

***When did you start dancing with Johnsonville Scottish Country Dance Club?***

I joined Johnsonville club at the start of 2013. I had seen the beginner lessons at Johnsonville club advertised when we moved back to Wellington a couple of years earlier, but I was busy renovating our house and settling back into New Zealand. I met Kristin in mid 2012, when I started work at Victoria University, and we discussed dancing then. As soon as we got back from the Christmas break at the start of 2013, she marched up to my desk and said 'Right – here are the dates of the beginner classes this year – see you there!' It was just what I needed to give me courage to get through the door on the first night!

***How did you get into Scottish country dancing?***

I had enjoyed Scottish Country dancing lessons at school in the UK when I was about 10, but we then moved house and I changed school. My son also did some dancing when we lived in Malaysia, and his group used to perform at the annual St Andrew's Day ball. I enjoyed watching the children dance but there were no adult lessons available for me to learn.

***What do you most enjoy about SCD?***

Where do I start?

We have such a vibrant and diverse club, and I love the ethos of the club such that we are all quite relaxed and can laugh at ourselves. We are a pretty forgiving bunch and there is no pressure to be perfect.

I really enjoy the physical and mental workout dancing offers and the lovely music – even more so on the nights we have live music!

***Tell us a bit about any Scottish connections you may have.***

I was born in England, and I don't think there is any Scottish heritage in me.

***What sorts of activities have you been involved with at the club over the years?***

I took over as Treasurer in late November 2013, when Barbara became too unwell. I was also a member of the famous 'bunting bee' group who made the lovely bunting we regularly use to decorate the hall with on tartan night and annual dances etc. The bunting bee was the suggestion of Debbie Cooper, who also started dancing at the same time as me. A group of us spent an evening in Ngaio Tennis club rooms making lots of bunting at the end of 2013. Unfortunately Debbie suffered an injury early the following year and I don't think she has ever seen how wonderful the bunting looks.

I was tasked with making mulled wine for the mid-winter dinner in the first year we held the event. That proved to be very popular and continues to be a drawcard for the event each year – no pressure!

***What club activity stands out for you?***

I always love the tartan nights and annual dances, when it is great to do a lot of dances in one night and meet dancers from other clubs. The ceilidhs we have had the last few years have also been wonderful social events. The first was held at Rod and Kristin's house, and we danced on their deck as the sun went down. The last 2 years we have had a start of year ceilidh late January at Johnsonville bowling club – a spot of bowling, dancing and a pot luck supper. We also hold mid winter dinners, when many partners join in the fun.

***Tell us something about your life outside of Scottish country dancing.***

My husband and I are now empty-nesters, and enjoy cycling at weekends when the Wellington weather allows. I keep meaning to join another club and dance 2 evenings a week - maybe next year!