Greetings from the Chair

It was wonderful to see so many of you at last month’s Burns Supper and Ball at the Torrance Woman’s Club. Almost ninety people enjoyed the meal, the speeches and especially dancing to the wonderful music of Andy Imbrie, Judi Nicolson and Ian Nicolson. And the floor was so comfortable on the feet! It’s hard to find a building with a good wooden floor. The Ball Committee would like to thank everyone who helped to make this the highlight of our dancing year. I heard a lot of good comments from people, but if you have suggestions for improvement for next year, please send me an email.

We attempt to keep the price affordable so as many people as possible can attend, but the price of your ticket does not cover the entire cost of the dinner, hall and musicians. Thanks to the beautiful opportunity baskets and donations, much of the deficit was made up, but we still ended up in the red after all expenses were paid. See Connie’s message on page 2 to find out if you can help us out next time.

Coming in February are the demonstrations we put on at the Queen Mary Scottish Festival, coordinated by Pat Zschoche. Soon she will be soliciting volunteers to dance at the Highland Games at the Orange County Fairgrounds in May, so we will have several opportunities to show people how much fun we have dancing.

And don’t forget our monthly dances at the Tustin Senior Center. Note that the April dance will be held on the first Saturday, (April 4th), as the Senior Center was not available on the 11th. Hope to see you there!

Terri Speakman, Chair

Orange County Classes

MONDAY
First Presbyterian Church
146 Grand St., Orange
Beg/Inter. 7:00 – 9:30 p.m.
Bob Harmon: (714) 774-8535

WEDNESDAY
Columbus-Tustin Activity Center
17522 Beneta Way, Tustin
Beginning 7:00 – 8:15 p.m.
Intermediate 8:15 – 9:30 p.m.
Shirley Saturensky: shirlsat@gmail.com

FRIDAY
Columbus-Tustin Activity Center
17522 Beneta Way, Tustin
Interm/Adv: 7:15 – 9:30 p.m.
Shirley Saturensky: shirlsat@gmail.com and Pat Zschoche: swisslassie@hotmail.com

Note: The Wednesday and Friday classes require enrollment through Tustin Parks and Recreation (www.tustinca.org)

The Next Big Event
San Diego Branch
Sapphire Ball
March 7, 2020
Balboa Park Club
Music by Reel of Seven
Calendar of Events

HERE

March 2020
14 OC Branch Dance, Tustin Senior Center, 7:00 p.m. (recorded music)

April 2020
4 NOTE DATE! OC Branch Dance, Tustin Senior Center, 7:00 p.m. (recorded music)

May 2020
9 OC Branch Dance, Tustin Senior Center, 7:00 p.m. (recorded music)
23 Costa Mesa Games Dance, Tustin Senior Center

June 2020
13 OC Branch AGM, Potluck Supper and Dance, Tustin Senior Center, 5:30 p.m. (recorded music)

THERE

February 2020
22 LA Branch Beginner Dance, First Christian Church, Studio City, 7:00 p.m. (recorded music)
29 SGV Branch Ceilidh, Church of Our Saviour, San Gabriel, 5:00 p.m. (recorded music)

March 2020
21 SGV Branch Spring Delight Dance, Church of Our Saviour, San Gabriel, 6:00 p.m. (recorded music)
28 LA Branch Tea Dance, First Christian Church, Studio City, 4:00 p.m. (recorded music)

April 2020
18 SGV Branch Workshop and Tea Dance, Church of Our Saviour, San Gabriel
25 LA Branch Dance celebrating 40 years of dancing in Thousand Oaks, Hillcrest Center for the Arts, Thousand Oaks, 7:00 p.m. Live music by Julie Wyrick, Martha Matthews and Eve Harrison. Free admission

May 2020
30 Note Date! SGV Branch AGM and Dance, Church of Our Saviour, San Gabriel (recorded music)

ELSEWHERE

March 2020
7 San Diego Branch 45th Anniversary Sapphire Ball, Balboa Park Club, San Diego. Dinner 5:30 p.m., dancing 7:00 p.m. Music by Reel of Seven. RSVP by Feb. 25th for dinner.

