

# Tartan Press

Newsletter of The Manitoba Highland Dancers Association

October 2010

## Executive

### President

George Hamilton 479-6142  
[ghamilton@mbhighlanddance.com](mailto:ghamilton@mbhighlanddance.com)

### Past President / Chair

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

### Vice-President

Craig Oliphant 663-1118 [coliphant@retsd.mb.ca](mailto:coliphant@retsd.mb.ca)

### Treasurer

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

### Secretary

Jennifer UnRuh

### Membership

Diana Simpson [dsimpson@mbhighlanddance.com](mailto:dsimpson@mbhighlanddance.com)

### Competition Coordinator

Zan Sinclair [zsinclair@mbhighlanddance.com](mailto:zsinclair@mbhighlanddance.com)

### Competition Director

Suzanne Sinclair

### Finance Director

Annika Pineau

### ScotDance Representatives

Kathy Hopper [khopper@mbhighlanddance.com](mailto:khopper@mbhighlanddance.com)

Kathy Ramesar [kramesar@mbhighlanddance.com](mailto:kramesar@mbhighlanddance.com)

grow and change in a positive way. Although we have many who have, I am still looking for many more. If you look on the front page of the competition program you will see we still have many positions left vacant. We also have many volunteers who have held positions for years and are ready to retire from those jobs. If you have a desire to help us continue to have competitions and promote highland dance then please let me or any member of the executive know and we will put you to work right away.

This fall consider introducing a friend to highland dance. There are probably kids out there who haven't yet found an activity to sign up for this fall. Hook them up with your dance teacher. You know highland is one of the best things to be involved with. Why not help others experience it as well?

George Hamilton, president of MHDA

## Selkirk Settlers Parade



The annual Selkirk Settlers Parade was held on Saturday, Sept. 11/10.

Scottish groups and pipe bands marched to celebrate the settlers who came over from Scotland 198 years ago. MHDA was represented by 3 dancers along with our President, George and mom Judith, who wore 2 hats that day. Here is Kelsey, Alia and Lauren by the Thistle Monument.



## Message from the President

Well it's October and it's time to get the show on the road again. The summer comes and goes so fast.

Many of our members attended the ScotDance Canada Championship Series in Saskatoon in July. I was there and had a great time. Saskatchewan set a new standard for how to host the Championship Series. We'll have to make sure to keep the prairie reputation strong in 2016. For those who were not able to attend the Series I encourage you to speak to your friends who did and find out what it is all about.

August brought Folklorama. This year we again had a great turnout of young and older MHDA dancers to entertain the patrons. Folklorama is about entertaining spectators and showing them what Scottish culture is all about. I had opportunity this fall to meet with the Scottish Pavillion executive. They are looking for ways to refresh their show. Having the MHDA in a more prime time spot was also discussed and well received.

September brought about our annual membership drive and membership meeting. We had our usual turnout for this event. Our guest speaker Evelyn Ashton spoke on conditioning and injury prevention for highland dancers. Those in attendance found it to be very interesting and useful information.

In the last Tartan Press I spoke about the need for members to step up and do more if our organization is to continue to

# Medal Tests and Theory Exams

## A Primer for Parents and Dancers

**Offered at least once per year, Medal Tests and Theory Exams are a non-competitive evaluation of an individual student's achievements and standards in highland dance.**

Medal Tests and Theory Exams are not compulsory, but highly recommended. A dancer's teacher\* may suggest a dancer take Medal Tests and Theory Exams as another avenue of dance to explore. There are several reasons why a dancer might be interested in doing this. One is to learn more challenging steps as the levels get higher. Medal Tests also allow dancers to participate in a non-competitive atmosphere. Finally, if a dancer wants to become a professional in the world of highland dance, this is the only route to achieve that status.

Medal Tests are different from medals awarded at dance competitions. **Receiving an award from a Medal Test means that the dancer has mastered the specific levels and steps of dances in the SDTA syllabus**, while receiving a medal in a competition (another worthy achievement) means that the dancer danced more successfully than another competitor according to the adjudicator on that day.

The first level of Medal Tests is called Tiny Tot Exams and then, over the years dancers evolve through various different levels: for example, Pre-bronze, Bronze, Silver, Gold all the way through to Scottish Award 5 in Highland and National, and Scottish Award 2 in Jig and Hornpipe dances. There are also Theory Exams beginning with Primary through amateur grades to Grade 5. A series of Choreography exams are also offered. Professional exams are available beginning with the Associate Level through to Fellowship. Each level is designed to introduce and challenge the dancer to improve their standard and quality of dance. Dancers who are successful in passing their level receive certificates and medals/plaques for their hard work and effort from Scotland. Dancers who participate by taking all exams (Highland, National, Jig, Hornpipe and Theory) benefit by improving their dance skills in all areas to become a well-rounded dancer.

