

Reel Time

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

Summer 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.

Classes begin 5 September

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 7 September

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.

Classes begin 9 September

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.

Classes begin 13 September.

Waterbury Scottish Country Dancers Bunker Hill Congregational Church, 274 Bunker Hill Ave, Waterbury CT. Friday 7:30 to 9:30 pm. Parking is on the street and the hall is on the lower level. Contact Cate Mahoney 203-879-6000 or Mollie Keller 203-375-2840. **Classes begin 9 September**

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 Hampshire Highlands Aug. 26-28, 2011. St. Methodios Faith & Heritage Center, Contoocook, NH Teachers: Dale Birdsall, Robert McOwen, Andy Taylor-Blenis.. Musicians: Peter Macfarland, Joanne Garton, Susie

Petrov. For more information visit the website at <http://www.rscdsboston.org/events-NHHIGHLANDS.html/>

New Hampshire Highland Games Sept 16-18, 2011. Loon Mountain Ski Resort, Lincoln, NH. For more information visit www.nhscot.org.

Teacher Candidates Appreciation Dance Sept 24, 2011. Park Avenue Congregational Church, 50 Paul Revere, Arlington, MA. Join in dance to congratulate the teacher candidates upon their class completion. Tickets are \$10. For more information contact: Lea Sewell 617-903-3379 or visit <http://www.rscdsboston.org/events-calendar.html>.

Goshen Scottish Festival Oct 1, 2011. Goshen Fairgrounds, Goshen Connecticut. 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM – Rain or Shine! <http://www.sasct.org/festival.html>

Scotland Highland Games Oct 9, 2011 (Sunday) Edward Waldo Homestead, Waldo Road, Scotland, CT. 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM. For more information visit www.finitesite.com/scotlandgames.

Mystic Fall Ceilidh Oct 14, 2011 (Friday) Groton Inn and Suites. Starts at 7:00 PM.

Brunswick Fall Dance Party Oct 15, 2011. Topsham Grange Hall, Topsham, Maine. Music provided by Boston Hospitality. For more information contact Patti Tillotson 207-833-2329 or visit <http://www.rscdsboston.org/events-calendar.html>.

Sixth Annual Nutmeg Workshop Sat. Oct. 22, 2011 First Church, 190 Court Street, Middletown, CT. From 1:00 – 9:00 pm. Cost \$38. The teachers are Ralph Stoddard and Stella Fogg. For more information, contact [Lucile Blanchard](mailto:Lucile.Blanchard@waterburyct.org), 860-347-0278.

Jeannie Carmichael Ball Saturday, November 5, 2011 Music by Parcel of Rogues. The MacArthur Ballroom at the Thayer Hotel, US Military Academy at West Point, New York. Ball tickets \$75/person. For more information contact Wendy Pally at 646-263-0999 or visit <http://www.rscdsnewyork.org/>.

Dance Scottish 2011 Over the last few years, Dance Scottish Week has become such a firm feature of the Scottish Dance calendar worldwide. As a result for Dance Scottish 2011 will run from 4 Nov – 3 Dec. <http://www.rscds.org/events/dance-scottish-week.html>

Pinewoods Benefit Ball Sunday, 4 December 2011 at 2 PM. Old Town Hall, Salem, Massachusetts. Music by Tullochgorum! For further information & hospitality arrangements call 617-928-0398 or visit <http://www.rscdsboston.org/events-calendar.html>

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

From Catriona

Dear Dancers,

Many thanks for the many cards and phone call following my hip surgery!! I just loved the array of doggie/johnny coat/healing cards...even a turtle with ghillies!!! The rehab owner, when trying to place something on my bureau, said "you have too many friends...there is no room to put anything for all the cards"!!

I miss you all and while I am stumping around my house on my cane, I long and look forward to being able to skip change again!!

Thanks again.
Catriona

Middletown End of Season Dance (June 15th)

In the middle of June...June 15th to be exact, the Middletown Scottish Country Dancing Class held their Annual Meeting and the final dance of the class season. There were about 20 people in attendance and our teacher, Ken Way, led us through an assortment of wonderful dances which were not mind bending but did require us to focus on what we were doing. This was a bit difficult because many of us were in a party mood but we did our best so as not to discourage our teacher.



