

Bob and Mary Low Beatty, Editors



Detroit Branch RSCDS
P.O. Box 931
Royal Oak, MI 48068

Website: rscdsdetroit.org/ - includes events and many photos.

Newsletters may be sent to Sue Boczek at sboczek@voyager.net

Deadline for input for next newsletter: May 1, 2009.

Executive Committee

Chairman: Sue Boczek (248-398-2921)
Past Chair: Don Johnston (586-228-7370)
Vice-Chair: Jim Watson (248-542-5415)
Treasurer: Al Cook (248-547-9823)
Secretary: Helen Brisson (248-623-6321)
Members at Large:
 Rachael Harrer (248-544-9231)
 Ruth Scodel (734-761-6172)
 Linda Johnston (586-228-7370)
 Bob Beatty (248-543-4142)
Membership: Bonnie Cook (248-626-2340)
Demonstration: Jayme McFarland (810-765-4125)
Publicity: Margaret Sarna (248-637-2824)
Music, webmaster:
 Don Sarna (248-637-2824)
Teachers:
 Laurel Paterson (586-294-4329)
 Robin Warner (734-426-0241)
 Helen Welford (734-426-0241)

Class Contacts

Detroit Branch – Madison Heights
Thursday 6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. basic
 7:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. combined
 8:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m. advanced

Madison Heights United Methodist Church
246 E. Eleven Mile Rd.
Madison Heights, Michigan
Bob Beatty (248-543-4142) or
Linda Johnston (586-228-7370)

Roseville – “Red Hackles”
Tuesday 7:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.
Erin Presbyterian Church
Gratiot at Common Rd. (12 ½ mile)
Roseville, Michigan
Margaret Ross (586-792-9776)

Ann Arbor – “Tartan and Thistle”
Monday 7:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.
Robin’s Barn, 4222 Dexter Townhall Rd.,
Dexter, MI – Helen Welford 734-426-0241 or
Joan Hellmann 734-769-1052.

Ann Arbor Class

Note the change in night. The first hour provides an introduction and some instruction and is very suitable for beginners. Refreshments and social dancing follow. We are welcoming guest teachers and have enjoyed classes this fall with Susie Langdon Kass from California and Catherine Graham on her visit back from Arizona.

Dancing in Orlando

By Rachael Harrer

Just as the temperature dipped to - 6 degrees in the Detroit area in mid January, eight members of the Detroit Branch of the RSCDS made our way to sunny Orlando, Florida to participate in the 32nd annual Central Florida Scottish Highland Games. You might say our timing was quite remarkable, however we arrived in a "cold wave" with temperatures in the 40's at night and not much higher than the 50's most days.

We were warmly welcomed by the Orlando SCD group who invited us to a practice for the Highland Games, marching in the parade, carrying the group's tartan banners

,and dancing throughout the day. There were some familiar dances as well as several new, interesting ones which we quickly learned. Spectators became participants with just a bit of encouragement and people of all ages joined us for a dance or two. We could come and go to see the rest of the activities, and upon our return there was always a group dancing. The setting was a beautiful park along the shores of Lake Jesup, where, just as their brochure attests "bald eagles, hawks and live alligators often appear during the games to enjoy a Celtic aire."

When we weren't engaged in a dance event, our group went off in varying configurations to explore the area. We enjoyed hiking in an environmental center and paddling down a river in Wekiva Springs State Park. All of us spent time at Epcot Center in Disney World. Coming together to share our experiences was always interesting. We also had celebrations of two group members' birthdays which were planned quite secretly and cleverly. All in all, the time was a welcome respite from the frigid north and hopefully makes the winter seem a wee bit shorter this year.

By Margaret Sarna

Eight Detroiters recently spent four delightful days in Orlando: The Gaspars and Cooks (Bonnie & Jim), Rachael Harrer, Sue Boczek and Don & I. We went for the Orlando Highland Games in Winter Springs. We danced Thursday night, Friday night and all day Saturday, 10:30-4:00. Each year teacher James Kutzner comes from Melbourne (FL) to put us—and the audience—through our paces. We did 20 dances that day, perhaps more. Even though the locals were freezing, we were happy with 65 degrees!

Among other events were two surprise birthday parties, complete with key lime pies! (You can have cake any time, but not Publix KLPs.) We'd planned a surprise for Rachael, and everyone kept the secret. The party followed pizza at our motel's cozy patio lounge. Two days earlier, the group

surprised me at class! I was truly stunned, as Don's been 'instructed' to never tell when my birthday is. Getting into Epcot free on your birthday is a deal—admission is nearly \$80 now. You're given a big badge, and staff is trained to wish you HB. We lost count of how many greeted me by name. You spot and greet others celebrating their birthdays, too. Lots of fun!

The Orlando Branch brought refreshments for us at Thursday's class, an especially nice treat since they normally don't have goodies.

They also bring in all the food and beverages for the dancers at the Games, a virtual feast. No one goes hungry, and it keeps up our energy!

Dancers are free to take a break any time and shop the vendors, watch other events, eat or rest. They can buy all sorts of foods, as the Games are well represented by Scottish food dealers, but no one needs to with the spread the Branch serves.

Every dance has audience participation, and there's quite a number of spectators all day.

Because the platform is at the entrance to the field, everyone passes at least twice. Dancers wear what they wear in real life to dance. No Strathspeys are done as they bore audiences. The sponsoring Scottish clubs don't charge for our 'booth' (a dance platform and 3 tents with tables & chairs for spectators, dancers and food) as we're considered part of the entertainment.

A favorite among Detroiters was Balgeddie Reel, which James teaches every year. Some had never done it and thought it quite the fun dance. Other favorites done Thursday, Friday and/or Saturday were Irish Rover, The Lea Rig, Postie's Jig, Reel of the Royal Scots, Trip to Bavaria, Montgomery's Rant and Mairi's Wedding.

