

RSCDS Glasgow Branch

Minutes of the AGM by Proxy on Thursday 20 May 2021

Chairman's Remarks

A very warm welcome to you all.

Thank you to all those who have sent in their proxy voting form.

This evening, I shall be demitting office after three years as the Chairman of Glasgow Branch. It has been both an honour and a privilege. Never did I think, when I agreed to join the Committee in 2008, that I would end up as Chairman. I have been a Committee Member, Social Events Convenor, Secretary and Vice Chairman. What could perhaps be described as an apprenticeship!

However, there have been many challenges along the way, not least this last year, thanks to Covid 19. Classes and dances have disappeared completely, to be replaced by a weekly Lockdown Email, trying to keep in touch with our members and hopefully to keep everyone's spirits up. With the roll-out of the vaccine, it is hoped that we will be able to hold classes and dances sometime in the autumn.

Lockdown has also sadly halted the next group of candidates completing their teaching certificates. We have seven dancers who have successfully completed Part 1, but they need life to return to normal to be able to take Part 2. Let's hope that they can get back on track next year.

Zoom has made an enormous difference and has enabled us to hold Committee Meetings as well as this AGM. Not the same I know as when we meet in person but a step in the right direction.

Come the autumn our newsletter editor, Meg Barrowman may be able to take up the mantle again. Meg does a wonderful job in completing what must resemble a jigsaw at times. Thank you, Meg.

I would also like to acknowledge the sterling work that Catherine & Alistair Raeburn have contributed to the Branch in happier times when we could meet on the dance floor. They have both been a great asset; the Branch is indebted to them. Thank you Catherine & Alistair.

Finally, I would like to thank all the Committee most sincerely for the encouragement and support they have given to me during the last three years. The Committee has worked tirelessly behind the scenes and the fruits of their labours over this last year will hopefully be apparent when we can once again put on our dancing shoes.

I wish the new Committee the very best of luck in taking Glasgow Branch forward after this very unusual chapter in its history.

This is the 98th AGM of Glasgow Branch held on 'Zoom', with all members invited to attend as observers. It is an AGM by Proxy, similar to 2020, due to the continuation of the coronavirus pandemic.

At the beginning of May, all members received their voting form, by email or post, with the deadline for receipt of the voting form to be 10pm on Monday 17 May.

The tellers were Amy Bryson (Secretary) and Mary Webster (Treasurer). My thanks to both of them for all the work that the AGM by Proxy entailed.

The Branch Report, Financial Report including the Trustee's Report, the changes to the Constitution and the Rules have been available online; paper copies were sent to those members not on email.

Thank you Margaret.

I am indeed honoured to be offered the role of Chair of the Glasgow Branch. I have to admit that Margaret will be a hard act to follow. On behalf of the committee and membership, I would like to thank Margaret for the outstanding way she has steered us over the last three years. That includes the last very challenging year, during which Margaret has kept our spirits up, despite the pandemic around us.

Perhaps not of all you know much about me. I am a medical doctor but have devoted most of my career to clinical research. Currently I am doing research on coronavirus and cancer for a biopharmaceutical company. Previously, accompanied by my wife Tamara, I have worked and lived in eight countries, including many years working on HIV programmes in Africa, before we returned to Scotland in 2012. Soon after returning we took up Scottish country dancing and joined the Glasgow Branch. Tamara excels at all types of dance and has always wanted to try Scottish country dancing. We were delighted by the warm welcome we received by Glasgow Branch. It has allowed us to be part of a vibrant community, where we have made many good friends. I believe the community spirit of SCD is a unique feature of our international organization. I have been pleased to be a member of the committee for four years, with three years as vice-chair.

I hope to continue the excellent work Margaret did for the Branch. I know I will be assisted by a truly stellar team of committee coordinators and members. Now we are cautiously optimistic that we will be able to recommence classes and even dances in autumn of this year and we are making plans accordingly. The committee also has an ambitious project designed to publicise Scottish country dancing through social marketing as well as another campaign to raise awareness of the health benefits of dancing. I will keep you apprised of progress on this and all other Branch activities, initially through "lockdown" emails, a tradition created by Margaret and one which I will try to emulate.

Many thanks again for placing your trust in me as Chair of the Branch. I will do my best for the Branch and I hope to see you all again in autumn!

With that, I would like to close the meeting and let you know that the Branch AGM next year will take place on May 19th., hopefully in person.