

# Reel Time

Newsletter of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society, New Haven Branch

Summer 2005

## Class Schedules

*Greater Hartford Scottish Country Dance Class*  
Grace Episcopal Church on the Green, Windsor CT.  
Tuesday 7:00 to 9:30 pm. Contact Barbara Austen 203-630-9749 or Karen Pestana 860-298-8311.

*Middletown Scottish Country Dancers* First Church of Christ Congregational, 190 Court Street, Middletown CT.  
Wednesday 7:00 to 9:30 pm. Contact Joyce Chase 203-238-0694 or Lucile Blanchard 860-347-0278. **Classes begin Sept. 7.**

*Kilts & Ghillies Scottish Country Dancers* Millennium School of Irish Dance, 12 Old Mill Road, Georgetown, CT. Tuesday 7:30 to 10:00 pm. Contact Angela Montague 203-762-9892 or Peter Price 203-675-9587. **Classes begin Sept. 20.**

*Mystic Scottish Country Dancers* St. Andrew Presbyterian Church, 310 Fort Hill Road, Groton, CT. Friday 7:30 to 9:30 pm. Contact Ruth Walsh 860-536-6265 or [www.mysticsscottishdancers.com](http://www.mysticsscottishdancers.com) **Classes begin Sept. 9.**

*New Haven Branch Scottish Country Dance Class*  
New Haven Medical Society, 364 Whitney Ave., New Haven, CT. Tuesday 7:30 to 10:00 pm. Contact Dick Platt 203-878-6094 or Leslie Kearney, 203-281-6591. **Classes begin Sept. 6.**

*Newtown Scottish Country Dancers* St. James Episcopal Church, 25 West St., Danbury, CT. Monday 7:30 to 9:30 pm. Contact Ernie Harrington 203-938-2881 or Ed Davis, 203-264-0870. **Classes begin Sept. 19.**

*Woodbridge Scottish Country Dancers* First Church of Christ Congregational Parish House, 5 Meetinghouse Lane, Woodbridge, CT. Friday 7:00 to 9:00 pm. Contact Donna Ives 203-393-3713 or Mollie Keller, 203-375-2840. **Classes begin Sept. 23.**

And be sure to check out *Peter Price's class*, held on the second Thursday of the month, 8:00 pm, the New Haven Friends Meeting House, 225 East Grand Avenue, New Haven. The fall classes will be held on Sept. 8, Oct. 13, and Nov. 10 with no class in December. (Call 203-675-9587 for more information.)

*Special note:* The first hour of four September classes in Mystic will be for beginners and those who want to have their basic steps reinforced. And they are free for all.

In addition, you might be interested in a new *Scottish Country Dance course* at Westchester Community College in Valhalla, NY, starting on Friday, Sept. 23 for 10 weeks. For more information, write <mailto:suefer3@yahoo.com>.

## Upcoming Events

**Hillsboro Highlands** Hillsboro Camp, Hillsboro, NH. Friday-Sunday, August 26-28, 2005. Norah Link, Dale Birdsall, MaryEllen Scannell, teachers. Music by Christine Anderson, Anne Hooper, Terry Traub. \$114. Contact Susan Haines 603-435-8643 or [sdhaines@earthlink.net](mailto:sdhaines@earthlink.net).

**Challenge Class** Thursday, September 22, 7:15-9:30 pm, \$8.00, First Church, 190 Court Street, Middletown, Ken Way, teacher. Call Lucile Blanchard 860-347-0278 or Joyce Chase 203-238-0694 for more information.

**New Hampshire Highland Games** Sept. 23-25, 2005. See <http://www.nhscot.org> for more information.

**Scottish Weekend at Camp Ramblewood**  
Camp Ramblewood, Darlington, MD. Friday-Sunday, Sept. 23-25, 2005. Mel Briscoe, Fiona Grant, Helen Russell, teachers. Music by *Scottish Weekend Band*. See <http://www.ScottishWeekend.org> for more information.

**St. Andrews Scottish Festival at Goshen** Saturday, Oct. 1, 2005. Goshen Fairgrounds, Rt. 63, Goshen, CT. Piping, clan tents, shepherding, Highland dance competitions, vendors. For more information, <mailto:info@sasct.org>.

**18th Annual Scotland's Highland Festival** Scotland, CT Oct. 9, 2005. See [www.scotlandgames.org](http://www.scotlandgames.org) for more.

