

The Ghillie Callum

Volume 55 Number 2

December 2024

HALLOWEEN COSTUME CONTEST



Among the winning team costumes was one from the Torrance class as Gypsy Dreams. Dancers from left: Martina Hanson, Christopher Bradley, Lisa Hancock, Bill Hartung, Nancy Hartung, Betty Anderson, Mike McGinnis, Doris Fisher, Eric Fisher.

More photos from the Halloween dance on page 4.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Hello Dancers,

The Interbranch Dance with lively music by the So-Caledonians was a great start to a new season of dancing. We had a surprise announcement about a possible 2026 Catalina Workshop and Ball — wahoo! That would be a magical event.

Next up was the Halloween Spooktacular dance with so many clever costumes. It was fun seeing new faces join us. In November, Patti Cobb and friends played for our St. Andrew's Ball at the South Bay Masonic hall.

In December, the Orange County Branch is hosting their Christmas Ball on the 14th — always a festive night. Then we will ring in the New Year with our Hogmanay dance on the 31st — back again at the El Segundo Woman's Club. Once again, it will have the early start time.

Friends and family are welcome.

Starting off 2025 will be the Burns Supper and Ball, when we celebrate Robert Burns' 265th birthday on his actual birthday of Jan. 25. We are asking each class to donate two baskets for the silent auction, so ask your teachers how you may help. These baskets do so much to offset the cost of the dance as we try to keep the admission price down.

I would again like to take this time to thank all of you for making Scottish country dancing such a wonderful community: teachers, chairs of the various committees, volunteers at the various events and those of you who come to classes and dances. It does take a village.

Thank you and happy holidays,

Kris McGinnis

CATALINA WORKSHOP 2026

Plans are now underway for a return to Catalina Island on May 1-3, 2026, with another chance of a lifetime to dance in the unique Casino Ballroom. This will be an Interbranch event, and we hope to attract dancers from all over the West Coast with an outstanding band and gifted teachers.

The last Catalina Workshop Weekend was held in 2018, and we plan to have similar pricing in 2026. We can accomplish this only due to the generosity of our very special sponsors.

If you would like to be a sponsor for this event, we offer two levels of sponsorship as follows:

Gold sponsors for \$1,000

Silver sponsors for \$500

Sponsors will get to choose their favorite dance for inclusion in the ball program. They will also be recognized in the ball booklet. If you would like to join this wonderful group of branch members, contact me at doris.fisher@gmail.com. We are a (501c)(3) organization, so your sponsorship would be tax deductible.

MATCHING CHALLENGE: One family in our branch has issued a Matching Challenge for the Catalina event. They will match any amount donated up to a total of \$1,000. If you would like to participate in that challenge, contact me.

Doris Fisher, Catalina Organizer

CALENDAR
LOS ANGELES BRANCH

DECEMBER

31 **HOGMANAY PARTY.** El Segundo Woman's Club, 541 Standard St., El Segundo. Music: recorded

JANUARY

25 **BURNS SUPPER & BALL.** Torrance Woman's Club, 1422 Engracia Ave., Torrance. Music: Andy Imbrie and Caroline McCaskey

FEBRUARY

22 **BEGINNER DANCE.** First Christian Church, 4390 Colfax Ave., Studio City. Music: recorded

MARCH

22 **BEGINNER DANCE.** Torrance Cultural Arts Center, Torrance Blvd. at Madrona Ave. Music: recorded

OTHER BRANCHES

DECEMBER

14 **OC CHRISTMAS BALL.** Tustin Area Senior Center, 200 S. C St., Tustin. 7 p.m. Music: Flindrikin

FEBRUARY

8 **OC BEGINNER DANCE.** Tustin Area Senior Center, 200 S. C St., Tustin. 7 p.m. Music: recorded

**Deadline for the March issue
of the Ghillie Callum is Feb. 1.**

“AULD LANG SYNE”

The nostalgic phrase “auld lang syne” appeared in Scottish song as early as 1588, but it was the poet Robert Burns who gave us the version we sing every Dec. 31.

When Burns turned in the manuscript of “Auld Lang Syne” in 1788 he was quick to cite it as “an old song of the old times.” He is said to have explained, “It has never been in print, nor even in a manuscript until I took it down from an old man.” In his interpretation, Burns added the phrase: “we’ll take a cup of kindness yet, for auld lang syne ...”

