



Playing Scottish: The Roots of Live Music in the San Francisco Branch, Part III

By Heather MacKay

Welcome to the third in a series of articles drawn from an interview with Barbara McOwen, a well-known Scottish Country dance musician, bandleader, and arranger who got her start in the San Francisco Branch. Our first two articles covered the beginnings of live music in the Berkeley class in the late 1960s and early 1970s and the era in which the Berkeley Scottish Players gained fame and recognition. However, in the early 1980s, Barbara and Robert headed to the East Coast, and there were many changes in the make-up of the Bay Area dance music community.

Heather (H): Had Kim McGarrity come on the scene by the time you and Robert left, since in many ways she became a leader of Scottish music community in the Bay Area?

Barbara (B): She and Robert go way back to teenage years.... About 6 months after Robert moved to Berkeley, Kim moved to San Francisco. Then she started Scottish Country Dancing and she did a lot of dancing and took her full certificate exam a few years later. Then it turns out that she really had a lot of music, but she wasn't letting us know. What I had heard was that she used to play the viola. It almost seems like Robert and I had to leave town, and the minute we left town—Boom! Kim becomes a pianist and fiddler. Full-fledged musician. I think it had been germinating, maybe she'd been trying it out on her own or came to some open band rehearsals. But it was almost like we had to leave town, and this vacuum opened and Kim got sucked into the vacuum.

We were close friends before we left, and after we left we became closer friends and musical buddies. She and Margo Leslie became kind of a unit, with Kim on piano and Margo on fiddle. They met others and the band turned over quite a bit. They started this huge band. Karen Arinosian was a fiddler they found, and Geoff Palmer, the mandolin player, and they found the bass player, Andy Johnson. They found a lot of good musicians.

And in fact, they found Alasdair Fraser. Shortly after I left, I was coming back at any drop of a hat, and I flew back for what is now the Jean Patrick Ball. It felt wonderful for me that they needed me, whether it was true or not. I felt needed. It was very nice. So here we were at the Games. Nancy, Kim, Margo and I had our fiddles and we were sitting under a tree,

and it was very, very hot. We were trying to jam but none of us could think of any tunes, and Nancy really was uncomfortable playing without music, so we were having this very sorry, but still fun, jam session. And this guy comes along and says, "Oh, I know some of those." So each of us would take turns handing him our fiddles and saying "yeah, he knows this and he knows that," and "Oh, he's got a Scottish accent," and "Oh, he's cute!" I told them, "My goodness, be sure and get his phone number!" Well, they didn't get his phone number, they gave him their phone numbers and expected him to call them, which he didn't do for months. So we all thought this very nice guy had been lost, that he'd lost the phone number!

And that was Alasdair Fraser, of course. He started country dancing in Mark Post's class, for which I think Margo was playing. He started as a dancer, he had just moved to the area and, of course, he was a very fine fiddler. Even then, he was formative and even then we almost couldn't recognize what he was.

It did seem to me that, trying to figure out what music should sound like for dancers, the accordion standard was very, very high and we were still trying to set the standard for fiddling but it was way low. Well, Alasdair came along and it was "Ohhh, right, there it is, there's the standard!" He embodied what I had so desperately been trying to determine: what is Scottish and what is dance music on the fiddle?

[Some final notes from Heather: as most of you know, live music for dancing in the Bay Area continued to grow through the 1980s and 1990s, and there is today a wonderful community of players ranging from internationally known

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Classified Announcements

Other Events

2004 Ball Gown Sale and Tea Party January 24

Come and join us for a good time browsing, trying on, buying, or selling. You're sure to find some great bargains! In the past, we've had fun admiring and commenting on dresses others were modeling. Susie's house has lots of space and a huge mirror. So...don't get rid of that gown that doesn't fit or no longer seems to be the right color! Bring it to the Ball Gown Sale!

The annual pre-Valentine's Ball tea party and ball gown swap will again be held at Susie Langdon Kass' home in San Francisco. The date is **Saturday, January 24**, from 2:00–4:00 p.m. Even if you don't find something to buy, you still can enjoy a cup of tea, good food, and socializing.

The proceeds of each sale go to the seller, but the entry donations (\$3 per person) will go to the scholarship fund. If you can't make it, you can still send in garments for possible sale.

Look for flyers with directions to Susie's house and **SAVE THE DATE!**

Music, Music, Music!

New CD Release

A new Scottish Country Dance album, *The Devil's Quandary*, will be available at the end of October, featuring Deby Benton Grosjean, Fiddle, Andy Imbrie, Piano and Bob McMurtry, Recorder and Percussion. It contains original tunes coupled with hot traditional tunes, laced with beautiful strathspey harmonies written by Deby. The CD will debut at the Asilomar Workshop, October 31st for \$15 per CD. It will also be available from Deby Benton Grosjean or Bob McMurtry, PO Box 421, Felton, CA 95018. Add \$2 for shipping and handling. Great to dance to and listen, as well.

VALENTINE'S BALL PREVIEW SESSION

Saturday, February 7, 2003

1:00 - 5:00 PM

Noe Valley Ministry,
1021 Sanchez Street
at 23rd Street
in San Francisco

\$7.00

Teachers: Bruce Herbold,
Susie Langdon Kass,
& Trina Merriman

Music by the xxxxxxxxxxxx Band:
David Newitt, Heather MacKay,
Patti Cobb, & Bruce Herbold
All dances will be briefed, walked through for one or more couples and danced once for each couple.

