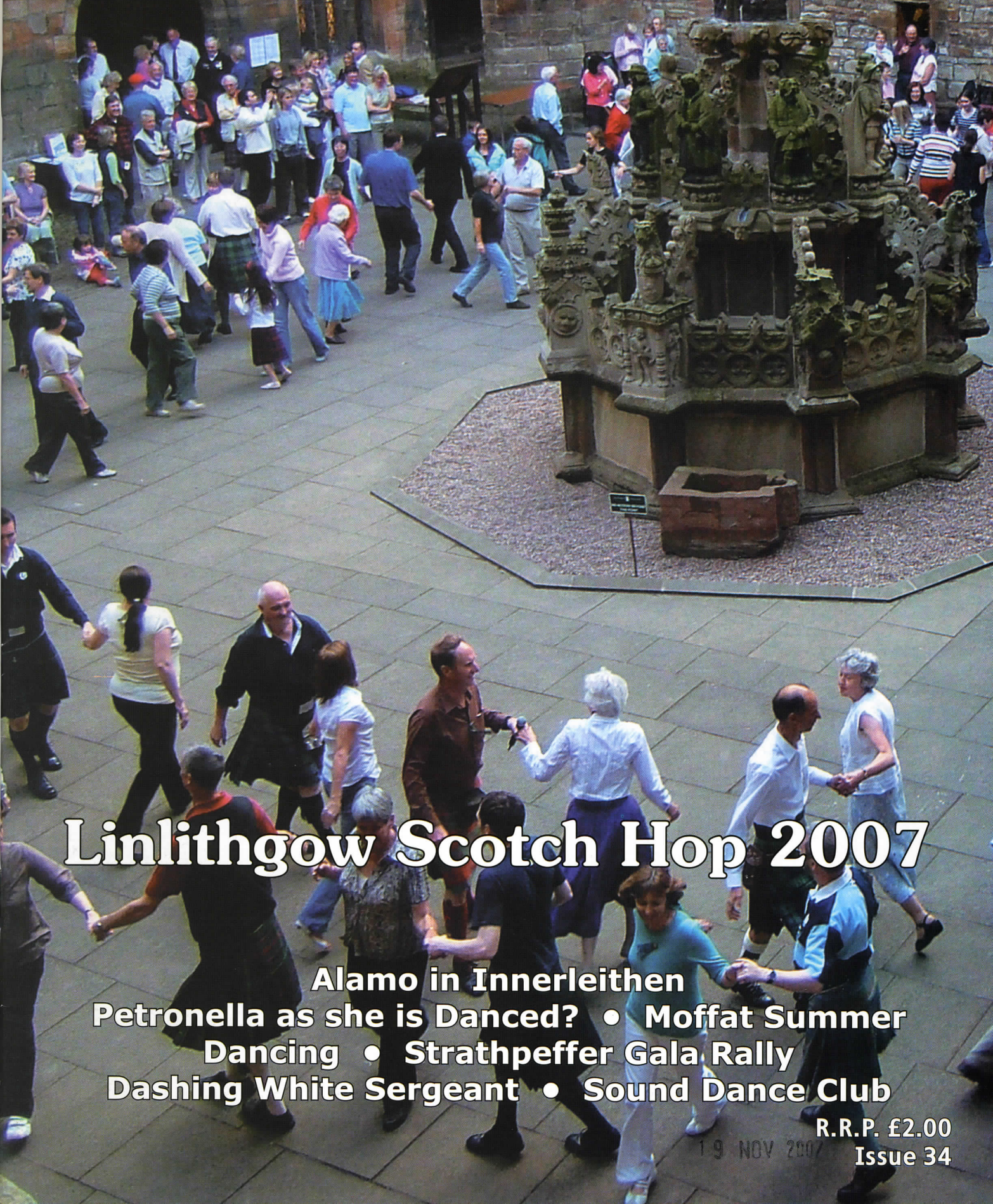


Dance On!



Linlithgow Scotch Hop 2007

**Alamo in Innerleithen
Petronella as she is Danced? • Moffat Summer
Dancing • Strathpeffer Gala Rally
Dashing White Sergeant • Sound Dance Club**

R.R.P. £2.00

19 NOV 2007

Issue 34

Linlithgow Scotch Hop 2007



The Bella McNab Band



The Wayne Robertson Band



Apologies

To all of you who have been waiting patiently for your magazines. We're back on track now and have numbered the issues, which means that everyone will receive 12 issues for their annual subscription.
Thank you for your patience.

Karin

BBC Radio Scotland

Take the Floor

With

**Fergie MacDonald & his Ceilidh Band
And Guests**

&

**Robbie Shepherd
Lochinver Village Hall**

**12 December 2007
BBC Radio Scotland
01224-384 839**

Take The Floor

10th November: Deoch 'n' Dorus

17th November: Kenny Thomson & Wardlaw SDB

24th November: OB from Strathallan School
with Simon Howie SDB and Guests Perdy Syers-Gibson &
Joan Blue and George Donald

1st December: Ian Thomson SDB

8th December: Craigowl SDB

15th December: Glenraig SDB

22nd December: The Occasionals

29th December: OB from Lochinver Village Hall
with Fergie MacDonald Ceilidh Band

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Dance On!

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Linlithgow Scotch Hop 2007

If ever there was a good advertisement for Scottish Traditional Dance it must surely be The Linlithgow Scotch Hop.

The brainchild of John Carswell, this magnificent annual event attracts people from far and near. Ideally, weather permitting, it takes place in the Palace Courtyard, but contingency plans are in place to move it lock, stock and barrel down the road to the local sports hall if rain threatens. Despite the dreadful summer this year, Wednesday evenings in July and August were blessed with sunshine and, for the first time ever, all the dances were held outside.

John has hit upon a winning

formula. He keeps the programme simple enough so that he can call the dances and encourage beginners to have a go, but with just enough variety and intricacy to attract more experienced dancers.

His hard-working team are amazing. Everything is run with precision, and someone is always on hand to help struggling dancers get the hang of it. Here's what Norma Macleod has to say about this year's shindig.

"The first night started off very lively with music from Wayne Robertson and his Band. The second evening saw visitors from Russia and music from Simon Howie and his Band. The third evening had a group celebrating

a birthday with a visit to Scotch Hop and dancing to the unique sound of Bella McNab. The fourth evening saw Iain Cathcart and his Band making us want to dance all night. The fifth evening was very busy with The Ian Muir Sound keeping our toes tapping. All the usual favourite dances were expertly called by John and demonstrated first before everyone had a go."

You just need to look at the pictures on Page 2 to see how much people enjoyed themselves – their smiles say it all. Notice too the variety of ages, children and teenagers dance happily with adults and OAPs.

Well done once again John, and roll on 2008!



Alamo in Innerleithen

Innerleithen's ever-successful annual Music Festival had an exciting programme as always. It started on Friday 17th August, going through Saturday 18th August when we met at the Festival Breakfast Club to get off to a hearty start. For their dancing contribution this year they invited Edinburgh's "Kick the Cat" group of Appalachian Cloggers to run a workshop. Five of the group attended to help, with Ian Goodall instructing the class in some of the simpler steps like Alamo, Bucks, Grand Square Kick, Scooters, Walk the Heel, Cowboys and some Basics.

With an excellent turn-out and Ian's cheerfulness and charm, the class astounded us by achieving the complete execution of a dance named, appropriately, "Dead Easy", a progressive dance in Sicilian Circle formation. It was encouraging to see the expressions of grim determination change to pure joy as the dance proceeded.

To give the class a breather during the "water-break" the Kick the Cat team demonstrated a dance for four with solo singing accompaniment of the song *Old Joe Clark*.



Oh, and just to show there's no hatred of the feline species amongst our group we include a picture of Hazel, owned by one of the team. Does she look ill-treated? Kick the Cat is simply the name of one of our steps which involves swinging the foot across and back, so no need to call the SSPCA! If you've never been to Innerleithen Music Festival you should be there next year and if you fancy joining Kick the Cat we meet in St. Margaret's School Drama Department in East Suffolk Road, Edinburgh, every Tuesday at 7.30p.m. New members are very welcome. Hard-soled shoes or tap shoes (not clogs) are recommended.



Petronella as she is Danced?

By Finlay Forbes

Petronella has the distinction of being the first dance in the first book published by the Scottish Country Dance

Society back in the days before it was permitted to add Royal to its title. Those who are very particular about accuracy in these matters will no doubt point out that Petronella has no exclusive claim to being the first dance published by the Society because it shares a book with eleven other dances published at the same time. Be that as it may, it remains the first dance that any systematic reader of the Society's collection would find on opening the first book. I still possess enough residual sanity to have no interest in the arcane mental processes underlying the decision to place this particular dance in so prominent a place but I have to confess to finding the decision just a little bit strange.

Petronella is not a particularly Scottish sounding name for a dance and its four-square clumping central European melody is decidedly empty of the Highland humours and brimful of Teutonic ones.

The dance presumably takes its title from the Germanic feminine form of Peter. Petronella is a relatively common girl's name in Sweden, Germany, Holland and the Afrikaans speaking communities of South Africa (there is a railway station called Petronella just to the north of Pretoria in the Transvaal). The tune seems to have sprung from the same ethnic musical background as its dance's name.

Scottish or not, Petronella both as a dance and as a dance movement, is a prominent feature of the current Scottish Country Dancing scene and is unlikely to disappear on any



grounds of doubtful Scottish antecedence however well proven.

What is far more interesting is the form assumed by Petronella in RSCDS Book 1. It is all very much in the three beat pas de Basque, skip change of step and square poussette world of modern Scottish Country Dancing but is that how it always was or has someone been doing a bit of tinkering?

Predictably, the tinkers have had a field day. I came across

an earlier set of instructions for Petronella as taught by the great James Scott-Skinner and it would be fair to say that these instructions reveal a far more interesting and in some ways easier dance than the present identikit affair. The Book 1 version of Petronella may not have been dumbed down but it certainly has been dulled down and, as we shall see, slowed down.

Skinner's figures are virtually identical in name but their

execution is clearly quite different.

Skinner's description in "The People's Ball Room Guide" of 1905 (Teaches how to dance and how to behave in the ballroom – price one penny!) is preceded by the statement "This is one of the very prettiest Country Dances we have". It ends with the somewhat cryptic statement "There is a tune 'Petronella' for this dance. 'Meg Merrilees' suits it admirably. Is there some implicit disapproval of the original tune lurking beneath Skinner's rather bald observation?

