

Reel Time

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

Fall 2011

Class Schedules

Greater Hartford Scottish Country Dance Class
Grace Episcopal Church on the Green, 311 Broad St.,
Windsor CT. Tuesday 7:00 to 9:30 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.

Wilton Country Dancers Millennium School of Irish
Dance, Top Floor, 9 Ethan Allen Highway [Route 7]
Wilton, Connecticut. Between Keogh's Hardware and
Dunkin' Donuts North of Routes 57 and 107, South of
Route 1102. \$5.00 for adults and \$2.00 for dancers 21
and under. Contact Sandra Bethray 203 322-8341 or
sjbethray@aol.com.

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
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.

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 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. Summer dates: Sept 14, Oct
12, Nov 9.

Upcoming Events

18th Century Dance: Saturday, November 19th.
Greenland Parish Hall, Greenland NH. Scottish
Country Dances from the 1700's. For more information
see <http://www.rscdsboston.org/18CentFlier.pdf> or
contact Laurie Stevens at (603) 773-9795.

Pinewoods Benefit Ball: Sunday, December 4, 2011.
Old Town Hall, Derby Square, Salem MA. Music by
Tullochgorum. Admission is \$25. Contact Sara
Schechner and Ken (617)-928-0398 or visit
<http://www.rscdsboston.org/events-calendar.html>

Scottish Dance Music Workshop: Sunday, December
11, 2011. Award winning Scottish musicians Susie
Petrov and Calum Pasqua. New England Carousel
Museum, 95 Riverside Ave. Bristol CT. The Music
workshop runs from 1:00 PM to 3:30 PM. Tea is at 3:30
and Scottish Country Dancing with the Musicians is
from 4:00 – 6:00 PM.
Contact Cate Mahoney 203-879 6000.

Creating The Harvest Concert/Cabaret : Friday,
November 18, 2011. Norwich Art Council, 60
Broadway Norwich, CT 06384. Anglo, Scottish and
Irish concert featuring Peter and Damon Leibert.

Celtic Concert : Saturday, December 10, 2011 7:00 PM.
Norwich Free Academy, 305 Broadway Norwich, CT
06360. A presentation of Celtic music by the NFA
Celtic Club. Colleen Conoyer (a member of the Mystic
Scottish Country Dancers) will be playing the bagpipes.
Tickets are \$7 general admission, \$5 for students,
seniors, and kilt-wearers, and \$20 for families of 4 or
more. It will be held in Slater Auditorium.

Mystic Burns Night Supper: Saturday, Feb 11, 2012.
Groton Inn & Suites, Groton, CT. For more, check
www.mysticsscottishdancers.com or Ruth Walsh, 860-
536-6265.

New Haven Highland Ball: - Save the date. Highland
Ball - March 3, Brunch March 4, 2012.

Highland Ball Weekend: - Save the date. RSCDS
Boston Highland Ball Weekend, Weston, MA. Music
by Highland Whisky and Terpsichore. For more
information see
<http://www.rscdsboston.org/HB2012PrelimFlier.pdf>

Rerr Terr - Save the date. Tenaflly, NJ Saturday, April
2, 2011. For more information see www.rscds-nj.org.

Tartan Day - Save the date. April 14, 2012. Plans are
in the works to take a bus to New York as we have done
in the past.

Kilts and Ghillies 2011 Tea Dance – Save the date. 30
April 2012.

Pawling Weekend – Save the date. Hopewell Junction, NY Friday, May 20 - May 22, 2012. For more information see www.rsedsnewyork.org.

Trip To Scotland (June 28 – July 7, 2012) – Catriona is looking for any and all interested in a trip to Scotland next year to determine if there is enough interest to schedule the trip. The group attending will fly to Edinburgh, with accommodations tentatively held at Cambo House (near St Andrews). A nonrefundable deposit of \$100 per person is needed by December 2, 2011. The approximate cost for the trip is about \$2200. If you are interested in this trip, contact Catriona as soon as possible.