Some knowledge of the dances is desirable.

This is a review session.

Dances will not be taught in detail.
Sponsored by the San Francisco Class
For information call Susie at 415-333-9372
or Linnea 415-647-5176

Directions:

By car: *Street parking only*; carpools **STRONGLY** suggested.

From 101: Take Cesar Chavez (Army) Street West exit, Cesar Chavez west to Sanchez, then right (north) to 23rd Street.

From 280 north: Take the San Jose Avenue exit. After the 1st light, turn diagonally left onto Dolores at left turn light, continue north to 24th Street. Turn left, then right onto Sanchez.

By public transit: Muni: J-Church streetcar, 24-Divisadero bus, 48-Quintara bus; or BART to a downtown station and transfer to the J-Church streetcar, or BART to the 24th Street station and walk.

Lost and Found

We ended up with only a few "Lost and Found" items from the Pleasanton Games this year! THANK YOU for remembering and taking home your belongings.

Some of the found items have been claimed. Here is what I still have:

- A Blue Nike visor, slightly faded
- A small mesh shoe bag with ghillies, panty hose, and a pair of black socks.

I strongly urge you to mark all your shoes, clothing, and other belongings with your name, especially items that you can leave around or take off at a dance event. Then forgotten items can be easily returned to you.

Susie Langdon Kass
415-333-9372, susielk@itsa.ucsf.edu,

Volunteer Opportunities

Run for the Branch Committee!

The nomination committee will soon be recruiting members to run for election to the "Branch Committee", our organization's Board of Directors or Executive Committee. Four board members will be elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in May for a two-year term. Please consider being on the Branch Committee. It's fun and a great way to serve our the Branch. If you are interested yourself, or could suggest someone, please let us know. Contact any "board" member or Susie at susielk@itsa.ucsf.edu, 415-333-9372.

To find out more about the Branch Committee, why not go to a meeting? All RSCDS-SF Branch members are welcome at Branch Committee meetings. The committee usually meets at a member's home in the afternoon of monthly party days. Call one of the Committee members to find out the location of the next meeting. Or, talk to any of the current or former Branch Committee members.

The Nominating Committee.

Continued from page 1

musicians to people just starting to pick up an instrument. I hope that someday I, or someone else out there, will get around to documenting the growth of SCD music in the Bay Area from the early 1980s to the present. In the meantime, if I ever hope to be good enough to play a monthly party, I'd better get away from the word processor and spend more time with my fiddle!

And where is Barbara McOwen, now, you might ask? Since moving to Boston in the early 1980's, Barbara and Robert remain active in the Scottish dance and music community. Robert teaches Scottish Country and Highland dance. Barbara leads the band *Tullochgorum* and the *Muckle Carfuffle Band*, as well as being a co-founder of the Boston Scottish Fiddle Club and the Strathspey and Reel Society of New Hampshire. She continues to write new tunes and arrangements, teaches many fiddle students and is organizing a new Scottish fiddle camp on an island in Boston Harbor.]

In Memoriam

It is with regret that the Santa Cruz class must report the passing of Howard Leach, who died on August 28, 2003. Howard and Carol Leach were the devoted teachers of the Santa Cruz class for more than 20 years, driving over the hill on Thursday nights without fail, come rain or shine, snow or traffic. Howard may have seemed gruff to some of us when we began dancing, but we all learned to enjoy his fine teaching, his fine taste for fun dances, his dry Texas wit, and the twinkle in his eye. He was amazingly patient with our raucous behavior, and his steady hand at the helm of the Santa Cruz class helped it through many troubled times.

Tom Cuthbertson

The Games at Pleasanton – 2003

by Doug McConnell

Another year and another Games, with plaudits to all who helped make it happen. Where does one begin? Clearly, it is with heartfelt thanks to the performers (some 280 dancers, 60 fiddlers, 25-35 harpers and 2 singers) who entertained the audiences on our two stages for the two days of the Games and who combined with the highland dancers in the Salute to the Chief in the closing ceremonies in front of the grandstand each day. Kathleen McAdam's youth sets performed beautifully to the packed grandstand and the crowds standing in front. Thanks also to the teachers who work so hard with the dancers and raise the level of dancing overall, throughout the Branch and beyond. Nor should we forget our adjudicators, Lin Pettengill and Marjorie McLaughlin, and their scribes (Marilyn Stocker, Paula Jacobson, and Gloria McConnell), and the work they do to prepare by studying the dances to be performed in advance and then judging each performance. Special thanks also to Alastair Brown and to Sandy McNeill for all their sound engineering work.

Thanks are due to those who appear by magic on the Friday and set everything up and who stay after the Games on Sunday evening to tear it all down and pack it away until next year. If I inadvertently miss someone, forgive me, but I know that these people were active in construction and put away (not destruction!): Gene Bissell, Alastair Brown, Harry Butler, Mark Caplin, Julie Carpenos, Mel Creusere, David Gord, Michael Howard, Paula Jacobson, Susie and Sid Kass, Vern McEvoy, Margaret Mitchell, Claire Pollitt, Alisa Pura, Greg Reznick, Marilyn and Bill Stocker, Michael Suckow, Larry Wakeman, and my stalwart from the early Santa Rosa days, Bud Wisecarver.

