

CDR NEWS

IS005

AUGUST 2016 EDITION



40th Anniversary Contra Dance, June 23, 2016. Photo by Kate Baron.

1976 - 2016

It's a Great Time to be Dancing

By Kate Baron

Right now there is so much going on in CDR! From an amazing Jane Austen Ball, to an awesome combined Contra/English TV demonstration and a huge 40th anniversary dance, this summer has been a great time to be country dancing in Rochester. And in the next month there is a lot more to come: on August 20th come join us for a FREE Contra/English Open House dance and potluck dinner; then less than two weeks later you can dance your way through the afternoon at the Netherfield Ball; and in September there will be an awesome English dance celebrating all of the hard work of one of our most dedicated volunteers. Also in September don't forget our annual meeting of the membership - this year in addition to voting in a new slate of officers we'll be voting on an update to our bylaws. The CDR membership year also renews on September 1, so make sure to update your membership - look for the updated form, since we are adding some new membership benefits this year and need some additional information. This year we're also offering an annual pass for the first time, so if you attend the weekly dances on a regular basis check out the details on page 2 and on the membership form - a pass just might be something you will want to consider! And as always, our many dedicated volunteers continue to work on ways to make the dances even more fun - so consider volunteering today!

Save the Date!

Mark your calendars! Here are some upcoming events you won't want to miss:

- Contra Volunteer Orientation (with Pizza!) Thursday, August 11, 2016. 6:30 at Covenant.
- CDR's 40th Anniversary Open House FREE Dance - Contra & English Saturday, August 20, 2016
- Netherfield Ball Saturday, August 27, 2016
- Richard Sauvain Appreciation Dance Sunday, September 18, 2016
- CDR MEMBERSHIP MEETING / ELECTION at Contra: Thursday, September 22 at English: Sunday, September 25

Learn English Country at the Netherfield Ball

Want to learn how to English Country Dance, and attend a Regency Ball? Netherfield Ball is the place for you! The low-key, stress-free, fun-filled atmosphere of the Netherfield Ball is designed to encourage new dancers. The ball program is chosen especially for beginning dancers with all the dances being taught and called. There will also be experienced dancers, including the Meryton Assembly Dancers, to help at every turn.



This year's ball will take place at First Baptist Church (175 Allens Creek Rd., Rochester, NY 14618), from 2 to 6pm on Saturday, August 27. Dances will be called by Lisa Brown and Richard Sauvain. Music will be provided by Syracuse musicians Laurel Sharp on an astounding variety of wind instruments, Pat Doherty on piano, and Kailyn VanNorstrand on flute. Adult admission is \$10.

Become a Member!

It's that time of year again - time to renew your membership!

CDR members are eligible for a host of benefits, including a discount at the weekly dance, eligibility for great members benefits (such as the annual scholarship and - new this year - member nametags buttons!), and this newsletter delivered to your door! And membership helps support the CDR Community: while most of the revenue from attending the dances goes directly toward the costs of our events (performers, rent, supplies, etc), the income from club membership helps pay for the annual expenses of the club, such as insurance, website hosting, advertising, etc. So support CDR and become a member today! Fill out a form at the weekly dance (prorated rates available) or online at www.cd Rochester.org (Membership registration information is on the "About Us" page).

Buy an Annual Pass!

- Is dancing an event you look forward to every week? Are you tired of having to scrounging up change when you're running out the door?
- This year CDR is introducing an all-year dance pass - buy a pass and you'll attend the weekly dances for a year for free! And there are additional benefits:
- - The more you dance the more you'll save!
- - Special pricing for children's passes (under 17) and student passes make dancing more affordable for young dancers and families.
- - Students and Children receive their CDR membership for free, with purchase of an annual pass
- - Family pricing: households with more than two children under the age of 17 only need to buy two children's passes - additional children's passes are free.
- See the updated membership form for Annual Pass pricing and complete details. Passes will not be prorated and are valid for our membership year (September 1 to August 31), so renew your membership and get your pass today!

Did you know? During the Depression, dance marathons were popular as a means to forget about daily troubles and to compete for cash prizes. Marathoners danced for hours and days at a time, usually resting only 15 minutes for every hour of dancing. Americans Mike Ritof and Edith Boudreaux hold the world record. From August 29th, 1930, to April 1st, 1931, they danced for 5,154 hours and 48 minutes - that's 214 days. They won \$2,000 at the Merry Garden Ballroom Dance Marathon in Chicago, Illinois. Due to potential health risks, Depression-era dance marathons were eventually banned.

