

the Ghillie Callum

Volume 56 Number 3

March 2025

BURNS SUPPER & BALL



Ready to bring in the haggis at the Torrance Woman's Club are, from left, piper Martin Johnson, David Waller, Kirstin McLatchie, David Morgan and Christopher Bradley. Photo by Connie Learn. Additional photos inside.

Balloons, cake with candles, music and dancing — what a birthday celebration! On Jan. 25, 2025, the 266th birthday of Robert Burns, our favorite Scottish poet was honored in great style by the Los Angeles, Orange County and San Gabriel Valley branches.

At the lovely Torrance Woman's Club, we toasted, ate and drank, and we danced to the fabulous music of Andy Imbrie and Caroline McCaskey.

In Ann McBride's "Immortal Memory of Robert Burns," we learned that President Abraham Lincoln had been a fan of Burns — who knew? The Selkirk Grace

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GREETINGS FROM THE CHAIR

Hello Dancers, in this first issue for the 2025 year of the Ghillie Callum, I am still reeling from the fabulous Robert Burns supper. The music and company were just fabulous. Thank you to all who participated in preparing for this event.

Now, we are on to the New Year's duties. The teachers are beginning to work on the dance choices for the upcoming program. We have several members who are training to become teachers through CTI, a new program of the society.

Thank you, Roberta Gotfried, Ann McBride and Marjorie McLaughlin for your mentoring.

This is also the time to start thinking about the summer events:

— TAC Summer School will be held in Sherbrooke, Quebec, the beginning weeks of August. For details, go to tac-rscds.org.

— Summer School at St. Andrews has several weeks to choose from, mid-July through mid-August. For details, go to RSCDS.org/events/summer-school-2025.

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CATALINA 2026 UPDATE

Exciting news! Plans for the Catalina Island Workshop & Ball to be held May 1-3, 2026, are now firmly underway.

The teachers will be Gary Coull of Aberdeenshire, Scotland (current chair of RSCDS) and Jeanne Moody of San Diego, CA.

Music will be provided by the Thistle House band; musicians are Dave Wiesler, David Courrett-Knight and Dan Emery.

It is not too early to reserve your spot with a \$100 deposit. For registration forms and information, go to www.rscds-interbranch.org.

Doris Fisher

CALENDAR

LOS ANGELES BRANCH

MARCH

22 BEGINNER DANCE. Torrance Cultural Arts Center, Torrance Blvd. at Madrona Ave., Torrance. 7 p.m. Music: recorded.

APRIL

27 SUNDAY AFTERNOON DANCE. El Segundo Woman's Club, 541 Standard St., El Segundo. 2 p.m. Music: recorded.

JUNE

28 POTLUCK, AGM AND DANCE. First Christian Church, 4390 Colfax Ave., Studio City. Potluck supper 5 p.m., meeting 6 p.m., dance 7 p.m. Music: recorded.

OTHER BRANCHES

MARCH

8 OC AFTERNOON DANCE. Tustin Area Senior Center, 200 S. C St., Tustin. 4 p.m. Music: SO-CAledonians.

15 SGV BEGINNER TEA DANCE. Church of Our Saviour, 535 W. Roses Road, San Gabriel. 4 p.m.

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We missed the Winter School, which was in February. The ball is held in Blair Castle — how cool is that?

I look forward to a wonderful year.

Kris McGinnis

OBITUARY



Phyllis Larsen and her longtime partner Randy Scherer.

The Los Angeles Branch lost one of its most stalwart supporters on Dec. 13, 2024.

Phyllis Larsen passed away from renal failure at age 76. She had lived in Long Island, NY, for the last decade near her brother.

Phyllis danced with the Dem Team in the 1990s and was always the go-to person for fun things to do. She always knew which way to go.

Condolences may be sent to her brother, Donald J. Larsen at djlarsen18@verizon.net.

Maggie Manchester

Burns continued from page 1

was recited by Norm McCallum.

The Toast to the Lassies was given by Ray McEdward, with an extra, heartfelt additional toast to “someone who can’t be here tonight,” Aase Hansen. The Reply to the Laddies was by Jodi McEdward.

