

# Reel Time

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

Winter 2007

## 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.

*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](http://www.mysticsscottishdancers.com).

*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.

*Newtown Scottish Country Dancers* St. James Episcopal Church, 25 West St., Danbury, CT. Monday 7:30 to 9:30 pm. Contact Ernie Harrington 203-664-1315 or Ed Davis 203-264-0870.

*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.

**Peter Price's Class** Second Thursday of the month, 8:00 pm, New Haven Friends Meeting House, 225 East Grand Ave., New Haven. Spring dates: Mar. 18, Apr. 12. This class welcomes everyone with an interest in Scottish country dancing.

## Upcoming Events

**Ball Workshop:** Saturday, Feb. 17, 2007 2:15-5:00 pm. First Church of Christ Congregational, 190 Court St., Middletown. \$8. Teacher, Ken Way. For those interested in staying on for dinner, a list of local restaurants will be available. Contact Lucile Blanchard, 860-347-0278.

**New Haven Branch Highland Ball** Saturday, March 3, 2007, West Hartford Community Center. \$55 or \$60 after Feb. 5. 5:30 pm to midnight. Music by *Thistle House*: Dave Wiesler, David Knight, Dan Emery.  
**Sunday Brunch**, March 4, New Haven Medical Society. 11:00 am. For more information, contact Barbra Link at [blink6325@yahoo.com](mailto:blink6325@yahoo.com) or Jane Leibert, 860-887-9184 or see [www.RSCDSNewHaven.org](http://www.RSCDSNewHaven.org).

**Challenge Class** Thursday, March 22, 2007. Green Street Arts Center, 51 Green St., Middletown. 7:00-9:30 pm, \$8. Peter Price, teacher. For more information, Barbara Austen at [beausten@att.net](mailto:beausten@att.net).

**Sixth Annual Tea Party** Middletown Class Wednesday, March 28, 2007. First Church of Christ, 190 Court St., Middletown. 7:00-9:30 pm, no fee Social dance night with a Scottish tea.

**Rerr Terr** Saturday, April 14, 2007 Church of the Atonement, Tenafly, NJ. Music, Highland Whiskey Contact [Cearlone@comcast.net](mailto:Cearlone@comcast.net).

**Challenge Class** Thursday, April 19, 2007. Green Street Arts Center, 51 Green St., Middletown. 7:00-9:30 pm, \$8. Teacher TBA. For more information, Barbara Austen at [beausten@att.net](mailto:beausten@att.net).

**Kilts & Ghillies Spring Ball** Saturday, April 28, 2007, South Britain Congregational Church. 6:00-11:00 pm. Music by *Terry Traub & Friends*. Contact Mollie Keller, [unclemollie@hotmail.com](mailto:unclemollie@hotmail.com).

**Boston Highland Ball Weekend** May 4-6, 2007. \$70. Nevins Hall, Framingham, MA. Music by *Three Gentlemen and a Lady*. **Friday Welcome Dance**, May 4, \$10. Music by Hanneke Cassel, Susie Petrov. **Sunday Brunch**, May 6. For more, [www.RSCDSBOSTON.org](http://www.RSCDSBOSTON.org)

**Challenge Class** Thursday, May 17, 2007. Green Street Arts Center, 51 Green St., Middletown. 7:00-9:30 pm, \$8. Kent Smith, teacher. For more information, Barbara Austen at [beausten@att.net](mailto:beausten@att.net).

**Pawling Spring Weekend** May 18-20, 2007. Circle Lodge, Hopewell Junction, NY. \$225 or \$295. Teachers: Mel Briscoe, Ruth Jappy, Graham Donald. Music, Bobby Brown's *Scottish Accent*. Contact Sally Clayton, [mitzzu@hotmail.com](mailto:mitzzu@hotmail.com) or Ellen Sears, [ellen@tlotsondesign.com](mailto:ellen@tlotsondesign.com)

**Rhode Island Scottish Highland Festival** Saturday, May 19, 2007, 9 am to 5 pm. Washington County Fairgrounds, Rt. 112 South, Richmond RI (Exit 3 off Rt. 95 North). For more information, [www.riscot.org/](http://www.riscot.org/)

**Westchester Ball** Saturday, June 2, 2006.

**Summerdance XVIII** at the United Nations for UNICEF Saturday, June 23, 2007.

**Nutmeg Camp** (formerly Camp Laurelwood) Saturday, Sept. 8, 2007. Save the date. (See below.)

For information on similar events, check [www.intercityscot.org](http://www.intercityscot.org).

