



Orange County Ceilidh



Newsletter of the Orange County Branch of the RSCDS

Volume 44, No. 4

July/August 2026

Visit our website at www.rscds-oc.org

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

Greetings from the Chair

Welcome to Summer! We have had a busy spring of Scottish Country dancing here in southern California. The main event was the Catalina workshop and ball the first weekend in May. See Connie Learn's article and photos starting on page 3. There was robust attendance not just from southern California dancers, but many from the Bay Area traveled south and others from around the country joined us to learn from San Diego teacher Jeanne Moody and RSCDS Chair Gary Coull and dance to the fabulous music of Thistle House.



This event would not have happened without the leadership of Doris Fisher—thanks so much, Doris! She and Eric made a number of trips over to the island over the course of the past two years to get all the venues and plans in place. She and her committee worked hard to put on a great weekend and it was much appreciated. With any luck, we will be able to do it again in a few years.

May also saw the Orange County Branch celebrate the 100th birthday of founding member Shirley Saturensky - see article on page 5. And of course, over Memorial Day weekend, the Scottish Fest provided entertainment of all things Scottish, including, of course, Scottish Country dancing and Step dancing. The month ended with a great dance in San Diego (unfortunately, I was traveling, so had to miss it).

The summer will have lots more dancing opportunities across the three local branches. I hope to see you at one or more of them.

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

WEDNESDAY

Columbus Tustin Recreation Center
17522 Beneta Way, Tustin
Basics/Beginner: 7:30-9:30 p.m.
Connie Walker: samanthasem@yahoo.com

FRIDAY

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

Note: Classes require enrollment through Tustin Parks and Recreation (www.tustinca.org)

The Next Big Event
Interbranch Dance
September 26, 2026
Tustin Area
Senior Center
Music by the
SO-CALedonians

Calendar of Events

(See branch website rscds-oc.org for flyers of upcoming dances.)

HERE

June 2026

- 13 Branch AGM, Potluck & Dance, Potluck at 6:00, AGM at 6:30, dancing at 7:00 p.m., Tustin Area Senior Center, recorded music

July 2026

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

August 2026

No Branch Dance

September 2026

- 12 Branch Dance, 7:00 p.m., Tustin Area Senior Center, recorded music
26 Interbranch Dance, 7:30 p.m., Tustin Area Senior Center, music by the SO-CALedonians

THERE

June 2026

- 20 SGV Branch AGM & Dance, AGM at 3:00, Dancing 4:00; St. James Episcopal Church, South Pasadena, recorded music
27 LA Branch Potluck, AGM & Dance. Potluck 5 p.m., AGM 6 p.m., dance 7 p.m. First Christian Church, Studio City, recorded music.

July 2026

- 18 SGV Branch Scottish Luau, 4:00 p.m., St. James Episcopal Church, South Pasadena, music by the SO-CALedonians
25 LA Branch Summer Dance, 7:00 p.m., Torrance Cultural Arts Center, recorded music

ELSEWHERE

July 2026

- 5-11 Blue Ridge Scottish Dance School, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC; blueridgesds.org
10-18 Pinewoods Scottish Sessions, Plymouth, MA, rscdsboston.org/pinewoods-scottish-sessions.html
July 19-Aug 16 RSCDS Summer School, St. Andrews, Scotland, rscds.org

- July 24-Aug 2 TAC Teacher's Weekend and Summer School, Medicine Hat, Alberta; info and registration at tac-rscds.org

October 2026

- 2-4 Ft. Worden Workshop, Port Townsend, WA; hosted by the Seattle Branch, registration at rscds-seattle.org/fort-worden/
Oct 30-Nov 1 Asilomar Workshop and Ball, Pacific Grove, CA; hosted by the San Francisco Branch, registration at rscds-sf.org/Asilomar

Minutes of the COM of April 26, 2026

Meeting Highlights:

- **Treasurer's Report:** Current balance in the checking account is \$14,752, of which the Scholarship Fund balance is \$2298.
- **Membership:** 2025-2026 membership is 28 members and 35 associate members. To date, 8 members and 5 associate members have renewed for 2026-27.
- A decision was postponed as to whether or not to participate in the Cerritos International Festival of Friendship again next year depending on whether it will be held in the theater again.
- The State Charity registration was completed previously and now back raffle permits must be paid.
- Edie Archibald is working on a banner for Asilomar.

The next Committee of Management meeting will be held on August 30, 2026. Copies of the full minutes of the meeting are available from Recording Secretary Randi Kraemer.



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Catalina Adventure 2026

Although I have lived in Southern California for more than 35 years, I had never been to Catalina before this event. I was a bit nervous about the Catalina Express from Long Beach and had brought some Dramamine for motion sickness, but I didn't need it. The weather was beautiful with calm water and smooth sailing. On several occasions a school of dolphins swam and jumped near the ship on the way there.

