

Dance On!



Take the Floor in Lonach Hall

**Ayr Branch Day School • RSCDS International
Teacher, Teacher! • Westerton Club
History of Irish Dance**

**R.R.P. £2.00
Issue 24 - October 2006**

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Website: www.northumbrian.info

INFORMATION Gathering Office 01665-712 044
TICKETS Alnwick Playhouse 01665-510 785

Scotland's Social Dances

This sixth IVP dance video acknowledges the 'crossover' of four different forms of Scottish social dancing – Old Time, Ceilidh, Scottish Country, and Sequence Dancing. In the past, these forms of dancing were separate, but now they are brought together on social dance programmes.

'Scotland's Social Dances' is a 2-hour video, introduced by **Jessie Stuart** of Dufftown, which demonstrates **56 dances: Quicksteps, Waltzes, Foxtrots, Saunters, Swings, Latin, Ceilidh, Scottish Country Dances and Quadrilles.**

- 2 DVD Set £19.99 + P&P
- VHS Video £17.99 + P&P

For more information contact: **Anita Mackenzie**
Telephone/Fax: **01259-724 169**
E-Mail: **AnitaIVP@aol.com**
Web: **www.scottishdancevideos.com**

Other Dance Videos Available

Scotland's Social Dances

56 Dances
Quicksteps, Waltzes, Foxtrots,
Saunters, Swings, Latin, Ceilidh,
Scottish Country Dances and Quadrilles

Editorial

Well, as you can see, we've started our "Club of the Month" feature on page 7, and first under the spotlight is Westerton Scottish Country Dance Club. If you would like your club to be featured in this way just send us a brief history of the club, details of meeting time, place etc and lots of photographs.

Finlay and George are up on their soapboxes again - remember we welcome healthy debate, if you disagree with what they say, let us know. We'll always print both sides of an argument if we have them!

It's always good to hear from our overseas readers, and this month we even have a dance from an Australian club. 38 bar jig - musicians across the land will be tearing their hair out!

Next month we will have full booking details for both the Orkney Ceilidh Weekend(13-16 April) and the Northbeat Island Fling (8-11 June). Hope lots of "Dance On!" readers will be going!

Karin

Take The Floor

28th October Gary Sutherland SDB
(John Ellis & his Highland Country Band)

4th November Neil MacEachern SDB
(OB from Albert Halls, Stirling)

11th November Bruce Lindsay SDB
(The Glenfiddich Fiddle Festival)

18th November Duncan MacKinnon SDB

25th November To be confirmed

2nd December Gordon Shand SDB
(OB from The Caol Hall, Fort William)

Saturday Evenings 19.05-20.30

BBC Radio Scotland 92-95 FM 810MW Digital Satellite 0116
www.bbc.co.uk/radioscotland

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To contact us

Telephone: 01450-850 262

Fax: 01450-850 602

Website: www.danceon.co.uk

Filters House, Dodburn, By Hawick, Scottish Borders TD9 0PG

Editor: Karin Ingram

E-mail: editor@danceon.co.uk

Marketing Manager: Laura Ellis

E-mail: laura@northbeat.co.uk

Mob: 07946-577 239

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Dance Around

With memories of summer fading fast, thoughts turn to dancing, and the events that are in the diary for the coming months. September has been slow on the dancing scene and Sue and I have had to travel farther afield for dancing.

As a reminder of the summer gone here are one or two pictures from the season of summer dancing in Moffat Town Hall. The dancing was organised by Sue Petyt, ably assisted by Christine and Murray Cameron. Held on every Thursday during August, this was a much shorter run than previous years when it was run throughout June, July and August. The event has been supported by a small grant from Dumfries and Galloway Council.



Music was provided by Willie McRobert, John Douglas and Ian McRobert with occasional guest appearance by Ian Kirkpatrick.



With Iain Hale, AKA Flash@ Streaming Pictures



Summer dancing in The Concert Hall at Troon was organised by the Ayr Branch of the RSCDS. This is always an event worth going to at least a few times during the summer despite, for us, the 150 mile return trip over "interesting" country roads. Pictures are from the evening Karyn McCulloch and her band played. Other bands featured during the season were Marian Anderson, Colin Dewar and Kenny Thomson.

Karyn McCulloch



The Ayr Branch Day School and Dance got the new season off to an excellent start. Like all events dancers come from a wide area to support, although the numbers were down this year it afforded plenty of room to dance. It is evident that there is a greater need for dance groups to support each other's events in their locality in order to make them viable.

Teacher for the class was Margo Priestly, supported by musician Jennifer Wilson, and it is nice to be able to attract teachers from out of area who bring a different style of approach. Amongst other dances, Margo taught Hunter's Moon and Harvest Moon.

Some different dances on the evening programme to challenge the grey matter, including Preston Mill and The Wishing Well.

David Cunningham was supported by Ian Adamson on drums with an unexpected but welcome appearance by Colin Dewar on second box.

Ayr Branch Day School



Colin Dewar, Ian Adamson & David Cunningham



Wilma Brown Helen Frame Margo Priestley & Jennifer Wilson

The International Branch of the RSCDS

Although Scottish Country Dancing is danced all over the world, with over 160 branches of the RSCDS in various locations, what happens if you find yourself in a position where being a member of a branch is not feasible? You still want to dance, you still want to keep up with what's going on, you still want to have access to other dancers, dances, music, and you still want to belong to the RSCDS family. What do you do?

You join The International Branch! So far it has 150 dancers and, we are

mail, and by post on request, with the odd phone call thrown in. The International Branch was started to give individual dancers a means of communicating with others – the members are the branch – the branch is what the members make of it.

The Branch committee is based in Scotland, Luxembourg, France/Scotland, Holland, Norway, Austria/England and our Editor, who also plays the accordion, has so far lived in Scotland, USA and Belgium in the last year or so, as his work takes him from place to place. It hasn't stopped him from publishing though, what with



modern technology and all that.

We are, however, a sociable lot – one person joined because "I want to join a group who can make a meeting fun". The committee try and meet up whenever it is possible, at weekend schools, in Gatwick and Edinburgh airports, Summer School etc etc and decisions are taken via e-mail. Wherever and whenever it is feasible, the committee tries to meet with as many International Branch members as possible, Summer School being just one place, the RSCDS AGM another, and the most "outlandish" – a lay-by in Australia for a member to hand over her subscription.

We are here to dance, and dance we shall, and the International Branch is happy to announce that we have our first ever workshop, in Tallinn, Estonia in September 2007. It will be for all levels and ages, and though we are still finalising the list of musicians and teachers for the course, we are happy to say that the quality of musicians and teachers who have already shown interest is very impressive.

We welcome all enquiries – please contact Pia Walker on membership@rscds-ib.org or pia@intamail.com or phone + 44(0) 1334 654427 for further information.



very happy to say, musicians from 26 different countries, the latest joining us from Monaco and Estonia, but most European countries, including UK are also represented and exotic places like India, Bolivia, Argentina and Ukraine feature in the list as well.

All members dance in their chosen geographical area, and the Branch therefore with no direct classes to organise, focuses on sending out communications via a Newsletter every 2-3 months, and regular "News & Views" whenever information comes in from the RSCDS, plus relaying our members' problems, queries and needs and good ideas to the RSCDS or to others who will be in a position to help. This happens through e-



Advance Notice

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in

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Westerton SCD Club

Westerton

Scottish Country Dance Club 75th Birthday Celebration 12th October, Westerton Village Hall, Glasgow

It's not every club that can celebrate a 75th Anniversary by welcoming one of the initial members. Sheila Blythe, now 91, was the Guest of Honour at the Westerton Scottish Country Dance Club's Birthday Party, held at the village hall on 12th October. "I was only sixteen at the time," reflects Sheila. "My mother and father organised a dance in the old (wooden) hall. They thought Scottish Country Dancing may attract some little interest with the residents of the original small community - Well!! over two hundred tickets were sold at 10/- a time (a lot of money in those days), people came from all over, Miss Jean Milligan, one of the co-founders of the Scottish Country Dance Society brought along a demonstration team, and there were so many dancers, they had to take the floor in relays. It consequently became obvious that this wasn't just a one off, and the club itself was established."

"Since its inauguration in 1931, the club has enjoyed an unbroken run of success, even during the war years," said current teacher, Marion Mackintosh, "making it the oldest independent club of its type still in existence. From the initial teaching of Miss Calder and Miss Gordon, who served for 23 years, and my immediate predecessor Mae Manderson (20 years), the club has thrived on the very best of dancing instruction, camaraderie, and good fun. Today we have a membership of around 50, with a strong enthusiastic committee, determined to see us on to Centenary Celebrations."

The seventy or so guests at the party enjoyed dancing to the music of David Ross, and a special dance, "Mrs. Rae of Westerton", devised by Marion Mackintosh for the occasion, was danced with much relish. The success of the evening was perhaps summed up by the comments of Anne and Malcolm Frost visiting from Yorkshire, "The significance of the event, together with warmth and ambience of the all those participating was really exceptional, we will definitely be back for the centenary."

Patrick Murray



*Patrick Murray, Sheila Murray,
Moira Calderwood, Lillian Murray,
Maureen Daniel & Dick Daniel*



*Mae Manderson (who taught the
class for 20 years) dancing with
Tom Carmichael*



Sheila Blythe cuts the birthday cake.

