



# RSCDS Bristol

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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ROYAL SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE SOCIETY IN BRISTOL

## Stepping In Californian Style

Eagerly awaited by the large number of people who had registered to experience the Ron Wallace factor, our visiting teacher from the far side of the world arrived direct from California, enthusiastic about dancing and very excited about the weekend.

Ron took as his theme for the weekend, dancing through the ages. Those attending on Saturday enjoyed steps and movements not normally associated with modern Scottish dancing and the aching muscles that went with it!

Accompanying Ron with exuberant piano playing was Angela Young, who currently teaches in London. She first met Ron in 1989 at the RSCDS Summer School in St Andrews, where they were the youngest members of the staff.

In the evening, enthusiastic dancers responded to the music of Hugh Ferguson and the Dalriada band, guided by MC Stuart Grant. The jet lag continued to avoid Ron whose enthusiasm was still very much in



Rhona and Gordon with perfect poise during the quadrille class as instructed by Ron Wallace.

evidence, but at the interval he “hit the wall” and Barbara took him home. He pronounced that he would set his alarm clock to coincide with the end of the dance so he could continue to party when people arrived back at the house! Sunday morning saw step dancers

assembling: some experienced, some curious, some bystanders, and members of Bristol Clippers, a clog dance side, all keen to learn Cape Breton style stepping. It was a non-stop class, during which Ron taught simultaneously at all levels of competence from beginners upwards. Ron said he found this easier than country dancing, as his muscles did not get cold because he was working all the time.

After lunch, assembled dancers were treated to the delights of learning five figures of a sixteenth century quadrille. Due to Ron’s inexhaustible enthusiasm people were still laughing right at the end despite being very tired.

The next day Ron’s fascination for dance took him to visit the book shops of Hay-on-Wye, yielding books on Welsh music and dance. He left with a promise to return, and we look forward to welcoming him back. *Keith Henry.*

## This Issue

- ◆ DanceTour to Russia
- ◆ Summertime St. Andrews
- ◆ Brownies Treat!
- ◆ Getting Organised in Edinburgh
- ◆ RSCDS Bristol News & Local Events

## Summertime St. Andrews

In a fit of complete mental aberration after class early last year, someone suggested that a group of us go to the RSCDS Summer School at St Andrews! After a sharp intake of breath, and debate regarding our competency, we threw caution to the wind and signed up. Yeh!!!

At registration we met participants from Canada, New Zealand, Australia, Germany, Sweden, Japan, Taiwan, to mention a few. Now I started to panic: had I done the right thing? Help!!!!

Though not everyone shared my rapture about being woken up by the bagpipes, (can't think why) we were up and ready to dance on Monday morning. We were just a tad nervous (terrified if I have to be absolutely honest) to start with. However, we were relaxed very quickly with our teachers and musicians, who shared their enthusiasm and joy of dancing with us all. In addition to two morning classes, we went to afternoon classes in technique, Ladies Step, Highland Step and Ballroom dancing.

Then it was teatime, and out to the social dance in the evening. So we were doing at least 6 hours dancing a day!! It was TERRIFIC!! Of course after the social dance one might just pop into a nearby pub to re-hydrate, absolutely essential. Now that is what I call sensible!

Friday afternoon we had free so a group of us went sight seeing round St Andrews. The cathedral, now a ruin, must have been absolutely



Wardlaw: popular pre-dinner drinks and party location during the Summer School

magnificent, when it was the religious capital of ancient Scotland. Then off to the castle, and straight to the beach for a paddle. It was a mad rush back up to our rooms to get ready for the evening Ceilidh, with Taiwanese dancing, Welsh clog dancing, superb piano and accordion playing, singing, hilarious sketches and belly dancing.

The weather was a wee bit variable: soft rain, hard rain, medium rain and no rain but overcast! Then there was the Haar, a gentle, engulfing mist!! I just loved it. Walking home from a Social Dance ankle deep in rain water and surrounded by the Haar is truly magical!

The RSCDS Summer School is a marvellous social experience, meeting so many people from around the world with the same love of Scottish Country Dancing. I would recommend it to one and all. Roll on Summer School 2003!!! For details: <http://www.rscds.org/>

*Rhona "Hooked on Scottish Country Dancing" Chalmers*

## RSCDS Bristol

### Many Happy Returns, Peter!

From the very first notes, writes Patsy Patterson, Dave Hall and his band set the theme of the dance in October: light-hearted fun to toe tapping rhythms and zinging harmonies.

During the Dancing Master, there were curious activities behind the scenes. Peter, ably performing his duties as MC, had had a big birthday on the previous day, and the branch couldn't let it pass unnoticed. Champagne was being opened and poured for the toast, 70 candles were being lit around the decorated sultana whisky cake, and presents were retrieved from hiding places. The interval was announced and the band struck up "Happy Birthday" as the aforementioned goodies were carried aloft to the surprised Peter.



Candles extinguished, Peter dissects the whisky cake.

## DanceTour To Russia

**K**uban Scottish Dancers invite you to come and dance with them in Krasnodar, and then dip your tired toes in the warm Black Sea. Situated on the flat, fertile Kuban steppe, home of the Cossack horsemen, Krasnodar is the regional capital of the Kuban State.

