

# *Dance On!*

**Mats Melin**  
**The Ever-Changing Tradition**



**Who was Kate Dalrymple?**  
**Jennifer Calls the Shots** • **Dunedin Dancers**  
**Sunburn and Swinging** • **Podium or Pulpit**

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Issue 8 - June 2005



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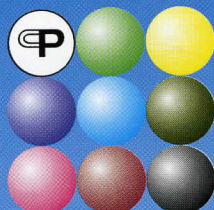
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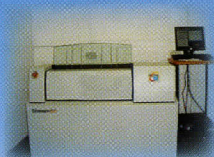


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## Editorial

**T**he number of subscribers to **Dance On!** has been growing almost daily. We've had one or two phone calls asking exactly who does what, so here goes: as Editor, I check all copy for inconsistencies, mistakes (and libel!); I scan in and edit photographs; I decide on the content of the magazine and then compile it on my computer (using Microsoft InDesign). I transfer the whole thing onto CD and send it to Culross the Printers in Coupar Angus who then print and distribute it. The cover is designed by Bruce Dow, the printing plates made up by Ian Norrie, and the binding and packaging organised by Derek MacDonald.

Rob Corcoran deals with all of the administration – subscriptions, invoicing etc. He prints the address labels on his computer and sends them to Culross, he also holds back-issues of the magazine and sends out additional copies as requested. Any e-mails go first to Rob, and he then forwards the relevant ones to me; he also takes all phone calls for **Dance On!**. The Website, [www.danceon.co.uk](http://www.danceon.co.uk) is designed and updated by Rob. He invoices advertisers and deals with all banking.

We have a new advertising and marketing manager, Laura Ellis. Laura will be contacting potential advertisers and helping to design adverts when necessary. Her contact details are at the foot of the page.

Lastly, and most importantly, our readers. **Dance On!** at present makes no profit, we rely on advertising and readership – so spread the word!

*karin*

## Contents

The Ever-Changing Tradition	page 5
Jennifer Calls The Shots	page 6
Who Was Kate Dalrymple?	page 8
Your Letters	page 10
SCD In Italy	page 11
Vancouver International	page 11
Web Dancer	page 12
Dance Instructions	page 13
Dunedin Dancers	page 17
Tut, Tut, Tut	page 18
Alasdair's Dance Diary	page 20
Podium or Pulpit?	page 22
Dance Around	page 24
Skyedance	page 25
Dannsa Summer Tour Dates	page 25
Sunburn and Swinging	page 26
Take The Floor, Fyvie Castle	page 28

## Take The Floor

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Front cover photograph courtesy of Dannsa  
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**Dance On!** will be published each month and is available by personal subscription or through your dance group. Single copies are available at £2.70 (inc UK P&P) and a 12 month subscription is £24 plus the relevant P&P.

<b>P&amp;P:</b> UK (inc N. Ireland & Channel Islands)	£ 8.40
Europe (inc Republic of Ireland)	£15.60
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**Dance On!** will be published each month. Deadline for all articles is the 3rd of the preceding month.

**Dance On!** is printed by Wm Culross & Son Ltd, Queen Street, Coupar Angus, PH13 9DF Telephone: 01828-627 266 Fax: 01828-627 146  
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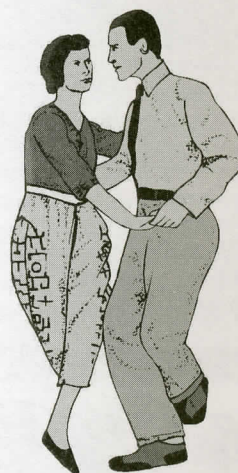
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# The Ever-Changing Tradition

**By Mats Melin**



**T**he last nine months have been an eye opener for me regarding how I perceive dance or any kind of movement. I have had to face my own ethnocentrism and take stock of how I had, until that point in time, understood and viewed the concept of dance. This process of awareness has made me even more interested in the many aspects of dance that there are out there.

In the course of my research for my dissertation on the revival of Step Dancing in Scotland, I read many interesting articles on "revivals" of different kinds and also about the concept of tradition. I used to use the word "tradition" in reference to something that was both "old" and something that was "unchangeable". There are many views on the concept of tradition. However, two definitions that seem to sum up many is that tradition is a "work-in-progress" and that it is constantly "transforming" or changing "because tradition tries to describe such a complex reality and is so commonly used by so many people in so many contexts, it may always be a work-in-progress" (Spalding and Woodside 1995:249). Atkinson (2004) discusses issues of selectivity, creativity, continuity, and ongoing reconstruction within tradition. Along the same lines Feintuch argues that, "Tradition is a social and academic construct standing for and resulting from an ongoing process of interpreting and reinterpreting the past." (Feintuch 1993: 192)

In this short article I am not going to concern myself

with historical accounts of traditional dancing, but rather with the issues of change, innovation and resistance to the same from personal experience and my point of view. I suppose we all feel a certain amount of security with dances and dance styles we have grown up with, learnt over a long period of time and that one feels comfortable with. Then something comes along that upsets the harmony. My first experience of this was 25 years ago. I heard a group of Scottish Country Dance teachers, during a tea break, discussing whether "modern" dances composed outside the RSCDS framework were to be regarded as traditional or whether it was appropriate to dance them in the RSCDS class in question. One issue that was argued was the changing format of these new dances (all couples dancing and some couples starting on the opposite side) and new formations, such as the Rondel, coming into use. It was felt at the time that these dances should not be danced until approved by the RSCDS. The dances in question were Postie's Jig, Black Mountain Reel and The Blooms of Bon Accord. 25 years later these very dances are common and almost regarded as "old hat" in some areas at social dances. Change was embraced, but in some cases at the expense of other dances which are no longer commonly danced at these social dances.

Another case of "transformation of tradition" that I have observed, and still observe, is the revival of Step Dancing in Scotland. It is not the place here to enter

into the level and strength of evidence of Step Dancing in Scotland, but I personally feel my own research has satisfied me with the knowledge that some form of Step Dancing was once common in many, if not most parts of Scotland. Had it lived on and developed alongside Scottish Country and Highland Dancing we would not have the discussion of its authenticity. However, it did not and other dance forms took over. There are enough recollections recorded to say that it did exist, but how close the form of Step Dancing that is revived in Scotland today is to these older memories, we will probably never find out. The Step Dancing revival has a very strong Scottish "essence" but it cannot be disputed that it has, for over 200 years, been developed and influenced by local circumstances in areas of Canada and not developed in an indigenous Scottish context. To the Canadian exponents, the Scottish heritage is always acknowledged but to them the dance form now serves as an ethnic identifier in Canada.



It is so, for example that the term "Cape Breton" music and dance has emerged over the last 15-20 years. Before that, music and dance in Cape Breton was generally not labelled, with possibly "Scottish" added to it for record covers and concert posters. What is interesting to observe is that "Step Dancing" is back in use in Scotland. Regardless of what you call it, it is there. The number of practitioners may be small at the moment, but it will be interesting to see how it develops and changes when being used in Scotland over time.

Coming back to the discussions on the level of Scottishness of this style of dance in Scotland today, there is no precedent, as far as I know, of a dance form being introduced to Scotland from abroad that claims Scottish roots. My argument here, is that the same amount of resistance to something unfamiliar must have been felt by dancers when, for example, the first Country Dances were introduced from England. This form of dance certainly had a different structure from indigenous Scottish reels. Later, Quadrilles and couple dances came in from Continental Europe and England. The aesthetics of solo dancing changed as well. A more grounded style was gradually replaced by aesthetics of ballet and an elevated style of dance was developed. All these introductions of dance forms and developments thereof were embraced, "transformed" and made Scottish by adding the familiar to the new. For example when the Quadrilles were introduced to Scotland they were quickly set to Scottish music, thus combining the "foreign" with the familiar. I would certainly not argue that in modern Scotland the Military

Two Step, Strip the Willow, Quadrilles, Circassian Circle and the Sailors' Hornpipe are not part of the Scottish dance tradition, but their origins may lie elsewhere. This process is by no means unique to Scotland. In my own country there is probably nothing more Swedish than a "Polska" even though its origins are supposed to be Polish.

Is it not simply that we regard what we are familiar with as traditional? However, we do not always pay attention to the processes of change, which these traditions constantly undergo, or are aware that we are part of the influencing factors that affect these changes. Tradition is a work-in-progress.

### Atkinson, David

(2004). *Revival: genuine or spurious?* In *Folk Song: Tradition, Revival, and Re-Creation*. Eds. Ian Russell and David Atkinson. The Elphinstone Institute, University of Aberdeen.

### Feintuch, Burt

(1993). *Musical Revival as Musical Transformation*. In *Transforming Tradition: Folk Music Revivals Examined*, edited by Neil V. Rosenberg. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 183-193.

### Spalding, Susan Eike and Jane Harris Woodside

(1995). *Communities in Motion. Dance, Community, and Tradition in America's Southeast and Beyond*. Greenwood Press, Westport.

***There are twenty dance names hidden in this grid, reading vertically, horizontally, diagonally and backwards. How many can you spot? See page 10 for the list of dances.***

H	A	M	I	L	T	O	N	H	O	U	S	E	A	Z
T	L	I	S	N	O	D	R	O	G	Y	A	G	V	T
P	A	L	A	I	S	G	L	I	D	E	S	P	A	L
E	E	I	G	H	T	S	O	M	E	R	E	E	L	A
T	C	T	S	P	D	H	E	V	E	A	L	T	P	W
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O	R	T	N	J	Y	E	L	S	B	I	Y	R	I	A
Y	I	W	P	A	S	E	L	G	P	L	R	H	E	N
K	G	O	H	X	V	Q	C	L	T	Y	L	T	S	R
N	S	S	H	E	S	S	U	R	A	L	G	A	J	E
I	Z	T	L	A	W	Y	R	O	T	C	I	V	I	B
D	V	E	F	O	U	L	A	R	E	E	L	E	G	T
T	A	P	D	U	K	E	O	F	P	E	R	T	H	S



# Jennifer Calls The Shots

**D**ance Calling is a relatively recent development in Ceilidh Dancing in Scotland. In English Folk Dance it has been commonplace for many years, and American Square and Contra Dance have always had callers. There is a small, but growing, band of dance callers now in Scotland – a trend started in the seventies and early

eighties by such eminent figures on the dance scene as Bob Blair, Dave Francis and Wilma Henderson. Many dance bands do their own calling and walking through of the dances, but this can sometimes prove problematic if the caller needs to keep calling with the music, or get down onto the floor with the dancers. **Dance On!** would very much like to publish a list of callers (and their specialities – Old Time, Ceilidh, Reels, Country etc) so all callers out there, please get in touch.



