

Valley Scottish Country Dance Society

Annual General Meeting

June 13th, 2018

The 2018 Annual General Meeting of the Valley Scottish Country Dance Society was held at Kings Riverside Court, Kentville on Wednesday, June 13th at 7:30pm.

Present: Dorothy Robbins (President), Keith Austin, Peter Ryan, Nelly Garvey, Marvin Ladouceur, Debbie Ladouceur, Janet Whitman, Rajeev Chowdhury, Bill Malesky, Ron Anderson, Kathy Walker, Wendy Stewart, Bill Crowson, Ivan Shilliday, Frances Shilliday, Debbie Harris, Pat Loughnane, Duncan Keppie, Maggie Keppie, June Jain, Jane Downie, Julia O'Malley, Vicky Austin (Recording Secretary)

Regrets: Fred and Gail Huntley, Rob and Wendy Raeside, Sue and Crawford Van Horne, Edna Mclean, Inge Mair, Jane Hynes

Welcome & Call to Order

Dorothy Robbins, President, welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 7:30pm

Minutes of 2017 Annual General Meeting

The Minutes of the 2017 Annual General Meeting were posted on the website.

Motion: To approve the 2017 AGM Minutes with no additions or removals.
Moved by Keith Austin Seconded by Marvin Ladouceur. Motion carried.

Business arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the Minutes.

Correspondence

The Secretary read a thank you note from Lilly and the Matheson Wood Family. Lilly danced for our group in the Spring and was given individual donations towards her trip to Scotland for a Highland Dance competition.

Reports

The following are summaries of the reports available on the VSCDS website, unless noted otherwise as Full Report in these Minutes.

The President requested that all reports be presented with a Motion to approve, followed by a call for approval at the conclusion of all the reports.

- **President's Report**

President Dorothy Robbins looked back on a busy and happy year. She commented on the challenges of adopting new Bylaws for the Society as required by the Registry of Joint Stock Companies in 2017. She balanced that with the enthusiasm and camaraderie of our VSCDS dancers, whose numbers continue to grow when other groups are struggling to maintain membership. Dorothy noted the several social events during the year and thanked everyone involved. Particular mention was made of the Event Coordinators, Debbie and Marvin Ladouceur, who so capably took over organizing and hosting duties from Edna

MacLean; the Burns Supper Committee; members of the Directors and Executive; Webmaster Rob Raeside; and especially our teachers Maggie, Duncan and Rob as well as Sue and Crawford van Horne in Wilmot.

Motion: To approve the President's Report.
Moved by Dorothy Robbins.

- **Treasurer's Report**

Janet Whitman presented the end of year (May 31st) financials, reporting an increase in VSCDS equity of \$11.68 and a deficit of \$65.05 for the Burns Supper. Under the new Bylaws, we do no longer require an annual auditor. To that end, Janet thanked Marvin Ladouceur for his expertise in reviewing the financials.

Motion: To approve the Treasurer's Report.
Moved by Janet Whitman.

- **Webmaster's Report (Full Report)**

Rob Raeside maintained the website for the year, providing regular details about classes, advanced classes, Burns night, special dances, and other events, as well as links to relevant suppliers and other Scottish Country Dancing websites. The new web host at Aabaco Small Business seems to be stable. The number of site visits appears to have increased by about 50% since moving web hosts, with a peak of activity in December and January, and again in May when special events are being arranged. Duncan Keppie and the current president are provided with full information on how to access the site. The website is available as a resource to all members if people want to post relevant information. If anyone else wants to participate in running the site, please contact Rob.

Motion: To approve Rob Raeside's Webmaster's Report.
Moved by Vicky Austin.

- **Events Committee (Full Report)**

With the indispensable assistance of Wendy and Rob Raeside and the great support of all the members, the following events were organized:

Spring Dance June 2017
Fall Midterm Social 2017
Christmas Holiday Dance 2017
Winter Midterm Social 2018
AGM Meeting Hall Rental and Social 2018

The cost of renting St. James Anglican Church Hall in Kentville for the two dances totalled \$130. Rental of Riverside Court meeting room for the AGM was \$25. Any supplies needed for the social events were donated by various members.

