

SCOTCH ON THE ROCKS involved a week of Scottish Country dancing with Maggie and Duncan Keppie during the last week of August, 2015, in the Wolfville area of Nova Scotia, combined with two half-day field trips to local beaches (with Duncan) and a 1-hour massage with Ailsa Keppie. The 1/2-day dance classes included some Highland steps and unusual figures, such as the Rigg, Hand-in-Hand reels, turn corner-partner-corner-partner starting with 2nd corner, the Ancient Pousette, and the Snake, some popular dances (Reel of the Royal Scots, Quarrie's Jig, Follow me Home), as well as some dances specially devised for the occasion. The field trips visited Ross Creek beach to look for agate and 200 million year old silicified trees with spectacular views of the Bay of Fundy and Cape Split, and Blue Beach to find 350 million year old fossil plants, tetrapod scales, and rain drop prints with great views of the Minas Basin and Blomidon.

Here are some quotes from various people:

“It was wonderful meeting other dancers from all over North America and learning from them. Duncan and Maggie are very entertaining and competent teachers, and Duncan certainly lived up to his reputation of doing things “just a little differently” (never thought I would hear the words “let’s do a Mexican variation” at a SCD class). Outstanding teaching job and the mixed levels of the class worked very well. The dances I personally most enjoyed were “Quarrie’s Jig” and “As the Moon Turns”, and I was intrigued by the Glasgow Highlander’s and the Schottische step, which I have yet to learn. In class, I also had great fun with the Highland steps; Maggie and Duncan’s dance “The Wedding Ring” featured some of these. I love having just half a day class. It really gives us an opportunity to do some touristy things for the rest of the day. The winery after the geological walk was lovely end to our afternoon. The two afternoons gave us an opportunity to get to know each other outside of the dancing and there was ample opportunity to do other activities in the balance of the week. All in all, a great event! My impression was that all thought it should continue. The hospitality of the local dancers and the warm attitude of everyone in the group was wonderful. It was a good opportunity to test the theory that in Scottish Country Dance there are no strangers, only friends you haven’t met. It holds true so far! How lovely. Refreshments were great! So was the massage. The massage with Ailsa was a perfect end to my week. The hotel we stayed at (Old Orchard Inn) was lovely, with views overlooking the Annapolis valley, and complete with a pool and a very pleasant (and highly air-conditioned, thank goodness) restaurant. Thanks again for making my summer glorious.”

