

In Step

Promoting traditional celtic dance, music and culture.

Newsletter of the Greater Washington Ceili Club

www.gwcc-online.org



M a y 2 0 0 7



CLUB WORKS

by Tom Scullen, President

GWCC – it's your club!

I'm a few months into my presidency now and thought it would be useful to have a chat about how the club works - a behind the scenes, inside view of the hard working committees and the many activities in which we participate. My ulterior motive of course is to get you all even more involved in the club – and also to recognize the quiet efforts of our many dedicated members. So if you find something that sparks your interest, come see me, contact the committee chair or member, or fire off an email to editor.gwcc@gmail.com Keep in mind too, that working in a committee is an excellent and fun way to influence what your club does.

The Club: GWCC sponsors monthly ceilis, teaches dance classes, puts on the Cape May weekend with classes, concerts and ceilis, performs at many local celtic festivals and assisted living and senior citizen centers throughout the year, publishes a monthly newsletter and awards scholarships. The club organizes and conducts all these events through several committees that are chaired and staffed by its members. Here is a list of GWCC committees with a short description and participants:

Cape May – Chaired by Linda Fitzpatrick, the Cape May Committee organizes the annual dance weekend at Cape May, New Jersey, arranging for publicity, registration of attendees, hotel accommodations, all dance workshops and entertainment, qualified instructors, and a free concert for attendees and residents of Cape May. Committee Members: Kathy Kevany, Bev Ricks, Karen Merry, and Mike Kevany.

Ceili – Chaired by Dixie Baker and Dick Defreyre, the Ceili Committee organizes all monthly GWCC ceilis and New Years Eve ceili, arranging the venue, scheduling the musicians, selecting set and ceili dances to be taught at GWCC ceilis during the year, and the line-up of dances at each ceili. Committee Members: Edie O'Donnell, Betty McCarthy, Jane Twomey, Dorothy Raffel, Sue Boon, Ann Marie Breheny, Pat Twomey, Paul O'Donnell, Don Kaliher, Emmett Murphy, and Tom Scullen.

Elections – Chaired by Edie O'Donnell, the Elections Committee administers the annual elections of GWCC officers and board members each October. This includes petitioning for candidates from the general membership, announcing candidates, publishing election ballots in the newsletter, collecting and tabulating ballots, and announcing the elected individuals.

continued page 2

Membership – Chaired by Frank McCarthy, the Membership Committee maintains a list of current GWCC members, reminds members when membership needs to be renewed, collects membership fee and forwards to GWCC Treasurer, organizes “Welcome Back” ceili in fall of each year, and suggests ways to attract and retain members. Committee Members: Joan O’Connor, Betty McCarthy, Linda Fitzpatrick, Ed O’Connor, Emmett Murphy, and Tom Scullen.

Outreach – Chaired by Dixie Baker and Edie O’Donnell, the Outreach Committee arranges for interested GWCC members to perform Irish dance, music and entertainment at regional Celtic and Irish festivals, assisted living and senior citizen centers, and hospitals. Committee Members: Jane Twomey, Paul O’Donnell and Don Kaliher.

Newsletter – Chaired by editor, Anne Marie Russell, the Newsletter Committee publishes the monthly club newsletter “In Step” in electronic and paper format. It contains articles on dance, music, travel and culture as well as schedules of local dance lessons, ceili dances, sessions and performances. The newsletter is distributed to club members, Irish associations and local establishments. No advertising is accepted.

Publicity – Chaired by Emmett Murphy, the Publicity Committee arranges for the widest dissemination of advance notices of all GWCC classes, events, and ceilis in as many media as possible, continually searches for new and additional resources for GWCC publicity and press releases. Committee Members: Sue Boon, Bev Ricks, Joan O’Connor, Jane Twomey, and Paul O’Donnell

Scholarship – Chaired by Jane Twomey, the Scholarship Committee arranges for limited scholarships for young musicians and dancers who are going to compete in All-Ireland Fleadh competitions as well as GWCC members who are going to Ireland to study or to visit for the first time. Committee Members: Linda Fitzpatrick, Kerry Miller

Spring Fling – Chaired by Joan O’Connor, the Spring Fling Committee arranges publicity, participant registration, hotel accommodations, venue, musicians, and qualified dance instructors for a spring/early summer weekend event within a 2-hour drive from DC. Committee Members: Dixie Baker, Ed O’Connor and Tom Scullen.