A highly qualified examiner from the SDTA who has been invited by the SDTA's Executive Council to become an examiner is the assessor of the dancers' Medal Tests. A SDTA examiner is usually a teacher, adjudicator and highly respected professional in the Highland Dance community.

**Medal Tests are offered following the Winnipeg Scottish Festival Competition and Championship in mid-February, but they may also be offered in November 2010.** The SDTA does not have a minimum age in which a dancer may begin medal tests; however, the dancer's teacher will determine whether the dancer is ready and may invite your dancer into this opportunity. If you have any questions about Medal Tests or are interested in your dancer pursuing this avenue of dance accreditation, ask your dancer's teacher for more information. Extra classes are sometimes involved in order to prepare, especially with regard to Theory Exams.

Dancers who love highland dance may be interested in becoming a teacher themselves one day. Medal Tests and Theory Exams are critical in order for a dancer to pursue this dream. It is not compulsory, but some teachers recommend that teacher candidates complete all the amateur tests before taking the first level of professional exam called Associate Level. Once a candidate has successfully passed the Associate Level, it is suggested that an Associate Professional Teacher teaches for a minimum of two years under the "wing" of their teacher to learn good teaching techniques. Following this, the Associate Professional Teacher can take their Members Professional Exam. Years later, after collecting valuable teaching experience, the Fellowship Exam can be taken. It is suggested that before a professional embark on the Fellowship Exam, that the Associate and Members Levels of National Exams also be taken.

**This writer encourages all her students to participate in Medal Tests and Theory Exams, as well as encouraging them to later become professionals. There is no greater honor than your student becoming a contemporary!**

\*The teacher must be a current professional member of the Scottish Dance Teacher's Alliance (SDTA) in order to offer medal tests to their dancers.

Gaelyn McGregor, Principal, McGregor Studio of Dance



The Irene Baird dancers had a great time and won a 4th place at Canadians in Saskatoon this past July, dancing "Ceilidh Music" in the Large Group Choreography. Winning a medal on the first day was a terrific start to a great week

## Important Dates

November 20, 2010	Competition, St. James Civic Centre
December 4, 2010	Tartan Tea at the Civic Centre
January 29, 2011	Competition, St. Andrew's River Heights United Church
May 1, 2011	Provincials at MTyp
June 11 and 12, 2011	Mid-Canada Competition, the Forks

## Pain is Temporary, Pride is Forever

Ever wonder what a highland dancer does to keep in shape, besides hours and hours of dance practice that is? Well, one of my dancers, Shannon DelBigio had done her share of running and working out, but when a torn cartilage sidelined her dancing for most of last year, she found a way to keep herself in shape. She started running more, with visions perhaps even then of running her first marathon.

Now Shannon comes from a family where fitness and running is as natural as eating, and in her family that eating means lots (and I mean lots) of vegetables! So nutrition wasn't a problem, but her knee was.

Luckily Shannon found that the direct alignment of the knee in running wasn't as much a problem as landing from split highcuts or leaps, so off she ran.



And despite the fact she'd missed most of the year's dancing season, she was in shape thanks to the extra running and able to jump back into dancing close to the end of the season and join our school in Saskatoon for the ScotDance Canada Championship

Series. She ended up with a handful of medals in her individual events and helped our school win 2nd place in the 16 & over small group choreography competition. A big accomplishment for a little group from Manitoba!

But Shannon didn't stop there. Her training continued until she was ready for her first marathon - the Queen City Marathon in Regina, the last weekend in September. Once again, she had a little frustration with a minor injury just before her big run, but she is a determined young lady. Off she went, not knowing if her body would hold up. But as the Queen City marathon t-shirts suggested...PAIN is TEMPORARY, PRIDE is FOREVER.

Here she is, crossing the finish line (looking pretty pleased and fresh) with an amazing time of 3 hours and 47 minutes. Less than 4 hours is often a goal for many marathon runners, but pretty amazing for a first marathon, not to mention one that was not without injury. I think this accomplishment says a lot about Shannon.

And I'd like to think it says a lot of highland dancers in general! You all know what your bodies can do, when to listen to the pain and take special care with injuries, but you also know those times when you push yourself through tough practices, enduring the pain of that extra effort. Hopefully you've also enjoyed the special pride that comes from reaching your goals, especially after you've pushed yourself above and beyond.