In between these two comments lies the description of the dance.

The dancers are arranged in the usual way.

First lady and opposite gentleman advance to the centre one, two, three and turn with toes to the right. Then they execute the first quickstep twice.

They advance to the opposite side and set.

They advance to the centre and set.

They advance and set in places having thus with their successive movements described the figure of a diamond.

Then down the centre, back and poussette.

These instructions, which are given without bar counts, were intended as an aide memoir for those who knew the dance rather than a guide for greenhorns.

A more analytical description of the dance appears in "An Illustrated Guide to the National Dances of Scotland" edited by Donald Richard Mackenzie and published by the editor in

1910, five years after Skinner published his version.

Mackenzie's description differs in detail from Skinner's but some of the apparent differences may be due to Mackenzie's decision to flesh out some of Skinner's skeletal shorthand.

His instructions state that the dance should be done with arms akimbo and that pas de Basque should be used in "The Figure", which he makes clear is the figure that we would now describe as Petronella.

Bars 1-4

First lady and gentleman make a right about turn into centre, and balance face to face.

Bars 5-8

Right about turn into each other's place, and balance face to face.

Bars 9-12

Right about turn into centre, and balance face to face.

Bars 13-16

Right about turn out to places, and "high cut" face to face.

Bars 17-24

First couple join hands, quick march down the centre and up again.

Bars 25-32

First and second couples two-step waltz round each other.

Mackenzie's instruction to "repeat down a couple" suggests that the intended result of the two-step waltz movement was to progress one place.

There is some similarity between Mackenzie's two-step waltz and the whirling and birling movement that "reelers" use in place of the modern square poussette. There is some anecdotal evidence to suggest that the square poussette owes more to a desire to reduce the level of body contact in the two-step waltz to

something less likely to wound the sensibilities of those deeply moral souls who back in 1923 doubtless felt that Scottish Country Dancing had to be purged of anything that might encourage lasciviousness. A standard ballroom hold, with such a disturbingly high level of body contact, was positive encouragement for dancers to embark upon the proverbial primrose path.

Another interesting and revealing feature about Mackenzie's version of Petronella is that it includes a metronome setting for the music. At 138, it is astonishingly fast by today's standards of 112-116 (unsullied by any use of variable speed controls). Even Jimmy Shand in the era of the vintage 78s only nudged 120. Watching those dedicated three beat pas de Basquers plying their trade or at least attempting to ply their trade at 69 bars to the minute would be a sight worth paying good money to see – especially for anyone seriously into schadenfreude.

I like Mackenzie's version of the dance and I believe that it has a far stronger claim to traditional authenticity than the RSCDS's stylised and excessively mannered creation at the beginning of Book 1. It is far more fun to dance than its rather staid and stilted descendant and without the square poussette, is easier for beginners to take on with some chance of success. I am not convinced that I should like to tackle it either as a dancer or a musician at Mackenzie's prescribed speed but it is certainly worth a try at something slightly nipper than today's rather stodgy plod.

The shock of the old can often be greater than the shock of the new. Perhaps, winding back the clock is the best way to progress but don't take my word for it. Try it and see.

Ceilidh & Old Time Dances							
Regular Weekly Events							
Date	Town	Hall	Band	Time	Cost	Contact	Comments
Every Saturday	Fife, Largo Ward	Largo Ward Village Hall	t.b.c.	8pm -11pm No Bar	£3.50 (tea)	Door	Different bands each week.
Every Sunday	Fife, Cupar	The Castlehill Assoc, off St Catherine St.	-	2pm-5pm	£2 (tea)	Door 01383 415 142	Ceilidh, Old Time & Social Dance Club
Most Sundays	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 Tuesday	Glasgow University Humber, East Lothian	Student Union, University Avenue.	-	7.30-10pm Bar	£5	Text dance to 07886 771 364	Dance Club. Age 25-69½
Every Wednesday	Newtongrange	Village Hall	George Hood	7.30-10pm	£3 B.Y.O.B.	Door (Owen & Catherine Harrison)	Ceilidh, Old Time and Social Dance Club
		Morris Club	Live Music	7.30-10pm	£3/£1.50	Door (Karin Ingram)	Ceilidh & Old Time Club
	Midlem	Village Hall	Live Music	8pm-10pm	£2 (tea)	Door (Gracie Belle Scott) Info Tel:- 01835 870 244	Social Dance (Old Time)
Every Thursday	Glasgow	St Andrews in Square	Live Music	7.30-9.30	£4 Bar	Door (Tricia Matthews)	Ceilidh & Old Time Class
	Penicuik	Town Hall (Stops 6/12/2007)	-	8-9.30pm	£2.80/ £1.45	Door (Annabel Oats) Info tel: 01968 672 631	Ceilidh Dance Class Child/ Student concessions

Ceilidh & Old Time Dances							
November 2007							
Date	Town	Hall	Band	Time	Cost	Contact	Comments
17 th	Elgin	Bishopmill Hall	Johnny Duncan	8pm-12mn	£4 (bar)	01343 543 655	Jolly Dancers
	East Kilbride	Calderwood Hall	Lindsay Weir	7.30-11.30	£6 supper	Door - B.Y.O.B.	Highlanders Tel: 01355 230 134
18 th	Montrose	Park Hotel	Johnny Duncan	2pm-5pm	Door	01241 879 487	A & F Club ceilidh
	Arbroath	Café Project	Scott Carnegie	7.30-10pm	£3 Door	01241 879 487	Old Time, Ceilidh & Set
19 th	Kirkwall	St Magnus Centre	Live	8pm -	£2 & 50p	01856 873 534	Old Time, Ceilidh and Country
	Forfar	West End Social C.	Gavin Piper	?	?	01307 462 935	Phone for Tickets
21 st	Ellon	Station Hotel	Graeme Mitchell	8pm-11pm	£2.50 Bar	Door	Food available
23 rd	Torphins	Learney Hall	Garioch Blend	Phone	Forbes Philip	01339 882 495	Touch of Tartan Dance
24 th	Pumpherston	Village Hall	David Wilson	7.30-11.30	T (supper)	01506 205 051	or 01506 417 512 - BYOB
	Black Isle	North Kessock Hall	Ian Hutson	8pm-12mn	B.Y.O.B.	Door	Social Dancers
	Penicuik	Town Hall	Bill Richardson	7.30-11.30	£6/£3 BYOB	01968 672 631	Charity - Raffle
25 th	Arbroath	Café Project	Ian Cruickshanks	7.30-10pm	£3 Door	01241 879 487	Old Time, Ceilidh & Set.
28 th	Dufftown	Memorial Hall	-	7.30-10pm		01542 887 616	Monthly Social
30 th	Strathaven	Strathaven Hotel	-	7pm -Late	£11 Dinner	01236 429 290	St Andrews Night Dance
	Kinellar	Comm. Hall	Lomond Ceilidh	8pm-12mn	£6 Raffle T	01224 713 674	Tartan Night for Malawi
	Helensburgh	Commodore Inn	Jock Fraser	8pm-1am	£7 (bar)	01389 841 208	Highlanders Dance

Scottish Country Dances							
November 2007							
Date	Town	Hall	Band	Time	Cost	Contact	Comments
	Dundee	St Andrews Church	Jimmy Boal	7.30pm	£2	01382 509 103	King Street Hall Every Monday
	Dundee	Park Place School	Jimmy Boal	7.30pm	£2	01382 509 103	Every Tuesday Beginners then General
16 th	Alva	Cochrane Hall	Gordon Shand	7.30pm	£5	Bring a cup	Alva SCD Club Dance for Charity.
	Annan	Victoria Halls	Lothian	7.30pm	£7	01461 500 250	Annan RSCDS
23 rd	Helensburgh	Victoria Halls	t.b.a.	7.15pm	£18	01436 675 980	Branch Annual Ball
24 th	Stirling	St Ninian's Old Church	David Oswald	7.30pm	£5	01786 461275	Stirling Castle Club - no recaps
	Dingwall	Town Hall	Drummond Cook	7.30pm	£5	01997 423 373	Dingwall SCD Club
	Essex	Woodford Green	Silver Cross	7.30pm		020 8504 1632	www.efsa.org.uk (Epping Forest)
	Keswick	Braithwaite C. C.	Alan Ross	01900 829 208 or		01228 674 698	Derwent SCD Club.
30 th	Lanark	Greyfriars Church Hall	Grant Crawford		£5	01555 665 705	Lanark RSCDS - St Andrews Dance
	Troon	Concert Hall	Lindsay Weir	7.30pm	£6	01292 315 558	Ayr Branch Dance
	Glasgow	Whiteinch Centre	C.D.'s	8pm	£3	0141 942 6850	Beginners Dance - Glasgow Branch



