

The Scottish Country Dance Society of Boston, MA, Inc.
Minutes of the Annual General Meeting, 11 June 2018

The meeting was called to order at 7:45 p.m. by President Jeremy Thorpe.

Minutes of the SAGM: The minutes of the SAGM, November 6, 2017 were approved as distributed.

Election Results: Jeremy read the results of the recent Branch election. They include Jeremy Thorpe as President, Susan Haines as Secretary, and Karen Gansz and Winifred McGowan as Exec members at-large for three-year terms. The open position on the Nominating Committee has not yet been filled.

Treasurer's Interim Report: At eight months into the fiscal year, Treasurer Cathy Crabtree reported that the total Branch revenue is currently at \$72,637 after a successful November Concert and receipt of Pinewoods registration moneys. Membership dues were down by about \$500.00, a wireless microphone was purchased for \$500.00, and the administrative expenses incurred from Square, Inc. (the on-line payment service) was \$2290.00.

SDCEA: Vickery Trinkaus-Randall, SDCEA President, reported that the SDCEA had a change in personnel. Vickery stepped into the role of President, Julia Mullen is the clerk, and Rebecca Gore agreed to fill the vacant position on the board. Other members of the Board include Gail Wine as Treasurer, Bob Littlehale, Peter Tandy, and Kendra Eshleman. The board administers several funds and awards scholarships from those funds. A total of \$2555.00 was awarded in fiscal year 2017 to aid Scottish Country Dancers attending Pinewoods Scottish Sessions I and II, ESCape, and New Hampshire Highlands. The SDCEA awards half scholarships to these activities while encouraging participants to pay part of the costs themselves. Preference is given to Branch members, although some awards are also available to non-Branch members. Contributions to the SDCEA are always welcome, and \$2,252.00 was received in 2017 including \$1320 from the Scholarship Dance. If you would like to donate, you can speak to a Board member, pick up a donation form at your next class, or print a form from the Branch web site.

Vickery announced the winners of the Ed Rawson Fund Class Awards for newer dancers including Morgan Henry and George Sanders from the Fairlee Class; Jim and Denise Nelson from the Kennebunk class; Madison Rose Shulkin and Gisele Desjardins from the Albany Class; and Eileen Baird from the Chelmsford class. Congratulations!

The Board will try to hold two meetings per year, one in the Fall to coordinate the Scholarship Dance and one in the Spring to handle scholarship application review and committee business. The next meeting will be held on October 10, 2018.

Membership: MaryEllen and John Scannell reported that there are 214 Branch members and 21 Associate Members. In addition, there were 45 individuals and 5 associates who did not rejoin. Fourteen classes contain eight or more members listing that class as their location. There was a discussion concerning the most appropriate way to recognize young dancers ages 16 and under. Headquarters charges 50% of the adult membership rate for young dancers ages 12 to 17. Our By-Laws defines a Junior member as dancers 18 and under, but there is no policy to serve as a guideline for Youth Attendance at Branch events. Exec will work to develop a policy.

Mailing List: Peter Tandy, the Branch Mailing List Coordinator, reported that the list currently has 1445 records, 36 more than last year. The list includes 40 member records,

1 Associate member record, 55 SDC group representatives (but only 3 e-mail addresses for sending the *Tartan Times*), and 602 Concert records (15 less than large year). Peter expresses his thanks to MaryEllen and John Scannell for their efforts with the memberships so that the mailing database can be kept up-to-date.

Boston Scottish Country Dancers (Demo Team): Laura DeCesare, Team Coordinator, reports that the Boston Scottish Country Dancers had a wonderful year. Thirteen dancers performed at NEFFA with choreography by Loren Wright. In January, they performed at Ancient Universities' Burns Night, and, at BCMFest they did a collaborative performance with the young dancers of the Mladost Folk Ensemble. In the Fall, the dancers performed at the Fall Concert with Alasdair Fraser and Natalie Haas. The team will miss performing at the Fall Concert but look forward to the new Ceilidh event planned for this Fall. In anticipation of the change from the concert to the Ceilidh, the dancers held a subcommittee meeting to determine what the "Demo Team" would look like moving forward, considering that the Concert had been one of their two major gigs each year. They needed to clarify what its absence would mean. They determined that their primary role was "to bring the joy of Scottish dance and music out into the community." They had already been expanding their efforts by dancing in senior residences, local festivals, and even a private birthday party. They also danced at their third Dance for World Community festival in Harvard Square and hope to continue reaching out and bringing Scottish Country Dancing to as many people as possible.

