

# Reel Time

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

Winter 2009

## 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 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.

*Woodbridge Scottish Country Dancers* First Church of Christ Congregational, 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 Monday of the month, 8:00 pm, New Haven Friends Meeting House, 225 East Grand Ave., New Haven. **Spring dates:** Mar. 9, April 13, May 11.

## Upcoming Events

**New Haven Branch Highland Ball** Saturday, Mar. 7, 2009, 5:00 to midnight. West Hartford Town Hall, 50 So. Main St., West Hartford. \$60 or \$65 after Feb. 23. Music by *Music Makars*: Etienne Ozorak, Fred Mamula, Jack Lindberg, Nicholas Ozorak, Elizabeth Weiss Ozorak.

**Sunday Brunch:** Mar. 8, American Legion Post #79, 43 Bradley St., Madison, CT, 11 am.

**Ball Workshop**: Saturday, Feb. 21, 2:30-5:00 pm. \$10. First Church of Christ Congregational, Middletown. Teacher, Ken Way.

For more, contact Ellie Toy, [eltoy@sbcglobal.net](mailto:eltoy@sbcglobal.net) or Lucile Blanchard, [lblanchard@wesleyan.edu](mailto:lblanchard@wesleyan.edu).

**Challenge Class I** Monday, March 16, 2009  
Green Street Arts Center, 51 Green St., Middletown. 7:00-9:15 pm, \$10. Teacher, Kent Smith. For more information, Barbara Austen at [barbara\\_austen@att.net](mailto:barbara_austen@att.net).

**Eighth Annual Tea Party** Middletown Class  
Wednesday, March 25, 2009. First Church of Christ, 190 Court St., Middletown. 7:00-9:30 pm, no fee. Social dance night with Scottish tea.

**Tartan Day** in New York City, Saturday, April 4, 2009  
Bus to the city and back. \$38.50. A fundraiser for the New Haven Branch. Registration form attached. See article below.

**Challenge Class II** Monday, April 6, 2009  
Green Street Arts Center, 51 Green St., Middletown. 7:00-9:15 pm, \$10. Teacher, Chris Ronald. For more information, Barbara Austen at [barbara\\_austen@att.net](mailto:barbara_austen@att.net).

**Rerr Terr Saturday**, April 18, 2009 Church of the Atonement, Tenafly, NJ. 5:30-11:00 pm. \$40. Music by Highland Whisky. See [www.rscds-nj.org](http://www.rscds-nj.org).

**Teachers' Workshop** Saturday, April 25, 2009  
South Britain Congregational Church, Southbury 9:30 am - 4:00 pm. Instructor, Jennie Beer. For more information, write [barbara\\_austen@att.net](mailto:barbara_austen@att.net). See article below.

**Kilts and Ghillies Ball** Saturday, April 25, 2009  
South Britain Congregational Church, Southbury, 6:00-11:00 pm. \$35. Music by *The Mary Morrison Scottish Trio*, Alice Backer, Mary Abdil, Jenny Winship. Contact Mollie Keller, [unclemollie@hotmail.com](mailto:unclemollie@hotmail.com).

**Boston Highland Ball Weekend** May 1-3, 2009  
5:30-11 pm, Nevins Hall, Framingham, MA. \$65. Music: *A Parcel of Rogues*. **Friday Welcome Dance**, May 1, Springstep, Medford, MA, 8 pm. Music: Peter Macfarland, Susie Petrov. **Sunday Brunch/Dance**: Lincoln, MA. For more information, see [www.RSCDSBOSTON.org](http://www.RSCDSBOSTON.org).

**Pawling Weekend** May 15-17, 2009. Circle Lodge, Hopewell Junction, NY. \$250 or \$325. Teachers: Eric Finley, Pat Coyle, Terry Harvey. Music: Bobby Brown's *Scottish Accent*. For more information, see [www.rscdsnewyork.org](http://www.rscdsnewyork.org).

**Challenge Class III** Monday, June 1, 2009  
Green Street Arts Center, 51 Green St., Middletown.  
7:00-9:15 pm, \$10. Teacher, Leslie Kearney. For more  
information, Barbara Austen at barbara\_austen@att.net.

**Westchester Ball**, Saturday, June 6, 2009.

**Rhode Island Scottish Highland Festival** Saturday,  
June 13, 2009, 9 am to 5 pm. Washington County  
Fairgrounds, Rt. 112 South, Richmond, RI (Exit 3,  
off Rt. 94 North). For more information, www.riscot.org

Check www.intercityscot.org for similar events.

