

The Scottish Country Dance Society of Boston, MA, Inc.
Minutes of the Semi-Annual General Meeting, 8 November 2021

The virtual meeting was called to order at 7:47 PM by President Jeremy Thorpe.

Jeremy opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and thanking all for coming together during these ever-changing times.

Jeremy reported that Headquarters had held its Annual General Meeting just this past weekend and voted to increase membership fees for the 2022-2023 year. This means that likewise, the Branch will need to consider increasing its membership fees.

Membership reminder – Currently, the membership stands at 178. Please renew your membership as soon as possible (if you have not done it already) and remind your friends to do the same.

Minutes of the AGM: The minutes of the AGM 7 June 2021 were approved as submitted.

Treasurer's Report, 2020 - 2021: Cathy Crabtree's report highlighted the Branch's financial position as of September 30, 2021 and compared it to the numbers for the past two years.

Membership fees were kept down last year because Headquarters wanted to allow the Branches to keep more funds available for their members.

Revenue and other support included grant money from the SDCEA, a profit from Pinewoods Scottish Sessions, and sales from the Bookstore due to their presence at Pinewoods. There was a small shortfall from ESCape (which will be shared with CDS), and honorariums were paid to the leaders of the 3rd Sunday Workshops that were supported by the Teaching and Music Committee.

Expenses consist of administrative fees (including fees to Square for online payments), insurance which included several upgrades in coverage, and some music subsidies for Branch Class parties.

Pinewoods Camp, Inc.: Bruce Mabbott, the RSCDS representative to the Pinewoods Executive Board, presented his report on the state of Pinewoods.

Bruce reported that he had actually just been at PW for the Board meeting and retreat which is held every fall. It was wonderful to be at camp and to be with all the wonderful people who steward this special place throughout the year.

So, what has been happening?

Pinewoods had a tumultuous summer, which started in grand fashion as it re-opened after taking 2020 off and with successful Scottish Sessions, which, however, due to the increasing risk of COVID, camp had to be cut short in August. The good news is that no cases of COVID amongst campers were communicated to the Pinewoods Board, and they are not aware of any transmission at camp.

This obviously hurt the Pinewoods finances for a second summer as there are a lot of fixed costs for the whole summer that could not be recouped by having to close early. The Board is happy though that many people included Pinewoods in their giving this year, and that has helped weather the worst of it.

Also, as some people may have seen on social media, the camp did have some storm damage from the Nor'easter that ripped through the region recently. However, the camp was incredibly lucky that more damage was not caused as over 40 trees came down in the storm. The most notable damage that did occur was some slight damage to Pineneedles, the gender-neutral changing room was flattened, and a new unnamed crew cabin will need a thorough rebuild. Luckily, these will all be remedied before the 2022 season.

The trees at Pinewoods are under a lot of stress at the moment. Walking around camp, there is evidence of different tree diseases that have taken hold. This along with other environmental stresses from the warming climate and more intense storms means that camp is changing. The Board discussed having a qualified arborist complete a comprehensive Forestry plan, which will help guide us to make better decisions.

The new Executive Director, Chris Jacobs is fitting right in. She has had a steep learning curve this summer but is thoroughly enjoying camp and is hoping for an uneventful winter!

Capital construction projects:

- Bathroom at C Sharp is being designed and will hopefully be built this off-season
- Addition to Corn Rigs (crew cabin behind Fine Companion)
- Handwashing station near dining hall

Other news from the Board Meeting - They had a wonderful Sunday morning with a lovely Native American couple and their young son, learning more about how the land we now call Pinewoods would have been like in pre-Colonial days. Pinewoods is part of Wampanoag land. They also danced Native American dances and listened to their music. In return, the Board also taught them some dances and songs!

Centennial planning for 2025 is just starting to be discussed. If you have any ideas of ways that you think it should be celebrated, then please let Bruce know.

The new BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) pilot scholarship is being launched for 2022. Similar in nature to the existing NGL, it will try and encourage diversity in our wonderful traditions.

Discussions were also held on the possibility of renaming dance pavilions at camps. No decision was made at the Board meeting, and there are strong feelings on both sides. More work is necessary on this topic.

Summer 2022 will HOPEFULLY be a “normal” summer for Pinewoods! Obviously, it is very early yet to know what will happen, but the Board has its fingers crossed.

As ever, Pinewoods is also incredibly grateful to the generosity of the Scots, especially in times like these. Donations to camp have been especially appreciated due to the lack of income over the past couple of years. The Board knows that Pinewoods can weather this due to your generosity. Thank you again!

That is all the news from Pinewoods Camp, Inc.