So as you head into a new season of dance, remember - - Pain is temporary but pride is forever!

May you all enjoy an injury free year filled with pride!

Donna Cram, Shannon's highland dance teacher



Lauren McCombe of the Irene Baird School of Highland Dance, represented Manitoba 16 year olds this July at "Canadians" in Saskatoon. She had a terrific time and was pleased to win her class in the Nationals competition.

The last time she won this trophy was in Saint John, New Brunswick in 2007.

## 2010 Tartan Tea

Saturday December 4th,  
1:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the St. James Civic Centre

The Tartan Tea is a lovely afternoon in which various schools combine together to provide the dancing entertainment and share delicious holiday desserts with family, friends and relatives. Every M.H.D.A. family participates by selling tickets, volunteering time, donating baked goods and making jars for the Jar Bar.

Tartan Tea tickets will be distributed in the fall through the dance schools and each family receives a minimum of 5 tickets to sell as part of their annual membership fundraising responsibility. Ticket sales are extremely important since it is a factor in the determination of government funding and MHDA's major fundraising event. The money raised from the Tartan Tea helps pay for the expenses associated with hosting our highland dance competitions.

Please mark your calendars and sell as many tickets as you can!

Additional tickets are available through dance schools.

# Out of Town Results

## Donna Cram School

ScotDance Canada Championship Series 2010 -  
Saskatoon, Canada - July 7 to 11, 2010

### City of Bridges Choreography

Small Group, 16 years & over

Donna Cram School - 2nd place

### Special "Reel" Event of 2010 Premier 15 years

Erika Ramesar - Qualifier

Top 6 for Reel Finals

### Canadian Interprovincial Championship 14 & 15 Years

Erika Ramesar

4th, 6th judges placing - Sword

### ScotDance Canada Open championship 15 Years

Erika Ramesar

3rd Fling

4th Sword

3rd Reel

Overall - 3rd Runner up to 15 year champion

### ScotDance Canada Open championship

19 years and under 21 years

Stacie Nixon

4th Fling

5th Sword

Overall: 4th runner up to the 19 & under 21 year champion

### Premier Highland 19 & 20 Years

Stacie Nixon

2nd Sword

### Restricted Premier Highland 18 - 20 Years

Emma Domke

6th Sword

3rd ST

Shannon DelBigio

7th Fling

### Restricted Premier Highland 21 & over

Jessie Edmonds

2nd Fling

2nd Sword

1st ST

### Premier Nationals 15 Years

Erika Ramesar

3rd Lilt

7th Blue Bonnets

### Restricted Premier National 18 to 20 years

Shannon DelBigio

3rd Lilt

2nd Blue Bonnets

5th Village Maid

### Restricted Premier National 21 & over

Jessie Edmonds

3rd Lilt

3rd Blue Bonnets

## Linda Aronson School of Highland Dance

### ScotDance Canada Championship Series 2010

#### Thursday Results, July 8<sup>th</sup> Highland, Premier Class

Jennifer Watt - Restricted 13 year old Class

Trophy Winner

1st Fling

3rd Sword

2nd Seann Triubhas

Amanda Bunting- Premier 10+ 11year old Class

Fling 4<sup>th</sup>

Terryn Shiells - 18-20 year old Class

5th overall placing

4th Fling

5th Sword

6th Seann Triubhas

Jessica Oliphant- 17 year old Class

7th Seann Triubhas

#### Saturday, July 10<sup>th</sup>, Nationals, Premier Class

Jennifer Watt - Restricted 13 year old class

1st Lilt

3rd Village Maid

Terryn Shiells - 18-20 year old Premier Class

6th Lilt

6th Blue Bonnets

Jessica Oliphant- 17 year old Class

5th Lilt

#### Pre-Championship, Sunday, July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2010

Jennifer Watt - 13 year old Premier Class

3rd Fling

7th Sword

7th Reel

Terryn Shiells - 18-20 year old Premier Class

8th Fling

1st Sword

## For Sale

Kilt/Vest/Socks (2 pair)

from MacIsaac Kiltmakers

Dress Purple McKenzie ~ Will fit age 4 - 10 yrs

\$550

Black Vest ~ Will fit 8 - 11 yrs

\$40

Child's Blouse ~ Size small

\$20

Red Jig Dress with Apron from Marg's Highland Dance Wear

Size 10

\$50

Red Jig Shoes ~ Size 2

\$25

Contact Betty: 612-7167 [kbharder@mts.net](mailto:kbharder@mts.net)