

**Minute of the 88th Annual General Meeting of the Aberdeen
Branch of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society.
Held at Beechgrove Centre, Midstocket Road, Aberdeen
on 15th June 2015**

Present were the following 38 members of the Branch:

Emma Allsop, Brian Anderson, Aileen Appleyard, Morag Barclay, Kathleen Bruce, Sheila Cameron, Lynne Cursiter, David Eastwood, Edna Ewen, Anne Findlay, Gail Fraser, Sheila Fyfe, David Geddes, Stan Grycuk, Clare Grycuk, Martha Harris, Ray Inkster, Jane Leys, Jean Martin, Lesley Martin, Heather McDonald, Linda McDonald, Heather McKenna, Paul McKnight, Isobel McMillan, Martin Milne, George Rae, June Rae, Irene Shand, Anna Smail, Fiona Spence, Walter Sutherland, Evelyn Swanson, Fiona Taylor, Eileen Watson, James Watson, James Wilson, Lynn Wood, Doris Young.

1.1 Chairman's Opening Remarks.

Stan Grycuk, Chairman, welcomed members to the Aberdeen Branch's 89th AGM and made the following remarks:

"Welcome everyone to the 89th AGM of the Aberdeen Branch of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society.

As a new branch chairman, I was quickly introduced to the wide range of activities that are run by the branch, and I see my role as one of encouraging and supporting committee members in carrying out these activities.

There are two main objectives of our constitution, the first being the teaching and development of Scottish country dancing. To this end we run classes at all levels from within the schools, to classes at Introductory, Intermediate, Advanced and Demonstration levels. We are fortunate that many of the classes have the benefit of live musicians, which is a real asset here in Aberdeen.

The second main objective of the constitution is to promote the enjoyment of Scottish country dancing. To that end we hold two main dances each year, which are run to society standards. These together with winter and summer socials give all of our members a chance to put into practice the skills that they have learned in class. These social dances are always lively events, and I would encourage all members to attend as many as possible.

Here in the North East, we are lucky in being within an hours drive of many local dance groups. It is great fun attending dances in the village halls, meeting old friends and supporting the smaller clubs. There is a hard core of dancers that you can find on the circuit, but I encourage all members to attend as many dances as possible, its great fun. Details of all North East Dances are shown on our website, which now includes programmes and cribs. So there is no shortage of information.

Perhaps I should also mention that alongside our website, we are making

more use of Facebook to promote our activities. For those of you that are reluctant to use Facebook, it need not be scary at all. Ask a friend to help get you started, or follow the RSCDS guide. In general, more and more information about Scottish Country Dancing is available online, and there are some wonderful resources to explore there.

There have been a number of highlights in my first year as chairman. These started with the society AGM in Perth. Apart from the official business, it is a chance for the ladies to go to town on their posh outfits. You can see this from the latest online Society newsletter, where a number of Aberdeen dancers appear in the short video. If you have never been to the AGM dance it is a memorable experience dancing with so many excellent dancers.

Other highlights of my year were the Public dances during St Andrews summer school, the Newcastle festival, the Aberdeen festival, and the children's party. This last event, where 90 enthusiastic children from our school classes danced so well, was what I hope will be the start of their long association with Scottish Country Dancing.

As this is our 90th year, the committee have been busy organising events to celebrate the occasion, together with publishing a book of dances by Branch members. Some details of what we are doing have already been included in our Newsletters. Tickets for the events, the new book of dances and accompanying CD will be available later.

Lastly I would like to thank all of the committee, the teachers and the helpers for their hard work and dedication throughout the year. Without their efforts we would not have dancing in Aberdeen."

1.2 Apologies for absence were received from the Honorary Vice-President Doris Kinghorn, and 33 other members as follows:

Maggie Alexander, Paul Anderson, Joan Anderson, Sheila Bain, Bob Clarke, Pam Dignan, Willie Fyfe, Margaret Gowans, Tom Hall, Doris Kinghorn, Violet Lorimer, Betty MacKenzie, David MacKenzie, Iain Martin, Gordon McRuvie, Jim Morrison, Moira Morrison, June Raitt, Alister Reid, Judith Riddoch, Moira Robertson, Mary Robinson, Sally Russell, Alan Smail, Willam Stuart, Frank Thomson, Margaret Webster, Eric White, Elizabeth White, Fiona Wilson, Anne Wood, Bruce Wyer, Linda Wyer, Angela Young.

1.3 Approval of the Minute of Previous Annual General Meeting

The minute of the Meeting of 16th June 2014 had been circulated beforehand to members.

The minute was approved and adopted on a proposal by Fiona Spence and seconded by Isobel McMillan.

