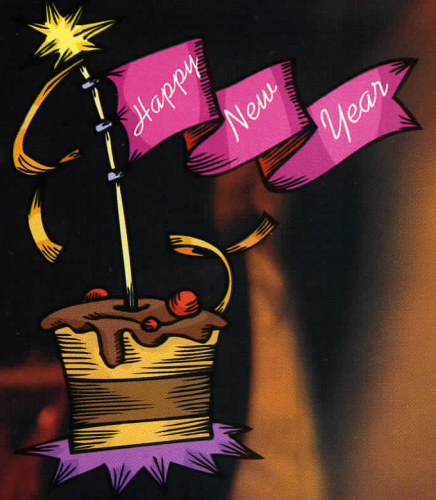
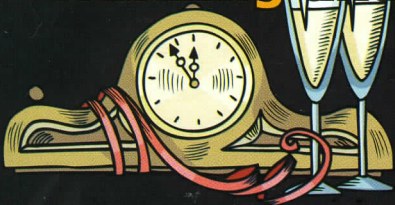


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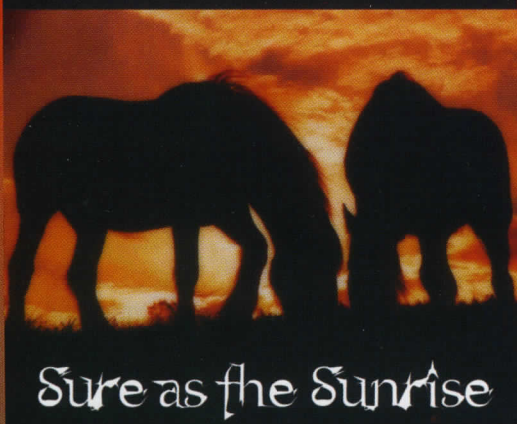
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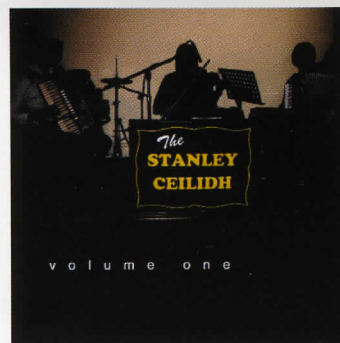
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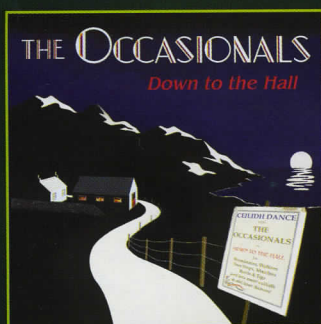
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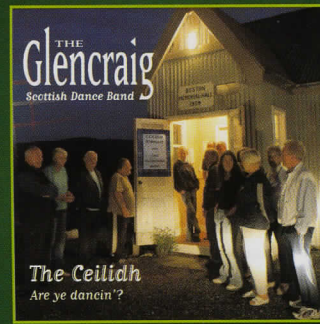
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## Editorial

**M**any of you will be due to renew your subscriptions this month, and the "Dance On!" team would like to thank you for your support this last year. Our readership is growing virtually daily and we are delighted with the articles and photographs that you are contributing. We've lots of exciting things planned for next year. We'll be at the Orkney Ceilidh Weekend in April, then it's off to Skye for the Island Fling on 8 June. We're hoping to begin taking bookings for the Island Fling next month as soon as we have all the tutors confirmed. At the moment we have the usual team of top-class musicians (Stuart Anderson, Judith Linton, Nicol McLaren & David Scott) and our Old Time tutor is the one and only Jessie Stuart. We will also be welcoming Lorna Fotheringham and Neil Leask who will be coming to teach Orkney Dance. There will be Scottish Country Dance, Step Dance and maybe even some Cornish! We're looking forward to this year's Scotch Hop in Linlithgow and hope to be attending each week and supporting John Carswell in this excellent venture. Later in the summer we will be holding our first ever "Dance On!" Day – more news about that very soon! Have a wonderful New Year!

**Karin**

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*Front cover photograph of Robbie Shepherd*

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Filters House, Dodburn, By Hawick, Scottish Borders TD9 0PG

**Editor: Karin Ingram**

**E-mail: [editor@danceon.co.uk](mailto:editor@danceon.co.uk)**

**Marketing Manager: Laura Ellis**

**E-mail: [laura@northbeat.co.uk](mailto:laura@northbeat.co.uk)**

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# Robbie's a Winner

**T**he Scots Trad Music Awards were held in Fort William on Saturday December 2<sup>nd</sup>. Take the Floor was recorded the night before in Caol Community Hall with Gordon Shand and his Band, who won the Scottish Dance Band of the Year in 2005. Awards went to many in the Scottish Dance Scene. The RSCDS sponsored The Strathspey and Reel Society of the Year, and Musical Director Mo Rutherford presented the trophy to the winner, Banchory. The Marian Anderson Scottish Dance Band won this year's Award for Dance Band of the Year, sponsored by The National Association of Accordion and Fiddle Clubs and presented by its Chairman, Nicol McLaren. Sir Jimmy Shand MBE and Fergie MacDonald were among the inductees to the "Hall of Fame". The highest accolade of the night – The Hamish Henderson Award for Services to Traditional Music – was won by Robbie Shepherd. He is as much a part of Scottish broadcasting as the Hogmanay Bells. As the presenter of BBC Radio Scotland's Take the Floor and The Reel Blend, Robbie's strong Doric tones have made him welcome in homes throughout Scotland, and with the advent of Internet broadcasting, his audience now stretches across the world. He was born in Dunecht, twelve miles outside Aberdeen, and when Robbie was growing up his father used to go into the city once a month to buy records. The young Robbie could hardly wait to hear the latest Jimmy Shand, Robert Wilson and Kenneth MacKellar offerings, and his enthusiasm for Scottish music has never diminished. His own instrument is the moothie. In his younger days



*Robbie receiving his Award. © Nicol McLaren*





**Esma & Robbie Shepherd. Robbie often jokes that his MBE stands for "Man Behind Esma". © Nicol McLaren**

he played with a band and once supported Calum Kennedy, but it was language that was to bring him to the public attention. He has commentated on the Highland Games circuit, including the famous Braemar Gathering, since the 1960s and as a popular concert compere he travelled the length and breadth of Scotland and down to The Royal Albert Hall with The Scottish Fiddle Orchestra. His weekly columns for the Aberdeen Press & Journal, in which he reflects with wry humour on current affairs, books and films, has long enjoyed an enthusiastic following. Written in Doric – hence the published collection, "Doric Columns" – they find their way all over the world to appreciative readers, and Robbie's acknowledged expertise in his mother tongue resulted him being awarded the M.Univ (Master of the University) by Aberdeen University in 2001.

When the original host of Take the Floor, David Findlay, died in 1981, Robbie was given the opportunity to take over. Despite initial opposition from some who found his broad Doric accent unsuitable, Robbie soon made the programme his own. His warm welcome and genuine

love of the music he presents immediately puts an audience at ease.

This is particularly true when Take the Floor takes to the road and broadcasts live from Lerwick or Achiltibuie or the many other places where Robbie and crew have rolled up. Such adventures don't always go entirely to plan. Robbie well remembers the time he and his production team had to saw through a chain across the door of a Glasgow hall

before they got in and got the show going. Then, on Mull, they had to keep pumping coins into a hungry electricity meter so that the power would stay on through the show.

The power of Robbie's personality has ensured that many other honours have come his way. In 1992 Robbie's services to Scottish Music were recognised by The National Association of Accordion and Fiddle Clubs, and in 1998 he was presented with an award for his outstanding loyalty to the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society. In the 2001 New Years Honours List Robbie was appointed MBE for his services to Scottish Music and Culture. Other recognition has come in the form of a ceilidh band calling themselves Robbie Shepherd's Nightmare, a wonderful tune – *Robbie Shepherd MBE* – written by renowned dance band leader Graeme Mitchell, and a poem written in his honour by Simon Brown – a suitable tribute to a man of letters and a poet of the airwaves.



