

*Royal Scottish Country Dance Society ~ Los Angeles Branch
2022 Joint Secretaries' Report ~ The Year in Review
(and 2022 Report to RSCDS Headquarters)
Robb Quint & Audrey Prest*

The past dance year 2021-2022 has emerged much more favorable than the previous one, and even though last year's joint secretaries' report was hopeful and even optimistic, this year's will read quite a bit better, since the light at the end of the COVID tunnel, just barely in sight a year ago, has now been largely reached.

We are back again gathering this year for a live Annual General Meeting preceded by a potluck and followed by a dance. Last year we were not able to do that; Zoom was still "king." At the time of last year's A.G.M. there hadn't been any live post-COVID dance anywhere in Southern California. That did not occur until Orange County's July Monthly Dance, when the entire ordeal seemed to be over...and then came the Delta variant! Despite that, the Los Angeles Branch was still able to hold a "masked" Halloween Dance and a "masked" Saint Andrew's Ball without the full buffet supper of the past but with very nicely created COVID-appropriate snacks and desserts nonetheless and with the usual live music as well. Then came Omicron's surge, and what had been planned to be a live Hogmanay had to be canceled at the last minute and turned into a wholly Zoom affair. Omicron also caused the postponement of the joint Los Angeles-Orange County Burns Supper and Ball, but it was ultimately held in mid-February, still "masked" but with live music and in person. Because our February dance would have been merely one week after Burns and it thus would have been difficult to prepare dancers for two events a week apart, our February monthly dance was canceled. In March the first Torrance monthly dance since the shutdown was held, and in April the live-music dance which would have been held in April of 2020 in Thousand Oaks was held with its same archived dance program in Studio City, our first masks-optional dance since February of 2020. As the dance year continued to become increasingly normalized, a tri-branch Games Dance was held just last month.

The class situation has been a mixture of fortunate and unfortunate. Following a long suspension of all live classes, some classes have returned. The first to do so was Torrance, which shifted from Zoom only to a clever hybrid of live and Zoom and taking good advantage of the availability of several of the branch's teachers. Van Nuys has returned to normal operation, and so has Santa Barbara. A small biweekly class in Lancaster has also returned, and the Dem. Team's class is also meeting again. Not returning...and not altogether owing to COVID but rather because of a whole panoply of negative factors (and in some cases even closed down before the COVID shutdown)...have been Beverly Hills, Redondo Beach, Tarzana (as a weekly class but replaced with a first-Sunday-afternoon monthly class), Thousand Oaks, and Ventura.

All in all '21-'22 was far better for us than '20-'21, and we look forward to '22-'23.