

A detailed illustration of a violin positioned centrally on a piano keyboard. The violin is rendered in a metallic, reflective style, possibly silver or chrome, with intricate details of its body, f-hole, and bridge. The piano keys are shown in perspective, receding into the distance. Above the violin, a bright, circular light source is framed by a dark, arch-like shape, creating a dramatic, high-contrast scene. The overall composition is symmetrical and visually striking.

Sandy Ower The Sea

*Chris
Duncan*

*Muriel
Johnstone*

1/ *Geordie MacLeish, Miss Lyall, Miss Brander, Lady Harriet Hope, John Angus' Reel (of Calcutta), De'il Amang the Tailors*. I like to start a concert with a set of tunes like this. It gets the audience bouncing from the start.

2/ *Miss Smyth of Methven's Favourite, Eleanora Robertson's Favourite*. These jigs were composed by Robert Mackintosh and William Marshall respectively, both well known composers from the so called "Golden Age" of Scottish fiddle music, (1700-1850).

3/ *The Sheiling Song*. This simple and beautiful melody transports us to the gaelic speaking areas of Scotland.

4/ *Sir George Clark of Pennycuik, The Flowers of Edinburgh, James Miller (Bullionfield)*. This set starts with a lovely solo strathspey, followed by two lively reels, the first of which is my wife Carol's favourite tune.

5/ *Twist Ye Twine Ye Even So*. When I play this tune I think about the fable of a princess locked in a castle tower and ordered to spin gold from the hay provided. This is the type of tune she might hum to herself as she worked. *High Road to Fort Augustus* is an old and unusual reel.

6/ *Stewarts of Java*. This set consists of two reels from Marshall. "*Mrs L. Stewart of the Island of Java*" and "*Major L. Stewart of the Island of Java*". The titles show how the aristocracy patronised musicians. In return the patrons were made immortal in melody.

7/ *Sir Charles Forbes of New and Edinglassie*. A slow strathspey from William Marshall. He was well known for his choice of unusual keys. This one is in E minor.

8/ *Atholl Highlanders*. This is a popular tune on all Scottish instruments, and why not? It is very well known to folk musicians and dancers alike.

9/ *The Smith's a Gallant Fireman* is well known as either a strathspey or a song. This strong strathspey version is followed by *The Forth Bridge* first as a strathspey and then as a lively reel.

10/ *Anna*. This beautiful melody is Muriel's personal tribute to her friend Anna Holden, composed on hearing of her untimely death in 1995. Anna, from Birmingham in the UK, was well loved and respected by all who knew her.

11/ *Sleepy Maggie, Duns Dings A', Tail Toddle*. Muriel and I arranged these tunes to play for dancing at the 1995 Sydney Scottish country dance winter school. We both liked them so much, we decided to keep them together.

12/ *Maggie Broun's Favourite, Earl of Morton's Jig, Miss Sally Hunter of Thurston*. Three old and lovely jigs - no wonder they are still popular.

13/ *Miss Gordon of Gight*. This wonderful tune was taught by Alasdair Fraser at his 1992 "Valley of the Moon" fiddle camp. This is where Muriel and I first met. *Colonel McBean* is a great tune that is not heard very often. The reel that follows it, *Captain Keeler*, is much more popular.

14/ *Mr Oswald of Auchincruive*. We play this tune in one of our country dance sets and it occurred to me how often super tunes like this just seem to get buried in the vast Scottish country dance music repertoire and are seldom heard to best advantage.

15/ *Sandy Ower the Sea*. Sandy is a name often used to describe a young Scotsman. This tune might remind him of Scotland when he is away from home, or "ower the sea".

16/ *Rothiemurcus Rant*. This tune is often said to have been Robbie Burns' favourite. It certainly has all the elements of a good strathspey. *Merry Lads of Ayr* is one of a host of great reels in C major, followed by the *High Road to Linton*. We have had some fun with this popular pipe reel.

Chris Duncan

All Tunes Traditional except Anna ©



TRACK TITLES

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|----|---------------------------|--------|
| 1 | Geordie MacLeish | (4.05) |
| 2 | Miss Smyth of Methven | (2.32) |
| 3 | The Sheiling Song | (3.33) |
| 4 | Sir George Clark | (5.12) |
| 5 | Twist Ye Twine Ye Even So | (4.00) |
| 6 | Stewarts of Java | (1.52) |
| 7 | Sir Charles Forbes | (4.16) |
| 8 | The Atholl Highlanders | (4.16) |
| 9 | Smiths a Gallant Fireman | (4.01) |
| 10 | Anna | (3.49) |
| 11 | Sleepy Maggie | (2.22) |
| 12 | Maggie Broun's | (3.46) |
| 13 | Miss Gordon of Gight | (4.12) |
| 14 | Mr Oswald | (1.53) |
| 15 | Sandy Ower the Sea | (5.09) |
| 16 | Rothiemurcus Rant | (4.14) |