



# Orange County Ceilidh



Newsletter of the Orange County Branch of the RSCDS

Volume 43, No. 4

July/August 2025

Visit our website at [www.rscds-oc.org](http://www.rscds-oc.org)

“For naught can cheer the heart sae weel, As can a canty Highland reel” — Robert Fergusson

## Greetings from the Chair

Happy summer to all. Recently a group of dancers from the local branches provided demonstration step and Scottish Country dances and audience participation ceilidh dances to the attendees at the Scottish Fest over Memorial Day weekend. We had good attendance at all sessions and many inquiries. Now we'll see if any of those people show up for a class somewhere. Thanks very much to Pat Zschoche for coordinating (or was that cat-herding) the dancing. And also thank you to Flora and David Morgan for hosting participants at their house Saturday night. A group of dancers will also be performing at the California Celtic Festival on June 15 in Placentia.

Some of us were able to help former teacher Shirley Saturensky celebrate her 99th birthday recently. We were happy to see she is doing well and we were also glad to see former members John and Rita McKenzie and former teachers Bob Patterson and Renee Boblette. See the photo below.

Looking ahead, in addition to the normal summer classes and monthly dances, San Gabriel Valley is hosting its special summer series of classes on Thursday and Sunday evenings featuring guest teachers and special topics. See the schedule on page 6.

In September, the 36th Annual Interbranch Dance will be held on the 27th featuring the music of the SO-CALedonians and the always impressive miscellany sale. If you have any surplus Scottish gear, please bring it along to add to the collection. Meanwhile, have a great summer and I hope to see you at our AGM next weekend and at other events this summer.

*Terri Speakman, Chair*



## Orange County Classes

### TUESDAY

Columbus Tustin Recreation Center  
17522 Beneta Way, Tustin  
Intermediate: 7:30 – 9:30 p.m.  
Pat Zschoche: [swisslassie@hotmail.com](mailto:swisslassie@hotmail.com)

### WEDNESDAY

Columbus Tustin Recreation Center  
17522 Beneta Way, Tustin  
Basics: 7:00 – 8:15 p.m.  
Beginner: 8:15-9:30 p.m.  
Connie Walker: [samanthasem@yahoo.com](mailto:samanthasem@yahoo.com)

### FRIDAY

Columbus Tustin Recreation Center  
17522 Beneta Way, Tustin  
Experienced: 7:30 – 9:30 p.m.  
Connie Walker: [samanthasem@yahoo.com](mailto:samanthasem@yahoo.com)  
Pat Zschoche: [swisslassie@hotmail.com](mailto:swisslassie@hotmail.com)

**Note: Classes require enrollment through Tustin Parks and Recreation ([www.tustinca.org](http://www.tustinca.org))**

**The Next Big Event**  
**Interbranch**  
**Dance**  
**September 27, 2025**  
**7:30 p.m.**  
**Tustin Senior Center**  
**Music by the**  
**SO-CALedonians**

## Calendar of Events

(see branch website [rscds-oc.org](http://rscds-oc.org) for flyers of upcoming dances)

### HERE

#### June 2025

- 14 Branch Potluck, AGM & Dance, Potluck 6:00 p.m., AGM 6:30 p.m., Dancing 7:00 p.m., Tustin Senior Center, recorded music

- 14-15 California Celtic Fest, Kraemer Park, Placentia

#### July 2025

- 12 Branch Dance, 7:00 p.m., Tustin Senior Center, recorded music

#### August 2025

No Branch Dance

#### September 2025

- 13 Branch Dance, 7:00 p.m., Tustin Senior Center, recorded music
- 27 Interbranch Dance, 7:30 p.m., Tustin Senior Center, music by the SO-CAledonians + Miscellany Sale

### THERE

#### June 2025

- 28 LA Branch AGM, Potluck and Dance, Potluck 5:00 p.m., Meeting 6:00 p.m., Dancing 7:00 p.m., recorded music

#### July 2025

- 19 San Gabriel Valley Branch Luau, 4:00 p.m., St. James Episcopal Church, South Pasadena, music by the SO-CAledonians
- 26 LA Branch Summer Dance, 7:00 p.m., Torrance Cultural Arts Center, recorded music

#### August 2025

- 23 LA Branch Summer Dance, 7:00 p.m., First Christian Church, Studio City, recorded music

