

The Scottish Country Dance Teacher

TAS Newsletter February 2012

Newsletter of the Teachers' Association Scotland (TAS)

Chairman: Anne Taylor Secretary: Oluf Olufsen Treasurer: Sue Porter

Committee: Margaret Harris, Mary Burney, Neil MacPhail

Workshop Organiser: Jenny Greene

Newsletter Editor: Jimmie Hill macleodhill@mac.com

From the editor

A fairly long newsletter this time. We have a report of the AGM discussion on use of funds and the Autumn Workshop plus news of the Spring one in Inverness with Jean and Jennifer. The committee would be grateful if you could fill in the questionnaire about the use of surplus funds.

We are grateful to John Wilkinson for allowing us to reprint four of his dances which he taught at our September meeting and to Malcolm Frost for sending in a dance for us all to try.

I hope you find the results of the e-mail survey of interest and an idea worth developing. Hope to see as many of you as can make it to Inverness in April and Broxburn in September.

JH (ed)

TAS Spring Workshop

Saturday 21 April 2012

Teacher: Jean Martin Musician: Jennifer Wilson

Trinity Church Hall, Huntly Place, Inverness IV3 8HA

Timetable

10.30	Coffee and Registration
11.00	Session 1: Class taught by Jean Martin, accompanied by Jennifer Wilson
12.30	Lunch
1.30	Session 2: Music Session led by Jennifer Wilson and Jean Martin
2.30	Tea
3.00	Session 3: Informal dance. Music by Jennifer.
5.00	Session 4: Informal TAS Discussion
5.30	Finish

September Workshop Report

John Wilkinson ran two very enjoyable sessions at the September workshop. The morning session was 'Dances with unusual tempi and formations'. He taught *The Gentle Shepherd*, *Tweedside*, *Strip the Willow* in 9/8 time, *The Axum Reel*, as well as the formation 'en rond' from *St Andrews Gardens*. Even for teachers some of these are a challenge! He reminded us that *Tweedside* is in 6-bar phrases, with three steps to each movement. Going *step step close* does not come easily to some of us, more used to *step close step*! It was interesting to see the problems we had doing *Strip the Willow* in 9/8 time with 3 running steps to the bar. John pointed out that the dancing couple turn only on the first 4 bars but continue to complete their final turn on the first two bars of the next turn of the dance. For *The Axum* he reminded us that there are only 3 simple rules: men always dance to their partner's place; ladies always dance to the place of the man in front; and you always pass by the LEFT shoulder. Simple when you know how! It was fun doing dances which we might avoid with our weekly classes and being reminded that there is more to life than *step close step*!

John's afternoon class was dances he had devised himself. He taught *Dance Willie Dance*, *The Cambuslang Octogenarian*, *Greenmantle*, and *Jacquie's Fankle* and he has kindly given us permission to publish them in this newsletter. (at the end). The day was a good balance of old challenges and interesting new dances, taught by a clear and well-prepared teacher – setting us all an example of good practice.

TAS AGM – brief report

The minutes of the 2011 AGM will be circulated before the next AGM. The meeting was good-humoured with constructive discussions. At the AGM TAS had a healthy membership of 141. The accounts are very much in order. Jenny Greene became our new Workshop Organiser and Neil Macphail from South Queensferry joined the committee. The main discussion was what to do with our accumulating funds and Sue has given us a very full account of that discussion later in this newsletter, along with a questionnaire for everyone to give their opinion. It was agreed that the Spring 2012 workshop would be in Inverness and the September workshop in Broxburn. This underlines our policy of reaching out to teachers outside the Central Belt. The committee would very much like to hear the views of the membership on how TAS could develop. Could, for example, we think of a TAS weekend? What do you think? Why not email the editor and we could put a list of ideas in the next pre-AGM newsletter?

Getting to Inverness

For anyone who seldom ventures north of the Central Belt, Inverness is easy to get to with good train and bus connections to the rest of the country. The committee would like to encourage as many members as possible to get together, car-share, and come north in April to support the workshop. Some members regularly drive a long way to come south or north to our more central meetings.