It is said that an army marches on its stomach and none know this better than the East Bay ladies. They appear as if by magic each year about 11:30 a.m. and once again provided a gourmet picnic lunch for the set up crew on Friday. Marge Henry was ably assisted by Virginia Bissell, Cathleen Cooper, Linda Henderson, Jewel Murphy, Claire Pollitt, Susan Reznick and Margaret Ward, all heavily involved and deserving the gratitude and thanks of all of us.

This was a weekend of mixed feelings for me. I have seen this program grow from a beginning where two or three sets of dancers danced on the grass in a back corner of the fairgrounds, where the first platforms with which we were provided were painted dark green and absorbed heat to the extent that dancers got blisters through their ghillies! The program could not have developed into what it has become without the special support of the San Francisco Branch and the wonderful people who are its members. I have so many wonderful memories to treasure and I thank you for them.



Monthly Parties

DECEMBER MONTHLY PARTY
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2003, AT 7:30 P.M.
MOUNTAIN VIEW MASONIC TEMPLE
840 CHURCH STREET, MOUNTAIN VIEW
HOSTS: MOUNTAIN VIEW CLASS

Dance	Source	Type/Level
A Jig for Mrs. Dunn	Children's/3	32J 2 B
The New Town of Edinburgh	MMM 2	32S 3 B
The Irish Rover+	Cosh 22 SCD	32R 3 A
Miss Gibson's Strathspey+	Leaflet 18	32S 3 I
Jessie's Hornpipe	8/9	32R 3 B
The Express	20/11	40J 3 I
John McAlpin	Foss/Galloway	32S 3 I
Midnight Oil+	Drewry/Bankhead pt3	48J 5 A
Asilomar Romantic+	SF Coll. Vol 2	32S 3 I
Ye're Welcome, Charly Stuart	7/1	32R 3 I
Mrs. Stewart Sinton's Reel	Gr./12	32J 2 B
Mr. Robert H. Mackay	38/5	32S 3 I/A
The Rocks of Gibraltar	Border Book	32R 2 B
Butterscotch and Honey	Attwood Leaflet	32S 4 I/A
The Reel of the 51 st Division+	13/10	32R 3 B/I
+ new this month		

JANUARY MONTHLY PARTY
SATURDAY, JANUARY 3, 2004, AT 7:30 P.M.
PARK SCHOOL
360 E. BLYTHEDALE, MILL VALLEY

HOSTS: SANTA ROSA CLASS AND DUNSMUIR SCOTTISH DANCERS

Dance	Source	Type/Level
A Jig for Mrs. Dunn	Children's/3	32J 2 B
Monymusk+	11/2	32S 3 B
The Golden Gateway Reel+	McMurtry/Devil's Quandary	32R 3 I
Miss Gibson's Strathspey+	Leaflet 18	32S 3 I
On the Quarterdeck+	Boyd/Harbour City	32H 2B
The Express	20/11	40J 3 I
John McAlpin	Foss/Galloway	32S 3 I
The Irish Rover	Cosh 22 SCD	32R 3 A
Mrs. Hamilton of Wishaw+	23/9	32S 3 I/A
Jessie's Hornpipe	8/9	32R 3 B
Postie's Jig+	Clowes/Ormskirk 5	32J 4 B
Mr. Robert H. Mackay	38/5	32S 3 I/A
Midnight Oil	Drewry/Bankhead pt3	48J 5 A
Asilomar Romantic+	SF Coll. Vol 2	32S 3 I
The Reel of the 51 st Division	13/10	32R3 B/I
+ new this month		

DIRECTIONS TO MOUNTAIN VIEW MASONIC HALL
840 CHURCH STREET, MOUNTAIN VIEW, CA 94941.

FROM 280: exit at S. El Monte Avenue, to Foothill Expressway. Right on Foothill Expressway, left on Miramonte Avenue, across El Camino Real W., to S. Shoreline Blvd. Turn right onto Church Street.

FROM 101: Exit at Moffett Blvd. Follow Moffett Blvd. south to Central Expressway. Cross Central Expressway to Castro Street. Turn right onto Church Street (5 blocks).

DIRECTIONS TO PARK SCHOOL
360 E. BLYTHEDALE, MILL VALLEY

The Park School in Mill Valley is located at the corner of East Blythedale Avenue and Elm Avenue. Parking is in the school yard (behind the school), on Elm Avenue, or in a small car park at the corner of E. Blythedale and Elm, opposite the school.

Branch Scholarships
 Scholarships are available for all kinds of dance/music workshops and events. Contact Paula Jacobson at (831) 688-8295 for more information

RSCDS Management Board: a Glimpse of Life at the Top

by Susi Mayr

When the new management structure for the RSCDS was decided two years ago, it finally became possible for any member of the Society, not just Branch representatives, to be elected to the Management Board and its Committees. Having spent quite a lot of time criticising what the RSCDS was doing (even as a member of the old Executive Council) it seemed inappropriate to stand back and do nothing when active involvement was possible. I happened to be working in the UK, so travelling to Edinburgh for a meeting once every two months would be a lot easier than flying in from Vienna. So, with quite a bit of encouragement from dancing friends in many different countries (including quite a bit of support from San Francisco Branch – thank you!), I decided to agree to being nominated, and was duly elected to the Management Board. As there were exactly as many candidates as places to fill it was not such a momentous feat.