#### May 2026

- 1-3 Catalina Workshop and Ball. Teachers Jeanne Moody & Gary Coull, Music by Thistle House. Information & registration form at [www.scottishdancecatalinaworkshop.com](http://www.scottishdancecatalinaworkshop.com)

### ELSEWHERE

#### July 2025

- 4-12 Boston Branch Pinewoods Summer Camp; [rscds-boston.org/pinewoods-scottish-sessions.html](http://rscds-boston.org/pinewoods-scottish-sessions.html)

- July 13-August 10 RSCDS Summer School, St. Andrews, Scotland; [rscds.org](http://rscds.org)

#### August 2025

- 1-10 TAC Summer School, Bishop's University, Sherbrooke, Quebec; [tac-rscds.org](http://tac-rscds.org)



## Minutes of the COM of May 4, 2025

### Meeting Highlights:

- **Treasurer's Report:** Current balance in the checking account is \$10,348, of which the Scholarship Fund balance is \$2298.
- **Membership:** 2024-2025 membership was 29 members and 38 associate members. 14 members and 7 associate members have renewed to date.
- Pat Zschoche is coordinating demonstration dances at the Scottish Fest May 24-25 and the Celtic Festival June 15. David and Flora Morgan will host a potluck at their house on May 24 for all dancers who come to the Scottish Fest.
- The dance program for 2025-26 has been completed by the teachers.
- The Orange County Branch will be in charge of the next Burns Ball on January 24, 2026. Andy Imbrie and Caroline McCaskey will again provide the music.
- Catalina Workshop and Ball, May 1-3, 2026 is now taking reservations.
- The scholarship application will be amended to reflect a maximum dance scholarship of \$500 for full members of the Orange County branch and \$100 for associate members.
- There are a number of branch members interested in the RSCDS Basic Teaching Skills course.
- Pete Anderson was thanked for his 40 years of service to the branch and will be resigning from the COM to move to Washington.

The next Committee of Management meeting will be held on August 24, 2025. Copies of the full minutes of the meeting are available from Recording Secretary Randi Kraemer.



*Orange County Ceilidh*



# Scottish Fest 2025



Orange County Ceilidh



## Imbolc: Spring is Sprung

*"If Candlemas is fair and clear  
There'll be two winters in the year."*

*Scottish Saying*

A plethora of names—St. Brigid's Day, Lupercalia, Snowdrop Festival, Setsubun (Japan), Groundhog Day, *Gŷyl Fair y Canbryllau* (Wales)—link with the coming of spring and the date February 2. Candlemas, a Christianization of this midpoint between winter and spring, is one of its many tags.

Historians agree that *Imbolc* has pre-Christian origins, the date being significant in Celtic lands since neolithic times. The onset of the lambing season and preparations for spring sowing marked a new beginning in the agricultural year. For a people dependent on the weather and hours of sunlight to survive, the Celts anticipated the successful passing of winter with longer, warmer days ahead.

The etymology of *Imbolc* (IMM-bulk) is unclear. However, most agree it derives from an old Irish word *I mbolc*, meaning "in the belly" or "in the womb". This, of course, refers to the lambing season and the pregnant or lambing ewes with new milk. Another suggested origin is *oimelc* or "ewe's milk". Further possibilities include *imb-fholc*—"to wash or cleanse"—and *emibibolgon*, a Proto-Celtic word for "budding".

As the major spring quarter feast, *Imbolc* celebrates fire and light as well as honoring the Gaelic Goddess Brigid and her Christian sister Saint Brigid. There is debate whether these two were one and the same. The few historical facts about St. Brigid suggest she lived in the 6th century and founded a monastery at Kildare, Ireland. "Probably she is based on the fertility goddess Brigid or she was a real person and the lore of the goddess was transferred to her." She is the patron saint of Irish nuns, new-borns, midwives, dairy maids and cattle. Also associated with milk, hearth, home and babies, her St. Brigid

handmade crosses invoke her protection for house, windows and stables. This is also a time for visiting holy wells, ritual house cleaning, and lighting bonfires.

