



Harbour City Happenings

RSCDS Wellington Region Newsletter

Vol 28 No 1 – March 2025

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President's Column

From Rod Downey, President



Welcome all back to dancing. I have reports that clubs are welcoming many new dancers, as well as returning club members.

Year to Date:

Summer School – Many thanks to the Wellington Region tutors, dancers and musicians for supporting such a wonderful Summer School.

The organising committee, led by Ann Oliver, did a grand job. I hope you found time to get to something over the period if not the whole school. Congratulations to Wellington candidates Chris Totton (Unit 5) and Maureen Sullivan (Unit 3) for passing their teaching exams at the school.

Summer Dancing – Chris Totton again organised Summer Dancing. We kept the start time to 7:00 pm. Perfect weather, very un-Wellington. Thanks to Chris, together with Isobel Harris Clark, Diane Bradshaw, and Joy Tracey, for taking these classes. We had about three sets per week and even some passing spectators joining in!



Summer Dancing, with some boys from St Pat's joining in
(Photo: Joy Tracey)

Beginners' Classes – Great to hear that many clubs offered these and from all reports, they were well attended. Hopefully this translates into club members welcomed into our SCD family. Remember, if you want to use the Region

Banner, you can contact Brenda Vale (Region secretary) wellington@dancescottish.org.nz.

Region Committee Shrinkage – Due to changing personal circumstances, we are sad to lose valuable committee members Janice Henson (health) and Zoe Attwood (moving out of the region). Special thanks to Janice for all her work as class coordinator. Please have a think about whether you might come in and support the region by being a committee member. (Nice people, short meetings. Only three left for the year.)

Upcoming:

In 2024, we celebrated the centenary of the publication of the first book, Book 1, and we had a nice day dancing dances from Books 1-5. This year, we plan a similar day with dances from Books 6-10. The Region Committee has also planned an event catering to those who love complex dances based around **fugues**, as well as our usual classes. I also note it is the 70th anniversary of Johnsonville Club's establishment, initially as a church group. They will have a special Tartan night on the Monday of King's Birthday weekend (2 June).

Historical RSCDS Dances, Saturday 12 April, 1:00-4:30 pm (with afternoon tea), St John's Church Hall, Johnsonville. Mark it in your diaries. Again, we revisit the early days of the society, this time with 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. Come and again celebrate the dawn of the RSCDS. The date is specifically chosen to avoid all those holidays in April.

New Dancers' Celebration, Saturday 4 October, Knox Church Hall. Linden Club has kindly agreed to host the 2025 New Dancers' Celebration. There will be two preparation classes, which will be taken by Ann Oliver, on Tuesdays 23 and 30 September, at St David's Multicultural Hall in Petone.

Region Classes – on Tuesday nights, 7:30 - 9:30 pm, at St David's in Petone

- Five **Basics** Classes (May-July, tutor: Melva Waite)
- Four **Intermediate** Classes (May-June, tutor: Diane Bradshaw)

Details of the above are at the end of this issue of HCH.

- Two **Advanced Classes** (tutor: Joy Tracey). These are on Saturday afternoons, 12 July and 30 September, 1:00 – 4:30 pm, at St. John's, in Johnsonville.

Region classes are a fantastic opportunity to meet people from other clubs and to really work on your dancing. We are lucky in the Region to have so many able and willing tutors and musicians.

Special Region Event – Fugues Day, Saturday 11 October, 1-4 pm. 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 in Wellington. Dancing fugues are analogous to 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 at St John's, as my last hurrah as Region President.

Classes Coordinator: Leslie Campbell, has agreed to be the coordinator for the region classes.

class-coordinator@wellingtonscd.org.nz.

Feedback – We will send out materials asking clubs if you want us to change the structure of what we offer. Do you want other offerings, etc? If you have any thoughts, please get back to us in a timely manner, as now we need to book halls in September 2025 for 2026!

Finally, I hope you all have a great year of dancing. Do take advantage of the opportunities above. If you want to contact us and have any suggestions which help us to do better, please e-mail me president@wellingtonscd.org.nz or Brenda, the region secretary wellingtont@dancescottish.org.nz. We are all in a team together!

Gary Morris

Gary passed away on the morning of 10 March 2025 at the rest home in Carterton where he has been a resident for a number of years.

His contribution to Scottish Country Dancing over the years has been extensive as has been his worldwide service to the Society.

A full obituary will be included in the next issue of the Harbour City Happenings.

RSCDS NZ Summer School 2024/25

Musings of the Summer School Organiser

From Ann Oliver

Over recent years I have felt it was only a matter of time before I stepped up to running a Summer School. Having been involved in Scottish Country Dancing since childhood, attended many summer schools in NZ plus a few in Australia and the USA, and spent time on the Wellington Region committee organising dancing events, I feel that my dancing life has been “in training” for the role. So when Debbie Roxburgh (then Vice President) approached the Wellington Region late in 2021, it was not too much of a shock, or a step up, for me to say yes. This was especially true as a great committee had also volunteered to help. The members being Andrew Oliver, Margaret Cantwell, Lee and Michele Miller, Peter Beaumont and Jeanette Watson. All seasoned Summer School attendees with lots of skills, on and off the dance floor, and plenty of ideas about what makes a good Summer School.