*Jennifer puts the dancers through their paces*



*Jennifer working with Gordon Brown & Sandy Redpath*

One of the youngest callers in Scotland must be sixteen-year-old Jennifer Cowie. Jennifer is a 5<sup>th</sup> year student at Penicuik High School, currently studying for her Highers. She is an extremely keen Ceilidh and Old Time dancer and has recently started calling and teaching dances.

Jennifer's interest in Ceilidh Dance started back when she was in primary four – about the age of seven. She went to a class on Thursday nights in Penicuik and

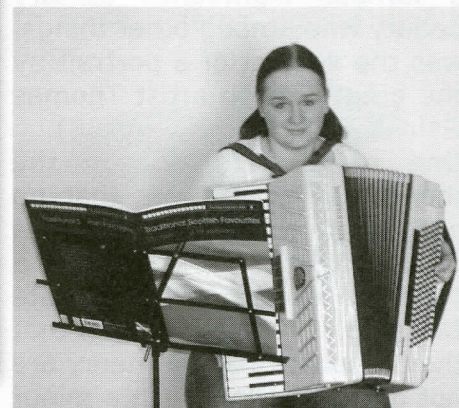


*Jennifer Cowie*

has steadily gained in competence, knowledge, confidence and enthusiasm. She joined The Newtongrange Dance Group who meet on Wednesday nights and from there realised that she enjoyed dance calling. She hasn't been doing it long, only since about August 2004, but has progressed to such a level that she is now in demand as a freelance caller and regularly teaches the Newtongrange Group. For her sixteenth birthday in March the group threw a surprise party for her, and clubbed together to buy her a radio mic. She now enjoys calling as much as she does dancing!! However, this talented youngster is keeping her options open – she's learning accordion and keyboard too. Jennifer is poised to become a major name on the Scottish Dance Scene.



*Jennifer's birthday party at Newtongrange*





# Who Was Kate Dalrymple?

**By Finlay Forbes**

A few years ago, Radio Scotland floated the idea of changing "Take the Floor's" familiar signature tune of *Kate Dalrymple* to something that our broadcasting gurus and guardians of public taste considered more appropriate to the spirit of the age. Clearly that well-known but all too often ignored piece of consultant's wisdom, "if it ain't broke, don't fix it", had yet to reach Radio Scotland's corridors of power. (Or perhaps those who inhabited the corridors subscribed to the normally plausible view that consultant's wisdom was an oxymoron.)

A flood of protests, including threats of a mass listener boycott followed and all thoughts of change were quickly and very publicly abandoned or at least put on hold pending a more opportune moment (like when the grim reaper finally claims the last of the current generation of listeners).

But who was this Kate Dalrymple who over the years has managed to inspire so much loyalty and affection in the hearts of those of us who love Scottish Dance Music?

One theory cited in two seemingly separate sources (although it could be the same source in two different places) is that the lady in question was a famous eighteenth century beauty who among other things, was the subject of a portrait by the great English artist Thomas Gainsborough (1727 - 1788).

One rather large fly in the theoretical ointment is that no authoritative list of Thomas Gainsborough's works includes a painting of anyone called "Kate Dalrymple". I have no doubt that the proponents of the theory are not going to allow such a minor

detail to stand in the way of a good story especially when the more sordid reality emerges. After all, she could have been a famous eighteenth century beauty whom Gainsborough never quite got around to painting.

In reality, what we have here is a serious case of mistaken identity. Gainsborough's subject was not our beloved Kate Dalrymple but the notorious and beautiful royal courtesan Grace Dalrymple (born Edinburgh 1758(?) died Ville d'Avray France 1823). The lady, whose conquests included the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Orleans and Napoleon Bonaparte, led a life sufficiently remarkable for it to have been made the subject of a book and a film but which somehow managed to escape the attentions of the Scottish musicians of the period. Perhaps the lady's time was taken up with weightier matters than the frivolities of "Scotch Dancing". To set the record straight, Gainsborough made two paintings of Grace Dalrymple. The first, dating from 1778, is a

full-length, life-size rendition of her under her short-lived married name of Mrs Grace Dalrymple Elliot. In this case, the choice of name is slightly odd given that her brief marriage to the Scots physician Sir John Elliot had effectively been terminated by an earlier elopement with Lord Valentia in 1774. (She was a bit of gal was our Grace!)

This painting, which now hangs in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, was commissioned by yet another of her lovers, The First Marquis of Cholmondeley. It is a superb piece of work and one that shows Gainsborough's almost impressionistic handling of paint to excellent effect, particularly in the dress fabric. Gainsborough's second depiction of Grace Dalrymple is an oval portrait dated about 1782. Apart from being a fine example of the artist's late style, the painting is interesting in that the subject looks considerably older than twenty-four, which would have been her age at the time if her official birth date is accurate.

Fascinating though all this may be, there is no historical evidence to link this fine if not particularly virtuous lady to the signature tune of "Take the Floor" other than the possibility that she may have danced to it or heard it under a different title.

There is no doubt that the tune existed at the time when Grace Dalrymple's fame was at its height. It appears in a number of eighteenth century collections and may even have its origins in a seventeenth century lute tune.

The most common but by no means the only name for it back







Johnnie was not a person but a percussion instrument also known as the Turkish Crescent used in military bands and in some classical eighteenth, century scores such as Mozart's *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* to add a Turkish flavour to the music.

So here we are, well into the nineteenth century with a well-established tune that has been called variously *The New Highland Laddie*, *The Old Highland Laddie*, *The Highland Laddie* of indeterminate vintage and *Jinglin' Johnnie* but never in all that time *Kate Dalrymple*. So how did Kate Dalrymple make her highly successful bid for the title?

Enter William Watt, handloom weaver of East Kilbride (b 1792 d 1859). Besides plying his trade as a weaver, Watt was something of a poet who achieved particular fame in his day as author of the broadside ballad *Bob o' the Bent* (published complete with an advert for boot polish at the bottom of the page!). His fame was of little advantage. Like so many poets who lacked independent means, William Watt died in poverty.

Watt had two poetry collections published during his lifetime and another titled "Poems on Sacred and Other Subjects, and Songs Humorous and Sentimental" published posthumously in 1860. His output included an ironically humorous song *Kate Dalrymple* written to fit a tune that he knew as *Jinglin' Johnnie*.

Unless the ravages of time were particularly unkind, Watt's description of Kate puts paid to any theory that she may have been a paragon of pulchritude. "*Her face had a smack o' the gruesome and grim, That did frae the fash o' a wooers defend her.*

*Her lang Roman nose nearly met wi her chin, And brang folk in mind o' the Auld Witch o' Endor.*"

Readers who know the song will be aware that Kate's fortunes change when she becomes

heiress to a rich friend's estate and finds herself courted by suitors who previously would have given her a very wide berth.

In the song, Kate falls eventually for Willie Speedyspool the sarkin' weaver, a man whose comeliness matches her own and whose physical defects have the added advantage of allowing Watt to indulge in a brilliant piece of assonant rhyming.

"*Tho' his richt e'e doth skellie, an his left leg doth limp ill, He's won the heart and got the hand o' Kate Dalrymple.*"

It sounds like the perfect match.

There seems little doubt that the melody owes its current popularity as a dance tune to James S. Kerr, the famous Glasgow music publisher who included it under the name *Kate Dalrymple* in his second collection of "Merry Melodies" somewhere around 1875. Oddly enough, neither Kerr nor J.S. Robertson (Atholl Collection) classifies it as a reel. Both include it in the "Country Dance" sections of their collections, presumably on the grounds that it did not have the melodic characteristics that distinguished the genuine reels of the time.

When all the pieces fall into place, it appears that far from being an eighteenth century beauty, Kate Dalrymple was an imaginary nineteenth century being with a face that made the Medusa look like Helen of Troy. For all that, there seems little doubt that the strains of this famous and familiar air will continue to herald programme after programme of magnificent dance music for many years to come. Here's hoping that it does.



then was *The New Highland Laddie*. Burns perversely called it *The Old Highland Laddie* when he used it in 1792 for his song *Bonnie Laddie, Highland Laddie*. (Burns wrote a second version of the same song for the Scots Musical Museum. The tune he used, which he called simply *Highland Laddie* was neither an earlier incarnation of *Kate Dalrymple* nor the tune that we now know as *Highland Laddie*). There was an epidemic of musical *Highland Laddies* back then so it is probably just as well that one of them did the decent thing and changed its name. Clarkson's "Musical Entertainment" published around 1796, includes it under the title of *The Highland Laddie* as the theme for a set of variations. Clarkson sets the tune in the low vocal key of F Major and marks it "moderato", which means that he intended it to be taken at well below the speed at which even the slowest bandleader would take it today. His choice of key, tempo and musical form tend to suggest that he was treating it as a song tune rather than a piece of dance music. Somewhere in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, our tune picked up the alternative title of *Jinglin' Johnnie* under which name it was later to resurface in The Atholl Collection of 1884. As far as we know, Jingling



# Your Letters

Dear Karin,

I have read the letter in the May edition of Dance On!, which was sent by Finlay Forbes. Although I do not agree with all of his observations and comments, which I'm sure will promote further letters in the next editions, I must confess that his fears for the future of the RSCDS remaining the leaders of the Scottish Dance Scene are not to be disregarded.

I would agree that the income of younger dancers is less than the "outgoing" older dancers and, if this continues, a decline in membership will inevitably take place. I know that efforts are being made to introduce Country Dancing to the schools – and a sound idea it is – but is it enough? I don't know what the answer is, but there is no fast fix, that's for sure.

We have a similar situation on the doorsteps of our Accordion and Fiddle Clubs, where it is becoming difficult to replace retiring committee members with younger people. This forces a club to close, which is very sad; some have been running successfully for over twenty-five years. Again I don't know what the answer is, but the music and dance scene is changing and we've got to accept that – willingly or unwillingly.

I remain positive and will support any positive programme to help solve the problem; a negative approach cannot be acceptable. We know what it was – but what will it be in the future?

