



# *Capital English Country Dancers*

## *Callers and Musicians for 2011 – 2012*

**Capital English Country Dancers bring you many of the finest callers and musicians from all over the East Coast. Read about them and appreciate their contribution to our dances.**

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## **Tom Amesse, caller**

**Tom Amesse** is a dance leader in New York City and has been the MC of the New York Playford Ball several times. Across the Hudson, he teaches ECD in Ridgewood, New Jersey and leads their annual "Play-Ful" ball where attendees are encouraged to let loose their inner child and dance as if no one is watching.

Tom travels quite a bit and has taught in many places including Boston and Amherst, Massachusetts, Philadelphia, PA, Washington, DC, Albany, NY and South Kingston, RI. He has led sessions at the "Dance Flurry" in Saratoga Springs, NY, "NOMAD" in New Haven, CT, and Kindred Spirits in Binghamton, NY as well as being the MC at the Stockade Assembly in Schenectady, NY, the George Washington Ball in New York City, the Twelfth Night Assembly in Staten Island, NY, the Colonial Ball in Trenton, NJ and the Elm City Assembly in New Haven, Ct.

In 2011 Tom will MC the Binghamton Ball on April 2. In June he will cross the pond to call sessions at the Litchfield Folk Festival in England.

You will also find Tom calling Contra dances, Square dances and playing his fiddle at Irish sessions.

Tom comes to us from Staten Island

## **Melanie Axel-Lute, caller**

Melanie Axel-Lute called her first English dance for North Jersey English Country Dancers in honor of Sharon Green's move to California. After several years of working with Mary Jones and Tom Amesse, she began calling full programs. She has been a contra dance caller since 1998 and is a regular at dance camps and dance weekends, where she divides her time between ECD and contra. She is known for careful teaching and eclectic programs, so come enjoy old favorites and unknown gems

## **Mark Bagdon, violin**



**Mark Bagdon** of Delmar, NY, switches effortlessly from fiddle rags to Strauss waltzes. He performs Ragtime and Gilded Age balls with Spare Parts, as well as contras and English dances and even Argentine tango milongas.  
(photo: Ted Crane ©2001)

Mark lives in the NY Capital District

## **Don Bell, caller**

**Don Bell** - has loved country dancing for many years and enjoy sharing the joys of traditional dance with others. Since 1997, he has taught beginner workshops in English Country dance and run the Rensselaer English Country dance series. He has been on the Flurry Festival committee since 1992 and the DFO Board since 2004.

Don is from Troy NY

### **Eric Buddington, violin**



North Adams' **Eric Buddington** switches effortlessly between fiddle and violin. He excels at Argentine tangos, waltzes and milongas; he also joins Spare Parts for Regency balls, Ragtime balls, and English country dances, as well as contras. He performs with Spare Parts on The Regency Ballroom CD. Formerly with the Flying Garbanzos, Eric currently performs with Spare Parts (tango, regency, ragtime, contra, English), CoinciDance (contra),. Poke in the Eye (traditional and original fiddle & guitar) and Woodbinde (medieval music). Visit his WEB site at <http://eric.buddington.net/>

Eric comes to us from North Adams.

### **Graham Christian, caller**

**Graham Christian** (English country dance) started dancing English and Scottish at Swarthmore College. He has taught English country dance all over the U.S. as well as in England and Europe. He has studied Renaissance and Baroque dance with Dorothy Olsson, Kaspar Mainz and Ken Pierce, and has created many reconstructions of Playford-era dance, as well as writing the acclaimed dance history column Tell Me More for the Country Dance and Song Society News.

Graham is back at our dance by popular request. He was a hit last year.

Graham comes to us from the Amherst MA area

### **Joyce Crouch, piano**

Joyce Crouch plays piano for English country dance and "Mostly Waltz" events as a member of "Pleasures of the Town" and "A Little Excitement." A frequent player at her hometown dances (Amherst, MA, Monday nights), she has also appeared at festivals, balls, dance weeks and weekends at Pinewoods Camp, and special dance events around the Northeast, from Philadelphia to Boston to Brattleboro and beyond. Classically trained as a concert pianist, Joyce has made a sub-specialty of playing solo piano for ball practice sessions, as well as other solo piano dance gigs. She thinks all this is really fun.

Joyce comes to us from the Amherst MA area.