**Mystic Scottish Country Dancers Fall Ceilidh**  
Friday, Oct. 21, 2005. 7:00-11:00 pm. Groton Motor Inn, & Suites, Groton, CT. Contact Ruth Walsh at <mailto:RHWDVB@aol.com> for more information.

**Mel Briscoe Workshop** Saturday, Oct. 22, 2005, 3:00-5:00 pm. \$8; free for current RSCDS New Haven Branch members. First Church, 190 Court Street, Middletown. Music by Suzie Petrov. Call Lucile Blanchard 860-347-0278 or Joyce Chase 203-238-0694 for more information.

**Middletown Fall Party** Saturday, Oct. 22, 2005, 7:30-10:00 pm. \$10.00. First Church, 190 Court Street, Middletown. Music by Suzie Petrov. Call Lucile Blanchard 860-347-0278 or Joyce Chase 203-238-0694 for more information.

**NOMAD** Friday-Sunday, Nov. 4-6, 2005. Wilbur Cross High School, 181 Mitchell Drive, New Haven, CT. Participatory dance sessions, folk music, singalongs, dance performances, storytelling, handcrafts, folk bazaar. See their website <http://www.nomadfest.org>.

**Jeannie Carmichael Ball** Saturday-Sunday, Nov. 5-6, 2005. Thayer Hotel, U. S. Military Academy, West Point, NY. Ball, \$70; Brunch, \$25. Sponsored by the RSCDS New York Branch. Music by Muriel Johnstone and Jim Lindsay. Contact Mary Zagami, 718-823-0119 or <mailto:info@rscdsnewyork.org>.

**Challenge Class** Thursday, November 10, 7:15-9:30 pm, \$8.00, First Church, 190 Court Street, Middletown, Kent Smith, teacher. Call Lucile Blanchard 860-347-0278 or Joyce Chase 203-238-0694 for more information.

**Middletown Holiday Party** Wednesday, Dec. 28, 2005, First Church, 190 Court Street, Middletown, CT. Call Lucile Blanchard 860-347-0278 or Joyce Chase 203-238-0694 for more information.

**Robert Burns Dinner and Dance** Saturday, Feb. 11, 2006. 5:30 pm to midnight, Groton Inn and Suites. Music by Finton Stanley International Ceilidh Band. Check [www.mysticsscottishdancers.com](http://www.mysticsscottishdancers.com) for more information.

**New Haven Branch Highland Ball** Saturday, March 4, 2006, West Hartford Community Center; **Sunday Brunch**, Sunday, March 5, New Haven Medical Association Building. Music by Tom Pixton, Hanneke Cassel, David Knight, Mike MacNintch.

For information on similar events, check <http://www.intercityscot.org>.

### On a Personal Note

Jane Leibert was sighted at the Drumkilbo Reunion Party walking without a cast. Her knee is healing nicely and we hope to see her dancing again soon.

Donna and Richard Ives are celebrating the birth of twin grandsons to their son Andrew and his wife Tracy. Although the babies were 7 weeks premature, weighing a little over 4 pounds, they are making strides every day.

Anand Hingorani is enjoying a holiday in Melbourne, Australia. He has found enough dance clubs to be dancing just about every night.

Your editor's daughter, Alice Blanchard, will have her third thriller published at the end of August. The title is *Life Sentences*.

### It's that time .....

You will find a membership application for the 2005-2006 RSCDS dance season at the back of Reel Time. Please fill out the application form and mail it with your check to the Membership Chairman, Ed Davis. The address is on the application. All applications should be

returned by November 1. And all members who have signed up for 2005-2006 by October 22nd can take the Mel Briscoe Workshop for free (see Upcoming Events).

### Challenge Dance Classes

For the coming year, Ken Way has arranged another series of classes for experienced Scottish country dancers. For the fall:

Sept. 22 - Ken Way

Nov. 10 - Kent Smith

There will be two or three more classes next spring. All classes will be held at First Church in Middletown, 190 Court Street. See listings under Upcoming Events.

For these classes you should be able to do a straightforward dance from a talk-through, demonstrate teamwork in your dancing, and have good phrasing and covering. You are expected to be able to dance these figures without instruction: Allemande, Double Triangles, Figure of Eight, Grand Chain, Hello-Goodbye Setting, Knot, Ladies' Chain, Poussette (quick time), Poussette Right Round (Strathspey), Promenade, Reels of Three & of Four, Rondel. These classes are for dancers interested in more unusual dances than they get in regular classes.

