

# Dance On!

## Derek Haynes The Warrior Sleeps



**Ion Jamieson and the Langshaw Lassies**  
**Papa's Story • And Back To The Original...**  
**Pas-de-Bas • Detour to Graemsay**

R.R.P. £2.00  
Issue 7 - May 2005





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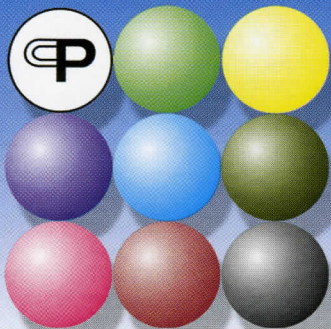
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## Editorial

**T**his month's magazine once again is full of articles and photographs. We rely on you to let us know what's going on in your area, so please keep sending them in. We're always on the lookout for new dances and music, so if you've written something and would like to see it in print, please send it to us. Also let us know if you have a Website that you would like reviewed, and of course any CDs, books or videos about dance should go directly to Campbell Hunter at 37 Carronvale Road, Larbert, Stirlingshire FK5 3LG.

We are indebted to the family of the late Bobby MacLeod for allowing us to print extracts from his book, "Pas-de-Bas".

We have printed a tribute to Derek Haynes, whose death leaves a huge void in the Scottish Traditional Dance Scene. Our sympathies go to his family and friends.

**Karin**

## Take The Floor

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## Dance On!

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*Front cover photograph of Derek Haynes courtesy of  
Maureen Haynes*

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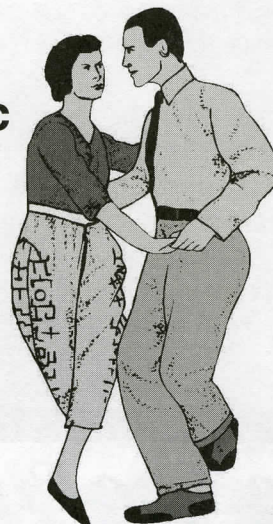
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# The Warrior Sleeps...

## Derek Arthur Haynes

### 11<sup>th</sup> May 1932 – 4<sup>th</sup> April 2005

**D**erek was a man of remarkable talent who was an inspiring teacher and a gifted and enthusiastic dancer (his Highland demonstrations were justly admired). Derek's classes were superbly organised and he offered original ideas on ways to dance steps and formations correctly. Dancers came to Derek to enjoy themselves as well as to learn. He had a great sense of fun and dancers came back to his classes with eager anticipation. For many years he taught at the RSCDS Summer School and was invited to teach overseas on a regular basis. For the unfortunate people who didn't have the chance to attend his classes or dancing weekends, Derek will be remembered for the dances he wrote. There are many favourites including The Black Mountain Reel, Miss Gibson's Strathspey and Neidpath Castle, but one lesser-known dance that gave him particular satisfaction is Domino Five. This simple reel for five dancers is probably the most useful dance written for many years. It can provide great satisfaction to the inexperienced dancer and is also a happy social dance for people of all abilities. Many of Derek's dances combine simplicity as well as originality (and this is not easy to achieve)."

#### Roy Goldring

**D**erek was one of those friends you seem to have known forever. His was one of the faces you saw wherever you went to dance. Unmistakable and energetic! I first met him dancing in the Clifton Hall, Rotherham (long since pulled down!) in either the late 60s or early 70s. From then on we usually had a dance together whenever we met. Later he came to teach at the Doncaster RSCDS Day School and Maureen (a Doncaster lass) came along for the day. We were delighted when Derek and Maureen renewed their friendship, and soon after heard they were engaged and then married.

At Summer School in St Andrews we were in the same class for several years and I always admired his neat, precise footwork and vitality. He danced in the demonstration team and was always a joy to watch. He

enjoyed the Summer School ceilidhs too. I will never forget the "Accident Class" where Derek was bandaged from head to toe and Anna Holden announced the team would dance "The Golden Pheasant"! Hard enough without the bandages, but Derek bounced through the whole dance to screams of delight.

Later he was to teach Men's Highland to both my husband and my son. Both enjoyed his classes and held him in high regard. They enjoyed his clear instructions and demonstration of steps. Keith always used to lose several pounds in weight when he danced in Derek's class and both he and Patrick enjoyed it all especially the demonstrations in the Younger Hall which, although demanding, were always fun.

We were privileged to watch in total admiration while Bill Ireland sang his mouth music and Jennifer Wilson and Derek danced. But the humour was never far away with a "twist" at the end when the two men cut Jennifer out and danced together.

We will all have our memories of Derek but I find it hard to believe that I won't see him again in the Younger Hall or striding around St Andrews. Think of Derek when you next dance Miss Gibson's Strathspey, The Clansman, Neidpath Castle or maybe even The Sleeping Warrior – these being just four of so many beautiful dances he devised.

The understanding and depth of experience Derek brought to Scottish Country Dancing, together with his cheeky sense of humour, will be greatly missed.

A larger than life character in all senses.

#### Keith & Moira Stacey

**L**ook at any Dance programme and chances are there will be one of Derek's dances featured. At his funeral service there was standing room only, more than 200 people turned out to bid farewell to a dancing legend. Musicians George Meikle, David Queen and Alan Harrison provided a befitting tribute for The Dancing Master.

In compiling this tribute I would like to thank Roy Goldring and Keith and Moira Stacey for their contributions.

**Iain Hale**

**D**erek was my most influential teacher and friend. His death has shocked me. I was still looking forward to dancing with him again, when we returned to England, in some uncertain future. Now it won't be. I have written my Epithanalion on his loss, and that of many friends in recent times.

**George Hobson**

### Epithanalion

Dedicated to the memory of helpful friends now gone, foremost DH

So many, so many are gone from the dance

I've lived on beyond them by unhappy chance

I've leaned on so many, from each I have learned

A treasure of knowledge that I never earned.

To go on without them in each empty set,  
I have to remember I'm repaying debt.

The pitch of grief is high,  
And keening far beyond a sympathetic hearing.

Each in his way will cry  
For the loss we are feeling  
After anger and shock lies  
The solace of grieving  
In all of my loving is all of my mourning.  
And in this acceptance  
The start of my healing.

Is he dead then?  
Not in me, no, never.  
Take this for comfort,  
Know, each is part of all,  
And all have part of each

There is no comfort yet in hearing truths,  
however deep  
In this new language we have not learned  
to speak

Yet  
My pain is now,  
And this is where we shall not meet,  
Not ever.

And I can never say,  
And know that it is heard,  
The humblest heartfelt word  
My thanks

When this consciousness has crept,  
To that next waking.  
Will the waking be to silence?  
The happy silence of the spaces in the music?  
Or that worst silence  
Of the music's end?



# Ion Jamieson and The Langshaw Lassies

## Ion CB Jamieson

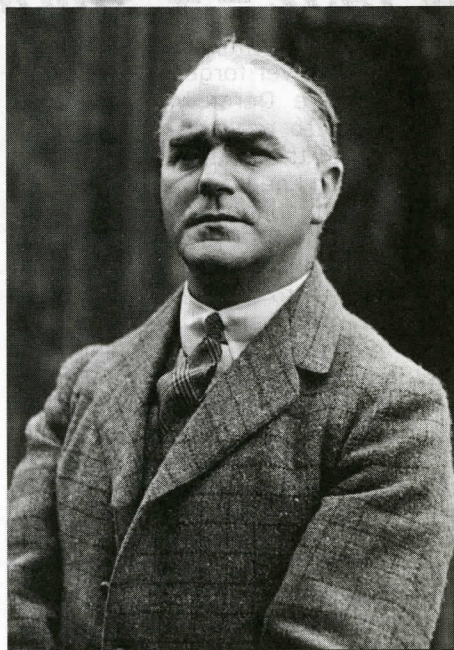
**I**on Campbell Bell Jamieson was born in 1883 at Bo'ness near Linlithgow. When he was about ten years old a visiting dancing master came to his house and taught Country and Highland dancing to Ion and some of the other children in the neighbourhood.

In 1915 he married Mary Bruce in Galashiels, and at that time he lived at Windhead, Lauder. After working as factor of Thirlestane Estates near Lauder, ill health forced a move and he went to The Lodge House at Langshaw near Galashiels in 1920.

When he attended local dances, the people told him of the dances they remembered from their youth, and so his collection of Borders dances began.

Many of his dances came from people he met at W.R.I. meetings (he frequently accompanied his wife, simply to have the opportunity to meet older people and discuss dancing as it used to be done in the area). His interest was neither scientific nor technical – he just loved the dances and the stories that were attached to them. He did not usually travel far afield, and rarely made any attempt to find corroborative evidence for the dances he collected.

He gave more than forty dances to the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society. Those published include



*This photo was discovered by a friend of mine in an antique shop in Walkerburn. He didn't realise the significance of it but thought it might be of interest to me. It may be the only photograph of Ion Jamieson known to dance researchers or organisations. I gave the photograph to the Scottish Traditions of Dance Trust.*



## By Karin Ingram

*The Punchbowl, Linton Ploughman, Roxburgh Castle, and Oxtan Reel. "The Border Dance Book" was compiled by Elizabeth Maclachlan and contained twenty-three dances collected by Ion Jamieson locally.*

Such was the interest in dance in the area, that Ion Jamieson started dance classes in the local village hall at Langshaw. His style of dance and teaching was not that of the Scottish Country Dance Society. He placed less emphasis on technique and preferred the dancing style of the kirns to that of polite ballrooms. He wore ordinary shoes for dancing, and occasionally a kilt. He was strict in his dance teaching, but never asked anyone to dance a step that he did not dance himself.

Ion Jamieson died in 1953, and Mary in 1975.

## Traditional Dancing in Scotland

**D**uring the nineteen fifties, Joan and Tom Flett were doing extensive research throughout Scotland for their book "Traditional Dancing in Scotland" (published in 1964). They had heard of Ion Jamieson, but weren't aware that he was still alive in 1953 when they were concentrating on dancing in the Scottish Borders.

They saw his obituary in the paper, and some weeks later Tom Flett went to speak to his widow.

She was very helpful and told Tom about the existence of cine film shot by her husband and showing country dancing. Unfortunately she had donated all of his old cine equipment to the local hospital, and suggested that Tom enquire there.

The hospital was very embarrassed to admit that they had sent the projector and all the films to the incinerator because they were so old and broken!

Nearly ten years later Francis Collinson, an expert on Scottish music, contacted the Fletts. Apparently the film had been pushed to the back of a drawer and had not gone with the others to the hospital. Mrs Jamieson had sent it to him in the hope that he





*Ion Jamieson's dancers as they appeared in the film*

could get in touch with the Fletts.

It was a 9mm film, in very poor condition, and Tom and Joan were concerned that they might damage it. They sent it to The School of Scottish Studies for safekeeping. Several copies were made, eventually being transferred onto video.

In the late 1970s Pat Shuldham-Shaw, dance and song researcher, studied the film and made notes of a lot of the material. It was assumed to have been filmed mostly in the nineteen twenties.