HIGHLIGHT
AN ARTIST: Cory Clark

The assignment for the painting was to advertise Baltimore to local people by showing a part of Baltimore that wouldn't be pictured on the front of a tourist magazine. I chose to paint the Irish dance culture, and tweaked J.Patrick's a bit by showing us dancing outside.



“Late Afternoon Ceili” Acrylic 16x20

You can reach Cory at treasurehider@gmail.com



DANCE NOTES

by Edie O'Donnell

The last part of April was full of dance...

Southern MD Celtic Festival Performance

April 22nd saw a number of GWCC dancers performing at the Southern Maryland Celtic Festival. With a picture-perfect day, the crowds were large and the entertainment was excellent. Our performance included both demonstration and audience participation numbers, and we are lucky to have Danny Flynn and Pond Scum providing live music. A number of our participants chose to stay overnight, so 17 of us descended on a local Italian restaurant to continue the fun! A leisurely Sunday return was in order for many.

April GWCC ceili

On Sunday, April 29th, the GWCC monthly ceili was held at Cherry Hill Park.

The workshop dance was the Skirdagh Set, taught by Ann Marie Breheny. Ann Marie was back and looking great after the birth of Aidan Christopher earlier this year. The young man himself came for the ceili, accompanied by proud papa, Scott. As usual, the newest member of GWCC was heartily welcomed, with many folks jockeying for a position to be the next "holder."

The band was Rambling House, Tina Eck, Matt Shortridge, Marc Glickman and Danny Noveck, who supplied us with fine tunes for the dancing.

The first set of dances included the Mazurka Set, the North Kerry Set and the 16-Hand Reel. The pot luck tables showed off the culinary talents of our dancers. The second set of dances started with the Corofin Plain Set. It was followed by the Cashel Set and the Kildownet Half Set, last month's workshop dance. During the break, Don Kaliher won the 50/50. We ended the evening with the Ballyvourney Jig Set, the Skirdagh Set, followed by a waltz, the Clare Lancers Set and our national anthems.

Matt Cunningham ceili

Don't forget to join us for our ceili at Cherry Hill on May 20th with Matt Cunningham and his band from Ireland. We are very fortunate to be on Matt's short list of must-be places on his North American tour each year. Bring your friends, dancers and non-dancers alike. The evening will be full of wonderful music to please all participants.

Summer dance class

Finally, the Sweats of Summer begin at the Frost Center on Thursday, June 7th. Contact Paul O'Donnell for more details.



FROM THE EDITOR

Our June issue will be a summer one with events for June, July and August. Then, starting in September, we resume publishing an issue every month.



TELL TOM

from Tom Scullen, President

Our club is active - monthly ceilis, dance lessons, special dance classes with visiting instructors from Ireland, dance and music performances at local assisted living centers, and the annual Cape May Dance Weekend. But it is your club ... so tell me new things you'd like us to do. Send as many ideas as you'd like to gwcc.editor@gmail.com.



TRAVEL TALES

The Burren

by Cory Clark

Editor's note: Last fall, Cory, an accomplished artist and set dancer, spent several months in Co Clare, Ireland as a Study Abroad student. She shares her experiences and photo imagery...

On my first day exploring the Burren, the Dean of the Art College described the unique western region of Clare as a 'magical place'. We were standing in an ancient ring fort overlooking a hazelnut scrub filled field, and I paused to reflect upon his statement, not fully realizing the extent of his words.

Through the distinctive landscape, and events which occurred during the semester I came to accept the area as 'magical' in the enchanting, mind calming sense.

