



Capital English Country Dancers

Callers and Musicians for 2016 – 2017

Capital English Country Dancers bring you many of the finest callers and musicians from 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 to teach ECD 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 and at the Adirondack Weekend at Silver Bay, 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. He has MC'd the Binghamton Ball and the Rochester ball several times. Tom once crossed the pond to call sessions at the Litchfield Folk Festival in England. In 2012, Tom MC'd the Firefly Weekend at the Great Camp Sagamore in the Adirondacks, and in the winter of 2015, he had made a tour of California, Arizona and South Carolina where he called many English Country and contra dances over a three-month period.

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

Tom comes to us from Staten Island, NY

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.

Melanie lives in the greater Capital District.

Karen Axelrod, piano



Karen Axelrod is highly regarded for her creative and rich piano accompaniment. She left the classical world of music over 20 years ago, and has found her home in the folk world. Her improvisational playing is lyrical, yet is touched with humor and whimsy. Karen plays for English, Scottish and American dancing, and has been on staff at numerous places including Pinewoods Dance Camp, Ogontz, Buffalo Gap, Berea Christmas Country Dance Week, The John C. Campbell Folk School, Monte Toyon, and frequent dance weekends and balls. Karen also plays accordion for the renowned longsword team, Orion.

Karen comes to us from Northampton MA.

Kate Barnes, piano, flute, guitar



Kate Barnes has been playing piano, flute and assorted other instruments for traditional dancing since 1971, and has been invited to most major contra, square, British Isles and vintage dance events throughout the United States, performing for dances and concerts, leading ensemble workshops, and generally acting in a crazy and often undignified manner. Averaging over 250 engagements per year since 1980 she is arguably one of Boston's busiest musicians, and has also played for festivals and tours in England, France, Denmark, Shetland, Scotland and Czechoslovakia. She works with the bands *The Latter-Day Lizards*, *Bare Necessities*, *Yankee Ingenuity*, *Big Bandemonium*, *Dark Carnival*, *Crazy Quilt*, and *The Dactyls* and has performed with many traditional greats including Seamus Connolly, Joe Derrane, Cathie Ryan, Chris Norman, Alasdair Fraser, Rodney Miller, and Joe Cormier.

Publications include English Country Dance Tunes, English Country Dance Tunes Volume Two, A Little Couple Dancemusik, and Interview With A Vamper..

Recordings include Sleeping On a Rock, Kitchen Junket and Heatin' Up The Hall, Bare Necessities, Take A Dance, Nightcap and at least 10 others in the Boston CDS Centre Dance Series with Bare Necessities, Airplang and Airplang, BLT, Soir et Matin, Yankee Dreams and Moxie, Shape Shifting, Cascata de Lagrimas, Between Two Worlds and Gypsy Wine, and Twelve-Gated City, The Great Waltz and Childsplay: Live

For more information about Kate, check out her WEB page <http://canispublishing.com/>

Kate comes to us from the Amherst, MA area.

Don Bell, caller

Don Bell has loved country dancing for many years and enjoys 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

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 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, calling at NEFFA, NOMAD, Early Music Week at Pinewoods, the New London Assembly, Cecil Sharp House in London, Philadelphia, and the Bay Area. He has been master of ceremonies for the Whately Ball, the Brattleboro Ball, the Elm City Assembly, the Binghamton Ball, and, most recently, the Fall Ball in San Francisco. 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. He is the author/editor of the new anthology of historical dances for English country dancers, **The Playford Assembly**, issued by CDSS in conjunction with the Centennial.

Graham comes to us from the Amherst MA area.

Aldo Fabrizi, mandolin



Aldo Fabrizi started his musical career as a classical bassist performing with such organizations as the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Boston Pops Orchestra, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and the Handel & Hayden Society. Since moving to Amherst he's been playing mandolin for the Amherst English Country Dancers and with the 3rd String Trio, which he founded in 2012 with his extraordinary colleagues, Kate Barnes and Karen Axelrod. He has been the Music Director of the Valley Light Opera since 2012 and has just recently taken on the additional appointment of Music Director of the Greater Worcester Opera.

