



SAN FRANCISCO BRANCH, INC.

Teachers' Committee Meeting, September 17, 2011, minutes

Location: Home of Kathleen McAdam

Note: Where any or all of us is expected to do something, the words in parenthesis "[Action Item]", followed by *italics and bold type* is used.

Meeting called to order:

by Armin, at 2:04pm. Many thanks to Kathleen for hosting, while recovering from a hip fracture. A special welcome to Greg and Kristi, whose first meeting it was.

1. Present:

Those present signed in. Kathy Allen, Cathy Bertics, Armin Busse, Patti Cobb, Kristi Closser, Laura Cooper, Juliet Davoren, Linda Henderson, Bruce Herbold, Bradley Hobbs, Susie Langdon Kass, Sheena MacQueen, Kathleen McAdam, Trina Merriman, Lin Pettengill, Greg Reznick, Alan Twhigg.

2. Regrets:

The following regrets were noted: Fred DeMarse, Gail Erwin, Sara Gratiot, Bruce Hamilton, Jo Hamilton, Alex Harvey, Marianna Harvey, Paula Jacobson, Pat O'Brien, Jim Passage, Sandee Schultz, Gary Thomas, Ron Wallace, Tim Wilson.

3. Minutes of January 22, 2011 meeting:

Accepted as written (Proposed Alan, 2nd Linda, with all in favor who attended the January meeting). At this point, there was a brief clarification that (for historical reasons relating to choosing candidate class teachers) only fully certificated teachers are eligible to vote on Teachers' Committee motions.

4. Report on Party Program Committees:

All program committees - party and ball - are up to date.

Bruce reported: a) That (unintentionally) the non-RSCDS dances in the upcoming programs are all John Drewry dances. Bruce suggested [Action Item to MCs]: ***John Drewry be acknowledged at the Oct/Nov parties:*** Drewry has >800 published dances, and is currently in failing health. b) That almost all Book 46 dances have been featured on the Monthly Party programs. There was general agreement that Book 46 has some excellent dances. c) That the Heart of San Francisco book will be published soon, and that this will become part of our repertoire.

A question was raised regarding the mix of dances on the party programs. Bruce replied that a) he complies with the Guidelines for Ball and Party Programs (Available at: <http://www.rscds-sf.org/branch/pdf/Guidelines%20for%20Ball%20and%20Party%20Programs.pdf>.) [Action Item] ***It is the responsibility of all on the program committee to read the guidelines before compiling the program.*** Questioning the guidelines from time to time would be within the

Teachers' Committee's remit, not his. b) That [Action item] **any dancer is welcome any time to email suggestions to Bruce.** c) [Action Item] **Bruce will soon update the suggestions spreadsheet on the repertoire list, and post that updated document on the web.** The currently posted list (<http://teachers.rscds-sf.org/> and click on "Dance repertoire") is 2011/02/01. There was a brief digression at this point regarding use of the Teachers' Reflector list for discussion/suggestions of dances. It was pointed out that the Teachers' reflector is not a discussion forum, but that there are websites for teachers' discussion. [Action Item] **Susie offered to** (and did) **send the link to one:** Scottish Country Dance Teachers <http://www.facebook.com/groups/5808618015/>. TAC forum and the strathspey server also offer the opportunity to discuss dances.

A question was raised regarding the procedure for requests for Ball programs (such as whether to dance MacDonald of the Isles x6, rather than x3). It was agreed that the Event Chair, the Program Committee members, and the musicians each have influence over such a decision, but that the Event Chair quite likely may not know they have influence. Again, there was a reminder that [Action Item] **We all need to read the guidelines before serving on a program committee.** (Guidelines for Ball and Party Programs, available at: <http://www.rscds-sf.org/branch/pdf/Guidelines%20for%20Ball%20and%20Party%20Programs.pdf>. The same document is available through the Teachers' Pages - though curiously this is the identical, draft version dated January 2001 that we then approved in March 2001: <http://teachers.rscds-sf.org/SCTCdc20010104BallProgGuide.pdf>.) It was also agreed that the MC has the responsibility to make the evening go well, so the ultimate decision would rest with the MC. [Action Item] **We need to read Bruce Hamilton's The MC's Duties before serving as an MC.** (Available from the Teachers' Pages under "Bruce Hamilton's Notes on MCing" at: http://teachers.rscds-sf.org/SCTCdc20050716_MCing.pdf.)

Following further discussion, the Teachers' Committee went on to propose the following (Patti, 2nd Trina), with all in favour.

The Teachers' Committee recommends to the Branch Committee that, when Event Chairs are approved by the Branch Committee, in addition to the Event Job Description they receive from the Branch Committee, they also receive a copy of the Guidelines for Ball and Party Programs and a copy of Bruce Hamilton's The MC's Duties; furthermore that the Branch Committee inform the Event Chair that they should pick an MC based on the MC's capacity to do the job (rather than as a way to honor them). [Action Item] **Bradley will bring this to the Branch Committee.**

The final discussion on this point was that if we have a Teachers' Workshop on the topic of being an MC, then Bruce Hamilton would be one possible choice.