### **Don't Forget!**

Be sure to register for the New Haven Ball and  
Brunch before the price goes up by \$5 on Feb. 23rd. If  
you don't have the registration form, you can download it  
from the Branch web site, www.rscdsnewhaven.org

### **Important notice from our President:**

#### **WARNING!**

The New Haven Branch Committee of Manage-  
ment, aka Board of Directors, is in danger. Many of its  
members have been with it for many years; in some  
cases decades. Several members in key positions have  
given notice of their intention to retire in the near future.  
It is imperative for the health and spirit of the organiz-  
ation that you who are keen on Scottish Country Dancing  
consider volunteering to join as members of the COM.  
The Branch is the structure that ties us together and  
makes the SCD experience possible for us.

The Committee of Management guides the New  
Haven Branch and sets its priorities. The annual New  
Haven Ball has been very successful, consistently well  
run, with excellent programs at an affordable price.  
Branch membership has recently risen and the Branch  
remains solvent, even in these trying times. However, it  
has not been perfect. Teacher development has unfortun-  
ately been neglected and as a result there have been few  
new teachers for several years. We have already lost one  
class for lack of a teacher, and others are in danger. This  
problem must be addressed.

As of the forthcoming AGM, retirees will include  
President, Secretary and two at-Large members. In the  
following year our treasurer plans to retire. Our Vice  
President has agreed to take on the President's task, and  
at this point there is a volunteer for one of the at-Large  
positions. Volunteers for any of these vacant positions  
are urged to contact our nominating committee, Ev  
Munro and Nina Stein. An organization is only as vital  
as its active members. If you care about this wonderful  
sport, show it now by volunteering to become a member  
of our Committee of Management.

*Ken Way*

### **What are Challenge Classes?**

The New Haven Branch has been scheduling

special Challenge Classes for several years now. Some  
dancers think the term means these are only for advanced  
dancers. Not true. These classes are held as an oppor-  
tunity for you to work with a different teacher than the  
one you have classes with. And each teacher brings a  
group of dances and figures that he or she finds espec-  
ially interesting. The only requirements are knowledge of  
all the basic figures in Scottish country dancing. Most  
dancers with several years experience will find these  
classes enlightening and enjoyable. Do try them.

### **Thanks from Catriona . . .**

White dress - check. Tartan sash - check. Red  
ghillies - check. Directions - check. Navigator, Paula -  
check.

As I prepared for our November 7th demo at Stone-  
Ridge, I ran around the house, anxious that I'd miss the  
practice dance and the demo rule is if you miss the  
practice dances, you don't do those dances in the demo.  
With Paula in the car, I drove around the StoneRidge  
complex, not sure where the building was. Then I saw a  
white dress . . . Yahoo! We parked and rushed over.  
There was Joyce, but why not in her white dress??

We came through the doorway and SURPRISE!  
Karen Pestana was the white dress decoy. The room was  
filled with friends for my 60th birthday party! I was  
totally surprised. It really does happen – your jaw falls  
down to your chest.

It was a wonderful evening and I cannot thank  
everyone enough for the work, the many emails, the  
phone conversations that went into this amazing event.  
Joyce programmed a set of dances that I love, Mardene  
had totally deceived me with her plans for this "demo,"  
Marge and Don drove back early from the south to help  
us celebrate, Betty did the tea, Ellie even came back  
from China, Lucile did her usual "roving reporter"  
photos. So many others with kind thoughts and funny  
cards made it a very special evening for me.

Many, many thanks to one and all and much love.

*Catriona MacAuslan*

P.S. And it made turning 60 less of a shock!!!

### **Middletown Holiday Dance**

On Saturday, Dec. 27th, the Middletown class held  
their holiday dance at First Church. With music by Norb  
Spencer on his accordion, a guitarist and a flautist from  
Scotland, 28 dancers enjoyed the very interesting pro-  
gram devised by Ken Way. Starting with *La Flora*, we  
got to dance three dances from the next New Haven  
Highland Ball and Brunch – *The Enchanted Garden*, *The  
Clansmen*, and *Crowcombe and Stogumber* which ends  
with an interesting figure that has all four corners turning  
in place to face a different direction as the first couple  
petronellas. By the time we danced *Reel of Mey*, every-  
one felt they had fully celebrated the holidays. And the  
refreshments, provided by Middletown dancers, were the  
best possible fuel for the evening.