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

Ceilidh & Old Time Dances

December 2007

Date	Town	Hall	Band	Time	Cost	Contact	Comments
1 st	Dufftown	Memorial Hall	Graeme Mitchell	7.30-11.30		01542 887 616	Old Time Dance
	Aviemore	Village Hall	Colin Donaldson	8pm-12mn	£4 Tea & bisc.	01479 810 933	Monthly Dance
	Penicuik	St Mungo's Hall	George Hood	7.30-11.30	£5 No Bar	01721 723 468	Old Time & some set dances
2 nd	Angus	Tealing	Johnny Duncan	7.30-10pm	£2.50	Door	Soft Drinks available
3 rd	Kirkwall	St Magnus Centre	Live	8pm -	£2 & 50p	01856 873 534	Old Time, Ceilidh and Country
5 th	Ellon	Station Hotel	Charlie Esson	8pm-11pm	£2.50 Bar	Door	Food available
7 th	Irvine	Volunteer Rooms	Lindsey Weir	7.30-11.30	£6 supper	01292 289 234	Ayrshire Ceilidh Club
	Kinellar	Comm. Hall	Lomond Ceilidh	8pm-12mn	£6 No Bar T	01224 790 468	Tartan Dance - Charity
8 th	Newtongrange	Dean Tavern	Waverley	7.30-11.30	£6.50 (supper)	0131 663 6022	A & F Club Supper Dance
	Glencarse	Village Hall	George Rennie	7.30-11pm	£3.50 Door	01738 860 574	Soft Drinks available
	Inverness	Kirkhill C.C.	Colin Donaldson	8pm-12mn	B.Y.O.B.	Door	Social Dancers
	Strathaven	Ballgreen Hall	Roger Dobson	7.30-11.30	£6 supper BYOB	01357 520900	Avondale Ceilidh Society
9 th	Arbroath	Café Project	Wayne Robertson	7.30-10pm	£3 Door	01241 879 487	Old Time, Ceilidh & Set
14 th	Foulden	Village Hall	George King	8pm-12mn	£5 Supper	01289 386 400	No Bar- Soft Drinks available
	Helensburgh	Commodore Inn	Charlie Kirkpatrick	8pm-1am	£13 (bar)	01389 841 208	Highlanders Supper & Dance
15 th	Elgin	Ashgrove Hall	Julie McRitchie	8pm-12mn	£4 (bar)	01343 543 655	Jolly Dancers
16 th	Montrose	Park Hotel	Graeme Mitchell	2pm-5pm	Door	01241 879 487	A & F Club ceilidh
	Arbroath	Café Project	Graeme Mitchell	7.30-10pm	£3 Door	01241 879 487	Old Time, Ceilidh & Set
17 th	Kirkwall	St Magnus Centre	Live	8pm -	£2 & 50p	01856 873 534	Old Time, Ceilidh and Country
21 st	Ellon	Station Hotel	Holly Duo	Xmas Doo	Ticket only	Advance Ticket	Party for regulars only
22 nd	Blackford	Village Hall	t.b.a.	8pm-11.30	£4 No Bar	Door	Charity - Soft Drinks
	Aviemore	Village Hall	Lindsey Weir	8pm-12mn	£4 Tea & bisc.	01479 810 933	Monthly Dance
23 rd	Arbroath	Café Project	Johnny Duncan	7.30-10pm	£3 Door	01241 879 487	Old Time, Ceilidh & Set
24 th	Black Isle	North Kessock Hall	Hurly Burly	9pm-1am	B.Y.O.B.	Door	Social Dancers
26 th	Elgin	Bishopmill Hall	Lindsay Weir	7pm-11mn	£4 (bar)	01343 543 655	Jolly Dancers
31 st	Inverness	Kirkhill C.C.	Lindsay Weir	9pm-1am	B.Y.O.B.	Door	Social Dancers
	Cardross	Village Hall	Neil Sinclair	9pm-2am	£11 (BYOF&D)	01389 841 208	Highlanders Hogmanay Dance
	Old Meldrum	British Legion	Trav'lin Country	8.30-12.30	£8 T	01651 873 942	Tickets from mid November
	Pumpherston	Village Hall	David Wilson	7.30-1am	T only (dinner)	01506 205 051	or 01506 417 512 - BYOB
	Banchory	British Legion	Colliston Sound	8pm -	T only	Committee	Advance Ticket only

Scottish Country Dances

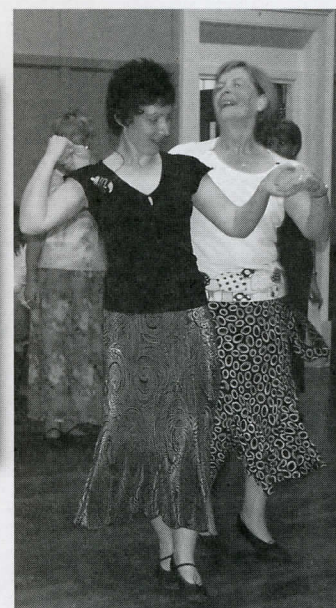
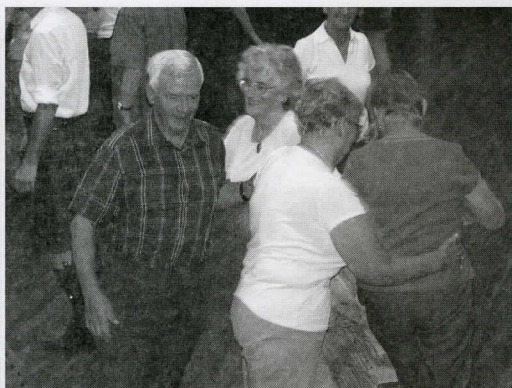
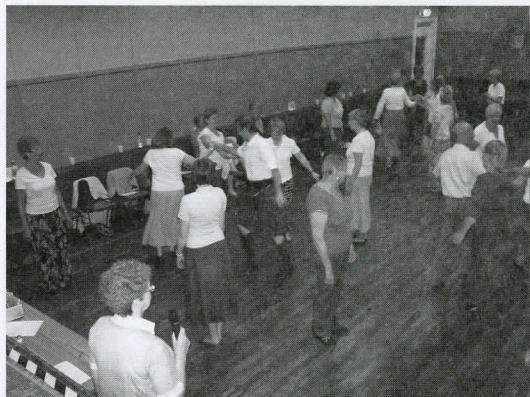
December 2007

Date	Town	Hall	Band	Time	Cost	Contact	Comments
Dundee Finishes 10 th		St Andrews Church	Jimmy Boal	7.30pm	£2	01382 509 103	King Street Hall Every Monday
Dundee		Park Place School	Jimmy Boal	7.30pm	£2	01382 509 103	Every Tuesday Beginners then General
1 st	Bearsden	Town Hall	Kenny Thomson	7.30pm	£7	0141 570 1001	Charity - Marie Curie Hospice -supper
	Dundee	St Andrews Church	Maple Leaf	7.30pm	£4	01382 509 103	Charity Dance - [incl. refreshments]
6 th	Kirkwall	Scout Hall	Live Music	7.30pm	£2/50p	01856 873 534	Orkney Traditional Dance Assoc.
7 th	Bearsden	Burgh Hall	Kenny Thomson	7.30pm	£6	0141 942 6850	Glasgow Branch Dance
	Hamilton	Eddlewood Hall	John Renton	7.30pm	£6	01698 853 226	Hamilton Branch Dance
	Dumfries	Steel Avenue C.C.	[no contact details]			Door	Memory of Jackie Johnstone
8 th	Stirling	St Ninian's Old Church	Colin Dewar	7.30pm	£5	01786 461275	Stirling Castle Club - no recaps
	Glasgow	Kessington Hall	Sandy Nixon	7.30pm	£7	0141 204 3713	'Just For Fun' Dances -no recaps
	Manchester	Levenshulme Sch.	Scottish Measure	7.30pm	£6	0161 633 1528	RSCDS Manchester Xmas Dance
	Victoria Hall	Kirkpatrick Fleming	[contact Sue Petyt]			Door	Xmas Party Dance
	Gatehouse	Primary School	Kenny Thomson		£7	01557 814 165	Gatehouse of Fleet RSCDS - supper
11 th	Dufftown	Memorial Hall	-	7.30pm		01542 887 616	Christmas Social
	Falkirk	Town Hall	David Oswald	6.30pm	£10	01324 471 975	75 th Ball - Buffet Supper
14 th	Helensburgh	New Hermitage Academy	Sandy Nixon	7.45pm	£8.50	01436 842 695	Xmas Dance - Light supper - Raffle
	Dunfermline	Glen Pavilion	David Cunningham	7.30pm	£21	01383 720 972	Annual Ball
	Dumfries	High School	Liam Stewart	7.30pm		01387 265 815	Dumfries RSCDS
15 th	Essex	Woodford Green	Craigievar	7.30pm		020 8504 1632	www.efsa.org.uk (Epping Forest)
20 th	Stirling	Albert Halls	Nicol McLaren	7.30pm	£5	01786 461 275	Xmas Dance - Pay at Door
22 nd	Stirling	St Ninian's Old Church	Marian Anderson	7.30pm	£5	01786 461 275	Stirling Castle Club
	Monkton	Carvick Webster Hall	Kenny Thomson	7.30pm		01292 315 558	Ayr Branch Xmas Ceilidh
28 th	Forres	Town Hall	Drummond Cook	8pm	£5	01309 673 325	RSCDS Forres Branch

Moffat Summer Dancing

The summer dancing in Moffat Town Hall drew almost as many visitors as dancers on some evenings. This year, as always, the event was held every Thursday during August, music was provided by The Willie McRobert Scottish Dance Band, which included John Douglas and Ian McRobert. Along with the many local dancers there were quite a number of dancers who had travelled frae a' the airts.

The organisers of the Moffat Summer Dancing would like to acknowledge the financial support given by Dumfries Arts Association which helps to ensure that the event will continue next August.



John Douglas & Willie McRobert

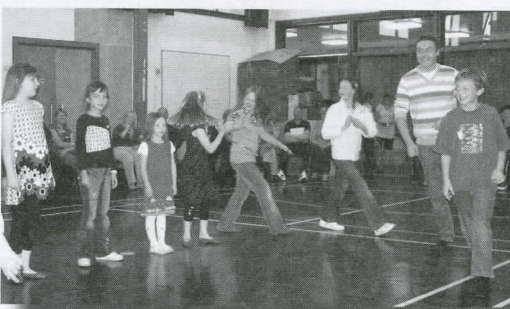
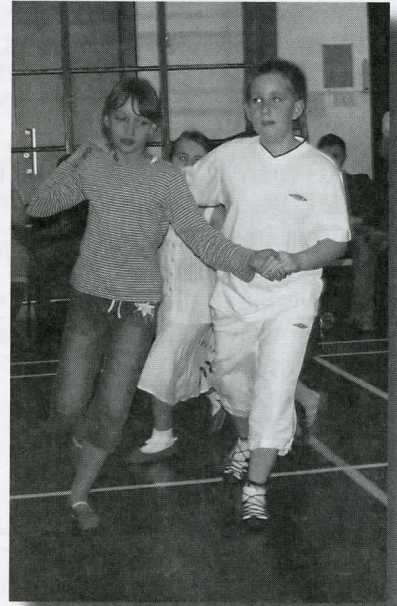


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Troqueer Primary School

The RSCDS graded medal test certificates were presented to the members of the Troqueer Primary School Country Dancers past and present. Joanne Seymour, the dance teacher, organised an evening of dancing for all the children, parents and guests. The medal presentations were made by Mrs. Rachel Fenwick, Chairman of the Dumfries Royal Scottish Country Dance Society.

A dance written by one of the young dancers is to be published later this year in the second edition of Country Dances for Children by the Newcastle Branch.



The Dancie

Finlay's articles are very good at setting me off thinking, and his comments on Strathspey tempos in the last edition did just that.