Several things were unknown about the film:

Where was it taken?

When was it taken?

Who were the dancers?

What colour were the costumes?

Were they actually "Bondagers" as the costumes suggested?

#### ***Bondagers and Hiring Fairs***

**I**n the rural areas until the nineteen forties, hiring fairs took place in most of the towns. These were usually once a year, but in some places they were every six months. Farm workers would attend these fairs. They would attach a label to their shirts, and it would give their specialty – poultryman, cattleman, shepherd, etc. These men were known as hinds.

When the farmers and landowners hired the hinds, they were expected to bring with them female labour to work in the fields as well as in the houses. They were known as "Bondagers". These women were often wives and daughters of the hinds, but there were many young women who were free agents, and who could be hired by the men for work when required. The farmer paid

the hinds, and they in turn paid their bondagers. The women who worked in the fields were expected to have the same strength and stamina as the men. There is a tremendously powerful play, called "The Bondagers" by Sue Glover about the lives these women led.

The bondagers' costumes were very distinctive. They wore long heavy skirts made of a woolen material known as "druggit", with often several layers of underskirts beneath. On their heads they wore large bonnets called "uglies".

The hiring fairs were great social occasions, and usually involved dancing. Often the dances would last from noon until midnight. Some were known as "Penny Reels", and the men had to pay a penny for themselves and a penny for their partner for each dance.



*Young bondager © Clapperton Studios, Selkirk*

#### ***The Langshaw Lassies***

**W**hen I began researching dance for the Scottish Traditions of Dance Trust in the Borders I was aware of the existence of the film, but like everyone else knew very little about the background to it. I was interviewing a lady called Betty Blackie, and when I arrived at her house she said to me, "I hope you don't mind, but I've asked a friend to join us. She used to be in a dance team."

Of course I had no objection. Mrs Betty Dodds duly arrived, and almost her first words were, "They showed a film of us on TV. I was in Mr Jamieson's dance team!"

It transpired that three of the ladies in the film were still living locally – Betty herself, Bess Hermiston and Jenny Riddell! We discovered that the film was shot in 1934 in a field beside Ion Jamieson's house in Langshaw. The men were mostly in their late



*Langshaw Tower and Lodge as they are today, and the field where the film was shot.*

teens or early twenties, but the girls were younger than we first thought – only fifteen or sixteen. They were all farm workers, but the ladies were not bondagers. Those costumes were made for dance displays and were worn on the team's trip to the Albert Hall in London in 1935 when they took part in an international folk dance festival.

Mrs Blackie then produced an old photograph album.

Mrs Blackie was only a little girl at the time, but her grandmother "Granny Noble" was in charge of the costumes, and went with the team to London.

Betty Dodds described the costumes – brown skirts, pink blouses, black bonnets, and the men in brown shirts and trousers. Mrs Dodds could name all of the dancers, say where they lived and what they did.





***The Dance Team from Langshaw who went to London:***

***Back, L to R: Sandy Geddes, pigman at Glendearg; Ramsay Noble, roadman; Tommy Robeson, ploughman at Colmslie; Jim Wilkie, ploughman at Bluecairn; Jim Crozier, shepherd at Colmslie Hill.***

***Front, L to R: Betty Kerr, (Mrs Dodds) maid at Langshaw Lodge (Mr Jamieson's house); Mary Houston, pupil at Athol Cres (domestic college in Edinburgh); Mrs Noble (Betty Blackie's Granny), housewife in Langshaw village; Jenny Easton (Mrs Riddell), dairymaid at Glendearg; Bess Macvicar (Mrs Hermiston), dairymaid at Glendearg.***

Here is an extract from a journal written by Mrs Noble about their trip to London:

***Langshaw in London***

There does not seem to be much connection between the two, except that both begin with a capital L, but more than a year ago there was contact, when for two whole days Langshaw to the number of eleven invaded London – peacefully – but not unheralded as the local papers had given a good account for some weeks of the Bondagers – the first team from Scotland to be invited to take part in the English Folk Dance Festival held in the Albert Hall, London.

You may imagine what excitement there was in this district when the invitation was first heard of. May I here quote one of the papers. "Congratulation to the Langshaw dancers on being invited to represent Scotland at the great folk dance festival in the Albert Hall on Saturday". This is the first time we understand that Scotia has been represented. Last year it was Portugal. The Langshaw Bondagers can be depended upon to maintain

the reputation of the North. There are eight of them – four winsome Border lasses and four stalwart Border lads – plus a skilful melodeon player. Good Luck to the nine, and may they stir the Sassenach!

Well, we set off by bus on the Thursday night and that ride was

not the least enjoyable part of the whole adventure. We were out to enjoy every minute of it and we didn't waste much time in sleeping on the way. As soon as day dawned we were all gazing out. The sights and sounds were new to most of us and it seemed such a long ride into the heart of London from the time we first entered. Those who had been there already were kept busy pointing out to the others the several places of note and it now was an hour and a half after entering London before we were put down at our Hotel in Gower Street.

After a short rest, a much-needed wash and a very enjoyable breakfast we timidly set foot in the streets and got safely to Trafalgar Square under Mr. Jamieson's guiding care. But the traffic was tremendous and it is a mystery to me how well the London police control it. But when the policeman lifted up both hands, Langshaw and the other pedestrians at last streamed by. The shops were a great attraction, Bond Street and Oxford Street are no longer just a name to us and although we couldn't purchase we revelled in the beautiful things – gorgeous jewels, handsome dresses and hats – which are not seen in Langshaw.

We were out in the afternoon again and by that time had almost overcome our fear of the streets. After tea we were taken by bus to the Albert Hall where we made the acquaintance of some other teams who were also there for rehearsal. The Dublin team we knew well by this time as they were staying in the same hotel. We were rather over-awed by the size of the Albert Hall and wondered if there could be enough people to fill it. Our doubts were settled on the following



***Betty Kerr, Mary Houston, Jenny Easton & Bess Macvicar at Langshaw***





**Betty Dodds (Kerr), Betty Blackie, Jenny Riddell (Easton) & Bess Hermiston (Macvicar) revisit Langshaw in 2000**

night, Saturday, when from the arena we had to face a vast audience. In fact, there wasn't sitting room at all and some of the Langshaw team found itself perched on the stool belonging to the greatest organ in the British Isles. My part, I thought, was to chaperone and see that everything was correct about the team – dress especially, but my legs felt as if they wouldn't support me when I was told I had to lead into the hall – not only the Langshaw team but all the others – so behold me with the St. Andrew banner flying leading a procession representing Scotland, Wales, Ireland and England. It was a wonderful march past and I shall never forget it.

The dancing that followed was marvellous, the massed Morris dancers, the Girl Guide dancers from Anglesey who looked so charming in their quaint white smocks and lace caps, the solo dancer from Barra in the Outer Hebrides and the old man of 73 from Londonderry, a champion step-dancer, and eight dancers, Bondagers from Langshaw – from the Scottish Border. They danced "The Shepherd's Crook" and "The Scotch Bonnet" two of the many dances collected by Mr. Jamieson, but for whom there would probably have been no dancing team and certainly no trip to London, so, at this point I should like to record our thanks to Mr. Jamieson, for all his training and all the duties he undertook to make our visit to London such a success.

But I must not miss out the Saturday morning when we saw more of the

London sights and when the company had lunch in Park Lane through the kindness of a lady who visited Langshaw during the summer. Mr. Jamieson fixed up a bus ride for us and we had the privilege of being shown over the Royal Mews, seeing the King's horses and the State Coaches.

We had tea, then a rest before the great moment when we set out in taxis to the Albert Hall to take our part among the five hundred dancers from every corner of the British Isles. We could not wait until the end of the performance as our bus was waiting and we began our long journey back at 11pm when Langshaw and London were separated.

**Report by Mrs. Noble**

### Full Circle

In 1935 a team of dancers went from the Borders to dance in London, and in 2000 history repeated itself. Every area or town in the UK was offered the chance to present "Our Town Story" at The Millennium Dome. The day allocated to the Borders was the 12<sup>th</sup> April. There were three twenty-minute slots, one for dance, one for music and one for drama.

The dance scene opened with an old man talking to his granddaughter about his memories of working the land as a young man. A video was playing, showing Borders scenery.

The old man spoke about the bondagers, and the video changed to show the old film footage shot by Ion Jamieson. It faded out, and the dancers' positions were taken up by a team of dancers on stage, dressed in bondagers' costume. They performed "Lassie wi' the Yellow Coatie" – one of the dances on the film.

Granddad then spoke of a dance called "The Three Sheepskins" and the little girl said that she was learning that at school. The video showed the children in school doing the dance. The film froze, and eight of the schoolchildren came on stage and danced.

From there they moved into contemporary dance representing the sea and the mills, and the video reflected that.

We all flew down to London to see the sights as well as to perform. Sixty-five years before, a party of young people went there by coach – we followed in their footsteps.

**Many thanks to Mrs Blackie for allowing us to use her photographs.**



**Dancers at The Dome in 2000**



## Dancing Family Weekend

Troon 7<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> October 2005

### Calling all parents and grandparents...

**T**his is a new event being run by the RSCDS for young families. It is a residential weekend in The South Beach Hotel, Troon, Ayrshire on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2005. The emphasis will be on families dancing together. All the family, dancers and non-dancing members, will be welcomed. However, within each family there will be one adult and one child who wish to dance. We propose to commence the weekend with a ceilidh for all the family on Friday night after dinner. On Saturday morning, classes will be taught by Andrew McConnell with Kenny Thomson accompanying him on accordion for those wishing to dance, while others are free to explore the amenities in Troon. The afternoon is free for all the family to visit the many parks, swimming pools and leisure facilities in Troon and surrounding area. A quick visit to Glasgow would even be possible. After dinner we will be dancing to Kenny Thomson's Band, who will provide a mixture of Ceilidh and Scottish Country Dances suitable to the ensemble present in the ballroom of the hotel. Sunday morning will once more see Andrew teaching a class and lunch will round off the weekend.

Troon can be reached by car or rail with Prestwick (4 miles) or Glasgow (1 hour drive) airports near by with cheap flights available. The cost of a room for the weekend is £217 (Family with one RSCDS member £200). This includes accommodation for two adults and two children, dinner, bed & breakfast on Friday and Saturday nights, classes both mornings and dances both nights.

More information from RSCDS Headquarters. Tel: 0131-225 3854 or [info@rscds.org](mailto:info@rscds.org) Applications to be in by 6<sup>th</sup> June.

I look forward to welcoming you to our first family weekend.

