

THE ROYAL SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE SOCIETY
YORK AND NORTH HUMBERSIDE BRANCH

BROUIN'S REEL

September 2023

A NEWSLETTER

No. 174

Editorial

Our Monday class for years has had the custom of making the last night in the Christmas and summer term a request night, and looking at the request lists for those nights reflects trends of thoughts at different times. When a particular RSCDS book has been popular, clusters of dances from it appear for a few years, and that was the case for Book 33 and now very much so for Book 52. Conversely, all the dances from other books seem to disappear without trace – has anyone danced “The Gillyflower” or The Argyll Ludging” lately?

Another feature of lists of requests is how uneven they often are. I have got used to seeing a dozen reels and one or no jigs over the years, and was surprised that in June almost all the dances chosen were jigs! Perhaps that is just because some very good jigs have been published in the last few books.

Some years ago, in the days when branch dance programmes could feature 18 or more dances, I overheard someone say in horror, “But there are *four* strathspeys on the programme!” My (unvoiced, then) reaction had been “But there *only* four strathspeys on the programme!” Nowadays, there are comments that strathspeys are all well and good as long as they only go three times through. Otherwise, they are boring.

No, they are not! Here then is my sally in defence of the strathspey, and my apologies to those who have heard me campaign about this

before. [My original thought was “to harp on”, which brings me to an aside – can you imagine an SCD band with an electro-harp? Wow!]

The RSCDS is a guardian of all our traditions and has kept the emphasis on strathspeys. I believe the tempo, the "Scotch Snap" and the style of the dance are unique to the Scottish tradition and are found nowhere else. We should be proud to feature them.

There's a view around that strathspeys are slow and therefore suitable only for beginners, the unfit and the elderly, and that's why “people” (i.e. the unfit, injured and elderly) like them. I strongly disagree! It's an elegant and powerful dance. Much of that powerful elegance in the strathspey comes from the strong push as you change feet: far from being a namby-pamby dance to recover in (and yes, you can use it as a recovery dance) it needs real strength and technique to dance it well. At St. Andrews once, I watched a tall young Japanese man dance the most masculine strathspey I've ever seen. No question of it being a soft and easy dance there.

There's the music, too. If you think it's boring, then listen more carefully! Okay, there are a few mediocre tunes around, but that is also true of jigs and reels. I don't believe that only traditional strathspeys with their unique rhythm should be used; I love some of the slow airs and song tunes too. The Salley Gardens is a frequent and lovely tune in strathspey sets, and it's a slow air, a song, and Irish to boot! There are some fabulous strathspeys in traditional mode; play one in a minor key, and my insides melt!

I've not touched on some of the types of dances which rarely appear these days – 16S + 16R medleys, slow 6/8s, dances in running step. Those can wait for another editorial on another day! In the meantime, listen to the music, and love the dance, and make sure you appreciate reels, jigs AND strathspeys. But whatever your own preference, do what Helen Brown says in her article – “Dance with joy!”

Joyce Cochrane

HALF-DAY SCHOOL & DANCE, 7th OCTOBER, STOCKTON ON THE FOREST

PLEASE NOTE THESE IMPORTANT CHANGES:

Due to unforeseen circumstances, our teacher, Deb Lees, has had to pull out of teaching the Half-Day School, and she and Roger cannot play in the band in the evening.

The Half-Day School will now take the form of a workshop led by Helen and Malcolm Brown, who will teach dances from their back catalogue, many previously unpublished. While improvers and less experienced dancers in particular will gain a lot from this workshop, there should be plenty for the more experienced dancer too – something for everyone! Please join us. Application forms are available on the website or from Jennifer or me, if you have not already received one. The price, as previously, is £15 for all. Or just turn up! If you have already paid, you will receive a refund.

Given just half a band and another dance with Leonard Brown close to York that same evening, we have reluctantly decided to **cancel our evening dance**. The committee believes that the day school/workshop and similar events are very important, and urges you to join us on October 7th. The workshop will run from 2.00 to 5.15, with a break for light refreshments.

We send our very best wishes to Deb and Roger.

PAYING FOR DANCE TICKETS

Most people already know that you can buy tickets in advance in cash (e.g. at your local class), by cheque, or by bank transfer (BACS). **You can also pay at the door by bank transfer on your phone** – another method you may prefer if you no longer habitually carry cash.

WHERE SHOULD I SIT?

There are two common ways that are used by MCs to get people on to the floor for the next dance; one is simply to announce it from the stage “Please make up four couple sets for the next dance, ...”

