

By Chris Jacobs

It's been a little over a month on the ground as executive director and I am often asked about my first impressions and what I love most about Pinewoods thus far. My answer is quite simple: It's YOU. It's the people of Pinewoods. It's your amazing story and long history. It's your beautiful smile and jovial laugh. It's your tears of joy and sadness at finally being able to return. It's your corny jokes and silly limericks. It's your angelic voice and snappy tune. It's your deep passion and enthusiasm. It's your invitation to dance and your patient guidance on the dance floor. It is YOU welcoming ME with open arms. I am fortunate to be here. I look forward to meeting more people of Pinewoods and seeing again those I've met.

Pínewoods Work Day - Saturday June 5th

We had a fabulous day helping get Camp ready to open. The weather was spectacular and not quite as hot as we were fearing. Nearly 30 people volunteered their time and energy into getting cabins open, putting docks in, helping in the kitchen, and making the pavilions danceable once more!

The energy and enthusiasm that our work day volunteers brought with them really made Camp feel alive again. There was laughing, singing, and tomfoolery in the woods once more! Thank you so much to all the volunteers and crew for all of your hard work and wonderful can-do attitudes that you brought to Camp. You really made a huge difference!

Volunteers at the work day:

Alyssa Adkins Anna Alter Martin Barbour Nancy Barbour Alex Bowers Samuel Breslow Nick Browse Mark Dooley Kat Dutton Jim Greaney Laird Heal Sean Ianni Roberta Lasnik Cindy Lincoln

Charles Liu Saralinda Lobrose Diane Lockhart Jim Madigan Colin McArdle Hannah McArdle Barbara Morrison lo Rasi Marissa Roque Laurie Somario Clara Stefanov-Wagner Phyllis Stefanov-Wagner Seth Weidner



Volunteeer Work Day: Hannah McArdle putting up curtains. Photo by Martin Barbour



Saralinda Lobrose and Roberta Lasnik washing windows. Photo by Martin Barbour



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Boston Branch, Royal Scottish Country Dance Society

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Country Dance Society, Boston Centre

P.O. Box 3055 Acton, MA 01720 781.591.2372 • www.cds-boston.org

Country Dance & Song Society (CDSS)

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Folk Arts Center of New England

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Check Our Website

For news updates, additional information, photos, and past issues of the Post, log on to our website: www.pinewoods.org, or join us on our "Pinewoods Camp" Facebook page.

Note:

This issue of the Pinewoods Post is being sent out via email to most of our readers, as will all future editions.

However, paper copies will continue to be mailed to those who have requested their issues in hard copy.

To request a paper copy, email office@pinewoods.org



Milling Our White Pines

By Martin Barbour

One of the many joys of being at Pinewoods is the rustic ambience of the majestic, mature, white pine forest which inspired the name of the camp we all love. The camp landscape did not always look like this. The environment has grown and evolved over the past one hundred years of Pinewoods history, and we continue to see transformation. An aspect of that forest lifecycle that we are dealing with today is the loss of many of our old white pines that have reached the end of their lives. PCI actively works to address the health of our forest along with the safety of our campers by selectively removing trees that are diseased, damaged, or a safety threat to buildings, people, or electric lines. Fortunately for Pinewoods, the wood from the white pine has been used for centuries for building houses and other structures. In preparation for Camp opening this year, we spent two days milling our downed white pines to create planks that we will be able to use for building projects around camp. The changing shed by Long Pond was built with local white pine. Our plan for the future is to use our own trees wherever we can and contribute to environmental sustainability. The trees that have grown up at Pinewoods will now be able to shelter and protect us in new ways.



Milling at Pinwoods. June 2021 Photo by Martin Barbour



Our Own Pinewoods Lumber Photo by Martin Barbour



Stories of People, Adventure, Wars, an Earlier Pandemic, and Pinewoods Camp

Dedicated to Lily Roberts Conant

By Marney Morrison

During the summers of 1943 and 1944, cabins at Pinewoods Camp remained shuttered. There was no dancing. It was wartime: gas was rationed, men and women were overseas or working for the war effort at home. A crisis for the future of Camp emerged when, during a hurricane in the fall of 1944, the roof of C# collapsed, and then on November 12, Helen Osborne Storrow, the owner of Pinewoods, died in a hospital in New York City.