There are early trains from Edinburgh and Glasgow which arrive in Inverness just before 10.30, but it makes more sense to car-share. Glasgow/Edinburgh to Inverness can take under 3 hours and with good company the journey will just fly in! Morning coffee at Ralia cafe? If anyone would like to offer seats in their car or would like a seat, I am prepared to act as a clearing house to match up cars and passengers. E-mail me at macleodhill@mac.com and I will send details around (*Jimmie*).

The hall is 10/15 minutes walk from the town centre on the 'other' side of the river. The church fronts onto the river and is easily found. Cross over the footbridge, turn right, then walk along the path, under the main road bridge, and it is just past it.

RSCDS Summer School and children

One of our members, Aad Boode, has pointed out that 12-15 year-olds are welcome to attend Summer School during Week 3 (29th July - 5th August). They will be assigned to a class appropriate to their capabilities and will be able to attend all the school activities. This was tried last year, but there was only one applicant.

E-mail survey

Now that the newsletter goes out to most members via e-mail, I thought it would be a good idea to see how many people would react to an e-mail survey as the basis for a newsletter article. We all know how difficult it is to get people to write – for some of my classes in school a visit to the dentist, without a jag, is far less painful – chorus of ‘OH NO!’ when I say “Jotters out!” 35 people responded to the questions I sent out, which I found extremely encouraging – and gave me a chance to have an e-mail chat with some of you! If you think this was worthwhile, e-mail me or write to me with ideas for future questions. (JH, Editor)

Question 1: In your classes do dancers pay for the whole term in advance or week by week?

Teachers responded to this question from large branches such as Aberdeen and Glasgow and also from small private groups with no RSCDS affiliation. Only one reply insisted on payment in advance; a few teachers said that their groups only paid by the week, but the vast majority allow a dual system. The answer which came back loud and clear was that the individual should decide which way he or she would like to pay.

Some groups pay for one term at a time and some allow dancers to pay for the whole year. One branch allows dancers to pay in advance (PIA), but in the summer term they use ‘pay as you go’ (PAYGO) for everyone. In some branches if a dancer chooses PAYGO, then finds they have paid the equivalent of PIA, then the rest of the term is free. One branch has PIA but also a system of ‘term tickets’ which can be used throughout the year. This makes sense if you know you are going to spend 6 weeks in Australia visiting the grandchildren while we all freeze at home. All groups running a dual system fixed a slightly higher PAYGO rate to encourage dancers to pay in advance to make Branch Treasurers’ lives a little easier! One policy which most respondents agreed on was that beginners should pay on a weekly basis until they decided they wanted to pay in advance, ie until they knew they were going to continue coming along. This is in marked contrast to local authority courses where a class would be cancelled if insufficient numbers had signed up in advance.

Most respondents included their actual charges when replying. This showed quite a lot of variation throughout the country, depending on cost of halls, whether the teacher was paid a fee, or whether a musician was paid as well. In branches which used musicians the rates varied considerably. The termly charge in one branch was almost as much as the whole year rate in others.

The length of the term varied from group to group, some as short as 6 weeks, others as long as 12. Divided by the number of weeks, the lowest charge came out at £1.50 per week, the highest at £5. The highest PAYGO charge was £6.50 per week and the lowest was £2. An extra 50p per week seemed to be the normal extra charge for PAYGO people. It seems that, on average, a Scottish country dancer in Scotland this year is paying c. £3.00 per week for his or her class, and in many cases this will involve live music. Teachers with classes of 40 members can keep costs down, while a teacher with an average of 12 people has to cover hall costs as a priority and may have to charge more. With fixed costs of hall, teacher and musician it is understandable that many teachers expressed a preference for payment in advance.

Finally, one interesting reply pointed out that far more important for her young dancers was not the cost of the class – it was the cost of childcare when attending class. And for those driving some distance to class, petrol must now be a significant cost as well. The overall impression was that SCD is still great value for money – no matter how you pay!

Question 2: In a beginners class when would you begin the strathspey step?

The most interesting issue this question showed up was how few classes we have solely for beginners. The majority of teachers said that beginners were usually integrated into an existing general class. Some said that they held a 30-minute session for technique prior to the general class and beginners were encouraged to attend. Some teachers admitted to never having taught a complete beginners class.

