

The GHILLIE CALLUM

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BURNS SUPPER & BALL

Questions of “what if?” inspired Ilse Gilbert in her Immortal Memory of Robert Burns at our annual Burns Supper & Ball this past January.

Ilse said as she began to research Burns, and uncover some less flattering facts about him, she imagined how she might like to amend his life.

For example, Burns was a known womanizer. But if not for that, we wouldn't have his romantic poems. If not for the scandal with one of those women, Jean Armour, Burns wouldn't have sold his poems to raise money to flee to Jamaica, and they could have gone unpublished.

He's been portrayed as quite a drinker, but if not for his rowdy Edinburgh dinner club and its witty conversation, he might not have met the patrons who befriended and supported him throughout his life. “I could hardly meddle with that,” Ilse conceded.

And what of his career as an exciseman, a tax collector? While she was disappointed to see him in that role, he was good at it, and the job offered reliable income for his family. Who could question that, she asked.



Ilse Gilbert presented the Immortal Memory of Robert Burns.
For more photos, see insert.

One could criticize such a talented poet for spending his time writing lyrics to popular songs. But they were appreciated by the common folk, and their popularity has outlived some of his other work.

Considering all that, Ilse said with a smile, her misgivings about Robert Burns became a thing of the past.

The festive evening began with a welcome by the chairs of the Los Angeles and Orange County branches, Rosemary Abend and Jan Lauer.

For the all-important haggis ceremony, John Cahill piped in the procession. The

traditional dish, made by Jon Reeves, was carried in on a silver tray by Roberta Gotfried as Poozie Nancy. Sword-carrying Henchmen were Evan Avery, John Herald and Bill Hartung.

Jim Bell recited Burns' Address to the Haggis. Mary Nisbet gave the Selkirk Grace.

Jeff Altman gave the Toast to the Lassies, noting that “Robert Burns knew they'd always have the upper hand.” Margaret Burnett did the Reply to the Laddies, citing their many fine attributes. She took a stab at a few rhyming couplets, concluding that “The lads are our heroes.”

For the evening of lively dancing, we had the pleasure of a new-to-SoCal band, Stringfire! Grand marshals were Rosemary Abend and Terri Speakman. Dances were briefed by Rosemary Abend, Roberta Gotfried and Shirley Saturen-sky.

Others to be thanked for the wonderful evening include: Dianne Wilson, raffle; Doris Fisher, registrar; Mike McGinnis, sound; Linda Boucher and Bob Harmon, graphics; Nancy Hartung and Kris McGinnis, decorations.

Audrey Ramsay Prest

50TH ANNIVERSARY BOOK OF DANCES

April 2016 will mark the 50th anniversary of the Los Angeles Branch.

As part of the celebration of this milestone in the history of Scottish Country Dancing in the Southland, the Branch hopes to publish a book of dances written by our members.

This is not a competition. It is simply an opportunity for our members — both primary and associate — to participate more fully in our celebration.

The members of our Teachers Committee have agreed to offer any of their class members time to try out a dance in class prior to submission. The whole purpose of this is to insure that the dance “works.” It’s very hard to fully visualize a new dance without seeing it danced. This is your opportunity to do so and we hope you will take advantage of your teacher’s generous offer.

If your dance was previously danced at the workshop for dances to be submitted for Book 49 held in the fall of 2013, they do not need to be tried out in class unless you have made a re-

vision to the dance from what it was at the time of our competition.

Some time over the summer, we will schedule a workshop so that all of the dances can be tried out prior to their being included in the book.

A committee of teachers will then work with you to ensure that proper RSCDS terminology has been used. It is not our intent to change your dance, but we do want to insure that the instructions are clearly written and easily understood.

If you are writing a new dance specifically for the Anniversary Book, we encourage selecting a title that relates to the subject of the book (our anniversary) and/or the history of the L.A. Branch.

Dances should be sent to me, preferably by email — dgsa@pacbell.net — no later than our AGM on June 27, 2015.

Deanna St. Amand

CALENDAR

LOS ANGELES BRANCH

MARCH

28 **Beginner Dance**, Torrance Cultural Arts Center, 3350 Civic Center Drive, 7 p.m. Music: recorded.

