

Dance On!

Asteveryn in Cork



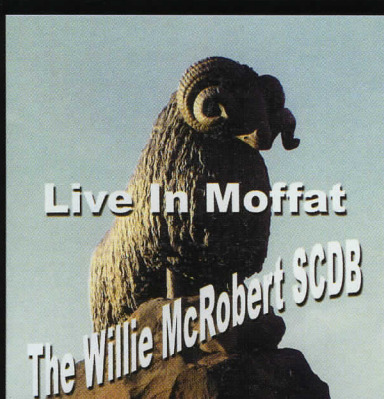
**Inverness Highland Ball • Morris Dancing
But Is It Art? • Dancing in Zimbabwe
When Speculation Becomes Fact**

**R.R.P. £2.00
Issue 12 - October 2005**

All the tracks were recorded live during the summer dancing 2005 in Moffat Town Hall. An annual event for both dancers and non-dancers visiting Moffat during June, July and August.

Dances include: Waltz for Zoë, The Dancing Bees, Ring of Brodgar, Kingston Jig and The Highlandman's Umbrella.

Copies of the CD are available from:
John Douglas Music in Dumfries,
Concorde Music in Perth, Shielburn
Associates in Reading and the Buccleuch
Arms Hotel in Moffat or direct by mail
order from the producers:
Streaming Pictures priced £10 + £2 p&p
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Semple Travel Dancing Holidays

Dance Group		Destination		
Mary & Trevor Howard	Scottish Country Dance	5* Pestana Carlton Hotel Madeira	14 Nov 05	Full
Macenmuir	Scottish Country Dance	5* Algarve Casino Hotel, Algarve	13 Mar 06	Limited
Barry Steele	Scottish Country Dance	4* Confortel Hotel Fuengirola	26 Feb 06	Full
Robert Whitehead	Scottish Country Dance	4* Las Paleras Hotel Fuengirola	5 Mar 06	Available
Margaret Harris & Margaret Masterson	Scottish Country	Tunisia	12 Mar 06	Limited
Lizzie Clark	Line Dancing	4* Avanti Hotel Paphos	28 Mar 06	Full
Marian Anderson	Scottish Country Dance	Austria	3 Jun 06	Full
Iain MacPhail	Scottish Country Dance	Costa Brava	2 May 06	Available
Glencraig SDB & Glenelvan SDB	Scottish Country & Old Time Dance	Adriatic Coast, Italy	24 Sep 06	Released Soon

Spring 2007 – Scottish Dancing on Queen Mary 2 – Transatlantic Cruise – Details to Follow



For more information or to book please call
0141 762 3939 or 0141 762 5565



Karin

*Front cover photograph © Julian Whiting, Asteveryn
Front cover design by Bruce Dow, Culross Printers*

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E-MAIL

Cork International Folk Dance Festival

The Cornish demonstration dance team and ceili band Asteveryn have just returned from Cork, Eire where they have participated in their 10th International Folk Dance Festival. The Group was among prestigious company with a total of twelve other countries also being represented at one of the largest festivals to be seen in Cork County.

The event was organised by the Owenabue Valley Traditional Group under the leadership of one Mr Barry Cogan with help from his son Fionan and Daithi Kearney, a talented dancer and musician with the same group. Asteveryn had been invited to Cork two years ago as guests at a much smaller event but this was to be the big one.

Performers at the festival came from all over the world and included Walbrzych from the schools and universities of Walbrzych in Poland, Citt' di Sennori from the Logudoro region of Sardinia, Kelc'h Keltiek Roazhon from Rennes in Brittany, De Pierewaaiers from Nijmegen in Holland, Strathspey Fiddlers from the North of Scotland, Vecchia Girgenti from Sicily, Lisinski from Croatia, Filipino Dance and Choral Group from the Phillipines, Vetra from Klaipeda in Lithuania, Hannover Minstrels from Germany, Faarup from Denmark alongside numerous home grown groups from Ireland.

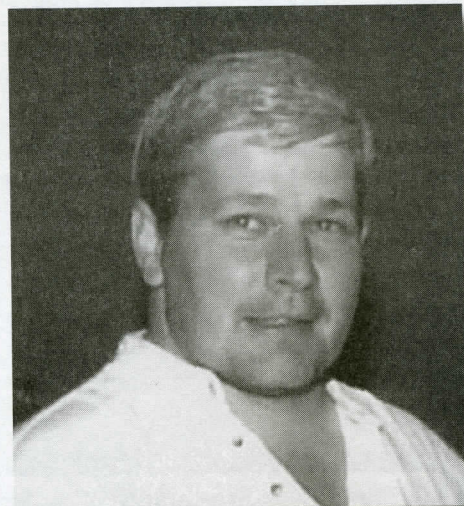
Each group had its own very unique style and incorporated traditional music and dance from its local region and national culture. The language barriers were soon passed by the common love of dance

and the desire to share in each other's cultures. It was interesting to note the history surrounding the different dance cultures – Cornwall's steeped in tradition and linked to its trade and industrial past with fishing, mining and agriculture compared to, for example, the Sicilians showing the influence of many years of different rule by the Greeks, Romans and Spanish to name but a few. The Croatians, Lisinski, displayed dances from no less than nine separate dance styles from all regions of their country whilst the Dutch drew on experiences of their lives as students in Nijmegen. With such diverse cultures it was interesting to note some cross pollination in traditions, especially the cultural roots to the dances, many being found emanating from the working areas, farming, fishing, etc.

The Group was given a busy schedule and travelled around County Cork performing at various street locations during the day and with the different groups in Concerts each evening. The people of Cork were treated to a spectacle of music and dance with the various dancers on show, ranging from the steady waltz style from Denmark to the high energy from Sicily.

Venues where the group were put to dance varied from the super stage of the City Hall in Cork to the aisles of ASDA, and from the streets of Cork City to the village centre at Midleton. The first few days were spent with our friends from Scotland, the very talented Strathspey Fiddler,s who showcased their unique musical style and threw

*By Julian Whiting,
Asteveryn*



in the Highland Dancing and Step Dancing so seldom seen outside Scotland. Asteveryn, the fiddlers and a traditional Irish group, Jacintha O'Sullivan's School of Dance (The Imokilly Dancers) opened the Festival with a reception at Glounthane, where each group gave a taster of what was to come over the festival week.

The same groups spent the next day touring the shopping centres performing en route and then meeting at a local holiday complex for an afternoon show. The performances were well received, the talented fiddlers standing in for the Irish musicians, who were unfortunately working. The evening saw the first major concert in Midleton; the Scots and the Cornish were joined by the Croatians, the Sicilians and some local groups for a splendid evening of entertainment.

Next the Cornish were paired with the Polish dancers, a massive group, complete with choir. This made the small

town square at Kinsale look very overcrowded – twenty Cornishmen and upwards of eighty Polish. The show was again stunning with the contrast of the Cornish sets to the almost folk tale dances performed by the young Polish group. The same groups stayed in Kinsale for the evening concert attended by a good size audience where the acts took it in turns to perform and, at last, a chance to try each other's dances in a ceilie type atmosphere. Language barriers aside, the three groups provided a fun evening for all. The Friday brought the opportunity to visit the Town of Cobh, the highlight for many folk groups; but first the Cornish were set the task of dancing in Tesco's, not a lot of room in the aisles but a valiant effort. On to Cobh for a brief stop over and

then back in to Cork City for the first of two nights of gala concerts. The organisers had decided to split the international groups and mix them with the local ones, Asteveryn were to be first on in the first concert.

A fantastic venue and a massive stage on which to perform greeted the group, a long way from the village halls that we see week in and week out in Cornwall. The groups all did their bit, a spectacle of colour and so many contrasting styles, it was all over a bit too quick. The downside of performing was that the groups missed each other but there was a great appreciation of what each group had achieved.

The Saturday saw the biggest collection of dance teams ever to grace the streets of Cork City as everyone took to them.

Allocated individual spaces, the various groups entertained the masses throughout the day. There was everything from marching bands to the Philippino dancers.

In the evening was the second big concert and the remaining half of the international groups were programmed to perform – another great night of entertainment to bring the festival week to an end. It was during these two bigger concerts that the home grown talent of the Cork region was able to perform, interspersed with the international visitors. The show included performances linked to Riverdance and most notably Siamsa Tire who showed the teachings of the Irish Dance Masters. Siamsa Tire are the National Folk Theatre and they produced a superb performance to show how the ageing dance masters managed to pass on the traditional steps and footwork so evident in Irish dance today. There were too many artists to mention them all except to show the diversity evident within a culture with the traditional live bands and dancers performing alongside the taped *Riverdance* and *Lord of the Dance* show music.

At the end of the week all the groups were presented with gifts to commemorate their attendance at the Festival marking the City's year as the European City of Culture. It was a privilege to be invited and long may these events continue so that we may all be able to learn about dance from all over the world.

The Cornish Festival, Lowender Peran, the Festival of the Celts, is due to start on the 19th October in Perranporth on the North Coast of Cornwall. The event features groups from Scotland, Ireland, Brittany, Wales, the Isle of Man and of course Cornwall, it would be a pleasure to meet you there.



All photographs © Julian Whiting

But Is It Art?

By Finlay Forbes

Let us suppose for the moment that the Scottish Assembly decided to create two new ministries, one for "Sport and Recreation" and one for "Arts and Culture". Which one would look after Scottish Country Dancing? Given the cynicism of modern politics and the marginal nature of Scottish Country Dancing, "neither" is always a strong probability but as we are firmly in the world of fantasy, let us assume that one of these hypothetical bodies would enter the frame. If so, which one would it be?

To put the question more bluntly, is Scottish Country Dancing an art form or a recreational activity? Does it involve serious creative input from its practitioners or is it more akin to a game with a prescribed and largely immutable set of rules? Answers along the lines of, "a bit of both but not much of either" will not do other than to underscore the point that the world of Scottish Country Dancing has never really given the matter as much thought as it deserves. In its new twice-yearly magazine "Scottish Country Dancer", The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society makes some oblique references to its chosen activity as an art. Even a cursory examination of these references suggests that they are more likely to be based on an unsatisfactory mixture of casual assumption and the Society's characteristically whimsical and imprecise use of English rather than on anything even remotely akin to rigorous analysis. Some readers who have made it thus far will feel tempted to add yet another question to those that have already been asked - "Does it matter?"

Now is the time for the first genuine answer. Yes it does! It probably wouldn't matter, or at least matter a lot less, if Scottish Country Dancing were a vibrant, growing phenomenon that was deeply embedded in the nation's culture - but that is precisely what it isn't and, more disturbingly, that is what it shows no real signs of becoming. As I see it, part of the problem lies in the inability of Scottish Country Dancing to decide what it really is and therefore what it genuinely has on offer. So here we are, back at the question that refuses to go away. Is Scottish Country Dancing an art form that allows for creativity and a certain degree of interpretation of instructions or is it a game where participants must do things by the book or risk censure for breaking the rules?