### **Sue Dupre, caller**

**Sue Dupre** has been calling contra, square and English country dances for over 20 years.



Sue has been a featured performer at various festivals, including the Philadelphia Folk Festival, North Carolina's Black Mountain Festival, Maine's Down East Dance Festival, New York's Dance Flurry and at many

dance weekends. She has been a staff member at summer dance camps, including Family Week at Buffalo Gap Camp where she taught sword dancing to children and taught dances and play party games to children and families.

She has traveled from coast to coast and north to south, calling at dances, parties, weddings and community celebrations. She also performs as dancing mistress for 18th Century reenactor events in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Sue is known for enthusiasm and good humor, for an extensive repertoire representing the best of the old and the new, for clear and efficient teaching, for a rhythmic calling style, and for my work with novice dancers.

In addition to her work as a caller, Sue is passionately devoted to the promotion and performance of historic English ritual and ceremonial dances in American communities.

For more information, go to <http://sue.handsomemolly.com/>

Sue comes to us from central New Jersey.

### **Elizabeth Freedman, caller**

**Elizabeth Freedman** began English country dancing twenty years ago, and has taught and performed both English country dance and Scandinavian couple turning dances for at least 15 years. She is a regular caller at CDNY and has called sessions at various on week-ends at Circle Lodge. She has been a caller at CD of Westchester and Stockbridge ECD and travels to Albany every year to call for Capital ECD . She has also taught English country dance workshops for the New York City chapter of the Jane Austen Society of North America.

Elizabeth Freedman comes to us from the NYC area.

### **HeartsEase (Diane Bell, Vonnie Estes, Patricia Kernan, Marilee Urbanczyk, Gail Griffith)**

HeartsEase has been playing together in their current configuration for over 10 years; they're one of the few established English Country dance bands in the Capital District. Musicians include Diane Bell on violin; Vonnie Estes on piano; Patricia Kernan on flute, clarinet, and violin; Marilee Urbanczyk on pennywhistle and rhythm; and Gail Griffith on concertina, banjo, and rhythm. HeartsEase plays at the monthly Rensselaer English country dances, as well as for weddings and other events in the area.

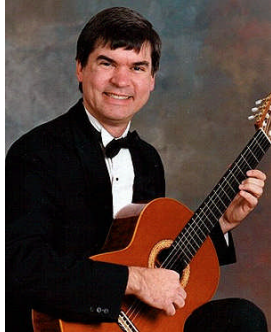
Members of Heartsease live in the greater Capital District of NY.

### **Jeanette Hancock-Huttel, violin**

Jeanette Hancock-Huttel plays the violin and is a favorite at our dances. She is the youngest of the musicians to play for Capital English Country Dancers and is currently a Senior in High School. Jeanette is a regular musician for the Hurley English Country Dance Series.

Jeanette comes to us from Woodstock NY.

### **Joe Hetko, guitar**



Joe is a versatile musician of more than 20 years. He teaches guitar and plays classical, jazz, folk and popular music both solo and in ensembles. Joe is a member of Duo Dolce, which combines the beauty of the flute and guitar in a warm and elegant style.

For more on Duo Dolce go to  
<http://www.capitaldistrictweddingnews.com/DuoDolce/>

Joe Hetko lives in the Capital District.

### **Mary Jones, caller**

**Mary Jones** is an entertaining and energetic caller who has called dances in the Albany area for more than a decade. She is a regular caller and teacher for the Amherst Area English Country Dances; for many years while residing in Amherst, MA, and once again since moving to Turners Falls, MA. She has called a program of historic dances with Larry Wallach on harpsichord and an all acoustic band at the World Fellowship Center, New Hampshire. Mary was the Mistress of Ceremonies for the Burning of Kingston Ball in 2009.

Mary Jones comes to us from the Amherst MA area.

### **Patricia Kernan, flute**

**Patricia Kernan** has played flute since childhood in a variety of bands, orchestras, and ensembles. In the last ten years she has concentrated on playing for English country, contra and family dances in several bands, including Heartsease, Fireflies, and Tamarack. She continues to coordinate a weekly traditional music jam at the New York State Museum that she established in 2001.

Patricia Kernan lives in Albany, NY.

### **Eric Martin, violin and viola**

Equally at home on violin and viola, **Eric Martin** is a classically trained musician who has found a home in traditional dance and folk music. Eric plays with numerous groups for Contra Dances, English Country Dances, and concerts. He enjoys the freedom and improvisation inherent in traditional music. Classically, Eric has played with the Syracuse Symphony, Tri-Cities Opera Orchestra, Springfield Symphony, Irish Chamber Orchestra, and Berkshire Bach Orchestra and holds performance degrees from Ithaca College and the University of Limerick, Ireland.