**Organiser Simon Thumire with Robbie and Marian Anderson and Max Ketchin from Marian's winning band.**



# In Memoriam

## Hugh Anstrid Thurston, 1922-2006

*By Rosemary Coupe, Vancouver*

Today the University of British Columbia is a city within a city, with massive high-rise buildings. In the 1950s and 1960s, however, permanent buildings were sparse, and the gaps between them were filled with uniform rows of World War II army huts. One (Hut L5) was the home of the West Point Grey Scottish Country Dance Club and its teacher, mathematics professor Hugh Thurston. Even a casual visitor could see that Hugh cared passionately about dancing. He insisted on precise phrasing, and he taught and demonstrated with perfect clarity. His style was simple and unpretentious, like the army hut itself, but there was an intensity about the classes. The group was close-knit and friendly – after the Friday class, everyone would go to the home of one of the members for tea, and listen to Hugh talk about the dances and their history.

West Point Grey was not the first class Hugh taught. As a very young Englishman during World War II – obviously a mathematical whiz kid – he worked as a cryptographer deciphering the messages of the Italian navy and later the Japanese armed forces. His friendship with Hugh Foss (a leading codebreaker at Bletchley Park) must have dated from that time, and likely Foss sparked his interest in Scottish dancing with its intricate patterns. Later, Hugh Thurston dated his interest in Scottish dancing as starting in 1943.

Hugh Thurston took his PhD at Trinity College, Cambridge. While there, he likely joined the Cambridge Reel Club, and he would have met fellow Cambridge mathematician and dance historian Tom Flett, whose "Traditional Dancing in Scotland"



*Hugh Thurston demonstrating sword dancing in Bristol.*

*Photograph courtesy of Graham Pickering*

was eventually published in 1964. Then for some years in the 1950s Hugh lived in Bristol. Jean Hood, a member of the Bristol Branch, remembers him:

"It was in the 1950s when I joined Hugh Thurston's class on a Thursday at Westmorland Hall. It was a lively group, full of enthusiasm... There was always an excuse for fancy dress, and any date was seized upon: Midsummer Day, Hallowe'en, Hogmanay, St Andrew's Day, Guy Fawkes, someone's birthday. It was not always easy to dance in heavy costume! We gave demonstrations all over the region... We had two visits from Miss Milligan, the second to test us on the first part of the teaching exam."

Later in "The Thistle", Hugh

himself remembered the group's trip to Italy at the invitation of Italian dancers. They travelled in kilts with their own piper, giving impromptu performances in piazzas. One day they danced a foursome and broadswords while waiting for a train in Milan, and had to scramble aboard when the train left early. Hugh's interest in the dances of other cultures may date from this period in his life, as well as the Cambridge Reel Club's trip to Sweden in 1951.

While still in his early 30s, Hugh amassed a huge amount of information on the historical background of the dances, and in 1954 he published "Scotland's Dances". The foreword was written by Hugh Foss, OBE, who by this time was Chairman of the London Branch of the RSCDS. This book, still in print, is typical of Hugh Thurston in several





***Marjorie Gibson, Tom Gregory, Josephine Pickering & Hugh Thurston dancing on Redland Green in the mid-fifties.***

***Photograph courtesy of Graham Pickering***

ways. It takes a careful analytical approach to the history of dancing in Scotland, probably the first book to do so. It presents information in meticulous detail, listing the sources, for example, of dances currently popular. Finally, the book covers the whole gamut of Scottish dancing, from reels, Highland dances, and Hebridean dances to country dances.

By 1956, Hugh had moved to Boston, becoming the first editor of the Boston Branch newsletter "The Tartan Times". He came to Vancouver in 1958 to take up a position in the Department of Mathematics at UBC, and lost no time in founding the West Point Grey Scottish Country Dance Club. He befriended Mary Isdale MacNab and taught her dances with great enthusiasm. In 1961 he first issued his own remarkable dance magazine, "The Thistle". The first number of "The Thistle" began with two sentences typical of Hugh's understated style: "We have decided to issue a magazine. This is it."

"The Thistle" published new dances and historical studies of traditional dances. It explored similarities and differences between Scottish dancing and other dance traditions. It answered readers' questions on all matters connected with dancing. It gave advice on dance technique. It contained puzzles and quizzes to intrigue

its readers (Hugh was ever the playful cryptographer). While the original articles were not signed, almost all (perhaps even some of the readers' questions!) were pretty obviously written by Hugh himself.

Above all, the 55 issues of "The Thistle" show Hugh's erudition and the breadth of his interests. He writes with authority not only on Scottish country dancing, but on Serbian, Bulgarian, Scandinavian, Portuguese, and Irish dancing, and on New England contra dancing. Other articles show his detailed

knowledge of music.

During these years, Hugh and his wife Nina (they married in 1962) taught at SCD workshops in Vancouver, Calgary, and Kamloops. They were also active in the international dance community. In 1964 Hugh served as President of the Northwest Folk Dancers Incorporated, an organization coordinating the folk dancers of Alaska, BC, Washington, and Oregon. Nina edited the group's newsletter and followed Hugh as President in 1967. Dub Fortenberry of Seattle, whose background is Swedish, remembers being amazed at what Hugh knew about Swedish dancing, and at his understanding of the rhythms of all the countries of Europe: "When he was teaching rhythms, for example in Bellingham, he called them off like you'd say 2 plus 2."

Hugh's attitude towards the RSCDS was complex. He combined great personal respect for Miss Milligan with a critical attitude towards the work of the RSCDS in reconstructing old dances. Various "Thistle" articles pointed out misinterpretations by the RSCDS editors, often showing the reader the difference between the dance as originally written and the dance as arbitrarily re-written by the RSCDS. Yet when Miss Milligan visited Vancouver in 1963, Hugh and Nina were eager to host



***With the demo team on Redland Green in the mid-fifties.***

***Photograph courtesy of Graham Pickering***



her. Marianne Taylor of Boston remembers a story originally told by Stewart Smith:

"Miss Milligan and Stewart Smith are flying to Vancouver, where she intends to give Dr. Thurston a piece of her mind about his recently published comments on the RSCDS research techniques and their way of figuring out Scottish dances. They get to Vancouver; Hugh meets them; his wife Nina gives them a lovely meal and then Hugh and Miss M. go into his study, while Stewart sits outside, chewing his nails and listening for sounds of conflict. After about an hour, Hugh and Miss M. emerge, all smiles, and Miss M. trumpets, "Dr. Thurston and I have agreed to disagree!" Hugh was such a marvellous, intelligent charmer that he charmed even her! And he was most likely right, as usual.

After her stay, Miss Milligan showed nothing but appreciation for the kindness of the Thurstons.

From Vancouver, Hugh Thurston kept in touch with Hugh Foss. Foss took a broad-minded, often humorous approach to contentious issues, yet remained a committed member of the RSCDS. Every year "The Thistle" published Foss's account of Summer School and the topics stressed by Miss Milligan, who always seemed to be "at the top of her form". Many clever and wonderful poems by Foss appeared in "The Thistle" too. Hugh Thurston also admired the work of Tom and Joan Flett, whose field work was done from a different perspective from that of the RSCDS. He invited the Fletts to give workshops in Vancouver, and they taught reels from Shetland, Orkney, and Barra.

Hugh's own interest in traditional reels may have led him to compose his best-known dance, "Schiehallion". Here is his account of its composition:

"The idea was to create a new reel. The Scottish reel has a very definite structure – a verse-and-chorus pattern. Think of the Foursome Reel for example (the plain Foursome, not the

Strathspey and Tulloch); here the reel of four is the chorus and the various steps are the verses. In the Threesome Reel, the chorus is the arching figure, and again the verses are steps. In the Reel of Tulloch, the birling is the chorus; and the same structure can be followed in the Fivesome Reel, the Sixsome Reel (as in *The Border Book*), the Shetland (Sixsome) Reel, the Sixer Reel from Oxton (published under the name Oxton Reel) and so on.

