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Registration Night

- Remember to come out and register on **September 10th** (Wednesday) at MacNab, 7:30 pm ready to dance at 8:15 pm.
- Special **Children's table** with new instructor Cate Reid. Or bring your forms to the first class on Sept 13. Cate's email caterstoall@hotmail.com



You received a registration form in the June Rant but there will be extra forms there if needed – or download one from the web.

Hamilton Ball

Keep April 4, 2009 free for fun at "The Scottish Rite".

Hamilton Weekend

October 17, 18 & 19th at the Burlington Seniors Centre. Remember forms are on the web or contact Scott Reid at 905- 332-2049.

Web Enhancements

Check out www.rscdshamilton.org and see the new area where pictures of events were moved to. If you want to see your pictures on the web, please forward to the editor.

Chairman's Message

The August edition of the Rant reminds us that another summer draws rapidly to a close and another full season of dancing is about to begin. Many of you have kept your dancing feet and dancing brains in fine tune but for some this is a time to recharge the batteries and make sure everything still works. We look forward to a year of classes and plenty of dancing opportunities. Carol and I spent a fair part of our summer in Eastern Canada, visiting both Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. The first of these trips was by train and allowed our granddaughters to appreciate just how vast even a part of our country is. We then traveled to Newfoundland by ourselves and marveled at how beautiful and friendly is this oldest and newest of Canada's provinces.

Members of the branch were saddened to learn of the passing of Jean Douglas, a former branch chairman and leading influence on Scottish Country Dancing in this area. Jean and Arthur's style and love of dancing affected us all. She will be missed. Our sympathy also to Cheryl and Lynda on the loss of their father Mac Gates and to Anne and Stewart who mourn the death of Anne's mother Madge Gillespie. Another flower of the forest weeded away this summer is Nora Kindness who was an important figure in the RSCDS community.

Registration takes place on Wednesday, September 10th at MacNab Church. Registration forms are available on the Branch website (click on JOIN US tag, then under adult registration form or go to the June Rant) so you can have the form all filled out when you arrive. Print copies will be available on the night also. This year we are planning to register the children at the same time. New Teacher Cate Reid will have a table and will be happy to meet our newest dancers and their parents. We will also do some dancing, starting at 8:15. Please plan on attending the Hamilton Weekend this year on 17 – 19 October. Again, registration forms are on the website (front page under the Weekend paragraph). We are also looking for people who are willing to host out of town guests. Just give your name to Scott or Cate. The annual Hamilton Ball will be on April 4th at The Scottish Rite. It's not too early to start making your Easter Weekend plans now. I also commend to you the Oakville Ceilidh Dance on September 19th and the Colin Dewar Special Dance in London on September 30th.

I look forward to seeing everyone at Registration Night.

John Dinsmore
Chairman



East coast near Cape Spear



Gros Morne



Flowers of the Forest

Jean Douglas

Jean was Chairman of the Hamilton Branch back in the 1990s. Jean had many children in her classes for many years. Both Jean and her husband Arthur (who died in 1994) were SCD teachers and they certainly influenced many young dancers into the enjoyment and fun of dancing. She wrote books on childrens dances and we all remember her "friendship circle" which was just Jean, always friendly and sociable. She passed away in July 14th at the age of 96 years.

Allan (Mac) MacIntosh Gates born July 5, 1925 passed away on June 3, 2008. He was the father of six children, including twins Cheryl Gates and Lynda Proud who are both members of the Hamilton Branch. Allan and his wife Ruth attended the May Galas and the Robbie Burns lunch and were followers of the children's class because of grandchildren Sarah and Daniel Proud.

Sarah Marie Proud was married to Adam Michael Cameron on May 22, 2008 and moved to Halifax. Sarah has received her BA in Linguistics Cognitive Science from McMaster University and is on the Dean's Honour Roll. Lynda Proud and her daughter Ruth plan to visit Sarah in August, so hopefully she will bring us back an article for the Rant. We all know about "Anne of Green Gables" but always want to know more about the area.