**The Club
meets on
Thursday
evenings
7.30-9.30 in
Westerton
Hall,
Bearsden,
Glasgow.
Teacher
is Marion
Mackintosh.
Contact:
0141-942
6172**



Ceilidh & Old Time Dances Regular Weekly Classes							
Date	Town	Hall	Band	Time	Cost	Contact	Comments
Every Saturday	Fife	Largo Ward Village Hall	t.b.c.	8pm -11pm No Bar	£3 (tea)	Door	Different bands each week.
Every Sunday	Fife, St Andrews	Boys Brigade Hall, Kinnessburn Road	Live Music	2pm-5pm	£3 (tea)	Door or tel 01334 472 375	
Most Sundays	East Kilbride	Girl Guide Hall, Dundas Place	-	7.30 -10pm	£1.50 (tea)	Door or tel : - 01355 230 134 or 245 052	Ceilidh & Old Time Club
Every Tuesday	Glasgow	Student Union, University Avenue	-	7.30-10pm Bar	£4	0141 334 9869 or 07050 222 173	Dance Club
	University of Lethbridge	Village Hall	George Hood	7.30-10pm	£3 B.Y.O.B.	Door (Owen & Catherine Harrison)	Ceilidh, Old Time and Social Dance Club
Every Wednesday	Newtongrange	Morris Club	Live Music	7.30-10pm	£3/£1.50	Door (Karin Ingram)	Ceilidh & Old Time Club
	Glasgow	St Andrews in Square	Live Music	7.30-9.30	£4 Bar	Door (Tricia Matthews)	Ceilidh & Old Time Class
	Midlem	Village Hall	Live Music	8pm-10pm	£1.50	Door (Gracie Belle Scott)	Old Time Dance Class
Every Thursday	Penicuik	St Mungo's Hall		8pm-9.30	£2.70	Door (Annabel Oates)	Finishes 7-12-06 until 11-1-07

Ceilidh & Old Time Dances November 2006							
Date	Town	Hall	Band	Time	Cost	Contact	Comments
4 th	Newtongrange	Dean Tavern	Jimmy Lindsay	7.30-11.30	£6.50 (supper)	0131 663 6022	A & F Club Supper Dance
	Auchendinny	Glencorse Comm. Hall	Webster Craig	7.30-11.30	£5 No bar	01721 723 468	(Near Penicuik)
	Elgin	Bishopmill Hall	Ian Cruickshanks	8pm-12mn	£4 Bar/Tea	01343 543 655	Pay at Door - Jolly Dancers
5 th	Angus	Tealing	Ken Stewart	7.30-10pm	£2.50	Door	
8 th	Ellon	Station Hotel	Charlie Esson	8pm-11pm	£2 Bar	Door	Food available to buy
10 th	Eastwood, Glasgow	Carmichael Hall	Charlie Kirkpatrick	7.30pm - ?	£10 (supper)	0141 638 5200	Charity for Princess of Wales Hospice
	Irvine	Volunteer Rooms	Gary Blair	7.30-11.30	£6 supper	Door	Ayrshire Ceilidh Club
	Foulden	Village Hall	Lindsay Weir	8pm-12mn	£4.50 supper	Door No Bar	Info 01289 386 400
	Alnwick	Northumberland Hall	Danelaw	8pm -	£5 Bar & Supper	Door	Info 01665 712 044
11 th	Erskine	Bridge Hotel	Dick Black & Eddie Rose	7.30-12.30	£12 Bar & Meal (Ticket Only)	01505 874 360	19 th Annual Erskine Hospital Charity Ceilidh
	Glencarse	Village Hall	George Rennie	7.30-11pm	£3.50	Door	Soft Drinks available
	Strathaven	Ballgreen Hall	Jim Anderson	7.30-11.30	£6 supper B.Y.O.B.	01357 520900	Avondale Ceilidh Society
	Inverness	Kirkhill Comm. Hall	Marian Anderson	8pm-12mn	? B.Y.O.B.	Door	Social Dancers
	Elgin	New Elgin Hall	Johnny Duncan	8pm-12mn	£4 Bar/Tea	01343 543 655	Pay at Door - Jolly Dancers
	Alnwick	Northumberland Hall	West Telferton	8pm -	£5 (£4) Bar	Door	Info 01665 712 044
12 th	Arbroath	Café Project	Wayne Robertson	7.30-10pm	£3 Door	01241 879 487	Old Time, Ceilidh & Set dances.
13 th	Kirkwall	St Magnus Centre	Live music	8pm	£2/£0.50	Door	Old Time, Ceilidh & Country
17 th	Aviemore	Village Hall	Ross MacPherson	8pm-12mn	£4 Bar	01479 810 933	Pay at Door
	Balloch	St Kessogs Hall	Andrew Warren	8pm-12mn	£5 Bar	01389 759 408	CHAS Charity Dance
18 th	East Kilbride	Calderwood Hall	Johnny Duncan	7.30-11.30	£6 supper	Door - B.Y.O.B.	Highlanders
	Monikie	Memorial Hall	Gavin Piper	7.45-11.45	£3.50 No Bar	01382 350 206	Bring own Food
19 th	Montrose	Park Hotel	Gordon Pattullo	2pm-5pm	£2 Bar	01241 879 487	A & F Club ceilidh
	Glencarse	Village Hall	George Rennie	7.30-10pm	£2.50	Door	Soft Drinks available
	Arbroath	Café Project	Steven Carcary	7.30-10pm	£3 Door	01241 879 487	Old Time, Ceilidh & Set dances.
	Ellon	Station Hotel	Frank Thomson	8pm-11pm	£2 Bar	Door	Food available to buy
24 th	Helensburgh	Commodore Inn	Ian Anderson	8pm-1am	£7 (bar)	01389 841 208	Highlanders - Dance
25 th	Pumphreston	Village Hall	Gordon Pattullo	7.30-11.30	£? (supper)	01506 205 051	BYOB
	Black Isle	North Kessock	Wayne Robertson	8pm-12mn	B.Y.O.B.	Door	Social Dancers
	Penicuik	St Mungo's Hall	Ian Hutson	7.30-11.30	£6/£3 Raffle	01968 672 631	B.Y.O.B.
	St Andrews	Town Hall	Billy Anderson	7.30-12mn	£12.50 (stovies)	01334 477 510	"St Andrews in Bloom" fund
26 th	Arbroath	Café Project	Scott Carnegie	7.30-10pm	£3 Door	01241 879 487	Old Time, Ceilidh & Set dances.
27 th	Kirkwall	St Magnus Centre	Live music	8pm	£2/£0.50	Door	Old Time, Ceilidh & Country
29 th	Dufftown	Memorial Hall	-	7.30-10.30	?	Door	Monthly Social
	Strathaven	Strathaven Hotel	Recorded [Mixed]	6.30-11pm	£11/£8 Meal 8pm	01698 421 726	Charity Dance

Scottish Country Dances November 2006							
Date	Town	Hall	Band	Time	Cost	Contact	Comments
	Kilmorach, Beaully	Village Hall	-	7.45pm		01463 782 496	SCD Class Every Tuesday
	Dundee	St Andrews Church	Jimmy Boal	7.30pm	£2	01382 509 103	King Street Hall Every Monday
	Dumfries	Marchmont High	John Douglas	7.30pm		01387 770 228	Every Monday
	Dundee	Park Place School	Jimmy Boal	7pm		01382 509 103	Beginners then General Every Tuesday
1 st	Kirkwall	Broad Street	(Comm. Centre)	7pm	£2/50p	01856 873 534	Orkney Traditional Dance Assoc.
3 rd	Andrishaig	Public Hall	Alasdair Heron	Date change		01546 510 316	RSCDS Mid Argyll Branch
10 th	Linlithgow	Burgh Halls	Gordon Shand	7.45pm	£6.50	01506 845 698	Linlithgow SCD Club
11 th	Glasgow	New Kilpatrick Hall	C.D.'s	7.30pm	£5	0141 942 6850	Light Supper - Club Night
	London (N.E.)	Woodford	Craigievar	5.45pm	(S)	020 8504 1632	See website www.efsa.org.uk
	Stirling	St Mary's School	Alan Ross	7.30pm	£5	Door	Stirling Castle Group - no recaps
	Castle Douglas	Town Hall	Ian Muir	7.30pm	£7	01556 620 658	Annual Branch Dance with Buffet
	Nairn	Community Centre	Jock Fraser	7.30pm	£5	01463 234 680	Proceeds to Erskine Hospital
	Ulverston	Coronation Hall	John Renton	£13 or	£6.50	01229 838 575	48 th Ball Buffet meal & wine
	Bridge of Weir	Cargill Hall	Colin Dewar	7.30pm		01505 612 944	Kilbarchan Club Dance
17 th	Helensburgh	Victoria Halls	Marian Anderson	7.15pm	£18.50	01436 673 521	Annual Ball
	Alva	Cochrane Hall	Gordon Shand	7.30pm	£5	Door	Charity - Strathcarron Hospice
	Duns	Volunteer Hall	James Coutts Trio	7.30pm	£5	01361 883 048	Duns & District RSCDS
	Annan	Victoria Hall	Kenny Thomson	-	£6	-	Annan RSCDS - Buffet Supper
	Troon	Concert Hall	Marian Anderson	7.30pm	£5	01292 315 558	Ayr Branch RSCDS
24 th	Killlearn	Village Hall	Lothian	7.30pm		Door	Strathendrick Club
	St Andrews	Younger Hall	David Cunningham	7.30pm	£20	01334 475 274	St Andrews Branch Ball
25 th	Dingwall	Town Hall	Drummond Cook			01997 423 373	Dingwall SCD Club - Rally
	Stirling	St Mary's School	David Anderson	7.30pm	£5	Door	Stirling Castle Group - no recaps
	Braithwaite	Village Hall	Jean McConnachie	-	-	01900 829 209	Derwent SCD Club

