

# *Reel Time*

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

Spring 2014

## 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 Lucile  
Blanchard 860-347-0278. The last Middletown dance  
class for the spring term will be Wednesday 11 June at  
7:00 PM.

*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 Leslie Kearney  
203-281-6591 or [newhavenscottish@gmail.com](mailto:newhavenscottish@gmail.com).  
New Haven class party - last class this spring is May  
20, 2014.

*Peter Price's Class* Fourth Monday of the month class,  
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](mailto:Peter.price1672@gmail.com)

*Summer Dancing in New Haven*  
Tuesdays, June 24 - August 26, 2014. New Haven  
Friends Meeting House, 225 East Grand Ave., New  
Haven. From 7:30 to 9:30 pm  
Contact Leslie Kearney 203-281-6591 or  
[newhavenscottish@gmail.com](mailto:newhavenscottish@gmail.com)

## Upcoming Events

**Pawling Weekend (51<sup>st</sup>)** – Hopewell Junction NY,  
Friday, May 16 - May 18, 2014. For more information  
see [www.rscdsnewyork.org](http://www.rscdsnewyork.org).

**Fairlee Spring Fling** – May 17, 2014 - Fairlee town  
Hall, 75 Town Common Road, Fairlee, VT. The dance  
begins at 7:00 AM For more information contact Gary  
Apfel at 802-439-3459 or visit  
<http://boston-massachusetts.us/fairlee-spring-fling>

**Dance Out Opportunity** – May 25, 2014 –  
2:00 – 3:00 PM. Heirloom Festival. [http://](http://www.rareseeds.com)  
[www.rareseeds.com](http://www.rareseeds.com)  
Comstock, Ferre & Company, Wethersfield, CT  
The oldest continuously operating seed company in New  
England. Ev Munro is in charge of the event. Karen  
Pestana will lead the dances. Contact Everett if you  
would like to dance.  
[Bonnieladdie63@ct.metrocaset.net](mailto:Bonnieladdie63@ct.metrocaset.net)

**Westchester Ball** – Saturday, 7 June. For more  
information visit [http://www.rscdsnewyork.org/](http://www.rscdsnewyork.org/home.html)  
[home.html](http://www.rscdsnewyork.org/home.html)

**Rhode Island Scottish Highland Festival** – June 14,  
2014 from 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM, rain or shine. For more  
information see [http://www.riscot.org/](http://www.riscot.org)

**Round Hill Games** – July 5, 2014 rain or shine. We  
will be dancing a demo at the games. A wee bit o'  
Scotland will be at Cranbury Park in Norwalk CT  
on Saturday, July 5, 2014, from 8am to 5pm.  
For more information see <http://www.roundhill.org> or  
[secretary@roundhill.org](mailto:secretary@roundhill.org).

**Scottish Pinewoods Sessions**, July 11 – 19, 2014. See  
[www.rscdsboston.org](http://www.rscdsboston.org) for more information.

**New Hampshire Highlands** – August 22-24, 2014. St.  
Methodious Faith & Heritage Center, Contoocook, NH.  
For more information visit: [http://www.rscdsboston.org/](http://www.rscdsboston.org/events-NHHighlands.html)  
[events-NHHighlands.html](http://www.rscdsboston.org/events-NHHighlands.html)

**New Hampshire Highland Games** – The 39<sup>th</sup> New  
Hampshire Highland games and festival will take place  
from September 19 to September 21 at Loon Mountain in  
Lincoln, New Hampshire. For more information visit  
[http://www.nhscot.org/](http://www.nhscot.org)

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

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## **New Haven Highland Ball**

Once again the members of the RSCDS organized  
an outstanding Highland Ball and Brunch. The ball  
paid tribute to Miss Jean Milligan who lived all her 92

years in Glasgow and was a passionate supporter of Scottish Country Dancing. Her dedication to Scottish Country Dancing is legendary.



In tribute to Miss Jean Milligan, ladies wore hats and gloves – and Ken Way’s delightful ball buttons featured Miss Milligan’s portrait.



Music for the ball was provided by ‘The Parcel of Rogues – Susie Petrov, Calum Pasqua and Dan Houghton – for ball and brunch.



The ball dances were provided by deviser Joyce Chance and the brunch program provided by Barbara Austen.



Getting into the spirit, even some of the men wore hats.



The ball was well attended and well organized thanks to the tireless efforts of ball chair Everett Munro and his co-chair Dave Lees.

