



Teachers' Committee Minutes

Final

Meeting

Saturday 19 May, 2018

at the home of Alan Twhigg, Mountain View, California

Present

Armin Busse, Laura Cooper, Rebecca Davis, Marianna Harvey, Bradley Hobbs, Paula Jacobson, Don MacQueen, Trina Merriman, Rachel Pusey, Dilip Sequeira, Alan Twhigg, Geoffrey Wood.

Regrets

Juliet Davoren, Fred DeMarse, Bruce Hamilton, Jo Hamilton, Linda Henderson, Susie Langdon Kass, Dwayne McQuilliams, Mary McQuilliams, Lin Pettengill, Sandee Schultz, Tim Wilson.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 2:08 pm by Armin Busse, Chair.

Edit Agenda

An update on the Dancing Achievement Awards class was added to the posted agenda as well as Monthly Party programs configurations, which was tabled from January's meeting.

Announcements

There were no announcements.

Old Business

Change/accept minutes of previous meeting

Proposed: Marianna - that the [20 January, 2018 Preliminary A] minutes be accepted as final.

Seconded: Paula

Motion carried, without objection

Report on Party Program Committees

The program for the Jean Patrick Memorial Dance was sent out 3 May. The dance is scheduled for 1 September at the Veterans Memorial Building in Pleasanton.

The program for the Kim McGarrity Memorial Ball at Asilomar has been posted on the Asilomar website (<https://sfasilomardance.wixsite.com/asilomarweekend>) and will be sent out on 1 July.

Report on Future Teachers' Workshop

Trina has sent e-mails to Sarah Pawlowsky, head of the Physical Therapy department at San Francisco State University, but has not gotten any response from her. The hope is that Sarah will lead a workshop on dancers' health, including a research survey conducted by the graduate department which would benefit teachers. Trina will continue to pursue arrangements with Sarah.

- ▶ **Action Item:** Trina, please contact Sarah Pawlowsky of the Physical Therapy Department at SFSU to make arrangements for a Teacher Workshop.

New Business***Report from BC***

Bradley (TC-BC Liaison) reported that members of the Branch Committee have worked with Mike Greenwood (Digital Marketing Communications Officer for the Society) and Kathrine Butler (Graphic Designer/Consultant for the Society) on revamping the Society website. Several Branches volunteered to assist the Society in this endeavor, beta-testing a portion of the new website. The Society wishes to bring their website up-to-date and make it more responsive to the needs of Branch administrators and members alike.

Chris Duncan and Catherine Strutt, who will be playing for Asilomar, will require O-B1 visas (Artist from Abroad visa program) as they are coming from Australia. The Asilomar Committee is handling the application, which is reported to take several months. Word from the Asilomar Committee is that all is well in hand.

The Jordanhill stage ("high stage") and cover will be inspected when the stage is taken out of storage at the Alameda Fairgrounds for the county fair (15 June – 8 July) The cover has seams which have opened up and it is possible that the cover material itself may have outlasted its usefulness. The stage deck, which was temporarily repaired before the Pleasanton Highland Gathering and Games last year, will probably require a layer of roving and resin to seal and protect the plywood as well as providing a better dance surface. It is expected that the repairs can be done shortly after the Alameda County Fair closes.

Youth Weekend West workshop and ball is still open for dancer registration. While the workshop is for dancers 35 and under (thus, "youth") all dancers may register for the Friday night ceilidh and the Saturday ball. YWW is 25-27 May.

The Branch Committee continues to identify shortcomings of the Branch website and seeks to find a solution which will result in a website which is useful and usable to the membership and appealing and informative to the interested public.

This is Patti Cobb's third and last year as Asilomar Chair. Sheena MacQueen has munificently volunteered to chair Asilomar 2019 and is shadowing Patti this year.

January's Monthly Party is scheduled for the second Saturday of the month (12 January 2019). This, unfortunately, conflicts with Dunsmuir's Bishops Ranch retreat. Moving the January party to the second Saturday of the month from the traditional first Saturday highlights how a seemingly small change can impact other events within the Branch. Don MacQueen (Branch Committee Chair) would like to convene a meeting this summer of all interested parties to coordinate event scheduling for the 2019-2020 dance year—a year hence.