Ceilidh & Old Time Dances December 2006

Date	Town	Hall	Band	Time	Cost	Contact	Comments
1 st	Stirling	Albert Halls	Bill Richardson	8pm-12mn	£10/£8	01786 473 544	Tickets from Box Office
2 nd	Dufftown	Memorial Hall	Graeme Mitchell	7.30-11.30	£6	Door	Old Time Dance
	Newtongrange	Dean Tavern	Waverley	7.30-11.30	£6.50 (supper)	0131 663 6022	A & F Club Supper Dance
	Auchendinny	Glencorse Comm. Hall	Jimmy Anderson	7.30-11.30	£5 No bar	01721 723 468	(Near Penicuik)
3 rd	Angus	Tealing	Johnny Duncan	7.30-10pm	£2.50	Door	
8 th	Irvine	Volunteer Rooms	Jean McConnachie	7.30-11.30	£6 supper	Door	Ayrshire Ceilidh Club
	Foulden	Village Hall	Neil Hardie	8pm-12mn	£5 No bar	Door	Tel:- 01289 386 400
	Ellon	Station Hotel	Holly Duo	8pm-11pm	£2 Bar	Ticket Only	Xmas Party for regulars
	Helensburgh	Commodore Inn	Charlie Kirkpatrick	8pm-1am	£13.50 (bar)	01389 841 208	Highlanders - Supper Dance
9 th	Glencarse	Village Hall	Johnny Duncan	7.30-11pm	£3.50	Door	Soft Drinks available
	Strathaven	Ballgreen Hall	Roger Dobson	7.30-11.30	£6 supper B.Y.O.B.	01357 520900	Avondale Ceilidh Society
	Inverness	Kirkhill Comm. Hall	Ain Folk	8pm-12mn	? B.Y.O.B.	Door	Social Dancers
	Elgin	Bishopmill Hall	Steven Carcary	8pm-12mn	£4 Bar/Tea	01343 543 655	Pay at Door - Jolly Dancers
	Monikie	Memorial Hall	Gavin Piper	7.45-11.45	£3.50 B.Y.O.B	01382 350 206	Nr Dundee
10 th	Glencarse	Village Hall	Gordon Pattullo	7.30-10pm	£2.50	Door	Soft Drinks available
	Arbroath	Café Project	Holly Duo	7.30-10pm	£3 Door	01241 879 487	Old Time, Ceilidh & Set dances.
11 th	Kirkwall	St Magnus Centre	(Xmas Party)	8pm	£2/£0.50	Door	Old Time, Ceilidh & Country
15 th	Aviemore	Village Hall	Fraser MacLean	8pm-12mn	£4 Bar	01479 810 933	Pay at Door
16 th	Blackford	Village Hall	Dave Husband Sound	8pm-11.30	£4 No Bar	Door	Soft Drinks Available
17 th	Montrose	Park Hotel	Steven Carcary Duo	2pm-5pm	Door	01241 879 487	A & F Club ceilidh
	Arbroath	Café Project	Mac Kinnear	7.30-10pm	£3 Door	01241 879 487	(Xmas Doo)
20 th	Ellon	Station Hotel	Frank Thomson	8pm-11pm	£2 Bar	Door	Food available to buy
24 th	Glencarse	Village Hall	Wayne Robertson	7.30-10pm	£2.50	Door	Soft Drinks available
26 th	Elgin	New Elgin Hall	Fine Blend	8pm-12mn	£4 Bar/Tea	01343 543 655	Pay at Door - Jolly Dancers
30 th	Blackford	Village Hall	Alan Doig	8pm-11.30	£4 No Bar	Door	Soft Drinks Available
31 st	Cardross	Geilston Hall - Door closes 10pm	Neil Sinclair	9pm-2am Tea & coffee	£11 (BYOB) Own Food	01389 841 208 01389 750 546	Highlanders - Party & Dance
	Black Isle	Tore Hall	Lindsay Weir	9pm-1am	£? (BYOB)	Door	Social Dancers
	Old Meldrum	British Legion	Molly Shand	8.30-12.30	Ticket Only	01651 873 942	Available from mid Nov.
	Pumphreston	Village Hall	Alan Ross	7.30-12.30	£? (meal)	01506 205 051	BYOB - Ticket Only

Scottish Country Dances December 2006

Date	Town	Hall	Band	Time	Cost	Contact	Comments
	Kilmorach, Beaully	Village Hall	-	7.45pm		01463 782 496	SCD Class Every Tuesday
	Dumfries	Marchmont High	John Douglas	7.30pm		01387 770 228	Every Monday
	Dundee	Park Place School	Jimmy Boal	7pm	£2	01382 509 103	Beginners then General Every Tuesday
1 st	Glasgow	Carmichael Hall	Kenny Thomson	7.30pm	£6	0141 942 6850	Light Supper
2 nd	Dundee	St Andrews Church	Maple Leaf	7.30pm	£4	01382 509 103	Charity Dance - [incl. refreshments]
	Ingleton		Ingleton Ball			01524 241 451	North West Craven RSCDS
4 th	Dundee	St Andrews Church	Jimmy Boal	7.30pm	£2	01382 509 103	King Street Hall
6 th	Kirkwall	Broad Street	(Comm. Centre)	7pm	£2/50p	01856 873 534	Orkney Traditional Dance Assoc.
8 th	Helensburgh	Hermitage Academy	Sandy Nixon	7.45pm		01436 673 521	Christmas Dance
	Hamilton	Eddlewood Hall	George Stirrat	7.30pm	£5	01357520917	Christmas Dance
	Dunfermline	Glen Pavilion	James Coutts	7.30pm	£18.50	01383 721 705	Branch Ball - Dress Formal
	Nr. Gretna	Kilpatrick Fleming	Willie McRobert	-	£5	sue@suepetyt.me.uk	Christmas Party Dance
9 th	Stirling	St Mary's School	Nicol McLaren	7.30pm	£5	Door	Stirling Castle Group - no recaps
	Manchester	Levenshulme High	Chris Dewhurst	7.30pm	£6	0161 633 1528	RSCDS Manchester Xmas Dance
	Gatehouse	Primary School	Kenny Thomson	7.30pm	£6		RSCDS Gatehouse of Fleet
11 th	Dumfries	High School	John Douglas	7.45pm	£6	01387 267742	Christmas Party Dance
15 th	Duns	Volunteer Hall	Gary Donaldson	7.30pm	£5	01361 883 048	Duns & District RSCDS
	Dumfries	High School	Glencraig	7.30pm	-	01387 265 815	Dumfries RSCDS
16 th	London (N.E.)	Woodford	Silver Cross	7.30pm	(D)	020 8504 1632	See website www.efsa.org.uk
	Stirling	St Mary's School	Colin Dewar	7.30pm	£5	Door	Stirling Castle Group - no recaps
22 nd	Stirling	Albert Hall	Marian Anderson	7.30pm	£5	Door	Xmas Dance
28 th	Linlithgow	Burgh Halls	Alan Thomson	6.45pm	£7	01506 845 698	Starts with Recep & Supper (B.Y.O.) Dancing 8.30



The Dance Diary Please send all information to: Alasdair Graham, First House, 1 First Avenue, Dumbarton, Dunbartonshire G82 2PU or e-mail: alasdair.graham@blueyonder.co.uk

Teacher, Teacher!

By Finlay Forbes

In my early teens, long before I had any aspirations to being a professional trainer, I heard a great deal about the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society's Full Teaching Certificate. It and its holders were spoken of in tones of awe and wonder by the Society faithful and even by some of the not so faithful. According to the sales pitch, those who held it were carefully selected, highly trained, wise beyond words, peerlessly skilled and certainly of a vastly superior standard to those of us who clumped our unlearned way week after week through the wondrous windings of reels, jigs and strathspeys. As far as the world of Scottish Country Dancing was concerned, "Gaze on my works and tremble" was a masterpiece of litotes when referring to such mighty specimens of humanity. After all that hype, my early encounters with these purportedly Olympian creatures were generally disappointing. In comparison to my schoolteachers at the time, some were better and some were worse. None stood out as particularly brilliant and certainly none came anywhere close to being inspirational. Comparing "certificated" teachers to an assortment of fair to middling pedagogues was one thing. Comparing them to professional adult trainers in other fields of learning was something completely different. In terms of technique and presentational skills, the typical certificated teacher fell a long way short of the typical professional trainer. Even after allowing for the fact that certificated teachers were not professionals, the gap still seemed to be inexplicably and irrationally wide. At this point, I started to pay attention to matters other than steps and formations during dancing classes. After a time, I reached the disturbing but unavoidable conclusion that the purpose of holding a teaching certificate had little if anything to do with teaching Scottish Country Dancing. Its main purpose was to stress the importance of the gulf in skill and knowledge between teachers and their hopelessly inept students. This not very edifying plot was worked

out using such juvenile tricks as giving class members an instruction that the teacher knew they couldn't carry out because he/she hadn't taught it yet. Stage Two of this uninspiring ritual involved feigning disappointment at the result to the obligatory accompaniment of muted but surreptitiously obvious sighing and tutting. Was there a secret agenda designed to keep the skill gap between pupils and teacher at a constant level? I could think of no other plausible explanation for statements like, "When I see this movement done properly at a ball or formal dance, it is always by another teacher." Well hip hip hooray for teachers! Why don't they tell their students how to do it then we'll all get it right? Apart from the power games that seemed to play such a significant part in the "teaching" process, the style of delivery was generally stilted and unimaginative. It was as if a "speak your weight" machine had sprouted limbs and taken on the personality of a chronic control freak. The nearest equivalent that I could think of was the parade ground drill manual. "Look this way and I will give you a complete demonstration of the right turn." "For ease and simplicity of instruction (the armed forces go to great length to reduce difficulty) this movement is broken down into parts each part of which is numbered." For the rudimentary body movements that make up the bulk of military drilling, this approach works reasonably well after about six hundred repetitions but is worth remembering that the purpose of military drill is not to provide social and recreational pleasure for its participants. If it was, none of the sergeants and corporals who trained me had much of a clue about pleasure, or if they did, they chose not to share it with me. To be fair, some certificated teachers were better than the norm but I always had the uneasy feeling that those teachers who were above average acquired their superior training techniques in spite of their certificated status rather than because of it. In the main, I found the whole business baffling and irritating until

I decided to become a professional trainer. After that it was no longer baffling, just irritating. When I entered the world of training, my employer at the time decided very wisely that if full-time training was what I was going to do, I had to attend the firm's much-feared "Instructor Training" course (we have ways of embarrassing you that are beyond your wildest nightmares). My initiation into cringing at my own gaffes was presided over by a kindly, shrewd and acutely observant Glaswegian who allowed nothing negative to escape unnoticed yet who encouraged me to build on my particular strengths and thus develop my own style of delivery. Some years later, when my Glaswegian mentor decided that I should assume his mantle as Course Director, the manufacturers of ephemeral management verbiage had changed the course's title from "Instructor Training" to "Effective Speaking" while cunningly masking the fact that its content had remained largely unaltered. In the intervening period, I had been described officially as trainer, tutor, lecturer, presenter, faculty member, group leader, facilitator and probably a few other unbelievably silly and now forgotten things born of the jargon of the age. (What I was described as unofficially has little bearing on the subject in hand.) The one thing that I was never described as was "teacher". For some unspoken but nonetheless pressing reason, people involved professionally in training consenting adults choose not to refer to themselves as teachers. Perhaps it is born out of a desire to avoid the schoolmaster/schoolmistress image and all that it conjures up but it is more likely to arise from an awareness of the different dynamics of the job that they are doing. Training adults who are attending a course of their own free will is a very different business from teaching minors who are only in the classroom by a combination of parental authority and the law of the land. Although such a distinction

is hardly subtle, it still manages to elude a disturbingly large number of the fraternity and sorority involved in teaching Scottish Country Dancing.

It is here that I believe the problem lies. Many certificated dancing teachers give the impression that they have gone through a crash course in mid twentieth century primary school teaching and by so doing are fully equipped to teach adults. They aren't. There may have been nothing wrong with primary school teaching in the 1950s but that is hardly the point. Adults learning Scottish Country Dancing are not schoolchildren. The learning dynamics of the primary school classroom do not apply and are unlikely to work, which may explain why trained primary school teachers often find it extremely difficult to adjust to training consenting adults.