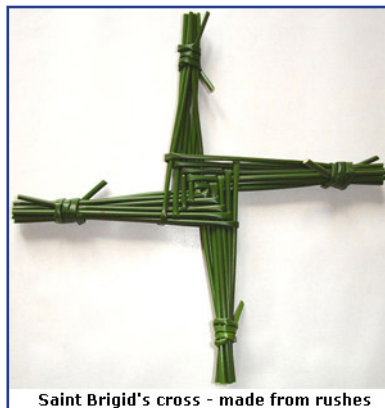
Since this is a season of transition, a certain amount of weather lore is linked with *Imbolc*. An old tradition, waiting for an animal—badger or groundhog—to emerge and foretell more winter days or not, is observed. This occasion also marks the gathering of more firewood by *Cailleach*—the divine hag/crone of Gaelic tradition—who predicts an extension of winter or its end. If she can, she makes sure the weather on *Imbolc* is bright and sunny so she can see to gather plenty of firewood while most people would be happy with cloudy weather, which indicates *Cailleach* is asleep and winter ends soon.

One alternative meaning for *Imbolc* is *imb-fholc*, which means to wash or cleanse. Here we connect with the ancient Romans who celebrated *Februa* or *Lupercalia* as a

purification event. This returns us to Candlemas and the Christian festival of purification. Candles were taken to church and blessed for use in the coming year. Candlemas is known in Irish as *Lá Fhéile Muire na gCoinneal*, "feast day of Mary of the candles".

Altogether, *Imbolc* is a happy time with emphasis on fertility, new growth, and renewal. It is mentioned in several early Irish manuscripts even though not many facts or customs are explained. "The tale *Tochmarc Emire*—from the 10th century—names *Imbolc* as one of the four seasonal festivals, and states it is 'when the ewes are milked at spring's beginning'." The 12th century *Book of Leinster* version of *Táin Bó Cúailnge* ("Cattle Raid of Cooley") indicates the date of *Imbolc* is three months after feast of *Samhain*. A 14th century translation of the same text changes the name from *Imbolc* to *Fél Bríge* (St. Brigid's Feast) so here we are back to many names for a single event.

Spring renewal and new life were important to the early Celtic farmers, and although they called the celebration many different names, they looked forward to the warmer weather, longer days, and promise of renewed life. Indeed, an optimistic outlook as a time of new growth approached.



Saint Brigid's cross - made from rushes

*Karen Kerman*

*Orange County Ceilidh*

The Los Angeles, Orange County, San Diego and  
San Gabriel Valley Branches of the RSCDS present

# Catalina Island Weekend Workshop & Ball May 1-3, 2026



Weekend price of **\$295.00** includes Friday night dinner and Ceilidh, Saturday and Sunday morning workshops, optional ball review and Saturday night plated dinner and ball in the beautiful historic Casino Ballroom if reserved by January 31, 2026. Other pricing options available. **You are responsible for booking your own hotel and ferry ride to the island.** For all the detailed information and helpful hints, go to the website below or scan this QR code.



**Teachers:** Jeanne Moody of San Diego, California  
and Gary Coull of Aberdeenshire, Scotland  
**Musicians:** Renowned East Coast band Thistle House



## **Ball Program** (scan the QR codes below for cues & videos):

Looking for a Partner	B J	Haynes, Carnforth 6
The Aviator	I J	RSCDS Book 52
Longborough Lanterns	B S	Shaner, Delaware Gold
Capelthwaite	I R	Sigg, SF Collection 2
The Dream Catcher	A S	RSCDS Book 45
Mairi's Wedding	I R	Cosh, 22 SCD
The Bees of Maggiecknockater	I J	Drewry, Canadian Book
The Braes of Tulliemet	B S	RSCDS Book 7
J.B. Milne	I R	Foss, Angus Fitchet
Ian Powrie's Farewell to Auchterarder	A J	RSCDS 30 Pop V2
The Gentleman	I S	RSCDS Book 35
The Black Leather Jig	I R	Selling, Delaware Silver
Mrs. Stewart's Jig	B J	RSCDS Book 35
The Library of Birmingham	A S	RSCDS Book 49
The Mongomerie's Rant	I R	RSCDS Book 10
Vintage Simon	A J	RSCDS Book 47
John McAlpin	I S	Foss, Galloway Album
Bauldy Bain's Fiddle	I R	Dickson, Lothian Coll.



