

**Boston Branch of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society
Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting**

August 28, 2013

Present: Betty Allen, Beth Birdsall, John Crabtree, Kat Dutton, BDan Fairchild, Jean Farrington, Alex Hall, Bob Littlehale, Lance Ramshaw, Vickery Trinkaus-Randall

Meeting called to order at 7:20 pm by Jean Farrington.

(The first item of business taken up was the Boston Ball, since the staff at Memorial Hall in Melrose was standing by to hear our decision. The agenda then resumed in the normal order.)

1. **Minutes from the previous meeting:** MSP to approve the minutes after one minor correction.
2. **Treasurer's Report (Bob):** We had a cash flow problem with our check to PCI due to delay in depositing the Pinewoods income checks. As a result, Bob had to cash in our CDs, with a loss of roughly \$60 of interest. We used to carry a bigger balance, so that this kind of thing didn't become an issue. He is looking for places to reinvest the CD money.

The final figures are in for the Highland Ball, showing income \$9,896, expenses \$11,300.24, for a loss of \$1,404.24. That loss is fortunately less than we had previously thought, since the earlier figures had missed some income items due to an accounting oversight.

Preliminary figures for ESS show income \$4,613.25, expenses \$5,456.39, for a loss of \$843.14 Preliminary figures for the Pinewoods Scottish Sessions show income \$21,247.01, expenses \$14,115.11, for a profit of \$7,131.90, but there are additional expenses that will be coming in against that. Jean wants to inquire about the loss for ESS, since they had more people this year than in earlier years. Bob noted that averaged over 10 years, they are still in the black.

MSP to approve the report.

Century	\$36,751.33
Lloyds	\$244.22
Total	\$36,995.55

3. Reports from Liaisons.

- a. **Fall concert** [Oct. 26-27, 2013] (John): Things are going well. Flyers have been printed up, and will be sent out to Peter's email list of non-members interested in the concert.

Beth has created a Facebook event page for the concert. John is working on seeing that our event is listed on the band's own website, though they have changed websites recently, and the first hit is usually the old version.

Looking ahead to next year, John reports some concern that we might run into the same kinds of scheduling problems with the Museum next year as we did this year. Bob and John suggested exploring Memorial Hall in Melrose as a venue for the concert, which would be cheaper. It has 400 fixed seats, with space for an additional 400 chairs on the floor, so we could perhaps get by with one show. On

the other hand, we could stick to the fixed seats and use the floor space for the dancing, which would provide good viewing.

- b. **Highland Ball** [May 10, 2014] (BDan): Bob, Betty, and John visited Memorial Hall in Melrose, and came away very excited about having the Ball there. Bob presented a comparative analysis of the costs using a local restaurant's catering service there compared to the costs at Moseley's.

The hall has space for probably 15 sets, with seating space that is close to the dancing area. There are 123 parking spaces. The building is air conditioned, and there are dressing rooms with racks. We can rent the entire facility for 8 hours for \$800. The hall arranges for tables and the caterer provides table cloths and cleans the kitchen before and after. Bob included a one-day liquor license with the required police detail in his rough budgeting. Depending on the other expenses, it seems that we might even be able to lower to ticket price.

There is a grand piano, but it costs \$200 to rent it plus \$200 to tune it, so we should probably use a keyboard instead.

The date would be the second Saturday in May. First Saturdays are never possible at this hall due to a longstanding series of orchestra concerts.

Exec enthusiastically agreed (MSP) to reserve the hall for May 10, 2014, with thanks to John for the initial suggestion. We can book for the next year on the night of the event, if we decide to.

We discussed and short-listed possible bands, and BDan will talk with them. We also thought about members who might be interested in being cochairs for the event, and Jean will contact folks.

- c. **PW Benefit Ball** [Dec. 7, 2013] (Betty): Gill is sending out the contract to the musicians. At the request of the TMC, it will include a clause specifying that the band play the title tunes if possible.

Evelyn Murray and Susan Haines are the TMC subcommittee to devise the program, and they have consulted with the ball chairs.

- d. **ESS Pinewoods** (Jean): Nothing to report.
- e. **PW Scottish Sessions** (Bob): Nothing to report. The chairs' move to a new house slowed them down some in getting stuff to Bob. Bob will check with them as to whether there are people that they'd like to work with whom they'd like to suggest as assistant chairs for 2014 and chairs in 2015.
- f. **NH Highlands** [Aug 23-25, 2013] (Vickery): A fine time! Over 80 people attended (they were full up in the retreat house), with lots of new dancers, music, and merriment. They are working on confirming dates for next year, probably the 4th of the 5 August weekends.
- g. **Branch Activities at NH Highland Games** (John): Things sadly have fallen through here. John called the Games organizers recently to follow up on his earlier queries about the tent space and space for dancing, and learned that there is no space for dancing in their plan at all. MaryEllen separately has been trying to contact the organizers, but has not had her phone calls returned. In addition to MaryEllen and folks willing to teach, a number of demo team folks had also been ready to attend and dance, at least as a day trip.