Motion: To approve the Events Committee Report.
Moved by Debbie Ladouceur.

- **Burns Night**

Keith Austin, Chair of the Burns Supper Committee, reported on the VSCDS 43rd Annual Burns Supper held on January 20th, 2018 at the Louis Millett Community Complex in New Minas. This was a new venue providing opportunities to expand and update the event. Keith thanked his fellow committee members, Marvin Ladouceur and Rob Raeside for their invaluable commitment and support as well as everyone who helped to make this a successful evening. Most of the feedback was very positive except for the hardness of the floor for dancing. A full list of Keith's thank you remarks is included in his report posted on the VSCDS website.

Motion: To approve the Burns Supper Report.
Moved by Keith Austin.

- **Teachers' Reports**

Regular Classes

Maggie Keppie reported on the regular classes from September 2017 to May 2018, noting that our numbers continue to grow and we often have an equal number of men and women dancing. We learn and dance various steps and set formations as well as traditional favourites. A new dance, *Miss June McGregor*, was choreographed for introduction at the McGregor Clan Gathering in Scotland this summer. In addition to thanking her fellow teachers, Maggie thanked members of the Executive and the group in general for making each week so enjoyable.

Motion: To approve the Regular Classes Report.
Moved by Maggie Keppie.

Advanced Classes

The report of the advanced class was presented by Duncan Keppie. Ten advanced classes were held with 1-2 sets each time. Various new formations were on the program each month, including: Handem Reels, 3 Couple Poussettes, Diagonal Rights and Lefts, Knot in Golden Knot. During the Tuesday classes, the more advanced dancers work on more challenging figures when the two levels split for part of the evening.

Motion: To approve the Advanced Classes Report.
Moved by Duncan Keppie.

Wilmot Group (Full Report)

The Wilmot class met for eight classes plus a dance. We started the term with six new dancers but because of problems such as physical challenges, distance away from class etc., we lost four of them very quickly. The class size varied from a set of 5, to a set of 3 and a set of 4.

The theme of this year's term was reels of three across up and down the dance, plus mirror reels and corners. I threw in some quite challenging dances at times and the class coped very well. We always do step practice, both Strathspey and the faster steps as well as practice figures.

We were delighted to welcome Martha and Dave to our penultimate class and dance and hope they return next year. Apart from them, we did not get any other VSCDS dancers at

our dance (for the first time ever). I am interested in feedback to see if having the Truro Tea Dance the day before made any difference or not.

Motion: To approve Sue Van Horne's Wilmot Group Report.
Moved by Frances Shilliday.

Discussion note on Sue's request for feedback: Members felt that having the Truro Dance on the Sunday, the Wilmot dance on the Monday evening and the regular Kentville classes on Tuesday evening affected the lack of representation from the Valley dancers.

Demonstration Dance Videos Project

Duncan included information about the videos project in his Advanced Class Report. With the able assistance of Marvin Ladouceur, 15 videos were produced for viewing online. The full list of dances and their links is available on the website. Marvin noted there have been over 1,000 hits on the videos since mid-February. Duncan remarked that the Macadians recently played in Maine. A teacher from Boston who had viewed the videos said "the group looked quite professional". The demonstration dances group consisted of our own advanced dancers and four others who came from Truro each month.

Motion: To formally thank Marvin Ladouceur for his participation, without which this project would not have happened. Acknowledged by applause.
Moved by Duncan Keppie.

All Motions to approve the Reports were Seconded by Rajeev Chowdhury. Motions were carried.

New Business

- Bonus for Teachers

Janet reviewed last year's bonus amount with those of previous years. In 2017 there were funds available to increase the bonus amounts to \$400 each to the Keppies and \$300 to Rob. As there is only a small increase this year, the suggestion was to return to the original amounts of \$300 (x2) and \$200. Discussion followed, with input from Rajeev Chowdhury and Ron Anderson.

