

OVER THE WATER



*A Joint Newsletter of the Northern Virginia and Washington DC Branches
of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society*

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* <http://rscds-greaterdc.org> * RSCDS Headquarters, Edinburgh - www.rscds.org *

What I Did On My Summer Vacation!

Summer is a wonderful time of year—a time for BBQs, swimming, traveling, camping, and rolicking in the sunshine. But no summer would be complete without plenty of Scottish Country Dancing. This summer was no exception, as several of our fellow dancers laced up their ghillies and took to dance floors far and wide. Now that our globe-trekking compatriots have returned from their travels, here is a sample of what some of our friends did on their summer vacations.

Pinewoods, Near Plymouth Mass.:

Sponsored by the Boston Branch of the RSCDS, this dance camp offered three sessions at the beginning of July, including a Scottish weekend, a week long Scottish session and an English/Scottish week. This camp boasts dancing from morning until midnight everyday, along with theme

parties, ceilidhs, and swimming or canoeing in the local pond.

Kay Hoffman calls it “an experience like no other.” She says that while the Scottish sessions are “very high-energy” and “always crazy things happening,” it is also “a haven in the woods.”

If you want to attend this dance camp next summer, be sure to get your application in early because it fills up fast, as those who were wait listed this year will tell you.

TAC Summer School, Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada

This dance school is held in association with the RSCDS Teachers Association of Canada’s Annual General Meeting in August. It can be found in a different location every year. Every other year, including this one, TAC also holds a teacher candidate class along with the two weeks of summer school.

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If you missed out on all of the summer fun, or if you are just itching for more, ARGYLE WEEK-END, on November 10-12, is just what you need. Sponsored by the Northern Virginia Branch, this promises to be the event of the year.

There will be music and teachers you won’t want to miss: Elaine Brunken, from our own area, and Ruth Taylor from Kingston, Ontario, will challenge you with their

lessons, and Dave, David, Liz, and Becky Ross will make it easy with their music. Saturday morning classes and the after-lunch ball review class will be held at the Durant Center in Alexandria, instead of at the usual Trinity Presbyterian church.

The Friday Welcome Dance will begin at Trinity (the usual place) at 8:30 p.m., rather than 8:00 p.m., to give everyone just a

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Summer Vacation Cont.

Our friends who participated in this event enjoyed lots of great music and dance instruction, along with almost non-stop fun day and night. The Jimenez family spent a week at TAC this year and could not stop raving about their experience. I believe Nick declared it, "AWESOME!" Apparently, it is such a good time that even dancers with broken bones could not stay away.

If you want to attend next summer, then you will be off to beautiful British Columbia. Be sure to send us a post card!

RSCDS Summer School, St. Andrews, Scotland

Several of our branch members returned to the homeland this summer to participate in an RSCDS institution since 1927—summer school at St. Andrews. For some it was an annual ritual, while others were setting foot on the revered soil for the first time. For some it was right to business, with teaching certificate exams and tutoring classes, while for others it was all play—with some touring and sightseeing thrown in for good measure.

When asked about his favorite part of the St. Andrews experience, Jay Andrews (no relation to the saint, as far as I know) said

that it would be too hard to choose any one thing. "It was all magnificent."

If you are thinking of taking a trip to St. Andrews next summer be sure to talk to Jay. He's been there before, and you can bet you will see him there again, and again, and again

Frederick Annual Summer Workshop, Walkersville, MD

For those without the time or the pocket change to attend one of the longer summer workshops farther a field, the one-day event sponsored by the Frederick group in Walkersville, Maryland was just the ticket for getting through those dog days of summer. Jeff Corrihan from Williamsburg took us all on a wild ride that day. Introducing us to new styles of steps and dancing, including a crazy dance that had figures called the shuttle and winding and unwinding the bobbin. (I've never heard so much distressed laughter in my life.) Then, after a great potluck dinner, we danced the night away with a fun and interesting social program. No live music, but lots of lively entertainment.

Do not overlook this event next summer if you are in town. There is no excuse to miss such a terrific opportunity to dance and be with friends



Scottish Weekend, Timber Ridge Camp, West Virginia

Although it was held in September this year, (and even spilled over into October) this dance weekend is like the cherry on top of an ice cream sundae, our summer vacation report would not be complete without it. Known to many as Ramblewood, after the name of the camp in Maryland where this event has traditionally been held, this year Scottish Weekend had a new location but the same great food, superior teachers, and riotous good fun. Yes, it was very cold and wet, but that did not dampen anyone's spirits. After a long night of classes, ball, and ceilidh, several dancers jammed out to jazz, swing, chacha, and the hokie pokie until all hours of the night (or should I say morning?). As Evan Duncan has often said, it was a night "[w]hich will be remember'd for a very long time."

If you are planning on attending next year (and you should), but you are concerned about finances do not overlook the scholarship opportunities available to those who volunteer to assist with various camp chores. And be sure to get your ceilidh act ready. If you have trouble coming up with one, talk to Rosalie, I'm sure she can put you to good use.