As the RSCDS NZ Summer School had not been held in Wellington city for 17 years, the committee were really keen to arrange things so that as many Wellington dancers as possible could come and join in the fun. We know being a resident at Summer School is expensive and so we offered commuter options, not just for the full school, but also for the first half only (to let those who had not attended before have a “taster”). It was therefore really great to see so many Wellington dancers take up the opportunity to come along. Fifty-six Wellington dancers registered, nine as residents and 46 as commuters, with 15 of these being for the half-school option. Additionally we were delighted that 38 first-time NZ attendees joined us. We were thrilled that post Covid, we could engage international musicians and teachers. Our international musicians, Elke Baker and Lisa Scott, from the USA, were truly amazing. Their energy and rhythm really helped the dancers. It was also clear, when the music class played on the final night, that Elke managed to pass this on in her teaching. The final night was amazing: the energy on the stage and the floor was incredible, right to the last chord.

International teachers, Kate Gentles (Cambridge, UK) and Diana Hastie (Australia) challenged their classes both mentally and physically, and the addition of step dancing, both in the afternoon class (thanks Kate) and during after parties (both Kate and Diana), added to the fun.

We are extremely lucky in Wellington to have such a huge selection of very fabulous teachers and musicians, and one aim for the school was that it should feature the vibrant dancing community in Wellington. We therefore involved the local tutors, teachers, and musicians for classes and evening events to supplement our international staff.

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Three Wellington teachers were on staff: Elizabeth Ferguson, Susanna van der Gulik and Andrea Wells. All the evening MCs were from the Wellington Region, except Graeme Plank who co-ordinated the items at the Ceilidh. MCs were:

- Opening Night – Rod Downey
- Youth Night – Helen Oliver and Isobel Harris Clark
- Kiwiana – Iain Matcham
- Hogmanay – Damon Collin and other Lower Hutt teachers – Andrea Wells, Chris Totton, Diane Bradshaw, Catherine McCutcheon, Elizabeth Ferguson, Susanna van der Gulik
- President's Ball – Catherine McCutcheon
- Ceilidh – Graeme Plank and Mary McDonald
- Final Night – Elaine Laidlaw

Local musicians also supported the school. For evenings we had :

- Richard Hardie accompanying Elke Baker and Lisa Scott from the USA
- Lynne Scott and Mary McDonald, along with the rest of *Wild Heather*, playing for the youth night
- Aileen Logie, Jason Morris, Hilary Ferral, Ian Telfar (*Aileen Logie's Scottish Country Dance Band*) playing for the Kiwiana night
- *Schiehallion* (Ceilidh Band) – led by Mary McDonald and comprising the *Wild Heather* musicians, supplemented by Iain Matcham and Duncan McDonald, playing for the Ceilidh.

The majority of the musicians above also played for classes, along with Thomas Nikora and Sam Berkahn.

With so many musicians on staff, we needed help to coordinate them and their instruments, and ensure the music was balanced and appropriately amplified for the many class and evening venues – a task James Scott undertook with great skill.

All the musicians, teachers, and MCs supporting the school were fabulous, and we received amazing feedback for the school. In particular, people appreciated the teaching in class and the variety and quality of music across the evening events. So thank you to all who made the week such a success.

Of course, any school depends heavily on volunteers and it was great to see how many people from the Wellington region willingly volunteered. I am enormously grateful for everyone's support. This includes:

- The Region committee who loaned equipment, advertised and encouraged participation
- Clubs and individuals who helped with catering for the evening events and morning teas
- The 21 Wellingtonians who helped as exam dancing volunteers for exam preparation and exams
- Those who gave up their time to act as gofers for classes

- The decoration committee
- Helpers with transport, communications, photography, registration packs, registration, walkthroughs, and just anything we asked for.

I would also like to acknowledge the support of a number of organisations: Wellington City Council provided a grant for venues, the Pub Charity Ltd provided a grant for Elke Baker's accommodation (as teacher of the musician class) and the Pelorus Trust provided a grant for the transport (mini buses).

To all who attended, thanks for coming and joining in the fun. And if you haven't yet experienced a Summer School, I hope you are able to some time soon.



Final night: Ann Oliver hands over the Summer School banner to Graeme Plank, the organiser of next year's Summer School in Christchurch
(Photo: Andrew Oliver)

The Spirit of Summer School in Wellington

From Loralee Hyde

What a treat for the Wellington Region to have the opportunity to attend a RSCDS New Zealand Branch Summer School in the city! It was 17 years since Wellington last hosted an influx of dancers from across the country and from overseas.

Many from throughout the region were among the 170 registered attendees at the Wellington Summer School, from 28 December 2024 to 4 January 2025, with a good number commuting, including me.

Thanks so much to Summer School organiser Ann Oliver and her committee for their hard work in organising and running this memorable school.

Adding to the school spirit, behind the scenes a legion of dancers from around the Region helped support the committee, both before and during the event. Beforehand, bakers produced tasty morsels for morning teas (and accommodating dietary needs), while others worked on communications.

