

Reel Time

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

Winter 2011

Class Schedules

Greater Hartford Scottish Country Dance Class
Grace Episcopal Church on the Green, 311 Broad St.,
Windsor CT. Tuesday 7:00 to 9:45 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, 9 Ethan Allen Highway (Rte 7),
Branchville CT. Tuesday 7:30 to 9:30 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 7:00 to 9:30 pm. Beginners, 7-8 pm;
Intermediates, 8:15-9:30 pm. No charge for classes.
Contact Ruth Walsh 860-536-6265 or
www.mysticsscottishdancers.com.

New Haven Branch Scottish Country Dance Class
Whitney Arts Center, 591 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 **New Location!**
Bunker Hill Congregational Church, 274 Bunker Hill
Ave, Waterbury CT. Friday 7:00 to 9:30 pm. Parking is
on the street and the hall is on the lower level. Contact
Donna Ives 203-393-3713 or Mollie Keller 203-375-
2840.

Peter Price's Class Second Monday of the month class.
New Haven Friends Meeting House, 225 East Grand
Ave., New Haven. From 7:30 to 9:30 pm. Contact
Peter Price 203-675-9587

Upcoming Events

New Haven Branch Highland Ball: Saturday, March 5,
2011, 5:00 pm to midnight. West Hartford Community
Center, 50 South Main Street, West Hartford, CT 06107.
Music by Tullochgorum. Visit the New Haven branch
site at <http://www.rscdsnewhaven.org/home/start.asp>
for applications and details.

Please send in your reservations as soon as
possible. The fee is \$60 for the ball and brunch if you
register before February 21st.

If you haven't received a registration form through the
mail or picked one up at your class, you can find it on the
RSCDS New Haven Branch website at
<http://rscdsnewhaven.org>

Sunday Brunch: March 6, High Lane Club, 40 High
Lane, North Haven, CT. 11:00 am, dancing at 12:30.
We will again be holding the "Dancing Duds" sale at the
brunch, so please bring any gently used clothing to sell
as this is a major fund raiser for the branch.

Ball Workshops: February 19, 2-5 PM, First Church of
Christ Congregational, 190 Court Street, Middletown
CT. Ken Way is teaching – cost is \$8.
Reservations have been made at Haveli Indian
Restaurant for those who might like to dine after the
workshop. Please RSVP to Susan Leff at
etdavis4@netzero.net if would like to dine. For more
information on the workshop call 203 879-6000 or
harpdancer@gmail.com.

Tenth Annual Tea Party Middletown Class
Wednesday, March 30, 2010. First Church of Christ, 190
Court St., Middletown. 7:00-9:30 pm, no fee. Social
dance night with Scottish tea. Call Lucile Blanchard,
860-347-0278, for more information.

Capital Weekend A Scottish Country Dance Weekend
workshop, April 1 – 3, 2011 at Cherry Hill Park
Convention Center, College Park, MD. For more
information see www.capitalweekend.org

Rerr Terr Tenafly, NJ Saturday, April 2, 2011 5:30
PM to 11:00 PM.. Tickets \$40 if purchased by March
25, \$45 at the door. Music by Highland Whiskey. For
more information see www.rscds-nj.org.

Tartan Day - April 9, 2011. Transportation provided
by bus. Event includes marching in the New York
Tartan Day parade and a meal at the St Andrews
Restaurant and Bar. For a reservation form visit
www.mysticsscottishdancers.com/Links.html

Kilts and Ghillies 2011 Tea Dance – Kilts and Ghillies
Tea Dance is coming 30 April 2011. The dance runs
from 3:00 PM to 7:00 PM with light refreshments.
Music is provided by Thistle Hill.

Boston Highland Ball Weekend – RSCDS Boston
Branch May 6, 7, and 8, 2011. Music by The Music
Makers. Program information and ticket forms will be
available online by March 2011 at www.rscdsboston.org.