Aldo comes to us from the Amherst MA area.

Laura Hagen, recorders



Laura Hagen has been a guest performer with the Capital English Country Dancers since the early '90s and loves both 17th & 18th century dance music repertoire ...and providing live music for dancers! She is a performer on all things recorder, has been teaching recorder for many years and is proud to name Nancy Yule as among one of her very first students.

Laura has just returned home after a four-year course of study at the Early Music Institute of the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University, where she was awarded the degree of Master of Music in Recorder Pedagogy, as well as an advanced Performer's Diploma in Early Music on the recorder. Laura was an Associate Instructor and Coordinator of the music school's Pre-College Recorder Program, teaching recorder to young adults ages 7-18 both at the university and in after-school programs she developed directly at local public & private schools. For four summers, Laura was also on the faculty of the Indiana Recorder Academy directed by Eva Legêne, providing young people the opportunity to develop their Renaissance, Baroque and modern recorder skills and also camp, hike and swim in a beautiful Indiana state park.

It is Laura's wish to establish such a “musical excellence” program (and a recorder summer camp) for young people here in the Capital Region (after all, we need future generations of English Country Dance musicians!) If you know of a local college, university, school district or organization – which is supportive of the arts & music and might be interested - please let Laura know at lhagen@nobleharbor.com.

Laura lives in the NY Capital District.

HeartsEase:

Diane Bell, violin; Vonnie Estes, piano; Patricia Kernan, winds, Marilee Urbanczyk, pennywhistle and percussion; Gail Griffith, concertina, banjo, rhythm.

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.

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.

Marnen E. Laibow-Koser, violin

Marnen E. Laibow-Koser has been playing for country dancing for over three decades. He is a member of The Flying Romanos, which in 2008 became the first English country dance band to perform in Japan since the 1970s, and also performs regularly in the New York and Boston areas with musicians such as Colin Ferguson, Audrey Knuth, and Jody Kruskal.

When not playing country dance music, Marnen is an eclectic multi-instrumentalist and composer, regularly performing anything from Javanese gamelan music to opera. He received his Master of Music degree from New England Conservatory's unique Contemporary Improvisation program, where his teachers included Ran Blake, Joe Morris, and Malcolm Peyton. In 2014, Marnen served as musical director and pianist for Opera Brittenica's groundbreaking immersive production of *The Turn of the Screw* (Brookline, Massachusetts). He has also been musical director for theater companies across the U.S., including Festival 56 (Illinois) and Pioneer Arts Center of Easthampton (Massachusetts). Marnen has also toured Europe and the U.S. as violinist

with the Renaissance-folk-rock band Blackmore's Night (led by Deep Purple's Ritchie Blackmore), and is currently a ballet accompanist at Boston Conservatory and Harvard University.

Marnen's compositions have been performed and recorded by groups such as Gamelan Son of Lion (Pathetan Pélog, on the CD Bending the Gening) and the Westchester Philharmonic Orchestra, and have also been featured in fiction podcasts (Metamor City; Scouts Remastered) and video games. In 2016, he was a composition fellow at the Imani Winds Chamber Music Festival.

When not playing music, he is often developing software, and has recently started pursuing research projects in the field of computer-generated algorithmic music.

For more information, check out Marnen's website at <http://www.marnen.org>

Marnen comes to us from Boston, MA.

Mary Lea, violin and viola

Mary Lea is a member of Bare Necessities, a quartet known here and abroad as the benchmark of English country dance music. Composed of two violinist/violists, Mary Lea and Earl Gaddis, a wind and guitar player, Kate Barnes, and pianist Jacqueline Schwab, this group has made its mark as a creative and improvisatory group that has brought new energy and ideas to the wonderfully varied repertoire of this dance tradition. The Bares have played at festivals, music and dance camps, weekend and special events throughout the U.S., Canada and England, as well as at a weekly local Boston series ever since forming in 1981. They have produced 18 CDs, of which 15 constitute a series spearheaded and produced by the Boston Centre Country Dance and Song Society.

