



# The Town Crier



## VILLAGE GREEN ENGLISH COUNTRY DANCERS, DECEMBER 2006

### CALENDAR FOR 2006/2007

#### 2006

December 13 Last Class before Christmas, Harrow United  
 December 16 Christmas Social, St. Paul's Anglican

#### 2007

January 10 First Class, Harrow United  
 January 31 After-Class Tea  
 February 10 Workshop, Valentine Social, St. Paul's Anglican  
 March 10 English/Scottish Social, St. Paul's Anglican  
 March 14 After-Class Tea  
 April 11 After-Class Tea  
 April 25 Last class, Harrow United  
 April 28 Pearls of Wisdom Ball, Vasa Lund  
 May 2 Annual General Meeting, Harrow United

**Note: 3 volunteers needed for refreshments for each After-Class Tea. Contact Frances Harris.**

#### VILLAGE GREEN EXECUTIVE 2006/07

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## PRESIDENT'S MUSINGS

It is so nice to see so many dancers out to class every Wednesday, whether it be advanced or beginner. To me the beginners seem as though they are no longer beginners, especially seeing how well they learn a new dance downstairs & when they come upstairs to do the dance again with the so-called 'more advanced' dancers, they put us to shame when they show us how well they do the dance. It seems that everyone has been enjoying themselves thoroughly & is looking forward to the winter session of dancing. I know I am.

If you missed our masquerade party, you missed a wonderful evening. Even though we had to change the date & church we had originally scheduled due to uncontrollable circumstances, we had a number of regular dancers & their guests show up for a very tasty potluck meal at 6:00 p.m. You can always count on Village Green members to bring a variety of dishes for all to share. Some members came dressed in fancy costumes & masks while others came just as themselves, which was just fine. Dancing got off to a roaring start at 8 p.m. thanks to our excellent - as usual - Fine Companions band & very skilled teachers, Jackie & Sue. Thank you to our very creative Social Convener, Frances Harris, for the way she & her helpers decorated the church prior to the party. From colourful rows of overhead balloons to an assortment of beautiful masks on purple banners, & tables set out with matching napkins, it put us in a Halloween mood the moment we stepped inside the church ready 'to party'.

If you were unable to attend this party, don't despair, because there is another party coming up soon. Our Christmas party is scheduled for December 16, 2006 at St. Paul's church. This is always well attended & the supper is always delicious. Start planning now for what you would like to bring. It is also very important that everyone come out to Wednesday night classes because the dances being taught are the ones that will most likely be danced that night & we can get more dancing in if it doesn't take too long to explain the dance steps. You will find out more about this event at classes before Christmas & you'll be able to sign up for what you would like to help out with. Hopefully as many members as possible, along with guests, will be able to attend this long-awaited evening.

We also have many other exciting social evenings planned for the coming winter season. In February we have a Valentine social in the works & March will see our annual English-Scottish evening. It is always exciting to dance different styles of dance with members from a different dance group. In April we wind up our dance year with a beautiful, graceful, Spring Ball, so start planning now what elegant outfit you will come up with this time. Sounds like an exciting few months to look forward to.

Here's hoping everyone has a wonderful Christmas & you get everything your heart desires.

Merry Christmas,  
**Marilyn**

### Highlights of November Executive Meeting

from Sandra Johnston

- ❖ As of October 31 VGECD have \$7073.68 in the bank account. There are a few memberships outstanding. Please submit your dues to John.
- ❖ At the after-class tea in January we hope to provide examples of English Country costumes. This display is always interesting, especially if you are planning to have a costume sewn for the Ball.
- ❖ Plans for the Christmas social are underway. Wine, as well as a non-alcoholic drink, will be served with dinner. VGECD will provide a turkey. Members will provide all other dishes. "Yummy"! Plan to attend this festive occasion that will end with carol singing.
- ❖ We are on a mission to stir up interest in VGECD. If you know of any groups or individuals who might be interested, please advise an executive member. A demonstration could be prepared to entice members of other groups, associations or organizations to join our group.

## Sinterklaas Meets Father Christmas ... and The Dance Goes On

by Joan Baragar

When John Groen married Delayne, “Sinterklaas” from The Netherlands would visit on December 5, and Father Christmas from England would come on December 24. Delayne would make Dutch Banket, an almond-lemon roll covered in rich pastry. She would hang holly (as she still does) from the pictures in the living room, a lovely memory of her father’s custom.