Eric Martin comes to us from the Berkshires MA.

### **Britany Orlebeke, violin**

**Brittany Orlebeke**, an Albany native, has been playing for English and contra dances for fifteen years. She is a member of the contra dance band, Beverwick, and the English country dance band, Three Muses. A classically trained violinist, Brittany joins groups of various sizes and configurations and has played with Larry Wallach at Capital English Country Dances. She especially enjoys the spirit of the English repertoire and looks forward to a melodious romp on Sunday October 4.

Brittany lives in the NY Capital District.

### **Sue Polansky, clarinet**

Sue Polansky (clarinet) is a regular musician for the Westchester English Country Dances series and the Hurley English Country Dance series, in addition to being a member of Hudson Crossing. She is a music therapist and plays for a variety of venues including churches and theater.

Sue Polansky comes to us from New Rochelle.

### **Paul Ross, caller**

Paul has been dancing English country dance since 1971, when he joined the University of Chicago Country Dancers under the direction of Pat Talbot. She was an inspired teacher and leader, who taught us English and Scottish country dancing, morris, gamalpolska, and hambo. When Pat left, Paul took over the calling. I knew so little then--and am still learning all these years later.

In 1981 he followed his girlfriend (and now wife), Faina, to New York City and promptly joined the country dance scene here, dancing at Duane Hall and serving on the New York Dance Activities Committee, the precursor of CD\*NY. His teachers were the master callers of those years: Genny Shimer, Christine Helwig, Fried Herman, Sue Salmons, Bertha Hatvary, and others, and he had the privilege of dancing to Phil Merrill's and Marshall Baron's playing.

In 1993 (more or less), Paul became an apprentice caller in Westchester, studying under

Christine and Fried. Fried, in particular, has been the major influence on my dancing and on my understanding and vision of what ECD is. To help preserve that vision and the dances that Fried created he founded The Lenox Assembly in Lenox, Mass., in 2009, a dance weekend co-lead with Robin Hayden that is dedicated to the art of dancing well. You may see some of the results of this effort on his Childgrove YouTube channel, <http://www.youtube.com/user/childgrove>

Paul comes to us from New York City.

### **Kathy Shimberg, piano**

**Kathy Shimberg**, a life-long musician is well versed in a variety of musical genres, and plays a number of different instruments. She first fell in love with the graceful liveliness of English country dancing and the beauty of its music some 50 years ago in the Boston area, when she was drawn unknowing into a round of "Newcastle" without a walk-through! She has been dancing and playing piano for English dances ever since, along with contras, squares, and other forms of traditional community social dancing. She is known especially for providing sensitive and steady rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic accompaniment that blends and supports the dancers and callers as well as the other musicians in an ensemble. She delights in playing with and for others, and in matching the music to the particular character of the dance in progress. She has played numerous times in the greater Albany area with various bands, for both contra and English dances, including for Capital District English Dancers as part of her trio Three Muses, among other groups, and looks forward to playing in here again on Sunday, April 4, 2010.

Kathy Shimberg comes to us from Mt. Vision, NY (near Oneonta).

### **Spare Parts Band (Bill Matthiesen, piano and Liz Stell, flute)**



photo:  
Sandy McNay

**Spare Parts** plays "music from past to present, always with dance groove". Since our first dance in 1989, **Liz and Bill** have been playing beautiful and energetic music for Capital English Country Dancers. They are favorites at the Dance Flurry and many other venues. Bill compiled and edited Waltz Books I, II, and III are "Must-haves for the waltz lover." ---Fiddler Magazine.

Eric Buddington will be the "Spare Part" on January 2.

Visit their WEB site at <http://www.bfv.com/spareparts/index.htm>

Bill Matthiesen and Liz Stell come to us from the Pittsfield MA area.

### **Alan Thomson, piano**

**Alan Thomson**, being the multi-genre pianist many have come to know, is an active performer at numerous festivals, dances, and concert settings involving Classical, Jazz, Swing, traditional Contra, English country dance, and musical theater. He's happy to be back playing again at one of his favorite English dance settings.