Madge Gillespie passed away in July. She was the mother of Anne Gillespie and mother-in-law of our treasurer, Stewart Petch.

Nora Kindness passed away on July 18, 2008 at the age of 87. Nora danced with the Kentucky branch.

Hospitality Wanted

OK my friends and Scottish Country Dancers, here is your chance to volunteer to host out-of-town SCDs in your own home for the two evenings of our Hamilton Weekend activities on October 17th and 18th.



Please contact Cate Reid at caterstoall@hotmail.com or telephone her at 905 332-2049 and let her know how many people you are willing to host. This is a great way to get to know people better, make new friends and help out the weekend activities, these activities will be held at the Burlington Seniors Centre.

Ceilidh in Oakville

Oakville Scottish Country Dance Group
CEILIDH DANCE

Come and dance or enjoy the entertainment at the Oakville Ceilidh on:

Date: September 19, 2008

Day: Friday

Time: 8:00 pm till 10:00 pm

Place: Bronte Legion Hall, Oakville

Music: Fred Moyes

Contact: Anne Harrison
905 845-6718



Special Dance

Colin Dewar and his band will be playing for a dance in London on **Tuesday night**, September 30th at the German Canadian Club on 1 Cove Road, London.

Tickets are \$30 each. Accommodations can be arranged. For more details and directions www.excelle.net/SCD

Contact Helenbell@sympatio.ca
Tel: 519 471-0623



Westfield Village

Scottish Country Dancing is a hobby that we all have in common but many of our SCD friends have other interests as well. John Aikman (our past Chairman) has been involved with Westfield Heritage Village since 1969 as a volunteer and also as a member of their board. He has actively been blacksmithing there for over 20 years and is in fact the lead blacksmith with a team of 12 others.



At Westfield you will find a collection of over 30 historical buildings which has made Westfield one of the most interesting historical destinations in Ontario. Carefully restored and staffed with costumed interpreters, the buildings capture the true charm and spirit of early Canadian culture.

Westfield is located on Regional Road 552 (Address for online map services: 1049 Kirkwall Road, Flamborough), off Highway 8 in Rockton. For more information, call 1-800-883-0104, (519) 621-8851, 1-888-319-4722 or e-mail: westfield@speedway.ca.



City's Piping Festival Tunes up

Pipers from around the world have gathered in Glasgow for the city's International Piping Festival. The organisers said the programme was designed to showcase the "vibrancy and diversity of the pipes".

As well as bands and artists from Scotland, pipers from Pakistan, Australia, the United States and Canada will be appearing. The festival's fifth year will see an estimated 8,500 pipers taking part.

The event culminates in Glasgow Green on 16 August – (it's already happened) where 200 bands will battle it out to be World best Pipe Band.



Thought you'd enjoy the colourful uniforms of the pipeband.

Next Rant

August Editor: Kathleen Noble

Deadline next Rant: **October 23rd**

Editor next Rant: Pierre Arnold

Email: pw.arnold@sympatico.ca



Visit to the UK – Wilma & Charlie Atkinson- July '08

Entering Newcastle along the east side I drove past the Corner House pub at the junction of Heaton Road and Stephenson Road and the thought passed through my mind that this might have been the inspiration for the tune 'The Corner House Jig' by Andrew Rankine. Andrew lived in Whitley Bay on the North Sea coast for 9 years beginning in 1963 and played frequently for the Newcastle Branch of the RSCDS so it is quite likely that he often passed this way. Later, while in the centre of Newcastle, I passed by Barras Bridge and recalled another of Rankine's tunes by that name.

Our next stop was along the Newcastle Quayside, now the scene of a lot of new development or redevelopment, which includes an active night-clubbing area. It is adjacent to the new Millennium Bridge across the Tyne and within sight of the High Level Bridge designed by Robert Stephenson of railway fame. This two-level bridge was completed in 1849 and was possibly the last major bridge to be built using cast iron arches, because steel was rapidly becoming the favoured bridge material. The bridge is still standing and in daily use carrying 2 lines of rail traffic on the top and vehicles underneath. I wondered if the SCD tune 'The New High Level', sometimes ascribed to Rankine as co-composer, was inspired by this bridge.

