

Boston Branch of the Royal Scottish Dance Society

Minutes of the Executive Committee

September 25, 2019

Present for phone meeting: Marsha Byrnes, Cathy Crabtree, Karen Gansz, Sharon Gilmour, Susan Haines, Winifred McGowan, Linda McJannet, Lance Ramshaw, John Salyards, Jeremy Thorpe

1. **Minutes from the August 27, 2019 meeting** – The minutes were approved with two corrections – under Website, the Android problem was with loading web pages, and the number of attendees at the Chelmsford Party was 29, not 120.
2. **Treasurer's Report** (Cathy) – Cathy reports that the total liabilities and net assets stand at \$62,518. The Pinewoods Scottish Sessions and ESCape expenses to Pinewoods Camp have been paid. The Prepaid Expenses includes the rental fees for both the Highland Ball and the Ceilidh that have been prepaid. The Prepaid Revenue includes the \$1000 grant received from NHScots and membership fees that will be paid to HQ in November.

Two areas of revenue where the numbers are down are the Boston Scottish Country Dancers, a.k.a. Demo Team, and the Bookstore. The BSCD performed at fewer paying gigs this year. Did the Bookstore just have a bad year? Cathy will ask Mike and Dawn.

The expenses for Pinewoods Scottish Sessions are nearly complete with perhaps just a couple of reimbursements due. Cathy is waiting to hear from the ESCape chairs so that any outstanding expenses can be paid. The profit, which currently is just over \$3000, will be shared between the Branch and CDS.

3. Reports from Liaisons –

- a. Highland Ball (May 9, 2020) (Cathy) – Katie McNally has agreed to be the band director. Charles Liu has put together the Ball program, and Katie has approved it. Karen Sollins has agreed to organize the Friday night Welcome Dance, and Diane Lockhart has been asked but has not committed to hosting the Sunday Brunch. Linda McJannet may be able to help organize it. Susie Petrov has suggested using the same caterer, so Marsha Byrnes will be speaking with them. Kat Dutton has volunteered to do the booklet. The budget should be approved at the October meeting, so Marsha will be basing it on last year's budget. Cathy will send the contracts to Marsha. A sound person and someone to devise the Grand March are still needed.
- b. Joint Ceilidh (November 2, 2019) (Cathy) – Postcards have been sent to the 450 addresses on the mailing list, and Linda will be taking some to a few pubs. Please post the Ceilidh on any social media groups to which you belong. Linda has tickets to sell. Jeff Hopper had given Linda the names of four

national Scottish organizations who were interested in publicity, and Linda has sent them information. The three participating groups will be meeting soon to make sure everything is set. Cathy will serve as the event manager/house manager. The BSCD have been rehearsing their dances, and Jen Schoonover is organizing some fun Ceilidh dances.

- c. Scottish Sessions Pinewoods (July 10 – 18, 2020) (Jeremy) – Jeremy has received a survey concerning the camp itself and how the Branch feels things went. It is due on September 30th. There was an issue with a peanut allergy and a question about the available inventory of shirts, but those were the only items of note.
- d. ESCape (July 6 – 10, 2020) (Sharon) – Most of the work was done by the chairs, April Birnie and Dan Potter, with not much for the Branch representatives to cover. Jeremy will check in with them.
- e. Loon Mountain Games (September 18 – 20, 2020) (Karen) – Merrill Henderson reports, “We were listed in the "Try it" activities this year; I think that encouraged folks to come to our dancing sessions. We had 30-40 folks on the Parade Ground on Friday afternoon. As you know, we had a scheduling conflict for our space on Saturday afternoon. Nevertheless, we probably had 2 dozen dancers starting out there. On Sunday, we did better with 25-30 folks showing up to dance. All were enthusiastic about the experience and we handed out Branch class postcards and wristbands after each session. To be redundant with my class report, 3 new dancers who received information at the Games came to dance in Greenland last night. I think they'll stay - they are sending in Branch memberships. On my sign up list from our tent, there also are folks who may join the Nashua and Salem classes. As in past years, we heard from a number of people who would like to dance in the Concord, NH area. I wish the Branch would make a concerted effort to get a class going there.”
- f. Teaching and Music Committee (Marsha) – Marsha reports that the group is still working on teachers for 2020. They are also considering changing the class offerings and to add something to the application in order to better judge the number of people per class. Charles is working on a letter from TMC plus some other materials to send to the classes. Kat Dutton agreed to serve a second term as a teacher representative, but a musician and an at-large person are needed.
- g. Boston Scottish Country Dancers (Marsha) - The team is getting ready for the Ceilidh, and they are still waiting to be paid for their performance at the Dance for World Community Festival. Exec approved paying a \$200 honorarium to the leader and a \$100 honorarium to the administrator for the 2018 – 2019 season.