To answer this question, we need to look at the real origins of Scottish Country Dancing rather than the Bonnie Prince Charlie/Scottish Enlightenment mythology in which it has traditionally swathed itself to create an illusion of traditional legitimacy. Shorn of all its attendant rhetoric, modern Scottish

Country Dancing had its origins in the not terribly romantic setting of Jordanhill College of Education in Glasgow - a city that enjoys a strangely ambivalent relationship with the rest of Scotland. It was there that its rules were devised and written and it was from there that they were originally enforced through the army of carefully vetted and approved citizenry who emerged from that institution and a few other places besides adorned with a gerundive monstrosity of a designation "certificated teacher". Given the nature of the establishment where it was cradled, it is hardly surprising that Scottish Country Dancing is more redolent of the school gymnasium (knee length shorts and gym shoes era) than any institution of high artistic endeavour. Standardisation and control were the key features of the nascent world of Scottish Country Dancing. There was a "correct" way of doing everything, which meant that by definition any other approach, however historically informed or aesthetically pleasing it may have been, became "incorrect" by definition. Very few art forms are comfortable with such over-rigid notions of correctness and incorrectness because they stifle the original thinking that is so essential to their development and ultimately to their long-term survival. From the standpoint of the tradition of Haydn and Mozart, Beethoven's middle period and late works were composed "incorrectly" yet they are now core features of the classical repertoire. From the same reference point, Wagner's opening to Tristan and Isolde was an unspeakable harmonic blunder and as for Debussy - say no more! Mercifully, music, like most high art, manages to accommodate new ideas with reasonable (if sometimes imperfect) success. Scottish Country Dancing solves the problem of change by banning it altogether or allowing it only once the appropriate committee has pronounced it fit for human consumption usually with a string of conditions attached. No art form could survive in those conditions.

From its birth, modern Scottish Country Dancing was afflicted with *thebookseizitis* and in over eighty years it has never managed to shake it off. If anything, it has become even more like a game with a book of rules to be followed than an art form designed to appeal to the creative side of humanity. Too many "certificated" teachers sound more like incarnations of speak your weight machines reciting lessons learnt by rote than human beings interacting dynamically with those whom they are trying to teach and inspire. It is as if all the major advances made in adult learning

since 1923 have totally bypassed the world of Scottish Country Dancing. In this respect at least, habit has been palmed off as tradition and rules have been labelled misleadingly as standards. One argument that is often advanced to prove Scottish Country Dancing's status as an art is the number of new dances being created year on year. Such is the rate of production that I have heard dancers suggest that some devisers ought to seek therapy for hyperactivity. How can all this feverish creativity take place in an artistic vacuum? Perhaps another piece of musical history will illustrate the point. Joseph Haydn, arguably the most original composer of minuets who ever lived, once expressed the wish that someone would write a genuinely new minuet. Haydn, being a creative genius of the very first rank, was perhaps unusually aware of the problems of expressing originality within a musical form as prescriptive as the eighteenth century minuet. In this case, the problem was solved, partly by Haydn himself and partly by Beethoven and his contemporaries, by replacing the minuet with the scherzo. Once the last tenuous ties with the ballroom were cut and the absolute need to write in 3/4 time disappeared, a whole range of new possibilities opened up. With its severely restricted variety of rhythms, steps and basic figures, Scottish Country Dancing is still in the minuet stage of its development. There may still be a vast number of potential permutations and combinations of figures waiting to be assembled rather in the manner of modular furniture but in creative terms there is a huge difference between finding new blends of old figures and producing something that is genuinely original. Reels of three and even poussettes may have been subdivided into halves and quarters to add variety but there must come a point where further subdivision will be constrained by the length of the musical bar. Some new figures may have been invented in an attempt to give the impression of doing something different but, in essence, virtually all the devising of new dances has involved working within the old rules of what is still an old game. If Scottish Country Dancing really is a game masquerading as an art form, it has a serious problem that goes well beyond the doctrinal gap between reality and rhetoric. Apart from the obvious problem of being one thing while pretending to be another, it has become a game without any overt competitive edge. Without an official competitive aspect, a game either creates its own competitiveness, usually of a fairly unpleasant kind, or it degenerates into nothing more than an exercise routine. Any exercise routine hidebound by a set of humanly created rules collapses into a ritual. It may be a ritual that has a beneficial effect on the heart, lungs and connective tissue but that does not make it an art form. If anything, it makes it the antithesis of an art form.

In an age where regulation is omnipresent and still growing, very few people are likely to seek out a pastime that offers nothing but more rules and regulations. Most working citizens have more than their fill of fire regulations, health and safety notices, pronouncements from Designated Professional Bodies and all manner of other bureaucratic attempts to fix things that ain't broke or fix things that are "broke" with cures that are far worse than the diseases. The last thing that these hard-working souls want is to go out for a night's dancing in another rule-infested environment. If they want anything at all from their dancing, it is the chance to express themselves creatively in a world of ever-diminishing creative opportunities. If The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society's membership is any indicator of the state of Scottish Country Dancing's health, a passing comment in "Scottish Country Dancer" gives some cause for concern. The comment suggests that membership has fallen yet again over the past year although the size of the drop is not given. This implies that the Society's health is still on the decline and recuperation has not yet begun. Perhaps now would be a good time to reappraise not so much where Scottish Country Dancing is going but what it actually is as against what it should be. Should it continue in its present comfortable, dull but ultimately moribund sporting and recreational existence or should it live dangerously by aspiring to the condition of an art form? Do we stick with the wondrous choice of "Reels and Jigs" on the one hand and strathspeys on the other or do we explore new rhythms, invent new steps, develop new figures and (perish the thought) allow some interpretative latitude in the existing repertoire? (Is allowing a right-shoulder pass in Mairi's Wedding reels of four really the end of civilisation as we know it?) As tough choices go, the choice between art and recreation is not as bad as all that. After all, it is a choice between a low risk path to a comfortable but certain death or a higher-risk approach that offers some chance of survival and even the prospect of growth. As the North Americans would say, "This one's a no-brainer".

Nicol McLaren

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Dancing in Zimbabwe

As you can see from these e-mails between Sue and Mary-Anne, not everyone finds it easy to attend a dance class. Some members of the group are in the UK at the moment, and if you have any spare dance CDs that they could take home with them please contact Sue Petyt on 01387-810 958.

Dear Sue,

I am writing from Harare, Zimbabwe (in Africa) where we have a Scottish Country Dance class run by myself. Sometime last year I came across your dance "Fisherman's Reel" and taught it in class only to find that the dancers who attend the other dance class in Harare already knew the dance well! Then last year some ex Zimbabweans, who currently live in New Zealand, came back for a visit and brought with them a CD with the music for Fisherman's Reel. It is always hard to explain to people what it is like in Zimbabwe but the gift of a CD was a major thing as we cannot purchase dance music here and we cannot order it from outside the country as we have no foreign currency. Since then I have been into your dance site and, with the aid of your videos, taught a number of your dances.

So from the Scottish Country dancers in Harare Zimbabwe thank-you.

Regards

Mary-Ann Richardson

Mary-Ann, it is nice to hear from you.

I am pleased that my dances and videos have been helpful in keeping your dancing going. Is there anything we, here in Scotland, can do to help you get CDs and dance books?

If we were to post CDs to you, would you be able to receive them or would they not reach you? I know people who would be happy to give them to help.

Let me know how we can help.

Happy Dancing

Sue Petyt



Dear Sue,

How very kind of you to reply to the e-mail and so fast! Last night was our weekly dance class and I did tell them I had sent off an e-mail so it will be great to, next week, actually announce we had a reply.

I would love to tell you about our dancing group, which I hope does not bore you.

We dance once a week in a Scout Hall in a suburb called Borrowdale. The hall is a good size but sadly does not have a sprung floor. (I have had the pleasure of dancing on a sprung floor when I visit the dance group in Somerset West, South Africa, and boy does it make a difference.) The class has been meeting in the same hall since before 1980, when I joined, and we have built up a good relationship with the Scout group which, in the current situation in Zimbabwe, is important as it has given us some negotiating powers when discussing rent. The class, over the years, has seen many changes, from teachers

to the general "feel" of the group and latterly to diminishing numbers following people leaving or the current situation in the country. I can remember dancing in the hall in the days when there were four sets, and about seven years ago when I took over running the class we had about three sets but now we are down to ten to twelve dancers on a weekly basis. The youngest dancer is in his early twenties and the eldest dancer is over seventy-five so I would place our average age in the late fifties!

At this point I need to explain a bit about life in Zimbabwe and please, this is not a "moan session", but it does help to explain the people and the class. Life in Zimbabwe is different and I guarantee we do not have a dull moment. Inflation is a run-away train and people have to adjust to price increases on a DAILY basis and sadly on top of this is the fuel problem. All these factors affect the dancing class, for example:

A number of the dancers have retired and are naturally on fixed income so they have to decide what best to spend their money on. Unfortunately I have had to increase the monthly charge for the class and while last year we charged Z\$5000 a month, which then related to just over the price of a loaf of bread, we are currently charging Z\$25000 (which at the time of the increase was just more than a loaf of bread but now is less!). This is purely for the hall rental as the weekly teas are donated by whoever is on "tea duty" and any other expenses are covered on an ad hoc basis (normally donations).

Then there is the fuel problem. Currently our official fuel price is Z\$22500 a litre, which I mention just for fun as you cannot buy it for that! One of the dancers reported last night she had managed to purchase 20 litres at Z\$90000 a litre on the "black market". When official fuel is available you can spend up to twelve hours queuing for it so naturally you are careful how you use it. So numbers of dancers have dropped purely based on the fact that people do not have fuel to come to dancing. However, they are resourceful and the lift club system is well in place with the most coming from the retirement village nearby, which means five people come together (1 car = 1/2 a set!). There is always a positive side to everything and in this case it is the fact that a car full of ladies is slightly more secure than ladies traveling at night on their own.

The result of this is that I very rarely plan a programme for the evening as I have no idea how many dancers I will have or what the "mood" will be. Dancing has taken on a whole new meaning and is now definitely an evening of light entertainment. One person, who is not a dancer, used to come on a weekly basis to watch. When asked why she did this her reply was, "It's better than watching TV". Now I wish I could say that she was comparing the dancers to watching BBC Strictly Come Dancing but sadly that would not be true. They are a group of people who join together on a weekly basis (some even do this twice a week as there is another dancing group in Harare) for fun and exercise. Some are not bad dancers and have a fairly good knowledge of SCD, and they could

be better, but it is hard to push too much on technique when you know during the tea break one of them could be talking about the cost of medical bills (based on the age group this is definitely something that affects people and sadly it is VERY costly to be sick here). I suppose as the teacher of the class I would have to say that my greatest reward is seeing the dancers smiling and having fun. In June this year, for Chief's night, six dancers did two of your dances, namely "The Three Square Strathspey" and "The Annan Reel". They danced well and enjoyed themselves and I think you would have been pleased had you seen them, so once again thank-you.

With reference to our Internet connection I have to say that right now it is really not great and not at all reliable. I have managed to download dances from the Net and naturally your video clips (up till recently I even took my computer to dancing, it wasn't a great dance partner, but unfortunately it was stolen from the office) so all in all we do have a good selection of dance instructions. Also, before my computer was stolen, I had started converting some of the dance tapes to CD and had actually managed to do three CDs so that, along with donations, meant that the class now has eight CDs (four of those are even RSCDS ones!) so we have started moving into the modern world! I have no idea how reliable postage is and I would not be able to return any favours. I do have one of the dancers currently in Aberdeen on holiday (she plans to return round end of November) and I could get her details (contact address etc.) but I hasten to add that I would not be able to purchase any CDs.

From Harare Caledonian Society Scottish Country Dancers "Dancing is REEL fun"

Regards

Mary-Ann

Thank you for telling me a bit of what life is like for dancers in Zimbabwe - if you do not mind I would like to send your email to be published in the new Dance On! Magazine (www.danceon.co.uk). The Website is not finished (the magazine has not been going for a year yet) but hopefully will improve.

I write an article in the magazine in which I review Websites associated with any form of Scottish Dancing (Country, Ceilidh, Old Time, Highland etc) and I am sure the Editor would be interested in your e-mail, so let me know if you are happy for me to do that.

Happy Dancing

Sue

Dear Sue,

I certainly do not mind you sending on the e-mail. I did manage to get into the Website this morning but, as you say, it is still early stages. I think we have some pretty amazing folk at dancing in Harare who have in the past organised the class when we had no electricity; and once the team, who were due to dance at an official function, had to practise outside by the light of my car headlights with the car radio playing the tape! Wonderful that people could be so enthusiastic about their Scottish Country Dancing!