Helen Storrow left the bulk of her extensive estate to her son. However, she left her Long Pond property that included Pinewoods Camp to Lily Roberts Conant. In a letter Helen Storrow wrote that Lily should feel under no obligation to continue the dance camp. It was expensive to maintain; selling the property could pay for her three children's college educations.

To know our past, reel back to the early years of the 20th century.

Before World War I

In 1911 in London a group of folkdance enthusiasts founded the English Folk Dance Society (EFDS) with Cecil Sharp as the first national director. By 1909 he had put together a demonstration team to illustrate his talks.

World War I and the influenza pandemic of 1918-1919 had not yet erupted when English-speaking communities worldwide began celebrating the 300th anniversary of Shakespeare's work. A flurry of productions coincided with interest in collecting and reviving folk songs and historic and traditional dances. Directors in both Stratford-upon-Avon and London adopted this material in their productions. They turned to the fledgling EFDS for dances, dance music, instruction, and staged choreography. Cecil Sharp led dancing schools in both places. His demonstration team performed in England and at folk festivals in Europe.

The EFDS demonstration team in 1911 included Helen May Karpeles (who, with her sister Maud, was mesmerized by the music of an English folk song and dance competition judged by Cecil Sharp at a 1909 Shakespeare festival in Stratford-upon-Avon); A. Claud Wright (a physical education teacher trained in a new wave of non-militaristic movement training for children, including Danish gymnastics and folk dance, who brought English folk dance to the attention of Helen Storrow in Boston); Lily Roberts, a young woman also trained as a physical education teacher in the new curriculum; and Douglas Kennedy, the youngest member at 17. Douglas Kennedy and Helen Karpeles married in 1914. They had become engaged in the 10-minute interlude before going on stage at a folk festival in Paris the year before. Leaving an academic career as a botanist, Kennedy, a sixth-generation folk singer and son of song collectors, became the next director of the EFDS after Cecil Sharp died in 1924. Four other members of the 1911 team died in the battle of the Somme fought from July to November 1916.

George P. Baker, a Harvard professor of dramatic literature who was visiting Stratford-upon-Avon in 1912, saw a production using collected traditional material and interpreted historic dance. He watched the EFDS demonstration team perform and invited a member of the group, A. Claud Wright, to come to Boston to teach the following summer. In 1913 and 1914 Claud taught English dance at a summer course in Maine and classes in the Boston area. The first summer he was introduced to Helen Storrow, a wealthy philanthropist who enjoyed dancing as a way to stay fit and have fun. Folk dancing from different countries was one of the dance forms taught at her dancing school for women. Morris and sword as well as complex Playford country dances offered challenge and variety of their own without the artificiality and difficulty she experienced with ballet, and she wanted to add them to her school.

England Goes to War and Opportunities Open in the United States

England entered the war, later known as World War I, on August 4, 1914. After the success of a London production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Cecil Sharp, who had choreographed the dances and arranged the music, came to New York in the fall of 1914 to help Granville Barker with a production of the same play. After six weeks in New York working on the production, they built productions of the same play in Boston, Chicago, Philadelphia, Pittsburg, and St. Louis. While he was in these cities Sharp taught English dance to the musicians and dancers included in the productions and lectured and taught dance to interested members of the social elite as well. In Boston he charmed Helen Storrow and may have influenced her to refocus her dance school on only various kinds of English folk dancing.

The American Branch of the EFDS

By the spring of 1915, although hired to come again to the United States, Claud Wright had enlisted. This opened an opportunity for Cecil Sharp who was already in the United States and annoyed with Wright for working independently of the EFDS. On March 23, 1915, at a meeting at the Colony Club in New York City, Sharp oversaw the formation of the American Branch of the English Folk Dance Society. The sole purpose of this branch was to continue holding an English dance summer school. A committee from the different dance communities planned, organized, and financially underwrote a summer school in the US for the English Folk Dance Society. The staff they hired for the summer school was expected to be teachers from England. George Baker, the aforementioned Harvard professor, was the first president; Helen Storrow was secretary. A year later she became president. In the summer of 1915 this new organization sponsored the English dance summer school in Maine. Cecil Sharp was hired to be the teacher.

