

the Ghillie CALLUM

Volume 58 Number 1

September 2026



The 2026-2027 Committee of Management was elected at the June 2026 AGM. From left, they are Robb Quint, corresponding secretary; Roberta Gotfried, teachers rep and Dem Team director; Kris McGinnis, chair; Audrey Prest, recording secretary; Jon Reeves, MAL; Callan Edwards, MAL; Christopher Bradley, vice chair; Kaisa Schmitt, MAL; Doris Fisher, treasurer. Not pictured: Sarah Fox, MAL.

Photo by Claudia Pedersen

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Greetings everyone,

I hope you have enjoyed the toasty summer. We are about to kick off another fun year of dancing with the Interbranch Dance just around the corner on Sept. 26.

It will again be held at the Tustin Area Senior Center, with music by the SO-CAledonians.

Plans are underway for the Jack Rennie memorial dance when we will celebrate our branch's 60th year! It will be quite an event. It will be held Saturday, Nov. 28, starting at 4:30 p.m. at a new venue called The Sanctuary.

This unique site is in Long Beach and is perfect for our celebration. Music will be by Susie Petrov, accordion; KeyReel Raskolenko, fiddle; and Andy Imbrie, keyboard.

It would be lovely if the ladies would wear tartan sashes with their gowns and the men come in their finest kilts.

I'm collecting photos for a display of branch history. If you have some to share, please send them to me via email. Group shots with members old and new would be wonderful. Ahhh, the memories we all have stored on our phones.

This year we also will hold our Halloween and Hogmanay dances. (See the calendar on page 2.)

Looking forward to seeing you on the dance floor,

Kris McGinnis

YEAR-END FINANCIAL REPORT

The Los Angeles Branch has a fiscal year that goes from July 1 to June 30.

As of June 30, 2026, the branch had \$32,834 in cash/checking and \$13,698 in pre-paid expenses.

We also had received \$3,449 in dues prepaid for the next fiscal year. Of our cash/checking, \$6,768 is in designated funds.

Our excess of income over expenses in the last fiscal year was \$22,694. This was primarily due to receiving unexpected, generous donations from individuals totaling \$22,500.

The detailed financial reports are now available on our website.

Doris Fisher, treasurer

BEHIND THE SCENES

Many branch members have assisted me since I took over printing this newsletter, fliers and other things from Frank Ibbott in 2012, and it's time to acknowledge them!

Readers see some of their names in photo credits and on the articles they submit for the Ghillie Callum, but others contribute their time and talents behind the scenes.

Many thanks to:

Tony McQuilkin: setting up the Mobile Crib numbers

Robb Quint: proofing fliers and dance programs and finding those great photos for the fliers, as well as co-editing the annual cue book with me

Jon Reeves: proofing and emailing the Ghillie Callum, maintaining the branch membership database for sign-in sheets, Ghillie Callum mailing envelopes and the directory

Terry Schaeffer: proofing, folding/stapling and mailing the Ghillie Callum

Teachers Committee and its chairs Rosemary Abend, Roberta Gotfried and Deanna

St. Amand: choosing the annual program, getting the programs devised by teachers for each dance (and many other tasks!)

Audrey Ramsay Prest, editor

CALENDAR LOS ANGELES BRANCH

SEPTEMBER

26 INTERBRANCH DANCE. Tustin Area Senior Center, 200 S. C St., Tustin. Doors open 6 p.m.; miscellany sale 6:30; dancing 7:30. Music: SO-CALedonians.

OCTOBER

24 HALLOWEEN DANCE. First Christian Church, 4390 Colfax Ave., Studio City. 7:30 p.m. Music: recorded. Awards for costumes that best represent the names of Scottish country dances.

NOVEMBER

28 JACK RENNIE MEMORIAL AND LOS ANGELES BRANCH 60TH ANNIVERSARY BALL. The Sanctuary by Wedgewood, 600 E. 5th St., Long Beach. Reception with appetizers and drinks 4:30 p.m.; opening remarks 5:15 p.m.; buffet dinner 5:30 p.m.; grand march 6:30 p.m. Music: Susie Petrov, KeyReel Raskolenko, Andy Imbrie