The round Casino ballroom (that I'd heard so much about) did not disappoint, coming into view as the ship neared the island. Walking from the dock with my luggage to the place where I was staying was easy. I dropped off my luggage and then headed to the waterfront for the Scottish Country Dancing Demo with the wonderful assortment of dancers from the SoCal regions, emceed by Connie Walker, with the beautiful sea coast framing the dancers. The demo went off without a hitch and was well attended with lots of tourists filming the entertainment.



Next, came the dinner and Ceilidh. It was no small feat trying to provide dinner for 135 people in one not-so-large area, but everything was well organized and ran efficiently. The food was good. The Ceilidh consisted of Thistle House's amazing professional musicians and some great, local talent. The kazoo band with audience participation was a lot of fun and certainly unique! Even the night seemed to contribute with a full moon illuminating the heavens.

On to Saturday morning and the workshops. My first workshop was with Jeanne Moody from the San Diego Branch. I enjoyed her marvelous teaching and bubbly personality with a room full of other excited dancers. The teachers moved from one location to the next, providing a seamless flow into the next workshop which was with Gary Coull from Scotland, teacher and

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present chair of the RSCDS. The mood was light and cheerful as he expertly executed the teaching of another fun dance, often stopping to provide tips and answering questions. I did not attend the Ball



Review, but those who did attend said it was an excellent preparation for the ball.

The perfect theme of this event, Top Hats and Tiaras, was appropriately displayed as Scottish country dancers gathered at the waterfront providing a great photo opportunity with the amazing coastline and round ballroom in the background. When I was in Scotland, I attended The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo, which had a bagpiper escorting us up to the castle and show.

Bringing back wonderful memories of this, our piper, Dan Emery, escorted 135 dancers from the waterfront to the ballroom. The tourists on Catalina were busy



taking photographs and videos of this professional. It really was a site to behold!

Upon entering the ballroom, I was filled with a sense of wonder—the beautiful wooden floors, the unique chandeliers, and all the decorated tables surrounded by windows with breathtaking views. The dinner was delicious. Then the dancing began. The music by Thistle House was incredible with David Courret-Knight on



the fiddle, Dave Wiesler on the piano, and Dan Emery on bagpipes and flutes. The sound was a treat to the ear!

Just when I thought it couldn't get any 3



Gary and Jeanne told us about their lives apart from SCD

better, we received lighted garlands for our heads, which transformed the ball into a menagerie of illuminated dancers. The night was like a wonderful dream with so many amazing people, music, dances, and food. My words really can't do it justice.

The next morning was our final workshop at Avalon High School with both Jeanne and Gary providing dance instruction. It was another great opportunity to learn some new dances and/or review some old ones under their masterful teaching and more wonderful music!



Many thanks to event chair Doris Fisher



Alas, all things must come to an end. All too soon, it was time for me to leave this magical island. With all the dancing and workshops, there wasn't much time for sight-seeing. Hopefully, I'll give myself a few more days on the island next time. I can sum up my first ever workshop and ball on Catalina with two sentences: it exceeded my expectations, and I can't wait until the next time!

Connie Learn

P.S. Merchandise (shirts, mugs, totes, etc.) with either the weekend logo or the Top Hats and Tiaras logo can be ordered through this link: www.scottishdancecatalinaworkshop.com/



Happy Birthday, Shirley

A group of dancers gathered recently to celebrate the 100th birthday of beloved founding member and long-time teacher Shirley Saturensky. Although there was not space to dance in the room at her retirement community, Shirley was able to view recorded dancing of two special dances—*Calzona Ramble*, devised by Shirley, and *Shirley's Centennial Strathspey*, devised by Pat Zschoche especially for the occasion. Shirley's memories about her history with Scottish Country dancing are to the right. Many thanks to Renee Boblette and Pat Zschoche for organizing the gathering.



Current and former branch teachers, left to right: Bob Patterson, Renee Boblette, Connie Walker, Pat Zschoche and Shirley Saturensky



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An Acknowledgement on the Occasion of Her 100th Birthday

By Shirley Saturensky, May 14, 2026

I'd just like to acknowledge the many, many people that have had a huge influence on me in Scottish Country Dancing. I was first introduced to Scottish Country Dancing at a weekend retreat held at one of the old CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) camps somewhere in the mountains of Southern California. My sister-in-law urged me to go along. We'd done some folk dancing together. A Scottish dance or two was included on the program, but I was so inexperienced, that when told to "set and cast", I had no idea what that is and was totally lost. So later on, after the workshop was over, I joined monthly Scottish Country Dance classes in Los Angeles, taught by a visiting teacher from San Francisco. He was also a judge of Highland Dancing. And was from Texas originally. It was great, and a lot of fun, and I was hooked!