The new Management Board, although potentially a very different body, turned out to be, in my opinion at least, very much like a smaller version of the old Executive Council. It seemed to take forever to make even the simplest decisions, there was much talking and reading of reports, but nothing much was changing. Apparently we had to give the new structure time to “bed in,” and not be so impatient.

True, there were some obvious improvements, for example we did decide to make reports of the Management Board meetings available, not only to Branches, but also to all individual members on the RSCDS website, which was redesigned and a new “members only” section introduced. Although we discussed a whole spectrum of topics (take a look at the published reports to find out what they are) there still did not seem much to show for the amount of time we spent on Society business. Communication between members of the Management Board works quite well – some of us are quite prolific email writers, but it is still words rather than actions. Obviously the Management Board must exercise a certain degree of caution and consideration in its activities, but I would have thought it could be more active in its approach, instead it often seems to wait until a problem becomes impossible to ignore, and even then has a tendency to look the other way. I think we need to have the courage to take some risks.

There have been some very basic issues that we have been ignoring or have temporarily sidelined while dealing with the new management structure, and we have to start dealing with them. Basic issues such as the way the Society sees itself: is it a Scottish organisation with its main focus in Scotland, or should it acknowledge its – perhaps – unexpected worldwide spread and address the issues this situation brings? Is it an umbrella body for dancers or for teachers? Is it a Branch-

based or a member-based organisation, and what about representation for HQ members (who make up about 10% of the total membership but have no official voice at the AGM, although there is now an “HQ member spokesperson” on the Management Board – not a fact that has been publicised much).

Currently the RSCDS is trying to be all of these things, and spreading itself too thinly to be really effective. What we need is a clear direction, and the Management Board should be leading the way forward. This year’s AGM is making a good start with a formal debate on membership structures, which will, hopefully, lead to a general discussion of the available options with Branches and individual members (please join in!), and a motion for consideration at the earliest possible opportunity (the 2004 AGM).

Even before my year on the Management Board started I thought that twelve months would be quite enough – either things would start moving quickly and a clear direction would emerge, or nothing would change (and I might as well spend my time doing something else). Initially, I decided not to stand for election again. However, just a couple of days before the closing date for nominations it transpired that there were fewer candidates than places and I decided to “help out” by running again (so many people thought this was a good idea that I had two nomination forms, from the Branches in San Francisco and Northern Territories - Australia). As it happens, there will be a proper election this year, as a last minute rush brought eight nominations for seven places! At least there will be some excitement at the AGM....

(Biographical Note: I have been dancing seriously for nearly 30 years (although my first experiences were a bit earlier than that, with my grandmother’s collection of 78s), teaching since 1981 (and one of the very first recipients of the Jean Milligan Scholarship), I am currently Chairman of Vienna Branch and a Branch teacher, and have met quite a few members of San Francisco Branch in the days when business took me to California on a regular basis (at the right time of year for Asilomar and the Valentine’s Ball!).

Editor's Note: If you wish to contact Susi about any matters mentioned in her article, or with any other questions you may have about the Management Board and her role, you may contact her at redrose_solutions@tiscali.co.uk

In the Summer of 2003



Sue introducing a dance, with Janet, Judy, Roy, a guest dancer, and the musicians.

In June 2003, five local dancers, Sue and Bruce Anderson, Judy Belden, Janet and Roy Hayter went together on an Elderhostel trip, which included following the Lewis and Clark route by canoe on the Missouri River in Montana. One night we gave a dance demo to other campers, including a Sierra Club group. They kindly provided a fiddler and mandolinist, who could play Scottish tunes, and a guest dancer to make up a set.



Sue, Judy, Janet, Roy dancing a poussette.



Roy, Sue, and Bruce attempting to dance Triumph high up above the Missouri River in a rock formation called the Ballroom.

Ave atque Vale...



Picture 1



Picture 2



Picture 3

Doug and Gloria McConnell are ready for retirement to the Gold Coast in Queensland, Australia; that is, as soon as the Australian Government can get its Ducks in a Row!

The 2003 Games was Doug's last Games as Chairman of the Celtic Heritage Area; he has been our Chairman of the Celtic Heritage Area since its inception;

Doug created the popular mix of dancing, fiddling, harping, singing, and audience participation dancing for the visitors, *viz.*,

- Alasdair Fraser, and The San Francisco Scottish Fiddlers rant on Sunday;
- Harper's Hall, John Kelly, and Kirstie Fitch provide musical interludes;
- Ron Wallace, Jennifer Kelly, and other groups generate music and dance;

On Friday, September 26, to celebrate Doug's service to the Caledonian Club, and the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society-San Francisco Branch, the setup team said "Let them eat Cake":

1. Marge Henry to serve after Doug cuts the first slice.
2. Caledonian Club SF chocolate and raspberry (partially devoured).
3. Bon Voyage Doug almond and lemon curd (ready for action).

