

Reel Time

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

Fall 2013

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
Angela Montague 203-762-9892.

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 Linda Scent 860-
464-9081.

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.

Peter Price's Class Fourth Monday of the month class
(November 25), this December it is scheduled for the
fifth Monday (December 30).
New Haven Friends Meeting House, 225 East Grand
Ave., New Haven. From 7:30 to 9:30 pm. Note: This
class will only take place if there are 8 dancers who have
confirmed with Peter that they are coming. Contact
Peter Price 203-675-9587 or
Peter.price1672@gmail.com

Upcoming Events

Brian Heckler's 60th Birthday – November 19th. His
birthday is actually November 30th, St Andrews Day.
The plan is to beat the Thanksgiving rush.
591 Whitney Avenue, New Haven. 7:45 PM.

Scottish Country Dance Painting Show – November
17, 2013. Jane Sharp 2014 Scottish Dance Paintings
Calendar and Show. Leonia Public Library, 277 Fort
Lee Road, Leonia, NJ 07605. More information at:
http://rscds-nj.org/aboutus/janesharp_2013.html

34th Annual Delaware Ball – Saturday, November 23,
2013. Crosslands Retirement Community, 1660 East
Street Road, Kennett Square, PA 19348. Grand March
starts at 8:00 PM. More information at:
<http://www.delvalscottishdance.org/the-34th-annual-delaware-ball-saturday-november-23-2013>

Drewry Night – December 7, 2013. Homecrest
Presbyterian Church, Avenue T and East 15th Street,
Brooklyn, NY. Refreshments \$10.00. For application
use <http://www.rscds-nj.org/events.html>

New Haven Class Winter Solstice Party – December
10th. 591 Whitney Avenue, New Haven. Starts at 7:45.

Westchester Hogmanay, Elmsford, NY – December
31, 2013. Sponsored by the Westchester Class of the
New York Branch. More information to come...
Check <http://www.rscds-nj.org/events.html>

Delaware Valley Hogmanay, Philadelphia, PA -
December 31, 2013. Germantown Friends School, 31
West Coulter Sreet, Philadelphia PA 19144. Spend
New Year's Eve in the gymnasium of Germantown
Friends School dancing to the lively tunes of Terpsichore
(featuring: Liz Donaldson on piano & Elke Baker on
fiddle) and piper, Dan Emery.
For more information:
<http://www.delvalscottishdance.org/calendar>

Burns Night, Tenaflly, NY – January 28, 2014. For
more information:
<http://www.rscds-nj.org/classes/tenaflly.html>

Burns Night, Manhattan, New York – January 23,
2014. For More information:
<http://www.rscsnewyork.org/dancecalendar.html>

Mystic Scottish Dancers Burns Supper – February 8,
2014 – more information to follow.
<http://www.mysticscottishdancers.com>

New Haven Highland Ball: - Save the date. Highland
Ball - March 1, Brunch March 2, 2014.

New Haven Ball Workshop- SATURDAY – JAN 18, 2014

1:00pm to 4:00pm

Your Community Yoga Center

First Church of Christ Congregational

39 Putnam Avenue

Hamden, CT 06517

Brian Haeckler & Peter Price, Teachers

New Haven Ball Workshop- SATURDAY – Feb 15, 2014

2:00pm to 5:00pm

First Church of Christ Congregational

190 Court Street

Middletown, CT 06457

Ken Way, Teacher

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

On A Sad Note - Gretchen Gates died Tuesday June 4, 2013 at 5:45 AM. She was 73 years old. She has suffered from Parkinson's disease since 2000. She has been at the Arnold House nursing home in Stoneham MA since July, 2012. She started doing Scottish Country dancing in the early 1980s. She has served on the Executive Committee of the Boston Branch, the Cambridge Class Committee, chaired various events, and danced with the Boston Branch Demonstration team. She attended Scottish events and classes and also enjoyed ballroom dancing. She worked as a dental hygienist, massage therapist, and taught a Yoga class for many years. She is survived by her children Peggy and Michael, her granddaughter Jessica and her sisters Vicki and Susan. For more information contact David Arnold 617-924-3811, david-arnold@earthlink.net.

Dave Lees

A Fond Farewell - We have been richly blessed with Joyce becoming an integral part of our Mystic dance class.....and we have improved our dance skills....while having a wonderful time in the process. Joyce has given us so very much - while she drove many miles to be with us on Friday nights...worked full time....took courses to achieve her BS in Nursing...was a devoted teacher and friend in addition to being an integral part of the RSCDS chapter here in CT in addition to being a wife, mother and good friend to all.....