**David Ross**, Kilmarnock

Dear Karin,

If only – how often do we say that. The truth be said: if only I had started Scottish Country Dancing earlier in life. "It" began about four years ago when I joined a small group of Scottish Country Dancers in a village in Kent. It did not take them long to find out that I had absolutely no idea of what to do. "Cast" – what's that? "Reel" – what's that? "Right-hand across"? Oh – you mean "teapot"! However, having purchased a pair of little black dancing shoes, I was brimming with confidence and enthusiasm, if nothing else. Scotland, here we come! A dance at the Town Hall in Pitlochry? Yes, please. I felt I really was a Scottish Country Dancer, having already been to three (yes, three) classes, but most importantly having a pair of little black dancing shoes! I was confident they would call the dances – they surely **MUST**. My heart sank when I saw 100 or so dancers expertly reeling and jiggling – and no caller?! I retreated in haste. "Don't go," said a friendly voice, "I will talk you through a few dances. You can also come as a spectator, if you like." And this was the beginning of a wonderful friendship, having since danced in Pitlochry many times. I am now a member of The Orpington & District Caledonian Society and dancing seems to have taken over my life. Thanks a bunch, June Templeman. It's your fault that I have no time to sit in an armchair with my knitting – but my otherwise high blood pressure has returned to normal! I wonder why? Thanks for all your help, June – happy dancing. Kind Regards, **Elisabeth**

PS Karin – I would be interested to know if "Karin's Strathspey" has anything to do with you. My daughter's name is also "Karin" with an i!!

*Karin replies:* No, the Strathspey is not named for me I'm afraid. There will be plenty of other "Karins" out there though, because that is the common spelling in the rest of Europe. It's only in America and Britain that "Karen" is more usual. Ingram is a Scandinavian name, and that's why my parents chose "Karin". (I dread to think what I would have been called if I'd been born a boy!) I remember having an argument with a teacher at primary school who insisted that I had changed the spelling of my name and it should be with an "e"! And while we're on the subject of names – no, I am no relation to Dixie Ingram the dancer – but I wish I'd had a fiver for every time I've been asked!



## Wordsearch Answers

Cornrigs, Dinky One-Step, Duke of Perth, Eightsome Reel, Eva Three-Step, Foula Reel, Gay Gordons, Gypsy Tap, Hamilton House, Haymakers, La Russe, La Va, Military Two-Step, Palais Glide, Petronella, Postie's Jig, St Bernard's Waltz, Triumph, Veleta, Victory Waltz.

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## SCD in Italy

**A**round eighty Scottish Country dancers once more followed Marian Anderson's Dance Band in a successful trip to Riva, on the shores of Lake Garda, N. Italy.

The band members comprised Marian on lead accordion, Graham Bell (Edinburgh) on second accordion, Max Ketchin (Tinnit) on the drums. They were joined on this occasion by Scott Gordon and his wife Susan from Aberdeen on the keyboard and fiddle.

Janet Johnston (Edinburgh) prepared and recapped the dances, which were a lively and inspiring mixture for the week. This proved to be a winning combination. The company was very appreciative of the effort that Marian and Janet had put into the holiday.

The chosen venue was excellent, the accommodation most comfortable with a very friendly and courteous staff.

The Mikado & Co look forward to wherever Marian and John Semple (travel agent) will lead them next year.

*The Mikado*



## Vancouver International

**D**ancing in a library? It would seem an unlikely scenario – with raised eyebrows of irate readers who were being denied the expected silence – as lively music and noisy “heuching” filled the air.

Fortunately, because of the unusual and imaginative design of Vancouver's main Public Library, no readers were denied their quietude. At about noon on Friday April 29 2005 it was the setting for the International Day of Dance when, with the co-operation of The Vancouver Dance Centre, two full sets of dancers (including eight men!) gave a public demonstration.

The Vancouver downtown library takes up a whole city block and is actually two separate buildings; in the western half is the nine-storey library itself, and in the eastern half is a twenty-one storey office tower, all faced with sandstone, with curved walls and columns not unlike The Coliseum. It is the space in between the buildings that provides the venue for entertainment, because it is a wide, glass-roofed concourse, with the library on one side, and cafés and small stores on the other (the ground floor of the tower). It proved to be the perfect place to give a public performance, with adequate space for the enthusiastic audience without impeding pedestrian traffic flow, even when several members of the audience (including a group of Mexican students attending college

in Vancouver) were encouraged to join in with The Dashing White Sergeant and Mamie's Jig.

Under the direction of Vancouver Scottish Country Dance Teacher, Marie Disiewicz, the dancers performed Shiftin' Bobbins, Pelorus Jack, Culla Bay, Postie's Jig, Seton's Ceilidh Band and The Belle of Bon Accord.

The event was organised by Ray Eagle and photographer for the day was Jim Tan. Many thanks for their hard work.





# 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 five 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 email 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)**



**[www.i-way.co.uk/~kelpi/net2a.htm](http://www.i-way.co.uk/~kelpi/net2a.htm)**

The Scottish National Dance Company. The home page tells me that the SNDC, as it is usually known, was founded in 1970 by Colin Robertson and Lewis Innes to promote Scottish dance in all its various forms.

The SNDC is probably best known for selling copies of dances devised by people from all over the world (most of which the RSCDS don't stock) as well as music and recordings. There were a lot of links on the Home Page, which made it appear that there was a lot more to the SNDC than just the catalogue. The links were a bit confusing, and several sent me to the same place, although it did not always seem relevant to the wording of the link. At the bottom of the Home Page I found a list of links which formed a menu and decided to work my way through these.

The "Ritual Dance" link took me to a page with text about such dances as The Sword Dance of Papa Stour and the Marquis of Huntley's Highland Fling, it didn't actually tell me anything about the dances, just a few words about their origins, and I must admit I found the bright yellow background a bit of a strain to look at.

I then looked at the KASDA link, which revealed itself as the Kelpi Annual Scottish Dance Award (which customers can nominate and vote for) and discovered that the 1998 winner was Roy Goldring. It was at this point that I started to wonder about the site. I know that the SNDC is still active, and I was puzzled that their catalogue was not on this site anywhere as I was sure I had seen it on-line before.

I had found the site by using the "Google" search engine and typing in "Scottish National Dance Company" and the first site on the list was the one I was looking at. Going back to my search I discovered that farther down the list, almost at the bottom of the first page, was a link to [www.sndc.co.uk](http://www.sndc.co.uk) which, when I opened it looked much more likely as the current site.

**[www.sndc.co.uk](http://www.sndc.co.uk)**

The site was much more as I expected and contained the

full catalogue although there was no on-line ordering, but a promise that it will come.

The first item on the menu is "Finding Items" this gives simple guidance on how to find some text on a page – useful if you know what you are looking for – and the guidance is correct, although there are other ways of carrying out a search.

The Menu offers: Country Dance Publications, Country Dance Recordings, Highland Publications and Recordings, Step Dance Publications and Recordings, Videos, and Dance and Music related Accessories such as Slipstop. Although the catalogue is extensive there are no prices, for those you have to send an e-mail and it is not clear whether or not you have to order by "snail mail" or telephone. A word of warning – you should not include your credit card details in an e-mail unless you use encryption (which most of us don't). E-mails sent as plain text can easily be read by anyone who wants to monitor what is being sent.

A useful improvement to the catalogue would be an "Items Recently Added" page, which would allow regular customers to see what has been added during the last month. The search facility is not much use if you are not looking for a particular item, but just seeing if there is anything of interest. Going through the complete catalogue can be a bit daunting.

The site has the potential to be developed further and on-line secure ordering would be the main improvement. Oh – and please Kelpi – will you get the old site deleted – it can't be doing your business any good! At the very least, if you cannot arrange to have the URL discontinued, clear the site and put a link on the home page to direct people to the new site.

## Footnote

I would like some feedback on the range of sites that readers would like me to review. There are lots of Country Dance sites but I am struggling to find many that relate to other forms of dancing. If anyone knows of any please send me the links. I would also like to know if sites which sell dance music CDs or sites run by the bands would be of interest – please e-mail [sue@suepetyt.me.uk](mailto:sue@suepetyt.me.uk) with your ideas or write to the letters page.



## Let's Celebrate!

(Jig 4x40)

**A Dance for four couples in a longways set**

*Original Tune: St Columba's Jig  
by Chris Dewhurst*

*(2 chords, third and fourth couples change sides on the second chord)*

*This dance was written to celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup>  
Anniversary of St Columba's Scottish Country  
Dance Class.*

**1-4** First couple dance half a figure of eight round second couple WHILE fourth couple dance half a figure of eight round third couple.

**5-6** First couple dance down the middle WHILE fourth couple dance up the middle towards each other, second and third couples step up/down.

**7-8** First lady and fourth man, first man and fourth lady pass right shoulder, then pull right shoulders back to finish facing each other, first couple facing up and fourth couple facing down.

**9-12** Fourth and first couples circle left once round.

**13-14** Fourth and first couples set, on the second setting step, pull right shoulders back to face "corners". (First lady facing third lady, first man facing third man, fourth lady facing second lady, fourth man facing second man.)

**15-16** First and fourth couples change places right hand with "corners" and finish facing them.

**17-24** All dance double diagonal reels of four, passing right shoulders (with "corners") to begin and joining left hands across in the middle.

**25-32** Third man, followed by his partner, dances a figure of eight round first couple (in fourth place) giving right shoulder to first man to start. Finish between fourth couple's place facing up. WHILE second man, followed by his partner, dances a figure of eight round fourth couple (in first place) giving right shoulder to fourth man to start and finish between first couple's place facing down. First and fourth couples step up/down on bar 32.

**33-40** All circle to the RIGHT and back, finishing on the sidelines, 2,4,1,3.  
Repeat from new positions.

© Sue Petyt January 2003

## Kate's Travels

(Strathspey 4x40)

**This dance is for four couples, in a longways set.**

*Mrs Kate Gibson is a long-standing member of  
Scunthorpe Scottish Country Dance Club.*

**1-2** Second couple cast up, third couple cast down.  
**3-4** Second couple join right hands and dance down, third couple join right hands and dance up.

**5-8** Second and third couples dance right hands across WHILE first and fourth couples set and cross right hand. Second and third couple finish facing corners (ie second man facing first lady, second lady facing first man, third man facing fourth lady, third lady facing fourth man).

**9-10** All set.

**11-12** Second and third couples change places left hand with corners.

**13-16** First and fourth men give right hands and cross between second and third ladies, and dance to the ends of the set, WHILE first and fourth ladies give right hands and cross between second and third men and dance to the ends of the set. Fourth and first couples join left hands with their partners and dance up/down to meet in the centre of the set (2,4,1,3).

**17-20** Fourth and first couples dance left hands across. Finish facing corners. (First man facing third lady, first lady facing third man, fourth man facing second lady, fourth lady facing second man.)