There seemed little point in creating a new reel with one new figure to act as chorus, letting the dancers choose steps for the verses, as so many reels on this pattern existed. But there did seem to be a place for a reel with a definite chorus and a choice of figures (rather than setting steps) for the verses. And this is the way Schiehallion was first presented: the chorus as we know it (half a grand chain and Highland schottische, and repeat) and a repertoire of a dozen or so figures for the dancers to choose from."

It turned out, however, that dancers did not want to choose their own figures, but preferred to be told what to do. So, Hugh writes:

"I therefore noted the four figures that seemed most popular (two strathspey and two reel seemed to give the dance about the right length), put them in what seemed a good order, and began to teach (and eventually to publish) the dance in this form."

The name "Schiehallion" must have been inspired by the beautiful symmetry of the mountain and perhaps also its association with the history of science. Dr. Nevil Maskelyne, eighteenth-century Astronomer Royal, attempted to calculate the mass of the earth by determining the mass of Schiehallion itself and observing the degree to which it caused a pendulum to deflect. Such experiments would have appealed to Hugh Thurston's mathematical mind.

The term "Schiehallion" is now best known to dancers as applied to the "Schiehallion reels" which end the dance. Hugh preferred to call this figure a "reel of eight", and stressed that it was not really his original figure, but essentially the same as the reels in the traditional Axum Reel.

Among country dances, Hugh preferred the simpler, traditional ones. His favourite dance was



**Hugh dancing on Queen Elizabeth Plaza, Vancouver. Nina is on right of photo, Dorothy Ross on left, and Alistair Ross behind.**



"The Duke of Perth" (which he danced not in the RSCDS style, but with what he described as "elbow-cup" turns). He would be glad to know that his dance "The Flying Scotsman" is now a ceilidh favourite. He did not care for "artificially contrived exhibitions" of country dancing, preferring to see country dancing "as it is normally and naturally done". This may explain another story told by Marianne Taylor:

"My other wonderful memory of him was when our folkdance performing group went to a festival in Saint John, NB, where the Don Messer show was the headliner. We performed dances of many countries, including one Scottish set. Hugh's comment on our performance was, 'Well, it may not be ROYAL Scottish country dancing, but it certainly is Scottish country dance.'

The main figure in the only Hugh Thurston dance published by the RSCDS, "The Last of the Lairds", is also traditional in origin, based on the cross-over reels found in dances like "Maxwell's Rant". (Hugh Foss described the dance as "Maxwell's Rant cubed".) Given Hugh's ambivalence towards RSCDS editors, it is ironic that the RSCDS Publications Committee chose to alter "The Last of the Lairds" so that all three couples are moving on bar 32 and again on bar 1 at the beginning of the next repetition. This to Hugh was the mark of a poorly conceived or poorly reconstructed dance. He certainly would not have agreed with the Committee that "the ending shown

above is more satisfactory", as the note in Book 22 says he did.

In the early 1970s, Hugh and Nina moved away from Scottish country dancing towards folk dancing in a broader context. A sabbatical year spent in Turkey further spurred their interest in international dancing.

Throughout his career, Hugh was also active in his professional field, writing five books on the pedagogy of mathematics. After retiring as an Emeritus Professor, his interests turned to the history of astronomy. In "Early Astronomy" (1994) Hugh showed the same breadth of erudition as he had done in his writing about the dance, describing the astronomy of many pre-modern cultures including Greek, Babylonian, Chinese, and Mayan. A former student wrote, "His book is as entertaining as his lectures were."

In retirement, Hugh entered the debate about the observations of Ptolemy and their dubious validity. He also wrote a fascinating account of his war-time work in cryptography for an on-line

magazine. In the same magazine he described his interests as "early astronomy, pure mathematics, cryptography, and scepticism" – a telling list. When Hugh Foss died in 1971, Hugh Thurston wrote, "In the days when leaders in the Scottish country dance movement tended to be narrowly dogmatic, Hugh (Foss) pleaded for liberality based on knowledge." This statement could just as easily apply to Thurston himself.

In later life, Hugh returned to Scottish country dancing, joining the White Rock Club for several years up to the early 1990s. Nina Thurston died on 14 September, 2006, and Hugh on 29 October, 2006. They left no family.

*Thanks to **Fiona Grant** of Bristol, **Marianne Taylor** of Boston, and **Dub Fortenberry** of Seattle for supplying material.*



***Hugh Thurston (centre) dancing the Kola at Crescent Beach Camp, 1963. The more casually dressed man to his right is Bob Simpson, first Chair of the Vancouver Branch***



## Ceilidh &amp; 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	Ceilidh & Old Time Club
Every Wednesday	Glasgow University	Student Union, University Avenue	-	7.30-10pm Bar	£4	0141 334 9869 or 07050 222 173	Dance Club
Every Thursday	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 Friday	Newtongrange	Morris Club	Live Music	7.30-10pm	£3/£1.50	Door (Karin Ingram)	Ceilidh & Old Time Club
Every Saturday	Glasgow	St Andrews in Square	Live Music	7.30-9.30	£4 Bar	Door (Tricia Matthews)	Ceilidh & Old Time Class
Every Sunday	Midlem	Village Hall	Live Music	8pm-10pm	£1.50	Door (Gracie Belle Scott)	Old Time Dance Class
Every Monday	Penicuik	St Mungo's Hall	-	8pm-9.30	£2.70	Door (Annabel Oates)	Restarts 11-1-07

## Ceilidh &amp; Old Time Dances

## January 2007

Date	Town	Hall	Band	Time	Cost	Contact	Comments
1 <sup>st</sup>	Foulton	Village Hall	Dod Hutchison	8pm-12mn	£5 supper	Door No Bar	Info 01289 386 400
	Glencarse	Village Hall	Johnny Duncan	7.30-11.30	£1.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 <sup>nd</sup>	Elgin	New Elgin Hall	Lindsay Weir	8pm-12mn	£4 Bar/Tea	01343 543 655	Pay at Door - Jolly Dancers
6 <sup>th</sup>	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 <sup>th</sup>	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 <sup>th</sup>	Kirkwall	St Magnus Centre	Live music	8pm	£2/£0.50	Door	Old Time, Ceilidh & Country
12 <sup>th</sup>	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 <sup>th</sup>	Glencarse	Village Hall	Wayne Robertson	7.30-11pm	£3.50 Door	01738 860 574	Soft Drinks available
14 <sup>th</sup>	Arbroath	Café Project	George Rennie	7.30-10pm	£3 Door	01241 879 487	Old Time, Ceilidh & Set dances.
19 <sup>th</sup>	Foulton	Village Hall	Bon Accords	8pm-12mn	£5 supper	Door No Bar	Info 01289 386 400
20 <sup>th</sup>	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 <sup>st</sup>	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 <sup>nd</sup>	Kirkwall	St Magnus Centre	Live music	8pm	£2/£0.50	Door	Old Time, Ceilidh & Country
26 <sup>th</sup>	Helensburgh	Commodore Inn	Stuart McKeown	8pm-1am	£7 (bar)	01389 841 208	Highlanders - Dance
28 <sup>th</sup>	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 <sup>th</sup>	Seamill	Hydro Hotel	Nicol McLaren			01294 823 865	New Year Ball
	Helensburgh	Victoria Halls	Alan Ross	7.30pm	£2.50		Members Dance
10 <sup>th</sup>	Kirkwall	Broad Street	(Comm. Centre)	7.30pm	£2/50p	01856 873 534	Orkney Traditional Dance Assoc.
11 <sup>th</sup>	Stirling	Albert Halls	Marian Anderson	7.30pm	£5	Door	Visiting Group - Charity Dance
12 <sup>th</sup>	Paisley	Town Hall	Ian Muir Sound	7.30pm	£18.50	0141 942 6850	Glasgow RSCDS Annual Ball
13 <sup>th</sup>	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 <sup>th</sup>	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 <sup>th</sup>	Hyde	Town Hall	Iain MacPhail	7pm	£15	0161 633 1528	RSCDS Manchester - Ball
26 <sup>th</sup>	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 <sup>th</sup>	Stirling	St Mary's School	James Coutts	7.30pm	£5	Door	Stirling Castle Group - no recaps