After a fine evening of dancing everyone relaxed to discuss the annual meeting and since teachers are not paid for teaching classes, the Middletown class presented teacher Key Way with a gift certificate for "a job well done." It was a delightful evening.

Everett Munroe

Round Hill Games (July 2)

Clear blue skies, a wonderful breeze, fish and chips and massed pipe bands, all along with Scottish Country dancing...what more could you want!! Oh, and yes, forgot to mention the wedding!!



Our intrepid group of Connecticut dancers met and immediately joined erecting the two tents for our dance booth, setting up the generator and we were open for business !! The new location for the dancers, set among the clan tents, was a big improvement over previous years...We all love the electrified pipe band that we have historically been next to...it is wonderful to listen to that music but not when we have to compete with them musically.

This year we were able to actually hear our dance music (yes!) and thus able to dance virtually all day. We had audience participation and were able to introduce/encourage some youngsters in joining the fun and some simple dances Joyce Chase devised. We were also able to attract some dancers who had put aside their ghillies for years...our fine music and friendly attitude had them joining in the dance...coming back to the fold!

With the Connecticut, New Jersey, New York dancers joining in, we had two complete sets for a good part of the day...and Joyce had organized several dances that were fun and familiar...but we also had spontaneous requests for other choices which she was able to provide from her large dance repertoire!!

As usual, food/beverage/vendors were up and running all day...tasty and refreshing...!! The Games culminated in the wedding of two members of the Round Hill Games board who met and got engaged at the previous Games. They had their wedding ceremony at this year's Games and brought the Games to a close with the bride and groom leading the massed pipes onto the field.!!



With Everett Monroe as the representative of clan Monroe, he felt compelled to share his knowledge. He spent most of the afternoon teaching William Douglass the fine art of marching-in-step.

Kudos to all those dancers who participated, set up and broke down the tents/generator etc and of course to Joyce for devising the program..

Weather, events and of course, dancing, made this year's Games a great success

Catriona

Mystic End of Season and The Rhode Island Highland Festival

The Mystic Scottish Country Dancers ended the dance year in a bit of a whirl-wind. While Joyce Chase was in Scotland on a well earned vacation, our superb back-up instructor Linda Scent prepared us for the 13th annual Rhode Island Scottish Highland Festival, held at the Washington County Fairgrounds on Saturday, the 11th of June.

Actually, our dress-rehearsal for the Festival was held on the Friday night previous (the 10th) at StoneRidge in Mystic where we shared in a delicious end-of-the-year pot-luck dinner and then danced away the calories we had just taken in!! This year's Rhode Island Festival was dedicated to the memory of Grace McPherson who was a one of our group for many years – and was very active with the RI Group as well as working the Clan McPherson booth at Scottish Festivals all over New England.

Grace was remembered as a superb lady who was an example for us all....and she was indeed a wonderful presence at all events Scottish. And how we miss her beautiful smile and “can-do” attitude!



Stoneridge has a great room for dancing practice and we were determined to present several different examples of Scottish Country Dancing at the Festival. Seen in the picture above are Everett Munroe, Joyce Chase, Rick and Becky Corbett, Alison Pollick, and Jane Leibert... the photographer (me) abandoned his post in first position. Our presentation at the games was to be just prior to the Opening Ceremonies and the Massed Bands and right after a rocking presentation by the group - Albannach. They are a hard act to follow! In addition, our numbers were relatively small given the fact that many of our members were on an Alaskan Cruise hooting it up. That merry band include Rick and Becky Corbett, Peter and Jane Liebert and Cariona MacAuslan,

Don Fisher. We trust they were thinking of us as they enjoyed the beauty of the Pacific-Northwest (right.....).

The weather on the day of the games was chancy at best. There was a threat of a nice thunderstorm hanging over the parade grounds most of the morning and that drove us to the clan tents for refuge and a little something ‘to warm up out enthusiasm’.



Joyce is seen here catching Everett as he was trying to sneak back to his clan tent during some demonstration dances. Though we all knew that the grassy area at the Fairground we would be a bit difficult to dance on, we had no idea that they hadn't mowed it for a week. This created a unique challenge... ever danced when your feet were tied together? That is what it felt like on the first dance and we created a new step called ‘the heap’. We learned quickly though... we just had to step higher and we completed all three lively dances that we had picked.