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During the school, volunteers assisted with registrations on the first day, were on the door at evening functions, helped with supper, or took photos and videos. Then there were the class gofers, assisting the tutor and musicians, organising morning teas and sorting out any issues to make sure the classes ran smoothly.

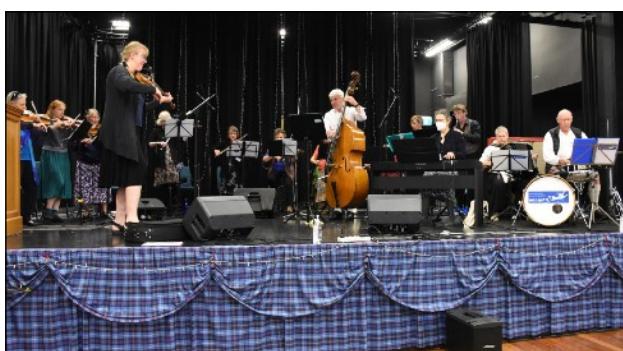
There were nine classes in all, with three of the teachers being Wellington tutors. Many permutations of musicians, a good percentage of them from the Region, played for classes and at evening functions. MCs and briefers for the evening functions were also locals.



Fast and furious circles in *Trip to Timber Ridge* at the Kiwiana Night with MC Mr Pukeko at the middle right
(Photo: Loralee Hyde)

Dancers also entered into the spirit of the school: appreciating the contributions of the organisers, teachers, musicians and gofers; making new friends; enjoying the afternoon activities; creating amazing costumes for the Kiwiana Night; participating in items at the Ceilidh; and dancing enthusiastically at the evening functions.

The fantastic Final Night was a fitting end to a wonderful week of dancing and music. The stage was full of musicians – Elke Baker, Lisa Scott and Richard Hardie, with the Musicians Class. With a great programme, the hall was full of dancers right to the end of the evening.



The massed band at the Final Night—Elke Baker, Richard Hardie and Lisa Scott with the Musicians Class (some musicians obscured). Photo: Loralee Hyde

The success of this Summer School reflected the wide range of talent and the commitment from teachers,

musicians and dancers we have in the Wellington Region, resulting in an entertaining and spirited week of Scottish Country Dancing full of fun and friendship. Thank you all for your contributions. See more about the spirit of the school and photos [here](#).

Being a Gofer at Summer School

From Deborah Shuker

The 2024/25 Summer School was held in Wellington with dancers, tutors and musicians from around the country and overseas. Too good an opportunity to let pass without joining in.

Doubting the ability of my knees to handle six days of dancing, I enrolled as a “half commuter” which meant living at home and three days of morning classes, and optional evening dances.

Then there was a call for Johnsonville dancers to be on supper duty at the first dance and a call for another gofer – so I offered to do both. Organisation of such a large complicated event is a mammoth task and I am in awe of those who take it on. Over 150 participants in seven venues (counting Scots College as one), nine different streams, each requiring tutor, musicians, venue, transport to venue, gofer and morning tea. Similar requirements, plus MCs, for the seven evening dances held at the College. Also organisation of in-College accommodation. Whew!

Members from local clubs took turns at providing food and staff for evening events. The organising committee managed to keep going, despite being very tired at times. Everybody looked happy. A job very well done.

The gofers attended a briefing meeting in the afternoon of registration day to learn what they needed to do and meet the tutor they were helping. Duties involved collecting the morning tea box and tutor from Scots College and being at the venue by 8.30. No lie-in for me, driving from Karori, but I treated Wayne to the excitement of being under a landing aeroplane and surviving.

At the Kilbirnie venue I had to unlock, disarm the alarm, set up and clear up morning tea, mark the roll and do anything else required to free up the tutor so he could focus on the class.

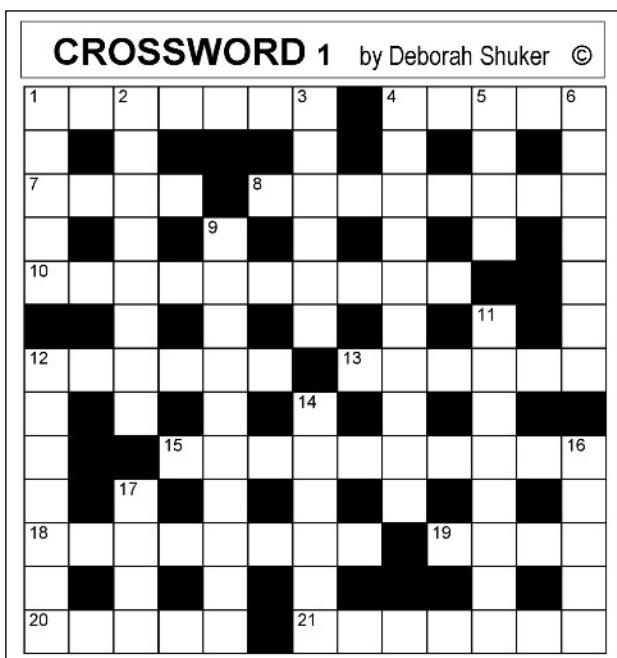
My offer to be gofer was for the three days I was not registered for a class, and Juping was the gofer when I was in class, so I watched her. There was a detailed file of what you needed to know about the venue, with photos showing where the security systems were and how to operate them. Wonderful! After the first day, the process wasn't so nerve-wracking and I managed to avoid any sirens. Operating the air conditioning, however, was not

so smooth. When the tutor asked for a change in that, I made it warmer, not colder, but that was soon fixed. The leak on the kitchen floor was more of a problem, but the venue caretaker came within half an hour of my call, despite being told it wasn't urgent. He even washed the floor.

