

Dance On!

A group of people, including men and women, are captured in a dynamic dance pose. They are wearing traditional Scottish kilts and white shirts. The background is blurred, suggesting a fast-paced event or festival.

Eksjö Tattoo

**The Dancing Masters
Hawick Swords Go To Belgium • The Dancie
To Demonstrate or Not? • Hobson's Choice**

**R.R.P. £2.00
Issue 23 - September 2006**

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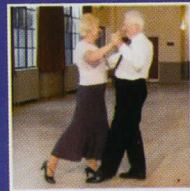
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Scotland's Social Dances





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Editorial

Please note that the new postal charges have affected us and, while the cost of the magazine remains at £2.00, postage has risen by 10p per month. Remember if your group orders 4 or more magazines each month, or if you are ordering back issues, then you do not pay any postage at all!

Dance teacher John Caskie made a brilliant suggestion in a letter to "Dance On!". We are going to introduce a Club of the Month each month, so let us know if you would like to be included.

Dance groups have been travelling far and wide over the summer, one group went to Sweden, while another danced in Belgium. George Hobson stayed at home, but still managed to upset the foreigners!

We're always looking for interesting articles and suggestions for the magazine, so keep them coming. We're always delighted to include dances sent in by our readers, and we plan to bring out a book of some of the 167(!) that we've published so far.

Keep in touch - "Dance On!" is YOUR magazine.

Karin

Front cover photograph © Jennifer Cowie.

Front cover design by Bruce Dow, Culross Printers

Take The Floor

23rd September Marian Anderson SDB
(June 2006)

30th September Graeme Mitchell SDB
(OB from The Lonach Hall)

7th October Donald MacLeod SDB
(Behind the scenes of TTF auditions)

14th October Ian Holmes SDB
(Ian Holmes and his many accordions)

21st October Charlie Kirkpatrick SDB

Saturday Evenings 19.05-20.30

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www.bbc.co.uk/radioscotland

Dance On!

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Eksjö Tattoo

By Jennifer Cowie

The Eksjö Tattoo is an event, like Edinburgh's Tattoo, which is held annually in Sweden. The Tattoo itself is held over four days – Wednesday, which is used as a dress rehearsal, Thursday, Friday and Saturday (the Saturday consisting of two performances, one in the afternoon and one in the evening).

Glencorse Pipe Band had been to Eksjö in 1999 and this year they were invited back. This year however, they also took some dancers.

Glencorse Pipe Band are: Pipe Major Bill Kenyon, Colin Campbell, Pete Case, Stewart Graham, Lisa Henderson, Alan Ramage, Vic Ramage, Joe Wallace, Christopher Grieve, Tam Crawford, guest piper Alan Angus, drum major Daniel McBeth, Drum Sergeant David McBeth, Donna Flockhart, Caroline Flockhart, John McAlister, Laura McBeth, Graham Case and James Blair. The Dancers were: Jennifer Cowie, Shonagh Toulouse, John Fawns, Joan Fawns, Alan MacGregor, Meg MacGregor, John Durrand and Christine Durrand.

In total there were thirty-one of us travelling, including Anne Kenyon and Shirley Henderson, two committee members with the Pipe Band. Also with us were Fiona McBeth and Anne Crawford.

We were flying from Edinburgh to Amsterdam and from Amsterdam to Gothenburg followed by around a two and a half hour bus journey to Eksjö. This travelling happened on the Monday (7th August). The flight left at 10.55am (not too early a start). We all congregated at the airport around 8.45am only to discover a member of the band (whom we won't name and shame) had forgotten his

passport! However, he had plenty of time. Meanwhile the rest of us checked in and headed for the departure lounge for a party. It was Shirley's birthday so we had chocolate cake and champagne for breakfast! Alan joined us a wee while later!!

The flight to Amsterdam went well, we arrived about 12.30pm and there we had a couple of drinks and a look round the duty free. Around 3.30pm we got the flight to Gothenburg. Again the flight was fine. We finally arrived in Sweden at around 16.45pm, but that wasn't the end of the journey for us yet! Our main concern when we got off the flight was that all the instruments were with us. They were and thankfully they were undamaged.

Outside Gothenburg airport Major Peter Karlsson greeted us. He was our chauffeur for the week. He was in charge of us and took us everywhere. He had organised for a coach to pick us up to take us to Eksjö. So, on went the luggage, followed by the dancers and the band. It

was a very hot journey; the air conditioning wasn't working so, with some empty water bottles we managed to wedge open the sunroofs. I must say that it was quite a noisy journey, that noise was made by the dancers mainly but a couple of the band joined in too. After two stops (to get some fresh air) and around two and a half hours we arrived at our accommodation – the Barracks in Eksjö.

Everyone collected their luggage and went into the Barracks to find their rooms. I was sharing with three other girls, the couples all had rooms to themselves and the families shared. In our room were fourteen beds, fourteen lockers, a table with four chairs and only one window that would open. Anyway after a quick freshen up and a change we headed over to Peter's house for something to eat. It was about a ten minute walk from the Barracks. After eating, some had a shot on the trampoline that he had in his garden. Very good fun!



Christine & John Durrand and Meg & Alan MacGregor settle in for the long bus ride.



Peter Karsson & Caroline Flockhart

We spent a couple of hours there, then headed back to the Barracks to get some sleep. Well that was after we made our own beds, sorted out who was using what toilets and showers and unpacked our luggage. Before going to bed we were also told what times our meals would be at every day. Breakfast was from 6.15am – 9am, Lunch was 11.30am – 12.30pm and our evening meal was at 4.30pm – 6pm.

Tuesday morning, our first morning in Sweden. We were up about 7.30am – enough time for a shower before we went for breakfast. Breakfast was good, there was lots of choice and there was something that everybody could eat. After breakfast we had a practice of our marching just to make sure we knew what we were doing. However that practice didn't last too long as some of us went go-karting. It was mostly the youngsters of the group that went while the rest of the group found other things to do. Like shopping! Some of us hadn't been karting before but that

didn't make a difference, we all still had a brilliant time. It was James that came out on top with the fastest lap time – thirty-two seconds! After around an hour or so, including a few crashes, we had to go back to the Barracks for lunch where we met with everybody else. We enjoyed a nice lunch.

After lunch we went to the town square (where we would be performing) for another practice. Whilst we were there we had to change the marching because the area we had been practising on at home wasn't the same as this area. So we had to spend a little longer than was probably planned to change it. Later, after a few minor disagreements, we came up with something suitable and, after going through it about a million times (slight exaggeration, maybe!), we got it. Anyway, after that practice we went back to the Barracks and went through it again and again until everybody was 100% happy. By the time dinnertime came it wasn't perfect but we were getting there!

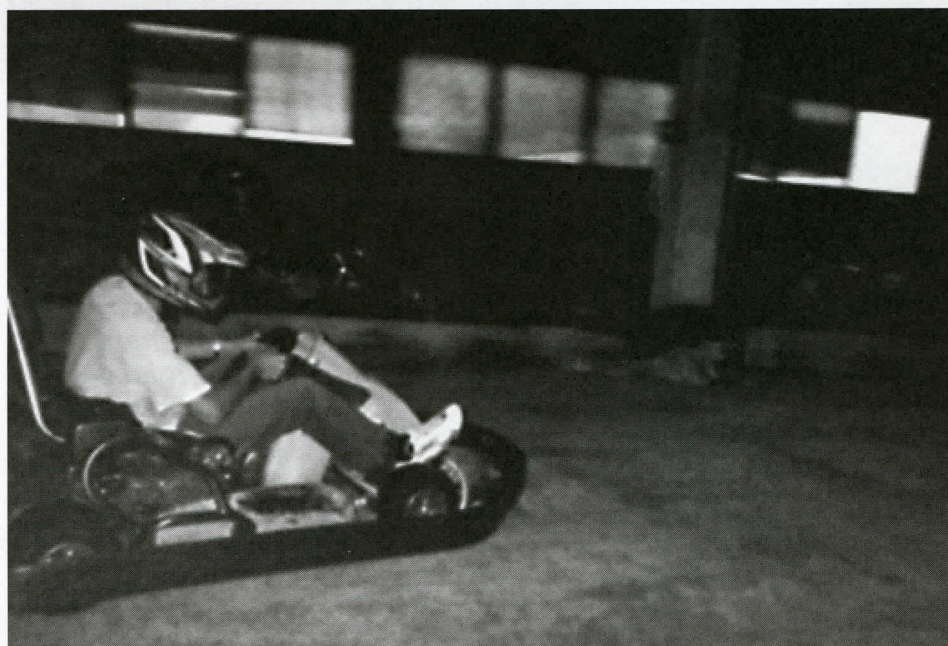
We had the rest of that evening to ourselves. So, after being told that we would have to be up early for a practice at 9.30am we all went to bed. Not!

Wednesday morning, everybody was up early for the practice,

as planned. This time we went through the dances we would be dancing at the Tattoo. Those were Shiftin' Bobbins and Jennifer's Waltz. Then we went through the marching. That took us up to lunchtime, so we headed for lunch.

After lunch we were going to another little town about an hour away from Eksjö. So we had to get into our uniforms, instruments tuned and dancing shoes on. We went by coach. When we got there we had to march up the road – stopping all the traffic, then into an area where around 150 people were waiting for us to perform. We had a brilliant time dancing and playing and the crowd seemed to enjoy it to. We played and danced for about an hour. We then marched back to the coach and went back to the Barracks. On the way back some people had a little nap! When we arrived back we went for dinner then back to our rooms to get ready for our first real performance. About that time, I received a text from home; it said that there was a pretty bad storm heading our way, but by early evening nothing had come of it.

The tattoo started at 8pm every night. However, Shirley, Anne, Anne and Fiona left early to try to sell some DVDs for us.





Dancing in Sävsjö

We were on seventh, so we didn't have to leave until around 8.45pm. About 8pm it got quite dark and a bit windy. Then the heavens opened. The rain couldn't have come down any faster. Then the thunder and lightning started!

That night was a disaster, we never got out the Barracks, we were all dressed up with nowhere to go! Later the rain cooled off slightly so the band went out and piped for the other bands coming back in. Eventually around 9pm Shirley, Anne, Anne and Fiona arrived back, they were soaking. They told us that the performances had been good but that one of the towers with lights on it had fallen and it was all ruined because of the weather. All in all Wednesday night was a disaster.

