

OVER THE WATER



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

Summer

2007

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

Welcome A-Board!

The votes have been tallied and there will be no recount. The Northern Virginia and Washington D.C. branches of the RSCDS, and their affiliated groups, have elected new boards.

Northern Virginia held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) at the Durrant Center on Wednesday, April 11, 2007. After receiving reports from the outgoing board on finances, membership, and other branch activities, the nominating committee presented candidates for the new board, which the branch membership accepted unanimously. Following the meeting, members enjoyed a wonderful social program prepared by Carol Porter and Yvonne Yang with music by David Knight.

The make up of the Board changed significantly because of term limits imposed by the branch charter. Following tradition, former Vice-Chairman Mark Priest moved into the big Chair. Of his new responsibilities Mark said that he wished to continue the good work of outgoing Chairman Jeff McLean and “stay solvent.” Additionally, several new members of the branch are now

running the shop: Lara Bainbridge, Irene McGhee (who noted that her newly acquired “power feels strangely wonderful”) and Bryan McGhee. Bryan commented that as new members he and Irene wanted to “do something beside dance.” It is good to see their willingness to jump in and fully participate in the branch. We

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In 1988 a group of Scottish Country Dancers in Delaware Valley and the D.C. area had a dream. They dreamed of gathering together with great teachers and accomplished musicians far from the hustle and bustle of city life, to share a weekend of dancing and fun. In 1989, that dream first became a reality when a group of dancers, musicians and teachers gathered in the mountains of West Virginia for the first Scottish Weekend.

Now, nearly 20 years later, Scottish Weekend will again return to West Virginia on September 14-16. Like last year, the Weekend will be held at Timber Ridge. Chair Ellen Ternes has said that in our second year at Timber Ridge “we’re making some improvements - extra clean-up, making sure plenty of coffee is always on hand and that you know where the extra blankets are.”

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Boards cont. . . .

expect to see great things from all of them, on and off the dance floor.

One person who will not be changing roles on the new board is Eva Lanyi, who Chairman Mark has asked to stay on as the teacher coordinator because she has done such an exceptional job. Many do not realize it, but for the last year Eva has been the one working quietly and diligently behind the scenes to ensure that we have teachers for our classes and live musicians on a regular basis. She has also planned and coordinated the majority of our demonstration opportunities. Although this is a non-voting position, the board could not function nearly so well

without her. Keep up the good work Eva!

The Washington D.C. branch held its AGM and a potluck on June 3, 2007. Their new board consists of President Jim Mielke, VP Joan Rubin, Secretary Kim Kenealy, and Treasurer Fred Eustis.

The Washington Branch also has two affiliated groups with their own independent boards: The Scottish Country Dance Society of Washington (SCDSW), which dances on Monday nights at NIH and St. Columba's Scottish Country Dance Group (St. C's), which dances on Tuesday nights at the Greenbelt Community Center.

Jay Andrews was elected the new President of the St. C's group. The SCDSW board remained the same except the man at the top. Their new president is Guy Armantrout.

Northern Virginia Branch Board 2007-2008

Chairman:	Mark Priest
Vice-Chairman:	Barney Lawless
Secretary:	Mary McLean
Treasurer:	Carol Porter
Members at Large:	Jay Andrews Laura Bainbridge Irene McGhee Bryan McGhee
Teacher Liason:	Eva Lanyi

The Northern Virginia Branch has affiliated groups in Fairfax, Charlottesville, and the Outer Banks, NC. The dance groups in Frederick and Baltimore are affiliated with the Washington Branch. None of these groups have independent boards. And while the Richmond group is not affiliated with either branch, we enjoy getting together with them whenever they have a great dance event like the recent Silver Thistle Ball Weekend in Ashland, VA.

We are looking forward to another fabulous year of dancing in the Washington D.C. area and we wish everyone on the new boards the best of luck.



Washington Branch Board 2007-2008

President:	Jim Mielke
Vice-President:	Joan Rubin
Secretary:	Kim Kenealy
Treasurer:	Fred Eustis
Teachers committee:	Rebecca Ramsey Guy Armantrout Sally-Beth Buckner

Wee Nibbles...