## Bus Trip for Tartan Day

Would you like to join hundreds of fans of things Scottish in New York City to celebrate Tartan Day? The New Haven Branch decided to try for a different kind of fund raiser and hire a bus to take us to the city and back on Saturday, April 4th. We will arrive after 10 am and return at 7 pm, giving us loads of time to do what we want – shop, go to a museum, have lunch – before the parade starts at 2 pm. We have been signed up to march for our Branch. The parade will go from 45th Street on 6th Avenue up to 58th Street. Then, of course, time to sample a pub or two. The cost for the round trip is \$38.50. And just think – you'll be able to combine the pleasures of the day with a contribution to your Branch.

The registration form is attached to the newsletter. For more information, contact Ev Munro at Bonnie-laddie63@aol.com. If you cannot take part but would like to contribute \$10 toward this fundraiser, you can mail a check to Ev. His address is on the registration form. Tartan Day could be seen as the American Scot's answer to St. Patrick's Day. The Irish can't have all the fun. For further information on Tartan Day, check [www.TartanWeek.com](http://www.TartanWeek.com).

## Why the New Brunch Location?

It has come as a surprise to many Branch members to learn that this year's Brunch dance, to be held on Sunday March 8th, will not be at the Medical Society building in New Haven. The New Haven Branch Board discussed the news that this building was up for sale at several meetings this fall. While one might think in this market there's a good chance of the building still being available in March, the Board couldn't take that chance. So many people attending the Ball weekend come from out of state, it would be impossible to notify them at the last minute if the Society building was sold.

So the Board appointed a committee to look for a new space. Ev Munro, Catriona MacAuslan and Joyce Chase checked out possibilities separately in various towns in central Connecticut. Then on the afternoon of January 2nd, Catriona, Joyce, Ellie Toy and Lucile Blanchard (the Ball co-chairs) went on a hunt. We looked at church halls, VFW halls, grange halls, even the Hungarian Potato Society hall. The prices for some were high, the size of the dance floor not big enough, the kitchen facilities inadequate. When we walked into the American Legion Post #79 in Madison, we gave a collective sigh of relief. Beautiful wood floor, very clean kitchen and the price was reasonable. Also lots of parking space available and it is right off Rt. 79, near the Connecticut Turnpike exit – very easy to find. We hope it lives up to its potential.

*Lucile Blanchard*

## Teachers' Workshop

A Teachers' Workshop is scheduled for Saturday, April 25, 2009 at the South Britain Congregational Church in Southbury, CT. This is where the Kilts &

Ghillies Ball will be held that same evening. The workshop will run from 9:30 am to 4:00 pm with the instructor Jennie Beer from Philadelphia.

Part of her focus will be using techniques from other types of dance instruction in teaching SCD. The topics will be: Participatory learning – how to encourage dancers to teach each other and themselves; Describing, teaching, briefing, showing, and prompting – How to change what you say and how you think for each; If you don't look for "faults," what could you look for instead?

The workshop is open to teachers and those who might be interested in teaching. The price is still being determined. For more information, contact Barbara Austen at (203) 630-9749 or [barbara\\_austen@att.net](mailto:barbara_austen@att.net).

*Barbara Austen*

## Mystic Burns Night

The Mystic Scottish Country Dancers hosted its 21st annual Burns Dinner and Dance on Saturday, Jan. 31 at the Groton Inn and Suites. The weather was cold but clear as some 365 guests arrived to honor Robert Burns on the 250th anniversary of his birth. The national bard of Scotland was born in Ayr at the upper end of a little green island in the North Sea “well away from pretty nearly everything.” Our formal program was emceed by Neil Sharpe from Rumford, RI.



After the Color Guard opened the proceedings, the Mystic Highland Pipe Band played several traditional march tunes such as *Highland Laddie* as well as *Coming Thru the Rye* and *Will Ye Nae Come Back Again* and finally *A Man's A Man for A' That*. The Band concluded with moving renditions of *Amazing Grace* and *Auld Lang Syne*.



This was followed by the Stirling Highland Dance Company performing *Reel of Tulloch*, a spirited Sword Dance by four of the band members, and then a small pipe group entitled *The Mystic Haggis* playing Robbie's own *Loch Lomand*. 'Twas a bonnie way to begin the evening.



The Mystic Scottish Country Dancers, taught by Joyce Chase and Linda Scent, performed *The Drunken Sailor* and *The Lea Rig*, an elegant strathspey that recognizes Burns' poem, *I'll Meet Thee on the Lea Rig*. We hoped our audience could picture a lad venturing out on the lea rig of a pasture at twilight to meet his bonnie lass. This was followed by more from the Stirling dancers.