### **Middletown Holiday Party**

On Wednesday, December 27th, Norb Spencer and his band of musicians including Susie Petrov played for the Middletown class at First Church to celebrate the holidays with dance. Ken Way's program started with *The Twinbairns' Reel*, named after twins with the names Chloe and Zoe. It also included *The Quaich* which is the name of a small two-handled drinking cup. *J. B. Milne* was a fine romp and *Asilomar Romantic* let the dancers glide through a strathspey to some lovely music. There were 18 dancers and as usual the table was loaded with tasty treats for the break, including bottles of ginger beer for those wanting a taste of home. The evening ended with the *Reel of the Royal Scots* which always leaves us in a glow.

### **First Night**

A small but select group of dancers gathered New Year's Eve at the New Haven Medical Association building for the annual First Night party. A sumptuous and leisurely pot-luck dinner was followed by dancing. Bob Byrnie again provided the elegant backdrop of a lighted Edinburgh Castle. He promises next year's will be even better! Twelve dancers enjoyed a short program devised by Barbara Austen. By acclamation, New Year's was celebrated at 10:30 pm to allow folks to get home before the "crazies" got on the road and to reserve everyone's strength. Overall it was an enjoyable evening although some of the regular attendees were absent.

*Barbara Austen*

### **New Dancers**

Several New Haven Branch classes welcomed new dancers in January. This is encouraging, as we need to continue bringing in newcomers to keep Scottish country dance going. Time has a way of working on us older dancers so that eventually we have to stop. We hope that every class makes an effort to welcome newcomers for it's the social aspect as much as the exercise that keeps them coming back.

### **On a Personal Note**

We are glad to report that Joyce Chase is recovering well from surgery on both feet and is already back to teaching if not dancing.

### **Scottish Dance and Hand Washing**

Perhaps you're not aware that Scottish country dancing creates an opportunity for sharing microbes. Every time we take hands, we are exposed to a varied field of germs. To avoid catching more colds, remember to wash your hands after dancing, particularly before eating or handling food. We all want to keep our dancing a healthy sport.

*Condensed from an article by Kathryn Knowles in The Tartan Tattler*

### **Challenge Classes**

After learning that First Church would not be available for Thursday night Challenge Classes, Barbara Austen scouted around for a suitable location in central Connecticut. She found a room with a good floor at the Green Street Arts Center in Middletown. (See Upcoming Events) Green Street is a new arts and education center offering a broad spectrum of classes, workshops and programs for adults, teens and children. This center was created by Wesleyan University in collaboration with the city of Middletown and the North End Action Team – a welcome addition to the community.

### **Nutmeg Workshop**

Remember the fun we had at Camp Laurelwood last May when the New Haven Branch held a Saturday workshop in the Madison woods? Its success made us realize we had outgrown that location, so the 2nd Annual Nutmeg Workshop will be held on Saturday, September 8, 2007 at the Incarnation Center in Ivoryton, CT. The location, an Episcopal Camp and Conference Center situated beside Bushy Hill Lake, is a lovely spot for an early September event and it has easy access from Routes 95 and 9. (Their website is: [www.incarnationcenter.com](http://www.incarnationcenter.com)) Starting at 12 noon, participants can bring a picnic lunch to eat in this beautiful setting. Afternoon classes will be taught by Robert McOwen of Boston and Kent Smith of West Hartford. A potluck supper will follow, with meat and drinks provided, and side dishes and desserts brought in by members of the New Haven Branch. The evening dance with live music will go from 7 to 9 pm. The cost will be \$25.00. For more information, write Lucile Blanchard at [lblanchard@wesleyan.edu](mailto:lblanchard@wesleyan.edu) or call 860-347-0278.

### **Sponsoring a Stone**

It has been suggested that the New Haven Branch sponsor a stone on the walkway at the Culloden Battlefield Visitor Center which is being upgraded. This is part of a fund-raising effort by the National Trust for Scotland for completing the upgrading. The stones come in

various sizes with varying amounts of lettering allowed. The Board is taking suggestions for a message if they decide to buy a stone. More information can be found at <http://www.cullodenwalk.org.uk/>

### Trip to Scotland – Catriona MacAuslan

The trip to Scotland in August is filled. Catriona is in communication with the RSCDS groups in Aire, Oban and Glasgow to arrange for times when the group can dance with them.

