



The Town Crier



VILLAGE GREEN ENGLISH COUNTRY DANCERS, OCTOBER 2006

CALENDAR FOR 2006/07

2006

October 18	After-dance Tea
October 28	Potluck & Masquerade Social, Churchill Park United
November 15	After-dance Tea
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-dance Tea
February 10	Workshop, Valentine Social, St. Paul's Anglican
March 10	English/Scottish Social, St. Paul's Anglican
March 14	After-dance Tea
April 11	After-dance Tea
April 26	Last class, Harrow United
April 28	Spring Ball, Vasa Lund
May 5	Annual General Meeting, Harrow United

VILLAGE GREEN EXECUTIVE 2006/07

President	Marilyn Armstrong	475-6591	tarmstrong39@shaw.ca
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PRESIDENT'S MUSINGS

Well, here we are in October & we have had quite an exciting September, dance-wise. We had over 60 people show up for our opening social September 6th, with a number of new dancers. Thanks to all involved in making the social such a success. Our band, the Fine Companions, was as wonderful as always, the demonstration dancers provided an inspiring performance & Liz Goossen did a great job of teaching dancers of mixed skills. The high attendance came because everyone put out brochures advertising our Village Green dance group & also brought their friends & relations. Frances Harris & Zyna Boyes supplied & put up the colourful decorations in the church hall. Many members brought refreshments, made tea, coffee & punch & stayed afterwards to help clean up. As you can see, with so many volunteers offering to help out in some way, our socials come off superbly.

We have had about 10-12 dancers showing up for beginners' class downstairs each week. It would be wonderful if everyone decided to become a full-fledged member of Village Green. Our first after-class tea party is scheduled for October 18th & I am looking forward to meeting as many of the new dancers as possible, as well as catching up with last year's regulars.

Our second social this year will be our Masquerade Party coming up on October 28th at Churchill Park United Church. Dust off your Halloween costumes & masks, see how many people you can scare, & see if they can figure out who you are. I'm looking forward to seeing everyone at class on Wednesdays.

Your President,
Marilyn

Highlights of September Executive Meeting by Sandra Johnston

The meeting was held on September 19, 2006 at the home of Marilyn and Terry Armstrong. Highlights are as follows:

- ❖ VGECD will be celebrating its 30th anniversary during this dance year.
- ❖ In addition to Liz Goossen and Sue Stanton, Maureen McIntosh and Mary Louise Chown will be teaching before Christmas.
- ❖ The workshop planned for October 28th has been cancelled since no teacher was available. The masquerade social will still take place at Churchill Park as scheduled (see ad).
- ❖ If you have any suggestions as to how we could reach potential members, please advise an executive member.
- ❖ As of August 25, the bank balance was \$4,748.09.

VILLAGE GREEN BULLETIN BOARD

Challenge Class CANCELLED on 29 October.

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

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.*

Love isn't always in Three Quarter Time by Joan Baragar

Put an Olson and a Maurakis together and what do you get? Well, if the Olson is *Linda* and the Maurakis is *Andy*, you get a wonderful appreciation of dancing to a variety of new rhythms and tunes. Linda and Andy join us on Wednesdays for English Country, but have eclectic tastes and experiences in dancing.

It wasn't all this footwork that drew them together in the first place, however. They met at a Spanish class – but soon, contacts there introduced them to a folk-dancing group. They explored this kind of activity together until they eventually discovered English Country Dancing.

This is Andy's third year with us and Linda's second. It was delightful news when they were married last March.

Why have they stayed with Village Green? They say they appreciate the teaching techniques which allow us really to learn the dances. We are not thrown into a set to figure out all the steps on our own. Also, Linda says, dancing is an alternative to a more formal workout, yet it is wonderful exercise and real fun. She is especially fond of the socials and the chance to dress up for a special event now and then.

Wednesdays are a great drawing card for Andy and Linda. They have learned new dances and made new friends through VGECD. Our hope for them is that they will just keep right on dancing together through life!

News of our Members:

Our sympathy to Thelma Fast who lost her husband, Dr Bernard Fast, this past August. Ron McIntosh is convalescing. We are thinking of you, Ron, and hope to see you dancing soon.

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

Editors' Note:

This issue emphasizes the "English" in English Country Dancing. Thanks to all our contributors for taking the time to share your thoughts and insights. We hope to hear from more of you during the year, so send in your contributions. It's great to have a stockpile of possibilities to draw on. **Deadline for the Christmas issue is 18 November 2006.**

How Did Village Green Become Associated With Hawk Green?

By Caroline McDowall

Late in 1999, I began to wonder whether the English Country dances we were dancing here in Winnipeg were the same as the English Country dances they were dancing back in England, or whether English Country dancing had developed in its own way over here, no longer being connected to its roots, rather as the English language developed in its own way in North America after the Pilgrim Fathers brought it over in 1620. English spoken in North America is no longer the same as that spoken in England!