APRIL

26 **Sunday Afternoon Dance**, First United Methodist Church, 1338 E. Santa Clara St., Ventura, 1 p.m. Music: recorded.

MAY

23 **Costa Mesa Games Dance**, Tustin Senior Center, 200 C Street. Music: recorded.

JUNE

27 **AGM, Potluck and Dance**, First Christian Church, 4390 Colfax Ave., Studio City. Music: recorded.

JULY

25 **Summer Dance**. Torrance Cultural Arts Center, 3350 Civic Center Drive, 7 p.m. Music: recorded.

AUGUST

28-30 **Harwood Lodge Weekend**. Mount Baldy.

OTHER BRANCHES

OC = Orange County, SD = San Diego,
SGV = San Gabriel Valley

MARCH

7 **SD Spring Extravaganza**. St. Peter’s, 334 14th St., Del Mar, 6:15 p.m. Music: Andy Imbrie and Elizabeth Wood.

14 **OC Monthly Dance**. Anaheim Downtown Community Center, 250 E. Center St., 7 p.m. Music: recorded.

APRIL

4 **OC Monthly Dance**. CANCELLED.

MAY

9 **OC Monthly Dance**. Anaheim Downtown Community Center, 250 E. Center St., 7 p.m. Music: recorded.

JUNE

13 **OC AGM, Potluck and Dance**. Anaheim Downtown Community Center, 250 E. Center St., 7 p.m. Music: recorded.

“SEMBLANZA!”

Last November the Demonstration Team participated in “Semblanza!,” an international dance concert. Originally “Semblanza!” featured dance groups from Mexico, Central and South America. In more recent years, the producers have taken advantage of the diversity of cultures in Los Angeles to include dance traditions from other parts of the world.

The 2014 concert had a theme of “Europe in the Americas.” This allowed them to reach beyond the communities with large immigrant and first-generation populations to communities, like ours, that maintain their traditions from within mainstream culture.

The concert was performed in the historic Los Angeles Theatre, in the Historic Theatre District of downtown Los Angeles. The opulent interior was inspired by the Palace of Versailles. It’s so grand that it even has its own ballroom! The auditorium seats close to 2,000 people.

It all happened in one long day. All the groups were asked to be in costume and make-up (yes, stage makeup) before dress rehearsal began. As the technicians continued to prep the stage and configure the lighting cues, each group presented their dances with the other groups as audience.

There were eight groups from Latin America (including the City of Angels Ballet Company) and groups representing Spain, Portugal, Germany, Serbia, Ireland and Scotland, with Scandinavia representing both Sweden and Finland.

Watching all the other dancers, we were able to enjoy the diversity of performance styles. Many of the Latin presentations were in the “Folklorico” style, theatrical performances based on traditional dances. Other groups presented social or ballroom style dances. A few, like us, presented dances in traditional forms.

Roberta chose Laich of Moray for our presentation. Larry Kanowsky, Evan Avery, Alice Allen, Alison Dival, Carol Madden and Martina Hanson made up the set, with John Cahill piping us on and off stage.

The audience was predominantly Hispanic. They were enthusiastic and clapped along when the tempo switched to quick time.

For the finale, all the groups came back on stage following their national flag. We, of course,



The L.A. Branch Demonstration Team, with director Roberta Gotfried, at the Los Angeles Theatre in November.

were led by John, while Larry and Evan carried the Scotland Lion Rampart and the St. Andrews Cross flags.

More than 100 dancers filled the stage as the audience cheered and cheered. It was a very memorable moment.

Alice Allen



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 supplied by Robb Quint.

