



# RSCDS Bristol

Volume 8 Issue 2

Spring 2006

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ROYAL SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE SOCIETY IN BRISTOL

RSCDS Bristol Registered Charity 1059608

## Chairman's Message

Welcome to the Spring edition of our Branch newsletter. I am sure you will find lots of interesting articles and photos to enjoy.

The contact details for the Committee are listed so do get in touch with any of us if you have any queries or comments on the Branch. We are here to represent you in the running of the branch and to help you get the most out of your dancing.

The format of the class evening has been altered in response to the recent questionnaire and we hope you are enjoying the new pattern. Do remember to give suggestions to Barbara for items to include in the breakout group if there are any dancing formations patterns or steps you would like to perfect.

We have tried to respond to other comments from the questionnaire such as chair provision – we can't do much about the temperature unfortunately but the warmer weather should be here soon!!

If you would like to get more involved in the Branch, do consider standing for the Committee in October at the AGM – there are two ordinary committee membership positions which will be open for election and we will also be looking for a new Secretary.

Our Summer term will go on until the end of June so enjoy your summer dancing and don't forget to buy your ticket for the Summer Dance on 20 May. It will be at St. Monica's with the wonderful music of Dalriada - don't miss it!!

Caroline Dunn  
Chairman

## This issue:

- General Information
- Membership update
- Burns revisited
- Memories of school
- Weekend away
- Society & Branch AGM

## Jump for Charity

Ruth Davies is intending to make a solo skydive for the charity Vision Aid Overseas on Sunday 30th April. As you may know, Ruth is about to take part in her 7th project to Africa in May, testing eyes and supplying spectacles where necessary.

The money raised from the jump will enable more people to benefit from spectacles which allow them to lead a normal life, earn a living or attend school.

The jump from 10,000 feet will include 5,000 feet of freefall followed by her steering the parachute to the dropzone. Dancing should resume on May 1st! You can sponsor Ruth at [www.justgiving.com/ruthd Davies](http://www.justgiving.com/ruthd Davies) or just speak to her directly.

*A lively music night with Ian Muir at Badminton School*



## Branch hits 100!

Since taking on the role as Membership Secretary at the AGM in November last year, the membership has gone up with a steady rise in numbers and on March 22nd it reached the dizzy height of 100.

Over this time I have been educating my self in the use of MS Access so all the details can be held on a data base. With it on a data base it will make the day to day job of keeping records up to date easier.

The first time members will see a real difference is when they renew their membership. I will be printing off the membership forms already filled out with each member's details so every one can check to see if it's correct and amend it if necessary.

It is good to see so many new faces, every club needs new people with new ideas to regenerate and move forwards, existing members should see this as a sign of a successful club, and combined with the experience of existing members the future looks promising and exciting.

Clive Robinson  
Membership Secretary



*Bristol branch out in force at Winter School*

At the Younger Hall the dances were announced but never talked through - so I learned to do my homework!

By contrast, Pitlochry was a house party atmosphere with the added luxury of staying in a hotel with ensuite facilities, service at table in the evenings, classes a brisk walk away, or for a couple of days, within the hotel itself, which was in a beautiful park-like setting.

night with Barbara as our MC. Peter provided us with some challenging classes in the mornings which everyone enjoyed despite regular bouts of confusion!

Throughout the weekend, Hugh, Fran, Kevin and Elizabeth provided a wonderful selection of music.

Thanks to Alan for stepping in with his GPS to lead the walk at short notice. I'm glad to see no-one was lost on the moors. (In fact, I seem to recall he actually came back with more people than he left with).

**Society AGM update**

The 2006 RSCDS AGM and Annual Conference weekend will be held in November in Aberdeen.

We are pleased to say that Bristol branch has been asked to take on the challenge of organising this year's Member's Forum – a new format combining "Branch Forum" & "Take to the floor"

A working group has been established and is thinking hard about the final format (interactive, round-table workshops) and topics for discussion will be invited from all RSCDS members soon.

This is an exciting opportunity for the branch and we hope to have good representation at the event to support the group and the Forum. Let us know if you are interested in attending.

**40 years of RSCDS schooling**

A few memories From St Andrews Summer School 1965 and Winter School in Pitlochry 2006.

A fortnight staying as a young student in the University halls of residence – I remember the small cramped room, walking along the corridor to the bathrooms, the queues at meal times, the rush to be everywhere on time. Ironing full skirted white dresses for the Younger hall ball, the outdoor rehearsals for the Pitlochry demonstration (a 32-some) under the eagle eyed Miss Milligan.

The music was first class, the classes expertly taught by lively teachers, the Ball at Blair Castle a highlight and the whole experience one to be recommended.

