



Background and History

Recognizing the need for a national body to oversee the continuity of the "Canadian Inter-Provincial Championships", **ScotDance Canada (Scottish Cultural Organization for Traditional Dance in Canada)** was formed in July 1987 in Regina, Saskatchewan with its Constitution receiving formal acceptance in Hamilton, Ontario in July 1988. Since November 1990, ScotDance Canada has been an Affiliated Member of the Royal Scottish Official Board of Highland Dancing (RSOBHD) and has acted as the Registration Agent for Canadian dancers and competition organizers participating in the Worldwide Registration System since January 1994. In January 1996 the RSOBHD recognized ScotDance Canada as the principal organization and means of communication with the RSOBHD in Canada.

ScotDance Canada Association was granted Incorporation Status under the Canada Corporations Act by the Minister of Industry Canada on January 24, 1994 and in 1995 received Charitable Status designation thanks to the work of Loree Martin Vellner (Alberta). The bylaws were amended and accepted at the Annual General Meeting of July 1997. Further amendments have been made at the 2003, 2004, 2006-2017 Annual General Meetings. A special voting meeting was held October 21, 2012 with regards to changes to our national championship. ScotDance Canada received Ministerial Approval from Industry Canada for all of these amendments. The By Laws changed significantly in 2014 as we transitioned into the new Not-For-Profit (NFP) Act as passed by our Canadian Government.

Linda Rankin was approved by the RSOBHD as our delegate in September 1990. She attended her first meeting representing ScotDance Canada on November 18th, 1990 and has been the Head Delegate for ScotDance Canada for 22 years. In November of 2012, Linda was named the Vice President of the RSOBHD and therefore retired as our head delegate. Rachel McLagan was named our sole delegate. September 2013 Lindsay Reid attended her first meeting as a full delegate for ScotDance Canada. In March 2016, Jacqueline Aird was named a delegate and represented ScotDance Canada at her first RSOBHD Meeting.

ScotDance Canada created a Class C Honorary Membership category within our bylaws, to honour a prominent person interested in promoting the aims of ScotDance Canada. Such person is eligible to attend all General Meetings of the Association but is not entitled to the privileges of voting, of holding Office or of having any interest in the property of the Association. In 2006 and 2009, ScotDance Canada appointed Shendl Russell and Linda Rankin respectively, the title of Class C Honorary Member.

Over the years ScotDance Canada has prospered under the leadership of nine Presidents: Irene Baird (Manitoba), Loree Martin Vellner (Alberta), Heather Jolley (British Columbia), Anne Sutherland (Ontario), Christa Mackie (Ontario), Marilyn Wright (Ontario), Peter Archibald (British Columbia), Bill Troock (Alberta) and Cheryl Rafter (British Columbia). These Presidents have managed to bring the voices of our vast country together on the floor of the Annual General Meeting and the Mid -Winter Planning Meeting.

Independent Membership has been awarded to the six founding members of ScotDance Canada: Mrs. Adeline Duncan of Victoria, British Columbia (1991); Mrs. Irene Baird of Winnipeg, Manitoba (1993); Mrs. Gail Danysk of Calgary, Alberta (1994); and, Mrs. Heather Jolley of Burnaby, British Columbia, Mrs. Sandra Bald Jones of Hamilton, Ontario, and Mrs. Donna Jean Ostrander (nee Macdonald) of Ottawa, Ontario (1995). Loree Vellner of Red Deer, Alberta was made an Independent Member in 1998. 2009 saw the addition of Anne Sutherland of London, Ontario and Bill Troock of Edmonton, Alberta as Independent Members. Sadly, 2009 also marked the passing of Mrs. Adeline Duncan, ScotDance Canada's first Independent (Honorary) Member. Additionally Independent Memberships were awarded to Christa Mackie of Oakville Ontario (2010), Peter Archibald of North Vancouver, British Columbia (2011) and Deborah Wardrope of Mississauga Ontario (2013). Barb Brown-Yorke of Kensington, Prince Edward Island became an Independent Member in 2014 as did Cheryl Rafter of Vancouver, British Columbia in 2015.

A new class of Membership was introduced and passed at SDC AGM 2010. The distinction of "Emeritus" membership. This is to be awarded to any ScotDance Canada Independent Member upon retirement or death. The late Mrs. Adeline Duncan was awarded the first Emeritus membership. Through retirement Emeritus status has been awarded to: Donna Jean Ostrander (nee Macdonald) (2011), Gail Danysk (2011), Loree Martin Vellner (2011), Sandra Bald Jones (2012), Donna Cooper (2021) and Irene Baird (2022).