## Ceilidh &amp; Old Time Dances

February 2007

Date	Town	Hall	Band	Time	Cost	Contact	Comments
3 <sup>rd</sup>	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 <sup>th</sup>	Angus	Tealing	Johnny Duncan	7.30-10pm	£2.50	Door	
5 <sup>th</sup>	Kirkwall	St Magnus Centre	Live music	8pm	£2/£0.50	Door	Old Time, Ceilidh & Country
9 <sup>th</sup>	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 <sup>th</sup>	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 <sup>th</sup>	Glasgow	Trades Hall	Scotland's Ceilidh	7.30-11pm	£15 Buffet	0141 948 1170	FPA Charity Dance
17 <sup>th</sup>	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 <sup>th</sup>	Montrose	Park Hotel	Marian Anderson	2pm-5pm	Door	01241 879 487	A & F Club ceilidh
19 <sup>th</sup>	Kirkwall	St Magnus Centre	Live music	8pm	£2/£0.50	Door	Old Time, Ceilidh & Country
24 <sup>th</sup>	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 <sup>nd</sup>	Peebles	Burgh Hall	Bill Richardson	7.30pm	£5	01896 833 508	Roxburgh, Selkirk & Peebles
7 <sup>th</sup>	Kirkwall	Broad Street	(Comm. Centre)	7.30pm	£2/50p	01856 873 534	Orkney Traditional Dance Assoc.
9 <sup>th</sup>	Jedburgh	Kenmore Hall	Marian Anderson	7.30pm	£5	01835 830 267	Roxburgh, Selkirk & Peebles
10 <sup>th</sup>	London (N.E.)	Woodford	Craigievar	7.30pm	Supper	020 8504 1632	See website <a href="http://www.efsa.org.uk">www.efsa.org.uk</a>
	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 <sup>th</sup>	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 <sup>th</sup>	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 <sup>rd</sup>	Aberfoyle	Rob Roy Motel	Dumgoyne	7pm	£32.50	01505 614 454	Glasgow Branch Dinner Dance
24 <sup>th</sup>	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](mailto: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](mailto:sue@suepetyt.me.uk)**

## HOUSE of TARTAN

[www.houseoftartan.co.uk/](http://www.houseoftartan.co.uk/)

I have just had a great time on this Website and spent much longer than I normally do reviewing a Website. I have spent the whole of a wet and windy afternoon playing at designing my own tartans on-line. You choose the colours you want from a selection, put them in order and say how many threads wide you want them, press the button, and a picture of your new tartan appears. If you don't quite like it, you can either start again or make amendments. I must admit that a couple of times it seemed to get a bit confused when I tried to make amendments, but it was great fun, and when you have finished you can have it woven which would be really good if you wanted to design a new tartan for a club, but probably a bit expensive to do it as an individual. Alternatively you can save the picture to disc for use as you would any jpeg. The site is available in German as well as English and the front pages of the site look slightly different (although I can't read German) although the main shopping part of the site is the same. I am doing this review at the beginning of December and the Home Page has a festive look to it. This is good as it shows that the site is actively managed and therefore likely to be monitored and taken seriously as a way of generating business. Many businesses still think that once they have a Website, that's it, but like any shop window it needs to be kept up to date and relevant to current trends. There are the usual Clan and Tartan finders which you would expect to find, as well as the "interactive weaver" which has occupied so much of my time. There is also a "What's new in the world of Tartan" which has a picture of a pink kilt for Balamory and a kilt in the Dark Island tartan which is woven from two shades of black. "Fabrics and Products" is the link which takes you to the main part of the shop. There the main categories are Highlandwear and Kilts, Clan Badges, Tartan Accessories, Brooches, Leisurewear, Clan Gatherings, Ladies Tartan Wear, Ribbons, Gifts and

Mrs Macs Children's Section. Most of these options lead you to quite long lists of items which can be bought on line, some items do say to choose a size, but that you will be contacted by e-mail for exact measurements, which seems very sensible. The one which puzzled me a little was the "Clan Gathering" option which just had a lady's skirt and bustier listed, these could easily have fitted in the "Ladies Tartan Wear" section, but otherwise everything was where I expected to find it.

There is a lot of interesting information hidden away on the Website, which pops up unexpectedly. I was looking at hats, and clicked on a link which said "More About Scottish Bonnet Sizes" and found that as well as information on hat sizes, there were some "Frequently Asked Questions" (FAQs) and some pictures of different styles of hats. For example "Question: What Glengarries do pipers wear? Answer: Plain Glengarries. Question: What Glengarries are worn by the Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders? Answer: Red/White Diced Glengarries. This makes the site much more interesting, it is like being shown round by a knowledgeable assistant, who tells you stories as you go.

There is a Visitor Survey page which says "Use this form to request a swatch of the tartans listed in these pages. Please take a moment to complete this enquiry, even if you don't choose any items, your mail will make more sense than a hits counter!"

There is also a "Learn about Tartan" link which takes you to a whole new section on the Tartan Story, there is a link to display this in Japanese, which may indicate that the company has done its research and knows where one of its best markets is.

The information on this page is fascinating, some of it I knew, but some was new to me. Although I haven't bought anything from this site, I have had a great time looking around and have book marked it so that I can return.

Now if I change the red in that tartan I designed for a blue...



## DYM 180

### 32 Bar Strathspey

**Music: The Bobby Harvey  
Strathspey by Angus Fitchet**

**3 couples in a 3-couple longways set**

*Devised by Chris and Sue Ronald, October 2006, for Marion and William Salmon. The title of the dance refers to the number plate of a very special motor car.*

#### Bars

**1 - 4** 1<sup>st</sup> couple change places passing by right shoulder, and cast off one place on partner's side as 2<sup>nd</sup> couple step up

**5 - 8** 1<sup>st</sup> couple set advancing, passing back to back on the second step, pull right shoulders back to face partner and turn with both hands to finish facing first corners; on bar 8, 1<sup>st</sup> man pulls right shoulder back and 1<sup>st</sup> woman helps him round with her right hand (in his left hand)

**9 - 12** 1<sup>st</sup> couple set to and turn first corners with both hands. 1<sup>st</sup> woman finishes between 2<sup>nd</sup> couple at top, 1<sup>st</sup> man finishes between 3<sup>rd</sup> couple.

**13 - 16** 1<sup>st</sup> couple set advancing, passing back to back on the second step, pull right shoulders back to face partner and turn with both hands to finish facing 2<sup>nd</sup> corner, 1<sup>st</sup> woman helping partner as on bar 8

**17 - 20** 1<sup>st</sup> couple set to and turn second corners, finishing in 2<sup>nd</sup> place on partner's side

**21 - 24** 1<sup>st</sup> couple set advancing, passing back to back on the second step, pull right shoulders back to face partner and turn three-quarters round with both hands, to finish woman above man in the centre; at the last moment, they release both hands, and pull right shoulder back so that woman faces up and man faces down

**25 - 28** 1<sup>st</sup> woman with 2<sup>nd</sup> couple, 1<sup>st</sup> man with 3<sup>rd</sup> couple, right hands across, again finishing with woman above man in the centre (left shoulder to left shoulder)

**29 - 32** (Snake figure) 1<sup>st</sup> man, followed by 3<sup>rd</sup> man and 3<sup>rd</sup> woman, dances up the women's side, across the top and half way down the men's side; while 1<sup>st</sup> woman followed by 2<sup>nd</sup> woman and 2<sup>nd</sup> man, dances down the men's side, across the bottom and half way up the women's side.

Finish in order 3,1,2. Repeat from new places.

© Chris Ronald

#### (Footnotes)

The movement on bars 5-8, 13-16 and 21-24 was devised by Kathy Wendell. See bars 9-16 of The Rose Garden, San Francisco Collection, Volume 2. She had been inspired by kissing gates she had seen in the UK.

