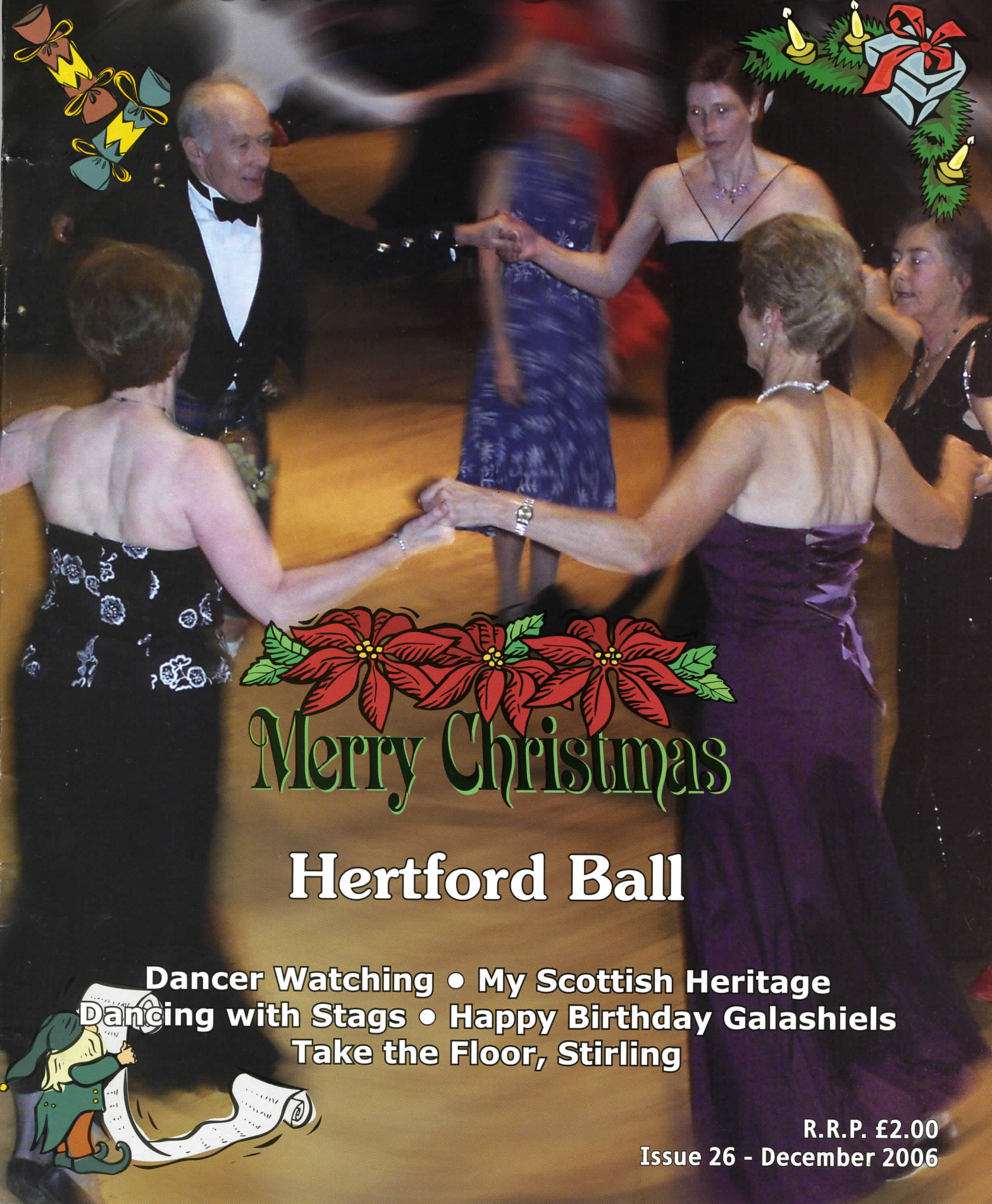
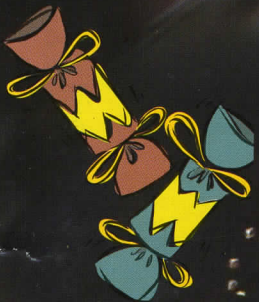


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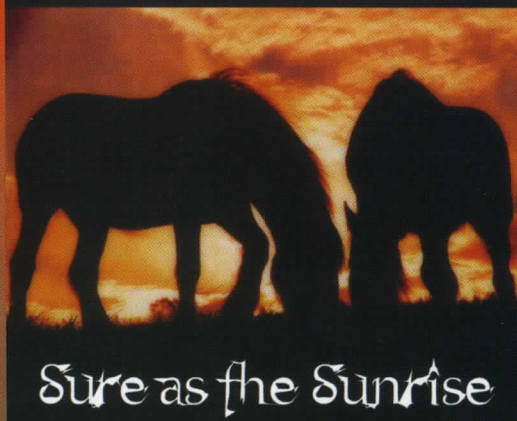

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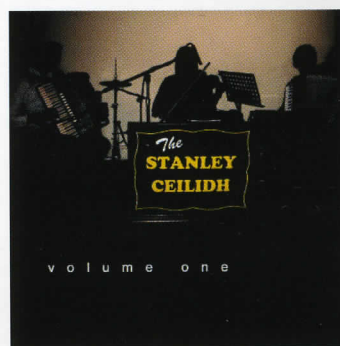
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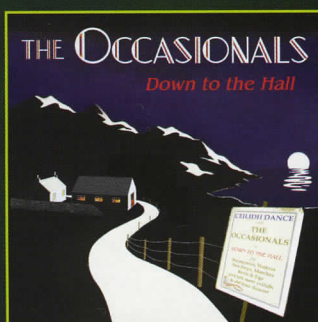
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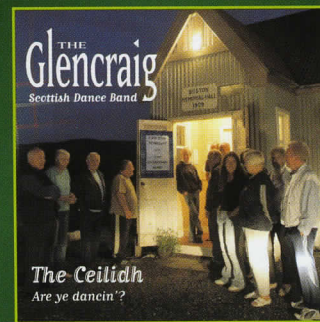
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Editorial

Christmas is almost upon us, and we're right in the middle of the dancing season. We've been working round the clock (literally - I'm writing this at 5.30a.m.!) to bring you both your December and January issues.

Finlay has to have the last word as usual, and George has been squaring up to a stag! We'd like to wish Galashiels SCD Club a very happy 80th birthday.

Flash has been out and about again with his camera at the Hertford Ball and the Kirkpatrick Fleming Christmas party.

The "Dance On!" Team would like to wish all of our readers a wonderful Christmas!

Karin

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Dancer Watching

By Karin Ingram

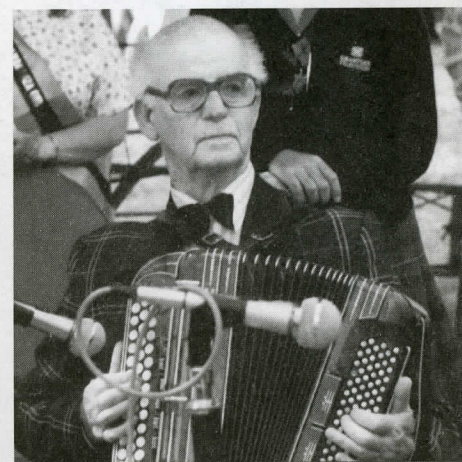
A question was raised on the Strathspey Server (www.strathspey.org) a while ago as to why the majority of Country Dancers seemed to be "white collar" (teachers, lawyers, accountants etc) and very few were what could be termed "blue collar". This is a subject that has interested me ever since I began researching Scottish Traditional Dance. Please forgive me if I generalise a bit here – I'm well aware that there are exceptions to every rule. These observations are my own, and I would be very interested to hear if readers agree or disagree with me.

Dancers from rural, mining or fishing communities don't generally differentiate between Country, Old Time, Reeling or Ceilidh Dancing. It's just "dancing" and they've done it all of their lives. I think that the key here is not their occupation; it is their upbringing in a community. One thing I very quickly realised was that just because somebody had left school at fourteen to be a shepherd, or a miner, or a fisherman, it most certainly did not mean that they lacked the brains



Farmer, Tom Gifford, & his wife, Sheila are both keen dancers.

to gain further qualifications; it was simply that they best served their community by working and earning as early as possible. They are often very well-read, with a knowledge of Scottish history, literature and music (as well as a good dose of common sense) that way surpasses many university-educated people. These folk grew up with dance and music in their village halls. It wasn't something that was just taught for the school dance, it was there all year round. Everyone in the community gathered together to dance, families went along and children danced with their parents and grandparents and so the dances – and the music – became second nature. They did Petronella, The Lancers, Spanish Waltz, Broun's Reel etc without ever having to think of what their next step should be, or where they should end up at a particular musical phrase – they just felt it! Dances fell in and out of favour like fashions. The idea of anyone going to classes to learn to dance has always been a bit strange to them although there were certainly exceptions, such as Ion Jamieson's dance group (all in rural occupations), whose country dancing is some of the earliest filmed. Every community had its musicians; again these skills were often handed down from generation to generation. Just look at some of our best-loved Scottish Dance Band leaders and musicians – Jimmy Shand, Bobby MacLeod, Will Starr, Judith Linton, Nicol McLaren, Freeland Barbour, Gordon Pattullo – the list is endless – all from "community" backgrounds. Some are now in what would be termed "professional" occupations, but you don't have to go back more than a generation to find a farmer, miner or fisherman. If you watch dancers from this background you'll see that they use a certain "economy" of movement. Their feet don't generally lift very far off the floor and they manage to achieve a good-going birl without seeming to expend too much



Sir Jimmy Shand MBE

energy. In my mind, the one thing that always makes them stand out is the feeling that they are as one with the music. They may not know every step in the correct order when they try a new dance, or they may in fact have their own "local variation" of a dance, but they are always, always in perfect time with the music. They know when a jig is played instead of a reel or if it should be a 4/4 march, rather than a 6/8. These are the people who, 9 times out of 10, will be able to tell you which dance band is playing when they hear a track on the radio. Dancing is truly "in their soul".