Patsy Patterson

**Haytor 2006**

It was with a little trepidation that I volunteered to organise this year's break away at Haytor. I had no need to worry – it all comes down to teamwork - thanks to everyone who contributed...

Our hosts at Moorlands were as accommodating as ever and their new international band of staff proved to be helpful, friendly and efficient (just ask Rhona or Jose!).

And what can I say about Saturday night's ceilidh? Brian managed to gather together an interesting array of 'turns'. Prancing cowboys, mutinying sailors, blindfolded and stick-wielding women - not to mention the risqué poetry and excessive cross-dressing - anyone looking in from outside would certainly have wondered what sort of club we were running!

And don't forget, next year we will be at Haytor on 16-18 March 2007 - Book your place soon.

Mike Innes

**I'm a Burns' Night Volunteer**

Do you have a habit of volunteering? I do. Well, at least other people like volunteering me.

My Dad regularly reminded me of the golden rule of army life "never volunteer for anything!" He was in the Royal Engineers where everybody obeyed the golden rule. Dad often told me of the old joke about the sergeant major who said to his platoon: "I want three volunteers to come forward, you, you and you!"

So I was "volunteered" to give the Burns Night supper "Toast to the Lassies". I told myself they would not have volunteered me if they didn't think that I had made a reasonable job of my speech last time. (I only found out later that they couldn't get anyone else to volunteer)

How did I produce my Burns Night speech? I have an easy-to-remember 2 step plan. Step 1



*A Tango from the winners of Haytor's Strictly Come Dancing 2006*

The weekend started with a delightful buffet meal followed by a lively and well-structured dance

normally lasts until about 48 hours before the day. It consists of “do-nothing-as-something-will-surely-come-to-me”. Step 2 follows and consists of “panic-panic-what-shall-I-say” as nothing ever does inspire me! This time at the middle of my panic stage, as always, I decided to base my speech on five old jokes rewritten to a relevant theme.

The truth is there is something addictive in making a speech in front of a large audience. You either love it or you hate it. I love it! I suppose it was my schooling – my Dad volunteered me for an army boarding school in Dover – that gave me the taste for public speaking. Our school had strange subjects in its military timetable such as “Map Reading” and “Speech Making”. (Actually I recently found out that it was Caroline’s father, Brigadier George Laing who was my tutor 40 years ago!)

Anyway to complete my speech preparation I adapt another army adage “Time spent in reconnaissance is seldom wasted”, swapping “rehearsal” for “reconnaissance”. I try and speak it out loud at least 5 times and I always write it all down just in case I forget.

So, on Burn’s night it was only one glass of wine before I stood up, but at least 3 afterwards. I volunteered Tricia to drive me home!

Brian Machin

### Burns Season

Apart from our own excellent and most successful Burns Supper, the Branch this year was invited to provide some display and general dancing by three groups, two ‘local’ and one not quite so local, namely: the Rotary Club at Frampton on Severn, the Bristol Golf Club – Ladies section, and the Kingwood Rotary Club who meet at Cleeve Rugby Club, Mangotsfield.

We put together and rehearsed a programme of 3 display modules, to be interspersed with audience participation and the ‘volunteer’ team were fortunate to have Hugh providing live music for two of the

venues and Hugh’s recorded music for one.

At each venue we were made most welcome and our dancing was well received. Audience involvement varied from enthusiastic to boisterous, but more importantly on each occasion the people wanted to dance. Letters of thanks have since been received with the hope expressed that we might be available next year!

Apart from the advantage of taking our dancing out into the local community, I felt there was another big ‘plus’ here – the feeling of achievement by the team of dancers themselves. Display/demonstration dancing has to be precise, with the dancers all working as a team, while at the same time overcoming the inner panic just before taking to the floor.

Thanks to all of you who volunteered. What? No, I don’t remember twisting any arms!

Well done guys.

Joan Ferguson

### Scottish Dance and Stay Young

Thanks to Patsy for this encouraging extract from an article on how to “smarten up”....

We know that exercising the brain can slow down the ageing process, and now we are seeing that you can not only reorganise your brain but it is likely that you can also improve the way your brain works. A creative hobby – learning to Scottish dance – is a key.

You have to challenge your brain from the cognitive aspects, the spatial awareness, language, memory, maths, through to the motor coordination. All of these challenge different areas of the brain.



John & Mike at Burns Night – should they be allowed to drink the profits next year?

That’s why they say taking up a new hobby is good for you. Remember there are no free rides it has to be hard work, but it is social, fun, good physical and mental exercise and very rewarding when it all goes right.

### Branch AGM Agenda

Members of the branch are invited to the AGM of RSCDS Bristol, to be held on Thursday 19 October 2006 in the gym of Badminton School, Westbury-on-Trym at 8.30pm. No Charge is made to members attending the class on the AGM evening.