The other way is to get the band to play the first 8 bars (or play the first 8 bars if using recorded music). Both systems have benefits, but I prefer the second method as it ensures that the band is actually ready, or in the case of recorded music, that I have selected the correct track.

So what should the dancers do? Is there anything wrong in not clearing the floor? Does it matter if they start to make up sets before the dance is announced? (Perhaps they are dropping a hint that they think there is too big a gap between dances? As an MC, I think it is my job to judge how long a gap to leave, so I am afraid I don't take kindly to such hints.)

How should dancers make up sets? If they are sitting near the top or middle of the room, then surely it makes sense for them to join in and make a set near to where they are sitting?

Does this mean that dancers sitting near the bottom of the hall should expect to join all sets at the bottom of the room as third, fourth or fifth couple, which was my experience at a recent dance?

Does this mean that the people sitting at the top always dance in the top set? Perhaps a more general mixing of partners throughout the room would give them an opportunity to dance in other parts of the room.

Does it matter how fast the top man counts down the line? If you are waiting at the bottom of the room to discover whether you are the fifth couple in a four couple dance, then I think the answer is yes.

At the very first dance with a band which I attended, I remember making my way on to floor to take a place next to another member from our dancing class. “Very good, Malcolm” she said – “You do

know that you are supposed to join sets from the bottom of the line, don't you?" Well I certainly did after that! As you can tell, it is a lesson that, despite the intervening fifty plus years, I have never forgotten.

Malcolm Brown, York

CHANGES IN THE ANNUAL PATTERN OF DANCING

We've become used a certain pattern of which dances occur and when, but there are a few changes this season which you should be aware of. (This does not include the Day School/Evening dance – see above).

1. October: The annual Leeds RSCDS/York RSCDS Joint Ball will take place this year on 21st October, instead of in November. This is a change for one year only.

2. November: There is no branch dance this month. However, we will hold a workshop on Book 53 taught by Helen Russell, at Dunnington Reading Rooms, on Saturday November 5th (2.00 – 5.00 pm).

3. December: After canvassing opinion amongst Branch members, there was no consensus at all on whether to go ahead with an afternoon or an evening dance. It was decided that the time had come to say goodbye to the New Year's Eve dance.

4. January: There has not been a dance in January since the pandemic began. This year it will be restored as an afternoon dance on 13th January, at Dunnington Reading Rooms ((2.00 – 5.00 pm).

The remaining dances in the season's calendar will take place as usual.

BRANCH WEBSITE

Our branch website has reverted to its old name www.rscdsyork and is being run by Malcolm Brown. (The earlier rscdsyork.website will also work for the time being.)

THOUGHTS ON ETIQUETTE AND RESPECT

Over the last 18 months I have had plenty of time to read and think. I think about SCD a lot as it has been a huge part of my life. I started dancing 60 years ago this month and loved it from the first step. I like the etiquette, the manners and the music, all of which have combined into a passion.

One of the articles I was reading (I'm not sure where it was from) was about the respect we should give to dancers and dancing. The dancers and musicians are all part of a team as without any music, be it live or recorded, we wouldn't have any enjoyment from our dancing. As dancers we can enjoy the music which enables us to dance with joy (not gay abandon!) proving that we cannot really do without the music. The article mentioned that it is disrespectful to the musicians if we clap before the chord. This is because that is the final part of the dance when dancers should be acknowledging their partners and the musicians finishing their part of the bargain. We can then have a quick word of thanks with our partner before we applaud to thank the band.

I have been lucky enough to travel to many parts of the world to dance SCD. I noticed in America and Canada that all the dancers in the set thank each other before walking off the floor. The Japanese acknowledge each other after the dance perhaps as part of their culture. It is easy to watch people we admire and follow what they do be it a good or bad habit. However, perhaps we should periodically assess what we are doing and be prepared to lose from any bad habits that have crept in. I have had dancing ones in the past but Malcolm has stamped them out of me!

It is a real treat to dance to live music and we are lucky in this area to have so many opportunities during the dancing season. I admit that some of us have to travel further than others and post Covid we are only gradually getting back to it. Many of the musicians who play for us come from Northumberland or Scotland which means they have to travel a fair distance (100 – 200 miles) to get to us on time whatever

the weather. I feel this is a real dedication to their craft that they want to share with us and we must not forget to show our appreciation. When the Branch first started to book bands, the late Robert Baird, leader of the Border Reivers Band, told us that they did not like to be treated like a record player (you can tell how long ago it was!). I think we should always make the effort to treat them well.

