



The Town Crier



VILLAGE GREEN ENGLISH COUNTRY DANCERS, JANUARY 2007

CALENDAR FOR 2006/07

2007

January 28	Challenge Class, Norberry Community Centre (St. Mary's Rd. & Molgat)
January 31	After-Class Tea
February 10	Workshop, Churchill Park United; Valentine Social, St. Paul's Anglican
February 11	Challenge Class, Norberry Community Centre (St. Mary's Rd. & Molgat)
February 25	Challenge Class, Norberry Community Centre (St. Mary's Rd. & Molgat)
March 10	English/Scottish Social, St. Paul's Anglican
March 11	Challenge Class, Norberry Community Centre (St. Mary's Rd. & Molgat)
March 14	After-Class Tea
March 25	Challenge Class, Norberry Community Centre (St. Mary's Rd. & Molgat)
April 11	After-Class Tea
April 22	Challenge Class, Norberry Community Centre (St. Mary's Rd. & Molgat)
April 25	Last class, Harrow United
April 28	"Pearls of Wisdom" Spring Ball, Vasa Lund
May 2	Annual General Meeting, Harrow United
May 6	Challenge Class, Norberry Community Centre (St. Mary's Rd. & Molgat)

Please note: Volunteers are needed to provide refreshments for each After-Class Tea.

Please contact Frances Harris.

VILLAGE GREEN EXECUTIVE 2006/07

President	Marilyn Armstrong	475-6591
Vice-President	Anne Morton	284-2235
Past President	Maureen McIntosh	783-1488
Secretary	Sandra Johnston	889-8780
Treasurer	John Groen	889-0425
Publicist	Marion Tetrault	222-6630
Archivist	Terry Armstrong	475-6591
Social Conveners	Zyna Boyes	489-1849
	Frances Harris	257-4938
<u>Other Working Positions:</u>		
Teachers' Rep.	Liz Goossen	489-2752
Dem Coordinator	Virginia Stevens	832-1769
Editors	Judy Valenzuela	475-6666
	Joan Baragar	488-9195
Member-at-large	Jane Hoag	895-7850

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PRESIDENT'S MUSINGS

Welcome back one and all to Village Green's last season of dancing for 2006-2007. The best is yet to come! Welcome to any beginners we have for the next few months. Those who started as beginners in the fall are ready to join the more experienced dancers upstairs for the full 2 hour schedule. Hope everyone had a very joyous Christmas season & are raring to go & learn new dances in time for our 30th anniversary Pearls of Wisdom ball coming up Saturday, April 28th. If you didn't come to our Christmas social, you won't want to miss the ball.

For those of you who missed the Christmas social, we had a fantastic turn-out of about 95 people who came for a pot-luck dinner & dance afterwards. The evening started out at 5:00 p.m. with 2 women playing their flutes for us. The music was very pleasant to listen to while dancers enjoyed hors d'oeuvres & wassail before the meal was served. Thank you to Anne Morton for arranging this wonderful entertainment. Thank you also to Frances Harris for organizing the dinner & her 'elf' helpers for assisting with the beautiful decorations & setting up the tables for dinner. Thank you to everyone who brought supper for the meal & to the gentlemen who helped to pour wine during the supper. The teachers & Fine Companions were tremendous, as usual, for teaching a number of dances to a large group or supplying the music. Thank you to Caroline McDowall for her beautiful reading in between dances. We wound up the evening with coffee & dessert. A donation of \$400 was given to the Christmas Cheer Board as well, and a special thanks is due The Fine Companions for donating their fee.

If you plan on coming to the ball, it is very important to come to all the classes from now until then to learn the dances that will be done that evening. The night proceeds much quicker with only a short briefing of the dance. We hope everyone can stay for the after-class tea party on January 31 when we hope to have Bob Butler come in & show some examples of costumes you can plan to make for the ball. There will also be some photo albums of past balls to look through.

Be prepared for the socials coming up this season including the Valentine's Day Social February 10th & the English-Scottish Social March 10th. This last social is a lot of fun because you get to meet people from a different dance group & also learn their style of dance & a few more of our own.