After a while we all got changed and had another night in. Most of us were in John and Joan's room for a drink and a bit of a singsong. It wasn't too late a night – it was around midnight when most went to bed!

Thursday Morning, again everybody was up nice and early. Today was similar to Wednesday. After breakfast we all got into uniforms and off to a place called Sävsjö. Again it was around an hour away. We were going there to do a performance similar to Wednesday's. Before we got to Sävsjö to perform we stopped off at a church to have a look in, it was beautiful,

both inside and out. We spent about fifteen minutes there and then got back on the bus. Ten minutes and we were there. When we got off the bus we marched up the road, this time going round a couple of corners on the way. We marched into a cobbled area just big enough to play and dance in. The crowd was around the same number as the day before. We danced again for about an hour. When we marched out we marched up and round the fountain that was situated at the top of the area where we had been performing. We were then taken for lunch.

On the journey back we stopped off to have a walk around and old mill. We had twenty minutes there then we went back to the Barracks, some of us sleeping all the way back. When we got back we had a couple of hours to ourselves, then we had dinner. After dinner again we had to get ready for the Tattoo at night. About 7 o'clock the rain started again, but luckily no more thunder and lightening. About 8pm the band began to tune up (the rain had gone off by this time). We got on the bus at 8.45pm; we were there in minutes. We marched up the street and waited at the gates, the band in front of us was just going in. About five minutes later the gates opened. It was our turn! Next Bill (pipe major) shouts, "By the right quick march" then everyone, starting by the left, marched in.

The seats were full, about 2000 people. Whilst marching on we had to dodge all the puddles but apart from that it went smoothly. The dances went well and the crowd seemed to enjoy it, it was over very quickly. When we marched out, just as we got to the gates, the crowd started a Mexican wave, but we didn't get just one – we got two Mexican waves – Swedish style! Just as we were leaving through the gate the rain started, so on went the capes and on went the last band. All we had to do now was the finale. Ten minutes later on we went – this was the easy bit for the dancers, all we had to do was stand and listen. The pipers played *Highland Cathedral* along with the other bands. The Swedish National Anthem was next, followed by a hymn. That was the finale over, there were fireworks and everybody was marched out of the arena.

The band found an area to play when we had finished and people came to listen. A few more DVDs were sold and then we went back to the Barracks. One down three to go!

When we got back to the Barracks we got out of our uniforms, then some people went to the Officers Mess, some people stayed in. So it was another early night!

Friday morning, there were only a couple of people feeling a bit rough! But everybody still made it for breakfast. The weather was lovely, slightly cooler than previous days but it was nice. We went to a place called Aneby to visit an old village, which was very nice. There we were treated to lunch. Then we had another performance to do, so we danced and played for around the same time as we had the previous day. In late afternoon we headed back to the Barracks for dinner. After dinner it was time to get ready again. The performance that night was much the same as the night before, it went well and we



Shonagh Toulouse & Jennifer Cowie

all thoroughly enjoyed it. When we got back to the Barracks most of us went to the Officers Mess for a couple of drinks and then back to bed. A bit of a late night, yet again!

Saturday was our last day in Sweden. We had two performances to do, so that took up most of the day. However, we did have time for a bit of shopping in the morning.

The first Tattoo of the day started at 3pm, we left about 3.30pm to get there in time for our performance. It went really well, only I have to say I prefer to perform in the dark because then you can't see the crowd!

Our last performance was at 8pm; so after the first one we came back to the Barracks and had dinner. Then we got ready to go out again. Every night was the same, so again we knew what we had to do. The rain started just as the band was heading outside to tune up. (Well I did say everything was the same!) The dancers were all congregated inside, I went out to get some photographs of the band, but let's just say

I never got those photos. I slipped down the stairs and ended up not able to perform at the last performance. So instead of dancing in the rain I got two very nice, blond soldiers in full uniform to take me to the hospital. A bit of a disaster on my part. (*Sounds well-planned to me - K.*) We did, however, manage to get there for the finale. For the band and the other dancers the last performance went very well.

That was it - all the performances were over.

After the finale we had to go to a big gathering, where all the bands were meeting and where we all received our medals for performing. After the presentation we had a nice meal and after that some stayed for a few drinks, others went back to their rooms to pack. It was another late night and we had a particularly early start the next day.

Sunday, everybody was up around 6.00am and ready to leave by 7.00am. Ahead of us we had that long drive on the bus to get to Gothenburg - most took that as an opportunity to get some sleep. When we finally arrived at Gothenburg airport we all checked in, some stayed at a coffee shop there, but some headed to the departure lounge and found another coffee shop.

A couple of hot chocolates and an hour or two later we were ready to leave. We headed for the gate where we met the pilot and cabin crew that were on our flight and because some of the guys had their kilts on (they knew there were pipers on the plane) they asked us whether they would play the pipes when they were on the plane. So, sure enough, when we were flying at about 35,000ft in the air Bill got the pipes out and played for the crew and the passengers. The flight went well and there were no problems.

We arrived in Amsterdam around 2.00pm and we had to walk through to the departure lounge of gate 57 to get the plane home. The flight was delayed an hour so we didn't leave there until about 3.30pm. After a good flight back to Edinburgh, everybody got their luggage - no damage to any of the instruments - we were glad to be back in Scotland. At the airport we said our goodbyes and headed home.

After a couple of days at home it was back to normality, with some very good memories of our trip. It was an extremely enjoyable and successful trip, one, which I'm sure, we'd all like to repeat!

All photographs © Jennifer Cowie



The dancers with piper, Daniel McBeth

The Dancing Masters

By the end of the 18th century and throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries, dancing was a vital and integral element of the social life of all levels of Scottish society. Hundreds of professional dancing masters travelled miles, often by bicycle over a large geographical area giving classes for children and adults from all walks of life.

Not only did they teach dances and dance steps in both Highland and Country Dance styles, they also introduced new and novelty dances. The lessons included kinaesthetic exercises, manners, deportment and etiquette. The dancing masters expected only the highest standard of performance, insisting on neat, light steps and a proud, upright carriage.

Dance was taught in almost every town and village in the Borders, and there are records of some of the teachers who both lived and taught in the area.

Professor Buck

"Professor" R.F. Buck taught dance in the Borders, and occasionally East Lothian and Wigtownshire, from around 1895 until the late 1930s.

Almost every year he ran classes in Hawick, Lilliesleaf and Selkirk in a ten-week session. In the main towns he taught the usual reels, square dances and circle dances, and a few of the more common Country Dances. In the rural areas, he included more Country Dances in his lessons – in particular *The Blue Bonnets*, *Cumberland Reel*, *Duke of Perth*, *Meg Merrilees*, *Corn Rigs*, *Speed the Plough*, *Roxburgh Castle*, *The Bottom of the Punchbowl*, *Jessie's Hornpipe*, *Rifleman* and the *Duchess of Gordon*. In his early teaching days he also taught a set of Quadrilles known as the *Land of Burns Quadrilles* and the *Old Lancers* which was a single figure Quadrille, rather than the more familiar five figure version.



**John M. Duthie photographed with bicycle circa 1898. Photograph courtesy of Wat & Nancy Duthie, Bonnyrigg
© The Orkney Photo Company, Kirkwall**

To assist in learning, Mr Buck always paired beginners with more experienced dancers. He never taught more than six Country Dances in detail, because he felt that the best way for his pupils to learn was to do the dances themselves. At his Finishing Balls Mr Buck introduced other dances which had not been taught throughout the session.

John M. Duthie

John McCulloch Duthie was born in Lochcarron in Wester Ross on the 9th November 1876 and his family moved to Bilsey in Orkney where his father George was Headmaster. He went to Edinburgh University and graduated MA round about the turn of the century. He married Miss Netta Bruce in 1904, by which time he had become Headmaster

at New Byth Public School in Aberdeenshire. He stayed there until 1910 when he moved down to Lauder in the Borders. He remained Headmaster in Lauder until 1919 when he moved to become Headmaster at the Burgh School in Galashiels, where he remained until he retired in 1941.

In 1926 he formed the first branch of Scottish Country Dancing in the Borders at Galashiels in 1926. At about the same time the Borders Musical Festival was started and Mr. Duthie was secretary of it until he retired. He taught the pupils at

the Burgh School and had much success when entering teams of dancers in the Borders Festival. Music for his dance classes was provided by Mrs. Duthie on the piano and Wat Bryden (the milkman) on the fiddle.

Mr Duthie wrote and published a book of Scottish Country Dances but on more than one occasion he disagreed with the RSCDS. Mr. Duthie and Miss Milligan (the founder of the RSCDS) could not get on.

When Mr Duthie's club started in the mid twenties it was all female except for him and one other

gentleman – Mr. Ion Jamieson from Langshaw (see own section). Mr. Jamieson sometimes wore the kilt but Mr. Duthie never did. He was a very strict disciplinarian – dancers were not even allowed to hooch!

In later years Mr Duthie lost his sight but continued to take the dance classes with the help of his only daughter Joan.

The following appeared in the Border Advertiser in November 1928:

"Scottish Country Dancing, much being done to revive Scottish Country dance. Scottish Country Dance Society already collected 50 dances which have been published with full descriptions and appropriate music. Club been running at Galashiels Burgh School for two years will be resumed this year."

John Duthie died in November 1964.

Mr Fletcher

Mr. Fletcher, a shoemaker in Pathhead, taught in Oxtou in 1892 and 1894. His classes ran for six weeks, two nights per week. He was not himself musical, and so hired a local fiddler to play for his class. He again taught all of the popular dances of the time, but also *Loch Erichside*, *My Love She's But a Lassie Yet* and *La Tempête*.

Jim Fox

Jim Fox in lived in Morebattle from the 1880s until the 1950s. Every year from September to March, he held his weekly classes in Morebattle Hall with a regular attendance of some forty people. Local musicians played for the classes. At the end of each month there was a dance, with Fox's Ball as the grand finale at the end of the season. The musician at the ball was usually Eckie Fear, a fiddler from Kelso, who would come with a pianist and a drummer.

"Foxey" travelled to Edinburgh to learn new dances to pass on to his pupils. One of the last ones he taught was *The Chestnut Tree*,



With wife, Netta, at the piano circa 1960

Photograph courtesy of Wat & Nancy Duthie, Bonnyrigg

before ill health forced him to give up teaching.