One of the most difficult adjustments of all to make relates to the significance of the instructor. All effective professional trainers acknowledge unequivocally that they are the least important people in the room. They are there to give value to those that they are teaching, not to receive admiration and personal glory. Admiration may and often does follow but it is the consequence not the object of the exercise. There is no need for professional trainers to prove that they know more than their students do. The students wouldn't be there if they didn't. In this respect, aspiring Scottish Country Dancers are no different from any other willing students. They are there because they acknowledge the fact that they can't dance as well as they would like and want to learn from an expert. There is no need to rub their noses in ignorance that they have already acknowledged.

Of course it isn't all doom, gloom and disaster. There are inspired professionals out there. On my first ever visit to the Stirling University Summer School, I turned up to Airthrey Castle for the pre-course get together. My plans for the evening involved little in the way of physical activity. I had just driven 450 miles and the arms of Morpheus were beckoning invitingly from the not very comfortable depths of my bed in the residential block. Then the Scottish Country Dancers arrived. At that point I made the mistake of taking an interest in what

they were doing. As I watched, a very charming lady with a distinct Banffshire accent informed me that one of the sets needed a man and if I stepped in, she would join me once she had got everyone organised. When I explained, quite truthfully, that I didn't know the dance, her response was, "Don't worry, you'll be fine." This was my first encounter with the Queen of the Dance herself, Jessie Stuart.

It was not long before I recognised Jessie as a complete and accomplished professional of the kind that Scottish Country Dancing needs so desperately yet produces so rarely. Behind her warm friendly natural style lay immaculate preparation, acute observation and the ability to think quickly when the unexpected happened. Like all true professionals, she made it look easy.



This was dance tuition as it was meant to be. Getting it right was important but getting pleasure out of dancing was even more so.

This should not be taken as a cue for every dancing teacher to become a clone of Jessie Stuart. As my erstwhile Glaswegian mentor and I stressed so often, it is important to distinguish between personality and technique and to recognise the contribution made by each. Jessie's techniques can be developed by anyone with the necessary will and

working parts. Her personality is unique and any attempts to replicate it are going to produce nothing more appetising than some pretty low-grade ham acting.

Being prepared, focussing on the enjoyment of the audience and delivering clear instructions and accurate demonstrations are techniques that can be learnt and developed with practice. Being humorous is more difficult for those who are not naturally funny but then humour although helpful is not obligatory. (I have often advised lecturers and public speakers not to tell jokes because they detract from their not inconsiderable skills as serious and competent presenters.) Studying the music and involving the musician in the group are skills that can be acquired with a bit of effort but the lightning fast spur of the moment Stuart ripostes probably can't. You've either got it or you haven't.

This still leaves at least one important question unanswered. Is the system for awarding teaching certificates really suited to its purpose?

My experience as a "stooge" during a final examination suggests that it is nowhere close. Success appeared to depend on total mortification of personality allied to the ability to parrot certain lines without hesitation or deviation but with some permitted degree of repetition. To be fair, some candidates had truly remarkable vision. They all noticed that we "appeared to be having a little trouble with that step" without actually looking at anyone. Amazing!

I am not quite sure how reciting some piece of depersonalised rote learning to satisfy a pair of scowling scribblers behind a desk fits in with the business of teaching anyone how to dance. To me, as an onlooker, it looked more like an ancient and largely irrelevant initiation ritual.

Given the importance of teachers in forming the image of Scottish Country Dancing, now may be a good time to take a long hard look at the fundamentals rather than fiddling with the detail. In assessing the suitability of teaching certificates, those who issue them are not the ones to judge. Does it work for the dancers? They are the only qualified judges. If it doesn't work for them, there won't be any dancers.

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

www.contemplator.com/tunebook/

This is a Website that contains a large number of MIDI tunes which you can download for your own use (not to sell). There are Scottish, Irish, English, Welsh, America and Canadian. In the Scottish section alone there are 133 tunes so, if you decide to listen to them all, be prepared to spend a long time in front of the computer! While the quality of a MIDI tune is not as good as a CD it is still a good way of identifying tunes and songs, some of them even come with the words so you can sing along. In addition to the traditional tunes, if you go to www.contemplator.com/ you will find even more tunes, Songs of the Sea, Popular songs in American History and some harp tunes. The Website really is a great place to waste time enjoyably; the tunes are playing as I write...

Folk Music



I found the contemplator site via a link from

<http://ceolas.org/ceolas.html>

which has links to all sorts of things. The Ceolas site states "Welcome to Ceolas, the home of Celtic music on the Internet, since 1994. Ceolas houses the largest online collection of information on Celtic music, and has links to hundreds of related sites." I can certainly endorse the "hundreds of links".

The first heading is "What is Celtic Music?" and this is followed by "Resources", "Instruments", "Artists", "Live Music and Regional Guides", "Review and Sound Samples", "Tunes", "Related Sites" and a link to "Irish Net" which is described as "an extensive online database of Irish-related resources in the US".

It is certainly extensive and, as is usually the case in a site

with so many links, some of them are no longer valid, as it is impossible to keep them up to date. Some links also point at sites which have not been updated for some time. In some cases this doesn't matter as the information is for reference and doesn't need to change, but the pages which detail events need to be up to date and some have obviously been abandoned.

None of the links supposed to go to dance Websites works, but I make no apology for looking at music Websites in "Dance On!", after all – no music – no dance!!

www.irelandseye.com/dance.html

Irish Dance

This page of a Website about Ireland has interesting facts about the origins of Irish Dance, attributing the origin of circle dances to the dances of the Druids. There is also the following reference to the origin of the reel.

"During the mid sixteenth century, dances were performed in the great halls of the newly built castles. Some of the dances were adapted by the sixteenth century English invaders and brought to the court of Queen Elizabeth. One of these dances was the Trenchmore, which was an adaptation of an old Irish peasant dance. From this period onward another style of dance called the Hey was popular where female dancers wound in around their partners, in a fore-runner of the present day reel".

There are obviously many similarities with Scottish dance including the role of the Dancing Master who travelled around the villages teaching the local people to dance.

The following excerpt provides information on the origin of Irish Dance costume. *"The costumes worn by Irish dancers today commemorate the clothing of the past. Each school of dancing has its own distinct dancing costume. Dresses are based on the Irish peasant dress worn two hundred years ago. Most of the dresses are adorned with hand-embroidered Celtic designs, copies of the Tara brooch are often worn on the shoulder. The brooch holds a cape which falls over the back. The clothes worn by men are less embellished but steeped in history- they wear a plain kilt and jacket, with a folded cloak draped from the shoulder. Male and female dancers today wear hornpipe shoes, and for reels and jigs, soft shoes similar to ballet pumps are worn."* (The article appears in full on Page 24.)

This is just one page of a large site, but is very interesting to read.

Geolas

Waltz for Cathie **(My Wee Tea Bag)**

Old Time Waltz

Waltz Hold, Gent Facing Line of Dance

David Cronie dedicated this dance to his wife Cathie as a way of saying thanks for all her help in running classes and making the tea.

Bars

1-4 Balance forward and back, forward and back.

5-8 Step forward left, right, left, close right to left, step forward left.

9-12 Balance back and forward, back and forward.

13-16 Step back right, left, right, close left to right, changing into double hold.

17-20 Left foot back to centre turning hard right, step right foot facing against line of dance, you are now facing against line of dance in double hold.

21-22 Step left, close right to left, step left, (lockstep).

23-24 Turning hard left, step back right, step left, along line of dance step right, close left to right, step right.

25-28 Step, point, step, point.

29-32 Two full rotary waltz turns.

© David B. Cronie



David Cronie

Jeanie Bell **Old Time Waltz**

Waltz Hold, Gent Facing Line of Dance

Devised by David Cronie for his aunt, Jeanie Bell's, 80th birthday

Bars

1-4 Step forward left foot, right foot, step back left. Close right to left, step forward left (twinkle).

5-8 Step forward right foot, left foot, step back right. Close left to right, step forward right, (twinkle).

9-12 Step left to centre cross right over left. Point left to centre, close left to right.

13-16 Step right to wall, cross left over right. Point right to wall, close right to left.

17-20 Step forward left, right, and chassé forward.

21-24 Step back right, left, and chassé back to finish facing each other in double hold.

25-28 Gent, step close, step close line of dance while lady turns two times below gent's right arm.

29-32 Two full rotary waltz turns

© David B. Cronie

Birthday Two Step

6/8 or 4/4 March

Waltz Hold, Gent Facing LOD

Bars

1-2 Step forward left, right, left, point right.

3-4 Step forward right, left, right, close left to right without weight.

5-6 Chassé to centre.

7-8 Chassé to wall, into open hold.

9-10 Step forward left, right, left, point right.

11-12 Step back right, left, right, close left to right.

13-16 Two full rotary waltz turns.

© David B. Cronie

The Glasgow Gallop (Virginia Circle)

32 Bar Reel

Progressive

Formation: Couples in ballroom hold, men with backs to centre.

This dance was collected in Glasgow and may very well have another name. The caller who taught it had a habit of renaming dances! It is, of course very similar to the Virginia Reel, hence the alternative title. Any information would be welcome!

Bars

1-4 All gallop anti-clockwise for eight steps.

5-8 All gallop clockwise for eight steps.

9-12 Dancers all turn partners with right hand.

13-16 Dancers all turn partners with left hand.

17-20 Dancers all turn partners with both hands.

21-24 Dancers all "dos-e-dos" their partners, passing right shoulders, and progress to the next person to their right.

25-28 Facing new partners, and with both hands joined, dancers jump and kick their right foot across the left, jump and kick their left foot across their right; the man raises his left arm and his partner turns once underneath.

29-32 In ballroom hold, dancers swing.

These thirty-two bars are repeated with a new partner each time.

© Northbeat

Last month when we printed "The White Heather Foxtrot", we attributed it to Graham and Kathy Thomson. We are indebted to a reader, extremely knowledgeable in sequence dancing, who pointed out that, although the Thomsons did indeed write a dance called "The White Heather Foxtrot" in 1991, this most definitely is not it! It would appear that this is a completely different dance, written by someone else, but given the same name. If anyone else can enlighten us, please do.

Mrs Jay Robertson's Hornpipe

8 x 32 Bar Hornpipe

3 Couple Dance in a 4 Couple Set

Her love for music, rhythm and dance says it all in this hornpipe.

Bars

1-4 1st couple dance round each other, passing right shoulders, and cast into second place. (2nd couple dance up on Bars 3 and 4, ready for reel of 3.)

5-8 Half reels of 3 up and down the dance on the sidelines. (To begin 1st and 3rd couples facing up, 2nd couple facing down.) 1st lady passes 2nd lady right shoulder, whilst 1st man passes 2nd man left shoulder.

