



Harbour City Happenings

RSCDS Wellington Region Newsletter

Vol 27 No 4 – December 2024

Editor: Désirée Patterson – editor@wellingtonscd.org.nz

President's Column

From Rod Downey, President



Since My Last Report:

Bereavements – Since my last report for HCH, we have lost Ian Taylforth. Ian and Edith Campbell, whose passing was mentioned in the last issue of HCH, were sterling members of the region who made many contributions to Scottish Country Dancing. I attended Edith's Memorial Service on St Andrew's Day, which showcased the amazingly broad range of contributions that she made to many spheres of activity.

Clubs – I attended the Capital City, Tawa and, of course, Johnsonville final nights. The ones I could not make also reported great attendance and spirit.

New Dancers' Celebration – Held in Knox Church, this was organised by the Upper and Lower Hutt Clubs, with music by *Strings Attached*. The MCs were Chris Totton, Andrea Wells, and Chris Kelly. Diane Bradshaw ran two preparation classes. Extremely successful event with around 19-20 sets attending. Fantastic to see so many new dancers attending and the general region support. Let's work to make this even bigger in 2025!!

Archival Project – There has been a lot of work on this excellent project, with lots of new archival material being found and donated to the region. Thanks to Damon Collin and to Lesley Campbell for their materials from the early years of dancing in Wellington. [Ed: This is well worth exploring, there is a wealth of the region's history on the website: <https://wellingtonscd.org.nz/celebrating-60/>]

Region AGM – At the AGM on 5 November we welcomed new committee members Lesley Campbell, Joy Tracey, Denise Pitt, and farewelled Aileen Logie and Bruce Chapman. Joy will be the new vice-president and Sarah Epps has replaced Debbie as treasurer. Thanks to those members who have generously agreed to continue. They are Elaine Lethbridge, Elaine Laidlaw, Janice Henson, Debbie Stephens, Lynne Scott, and Zoe Attwood. The

From the editor

In 2020, it was decided that Harbour City Happenings would be provided electronically, free of charge, to anyone who wanted it. Initially, it was sent to all existing email subscribers, as well as all RSCDS members in the Wellington Region. People who wanted a printed copy posted to them would continue with a yearly \$10 subscription.

At the recent Region AGM, it was agreed that from the next issue – March 2025 – Harbour City Happenings will be sent out by email only. With the increased cost of both printing and postage, the \$10 subscription for postal delivery of a hard copy is no longer sustainable. And since there are now only eight postal subscribers, all of whom also have an email address, the solution was simple: **email delivery only**.

Harbour City Happenings will continue to be posted on the [Wellington Region website](#), and will be distributed to Wellington Club secretaries, as well as Region secretaries, for further dissemination.

If you wish to have your personal copy emailed to you, please contact me editor@wellingtonscd.org.nz, and I will add your name to my subscribers list.

*Désirée Patterson
Editor, Harbour City Happenings*

AGM had quite low attendance, perhaps because we had no remits of importance to discuss, or perhaps because people are happy with Region activities. The committee might look to see if remote attendance is possible in the future.

Congratulations – Whilst not a Region item, our congratulations go to Debbie Roxburgh (who taught this year's advanced class) on her [NZ Public Service Award](#).

Upcoming: Lots of dates for your 2025 diaries

Summer School: Be There! – I have written lots about this, but if you can, try and go to some of the events if

you can't attend all of the school. There is something quite special about being at an event with so many people and visitors from overseas.

Planning for 2025 – Lots of stuff for the diary. Thanks to all the clubs for getting their 2025 dates in for the planning meeting of 3 December. We appreciate it, and we especially thank Elaine Lethbridge for again compiling the Region Calendar!

Costs for events in 2025 – All of the halls we use have significantly increased costs for 2025. Also, the committee voted at the September meeting to increase musicians' pay so it's slightly above the minimum wage which seems only fair (still only covering playing time). We try to have musicians where possible and appropriate at region classes and events, being part of our duty to SCD in the Region. Even the cost of catering has increased. Because of this we are forced to charge a wee bit more for Region Classes and some events for 2025. Scottish country dancing remains a remarkably inexpensive pastime.

Summer Dancing – The committee has agreed to have Summer Dancing in 2025 at the Old Government Building: 21, 28 January and 4 and 11 February. **Note the earlier time: 7:00-8:45pm** (as in 2024). Again, thanks to Chris Totton who has agreed to be the coordinator. The cost remains the same.

Club Beginners' Classes – The following clubs are offering beginners' classes in 2025: Capital City, Johnsonville, Linden, Lower Hutt, Ngaio and Waikanae. Great stuff!

