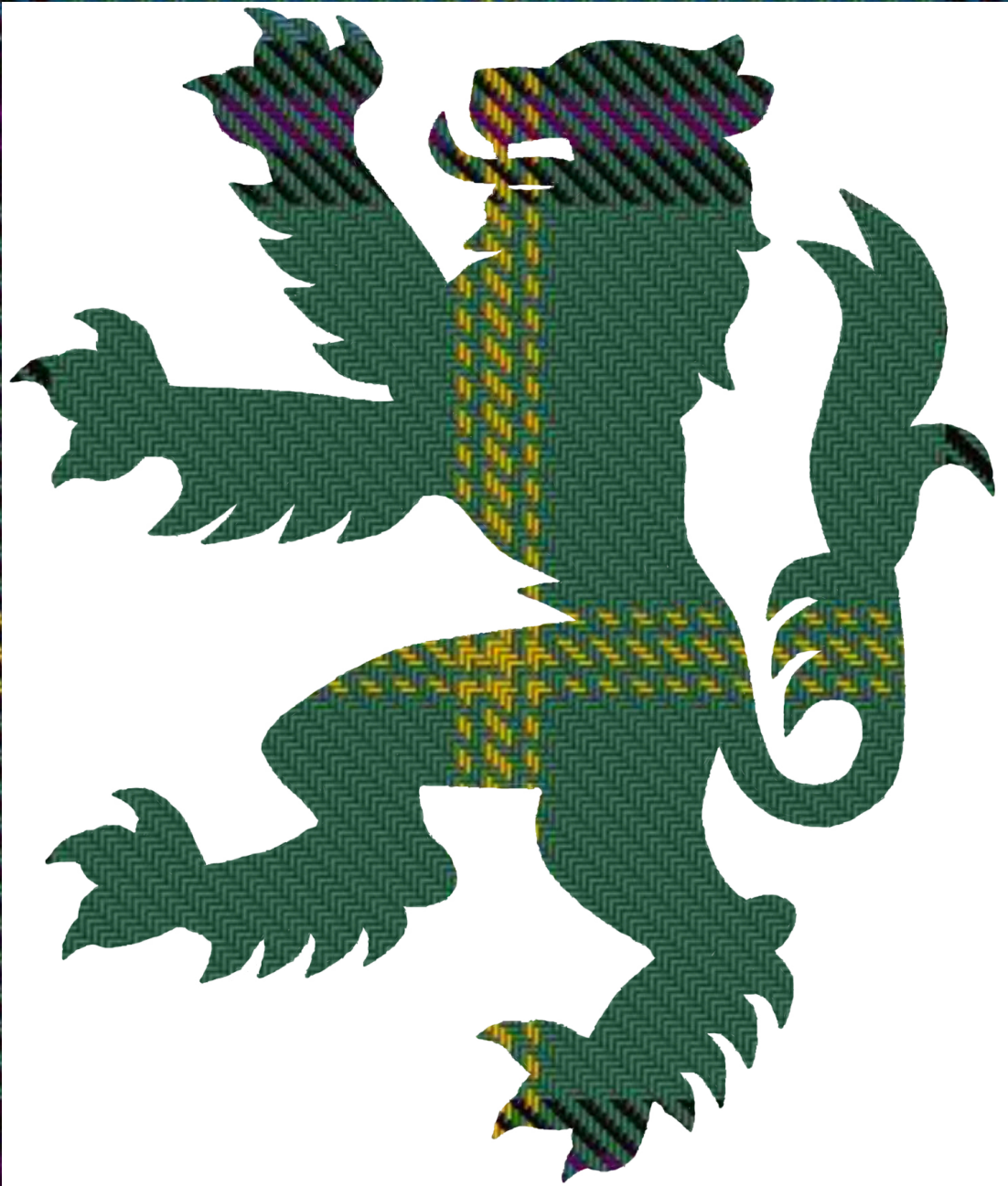


The Tartan Times

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Society*

www.rscdsboston.org

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Editors' Introduction

As many Branch members (and others) look forward to attending Scottish Sessions this July at Pinewoods in Plymouth, MA, we asked some longtime campers to share their memories. This summer is the 71st anniversary of Scottish Sessions at Pinewoods. Last summer the *Tartan Times* was itself in transition, and Covid rather than our 70th anniversary took center stage at Camp, but it's never too late to celebrate! We will spotlight the 10th anniversary of the English-Scottish-Contra Session (ESCape) in our next issue.

