

ALUMNI CONNECTIONS

Connecting dancers past, present, and future

News and Features

Dancing Over 30

Scottish Highland Dance has continued to stay popular with individuals over 30 for the music, exercise, creativity, and the friendships.

Robbie Burns

Every January 25th, Scots from around the world celebrate the birthday of the poet Robert Burns. Dancers all over the United States perform to help celebrate at these events.

Want to Volunteer?

Highland dancing needs you! Come and volunteer at your local competitions.

Seeds of Scottish Dance

An update on the exciting initiative dedicated to preserving the legacy of our influential dance instructors from across the United States

Welcome

Welcome back to the latest edition of our alumni newsletter. Here you will find exciting updates and events, but also stories, memories, and achievements of alumni like you.

We would love to hear from you if you have stories, photos, or ideas to share. Let's keep the spirit of Scottish dance alive together.

Contact Info

email: alumni@scotdanceusa.com
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Robert Burns

Scottish poet Robert Burns was born in Alloway, Scotland on January 25, 1759. Every year around the world, people celebrate the poet at Robert Burns Dinners usually held in January. The dinners consist of haggis, cock-a-leekie-soup, scotch whiskey, cranachan, a raspberry dessert, and shortbread. Someone usually recites the Address to the Haggis, a poem written by Burns, along with many toasts including toast to the lads and the lassies. The evening is usually highlighted by Highland Dancing, a Gay Gordon, or a Dashing White Sergeant as well as music of the bagpipes. The evening often concludes with a rendition of Auld Lang Syne.



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The 30 and Overs



How does one stay motivated as an adult dancer?

Staying motivated as an adult dancer can be challenging, but it's absolutely possible with the right mindset. We put this question out to dancers in the Highland Dancers Over 30 (or Thereabouts) Facebook Group. Some expressed it wasn't always easy, especially as age related injuries prevailed, but they did find that the joy of just moving was its own reward.

Dancers in this group found that being part of a group helped to boost their motivation. Dance classes with others are not only fun, but inspiring. It becomes a form of social engagement, especially with other adults. Attending workshops, dancing in competitions, making friends who have like minded attitudes, or following dancers on social media can inspire and motivate you to keep pushing forward.

Learning new steps or dances helps with motivation. Participating in dance exams is motivating to some by being able to demonstrate what they have learned. Being part of a group choreography can be exciting because you are dancing with others while all working toward the same goal.

Having a passion for the music and dance seems to be the biggest motivator. Older adults are dancing for the culture, the cardio, and the socialization. Their biggest benefit is the "joy of moving". It's keeping you fit, you feel the need to improve, and most of all wanting to be the best one can be. There's an heir of excitement in their dance. The support they receive from their peers is extremely motivating. These dancers love the feeling in their body when they dance. Reflecting on how far they've come gives them a new appreciation along their journey in keeping them motivated and knowing they are constantly growing.

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Stay Connected: Volunteer at a Local Competition

Most competition organizers are looking for volunteers to help with their competition(s). Former dancers make excellent volunteers because they understand what happens during a competition. Check out the list of various competitions and contact the organizer to volunteer.

Line-up/Marshaling: Many dancers probably are most familiar with the marshals. The marshals verify that all dancers are in the line-up area before the group is put up on the stage to compete. The marshal then lines up the dancers for going on the stage. The marshal may be asked to lay down the swords for the Sword Dance.

Registration Desk: Check in all dancers for the competition. Verify that each dancer has a current dancer registration card. Possibly hand out dancer numbers.

Tally/Scrutineer: The scrutineering team takes the judge's score sheets and enters them on the tally form or in the Highland Scrutineering computer program. The scrutineer tallies each dance and then the dance tallies to determine the winner(s). The scrutineer prepares the forms to be given to the announcer to announce the awards.

Announcer: This position requires a person with a strong and clear voice. The announcer may be provided a script by the competition organizer. The announcer calls the dancers to the line-up for each dance. The announcer may be asked to make other announcements such as the sale of raffle tickets, time schedule and safety reminders.

Runner: The runner sits near the judge's desk. Once the judge(s) finishes scoring their form, the runner picks up the form and takes it to the scrutineer. The runner may ask the judge(s) if they need anything like water.