**Sue Porter**  
RSCDS Youth Director

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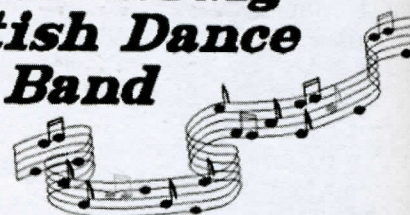
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# Detour to Graemsay

**A**fter the close of the Orkney Dance Festival on Easter Monday a group of us crossed on the 4.00pm ferry from Stromness on Mainland Orkney to the tiny island of Graemsay, halfway to Hoy. Having been met by my former school and college friend Irene Mathieson and her husband Bobby (of recent *Countdown* fame!), we walked up the hill to inspect the evening venue. It was the community hall which had been built by the islanders some years back. En route many of us enjoyed a romp on the beach and took pictures of the lighthouse and surrounding views.

Once through the open door, because keys are seldom needed in Graemsay, we found the dance floor, "green room", the kitchen, the makings of a bar and buffet table and outside, the all important toilet block.

While the Mathiesons gave us delicious soup and sandwiches up at their house we plied them with questions about island life and the experience of being head of a one teacher school. Irene told us that after her last remaining pupil left for secondary school she took early retirement. Now she is occupied by many new roles and is probably in the unique position of being the only Roman Catholic verger of the Church of Scotland.

We were thrilled that almost the whole community turned up and even more pleased they too had ceilidh items to offer. Folks of all ages joined in freely with the dancing and were eager to extend their repertoire. Other pictures, which were posted to us along with Orcadian newspaper cuttings, show a mixture of pleasure and studied concentration on people's faces. One woman remarked how astonished and delighted she was to see five members of her family on the dance floor at the same time. The entertainment drew to a close all too soon but Catherine Mottram, the MC for the evening, had prepared a set of crib sheets and an accompanying CD so that future dancing could be enjoyed without our support.



As you can see from the photograph, there were 36 people in the hall that night (including Irene, the photographer) so the 15 of us from Manchester had almost doubled the population of the island. It was a fabulous additional highlight to the absolutely splendid weekend we had spent at the Orkney Dance Festival. The photograph was taken at the end of the ceilidh evening before we departed to catch the late ferry which the Community Association had organised for us. No mean feat on an Easter Bank Holiday Monday! We felt honoured by this and were touched to find that the whole community seemed to be at the harbour waving





us off as we sailed back on calm waters under the Orkney stars to Stromness. No wonder we sang and danced all the way. It had been a splendid trip and a really thrilling experience.

**Thank you Graemsay** for many very happy memories.

**Margaret McCann, Manchester RSCDS**

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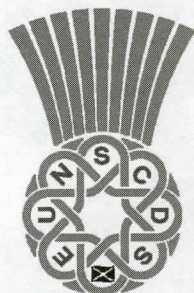


# Web Dancer

By Sue Petyt

This column will appear each month and I will review a number of Websites associated with dancing. Due to publishing deadlines, I write this review about 5 weeks before the magazine is published so please be aware that Websites can change between my review and the publication of the magazine. These observations are based on my professional opinion and personal preferences, please e-mail your views to me or write to the letters page.

If you would like your site reviewed please e-mail the link to me at [sue@suepetyt.me.uk](mailto:sue@suepetyt.me.uk)



<http://nscds.eusa.ed.ac.uk>

This is the Edinburgh University New Scotland Country Dance Society's website. The group is normally known as "New Scotland" and organises events and classes for country, ceilidh, highland and step dancing.

All the options on the Home Page, which is laid out in an unusual and interesting format, are also available as a more traditional menu bar on other pages. This, with the additional hyperlinks in the text makes the site easy to navigate and there is no need to retrace your steps all the time.

The Home Page provides links to an overview of Scottish dancing and information about each type, it is set up so that you can either go directly to the type of dancing you are interested in, or read about all types. The information is well written and interesting with the right level of detail and provides such interesting snippets as the origin of the term "country dance" (apparently it comes from the Court dancing term "contredanse" which was used to describe a dance where you faced your partner). The photographs and layout are pleasing to the eye and make for easy reading.

The "What's On Where This Week" page was exactly what it said. Even though I looked at the site over the Easter holiday, it was up to date, and although there were no University events, other events in and around Edinburgh were listed.

"Membership and How to Join", makes it clear that non-students can become members too and can join the mailing list to be notified of forthcoming events. There is also information on why they are called "New Scotland" and interesting information on the origins of the group and their links to other universities and The Dunedin Dancers.

The Classes Page gives details of all classes, times and venues, and also a description of the expected standard for each class so that students can determine which class is right for them. There is also a Class Venues Page which displays maps highlighting the most commonly used venues for classes and dances. This is a useful feature for students who are not familiar with Edinburgh but is something that any group that wants to encourage new people to join them should copy in order to make it easy for venues to be found.

The Events Calendar was a bit of a disappointment. It had all of the events for the year included (from September 04 to August 05) yet the site is obviously updated weekly so it would be easy to delete those events that had passed. There may be a reason for leaving the events there (to show potential undergraduates the year's activities) but it would be worth making this clear at the start of the page, otherwise it can make the site look out of date.

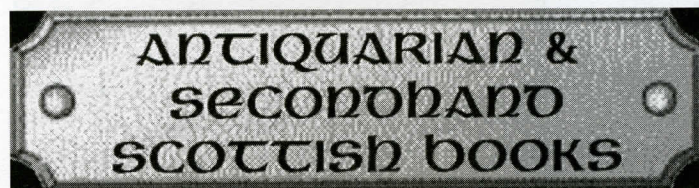
The Fresher's Weekend Page does exactly that, it says in capital letters, "THE FOLLOWING IS OUT OF DATE AND IS FOR GENERAL INFORMATION ONLY". This is absolutely fine and allows people to ignore it if they were looking for future information, or read it if they are looking for a general impression of what goes on.

The Members' Area page is excellent. Not only does it tell you what to do if you have forgotten your username and password, but tells you what is in the Members' Area so you know whether to bother logging in or not. As I am not a member I couldn't gain access, but all the information about the running of the club and the committee members is held within this area.

The information on Dance Festivals should encourage students to join as the group obviously have a great time travelling the world dancing and making friends. There is also a page on the teams' successes in the Newcastle and Edinburgh Competitions.

The page on "Dance Equipment" gives details of different types of shoes for different kinds of dancing and where they can be bought, explains what slipstop is and is for, and provides information on relevant books and fabric suppliers. There are also New Scotland T-shirts and badges available to buy (not on-line) although the page says "Stock as at September 2003" so it is not clear what is still available and this page needs some attention.

There is a latest update page, which for a large site like this is a great feature. It allows busy people the chance to look quickly to find out if there is anything new since they last looked and they can quickly access something which interests them. The site as a whole showed an awareness of how people use the web, as a source of information that is relevant, quick and easy to find and students (and others who are interested in Scottish dancing), will find it an interesting site.



[www.grian.demon.co.uk](http://www.grian.demon.co.uk)

For the second website this month I have discovered one which sells Antiquarian and second hand Scottish Books at [www.grian.demon.co.uk](http://www.grian.demon.co.uk). I don't know anything about the company but they have a number of books for sale that relate to Scottish dance (as well as other interesting subjects). If you select "Entertainment" from the Home Page and then "Scottish Dancing" from the menu on the next page you will get a list of the books they have for sale. It is possible to order on line by filling in a form or by email, and there is a secure payment facility. I have not used this company or ordered anything from the website and I cannot make any recommendations or take any responsibility for the performance of the company. You must use your own judgement with regard to this site.



## **Two Furlongs** **(3x32 Strathspey +** **3x32 Strathspey encore)**

*The music for this dance is on the CD Dancers' Choice 2 (Robert Whitehead) available via [www.highlandermusic.com](http://www.highlandermusic.com)*

### **A dance for three couples in a longways set**

*As three couple strathspeys tend to be repeated, I have written this dance with a built in encore which is different from the dance (making it 6x32). Variations can be made as to the mix and match of the two parts.*

#### **THE DANCE**

**1-3** First lady, followed by second and third ladies, leads down the centre of the set, WHILE third man, followed by second and first man, leads up the centre of the set, all finish opposite partner, 3,2,1.

**4** All dance right shoulder passed partners to finish on opposite sides.

**5-8** All chase clockwise half way round to original place.

**9-12** First and third couples dance half a double figure of eight round second couple. First couple crossing down to begin, third man continuing to dance up behind second man, and third lady continuing (by pulling left shoulder back) to dance up behind second lady.

**13-16** Second man with first and third ladies dance right hands across on the men's side, WHILE second lady with first and third men dance left hand across on the ladies side.

**17-20** First and third couple dance the other half of the double figure of eight.

**21-24** The men dance right hand across on their own side, WHILE the ladies dance left hand across on their own side. Third couple finish back in place, first and second couple finish in the centre of the set nearer hands joined, second couple facing up, first couple facing down.

**25-32** First and second couples dance a Rondel. On bars **31** and **32**, third couple step up into second place, and first couple dance down to third place.

Repeat from new positions.

#### **THE ENCORE**

**1-4** First and second men, dance half diagonal rights and lefts with second and third ladies, WHILE first lady and third man dance counter clockwise half way round the outside of the set.

**5-8** Second and third men dance half diagonal rights and lefts with first and second ladies, WHILE first man and third lady dance clockwise

half way round outside of the set. (All back in original places).

**9-12** Second lady dances half a figure of eight round first couple, giving left shoulder to first man, WHILE second man dances half a figure of eight round third couple, giving left shoulder to third lady.

**13-16** Second lady with first couple, second man with third couple, dance left hands across.

**17-20** Second lady dances half a figure of eight round first couple giving right shoulder to first lady, WHILE second man dances half a figure of eight round third couple giving right shoulder to third lady.

**21-24** Second lady with the first couple, second man with the third couple, dance right hands across. All finish on the sides in original places.

**25-32** first, second and third couple dance a horseshoe chain thus:

25-26 First couple turn right hands all the way round, WHILE second and third ladies change right hands on the lady's sides and second and third men change right hands on the men's side.

27-28 Second couple turn left hand all the way round WHILE first and third ladies change left hands on the lady's side and first and third men change left hands on the men's side.

29-30 Third couple turn right hand all the way round WHILE first and second ladies change right hands on the lady's side and first and second men change right hands on the men's side.

31-32 First couple turn left hand all the way round WHILE second and third ladies change left hand on the lady's side and second and third men change left hands on the men's side.

Repeat from new positions.

© Sue Petyt April 2001



## Triskelion

**(3 x 32 bar Strathspey  
+ 3 x 32 bar Reel)**

This dance is danced through 3 times in Strathspey time, followed by 3 times in Reel time.

*Strathspey: The Lass o' Corrie Mill (Traditional)*

*Reel: Alasdair of the Dun (Traditional)*

**Dance for 3 couples in a triangular set**

*For Clare Lyddon and Peter Edwards on the occasion of their wedding on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2002.*

**1-2** Men dance across the set to the position of the lady on their right, passing left shoulders in the middle, while ladies cast into their partner's place.

**3-4** Ladies dance across the set to the position of the lady on their right (currently being occupied by a man), passing left shoulders in the middle, while men cast into the man's place.

**5-8** Repeat bars 1-4.

**9-12** 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> couples (in 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> places respectively) dance half a men's chain.