I suppose Etiquette and Respect can be covered by one word – Courtesy.

However, after saying all this, I still think we have the best Branch!

Helen Brown, York

BRANCH COMMITTEE 2022 – 2023

The first committee meeting after April's AGM took place after May's *Broun's Reel* had been printed. This is the first opportunity to publish the list of committee members agreed then (unchanged from last year). PLEASE NOTE: David Proctor will retire from the committee next April. **Please consider if this is something you can do!** David advises that starting working with him from December on would give a good training to anyone willing to help.

The members of the Branch Committee are as follows:

Chairman: Helen Russell
(helenthekelpie@gmail.com; 01482 804178)
Treasurer: David Proctor
Secretary: Joyce Cochrane
(jcochrane@jcochrane.karoo.co.uk; 01482 871790)
Minutes Secretary: Joyce Cochrane
Membership & Communications: Jennifer Robinson
Publicity/Social Media/Marketing: Angie Francksen
Members: Ken Wallace, Helen Brown, Ruth Potter.

Special thanks to Carol Hazell who, though not a committee member, handles the online Yorkshire Diary.

BRANCH WALK, MELBOURNE, 15th JUNE

Another super day for a walk from Ken – and yet another scorcher! A walk on the flat, through varied country, in very congenial company, and returning along the Pocklington Canal to meet Malcolm and Helen Brown at the Melbourne Arms for a good lunch.



Probably the right number for a group walk, but think about joining us next year if you've not been before, even if just for the lunch! Many thanks to Ken for his preparation and leading of the walk.

WHITE ROSE FESTIVAL, GATEWAYS SCHOOL, 8th JULY

After some glorious weather in June, the weather broke, and on the 7th July the heavens opened! All the dancing had to take place indoors in the Sports Hall, but there was room for both children and adults to dance. Our branch team, ably taught by Di Edwards, performed really well, and everyone thoroughly enjoyed the experience. A great evening dance followed, but our lot got up for just about every dance! Well done to all, and many thanks to Lynne for all her organization and admin.



LEEDS RSCDS/Y&NH RSCDS JOINT BALL, TADCASTER, OCTOBER 21

This year the Joint Ball held by our two Branches is being organized by Leeds RSCDS, and will take place on Saturday 21st October at the Riley-Smith Hall in Tadcaster. The dance begins at 7.30 pm, ending at 11.00 pm.. Refreshments take the form of a finger buffet provided by Leeds RSCDS, and tickets cost £30 (£15 for spectators).

The programme, danced to live music from the Phill Jones SCD Band, has been drawn up by Leeds RSCDS and includes suggested dances from York & North Humberside:

EH3 7AF	Jig	RSCDS Bk 40
Jordanhill	Reel	A. Brown/Glasgow 100 th
Miss Gibson's Strathspey	Strathspey	RSCDS Leaflets
John Cass	Jig	RSCDS Bk 49
Round Reel of Eight	Reel	RSCDS Bk 27
Jean Martin of Aberdeen	Strathspey	RSCDS 3/2006
Neil M. Grant	Jig	RSCDS Bk 49
Montgomerie's Rant	Reel	RSCDS Bk 10

Interval and finger buffet

Mrs. Stewart's Jig	Jig	RSCDS Bk 35
A Hundred Years Since	Reel	Knapman/ Glasgow 100 th
The Rose of the North	Strathspey	Leeds 25
The Chequered Court	Jig	RSCDS Book 42
The Earl of Mansfield	Reel	RSCDS LEAFLETS
Neidpath Castle	Strathspey	RSCDS Bk 22
All the Eights	Jig	Leeds Golden Collection
Deil Among the Tailors	Reel	RSCDS Bk 14