Scottish Country Dancers are often professional people (or at least from a professional background). A big attraction is the "challenge" of the dance – being able to master the intricate patterns and movements in some of the more complicated dances. The mental stimulation is equally important to the physical. I think it's very unfair to classify them as "geeks" (as someone previously suggested on the Strathspey Server), because to me a "geek" is someone who lacks social skills, and Scottish Country Dancing is undoubtedly a social experience. While not every Country Dancer has ambitions to be in a display team, many constantly strive



Country Dancers

to improve their technique and increase their library of dances. Contrary to general opinion they often embrace the new, and there is great excitement when a different figure or step is found in a new dance, with much discussion about its merits. They are playing a vital part in preserving the tradition, while allowing it to move forward as well. Take a Country Dancer out of a set dance though, and there are sometimes problems! On at least three occasions that I can think of I have been at a "Take the Floor" broadcast when the majority of the dancers have been Country Dancers and the dancing has been "against" the music in the round the room dances. What has usually happened is that the first couple has come onto the floor and started the dance at the beginning – but not at the beginning of the music phrasing! One time in Glasgow I had missed the start of a Britannia Two-step (I think I'd been blethering at the bar!), and was dragged onto the floor after the dance had started. On this occasion the band hadn't played an introduction, but the dancers had assumed an eight-bar intro and had started the dance late. I just couldn't find my feet! The dancers behind me (whom I knew) said jokingly, "What's up

Karin, don't you know this one?" But I physically couldn't dance against the music – I had to get in time, which meant we were out of time with all the other dancers! Despite the looks we got from some of the others, we were the only ones who finished with the band! When this happens at a dance, a good band will quietly add in an extra 8 bars or whatever to bring everyone into line – and often the dancers won't notice – but they can't do that for a broadcast. Country Dancers often know complicated sequences of steps, but don't instinctively know exactly where they fit with the music – or sometimes even what the music should be (e.g. any good reel or jig). Just a few years ago it was quite common for Country Dance Diaries to be printed without listing the bands playing! I queried this once (I think it was actually on an RSCDS site) and was told there wasn't room for that information! That's the first thing I'd want to know before I went to a dance. An RSCDS branch has recently brought out a CD with one of Scotland's top dance bands providing the music – and nowhere on the outside cover does it say who is playing! All this does tend to suggest that to many Country Dancers steps and technique are more important than the music.

Reelers are often from a public (as in English public, Scottish private!) or military school background. They do The Eightsome, Foursome, Hamilton House, Reel of the 51st, Duke of Perth, Mairi's Wedding etc, because that's what they were taught at school. Again it's something they were brought up with, but they have no particular desire to go to a weekly class to learn new dances. What they know already is just fine for any social occasion that they're likely to attend. These dancers have a very distinctive setting step, it's a sort of sway from one leg to the other (a bit like a penguin!) and is usually accompanied by a hand clap.

Old Time Dancers can be from any social background. They tend to favour round the room dances, rather than set dances. What I personally think of as "high" Old Time, overlaps with Sequence and Ballroom and exponents of this style are often extremely graceful and elegant. They are to couples dance what Country Dancers are to set dance. They enjoy the challenge of new and complicated dances and enjoy perfecting their technique.

Ceilidh Dancers can also be from any background, but often their only early dance



Old Time Dancers, Jimmy Allan & Jessie Stuart

experience has been in the gym hall at school, learning The Gay Gordons for the Christmas Dance. They dance for the fun of it and generally don't take themselves or the dance too seriously. Ceilidh Dancing is a real melting pot of all the other styles. You'll see Country Dances like Strip the Willow and The Dashing White Sergeant and Old Time Dances like Pride of Erin Waltz and The Military Two-Step. I think of a Ceilidh Dance as anything that I can "call" as opposed to "teach". In other words, I don't need to spend more than a couple of minutes explaining, before they can get on with dancing it. Ceilidh Dancing usually draws from other cultures as well as Scottish, particularly the English, American and Irish traditions.

Many Ceilidh Dancers have no knowledge at all of the music. They don't know the difference between a modern waltz tempo and an old time waltz tempo, or a reel and a jig – nor do they really care! They want to birl as fast as possible, and to add in extra



Ceilidh Dancer Mike Scott and his partner get into the swing of things moves here and there. Ceilidh Bands can also be fast and furious. I'll always remember being on the panel at a Scottish Traditions of

Dance Trust forum alongside Jim Johnstone and Stan Reeves; after a fairly heated discussion about the merits of the different styles of dance and music Jim said, "Aye Stan, I could play at one o' your gigs – but you couldnae play at one o' mine!" Very true!

Next time you're sitting on the sidelines watching a Dashing White Sergeant, do a little "dancer watching". It's so easy to pick out the different dancing backgrounds.

Here are a few responses from The Strathspey Server.

Karin Ingram's interesting article talked at length about the rural community people picking up their dances just by doing them. This works because the dances they do are easy to pick up that way, not because the rural

community people have a special innate talent for picking up dances that we urban types have somehow lost. The rural community is not into attending dance classes, therefore any dances that would require serious instruction simply do not enter their repertoire (a statistician would call this a "self-selecting sample"). Without wanting to demean them in any way, you probably won't find the shepherds, miners, and fishermen instinctively knowing where to put their feet doing, say, "Dugald Dalgetty" or "Wing-the-Wind" (both out of the Waverley Fugues, by Hugh Foss), since these dances basically live on abstraction – but then again these dances are highly contrived works of art that tax even most dedicated Country Dancers to their utmost. However, the same goes for much of the modern country dance repertoire which, without the notion of a dance "class", simply would not be feasible to do as it is very difficult to pick up by instinct.

Anselm Lingnau

Looking at the situation here in Germany (local groups and weekend workshops) I would also agree that there are more "white collar" dancers than "blue collar" dancers. But I think the reasons for that differ a bit from the situation in English speaking countries.

The first SCD groups here in Germany were founded about 45-50 years ago (very few might be older). Who started these groups? Mainly well educated people who were introduced to SCD during time spent in the UK or USA (work or university), or people who had contact with the British Army or English speaking Clubs. Nowadays our children have at least five years of English at school, but if I have a look at the generation of my parents and other relatives (most of them with blue collar background), they hardly speak or understand a foreign language.

Here in Germany SCD is one exotic dance style which competes with other exotic dances styles like Argentinean tango, Greek dancing, Irish step, etc.



Jim Johnstone & Bobby MacLeod

Although we have now a good number of SCD groups around (not all have connections to the RSCDS, although they mainly dance RSCDS style), still many dancers begin SCD while they are at university. Others got hooked because they are interested in all things Scottish. I personally began SCD about twelve years ago (while I was very much involved in historical dancing – mainly Italian renaissance, where the foot work is even more technical and complicated than in SCD!), when I saw an announcement at a national dance calendar. I went to a four-day dance weekend at the Poitzer Mill together with some dance friends, four of the five are still connected with SCD.

Happy dancing,

Martina Mueller-Franz

Karin, this is a very good article. It gives colourful credit to the various and valid forms of dancing in Scotland and their wonderful values, RSCDS being the youngest of them. It brings back memories. As a devoted RSCDS dancer for over forty-five years your article reminds me of when I began as a child with my parents in Britain. We just got together and danced, a combination of your first category and the reelers. All types are so wonderful, it is just that I, and many others, dance and promote the RSCDS, while still respecting and valuing other styles.

Simon, Vancouver

When I started Scottish Dancing, down in the wicked city of London, and then in the wilds of Yorkshire, I was only aware that there was one form of SCD (both classes were taught by RSCDS teachers). As I became more involved and started to teach it, again it was only RSCDS style dancing, because I knew nothing of the others – in fact I was brainwashed into believing that the only “correct” way of dancing was RSCDS style. This persisted for a long time, and it is only relatively recently (last ten years) that I have discovered that the Reeling Style (using a



Early Reelers

sort of pas de basque step for everything, and hands behind back together with clapping at odd times, i.e. just before taking both hands to birl round) is not some strange aberration but possibly a more traditional style!

This does not mean that I want to go “Reeling” – they have a very limited number of dances in their repertoire, which is fine for them because I suspect that the keenest of them only dance a dozen times a year (compared with my three times a week).

I think there are similarities between the different codes of football, which range from the simple “use your feet and your head”, through “pick up the ball and run” of Rugby League (thirteen men), Rugby Union (fifteen men), American (specialist teams) through to whatever is meant by Australian Rules (I think you probably have to be Australian to understand what the “Rules” are).

In the same way as you play by the rules of one code or the other, we usually dance in one style or the other.

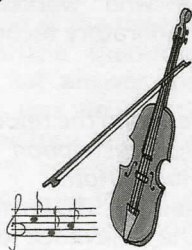
As I see it our RSCDS style is most suitable for young athletic adults – people who can leap tall buildings in a single bound, and do it gracefully and without effort. The problem is that most people in the UK either take it up after they have retired from work or, if you are lucky, people come back to it after the children have left home.

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Response to a Response

Finlay Forbes

I read the piece entitled "Response To "Dance On!" Article" in last month's issue with little interest but with a considerable amount of puzzlement, dismay and ultimately a touch of sadness.

Is this poorly constructed affair strewn with half-baked arguments, grammatical gaucheries and whimsical punctuation really meant to be putting forward a serious argument or is it an alternative comedy joke that has fallen flat?

The first of many questions that it raises is one that has cropped up before in these pages when I find myself at odds with dance organisations. Who is speaking on behalf of whom?

Although Angela Dreyer-Larsen has signed herself as "Director", she is not a director of the limited company in the sense used in the Companies Act 1985 (unless the company's most recently filed annual return is wrong) and therefore she is not a trustee of the charity. In the interests of clarity, I should point out that there is nothing illegal about someone who is not a statutory director being given the job title "Director" but it can be confusing for those who are not overly familiar with the wonders of UK corporate governance. Angela, like her co-author Diane, is a paid employee of the Trust. Neither of them is a member of the board.

Does their response represent the official views of the Scottish Traditions of Dance Trust as a body or is it merely the collated thoughts and feelings of two of its employees?

Most corporate bodies have very strict rules about making public statements and to be frank; I am astonished that any board of any registered charity would allow something like Angela and Diane's response to be published in its name. What was published was so crude and poorly crafted in places that it is difficult to believe that anyone apart from its authors reviewed it before allowing it into the public domain.

I do not propose to respond to every last detail of Angela and Diane's literary effort because parts of it, particularly the more personal insinuations about what I do and do not understand, are too subjective and lacking in relevance to be worth powder and shot.

Firstly, let me say that I am a little miffed by the authors' contention that my article was a "diatribe". If they consider such a piece to be the best that I can muster in the diatribe line they are seriously mistaken. Let me

assure them that if I had chosen to pen a diatribe it would have been very different in style and tone from the piece that appeared in last month's Dance On! For the record, this article isn't a diatribe either. Can STDT's funds stretch to a dictionary?

"STDT is very concerned that the residents of Clackmannanshire would be very offended by such a ridiculous statement."