Ion C. B. Jamieson

Ion Campbell Bell Jamieson was born in 1883 at Bo'ness near Linlithgow. When he was about ten years old a visiting dancing master came to his house and taught Country and Highland Dancing to Ion and some of the other children in the neighbourhood.

In 1915 he married Mary Bruce in Galashiels, and at that time he lived at Windhead, Lauder. After working as factor of Thirlestane estates near Lauder, ill health forced a move and he went to the Lodge House at Langshaw near Galashiels in 1920.

When he attended local dances, the people told him of the dances they remembered from their youth, and so his collection of Borders Dances began.

Many of his dances came from people he met at W.R.I. meetings (he frequently accompanied his wife, simply to have the opportunity to meet older people and discuss dancing as it used to be done in the area). His interest was neither scientific nor technical – he just loved the dances and the stories that were attached to them. He did not usually travel far afield, and rarely made any attempt to find corroborative evidence for the dances he collected.

He gave more than forty dances to the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society. Those published include *The Punchbowl*, *Linton Ploughman*, *Roxburgh Castle*, and *Oxton Reel*.

Such was the interest in dance in the area, that Ion Jamieson started dance classes in the local village hall at Langshaw. His style of dance and teaching was not that of the Scottish Country Dance Society. He placed less emphasis on technique and preferred the dancing style of the kirns to that of polite ballrooms. He wore ordinary shoes for dancing, and occasionally a kilt. He was strict in his dance teaching, but never asked anyone to dance a step that he did not dance himself.

Ion Jamieson died in 1953 and Mary in 1975.



Ion C.B. Jamieson

James Laidlaw

James Laidlaw (affectionately known as "Wull o' Phawhope") lived at the head of Ettrick. He had a wasted right arm but he was still able to play the fiddle beautifully and was an excellent dance teacher. He taught some unusual Country Dances such as *The Bottom of the Punchbowl*, *Falkland Beauty*, *Rocks of Gibraltar* and *Duchess of Gordon*, along with the usual reels and quadrilles in various classes in Ettrick from 1875 until 1890. He died some time between 1890 and 1895 at the age of 50 or 55.

Advertisements for Dancing Classes

The following are extracts from advertisements for dancing classes which appeared in the Border Advertiser.

21/1/1858 Dancing – Mr. Littlejohn from Balmoral will open a class for dancing in the Salmon Inn Ballroom of Friday 21st January at half past seven.

17/6/1859 Dancing – Mr. McGlashan begs to announce that he will open a class in the Salmon Inn, Galashiels on Monday 27th June at quarter past six. Mr.

McGlashan will also at the same time open classes in the County Hotel, Selkirk, Rose Bank, Melrose and Nest Academy, Jedburgh.

24/6/1859 Stow Dancing etc. We observe that Mr. Milne from Edinburgh has again visited our village and taken up classes in the Town Hall. His merits as a teacher are well known. He is an accomplished vocalist and musician and performs upon the violin, concertina and guitar with masterly skill.

22/2/1861 Dancing and Deportment in the New Corn Exchange. We have to notice the formation of a select association for the practice of dancing and deportment amongst the better class male and female operatives. A number of the most respectable of our working men and women have formed themselves into a society for improving themselves in the ceremonies and evolutions of the ballroom. They are in favour of more order, better dancing, and more politeness and suavity of demeanour.

18/10/1910 Mr. A. Glendinning Dancing classes in Galashiels resuming 21st November. Arrangements for private tuition at pupils' residences.

22/7/1914 Galashiels Dancing and Physical Culture. Mrs Ryers of Edinburgh (for many years connected with the Moat School, Galashiels) will resume her classes in Galashiels in the Autumn.

15/10/1915 Dancing classes. Mr. G. Dickson of Cathedral Hall Dancing Academy, Edinburgh will commence a series of High Class Dancing and Deportment Classes in Masonic Hall, Galashiels commencing Thursday 30th September. Juvenile and Adult Beginners 10/6d per quarter, or 1/- single lesson. Open assemblies 8 till 10.30. Ladies 6d, Gentlemen 9d. Latest dances and music. Quadrille Band.

During the 19th century, dance class seasons ended with a display of dance. The following are extracts of reports in the Border Advertiser of the time:

6/5/1859 Dancing Assembly, Galashiels The pupils under Mr. Dixon brought the season to a close on Friday night by a grand display. The dances, which were gone through with precision and grace, gave evidence of a most careful system of training, and evidently embraced all the latest changes. Such were the Polka in a style new to our eyes, The Reel of Tulloch in a complicated and pleasing variety of figures and Quadrilles with novel and graceful changes. In Waltzing, for teaching which Mr Dixon has long been renowned, the pupils evinced remarkable dexterity and swiftness of evolution.

29/7/1859 Dancing Assembly Mr. McGlashan's dancing class finished on Saturday with the usual demonstration. The new dance the "New Lancers" which was so much admired last year was performed to perfection, and the Scotch Reel Quadrille which we understand is the joint invention of the accomplished Mons. Veughs and Mr McGlashan was greatly admired and is sure to take its place as a favourite in our festive assemblies, combining as it does so much of our traditional dance with only a little of what is foreign.

7/12/1860 Mr. Milne's Concert and Ball Mr. Milne introduced a boy of eleven who had been a pupil of his for two sessions to dance the Highland Fling.

4/6/1884 Lauder Dancing classes. On Friday evening last Mr. Sutherland, teacher of dancing, deportment etc. brought to a close a course of lessons he has lately been giving here by holding an Assembly in the Volunteer Hall. There were about 40 pupils present and a number of parents and friends. After the Grand March the following dances which had been taught at the classes were gone through almost without mistake: La Tempête, Reel, Lancers, Highland Schottische, Circassian Circle, Polka, Patronella, Quadrilles, Dutch Polka, Duchess of Gordon's Fancy, Rory O'More, Plain Schottische and Haymakers. Six young ladies danced the Sword

Dance. Another young pupil took the difficult solo dance, Ghillie Callum.

11/6/1884 Stow Dancing classes. Mr. Sutherland, Edinburgh, brought the session to an end with an Assembly in the Town Hall. Dancing commenced with a Grand March and La Tempête followed by a set of Quadrilles. The Lancers, Schottisches, Polkas and Country dances followed. The Falkland Beauty was performed up to the mark, it being a very intricate dance. The Highland Laddie, a lady's solo dance, was done by four of his young lady pupils.

15/4/1913 Earlstoun Mr. Buck's dancing classes were brought to a close with a display by the students to parents and friends.

7/10/1913 Remarkable dancing record by Borderers. Three Keppie sisters of Laurence, Massachusetts won many honours at the Labor-day United Scottish Clans' Games. Ivy Keppie won the special Walter Scott gold medal in adult class and two firsts for the Highland Fling and Sword Dance. Bella Keppie came second and third in that class. Vina Keppie won first for the Highland Fling and Sword Dance in secondary girls and the Walter Scott Gold Medal. There were 35 competitors.

5/1/1921 Galashiels World Champion Dancer. Record attendance at Playhouse for most varied and attractive programmes. Dancing is an outstanding feature, as the most wonderful and marvellous exhibitions of the art are given by the holder of the world championship belt, which was shown by his lady partner. Jim C. Max is seen to perfection in a maximum medley of { } songs and dances, and McCardle and Donald are first rate comedians and dancers. In all three turns dancing is a feature and will satisfy the keenest critic.

This article was researched and compiled by Karin Ingram and members of the board of The Scottish Traditions of Dance Trust.

It formed part of a Borders Exhibition in 2000.

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

<http://ceilidh.members.beeb.net/>

Those of you who benefit from the Dance Diary in "Dance On!", may not realise that Alasdair Graham also has a Website which not only features the Dance Diary but also has programmes and newsletters.

Alasdair explains on the About Us page, that the site started to keep a few friends in the West Central area of Scotland up to date with Ceilidh events that were being held in the area; well, since then the site has grown quite a lot! It now not only has Ceilidh and Old Time events, but Country Dance events too, and a Country Dance newsletter which is e-mailed to those who want to receive it, or can be downloaded from the Website. These contain a huge amount of information about dances, and most have programmes as well. The Website is called "Dancing in Scotland" and from its beginnings as a West Central area site it has spread to encompass the borders, Dumfries and Galloway, and Perth to list a few, so it does justify its name. I have no doubt that it will continue to expand and spread its coverage.

The Home page is well laid out though I would have preferred a different font for the body text. Times Roman tends to be the default, but modern fonts such as Verdana have been developed to be easy to read on a screen, the older fonts were of course designed for printing onto paper to read, and tend to have more curls and flourishes on the letters.

The "About" page has a picture of Alasdair and his wife and some words of explanation about the site. It very sensibly gives a warning to check with the organizers of dances before turning up to make sure it is the type of dance you want. This warning is rather tucked away on this page and I think it would be best if it was repeated at the top of each of the events pages, where people will be reminded that it is their responsibility to check.



There is a comprehensive "Contact" page with e-mail, address and telephone number, and a "What's New" page which allows you to see what has been added since you last looked.

The "Country Dance Event" page brings up a list of events in date order, the one which is happening next at the top and there was a separate page for the summer dancing. When I clicked on "Ceilidh Events" I thought at first there weren't any, and then I realised that on the menu at the side, and at the bottom of the page (off my screen) there were links to the next three months which I had to click on individually to see what was there. I nearly missed these links and I think it would be better if the events either

all came up on one page like the Country Dance events, or if the links were at the bottom of the text and so were easily seen. It would also be nice to see more distant events as well as the next three months, particularly for people who are planning trips and may want to take in a dance or two on the way.

There are details about Ceilidh and Old Time classes in the area and links to other relevant Ceilidh and Country Dance Websites as well as a "Frequently Asked Questions" page.

I was curious as to what would be on the "Downloads" page, and found that it was copies of Alasdair's newsletters. These are very comprehensive and well worth looking at, I am sure that if you sent him an e-mail (address is on the "Contacts" page) and asked to be included on his mailing list, he would be more than happy to send you them when they are issued.

This is a comprehensive, extremely well-maintained site which provides a very useful service and there are some cartoons here and there to keep you amused. Alasdair obviously spends a significant amount of time keeping it up to date and providing relevant information; we all benefit from his efforts in "Dance On!" as well.