Hope to see everyone out dancing in the weeks to come.

Marilyn Armstrong

Highlights of January Executive Meeting

from Sandra Johnston

- ❖ As of December 31, 2006 VGECD has \$7,686.97 in the bank account. Please pay dues to John.
- ❖ VGECD t-shirts are still available. See Marion to place an order.
- ❖ Teachers for the second term will be Maureen and Sue with Jackie assisting.
- ❖ John will be ordering nametags for new members. If you require one, please inform John as soon as possible. And please remember to wear your nametag to every class [*Editor's Note: Keeping it in your dancing shoes can work well*].
- ❖ Please contact the Nominating Committee chaired by Anne Morton if you would be interested in serving on the executive in 2007-2008. We definitely will be requiring an editor for the *Town Crier* but are ready to accept nominations for any/all positions. We also need a Webmaster. Don't be shy!
- ❖ The *Free Press* had an article regarding the tax credit being offered for children enrolled in dance activities. As members of Dance Manitoba, we lobbied for inclusion of dance as a fitness activity.
- ❖ This year, Hawk Green in England is celebrating its 25th anniversary. A group picture will be taken at our February workshop/social, which will then be sent to them.

The Royals

by Joan Baragar

Berna Cleghorn and Iona McPhee, who have been members of the *Royal* Scottish Country Dancing Society, came to my house for tea. Immediately, I knew I was in very distinguished company. Berna has been dancing with “the Scottish” since 1982 - and Iona, who started in 1978, remembers some wonderful times with that group although she is no longer a member. In 1978, the introductory instructor was Monique Henderson; in 1982 – Liz Goossen.

Iona chose dancing as a retirement project. Berna was inspired by a group that danced at *Folklorama*. Both these women grew up with different kinds of dancing on the prairies, in the country: Iona comes from Brookdale and Berna, from Cypress River. But they met each other at “the Scottish”. They eventually met others, too, many of whom now dance with Village Green.

“Scottish dances,” said Berna, “are in sets of four or five, always, [whereas] English have long-ways sets.” They discovered the importance of precise footwork in their classes - for example, the “pas de basque”, a three-point step found only in Scottish dancing. Instructions for the dances are written in special handbooks that also inform the dancer about the number of measures needed to complete a certain set of steps. The precision in Scottish Country dancing can be both satisfying and challenging. But Berna and Iona also enjoy the more relaxed approach to *English* Country Dancing. Sometimes “girls just wanna have fun” – you know?

The trips they took with the Scottish group or the English were certainly not short on fun, even if Iona did buy a twelve-pack of beer for a Grand Forks outing once – and bring back ten bottles because only she and Berna drank beer! She also recalls having breakfast at a farmhouse where the hens laid coloured eggs and pecked at her legs. The memories always include more than the dance agenda (!)

Thanksgiving weekends often brought a ceilidh at Fort Qu’Appelle, Saskatchewan. The dancers – from Winnipeg, Yorkton and Saskatoon - slept in dorms in the old T.B. Sanitarium. Berna calls those *lost weekends*: “If you got two hours sleep you knew you had overslept”, she says. Partying and dancing went together. Berna, who wanted to save her party dress from spills at a Qu’Appelle banquet, once added a black garbage bag to her ensemble, with a hole for her head! She was always fond of fancy dresses, with or without the garbage bag. At Arnes one *summer*, (a fortieth anniversary party for dancers Norma and Archie Sharp), she wore a dress from the 40’s or 50’s, plus a fur coat, fur hat, boots and gloves!

In 1997, Iona, Berna and Janis Platts enjoyed a trip to Scotland during which dances like “Corn Riggs” were accompanied by a piper – performances were held in Edinburgh and in a fishing village – and Berna taught onlookers how to dance. Some of these trips had their dangerous moments. At a Scottish Dancing event in Kenora, Iona was seated at a banquet when she realized her chair was locked with her neighbour’s. She stood to get a better look and lowered her head – right onto a flaming candle in the centerpiece! Someone across the table put a hand out and snuffed the fire that was singeing her hair. But no-one, she claims, gave her any sympathy for the near-disaster.