To find out, I wrote to Cecil Sharp House in London, England, to ask whether they might suggest a dance group or two that Village Green might "twin" with, in order to learn about the current English Country dance scene over there and, for purely personal reasons, to try to find where I might dance English Country dancing while visiting my family in England. I also thought that some other Village Greeners might, like me, want to do some English Country dancing while they were visiting England as it would add to the cultural experience.

I heard nothing from Cecil Sharp House and forgot about my letter. Then, out of the blue, one Sunday in October 2000, the 'phone rang. "Probably my mother" - she often phoned on Sundays. Sure enough, there was a strong English accent, but certainly not my mother's!! It was a man's voice - and not my brother's either!

Graham Smith of Hawk Green Hoe Down Folk Dance Club had seen my request in the Country Dance Society newsletter! Cecil Sharp House had published my letter and Graham was responding! Sure, they are dancing the same dances that we are dancing! Sure, people from Village Green would be welcome to dance with Hawk Green - or any other of the several English Country dance clubs in the Macclesfield area! And so the "twinning" link between Village Green and Hawk Green speedily developed.

Graham has been unbelievably wonderful. We could not have found a more welcoming, helpful, friendly, dedicated, regular and inspiring contact. Since that time, he has written or, more recently, e-mailed, regularly and frequently with all sorts of Hawk Green (and other!) dancing news. He has sent tapes, provided CD's, sent maps and tourist information, flyers, photographs, dance notations, and all sorts of dance-related information. I have done my best to respond in kind, by sending our Village Green dance news, Town Criers, photographs, and etc. back to Graham and Hawk Green. At our Jubilee Ball in April 2001, we celebrated the linking of our two organizations. On their Friday evening dance, Hawk Green danced the same programme of dances as we danced for our Jubilee Ball and each group raised a toast to the other. For our One Year Anniversary, Liz Goossen choreographed the dance "Friends Across the Water" in honour of our association and both groups danced the dance "at the same time" (Village Green at our Saturday Social, Hawk Green on the Friday) to celebrate the event.

Jeannie Gilbert, Maureen and Ron McIntosh and I have all danced in England with Hawk Green and have enjoyed it so very much!! The most surprising thing, I think, is that they are so like us!! Their Friday evening dances are so like our Wednesday evening dances, it is almost uncanny!! In no time, you feel you are dancing with Village Green!! Hawk Greeners are so welcoming and friendly, I strongly encourage everyone visiting England to include dancing with Hawk Green in their itinerary. As Jeannie said, following her first visit: "From the moment you're invited to take a partner, form a longways set, and take hands four, you know you are home" and "it was a wonderful time with wonderful memories."

I have been most warmly welcomed not only for dancing, but to stay the weekend, attend an amazing "dance" wedding, watch lots of wonderful Morris dancing (and enjoy a pint!) at English pubs, and enjoy bed-and-breakfast with both Graham and the Turners. Maureen and Ron enjoyed an entire weekend (or was it a week?!) of dancing and dance events culminating with the crowning of the Queen of the May on

May Day with Hawk Green. Maureen and Ron wrote: "If you are looking for a great evening of English Country Dancing, try Friday evenings with Hawk Green Hoe Down Folk Dance Club." On one occasion, Jeannie attended the well-dressing in Graham's Cheshire village of Sutton-Lane-Ends. Well-dressing is an ancient ceremony to bless the water supply and wells of towns and villages. A large picture or tableau made of flower petals pressed into wet clay is an important part of the ceremony. In July 2001, when I danced with Hawk Green, I was asked to speak to everyone on behalf of Village Green. I closed by presenting them with a small Maple Leaf suncatcher, saying that, "Upon a Summer's Day," it is the same sun that shines on both our groups and that Village Green hoped that "The Maple Leaf Forever" would remind Hawk Green of the special dancing bond that reaches right across the sea from the one group to the other. (Reference *Town Criers* of October 2001, December 2001, October 2002, among others....)

THE VILLAGE GREEN MORRIS MEN TOUR ENGLAND, JULY 2006

After years of discussing and planning, the Village Green Morris Men finally took their English dancing to England. Village Green's twinning with Hawk Green opened the door for our excellent start with the Adlington Morris Men and later we were hosted by teams at Grimsby in Lincolnshire, Leyland in Lancashire and Taunton, Somerset. The hosts invited other local Morris sides, representing different styles such as Northwest Morris and Sword and Clog to join us.