Stories of People, Adventure, Wars, an Earlier Pandemic, and Pinewoods Camp (cont.)

Wellesley College Unknowingly Plays a Part in the History of Pinewoods

Wellesley College wanted someone from England to direct a pageant in the spring of 1915 and had funds to offer for both travel and remuneration. The EFDS summer school in Maine could use another teacher. Sharp sent a cable to England looking for the right candidate. Douglas Kennedy gave his wife, Helen Karpeles Kennedy, credit for recommending Lily Roberts. The three of them had been on the 1911 demonstration team together and became lifelong friends. Lily, 27 and single, taught dance for the EFDS in and around Scarborough, England. The previous December the city center had suffered the first bombardment of the UK by six German ships. Eighteen people died, including a 14-month-old toddler. The men were steadily leaving for military service, and Lily's future as a dance teacher or a bride looked bleak when Cecil Sharp sent her a letter of invitation.

Following is an excerpt from writings of Lily's granddaughter Susan Conant:

The offer of an all-expense paid trip to America was a great adventure. Lily's decision to leave was very quick. Sharp's letter took about 2 weeks to cross the Atlantic arriving about April 15. A return response would not have been possible since Sharp was on the boat to England. It arrived April 29, they spoke on April 30, Lily obtained her passport May 1 and received final travel arrangements on May 3. She was to leave on May 9 on the Cunard ship, the *Tuscania*. But the *Tuscania's* sister ship, the *Lusitania*, was torpedoed and sunk on May 7. Plans had to change. Mrs. Storrow sent word that the Wellesley production would be postponed so that Lily could leave May 15 on an American owned ship, the *New York*.

The *New York* was an old tub, once an elegant cruise ship, but now a second-class–only carrier for the masses fleeing Europe. Lily mistakenly thought she had booked a first-class cabin. But when



on the ship she discovered she was assigned to a berth in steerage at the end of a long, dark corridor inhabited only by men. Being a proper English girl, she refused to go down to the berth and spent her first night on deck. Subsequently, the purser found her a cabin rooming with a trapeze artist. She commented later that she received quite an education on the two-week long trip.

After the summer school ended, Mrs. Storrow invited Lily to stay in Boston and be the head teacher at her dancing school. She promised Lily's parents that she would treat Lily like a daughter.

Helen Storrow's efforts to promote physical fitness and skillbuilding for women and girls of all walks of life led her to help fund and build leadership in the budding Girl Scout movement. She developed plans for a national Girl Scout Leadership training course; the first session took place at the Winsor School in Boston in 1917.

The American Branch of the EFDS held a two-week course in 1915 in Eliot, Maine, and in 1916 and 1917 at the Agricultural College in Amherst, MA (now UMass Amherst). Once the United States entered the war, attention and resources went elsewhere. Like a character in a mummer's play, the English folk dance summer school died.

Tragedy by Way of War and Pandemic Comes to the United States

The next few years brought dramatic and traumatic changes to everyone in the United States, including Lily Roberts. In April 1917, the United States declared war on Germany. During that year Lily and a young American named Richard Conant fell in love, and on December 15 they were married at Mrs. Storrow's home. Maud Karpeles was her maid of honor. Cecil Sharp walked her down the aisle.

On August 28, 1918, the first cases of the influenza pandemic appeared in Boston among naval sailors at the receiving ship at Boston's Commonwealth Pier. Despite efforts to contain and isolate those men, around September 11 the first civilian cases were reported. The numbers grew and grew. Lily and Dick Conant escaped death from both the flu and the war. However, they were not unscathed in those years. In June 1918 Lily, newly pregnant, fell ill and was hospitalized until July 17. On July 7, unable to say goodbye except by letter, Dick deployed to France. A baby boy was born in January 1919. Dick wrote the following cable the day before he landed back in the United States.

January 21, 1919 - aboard ship - RKC cable to mother

We are 60 miles from the Statue of Liberty and will disembark tomorrow. Yesterday morning I got a wireless that I had a son and that he and Lily were well. Last night after a day of bliss I got a wireless that the baby had died.

