

Country Dances were the popular social dances done by all ages and all classes of Society in America during the 18th and early 19th century's. They were basically English in Origin. They were danced throughout the British Isles and many parts of western Europe. The "Country Dance" was a generic term for progressive dances in longways formations, and did not have a specific connotation of rural or rustic. By the 1780s Americans began calling these dances "contra dance", probably derived from the French term Contredanse.

The major difference between how these dances are danced today and how they were danced in the 18th century is what the dancers did with their feet while dancing. Dancing Masters would travel throughout the country side and American cities teaching the upper class American society the latest steps and dances from London and Paris. I will be teaching a selective set of these dances from the American Colonial period complete with the balletic like steps of the 1700s.

The minuet is a Dance for two people. It was either danced by a couple or it could be danced by two women. Most upper class Balls were open by 1 to 5 couples dancing the minuet one couple at a time with all the ball attendees watching. One could say that the minuet is the forerunner to the waltz. This dance along with the Country Dances were considered an important part of any young person's education along with singing and playing a musical instilment.

I will be teaching a simple Z minuet complete with the balletic foot work.

Any one over the age of 12 years old is welcome, no dance experience needed. We will start at the beginning. We will be learning how to honors your partner and dance & social deportment. The steps I will be teaching are skip change of step, chasse, pas de bourree and rigadoon. The last class of the series will be a ball and for those interested in doing so we will do a demonstration dance at the Wyman Tavern Festival on June 17th (not a requirement just if you want to)..