DECEMBER

31 HOGMANAY PARTY. El Segundo Woman's Club, 541 Standard St. 5 p.m. Music: recorded.

JANUARY

23 BURNS SUPPER & BALL. Torrance Woman's Club, 1422 Engracia Ave. 4:30 p.m. Music: Patti Cobb and Audrey Jaber.

OTHER BRANCHES

SEPTEMBER

12 OC BRANCH DANCE. Tustin Area Senior Center, 200 S. C St., Tustin. 7 p.m. Music: recorded.

OCTOBER

18 SGV FALL DANCE. South Pasadena War Memorial, 435 Fair Oaks Ave., 4 p.m. Music: recorded.

NOVEMBER

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

DECEMBER

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

INTERBRANCH DANCE

Saturday, Sept. 26, 2026
Tustin Area Senior Center
200 S. C St., Tustin

Mrs. Stewart's Jig	B J	Book 35
Invercauld's Reel	I S	Book 11
Toast to the Mousies	I R	Book 53
Roaring Jelly	I J	Glendarroch S. D. Sheets
The Dundee Whaler	B S	Ormskirk Scottish Dances, Vol. 1
Pinewoods Reel	A R	Book 53
City Lights	I J	Book 52
Something in the Air	A S	Book 53
Dancing Forth	I R	Book 54
The White Heather Jig	I J	Thirty Popular Dances, Vol. 2
The Falkirk Lass	B S	Book 53
The Black Leather Jig	I R	Delaware Valley Silver
Light and Airy	B J	Book 4
Linnea's Strathspey	A S	Book 47
The Sailor	B R	Book 24
The Wind on Loch Fyne	I S	Thirty Popular Dances, Vol. 2
The Ambassadors' Reel	B R	Vienna Book of SCDs

HALLOWEEN DANCE

Saturday, October 24, 2026
First Christian Church
4390 Colfax Ave., Studio City

City Lights	I J	Book 52
The Mathematicians	NEW AR	Tweeddale Coll., Vols. 2 & 4
Sugar Candie	I S	Book 26
A Touch of Tartan	NEW B R	The Dancing Thistles
Light and Airy	B J	Book 4
Scott Meikle	I R	Book 46
City of Belfast	NEW I S	Book 48
The White Heather Jig	I J	Thirty Popular Dances, Vol. 2
The Reel of the Royal Scots	B R	The Leaflet Dances with Music
Gloria's Wee Jig	B J	The Devil's Quandary
Elsbeth Gray's Reel	A R	Book 53
Ardnahoe	B S	SCDDDB Online
The Rover's Rant	I J	12 Social Dances by Goldring
Da Rain Dancin'	I R	Thirty Popular Dances, Vol. 2

SNIFF — ACHOO!

A gentle reminder: We should refrain from wearing fragrances in class and at dances.

JACK RENNIE MEMORIAL AND LOS ANGELES BRANCH 60TH ANNIVERSARY BALL

Saturday, November 28, 2026
The Sanctuary by Wedgewood
600 E. 5th St., Long Beach

St. Andrew's Fair	B J	Five SCDs 1982
Rennie's Rant	I S	L.A. 50th Anniversary
Bratach Bana	I R	Thirty Popular Dances, Vol. 2
The Bees of Maggie Knockater	I J	Thirty Popular Dances, Vol. 2
Asilomar Romantic	I S	Thirty Popular Dances, Vol. 2
Founders' Reel	I R	Dances with a Difference
Gloria's Wee Jig	B J	The Devil's Quandary
City of Belfast	I S	Book 48
The Mathematicians	A R	Tweeddale Coll., Vols. 2 & 4
Gang the Same Gate	I S	Book 36
A Touch of Tartan	B R	The Dancing Thistles
Major Ian Stewart	I J	Book 35
Elsbeth Gray's Reel	A R	Book 53
The Poppy and the Thistle	I S	L.A. 50th Anniversary
City Lights	I J	Book 52
The Deil amang the Tailors	B R	Book 14

HISTORY OF THE L.A. BRANCH

Reminiscing about the Los Angeles Branch with Rosemary Abend, Ann McBride and Deanna St. Amand

While many members of the branch have logged quite a few years of membership, these three have a combined total of 134 years! Ann joined in 1973, Rosemary in 1984 and Deanna in 1987.



Q: How big was the branch?

RA: In the mid-1970s Los Angeles was the largest branch in the U.S. with more than 350 members. At that time, it was the only branch in Southern California and extended all the way south to San Diego.

Q: What did things cost in the 1960s and '70s?