During World War I Cecil Sharp returned repeatedly to the United States as there were still private interest and funds for cultural activities no longer supported in England. Olive Dame Campbell made a pilgrimage from Georgia to Boston to meet him and show him the ballads she had collected in the southern highlands. Finding older versions of English ballads than those remembered in England became his new grail, and he was off. He did not consider that there might be other influences on those American versions

Lily Roberts' passport photo courtesy of the Conant family

Stories of People, Adventure, Wars, an Earlier Pandemic, and Pinewoods Camp (cont.)

of ballads or on the American contras and square dances enjoyed by his students in New England. His singular vision contributed to American misunderstanding of our multi-rooted traditions.

Part of a Post-Pandemic Outdoor Recreation Movement

In 1919, very likely in response to the pandemic, Mrs. Storrow began buying land around Long Pond where she established four camps. She moved the Girl Scout Leadership training course to one property and named it Pine Tree Camp, building an office, a camphouse, and small separated cabins for the students. Whenever it was built, the original Ampleforth pavilion was for outdoor dining and an outdoor classroom. Lily Conant acted informally as Helen Storrow's companion and personal assistant for the remainder of Helen's life. On a point of land jutting into Long Pond, Mrs. Storrow built a personal compound, providing a summer residence for herself away from the city with additional cabins for Lily and Dick, and eventually more cabins for their children Betty, Helen, and Rick. Lily and her children stayed at The Point all summer. Dick, a lawyer, helped found the American social work movement and filled the camp with social workers for a retreat weekend every summer.

After the war and the pandemic passed, English dancing resumed in local communities where there were leaders. In some places it never came back; in others new groups formed. For the fall of 1926, Marjorie Barnett, an English classical pianist and EFDS dance teacher who had taught English dancing in New York City for a year, accepted a job teaching piano at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, NY. She started a dance group there. Phil Merrill and his lifetime partner, James Quillon, were students of hers.

A Dance Pavilion Is Built on Long Pond

Dancing resumed at Pine Tree Camp on Long Pond. Helen Storrow commissioned a new outdoor dance pavilion over 1925 and 1926. Cecil Sharp had died in 1924, and Helen and Lily named the pavilion C# in his memory. The homophones C. Sharp and C# would have been obvious to the small set of musicians and dancers who made their way to Pinewoods over the following 25 years before the camp branched out to also host Scottish dancers in 1952.

Dancers from the Boston English dance community and women at the Girl Scout Leadership training course, which included dance as part of their recreation, were the first to try out the new pavilion. CDS, Boston Centre, under their earlier name, held a summer course there in 1925 and 1926. It is from that first summer dance session at Pinewoods Camp that we start counting our years there.

The EFDS Summer School in Amherst Resumes, Another English Woman Emigrates, and a Young Pianist Finds His Calling

In 1928 the EFDS summer school at Amherst came back to life, run by a committee from the various affiliated groups. At the recommendation of the EFDS headquarters in London they invited Miss May Gadd (aka "Gay"), the EFDS Northeast regional director based in Newcastle, England. Gay's favorite dances were "Step Stately" and "The Morpeth Rant." She brought community dances she'd learned in Northern England with her as well as new repertoire of Morris, sword, and Cecil Sharp's reconstructed Playford country dances. During the dance school, Gay was invited to stay in the United States to teach English dancing in New York City.

Phil Merrill, the aforementioned young Eastman School of Music piano student, attended this 1928 summer school at Amherst. Phil found that, whereas stage fright ended his dreams of a career as a concert pianist, he was perfectly happy playing for dancers who were looking at their partners and not at him. As a teenager in Maine, Phil had played for local contra dances. He fell in love with all the forms of English dancing and was a beautiful dancer. He later called contra dances at CDS events around the country.

In 1929 May Gadd was asked to be the first national director of a new American organization independent of the EFDS in England. (This new entity was named the English Folk Dance Society of America.) Helen Storrow was elected president just as she had been of the former, informal organization. This new incorporated American organization had staff and an office and was expected to serve all the dance communities which were now called Centers. The name later changed to the Country Dance Society and then later to the Country Dance and Song Society.

