

Royal Scottish Country Dance Society, Chicago Branch

August 1988

Blethers

Chari Wurtzel, President

Kenneth Schoon, Editor

Classes resume September 11th. We will continue to dance at the Fox Center in Oak Park for at least a few more months. Hopefully you have received a flyer about the location in the mail. Please plan to arrive for class at 6:15 in order to change shoes, greet friends, and be ready to dance promptly at 6:30.

Dues are now due!! But then you knew that already. (Expediency is appreciated.)

Officers for 1988-89 were elected at the Annual General Meeting last May. They are chairman, Chari Wurtzel; treasurer, Noel Chavez; secretary, Kent Smith; Members at Large, Ingrid Kendall, Ann Lindsey, and Bill Moorhead.

Branch members appointed to specific duties include:

<u>Blethers</u> editor: Ken Schoon	Auction coordinator: Ann Wood
Membership coordinator: Barb Ellis	Record collection: Bill Moorhead
October dance chair: John Collins	Tape collection: Ingrid Kendall
New Year Ball chair: Ken Schoon	Workshop chair: Ingrid Kendall
Beginners' Workshop chair: Bill Moorhead	Librarian: Catherine Blair
Publicity coordinator: Pat Garigues	Tea coordinator: Kent TeVault

Branch class teachers this year will be rotated. There will be four teaching sessions with different teachers for each session. This fall they will be Ingrid Kendall and Kent Smith (September - October), and Barbara Ellis and Bill Moorhead (November - December). One unannounced Sunday each session will be a social dance.

New dancers are especially welcome at the beginning of each session.

Demonstration team instructors this year will be David and Avril Quarrie.

International Culture Festival in Hammond is September 10th and 11th this year. Our demonstration team will be on the "main stage" at 2:30 p.m. on Saturday.

The Sisters Dorcas and Letitia Reunion Dance and potluck picnic also on September 10th will be at the DeKoven Foundation in Racine, Wisconsin.

Beginners' Workshop will be September 17th at 9:00 a.m. at St. Luke's School in River Forest. Tickets are \$6.00 in advance or \$8.00 at the door. We are very pleased that Norma Briggs, from Madison, Wisconsin, will be our instructor. For more information contact Bill Moorhead at 848-2332.

Alasdair Fraser, a very well known Scottish fiddler, will be performing a recital at the Glendora House in Chicago Ridge, on October 2nd. Tickets are \$10.00 which includes the recital, country dance, and buffet supper. A brochure is enclosed. Please send a check for your reservation to Mary Brown as soon as possible.

The gourmet dinner to benefit last January's auction was held April 23rd. The lucky diners were Avril and Dave Quarrie, Jeanette and Ken Parrott, and Ann and Hank Wood. Ann Lindsey was the gracious hostess. The dinner was elegant and delightfully served by Chari Wurtzel and Noel Chavez. Both the diners and the workers had a wonderful time.

The Auction this year has been set for November 6th. Our chairman, Ann Wood, suggests that we start thinking about how we might best serve the group and help us get over the \$1,000.00 mark. It's easy if everybody helps. We will need more guests if we are going to continue to grow and be successful. Therefore a prize (two tickets to next January's Nicht Wi' Burns) will be given to the member who brings the most guests. Home baked goods are always a good auction item. Some items can be baked now and frozen until the auction. (The gourmet dinner was our biggest item last year.) Call Ann with any ideas. Start putting together all your white elephants and clever ideas now and avoid a last minute panic!

Call for Original Dances: As we hope to publish a booklet of dances in honor of our 10th anniversary in 1990, our branch is holding a competition for new dances. Members should submit dances to our secretary by October 1st. There are guidelines, so ask if interested. Five dances (that your editor is aware of) have been written by or for members of our group, perhaps more! Two of them are:

Many Happy Returns, a 32 bar strathspey for 3 couples, devised by Mel Briscoe to note the departure of Martin Mulligan from Chicago and the beginning of a new phase of his career in Newfoundland. It was first taught and danced at the Chicago Branch Weekend at Lake Geneva last June. It was then taught and danced at Winter School in Sydney, Australia, in July.

Trip to Japan a 32 bar reel for 3 couples, devised by Ingrid Kendall to celebrate the visit of the Schoons to Osaka, Japan, this month. It was first taught and danced at Osaka, August 21st.

Martin Mulligan's new address: Department of Biochemistry
Memorial University of Newfoundland
St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada A1B 3X9

Kathleen Grant Proudfoot, daughter of Laura and Jimmie Proudfoot was born May 7th, 1988. She made her Branch debut May 21st at the going-away party for Martin. A warm welcome to Kathleen and congratulations to the proud parents.

Highland dance competition: Our two branch life-members competed in Highland Games this summer and did quite well. Congratulations are in store for:

Jacob Schoon, who won three first place awards (technique, Fling, and Sword) at the Milwaukee games, and a first place in the Sword at the Chicago games. Jake competed in the primary class--age 6 and under.

Yoshifume Yukishige, who placed first in the Sword Dance at the Tokyo Highland Games. Yoshi competes in the open competition.

Traveling around the world:

Avril, Dave, and Ralf Quannie taught and danced in Brisbane, Australia, then spent a week at Winter School near Sydney where they taught one day's session (including Many Happy Returns) While camping later in New Zealand, they danced with a group after hearing an announcement of the class on local radio. Ralf was earlier in Germany and danced with the Hamburg group.

Ken, Peg, and Jacob Schoon visited with Yoshi and Kathy Yukishige in Osaka this summer. A highlight of their trip was dancing with the Osaka area SC dancers. Trip to Japan, written for the occasion by Ingrid Kendall, was taught. Kathy and Yoshi plan to be in Massachusetts for Christmas and in the Chicago area in January.

Ann Wood, at press time, was in Scotland visiting relatives and friends.

Newlyweds, Barb and John Ellis sent the following:

Dear Everyone, Thank you so much for the coffee grinder, coffee maker and the beautiful azalea plant! We've spent many pleasant evenings relaxing with freshly made coffee and the azalea is flourishing (its blooms perfectly matched the beautiful memento Ingrid stitched for us.) We particularly want to thank all of you for your good wishes and for the friendship and comradeship we've enjoyed, both from the demo team (who made our wedding a never-to-be-forgotten event!) and from each and every wonderful member of the Chicago Branch. Love, Barb and John.

A Real Scottish Experience: The following is reprinted from Tartan Times, the newsletter for the Scottish Country Dancers in Osaka. Perhaps many of our members can relate to its descriptions. It was written by one of their new members.

I attended the Scottish Society Party which was held in the evening of May 21 at the Tokyo American Club. I was not sure whether I could dance at such a party since I still cannot do the "reel of three" and many other things correctly. Many people encouraged me to go by saying, "You will have fun, so let's go together." I believed what they said and I collected my courage in making up my mind to go. I was totally unsure what was going to happen. The only sure thing was that I was going to dance unless I tripped and fell.

When I was walking to the American Club, my heart was beating so quickly. I felt a bit relieved to see familiar faces of the Blue Bell Society with whom I had practiced hard together in the beginners' class at Tateshina. At the party the ladies were in long white evening dresses with Tartan sashes hanging from their shoulders and the men were in kilts. I felt like I was in Scotland although I was speaking in Japanese.

Before the dinner started, there was a kind of ceremony, but I was not sure whether it was a typical Scottish ceremony or what. Two men were speaking to each other in English or what I guess was English, because I understood nothing but the words in which they hoped for good weather on the following day. The "ceremony" ended with a Haggis, a big sausage-like dish, cut into pieces.

I was very much interested in what dishes would be served as cooking, or I should say eating, is one of my main interests. The dinner was a rack of lamb, Haggis, and trifle. After the dinner, the time for the dance came.

I know I cannot dance without the help of the people around me, as it is always the case on the third Sundays. That evening, I was very nervous, but fortunately there were some songs I practiced dancing to before. I enjoyed dancing very much, but in my mind I was busy following the order of the steps so as not to make mistakes. Time passed so fast when dancing. At the end of the party all the participants made one big circle, hand in hand and sang "Auld Lang Syne" together. I felt so happy and thanked the people who encouraged me to go.

The following day, the competition of Scottish sports was held at Sotobori Koen in Yotsuya. In the field some big Scots and others were competing on how far they could throw a heavy ball and a big heavy log. At the same time a Highland dance competition and Piping competition also took place. I felt that my legs would become paralyzed just looking at the people dancing the Highland dances. I didn't believe my legs could ever be that skillful.

The weather was not good despite the pray of the previous night at the party. Only the ladies Highland dance competition was finished before the rain started around the noon. The rest of the competition was due to start at 2 p.m. The rain became heavier, and there appeared ponds of water on the stage, but the contestants did not quit. They ignored the heavy rain and continued their dancing. They must have the Scottish spirit. . . . Congratulations to Mr. [Yoshi] YuKishige [and others]. I feel very proud that I am learning to dance from these excellent dancers.

Through these two days I had a real Scottish experience. I am already looking forward to the next year's party.

Mieko Suzuki

Branch Classes: Sunday evenings at 6:30 at the Fox Center, Oak Park, Illinois
Basic and advanced. Tea and light refreshments served at 8:30.

Calendar:

September 4	No class	
September 10	International Culture Festival SCD demonstration at 2:30 p.m.	Hammond, Indiana 10:00 to 6:00
September 10	Sisters Dorcas and Letitia Reunion	2:00 Racine, Wisconsin
September 11	Classes Resume (Session I)	6:30 Fox Center, Oak Park
September 17	Beginners' Workshop	9:00 River Forest
October 2	Alasdair Fraser Recital and Dance	2:30 Glendora House
October 22-23	Scottish Fair SCD workshops all day; demo at 5:30	Irish-American Cultural Center
November 6	Auction / Session II begins	
November 20	Semi-Annual General Meeting	
January 7	New Year Ball	Glendora House, Chicago Ridge

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