RA: The cost of a branch class in 1966: \$.75
Membership in 1969: \$2
The Burns Supper in 1970: \$6

Q: How did the dance program differ from today's?

AM and RA: The year's program in the 1970s and '80s had 40-46 dances, mostly RSCDS dances

Q: How different were the dance events?

Continued on page 4

RA: The dances started at 8:30 p.m. and had 26 dances, with a few extras if there was time. There were no briefings or walk-throughs.

AM: Some dances on the program would have an asterisk, which meant “ladies’ choice,” so women could ask a partner; for the other dances you sat and waited to be asked.

RA: Beginners were told by their teachers which dances they were “allowed” to do. Beginners usually danced with others from class, often at the foot of the hall because the more experienced dancers were at the top.

DSA: Back then, you were not allowed to attend a formal dance until you’d danced a year.

AM: They were a lot more stringent — proper steps were expected.

DSA: The quality of dancing may be less, but the inclusivity of the group has expanded.

RA: L.A. had a reputation for being unfriendly to visitors; we’re doing better now.

AM: The monthly dances each had a cue book, and it even had a special place in the book to “pre-book” your partners.

Q: What about the music at dances?

DSA: We used to have Jack Rennie’s band at all the dances, either the Heathertones or the Thistle Band.

RA: Jack said that he and Pete Kier played at the first L.A. Branch AGM, and they only knew a few tunes so they played them all evening.

Q: Where were the dances held?

AM: Miles Playhouse, St. Monica’s High School, Westchester Senior Center, the War Memorial in South Pasadena.

Q: What was a dollar-dish dance?

DSA: If you brought a dish for the refreshment table, you got a dollar discount off the price of the dance.

Q: What did you wear to dances?

DSA: For formal dances, I was told to wear a long white dress with a tartan sash.

Q: How were classes different then?

RA: It was more rigid then. You didn’t just go to an intermediate class.

AM: You had to be a beginner for two years, then had to be recommended to move up to a more advanced class.

AM: Classes were every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. When there were no classes in the summer, the branch had a dance every Saturday night.



Talking together about L.A. Branch history this summer, from left: Ann McBride, Rosemary Abend and Deanna St. Amand.

RA: All the classes had banners, which were displayed at formal balls.

AM: Women always wore skirts to class, never pants or shorts.

AM: Every class spent time on steps.

DSA: They only taught L.A. program dances.

Q: How has the music for class changed?

AM: Teachers had boxes of LP records, then cassettes, then CDs, and you had to take the player to class as well. Now the music is on phones with tiny, light-weight speakers. Teachers needed help carrying all the equipment in and out of class. At one outdoor demonstration the wind blew the arm off record. The branch owned and maintained the music.

DSA: Dancers had to stay way back from the table where the record player was located because the vibration caused by the dancers hopping or dancing a pas-de-basque could cause the record player to skip.

DSA: Each year when the new program was selected, the Branch purchased a copy of each record containing the selected music for each teacher plus a copy for the branch archives. These archival copies were meant to be maintained in pristine condition. When Audrey and I cleaned out Frank Ibbott’s office after his death I counted 450 records.

AM: Once a year the teachers would go out to the Ibbotts’ house to clean records and repair the sleeves.

Q: Who were your first teachers?

RM: Jack Rennie

AM: I'd started in New Zealand, then here I had Ella Thomson, then Margaret Morrison.

DSA: My first teacher, Robert Burger, only taught one class, then Margaret Morrison took over, followed closely by Ann McBride and Jo Ibbott, all within the first four months of my starting.

Q: How many teachers has the branch had?

RA: I counted 63 teachers over the years.

Q: Did the branch have children's classes?

RA: At one time we had three children's classes, divided by age.

Q: Were there workshops in the early years?

DSA: The Santa Barbara workshops were on Memorial Day weekend, from gathering on Friday night to a picnic on Monday.

AM: Before Santa Barbara, we had workshops in the mountains and at Santa Maria.

RA: The workshops always had teachers from Scotland.

DSA: These were magical weekends.

AM: You'd come back all invigorated from the atmosphere of it.

RA: The Santa Maria workshop cost \$21 for classes and accommodations.

Q: What about our connection with the So-

ciety?

RA: We had a closer connection with Scotland, with teachers coming here for workshops and candidate exams. We had a candidate class every other year. Even Miss Milligan visited.

Q: Besides the dances, where else have we had performances/activities?