2017 CDR Wall Calendar

Love seeing great photos of our dances? Want to know about all our events coming up throughout the year? This fall, we'll be publishing our first ever CDR Wall Calendar! It will feature great photos of our community in action and also note all of our regularly scheduled events for your convenience. Presales will open in November.

Want to submit your photos for consideration? We'll be holding juried selections in the fall, but we'd love to see your photos now! Send them to newsletter@cdrochester.org. Image resolution of at least 1700 x 1300 pixels is recommended.

Want to Contribute?

Have something to share to the CDR community? Want to write an article or notice, submit a photo, or have an upcoming event you want to share? Want to participate in putting together the newsletter? Submit your information to newsletter@cdrochester.org today to be included in the next quarterly issue.

Stay in Touch...

- www.cd Rochester.org
- www.facebook.com/CountryDancersofRochester
- www.meetup.com/Rochester-Community-Dances
- Questions? Comments? Write to us at newsletter@cdrochester.org



40 Years of Dance Featured on local News Program

Jeanie Lockwood

How much fun are contra and English? So much fun that nineteen dancers and two musicians recently gathered at 5am to share their love of dance with Rochester news audiences. Alexis Arnold from WHAM 13's Good Day Rochester morning news show joined us at Rochester City Ballet studios on June 21 to learn about contra and English country dancing and to get the word out about our 40th anniversary contra dance that would take place on the 23rd.

I dragged myself out of bed at 3:45am to start my day the best way I can think of – with dancing. Everyone arrived a bit bleary-eyed, but soon Jane and Dick's music was filling the studio and we were lining up to practice a few dances before the cameras were on us. Alexis and one cameraman arrived a lot closer to 6:05 showtime than I would have expected, but they got the lay of the land and got to work. Alexis learned the basics of contra from Rich Dempsey, her trusty partner for the morning, and she got pretty comfortable with the moves for someone who was just learning them. Our coordinators and the cameraman worked out a few kinks with lighting and sound and soon we were on the air and (yes!) dancing. We'd have a few moments on air with Alexis talking or dancing (five segments of 1, 2, or 4 minutes each) and then the camera would turn off, but we'd continue the dance, because, well, we're dancing! Oh, yeah. THIS is why I'm here this morning.



On-air interview. Photo by Lisa Brown.

Mistakes tend to be easily forgiven in our community and dismissed as “enhancements” to the dance, but I made four or five big blunders on camera during the contra segments that I was sure would come out horrible on live TV. (Everyone knows the camera can add 10 pounds – does it have the same effect with mistakes?!) I was amazed and delighted to see that all of my goofs either were mostly hidden by what was going on around me or seemed to come off merely as the fun that it was. The worst (read: least hidden) one was when I was in the role of the gent and my neighbor twirled me after our swing. Forgetting my role, I positioned myself to her right, and when the next figure was a ladies' allemande, I found myself meeting my partner in the middle! Then I realized the error had not resolved yet – I still had to get back to my own side to swing my partner! I'm telling myself I provided an excellent example for our viewers – thanks to the dancers

around me – of what a relaxed, friendly atmosphere our group creates.

We also did an English dance demo (Duke of Kent's Waltz, one of my favorites), but Alexis elected to leave that one to us. I enjoyed the contrast of contra's energetic fun and the elegance of English – it's not often I get to dance both styles in the same gathering – as well as the idea of sharing them both with others who might see us and realize it's something they need to try.

A day or more before the broadcast I learned with great relief that there were certain people who would be there to talk to Alexis about what we do, about the history of the dance styles and of our organization, and about the anniversary event coming up. Thank goodness for Kate and Peggy, because I had been worrying that they'd be asking us regular Joes for some words about our dance experience. (Cue my mental footage of idiot-on-the-street interviews, with me squarely in the limelight.) Phew! Nightmare averted.

Wrong. About 30 torturous minutes before one of the segments we were told to come up with what we like about dancing, for our quick individual interviews. Gah! I did survive it, and I think all the segments turned out pretty darn well, giving a good impression of what we do and who we are as an organization. And did I mention I got to start my day with dancing?

See our segments from the broadcast on the Fox Rochester web site:

<http://foxrochester.com/news/good-day-rochester/country-dancers-of-rochester-celebrate-40-years>

www.cd-rochester.org

40th Anniversary Open House: Join us for a FREE Dance!

The celebration isn't over - on Saturday, August 20, 2016, from 6:30 - 9:30 PM we're holding a special 40th Anniversary OPEN HOUSE dance, free to all (but donations accepted), at First Baptist Church. It will feature a mix of dances from both Contra and English country and will provide an opportunity to socialize with members of our community who you might not know yet! Beginners are welcome and all dances will be instructed. Calling will be by Margaret Mathews and Richard Sauvain, and music will be by Jane Knoeck and Eileen Nicholson. There will be a pot luck dinner before the dance, from 5:30 to 6:30.