And thus it was that we presented all three fun dances that were well received – and NONE of the dancers tripped (thank goodness): We smiled away as we danced *Follow Me Home* a 32 bar jig....*Fun and Flirtation* a 32 bar Strathspey and *It's Nae Bother* - another 32 bar jig. We all decided that if we made errors, everyone would forgive us as we smiled and danced “with vigor!”



This bonnie hound was into *Folow me Home* but he just couldn't seem to get his strathspey step to work (he was much better at reels). After our demonstration we

returned to our ‘base’ to offer social dance instruction nearest to a pine grove – but the many visitors were attempting to see and do as much as possible before the “occasional showers” descended upon us in the early afternoon. The rain did descend – and we beat it home to the warm shelter of our homes, with visions of Pinewoods, other summer Scottish festivals and the Nutmeg Workshop on our mind.

Several of our dancers are also members of Scottish pipe bands.... We are very proud that our Colleen Cournoyer received a blue ribbon for grade 2 piobaireachd (commonly called the classic music of the bagpipe) with the tune *Lament for Donald of Laggan*. She not only dances like a dream – but she pipes most beautifully!

Ruth Walsh, Dave Lees

Celtic Cruise to Alaska (Inside Passage)

This year a merry band of dancers including Catriona MacAuslan, Don Fisher, Peter and Jane Leibert and Becky and Rick Corbett took a Celtic Music Cruise to Alaska.



It's almost impossible to get everyone in one picture because there is so much going on all the time and everyone is running around having way too much fun.



Peter (with Jane seen above) struck up a lively version of Mairi's Wedding on his concertina as the *ms Zuiderdam* pulled away from the pier in Vancouver at 5:00 pm on Saturday, June 4th.

The cruise featured performers including Alasdair Fraser (Scottish fiddler) and Natalie Haas (cellist), The April Verch Band (Appalachian/Celtic/old-time music, with April on fiddle and her band members on banjo, bass, what have you – April is also an incredibly accomplished Ottawa Valley-style step dancer), and Matt & Shannon Heaton from Boston (Shannon on Irish flute/vocals and Matt on guitar, bouzouki, bodhran and vocals). Stellar musicians all!

The “Celtic Cruisers” group was comprised of about 150 people from all over North America (the total passenger count on the ship was around 1,900), and in addition to the professional “headliners,” there were amateur musicians, singers, dancers, and music lovers in general. The cruise program included workshops and private concerts, and we made sure that the organizer included Scottish Country Dance as well. Unfortunately, the planning of the various activities was not very well organized, and we discovered that all the workshops had been scheduled for a brutal 8:00 AM timeslot. However, I can now say that dancing on the deck in the brisk Alaskan air works as well as any coffee.

On two nights during the cruise, there was a *ceilidh* and *seisún* in one of the lounges; on the other nights, there was a standing *seisún* after dinner on one of the decks, with impromptu Scottish country dancing. (Editors note... I found out that a *seisún* is Irish Gaelic for ‘all musicians into the pub and play ‘til you drop’).

We also enjoyed two excellent private afternoon concerts featuring all three groups, both separately, and also all together for a big finale. While in port at Ketchikan, Alasdair Fraser organized an impromptu “Fiddle Raid on Ketchikan,” which had all the musicians and dancers winding their way through the streets and shops of this little port, before ending up – where else? – at a pub. The tunes flowed (as well as the drinks – courtesy of the bar owner, who was delighted to have this unexpected entertainment), and April Verch hopped up on a table to do some step-dancing.



Did I mention there were things called “glaciers” we kept running into?

In addition to the exceptional music, dancing and general fun, we had some incredible experiences while in port (the ship stopped in Juneau, Skagway and

Ketchikan). To name a few: visit to a Musher's Camp with introduction to the sled dogs



There was a train ride on the White Pass Railway (we hear the marks from Catriona's fingernails can still be seen in the seat cushions), visit to the Mendenhall Glacier, rafting through a Bald Eagle Preserve, and floatplane ride over Misty Fjords National Park (Becky's stomach still isn't quite back to normal).

During the 'boring' days at sea, we had to content ourselves with watching the magnificent scenery and whales, bald eagles, seals, sea lions and bears (oh my!). The majesty and enormous scale of the mountains and the landscape in general truly cannot be appreciated by pictures alone.