Further pictures available on <http://www.rscds-sf.org/>

During the Jane Patrick Memorial Dance on Saturday evening, Doug and Gloria were presented with a new dance, with music created for the occasion.

Current plans are that Alastair Brown will take over the Chairman's duty for the 2004 Games, having been Doug's assistant for several years.

(Pictures and words: Alistair Brown)

Scottish Dancing in Russia

by Alan Twigg

In the first part of September I had the good fortune to be one of only two Americans to take part in the first SCD tour group to visit southern Russia. The tour was organized by a Scottish friend of mine and consisted mainly of dancers from the British Isles, but also included a smattering from Canada, France, Germany, and New Zealand. The basis for the trip was to meet up with a fledgling SCD group based in Krasnodar, the Kuban Scottish Dancers. Krasnodar is the provincial center for the Kuban Steppe, a largely agricultural region that adjoins the western Caucasus and the Black Sea.

So why is there Scottish dancing in this obscure corner of the world that sees very few foreign visitors? A few years back, Ilona Gumenyuk, a Krasnodar native with a background in Russian dance performance, spent some time in Britain looking for employment as a translator. She met up with Scottish dance teacher Fiona Grant, fell in love with Scottish dancing, and arranged to attend the Summer School at St. Andrews during her visit. Ultimately Ilona was unsuccessful in finding a job and returned home, but with a new enthusiasm for Scottish dancing and culture, which led her to start a class in SCD and a club promoting Scottish culture and music. The dance group has now been going for a year and a half and has 50 members, many of whom are students at the local university. The cultural club has attracted a musical ensemble who play Celtic music and sing Scottish songs, even though one of the singers understands no English. Ilona passed the Preliminary Test to become an RSCDS teacher at this year's Summer School, and has done a remarkable job transmitting her enthusiasm and love for things Scottish to the members of her group, along with the *pas de basque* lessons.

Our tour group flew into Krasnodar airport late on a rainy evening; most of the party had been up more than 24 hours, having departed from London the previous night. The Kuban dancers were out in strength to meet us, and the welcome could not have been warmer; they assisted us with luggage, piled onto the hired coaches with us, and got us settled in our hotel and provided with a late supper. This was only the first indication of how well we would be taken care of during our stay. Every time our coaches left the hotel, several of the dancers accompanied us. Others turned up early to greet us at the classes and other events, and we had personal guides for shopping and sightseeing expeditions.

The morning following our arrival, dance classes got underway at the Palace of Culture, a building equipped with several different halls suitable for dancing, as well as a good-sized theater. The teaching staff consisted of David Queen from Lancashire; Fiona Grant, who resides in Bristol; Malcolm Brown from York; Cate Gray from Wales; Shirley Butterfield from New Zealand, and myself (some of these

names will be familiar to strathspey newlist subscribers). Music was most ably provided by Andrew Lyon and James Gray on accordion and piano, and also by David Queen on fiddle when he wasn't teaching; together these three make up the dance band **Scotch Measure**, and you can hear them on the band's CD release, "First Dram." Rather than arranging classes according to experience level, the visitors simply divided into two equal-sized groups, with the Kuban dancers dispersed among us. The Russians ranged in dance experience as well as in knowledge of English, but the teachers were aware of that and kept explanations simple and visual, and everyone pitched in to help, those who knew both languages translating when necessary. We had two full mornings of classes that weekend, an informal dance on Saturday night, and a program of Russian culture and music on Sunday evening, in addition to museum visits, shopping, socializing, and an elaborate Cossack-style banquet.

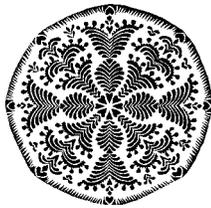
The Russian cultural program was excellent in content and organization. All of the Kuban dancers turned up in ethnic costume, and we were entertained with a display of local artists' work before the program began. The formal welcome included the traditional Slavic offering of bread and salt as we entered the hall; each table was laden with local wine, vodka, cookies, and other treats. During the evening we experienced a wide variety of performances, including some of the most poised little girls I've ever seen. Other highlights included Georgian dancers, a gypsy hoop dance, mock medieval battles (who would have expected that the Russian would triumph over the Mongol?) and a wide sampling of different Russian dance and singing styles from various groups local to Krasnodar. We were taught a folksong, encouraged to join the dancing, and given lessons in how to drink vodka (which had repercussions in some cases).

The following day, our tour group headed off for several days at a resort on the Black Sea, about 2 hours' drive from Krasnodar. Here we enjoyed swimming, trail-walking, massage, more dance classes, general R&R, and a couple of very Russian activities, including a trip up into the Caucasus Mountains for a barbecue and a Russian bath (similar to a sauna, with the addition of bunches of oak leaves to flail each other with and a cold outdoor plunge to invigorate the system!). We also had a class from Ilona in Soviet-style dance; this was drawn from a program formerly administered in schools as a competitive activity and consisted of couples' dances choreographed to traditional folk music. The last night of our stay, we had a formal dinner in the rooftop restaurant and put on a bit of a *ceilidh* for some local dignitaries and other guests. We thought it was good fun singing a few Scottish songs and doing a demonstration dance or two, but were bowled over when some Russians came over to talk to us afterward in the lounge and said they were professional musicians who had driven up from

another town 4 hours away when they heard about our event! This was not the only time people at neighboring tables heard English being spoken and immediately wanted to demonstrate their good will by buying us drinks, chatting, or dedicating musical numbers. An experience quite unlike the normal reception afforded an American tourist!

