



Teachers' Committee Minutes

Final

Meeting

Saturday, 19 May, 2012

at the home of Marianna and Alex Harvey, Mountain View, CA

Present

Armin Busse, Laura Cooper, Alex Harvey, Marianna Harvey, Bradley Hobbs, Susie Langdon Kass, Paula Jacobson, Don MacQueen, Trina Merriman, Pat O'Brien, Alan Twigg

Regrets

Kathy Allen, Juliet Davoren, Fred DeMarse, Gail Erwin, Sara Gratiot, Bruce Hamilton, Linda Henderson, Lori Howard, David Newitt, Greg Reznick, Gary Thomas, Ron Wallace, Tim Wilson

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 2:03 by Armin Busse, Chair.

Edit Agenda

There were no corrections or additions to the posted agenda.

Announcements

There were no announcements.

Old Business

Change/accept minutes of previous meeting

There were no changes to the draft minutes.

Proposed: Paula – that the draft minutes be accepted as final

Seconded: Marianna

Motion carried, without objection

Report on Party Program Committees

Paula reported that programs for the Kim McGarrity Memorial Ball and the Jean Patrick Memorial Dance were finished in March. Further, the written cribs for the Asilomar weekend were almost done and will be completed by 1 July—ample time for Susan Spiegel to include them in the Asilomar booklet.

- ▶ **Action Item:** Armin will put due dates on the program calendar for monthly parties and special dance events.
- ▶ **Action Item:** Paula will request non-RSCDS dance descriptions from Bruce Herbold.

Report progress on database for ball program write-ups

Alan reported that the task gets easier as more dances are entered into the database. Currently the database contains a few hundred dances with their descriptions. The intent of the database is to standardize the written cribs for use on dance programs. Paula added that Eric Ferguson's cribs, found on DanceData, have gotten to be close to our preferred format with only minor differences. Considering this, Paula suggested that perhaps it would be best to simply send out the link (URL) to Eric's cribs. A recommendation was supported by the group that when program documents are sent out via the internet, they should be sent in multiple formats to ensure that all recipients can open them regardless of the user's computer operating system or software.

Courtesy

Armin reminded the teachers present that all participants and supporters of classes and dance events need to practice courteous manners. Dancers need to be encouraged to be respectful of the teacher. Shouting out corrections or comments on a dance to a teacher in a class or dance event must be avoided: keep manners pleasant and respectful. Outbursts tend to make the teacher briefing the dance (as at monthly parties or special dance events) and others in attendance uncomfortable.

Teachers need to establish the standard of courtesy in their classes as the norm. That is, listen to the talk—through, make requests in a polite manner, use “please” and “thank you”. Simply put, just be kind. While some dancers rely on cribs—either the written word or dance diagrams—to refresh their memories on a dance, it is important to realize that some dancers rely on the talk-through or briefing to remember the dance. If dancers must refer to their cribs to remember a dance, it is important that they be discreet and not disruptive. Do not converse with your partner or members of your set during the talk-through.

Jamie Tanner wrote an informative article on ballroom courtesy which teachers are encouraged to print out and have available at class.

- ▶ **Action Item:** Don will find the article on ballroom courtesy printed in an earlier edition of the Reel & Strathspeyper.
- ▶ **Action Item:** Armin will ask Bruce Hamilton if he is willing to write an article for the Reel & Strathspeyper if Don cannot find the other article by the middle of June. If the other article is found, perhaps Bruce can use some of its ideas when writing his article if he feels a new article would be beneficial to the Branch membership.
- ▶ **Action Item:** Bradley will contact Jamie for a copy of his article and permission to reprint and distribute it.

Articles and reprints should be made available to the membership before the Asilomar previews.

New Business

Approve TC-BC Liaison

Bradley Hobbs has been our liaison to the Branch Committee. Since he was elected to the Branch Committee for an additional term of two years at the recent Branch AGM, Bradley was happy to stand again for the TC-BC liaison post.

Approved, without objection.

Discuss future Teachers' Workshops

Trina reported that Bruce Hamilton will lead a workshop on the craft and duties of MC'ing. He liked the idea that the proposed afternoon workshop will also have a segment on proper microphone technique (lead by Patti Cobb) and briefing dances (lead by Ron Wallace).