**13-16** 1<sup>st</sup> man, 3<sup>rd</sup> lady and 2<sup>nd</sup> couple (in 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> places respectively) dance half a men's chain. Men have now all progressed one place anticlockwise from their original position.

**17-24** Ladies dance a petronella turn to the position on their right, and set with the man in that place. Repeat. All are back with original partners.

**25-32** All circle 6 hands round and back.

Finish in the order 2,3,1 ready to start again.

If encored, this dance could be danced just once through as a Strathspey and once through as reel.

© Ian Brockbank, February 2002

## The Inside Oot Fish Eater

**(Reel 5 x 32)**

**Dance for 5 couples in a 5 couple longwise set**

*Peter Wood wrote the tune "The Inside Oot Fish Eater" for Lindsay Weir in the early '90s.*

*Lindsay now plays for Dunedin Dancers' Wednesday social night once a month, and Ian Brockbank wrote this accompanying dance for her when she played in April.*

**1-8** 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> couples lead down the middle and up to face first corners. 2s and 4s step up on bars 3 and 4.

**9-12** 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> couples couple dance corners pass and turn with first corners. At the end, dancing couples approach then pull back right shoulders to face fourth corners (partner's second corners).

**13-16** 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> couple dance corners pass and turn with fourth corners. At the end, dancing couples approach then pull back right shoulders to face out their own side.

**17-24** 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> couples dance the first eight bars of petronella **while** dancing couples dance out their own side and to the right, across the set between the setting couples, out partner's side and to the right, finishing 1<sup>st</sup> couple in 2<sup>nd</sup> place and 3<sup>rd</sup> couple in 4<sup>th</sup> place, all on opposite sides of the dance, and set. (i.e. all 5 couples are now on opposite sides of the dance, and all set on bars 23-24).

**25-26** 2<sup>nd</sup> couple turn half way giving right hand **while** 1<sup>st</sup> couple dance right hands across half way with 4<sup>th</sup> couple and 3<sup>rd</sup> couple dance right hands across half way with 5<sup>th</sup> couple.

**27-28** Giving hands on the sidelines, all set.

**29-32** All turn (or spin) partners with right hands.

Finish in the order 2, 4, 1, 5, 3, ready to start again.

© Ian Brockbank March 2005



# The Inside Oot Fish Eater

Peter Wood

© Shian Music 1996

Four staves of music in G major (one sharp) and common time (C). The music is written in treble clef. Below each staff are the corresponding chords.

Staff 1: D D<sup>7</sup> G A<sup>7</sup> D Bm Em A<sup>7</sup>

Staff 2: D D<sup>7</sup> G A<sup>7</sup> D Bm A<sup>7</sup> D

Staff 3: D Bm Em A<sup>7</sup> D Bm Em A<sup>7</sup>

Staff 4: D Bm Em A<sup>7</sup> D A<sup>7</sup> D D



**Lindsay Weir**



## Jane's Jig

(Jig 4x32)

A dance for four couples in a longways set.

*This dance was written for Jane Gamon, my first Scottish Country Dance Teacher*

**1-2** First man with second woman, fourth man with third woman, change places giving right hand.

**3-4** Second man with first woman, third man with fourth woman, change places giving left hand.

**5-8** First and fourth couples dance half rights and lefts.

**9-16** Reel of four on the sides. Second couple facing down and giving right shoulder to fourth couple, who face up, and first couple facing down give right shoulder to third couple who face up. (Make sure the reel is completed in the eight bars, omit the last shoulder if necessary to get back to place)

**17-20** First and fourth couples dance right hands across.

**21-24** First couple with third couple, fourth couple with second couple, dance left hands across.

**25-28** First couple dance half a figure of eight round third couple, and fourth couple dance half a figure of eight round second couple.

**29-32** All four couples turn one and a half times to their own sides.

Repeat from new positions.

© Sue Petyt, March 1994

A video of this dance being performed is available on [www.suepetyt.me.uk](http://www.suepetyt.me.uk)

## The Baden Powell

(Couples Dance – 2/4 Marches)

Men facing line of dance, lady facing away. Right arms extended to join right hands at arms' length.

*We know little of the origins of this dance except that it was named after the founder of the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides and has been danced in the North West of Scotland for many years. It is a different dance entirely from "The Baden Powell Schottische", although the tempo is the same. We are indebted to Willie & Jean Bolton of Longniddry for showing us this version of the dance.*

**Bar 1** Each dancer taps their right toe in front, then behind, then skip-steps clockwise leading with the right foot. (Right, close, right)

**Bar 2** Each dancer taps their left toe in front, then behind, then skip-steps clockwise leading with the left foot.

**Bars 3 – 4** **Bars 1 – 2** are repeated, thus each couple has completed a full circle and returned to their original positions of man facing the line of dance, lady against the line of dance.

**Bars 5 – 8** The lady turns to face the line of dance (standing on her partner's right), and in promenade hold couple do eight skip-steps forwards, each leading with the right foot. (Right, close, right; left, close, left; right, close, right: etc.)

*These eight bars are repeated for the duration of the music.*





# Papa's Story

**By Rob Corcoran**

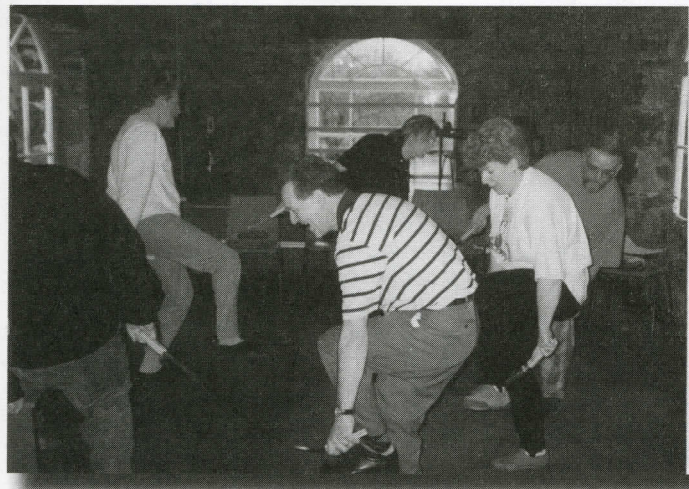
I've been teaching the Papa Stour Sword Dance all over Scotland since 1999 and the most popular questions about it are: where does it come from and when was it devised? But first I'd better tell you how I came to be dancing it in the first place.

I joined the Southport Swords dance team in 1983 and their repertoire consisted mainly of the six-man Longsword dances of North Skelton in Yorkshire. There are five variations, called Figures 1 to 5, and are just a little repetitive so you will only ever see a choice of two danced in any session. That's why the team also does Morris dance, to add a bit of variety. But also in their repertoire is the showstopper from a tiny island called Papa Stour – Island of the Big Priests – in Shetland.

It was the late John Smith, founder of the Southport Swords, who came across this dance in the 1960s. Where he spotted it, whether in Shetland or performed in England by a Scottish Country Dance team I'm not sure because I've heard a couple of country dancers refer to dancing it in that era.

At the time it was considered to be a dead tradition (no longer danced in its original location) and the Southport Swords were credited by the English Folk Dance and Song Society (EFDSS) as the "keepers" of the dance. But not for long!

George Peterson was born and bred on Papa Stour and while teaching at a school on the Shetland mainland he taught the dance to each year's older boys. So when George found out about the Southport claim he made it quite clear to all concerned that it was indeed alive and kicking in its homeland!



*A workshop on Skye*

I met George about ten years ago and he was quite content that "his" dance was being performed regularly elsewhere and was considered quite spectacular. He showed me a video of one of his boys' teams dancing and also played me some of the music used locally.

The Shetland team always performed the play that introduces the dancers but the Southport Swords only do the dance element and they do it much faster too. You can hear the original tune on various Aly Bain CDs and it's quite slow – sorry I don't know the time signature, but I do know that it gave you 6 beats to do each move (slip-jig style). (*I checked with Aly – it's 9/8 tempo, K.*) When I was first asked to teach the dance I realised that I had to re-learn it, analysing every move, breaking down its complexities.

The dance has never been written down apart from outline descriptions in, for example, Sir Walter Scott's "The Pirate" and there are other written references back to 1788. But its origins are lost in the mists of time and we will never

know if it was devised on Papa Stour or whether it arrived with sailors or fishermen from north Europe. There is a reference somewhere to the "swords" being straightened hoops from herring barrels, so maybe the fishermen were the originators.

The first time I was due to teach it I knew would be a single two-hour session to complete beginners from all over Britain at an Island Fling on Skye. So I decided at an early stage to slow the pace down to jig-time to give dancers 8 beats to every move – quite a concession because there are so many twists and turns, hops and jumps.

Writing the dance down took months of preparation and the 8 figures (4 distinctive and 4 chorus) ended up as 4 pages of type. I wanted the people learning it to be able to take away copies so that they could get others involved back home and practise with a reference copy.

That first session went well and the team picked up the whole dance in two hours, being able to dance it through at the end. At

that and subsequent Island Flings we took dozens of dancers through it ranging in age from 7 to a multiple thereof, and all completed it – though not without some infamous arguments. Injuries are fortunately uncommon!

Other than the Southport Swords there are a small number of teams regularly dancing Papa Stour including Carlisle Sword and Morris dancers. There is a women's team called Half Moon Sword over in New York who do an interesting, quite slow version.

In Scotland there are teams in the Borders and Beaulie and of course there is now that great team of youngsters in Kirkwall, part of Maureen Findlay's Dance School. The Papa Stour Sword Dance is one of those great dances – wonderful to watch and thrilling to be a part of it. And if you want to know more you will find over 100 references on the Internet – but that is not as rewarding as finding your own herring barrel and straightening out the hoops!



*Papa & The Stours from the Borders*



# Your Letters

Dear Karin,  
I am sorry that Finlay Forbes has had such a sad dancing life - surely the purpose of this magazine is to celebrate the diversity of this activity that most of us enjoy so much, not continually complain.

My experience of the RSCDS is exactly the opposite - I started dancing with an RSCDS qualified teacher where I found inclusiveness and fun; I joined the Society to go to Summer School at St. Andrews where I gained the confidence to dance anywhere in London, and then farther afield, with and outwith the Society, constantly provided with the instructions for dances we didn't know from the excellent London Branch bookstall. I have had twenty years of fun, flight and friendship, thanks to my association with the Society - thank you, RSCDS!

**Rachel Wilton**



Dear Karin,  
I have no doubt that Finlay Forbes article "Where Have All The Dancers Gone?" will have stirred up a hornet's nest of reaction, especially in Scottish Country Dance circles. I am a member of two Scottish Country Dance clubs in the Edinburgh area, and I have to say that I agree with almost everything in the article. Scottish Country Dancing in Scotland is in serious (perhaps even terminal) decline. I attend dances and club nights regularly (and occasionally dances at other clubs), and you can see the main problem: an aging membership. The vast majority of members and dancers are aged over 50 and there are precious few under 40. Scottish Country Dancing in Scotland is facing a simple but very bleak future: age will take its toll on the present membership, so who will be keeping the dancing alive in 10-15 years?