Motion: To give bonus amounts of \$300 each to Duncan & Maggie Keppie and \$200 to Rob Raeside.
Moved by Janet Whitman. Seconded by Keith Austin. Motion carried.

- Burns Committee Motion

Presented for information purposes only as the Motion was made and carried at a meeting of the VSCDS Directors on April 17, 2018.

"To nominate the Burns Supper Committee annually after the event debriefing, no later than the last Tuesday in February."

All other positions are nominated for and elected at the Annual General Meeting.

- Burns Supper Tickets

Janet reviewed this year's "three free classes for everyone" decision. Historically, the three free classes were intended to encourage new dancers to return to weekly classes after the Burns event. Janet noted that the potential impact to finances by allowing VSCDS members to have these three classes for free is potentially in excess of \$300. Ron Anderson remarked that offering the Burns Supper ticket with three free classes to new dancers is a good marketing strategy.

Motion: To provide three free classes prior to Burns Supper for those who have purchased Burns tickets but are not VSCDS members. Existing members will pay for these three classes.

Moved by Janet Whitman. Seconded by Rajeev Chowdhury. Motion carried.

- History and Archives

Dorothy Robbins outlined the need for a volunteer to take over archiving and/or storing the many albums, photos and materials for VSCDS. She suggested someone might be interested in digitalizing the archive. Maggie added that there is additional archival material inherited from other groups over the years. She suggested that Dance Nova Scotia might be able to provide assistance. June Jain thought we should first approach the Kings Historical Society for help in safeguarding our historical documents.

Motion: To have Dorothy Robbins contact the Kings Historical Society and Dance NS to investigate avenues for assistance.

Moved by Rajeev Chowdhury. Seconded by Pat Loughnane. Motion carried.

- Purchase of Fans

Marvin Ladouceur proposed the purchase of two or three 16" fans for keeping the dancers cool, especially at the Kings Riverside location. Up to this point, Marvin and Keith Austin have been bringing fans from home each week. As we are not able to store them at Kings Riverside, Marvin also requested three volunteers to store and transport the fans each week as required.

Motion: To purchase three fans, to a maximum expense of \$150

Moved by Marvin Ladouceur. Seconded by Bill Crowson. Motion carried.

Note: Marvin, Bill Crowson and Bill Malesky will each look after storing and transporting one of the three fans.

- Proposal for a Dinner Dance

Duncan presented his idea to have a dinner dance during the year that would highlight the Keppie dances and provide an additional opportunity to dance with the Macadians performing live music. He suggested his options for venues, dates, menus and music. Duncan is going to create an email survey which he will forward to members, providing the opportunity for feedback.

ADDITION TO AGENDA: Dates for VSCDS classes in 2018 and 2019

Term 1: September 18 to November 27, 2018 and January 8,15 and 22, 2018

Term 2: February 5, 2019 to May 7, 2019

Both terms will be extended by one week if there are winter weather cancellations.

Burns Supper date: January 26, 2019

During the year, the VSCDS Directors and Executive will set the date for AGM 2019 as well as for the end of term dance.

Report of the Nominating Committee

The 2018 Nominating Committee consisted of Fred Huntley, Sue Van Horne and Ivan Shilliday. Ivan presented the nominations for the seven Directors as required in the VSCDS Bylaws.

Ron Anderson
Rajeev Chowdhury
Jane Hynes
Inge Mair
Dorothy Robbins
Sue Van Horne
Janet Whitman

Motion: To accept the Nominating Committee’s proposed slate of Directors.

Moved by Keith Austin. Seconded by Peter Ryan.

The President called three times for further nominations. None were given. Motion carried.

Adjournment

Kathy Walker moved for adjournment of the 2018 AGM at 9:05pm.

Dorothy thanked the four volunteers who brought food and the Ladouceurs for setting up refreshments (and doing cleanup) to allow for requested social time after the AGM.

