

Boston Branch of the Royal Scottish Dance Society

Minutes of the Executive Committee

March 25, 2015

Present: Betty Allen, Dale Birdsall, John Crabtree, Kat Dutton, Susan Haines, Alex Hall, Merrill Henderson, Bob Littlehale, Jeremy Thorpe

Absent: Linda McJannet

Guest: Beth Birdsall

1. Minutes from the February 25, 2015 meeting required adding the word “name” to the New Hampshire Highlands report and re-wording the Stow class information and then were accepted.
2. Treasurer’s Report (Bob) – The Main Checking account is at \$23,091.43 and the Lloyds account is at \$1,888.73 for a total of \$24,980.16. The SDCEA Scholarship Dance had just four and a half sets, so the attendance numbers are declining. Bob noted that the deposit schedule for Pinewoods has changed by one month, a change that must have been agreed upon. The deposit dates are March 10, April 10, and May 10, each requiring \$11,859. In the meantime, Scottish Sessions has not changed its deposit schedule, and ESC is not asking for deposits until mid-April to early May. The combination of these huge deposits, the insurance that is due in April, and the costs from the Highland Ball, the Branch will encounter some serious cash flow problems. Jeremy will ask Judy Erickson if CDS could pay the ESC deposits which would help with the cash issues.
3. Reports from Liaisons –
 - a) Fall Concert 2015 (John) – No report at this time.
 - b) Highland Ball (Bob) – The booklets have been finalized, but the numbers for registrations are low which is quite worrisome. There are currently 60 guests for dinner which is 18 less than this time last year. The low number of registrations may be due to the fact that the ball is earlier this year, but no matter what, there are still \$6400 in expenses that must be paid. Jeremy will forward a message on the members list and it needs to be talked up as much as possible.
Meanwhile, co-chairs are needed for next year, so please be thinking of possible candidates.
 - c) ESC (Jeremy) – There are currently 48 paying registrants which is ahead of last year’s numbers at this time, but 37 are still needed to reach the 85 needed to break even. Future recruiting and advertising plans are underway.
 - d) Scottish Sessions Pinewoods (Beth) – Everything seems to be going well. To date, there are 92 applicants including some international campers. A new

version of the contract was recently received from Pinewoods and will be delivered on Sunday.

The camper teachers are set and work continues on camper musicians. The jobs are also being looked at.

- e) New Hampshire Highlands (Susan) – No report at this time.
- f) New Hampshire Highland Games (Merrill) – There will be a notice in the next edition of the *Tartan Times* to solicit help.
- g) Teaching and Music Committee (Betty) – Due to some confusion, the contracts for the Pinewoods musicians had not been sent, but that problem has been resolved.

The repeated issue of lack of procedures for events still exists. Beth has the Scottish Sessions Pinewoods information and will pass it along. A library of information will be started for information on other events.

Howard Lasnik will be leading the May and June Challenge classes. Jean Martin and Elinor Vandegrift will be the examiners for the Candidates' Examinations.

A document outlining the duties of the TMC and its members will be added to the web site.

- h) *Tartan Times* (Kat) – The previous three issues of the *Tartan Times* had been sent from the printer to Kat, but the last issue was not sent. The next issue will be sent from Barbara to Kat to check the format. Due to Evelyn being so busy with tax season, the next edition will be started after April 15th.
Of note is the fact that the quality of the pdf is getting better.
- i) Demonstration Team (Alex) – The team has been on a rehearsal hiatus due to people being away, but they are back on track and preparing for NEFFA.
- j) Membership (Dale) – As of March 25th, there were 232 Branch members plus 15 associate members. Of these, 204 members and/or associate members requested to receive communications electronically. In addition, 32 members and/or associate members will receive a hard copy of the *Tartan Times*. To date, 47 who were members last year have not renewed. There are 20 first-time Branch members and one first-time associate member.
Everyone is wondering why the Directory has not been sent. Dale will check with MaryEllen.
- k) Nominating Committee (Dale) – The slate of candidates is set for the upcoming election.
- l) Website and Publicity (Kat) – A reminder from the webmasters that everyone should thoroughly proofread all documents for spelling and accuracy before sending the information to them for posting.
- m) Bookstore (Merrill) – No report at this time.
- n) Class Liaisons –