A list of dates is on p. 10 of this issue, and details of venues and costs are on the [region website](#).

Another Early Dances Event: Books 6-10 Dance Day – 12 April, St Johns Church Hall – Following the success of the Early Wellington Dances Day in 2023, and our Books 1-5 Dance Day in 2024, the committee has decided to run a similar event on books 6-10 and this will be led by Elaine Laidlaw. We seldom dance from those books, so this will be a fun opportunity! Fantastic tunes in those early books, and fun – usually not too complicated – dances.

Special Region Event: Fugues Day – The committee have decided to try something new for the advanced dancers this year. We will have a day devoted to dancing **fugues**. This kind of class is very successful overseas. It will be nice to try this in Wellington. Dancing fugues are analogues of musical fugues where some figure is repeated as a theme, perhaps with variations. Examples you might know include [The Cranberry Tart](#), or perhaps [The One O'Clock Canon](#), the latter being a special kind of fugue called a *canon*. Fugues tend to be relatively complicated and are both a challenge to dance and a great reward when achieved. They are especially good for working on teamwork and phrasing. I will be tutor for this

event on 11 October, as my last hurrah as Region President.

Region Classes – In 2025, the region will be running the following classes:

Basics: *Melva Waite* – 6 & 20 May, 3 & 17 June, 1 July;
Intermediate: *Diane Bradshaw* – 13 & 27 May, 10 & 24 June; and **Advanced:** *Joy Tracey* – Two Saturday dates, somewhat separated because of hall availability: 12 July and 30 September.

Thanks to Lesley Campbell who has agreed to become the new coordinator for these classes.

New Dancers' Celebration 2025: 4 October, Knox Church Hall – Linden Club has kindly agreed to host the 2025 New Dancers' Celebration. There will be two preparation classes on 23 and 30 September.

Special Club Event – Another 70th – Whilst not a region event, but in the spirit of Lower Hutt and Capital City's celebrations this year, 2025 will be the 70th anniversary of the formation of Johnsonville as a church group, so it is planning a special Tartan Night on the Monday of King's Birthday Weekend, 2 June, 7:00 pm.

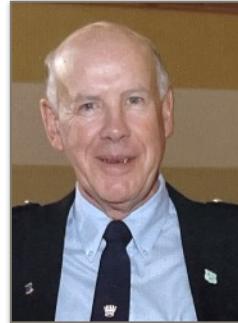
See you at Summer School and in 2025.

If you want to contact the committee (president@wellingtonscd.org.nz) (me) or the region secretary (Brenda Vale) (wellington@dancescottish.org.nz). We are all in a team together!

Ian Taylforth

From Rod Downey, President Wellington Region

The Wellington Region lost another stalwart recently, as we were saddened by the loss of Ian Taylforth. Ian did a lot for our region. Over the years, he has held various positions: region committee member, Region Counsellor, Region President. Ian's wife, Bronwyn Maysmor, died earlier this year. Both were truly patient with, and gave lots of encouragement to, new dancers. Ian was also tutor at Waikanae before moving to Eastbourne where he danced. He later moved to Seatoun. Ian was a member of Kelburn Club, but also attended Wellington Club. When he moved to Paraparaumu, he rejoined the Waikanae Club. Another greatly missed.





Summer School is less than 2 weeks away!

28 December to 4 January

The latest Summer School newsletter was sent to registrants and to region and club secretaries last week.

Whether you have registered or not, the Summer School Committee would love to see you there. If you are not registered for the School, there are still plenty of options for you to be involved.

Evening events

Come along for an evening dance or two, or three.... or more. Hogmanay and the President's Ball are always very popular, or if you are new to dancing, you could come along to the Ceilidh, where everyone will be able to take to the floor with confidence.

If you want to come to **all of the evenings**, then the multi-pass is the best value. This gives you a discounted ticket to attend all evening dances. Please order this in advance. Email nzsummerschool2024@gmail.com to let us know how many tickets you want and make payment to the **NZ Summer School NI bank account**

01-0235-00104533-004 (or 01-0235-0104533-04, if your bank needs fewer digits). Make sure you include 'Multi pass' and your name as reference. Your ticket will be available for you to collect at the door on the Opening Night.

For individual evenings, please pay cash at the door – bringing the right change is always appreciated ☺.

Multi-pass entry to all evening events – \$120 RSCDS, \$150 Non-RSCDS, \$50 JAMs Juniors/Spectators.

Casual evening functions – Opening night, Youth night, Kiwiana night, Ceilidh and Final night: \$15 RSCDS, \$20 Non-RSCDS, \$5 JAMs/Juniors/Spectators.

