

Carolinas Branch News

Vol. 8, No. 3

Fall, 2018

Welcome to the third newsletter of 2018. Here are a couple of reports from this summer's Thistle School, and more news about the branch's coming reorganization. The next newsletter will come out after the holidays and into the new year. Deadline for copy is Feb. 1, 2019. Please send PICTURES! And write LETTERS!

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To access the Website for the Carolinas Branch, visit:

www.rscdscarolinasbranch.org

Dawn May Be Gone, but Her Legacy Lives On

By Tom Dillon

Dawn Dorsey may be gone, but it would be flat wrong to say she was not at this year's Thistle School of Scottish Country Dance, held July 8-13 at Lees-McRae College in Banner Elk, N.C.

Dawn was remembered Tuesday, July 10, when Bob Messner, her cohort for years running sound at Thistle, called "Spit Spot," which he described as "a dance for Dawn." The strathspey is danced to the music, "The Lady in Red," and several people danced it with a tear or two in their eyes.



She was one of several departed Thistlers honored as we launched blue balloons into a misty sky just before the formal banquet July 11. Bob Messner remembered it was the same kind of mist that showed up at her memorial service earlier this year in Tucker, Ga., her hometown.

But the climax of the week came at the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games Gala, danced Friday night and into Saturday morning at Reynolds Gymnasium on the Lee-McRae campus. (Yes, Dawn's husband, Callaway, made the trip to be there.)

It's safe to say the most anticipated dance on that program was "Joined at the Hip," a 32-bar reel for three couples in a four-couple set. The dance was devised in February by Catherine Shaw of London, Ontario, and was dedicated to Dawn and Bob for "their many years of service to Scottish Country Dancing."



Photo by Robert South

The pond and dam at Lees McRae College is a favorite spot for many Thistle regulars.

The dance had first been danced at the Unicoi weekend earlier this year, where Bob Messner learned he was in on the dedication.

“When they first showed it to me, they had my name covered up,” he said later. “I didn’t realize I was included until the Unicoi weekend.” Dawn was aware of the dance, though she didn’t get to see it danced before her passing on Feb. 27.

The idea for the dance originated with Kate Mathewes of Asheville, N.C., who sent it to several dance devisers. Catherine Shaw was the one who responded, and she completed the dance in February. It’s danced to the tune, “Whisky Galore.”

Joined at the Hip

1-8 First couple lead down the middle, turn right hand halfway, and dance up to finish facing up below second couple, who have stepped into the centre of the dance taking promenade hold.

(Second couple steps up on bars 3 and 4.) At the same time, third couple steps in to face up, taking promenade hold.

Alternative: First couple turns by the right hand halfway, leads down the middle of the dance, and dances back in reverse to finish turning inward to face second couple.

9-16 Second, first and third couples dance a promenade up and down the dance; first couple finishes facing second lady, nearer hands joined.

17-24 First couple sets to second lady, and pulling the right shoulder back, sets to third lady, third man and second man, finishing facing the top.

25-32 First couple dances up and casts off into second place still on opposite sides. First couple dance a half-turn and twirl while second and third couples turn right hands once around.

■ Devised by Catherine Shaw

Thistle 38: A Newcomer's Happy Impressions

By Sheila South

Of course I knew Thistle School was going to be a challenge, and quite honestly, I was fearful of it. We have accompanied our teenage children as chaperones to so many of these SCD events, and they have fared gloriously. But they are energetic and quick to learn. And better than that, they easily recover from both social and physical mishaps. Would the dancers at Thistle School be friendly and inviting or offish and clique-ish? Would the teachers be understanding or scornful? Would the week be too long to manage?

Even so with these daunting thoughts impeding, Thistle School 38 was to be a milestone -- a marker of a change in our lives. Sending both children off to college as we became empty nesters, with now much more time to focus on our own interests, we set out to tackle this formidable endeavor.

Hard work is the phrase that comes to mind, hard work indeed ... exhausting, give-me-pain-pill, let-me-go-to-sleep, and is-it-morning-already hard work. The best kind of work I have ever done! Attending class every morning and dancing a program of other dances all evening was certainly more than I thought myself capable physically or mentally.





Photo by Robert South

Need a dance walk-through? This set of dancers was part of this year's Thistle auction.

But WOW! The support offered by other dancers was fabulous. And the instructors made class a joy. 'Twas such a neat experience to dance from one teacher to the next, each with his or her own tricks and tips, personality, quirks and humor to make the dancing all the more fun. The instructors were approachable, attentive, and skilled in adjusting to the dynamics of the dancers in the class. The time spent there was worthwhile and well consumed.

Now I have not even begun to address the lovely venue of Thistle School 38 at Lees-McRae College in Banner Elk among the cool and inviting NC mountains. Not a better place to be to escape the heat of summer. And what of the music? Is there any better than Scottish? And the people -- the fellow dancers? Wonderful new friends with a shared and common passion -- Scottish Country Dance.

So what would I say to anyone sitting on the fence and contemplating 'should I go?', 'will I fit in?', or 'can I do it?'.

Yes, yes you can! Do not delay another moment. You will be so glad you made the effort!

Chairwoman's Letter:



As we swing into the Fall season of dance classes and events, we want to thank Tom Dillon for the many years he has been editor of this Carolinas Branch Newsletter. He reminds us that articles and letters to the editor would be much appreciated. The Newsletter is a way for us all to communicate what is going on in our local dance communities as well.