#### AGM Agenda

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of RSCDS - Bristol AGM held on 20 October 2005
3. Matters arising therefrom not otherwise on the agenda
4. Secretary's Report
5. Treasurer's Report and Accounts
6. Nomination of Branch delegates for RSCDS AGM 2006
7. Election of Committee
  - a) Election of Chairman (Marcus Ashman) Caroline Dunn retiring
  - b) Election of Secretary Rhona Chalmers retiring
  - c) Election of Treasurer Jose Tarnowski standing for re-election
  - d) Election of Committee members Mike Innes and Ruth Davies retiring
8. Any other Business (Items to the Secretary before the meeting please).

## RSCDS HQ Events

**Spring Fling** (for under 35s)  
**31 March – 2 April 2006**  
Newcastle

**RSCDS Summer School**  
**16 July 2006 – 13 August 2006**  
St Andrews

**RSCDS AGM/Conference**  
**3-5 November 2006**  
Aberdeen

**RSCDS Winter School**  
**22-26 February 2007**  
Pitlochry

## Bristol Branch Events

**Redland May Fair**  
**1 May 2006**  
Demonstration & Taster session

**Summer Dance**  
**20 May 2006**  
St Monica's Trust, W-O-T  
Band: Hugh Ferguson and Dalriada

**New Season Dance**  
**14 October 2006**  
St Monica's Trust, W-O-T  
Band: George Meikle and Lothian Band

**Branch AGM**  
**19 October 2006**  
(see Agenda in this newsletter)

**Day School**  
**11 November 2006**  
St Peter's Church Hall, Henleaze  
Teacher: Janet Johnston  
Musician: Peter Shand  
Evening: Hugh Ferguson & Dalriada

**Burns Supper & Dance**  
**January 2007**  
Redland High School for Girls  
Band: Hugh Ferguson and Dalriada

**Newcomers' Dance**  
**10 February 2007**  
Monks Park School, Horfield  
Band: Ian Muir

**Haytor Weekend**  
**16-18 March 2007**  
Haytor, near Bovey Tracey  
Band: Hugh Ferguson and Dalriada

## Bristol Class Dates

Join us for fun nights of Scottish Country Dance on the following dates:

Thursday nights for all  
7.30 – 10.00pm

with breakout technique sessions  
7.50 – 8.50pm

5 Jan 06 – 30 March 06  
20 April 06 – 29 June 06

New season starts 14 Sept 06

## Teachers 2006

Peter Wright: xxxxxxxxxxxx  
xxxxxxxxxx

Barbara De Winton: xxxxxxxxxxxx  
xxxxxxxxxx

Fiona Grant: xxxxxxxxxxxx  
xxxxxxxxxx

## Bristol Branch Committee 2005/06

Chairman:  
Caroline Dunn: xxxxxxxxxxxx  
xxxxxxxxxx

Chairman-elect:  
Marcus Ashman xxxxxxxxxxxx  
xxxxxxxxxx

Secretary:  
Rhona Chalmers: xxxxxxxxxxxx  
xxxxxxxxxx

Treasurer:  
Jose Tarnowski: xxxxxxxxxxxx  
xxxxxxxxxx

Catering:  
Ruth Davies: xxxxxxxxxxxx  
xxxxxxxxxx

Publicity:  
Mike Innes: xxxxxxxxxxxx  
xxxxxxxxxx

Membership Secretary:  
Clive Robinson: xxxxxxxxxxxx  
xxxxxxxxxx

Ticket Secretary:  
Andrew Smith: xxxxxxxxxxxx  
xxxxxxxxxx

## RSCDS Management Board

Andrew Smith: xxxxxxxxxxxx  
xxxxxxxxxx

## RSCDS Membership Services C'ttee

Rhona Chalmers: xxxxxxxxxxxx  
xxxxxxxxxx

## Useful Web links

Don't forget our own website which will help to keep you up-to-date with the branch, classes and events.

RSCDS Bristol Branch  
<http://www.rscdsbristol.info>  
Webmaster: Peter Wright

Others sites which may be of interest:

RSCDS Headquarters  
<http://www.rscds.org>  
(ask Committee member for password)

Grand Chain  
<http://www.scottishdance.net/>

Strathspey Server  
<http://www.strathspey.org/>

## Newsletter

After a bit of a struggle and several pleading reminders, I am happy that so many of you were eventually persuaded to contribute to this newsletter.

We plan to continue with two issues per year, in Spring & Autumn.

Don't forget, no news submitted means no newsletter!!

Editor: Mike Innes

Next Issue: Autumn 2006  
Submissions by end September