Respectfully submitted by Vicky Austin (Secretary)

President's Report

Another year and many more nights of dance to remember! In my year as President two things in particular stand out. First, the frustrations of the changes to the By Laws as required by the Registry of Joint Stock Companies, which have caused some confusion and difficulty in adjusting to them; and secondly, the enthusiasm and camaraderie of an eclectic group of dancers which amazingly continues to number in the high twenties and low thirties every week. And this at a time when other groups are having difficulty maintaining their numbers.

Perhaps part of this is due to Kings Riverside Court who welcome us to the property, providing a good dance space at a very reasonable fee. But the main factor in our success has to be the excellent teaching of our three instructors, for which we are truly grateful. I marvel every week at their patience and the way in which they blend our different levels of expertise and concentration. The division in the group for part of the evening has worked well. A special time which we all enjoy is the mid-term break when we dance continuously for an hour and a half and then socialize (and eat), for which there is little time during the regular instruction nights.

The Christmas Party, now held in the afternoon at St James Parish Hall in Kentville is another successful social event. Parking is not the best but the location has proved most successful and our closing June Pot Luck Social will also be held there again. For many years this summer event was a BBQ held at different homes of members but for the last number of years we have been graciously hosted by Edna MacLean at her home on Church Street. Belated thanks to Edna for her generous hospitality over those years. It was not an easy job and I am sure she breathed a sigh of relief when Debbie and Marvin Ladouceur took over as Event Coordinators and efficiently looked after all the many details.

A major change of venue for the Annual Burns Supper and Dance proved, on the whole, to be a successful choice. Obviously, adjustments such as the re-appointing of decorations, new positioning of tables, etc., was necessary but the well organized Burns Committee, headed by Keith Austin, did a magnificent job. Pat Loughnane, our wonderful chef and his hard working helpers were particularly happy with the better kitchen set up and although there were some negative comments particularly about the floor and the sound system the general consensus on the change was good. We wait to see what the Committee has to recommend for 2019.

The Board of Directors/Executive Committee has met twice during the year along with one short 'meeting of the whole' to accept the new By-Laws. We are still trying to clarify our responsibilities - special thanks to Rob Raeside for his help and patience! I am particularly thankful to Vicky Austin, our well organized Secretary who has always been there with answers or questions to my problems and, of course continuing praise goes to our faithful Treasurer, Janet Whitman. She quietly and calmly deals with all our weekly dues and our ongoing financial needs.

Rob Raeside continues as our Webmaster, keeping everyone interested in the Scottish Dance world alerted to what is going on - and Duncan is our 'go to' person to keep the local dancers aware of happenings, allowing them also through video to see how we should be

dancing. Duncan will also be reporting on the monthly dances which he holds for those more advanced dancers from which, thanks to the technical expertise of Marvin, a series of Dance Videos are being developed.

Meanwhile Sue and Crawford Van Horne have continued to run two 8-week classes of dance instruction in Wilmot. Many of these dancers join us for the Burns Supper and some come weekly as well to Kentville.

Requests for Demonstrations or entertainment continue to be met with enthusiasm and our Instructors always come up with varied and interesting programs based on the many skills of our own performers. Speaking of performing, in March we had Lily Wood and her parents join us, looking for financial support so Lily could perform at a Highland Competition in Scotland this Summer. Lily, a very poised and articulate 11 year old danced for us, eliciting over \$300 in donations from our group as well as suggestions of other leads for help. The family were comfortable with us and appreciative of our help and interest.

As I look back on the year, it has been busy and happy. Best wishes to all of you for the summer. Keep practising those steps and we look forward to seeing you in September.

Respectfully submitted,

Dorothy G. Robbins, President

Burns Supper Report 2018

The 43rd Annual Burns Supper was held in The Louis Millett Community Complex in New Minas on January 20th 2018, with 176 tickets sold. The organizing committee consisted of Keith Austin, Marvin Ladouceur and Rob Raeside. Sue Van Horne and June Jain oversaw the decorations for the hallway, entrance and tables. Pat Loughnane catered the event and arranged for the table servers. They all did a great job in this new venue.

Edna Maclean, Dorothy Walker Robbins, Wendy Raeside, Sue Van Horne, June Jain, Dorothy Hynes, Gail Gordon and Debbie Ladouceur made this year's tasty batch of haggis.

