

Lifting Your Music (and Spirits)—a Workshop on Playing for English Country Dancing

An online workshop with pianist Jacqueline Schwab

Sponsored by the Boston Recorder Society

Sunday, October 4, 2020, 6:30-8 pm ET

Come explore the joys of playing for English country dancing! Bringing lilt, lift, and improvisational possibilities to the beautiful tunes will add much to your music making, whether or not you ever play for an actual dance. This will just be a start, but hopefully a doorway into the vibrant, worldwide dance community. We will focus on the performance practice of modern English dance music but also touch on improvisational ideas for 17th- and 18th-c. dance music; however, you will also learn basic principles for approaching dance playing, in general. We'll explore one or two easy-to-play tunes and make them come alive, in order to command and inspire the dancers. Your ability to play at dance tempo, without stopping, will be helpful for this workshop—but we'll also discuss growing that skill. When you register, you'll receive a zoom link and also a few tunes for the workshop.

Pianist Jacqueline Schwab discovered English country dancing at age 15 and has long played for many styles of dancing, including with the *Bare Necessities* quartet. *Bare Necessities* has played for Boston Centre Country Dance Society's weekly dances since the 1970's and for dances throughout the US and beyond. They have released 18 dance music recordings. Jacqueline has led many dance music workshops. She also formerly played for ballet and modern dance classes. Her musical sensibilities arose from her time immersed in the rich classical and folk music scenes of Pittsburgh's "melting pot" and later in Boston. Her signature playing infuses the soundtracks of Ken Burns' Grammy-winning *Civil War*, *Baseball*, *Lewis and Clark*, *Mark Twain*, and *The War*, among others. She has performed at the White House for President Clinton, and, with Scottish singer Jean Redpath, on public radio's *A Prairie Home Companion* and on CBS' *Late Show with David Letterman*. Jacqueline graduated from the New England Conservatory in Boston, majoring in piano improvisation and did graduate work at Boston University, focusing on 18th-century English country dance music primary sources. She also performed for several years (on muselar/virginals) in the Boston-area *Renaissomics* ensemble. In her solo concerts, she spins musical stories, building bridges to connect listeners to the different cultures and strands that have formed American music, and has performed in almost every State of the Union. She lives on Cape Cod.