I certainly agree that the RSCDS has been fairly generous in allowing considerable latitude in editing the old dances. Sometimes this has been a great improvement to the dance, as for example Duke of Atholl and Montgomerie's Rant. But I wish they would be more honest about it, and publish the original beside the new version. The American publications of Kate Van Winkle Keller are wonderful, and show just how things can be done nowadays. The RSCDS has copies in their archive now, so I hope the publications committee has seen them!

I don't recall the strathspey being so very slow, though. Certainly, for demonstrations it was a little slower than for general dancing, but it does seem to have slowed down rather excessively (in some places) these days.

When I play my old recordings, they seem pretty good to me, but quite a lot of my friends have accused me of speeding them up. If only I could transpose the speeds! Then at least I could choose. As it is they are as they are, but it isn't just the strathspeys, my friends complain about the reels and jigs as well.

Methinks it is not the world going faster, but old age striking!

So blaming "Auntie Jean" isn't fair – it seems to have taken place after her death. Nor is it fair to criticise her interpretation of the strathspey movement. She had a great feel for dance, and where she had to make guesses, due to lack of information, most of the guesses stand up well in the light of 50 more years of research into the history of dance.

Her style of strathspey is very much in keeping with the Baroque technique.

I can remember as a boy, when learning the rudiments of SCD

at age 10 or 11, I wanted to know why there was a dip in the strathspey.

But no one could answer my question.

In those days it was a much deeper dip than nowadays, as looking at old photographs proves! We practised the dip movement every week, and very seriously. There was none of this "warm up" stuff then, but a lot of attention to technique during the course of the evening.

The answer is that the strathspey steps are Scottish versions of standard Baroque steps – perhaps Baroque with a Highland accent.

We now have a number of dances (such as The Duchess Tree) that are choreographed to go with common time (of four in a bar) which could well be danced with standard Baroque steps; as I look around the footwork is moving in that direction. Unfortunately, the dip would still be there, and although it is different, it is equally difficult to get it right! What I see is a loss of the Scottishness, but not a gain in the Baroque.

Many of these dances, and especially The Duchess Tree, do not go well to a proper strathspey tune. I have heard excellent bands play the most awful selections to dance to. I realise that to a musician it makes perfect sense to put a stonking strong strathspey after some smooth as cream song tunes.

But The Duchess Tree, as one of my friends put it as one band suddenly stonked, "this dance should be danced to hymn tunes". If you are a musician, please take it from me, The Duchess Tree is holy writ, and strong strathspeys are as welcome as a rave up at a funeral. In fact, *The Duchess Tree* is now sacred in my memory to Rob Gordon, as it was played at his funeral, to great effect on me, and I think to all there. To have it mixed with *Orange and Blue*, or any other wild strathspey, is sacrilege, and I hate it.

I love strong strathspey tunes for most of the real strathspeys,



though, and of course for The Fling.

Which brings me to another slowing down that has nothing to do with J.C.M.

I have a friend who wanted to learn The Fling. I agreed to teach him, and he arrived complete with a 45rpm record – hey it wasn't that long ago! – 10 years – must have been a tape!

Anyway we couldn't dance to it as it was played as a dirge. The Fling in slow motion may look good on TV, but it is VERY difficult to do in real life. We had to look out my ancient SOBHD record and tape that, and yes it was successful. He learned The Fling, obviously impressed the girl and her folk enough, and is now married with family.

As a matchmaker, there is nothing to beat a Dancie!

Foursome Reel

The Foursome Reel (or Scotch Reel) is one of the oldest dances in the Scottish repertoire. It dates from at least the early 19th Century. At a "Reel Party", it usually follows an Eightsome. Elements from it can be found in many dances throughout the years, in particular The Reel of Tulloch and Hullochan's Jig. During the Hawick Common Riding the Cornet's Reel is actually a Foursome. The instructions here are as it would be done at a "Reel Party".

48 Bar Strathspey + 88 Bar Reel

Strathspey

Bars

1-8 All dance a reel of four. To begin, the ladies pass left shoulders in the centre, while the men wait for two bars before joining in to pass right shoulders with their "opposite" lady (not their partner). They should finish in a line of four, men back to back in the centre and each facing his "opposite" lady.

9-16 All set to "opposites".

17-24 All dance a reel of four, again finishing with man back to back in the centre, but this time each facing his partner. The men have changed places, but the ladies should be in the same position as they started the reel of four.

25-32 All set to partners.

33-40 All dance a reel of four, finishing in the same position as at the end of Bars 1-8.

41-48 All set to opposites.

Reel

Bars

1-8 Each man steps to his left and joins nearer hands with his partner on his right and his opposite on his left to form a circle. All circle to the left and then finish in a line of four once again, this time with the men back to back in the centre and facing their own partners.

9-16 All set to partners.

17-24 All "Tulloch turn"* own partners, finishing with ladies facing each other in the centre with their backs to their own partners.

25-32 Ladies set to each other.

33-40 Ladies Tulloch turn each other, finishing facing their opposites.

41-48 All set to opposites.

49-56 All Tulloch turn opposites, finishing with men facing each other in the centre with their backs to their opposites.

57-64 Men set to each other.

65-72 Men Tulloch turn each other, finishing facing their partners.

73-80 All set to partners.

81-88 All Tulloch turn partners and finish side by side.

*A "Tulloch turn" consists of dancers linking right arms at the elbow, raising their left arms in the air and swinging clockwise for four bars (count of eight), they then change to link left arms with right arms raised and swing anti-clockwise for four bars.

Mairi's Wedding

The "Mairi" of the title is Mary McNiven. The song (also known as The Lewis Bridal Song) was originally written in Gaelic by her friend Johnny Bannerman for the 1935 Mod and set to an old traditional tune that can be found in the Marjorie Kennedy-Fraser collection of music of the Hebrides, published in the early 20th Century. The lyrics were translated into English a year later by Sir Hugh Robertson. Mary wasn't actually married (to Skye-born sea captain John Campbell) until six years later. The dance was written in 1959 by James Cosh (who died in 1995).

8 x 40 Bar Reel

Formation: Longways set of four couples

Bars

1-4 Couple 1 turn each other with the right hand and cast down one place on their own sides. (Couple 2 move up.)

5-8 Couple 1 turn each other with the left hand and finish facing first corners.

9-12 Couple 1 dance half reel of four with first corners (starting by passing right shoulders so that leading couples always pass left shoulders in the middle). Corners will have changed places.

13-16 Couple 1 dance half reel of four with second corners.

17-20 Couple 1 dance half reel of four with first corners (which returns the corners to their original places).

21-24 Couple 1 dance half reel of four with second corners (they also return "home").

25-32 Couple 1 dance reels of three across the set, Lady 1 moving up to dance with Couple 2 and Man 1 moving down to dance with Couple 3. Couple 1 finish on own sides, one place down (second place).

33-40 From that position, Couples 2, 1 and 3 join hands to form a circle and circle left for eight steps and back to the right for eight steps.

Couple 1 repeat these forty bars from second place and then slip to the bottom, leaving Couple 2 as the new leading couple.

Heilan' Man's Umbrella

The origins of this dance are unknown, but the place it refers to is the railway bridge over Argyle Street in Glasgow, just beside Central Station where, in days gone by, folk coming down to the city from the Highlands and Islands would arrange to meet up.

Square Set for 4 Couples

4 x 32 Bar Reels

Bars

1-4 In promenade hold, all four couples advance and retire.

5-8 All four ladies cast by the right and dance round one place clockwise.

9-12 In promenade hold, all four new couples advance and retire.

13-16 All four men cast by the left and dance round one place anti-clockwise.

17-18 All set to new partners.

19-20 Men 1 and 3 (who are now facing across the set on the sides) change places giving left hands.

21-22 Men 2 and 4 (who are now facing up and down the set at top and bottom) change places giving left hands.

23-24 Dancers are now all back with their original partners, one place round the set clockwise. All set to their partners.

25-32 All join hands and circle left for a count of eight and back.

The dance is repeated three times to bring the dancers back to their original positions.



The Heilanman's Umbrella as it is today.

Karin's Many Happy Returns

This dance was written by Pia Walker for Karin Ingram's birthday and is danced to the original tune, "A Jig for Karin", written by Nicol McLaren. Both dance and tune are appreciated and treasured by the recipient!

A 32 Bar Jig for 2 couples, standing side by side in at least two longwise sets, and as many rows as there are dancers. (Dancers are facing their partners, if they have their back to another dancer then they are a "middle dancer". i.e. If there are two sets, A & B, then Lady 1A is facing her partner Man 1A, he has his back to Lady 1B, who is facing her partner Man 1B, therefore Man 1A and Lady 1B are "middle dancers"; if there were a third set then Man 1B and Lady 1C would be "middle dancers" also and so on.)

Bars

1-2 Middle dancers turn their partners with right hands.

3-4 Middle dancers turn each other with left hands.

5-6 Middle dancers turn their partners with right hands.

7-8 Middle dancers turn each other with left hands. Or, if there are only two sets, dance a full reel of four across (middle dancers and partners).

Rows 1 and 2 only

9-12 Middle dancers dance right hands across on the sides with their partners all the way round.

13-16 Middle dancers dance left hands across on the sides with their partners all the way round. (4 hands across and back)

All Dancers on the Floor

17-20 Holding hands on the side, all advance and retire.

Rows 1 and 2 only

21-24 Facing each other (Row 1 facing down, Row 2 facing up), Rows 1 and 2 advance and retire.

Row 1 progresses thus:

25-26 Rows 1 and 2 pass each other with Row 2 forming arches

27-28 Rows 1 and 3 pass each other with Row 1 forming arches

29-30 Rows 1 and 4 pass each other with Row 4 forming arches

31-32 Rows 1 and 5 pass each other with Row 1 forming arches

The dance begins again with the leading row in their new position (fifth in the set), so they are dancing with Row 6, while the new top 2 rows also begin.

When reaching the end of the rows of dancers, the leading couples can use the remainder of the 32 bars to birl to their hearts' content until it is time to start again.

A Jig for Karin

Nicol McLaren
18th Sept 2007

Dm A Dm Dm C Dm A Dm C A7

Dm A Dm F E C Dm A7 Dm Dm-A7 Dm C7

F C F F E C Dm A Dm B^b A F

F C F F C Dm C B^b A7

Dm C7 F E C Dm A Dm B^b A F

F C F F C B^b A7 Dm Dm

© Nicol McLaren, Glencraig SDB



Margo MacLennan and Pia Walker dancing at Karin's Birthday Party.