When Phillip Merrill and James Quillon moved to New York City, Jimmy sang and then completed his career as an opera coach for the Metropolitan Opera. Phil taught music in schools, teaching among others, Yo-Yo Ma and Jack Langstaff when they were children. Phil played for all the New York City English dances and as the national music director at courses and camps around the country. Phil's performance of traditional dance music as well as his highly proficient command of the piano, concertina, and recorder served as a magnet for other talented musicians. May Gadd used to say, "Listen to the music; the music will tell you what to do."

The Summer Dance School Moves to Pinewoods Camp for Ten Happy Years

The resumed English folk dance summer school stayed in Amherst for only five years (1928-1932). Helen Storrow and Lily Conant had other ideas.

In 1932 Helen Storrow invited the teachers and organizers from the two-week dance school to visit Long Pond after the course in Amherst ended. Pleased with the hoped-for enthusiastic response to the camp, she invited them to hold the summer school at Pinewoods starting the following summer. In 1933 the summer school once again included Lily Conant as well as her family. As Helen Storrow's assistant, Lily hired local teenage boys to work at Camp, including them in the dance classes and evening dances. She encouraged the organizers (what became CDSS) to invite the staff to bring their families. Lily and May Gadd set ages for when those children could join the adults in their classes: 11 for Morris and 13 for country dancing, contras, and squares. Through these actions, and others, Lily planted the seeds of future multigenerational dance communities.

From 1933 to 1942, the two-week English folk dance school was held at this new place, renamed Pinewoods Camp in 1935 when Helen Storrow moved the Scout Leadership training to another camp. Douglas Kennedy, by then the national director of the EFDS, came from England to direct the 1937 summer dance

Stories of People, Adventure, Wars, an Earlier Pandemic, and Pinewoods Camp (cont.)

school at Pinewoods. He and his wife Helen were close friends of Lily and Dick Conant. Douglas brought enormous enthusiasm for community dances. As the director of the EFDS, he encouraged their collection all over England. He and Helen liked the less formal, more inclusive dancing and community they found at Pinewoods. The focus was more about participation for all levels of proficiency and less about performance. People drawn to Camp came from varied backgrounds. From the beginning, the road to Pinewoods was open to all interested; no one was excluded due to social class, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or race. Collectively, the participants loved the music and dance and enjoyed the primitive facilities, including bathing in the pond, eating out of doors, and using outhouses. Under Gay, influenced by her years in Northumberland, and by Douglas Kennedy, the English community dances were as appreciated as Sharp's historic reconstructions. Also, each week had someone on staff who called New England squares and contras. The Kennedys especially enjoyed the American squares and contras.

The following year Douglas began planning to leave his position at the EFDS as he and Helen had decided to emigrate to the United States. World War II interrupted their plans, and they stayed in England. Initially they stayed to be part of the war effort; they ended up staying in England and helping bring post-war changes to the EFDS including abolishing a dress code and publication and promotion of the Community Dance Manuals. His stated plan was to make the organization attractive to the descendants of the people from whom the dances had been collected. He and Helen and another couple formed a square dance band of fiddle, banjo, concertina, and drums. They brought over callers and introduced American squares and contras to people in England.

The End of an Era

After Helen Storrow died in November 1944, leaving the property with Pinewoods Camp to Lily Conant, the musicians and dancers who participated in the summer dance school knew they might lose this beautiful place.

The CDS, Boston Centre members, the Conant family's local dance community, asked permission and put together a local dance weekend for the summer of 1945. Did they think it might be the final time? Who helped repair the dance pavilion?

A New Beginning

There was profound relief and gratitude all over the United States in the hearts of all former participants when Lily Conant announced that she and Dick would keep Pinewoods Camp running instead of selling off the property with the Camp buildings. Camp was spared; dancing, dance music, and song would continue at Pinewoods into the future. The national two-week course resumed in 1946.

In recognition of this momentous choice two dance musicians, Louis Baker and George Zimmerman, composed a tune and wrote a new dance. They sent them to Lily with this inscription:

Respectfully dedicated to Lily Conant in their sincere appreciation of her courage and sacrifice in making it possible for the E. F. D. S. summer school to be held again at Long Pond in the post-war period.