I am sure that the good citizens of Clackmannanshire have better ways of spending their time and energy than on being "very offended" by the tongue in cheek obiter dictum of some visiting hack. If they are very offended or even just plain offended, I shall be more than happy to apologise to them but I am not convinced that Angela and Diane have been engaged as official advocates in this matter. Unless and until they are appointed to that role, they would be well advised to let the good folk of Clackmannanshire speak for themselves.

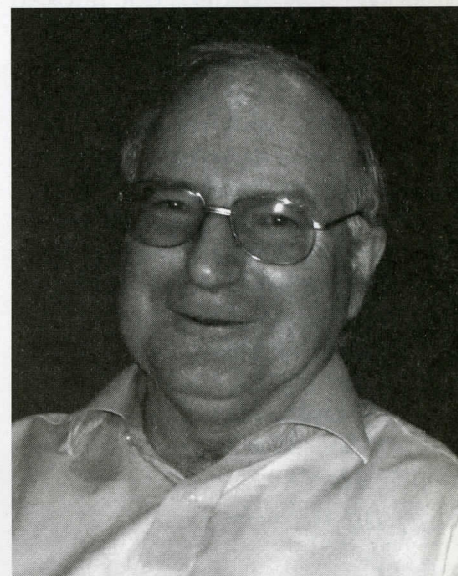
As any Scot knows..

I assume that in this context the phrase "any Scot" has the same meaning as "every Scot". If it does, the authors' assertion concerning the typical Scot's knowledge of Alloa is highly improbable. Did they test it before committing it to paper or is it just a wild, unsubstantiated assumption? I actually went to the trouble of testing their hypothesis on some of my fellow Scots and unearthed a serious paucity of knowledge in the Alloa department. Mind you, I cannot see the day when people will be blackballed from their local Caledonian Societies for failing to know that one of Paton's mills used to operate in Alloa.

What I find most surprising is that in their robust defence of Alloa and district, those speaking for the STDT of all organisations did not mention the area's association with the late Andrew Rankine who worked for many years as a laboratory technician in nearby Menstrie.

STDT fails to understand the relevance of the long-winded description given of The Dunmar House Hotel.

I am not surprised by STDT's failure to understand the relevance of my "long-winded" description of Dunmar House Hotel. STDT is an inanimate and intangible body corporate



and being such is incapable of understanding anything. Have the authors emulated the Duke of Plaza Toro and incorporated themselves?

I am not sure why Angela and Diane believe that I was being critical of the building. I was merely making a point in passing about its architecture. Our two scribes seem to have developed an uncanny knack of reading implied criticism into statements that are nothing more sinister than neutral observations.

The assortment of information on STDT's legal status was very useful but it failed to answer the question "who appoints the board?"

The company's most recently filed annual report is decidedly cryptic on the matter, stating merely that "The directors are appointed following proposals at meetings".

The section....infers a mis-managed (sic), bogus organisation and STDT considers this statement to be very misleading".

The fact that a Web site does not contain all the information that I want does not make the organisation behind the Web site suspicious in any way and at no point did I say that it did. All that stuff about questionable legality came from the authors of the response and nobody else. If they read what I wrote with a little more care than they seem to have shown so far, even they may see what I mean. I was deeply (although not favourably) impressed by this particular literary gem.

"The organisation is perfectly legal and has intense form of governance to which any organisation allocated public funds is scrutinised."

I suppose that a meaning of sorts does manage to extricate itself from this extraordinary syntactical entanglement but it is worth pointing out that the English language was distorted grotesquely to rebut a point that was never made. I should like to warn the authors that I take a very dim view of inflicting needless suffering on one of the world's richest and most expressive languages.

Even if we ignore the wondrous sentence structure, the statement implies a greater degree of scrutiny than actually exists. Companies House is little more than a filing agency that tends to leave companies alone as long as their directors file accounts and annual returns on time. My guess would be that the closest scrutiny of the Trust's affairs comes from the Scottish Arts Council, which appears to be its main source of funds. That said, all those financial and regulatory details, like "the flowers that bloom in the spring tra la", have nothing to do with the case.

STDT has found a way of introducing traditional dance to young people who would not normally be interested in Scottish Country Dancing to Jimmy Shand.

Do Angela and Diane seriously believe that modern Scottish Country Dancing is all about dancing to Jimmy Shand? The late Sir Jimmy may still be revered as an outstanding musician by many of us who play Scottish dance music but his style of playing has been out of favour with those in control of Scottish Country Dancing for some time (like about forty years). Did the comment somehow manage to sneak out of a time warp?

As I have mentioned in this magazine before, wrong footing Jimmy Shand at the height of his fame may not have been the smartest move that the Scottish Country Dancing brigade made but the move and its consequences for Country Dancing are all history now.

A statement like this does make me wonder when Angela or Diane last attended a Scottish Country Dance event and how au fait each of them is with the current state of that particular part of Scotland's dance heritage.

Its links to Scottish traditional dance were obvious to anyone with an appreciation of dance and creativity".

Sorry ladies, this just isn't good enough! "The king's new clothes gambit" is an outmoded and discredited debating trick that cuts no ice with me and is unlikely to cut any ice with this magazine's readers. I have assorted gongs, certificates and gewgaws for Highland and Country Dancing, a fair bit of experience in Ceilidh and Step Dancing not to mention direct and indirect contacts with experts in other fields. The only connection between "Skimming Stones" and Scottish traditional dance that I was able to discern (with a little help from my friends) was a vestigial pas de Basque. It is time for STDT's panel of experts to enlighten those benighted souls who just don't get it.

The contemporary of today is the tradition of tomorrow.

That looks axiomatic but it isn't really. In practice, the contemporary of today may turn out to be nothing more than the nostalgia or the forgotten past of tomorrow, especially if "the contemporary of today" is a product of the mind benders of mass marketing. There is a very nice but important distinction between "adapt or die" and "adapt and disappear". Having young people dancing "Scottish" dances that are indistinguishable from the globalised contemporary trends of mass "culture" would be the mother of all Pyrrhic victories.

Perhaps the best illustration of where all this could lead is the attempt by some of the major record labels to redefine the term "classical music" through the use of crossover artists. These days, anyone who can bawl a passing imitation of "Nessun Dorma" into a microphone is billed as an "Opera Star". That is not building on a tradition. That is just dilution and dumbing down.

"STDT is unique in that it is the only national organisation that not only promotes and encourages enjoyment in all forms of traditional dance, but also conserves artefacts, oral history and dance memorabilia."

STDT may well be unique in that respect but that is not what its Web site claimed at the time when I submitted my article therefore the response does not answer the original point. There was no mention of artefacts, oral history and memorabilia in the original assertion. I notice that the Web site no longer makes the claim that it once did for STDT. I wonder what sequence of events led to so radical a reappraisal of the trust's uniqueness.

"In the final analysis the figures speak for themselves."

No they don't. Without any information about the basis on which they have been calculated, they maintain a stony silence.

So much that is of apparent significance about these statistics and the accompanying narrative is undefined and therefore largely meaningless.

Who are "we"? Is the term limited to the Trust's trustees and employees or are other people involved?

"Produced" is an odd term to use in this context. What does it mean? What does STDT have to do to lay claim to "production"? How much input does STDT have to contribute for an event to qualify for inclusion in the count of 442? Does the total include the collaborations listed on STDT's Web site? Could some of the other collaborators also lay claim to the figures? If I attended 6 of the 442 events, would I be counted as 1 person or 6 people?

"Should we not be celebrating this success in an area that has been in decline for some years now?"

You may celebrate all you like. I shall leave the Veuve Cliquot on the off-licence shelves until I have had a few more answers.

Which brings us to the rather sorry business of the closing salvo complete with its supposedly irrefutable cliché. Dream on! I could comment on it at length but I shall not bother. Vacuous bluster of this kind does STDT no credit at all.

In the end, I feel more saddened than angered by the fact that a body with such high and worthwhile ideals as STDT chose to represent itself in this way. Perhaps Angela and Diane have managed to show Scottish Traditions of Dance Trust in its true colours. I sincerely hope that they have not but ultimately it is not my views that matter. "Dance On!" readers are intelligent people capable of forming their own opinions. They can judge for themselves.

Ceilidh & Old Time Dances Regular Weekly Events

Date	Town	Hall	Band	Time	Cost	Contact	Comments
Every Saturday	Fife, Largo Ward	Largo Ward Village Hall	t.b.c.	8pm -11pm No Bar	£3.50 (tea)	Door	Different bands each week.
Every Sunday	Fife, St Andrews	Boys Brigade Hall, Kinnessburn Road	Live Music	2pm-5pm	£3 (tea)	Door 01334 472 375	Strictly Ceilidh - Instruction Available
Most Sundays	Fife, Cupar	Old Parish Church	-	2pm-5pm	£3 (tea)	Door 01383 415 142	Ceilidh & Old Time
Every Tuesday	East Kilbride	Girl Guide Hall, Dundas Place	-	7.30 -10pm	£2 (tea)	Door or tel : - 01355 230 134 or 245 052 0141 334 9869 or 07050 222 173	Ceilidh & Old Time Club
Every Wednesday	Glasgow University	Student Union, University Avenue	-	7.30-10pm Bar	£4	Door (Owen & Catherine Harrison)	Dance Club
Every Thursday	Humble, East Lothian	Village Hall	George Hood	7.30-10pm	£3 B.Y.O.B.	Door (Karin Ingram)	Ceilidh, Old Time and Social Dance Club
Every Friday	Newtongrange	Morris Club	Live Music	7.30-10pm	£3/£1.50	Door (Tricia Matthews)	Ceilidh & Old Time Club
Every Saturday	Glasgow	St Andrews in Square	Live Music	7.30-9.30	£4 Bar	Door (Gracie Belle Scott)	Ceilidh & Old Time Class
Every Sunday	Midlem	Village Hall	Live Music	8pm-10pm	£1.50	Door (Annabel Oates)	Old Time Dance Class
Every Thursday	Penicuik	St Mungo's Hall	-	8pm-9.30	£2.70	Door (Annabel Oates)	Restarts 11-1-07