Jim Bell recited the “Address to the Haggis,” the annual delicacy that was prepared by Jon Reeves. Kirstin McLatchie as Poosie Nancy, carried in the haggis, accompanied by Henchmen Christopher Bradley, David Morgan and David Waller and piped in by Martin Johnson.

To begin the dancing, the grand marshals were John Allen and Elizabeth Seward. Dances were briefed by Anthea Macdonald, Doug Macdonald, Kris McGinnis, Connie Walker and Pat Zschoche.

In spite of the start of much-needed rain, the partying continued around the corner at the home of Mike and Kris McGinnis.

Audrey Ramsay Prest

MARCH 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	I J	Book 52
The Land of Enchantment	A S	L.A. 50th Anniversary
The Rambling Pitchfork	B R	All Kinds of Everything
Fair Enough	B J	Book 51
Smiling Lila	I R	Donald J. Bartlett online
Largo Law	B S	MMM1
Niles Roberts' Farewell...	A J	Book 53
The Dancing Bees	B R	24 Graded & Social Dances
Gloria's Wee Jig	B J	The Devil's Quandary
Sueno's Stone	I R	Magazine Dances 2005-2009
Gramachie	B S	MMM I
The Roselath Cross	I J	Book 41
Porchester Hall	I S	London Jubilee
The Ambassadors' Reel	B R	Vienna Book of SCDs



AGM DANCE

Saturday, June 28, 2025
First Christian Church
4390 Colfax Ave., Studio City

Granville Market	B J	A 2nd Book of Graded SCDs
Whigmaleeries	I R	Imperial Book of SCDs, Vol. 2
Arniston Glen	B S	Lothian Collection
The Rover's Rant	I J	22 Social Dances by Goldring
Neidpath Castle	I S	Book 22
Mrs. Stewart of Fasnacloich	A R	Leaflet Dances with Music
The Scallywag	I J	Book 52
Flowers of Edinburgh	B R	Book 1
The 30th Anniversary Ball	A S	L.A. 50th Anniversary
City Lights	I J	Book 52
Lady Dumfries	B R	MMM I
Burns Night	B J	Boston 50th Anniversary
The Poppy and the Thistle	I S	L.A. 50th Anniversary
Elspeth Gray's Reel	A R	Book 53
Gramachie	B S	MMM I
Toast to the Mousies	I R	Book 53

APRIL AFTERNOON DANCE

Sunday, April 27, 2025
El Segundo Woman's Club
541 Standard St., El Segundo

Come Under My Plaidie	B J	SCDs for Children
Bea's Delight	I R	Book 43
Neidpath Castle	I S	Book 22
City Lights	I J	Book 52
Redwood Arbor	B S	Dragonfly
Arthur's Seat	I R	SCDs of the 18th Century
Burns Night	B J	Boston 50th Anniversary
Elspeth Gray's Reel	A R	Book 53
Mistress Mary	I S	L.A. 50th Anniversary
Farewell to Balfour Road	I J	Book 52
Flowers of Edinburgh	B R	Book 1
The Rover's Rant	I J	22 Social Dances by Goldring
Whigmaleeries	I R	Imperial Book, Vol. 2
The 30th Anniversary Ball	A S	L.A. 50th Anniversary
Joie de Vivre	B J	Book 39
Porchester Hall	I S	London Jubilee Book (2019)
Hedwig's Reel	B R	A 2nd Book of Graded SCDs

VIDEOS — WHO NEEDS THEM?

We all watch dance videos, but can we depend on them to always show an accurate picture of the dance? Not necessarily.

When we first introduced Smiling Lila, the teachers discovered that none of the videos was correct according to devisor's notes. Fortunately, there is now a correct video online, filmed by Bill Hartung at the St. Andrew's Ball. I have found that the society's videos generally are correct; however, they only film RSCDS-published dances.

A second concern is that demonstration teams have greater leeway to change a dance. Or, they might end a dance differently to transition to the next dance. Be cautious when viewing a demonstration team video.

Finally, a video is not a vehicle to learn a dance. Many of us learn best by physically moving in class. The teacher can offer "tips" you will not get in a video. Plus, you can practice technique, which you will not get in a video.