DSA: We've had adjudications of dancing at the Seaside Games and on the Queen Mary.

AM: I remember the joy of dancing in the historic rooms of the ship.

DSA: We've done lots of demonstrations. The Costa Mesa Games were huge. We'd have 50+ dancers from the L.A. Branch, as well as others.

Q: Were there any non-dance activities?

RA: We had a picnic every summer at Polliwog Park in Manhattan Beach.

DSA: Several times a group went to the Glendale Centre Theater and the Hollywood Bowl. And Team danced in the movie "So I Married an Axe Murderer" and in the Opening Ceremonies of the 1984 Olympics.

All three: It's been a lot of wonderful experiences, wonderful memories, wonderful education.

Audrey Ramsay Prest

JON OF THE MANY HATS

When we sit down to our tri-branch Burns Ball celebration dinner, an integral part of the menu is, of course, the haggis. We are so fortunate that our resident "haggis chef," Jon Reeves, has enhanced our celebration of the Bard every year.

But Jon wears many more hats. He has served on the Branch Committee for many years. He is the keeper of the branch CD equipment, which he "lugs" to our informal dances, sets up, takes down, and then "lugs" home again.

He has been a mainstay of the Valley College class, providing support to Aase Hansen during her tenure and to me when I taught the class for several months before Dawn Bertani became the permanent teacher.

As if all this were not enough, Jon has been a driving force (in more ways than one) behind the City of Burbank's float for the annual Rose Parade. His responsibilities cover every-

thing from constructing the frame to taking the float on trial runs. Then, in the wee hours before the Rose Parade begins, Jon and his support crew maneuver the float from its home in Burbank to Orange Grove Boulevard in Pasadena. And then he rides inside the float to run the engine that powers the movement of the characters.

So "hat's off to Jon of the many hats"!

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.

DANCING IN EUROPE, 2026

Travelling to other countries in June reminded us how many good people there are in the Scottish country dance community! Before and after a lovely week with his family, John Allen and I danced in Budapest and in Germany.

In SCD groups around the world, we can connect and communicate with each other, overcoming language, cultural and national boundaries. This was nowhere more obvious than dancing with the Budapest group.

We danced once with the so-called beginners group

— dances included every formation I could list, and more! We also danced with the intermediate group, and I had to ask them how they achieved such excellence. Just look at their Facebook page! (I did learn a little Hungarian, including bol = left, and cupola = teapots).

We attended a summer dance near Regensburg — and our thanks to so many friends here who helped us prepare about 20 relatively complex, unfamiliar and wonderful dances. We



Joining dancers in Budapest in June, L.A. is represented by Elizabeth Seward, second from left, and John Allen, far right.

also danced with the Freiburg group in the Black Forest, where I had my first taste of SCD before taking a break of many, many years. All extended a warm and enthusiastic welcome. It was a real delight to dance with them all.

By the way, there is an international weekend in Budapest (a beautiful city!) Oct. 1-3, 2027.

Elizabeth Seward

SCD MAGAZINE

The print version of the Scottish Country Dancer magazine will no longer be mailed free to members. There will continue to be no charge to receive the magazine via e-mail.

Starting with the next issue in the fall, those who wish to receive the RSCDS magazine as a print version by mail will need to pay for it by ordering it from RSCDS-HQ, or be automatically converted to the e-mail version.

Here are the salient points of what we know so far (which is not yet everything).

1. If you are currently receiving the magazine via e-mail, nothing changes.
2. The cost of the next two issues if mailed, fall 2026 and spring 2027, will be £3 (around \$4) for both issues combined.
3. If you do not pay the subscription fee you

will automatically be converted to e-mail and do not need to notify the Los Angeles Branch or RSCDS-HQ.

4. For anyone wishing to pay the new fee and continue receiving print versions of the magazine by mail, the step-by-step process (including payment with non-pound foreign currencies like our dollar) is not yet available.

5. If you plan to pay the fee to continue receiving the print version by mail, please send an e-mail to me at volleyballjerry@aol.com and I will put you on a list to be personally sent the ordering instructions when we have them.

To repeat, if you wish to be converted to e-mail and not pay, you need to do nothing at all.

*Robb Quint,
branch corresponding secretary*

CLASSES



Dem Team

In June the Los Angeles Branch Demonstration Team did its annual performance at the British Home in Sierra Madre. Dancers are, from left, Bill Hartung, Connie Walker, Sarah Fox, Dawn Bertani, Mike and Kris McGinnis.