9-12 1st couple dance round each other, passing left shoulder and cast into third place. (2nd couple, who are in third place, dance up on Bars 11 and 12.)

13-16 Half reels of 3 up and down the dance on the sidelines. (1st couple facing up and 2nd and 3rd couples facing down.) 1st lady passes 2nd lady by right shoulder and 1st man passes 2nd man by left shoulder.

17-24 1st couple, followed by 2nd and 3rd couples, dance down the centre for 4 bars with nearer hands joined. (2nd and 3rd couples dance up sidelines to begin.) On Bars 21-24, with 1st couple pulling back right shoulders and facing up and with 2nd and 3rd couples facing down the dance, they dance half reels of 3 in the centre of the dance. (1st couple pass 2nd couple right shoulder to begin. 3rd couple dance to place on Bar 24.)

25-32 1st and 2nd couples dance Allemande.

NB In Bars 17-24, when dancing down, do not travel below 4th couple.

© Rob Sargent April 2006



Mrs Jay Robertson's Hornpipe

Composed by Colin Dewar May 2006

Bb F Eb Bb Cm C7 F CF7 Bb F

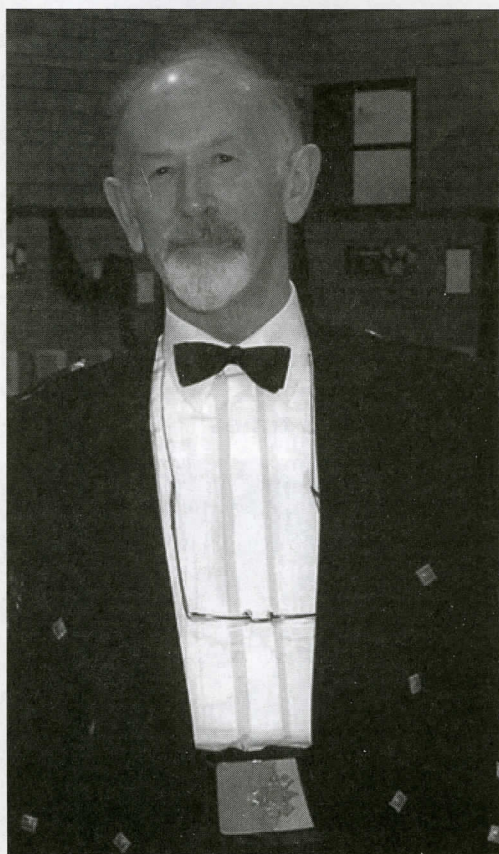
Eb Bb Cm F7 Bb Bb

Eb GEB Bb F#B F CF7 Bb D#B7 Eb Eb

Bb F#B Cm F7 Bb Bb

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When we printed The Tullich Hornpipe with its original music in the August issue, we had many requests for more – so enjoy!!



The President's Jig

32 Bar Jigs

Formation: Couple facing couple around the room, each lady on her partner's right.

Karin Ingram devised this simple Ceilidh dance in honour of Ted Adams, President of the Builders Merchants Federation. The first public performance of the dance was at the President's Highland Ball on April 1st, 2000.

Bars

Bars 1 – 4 With hands joined to form a circle, all four dancers in each set take eight side-steps to the left (clockwise).

Bars 5 – 8 Still in their circle, dancers take eight steps back to the right (anti-clockwise).

Bars 9 – 16 All four dance a "Ladies Chain" thus:
Bars 9 - 10 Each lady gives the other lady her right hand and they change places (passing right shoulders).

Bars 11 - 12 Each person then gives their left hand to their opposite (the person of the opposite sex who is not their partner) and they turn them once round. In ceilidh dancing, although not usually in Scottish Country dancing, the man often puts his right arm around the lady's waist at the back and they turn as a couple.

Bars 13 - 14 Each lady gives the other lady her right hand and they change back to their original places (again passing right shoulders).

Bars 15 - 16 Each person then gives their left hand to their partner and they turn them once round.

Bars 17 – 24 Except for the President's Set, all dancers dance rights and lefts in their fours thus:

Bars 17 - 18 Each dancer takes the right hand of the person opposite (not their partner) and crosses over, passing right shoulders, to change places with them.

Bars 19 - 20 Each dancer then takes the left hand of their partner, and passing left shoulders, changes places with them.

Bars 21 - 24 Bars 17 - 20 are repeated to return all four dancers to their original positions.

(Bars 17 – 24) The President's Set forms a "basket" (the ladies put their arms around the men's shoulders and the men put their arms around the ladies' waists, and hold on tightly) and circle to the left (clockwise) for a count of sixteen.

Bars 25 – 32 Each dancer takes his/her opposite in ballroom hold and polkas round progressing in the direction in which the man was facing, to meet up with a new couple coming towards them.

These thirty-two bars are repeated for the duration of the music.

© Northbeat 2000

June's Jubilee Jig

4 x 38 Bar Jig

Recommended music: *The Three Sea Captains*
(recorded by Reel Tradition)

4 couples in a longways set

This dance was devised by George Gaze, a member of the Box Hill Scottish Society, to celebrate a special birthday of one of our teachers, Miss June Inwood. June has taught Scottish Country Dancing at our Society for over twenty five years.

Bars

1-4 1st couple cross over giving right hands and cast off one place (2nd couple step up on bars 3 & 4).

5-8 1st couple dance a half diagonal reel of 4 with 1st corners, passing partner's 1st corner by the right shoulder to begin. 1st couple end passing left shoulder ready to...

9-12 dance a half diagonal reel of 4 with 2nd corners, passing partner's 2nd corner by the right shoulder to begin. 1st couple end in 2nd place on own sides ready to...

13-24 repeat bars 1-12 with dancers in 3rd and 4th couple positions as corners.

25-28 1st & 2nd couples (in bottom 2 places) half rights and lefts.

29-32 2nd & 4th couples (in middle 2 places) half rights and lefts.

33-36 2nd & 3rd couples (in top 2 places) half rights and lefts.

37-38 1st and 2nd couples cross over giving right hands.

Repeat 3 times



Box Hill Scottish Society

50th Anniversary Ball

By Julia Grant

On 19 August 2006 we held our 50th Anniversary Scottish Country Dance Ball at the Box Hill Town Hall in Victoria, Australia. One hundred and ninety dancers danced until the next morning to the wonderful music of The Matthew Robertson Super Scottish Band.

Matthew, who is the President of the Melbourne Scottish Fiddle Club, created a special band for this occasion. Matthew led the fiddle section, comprising Evan Davies (also on flute), Di Gaylard, Barbara Hannan, Jean McConnochie, Colin McLeod, Kate O'Leary, Pria Schwall-Kearney, Judy Turner, and Jack Wilson. David

dance teacher. Instructions for this dance are on page 16.

Dancers came from Scotland and Japan, from other Australian States (Queensland, Australian Capital Territory, South Australia and Tasmania) and from country Victoria (Ballarat, Castlemaine, Ocean Grove). Some dancers also represented other dance traditions: Ballet, Colonial, English, Irish and Welsh. All helped make this a glittering occasion, which met the three main aims long held by our Society: to promote, teach and dance Scottish Country Dancing; to promote Scottish music and to raise money for a local charity.



Dances on the Ball programme:

Grand March
The Luckenbooth Brooch
Meeting of the Waters
The New Scotland Strathspey
Speirs Bruce - The Pole Star
Anniversary Reel
Bonnie Stronshiray
June's Jubilee Jig
The Music Makars
Monymusk
The Duke of Atholl's Reel
Blooms of Bon Accord
Gothenburg's Welcome
The Minister on the Loch
Ian Powrie's Farewell to Auchterader
De'il Amang the Tailors
The Robertson Rant
Mairi's Wedding



South on piano accordion led the rhythm section, comprising Neil Adam (guitar), Dave Alleway (harp), Claire Alleway (cello), Athalie Brooks (double bass) and Louise Schwall-Kearney (piano).

The Ball commenced with a Grand March led by the Mayor of Whitehorse, Sharon Ellis, partnered by our Vice President, Martin Chambers, and the Mayor's husband, Warren Ellis, partnered by our President, Julia Grant. The seventeen dances on the programme included many old favourites such as *Mairi's Wedding* and *De'il Amang the Tailors*. There were some newer dances such as *Speirs Bruce - The Pole Star* and *June's Jubilee Jig*. The latter was written by one of our Society's members to honour a long term



TIMETABLE

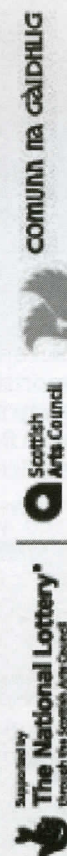
- FRIDAY 10 NOVEMBER**
 6.00 - 8.00 pm Registration, Badenoch Centre
 8.00 - 1.00 am THE OCCASIONALS, Ceilidh Dance, Badenoch Centre
- SATURDAY 11 NOVEMBER**
 9.30 - 5.00 pm Classes
 FRASER FIFIELD and FRANK MCCONNELL, Performance, Tallan nan Ros
 Festival @ Five, session at the Silverford Hotel
 5.00 - 8.00 pm FIRST HARVEST and DANNISA
 8.00 - 11.00 pm Concert/Ceilidh Dance, featuring Kathleen MacInnes & Iain MacDonald
- SUNDAY 12 NOVEMBER**
 9.30 - 3.30 pm Classes
 1.45 pm JOHN SIKORSKI, Performance, Tallan nan Ros
 3.45 - 5.00 pm HO-RO GHEALLAIDH!