Robb Quint posts videos of upcoming dances in the area. Use them – as a review of a dance you have already learned.

Rosemary Abend

CLASSES



Santa Barbara Thursday

The Santa Barbara class has continued to have strong attendance in support of their new instructor, Rachel McDonald, far right, who is currently taking CTI training, along with Mary Nisbet, under the knowledgeable and experienced eye of Marjorie McLaughlin of the San Diego Branch. Rachel is focused on leading a social class that is accessible to all ability levels.

Santa Barbara Tuesday

This new class has been meeting as an informal group for more than two years with the objective of preparing its members to attend branch events.

At the beginning of 2025 we were delighted to be recognized as an official Los Angeles Branch class and want to thank Kris and Mike McGinnis and Rosemary Abend for their help in making this happen.

The class spent January preparing for the Burns Ball with particular focus on the more advanced dances.

Mary Nisbet



Representing the Santa Barbara classes at the Burns Supper & Ball are, from left, Roger and Mary Nisbet, Rachel McDonald and Sarah Stelck.

Valley College

Our class was well represented at the Burns Supper & Ball — at least 17 of us attended and (of course) had a wonderful time.

Elizabeth Seward and John Allen had the honor of serving as grand marshals.

Ann McBride gave a very interesting Immortal Memory of Robert Burns (hint: Abraham Lincoln was a fan of Burns).

Jon Reeves prepared the haggis, and Audrey Prest printed the fliers and cue books.

Tove Olafsen and Audrey organized the

two silent-auction baskets contributed by the class, which just happened to be won by class members Callan Edwards and Noa Weisberg.

Margaret Burnett donated a beautiful painting for the silent auction as well.

In other news ... Jeff Altman and Dawn Bertani have been taking turns to practice-teach one dance each week as part of their Core Training for Instructors course (CTI) to become SCD teachers.

Sadly, Carmen Silva-Corvalán and her husband Scott Dahlberg lost their house in the Palisades fire. Other class members experienced evacuations but were fine.

Julie Marleib very kindly placed many phone calls to check on class members during the crisis.

Laura Young Farooqi returned to dancing in January, showing photos of her cute new baby Darren. Jim Bell was in Texas for a while but returned in time for Burns.

Dawn Bertani (with husband Nick and their boys) and her mother Elizabeth Seward traveled to Texas to spend Thanksgiving with Dawn's sister and her family.

Callan Edwards passed the exam to become a licensed clinical social worker.

Lindsey Courtney used her school's winter break to travel to New Orleans and other fun places in that area.

Ann McBride spent Christmas with her niece and nephew in Idaho — but hurried back in time for Hogmanay dancing here.

Claudia Pedersen went to Carson City, Nevada, for the holidays with her daughter and her family.

Lisbeth Hencke is staying with her mother Aase Hansen on a long-term basis.

Audrey Ramsay Prest

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.

Torrance

The Torrance beginner class continues, but it is not Zoomed. The intermediate/advanced class continues to meet in "hybrid form" with live dancing and Zoom.

We had a lovely holiday party at the beautiful Rolling Hills home of Lisa Hancock in December. Lisa's daughter Sophie joined us for Hogmanay, as did Kelly's daughter Abigail and Gabriel's mother Margaret. Debby and George visited Thailand and Vietnam. Ruth's daughter Sarah visited from Germany with her newborn twins Alma and Stella.

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, CA 90501 or via Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8248957840> (meeting ID, if needed: 824 895 7840). To be added to the email list, contact Kris at krismcginnis@gmail.com.

Tony McQuilkin

**Deadline for the June issue
of the Ghillie Callum is May 1.**



**RSCDS, Los Angeles Branch Inc.
P.O. Box 90871, Los Angeles, CA 90009
chair@rscds-losangeles.org**

Branch chair: Kris McGinnis
Phone: 310-963-8829
Email: krismcginnis@gmail.com

Membership chair: Melinda Brown
Address: 22190 Sierra Dr.
Exeter, CA 93221
Cell phone: 805-368-7057
Email: mjtb1002@hotmail.com

Ghillie Callum Editor: Audrey Ramsay Prest
Home phone: 818-708-8125
Email: aramsapp@sbcglobal.net