So how can this decline be reversed? Turning things around will not be easy. I know that in the Edinburgh area, significant steps have been made to teach Scottish Country Dancing in schools, with even junior balls being held. But this is a long-term initiative. Scottish Country Dancing requires action NOW. The RSCDS regards itself as the "watchdogs". Scottish

Country Dancing requires action from the RSCDS and, especially its leadership, NOW.

Unfortunately, the first step they must take is to accept most of the criticism in Finlay's article and realise the dire consequences if things do not change. If not, there will come a point in the near future when it will be too late. The decline will be terminal.

To return to an earlier subject of correspondence in your Letters Pages, namely the criticism aimed at those who do not always dance the called dance at ceilidhs. I have to confess that I am one of the prime offenders (actually, if I am totally honest, one of the main instigators of this practice). I really cannot understand why this practice is so frowned upon.

Stalinism is alive and well in the ceilidh halls of Scotland!! Surely at a ceilidh, each set is a separate entity, so if some sets are doing their own thing, it should not affect any other sets. I have been at some dances (notably John Carswell's Linlithgow Scotch Hop) where two different dances are danced simultaneously, with one line of sets doing one of the dances, while another line does the other dance. This works fine. I only wish more bands would do this.

Lastly, I would like congratulate Dance On! on the quality of the magazine. I have found every issue very interesting, especially the instructions for the dances (we can try them at ceilidhs).

**Brian Martin**



Dear Karin,  
Let's be Friends!

Over the past few months there have been a series of very strong opinions expressed in this magazine about the various merits of different forms of dance and the standard to which they are performed, and what seems to be apparent is that many views are entrenched and this is to the detriment of all forms of dancing.

There are several subjects for discussion here - let's take the standard of dancing, which usually relates to country dancing. Over the length and breadth of the country, children, teenagers and adults play football every week and strive to

improve - their heroes are David Beckham, Michael Owen etc - the stars who perform at the highest skill levels. Why then do so many people make derogatory comments about dancers who strive to perform to a high standard? We admire our sporting and entertainment heroes for their excellence in performance - so why not our dancers?

If you think about football, would David Beckham be happy playing Sunday amateur football all the time - I am sure he wouldn't, he wants to spend most of his time playing with those of a similar standard, but there will be times when he is willing to share his skills and experience with those who are still learning.

As "experienced" dancers we do sometimes find it frustrating when, having paid for a ticket, we spend the whole evening dancing in sets which fall apart and don't manage to complete a single time through successfully, particularly when programmes are published in advance and there is time for the dances to be learned. If it happens occasionally that's fine, and we can laugh with those who got into a complete muddle, and are quite happy to shout instructions when it's helpful - even "experienced" dancers make mistakes sometimes.

None of us was born knowing how to dance, we all had to learn and made mistakes along the way, no doubt annoying others who were more confident. Dances specifically for beginners are held occasionally and these are a great idea for boosting confidence - and the more advanced dancers should go along and be helpful and encouraging, and not stay away. When learning to dance, many of us have "suffered" from the aloofness of some dancers and do try not to behave the same way, but we should be allowed to dance correctly too - it is still sociable and a great sense of achievement and fun to complete a difficult dance correctly. Having said that, ceilidh dancers can forget about newcomers too. We went to the Musselburgh Accordion and Fiddle Festival and decided to stay for the Ceilidh; we danced The Gay Gordons and The St Bernard's Waltz, but Eva Three-steps and Hesitation Waltzes were new to us, so we sat out. No one came to ask us if we would like to dance, even people who knew us, and were aware we were not ceilidh dancers. The



# Your Letters

problem of not making newcomers welcome is not just an issue for country dancers.

On the subject of summer dances raised by John Carswell, I think you have to be aware of your market. Some summer dances, such as Ayr, seem to be aimed at people who are dancers; others such as his Scotch Hop are aimed at visitors. I agree that Princess Gardens in Edinburgh should present a friendly, encouraging face but if an event is designed for those who can already dance the programme would not be suitable for non-dancers or beginners. There are other summer dances which are aimed at visitors – try the summer dancing in Moffat Town Hall – every Thursday in June, July and August with easy dances – all walked through once, and everyone made very welcome.

Comments about the RSCDS have also abounded. The original concept of the RSCDS was brilliant, and over the years it has done great things for country dancing, not least of which is publishing dances and music, and without these dancing would not be where it is today. The problem is that times have changed and the RSCDS has not changed quickly enough to keep up. Dancing, we are told, is not "cool", and looking at the average age of those attending most dances you can see why young people are not encouraged to join in. Despite the fact that some of us "birl and twirl" (contrary to RSCDS instructions), many dancers struggle to complete the required figures in time.

The RSCDS was late in developing a useful website, long after many branches had them, and the recently collected database of members' names and addresses did not ask for e-mail addresses or mobile phone numbers where available, only postal addresses. The RSCDS needs to appeal to young people and most young people use e-mail or texting as the first choice for communication, rather than "snail mail". Marketing needs to be proactive, it needs to be sold to them as something exciting that's good fun – there are lots of children dancing in schools – let's keep them as they get older.

We all have our different attitudes to dancing but, in the end, we all do it for the pleasure it gives us; the dancing and the music lift us and make us smile. The last thing

we should be doing is falling out amongst ourselves, whatever kind of dancing we do, let's be friends with each other, help each other along, encourage more people to join us and, most of all, enjoy ourselves.

**Sue Petyt & Iain Hale**



Dear Karin,

I thought this may be of interest:

The Claims Of Dancing

"The claims of dancing as an essential part of education have recently been advanced in more than one newspaper. Considering that dancing – included under the heading of music – had an important part in Plato's ideal curriculum, it is not surprising that its comparative neglect in modern times should have been noted with regret by the more enlightened educationalists. There is no need to draw attention to the hygienic value of what, half a century ago, we should have been permitted to refer to as terpsichorean exercises. This consideration alone would warrant its inclusion in any possible system of instruction, and even life. But it is far more than a mere gymnastic. Its tonic effects extend from the toes and fingers to that pineal gland where Descartes placed the temporal lodging of the soul. It is a spontaneous expression of elemental poetry, a spread of joyousness, rippling up through the whole diapason of being. It dignifies our animal nature, so "that one might almost say the body thought," it soothes and refreshes the mind by cradling it in cadences which conform automatically to the highest laws of science and aesthetics; and it satisfies the soul by its own inner soul of harmony."

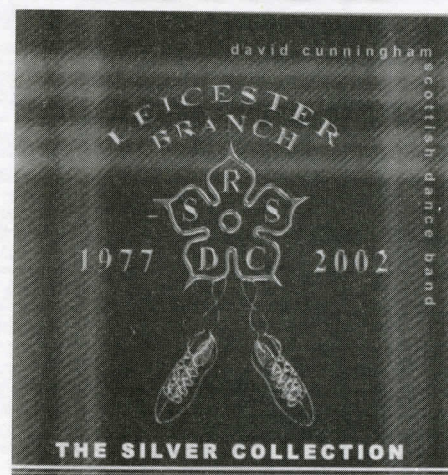
**(Extract from the Glasgow Herald 1839 – How times have changed?)**

"The essence of good dance is in Transition not Position" (Madonna) – Think about it!!

**Patrick Murray**



# CD Review



## **The Silver Collection** **The David Cunningham** **Scottish Dance Band** **TRCD 0302**

**Copies from Barbara Sharp**  
**9 Granville Crescent**  
**Wigston Leics.**  
**Tel 01162-889 182**  
**Barbara.sharp@virgin.net**

This first class CD has been published by The RSCDS Leicester Branch to coincide with their Silver Anniversary. The collection contains three reels – two at (8x32) and one at (4x32), one hornpipe (8x32), four jigs – one at (3x32), one at (4x32), one at (5x48) and one at (8x32) and seven strathspeys – one at (3x32), one at (3x40), three at (4x32), one at (4x40), and one at (1x80). The tempos are great and the music exciting, the dancers will not need any encouragement to take the floor with this music. With this wide selection of repetitions and indeed number of bars played this will be a must have for any dance class working from recorded music.

As an added bonus the instructions for five of the dances are printed on the sleeve – a great buy at £12.00 plus £1.50 P&P. The branch has produced a book of instructions for the other dances priced £3.50. I should add that the Falkirk Branch have already ordered copies of both CD and Book. Finally I should like to compliment David Cunningham and the band members on producing a superb CD for dancers and indeed teachers.

**Campbell Hunter**



# Alasdair's Dance Diary May

## Ceilidh & Old Time Dances

May 2005

Every Saturday	Fife	Largo Ward Village Hall	t.b.c.	8.30-11.30 No Bar	£3 (tea)	Door	Different bands each week.
Every Sunday	Fife St Andrews	Scout Hall, East Scores	Live Music	2pm-5pm	£3 (tea)	Door or tel 01334 472 375	MC/Caller Charlie Todd
Every Tuesday	Glasgow University	Student Union, University Ave.		7.30-10pm Bar	£4	0141 334 9869 07050 222 173	Dance Club
Every Wednesday	Newtongrange	Morris Club	Live Music	7.30-10pm	£3/£1.50	Door (Karin Ingram)	Ceilidh & Old Time Dance Club
	Glasgow	St Andrews in the Square	Live Music	7.30-9.30 Bar	£4	Door (Tricia Matthews)	Ceilidh & Old Time Dance Class
13 <sup>th</sup>	Edinburgh	Minto Hotel	Canongate Cadgers	8pm-12mn	£6/£4	Door	Family-Caller
14 <sup>th</sup>	Beaully	Phipps Hall	Robert Whitehead	7.30-11.30	£5 (supper)	Door	Charity
	Dunbar	Dunbar Castle	George King	8pm-11.30	£2 [Bar]	Door	Social Club
15 <sup>th</sup>	Arbroath	Café Project	Steven Carcary	7.30-10pm		Door	Old Time Dances
20 <sup>th</sup>	Perthshire	Bridge of Earn Hall	Simon Howie	8pm-11.30	£5 B.Y.O.B.	Door	Stovie supper
21 <sup>st</sup>	Glasgow	Partick Burgh Halls	John Carmichael	8pm-11.30 Bar	£5 membership	0141 339 9679	Highlanders
	Perthshire	Blackford, Village Hall	Alan Doig	8pm-11.30 No Bar	£4 (tea & biscuit)	Door	Soft drinks available
22 <sup>nd</sup>	Montrose	Park Hotel	Steven Carcary Duo	2pm-5pm		Door	A & F Club ceilidh
	Arbroath	Café Project	Ian Cruickshanks	7.30-10pm		Door	Old Time Dances
	Glencarse	Village Hall	George Rennie	7.30-10pm	£2.50	Door	Charity
25 <sup>th</sup>	Dufftown	Memorial Hall		7.30-10.30		Door	Monthly Social
26 <sup>th</sup>	Fife	Windygates Village Hall	Bruce Lindsay	8pm-11pm No Bar	£3 (supper)		
27 <sup>th</sup>	Helensburgh (Highlanders)	St Joseph's Hall, Grant Street	Occasionals	8pm-1am Bar	£5.50	01436 672 927 01389 841 208	Dance (AGM at 7pm prompt)
28 <sup>th</sup>	Dunbar	Dunbar Castle	Davie Strang	8pm-11.30	£2 [Bar]	Door	Social Club
	West Lothian	Pumpherstoun Village Hall	Neil Hardie	7.30-11.30 No Bar	£3.50 B.Y.O.B.	01506 417 512 01506 434 365	Advance Ticket only
29 <sup>th</sup>	Arbroath	Café Project	Holly Duo	7.30-10pm		Door	Old Time Dances