Three of our Independent Members have received the prestigious Atholl Clasp award, presented by the RSOBHD. The award is given to individuals within the dancing community who have served their sport extremely well and who

have given their lives to Highland Dancing. Adeline Duncan (BC) received the award in 2004, Heather Jolley (BC) in 2006 and Sandra Bald Jones (ON) in 2010.

ScotDance Conferences provide an excellent opportunity for the exchange of knowledge and ideas amongst its membership. The first National ScotDance Canada Conference was held in Toronto, Ontario in October 1991. In 1994 a Western ScotDance Canada Conference was held in Kelowna, British Columbia and an Eastern ScotDance Canada Conference was held in Toronto, Ontario. The second National Conference was held in Toronto, Ontario in October 1996. ScotDance Canada's National Conferences have continued to be held every other year in October: 1998 – Montreal, QC; 2000 – Halifax, NS; 2002 – Calgary, AB; 2004 – Etobicoke, ON. In 2006 ScotDance Canada supported and participated in the "World of Highland Dancing Conference" in Las Vegas, Nevada in lieu of a National Conference. Montreal, QC was the location of the 2008 ScotDance Canada National Conference. In 2010, the most recent ScotDance Canada National Conference was held in Vancouver, BC. In addition to the regularly scheduled National Conferences, many of the ScotDance Provincial Affiliates hold Provincial Conferences on a regular basis.

In October 1992 a joint ScotDance/FUSTA (Federation of United States Teachers and Adjudicators of Highland Dancing) Conference was held in Las Vegas, Nevada. ScotDance Canada has participated in "The World of Highland Dancing", an International Conference, held in Las Vegas, Nevada in October 1999, 2003, 2006, 2011 and 2014. ScotDance Canada supported the International Highland Dancing Conference held in South Africa in 2013.

The first edition of the ScotDance Canada Newsletter was issued in July 1991. Avril Wood, Rothesay, NB, served as the Newsletter Editor from 1991-1992 followed by Donna Jean Ostrander, Ottawa, ON, (1993-1999), Heather Jolley, Burnaby, BC, (2000-2004) and Peter Archibald, Vancouver, BC, (2005) where distribution became electronic. Over the next few years, the ScotDance Canada website became our primary means of communication and the Newsletter seemed to become an unnecessary tool. A Canadian Events List outlining dates and contacts for the majority of the competitions in Canada is compiled and issued annually by ScotDance Canada. Once originally distributed by mail accompanying the Newsletter, this information is now prepared by the National Competition Organizer Registrar and appears on the ScotDance Canada website. Newsletters are also issued in the months leading up to the annual Championship Series. In March 2017, the Education and Development Committee began distribution of technical e-newsletters to SDC Professional members.

In 1992 ScotDance Canada established the "James L. McKenzie Memorial Fund" in memory of Mr. James L. McKenzie of Aberdeen, Scotland. Its intent is to award funds throughout Canada to deserving recipients for Highland Dancing enhancement. The first recipients to receive this award were announced in 1996. The committee was originally chaired by Donna Jean Ostrander (nee Macdonald) (ON), followed by Karenanne Peck (NS), Cheryl Rafter (BC), Jennifer Stephenson (QC), Barb Murray (NB), Peter Archibald (BC) and Carleigh Leighton White (ON).

In 1992 ScotDance Canada established the "James L. McKenzie Memorial Fund" scholarship in memory of James L. McKenzie of Aberdeen, Scotland. Its purpose is to award funds to deserving recipients in Canada for Highland Dancing enhancement. ScotDance Canada's Scholarship Committee oversees these two scholarships, represented by one ScotDance Canada member from each of the Affiliate provinces. In 2019 a scholarship for recipients holding Examining Body professional status and post-secondary education aspirations was approved by the Board of Directors in memory of Loree Martin Vellner, past President, Independent Member and Emeritus Member. Both scholarships are adjudicated by our two Honorary Members, Shendl Russell and Linda Rankin.