### Greater Hartford Scottish Country Dancers Demo Team

*Many New Haven Branch members have seen our demo team in action, but few have any knowledge of who and how it started and all that. Mardene Hof, the teacher/manager of the demo team has written out its history for us.*

*The Editor*

The Greater Hartford Scottish Country Dancers have now been giving demos for over sixteen years. My first experience on a Scottish Country Dance Demo Team was when I was dancing with the West Hartford group. Some of us were asked to rehearse some dances for an Arts Council event in Hartford. At the rehearsal, we must have practiced reels on the side a million times. So, years later when I became a teacher and was asked to consider starting a demo team, I had my own opinion of how to get one going with regularly scheduled rehearsals and a repertoire of dances, a team that could be ready to perform any time. Dances would be chosen to show traditional figures and steps that create clear patterns for an observer. Rehearsals would work on covering, phrasing and team-work. And the members would have a say about which dances they enjoyed most. We try to rehearse on Sunday evenings twice a month, with a demo twice a month. I was surprised to find out that some dancers join the team for the rehearsals rather than the actual demos.

The level of our dancers is mixed, with emphasis on team work and commitment. One of our early members had connections with a retirement community, so our first rehearsal hall was on Starkle Road in West Hartford. The community room was waxed just before we arrived, but not buffed, so the floor was quite danceable. The custodian even found buffing easier after we left. We named the two

large plants Fred and Ethyl. Community residents came on Sunday night to put their laundry in the machines and watch us. They felt free to point out errors and make other comments such as, "I hate bagpipes." We performed an annual demo in appreciation for the use of their small hall. Then the hall was enlarged and the local political party took it for their Sunday night meetings.

We found a private ballroom studio in Glastonbury with a reasonable rent, so we charged a bit more for demos. We stayed with that studio through two more owners for eleven years. Our members were coming from all over Connecticut, representing nearly all the classes, and this made Glastonbury handy, being right off Route I-91. We are now have a hall in Wethersfield with the same criteria, raising our demo fee a bit more to cover the increased rent. When we reach the end of our September-through-May year, if we are in the red, we each pitch in five dollars or so. With success, this happens less often.

We have had as many as twenty members and as few as twelve. Three of us have been with the team since the start. There are a lot of stories about how it has gone over the years, some funny, some not. Men in kilts turn out to be attractive to elderly women with few inhibitions. Ken Way was once asked to be a date for New Years' Eve. Owen McKay was seriously asked if he was George Washington. We've danced on every imaginable surface from creaky tables (scary) to the floor of a wooden gazebo (heavenly).

For music, we started with a borrowed record player and records from the West Hartford group. One summer, the wind in the park simply lifted the record off the turntable and blew it away. TAC recommended using a cassette player which I bought, calling it Trevor. I spent weekends in the studio recording the records onto cassettes, one piece of music per cassette. As we obtained more cassettes, speed control became a necessity since the music was recorded on different machines at different speeds. At a demonstration two years ago, Trevor simply would not power up. We had to borrow a secretarial dictaphone and the audience strained to hear the music. Time for a new CD player, with members scrambling to gather a basic music library on CDs. We purchased speakers later for more volume and control over where the sound is directed.

The demo team only dances in Connecticut since other demo teams cover other locations. We have done a few demos out of state for personal reasons. We take notes on every event with some places noted: *Never go back*, and sometimes we turn down a demo opportunity. Several places have us back every year. One retirement community books us in advance for three demos a year. October and November are our busiest months. In November we often perform three demos. January and February are lean months. Rehearsals are cancelled at the very flirt of a snow drop since so many members come from so far. Not all members sign up for every demo; we call for backup dancers when needed.

As far as I know, our members enjoy the rehearsal/-

demo process. It is fun to go to Goshen every year and track the progress of their Scottish addition to the Connecticut life style. It is warming to have made many friends at the Hartford Marathon, and NOMAD is a regular part of our lives. Special events give variety every year. Many nursing homes and retirement communities consider us part of their regular schedule. The demo team allows me to continue to teach Scottish Country Dance even though I no longer teach a weekly class. I like to think that the approach I use is different enough from other teachers that I am contributing to the overall enjoyment of Scottish Country Dance in Connecticut.