Whatever the place or the occasion, Berna and Iona are still keeping supple with English and/or Scottish dancing as a way to fend off a rocking-chair retirement. Whether the primary emphasis is on precise footwork or enjoyment of music and movement, they love to dance. This year’s English-Scottish Social will be a way of bringing the elements of both types of dancing into the limelight and of celebrating lively veterans like Iona and Berna. Almost in unison, these women raised their tea-cups and told me, “We try to keep the flame of life lit at all times. If the flame in one of us goes out, the other re-lights it!”

Amen!

To My Valentine: an English/Scottish Social Memory

by Judy Valenzuela

My most memorable English/Scottish Social was in 1988 when I was dancing with the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society. I brought my fiancé, Francisco Valenzuela, to introduce him to the music and dance. He was surprised to encounter his first ESL teacher, Virginia Stevens, and they had a delightful reunion. Later I remember my introductory teacher, Liz Goossen, telling me how Virginia came to her quite concerned and voicing the hope that her former student's future wife was good enough for him. When Liz discovered who it was, she said she hoped he was good enough for me! Well, after almost nineteen happy years together, I hope we have dispelled their fears, and I am pleased to be dancing again with both of them. Unfortunately we won't be at this year's English/Scottish Social, because we will be in Chile, but we send our best wishes for a joyful joint celebration.

News of our Members:

- We miss Janis Platts, who has been away from dancing since before Christmas due to health problems and surgery. Janis is in hospital, but visitors are restricted to family.
- Congratulations to Margaret and John Taylor who recently celebrated their 50th anniversary.

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

VILLAGE GREEN SOLDIER'S JOY

by Anne Morton and Mary Louise Chown

Last fall, Mary Louise Chown and Village Green premiered a new version of a dance to the tune "Soldier's Joy", one of the most popular tunes ever to come from the British Isles. Here is the story of how the dance came to be.

Early last November, while working at the Archives of Manitoba, I was researching Miss Matilda Davis's boarding school for girls. The school, which operated from 1858 to the early 1870s, was located in a fine stone house called Twin Oaks. This still stands not far from St. Andrew's on the Red. Staff and students were the daughters and grand-daughters of Scottish or English fur traders and their Aboriginal wives. Life at Miss Davis's centred on school work and morning and evening service at St. Andrew's every Sunday. There were opportunities for recreation, however. According to historian Lillian Gibbons: "*In summer, on a Saturday afternoon the girls made a pretty sight sitting under the trees sewing and darning, doing fancy work or reading. Winter nights they would dance reels and listen to vivacious Lydia Christie sing 'Money Musk' and 'Soldier's Joy'.*"

I had recently returned from a conference in Nebraska with a copy of Rex Rideout and Mark Gardner's CD, *Frontier Favourites: Old-Time Music of the Wild West*, which includes 'Soldier's Joy'. With the lyrics fresh in my mind, I was startled at the idea of Lydia Christie, daughter of the chief factor at Fort Edmonton, singing (or being allowed to sing) "Well, it's 25 cents for the morphine and 15 cents for the beer."! Searching the web for lyrics more suitable for a young lady, I also found lots of other stuff, including dance versions. Some of my discoveries I e-mailed to Mary Louise Chown, who's been working on Red River history. I was astonished and delighted that the very next night (November 8) Mary Louise taught us a duple minor version of "Soldier's Joy". Here's Mary Louise on how the dance was created.

I was looking for a simple dance without intricate steps as a first dance for one of the general dance classes. As I am a new teacher, my repertoire of known dances is still rather small. I was browsing through the set of country dance books when I opened the page to the tune "Soldier's Joy". I didn't care for the dance instructions as a warm up dance because it had a figure eight

across the set and I didn't want to teach that figure for the first dance. But I like the tune and so onto the internet I went. Well, there are dozens of dances to the tune of "Soldier's Joy". I found one that was a Sicilian circle with figures that were just what I wanted for my first dance of the evening. I felt, though, that a Sicilian circle had disadvantages because people couldn't join in at the bottom as they came in and changed into their dancing shoes. Well then, if I could change it to a duple minor, it would fit all my criteria. I danced it at home in my living room, and with salt shakers to represent all 4 dancers. It looked fine. The following Wednesday, I taught it to the dancers and halfway through, we ran into trouble. I should have made it "1st couple improper". Still, something wasn't working, and though everyone there was willing to keep working on the dance, I really didn't know how to extricate them, and so I switched to another dance. After all, the first dance of the class is to warm up, not stand around! I went back to the drawing board, armed with suggestions from various dancers, and the following week, we danced the Village Green Version of Soldier's Joy successfully. Here it is:

VILLAGE GREEN SOLDIER'S JOY Duple Minor, first couple improper

A1 1-4 Sides approach forward and back

5-8 2-hand turn with your partner, end facing your neighbour

A2 1-4 Gentle siding by the right shoulder with your neighbour

5-8 2-hand turn with your neighbour 1 1/2 times around

B1 1-8 Full ladies chain, assisted

B2 1-8 4 changes of a circular hey, beginning with your partner

So apparently the tune was in the air, or maybe Mary Louise had caught the echo of Lydia's voice? As to the lyrics, versions range from the obscene to the innocuous. The vivacious Miss Christie probably entertained her schoolfellows all those years ago with "Dance all night, fiddle all day, That's the soldier's joy they say".

For more information visit the following web sites:

Lillian Gibbons on the school: <http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/transactions/3/redriverhomes.shtml>

Hear Rex Rideout and Mark Gardner play Soldier's Joy: http://www.songofthewest.com/wst_page2.html

Library of Congress 'American Memory': <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/afcc/soldiersjoy/>

Library of Congress, 'An American Ballroom Companion: Dance Instruction Manuals, ca.1490-1920'. A great site for information on English Country Dance: <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/dihtml/dihome.html>

COOKERY CORNER

Scottish Oatcakes

submitted by Sandra Johnston

½ cup butter

½ tsp. baking soda

1 cup rolled oats

2 tsp. baking powder

1 cup flour

¼ tsp. salt

⅓ cup sugar

2 – 3 tablespoons cold water

Cut butter into rolled oats, flour, baking soda, baking powder, sugar and salt until mixture resembles fine crumbs. Add water, 1 tablespoon at a time, until the mixture forms a stiff dough. Pat down and roll out on a lightly floured surface until approximately ¼ inch thick. Cut into 2½-inch rounds. Place on an un-greased cookie sheet. Bake at 375 degrees F for 12-15 minutes until oatcakes start to brown. Cool on a wire rack. Makes 14.

Evening Dance Program, 10 February 2007

Sprigs of Laurel	duple minor
Upon A Summer's Day	3 couple longways
Teacher's Choice: The Bishop	triple minor
Juice of Barley	duple minor
Rufty Tufty	2 couple dance
Teacher's Choice: Graies Inn Mask	4 couple longways
Dartford Camp	triple minor
Comical Fellow	duple minor
Teacher's Choice: Shrewsbury Lasses	3 couple longways
Hole in the Wall	duple minor

The Teacher's Choice dances will have been taught by Jeannie during the workshop sessions earlier in the day. Instructions for Sprigs of Laurel, The Bishop and Graies Inn Mask can be found on the back page of the newsletter. Please add them to your binder of dance instructions for future reference. If you would like instructions for any additional dances, please ask Liz.

VILLAGE GREEN BULLETIN BOARD

Upcoming Magic of One storytelling and music concerts:

January 26 Giving Birth Beside the Buffalo: The true story of Marie Anne & Jean Baptiste Lagimodiere. *A collaboration between Ottawa Storyteller Ruth Stewart-Verger, and local storyteller, and Village Green member, Mary Louise Chown. Music: Sierra Noble & Danny Flett.*

March 23 Celtic Rites of Spring. *Wayne Drury, Jane Cahill. Music: Castlerigg (Paul and Susan Hammer)*

Where: 8:00 PM at the Unitarian Church Hall, 603 Wellington Crescent.

\$10 in advance, \$12 @ door Tickets at McNally Robinson Grant Park & Downtown, Prairie Sky Books & Mary Louise Chown (489-6994).