**21-22** All set.

**23-24** First and fourth couples change places left hand with corners.

**25-28** Second and third men give right hands and cross between first and fourth ladies, and dance to the ends of the set, WHILE second and third ladies give right hands and cross between first and fourth men, and dance to the ends of the set (4,3,2,1). Third and second couples join right hands with their partner and dance up/down to meet in the centre of the set (4,3,2,1).

**29-32** Third and second couple dance right hands across WHILE fourth and first couple set and cross right hands. (Fourth, third and second couples finish in the centre of the dance.)

**33-40** Fourth, third and second couples dance an allemande.

Repeat from new positions.

© Sue Petyt January 1995





## The Craven Twelvesome

### 4 x 32 Bar Reel

*(Original: The Moving Cloud played as a reel)*

**Formation:** 4 men, each with 2 lady partners, standing in a square set

*We don't know the origin or the deviser of this dance, but suspect that it may be from the north of England, given that The Craven Fault runs from Cumbria to Yorkshire. The instructions here came from Moira Johnstone.*

**1-8** Each man dances a reel of three with his partners, starting by passing right shoulders with his right-hand partner.

**9-10** Men advance with two setting steps to the centre.

**11-12** Men dance a right hand star half way round to opposite place.

**13-16** Men cast out of the set between their opposite ladies, travel clockwise behind the set and emerge between next ladies (the ladies who were to the right of them originally).

**17-18** Head Trios (trios now in positions 1 and 3) advance for three steps and on the fourth step each lady joins both hands with her opposite lady and dances half turn to change places.

**19-20** These new trios retire for four steps.

**21-24 Bars 17-20** are repeated by Side Trios (those in positions 2 and 4)

**25-32** All circle left for eight steps and back for eight steps.

These 32 bars are repeated 3 times, so that everyone ends up back in their original places.

## Sunnybank Stomp

### Couples Dance – Waltz

*This is a good dance to start off an evening, because it is progressive. It was devised by Mrs Sheena McGrath to be danced to the tune of the same name written by Gordon Pattullo for Andy and Sheena's Ruby Wedding in October 2004. The dance notation is by David Cronie. The steps here are for the man, the lady dances the opposite.*

**Formation:** In double hold (facing each other with both hands joined) with man facing wall and lady to centre.

**1-8** Advance and retire, then cross over to change places. Advance and retire, then cross over back to place.

**9-12** Both face line of dance in promenade hold (hands crossed and held in front). Step forward left, right, left, close right to left. Step forward left, swivel round to face against line of dance.

**13-16** Step forward right, left, right, close left to right. Step right; turn round to face line of dance.

**17-20** Dance two full rotary waltz turns, to finish with gent facing wall, lady to centre.

**21-24** Both step back to centre left, right, then step to wall, left, right.

**25-26** With a "skating" action diag to centre with hands crossed, forward left, close right to left, forward left.

**27-28** With a "skating" action diag to wall, forward right, close left to right, forward right.

**29-30** With a "skating" action diag to centre, forward left, close right to left, forward left.

**31-32** Gent  $\frac{3}{4}$  anti-clockwise turn to face new partner; lady  $\frac{3}{4}$  clockwise turn to face new partner.

## Did You Know?

*The Eightsome Reel comes in many different forms and combines features of the Quadrille and Scotch Reel. The most commonly danced variation (40, 8x48, 40 Bar Reels) is believed to have been devised by the Earl of Dunmore and a group of friends at Blair Castle in the 1870s. Other distinctive variations can be seen in Shetland, Buchan and Northumberland. In the Scottish Borders many of the Reels danced by the Principals of the various Common Ridings and Festivals are also variations of The Eightsome.*



Cajun Waltz Ad Lib

**THE SUNNYBANK STOMP**By Gordon Pattullo  
© Sunshine Music

(Repeat part one each time)

Chord symbols and markings in the score:

- Staff 1: D, A7, D
- Staff 2: D, E7, A7
- Staff 3: D, A7, F#7, Bm, D7
- Staff 4: G, A7, D, Fine, D, B7, E7, 3
- Staff 5: A
- Staff 6: E7, A
- Staff 7: A
- Staff 8: TRIO, E7, A, D, A, A, A7, D.C. al Trio
- Staff 9: A
- Staff 10: E7, A, E7
- Staff 11: A
- Staff 12: E7, A, D, A, A, A7

To Andy & Sheena McGrath on the occasion of their Ruby Wedding  
(7 / 10 / 04)D.C. (with Repeat)  
al Fine



## The Halcrow

### 6/8 March

Side by side, nearer hand joined,  
man commences on left foot,  
woman on right

*This dance was devised by Moira Johnstone for  
Jimmy Norman, Halcrow Stadium, Gretna*

**1-4** Forward for 3 steps, point – man right foot, woman left foot. Cross over to change places – step, cross, step close.

**5-6** Man on the right foot, woman on the left foot, forward for 2 steps, turn away from each other, man turning half-way round to finish facing against line of dance, woman full turn to finish facing line of dance.

**7-8** Cross back to place, step, cross, step close, man still facing against line of dance, woman facing line of dance. Join nearer hands.

**9-10** Moving against line of dance, man on the right foot, forward for 3 steps point forward, woman back for three steps, commencing left foot, point back.

**11-12** Man back, line of dance for three steps, commencing left foot, woman forward for 3 steps, commencing right foot, turn to face each other.

**13-16** Dance back to back passing right shoulders, back to place facing forward ready to start again.

© Moira Johnstone



## Millennium March

### 4/4 March

Commence side by side, facing the line of dance, hands crossed in front.

Both start on the right foot

*This dance was devised by Moira Johnstone to celebrate The Millennium at a local Hogmanay dance on 31 December 1999. The tune, Jimmy McDonald of Tighnabruich by Ian Muir of Prestwick was used to devise the dance. This annual dance was organised by the late Mary Carruthers on behalf of the local branch of The Arthritis and Rheumatism Council.*

**1-2** Step forward right foot, left foot forward turning to the right for a quarter turn to face the wall, (do not drop hands, but turn the woman under the right arm to finish side on to the line of dance, both facing the wall). Cross right foot over the left foot, transfer weight to the right foot and point the left foot to the side, line of dance.

**3-4** Step onto the left foot, cross the right foot over the left foot, transfer weight to the right foot, step with left foot, point the right foot to the side, against line of dance.

**5-6** Step onto the right foot, cross left foot over right foot against line of dance, transfer weight to the left foot. Woman turns to face partner without dropping hands; man steps onto the right foot and closes left foot to right.

**7-8** Set line of dance and against line of dance

**9-10** Turn away from each other (man to the left, woman to the right) finish facing each other. Join hands – crossed (man's right hand uppermost).

**11-14** Into the centre for four steps (man back commencing left foot, woman facing commencing right foot) and back to place for four steps.

**15-16** Man drop left hand and turn woman under the right arm to finish hands crossed in front.

© Moira Johnstone

## The Tollbooth Tussle

### 32 Bar Reels or Jigs

#### Sicilian Circle

*Written by Kirsteen Mackinnon in protest against the tolls for the Skye Bridge, which have now been abolished.*

**1-8** All dancers join hands in fours and circle to the left for eight steps and back for eight steps.

**9-12** Each dancer sets twice to their opposite (four pas de basque steps).

**13-16** Each dancer swings their opposite for a count of eight.

**17-20** Each dancer sets twice to their partner.

**21-24** Each dancer swings their partner.

**25-26** Joining nearer hands with partner, those couples facing anti-clockwise make an arch and pass over the couple they have just danced with.

**27-28** The anti-clockwise couples pass under the arch made by the next clockwise couple coming towards them.

**29-30** The anti-clockwise couples arch over the next clockwise couple.

**31-32** The anti-clockwise couples go under the arch made by the next clockwise couple. This "dipping and diving" movement means that couples have progressed four.



# Dunedin Dancers

## International Folk Dance

### Festival, July 2005

**F**olk dancers from Serbia, Germany and Belgium will be performing for audiences in Edinburgh, Stirling, Dunfermline and Falkland as part of the Dunedin Dancers' 18<sup>th</sup> International Folk Dance Festival from 24<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> July 2005.

The highlight of the Festival is the performance at The Church Hill Theatre, Edinburgh, on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> July. Tickets are available (price £8, or £6 for over 65s and under 16s) from the Usher Hall Box Office on 0131-228 1155.

Weather permitting, spectators are also welcome at Falkland Palace, Fife, on Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> July, outside the Scottish Parliament on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> July, at Pittencrieff Park, Dunfermline on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> July and at Stirling Castle on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> July. Please contact Christine Merrick on 07020-947 324 for further information.



**Belgian Group**

Dunedin Dancers, with help from members of New Scotland, the Edinburgh University Scottish Country Dancing Society, organise their International Folk Dance Festival every second year. Three folk dance groups from other European countries are invited to participate in a week of performing, social dancing and workshops, as well as general socialising and visiting tourist attractions in southeast Scotland. All the participants try out each other's dances, and many new friendships are formed. One of the key purposes of the Festival is to introduce international folk dancing to people throughout the area, both residents and tourists.



**Dunedin Dancers © Craig & Samantha Townsend**



**Dunedin Dancers at Falkland © Anne Burgess**

This year, Dunedin Dancers and New Scotland are pleased to host Trachtengilde Schwalenberg from Germany, Dimitrije Tucovic from Belgrade, Serbia and Volkskunstgroep 't Havermeuleke from Leuven, Belgium. These three groups have very different styles of dancing and, together with the host groups' Scottish dancing, will produce an enjoyable and varied performance.

All the visiting folk dancers are accommodated in the homes of members and friends of Dunedin Dancers for the week, although most of the meals are provided by Dunedin Dancers in the Festival's base, which is George Watson's College in Edinburgh. Dunedin Dancers are always looking for new hosts who would be willing to accommodate a couple of visiting folk dancers; it is always very enjoyable and by hosting the dancers (or musicians) you feel very much involved in the Festival and are able to participate as much as you wish. If you are interested in hosting, please contact Christine Merrick on 07020-947 324 to discuss this or to ask any questions you may have.

## International Folk Dance Festival - Edinburgh



**Dunedin Dancers' 18<sup>th</sup> Festival**

**23<sup>rd</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> July 2005**

**Folk Dance Groups from Belgium, Germany and Serbia**

Outdoor performances in Stirling, Falkland and Dunfermline, as well as Edinburgh - see our website for details.