Ceilidh & Old Time Dances January 2007

Date	Town	Hall	Band	Time	Cost	Contact	Comments
1 st	Foulden	Village Hall	Dod Hutchison	8pm-12mn	£5 supper	Door No Bar	Info 01289 386 400
	Glencarse	Village Hall	Johnny Duncan	7.30-11.30	£t.b.a.	Door	Soft Drinks available
	Glasgow	Old Fruit Market	3 Ceilidh Bands	9pm - 3am	£25 Ticket	0141 353 8000	www.keltic-music.com
2 nd	Elgin	New Elgin Hall	Lindsay Weir	8pm-12mn	£4 Bar/Tea	01343 543 655	Pay at Door - Jolly Dancers
6 th	Newtongrange	Dean Tavern	Glenelvan	7.30-11.30	£6.50 (supper)	0131 663 6022	A & F Club Supper Dance
	Auchendinny	Glencorse Comm. Hall	Neil Hardie	7.30-11.30	£5 No bar	01721 723 468	(Near Penicuik)
7 th	Angus	Tealing	Ken Stewart	7.30-10pm	£2.50	Door	
	Arbroath	Café Project	Steven Carcary	7.30-10pm	£3 Door	01241 879 487	Old Time, Ceilidh & Set dances.
8 th	Kirkwall	St Magnus Centre	Live music	8pm	£2/£0.50	Door	Old Time, Ceilidh & Country
12 th	Irvine	Volunteer Rooms	Lindsay Weir	7.30-11.30	£6 supper	Door	Ayrshire Ceilidh Club
	Oban	McTavish's Kitchens	Graeme Mitchell	8pm-Late	Phone for ticket	01631 563 914	Oban A & F Supper Dance
13 th	Glencarse	Village Hall	Wayne Robertson	7.30-11pm	£3.50 Door	01738 860 574	Soft Drinks available
14 th	Arbroath	Café Project	George Rennie	7.30-10pm	£3 Door	01241 879 487	Old Time, Ceilidh & Set dances.
19 th	Foulden	Village Hall	Bon Accords	8pm-12mn	£5 supper	Door No Bar	Info 01289 386 400
20 th	Strathaven	Ballgreen Hall	Jimmy Lindsay	7.30-11.30	£6 supper B.Y.O.B.	01357 520 900	Avondale Ceilidh Society
	Lockerbie	Academy	Colin Dewar	7.30pm - ?	£5 (phone)	01387 810 423	Old Tyme Dance
	Glasgow	Partick Burgh Hall	Fraser McGlynn	8pm-11.30	£5 Bar	Door	Glasgow Highlanders
21 st	Montrose	Park Hotel	Marian Anderson	2pm-5pm	Door	01241 879 487	A & F Club ceilidh
	Arbroath	Café Project	Marian Anderson	7.30-10pm	£3 Door	01241 879 487	Old Time, Ceilidh & Set dances.
22 nd	Kirkwall	St Magnus Centre	Live music	8pm	£2/£0.50	Door	Old Time, Ceilidh & Country
26 th	Helensburgh	Commodore Inn	Stuart McKeown	8pm-1am	£7 (bar)	01389 841 208	Highlanders - Dance
28 th	Arbroath	Café Project	Gordon Pattullo	7.30-10pm	£3 Door	01241 879 487	Old Time, Ceilidh & Set dances.

Scottish Country Dances January 2007

Date	Town	Hall	Band	Time	Cost	Contact	Comments
	Kilmorach, Beaully	Village Hall	-	7.45pm		01463 782 496	SCD Class Every Tuesday
	Dundee	St Andrews Church	Jimmy Boal	7.30pm	£2	01382 509 103	King Street Hall Every Monday
	Dumfries	Marchmont High	John Douglas	7.30pm		01387 770 228	Every Monday
5 th	Seamill	Hydro Hotel	Nicol McLaren			01294 823 865	New Year Ball
	Helensburgh	Victoria Halls	Alan Ross	7.30pm	£2.50		Members Dance
10 th	Kirkwall	Broad Street	(Comm. Centre)	7.30pm	£2/50p	01856 873 534	Orkney Traditional Dance Assoc.
11 th	Stirling	Albert Halls	Marian Anderson	7.30pm	£5	Door	Visiting Group - Charity Dance
12 th	Paisley	Town Hall	Ian Muir Sound	7.30pm	£18.50	0141 942 6850	Glasgow RSCDS Annual Ball
13 th	Stirling	St Mary's School	D. Cunningham	7.30pm	£5	Door	Stirling Castle Group - no recaps
	Penrith	Cumberland Hall	Jean McConnachie	7pm	?	01768 881 359	Penrith SCD Club
	Lockerbie	Academy	Colin Dewar	8pm	£6	01387 810 423	Hightae SCD Club
19 th	Stirling	Albert Halls	Glencraig	7.30pm	£9	Advance Ticket	Stirling Branch Burns Supper
	Duns	Volunteer Hall	Freeland Barbour	7.30pm	£5	01361 883 048	Duns & District RSCDS
20 th	Hyde	Town Hall	Iain MacPhail	7pm	£15	0161 633 1528	RSCDS Manchester - Ball
26 th	Kelso	Ednam Village Hall	Stuart Adamson	7.30pm	£5	01573 228 514	Roxburgh, Selkirk & Peebles
	Bearsden	Public Hall	John Renton	7.30pm	£6	0141 942 4287	New Kilpatrick Charity Dance
27 th	Stirling	St Mary's School	James Coutts	7.30pm	£5	Door	Stirling Castle Group - no recaps

Ceilidh & Old Time Dances

February 2007

Date	Town	Hall	Band	Time	Cost	Contact	Comments
3 rd	Sorn	Village Hall	Ian Cruickshanks	7.30-11.30	£5 (phone)	01292 220 344	Or tel: 01560 700 219
	Newtongrange	Dean Tavern	West Telferton	7.30-11.30	£6.50 (supper)	0131 663 6022	A & F Club Supper Dance
	Auchendinny	Glencorse Comm. Hall	Webster Craig	7.30-11.30	£5 No bar	01721 723 468	(Near Penicuik)
4 th	Angus	Tealing	Johnny Duncan	7.30-10pm	£2.50	Door	
5 th	Kirkwall	St Magnus Centre	Live music	8pm	£2/£0.50	Door	Old Time, Ceilidh & Country
9 th	Lockerbie	Town Hall	Archie MacVicar Trio	8pm-12mn	£5 (supper) (T) B.Y.O.B.	01576 610 272 01576 202 665	Lockerbie A & F Club Dance - Ticket only
	Foulden	Village Hall	Jock Borthwick	8pm-12mn	£5 No bar	Door	Tel:- 01289 386 400
	Irvine	Volunteer Rooms	Donnie & Diane	7.30-11.30	£6 supper	Door	Ayrshire Ceilidh Club
10 th	Strathaven	Ballgreen Hall	Marian Anderson	7.30-11.30	£6 supper B.Y.O.B.	01357 520900	Avondale Ceilidh Society
	Glencarse	Village Hall	George Rennie	7.30-11pm	£3.50 Door	01738 860 574	Soft Drinks available
15 th	Glasgow	Trades Hall	Scotland's Ceilidh	7.30-11pm	£15 Buffet	0141 948 1170	FPA Charity Dance
17 th	East Kilbride	Calderwood Hall	Dave Husband Sound	7.30-11.30	£6 supper	Door - B.Y.O.B.	Highlanders
	Glasgow	Partick Burgh Hall	Lex Keith	8pm-11.30	£5 Bar	Door	Glasgow Highlanders
18 th	Montrose	Park Hotel	Marian Anderson	2pm-5pm	Door	01241 879 487	A & F Club ceilidh
19 th	Kirkwall	St Magnus Centre	Live music	8pm	£2/£0.50	Door	Old Time, Ceilidh & Country
24 th	Pumpherstoun	Village Hall	Gordon Pattullo	7.30-11.30	£? (supper)	01506 205 051	BYOB

Scottish Country Dances

February 2007

Date	Town	Hall	Band	Time	Cost	Contact	Comments
Kilmorach, Beaulay		Village Hall	-	7.45pm		01463 782 496	SCD Class Every Tuesday
Dundee		St Andrews Church	Jimmy Boal	7.30pm	£2	01382 509 103	King Street Hall Every Monday
Dumfries		Marchmont High	John Douglas	7.30pm		01387 770 228	Every Monday
2 nd	Peebles	Burgh Hall	Bill Richardson	7.30pm	£5	01896 833 508	Roxburgh, Selkirk & Peebles
7 th	Kirkwall	Broad Street	(Comm. Centre)	7.30pm	£2/50p	01856 873 534	Orkney Traditional Dance Assoc.
9 th	Jedburgh	Kenmore Hall	Marian Anderson	7.30pm	£5	01835 830 267	Roxburgh, Selkirk & Peebles
10 th	London (N.E.)	Woodford	Craigievar	7.30pm	Supper	020 8504 1632	See website www.efsa.org.uk
	Stirling	St Mary's School	Gordon Shand	7.30pm	£5	Door	Stirling Castle Group - no recaps
	Dundee	St Andrews Church	Maple Leaf	7.30pm	£4	01382 509 103	Charity Dance - [incl. refreshments]
16 th	Helensburgh	Victoria Halls	Neil Copland	8pm	£7	01436 673 521	Charity Dance
	Duns	Volunteer Hall	Stuart Adamson	7.30pm	£5	01361 883 048	Duns & District RSCDS
	Hamilton	Eddlewood Hall	George Stirrat	7.30pm	£6	01357 520 917	Hamilton & Clydesdale RSCDS
	Dumfries	High School	Marian Anderson	7.30pm	?	01387 265 815	Dumfries RSCDS
17 th	Dalbeattie	Town Hall	Roy Hendrie	7.30pm	£7	01556 611 784	Kippford CD Group
	Moffat	Town Hall	Ian Slater	?	£5	01943 874 757	Advance Ticket - Bring & share supper
23 rd	Aberfoyle	Rob Roy Motel	Dumgoyne	7pm	£32.50	01505 614 454	Glasgow Branch Dinner Dance
24 th	Stirling	St Mary's School	Nicol McLaren	7.30pm	£5	Door	Stirling Castle Group - no recaps
	Manchester	Levenshulme High	t.b.a.	7.30pm	£6	0161 633 1528	Nice 'n' Easy Dance - Faith Supper



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 e-mail your views to me or write to the letters page.

If you would like your site reviewed please e-mail the link to me at sue@suepetyt.me.uk



Sound Dance Club

www.sounddanceclub.co.uk

If the website is a reflection of the club, then they have a lot of fun in Lerwick! The aim of the club is "to promote Scottish & Shetland dancing in social activities to benefit inhabitants locally and throughout Shetland and also to interact with other Dance Clubs to foster & encourage the art of dancing".

