



The Thistle and Tartan Newsletter

January/February 2018

My first four months as Club President zipped by. It has been a huge, enjoyable learning curve.

I can't do it alone. I have help from a terrific executive that keeps me grounded and in the know. They work hard, bring excellent ideas to the table and share their individual expertise and perspective. A leader is only as good as its team. Thanks everyone.

And thank you to those who come to dance week after week. It makes the teachers' job easier and more pleasant when they have consistent attendance. Lessons are progressive. Missing the odd lesson is not likely to set you back far, especially if you have been dancing for some time. However, the more you come, the more you will learn.

Bev Will put on a fun set of lessons during the first half of the year. Jean Gibson takes over in January. Social Nights this year: Burns Night, Valentine Day Social, St. Patrick's Day Social, and Spring Ceilidh in April. This year Saskatoon hosts the Branch AGM and Ball. The location is to be

determined. It will be May 5, 2018. We need people to organize and help out at the Ball. Details to come.

The 10th Annual Burns Night is at All Saints' Anglican Church at 1801 Lorne Avenue. We need people to volunteer that day. For door prizes, if you would like to donate, let Jean Gibson or myself know. Only \$30.00. Seats are limited. Get your tickets soon! Bring friends and family.

Details, interesting facts about Burns Night and information about Robert Burns follow later in this newsletter.

I hope all of you have a great 2018! Many blessings, happiness and adventures are my wishes for everyone. I continue my commitment to keep the communication and information flowing to all club members, as well as making sure this club stays vibrant and dynamic!

Happy New Year everyone! Keep warm, healthy and safe!

Marian

2017-2018 Executive

Past President: Bill Pollock
President: Marian Holmes
Vice President: Tara Zrymiak
Treasurer: Robert Clark

Secretary: Diane Cross
Librarian: Bob McNaughton
Demo Team Convenor: Diane Davis
Teacher's Representative: Jean Gibson

Teachers: Jean Gibson and Bev Will



The SSCD logo has been digitised for embroidering. The result is illustrated in the attached photo.

With the digitising done, any of us can take whatever shirt, jacket, hat etc. we wish to Jeff's Crestwear (A1 - 116 103rd St. E., Sutherland) to have the logo embroidered on to it for \$15.00 plus tax.

For more information, contact Bob McNaughton.

Social Nights: Held the last Wednesday of the month, except September. If you wish, you may bring finger food, especially related to the theme. Most of our socials feature live music from The Peat Fire Flame. Jokes, entertainment and of course, dancing, rule the night!

Special Social Nights and Events January-May 2018

All events take place at St. Mark's Church Hall unless otherwise noted! 1406 8th Ave N. Start time is 7:00 p.m. until around 9:30 p.m.

- **January 10 - Classes** resume
- **January 20 - 10th Annual Burns Night Supper.** All Saints Anglican Church. 1801 Lorne Avenue. A fun filled evening of all things Robert Burns including food, poetry and dancing! Doors open at 5:00 p.m. Welcome and dinner at 5:45 p.m. **This is an adults only event.** \$30.00 Advance sales only! Seats are limited.
- **January 31** - Club Robert Burns themed Social
- **February 28** - Club Valentine Day Social
- **March 28** - Club St. Patrick's Day Social
- **April 25** - Club Spring Ceilidh
- **May 5** - Branch AGM and Ball - Location to be announced.
- **May 16** - Club AGM

Basic and Advanced Classes

There are **no basic classes scheduled for the rest of the season** due to low attendance. Fridays will be reserved for demo practice rehearsal and **advance classes** when scheduled. There are no set times for the advance classes. It is part of Bev's teacher training. She needs a certain number of hours and it is up to her whenever and however she schedules them. We will keep you informed as they arise.

For advanced class you need to have a good, proficient knowledge of steps and formations. The dances are fun and unique.

Did you know? Cranachan - a dessert made using a mixture of whipped cream, whisky, honey, fresh raspberries and toasted oatmeal - is often served after the main course on Burns Night.

Alternatively people have Topsy Laird - which is a whisky trifle.