Concert performance on Thursday 28 July at 7.30pm in the Church Hill Theatre, Morningside, Edinburgh.

Tickets (£8/£6) from Usher Hall Box Office, 0131 228 1155.

**Can you help us?**

**Do you have a spare bed?**

We are looking for more offers of hospitality for our visiting folk dancers this summer. Our festival is based at George Watson's College, Edinburgh, where we feed everyone during the week and have ceilidhs/parties most nights. We still need some more beds.

Hosts are asked to provide bed and breakfast, a meal on the Sunday night and two packed lunches. In return, they will enjoy meeting people from another country, get swept into the dancing, parties and great atmosphere, and enjoy the groups' performances in several attractive parts of Scotland.

If you would like more information, please phone Denise Fallas on 0131 447 9258 or email her on [denisefallas@aol.com](mailto:denisefallas@aol.com).

[www.dunedindancers.org.uk](http://www.dunedindancers.org.uk)



# “Tut, tut, tut!”

**By Finlay Forbes**

I had an interesting conversation with someone whom I met for the first time recently. He was one of what seems to be a growing number of ex-Scottish Country Dancers. The conversation went something like this, “I love Scottish Country Dancing. I used to do it regularly but then I gave it up because too many of the dancers took it too seriously. I couldn’t cope with all that “tut, tut, tutting” every time somebody made a mistake. I now do Irish dancing instead. That is just as good fun but far more relaxing because everyone is so laid back. Nobody worries if you make a mistake.” For the record, the person concerned was no more than middle-aged with all his moving parts in working order – or at least with all the moving parts necessary for Scottish Country Dancing in working order. I was listening with some sadness to a man who had given up Scottish Country Dancing because of its unsociable atmosphere rather than because of any physical and mental demands that it placed upon him.

“Tutting” may not be unique to Scottish Country Dancing but anecdotal evidence suggests that certain breeds of Scottish Country Dancer are abnormally prone to a particularly nasty and acute strain of this rather unpleasant ailment. Old Time Dancers always seem far more tolerant of the sins of feet, brains and other malfunctioning body components attached to inexperienced performers.

Ask the average tutter what purpose their minimalist form of oral expression serves and you will doubtless be treated to a pompous diatribe about preserving some arcane set of standards unknown to any

recognised standard setting body anywhere in the world. (Is there a British Standard for the execution of The Reel of the 51<sup>st</sup> Division?)

In reality, tutting has nothing to do with maintaining standards and everything to do with feeding the egos of those who suffer from it. Being able to show displeasure at someone else’s lapses from grace bolsters the self-esteem of those who need that kind of stimulus to make their own efforts seem superior. In extreme cases, it may be the only means they have of giving themselves some sense of self-worth. The sordid truth is that tutters give the appearance of taking their dancing seriously when in fact, what they are doing is taking themselves far too seriously. Tutting is nothing more or less



than an ego trip for those with limited powers of creativity and no sense of adventure.

The great concert pianist Stephen Kovacevich (Stephen Bishop as was) has an interesting and revealing anecdote related to this subject. As he walked on to the platform at the beginning of one of his recitals, he noticed a young man in the combined company of an obvious girlfriend and a pile of sheet music. To Kovacevich’s dismay, the music on the man’s lap appeared to coincide rather

too closely for comfort with the music on his recital programme. What he had was a dreaded score marker, not only that but a score marker seated within his natural line of vision. Needless to say the young man followed the scores carefully, which was not in itself a problem. The problem arose when he kept nudging his companion and smiling knowingly every time that Kovacevich played a wrong note. This man’s antics did nothing to reduce the number of wrong notes in the recital. If anything they had the opposite effect.

This story makes two equally important points. The first is that even the world’s best performers make mistakes from time to time. Mistakes are the inevitable consequence of testing performing skills to their limits instead of playing safely and drearily within those limits. Real performers need that rush of adrenaline to keep them going.

The second point is that drawing attention to every mistake is likely to increase rather than reduce the chances of another mistake being made. Tutters cause mistakes by sapping other people’s self-confidence and making them nervous and jittery, but then that is the whole purpose of the exercise is it not? “We don’t want these outsiders getting too confident now, do we? I mean they could end up dancing better than we do and that would never do would it?”

The tutters’ justification is usually based on the notion that they have taken the time and trouble to learn the dances



properly so it is perfectly reasonable for them to object when their enjoyment is limited by the actions of those who have gone to a lot less trouble. On the face of it, this looks like a fair argument but is it really?

What do we say to those devout souls who ask, "Why should our dancing be spoiled by the antics of someone who couldn't be bothered to learn the dances properly beforehand?" The answer is quite simple, "Because you chose to take their money at the door." As soon as you accept money from these lesser mortals as payment for admission, you are obliged to honour your side of the contract, which includes allowing them on to the floor to dance. If you don't like what they do, you can always offer to refund their money and ask them to leave. Even if these dancers are not up to some undisclosed standard, it is both unfair and dishonest to expect them to do nothing more than sit on the sidelines and gape in unalloyed admiration at exploits of self-appointed, self-obsessed "experts" massaging their own egos. It is not a pretty sight and certainly not one worth paying money to see. Even when done proficiently, the visual impact of Scottish Country Dancing at floor level is extremely limited (as the disinterested judges in "Come Dancing" once pointed out as tactfully as they could without compromising their own professional standards). If serious dancers wish to use money from their less devout fellows to reduce the price of their pleasure, they must be prepared to accept the consequences. It is all part of the difficult process of growing up. In the sordid world beyond the cloisters, people actually expect to get what they pay for. If the tutters dislike the prospect of having their pleasure diminished by the activities of the flannel footed, navigationally challenged masses, all that they have to do is pay the additional



amount necessary to cover the cost of having "fewer but better" dancers sharing in their events. They could achieve this by stating the attendance criteria on all publicity material related to their activities. At no extra cost and no prospect of any future bill for royalties, here is some suggested wording for a standard footnote to the flier announcing the "Darktown Tutters Ball".

"This programme is not suitable for beginners or dancers of limited experience. If you cannot dance every dance on the programme from memory, please stay away. You may be

asked to take an oral or practical proficiency test before being admitted to the hall."

#### **Optional Rider 1**

"The doorkeepers reserve the right to search all bags, sporrans, clothing, hip flasks and any other suspicious articles for crib cards, copies of Pilling, electronic storage devices, grotty jottys, or any other items or materials indicative of a failure on the part of the entrant to prepare properly for this event. The presence of any of the aforementioned items in the possession of the entrant shall constitute grounds for refusing entry."

This may not be very welcoming but at least it is honest enough to allow the massed ranks of tutters to tut away with unblemished consciences at the misdeeds of any undesirable citizenry who may have managed to escape detection, rejection and ejection by the rigorous vetting process. It also precludes any sustainable prosecutions under the Trade Descriptions Act.

But tutters of the world despair ye not! Those on the receiving end of your displeasure are nearly all like my conversational friend. They never complain. They just don't come back. One of these days, you will have the floor – a very empty floor – all to yourselves.

**Nicol  
McLaren**

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## **The Glencraig Scottish Dance Band**

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# 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	Demonstrators: O & C Harrison
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
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- (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
	Perthshire	Rait Village Hall	George Rennie	8pm-11pm	£3 (supper)	Door	Info 01821 670 235
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
21 <sup>st</sup>	Kirkwall	King St. Hall	t.b.a.	7.30-10.30	£2/£0.50	Door (Supper)	Old Time/Ceilidh/Country
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
27 <sup>th</sup>	Kirkwall	King St. Hall	t.b.a.	7.30-10.30	£2/£0.50	Door (Supper)	Old Time/Ceilidh/Country
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	£3 (supper)	Door	No Bar

## Scottish Country Dancing

June 2005

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
	Alva	Cochrane Hall	Colin Dewar	7.30pm	£4	Door	No Recaps
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
	Fochabers	Public Institute	Sandy Nixon	8pm		01343 820 406	Weekend Dance
18 <sup>th</sup>	Fochabers	Public Institute	Sandy Nixon	7.30pm		01343 820 406	Weekend Dance
	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
21 <sup>st</sup>	Perth	City Halls	David Anderson	7.30pm	£5/£1	01738 622 720	Summer Dancing (Re-caps)
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
	Alva	Cochrane Hall	David Anderson	7.30pm	£4	Door	No Recaps
24 <sup>th</sup>	Alford	Public Hall	Frank Thomson	8pm		01651 863 052	
	Galashiels	Volunteer Hall	Marian Anderson	7.30pm	£4.50		Braw Lads' Gathering
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
	Glasgow	Great George St Hall	-	7.30pm	£5	0141 945 0513	Hyndland Hoofers Club Dance
28 <sup>th</sup>	Perth	St Matthew's Hall	Lothian	7.30pm	£5/£1	01738 622 720	Summer Dancing (Re-caps)
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
	Alva	Cochrane Hall	Sandy Nixon	7.30pm	£4	Door	No Recaps



# Alasdair's Dance Diary July

## Ceilidh & Old Time Dances

July 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	Demonstrators: O & C Harrison
Every Monday	Kirkwall, Orkney	King Street Hall	Live Music	7.30pm-10.30pm	£2/£0.50 soft drinks	Door (Supper)	Old Time, Ceilidh & Country Dancing
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
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Meikleour	Village Hall	Ken Stewart	8pm-11.30	£3.50 Bar	Door	
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Angus	Tealing	Ken Stewart	7.30-10pm	£2.50	Door	
9 <sup>th</sup>	Dunbar	Dunbar Castle	Dick Black	8pm-11.30	£2 Bar	Door	Social Club
13 <sup>th</sup>	Linlithgow	Palace Courtyard	Ian Muir	7.30pm	£6/£5 Tea	Door	Indoors if wet
16 <sup>th</sup>	Perthshire	Blackford, Village Hall	Alan Ross	8pm-11.30 No Bar	£4 (tea & biscuit)	Door	Soft drinks available
17 <sup>th</sup>	Montrose	Park Hotel	Ian Cruickshanks	2pm-5pm		Door	A & F Club ceilidh
	Glencarse	Village Hall	Wayne Robertson	7.30-10pm	£2.50	Door	Charity
20 <sup>th</sup>	Linlithgow	Palace Courtyard	John Carmichael	7.30pm	£6/£5 Tea	Door	Indoors if wet
23 <sup>rd</sup>	Dunbar	Dunbar Castle	t.b.a.	8pm-11.30	£2 [Bar]	Door	Social Club
27 <sup>th</sup>	Linlithgow	Palace Courtyard	Occasionals	7.30pm	£6/£5 Tea	Door	Indoors if wet
	Dufftown	Memorial Hall	-	7.30-10.30		Door	Monthly Social
28 <sup>th</sup>	Fife	Windygates Village Hall	Bruce Lindsay	8pm-11pm	£3 (supper)	Door	No Bar
29 <sup>th</sup>	Edinburgh	Minto Hotel	Canongate Cadgers	8pm-12mn	£6/£4	Door	Family-Caller
	Dufftown	Memorial Hall	Iain Cathcart	8pm-12mn	£5	Door	Old Time Dance
30 <sup>th</sup>	Perthshire	Blackford, Village Hall	Jimmy Lindsay	8pm-11.30 No Bar	£4 (tea & biscuit)	Door	Soft drinks available
31 <sup>st</sup>	Glencarse	Village Hall	George Rennie	7.30-10pm	£2.50	Door	Charity