Awards: The awards person will prepare the medals and trophies to be presented to the winners. The awards person may also be asked to present the awards to the dancers or to stamp dancer cards.

Not sure you are ready to volunteer? Ask about training opportunities. A competition Organizer will be happy to pair up a new volunteer with someone who can train you.

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Upcoming Competitions Across the Country

East Region

- April 6th- NYC Highland Dance Competition
- April 12th- NH Indoor
- April 26th- East Regional Closed Championship & Southern Maryland
- April 26th- Celtic Festival Pre-Premier Competition
- May 17th- FairHill Scottish Highland Games

Midwest Region

- April 5th- Spartan Tartan Highland Dance Competition
- April 12th- Capital City Spring Dance Competition
- April 26th- Cincinnati Indoor
- May 17th- Michigan Celtic Classic Spring & Queen Lakes Open Championship
- May 24th and 25th- Alma Highland Festival

Northwest Region

- May 17th- Northwest Regional Championship

Southeast Region

- April 5th- Florida Open Championship and Competition
- April 12th and 13th- Loch Norman Highland Games and Carolinas Open Championships
- May 3rd- Savannah Pre-Premier competition
- May 17th- Smoky Mountain Highland Games Dance Competition
- May 17th- VA Indoor at Montpelier Celtic Festival
- May 17th- St. Louis Scottish Games

Southwest Region

- April 5th- San Antonio Highland Dance Competition
- April 26th- Southwest Regional and Pre Premier Competition
- May 3rd- Rio Grande Valley Celtic

West Region

- April 5th and 6th- 41st Annual Hawai'ian Highland Festival
- April 27th- Sacramento Valley Championship and Competition
- May 24th and 25th- Scottish Fest

Check ScotDanceUSA for additional details.

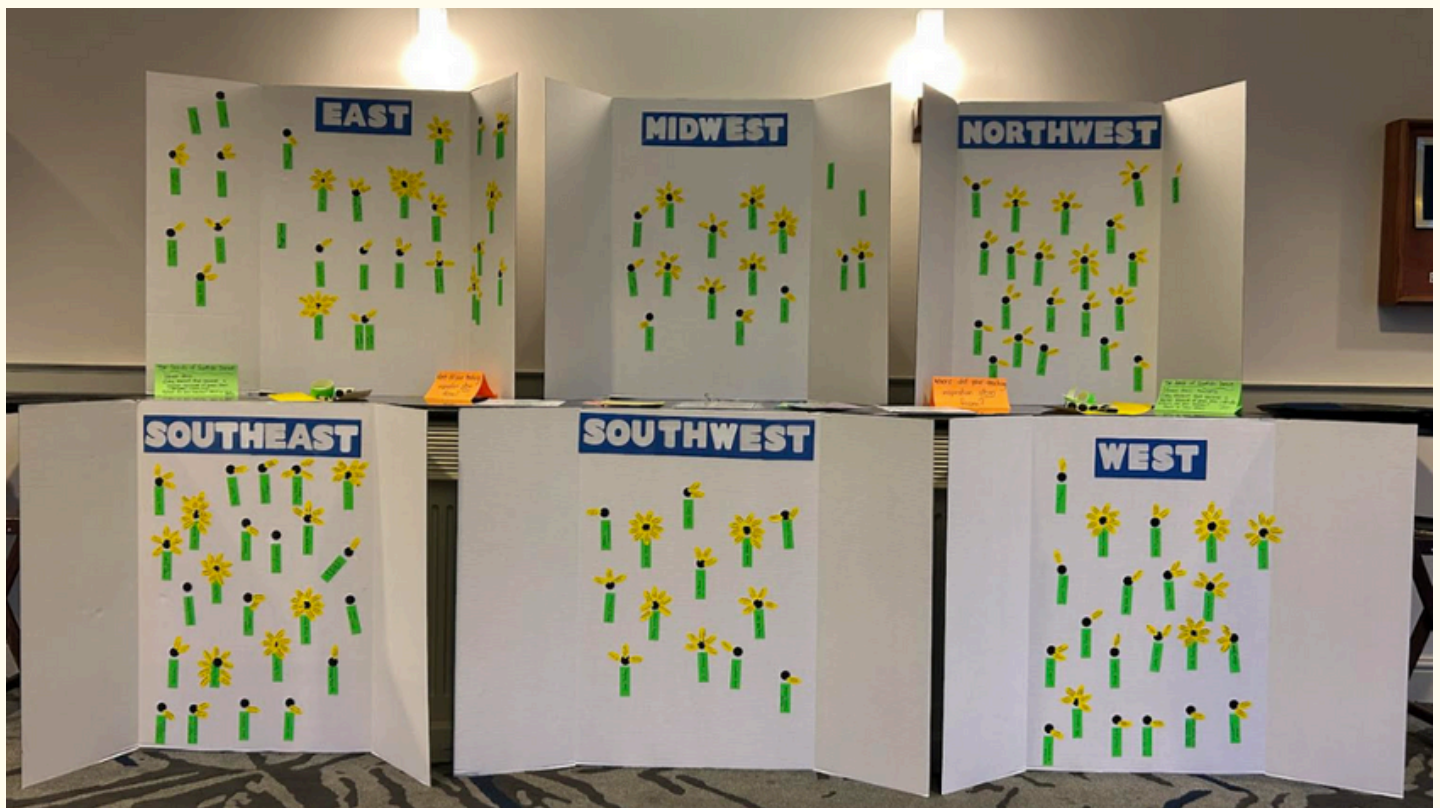
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Seeds of US Scottish Dance

