



## BRANCH NEWS SEPTEMBER 2024

Registered Charity No 1069188

### WHAT'S OCCURRING?

A lot has happened since I last wrote a Newsletter for the Branch. One of the most significant events has been the development of a new website, which has gone out to Branch members for feedback, so that it can be tweaked prior to going live. We've heard from a number of you, generally with approving comments, but also with some very helpful suggestions. Thank you. Please continue to express your views.

The existence of a website, with its scope for more immediate updates and interaction, has inevitably caused us to review the function of a newsletter. Is it still useful? Does it justify the amount of work it entails? Who will produce it? I am no longer Branch Secretary, having come to the end of my term of office at the Branch AGM in June. The Committee has been looking at ways of slimming down the role of Secretary to make it more manageable for Judy Williams, who has valiantly taken it on.

So maybe the Newsletter is superfluous. However – always the glutton for punishment – I have offered to continue to produce occasional issues, which will reach you by e-mail every so often. This may still be a good alternative means of drawing your attention to recent developments and forthcoming events. Hopefully it will complement the website.

Which brings me nicely to the purpose of the present issue. I have put together in the form of Listings a number of Branch events over the coming season, as well as others from nearby Branches. I have also collated some information on Branch activities that gives members a little more detail than is practical on the website.

I still have some saved material which members have provided me with in the course of the last year. I hope to put those items together into a further Newsletter soon, as I don't want anyone's efforts to go to waste, and I believe they are still of interest.

The Committee would also like to express their gratitude to Fran Smith for the hard work she has put into the previous website over the years. Fran continues to run the Branch Shop, which can be reached through a link on the new website. Maybe Fran will be kind enough to do a write-up for us for the next Newsletter.

**Alison Jackson**

At the AGM in June 2024 the following were elected:

**Chair: Heather Davies** [chair.rscdssouthwales@gmail.com](mailto:chair.rscdssouthwales@gmail.com)

**Secretary: Judy Williams** [rscdssouthwales@gmail.com](mailto:rscdssouthwales@gmail.com)

**Treasurer: Jane Davidson** [treasurer.rscdssouthwales@gmail.com](mailto:treasurer.rscdssouthwales@gmail.com)

**Committee Members: Tony Harland; Alison Jackson; Ann Morgan; Pat Rye; Fran Smith; Carol Walton. There is one vacancy.**

**If you have something to discuss, please feel free to talk to any of the Committee.**

**DANCE CELEBRATION/FAMILY PICNIC  
OYSTERMOUTH CASTLE, MUMBLES,  
SATURDAY 28 SEPTEMBER, 2:00–4:30**

You've all previously had a flier advertising this event. And see the current Listings. Tony Harland has taken the lead on organising the event and writes as follows:

*Most of you will know that for many years the RSCDS has held its "Festival" in June at various outdoor locations, but the weather hasn't been too kind to us of late, so we thought we'd give September a chance. We've also decided to have a go at moving more to the west, hence the Swansea area.*

*Now this isn't the same as the Festival event: it's simple Scottish dancing (all dances walked through) plus Ceilidh dances. The reason for this is that we want the public to get involved, with the intention that if some people really enjoy themselves we can tempt them into giving Scottish dancing a go. It's still bring a picnic time and if you have any friends you think would enjoy some simple dances then please bring them as well.*

*In case of wet weather we have a backup venue, the Ostreme Centre, right by the castle, on the corner of Newton Road and Castle Avenue, with a good dance floor.*

*We don't expect you to dance for the whole two-and-a-half hours, soooooo, about half way through. while we have our picnics, Sweyns Ey are going to give us a dazzling display of Morris dancing.*

It seems that parking could be difficult on a Saturday afternoon, but Tony has made some helpful suggestions (possible alternative route, car-sharing, etc.). If you would like to have this information, please get in touch with Tony direct on [anthony.harland@anthonyh102.plus.com](mailto:anthony.harland@anthonyh102.plus.com)

**SCD TECHNIQUE WORKSHOP, ST  
PAUL'S PARISH CENTRE, DE LA  
BECHE ROAD, SKETTY, SA2 9AR  
SUNDAY 27 OCTOBER, 2:30 – 5:00 PM**

This workshop has been organised in response to a wish expressed by some members at our AGM in June. They wanted a chance for us all to improve our **dancing** (i.e. not just to learn **dances**).

We have been delighted that Alison Littlejohn, a very experienced teacher whose forte is technique and who is herself a beautiful dancer, has been willing to take this on. It may be that this workshop will be the precursor of regular technique classes. So if you're interested in future classes, please support this event and express your ideas about possible frequency, suitable locations, etc.