48th Annual Workshop & Ball

February 16 - 18, 2018

at Chateau Lacombe Hotel

Edmonton, Alberta

Contact Ann MacDonald at 780-224-7191 or ann_mac@shaw.ca

Or check out the website: <http://www.rscdsedmonton.com/annual-workshop--ball.html>

Saskatoon Scottish Country Dancers 10th Annual Burns Night

Time 5:00 p.m. - Gathering - 5:45 p.m. Welcome

Tickets \$30.00 - advanced sale only - reserve by phone 306 664-7049 or email saskatoon@rscdssask.org.

About Burns Night

- Burns Night is celebrated annually in Scotland and around the world on or near January 25. It commemorates the life and contribution to Scottish culture, of Robert **Burns**, who was born on January 25, 1759.
- The first supper was held in memoriam at Burns Cottage in Alloway, by nine of Burns' closest friends, on 21 July 1801, the fifth anniversary of his death.
- The first Burns Club still in existence was founded in Greenock in 1801 by merchants of Ayrshire, some of whom had known Burns personally.
- Informal suppers vary from club to club worldwide but the general format has remained the same since the first Burns Night in 1801.
- The most important thing about a Burns Supper is to have fun.

About Robert Burns

- Often referred to as Rabbie (never “Robbie”) and the Bard of Ayrshire. The family name was spelt “Burness”. His friends called him “Spunkie”.
- Robert's parents were small tenant farmers William and Agnes. His father was a well-respected and religious man. His mother was a kind, lively and strong woman in her own right, often telling stories and singing.
- In 1765 William hired John Murdoch, a private tutor for his two oldest boys, sharing the expenses with three other local families. Murdoch taught Robert English grammar and Psalms.
- According to Murdoch, Robert's voice was “untuneable”. He may not have been able to sing, but Robert went on to pen some of the most well-known and best loved songs ever written. In contrast, he fell in love with his wife, Jean Armour in part of her rich melodious singing voice.
- On long, dark, bitterly cold winter nights Robert read Shakespeare, David Hume, and philosopher Adam Smith by the light of a small, single candle.

- When the Burness family lived in Tarbolten, Robert attended a country dancing school “to give my manner a brush”. His father objected and Robert went just to be rebellious. He wrote years later, “My father had an unaccountable antipathy against the meetings, and my going was... in absolute defiance of his commands. My father...was the sport of strong passions; from that instance of rebellion he took a kind dislike to me.”
- It is a myth that he was an over-sexed, booze-sodden farmhand.
- Burns acknowledged women as individuals who had valuable insights and opinions. He found them stimulating.
- His first collection of poetry, “Poems, chiefly in the Scottish Dialect” was published in July 1786. He wrote about injustice, hypocrisy, the hard life of the countryman, radicalism, anticlericalism, sexuality, gender roles, Scottish cultural identity and man's inhumanity to his fellow man. Inequality made him angry.
- Over his lifetime Burns contributed prolifically to James Johnston's Scots Musical Museum, a collection of Scottish folk songs. The first volume was published in 1787 and included three songs by Burns. In all, he submitted nearly 200 songs. He toured the Highlands and borders of Scotland to collect old Scottish tunes and wrote new lyrics. Until then, songs were handed down verbally throughout the generations. Burns' efforts helped to retain the Scottish culture. He was most proud of this.
- One such song was “**Auld Lang Syne**”. He sent it the Scots Musical Museum with a note saying that it was an ancient song that had only been passed on by word of mouth. He claimed an old man dictated it to him, so Burns wrote it down on a piece of paper.
- Burns' body was exhumed in 1815 in order to be moved to a new mausoleum in Dumfries, Scotland where he died. Scientists took a plaster cast of his brain and discovered it to be larger than the average man's.
- In 2009, Burns was the first person to ever be featured on a commemorative bottle of Coca-Cola. This was in support of the Scottish Executive's Homecoming initiative, celebrating the 250th anniversary of his birth.
- In all, Burns wrote 246 poems, 346 songs, in addition to several epigrams, epitaphs and epistles in just 20 years. He wrote at his lowest points in his life when he was bored and depressed. His most productive period was from 1784-1796 when he wrote a total of 515 poems and songs. Many were published after his death.



Websites

www.timeanddate.com/holidays/uk/burns-night
www.visitscotland.com
www.scotland.org/events/burns-night