Some customs, however, have changed since then. Sinterklaas doesn’t visit any more: he was too early to fit in with Canadian Christmases! There is no traditional table food for December 24 or 25 any more, and vegan dishes are never the same from one year to the next. Sometimes, fish is added – and usually a delicious Christmas pudding/ice cream dessert.

Delayne says, “I am like a little kid, I get so excited as the house takes on the Groen traditional look for the holidays. We always have a fire going and the fireplace has a plump English snowman wearing a top hat and cuddling a Santa beside the hearth. Near the front door I fill Dutch klompen with [imitation] holly leaves bright with berries.”

Delayne and John welcome the whole family to their home on Christmas Eve. Five grandchildren and their parents create a lot of cheerful noise. Everyone shares the food contributed from three houses. Delayne always hangs chocolates on the tree for the children. On Christmas morning, everyone returns to open gifts and litter the floor with wrappings for the cats’ playful enjoyment.

As for the Groens’ Village Green activities, Delayne always vowed she would never marry a man who couldn’t dance. “I was dance-crazy as a young girl,” she says. “And guess what! *John did not dance.*” So for years Delayne danced by herself around the kitchen – or not at all. “Then our eldest son got married and we had to learn to dance for his wedding....” One day about five years ago, John saw a picture of Liz Goossen in the *Free Press*: she was teaching Village Green English Country Dancing. (Little did the Groens know that her niece would later marry their son, Ken!) That article persuaded John to try authentic English dancing with his delighted English wife...and now “he is sought after all the time as a partner.” They love coming each week – and John, who also loves to work with numbers, has been Treasurer for four years.

The Groens are valued, friendly and able members of VGECD. They contribute a varied background of experience and a common enthusiasm for the all-season pleasures of The Dance. From Delayne and John in *this* festive season: *Happy Christmas* and *Prettige Kerstdagen*.

### **News of our Members:**

Dancers of VG: We are taking this opportunity, in addition to the Wed.-Night card, to say "Thank You" for your thoughtfulness and care of each and both of us at this time of Ron's surgery. We are learning a new and complex dance with unexpected partners. We look forward to that time both of us are dancing familiar (and new) dances with familiar (and new) partners on Wed. evenings at Village Green.

**Ron and Maureen McIntosh**

*Please send news items to the Editors (special celebrations, events, best wishes or condolences).*

**Editors' Note:**

The next issue will appear before the Valentine Social and there will be no other issue before the English/Scottish Social (Judy will be away in Chile from February 20-March 22), so write your anecdotes and stories over the Christmas holidays and send them in early. We hope to have an article for every newsletter from each of the groups: beginners, regulars and challenge. Please say "Yes" if someone approaches you to write an article for the *Town Crier*. We will all be pleased to read whatever you have to tell. Thanks to this issue's reporters who sent in their special Christmas contributions. We hope to hear from more of you during the year, so give us your stories and recipes. **Deadline for the next issue is 20 January 2007.**

**VILLAGE GREEN BULLETIN BOARD**

A reminder to **wear your name tags** and to **change from outside shoes into "dancing shoes"**. We don't want to mark or scratch the wonderful newly finished floor.

If you are travelling and want to know if there is any ECD happening, you can check out this website: [www.cdss.org/grp\\_addr\\_list.html](http://www.cdss.org/grp_addr_list.html).

**Christmas Country Dance School**, December 26-January 1, Berea College, Berea Kentucky. Traditional dance, music, song, folk drama, storytelling & crafts since 1938. *Brochure available at the Wednesday classes.*

**MAGIC OF ONE PRODUCTIONS CONCERT**, January 26, 2007:

"Giving Birth Beside the Buffalo: The true story of Marie Anne and Jean Baptiste Lagimodiere"

Stories: Ruth Stewart-Verger (Ottawa Storyteller), Mary Louise Chown

Music: Sierra Noble and Danny Flett



**Our new t-shirts are coming soon!**

**Make a dance statement and support our fundraiser - order yours now.**

**New orders are available only in Kelly Green with white print. Price \$20.00**

**Contact Marion at class or call 222-6630.**

## Dancing at Norway House, Christmas 1908

by Judy Valenzuela

We think of our dancing season as being active, but how many of us would expect that Norway House's almost one hundred years ago would rival ours? They had dances every few days and even boasted two bands, festively clad dancers, and great food. Thanks to the journalistic aspirations of a young HBC clerk named William Chapman, who styled himself "the Norway House Reporter," we get an intimate view of the celebrations. The winter season opened in mid-November:

12 Nov. 1908: "*Amongst those present we noticed Miss Budd dressed in a charming confection & wearing a fine China silk waist of a beautiful soft pink colour, Miss Annie Budd also attired in a charming creation.... The Fort contingent, as was only fitting, was greatly in evidence, Mr Sinclair [in charge of the Post] being the only one absent from the auspicious social event....*"

Just five days later the next dance took place, with a much fuller description. Some of the hazards encountered are fortunately no longer a concern – yet another reason to be grateful for electricity!

17 Nov. 1908: "*The greatest social event of the winter season to date which took place this evening at 8:30, was the grand ball at the Norway House rooms. Donald Flett and M<sup>r</sup> Carson led off and almost immediately a spirited dance was in progress. The bright eyes and flushed cheeks of the fair dancers surely represented a dazzling picture of the joy of youth whilst the less graceful display of enthusiasm on the part of the men suggested rather the joy of living. After several dances had taken place Messrs Sinclair & McDonald soon shewed themselves to be two of the most ardent supporters of this wholesome pastime. The chief feature of this dance was, perhaps, the small number of Red River jigs, there being no call for any until nearly mid-night, there cannot have been more than about three jigs in all this evening and it would be well for hostesses to remember this when making up dances this season. There was but one hitch in the proceedings and that was the breaking of a lighted lamp which fell off from the piano, in the middle of a "set"; fortunately there was no conflagration or explosion. The dance went on ceaselessly until 3 a.m. next day. Undoubtedly the accompaniments of Miss Budd at the piano added considerably to the success of the ball, and her social triumph was well deserved. The Sinclair String Band and the Budd Band were in attendance. Refreshments for the "outside" guests were served in the Bachelor's Hall, whilst the Misses Flett had prepared a sumptuous repast in the dining room for the H.B. men and their immediate friends. Amongst those present we noticed Miss Budd wearing a fine white china silk waist relieved by a tasteful bow of blue chiffon, & a black dress brought up at the waist by a snappy belt, Miss Annie Budd similarly attired with the exception of the bow which was of pink chiffon, Mrs Garson a charming creation of black silk, the Misses Macleod in simple but effective gowns. Most of the well known matrons of society turned out and did their share of ensuring the success of the proceedings & all the well known young fellows about town seemed to be present as well as those of the older generation. The Misses Flett of Selkirk, who are spending the winter here, were present but could not be induced to dance, much to our disappointment. Messrs Flett, Garson & Folster did the 'calling-off'.*"

As a postscript he added:

18 Nov. 1908: "*Alec Budd around early looking 'awfu' tough'; his condition may be attributed to several causes but perhaps the foremost of these is the unsympathetic manner in which his better-half treated him early in the morning, making him get up before 7 a.m. in spite of the fact that he did not get home till after 4 a.m. this morning.*"

A week later Mrs Coland hosted a dance, which Chapman reported in detail, concluding:

23 Nov. 1908: "*It was not until about 3 o'clock in the morning that the better known young fellows, Messrs Flett, Garson & Chapman started for home. On the whole this social function was very successful*

*from the view-point of the dancers, though Jack Folster's beans - being prepared for his trip - were by mistake consumed by some of the guests."*

The weekly dances were not always successful, however:

*"Peachy Keam (and he certainly is a peach) gave a dance at Rod Robertson Rooms, and, although he sold a dog for \$10.00 with which he bought provisions for the supper, the affair was not of much social interest."*

The next week yet another dance took place at 'Arthurson Hall', which was slow until the appearance of Donald Flett, who Chapman describes as *"that prince of dance callers."* Even a diphtheria quarantine failed to interfere with the dances that increased in frequency as the Christmas season approached.