Marvin Ladouceur designed the advertising poster and the new tri-fold Burns Supper program. Rob Raeside facilitated the colour printing of the program. Wendy and Rob Raeside created and printed the dinner tickets and organized their sale and distribution. Wendy provided the beautiful head table flower arrangement, which was presented to Tara Kalkman at the end of the speeches.

Andrea Lindsay was the Haggis Bearer, led by Sandy McMillan on the bagpipes.

We are grateful to our guest speaker, Dr. David Duke, for addressing the Immortal Memory of Robert Burns. We also acknowledge and thank the following, all of whom were among our own VSCDS dancers. The contribution of their time and talents made for an enjoyable evening.

- Toast Master, Rev. Dr. Jeffrey Hosick
- Rob Raeside (*Address to a Haggis*), Elizabeth Anderson (*To Canada*), Ron Anderson (*To Scotland*), Dan Kalkman (*To The Lassies*) and Vicky Austin (*Reply to the Toast to the Lassies*)
- Murdina McRae, for delivering the *Aftergrace* in Gaelic and English

Our VSCDS president, Dorothy Walker Robbins, wrapped up the formalities by thanking everyone involved in organizing the event and helping with the set-up on Friday afternoon. We include our thanks to all guests who support and attend our annual tribute to Robert Burns.

The Macadians provided music for the dancing with guest musicians Sandy McMillan, Krissy Keech and an appearance by Master William Keppie (age 7). Maggie Keppie 'called' the dances.

The Ceilidh featured songs by Peter Ryan, music by The Ukulele Ladies and Acadia student Keara Liebowitz on fiddle.

The Burns-related artwork on the walls was provided by students of Somerset and District Elementary School, under the artistic guidance of June Jain.

Overall, the space and facilities in the Louis Millett Community Complex worked well, with the noted exception of the hardness of the floor for dancing.

On a personal note, I am grateful to Marvin Ladouceur and Rob Raeside for their invaluable commitment and support in delivering a successful Burns Supper 2018.

Respectfully submitted,

Keith Austin
2018 Organizing Committee

VSCDS Teachers' Report

This year followed the well established pattern of having two 14-week terms, with a mid-term social and end-of-term potluck and dance for each. We began in mid September, continuing through to early December, at which point we enjoyed a Christmas break before our holiday dance between Christmas and New Year's. In January, three Tuesdays were given over to learning the dances for our traditional Burns' Night celebration, held in New Minas this year. We also put on a musical ceilidh with dancing, singing by the Gaelic Choir, instrumental selections, songs and poetry for the residents of Kings Riverside Court as a further tribute to Robbie Burns. The second term began in late January and ended in mid-May, two weeks later than planned, due to weather-related cancellations during the winter.

We continue to welcome new dancers each term. It is also wonderful to now have nearly equal numbers of men and women dancing. We typically have four or five, sometimes even six sets on the floor each week. Everyone joins in a warm-up dance, followed by some limbering up exercises, and then a new or review dance is featured to build repertoire for the whole class. Following that, we split into two levels for about half an hour. Duncan works on more challenging figures and dances for some, while Maggie focuses on improving more subtle dance skills such as phrasing, connecting figures in the flow of what comes before and after, mastering footwork for special situations (as in 'set advancing', 'petronella turn', 'Tulloch turn', stepping up, and so on).

After a short break, the second half of each class generally features a review of selected dances learned previously. After six classes, a short program is put together for a purely social evening with nothing new at all, and focused on simply enjoying the dances already learned so far in the term. This mid-term dance is designed to allow a greater opportunity for enjoyment and building confidence than would otherwise be possible if each and every class included new material. Light refreshments are also shared at these socials during the last half hour, to allow time for friendly conversation and the chance to get to know each other better. During our spring social we also welcomed a young highland dancer, together with her family, to share her love of solo Scottish dances, as she prepares for participation in several special events in Scotland this summer.