Pawling Weekend – 48th Annual Spring Weekend at the Circle Lodge, Hopewell Junction, NY - May 20 - May 22, 2011. More information at www.rscdsnewyork.org.

Celtic Music Cruise – June 4 – 11 2011. Vancouver Inside Passage, stopping at Juneau, Skagway and Ketchikan.



Live concerts, ceilidhs, music workshops, and a **Scottish Country Dance**. This cruise looks like one heck of a lot of fun! Check <http://www.celticmusiccruise.com> for more info or contact Violet at Montrose Travel (800 301-9673)

Scottish Pinewoods Sessions – July 6 – 16, 2011.

Check <http://www.intercityscot.org> for similar events.

Middletown Class Fall Party

Better late than never... I forgot to put this item in the last issue of Reel Time. On Saturday, Oct. 30, the Middletown Class held their annual Fall Party at First Church. Norb Spencer and his friends provided the great music. His friends include Rebecca McCallum who played so beautifully at the Nutmeg Workshop the week before. There were six musicians in all and sadly, only a few more dancers.



Fifteen of them came wearing a wide variety of costumes and kilts. Seen here are Marge Wills, Lucile Blanchard, Alwyn Thorpe, Bob and Mary Brynie and Tim Hawley.



The rest of the crew included Marge Hawley, Alice Hencir, Ellie Toy, Key Way, Barbara Link and Paula Pan. Ken Way, dressed as the 'Great White Hunter' and was caught observing the performance through his binoculars. Norb's program was fun, starting with *Jubilee Jig* and including such favorites as *Davy Nick Nack* and *The Gentleman*, but also testing us with *Airie Bennan* and *The Bramble Bush*. At the break, we attacked the table of treats that people had brought in and the evening ended with a fine romp through *J. B. Milne*.

Dave lees, Lucile Blanchard

Jeannie Carmichael Ball

The 2010 Jeannie Carmichael Ball was held in the Crest Room at The Thayer Hotel on the weekend of November 13th.

Jeannie Carmichael was the moving force in Scottish country dancing in the U.S. In 1947 she inaugurated the first Scottish dance group in North America to be affiliated with the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society.

In 1954, Miss Carmichael was invited to New York City by Mary Ann Herman, of Folk Dance House, to conduct a Scottish country dance workshop. A number of New York dancers were so impressed with the grace and elegance of the dance that they began to practice on their own. In the fall of 1955, Miss Carmichael came to New York City every other week to teach. In May, 1959 the group became a bonafide branch of the RSCDS.

Jeannie Carmichael died on September 6, 1966, and in November 1968, the New York Branch held its first weekend workshop and ball as a memorial to her.

The ball was attended by a contingent of Connecticut dancers.



Included in the group were Ellie Toy, Everett Monroe and Lucile Blanchard.



Becky Corbett, Paula Yu Pan and Joyce Chase.

The Thayer Hotel is perched on a hilltop in Upstate New York, with commanding views of the Hudson River and the United States Military Academy at West Point. It was a beautiful fall weekend and the scenery was magnificent.



The program started with a sherry party (of course), followed by a dinner, a grand march and then dancing... starting with *Lady Catherine Bruce's Reel* and finishing up the evening with *Reel of the Royal Scots* – always a favorite.

The music for the dance was provided by *The Parcel of Rogues* – Calum Pasqua, Suzie Petrov, and Dan Houghton.



Due to scheduled surgery I had been placed on the 'Don't Dance' list by my doctor. So I figured... maybe just the grand march and the first dance. The

music played the *Parcel of Rogues* was fantastic and I found myself on the dance floor repeatedly until ending up with the *Reel of the Royal Scots*. I was very fortunate to be able to attend the after party and make use of the medicinal benefits of the beverages served.

The next morning included a fine brunch followed by more dancing to the music of the *Parcel of Rogues*. The brunch program started with *The Isle* and ended with *Mairi's Wedding*. Sanity reigned for me that morning and I spent my time chasing squirrels along the Hudson River.