## Scottish Country Dancing

May 2005

13 <sup>th</sup>	Edinburgh	Heriot-Watt	The Waverley	7.30pm	£25	0131 339 7989	Highland Charity Ball
	Beaully	Phipps Hall	Robert Whitehead	8pm		01224 644 030	
	Turrif	St Ninian's Hall	Frank Thomson Duo	8pm		01224 644 030	
	Beaully	Phipps Hall	Robert Whitehead	8pm	£5	01463 782 496	Kilmorack SCD Class
14 <sup>th</sup>	Dunblane	Victoria Hall	Nicol McLaren	7.30pm	£4	Door (Raffle)	Stirling RSCDS Summer Dancing
	Castle Douglas	Crossmichael Hall	Jean McConnachie	7.30pm	£5	01556 620 658	Castle Douglas RSCDS
16 <sup>th</sup>	Troon	Concert Hall	David Ross	7.30pm	£2.50	Spectators £1.50	Summer Dancing
20 <sup>th</sup>	West Kilbride	Public Hall	Susan MacFadyen	7.30pm		01294 823 865	ASMA fundraising dance
	Rothienorman	Village Hall	Frank Thomson	8pm		01224 644 030	
	Isle of Skye	Portree	Gordon Shand	8pm	Buffet	01478 612 491	Weekend Ticket £25
21 <sup>st</sup>	Isle of Skye	Portree	Daytime Classes	10am to	12.30pm	01478 612 491	Teacher:- Anne Smyth
	Isle of Skye	Portree	Gordon Shand	7.30pm	Supper	01478 612 491	Booking required.
	Westhill	Ashdale Hall	Sandy Nixon	7.30pm		01464 821 171	
	Pitlochry	Town Hall	Colin Dewar	7.30pm	£5/£1.50	01796 473 488	Summer Dancing
23 <sup>rd</sup>	Troon	Concert Hall	Sandy Nixon	7.30pm	£2.50	Spectators £1.50	Summer Dancing
27 <sup>th</sup>	Keith	British Legion Hall	Frank Thomson	8pm		01224 644 030	
30 <sup>th</sup>	Troon	Concert Hall	Kenny Thomson	7.30pm	£2.50	Spectators £1.50	Proceeds to 'The Ark' charity



# Alasdair's Dance Diary June

Ceilidh & Old Time Dances							
June 2005							
Every Saturday	Fife	Largo Ward Village Hall	t.b.c.	8.30-11.30 No Bar	£3 (tea)	Door	Different bands each week.
Every Sunday	Fife St Andrews	Scout Hall, East Scores	Live Music	2pm-5pm	£3 (tea)	Door or tel 01334 472 375	MC/Caller Charlie Todd
Every Tuesday	Glasgow University	Student Union, University Ave.		7.30-10pm Bar	£4	0141 334 9869 07050 222 173	Dance Club
Every Wednesday	Newtongrange	Morris Club	Live Music	7.30-10pm	£3/£1.50	Door (Karin Ingram)	Ceilidh & Old Time Dance Club
	Glasgow	St Andrews in the Square	Live Music	7.30-9.30pm Bar	£4	Door (Tricia Matthews)	Ceilidh & Old Time Dance Class
4 <sup>th</sup>	Meikleour	Village Hall	Andy McGrath	8pm-11.30	£3.50 Bar	Door	
	Auchendinny, Midlothian	Glencorse Comm Centre	Willie Simpson	7.30-11.30 No Bar	£5 Sausage Roll supper	Door or 01721 723 468	(near Penicuik)
5 <sup>th</sup>	Angus	Tealing	Johnny Duncan	7.30-10pm	£2.50	Door	
10 <sup>th</sup>	Keith	Royal Hotel	Graeme Mitchell	8pm-late		Festival	Committee event
11 <sup>th</sup>	Midlem, Borders	Village Hall	Eric Goodfellow	7.30pm-12 Bar + tea	£5 bring own supper	01835 870 244	Proceeds to Charity
	Dunbar	Dunbar Castle	Dod Hutchison	8pm-11.30	£2 [Bar]	Door	Social Club
	Cardross	Geilston Hall	Ian Cathcart	8pm-12mn	£8.50 BBQ	01389 841 004	Ticket only - (Bar)
12 <sup>th</sup>	Arbroath	Café Project	Bill Anderson	7.30-10pm		Door	Old Time Dances
	Glencarse	Village Hall	Jimmy Lindsay	7.30-10pm	£2.50	Door	Charity
18 <sup>th</sup>	Helensburgh (Highlanders)	Largs, Willowbank Hotel	t.b.a.	7pm	Dinner Dance	01436 672 927 01389 841 208	Ticket only
	Glasgow	Partick Burgh Halls	Charlie Kirkpatrick	8pm-11.30 Bar	£5 membership	0141 339 9679	Highlanders Club
	Perthshire	Blackford, Village Hall	Eden	8pm-11.30 No Bar	£4 (tea & biscuit)	Door	Soft drinks available
19 <sup>th</sup>	Montrose	Park Hotel	Wayne Robertson	2pm-5pm		Door	A & F Club ceilidh
	Arbroath	Café Project	Mac Kinnear	7.30-10pm		Door	Old Time Dances
25 <sup>th</sup>	Dunbar	Dunbar Castle	Alex & Alistair	8pm-11.30	£2 [Bar]	Door	Social Club
26 <sup>th</sup>	Arbroath	Café Project	Ian Cruickshanks	7.30-10pm		Door	Old Time Dances
	Glencarse	Village Hall	Johnnie Duncan	7.30-10pm	£2.50	Door	Charity
29 <sup>th</sup>	Dufftown	Memorial Hall		7.30-10.30		Door	Monthly Social
30 <sup>th</sup>	Fife	Windygates Village Hall	Bruce Lindsay	8pm-11pm No Bar	£3 (supper)	Door	

Scottish Country Dancing							
June 2005							
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Moffat	Town Hall	Willie McRobert	7.30pm	£2.50	01683 300 266	Summer Dancing
	Strathaven	Rankin Church Hall	-	7.30pm	£3	01357 521 953	Summer Dancing
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Glasgow	Kessington Hall	Donald MacLeod	7.30pm	£5	01360 550 256	Summer Dancing
	Montrose	Old Church Hall	Frank Thomson	8pm		01224 644 030	
4 <sup>th</sup>	Edinburgh	Assembly Rooms	Colin Dewar	7.30pm	£30/£27.50	0131 337 4482	Edinburgh RSCDS - Annual Ball
	Pitlochry	Town Hall	David Anderson	7.30pm	£5/£1.50	01796 473 488	Summer Dancing
	Darlington	Dolphin Centre	Marian Anderson	7.30pm	£7.50	01748 823 371	Supper
6 <sup>th</sup>	Troon	Concert Hall	Marian Anderson	7.30pm	£2.50	Spectators £1.50	Summer Dancing
	Dundee	Marryat Hall	James Coutts	7.30pm		01382 642 131	Summer Dancing
7 <sup>th</sup>	Dufftown	Memorial Hall	-	7.30pm		01542 887 616	Summer Dancing
9 <sup>th</sup>	Moffat	Town Hall	Willie McRobert	7.30pm	£2.50	01683 300 266	Summer Dancing
	Strathaven	Rankin Church Hall	-	7.30pm	£3	01357 521 953	Summer Dancing
10 <sup>th</sup>	Ellon	Brownie Hut	Dennis Morrison	8pm		01224 644 030	
	Ballater	Victoria Hall	Frank Thomson	8pm		01224 644 030	
11 <sup>th</sup>	Dingwall	Town Hall	Lindsay Weir	7.30pm	£5	01997 423 373	Dingwall SCD Club Rally
	Dunblane	Victoria Hall	Colin Dewar	7.30pm	£4	Door (Raffle)	Stirling RSCDS Summer Dancing
12 <sup>th</sup>	Whittington	Village Hall	-	5.30pm		015242 41986	North West Craven RSCDS
13 <sup>th</sup>	Troon	Concert Hall	Colin Dewar	7.30pm	£2.50	Spectators £1.50	Summer Dancing
	Dundee	Marryat Hall	David Cumming	7.30pm		01382 642 131	Summer Dancing
15 <sup>th</sup>	Dunfermline	Glen Pavilion	George Meikle	7.30pm	£4	01383 720 972	Summer Dancing
16 <sup>th</sup>	Moffat	Town Hall	Willie McRobert	7.30pm	£2.50	01683 300 266	Summer Dancing
	Strathaven	Rankin Church Hall	-	7.30pm	£3	01357 521 953	Summer Dancing
17 <sup>th</sup>	Kemnay	Kirk Centre	Frank Thomson	8pm		01224 644 030	
	Dumfries	Loreburn Hall	Lothian	7.30pm	£6	01387 265 813	Dumfries RSCDS
18 <sup>th</sup>	Pitlochry	Town Hall	David Oswald	7.30pm	£5/£1.50	01796 473 488	Summer Dancing
20 <sup>th</sup>	Troon	Concert Hall	Karyn McCulloch	7.30pm	£2.50	Spectators £1.50	Summer Dancing
	Dundee	High School	Ron Kerr	7.30pm		01382 642 131	Summer Dancing
23 <sup>rd</sup>	Moffat	Town Hall	Willie McRobert	7.30pm	£2.50	01683 300 266	Summer Dancing
	Strathaven	Rankin Church Hall	-	7.30pm	£3	01357 521 953	Summer Dancing
24 <sup>th</sup>	Alford	Public Hall	Frank Thomson	8pm		01651 863 052	
27 <sup>th</sup>	Troon	Concert Hall	Lothian	7.30pm	£2.50	Spectators £1.50	Summer Dancing
	Dundee	Marryat Hall	Sandy Nixon	7.30pm		01382 642 131	Summer Dancing
29 <sup>th</sup>	Dunfermline	Glen Pavilion	Roger Cook	7.30pm	£4	01383 720 972	Summer Dancing
30 <sup>th</sup>	Moffat	Town Hall	Willie McRobert	7.30pm	£2.50	01683 300 266	Summer Dancing
	Strathaven	Rankin Church Hall	-	7.30pm	£3	01357 521 953	Summer Dancing
	Settle	St John's	-			015242 41986	North West Craven RSCDS



# And Back To The Original...

**I** have it on good authority that a decree has gone forth from those who make it their business to issue such decrees that musicians who play for Scottish country dancing should always end their sets with the original tune for the dance. Why?