The subcommittee also discussed the importance of the team as a way of providing advanced-level training and practice to dancers in the Branch. They entertained the possibility of holding more advanced classes when they were not preparing for specific performances. These advanced classes would be an avenue for other dancers to check out the group to see if they would be interested in joining them.

The final discussion of the subcommittee concerned re-naming the team. They finally settled on the name "Boston Scottish Country Dancers."

The team breaks for the summer and resumes after Labor Day. They are actively seeking new members and hope that anyone who is interested will speak to Laura DeCesare or Andy Taylor-Blenis for information concerning rehearsals, performances, and what is expected in terms of commitment. They hope that you'll join them and help with their efforts to expand the Scottish Country Dance community.

Teaching and Music Committee (TMC): Charles Liu, Chair of the Teaching and Music Committee, reported on the activities of the Committee in the past year. TMC is responsible for planning and organizing the teaching and music aspects of the Highland Ball, the Pinewoods Scottish Sessions, and other events to promote Scottish Country Dancing and musicianship.

For the Highland Ball, the TMC solicited the Branch classes for dance suggestions, and many of the dances were able to be incorporated into the final Ball program. It was truly a Branch-wide participatory effort, and the TMC hoped you enjoyed it. Thank you to Roberta Lasnik and Robert McOwen for taking the lead in devising the program. Thank you also to the Ball committee, Kat Dutton, Cathy Fahey, and Valerie and Stephen Thomforde for the great job done in organizing the Ball.

For Pinewoods Scottish Sessions, the morning class offerings were changed for 2017 and seemed to work well. The same format will be used for 2018.

This summer is going to be the 50th anniversary of the debut of the Pinewoods Reel, written by John Bowie Dickson, and the co-chairs are planning a commemoration for the occasion. Please look for it at camp! Thank you to Laura DeCesare and Ross Porter for the great work they have done as Pinewoods co-chairs.

We are fortunate to have Susie Petrov returning as the Music Director for 2018, and we are pleased to announce that Elke Baker will serve as Music Director in 2019. The confirmed teaching staff for 2019 includes Janet Johnston from Edinburgh and Jean Dodds from Adelaide, Australia. Jean is believed to be the first teacher from the Southern Hemisphere on the Pinewoods teaching staff.

The TMC organized and supported several dance workshops this year. Jen Schoonover and Susie Petrov led a successful workshop last September on the history of Scottish Country Dances. In November, Howard Lasnik led a workshop in Brunswick, Maine. The TMC hopes to organize similar workshops in Northern New England next fall.

The TMC would like to recognize Howard Lasnik, Karen Sollins, and Cathy Fahey who took the initiative to organize Scottish Country Dance events at NEFFA this year. Thank you also to Jen Schoonover who led a family dance in the spring and Robert McOwen for leading a Burns Supper and subsequent Scottish Country Dance workshop at MIT in the spring.

As RSCDS Headquarters prepares new dance books, periodically they distribute dances to the dance groups worldwide to solicit their feedback. Several of our dance classes participated in the effort to evaluate dances submitted for RSCDS Book 52, scheduled to be released in the summer of 2018. Thank you to Karen Sollins and Susie Petrov for coordinating the evaluation effort.

Every two years, RSCDS Headquarters dispatches examiners to branch groups worldwide to conduct Teacher Certification Examinations. The examiners will be coming in 2019. Susie Petrov will tutor the teacher candidates in the Branch in the coming year. If you know any good dancers amongst you, please encourage them to take the challenge and join the teacher training. The TMC would like to thank you in advance for participating in the upcoming practice teaching sessions by the teacher candidates.

The TMC would like to thank all Branch members for their support. They continue to welcome your ideas in any areas where they can help to promote Scottish Country Dancing and musicianship.

Tartan Times: No report was submitted at the time of this meeting.

Website: The webmasters Meyer, Laura, and Matt Billmers report that this has been a busy year working out the wrinkles and issues with the new website design. Meyer was able to finally devise a scheme for posting pictures to the new photo gallery format. Consequently, photos from Pinewoods 2017 are now posted as well as those from the recent Highland Ball. They are looking forward to taking more photos at Pinewoods 2018.

Please note that the diagrams and dance directions for this year's evening parties at Pinewoods will not be posted due to a request from one of the evening program devisers. There is a link on the web site that will direct campers to <http://my.strathspey.org> for the dance directions.