CEILIDHS

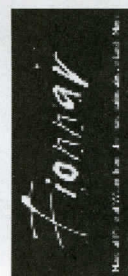
- FRIDAY 10 NOVEMBER 8.00 pm**
 THE OCCASIONALS - Ceilidh Dance, Badenoch Centre
 The Occasionals are widely acclaimed as one of the great Scottish ceilidh dance bands. Since 1986 Freeland Barbour and his band have been playing for dancing the length and breadth of Europe.
 "they will have even frostbitten toes tapping" - Rambles
- SATURDAY 11 NOVEMBER 8.00 pm**
 FIRST HARVEST & DANNISA - Concert/Ceilidh, Badenoch Centre
 A reprise of the hugely successful Tune UP tour between Dannisa and First Harvest, featuring the considerable talents of Kathleen MacInnes and Iain MacDonald. The Dannisa line-up will include founder members, Caroline Reagh, Sandra Robertson, Fin Moore and Frank McConnell with Donal Brown, Gabe McVarish, Liz MacLean and Karen Steven. One evening - part concert, part ceilidh but all rivetting.
 "... precision with grace and an infectious delight" - The Scotsman

EVENTS

- SATURDAY 11 NOVEMBER 1.45 pm**
 Guest Performance - Fraser Fifield and Frank McConnell
 Commissioned by Dance Base as part of their Edinburgh Three Piece Suite programme, with funds made available by The City of Edinburgh Council
- SUNDAY 12 NOVEMBER 1.45 pm**
 Guest Performance - John Sikorski
 A founder member of the Scottish Step Dance Co, John also has a great interest in other forms of percussive dance and the Hungarian folk dance tradition
- Art Exhibition Iona Gallery, Spey Street, Kingussie**
Scape - Images from the Scottish Highlands
 An exhibition of paintings by Beth Robertson Fiddes. Based on her studies of Scottish landscape this show reflects on the everchanging elements from Badenoch and the Cairngorms, to Sandwood Bay in Sutherland.
- Dannisa wish to acknowledge the following for financial assistance with Strathspè Away 2006



The co-operative
memberships



SRATHSPÈ AWAY



Welcome to the fourth Strathspè Away, which has successfully embedded itself as a unique event in the Scottish dance calendar. This year sees an expanded programme with a range of levels to choose from in many of the classes as well as the introduction of Gaelic, Latin American and Appalachian Clogging. Following her delightful performance last year, we are delighted this year to welcome Priya Sreekumar who will teach the South Indian Classical dance form - Bharatanatyam. Donald Black joins us to teach Mouth Organ and Patsy Reid will teach fiddle and accompany some of the classes. With concerts, ceilidhs and lunchtime performances we hope you find plenty to enjoy.

KINGUSSIE
10 • 11 • 12 NOVEMBER 2006

CLASSES

All Classes are open to everyone 14 years and over
Classes in **bold** are open to everyone and children under 14

SATURDAY 11 NOVEMBER

9.30 - 11.00

Session 1

Bharatanatyam (South Indian Classical Dance) - Priya Sreekamur • Ceilidh Dancing (beginners) - Mary Ellen Thomson • Fiddle (intermediate) - Karen Steven • Fiddle (advanced) - Gabe MacVarish • Gaelic (beginners) - Niall MacGrigor • Highland dancing - Jean Swanson • Irish Set dancing - Jim Barry • Mouth Organ (beginners) - Donald Black • Quadrilles - Frank McConnell • Step Dancing (beginners) - Caroline Reagh • Step Dancing (intermediate) - Rae MacColl

11.00 - 11.30

Tea - Badenoch Centre

Session 2

Ballroom dancing - Dawn-Claire Robertson • Bharatanatyam (South Indian Classical Dance) - Priya Sreekamur • Ceilidh dancing (intermediate) - Mary Ellen Thomson • Fiddle (beginners) - Patsy Reid • Fiddle (intermediate) - Karen Steven • Fiddle (advanced) - Gabe MacVarish • Gaelic (fluent) - Niall MacGrigor • Highland dancing - Jean Swanson • Irish Set dancing - Jim Barry • Mouth Organ (advanced) - Donald Black • Put-a-Beul - Liz Maclean and Kathleen MacInnes • Step Dancing (beginners) - Rae MacColl • Step Dancing (advanced) - Sandra Robertson

12.45 - 13.45

Lunch

Session 3

Ballroom Dancing - Dawn-Claire Robertson • Bharatanatyam (South Indian Classical Dance) - Priya Sreekamur • Ceilidh dancing (intermediate) - Mary Ellen Thomson • Fiddle (intermediate) - Patsy Reid • Irish Set dancing - Jim Barry • Mouth Organ (beginners) - Donald Black • Put-a-Beul - Liz Maclean and Kathleen MacInnes • Quadrilles with Caroline Reagh • Step Dancing (beginners) - Rae MacColl • Step Dancing (intermediate) - Sandra Robertson • Step Dancing (advanced) - John Sikorski

15.30 - 16.00

Tea - Badenoch Centre

Session 4

Highland Dance through the years Lecture by Jean Swanson
Local Gaelic place names Lecture by Niall MacGrigor
Piping Recital by Fin Moore and Co.

SUNDAY 12 NOVEMBER

9.30 - 11.00

Session 1

Appalachian Clogging - John Sikorski • County Dancing (intermediate) - Mary Ellen Thomson • Fiddle (intermediate) - Gabe MacVarish • Gaelic (beginners) - Niall MacGrigor • Highland dancing - Jean Swanson • Inverness County Square Set - Caroline Reagh • Latin American - Dawn-Claire Robertson • Put-a-Beul - Liz Maclean & Kathleen MacInnes • Quadrilles - Frank McConnell • Step Dancing (advanced) - Sandra Robertson

11.00 - 11.30

Tea - Badenoch Centre

Session 2

Fiddle (beginners) - Karen Steven • Fiddle (intermediate) - Gabe MacVarish • Gaelic (fluent) - Niall MacGrigor • Hebridean Dancing - Sandra Robertson • Highland dancing - Jean Swanson • Irish Set Dancing - Jim Barry • Latin American - Dawn-Claire Robertson • Quadrilles - Frank McConnell • Step Dancing (beginners) - Caroline Reagh • Step Dancing (intermediate) - Rae MacColl

12.45 - 13.45

Lunch

Session 3

Country dancing (beginners) - Mary Ellen Thomson • Fiddle (intermediate) - Gabe MacVarish • Fiddle (advanced) - Patsy Reid • Gaelic (beginners) - Niall MacGrigor • Hebridean Dancing - Sandra Robertson • Inverness County Set - Caroline Reagh • Irish Set dancing with Jim Barry • Latin American - Dawn-Claire Robertson • Put-a-Beul - Liz Maclean and Kathleen MacInnes • Step Dancing (beginners) - Rae MacColl • Step Dancing (advanced) - Frank McConnell

15.30 - 15.45

Tea - Badenoch Centre

Final Session

15.45 - 17.00 Ho-Ro Gheallaidh - Badenoch Centre

TUTORS

Appalachian Clogging	John Sikorski	Irish Set Dancing	Jim Barry
Bharatanatyam	Priya Sreekamur	Inverness County Square Set	Caroline Reagh
Ballroom	Dawn-Claire Robertson	Mouth Organ	Donald Black
Ceilidh Dancing	Mary Ellen Thomson	Put-a-Beul	Liz Maclean
Country Dancing	Mary Ellen Thomson	Quadrilles	Kathleen MacInnes
Fiddle	Gabe MacVarish	Step Dancing	Frank McConnell
	Patsy Reid		Caroline Reagh
Gaelic	Karen Steven		Frank McConnell
Hebridean Dancing	Niall MacGrigor		Sandra Robertson
Highland Dancing	Sandra Robertson		John Sikorski
Latin American	Jean Swanson		
	Dawn-Claire Robertson		

INFORMATION

All classes are open to everyone over the age of 14 years
Classes marked with +, or in bold are open to everyone, including children under 14

Classes are allocated on a first come basis

Danmsa operates a Child Protection Policy and are committed to making it effective. We would greatly appreciate the help of parents and guardians in making arrangements to collect children from the drop-off/pick-up point in the Badenoch Centre - Thank You

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Please post the completed application form by:

Friday 3 November 2006

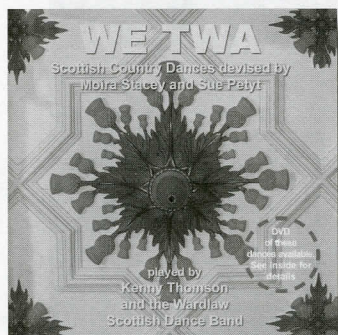
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Should you require further information please contact:

Sandra Robertson
T: 01540-661594
E: sandra@danmsa.com

CD Reviews



We Twa

We Twa the Dances (DVD)

Kenny Thomson & The Wardlaw Scottish Dance Band

SPCD002

Supplier: Streaming Pictures.
9 Merton Court, Lochmaben,
Lockerbie DG11 1SN
Tel: 01387-810 958
directors@streaming-pictures.
co.uk
www.streaming-pictures.co.uk

The We Twa CD is an excellent recording of the music for a selection of 17 newly devised dances by Moira Stacey and Sue Petyt. A DVD has also been produced where all the dances are demonstrated twice through. If you prefer to read your dances rather than viewing them you can download the instructions from Moira and Sue's websites. www.moirastacey.com www.suepetyt.me.uk The tempos on this CD are truly wonderful and will encourage the dancers to give a very relaxed and controlled rendition of the dances. Being of the old brigade I initially found it easier to follow the dances from the written instructions however, the more I use the DVD, the easier it becomes. I feel this new and innovative idea with a DVD to support the CD is excellent and would strongly recommend it to one and all.

**CDs for review should be sent to: Campbell Hunter,
37 Carronvale Road,
Larbert, Stirlingshire
FK5 3LG**

*With
Campbell Hunter*

Gay Gordons

**Sandy Legget &
The Carseloch Ceilidh
Band**

HRMCD103

Highlander Music, PO Box 422,
Beauly, IV4 7WE. Scotland.

Tel: 01463-871 422

Fax: 01463 871 433

info@highlandermusic.com
www.highlandermusic.com

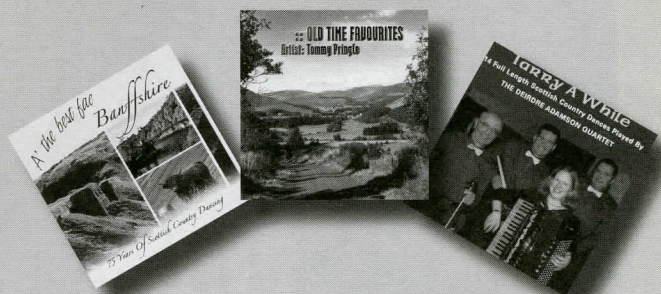
This CD has been issued by Highlander Music and is an amazing collection of Ceilidh dances with an inspired selection of music. The dances recorded are all well known and popular and include the following titles:

Gay Gordons / Edinburgh Mixture; Gay Gordons Encore/ Call of the Pipes; Foulra Reel / Shetland Reels; Strip the Willow; Victory Waltz / Waltz of the Bells; Kelvingrove Two Step / Britannia Two Step; Canadian Barn Dance / Dunoon Barn Dance; Comin' Through the Rye / Southern Rose Waltz Calliope House / Jigs; Mrs MacPherson of Inveran; Eva Three Step / Russian Ballet; Viennese Swing / Lilac Waltz; Silver Spire / Irish Reels; Boston Two Step / Flirtation Two Step; Orcadian Strip the Willow.