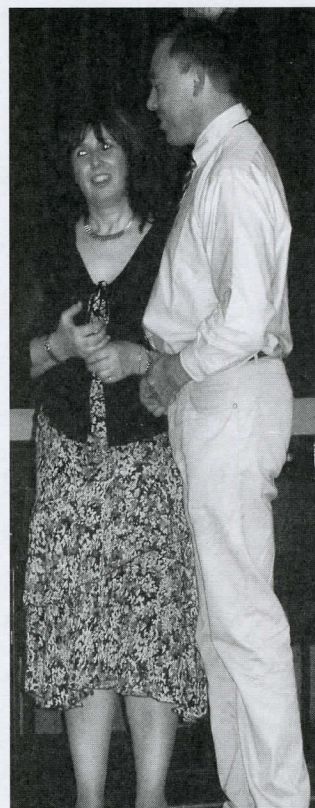
Thank you to all my friends who came along to help me celebrate.

They came from Orkney and from London, from Lockerbie and from Kiltarlity - and what a night we had! Thank you too to The Glencraig and The Glenelvan Dance Bands, to everyone who brought something for the buffet and to everyone who contributed to Hessilhead Wildlife Rescue.

Special thanks must go to the Cowie Family and others from the Scottish Dance Group, who decorated the hall.

Karin x

*Karin Ingram and
Nicol McLaren*



New Struan House

Devised and arranged by Campbell Hunter in aid of the Scottish Society for Autism and first performed on Saturday 3 May 2003 at The Royal Highland Centre, Edinburgh. The original tune, "Open Doors" was written by Iain Peterson and published by Shian Music.

4 Couple Longways Set

8 x 32 Jig

Bars

1-4 1st, 2nd and 3rd couples, joining hands in the sidelines, set, then, the men making the arches, all three couples cross to other side and face in.

5-8 1st, 2nd and 3rd couples again set and cross over, this time the ladies make the arches.

9-12 1st couple lead down the middle, followed by 2nd couple.

13-16 2nd couple lead back up the middle, followed by 1st couple, to finish in the sidelines. The order is now 2, 1, 3, 4.

17-20 1st man with 3rd couple and 1st lady with 2nd couple dance three hands across with right hand.

21-24 1st man with 2nd couple and 1st lady with 3rd couple dance three hands across with left hand.

25-32 2nd, 1st and 3rd couples dance six hands round and back.

Repeat from new places.

© Campbell Hunter 2002

Johnnie Walker

This dance was devised by Norman and Helen Robson. Somebody gave me the printed instructions a long time ago. I have no idea if the wording belongs to the Robsons, but hopefully the instructions are correct!

A medley for four couples in a square set.

Strathspey

Bars

1-8 Eight hands round and back

9-12 Set to and turn corners right hand

13-16 Set to and turn partners left hand.

17-24 1st and 3rd couples advance into the centre, take right hand of the person facing, dance out through the side couples, cross over behind them and dance to opposite places and turn partner one and a half times by the right hand.

25-32 2nd and 4th couples repeat Bars 17-24. All are now in opposite places.

33-34 All the ladies Petronella one place to the right.

35-36 All set once.

37-38 All the ladies Petronella another place to the right.

39-40 All set once.

41-48 All the men repeat Bars 33-40. All are now back in original places, facing partners.

49-56 Grand Chain all the way round the set.

57-64 Allemande anti-clockwise round the set

Jig

Bars

1-64 Repeat Bars 1-64 in jig time. All the ladies finish in the middle, back to back, facing partner.

Trencher Boy

An easy ceilidh dance – origins unknown, but probably English.

4 or 5 x 32 Bar Jig

4 or 5 Couple Longways Set

Bars

1-4 Holding hands on the sides, dancers advance and retire.

5-8 Dancers repeat Bars 1-4.

9-16 Following the leading couple, all dancers cast off on own sides and then lead back up the middle to places.

17-28 Each couple makes an arch; leading couple go right down the middle under the all arches to the bottom, where they make an arch; the next couple does the same and so on until they are back in their original order.

29-32 Leading couple swing to the bottom and stay there.

The dance is repeated for the duration of the music with a new leading couple each time.

Your Letters

Dear Readers,

As you may know, Robert Burns joined a Scottish Dancing Class in Tarbolton in 1779.

I am organising a Burns Celebration in Lavenham Village Hall on 26 January and would like to incorporate the dances Burns did.

I have asked the National Trust of Scotland, the Burns Heritage and the RSCDS if they have an archive listing the typical dances danced in Tarbolton.

Does anyone have any records that might help?

Kind regards,

John Busby

johnbusbyltd@hotmail.com

Dear Karin,

Last month's article "Hobson's Choice" makes a remark: "in some SCD groups, man + kilt + 2 legs = demonstrator", and also indicates his own unwillingness (I think) to do demonstrations. Quite right Mr. Hobson, and that is how it should be.

The four standards of dancer are beginner, intermediate, advanced, and competition. Anybody, in any of these standards, who is coordinated in their movements, can do demonstrations, provided the teacher has the sense to choose dances the group can do reasonably well. (Perhaps I should exclude exclude raw beginners.) There is no such thing as a "demonstration-standard dancer"; a

person who is invited to take part in a demonstration is not, thereby, one of the best dancers in the district.

How well (unfortunately) I remember:

(a) A group who decided to be a demonstration team, one member of which caused resentment by high-handed treatment of others;

(b) A demonstration group where the turnover of membership in one year was more than the total membership, the atmosphere being so bad;

(c) A small group within a demonstration team who resented being required to attend an advanced class, thinking it was beneath them;

(d) A teacher (of a demonstration team within a larger group) who resented the unwillingness of a group member to join the team for a forthcoming event;

(e) A teacher (of a demonstration team within a larger group) who strongly resented a refusal to join, claiming that the person in question was letting the whole group down very badly;

(f) A member of a large branch who objected to my statement "the qualifications are to be ready, willing, and able", stating that there is competition to be in the team. Competition within any SCD group is unhealthy.

If only everyone would remember that SCD is social dancing!

Best wishes,

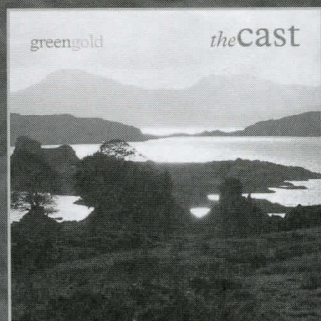
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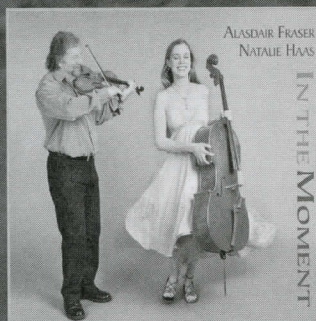


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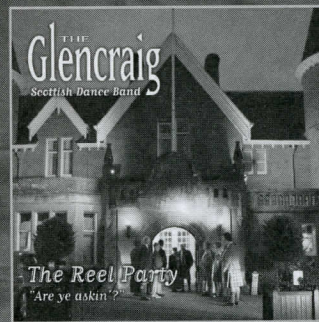
The Cast
"greengold"
CDTRAX 319

Mairi Campbell and Dave Francis are the multi-talented Scottish duo known as The Cast. Mairi and Dave are polished, relaxed and engaging performers and the new album is a stunning blend of gentle songs and fine fiddle tunes. Mairi takes center stage on vocals, to the accompaniment of Dave's excellent guitar and Mairi's delicate fiddle.



Alasdair Fraser & Natalie Haas
"In The Moment"
CUL 122

Alasdair Fraser, recognised internationally as one of Scotland's leading fiddle players, again combines with the youthful virtuosity of cellist Natalie Haas. In 2004 their first collaboration - "Fire and Grace" - was voted "Album of The Year" at the Scots Trad Awards. This is an equally stunning album and early feedback has been excellent.



The Glencraig Scottish Dance Band
"The Reel Party - Are Ye Askin?"
CDTRAX 315

One of the few bands that specialises in playing for all types of Scottish Social Dancing and in this, their second album for Greentrax, they capture the mood and feeling of the traditional "Reel Party". Their first Greentrax album "The Ceilidh" won The National Association of Accordion and Fiddle Clubs' award - "CD of The Year 2007"

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Inverness Highland Scottish Country Dance Ball 2008

As we approach next year's Ball on March 29th at the Sports Centre, Bught Park, Inverness I am pleased to report that everything is booked and we are waiting with great expectations for another excellent evening of friendship and good dance. Over the last ten years we have had excellent music from Colin Dewar but for 2008 we have gone for a change by asking Marian Anderson and her Band to play for us so another good night is in store.

All organisers of balls and dances will know organising such an event can be thwart with unforeseen problems and the 2006 one was no exception. It was probably more difficult to cater for 360 dancers than at a normal dance or rally. Our problem was not the dance programme or music. As a committee of five we have to rely heavily on caterers and with five weeks to go our caterers decided that they didn't want to do it. However they recommended another caterer who, on face value, fulfilled our requirements satisfactorily, but on the night nothing turned out as it should have done. Dinner should have taken 90 minutes, but it turned into a 140 minute fiasco. All you "organisers" beware! Catering has always been a problem but in 2004 we had it cracked only to fall apart in 2006. In view of this we have decided to supply light refreshments only during the interval, giving us more time on the dance floor as a bonus. By doing this we have been able to reduce the cost from £26 a ticket to £13.50. However this will be a

formal ball and for all of you who haven't attended the Highland Ball before, there is no finer sight than watching over 100 men in Highland Dress dancing Reel of the 51st! One of the success stories of the ball has been the carefully selected programme of weel-kent dances, we aim to cater for all tastes! The 2008 programme is no exception and be they beginners or advanced dancers there are plenty of dances to enjoy. We hope to attract dancers who just love to dance be they social dancers or Scottish Country Dancers. All dances will be called for those of us who have short memories... where was I?! In view of the popularity of our event we have limited the numbers in the past to 350 but now that we no longer require space for dinner we can extend the number to 400.