Dave Lees

Middletown Holiday Dance

On Wednesday, Dec. 28th, the Middletown class held their annual holiday party and 27 dancers attended from all over Connecticut. Norb Spencer and his friends were scheduled to play. Unfortunately, Norb couldn't make it at the last minute but his four friends managed very well. As usual, Middletown dancers provided a tasty selection of treats to sample during the break.



The program, devised by Ken Way, was very friendly, starting with *Collichur*, then *The Fiddlehead*, a dance new to us from the Dunsmuir Collection. Three of the dances are on the New Haven Ball program. When we came to *Hollin Buss*, Ken described his research into the name, coming to the decision that it was named after a Dutch ship (buss). And by the time we romped through *Mrs. MacLeod*, everyone felt they'd had a wonderful evening.

Lucile Blanchard

George Thomson Surprise 60th Birthday Party

A surprise 60th birthday party was held for George Thomson at the New England Carousel Museum in Bristol Ct on Jan 16th. George, a member of the New Haven group was told that he was scheduled to play his pipes for a wedding party.



George showed up in full Scottish dress with his pipes and was totally surprised to find the party was for him. Mickey Koth and John Kalinowski headed up a fabulous band that played both Scottish and contra dance tunes. The hit of the party was George playing bag pipes for a contra dance. Dances were taught by Bill Fischer, Dave Lindsey and Brian Haeckler.

The New England Carousel Museum is the location that the 'W' (we haven't finalized a name for the Waterbury/Windsor group yet) uses for dance practice and it is a very interesting place. It was founded as a nonprofit educational organization in 1990, in Bristol, Connecticut. At that time, the Carousel Museum rented 10,000 square feet of space on the first floor of the restored 33,000 sq. ft. factory building at 95 Riverside Avenue, and displayed a diverse collection of carousel art and memorabilia.

The Museum has matured considerably over the past 20 years, and it continues to grow and evolve. The Museum of Fire History opened to the public on the second floor of the building in June, 2002.

The unique aspect of the second floor is the major uncommitted floor space which will be kept open for all to use. The second floor is where dance practice takes place. With the many improvements that have been made to the building, there are now many facility rentals at the Museum, including wedding, bar mitzvahs, dinners and performances. All of the activities at the museum help to generate income for the Museum. Recently \$15,000.00 worth of chandeliers were donated to the Museum and are now installed on the second floor. The lighting has turned the area into a majestic facility rental hall.

Dave Lees

New Haven Ball Workshops

A New Haven Ball workshop was held on 23 January 2010 at the New England Carousel Museum with instruction provided by Brian Haeckler. The workshop was well attended and although the it was a frigid day it took no time at warm up after a few practice dances.

There is all sorts of neat stuff in the Carousel museum and it was a bit of a challenge to round everyone up to actually practice the dances.



Seen here are Everett Munro and Rick Corbett comparing their looks to the Greek God Apostrophes (the god of punctuation). Brian provided excellent instruction for many of ball dances and emphasized that 'visualizing' the steps and identifying recovery points were key to getting through the dances in a dignified manner.



Brian is seen here teaching a dance without a walk-through... instead emphasis is on listening and visualizing movements through the steps. As you can see from this photo, there is a very nice dance floor for practicing and there are also lot of toys to play with. The Carousel Museum is not the easiest place to find by car but it is well worth the trip.



In this rare photo we see Catriona's mischievous side. She was heard saying 'Who me?'... while trying to explain that she was totally innocent and had nothing to do with the Whoopee cushion that somehow showed up on one of the chairs during a break in the dance instruction.