*Mardene Hof*

### **Etiquette**

Yes, this old-fashioned word concerns Scottish country dancing. The following rules were written in the 19th century, and some of them still apply!

1. Profanity, stamping feet, hissing, writing on the wall, smoking or spitting are strictly forbidden.
2. Gentlemen are not allowed in the ballroom in boots, spurs, gaiters, trowsers; nor are loose pantaloons considered proper for a Full Dress Ball.
3. Chewing tobacco and spitting on the floor is not only nauseous to ladies, but injurious to their dresses.
4. Ladies must wear dresses becoming to their figure yet not revealing enough to distract the gentlemen.
5. Persons with no ear for music ought to refrain from dancing.
6. Ladies should avoid talking too much; they also should not whisper continually in their partner's ear. This gives a bad appearance and precipitates rumors.
7. Persons who dislike a dance, instead of interrupting or attempting to alter the dance, should retire to their seats.
8. A lady may decline to dance, then change her mind when asked by another. In these matter, ladies are exempt from all explanations. A lady's happiness comes before the preservation of male pride.

### **Greater Hartford End-of-Year Party**

Ten dancers braved the first of what turned out to be a whole summer of hot and humid days to attend the end-of-year party in Windsor on June 14th. Norb Spencer and his intrepid musicians seemed undaunted by the heat and provided tunes that kept us all dancing. The class was fortunate to have a visitor, Karen Lavalley, and two new dancers, Marie and Collette, join the festivities. Barbara's program was a bit challenging, but everyone seemed to enjoy themselves despite the heat.

*Barbara Austen*

### **Pawling Spring Weekend**

"Pawling" and "Pinewoods" are all I hear from dancers in our spring classes and they speak of them with real anticipation. Never having attended either, I decided to try Pawling Spring Weekend, the New York Branch workshop. Pawling is no longer held in Pawling, New York, but in Hopewell Junction at Circle Lodge, a family camp on Sylvan Lake. Ellie Toy and I arrived on Friday afternoon,



May 20, assigned to stay at the Red Motel which is actually just that, a long red building on the campgrounds with rooms that have all the features of a motel. Other dancers were housed in cabins with varying levels of comfort, but in the cool, pleasant weather, nobody complained. After the Friday night dinner, Ellie and I dressed for the Welcome Dance. As we walked toward the Social Hall, we heard the band strike the chord for *Good Hearted Glasgow*. Oops. Their 8 o'clock dance starts exactly on the hour. We rushed to get our shoes on for *The Duke of Perth* and enjoyed the rest of the evening's program.

After the dance, people gathered in the Canteen for a wine and cheese party, crowding into seats with much talk and merriment. In another room, people danced to a variety of music including some wild jitterbugging. For the Saturday classes, the 140 dancers were divided into three groups, Advanced Beginners, Intermediate and Advanced, with three teachers – Muriel Johnstone, Elaine Brunken and John Wilkinson – rotating to teach each group. The music was provided by Bobby Brown and the Scottish Accent, with Jim Stevenson playing for classes as well. We found all the teachers excellent, each one focusing on different aspects of dancing.

After lunch there was time to check out Bernie McGrath's Scottish Shop and the Bazaar where people found some amazing bargains in slightly worn dance clothes. Ellie and I then attended the ball walk-through which we found very helpful, only to learn later that we'd missed a wild informal party at one of the cottage groups, at times involving people being tossed in the lake which was not warm. The formal evening events started with a sherry party at the Gazebo by the lake, followed by dinner,



the Grand March, and the Highland Ball. From *Machine Without Horses* to *The Reel of the Royal Scots*, it was a joyous romp. We scattered to our rooms to change into casual clothes and return for the ceilidh. This was the usual mix of song, recitation, comedy, audience participation and music – great entertainment. Another Canteen party followed for those who could keep their eyes open.

We were allowed to sleep late on Sunday, with a piper walking the grounds as a wake-up call. A third class with the third teacher, just as helpful as the rest. The final event after lunch was a combined dance for all with champagne being served, a fitting toast to a grand workshop.

