

Reel Time

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

Spring 2006

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. **Last class will be June 20** with a party. Fall classes start Sept. 12.

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. **Last class will be June 21.**

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.

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. **Last class will be June 23.**

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. **Last class will be June 27.**

Please note: Dancing will continue at the Institute of Sacred Music on July 11, 18, 25 and August 1, 8 and 15.

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. **Last class will be May 22.**

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. **Last class will be June 2.**

Upcoming Events

Challenge Class Thursday, May 18, 2006. First Church, 190 Court St., Middletown. 7:00-9:30 pm \$8.00. Barbara Austen, teacher. Call Lucile Blanchard 860-347-0278 or Joyce Chase 203-238-0694 for more information.

Pawling Spring Weekend May 19-21, 2006. Circle Lodge, Hopewell Junction, NY. Teachers: Robert McOwen, Elinor Vandegrift, Les Lambert. Music: Bobby Brown's *Scottish Accent* and Jim Stevenson-Mathews. Contact Sheila Wilson 212-744-1470 or e-mail: info@rscdsnewyork.org.

Rhode Island Scottish Highland Festival Saturday, May 20, 2006, 9 am to 5 pm. Washington County Fairgrounds, Route 112 South, Richmond, RI (Exit 3 off of Route 95 North). Further information, Scottish Heritage Society, P. O. Box 44, Westerly, RI 02891.

Camp Laurelwood Workshop, Summerhill Road, Madison, CT, Saturday, May 27, 2006. Teachers: Karen Lavalley-Tente, Ken Way, James Ferguson. Music: Norb Spencer, Susie Petrov. Contact lblanchard@wesleyan.edu for information.

Westchester Ball St. John's Church, Larchmont, NY.. Saturday, June 3, 2006. Music: *Highland Whisky*. Contact Mary Zagami 718-823-0119 or chris.ivy@verizon.net.

Memories of Balmoral – A Scottish Victorian Weekend, Woodstock, CT. June 23-25, 2006. Teachers: Dale Birdsall (Scottish), Martha Griffin (Vintage). For more information: www.vintagevictorian.com/scotland.html

Summerdance XVII at the United Nations, fundraising for UNICEF Saturday, June 24, 2006, 12:30-4:00 pm. Contact Sheila Wilson 212-744-1470 or e-mail info@rscdsnewyork.org.

83rd Round Hill Scottish Games Cranbury Park, Norwalk, CT. Saturday, July 1, 2006. Music by MacTalla Mo'r. For more information and directions, see www.RoundHill.org.

English-Scottish Pinewoods Session July 3-7, 2006 Pinewoods Camp, Plymouth, MA. Teachers: Ron Wallace (Scottish), Gene Morrow (English). Contact Marianne Taylor 603-463-7771.

Scottish Pinewoods Session I July 7-9, 2006
Scottish Pinewoods Session II July 10-15, 2006
More info, Bob_Littlehale@comcast.net

Glasgow Lands Scottish Festival, Northampton, MA. July 15, 2006. See www.glaslowlands.org.

T.A.C. Summer School for all Scottish country dancers (not just teachers). Aug. 6-13, 2006. Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada.

Hillsboro Highlands Hillsboro Camp, Hillsboro, NH Friday-Sunday, August 25-27, 2006. For more information, contact Loren Wright NashuaSCD@comcast.net.

For information on similar events, check www.intercityscot.org.

Lost and Found

Found at the Brunch: LL Bean Norwegian-style cardigan, women's, size medium, wool, red and shades of grey pattern with fancy silver clasps. Will arrange delivery within Connecticut or will mail to out-of-state owner. Contact Ingrid Davis at 203-263-3578 or ingridd@earthlink.net.

AGM

The Annual General Meeting of the New Haven Branch of the RSCDS met on Saturday, May 13, 2006 at the Medical Society. The chief business was electing new officers and board members for the 2006-2007 year. After some discussion, the following slate was presented:

President	Ken Way
Vice President	Catriona MacAuslan
Secretary	Barbra Link
Treasurer	Richard Ives
Branch Class	Leslie Kearney
Teacher	
Committee	Barbara Austen
Intergroup	Don Wills
At Large	Mary Byrnie
	Bob Byrnie
	Joyce Chase
	Everett Munro
	Nina Stein
Membership	Ed Davis
Newsletter	Lucile Blanchard

The office of Vice President was newly created to ease the pressure on the President to be present for every meeting. The slate was accepted by a consensus of votes. The Branch thanked Dick and Ena Baxter for their four years of service as President and Secretary. They were actively responsible for carrying on the business of the Branch and working with the RSCDS home office in Edinburgh.