President's Ball and Hogmanay – \$30 RSCDS, \$35 Non-RSCDS, \$15 JAMs/Juniors, \$20 Spectators

Programmes for the evening dances are available online ([Evening Functions](#)). Stars have been used to indicate which will be walked and which are a bit more difficult.

Thirtytwosome practice

The *Thirtytwosome Reel* (and its smaller cousin, the *Eightsome Reel*) is danced immediately after the Hogmanay ceremony and will **not be briefed**. So, if you are planning on coming to Hogmanay (casually or as a school attendee)

and want to do this dance, please come to the *Thirtytwosome* practice at 4pm on Tuesday 31 December in Scots College Hall. As an added bonus, there will also be a **walk-through of the Maxina**.

The following Branch events are open to everyone:

Teachers' Forum – Tuesday 31 December, 1:30 – 2:30pm

The NZ Branch invites everyone interested in using digitised music to the Teachers Forum which will be held in the Scots College Hall. Catherine McCutcheon will show you her tricks and tips for organising her music files, and using *Amazing Slowdowner* to best effect. Bring your 'I wish I could' thoughts, and see if there's a solution in the room.

We also hope to record this session and make it available via the NZ Branch website, so you can watch it, or refer back to it, later.

The Branch AGM – Wednesday 1 January, 1:30pm

The RSCDS NZ Branch AGM is held at Summer School each year – this is open to all Branch Members; you are welcome to come along. This will be held in the Scots College Hall. Afternoon tea will be provided after the meeting is completed.

Meet the Management Committee – Thursday 2 January, 1:30 – 2:30 pm

This is your opportunity to meet the newly elected NZ Branch Management Committee and ask them any questions you have. This will be held in the Scots Hub.

JAM Forum and Under 30's General Class – Saturday 4 January, 12:30 – 1:30pm

All JAMs (junior dancers), their parents and those interested in supporting junior dancers are welcome to come to the JAM Forum to discuss how we can make Scottish Country Dancing something that more young people can come and enjoy. The forum will be held in the Scots Hub. Lunch will be provided by the NZ Branch.

Following the forum, a slight change in plan – the advertised Mixed JAMs Class will be open to anyone under 30, and will be held in the Scots Gym (1:30 – 2:30pm). The teacher will be Susanna van der Gulik.

And an opportunity for free teaching for all dancers of intermediate or advanced level – Volunteer dancers for RSCDS teaching exams

The teaching exams consist of each exam candidate teaching a class of two to three sets of dancers. The class typically includes teaching a formation or steps required in the dance, as well as the dance itself. **So we need dancers for the Exam class to teach, and would love you to volunteer if you are an intermediate or advanced**

level dancer. This is a great way of getting some free teaching!

The exams will be held in two sessions: **9am – 12pm and 1:30pm – 4:30pm on 3 January.** We are also looking for volunteer dancers to help the candidates practise, in practice sessions from **1:30pm - 4:30pm on 30 December and 1 January.**

Dancing volunteers will not be required to dance for the full practice session or exam session. To find out more, and sign up to volunteer in this way, please check out the link [Volunteer Dancers](#)

*Ann Oliver
Wellington Summer School Organiser*

New Dancers' Celebration: A hall packed with dancers!

From Loralee Hyde

The New Dancers' Celebration welcomes those who have taken up Scottish Country Dancing during the past two years to our community. To great astonishment, this year's event had 19 sets taking to the floor—the largest New Dancers' Celebration in the Wellington Region since pre-pandemic times!

Hosted by Lower Hutt and Upper Hutt Clubs on 12 October in the Knox Church Hall in Lower Hutt, with Chris Totton, Andrea Wells and Chris Kelly as MCs, the evening was full of good cheer and lots of smiles.

Dancers came to the event from clubs throughout the region. We also welcomed others from Whanganui, and RSCDS New Zealand Branch Secretary Joy Dick from Ashhurst.

The more experienced dancers helped the newer ones enjoy the special programme of easier dances, with the popular *The Laird of Milton's Daughter* (with the *corner chain* formation) and *The De'il Amang the Tailors* (which can be devilishly fast) adding a few challenges.

Throughout the evening, we danced to toe-tapping music from *Strings Attached*—Lynne Scott on the fiddle, Sharlene Penman on the keyboard and Richard Hardie playing the double bass.



Lynne, Sharlene and Richard (Photo: Loralee Hyde)

A dance of regional significance was the strathspey *The Halfway House*, devised by Elaine Laidlaw, which is a tribute to the Community House in Britannia Street, Petone, where the Wellington Region Committee meets—the dance is published in The Wellington 60th Anniversary Collection.