Debbie Billmers Jarvis, who has been coming to Camp since she was a child, captures the essence of the Pinewoods experience—music, dancing, friendships forged and deepened, and the natural beauty of the ponds and the pines. Jeanetta McColl, who began her Pinewoods journey in 1963, is without doubt our senior Pinewoods historian. Jeanetta's article recalls with relish the highly inventive pranks (as well as the excellent music and dancing) that were a highlight of her early years at Camp.

More recently, in addition to dance classes, dance parties, swimming, and socializing, many campers have embraced card-table competitions. Jennifer Tyson describes a highly entertaining (and hotly contested) cribbage tournament on the Camphouse porch, and Jeremy Thorpe details the challenges and rewards of playing board games outside, near a swimming dock, on a porch with large gaps between the floorboards.

No doubt all generations of campers have drawn on their musical and other talents to create amazing ceilidh acts. Dave Wiesler, pianist, composer, and writer of witty lyrics, shares the collaborative process that gave us such classics as the Gilbert and Sullivan parody, "I am the Very Model of a Modern Scottish Dancer-er." Many of us have marveled at the four-part harmony of Dave, plus Lyle and Lance Ramshaw, and Terry Harvey as they performed these creations. Click on the link (or cut and paste it) to hear Dave's solo rendition of the Bob Dylanesque "Tangled up in Reels," his personal favorite.

Editors' Introduction

While we create our own Pinewoods history, it's also worth noting how history has intersected with Pinewoods. The Women's Movement, for example, came to Camp when Men's Highland classes were supplemented by classes for women. The Sexual Revolution made its mark when the rule that single women must stay on Women's Hill and single men in Lads a Bunchum was officially relaxed, allowing unmarried couples to pick their own cabins. A review the lyrics of "Lads a Bunchum," the morris dance tune for which the cabins were named, suggests that in their realistic view of romance, folk tunes, like folk dancers, are ahead of their time!*

We hope you are looking forward to making new memories this summer—and if you haven't applied to Scottish Sessions yet, visit <https://rscdsboston.org/pinewoods-scottish-sessions.html>. As of this writing, a few slots were still available !

And in case you needed an even bigger nudge, you can check out the narrated Pinewoods slideshow here:
<https://rscdsboston.org/movies/pinewoods-slide-show-2.mp4>

Slainte!

Linda McJannet and Nikki Lauranzano,
Co-Editors

**Lyrics for Lads a Bunchum*

Oh dear mother, what a fool I be,

Six young fellows come a-courting me.

Five were blind and the other couldn't see.

Oh dear mother, what a fool I be!

Rooted in the Pines

Debbie Jarvis

Trying to explain to friends, neighbors, and colleagues why I'm disappearing for a week every July never gets easier. "It's sort of like summer camp, but for adults, and with traditional Scottish music and dance... and theme parties... and a highland ball... in the woods, in cabins..." Though my scattered explanation of the experience usually leaves my audience confused, leaving camp every year always provides me with clarity, reminding me of who I am and of what's most important to me. The trees hold memories of my years there since I was a young girl first attending the FAC and then Scottish Sessions at Pinewoods. Despite the many changes in my life, Pinewoods has remained constant.

Starting at age six or so, I looked forward to the end of the school year because it meant I'd be going to FAC (Folk Arts Center) Pinewoods. I would learn dances from all over the world, see friends I only saw at camp, and immerse myself in folk dance and music with others who know how to clap to 11/16 time signatures and how to sing in Croatian. Folk dancers are an eccentric breed, but we are an amazing community full of love and life.



*Debbie Jarvis and Karen Cotting in costume
at the Great Scott edition of Pinewoods*

Rooted in the Pines (cont)

At sixteen, I first attended the Pinewoods Scottish sessions as a burgeoning fiddler who had been playing for the local RSCDS classes. While at camp, I danced every day, from the morning highland dance classes to the evening dance parties and into the wee hours at the ceilidhs. The joy I felt while playing this music, doing these dances, and meeting these people among the pine trees germinated a lifelong passion for Scottish music and dance.