On the Home Page there is an introduction from the Chairman, creditably short, which welcomes new members, and then there is a heading "Latest News" and links to items which have been most recently updated. The first of these is a list of dances which the club members know. This is a really good idea for anyone who was thinking of visiting or joining as you know which dances to swot up on in advance, or find out how to do if you're not sure.

In this section there are also links to information on the dates for club nights and dances in 2007, as well as links to photographs of events.

The Contact Us page has the names, phone numbers and e-mail addresses of the officers of the committee and the names of other committee members and the About Us page contains a copy of the constitution.

The Multimedia page is fun. There are photographs of events the group have taken part in and these are very well displayed and easy to click through and there are also some video clips. These are good quality and don't take too long to download (assuming you have Broadband) and they really give a flavour of the atmosphere at the dancing.

Overall this is good site for providing information and gives a welcoming feel, it is well structured and straightforward, well worth a visit, and I expect that goes for the club as well!

www.australian-heritage-dance.com

Australian Bush, Colonial & Traditional Dances

While I was browsing the web I came across this site and was fascinated by a dance which had the title "Around the House and Mind the Dresser", I just had to investigate further.

This site is headed, "Australian Bush, Colonial & Traditional Dances" and says that the majority of the dances were folk dances from Great Britain and Europe, while the others were from the Australian tradition. I am sure that Finlay Forbes will be able to explain to us what an Australian traditional dance might be (I would have said Aboriginal), but there are Quadrilles, Jigs and Reels, some familiar and some not so familiar and the instructions are clear so it is quite possible to learn them.

The site is slightly annoying in one respect in that when you click to open a new page it almost always opens in a new window, which meant I had about 10 windows open by the time I had finished looking at the site, but that didn't detract from the interesting dances and the instructions.

There is the country dance Australian Ladies and a dance called Jubilee Jig which is nothing like the country dance of the same name as well as circle and couple dances including the St Bernard's Waltz, the Frangipani Waltz and the Evening Three Step (yes it does say Evening) which bears a striking resemblance to another dance I know!! A few have clips of music or copies of the musical score.

There is a links page which is well organised into categories and is mainly focussed on Australian music and dance sites. There are some international links to The English Folk Dance and Song Society, Palmers Pocket Playford and the Vintage Music and Dance Society. Interestingly the RSCDS is not listed.

I shall expect to see some of these on the dance floor soon!!

Golden Years' Waltz

This dance was devised and arranged by David Robinson in February 2004 to commemorate the Golden Wedding of Alastair and Dolly Moir of Buckie being celebrated in September 2004.

Time: 3/4

Tempo: 44 bpm

Commencing position: Man facing, lady backing wall in double hold, hands raised to shoulder height, half extended. Man's steps shown, lady normal opposite except where stated.

	Count	Bars
Pas de Valse rearward, balance back, pas de valse,, balance forward		
LF back, RF back, close LF to RF 3 rd position front	1,2,3	1
RF back, close LF to RF 3 rd position front ww	1,2,3	1
LF forward, RF forward, close LF to RF 3 rd position rear	1,2,3	1
RF forward, close LF to RF 3 rd position rear ww (assuming normal ballroom hold)	1,2,3	1
Rotary Natural Turn, Pas de Valse,, Pas Glissade, Pas Glissade		
Rotary Natural Waltz turn	1,2,3	1
RF forward along LOD, LF forward diagonal to centre, close LF to RF turning to face wall and partner in double hold	1,2,3	1
LF side along LOD, close RF to LF 3 rd position front	1,2,3	1
LF side along LOD, close RF to LF 3 rd position front	1,2,3	1
Pas de Valse rearward, balance back, pas de valse,, balance forward		
LF back, RF back, close LF to RF 3 rd position front	1,2,3	1
RF back, close LF to RF 3 rd position front ww	1,2,3	1
LF forward, RF forward, close LF to RF 3 rd position rear	1,2,3	1
RF forward, close LF to RF 3 rd position front ww turning to face LOD in promenade position (Lady's LH in man's RH at shoulder height)	1,2,3	1
Solo Progressive Reverse turn, Solo Rotary Reverse turn, Pas Glissade, Pas Glissade		
(releasing hold) Progressive Reverse turn (Lady Progressive Natural turn)	1,2,3	1
Rotary Reverse turn (Lady Rotary Natural turn) to finish in double hold facing partner and wall	1,2,3	1
LF side along LOD, close RF to LF 3 rd position front	1,2,3	1
LF side along LOD, close RF to LF 3 rd position front (to finish in promenade position in double hold, hands held at shoulder height)	1,2,3	1
Step, Cross, Pas Glissade, Step, Point		
(Raise Right hand, retaining double hold) LF along LOD in promenade position	1,2,3	1
RF along LOD across LF in promenade position	1,2,3	1
LF side along LOD, close RF to LF in 3 rd position front	1,2,3	1
LF side along LOD lowering RH and raising LH turning head to face against LOD, Point RF against LOD	1,2,3	1
Step, Cross, Pas Glissade, Step, Point		
RF against LOD in promenade position	1,2,3	1
LF against LOD across RF in counter promenade position	1,2,3	1
RF side against LOD, close LF to RF in 3 rd position front	1,2,3	1
RF side against LOD, point LF along LOD (release LH hold and turn to face LOD in promenade position)	1,2,3	1
Solo Progressive Reverse turn, Solo Rotary Reverse turn, Pas Glissade, Pas Glissade		
(releasing hold) Progressive Reverse turn (Lady Progressive Natural turn)	1,2,3	1
Rotary Reverse turn (Lady Rotary Natural turn) to finish in double hold facing partner and wall	1,2,3	1
LF side along LOD, close RF to LF 3 rd position front	1,2,3	1
LF side along LOD, close RF to LF 3 rd position front (resume ballroom hold)	1,2,3	1
Rotary Natural Turn, Pas de Valse,, Pas Glissade, Pas Glissade		
Rotary Natural Waltz turn	1,2,3	1
RF forward along LOD, LF forward diagonal to centre, close LF to RF turning to face wall and partner in double hold	1,2,3	1
LF side along LOD, close RF to LF 3 rd position front	1,2,3	1
LF side along LOD, close RF to LF 3 rd position front	1,2,3	1

Carlaverock Castle

A 32 bar reel for three couples in a four couple set.

Music: Any good set of laid back reels with a lilt to them, played not too fast, such as *Lady Dumfries* by Muriel Johnstone's Band on "A Dancer's Miscellany IV".

Devised by Peter M. Price, November 26, 2006.

Bars

1 - 2 1st couple set,

3 - 6 1st woman casts off around 2nd woman and dances across the set to face out in 2nd man's place – 1st man follows partner – he crosses the set to top place ladies' side and casts off around 2nd woman to 2nd woman's place. 2nd couple steps up on Bars 5-6.

7 - 8 1st man with 3rd woman, 1st woman with 3rd man, turn with the left hand once round.

9 -16 Reels of three on the sides:

To begin – 1st man 2nd woman, and 1st woman 2nd man pass right shoulders. 1st woman finish facing out in 2nd place on the men's side.

17-20 1st woman, followed by partner, casts up around 2nd man and then dances down the middle to finish between 3rd couple (and begins to pull right shoulder back).

21-24 1st couple turn with right hands once and a quarter round to face first corners.

Corners Pass & Turn:

25-28 1st couple dance right shoulders round 1st corner positions and pass right shoulders in the middle to face 2nd corner positions as 1st corners dance in (1 bar), turn with right hands (1 bar) and dance back out to place (2 bars).

29-32 1st couple dance right shoulders round 2nd corner positions and passing right shoulders, cross back to 2nd place own sides as 2nd corners dance in (1 bar), turn with right hands (1 bar), and dance out to place (2 bars).

Repeat, having passed a couple

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Morino VII

32 bar Reels

Dance for 2-couple sets with couple facing couple, lady on the right. Sets can either be arranged around the room or in lines up and down the hall, whichever fits the dance floor better.

Written for the wedding of Lindsay Weir and Colin Garvin on 2nd September, 2006, and written in their wedding book at the reception near Inverness. Lindsay and Colin are both accordionists. Lindsay plays a Hohner Gola and Colin plays that workhorse of the Scottish band scene, the Morino V. Morino V + II = Morino VII – the number of hands in the grand chain.

Bars

1-4 Joining hands with partner, advance and retire towards opposite.

5-8 Couples change places, one couple making an arch and the other dancing underneath.

9-12 Joining nearer hands with opposite, advance and retire towards partner.

13-16 Change places with partners, one couple making an arch and other dancing underneath.

17-24 Giving right hand to the same person to start, dance **seven** hands of grand chain around the room, dancing along the line parallel to partner. If the sets are arranged in lines, cross over with partner when reaching the end of the line and start down the other side.

25-32 Join hands with partner and the last person in the chain, circle four hands round and back.

Repeat ad lib

© Ian Brockbank September 2006



Colin Garvin & Lindsay Weir

Mississippi Hot Dog Reel

16 Bar Reel (4/4)

Couples Dance

Gay Gordons Hold

Dance devised by Jessie Stuart

Bars

1-2 Both set first to the left, then to the right (pas de Basque steps).

3-4 Walk forwards for four steps.

5-6 Set to the right, then to the left.

7-8 Walk forwards for four steps.

9-12 Retaining Gay Gordons hold, both do a half turn to the right so that the man is directly behind the lady, holding both hands now at shoulder height and both facing the wall. Both take two steps to the left and then two to the right.

13-16 Couple let go of right hands, but retain left hand hold. They raise left hands above head height and lady turns to face man. They put their right arms around their partner's waist and birl.

These sixteen bars are repeated for the duration of the music.

The Bluebell Polka

2/4 Tempo Polka

Original: The Bluebell Polka

Formations: Couples facing line of dance, lady on man's right, nearer hands joined.

Bars

1 Starting with outside foot, step, hop, step, hop.

2 Lady moves round in front of man to end up on his left (using step hop).

3 Bar 1 is repeated.

4 Lady moves round to face partner (he is still facing line of dance).

5-6 With both hands joined couples take four steps towards line of dance (lady moving backwards).

7-8 In ballroom hold, couple polka (step, hop) together.

The Civil Engineer

4 x 32 Bar Reel

Danced devised by Campbell Hunter, Chairman RSCDS Falkirk Branch and dedicated to Gordon Shand, band leader and civil engineer.

Bars

1-8 1st man dances in towards his own partner pulling back his left shoulder and casting down behind the men's line his partner follows him in tandem, he then dances up the middle from 4th place to meet 4th lady who is dancing down to meet him.