When to start strathspey? Three brave souls said they started in week 1. One teacher does not begin the slow rhythm until beginners are confident in jigs and reels. The consensus seems to be around weeks 3 or 4 or “when you feel it is right for them”. Several teachers recommended waiting until around weeks 6 or 7 – well into the first term. One teacher pointed out that if you don’t start it till very late in term 1, your Christmas dance programme will be pretty exhausting if there is only one strathspey!

AGM Discussion on use of TAS surplus funds

While keeping a reserve of one year's running costs in the bank we have available approximately £800 of surplus funds. Various suggestions were received and discussed at the AGM in September. As no conclusive decision was reached, it was decided that the committee would discuss them further and then disseminate the recommendations to the membership before progressing on them. Other ideas came up at the committee meeting.

1) Purchase of external computer device to retain TAS records

A means of storing data such as minutes of AGMs, meetings, newsletters, leaflets produced by TAS, accounts etc that need to be kept should be purchased so that it can be passed to successive secretaries. Hard drives and pen drives were discussed as alternatives.

Decision: The committee decided a 32-bit pen drive to be purchased. Approximate cost: £50

2) Subsidise TAS events

Subsidise the cost of workshops and the AGM meeting. Help with travel costs involved for meetings as we are a very geographically spread out membership. The cost of each meeting would be considered by the committee and a subsidy agreed by them. Suggest up to a maximum half of total costs.

Decision: Subsidise the forthcoming Inverness workshop hall cost up to £150.

3) Subsidise teaching-related 'outreach' sessions run by TAS

Basic Teaching Skills Course

Subsidise an appropriate member of TAS to deliver this course in areas at the invitation of a local Branch or group. This course is to give guidance in teaching different types of classes, as required by the participants. It is a non-examinable course. TAS would be responsible for the expenses of the teacher, eg travelling, teaching fee (decided by TAS) while the locals would be responsible for the hall and refreshments.

Pre Candidate Course

This could be a day or weekend course, non-examinable, to outline and give a taster of the Teaching Certificate courses. Offered on same basis as the Basic Teaching Skills.

Visiting RSCDS teacher

Subsidise a qualified teacher to classes with no RSCDS teacher or nearby Branch. TAS would be responsible for the expenses of the teacher (eg travelling, teaching fee decided by TAS) while the locals would be responsible for the hall.

Decision: Progress further if membership in agreement. Each year amount of surplus funds to be ring-fenced for these outreach sessions.

4) Advertising of TAS

a) Flyers that members could use to advertise TAS in their own area. To be emailed to members or hard copies can be requested from TAS treasurer . These were distributed at the Society AGM in Glasgow and 5 members have joined since then.

b) Advert in the Scottish Country Dancer. Both editions or just the October one? Cost is approx. £75 per 1/8th page advert.

Decision: Produce flyers and insert SCDer advert in the October edition.

5) Project to develop one of the purposes within TAS's constitution

It was suggested that a small group of members could undertake such a project but no specific topic was suggested at the AGM. The committee has not progressed this further but would welcome suggestions.

Decision: none so far.

6) Grants to members attending Teacher Training Certificate Courses Part 1 or Part 2

Much discussion took place on this topic. It was felt that on reflection, we were not really in a financial position to be able to offer grants on a regular basis due to year-on-year financial variation. The amount of work involved with ensuring the criteria, that would have to be drawn up, were adhered to by applicants and the issuing of grants were seen to be not practical, considering the amount of surplus funds available.