Such has been the demand from "Dance On!" readers, that Alasdair is now happy to include events worldwide. Contact him at:

alasdair.graham@blueyonder.co.uk

Hunter House Mill

Strathspey 4x32

Two chords, third and fourth couples cross over on the second chord

Four Couples Longways Set

1-6 First couple with nearer hands joined, dance down the middle, (finishing below the fourth couple), separate, cast up behind the fourth and third couples finishing in second place.

MEANWHILE Second couple stand still for 2 bars, then with nearer hands joined, dance down the middle, (finishing below the third couple), separate, cast up behind the third couple and dance up to finish in first place.

7-8 Second and first couples set

9-14 Fourth couple with nearer hands joined, dance up the middle, (finishing above the second couple who are in first place), separate, cast down behind the second and first couples to third place.

MEANWHILE Third couple stand still for 2 bars, then with nearer hands joined, dance up the middle, (finishing above the first couple who are in second place), separate, cast down behind the third couple and dance down to finish in fourth place.

15-16 Fourth and third couples set.

17-20 All four couples turn partner right hand once round.

21-24 First and fourth couples dance half rights and lefts, omitting the polite turn at the end.

25-32 Second couple face down, fourth couple face up, first couple face down, third couple face up and dance a reel of four on the side.

Repeat from new positions

© Sue Petyt August 2006

Sparks Fly

Jig 8x32

A dance for 3 couples in a longways set of four

1-4 First and second couple set and link, WHILE third couple set and cross right hands (all join hands on the side to set).

5-8 First and third couple set and link, WHILE second couple set and cross right hands (all join hands on the side to set).

9-16 First couple cross giving right hands, cast up behind the third couple, dance in front of the second couple, cast behind them into second place on opposite sides, third couple step down on 15 & 16.

17-28 Second, first and third couples dance three couple rights and lefts thus:

17-18 Second, first and third couples change right hand with partner

19-20 First lady and third lady, first man and second man, second lady and third man, change left hands.

21-22 First lady and second lady, third lady and second man, third man and first man, cross right hands.

23-24 Second man and second lady, third man and third lady, first man and first lady change left hands.

25-26 Second man and first man, second lady and third man, first lady and third lady, cross right hands.

27-28 First man and third man, second man and third lady, first lady and second lady, change left hands.

29-32 Second, first and third couples set and cross right hand.

Repeat having passed a couple

© Sue Petyt June 2004



White Heather Foxtrot

Polka

This dance was written in 1991 by Graham and Kathy Thomson, who have written many Old Time, Sequence and Ballroom dances including Charlotte's Waltz, The Florentine Quickstep and The Hebridean Blues. The early Foxtrot dances in Britain date back to about 1917, when the Americans became involved in World War I and brought their style of dancing here. Although originally danced to the usual Foxtrot tempo, Ceilidh dancers prefer to dance The White Heather Foxtrot to Polka or even Schottische timing, adding in a "twinkle" here or there!

Formation: Couples facing each other in ballroom hold, men facing the line of dance.

Bars

1 – 2 Man steps forwards (towards the line of dance) onto his left (lady backwards on her right), forwards on right, and then takes three faster steps i.e. left, right, left right left. The lady is mirroring his steps, moving backwards – right, left, right left right.

3 – 4 The man now moves backwards (against the line of dance) – right, left, right left right, while the lady moves forwards – left, right, left right left.

5 – 6 The couple take one side-step into the centre (man's left, lady's right), cross the other foot over, take another side-step, close and side step again i.e. step, cross, step close step.

7 – 8 **Bars 5 – 6** are repeated in the opposite direction, man starting by side-stepping onto his right, lady onto her left.

9 – 10 Man steps forwards (towards the line of dance) onto his left (lady backwards on her right), forwards on right, forwards onto left, hesitates with weight on left and then places weight onto right (which is still behind). The lady is mirroring his steps.

11 – 12 **Bars 9 – 10** are repeated

13 – 14 Couple dance a "square". Man's steps: forwards on left, close, side-step on right, close, backwards on right, close, side-step on left, close. Lady's steps: backwards on right, close, side-step on left, close, forwards on left, close, side-step on right, close.

15 – 16 **Bars 13 – 14** are repeated.

In some areas **Bars 3 – 4** are danced towards the line of dance.

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

Langshaw Lassies

8 x 32 Bar Reel

The old shepherd who passed this dance on to Ion Jamieson had forgotten its name, so Mr Jamieson named it for the area in which he lived and taught dance (see page 10). These instructions were taken from The Border Dance Book of Scottish Country Dances, compiled by Elizabeth MacLachlan and published by MacDougall's Educational Co. Ltd., Edinburgh.

4 Couple Longways Set

Bars

1 – 4 First couple turn with right hands.

5 – 8 First couple cast off two places on own sides.

9 – 12 First couple turn with left hands.

13 – 16 First couple cast up two places on own sides to top.

17 – 24 First couple lead down the middle and up again, casting off one place on wrong sides, woman passing in front of man. (Second couple move up.)

25 – 28 All dancers clap own hands three times, one silent beat, then all tap with right heel on floor three times, one silent beat.

29 – 32 First couple turn with right hands to own sides one place down

Repeat, having passed a couple.



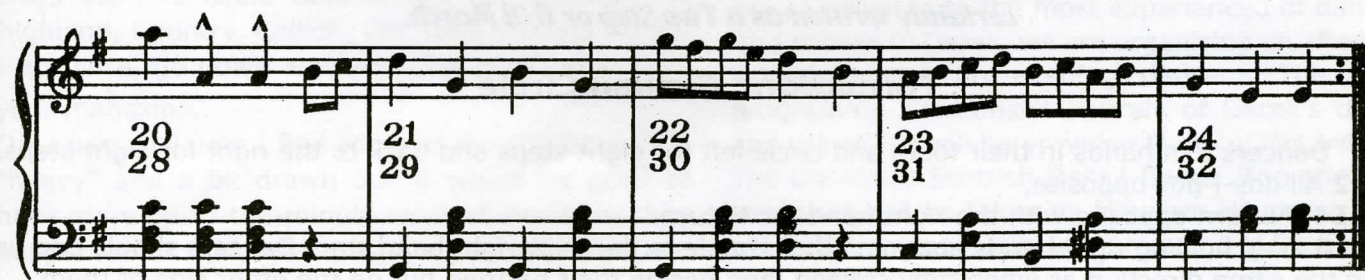
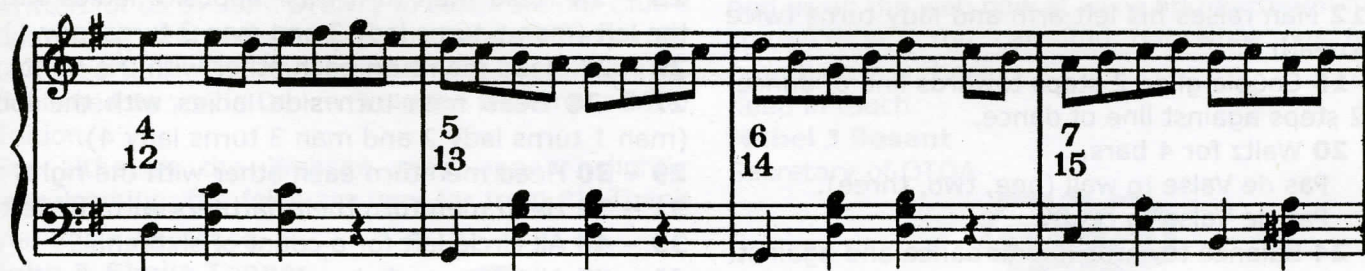
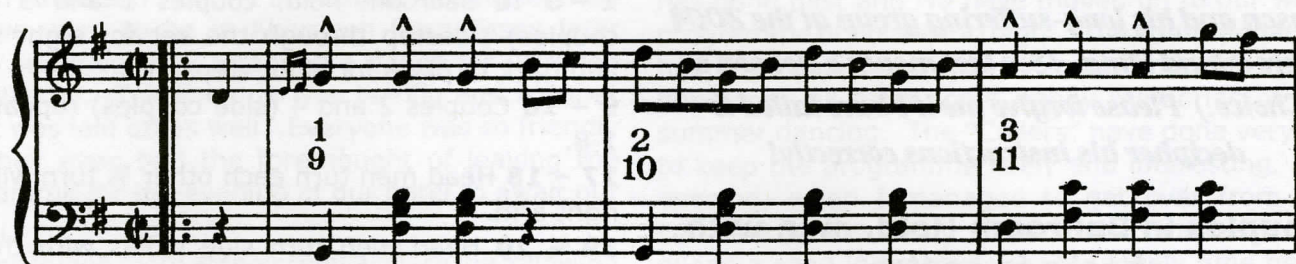
Ion C.B. Jamieson's home, Langshaw Lodge and the ruins of Langshaw Tower.

Langshaw Lassies.

Tune - The old traditional air 'EAST NEUK OF FIFE.'

Arranged by
A. SHAND.

Collected by
ION C. B. JAMIESON.



32 bars

Island Swing Waltz

32 Bar Old Time Waltz (Viennese Swing tempo)

This was the dance that was devised by George Hobson and his long-suffering group at the 2004 Skye Island Fling. (See last month's Hobson's Choice.) Please forgive me if I have failed to decipher his instructions correctly!

Couples in Ballroom Hold, men with backs to centre

Bars

- 1 – 8** Natural waltz turns for 8 bars.
- 9 – 12** Man raises his left arm and lady turns twice underneath it.
- 13 – 16** Couple glide 2 steps towards line of dance, and 2 steps against line of dance.
- 17 – 20** Waltz for 4 bars.
- 21** Pas de Valse to wall (one, two, three).
- 22** Pas de Valse to centre.
- 23 – 24** Balance towards line of dance and against.
- 25 – 28** Turning slightly so that man is facing line of dance, lady against, dancers take 2 sidesteps into the centre and 2 back out again.
- 29 – 32** Dancers waltz together for 4 bars.

These 32 bars are repeated for the duration of the music.

Pinewoods Two-Step

32 Bar Jigs/Reels

We believe this dance to have been written by Jim Rae (who also wrote The Old Spedling Castle Ghost Dance). Perhaps our readers can confirm this? It seems to fit best to jigs or reels but was almost certainly written as a Two Step or 6/8 March.