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

SUNDAY AFTERNOON DANCE

April 26

First United Methodist Church
1338 E. Santa Clara St., Ventura

Ye Ken It Well	J B	The Devil's Quandary
Mrs Hamilton of Wishaw	S A	Book 23
The Highland Lass	R B	Book 30
Rodney's Rant	J I	Q.E. Diamond Jubilee
The Rose Garden	S I	San Francisco Vol. 2
Tomalena	R I	San Francisco Vol. 2
Petronella	R B	Book 1
Marigold NEW	J A	Cosh 22 SCD
Largo Law	S B	MMM I
Glastonbury Tor	R I	Book 47
Pelorus Jack	J I	Book 41
Welcome to Ayr	J I	Book 47
Her Majesty's Crown	S B	Central Kentucky
Inverneill House	R A	Book 35
EH3 7AF	J B	Book 40
Bruce's Men	S I	Scotia Suite
The Glenalmond Gamekeeper	R I	Bankhead 6

AGM DANCE

June 27

First Christian Church
4390 Colfax Ave., Studio City

The Duke of Atholl's Reel	J B	Book 16
Flight to Melbourne	R I	Book 47
Dear Gladys	S A	Farewell My Fancy
The Kelloholm Jig	J I	RSCDS Leaflet
The Braes of Tulliemet	S B	Book 7
Glastonbury Tor	R I	Book 47
The Cocket Hat	J I	Book 44
Susan Scott of San Rafael	R B	Let's All Dance, Too
Hana Strathspey	S I	Tweeddale Coll. Vol. 4
Marigold	J A	Cosh 22 SCD
The Barmkin	R B	2nd Graded Book
Vintage Simon	J A	Book 47
St. Martin's Strathspey	S B	24 Graded & Social
The Dalesman	R I	12 More Social Dances
The Rose Garden	S I	San Francisco Vol. 2
Welcome to Ayr	J I	Book 47
The Lass of Richmond Hill	R B	2nd Graded Book

BIRTHDAY WISHES

Mary Brandon's 90th birthday is April 6, 2015. Mary – longtime L.A. Branch teacher, L.A. Demonstration Team director, dance devisor, RSCDS examiner and Scroll of Honor recipient for founding the Hawaii Branch – doesn't want a party, but would love to hear from dancers and SCD friends.



A post box has been set up specifically for your cards, photos and letters: Brandon Birthday Greetings, 6520 Platt Ave #143, West Hills, CA 91307.

Mary does not use the internet, but if you must email your message, send it to: shoobraidbrandon@gmail.com, and we will print it out for her. Please, no links to videos or e-cards. You can help make this a memorable day for a very special woman!

Alice Allen

CLASS REPORTS

Valley College

Another day, another newsletter. Though this one has lots of pictures so I'll keep my comments to a minimum. :)

Jon Reeves is doing what you'd expect Jon to be doing if you know Jon at all ... floating and dancing, along with Audrey Prest and Terry Schaeffer. Jon and Audrey also both worked at the post-parade display of floats in Pasadena answering questions, after which Audrey scurried off to Salt Lake City for more communing with dead relatives ... unlike some family gatherings, no fights broke out.

Alison McAlpine has had surgery on her foot, and we wish her speedy recovery and painless dancing in the future.

Aase Hansen's husband Alvin had a medical scare but came through with a mechanically enhanced heart that's working well for him. Aase had Rick and Lisbeth here for Christmas. As a bonus, while they were here she had cutie-pie grandchildren Freya and Magnus for a sleepover ... a fun crowd, though you wonder if the sleep in sleepover is entirely accurate.

Our class moved into a very impressive new building on the Valley College campus with a beautiful dance floor — woohoo! Our old location, the Field House, served us well but was definitely showing its age, along with many years of use — which may explain why we were so fond of it and patient with its inconveniences.

That and the fact that our branch has held classes there since the late 1970s! That’s a whole lot of good memories ... laughing and dancing, and freezing and sweating ... come to think of it, it’s really nice to be in the new place. :)

Happy dancing!!!!

Robyn MacGarva



The Valley College Class moved into its new home: Multipurpose Room 2 of the college’s just-built Community Services Center, right next door to the old Field House, where Scottish Country Dancing had its first San Fernando Valley class in the 1970s. The location is so clean and fresh that it still has that new-dance-floor smell!

Long Beach

What a joy! Long Beach Class has a new beginner, quite a breath of fresh air and giving us a glimpse, perhaps, of what it was like when we first discovered SCD and its fun!