- Northern Virginia will be having guest teachers each week throughout the summer. Check out the schedule at http://rscds-greatdc.org/nova_info.html Drop-in fee is \$3. Come Join Us!
- The annual Fort Ward Demo is Sat., Aug. 9. Anyone can join in; we want lots of dancers. Contact Eva Lanyi (elanyi@cox.net) for details.
- The Outer Banks class is now on TUESDAY night from 7 to 9 pm. If you're headed that way don't forget your dancing shoes! Don and Jackie would love to have you.
- The new Scottish Country Dance Directory is ready! Contact Jenn Mayrovitz (jmayrovitz@verizon.net) for an electronic or hard copy. Hard copies are \$5.
- Richmond SCD will be holding a "Dance on the Field" at their local Highland Games in Oct. Check out their webpage at <http://scd-richmond.org/> for details of this and other Richmond SCD events.
- Don't miss the Golden Buckeye Ball on Oct. 13, 2007. See <http://www.rscdscincinnati.org/GoldenBuckeye.html> for all the details.
- THANK YOU to everyone who came to my birthday party or expressed a wish to come. I love you all!

Shanda

Weekend cont. . . .

Also making a return is one of Scottish Weekend's very first teachers, Geoffrey Selling, who will be making his third appearance at the Weekend. Geoffrey has danced or taught in the Philadelphia area since 1969 and has conducted workshops throughout the U.S. and Canada.



He will be joined by Jean Martin of Aberdeen, Scotland, and Fiona Carnie of Calgary, Canada, who will be with us for the first time. Jean is a former Chairman of the RSCDS. Fiona has been involved in Scottish Country dancing since she was eleven.

Also making his Scottish Weekend debut is renowned Scottish fiddler Keith Smith. He will be the featured music teacher for the weekend.

This is a not to be missed event. For those who have financial concerns, scholarships are available. And for those who would like to contribute to the continued success of Scottish weekend, tax deductible donations are gladly accepted. So join us at Scottish Weekend! You'll be glad you did.

For more information see the web, <http://www.scottishweekend.org/>, or e-mail Ellen Ternes, chair, ellenter@comcast.net, or registrar Fred Eustis, feustis@starpower.net.

Scottish Weekend Top 10

We recently overheard someone say "There are 3 Scottish Country dancing events that are a must-do - Pinewoods, Asilomar and Scottish Weekend." Here are the top 10 reasons we think Scottish Weekend is an essential experience for every true Scottish country dancer:

10. Beautiful wooded setting at Camp Timber Ridge, WV, 2 hours from D.C.
9. Best dance music in the Mid Atlantic - check out the line-up - <http://www.scottishweekend.org/>
8. You don't have to cook for a whole weekend. You don't even have to wash dishes.
7. Friendly people from all over
6. Wait...best dance music east of the Mississippi - Liz Donaldson, Dave Wiesler, Earl Gaddis, Dan Emory, Ralph Gordon, David Knight, Marty Taylor, Becky Ross, and this year Keith Smith to boot!
5. Great teachers - Jean Martin from Scotland, Fiona Carnie of Calgary, and Geoffrey Selling, Philadelphia, and fiddler Keith Smith from Scotland teaching the music class
4. Super dance programs - check them out on our website - <http://www.scottishweekend.org/programs.html>.
3. You can spoil yourself when you're not dancing - pool, massages, canoes, beer sipping, wine tasting, beer sipping. Oops, did I already say that?
2. Awesome dance floor (testimonial from last year at Timber Ridge - "First time I've come home from Scottish Weekend and not been sore. The floor was great.")
1. Okay, it's actually the best Scottish Country dance music both sides of the continental divide. Period. You'll wonder what you've done right in life to get the chance to dance to the Scottish Weekend music.



Summer Frolic
Saturday August 11, 2007 at 7:30 pm
Trinity Presbyterian Church, Arlington VA
Admission: \$15
Music by Liz Donaldson, Becky Ross, and Colleen Reed

got ghillies?

what are ghillies?

Sometimes called ghillie brogues, ghillie is the Scottish Gaelic word for lad and brogue comes from the Gaelic brògan, meaning shoes—hence a lad’s shoes. The ghillie (lad) was the highland chief’s attendant. He usually accompanied the chief on hunting and fishing expeditions or acted as a gamekeeper.

Today, the term “ghillies” identifies the shoes traditionally worn for Scottish dancing. They are made of leather, form-fitting, with a soft sole and crossed laces that tie about the ankle. They come in numerous styles and colors, most commonly black, but red is also very popular.



why wear ghillies?

Anciently, ghillie brogues were designed for hunting. They drained water, dried quickly, and did not get stuck in the mud. It is hoped, however, that none of our dancers will be holding a ball in a bog any time soon. But the design of the dance ghillie is still well suited to the intended purpose. The shoe is lightweight and flexible, allowing for a full range of movement and a nice line along the turned-out leg to the perfectly pointed toe.