1.4 Matters arising from the Previous Minutes:

There were no matters arising.

2. **Honorary Secretary's Report**

The Honorary Secretary's Reports had been circulated beforehand to members.

On a proposal by Paul McKnight seconded George Rae, the Honorary Secretary's Report was unanimously adopted.

3. **Honorary Treasurer's Report**

Fiona Taylor presented the accounts and spoke of the surplus and loss breakdown for the year for adult and children's classes

Admin expenses were noted as high and Fiona confirmed the following:

- The Branch had purchased 5 CD/iPhone/iPod players for the Adult and Children's classes without a musician. These were bought for £220 each including carrying bags.
- The band for the Commonwealth Ceilidh was included but had been reimbursed by Headquarters.
- Sales of Books & CDs were different in income and expenses – this included the cost of postage and copies of Graded Book 3 and accompanying CD for the children's teachers.

After discussion the **Annual Accounts were unanimously adopted on a proposal by Clare Grycuk and seconded by Aileen Appleyard.**

The membership was asked if there were any questions on the breakdown of the figures for the individual classes and events during the year which were available at the meeting. There were no comments.

3.1 **Children and Young Person's Fund**

The amount for this fund had been recommended by the Finance sub-committee, notified to committee and to be agreed at the AGM. It was noted that £475 had been spent during the year (Inverness Festival entries, Children's Party Dance and Aberdeen Festival Entry Fees).

£600 for the year April 2015 to March 2016 had been recommended.

The Children and Young Person's Fund was unanimously adopted on a proposal by Isobel McMillan and seconded by Linda McDonald.

4. **Report from Headquarters**

As members had regular copies of the Scottish Country Dancer they were familiar with Headquarters' news.

Outstanding items included PRS licences (Performing Rights Society) with whom HQ (David Cunningham) is still in correspondence.

Three members of the Aberdeen Branch were on committees at present:

Isobel McMillan – Management Board

Angela Young – Education & Training

Emma Allsop – Youth Services Committee

Isobel McMillan noted:

I was elected as a member of the Board in November 2014. There are 14 members, and I have attended 3 meetings so far, plus one big strategy meeting where all the committees got together to discuss various ideas on how to take the Society forward.

Major topics included “How do we increase membership?” and “How do we balance the books?” To address some of the concerns, 4 members of the Board were asked at the April meeting to produce discussion papers. These will be discussed at the next strategy meeting at the end of June.

A large part of each meeting is devoted to discussion of the accounts: there is a Finance and Governance Advisory group on the Board, the members of which have corporate experience in the financial sector and are familiar with organisational risk management. I ask them to speak in layman’s terms so that I can understand – fortunately that gets smiles and nods from the others like me! To date there is no treasurer to replace William Whyte, who retired in November after many years’ service. Several people have been approached.

There are several new initiatives. One is that an invitation has been sent to all the secretaries of the Branches asking them to join the RSCDS Branch Secretaries’ Facebook group to facilitate discussion of common problems. This group was set up by Tom Halpenny, the representative from SW Washington Branch, USA. At the end of April 35 Secretaries had joined up, but 12 had refused because they don’t like Facebook. In those cases the Branch has been requested to get another Committee member to join instead. We are of course hoping that this will enhance communication between HQ and the Branches.

I have a role to play here, because I have been appointed liaison officer between 18 branches and HQ. So far I have helped in expediting a Branch Scroll being signed, sealed and delivered to the Vancouver Branch for their member Jean Wagstaff. I have also sent all 18 Branches a sort of blog, and even got some replies.

All our meetings have Tom Halpenny connected on Skype, but for him of course it is the middle of the night or early morning and his view of the meeting is limited. A proper conference call system would of course mean that many of us could connect from home and not charge travel and accommodation fees!

The main Board is interesting but challenging work, and I would encourage anyone with some spare time, if only to read all the papers, to come forward and help us keep the Society progressing towards its centenary and beyond!

Angela Young who was unable to be present wrote the following which was read out to the AGM:

“I am now midway through my second year on the Society’s Education and Training committee where all discussions about exams, assessments, schools and training take place.

Working on relaunching and promoting the Dancing Achievement Award, thinking of ways to continue the development of young dancers who have completed all their Medal Tests, discussing how to manage teacher training, and monitoring the website training elements are all part of this committee's work as well as the Society Schools' management.

It definitely is the area of the Society that has dancing and standards at its heart and one that it is fascinating to work on."

Emma Allsop Youth Services noted:

I joined the Youth Services Committee for the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society in November so am still relatively new to it. As a committee we work to organise events for Youth members of the Society. These include day schools, workshops and weekends such as Spring Fling.