Ann McBride

SCD-SoCal-mail

Regular e-mails about all local dance events, links to videos of dances, commentary about newly introduced dances and occasional tidbits of Scottish history, geography and culture are provided by Robb Quint.

To be added to the mailing list, contact Robb at volleyballjerry@aol.com.

NEW MEMBER

The Los Angeles Branch welcomes new member Sarah Fox.

Melinda Brown, Membership Secretary

HOGMANAY

Tuesday, Dec. 31, 2024

NEW LOCATION!

El Segundo Woman's Club
541 Standard St., El Segundo

Granville Market	NEW	B J	2nd Graded Book
Porchester Hall		I S	London Jubilee
The Ambassadors' Reel		B R	Vienna Book
Follow Me Home		I J	Book 38
Foxhill Court		A S	Canadian Book
Scott Meikle	NEW	I R	Book 46
Gloria's Wee Jig		B J	The Devil's Quandary
Smiling Lila		I R	Donald J. Bartlett online
Redwood Arbor		B S	Dragonfly
Best Set in the Hall		A J	Book 46
Largo Law		B S	MMM1
Sueno's Stone		I R	Magazine Dances 2005-2009
Farewell to Balfour Road		I J	Book 52
Gramachie		B S	MMM I
Pinewoods Reel		A R	Book 53
Mistress Mary	NEW	I S	L.A. 50th Anniversary
Les Remparts de Séville		I J	Book 50
The Deil amang the Tailors		B R	Book 14



BEGINNER DANCE

Saturday, Feb. 22, 2025

First Christian Church
4390 Colfax Ave., Studio City

Laggan Bay	NEW	B J	Craigievar Book 2
Toast to the Mousies		I R	Book 53
The Land of Enchantment	NEW	A S	L.A. 50th Anniversary
Fair Enough		B J	Book 51
Hedwig's Reel		B R	2nd Book of Graded SCDs
Follow Me Home		I J	Book 38
Largo Law		B S	MMM1
Scott Meikle		I R	Book 46
Granville Market		B J	2nd Book of Graded SCDs
Mistress Mary		I S	L.A. 50th Anniversary
The Rambling Pitchfork		B R	All Kinds of Everything
The Roselath Cross	NEW	I J	Book 41
First Love		B S	Let's All Dance Too
Diamonds Are Forever		A J	L.A. 50th Anniversary
Gramachie		B S	MMM I
The Ambassadors' Reel		B R	Vienna Book of SCDs

BURNS SUPPER & BALL

Saturday, Jan. 25, 2025

Torrance Woman's Club
1422 Engracia Ave., Torrance

Come Under My Plaidie	B J	Book 10
The Kissing Bridge	I R	Book 47
The Dundee Whaler	B S	Ormskirk Book 1
Best Set in the Hall	I J	Book 46
Pinewoods Reel	A R	Book 53
Burns Night	B J	Boston 50th Anniversary
Toast to the Mousies	I R	Book 53
The Falkirk Lass	B S	Book 53
Niles Roberts' Farewell...	A J	Book 53
The Glengarry Homestead	I S	The Kangaroo Paw
The Magic of Merrill	I R	S.F. Branch Dances online
The Cranberry Tart	I J	Dances / Seven Year Itch
Lady Dumfries	B R	MMM I
The Library of Birmingham	A S	Book 49
Chased Lovers	I J	Book 53
The Deil amang the Tailors	B R	Book 14



BEGINNER DANCE

Saturday, March 22, 2025

Torrance Cultural Arts Center
Torrance Blvd. at Madrona Ave.

Laggan Bay	B J	Craigievar Book 2
Arthur's Seat	I R	SCDs of the 18th Century
First Love	B S	Let's All Dance Too
City Lights	NEW	I J
The Land of Enchantment	A S	Book 52
The Rambling Pitchfork	B R	L.A. 50th Anniversary
Fair Enough	B J	All Kinds of Everything
Smiling Lila	I R	Book 51
Largo Law	B S	Donald J. Bartlett online
Niles Roberts' Farewell...	A J	MMM1
The Dancing Bees	B R	Book 53
Gloria's Wee Jig	B J	24 Graded & Social Dances
Sueno's Stone	I R	The Devil's Quandary
Gramachie	B S	Magazine Dances 2005-2009
The Roselath Cross	I J	MMM I
Porchester Hall	I S	Book 41
The Ambassadors' Reel	B R	London Jubilee
		Vienna Book of SCDs

HALLOWEEN COSTUME CONTEST



The dance Domino Five became Domino Eight for, from left, David, Thomas, Dawn and Nick Bertani, Elizabeth Seward, John Allen, Margaret Burnett and Jeff Altman.