I am currently following up with the dancer in UK and will come back to you re contact information.

While your weather will be getting cooler, October is generally our hottest month with temperatures round 32 degrees Celsius (89.6 F) and no rain - I can guarantee that we do not need to dance to keep warm!

The CD's we currently have are:-

The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society Book 39

The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society Book 40

The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society Book 41

The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society Book 42

Nice to See You - Ian Cruickshanks and his band from Kirriemuir

The tapes that I managed to convert to CD were

Life Begins at Forty - Robert Whitehead and the Danelaw Band
Ten SCD-Leeds Branch Silver Jubilee - Crowe, Bobby & Johnstone, Muriel

In Strict Tempo - Lothian Band
Second Celebration - Lothian Band
Thank-you again

Regards

Mary-Ann

Alasdair's Dance Diary - November

Ceilidh & Old Time Dances							
Regular Weekly Classes							
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	Boys Brigade Hall, Kinnessburn Road	Live Music	2pm-5pm	£3 (tea)	Door or tel 01334 472 375	Demonstrators: O & C Harrison
Every Tuesday	Glasgow University	Student Union, University Avenue.	-	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 Club
	Midlem	Village Hall	Live Music	8pm-10pm	£1.50 tea	Door (Gracie Belle Scott)	Old Time Dance Class
	Glasgow	St Andrews in Square	Stops 14/12/05	7.30-9.30	£4 Bar	Door (Tricia Matthews)	Ceilidh & Old Time Class
Every Thursday	Penicuik	Town Hall	Stops on 8/12/05	8pm-9.30	£2.70 or £1.40	Door (Annabel Oates)	Ceilidh Dance Class

Ceilidh & Old Time Dances							
November 2005							
5 th	Irvine	Volunteer Rooms	Donnie & Dianne	7.30-11.30	£5.50 (supper)	Door	Ayrshire Ceilidh Club
	Carlisle	District Hall	William McFarlane	7.30-12.30	£5 (supper)	01555 773 327	Highlanders
	Newtongrange	Dean Tavern	Jimmy Lindsay	7.30-11.30	£6 (supper)	0131 663 6022	A & F Club Supper Dance
	Auchendinny	Glencorse Comm. Hall	Webster Craig	7.30-11.30	£5 No bar	01721 723 468	(Near Penicuik)
	Glasgow	St Andrews in Square	Black Rose & an Orchestra	8pm-? Bar	£15 Ticket only	0141 548 6020	Glasgay Festival Event
6 th	Angus	Tealing	Ken Stewart	7.30-10pm	£2.50	Door	
11 th	Foulden	Village Hall	Neil Hardie	8pm-12mn	£4.50 No Bar	01289 386 400	Supper Dance
	Midlothian	Newtongrange Leisure Centre	Johnny Duncan	7.30-11.30 No Bar	£5 (incl. Supper) B.Y.O.B.	0131 660 1276 0131 663 6221	Wednesday Dance Club
	Alnwick	Northumberland Hall	Fiddler's Elbow	8pm-? (caller)	£5 soup & supper	01665 712 044	Northumberland Gathering Border Dance
12 th	Strathaven	Ballgreen Hall	Clyde Valley	7.30-11.30	£6 (supper)	01357 520 900	Advance Ticket only
	Dunbar	Dunbar Castle	Dod Hutchison	8pm-11.30	£2 Bar	Door	Social Club
	Erskine	Bridge Hotel	Dick Black & Guest Eddie Devine	7.30-12.30	£12 (supper) Bar	01505 874 360 0141 880 6380	Erskine Hospital Charity
	Penicuik	Town Hall	Neil Hardie	7.30-11.30	£6/£3 BYOB	01968 672 631	
	Alnwick	Northumberland Hall	Lomond Ceilidh	8pm-? (caller)	£5	01665 712 044	Northumberland Gathering Border Dance
14 th	Kirkwall, Orkney	King Street Hall	Live Music	7.30pm-10.30pm	£2/£0.50 soft drinks	Door (Supper)	Old Time, Ceilidh & Country Dancing
18 th	Edinburgh		The Thistle Ceilidh Band	7.30-11.30	£10/£11 Tickets only	0131 337 4482	Ceilidh with emphasis on Country Dance
19 th	East Kilbride	Calderwood Hall	James Coutts	7.30-11.30	£5 (supper)	01698 818 339	Highlanders - B.Y.O.B.
	Tarbert, Loch Fyne	Village Hall	Ross MacPherson	8pm-1am B.Y.O.B.	£6 (lt. supper)	01880 820 744	Charity:- Beatson Oncology & Heart Start
	Glasgow	Trades Hall	Bella McNab's Band	7.30-11.30	£10, £8 (conc.) & £5 (under 16)	0141 552 2418 (option 2/3) or 01292 313 205	Ceilidh Dance
	Partick	Burgh Halls	t.b.a.	8pm-11.30	£5 Bar	Door	Highlanders
	Beaulay	Phipps Hall	Marian Anderson	7.30p.-?	£5 at Door	01463 782 496	Charity Dance
20 th	Montrose	Park Hotel	Deirdre Adamson	2pm-5pm		Door	A & F Club ceilidh
	Glencarse	Village Hall	George Rennie	7.30-10pm	£2.50	Door	Charity
23 rd	Glasgow	St Andrews in Square	Fergie MacDonald	8pm-?	£6 [Bar]	Door	Info 0141 548 6020
24 th	Fife	Windygates Village Hall	Bruce Lindsay	8pm-11pm	£3 (supper)	Door	No Bar
25 th	Helensburgh	Commodore Inn	Stuart McKeown	8pm-1am	£7 Bar	01389 841 208	Highlanders Dance
25 th	Edinburgh	Orwell Lodge Hotel, Polworth Terrace	Willie MacFarlane Band (Addiewell) Mairi MacArthur (Gaelic and Scots songs)	7.30-11.30	£15.00 All dances will be called	Tam Burke 0131 453 5766 or email:t.burke@nls.uk	Supper Dance
26 th	Pumphreston	Village Hall	Alan Ross	7.30-11.30	£3.50	01506 417 512	Advance Ticket only
	Dunbar	Dunbar Castle	George King	8pm-11.30	£2 [Bar]	Door	Social Club
	Meikleour	Village Hall	Gordon Pattullo	8pm-11.45	£3.50 Bar	Door	
	Stirling	Albert Halls	Bill Richardson	7.30-11.30	£10/£8	01786 473 544	STDT Event
28 th	Kirkwall, Orkney	King Street Hall	Live Music	7.30pm-10.30pm	£2/£0.50 soft drinks	Door (Supper)	Old Time, Ceilidh & Country Dancing
30 th	Dufftown	Memorial Hall	-	7.30-10.30		Door	Monthly Social

Scottish Country Dances							
November 2005							
Every Monday Night		Dundee - St Andrews Church Hall, King St.		7.30pm	£2	Door	SCD Club
3 rd	Castle Douglas	High School	-	7.30pm	£2 Door	01556 620 658	Social evening with walkthroughs
4 th	Kirkwall	King St., Hall	-	7.30pm	£2 / 50p	01856 87 3534	Orkney Trad. Dance Assoc.
5 th	Stirling	St Mary's School	David Anderson	7.30pm	£4.50	Door	Stirling Castle Group
5 th	Longridge	Civic Hall	Ian Slater	7.30pm	Dance	01772 716 301	Ribble Valley RSCDS
11 th	Keith	Longmore Hall	David Cunningham	8pm		01224 636 128	(North East Scotland)
	Alva	Cochrane Hall	James Coutts	7.30pm	£5	Door	Club Dance
	Carnoustie	Beach Hall	Maple Leaf	7.30pm			30 th Anniversary Dance
12 th	Castle Douglas	Town Hall	George Meikle	7.30pm	£7	01556 620 658	Annual Branch Dance
	Linlithgow	Academy	Colin Dewar	6.30pm	£25 Ball	01506 834 114	Silver Jubilee - Dress Formal
	Chipping	Village Hall	Dancefest 2005			01200 446 246	Children's Festival
	Bearsden	Manse Road Hall	C.D.'s	7.30pm	£5	0141 942 6850	Glasgow Branch Club Night
	Stonehaven	Town Hall	Frank Thomson	8pm		01569 763 451	
18 th	Bridge of Weir	Cargill Hall	Colin Dewar	7.30pm		01505 612 944	Kilbarchan Club Dance
	Helensburgh	Victoria Halls	John Renton	7.15pm	£17.50	01436 673 521	St Andrews Ball
	Duns	Volunteer Hall	Lothian	7.30pm	£5	01361 883 048	Duns & District RSCDS
	Oban	C of S Centre	Roy Hendrie	7.30pm		01631 563 103	Annual Dance
19 th	Stirling	St Mary's School	David Oswald	7.30pm	£4.50	Door	Stirling Castle Group
	Dalston	Caldew School	Colin Dewar			01228 515 897	Carlisle RSCDS
	Annan	Victoria Hall	Jean McConnachie	-	£6 Door	01461 500 250	Annan RSCDS
24 th	Castle Douglas	High School	-	7.30pm	£2 Door	01556 620 658	Social evening with walkthroughs
25 th	Killearn	Village Hall	David Anderson	7.30pm	£6	Door	Strathendrick Club
	Troon	Concert Hall	Sandy Nixon	7.30pm	£5	01292 315 558	Ayr Branch Dance
	Irvine	Magnum Centre	Roy Hendrie			01294 823 865	Children's Day of Dance
	Mosstodloch	Village Hall	Frank Thomson	8pm		01224 636 128	(North East Scotland)
26 th	Dingwall	Town Hall	Drummond Cook	7.30pm	£5	01997 423 373	Dingwall SCD Club Rally

Alasdair's Dance Diary - December

Ceilidh & Old Time Dances							
December 2005							
2 nd	Borders	Fouliden Village Hall	Lindsay Weir	8pm-12mn	£4.50 Supper	01289 386 400	Ticket only
	Carlruke	District Hall	Dick Black	7.30-12.30	£5 (supper)	01555 773 327	Highlanders
	Edinburgh	Minto Hotel	Canongate Cadgers	8pm-12.30	£10 [Bar]	Door	Ceilidh then Zeus Disco
3 rd	Newtongrange	Dean Tavern	Waverley	7.30-11.30	£6 (supper)	0131 663 6022	A & F Club Supper Dance
	Auchendinny	Glencorse Comm. Hall	Jimmy Anderson	7.30-11.30	£5 No bar	01721 723 468	(Near Penicuik)
	Dufftown	Memorial Hall	Graeme Mitchell	7.30-11.30	£5 No Bar	Door	Old Time Dance
4 th	Angus	Tealing	Johnny Duncan	7.30-10pm	£2.50	Door	
8 th	Edinburgh	Minto Hotel	Canongate Cadgers	8pm-12.30	£10 Bar	Door	Ceilidh then Zeus Disco
9 th	Helensburgh	Commodore Inn	Charlie Kirkpatrick	8pm-1am	£13.50 Bar	01389 841 208	Highlanders Supper Dance
	Midlothian	Newtongrange Leisure Centre	Gary Donaldson	7.30-11.30 No Bar	£5 (incl. Supper) B.Y.O.B.	0131 660 1276 0131 663 6221	Wednesday Dance Club
	Irvine	Volunteer Rooms	Jean McConnachie	7.30-11.30	£5.50 (supper)	Door	Ayrshire Ceilidh Club
10 th	Strathaven	Ballgreen Hall	Roger Dobson	7.30-11.30	£6 (supper)	01357 520 900	Avondale Ceilidh Club
	Dunbar	Dunbar Castle	Davie Strang	8pm-11.30	£2 Bar	Door	Social Club
11 th	Glencarse	Village Hall	Johnnie Duncan	7.30-10pm	£2.50	Door	Charity
12 th	Kirkwall, Orkney	King Street Hall	Live Music	7.30pm-10.30pm	£2/£0.50 soft drinks	Door (Supper)	Old Time, Ceilidh & Country Dancing
16 th	Meikleour	Village Hall	Ken Stewart	8pm-11.30	£3.50 Bar	Door	
17 th	Perthshire	Blackford, Village Hall	Dave Husband Sound	8pm-11.30 No Bar	£? (tea & biscuit)	Door	Soft drinks available
	Partick	Burgh Halls	t.b.a.	8pm-11.30	£5 Bar	Door	Highlanders
	Cardross	Geilston Halls	Colin Dewar	8pm-12mn	£? Bar	01389 841 051	Advance Ticket
18 th	Montrose	Park Hotel	t.b.a.	2pm-5pm		Door	A & F Club ceilidh
22 nd	Edinburgh	Minto Hotel	Canongate Cadgers	8pm-12.30	£10 Bar	Door	Ceilidh then Zeus Disco
24 th	Dunbar	Dunbar Castle	t.b.a.	8pm-11.30	£? Bar	Door	Social Club
29 th	Fife	Windygates Village Hall	Bruce Lindsay	8pm-11pm	£3 (supper)	Door	No Bar
31 st	Cardross	Geilston Halls	Neil Sinclair	9pm-2am	£11 Bar(own food)	01389 841 208	Highlanders Dance Party
	Carlruke	District Hall	Ian Cathcart	7.30-12.30	£?? (supper)	01555 773 327	Highlanders Hogmanay
	Stirling	Albert Halls	Fagins Pocket	7.30-1am	£35	01786 473 544	Council & STDT event
	Pumphreston	Village Hall	Alan Ross	7.30-1am	£12.50 Meal	01506 417 512	Advance Ticket only
	Glasgow	St Andrews in Square	t.b.a.	8pm-?	£?? [Bar]	0141 548 6020	Advance Ticket only