We came back to Krasnodar for another weekend of classes, a *ceilidh* dance, and a formal ball. Once again, the impact of our visit was as surprising to us as to our hosts, if not more so. We were told that some officials would be attending and the organizers and teachers were asked to show up a bit early in case someone wanted to interview us. When we arrived, there were half a dozen TV camera teams, and we were told later that they represented national Russian media! Some of the camera operators stayed most of the evening, filming the various proceedings. Notable among the *ceilidh* performances was the act presented by David Queen, who one-upped the performance many will remember from Elke Baker at Asilomar a couple years ago, when she danced the Highland Fling and accompanied herself on the fiddle. David played fiddle while dancing the Seann Truibhas, a significantly more complex endeavor in that this dance moves around a significant area. The Kuban dancers dramatized a Burns poem with a choreographed tango, proving a remarkable melding of different cultures.

With the ball behind us (complete with a dance featuring *zdravstvuite-do svidaniya*, or hello-goodbye, setting) and an after-party at which we crammed 25 people into a minuscule hotel room (8 of them on the same single bed for a while), all that were left were the farewells and the return journeys. The farewells were as warm as the welcomes, with hugs and promises to meet up again. One of the youngest Russian dancers said that he was sending a piece of his heart away with us across the sea... I'd happily return, and hope to encourage more interactions between the cultures.



Directory Additions

Benson H Tongue Claire Tongue 3434 Tupelo Dr Walnut Creek CA 94598	P	(O): 510-643-8629 (H): 925-935-6415	Teresa Terada 1022 W Knickerbocker Dr Sunnyvale CA 94087	(H): 408-773-0455 terri_terada@yahoo.com
Stacey Snevely 572 Hermitage Dr San Jose CA 95134		(O): 650-786-3458 (H): 408-321-0116 stacey@staceykristine.com	Patricia J Webb 7221 Healdsburg Ave Sebastopol CA 95472	(O): 707-823-6010 (H): 707-829-6610 pando@jps.net
Edith Summers 1915 Tassajara Ave Richmond CA 94805		(H): 510-237-7959	Charles & Marilyn Wood 1030 N Baker Stockton CA 95203	S (H): 209-465-8871 chuckjwood@aol.com mraewood@aol.com
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RSCDS-SF CALENDAR OF EVENTS, 2003-2004

Revised 10/01/03 • Compiled by Dotty Lieber: dotty@cruzio.com

OCTOBER, 2003

- 4, Sa: LOCH LOMOND HIGHLAND GAMES, Highland Park, Ben Lomond. Anita: a.geleynse@comcast.net
- 4, Sa: MONTHLY PARTY, Alameda Masonic Hall, 2312 Alameda Ave. Sandra 707-643-9162 Hosts: Berkeley Classes
- 11, Sa: 2-6 PM ASILOMAR BALL PREVIEW, (Part 1 of 2) Mitchell Park Community Center, 3800 Middlefield Rd. Palo Alto. Tim: timtoddw@hotmail.com , 415-440-7438
- 12, Su:1-5 PM ASILOMAR BALL PREVIEW (Part 1 of 2), Lafayette Veterans Memorial Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd. (at First St.), Lafayette: Tim: timtoddw@hotmail.com , 415-440-7438
- 18, Sa: 12:30 - 4:30 PM ASILOMAR BALL PREVIEW, (Part 2 of 2) Mitchell Park Community Center, 3800 Middlefield Rd., Palo Alto: Tim, timtoddw@hotmail.com 415-440-7438
- 26, Su: 1-5 PM ASILOMAR BALL PREVIEW (Part 2 of 2), Lafayette Veterans Memorial Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd. (at First St.), Lafayette: Tim, timtoddw@hotmail.com 415-440-7438
- 30, Th: 7:45 PM Santa Cruz Class FAMILY & FRIENDS NIGHT. Juliet 408-733-9035
- 31, Fr - Nov. 2, Su: ASILOMAR WORKSHOPS AND BALL. Cameron 650-365-5574, Julee: julm-hcs@pacbell.net

NOVEMBER, 2003

- 1, Sa, & 2, Su: ASILOMAR WORKSHOPS AND BALL see October listing
- 7, Fr: CAMPBELL CLASS NEW BEGINNERS; Basic Intermediate class also: Rebecca 408-378-3817
- 8, Sa: MONTHLY PARTY, San Mateo Masonic Temple, 100 N. Ellsworth, San Mateo. Sandra 707-643-9162. Hosts: New World, Red Thistle
- 26, We: 7:45 PM MT. VIEW CLASS THANKSGIVING BASH. Anita: a.geleynse@comcast.net