ScotDance Canada moved rapidly forward into the electronic age during the Presidency of Christa Mackie (2001-2005). Under Christa's leadership, SCOR (ScotDance Canada On-line Registration system) - an electronic program handling the complete administration of a competition from entry form to final results - was developed. With a change in service-provider, Pierie Danysk, Calgary AB, SDC Communication Chairperson, and Kathy Ramesar, Winnipeg, MB, dedicated countless hours of work to implement a new program. The new and improved ScotDance Canada website (www.scotdance.ca), under the careful management of Pierie Danysk, was considered to be ScotDance Canada's main source of communication with its membership and the Canadian Highland Dance community in general for many years. ScotDance Canada launched their new website in the fall of 2012. Barb Yorke, ScotDance Canada Board of Director for Prince Edward Island was at the helm of this project making sure the site served the needs of our Canadian dancing community. In 2020, under the direction of ScotDance Canada's Marketing Committee Chairperson Cheryl Rafter (BC) and IT Committee Chairperson Lindsay Perreault (ON), our website received a new look. A donation page was added, offering two donation programs; Friends of ScotDance Canada (patrons of our organization) and a general donation program. Being a charity, it is important for our organization to seek donations in order to continue with our mandate to provide educational support for our professionals and programs to assist our dancer base. As well, a dedicated SDCCS page was added to bring focus to our National event.

In 2003 a commemorative book entitled “Canadian Highland Dance Experience – Past, Present and Future,” edited by Deborah Wardrope (ON), was published by ScotDance Canada. This limited edition book details the history of Highland Dancing in Canada and also illustrates Canada’s place in the worldwide community of Highland dance.

The “ScotDance Canada Suite”, undertaken as a Millennium project, was choreographed by Sheryl Joyner (ON), Chairperson of the National Choreography Committee (committee has since been disbanded), from steps provided by ScotDance Canada members from across the country. The Suite had its inaugural performance at the 2003 ScotDance Canada Championship Series in St. Catharines, ON and was performed again at the Opening Ceremonies of the 2004 SDCCS in Winnipeg, MB, marking the 30th Anniversary of the “Canadian Inter-Provincial Championships”.

In 2004 ScotDance Canada began an innovative, online Judges’ Exam Preparation Course developed and conducted by Deborah Wardrope (ON), then Secretary of ScotDance Canada. The course proved to be a much-needed study tool for candidates preparing for the RSOBHD Judge’s Exam.

Spearheaded by Deborah Wardrope (ON), the 2008-2009 year saw the development of an Education Centre on the ScotDance Canada website. This came at a time when professional development is very much to the forefront. Plans are to continue to develop the Education Centre to serve as a much-needed reference library for professionals. Currently, Deborah Wardrope, Chairperson for ScotDance Canada’s Education and Development Committee oversees various projects in an effort to provide our Professional members with up-to-date information on technique and other relevant highland dancing topics.

The first planning meeting of ScotDance Canada was held March 2000 in Winnipeg Manitoba. with the following in attendance: President Anne Sutherland (ON), Vice-President Karenanne Peck (NS), Secretary Christa Mackie (ON), Treasurer Jennifer Stephenson (QC), Pat MacKenzie (BC), Gail Danysk (AB), Katie Goldie (SK), Irene Baird (MB), Kelly Monson (ON), Ann Landry (NB), Barbara Yorke (PEI) and IM Donna Jean Ostrander (nee Macdonald) (ON). Another planning meeting was not arranged for another decade when ScotDance Canada recognized the need for this yearly Board of Directors Planning Meeting. The yearly conference call was not meeting the needs of our organization. A planning meeting was held in Winnipeg Manitoba in 2010, chaired by Bill Troock (AB). Subsequently meetings have been held in Toronto, 2011 chaired by Peter Archibald (BC), 2012 chaired by Bill Troock (AB) and 2020 chaired by Cheryl Rafter (BC). ScotDance Canada’s Board of Directors attend both face-to-face and on-line annual planning meetings.

Changes were made to the ScotDance Canada Board of Directors in 2010. The Board of Directors for ScotDance Canada was reduced from 27 Provincial Board of Directors and up to 9 Independent Members to 9 Provincial Board of Directors and up to 9 Independent Members. The weight of the vote remained the same with each province still holding 3 votes and Independent Members allowed 1 vote each. The amendments received Ministerial approval from Industry Canada as of January 1, 2011.

The Simplified Child Abuse/Molestation Risk Management Program was developed by Insurance Advisor Eric Johnston (AB) and passed into ScotDance Canada’s Operations Manual in 2008. In 2010, Deborah Wardrope (ON) and Barb Yorke (PE) revised the program now called the “Child and Youth Abuse Protection Program. This program more fully meets the current demands of good governance of our charitable organization and currently falls under the direction of Cheryl Rafter (BC), Chairperson for ScotDance Canada’s Risk Management Committee.