Lose your heart to the dances of Jane Austen's era at the Jane Austen Workshop/Valentine's Social

Saturday, February 10, 2007

Workshop

with Jeannie Gilbert

at

Churchill Park United Church 525 Beresford

Morning Session 10 - 12

Afternoon Session 1 - 3

After a great day at the workshop you won't need much Persuasion to "Emma" late Jane's heroes and heroines on the dance floor.

Taking Pride in your dancing could Prejudice more partners in your favour, so show some Sense and Sensibility and join us for a heart-warming evening of dancing and convivial company



Social

St. Paul's Anglican Church

Point Road & North Drive

Doors Open @ 7:00

Meet & Greet with Appetizers & Wassail @ 7:30

Dancing to The Fine Companions @ 8:00

Please complete form and give to Jackie Soble (254 0628), the registrar for the workshop

Name(s):	Phone #	Total:
Session 1: 10:00 am to 12:00 pm	\$ 7.00 # _____	\$ _____
Session 2: 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm	\$ 7.00 # _____	\$ _____
Evening Social	\$ 5.00 # _____	\$ _____
Attending ALL 3 sessions	\$15.00 # _____	\$ _____

I will bring ___ hors d'oeuvres OR ___ dessert: ALSO sign up at class for additional help required



PEARL OF WISDOM

Vern McLellan -

Happiness is like jam - you can't spread even a little without getting some on yourself.

WONDERING WHAT TO WEAR TO THE BALL?

It's time to start thinking about the Pearls of Wisdom Ball on April 28th. Dressing up is part of the fun of a ball. And elegant attire needn't be difficult or expensive to obtain. Come to the after-class tea on January 31st. Bob Butler will have examples of clothing for both men and women, and lots of creative ideas to share.

PEARL OF WISDOM

Katharine Hepburn - If you obey all the rules, you miss all the fun.

Ball Highlights from the January Executive Meeting by Sandra Johnston

- ❖ Jeannie and Roger will be calling the dances at the Pearls of Wisdom Ball.
- ❖ At our March classes, we will start practising dances in preparation for the Ball. The objective is to feel comfortable enough to join in every dance.

The deadline for the next *Town Crier* is March 31.

Village Green English Country Dancers
Celebrate their 30th Anniversary with



Pearls of Wisdom
Spring Ball

Dinner and Dancing

Saturday April 28, 2007

at

Vasa Lund Park

5429 Roblin Blvd, Winnipeg

Live Music with The Fine Companions
Mark your calendars. More details to follow

www.villagegreenenglishcountrydancing.org

The Bishop

triple minor set (from the Apted Collection)

- A1 First man cast off (2nd man dance up), balance to 3rd Woman, and turn her two hands once round.
- A2 First woman cast off (2nd Woman dance up), balance to 3rd Man, and turn him two hands once round.

- B1 First couple gate up with the couple above (the 2s) while the couple below (the 3s) gypsy. All circle half round.
- B2 First couple gate up with the couple above (the 3s) while the couple below (the 2s) gypsy. All circle half round.

Sprigs of Laurel

longways duple minor (Fallibroome 5)

- A1 All set to partner, right hands across once round
- A2 All set to partner, left hands across once round

- B1 First couple down the middle and up, cast off to second place, 2s dance up
- B2 All right hand turn with partner, then left hand turn

Graies Inn Mask or Gray's-Inn Mask

longways for 4 couples

Part 1

- A1 Up a double and back, set and turn single
- A2 repeat
- B1 Women's line down a double and back, while men's line up a double and back
- B2 Women's line up a double and back, while men's line down a double and back
- C1 All fall back a double, forward to place
- C2 Change places with partner
- D Step right and honour partner, step left and honour partner
- E1 All two hand turn with partner
- E2 Change place with partner (men ready for)
- F1 Straight hey for 4 on men's side (1 face 2 and 3 face 4)
- F2 Straight hey for 4 on women's side (1 face 2 and 3 face 4)

Part 2

- A1 Side, set and turn single
- A2 Repeat
- B1 to F2 as in Part 1

Part 3

- A1 Arm right, set and turn single
- A2 Arm left, set and turn single
- B1 to F2 as in Part 1