Formation: Sicilian Circle

- 1 – 8** Dancers join hands in their fours and circle left for eight steps and back to the right for eight steps.
- 9 – 12** All dos-i-dos opposite.
- 13 – 14** All turn opposite with the right hand for ½ turn.
- 15 – 16** Keep holding right hands and join other couple to dance ½ right hand star. Dancers should end up facing the same direction as when they started, and beside their partner, but on the other side of them.
- 17 – 20** All dos-i-dos opposite.
- 21 – 22** All turn opposite with the left hand for ½ turn.
- 23 – 24** Keep holding left hands and join other couple to dance ½ left hand star. Dancers should end up in original positions, but with left hand joined in the middle.
- 25 – 28** Still with left hands joined in the middle, dancers take their partners in a "Gay Gordons" hold and complete one full "wheel" together.
- 29 – 32** Dancers let go of the other couple and retain the Gay Gordons hold with their partner. They pass left shoulders with the other couple to progress in the direction they originally faced.

These 32 bars are repeated for the duration of the music.

Strip the Willow Square

4 x 48 Bar Jigs

Square sets of 4 couples

- 1 – 8** In ballroom hold, couples 1 and 3 (head couples) sidestep through the set for eight steps, and back to place for eight steps.
- 9 – 16** Couples 2 and 4 (side couples) repeat Bars 1-8.
- 17 – 18** Head men turn each other ¾ turn with the right arm.
- 19 – 20** Head men turn side ladies with the left (man 1 turns lady 4 and man 3 turns lady 2). These are the ladies of the couples to their right.
- 21 – 22** Head men turn each other with the right.
- 23 – 24** Head men turn their opposite ladies with the left (man 1 turns lady 3 and man 3 turns lady 1).
- 25 – 26** Head men turn each other with the right.
- 27 – 28** Head men turn side ladies with the left (man 1 turns lady 2 and man 3 turns lady 4).
- 29 – 30** Head men turn each other with the right.
- 31 – 32** Head men turn their partners with the left.
- 33 – 40** All circle left for a count of sixteen.
- 41 – 48** All promenade home.

Bars 1 – 48 are repeated with the side couples leading and the side men turning, then the head couples again, but with the ladies turning the men, and finally with the side couples again, with the ladies turning.

Your Letters

Dear Karin,

Having read the crit in "Dance On!" of the Aberdeen RSCDS Website I should like to put forward another view of them. Having met a group of them on the Marian Anderson Holiday in Austria, having learned that we were to be in Aberdeen from Essex later in the summer, they arranged a dance for us when we were up. The evening was terrific and a super buffet was laid on as well. Everyone was so friendly and they even had the forethought of leaving the programme for the evening at our hotel to await our arrival.

We then joined them at their regular class the following week. How lucky they are to have an accordionist for their class instead of CDs. They even included Epping Hundred on one evening, a dance specially written for us by John Drewry to celebrate our Club's Centenary, with music specially written for us by Iain MacPhail. The dance and music, I should add, published by you in Dance On in the November 2005 Edition.

So, although the Website may appear slightly unwelcoming, the folks are very far from it! Thank you again Aberdeen.

John & Sheila Tanner



Dear "Dance On!",

I have listed details of our dance club which resumes on Thursday 21st September for inclusion on your Website.

Can I mention that it would be nice in your magazine to possibly have a "Dance Club of the Month" spot, with a full page of what happens, who attends who plays etc and could take in the full spectrum of Highland, Country, Ceilidh, Old Time etc and would, I am sure, go down well with the public who read your magazine.

On a personal note I find some of the articles a little "heavy" and a bit drawn out, it would be good to have more up-to-the-minute news of events as they happen, but I add again this is a personal view and one you might want to consider.

Cheers

John M. Caskie, Dumfries

What a great idea from John! Club of the Month would make an excellent feature. We'll maybe start with John's own excellent Old Time group, and please let us know if you would like your Club to be featured in this way.

Dear Karin

I would like to update the dance happenings of OTDA through "Dance On!". The summer season of weekly dancing in the St Magnus Centre in Kirkwall has gone past and we have moved on to our winter programme of once a fortnight. The summer dancing has been supported well by locals and visitors so I hope they all have some happy memories of their summer dancing. The "Callers" have done very well to keep the programme lively and interesting. One evening, when I managed to get over from Hoy, we were honoured by an Australian visitor (in kilt) giving a song in gratitude for the lovely time he had had. What a voice he had and his dancing wasn't bad too!

We have moved forward with technology - you can find us on the web now at www.orkneycommunities.co.uk/OTDA You can find out what our future programme is there.

Keep in touch.

Mabel J Besant

Secretary of OTDA



Dear Karin,

A Tribute to Derek Haynes

On Saturday 28th April 2007 a very special event is taking place in Lockerbie Town Hall.

We were sad last year to learn of the death of Derek Haynes who contributed so much to the development of dancing. His dances are always fun to do and many can be danced by beginners who feel they have really achieved something, while advanced dancers get pleasure from the flowing movements and unusual combinations of figures. His more complex dances are a challenge to the most experienced of dancers. As a tribute to Derek, we are organising an afternoon workshop and an evening dance. The dance programme will consist entirely of Derek's dances and the music will be provided by Nicol McLaren and The Glenraig Scottish Dance Band. The afternoon workshop will be taken by Maureen Haynes and will provide the opportunity to learn some of Derek's less well known dances.

The proceeds from the dance and raffle will be going to Cancer Care, a charity which Derek supported with the sale of his dance books.

The event is TICKET ONLY. Further information can be obtained from sue@suepetyt.me.uk or by telephoning +44 (0) 1387 810958 or from www.streaming-pictures.co.uk where tickets can be bought on-line.

Sue Petyt

Ceilidh & Old Time Dances

Regular Weekly Classes

Date	Town	Hall	Band	Time	Cost	Contact	Comments
Every Saturday	Fife	Largo Ward Village Hall	t.b.c.	8pm -11pm No Bar	£3 (tea)	Door	Different bands each week.
Every Sunday	Fife, St Andrews	Boys Brigade Hall, Kinnessburn Road	Live Music	2pm-5pm	£3 (tea)	Door or tel 01334 472 375	Demonstrators: O & C Harrison
Most Sundays	East Kilbride	Girl Guide Hall, Dundas Place	-	7.30 -10pm	£1.50 (tea)	Door or tel : - 01355 230 134 or 245 052	Ceilidh & Old Time Club
Every Tuesday	Glasgow University	Student Union, University Avenue	-	7.30-10pm Bar	£4	0141 334 9869 or 07050 222 173	Dance Club
	Humble, East Lothian	Village Hall	George Hood	7.30-10pm	£3 B.Y.O.B.	Door (Owen & Catherine Harrison)	Ceilidh, Old Time and Social Dance Club
Every Wednesday	Newtongrange	Morris Club	Live Music	7.30-10pm	£3/£1.50	Door (Karin Ingram)	Ceilidh & Old Time Club
	Glasgow	St Andrews in Square	Live Music	7.30-9.30	£4 Bar	Door (Tricia Matthews)	Ceilidh & Old Time Class
	Midlem	Village Hall	Live Music	8pm-10pm	£1.50	Door (Gracie Belle Scott)	Old Time Dance Class
Every Thursday	Penicuik	St Mungo's Hall	-	8pm-9.30	£2.70	Door (Annabel Oates)	Starts 12/10/06 Child £1.40

Ceilidh & Old Time Dances

October 2006

Date	Town	Hall	Band	Time	Cost	Contact	Comments
1 st	Angus	Tealing	Johnny Duncan	7.30-10pm	£2.50	Door	
2 nd	Kirkwall	St Magnus Centre	Live music	8pm	£2/£0.50	Door	Old Time, Ceilidh & Country
6 th	Irvine	Volunteer Rooms	Karen McCulloch	7.30-11.30	£6 supper	Door	Ayrshire Ceilidh Club
	Culter Mills	Social Club	Dick Black	8pm-12mn	?	01224 780 628	Phone for tickets
7 th	Pumphreston	Village Hall	James Coutts	7.30-11.30	£? (supper)	01506 205 051	BYOB
	Newtongrange	Dean Tavern	George Hood	7.30-11.30	£6.50 (supper)	0131 663 6022	A & F Club Supper Dance
	Auchendinny	Glencorse Comm. Hall	Gordon Clark	7.30-11.30	£5 No bar	01721 723 468	(Near Penicuik)
	Elgin	New Elgin Hall	Julie Ritchie	8pm-12mn	£4 Bar/Tea	01343 543 655	Pay at Door - Jolly Dancers
8 th	Arbroath	Café Project	George Rennie	7.30-10pm	£3 Door	01241 879 487	Old Time, Ceilidh & Set dances.
11 th	Ellon	Station Hotel	Frank Thomson	8pm-11pm	£2 Bar	Door	Food available to buy
13 th	Aboyne	Victory Hall	Johnny Duncan	8pm-12mn	£5	01339 886 534	Phone for tickets
	Foulden	Village Hall	Webster Craig	8pm-12mn	£6 No bar	Door	Tel:- 01289 386 400
	Comrie	Croft Barn	Comrie Band	8pm-11.30	Ticket (transport)	01764 670 140	Traditional Barn Dance
14 th	Dufftown	Memorial Hall	Bruce Lindsay	7.30-11.30	?	Door	Old Time Dance
	Glencarse	Village Hall	Alan Doig	7.30-11pm	£3.50	Door	Soft Drinks available
	Strathaven	Ballgreen Hall	Jean McConnachie	7.30-11.30	£6 supper B.Y.O.B.	01357 520900	Avondale Ceilidh Society
	Black Isle	North Kessock	Jock Fraser	8pm-12mn	B.Y.O.B.	Door	Social Dancers
15 th	Montrose	Park Hotel	Johnny Duncan	2pm-5pm	Door	01241 879 487	A & F Club ceilidh
	Glencarse	Village Hall	Gary Sutherland	7.30-10pm	£2.50	Door	Soft Drinks available
	Arbroath	Café Project	Ian Cruickshanks	7.30-10pm	£3 Door	01241 879 487	Old Time, Ceilidh & Set dances.
16 th	Kirkwall	St Magnus Centre	Live music	8pm	£2/£0.50	Door	Old Time, Ceilidh & Country
20 th	St Andrews	BB Hall	John White	7.30-11pm	£5 Raffle	01334 472 375	Kinnessburn Road
21 st	Blackford	Village Hall	Alan Doig	8pm-11.30	£4 No Bar	Door	Soft Drinks Available
	Aviemore	Village Hall	The Worthies	8pm-12mn	£4 Bar	01479 810 933	Pay at Door
	Elgin	New Elgin Hall	Jock Fraser	8pm-12mn	£4 Bar/Tea	01343 543 655	Pay at Door - Jolly Dancers
	Monikie	Memorial Hall	Gavin Piper	7.45-11.45	£3.50 B.Y.O.B.	01382 350 206	Nr Dundee
22 nd	Arbroath	Café Project	Steven Carcary	7.30-10pm	£3 Door	01241 879 487	Old Time, Ceilidh & Set dances.
25 th	Dufftown	Memorial Hall	-	7.30-10.30	?	Door	Monthly Social
	Ellon	Station Hotel	Charlie Esson	8pm-11pm	£2 Bar	Door	Food available to buy
27 th	Helensburgh	Commodore Inn	Donnie & Diane	8pm-1am	£7 (bar)	01389 841 208	Highlanders - Ceilidh
28 th	Blackford	Village Hall	Eden	8pm-11.30	£4 No Bar	Door	Soft Drinks Available
	Inverness	Kirkhill Comm. Hall	Steven Carcary	8pm-12mn	? B.Y.O.B.	Door	
29 th	Glencarse	Village Hall	Ken Stewart Duo	7.30-10pm	£2.50	Door	Soft Drinks available
	Arbroath	Café Project	Mac Kinnear	7.30-10pm	£3 Door	01241 879 487	Old Time, Ceilidh & Set dances.
30 th	Kirkwall	St Magnus Centre	Live music	8pm	£2/£0.50	Door	Old Time, Ceilidh & Country