Demonstration group practicing. Photo by Kate Baron

2016-2017 CDR ELECTION

About CDR

Country Dancers of Rochester, Inc. is an educational organization which is dedicated to the preservation, study, teaching, enjoyment, and continuing evolution of English and American traditional and historical dance and dance music. CDR endeavors to further these objectives through activities and programs open to the general public.

Country Dancers of Rochester is governed by bylaws and run through a hierarchy of committees, starting with the Board of Directors and Planning Committees for each dance group (currently Contra and English Country). These committees are structured as follows:

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is responsible for transacting any business necessary to the maintenance of the organization. They are directly responsible for maintaining CDR's non-profit status, and enforcement and maintenance of the bylaws and the articles of incorporation. Examples of the Board of Directors' specific responsibilities include:

- Rules for organizational branding / general publicity / marketing
- General maintenance of non-profit status, enforcement and maintenance of the bylaws and articles of incorporation
- Budgeting & maintenance of general finances
- Maintenance of membership list & benefits
- Development & regulation of Mission / Values / Goals
- Development and enforcement of a Behavioral Code

The membership of the Board of Directors is composed of the four elected members of the Board of Directors (President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer), and the three appointed members of each Planning Committee (Chair, Booker, and Financial Secretary). The Board of Directors holds quarterly meetings. Any member of CDR is welcome to participate in regular meetings and assist on subcommittees, but only members of the Board of Directors vote on official business.

Current Board Members:

President: Kate Baron

Vice President: Lisa Brown

Treasurer: Rich Dempsey

Secretary: Jeanie Lockwood

Members at Large:

Bob Fabinski

Marcia Locke

Mary Haverfield

Pat Hanley

Richard Sauvain

Next meeting:

Sunday, Oct. 9, 3:30-5:30pm,
at First Baptist Church.

Planning Committees

Current Planning Committee Members:

Contra Planning Committee:

Marcia Locke (Chair)*, Mary Haverfield (Financial Secretary), Bob Fabinski (Booker), Bob Berch, Catherine Morrissey, Jeanie Lockwood, Kate Baron, Julie Alberlan, Lisa Brown, Peggy Dempsey, Rich Dempsey, Tom Bannister.

English Country Planning Committee:

Lisa Brown (Chair)*, Pat Hanley (Financial Secretary), Richard Sauvain (Booker), Chris Cassidy, Leslie Phillips, Rich Dempsey, Ruth Hyde.

**Please contact the chairperson to receive information about upcoming meetings.*

The Planning Committees are responsible for the day-to-day business of running the respective dances. Their duties include but are not limited to:

- Booking talent
- Setting schedules of events
- Advertising & planning special events
- Forming subcommittees
- Performance teams

The Planning Committees are also responsible for supporting the Board of Directors in administering the rules of the organization, preparing timely reports, and communicating items for approval. Each Planning Committee includes three appointed members – the Committee Chairperson, the Booker, and the Financial Secretary. These three members are nominated by the Planning Committee and approved by the Board of Directors. Planning Committees will hold regular meetings, with a minimum of 6 per year. Any member of CDR is welcome to participate in regular meetings and assist in subcommittees, but only members of the respective Planning Committee may vote on official business.

2016-2017 CDR ELECTION

Meet the Candidates



CDR President - Lisa Brown

After years of driving from Syracuse to Rochester for every English country dance, class and event, Lisa shortened her dance commute by moving to Rochester five years ago. She has been dancing for ten years and has attended CDR dances since the first Jane Austen Ball. Lisa is current chair of the English Planning Committee, Vice President of CDR, and director of the Meryton Assembly Dancers (Demo Team). She is the regional coordinator of the Jane Austen Society of North America and the proprietress of Regency Rental, a costume rental company. Lisa enjoys photography and every fall visits the Adirondacks for leaf peeping.



CDR Vice President - To Be Determined

Role of the Vice President: Acts as executive in the President's absence, and is responsible for overseeing the publicity of the club. Participate on the Board of Directors and attend the quarterly meetings.

Want to volunteer? Contact any member of the nominating committee to discuss the position!