April 2020
4 Vancouver Island SCD Workshop and Ball, Victoria, BC. Music by The Tartan Players

July 26-August 2, 2020
TAC Summer School, Mount Royal University, Calgary, Canada. Registration opens March 1, tac-rscds.org

Minutes of the COM of November 10, 2019

Meeting Highlights:
• Vice Chair’s Report: Insurance has been paid and certificates issued.
• Treasurer’s Report: Current balance in the checking account is $7874, the Andrew Rankine Fund has $1674 and the Dorothy Craik Memorial Dance Scholarship Fund has $671. The 2019 Christmas Ball lost $96 and the 2020 Burns Ball lost $463, split between LA and OC.
• Membership: 2019-2020 membership is 37 adults and 28 associate members.
• The scholarship subcommittee presented proposed scholarship guidelines and application form. Several changes were proposed and they will be finalized at the next meeting.
• Flindrikin has been booked for the 2020 Andrew Rankine Memorial Christmas Ball.
• There was discussion of ideas about venue, musicians, pricing and fundraising for the 2021 Burns Ball.

The next Committee of Management meeting will be held on May 3, 2020. Copies of the full minutes of the meeting are available from Recording Secretary Randi Kraemer.

Opportunities for Your Loved Discard

If you are planning on downsizing, or if Marie Kondo’s de-cluttering book is front and center in your home, please consider donating those items that no longer “spark joy” to our Branch. Since our occasional dance basket drawings have been such a success, we would be happy to receive items that might be useful for future “Opportunity Baskets”. Send an email to Terri Speakman or Edie Archibald (ediearchibald@gmail.com) with a description and photo of what you would like to contribute, and we will let you know if it might be used.

Unfortunately we cannot take everything that is offered due to storage limitations, but we are certain that there are some old treasures out there that would be welcomed to a new home.

Connie Walker

Orange County Ceilidh
2020 Burns Supper and Ball
Sheilah Seeks Sea Shells

Sheilah Siminuk is not only an enthusiastic and long time devotee of Scottish Country Dancing; she also teaches elementary school students about fossils and paleontology at Trabuco Field Study at Trabuco Elementary School. Students from all over Orange County visit their program to learn about science and history in the area. She teaches about fossils when second and fourth graders visit. But her fossils are special, as she collects them herself from creek beds in south Orange County and prepares them for her classroom lectures. As if that was not enough, Sheilah is also called upon to teach classes in science, natural history, ecology, natural history and environmental studies.

Sheilah’s interest in fossils was triggered when she saw the outlines of a fossilized shell embedded in a rock in Aliso Creek wash where she was walking with her children. Since then, she has discovered many marine invertebrates dating from about 16 million years ago in the Middle Miocene Epoch. Some of Sheilah’s discoveries can be seen in the accompanying photos, mainly fossilized marine invertebrates such as clams, snails, oysters and Turritella Gastropods, (horn snails). No dinosaurs here though; they disappeared about 50 million years before.

These fossils are in sedimentary rocks that range in size from small, individual turritela fossils (2 inches) to large boulders (bigger than a bowling ball - and heavier, too!) These rocks typically contain many fossilized animals in close proximity to each other (usually the same species too, or two or more species mixed together). Evident in her fossils are the opalescence of the original shells (similar to the “mother-of-pearl” look of abalones), and reddish color of the turritella shells. Her collection contains only invertebrates, though many vertebrate species have been discovered by professional paleontologists in recent years in the surrounding areas (whales, dolphins, sharks, etc.)

Mary Anning

Sheilah can also be seen in the portrait channeling her hero Mary Anning, who is credited with discovering some of the most exceptional fossils ever found. Born in 1792 near Lyme Regis on the English Channel, Mary grew up collecting fossils and shells along the shore with her father to sell to tourists. Because she was uneducated and a woman she received little attention for her discoveries, but her contribution to paleontology, geology and evolution is now widely recognized. Among Mary’s most spectacular finds are the first Ichthyosaurus (15 ft long) and a Plesiosaurus (like a Loch Ness monster). Look for a movie about her and for her face on a 50 pound note. (P.S. Lyme Regis is an interesting place; there are 71 layers of rock with a different species of ammonite in each layer.)