Classically trained from a musical family, Mary has been playing dance music professionally on the violin and viola since 1977. Besides performing at English country dances, Mary continues to play for contra dancing, couple dance and vintage dance events, and for local listening gigs in a duo playing French and Swedish music. Over the years, she has been teaching, playing for dances, private events (weddings etc), organizing concerts and dance weeks, playing on numerous recordings and performing at dance and music weeks throughout the country and abroad.

For more about Mary Lea's musical and non-musical endeavors (Peace Corps and more) , go to dancefiddler.com/bio.htm

Mary comes to us from Brattleboro, VT.

Pat MacPherson, piano

Pat MacPherson is the Director of Education at the Country Dance and Song Society. She plays piano for English country dancing and for many years played fiddle at Pinewoods Camp Scottish week. Pat has been dancing since the age of 5, when she was first taken to ballet then Scottish country dance classes in Toronto. She also loves Southern squares and swing dancing.

Pat comes to us from Montague, MA.

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.

Val Medve, caller

Val Medve is known for her selection of English country dances both vintage and new. Her calling style is clear, easy to follow and laced with good humor.

Val's interest in dance began with Polish folk dancing when she was a young girl in southwestern Connecticut. In the early 1980s, she caught the contra dance bug. She soon added many other traditional dance genres, performing with Gwiazda Polish Folk Dance Ensemble, Reel Nutmeg, Sleepy Hollow Morris, and The Green Mountain Volunteers (a troupe that represented the U.S. at international dance festivals in Canada and abroad).

She calls regularly in northern Vermont for the Burlington Country Dancers in Colchester, the Wake Robin retirement community in Shelburne, and the summer classes in Richmond. Val has taught/called ECD at NEFFA (New England Folk Festival), the Flurry Festival, Adirondack Dance Weekend, Champlain Valley Folk Festival, Jane Austen events in northern Vermont, as well as dance evenings in Troy, NY; Rochester, NY; Amherst, MA; Kingston, RI; Philadelphia, PA; Ann Arbor, MI; and the Big Island of Hawaii.

In the summer of 2013, with the help of coffee (which she had forsaken for almost a decade), Val booked and powered through a 2-week ECD tour with her husband Tom and the Seppelers, where she and Dan called to music by Barb (sometimes accompanied by fine local musicians). Aided by a hard-working and devoted committee, Val organizes the Burlington Country Dancers's annual "Across the Lake" English Country Dance Weekend (usually the second weekend in June).

Val comes to us from Essex, Vermont (near Burlington).

Britany Orlebeke, violin

Britany Orlebeke, an Albany native, has been playing for English and contra dances since 1994 and she especially enjoys the spirit of the English repertoire. A classically trained violinist, Britany joins groups of various sizes and configurations at Capital English Country Dances. She was a founding member of the contra dance band, Beverwyck and the English country dance band, Three Muses. For many years she regularly played for our dances. As family and career became busier, her appearances at our dances became less frequent. We are overjoyed that she is able to join us this season and hope she continues to grace our dances with her beautiful music.

Britany lives in the NY Capital District.

Anna Patton, clarinet

Clarinetist Anna Patton grew up in a musical family in northern Vermont and was immersed from a young age in an eclectic mix of jazz, classical, traditional and world music. These days she gets to incorporate many of those influences into playing music for different kinds of dancing, including English, Contra, and Blues dance. Among other bands and free-lance projects, Anna tours extensively around the U.S. and abroad with the innovative contradance band, Elixir. She also loves to sing and leads a choir that sings close harmony arrangements of swing-style songs.

Anna lives in Brattleboro VT with her husband, fiddler Ethan Hazzard-Watkins.