2016 Nominating Committee:

- Kate Baron (kate@cdrochester.org)
- Richard Sauvain (rws@cdrochester.org)
- Marcia Locke (marcia@cdrochester.org)



CDR Treasurer - Rich Dempsey

Although Rich works in IT at Kodak, his passions are for food, dance, and music. At the end of a tough day in the "cubicle farm", there's little better than chopping and sautéing onions, carrots, and other goodies as the base of a tasty dinner. As many know, soups are a particular specialty of his, and well suited to Rochester's winters. Rich has been dancing for just over 20 years now, and loves the community. Country dancing is delightful for bringing people together, and for the way we all dance together. Rich is currently the Treasurer of CDR.



CDR Secretary - Jeanie Lockwood

Jeanie is a stay-at-home mom of three unschooling kids, ages 13, 11, & 7. With 40 years of not dancing to make up for, she has been participating in as much contra as her busy family life allows, as well as English and belly dance, since 2014. Jeanie's interests outside of dance include preparing and enjoying nutrient-dense foods, study of German New Medicine, nights out with her (almost perfect and yet mostly non-dancing) hubby, learning the fiddle, and books and movies that make her laugh. Jeanie is currently the secretary of CDR.

Save the Date: Richard Sauvain Appreciation Night

Date: Sunday, September 18, 2016 (Our regular Sunday Evening Dance)

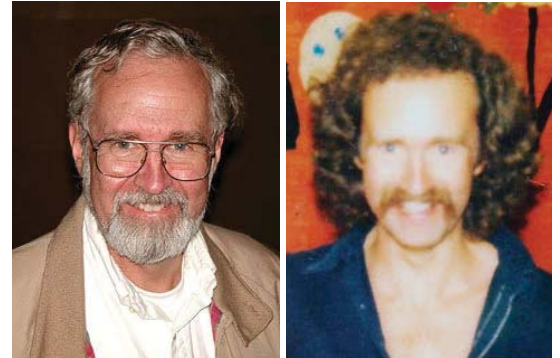
Time: 6:30 – 9:30 pm

Caller: David Smuckler

Music: Jane Knoeck and Eileen Nicholson

Just about 31 years ago, in 1985, Richard Sauvain almost single handedly started the English Country Dance series in Rochester. Since then he has done almost everything there is to do in the Country Dancers of Rochester organization. Today he uses his vast knowledge of music and callers to provide us with the best in music and dance leadership available along with the finest dilly beans.

Come and help us say a Big Thank You to Richard for all he has done (and continues to do) for the English Country Dance community. Learn about some of the history of our English Country Dance organization. Bring a snack and a pile of appreciation for someone who has made possible the activity we all enjoy so much.



Richard Sauvain

A Glimpse into Time: Part 2 The Growth of English Country Dancing in CDR

By Peggy Dempsey

Before the Country Dancers of Rochester formed in 1976, monthly dances were held for about a year at the old Genesee Co-op building on Monroe Avenue. These dances, organized by Tom Bohrer, were a mix of English country dances, contras and squares. Tom discontinued this series shortly before CDR formed. The early CDR dances, held weekly at St. Thomas Episcopal, were primarily contra, but there were also squares and an occasional English country dance depending on the callers who were hired. So how did English Country dancing become such a vital and significant part of CDR?

Richard Sauvain, an avid contra dancer in the early years of CDR, considers himself by nature a “maintainer” rather than an “initiator”, and beginning in 1977 fulfilled many volunteer roles in contra-centric CDR. He was at times an opener, closer, newsletter editor, president, etc., etc. His first introduction to English country dancing was at a CDR dance called by Eric Rounds. Richard was struck by the smooth elegance of the dance and the delightful music. Although occasionally traveling to attend English country dances in other locations, he wanted to do more English dancing locally. In 1984, Richard became an “initiator” and organized a once-a-month English dance at Brighton’s Carmen Clark lodge. These early dances were small affairs, primarily publicized by word of mouth and sometimes subsidized by Richard himself. Richard learned to call and Colleen Liggett and friends frequently provided the music.

English country dances in Rochester continued to be held once a month, growing slowly and expanding to twice a month in 1996. The group switched locations, moving from Carmen Clark Lodge to Covenant United Methodist Church in 1989 and then to the Friends Meetinghouse in 2000. The Friends Meetinghouse was a wonderful site as they had just built a new room with a wooden floor (thanks to the insistence of Friends member and long-time dancer Ruth Hyde!)

In 2007, Judy Bezon, who was the President of CDR and both a contra and English dance enthusiast, thought that we could capitalize on the widespread interest in films based on Jane Austen’s books. She suggested that there should be a ball, which led to organizational and financial assistance from CDR for the first Jane Austen Ball held at Cutler Union. With that first ball and its ball preparation lessons, a new crew of dedicated and enthusiastic English country dancers became active not only in dancing at the regularly scheduled dances but also in organizing and promoting additional English country dance events. Lisa Brown, affiliated with the Jane Austen Society, was among the many people who threw themselves into the English country dance scene in Rochester.