*Lucile Blanchard*

## **Drumkilbo Reunion Party**

When we learned that John Wilkinson, our teacher of Book 44 dances at Drumkilbo in Scotland last year, was coming to teach at Pawling, we knew we had to have a party. John and his wife Ruby spent a week exploring a small corner of America, their first visit. Then on Saturday, May 28, we held a Drumkilbo Reunion Party in the main hall of Camp Laurelwood in Madison. Not only did all the Drumkilboeans but two (Jim and Andrea McNab - we missed you) show up but so did 28 other dancers for a rollicking afternoon. Ken Way devised a fine program of dances that we had mostly danced in Scotland. John then taught us two of his own dances – *The New Australian Parliament* and *Dance Willy Dance*. The party moved on to Catriona MacAuslan's house where her husband Don and their three dogs welcomed us for a potluck supper. As always, the food produced out of baskets and coolers was delicious, with Skip Chase manning the grill for hot dogs and hamburgers. We were extra lucky to have two pipers, Paul McRanor and George Thomsen. After supper they went outside to take turns showing off their favorite tunes, blending their efforts for some, going solo for others. A glorious way to end the day.

*Lucile Blanchard*



## **Pinewoods Session II, July 11–16**

Pinewoods Camp, a former Girl Scout leadership camp now owned by a consortium of music and dance groups, is located in a pine forest in Plymouth, MA. The cabins are rustic but comfortable, with small closets and pegs along the wall for hanging the many dresses needed for a week's worth of dancing. Most cabins have clotheslines strung up in the trees nearby. Bathrooms and showers are scattered



Dance pavilion C#

about the camp. Dancing takes place in four open-air pavilions with sprung-wood floors. Dancing out in the woods has a wonderfully free feel to it, and swatting at moths and beetles during the evening dances adds a whole new twist to the use of hands. The food served at the camp is out of this world. Everything is made on the spot with different kinds of fresh baked bread for every lunch and dinner. The vegetarian meals were varied and delicious. I gained three pounds during the week!!

Pinewoods Session II, attended by 140 people, began with a welcome party on Monday afternoon, followed by dinner and a dance in Pavilion C#. The daily schedule consisted of two morning classes, one or two afternoon classes, an evening dance and an event, such as an auction or ceilidh, and/or an after-party. Ranked classes were held first thing in the morning: Basic, Intermediate and Advanced. Other classes included Highland, Ladies Step, Experienced Social, Technique & Critique, Tricky Dances and Easy Dances (from the evening's program), Teacher's Choice (for experienced dancers) and Pinewoods Dances. There was also a music class each afternoon for musicians as well as a yoga class.

The teachers were Mel Briscoe from Virginia, Jessie Stuart from Scotland, and Elinor Vandegrift from Washington. They rotated through the three graded classes and the Technique & Critique classes. Each one focused on different aspects of dancing – leg movement, timing, foot turnout, keeping your head level during traveling, centering your weight to balance on the weight-bearing foot while pushing your other foot forward, etc. We've heard it all before in our classes, but it helps to have it reinforced. They taught with a combination of humor, understanding and skill, making the classes great fun.

There was a goods and services auction on Wednesday night after the evening dance. (You do get used to functioning on 3 to 4 hours of sleep each night!) Items included massages; handmade dance skirts; a costume to be designed and sewn for next year's costume party; lessons by Kathy Fraser, one of the fiddlers, in speaking "Australian"; framed pictures and many other items donated by the campers. This year's auction raised over \$7,000 for the camp.



Miss Bumble Bee

The "Bouncing Beasties" costume party on Tuesday night was a blast. Costumes ranged from simple animal print dresses to more elaborate costumes; sharks, bees, a pink flamingo and a monkey. Half the dancers came in

costume and many dances had animal names. During the dance *Keep the Cats in the Kitchen*, the fiddles made the most incredible meowing sounds I've ever heard!

The music for the week was stupendous. One or two musicians played for each class and they all played at the evening dances. The final dance of the Friday evening ball was *General Stuart's Reel* played by four fiddles, drums, accordion, bass, and two pipers. With such great music, the dancers practically flew through the air. A spectacular ending to a fabulous week. Four of these musicians will be playing at our next ball – Tom Pixton, Hanneke Cassel, David Knight and Mike MacNintch. Our ball will be rockin' in 2006! Don't miss it!

It sure was hard to leave the Pinewoods magic and re-enter the "real" world at the end of the week. It did help to keep in mind that there's always next year. Same time, same place.