A delicious supper provided by the experienced dancers was warmly welcomed by all halfway through this fabulous evening of dancing.

Thanks so much to Lower Hutt and Upper Hutt Clubs and their members for the work they did to put on this great



The hall full of Scottish Country dancers at the beginning of the celebration.

celebration—especially as Lower Hutt had celebrated 70 years of dancing just a month before!

Long may the joy and camaraderie of this night continue in our Scottish Country Dancing community.

Tuesday afternoon dancing in 2024

From Pat Reesby

Tuesday afternoon dancing has come to the end of another enjoyable year.

The group began in late 2018, tutored by Catherine McCutcheon on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month. Demand soon arose for a more general group, which now meets on the third Tuesday ... and the fifth when there is one.

Catherine has continued to take the popular general group. In 2024, tutors for the advanced/experienced group have been Iain Boyd, Diane Bradshaw, Melva Waite and Rod Downey.

Dancing, of course, requires music. Most tutors bring their own equipment, but Tuesday afternoon dancers also have a Coomber, previously owned by the Carterton SCD Club. Earlier this year, Chris Totton made a sturdy wooden trolley to keep our Coomber safe and secure in the hall storage area.

Starting in July, St John's increased the hall hire for non-profit groups, with an additional charge for use of the lounge. St John's is an excellent venue, and as long as numbers stay reasonably healthy, we can comfortably afford the new fees.

Many thanks to Aileen and Hilary for their lovely music on 30 April and 19 November. In case you haven't yet heard, family duties are calling Aileen back to Scotland. We'll miss her.

And thanks to Elaine for another delicious spread – strawberries and cream, and cheeseboards – on 19 November.

Catherine is more than happy to take the general group again next year, while our first 2025 tutor for the advanced/experienced group will be Gaye Collin.

The focus for the general group is on both popular and newish dances, including some from upcoming programmes. Although the dances are walked and taught where required, these sessions are intended for independent dancers who can dance reels of three, reels of four, allemande, double triangles and other common formations. Dancers would normally be at least intermediate level.

Newcomers are always welcome at Tuesday afternoon dancing, but if you're not sure whether it's right for you, it's a good idea to check with your club tutor.

<https://wellingtonscd.org.nz/clubs/daytime-group/>

Lower Hutt Club

From Chris Connolly

Lower Hutt Club had a very busy 2024 year with our 70th anniversary celebrations as well as co-hosting the New Dancers' Celebration, with the Upper Hutt Club.

Our Juniors finished up the year with a fantastic performance of *Cheers Maggie* devised by Iain Matcham, and they looked super in their kilts. Their dancing was impressive especially given their young age and the great tutoring by Iain.



Iain has now stepped down, however, and we are very excited to have Anna Verhaegh as tutor for this group in 2025. These classes will continue to be held at Epuni Hall each Monday, during school term, from 6:30–7:15pm. You can contact Anna on anna.verhaegh@gmail.com.

Dancing has finished for this year with our Club Service Award being presented to Gaye Collin on our final night.

We are looking forward to starting up again on 3 March 2025. We are pleased to have Chris Totton and Andrea Wells co-tutoring again.

To ensure continued growth of the club we will be offering a six-week Beginners' Course starting in February. Classes will be in the Epuni Hall on Monday

nights from 7:30–9pm. The dates will be February 3, 10, 17, 24 and March 3, 10. Elizabeth Ferguson will be the tutor. She can be contacted on 021 934 428.

On 3 March, the class will be introduced to the club and invited to dance the first couple of dances before resuming lessons in the back room.

We held two Family Nights with members bringing along family and friends. These will be held again on 14 April and 30 June 2025.



Johnsonville Club: Kristin Downey steps down as President

From Loralee Hyde

At the Johnsonville Club AGM on Monday 11 November, President Kristin Downey stepped down after 16 years in the position. At the AGM, Johnsonville Secretary Robert Vale paid tribute to Kristin. A summary of his tribute follows.

Robert Vale: Kristin's impact and achievements

Robert shared that along with her love of the dance, the music—and the laughter—Kristin has dedicated many years of service to the club over her 34 years so far as a member. She was Acting Secretary in her early years, served as Secretary for three years and then as Treasurer for three years. She went on to become President in 2009, that's a reign of 16 years.

Many of what are now regarded as Johnsonville traditions are down to Kristin. Together with the committee and tutor, in 2012, she put in place a series of measures to counteract a significant drop in membership. The results speak for themselves—the club increased membership from only 23 dancers in 2012 to 77 this year.