Torrance

During July, Tony performed in the chorus of "Shrek the Musical" with the Aerospace Players at the James Armstrong Theatre in Torrance. It ran for two weekends, and the second weekend crowds kept getting larger!

Kelly Wolschon visited Michigan. In July, Lisa Hancock and her daughter Sophie Rehrig visited family in Pennsylvania and danced with the Delaware Valley Branch. They received a friendly welcome and enjoyed dancing some well-known dances as well as some new to them.

On Aug. 29, Marisa McGinnis, daughter of Kris and Mike is getting married. Congratulations, Marisa!

Valley College

Summer hiatus may be coming to an end and classes will be starting up soon, so what have the members of our Monday LAVC class been up to?

First off: HUGE CONGRATULATIONS to Sarah Fox for passing her Units 2 & 3 exams at St. Andrew's Summer School! This is no easy feat. We look forward to many upcoming opportunities for her to share her experience, joy and the liveliness that she brings to dancing and the community. Well done!

Congratulations also to Noa Weisberg who was accepted into UC Davis and will be starting there this fall. We wish you well on life's upcoming adventures!

Sarah Fox, Dawn Bertani and Callan Ed-

Carmen Silva-Corvalán and Scott Dahlberg are very happy to have their first great-grandson from their eldest grandson Nicolas and his wife Emilie, born May 8. They will be going to the wedding of Nicolas' brother in September.

Doris and Eric Fisher flew to Chicago and came home on Amtrak's California Zephyr and Coast Starlight trains in first-class sleeping cars. They especially enjoyed the Rocky Mountains scenery, meeting other people in the dining car, and seeing the beautiful and historic stations in Chicago, Denver and Los Angeles.

Tony McQuilkin

wards couldn't survive the summer without lots of dancing to the magic of live music. All three made the trek to St. Andrew's, Scotland, for the annual St. Andrew's Summer School. Sarah went for two weeks as a Unit 2 & 3 candidate; Dawn joined her for Week 1 just for fun this year; and Callan attended youth week for her second year in a row! It was an inspiring treat for all three to participate in classes and dance with the international community that convenes there. Dancing with an extended community brings varied experiences and perspectives to our dance and to our home community. If you have the opportunity to participate in such an event, please do so!

Elizabeth Seward and Captain John Allen took a European river cruise and danced

with communities along the way. Tove Olafsen went home to Norway to spend the summer with family; and Jim Bell made a return visit to his hometown of Troon, Scotland, as well.

Lindsey Courtney had a brief visit in London before exploring the quiet lakeside towns of Lake Maggiore in Northern Italy. Jon Reeves took his amazing costume skills to San Diego Comic-Con, showing off a new costume for each day. And Margaret Burnett and Jeff Altman went on an adventure to Iceland, Norway and the Lofoten Islands.

Those who stayed local had opportunities to participate in the Summer Series put on by the San Gabriel Valley Branch as well — with a special class dedicated to Deanna St. Amand's recently published book *For Friends and Family*.

Sarah also joined Callan and Jon this summer as members at large on the board of the Los Angeles Branch. Happy dancing!

Dawn Bertani and Sarah Fox

Youth class

A new class for young dancers ages 7-18 begins Sept. 14. It will be on Mondays from 5 to 6:15 p.m. in the Community Services Building Room 102 at Los Angeles Valley College. The class is for beginners through more experienced dancers, focusing on skill development and building confidence in a social setting.

Dawn Bertani

MEMBERSHIP

Welcome back to the branch Madeleine Rackley.

Melinda Brown, membership secretary

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

If your address label on the envelope for this Ghillie Callum has a ★ or if you receive your Ghillie Callum by email and an application form is included, you need to renew your membership in the Branch. Please contact the membership chair: Melinda Brown, 22190 Sierra Drive, Exeter, CA 93221; mjtb1002@hotmail.com

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.



RSCDS, Los Angeles Branch Inc.

2021 W. 177th St., Torrance, CA 90504-4305

chair@rscds-losangeles.org

Branch chair:

Kris McGinnis

Phone:

310-963-8829

Email:

krismcginnis@gmail.com

Membership chair:

Melinda Brown

Address:

22190 Sierra Drive

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

**Deadline for the December issue
of the Ghillie Callum is Nov. 1.**