Scottish Country Dances							
December 2005							
2 nd	Glasgow	Carmichael Hall	Alan Ross	7.30pm	£5	0141 956 2134	Glasgow Branch Dance
	Kirkwall	King St Hall	-	7.30pm	£2 / 50p	01856 87 3534	Orkney Trad. Dance Assoc.
	Torphins	Learney Hall	J. Cruickshanks	8pm		01224 636 128	(North East Scotland)
3 rd	Stirling	St Mary's School	D. Cunningham	7.30pm	£4.50	Door	Stirling Castle Group
	Dundee	St Andrews Church	Maple Leaf	7.30pm	£3.50	01382 509 103	Charity Dance
	Braithwaite	Community Centre	J. McConnachie			01228 674 698	Derwent SCD Club
	Ingleton	-	Scottish Measure		Ball	01524 241 451	North West Craven RSCDS
	Broughton	Parish Hall	Alan Ross	6.45pm	£10 Ball	01772 729 547	Preston & Dist Caledonian Soc.
	Gatehouse	School	Kenny Thomson	-	-	01557 814 165	Gatehouse of Fleet RSCDS
4 th	Dunblane	Hydro Hotel	(Various)	10.30am		01786 849 247	S.T.D.T. 10 th Anniversary
9 th	Helensburgh	Hermitage Academy	Sandy Nixon	7.45pm		01436 673 521	Christmas Dance
	Dunfermline	Glen Pavilion	James Coutts	7.30pm	£18	01383 720 972	RSCDS Ball - Dress Formal
	Westhill	Ashdale Hall	Lothian	8pm	Ticket	01224 636 128	Aberdeen RSCDS
13 th	Dufftown	Memorial Hall	-	7.30pm		01542 887 616	Christmas Social
16 th	Duns	Volunteer Hall	Marian Anderson	7.30pm	£5	01361 883 048	Duns & District RSCDS
	Dumfries	High School	Lyne Valley	7.30pm	-	01387 265 815	Dumfries RSCDS Dance
17 th	Stirling	St Mary's School	Alan Ross	7.30pm	£4.50	Door	Stirling Castle Group
	Monkton	Carvick Webster Hall	Kenny Thomson	7.30pm	£5	01292 315 558	Ayr Branch Ceilidh
21 st	Stirling	Albert Halls	Glencraig	7.30pm		01786 822 853	Stirling RSCDS Dance
29 th	Forres	Town Hall	Drummond Cook	8pm		01463 234 680	(North East Scotland)



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

Web Dancer

By Sue Petyt

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

www.concordemusic.com

(Reviewed 10th September 2005)

The Home Page displays an overview of what I assume must be the latest releases, and also a comprehensive menu of classifications which covers dance, films, comedy, accordion, fiddle and many other categories on CD, DVD and Video. Each DVD and Video gives an indication of whether or not it can be played worldwide – there is even a section for NTSC Videos for USA, Canada and Japan. This shows that the proprietors at Concorde Music have really grasped the potential of the Web as a means of communicating with customers in every country of the world, and are providing the information they need. Among the items listed on the Home page are CDs from John Douglas, Roy MacLean and Willie McRobert, all possibly better known in the accordion and fiddle clubs, but all with dance tracks and all excellent musicians. Each CD, DVD or Video has a small picture of the cover which is not very clear, there is an option to "Click for full view", however when you do click on the image, the picture which you get is not much bigger, and in some cases is actually smaller. Having said that, all the information you need about the tracks or subject is available and should be sufficient to enable you to make a choice.

The Scottish Dance pages brought up nearly 200 CDs of Scottish dance music with, in most cases, lists of the tracks. I had to lock away my credit card as there were at least ten CDs that I would have liked to buy (which you can do on this site at the click of a mouse!) and several others which would also have been on my "nice to have" list. I have resisted the temptations so far, but I think I may be back!

The "Scottish Dance on Video" section has about twenty videos, some of which appear to have only music and scenery, but several which have dancing, shown in a way that would help you to learn. These are great to watch, but there is no substitute for practice.

I spent quite some time looking round the site at Scottish hill-walking, pipe bands, railways and comedy and could easily have spent a lot of money – I know some of the CDs that are going on my Christmas list and, as Concorde say they normally send items the same day they receive the order, it will be good for those last minute gifts.

There is also a note on the site which says – "If you are looking for a particular artist or track, not featured on our site, please get in touch by telephone, e-mail or fax. With over 36 years' experience, if we can't source your request, it's probably not available!" So, if you have been looking for something in particular and can't find it, why not give them a try?



www.scotwebstore.com

(Reviewed 11/09/2005)

The Scotweb store does not just sell CDs and DVDs, but sells all things Scottish! In fact to find the music section you have to click on "Full Menu" then on "Music and Media" then in the CD section, near the bottom of the list you have to click on "Scottish Dance" where is then a choice between Ceilidh and Country.

There are 79 items in the Ceilidh section and 134 in the Country section. When you go into each separate section there are several pages of items. Some do not have pictures and it isn't until you click on the item that you find out whether it is a CD, cassette, or DVD. This sort of information would be useful and would save time. At first I thought that those without pictures were all cassettes but this turned out not to be the case.

I also discovered that only one of the CDs was in stock and this was "Bobby Brown & Scottish Accent – Scottish Dance Country". This could be sent the next working day, other items said "usually dispatched within 1 week". This means that their catalogue may look larger than it really is as, if there is no stock, there is no guarantee that the item will be available, especially as some of the tapes and CDs listed have old release dates. However if they can be obtained, this is a good source of old material.

The site also runs a scheme of points, every purchase gives a certain number of points which can then be redeemed for purchases. I am not sure whether this would encourage someone to buy from them rather than anyone else, but if you buy a lot of CDs, providing they can supply them, this would be a way of getting a free one every so often.

The Website was easy to use although it would be easier if the track list was displayed with the picture, rather than needing another click to display it on the screen.

Quick and Easy

Jig 4x32

This dance is for four couples, in a longways set, third and fourth couples cross on the second chord.

1-4 Second and third couples dance right hands across.

5-8 First couple with second couple and third couple with fourth couple dance left hands across, all finishing on the sidelines.

9-10 First and fourth couples dance in to meet partner, join nearer hands with partner. First couple dance down to finish between second couple, who face down, and fourth couple dance up to finish between third couple who face up.

11-12 All set in lines across the dance.

13-16 First lady and fourth man give right hands, dance between second lady and third man, and cross to each other's place, WHILE fourth lady and first man give right hands, dance between second man and third lady, and cross to each other's place (finish 4,2,3,1).

17-20 First couple cross right hand and cast up one place WHILE fourth couple cross right hand and cast off one place. Second couple step up on bars 19-20 third couple step down. (First couple finish facing up, fourth couple finish facing down on the sides. Finish 2,4,1,3)

21-24 First man turn fourth lady with the right hand, and fourth man turn first lady with the right hand

25-32 All four couples dance eight hands round and back.

Repeat from new positions.

© Sue Petyt
September 1994

The Russian Ballet

6/8 Marches

Dance for three people, one man with two ladies.

All trios facing the line of dance with man between the ladies and nearer hands joined.

The origin of this dance is unknown, although it does predate World War II. In some areas it is also known as "Butlin's Ballet", but whether it was devised there or just popular is unclear. The shorter version is seen more often, but the full version is far more fun!

1-4 All march forwards for eight steps.

5-8 Still holding hands in line, the trios set twice (four pas de bas steps), all moving to the right first.

9-16 Each trio dances a reel of three, beginning with the man passing left shoulders with his right hand partner.

17-24 Again holding hands in line, each three dances "double arches". (The man raises his left hand – and therefore the right hand of his left-hand partner – to make an arch. The right-hand lady passes in front of the man and underneath this arch, closely followed by the man who of course is going underneath his own raised arm. This move is then repeated with the man raising his right arm, passing his left-hand lady underneath, and following her through.)

25-26 Still holding hands, each dancer jumps and kicks the right foot across the left foot, and then jumps and kicks the left foot across the right.

27-28 Bars 25-26 are repeated.

29-32 The man kisses his right-hand partner, kisses his left-hand partner, and moves on to the two ladies in front.

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

Shorter Version

1-4 The trios march forwards for four steps and backwards for four steps

5-8 Bars 1-4 are repeated

9-12 Still holding hands in line, the trios dance "double arches".

13-16 The men move on to the ladies in front.

The Road to Auchengarth

**Old Time Waltz
Double Hold, Gent Facing Wall**

*Devised by David Cronie for his good friends
Jim and Roseann Roberts at Auchengarth*

- 1-2** Step left to side, close right to left,
Step left to side, close right to left,
3-4 Step right to side, close left to right,
Step right to side, close left to right,
5-8 Both solo outwards turn, touch hands, and
back round.
9-12 Step left to side, cross right over left, point
and close.
13-16 Step right to side, cross left over right,
point and close.
17-20 Step back to centre, left, right, left, close
right to left.
21-24 Step to wall left, right, left, close right to
left, turn to face line of dance in open hold
25-28 Step forward left, right, and point, and
dip.
29-32 Two full rotary waltz turns.

© D. Cronie
June 2005

Kirkpatrick Durham Two-Step

**Two-Step
Couples Dance**

**Stand side by side, holding nearer
hands**

- 1-4** Set, then walk three steps forward, turn to
face partner and close right to left
5-8 Now with both dancers facing one another
in double hold, set and turn away from each other
(i.e. gent pull back left shoulder, lady pull back
right shoulder) to face each other in double hold.
9-10 Both step on left foot and kick right foot,
both step on right foot and kick left foot.
11-12 Step close, step close, line of dance,
13-16 Two full rotary waltz turns.

