish Country Dance Club on their winding-up, for which we are very grateful.

Thanks was given to John Graham for acting as our Independent Examiner for this year, and for the previous years as he is now stepping down from this role.

## **7. Management Report**

See addendum for Management Board report.

Lorna Ogilvie expanded on the Celebrity Ambassadors mentioned in Neil's report, advising that those approached had all wanted to be financially recompensed which was not achievable due to the current financial position; ideas were therefore wanted going forward. It was noted that the Darcey Bussell More4 TV series for the Queens Platinum Jubilee had worked as it was a two way agreement. In light of the RSCDS Jubilee it had been decided to use past RSCDS Chairs to help act for / represent the current RSCDS Chair and Chair Elect due to the large number of events happening.

## **8. Adoption of Reports**

The AGM adopted the Trustees Report, the Secretary's Report and the Management Board Report (proposed by Janice MacDonald and seconded by Christopher Smith).

## **9. Branch Subscription**

It was proposed that the Branch subscription for 2023/2024 should remain unchanged at £6. This was agreed by the AGM.

## **10. Honoraria**

It was noted that the 2021 AGM had agreed that the Honoraria for 2021/2022 would stay at £425 to the Secretary and £300 to the Treasurer, but with new incumbents of these roles moving to an expenses basis. As the current Secretary was stepping down this year that position would move to an expenses basis for 2022/2023, with the Treasurer continuing for a final year on a £300 Honorarium.

## **11. Election of Officers**

The Chair had completed her 3 year term of office so was not eligible for re-election, while the Secretary had decided to stand down after 5 years on the Committee, 3 of which were as Secretary. The Treasurer was happy to continue for a final year and no further nominations were received. Nomination for the following officers for 2022 / 2023 were received as below and duly elected by the AGM:--

Chair: Christopher Smith (Proposer - Allana Creighton, Seconder - Judith Borup)  
Secretary: Rod Purcell (Proposer - David Carswell, Seconder - Linda Gaul)  
Treasurer: Judith Borup

The position of Vice Chair remains vacant.

There had been two proposals for Committee members, namely:-

Betty Blair for 1 year (Proposer - Allana Creighton, Seconder - Margaret Breckenridge)

Betty Bott for 3 years (Proposer - Janice MacDonald, Seconder – Allana Creighton).

Both were elected unanimously by the AGM.

There remained one vacant Committee Member position for 3 years.

Thanks were extended to Linda Carswell and Janet Macdonald for completing three years as Committee Members.

Janice MacDonald was welcomed to her first year as Membership Secretary having taken on this role in December 2021. Rod and Susan were thanked for their work over the last year as Highland Gateway Editor and Website Manager respectively. Susan was now standing down after 5 years on the Committee so a replacement was needed, while Rod would consider whether or not to continue as Highland Gateway editor.

Christopher Smith then took over the rest of the AGM as the new Branch Chairman.

## **12. Appointment of Independent Examiner**

Thanks was extended to John Graham for his work as the Independent Examiner for the Branch. John has decided to step down and volunteers / suggestions for a replacement were requested.

## **13. Constitution**

Sue briefly went through the proposed changes to the Branch Constitution as per RSCDS HQ recommendations. There were no questions and the AGM agreed the proposed changes (proposed by Don Marshall, seconded by Betty Bott).

## **14. Motions**

No motions had been submitted to the Branch Secretary.

## **15. AOCB**

The Branch has membership of the Sports Injury Clinic at Bells Sports Centre at a cost of £40 per year, which entitles Branch members to a £5 reduction on the cost of an initial assessment. As such it was wondered whether members were using this service and thereby whether to continue our membership of this Clinic. Five members present indicated that they had used the service over the recent years, but due to Covid shutdowns and gradual return to dancing it was agreed that recent usage was not an accurate gauge for discontinuation of this membership. It was thereby agreed to renew the membership for another year.

It was noted that past member Bill Baird had passed away.

The new Chairman Christopher Smith thanked everyone for attending, and thanked Allana for leading the Branch through Covid with assistance from the Committee.

There being no further business the AGM ended at 8.10pm.