The Seeds of US Scottish Dance project which kicked off last summer at the 2024 USIR in Boston continues to bloom. Six boards representing each region were displayed at the USIR for teachers to write down their teachers' names or students who became teachers.

Then the Alumni Connections featured each region on their Facebook page as the information grew. The project continued at the MRM workshop held annually in King Of Prussia, PA. Additional names were added to the trees. Let's keep this project growing.



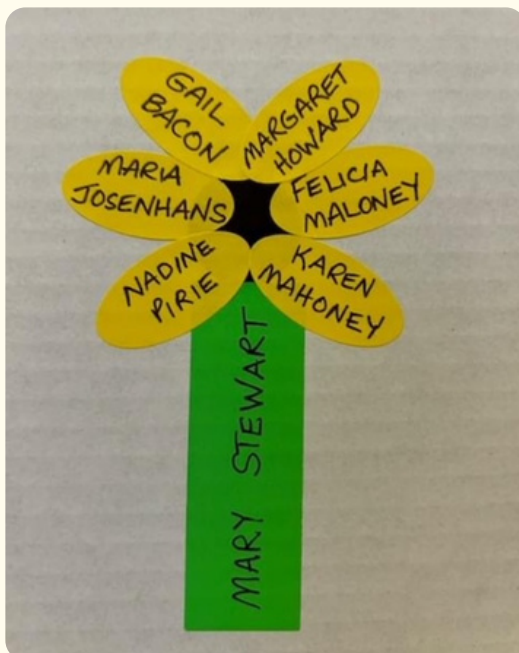
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The Seeds of US Scottish Dance Project is a project dedicated to preserving the legacy of influential Scottish dance instructors who played a pivotal role in promoting and teaching traditional dance worldwide. By tracking and documenting the lives, contributions, and stories of these teachers—many of whom immigrated and brought Scottish culture to new regions—this project aims to honor their impact on the global Scottish dance community. With your help, the project ensures that the dedication and artistry of these teachers are remembered and celebrated for future generations.



How can you help the project grow?

Send us any information you have about teachers past and present.

- Who inspired *you* to teach?
- Who did *you* inspire to teach?
- Do you know who taught your dance teacher?
- Any other information you can send!

[Click here to send us information](#)

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Get Featured in our Newsletter

We Want To Spotlight YOU!

The United States has so many amazing Scottish Highland Dance Schools across the country. We'd love to hear from you! Please send information about your dance school so we can feature you in our next newsletter. Share your school's story, achievements, and anything that makes your community special—let's celebrate the rich diversity of Scottish Highland Dance across the country together!

[Click here to add your awesome school!](#)



Send us pictures!

Everyone has a collection of memorable photos from competitions, Burns dinners, festivals, dance classes, and more. Send us your photos—old and new—so we can create a historical archive that showcases our incredible Highland dance legacy!

Email: alumni@scotdanceusa.com
or send on Instagram or Facebook