

Folk Dancing in Rossland

We dance once a month, during the September to June time frame, on the 2nd Friday of each month (with a few exceptions)

There are two kinds of dances we're doing, English Country dancing, and [American] Contra dance.

There are similarities between these two, but the English is more sedate with more grace and poise, whereas the Contra is a bit more jaunty.

The English Country dancing hails from the 17th to 18th century, in the days of the courts. Think of the 'Jane Austen' era, as portrayed in recent films, *Emma*, *Pride and Prejudice*. Although many of the dances are collected from that era, there are modern compositions too, drawn from an active community of dancer/choreographers.

The Contra dancing (from the French 'contre': opposite) is more similar to American square, though set formation is longways (a line men opposite or 'contre' a line of women), not square.

Both styles of dance are socially interactive: you dance with your partner, and others, as the music and figures flow along.

Although both styles of dance are done with couples, it's best for newcomers to dance with experienced dancers, to quickly get the hang of things. So, if you have a partner, bring them along, but a partner isn't required. And, if you do have a partner... you'll probably *not* be dancing more than 1 or 2 dances with them in the evening, although you will dance with them along the progression of the dances, for a moment.

We have been dancing to recorded music, but there is a group of local musicians who have been practicing some of the English tunes, and working on their jigs and reels for the contra!

All of the figures are taught; all of the dances are walked-through. The dance leader (caller) prompts the dancers through the figures, too, as required.

This season, we're dancing in the Miners Hall on Friday nights [see schedule below, and exceptions]. Notwithstanding the aforementioned films, and the costumes portrayed therein, we're dancing in ordinary clothing. If you have dance shoes, or other leather-soled street shoes, that's excellent, but just about anything will do, except: avoid sticky rubber soles. The dance runs from 7:00 to 9:30, and we take a break somewhere in the middle for a bit of pot-luck dessert. If you haven't got a dessert, come and dance anyway!

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Schedule (2009-2010) :

(All dances are on the second Friday of the month, unless noted)

Sep 11

Oct 9

Oct 30 [5th Friday]

Dec 11, 2009

Jan 8, 2010

Jan 29 [5th Friday]

Mar 12

Apr 9

May 14

Jun 4 [1st Friday]

Time : 7:00PM to 9:30

Venue :

Rossland Miners Union Hall, [1768 Columbia Avenue.](#), Rossland, BC, Canada. This is a marvelous wood structure from 1897. Nice floor, and a nice sound, too, **thanks**, to the Rossland Council for Arts and Culture (**RCAC**)!

Cost :

\$5 for drop-in, but you can get a break on the price by buying the season in advance: \$40/10 sessions.

References:

<http://www-ssrl.slac.stanford.edu/~winston/ecd/history.htmlx>

<http://youtube.com/watch?v=lqhNoyVe-2o>

["Look Both Ways"](#)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Contra_dance

<http://youtube.com/watch?v=18Cq86IAq6U>

[Globe and Mail article on Contra](#)

Organized by: Dave Cornelius (dc@2cats.net) 250-362-3319