Some of my most memorable experiences living in the Burren are centered around the phenomena of the turlough. A turlough is essentially a disappearing lake which appears after heavy rains and during the winter.

The Burren's bedrock is made of limestone, often exposed due to ages of grazing and weathering. This limestone is easily dissolved by rain water which creates large crevices, caves, and underground passageways. Since most of the rainwater flows directly through the limestone into these underground passageways, instead of soaking slowly through the ground, the bedrock becomes inundated. This excess water is forced onto the surface and lakes are formed.

These lakes can appear in a matter of hours and grow to acres in size, sometimes flooding roads and forcing detour travel (especially frustrating when attending ceilis!). The turlough next to my house would be pasture one moment and waterfront land several hours later.

Imagine the confusion of waking up to the calls of seagulls, sea birds, and ducks. Then, looking out the window and finding a lakefront view but not knowing where the water came from.

The Burren is also a particularly hilly area, with the biggest hills categorized as mountains. Their stark grey limestone sides are forever changing from purples to blues with the unpredictable weather.

Climbing these hills is especially rewarding because of the close view of wildflowers as one scrambles up the unstable and ankle-twisting rocks. Sometimes when stepping onto a seemingly stable patch of grass, one's leg falls into a knee deep crevice. Then the wildflowers truly become macro vision!

Strangely, because of the environment these wildflowers could be Arctic, Mediterranean, and Alpine. Rule of thumb, don't trust the grass, walk only on rocks, unless wildflowers require closer inspection.

But the best part about reaching the top, besides the aerial view of the land, is the vast expanse of nothing. This nothingness is truly enchanting and a welcomed refreshment for the busy mind.

Aside from the obvious 'magical' characteristics of the ancient ring forts, tombs and castles, the Burren has much more understated qualities to offer. Living in the Burren, surrounded by calm, was a welcomed break from the hectic, scheduled world. I recommend an extended stay.



"turlough" – disappearing lake. First, as you can see in this photo, dry ground, no lake...



...then it appears. Co. Clare, Ireland. "The Burren"



DANCING IN DIXIE

by Paul O'Donnell

The annual CCE Provincial Convention is usually held just after Easter and this year that meant April 12-15 in Atlanta, GA. I was part of a small group of dancers and musicians from the DC area that made the journey to the event which was billed as

“Ireland in Dixie 2007”. Some flew and some drove, the final group included dancers Dick and Dixie deFreyre, Gene and Kendra Swann, Vickie and Bill Barr, Paul and Edie O'Donnell, Larry Frank and Suzanne Little, and Gene Nazarowitz and Andrea McElhenny. Also participating were Jim Owens, the Jesse Winch family, and the Danny Flynn family.

We arrived on Thursday by plane and took the handy airport shuttle to the Westin Atlanta Airport. After gathering in Gene and Kendra's spacious room, eight of us were able to walk to a nice restaurant nearby for dinner together. Returning to the hotel, we found the mixed ceili had already started with Ceoltoiri na Sionnaine--two lively sets of young musicians swapping the stage. The dances consisted of Plain set, Siege of Ennis, Lancers set, Haymakers Jig, Sliabh Luachra, Sheaves of Berte, High Caul Cap, Connemara Reel, and a 3-person ceili dance. Tony Ryan was over from Galway to teach the dance workshops and call dances at the ceilis.

Friday was a day of meetings for the CCE folks, but there was an afternoon workshop which taught the Cuchullain set, Peeler & the Goat, and the first three figures of the Sliabh Fraoch set. After this workout, virtually all our dancers headed into Atlanta for dinner together. Still there was time to relax before the evening ceili which featured tunes from various music workshop leaders and members of the Green Fields of America. Dances at this ceili included the Corofin Plain set, Cashel set, Connemara Reel, Clare Plain set, Cuchullain set, Mazurka set, and three figures of the Labasheeda Reel set. Problems with the sound system delayed the start, but there was plenty of good dancing between 8-11pm with usually about 18 sets on the floor.