Gay Gordons is a tremendous CD with a wide selection of dances all with great tempos. I would strongly recommend this CD to listeners and dancers alike.



THE CONCORDE



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Stuart Anderson "Dance Ceilidh" CD £10.00
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Dancing on the Farm

By Mike Miller

The spontaneity of a party that just happens and forgets to stop is something to savour for decades to come.

Let me set the scene for those of you unfamiliar with the African bush and its occupants (I exclude the more civilized, classified as fauna and flora). There is a long narrow valley, divided into farms of about 2000 morgen, stretching from the top of the mountains down to the river. Most of the land is covered in sub tropical bush. The farms were too far from the markets to be viable. Fertiliser was taking the place of manure and the banks were holding many a mortgage. It was the beginning of the end of a way of life. Surviving off the land in sub tropical bush is not hard, but it does not keep one in booze and smokes.

I arrived up on the farm on a short break from the Air Force with a haul of canned food wheedled out of the mess and no cash. I found my friend and his wife out of cash, booze, cartridges and smokes; in other words, destitute. This needed an imaginative approach. Some of the farms had received cheques from the Co-op. Some farmers actually managed to have small surpluses. They all lacked news of the outside world and a chance to socialise.

Now, if we loaded the trailer with the piano and the sofa, added a cook, fire in an oil-drum, supply of home grown tomatoes, onions and mealie meal, we had the beginnings. Hooking up the tractor we set off for the next farm. Arriving amongst barking dogs, Alice, James and yours truly started to rock and roll on the trailer.

Well, it took less time for them to get to it than kids leaving class when the bell rings. Naturally they needed help and odd useful items were collected by yours truly to help them. With a second tractor and trailer in tow and a pianist to boot we hit the second third and fourth farms in quick succession. Someone had gotten onto the party line and we started finding folks actually waiting for us. It was when we were up to about ten vehicles we delegated one unit to the musicians, one to the cooks and the rest to dancing, singing etc. One farmer, more successful than the rest, sent a driver to town for ice (a rare luxury) and a list for the bottle store.

By the time we got back to the farm, the sun was low on the horizon and,

hearing the racket, the farm labour force were waiting for us, smiling as only Africans can. Fires were lit, the packing shed was watered down and swept, seating from the tractors unloaded. Trellis tables were piled up with contributions. Bales of hay were opened at one end of the shed and karosses and hessian spread over. Not quite grandma's bed but quite adequate.

Now, in order to dance in an acceptable manner, one must mimic the action of a pump, with the whole body swaying from side to side and the right arm moving vigorously up and down through 180 degrees, all the time clutching your unfortunate partner in a suffocating embrace and stamping vigorously to the 4/4 tempo. Occasionally some enlightened soul would call for some traditional stuff based on small groups doing circular movements without any sinful body contact.

Slowly folks dropped off to sleep on the hay bed. A few diehards kept the kettle boiling. However sun up for farmers is get up. Fires were stoked, meat on the braai and mealie meal pap in the iron pots. Strong black coffee is made with condensed milk.

A stock expression in the bush was "n boer maak'n plan" or "no problem". In no time plans for the day were being drawn up and some of the younger souls were sent off to bring in supplies.

Remembering our own shortages I also began a plan of action. Having been told to help myself to cartridges, that aspect was solved. There remained, however, alcohol and tobacco. Everyone drank Oudemeester brandy and liked trifle, so taking a half gallon cream can, I set off to obtain contributions for the trifle from all present, helping myself to the odd cigarette on the way. With my can filled, a third was bottled for later consumption, a third went into the trifle and a third into the home brew, with raisins, honey, a bit of yeast, some meths, crushed ginger, etc.

By mid afternoon a young ox and two buck were on spits and yards and yards of sausage were being produced. A few more energetic souls were playing jukskei (throwing yoke pegs at a stake) but most just dozed off.

Drums on the hills, short staccato tuning rolls as goat skins heated over fires tautened, the smell of African

hard woods on the fires, the smells of the stables mixed with diesel and the steady thump of a Lister Diesel pumping up clear cold water into the reservoir. This was a sensual mix and remains with me forever. As the brief African twilight dwindled the villagers, with their drums, came up to us. The men mostly in cat skin loincloths, their bodies oiled, their fighting sticks in their hands; the women carrying five gallon tins of beer on their heads. They formed a circle outside the shed and James, Alice and I were invited as guests of honour.

The matriarch took a gourd of beer and after tasting it herself, handed it to each in turn. Then slowly, deliberately, the drums began and a Shangaan Warrior leapt into the centre, no longer a labourer, but a fierce, free spirit of long past conflicts, his entire body tensing, rippling muscles shining in the firelight, muscle groups dancing on chest, abdomen, thigh. Shouting, "death to the whites", "death to his enemies", then jumping higher and higher, he jack-knifed and landed on the base of his spine over and over, feeling nothing but the dance.

Custom demanded that I should respond. This was a hard act to follow. However my Cossack dance met with approval and after various other solo efforts, the climax came with a young couple giving a rhythmic simulation of the mating game. Simulated? Somehow it seemed very realistic.

The evening, by now, was in full swing. The punch had taken effect and most of the men were well oiled. So going from one to the next I politely asked for a smoke and no-one even noticed that their box of 50s had lost a row.

Mission accomplished, I could at last relax and drifting over to a most attractive lady I asked her to dance. She, fed up with her partner who had passed out (probably suffering from punch poisoning), came into my arms and started telling me the old, old story with her hips. There are many classic movements in dance and this lady was a master of many, not in the book.

I must draw this account to an end now for the fun and games that took place that night may shock our younger readers!

Hobson's Choice

Send More Deckchairs, I Think We're Sinking!

With apologies to any active Systemsists in our ranks

I gave myself pause for thought. Well! With thoughts as slow and ponderous as mine, if I don't stand still for a while they will always be at least two steps behind what I am actually doing. So there I was on pause having a good look at what I had just been thinking, which was: "Nice dancer that, she knows how to give proper hands to your diagonal opposite in a wheel!" Then the dormant Spindleberry reappeared after months of blissful absence with a loud snortle. Reclining on the tea-table picking cleavers from his cleavage, this long-nosed, eagle-eyed invisible to all but me wood-nymph said:

S "So that's what you think makes a good dancer is it? Be as inconsiderate as you like, but give the proper secret handshake and all will be forgiven. She's one of us!

G "No that's not what I meant at all, it's just there are accepted ways of doing things, and we can all always try to dance a little better, and..."

"And nothing!" boomed Spindleberry drawing himself up to his full quivering four foot ten inches, "I'll sit on a booster seat before I'll take that from you!"

Of course by now my male inability to do more than one active thing at once while considering lighter more pleasant matters every six seconds was beginning to produce my famous rolling eye lockout. "Er, what comes next?" - "Nothing, just get ready to bow!"

Saved by the chord! But not safe from a wrathful Spindleberry

S "Who do you think you are? Sitting in judgement on folks doing

things how they want. Dance Better? Who set these damnable rules anyway?"

G "But the Teacher, the Committee, the Manual..."

S "Systems! This is more of your damned systems again. Systems are set up for a purpose; and in this case are you sure what that purpose is? Let me remind you of your own nine indicators of a moribund system from the days when there was some point to you, do you remember them? Do you remember the key question? Has the main purpose or the organisation become its own survival or has it remained the survival of its original ideal? How many helpless managers have wriggled on the hook of your snide indicator questions? Well now it's your turn!"

His eyes became large and limpid violet, his voice dropped to a hoarse whisper, his pointing finger quivered as he said:

"Answer! Now you answer! Answer... if you dare!"

Do you encourage subordinate parts or members, to compete and perform individual tasks rather than co-operate and form teams?

Do you encourage hierarchies with trappings, especially trivial perks and duties, related to rank?

Do you respond to lower rank innovations by saying "If it had been a good idea, we would already have thought of it"? (The actual words are, "We tried that once and it didn't work".)

Do you feel threatened rather than enriched by junior correctors?

Do you periodically have convulsive management reorganisations aimed at doing the job better rather than doing a better job?

Does your organisation have a refined and arcane language, and even simple identification gestures, secret handshakes etc? Would you see the statement "All swans are white" as a guide to identifying swans? An indicator

With George Hobson

of the nature of white? Or a challenge to find a black swan? Is education in the tenets and history of your organisation important to your survival? Would the background and provenance of a critic weigh more with you than the cogency of their argument?

S "I'm not saying that you and your Holy System are doing all of these things, yet! But you're beginning to tick the boxes, and you're beginning to tick me off! I did hear you intoning the tenth and final mantra recently, you know the one that justifies the other nine..."

Our system ensures that wherever we go, we will know the rules and be accepted, our little cogs can grind in any machine anywhere.

S "Do you want to be just a cog in someone else's machine? Or would you rather be a little free-wheeler and damn the critics?"

G "Er, I think I'd better ask someone whose opinion I value more than mine, but it is nice never to have to think!"

S "Typical, you're about as much use and decoration as the two hairs on a fruit fly's bottom, I think I might as well give my guidance to someone with a bit more backbone! - And just remember, it's your thoughts I hear, and that "good!" is going to cost you dear!"

P.S. I didn't get a place at Winter School this year after all. But am I bothered? You'd better believe just how blue-bottomed bothered I am! This is my third year of failure in succession, but at least I'm on the waiting list this year. Waiting... humph! That'll be right!

Your Letters

Dear Editor,

A correspondent in your June issue made several comments regarding articles (one by myself) in the April issue, relating to the (then recent) Festival of Dance, held for 700 schoolchildren in Glasgow's Kelvin Hall. I wish to belatedly answer some of the points raised.

Whilst it is accepted that no mention was made in my article of the pivotal contribution by Mrs. Johan MacLean, this was in no way intended to diminish recognition of her considerable input. In point of fact, I merely referred (incomprehensively) to the praise, which had been given various people, from the rostrum and in the media.

The mention of Education Department staff did not denigrate their input, but merely pointed out the fact that they were being paid for their efforts on the day, whereas by comparison, charitable input by several others was unsung. I was unaware that the teachers from RSCDS Glasgow Branch were paid professional rates for their efforts. I re-assert that it was the contributions by un-remunerated helpers, and the comparatively "laissez faire" attitude to deportment, step and figure completion, which I wished to highlight for praise. Further, I find it unimaginable that anyone could possibly believe that the event was inspired and achieved by any other than RSCDS Glasgow Branch in association with RSCDS HQ and the Glasgow Education Department. The banner behind the band, which I helped to hang, certainly underlined HQ involvement.