*‘Dance with your heart’*, one of the dances at the ball was recorded and sent to You-Tube. This is the first instance of this dance to appear on You-Tube. *(It is a good thing we practiced this dance).*

Here is the link to the YouTube video:  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f612MXTjUc4&feature=c4-overview&list=UULcVIOzB7lsIOPWZZ1yGNWQ>

*Dave Lees*

### **28<sup>th</sup> Annual Vernal Equinox Sunrise Dance On Lantern Hill**

Most of us wait passively for spring, if impatiently, crossing off calendar days, grumbling over electric bills, forgoing jackets on the days when 40 degrees feels balmy. But the Westerly Morris Men rush to greet the season with bells on — literally.

For the 28th year running, the Morris Men made their annual trek to the top of Lantern Hill in the minutes

before dawn Thursday, joined by an audience of a couple dozen — a mixed crowd of devotees and first-timers — to usher in the sunrise of the first day of spring with traditional English song and dance.



Geoff Sewall, 74, of Charlestown, R.I., was the first to arrive around 5:30 a.m., having set his alarm for 4:10. Though not new to the hike — this is a trail he often takes with his hiking group, or with his daughter for mid-winter strolls — this was to be his first vernal equinox with the Morris Men, whom he’s performed with for years as part of the Chorus of Westerly’s annual celebration of Twelfth Night.

He came, he said, for his granddaughters ages 4 and 7, whose mother called him the day before to inform him it was likely he’d have to carry one of them. “We’ll see how that goes,” he said.

As the silhouettes of still-bare trees came into relief against the slowly lightening sky, a few began the climb early, flashlight beams disappearing over the first steep heel that juts up from the trailhead on a curve of Wintechog Hill Road.

Others joined, seeming to ascend into the fog, punctuating an unsteady drizzle with the squish of mud underfoot.

At the top, a short 15-minute hike, the Morris Men stretched, their audience sipped coffee and strained to make out the view. On a clear day, it’s trees for miles, but on this particular morning, there was little to see past the outcrop of quartz except a thick, pale haze.

Peter Leibert, the group’s founder and musician, gave brief history lessons between numbers — quaint country dances with plenty of skipping, kerchief-twirling, and clacking of wooden staffs. Besides the straps of dozens of tiny bells around the dancers’ shins and the occasional singing — or, rather, enthusiastic shouting — the only music came from Leibert’s accordion, accompanying every song.

Their outfits — called Morris kits, Leibert said — feature green from top to bottom, bowler hats rimmed with ribbons and vests plastered with buttons from fairs, events, and competitions the group has performed in over the years.

The bells accentuate rhythm, perhaps dispel bad spirits. The dancing itself was once a ritual to ensure a fertile spring, he said, before offering an even simpler explanation:

“We dance because we have a good time,” Leibert said. Sometime around 10 minutes to 7, someone called out, “Sun’s up” — the only visible cue that the wall of mist had lightened from blue to gray.

And with two final dances and raucous applause, the group began their descent.

Daniel and Jocelyn Rzewuski, 40 and 37, also of Charlestown, have come to welcome spring this way a handful of times now. Both are experienced hikers. He scales Mt. Washington at least twice annually; she made her first summit last year.

But more than the first hike of the season, they like the idea of an old tradition preserved, kept alive.

“There’s something romantic about that,” he said.

*Dave Lees*

### **Mini Burns Night at Stone Ridge**

For many years the Mystic Scottish Country Dancers have been providing a ‘*Burns Night in 30 Minutes*’ to the residents of the StoneRidge, an independent living community in Mystic, Connecticut.



The Mystic Country Dancers have all the toys they need to entertain the residents... Everett is very fond of sharp objects so we keep a sharp eye on him. The entertainment included some dancing (*Gay Gordons*), an *Ode To the Haggas* by Bob Scent and a short Immortal Memory by Dave Lees.



Seen here is Robert Byrnie presenting the haggis with Everett sneaking up behind him with his beloved dirk (*he really does like sharp objects*).



There is nothing better than a good shot of scotch (or is it a shot of good scotch)? It really doesn't matter... as long as you have your dirk handy.



*Dave Lees*

### **Mystic Irish Parade**

The Annual Mystic Irish Parade took place on March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2014 and it was cold as..... words fail me. A small group of dancers from the Mystic Scottish Country Dancers attended the event. Eleven years ago, a few dedicated members of the community joined together in celebration of their Celtic heritage. Wanting to share their cultural traditions with their friends and families, they decided to bring Ireland to the small town of Mystic Connecticut. Better known as the Mystic Irish Parade Foundation, this phenomenal team of local residents, business leaders and community volunteers

plan and execute the Mystic Irish Parade each year in downtown Mystic.