(Continued next column →)

Deborah Shuker's Crossword

Deborah is a professional deviser of crosswords. She was invited to create some crosswords for the daily newsletter at Summer School. She has kindly agreed to have them included in the next few issues of Harbour City Happenings. **The solution is on page 10 of this issue.**



ACROSS

- 1 Venue of NZ 2014/15 Summer School (7)
- 4 Prize (5)
- 7 Dot on sheet music (4)
- 8 Stress (8)
- 10 Dancing by day and night can be _____ (10)
- 12 A turn at the end of Rights and Lefts (6)
- 13 Swearing rudely (6)
- 15 Lose time (4,6)
- 18 Graphically described (8)
- 19 Figure of eight (4)
- 20 Early figure in New Zealand dancing, an originator of Summer School (5)
- 21 _____ Bobbins, dance dedicated to Lancashire spinners and weavers (7)

DOWN

- 1 Joyful activity (5)
- 2 Covering of a kernel (8)
- 3 Idiot, fool (Scottish) (6)
- 4 These might be suffered after the ball (6,4)
- 5 Church recess with domed roof (4)
- 6 Part of the name of a ceilidh dance with military links (7)
- 9 _____ Ladies - in this dance cross right, cast right (10)
- 11 Conscientious (8)
- 12 Chalky crayons (7)
- 14 Hairstyle (6)
- 16 He wrote and sang "The Times They Are a-Changin'" (5)
- 17 A picture book dog created by Eric Hill (4)
- SOLUTION TOMORROW

My most difficult task was making up a set. If I was in the kitchen organising morning tea, I sometimes missed the teaching, but on the plus side, my knees mainly cooperated.

Getting to know the class members was a bonus, including Hisako and Ian Ewing from Canberra area who had been Johnsonville dancers years ago, and Justine Redfearn of Wellington, now London. There were seven Johnsonville members in this social class and six Australians. How lucky were we fifteen to have live music from Mary, Sam and Aileen. There were lots of laughs and the tutor Wayne McConnell kept it interesting. His word puzzle as an introduction to each other, and my crosswords in the daily newsletters got us mixing well.

Two enjoyable dances that were new to me were *Shinkansen* (The Bullet Train) and *Orpington Caledonians*. I recommend being a gofer as a good way to be involved. *This article was first published on the [Johnsonville Club's website](#).*

RSCDS Winter School, Pitlochry, Scotland 16 – 21 February 2025

From Joy Tracey

What's not to like about five days of Scottish country dancing in stately surroundings, dancing to amazing musicians, guided by skilled teachers? Throw in a light dusting of snow and a ball in Blair Castle to cap it off, and you have the experience of a lifetime.



Atholl Palace Hotel, with a light dusting of snow

Yes, Winter School 2025 delivered.

The location at the Atholl Palace Hotel set the scene from arrival on the Sunday afternoon, when the three of us from Wellington – Mary and Duncan McDonald and myself – discovered that three fellow NZ dancers from further north – Jenny Cuttle, Audrey Stuckey and Liz Douglas – were all swelling the numbers in the Very Advanced class. All 150 dancers checking into the hotel at the same time gave us plenty of time to meet new friends.

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Classes were scattered around the township, and a brisk walk in the morning to the centre of town was a good ‘warm-up’ in the 2–5 degrees C temperature. Those having classes in the hotel enjoyed a more leisurely start.



The Very Advanced class

With four days of dancing, four classes and four tutors, every class was able to experience each tutor, as well as enjoying a different musician every day. The teachers were Graham Donald, Alice Stainer, Deb Lees and Andrew Nolan, and the musicians were Muriel Johnstone, Ian Robertson, Jim Lindsay and Ewan Galloway.



The band at the final ball, with Muriel and Jim on the right, and Ewan on the left

The evenings' social dancing and the ceilidh culminated in a soirée in the hotel's gracious foyer.



A soirée in the hotel's foyer

The afternoon ‘presentations’ were a treat – the history of quadrilles and lancers; learning to dance the lancers with Jimmy Hill; the music of the Gows by Pete Clark; and of course, an afternoon for whisky tasting.

The final night’s ball in Blair Castle was all I’d hoped it would be, and was a fitting end to the school.



The Eightome Reel at the final ball

The historic and magnificent entrance and corridors leading to a stunning ball room (no need to ‘decorate the hall’!), the dancers in formal dress, the band lifting to yet another level, persuading the legs to keep dancing, ending with a heartfelt *Auld Lang Syne*.

Wow! and haste ye back.