*Barbra Link*

### 82nd Round Hill Highland Games

This year the games at Round Hill resumed. On Saturday, July 2nd, a group of us dancers gathered at Cranbury Park in Norwalk to take part in this annual event. A large tent with a wooden floor was set up for Scottish country dancing. Susan Ferguson, Ken Way and Joyce Chase then took turns running a casual program of dances demonstrated by Connecticut and New York dancers for those who came to watch. At times, the dancers tried to talk people into coming on the floor to try it. For the most part, they were met with abashed grins and regretful head shakes. At noon the dancing stopped for the opening ceremonies of the Highland Games which took place in the center of the field, announced by James Ferguson of the New York Branch. Pipe bands and clan representatives carrying banners made up the parade, followed by a motley dozen dancers carrying a gold banner to represent the RSCDS.



Louis Perez and Dick Baxter

People took advantage of this opportunity to lunch on fish and chips or brideys. Then back to dancing as a Scottish rock band set up their speakers and ran cables around the floor. A final dance before surrendering the floor to the waiting band which included two fantastic pipers. Time to check out the vendors' booths and the clan booths. Ev Munro held down the Clan Munro booth all by himself. Dick and Jane Platt did a great job with their Clan Gunn booth nearby. We were also very impressed with the men,



and one woman, working hard at the sheaf toss, and then the caber toss. After last year's cancellation, we are glad that Round Hill is back in business

*Lucile Blanchard*

### **Mel Briscoe – Workshop Teacher**



Mel & Ellie Briscoe

Mel Briscoe lives in Virginia now but he began Scottish country dancing in Boston some twenty-eight years ago. He passed his prelim at TAC in 1982 and received his Teacher's Certificate two years later. He has taught classes and workshops all over the U.S. and Canada and also in Japan. In real life he is an oceanographer at the Office of Naval Research. He is also an expert scuba diver. His wife Ellie, whom he met at TAC, is also a teacher and she scuba dives too. We have heard such good things about Mel's workshops, we are looking forward to having him here on October 22nd. (See Upcoming Events.)

### **Summerrance XVI**

Do you want to help raise money for UNICEF? Then think about taking part in Summerrance next year, the New York Branch's afternoon program of dancing in the halls of the United Nations. On Saturday, June 25, eight New Haven Branch dancers arrived at the UN on a steamy afternoon to join fifty-some others from New York and New Jersey for three hours of dancing to the flash of cameras as tourists strolled through the entry halls. The program was a mix of fairly basic dances and more challenging ones such as *Haven't a Clue* and *The Caveman of Culsh*. With the marble floor, dancers did sit out now and then to rest their feet. At the break we were treated to a set of bagpipe tunes beautifully played by Calum Pasqua, a classical violinist with great musical talent. Then James Ferguson, known to all as Fergie, presented the UNICEF representative with a check for \$1,300, pretty good fund-raising, I'd say. After it ended, most of the dancers walked over to O'Neill's Pub on 3rd Avenue where they gave us the whole upstairs with tables set for dinner and a small bar. After a good meal with choices like bangers and mash or shepherd's pie, some of the tables were cleared away for more dancing which Fergie oversaw. It was a very gratifying day in the city. The New York Branch people who made it all happen were Sally Freedman, Nancy Pryce,

Sheila Wilson, Estelle Ellis and last but not least, Fergie, chief cook and bottle washer.

*Lucile Blanchard*

### **Do you know this woman?**

If you are a Scottish country dancer, you have seen her at classes and parties, but probably not in this outfit. Ellie Toy is a professional storyteller who often performs dressed as Mother Goose. Marge and Don Wills caught her in July after she gave a presentation at the Mystic Public Library.



Ellie dances in Middletown and is a member of the Greater Hartford Demo Team. And no, the goose is not real.

### **Request from Intergroup Representative**

Don Wills would like a dozen flyers from each class of the New Haven Branch to set out on his flyer board this fall at places like Goshen and NOMAD. He has the official 3-fold flyer that lists all the classes, but people like to pick up flyers for specific classes in their area as well. Please send them to Don Wills, 375 Allyn Street, #9. Mystic, CT 06355.

### **Wanted: Supervisors for NOMAD Food Booth**

As you know, the food booth at NOMAD is our major fund-raising event. Last year we took in \$1,400, and we hope to do even better this year because the NOMAD administration has been very helpful about our setup. But this only works with volunteers from the Scottish country dancers who benefit from the results. NOMAD will be held this year from Friday night through Sunday, Nov. 4-6, 2005. Dick Baxter, our Branch president, is asking for people to commit in advance to spending a certain amount of time working in the food booth. In particular, he needs to have supervisors lined up to cover the various 3- or 4-hour shifts from early Saturday morning until Sunday afternoon. Supervisors will handle the money, oversee the other helpers and just generally be in charge for their shift. Since the Jeannie Carmichael Ball is taking place the night of Nov. 5th with a brunch the next morning, this depletes the pool of possible helpers. So please seriously consider doing your part for this important fund-raiser. You can reach Dick at 860-314-0363 or enabaxt@sbcglobal.net. Thank you.