## 5. Secretary's Report

What a difference a year makes! This time last year we were sitting here socially distanced wearing facemasks, but over the last 12 months we have made slow but steady progress back to near normality in the dancing world with a surprising variety of activities.

Covid and the Covid Officer role took centre stage for myself as the Branch moved indoors in September, with a lot of work done to ensure that the Branch complied with all Government restrictions, as negotiated by the RSCDS with Sportscotland (a Government body). The practical application of the Covid requirements revolved mainly around the Test and Protect Register, wearing of facemasks when not dancing, ventilation of premises, hand sanitising etc; These requirements stayed with us until mid-March, with increases as well as decreases in regulations over that period.

The Autumn Term commenced with two successful Saturday afternoon Branch Classes, which were then followed by two classes covering dances from our '95th Anniversary Dances' book. Weekly Branch Classes re-started mid- October into December, and then after a mini-Covid shutdown, resumed from late January until the end of March. Many thanks to our Branch Teachers Judith Borup, Allana Creighton, Rae Farrow, Linda Gaul and Fiona Goudie, for their hard work and dedication in devising suitable programmes for a return to dancing, encouraging dancers to return to the dance floor as well as implementing the Covid rules with the assistance of their Class Helpers. Attendance has not reached pre-Covid levels, but it is encouraging and will hopefully continue to improve during the coming Class season; a new Beginners Class should also help to attract some new, as well as returning, dancers. Additionally the Wednesday Class ran a surprise Retirement Party for Christian Catto in December which got some good coverage in the Courier; thanks to Fiona Goudie for all her hard work there.

A planned dance in early January utilising the list of Members' favourite dances compiled over the Summer of 2021 was an unfortunate casualty of the Covid mini-lockdown at Christmas / New Year. To fill the void we did a re-run of Jim Lindsay's concert on Zoom inviting Dundee Branch Members to join us which was much enjoyed by over 30 attendees.

By late April confidence about returning to the dance floor had increased significantly. This helped ensure a successful Branch Ball at the Station Hotel, with a much enjoyed programme and excellent music from James Coutts Scottish Dance Band. Thanks to the Ball organising team of Janice MacDonald, Susan Black, Allana Creighton, Rod Purcell and Pat Fraser.

RSCDS HQ invited submissions for the new 'RSCDS Book 53 for 2023' in March and it was decided to submit dances from our '95th Anniversary Dances' book. Branch Members were invited to vote for their favourite Jig, Reel and Strathspey, and 'Highland Gateway', 'Perth Reels for Real' and 'Dancing in Perthshire' by Rhoda Purcell, Carol Bisset and Janet Macdonald respectively were thereby submitted for inclusion. Come mid-May the Branch spent a Saturday afternoon trialling 10 of the 200+ submitted dances as part of the selection process for the new book.

May saw the resumption of our normal season of Spring Classes and Summer Dance; thanks to our 9 Teachers, Musicians and Bands. Classes were very well attended, while the Dance attendance was less so for various reasons including a rise in Covid cases locally. Use of technology was trialled in a couple of ways; firstly the organisation rotas (e.g. Welcome, Thanks, Teas etc) went online as a Google Doc meaning that the current status of roles for an evening was always available / updatable, and for the dances the

programmes were put onto the Strathspey Server so dancers could view the Youtube videos as well as Cribs etc, something which was much appreciated by a variety of dancers. A big 'Thank You' to Linda Carswell for all of her hard work in booking Bands, Musicians and Teachers as well as producing the final programme. It was also good to see a photo from our last dance of the season making it onto page 2 of 'The Courier', with the full write up including two photos in the 'Perthshire Advertiser'.

Early June saw the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations and an opportunity for the Branch to participate in Scone's celebrations. A team of 12 Branch Members demonstrated a small programme of dances in the park, the audience much enjoying the display while the organisers 'loved seeing dancers of all ages joining in the final dance'. 'Dance Scottish Together', the RSCDS monthly email communication, subsequently included a photo of the Branch Team dressed in red, white and blue amongst other Platinum Jubilee Celebrations.