(Photos: Joy Tracey)



Auld Lang Syne at Blair Castle

Ngaio SCD Club

From Wendy Donald

Our first night of dancing for 2025 was held on the first Thursday in March. Members were glad to return to dance, after for some, more than three months without dancing. Even if one had attended or assisted at SCD

Summer School here in Wellington (and many of us had), that finished two months ago!

We were joined by some new dancers (and more are expected next week), who are attending for four weeks to see if it is for them. Our tutor Melva Waite had a good programme, so that the new dancers were learning and dancing on their first night, and we enjoyed as we assisted them. At 9 pm, the committee provided supper, and we enjoyed having time with friends, and to chat with the new dancers.

In the following three weeks, we shall again be joined by beginners until 9 pm. Then, in the latter part of the evenings, we more experienced dancers will have some dances just for us.

The next item on our programme is our Annual Dance at the lovely Ngaio Town Hall, which is being held at the time that the next HCH is due. Being in mid-June, on Saturday 14th, definitely winter time, it has been decided to hold it in the afternoon, from 2:30 to 6 pm, so that dancers from further afield may be able to come to join us, when the night is not very late and driving home is not after 11pm.

Carterton SCD Club

Life Membership for Michael Laidlaw

From Sue Doesburg

In mid-October last year (2024), Carterton SCD Club ran their ‘business as usual’ AGM, but on the agenda this time, was a proposal for a Life Membership award. Behind the scenes, Denise Richardson and Kathleen Henderson had been colluding, and were strongly of the opinion that Michael Laidlaw should be awarded a Carterton SCD Club Life Membership to acknowledge his contribution to the club.

As Kathleen outlined when proposing Michael for the award:

In 2000, when the club was established, Michael, as the secretary, developed and wrote the Terms of Reference. Then two years later (2003), while in the role of treasurer, he set up the equipment replacement fund, which has subsequently allowed the purchase of more advanced equipment (i.e. computer and speakers) to support club activity. Michael has also copied music from records to CDs, along with downloading music onto the club laptop to increase the repertoire of music available for dances. He is a certificated RSCD tutor, occasionally still teaches a class, and has held various roles at region and branch level.

And from someone who is a more recent club member, observations are:

Michael is always present at Carterton Club while his wife Elaine teaches. He assists with equipment, knows stuff about places in Scotland, provides prompts about dances, stands in occasionally as a dancer, looks very much at home in a kilt, never ever complains about anything, and is our most appreciated Carterton Club stalwart!

Needless to say Michael’s nomination for Carterton’s Life Membership was unanimously supported by club members. President Zoe Attwood presented Michael with a framed certificate and a Life Member Carterton SCD Club badge.



Denise, Kathleen and Michael (Photo: Anne-Marie Boyd)



**Carterton
SCD Club**

25th Anniversary Ball

Saturday 29th November - 7:30 p.m.

Carterton Events Centre

Ends and Beginnings at Johnsonville

From Kristin Downey and Maureen Sullivan

A good end to 2024 – The 2024 club year finished with our usual Christmas lunch at Café Thyme on 2 December – a week earlier than usual, and hot on the heels of an excellent [Final Night](#). Twenty-four club members signed up, possibly the largest turnout we’ve had. The weather wasn’t kind, but the staff made us welcome inside and the café was soon filled with a hubbub of conversation, and lots of relaxed and happy faces as we all enjoyed socialising over coffee, snacks, and lunch.

Summer School, a lot going on – Club members Jeanette Watson and Peter Beaumont made a massive commitment as members of the SS organising committee, but many other Johnsonville members also got into the spirit of Summer School. Around two sets attended classes, a further set attended evening events, and others contributed as volunteers, including some not able to attend SS itself. Johnsonville hosted Opening Night, supplied almost 600 baked items towards morning teas and suppers, and individual members helped out in too many ways to list here.



MC Rod Downey and [Summer School musicians](#) Elke, Richard and Lisa at Opening Night (Photo: Loralee Hyde)

Congratulations to Maureen Sullivan who successfully achieved Unit 3 of her teaching qualification as part of the Examination Class.

Into 2025 - Summer Ceilidh with a Burns theme – With Summer School done and dusted, it was time for the club's traditional [Summer Ceilidh at Johnsonville Bowling Club](#). It went off without a hitch – thanks to the committee and volunteers, Rod and his remarkable dances, generous ceilidh performers, our fantastic pot-luck cooks and enthusiastic bowling club 'coaches'. Numbers were down a little, perhaps due to the rigours of Summer School, but 27 attendees had a fun day.

Bowling led into nibbles and then on to Rod's programme, designed to ease us back into the dancing year, and give us a lot of laughs. This year's ceilidh on 25 January fell on Robbie Burns Day, so Rod chose dances and music to match. A hot day, and tired feet meant we appreciated



Club members enjoy dancing *Salute to Robbie Burns* at the Johnsonville 2025 Summer Ceilidh (Photo: Kristin Downey)

the break for ceilidh items, ranging from Jeanette's graceful step dancing, to Colin's entertaining recitation of the song *Do you Sing any Dylan?* and Des's extemporaneous rendition of the poem *Holy Dan*. Ceilidh over, and potluck dinner beckoned.