Alan lives in the NY Capital District

## **Tricia van Oers, Recorders**

**Tricia van Oers** was born in Rotterdam, The Netherlands. In 1998 she graduated from the Rotterdam Conservatory (teacher and soloist degrees), where she studied recorder with Thera de Clerck and Han Tol. Upon recommendation of the conservatory she was awarded a scholarship, enabling her to do graduate study at Indiana University's Early Music Institute, where she received a Performer Diploma with high achievement in Early Music-Instrumental performance, while being an Associate Instructor. Until the summer of 2000 Ms. van Oers was employed by the Von Huene Workshop, Inc. in Boston, making, repairing and testing recorders. She regularly lends her skills to the Workshop still, and has represented the shop at Early Music Festivals in the United States and Europe. She was Director of the '99 North American Recorder Teacher's Conference at Indiana University's School of Music, and was on the faculty of the Amherst Early Music Festival, I.U.'s Summer Academy, and the '00 North American Recorder Teacher's Seminar. Ms. van Oers taught for the Boston Recorder Society and teaches frequently as a guest coach for Recorder Societies. She has performed in solo and ensemble recitals in the Netherlands, Portugal and the United States. As a founding member of the Rotterdam (NL) based ensemble Scarabee she recorded at the Great Hall of Mirrors at the Palace of Versailles (France). She now lives in New York. Her activities include performances with the New York Ensemble for Early Music, Long Island Baroque Ensemble, Concert Royal (NYC), a cantata and oratorio performance with Bard College, the Saratoga Chamber Singers, Vernon Chorale, The Cantata Singers (Boston), and The Choral Festival Orchestra, Musica Sacra, and the Philadelphia-based baroque orchestra Tempesta di Mare. She frequently serves on the faculties of Early Music workshops and is a founding member of the New Amsterdam Recorder Trio (NewART), which has performed concerts in collaboration with the Flanders Recorder Quartet and the viol consort Parthenia

## **Larry Wallach, piano and harpsichord**

**Larry Wallach** has a long tradition of playing English country dance music for local series. He has shared his music with Capital English Country Dancers (CECD) since the first year in 1989, and prior to this, he played for an English country dance series in the Berkshires. He taught dance band workshops in the early years of CECD to foster musicians interested in playing English country dance music. Since 1995, he has been on the staffs of early music weeks at World Fellowship Center, New Hampshire and at Camp Pinewoods, Massachusetts as pianist and harpsichordist. Larry enjoys playing English country dance music on his new harpsichord and his interest was the inspiration for an afternoon of Historic 17th century dance and acoustic music on October 4 2009.

Larry is also a composer whose recent works include "Berkshire Morris Madness" for wind quintet based on eleven tunes danced to by the Berkshire Morris Men, of which he has been a member since 1984. He is a devotee of the music of Charles Ives and has performed the sonatas for violin and piano with a variety of violinists and fiddlers.

Larry is currently Livingston Hall Chair in Music at Simons Rock College

Larry Wallach comes to us from Great Barrington MA.

**Eric Walentowicz, flute, saxophone**

**Eric Walentowicz** is a seasoned Classical and Jazz player on flute and saxophone in the Albany area. He adapts to any style of music immediately and English country dance music is no exception.

Saxophonist/composer, Eric Walentowicz, started playing professionally at age 13. He majored in studio music and jazz at the University of Miami and North Texas State University. His teachers have included Ed Calle (w/ Miami Sound Machine/Julio Iglesias), Rick Margitza (w/ Miles Davis/Maria Schenider), Gary Campbell (Florida International University, CoAuthor of Patterns For Jazz), Gary Keller (University of Miami, Sonny Stitt Transcriptions), Andy Middleton (Dave Holland, etc.) , Bob Franceschini (Currently w/ Mike Stern), Dave Tofani (Steely Dan etc.) and Clemente Barone (Detroit Symphony Orchestra).

Eric has worked as a musician in New York City, Detroit, Miami, Dallas, and the Capital District and as a staff musician for Norwegian Cruise Lines. He has played gigs with the Dallas Jazz Orchestra, The North Texas State One O'Clock Jazz Lab Band, the Platters, Portable Rainbow at the Burlington Jazz Festival and several Miami-based Latin bands. He has appeared locally with the Tim Olsen Group, **Terry Gordon** Quintet, Ted Perry Quartet, Rob Cenci Quintet, **Joe Finn** Quintet, Mike Lamkin Trio, **Pete Sweeney** Trio/Quartet, Mike Wicks Sextet, Peg Delaney, Anne Corea and Co., Jeff Gonzales Blues Band, Rob Cohen Trio, Made in the Shade, Karen Lawrence Band, Groove Syndicate, and with his own EW Trio/Quartet/Quintet.

Visit his WEB site at [albanysax@hotmail.com](mailto:albanysax@hotmail.com)

Eric lives in the NY Capital District