Whilst 4th lady dances in towards her own partner before pulling her left shoulder back and casting up behind the ladies' line and her partner follows her in tandem, she then dances down the middle from 1st place to meet the 1st man who is dancing up to meet her.

1st lady and 4th man stand still on bars 1 and 2 before following their partner in tandem.

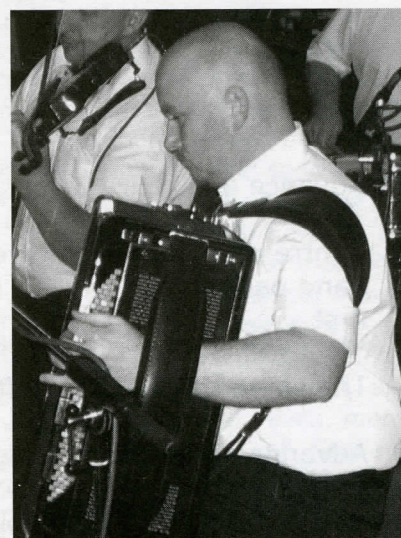
9-16 1st man with 4th lady in promenade hold, dance a promenade reel of three with 2nd and 3rd men, they begin by passing 2nd man with the right shoulder whilst 4th man and 1st lady dance a promenade reel with 2nd and 3rd ladies (they start by passing right shoulder with 3rd lady). On bar 16 the promenading couples meet and change partners.

17-24 1st couple dance a promenade reel of three with 2nd and 3rd men and 4th couple dance a promenade reel of three with 3rd and 2nd ladies. On Bar 23 the 4th man swings his partner across from his right to his left side and the promenaders finish in the middle of the set, 4th couple facing the 1st, the order 2413.

25-32 4th and 1st couples dance four hands across with the right hand and back with the left.

Repeat from new places.

© Campbell Hunter



Gordon Shand

The Twelve Reel

64 Bar Reels or Jigs

**Four men, each with two partners,
standing in a square.**

Bars

1-4 Head trios advance and retire

5-8 Head trios advance and ladies change with opposites so as to retire with opposite men.

9-16 Side trios repeat Bars 1-8.

17-32 Bars 1-16 are repeated back to places.

33-36 Head men take right hand partners and dance round inside (anti-clockwise).

37-40 Head men repeat Bars 33-36 with left hand partners.

41-48 Side Trios repeat Bars 33-40.

49-56 Each dancer links arms with both partners and clasps own hands in front, thus the trios form four "baskets", and pivot to the left for a count of sixteen.

57-64 All twelve join hands and circle left for a count of sixteen.

Dundee Reel

*From The Border Dance Book, collected by
Ion C.B. Jamieson. This dance is growing in
popularity once again.*

40 Bar Jigs (Original: Bonnie Dundee)

4 Couple Longways Set

Bars

1-8 Men dance reel of three on the side, while ladies do the same (1 & 2 passing right shoulders to start).

9-16 Couples 1, 2 & 3 dance six hands across then back.

17-24 Leading couple dance down the middle and back, lady turning under man's raised arm to face 1st corner.

25-28 Set and turn 1st corner (with both hands)

29-32 Set and turn 2nd corner.

33-36 From second place, wrong side, holding hands on the side, couples 1, 2 & 3 advance and retire.

37-40 Leading couple birl partner back to own side, second place and repeat dance from there.

Highland Reel

**Set of six (3+3)
Three facing three around the room**

32 Bar Reels

Bars

1-8 Advance and retire twice.

9-16 Centre person in each three dances reel of three with the dancers to his right (his right hand partner and the left hand dancer of the opposite three) passing left shoulders first.

17-24 The same threes circle left for eight and back for eight.

25-28 Advance and retire (in original threes).

29-32 Sideslip to the right for four and then diagonally forward left for four to progress.

What My Scottish Heritage Means to Me

By James Mungall

Since I can remember: I have worn a kilt, attended Highland games, listened to bagpipes, and pined over basket hilted broadswords. I was raised around a culture dedicated to a Scotland I had never seen, but loved all the same. I grew into a secondary culture that was foreign to most of my peers, to whom it had to be explained numerous times, "a kilt is not a skirt". And when they would inevitably ask me, why I did these things, my answer has always been the same, "Because I'm Scottish."

When I was seven years old, I became involved in the Scottish Country Dance group sponsored by the Caledonian Society of Baton Rouge. For about the next three and a half years, I was active in public and private dance demonstrations at such events as: Robert Burns suppers, Celtic Nations festivals, International Heritage festivals and Highland games, among others. Soon after that time however, I left the Scottish dance group and even ceased to attend Scottish and Celtic functions. I fell into a state of what I consider now to be a rebellion against my heritage. I no longer owned any

kilt that fit me, and even said that I would not wear one again. I wanted to be like my peers, I wanted to be a cookie-cutter product of American pop culture. That product did not include room for being actively Scottish. It was no longer cool to wear a kilt. Thus, for a time, I fell out of the habit of attending Scottish events, dancing Scottish dances, attempting Scottish games, and enjoying Scottish music. Over time, however, the acquired apprehension slowly began to subside. During my first year of college, my father asked me to come to a Burns Night Supper, and, for some reason, I desperately wanted to go, but I refused to go without a kilt. So, for Christmas, my grandmother took in one of my father's kilts and it was gifted to me. It felt right to have a kilt on again. It felt as though something fell into place that had long been removed. I attended the Burns Supper, and slowly, my journey back into the fold of the American-Scottish culture had begun.

There were intermediate steps back into the culture that was so familiar in my youth: I began learning Scottish and Celtic instruments such as the bodhran and penny whistle, attending Scottish Highland Games, but none was so great a step to me as returning to the Scottish Country Dance group. As active membership in that during my youth was the peak of my involvement in the Scottish culture, I feel as though I am slowly gaining back what I had foolishly thought to forsake. It surprised me, how quickly I remembered every dance step, and could execute it as I could when I was younger. But it frustrated me how I'd forgotten all of the dances. That's the way it feels entering back into the culture of my fathers. Much of it comes so naturally, as if it'd be imbedded in me forever, but I've forgotten so much else that I have to relearn. But I am relearning the dances, remembering how to properly put on flashes and remembering to wear a kilt pin at all. I recall even forgetting to wear a sporran altogether, and when, after being reminded to wear one, my frustration with the proper position that it should be worn.

Now it's fun to tell my peers that I own a kilt, one that I actually wear. I still get the reactions I got in grade school sometimes: giggles, laughter, raised eyebrows. But I understand something now that I didn't before.



My heritage is a part of who I am, whether I choose to acknowledge it or not. The kilt is a tradition of my heritage, the dancing is a tradition of my heritage, the pipes, the tartans, the stories, the games, they're all traditions of my heritage. Each culture has its own traditions, and some people know how their traditions got started, and others do not. It is, however, inherent in them. Traditions, that is how one finds his or her own identity. I have found mine, in part, in kilts, dances, bagpipes, basket hilts, and the Saint Andrew's cross. My Scottish heritage, to me, is identity. It is part of being of a people who are like me, who share something with me that others don't. It is about being something different and special, but being something different and special together.

Scotland is a land I've never seen, but one to which I owe an allegiance, one that I love. Scotland may always be a far away place, although one day, I hope to see it. However, Scotland is always present in the traditions: the kilt, the tartan, and the pipes. Scotland is even more present in the people of Scotland and their descendants, of which I am one.

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Hobson's Choice

**Dances with Stags
Or
Country Dance can
get you into so much
trouble!**

So there I was, walking across Scotland, actually in the middle of Rannoch Moor exactly twelve miles from absolutely anywhere. The grey sky was dropping grey globules through the grey air onto grey rocks scattered among grey vegetation. An almost invisible grey heron perched high in a rowan could see a party of little Hobbitses plodding compulsively to Mordor (well, to the blessed relief of a billet for the night in Kingshouse Hotel!). Much of the grey precipitation seemed to home in on the exposed necks and faces of the cagouled fools, however much they bent their heads farther towards the ground! Greyly, greasily, it slimed all over them and dragged the cold of mid October through to their very bones. So there I was with a happy group, the only male in a gaggle of very fit and game ladies. I really don't know where she who must be obeyed finds these holidays! Our beloved leader had turned back earlier, he said, to go and help his wife drive the bus to meet us at the far end.

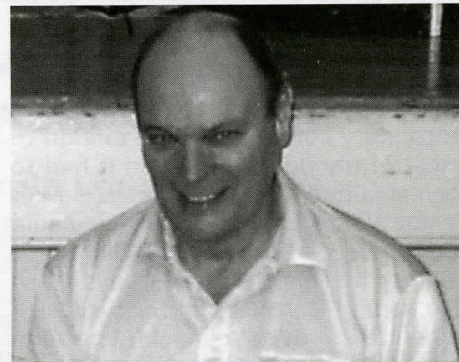
The track was clear and firm at least, so no chance of getting lost, you would think. But every time we passed a hump or hollow or large rock or tree, one or other of the ladies would lose her way and start drifting off round the wrong side of it. I had a full time job darting after them and saying, "Come on ladies stick to the path or we

might get lost". Only to hear one of them mutter, "Chance would be a fine thing".

I will never understand women however long I live!

Then to cap it all the grey mist came down and swirled around us. Thinking it time to cheer up a bit and show how much I was enjoying it all I launched into "Sure by Tummel and Loch Rannoch and Lochaber I will go, By heather tracks wi' Heaven in their wiles." To be greeted by "Oh for Heavens sake!" or "Well go then!" or even "Shut up, shut up, shut up!" So I sulked for a couple of miles then tried again with a philosophical observation along the lines "Well it could be worse, just think if God had put our noses the other way up, we'd all be drowning now!" Our most fearsome Amazon stopped, turned to me and said, "If you don't shut up for just one minute you will personally experience the anatomical plaiting I learned in Brownies." As I pondered whether this was a pleasantry or not, my attention was caught by what seemed to be a mobile midden with large branches sticking out of it. No! It was that most noble of creatures, a stag! Steaming greyly in the grey mist, barely fifty metres away, or about eight stag-bounds in old measure. Here was the chance of a lifetime, an expert witness! I have always personally thought that the raised arms of Highland dancing with thumb to middle finger was most likely to have originated in the "clicking" for attention of my primary school background rather than some febrile imitation of stags' antlers! So facing this reeking monarch I raised my arms in the approved 3rd position and

By George Hobson



gently waved them up and down a little. An immediate response!

He took a step forward, thrust out his muzzle and laid his antlers back; I copied this as best I could.

He pawed the ground flinging up some mud, I mirrored him with a quick strathspey setting step, spattering my ladies with water.