Sadly during the year we lost a number of members. Past member Doreen Coghlan's cheerful demeanour will be missed at the wide circle of classes and dances she attended, while Jim Healy had been a past Branch Chair, Secretary and Treasurer, as well as roles at HQ including RSCDS Chairman, receiving the Society Scroll of Honour in 2020. Good articles appeared about both in the local press, with a further one on Jim due in the next Scottish Country Dancer magazine.

Member communications was again a key theme with 2 Highland Gateway magazines and 9 Email Updates being produced, and our postal Members again receiving Christmas Cards from the Branch.

And finally to the 'Thank You's'. Thank you to all of the Committee for their hard work over the last year to get us back up and running again after Covid, numbers were down but that was to be expected. Further thanks go to the outgoing Committee Members namely Allana Creighton who has been Chairman for the last 3 years, together with Committee Members Linda Carswell and Janet Macdonald. Thanks also to Rhoda Purcell for completing 5 years as Membership Secretary in December, and welcome to Janice MacDonald who has taken over this role; Rod Purcell for continuing to produce 'Highland Gateway', and Susan Black for continuing to maintain the Branch website.

Last but not least, thanks to you the Members for your support and encouragement whilst I have been in post as Secretary over the last 3 years. Little did I know that Covid was round the corner and how much time I would spend reading the Coronavirus Act, or that I would be learning, and sometimes teaching others, to use anything from Zoom and WeTransfer, to GoogleDrive, Google Docs and the Strathspey Server.

Thank you!

Sue James  
07/09/2022

## 7. Management Board Report

The Board has continued to meet virtually over the last year although the June 2022 meeting was a hybrid session. There have been 6 meetings since last September, and the next Board meeting is planned for 24 September 2022.

The Autumn Gathering took place in Perth in November 2021, Winter School was held in Pitlochry in February 2022, and Summer School took place in St Andrews over 3 weeks during July/August 2022. All events were well attended and were evidence that the dancing community was ready to get back to normality following the relaxation of COVID restrictions, although there are still some small mitigation measures in place at dancing events.

“Dance Scottish Together” (the RSCDS virtual newsletter for members) continues to be issued on a monthly basis and is being well received by members across the globe.

Despite most Board meetings being virtual over the last year it has still been a very busy year for both the Management Board and all Committees.

There was considerable discussion throughout the year around the Society's finances as we continued to feel the financial impact of COVID restrictions/event cancellations. The annual accounts that will be presented to the AGM in November this year will show that the Society has had a very difficult year financially, but with the re-emergence of all of its major events, the picture for future years should begin to pick up again. As a consequence of 2 very difficult years, the Board is currently discussing a possible fundraising strategy to support the Society's financial recovery after the COVID related losses sustained over the last 2 years.

Work on the Scottish Schools project has been restarted and regular reports are received by the Board on progress being made with this major project.

In the run up to the launch of the RSCDS Centenary later this year, the Board has been looking at the possible appointment of some Celebrity Ambassadors who, it is hoped, would help showcase the work that the Society does.

The RSCDS Centenary celebrations will be launched at the 2022 Autumn Gathering weekend and will run for 12 months. A number of events to celebrate this milestone are planned and details can be found on the RSCDS website. This information is updated and refreshed regularly as new and more events are confirmed.

During the last year, the RSCDS has published the Walter Scott collection of dances with an accompanying CD, and the Jubilee Book of dances to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. In addition, Branches across the globe have been very involved in the process of putting together Book 53 which will be published in summer 2023 with an accompanying CD of music.

A review of Committee remits and the RSCDS Rules and Procedures has been undertaken. As a consequence, the Board will be presenting some minor proposed changes to the AGM in November 2022. This review was a commitment given at the AGM in November 2021.

The Board had a number of discussions earlier this year to consider how to respond to the Russia/Ukraine conflict in line with the UK government sanctions/advice. The result of our discussions was a statement on the Society's position which is available on the RSCDS website.

The Autumn Gathering will be held in Glasgow in November 2022 and 2023. Planning is also well underway for Winter School, Spring Fling, and Summer School in 2023.

Neil Copland,  
30 August 2022