Scottish Country Dances

October 2006

Date	Town	Hall	Band	Time	Cost	Contact	Comments
Kilmorach, Beaulieu		Village Hall		7.45pm		01463 782 496	SCD Class Every Tuesday
	Dumfries	Marchmont High	John Douglas	7.30pm		01387 770 228	Every Monday
	Dundee	Park Place School	Jimmy Boal	7pm		01382 509 103	Beginners then General Every Tuesday
4 th	Kirkwall	Broad Street	(Comm. Centre)	7pm	£2/50p	01856 873 534	Orkney Traditional Dance Assoc.
6 th	Bearsden	Burgh Hall	James Coutts	7.30pm	£6	0141 942 6850	Light Supper
7 th	London (N.E.)	Woodford	Robin Ellis	7.30pm	(S)	020 8504 1632	See website www.efsa.org.uk
9 th	Dundee	St Andrews Church	Jimmy Boal	7.30pm	£2	01382 509 103	King Street Hall
13 th	Dufftown	Memorial Hall	Colin Dewar	8pm	£6/£4	01542 887 616	Pay at Door
14 th	Stirling	Albert Halls	Colin Dewar	7.30pm	£5	01738 440356	Day School Dance
	Longtown	Community Centre	John Renton		£8	01228 674 698	Caerleol SCD Group
16 th	Dundee	St Andrews Church	Jimmy Boal	7.30pm	£2	01382 509 103	King Street Hall
20 th	Irvine	Castle Park Centre	Ian Hutson	7.30pm	£6	01294 823 865	North Ayrshire Branch Dance
	Reston	Village Hall	Marian Anderson	7.30pm	£5	01361 883 048	Duns & District RSCDS
21 st	Stirling	St Mary's School	David Oswald	7.30pm	£5	Door	Stirling Castle Group - no recaps
	Dalston	Caldew School	Neil Copland	-	-	01228 515 897	Carlisle & Border Branch RSCDS
23 rd	Dundee	St Andrews Church	Jimmy Boal	7.30pm	£2	01382 509 103	King Street Hall
27 th	Helensburgh	St Joseph's Hall	Donald MacLeod	8pm	£6	01436 673 521	Branch Mini Charity
	Kilmarnock	Grand Hall [Ball]	Fleming Sound	7pm	£17.50	01563 523 669	70 th anniv. Kilmarnock Branch RSCDS
	Lockerbie	Academy	Sandy Nixon	8pm	£7	01576 710 656	Lockerbie RSCDS [Buffet Supper]
28 th	Stirling	St Mary's School	Ian Thomson	7.30pm	£5	Door	Stirling Castle Group - no recaps
30 th	Dundee	St Andrews Church	Jimmy Boal	7.30pm	£2	01382 509 103	King Street Hall

Ceilidh & Old Time Dances

November 2006

Date	Town	Hall	Band	Time	Cost	Contact	Comments
4 th	Newtongrange	Dean Tavern	Jimmy Lindsay	7.30-11.30	£6.50 (supper)	0131 663 6022	A & F Club Supper Dance
	Auchendinny	Glencorse Comm. Hall	Webster Craig	7.30-11.30	£5 No bar	01721 723 468	(Near Penicuik)
5 th	Elgin	Bishopmill Hall	Ian Cruickshanks	8pm-12mn	£4 Bar/Tea	01343 543 655	Pay at Door - Jolly Dancers
	Angus	Tealing	Ken Stewart	7.30-10pm	£2.50	Door	
8 th	Ellon	Station Hotel	Charlie Esson	8pm-11pm	£2 Bar	Door	Food available to buy
10 th	Eastwood, Glasgow	Carmichael Hall	Charlie Kirkpatrick	7.30pm - ?	£10 (supper)	0141 638 5200 07973 488093	Charity for Princess of Wales Hospice
	Irvine	Volunteer Rooms	Gary Blair	7.30-11.30	£6 supper	Door	Ayrshire Ceilidh Club
	Foulden	Village Hall	Lindsay Weir	8pm-12mn	£6 supper	Door No Bar	Info 01289 386 400
	Alnwick	Northumberland Hall	Danelaw	8pm -	£5 Bar & Supper	Door	Info 01665 712 044
11 th	Erskine	Bridge Hotel	Dick Black & Eddie Rose	7.30-12.30	£12 Bar & Meal Giant Raffle (Ticket Only)	01505 874 360 0141 880 6380	19 th Annual Erskine Hospital Charity Ceilidh
	Glencarse	Village Hall	George Rennie	7.30-11pm	£3.50	Door	Soft Drinks available
	Strathaven	Ballgreen Hall	Jim Anderson	7.30-11.30	£6 supper B.Y.O.B.	01357 520900	Avondale Ceilidh Society
	Inverness	Kirkhill Comm. Hall	Marian Anderson	8pm-12mn	? B.Y.O.B.	Door	Social Dancers
12 th	Elgin	New Elgin Hall	Johnny Duncan	8pm-12mn	£4 Bar/Tea	01343 543 655	Pay at Door - Jolly Dancers
	Alnwick	Northumberland Hall	West Telferton	8pm -	£5 (£4) Bar	Door	Info 01665 712 044
13 th	Arbroath	Café Project	Wayne Robertson	7.30-10pm	£3 Door	01241 879 487	Old Time, Ceilidh & Set dances.
17 th	Kirkwall	St Magnus Centre	Live music	8pm	£2/£0.50	Door	Old Time, Ceilidh & Country
18 th	Aviemore	Village Hall	Ross MacPherson	8pm-12mn	£4 Bar	01479 810 933	Pay at Door
	East Kilbride	Calderwood Hall	Johnny Duncan	7.30-11.30	£6 supper	Door - B.Y.O.B.	Highlanders
19 th	Monikie	Memorial Hall	Gavin Piper	7.45-11.45	£3.50 No Bar	01382 350 206	Bring own Food
	Montrose	Park Hotel	Gordon Pattullo	2pm-5pm	Door	01241 879 487	A & F Club ceilidh
	Glencarse	Village Hall	George Rennie	7.30-10pm	£2.50	Door	Soft Drinks available
	Arbroath	Café Project	Steven Carcary	7.30-10pm	£3 Door	01241 879 487	Old Time, Ceilidh & Set dances.
22 nd	Ellon	Station Hotel	Frank Thomson	8pm-11pm	£2 Bar	Door	Food available to buy
24 th	Helensburgh	Commodore Inn	Ian Anderson	8pm-1am	£7 (bar)	01389 841 208	Highlanders - Dance
25 th	Pumphreston	Village Hall	Gordon Pattullo	7.30-11.30	£? (supper)	01506 205 051	BYOB
	Black Isle	North Kessock	Wayne Robertson	8pm-12mn	B.Y.O.B.	Door	Social Dancers
	Penicuik	St Mungo's Hall	Ian Hutson	7.30-11.30	£6/£3 Raffle	01968 672 631	B.Y.O.B.
26 th	Arbroath	Café Project	Scott Carnegie	7.30-10pm	£3 Door	01241 879 487	Old Time, Ceilidh & Set dances.
27 th	Kirkwall	St Magnus Centre	Live music	8pm	£2/£0.50	Door	Old Time, Ceilidh & Country
29 th	Dufftown	Memorial Hall	-	7.30-10.30	?	Door	Monthly Social
	Strathaven	Strathaven Hotel	Recorded [Mixed]	6.30-11pm	£11/£8 Meal 8pm	01698 421 726	Charity Dance

Scottish Country Dances

November 2006

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



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

The Dancie

There is almost no Historical Dancing in Scotland. I know of three groups only, and two of those don't take beginners.

There are quite a number of regular classes in England, certainly enough to run a number of different Summer Schools, these latter being what those living North of the Border have to rely on at present.

Whilst I have an emotional predisposition to agree that "Scotch is best", for anything I suppose, but particularly for dance, I feel that it is very important to be able to say exactly why this is so. Indeed, to me, it is of primary importance to actually know what is Scottish and what is not, if you are going to utter that slogan. When it comes to dancing, there is almost as much fiction spoken as about the haggis, with the subtle but important difference that, in the case of the haggis, the speaker knows that it is fiction, even if the hearer can be deceived.

Very little is known by the general public about a major part of our national heritage, and what is "known" is mostly incorrect. I feel that it is of national importance that this terrible gap in our education be rectified.

I recently heard a Highland Dancer claiming that the Fling was 2000 years old. What we see is a typical 18th Century dance, so it was rather like claiming that the New Town of Edinburgh was built by the Romans.

I would ask any of our politicians, local, regional or in Holyrood, the very simple question – "What is Scottish about Scottish Dancing, Highland or Country?" How many do you think could answer that? They could tell you a lot

about haggis though, and the laws about shooting them.

The most Scottish of all dances has almost completely vanished from the ballroom floor. It used to be on every programme of the Saturday night dances when I was a student in the 60s, yet now I dance it but once a year, and that down in Leeds.