Kristin introduced a range of social events to complement the club's regular Tartan Nights, with the aim of enabling members to get to know each other off the dance floor—a summer ceilidh starting in 2014, a themed midwinter dinner and dance in 2015, a Samhain/Halloween celebration and the pre-Christmas lunch in 2016, St Patrick's Day in 2019, and Beltane in 2024.

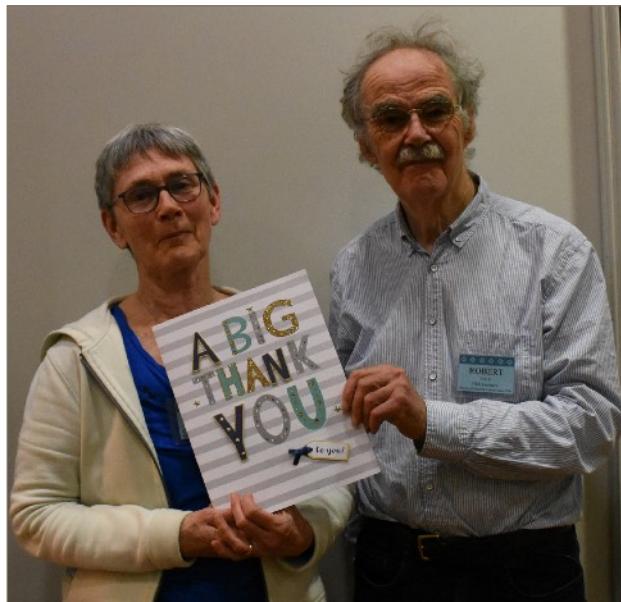
In 2016, Kristin initiated the development of the Johnsonville website with the aims of providing easy access to information about the club, events, and the benefits of Scottish Country Dancing, and ensuring the club has a historical record of activities, photos, and history.

In 2019, Kristin was instrumental in moving the club's weekly email newsletter to a professional e-newsletter format as a strategy to engage and connect with our dancing community. There are now 165 subscribers from across the country and internationally. In November 2019, Kristin was made an Honorary Life Member of the club.

Johnsonville's underlying philosophy is one of good humour, having fun, and increasing participation with a goal of building an inclusive community of dancers. Kristin's significant contributions over the years have helped ensure that community spirit continues to shine through.

Robert thanked Kristin for the great impact she has made through her achievements, saying the club looks forward to sharing the joys of dancing with her over the coming years.

See Robert's full tribute along with an array of Loralee's historical photos at <https://www.johnsonvillescd.org.nz/2024/11/14/tribute-kristin-downey/>



Kristin with Johnsonville Club Secretary Robert Vale, when she stepped down as Club President after 16 years in the position (Photo: Loralee Hyde)

In reply to Robert's tribute, Kristin has given an account of the time she spent as President, celebrating just some of the people who have contributed to building the club community alongside her. A summary of her account follows.

Kristin Downey: Celebrating Our People

Kristin congratulated the new Johnsonville Club President, Maureen Sullivan, who brings a wealth of experience to the role. Kristin is pleased to pass on the torch to someone so dedicated to Scottish Country Dancing, and to the club. Maureen has a broad knowledge of the club's operations, having started as a beginner at Johnsonville in 2013, and serving on the committee for eight years. Kristin says it was highly rewarding to play a part in the revival of the club and see membership numbers build since 2012—a revival due to the hard work of many committees and many members across the sixteen years she was President, as well as from energetic and enthusiastic club tutor Rod Downey.

She is especially grateful for the support of the office bearers who served with her. Secretaries over that time have been: Désirée Patterson, Pat Reesby, John Munro, Elaine Rouse and Robert Vale. Treasurers were: Jean Denne, Joanne Ang, Elizabeth Rendell, Barbara Thompson, Allison Kay and Christine Crewdson.

Every committee member also contributed to the successful club Johnsonville is today. Each of them has committed

time, energy, and thoughtfulness to the decisions made on behalf of club members, ensuring a happy, welcoming and inclusive club community.

Kristin is grateful to Loralee Hyde in her website, design and photography roles, and to John Homes as newsletter editor for providing great support in communicating with members. She very much appreciates Elizabeth Ngan's long service as supper co-ordinator and gives special thanks to Rod, who is always there with support.

And of course, the committee relies heavily on every club member for the smooth operation of the club, and their commitment to the club ethos. Members make a club.

Kristin will continue to be involved in special projects in support of Maureen and the new committee, but with more time for rest and for exploring other endeavours. She looks forward to being well enough to return to the dance floor next year.

See Kristin's full account of her time as President at <https://www.johnsonvillescd.org.nz/2024/12/08/kristin-downey-celebrating-people/> along with more photos Loralee has sourced from across the years.