The big day for all the workshops is always Saturday and in the morning dance workshop we were taught the Derrada set and the last two figures of the Sliabh Fraoch set. The lunch buffet was very

nice, as was the breakfast buffet. In my opinion, the catered buffets were actually better than the regular buffet meals in their restaurant. Back for the afternoon workshop and we had a quick run through of the South Galway set. Following that were assorted “tricky figures” from various sets, so most of the DC dancers left the workshop early to rest up and clean up for the Banquet and Ceili.

The official culmination of the weekend is the Banquet dinner with the distinguished speakers and the featured entertainment. The food choices, lamb and salmon, were both well executed. Fingal (Billy McComiskey, Daithi Sproule, and James Keane) performed before the meal and Green Fields of America took the stage afterwards for the main event. The speeches were reasonably short and worth listening to, which meant the whole affair stayed within a half hour of the published schedule. The big ceili dance list had the Caledonian, Derrada, Connemara Reel, Ballyvourney Jig, Claddagh, Cuchullain, South Galway, and Clare Plain sets. I always appreciate when we get a chance to do the workshop dances at the ceili and we had three of them here, and for most of the night the floor had 15-18 sets participating.

Although we stayed over until Monday, the majority of folks start heading home Sunday. After Mass at the hotel (partially in Gaelic) followed by another breakfast buffet, it was time for the “Going Home” ceili. Most dancers plan for this last chance event and so there were still 12 sets to take floor as Ceoltoiri na Sionnaine again provided the music. This time we danced the Sliabh Fraoch, Fairy reel, Aoife's 3-step (a two-hand dance), Clare Plain set, Harvestime jig, and the Rince Mor. Finally we bid farewell to our dance friends from Anchorage, Seattle, Windsor, and New Orleans, promising to dance together again next year in Parsippany if not in Cape May this fall.



CAPE MAY WEEKEND

For a wonderful weekend away, full of dancing and music, consider the Cape May Dance Weekend. Held at the seaside resort Cape May, New Jersey. Enjoy too, the sun, sand and Victorian mansions. Mark your calendars for September 28-30th. For more details, see the flyer and Upcoming Events in this issue.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Note: events in bold are GWCC

May 20 GWCC Ceili at Cherry Hill 5PM
Set workshop starts at 4:00PM (Review)
Music by the Matt Cunningham Band
Cherry Hill Park Convention Center
College Park, MD
Info: 301-294-3568 rdefreyre@aol.com

May 20 ceili J. Patrick's Pub 4:30PM
All dances called by Marilyn Moore
Music by the Hedgerows
1371 Andre St, Locust Point, Baltimore MD
Info: 410-244-8613

June 7 GWCC dance class session begins
"The Sweats of Summer" Thurs at 8PM
Taught by Paul O'Donnell
The Frost Center
4915 Aspen Hill Road Rockville, MD
Info: 301-649-6410 Paul O'Donnell

July 7-15 35th Willie Clancy Summer School
"Willie Week" traditional music and dance
Miltown Malbay, County Clare, Ireland
Info: <http://www.setdancingnews.net/wcss/>

July 9-13 CCE FiddleWeek
Washington Waldorf School
4800 Sangamore Road, Bethesda, MD
Info: Mitch Fanning 9824 Rosensteel Ave.
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Sept 18-27 Irish Charter Cruise
Rome, Italy
Info: byrne_g@yahoo.com

Sept 28-30 Cape May Dance Weekend
Info: sousane@comcast.net



MEMBER BULLETIN BOARD

Ride needed

Brian Madigan is interested in traveling to and from the GWCC Ceili events He doesn't drive - could transportation be provided? He lives on Wisconsin Ave in Bethesda near Metro. You could pick him up at home or a metro station. Please contact him at 301-657-2272 to make arrangements.

Our condolences

Our condolences to Betsy O'Malley on the passing of her mother, Barbara F. Thomsen on May 7, 2007. The club made a donation "In memory of Babs Thomsen" to the designated charity. Betsey is the banjo player with the Bog Wanderers.