In my four decades on this earth, I have been a student, a teacher, a child, a mother, a reader, a writer; I have changed jobs, countries, careers, priorities. I have been a camper, and I have been a co-chair. But every single year, I return to Pinewoods, and every single year, I remember that no matter what else changes, the pines remain constant. The friendships, the music, the dance, the natural beauty of camp wait for me, welcome me year after year. The trees remind me to breathe, the ponds remind me to reflect, and the music, always audible from somewhere if you listen hard enough, reminds me to dance.



Debbie Jarvis, was born into a folk dance family and grew up in the FAC (Folk Arts Center of New England) community. Debbie and her twin sister, Karen Cotting, were "The Billmers twins," and were also known in the '90's fiddle circuit as The Twin Fiddling Machine. Debbie, though of Eastern European descent, has developed a love for all things Scottish (except haggis). Debbie has become deeply involved in the Boston Scottish music and dance scene and currently serves as chair of the RSCDS Boston Branch Teaching and Music Committee.

Pinewoods Memories: Pre-Millennial Mischief

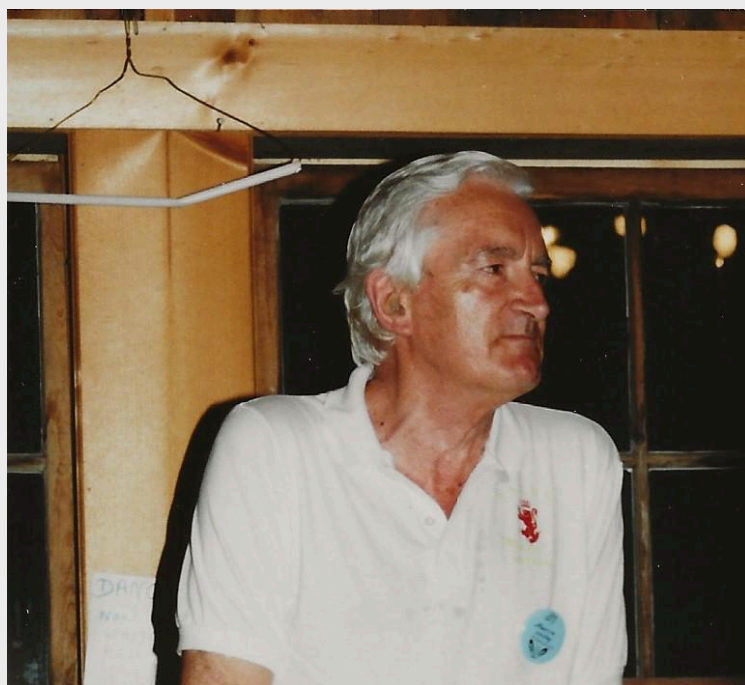
Jeannetta McColl

Editors' Note:

The following anecdotes were extracted (with permission) from Jeanetta's authoritative history of Scottish country dancing at Pinewoods. Portions of her history were published in the Fall, 2023, issue of the Pinewoods Post. (<https://pinewoods.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Pinewoods-FALL-2023-12.8.23.pdf>). Here we share light-hearted memories omitted from that account. We hope they will capture the Spirit of Pinewoods Past and invite us all to consider what we wish for Pinewoods Future

In 1953, the Boston Branch of the RSCDS offered its first weekend at Pinewoods Camp. Branch members have always been serious about SCD, the hows and the whys, but we have also made time for fun and frolic.

In the '60s, Pinewoods attracted dancers from eastern Canada as well as the US. Some Montreal dancers became friends with the couples who occupied Apley House. In 1962, one of the visitors was returning to the UK, so a farewell party was organized and enjoyed by all. The same thing happened the following year. In 1964, however, no Montreal visitor was leaving, so a "farewell party" was organized for an unsuspecting camper, Maurice Whitby. Someone packed a suitcase full of Maurice's belongings and added the very desiccated carcass of a mouse that had been found on the road outside Apley House



Maurice Whitby of Hamish fame.

Pinewoods Memories

(cont.)