A new crop of beginners – Each year the committee co-ordinates a wide-ranging promotional campaign to attract new dancers. This includes local newspaper ads and articles, posters, road-side signs, radio ads, placements in community centre newsletters, and of course Facebook posts. The club website also holds all the information people need to know.

Committee members and club members work together to support this campaign, and spread the word. Many of our beginners come to us via word of mouth from friends and colleagues. Thanks to all that effort during January, our February beginners' classes have flourished. Special thanks to 2024 new dancers Annabel and Declan, for their contribution to [an article that appeared in the Independent Herald](#) inspiring new dancers to join the fun.

This year, Johnsonville has attracted 36 new dancers over the three weeks of February beginners' classes. (We no longer offer a class in Waitangi Week as many people are away.) Happily, 15 have returned, joining us on our first club night on 3 March. It all bodes well for a good year ahead.



2025 beginners at Johnsonville's first club night for 2025 on 3 March (Photo: Loralee Hyde)

Looking forward – This promises to be yet another exciting year at club, with our annual **St Patrick's Day Celebration** on Monday 17 March – wear some green and come along to Khandallah Town Hall to enjoy a fun night of dancing and live music from Jason Morris. Followed on 14 April by our [first Tartan Night for the year](#) with music by Jason Morris, Hilary Ferral and Anna Miller. And the highlight for 2025 will be our [special Tartan night on Monday 2nd June](#) (King's Birthday) to celebrate the club's 70th Anniversary of its founding as a church group. All welcome to join us, see more details about these two events later in the newsletter.

Johnsonville Club celebrates 70 years of dancing

From Kristin Downey

Join us at Khandallah Town Hall on King's Birthday Monday 2025

As in many places, Scottish country dancing in Johnsonville had its origins in a church community, later becoming a public club, and later again becoming affiliated with the RSCDS.

A 1976 minute book records what the Johnsonville committee of the time determined as dates for these events:

- 1955 – 1st Teacher Mr. McLellan. Branch of St. Columba Friendship Club, meeting in the Sunday School Hall, Haumia St, Raroa
- 1963-66 – Later shifted to Earp St. Church Hall. Members from outside church accepted. Jenny Gubbins (later Jenny Chisholm), taught.
- 1964 – first birthday (of public club)
- 1966 – became affiliated group with R.S.C.D.S.

The date of affiliation with the RSCDS is easy to verify, the other dates less so. In 2014, Johnsonville secretary Pat Reesby went hunting for primary sources to try to pin down definitive dates – with mixed success.

Church group – With earlier annual reports missing, the first reference Pat could find was in the 1958-59 St Columba annual report:

"The Scottish Country Dance Club has proved a most enjoyable and useful part of our congregational life, and the little Sunday School hall at Raroa has proved an immense boon when floor space at St Columba has been at a premium. New members will be most warmly welcomed."

Public group – Pat found mention of the 'Scottish Country Dancing Club' in the August 1965 church newsletter *The Fragment*:

"The Club meets every Monday evening and would be very pleased to see some new members. We acknowledge a debt of gratitude to Miss Jenny Gubbins for the time she gives in teaching members the various intricate dances."

Pat concludes: *sometime between 1963 and 1966 the club moved to the church hall in Earp St, and members from outside the church were accepted.*

The date of 1963 continued to be accepted as the date of formation of the club separate from the church, and was the basis for Johnsonville Club's Silver Jubilee celebrations in 1988, when the club celebrated 25 years of dancing.

In amongst uncertainty about dates, 2013 slipped by without celebrating 50 years as a public group. But in



President Kristin Downey thanks Secretary Pat Reesby for her extensive research into the club's early history at Johnsonville's 2015 Annual Dance (Photo: Loralee Hyde)

2016 we got our act together and organised a grand [50 Golden Years Celebration](#) of affiliation with the RSCDS.

Nine years on, we're ready to celebrate again. And this time we're marking our church group origins, 70 years ago. We'll have a fine four-piece band to get our toes tapping, as we enjoy a special programme of dances designed to honour some of our long-standing members. Do join us!

Johnsonville 70th Celebration & Tartan Night

Khandallah Town Hall, 11 Ganges Rd, Khandallah
7.00pm, King's Birthday Monday 2 June 2025
Music by Jason Morris, Hilary Ferral,
Anna Miller, Ian Telfar

Rosnor Abbey	(J) Miscellany
Corn Rigs	(R) 4/12
^Liz Rendell	(S) R Downey – Pīwakawaka Coll
^John Markham's Rant*	(R) R Downey – Golden Bear Coll
^A Trip to Johnsonville School	(J) R Downey – Tuatara Coll
^Isla's Fancy*	(S) R Downey – Cane Toad Coll
Reel of the 51st	(R) 13/10
	Supper
^Short and Very Sweet	(J) R Downey – They Stole My Wife
^Stargazers*	(S) R Downey – They Stole My Wife
Shiftin' Bobbins	(R) R Clowes – Ormskirk
^My Golden Bear**	(J) R Downey – North Cape to Bluff
The De'il Among the Tailors	(R) 14/7

Join us for a special night celebrating 70 years since the formation of the church group which became Johnsonville SCD Club.