DECEMBER, 2003

- 1, Mo: 4-6:30 PM: NEW SF CHILDREN'S CLASS starts: Location TBA. Susie 415-333-9372
- 6, Sa: MONTHLY PARTY, Mountain View Masonic Temple, 840 Church St.: Sandra 707-643-9162 Hosts: Mountain View Class
- 13, Sa: BERKELEY HOLIDAY PARTY, Potluck 6 PM, Dancing 8 PM, Alameda Masonic Hall 2312 Alameda Ave., Alameda. Heather, 510-653-7507, mackay@voicenet.com
- 18, Th: 7:45 PM SF CLASS WINTER SOLSTICE PARTY: Susie, 415-333-9372
- 27, Sa: 8 PM LAFAYETTE TWEEN PARTY witken@astound.net

JANUARY, 2004

- 1, Th: 8-10 PM SF Class MONTHLY PARTY DANCE REVIEW: Noe Valley Ministry, SF. Susie 415-333-9372

- 3, Sa: MONTHLY PARTY, Park School 360 E. Blythedale, Mill Valley: Sandra 707-643-9162 Hosts: Santa Rosa, Dunsmuir
- 10, Sa: 2 PM (video at 1:30) TEACHERS MTG.at Kathleen's Bruce Hamilton 650-328-0474
- 11, Su: 6 PM NEW BEGINNERS CLASS starts, SF: UCSF Fitness Center Susie 415-333-9372
- 17-18, Sa-Su: DUNSMUIR DANCERS WEEKEND RETREAT
- 24, Sa: BALL GOWN SWAP & SALE, SF: Susie: susielk@itsa.ucsf.edu , 415-333-9372. Watch for flyer

FEBRUARY, 2004

- 7, Sa: 1-5 PM VALENTINE'S BALL REVIEW, Noe Valley Ministry. SF. Susie 415-333-9372
- 11, We: MT. VIEW CLASS CUPID'S BOW PARTY (Valentine's Ball Review) Anita, a.geleynse@comcast.net
- 14, Sa: VALENTINE'S BALL. Art: atarsa@lsil.com

MARCH, 2004

- 6, Sa: MONTHLY PARTY, Lucie Stern Center, 1305 Middlefield Rd, Palo Alto. Sandra 707-643-9162 Hosts: San Jose Class
- 31, We: 7:45 PM MT. VIEW CLASS "ALL FOOL'S EVE" PARTY Anita, a.geleynse@comcast.net

APRIL, 2004

- 3, Sa: MONTHLY PARTY, Alameda Masonic Temple, 2312 Alameda Ave., Alameda. Sandra 707-643-9162. Hosts: Lafayette, Livermore Classes.
- 17, Sa: SACRAMENTO WORKSHOP AND BALL: www.rscds-sacramento.org
- 18, Su: 2 PM TEACHERS MEETING (video @ 1:30) Location TBD: brucehamilton@macconnect.com
- 25, Su: MULTI-ETHNIC DANCE FESTIVAL, Cubberly Theatre, 4000 Middlefield Rd., Palo Alto. Red Thistle Dancers

MAY, 2004

- 1, Sa: MONTHLY PARTY, Temple United Methodist Church, 1111 Junipero Serra Blvd., San Francisco. Sandra 707-643-9162. Hosts: San Francisco Classes
- 15, Sa: (Tentative) CHILDREN'S BALL. Kathleen 925-934-6148
- 26, We: MT. VIEW CLASS END OF YEAR PARTY: Kings Head Pub, Campbell. Anita: a.geleynse@comcast.net

JUNE, 2004

- 5, Sa: MONTHLY PARTY, Soquel Grange, 2800 Porter St., Soquel Sandra 707-643-9162 Hosts: Santa Cruz, Soquel, Monterey Classes
- 9 and 16, We: MT. VIEW CLASS DANCING IN THE PARK Anita: a.geleynse@comcast.net
- 17 or 24 (TBA), Th: 7:45 PM SF CLASS SUMMER SOLSTICE PARTY. Susie, 415-333-9372
- 19, Sa: 2 PM: TEACHERS MEETING (video @ 1:30) Location TBD brucehamilton@macconnect.com
- 26, Sa: TRUCKEE WORKSHOP & DANCE: Dave 775-825-6867

The Evolution of the Kilt

1600 to 1725 — The Belted Plaid

Documented from the 15th century, and probably appearing much earlier, the saffron shirt was the signature garment of the Highland Scots, not the kilt or any of its precursors. In other words, *Rob Roy* got it right; *Braveheart* missed the mark.

Around 1600, the saffron shirt went out of use and never returned. This was probably due to the Elizabethan conquest of Ireland, the birthplace of the saffron shirt. The *plaid* became the universal dress of the Highland Scots. The belted *plaid* (*breacán filleadh*), the progenitor of the kilt, came into being around this time. The belted *plaid's* earliest documented appearance is in Irish Gaelic in *The Life of Red Hugh O'Donnell* in a description of a corps of Hebrideans who had come to The O'Donnell's assistance in 1594: "They were recognised among the Irish soldiers by the distinction of their arms and clothing, their habits and language, for their exterior dress was mottled cloaks of many colours with a fringe to their shins and calves, their belts were over their loins outside their cloaks."