We can advise that Inverness Airport is much more accessible than in 2006 and there are frequent flights by various airlines from most UK airports. If booked early enough there are excellent prices to be had through Ryanair, EasyJet, BMI, Eastern and BA. There is also a regular direct rail service from Kings Cross leaving at 12 noon and getting to Inverness at 20.05pm. A relaxing way to see the changing landscape in comfort. The City of Inverness offers a wide range of accommodation and the Tourist Information Office will gladly advise.

On that note we look forward to welcoming new and old friends once again.

Rob Sargent

Chairman, Highland Scottish Country Dance Group



The Reel of the 51st Division at last year's Ball.

Ball Programme 2008

HIGHLAND SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE GROUP

Sports Centre, Bught Park, Inverness, Saturday, 29th March 2008

MARIAN ANDERSON SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE BAND

Programme: Starts 7.30 pm prompt

Gay Gordons

1.	Saltire Society Reel	8 x 32 bar R	Leaflet
2.	The Frisky	8 x 32 Bar J	Book 26
3.	Butterscotch & Honey	4 x 32 bar S	Attwood
4.	Reel of the 51 st Division	8 x 32 bar R	Book 13
5.	The Bees of Maggiecknockater	4 x 32 bar J	Drewry
6.	Calum's Road	4 x 32 bar S	Sargent
7.	Black Mountain Reel	5 x 32 bar R	Haynes
8.	Seton's Ceilidh Band	4 x 64 bar J	Fordyce
9.	Margaret Parker's Strathspey	8 x 32 bar S	Book 31
10.	Tullich Hornpipe	4 x 32 bar H	Sargent
11.	Mairi's Wedding	8 x 40 bar R	Cosh

St Bernard's Waltz

12.	The Montgomeries' Rant	8 x 32 bar R	Book 10
13.	Follow Me Home	8 x 32 bar J	Book 38
14.	Wisp of Thistle	8 x 32 bar S	Book 37
15.	Catch the Wind	8 x 32 bar R	Book 45
16.	Ian Powrie's Farewell to Auchterarder	128 bar R	Hamilton
17.	Wind on Loch Fyne	3 x 32 bar S	Dickson
18.	J B Milne	8 x 32 bar R	Foss
19.	Postie's Jig	4 x 32 bar J	Clowes
20.	The Robertson Rant	80 bar S	Book 39
21.	Robbie Over The Waves	8 x 32 bar R	Sargent
22.	Shiftin' Bobbins	8 x 32 bar R	Clowes

Extra: Duke of Perth

8 x 32 bar R Book 1

All dances will be called with encores for popular ones

Dress Formal

Tickets £13.50 including light refreshments

Last day of availability – Saturday, 22nd March 2008

No refunds after 1st March 2008

Tickets limited to 400

Cheques made payable to: Highland Scottish Country Dance Group

Please send stamped addressed envelope to:

Mrs Mary Ross, 60 Drummond Road, Inverness IV2 4NU

Tel: 01463-234 680

Happy Birthday Mary



Dancer's Special Day

There was a special celebration at the Monday night Scottish Country Dancing class in the hall at Steel Avenue recently on the occasion of Mary Wilson's 90th birthday, when she was presented with a cake and flowers from her friends.

Mary has been a member of the Dumfries branch of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society (RSCDS) since 1955. She still dances at classes in Dumfries every Monday and Tuesday as well as in Lockerbie every Thursday. She also goes to Old Time Dancing every week.

Mary attends all the local dances and spends a fortnight every summer at the RSCDS Summer School in St Andrews.

Mary says, "I've had a lot of pleasure among all the friends I've made over the years."

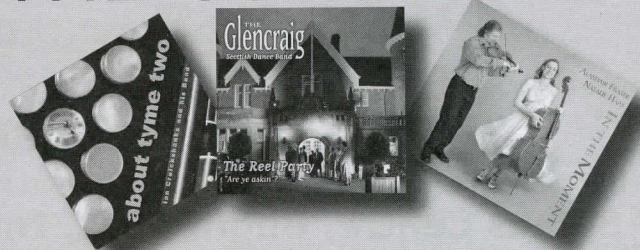
Mary is pictured with her special cake and receiving her floral arrangement from Rachel Fenwick, Chairman of the Dumfries branch of the RSCDS, and fellow dancer Mary Graham.

Marion Bennett

RSCDS Dumfries Branch



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Strathpeffer Summer Gala Rally

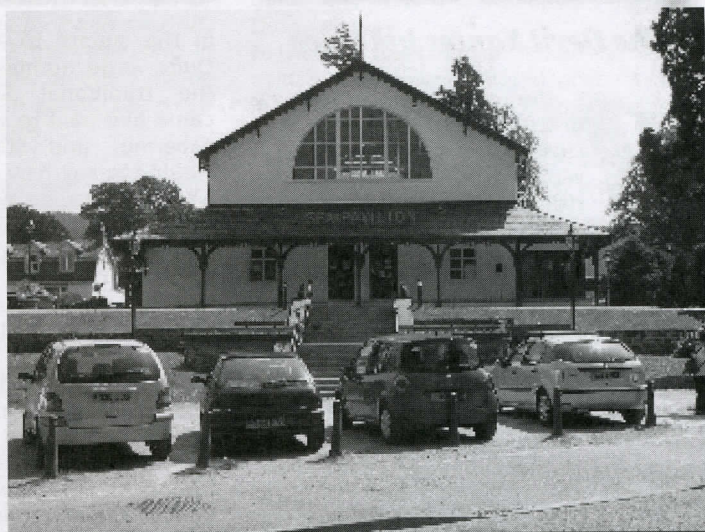
June arrived like a damp squib with thick haar, or perhaps one could say "Scotch Mist", every morning and summer seeming a million miles away. However, on Saturday the 9th, June suddenly remembered it was meant to be flaming June. The sun shone and the mercury rocketed up the thermometer and suddenly people appeared in scanty summer clothes. Dingwall was buzzing with the car boot sale at the auction mart just outside the town and the High Street was hosting the monthly Farmers' Market. Strathpeffer, not to be outdone, was having its annual Victorian Day. Locals and tourists alike mingled and wandered enjoying the heat, the sights and the melting ice creams.

The evening in Strathpeffer was busy too. At 7.30 pm about 130 dancers gathered from all over the Highlands and Islands and from as far away as Surrey and were welcomed to the Dingwall Scottish Country Dance Club's Summer Gala Rally in the Pavilion. The Colin Dewar Quartet provided excellent music, which made the dancers keen to take to the floor. The first half of the programme was: Anderson's Rant, The 51st Travellers, The Moray Rant, Peggy Dewar, The Jackdaw, Cape Town Wedding, Miss Johnstone of Ardrossan, The Nurseryman, Jean Martin of Aberdeen and Red House.

After that the dancers were glad to have a break and gallons of tea plus excellent home-baking and savouries. Also plenty of fruit, which is becoming very popular at rallies in the north. The wonderful warm, sunny midge-free evening allowed many to take their supper outside. The local Pipe Band was playing in the Village Square and their music could be enjoyed. Refreshed, the company returned to the large, sprung wooden floor for the second half of the programme which was as follows: Joie De Vivre, The Royal Wedding, The Inimitable Derek, Muirland Willie, Scotch Mist, The Piper and the Penguin, Campbell's Frolic, Sloane Square, Lothian Lads and Quarries' Jig. The programme was designed to have old favourites, include newer dances and to introduce others which have not been danced in the area before. The Cailleach nan Cearc is pleased to see that The Jackdaw will be flying in the Highlands again come September at the Forres Branch dance.

The Dingwall Scottish Country Dance Club's next rally will be held on Saturday 24th November in Dingwall Town Hall, another excellent venue, with the music being provided by Drummond Cook's Band. It is hoped that many folk frae a the airts will be there.

Cailleach nan Cearc



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Hobson's Choice

The Devil Names his Price

As the cold and surprisingly gritty water of Loch Insh closed over my head, and I watched the shocked bubbles rising from my tartan shirt and open mouth towards the dappled sunlight framing our upturned canoe; I cannot say that my whole life flashed before my eyes; but some very mixed thoughts and emotions did!

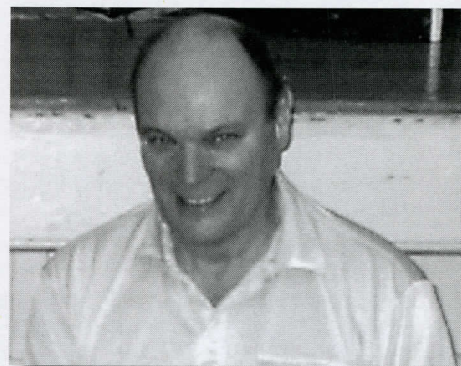
You first need to know one piece of background to explain my feelings of dismay and betrayal, rather than some version of *"Oh no! Here we go again"* (which my normal communications might suggest). In my youth I had claims to be a considerable athlete; though small in stature, and proportionately too short in the leg to be much of a runner, I used my strength, speed, co-ordination and above all, BALANCE to excel in throwing hammers, javelins, discuses, putting shots and most relevantly pole-vaulting! How could a man who could run flat out, shift, plant and leap, swing through, shoot, turn, thrust and arch, release and rotate; be now sinking in the water? How could such a man push a canoe from the bank, with his wife sitting trustingly in the bow, to find himself rocking and waving his paddle, unable to damp the rocking, unable to turn, unable to sit, only able at last to give in to gravity and enter the water butt first with little arms and legs waving bye-bye to life? How could he? I'll tell you how! It's that damned Scottish Country Dancing again! Yes, there I was, sinking through the water, thinking, *"This is a hell of a price to pay for a day of simple pleasure and indulgence"*. The day had been the previous one, culminating in our evening spent with the admirable Dingwall RSCDS club at their second Strathpeffer Gala Rally. I am well known for hating Balls and hyped dances, with all their affectations and pretence, but I make an exception for this one. Good dancers (i.e. they enjoy dancing and the company of other dancers); good music from Colin Dewar et al (i.e. they enjoy playing for dancers, watching them and responding to mood); good dancing (priorities: the set first, the dance second, your partner third and self last!); good calling (shared by the class, related to the needs of the sets); good food produced without any fuss or bother. But best of all the magnificent ambience of the Strathpeffer Pavilion; high vaulted ceiling, sitting out areas separate from the dance, but with windows to see in through and be entertained, superb floor, and adequate changing rooms. The day itself added enormously to the effect, bright warm sunshine accentuated by the long Northern days taking the sun through to 11 o'clock. It was a festive day in the town with pipe band and dancing

in the square to act as our backdrop. Quite large numbers of those watching the traditional Scots entertainments came and paid to watch us in our senile capering, and stayed and took the trouble to say how enjoyable we were to watch, *"because we so clearly enjoyed what we did!"* Now this is the point, I enjoyed myself so much that I forgot not to do every dance, I forgot to sit around looking miserable so that no-one would partner me, of the 130 odd there no more than a dozen were not friends, and that mainly because I didn't know them yet. The few that were not friends because of imagined slights in the past, or in print, were so busy enjoying themselves they forgot the link between fist and nose! I danced the night like a dervish, and only when I tried to fold myself into the car did I realise that my hips and lower back were full of arthritic ground glass. Well heigh-ho and home to a night of rueing the follies of age.