The young and very energetic dance group started by Ilona Gumenyuk on her return from a year working in Bristol, dances in the Palace of Culture, and has appeared on Russian television and at Festivals of Scottish Music. Just south of the city are the Caucasus Mountains, shielding the subtropical coast of the Black Sea from the cold Siberian north winds.

There will be time to explore the countryside as well as share dancing expertise. Scottish Measure will provide music for all occasions, and Angela Young and David Queen will encourage inspirational dancing.

Fiona Grant has taken on the task of publicising and encouraging participation in the Holiday, and is responsible for the financial administration of the project. To aid negotiation with Russian bureaucracy, she has created DanceTour as a not-for-profit company whose business is to run dance courses.

Over the last few years Bristol branch have sponsored and encouraged Ilona and her dance group, and she would be thrilled if dancers from the branch would join them in the late summer from 5-14 September. Details of the holiday are now available from Fiona.



Displaying the Kuban Scottish Dancers' Demonstration Team

## Dance Alive

**M**embers of Bristol RSCDS supported World Dance Day on the August Bank Holiday, down by the waterfront.

A small group of dancers met for a hurried practice in St Alban's Church Hall a few days before the display. Clive was kitted out with Andrew's spare kilt and turned up on the day looking like a true Scot!

Sunday was a dull overcast day, rather cold and windy and only the brave few turned out to enjoy the day of dance. Peter started up the band at about 12.30 and as we danced our first display dance a small crowd formed to watch. They in turn were asked to join in and seemed to really enjoy the experience. Who knows ....one or two might turn up at Beginners Scottish one evening! We danced in all for about half an hour.

Many different groups and clubs turned out to support Bristol Dance Live and a good and varied show was staged. *Lynn Robinson*

## Brownies Treat!

**A**fter a day in Hay on Wye, Ron Wallace and I had an hour to prepare for a Saint Andrew's day visit to the Brownies in Stoke Bishop. We met 24 lively Brownies and their leaders. I talked about Saint Andrew, Scottish dancing, tartan and the kilt. Proudly exhibiting my live model in kilt, sporran etc., they were most interested in asking what was worn underneath.

Ron taught the Orcadian Circassian Circle, and I introduced them to a simple round the room dance. Both dances were executed with energy and enthusiasm, if not the greatest technique! The time over, they were exhausted, but were asking for more. We received a 'Brownie Thank-you' and left heartened by their response to Scottish Country Dancing.

*Barbara de Winton*



Creative Caption suggestions  
to the Editor before the  
Haytor ceilidh please

## Class Dates Announced

**W**arm up those frosted  
muscles and banish  
winter torpor:

### Elementary/Beginners

Redland Parish Church Hall,  
Redland Green Road.

Mondays 7.45 - 9.30pm  
13 January - 7 April 2003

### Improvers/Technique

Dance Studio, Fairfield Grammar  
School, Fairlawn Rd, Montpelier

Wednesdays 7.30 - 9.30 pm  
15 January - 9 April 2003

### Intermediate/Advanced

SS Peter & Paul School,  
Aberdeen Road, Redland

Thursdays 7.30 - 10.00pm  
9 January - 3 April 2003  
24 April - 12 June 2003

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

Newsletter Editor: Fiona Grant

## Dance 2003 Diary Dates

**D**iligent dancers have much  
to look forward to in 2003:

Tickets for the Burns Supper &  
Dance on Saturday 25 January in  
Redland High School sold out!

Newcomers Dance at Monks Park  
School on 8 February with Scottish  
Measure calling the tune sold out!

Look forward to a weekend of  
dance at Haytor, 21-23 March.

Celebrate Summer on 17 May at  
Clifton Pre-Hall with The Frank  
Reid Scottish Dance Band.

Be charmed by the exquisite fiddle  
playing of Green Ginger at the New  
Season Dancers on 11 October.

Perfect the neatness of your steps at  
the Day School on 8 November  
with Angela Young. Peter & Edna  
Russell with Jimmy Coleman will  
play at the evening dance.

## Bristol Branch Committee 02/03

Chairman: Keith Henry  
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## RSCDS Bristol

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### RSCDS Management Board

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### RSCDS Finance & General Purposes Committee

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## RSCDS Worldwide

**A**wet, windy, stormy  
Aberdeen hosted the AGM  
of the Royal Scottish Country  
Dance Society in November. But  
the welcome was warm, and the  
700 dancers enjoyed excellent  
hospitality, dancing and stovies!

Andrew Smith was elected to the  
newly created Management Board,  
and Fiona Grant to the Finance &  
General Purposes Committee.

Reports of the more recent  
meetings are displayed on the  
branch noticeboard and the RSCDS  
website: <http://www.rscds.org/>

Under review is the Society  
membership structure, the Strategic  
Plan, the web-site, management,  
and AGM arrangements. Priorities  
for Management Committees have  
been set: finance, communication,  
exams, the Manual, Book 43, and  
the "Warm-up" booklet.

Comments from all members are  
requested and welcome. Let us  
know your opinions!

*Andrew Smith, Fiona Grant*