We can be grateful to William Chapman, whose vivid descriptions allow us to join the festivities. His superiors, however, were less than pleased with his efforts, and on New Year's Day 1909 he wrote:

1 Jan. 1909: *"W.M. Chapman working most of the day, so the latter, special representative of the 'Norway House News', is unable to give a very vivid description of the day's proceedings.... The Dean had a great feast at the Deanery and a dance afterwards.... which started at 4 p.m. and ended at 4 a.m. The censor has warned the editor of the Norway House News not to give such lengthy accounts of these social functions as heretofore, so in future if our readers desire to know all about any dance, marriage or any social function it will be necessary for them to be present at such, or else to be contented with inaccurate accounts from those who were present. It has been the pride of the 'Norway House News' that authenticity has been the first consideration and your editor, who is now retiring to take charge of the 'Northern Star, Split Lake', thanks you (the readers of this Journal) for your continued patronage & trusts that you will put the same confidence placed in him in his worthy successor."*

Thanks to William Chapman we have a tantalizing glimpse into social life at an HBC post - though very little about the fur trade he was charged with recording!

*(Credit: Hudson's Bay Company Archives, Archives of Manitoba, B.154/a/84 fos. 31-44, B.154/a/85 p. 2)*

## **Mince Pie, Christmas Cake and Christmas Pudding**

***found by Joan Baragar on the Internet***

Did you know that mince pie began life as a meat dish? Originally, Christmas celebrations included many meals and *lots of meat* to help people deal with cold weather. Pigs, calves and poultry were popular meats which were smoked and pickled in stoneware jars as filets, cutlets, hams, pigs' knuckles and trotters. The containers were buried in snow or stored in root cellars. The meats would later join cheeses and breads on festive tables during Christmas holidays.

In the Middle Ages, **mince pie** became a popular choice. It is perhaps the oldest traditional Christmas dish. Originally, finely-chopped poultry, pheasant, partridge and rabbit were mixed together to make a mince pie. Later, sweet ingredients - sugar, apples, raisins, candied oranges and lemons, etc. - were added to bring it closer to the dessert we think of today.

A cousin of this pie - **Christmas pudding** - was made a traditional dessert in the 17th Century by eliminating meat and putting together so many chopped-up sweet ingredients that the English called the pudding "Hackin". A variation became the even richer **plum pudding** which was often prepared on Christmas morning. It was traditionally sprinkled with brandy and flamed.

With time, traditional dark **Christmas fruit cake** evolved from the Christmas pudding, including raisins, dates, nuts and candied fruit in its recipe. Now, these treats have become popular all over the world, and people may gift each other with Christmas cakes to symbolize sharing happiness and cheer during the holiday season.

## COOKERY CORNER

### **Dark Christmas Cake from the Hookham family tradition** *submitted by Liz Goossen*

Place in a large bowl and soak overnight (at least) with ½ to 1 cup apple juice (or brandy or rum) 6½ to 7½ pounds of fruit & nuts as follows. You can adjust amounts to your own preference.

2 lbs dark raisins (Thompson)	1 lb currants
1 lb glazed cherries(mix of red/green)	½ lb lemon peel
1 lb glazed pineapple	½ lb orange peel
1 lb dates/prunes	½ lb almonds (ground or finely chopped)

I usually cut the glazed cherries in half, and cut the pineapple into 3/8" size pieces. As well, I sometimes add a ½ lb of the very large juicy raisins. Place fruit in a very large bowl, or use crisper from fridge, add 1 cup white flour and mix to coat fruit evenly.

In blender mix (in four batches): 4 oranges, 12 eggs, 1 lb butter, 1 lb brown sugar

Alternating the liquid batches with the remaining flour (3 more cups) and spices (2 tsp cinnamon, 1 tsp allspice, ½ tsp cloves, 1 tsp nutmeg, 1 tsp salt, 1½ tsp baking soda), mix well.

Prepare pans: line with brown paper (2 layers on the bottom), grease on bottom and sides. Fill the prepared pans to about 2/3 full.

Place in a 250 degree oven, cover all the pans with a double layer of brown paper and place a pan of water on the bottom rack.

Check the smaller pans (3 - 3½" square) after 3½ to 4 hours; the mid-size pans (5 - 6" square) probably take 4½ to 5 hours and the large pans (8" square) take 5½ to 6 hours.

Let cool, wrap well and let ripen a minimum of 6 weeks.

Decorate with marzipan, if so desired and ENJOY.