Cues

**All important information and the registration form can be found at**

**[www.scottishdancecatalinaworkshop.com](http://www.scottishdancecatalinaworkshop.com)**

Cues and videos available at <https://my.strathspey.org/dd/list/59849/>



Videos



## San Gabriel Valley Branch 29th Annual Summer Series

South Pasadena War Memorial, 535 Fair Oaks  
Thursdays 6:30-9:00 p.m., Sundays 6:00-8:30 pm, \$7 per class

- June 12 Ann McBride: Dances with Elements of Diversity; Different Twists to Familiar Dances
- June 15 Field Trip to California Celtic Fest, Placentia
- June 19 Kris McGinnis: More of John Mitchell's Many Interesting Dances
- June 22 Marjorie McLaughlin: A History of Scottish Country Dancing — 18th Century into the 21st
- June 26 Connie Walker & Martha Matthews: Feeling the Phrasing as You Dance and Music's Magic Number
- June 29 Connie Walker: Easy Step Dancing for Everyone (Women and Men)
- July 10 Anthea Macdonald: Pousettes Come in All Shapes & Sizes
- July 13 Review for Luau
- July 16 Review for Luau
- July 20 Anthea Macdonald: Notable John Drewry Dances
- July 24: Doug Macdonald: Phunny Phrasing and Odd Numbers
- July 27 Field Trip to Angels Baseball Game vs Seattle Mariners
- July 31 Perennial Favorites and Ice Cream Social



## June Potluck, AGM and Dance

**June 14, 2025**, Potluck 6:00 p.m., Meeting 6:30 p.m.,  
Dancing 7:00 p.m.  
Tustin Senior Center, 200 C Street, Tustin  
Cost: \$15 Members; \$18 Non-Members

Gloria's Wee Jig	J	B	McMurtry/ Devil's Q
Da Rain Dancin'	R	I	RSCDS 30 Pop V2
Tuolumne Tournee	S	A	Saturensky/50 Yrs LA
The Waipu Wanderers	R	B	West/Whangarei Book
Aberdeenshire Meets			
Argentina	S	I	Stott,/Argentine Coll
Maitland to Manchester	J	I	Thomas/Wallace, San Andreas Coll.
Fair Enough	J	B	Book 51
The Peat Fire Flame	R	A	Drewry/ Bon Accord
Sandy O'er the Lea	S	B	MMM II
The Two Gray Cats	R	I	Walduck/Other Kang
La Famiglia Graziani	S	I	Landon/Woodhall V3
A Trip to the Drakensberg	J	I	Book 38
The Pawling Porch	R	B	Brunken/Moments
Glavya	J	A	Drewry/Canadian Bk
The Glengarry Homestead	S	I	Brenchley/Kangaroo Paw
The Roselath Cross	J	I	Book 41
The Deil Amang the Tailors	R	B	Book 14

## July Branch Dance

**July 12 2025**, Dancing 7:00 p.m., recorded music  
Tustin Senior Center, 200 C Street, Tustin  
Cost: \$15 Members; \$18 Non-Members

The Pawling Porch	R	B	Brunken/Moments
Maitland to Manchester	J	I	Thomas/Wallace, San Andreas Coll.
Ardnahoe	S	I	Robertson
Burns Night	J	B	McOwen/Boston 50
The Glengarry Homestead	S	I	Brenchley/Kangaroo Paw
The Peat Fire Flame	R	A	Drewry/Bon Accord
Gloria's Wee Jig	J	B	McMurtry/Devil's Q
Scott Meikle	R	I	Book 46
The House Keys of Lisbon	S	A	Landon/Woodhall V4
Crom Allt	R	B	Goldring/RSCDS Gr 3
La Famiglia Graziani	S	I	Landon/Woodhall V3
Welcome to Ayr	J	I	Book 47
Alan J. Smith	J	B	Book 45
The One O'Clock Canon	R	A	Book 47
Aberdeenshire Meets			
Argentina	S	I	Stott/Argentine Coll
Waverley/Fugal Fergus	J	I	Book 15/Foss
The Waipu Wanderers	R	B	West/Whangarei Book

*Orange County Ceilidh*

## September Branch Dance

**September 13 2025**, Dancing 7:00 p.m., recorded music  
Tustin Senior Center, 200 C Street, Tustin  
Cost: \$15 Members; \$18 Non-Members

