

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

The beginners' classes in February, 2016

How did you get into Scottish country dancing?

I saw the advertisement for 2016 in the local paper. John Munro, club secretary, replied to my email recommending that I come and try it out. Many years ago there had been some ceilidh dancing at school in Melbourne so it was not completely foreign to me.

What do you most enjoy about SCD?

The fellowship of the club members and forming new friendships. It is a safe way to keep fit and a challenge to the "grey matter".

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

My maternal ancestry is pure Scottish. A cousin has provided me with documentation back to the 12th century. My grandfather was a Macdonald and my grandmother a Macqueen. Although born in Australia, their parents emigrated from the Highlands and Hebrides at the time of the Clearances (1800s). My grandmother's parents both came from Portree, Skye but married in Victoria.

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

Besides joining the supper team I have kept a low profile. Some odd jobs have included making extra pennants, even ironing them all. When Rod and Kristin have been overseas I have assisted with set-up.

What club activity stands out for you?

The privilege of being tutored by Rod whose enthusiasm and broad knowledge, not only of the dances, but also the associated music and musicians

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

Retirement can be a really busy time of life. Besides the usual household chores I spend time in the garden, growing mainly vegetables and mowing the lawns within the boundary. I read a lot, usually at least one library book per week. Lately much of the reading matter has been about Scottish history, inspired by the previously mentioned material from my cousin.

Once a month I attend Ceol Alba, the Scottish music group. Having played in orchestras in another lifetime, over 40 years ago, my technique is not so good these days but I enjoy the experience of playing such a variety of pieces.

Cooking and sewing are also my passions. I like to experiment with a variety of cuisines and have been making some clothes and also gifts for the youngest of my 8 grandchildren and 2 great-granddaughters.