Of the dates which Bruce suggested for the Teachers' Workshop, the 23/24 of March, 2013 seemed most practical. It was originally thought that this would be a three-hour workshop, but given the fact that the workshop would be open to teachers-in-training as well as Part II (full certificate) teachers that this might not be enough time to accommodate everyone. A time frame of 1:00 – 5:00 was suggested. A large venue will be needed, but a dance floor is not required. The April monthly party would then be a good event for workshop attendees to put into practice what they have learned, if the hosting classes (Red Thistle Dancers and Campbell class) would acquiesce to having them deliver the briefings.

This discussion led to a discussion on the current quality of briefings, in that some briefers are better than others at this task. Armin proposed that a survey be made available to teachers at monthly parties to give feedback on the quality of briefings. This idea opened up to include feedback on the venue, the music, the dance programs and other elements of the monthly parties. Branch Committee support would be required to circulate this more encompassing survey, which would be available to all attendants. Direct anonymous individual feedback by teachers of teachers briefing dances was suggested as a good way to start and would create the best benefit for the individual MC. A larger feedback form might not be as effective for improving briefings and MC duties, which is our initial goal.

- ▶ **Action Item:** Bradley (TC-BC liaison) will bring this item to the BC for discussion and approval.
- ▶ **Action Item:** Armin, Trina, Bradley will compose a short survey for the teachers to use at monthly parties.

An announcement needs to be presented to all interested teachers before the briefing survey is implemented, no sooner than the October 2012 Monthly party. As the next Teachers' Committee meeting is on 22 September, 2012, this would allow discussion and decisions on the survey before it is distributed.

Report from BC

Bradley reported that some Branch members have contacted the BC concerned about the lengthy intermission breaks at monthly parties. The TC clarified the guidelines that the MC notifies the band leader 10 minutes in to the break that dancing will resume shortly. The break ends after 15 minutes have passed.

It was pointed out that since there is often a new MC for each set of dances, that the new MC might not know when 10 minutes have passed and the band leader needs to be notified. Don suggested using a kitchen timer to signal the end of breaks.

On another matter, the distribution of BC agenda to the TC was discussed.

- ▶ **Action Item:** Don (BC Chair) will send BC agenda to the TC Chair (Armin) two weeks in advance of a BC meeting.
- ▶ **Action Item:** Armin (TC Chair) will review the agenda and decide if it is suitable to distribute through the teachers' reflector.

Report on TAC

Paula (TAC rep) has been forwarding reports from TAC through the teachers' reflector as she receives them.

Paula will be attending the area reps' meeting on 27 July 2012 as part of the TAC AGM weekend. If teachers have questions or concerns they would like Paula to raise at this meeting, they should contact Paula. The agenda is not available in advance of this meeting.

Special Topics for future Meetings

There are already in excess of fourteen topics already queued for discussion. However, if after reviewing the list posted on the Teachers' page teachers have further ideas for special topics, they should submit them to Armin.

Teacher resources

Greg Reznick, who was not in attendance, suggested this item: the item was tabled until the next meeting.

Voting rights for Part 1 (Prelim equivalent) teachers for the teachers committee.

Currently Part 1 teachers (i.e., teachers who have passed exam units 1, 2 and 3) may attend TC meetings, although they do not have voting privileges. This fact has been written into the Branch Bylaws (Article X, Section 1). It was thought in previous years when this issue came up that there would be too much conflict of interest for Prelim/Part 1 teachers to cast votes. The point was raised that on the few items the TC votes on, generally the vote is unanimous and, in the last several years, never controversial.

Proposed: Susie – that the Part I qualified teachers be allowed to vote at TC meetings.

Seconded: Armin

Motion carried, without objection

- ▶ **Action Item:** Bradley (TC-BC liaison) request to BC that the Bylaws be updated to reflect this change.

Teachers' candidate tutoring

Six candidates are needed to be eligible to host an examination tour. Currently there are two known candidates. Joan Baker has a small group in Arizona which may want to participate in a teacher exam at our site. Newer candidates (Unit 2, 3) in our Branch are possibilities for a course in 2012/2013 with the

examination in 2013. Teachers are encouraged to seek out dancers who are interested in pursuing their teaching certificates. Financial help is available through the Branch Scholarship Fund.

Alan and Bruce Herbold have been the Teacher Tutors for the last three years and have stepped down from this post. Nevertheless, Alan was willing to be the contact person until such time that a new Teacher Tutor is approved by the TC. Armin, who worked alongside Alan and Bruce during the 2011 Teacher Training course, is considering the post. Armin has taken the Tutor Training course at TAC, although this additional training is not a requirement of the Society to be a Teacher Tutor: any fully qualified teacher (Part 1 and 2) can be a tutor. Further, the Teacher Tutor can bring in other teachers to teach segments of the Teacher Training course.

