

Great Scot! There is Scottish Dance in the Lehigh Valley

“Rights and lefts,” “mirror reels,” “pas de basque,” “skip change of step.” No, this is not some strange language; these are a few of the figures and steps in Scottish Country Dancing. And, how to do this dance is not a mystery; it is done every week here in the Lehigh Valley.

Scottish Country Dancing dates back centuries, having begun as folk dancing, but unlike most dances of the people, this dancing is done in the castles as well as barns and cowsheds (the Queen of England even does it, very regally, of course). It is social dancing, and members of the Scottish Country Dance Society of the Lehigh Valley frequently attend dances and balls in Pennsylvania, Delaware, and New Jersey.

Scottish Country Dancing is done in sets, usually of four couples. There are “quick time” dances that are energetic (Jigs, Reels, and Hornpipes), that expand one’s aerobic abilities, and there are the stately Strathspeys that stretch one’s leg muscles. These are not “sissy” dances; they are even used in training Scottish military troops. Because of the figures involved, these dances keep the mind alive as well as the body. Dancers are constantly encountering and interacting with others as they move through the patterns of figures that make up the dance.

How does one get in on this hot, new experience? Come to the Church of the Mediator, 1620 Turner Street, Allentown, on Sunday nights from 7 to 9 pm. Dancers at all levels are welcome! Instruction from 7 to 7:45 is followed by social dancing from 7:45 to 9. Cost is \$2.00. Come with a partner or come alone (kilts optional, enthusiasm essential). Learn this exciting dance from teachers certificated and sanctioned by the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society of Edinburgh. Kick-off Dance Party starts the new season on September 17. For more information call Jim Reynolds (610-820-0798).