Johnsonville Club – A special end to 2025

From Kristin Downey

The last month of the dancing year is always a busy time at Johnsonville. We celebrate Halloween, get set for the new dancing year at the club AGM, and then hold our Final and Tartan Night on the last Monday of November.

All those events took place as usual this year, but each one brought something special.

HALLOWEEN – and we farewell Aileen Logie

The club's [2025 Halloween celebration](#) was one of the best – the decorations, the dancers and their costumes, the MC, the programme, the music, the bard's story, and the special supper treats all made for a night of high spirits.



Elizabeth Ngan's ingenious and colourful Halloween supper goodies (Photo: Loralee Hyde)

But there was one sad element. Halloween was the last time we would have Aileen Logie playing for us, as she returns to Scotland in the new year.

Aileen has played at many of the club's Tartan Nights and Annual Dances over the years, and more recently became Johnsonville's 'club musician'.

Starting on 27 July 2020, when we were still dancing at Johnsonville Bowling Club, Aileen has played regularly at club nights. Over that time, she has generously shared her company, her music, and her knowledge of things Scottish.

Aileen has also contributed to the life of the club in other ways. She has written articles for the club newsletter, on topics such as [Scottish/Irish Music Connections](#). And very memorably, she offered a spirited *Address to the Haggis* at the club's Burns-themed [2021 Summer Ceilidh](#).



Aileen plunges a knife into the haggis at [Jville's 2021 Summer Ceilidh](#) (Photo: John Patterson)

It was my great pleasure to thank Aileen for all she's shared with us, and to present her with a memento of her time at Jville - one of the few remaining Johnsonville club badges, designed in 1985 by [Jville's first life members Isla and Eric Norris](#).

AGM – many service awards and a new president

There was an excellent turnout of members for this year's AGM, lured in by Arobake cakes, but also with the desire to acknowledge the service given by [club members receiving 2024 service awards](#).

Awards were made to Anne Mackenzie, Charles Burden, Janet Gootjes, Liz Hands, John Patterson and Robert Vale, for service including hall set-up and pack-up, cataloguing dance books and leaflets, technical support, sub-committee membership and supper duty. The range of service was matched by a range of membership from two to seventeen years, a reflection of club members' willingness to get involved early, and remain involved over many years.

A special aspect of the AGM was the change of president. Kristin Downey stood down after 22 years of continuous service on the club committee – three as secretary, three as treasurer, and 16 as president, with Maureen Sullivan the club's new president. (More on this in a separate article by Loralee Hyde.)

FINAL AND TARTAN NIGHT – and a big youth band

Johnsonville Club's Tartan and Final Night was a wonderful way to finish a truly successful dancing year, with so many good things going on.

It was fantastic to welcome a quintet of young musicians to the stage. Brought together by Lynne Scott, they gave us a great night's dancing. Many thanks to fiddlers Cassandra Bahr, Em Griffiths and Hannah Smith, Sam Berkahn on bass, and keyboard player Thomas Nikora. And to Lynne for her arrangements and James Scott on sound setup.

What a treat to see so much musical talent and so many young musicians in one place at the same time. So much fun to have such a big band to finish off our year, with Lynne joining them on stage for the last dance of the night, Mairi's Wedding.



From left: Em, Cassandra, Hannah, Thomas, Sam (PHoto: Loralee Hyde)

It brought to mind big bands of the past at Johnsonville, especially between 2000 and 2010, when we were privileged to have Peter Elmes and (many) associates playing for us. Peter always welcomed extras, so at times there were up to seven musicians on stage.

All in all, a special end to a great year. Thanks to tutor Rod Downey for his commitment as club tutor, Melva Waite as guest tutor, and Maureen Sullivan as tutor in training. Thanks also to Jville's club members who make it such a happy and smooth-running club.

Linden Club

From Patricia Fisk

The Linden Club has enjoyed the last few months of the dancing year. We had a great turnout (including most of our newer dancers) at the New Dancers' Celebration in

early October. We all enjoyed an awesome night of dancing.

Our final tartan/supper night was held in early November and was well attended and greatly enjoyed by all. The evening's programme was made up entirely of requests by club members, and turned out to be an energetic evening that kept people on their toes!

We rounded off the year with our traditional end-of-year dinner which was also well attended and a great opportunity to socialise.

Linden Club will start 2025 with four beginners' classes commencing on Monday 10 February at our usual venue, Tawa Baptist Church Hall, 229 Main Road Tawa. More experienced dancers are welcome to come along to make up the sets. Club nights will restart on 10 March.

