

# Tartan Press

Newsletter of The Manitoba Highland Dancers Association

April 2008

## Executive

### President

Vacant

### Past President / Chair

Cathy Domke 488-1341 [domke@mts.net](mailto:domke@mts.net)

### Vice-President

Fiona Olsen [folsen@mbhighlanddance.com](mailto:folsen@mbhighlanddance.com)

### Treasurer

Deb Kusano 253-9008 [kusanod@mts.net](mailto:kusanod@mts.net)

### Secretary

Allison Thomson 654-4181 [thomson8@mts.net](mailto:thomson8@mts.net)

### Membership

Jane Ross 222-0961 [dajross12@shaw.ca](mailto:dajross12@shaw.ca)

### Competition Coordinator

Glenda Shiells 255-7346 [shiells104@shaw.ca](mailto:shiells104@shaw.ca)

Cheryl Nixon 255-1467  
[cnixon@mbhighlanddance.com](mailto:cnixon@mbhighlanddance.com)

### Competition Director

Barb Campbell 931-8497 [kcampbell68@shaw.ca](mailto:kcampbell68@shaw.ca)

### Finance Director

Vacant

### Volunteer Coordinator

Teri Holroyd 3335286 [tholroyd@mts.net](mailto:tholroyd@mts.net)

### Tea Coordinator

Caroline Spellman 453-0440 [Spellman.CR@forces.gc.ca](mailto:Spellman.CR@forces.gc.ca)

### Tea Co-Coordinator

Sharon Leonard 694.8132 [jsleonard@shaw.ca](mailto:jsleonard@shaw.ca)

## Message from the Chairperson

As I was staring at my computer wondering what to write in my message, I was thinking I needed a quote for inspiration. I googled 'highland dancing quotes' and the following came up as a link...

*"I have to ask the question - what is the point of Highland Dancing? When you compare it to the Irish hard shoe (Riverdance) style, it's a wet blanket. I'll take stepdance any day. We Scots seem to keep pushing it, but what's the point?"*

Wow, I mused. That is a little dramatic. But wait, that's what someone asked me the other day, "What is the point of highland dancing?" They will never be professional nor make money at it. You're going to spend all that money and end up with what?

So, what is the point?

On the website where the original quote came from, someone responded with the following: *"The point of highland dancing is that the elite dancers of championship standard train very hard to qualify for the worlds in dunoon."* One point of view, but one I can't fully agree with. That means it is only worthwhile for elite dancers. Some dancers may train equally

as hard and never qualify, while others may not have the opportunity.

Another statement I found says *"Children learn to perform their best, while at the same time appreciating the skills and abilities of their fellow dancers."* OK, I think I can live with that one a little better.

I don't think there is one single reason to highland dance, as there is no single reason to do most things in life. Maybe the point of highland dancing is because people like it. I asked one of my daughters what the point of highland dancing was and they said. "I dunno... I just like it".

So, while it may not lead to a career (most activities don't), it can help develop poise, discipline and self confidence. To me, that is the point of highland dancing.

## Annual General Meeting

Manitoba Highland Dancers Association  
Sunday, April 27, 2008, 7 p.m.  
Crescentwood Community Centre  
1170 Corydon Ave.  
Winnipeg

Please make every effort to attend the Annual General Meeting. We need your support to keep this organization running. There are many opportunities to volunteer and executive positions need to be filled.



See you there!



## 2007 Provincial Representatives

Just a reminder to hand in your provincial sashes. It is important I receive them before the championship to make sure they are in clean condition and we aren't short for this year. We don't want to leave someone out! Please have them to me by the AGM.

Thank you,  
Cathy Domke

## Have Swords, Will Travel...

Written by Sarah Richer

An invitation, a love of highland dance and a great sense of adventure are what led 11 dancers from the Ena Sutton Highland Dancers of Winnipeg to take their show on the road all the way to Trujillo, Peru last August.

Under the direction of Kathy Hopper, Alicia Brown, Vicki Cutts, Kerstin Holmberg, Jillian Impey, Tracy Kirby, Lendre Lux, Colleen McBean, Gwendolyn Richer, Diana Simpson, Tamara Siemens and Sandi van Helvert, all of who are current or past members of MHDA, danced their way into the hearts of the Peruvian people at the XIV Festival Internacional de Danzas Folcloricas.

We had some adventures upon arriving in Peru as the custom officers tried to understand why we were bringing swords into their country. We also encountered an interminably long (I think it was about ten hours – it felt like a month!) trip on a bus that defied description as we made our way from Lima to Huanchaco where we would stay for the duration of the

festival. Arriving tired, hungry and in desperate need of a good stretch of our legs we found out that our hotel was not expecting us and their doors were locked. After much difficulty in communication we were given entrance and began to settle in. All was set right though when we met our guide Hipo. Hipo became not only our guide, but our “body guard” for our younger dancers, our translator, our tour arranger, our mother hen and above all, our dear friend.