As with any organization dealing with a vulnerable sector of society, good governance also dictates the screening of its members as evidence of good character. A new Risk Management Policy was introduced by Deborah Wardrope and passed into our Operations Manual by the membership at the 2010 AGM. Part of this program was the introduction of Enhanced Canadian Police Information Centre Record Check (ECPIC), implemented by Cheryl Rafter (BC) Chair of the Risk Management Committee. Approved by the Board of Directors, the program was extended in 2014 to include all non- ScotDance Canada members (judges/individuals conducting workshops and pipers for dancers at ScotDance Canada sanctioned events).

ScotDance Canada secured the services of a lawyer in 2011 with the mandate to review ScotDance Canada’s By-Laws. In consultation with Cheryl Rafter (BC), amendments were suggested and proposed to the membership at the 2011 AGM in Antigonish Nova Scotia. These amendments received Ministerial approval from Industry Canada as of January 1, 2012.

At the AGM in 2011, ScotDance Canada passed an additional qualifying heat to our Canadian Inter-Provincial Championship. Amongst other things, the “Qualifier” was intended to improve the availability of this championship to more members of our Canadian dancing community. The first qualifying heat was to take place in July of 2012. At the RSOBHD meeting of May 2012, the Board unilaterally voted to cancel the qualifying round based on a document

negotiated in the 1970s prior to ScotDance Canada's formation. ScotDance Canada announced the suspension of the "Qualifier Heat" on May 31, 2012.

During the Mid-Winter Meeting of 2011, Deborah Wardrope (ON) introduced a document outlining ideas around a National Dance Championship. The idea was to pick four National Dances each year and set the steps. The idea was to try and maintain our membership base of dancers as well as give the spot light to the traditional National Dances. A committee was formed under the direction of Kendra Jones (SK). A trial year was proposed for 2012. Based on the success of the trial year, the Board of Directors passed the proposal to have an Annual National Dance Premiership. The dances and the steps for 2013 and 2014 were selected by SDC Advisory Committee under the direction of Anne Sutherland (ON). It was decided in 2013 to disband the Premiership Committee and include it under the National Competition Organizer prevue Chaired by Keltie Stowkowy (AB). As of 2018, the RSOBHD now oversees National Premiership events, adopting ScotDance Canada's rules and setting the steps annually.

President Bill Troock (AB) called a special meeting of the Board of Directors for October 21, 2012. The Board of Directors approved a change to the name of our national championship from the Canadian Inter-Provincial to the Canadian Championship. A suggestion from British Columbia was approved to place a onetime moratorium of three (3) years with regards to any further changes to our national championship. Since this was a change to our objectives, a declaration by the Secretary of ScotDance Canada was sworn to under oath in front of a Commissioner of the court. Industry Canada then gave Ministerial approval to the changes. The moratorium ended December 31, 2015.

In 2013, the Office Bearers and the Board of Directors were focused on jointly hosting the ScotDance Canada Championship Series held in Montreal. Jennifer Stephenson (QC) was Chairperson of this unique project with support from Rebecca McKinnon (AB) Competition Organizer Chairperson, Leah Sutton (SK) Scrutineering Chair, and Kathy Hambly (ON) Souvenir Programme coordinator. The event featured a highly successful nationwide raffle, spearheaded by Christa Mackie (ON). Generous donations of both Highland and National dance outfits were provided by Heather Jolley, owner of Tartantown (BC).

The ScotDance Canada Championship Series has evolved tremendously since 1992 in Winnipeg where a new age group of 9 Years and under in the then "Canadian Inter-Provincial Championship" was introduced (Erin Welk was the first to be awarded Champion in this age category). The Montreal 2013 event saw the Canadian Inter-Provincial Championship move to its new title, "Canadian Championship" which included a new 21 Years and over age group, making for 7 age groups. Marielle Lesperance was the first to be awarded Champion in the 21 Years and over age group.

In 2019 a scholarship for recipients holding Examining Body professional status and post-secondary education aspirations was approved by the Board of Directors in memory of Loree Martin Vellner, past President, Independent Member and Emeritus Member. This scholarship is adjudicated by our two Honorary Members, Shendl Russell and Linda Rankin. The first recipient of this scholarship, awarded in July 2020 was Ashley Abraham from Alberta.