As reported in the Fall, 2023, *Tartan Times*, John Bowie Dickson's dance, Pinewoods Reel, was introduced during the weekend session of 1969. But it was also the date of the first moon landing. A ceilidh skit featured a V-shaped dance to celebrate the rocket launch. Alluding to the US-USSR space rivalry, a mysterious person with a hammer and sickle "tattooed" on his chest (who turned out to be Dickson himself) tried to interrupt the dance and was tossed into Long Pond. On Sunday, TVs appeared around camp, and we all watched Neil Armstrong become the first person to "dance" on the moon.

The first "dinner on the raft" (a popular auction item) was in honor of Bob Grant, a teacher from Edinburgh. While other campers gathered to watch, he and his guests were rowed out to the raft, and a fiddler started to play. Unexpectedly, two policemen arrived. Having lost their way to the Girl Scout Camp next door, they were directed by dining room staff (mischievously it would seem) to the dock. One officer asked to be rowed to the raft, alleging he had to ticket the diners for eating in an unlicensed location. The other officer was chased back to the cruiser by Torf (Louis Torfason).



*Torf and Raph
Thomson on the
Camphouse porch.*

Pinewoods Memories

(cont)

Torf was a big man, who enjoyed his kilt and other eye-catching clothing. On this day, he was wearing a colorful caftan. Torf was also known for offering hugs to everyone he met on the paths. [This might not go down so well now, but the '70s were a different time.--Ed.]. That year, the auction raised a lot of money (and laughter) by offering "protection" from Torf's hugs. The policeman, Torf claimed correctly, had not purchased protection and was therefore fair game. Everyone took these events in good humor. Later that evening both the officers came back to watch the dancing.

For a time, the ancient ritual of a shivaree was enacted for the most recently married couple, who typically stayed in Boatman, a cabin for two on Round Pond. One night, about 30 people gathered at 3 AM to mark the marriage of beloved teachers, Geoffrey and Cecily Selling. The signal was given, and the noise-makers got to work. We entered the cabin expecting to rouse Geoffrey and Cecily. BUT who did we see? Maurice Whitby and Torf, wearing nightgowns and shower caps. The whole place burst out laughing, as Geoffrey and Cecily emerged from their respective (tiny) cabin closets.. *[Judy Reynolds Shaw reports that Torf obtained a nightgown for Maurice by borrowing one from her, on the pretext that a fellow camper had "forgotten" hers.—Ed.]*

Later, the Round Pond neighbors complained about the noise, and that was the end of shivarees.



Alasdair Fraser & Ed Pearlman at the ceilidh - 1984



Marianne Taylor, at the piano practicing for her next endeavor

Pinewoods Memories

(cont)

One activity has been constant since 1953. Every morning at 7 AM, a piper comes through the camp to start the day. One very wet morning in the 70s, the piper was seen carrying a cassette player rather than playing himself. I wonder how many other times this happened?



Jeanetta McColl, the daughter of a Black Watch piper and a musical mother from Wales, began teaching SCD in college. When she moved to Massachusetts in 1960, Jeanetta found the Boston Branch, and she has been a member, teacher, and Branch leader ever since. She first attended Pinewoods in 1963, and from then until 2013, she missed only two Scottish Sessions—and organized 13 of them. Now 92. Jeanetta reports that the camaraderie of the Boston SCD community, her love of dancing, and memories of the silliest pranks keep her connected to Pinewoods, even though her health does not permit her to return.



Back row: Earl Gaddis, Dave Arnold, Beth Murray, John Ridgway, Robert McOwen, Bill Tomczak
Middle row: Ed Pearlman, Barbara Russell, Kim McGarrity, Susie Petrov, Pat MacPherson, Leif Tilden, Christine Anderson, Colin Gordon, Ralph Thompson
Front row: Margo Leslie, Alison Rose Turner, John Turner, Barbara McOwen, Arlene Leitch, Ron Gonnella
Photo taken in 1982

Gaming on the Porch

Jennifer Tyson

I'll be the first to tell you that I'm not a "serious" gamer, despite hanging out pretty extensively with nerdy, gamer type folks for many years — long, complicated, strategy games that took hours? No thanks.