Alison has set out her ideas about how she will organise the October workshop:

*The aim of this workshop is for dancers to build confidence in their knowledge of formations used in Scottish Country Dancing through phrasing, covering and teamwork. There will be the opportunity for improvement in technique of the steps and transitions between the steps required in the formations taught.*

*Some of the formations to be covered will be selected from the following,*  
*Four hands across and back*  
*Hands round and back*  
*Reels of three*  
*Double triangles*  
*Bourrel*  
*Poussette*  
*Grand chain*  
*Ladies' and men's chains*

Thanks, Alison. Please note that this will be a mixed ability event – everyone welcome!

See current Listings for more details.

## EXCITING NEWS FROM ALEX GRAY, OUR VICE-PRESIDENT

In August Alex sent us the following:  
*Some time ago I entered a couple of dances for consideration for the Edinburgh "One Hundred Years" Book. I gather that well over fifty submissions were received. I've just heard that the two dances with music by James which I submitted are among the fourteen that have been chosen for publication. They're called Joppa Rocks and Jock's Lodge.*

*James composed three tunes for Joppa Rocks – "Joppa Rocks", "Porty Prom", and "Coal & Salt", and for the other dance he composed "The Professor". The tunes for Joppa Rocks are concerned with the rocks at the eastern end of Portobello promenade, where the coal seams come to the surface, along with seams of other rock types. The coal was used in the Joppa salt pans to heat the sea water in a big enclosure to evaporate the water and make sea salt crystals. The other dance is a strathspey. James wrote the tune when Cardiff University made me a professor.*



Alex also sent us pictures (see above for one of those pictures) of the continuing beauty of the roses given to him by the Branch to (in his words) "remind me of the happy times Kate and I had dancing for forty-seven years in South Wales. Thank you once again."

## LISTINGS 2024-2025

### 2024

**Sat 28 Sept, 2:00–4:30 pm**, South Wales Branch Dance Celebration and Family Picnic. Grounds outside Oystermouth Castle, Mumbles SA3 4BE (or in Ostreme Centre next to the castle if wet). Free of charge, all welcome. Programme of easy dances (Scottish Country & Ceilidh), with demonstrations by Sweyns Ey Morris Dancers & others. Contact Judy Williams [rscdssouthwales@gmail.com](mailto:rscdssouthwales@gmail.com)

**Sat 5 Oct NB: CANCELLED**  
Pembrokeshire Group Social Dance, Letterston Memorial Hall, SA62 5SJ. Contact Tony Miles [tondi@talktalk.net](mailto:tondi@talktalk.net)

**Sat 12 Oct, 7:00–10:30 pm**, Bristol RSCDS New Season Dance. Oatley Hall, St Monica Trust, BS9 3TN. Music by Craigellachie. £15. Bring & share supper. Contact [tickets@rscdsbristol.info](mailto:tickets@rscdsbristol.info)

**Sat 19 Oct 6:30–9:30 pm**, St Andrew's Club regular third Sat of the month dance at Scout & Guide HQ, Swansea SA2 0AU, 6:30 – 9:30 pm. Bring & share supper. Details Jim & Jan Proudfoot 01792 299443 [jimnjan@ntlworld.com](mailto:jimnjan@ntlworld.com)

**Sun 27 Oct, 2:30-5:00 pm**, S Wales Branch Technique Workshop, St Paul's Parish Centre, Sketty, Swansea SA2 9AR. Led by Alison Littlejohn. All welcome – mixed ability approach. £5 per dancer.

**Sat 9 Nov, morning, afternoon & early evening dance**. Bristol RSCDS Day School. Different venues morning/afternoon. Teacher Ros McLaughlin. Music Ian Robertson.

**Sat 16 Nov. 6:30–9:30 pm**, St Andrew's Club regular third Sat of the month dance at Scout & Guide HQ, Swansea SA2 0AU, 6:30 – 9:30 pm. Bring & share supper. Details Jim & Jan Proudfoot 01792 299443 [jimnjan@ntlworld.com](mailto:jimnjan@ntlworld.com)

**Sat 23 Nov, 2:30–5:00 pm**. Dancing around the World Dance/Workshop, run by S Wales Branch. St Paul's Parish Centre, Sketty, Swansea SA2 9AR. Selected dances from the RSCDS

collection on the CD recorded by Colin Dewar for the event, which is taking place globally within the same 24 hours. Led by Heather Davies, Lyn Wilson & Alison Jackson. All dances will be walked through, with some practice of particular formations – all levels of dancing experience catered for. All welcome. £5 per dancer. Contact Judy Williams [rscdssouthwales@gmail.com](mailto:rscdssouthwales@gmail.com)