It seems like this guy is always there in the middle of the parades and he really spooks me out.



We had a small group of dancers attending (it really was cold) and we managed to dance our way for the entire length of the parade. Peter Leibert provided the music and the rest of us improvised our own dances. We were very creative.



Some of our more energetic participants were a bit too rambunctious and found themselves hauled away. It was cold but very well attended. The entire parade took about two hours to herd all the participants to the awaiting bars at the end of the parade.

*Dave Lees*

### **Ruth Walsh's Retirement from NaCCRA**

On April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2014 at Stone Ridge in Mystic another Mini Burns was performed for Ruth Walsh's retirement as the president of the *National Continuing Care Residents Association (NaCCRA)*. The NaCCRA is an

organization of continuing care residents, and others concerned for aging in America. The NaCCRA brings them together to support programs, products, and solutions that can help older people remain vital, vigorous and engaged.



This was yet another opportunity to bring out a 'Mini Burns Night'. (Everett once again got to sling around with his beloved dirk). The evening's entertainment included Highland dancing, Country dancing, Social Dancing, and an Immortal Memory. Bob Scent performed the 'Address to the Haggis'. The evening finished with lots of food, toasts, presentation and some piping and finally *Auld Lang Syne*.



It was a wonderful evening and Ruth received a commendation for her hard work for the NaCCRA. Now she has all sort of free time for dancing.

*Dave Lees*

### **Everett Crosses A Milestone**

Who would have thought that Everett was a quarter of a century young. At dance practice on May 2, 2014 Everett celebrated his 75<sup>th</sup> birthday.



As soon as there was a break in the dancing Everett demonstrated his ability to inhale birthday cake while singing *Auld Lang Syne* to himself. Happy Birthday Everett and we hope you have many more birthdays.

*Dave Lees*

### **Save the Date (9/14/14) – Barbie and Ken are throwing a party!**

Ken Way and Barbra Link invite everyone in the Branch, its classes, and beyond to join us for a dance party on Sunday, September 14, 2014, from 2:30 – 6:00 p.m. Please mark your calendars now and plan to join us in September for an afternoon of free dancing and light refreshment to celebrate our marriage, which will be held in June. The dance will be held at First Congregational Church, 190 Court St., Middletown (home of the Middletown class) and music will be provided by Norb Spencer and friends. The dance program will be sent out when finalized. Please come and help us celebrate our new life together!

*Barbra Link*

### **Annual General Meeting**

The Annual General Meeting ( AGM ) of the RSCDS New Haven Branch occurred on Saturday, May 3, 2014 at 1:30 pm at the First Church of Christ, 190 Court Street, Middletown, CT.

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

**RSCDS New Haven Branch Officers:**

President	Catherine Mahoney 203-879-6000
Vice President	Stephen Rice 203-630-9749
Secretary, rec	Susan Leff 203-264-0870
Secretary, cor.	Karen Pestana 860-298-8311
Treasurer	Catriona MacAuslan 203-421-4060
Branch Class	Leslie Kearney 203-281-6591
Intergroup	Don Wills 860-536-1981
At Large	Mary Byrnie 860-635-4056
	Alice Hencir 203-245-7051
	Peter Leibert 860-887-9184
	Judy Locker (860) 688-8037
	Elizabeth Muir 860-345-8403
	Everett Munro 860-501-0649
	Karen Pestana 860-298-8311
	Nina Stein 203-757-2539
	Marge Wills 860-536-1981
Membership	Ed Davis 203-264-0870
Newsletter	David Lees 860-715-3261
	<a href="mailto:dglees@comcast.net">dglees@comcast.net</a>

**Minutes of the New Haven Branch Board** meetings are available to all Branch members. If you want a copy, let Susan Leff know ([etdavis4@netzero.net](mailto:etdavis4@netzero.net)).

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**Editor's Note**

Deadline for the next newsletter is **Aug15** for Publication of the document by the end of the month. The editor will welcome all of your reports, and particularly all calendar listings. David Lees' email is [david.g.lees@pfizer.com](mailto:david.g.lees@pfizer.com) or [dglees@comcast.net](mailto:dglees@comcast.net)

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