*With thoughts of my Kirkpatrick Durham
dance class.*

© D. Cronie April 2005

Miss Betty Ferguson of

Dumfries

Strathspey 4x32

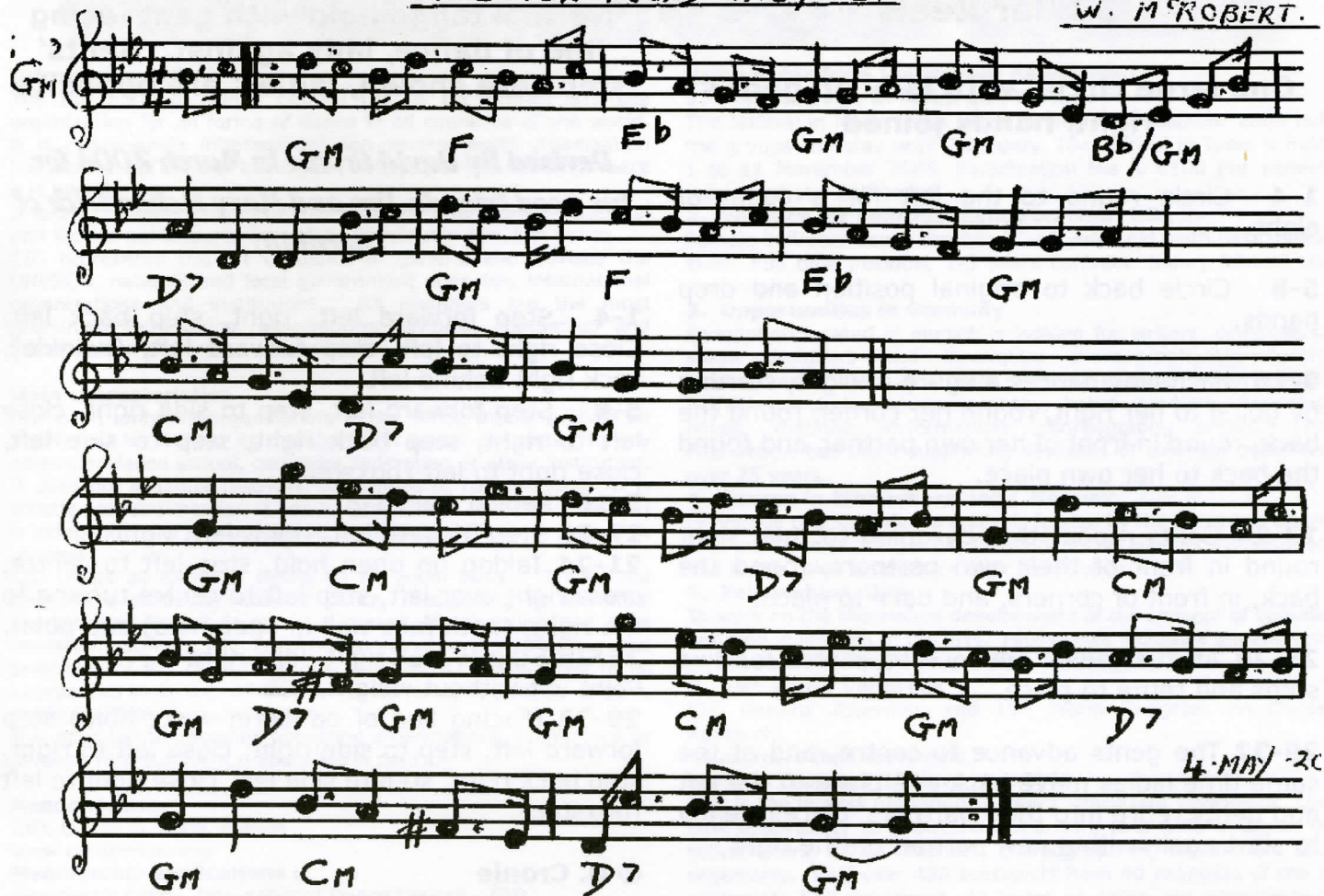
**Longways set of four couples. Second
and fourth couples cross to opposite
sides on 2nd chord**

- 1-4** First man dances half a figure of eight round
second couple, giving left shoulder to second man,
and finishes above his partner. WHILE fourth man
dances half a figure of eight round third couple
giving left shoulder to third man, and finishes
below his partner, facing her. On bar 4 first and
fourth couples acknowledge their partners.
5-6 First couple, in promenade hold (man with
lady on his left) dance down the middle, while
fourth couple, in promenade hold (man with lady
on his left) dance up the middle. Second couple
step up to first place and third couple step down
to fourth place.
7-8 First and fourth couples dance left hands
across half way.
9-10 First man and third lady, first lady and third
man, fourth lady and second man, fourth man
and second lady, pass right shoulders to change
places.
11-12 First and fourth couples set WHILE second
and third couples dance left hand across half
way.
13-14 First man and second lady, first lady and
second man, third man and fourth lady, third lady
and fourth man, pass right shoulders to change
places.
15-16 Second and third couples set, WHILE
first and fourth couples dance left hands across
half way. First and fourth men pull left shoulder
back, dance a $\frac{3}{4}$ turn to face up/down to finish
with their partner on their right. First and fourth
ladies dance out of the left hands across and face
up/down.
17-20 First couple with nearer hands joined,
dance up between the third couple (who are
in first place) and cast to second place WHILE
fourth couple dance down between second couple
(who are in fourth place) and cast to third place.
[(3)1(4)2]
21-24 Third, first, fourth and second couples do
half a turn with the right hand, stay in the centre
of the set, pull right shoulder back and dance out
to other side of the dance. (Half turn and twirl)
[3(1)4(2)]
25-32 All four couples circle round and back.
Repeat from new positions

© Sue Petyt
January 2005

BETTY FERGUSON'S STRATHSPEY.
THE TEN POUND CHEQUE.

W. McROBERT.



Surprise Birthday Present for Betty Ferguson

Betty Ferguson had a surprise at the first Monday class of the Dumfries Branch on 5th September, when a set of dancers took over the floor and danced a new strathspey called "Miss Betty Ferguson of Dumfries". The dance was commissioned by Betsy Maxwell, the wife of the Dumfries Branch Chairman, to celebrate Betty's birthday and to recognise the long service she has given to the Dumfries Branch as a teacher, committee member, treasurer and dancer.

The dance was written by Sue Petyt and illustrates the fact that Betty takes two classes for the branch, and that some dancers are enthusiastic enough to attend both. The original tune, *The Ten Pound Cheque*, was composed for the dance by Willie McRobert. Betty was presented with a framed copy of the dance, a copy of the music and a CD of the music for the dance, recorded specially by Willie McRobert.



Betty Ferguson & Betsy Maxwell

Welcome

32 Bar Reels

One large circle, with lady on gent's right, hands joined

1-4 Circle round to the left for a count of eight.

5-8 Circle back to original position and drop hands.

9-16 Each lady dances a figure of eight, starting by going to her right, round her corner, round the back, round in front of her own partner, and round the back to her own place.

17-24 Gents repeat that by going to their right round in front of their own partners, round the back, in front of corners, and back to place.

25-28 All the ladies advance to centre for two steps and retire to place.

29-32 The gents advance to centre, and at the same time ladies move back one place to the left and gents retire into their partners' places, ready to start again with a new partner on the right.

© D. Cronie

Sapphire Tango

Normal tango hold with gent facing line of dance, lady against. Gents' steps are shown, ladies' are opposite

Devised By David Cronie in March 2004 for his good friends Jim and Mary McKendrick of Thornhill.

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

5-8 Step forward left, step to side right, close left to right, step back right, step to side left, close right to left (boxstep).

9-16 Repeat Bars 1-8

17-20 Step forward left, right, left, right,

21-24 Taking up open hold, step left to centre, cross right over left, step left to centre turning to the right, (both face wall in open hold) and point.

25-28 Step to wall right, left, right

Point left without weight,

29-32 (Facing line of dance in waltz hold) step forward left, step to side right, close left to right, step back right, step to side left, close right to left (boxstep).

© D. Cronie

Postie's Jig

4 x 32 Bar Jigs

Four Couple Longways Set

This dance was devised by Roy Clowes, and is now very popular at Ceilidhs and Old Time Dances.

1-2 1st and 4th couples "set" to their partners.

3-4 1st and 4th couples "cast in" one place (1s face up the set and then dance down behind 2s, who move up to let them in, while 4s face down the set and then dance up behind 3s who move down to let them in)

5-8 1s and 4s dance "½ figures of 8" round new end couples starting by crossing the set, so that Ladies 1 & 4 finish on men's side while Men 1 & 4 finish on ladies' side.

9-12 Man 1 & Man 4 join nearer hands, as do Lady 1 & Lady 4. They dance across the set (men making an arch and ladies passing underneath) and turn "posts" (nearest person from Couples 2 & 3) with free hand to face up/down (now with own partner).

13-16 1s dance down while 4s dance up (couple dancing up always make the arch) and turn posts with free hand.

17-20 1s & 4s repeat bars 9-12 from new positions.

21-24 4s dance down while 1s dance up and turn posts with free hand.

25-32 1s & 4s dance ½ rights and lefts (all give right hand to partner and change places, then ladies give lefts to each other and change places while men do the same) then all give right to partner and swing.

The order is now 2, 1, 4, 3 and so Couples 2 and 3 are the new dancing couples.

International Dance Council

Introducing CID

The International Dance Council CID is the official umbrella organization for all forms of dance in all countries of the world. It is a non-profit international non-governmental organization founded in 1973 within the UNESCO headquarters in Paris, where it is based.

It is a worldwide forum bringing together international, national and local organizations, as well as individuals active in dance. CID represents the art of dance in general and advises the UNESCO, national and local government agencies, international organizations and institutions. Its members are the most prominent federations, associations, schools, companies and individuals in more than 120 countries.

Main characteristics

CID is an umbrella organization, in the sense that it evolves on a different level from its members. It is not connected to any particular dance school, company, federation or other institution. It does not organize festivals, workshops or competitions. It is strictly non-commercial; it has no products or services to sell. It is independent of any government, political ideology or economic interest.

CID treats all forms of dance on an equal basis. It does not promote a particular view of dance, recognising its universal character as an art form, as a means of education and as a research subject. It is non-discriminatory. Reflecting the principles of the United Nations and UNESCO, it is open to all approaches to dance, without prejudice for race, gender, religion, political affiliation or social status.

It is open to membership, accepting organizations, institutions or persons with sufficient credentials in dance.

Headquarters:

CID, UNESCO, Paris, France

www.cid-unesco.org

Membership applications :

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Fax (30)210.324.6921

president@cid-unesco.org

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What being a CID Member means

Above all, it is a gesture towards the global family of dancers - you declare that you feel part of it.

It is also a statement on the unity of dance forms - dance takes countless shapes but the art of dance is one.

Among other advantages, CID Members are entitled to:

- Receive a certificate signed by the president, a CID badge, stickers, posters, gifts and other material.
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- Be listed in priority and specifically in the Global Dance Directory (80,000 addresses, by far the largest in the arts)
- Address inquiries to the CID secretariat, which is staffed by several full-time experienced members and has a huge archive of resources.
- Be part of a network including thousands of specialists in more than 120 countries, who are eager to be of service to other CID members.
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- Support applications to the UNESCO National Committee of their country or various sponsors to fund their travel abroad in order to represent their country.
- Share the prestige of "the United Nations of Dance", as CID is sometimes called.

Some items from the current Newsletter:

1. Folk festivals in Malta and Tunisia

The festival in Malta takes place 26 and 27 December 2005 but the groups can stay until 2 January. The festival in Tunis is held 1 to 11 November 2005. Participation fee is €100 per person including hotel half board.

2. Vacancy for ballroom dance teacher, USA

Female ballroom dance teacher 25-40 years old, with basic office skills. Full time position, 1-3 years contract. Salary 20.000 US dollars plus.