## Lady in Red

### 32 Bar Slow Jig

**Suggested music  
"Gentle Shepherd"**

**5 Couple longways set**

*Devised by Simon Scott to celebrate the "Ruby Anniversary" of the RSCDS Vancouver Branch. The title, of course, comes from the wonderful song by Chris de Burgh, which begins, "I've never seen you looking so lovely as you do tonight". Gentlemen, let's dedicate this dance to our lovely partners who, on occasion, may be attired in red.*

#### Bars

**1-2** All five couples join hands on the sides and set to partners.

**3-4** 1C, 3C and 5C petronella into the centre, while, 2M and 4M cast up one place and 2L and 4L cast down one place.

**5-6** 1C, 3C and 5C set to partners, while, 2C and 4C cross over to opposite sides. 2M dancing between 1C, 4M and 2L dancing, right shoulders, between 3C and 4L dancing between 5C.

**7-8** 1C, 3C and 5C petronella out to opposite sides, while, 2M and 4M cast down and dance into the centre to face up and 2L and 4L cast up and dance into the centre to face down. 2C and 4C finish facing partners in a line up and down the centre of the dance.

**9-16** 2C and 4C dance a reel of four up and down the centre of the dance.

**17-20** 2L with 1C, and 2M and 4L (who take left hands to pass at the end of the reel) with 3C, and 4M with 5C, dance left hands across once round, 2C and 4C finishing in their partners places. All are now on the opposite sides of the dance.

**21-24** All join hands on the sides and set to partners then cross over giving right hands.

**25-28** 1C with 2C, and 3C with 4C, (the top four couples) dance set and link.

**29-32** 1C with 4C, and 3C with 5C, (the bottom four couples) dance set and link.

Repeat the dance four more times.

© Simon Scott, Vancouver



## Found on Strathspey

Dance for 4 couples in a 4 couple longwise set

### 4x32 Bar Reel

**Tune: The Inside Oot Fish Eater  
(Peter Wood)**

*In April 2005 I wrote "The Inside Oot Fish Eater" for Lindsay Weir. After trying it at Dunedin (with Lindsay playing) I posted it to the Strathspey mailing list. Alan Paterson replied, saying I had posted a dance of the same name a while earlier, and sent me the instructions I had sent. It looks a nice dance, but I had completely forgotten I had written it!*

#### Bars

**1-8** 1s and 2s, and 3s and 4s dance set and rotate to change places:

- 1-2 All set
- 3-4 All cast one place clockwise round the small square of four
- 5-6 All change places RH with partners on the side
- 7-8 All chase one further place clockwise around the small square.

**9-16** All dances reels of four on the sides. 1s and 4s don't finish the reel but instead curve in on the last bar to join LH in the centre and RH with corners in a St. Andrew's Cross formation.

**17-24** 1s and 4s dance a double spoke:

- 17-18 Set balancing with corner and set advancing (ACW) to join RH with next corner (still LH joined in wheel).
- 19-24 Repeat three more times to return to position at start of movement.

**25-28** Set to corners (i.e. 4M to 2M, 4L to 2L, 1M to 3M, 1L to 2L) and turn them with the hand which takes the dancing couples out through the ends (RH for 4L/2L and 1M/3M, LH for 4M/2M and 1L/3L).

**29-32** 4s and 1s turn or spin RH.

Finish in the order 2,4,1,3, ready to start again.

© Ian Brockbank May 2003

## Shadow Games

### 32 Bar Reel

3 couples longways set

#### Bars

**1- 8** A fugue:

**1C:** Set, lead down through 3C, cross, and cast up to 1st place.

**2C:** Wait 2 bars, then set, cross down through 3C, and cast up to 2nd place.

**3C:** Wait 4 bars, then set and cross giving RH.

All are now in partner's original place.

**9-12** 1C 2C set and link for two couples. 2M and 1W stay facing out.

**13-16** 2C 1C 3C dance half reels of three on the sides, 1M and 3M, also 1W and 3W, pass LS to begin.

1C finishes in the middle, 1W facing the men's side of the dance with 1M close behind. Likewise, 3M and 2M finish in the middle facing the women's side with their partners close behind.

**17-24** All dance a shadow reel of three up and down the middle of the dance, 3M 1W 2M leading their partners. 1C passes 3C with right shoulders to begin.

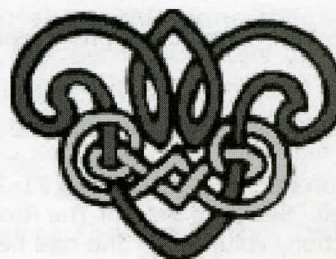
1C finishes in the middle ready to continue dancing as a tandem. 2C and 3C finish on the sidelines.

**25-28** 1C, in tandem, dances a half reel of three with 1<sup>st</sup> corners, giving RS to 3W to begin.

**29-32** 1C, still in tandem, dances a half reel of three with 2nd corners, giving RS to 2W to begin 1C finish the reel in 2<sup>nd</sup> place on own sides.

Repeat, having passed a couple.

© Terry Glasspool 2005





## The People's Princess

*Devised by Simon Scott and dedicated to the memory of a lady whose life touched so many hearts, Diana, Princess of Wales.*

### 48 Bar Reel

**Music if danced only twice through use "Damaris Reel"**

**David Cunningham, Silver Thistle CD**

#### 4 Couple longways set

**Form sets with 3C and 4C on the opposite sides for one beginning chord**

#### Bars

**1-4** All four couples set twice to partners, hands joined on the sides.

**5-8** 1C dance in towards one another and then, turning up and away, cast off one place while 2C dance in towards one another and then turning up dance to first place facing out. 4C and 3C dance likewise but turn down and cast up.

**9-16** 1C with 2C and 4C with 3C dance double figures of eight. 1M with 4L and 4M with 1L finish in promenade hold.

**17-24** 1M with 4L dance a reel of three on the man's side passing 3L right shoulder while 4M with 1L dance a reel of three on the lady's side passing 2L right shoulder to begin.

**25-32** 1M with 4L, still in promenade, dance down between third couple and cast up round 3M left shoulder, to the lady's side. On the last four bars they drop right hands and turn each other with the left hand to finish 1M facing 3M and 4L facing 2L, while, 4M and 1L dance likewise up the dance to cast off round 2M to finish on the man's side, then drop right hands and turn left hands to finish 4M facing 2M and 1L facing 3L.

**33-40** All dance reels of four on the sides, passing right shoulder to begin. 1M with 4L and 4M with 1L pass right shoulders on bar 40, ladies pulling right shoulder back

**41-48** All dance eight hands round to the left for six slip steps, then pivot round on the spot, by passing the right foot in front of the left, on bar 44 and then chase back to place with skip change of step.

Repeat from new position

© Simon Scott, Vancouver

## The Four Winds

### A 32 Bar Reel for 4 Dancers

**Formation:** Four dancers, any gender combination, arranged in a square. #1 has their back to the music, #2 and #4, numbered clockwise, face each other across the dance, and #3 is at the bottom facing up.

#### Bars

**1-12** #1 dances clockwise behind #2 to end in front of #3, turns #3 with LH then dances clockwise behind #4 to original place.

**13-16** #1 & #3 set and turn LH  $\frac{3}{4}$  to form a line across of four across the dance. #1 is facing #2 and #3 is facing #4.

**17-20** All dance a half reel of four across the dance, passing RS at the ends to begin.

**21-24** #4 & #3, also #1 & #2, turn RH. #3 and #1 let go early and pass RS to finish having changed places. #4 and #2 dance for four bars to finish where they started.

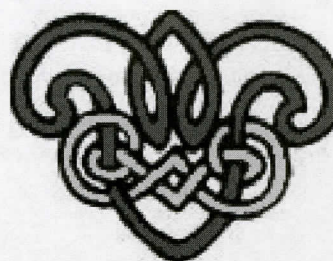
**25-28** Repeat bars 21 - 24 with LH: #4 & #1, also #3 & #2, turn LH. #1 and #3 let go early and pass LS to finish having changed places. #4 and #2 dance for four bars to finish where they started.

**29-32** All dance a half reel of four across the dance to finish in original places. #3 & #1 extend their loops at the end of the reel and dance clockwise to place. #4 & #2 finish the reel as if they were passing RS.

#2 finishes facing clockwise, ready to begin the dance without pausing.

Repeat three times, with #2, #3, and #4 leading in turn. The second and fourth times through the reels and turns will be in a line up and down the dance.