Rowena Gillo, a LB resident, discovered us through Parks and Recreation. She had sampled their class offerings in the past, and this sounded like real fun. Or as she said, “This one popped up!” She comes to us armed with great enthusiasm and a willingness to meet any challenge. In fact, she attended the Burns Supper/Ball and was tempted to try Collie Law, which had been learned that very day. “I almost did it,” but she admits not having shoes yet. “Maybe next time.”

However, this splendid evening did leave a lasting impression, as she tasted haggis for the first time, experienced the “pomp and circumstance” of the program, and enjoyed the traditional attire. The energy present as we danced “amazed” her.

“I wanted to find a dance [type] that I could feel inspired and accomplished with, and I think I found it!” Rowena related. “Members are

very patient and welcoming. It’s like a family.” All around it’s a very positive reaction to experiences. Her descriptions say exactly what many of us feel: “I love the music. It is uplifting and energizing.”

When asked specifically about her class experiences, Rowena responded that it was good — “a challenge” — to be with what she termed advanced dancers. (Long Beach is a class of mixed level experience.) Maybe we learn faster when pushed out of our comfort zone?

We welcome Rowena and really wish her the best. Hopefully, we’ll see her at a beginner dance in the near future.

Of course, John Cahill was our piper for the Burns Ball, and Roberta served as Poosie Nancy, presenting the haggis for its honor. Many class members also attended and enjoyed the evening.

Feb. 14 and 15 marked the Queen Mary Festival in Long Beach, and Roberta led the L.A. Branch Demo team as they showed the more formal side of SCD. A handful of us participated in the other demos and audience participation.

Karen Kerman

Reseda

Our class enjoyed the holiday season, and we are happy about being back to dancing and look forward to upcoming activities.

Norm and Ruby Plotkin traveled north to San Francisco and celebrated with family members. Their two grandchildren, Zev Benjamin, who is 4, and Autumn Danielle, who is 2, especially enjoyed the holiday visits from their grandparents.

Deanna St. Amand welcomed many of her class members, past and present, as well as friends to her annual Christmas Party. This get-together has become a long-standing tradition and is looked forward to by everyone.

Angela Tennyson and Wellington, her white standard poodle, also did some entertaining: They brought in the 2015 New Year with a lovely sit-down dinner.

Stella Fogg, a long-time friend of Mary Brandon and for whom the Foggy River Reel was written, paid a holiday visit to Southern California. She was met at LAX by Alice Allen, who drove her north to Santa Barbara to visit Mary Brandon, giving the friends a wonderful time together.

After a very busy December volunteering at Burbank's Rose Parade float, Audrey Prest spent the first week of January in Salt Lake City with friends doing family history research. She reports that she found a good paper trail on her Ramsay family in Perth, Scotland. Still searching for Lady Lucy, however.

Claudia Pedersen

Redlands

Tim Harrison has launched a new class in Redlands on Wednesday nights. If you're in the area, or have friends out that way who might be interested, contact Tim: 310-489-4765 or tim@tim-doodle.com

Thousand Oaks

First and foremost a hearty "Thousand Oakie" welcome to two new dancers to our class, though not new to Scottish Country Dancing.

Eunice Udelf danced with the Thousand Oaks Class many years ago as well as with Waverly Dancers when directed by Kathy Conley.

Carmen Silva-Corvalan danced with Oberdan Otto's Culver City Class and with Waverly as well when it was directed by Eve Lubin. An enormous coincidence: Both of them have not danced at all in many years, and both appeared the first time in class on the very same Tuesday evening, each without any knowledge of the other. Many thanks to Christa Wilk for encouraging Carmen to return to dancing and come to class.

In the Grandmothers Department ... Grandmother #1 (in no particular order) Donna Ingram accompanied her grandkids (and the intermediate generation) on a Mammoth ski holiday in December, and while the other two generations were out on the slopes, Donna enjoyed the tranquil quietude of the lovely bucolic wintry setting, a pleasant contrast to the also pleasant but busier hours with her grandkids.

Grandmother #2, Claudia Pedersen, with Brent in tow, made a visit to her grandkids (and the intermediate generation) in Concord and spent what she reported as a rather mundane but very enjoyable and traditional holiday time with them, their pet dog and the neighbors.