It is difficult to believe that any lone member of the human race wasted time and effort drafting an utterance so totally bereft of meaning, point or purpose. This is clearly the work of a committee driven by an irrepressible desire to find a cure for which there was no known disease. In legislative terms, it is a crime creation scheme designed specifically to make criminals out of some of the more imaginative and progressive musical thinkers among the extremely gifted musicians currently playing for Scottish Country Dancing.

From a dancer's point of view, the practice of returning to the original serves no useful purpose or at least no purpose so useful as to warrant crippling musical imagination to the extent that it does. It may help inattentive emcees to gather their bearings or warn class teachers that the end is nigh but neither case is strong enough to justify the stultifying effect that the practice can have on the quality of the music.

Those who seek to constrain creativity in this way would do well to learn from the attempts of L'Academie des Beaux Arts to suppress impressionism in the nineteenth century. History's cold and unforgiving eye makes their actions look vain, risible and just a little pathetic. Even the attempt to establish "impressionism" as a derogatory term failed abjectly although there is little doubt that the members of L'Academie who coined the phrase thought themselves incredibly witty at the time.

Most dancers have easier ways of working out that a dance has reached its end than trying to play "Name that Tune" while negotiating the intricacies of diagonal rights and lefts or whatever other pleasure the dance deviser has dreamt up

to test the dancer's mental and physical agility. I can say with absolute certainty that I have never been at a dance where I have heard any dancer complain about the fact that the band did not finish on the original tune. I suspect that any complaints that do arise do so because the mysterious but omnipresent "rule book" decrees that they should rather than out of any deep understanding of the nature and nuances of Scottish dance music (or whatever other type of music has been hijacked for the original).

If the practice of returning to the original does not help dancers and cannot be justified on the grounds of the limited help that it may afford teachers and emcees, the only remaining considerations must relate to the music itself or control for the sake of control (surely not!).

In the combined interests of charity and relevance, I shall dismiss the notion that this idea was spawned solely to satisfy the needs of the rule creation industry, which leaves us with nothing but the intrinsic qualities of the music itself.

There is nothing inherent in any original tune for any Scottish Country Dance that demands a return to it at the end. Indeed, it would be fair to say that some original tunes hardly justify an appearance at the beginning of the set let alone anywhere else. Without wishing to get into a long ontological argument (although we can always hope), any idea that a tune contains these qualities can exist only in the minds of those who have turned the idea into a mantra. People versed in such psychological analyses can only look on "with sad and wondering eyes" at the extent to which emotional attachment to a particular viewpoint has managed to blot out the realities of the music itself and in so doing, eliminate so many creative possibilities.

Sets of tunes for Scottish Country Dancing are not in sonata form or indeed in any other extended musical form that may require some element of thematic restatement to balance the structure and complete the musical argument. In a set of

**By Finlay Forbes**

tunes designed for dancing, each tune is a musical structure in its own right. Any attempt to equate returning to the original with classical recapitulation is fanciful to the point of absurdity when what we are considering are sets of completely formed tunes.

It is possible for a set of tunes to be organised in a way that makes working back to the original aesthetically satisfying. It is equally possible and at least equally musical for a set to develop in a way that takes it away from the original into a melodic style or tonal region from which a satisfactory return to the original is no longer an aesthetically pleasing phenomenon.

Perhaps the most striking recorded example of this is the late Andrew Rankine's "Bratach Bana". In this set, Andrew uses progressive diminution to build up from the very open and easy going original to the much busier "Black Bear Hornpipe" before plunging back into the original tune. The effect is pure bathos. The key change from D Major to A Major is straight out of the Jimmy Shand School of set building ("naething ower fancy"). The problem lies not with the change of key but with the sudden change in melodic style from an energetic tune containing a lot of short notes



**Andrew Rankine**  
photograph courtesy of  
**Jimmy Clinkscale**



into a more relaxed tune made up largely of longer notes. The rate at which the notes enter the listener's ear slows down suddenly causing the whole structure to sag.

Some would argue that Andrew Rankine should have selected his tunes with a bit more care to avoid such an anti-climactic ending but that solution would have diminished the set's musical interest by limiting it to tunes similar in style to the original.

Iain MacPhail reworked this set brilliantly when he recorded it with his own band. Instead of returning to the original, he built the set up to finish with a flourish on "The Black Bear". The result is highly effective and incidentally still preserves Andrew Rankine's original and very elegant key sequence of A Major, B minor and D Major albeit with an extra pair of orthodox key changes added near the beginning to set up the glorious final run home.

In some cases, original tunes may have closing bars that lack the air of finality necessary to bring the set to a musically satisfying close. Some listeners and, more significantly, some bandleaders struggle to find the mixolydian ending of "Mairi's Wedding" a satisfactory conclusion to anything. Any attempt to recast the ending in the major mode spoils the tune's unique and slightly wistful character as we are transported from the misty, mysterious Hebrides to the Hackney Empire in the heyday of the music hall era. "Mairi's Wedding" is undoubtedly an excellent starting tune but its aptness as a closing tune is at best open to question. Most bandleaders, when left to their own devices, recognise this and end with something that resolves naturally on to a major chord rather than trying to contrive an orthodox major ending out of a modal melody.

Some popular alternative tunes (such as "Donald Iain Rankine" and "The Banjo Breakdown") have such an air of finality about them that moving on to anything else requires considerable care and thought. Returning to an original just because it is the original is unlikely to be a very satisfactory answer.

In order to clear the ground for further debate, it is important to establish at this point that the progress of music depends on recognising that there are

no immutable rules. In any art form, those principles described as "rules" are no more than frequently observed and occasionally ignored conventions. Any art form that rests too long and too comfortably within a set of established conventions faces certain death.

There may have been a time, somewhere around 1924, when musicians who played for Scottish Country Dancing required a fair degree of guidance on matters like bar counts and tune changing but these days have long passed. At this stage in history, all (or virtually all) musicians who play regularly for Scottish Country Dancing are fully aware of bar counts and go to considerable lengths to create sets that help dancers along.

The great Sir Jimmy Shand created some outstanding sets by restricting his tonal palette almost exclusively to sharp keys and limiting himself to very closely related key changes. There is no doubt that it worked extremely well and still does for bands who choose to work in this way, but there is more to Scottish dance music than that. Today's top bandleaders, conscious of the risks inherent in slavishly imitating what has gone before, have chosen to build on the past without being constrained by it. Whether the results are successful or not is a matter of opinion. I believe that they are but I have no doubt that there are others who would disagree and who long for a return to the simpler world of the age when "Take the Floor" was called simply "Scottish Dance Music".

Regardless of opinion, the fact is that most modern bandleaders build their sets differently from their predecessors. An influx of more formally trained musicians has led to a totally different philosophy of set building where variety and contrast are seen (or should that be heard?) as preferable to the uniformity of old. The unity of close key changes and the 1,2,3,1 layout of tunes has given way to techniques such as progressive diminution (Iain MacPhail's "Bratach Bana") or augmentation (the same band's "Silver Tassie") and the use of remote key changes ("Lass o' Gowrie" to "The Greendykes" in Colin Dewar's "Bratach Bana"). These practices tend to be inimical to a musically satisfying return to the original tune. Diminution and



**Iain MacPhail © Northbeat**

augmentation, if worked effectively, lead to a penultimate tune that is too different in style from the original to make the return home sound anything other than awkward. Remote key changes, because they are deliberately designed to alter the tonal perspective, need to be carefully placed and timed if they are not to make the set sound fragmentary or even disintegrate completely. The key sequence A, D, B flat, F works well when played in the order 1, 2, 3, 4 in four blocks of 64 bars. It is a lot less effective when played in the "traditional" (traditional?) order 1,2,3,4,2,3,4,1. The dramatic effect of the critical change between D and B flat comes too soon and becomes decidedly *déjà vu* and a bit tired on the second hearing. Apart from that, the sheer frequency of the key changes destroys the shape of the set and gives it what we Doric speakers would call a "half hung tee" sound.

The reality is that sometimes a return to the original is effective and sometimes it isn't. Having a hard and fast rule about something that depends so heavily on a combination of personal preferences and artistic circumstances makes no sense at all.

Maybe we should leave the dancing to the dancers and the music to the musicians especially given the superb quality of the musicians that currently grace our bandstands.



# Pas-de-Bas

## *A potpourri of facts, thoughts and opinions about dancing in Scotland*

*By the late Bobby MacLeod*

**D**ance music, generally speaking, is that which transmits its pulse in order that people are motivated to move their bodies to match its tempo. Its appeal is world wide, transcending even the barriers of creeds, colours and location, beyond the imagination. Thus the comparatively small contribution of our Scottish dance bands echoes and reciprocates the universal bonds created by ordinary people enjoying themselves, an enjoyment shared by listeners more and more in this era of mass communication. As this century nears its completion we find in Scotland a great enthusiasm for our music – happily for me anyway – not confined to the intelligentsia searching for reasons, but among the youngsters from city, town and country alike.

Having been involved in the scene quite deeply for some years I feel privileged to write down some opinions and hope that by doing so I shan't be precluded from further involvement! I have confined myself to self experience in my comment and deduction as this is not intended to be more than the voicing of opinions and views expressed by a Scottish-based dance musician.

To dance a person may use any part of the body, as for instance in Egypt!

We find it essential to transfer our body weight from one leg to the other, the pulse of the music being the catalyst that sparks us off collectively and sustains the dance. The basic step in nearly all our dance efforts is called the "Pas-de-Bas", a French term sometimes colloquially known as the "Paddybaa", although I do not think the Irish had anything to do with it. To tell you how to shift your weight musically from leg to leg in a rhythmic way should be easy; by taking a step with the left foot and bringing the right foot alongside it, temporarily taking the weight, before going on to the left foot, is the first fundamental, leading to transferring the weight progressively from leg to leg.

It is fair to say that all our dancers employ some form of this step which, incidentally, is the basic step used in Rock-'n-roll, Disco, Jive and the like. If you can beat time to music, you can "Pas-de-Bas".

I have little doubt that the French

influence in Scotland heralded, through the Royal Court, the arrival from Europe of figure dancing. The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society (RSCDS) for example, go to considerable lengths to inform us of the source of their original dances by giving us dates, often adding "Danced at such and such", or "Collected at so and so".

I would certainly not argue about the accuracy of the information, although any enquiring mind would ask itself the question, "Who danced so and so at such and such?"

Logic would prompt one to deduce, fairly or not, that it was **not** the bothy hands, the fisherfolk, the teuchters or even ordinary townsfolk of the period. In turn, by elimination, we are left with the feudal heads, chiefs, dukes, duchesses and all!

The same logic prompts me to add that these very same aristocrats have preserved some of our traditional dances in quite a remarkable manner, as they still dance the "Reels" as they call them in quite the most relaxed way, not including, curiously, the more modern Strathspey.