We know that Robbie more than appreciated the bonnie lasses he encountered in his short life. He's said to have fathered 14 children. He did adore his first love, beautiful Jean Armour, but because of his "straitened circumstances" marriage was impossible. Their informal contract of marriage was recognized by Scottish law. Their first born twins died shortly after birth, and their last child, Maxwell, was born on the day that Robbie was buried, July 22, 1796. We were privileged to hear JoAnne Hardin Gauss, whose grandmother was a relative of Jean Armour, reminisce about Robbie and his Bonnie Jean. She gave us a stunning picture of their meeting, courtship, marriage and probable turbulent life together.

Band Member and Scottish Country Dancer Dave Lees presented *The Immortal Memory*, noting that Robbie Burns has lived on for 250 years through his verse, his passions and his ideals. "In his short life, Robbie changed our perception and perhaps even our experience of the world we inhabit." What "he achieved was done through the setting down in verse and song the language and longing of the human heart:

"But pleasures are like poppies spread  
You seize the flower, its bloom is shed;  
Or like the snow falls in the river,  
A moment white, then melts forever."

It is Dave's hope that we will be inspired to rediscover our true selves, to think more kindly about our fellow men, and to work to make the world a better place.



Our own Andrew Fraser gave Robbie Burns' address, *Ode To A Haggis*, with the help of Steve Ingraham, Piper; Mark Davis, Haggis Bearer; Rob Davis, Dirk Bearer; and Minna DeGaetano, Poosie Nancy. Andrew performs an interactive rendition of the Ode, asking the audience for rousing sound effects, particularly when the Chieftain "cut you up wi' ready slight" and again when "The trembling earth resounds his tread." And we all joined in with a vigorous, "Gie her a Haggis!" Robbie would have been proud of us!

Dorothy Lohmann offered Robbie's *Selkirk Grace* and then dinner was served. We were pleased to give each guest a Robbie Burns lapel pin with his portrait and the dates, 1759-1796. After dinner and some rousing toasts, the social dancing program started with *A Highland Welcome*, ending with *Auld Lang Syne*. The dinner and the brunch that followed on Sunday morning were an outstanding success and we are already planning for Burns Night 2010 on the 13th of February.

*Ruth Walsh*

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS:** The Mystic Scottish Country Dancers will host a Fall Ceilidh on Friday, October 16, 2010 from 7:00 pm until.....at the Groton Inn and Suites. More information to follow.

### Reminder: Dancing Duds

Do remember to bring your gently used clothes to the New Haven Brunch on Sunday, March 8, 2009 at the American Legion Post in Madison. Mardene Hof will hold a clothing sale there. Get in touch with Catriona MacAuslan if you want to turn in your clothing before then. She can be reached at (203) 421-4060 or [catriona@newhaventravel.com](mailto:catriona@newhaventravel.com).

**Minutes of the New Haven Branch Board** meetings are available to all Branch members. If you want a copy, let Barbra Link know (blink6325@yahoo.com).

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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
	Catherine Mahoney (203) 879-6000
	Ev Munro (860) 442-7283
	Nina Stein (203) 757-2539

Membership	Ed Davis (203) 264-087
Web Master	David Keller

Newsletter	Lucile Blanchard (860) 347-0278 lblanchard@wesleyan.edu
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**Editor's Note**

Deadline for the next newsletter is **May 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](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 so that I will have your preferred address.

**RESERVATION INFORMATION – TARTAN DAY BUS TO NYC**

**Saturday, April 4, 2009**

Please print all information:

Name(s)\_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone Number\_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone Number\_\_\_\_\_

Departure Point (circle):

6:30 a.m. Stonington I-95 Exit 91 commuter lot (Route 234)

7:00 a.m. Waterford Wal-Mart Crossroads Plaza I-95 Exit 81

7:45 a.m. Madison Park & Ride Commuter Lot I-95 Exit 62 (Route 79)

8:00 a.m. West Haven Park & Ride I-95 Exit 42 (Route 162) Saw Mill Road

Send check or Money Order payable to: RSCDS New Haven Branch,  
C/O Everett Munro – 189 Glenwood Avenue – New London, CT 06320

\_\_\_\_\_seats @ \$38.50 each = \$\_\_\_\_\_enclosed

Boarding pass will be sent via e-mail when payment is received.

Thank you for supporting  
The New Haven Branch of the Royal Scottish Dance Society