Norm McCallum
2019 Andrew Rankine Memorial Christmas Ball Honoring Steve Wyrick
with Music by Flindrikin

Orange County Ceilidh
A Step Back in Time: Arbroath

The year 2020 marks some important anniversaries in world history. Two special ones for the USA come to mind: the pilgrims’ landing in Massachusetts in 1620 and the arrival of women’s suffrage via the ratification of the Constitution’s 19th amendment in 1920. However, one near-and-dear to Scotland and Scottish hearts, the 1320 Declaration of Arbroath, celebrates 700 years in April.

Arbroath is an unassuming harbor town on the Northeast coast of Scotland. Although evidence of settlement since Iron Age and Neolithic times is present, its real history began in medieval times with the founding of the Abbey.

Aberbrothock, the earliest recorded name of the settlement, refers to Brothock Burn where it meets the North Sea: Aber (river mouth or confluence) plus Bratboch (burn). Numerous spelling variations exist, and it appears as Abirbrothoe in the Declaration of Arbroath itself. The modern name, Arbroath, became common in the mid-19th century.

King William the Lion (1165-1214) founded Arbroath Abbey in 1178 with a group of Tironesian Order monks. It was dedicated to St. Thomas Becket and received consecration in 1197. Although the Abbey church was only partially completed in 1214, King William was interred there at his death and construction was finished in 1233.

Over the next few centuries the splendid abbey survived structural damage from battles, storms and fires and was rebuilt each time by its active residents. After the Reformation and the dissolution of the monasteries, Arbroath Abbey fell into disrepair. Stonework was plundered for town construction and lead from the roof was used in the 16th century civil wars. The large, round window space in the South Transept originally held a lighted beacon for Arbroath’s mariners.

The economy revolved around the harbor, and industries relating to fishing and sailing flourished. By the 1800s the harbor had been enlarged twice to become a major port for coastal shipping trade with Baltic ports. An Arbroath sail maker created an oiled flax cloth which is believed to be the source of the sails used on the Cutty Sark.

The fishing industry peaked between 1900 and 1980, but fish processing remains one of the largest employers. Arbroath’s unique industry today is the production of the “Arbroath Smokie”. Using traditional methods, family-run smokehouses sell this “world-class delicacy” of haddock smoke-cured over hardwood chips in a closed barrel.

Because of the Abbey’s role in history, the town was to become “one of the most famous names in Scottish history.” During the late 1200s and early 1300s, Scotland was involved in a series of wars of independence. Robert the Bruce and his allies secured the upper hand after the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314, but Bruce hadn’t made it easy on himself by being excommunicated by Pope John XXII. The Scots defied papal efforts to establish a truce with England and earned excommunication for the entire nation. In response to these rulings Scotland—at least the earls and barons—issued the “Declaration of Arbroath” or “Letter of Barons of Scotland” to Pope John XXII.

Written in Latin, this letter intended to confirm Scotland’s independent status, its right to choose or dispose of the monarch, and its use of military action if unjustly attacked. Abbot Bernard of Arbroth Abbey was the most likely author, cleverly weaving in some persuasive propaganda as well as stressing the points for independence.

Thankfully, the Pope heeded the arguments. He implored Edward II to make peace with the Scots. However, the very next year Pope John XXII was persuaded to take the English side again, extending the conflict until eight years later, 1328, when Edward III signed the Treaty of Edinburgh-Northampton, renouncing all English claims to Scotland and lifting the excommunications.

Was this stunning declaration a cunning diplomatic missive or a constitutional document? There is considerable debate over just what the document states and its significance. Do we read-in from historical context or take it for what it says?

Bruce Drue in Scotland Magazine, May 2018, calls it “a begging letter to the Pope.” He argues that the document itself could never have been a model for our Declaration of Independence. Some feel it could also be a calculated bluff or ploy to justify and support Bruce’s faction.

Still others analyze what is actually written. From this approach, Abbott Bernard spoke ahead of his time and produced an eloquent description of nationhood and probably one of the first expressions of contractual monarchy. By ancient Celtic tradition, the right of tanistry or selection overruled the divine right of kings. The debate continues.