Argyle XXIII The Bonnie Lad That's Far Awa Cont.

little more time to arrive comfortably and enjoy the music of Thistle House (Dave Wiesler, David Knight, and Dan Emery). The Saturday Ball at Trinity features Terpsichore (Elke Baker, Liz Donaldson, and Ralph Gordon).

And on Sunday afternoon, after the Brunch, Elaine Brunken will teach a low-impact, high-fun Old Tyme Dance workshop in Greenbelt at the Community Center, where the Tuesday St. Columba's class normally dances, to the music of David Knight and Liz Donaldson. Stretch out the weekend, and your muscles!

You can register for the whole package, or take it "a la carte." There are discounts for students and for new dancers. And, even if you're not dancing, you can still come and socialize at the Sunday Brunch at Carol Porter's home! (You could come to the Saturday afters party, too.)

For directions and more details, see <http://www.argyle-weekend.org> or call Ellie Briscoe at 703 461-7383. To register, contact Yvonne Yang at: argyle@rscds-greaterdc.org or call (703) 750-2965.



For the last 14 months he has been a familiar face at classes in Northern Virginia and Washington D.C.; he's even made a few trips up to Baltimore. Lee Fuell came to this area from Ohio on a temporary work assignment at the Pentagon. Unfortunately, he had to leave his lovely wife Patty and his exuberant black lab Molly behind in Ohio. Fortunately, he had Scottish country dancing to ease the loneliness and keep him out of trouble . . . mostly. And while finding Scottish dancing in Northern Virginia and its environs was certainly no problem for Lee, who could be found at a dance class almost every night of the week, finding SCD to begin with was certainly more accident than design. You could say it all began with a kilt.

In 1997, Patty was very heavily involved in genealogical research. As a result of her interest, Lee and Patty began associating with the Lindsay Clan and attending highland games. Although they did not discover country dancing at the games, Lee did develop a keen eye for highland wear. So, when Lee spotted a man wearing a kilt in the public library in Xenia,

Ohio he introduced himself. As it turned out, that kilt wearing bibliophile was a teacher for the RSCDS branch in Cincinnati. And thus a new pair of Scottish country dancers was born.



Well . . . sort of. For those of us who dance with Lee today it may be hard to believe, but Lee will be the first one to admit that when he began to dance he had no rhythm. Also for those of us who know Lee, it will come as no surprise that he kept going anyway because he's stubborn. Lee says that he was able to keep at it because, despite all of its frustrations, classes were happy times. He would come away feeling positive because the teacher never made him feel stupid. He also made some good friends early on. As Lee put it, "Scottish country dancers are pretty neat people."

Another helpful influence early on was the opportunity to attend a workshop in Cincinnati. The teachers at that workshop were the

Wee Nibbles...

- A new beginners class (FUNdamentals) began in September in Alexandria. They are having a great time and it is never too late to start; so invite your friends!
- A teacher candidate class also began in September. Be prepared if the tutors, Ralph and Stella, are looking for stooges (and we don't mean Larry, Moe, and Curly).
- The Alexandria big success—soggy, the fiddle club for their nice dry tent.
- Many thanks to everyone who has participated in recent demos, and to Eva for being the coordinator. More opportunities will be coming soon, possibly including the Scottish Preview at the Lyceum in Alexandria on Nov. 25th.



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Bonnie Lad Cont.

venerable Ron Wallace, and our very own Elaine Brunken. Lee was quick to point out that Elaine was very helpful and had a wonderful way of explaining things that really made a difference in his dancing.

Lee has come a long way since those early days. He and Patty just received their preliminary teaching certificates in August. Now Lee helps other beginners develop a love of Scottish dancing in a class he co-teaches in Beaver Creek, Ohio. He hopes to continue improving as a dancer and a teacher while working toward his full certificate. He and Patty are also considering a trip to summer school at St. Andrews next year.

What does Lee like best about Scottish Country Dancing? Without hesitation he replies, "The people." This includes all of the terrific people he met here in D.C. and Virginia, who Lee calls "as good friends as any in my life."

What does Lee not like? He doesn't like taking dancing too seriously. He says Scottish Country Dancing is social dancing; it is something we do for fun. Rather

than getting too technical and detailed, he ascribes to Miss Milligan's philosophy that you should "just fiddle with your feet."

What advice does Lee have for dancers and teachers? To the dancers he says, "If you're not having fun, you're not doing it right." And to the teachers, "If your class isn't having fun, you're not doing it right." Lee likes to say that the greatest compliment he receives when teaching Scottish Country Dancing is for one of his students to say, "I had fun tonight."

Although Lee returned to Ohio

at the end of September he has not left us completely behind. He plans to remain a member of the Northern Virginia Branch, and wants to visit often, beginning in November when he and Patty will be here for Argyle Weekend. At that point, Lee's SCD adventures will have come full circle because his very first workshop teacher, Elaine Brunken, will be there to see if Lee really has made any improvement. We think she will be pleased with his progress. We know we are pleased to call him one of our own.