Ngaio SCD Club

From Wendy Donald

Our Tartan and Final Night on 21 November was a most enjoyable success. We were joined by members of other clubs, to dance a lovely programme of our members' favourite dances. A delicious supper to finish, with time to talk and socialise, was perfect.



As this was the last time Aileen Logie played for Ngaio, she was presented with a lovely bouquet

With RSCDS NZ Branch Summer School being held here in Wellington, it is now full steam ahead! We have members who will attend morning dance classes at all levels: beginner, intermediate, and advanced. Some have been baking and a few will be 'go-fers' (meeting dancers, fetching and carrying as required). Some of our intermediate and advanced dancers will be 'stooges' for the aspiring tutors to teach, as they are examined, aiming for their tutor qualification; and still others will be attending the seven evening dances, including Hogmanay. An exciting and worthwhile time for all dancers here!

Since the AGM, we have had a meeting of the new committee, and next year is planned and bookings are

made. From Thursday 6 March, Ngaio Club is again offering four weeks of beginners' classes. This worked well this year, so we are offering them again. The club has benefitted from an increase in the numbers of members who attend regularly. The new dancers enjoyed, and stayed for the fitness, friendship, and fun!

Capital City Club

From Peter Beaumont

Club events and news

Capital City SCD Club wound up a busy 50th anniversary year with an Afternoon Social Dance on Sunday 17 November. Club members were joined by visitors from other clubs, along with friends and family, including several brand new to dancing. Jeanette Watson led us through a programme of easier dances to lively music provided by Lynne Scott and Thomas Nikora.



Friends and family joined in at the afternoon social dance.
It's never too early to start SCD!

Life Membership

Our Tutor Jeanette Watson first danced with the Island Bay Club's children's group in the 1970s and has been a tutor at the club for over half of its existence. At our recent AGM, Jeanette was appointed a Life Member of the Capital City SCD Club recognising her huge contribution to the club and Scottish Country Dancing in general.

Beginners' Classes 2025

Capital City SCD Club will hold beginners' classes on four Thursdays in February. Jeanette Watson will be the tutor.

For more information call: Juping 021 079 7771 or Peter 021 75 6068

Capital City Club Nights 2025

The first club night for 2025 is on Thursday 6 March at Newtown School Hall, and then weekly through to early November. Live music throughout the year on the first Thursday each month.

Genesis of a band

From Lynne Scott

Those dancers who attended the Johnsonville Club's Final Night on 25 November danced to a five-piece band of relatively young musicians – all around 25-30. A band like this doesn't just "happen": it's the product of a lot of behind-the-scenes work.

Earlier in the year, the Johnsonville Committee had asked me for a 5-piece band for their final night. While Wellington has plenty of experienced musicians, I saw this as an opportunity to highlight the energy that youth can bring to dancing. My prospective band members: Thomas Nikora, Sam Berkahn, Cassandra Bahr, Em Griffiths and Hannah Smith (all excellent musicians in their own fields) were all keen to be involved. So – phew! one hurdle overcome.

The next step was to put together the music for the evening. I asked the fiddlers if they had any preferred tunes that might be included. Em came up with some excellent ideas, including *Glasgow Roast* (it was the second tune in *Up in the Air*) – great choice! For each dance, the music usually consists of the "lead tune" that is associated with that dance, plus three further tunes that follow on well, and suit the dance. I also had to consider the experience levels of the fiddlers. Having selected the tunes, they were then published in an easy-to-read format, each with the chords for the pianist and bass player to follow. (It's a bit like Word, but for music!) The twelve dances on the programme took quite a bit of sorting out.

Having distributed the music, it was time to set up rehearsals for the band. Finding even one date/time in common for six people proved impossible, so we settled on two rehearsals, each with one person missing. It almost worked: sickness eliminated one musician from the first rehearsal, so the second was rescheduled. You have to be nimble!



Em, Cassandra, Hannah, Thomas and Sam (Photo: Loralee Hyde)

Rehearsals were interesting. While the music was mostly within easy reach of the musicians, we had a lot of work to do on playing as a band. First we had to work out who was going to lead the start of the dance, bringing everyone in together on that first chord, and practise this. There were stylistic elements to work on: swinging the jigs, snapping the Scotch snaps in the strathspeys, playing together in the fast reels... and then we had to agree on how each tune joined onto the next one, in every set. Finally, who would lead the final chord?

On the night, it ran like clockwork. We had only a very limited time to set up the instruments and sound equipment with James, so it required quite a bit of teamwork, but we made it in time. The energy pumping out from the band during the evening was very evident, and they all said they thoroughly enjoyed the experience. We trust the dancers did too!