The 2018 Winter Ball, held at the Orchard Pavilion in Sunnyvale, was successful, notwithstanding being in a venue not equal in elegance to the Scottish Rite Center previously used for the Valentine's Ball. With a more affordable venue, the event finished in the black (the last several years, the event lost over \$1,000 each year). However, with no Ball Chair, there are no plans for a 2019 local ball—either called "Winter Ball" or "Valentine's Ball". Members of the Ball Committee are willing to continue for another year (the Chair stepped down after two years of service), if a Branch member would chair the committee. Contrary to prevailing view, the Chair does not need to be a teacher, simply a Branch member with good organizational skills. If no one takes over as Chair of the committee by 1 July, the ball will be cancelled, ending a 51-year standing tradition. Branch members interested in chairing the Ball Committee may contact Bradley (Nomination Committee Contact) bshrscds@gmail.com

The Branch Committee reviewed and discussed the Teachers' Committee's remarks on Etiquette and Courtesy at Branch Events (see TC January 2018 minutes). Another suggestion has been offered for Asilomar and Winter Balls: that each class "adopts" first-time attendees: meet them at the beginning of the event, look after them at the dance, sit with them at a meal (Asilomar), etc.

Additionally, it was suggested that dancers clear the floor between dances, but this may have unintended consequences. When the floor is cleared, it can be difficult to see who was sitting out, and therefore they often sit out another dance. The intent was for the experienced dancers to integrate more with the less experienced dancers. The Teachers' Committee rebutted, offering the recommendation that if attendees want to dance, they stand up. If they don't want to dance, sit down. Etiquette and courtesy guidelines need to be imparted at the class level.

The Asilomar Committee is considering giving first-time attendees the option to self-identify as such with star stickers (or similar) for their name badges included in their information packets. Not all first-time attendees wish to be known in this way, so those dancers who see benefit in revealing their first-time status can simply apply the sticker to their name badge. Experienced Asilomar attendees need to be aware of this indicator and extend a welcoming hand to those dancers.

Sylvain Pelletier has been appointed to the Branch Committee following a nine-month respite. He has been re-instated as treasurer, although, in practice, he never stop doing the job, guiding the interim treasurer.

PayPal (an e-commerce business allowing payments and money transfers to be made through the Internet) option has been established for members to pay for many Branch events.

Teachers are asked to encourage their dancers to volunteer for Branch positions. Please refer to the volunteer page at the back of every Reel and Strathspey for positions needing volunteers. There are tasks small and large which need to be covered if members expect to receive the continued benefits that the San Francisco Branch has offered.

Report on TAC

Trina Merriman (Teachers' Association (Canada) representative for the Branch) reported that at the TAC AGM in 2017, the membership approved a motion to incorporate, establishing non-profit status. These plans are moving forward and are expected to be finalized at the next AGM (28 July, 2018 at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities, Minneapolis, Minnesota). TAC is celebrating its 60th anniversary this year.

The registration deadline for early-bird pricing for 2018 summer events has been extended to 20 June because TAC experienced technical difficulties earlier. There will be a Teacher Candidate course at TAC for Units 2, 3 and 5. Registration before 22 June is encouraged.

Teachers were asked if there is interest in hosting the TAC Teachers' Conference Weekend and Summer School in the Bay Area. There was mild support of the idea. A TAC summer in the Bay Area would be three years out if TAC is on board. The 2019 Teachers' Conference Weekend and Summer School will be held in Calgary, Alberta.

TAC is working to reduce their auditing cost. Future update on progress in this area may be available at the AGM. At the same time, TAC is keeping a closer eye on the books following a recent incident with a (now former) treasurer for the summer events. An anonymous TAC member has loaned TAC the funds to cover immediate expenses in the wake of the embezzlement. TAC asks the members to suggest methods to recover the missing funds.

Marketing materials to convey the benefit of joining TAC have been requested by members. These materials will be available at next AGM.

TAC has taken on a few projects, including indexing all the John Drewry dances. The list, in pdf format, is on the TAC website. <https://tac-rscds.org/index.php/help/index-of-john-drewry-s-dances>

The late Ken Natrass (Scotch Measure's lead accordionist from Winnipeg, Manitoba) has left his tune sets to TAC. Once they are organized, they will be a good resource for musicians.