Noa Weisberg included colorful "rain" falling from an umbrella for the dance Da Rain Dancin'.



Dancers from Orange County were Toast to the Mousies. From left, Pat Zschoche, Flora Morgan, Steve Bryan, David Morgan, Connie Walker, Connie Learn and Karen Kerman.



Grace and Gabriel White, left, as The Poppy and the Thistle, may be under the spell of Terri and Mia Coomes, as Slytherin House.



Seth Weisberg chose to be a feathered owl for the dance Hedwig's Reel.

Jon Reeves was Foxhill Court. His costume included a name tag: Hon. F. Hill.



The "come as the name of a dance" costumes make the evening extra fun, but there was our usual dancing and lots of delicious food, too.

BRANCH TEACHERS



Instead of having their usual Zoom meeting in September, L.A. Branch teachers met at Kris McGinnis' home to celebrate Deanna St. Amand's 14 years as teachers' representative.

Standing from left: Ann McBride, Deanna, Roberta Gotfried and Rosemary Abend; front, from left, Aase Hansen, Kris McGinnis and Robb Quint.

SEASIDE HIGHLAND GAMES

In October, the L.A. Branch Demonstration Team returned to the Seaside Highland Games to dance on the Sunday.

Dancers from left: Carol Madden, Martina Hanson, Marisa McGinnis, Kris McGinnis, Connie Walker, Mike McGinnis, Bill Hartung and Grant Clark. Ann McBride introduced them and the dances they performed.



ASILOMAR WORKSHOP



Los Angeles Branch members attending the Asilomar Workshop in October: from left: Doug Macdonald, Anthea Macdonald, John Allen, Elizabeth Seward, Dawn Bertani, Jeff Altman, Callan Edwards, Kris McGinnis, Christopher Bradley, Lisa Hancock, Mike McGinnis and Margaret Burnett.

A MYSTERY

Mary Isdale McNab published notes for a 200-bar set dance titled *The Earl of Errol's Reel*, and there's quite a story about one earl. The title of *Earl of Erroll* was granted in 1452, but it was a later earl who was the center of a murder mystery in January 1941.

That Earl of Errol, Josslyn Hay, lived in Kenya's Happy Valley, a community of British ex-patriots notorious for drug use, drinking and adultery.

In the early morning of Jan. 24, 1941, the earl was found dead in his car. The suspect was Sir Jock Delves Broughton, with whose wife the earl had been having an affair. Sir Jock was tried for the murder and, although found not guilty, he later committed suicide.

Ann McBride

A VERY FAMILY VACATION

Sometimes you find out the most interesting things about your family. When I was still a little girl of not quite 9 years old, my future father-in-law, Larry Hansen, died in New York. He was born in 1891 in Denmark and was placed in foster care from birth. An old widow, to make some money, took in this infant. She had family with whom she often visited, so the baby grew up with other children. Apparently, he was a nice person, for the extended foster family loved him and he stayed in contact with them until the 1930s.

In 1915 he left for the Danish West Indies (the Virgin Islands), and when the islands were bought by the U.S. in 1917, he moved to New York and became an American citizen. He never visited Denmark again.

Larry died in 1944, but his son Alvin, who became my husband, lived on for many years only knowing part of his father's story.

The adult grandchildren of that old widow had letters, photos and paintings by Larry that he had sent back to Denmark, things we didn't know about. We did not have any contact information but they were persistent and through serious research found us.

This summer my daughter Lisbeth met



Lisbeth Hencke, left, and Aase Hansen spent some time this summer with the grandchild of the woman who was foster mother to Lisbeth's grandfather in the 1890s. Aase had met her once before.

them for the first time and she was able to bring back with her paintings from the Virgin Islands done by her grandfather in 1915-17.

This photo is from Himmelbjerget, the sky mountain (remember Denmark is quite flat), looking out over the Silkeborg lakes. It was thought to be the highest point in Denmark for years but now they think there is another hill slightly higher. It is Lisbeth to the left, me in the middle and then Jenny. (The light blue clothing was a coincidence for the day. We had a good laugh when we met for breakfast.)