He levered forward scraping with both front legs to throw great gobbets of peat all over his flanks, I responded with a boot-laden rocking-step raising very satisfactory curtains of mud.

He raked the moss with his antlers and festooned his withers and haunches with it, I used my "antlers" as best I could to scrape up some moss and throw it over my shoulders.

He puffed out his already monstrously thick neck, scattered copious ropes of saliva and mucus all over his chest; his little willie twitched and squirted jets of urine all over his belly.....!?!.... I picked up some more moss and threw it over my shoulder.

If a stag can be said to sneer then this one surely did! I was clearly a wimp and he started to turn away. I had to do something for my self-respect; so starting at the deepest pitch

I could manage I put down the ultimate challenge.

Errrrrrruuuuuuuurrrk Huh!
Huh! Huh!

That seemed to do the trick, he spun to face me, and threw back **the word** at double volume and with a question mark, his panicking hinds scuttled close around him, my panicking hinds scuttled close about me. A separate bit of my mind thought "Stupid women! If he charged now he'd get the lot of you. Hide anywhere you like, but not behind me!"

But I was mistaken, they weren't hiding, six pairs of amazingly strong hands seized me, and dragged me away with me bellowing "Let me go, I can take him anytime, I've got him rattled." But they hissed at me "Just shut up! He's a giant great stag, and you're just a daft wee man."

As they got me safely round the curve of the hill, I was just about to give them a piece of my mind when the ghillie and his stalker loomed on the path, bagged rifles slung at their backs. They would understand these manly things at least! So I hurried towards them with a hearty greeting and started "You'll never believe what just..." But not even listening he interrupted me with:

"Are you the tree-hugging English loons that have been scaring and scattering the herd we're after from here to Kingdom Come?"

And not even waiting for a response went on

"We've been stalking this lot all day trying to get within 500 yards to get a decent shot. My client's paid thousands for this chance, and you silly beggars and your stupid walking could cost me my livelihood!"

His head went back, he was covered in mud and moss, his neck thickened and swelled, his mouth was foaming, he

pawed the ground, his little.... **(NO! that's enough of that! Ed.)** This chap had a serious overdose of spiritual Ugly Pills! Well that was enough for me "Stalking all day and can't get inside 500 yards? Hmm! You can't be very good at it. Tell you what, give me one of your wee-bittie brass cartridges and a little hammer, and I'll just go back and lift his tail and pop it in and give it a tap and blow his brains from here to breakfast if that'll suit you?"

Was he pleased? Well I don't know really because the same unearthly strong six pairs of hands were dragging me off again, but I don't know how he expected to get any deer with that amount of racket he was raising.

The rest of our journey to Kingshouse was accomplished with me at the centre of a secure and silent circle, but it was a circle that melted as if by magic as soon as we arrived in civilisation, to be replaced by a sight I have never seen before, six grown-up sensible

ladies sprinting for all they were worth to end jammed tight and struggling in the door of the toilet.

There was just one last puzzle in that there must have been another group in the hotel, even though I never tracked them down, because as I walked past an open window I heard female voices discussing their day, and one of them said, "If he ever leaves me out on the moor again with that idiot, I'll swing for him!" and a second strangely familiar voice said "At least you don't have to put up with him every day." Some women are so unlucky in their partners!

Any resemblance between any of the above and anything that actually ever happened anywhere, is purely a coincidence caused by my virtual reality intruding on other people's real virtue.



The Dancie

I have just been enjoying the Perth and Kinross Day of Dance in the Bell's Sports Hall in Perth. It was a very enjoyable day, as all the children in the Glenfarg party both behaved and danced very well. The programme was reasonably well chosen, but one dance I found set me off on one of my favourite hobby-horses.

It was "A Reel for Jeannie", and the particular bit of it was the clapping on bars 25-28. Eight claps, with nothing else going on at all. I am told by lady teachers that this is popular with their children, but I wonder if they are referring to girls, or mainly girls, when they say children.

In my view it is a very wimpish thing to ask boys to do, I suppose because I find that I feel less than happy to be doing it. Acting on the principal that I don't ask people to do things I wouldn't do myself, I offered the boys the option of high-cutting for four bars. Partly also, this was aimed at giving them something to do in the middle of an Eightsome Reel. They were unanimous in choosing cutting, and the girls decided to do that, too. I would point out that we are talking about single cuts here, not the full Monty of double cutting.

May I float the idea that if you wish to encourage boys to dance, giving them things that are "girly" to do is not going to be helpful.

Having made the one small alteration, the dance was very popular, to the extent that it showed so much that a couple of spectators commented on how the children seemed to enjoy my alteration. They certainly gave it lalady, and it showed both in their movements and in their facial expressions.

I accept the converse is also a possibility, that I am aiming to please the boys more than the girls, but I think that will need to be addressed when the balance swings the other way, and there



are more boys than girls in the dance class.

From a more theoretical viewpoint, I observe that to my eyes, girls seem to be able to feminise movements taught in a masculine way fairly well, but it is more difficult for boys to do the reverse action.

One of the boys floored me by commenting that it was strange to meet pupils of other schools when doing the progressive round the room dances such as The Dashing White Sergeant. Yes, it was partly what the day was all about; but it would be even more strange to meet and JOIN a bunch of adults enjoying themselves by doing SCD. His idea of SCD was obviously something that you did at school with that old idiot who came and told them how to do it, and it was strange to find that others did it too. Perhaps a re-think of the basic plan of the Day of Dance is called for? I hasten to add, to go further along the way that we already go, not less.

There is a Festival of SCD, plus some Highland (including the foursome,

HOORAY) at Leeds each year, with adult teams of dancers and children's teams, but we only mix for the DWS. Perhaps there could be a movement to go a little further there, too.

Then I received my November edition of "Dance On!". I had been able to attend neither the AGM of the RSCDS nor the STDT bash (we retired folk lead such busy lives!), so I read the articles about them with interest.

It was Finlay's one that set me thinking though, and in particular his comment on "Highland Dancing being not social at all". It isn't, is it?

Neither is Ballet. I have often thought about the incredible amount of practice that wee girls do for their Ballet teachers, and the extremely small number of them who use their hard won skills in any form as adults. It is similar with Highland, though they do get to perform as children, it would seem. But what then? A percentage of them go on to teach, and the cycle continues, I suppose.

Highland Dancing was originally very significantly linked to the social scene, even in Lowland towns such as Edinburgh in the 18th Century. Dances had not just one foursome on a night's programme, but many of them, according to reports by visitors. And of course, when the Eightsome came along, it was assumed that anyone who went into the middle would be well able to perform some Highland steps. When I was a youth, Friday and Saturday night dances always had a Foursome, and it was often preceded by an Eightsome. Not a lot of that about now!

That Highland Dancing still exists is in a significant part due to the performing of it with enthusiasm by the members of the Scottish regiments. I think that one reason for this is that it was eminently



suitable for men to dance together – most dancing is designed for mixed participation. My favourite dance is the all male Foursome, and an almost extinct thing it is these days. (*Come to Hawick for the Common Riding in June and watch the Cornet's Reel that's danced at dawn by the Cornet, his Right and Left Hand Men and his Acting Father.* Ed.)

Nowadays the percentage of males in any Highland Dancing school is nil or very small, unless there is an Army connection. I think that this is in some part due to the potential male dancers having no sight of any men doing Highland Dancing in a normal environment, such as a social gathering.

I notice that Highland Dancing teachers rarely if ever take their pupils to social dancing, though they should be more than capable of joining in AND getting some extra footwork practice to boot. I suppose that it is now too late for them to see men doing Highland Dance steps at such a social event, so the idea would not help the male dancers much anyway, but I think it would be of help to the pupils of either sex.

I would also like to send my thanks to Finlay for his kind comments about me. However, I don't operate entirely on my own! There are other Historical Dancers around, quite a lot in America, in England, and in Europe, (particularly Italy, it would seem). It would be nice to meet a few more in Scotland. The comment about the richness of the heritage that has been lost is incredibly true. I have been so impressed by it that I have begun to wonder if the highest point of Western civilisation in general was in the 18th Century. I certainly think it was so for dance. I am almost as sure when considering the English language, and music, and general behaviour, and philosophy, and economics, and on and on! After all, it was the time of "The Enlightenment", and especially of the Scottish Enlightenment.

My view is that our present style of SCD, i.e. the RSCDS style, is derived from that same 18th C flowering; but much had been lost. I am coming to the view that the Duke of Atholl, Lord James, had much input into the details of the style fixed upon in the early days of the Society. He should have been listened to, as he was well tutored in both Highland and social (aka Country) dancing. This latter was, however, not regarded as anything different from any other Country Dancing, and the style would be "as danced in the highest circles in Paris" or London or anywhere you choose as worthy of emulation. The idea was to be international, not particularly Scottish, but certainly to be the best. Perhaps the nearest thing these days is the Olympic Games, where the style of something is not at all national. New ideas, such as the Fosbury Flop, could come in to popularity, but they were

never regarded as the property of any one nation.

The idea of Scottish Country Dancing being different from English, or all others was hot in the early years of the 20th C, so it had to be differentiated off, and this was by stressing the local characteristics. So it was still "as done by the highest circles", but in Edinburgh, not Paris, and Highland, (and even Lowland), influences were to be encouraged. Och Aye, so they were.

The local enthusiasm for Strathspeys was a "good thing", and putting a Highland style jeté into the pas de Basque was also desirable. Doing all travelling by the use of skip change, rather than a rhythmic walk, is a bit of a challenge for the older dancers, though quite in keeping with the vigour of the youthful Country Dancer in Scotland. Lord James's Highland Dancing ability was obviously of great significance, and a great help to those enthusiastic dancers of the rather esoteric and old fashioned dancing that the infant RSCDS was trying to rescue from oblivion.

So I don't think that it is quite fair to say that RSCDS style is not "a living extension of that age", as it is a very reasonable picture of the local variations that would have been noticeable to foreigners, much as a local accent would in the language. They would have been outwith the ken of the visitors.

What the RSCDS has done since then is, of course, a different thing! I don't like the loss of all the 3/4, 9/8, and 3/2 tempos, and the idea that technique should be quite as restricted as it is. It is very pleasing to see the Thistle Dancers' Waltz being produced, stimulated by that magnificent "Rawlin's Cross" music. It is a good example of the losses that I am moaning about. Why can't the bands play at that speed for Waltz Country Dance? They go at such a belt that the enjoyment of that dance is totally lost to me. I hate it. But when Linda Gaul slowed the (recorded) music right down recently in Perth, (to something of a dirge-like sound it is true), dancing it was a delight once again.