**Sat 30 Nov, 2:30-6:00 pm.** Gloucester Scottish Society St Andrew's Dance. The Reddings Community Centre. Music Chris & Julie Dewhurst. Contact Pam Latham [pj259@talktalk.net](mailto:pj259@talktalk.net)

**Sat 30 Nov, 6:30–10:00 pm,** St Andrew's Day Ceilidh run by Corryvreckan Dance Team. Oatley Hall, St Monica Trust, Bristol BS9 3TN. Music and dance performances, ceilidh dancing for all. Tickets £18 in advance, available on Corryvreckan website. Bring & share supper.

**Sat 21 Dec 6:30–9:30 pm,** St Andrew's Club regular third Sat of the month dance at Scout & Guide HQ, Swansea SA2 0AU, 6:30 – 9:30 pm. Bring & share supper. Details Jim & Jan Proudfoot 01792 299443 [jimnjan@ntlworld.com](mailto:jimnjan@ntlworld.com)

## 2025

**Sat 11 Jan, 7:00-11:00 pm.** Cheltenham Ball (Cheltenham RSCDS). Music by Craigellachie. Princess Hall, Cheltenham Ladies' College. Tickets £30 (incl supper). [tickets@rscdscheltenham.org](mailto:tickets@rscdscheltenham.org)

**Sat 18 Jan, 6:30–9:30 pm,** St Andrew's Club regular third Sat of the month dance at Scout & Guide HQ, Swansea SA2 0AU, 6:30 – 9:30 pm. Bring & share supper. Details Jim & Jan Proudfoot 01792 299443 [jimnjan@ntlworld.com](mailto:jimnjan@ntlworld.com)

**Sat 1 Feb,** Bristol RSCDS Newcomers' Dance. Oatley Hall, St Monica Trust, BS9 3TN. Music by Dewhurst Trio.

**Sat 15 Feb 6:30–9:30 pm,** St Andrew's Club – as for 18 January.

**Sat 15 March 6:30–9:30 pm** St Andrew's Club – as for 18 January

**Sat 22 March, 7:00–10:30 pm,** Branch Spring Dance (West Wales). Whitland Town Hall, SA34 0AA. Music by Ian Robertson, accordionist. Details to be confirmed, flyer available in the autumn. Bring & share supper. Hot drinks provided. Contact Judy Williams [rscdssouthwales@gmail.com](mailto:rscdssouthwales@gmail.com)

**Sat 19 April, 6:30-9:30 pm,** St Andrew's Club regular third Sat of the month dance at Scout & Guide HQ, Swansea SA2 0AU, 6:30 – 9:30 pm. Bring & share supper. Details Jim & Jan Proudfoot 01792 299443 [jimnjan@ntlworld.com](mailto:jimnjan@ntlworld.com) *Note: this is Easter Saturday, and is a provisional arrangement, so will depend on likely numbers.*

**Sat 26 April, 7:00–10:30 pm,** S Wales Branch Spring Dance (SE Wales). Rhiwbina Memorial Hall, Cardiff CF14 6HL. Music by Ian Robertson, accordionist. Details to be confirmed, flyer available in the autumn. Bring & share supper. Hot drinks provided. Contact Judy Williams [rscdssouthwales@gmail.com](mailto:rscdssouthwales@gmail.com)

**Sat 17 May, 6:30–9:30 pm,** St Andrew's Club regular third Sat of the month dance at Scout & Guide HQ, Swansea SA2 0AU, 6:30 – 9:30 pm. Bring & share supper. Details Jim & Jan Proudfoot 01792 299443 [jimnjan@ntlworld.com](mailto:jimnjan@ntlworld.com)

**Sat 17 May.** Bristol RSCDS Summer Dance. Music by Matthew McLelland

**Sat 7 June, 7:00–10:30 pm,** Cardiff – Whitchurch Tuesday Class Annual June Dance, Rhiwbina Memorial Hall, Cardiff CF14 6HL. Music by John Browne, accordionist. £15 per dancer. Bring & share supper. Hot drinks provided.

**Sat 21 June, 4:30 pm,** S Wales Branch AGM, Scout & Guide HQ, Swansea, SA2 0AU.

**Sat 21 June 6:30–9:30 pm,** St Andrew's Club - as for 17 May