Wilma and I headed south along the by-roads of the Pennine chain, traversing Durham and into the Yorkshire dales. My ulterior motive in Yorkshire was to find some ancestors who lived a short distance north of Leeds. In the tiny village of Leathley I found the church of St. Oswald and in the churchyard I found the above-ground stone tomb of my great great great grandparents – Charles Atkinson and his wife Susanna. He was born in 1763, married in 1784 and died in 1838. The writing on top of the tomb was clear and unweathered making the transcription an easy task. That day we ate lunch at the Harewood Arms in the village of Harewood and adjacent to the Harewood Estate where the Queen's cousin and horse selection advisor, Earl Harewood has his country seat.

A few days later we visited a friend in Marple, a south-east suburb of Manchester. He offered us a day outing around the Yorkshire dales and before long we found ourselves in the village of Holmfirth some 9 miles south of Huddersfield. I did not know that this village and area around it was the location for the British Sitcom 'Last of the Summer Wine' which has been in production since 1972 and is still shown twice a week on local TV stations. We were able therefore to drink tea in the café featured in the show and to enjoy many of the familiar scenes. From Holmfirth we drove a short distance upstream to the Standedge Tunnel (see picture at end of article), the longest canal tunnel in Britain at 3.1 miles. The tunnel took 17 years to build from 1794 to 1810 and connects Huddersfield in the east to Manchester in the west, so completing an east-west canal route across the middle of England. The tunnel is 645 feet above sea-level and has a maximum of 638 feet of rock above it. The tunnel is 8 feet wide and 8 feet deep with 6 feet of clearance above the water. There are 4 'passing places' within the tunnel so that barges going in opposite directions can pass. An interesting feature is that, to save money, no provision was made for horses to pull the barges through the tunnel although there was a towpath for horses at each end. Instead the barge crew had to 'leg' the barge through the tunnel. This meant that 2 men had to lie on their backs on top of the loaded barge and push against the tunnel walls with their feet, so propelling the barge. It was quite a strenuous task which usually took 4 hours to transit the tunnel while the horses had a leisurely stroll over the hill to meet the barge at the other end.

From Yorkshire we headed north to Scotland crossing the new suspension bridge across the Firth of Forth. As we did so I thought of the Roy Goldring dance 'Inchmickery' named for the small island in the Firth about 6 miles east of the bridge. Our target was Pitlochry where we obtained Bed and Breakfast in a family hotel just a short walk from the town centre and stayed for 3 nights. I had lived in Pitlochry for a year in 1953–1954 while working on the Errochty Dam and hydro-electric project so it was interesting to see that the town had not changed a great deal in the intervening period. Fisher's Hotel was still on the main street and this had been the location for the Monday night SCD class. The lovely lawn behind the hotel was still there and reminded me of open air dancing in the spring of 1954.



A visit to Queen's View of Loch Tummel showed that the scene on a bright sunny day is unsurpassed as is the mass of Schiehallion (elevation 1083m) in the western distance. Queen's view was made famous by the visit of Queen Victoria in 1866 but probably was named after Queen Isabella, wife of Robert the Bruce.

Continued/5...

(See comments about the Falkirk Millennium Wheel next page)



Atkinsons in UK Cont'd.

We spent a day driving around the narrow roads in the area and made a detour to Trinafour, the former site of the construction office, from which we could hike along the access road to the Errochty Dam which created Loch Errochty. Our day was completed by driving west along the north shore of Loch Rannoch to the end of the road at Rannoch Station on Rannoch Moor where we had lunch in the railway station. We then returned along the secondary road on the south shore to complete a circumnavigation of the Loch.

Another day was spent on a visit to Balmoral Castle and Crathie church which meant driving over the hills to Kirkmichael and then up the Black Water valley to Braemar and the River Dee. As I drove along the Dee valley I could not avoid thinking of the dance 'The Royal Deeside Railway' (Book 40) and the delightful music selection played by Kevin Clark and the Craigowl Scottish Dance Band.