The webmasters request that when submitting information for the web site, please proofread it (more than one set of eyes would be great!), so that it is ready for publication and doesn't need to be downloaded multiple times.

Event organizers need to remember that calendar entries go on the Google calendar at calendar@rscdsboston.org and not to the webmasters. E-mail announcements and save-the-date information should be sent to the webmasters, so they can send it out on their rss feed, then to the general interest e-mail list, and finally to the member.

The webmasters continue to archive event fliers as the events happen. These are available through the Event Archives pull-down. You can also find something specific by using the search box that is on every page.

The webmasters do acknowledge that there are a few issues with the web site. There is a known, intermittent bug that causes the Chrome browser to crash when visiting some pages with thumbnail pictures. Resizing the browser window usually fixes this problem.

As for usage statistics, the webmasters successfully delivered about 400,000 pages for the year, or 1100 per day, or almost two per minute. The most popular requests are for the photo gallery. The biggest referrals, i.e. other sites that link to use, are Google, rscdsboston.com, Facebook, Google of Canada, Google of UK, and then Google of Rumania. Who would have guessed?

Calendar: Jeremy Thorpe reminded everyone to send their calendar information to calendar@rscds.org. Several people who have privileges to upload information have been doing so quite successfully. Jeremy will be altering the directions for everyone to make them clearer.

Equipment: Jeffrey Hopper reports that after many years of diligent service, Peter Tandy has stepped down as manager of the Branch sound system. MaryEllen Scannell is temporarily housing that equipment. The Executive Committee is seeking a replacement for Peter. If you are interested or know someone who is interested, please contact either the President or the Secretary. (Since this meeting, Thom Howe has agreed to be the manager of the Branch sound equipment.)

Archives: Gregor Trinkaus-Randall reports that he has received a packet of materials dealing with Jeannie Carmichael that will be deposited in the Archives. Marcia Rising also discovered a letter that established the Stow class in the 1960s, and it too will be placed in the Archives.

Meeting minutes are the key item collected for an organization and placed in an Archives. Gregor would welcome minutes from the Executive Committee, the Teaching and Music Committee, and information from Pinewoods and the Highland Ball. Please send items to Gregor or deposit them in a box provided by the University of New Hampshire Archives and let him know you have deposited them.

Bookstore: Dawn and Mike Little are the keepers of the Bookstore. Please be sure to contact them if you would like the Bookstore to come to your event.

Pinewoods Camp: Bruce Mabbott is now the RSCDS representative to the Pinewoods Executive Board, and he expressed a huge thank-you to Bill Card who had graciously performed this duty for the last six years.

Bruce reports that there has been a lot happening at camp! The new Executive Director, Carl, had quite his first winter at camp, with back to back to back winter storms that

brought down a number of trees and damaged several pieces of camp infrastructure. Luckily there was only one major piece of damage recorded. Camp really dodged a bullet again! The rest of the tree strikes were repaired efficiently and quickly by local contractors. Carl managed all of this clean up and repair work magnificently and only spent one stormy night cowering in the camphouse fireplace (one of the few places in camp built of stone) when trees were falling all around camp!

The major damage was to the camp store, which was effectively destroyed. The remains were cleared but the foundation was reused, and a new camp store has already been completed. The new store is in the same style as the old one but with more doors, windows, and better ventilation. The new store has an additional entrance from the walkway to the bathrooms and nurse's office to enable it to be utilized by the growing number of campers who have mobility problems....or those who just need a Dove bar after a visit to the nurse. Also, there is an ice cream vending machine set to free dispense, which is a more efficient option than the chest freezers of old. It will cut down on spoilage from power cuts as it is better insulated.

After Carl and Tony did an admirable tree survey, there are still a number of trees at camp that have been weakened by the storms or are hollow. These trees will be taken down after this summer season is over.

Once trees were cleared, contractors were called in and camp used the opportunity to reroof some of the cabins since the roofers were going to be on site anyway. New windows were also installed in some cabins.

Other noticeable work done over the winter was better access to some of the camp infrastructure for people with mobility issues. While camp will never be ADA compliant, these new ramps at Pinecones, Hunsdon House, and Newbiggin will certainly make it easier for our fellow campers to access these spaces. In addition, new steps into the cabins in the Square will replace the questionable masonry blocks that used to act as steps.