In a display somewhat akin to Beatle mania, the dancers were begged for autographs and photos by their Peruvian fans. Each time they took to the stage the crowd would begin to cheer and chant “Escocia”. The noise level was such that at times the dancers were not even able to hear the music which was supplied by their piper, Dave Campbell, drummer Richard Tingskou, keyboardist Alyson Impey, fiddler Murray Jowett and guitar and bodhrán player Trent Simpson. It’s almost impossible to believe that the bagpipes were drowned out by the noise of the crowds! I challenge you, dear reader to think of a time when you could not hear the pipes when they were being played! For Deb Holmberg and myself who were in attendance it was both a surreal and amazing experience watching the spectacle of what could only be deemed “Esocia-Mania”



From left to right: Kerstin Holmberg, Diana Simpson, Colleen McBean, Tracy Kirby, Gwendolyn Richer, Alicia Brown, Jillian Impey, Vicki Cutts, Lendre Lux, Tamara Siemens, Sandi van Helvert.

# Tartan Press

Newsletter of The Manitoba Highland Dancers Association

April 2008

Sharing a dressing room with Honduras, Venezuela, and the Magdaragat Dancers (a Philippine group also from Winnipeg) quickly became a party atmosphere when our fiddle player, Murray joined in a "jam session" with the Honduran musicians and they began to play the "Chicken Dance". The entire room formed a circle and everyone participated! All shyness and language barriers were eliminated at that moment and a real sense of friendship and camaraderie that lasted throughout the festival was formed as we clapped our hands and "shook our tail feathers" together!

During our ten-day stay in Peru we were also lucky enough to take in some sightseeing as well! Some of the tourist type highlights of the trip were visiting the archaeological sites of Chan Chan and Huaca De La Luna near Trujillo, and then the thrill of visiting the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Machu Picchu. We had some time as well to explore the market

square of Cuzco, which was quite the juxtaposition between the old and new. Cobbled streets and people dressed in traditional garb mixed with the latest in modern technology!

It was moments like the chicken dance and Dave playing his bagpipes on the bus we shared with the Hondurans back to the town we were staying in, it was the fun we had at the fiestas, and the bonding over a joined misery over squat toilets and the lack of toilet paper, the laughter, the friendships made and the thrill of dancing for a crowd that was seeing highland dancing for the first time that made our trek to Peru a trip of a lifetime.

Months have gone by, but the memories that we have of Peru, the wonderful people we met, and the sights we saw will remain with us as vivid as if they were just yesterday. Who would have ever guessed that our love of highland dancing would give us the opportunity to share it with a culture so far from home!

## Dancer Diversions...

Highland dancers are successful, involved, energetic people. Let us know what you are up to outside of Highland dance. Send email to [lwreggitt@mts.net](mailto:lwreggitt@mts.net).

## Tartan Press Submissions

Items to be published in the Tartan Press will be accepted up to two weeks prior to every M.H.D.A. competition.

Items may be sent by email to:  
Laureen Wreggitt  
[lwreggitt@mts.net](mailto:lwreggitt@mts.net)

## MHDA Website

The Tartan Press is available online at the Manitoba Highland Dancer's Association Website: [www.mbhighlanddancer.com](http://www.mbhighlanddancer.com)

Please send any photos for the website to:  
Keith Rempel  
[myrddin@mts.net](mailto:myrddin@mts.net)

## For Sale

Blue Velvet Highland Jacket with gold braid \$75  
Hornpipe outfit with hat \$40  
Cherry red National vest \$20  
Nova Scotia socks (from Ireland) \$65

All items fit slender 8 – 12 year old

Contact Laureen Wreggitt at 231-0759 or [lwreggitt@mts.net](mailto:lwreggitt@mts.net)

Dress Wine Cunningham Kilt, Vest and Socks. Would fit a slim 8-11 year old. Good condition. \$200 for outfit.

Green jig outfit. Skirt and Bib. Would fit a 7-10 year old dancer. \$15.

National Outfit – good for beginner. Great shape, dark green wool skirt and plaid, dark green vest. \$50. Would fit 7-9 year old.

Phone Cathy at 488-1341.

Green Jig shoe size 3 asking \$35.00- new \$78.00.

Green Jig shoe size 4 asking \$35.00.

Dancewear Deluxe Ghillies - Size 1. New \$110.00 asking \$45.00.

Red National Vest size 8-10. New \$125.00 asking \$45.00.

Red vest Size 8-10 new \$170.00 asking \$65.00.

Contact: Rosetta Matthews at 339-8454.