© Terry Glasspool





## Topsy Turvy

### 32 Bar Strathspey

#### 3 couple longways set

*This dance is for Gini Grover and Gene Robinson of Binghamton, New York.*

#### Bars

**1- 4** 1W dances a half figure of eight, crossing down through 2C, to end between 1M & 2M.

**5- 8** 1C, in promenade position, dance a half reel of three with 2C, passing LS with 2W.

1C finishes in the middle of the dance, facing down, retaining promenade hold.

2C finishes by meeting at the top and facing down, NH joined.

**9-12** 1C, followed by 2C, dances down through 3C, separate, and dances up the outside to partner's place.

**13-16** 1C 2C dance half rights and lefts.

The order is now 213. The first sixteen bars will be mirrored at the bottom of the dance.

**17-20** 3M dances a half figure of eight, crossing up through 1C, to finish between 1W & 3W.

**21-24** 3C, in reverse promenade position, dances a half reel of three with 1C, passing LS with 1M.

3C finishes in the middle of the dance, facing up, retaining promenade hold.

1C finishes by meeting at the bottom and facing up, NH joined.

**25-28** 3C, followed by 1C, dances up through 2C, separates, and dances down the outside to partner's place.

**29-32** 1C & 3C dance half rights and lefts.

The order is now 2 3 1, repeat twice to original places.

© Terry Glasspool

## Skagits in Stockbridge

### 4x32 Bar Strathspey

#### Tune: Miss Lyall (Traditional)

*Dedicated to Leslie (née Henderson) and Peter Hastings. Peter and Leslie got married on the 26<sup>th</sup> of March, 2001 in the company of members of the Skagit SCD group in Annacortes, WA, and held a ball in celebration on the 27<sup>th</sup> of July, 2002, in Cluny Church Hall, Edinburgh. At the time of the celebration they were living in Stockbridge in Edinburgh.*

#### Dance for 4 couples in a 4 couple longwise set

**This dance starts with two chords. On the second chord, 3rd and 4th couples cross over to the opposite sides.**

#### Bars

**1-2** 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> couples set.

**3-4** 1<sup>st</sup> couple cast off one place while 4<sup>th</sup> couple cast up one place.

**5-8** 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> couples dance right hands across, finishing in promenade hold with partner, 1<sup>st</sup> couple facing 2<sup>nd</sup> man and 4<sup>th</sup> couple facing 3<sup>rd</sup> man.

**9-12** 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> couples dance half a diagonal reel of four with 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> men, finishing with 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> ladies dancing  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the way round each other by the right shoulders to join in promenade hold with the other man, 1<sup>st</sup> lady and 4<sup>th</sup> man facing 2<sup>nd</sup> lady, and 1<sup>st</sup> man and 4<sup>th</sup> lady facing 3<sup>rd</sup> lady.

**13-16** Repeat bars 9-12 with 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> ladies.

**17-24** Repeat bars 9-16 to finish on the sidelines in the order 2,4,1,3, 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> couples on the opposite sides of the dance.

**25-32** 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> couples, and 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> couples dance a strathspey poussette once round.

Finish in the order 2,4,1,3, 1st and 3rd couples on the opposite side of the dance, ready to start again

© Ian Brockbank July 2002



# Forres Charity Gala Day

**The Rotary Club organised a Charity Gala Day in the Grant Park in Forres and Neil Grant was invited to bring a group of dancers to take part in the festivities. Thirty-two dancers danced a variety of dances, including Clunyhill Circle and Sueno's Stone devised by Neil.**

**Photographs © Neil Grant**



**Colin Kinnaird, Christine Grant, Pat Haughton & Dod Mackie performing the newly devised jig, Clunyhill Circle. Clunyhill is just behind them.**



**Rob Sargent, Neil Grant & Andy Garrow forming arches for the ladies**



**Dorothy McKnight & Neil Grant turn in the middle**

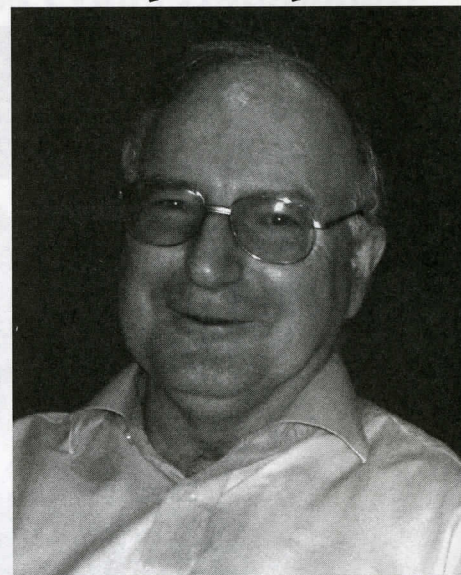


**Clunyhill Jig**



# Waltzing and Allemanding

By Finlay Forbes



**A**s the season of goodwill and beery bonhomie has once again crept up on us unnoticed, I shall forego the pleasures of cage rattling and pot stirring for the less controversial world of historical research (which may turn out to be nothing more than historical speculation). This move was inspired mainly by my delving into "A Complete Collection of Originall German Valtz for the Piano Forte or Violin and Violincello with a Second Violin Accompaniment Dedicated to Lady Charlotte Campbell by Nath Gow." The spellings of original, waltz and violoncello are as they appear on the elaborately engraved title page of this somewhat unusual collection of dance music published in Edinburgh somewhere between 1796 (the watermarked date on the paper) and 1804 (the more probable year of release).

As titles go, this one is slightly misleading because the book contains more than just waltzes. It also contains tunes called "Allamandes", which are in 2/4 time and somewhat confusingly claim in some cases to be usable as waltzes or "valtzes"



**Nathaniel Gow**

as the collection prefers to call them. What it does not contain are any tunes in the normal Scottish dance rhythms of the time. A quick play through the waltzes reveals remarkably little of melodic interest apart from some fiddle writing that is unusually high for the Scots repertoire of that period. Was this a quickly assembled line of pot-boilers designed to give a shot in the arm to the Gow's cash flow? Many of the regular patrons of the day such as Miss Herron of Herron, Miss Hamilton of Wishaw and Lady Lucy Ramsay have waltzes named after them, presumably to encourage them to subscribe to the publication – an act that would have set them back the princely sum of six shillings. Poor Lady Lucy Ramsay has been allocated a particularly unimaginative affair with a second fiddle part that merely goes through the motions. What did she do to offend the great fiddle master? Was he trying to avoid making these cosmopolitan creations sound too Scottish and by so doing falling into the trap of blandness? As far as the waltzes are concerned, Nathaniel Gow appears to be struggling more than a little to master the idiom. It is in the allemandes that the main musical interest lies and predictably, it is amongst these tunes that the survivors to the present day are to be found.

A publication like Gow's, dating from the time when Scottish Country Dancing was supposedly the last word in ballroom chic, raises some interesting questions. What was the Allemande? Was it along with the waltz common fare in the ballrooms of the time? Did Country Dances exist side by side with couple dances in those days? Did European couple dances start displacing

set dances a lot earlier than is generally believed?

Even if we ignore any etymological arguments between "allemande" and "a la main", the dance title "Allemande" is confusing on at least two counts. Country Dancers recognise it as a progression built into some dances rather than a dance in its own right. Some classical music enthusiasts will recognise it as one of three broad styles of melody that had largely fallen out of favour by the time of Gow's collection.

Renaissance composers like William Byrd, Orlando Gibbons and even the great Master of the Doleful, John Dowland, composed pieces spelt variously as Alman, Almand, Almain and Almaine that were not dissimilar to the tunes in Gow. When the Baroque Brigade arrived in the shape of Buxtehude, Bach, Handel and others, a dance form called the allemande had cemented its place as a core feature of the instrumental suite along with the courante, saraband and gigue. By the time that these baroque masters had finished with it, the allemande was a very different affair from



its renaissance namesake. The differences may have been due to the fact that composers like Buxtehude and Bach in particular appeared to sever all connection with the ballroom and treat it as a purely instrumental form. Where the renaissance almain was a relatively lively two in a bar dance not unlike a gavotte in its rhythm, the baroque one was a slow heavy four in a bar composition with very little of the dance about it. Composers used assorted contrapuntal and rhythmic devices to obscure the steady beat and turn it from a dance tune into a study in part writing. Other dance forms came in for the same treatment. Both Buxtehude and J.S. Bach used fugal devices in their gigue to such an extent that the results would be more likely to confuse than encourage anyone who tried to dance to them. Perhaps that was what they had in mind!