Tawa Club

From Désirée Patterson

In late July, Tawa Club held some “come-and-try-out-SCD” classes during which, over a few weeks, we welcomed nine new hopefuls, including a delightful young exchange student from Japan. From these, we ended up with four people staying the course who were still with us at the end of the year.

In October, we held a Dessert and Dance Night, to which we had invited the members of the Ngaio Club – thus returning their hospitality when they invited us to join their Midwinter Christmas Dinner in June. Everyone brought along a small plate of dessert-type goodies to share. The evening started sociably, catching up with friends over dessert and tea/coffee. We had a fabulous six sets on the floor, dancing to the music of *Wild Heather* – Lynne Scott, Mary McDonald and Sharlene Penman. Our tutor, Catherine, had prepared a programme of dances that had either direct, or somewhat oblique, references to sweet treats, such as *The Teddy Bears' Picnic*, *Short and Very Sweet*, *Everything Stops for Tea*, and of course *The Cranberry Tart*. She also created posters to illustrate each dance.



The Teddybears' Picnic (Photo: John Patterson)

For our final club night of the year, on 14 November, we were delighted to have an impressive eight sets on the floor – four sets of our own members, and four of sets of visitors from Ngaio, Johnsonville and other clubs. We enjoyed the great music from *The Cranberry Tarts*, a.k.a. Aileen Logie and Hilary Ferral. This was the penultimate time they were playing as *The Cranberry Tarts* duo (their final outing was at Ngaio’s final night), as Aileen will be returning to Scotland early next year. I know she will be sorely missed, both by her fellow musicians, and by us dancers.

The club’s year wound up with our annual potluck dinner at John and Désirée’s home. As it happened to be on 23 November, the date that the RSCDS in Edinburgh had designated as “Dance Around the World” day, we danced Ian Simmonds’ *Oriel Strathspey* on the deck.



Oriel Strathspey (Photo: Désirée Patterson)

As it was rather chilly (Wellington is still waiting for summer to arrive!), that was the only dance we did out there – people quickly scuttled back inside for dessert!

Tawa Club will not be offering beginners’ classes in February. Instead, we will again have them in July.

Our 2025 club nights will resume on Thursday 6 March , at 7:30 pm at the Tawa Bowling Club, 13 Davies Street, Tawa.

Beginners’ Classes in 2025

Johnsonville – Monday 10, 17, 24 February

Linden – Monday 10, 17, 24 February, 3 March

Lower Hutt – Monday 3, 10, 17, 24 February, 3, 10 March

Capital City – Thursday 6, 13, 20, 27 February

Ngaio – Thursday 6, 13, 20, 27 March

Waikanae – Friday 14, 21, 28 February

Details about venues and costs are on the [Region website](#).



Wellington Region Classes 2025

Early Dances Books 6-10	Saturday 12 April 1 – 4pm	St John's Hall Bassett Road Johnsonville	Elaine Laidlaw	\$15
Basics	Five Tuesdays 7:30 – 9:30 pm 6, 20 May, 3, 17 June, 1 July	St Davids' Hall off Elizabeth Street Petone	Melva Waite	\$45 for 5 or \$10 per class
Intermediate	Four Tuesdays 7:30 – 9:30 pm 13, 27 May, 10, 24 June	St David's Hall off Elizabeth Street Petone	Diane Bradshaw	\$50 for 4 Or \$15 per class
Advanced	Two Saturdays 1 – 4 pm 12 July and 20 September	St John's Hall Bassett Road Johnsonville	Joy Tracey	\$15 per class
Advanced (Fugues)	Saturday 11 October 1 – 4pm	St John's Hall Bassett Road Johnsonville	Rod Downey	\$15

*Come Scottish Country Dancing
for fun fitness and friends
Capital City Scottish Country Dancing*

Date/Time: 7.30 – 9.30pm Thursdays
6th 13th 20th & 27th February 2025

Where: Newtown School Hall
16 Mein Street, Newtown, Wellington
(free parking on school ground from Mein Street)

Entry Fee: \$5 per week or \$18 for four weeks

Club meets March to November on Thursdays
For more information call Peter 021 756 068 or Juping 021 079 7771

**6 Week Beginners' Course
in Scottish Country Dancing**

Monday evenings, starting 3rd Feb 2024, 7:30 - 9pm
Cost \$5 a night or \$30 for the full course

Fulfil a New Year's Resolution
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All you need is a comfy pair of shoes & light clothing (because you will burn calories).
Social group dancing - no partner required.
Contact: Chris (027 589 9284) for information.

www.lowerhuttscd.org.nz



Closing date for the next issue
Saturday 8 March 2025



Merry Christmas!
See you at Summer School!