Once Joyce received her degree in June.....she felt it was the better part of valor to continue her education - and thus is seeking her MS....and looking for a new position somewhere along the Eastern Seaboard to continue to advance her experience and her expertise. We knew she was looking....and though we hoped she would find a REALLY great job near us....it was also a given that she might find a position far from CT. And thus it was this last week that she ventured to Kentucky

for several interviews in the Louisville area.....and was offered a job at one of the great hospitals there.... Joyce accepted the position - and is preparing to move to KY very soon....while Skip stays in CT long enough to sell their home in Meriden.....and then he will join her in the beauty of Kentucky!! And I know there are MANY Scottish communities there - with great dancing !!!



*Ae fond farwell, and then we sever!
Ae farewell, but not forever!*

Ruth Walsh

End of Summer Party - On Saturday, August 17th, Catriona MacAuslan held a party for Scottish country dancers at her late mother's house in Clinton. It was really great weather, a fine time to be on the shore.



A canopy tent was up on her front lawn where a board meeting was held before the party. Then we gathered to talk, catch up on our summer activities and when Joyce Chase arrived from work, we danced under the tent.



George Thomson arrived with his bagpipes and he piped us down to the concrete jetty where we could enjoy the ocean breeze. He even went swimming. When it was time, people brought out dishes of the wide variety of food they brought, and Catriona's neighbors also carried over many platters of delicious treats. Then we sat and munched away. Finally as the sun went down, we went back to the jetty to see the very colorful sunset in the west and the almost full moon rising in the east.



The air was gentle so we lingered, not wanting to leave this lovely place.

Lucile Blanchard

New Hampshire Highlands

On the weekend of August 23rd, 9 of us Connecticut dancers gathered at the St. Methodios Center in Contoocook, New Hampshire for a great end-of-summer workshop. We met up with Jim McNab who used to dance with us in Middletown before he and his wife moved to New Hampshire. A welcome social was held for us before dinner. The evening dance started off with *Joie de Vivre* which was certainly the way we felt and ended with *Da Rain Dancing*. Then an ice cream social, followed by a musical jam.

Saturday morning we were woken by a piper. After breakfast we went to the classes we'd signed up for. The teachers this year were Kent Smith, Robert McOwen, Joanna Wilkinson and Gillian Charters who taught basic quick-time.



Then lunch and some special classes held early in the afternoon. Robert McOwen gave a step class and Kent Smith put us through our paces with a Party Prep, mostly walking dances from the evening program. After that several of us went down to the beach on the lake. The water was mild enough to attract swimmers and it was a lovely afternoon.

Then back to the Retreat House for a tea social which included wine as well.



Veronica's Attic, a specialty store, had arranged to be there for the afternoon, but then one of the cars broke down on the highway and they arrived late. We helped them bring in racks of clothing and boxes of other items to be sold. Dinner was held at 6, following by assembling outside to be piped in for the Saturday night dance. The evening program started with *A Wee Nothin'* and ended with *The Reel of the Royal Scots* which is always a great romp. Then people stayed for a very entertaining ceilidh. The scenery is just wonderful.



The piper woke us again for breakfast on Sunday, and we spent some time packing our things. A combined class was held with three teachers briefing the dancers on some very unusual dances. Eventually the weekend ended and people headed for their cars. It was so satisfying to be back in action after a summer with no dancing.

Lucile Blanchard

Bob Gregg Workshop – The New Haven Branch Class held a workshop in honor of Robert Gregg (1918-2012) on October 5, 2013. The workshop started and ended with comfortable dances easy to dance: Aldebaran, Blue Valley, Teapots and Turnstiles, Ken McFarland's Jig, The Fountain Strathspey, Phase Rule, Betelgeuse, The Stella Strathspey, Auf Wiedersehen. In the middle, we worked on learning two of Bob's challenging dances, Southpaw Reel and Old Rocking Chair Levi, with Clink and Chase in between.



All of the dances were devised by Bob; most came from two books of dances Bob published, *The Real MacGregor* (2006) and *The Arches of MacGregor* (2012).

The workshop was held at the First Church of Christ in Woodbridge, the church Bob and his wife were members of, where the Woodbridge class danced for many years.

The event was organized and run by Leslie Kearney, who did a huge amount of work. Peter Price, Brian Haeckler, Dave Goldberg, and Leslie Kearney taught the dances.

Paula Yu Pan framed and mounted a collection of pictures of Bob.



Pot luck supper – delicious food – plentiful wine. Good company. This event was a lovely way to celebrate a part of the legacy of a good friend. The workshop was originally planned for fall 2012, to honor Bob during his lifetime. The dances were chosen by Bob himself; the order of the program was his choice, with only minor changes.