And then I started going to Scottish Pinewoods and discovered gaming on the Camphouse porch. Gaming on the Camphouse porch was light, fun, and short...and preferably games that didn't involve extensive setup or breakdown, and, most importantly, could still be enjoyed by the sleep-deprived, danced out brains that we all still claimed to have by the end of the session

Gaming on the porch was open to all, was flexible and welcoming and yes, you could absolutely do nothing but be a peanut gallery. Almost invariably someone would bring a new, short, crowd-friendly game that would become the "It Game" of the session, which we would all go home and promptly purchase (Kat Dutton and Red 7, I'm looking at you). Friends would be made, rivalries begun and ended, rounds of "one-more-hurry-up-before-the-lunch/dinner-bell-rings."

Cribbage was always popular (few pieces, quick setup, quick rounds) and reached its height in 2019 with a full-scale tournament, complete with brackets and upsets... Dan Friedman-Shedlov and I ended up duking it out for the crown, and I'll let you in on a secret: I ceded the title to him, because I wanted the Pinewoods Swag more than the glory.

My camp experience is never complete without a several lovely gaming sessions on the porch, enjoying friends, ice cream, and the gorgeous view of the pond.



Jennifer has been dancing Scottish (and English and contra) since college, a lot of years ago, and is now a public librarian who loves the job perks of hiring dance and musician friends for programs!

‘Porchwoods’ - Always Board (Games) Jeremy Thorpe

The games come and go, but the tradition of playing games on the Camphouse porch at Pinewoods has been around at least since the 90s—along with the associated traditions of finding small rocks to keep cards from being blown away, crawling under the porch to find game pieces that fell between the boards, and rushing a game inside when a summer shower begins. These days you might see cribbage and chess tournaments, card games like Red Seven and Hanabi, and board games like 7 Wonders and Azul, often supplemented by ice cream and root beers from the camp store (or G&Ts from some camper's personal stash). It's an opportunity to rest tired legs during the hottest part of the day while exercising your brain and socializing—not only with the people you're playing with but with everyone passing through the porch on the way to and from Long Pond. It is usually not until the late-night camp house after parties that Body Boggle emerges from its closet, and the less said about that the better.



Jeremy has been attending Pinewoods Scottish Sessions since 1997, and when he's not playing games on the porch you can find him communing with the fish in his mask and snorkel.

‘Tangled Up in Reels’

Dave Wiesler

For nearly three decades, I’ve been writing and performing SCD-themed parodies at ceilidhs, often with Terry Harvey and Lance and Lyle Ramshaw. People ask me how I started this dubious hobby, and I place the blame on Terry.

In 1994, before I started dancing SCD, Elke Baker convinced me to take Muriel Johnston’s music class at Scottish Weekend, so I could stop sounding like a total hack when I accompanied Elke on Scottish music. It was there that I witnessed my first ceilidh. One act was Terry’s parody of *Cherish* in three-part harmony: “Poussette is the word I use to describe....” Even though I couldn’t tell a poussette from a carburetor, I was laughing along. Hook baited.

Next summer I started dancing and soon got enough grasp of the terminology, lore, and teaching culture to write my own parody. I chose the folk song, *The Ship Titanic*: “It was sad (so sad!), it was sad when the demo team went down.” I got a group to act out the pitfalls of demonstration teams — no-shows, miscues, treacherous stages. So much fun! Hook set. I followed up with Gilbert and Sullivan and Monty Python spoofs.



Dave performing Tangled up in Reels, Gainesville Florida, 2010

Video of him playing can be found at the link below.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ojDffkHKF6o>

‘Tangled Up in Reels’ (cont)

Terry and I both have eclectic musical tastes, making it easy to find potential targets among folk songs, R&B, and lots of 1960s and 1970s pop music. Once you look for it, it’s surprisingly easy to find ways to infuse SCD themes into a song. *Aimee* gets turned into *Phrasing*. *California Girls* becomes *Scottish Weekend Girls*. *Send in the Clowns* becomes *Where’s the Turnout?* Then you just write a ridiculous story to go along with the title. And if “I am the very model of a Scottish Country Dancer-er” takes on an extra syllable in the process, all the better.

The parody I’m most proud of is *Tangled Up in Reels*, based on Bob Dylan’s *Tangled Up in Blue*. I wrote it on the bus in 2004 on a Ken McFarland dance tour. Dylan’s song is already a story, so I just substituted my own (vaguely autobiographical) story about learning how to dance. I remember writing down all the words I could think of that rhyme with “reels” — reveals, steals, congeals, banana peels — and all the different kinds of reels there are — 6-bar, 8-bar, half-reels, parallel, diagonal, tandem, dolphin, crossover, etc. Both lists were immense, and the puzzle was to connect the rhymes in list A with the dance ideas in list B.