5. Teachers' Workshop

The Teachers' Workshop held April 9, 2011, at St Mark's, Palo Alto, 1pm-5pm, taught by Bruce Hamilton, focussing on how to improve our teaching, went well, was very well received, had sufficient attendance, and Bruce Hamilton was also satisfied with how it went. Comments such as "loved it" and "very thought-provoking" were expressed. Kathy reported that the 5-couple workshop dance "Pentonville" became a big end-of-night favorite at San Jose class this summer. Bruce's material titled An Approach to Dealing with Mistakes remains available on the teachers' pages under "Bruce Hamilton's Kaleidoscope Talk" and at: http://teachers.rscds-sf.org/SCTCdc20110318_BHamilton_MistakesPaper.pdf.

6. Approve TC-BC Liaison

This position comes due for renewal in May each year, following the Branch Committee elections. It was on our agenda because the May Teachers' Committee meeting was cancelled.

Bradley was willing to stand, was nominated (Patti), seconded (Lin) and elected unopposed with all in favour. Thanks were expressed to Bradley for taking on the role, and Bradley expressed that he enjoys it.

7. Progress on Database for Ball Program write-ups

Alan reported that this is trundling along, he and Paula are working on it, and that all are welcome to volunteer to join in. [Action Item] **Contact Alan if interested.**

8. Courtesy

This item, originally from Kathleen, was brought up by Armin as a reminder to us as classes start in the fall. [Action Item] **We should educate our class members not to shout out, and to raise a hand for questions. We, as teachers, should make our assistance subtle if an MC is flailing, and encourage our dancers to do likewise when a teacher makes a mistake.**

9. Discussion of future Teachers' Workshops

Suggestions were:

- a) "What makes a great MC?" [Action Item] **Armin will contact Bruce Hamilton to discuss availability.** We should [Action Item] **all try to tap in on the skills of a really good MC.** MCs mentioned in this context were: Paula Jacobson, Gene Bissell, Ellen Aaron, Tim Wilson.
- b) "Basics of Teacher Training Refresher class". Bruce Herbold, Alan, Armin, and Ron Wallace would be the contacts for this. (No immediate action).
- c) Experience Pat Coyle teach a regular class. Ideally, Thursday in San Francisco the week following Asilomar. [Action Item] **Bruce Herbold will work with Lin to contact Pat Coyle.**
- d) "How Mary Murray prepares to teach a workshop?" - for the non-dancing Teacher Forum during Asilomar. [Action Item] **Lin will suggest this topic to Mary Murray, and all please pass on to Lin any other suggested topics for Mary.**

10. Selection of Program Committees

Immediately following the January meeting, Lin Pettengill offered to fill the one remaining open slot, for May/June 2012. The schedule is available on the Teachers' Pages under the tab "Programs Due".

11. Report from Branch Committee

Bradley reported: a) The Branch Committee is clarifying their policy for reimbursement at the TAC AGM. In the past, only registration was reimbursed. Policy is now registration plus up to \$200 for travel expenses. b) For the upcoming Nov 4th RSCDS AGM, agenda items of interest include i) dissolving the post of Youth Director, and replacing it with a new sub-committee of the Education and Training Committee. ii) UK paying our Branch £500 to act as an exam centre on the examination tour. c) Currently, Branch membership stands at 296, anticipated to reach ~310. The Teachers' Committee expressed our gratitude for all the work done by the Branch Committee, and they likewise, through Bradley, for ours.

12. Report on TAC

Alan reported as proxy for Paula. If we have not yet done so, we should [Action Item] **read the Summary Record of the Area Representatives' Meeting 2011.doc**, sent out by Paula on 9/11/11 to the Teachers' Reflector. Alan mentioned some notable points: a) 5:30pm Friday in Quebec is a difficult time for many West Coast attendees. b) The 2012 AGM and Summer School will be in Portland, Oregon. c) The Basic Teaching Skills Course maxed out at 12 students, and covered a huge ability range. A great example of its purpose was in enabling

someone going to Afghanistan to dance/teach while overseas. This course will alternate years with the Teacher Candidate class. d) There was discussion of offering a Mentoring class. Meanwhile, we agreed [Action Item] **All teachers mentoring a future candidate should view the resources available on the RSCDS HQ site:** The syllabus, and particularly view Appendix E, at <http://www.rscds.org/images/stories/pdfs/syllabus%20revision%20may%202008.pdf> and continuing development, at <http://www.rscds.org/learn/continuing-development.html> There are plans to have TACNotes and a (revised) RSCDS Manual available in an on-line format. Alan also talked of a couple of the classes at the AGM: One on resurrecting older dances, where we agreed that Marjorie McLaughlin is a great resource if we were to offer such a class/workshop locally. Another on different styles of warmups. Alan would be willing to coordinate this if we were to offer a local mini-workshop on this topic.