Respectfully submitted,

Bruce Mabbott

Pinewoods Scottish Sessions, 2021:

The report for Pinewoods Scottish Sessions 2021 was presented by co-chairs Katarina Dutton and Laurie Somario on behalf of themselves and their third co-chair, Ellen Scannell-Woods. Pinewoods Scottish Sessions 2021 was a much awaited “Lost and Found” adventure for all who were able to attend. Anyone eligible to attend, who applied up to the day of camp, were accepted into the sessions for which they applied. Session 1 had 121 attendees, and Session 2 had 100 attendees. All kitchen work scholarships were awarded in both sessions. Two NGI scholarships were awarded for Session 1, and one was awarded in Session 2. Financial planning was extremely difficult due to so many unknowns, however, the final positive income was \$8,316.23. The teaching staff included Ellen Ternes from D.C., Jennifer Schoonover from Massachusetts, Katherine Giacoletti from Philadelphia, Robert McOwen from Massachusetts, and additional guest teachers Lois New from New York and Holly Sherman from Florida. The potpourri teachers were Martha Matthews and Holly Sherman, and Roberta Lasnik led the yoga class. The music staff was directed by Elke Baker and included Tim MacDonald, Kate Barnes, Andy Imbrie, Dan Emery, Larry Unger, Scott Weaver, and Marielle Webster. This all made for a wonderful band, day and night. The co-chairs would like to send an additional heartfelt thank you to the many people who worked tirelessly behind the scenes to make camp happen in such an uncertain year. They are extremely grateful to everyone who went the extra mile to make this year fantastic, especially the members of the TMC and the Executive Committee. They happily look forward to the new co-chairs of 2022 Deborah Jarvis and Catherine Scannell with their Music Director Tom Pixton.

Respectfully Submitted, The Co-chairs of Pinewoods Scottish Sessions 2021

ESCAPE 2021:

Kat Dutton read the report for co-chairs April Birnie and Daniel Potter.

After a year away from Pinewoods, ESCape 2021 was a grand success! Camp was smaller than usual with some last-minute cancellations but leaving 84 full-time campers and two part-time campers (as opposed to 126 campers in 2019). The low enrollment directly impacted the attendance of several classes, including the Scottish-for-All and Experienced Scottish classes, which had many dancers on the first day but declined to about a set each by the last day. The chairs heard from several Scottish dancers that part of the reason they were not attending the morning classes was because they were staying for Scottish Sessions and wanted to focus on English and Contra while at ESCape.

In contrast, Kat's Basic Scottish Technique class was once again a huge hit, with around 20 dancers each day trying Scottish for the first time or taking the opportunity to brush up on their technique. The chairs are hopeful that those campers will choose to return to ESCape again or even try out Scottish Sessions in the future.

The other morning classes, English for All and Morning Cup of Contra, were moderately well attended. They were able to pilot a Tai Chi class taught by Jill Emery during "zero period," the space between breakfast and the first dance class at 9 AM. Jill had a small group of campers attend each day, and should it be offered again, the chairs feel that it may be better attended in the afternoon.

The afternoon classes included a music workshop, a class of English dances devised or published since March of 2020, singing on the porch, Molly dancing, Contra choreography, and the Evening Dance Tutorial (where campers can get a sneak peek at the dances on that night's program). Most were successful, though some, like the choreography class, also suffered due to the smaller camp attendance.

The ESCape camp finances have been finalized, and the lost was just \$1,638.66, which will be split evenly between RSCDS and CDS-Boston. Given the popularity of ESCape before COVID, the chairs are confident that, should coronavirus cases subside during the next six months, there should be an increase in the number of campers in 2022.

The chairs are optimistic that ESCape will be able to be held next summer but will look to Pinewoods for the final call. April and Daniel are excited to co-chair ESCape 2022 but are beginning to ask around to find who will next take on the responsibility. As they begin to plan, April and Daniel will keep in mind several pieces of advice from this past summer, including that the names on the name buttons should be high-contrast, and that the design will look much different on a computer screen than in the dim light of the dance pavilions.

Additionally, the chairs plan to take a different approach to building the band for next summer. In previous years, musicians were hired as individuals who may or may not have played together. Several comments were made this summer from both dancers and the musicians themselves that the band lacked cohesion at times due to the choice of

musicians. Going forward, as musicians are hired, they will plan to intentionally hire pairs or trios. However, the evening bands will be programmed in exciting new combinations!

Finally, there is the question of how to best handle camper-led sessions. It has been a tradition at ESCape for the past several years for campers to offer one-off sessions during the week. These sessions would be advertised on the large schedule that was posted outside of the dining hall. However, this past summer, many campers offered sessions that no one attended, or many people attended pulling people out of pre-scheduled classes. This is in part due to having 30 fewer campers, but the chairs have yet to find the best way to organize camper-led sessions so that the schedule does not become over-saturated.

To close, April Birnie and Daniel Potter are excited to plan ESCape 2022 and hope to see many of you there!

New Hampshire Highlands Dance Weekend, 2021:

Roberta Lasnik presented the following report.

The 2020 and 2021 weekends were not held because of Covid-19.

In 2020, the lockdown was in effect, and, in 2021, even though there was a vaccine, the NHH committee did not feel that it was safe to hold camp as the 2 largest rooms for dancing and eating were indoors.

As for 2022 – the committee has made tentative hires and are hopeful it will be safe to dance next August.

The NHH committee is very cautious and are hoping for solid answers... At the present time there are more questions than answers.

Respectfully submitted, Roberta Lasnik for the NHH Committee

Gary Apfel, Susan Haines, Martha Kent, and Loren Wright

Other Business and Announcements:

- Many classes have resumed meeting in-person, requiring masks and proof of vaccination. Please remember to contact both the *Tartan Times* and the webmasters to provide them with any updated class information.
- CDS Boston center has asked if any classes/groups have received any push-back on requesting masks and proof of vaccination.
- Thank you to John Crabtree for hosting this Zoom meeting. It would not have been possible without you!

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Haines
Boston Branch Secretary