In 2019 at the Moncton SDCCS event, the first meeting of ScotDance Canada's Young Professionals took place, with Nicole Odo as Chairperson leading the group of young professionals in discussions around challenges and opportunities within our younger professional community. This cohesive group has organized subsequent online educational sessions in 2020 focusing on various topics facing younger professionals in the development of their dance studio business as well as marketing and maintaining dance student numbers.

The ScotDance Canada Dress tartan was introduced in 2019, designed by Heather Jolley. The tartan reflects ScotDance Canada's corporate colours of red and black with white as the backdrop. Tartantown was chosen as the exclusive distributor of the tartan, providing yardage sales as well as Highland dancing costuming, judges' apparel, and small merchandise items.

In March 2020, with the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, our National SDCCS event scheduled for Kamloops, BC was cancelled. Cheryl Rafter, ScotDance Canada President, convened an Emergency Task Force Committee consisting of ScotDance Canada's current Office Bearers, Cheryl Rafter, President; Jennifer Worthen, Vice-president; Elizabeth McCorkell, Secretary; Mary Munro, Treasurer; and 4 Independent Members, consisting of one past Secretary and three past Presidents (Deborah Wardrope, Anne Sutherland, Peter Archibald and Bill Troock respectively) to oversee various decisions requiring immediate attention around events and other subject-matter affected by the pandemic within the Canadian highland dancing landscape.

As the pandemic took hold, at the request of the Emergency Task Force, all ScotDance Canada sanctioned events were cancelled indefinitely. The Task Force provided regular advisories around future cancellations of our in-person events for our Highland dancing community as we navigated our way through the on-going pandemic. The Canadian

Highland dancing community responded with creative social media photo and video performance opportunities and challenges to bridge the gap from our competitive events being cancelled to when we might return to the competitive stage.

As a charitable organization, we turned our focus in the summer of 2020 from the competitive dance arena to one of 'giving back'. Bill Troock presented an idea to give back to those in need during the pandemic. A national fund-raiser was organized in August 2020 to raise money for Food Banks Canada and the Kids Help Phone by way of an online dance-a-thon whereby Highland dancers submitted videos and competed in teams to raise funds, with a goal to raise \$30,000, split equally between these two charities. Cheryl Rafter spearheaded the fundraiser using the tagline, "we can achieve this goal together even though we are apart" with support from the Board of Directors, Independent Members, dancers, parents, competition organizers and businesses. As an organization, we are very proud to have surpassed our goal and raised \$50,000, providing \$25,000 to each of the two charities.

In January 2020, ScotDance Canada's logo was refreshed. Jane Rowlands, designer of the 2014 and 2017 SDCCS medals, updated the dancer and maple leaf, creating a more stylized and energetic appearance. Jane also updated the provincial Affiliate logos to align with ScotDance Canada's logo. In addition, Jane created a branding standards document to ensure unified branding within our organization as well as for media, print and other marketing initiatives.

The SDCCS event scheduled for Ottawa in 2021 was subsequently cancelled. October 1, 2021 saw the gradual reopening of competitive events in Canada. The Task Force was suspended October 1, 2021 with the Risk Management Committee taking on the oversight of health and safety protocols and recommendations at our sanctioned events. We are very proud of our dance community for supporting each other in the difficult times we all faced.

On February 2, 2022, ScotDance Canada and its extended Highland dancing community lost a truly great lady, Irene Baird, our first President. Irene devoted her life to Highland dancing, always making time to welcome attendees at Highland dancing competitions and to congratulate all competitors who crossed her path on the day. She touched us with her knowledge, kindness, positivity, warmth, generosity and humour at every turn.

In 2022, the Board of Directors approved a new design for the Canadian Championships and ScotDance Canada Open Championships medals (debuted at the SDCCS 2022 event in Regina). Cheryl Rafter and Jane Rowlands collaborated on the design to incorporate ScotDance Canada's core values (protection, diversity, inclusiveness) through the symbol of the celtic knot tree. The augmentation of the red maple leaves and words symbolize unity, strength and conviction within our organization to uphold these values.

The SDCCS event returned to Regina in 2022 after a two year hiatus due to the pandemic.

In keeping with ScotDance Canada's vision to promote and foster Highland dancing in Canada through competitions, education and professional development, we are continually seeking new initiatives to promote growth amongst our professional members, dancers, and the Highland dancing community at large. We are proactive in our efforts to better the community of Highland dancing in Canada both in a duty of care capacity as well as adopting policies to meet our vision.

Amended May 2022