3. Opportunities in Germany

Foundation located in Munich is looking for writers, composers, stage designers and innovative choreographers/producers ready to experiment as a team to create evening-length ballets. Activities include: junior company, ballet academy, boarding house, matinee performances, choreography project. The Foundation has been supporting students of classical ballet for over 25 years.

4. Course in Ethnochoreology, Norway

University course in dance analysis funded by the European Union is offered free of charge. Eligible students receive accommodation and meals, plus support for their travel up to €315.

5. Fellowships, USA

To work on the theoretical development of the concept of cultural heritage in relation to the arts. Fellowships include a stipend and an allowance for travel to and from Washington, D.C.

6. 19th World Congress

CID General Assembly and 19th World Congress on Dance Research

"Much more than movement"

Larnaca, Cyprus, 9-13 November 2005

This is the largest gathering of dance specialists world-wide, the best opportunity to showcase one's work to a wide audience of practitioners, dance teachers, choreographers, researchers and organizers. Last year 450 specialists from 40 countries of the 5 continents had registered. All forms of dance are represented. Strictly non-profit - none of the organizers receives a fee. Not to be confused with festivals, workshops, or open conferences.

This Congress is jointly organized by IOFA Greece and the Cultural Heritage Association of Nicosia, in collaboration with the International Dance Council CID-UNESCO and the Dance Theatre "Dora Stratou". It is subsidised by the Ministry of Education and Culture.

The programme includes:

Presentation and discussion of original research reports.

Classes, lecture-demonstrations, video projections, discussions.

Performances by selected dance companies.

Exhibitions and sales of books, records, pictures, costumes, accessories etc.

Visits to places of special interest, such as dance schools, museums, sites etc.

Evenings where conferees can dance with music by local musicians.

While intended primarily for professionals, it is at the same time a participatory event, facilitating contacts with colleagues, informal discussions and individual initiative.

Presenting a contribution (research report, lecture-demonstration, class, performance, exhibition) is optional. Proposals must be sent before 30 September 2005.

To apply for a visa and/or financial assistance, registered participants receive an official letter of confirmation signed by the President of CID. Please make arrangements as early as possible.

Congress Secretariat: Dance Theater "Dora Stratou", Scholiou 8, Plaka, GR-10558 Athens, Greece; tel. (30)210.324.6188, fax (30)210.324.6921 www.cid-unesco.org

For further information on any of these events, please contact:

International Dance Council - CID

President's Office

president@cid-unesco.org

When Speculation Becomes Fact

By Mats Melin

I have always been fascinated by the stories attached to many Scottish dances. These stories are generally of two kinds. First we have those regarding the origin of the dance and second those who deal with the inspiration for the creation of the particular dance. The second category is often straight forward, particularly in the case of the many Scottish Country Dances that refer to a person, place, tune, or an event such as an Anniversary or a Jubilee. These are dances devised with a particular event or person in mind, or created to fit a particular tune. Many of the older Scottish Country Dances share their title with the "original" tune, suggesting that the figures were composed for that tune, and often the both the tune and the dance seem to have been composed and devised for a particular person, for example The Duke of Perth. However, in this case the same movement patterns have been associated with two more tune titles in different places in Scotland – *Broon's Reel* (*Broun's/Brown's Reel*) and *Pease Strae*. Some popular tunes have more than one dance associated with them, for example *Blue Bonnets* which has both Country Dances and several (ten or more) solo dances set to that tune.

There seems to be a need to know the origin of dances and in particular the many solo dances. There are various stories circulating with regard to the origins of the Highland Fling, the Sword Dance and the Seann Triubhas. Most stories seem to relate back to certain few sources and have mutated in the process so that it is today very difficult to sort fact from fiction. If the facts were ever there? It is plausible that there was more substance to the reason of the origin of these dances than the stories circulating today suggest. In that lies a deeper meaning as to why the dances came to be, but what that may be we may never find out for certain. Many dances, such as the Seann Triubhas, Over the Water to Charlie and Tulloch Gorm have acquired strong connections, in their associated stories, with the 1745 Jacobite Rebellion and Bonnie Prince Charlie. Discussing the ins and outs of these stories and any possible truth to their claims is better suited to a separate article debating them.

However, there is one particular dance I would like to draw attention to - the solo dance "Wilt thou go to the Barracks, Johnnie?". Over the years I have found several revealing aspects as to how speculation on the supposed origin of a dance can become seen as fact among those who dance it. I first came across "Barracks, Johnnie" when attending the RSCDS Summer School at St. Andrews in the early 1980s. At



the time I was more interested in the technique of how to dance the steps, than where it came from. My teacher was the late Robert "Bobby" Watson of Aberdeen who was a regular Highland dance tutor at the Summer School. One piece of information registered with me though, and was not questioned, that this had once been a recruiting dance. According to this belief, as told to me by various dance teachers, including Bobby Watson and the late Charlie Mill, the dance was believed to be an Army recruiting dance for the Gordon Highlanders in Aberdeenshire. The custom, according to the story, was to have it danced at the old "Feeing" Market or Fair in Aberdeen by a regimental dancer, with either pipe or drum accompaniment. This was to entice the onlookers to become "volunteers" and join the fighting forces. Another story tells that, sometimes, a pretty girl displayed the dance in front of the regiment standing on parade, for the same purpose. The dance was also to have been performed at the Army Barracks in Aberdeen. We will come back to these statements later.

Some eight years later I sent questionnaires to all the Scottish Regiments existing at the time asking about the dances each Regiment danced and their sources. This was part of my ongoing research. I expected some interesting facts from the Gordon Highlanders on this particular dance,

but was surprised to hear that they had no record of the dance in their regimental dance history. In fact they had never heard of it. I searched further and found that the original source of the steps was to be found in a manuscript referred to as the "Hill Manuscript" by the RSCDS. The manuscript had been lent by the then owners to Mrs Isobel Cramb, a dance teacher known for her interest in solo dances. Many of the dances in this notebook were brought to wider attention by Mrs Cramb, and include the Earl of Erroll, The King of Sweden and Dusty Miller. The RSCDS call these dances "Ladies' Step Dances" due to their interpretation of these dances as soft balletic style. The SOBHD and its associated Examination bodies UKA, BATD and SDTA call them "National Dances". At the time none of the aforementioned associations could offer any more information regarding the origins of the dance.

Tracing the source of the statements of this dance being an Army recruiting dance finally led me to an article written by Mrs Cramb in the Clan Hay Magazine (Vol 1, No. 3 1952, p. 23-24). In this article Mrs Cramb wrote:

"About ten years ago a manuscript was lent to Dr. The Hon. E. Forbes-Sempill by a Mr. Hill who lived in Aberdeen. It was written in a most elegant hand and bore a title page thus: *Frederick Hill's Book of Quadrilles and Country Dances. Etc., March 22nd, 1841.*

Dr. Forbes-Sempill made a copy of the manuscript at that time, and it was returned to the owner who was a grandson of the author. Mr. Hill has since died, and his daughter Mrs. Lorimer, has very kindly lent the original manuscript to me.

As the title-page indicates there are several quadrilles and a small collection of country dances in the book ... Some of these dances are Highland dances already well-known to us — 'The Marquis of Huntly's Highland Fling', 'Blue Bonnets', and 'Shantruish' (sic) — and then the exciting ones: 'Scottish Measure', 'Wilt thou go to the Barracks, Johnnie?' (*this must be a recruiting dance*); 'The King of Sweden' and the 'Earl of Erroll'.

I have not been able to find any trace of these last three elsewhere in the country, so *I think we can assume that they are Aberdeenshire dances.* The 'King of Sweden' is *probably also* a Hay dance in view of the large proportion of Hay officers in the Army of Charles the 12th, King of Sweden. I have found the music for this dance in the Gillespie collection (1768), now in the National Library of Scotland. The music for 'Wilt thou go to the Barracks, Johnnie?' still eludes me, but I continue to search ..."

What is significant about this extract is that the article is full of speculation and suggestions on the possible origins of the dances included in

the notebook. Mrs Cramb proposes an army connection, and a recruiting one at that, but also points out that the music "eludes" her.

In the early 1990s, I started searching for the Hill manuscript together with dance researcher Chris Metherell of Newcastle, who eventually managed to track it down and obtain copies of the manuscript from the current keepers. The notebook reveals many interesting aspects of dancing in early 1800s. One thing that can be seen when studying the style of notation in the notebook, is Mr Hill seems to be a pupil rather than a teacher, as suggested by Sir Ewan Forbes. Many of the notations are incomplete and few of them are consistent in their use of terminology. There could be many reasons for incomplete notations, but his use of words describing what appears to be similar movements vary from dance to dance and the whole layout suggests that he is noting down dances as he learns them. Tom and Joan Flett suggest that he could have been a pupil of Dancie Myron who is known to have been teaching in the area at the time (Flett & Flett, (1996) *Traditional Step-Dancing in Scotland*).

Looking at the description of the "Barracks Johnnie" the spelling of the title is of interest and gives a clue to the elusive music issue. The notebook title is - *Wilt thou go to the Barricks Johnnie*. Having searched for years for a tune tile including the word "Barracks" this spelling suggested pronunciation closer to "Berwick". The next clue was the structure of the steps for this particular dance. When they are cross-referenced with the other entries for solo dances in the notebook, they showed great similarities with those of the dance The Dusty Miller, which is often played in 6/4 time. Dusty Miller is an old hornpipe played in triple time (3/2). So, was there a tune in 6/4 or 3/2 time, which included the word "Berwick"? A musician contact in Canada, Mr. Murray Schoolbraid, brought my attention to an old hornpipe named *Go to Berwick, Johnny*.

Go to Berwick, Johnnie is a triple-time hornpipe with a 3/2 signature. An old rhyme began —
*"Go, go, (go)
 go to Berwick, Johnny
 Thou shalt have the horse
 And I shall have the pony."*

This jingle is found in Ritson (ed. of 1869, p. 27); and quoted by William Stenhouse in *Illustrations of the Lyric Poetry and Music of Scotland*, (p. 459),* who said that, "the silly old verses are usually chanted by nurses to divert their little ones." Other, well-known lyrics in this metre are *The Dusty Miller*, *Robin Shure in Hairst*, *Jokey said to Jenny*, and *Dance to Your Daddie*. Stenhouse wrote in *The Scots Musical Museum* (c. 1824), that tunes of the category of 3/2 hornpipes had been played in Scotland "time

out of mind", and that James Allan, piper to the Duke of Northumberland, had assured him that, "This particular measure originated in the borders of England and Scotland." Further investigation into the music may reveal more about the 3/2 hornpipe's existence in Scotland.

So are we simply looking at a mutation of the tune title from Berwick to Barricks? Quite possibly, as the steps described by Hill fit the 3/2 signature and the tune better than any other possibility. Armed with this discovery, I then asked Bobby Watson, when visiting him in Aberdeen in the early 1990s how he came to know the steps in their current form. For anyone who did not know Bobby Watson, he was a dapper, quick-witted person full of jokes and stories, even when keeping a strict class. For once, when asked he turned serious after a few seconds of contemplation. He then proceeded to tell me, for once, in a serious manner how he came by the dance.

Bobby said he was given Mrs Cramb's hand written notes of the dance that she had copied out of the notebook, with a request to see if he could make sense of them. One day he was working away in the studio in his house, trying out various ideas of what he thought it could be, when he heard the local pipe band march past outside playing the 6/8 march *Cock O' the North*. He got inspired to set steps to that tune and from that the dance developed until he had 8 steps loosely based on Hill's terminology, the last two steps of which he felt ought be done to faster tempo. That is how the steps came to be taught by Bobby. It spread among the Highland Dancers and the various organisations, the tempo has changed and the last two steps are no longer speeded up, so that it can now be found as a 2/4 march to the tune *The Braes O' Mar* or even as a 4/4 strathspey. The story of its regimental connection seems to have lived on as well. Nobody has, to my knowledge, questioned the facts of this story.