With that in mind, I understand that there will be a wonderful dance workshop in Little Rock, AR, November 3. (For info, email Judy Robertson at jrobertiii@hotmail.com.) The Greensboro Scottish Dancers are turning Greensboro into the Emerald City of OZ for their 35th Emerald Anniversary on November 17.

November 3 is the 89th Annual General Meeting of the RSCDS. On the agenda is the presentation of the Society Scroll of Honor to Deirdre MacCuish Bark (and others) who you know from her many years teaching at Thistle School!

By the end of this year, we need a Nominating Committee Chairman identified, as 2019 is an election year for officers. I will not be running for office, but will continue on the board ex officio. In what ways would you like to support the Branch?

Happy dancing!

Mary McConnell

Sheila South to Take Over Newsletter Editorship

I'm happy to announce that Sheila South will take over editorship of this newsletter starting in 2019. We've talked about this since Thistle School this past summer – see Sheila's story above -- and I've told Sheila I will be glad to continue contributing copy. I'm happy to turn editing duties over, and I hope you'll welcome her (and send stories and pictures, as I plan to).

Tom Dillon

How to contact the officers

Here are names and addresses for the Carolinas Branch officers:

Chair

Mary McConnell

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Vice-chair

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Treasurer

Brian Youngman

702 Newport Circle

Cary, N.C. 27511

(919) 467-3390 or bayoungman@att.net

Bits and Pieces

■ It's not really a dance week, but **Greensboro's St. Andrews Ball**, set for Saturday, Nov. 17, will have a couple of added attractions this year. On Friday, the night before, a ceilidh is scheduled, and on Thursday, the night before that, **Scottish folksinger Jim Malcolm** will perform at the Stonefield Winery in Stokesdale, N.C., just outside Greensboro. His performances in the area have coincided with the dance weekend for several years. Information on the ball is available at www.gsoscds.org. Information on Jim Malcolm's visit is available from the winery at nwurz@stonefieldcellars.com. Or call (336) 644-9908.

■ For a handy **Membership Form** to join or renew your membership in RSCDS and the Carolinas branch, go to the Branch Website (at the top of this newsletter) and click on Membership Application. Dues are \$40 for single memberships, \$66 for two adults at the same address, \$33 for young adults age 18 to 24, and \$5 for associate members from another branch. Send forms and dues by June 30 to Brian Youngman, 702 Newport Circle, Cary, N.C. 27511.

■ We hope that everyone in the branch is receiving the newsletter. If you're not, you will have to get this notice second-hand, of course, but we still hope you will respond. If you're not getting the newsletter, please let either the editor or branch secretary know. **If you don't have email**, telephone the editor (see the number at the top) and let him know. We'll be glad to print out copies and send them to you by U.S. mail.

■ Concerts of note include the **Tannahill Weavers** 8 p.m. Sept. 28 at the High Point Theater in High Point, N.C., and fiddler **Jamie Lavall** at 3 p.m. on Sept. 30 at Trinity Episcopal Church, Statesville, N.C. Call 336-887-3001 for the former, 704-872-6314 for the latter.

Need help?

Remember that the Branch has funds to help with individual group events, Here again is the form for requesting that help. Feel free to print it, cut it out and mail it in:

■ Request for funds from the Carolinas Branch for the support of special activities of member groups; e.g., hall rental or music for dances and workshops. Requests are to be approved by the Committee of Management prior to disbursement.

■ Name of the group (check payable to)



■ Name and mailing address of organizer of event



■ Name of the event _____

■ Date of the event _____

■ Date of Application _____

■ Purpose of the event _____

■ Use of these funds for the event _____

■ Amount requested _____

■ Contact telephone number or email _____

2018-19 Calendar

September 21-23	Fandango (ECD weekend)	Decatur, Ga. www.ecdatlanta.org
October 19-21	Stone Mountain Games/Dances	Atlanta, Ga. www.rscds-atlanta.org or www.smhg.org
October 20	Jeannie Carmichael Ball	Forest Hills, N.Y. www.rscdsnewyork.org
October 26-27	Reel Scottish Weekend	Charlotte, N.C. (704) 814-9647 or JPres79334@aol.com
October 26-28	Asilomar Weekend	Monterey, Calif. www.rscds-sf.org/events
November 2-4	Conference Weekend/AGM	Perth, Scotland www.rscds.org or moira.thomson@rscds.org
November 9-11	Argyle Weekend	Alexandria, Va. www.rscds-greaterdc.org
November 2-3	Charleston, S.C. Games & Dance	Charleston, S.C. (843) 810-7797 or charlestonrscds@gmail.com

November 17	35 th St. Andrews Ball	Greensboro, N.C. (336) 282-6507 or www.gsocds.org
December 1	John Drewry Night	Brooklyn, N.Y. www.rscdsnewyork.org
December 8	Christmas Dance	Richmond, Va. (804) 639-7688 or www.richmondscottishcountrydancers.org
December 31	Delaware Valley Hogmanay	Philadelphia, Pa. www.delvalscottishdance.org/hogmanay-2018-19
Feb. 17-22, 2019	RSCDS Winter School	Pitlochry, Scotland www.rscds.org or moira.thomson@rscds.org
April 12-14, 2019	Loch Norman Highland Games	Huntersville, N.C. www.lochnorman.com
July 7-12, 2019	Thistle School XXXVIII	Banner Elk, N.C. www.thistleschool.com
July 11-14, 2019	Grandfather Mountain Games	Linville, N.C. www.gmhg.org

Web sites and phone numbers are those available to the editor at the time of publication.
*Dancing on the field only

Happy fall travels!