The following day found me quite compromised in mobility below the shoulders, so rather than walk, cycle or climb, we opted for a sedate canoe expedition on our local loch. So there I was, standing in a wobbly canoe, unable to bend sway or sit, so what else could I do? If there had been someone there with a camera, it would have been too silly even for *"You've been Framed!"* Bald elderly dodderer for no obvious reason subsiding into the water, with his poor wife clinging to the canoe, plaintively crying, *"Why did you do that?"* Isn't there a world of implication in that question? Everyone, but everyone, thinks I do all these stupid things on purpose, when it is really hubris. I am not the man I used to be, and everyone knows that apart from me!

What could I say but *"sorry about that?"* Fortunately it was a warm day and our age related woollies acted as very fair wet suits. Someone said, *"We've paid sixteen pounds for this, and I'm damned if we're wasting it!"* So we expertly emptied the canoe and set off silently for our round the lake three-mile tour, steaming and paddling like the Millport paddle steamer. Ah well! All's well that ends well!

But it wasn't quite the end. The following Saturday I was recovered enough to go to the Pitlochry Dance. (Don't we get to dance in some lovely places?) A total contrast to Strathpeffer, but not in quality I hasten to add. Absolutely no frills, just excellent dancing, by dancers frae a' the airts, to splendid music from David Anderson (the drive and urgency of his strathspeys made them not for the faint-hearted), just juice and a biscuit at the half-time break with an opportunity for a wee keek over the wall to see how the moorhens in the reed-fringed lochan were doing this year. The programme respected the dancer's ability to prepare



the dances (no recaps) while accepting that newer or forgotten dances would need one of June's immaculate recap/walks. This means a 7.30 start and 10.30 finish giving plenty of time to return to our far flung airts; in our case, time to pack for a Sunday journey sadly down to darkest Englandshire. Sadly, because at this final dance, hordes of our friends from the naughty North had travelled down too, making it doubly hard to part at dance-end. At Strathpeffer there were so few strangers that we all stared at them as if they were touring Martians, then competed to partner them. I had just started thinking that Pitlochry was where we were Martians when all the gang rolled in! However there was a group from the Lakes present, who were super to dance with; it took me back many years to when we danced regularly with Lakes folk; but sadly everyone I had known seems to have ceased to dance at least in this world!

South-homecoming not so bad! In-box absolutely full of contacts from friends I didn't know I had, with news of, and invitations to, summer classes, end of year parties, and the Summer circuit of garden dances. Plenty to do as long as I behave appropriately! Which reminds me, I have to get on with the next episode of the "Smoking Slipper" Da-da-Daah!

Act one scene two

A mini rally, in a tiny Town Hall, dominated by enormous pillars round which the squeezed out sets must dance. The whole assembly will dance, but the scene opens with just one three-couple set made up of the scene one principals. This scene is mainly "business" so here is the choreography; groups may like to develop their own slapstick. Always remember that in slapstick, **once** barely shows, without a long and pointed lead in, **twice** is simply repetitive, **three times** is perfect but there **must** be a twist in the final outcome.

One three couple set for Mairi's Wedding,

The "men" are **Verdigris, Giorgiorella and Chimneysoot** partnered by **Madame Rondel, Dame Allemande and Princess Castlebriar**.

1-4 Verdigris and Madame R Birl, instead of turn and cast, and as Giorgiorella tries to step up they clip him and spin him from the set.

5-8 Verdigris and Madame Birl LH, smacking hands with corners as they pass (almost hello-hello setting) as each passes Giorgiorella they "miss" his hand and smack his face (much exaggerated reeling about and reaction)

9-24 Everybody pirouettes and smacks in the reels, but of course each smacks Gs face (or somewhere else as he tries to protect his face)

25-32 Every time a couple meet they do a half turn and switch reels, culminating in Dame R giving Giorgiorella a sling shot turn to throw him from the set.

33-40 First circle is simple pull in tight to accelerate widen out to break grip and Irish Whip Giorgiorella into the band

Second version

1-4 As Giorgiorella tries to turn and cast, 2M does not step up on 3/4 leaving G struggling to get to partner who turns single for bars 5-8

5-8 Giorgiorella runs round set to finally find way to 1st corner

9-24 In the reels 2nd corners dance first, everyone knows this but Giorgiorella so partner dances reel of 3 while 1st corner hooks Giorgiorella's belt as he forlornly tries to dance round, every time he is released and guesses where the reel will be the others change to frustrate him.

25-32 Giorgiorella reels across, but everyone else reels on the side and every time he meets a buxom lady he is belly-barged out of the set

33-40 V&C cross arms in circle and squeeze G and on bars 36 and 40 they release their outer hands to take grip on Gs belt and perform a rugby line-out lift to put him 9 feet up with his little legs waving (of course this is only practicable if G is fairly agile, light and assisting the lift by pressing straight arms down)

Alternative Mayhem

Full performance of "Jimmy's Jazzy Jumper"

Four Couple set, 3rd Man (Giorgiorella) dressed in the jazziest jumper you can find, with the addition of tinsel and flashing lights, and a "see you Jimmy" wig; the additional couple are members of the cast possibly **PC Hector** and **PC Francie**

Jimmy's Jazzy Jumper

(72 bars of unlikely combinations in strathspey and reel time changing eclectically.) If there is no live musician dance the whole thing as a reel.

1-8.1 Bow and curtsey, all turn to third man and bow and curtsey

(exaggerated), (third man curse and bouncy), all women and three men don sunglasses.

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

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

25-32 **Back to Strathspey.** Dance in to stand beside partner shoulder to shoulder, place hand on partners waist 1s and 3s face down 2s and 4s face up, 1s with 2s 3s with 4s dance three legged doh-si-doh, all start with inside leg, each double passes each double r sh, pass back to back as 4s pass 3s retiring, 4th man turns 3rd lady about to kidnap her and 4th lady casts to be opposite 3rd man when all retire to sidelines (3rd man is bewildered by partner change, nobody else reacts)

33-40 1s with 2s, 3s with 4s, rh across and lh back as 2nd and 3rd lady meet for second time in middle change wheels, return to sides (note: this is the new 3rd lady and the second partner 3rd man has lost)

41-56 All four women in turn approach 3rd man coquettishly and force him to turn them allemande left and right in alternate turns (Allemande left, man dance in for two and out for two straight, while lady dances in on a slight clockwise curve seizing mans left hand, raising it and continuing curve under and back to place, allemande right ladies dance anticlockwise curve and seize right hand). If the ladies wish, they can give Giorgiorella's hand a cruel tweak and spin him round to stagger about a lot.

57-72 **Jig** each of the three men each turn third man allemande left and right, (in this case the men all dance the male part, spinning Giorgiorella as many times round as they can manage, in alternate directions, finishing by collectively kicking his arse while all the ladies curtsey

Baron Hornpipe (as master of the revels) Stop the music! Stop the dance! This is disgraceful! You all need lessons in etiquette and decorum. I will not allow this ball to proceed until you have had some basic instruction. My entourage and I will return in ten minutes to look for improvement

Verdigris What did he say? He speaks lovely but I don't understand a word. Did he say we needed a ticket? Cos I haven't got one

Chimneysoot I thought he said we needed some rum! I could go for that

Dame Rondel NO, no! Etiquette and

decorum, he means you don't just grab a partner to dance, you wipe your hands on your kilt first. Anyway we tried that once and it was awful, you had to keep dancing with all these strangers from out Dingwall way.

Princess Castlebriar What he really said was someone should give us all a lesson so that we can all enjoy the dance. (Turns to audience) isn't that right? Wouldn't you like to dance? And I think you two should put your feet where your mouth is and take the lesson
Here be dancing
Everybody up

V&C divide audience into 2, each half doing a different dance to the same tune
Suggest: Duke of Perth and Reel of the Royal Scots

First one half then the other.

Verdigris We were better! Weren't we?
All OH NO YOU WEREN'T OH YES WE WERE etc

Then both halves dance at same time.

There is only comic effect if both callers call simultaneously with increasing volume and desperation. It helps if the dancers change from responding to one and then the other
Alternative

Strathspey triangles Indian River and Wind O L F

Baron Hornpipe That all seems very satisfactory, that was more like dancing the way it used to be. You may carry on!

Princess Castlebriar Just before you carry on dancing, I would like to announce that my club has asked me to mount a search over the coming weeks to find a new teacher to take our general class. I intend to do this by watching very carefully at the rallies for someone whose style of dancing would suit our club.

Giorgiorella (aside) To suit our club they'll have to have two broken legs

Verdigris (overhearing) What's that you bandy legged little coot? Are you suggesting our dancing's a bit lame?

Chimneysoot (only hearing Verdigris) There you go again! Blaming me for everything! Just because I was behaving myself!

Verdigris What have I said! What have I said!

Chimneysoot You know perfectly well what you said. "There's that randy ragged Chimneysoot, when she's not dancing she's on the game!"

Verdigris I said no such thing! I was just asking bandylegs here, wha...Now where's she gone? (Giorgiorella has taken the chance to slip away)

Chimneysoot You don't get away with it that easy! Now what do you mean by it!

Verdigris and Chimneysoot (bickering) And another thing/I only asked etc etc fade away to end scene all off

Setting

If ever you need to know anything about Scottish Country Dance, pay a visit to www.strathspey.org. You'll usually get much more than just the answer to your question. This is an interesting and hugely informative discussion about setting that appeared recently. Parts 1 & 2 were printed in the previous two issues and we will have part 4 in the next issue.

Sorry, I really meant to refer to traditional dancing in Scotland and not "Country Dancing as Miss M. decided should be danced in Scotland". I still think of country dancing as an everyday part of Scottish culture and I am regularly reminded, directly and indirectly, by RSCDS style dancers that this is no longer the case.