^ These dances honour some early & longstanding club members, and recognise Johnsonville School as the club's previous longtime home.

- Adult \$5.00 Student \$0.50
- All dances walked, newer dancers welcome
- * This dance is unsuitable for those who started this year
- ** *My Golden Bear* is only for confident, mobile dancers



RSCDS NZ Branch Inc. Wellington Region Region Dancing Day 2025

Early Dances Day

Saturday 1 - 4.30 pm

April 12

Tutor: Elaine Laidlaw

Cost: \$15

Please bring a water bottle

Live music

Intermediate Skills

For dancers who are familiar with all common steps and formations and have a reasonable level of fitness. You can dance familiar dances from a briefing and maintain correct footwork, phrasing and hand positions throughout.

You would typically have been dancing for at least 2 years.

Please check with your club teacher if you are unsure if the Early Dances Day is at the right level for you

Venue: St John's Anglican Church Hall, Bassett Rd, Johnsonville.



SOLUTION 1: ACROSS: 1 Dunedin, 4 Award, 7 Note, 8 Emphasis, 10 Exhausting, 12 Polite, 13 Effing, 15 Fall behind, 18 Explicit, 19 Reel, 20 Seton, 21 Shiftin.

DOWN: 1 Dance, 2 Nutshell, 3 Numpty, 4 Aching feet, 5 Apse, 6 Dashing, 9 Australian, 11 Diligent, 12 Pastels, 14 Plaits, 16 Dylan, 17 Spot.

**Closing date for the next issue of
Harbour City Happenings
Saturday 14 June 2025**

Johnsonville Tartan Night

Khandallah Town Hall

11 Ganges Rd, Khandallah

7.30pm, Monday 14 April 2025

Music by Jason Morris, Hilary Ferral, Anna Miller

Rosnor Abbey

(J) Miscellany

Mr Michael Bear's Reel

(R) S Phillips – Graded 2

The Marquis of Lorne

(S) Miscellany

Mrs Stewart's Jig*

(J) 35/1

Lady C Bruce's Reel

(R) Miscellany

Reel of the 51st

(R) 13/10

Supper

The Merry Oddfellows (J) Miscellany

The Braes of Breadalbane (S) 21/7

John Markham's Rant* (R) R Downey – Golden
Bear Coll

The De'il Amang the Tailors (R) 14/7

Our first Tartan Night of the year is designed to give new dancers the opportunity to dance to live music. Dancers in their first year are welcome to join us, and try a night at a different club.

- Adult \$5.00 Student \$0.50
- Dances marked * are unsuitable for dancers who started this year, but otherwise fine for all
- Most dances walked





RSCDS NZ Branch Inc. Wellington Region Region Classes 2025

5 Evening Classes - Basics Level

Tuesdays 7.30 – 9.30pm

May 6, 20, June 3, 17, July 1

Tutor: Melva Waite

Cost: \$45 for all five classes paid when registering; or \$10 cash per class

(It is best if you attend all classes. This allows the teacher to develop your skills from those taught at earlier classes)

Please bring a water bottle

Basics Skills

For New Dancers or dancers wishing to consolidate their knowledge of basic steps and formations. **You would typically be in the 1st or 2nd year of dancing.**

Expect to: -

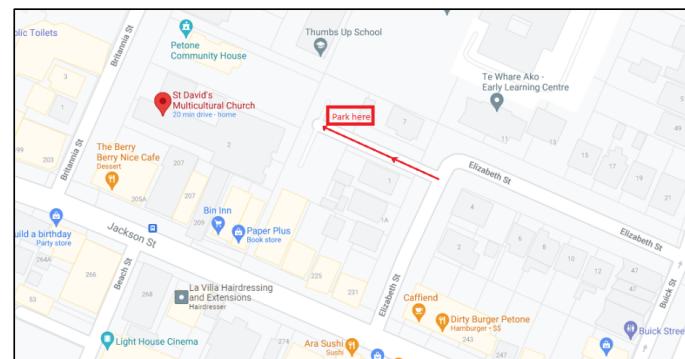
- Revisit the 5 basic steps – Skip Change, Pas de Basque/Setting, Slip Step, Strathspey Travelling, Strathspey Setting
- hone technique eg improving rhythm, hand and foot positioning, shape and timing/phrasing.
- integrate the above into some or all of the following formations – Poussette in quick time, Reel of Three, Allemande, Promenade, Grand Chain, Ladies Chain, Corners...perhaps more.
- dance these within suitable dances.

Please check with your club teacher if you are unsure if Basics is the right level for you

Registrations – to be received by April 29 (a week before your first class)

Please complete the online registration form by clicking [here](#) or go to the website www.wellingtonscd.org.nz

Venue: St David's Multicultural Church Hall, down the drive off Elizabeth St. Look for the Region banner near the door.