## St. Andrews Summer School and the Hollin Buss

St. Andrews' weather lived up to all expectations, sunny, breezy and cool for most of our stay. A couple of days of rain showers the second week, but right back to great weather for the third. This year the Summer School offered several opportunities to dance in the fabled Younger Hall, where I experienced my first "Highland" ball almost fifty years ago. The Younger was built as a concert hall by Younger's Brewery of Alloa (no longer with us), and boasts a sprung dance floor that moves big time in response to the dancing. The basic underpinnings are solid as a rock, but the wood floor above it is mounted on an elaborate spring suspension that leaves no question as to the beat of the music.

I was involved in the Teachers' Certificate class; the last chance to get to do the whole thing at one go before the new system goes into effect. That is to say, in addition to the teaching, one also had to sit another theory exam and another set of dances for technique evaluation, quite similar to the Prelim routine. Such will not be the case in future (from August 2006); candidates having passed the Prelim, or the new Modules 1, 2 and 3, will just have to show that they have completed six hours of teaching under a qualified mentor located anywhere on earth, and then do the Teaching Module over a period of at least two weeks, and pass the test, of course. There is some talk of a possible time limitation between passage of the Prelim and completing Modules 4 and 5, but for now, anyone who has passed the Prelim any time will be eligible to continue. Also, pass/fail will be based more on agreement of the teachings with the Manual than individual examiners' opinions. All in all, good changes.

As it turned out, I did great on the theory and the technique parts, but apparently blew the teaching test. Considering the criticism I was initially getting for my technique when I joined the course, I was pleased with the results anyway, and may even go back one more time to beat my head against the wall. Among the attendees the first fortnight were Romaine Butterfield (*Catch the Wind*) and Iain Boyd of New Zealand, Tom Kerr of Cape Town (*Cape Town Wedding*), Keith Napier of Australia (*Napier's Scottish Country Dance Index*), and even John Drewry of Aberdeen dropped in for a short time on Thursdays. John and Ruby Wilkinson were there; John was Ceilidh Master the first week and Ruby taught a Basic class. They send their regards.

As soon as my course was done, I assumed my responsibility as guide to St. Andrews and led excursions two miles to the west (the beautiful sands where the lead scenes for Chariots of Fire were shot), two miles to the east, and everywhere between, the final trip being out to a very unusual geological formation called the Rock and Spindle. It is a quiet place of about an hour's walk along the coast from the town that was a great place to meditate as a student. Bulldozers now hover above as the investors push up "Golf Course #7" and there is evidence of a road-wide

path cut through which I suspect will be a parking lot when I next return. Golf mania out of control, unfortunately.

We also visited Anstruther (Anster) a couple of towns down the coast. It has an active fishing harbour and a Fisheries Museum, among other things. In the Fisheries Museum I may have found the answer to the often-asked question, "What's a Hollin Buss?" At one time there was a fair amount of commerce taking place between Fife coastal ports and Holland. The ships used were commonly known as Busses, and references were made to "Dutch Busses" in particular. Draw your own conclusion. I've drawn mine.

*Ken Way*

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### RSCDS New Haven Branch Officers:

President	Dick Baxter (860) 314-0363
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Branch Class	Leslie Kearney (203) 281-6591
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Intergroup	Don Wills (860) 536-1981
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	Nina Stein (203) 757-2539
Membership	Ed Davis (203) 264-087
Newsletter	Lucile Blanchard (860) 347-0278 lblanchard@wesleyan.edu

### **Editor's Note**

Deadline for the next newsletter is **November 15** for publication by the end of the month. I will welcome all of your stories or reports, and particularly all calendar listings. My home address is 1061 Millbrook Road, Middletown, CT 06457.

**Note to Readers:** If you would rather receive Reel Time by e-mail, please send an e-mail message to me at [lblanchard@wesleyan.edu](mailto:lblanchard@wesleyan.edu) so that I will have your preferred address.