At my last count, Terry and I have written over fifty parodies. I keep thinking I’m out of ideas, but so far some song or poem always percolates into my consciousness, and I think, “Hey! That would be good for a ceilidh....” Or easier still: Terry sends me something and I just get to laugh hysterically.

In addition to entertaining us at ceilidhs, Dave Wiesler has a national reputation for his rhythmic and innovative piano playing, as well as for his sensitive accompaniment of dancers. He is a frequent member of the music staff at Pinewoods Scottish Sessions as well as for contra, swing, vintage, and English country dances around the country. His playing can be heard on over two dozen recordings, many of them featuring his more than five hundred tunes and compositions.

For more info, visit
<https://davewiesler.com/bio.html>



Parody Lyrics

'I Am the Very Model of a Modern Scottish Country Dancer-er'

Music by Sir Arthur Sullivan & Lyrics by Dave Wiesler ©1997

Verse 1

I am the very model of a Scottish Country Dancer-er.
I know the old quadrilles, the Caledonian and Lancer-ers.
I've danced in all the castles with the Scottish Aristocracy
And even in the boondocks, like New York and Washington, D.C.

I'm very well acquainted with all matters terpsichorean.
While gracing the Society as resident historian
I once met Davy Nick Nack; I'm a friend of Seann Truibhas Willichan
And I hold daily conferences in séance with Miss Milligan.

*And he holds daily conferences in séance with
Miss Milligan.*

*And he holds daily conferences in séance with
Miss Milligan.*

*And he holds daily conferences in séance with
Miss Milli-gilli-gan*

And I'll recite the book, the page, the author, and the title tune
Of any dance you like – and what the author ate that afternoon.
In short, in all that matters, from the simple to the fancier
I am the very model of a Scottish Country Dancer-er.

*In short, in all that matters, from the simple to
the fancier*

*He is the very model of a Scottish Country
Dancer-er.*

Verse 2

I am the very model of a Scottish Country Dancer-er.
I memorize the figures, so that nothing's left to chance-erer:
The tournee and the tourbillon, the Español, and that's not all –
For I can dance the spurtle as I juggle seven tennis balls.

I'm an expert of the music written in the Celtic idiom –
Jigs, strathspeys, and reels, Aeolian and mixolydian.
My heels are always lifted – you will never see them touch the floor,
And I won't make a spectacle like this when dancing Ferla Mor.

*He'll never make a spectacle like this when
dancing Ferla Mor.*

*He'll never make a spectacle like this when
dancing Ferla Mor.*

*He'll never make a spectacle like this when
dancing Ferla-ferla Mor.*

Parody Lyrics (cont)

'I Am the Very Model of a Modern Scottish Country Dancer-er'

Music by Sir Arthur Sullivan & Lyrics by Dave Wiesler ©1997

Verse 2 (cont)

I'll execute a Highland fling so graceful and meticulous
And then perform a ceilidh act exceedingly ridiculous.
In short, in all that matters, from the simple to the fancier
I am the very model of a Scottish Country Dancer-er.



*In short, in all that matters, from the simple
to the fancier
He is the very model of a Scottish Country
Dancer-er.*

*Dave making a spectacle
while dancing Ferla Mor*

Verse 3

I am the very model of a Scottish Country Dancer-er.
I always wear my kilt – in fact, I never wear my pants-erer.
My posture is impeccable, my teaching is accredited,
And I will catch the typos when your programme's badly edited

My set has width of seven feet, six inches (plus or minus one).
I'm frequently the first to clear the floor after the dance is done.
And I can do a new dance from a talk-through of a single word
And never never never (hardly ever) fail to close in Third.

*He never never never (hardly ever) fails to
close in Third.*

*He never never never (hardly ever) fails to
close in Third.*

*He never never never (hardly ever) fails to
close to close in Third.*

My whiskey's single-malted and my shortbread is delectable.
My eye contact is flirty, but it's never disrespectful.
In short, in all that matters, from the simple to the fancier
I am the very model of a Scottish Country Dancer-er.