13. Report on Tutoring Candidate Class

Alan Twigg provided a detailed report which is appended to these minutes (Page 6). All exam candidates passed. Applause. Congratulations to both the candidates and the tutors. Alan reiterated that he and Bruce Herbold have led the class 3 times, so it is someone else's turn next time.

There was brief discussion of the advantages of doing the class locally - chiefly that some candidates make major changes/improvements that they could not possibly achieve in two weeks, versus at a 2-week course such as TAC - chiefly that the added intensity works well for some, the peer support that comes from a big group, and the added input/exchange of ideas that a large group offers.

14. Discussion of Dances

Kathy requested a quick and helpful exercise on our understanding of "corner covering". We agreed the term can include covering with a diagonally opposite corner, an adjacent corner, or a corner in partner position.

15. Starter Jigs

Suggestions were: The Ox and Plough, The Buttercup (pub. Perth 800).

16. Dates and locations of next meetings

January 21, 2012 Lin Pettengill's, San Mateo

May 19, 2012. [Action Item] **Armin to check if Marianna would be willing to host.**

September 22, 2012 Bruce and Patti's, in Oakland

[Action Item] **Everyone should write these dates into their calendar.**

17. Special Topics for Future Meetings

A few suggestions have already been submitted. [Action Item] **Armin will provide these suggestions to us in due course.** In addition, these were suggested at the meeting:

- a) Different programs for computer-based music storage
- b) presentation on current exam process
- c) discussion of some thought-provoking articles in TACTalk
- d) Warm-up routines - Is a rut a good thing for warm-ups?
- e) Guidance and mentoring of new teachers

In connection with e), [Action Item] **Greg will work with Alan and others to come up with a proposal for a protocol to be followed when Level 1 teacher status is achieved.** (For example, inform registrar, be on the teacher reflector, overview of teachers' pages, guidance on

selecting and working with a mentor while preparing unit 4 materials, other useful documents.)
[Further Action Item] ***All are invited to contribute suggestions to Greg for what to include.***

18. Adjourned

The meeting was adjourned at 4:57pm by unanimous consent.

Submitted by Juliet Davoren

SF Branch Teacher Training 2011

In preparation for the 2011 North American Exam Tour, the San Francisco Branch held a teacher training class beginning in January 2011.

We had three candidates who were starting the examinations process, along with two others (one local and one from southern California) who wanted to resit the Unit 3 exam and two candidates for the Unit 5 exam. This number of candidates reached the minimum to qualify the Branch as an Exam Centre for the Tour, and exams were scheduled for May 14 at Christ Church, Berkeley.

Training classes for the Unit 3 exam (5 candidates) were held at the Polish Club in San Francisco. We held 10 sessions from January to May on Sunday afternoons, generally twice a month. The tutors were Armin Busse, Bruce Herbold, and Alan Twigg. This facility was chosen because of its central location and affordability, but proved to work well. Six training sessions for the Unit 2 exam (3 candidates) were held at Branch members' private homes in the East Bay, primarily as a cost-saving measure. The small number of candidates meant that we required space for only one set of dancers for Unit 2 training, which made it practical to use private homes. Of the two Unit 5 candidates, one was from Phoenix and did her training there, and the other was a resit and did not request to repeat the training; this was just as well, because it would not have been feasible to offer this training course for one person.

A number of volunteer dancers helped out with both training courses and with the exams. Sylvain Pelletier served as class manager and provided invaluable assistance with publicity, hall arrangements, communication with volunteers, and financial management. We are grateful to all the helpers, particularly Sylvain and those who made their homes available for the Unit 2 practices. For the exam itself, we offer particular thanks to Sylvain and to Linda Henderson for organization and to Eleanor and Barry Hotchkies for hosting the out-of-town examiner.

The exams were highly successful – all of the candidates passed. The examiners were Ron Wallace and Mary Murray, and Lyle Ramshaw and Susan Worland provided the music.

2011 Exam Results (Unit 1 Exam on February 12 and Unit 2, 3, and 5 Exams on May 14):

Emily Rose Beck passed Units 1, 2, and 3
Bob Branstrom passed Units 1, 2, and 3
Kristi Closser passed Units 1, 2, and 3
Bradley Hobbs passed Unit 3 (resit)
Deresa Teller (southern CA) passed Unit 3 (resit)
Larry Wakeman passed Unit 5 (resit)
Jennifer Reiner (Phoenix) passed Unit 5 (resit)

Note: Bruce Herbold and Alan Twigg have now been trainers for the last three cycles of exams, and according to the Teachers' Committee policy, a different trainer or set of trainers will need to conduct the next training cycle.

Report submitted by Alan Twigg, September 2011.