Spring Fling is a weekend of dancing for young people. The Youth Services committee works with a Branch anywhere in the world to organise this annual weekend. There are classes and dances and social activities.

Workshops are held in different locations throughout the UK several times a year. Aberdeen held one in October and will be holding another one in May 2016.

A Youth Branch has also just been set up. I have been tasked with organising a Flashmob for publicity for the Society. I hope to have around 50 dancers in one of the Shopping Centres in Aberdeen. This will be filmed and put on our Facebook page and webpage to try to promote and spread the enjoyment of Scottish Country Dancing.

5.1 Appointment of Honorary President

The appointment of Lesley Martin, as Honorary President was confirmed.

5.2 Appointment of Honorary Vice-Presidents

The appointment as Honorary Vice-President of Miss Doris Kinghorn was confirmed.

The appointment of Jane Leys as Honorary Vice-President was confirmed.

6.1 Election of Chairman Nominee – Stan Grycuk

This was proposed by Claire Grycuk and seconded by Fiona Taylor.

This was approved by the meeting.

6.2 Election of Vice-Chairman Nominee – Emma Allsop

The appointment of Emma Allsop as Vice-Chairman nominated by Gail Fraser and seconded by Janet Mitchell was confirmed. Emma was invited to join Stan at the top table.

6.3 Election of Honorary Secretary Nominee – **Lynn Wood**

Proposed by Stan Grycuk and seconded by Kathleen Bruce. There being no other nomination, **Lynn Wood was duly elected as Honorary Secretary.**

6.4 Election of Honorary Treasurer. Nominee – **Fiona Taylor**

Proposed by Anne Findlay and seconded by Rachel Discombe. There being no other nomination, **Fiona Taylor was duly elected as Honorary Treasurer.**

6.5 Election of Committee Members to replace those retiring

Nominations received:

Bruce Wyer – proposed by Lynn Wood and seconded by Fiona Taylor.

Lynne Cursiter – proposed by James Wilson and seconded by Lynn Wood.

Martin Milne – proposed by Stan Grycuk and seconded by Lynne Cursiter.

As there were three vacancies for 3 years, nominations were requested from the floor.

With no further nominations and as the required number of nominations to fill vacant posts had now been received, Bruce Wyer, Lynne Cursiter and Martin Milne were duly elected to serve on the Committee for three years.

Stan noted with appreciation those members of committee retiring: Kathleen Bruce, Edna Ewen and Gail Fraser.

6.6 Election of Delegates to the 2015 Society AGM

Members were reminded that its size entitles the Branch to have up to five AGM delegates, three of which were the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary. Nominations were requested from the floor for two other delegates for the AGM in Perth in 2015.

Isobel McMillan and **Jean Martin** volunteered.

With no further nominations from the floor these delegates were approved.

7. Appointment of Honorary Auditor

Frank Thomson, who had expressed his willingness to serve as Honorary Auditor, was proposed by Stan Grycuk and seconded by Lynn Wood.

This appointment was confirmed.

8. Motions

No motions had been had been raised to the committee.

9. Any other Competent Business

Lynn Wood noted 2 amendments to the Notes section in the Agenda:

3. the second Taster event is on Thursday 24th September.

4. Classes in the new season will commence during week commencing 28th September 2015.

Jean Martin noted that a **video** of the **Teaching Certificate Unit 2** (dancing section) had been recorded with members of the Aberdeen Branch in Aberdeen in June. She would like to thank Kathleen Bruce and Lynn Wood for their catering support.

Jean Martin asked if the committee would consider a **Day School** in the near future. **Stan Grycuk** responded that the Forward Planning sub-committee would consider this.

Jean Martin noted that she was disappointed that she would not be able to attend the 90th Celebrations; they were in the schools October break. **Stan Grycuk** noted that the committee had deliberately chosen the exact date when the Branch was formed and the date was published 10 months in advance.

Jean Martin noted that teachers were asked to fill in a form to say which night(s) they were available and which level of class they would be interested in taking. A long time ago, teachers were invited to take a class. She suggested that **younger teachers** should be **invited** to take classes, to allow those with grey hair to retire. **Stan Grycuk** responded that this would be investigated.

10. Close of Meeting

There being no other business, Stan Grycuk thanked the Committee again for all their hard work, in particular Lynn Wood and Fiona Taylor. He reminded members that an Open Forum would follow. He thanked all those who had attended and wished all members a happy dancing year. The meeting thereafter closed with thanks to the Chair.

11. Date of next Branch AGM

This was set to 13th June 2016.