

MAY in Scotland



JUNE in Scotland



JULY in Scotland



AUGUST in Scotland



Summer in Scotland

## RSCDS HAMILTON RANT - AUGUST 2017 EDITION

### *A Wee Bit of Scottish History*

#### Jute, Jam and Journalism

The **City of Dundee** is famous for the three 'J's'. The fourth largest city in Scotland began with the Picts in the Iron Age and grew in size significantly during the Industrial Revolution when the jute industry flourished. Jute manufacture required whale oil, and as Dundee was a seaport with a vibrant whaling industry, jute production was a natural fit.

Marmalade, purportedly invented by the Keiller family in 1797, became famous because of its mass production and worldwide export capabilities.

Journalism refers to the D.C. Thompson firm which prints a variety of newspapers and comics, including the 'Sunday Post', 'The Beano' and 'The Dandy'.

Dundee was also a major maritime and shipbuilding centre in the 18th Century and produced over 2000 vessels in a 10 year period in the latter part of the century including the Antarctic research ship '**RRS Discovery**' used by Captain Robert Scott in his fatal journey to the South Pole. This ship is now on display in the city.

The first Tay rail bridge, built in 1877, crossing the Tay estuary, collapsed the following year with the loss of lives of all the train passengers who were crossing the bridge at the time. There were no survivors.

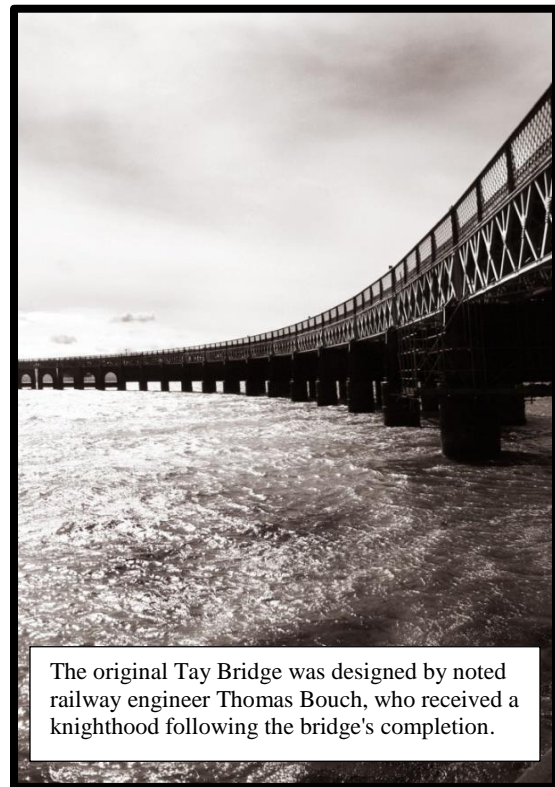
Winston Churchill was MP for Dundee in 1908 but was defeated in 1922. Following an appendix operation in the final days of his 1922 campaign he wrote that he left Dundee "*short of an appendix and a seat*".

He was offered the Freedom of the City many years later, but he declined the honour and never ever returned there.

Scottish dances associated with Dundee are '*Dundee Whaler*', '*Monifieth Star*' and '*Tayport Beauty*'.



City of Dundee located on the north bank of the Firth of Tay. The Tay is the longest river in Scotland.



The original Tay Bridge was designed by noted railway engineer Thomas Bouch, who received a knighthood following the bridge's completion.

# Our teachers tell their stories

## Alicia Manson

For as long as I can remember I have loved to dance. I was even pushed in my pram to dance classes when I was 3, my Mother realizing that if I walked all the way to class, I'd never have any energy to dance. Later on I would run home from school and turn on the radio and dance to the music until supper time.

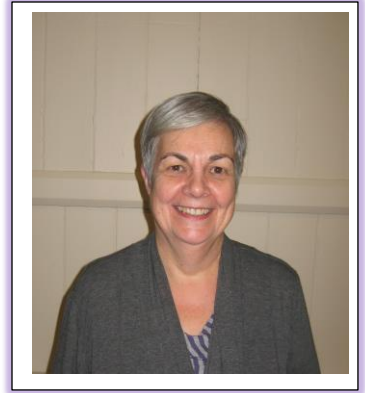
Oddly enough, I never danced Scottish Country Dancing at school.