Susan Leff

Mystic Barn Dance - On the 25th of October the Mystic Country Dancers held an old fashioned barn dance in Peter and Jane Leibert's barn. The rumor that hosting a barn dance was just a ruse to get help in an annual cleaning of the barn could not possibly be true.



The evening included good company, refreshments and just fun. Joyce Chase was there with music and we had enough people to do several dances that will be included at the 2014 Highland Ball including *Pelorus Jack*. As it turns out, the vertical supports in the barn actually helped the dancers stay in position during the dance... swing wide on one of your turns and you could knock yourself silly after colliding with a beam.

Dave Lees

Scotland Games - The 26th Annual Highland Games at the historic Waldo Homestead took place on Sunday, October 13. It was a day of piping and drumming, athletic competition, sheep dog demonstrations and loads of music and singing. There were stories and songs throughout the

afternoon and the highlight of the day is 'The Bonnie Knees' contest. Unfortunately we had no brave knee owner to compete in the contest.

We had several members of the Scottish Country Dancers attending the event and Karen Pestana arranged for us to perform a couple of demonstration dances.



We were fortunate to have Everett Munro and William Douglass bring a large tent for the Munroe clan...The rest of us cleverly made sure that we would not arrive at the games until after the tent was set up.



Once the tent was set up we couldn't dynamite these characters out of it... they were just having too much fun playing their instruments.

It was a brisk fall day and the event was well attended. Peter Leibert and Ruth Walsh took the lead of the Scottish Country dancers for the presentation of the clans.



Karen organized two demonstration dances, *Shiftin Bobbins* and *Seann Truibhas Willichan*. By a strange sequence of events, when I asked Karen what was the name of the strathspey that we performed, she sent me a message and her phone translated the dance title to *bean tubas wollongong* – now that is a dance I want to see!

The real surprise in dancing at the games was the preponderance of black walnut trees on the grounds. These trees produce some of the hardest nuts I have even encountered. The nuts were embedded in the ground from all the people stepping on them after they fall on the ground. The problem with dancing is that if you spring onto one of those things it really hurts. This, of course, added the flavor of adventure in dancing in that mine field as well as some new language that I had not encountered before.

Dave Lees

Windsor Library Event - On Tuesday, October 15, the Windsor class held an audience participation event at the Windsor Public Library. We had about a dozen people, ranging in age from pre-teen to adult. Barbara Austen had everyone up and dancing in very little time and all seemed to enjoy themselves.



They did not want to stop! We sincerely hope to get some new dancers out of this, as we do every time we put on a program at the library. Our thanks to Windsor Public Library for hosting and promoting the program.

Barbara Austin

Mystic Ceilidh – The Mystic Scottish Country Dancers sponsored a Ceilidh at Stoneridge Retirement Community in Mystic Connecticut.



The evening included storytelling, a concertina serenade, singing and social dancing.

Dave Lees

I volunteered to be the Master of Ceremonies for the event. Having never been an MC, I was worried that it would take a lot of work and planning to do a good job...it actually turned out to remarkably easy. I had a list of performers and all I had to do was yell 'Hey! You're up... get going and do your stuff'. It was a piece of cake.

We were entertained by the group *Mystic Haggas* which includes Bill, Dianne and Colleen Cournoyer, Bob Anderle, and Debbie and Melody Brohenski. The group has been around for years and have performed at many Burns Suppers and ceilidhs.



The evening included Highland dancing by Elizabeth Bland, an experienced highland dancer. I took a shot at a sword dance and managed to forget to wait for the four bars before starting the dance. So I was out of step for the entire dance but I remembered the words of Jim Motherwell (former Queen's piper)... 'Just keep moving and grin a lot'.

8th Annual Nutmeg Workshop - The 8th Annual Nutmeg Workshop was an amazing success. A lively time was had by dancers from New Jersey, New York, Massachusetts and Connecticut. The event was held at the First Church in Middletown, CT on Saturday, October 19th. The musicians were Jim Stevenson-Mathews and Rebecca McCallum. Teachers were Liz Burns and Arthur McNair.



After an afternoon of classes a buffet potluck supper was provided by members of the New Haven Branch. The event continued with an evening social dance enjoyed by all.



Cheers,

Alice Hancir

Editor's Note

Deadline for the next newsletter is **Feb 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

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 (2013-2014):

RSCDS New Haven Branch Officers:

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Secretary, rec	Susan Leff 203-264-0870
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At Large	Mary Byrnie 860-635-4056
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