By the classical era (c1750 – c1820), the term *allemande* usually referred to the clumpy three in a bar German and Austrian folk dances that were the precursors of the waltz and occasional interlopers in the more aristocratic minuet movements of symphonies, string quartets and other extended compositions of the period.

By the fashions of the time, Gow's *allemandes* should have been in 3/4 time and not readily distinguishable from his waltzes but, as we have seen, that was not the case. This particular product of the House of Gow appears to have embraced a new dance in the form of the waltz and revived an apparently dead one in the form of the old-style *allemande*.

Perhaps the film industry can shed some light on the subject of this apparent anachronism. There was an *allemande* danced during the ballroom scene of the film "Sense and Sensibility" (Emma Thompson, Hugh Grant

et al). At least one film reviewer saw this as an erroneous archaism but Gow's collection and other documents of the time suggest that Emma Thompson's adaptation may not have been all that wide of the mark. I am not suggesting that the cinema is an infallible research vehicle but it has its uses.

The fact that the *allemande* movement started to appear in Country Dances at around this time suggests that it may have been fashionable despite receiving only passing mention in contemporary records.

Even if the *allemande* itself has passed into something not far off oblivion, some of the tunes used to accompany it have found a place in the Scottish dance musician's repertoire.

*Miss Baird of Saughton Hall's Allamande or Valtz* is the tune that we now know as *Davy Nick Nack*. An adaptation of *Miss Mary Douglas's Allamand* (without an e on the end) appears as the reel *Lady Mary Douglas* in "The Celtic Collection" (published by Deeay Music). *Miss S. Campbell of Saddle's (sic) Allamande* has also been adapted as a reel and usually goes under the title of *Miss Campbell of Saddell* or sometimes just plain *Miss Campbell*. I first heard it on

Stan Hamilton's recording of Maxwell's Rant but that may not have been its first public outing after lying a mouldering in some library for over a century and a half. By the time Stan Hamilton recorded it, the tune had been doctored to some degree to make it work as a reel.

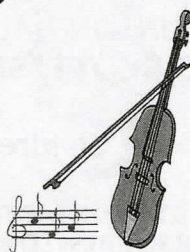
In these three extant cases, the price of survival has been high. The old *allemandes* had four measures like many of today's pipe marches. The modern reel conversions have only two. But perhaps the most significant loss is in the character of the music itself. The elegant, stately, gavotte-like rhythm has gone. I should be the last to deny that these tunes in their modern reel form are highly effective and there is no reason not to keep playing them (I still do) but that does not rule out their having a parallel existence in something like their original form.

Is the demise of the *allemande* yet another loss to the richness and variety of our dancing heritage? Can some future Jane Austen Ball give it a new lease of life? (All allegations of buck-passing will be strenuously denied.)

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## RSCDS AGM

*Here are some more photographs from the RSCDS AGM held in Aberdeen. This month the pictures are courtesy of and © Sylvia Baxter, Dumfries. Do you see any familiar faces?*



*Iain Hale dancing with Jayne Brown, Dumfries, who is the new Youth Director.*



*Anne Sheach from Skye dancing Australian Ladies (in front)*





# More Sex in Dancing

By The Dancie

**T**hose readers who have been with me for the past year will know by now that I am often banging on about what has been lost from SCD since it became nationalised in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Today I am not only doing that but banging on about sex as well.

To deal with the sexy thoughts first, I had something of a rush of blood to the head when I was reading about Morton's Fork. This was an "either /or" device for ensuring that money was paid to the Royal coffers of Henry VII<sup>th</sup> of England, in which if you looked rich, then you obviously could afford to pay, but if you looked poor, you must have money stashed away because you were not spending it, so you obviously could afford to pay. Either way you forked up! I was thinking of the idea of a fork, properly applied and not abused, as a tool for decision making, when my mind was also engaged with the idea of dancing in the Scottish regiments, and the encouragement of Highland dancing that came from its military practitioners. I was thinking of what could be done with a bunch of men to encourage their social life and team spirit when living in a military camp, possibly in dangerous territory, and how SCD and Highland dancing were excellent answers to that problem. I let my mind dwell momentarily on the thought of them doing any other dancing, but when I tried to envisage a foxtrot or the tango I knew that I had found a fork! So I produced Dancie's Fork, whereby IF I could envisage myself doing a dance with either a male or a female for a partner, THEN the choreography was sexually neutral.

To give an example, I could dance the Reel of the 51<sup>st</sup> with a man for a partner quite easily, although perhaps slightly differently from how I would dance it with a woman. So the choreography is neutral. That is a good thing, considering the origins of the dance!

I then started to apply the fork to other dances, even the dance that I consider to be the sexiest of all, the minuet. But it could be done with another man. It would be totally different, rather like two fighting cocks circling each other, instead of two lovers looking longingly at each other.

The choreography is neutral; the sexiness comes, or doesn't come, from the dancers themselves. All the choreography gives is potential, to interpret as the dancers choose.

Applying the fork to other dances produced a very interesting result, (to me anyway.) I found that, in general, dances before the 19<sup>th</sup> Century were neutral, becoming less so during that century, and almost all of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century dances were choreographically sexed. This distribution pattern



matches that of the sex of the choreographers and teachers of dance, being dancing masters originally, and then women coming to be in the majority in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

I also noticed that women can dance together quite comfortably even when doing a sexed dance. I agree that as Joyce Grenfell put it, it loses something "when you do it bust to bust," but it is certainly possible.

I also realized that "Dancie's Fork" was probably not politically correct, as being a heterosexual male seems to be next on the list for being banned. I was disturbed to read the symptoms of Asberger's syndrome, as to me it seemed like a description of a normal male, so maybe the banning will soon come about.

However, now to the bit that was lost, or at least to one of them.



Setting to your partner, or to a corner, seems to have been done MOVING TOWARDS THE OTHER PERSON, exactly as is nowadays necessary in the Duke of Atholl's Reel, (bars 9 & 10). There is a wonderful description of the scandalous nature of this figure by Addison, saying among other things, "it is the very opposite of back to back." It shouldn't be allowed in polite company, etcetera, all of which is difficult to envisage when considering the figure as done by RSCDS. But, think of setting twice, which nowadays seems very boring and is a rarity in dances produced this century, yet was quite common in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, and you will realize that you are going to get very close to your partner by the time four bars have gone, and eye contact will of course be maintained, and then the whole delightful satire fits into place. So does the popularity of the figure!

Now, when we apply the general rule of setting moving forwards to setting and turning, the whole figure, whether two bars or four bars of setting, becomes considerably more flirtatious, and also looses so much when the dancers are of the same sex.

May I suggest that you try the ideas, and I hope that you will enjoy practising, and keeping it sexy. One of the problems with trying to see what the dances were like, is that we have translated "foot it" and "set" as quite interchangeable, but they were not so.

Footing is like a very low backstep, as if done round the ankle rather than round the calf, and it is very difficult to go forwards when doing it. It is all too easy to go backwards! The lack of distinction in translating was partly due to the instructions often leaving the choice open – perhaps depending on the sexiness of the dancers! – and partly due to not knowing what on earth footing was. However we now have a good description of footing, so perhaps we – i.e. the RSCDS – should have a fresh look at all the dances claimed to be from old sources and either publish a fresh version or come clean on the mutilations we have inflicted upon these dances.

That is looking at a powerful lot of work, but if looked at one book at a time, and spread intentionally over years, by a keen and dedicated group of people – as all SC dancers are – it should be possible. It is something for the publications committee to think about, and hopefully act upon.