As far as Dance is concerned, our children can pass through their entire school years and come out with absolutely no knowledge of this aspect of their own culture.

My interest all began when my parents took up Scottish Country Dancing, and they took me along with them. After a few weeks I found that this was fun, for adult or child. Most other adult activities – like sitting talking for hours, or standing drinking cocktails, were boring to the point of pain, but this was wonderful. Energy was expended, there were complex movements to understand, and if someone went wrong (and as likely an adult as a child, too!) it was just a laughing matter.

Soon, though, I wanted to know why we did this and not that, where did it all come from, who says that we do it this way and even how old is it?

I got some answers, to a few of my questions, but I did not get much. Not until I took up the Historical stuff did I get any sort of perspective on things. But when I did, I came to appreciate my own cultural background in a European framework, which is far removed from bawling out drunken Scottish songs after (and before or during) a football game. This latter seems to be the only thing some people can do to celebrate their nationality, and that is a sad reflection on Scottish education.

These sad thoughts were brought about by a trip to France, in



the company of my local Town Twinning society and a group of Boys Brigade girls and boys, and Scouts. We showed the French some Historical, Highland and Scottish Country Dances, our dancing being much improved by the presence of the young folk. But they had to be taught from scratch, whereas all the older folk had some grounding in Country Dances at least. (I have to admit that our youngest Town Twinner was a very impressive Highland Dancer, which helped a lot, but she hadn't learnt any of that at school.)

The upshot of this dancing in France was a decision to learn some more dances to be ready to entertain the French during their visit here next year, when we are planning an evening

of dance and song through a thousand years. I hope that it won't seem that long.

One of the surprising things I have found in teaching Historical Dance is that by starting with the oldest, (circa 1200), the beginner goes from just walking, by small changes as time goes by, eventually to the complex, sophisticated, and elegant dances of the 18th Century. It is a natural progression, the pupil going through the same stages as the original choreographers of the dances.

After that period, the art of dance starts to decline as far as I am concerned, fading away entirely during the course of the 20th Century. So far, the 21st Century seems to have produced only Lap Dancing, and I have no desire to do that whatsoever. (*Spoil sport! – K.*)

It is a bit worrying, because I find that my views on music, dance, the English language, architecture, town planning, and behaviour (though I never achieve any thing like the 18th Century ideals in these things), all seem to follow the same pattern of a peak in the 18th Century followed by a slowly increasing decline. Perhaps it is just me.

If any reader wishes to join the Historical Dancing, Town Twinning style, please contact either the Secretary, Kinross TT Association, on 01577-862 126, or myself if you happen to see me.

We start on Sunday October 22nd at 2.00 pm, somewhere in Glenfarg, probably the village hall, (if numbers are enough.)

In his article "A Question of Creativity", Finlay Forbes takes a look at what motivates people to Scottish Dance, and what aspects of it give them the pleasure that keeps them in thrall to it. He mentions demonstration dancing, and the social side of it, but neither of these aspects appeals to me

enough to make me go out of an evening. My friend Jim Healy often remarks that I live on a different planet to him and the rest of the world, so here are my thoughts from my small planet. There are three planes or dimensions that come to mind immediately.

Firstly, the pleasure of achieving a successful performance of the dance.

This can be of a Country Dance, a Highland Dance, or Historical Dance; the pleasure of successfully completing it to my satisfaction is a major factor.

No, it is the major factor! It is akin to that felt by a hill walker on conquering the chosen hill, or climbing a tricky ascent, or a cyclist riding successfully over a rough track out in the wilds somewhere – all of which I have often enjoyed. It has nothing to do with external values, of being seen to be successful, but everything to do with the joy of physical movement, of control of one's body, of one's own judgment of spatial relationships, and of successfully completing a challenge to oneself.

Secondly, there is a pleasure in relating to a member of the opposite sex, though I realise

that this is not always possible for the ladies in some classes, as remarked upon in the Military Two-step by Joyce Grenfell! It obviously is not felt by those people who study the ground as they dance, but I always notice how much or little my partner is responding to me, how their handing technique fits with mine, and above all how well they turn, both two handed but especially, one handed. Sadly, few score well on that last category.

Thirdly, the pleasure of dancing with other men! By which I mean the sort of pleasure I get from going to my Probus Club, or the Burns Club (which is all male, now a rarity unfortunately), and it is quite distinct from anything else. In dance it is exceedingly rare, and only obtainable from the Ram's Reel, (the all male foursome), which is my favourite dance, simply because I haven't done it for many years.

As far as demonstrations are concerned, I find the audience just a nuisance, as I have to try to concentrate on doing the dance according to the book, and not my own way. My planet is more fun!

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25 October 2006

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Hobson's Choice

Now That's What I Call A Holiday!

Iknew this was going to be a brilliant day; the way it started set me up just right.

There was I with nothing better to do than blow my nose – don't knock it! It's one of the few pleasures left to me that doesn't hurt in some way. Clean, crisp, fresh-smelling white hanky, steady pressure and a low euphonious sound. A musical friend says that I produce a pure D flat with all the tone of a tuba. Pure, innocent, harmless satisfaction. Even the voice from indoors could not dull the moment.

"Are you shaving?"

"No, I'm blowing my nose, does it sound like shaving?"

"It wasn't a question, it was a statement, we're meeting some Germans later."

Memories flooded back, the Stuttgarter Spielkreis were here to exact revenge for what we did to their Cabbage Festival, what we did in kilts while they were in their Langer Kleide, what we did on various cobbles, in many squares and hospitals and schools. Incidentally, if you ever have to clear a space, big enough to dance in, in a kilt-nosey crowd, get your piper to walk round in ever-increasing circles while giving it laldy!

Lovely people, multi-talented singers, musicians and dancers, days of sharing memories, nights of dancing, playing, singing. Learning theirs and teaching ours. The very best of Highland Ceilidh. Inverness and District RSCDS should be bursting with pride at what has happened here over the years, with Germans, Norwegians, Canadians, Americans and Japanese – and they are only the ones that I remember. All of these invaders have left their mark and we in turn have



colonised their countries. Not only are we shamed when all of these people speak better English than we do, but we are shamed when they pick up in minutes our balletic Country Dance and we fall over our laughing feet in the simplest of their folk and social dances. But we do learn! And we really enjoy!

Here's one from this year's canon:

One man between two ladies, all trios facing anti-clockwise round room, march, walk or dance as you choose, preferably to the music, for eight or sixteen bars

By George Hobson

(you may need the sixteen later as mayhem ensues).

Raise your joined arms with left hand partner and pass your right hand partner under, while performing nonsensical capers or proceeding sedately.

Release said right hand partner to middle of the floor where they join in grand circle with all other released ladies and circle left while the remaining pairs turn fast or slow as they choose for eight bars.

Now the man must transfer the remaining partner to his right (so that he can get rid of her next!)

Now grab a lady from the centre to complete your trio and return to grand promenade.

The normal mayhem comes because there is always at least one spare lady well separated from an incomplete trio, so much running is required to catch up!

Additional mayhem can be produced quietly by any leftover pairs who could not get up in time to start the dance, sliding in and stealing a centre lady, leaving some poor pair wondering what has happened. Leftover singles may similarly infiltrate the centre circle and displace legitimate dancers for eight bars or so. Noisier mayhem may result from vigorous spinning propulsion of the right hand lady, or hooligan birling of the remaining partner. I hasten to add I did NOT do any





of this, but much happy laughter did result.

As if this wasn't already enough fun for one lifetime, we then got to zip across to the Fort William Day School with Linda Gaul. I really can't understand how I can go to so many good day schools with splendid teachers and never get any better. This must be a major talent in its own right! The one thing above all others that may help me to dance better, is to remember to dance from the heart and communicate it through my eyes, and perhaps to dance more quietly in every sense of the word! Certainly Linda thought we ought to make mistakes more quietly. When Country Dancers smile you can be sure they have just done something wrong, and all the others smile back in companionship, understanding or pity. When something goes wrong in a move for a couple there is a brief eruption of laughter. A disaster results in a corpsed set and everyone else, including the

teacher, wondering how they are having so much more fun than us? As a compliment to Linda's teaching I gather that Alistair Smyth is sending her a couple of his fabulous cartoons of Helga, the jackbooted, leather-skirted, dominatrix teacher in action! Sunday would have been a day of rest, but Rob Sargent was presenting his new hornpipes (see last month's "Dance On!"), and who could resist? A brilliant concept, brilliantly tried. Specific hornpipes, culled from the archives or specially composed, allowed to speak for themselves in an attempt to break away a little from the jig reel dominance perceived by many to be a problem. The mixed group from a range of backgrounds all tried steps from their culture. All of them fitted and all went well with each other. Rob favours a percussive step, turned-out in basic step-close-step form that would pose no real problems for Country Dancers apart from banging their heels down! Irish

Set Dancing polka step fitted perfectly well. Step Dancers had a whole range of things that fitted. Possibly best and simplest was the Canadian Barn dance step (step-step-step-hop). I found I favoured what the Old Timers did with lock step for travelling with cross step for close work and backstep for close retiring. But the essence is doing simple dances to powerful music with whatever steps you can manage and having uncomplicated FUN. There has to be a place for this new form, even if it is just in the warm-up and warm-down exercises in standard Country Dance classes. I sincerely hope Rob will publish more of his dances in "Dance On!" to reach the widest possible audience. All of this is the product of my memory. Our memories are the only things we truly own, and in our lives the only things wholly true. If your memories are different - tough!

To Demonstrate or not to Demonstrate?

By Finlay Forbes

Some years ago, when I was sufficiently green in judgement to serve on a committee, I remember being not particularly interested in a short but quite passionate debate about the correct nomenclature for public performances of Scottish Country Dancing. Those versed in such matters averred that the only serious contenders for such a hollow crown were "display" and "demonstration". For some reason known only to a select few, "exhibition" and good old "performance" were not in the running. Eventually, those considered to be in the know judged "demonstration" to be the winner. Display it transpired was something of a dirty word or at least a word that had an underlying air of vulgarity as far as those who inhabited the cloistered world of Jordanhill were concerned. Scottish Country Dancing performed for the public's edification should not be showy or attention seeking. Yes I know! Practitioners of the common Schottische and not so common three beat pas de Basque have yet to grasp the basics of the entertainment industry but living in a closed community tends to have that effect on people. In this context, the word demonstration may leave those earnest souls who rule Scottish Country Dancing untroubled but for those without the camp, it is a woefully inaccurate description of what a public performance of Scottish Country Dancing really is. Demonstration has enough meanings as it is. It does not need the world of Scottish Country Dancing adding to the confusion. Even if we rule out any similarities to protest marches, demonstrations of Country Dancing are not quite the same as demonstrations of cookery, flower arranging or compost making. The difference may be subtle but it is there.