The groups met us for informal dancing in the English style outside of village pubs, on High Streets and in Market Squares. Other memorable dance locations included a cider brewery, the cathedral grounds at Wells, the lawn of a seniors' residence and by the side of a canal. The seniors' residence, a former vicarage in the village of Hambridge in Somerset, was where, in 1903, Cecil Sharp was staying with his friend Vicar John Marson when he collected his first English folk song from the gardener. At each stop, the Morris sides took turns dancing for anyone who happened to be present. Sometimes there was a good crowd, occasionally it was just the other dancers, but we did not care, because the weather was good, the fellowship was warm, and the beer tasted great.

We noticed that the English generally dance slower than we do, most of the groups dance only two or three styles, and their standard of dance is high. Our Hockey Dance was a hit and has already been adopted over there.

Unfortunately, three of our team, including our musicians, could not make the trip, so we borrowed musicians from the host groups and they were all excellent, even if their pace and timing sometimes differed from ours. None of us will forget how fast we had to dance Rigs o' Marlow or how we had to slow down for some Fieldtown dances!

Our hosts made us feel wanted and appreciated at all of our stops, but nowhere more than at Hawk Green – Adlington. Graham and Christine Smith were hosts *extraordinaire* who took us on daytime excursions to the walled city of Chester and across the Peak District to the resort town of Buxton. Graham also brought us to dance for, and with, an enthusiastic group of primary school children on their last day of classes. On the Friday, Hawk Green hosted us for a fast-paced dance evening at which Mary Louise Chown and Dan Stone both had an opportunity to call dances. The home band, High Jinks, played wonderfully for the dancing and during the intermission, for our Morris demonstration as well. In Somerset, the Taunton Deane Morris Men also hosted a fun evening of dancing, singing and eating for us, during which Robin Lynch and Dave Edwards also called some dances.

It was indeed a successful and most enjoyable tour and who knows, maybe we will do it again sometime!

Dan Stone and Mike Lynch

If you wish to know the history of the Village Green Morris Men, you can read the text printed in the Town Crier last year or view text and photos on the web: <http://www.americanmorrisnews.org/> Click on "Past Issues", select December 2005.



English Country Dancers
Winnipeg, Canada

Make a dance statement and order your VG t-shirt.

Available in Kelly Green with white print or Heather Grey with forest green print.

Price \$20.00

Order deadline: October 25, 2006

Support our T-Shirt fundraiser and place an order. Sign up sheet available at dance class or contact Marion at 222-6630.

DEMONSTRATION TEAMS

Each year V.G. is asked to demonstrate dances at various functions. Sometimes it's at a largish function such as the Festival of Nations, and other times at local nursing homes. In either case it's lots of fun and a good chance to improve your dancing skills.

So, having the inclination and the time, how can you join the demonstration group? Well, usually if you have danced for at least a year and are currently not wearing a leg cast, you will be sufficiently familiar with dance figures and linking them together to participate enjoyably. Each demonstration requires a commitment to attend 2, 3 or occasionally 4 practices that are held on weekday evenings or Sunday morning. The dance program for each demonstration is organized by Jeannie considering the group for whom we are dancing and the members who are available on the demo date and who can attend the rehearsals. We dance in costume. If you don't own one, it is your responsibility to beg, borrow, make or steal one. You will find members of the group are helpful in your costume quest.

To join the demo pool, contact our Demonstration Teacher, Jeannie Gilbert, at 269 6012. Happy dancing.

Roger Palsler

CHALLENGE CLASS

Attendance at the challenge class is made on the basis of self-selection. The criteria for membership were published in the last newsletter. If you have questions about this class please call Jeannie (269-6012) or Liz (489-2752).

Classes are held at Norberry Community Centre (St. Mary's Road & Molgat St.) on October 15, November 12, 26; December 10; January 14, 28; February 11, 25; March 11, 25; April 8, 22; May 6.

Please note, previously scheduled class on 29 October has been cancelled.

COOKERY CORNER

Orange-Date Dessert Bars

Delayne Groen

Crust

2 cups of pecans, almonds or walnuts

1 cup oat flour (see note)

Dash cinnamon

4 tablespoons maple syrup

Filling

2 cups pitted, quartered dates (soaked 30 - 60 minutes)

3 tablespoons water

Juice of 1 large orange

Zest of 1 large orange

Remove the zest from the orange then juice it, not the other way around. Since the dates need to soak for 30 - 60 minutes, begin soaking them in the water and orange juice, then prepare the oat flour.

For Crust: Place the nuts in a food processor and process until coarsely ground. Add the oat flour then pulse to mix. Add the cinnamon, then the maple syrup, 1 tbsp at a time, until the mixture holds together. If necessary, add additional water. Lightly oil a 9-inch square pan, press 1/2 the crumbs into the bottom of the pan, reserve the rest for the top.