- h. Nominating Committee (Marsha) – Ilene Goldstein has agreed to serve as the third member of the committee along with MaryEllen Scannell and Gary Apfel.
- i. New Hampshire Highlands (August 28 – 30, 2020) (Susan) – Roberta Lasnik reports that about 70 dancers enjoyed the weekend (August 23 – 25, 2019) teaching of Chris Ronald, Linda Henderson, Robert McOwen, all to the fantastic music of Terry Traub along with Barbara McOwen and Emerald Rae on fiddles and Howard Lasnik on percussion. The weather was perfect for dancing – warm days and cool nights and Elizabeth Anderson was the Lifeguard on Saturday. Thom Howe brought up the branch sound equipment and music filled the dance hall. Betty Allen and Bob Littlehale made buttons that we could all read and “The Connecticut Ladies” devised the Grand March to the pipes of Campbell Webster and ended in sets ready for the evening dance devised by Chris Ronald. Mike Little brought the branch Bookstore and did a brisk business. Gary Apfel kept the Ceilidh moving along with many acts including a ‘signed’ reading by Morgan Henry, a dance and song routine from the Nashua group, a fiddle and dance swap by Malka Rae and Emerald Rae and a flute duet by Ilana Schmitt and Alex Bowers. We remembered the too soon passing of Gregor Trinkaus-Randall with a reading by Deirdre Rees. Many thanks to all who helped out at the ice cream party, Saturday Afternoon Tea, silent auction, candlelight supper on Saturday, setting up and clearing the dining hall and hanging and packing away the blue bunting. All the dances taught in the classes will be posted on the RSCDS Boston Branch website. No report on the recent dance weekend.
- j. *Tartan Times* (Susan) – Barbara McOwen has been invited to the next Exec meeting to discuss the future of the *Tartan Times* and her visions.
- k. Membership (Susan) – Membership totals for 2018 – 2019 were 211 members plus 18 associate members. As of September 21st, the 2019 – 2020 membership totals were 97 members plus 4 associate members. Also, 133 individuals and 5 associates who were members last year have not re-joined.
- l. Website (Lance) – The class information needs to be updated, and Jeremy will do this. Who has the Word document for the pdf listing? Maybe Barbara?
- m. Bookstore (Cathy) – The Bookstore was at New Hampshire Highlands and made some sales. What is the future of the Bookstore? Should it change to an online store or something else?
- n. SDCEA (John) – The SDCEA was wondering why we have a liaison with them seeing as they are an independent, self-governing committee. We have a liaison with them because what they do affects the Branch and what the Branch does affects them.

- o. Equipment (John) – John reports that there was a bad amplifier channel, so a new amp was purchased. The system can handle three channels. Exec approved reimbursing Thom Howe \$200 for the case and cables. The changes for reserving the sound equipment have been outlined in the Branch Class Reference sheet that will be distributed to the classes.
- p. Class Liaisons –
- Chelmsford, MA (John) – John reports that the class will once again be applying for a grant to help in paying musicians.
 - Greenland, NH (John) – The class started their new season on September 24th and had three dancers who learned about the class at the New Hampshire Highland Games.
 - Kennebunk, ME (John) – The class started the season on September 8th and had 8 new dancers.
 - Nashua, NH (John) – The numbers have been dwindling, so the class is encouraging membership.
 - Fairlee, VT (Karen) – Gary Apfel reports that the Fairlee Class resumed dancing on a weekly basis at the beginning of September. Nancy Dean - long time Scottish Country Dancer, co-founder of the Fairlee Class, and supporter of all things Scottish - has chosen to hang up her dance shoes now that she is almost 92 years of age. We will miss her presence and guidance. We hope to organize a celebration in her honor and will invite her Scottish Country Dance friends to join us when this takes place.
The Fairlee Autumn Social will be October 12. This spring, our band leader Susie Petrov hired, amongst other musicians, Dan Foster to fiddle. This past week, he gave her notice that he was not planning to attend after locating a higher paying job. Susie scrambled to find a replacement, and Nora Smith has graciously agreed to rise to the occasion. We are pleased that the dance will be able to proceed as scheduled and hope many dancers from other classes will still plan to attend. Dan Houghton and Dirk Tiede will still be rounding out the bill of musicians.
The class has been invited by Stephen Thomforde and Andy Taylor-Blenis to assist with participatory (and perhaps demonstration) dances at a ceilidh to be held in St. Johnsbury, Vermont on Saturday, October 26. Hopefully, this will attract some new dancers to Fairlee or Lancaster (St. J being halfway in-between).
 - Brunswick, ME (Karen) – Patti Tillotson reports that classes started up again the first Thursday in September, and they are gearing up for their Annual Fall Dance Party which will be Saturday, October 19. They are excited to be back at their old location at the Topsham Grange Hall. Liz Donaldson and Elke Baker will be the musicians. The class hopes that many dancers will come up. That kind of support is

very important to them. It shows that they are part of a larger group of dancers. Patti has noticed that many dances held in the Branch lately seem to be drawing fewer numbers and she really hopes that trend stops, and people start traveling out to dances again. Topsham is not that far north of Boston, and they start a bit early, so it is not a late evening for those from out of the area.

Patti encourages the use of her cell (207 841-3232) if anyone needs to call, because she does not always get messages at home anymore.

- Cambridge, MA (Lance) – Things are fine, and there are no changes to the contact information.

4. Old Business –

- a. Branch Archivist update – Jeremy sent the UNH contact information to Jeff Hopper and will introduce the two of them.
- b. Farewell for Evelyn – Jeremy will read the piece written by Jean Farrington at Evelyn's farewell and will announce the trophy in her honor to be given at the New Hampshire Highland Games.

5. New Business –

- a. SAGM date – The meeting will be on Monday November 4th

6. Next Meetings –

- a. October 23 – at John Salyard's home in Chelmsford