Postie's Jig (New)	J	B	RSCDS 30 Pop V 2
Starry Night	R	I	Harmon/50 Yrs LA
Ardnahoe	S	I	Robertson
The Ship in Full Sail	J	A	Forbes/Craigievar 2
First Love (New)	S	B	Baker/Let's All Dance
Smiling Lila	R	I	Bartlett
Maitland to Manchester	J	I	Thomas/Wallace, San Andreas Coll.
Midsummer Moon	S	B	Moody/Salute to SD
Best Set in the Hall	J	I	Book 46
Tuolumne Tournee	S	A	Saturensky/50 Yrs LA
The Barmkin (New)	R	B	RSCDS Graded 2
Waverley/Fugal Fergus	J	I	Book 15
Burns Night	J	B	McOwen, Boston 50
Elspeth Gray's Reel (New)	R	A	Book 53
Porchester Hall	S	I	Meyer, London Jubilee
Hedwig's Reel	R	B	RSCDS Graded 2
The Black Leather Jig (New)	R	I	Selling/Delaware Silver

## 36th Annual Interbranch Dance

**September 27, 2025**, 7:30 p.m.  
Tustin Senior Center, 200 C Street, Tustin  
Music by The SO-CALEDONIANS  
Cost: \$25 members; \$30 non-members; \$10 non-dancers

Looking for a Partner	J	B	Haynes/Carnforth
Toast to the Mousies	R	I	RSCDS Bk 53
The Gentleman	S	I	RSCDS Bk 35
Ian Powrie's Farewell	J	A	RSCDS 30 Pop V2
to Auchterarder			
Ardnahoe	S	B	Robertson
The Montgomeries' Rant	R	I	RSCDS Bk 10
The Bees of Maggie Knocketer	J	I	RSCDS 30 Pop V2
The Reel of the Royal Scots	R	B	RSCDS Leaflet
Sugar Candie	S	I	RSCDS Bk 26
The Cranberry Tart	J	I	RSCDS 30 Pop V2
The Dream Catcher	S	A	RSCDS Bk 45
The Black Leather Jig	R	I	Selling/Delaware Silver
Mrs Stewart's Jig	J	B	RSCDS Bk 35
Capelthwaite	R	I	Sigg/SF Collection 2
John McAlpin	S	I	Foss/Mag Dances 05-09
Vintage Simon	J	A	RSCDS Bk 47
Bauldy Bain's Fiddle	R	I	Dickson/Lothian



## OC BRANCH SCHOLARSHIPS

Revised 2020

The Branch has established a scholarship fund to encourage the development of Scottish Country Dancing teachers, dancers, and musicians in Orange County, and to provide opportunities for Southern California Scottish Country Dancing dancers to experience high quality live music both as listeners and as dancers.

To be eligible for a dance scholarship, the applicant must be a current member or associate member of the Orange County Branch and be presently attending class regularly for at least one year. Preference will be given to applicants interested in pursuing teacher training.

To be eligible for a musician scholarship, the applicant must be a resident of Southern California, have demonstrated an interest in playing Scottish Country Dancing music, and should play an instrument relevant to Scottish Country Dancing, such as accordion, fiddle, keyboard, piano, recorder, etc.



Applications are available on the branch website and at branch dance classes. Applicants must provide information on how the funds will be used and will need to provide documentation of attendance. Requests must be received at least 30 days before the funds are needed. Awards will be limited to a total of \$500 a year. Requests and awards will be confidential. Scholarships will be granted without attention to race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, color, nationality, ancestry, age, or place of origin.

The dance scholarship is in honor of Orange County Branch founding member and long-time dancer Dorothy Craik. The musician scholarship is in honor of Andrew Rankine, a noted accordionist, composer and renowned Scottish Country Dancing band leader.



If you are interested in applying, send your application to Scholarship Committee, c/o RSCDS-Orange County Branch, 8361 Castilian Dr., Huntington Beach, CA 92646 or email to chair Terri Speakman at [tjspeakman@verizon.net](mailto:tjspeakman@verizon.net).

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If not deliverable, return to:

**The Orange County Branch of the**  
Royal Scottish Country Dance Society  
8361 Castilian Dr., Huntington Beach, CA 92646

Volume 43, #4, July/August 2025

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**Thanks to all contributors!**

**THE ORANGE COUNTY CEILIDH IS  
PUBLISHED 6 TIMES PER YEAR.**

Deadline for the September/October *Ceilidh* is  
August 1, 2025.