Dave Lees

Kilts and Ghillies Ball

The program for this year's Kilts and Ghillies is still a work in practice and is subject to changes:

Program for Kilts & Ghillies Ball

Hooper's Jig	32J3	Misc 2
The Burn of Sorrow	32S2/3	Barry Priddey
Auchindrain	32R3	Peter Price
Mrs Stewart's Jig	32J3	Book 35/1
The Cashmere Shawl	32S3	Iain Boyd
Da Rain Dancin'	32R3	Ron Wallace
Monymusk	32S3	11/2
Lang May Your Lum Reek	32J2C/3C	Barry Priddey
Fireside Reel	32R3	18C
Quarrie's Jig	32J3	36/3
The Piper and the Penguin	88R4 sq	Roy Goldring
Gypsy Dreams	32S2/4C	Terry Glasspool
Miss Muriel Johnstone's Jig	32J3	Dale Birdsall
Linnea's Strathspey	32S3	Dunsmuir Dances
Knights' Heys	32H3	Terry Glasspool
Gordon of Straloch	32S3	Peter Price
Scottish Reform	32J2/3C	3/1
Mairi's Wedding	40R3	Cosh

Rhode Island Burns Supper

Several members of the Mystic Scottish Dances braved the weather on the 5th of February 2011 to attend the 48th Annual Burns Supper at *Rhodes-on-the-Pawtuxet* in Cranston, Rhode Island. The ballroom and gazebo were constructed in 1915 and were added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1978. The ballroom is over 10,000 square feet in size and can accommodate over 2,000 guests.

There is a second floor balcony in the ballroom and you can comfortably view the dances and performances from that vantage point. However, when you are in a balcony you do have to remember that if you are wearing a kilt the view from below may include some surprises as Everett Monroe discovered.



Everett is seen here taking in the aerial view with his wife Sarah. The group that attended the ball included Everett and Sarah Monroe, Ruth Walsh, Bill

and Colleen Cournoyer, Minna DeGaetano, Dave Lees, Linda Scent and the happy couple below:



Kat and Casey Kliphon.

It was a wonderful evening with dance music provided by *The Irish Express*. The Immortal Memory to Robert Burns was presented by Dr Michael A Bharier who described the remarkable international appeal of a poor poet born over 250 years ago. He speculated that it was possible that during conflict with Mexico in the past that the Scottish troops singing of ***Green Grow the Rushes O'*** could have been the origin of the term **gringo**. True or not it is fun to speculate.

The evening would not have been complete without bagpipes and The Rhode Island Highlanders put on a memorable performance of marching and piping. The view from the balcony was incredible. The group from Mystic stayed to the very end of the program and in doing so they not only participated in the last song of *Auld Lang Syne*, they avoided a torrential rainstorm that had started earlier in the evening.

Dave Lees

Groton Burns Supper

The Mystic Scottish Country Dancers hosted its 27th annual Robert Burns Dinner on Saturday, the 12th of February. The ballroom at the Groton Inn and Suites was resplendent with All Things Scottish, including Bob Byrnie's beautiful painting of the Eilean Donan Castle against a background of the St. Andrew's Cross that reaches through storm clouds into the night sky. The castle, located near the Isle of Skye, dates back to the 13th Century.



Mary and Bob had visited the Castle some ten years ago and were so charmed with its setting and history that he painted the picture, and dedicated it to his grandfather, James J. Byrnie. We are proud to display the Castle Eilean Donan at our functions; on our Burns Night, it provided an elegant backdrop for our talented musicians, Susie Petrov and The Parcel of Rogues. They provided such lively and danceable music that our toes were tapping as we were drawn to the dance floor to try our hand at many Scottish social dances as well as to foxtrots and waltzes.

The 252nd Celebration of Robbie birth began with a presentation by the Mystic Highland Pipe Band – and was followed with the introduction of a Specialty Group of our dancers who performed an Argyle Broadsword Dance, choreographed and directed by our own Dave Lees.