Winner of Pinewoods Scholarship

This year we have a new dancer going to Pinewoods on the Dick Morrison Pinewoods Scholarship. Noah

Pestana who dances in the West Hartford class at Windsor will be attending the Scottish Session in July. His mother Karen is a long-time Scottish country dancer and encouraged Noah to come to class with her a year and a half ago. He took to it quickly and has become very proficient, attending various other classes and parties. A high school senior, Noah will be attending Northeastern University in Boston next year to major in electrical engineering. He hopes to continue dancing in the Boston area during the school year. Congratulations, Noah!



Karen and Noah Pestana

Highland Ball and Brunch – 2006

We wish to thank everyone who had a hand in making this year's Ball and Brunch such a grand time. We had 151 for dinner this year including four fabulous musicians, as well as Brian Applegate of Spence Sound. Our guests were warmly greeted by Susan Wall at the front door table where they picked up their crib books and Ken Way-designed name badges. A gathering time to visit and sample the array of appetizers and a cup of Nina Stein's punch was followed by the Selkirk Grace, given by Dick Baxter. Everyone then enjoyed the delicious buffet created by Krauss Catering.

The Grand March, designed by George Thompson, was led by piper Mike MacNintch. The Ball dance program devised by Christopher Anagnostakis was briefed by Mardene Hof, Leslie Kearney, and Christopher. The music, arranged by Tom Pixton, was absolutely marvelous. In addition to Tom and Mike, we had the pleasure of David Knight and Hanneke Cassel on fiddles, with special appearances by fiddlers Debbie Bilmer and Tim Hayes (a rising young talent from Durham and friend of Joyce Chase). What a treat to have this virtuosity in such abundance!

This year's Brunch, organized by Barbra Link and Jane Leibert, was memorable as well. Ken Way

accepted the challenge of devising a program of dances associated with food. Not only were the dances lots of fun, but the food provided to accompany them made the brunch even more interesting. We were sated with Neaps and Haggis, Lobster in the Pot and Cranberry Tart to name a few of the combination dishes and dances. Barbara Austen and Peter Price were the briefers for this danceable feast and did a great job of helping us to be guilt-free about heading back to the dining room for that second (okay, third) piece of fudge.

Through out the weekend one voice in particular was heard above the others, that of our Emcee Extraordinaire, Don Wills, whose keen wit and sense of timing kept us laughing. We would also like to thank Marge Wills for the reservation flyers, Richard Ives for paying the bills, and the Board members for their coaching and encouragement.

Karen Pestana and George Thompson
Ball Chairs

Olivia, the Young Artist

You may have noticed the drawing and message on the inside cover of the Brunch program. It said: "To: dancers, From Olivia." And the message was, "You are good!!" with a smiley face under the exclamation marks and a row of 8 dancers (the correct number for a set) below. I learned that when Olivia visits the Windsor class on Tuesdays she brings her drawing pad. She has long blonde hair and a bright smile and lives with her grandparents. When she visits her mother, she says it usually involves ice cream. She is very active at Grace Church and very excited about the extended family from Russia that Grace Church is co-sponsoring with First Congregational. She is even learning some Russian. Thank you, Olivia, for your praise.

New Book by Bob Gregg

Robert Gregg, who dances in Woodbridge and New Haven among other places, has published a book of Scottish Country dances that he devised. It is named

The Real MacGregor I and features 20 new dances. Ten of these dances are for 2 or 3 couples in 3-couple longways sets, and ten are for 3 or 4 couples also in longways sets. The 3-couple set dances were written for the many dance groups that have difficulty attracting enough members to ensure having a full set for each class. TACBooks' first sales were to New Zealanders with low class attendance during their hot "winter". The 3-couple set dances are useful in dancing groups having 3, 6, or 9 couples, allowing the teacher to include all dancers without either having to exclude some dancers or work them in with extra repeats as is common when using 4-couple set dances.

These dances are designed to flow smoothly from one figure to the next without awkward changes. The directions are written so that they are understandable by the average dancer and may be somewhat fuller than necessary for teachers who will use their own explanations in teaching. The average dancer may benefit from the method of describing figures that are common and frequently used. There are figures or combinations that are new or unusual, adding interest to the dances. Some of these figures and combinations may have already been used by others in dances that are not well-known. Some dances such as *The Fountain Strathspey*, *Smoke on the Hills* and *Ann Arbor* have been particularly well-liked by teachers and classes in other branches.

The chairman elect of the Society, Irene R. T. Bennett, wrote from Edinburgh thanking Robert for the copy that has been placed in the archive at 12 Coates Crescent. This is due to the good offices of Catriona MacAuslan who took copies of the booklet with her to the Winter School in Pitlochry. The book, priced at \$6, is available from TACBooks in Canada, Patti Tillotson at the RSCDS Boston bookstore, or from the author.