Some of my early mentors and teachers include Ishbel Sanderson, Carol Goller (we danced in her garage!), Doug Grange and later Ron Wallace, and David and Mary Brandon. I also have to include some of my fellow teachers that I owe a lot to: Jan Cannonito in particular (she was one of my first teachers, we co-taught the class in Tustin for a while), Bob Patterson and Renee Boblette, Bob Harmon (a great help with music for the Tustin class) and Doug and Anthea Macdonald. This was before I got my Preliminary, and later, Full Certificates at St. Andrews (1982 and 1984).

I have a lot of wonderful memories—places we danced locally—in Los Angeles, Orange County, San Diego and San Gabriel Valley—and elsewhere—Asilomar, Fort Worden, Hawaii, Canada (East Coast, maybe Toronto), Maryland, Scotland and Ireland. I've probably forgotten some places. It's all been a great spectacular, and very satisfying, trip that I've had with Scottish Country Dancing and all of these wonderful people! Thank all of them for me! Now you can rest your ears.

Scottish Fest 2026

Once again, lovers of all things Scottish gathered to celebrate their Celtic connections at the annual Scottish Fest in Costa Mesa, California over Memorial Day weekend. As avid Scottish country dancers, crews each day showed our passion with enthusiasm and delight.

A group of eleven dancers from the Orange County and Los Angeles Branches danced twice each day on the Whisky Tavern stage. Excited audiences watched and then joined in for two simple dances. This was met with great eagerness since all ages were welcome to give SCD a try. A couple of arm-held infants joined the fun.

Three lively dances, “Oompah, Oompah, Shove It Up Your Joompah,” “Postie’s Jig,” and “The Black Leather Jig,” stimulated many observers to speak to those manning the table at our booth. Thank you, also, to this crew of loyal supporters! And a special thanks to teacher Pat Zschoche for organizing us, directing practices, and tending to logistics. Thank you, thank you, to all who participated!

Music of all kinds, Highland dancing, vendors, Clan Row, pipe band competition, athletics, and all kinds of Celtic-related food (other kinds also) provided a variety of activities and amusements for a delightful weekend in sunny SoCal. Old friends meet again, and we even made some new acquaintances;

all enthused by a common thread—a passion for Scottish culture.

Karen Kerman



June AGM, Potluck & Dance

June 13, 2026, Potluck 6:00 p.m., AGM 6:30 p.m., Dancing 7:00 p.m., recorded music
Tustin Area Senior Center, 200 C Street, Tustin
Cost: \$15 Members; \$18 Non-Members

Gloria's Wee Jig	J	B	McMurtry/Devil's Q
Porchester Hall	S	I	Meyer/London Jubilee
The One O'Clock Canon	R	A	RSCDS Book 47
Bedrule	S	B	RSCDS Book 33
Da Rain Dancin'	R	I	Wallace/30 Popular

Alan J. Smith	J	B	RSCDS Book 45
La Famiglia Graziani	S	I	Landon/Woodhall V3
Blooms of Bon Accord	R	I	Drewry/Deeside Vol 2
Vintage Simon	J	A	RSCDS Book 47
Tulloch Gorm	S	I	RSCDS Book 8
The Pawling Porch	R	B	Brunken/Moments

Waverley/Fugal Fergus	J	I	RSCDS Book 15
Tuolumne Tournee	S	A	Saturensky/50 Yrs LA
Hedwig's Reel	R	B	Phillips/RSCDS Gr 2
Quarries' Jig	J	I	RSCDS Book 36
Toast to the Mousies	R	I	RSCDS Book 53

July Branch Dance

July 11, 2026, 7:00 p.m., recorded music
Tustin Area Senior Center, 200 C Street, Tustin
Cost: \$15 Members; \$18 Non-Members

Burns Night	J	B	McOwen/Boston 50
Smiling Lila	R	I	Bartlett/Dancing Gems
Sandy's Scotch Broth	S	I	Sibley/Katannuta
Aird of Coigach	J	A	Bayly/Imperial Bk
Bedrule	S	B	RSCDS Book 33
Broadford Bay	R	I	Grant/RSCDS Leaflet

Davy Nick Nack	R	B	Campbell/Glasgow Assy
Waverley/Fugal Fergus	J	I	RSCDS Book 15
The Falkirk Lass	S	B	RSCDS Book 53
Beth Wilson's Delight	R	I	Mitchell/Whetherly 3
The One O'Clock Canon	R	A	RSCDS Book 47

The Cranberry Tart	J	I	Glasspool/30 Popular
The Barmkin	R	B	Goldring/RSCDS Gr 2
Something in the Air	S	A	RSCDS Book 53
Quarries' Jig	J	I	RSCDS Book 36
The Waipu Wanderers	R	B	West/Whangarei Book



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.

If not deliverable, return to:

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

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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, 2026.