RSCDS NZ Branch Inc. Wellington Region Region Classes 2025

4 Evening Classes - Intermediate Level

Tuesdays 7.30 – 9.30pm

May 13, 27, June 10, 24

Tutor: Diane Bradshaw

Cost: \$50 for all four classes paid when registering; or \$15 cash per class

(It is best if you attend all classes. This allows the teacher to develop your skills from those taught at earlier classes)

Please bring a water bottle

Live Music

Intermediate Skills

For dancers who are familiar with all common steps and formations and have a reasonable level of fitness. You can dance familiar dances from a briefing and maintain correct footwork, phrasing and hand positions throughout.

You would typically have been dancing for at least 2 years.

Expect to: -

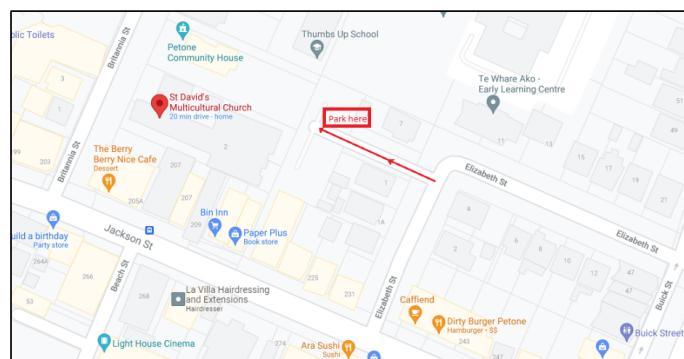
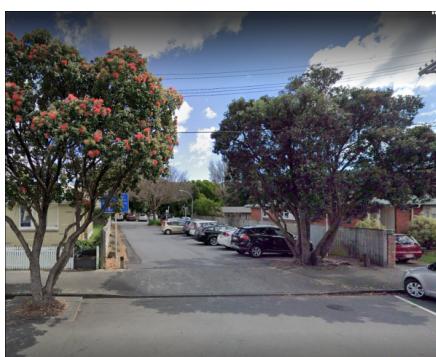
- Improve the accuracy of your steps, including transitions.
- hone technique eg improving teamwork, shape and phrasing.
- integrate the above into some or all of the following formations – Double Triangles, Strathspey Poussette, Turn Corners and Partners, Rondel, Set and Link, Set and Rotate, the Knot, Reel variations...perhaps more.
- dance these within suitable dances.

Please check with your club teacher if you are unsure if Intermediate is the right level for you

Registrations – to be received by May 6 (a week before your first class)

Please complete the online registration form by clicking [here](#) or go to the website www.wellingtonscd.org.nz

Venue: St David's Multicultural Church Hall, down the drive off Elizabeth St.



**Manawatu Scottish Society SCD Club
Celebrating 70 years!!**

Saturday 3rd May 2025, 7.00pm

Whakarongo Hall, cnr Stoney Creek Rd & Napier Hwy, Palmerston North

Music provided by Saltire Scottish Country Dance Band

MC Debbie Roxburgh

RSCDS members \$15, non-members \$18, others \$5

Grand March (piper Nicole Trewavas)

New Year Jig	J	RSCDS Bk 51
Shiftin Bobbins	R	Collins Pkt Ref
Paisley Weavers	S	RSCDS 3rd Bk Gr. SCDS
Seton's Ceilidh Band	J	RSCDS Bk 53
Montgomeryes' Rant	R	RSCDS Bk 10
Our Elsie	S	J Mortimer
Luckenbooth Brooch	J	RSCDS Bk 53
Reel On	R	Goldring Gr. & Soc. 3
Midsummer Common	S	RSCDS Bk 49
Reel of the 51st Division	R	RSCDS Bk 13

SUPPER

Hooper's Jig	J	MMM Vol. II
Orpington Caledonians	R	RSCDS Bk 49
Triple Happiness	S	RSCDS Bk 52
Pelorus Jack	J	RSCDS Bk 41
Maxwell's Rant	R	RSCDS Bk 18
City of Belfast	S	RSCDS Bk 48
De'il Amang the Tailors	R	RSCDS Bk 14



Tawa Scottish Country Dance Club

Invites you to join us in the Ngaio Town Hall
for our 2025 Annual Dance
on Saturday 24 May, at 7:30 pm

Music by Hilary Ferral, Jason Morris and Johnny Bourne

Admission \$17, RSCDS members \$14, Juniors & non-dancers \$6

Programme

- R **The Old Man of Storr** – Children's Book
- J **Joie de Vivre** – Book 39
- S **Neidpath Castle** – Book 22
- R **The Sailor** – Book 24
- * J **Beach Dancer** – Eddie West
- S **Miss Gibson's Strathspey** – Leaflet 10
- ** J **Gaelforce Wind** – Graded 3
- R **Flowers of Edinburgh** – Book 1
- S **Balmoral Strathspey** – Book 22
- J **The Laird of Milton's Daughter** – Book 22

S U P P E R

- * R **Fire Hose Reel** – North Cape to Bluff
- * J **Links with St Petersburg** – Book 46
- * S **Anna Holden's Strathspey** – Book 42
- * R **The Montgomeries' Rant** – Book 10
- * S **Miss Eleanor** – Book 49
- ** R **Trip to Timber Ridge** – Book 52

* Find a clever partner

** For the more experienced

