

Boston Branch of the Royal Scottish Dance Society

Minutes of the Executive Committee

January 28, 2015

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

Absent: Dale Birdsall

Guest: Stephen Thomforde

1. Minutes from the January 7, 2015 meeting were approved following corrections to the Pinewoods Benefit Ball and Pinewoods Scottish Sessions entries.
2. Treasurer's Report (Bob) – The Main Checking account is at \$26,024.38 and the Lloyds account is at \$1,888.73 for a total of \$27,913.11. The initial results from the Fall Concert show a loss of \$608.66, and John will send the expenses that he has to Bob.
A music subsidy of \$365 for the Montpelier Class was moved and approved.
Bob reports that all of the 1099s were processed and mailed.
3. Reports from Liaisons –
 - a) Fall Concert (John) – Robert McOwen is the Artistic Director, and a local Celtic Music Ensemble, Fellswater, has been approached to be the featured musicians. John presented the preliminary budget for the Concert which includes, after speaking with the manager of Fellswater, a sales bonus of 75%, i.e. \$500.00. The breakeven point is 58% of the seats. John reports that contracts with the hall and with Fellswater should be signed soon. A pianist may also be sought to supplement the musicians.
 - b) Highland Ball (Bob) – All of the Ball information has been posted on the website. Lois New reports that Lily Pearlman will be joining Ed and Neil Pearlman and the Albany Class will pay for her appearance.
 - c) Pinewoods Benefit Ball (Betty) – Nothing to report.
 - d) ESC (Jeremy) – Stephen Thomforde presented the budget which was approved after changes/corrections are made to the staff numbers and advertising and the numbers are re-calculated. The ESC Committee has signed on teachers Brooke Friendly, Anna Rains, Jamie Berg, and possibly Gillian Stewart. Karen Axelrod is the music director along with fellow musician Nicholas Williams, Earl Gaddis, plus others who haven't yet agreed to come. The hope is for a young, dynamic and fun party, but, in order for it to be successful, 26 more dancers than who attended in 2014 are needed. How

are they hoping to achieve this number? The committee wants to place ads in the CDS booklet and *Tartan Times*, utilize a new website, distribute post cards and business cards, and advertise at local contra dances. They will also ask if CDS will share their mailing list especially in light of the fact that there is no English-American week at Pinewoods this year.

- e) Scottish Sessions Pinewoods (Linda) – The class grid has been reviewed and approved by the Teaching and Music Committee. Suggestions were made for the camper teachers. The application is done but has not yet been posted.
- f) New Hampshire Highlands (Susan) – For 2015, Terry Traub will be the music director along with Emerald Rae and Catherine Miller on fiddle and Howard Lasnik on percussion. The teaching staff will include Cecily Selling, Lance Ramshaw, and Beth Birdsall. The contract with St. Methodios is being finalized.
- g) New Hampshire Highland Games (Merrill) – The Games people will provide a tent near the Governor’s Lodge, so there will be a presence at the Games this year.
- h) Teaching and Music Committee (Betty) – The last meeting focused a lot on Pinewoods, i.e. reviewing the class grid.
As for the Candidates, 4 of the 5 in the Unit 2 & 3 class have taken the written exam. The actual exam will be on May 2 in Stow. On March 21, there will be a mock exam, also in Stow, and volunteers are needed.
Barbara McOwen is planning to do a workshop for new musicians and new teachers who are not used to working with live music. The TMC is working on a budget.
Teachers are needed for the Challenge Class.
- i) *Tartan Times* (Kat) – The last edition was a little late but of great quality. There was some trouble with the web server.
- j) Demonstration Team (Alex) – The gigs at the BCMFest and Ancient Universities went well. Six couples will be performing at NEFFA (probably on the Sunday afternoon), and rehearsals will be starting in February.
- k) Membership Committee (Dale) – No report at this time.
- l) Nominating Committee (Dale) – The Nominating Committee reports that they have a wonderful and qualified candidate for the office of Treasurer. Despite asking several reliable and experienced people to consider running for Vice President, no one has agreed. Meanwhile, they are awaiting answers from some people who were asked to run as members-at-large,
- m) Website and Publicity (Kat) – Roberta Lasnik will be the contact person between TMC and the web masters.
- n) Bookstore (Merrill) – No report at this time.
- o) Class Liaisons –

- Cambridge, MA (Kat) – February is “bring a friend for free” month.
 - Montpelier, VT (Dale) - The class is hosting a social on February 28th.
 - Fairlee, VT (Dale) – Five members of the class attended the Nashua New Year’s Day Dance. Currently, the class is working on dances for the Montpelier Social and hope to have a good turnout. They are also working on the program for their Fairlee Spring Fling and hope to have fliers available in time for the Cardigan Mountain weekend.
4. Old Business –
- a) Coordinating the insurance year and membership year – The proposed by-laws change will be sent to the membership for voting as soon as Susan gets some personal business attended to.
5. New Business –
- a) Branch communications policy review – Several issues and thoughts concerning improving Branch communications were discussed.
 - Some advertising can be confusing to non-branch people.
 - What can be sent to members versus a list serve?
 - Some items are meant for a general audience.
 - Brief descriptions of the events may be beneficial, especially for those events that don’t change very much from year-to-year.
 - Website build is a complicated thing, so how do we make it timely and valuable?
 - Maybe a web form could help.
 - A communications meeting with Exec, TMC, and the web masters may be needed.
 - Should we survey the Branch membership?
 - Should there be links to non-Branch events?
 - How often should it be updated?
 - How could we use social media to our benefit?
 - Should there be a members-only area?
6. Next Meetings –
- a) February 25 – John Crabtree’s
 - b) March 25 – Kat Dutton’s