

ROYAL SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE SOCIETY GLASGOW BRANCH

Charity No.SC008002

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Annual Branch Report for AGM 2026

This is the 103rd Report for RSCDS Glasgow Branch.

Membership: Our current membership stands at 204 (27 Life members, 120 Adult members, 52 Joint members, 4 Young Adult members, 1 Youth member). In addition, we have 16 Associate members and 11 linked groups.

Classes: Classes began in September 2025 with six Branch Classes running until March catering for dancers of all abilities from beginners to experienced. As in previous years, Hillpark and Garnethill Beginners had several additional classes in April and May in preparation for the May “Nice and Easy” Dance. Additionally, four Spring Classes with a “Commonwealth Theme” were held with four different guest teachers. The Branch would like to thank all the musicians and teachers who make our classes possible; it is greatly appreciated.

Dances: Eleven dances were held during the last year including the Glasgow 850 Dance in October 2025, the Midwinter Ball in January 2026, three “Nice & Easy” Dances, Branch Dances and a Challenging Dance.

Glasgow Branch Newsletters: Three newsletters have been published during the year. We thank Peter Knapman for continuing in the role of Editor and for producing the newsletters with the Committee’s and Membership’s input. The Newsletters have benefited from interesting and informative contributions from Peter himself. Two Short Newsletters were also produced in June and January.

RSCDS AGM and Conference Weekend: This year the Society held its AGM and Autumn Gathering in Glasgow. Five delegates attended the AGM and a full report was published in the 2025 Winter Newsletter. Many Branch members were present to take part in evening dances and some of the other enjoyable and informative weekend events.

Glasgow Music Festival: The Scottish Country Dancing classes of the Glasgow Music Festival took place on Saturday the 14th of March in the Renfield Centre, Glasgow. With fewer entries than previously, all dancing took place in one extended session. Five enthusiastic primary school aged teams took part.

The Marion B Hamilton Certificate was awarded to Comely Park Primary School from the Falkirk area for achieving the highest score of the morning. The Honorary President of GMF,

Robert MacDonald, presented the certificate to the winning team, which was very appropriate as he is also the nephew of Marion B Hamilton.

There were also fewer adult teams participating compared to previous years. The winners of the RSCDS Glasgow Branch Quaich, which is awarded to the team with the highest score, was Glasgow Scottish Country Dancers.

We are grateful to Angela Young for adjudicating. Excellent music to accompany the dancers was provided by Susan MacFadyen. Thanks also to Maureen Daniel for taking on the challenging task of recording the comments, to the school staff, dance instructors and of course the pupils and dancers who all worked so hard, and to all the Glasgow Branch volunteers who acted as stewards on the day. The Branch would like to thank Susan Ewington for all her hard work in making this year's Festival a success.

Primary School Festival - Day of Dance: This one-day event for Scottish country dancing was once again held in Glasgow City Chambers, hosted by Lord Provost Jacqueline McLaren.

20 Glasgow schools took part however, due to transport issues on the day, a few schools had to call off. There were however over 20 sets dancing at one time. Deputy Lord Provost Baillie Christy Mearns welcomed everyone to the City Chambers. RSCDS Chair-Elect Sebastian Wanless was in attendance along with Finnie, the 2026 Commonwealth Games mascot.

The Branch would like to thank our MC Fiona McDonald and Ian Muir and his band for the excellent music. We would also like to extend our thanks to Fiona Fairlie who organised the event in partnership with Glasgow Education. Thanks also go to the school teachers, parent chaperones, Council staff and to RSCDS Glasgow Branch members for helping to make this a special day.

Seniors' Group: Four meetings took place throughout the year. In June RSCDS Chair Elect, Sebastian Wanless, gave an informative talk on "Africa - My Africa". Maureen Daniel was also presented with a bouquet of flowers to thank her for organising the Seniors' Group lunches as she was stepping down from this role. In October Peter Knapman gave an excellent presentation on the music and dance connected with the Glasgow 850 celebration. At Christmas, as well as lunch, there was a quiz and in March Billy Gray (Hillpark class and Outreach musician, and RSCDS Management Board Member) entertained attendees.

Musician's Workshop: In order to increase the pool of musicians who play for our Branch classes the Branch organised a Musician's Workshop on Sunday 14th September in New Kilpatrick Church Hall. RSCDS Music Director, Ian Muir, led the workshop. Musicians consisted of twelve fiddles, one cello, one guitar, one flute, four accordions, one snare drum and one piano. Everyone who attended enjoyed the experience. Our grateful thanks go to Ian Muir for his expert tuition on the day.

Outreach: The Branch has responded to many requests to hold or to participate in a wide range of events. We have supplied various teachers, dancers and musicians throughout the year, for a range of activities - the majority of which involved dance demonstrations for community groups.

In June the Outreach dancers visited the Memory Lane Dementia Group in St Andrew's Church Barrhead for the first time. In July the dancers made a return visit to the Friendship Group in Giffnock and at the end of July Outreach ran a ceilidh session for sixty P1-P7 children attending the FARE Holiday Hunger Programme. In the autumn the Outreach dancers were kept busy visiting the Prince and Princess of Wales Hospice in August, the Moments Café in Cathcart Trinity Church and Mearns House Care Home Autumn Fete in September. The Outreach dancers visited the QEUH Stroke Rehabilitation Wards 56/57 in October. A return visit was made to Hawthorn House Care Home in November and to Mearns House Care Home in December.

In November Amy Bryson, along with Màrtainn Skene, provided a taster session to students at Caledonian University and Lyndsey McCrudden led a ceilidh dancing session at the Connect Community Trust Community Ceilidh.

A return visit was made to the Prince and Princess of Wales Hospice in January. In February Outreach dancers danced at Kelvinside Manor Care Home for the first time. A return visit was made to the QEUH Stroke Rehabilitation Wards 56/57 in April.

In January, Anne Murray, our Outreach Convenor, was invited to speak at the Symposium on "The Healing Power of Dance" organised by Professor Wendy Timmons of the University of Edinburgh.

Branch Administration: This year the Class Convenor vacancy was filled, and another ordinary committee member joined the committee. It still remains challenging to attract Members to serve on the Committee and the Committee is operating with one ordinary committee member vacancy. Committee meetings were split between face-to-face meetings at Sherbrooke Parish Church and over Zoom.

Mary Webster and Margaret Tough continued to provide valuable and timely support and updating of the Branch Website.

Several sub-committees continued work from previous years e.g. the Classes and Dance Programme sub-committees. The Safeguarding Team met on a number of occasions to revise Branch policies and procedures including incident reports and risk assessment documents.

Other Notable Events: Two members of Glasgow Branch were awarded Branch Awards this session for their invaluable services to Scottish country dancing. Maureen McCrudden received her Branch Award at the Midwinter Ball and Maureen Daniel was presented with her Branch Award at the Seniors Lunch in March.

Sadly, we lost some branch members and members of our dancing community in the past year. These include Iain Stuart, Robina Marshall, Elma Wilson and Agnes McDonald.

Anne Thorn
May 2026