In 1994, while teaching Kindergarten at St. Mildred's Lightbourn School, a retired teacher walked into my classroom. She was missing the children and wondered if she could volunteer in my class. This was the start of a lifelong friendship with Shirley MacAllister. Shirley and her husband John were dancing with the Oakville SCDS Group, but they were new to dancing and learning all the steps and formations was difficult. That Summer Anne Harrison decided that she would start a beginner's class in September. Shirley asked if Ian and I were interested, and the rest is history.

With Anne and Neil's encouragement I took my preliminary SCD teaching certificate in 2003 and my full certificate in 2006 at Summer School in Waterloo. John Middleton was my tutor and both his endless patience and generous sharing of knowledge continues to be much appreciated. Anne Harrison was extremely generous, sharing the teaching of the Beginner class in Oakville with me, which gave me the opportunity to gain much needed confidence, experience and to learn from my mistakes.

I have taught the Monday class on a rotational basis, the Intermediate Technique class and now enjoy taking the newer dancers through their paces. I have been fortunate to teach at Workshops across Ontario and one in Halifax, N.S.

*Happiness truly is Scottish Country Dancing.*



## John Walton

I never wanted to be a dancer. I am English. I was a rugby player. Dancing was not on my agenda and it was by mistake that I attended my first Scottish dancing class. I was not impressed and vowed never to come back. The year was 1955.

Sixty two years later, I am a dancing teacher, married to my Scottish wife Margaret, who I met on the Scottish dancing floor. I obtained my teaching certificate in 1969, but had already been teaching children for two years. In the past fifty years I have taught, hundreds of dancers, from children to seniors, at all levels. I also did Highland dancing for several years.

After emigrating to Canada in 1965 with my wife and two young sons we continued our dancing with the Hamilton Branch. I have served on the Branch executive in many capacities over many years including Branch Chairman on three separate occasions. I have taught at Week-ends, workshops and TAC Summer School and in addition to teaching in the Hamilton Branch I have taught throughout Southern Ontario, the USA and Scotland.

I estimate in over my 60 years as a demonstration dancer I have taken part in well over a 1000 demonstrations ranging from performing in front of members of the Royal Family to dancing in local church halls.

I am also a dance deviser having devised many dances including 'The Castle of Mey', which appeared in the Diamond Jubilee Book. I am currently teaching a class in Grimsby and occasionally teach the Level 3 Class in Hamilton.





## Tartan Tales

### Clan Morrison

This is one of the oldest clans in Scotland. There are three distinct origins of the name, two Hebridean and one mainland derivation, all spelled the same. The clan lands are located at the northern part of the island of Lewis and they claim their descent from Olaf the Black, King of Man.

The first recorded Morrison is Hutcheon (or Hugh) in the mid-1500s who acted as lawman or judge in the Hebrides. Though small in numbers they were a very important clan as they continued to be the peace keepers among their aggressive neighbours for well over two hundred years.

The senior line of the mainland Morrisons were the Morrisons of Bognie Castle in Aberdeenshire.

In the 16th century, Hutcheon Morrison confessed on his deathbed to being the biological father of Torquil MacLeod who had been assumed to be the son of the MacLeod chief. As a result, Torquil was disinherited and the office of chief of the MacLeods passed to another. Torquil, having been raised a MacLeod his whole life, viewed himself as the legitimate chief and made an alliance with the previously peaceful Morrisons and the more aggressive Clan Mackenzie. However, after defeating the MacLeods, Torquil declared himself a MacLeod and turned on the Morrisons and Mackenzies, forcing them from their lands and possessions.

The Morrison clan later returned to settle in Ness, but their earlier power had gone forever.

In the Hamilton Branch we have Hugh and Debbie Morrison, long time members of the Level 3 class. Hugh is a Branch teacher and was for a number of years the Branch treasurer. It is appropriate that Hugh bears the Christian name common to many of the male members of the clan.



Ruins of Bognie Castle in Aberdeenshire

# Scottish Country Dancing Adventures in Indonesia 1987 - PART 1

Written and submitted by Charlie Atkinson

During the 1980s I was Vice President responsible for the management of a number of consulting engineering projects in South-east Asia (Thailand, Laos, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Indonesia) but most of my time was spent in Jakarta, Indonesia where I had opened a new office. This work involved frequent trips from Canada each year, each trip being up to 2 months duration.