Following on from Karin's article on Page 4...

I do have one or two slight quibbles. First was the bit about it not being learned. You have just had an article on the dancing masters, so what about that aspect? They taught top of the line style, to all and sundry, the latter being the nobility of course! Dancie Reid was our local man, and I am told that he was very strict, and also that he was very proud of teaching the top layers of society as well as the local villagers.

The dancing masters had been around for a very long time; Burns was taught by one such, with lessons in a room that is now Nat Trust property – and it was quite a small room, rather than a Village Hall. The ones featured in "Dance On!"

were just the last of a long line. Then it was taken over by Women! – and has never been the same since!

(*Point taken, Dancie, but I was talking about the dancers in these communities that you see nowadays. Their dance style isn't at all like that taught by the dancing masters. I suspect that it existed before, during and after their tuition! K.*)

Reelers seem to me to dance in the style of the 1920s or 30s, about the heyday of the late Queen Mum or a bit earlier, but why or where it came from I am not so sure. I suspect that it was a case of the popular style of the day influencing them, but why that process didn't continue I don't know.

Ceilidh Dancing is just English Barn Dancing as it always has been, not too much emphasis on technique, and plenty of enthusiasm. I note with interest a lot of dances have been renamed, such as Orcadian Ninepin, which was in the English cannon from way back just as Ninepin. The Northumbrians had their own style, and particular footwork, which you have probably met, the rant step, but otherwise it is/was still the same thing. (*I love the rant step, as both a setting and travelling step – do you think we could introduce it into SCD? K.*) Without the influence of the dancing masters, and therefore of Baroque style (latterly French) and technique, and the Highland influence, with its technique, which is what the RSCDS put in to SCD, you have the basic English style as received down the years. It is a bit like the language really!





Dance On!

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Letters

Dear Karin

I feel I must reply to the letter in the October issue of "Dance On!" about the dancing in St Andrews on a Sunday afternoon. We have been attending this "class" for over a year, (our friends for over three years) having been asked by the demonstrators if we'd like to go, and in that time it has always been a teaching class where we have learned a lot of new dances – e.g. Billy Jean Swing, On Leave Foxtrot, Winfield Quickstep, Rhumba One, Rhumba Rosalee, Braveheart Swing, Sindy Swing, Georgella Blues, Festival Glide, Tango Serida, Mayfair Quickstep, Silver Wedding Waltz and many more – not exactly ceilidh dances. The class has obviously evolved into a teaching class to meet the needs of those attending.

On the Sunday in question, the demonstrators, after the first dance, asked the regular dancers to go into the middle of the large circle, with the students all around. As the students could now see the dance from all directions, they had someone to follow, and we all helped them out, by giving directions as we went. We did NOT "keep to ourselves" as stated in the letter, but as you can imagine, 30 dancers mixed in among 100+ students (the dancers all being over 50), would have left the students with no-one to follow – with that number of people, they could not have watched the couple in front or anywhere else, and would have found it impossible to learn ANY dances easily.

They were well behaved, once they got the message to stop talking while the demonstrators were giving instructions for the dance, and a good time was had by all.

To say the demonstrators have a problem with young people is totally wrong. In the past year, about a dozen students have come to the class (in twos and threes, and never the same ones twice) and have all, without exception, been welcomed to the dances by name, helped by all the class, and been invited back any time. Despite this, none ever came again.

The students were not "suddenly asked to leave". Our demonstrators explained that the regular dancers were learning a new dance (Saunter Together), which is not one for beginners, and would appreciate having the last half-hour to continue learning this dance. There were another couple of dances for the students before they left. The writer states that the students had to leave without their *advertised refreshments*. Well, to suddenly cater for over 130 instead of the usual 40, in the usual 15 minutes is virtually impossible. They also were not charged the *advertised* £3 per head which some of the regular dancers were charged.

I spoke to the writer (she phoned to thank us for our help – despite being among the ones who she said *kept to ourselves*, by dancing solely in the centre) and in one sentence she said she DIDN'T put the notice in the Freshers' programme, and in the next, that she didn't expect so many to turn up. Why did she expect ANY if it wasn't she who put the notice in? After all, it was only on odd occasions that any students did come.

The demonstrators had no intention of starting another group anywhere; it was the regular dancers themselves, almost without exception, who ASKED them to, because we were going to the St Andrews dancing to learn new dances. The fact that the majority of the people who went to St Andrews now go to the new class speaks for itself.

Yours sincerely,
Helen Smith

Kirkpatrick Fleming SCD Club

Club of the Month



The group meets on Thursday evenings from 7.00-9.00 in The Victoria Hall, Kirkpatrick Fleming. All abilities are welcome. (They don't always dress like this – it was their Christmas party!

All photographs

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33rd ANNUAL ACCORDION and FIDDLE CHAMPIONSHIPS

SATURDAY 3 MARCH 2007 at 9.45 a.m. in BRUNTON HALL, MUSSELBURGH

Admission: Adults £4.00

Children (under 16): £2.50

Adjudicators

Classical	Roberto Enzo and Alan Kitchen
Fiddle	Judi Nicolson, Graham Reid and Tom Lapsley
Traditional	Bill Black, Simon Howie and David Cunningham Jnr
Rhythm	Mabel Gray

Composers

Accordion	Iain Peterson
Fiddle	The Gows

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6.45 p.m. to 8.15 p.m. in BRUNTON HALL, MUSSELBURGH

Tickets: Adults £3.50

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9.00 p.m. to 12.30a.m. in BRUNTON HALL, MUSSELBURGH TO
IAN HUTSON AND HIS SCOTTISH DANCE BAND

Tickets: Adults £6.00

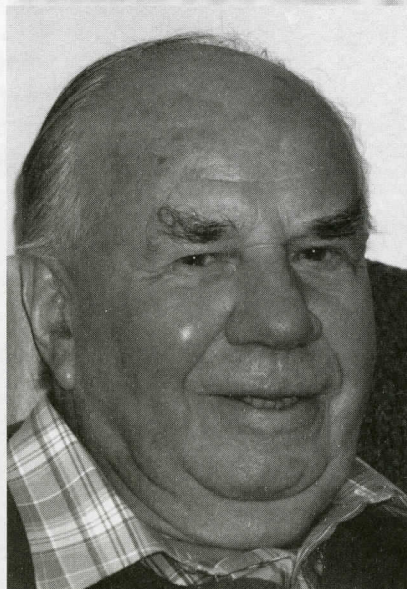
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Galashiels Scottish Country Dance Club

80th Anniversary Ball

The Club held a Ball in the Volunteer Hall, Galashiels on Friday 29th September, 2006 to mark eighty years of continuous dancing. The Club was formed by the late John Duthie, headmaster of the Burgh School in Galashiels, in 1926 to give the people of Galashiels something to do during the depression at minimal cost. At that time there was no charge for the use of school halls and as he had his wife Netta playing the piano and the local milkman Walter Brydon on the fiddle there was no expense there either. In total Mr Duthie taught the class for thirty-seven years. He was a strict disciplinarian and respected by his class. Latterly he became blind, and it was thanks to his daughter Joan who helped him prepare the classes that he was able to continue so long teaching. When he decided to retire he asked Mrs Nen McKiven to take over and she taught for twenty-five years.



Wat & Nancy Duthie



Ann Naismith



John & Netta Duthie



compiled by our present teacher Dr Lyn Bryce. Each of the five teachers was represented in the dance programme and Lyn enlightened those present of their time with the club and of who had composed the dances. One of the dances she devised for Ann Naismith, who has been a Scottish Country Dance teacher for over sixty years and has seen all ages through her hands. About one hundred and fifty dancers enjoyed dancing to the excellent music of Marian Anderson's Band (and nearly all were there to the finish). It was a very happy evening, and if we can use a pun "We had a Ball"

back drop to decorate the stage, as the Club has close connections with them; indeed a former teacher, Mrs Ann Naismith, has run a Braw Lads fundraising Country Dance for over thirty years and wrote the Braw Lads Reel. The hall was decorated with fifty illustrations of dances by another former teacher, Dan Blackwood, who has the knack of bringing humour into his artwork.

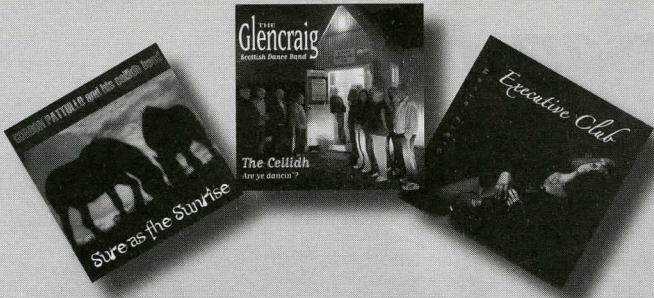
A member of the committee, Mrs Lena Scott, made decorative posies representing one of the ceremonies of Braw Lads Day and also made place cards of dance names for each table. Another committee member, Mrs Marion Stirling, made the cake which was also decorated in the Braw Lads colours. The programme, which included dances from throughout the 80 years, was

We were delighted that the Chairman of the Society, Stewart Adam, and his wife Chris were able to join us at the Ball, as Stewart was brought up in Galashiels and his late mother was a member of the Class and for many years acted as Chairman. Also with us were Wat Duthie and his wife Nancy. Wat is the son of the late John Duthie and he travelled down from Bonnyrigg despite being 94 years young. Jimmy Mitchell, whose band used to play for our Annual Dance in Mr Duthie's day, was there with his wife Jean and both of them took to the floor for quite a few dances. The Braw Lads Executive lent us their



Marion Stirling

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Hertford Ball

The 48th Annual Ball of the South East Hertfordshire Scottish Country Dance Society in the Castle Hall Hertford was held on Saturday 18th November. David Cunningham played accompanied by Graham Berry on keyboard. David introduced the band as David Cunningham and his mate, due to the fact that Ian Anderson, David's regular drummer had unfortunately been called away at the last minute. Numbers were down on previous years, which gave those who were there plenty of room for some excellent dancing to great music.

There were well known popular dances on the programme including The Silver Strathspey, Airie Bennan and Miss Johnstone of Adrossan. Two dances which may not be so familiar but were no less interesting were The Wapenshaw and Double Eighty and it's nice to see this type of dance on a programme.

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Hertford Ball



David Cunningham & Graham Berry



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Take the Floor, Stirling



Guest Presenter, Bruce Mackenzie



The Neil MacEachern Scottish Dance Band



National Youth Choir



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