- ▶ **Action Item:** Armin will write an article for the Reel & Strathspey to encourage dancers to be candidates in a 2012/2013 Teacher Training course. Deadline 1 June.

Dance repeats and the handling of communication between MC and musicians during parties.

Recently dances at monthly parties have been encored without the support of the majority of dancers on the floor. It is important that dances be encored only if there is obvious majority support for the dance to be repeated. The decision is the MC's, and the decision should be made quickly before dancers leave their sets. The MC is in charge, and while they may enjoy joining the dance, they have a job to do: facilitating the dance event. If an MC is filling out a set, it is nice if they have a prearranged signal with the band leader to communicate that the dance should be encored. Certain dances are so popular within our Branch that an encore is almost a foregone conclusion. However, the MC must arrange with the band leader that if there is a groundswell of applause they may encore the dance after the prearranged signal is given, based on a clear desire by dancers to repeat the dance. Any set which does not wish to encore a dance has the prerogative to leave the floor.

The MC need to remind dancers at the beginning of the dance event that dances will only be encored if there is clear and obvious majority support for the dance. Dancers signal an encore is requested by raising an index finger. Thunderous applause will generally be interpreted as appreciation for the musicians and their music. The MC will then ask the band leader if the musicians are willing to encore that dance.

Other Business

Discussion on Dances

Lake of the Sky, from the new [Heart of San Francisco](#) dance book, is on the upcoming Truckee program. There is a discrepancy between the written description and the dance diagram. The dance diagrams show two phrases of half double triangles when in fact the formations are half crown triangles followed later by half double triangles.

Suggestions for a new Starter Jig

Suggestions for a jig to start a dance program are to be sent to Bruce Herbold (Monthly Party Programming Continuity person)

Other announcements

Susie reminded the teachers that she has stepped down from handling publicity for the Branch. She will still produce the Monthly Party brochure and the Beginner Dancer flyer, but she urges the teachers to

assist in finding someone (or a group of 2-3 people) to publicize the Branch and its activities. Interested parties are asked to contact members of the Branch Committee.

- ▶ **Action item:** Bradley (TC-BC liaison) needs to bring this item to the attention of the BC.

Choose date and location for the next meetings

The next Teachers' Committee meeting will be held at the Home of Greg Reznick in Berkeley on Saturday 22 September, 2012 at 2:00. Social time begins at 1:30.

Locations for the 19 January and 18 May 2013 meeting were not fixed.

Adjourn

Proposed: Trina – that the meeting adjourn

Seconded: Paula

Motion carried, without objection

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 by Armin Busse, Teachers' Committee Chair

Following the meeting, the special round-table discussion topic was "Handling a perpetual beginner in an intermediate class" led by Trina Merriman.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bradley Hobbs

Recording Secretary

Follow-Up Action Items

- ▶ **Action Item:** Armin will put due dates on the program calendar for monthly parties and special dance events.
- ▶ **Action Item:** Paula will request non-RSCDS dance descriptions from Bruce Herbold.
- ▶ **Action Item:** Don will find the article on ballroom courtesy printed in an earlier edition of the Reel & Strathspeyper.
- ▶ **Action Item:** Armin will ask Bruce Hamilton if he is willing to write an article for the Reel & Strathspeyper if Don cannot find the other article by the middle of June. If the other article is found, perhaps Bruce can use some of its ideas when writing his article if he feels a new article would be beneficial to the Branch membership.
- ▶ **Action Item:** Bradley (TC-BC liaison) will bring this item (MP survey of briefings) to the BC for discussion and approval.
- ▶ **Action Item:** Armin, Trina, Bradley will compose a short survey for the teachers to use at monthly parties.
- ▶ **Action Item:** Don (BC Chair) will send BC agenda to the TC Chair (Armin) two weeks in advance of a BC meeting.
- ▶ **Action Item:** Armin (TC Chair) will review the agenda and decide if it is suitable to distribute through the teachers' reflector
- ▶ **Action Item:** Bradley (TC-BC liaison) request to BC that the Bylaws be updated to reflect this change.

- ▶ **Action Item:** Armin will write an article for the Reel & Strathspey to encourage dancers to be candidates in a 2012/2013 Teacher Training course. Deadline 1 June.
- ▶ **Action item:** Bradley (TC-BC liaison) needs to bring this item (need for Publicity Chair) to the attention of the BC.