Decision: not to progress

Questionnaire
Use of TAS surplus funds from the year 2010/11
Amount £800

Please indicate your views in the form below and return to Sue Porter by 30 March 2012 by e-mail to : *sue.porter3@btopenworld.com* or by post to *Schiehallion, Grianach Gardens , Oban PA34 4LB*

Proposals

Please circle choice

- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| 1. Purchase of pen drive for storing TAS records
(decision made at AGM) | YES | |
| 2) Subside TAS events (workshops/ AGM) | YES | NO |
| 3) Subsidise teaching related ' outreach' sessions run by TAS. | YES | NO |
| a) Basic Skills Teaching course | YES | NO |
| b) Pre Candidate Course | YES | NO |
| c) Visiting RSCDS teacher to classes without certificated
teachers | YES | NO |

Current year's income

- | | | |
|---|-----|----|
| 4) Advertise in Scottish Country Dancer Magazine | YES | NO |
| 5) Project to develop one of the purposes within TAS's constitution
If yes, give suggestions _____

_____ | YES | NO |

Any other comments

The Extra Day

by Malcolm Frost

a 3-couple 40-bar jig in a 4-couple longwise set
(using 10-bar phrasing)

Bars

- 1-8 1st couple lead down the middle and back up.
- 9-10 1s cast to 2nd place, 2s step up.
- 11-14 1st lady dances right hands across with 2s whilst 1st man dances right hands across with 3s. At end pass right shoulders into:
- 15-18 1st lady dances left hands across with 3s whilst 1st man dances left hands across with 2s. 1s finish in 2nd place own side.
- 19-20 1s turn right hand to finish back-to-back in middle, facing 1st corner.
- 21-28 1s set to 1st corner and turn corner both hands. 1s set to 2nd corner and turn corner both hands.
- 29-30 1s turn partner right hand to finish back-to-back in the middle, man facing up, lady facing down
- 31-36 1s dance six-bars reel-of-3 with corners on sidelines, starting by passing right shoulder with 2nd corner,
- 37-38 1s cross right to 2nd place own side.
- 39-40 All three couples set on side

Repeat from new position

Tune – The Wee Cooper Of Fife, or any other good jig in 10-bar phrasing

This dance was devised by Malcolm Frost in 2004 to celebrate leap year (and to give another excuse to dance to the fabulous tune *The Wee Cooper Of Fife*). It is further hoped that less experienced dancers may find these figures less challenging than those for *Wee Cooper* when acclimatising to 10-bar phrasing, thus helping them subsequently to better enjoy dancing the *Wee Cooper*.

Forthcoming events of interest

Day / Weekend Schools and Workshops

- Feb** **RSCDS Winter School in Atholl Palace Hotel, Pitlochry**
Sun Feb 19 – Fri Feb 24
Teachers – Alasdair Brown, Eric Finley, Sue Porter
Musicians – Bill Ewan, George Meikle, Gordon Simpson
- March 9** **Lorn (Argyll) Branch, 51st Weekend School 2012**
Fri 9 – Social dance – Ian Thomson's Band
Sat 10 Teacher – John Wilkinson Pianist – Andrew Nolan
Sat Buffet dance – Ian Muir's Band
Contact: Sue Porter
- March 16/17** **Aberdeen & NE Music Festival**
Adjudicators: Anne Taylor and Fiona Taylor
The Music Hall, Aberdeen
- March 24** **West Lothian Half-Day School**
Teacher – Jimmie Hill
Band – Lindsay Weir
Contact Marjorie Macrae e-mail: b.m.macrae@blueyonder.co.uk
- St Andrews Half-Day School**
Teacher – Eric Finley Musician – Robert Mackay
Evening Dance – together with the Spring Fling
Contact: Ross Colwell e-mail horoscol@btinternet.com or Valerie Frazer, Eden View,
High Road, Strathkinness, St Andrews, KY16 9RDS
- April 21** **TAS SPRING WORKSHOP, INVERNESS**
- May 11-12** **Millport Weekend on the Isle of Cumbrae**
Teacher – Jim Stott
Band – Neil Copeland
Contact: e-mail: janet.sommers@gmail.com or tel: Margaret Allen 01475 530479
- March 30-1/4** **Helensburgh Weekend**
Teacher – Jim Stott Pianist – Andrew Nolan
Band – Marian Anderson (Friday) and David Hall (Saturday)
Contact: Ross Sutherland 0141 585 0149 or e-mail: sutherlandross@yahoo.co.uk
- May 10 (Fri)** **Helensburgh Branch 60th Anniversary Dance**
Band – Ian Muir
Contact: Roy Bain - 01436 842695 or e-mail: roy.bain@btinternet.org.uk

June 15/16 Buckie Weekend School

Teacher – Ian Barbour

Band – Sandy Nixon

Friday evening dance, Saturday morning classes, Saturday night dance

Contact: Anne Taylor 01542 831007 for tickets only.