He was joined by Joyce Chase, Everett Munro and Minna DeGaetano who performed the intricate steps as they danced over their broadswords. The pipe music for the dancers was provided by our own Scottish Dancer Colleen Cournoyer, a talented member of the Pipe Band and a junior at Norwich Free Academy. Colleen has been playing the pipes for some 7 years and with Danny Pisoloski are co-founders of the Norwich Free Academy Pipe Club. Danny is also a junior at Norwich Free Academy and has been playing the bagpipes for more than 8 years. Danny provided a pipe serenade for the audience that was spellbinding as he skillfully played on the special bagpipes that he won while competing last year at the United States Junior Piping championships.

The audience was treated to several dances by members of the Stirling Highland Dance Company – A Highland Reel, a Six Person Broadsword Dance and Seann Truibhas. The story of Seann Truibhas tells of the fact that the wearing any tartan, and particularly kilts, was forbidden under penalty of death in 1746 after the Battle of Culloden. The dance has two tempos...the slower beginning tempo displays how the Scots felt wearing those hated tight English trousers and their attempts to remove them...and then the second, faster tempo, shows the freedom they felt once they were back in their kilts. And what a celebration that was!



The Mystic Scottish Country Dancers performed the dance, *The Clumsy Lover*. While introducing the dance, Neil Sharpe was quick to note that the title of the dance was no reflection on Robert Burns. The title was probably named after a fabulous pipe tune, a favorite of many of our dancers. The second dance was an elegant and graceful strathspey, *Laurelwood*, written by James Ferguson – a dancer, teacher and good friend of the Connecticut dancers who currently lives in New York. Fergie wrote this dance to honor 3 Connecticut dancers – two of whom (Joyce and Catriona) were dancing with the group that evening.

Dave Lees presented *The Immortal Memory*. He stressed that the legacy of Robert Burns has survived “in the heart and minds of those who have read his words, his ideas and feelings...inspirational poetry and songs, works that have survived wars, revolutions, and technological advances.” Robbie’s songs and poems span the whole spectrum of human experience. Robbie’s works make us proud and patriotic; makes us ashamed of man’s inhumanity to man; shows us the beauties of nature; opens our eyes to the pathos of the human condition and his appeal is universal.”

Dave reminded us that “When *Auld Lang Syne* rings across the world; whenever love is compared to a red rose; when man dares to consider himself the equal of his self-appointed master, Burns is there!”



Our own Andrew Fraser gave Robbie Burns’ address *Ode to a Haggis*, with the help of Piper Bob Scent, Haggis Bearer Mark Davis, Dirk Bearer Rob Davis and Minna DeGaetano as Posie Nancy. Andrew performs an “interactive” rendition of the Ode, asking the audience to provide rousing sound effects, particularly when the Chieftain “cut you up wi’ ready slight” and again when “The trembling earth resounds his treat!” And we all joined in with a vigorous, “Gie

here a haggis!!”... Robbie would have been mighty proud of us all!!

After a sumptuous dinner and rousing toasts, the social dancing program began with Linda Scent coordinating (and calling) all. Susie and her talented musicians provided the music – and we truly had “a ball” until time for *Auld Lang Syne*.

It was a fantastic evening...and we did indeed rejoice for such a splendid evening AND the fact that there was NO SNOW!!!

Ruth Walsh

Changing the name of the Branch

The question of changing our current branch name from the ‘New Haven Branch’ to the ‘Connecticut Branch’ has come up again due to our expanding membership in the state. As you read this feel free to provide your preference regarding this item to your branch representative so that it can be discussed at the next branch board meeting.

Minutes of the New Haven Branch Board meetings are available to all Branch members. If you want a copy, let Barbara Garton know (barbaragarton@earthlink.com).

RSCDS New Haven Branch Officers

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President	Catriona MacAuslan 203-421-4060
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Secretary	Barbara Garton 860-871-0321
Treasurer	Stephen Rice 203-630-9749
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Editor's Note

Deadline for the next newsletter is **May 15** for publication by the end of the month. The new editor will welcome all of your reports, and particularly all calendar listings. David Lees' email is david.g.lees@pfizer.com or dglees@comcast.net.

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