This is an important distinction. Up to this time, the *plaid* or cloak was pinned or wrapped or folded. Although belts are mentioned as girdles for both Scots and Irish dress earlier, this is the first instance in which the outer garment, and not just the shirt, is belted. It was apparently so important a difference that the Irish saw fit to mention that "their belts were over their loins *outside* their cloaks."

Like twins separated at birth, the *brat* "grew up" differently in Ireland and Scotland. By the 17th century, the Irish *brat* had become shaped in the shoulders for easier wear. The long "hair" of the frieze wool was pulled and curled to make a warm interior. The Scottish version was still made out of *tartan* (light wool) and therefore continued to be wrapped as the thickened Irish version could not.

In the early 17th century, the belted *plaid* began to be worn with fabric stockings, shoes, and blue "bonnets" similar to tam o'shanter.

From John Taylor's account of a visit to Braemar in 1618: "Their habit is shoes with but one sole apiece; stockings (which they call short hose) made of a warm stuff of divers colours which they call tartane. As for breeches many of them, nor their forefathers, never wore any, but a jerkin of the same stuff that their hose is of, their garters being bands of wreathes of hay or straw, with a plaid about their shoulders, which is a mantle of divers colours, much finer and lighter stuffe than their hose, with blue caps on their heads, a handkerchief knit with two knots about their neck; and thus they are attired."

Defoe, author of *Robinson Crusoe*, recounts from the Highland part of the Scottish army at the beginning of the Great Civil War in 1639: "Their dress was as antique as the rest; a cap on their heads, called by them a bonnet, long hanging

sleeves behind, and their doublet, breeches and stockings, of a stuff they call plaid, striped across red and yellow, with short cloaks of the same." It is obvious that the word "plaid" has begun to take on its modern meaning.

William Sacheverell, Governor of the Isle of Man, in 1688 writes: "The usual outward habit of both sexes is the pladd; the women's much finer, the colours more lovely, and the squares larger than the men's and put me in mind of the ancient Picts. This serves them for a veil and covers both head and body. The men wear theirs after another manner, especially when designed for ornament: it is loose and flowing, like the mantles our painters give their heroes. Their thighs are bare, with brawny muscles. Nature has drawn all her stroaks bold and masterly; what is covered is only adapted to necessity—a thin brogue on the foot, a short buskin of various colours on the legg, tied above the calf with a striped pair of garters. What should be concealed is hid with a large shot-pouch, on each side of which hangs a pistol and a dagger. A round target on their backs, a blew bonnet on their heads, and in one hand a broad sword and a musquet in the other."

In Martin Martin's *A Description of the Western Islands of Scotland* in 1703: "The first Habit wore by Persons of Distinction in the Islands was the *leni-croich*, from the Irish word *leni*, which signifies a Shirt, and *croich*, Saffron because their shirt was dyed with that herb: the ordinary number of Ells [yards] used to make this Robe was twenty-four: it was the upper Garb, reaching below the knees, and was tied with a Belt round the middle; but the Islanders have laid it aside about a hundred years ago.

"They now generally use the Coat, Wastcoat, and Breeches, as elsewhere; and on their heads, they wear Bonnets made of thick Cloth, some blew, some black, and some gray.

"Many of the People wear *Trowis*, some of them very fine Woven, like Stockings of those made of Cloath; some are coloured, and others striped; the latter are as well shap'd as the former, lying close to the Body from the middle downwards, and tied round with a Belt above the Haunches. There is a square piece of Cloth which hangs down before. The measure for shaping the *trowis* is a Stick of Wood, whose length is a cubit, and that divided into the length of a finger, and half a finger, so that it requires more skill to make it, than the ordinary habit.

"But Persons of Distinction wear the Garb in fashion in the South of Scotland." Martin's description goes on to describe plaids and how they are made. He states that "every isle differs from each other in their fancy of making *plaids*, as to the Stripes in Breadth and Colours. This Humour is as different thro' the main Land of the Highlands in so far that they who have seen those Places is able, at the first view of a Man's Plaid, to guess the place of his residence." This may be the precursor to "clan tartans." However, it has been established by many sources that the concept of "clan tartans" emerged after the Jacobite

Rising of 1745 to foster nationalism through establishment of a national costume. It was for this same reason that the Act of 1746 banned all forms of Highland Dress.

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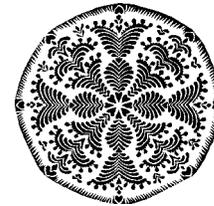
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SCD Elsewhere

November 2003

Fri-Sun, November 7-9

Victoria (BC) Branch Workshop at Cadboro Bay United Church (and neighbouring halls), 2625 Arbutus Rd. Friday night: 7:30 pm; Saturday classes 9-3; dance 7:30-11:00; Sunday brunch. Sponsored by RSCDS Victoria Branch. Teachers are Gary Thomas, Elinor Vandegrift, and Rosemary Coupe. Music by Scuttlebutt. Festive attire. Lunch during workshop; snacks during evening dance. Cdn\$70. Dancers may pay for package (welcome dance, 3 classes, evening dance) or may pay by module: individual classes plus dance, etc [2 classes and dance is a popular package]. Feel free to bring friends who have never danced before. The beginner class is open to all. Contact Anita Mathur 250-382-8808 dmanita@telus.net or Connie Bott 250-595-4308.

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