June 16 Ayr Branch Summer Assembly, Troon Concert Hall

Afternoon of country, ceilidh and displays plus evening dances.

Sept 1 TAS AUTUMN WORKSHOP, BROXBURN, WEST LoTHIAN

Sept 8 Lochaber Day School, Caol Youth Centre

Teacher – Janet Johnston

Pianist – Jennifer Wilson

Band – David Cunningham

Contact Anne Smyth

Sept 29 Ayr Branch Day School

Teacher – Eric Finley

Pianist – Jennifer Wilson

Band – David Cunningham

Dec 15 Dumfries Branch Day School and Dance

Teacher – Graham Donald

Musician – George Meikle

Band – The Lothian Band

Contact Jane Meikle 01387 252544 e-mail: janemjohnston@btinternet.com

If your event is missing, make sure we have it for the next issue

4 Dances

by John Wilkinson

taught at the
TAS Autumn Workshop 2011

Dance Willie Dance

Jig

The Cambuslang Octogenarian

Reel

Greenmantle

Strathspey

Jacquie's Fankle

Reel

Printed by kind permission of John Wilkinson.

All dances are © John Wilkinson.

DANCE WILLIE DANCE a 32 bar Jig for 4 couples in a longwise set

TUNE: *Dance Willie Dance by Hamish Murison*

Bars	Description
1 – 2	First couple and fourth couple Petronella into centre to finish with 1 st lady facing 2 nd man (1 st lady in a diagonal line with 2 nd lady), 1 st man & 4 th lady right shoulder to right shoulder, 1 st man facing 2 nd lady, 4 th lady facing 3 rd man and 4 th man facing 3 rd lady (in a diagonal line with 3 rd man). 2 nd man, 1 st man, 4 th lady and 3 rd lady are also in a diagonal line. 2 nd and 3 rd couples adjust up or down as necessary. (see Fig 1)
3 – 4	1 st man set to 2 nd lady, 1 st lady set to 2 nd man, 4 th lady set to 3 rd man and 4 th man set to 3 rd lady
5 – 8	1 st man turn 2 nd lady right hand once round, likewise 1 st lady turns 2 nd man, 4 th lady turns 3 rd man and 4 th man turns 3 rd lady finishing with 1 st and 4 th couples in a line in the centre, 1 st man and 4 th lady back to back. (see Fig 2)
9 – 16	1 st and 4 th couples dance a reel of four in the centre, passing partners right shoulder to begin. Finish the reel in the positions where it was started.
17 – 20	1 st couple with 2 nd couple and 4 th couple with 3 rd couple dance right hands across once round. Finish with 2 nd and 3 rd couples in original places, 1 st and 4 th couples facing partners in centre with right hands joined.
21 – 24	1 st couple lead up quickly and cast off to finish in 2 nd place in the centre with both hands joined. Likewise 4 th couple lead down quickly and cast up to finish in 3 rd place in centre with both hands joined. 2 nd couple step up on bars 23 and 24 while 3 rd couple step down.
25 – 32	1 st and 4 th couples change places with a Pousette. The order is now 2,4,1,3 ready to repeat the dance from new positions.

Devised April 2003 by John Wilkinson. When I taught at Winter School in Australia, Hamish Murison was my pianist. Hamish gave me a collection of his tunes and this dance was devised to suit one which I liked.

Fig 1



Fig 2



THE CAMBUSLANG OCTOGENARIANA 32 bar Reel

Recommended tune - Elegant Esther Gray by Lindsay Ross

Bars	Description
1 - 4	1st couple set for 2 pas de basque steps then cross over to opposite sides in second place giving right hands. Second couple step up on bars 3 and 4.
5 - 8	1st couple set for 2 pas de basque steps and cross over to own sides giving right hands and stay facing out.
9 - 16	1st couple cast round the person on their right, meet in the centre and turn once round left hand, then man dances down and casts up round 3rd lady into second place facing up while lady dances up and casts off round 2nd man into second place facing down.
17 - 24	1st couple dance reel of three on opposite sides, 1st man begins by passing 2nd lady right shoulder while 1st lady begins by passing 3rd man right shoulders. First couple finish by curving left to face 1st corners.
25 - 32	1st couple set to corners then partner (hello/goodbye setting) finishing with a petronella turn into 2nd place on own side.