Got news? It's your bulletin board. Send notices to editor.gwcc@gmail.com

GWCC Officers and Board

Tom Scullen – President
Dixie Baker - Vice-President
Ed O'Connor – Treasurer
Paul O'Donnell - Secretary

Board Members:

Susan Boon, Linda Fitzpatrick, Dick De Freyre, Don Kaliher, Betty McCarthy, Frank McCarthy, Emmett Murphy, Joan O'Connor, Edie O'Donnell, Bev Ricks, Anne Marie Russell, Jane Twomey, Pat Twomey

Committees (Chair):

Ceili (Dixie Baker and Dick DeFreyre)
Membership (Frank and Betty McCarthy)
Outreach (Edie O'Donnell and Dixie Baker)
Newsletter (Anne Marie Russell)
Scholarship (Linda Fitzpatrick)
Cape May (Linda Fitzpatrick)
Spring Fling (Joan O'Connor)

DANCE CLASSES

Mondays

Waterloo Elementary School, Columbia, MD
set dancing 7-8:30 beginners, starting April 16th
Instructors: Jan McVey and Don Kaliher
Info: 410 313-7275.
www.howardcountymd.gov/RAP

Tuesdays

Ring of Kerry, Gaithersburg, MD
ceili & set dancing 7:00 beginners, 8:00 advanced
info: Roger Andes 301-972-1657 randes@erols.com

Wednesdays

J Patrick's Pub
ceili & set dancing 7PM
1371 Andre St Locust Point Baltimore, MD
Instructor: Dan Stanton info: 410-276-2766

Thursdays

GWCC Frost Center, Rockville, MD
set dancing 7:30 beginners, 8:00 advanced
Instructor: the Paul O'Donnell
IrishGWCC@aol.com

Saturdays

Green Acres Center, 4401 Sideburn Rd Fairfax, VA
ceili & set dancing 10:30 beginner friendly
Instructor: Marilyn Moore
info: Larry 703-281-0910 lfrank2@earthlink.net

CEILIS

First Saturday,

Emerald Isle Club Ceili 7-11 p.m. Sept – May
ceili dances, some set dances, all called
American Legion #22, York Road, Towson, MD,
info: 410-263-5544

Second Saturday,

CCE Ceili, 7:30 Sept-May
ceili dances, some set dances, all called
Green Acres Center, 4401 Sideburn Rd Fairfax, VA
7:00 workshop
info: KendraR179@aol.com

Second Sunday,

J Patrick's Pub, 4:30-8:30 all year
set dances, some ceili dances, all called
1371 Andre St Locust Point, Baltimore, MD
info: 410-244-8613

Fourth Sunday,

GWCC Ceili 5-9:00PM Sept – May
set dances, some ceili dances, some called
Cherry Hill Park Convention Center
College Park, MD
4:00 workshop
info: rdefreyre@aol.com

LOCAL SEISIUNS

J Patrick's Pub, Locust Point, MD
Monday – Beginners Seisiun
Tuesday w/Laura Byrne & Jim Eagan
Thursday w/Peter Fitzgerald
Kids Seisiun w/Donna Long
info: 410-244-8613

Royal Mile Pub, Wheaton, MD

Kids' seisiun, 4th Sunday, 5-6:30
info: jmitchellf@yahoo.com
Adults' seisiun, 4th Sunday, 7-10:30
info: 301-946-4511

McGinty's Publick House, Silver Spring, MD

Kids' 2nd Sunday info: jmitchellf@yahoo.com
Adults' Tuesdays, 8:00 info: Doc Botzer

RiRa Pub, Bethesda, MD

Wednesdays, 7-11 and Sundays, 3-7 p.m.
info: philvar@erols.com

Auld Shebeen, Fairfax, VA

Saturdays, 12-2:00, kids once a month 11:00
info: 703-293-9600
Kids' info: <http://www.novasession.org/kids>

O'Faolain's Irish Pub, Sterling, VA

Sundays, 6-9:30 info: 703-444-9796

Ri-Ra, on Wilson Boulevard, Arlington

Sundays, 2-5 p.m.