Our winter holiday dance was held as usual between Christmas and New Year's. Our second term will end with a festive summer dance and potluck in mid-June. Jigs, strathspeys, and reels are included, together with varied set formations (round-the-room, longways, couples facing couples, squares, and lines of 3) to provide variety. New dances are choreographed for special purposes, such as this year's *Miss June McGregor*, to be introduced at the McGregor Clan Gathering in Scotland this summer. And of course, traditional favourites - such as the Reel of the 51st Division and Montgomerie's Rant - are included whenever possible, together with more recently emerging favourites. The teamwork of our three teachers, Duncan Keppie, Rob Raeside, and myself, is both a strength and a blessing for our group, and continues to serve us well. We also gratefully acknowledge the help of our Treasurer, Janet Whitman, our President,

Dorothy Walker Robbins, our Webmaster, Rob Raeside, our weekly fan-bearers, Marvin Ladouceur and Keith Austin, and all others who help to make each week so enjoyable!

Respectfully submitted,

Maggie Keppie

VALLEY SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCERS ADVANCED CLASS & SPLIT 2017-18 Report (J. Duncan Keppie)

Ten Advanced classes were held with 1 to 2 sets each time.

27th May, 2017 *New Formation*: Handem reels (Hand-in-Hand and Tandem reels) in a Reel Mixup and Hand-in-hand we'll go. *Others*: Searching the Archives, Miss Erica Scott, Double Sixsome

8th July, 2017 *New Formation*: 3-couple poussette in Jack's Jig. Turn 2nd corner, partner, 1st corner, partner in As the Moon turns, Double Sixsome. *Others*: Mountains of the Moon, Snods Edge

29th July: *New Formation*: Pickup Tandem reels of 3 in Fain to Follow and As bees flee Hame, Tandem Reels and Highland Schottische Poussette in A Dance She Grac'd, Like ane Bewitched.

Old favourites: Double Sixsome

26th August: *New Formation*: Diagonal Rights & Lefts in Gypsy Rover, Annan Reel, Crossing the Brook, and New One. *Old favourites*: Double Sixsome, and A'm tint

30th September *New Formations*: Knot in Golden Knot.

Old favourites: Luckenbooth Brooch, MacDonald of the Issles, Byron Strathspey, Figure it Out, A'm Tint

4th November *New Formations*: Double Tandem Reels in Wing'd Minute, Lades of Treasure, Snow on the River, Borealis Race. *Other*: Balgeddie Reel

25th November *New Formations*: Cross-over wheels in Alison Rose and NEW ONE, Intersecting Reels of 4 in Angus MacLeod. *Other*: Linnea's Strathspey, College Hornpipe and Wee Mary's Strathspey

VIDEO PROJECT: 24th February 2018, 31th March 2018, 28th April 2018, 2nd June 2018

Together in Kippo

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=06MSZQOsRMM>

Keppoch Charm

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ohbOCKbT9F0&t=24s>

Twine weel the Plaiden

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CB2YWIGkZhU&t=17s>

Slante, Austro-Alba

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2RhKWQCtWt8&t=13s>

Holly Rigg (strathspey)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V7AMJ8XWA2w>

Holly Rigg (Reel)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XqNxFgAzfL0>

Let's go for a whirl (Strathspey)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qMckhZ3VwL8>

Let's go for a whirl (Reel)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SvpzyMctbAs>

Corriearach

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6XuqxaVGKtk>

Corrie Cas

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iZIZTvY9uBI>

Mountains of the Moon

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=auXH4zscHGg>

As the Moon turns

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1wT0uFCBebQ>

Shake da Foot

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q21T-z7ic9o>

Handem Reel

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nof3D-tZkYw>

The Run Rigg

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mvEKFpkKPMY>

During the Tuesday evening classes, I work with 1-2 sets on more challenging figures, such as Hello-Goodbye setting (Bridge of Nairn, Linnea's Strathspey, Donald Bane, and College Hornpipe), Half Poussette (Lea Rig), & great dances e.g. Reel of the Royal Scots, Montgomeries' Rant, Duke of Perth (Duchess of Perth), & Haddington Assembly.