



Ardbrae

Scottish Country Dancers of Ottawa

RSCDS Affiliate

Information for Newcomers, 2019-2020

This leaflet has been written to help you, as a newcomer to Ardbrae, understand our organization.

What is Scottish Country Dancing?

Scottish Country Dancing is social dancing in “sets” of six or eight people. We dance to the music of reels, jigs, hornpipes and strathspeys. Strathspeys, unique to the music of Scotland, are slower in tempo.

What can I expect to learn?

In your first two years as a new dancer, you will learn some of the steps and formations used in the dances. Sometimes this will be a bit confusing, but, rest assured, all dancers have at one time or another shared this feeling.

What do I wear?

Wear what is comfortable. If you decide to pursue this activity, you’ll want to buy some dancing shoes. These are available in certain stores in Ottawa, or by mail order from Scotland. Ask your teacher or an experienced dancer for information. If you’re a man, you may wish to buy a kilt, but this isn’t a necessity.

When and where are Ardbrae classes held?

We dance at Churchill Recreation Centre, 345 Richmond Road, in Westboro. Basic and intermediate classes are held on Mondays at 7:30pm. After October, the Basic class meets separately for the first part of the evening and then joins with the intermediate class after the refreshment break. A class for experienced dancers is held on Wednesdays at the same location.

Who provides the refreshments?

Refreshments consist of juice, water and cookies. Members take turns bringing the juice. Cookies are provided. After you’ve been dancing with us for a while, please feel free to sign up to bring juice, in a team of two.

What are “socials” and “tea dances”?

Socials and tea dance are parties that cost \$6 per person, payable at the door. They are held several times a year, either on a Saturday evening or a Sunday afternoon. From December on, the programs for these parties include dances that have been taught in the Basic class. As the year progresses, new dancers are encouraged to participate in more and more of the dances on the program. Parties are a great way to enjoy what you’ve learned in class! At Christmas and at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in May, the socials include a pot-luck dinner.

How much does it cost to join?

Membership in Ardbrae is \$85 per year, which covers classes from September through May (\$45 for students upon presentation of a valid full-time student card). This fee includes classes and refreshments. Membership fees mainly offset the cost of renting the community centre that we use for classes each week.

Do you have a website?

Yes! You can find all sorts of information there, including party dates, locations and programs, links to other Scottish Country Dance sites and events, etc. Check it out: www.ardbrae.org

How about a newsletter?

Ardbrae produces a newsletter approximately four times a year. Each issue includes information on dance events sponsored by Ardbrae and other Scottish Country Dance groups in Ontario and Quebec in addition to articles of interest to those who love Scottish dancing and all things Scottish. Contributions from Ardbrae members are welcome.

Can I attend the Ardbrae Ball?

Many Scottish Country Dance groups sponsor an annual ball. In 2020, the Ardbrae Ball will be held on February 8th in the Heritage Ball Room of the Glebe Community Centre. The evening features live music and begins with a reception and Grand March, followed by a dance program that includes approximately sixteen dances. An MC gives a brief description of each dance before the music begins, to remind dancers of the main figures. A buffet dinner is included, with dessert and coffee served at the end of the evening. As a new dancer, you may purchase a ticket at a reduced price, allowing you to join in on five or six of the easier dances, and enjoy the exciting atmosphere of the live music, the dinner, and the fun and friendship before and after the dancing. Even if you don't come to the Ball, everyone is invited to attend the Sunday brunch that follows.

What is the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society (RSCDS)?

Scottish Country Dancing has a long history, but its modern health owes much to the work of two women—Jean Milligan and Isobel Stewart. In 1923, they established the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society, often referred to as the RSCDS. The Society carries out research, supervises the training of teachers around the world, and publishes books of traditional and new dances. You can buy RSCDS dance books as well as dance music CDs through a variety of sources. The teachers can help direct you to the best sources for these items.

How long have the Ardbrae Dancers been holding classes in Ottawa?

Ardbrae, an affiliate of the RSCDS, succeeded the Ottawa Country Dance Society which was founded in 1958 under the auspices of the City of Ottawa, Department of Recreation and Parks. Ardbrae's first Scottish Country Dance class was held over fifty years ago on October 7th, 1964, at Ridgemont High School in Alta Vista. Ardbrae is one of two large Scottish Dance groups in Ottawa. The other group is informally known as "the Branch." Other non-affiliated groups of dancers abound in the Ottawa region.

How is Ardbrae organized?

Ardbrae is governed by a Council that meets approximately once a month. Some council members are elected by the membership at the AGM in May; others are appointed by the Executive. Their function is mainly to plan the annual Ball, administer the funds, and establish class structure.

Chair:	Neil Thornton
Vice Chair:	Pattie Kidd
Treasurer:	Bob Anglin
Secretary:	Elaine Hoag
Past Chair:	Barb Anglin
Publicity	Randall Ware
Members at large:	Clara Burgener and Jennifer Cunningham
Membership coordinator:	Tamara Glanville
Basic class convenor	Julia LaRosa
Intermediate class convenors:	Alison Harvey and Brent Nicolle
Advanced class convenor:	Lindsay Clark
Teachers' representative:	Elizabeth Woodbury