So to summarise, we seem to have a dance – Wilt thou go to Barricks, Johnnie (Go to Berwick, Johnnie) – quite likely danced to the 3/2 hornpipe of the same name, as would go with all the other solo dances in Hill's notebook where the dance titles correspond with a tune of the same name. According to the Fletts' research, Mr Hill could have been a pupil of Dancie Myron in around 1841 in the Alford area of Aberdeenshire. Hill's notation came some 120 years later to inspire a dance teacher – Bobby Watson – to make up steps based on his dance knowledge combined with a chance inspiration of a tune – *Cock O' the North* which has strong North East connotations. The dance has continued to change, not so much in the technique and positioning of the feet but due

to tempo changes of its music from 6/8 to 2/4 or 4/4.

It is not the place here to deeply analyse the difference of step structure between the original notation and what is performed by Highland Dancers today, but both style and structure is way different, so we are really looking at two different dances. An original that fits 3/2 tempo of which we can only speculate on how exactly the steps may have been done; and a modern composition inspired by the original notation, where we know how each step looks as the composition was made up from modern Highland Dance movements.

Interestingly enough neither dance can be tied to the Gordon Highlanders as in the story, as indicated earlier, but the function of the story has helped keeping the imagination of dancers alive, giving them an image of what the dance *could* have been when taught Bobby Watson's modern version of the steps. So why not keep dancing some good steps and enjoy the dance, whatever the origin may or may not have been!

* This is part of Johnson, James., *The Scots Musical Museum with illustrations of the Lyric Poetry and Music of Scotland*. Ed. William Stenhouse and David Laing, Edinburgh, 1853.

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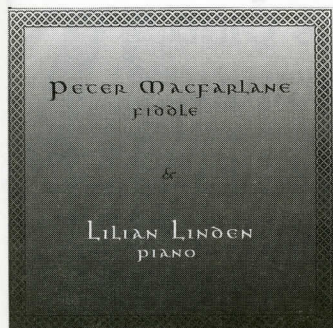
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Reviews



Scottish Dance CD

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Lilian Linden**

Suppliers: Lilian Linden
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Website: www.invercauldband.com
Phone: 01252-629 178
Mobile: 07879-633 766

Peter and Lilian formed a band in October 1997 which has expanded over time and is now known as The Invercauld Scottish Dance Band.

This is their debut CD containing all original music written and recorded by Peter on fiddle and Lilian on piano. The CD has fifteen tracks – 4 Reels, 3 Jigs, 3 Strathspeys, 1 6/8 March, 2 Waltzes, 1 Polka, and a Slow Air. There only being the two musicians on each track gives a fresh clean sound, making this CD particularly useful for beginners and children. The tempos are steady throughout and the tunes very exciting and inviting. This will be of particular use for teaching steps and technique. I would recommend this CD as a must-have in every dance teacher's collection. The Falkirk RSCDS Branch will certainly be ordering several copies.

Live in Moffat

**Willie McRobert's
Scottish Dance Band**

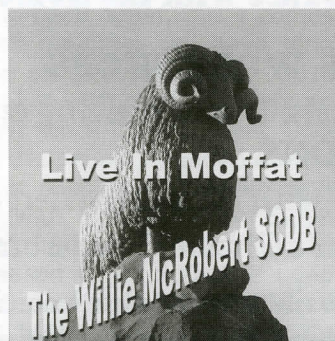
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This new recording by Willie McRobert and his Band was recorded live in Moffat Town Hall during the summer and was originally intended for local sale only. However since it has been so well received the number of discs available for sale has been increased and it is available from the aforementioned outlets.

This CD has 16 tracks – 6 Reels, 6 Jigs, 3 Strathspeys and 1 Waltz. All but one of the Country Dance tracks are for 32 bars; the one that is different is track 16 – *Argyll's Fancy* which is a 4x48 bar Jig. It is a pity there is not a 40 bar dance in the collection of dances as with this it would have made "Live in Moffat" the Perfect CD for a Country Dance teacher's collection.

Nevertheless this is an excellent CD and one I would recommend to my



fellow Country Dance teachers. The tempos are good and steady and the tunes and arrangements make you want to dance. This is a very desirable recording.

Band Members are:
Willie McRobert: Accordion
John Douglas: Accordion
Ian Kirkpatrick: Fiddle
Ian McRobert: Drums

By Campbell Hunter

**Please send any
items for review to:
Campbell Hunter
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Tuition is available in Country Dancing, Ceilidh Dancing, Irish Dancing, Highland Dancing and Step Dancing.

As well as dancing, classes are offered in Puirt-a-beul (mouth music), Fiddle and Mouth-organ tunes. One highlight of the classes is the presence of live music.

Lunchtime performances include "Heilan' Toe" doing the Papa Stour Swords and "Dance Ihayami" displaying some South Indian dance traditions.

The festival is open to everyone 14 years and over with events from lunchtime and some afternoon classes open to under 14s. It is open to those who may be selective in what they attend.

"....it was ten times better than just a 'really good weekend'; it was one of the best times I'd ever had in my life. The music and dance were just outstanding." *Joyce Cochrane.* Further information is available from Sandra Robertson on 01540-661 594 or sandra@dannsa.com

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The Inverness Highland Ball

By Rob Sargent

The Highland Ball Committee was formed in 1994 under the auspices of the Highland Scottish Country Dance Group. The group is made up of dancers who come from areas within easy reach of Inverness. This allows us when selecting programmes for the Ball to get a varied approach to current popular dances.

The initial concept was to give as many dancers as possible the opportunity to have an easy programme where everybody could dance without too much concentration, but with enjoyment. Memory loss comes to us all: we have found it much easier to remember the old favourites than some newer dances. However we try to cater for all tastes.

The first two Balls each attracted about 450 dancers, but we found it difficult to handle that number during the supper break. After careful consideration we decided to limit the numbers to 300 and this has improved the catering tremendously. We also had difficulties in finding suitable accommodation for 300 but we decided on the Bught Park Sports Centre in Inverness. The centre has air-conditioning, ample room and the floor is quite acceptable for dancing.

One problem we had with such a large hall was the acoustics. However this has been overcome by bands having more up-to-date speakers. The bands we have used in the past are Drummond Cook (a local band), John Renton and Colin Dewar. In 2004 we were again treated to marvellous music by Colin Dewar so we have decided to have him again. For the lovers of Scottish Country Dance music there are a number of new tunes to listen out for composed by Colin.

We insist that this is a formal occasion, but it usually ends up with the shedding of various items of clothing, especially by the men, throughout the course of the evening.

When we started the Ball we were constantly asked to make it an annual event but we decided against this as we wanted dancers to have something special to look forward to. However, we decided to hold an in-between dance in Nairn every other year. This is the next year's Ball programme. We make a point of calling the dances at this dance and the Ball which is much appreciated. At the four dances we have held we have had in the region of 175 dancers. The bands for this event have been Ian Cruickshanks, George Meikle and David Cunningham, all bands performing extremely well. Apart from Balls held in Edinburgh and Glasgow and the RSCDS AGM dances, our function is the biggest held in Scotland, attracting dancers from Ireland, Germany and France as well as good numbers from the south, and they come back year after year so we must be doing something that's needed. One area that we are very conscious of is the price of tickets. We believe that if you give the best you will have satisfied dancers who will come back again, but it comes at a price. At our committee meetings we have long discussions about whether the price should be an extra £2 or £2.50, bearing in mind that with many dancers on pensions there is a limit to how much can be spent. We hold lengthy meetings with all the people engaged for the night and achieve the best price possible. However, next year's ticket price is £21.50; with a two-year timespan between balls, prices inevitably increase more than the norm, e.g. the hall has increased to £2,200, the band costs £900 and the food £11 per head. It is difficult keeping the price down to £21.50 but dancers appreciate

that having the best comes at a price. We do make a point that the cost of the ticket is ploughed back into the event so that you get value for money and raffle money profit is now paid to Charity, which is selected by the Committee. In the past we have donated profits to organisations such as McMillan Nurses, Crossroads and more recently the Highland Wheelchair Dancers and the Highland Hospice. We are a non-profit making group.

By advertising the event well, such as on the Internet, we reach a bigger audience. In our first year we attracted 450, and 480 in the second year which was difficult to cope with. We therefore reduced numbers to 350 in our tenth year. We are now much better organised and have increased ticket allocation to 400 in 2006. Coming with a group or with a few friends makes the evening, however there are always plenty of people to dance with. We have found that many new friends are made and old acquaintances renewed and this is what it is about. Also it is important to point out that the hall has air-conditioning.

Our Ball usually falls on the first Saturday after Easter – ideal for those spending Easter in the Highlands or an early break.

Please contact Mrs Mary Ross, 60 Drummond Road, Inverness, tel. 01463-234 680 for tickets. You can also see us on www.dancescottishstyle.co.uk.

For those coming from farther afield, Inverness now has regular flights by EasyJet from Belfast, Bristol, and Luton, or by BA from Gatwick and Heathrow – fly time about 1 hour 15 minutes. Direct train service, King's Cross-Inverness departs 12.00 hrs, arrives 20.08 hrs. Tickets for both air and rail are reasonably priced if booked early enough.

The City of Inverness has travel lodges, travel inns, hotels and many B&Bs. Contact Inverness Tourist Information Centre, Castle Wynd, Inverness IV2 3BJ. Tel: 01463-234 353. Fax: 01463-710 609. E-mail: inverness@host.co.uk

Rob Sargent

Chairman, Highland Scottish Country Dance Group

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Morris Dance

This article was taken from the Internet at www.streetswing.com

Although this is primarily an American site, there is loads of information to be found in their Dance History Archives (particularly in the Dance Styles section).

English Morris Dancing has a great and mixed history when compared to other dances. The name is derived from the Morisco (môriskoz), a dance peculiar to the Moors and shows that the dance did have a Moorish beginning. The Morisco which it was often called was a Spanish name for a Moor or Moorish (Africa) or Spanish Muslim (Spain), who after the country was re-conquered after the legendary Charlemagne and Tamer lane battle (Christian Re-conquest 11-15th Century) remained there and became Christian (Moorish period). The Moors who had become subjects of Christian kings as the re-conquest progressed to the 15th Century were called Mudéjares.

The Morris dance (Tripudium Mauritanicum) was the most frequently mentioned of all the dances of the 15th Century. In Renaissance writings it is almost always mentioned that a Mouresca, Morisque or Moresque (Arab Lambra), Morisco was danced and was said to be brought to England from Spain by **John of Gaunt** (1340-1389) brother of Edward, "the Black Prince" during the reign of his father, Edward III (1312-1377) around 1360AD. In the beginning, the Morris dance was a pantomime of war, depicting the struggle of the Moors and Christianity and is one of the oldest English dances to date. However, its origin is not considered strictly English, but the modern version is.

Originally, it was done as a celebration type dance whose participants acted out the original battle (initially, hundreds of people would perform). It was generally performed on May Day, and introduced several characters,

varying in numbers, designation, and dress, according to taste or local customs, many diverse features being added over time. The Dance originally only used a solitary musician which would play a flute, bagpipe, violin, or accordion and a Tabor. The dance eventually quieted down and became enormously popular around 1500AD.

When the legendary Robin Hood (1160-1247) was the foremost figure of the dance in Elizabethan times (1533-1603), the birth of spring on May day would send the folk of England into the woods to collect flowers, boughs and blossoms and wait for the sun to rise, a symbol of the full opened year. They would return home in the sunlight, flower-laden, dancing and capering around an ox-drawn cart which bore the May Pole thus the Masque of Morris dance which Robin Hood danced with Marian.