During this time I encountered a number of Scottish expatriates working for other companies, asked them about Scottish Country Dancing and was delighted to learn that a group was operating in Jakarta under the auspices of the **Java St. Andrew Society**. This group met every 2 weeks in one of the large historic houses which were commonly provided to expats with families. I soon had an invitation to join the Society and attend the next event where I found up to a dozen couples ready for an evening of music and dance. The ritual was to put about \$5 in the donation box to pay for the constant supply of duty-free whisky and other drinks at the bar and then to spend the evening dancing to recorded music. Most of the ladies were keen on dancing while a majority of men seemed to prefer sitting at the bar. My preference was for dancing so I was pleased to find that there was no shortage of willing partners.

The Java St. Andrew Society has held an annual event “**The Jakarta Highland Gathering**” since the 1970s. Google ‘Jakarta Highland Gathering’ to see part of the 36<sup>th</sup> event in 2015, or go to:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p5sUOgzKagw>

<http://www.wowshack.com/10-reasons-to-check-out-the-jakarta-highland-gathering/>

In 1987 the Society held a Scottish weekend, open to the general public, on the Saturday evening of June 13 and the Highland Gathering on the Sunday afternoon of June 14. The Saturday event comprised a variety show “Scotland in Concert” showcasing typical Scottish elements of music, song and dance among which was Scottish Country Dancing. I was somewhat surprised when the ladies of the SCD group asked me to dance with them for a performance of the “Reel of Five” (Book 27 No. 8), a medley by 4 women and 1 man. I agreed and then had to review the dance with particular attention to the rather tricky foot changes in each tempo. I recall spending time in my hotel room in an effort to perfect the step changes to achieve a smooth ‘demonstration quality performance’. The evening performance included a few hurdles – I had brought my ghillies with me from Canada but no kilt or accessories so that I had to borrow these from someone of similar stature and the person who did agree to lend his gear to me was performing before me. Further, Jakarta is only 6° south of the equator with a normal tropical June climate of 95% humidity and 95°F temperature so that when I finally donned the borrowed kilt and accessories for the stage performance, they were already rather damp and destined to become much damper by the time the Reel of Five was completed under the spotlights. Nevertheless, the performance went well. Incidentally, I later discovered that the ‘Reel of Five’ is attributed to a source identified as “Atkinson: Scottish National Dances”.



Watch for Part 2 of Charlie's story of **Dancing in Indonesia** in the November edition!

As Charlie mentions in his article above, there are more female dancers than male, even in Indonesia!  
So this poem, submitted by Sue Dilworth, follows appropriately.

## The Two-Sex Scottish Dancer

I'm a two-sex Scottish Dancer  
And may seem rather dim  
But I never spend one evening  
As a full-time her or him

I change my sex from dance to dance  
My corners always alter  
It's really not surprising  
That I occasionally falter

The old and simple dances  
I can manage very nicely  
And I can learn a brand-new dance  
And do it most precisely

But when it comes to next week  
I don't know if I can  
For I learned it as a woman  
And dance it as a man

And so you men who have the luck  
To always stay the same  
When female gentlemen go wrong  
Be sparing of your blame

I'll add a postscript to this tale  
One comfort I have got  
When both women change their sex  
It doesn't show a lot!





## The Health & Wellness Corner

What? Brushing my teeth help with my Scottish Country dancing?! How?!?  
*I'm glad you asked... 😊*

🎃 **Fall classes begin week of September 11, 2017** 🎃

**Here are some simple things you can do *while brushing your teeth* in August that will help prepare you for the start of the dance season!**

I asked my dentist what the “ideal” length of time is that I should be spend brushing my teeth. He said 2 minutes – 30 seconds per “section”. How many of us, besides me, do nothing else while brushing their teeth? Here are 3 things you can do while brushing your teeth that will help with your dancing!

### 1) CALF RAISES

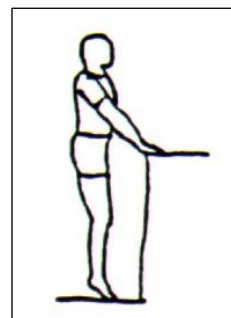
Important! Keep one hand (the hand not brushing your teeth) hovering an inch above the counter or with finger tips lightly touching the counter.