Many celebrations, including two permanent memorials, are planned for this year. Firstly, a “file copy”—the only version to survive in its original form—of the declaration will be on display at the National Museum of Scotland. A bas-relief information panel was unveiled at Arbroath Abbey in 2018. The sections represent elements of Arbroath’s history, industry, coat of arms, the abbey and the declaration itself. The second memorial is a tapestry showing similar interpretations.

Even as modern scholars interpret this document and guess at intended meanings, it still claims a unique place in world history. May we all remember what Tartan Day, 6 April 2020, means in Scottish history and keep the concluding thoughts in mind: “For it is not glory, it is not riches, neither is it honours, but it is liberty alone that we fight and contend for, which no honest man will lose but with his life.”

Karen Kerman

Orange County Ceilidh
March Branch Dance

March 14, 2020, Dancing 7:00 p.m., Recorded Music
Tustin Senior Center, 200 C Street, Tustin
Cost: $10 Members; $12 Non-Members

Newburgh Jig J B Book 48
Castle Douglas S I Goldring/12 Social
Itchy Feet J I Walton/Coast to Coast
Forty and Counting R A Book 52
The Paisley Weavers S B RSCDS/3rd Grd
The Cuckoo Clock R I Barbour/Repeat Pre.

Mrs Stewart’s Jig J B Book 35
Blue Butterfly S I Brooks/Leaflet
The Irish Rover R I Cosh/22 SCDs
Bridge of Nairn S B Book 13
IP’s Farewell to Auchterarder J A Hamilton/Leaflet
Bea’s Delight R I Book 43

The Starry Eyed Lassie J I Book 23
Bohemian Reflections R B Book 51
Glengarry Homestead S I Brenchley/Kangaroo
The Lincoln Imp J I Bark/World Wide
Flowers of Edinburgh R B Book 1

April Branch Dance

April 4, 2020 (NOTE DATE!),
Dancing 7:00 p.m., Recorded Music
Tustin Senior Center, 200 C Street, Tustin
Cost: $10 Members; $12 Non-Members

Newburgh Jig J B Book 48
In Mr. McGregor’s Garden R I Prest/LA 50th
Hello-Goodbye S B Book 51
The Bees of Maggieknockater J A Drewry/Canadian
Blue Butterfly S I Brooks/Leaflet
The Lass of Richmond Hill R B RSCDS/2nd Gr Bk

Granville Market J B RSCDS/2nd Gr Bk
The Cuckoo Clock R I Barbour/Repeat Pre.
Bonnie Stronshiray S I Campbell/Glasgow Assy
Farewell to Balfour Road J I Book 52
Glengarry Homestead S I Brenchley/Kangaroo
The Provost Wynd R B RSCDS/2nd Gr Bk

New Year Jig J B Book 51
Ramadan-ce R I Drewry/Turkish Set
The Paisley Weavers S B RSCDS/3rd Grd
The Starry Eyed Lassie J I Book 23
The Irish Rover R I Cosh/22 SCDs
OC BRANCH SCHOLARSHIPS

Orange County Branch has scholarship funds available to dancers and musicians which are to be used to further the interest of Scottish Country Dancing in the Orange County area and to help perpetuate the RSCDS tradition by encouraging the development of dancing skills and above all, enjoyment of the dance.

The Dorothy Craik Memorial Dance Scholarship offers funds to dancers. To be eligible applicants must be current members of the Orange County Branch and adhere to the criteria listed in the guidelines. The grant is intended to help members cover some of the expense of a training program (workshops, etc.). Applicants may be awarded only one grant per event and recipients may be asked to help out with operational functions at the event. All requests and awards will be kept confidential. Assistance will be granted without discrimination on the basis of race, religion, sex, color, nationality, ancestry or place of origin. Applications must be received at least 30 days before funds are needed.

The Andrew Rankine Memorial Fund is for musicians. It is open to Southern California-based musicians. Information and application forms for either scholarship may be obtained from your teacher, or write to: RSCDS-Orange County Branch, P.O. Box 26271, Santa Ana, CA 92799.

If not deliverable, return to:
The Orange County Branch of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society
P.O. Box 26271
Santa Ana, CA 92799

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Thanks to all contributors!

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Deadline for the May/June Ceilidh is April 1, 2019.