28th October 2023
YSCDC Platinum Anniversary Dance
7.30pm - 11.00pm
Tickets £15

**The Village Hall,
 Stockton on the Forest,
 York YO32 9UR**

**Live Music from
 Sandy Nixon
 & his SCDB
 Faith Supper
 Complimentary
 glass of bubbly
 & cake**



Maxwell's Rant	R 3C(4CSet)	Joie de Vivre	J 3C(4CSet)
Hoopers Jig	J 3C(4CSet)	Countess of Dunmore's Reel	R 3C(4CSet)
Sands of Morar	S 3C(4C Set)	Cape Town Wedding	S 3C(4CSet)
Links with St Petersburg	J 3C(4CSet)	The Chequered Court	J 3C(4CSet)
City of Belfast	S 3C Set	The Robertson Rant	S Sq Set
Miss Johnston of Ardrossan	R 5C Set	The Rutland Reel	R 3C(4CSet)
Father Connolly's Jig	J 3C(4CSet)	Rodney's Rant	J 3C(4CSet)
Platinum Celebrations	S 3C(4CSet)	Jean Martin of Aberdeen	S 3C Set
Montgomeries' Rant	R 3C(4CSet)	Reel of the 51st Division	R 3C(4CSet)

BOOK 53 WORKSHOP, DUNNINGTON, NOVEMBER 5th

Your chance to meet some of the dances from RSCDS Book 53! Helen Russell will lead a workshop, covering some of the new dances in particular, at Dunnington Reading Rooms on the afternoon of Saturday 5th November. The workshop will run from 2 pm until 5 pm, with light refreshments at the interval. The music is recorded; the price will be confirmed later.

Y&NH BRANCH ON SOCIAL MEDIA

The branch Facebook and Instagram pages are getting lots of hits and visits; thanks to Angie Francksen for her work on social media for us. Almost all organisations now have a Facebook page. Our pages really do look very professional.

CHRISTMAS SOCIAL DANCE, WILLERBY, 3rd DECEMBER

The Cottingham and Willerby classes are holding a joint Christmas social dance at St. Andrew's Memorial Hall in Willerby Square, on Sunday 3rd December. The dance will run from 2.00 – 5.00 pm, to recorded music, and seasonal refreshments will be provided. You don't have to be a class member to come – Lynne extends a warm welcome to all dancers from our branch area!

The programme has been chosen by Nigel Bell and is at follows:

Catch the Wind	Reel	RSCDS Bk 45
Pelorus Jack	Jig	RSCDS Bk 41
Rose of the North	Strathspey	Leeds 25
Inchmickery	Jig	Goldring 14/2000
MacDonald of Keppoch	Medley	RSCDS Bk 49
Glastonbury Tor	Reel	RSCDS Bk 47
Wind on Loch Fyne	Strathspey	Dunedin 1
The Highland Rambler	Reel	Leeds 25

Interval

Orpington Caledonians	Reel	RSCDS Book 49
The Scallywag	Jig	RSCDS Bk 52
Slytherin House	Strathspey	RSCDS Bk 52
The Aviator	Jig	RSCDS Book 52
Mrs. Stewart of Fasnacloich	Reel	RSCDS Golden Jubilee
Jean Martin of Aberdeen	Strathspey	Leaflet 3/2006
Mairi's Wedding	Reel	Cosh

Extras:

The Piper & the Penguin	Reel	RSCDS Scotia Suite
Midsummer Common	Strathspey	RSCDS Bk 49

BRANCH DANCE, PICKERING, SATURDAY 9th DECEMBER

Our branch's Christmas dance, on Saturday December 9th, takes place at the Memorial Hall in Pickering, to the music of Ian Slater. As last year, doors will open at 12.00 pm for those who wish to bring a picnic lunch. The dance will run from 1.00 pm to 4.00 pm, with seasonal refreshments provided at the interval. As last year, there will be a raffle – donations of prizes would be very welcome. Tickets are priced at £12.

The programme has been drawn up by Ruth and Jennifer, and is as follows:

EH3 7AF	Jig	RSCDS Bk 40
The Lochalsh Reel	Reel	Skye 2/RSCDS Bk 53
Midsummer Common	Strathspey	RSCDS Bk 49
Quarries' Jig	Jig	RSCDS Bk 36
Nottingham Lace	Reel	RSCDS Bk 53
The Water of Leith	Strathspey	RSCDS Bk 53
Mrs. Stewart's Jig	Jig	RSCDS Bk 35
Miss Eleanor	Strathspey	RSCDS Book 49
Zytglogge	Reel	Blackburn/Collecta Ursis

Interval

Kamo Karousel	Jig	West/http://eddywest.nz
Sueno's Stone	Reel	RSCDS 4/2008
Sugar Candie	Strathspey	RSCDS Book 26
Farewell to Balfour Road	Jig	RSCDS Bk 52
City of Stirling Reel	Reel	Goldring 2005/RSCDS Book 53
MacDonald of Keppoch	Medley	RSCDS Bk 49
Tribute to the Borders	Jig	RSCDS Leaflets
Miss Catherine Ann	Strathspey	Queen 1
Wind that shakes the Barley	Reel	Duthie

HARROGATE WEEKEND 2024

Friday 2nd – Sunday 4th February, Cairn Hotel, Harrogate

Teacher: Rachel Shankland

Class & Friday night musician: Alan Ross

Saturday night band: Susan MacFadyen

If you do not have a leaflet and application form, these are available on the website (rscdsyork.org) or from Joyce or Jennifer. If you would like more information, please ring or email Joyce.