Greater
Washington
CÉILÍ
Club

SPECIAL CÉILÍ

(Don't Miss This One!)

Sunday May 20, 2007

5:00 to 9:00 PM

Cherry Hill Park
Conference Center
9800 Cherry Hill Road
College Park, MD

ENTRANCE CODE: 76000

The Matt Cunningham Band 2007 USA Tour



PROGRAM

Clare Plain Set
North Kerry Set
Clare Mazurka Set
Connemara Reel Set
Cashel Set
Waltz
Paris Set
Kildownet Half Set
Ballyvourney Jig Set
Air
Clare Lancers Set

Review Workshop: 4:00 to 5:00

Potluck Supper during Break

Admission: Members-\$15, Non-Members-\$17

Information: 301-294-3568—<http://www.gwcc-online.org>



*"The
Sweats
of Summer"*

Irish Country Sets and Ceili Dance Classes

presented by the **GWCC** at The Frost Center
4915 Aspen Hill Rd in Rockville, MD

*June 7 - August 16, 2007
8:00-9:30pm*

*sets such as the new Sliabh Fraoch,
and the Durrow Thresher*

beginners welcome - please call first

**8 sessions for \$30 donation for hall
Mini-Ceili on 3rd Thus of each Month**

for information call Paul O'Donnell at 301-649-6410
GWCC website: <http://members.aol.com/irishgwcc>

THE GREATER WASHINGTON CEILI CLUB PRESENTS THE
2007 CAPE MAY DANCE WEEKEND

Friday–Sunday, September 28-30, 2007
 Cape May, New Jersey, “America’s Oldest Seaside Resort”

3 Set Dance Workshops with Pádraig & Róisín McEneaney

Ceilis Friday & Saturday, and Concert Saturday afternoon
 with music by Felix Dolan, John Whelan, Bernadette Fee,
 Brendan Dolan, Jimmy Kelly

Included in full package: three set dance workshops, concert Sat. afternoon,
 ceili Fri. & Sat. evening, lodging Fri. & Sat., and breakfast Sat. & Sun.
 Dinner Sat. night is available for an additional charge of \$30 per person.

Full Package non-smoking room at The Inn of Cape May (Victorian Inn)

	SINGLE	DOUBLE
Room without bath	\$240	\$375
City side with bath	\$280	\$440
Ocean side with bath	\$300	\$475
2-room Suite	N/A	\$520

Note:
 If you have more than
 two people in your room,
 there is a charge of \$115
 for each additional person.
 Fee includes events

Full Package with room at The Atlas Inn (“modern” motel).

	SINGLE	DOUBLE
City side room	\$350	\$450
Ocean side room (with sofabed)	\$370	\$480
Ocean side suite (with separate sitting room and sofabed)	\$385	\$500
Ocean side efficiency suite (with separate sitting room, sofabed, and kitchenette)	\$400	\$520

Atlas rooms have bath, two double beds and refrigerator. Smoking rooms available by request.

Dinner Saturday night = \$30 per person

Events Pass = \$85.00 per person

Please indicate your choice above, and enclose full payment. (GWCC members deduct \$10 per person from full package). Make check or money order payable to “GWCC” and mail with this completed form by 9/15/2007 to:
 Linda Fitzpatrick, Cape May Dance Weekend, 10903 Amherst Ave, #231, Silver Spring, MD 20902

For information, call (301) 933-2926, or e-mail sousane@comcast.net .

PRINT CLEARLY NAME(S) _____
 ADDRESS _____
 CITY/STATE/ZIP _____
 PHONE _____
 E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

Please indicate on the back of this form if there is a dance you would like included in the ceilis or workshops.

Join the club!

Get our monthly newsletter and save on monthly ceilis, all for just \$15.

To sign up or renew today, send this membership form and your check to

Frank McCarthy 78 Milshire Ct Silver Spring, MD 20905

Name _____

Address _____.

Email _____.

Greater Washington Ceili Club