Some dancers do wear other types of dance shoes. Ballet slipper can be worn, but the design is not ideal because the leather top foot is gathered and stitched to the sole at the balls of the feet (where Scottish dancers should be dancing), whereas the sole of the ghillie extends along the full toe. Jazz shoes often come with rubber soles that can aid in traction. But they also come with a slight heel that can cause bruising when the foot is properly placed in third position. Dance sneakers with a split sole and flexible arch can give greater support, but they are heavy, do not come to a full point, and ghillies don’t hurt as much when you step on your partner’s toes.

who wears ghillies?

Real men wear ghillies. They were traditionally a man’s shoe. The Scottish dance pump, similar to a ballet slipper but with a full sole, was the traditional woman’s dance shoe. Today while some women still prefer the pump, most Scottish country dancers, male and female, wear ghillies. But they still look most dashing with a kilt!

how do you wear ghilles?

Snugly. Many dancers, particularly men, make the mistake of wearing ghillies that are too loose. There should be no extra material in the toe, and it should be snug enough to shape to your foot. If you have difficulty finding the proper size, a tracing of your foot can be sent to a dealer. They are very adept at finding a correct fit. For those who need it, insoles can be inserted for better arch support.

when should you buy ghillies?

As soon as possible if your serious about Scottish country dancing. It really is easier to dance with ghillies. You should also promptly replace old ghillies if they have holes or tears in the stitching, or have become too loose (remember, leather stretches). With that in mind, it is not recommend that you wear brand new ghillies to ball or dance weekend. Break them in first around house and at class.

where do you buy ghillies?

There are numerous brands and styles of ghillies. It may take some trial and error to find your favorite. Some are designed specifically for Scottish country dancing and others for highland dancing. Some can be worn for either. The branch website has an excellent page listing contact information for the various suppliers at <http://rscds-greaterdc.org/hints.html>



My Sherando!

Scottish country dancing made quite a splash at Sherando Lake this year! The annual Sherando Lake dance and picnic sponsored by the Monroe Highland Scottish Country Dancers of Charlottesville on June 2 was a big success. There were at least four sets of dancers on the floor, and several others watching from the sidelines. All enjoyed popsicles and other summer goodies while not dancing.

Meanwhile, the fabulous music by Becky Ross and Julie Gorka made it easy for everyone to kick up their heels and enjoy. And the dancers weren't the only ones who appreciated the music and the program. Several of the visitors to the lake stopped by the pavilion to watch.

Although, there was a little bit of difficulty setting up initially because a birthday party had claimed part of the pavilion earlier in the day, the accommodations were soon sorted out and the dancing commenced.

It was such a lovely day that many enjoyed other activities in and around the lake both before and after the dance. Some took nature hikes. Others opted for a swim.

After the dance and some



playtime, everyone reconvened at a picnic area for some first class food. Compliments to everyone who provided the wonderful meal, and especially the well supplied dessert table.

The Sherando Lake dance is held every year on the first weekend in June. It is one of two annual events sponsored by the Monroe-Highland Scottish Country Dancers, also affectionately known as the Charlottesville group. They also sponsor a wonderful Burns Night event each January.

If you have not been to these events, you should definitely put them on your calendar for next year. They are well worth the trip, and the drive can be quite pretty too.

But you don't have to wait for a big event. The Charlottesville group dances every Tuesday night from 7 to 9 pm at the St. Paul's Church recreation hall in Ivy. They would certainly be happy to have you join them any time throughout the year.

Music Box

Strathspey is a unique Scottish musical form. But we dance strathspeys to many other types of music, such as songs and slow airs. Each form has a different character and can effect our dancing.

A traditional strathspey tune has a dotted rhythm with a strong initial urge that propels the dancer down and forward. This is done with a fully extended front leg while the rear leg bends to lengthen the dancer's reach. It is a stately, strong step, reflecting the power and emotion of the music. You can see an example of this a dance such as The Bridge of Nairn.

Songs and airs tend to be smoother and more lilting. Try dancing Miss Gibson's Strathspey and see how different it feels. Dancers must be careful not to let the soft quality of the music diminish the accuracy of their footwork. The step still requires a strong initial bend and reach.

Whatever the music, when danced well those on the dance floor and those watching from the sidelines can enjoy the rare beauty and grace of one of Scotland's most elegant dance forms.



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

It's a Family Affair!



How does a whole family become Scottish country dancers? Well, you begin with a very determined 10 year old girl. Originally Demaris Jimenez wanted to try Greek dancing, but when the family came across an ad in the newspaper for Scottish country dancing in Charlottesville, she was anxious to give it a try. Caroline, who has Scottish ancestry agreed, and older brother Nick was dragged along—against his will of course.