The publications of Kate Van Winkle Keller are a brilliant example of just how books of reconstructed dances can be presented to the dancing public, streets ahead of any others that I have seen. I wish she would produce CDs to go with her historical books, as I don't have ready access to a musician.

That is one aspect that the RSCDS has got a lead on!

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# Hobson's Choice

## New Year and the Resolutions of a Grumpy Old Man

So there I was, doing the breakfast washing up in my pyjamas, I know there are some who say a plastic bowl is better, but I find them a little tight under the armpits. My mind was occupied by the upcoming rally in Dingwall, and by the threat that I might be asked to do some of the recaps. This of course ramified into general reveries on change, etiquette, protocols, the old days and why are old men so subject to alternating tears and tantrums in rapid succession? In my case the two are provoked in equal measure by having to recap!

Recaps are a courtesy by the organisers of a rally to allow the dancers that "Oh, it's that dance!" moment, or to answer the age old cry of "How does it begin?" It is a courtesy in addition to the pre-publication of the programme so that any experienced dancer should be fully prepared for each dance as it starts.

My heart sinks as sets begin to walk as you start to recap. What are you to do? To openly say, that if you don't know it at all, then neither a recap nor a walk will fend off disaster, is just cruel. To slow your recap to the speed of the walkers makes it virtually incomprehensible to the non-walkers, who then wonder why you are doing it at all. To ignore mistakes you may spot in their walk-throughs is churlish, but to attempt to correct them through the microphone is worse, because

the non-mistaken walkers think you mean them and chaos results!

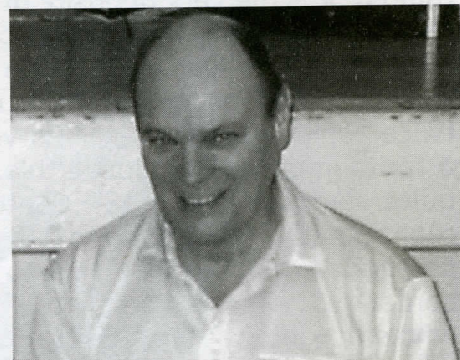
There is a growing trend to walk just new and unfamiliar dances. But there are always some at rallies, who either from lack of experience or lack of long-term memory, find all of the dances unfamiliar. One partial solution has been to asterisk dances to be walked on the programme. This has two problems; one, it is probably impossible to learn a dance so quickly (so is it on the programme as a demonstration by the home team?); and two, it sets a general expectation of walking of difficult dances, and leaves any one in any set free to say "My partner's not sure of this do you mind if we walk it?" – Has anyone ever said "yes, I do mind"?

Such thoughts lead me to my first crop of resolutions

- 1) I will return the courtesies of my hosts by doing my homework before I go to their rally.
- 2) I will listen patiently, quietly and gratefully to the given recaps because of the confidence they instil into the set.
- 3) If my partner for a dance is unsure, I will talk the dance through with them first, and make it my prime task to ensure they are well supported in the dance.
- 4) If I am unsure of a dance I will sit out and watch it and learn it for next time, unless a partner is prepared to explain it to me before we dance.

The second set of courtesies by the organisers of the rally is concerned with the pace and punctuation of the programme.

## By George Hobson



It would be possible, as some dancers clearly wish, to pass from one dance to the next with no real break. But to give the band a chance to keep their music organised, to provide a wide range of tunes, to relax cramped fingers and to take in essential fluids, we traditionally have breaks between each set dance. These same breaks give the dancers time to socialise, meet old friends, find new partners, and talk through the dances with those who are unsure. Traditionally the dancers left the floor to do all of these things. It may be the case in the modern world that we do not need these punctilios directing our behaviour, but we must consider then what the modern etiquette will be. The first problem to be addressed is what do we expect of the musicians, the MC and the recapper? I know from experience the dreadful pressure of a whole hall filled with people in lines of sets, directly the previous dance has finished. This leads to a rapid announcement of the next dance, before some have finished conversing, and before many have a new partner. In my most recent



negative experience, one top man started counting as the new lines started to form; this provoked the other top men to count, and the recapper to announce the dance. The result was that my new partner and I were counted out one minute and thirty seconds after the end of the previous dance. As we watched the dance we had the Pyrrhic satisfaction of seeing several sets collapse, having clearly little idea of what they had lined up for!

In some continental folk and traditional dance scenes the band will play dances in unbroken sets of three. Granted that many of their dances are couple dances and you may join or leave the floor as you wish, but they also have many set and square dances where others rely on your continued presence. So commonly they have the same partner for three dances, and I suspect that there are many people on the SCD scene who would quite like the same. For any individual or couple who are tired it is quite possible to whistle up replacements mid set, and quite a jolly atmosphere results. Between such sets they take breaks that are long by our standards, to drink, talk and eat. So clearly there are alternatives to our creaking attempts to recreate a vision of a genteel past. Perhaps we might consider Jig-Reel-Strathspey-Break for five minutes as a new pattern. Recapping three dances as one is not impossible, recently we had the experience of dancing Wind on Loch Fyne and McPherson's Jig as a Medley (Not uncommon) and having to recap both dances together. This caused some anticipation of problems but there were none; in fact it was one of the more successful parts of the programme.

## Second set of resolutions

1) When MCing I will leave a gap between dances sufficient in length for everybody to leave the floor, find someone to talk to, explain the key feature of a dance and retake the floor, even if they never leave it. I will then announce the dance and ask the top men to count down, or maybe up to make a change!

2) When on the floor I will not count down until asked to do so by the MC

3) I will resist the temptation to coach from the sidelines when counted out from dances, as this will either have overtones of patronising criticism, or become yet another new expectation by unprepared dancers.

4) I will neither laugh nor sympathise when sets collapse, but rather assume that was the way they intended to dance.

5) I will consider seeking opinions on continental programming from the rank and file of those who go to rallies purely to enjoy dancing.

I would have had other resolutions, but just then the washing up water overflowed onto my slippers, and by the time I had stemmed the flow I had forgotten what they were, what I was annoyed about, what I had most recently done wrong and just what it was about some rallies that left me wanting to go home and never return!

However there is always something positive round the corner. The Dingwall rally did not need my input so I was able to relax and enjoy it, with all recaps done expertly by the Dingwall class team. Drummond Cook played beautifully all night, some of his own tunes included, especially when they were the originals for the dance. His

phrasing, tempo and volume are always totally in phase with the dancer's needs, and I suspect that this is because he watches to see how we are responding. The programme of dances passed so smoothly for the whole evening that we were in the last dance before I realised it, so it must have been a very well chosen balance. The catering was as ever generous and suited to a party atmosphere, and I was trusted with a teapot! So there is some use left in me yet! The natural etiquette of the dancers present, while not being of the stiffly formal variety, gave no cause for even the most minor grump by me. Sets formed naturally from the top, people rotated from top to bottom of the hall, picked partners from all parts of the hall, made considerable efforts to ensure nobody sat out. In short the very model of a friendly informal Highland rally. Maybe there is no need for my New Year Resolutions after all? We shall see!

Here is a tiny tailpiece that in its own strange way may support this more relaxed view. In my newest club, which had better remain nameless, before I get banned yet again, a very attractive young lady sidled me up to and said:

*"I'm looking for a handsome young virile partner to be my Prince Charming in the Christmas Pantomime, but there aren't any so you'll have to do!"*

Cinderella shall go to the Ball!  
So my final resolution is:

Just go with the flow, there's more fun to be had that way!



# Dumfries RSCDS Christmas Dance



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**Nicol McLaren**

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*Willie Johnstone & Graham Berry*



# *Kirkmichael Old Time Christmas Party*



*Evelyn Grant stepping out with Santa*



*The reindeer has Jimmy Allan in his sights!*



*Organisers Evelyn & Willie Grant with Santa*



*Watch Out!*



*Sheila Peters*



*Did I disgrace myself on the dance floor?*





*The Gordon Shand SDB*



*Jim & Betty Russell with Robbie*



*The Take the Floor team  
would like to wish all  
readers of Dance On! a very  
Happy New Year!*



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*Robbie, Doug Maskew, Jennifer Cruickshank, Peter Elliot & Esma Shepherd.*