There was one mysterious occurrence... every night, when we returned to our cabins, we would always find a strange creature in our beds (in addition to Don, Peter & Rick)... these were little stuffed animals provided by the crew. They were the beloved animals you remembered as a child... you know wombats, bandicoots, komodo dragons, marmosets, and Armadillos... all those furry little critters you use to hug when you were young (on Mars).

Becky Corbett

Summer Ceilidh

On June 8th, Fergie and Susan Ferguson organized a ceilidh at Hall High School in West Hartford. The plan was to teach Scottish Country dances, as well as ceilidh dances, and with some CT dancers to demonstrate what SCD looks like before they try to teach the dances to the attendees. The event was comprised of high school students, and this was an ideal opportunity to expose young people to SCD and to help keep the dance form flourishing here in CT.



Dancers Everett Munroe, Barbara Austin, Bob Cole, Marge Wills (and Don Wills hiding somewhere), William Douglass, Susan Ferguson, Paula Yu Pan, and Fergie attended the event.



The event was very successful and the youthful enthusiasm of the students made the evening very enjoyable. The students seem to have an almost inexhaustible amount of energy. After participating in several social dances and country dances the young ladies surprised everyone with a 'fan dance'.



Their fan dance was actually much more practical than the usual 'fan dance' that I used to see when I was overseas in the Navy. This dance actually was a great way to cool down after a vigorous session of dancing.

Dave Lees

Pinewoods

Regrettably, I was not able to attend the Pinewoods sessions this year as I had some commitments imposed on me by 'she who must be obeyed'. Nevertheless, an intrepid group of Mystic dancers including Minna DeGaetano, Rich and Becky Corbett, William Douglass, Doug Clough and Kat Kliphon attended this year. This was the first time that Doug Clough had attended Pinewoods and he and William Douglass volunteered to stay at the remote outpost hidden deep in the hills of the Pinewoods camp known as the Cottey House. Rumor has it that if you are crazy enough to volunteer to stay there you are guaranteed to be accepted. It certainly worked this year.

Those that attended the camp this year again proved that Scottish Country Dancing inspires individuals to push themselves to their limits in the pursuit of perfection. In other words you party and dance until

you drop. This is like Olympic Iron Man competition. On the very first night (after a long drive to Massachusetts) there was dinner and then a party at the camp house followed by a 'gathering' at the Cottey House until about 3:30 AM. This type of routine really sets you up for a vigorous dance lesson the next morning.

Pinewoods really draws people for all over this world and this year was no exception. The fellow in black shirt bowing in the picture below is from Australia. There was also a couple visiting from Germany.



There is always a theme for this session and for the ball this year it was the 'Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy'. For those unfamiliar with that title, it is a book about the eminent destruction of earth by the Vogons to make way for an inter-galactic super highway. It turns out that the earth is actually a big experiment run by white mice (that certainly explains a lot of what I read in the newspapers).

Part of the decoration with this theme was the dolphins. It turns out that the dolphins were the most intelligent species on earth and when they found out about the Vogons they left the planet with the parting line 'So long... and thanks for all the fish'. All of this make perfect sense to me.



Later in the week these blow-up dolphins found their way into the pond and were used by some swimmers to perform real dolphin reels.

Continuing with the endurance testing of the dancers, the Saturday night ball was followed by a ceilidh (with a rumored 100 or more jelly shots that miraculously

disappeared) and then a traditional party in Cottey House (once more into the breach!). The theme for this party was Good Boys and Bad Girls (all the pictures of this little party have been censored).



Going further with the 'other world' theme for the weekend there was an 'out of this world' tea party. I am sure you can recognize Rick and Becky Corbett (i.e. Doctor Zoidberg and Leela), they never looked healthier (and Rick didn't really need a lot of makeup).

There was a fund-raising auction on Friday night and Rick and Becky Corbett won a statue of *Saucy Bess*. Along with this honor they were piped into the Friday night candlelight dinner by Mike MacNinch to the tune of Atholl's Reel into Itchy Fingers.

Pinewoods has big plans to remodel and enlarge the kitchen area, so there was a fund-raising so that you could 'own a piece of Pinewoods'. In other words, you could pitch money towards an object (like sinks, toilets, storage cubbies, appliances, etc) which would then bear your name for the season. One of the largest ticket items was the walk-in fridge, for the tune of \$16,000. That was a pretty heavy price tag so it was decided that the Scots would form a big consortium and raise money towards this little gem. By noon on Sunday, ALL of the money was raised! The fridge will be named 'Great Scot'. By the end of Session II, between the auction and the other individual donations, the Scots donated \$30,000 to Pinewoods... IMPRESSIVE!