## Scottish Country Dancing

July 2005

Date	Town	Hall	Band	Time	Cost	Contact	Comments
1 <sup>st</sup>	Glasgow	Partick Burgh Hall	David Oswald	7.30pm	£5	01360 550 256	Summer Dancing
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Pitlochry	Town Hall	Jim Berry	7.30pm	£5/£1.50	01796 473 488	Summer Dancing
4 <sup>th</sup>	Troon	Concert Hall	Kyle	7.30pm	£2.50	Spectators £1.50	Summer Dancing
	Dundee	Marryat Hall	Maple Leaf	7.30pm		01382 642 131	Summer Dancing
5 <sup>th</sup>	Dufftown	Memorial Hall	-	7.30pm		01542 887 616	Summer Dancing
	Perth	City Halls	Sandy Nixon	7.30pm	£5/£1	01738 622 720	Summer Dancing (Re-caps)
7 <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
	Alva	Cochrane Hall	David Oswald	7.30pm	£4	Door	No Recaps
8 <sup>th</sup>	Beaully	Phipps Hall	Marian Anderson	8pm		01463 234 680	
10 <sup>th</sup>	Arkholve	Village Hall	-	5.30pm		015242 41986	North West Craven RSCDS
11 <sup>th</sup>	Troon	Concert Hall	Marian Anderson	7.30pm	£2.50	Spectators £1.50	Summer Dancing
12 <sup>th</sup>	Perth	City Halls	David Oswald	7.30pm	£5/£1	01738 622 720	Summer Dancing (Re-caps)
13 <sup>th</sup>	Dunfermline	Glen Pavilion	David Anderson	7.30pm	£4	01383 720 972	Summer Dancing
	Linlithgow	Palace Courtyard	Ian Muir	7.30pm	£6/£5	01506 845 698	Scotch Hop
14 <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
	Alva	Cochrane Hall	Ian McPhail	7.30pm	£4	Door	No Recaps
16 <sup>th</sup>	Pitlochry	Town Hall	David Anderson	7.30pm	£5/£1.50	01796 473 488	Summer Dancing
18 <sup>th</sup>	Troon	Concert Hall	Ian Muir	7.30pm	£2.50	Spectators £1.50	Summer Dancing
19 <sup>th</sup>	Perth	City Halls	David Cunningham	7.30pm	£5/£1	01738 622 720	Summer Dancing (Re-caps)
20 <sup>th</sup>	Linlithgow	Palace Courtyard	John Carmichael	7.30pm	£6/£5	01506 845 698	Scotch Hop
21 <sup>st</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
	Alva	Cochrane Hall	Colin Dewar	7.30pm	£4	Door	No Recaps
25 <sup>th</sup>	Troon	Concert Hall	Kenny Thomson	7.30pm	£2.50	Spectators £1.50	Summer Dancing
26 <sup>th</sup>	Perth	City Halls	Marian Anderson	7.30pm	£5/£1	01738 622 720	Summer Dancing (Re-caps)
27 <sup>th</sup>	Linlithgow	Palace Courtyard	Occasionals	7.30pm	£6/£5	01506 845 698	Scotch Hop
	Dunfermline	Glen Pavilion	James Coutts	7.30pm	£4	01383 720 972	Summer Dancing
28 <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
	Alva	Cochrane Hall	David Cunningham	7.30pm	£4	Door	No Recaps
	Settle	St John's	-	-	-	015242 41986	North West Craven RSCDS
30 <sup>th</sup>	Pitlochry	Town Hall	Colin Dewar	7.30pm	£5/£1.50	01796 473 488	Summer Dancing
31 <sup>st</sup>	Culzean Castle	Walled Garden	Ian Muir	2.30pm			Dancing on grass



# Podium or Pulpit?

By Mike Scott

I'm beginning to wonder what century we're living in, never mind whether we've entered a new millennium; and I was under the impression that a Ceilidh was a gathering or party where people were supposed to go to *enjoy* themselves. Reading the letters that have been published in Dance On recently, I'm asking myself whether I've been attending ceilidhs or John Knox revival meetings. I thought that extremist Calvinism died out centuries ago, but it seems that Calvin's genes have been passed on and have found fresh expression in the form of one or two of our band leaders. Now I can't help wondering, when I'm on the dance floor and looking at the band, am I gazing up at a podium or a pulpit?

My recent articles in this magazine have surely had a common theme: "Please don't take dancing so seriously!" I'm dismayed to see that this plea has been falling on deaf ears. You'd hope that musicians wouldn't have deaf ears – unless they're Beethoven of course. As if it's not enough to have a few dancers taking themselves too seriously, now band leaders have joined in with their pet peeves. Come on guys! Lighten up! Ceilidhs are *informal* gatherings for people to have *fun*. They're not meant to be discipline camps where you have to be careful not to step out of line. We've got enough stress in modern life without adding more at a Ceilidh.

Maybe you should try to relax a little and have some fun too. There are enough Moaning Minnies and Serious Simons on the dance floor. The last thing we need are a few Holy Willies up on stage who believe that they've been blessed with the divine authority to interpret the one true dance scripture and then call down fire, brimstone and eternal damnation on all those heretics who don't conform to their narrow views. Anyone for a dose of closed-minded dogmatism? Not today, thank you – but still they come.

For instance we have the epistle, apparently from the Very Reverend I.M. Jolly, which was printed in the February 2005 issue of Dance On (issue 4). The Rev. Jolly, who calls himself an anonymous "broadcasting band leader," launches vigorously into his sermon. He bemoans the fact that on several occasions a set of



heathen dancers would leap on to the floor right in front of him and have the bald-faced effrontery to perform a Duke of Perth instead of the Authorised Version of Strip the Willow which he had announced from his pulpit. Shock! Horror! Burn them, burn the heretics! Don't they know where they are? How dare they have such fun right in front of his nose doing an unauthorised dance! Don't they know they aren't supposed to be enjoying themselves?! No doubt they should be wailing and gnashing their teeth.

The Rev. Jolly then goes on to tell us how he summoned up his righteous indignation and smote these sinners with 56 bars instead of the 64

they were expecting, leaving them standing like pillars of salt on the dance floor. Wow, he really showed them! What a repost! There's no messing when Jolly's around. I bet the poor devils didn't know what hit them! I hope I'm there to watch when he summons a plague of locusts. But for now I can't sleep for wondering how many dancers would fit on the head of a pin.

Our good Minister then suggests that wayward dancers are breaking the First Commandment of the Book of Dance - Thou shalt not show off! But in an uncharacteristic slip of open-mindedness, he asks if one of these dancers would care to enlighten him on why they had disobeyed his holy edict. Well I've never been to one of his rallies, but I believe I can answer for the dancers.

To begin with, even if the Rev. Jolly is right and the dancers are merely showing off, so what? I don't believe there's any law against that. Is it really that bad? I know our pastoral friend may feel he has to reel the wayward sheep back into the flock but, just like Jehovah's Witnesses that turn up uninvited at your door, there's really no need. There are many worse things than showing off. And for every person who gets upset at the sight of someone "showing off," there are ten who enjoy watching. You can't please everyone.

However, I don't believe that showing off is the main reason. Unlike Scottish Country Dancing with its almost 10,000 recorded dances, we Ceilidh dancers have to make do with a relatively small repertoire. So when you've been going out dancing two or three times a week for many years, doing the same twenty or thirty dances over and over, you start to take an interest in doing something different. There are two ways that one can introduce such differences: either embellish existing dances or introduce new ones.

A Scottish Country Dance has a published programme so that dancers can revise in advance. What's more, it's simply impossible for dancers with no experience to join in most Scottish Country dances. A Ceilidh, on the other hand, usually has a rich mixture of dancers of differing experiences



and from diverse cultures. There are seasoned veterans, who know every figure inside out, rubbing shoulders with foreign visitors who are enjoying a Ceilidh Dance for the first time. It's an impossible challenge to pick a programme that will suit everyone. The solution is as natural as it is elegant. Since many dances share the same musical signature, the experienced dancers can simply do a more advanced dance. The caller can announce the simple dance and walk inexperienced sets through it. The experienced sets don't need any explanation so that doesn't interfere with anyone else and the caller can simply ignore them and concentrate on the beginners. Where's the problem with that? Each set is simply minding its own business. I don't think it's a breach of etiquette that's annoying some band leaders and callers. Just like the religion of old, it has more to do with control. How dare anyone not do what they say! But we really don't need any more religious wars in dancing – we've got enough of them already.

Now once the music starts, inexperienced dancers are too busy trying to muddle through to watch what anyone else is doing. Even if they do look around, by the time they recognise a figure and try to reorganise their set, it's too late to do anything about it – the dance has already moved on to the next figure. Trust me on this! I'm usually one of the infantry down there dancing with them. Even when I'm in their set and trying to help, they often can't keep up with what's going on. The only way it has a chance of working is when an experienced dancer is in the set calling each figure in advance as they go along. Watching another set isn't enough.

What's more, I've rarely seen a situation where all the sets doing The Virginia Reel or Strip the Willow finish at the same point. So which set should the strugglers watch? They're inexperienced, remember, so how can they recognise which set is doing it right? Even more regimented dances such as The Eightsome Reel often have several sets that are out of time with the music, regardless of whether or not there's a set that's perfectly in time. But the whole point at a Ceilidh is – *no-one cares if they don't finish on time!* That would be *far too serious!* The only ones who seem to be bothered by this are the band leaders – and they're not even dancing!