- Brookline, MA (Kat) – The class was able to meet for the entire month. As a side note, Jean Farrington is managing the Branch events calendar, including changes.
- Cambridge, MA (Kat) – There has been good attendance for the month of March. The Unit 4-5 Candidates have been teaching in preparation for their exam.
The class has purchased a new sound mixing board and two speakers and expects to purchase two more speakers.
The Cambridge Class Dance List database has been compiled by Charles Liu, and Lance Ramshaw has done the coding and ordering. Perhaps the list could expand to other classes.
- Chelmsford, MA (John) – Susie Petrov taught and Dirk Tiede played in March to a class of 16 dancers.
- Brunswick and Belfast, ME (Merrill) – The classes are preparing a demonstration for the DownEast Folk Festival.
- Kennebunk, ME (Merrill) – The class has two enthusiastic new dancers and has been averaging four to five couples.
- Fairlee, VT (Dale) – About six class members attended the Montpelier Social and a couple will be attending the Highland Ball. Bill Tobin will be coming to Fairlee once a month (for the short term) to teach and to provide a change of pace. The class is also preparing for its own social scheduled for May 2 at Damon Hall in Hartland, VT. They are hoping that people will be able to attend despite the Candidates' exams on the same day.
- Montpelier, VT (Dale) – The class has started its final session of the year, but the numbers are down due to several reasons – moving away, disabilities, etc. – so they are trying to figure out ways to attract more people who will stay.
The potluck and social on February 28th went well with four and a half sets. The class would like to thank the Branch for the music subsidy and are grateful and appreciative that this opportunity exists.
- Salem, MA (Dale) – Due to the Highland ball occurring in April, the class will be hosting its “April Party” on May 9th with a potluck supper and a “Not-so-grand March.” The class would like to know if this is just a temporary change of date for the Highland Ball or if it is permanent. Since the snow emergency was lifted, the class regularly has two and a half sets, and the Unit 5 Candidates have been teaching and briefing dances.
The church is in the process of forming a non-profit entity to take over management of the physical building, but the class will be able to

continue classes, parties, and workshops in Bolles Hall at the same rental prices.

4. Old Business –

- a) Coordinating the insurance year and membership year – 25 ballots were cast all in favor of defining the membership year as running from October 1 through September 30.
- b) Upcoming committee vacancies – Replacements are needed for the Teaching and Music Committee.
- c) Branch Communications – Calendar – Jeremy will be sending out the Branch Communications Survey, but how should the calendar be handled? Google calendar is a possibility in which there could be limited access for making changes but there could also be several layers and people could sync it to their personal calendars. We must also keep in mind that many people rely on the printed *Tartan Times* for their information on accurate dates for events.

5. New Business –

- a) Documents from Headquarters – The March mailing from Headquarters contained several documents, but one in particular was the report from the Management Board. Headquarters acknowledges that membership is declining and that “a complete re-think on structure is necessary.” Work continues on the transfer of RSCDS to a Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG), and the first meeting of the CLG was held on February 28th. From the Membership Services Committee – Book 49 will be available in July 2015 and includes new formations including The Rose and The Celtic Reel. The recording for Book 49 is being recorded and will also include music for selected dances from Miss Milligan’s Miscellany. From the Education and Training Committee – The Unit 2 Prescribed Dances booklet has been updated with standard terminology and is now available from the shop. The dances themselves have not changed. There are also updated documents available on the website including technique dances found in the Help section, teaching notes for books 46 through 48 and the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee Book, the Examination Syllabus, and Guidelines for Unit 4 altered with regard to dances permitted for inclusion in the Record of Teaching Practice.

6. Next Meetings

- a) April 29 – Kat’s