*In short, in all that matters, from the simple to
the fancier
He is the very model of a Scottish Country
Dancer-er.*

This Times' Tartan

Pinewoods Jubilee

Designed by Joel LaMarre, Salem, MA

Day of the Tartan: July 10th **STA Ref#** 6818



This tartan was created to celebrate and commemorate the 50th anniversary (1953 to 2003) of Scottish dancing at the Pinewoods Camp in Plymouth, Massachusetts.

Yes, we did feature the Pinewoods tartan in our Fall 2023 edition of The Tartan Times. However, we believe, you can't have too much of a good thing.

Upcoming Events

A quick preview! Unless otherwise directed, consult the calendar on the website for time, place, and other details:

<https://rscdsboston.org/event-calendar.html>

DANCE PARTIES, WORKSHOPS, AND OTHER EVENTS

Saturday Evening, June 8 - Downeast Fling Scottish Dance Party with Ed & Neil Pearlman, 7PM Kennebunk, Maine — rscdsboston.org

Wednesday Evening, June 19 - Keith Murphy — burren.com

Wednesday Evening, June 19 - BSFC Session with Elizabeth Anderson — bsfc.org

Thursday Evening, June 20 - Troy MacGillivray & Mari Black, Cambridge, Mass. — passim.org

Friday Evening, June 21 - Hanneke Cassel in concert, Chelmsford, Mass. — hannekecassel.com

Week of June 23-29 - Acadia Music Festival, Bar Harbor, Maine, with Frank Ferrel, Troy MacGillivray, Mari Black, Laurel Martin, Lissa Schneckenburger, more — acadiatradfestival.org

Week of June 23-29 - Northeast Heritage Music Camp, Starksboro, Vt. with Katie McNally, Laura Risk, Becky Tracy, more — northeastheritagemusiccamp.com

Monday Evening, June 24 - Cambridge Class' End of Season Ice Cream Social - 8pm, Watertown, MA

Friday Evening, June 28 - Bob Littman's band, the Americana/folk trio Side Street, at the Burren — sidestreethband.com

Week of July 1-5 - Pinewoods ESCape Session (English, Scottish, Contra dancing) with musicians Elizabeth & Ben Anderson, more — rscdsboston.org

Sunday, July 7 - Summer BCMFest (Boston Celtic Music Festival) — passim.org

Weekend and Week of July 5-13 - Pinewoods Scottish Sessions - dance & music classes & activities, with musicians Catherine Miller, Katie McNally, James MacQueen, Peter Macfarlane, Calum Pasqua, Leland Martin, Dave Wiesler, Neil Pearlman, Stephen Thomforde, Nate Silva — rscdsboston.org

Tuesday, August 6 - Scottish Dancing on the Rose Kennedy Greenway, Boston, 7-9PM Music by Susie Petrov & Friends - rscdsboston.org

Wednesday, August 7 - Scottish Fish, Worcester, Mass. — bsfc.org

Weekend of September 20-22 - NH Highland Games & Festival, Loon Mountain, NH

Weekend of October 4-6 - Youth Weekend Away, Boston, MA - rscdsboston.org

Upcoming Events (cont)

RECURRING EVENTS

Lance Ramshaw's Slow Jam - a hybrid session on a Friday evening once a month and a mailing once a month with tune suggestions and info; it's good to get on his email list, no matter your playing experience – ramshaw.info

The Canadian American Club - Open mike every Friday night, and the Gaelic Club on the 3rd Sunday of the month, September through June, and occasional weekend dance parties; Watertown Mass., canadianamericanclub.com

Celtic Sessions at the Druid - every Tuesday, and Burren Front Room, every Friday night, often with Calum Bell & Eamon Sefton - druidpub.com, burren.com

Scottish country dancing at the CanAm Club on Monday nights, and more great dance/music events - rscdsboston.org

The Boston Scottish Fiddle Club - Workshops taught by a local teacher on the 1st Sunday of the month in Belmont Mass; and moderate-to-fast session 3rd Wednesdays at the CanAm Club, Watertown, bsfc.us

The New Hampshire Scottish Music Club - meets on the 2nd Sunday of the month in Concord, N.H., nhscottishmusicclub.org