A non-sequitural discussion arose regarding TAC membership renewal. New teachers get an initial free one-year membership. Post-meeting, Trina clarified—after consulting with Katherine Shearman (TAC Membership Secretary & Subscriptions) — that Membership runs from July 1 through June 30. No matter when one joins, the membership terminates on June 30th. There are no partial-year memberships. Furthermore:

- If you apply close to the year-end (beginning mid-April or so) the membership will automatically go to the next full year.

- If you forget that you already renewed, and renew again, the second renewal will automatically extend membership for an additional year. The system does this automatically, and the membership secretary would then send you a new membership card with the new end-date.
- All members with an email address should have already received a reminder, if your membership is due for renewal in the upcoming year (from tacmembershapsec@gmail.com). Members without an email address will soon receive a reminder in the mail.

Question concerning TAC memberships can be directed to Trina.

Articles in TACTalk and the Southwest Washington newsletter mention the improvement and effectiveness of the dance animation, DancieMaetion (http://www.danciemaction.com/DM2_list_all_dances.php). Linda Mae Dennis (teacher from Vancouver, Washington) and Patrick Hogan (animator) have created a rather extensive library of videos featuring pawn-like characters moving through the dances to a voice-over. Trina and Paula report that their beginner classes find the videos very useful.

Lastly, TACTalk requests that teachers submit successful opening and closing dances for dance events. Please send your choices to Trina, who will relay them to TAC.

Approve TC-BC Liaison

Bradley has been the TC-BC Liaison for the past seven years and is happy to continue in that role. However, as he intends to move back East, that may not be practical. Bradley will continue as TC-BC Liaison while he is still in the area with Geoffrey assuming the role once Bradley leaves.

Guidance and Courtesy of Dancers

Guidance and courtesy of dancers has largely been covered in the Branch Committee report to the Teachers' Committee. However, with further opportunity for discussion, it was emphasized that women are welcomed to invite someone to dance. Men—especially out of town men— need to be aware that women may ask them to dance.

It is important for the MC to set a cordial and welcoming tone at the beginning of the dance event. Marianna's welcome at the April Monthly Party—inspired by Kathy Allen— was brilliant in that it kindly reminded the experienced dancers to dance with the beginner dancers and be welcoming to new dancers at the dance. This encouraging greeting had a noticeable effect in that the new dancers in attendance enjoyed a pleasurable and uplifting evening.

MC role in our Branch Encore Protocol

Lyle Ramshaw sent an e-mail message to Armin (TC Chair) and Bradley (BC Vice-Chair, TC-BC Liaison) in April detailing his dissatisfaction with how encores have come to being handled in our Branch. The stated policy is that dancers wishing to encore a dance must indicate this by raising a hand immediately after the dance. If the "clear and obvious majority" of dancers on the floor request an encore, the dance will be repeated, generally "once and to the bottom". Recently, dances have been encored with only requests from a third of the dancers.

Teachers endorsed the 50% guideline, stating, however, that this policy must be explained at the beginning of the Monthly Party, not when the vote is observed. At that point—assuming the vote is insufficient—an explanation of the encore policy only serves to bait the crowd in to voting for an encore. Generally, the maximum numbers of encores for an event is three. Event chairs have a role in directing the MC's on the encore policy. Time management factors in, and this should be mentioned at the beginning of the dance event. If there is a firm closing time for the venue and a full dance program, MC's may not be able to accommodate encore requests.

Some teachers would prefer to have more dances on a program and fewer encores. Occasionally they felt that rather than encoring a dance they were not enthusiastic about, they could dance one that they preferred. A longer program with fewer (no) encores would give these dancers a choice.

Three-couple dances are generally done three times, with an encore expected. Given the flow between bar 32 and bar 1, MacDonald of the Isles is generally danced six times through in our Branch.

Teachers felt that Lyle made good points in his thoughtful letter and asked that the revised MC rules be put on the Teachers' Committee website. Armin will confer with Lyle for response and will summarize Lyle's concerns.