Anna Rain, caller

Anna Rain has been leading contra dances since 1991 and English Country dances since 2007. She is invested in precise and evocative teaching so that new dancers are comfortable, while she keeps more experienced dancers engaged and on their toes. Her clear, efficient walk-throughs make the most of dancers' time: we're all here for the music!

In her 'day' job as a certified Iyengar yoga instructor, she commits to helping students gain awareness and sensitivity in their bodies; this passion translates to her dance leadership. Anna has led contra and English Country dance sessions all up and down the East coast and in Portland and Seattle. Anna plays recorder in the ECD bands Hot Toddy, Night Cap, and Jack Rose.

Anna come to us from the Washington DC area.

Serendipity:

Barb Seppeler, piano; Laurie Giroux Williams, flute

For more information, see the performer descriptions.

Barbara Seppeler, piano

Barbara Seppeler is a graduate of the Crane School of Music, SUNY Potsdam with a Bachelor of Music in Education, and a Master's degree from SUNY Fredonia in Music Education. She has taught vocal, instrumental and general music to students of all ages in both public and private schools. Currently she is teaching music full time in Rochester, NY. Her passion is English Country Dance and she has performed at the Dance Flurry, NEFFA, CDNY, ten states including California, and Canada. She and her caller husband, Daniel, have started a weekly ECD Dance club at Hobart and William Smith College in Geneva, NY. Together with Laurie Williams on her crystalline flute, Serendipity has played in multiple states and Canada.

Barb comes to us from Rochester NY.

Daniel Seppeler, caller

Daniel Seppeler is an English Country Dance caller residing in Western New York. Secretly he assumes the identity of a mild-mannered software engineer in real life. His ability to render complex patterns into simple and well-directed instructions along with a warm sense of humor, delivers well designed and interesting programs to dance enthusiasts.

Dan's resume finds him performing in eight states and Canada throughout the northeast and California on the west coast. He has called in larger venues such as NEFFA, and conducted inspiring and entertaining workshops such as;” What the Dickens is English Country Dance?” and “Now for Something Completely Different in English Country Dance”.

As a community dance leader, Dan has organized an ECD student group at Hobart and William Smith College in Geneva, New York and served as a board member for Rochester County Dancers and Lake Country Dancers. In addition to his calling and teaching ECD credentials, Dan is a choreographer whose compositions are posted in both the US and UK.

Dan comes to us from Rochester, NY.

Third String Trio:

Karen Axelrod, piano; Peter Barnes, piano, flute, guitar and Aldo Fabrizi, mandolin.

For more information, see the performer descriptions.

Alan Thomson, piano and recorders

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. Holding a Master's degree of performance on piano from the College of St. Rose, he has of late been incorporating his longtime performance background on recorder in providing music for English Country Dances. As a piano instructor he teaches in as many styles he's been seen performing in.

Alan is founder and leader of The Alan Thomson Little Big Band and is one of the founding members the contradance trio, Border Bandits.

Alan comes to us from Albany, NY

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.

Laurie Giroux Williams, flute

Flutist **Laurie Giroux Williams** comes from a family of musicians and teachers in New York State. She received her degrees from the Crane School of Music at SUNY Potsdam and Ithaca College and the Orff-Schulwerk Teacher Certification from the Eastman School of Music. Ms.

Williams teaches elementary music classes and directs the elementary choruses at the Geneva City School District. She is a private flute instructor, and plays in the English Country Dance band, Serendipity, every chance she gets. Laurie has performed for English Country Dances in Boston, New York City, Toronto and is a regular for central and western New York dances. With Serendipity, she has played for Toronto's New Years Eve Ball, the historic Teel House Assembly in Norwich, CT, Rochester's Jane Austen Ball in 2013 and 2015, Vermont's Across the Lake, and Saratoga's Dance Flurry in 2014.

Laurie has three musical daughters and resides in Newark, NY - close to the beautiful Finger Lakes area.