Now our anonymous critic also suggests that it's off-putting to

the band when he calls a Strip the Willow and one set does a Postie's Jig. Later in his letter he suggests that it's fine if half of the floor do one dance while the other half do another. Excuse me? Sorry to mix metaphors yet again, but this seems like a red herring. If a single set doing a Postie's Jig can put you off, how can you cope with half the floor doing it? And I might suggest that since you've noticed many times that a set will ignore what you've called, maybe you should consider that you're not giving the dancers what they want. Maybe you should suggest splitting the floor and doing an easy dance alongside a more difficult one, instead of waiting for dancers to ask you for permission to do so.

As far as dancing in front of the stage is concerned, the reason in many cases is quite simple and eminently practical. In many common Ceilidh dances, such as The Virginia Reel or The Flying Scotsman, the dancing couple sideslip down the length of the dance floor at high speed. There are usually several sets in line, and the dancing couples follow each other with gay abandon down the hall. In this situation, the only sensible place to do a different dance is at the *top* of the hall. To go to the bottom at the far end from the band interferes with the other dancers who come careering into your set. When I'm in a set doing a different dance, we always try to go down to the bottom of the hall. But, on occasion, simple practicalities prevent this and we dance at the top, though we will try our best to keep to the side and out of the way.

But surely you *know* the difference between a Postie's Jig and a Strip the Willow. So why not watch one of the sets that's dancing *next* to the Postie's set to get your cues? Why watch the set that's doing the dance you didn't call? You'll just have to accept that sometimes a set will do a different dance. To me, this is simply your working environment. If you can't hack it, don't do it!

This brings me nicely to what I consider to be the crux of the matter and the only serious issue here. It appears to me that the Rev. Jolly is labouring under a misapprehension. It may seem to him that he and the dancers are on an equal footing (groan!). However, that's just not the case. His wishes and those of the dancers are *not* equal! There's a huge difference. The event is a *Ceilidh Dance*, not a *performance*. The dancers have come, not to sit and listen to a band, but to dance. They've come to *enjoy themselves*



and, what's more, they've actually *paid for that privilege*.

Now why are the Rev. Jolly and his merry band at the dance? Are they there to have fun like the dancers? Have *they* paid for the privilege? Have they each forked out several pounds for the pleasure of sitting on the stage and making music? I don't think so! I'll bet you a pound to a pinch of sulphur that they're playing *for money*. Heaven's no! The Reverend is there to earn filthy lucre, the root of all evil!

So let's just see if I've got this right. The dancers are collectively paying hundreds of pounds to a band so that they, the dancers, can dance. But the band leader, who is in the pay of the dancers, is complaining because the dancers who are paying him (did I mention that already?) are not doing what they're told? Now let's see, there seems to be a legion of metaphors that jump forth, begging to be exorcised – sorry, exercised. For example, isn't this a case of *the tail wagging the dog*? Or maybe we could say that he's trying to *put the cart before the horse*. No, I've got it! *He who pays the piper calls the tune!* If the Rev. Jolly wants to come along to a hall and play music and then demand that the dancers do exactly what he says, I've got a great idea – let's just reverse the roles! Instead of the dancers *paying him to play*, why doesn't the Rev. Jolly come along with his band, set up all their gear and then *he can pay everyone to come in and dance for him*. How would you like that, Rev. Jolly? Why don't you pay us to dance instead of us paying you to play? Then we'd have to do what you say, and if we had the cheek to complain about how you played you could simply not book us to dance for you again. Or you could tell us that if we didn't like the way you played then we didn't have to come and take your money. After all, there would be hundreds of other dancers queuing up to take our place.



# Dance Around

## Robert Whitehead's Trip North

**R**obert Whitehead's Band made a long overdue return to The Phipps Hall, Beaulieu, on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> May where they played to a full house for Kilmorack Scottish Country Dance Class's annual Spring Dance. The Band comprised Robert on lead accordion, his son Graeme on second accordion and Kenny Matthews on fiddle. The dancers from all the airts enjoyed the toe-tapping music – I quote, "A fantastic evening, inspired programme, good music and wonderful supper."

Praise must go to Frances Grant, the class tutor, for all her hard work. I hope it will not be too long before we hear Robert and his band at The Phipps again.

On Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> May I made my way back to The Phipps Hall to hear the Band play Old Time (for Eleanor and Frances's Dance) – again there was a full house. It was a different tempo, lots of the Old Time couple dances and some recently devised dances – The Kilmorack March and The Celebration Waltz.

Kenny the fiddler played a superb fiddle solo (you could have heard a pin drop).

I was pleased to be at The Phipps Hall, where we were given such a warm welcome both nights, I hope to be there next May.

**The Mikado**

## Manchester Day School

**M**anchester Branch of the RSCDS has held a Day School in SCD for over sixty years and 2005 will be no exception. It is always held on the last Saturday in September and is an opportunity for friends from all over the country to get together at the start of the new season, hear about holidays etc and get back into the dancing swing.

We already know that dancers will be coming from Guernsey and Southern Ireland this year and we look forward to welcoming them and anyone else who cares to join us.

Among our six classes there is always a class that emphasises teaching points and this year there is a Highland class to enjoy.

In recent years we have run a Children's Day School alongside the Adult Day School. The children do SCD in the morning and Highland in the afternoon.

Our teachers and musicians this year come from Edinburgh, Yorkshire and South Wales.

During a hectic day like this everyone needs to keep their strength up and this is easily done with the delicious buffet lunch that our caterers always provide.

As we have Robert MacKay coming to play for some of our classes we have set aside some time at the end of the day and he has agreed to talk about music for SCD. Robert has a great deal of expertise in this, having been one of the RSDCS's foremost musicians for many years.

We end the day with a dance to show the skills we have learned – or just to let our hair down!

So how about some more specific details for 2005?

**Date:** 24<sup>th</sup> September 2005 – registration and coffee at 9:30

**Venue:** Levenshulme High School for Girls, Crossley Road, Levenshulme, Manchester

(All classes for both Day Schools are held in the School and lunch is served there also)

**Cost:** Adults Day School, lunch and talk £30

Children 2 classes £10 (lunch if requested £5)

**Teachers:** Alex Gray, Kate Gray, Catherine Livsey, Margo Priestley  
**Musicians:** Pat Clark, Peter Clark, Phill Jones, Robert MacKay

**Dance:** Also held in the School at 7pm.

Tickets booked with Day School £5.00, otherwise £5.50

**Band:** Phill Jones and Ceol Na H'Alba SCD Band

By now I expect that there is a long queue of people who want to know how to apply so here are all the ways:

**E-mail:** dayschool@rscds.co.uk

**Telephone:** 01625-531 728 or 01625-618 320

**Post:** Annual Day School, 136 Altrincham Road, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5NQ

Come and join us!

## Dannsa Eileannach

### Dance Is Alive And Jigging In Lewis

**T**he dance revival was launched ten years ago after the first Hebridean Celtic Festival, which is celebrating its tenth anniversary this year. Workshops, led by Mats Melin, showed Islanders and festival attendees dances, particularly step-dances, which had been absent from these shores for many years. Mats then came over regularly to teach Step and began to reintroduce old Scottish dances back to the Islands: Dances such as Quadrilles, Lancers and Cumberland Reels. As the group grew he gradually helped introduce less familiar Ceilidh Dances and some Scottish Country Dances too.

At present, the group have emerged into confident and capable dancers and, although Mats assists when available, the group are "dancing on their own two feet"! However, the emphasis is now more on Ceilidh Dancing rather than Step Dancing. Dannsa Eileannach meet every Friday night in either the Old Gym of The Nicolson Institute, Stornoway or Barvas Village Hall, on the west side of Lewis.

Here you will find a group of 30-40 dancers of all ages, some younger than 10, some over 70, dancing Eva Three-steps, Postie's Jigs, White Heather Foxtrots and many more popular Ceilidh Dances.

The group has even expanded to meeting on a Wednesday night in the Old Gym, where for one hour there is a beginners' class and for the next hour newer, more complicated dances are introduced and mastered.

All members agree that it is an excellent way of keeping fit but very enjoyable at the same time. As dance seems to be currently "in vogue" we hope to continue growing from strength to strength.

We are holding a Ceilidh Dance in the Sea Angling Club, Stornoway on the 24<sup>th</sup> June, with Steven Carcary providing the music. Please come and join us. New members are always welcome.

**Neilian Mackenzie**  
**Committee Member**



# Skyedance Showcase

**Aros Friday 10 – Saturday 11 June 2005**

**I**t's been a busy few weeks with trips to Lewis (ceilidh with Alasdair MacCuish), North Uist (aahh sunshine and golden beaches), and the excellent Skye RSCDS May Weekend (reported elsewhere and now it's the run-up to the second *SkyeDance Showcase* which takes to the stage at Aros in Portree as you are receiving this magazine. If it's anything like the first one last year it will be the talked about all summer. Which is very apt as it takes as its theme *Spring into Summer!*. We don't expect it to match the world-famous *Riverdance* but it's a great opportunity for our young people (and their elders) to show off their love of dance.

They've all been working hard over the last year and you might be surprised just how much dance happens here. We have four classes a week in ballet with around forty kids turning up and plenty more on a waiting list (and if there's any other qualified ballet teacher out there – help! We need you on Skye!). As well as the classical stuff one class will be performing a piece from *Chicago* – and ballet is just the tip of the iceberg here.

Every year the Pantomime Group puts on a great show, always with plenty of dance sequences. The *SkyeDance Showcase* is an opportunity for us to see their dramatic pieces once more and this writer is particularly looking forward to the spectacular opening Hornpipe sequence they did.

One of the *SkyeDance* goals for the last year was to get Highland Dance back on an even keel and we made good progress. An ad in the local paper attracted thirty-five Juniors to the first class, and a Senior class with around ten students. Both classes were very ably assisted by a student from the Gaelic College who will be on Skye for another year. Both Juniors and Seniors will be putting on a display for the Showcase.

And it's not just an opportunity for the kids to demonstrate to Grandma and the rest of the community just how good they all are – there are some grown-ups showing off too. The Skye Branch of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society has been established for more years than they care to admit, but membership numbers have been falling in recent years. Then, following last year's

appearance in the *SkyeDance Showcase* they had so many enquiries about learning Country Dance that they set up a Beginners' Class. This is thriving with between ten and fourteen learners every week – and the class will meet throughout the summer.

Another dance form thriving on Skye is Arabic, with two experienced teachers and two groups of women meeting regularly. At the Showcase we will see three different styles performed because it's as diverse as what you might (but would never, nay never) term "British" dance.