Grandmother #3, Christa Wilk, and husband Bill met their Utah grandkids (and the intermediate generation) for a day in Lancaster, where none of them actually lives. The grandkids were visiting the other grandparents for a few days in Ridgecrest, and it was the approximate halfway point between there and Christa's home in Pacific Palisades. They all ate in a Louisiana-style restaurant that was so tiny that their group occupied the entire establishment and then spent a good part of a beautiful sparkling winter day just playing with the grandkids in a park.

The Thousand Oaks Class enjoyed a visit in late January from Santa Barbara dancers Christine Carlin and Sarah Stelck, and of course we'll be happy to see them again any time.

And most significant of all, our dancers greatly mourn the loss of our classmate and friend Sandy Waddell, who passed away on Feb. 22. Sandy had long been absent from class with an extended illness, during which time many of us are glad to have visited him and Madeleine at home.

Robb Quint

Ventura

Happy New Year of dancing from the Ventura class!!! We hope that you are having a wonderful 2015!

In December we finished up the year with our annual holiday party. We had a fun evening of dancing. De-resa had suggested that we wear our “ugliest” sweaters for the evening. I like to think of them as more “festive” attire. However regardless of how you label them, it was a lot of fun to see everyone and their holiday finery.

After class we headed over to a local restaurant for pie and coffee. Years ago, when David Brandon taught the class, he always wanted to

go out for pie every Friday night. So this is our yearly tribute to David, and we all had a slice of pie for him. We stayed chatting and visiting together until the restaurant was ready to close. Proof again the Scottish Country Dancers know how to party. :)

Although our class is doing fine and most



Members of the Ventura Class try to outdo each other's “festive” holiday sweaters at a class party in December.

of our dancers are healthy and well, we are missing Sandy Waddell, who lost his battle with various cancers in February. Several class members went to visit him and his wife Madeleine in his final weeks.

Lisa Sage

Flowers of the Forest

Just before press time, word arrived that Sandy Waddell passed away the afternoon of Feb. 22. He had been battling various cancers for several months.

Ilse Gilbert reported seeing a spectacular rainbow an hour or two after he died. She said it arched over Sandy and Madeleine's Oxnard house, and “I felt as if it was leading me there.” Ilse noted, “It was an amazing event, maybe better described than photo'ed.”

She said, “It seemed to embrace Madeleine and the family and friends who were there ... It felt like Sandy was still organizing things, even



Sandy Waddell



Ilse Gilbert captured this photo of a rainbow of Sandy and Madeleine Waddell's home shortly after he died.

now.”

Sandy was Branch treasurer for several years, and he and Madeleine danced most recently in the Ventura and Thousand Oaks classes.

MEMORIAL FUND

The L.A. Branch has money set aside in a Memorial Fund, to be used for special equipment or special events. It can also be use for scholarships to help members attend a workshop or something else 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 continuing to earn their own Ralphs Rewards points. Go online to register or pick up a flier to take to to your store. You need to re-register annually, beginning Sept. 1. Our Organization Number is 93159.



The Branch Demonstration Team performed both days at the Queen Mary Scottish Festival in February.

Demonstration Team

Preparation for “Semblanza!” was an unending demand for adaptation as our rehearsals moved from one temporary location to another, including Wilma Fee’s back deck. L.A. Dem Team dancers are indeed troupers, as they accommodated all the changes and challenges with aplomb and put on a memorable performance.

“Semblanza!” was Evan Avery’s last demonstration before going on hiatus from the team. While we miss having him on the team, we can still see him at monthly dances.

Roberta Gotfried continues to split rehearsals between Cheviot Hills and Santa Barbara as we prepare for the Queen Mary Festival in February and the Irish Fair in Pomona in March.

Between Roberta’s visits, Ilse Gilbert is putting the northern team members through their paces, with members of the Santa Barbara class filling in the set. Anthea MacDonald has been leading Cheviot Hills rehearsals when Roberta is on the road.

By the time you read this, many of you will already have seen the fruits of our labors in the Royal Salon on the Queen Mary.

Alice Allen



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