Joyce: 01482 871790 jcochrane@jcochrane.karoo.co.uk

Jennifer Robinson: e-mail: jar.doha@gmail.com

We are delighted that RSCDS Chairman, William Williamson, and his wife Linda, will join us on the Saturday evening.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

- September 30 NW Craven RSCDS Centenary Ball, Preston Patrick Memorial Hall, Milnthorpe – Robert Whitehead
- 30 Newcastle RSCDS Centenary Dance, Stannington – Roddy Matthews & Allan Smith
- October 7 Y&NH Branch Afternoon Workshop, Stockton on the Forest – Helen & Malcolm Brown, Gillian Stewart
- 7 Richmond RSCDS Autumn Dance, Richmond School – Leonard Brown
- 14 Brighouse SCDC Open Night Dance, Waring Green – recorded
- 14 Retford & District RSCDS Annual Dance, Westhill Comm. Centre, Ordsall - Blinkbonny
- 21 Leeds/Y&NH Joint Ball, Riley-Smith Hall, Tadcaster – Phill Jones

- October 28 **York SCDC 70th Anniversary Dance**, Stockton on the Forest Village Hall – Sandy Nixon
- 28 Sheffield RSCDS Day School & Dance, Coal Aston – Zsafia Jozsef, Phill Jones
- November 5 Y&NH Branch Book 53 Afternoon Workshop, Dunnington Reading Rooms – Helen Russell
- 11 Great Ayton SCDC Winter Social Dance, Parochial Hall, Great Ayton – Leonard Brown
- 18 Leeds RSCDS Branch Dance, St. Chad’s – Ian Slater
- 25 Doncaster & District RSCDS Nice & Easy Dance, Goldsmith Centre, Doncaster – Ian Slater
- December 2 Harrogate Saltire SCDC Winter Rant, Knaresborough – Ian Slater
- 3 Cottingham/Willerby classes Christmas Social, St Andrew’s Memorial Hall, Willerby – recorded
- 9 Y&NH Branch Christmas Dance, Memorial Hall, Pickering – 1.00 p.m. – Ian Slater
- 9 Brighouse SCDC Christmas Dance, Waring Green – Ian Slater
- 16 Leeds RSCDS Christmas Dance, St. Chad’s – George Meikle
- 28 Leeds RSCDS Hogmanay Dance, West Park URC – Ian Slater
- 2024**
- January 6 Great Ayton SCDC New Year Dance, Parochial Hall, Great Ayton – Marian Anderson
- 13 Y&NH Branch Afternoon Dance, Dunnington – recorded
- 20 Leeds RSCDS Branch Dance – Phill Jones
- 27 Harrogate Saltire SCDC Burns Ceilidh, Knaresborough – Leonard Brown
- February 2-4 Y&NH Harrogate Dance Weekend, Cairn Hotel, Harrogate – Rachel Shankland, Alan Ross, Susan MacFadyen
- 2 Richmond RSCDS Monthly Social, Town Hall, Richmond – recorded

- February 24 Y&NH Branch Afternoon Tea Dance, Darby & Joan Hall, Cottingham – recorded – afternoon tea provided
- March 23 Y&NH Branch Annual Dance, Stockton on the Forest – Ewan Galloway – Faith Supper
- April 6 Y&NH Branch AGM & Dance, Market Weighton Comm. Hall – recorded – Faith Supper
- May 11 Y&NH Branch Dance, Memorial Hall, Pickering – Robert Whitehead – Faith Supper
- July 13 White Rose Festival, Gateways School, Harewood – Ewan Galloway

BROUN'S REEL, our newsletter, is published four times a year and can normally be collected at the Branch Dances held in September, December, February and May. Readers wishing to obtain Broun's Reel by post should send 4 (or more) first or second class stamps, together with a note of name and address, to Joyce Cochrane, 22 Newton Drive, Beverley, HU17 8NX. Please don't also collect a further copy from the dances, or we might run short!

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