- **Action Item:** Armin (TC Chair), please confer with Lyle Ramshaw and summarize his concerns on Branch encore protocol to the TC.

Discuss Future Teachers' Workshops

There are no additional Teachers' Workshops planned.

Revised Teaching Certificate Syllabus

Malcolm Brown (Education and Training Committee Convenor for the Society) has announced some changes to the teaching certificate program.

The following changes have been made:

- 1) The minimum age requirements have been reduced. Members may begin the Teaching Candidate course at 16 years of age.
- 2) Two of the Unit 2 dances have been replaced with more suitable ones:
 - a. Summer Wooing replaces Gates of Edinburgh
 - b. Rodney's Rant replaces Woo'd and Married and A'
- 3) A couple of rarely danced formations have been removed from the Unit 3 list, and the list of Unit 3 assignments has been updated.
- 4) One rarely danced formation has been removed from the Unit 5 list, and the list of dances has been updated so that there is at least one dance containing a formation from the list of formations.
- 5) There is no longer the need for the candidates to dance the 16 or 32 bar assignment during the exam.

6) Although candidates will still be asked to recap the Unit 2 dances, it will no longer be assessed.

Candidate Class 2019

No candidates have expressed interest, nor have any potential candidates been identified by teachers to pursue the Teacher Training course in preparation for exams in 2019. Some teachers offered to support a future Candidate's Course in some fashion. Among these were Juliet, Rachel and Armin.

Rachel would prefer to work with the Dancing Achievement Awards (DAA) candidates.

Armin, who tutored in 2017 and assisted in 2011, offered to tutor the candidates.

Special Topics for future Meetings

A request was made to repeat the microphone workshop, which was done on 23 March 2013 as part of the teachers' workshop on emceeing.

Other Business

Discussion on Dances

There were no dances from upcoming programs brought up for discussion.

Suggestions for a new Starter Jig

"New Year Jig" by Maureen Robson, 1995. Published in RSCDS Book 51

Other announcements

The assessment for the Dancing Achievement Awards, Advanced Level, was on Sunday 22 April and was primarily successful. Sixteen dancers were assessed. Most passes with distinction, some passed with credit, a few did not pass.

From a Branch standpoint, the DAA has been classified from an event to a class; it is envisioned that this would be an ongoing course within the Branch. Experienced teachers are encouraged to tutor a DAA course at either the Intermediate, Advanced, or Very Advanced level. Fred and Linda and Trina learned an immense amount organizing the course. TAC offers a DAA tutor course.

Monthly Party Structure

Following the January Teachers' Committee meeting, the ad hoc committee (Juliet Davoren, Bruce Herbold, Sandee Schultz, Dilip Sequeira and Geoffrey Wood) discussed Monthly Party programming through e-mails. At today's meeting, Dilip suggested adding a sixteenth dance to the normal fifteen dance program, which would be reviewed for each Monthly Party. This would give the opportunity for an additional jig, bringing the count to five reels, five jigs, and six strathspeys. Replacing a strathspey with a jig was discussed at the January TC meeting.

The ad hoc committee also proposed giving program committees the latitude to replace a hard dance with a very hard dance (either physically demanding, or technically demanding). Questions were also raised about the core dance repertoire and whether the list still serves the purpose for which it was created. The Teachers' Committee will consider these recommendations at the September meeting (22 September) and discuss their implications.

Choose date and location for next meetings

22 September: Rachel

19 January: Possible hosts: Bruce Herbold/Patti Cobb, Kathleen McAdam, Tim Wilson or Pat O'Brien

18 May: TBA

Adjourn

Proposed: Paula – that the meeting adjourn

Seconded: Kathy

Motion carried, without objection

The meeting was adjourned at 4:47 pm by Armin Busse, Teachers' Committee Chair.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bradley Hobbs

Recording Secretary

Follow-Up Actions

- ▶ **Action Item:** Trina, please contact Sarah Pawlowsky of the Physical Therapy Department at SFSU to make arrangements for a Teacher Workshop.
- ▶ **Action Item:** Armin (TC Chair), please confer with Lyle Ramshaw and summarize his concerns on Branch encore protocol to the TC.