



## BRANCH NEWS JUNE 2021

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### GREETINGS TO ALL OUR MEMBERS

On behalf of the Branch Committee I'd like to express the hope that all our members are managing to keep safe and well during these difficult times. It's hard to find anything original to say about the effects on us all of this devastating pandemic. And lamenting the loss of Scottish Country Dancing seems paltry and myopic in comparison with the impact of the loss of life, loss of loved ones, loss of physical and mental health, loss of employment, loss of income and livelihood and loss of education suffered by so many people all over the world.

However, our common interest as an RSCDS Branch is Scottish Country Dancing, of which we have mostly been largely deprived during 2020 and the first half of 2021. There are small green shoots appearing, but these remain very tentative. At our last committee meeting we reviewed the position. Although there have been some local initiatives involving socially distanced dancing, both indoors and out, as a Branch we do not yet feel confident that "proper" dancing will be possible for us to organise in the near future. The RSCDS recently put out some guidance based on the position in Scotland: until "Level Zero" is reached there, no indoor "contact sports" will be permitted. Wales seems to be in a similar position. Given that proximity and touch with a range of other dancers are an integral part of our type of dancing, it seems likely that this will be one of the last activities that can be officially allowed. Other forms of dancing (solo, couple, line dancing etc.) are more feasible, as well as outdoor activities.

We do however have plans to run a hybrid **Branch AGM** on **Saturday 25 September 2021 in the late afternoon**. By "hybrid" I mean mixed face-to-face and on-line. The idea will be to have socially distanced attendance by those who can and wish to be physically present, with a screen set up for those who wish to participate remotely. Committee members are currently investigating facilities in the Swansea area. If possible, we will try to have a short social event afterwards – picnic teas, music, chat, maybe some easy dancing if we're able to. We'll let you know further details in due course.

In the meantime, please let us know what you think about this suggestion, and any other ideas you may have. Will you attend the AGM? If so, will you do so remotely? Or would you travel in order to meet up with fellow-dancers, subject to Covid restrictions at the time?

### ADVANCE NEWS

Bristol RSCDS Branch are planning to hold a 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Ball on Saturday 12 March 2022 at the BAWA Club, 589 Southmead Rd., Filton, Bristol BS34 7RF. Colin Dewar's Band. Further details in due course.



## MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

A reminder e-mail has gone out to all existing members, pointing out that renewal is due from 1 July 2021. Rates and other details are set out on the renewal form attached to the e-mail. Thank you to those twenty speedy members who have already renewed. Thanks, too, for the kind messages you've sent.

Sadly, as you are all too well aware, no face-to-face Branch events have taken place in 2020-2021. We have continued to have on-line committee meetings, and we had delegates at the Society AGM held virtually in November 2020. Three Newsletters (including this very limited one) have gone out in this period.

You may feel that this doesn't exactly represent good value for money, and you'd probably be right. For that reason, as a gesture of goodwill, the Committee have decided that we will waive the Branch element of the subscription for this coming year. Who knows how much dancing activity we will be able to have in this coming year, but whatever happens we wanted to acknowledge the deficit we all experienced last year.

The same doesn't apply to the Society element of the subscription, however. This will continue unchanged from last year (£18 single adult sub, with pro rata payments for other categories). The Society has continued to be very active in difficult circumstances, arranging a whole series of on-line events and regular news items, podcasts, recordings, newsletters, etc. I know that some Branch members have taken advantage of the regular on-line classes on a Wednesday evening, as well as participating in virtual events such as Summer School, Autumn Gathering and Spring Fling. At those events there have been amazing performances by a wide variety of musicians, dance demonstrations, and recapped programmes, as well as workshops, classes, chat groups, etc.

Over and above this impressive effort, the Society has also had to face the fact that the losses incurred as a result of Covid lockdowns and restrictions are massive. At the RSCDS AGM in November 2020 the deficit was estimated as likely to be around £140,000.

Therefore it is not surprising that the Society needs our subscriptions more than ever. So as a Branch we would appeal to our members to continue to support RSCDS. I will be very pleased to hear from everyone as soon as possible. I'll happily re-send the renewal form if you need it.

**Alison Jackson, Membership Secretary**  
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## MATERIAL FOR NEWSLETTER?

I'd also be delighted to hear from you about any topics you feel would be of interest to our members. Maybe some of the groups who've been doing versions of Scottish Country Dancing in the outdoors or socially distanced would like to send us some photos of their activities? Do you have some comments on how it worked for you? One member has drawn our attention to how dancing (not necessarily SCD) might be prescribed by GPs to counter social isolation and loneliness. Please tell us what you think.

**Alison**



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