Why do we have demonstration sets? I have danced in many in my time but never once did I

have any purpose in mind beyond getting on with the task in hand. What were my gyrations supposed to achieve (beyond romance in some cases and financial reward in others)?

Is the purpose of a demonstration set to demonstrate what Scottish Country Dancing is really like or is it to allow its members to strut their stuff before an admiring audience? To put another way, are demonstration dancers in pursuit of recruits or plaudits? Anyone tempted to answer this question should remember that body language never lies.

In reality, the demonstration set as we know it may be yet another manifestation of Scottish Country Dancing's deep-seated desire to inhabit the neutral zone between performing art and recreational activity. It tries to be a recreational activity through the week but on high days and holidays attempts to assume the status of a performing art. Public performances of such an activity, however well choreographed, are unlikely to draw forth the onlookers' awe and wonder. The skill levels on display will always be those of a recreational activity and therefore too low to impress an audience. The effect is similar to that created by one of the worlds' leading concert pianists playing a recital made up entirely of Grade 1 pieces. Members of the audience would probably go away feeling short-changed at having been treated to something that they believed they could do themselves with or without a bit of practice.

Any idea that demonstration sets are all about demonstrating how it is done so that the onlookers can re-enact what they have just witnessed is rarely borne out by the facts. The dances on offer are usually far too difficult for such an argument to be tenable. Anyone who could dance Bratach Bana or The Bees of Maggie Knockater after a single demonstration would require a level of balletic genius worthy of the great Nureyev himself. "Yer average punter"

who is after a bit of social and recreational exercise wouldn't have a hope.

Against this background, demonstrations always risk falling between two stools. If they reflect Scottish Country Dancing as it is likely to be for beginners, they will prove too dull to be worth watching. How many demonstration teams would consider dances like "The White Cockade" and "The Linton Ploughman" worthy reasons for getting dolled up in all their finery and putting themselves through all that sweat and strain? Yet, those are the dances that most rookies will end up doing. If the basic dances are choreographed to produce something vaguely resembling entertainment, they cease to demonstrate what Scottish Country Dancing really is. Dancers do not normally change from longwise to square sets in mid sequence and they certainly do not form sets in the wings of the hall and come dancing on to the floor to get into position (do they?). In cases like these, demonstration has clearly been supplanted by display.

Professionals who devise dance routines to go with Scottish dance music or to reflect the dancing spirit of Scotland rarely turn to Country Dancing for inspiration. Its footwork is too demure and its visual impact too feeble to set the audience's collective pulse racing. At floor level the visual effect is usually one of bodies shuttling in and out for no apparent reason. A reel of three does not look like a dynamic figure of eight unless it is viewed from above. Aerial views (in the rare cases where they are practicable) tend to expose the space limitations of the set and make the whole thing appear constricted and stuck in a box. A set in the middle of a large floor looks about as appetising as nouvelle cuisine to a starving navvy. Paradoxically, knowledgeable Country Dancers do not notice these features because they know what is

supposed to happen and derive satisfaction from the fact that what is supposed to happen actually happens. Professional choreographers tend to turn to the more showy footwork and body gestures of Highland and the spatial freedom of Ballet if they want to produce real entertainment.

"Correct" footwork may look attractive to someone who knows how it is supposed to be done but in this case, the expert eye is apt to cloud the judgement when it comes to assessing entertainment value. Textbook footwork can draw forth some surprisingly uncomplimentary metaphors from an audience that is totally clueless about the correct way of doing it.

Pipers, for all their insularity, are very aware of the differences between the need to impress other pipers and the need to entertain the public. A piper with even the remotest trace of a survival instinct would not play piobaireachd to a bunch of inebriated revellers at a Hogmanay party. The party people just would not appreciate the finer points of dithis, taorluath and other assorted artistic features in the way that a bunch of judges at the Highland Games would. Dyed in the wool Country Dancers seem to be less sensitive to these matters.

This gulf between technical perfection and entertainment has become something of a blind spot for demonstration teams. Part of the problem stems from the introversion that has beleaguered Scottish Country Dancing since the early sixties when it decided to distance itself from the star bandleaders of the time and go it alone. By choosing to enter such a monastic existence, Country Dancing cut itself off from mainstream Scottish entertainment and in so doing, lost most of its potential to appeal to an audience. Since then it has had a tendency to measure itself against itself instead of against less biased and therefore less flattering external reference points. Expert Country Dancers will look at a demonstration set's performance

and form an opinion of it based on their inside knowledge and personal preferences. They are totally incapable of assessing it as pure entertainment because they have too high a personal stake in the final judgement. In these circumstances those on the inside are very susceptible to the "They're a oot o step but Oor Jock" school of thinking. Other forms of dance never look as good because they are so different from ours. Unfortunately, neutral observers



(including potential recruits) do not always see it that way.

This year, over sixty six thousand people attended the Great British Beer Festival at Earl's Court. I suspect that very few of those who passed through the turnstiles did so to watch what was going on. Beer tasting is a very pleasant social and recreational activity but it is not particularly entertaining to watch. Wisely, those who promote it take this into account and avoid having demonstration teams. Certain female participants may indulge in a bit of schadenfreude when they see men having to queue at liquid redistribution points but that feature on its own is not going to sell extra tickets.

A casual attendee is unlikely to find earnest discussions on malt/hop balance or the virtues of the Reinheitsgebot particularly interesting without sampling the products under discussion. Even "witty" suggestions that certain fluids purporting to be beer bear a disturbing resemblance to the results of musteline renal activity (how can they tell?) degenerate into clichés after a surprisingly small number of replays.

What all this proves is that something that is a pleasant social and recreational activity

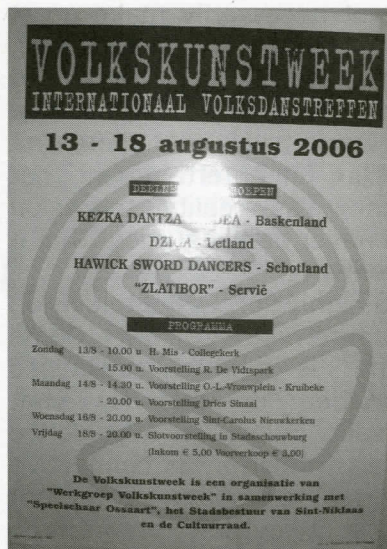
does not necessarily make great entertainment for an audience. Unfortunately, the same is not true of unpleasant social activity. If it were true, that bankrupt substitute for entertainment that we know as reality television would never be the success that it apparently is.

Even a highly successful television programme like "Celebrity Come Dancing" is a thinly disguised combination of celebrity chat and reality television with dance intervals thrown in as connective programming tissue. It is not really a television programme about Ballroom Dancing. Ballroom Dancing is just a means to an end. In this age of celebrity obsession, a television series based on superbly executed non-competitive ballroom dancing by unknown experts would probably draw far smaller audiences. On the same note, it is frightening to think that a programme featuring soap opera stars attempting to play Beethoven's Violin Concerto would probably draw more viewers than one that featured Tasmin Little doing the same thing. A great violinist playing a great piece of music superbly is no match for a pack of well known incompetents making a real mess of it. Reach for your stock of hankies now! Television producers are very skilled at dressing one thing up as another to draw in the viewers, many whom will take pleasure in seeing the rich and famous playing to their weaknesses. Without the celebrity embarrassment factor, the show would be yet another monument to the BBC's programming ineptitude.

Whether Scottish Country Dancing is a suitable vehicle for the ritual humiliation of celebrities is a question that may be worth asking, especially if it leads ultimately to the demise of the farce that is celebrity "culture".

Maybe that is where the future of the demonstration set lies – three competent couples and two flannel footed celebrities cavorting about on television with the Great British Public phoning in. Now there's a thought!

It would certainly change Scottish Country Dancing's image.



A group of dancers from the Borders were invited to take part in a festival in Sint-Niklaas near Antwerp from Sat 12th to Friday 18th August. They were guests of a local group whom they met in Austria three years ago. Other groups from Serbia, Latvia and the Basque region of Spain also took part. This festival has been in existence for more than thirty years and takes place every two years; this was the first visit from a Scottish group.

All the groups stayed with host families in Sint-Niklaas and surrounding villages. There was a lot of support from the local community with a civic reception held for visitors with the Deputy Mayor present. The weather was very wet but the wonderful hospitality more than made up for it. The groups danced in village halls and old people's homes and finished with a Grand Concert on the Friday night.



Swords rehearsal



Louise Douglas, Christine Anderson, & Ruth Longmuir



Dancing in the rain



Bryan Thomson gets some piping tips from Michael Bruce



Darren & Ian Thomson with their Belgian hosts



The team with their host families





Postie's Jig



Papa Stour Swords with a difference (above) and for real (below).



Highland Dancers, Isla & Emma Elliott-Walker



Emma Elliott Walker with her host Cristoff



The Basques



Jock Thomson does his best for overseas relations.

The Latvian group



Eksjö Tattoo



*Pipers and
Dancers on
their marks.*



The Scottish Dance Team



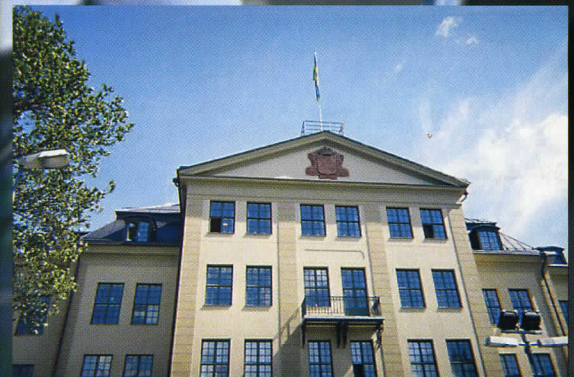
The Glencorse Pipe Band



John Durrand is ready for the off!



James Blair enjoys the scenery



Home from home, the Barracks.



The Scots impress the Tattoo audience