The demonstration group, which had been performing once a year, was revived and reinvigorated; the Meryton Assembly Dancers now perform in period costume several times a year, encouraging audience participation and inviting new dancers to join them at the regular English dance on Sundays. A number of themed “food” evenings began including Baklava Night, Strawberry Shortcake Night, and Ice Cream Sundae night. In addition to the annual Jane Austen Ball in the spring, the English Country Dance Planning Group now organizes the Masquerade Ball, the Turning of the Year Ball, and also the Netherfield Ball (to introduce English country dancing to newer dancers.)

(Continued on Page 7)

Recognizing Our Roots

Ceidlen Skidmore Beller: A CDR Founder

By Peggy Dempsey

While many volunteers have sustained the Country Dancers of Rochester over the years, we'd like to give special recognition to Ceidlen Skidmore Beller, one of the founding organizers.

Ceidlen Skidmore met Kelly Beller and moved to Rochester to be with him in March 1976. She had been involved with traditional dance in the Boston area-- primarily international, English Country, and contra. She started dancing in the late 60's with the legendary Ralph Page, a dancing master who ran week-long camps which Ceidlen attended. She recalls that the dancers "were very good but very proper--wild swinging was not appreciated."

When Ceidlen moved to Rochester, the timing was ripe for traditional dancing. Tom Bohrer had been holding an English dance once a month at the old co-op on Monroe Avenue and there was interest in organizing more frequent dances. As it happened, Joyce Desmarais was living in Rochester and playing hammered dulcimer with Blackthorn Ceilidh Band. Tod Whittemore, a contra dance caller, moved from New Hampshire to be with Joyce. Ceidlen, Kelly, Joyce and Tod often socialized together and they had all danced in New England. They enjoyed the dances at the co-op but like many dancers, wished that they were more frequent. Ceidlen recalls how these four friends were sitting around one night and someone said, "Wouldn't it be nice if there was something more regular?" Joyce said, "I know bands." Tod interjected, "I know callers." Ceidlen and Kelly added, "We know how to organize." And so Kelly and Ceidlen searched out sites and did the initial organization and publicity while Joyce and Tod arranged for callers and bands.



Photo: Ceidlen and Kelly in 1977

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For the first year, Ceidlen remembers that the weekly dances always had live music except for the times when they couldn't book a band. At the time, most callers traveled with a small sound system and records that they could use when live music wasn't available. All the money that was collected was paid to the hall, the band members, and the callers.

Ceidlen feels that she was a catalyst in the formation of CDR. "All the pieces needed were in the same pot at the same time." She and Kelly were able organizers, Joyce was part of a local band, and Tod was willing to call and to find other callers. Joyce and Tod moved away a year or two after helping to found CDR, but Ceidlen and Kelly continued to be active for many years. In addition, they introduced their son Charley to contra when he was young and it was at CDR that Charley met Megan Wobus whom he later married.

Ceidlen believes that CDR has been lucky as an organization. She observed that it has remained a very social organization and that "you don't have to know a lot [about dancing] to get started." CDR has been open to new things and always welcoming to beginners. As for beginners, she says "The ones who you can get up to dance with you are the ones who are likely to return."

Ceidlen is pleased that CDR is thriving after 40 years, and although she currently lives in the Baltimore area and doesn't dance much, she has many fond memories of the traditional dance scene.

As a founding organizer, her advice is to continue to be welcoming to those who come to check us out, and to remind callers to talk about safety so that everyone has a good time. She also suggests talking to any young folks who come and find out who's the motivator of that group so that we can link them in. And finally, find and nurture aspiring musicians so that we can always enjoy live music.

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As a result of this upsurge in interest and attendance, the English dance group outgrew the space at the Friends Meetinghouse and moved in 2011 to its current location at First Baptist Church on Allens Creek Road, where they now dance four Sundays a month. While CDR's initial focus was on contra dance, the organization has embraced and supported the growing interest in its cousin, English country dancing. Each dance series has its own planning committee and works under the umbrella of the Country Dancers of Rochester. Each series is strong and thriving, and Rochester is one of the few communities anywhere to offer both English and contra on a regular basis.



Country Dancers of Rochester
140 Fernboro Road
Rochester, NY 14618

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www.cd-rochester.org

CDR appreciates your support!

Renew your membership today, and continue receiving our quarterly newsletter direct to your home.