

Scottish Country Dances

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Dance Diary— Dancing News

Dances Recently Cancelled

Ericht Club <http://www.erichtdance.co.uk/whats-on/> has postponed its August and September dances although the October 23rd/24th Weekend is still showing as going ahead.

Perth Branch's <http://www.rscds-perthandperthshire.com/sample-page/> 95th Anniversary Dance on 25th September is now postponed until sometime in 2021.

Inverness Branch website shows all dances in that area are cancelled until the end of October 2020.

In Chicago, America, the New Year Ball is likely to be cancelled and the dancing community there don't anticipate resuming classes until 2021.

Dances Still Advertised

Stirling Branch <http://www.rscds-stirling.org/> has not yet cancelled its September 12th dance.

Allan & Lesley Ross have not yet cancelled their charity dance on 28th August.

RSCDS Forres still show a dance being held on 25th September 2020.

Glasgow Branch <https://www.rscdsglasgow.org/dances.asp> is still advertising its 11th September dance.

The Society's Board of Management has just announced that the Autumn Gathering 2020 is cancelled. There are plans for a remote AGM in November 2020 hosted from 12 Coates Crescent on 7th November 2020. If you booked early for the annual AGM weekend, check if you booked with the option of free cancellation. Online booking firms usually offer this either free of charge or by paying a few pounds on top of the room price. With hindsight we can see this is a wise move.

The chances of dancing resuming before the end of the year now depend on a stroke of as-yet-unidentified genius or a miracle. Even our local musicians admit they are not hopeful for the Perth Accordion and Fiddle Festival in October and they believe social dancing will take longer to resume. Dancing is a social activity involving close interaction and touch. Any measures which prevent such interaction would remove the fun and gaiety. Does anybody know if Line Dancing might be a suitable alternative? (!!)

RSCDS Mailings to Branches.

In the June Branch mailing the treasurer stated that the Society is incurring additional expense with its weekly podcasts and Zoom classes, also the *Dance Scottish at Home* venture. He asks branch treasurers to ask members to pay their subscriptions as in normal years as a deficit of £140,000 exists. This is contrary to the Chairman's statement that, "*Branches should be flexible and encourage payment when classes and dancing resume*"; which accords with government statements that where events etc are cancelled on account of the Coronavirus then full refunds of cash should be made.

Has the Society asked for a refund for the events they had to cancel, I wonder? The Society reported a loss of £46,000 in its accounts for 2019/20. Apparently further steps were put in train to cut central costs, and these will be reported on more fully following the next Board meeting. Is this £46,000 in addition to the £140,000?

On the topic of Branch fees, it is interesting to note the variation in charges amongst branches with the difference being as much as £11.00. One of the branches fairly local to me charges £19 in total (£18 to headquarters and a £1 for the branch) whilst another requires £30.

The Resumption of Dancing

Some classes in other parts of the world have been able to resume dancing; with conditions. In Northern Territory, Australia, there must be 4 square metres space for every person admitted to the hall and sets are to be 1.5 metres apart. In Hesse, Germany, dancing may be allowed to resume if people stay within the same set (maximum 10 people) all evening. (So much for socialising and meeting new people). But a final decision won't be made until nearer the end of August when people hear if dance *venues* (currently closed) will be able to re-open.

(continued overleaf)

DANCE DIARY

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- *Let me know details of your dances—if you don't tell me I can't include them in a future Newsletter or on the website.*
- *If you email them to me it means I don't have to type them out.*
- *If you don't have access to a computer then pop the programme into the post.*

You can download a copy of this and previous Newsletters in 'pdf' format from the Web Site.

Click on the "Country Dance" Page then the "Newsletters" page, where they are listed in descending order.

The web page has up-to-date information on these dances and programmes as they are notified.

The Resumption of Dancing (continued)

In Salzburg, Austria, dancing has resumed with social distancing in place for now and for the next few months. Formations which involve the giving of hands such as turn by the right, RHA etc. have to pretend that hands actually touch. Sets have also to be really wide. But with technique training, keeping 2 metre distance is not a problem say dance organisers.

The Lower Hutt club in Wellington, New Zealand, started with no restraints in mid-June. They keep a record of who attends in case someone attending gets the virus. Apparently at a recent class, for the first 15 minutes the teacher could not get anything done as members were all catching up with each other now they were out of lockdown!

The Society has issued a list of its considerations for Branches and Clubs thinking about resuming dancing. It is on the society website at https://www.rscds.org/sites/default/files/covid-19_considerations_for_branches_and_groups_1.pdf and makes very interesting reading. A pared-down version of these 'considerations' includes:

- Obese dancers to be told they must not attend dances or classes (Who is charged with this task?);
- Dancers over 70 years who have serious underlying conditions are to be advised similarly (How big will your class be?);
- Dancers should only use one chair (if you were ever a primary school teacher you'll be familiar with the staffroom remark, "That's my chair you're sitting on!");
- Dancers are to wear masks and latex gloves and not touch any other surfaces;
- Air conditioning should be switched off and no food or drink should be provided;
- Alternatives to cash should be offered as payment (How about a bag of potatoes perhaps or a brace of pheasants?)

Well, these considerations will doubtless reduce the number of dancers drastically!

Musicians

Recently we've heard of a number of deaths of musicians and this month's Box & Fiddle magazine has published articles in memory of the following:

Joe Gordon 1934 – 2020 Entertainer, Singer & Musician.

Robin & Eileen Davidson 2020 of the Selkirk Accordion & Fiddle Club.

Hamish Menzies 1934 – 2020 Band Leader.

Bobby Colgan 1937 – 2020 Musician.

Graham Ross 2020 Band Leader.

And yesterday we learned of the untimely death of musician, Alan Rintoul of the Lothian Band on 9th July 2020.

Alasdair

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