The journey south back to Newcastle offered the opportunity to divert to Falkirk to see the Falkirk Millennium Wheel, a magnificent bit of engineering connecting the high and low levels of the Clyde and Forth barge canal which is now restored to operation. We watched entranced as a barge loaded with passengers was lifted to the upper level while another loaded barge was simultaneously lowered by the rotating wheel.

Our last night in Scotland was spent in the Border country and chose the Liddesdale Hotel in Newcastleton. This planned village began life in 1793 as a handloom weaving centre. I wanted to see the town that inspired Roy Goldring to devise 'The Newcastleton Reel' and was somewhat disappointed to find such a small undistinguished place. This part of the border country was dominated by the Elliott clan who were border reivers and were called 'The Thieves of Liddesdale'. A visitor seeking shelter is said to have asked "Are there no Christians to be found?" and got the reply "No, we are only Elliots and Armstrongs." It was a dangerous time and there was 'daily slaughter, stealing on all hands and justice nowhere.'



Standedge Canal

Teachers Association Canada (TAC)

TAC run a summer school dance workshop every year, this year it was local in Waterloo and next year it will be out west (Sylvan Lake). How lucky we are to be able to take advantage of this school. For 7 days we danced every morning, afternoon (optional) and evening with 3 core teachers plus the benefit of visiting teachers. The standard of the workshop was high and it is run by teachers so things normally flow along very nicely.

Some of our branch members worked as stooges during the day and enjoyed a free dance at night. Other area dancers came for 2 or 3 days but most were full workshop attendees, between 14 – 16 in total from our branch.

During the week there were a variety of afternoon classes including step dancing, ball room dancing, old time dancing and music appreciation/knowledge. One evening was an optional dress up dance with a 50's theme. Elvis was there, about 40 poodle skirts (one with a cat instead of a poodle, one with old fashioned LP record), pink ladies, an A&W waitress and members of the Mickey Mouse Club. Some of our Japanese friends got together and created a cheer which read "TAC 50th".



Left to right: Scott & Cate Reid, J'ina Middleton, Anna Lipp, Sheila Robertson & Lauren Woods



We were housed on campus so the little walk to and from class helped warm us up for class. What an opportunity for more dancing, for exercise, for fun, for fellowship. It is certainly a good forerunner if you are planning to go to St. Andrews in Scotland. I can sum this up by saying you really needed lots of stamina for the parties! See you there next year!

Kathleen Noble



A Trip to the Rock

This was not our year to visit Ireland but we decided to go at least part way there, both literally and metaphorically, and spend our summer holiday in Newfoundland. We went with an Australian couple with whom we travel occasionally and for all four of us it was a first visit to this beautiful land which has the distinction of being both the oldest and youngest of the Canadian provinces.

We flew to St John's, sharing the flight with Michael Ignatieff who was on his way to a Young Liberal Convention, and spent the first two days there at the Bluestone Inn, one of the oldest houses in the downtown. Our host pointed out that our room had been used by Judi Dench when she was in the city for the filming of *The Shipping News*. It was the first weekend in August and we found ourselves at the George Street Festival, an annual event which is nothing less than an all-night party. St John's has the distinction of having the largest number of pubs per capita of any city in North America and I realized that I was even closer to my native Ireland than I had even imagined. The music and the Guinness were non-stop and the first feed of cod-tongues tasted great! A "session" in one of the pubs introduced us to the ubiquitous button accordion and the furiously played reels and jigs which are so characteristic of the Newfoundland musical style. I felt completely at home

On the following morning we walked on water. This weekly event is named for the fact that it starts on Water Street (every Newfoundland town seems to have a Water Street) and involves a group of local citizens who walk around the city just for the sheer pleasure of it. We were the only ones "from away" but we were warmly welcomed and the locals were very happy to proudly tell us about their city, which surely must boast some of the steepest hills in the country. St John's girls have the reputation of having the finest legs and it's all because they develop them walking the city. (We later found out that those in Cornerbrook would be not far behind.) Our tour took us to Government House, where the recently appointed Lieutenant Governor, John Crosbie, presides. South of the city we drove around the Irish Loop, visiting Witless Bay, La Manche Park and Petty Harbour before stopping at Cape Spear, the most easterly point in Canada. From the shore we were able to watch whales, which visit the many coves along the coast of the Avalon Peninsula.