### Burns Night Dinner

The Mystic Scottish Country Dancers hosted its annual Burns Anniversary Dinner on the Saturday, Feb. 10 at the Groton Inn and Suites. Despite some bone chilling temperatures, you could almost hear us cheer at the news: No snow! Our program included a superb presentation by the Mystic Highland Pipe Band, ending with a magnificent arrangement of *Amazing Grace* that sent chills up our spines. Three band members performed



an unusually intricate sword dance. Girls from the Stirling Highland Dance Company danced a cheerful set of variations on the different Scottish dances. Our own Country Dancers performed *Frae a' the Arts* and *Shiftin' Bobbins*, having much fun in the process.



Andrew Fraser, originally from Norwich, now an attorney in Sparta, NJ, recited the “*Ode To The Haggis*.” His dad, George Fraser, was one of the originators of our Burns Dinner in Southeastern Connecticut some 24 years ago. Andrew mentioned that

one of his earliest recollections was listening to his dad deliver the address to the Haggis. His parents originally hosted Burns Night dinners in their home. He told his dad that he was sure their house was going to explode if there were any more people in it, so the dinner was moved to a VFW hall, then to the Branford House at Avery Point in Groton and then to various local hotels. After George died in 1996, the Mystic Scottish Country Dancers asked Andrew to deliver the address; he has been with us for ten years, and charms us all with his interactive version of the Ode – asking the audience to provide a few sound effects, particularly when the Chieftain “cut you up wi/ ready slight....” and again when “The trembling earth resounds his tread.” We all joined in a vigorous, “Gie her a Haggis!”

One of Andrew’s associates in New Jersey is Judge John Mulhern of Newton whose daughter Anne is a first classman at the United States Coast Guard Academy. It has been our pleasure these past four years to have Anne and nine of her classmates at our Burns dinner. They have added a wonderful dimension to our dinners and we are proud that they could be one of us for a few precious moments each year. Anne and her friends presented the Club with a book about the life of Robert Burns, noting how honored they have been to attend our dinners and how grateful they are to share this special celebration. Judge Mulhern said that if it is at all possible, he will assemble as many of the ten that he can, so that they can be with us next year! A very special honor for us!



We toasted Robbie and these fine young men and women who are the epitome of the Coast Guard motto *Semper Paratus*. And so the evening proceeded with dancing and merriment on the 248th anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns – “truly a great man.”

Ruth Holland Walsh  
photos by Mary Byrnie

### Try Dancing in Estonia

For those of you feeling adventurous, the International Branch of the RSCDS in cooperation with the Talinn (Estonia) SCD Group and Talinn University invite you to a weekend of Scottish Country dancing, September 28-30, 2007. There is a sight-seeing package available before the workshop and non-dancing spouses/partners

are welcome as well. The teachers will be Patrick Chamoin (France), Susi Mayr (Austria/England) and Jessie Stuart (Scotland). For more information, check [www.rscds-ib.org](http://www.rscds-ib.org).

### Teacher Needed

Dunedin Scottish Country Dancers, the largest RSCDS group in West Central Florida, is a member of the Orlando Branch. The group meets in Dunedin, FL on Sunday evenings with a Basic Class from 6:00 to 7:00 pm, and a Social Class from 7:00 to 9:30 pm, from September through April. The group's official website is <http://www.scottishdancefl.org/dunedin.html>. The group is interested in welcoming visiting dancers and encouraging preliminary and fully certificated RSCDS teachers to become part of our dancing and teaching staff as a local and/or seasonal instructor. Anyone interested in further information about the Dunedin Scottish Country Dancers should contact either Bill Possi, Chairman, via email at [wadepossi@earthlink.net](mailto:wadepossi@earthlink.net) or Cal Lloyd, Vice Chairman, via email at [clloyd02@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:clloyd02@tampabay.rr.com)

*submitted by Bill Possi (Dunedin Scottish Country Dancers Chair)*

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### 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
	<a href="mailto:lblanchard@wesleyan.edu">lblanchard@wesleyan.edu</a>

### Editor's Note

Deadline for the next newsletter is **May 15, 2007** 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](http://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](mailto:lblanchard@wesleyan.edu) so that I will have your preferred address.