John is still hoping that the organizers will get back to him, but it currently looks like a complete wash-out for this year. He did raise the issue with them about getting us back into the plans for next year, and is hoping to meet with them about that as early as October.

- h. **Teaching Music Committee** (Betty): TMC suggested that the Candidate Class guidelines might better belong in the public area of the website, rather than in the Members Only area, since other branches have expressed interest in them.

For Pinewoods 2014, Antoine Rousseau from Paris has accepted as a teacher, and there are two other teachers that TMC is talking with. They have asked Liz Donaldson to be Music Director again.

Evelyn has taken over organizing the Advanced Classes, which will start in October.

- i. **Tartan Times** (Beth): For the past couple months, Beth has been able to call the printers to request a PDF copy on the same day that Evelyn delivered the issue, which has worked well. This month, however, Evelyn dropped it off on Friday, and when Beth called on Monday, they had already sent it out without keeping a copy, so she'll have to get it from Evelyn to mail it out. It would be great if the printers could send an email copy to Beth as a regular thing, but we don't know what arrangement Evelyn has with them.

- j. **Demonstration Team** (Alex): The team will be doing participatory dancing for a private wedding anniversary on Sept 6. Folks suggested bringing flyers.

The first rehearsal for the Fall Show was last Sunday, with four dancing sets planned. Linda mentioned at rehearsal that for this fall she is only planning on refreshments and dancing after the evening performance, but not after the Sunday matinee, to avoid over-straining the volunteers.

- k. **Membership** (Bob): MaryEllen reports 89 regular and 4 associate members so far.

- l. **Web Site and Publicity** (Kat): The Fall Concert webpage has been posted, with photos, bios, and links. Meyer is working to set up an FTP site that Lance can use monthly to automatically post the Exec minutes. He also plans to explore an archive scheme, similarly driven by uploading materials to an FTP site.

- m. **Bookstore** (Vickery): Dawn and Mike Little have agreed to take over as the Bookstore managers. Jean took some bookstore materials to NH Highlands, and made a few sales.

- n. **SAGM** [Nov. 11, 2013]: Since the Cambridge Class will be meeting at the Canadian-American Club from September till the end of the year, our SAGM will be there as well.

- o. **Class Liaisons:**

- 1) Albany: No report.
- 2) Belfast: No report.
- 3) Brookline: No report.
- 4) Brunswick: No report.

- 5) Cambridge: They met once in August at the Canadian American Club, followed by three Mondays at Fayerweather School, with good attendance throughout the summer. They distributed a survey, and 66% preferred the Canadian-American Club venue, so the class is contracting with them at least through December.

The Canadian-American Club does not have a sound system in the main hall. The plan is that the old Cambridge Class sound system will be stored at the Canadian-American Club, while still also being available for Branch functions. (Peter has been storing two Branch sound systems. The old Cambridge Class system is the one currently being used for Branch events, since the original Branch sound system currently has only one channel working.)

- 6) Fairlee: They will start dancing after Labor Day. Their Autumn Social will be on Oct 12. The program is set, and flyers were distributed at NH Highlands.
- 7) Great Barrington: No report.
- 8) Greenland: No report received, but Nancy Rawson has heard that they are planning to have an 18th Century night dance again this year.
- 9) Kennebunkport: Merrill reports that they are planning to start again in the fall, eager to regain their status as a Branch Class.
The most recent word is that they do now have 8 class members who are also Branch members, so that we can put them back on the official list of Branch classes.
- 10) Montpelier: No report.
- 11) Nashua: They met nearly every week over the summer, with 7-8 couples. Their North Chelmsford class on first Mondays is going strong.
- 12) Northampton: Class resumes after Labor Day
- 13) Salem: No report
- 14) Stow: They will start on the fourth Friday of September. They are talking about having a children's group starting at 7:00 before the main group.

4. Old Business

- a. **August Mailing.** Jean is working on the President's Letter. The rest of the materials are ready for emailing and posting on the Members Only area of the website.

5. New Business

- a. On Sept 14, Betty and Jean will be going to Pinewoods for a Users' Group meeting that PCI is organizing in response to low attendance at a number of sessions. They sent out a list of questions, mostly demographic. Some of the other groups are apparently thinking about trying out a weekend and week model similar to ours.

People noted that the CDSS weeks are on a rotating schedule, which is a problem that we haven't had to deal with. We should stress that our stable schedule works well for us, and that our community is used to it.

6. Next Meeting

- a. Sept. 25, at John Crabtree's
- b. Oct. 30

MSP to adjourn at 9:18 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Lance Ramshaw