

## ***Dancing and Health***

Gareth Edwards writing in the *Edinburgh Evening News* described 'a hobby out there that is fun, sociable and also a great way to get in shape' – dancing, of course! The NHS has launched a pilot project in England and Wales to pay for tango and street dancing lessons, since dance battles 'everything from obesity to depression'. But how does Scottish country dance stack up against tango and street dancing? Mr. Edwards interviewed a GP, Dr Carola Bronte-Stewart, who takes Scottish country dance classes regularly. She reported 'I got involved in dancing more for the social aspects but there is no doubt it is a great way to get healthy .' Mr. Edwards also summarized the pros and cons of several types of dancing. Scottish country dancing on average burns more calories than, say, the tango, and also is a very adaptable form of dance:

*Depending on the different dances, this can be a fairly relaxing way to exercise, ideal for elderly people, or a very energetic form of dance which will work the muscles and the lungs, as well as the legs. Usually has a great atmosphere. A typical hour of mixed-pace Scottish Country Dancing would burn between 200 and 300 calories.*

In spite of all this encouragement to dance, some people are still reluctant to participate. Men can be encouraged by the work of Dr. Peter Lovatt, a psychologist at the University of Hertfordshire and a former professional dancer, who is studying how genes, physical attraction and dance are linked in males. He suggests that relaxation and the coordination of different parts of the body in different ways are key attributes for male dancers. Unfortunately, he has no advice for female dancers since he has not studied them.

## **Obituary**

### ***Marianne Taylor, Boston***

Many of our dancers will remember Marianne as she taught a workshop here in 1999. Her lively and entertaining teaching was most enjoyable. She was a respected teacher who was invited to teach all over North America and in many other parts of the world. We knew her as a Scottish Dance teacher, but she was equally proficient in teaching English Dance and International Folk Dance. Sadly, Marianne passed away last summer after a courageous battle with cancer.

<http://www.facone.org/about/marianne.htm>



## ***Royal Scottish Country Dance Society St. John's (Newfoundland) Branch***

---

**NEWSLETTER**

**December 2008**

---

### **President's Message**

#### ***Greetings Everyone***

We have had a busy and enjoyable fall session of Scottish Country Dancing. Our enjoyment was enhanced by the presence of an energetic group of university students who spent a few Monday nights with us this fall. We hope that they are able to join us again. Vanier school is again available to us and we had two socials there. The Spring Social we finally had in September and the Beginners' Social in November. As usual, Corryvreckan supplied us with their excellent arrangements and performances of live music.

As I write this our January Social is being prepared by Bill and Sue Scott and we all need to be prepared to dance the programme on Jan. 17. Let's hope for a good turn-out. Our numbers seem to be getting thin so encourage your dancing friends to come out and join us.

It is time now to decorate the tree and put up the Christmas lights.

Merry Christmas to all and enjoy the holiday season.

Ken. Galbraith,  
Chairman, RSCDS, St. John's

## News

### *Committee of Management*

Our Committee of Management met on Tuesday, December 2. Among the issues discussed were the dates for the next term, the plans for the next socials and the possibility of a workshop in the near future – possibly including English dancing as well.

All the details and more will be available at our Annual General Meeting, scheduled for April 27, 2009. As usual, the AGM will start early with a potluck, but all business will be finished quickly so that there will be plenty of time left for dancing. This will be the last dance of the winter. Summer dancing will be going ahead as usual, although the starting date is not yet available.

Please consider volunteering to participate in the management of the group – there is always room for anyone who wants to help.

### *New Dates*

The Spring Social will be on April 4 – the date in the previous newsletter was incorrect.

The final Thursday class for the fall will be December 11 rather than December 4.

### *Congratulations!*

Congratulations on their engagement to Elizabeth Green and Glenn Hamlyn from all the dancers. We will all be sending our best wishes on the wedding day, December 20<sup>th</sup>, and look forward to seeing both of them dancing on Monday night in the new year.

### *Teachers' Association (Canada)*

TAC (Teachers' Association (Canada)), an organization of teachers of Scottish Country, was founded in Ontario in 1958 and has since spread around the world.

The aims of TAC are:

- To encourage and promote participation in Scotland's heritage of Country Dancing.
- To promote the highest possible level of approved standards of Scottish Country Dancing.

- To foster excellence in the teaching of Scottish Country Dancing.
- To undertake to preserve and disseminate materials supportive of the above objectives.
- To promote the continuance of the musical tradition in Scottish Country Dancing
- Stimulate co-operation between all teachers and dancers.

More information is available on the TAC website is at: <http://www.tac-rscds.org>.

Our own Noreen MacLennon is one of the four survivors of the original 13 founding members. During last summer's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations, TAC honoured Noreen by naming her an Honorary Life Member of the association.

We are truly fortunate to have Noreen helping us with our dances and congratulate her one her well-deserved honour.

### *Reach for the Top*

Abigail Steel (Corryvreckan's flautist/whistler) was a member of the 10 woman expedition that climbed Mount Kilimanjaro last summer. Abigail (second from the right)



Abigail was one of the eight women from this province on the team. It took the team five days to climb and two to descend the 5,895 metre high mountain – the highest free-standing equatorial snow-covered mountain in the world. The trek took the climbers from tropical rain forest through giant heathers, over desert landscapes and across snowfields before they reached the summit.