At Easter we invited the Telford School of Dance to send up two students to run a week-long workshop in hip-hop/street dance. We had fifteen takers for this and they are showing a sample of what they learned at the Showcase. If you think this form of dance is different we also have "Choreographed Highland Dance" which will be performed by two dancers from the Celia Orr School of Dance in Lanark. Believe me – this is different!

*SkyeDance* is keen to promote all types of dance, not just the traditional styles, and sometimes we have to bring in the expertise from far away. We are lucky, though, to have a number of teachers in our traditional dances locally and well-known Stepdancer Keri has been running classes in the south of the island recently. Two of her students will be performing a Step routine at the Showcase.

Some of the dances are accompanied by live music and there will be music and song interludes too from local performers. These not only create a good atmosphere and a well-rounded show – they give some of the dancers time to change costumes! The audience will spot some familiar faces among the different styles as many of our young people just "want to dance" whatever the style. One of those quick-change artists is Ruth Donaldson who will be performing another fine modern dance solo to match last year's *Jack Vettriano* masterpiece.

We all know dance is good for you – it's been well established by medical experts that dance is an important form of exercise for both body and mind – and watching the *SkyeDance Showcase* will be especially good for the mind! If you happened to be visiting Skye the weekend of 10-11 June we might have seen you there.

**Rob Corcoran**

## Dannsa Summer Tour Dates

### June

Fri 24 **Kilmorack** Village Hall

Sat 25 **Clashmore** Village Hall

Tues 28 **Wick**, Mackay's Hotel

Wed 29 **Skerry** Village Hall

Thur 30 **Durness** Village Hall

Fri 1 **Lochinver** Village Hall

Sat 2 July **Poolewe** Village Hall

### July

Wed 13 **South Uist**, Ceolas [www.ceolas.co.uk](http://www.ceolas.co.uk)

Mon 18 **Bute** Live [www.butelive.co.uk](http://www.butelive.co.uk)

Tues 19 **Killin** Village Hall

Wed 20 **Skye**, Feis An Eilean [www.skyefestival.com](http://www.skyefestival.com)

Thurs 21 **Oban**, Corran Halls

Fri 22 **Stirling**, Tolbooth

Sat 23 **Eyemouth** High School

### August

Sat 13 'Care to Dance' at the Windsor Hotel **Nairn**, in aid of the Highland Hospice

Tues 16 **Shetland** - Yell Dance Club

Wed 17 Islesburgh Centre, **Lerwick**

Fri 19 **Voe** Hall

Sun 21 Islesburgh Centre, **Lerwick**, morning workshop

Tues 23 **Glenlivet**, Glenlivet Public Hall

Wed 24 **Strathdon**, Lonach Hall

Thurs 25 Birnam House Hotel, **Birnam**

[www.thefiddletree.com](http://www.thefiddletree.com)

Fri 26 **Achmore** Village Hall

Sat 27 **Grantown on Spey** Grammar School

### September/October

Fri 23 & Sat 24 **Jura** Festival

Wed 28 **Lochcarron** Village Hall

Thurs 29 **Arisaig**, Astley Hall,

Fri 30 **Dalwhinnie** Village Hall

Sat 1 Oct **Braemar** Village Hall

Sun 2 Oct **Edinburgh**, National Museum of Scotland  
1.45pm & 2.45pm (free event)



# Sunburn & Swinging

## The Isle of Skye Weekend

**W**henever I have been there, over a period of fourteen years, Skye has never lived up to its reputation, the reputation that is for mist, rain and wind. We have just had another weekend in paradise! Music, dancing, sunshine, food and such a range of folks that even grumpy old sods could find somebody polite enough to pretend to enjoy their company!

Friday started with real welly! Gordon Shand and His Band took no prisoners. Two boxes, keyboard, percussion and the darkest fiddle I have ever seen. Amplification set to tenderise steaks, driving rhythms to make even Ceilidh Dancers get somewhere near the music. Tunes other than our comfortable SCD norm to challenge the ear. Syncopé enough to produce tachycardia in this traditionalist breast. The great and good, the rank and file, the novices and duffers of Country Dance, reeled back, took a collective breath and launched into a no compromise evening of dancing to match the music.

Even the caterers achieved something new. They managed to serve the hundreds attending in what seemed a matter of minutes. There are lessons here in logistics for many other rallies. Chairs were a bit in short supply, but enterprising souls soon found a few more.

Ibuprofen, Voltarol and Dihydrocodeine consumption must have gone through the roof during this evening. If this were an Olympic sport, a lot of medals would be withdrawn and participants sent home in disgrace. Come to think, this would be an improvement for those of us usually banned for bringing the sport into disrepute.

And so to bed after suitable relaxants.

Well over a hundred arose, not too early, on the Saturday morn, to attend the class. I think that if the numbers were accurately logged it could be a Highland, Scottish, UK, UK all-comers record for a class attendance! I don't have enough experience to comment on European and World scale. Anne Mackenzie (-Smythe) grew to match this occasion. Imagination, enthusiasm, relentless good humour, wonderful clarity of voice, and clarity of purpose, carried us all through the lessons of the morning. A five-piece band may be another record for a day-school class. For the first time we saw this enormously talented band non-plussed! I don't think they had ever been asked to come in slowly with the dancers and build up to speed. This will be a good trick for a five-piece if they ever achieve it. Our scraping feet were well concealed by the volume of the band. The major learning experience was probably what the Hungarians apparently call "much eye-touch". That is, regard for the people we are dancing with, it is just amazing how many people might reasonably expect you to look at them! And smile? - One tiny conversationette - "You can't do that dance without smiling" - "George! You shouldn't do any dance without smiling..."

Yes, four and twenty dancers came doon frae Inverness, and when the class was over there were four and twenty impressed. I think I might crawl across broken glass from Inverness to get some more of Anne's teaching.

The Saturday Rally saw a balance of amplification more suited to the ears of a generation not deafened by 120-decibel pop concerts. The informal nature of the second night ensured the swinging element; a day of unrelieved sunshine with a light breeze produced the sunburn. There were three categories of

## By George Hobson

countenance by evening: bright red and glowing in the dark for those who eschewed all classes and took to the hills, healthy pink for those who strolled in the afternoon after the classes, and peely-wally blue-white for those who were forced to their beds for whatever reason on Saturday afternoon. A programme just challenging enough for the end of such a weekend combined with quality sandwiches and ice-cream left us pretty well danced out for about twenty four hours.

I received a couple of comments on my techniques of coarse dancing (see *Dance On!*, April), not really complimentary, but I don't care. One blamed me for the fact that they were caught walking through a dance, and one apparently received a visit from a JCB leading a Dalek when they went for an innocent chat with their partner. I couldn't tell if they were suffering from concussion, because their normal state is confused. Serves 'em right I say! However after one of my efforts at local set redirection, a new dance aid was suggested, the fork-lift truck move, designed to get heavy, strong, static wilful males to the right place at the right time.

Finally might I just say I don't know what all the fuss about young people being missing is about? I saw dozens of youngsters on the weekend, hardly any of them a day over fifty. And my grandchildren have just voted that they think my age is about three, cheek! I thought I was at least seven.

To my Gaelic-speaking friends on Skye: -

*Tri nithean athig gun iarraidh - gaol, eud agus eagal.*

I loved your weekend, I envied your success, and I fear my dancing did not match your quality.



# ***Skye Weekend***



***Linda Struthers from  
St Andrews Shoemakers***



***Ray Eagle from Vancouver, Eileen  
MacLaren, Kirsteen MacCorquodale  
and Tina Hutchison***



***George Hobson with teacher Anne***



***Ann Duncan, Ann Sheach and  
Denise Harvey***



***Anne Mackenzie***

***It's all in the hands***



***Anne Mackenzie***

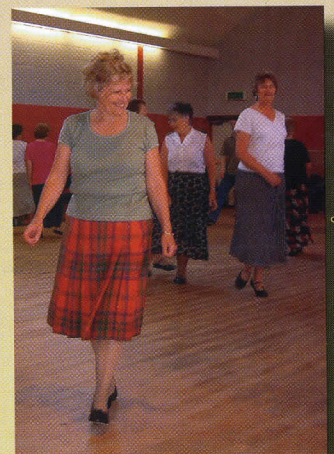


***Ann Duncan and  
Ann MacDonald***



***Gordon Shand keeps an  
eye on the dancers***

***A packed hall for the evening  
dance on Saturday***



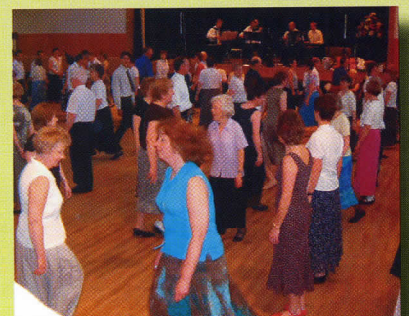
***Anne Mackenzie  
and Ann Sheach***



***Dark fiddling on the Skyeinbow  
(made in Shetland)***



***Class 5-piece the Gordon Shand Band***





# ***Take The Floor – Fyvie Castle***



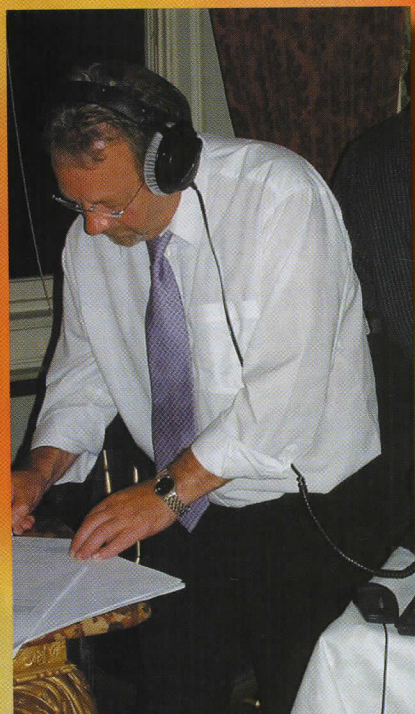
***Dancers at Fyvie Castle***



***Audio Engineer Matt Johnson  
with Jack Johnson, trainee***



***Gordon Cree, Anne Lorne-  
Gillies's accompanist***



***Producer, Ken Mutch***



***Anne Lorne-Gillies***

***All photographs  
© BBC Radio Scotland***



***Dennis Morrison***



***Douglas Lawrence***

***The Jennifer Forrest SDB***



***Robert Lovie leads Strip The Willow***