The Friday night dance at the Hilton was very nice (except for having to dance on carpeting, which is work).

This was our 4th year but the first for the

others, and I believe they had a good time and were glad they went. Don and I enjoyed every minute of their company and look forward to other out-of-town dance events with them.



Photo by Don Sanra

News From Ellie

Ellie Hayes sends greetings from her “wee cabin” in Weatherford, TX. In addition to dancing, Scottish Country, contra and English Country, she has her own business called Grannie’s Office Cleaning and is doing some tutoring in elementary education. Another new iron in the fire is serving as a clown, having taken a clown class. Some of you may know son David Hickling who is at Michigan State in a pre-med curriculum. Carl is serving as a school bus driver for the Weatherford Schools.

Ellie would like to hear from you. Her new address is 4673 Weiland Road, Weatherford, TX 76088.

Travels in Southeast Asia

By Timm Kelly

Who of our generation would have thought that Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia would be prime tourist destinations? Bonnie and I spent three weeks in January touring these

countries along with neighboring Thailand, where we were introduced to ethnic dancing in a guest’s home.

The trip had a number of themes. The first was the great cultural monuments including the Grand Palace of Thailand and Reclining Buddha in Bangkok, the Royal Palace in Phnom Penh, the Great Sacred Stupa in Vientiane, Laos, the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Luang Prabang, Laos and the magnificent testaments to the greatness of the Khmer Empire at Angkor Thom, Ta Prohm and the largest religious structure in the world at Angkor Wat. Second were the big cities of Bangkok and Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) with their congestion, noise, pollution and vibrant energy. Approximately 10 million people live in greater Saigon and all of them are on the streets riding motorbikes between 7 and 9 AM and again between 5 and 7 PM. Next was transportation both conventional and unusual. There were boats, cyclo-rickshaws (Once during rush hour in Saigon.), an ox cart, the back of a pick-up truck through the hills of northern Thailand and finally an elephant, in addition to airplanes, buses and taxis. Then there was the effects of war, starting with the Khmer Empire abandoning their capital at Angkor in the 15th century, through the Vietnam war, the Laotian Civil War and finally the wars for political control of Cambodia. While the bomb craters that can be seen as you approach Luang Prabang Airport, the Chu Chi Tunnels and War Remnants Museum remind you of the scenes you saw on the nightly news in the late 60’s and early 70’s, it is the prison at Toul Sleng and the memorial Stupa, with more than 8500 human skulls on display, at the Killing Fields of Choeung Ek that bear the most moving witness to the inconceivable brutality of this era.

A memorable experience was the interaction with the people of these countries, starting with our guides, two of whom come from villages in the hills and are among the first members of their families to attend school and a third who was born one month before Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge seized power

in Cambodia. He survived a forced march of several hundred miles during which his mother was without food and water for weeks at a time. It continues through the villagers we met in the hills of Laos and Thailand, many of whom live in huts of thatched bamboo with a cooking fire on the dirt floor and a TV or electric rice cooker in the corner. The welcoming ceremony in the home of an uncle of our Laotian guide in Vientiane was particularly memorable, as was the lunch in a home near Angkor Wat. Our most memorable experience was the visit to a school near Angkor Wat. We were each met by a student as we alighted from our bus. They took our hand and escorted us to their classroom where we shared their desks. Communication was difficult as the students had just started to learn English and we had essentially no knowledge of Cambodian, but it was rewarding for those who made the effort. The children proudly demonstrated their ability to recite the alphabet in English and read simple texts. From the classroom we walked with our student escorts to their village. The nearly two hours we spent with the students has formed a more lasting memory of our trip than all the great monuments we visited.



Bonnie and her student escort

Tea Dances

A tea dance was held on Super Bowl Sunday at Sara's Dance Academy in Macomb

Township, followed by refreshment at Heather Simmons' home. The dances were simple or familiar and included some on the program for Windsor's February 8 dance.

Windsor's Valentine's Day Tea Dance at the Scottish Club was attended by 5 sets of dancers including representatives of the Detroit Branch and a few as audience participants.

Events

For more information, visit www.intercityscot.org or send your Email address to dssarna@sprintmail.com

* Sunday, February 8 – Windsor Tea Dance; 3-6:30, Scottish Club

Saturday, February 21 - Toronto Tartan Ball, Royal York

Friday-Saturday, February 27-28 London Ceilidh/Workshop/Dance Weekend

March 20-21 Spring Fling - Cocoa Beach Florida

Saturday, March 21 – Border Cities Workshop & Dance (Friday night practice)

Saturday, March 28 – Annual Blair Ball (Kitchener/Waterloo area)

Saturday, April 4 – Sarnia Spring Dance (the group's 50th anniversary)

Thursday, April 9 – NO CLASS at MH

Saturday, May 2 – London's Spring Ball; Bobby Brown

Sunday, April 19 – Detroit Branch tea dance; Fred Moyes

Saturday, May 9 – Ann Arbor Ball

Thursday, May 21 – Branch Annual Meeting, potluck & final session

Sat-Sun, May 23-24 – Alma Highland Festival

Saturday, June 6 – Annual Soo Dance

Friday, Saturday, July 10, 11 – Saline Celtic Festival and workshop

Saturday, August 1 – Livonia Games

The Tartan

Gentlemen---The Tartan
Here's to It
The Fighting Sheen of It,
The White, The Blue of It
The Swing, the Hue of it,
The Dark, the Red of It,
Every Thread of it
The Fair have sighed for it,
The Brave have died for it,
Foremen sought it,
Heroes fought for it,
Honour the name of it,
Drink to the fame of it

Murdock Maclean