Because Charlottesville had no children's class and all of the other dancers were adults, the Beltons

had some concerns about taking on the challenge of teaching such a young dancer. But Demaris was determined to learn, and learn she did. Caroline says that Celia's positive attitude and patience made the experience enjoyable. On the other hand, it took several weeks and the prospect of dancing fully armed to bring Nick around. With Caroline and the kids now at dance class regularly, John, who works in the hospitality industry, decided he had better join in or get left behind. And soon the whole Jimenez clan was immersed in the Scottish dancing world.



These days you can find the busy Jimenez family involved in several activities. Both Nick (17) and Demaris (14) enjoy speech and debate, and they are very good at it. Demaris also likes swimming and tennis. And Nick, ever the "Alpha Male," likes kickboxing and Jujitsu.

Yet, despite their busy schedules, you will still meet the Jimenez family at many SCD events. And they are becoming regulars at TAC Summer School. They whole family attended last year and will be back again this year.

Well, maybe not the whole family. Their household also includes a German Shepherd puppy named Tango and two cats, Doolittle and Meow-Meow. They'll stay home.

When asked what she likes about Scottish country dancing, Caroline said she loves the patterns. And she believes it teaches good life lessons not easily found in many modern activities. For example, the social aspect of dancing teaches a young man to treat



women as ladies. He has to ask, lead, and take responsibility for his partner.

Demaris say that she likes the music. And Nick, well, Nick likes the gear—and any opportunity that dancing gives him to impress the girls.

So for John, Caroline, Nick, and Demaris Jimenez, Scottish country dancing is truly a family affair.



New Teachers



Congratulations to four new teachers on achieving Teaching Certificate Level 1! They are:

- Nathan Margason, Northern Virginia Branch
- Shanda Robertson, Northern Virginia Branch
- Sarah Phoebe Williams, Northern Virginia Branch
- Arianna Vogt, Delaware Valley Branch

Stella Fogg and Ralph Stoddard tutored the candidate class, which ran from September 2006 through April 2007. The candidates spent months studying the Manual and doing homework for the Unit 1 written exam, practicing candidate dances for the Unit 2 dancing exam, and writing and teaching exam-style lessons (a step, two figures, and linking the figures) for the Unit 3 teaching exam.

The candidates took their Unit 1 written exam on February 10, 2007, and received their results about 6 weeks later. They took their Unit 2 and 3 exams on April 21, 2007, and fortunately did not need to wait quite as long for these results. The anxiously waiting candidates received their score sheets less than 2 weeks later.

The examiners, Lesley Martin and Elinor Vandegrift, did their best to help the candidates relax and feel as comfortable as possible. Susie Petrov played for the exams.

Thank you to everyone who helped with the candidate class! We could not have done this without your help. In particular, we would like to thank:

- Jay Andrews, Sandy Gallamore, Eva Lanyi, and Yvonne Yang for completing the set for the Unit 2 exams.
- Ellen Ternes and Margaret Grandine, for being “backup dancers” for the practice and real Unit 2 exam, in case extra dancers might be needed.
- Eva Lanyi, for transporting the examiners to and from the exam center on April 21-22.
- Pam Stephens, for leading warmups, stretching, and warmup dances before the practice and real exams.
- Jay Andrews, for bringing lunch for the practice and real exams, bringing tea supplies to the classes, being an extra set of eyes for the tutors during the candidate class, and for assisting as needed.
- Sandy Gallamore, for bringing sandwiches to the candidate classes, and chauffeuring Stella.
- Maria Ward and Dave Chase, for bringing brewed coffee and hot water for tea, breakfast snacks, and extra tables and chairs.
- Carol Porter, for hosting Lesley and Elinor.
- D a v e Wiesler,

for bringing the Delaware Valley keyboard to and from the DC area for the exams.

- Jim and Laurie Mielke, for hosting Stella and Sandy for the practice and real exams, and for assisting with pickup and drop-off of the keyboard.
- The Delaware Valley Branch for providing the keyboard.
- John and Joan MacLeod, for hosting Nate and Phoebe for the practice and real exams.
- Zanne Macdonald, for hosting the music class in C’ville.
- Fred Eustis, for handling the finances of the class.
- Yvonne Yang for managing and organizing the class.

Thanks especially to all the dancers who gave up Saturday afternoons to stooze for the candidate classes and exams!

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Two Unit 5 candidates came down from Delaware Valley to take their teaching exams on April 22, 2007. Congratulations also to Katherine Giacoletti and Melissa Shaner, tutored by Jill Emery, on passing their Unit 5 exams and achieving Teaching Certificate Level 2.