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

New Hampshire Highlands

We knew Hurricane Irene was coming north the weekend of August 26th but that didn't stop us from going to Contoocook for this great end-of-summer workshop at the St. Methodios Faith & Heritage Center. Driving across New Hampshire is always a lovely experience – mountains, endless trees, rocky gorges with tumbling streams along the bottom. Sixty-five dancers showed up to take classes with three excellent teachers (Dale Birdsall, Robert McOwen, Andy Taylor-Blenis) and dance to the music played by Peter MacFarlane, Susie Petrov and Joanne Garton who just happens to be the daughter of one of our Connecticut branch members, Barbara Garton.



This workshop is open to every level of dancer, holding classes for Basic, Intermediate, Experienced and Advanced. In addition there is a special class for musicians. And Thistles and Things, a Scottish specialty store, sets up shop for people who want to buy CDs, books, ghillies and a wide variety of oddments to go with their outfits.

The housing options include sharing a dorm room in a cottage with 9 others, or paying a bit more for a double room in the Lodge. After settling into my cottage dorm, I went to the main hall for the welcome party where I met a wide selection of friends, including Jim Macnab who

used to dance in Connecticut before moving to New Hampshire.

After supper, we dressed for the evening dance. The program was an interesting combination of familiar (*Davy Nick Nack*, *Hooper's Jig*) and new (*There Cam' a Young Man*, *The Earl of Northampton*).



After the dance ended, people stayed around for the ice cream social, and took part in a Silly Hat Party. This was helped along when Roberta Lasnik, one of organizers along with Loren Wright, handed out wild, colorful hats from a large bag.



The next morning we went off to various locations for our classes, each accompanied by one of the musicians. By this time, the news of the hurricane indicated that it was approaching faster than they'd first predicted. We got updates from people with cell phones talking to family back in Connecticut. I sat out the afternoon classes to watch Robert McOwen teach a step class. A tea social was scheduled later in the Lodge later, something new for the New Hampshire Highlands. Deborah Blanchard presents teas professionally and for this one, along with tea, there were scones and cucumber sandwiches and other treats.

The evening started with a candlelight dinner (which was very appropriate for a hurricane pending.) Considering the forecast I got nervous about driving in bad weather and I packed my car and left. Others from Connecticut left as well, but Angela Hill and Joyce Chase stayed for the tea and the first two dances of the evening (*The Isle*, *Miss Gibson's Strathspey*). By then the organizers were letting people know that the Sunday morning program had been cancelled, and many people

planned to leave for home that night. It was a shame the workshop had to be cut short, but Mother Nature does have the final say.

Lucile Blanchard

Mystic Scottish Country Dancers Fall Ceilidh

The Mystic Scottish Country Dancers hosted its annual Ceilidh on Friday night, the 14th of October at the Groton Inn and Suites, with Mary Ruddlesden, Maureen Able, Lynne Horr, Alison Pollick and Jan Grosskopf as our hostesses. We were delighted to have great weather for our special party and proceeded to have a splendid night of All Things Scottish with some 80 people in attendance.

As in years past, it is always interesting to see the reaction of those unfamiliar with the word Ceilidh when we explain the wonders of this action packed evening... for most are mystified with the concept and anxious to experience the evening and see what 'it' is all about. We welcome all to this fun-filled evening with music and dancing that sets our feet a-dancing and our pulses a-thumping. We joined in social dancing and witnessed Scottish Country as well as Highland Dancing in addition to 'other' things Scottish! AND our refreshment tables included traditional shortbread for one and all to enjoy!



Peter Leibert served as our gracious Master of Ceremonies and played several tunes for us on his concertina, explaining how the instrument works as he taught us a lively social dance or two. Youngsters as well as veteran dancers had a ball as we truly did "trip the light fantastic!"

We welcomed a wonderful musical group called *The Mystic Haggis* whose members include Bob Scent on the pipes, two of our dancers, Bill (on the bodhran) and Colleen Cournoyer on the pipes, Evelyn Cournoyer who played the harp most beautifully and also Evelyn and Colleen's mom Diane on the fiddle. Melody is vocalist for the group and charmed us all with several beautiful songs.