Photograph of the tune and dance composed for the 1946 reopening of Pinewoods Camp dedicated and sent to Lily Conant.

Courtesy of the Conant Family

Epilogue, 75 Years and Many Changes Later

Lily and Dick invited the Country Dance and Song Society (as it was eventually called) to program more weeks of the summer. A week of recorder and folk song split into one of each in 1950. The singing brought in American traditional singers from Appalachia and the Ozarks, New England seaports and the Georgia Sea Islands, as well as singers from the UK, some living in the US. In 1952 the Scottish dancers in Boston arrived at Camp. The Conant family worked hard to keep the already aging infrastructure of camp going. When the first half century of Camp came to an end, and Pinewoods Camp, Inc. was created in 1975, a wave of young people had discovered Pinewoods. The dance floors rang with southern clogging, the stomping of the contra dance revival, the slides and polkas of Irish sets as well as all that had gone on before. Folk Dancing 'Round Boston held a weekend of international dance before it turned into the Folk Arts Center of New England. The first week-long family session was taking place at Camp and the summer schedule seemed full.

After being closed for over a year, Pinewoods Camp reopened in 2021. It opened late and closed early, but all who made it to the wooded camp between Long Pond and Round Pond experienced again the balm of this place we share. More changes at Pinewoods have taken place during this final quarter of our first hundred years. The diverse activities have grown way beyond those of the first quarter. We have the opportunity to continue to grow because of a choice made long ago. Let's remember with gratitude Lily Roberts Conant's decision 75 years ago to reopen Pinewoods.

(A note about sources: The information for this article is drawn from sometimes contradictory written sources, websites, letters, Susan Conant's research and writing about her grandmother, and remembered oral history from multiple people. When the archives are more easily accessible, post pandemic, a fuller picture can be drawn and properly ascribed as we work toward different ways to preserve the history of Pinewoods Camp before the upcoming celebrations of our centennial. A list of sources for this article will eventually be on the website. Send corrections and new information to post@pinewoods.org.) ◆

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Is It Time to Rename the C# and C# Minor Dance Pavilions?

Members of our Pinewoods community are asking us to consider renaming the C# and C# Minor dance pavilions. These pavilions were named as a play on words involving the musical notes and the name of Cecil Sharp, collector of English folk song and dance, historical dance interpreter, and founding member and first director of the English Folk Dance Society.

The PCI Board of Directors has discussed Sharp's legacy and the names of the pavilions throughout the year. This summer we have been listening. We held discussion sessions at almost every session at Camp this summer.

To help guide us in both critically studying Sharp's legacy while celebrating Pinewoods' history, please join us for an online discussion this fall. Details will be announced. Please email **post@pinewoods.org** with your questions and comments. Expect information about the conversations and the next steps in the process by which a decision will be made in the fall issue of the Post. ◆



C# Dance Pavilion in 1970 Photo by David Conant

Thank You, Warren!

Pinewoods thrives because of the passion and commitment of the dance and music community members who share their time, talents, and treasures to care for this place we love. Warren Anderson exemplifies this spirit of giving through the many, many roles that he has played for PCI. He has been a long-time camper, summer volunteer, work weekend volunteer, board member, board president, and graciously stepped up to take on the role of interim executive director for PCI last fall. He is working with Chris Jacobs this summer as well, to ensure a smooth transition as Camp came back to life this summer. Many thanks to Warren for his continuing contributions and commitment to Pinewoods!



Photo collage by Warren Anderson

Calling 2021 Pinewoods Photographers

If you took pictures during the 2021 sessions and are willing to allow us to consider them for the Fall 2021 Pinewoods Post, please send a few of your favorites to <u>post@pinewoods.org</u>.

Thank you!



Winter at Pinewoods Photo by Nancy Barbour



Please Support Pinewoods Camp!

Due to the pandemic our season began late and ended early, but Camp opened safely in 2021! Even during a short season following a fallow year the work of maintaining Pinewoods Camp continues unabated.

All of us share the responsibility as stewards of this increasingly rare and extraordinarily special place. Join us in our effort to preserve the magic for many generations to come by donating here: <u>http://www.pinewoods.org/supportpinewoods/donate/</u>