- First position: Toes facing straight ahead, feet about 6” apart
- SLOWLY raise up on your toes
- Hold for two beats
- SLOWLY lower your heels to the floor
- Second position: Turn toes in and heels out
- REPEAT - SLOWLY raise up, hold for two beats, SLOWLY lower your heels to the floor
- Third position: Turn toes out and heels in
- REPEAT - SLOWLY raise up, hold for two beats, SLOWLY lower your heels to the floor
- REPEAT all three positions until you are finished brushing your teeth!
- As your calves strengthen you will be able to hold in the top position longer and do more lifts

### BENEFITS:

To strengthen our calf muscles so we can...

- a) Gain height when we “SPRING, beat, beat”
- b) Gain LIFT in the first beat of our traveling skip change step
- c) So we can do 16 bars of Pas-de-basque without tiring!





## 2) BALANCE PRACTICE

Important! Keep the fingertips of your free hand lightly touching the counter.

- Lift one foot off the floor
- HOLD
  - o Wobbles are good – they force the muscles in the foot and ankle to work and strengthen to improve our ability to recover our balance quicker
- Lower that foot to the floor
- Raise the other foot off the floor
- HOLD



Note: Of course a *real* Scottish Country Dancer will raise that foot and hold it in a perfect Strathspey setting step position to practice that position as well!

- How long were you able to stand on one foot for? You should be able to hold longer with practice.



### BENEFITS:

To improve our balance, which is very important as we age, but more importantly...

- a) At the end of 4 or 8 bars of music, when we are where we're supposed to be, we finish our step and we stick! A perfect landing thanks to good balance – and good phrasing.

## 3) ARCH SUPPORT

Important! Keep the fingers of one hand hovering an inch above the counter or lightly touching the counter

- Move your toes to the edge of the mat in front of the sink
  - o No mat? Standing on a towel will work fine.
- Curl your toes under toward your heel, pulling the edge of the mat toward your arch as you curl
- Keep curling your toes until your arches are tight
- Release
- REPEAT



© Healthwise, Incorporated

### BENEFITS:

- a) Strong arches give us that lovely pointed toe in in all our steps, but none as lovely as in strathspey, while keeping the toe close to the floor, of course.
- b) The planter fasciitis band supports the arch; strong arches may help avoid planter fasciitis tears.
- c) As we age the arches of our feet tend to “fall” or “flatten”. This can result in our ankles and knees turning in, which pulls on our hips and back. We need strong arches and feet to carry us every day.

**SEE YOU IN SEPTEMBER, WITH SHAPELY CALVES AND ARCHES!**



Just for Fun



Oh! So our feet and balance aren't the only things that go...

## Fun facts about our fair city

### Did you know...

Concession Street, originally called Stone Road, was renamed to Concession Street in 1909 and is the oldest settled area on the Mountain.

It was once a Negro neighbourhood settled by slaves escaping from the U.S. on the Underground Railroad. It was, at that time, known as "Little Africa".

The freed slaves were illiterate and were educated alongside their children in local churches and schools.

Many of the freed slaves eventually returned to the U.S. to avoid the harsh Canadian winters and Concession Street was repopulated by other immigrating nationalities.

### Scottish Quiz

- 1) Blair Castle is the family seat of which clan?
- 2) What was the name of the Scot who managed Manchester United soccer club for many years?
- 3) What famous fiddler's portrait is in Blair Castle?
- 4) There is a large circle of stones in the Orkneys called what?
- 5) What distinction can the Cathedral of the Isles on the Isle of Cumbrae claim?

Answers are on the last page

# PHOTOS

## Gala Night

Photos courtesy of Dennis Baker





## Hamilton Ball

Photo submitted by Lisa Morelli



## London Ball

Photo submitted by Annette Sabourin



## Stoney Lake

Photos submitted by Maureen O'Donnell





## Dundurn Castle

Photos courtesy of Rick McKenzie



*Kudos to the Novice Dem Team and their supporters who represented the RSCDS Hamilton Branch at Dundurn Castle's June celebration of Canada's 150<sup>th</sup>.*





For more information on all events listed below, please go to:

[www.rscdshamilton.org](http://www.rscdshamilton.org). Events

Your branch website contains programs, information and registrations for all Hamilton events.

The Hamilton Branch website also includes website links for other area branches.