Aase Hansen

CLASSES

SANTA BARBARA

Santa Barbara's Thursday night class will soon welcome a new teacher. Ilse Gilbert, who has taught the class since 2012, will retire in early 2025, and pass the baton into the capable hands of Rachel McDonald.

Rachel joined the Santa Barbara class in 2019, with a perfect turnout from many years of training. She danced pre-professional ballet, as well as jazz, modern and character, from the age of 5 to 19. In addition to Scottish, she is involved with English country dance and California folklorico dance and has recently taken up square dance.

For the last 13 years she



Rachel McDonald

has been a personal trainer specializing in working with seniors and cancer patients and survivors, as well as teaching low-impact dance fitness classes. Rachel serves on the board of directors for Ecologik Institute, a non-profit dedicated to connecting girls and gender-marginalized youth to nature and technology, and she volunteers at the Santa Barbara Wildlife Care Network.

Rachel is currently enrolled in the RSCDS Core Training Instruction program, to develop proficiency in teaching SCD. The Santa Barbara class is fortunate to have such an experienced and talented new teacher step forward!

Ilse Gilbert



As evidence of the strong sense of community in the Valley College class, it seemed like everyone wanted to be there for Aase Hansen's last class — 29 dancers showed up for her on Nov. 1. That's Aase in the center of the front row.

Valley College

The Monday night class at Valley College also has a new — but very experienced — teacher. Ann McBride stepped in to take the class when illness caused Aase Hansen to retire.

Aase had taught the class for 36 years! She is moving to Maryland to live closer to her daughter, Lisbeth Hencke.

Our class was well represented at the Asilomar Weekend this year: Elizabeth Seward, John Allen, Dawn Bertani, Callan Edwards, Margaret Burnett and Jeff Altman. (See photo on page 6.)

Traveling farther afield, Jon Reeves spent just over a week in Japan. Lindsey Courtney

made good use of her school's fall break, spending about 10 days in Italy. Terry Schaeffer presented a paper at a conference in England.

Carmen Silva-Corvalán and her husband Scott made a journey of several weeks, driving across country to visit children and grandchildren.

Claudia Pedersen's visit with family in Nevada included lots of decorating for fall. Audrey Prest had a weekend in Bakersfield for a state-level event with DAR.

Aase enjoyed almost three weeks in Denmark (see additional story, page 6).

Audrey Ramsay Prest

Torrance

The Torrance beginner class continues, but it is not Zoomed. There are several new members, and the class is going well. The intermediate/advanced class continues to meet in “hybrid form” with live dancing and Zoom.

Kaisa Schmidt visited Portugal and danced with the Lisbon class. Class members attending the Asilomar workshop were Mike and Kris McGinnis, John Allen, Elizabeth Seward, Lisa Hancock and Christopher Bradley. I (Tony) have moved to Torrance and now attend the Torrance class live (rather than on Zoom!).

A record of each week’s program is published at my.strathspey.org. Dancers and teachers are welcome to join us in person Fridays 7:30-9:00 p.m. at 1530 Cravens Ave, Torrance, or via Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8248957840> (meeting ID, if needed: 824 895 7840).

Tony McQuilkin

DANCING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

The Society has a program called the Dancing Achievement Award (DAA) designed to help you improve your technique and knowledge of SCD. The DAA has three levels of achievement: intermediate, advanced and very advanced.

The training involves five to 12 hours of practice of nine prescribed dances. On the day of the exam, two assessors will evaluate your dancing. You will be sent a written evaluation sheet later. If you are interested in this program, contact me or go to the Society’s website and search DAA.

Rosemary Abend

SCD MAGAZINE

I want to try to generate some interest in SCD by strategically placing free copies of the magazine in British shops, etc. If you have any old copies and don’t know what to do with them, you can send them on to me.

Rosemary Abend

MEMORIAL FUND

The branch has money in a Memorial Fund, to be used for equipment purchases or special events. It can be used for scholarships to help members attend a workshop or something related to Scottish Country Dancing but who cannot afford the whole cost on their own. Applications are available from branch teachers.

RALPHS REWARDS PROGRAM

The branch earns a contribution from the Ralphs Rewards Community Contribution Program when members register to benefit the Branch, while they continue to earn their own Ralphs Rewards points. Pick up a flier and learn how to register or call 800-443-4438. You may still need to re-register every September. Our Organization Number is AV732. Then use your Ralphs Rewards card (or phone number) every time you shop.



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