The final day in St John's included a visit to Signal Hill where The Royal Newfoundland Regiment performed a Tattoo. The natural setting of the Citadel made this a most enjoyable experience. The Marconi exhibit, where the first trans-Atlantic radio transmission was received, is in the Cabot Tower at the top of Signal Hill. Before we left St John's we made another visit to Water Street to shop for CDs at a music store. The owner made a comment about "some Irish guy called Billy Connolly" being outside. There was the Big Yin himself just visiting the Rock like all the other tourists. This is Newfoundland. If it's not Irish, it doesn't exist!



Gros Morne



Bonne Bay boat tour



Anchors Aweigh



Signal Hill Tatoo



A trip to the rock...con'd.

The afternoon found us in Trinity on the Bonavista Peninsula where we stayed at Fisher's Loft Inn. Trinity was the location of much of the filming of *The Shipping News* and the cast stayed there during the shooting. It is easy to see why this site was chosen. The Bonavista is one of the most picturesque areas on the island and the whole Trinity Bay area is delightful. The movie theme continued as we drove around the Peninsula and happened upon the *Random Passage* set. This TV mini-series, which starred Colm Meaney, was made here and the set has been left as a tourist attraction. We had seen the series, which is based on the books by Bernice Morgan, and we were fascinated with the guided tour. The contrast between the harshness of life and the sheer physical beauty of the area is marked, and made us want to read the books and see the series again. We left Bonavista, resolved to return to spend more time there.

The island of Newfoundland is huge, larger than Ireland, and much of it is not accessible by road. We spent much of the next day driving across to the west, to the base of the Northern Peninsula and a little town called Sop's Arm where we spent the next few days walking and enjoying the music and the fresh fish. We moved on to Deer Lake and used it as a base to explore the magnificent Gros Morne National Park. This UNESCO World Heritage Site contains some of the most breath-taking vistas imaginable and we spent a glorious few days walking and touring the fjords by boat.

In Rocky Harbour we were entertained, ceilidh style by a local group, "Anchors Aweigh" whose music and stories were so enjoyable we didn't want the evening to end. It didn't. The next day, when we boarded a boat for a tour of Bonne Bay, the crew were the same group, and the music and stories continued. It was an unforgettable experience.



Random Passage



Cape Random film site

We had time for a quick visit to Cornerbrook before leaving Deer Lake to spend three days in Halifax (another favourite city). This time I had the opportunity to go to Pier 21, the museum which documents the immigrant experience. I came to Canada by ship when I was fifteen and, although we arrived in Montreal rather than Halifax, I was able to re-live that highly emotional time in my life. It was a fitting conclusion to a wonderful holiday.

Carol and John Dinsmore

			Booking info: Janet at Travel 800-311-1511 mention Valerie group
February 7 th	Hamilton Branch Monthly Dance MacNab Presbyterian Church	Bobby Brown & the Scottish Accent	Rhonda Moore (905) 525-1591
March 7 th	Hamilton Branch Monthly Dance MacNab Presbyterian Ch.	Don Bartlett	Rhonda Moore (905) 525-1591
April 4 th	Hamilton Branch Annual Ball The Scottish Rite	Bobby Brown & the Scottish Accent	Carol Dinsmore (905) 945-5744
April 14 th	Hamilton Branch Annual Workshop		Sheild Richards (905) 627-9697 Errol Ellis (905) 525-7447
May 6 th	Hamilton Branch Gala Night	Best of the Bands	Cate Reid (905) 332-2049