Becky Corbett, Dave Lees

Newport Polo Match

On Saturday, June 18, William Douglass and Ev Munro, of the Mystic Class, set off to watch the polo match between the USA and Scotland.



This match took place on the polo grounds of historic Glen Farm in Portsmouth, RI, on the outskirts of Newport.

Fitted in their grand Scottish attire, the 'boys' made a hit the minute they stepped out of the car. After setting up chairs and refreshments, they spotted a sign on one of the vendors tents...FREE GIN. Yes! they made a beeline for the free cups of Hendrick's Gin distilled and bottled in Scotland.

The fine lassie serving the gin was so excited when the guys approached decked out in their kilts, she came right around to where they were standing, got in the middle with her arms around them and asked her friend to snap a picture of the three of them.. Everett believes that picture is now on the wall of the president of Hendrick's Gin in Scotland. Since Everett failed to provide me with a photo I think that this captures the essence of the picture.



Man! Are we ever sexy!

While walking around a bit, the guys were chatted up by many people who thought we were direct from Scotland. On their way back to our chairs to settle in with another glass of gin, a group from the St. Andrew's Society of RI, invited them to join their party on the lawn.

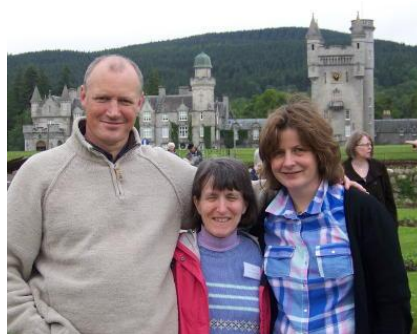
Needless to say, it was a grand time during the polo match cheering for Scotland, dashing out during half-

time rest period onto the pitch, as the field is called, to help replace the divots. The match is typically two hours in duration. All this for \$10. each.

Evertt Munroe, Dave Lees

Trip To Scotland

Steve and I took a wonderful tour of Scotland with Scottish folk singer Jim Malcolm and his wife Susie.



Barbara is seen here with Jim and Susie Malcolm. We spent ten days on a trip that went from Edinburgh to Dunkeld, to Balmoral and Nairn, Inverness, Loch Ness, Urquart Castle, the Isle of Mull and Iona, then on to Glasgow.



This is the picturesque town on Tobermory on the island of Mull.

Along each part of the trip we sang traditional and non-traditional songs about the areas we were passing through. Every night we had a private concert. The most exciting was a personal appearance by Andy M. Stewart. He used to play with Silly Wizard and has not performed for several years. He was absolutely captivating. Our trip (the second one this summer) was such a success, the Malcolm's may try this again. If so, we highly recommend it. What can possibly beat a ceilidh in the music room of an ancient castle?

Barbara Austen

Membership Renewal

Include with this newsletter is the RSCDS membership application form. Memberships for the coming year will be accepted immediately and the cut-off date for publication of the Directory will be November 1st.

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting for the New Haven Branch of the RSCDS took place on Saturday, May 14, 2011 in Middletown. After a Board meeting at 1:00 pm to officially accept the new slate of officers and board members, the AGM was called to order at 2:00 pm. There were approximately two dozen people in attendance. After the usual acceptance of the minutes of the 2010 meeting and the treasurer's report, the eight different committee reports were read and accepted. When the slate of candidates for this year's board was read, there were no objections or nominations from the floor and the slate as a whole was voted in.

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

RSCDS New Haven Branch Officers:

President	Catriona MacAuslan	203-421-4060
Vice President	Catherine Mahoney	203-879-6000
Secretary	Barbara Garton	860-871-0321
Treasurer	Stephen Rice	203-630-9749
Branch Class	Leslie Kearney	203-281-6591
Intergroup	Don Wills	960-536-1981
At Large	Angela Hills	860-921-5499
	Marge Wills	860-536-1981
	Peter Leibert	860-887-9184
	Lucile Blanchard	860-347-0278
	Nina Stein	203-757-2539
	Joyce Chase	203-238-0694
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Editor's Note

Deadline for the next newsletter is **November 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>