Bill Douglass was absolutely amazed when Bill Cournoyer told him that the bodhran could also be used as a really spiffy condiment tray if needed.

As a note, Evelyn Cournoyer was the first place winner in the Harp Competition at Loon Mountain in September – for which we are all mighty proud. Though she has been a student of the harp for just a few years now, she performs a special kind of magic with her fingers on the strings...and held the crowd spellbound as she played several solos for us.

Members of the Mystic Highland Pipe Band paid a surprise visit to the Ceilidh to pay special tribute to our Don Wills....who just retired as a member of the Band.



Don noted that he learned to play the pipes under the tutelage of Bob Scent, and thoroughly enjoyed his years with the band until problems with his legs made it impossible for him to march in parades. Putting him in a wagon just didn't seem to work out.. something about keeping in step with the music is tough when your feet are not on the pavement.

We hope Don will continue to play the pipes....and dance with the Scottish Country Dancers....though he has to take it a bit easy because of his leg. Sara and Everett Munro had a houseguest from England, Robert Cole who was on holiday in the US for a few weeks. He joined in the Ceilidh fun by telling a great story – and we were charmed by his superb accent.

Dave Lees performed a Sword Dance (against all his better judgment) that kept us entranced as his skill and agility managed the dance without his feet ever

touching the blades of the sword. He was accompanied by Colleen – who also was awarded several ribbons at nearby Scottish Festivals for her skill on the pipes. Our own dancers performed a 32 bar jig entitled *It's Nae Bother* and what fun we had with that one!

We sang and danced as we shared the joy of a very special evening.

Ruth Walsh

Mystic Scottish Country Dancers Barn Dance

Inasmuch as our dancing venue, St. Andrew Church in Groton was totally involved with a Yard Sale over the weekend of the 21st of October, the Mystic Scottish Country Dancers were invited to Jane and Peter Leibert's home in Preston for our 4th annual Old Fashioned Barn Dance.



Many of us have wondered if the annual barn dance is really just a clever ruse of Peter's to get his barn cleaned up. It is certainly an interesting expedition into the psyche of the barn owners when you see what is stored in the barn. While four of us worked on the barn there was many a 'What in the world is that doing in here???' being heard.

In years past there have been times when it so bitter cold that we danced with mufflers and mittens....but happily the night was relatively mild; we were able to dance away and share in the festivities of the evening in relative comfort.



There is a wee "fireplace" in the Barn – which, though it is truly just an illusion, continues to give us the

feeling that we are warmed by its glow as we dance away.



'Yep...Looks like Santa didn't quite fit too well here.. hand me that crowbar.'

We were delighted to have our guest, Robert Cole, from England with us as well as the Nutmeg Workshop presenters Stella Fogg and Ralph Stoddard with us to join in the fun!!



Joyce Chase provided music and dance instruction that kept us dancing all through the evening.

Dave Lees

The Sixth Annual Nutmeg Workshop 2011

The Nutmeg committee was not at all sure the change of venue to First Church, Middletown, for this year's workshop would draw as many dancers as before. But when the day came, Saturday, October 22, forty-six people came and the result was a very good workshop enjoyed by all.

This year's teachers were Stella Fogg from Virginia and Ralph Stoddard from Maryland. They took turns teaching the two afternoon classes – Improver and Experienced. The musicians were Jim Stevenson-Mathews on the piano, and violins played by Rebecca McCallum and Joanne Garton who is Barbara Garton's daughter. The Improver class was held in the Memorial Room which has a carpeted floor, but a good number of people attended so there was a full set plus, making it

easier for the teachers.

When classes ended by five, people got busy in the kitchen setting out their contributions for the potluck supper. As it happened to be Jim's birthday, Gaitley arranged for Catriona to get a cake to go with the deserts. We presented it holding one lit candle and serenaded him with "Happy Birthday."



This must have been a big boost, for his playing for the evening dance was fabulous. The music made us dance whether we planned to or not.