### **Christmas Cake Memories**

From Liz Goossen: "I have wonderful memories of helping my Mom make the Christmas Cake, lining the pans (the job no one wanted), cutting the cherries in half, chopping the glazed pineapple, mixing all the fruit, STIRRING the cake batter and MAKING my Christmas wish, filling the pans, and scraping the bowl clean after the cakes were in the oven."

From Anne Morton: "One of my memories from the year we lived in England, was a woman who appeared on What's My Line? She stumped the panel with her occupation, which was x-raying Christmas puddings. She worked in a factory which produced baked goods and her job was to make sure the sixpence, etc., was in the puddings."

## CHRISTMAS DANCE PROGRAM December 16, 2006

Merrily we Dance and Sing	E
Jack's Health	
Sun Assembly	
Yellow Stockings	
La Gavre	E
Childgrove	E
Female Saylor	
Pine Needles	E
An Early Frost	
Lilli Burlero	
Mount Hills	
Mr. Isaac's Maggot	
Black Nag	E
Duke of Kent's Waltz	E

If you bring friends or relatives to the party who are not English Country dancers, the dances marked "E" are suitable for them to dance.

Instructions to four of the dances are on the back page of this newsletter. Remember that these are not full instructions, but only reminders. If you want instructions for any of the other dances on the program, please ask Liz Goossen.

### Upcoming Ball, April 28, 2007

The theme for the upcoming ball is "*Pearls of Wisdom*". If you have a dancing quote you'd like to share in the newsletter or at the ball, let Jeannie Gilbert know.

For now, here is a quote to get us started:

*"Dancing with the feet is one thing, but dancing with the heart is another"*

Does anyone know the source for the quote? I couldn't find one.

*Liz Goossen*

# Village Green Christmas Social 2006



He's making a list, checking it twice,  
Gonna find out who's naughty or nice,

That's right, you guessed it.....

## Santa Claus Is Coming To Town!

Celebrate the season at the Potluck Festive Feast 2006.

Saturday, December 16, 2006 At St. Paul's

Doors Open @ 5:00

Wassail & Hors d'Oeuvres @ 5:30

Potluck Dinner @ 6:00 (Turkey & Wine included)

Dancing @ 7:30 to The Fine Companions

End the evening with a rousing carol sing-along

Tickets \$12.50

(\$2 from each admission donated to The Christmas Cheer Board)

**Mr. Isaac's Maggot**                      Duple minor                      Playford Ball

- A      1M turns 2W right about  $\frac{3}{4}$ , then returns to place by dancing below and behind 2M (2W stay inside the set). Similarly 1W turn 2M left  $\frac{3}{4}$  and finish in original places.
- B      Taking inside hands with neighbour, fall back 6 steps, forward for 3 steps, and turn single by the right (still moving forward). Face partner, dance 3 changes of a circular hey, finish in a line of four facing up (1's are in the middle). All dance up 3 steps, fall back 3 steps, 2<sup>nd</sup> couple assists 1's into progressed places.

**The Female Saylor**                      Duple Minor                      Playford Ball

- A1      First couple lead through the couple above and cast down to place  
First couple lead through the couple below and cast up to place.
- A2      First couple half figure eight round the couple below, then right hand turn once round to finish improper, facing down
- B1      All back to back with neighbour, and two hand turn once round with neighbour
- B2      All back to back with partner, first couple two hand turn half way (to own side) and cast off to second place, while the second couple turn two hands moving up the centre to top place.

**Yellow Stockings**                      Duple Minor      A Choice Collection of country Dances, Neal, 1726  
(Dance is in 9/8 time. Driving and smooth)

- A1      1st corners turn twice with two hands
- A2      2nd corners do the same
- B1      1C slip down (3) & back (3) & cast (6)
- B2      4 changes of circular hey

**An Early Frost**                      Duple Minor                      Philippe Callens, Belgian Boutades  
(Tune is in triple time.)

- A.1      Men turn single right, turn partner right hand half way;  
Women turn single left, turn partner left hand half way (All in original places)
- A.2      All turn single R, R-hands across once, easing out to face neighbour, pass through.  
(i.e. change places with the dancer along the side of the dance)
- B.1      All set to partner, partners cross (right shoulder); circle left once round;
- B.2      Half poussette (1M, 2W pushing); 1s cross & go below WHILE 2s 2-hand turn to own side and chassé up the middle to top place