Kilts & Ghillies Ball

We were blessed with another gorgeous spring day for the 18th Annual Kilts and Ghillies Spring Ball on April 29th in South Britain. Many people came a good distance, from Massachusetts and New York State, and commented that they enjoyed the scenery along the way. Thanks to the efficient caterer Michael Reiss, with desserts and appetizers furnished by the Woodbridge and Kilts & Ghillies classes, 70 meals were served. Everything was delicious, of course, and the music by Terry Traub, James Stevenson-Mathews, and Alice Backer, was superb. It was good to have Paul McRanor, son of K&G originator Ellen McRanor, as our piper. The youngest attendees were Ehlana McRanor and Malka Traub, daughters of Paul and Terry. Every-one in the Woodbridge class generously contributed time and talents to the long list of things to be done and I cannot thank them enough. Special thank-yous to our teachers Leslie Kearney and Peter Price, who devised the dance program and did the talk-throughs. Also Barbara Austen, who helped the

Woodbridge class and others cram the last couple of weeks! Peter came through with an excellent sound system on short notice and Susan Leff and Ed Davis (our "key person") provided accommodations for the Traub family. Our senses were treated to great sights, sounds, smells and tastes, and to the good company of others who love to dance that April evening.

Donna Ives

Through a Glasspool Darkly

On April 20, 2006, the Middletown group sponsored the third Challenge Class of the season. I was very grateful for the opportunity to present a number of dances by Terry Glasspool. Many of Glasspool's dances are extremely innovative to say the least. For example, in the round-the-room strathspey, *Gypsy Rover*, each dancer will function as a one, a two, a three and a four in each 32-bar round of the dance. The reel *Knights' Heys* (featured on the 2003 Kilts & Ghillies Ball and the 2004 New Haven Ball programs) is constructed to end the first couple on the wrong side so they will dance the repeat as the opposite gender. Glasspool provides an alternative ending, which we used at both of our balls, for a more standard progression; but this is just one instance of his ventures into gender-neutral territory. Others include his many compositions for varying numbers of individual dancers, which provide a repertoire of really good material for those evenings when only a few people show up, instead of having to do rather indifferent two-couple dances interminably.

At the Challenge Class, we warmed up with *Four and Twenty Blackbirds*, a jig for four dancers that features reels of three on several different axes. We spent quite a bit of time on a reel for a square set, *The Thistle and the Rose*, 96 bars arranged in three 32-bar sections. The first section owes a great deal to the *Robertson Rant*; the middle section represents what Glasspool describes as the *Dogwood Bloom*, a counter-intuitive kaleidoscopic figure; and the grand finale allows the dancers a bit of creativity, an eight-bar turn "in any mutually acceptable style." We then proceeded to an even more difficult 40-bar strathspey, *Chocolate Raspberry Swirl*, which, true to its name, incorporates many swirling patterns and, although danced in couples, requires a number of independent decisions by each dancer. Our last Glasspool dance of the evening was *Tempest in a Teacup*, a 64-bar reel for a three-couple set, second couple on the opposite side, 32 bars danced "right side up" and then 32 "upside down," a mirror image. This dance employs the 16-bar "temp-

est" figure, consisting of half a ladies chain, a full targe, and the other half of the ladies chain. Suffice it to say, this is considerably more difficult than it sounds, especially at speed. It's worth it though. Then, to reward everyone for a lot of hard work, we ended with *Mairi's Wedding*.

Terry Glasspool's dances reveal a sense of wit, humor, whimsy, and a diabolical intellect. I don't deny there was a certain amount of frustration in working on these dances, one could even say panic, hysteria, downright terror. In fact, I can't take credit for the title of this piece, I heard it being muttered around the room On the other hand, I think there were moments of excitement too, and at least one other class has started to use some of these dances. Maybe when we've recovered, we'll try a few more.

Leslie Kearney

RSCDS New Haven Branch Officers:

President	Ken Way (860) 653-5258
Vice President	Catriona MacAuslan (203) 421-4060
Secretary	Barbra Link (860) 345-8925
Treasurer	Richard Ives (203) 393-3713
Branch Class	Leslie Kearney (203) 281-6591
Teacher Comm.	Barbara Austen (203) 630-9749
Intergroup	Don Wills (860) 536-1981
At Large	Mary Byrnie (860) 635-4056 Bob Byrnie (860) 635-4056 Joyce Chase (203) 238-0694 Ev Munro (860) 442-7283 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 **August 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.

The internet address for the New Haven Branch web site is: www.rscdsnewhaven.org

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 so that I will have your preferred address.

Kilts & Ghillies Ball – April 29, 2006



Our piper



Arranging flowers



Caterer



Setting the tables



Musicians practicing



Shall we dance?



Right hands around



Dessert break



Studying the dances



Terry Traub played on . . .