Northern Virginia Branch Spring Ball Featuring



March 3, 2007

Trinity Presbyterian Church
Arlington, Virginia

Keep checking the website (<http://rscds-greaterdc.org>) for details!

Talented Teaching Pool Gets Deeper

The Northern Virginia Branch and the Charlottesville group had reason to celebrate in August, as Celia Belton returned home from St. Andrew's summer school as a fully certificated RSCDS teacher. And celebrate they did, in the only way that would be appropriate to such an occasion—they hosted an afternoon dance party. There were dozens of friends on hand to congratulate Celia on her success, along with lots of good food and great music.

Obtaining a full teaching certificate is no easy task. Celia had to undertake at least 18 months of teaching practice under the supervision of a qualified mentor. She was required to keep a record of all her teaching, including a detailed review of a series of lessons equivalent to at least 6 hours of teaching. After receiving an assessment of her teaching practice, Celia also had to complete an intensive teaching course and examination, which she chose to undertake at St. Andrews.

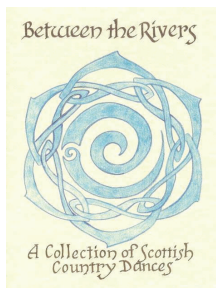
While many of us would be tempted to sit back and enjoy the triumph, Celia has other plans. She continues to teach the Charlottesville dance group; she will be an excellent resource for the two new teacher candidates in that area; and, she is trying to get a Scottish Country Dance class started through a University of Virginia program. With all of her energy and enthusiasm, we know great things will be happening in Charlottesville.

We also want to extend our congratulations to Lee Fuell, our intrepid traveler from Ohio, and his wife Patty Lindsay, who successfully completed their preliminary teacher certifications at TAC this August. They are now working toward their full teaching certificates. We wish them the best of luck, and hope they will come share some of their teaching talents with us from time to time.



New Washington Area Dance Book

Exciting news—we now have a dance book of our very own! *Between the Rivers* is a collection of 17 Scottish country dances devised by dancers in the greater Washington area, from Richmond to Baltimore, Frederick to Charlottesville, as well some a little closer to the White House.



Over 30 dances were originally submitted for consideration, and were tested in local classes. Many thanks to the teachers and dancers who

participated in evaluating them.

Some will be familiar, like Denise Peet's *Gypsy Weaver* and Elaine Brunken's *A Wee Nothin'*, while others may become your new favorite, perhaps Fred Eustis' *The Fiddler of Dooney* or Pam Stephens' *A Winter's Walk*. Several dances in the book include original tunes by Dave Wiesler, Liz Donaldson and Bonnie Rideout.

To get your copy of *Between the Rivers*, contact Jay Andrews at andrewj@erols.com or 703-719-0596. Copies will also be for sale at most local dance events, such as Argyle Weekend. The book is only \$10 (\$8 if you purchase 6 or more copies) plus actual shipping.

We hope soon to have t-shirts featuring the *Between the Rivers* logo designed by Mary Andrews. Proceeds from book and t-shirt sales will go into a scholarship fund, to which donations will be tax-deductible.



Words of Wisdom from Linda Gaul

Linda Gaul was RSCDS Chairman from 1998 to 2000 and Director of Schools from 2003 to 2006. She was one of the teachers at Scottish Weekend this year, and she agreed to sit down and let teachers and dancers ask her anything. Here are a few choice words of wisdom from that conversation.

- Ceilidh Dances: They are good for a warm-up and they get new people involved because the technique is less precise and everyone can just enjoy moving to the music.
- Music: Really listen to and feel the music. Sit out sometime and pay attention. Talk to musicians who are dancers.

- Dancers' Responsibilities: Good dancers know how a dance fits together and can "find the next bus stop if you do fall off." Some don't want to learn and are happy to be dragged through a dance, but dancers need to take responsibility for their own dancing. Listen to the teachers.

- Teachers' Responsibilities: Be patient. We all learn in different ways. Find what works in each situation. Read and understand the manual and try and keep the standards that have been set.

- Picky Points of Technique: These are guidelines. It is more important that you are working together and helping each other. We need to be a lot more forgiving. "Long live the grey areas."



Lasses Love a Man Who Can Dance



We all took up Scottish Country Dancing for different reasons. Some of us love the music. Some are here for the company. Admit it ladies, some of you come because you love to see men in kilts.

It is no secret that dancing is good exercise. But scientific studies have found numerous additional health benefits associated with dancing, including a reduced risk of Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia.

If that is not enough to get the guys on their toes, studies also show that men who dance well are much more attractive to women, and are considered genetically superior mates.

So don't wait, come to dance class today (before you forget where you parked your car)

and show these women what a real man can do in a kilt! To learn more, check out these articles:

- http://www.sixwise.com/newsletters/o5/11/02/the_health_benefits_of_dancing_-_including_specific_benefits_of_different_dances.htm
- <http://www.emaxhealth.com/cms/?m=show&id=4242>.



Want to know what's happening? Read the EVENTS CALENDAR: <http://www.rscds-greaterdc.org/events.html>