After two work weekends, camp is now open for the summer. Docks were put into the water, drainage ditches were dug, sticks and branches were cleared, paths were swept, and NEW mattresses were distributed to all the cabins by the horde. Yes, now you can sleep in comfort on 6" mattresses at PW rather than the time worn and slightly saggy 4" ones. If you would like to participate in any future work weekends (closing weekend is in September), you can sign up on the PW website, Pinewoods.org. The Scottish contingent has a very good reputation for getting things done at work weekends. Please help us keep that tradition going!

Similar to the Boston Branch, Pinewoods Camp maintains a climate-controlled archive at the University of New Hampshire. More resources are being devoted to this archive in order to digitize it and make it available online. Some of the earliest photos are being digitized first so that Pinewoods can try and identify any people in them, before all the people who would recognize them are no longer with us.

That is all the news from Pinewoods Camp, Inc. and enjoy any sessions you attend this summer!

Fall Concert of Music and Dance 2017: Cathy Crabtree reported that the ticket information from Meerkat indicates a sellout for the matinee and 70-75% of the seats sold for the evening show. Alasdair Fraser and Natalie Haas were well received and seem to enjoy performing for the Boston Branch.

Due to mounting losses for several years (prior to 2017), the Branch will not undertake producing a Concert in 2018 but will instead join forces with Highland Dance Boston to provide a Joint Ceilidh. Please plan to attend this event on Saturday November 10, 2018 at the Irish Social Club of Boston in West Roxbury, MA.

Pinewoods Benefit Ball 2017: MaryEllen Scannell reports that the Pinewoods Benefit Ball was once again hosted by the Salem Class. Many thanks to all the dancers who enjoyed an evening of dancing in support of Pinewoods Camp, Inc. in spite of the blizzard. The net to Pinewoods was \$700 this year. The Salem Class will be looking forward to the 2018 Pinewoods Benefit Ball and hosting a Book 52 Workshop.

Highland Ball 2018: Valerie Thomforde presented this report on behalf of herself and the rest of the Highland Ball Committee: Stephen Thomforde, Katarina Dutton, and Cathy Fahey.

The weekend started with the Welcome Dance held in Weston with music by Ed Pearlman and Beth Murray and the program devised and briefed by Loren Wright. Fifty-three dancers, including several from Canada and Albany, NY had an enjoyable evening. The Highland Ball was attended by 122 dancers enjoying the music of Laura Risk, Nicholas Williams, Hanneke Cassel, and Paddy League. This year, instead of a sit-down dinner, hors-d'oeuvres were served during the cocktail hour, a break with tradition that created an opportunity to socialize better than is offered while sitting at a table. The decrease in catering costs allowed the committee to offer an early bird ticket rate that was at a 25% discount from the 2017 price. The abundant leftovers were brought to the Sunday Brunch, though the Committee recommends a greater proportion of desserts for next year.

Piper Amy McGlothlin played for the Grand march devised by Marc Hartstein, while Karen Sollins, Charles Liu, and Beth Birdsall emceed the evening dances.

The Sunday Brunch was hosted by the John and Cathy Crabtree, who quite generously shared their home and beautiful yard with the exhausted dancers. The weather held off so that Andrea Aeschliman could brief dances accompanied by Dirk Tiede and friends.

The Ball Committee had hoped to create an event that was financially sustainable, and it seems that the loss may be around \$13.

The entire Highland Ball weekend could not have been possible without the help of many, many volunteers. The Committee wishes to thank everyone who dedicated their time, energy, and creative talents to making this event happen.

RSCDS AGM 2018: The Headquarters AGM will be in Perth on November 3, 2018. If anyone would like to be a delegate and represent the Boston Branch, please express your interest to any member of the Executive Committee.

Class Reports: Class reports were received and placed on file from Brookline, Cambridge, Chelmsford, and Stow in Massachusetts, from Greenland in New Hampshire, from Brunswick and Kennebunk in Maine, from Fairlee and Burlington in Vermont, and from Albany, New York.

Other Business:

- Jeremy Thorpe presented a Class Award to Peter Tandy for his years of dedication to the Boston Branch and for being our “unsung hero” who stored and transported the sound equipment all around the Branch. Thank you, Peter!
- Ross Parker and Bob Cole have been talking about starting a class at the YMCA in Barrington, RI. The class would be welcoming of all ages of dancers in the

community. Their plan for the first two months would be to start with a demonstration then to offer classes and see how it goes.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Haines, Secretary