Devised by John Wilkinson and dedicated to Charlie McGinley on the occasion of his 80th Birthday on 3rd September 1998.

GREENMANTLE a 32 bar Strathspey for three couples in a 3 couple set.

Tune: Any good 'lyrical' style strathspey

<i>Bars</i>	<i>Description</i>
1 - 8	1 st couple set, cross over giving right hands, cast off one place and turn left hands to first corner
9 – 12	1 st couple collect first corner in promenade hold and promenade anti-clockwise half way round to finish in diagonally opposite places, facing in with nearer hands joined meanwhile Second corners approach, turn left hand and dance back to place
13 - 16	1 st couple and first corners set diagonally across the dance and giving left hands to the person opposite, corners dance back to place while 1 st couple dance to second corners
17 – 20	1 st couple collect second corner in promenade hold and promenade anti-clockwise half way round to finish in diagonally opposite places, facing in with nearer hands joined meanwhile First corners approach, turn left hand and dance back to place
21 - 24	1 st couple and second corners set diagonally across the dance and giving left hands to the person opposite, corners dance back to place while 1 st couple dance to second place on own sides facing out
25 – 30	2 nd , 1 st and 3 rd couples dance a six bar reel of three on the sides, 1 st man passing 3 rd man left shoulder to begin, 1 st lady passing 2 nd lady left shoulder to begin
31 - 32	1 st man and 3 rd man change places left hands, while 1 st lady and 3 rd lady change places right hands.

Devised in March 2004. The title has no connection with John Buchan's novel of the same name, nor does it have any connection with the fine beer brewed by Broughton Brewery, it is simply that the earth's mantle here in the Lammernmuir Hills is very green.

JACQUIE'S FANKLE a 32 bar reel for three couples in a 3 couple set.

Tune: Any good reel

<i>Bars</i>	<i>Description</i>
1 - 4	1 st and 3 rd couples dance a Petronella turn into the centre of the set and set to partners
5 - 8	1 st and 3 rd couples change places with partner giving right hands(2 steps) then 1 st lady and 3 rd man change places giving left hands (2 steps).
9 – 16	All three couples dance a reel of four and chase as follows:- 1 st man and 3 rd lady dance a half reel of four then dance clockwise through their own sidelines back to the centre (where they were at the start of bar 9) meanwhile 1 st lady and 3 rd man pass the person facing by right shoulder then dance clockwise through opposite sidelines back into centre and rejoin the reel of four at the opposite end, but instead of passing each other they pull back their right shoulder to finish with the 1 st lady facing up and 3 rd man facing down meanwhile 2 nd couple dance clockwise round then dance a half reel of four in the middle then dance clockwise round to their original positions.
17 – 24	1 st and 3 rd couple dance a Petronella turn to their original positions on the sidelines, all three couples then set and turn partners right hands finishing in the centre with both hands joined
25 – 32	1 st , 2 nd , and 3 rd couples dance a three couple poussette (1 st couple poussette TWO places down while 2 nd and 3 rd couples each poussette up one place.)

Devised by John Wilkinson in December 2006 and dedicated to Jacque Riddell, a member of the class in Cockburnspath, who asked me to write a dance for her. She suggested the title. This is the result.

Spring Workshop 2012

Registration Form

Cost of whole day £4.00 per person.

Cheques payable to 'Teachers Association Scotland'. Please send form and cheque by 30 March to:

Mrs Sue Porter,
Schiehallion,
Grianach Gardens,
Oban PA34 4LB

Please bring a packed lunch. All hot drinks will be provided.

Sue Porter, TAS Treasurer, Tel 01631 563103 email sue.porter3@btopenworld.com

I enclose a cheque for _____ .

Title
Name
Address
.....
.....
.....
Tel No
E-mail
Branch

If you are paying for more than one person, please list those attending below: