

RSCDS, Chicago Branch



The Blethers

Greg Canfield, Chair

May 2001

Sue McKinnell, Editor

<http://www.midwestnet.com/clients/piper/branch.html>

2001 Annual General Meeting: This is official notice, pursuant to the Constitution and by-laws of the Chicago Branch of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society, that the Annual General Meeting will be held on Sunday, May 20. The meeting will be held in the parish hall at St. Josaphat's Church, Belden and Southport, Chicago, Illinois, starting at 6:00 p.m. The main item on the agenda will be the election of a new Committee of Management. You must be a member of the Chicago Branch to vote at the meeting (but others interested in the Branch are invited to attend). We will also discuss the RSCDS plan for reorganizing the Society as voted on by the Executive Council May 11 (see details below).

2001 Weekend Workshop: If you have not yet signed up for the 2001 Weekend Workshop, you still have time to do so. The Workshop will be held Friday, June 8 – Sunday, June 10 at *Stronghold*, a conference/retreat center located in Oregon, IL. Duncan & Maggie Keppie from Nova Scotia are the weekend teachers, and the Branch's own Barbara Cool will teach an advanced technique class. In addition to classes on Scottish Dance technique, there will be a musician's workshop and classes on Cape Breton Step Dance, mouth music, and the History of Scottish Dance. You should have received an application in the mail, but if you didn't or have misplaced yours, you can download one from the branch webpage or you can contact Noel Chávez at noel.chavez@uic.edu or (708) 848-9218.

Weekend Goodies: The all-important snack committee is in need of folks to help with the food at workshop parties on both Friday and Saturday nights, after the dances. If you can help either of those nights, and/or if you can bring treats, please contact Carlyn Bromann at 630-469-6029 (or Carlyn_msn.com - there is an underscore at the end of "Carlyn") to sign up. Thanks.

Summer Dancing: There **will** be summer dancing at the Oak Park Fox Center on Fridays starting at 7:00 p.m. Noel Chávez has graciously agreed to lead the dancing again this year. Dates for dancing are June 22, July 6, July 20, August 10, and August 24. The Fox Center is in Oak Park at the NE corner of Oak Park Ave. and Jackson Blvd. To get there take the Eisenhower (I290) to the Harlem exit and turn north (L from the west, R from the east). Take the first right onto Jackson and drive several blocks to Oak Park Ave. (Jackson twists and turns a bit). Park on the street and enter the building to find dancing.

Additional Up-coming events:

- Saturday, June 16th - *The 15th Annual Highland Games* at the Oak Brook Polo Grounds; look for the Branch table and come watch the demo team at 3:00 p.m.
- Sunday, September 16th - Celtic Fest downtown Chicago; the demo team will dance at noon.
- Saturday, September 29th – Midlothian Scottish Fair
- Sunday, September 30th – Fall dance with Elke Baker providing live (and wonderful!) music.

2000-2001 Committee of Management: Greg Canfield, Honorary Chair; Dorothy Pesch, Honorary Secretary; Mike Millin, Honorary Treasurer; Carlyn Broman, Jeanne Millin, and Liz Stake - Members at Large.

RSCDS Proposed Changes: Many of you should have received a copy of the proposed changes that were voted on at the RSCDS Executive Council meeting this past weekend. In general, the leaders of the Society see a need to change the way the Society is organized. In addition, there is a severe cash flow problem that needs to be addressed. Three proposals were presented to the Executive Council: 1) continue as at present with members working through Branches rather than directly, but with more Branch delegates; 2) move to having membership managed by HQ and all notifications sent directly to members rather than through Branches; 3) a two-tier plan with people opting for expensive full membership through HQ and direct access, or less-costly membership through Branches. The vote on May 11 was to determine which of these options would be presented to the AGM in the November for final vote. The results of the voting were that option 1 was selected, closely followed by option 3 (59-55 on the second ballot). HQ solicited comments from the membership and listened (read?) what was sent to them; those comments figured into the final selection. They are again soliciting member input as there is recognition that even though selected, option 1 is far from ideal; for example it does not address the main issue prompting the reorganization (Objective 10: to establish a management structure for the Society that will give clear leadership, respond to members' wishes and operate efficiently). And nothing is actually changed unless and until the vote next fall. If you wish to comment, visit the HQ website (www.rscds.org) and send them email – yes, they **do** read it!

SCD Mouse Pads: RSCDS Cincinnati is offering Scottish Country Dancing Mouse Pads. Visit their website for further information: <http://www.rscdscincinnati.org/index2.html>.

From a Backpacker Magazine (04/01 issue) equipment review (thanks Mary Ellen!):

Mountain Hardwear Mountain Kilt

My poor mother. After this review appears, she won't be able to show her face at church, shop at the supermarket during normal gossiping hours, or socialize with family friends who read this magazine.

Sorry, Ma, but it's my job to test the latest gear, and I'll be danged if Mountain Hardwear's new Mountain Kilt isn't one of the most comfortable pieces of outdoor clothing I've ever worn. I know it's hard to imagine your 34-year-old son wearing a skirt while backpacking, but this thing works. And it's wicked stylish, if I do say so myself.

Made to fit both men and women, the Mountain Kilt marries the rough-and-tumble panache of a Scottish kilt and the high-performance materials and comfort-beneath-a-hipbelt philosophy of Mountain Hardwear's Editors' Choice Award-winning Pack Pants (see "Editors' Choice '99," April 1999). So, in essence, this is a technical hiking skirt. Wrap it around your waist, buckle and snap it closed, and you'll instantly feel the benefits. A brushed microchamois lining that's soft as silk against your

bare bum. Lightweight Supplex fabric for comfort in hot weather. No zippers or seam waistband to pinch your hips under a pack that slide smoothly over each other for unfatiguing and high-stepping. And, best of all, built-in ventilation. Believe me, boys, the ventilation is here.

No doubt by now, many of you guys are shaking your heads in disbelief—perhaps disbelievingly. There's no arguing with the Mountain Kilt's performance on the trail. I wore it on several packing trips from Mexico to the Appalachian Trail. Cut to an above-the-knee length, the Mountain Kilt keeps your upper thighs cooler than the shorts I own and handled better than my forays in manly fashion.

Maybe a few brave lads will be flaunting some tanned and toned thighs. Some hardy souls may be channeling *Braveheart* and know that their butts are behind. C'mon, boys, leave the shorts behind, slip on a skirt, and let the mountain breezes tickle your skin. The revolution begins with your purchase.

Contact: Mountain Hardwear, 953-8375; www.mountainhardwear.com. Reader service #129

\$85

Unisex XS-XL

This handsome, hard-working hiking kilt is so cool and comfortable on the trail that you'll want to bust out the bagpipes and dance a little jig.

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