Peter Leibert held a raffle – the first prize being half the money taken in, then a ticket to the New Haven Ball, a ticket for the Tartan Day bus, and a bottle of Chardonnay. William Michels was the lucky one, winning first prize. The evening program, devised by Joyce Chase, was a great mix of familiar and not so, but always fun to dance. *The Falls of Rogie* was the most complex and the dancers handled it beautifully. Starting with *The Happy Meeting*, ending with *The Duke of Perth*, everyone took part in a truly wonderful workshop.

Lucille Blanchard

Middletown Class Fall Dance

After the successful Nutmeg Workshop, it was heartening to have so many people turn up four days later at First Church for the Middletown Fall Dance on 26 October.



Lucille and Mary and Bob Byrnie are seen here ready to hit the floor. Twenty-three dancers took the floor for Ken Way's program which started with *Ladies' Fancy*

and ended with *Da Rain Dancin'*. Norb Spencer brought his crew of musicians, including Rebecca McCallum who played so well at Nutmeg, and they kept us going all evening. Middletown class members provided the usual array of tasty snacks at break time. In fact people stayed around the food table until we had to urge them back onto the floor. It was a really fun evening.

Lucille Blanchard

Jeannie Carmichael Ball

The New York Branch got lucky in their choice of weekends for this major event. Saturday and Sunday, November 4 and 5, were beautifully sunny and clear. Our room in the Thayer Hotel gave a fine view of the West Point campus. And when Joyce Chase and I went downstairs for the sherry party, we were surrounded by familiar faces. Bob Cole and Paula Pan sat with us for dinner.



We were sorry that more Connecticut dancers didn't come this year. The evening progressed with the Grand March led by Iain Burns on the bagpipes. The Ball program of eighteen dances started with *A Touch of Tartan* and included such special dances as *Alex Doig's Jig*, *Waggle of the Kilt*, *The Mauchline Lady* (written in honor of Mardene Hof) and *Cherrybank Gardens*. The 4-couple set dances, *Trip to Bavaria* and others were particularly popular, ending with requests for a repeat. During the break, we found the dining room table held a dozen impossibly tempting desserts.



The evening wrapped with *The Falls of Rogie*. The after party was great fun as usual, giving us a chance to catch up on news from various sources.

This happened to be the weekend that Daylight Savings Time ended, so the added hour let us sleep late. Brunch was welcome when we got to eat. In the dining room our attention was drawn to a strange boat on the river. It turned out to be a modern replica of the barque Half Moon, the boat that Henry Hudson used in 1609 to explore the Hudson River looking for the Northwest Passage.



Then the morning dance began, a more familiar program starting off with *Roaring Jelly* and *Catch the Wind*. Susie Petrov's band, The Parcel of Rogues, was just wonderful, three fabulous musicians playing their hearts out. It couldn't have been a better time for all.

Lucile Blanchard

Ae Fond Farewell

As you may or may not know, Becky and Rick Corbett (members of the Mystic Scottish Country Dancers) will be moving to West Virginia shortly and will be with Becky's dad, helping him run his acreage farm. While they will physically be out there in the mountains they will still be with us in spirit.

Rick had an accident recently resulting in a fractured skull. Rick is recovering nicely and Becky sends her thanks for everyone's kind words, thoughts, prayers, and support. In Becky's words, *'It was an enormous help through all of this to realize what an incredible group of friends we have. We are very fortunate people.'*

Dave Lees

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:

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
	Peter Leibert	860-887-9184
	Barbara Austin	203-630-9749
	Marque Lethenstrom	203-500-2144
Membership	Ed Davis	203-264-0870
Web Master	David Keller	
	david.keller@janussystems.com	
	Marque Lethenstrom	
	marq52@yahoo.com	
Newsletter	David Lees	860 715-3261
	dglees@comcast.net	

Editor's Note

Deadline for the next newsletter is **February 15** for publication by the end of the month. I welcome all of your reports, and particularly all calendar listings. My 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>