I am also a proud member of RSCDS Glasgow Branch and of the Society (HQ). Yes, the wheel is demonstrably being slowly moved to avoid the "iceberg". Whether this is too little, too late, remains to be seen. I believe that our predecessors were not disposed to move the wheel one iota, hence blindly following their lead would be extremely likely to ensure disaster, although their commitment to their contemporary plans is undeniable.

Regarding "We are the Society. Who else?" I contend that the "Society" is all of the members, rather than an active few, or the office bearers, who are merely charged and trusted to function on behalf of all their members, and in the best interests of all their members. Notwithstanding, the disproportionate contribution by these few (particularly office bearers) is essential, and generally well

recognised – certainly by myself. I hold no office, but my wife is deeply involved, giving many hours of service per week, personally supplying most of the essential equipment and materials to complete her functions, and unavoidably involving my voluntary (and recognised) input, on many occasions. We must not lose sight of the fact that the Society (HQ), and (I presume) all of its Branches, are registered charities. In this respect, I consider the costs (direct and hidden) incurred by the RSCDS Glasgow Branch (and others) against this event, generally represent money (and effort) well spent.

Dick Daniel



Dear Karin,

Dancin' and snappin'

Firstly, our thanks for such a grand magazine. What would we do without it?

I'd love to let folks know that now there's an opportunity for Scottish Country dancers to dance their evenings away and learn something about photography during the day. We have teamed up with former Sunday Times travel photographer Philip Dunn to arrange a dancing holiday on the lovely Mediterranean island of Menorca.

Philip has been running photography holidays on the island for some years and has promised to arrange photography walks and talks as part of the Scottish Country Dancing holiday next April 13th-20th 2007.

It should all be great fun at a 4 star hotel, with lots excursions around the island and plenty of dancing.

Further details from Moira and Keith Stacey 01557-339 308 or Philip Dunn 01557- 331 343. More about Philip's photography holidays at www.photoactive.co.uk

Many thanks,

Moira and Keith

Dear Karin,

How many times do you hear people bemoan the lack of interest among young people in Scottish dance? My recent experience may throw some light: For 6 years in St Andrews I've been running a Sunday afternoon ceilidh dance, not a class, open to everyone. Last September, a chance remark of mine led, unknown to me, to an item appearing in the University Freshers' programme (they had never published one previously). So, to our amazement, over 100 students, some of them newly arrived that very morning, poured into our afternoon dance. I was delighted, but not so the others. What was billed as "hosted by the town" proved not so welcoming. The couple who had been demonstrating dances for us, and who had gradually been turning the afternoon into a "social dance" class, did change their prepared programme to suit. The students behaved beautifully, seemingly enjoying every minute.

However, two RSCDS teachers of long standing and excellent reputation, whom you might have thought would be delighted to help, stormed out with thunderous expressions as if they had been insulted. Then our MC suddenly announced the students should leave. The students dutifully left without a murmur or their advertised refreshments. What sort of impression have these newly arrived young people been left with? The regular dancers, with four notable exceptions, kept to themselves, and it must have been pretty obvious the students were not entirely wanted. As a result of that afternoon, our demonstrators have walked out (as if I had committed some kind of crime), and started a rival dance group elsewhere - I reckon they have a problem with young people! I am profoundly saddened to think that perhaps a lot of these students have been lost to us, if not forever, then for a long time to come.

Name & Address withheld on request

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The History of Irish Dance

The early history of Irish Dance reveals a constant shifting of population through migration and invasions. Each of these peoples brought their preferred types of dance and music. There are only vague references to the early history of Irish dancing, but there is evidence that among its first practitioners were the Druids, who danced in religious rituals honouring the oak tree and the sun. Traces of their circular dances survive in the ring dances of today. When the Celts arrived in Ireland from central Europe over two thousand years ago, they brought with them their own folk dances. Around 400 AD, after the conversion to Christianity, the new priests used the pagan style of ornamentation in illuminating their manuscripts, while the peasants retained the same qualities in their music and dancing.

The Anglo-Norman conquest in the twelfth century brought Norman customs and culture to Ireland. The Carol was a popular Norman dance in which the leader sang and was surrounded by a circle of dancers who replied with the same song. This Norman dance was performed in conquered Irish towns.

Three principal Irish Dances are mentioned often in sixteenth century writing: the Irish Hey, the Rinnce Fada (long dance) and the Trenchmore. One of the first references to dance is in a letter written by Sir Henry Sydney to Queen Elizabeth I in 1569. "They are very beautiful, magnificently dressed and first class dancers," Sydney wrote of the girls he saw dancing

enthusiastic Irish jigs in Galway.

Sydney went on to describe the dance formation, observing the dancers in two straight lines which suggests they were performing an early version of the long dance.

During the mid sixteenth century, dances were performed in the great halls of the newly built castles. Some of the dances were adapted by the sixteenth century English invaders and brought to the court of Queen Elizabeth. One of these dances was the Trenchmore, which was an adaptation of an old Irish peasant dance. From this period onward another style of dance called the Hey was popular where female dancers wound in around their partners, in a fore-runner of the present day reel.

When royalty arrived in Ireland, they were greeted at the shore by young women performing native dances. When King James landed at Kinsale, County Cork, in 1780, he was welcomed by dancers. Three people stood abreast, each holding ends of a white handkerchief. They advanced to slow music and were followed by dancing couples, each couple holding a handkerchief between them. The tempo of the music increased and the dancers performed a variety of lively figures.

I r i s h dancing was accompanied by music played on the bagpipes and the harp. In

This article appears on the "Ireland's Eye" Website and is reviewed by Sue Petyt on Page 12. It is an extract from the excellent book, "Irish Dance" by Arthur Flynn (ISBN: 0862817072). Illustrations are by Anne Farrall.

the houses of the Anglo-Irish aristocracy, the master often joined with servants in some of the dances. Dancing was also performed during wakes. The mourners followed each other in a ring around the coffin to bagpipe music.

The Irish Dance Master

During the eighteenth century, the dancing master appeared in Ireland. He was a wandering dancing teacher who travelled from village to village in a district, teaching dance to peasants. Dancing masters were flamboyant characters who wore bright clothes and carried staffs. Their young pupils did not know the difference between their left and right feet. To overcome this problem, the dancing master would tie straw or hay



to his pupils' left or right feet and instruct them to "lift hay foot" or "lift straw foot".

Group dances were developed by the masters to hold the interest of their less gifted pupils and to give them the chance to enjoy dancing. The standard of these dances was very high. Solo dancers were held in high esteem and often doors were taken off hinges and placed on the ground for the soloists to dance on.

Each dancing master had his own district and never encroached on another master's territory. It was not unknown for a dancing master to be kidnapped by the residents of a neighbouring parish. When dancing masters met at fairs, they challenged each other to a public dancing contest that only ended when one of them dropped with fatigue.

Several versions of the same dance were to be found in different parts of Ireland. In this way a rich heritage of Irish Dances was assembled and modified over the centuries. Today, jigs, reels, hornpipes, sets, half sets, polkas and step dances are all performed. Solo dancing or step dancing first appeared at the end of the eighteenth century.

The costumes worn by Irish dancers today commemorate the clothing of the past. Each school of dancing has its own distinct dancing costume. Dresses are based on the Irish peasant dress worn two hundred years ago. Most of the dresses are adorned with hand-embroidered Celtic designs; copies of the Tara brooch are often worn on the shoulder. The brooch holds a cape which falls over the back. The clothes worn by men are less embellished but steeped in history – they wear a plain kilt and jacket, with a folded cloak draped from the shoulder. Male

and female dancers today wear hornpipe shoes, and for reels and jigs, soft shoes similar to ballet pumps are worn.

Today there are many organisations promoting Irish Dance. The Feis has been an important part of rural cultural life. Children, teenagers and adults compete in separate competitions for Feis titles and prizes. There are group and solo competitions where dancers are graded by age from six to seventeen and then into the senior categories.

There are dancing championships in all four provinces, and winners of these provincial competitions qualify for the All Ireland Championships. The World Championships are held in Dublin at Easter where dancers from England, Ireland, USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand compete for the World title.

The Irish word céili originally referred to a gathering of neighbours in a house to have an enjoyable time, dancing, playing music and storytelling. Today it refers to an informal evening of dancing. Céilis are held in large towns and country districts where young and old enjoy together group dances. The céili can be traced back to pre-famine times, when dancing at the cross-roads was a popular rural pastime. These dances were usually held on Sunday evenings in summer when young people would gather at the cross-roads. The music was often performed by a fiddler seated on a three legged stool with his upturned hat beside him



for a collection. The fiddler began with a reel such as the lively "Silver Tip", but he had to play it several times before the dancers joined in. The young men were reluctant to begin the dance but after some encouragement from the fiddler, the sets of eight filled up the dancing area.

The world-wide success of Riverdance and more recently Lord of the Dance has placed Irish dance on the international stage. Dancing schools in Ireland today are filled with young pupils keen to imitate and learn the dancing styles which brought Jean Butler and Michael Flatley international acclaim.

Today there are many opportunities to watch and enjoy Irish Dancing. It is still a regular part of social functions. Dancing sessions at céilis are usually preceded by a teaching period where novices are shown the initial steps. During the summer months, céilis are held in many Irish towns. Visitors are always welcome to join in and with on the spot, informal instruction, anyone can quickly master the first steps and soon share the Irish enthusiasm for Irish Dance.

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The Glencraig Scottish Dance Band

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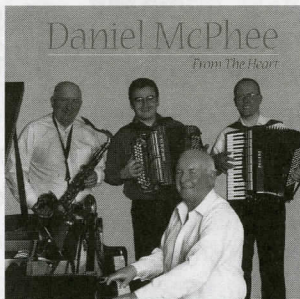
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Choreographers are invited to present their dance piece in front of an audience within a 4 minute time limit. The dance piece must be choreographed on a minimum of two dancers and a maximum of 10 (**NB: the dancers can be of any age**). Dance steps may be used from any style(s) of traditional dance and may be a fusion with other dance styles.

Three judges will decide the winners in each of the sections for
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- ♦ 17yrs & under
- ♦ 18 yrs & older.

NB: The age refers to the Choreographer and NOT the dancers.

Full details and rules of the competition
will be issued with the application form, available from:

Scottish Traditions of Dance Trust
18b Broad Street, Stirling FK8 1EF
T: 01786 849247 E: info@stdt.org W: www.stdt.org

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Albert Halls, Stirling
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Robbie with Sir Hamish & Lady Mary Forbes and Jennifer Stewart