In the early forms of the English Morris, five men, one being known as the "Foreman of the Morris" and another as the "Fool", a boy who was dressed up to characterize "Maid Marian," were the only performers. Accompanying these were a piper and/or a tabourer; with the sound of this melody, the clashing of staves and the jingle of small bells fastened to their costumes (garters), they danced to the lively measures. Soon after, the characters of the "Merry Men of Sherwood" were introduced, Tom the Piper with his pipe and tabor, the Dragon (no mention before 1585) and of course Robin Hood, Friar Tuck and Little John became conspicuous figures of the dance.

Historically (pre 1890s) there appeared to be three basic types of Morris:

1) As a solo dance performed at Moorish courts, (usually with blackened face to represent the

moors) and a stamping of the feet along with heel stamps.

2) As a couple or group dance which usually portrayed (sword) combat.

3) Large scale that utilized upwards of 100-200 people in two groups, dancing/acting out a dance battle pantomime. This, as a rule, would last 4-5 hours using a single musician.

England was a principal originator of this folk dance by helping it to grow, making it more of a dance than a celebration, by adding distinction to the dance; bells, waving handkerchiefs, real and fake horses (hobby horse) and black amours were a part of the dance, the dance steps were very complex and all the while keeping up a Jog-Trot pace.

In the Morisco, the dancers held swords in their hands, with the points upwards; this custom connects the dance with the ancient Pyrrhic or sword dance; which the Goths did the same in their military dance. In many English vicinities the dance is performed as a sword type dance utilising fancy costumes, swords, sabers, sticks, military marching, leaping and opposing sides. Many choral rounds of the time were very similar to the Mourisca with the British reviving the dance back in the 1890s. The dance does not have any real turns or patterns, did not glide or sway and was not danced on toe but was very intricate in its movements, (which are many). The Mourisca was a big element of the first ballets, often called "Spectacles" of that time.

The Mourisca or Morris dancers do

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Morris Dancing © David Wyatt

the dance differently in different parts of the world, and it can be done as a solo or group; however the basic idea of the dance is as follows:

1) Characteristic Form: Two rows, originally six, known as the "Los seis" ("the sixes") but later became ten, along with a "fool" (arap) and a boy dressed as a woman (Dama) who is called "Mayde Marya" (as in Robin Hood), and another man carrying a cardboard figure of a horse (hobby horse) on his hips. All of them wear fantastic costumes hung with many bells. Blacking of the face was very common.

2) Classic Form: Is done with two rows and three dancers each. These rows move to and fro, zigging and zagging, perform in a chain or can perform opposite each other with a vast amount of variations. The classical form used dibbers (sticks) rhythmically when opposing sides would meet (a type of ring dance called bean sitting.)

The dance steps were formerly described as a type of "Prussian Goose-step" or later a military march with the leg kicking forward and a little skip with the other. The arms were described as swinging vigorously and the bells were used to accent the kicking or flinging of the leg. The dance also used leaps that were about a foot high.

At the conclusion of the dance the participants sometimes engaged

in shouting. Swords and Sabers (originally wooden) are often used to portray battle when both sides meet. Sticks (like the stick dance) were used rhythmically throughout the dance as well. If someone was killed (acted-out) they were buried on the spot with no priest present. Morris Dancing went by many various names, such as Moresque, Morisque, Morisco, Morrisk, Morrice and Moorish; however the dance was essentially the same and was mainly a male only dance, while on the other hand the Zambra, a Flamenco/Spanish dance is of direct Moorish origin, performed by women only (moras and moros) and was only danced to flutes and oboes. The Sarabande is also a Spanish dance of Moorish origin when the moors invaded Spain. The Portuguese dancers, in their ceremonies fights with the Moors were replicated, and thus the form called Mourisca was originated. In the Azores it was still preserved under a dramatic form called Mouriscadas. There was also a dance known as the Moor's Pavane in the 16th Century. As a side note the Puritans saw the Morris Dance as a heathen form and prohibited it from being done until Restoration marked a half hearted revival.

Fernão Lopes, describing the character of King Pedro I, says of him that he was a great votary of the Morris dance. Dances such as the Baixa, Chacola, Mourisca,

and Villão were usual at all Court weddings in the 16th century. The Baixa is a distinctive kind which includes other dances. Religious festivals gave most opportunity for the dance as it is pretty much an exhibition (non-social) type dance. In 1599 William Kemp (actor), danced the Morris Dance from London to Norwich in nine days (over a period of four weeks) which he wrote about in 1600 titled "Nine Daies Morrice". In this writing he called himself "Cauliero Kemp, head-Master of Morrice-dauncers". He took three people with him on his quest, Thomas Slye his Taberer, William Bee his servant and George Sprat.

Today the Morris Dance is a festival or show dance, done by performers of the traditions, rather than a social dance and is considered firmly English. In the simple form it consists of three men, usually dressed in white, carrying handkerchiefs and or sticks with small bells attached to their legs, Baldrics (ribbons) worn on the shoulders. However, there are different "Traditions" or styles of Morris Dancing, which can have all male, all female or mixed with number of performers being 3, 5 or 8 etc. and can have a certain amount of overlap of styles.

There are even different styles or "Traditions" of Morris Dancing in different areas, with some being called North West Morris, Bampton Morris, Bedlam or Border Morris, Headington Morris, Adderbury Morris etc.

In Morris Speak the styles consist of an Ale (gathering of dancers), Caller (basically a choreographer), Chorus (Set or Corner), Kit (Costume), Set (Number of dancers) and Team (Organized group).

These dances or sets may utilize a "Fool" (usually the leader), a "Hobby Horse", "Sticks", "Bells", "Swords", "Jigs", "Hornpipes" etc. and "May" is still the favorite month of the year for this dance as was in olden times.

There is much debate over the history of the Morris Dance, with some ignoring its roots of the Spanish Moors while others embrace it. Whatever the history of this dance, it is as fun to watch today, as I am sure it was back in the day of its creation.

More Coarse Dancing

Or

Why I Can't Go Back To Some Places

(Better yeuched than nuked)

Wonders never cease? I had so much fun at the last rally that I nearly smiled. In my case, whatever the anatomists say, this takes twenty-seven key skeletal-muscles, scaffolding, two days' preparation and a second mortgage!

There I was in miscreants' corner, mildly disobeying all those lovely ladies who think I could be nice if only they or I tried a little harder. Incidentally is it only now I am sixty-seriously-something that the sight of my flopping out kilt-loops provokes any passing lady to lay hands on me? Or is this something that I should have known when I was a comparatively lusty twenty?

But I digress (is that a big cat with a cold or a female monster with a tiara?).

There I was dancing in the annexe, yes folks we now have an annexe for my ilk, which is better than dancing in a pointy hat! So from now on, what my fellow dancelexics and I do, will be referred to as duncing. It being better to rule in hell than serve in heaven, I even have the title of The Duncing Master. (*Strictly, it should be dysdancics but Derek Haynes coined the first and did it first.*)

So there I was mentally preparing, and slyly rehearsing the moves of yet another dance never to be essayed – you know the sort of thing:

Jimmy's Jazzy Jumper

(68 bars of unlikely combinations in strathspey and reel time changing eclectically)

1-8 Bow and curtsey, all turn to third man and bow and curtsey (exaggerated), third man curse and bouncy, all women and three men don sunglasses.

9-16 men 1, 2 and 3 cross the dance, 1 and 2 pass opposites by r and cast off, 4 m pass lsh cast up 3 men standing between 4 ladies, all place hands on ladies' shoulders, all seven set twice while shaking their heads

17-24 change to reel time the 7 cast by right following in sex and number order behind 2nd man pursued by accelerating 3rd man, regain proper places by obvious dancing

25-32 Back to strathspey. Dance in to stand beside partner shoulder to shoulder, place hand on partner's waist 1s and 3s face down 2s and 4s face up, 1s with 2s, 3s with 4s dance three legged dorse-a-dorse, all start with inside leg, each double passes each double r sh, pass back to back as 4s pass 3s retiring, 4th man turns 3rd lady about to kidnap her and 4th lady casts to be with 3rd man retire to sidelines

33-40 1s with 2s, 3s with 4s rh across and lh back as 2nd and third lady meet for second time in middle change wheels return to sides etc etc.....

So there I was in a Mairi's wedding circle wondering if

By George Hobson

the plebeian release-spin-regain could be transferred to strathspey circle with two bars to leap spin and change-change-change (if you cannot stay aerial for two bars you must remain crouched until music catches up) when I realised that the annexe was full of aliens, sort of negative vampires, instead of having no shadow these people had enormous shadows! But wait a minute! As I peered anxiously from this mini-eclipse my tiny mind twiggled; these were actually enormous people! After me and my goodwife the next shortest person was two metres tall by two metres round, and that was a woman, and to make up for her shortness she was built! Well that did depress me! It was just like Christmas with the Aunties when I was five. You have no chance! Whatever they want, you do.

But then you find the upside, they hardly noticed another twelve stone of me; it was heaven, my feet were off the ground and I was around like pass the parcel. Nemesis came as Valkyrie number two bore me in the circle. Magnificent, large, shining-bosomed, flowingly robed, she threw back her head. After dribbling it around for a while we threw it back to her (obviously I joke, she had to come and get it herself). I could see the back teeth. God knows what I thought was happening, but whatever I feared, the reality was worse! Starting low and building slow came the cry. A yeuch like you never heard

Yeeeeeeehooooooooooooooooourrrrrrch!

I was Yosemite Sam fixed and tricked onto the railway lines with the cowcatcher bearing down on me, and the long steam-whistle a-blowing.

The truth dawned! These were Americans, and if they couldn't nuke me they'd yeuch me. I had made only three mistakes, I got up this morning, I got up to dance and I got up in their set. Even then I might have gotten away with it, but I let it slip that I had resources that they hadn't. Unwittingly I had been doing the variations in Mairi's Wedding while on automatic, and they wanted them! Battered, spun, reverse-reeled, burled, and compound-yeuched by six Americans. Their low-commotion numbed me sense and body, and the impetus smashed me to the wall. As I lay there, feebly mumbling.....

"41-56 All four women in turn approach 3rd man coquettishly and force him to turn them allemande left and right in alternate turns

57-72 each of the three men each turn third man allemande left and right, finishing by collectively kicking his arse while all the ladies curtsey"

Each American in turn came and bent down to pat my head, and said, "Thanks for the best dance we've had since we came over." All my friends said was, "It serves him right for doing that damned prelim teaching cert." If you don't believe this tale, ask anyone who was at the Forres rally.

Troon



Wilma Brown, MC

Dance Around

The last of the Summer Dances for this year, organised as ever by the Ayr Branch of the RSCDS was held in the Concert Hall in Troon on Monday 29th August. Colin Dewar played the music for a capacity crowd of dancers who had come from near and far, quite a few from overseas who were holidaying in the area.

A great atmosphere was to be had although the space was a limiting factor for the most popular dances. The Hazel Tree, Starry-eyed Lassie, Autumn in Appin and Peat Fire Flame were just a sample of the excellent dances on the evening's programme.



The Edinburgh Trinity Scottish Country Dance Group held its first dance of the new season with Marian Anderson and her Scottish Dance Band playing for a capacity crowd.

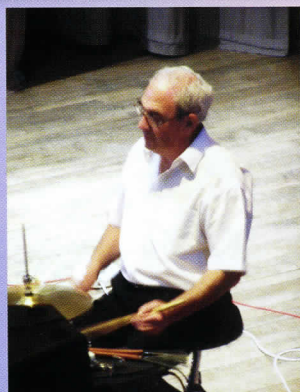
A popular programme included Midnight Oil, Ellwyn's Fairy Glen, Miss Allie Anderson and The 51st Travellers.

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Trinity



Marian Anderson SDB



Gus Millar of The Colin Dewar SDB



Cork International Folk Dance Festival