Little imagination is required to picture a large country house, or even a castle, as the venue, with the air of expectancy hovering over the arriving guests as the preparations proceed. The food and drink are laid out, the cloaks discarded as the bonhomie of the host and hostess permeates right through, while the band tunes up, checking its own detail in preparation. Albeit sometimes in antique finery, the company take the floor chattering as noisily as only the "toffs" can, until the formal chord is struck, when a concentrated silence prevails until the tune starts signifying that the band is in charge. The colour, contrast and character blend the scene, the "beat" is made secure by the movement, while the musician observes the footwork and timing of the males, he has no doubts about the ladies' dexterous footwork, even if it is hidden coquettishly.

To imagine the very first events of this type happening a long, long time ago, when dancing of this kind was being

introduced, is to picture the reaction of the various house and other servants – quite surely they would wish to emulate the dancing and fun enjoyed by the people they were "in service" to. I can visualize, easily, the kitchenmaid and the ghillie having a wee experimental swing in the pantry. And the mistress catching them at it.

All leading to a "teach in", in turn putting them through an Eightsome, simplifying the "chain" by linking arms and "cutting" the figure by "birling". Perhaps this is why in the north east the Eightsome can still consist of a series of perversely lengthy "birls" far, far longer than the bars of music cater for!

The wrong way to "birl", incidentally, is to cross hands. Far more solid torque is created if each partner's right hand is placed on the other's waist.

The obvious connection between the aristocracy and the military, coupled with some shrewd historic psychology, is responsible for the "Highland dancing" as we know it. The traditional Sword dance is fundamentally based on the "Pas-de-Bas", with decorative embellishments, high cuts and the like, all calling for perfect balance and skill. The military influences the precise nature of the Foursome and Tulloch, at the same time capturing the imagination of the Highlanders by likening some of the dance movements to the action of the indigenous stag posturing his machismo.

To this day regimental teams involve themselves in competition at premier Highland gatherings, demonstrating in the process the cultural significance of Scotland's unique international identity.

While world wide participation exists in the competition sense, mostly by the fair sex, no Highland gathering is complete without it. Commendably the practice of bedecking wee lassies with medals (sometimes to influence judges, I'm told) has given way to the charmingly simple "Aboyne" outfit which, while being distinctively traditional, still enables these females to look what they really are, poised, attractive and very vivacious.

The thought comes to mind that



perhaps, like the stag, males in the distant past performed some kind of dance to impress the females, and in my mind at least, this practice remains unchanged, which in turn leads me to the ballroom scene, leaving at the back of my mind the horrifying thought that dances in two lines could well have been instigated by the "Bloody Butcher" and his Cumberland Reel. Did the "Lancers" come from Europe via England? From where did we inherit the "Valeta", the "Polka", the "Barn Dance", the "Two Step", if not through the ballroom? The Quadrille definitely has a French ring to it, and there are several versions still performed in Scotland from the "Jig Time" to the "D'Albert", which can still be requested in Aberdeen. One has to take account of the fact that, prior to gramophones, music travelled either printed or by ear, journeying by either method from Europe to the Americas, Australia – in fact anywhere – in the minds of emigrant musicians, ultimately finding more common ground and embellishment in the process. Fundamentally, however, the idea remains in the shape of melody, rhythm and order as so well illustrated by the Cape Breton Ensemble which visited Scotland in 1983. The character of the modern ballroom may well have been shaped during the period when good manners were regarded as being of prime importance in society generally. The courtesies displayed at the Hunt Ball, or other prominent social occasions were no doubt passed on to the ballrooms, the patrons of which paid to "get in" at the door. No doubt the Industrial Revolution situation necessitated the activity of social recreation, with the added bonus of a tangible "Boy meets Girl" syndrome. The actual dancing, I feel, travelled from the south, gathering local nuances on the way through the Midlands, the north of England, and in a very unique way in Northumberland, where the traditional "Rant" step (a variation of the "Pas-de-Bas") combined to create a perfect marriage of Old Time and traditional dancing. In a programme danced there, The Eightsome reel is always perfect in that the dancers start and finish together, having correctly done the movements to the music. The band must be adaptable and versatile in this particular, and pleasant, part of the world as it may be required to play for "The Moonlight Saunter" immediately after the reel, a situation which can be further compounded by the requirement of the right music for "The Morpeth Rant" or "Ideal Schottische". Tempo is most critical here because of the

enthusiastic tradition of good dancing. As one travelled north, especially in the late 1940s the Border town of Hawick was a mecca for Old Time ballroom dancing, in whose programmes could



be encountered the "Circassian Circle", both forms of which were designed to make the company mix, as a progressive travelling movement was its main feature, rather like the "Waltz Country Dance".

The organisation of the Hawick programmes was invariably designed to contrast the tempi and the movement involved, set dances, sometimes called "heavy", being skillfully interspersed to suit the mood and physical stamina of the dancers.

Of course, in my view, the really good dancer could do the full course without too much physical effort, especially if enjoying equitable partners!

Still farther north, on the road to Edinburgh, Border towns and villages all cultivated local versions of dances, gradually changing the face of the programmes, the "Hulachan", a combination of Strathspey and Reel sometimes being featured.

Interestingly enough, the "Scotch Reel", and alternative "Strathspey and Reel" danced in the Highlands, seems to me to form the basis of the sets put together in Kerr's "Merrie Melodies", the Scottish dance bands' near biblical repository, where, by diligent search

one can find any combination of dance tunes.

While deliberately skirting our capital city with its wealth of culture, the central part of Scotland, which combines industrial and agricultural activity with manufacturing, the interest of the mining community in dancing as a recreation and social pursuit, remains notable.

I think that it is significant that the organised brass bands so popular with the miners had such a great influence on the dancing in the area; not only did the figures of Waltzes, Two Steps and the like become established, even more importantly, native Scottish tunes were harnessed to realise their new potential for figure dancing.

The contributions by my particular favourite, Lady Nairne, coupled with Sir Walter Scott, and of course, Burns himself, were incorporated into the dance band's repertoire mostly, it must be admitted, in waltzes where the sometimes slight alteration to the written form served to perpetuate popularly songs like "Comin' Thro' the Rye", "Jock of Hazeldean" and "Rise and Follow Charlie" to name but a few.

At the same time compositions like "The Original Boston Two Step" by Luke Cavendish Everett, and purposely written works by Felix Burns, became essentially part of the dance band's "Book". On reflection at this stage it is prudent to observe that the decorum of the dancers in all variety of venues had a great deal in common brought about, I know, by the desire to enjoy the company – this could even find comparison with various places of worship, which is a sobering thought – despite the fact that dancing and drink were synonymously linked.

Participation being the keynote, dancing was so popular that, in some areas (and Jimmy Shand himself told me), dancing would start at midnight on a Sunday (which had to be observed) and carry on into the sma' hours to slake the desire of the people to trip the light fantastic – little wonder that the skill and standards improved the actual performance to such a pitch that the average Scot could be relied on to "Pas-de-Bas" in any company.

***Dance On! would like to thank the family of the late Bobby MacLeod for giving permission to reproduce text from his book "Pas-de-Bas" published in 1984 by John Littlejohn Publications.***



# Dance Around

*With Flash @ Streaming Pictures*

**F**lash has been allowed out in pastures new this month, venturing south to the warmer climes of sunny Doncaster for the Doncaster RSCDS Branch Annual Ball. Judging by the difficulty in finding a hotel the dance should have been a sell out. This was not quite the case it appears most people were visiting the car event "Ripspeed".



But back to the dance, support was lower than previous years but for those who were there the dancing was no less enjoyable and the dancers has plenty of room to show off their foot work in the ever-popular dances of Gang the Same Gate, General Stuart's Reel and Silver Strathspey ("Wee Twa" as was). Excellent music was played by Marian Anderson and her SCD Band.



*Marian Anderson*

**T**ravelling north again to Penrith where the Penrith Scottish Country Dance Club held their annual Spring Dance, Jean McConnachie and her SCD band provided the music for the



*Jean McConnachie*



60 dancers. Some less well-known dances on the programme, and challenging ones too – Equilibrium, Cullen Skink and Loanhead of Daviot among them. Flash really needed to have his dancing head on that night!

**W**est into Dumfries & Galloway and the Castle Douglas Branch Day School Dance. This annual event was as popular as ever, drawing support from across the region including dancers from Ayr who



are always willing to support dances out of their area. Kenny Thomson supplied the music and the teachers were Linda Gaul and William Williamson.

As Flash was unable to attend the day school he had to rely on his intelligence network reports. Overall the report from the front line (or set) was a thumbs up.



*Gillian Hardstone*

The evening dance afterwards was an excellent programme of dances for all abilities including The Clansman (Derek Haynes), Laird of Milton's Daughter and Minister on the Loch, finishing with Todlen Hame.

It was nice to see some young people dancing including a young man who shows excellent promise in becoming a very a nice dancer indeed.

Next month Flash hopes to be dancing around in Moffat where Willie McRobert and his SCD Band will be playing every Thursday for the summer dance season in Moffat Town Hall during June, July and August.

*All photographs  
© Flash@Streaming Pictures*



# *Dance Around*



*Keith Stacey dancing at Doncaster*



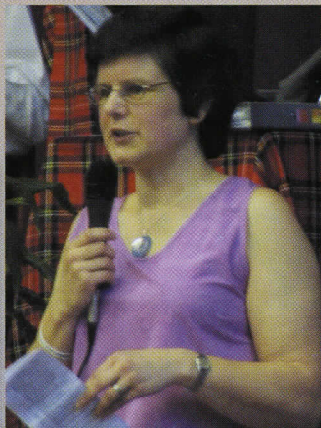
*The Marian Anderson SDB*



*Doncaster dancers*



*Jean McConnachie awaits the dancers at Penrith*



*Penrith MC*



*Penrith dancers*



*Penrith dancers*



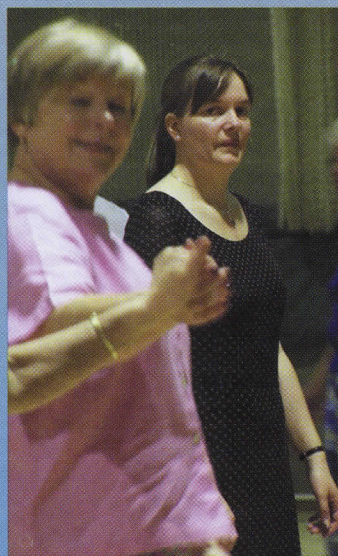
*Kenny Thomson and his Band*



*Colin Maxwell dancing at Castle Douglas*



*Castle Douglas Dancers*





# ***Take The Floor, Ballymena***



***The Colin Dewar SDB***



***Robbie Shepherd enjoys a Dashing White Sergeant with Amelia Macdonald & Jean Sharman***



***Robbie & Producer Ken Mutch***



***All Photographs © Seán Quinn Photos  
courtesy of Seán O'Neill, Maine Valley  
Accordion & Fiddle Club***