For Filling: In a small bowl, combine the dates with water and orange juice, let them soak 30-60 minutes. In a food processor, combine the dates, soak water and zest, puree until smooth. Spread the date mixture over the crust. Spread rest of crumb mixture over the filling, compress and smooth the top. Cover and keep in refrigerator until needed. Cut into bars and serve.

NOTE: To make oat flour, place whole, raw oats in a clean electric coffee grinder (several tablespoons at a time). Grind until very fine. Any left over flour can be kept in the freezer.

VARIATION: Use dried apricots, apples, pears, pineapple, figs or peaches (soaked 4 hours) in place of the dates.

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When I make this, I always used short-cuts, if I can get away with it. I process the nuts in the processor then put them into a bowl and add the rest, mix it up and it is done. The filling I short-cut as well. I do not soak the dates, as I use soft ones. I place the dates, water, zest and orange juice in a Vitamix and whip it up on the spot. The only reason the dates are soaked is to make it soft enough to whip smooth. Whatever catches your fancy in your own kitchen to achieve the same results is up to the cook!! I also use rolled oats. This dessert is unbaked and is a good healthy one. No wheat, no sugar, no cooking (I am a raw food addict!!!).

Editor's note: It is also delicious! In case you think the Executive is all work and no pleasure, this was the treat at our August meeting. Thanks, John and Delayne.



A note about the Quick Coconut Bread recipe from the last *Town Crier*:

Caroline McDowall tried it and called me. Between us we discovered that there are different qualities of coconut milk, and since she used the best, her loaf was a little dense. If you find the dough too stiff, try adding liquid or cutting back on the flour, or both. Even dense, it still tastes good!

Judy Valenzuela

October 28th, 2006 Dance Program

Moving On	Circle for as many as will
Midnight Ramble	Duple minor
Peterchurch Figure Eight	Longways for 3 couples
The Rifleman	Duple minor
Boys of Oakhill	Contra

Childgrove	Duple minor
La Gavre	Duple minor
Bridgewater Bay	Three couple
Ore Boggy	Duple minor
Three Meet	Circle

Since this dance evening is open to all, the 'die-hard English Country dancer' as well as the 'what is English Country Dancing? dancer', INVITE your friends, acquaintances, neighbours who might be interested (even remotely) in ECD. This will be a good evening for them to get their feet wet, beginning with a potluck and then on to an evening of relaxed dancing.

When the Village Green Morris Men toured England this summer (see the story on page 5), one of our new teachers was on the lookout for interesting music and dances. She purchased a couple of dance books. I found "Bridgewater Bay" in one of them and include the dance instructions in this newsletter. "La Gavre", taught by Scott Higgs at our workshop last March, is also included.

For new dancers, we encourage you to keep the dance instructions, which are published on the back page of the newsletter, for future reference. NOTE, however, these instructions are a reminder of the figures in the dance. To read a full description of the dance, it is always necessary to go to the original source.

Submitted by Teachers' Rep *Liz Goossen*



Masquerade Ball
Saturday, October 28, 2006
Churchill Park United Church

Doors open 5:30
Pot Luck Supper 6:00
Dancing 7:30

Pot Luck Admission – A Tasty Dish
Social Admission \$5

*Dress To Impress in your gown or costume of
choice*
Wear a Mask!

*Good selections of masquerade masks available at Harlequin, Dollarama,
The Party Store.*

Check the Internet for ideas and make your own, or use make-up

*If you plan to come to the October Social, please remember to wear your name tags
and clean “dancing” shoes.*

Bridgewater Bay

Longways for three couples

- A1 First couple set and cast one place, first woman dances right hand star with the couple above, while first man dances right hand star with the couple below
- A2 First couple dance left hand star, first man with the couple above and first woman with the couple below. All set and change places with partner, passing right shoulders
- B1 All swing partners, second and first couples finish in the centre facing down while the third couple finishes facing up.
- B2 Dip and Dive, starting with the first couple (in the middle place) making an arch for the third couple to dance under. The couple in the middle is always the couple making in the arch. At the end of the phrase, the first couple has to make one more arch and dance to the bottom of the set while the third couple dance under it to second place.

Dance twice more

From “The Willow Tree”

Music: 32 bar innocuous single reels.

La Gavre

Duple Minor IMPROPER

- A Right hand star, then left hand star.
- B First couple lead down the centre, turn inwards, skip back and cast into second place (couple two move up to finish facing out).
- C Neighbours mirror gypsy: first man and second lady right shoulder, first lady and second man left shoulder, same pairs gypsy around the other shoulder.
- D All set forward to partners and turn single to the right, partners taking right hands, Bernard Bentley allemande (ladies move forward a double and back, while men gypsy around them clockwise)

Philippe Callens “Belgian Boutades”