## HAMILTON BRANCH

### **Event: Dancing on the Dock**

When: Wednesday evenings in August from August 2<sup>nd</sup> to August 30<sup>th</sup> inclusive

Time: 6:30 to approximately 8:30 (dusk)

Where: The lovely gazebo behind William's Coffee Pub at Hamilton's Pier 8

Note: If you have never joined us to dance on the dock before, please note we dance outdoors on concrete and recommend wearing running shoes or a similar shoe.  
Bring a chair, bring a friend - Get yourself to Williams Coffee Pub and just follow the music!

### **Event: Registration Night**

When: Wednesday September 6, 2017

Time: 7:30 to 9:30

Where: MacNab Church

Note: There will be a short dance program, so bring your shoes.  
More information about classes and locations can be found on our webpage  
[www.rscdshamilton.org](http://www.rscdshamilton.org).

### **Event: Welcome Dance**

When: Saturday September 23, 2017

Time: 7:30 to 9:30

Where: MacNab Church

### **Event: Beginner Workshop**

Hamilton Branch will host a Beginner Workshop this year, currently planned for October. No other details are available at the time of this RANT publication, but additional information will be shared as soon as available.

### **Event: 1867 Dance and High Tea**

When: Sunday, November 5, 2017

Time: 1:30 to 4:30 pm

Where: Scottish Rite

Additional information will be shared as it comes available, but this dance has everyone excited! Music, food, decorations and costumes will all be geared to the period!  
So mark this one as "*a must*" on your calendar for November!



## HAMILTON BRANCH

### **Event: Christmas Dance**

When: Saturday, December 2, 2017

Time: TBA

Where: MacNab Church

I hate to be the bearer of such news, but Christmas IS coming...

We had so much fun and had such positive feedback on last year's Christmas Dance that we are going to make it similar. More information will be shared as it comes available, but mark the date!

### **Event: Friday Afternoon Social Dances**

When: The first in this series will be on Friday, October 27, 2017

Time: 1:30 to 3:30 pm

Where: Melrose United Church (at the corner of Locke and Homewood)

### **Event: \*\*NEW!\*\* Friday Evening Social Dances**

When: The first in this series will be on Friday, November 24, 2017

Time: 8:00 to 11:00 pm

Where: MacNab Church

## Surrounding Area

## **FOLLOWERS OF THE CELTIC WAY**

### ***Weekly Celtic Service***

Saturdays at 5:00 p.m.  
Starting September 16th, 2017



A contemplative service with Celtic music and prayers  
followed by a fellowship meal

Focussing on the Celtic teachings of:

The goodness of God's Creation, and seeking good  
rather than evil in all things and all people

Equality of all people

Awareness of the sacred in daily life

Environmental stewardship of God's Creation





## GARAGE SALE

**SOLD OUT!**

We will continue the “Garage Sale” section if we get more articles to sell. If you have some **Scottish things** you are no longer using, that others, especially new dancers, might be able to use, we will advertise them for you. In the Garage Sale you can sell, give away or trade. The purpose of the Garage Sale is to connect Buyers and Sellers, so please contact the Seller directly for more information. Send the details to John Walton ([jwalton15@cogeco.ca](mailto:jwalton15@cogeco.ca)) or Lynn Taplay ([lynntaplay@gmail.com](mailto:lynntaplay@gmail.com)) Please include your name and contact info so prospective buyers can contact you.

### A Message from your RANT Committee

Thank you to everyone who sent photos of recent dances or events!  
I think we all enjoy walking down “*Memory Lane*” through photos.  
Thank you for stories about “*where in the world*” you have danced.  
Please keep these coming.

If you enjoyed this edition of the RANT, please let us know.

We publish the RANT for your enjoyment and encourage you to *help us* continue to publish future issues by contributing to them – otherwise you will end up with more history lessons...

There will be one more issue in 2017 – watch for it in November!

*Sincerely,*

*Your RANT Committee*

Manager and Editor: John Walton ([jwalton15@cogeco.ca](mailto:jwalton15@cogeco.ca))

Design and Layout: Lynn Taplay ([lynntaplay@gmail.com](mailto:lynntaplay@gmail.com))



### SCOTTISH QUIZ – ANSWERS

1. Clan Murray
2. Matt Busby
3. Niel Gow
4. Ring of Brodgar
5. Smallest in Europe



*Portrait of Niel Gow 1787*