Sad, but the reality is that the RSCDS Office could move to Liberia and it would not affect the majority of people who dance in Scotland but only an ageing and diminishing minority.

Bryan McAllister

I think we have to look to our early dance experts (Robert Lambie et al) for the answer to this question. As far as I have seen in early dance, setting was always a two-way operation. Of course the pas de Basque (or pas de bas depending on your preference) did not exist in its current form†. The setting step – I believe – was far more similar to a strathspey setting step, although lower to the floor.

Karin Ingram

I think it would be a good subject for an article in "Dance On!", so I will try to work one up shortly. I certainly found the development interesting, so I hope to be able to pass on that interest.

I have the pleasure to remain, your humble and obedient servant,

Dancie

†Not exactly accurate on several points.

Yes, the pas-de-basque did exist in its current form, but as a setting step was only one of many that one might have used. Our use of it is simply a reinsertion from a time prior to the style danced at the time the Society was formed. The EFDSS step-swing, aka balance, as in balance and pas-de-basque was pretty much the current style, and still is in many non RSCDS circles. Since both the strathspey travelling and setting steps were made up by Miss M for country dancing‡, I can hardly think that there was a setting step similar to ours at

some time before the Society. As a setting step, it really does not work to well since it covers so much lateral distance. I suspect that none of our "historic" strathspeys, pre-RSCDS, were ever danced with anything like our strathspey, which is somewhere between a schottische and a skip change of step. The oldest reference to a strathspey country dance is "Montgomery's Rant", which we do in reel time, though the rant step used south of the border for Moneymusk would work as a compromise.

Richard Goss

I've obviously not explained the step clearly. The setting step that I have seen Early Dancers use is step close step close right, step close step close left, which is not dissimilar to the Strathspey setting step except that it does not have the "hop", and it is much closer to the floor.

You mention the rant step for Moneymusk, I haven't seen that. Is it the same as the distinctive rant step we use to dance The Morpeth Rant?

Karin Ingram

Yes, the rant step is a distinctive step done in the borders, both sides. From there through the EFDSS, it is pretty much known by country dancers throughout England. Some have called it a Polish polka, sort of hop hop step.

Actually I understood what you meant, but setting, by definition, is done in place, and strathspey setting is not. The problem when one invents something based on a false concept, then all the seams start showing when you try to fit reality into an initially unreal concept.

For example when the Church taught that the Earth was the centre of the Universe and everything rotated around it, astronomers and navigators could still do their job, but the maths was much more complicated. Since there were no strathspey step, modern strathspey tempo country dances, there was no reason to have a strathspey

setting step to insert into pdb mode in the first place. The problem only appears when we believe, in spite of the evidence, that such a thing existed.

Richard Goss

I'm busy dancing the rant step here in my office, and trying to work out how to notate it – impossible! Basically it's a double hop on one foot, with a tap in front from the other on the first hop and then repeat the double hop on the other foot etc!! It's a great step though, we use it for travelling as well as setting.

Karin Ingram

Mr Goss, I value your scholarship highly, but I am having a problem with your theory that JCM invented the s'pey. According to that theory, the Queen Mum learned her setting in reel time from some other dancing master, (because it still had sideways travel), but her setting in s'pey from JCM, because it was normal. Most Reelers are the same, though Moneymusk seems to be their entire repertoire in S'pey! It all seems unlikely.

Robert Lambie

‡Methinks: Hmm, I'm not certain we can credit Miss M with being so inventive. I've just been dancing with a group of Slovaks this afternoon, and we used a fair approximation of the common schottische step in at least one of their dances: step, close, step, tap. The tap could have been performed as a little lift or bounce. I'm pretty certain their dances pre-date 1923...

What I do find interesting is that it seems that over the years the speed of strathspeys has slowed when played for country dancing, making it possible to give our country dance strathspey steps a truly idiosyncratic look (that is, if the dancers actually put in the dippy bit at the beginning of the step), but the stepping pattern is basically the same as found in lots of European folk dance.

Fiona, Bristol

The Dashing White Sergeant

By Richard Goss

I think our dance, with its name, is simply the fact that this particular tune got attached to a particular set of figures, and a lot of variations.

The earliest form of the dance that I have comes under the heading of "Swedish progression", meaning threesomes facing threesomes. The closest to our combination of figures, and these do not use our tune, is called "La Belle Sergeant". I have no idea when the dance became a round the room version, as with Circassian Circle (a class of dance, and not a specific dance itself), and the union dances (four facing four) were here all described as up and down the room, not around it. The DWS description goes as follows.

The room is divided in the centre between top and bottom. At this point, there is a threesome with a man in the centre facing up the room, vis a vis a threesome with a woman in the centre facing down. Behind these threesomes others with the same centre arrangement are lined up for as many as are dancing. On the first repeat of the music, only the initial six in the centre are dancing, as they pass through, both groups meet a new threesome, so that the second dancing involves twelve people, and so on until they reach the ends of the room. At this point, after passing through, they simply turn around and miss one repeat before starting back.

I once tried this at a party with a lot of non British dancers here in Spain. The hall in question was long and so narrow that it would be difficult to have two parallel rows of sets for a strathspey. There were about twenty-four people, of whom only four of us (two couples) had ever seen or done the dance. I organized the set as follows. I was in the centre of the hall, facing up with a female dancer facing down, to our right we each had another knowledgeable person of the opposite sex, and an experienced, but non British, dancer to our left. In the initial sixsome, it is pretty easy, even without a walk or talk through to get the other two through the figures by handing and mimicry. On the repeat, this meant that we

had twelve dancing, of whom six had already done it, and the other six had been studying their future roles from behind the positions in which they would dance. For the next repeats while the experienced dancers were further diluted, the inexperienced had by that time more time to study the dance from the rear. By using live music, 8 x 32, this meant that everyone had a chance to dance at least five times, with the initial threesomes doing it seven times. It worked, and they asked for an encore, at which point I reversed the order so that the initial threesomes moved to the ends of the set.

As an aside, there is another problem with the RSCDS version and this is the possibility of collision between who goes under and who goes over after the advance and retire. I know we have a rule, but this following method is simpler. The centre person only retains hands with the right hand partner, so with two arches each facing a single person, there is less confusion.

Chivers (1822) is an interesting source on Swedish Progression.

After describing the progression, as I did previously, he next lists the following technical terms...

Set to Top and Bottom at the sides – is performed by the two centre persons moving to their right at the sides and set to opposite corners, then set to their own corners, still remaining at the sides.

Swing with right and left hands to places – This figure is generally performed after the above, by the centre persons swinging their own corners with the right and left hands to places, observing the corner persons only turn round in their places.

All lead through – The two lines exchange places, by passing on the right of each other.

Two Lines Lead Round and Exchange places – the top three join hands, and the opposite three do the same, (forming two lines= and each lines moves to the left and exchange places.

Cross over giving right hands – the two lines exchange places, and in passing they give right hands and set still holding the hand.

Hey contrary sides – the two centre

persons, hey (i.e. reel) with the two corner persons at their right hand. Hands three round your own lines – The top three hands round, and at the same time the opposite line do the same.

The figures (i.e. the dances as named after the tunes provided).

Isabella: hands six half round, and back again; set to top and bottom at the sides; swing with right and left hands to places; advance and retire in two lines; all lead through.

La Belle Sergeant: Set three and three in your places, joining hands; the same at the sides; set to top and bottom at the sides; swing with right and left hands to places; hands three your own lines, and back again; advance and retire in two lines; all lead through.

The Carnival of Venice: set to top and bottom at the sides; swing with right and left hands to places; advance and retire in two lines; all lead through.

Vulcan's Cave: hands six half round, and back again; advance and retire in two lines twice; set to top and bottom at sides; swing with right and left hands to place; hands three your own each, and back again; two lines lead round and exchange places.

Mr Chivers' Fancy: cross over giving right hands; back with left; all six hands across half round, and back again; advance and retire in two lines; all lead through.

Le Gascon Volage: Advance and retire in two lines twice; set to top and bottom in your own lines; chain figure of six; advance and retire into lines; all lead through.

Mr Chivers' Whim: All six hand across half round, and aback again; hey your own lines; all lead through | hands three round your own lines.

Matilda: Cross over giving right hands | back with left | hands six half round, and back again; advance and retire in two lines twice; two lines lead round and exchange places.

Di Tanti Palpiti: Cross over giving right hands; back with left; hands six half round, and back again; set to top and bottom your own lines; chain figure of six; advance and retire in two lines; all lead through.

Club of the Month

Sound Dance Club, Shetland

Sound Dance Club was formed in October 1997 by Alisdair Gair, when the dance classes he had been running for the previous four years had increased in numbers so much that he asked for a club to be formed with a Committee.

The Club meets every other Monday where a variety of dances are taught by Caroline and Maddy Maddison; mainly Scottish Country, Ceilidh and a small amount of Modern Sequence.

Every month a dance is held in the hall, and we are fortunate to have on our doorstep Da Fustra, The Cullivoe Dance Band and Jim Halcrow's Dance Band, who all play for us on a regular basis.

Every year a charity event is held and the club has so far raised over £5000 for local charities.

The club over the last ten years has visited and been visited by The Orkney Dance Club, the Torphins Dance Class and the Blackburn Social Dance Club.

The club has a Website that was recently reviewed by Sue Petyt for this magazine. Any information on the club can be accessed through www.sounddanceclub.co.uk

Every year for the past four years the Sound Dance Club has held a dance in The Shetland Hotel on the Sunday night for all the people who come up from down South for the Shetland Accordion and Fiddle Festival and who are unable to get into the Sunday's final Foy.

The first year we had Graham Edwardson's Dance Band, the second year was Robert Whitehead, last year The Lomond Ceilidh Band and this year The Gary Sutherland Ceilidh Band.

Each year the reputation of the dance has grown and this year we had a complete sell out and a waiting list, so much so that next year we are looking for a bigger venue. We try to get bands that are not playing in the festival, who are just up for the "Craic" and are willing to play for a few hours before going on to the Foy.



Dancing in The Shetland Hotel

Photographs © Maddy Maddison



Sound Dance Club's 10th Anniversary



The Lancers



Dancing The Chicago Swing



The Cullivoe Dance Band



*Alistair Gair cuts the birthday cake, while
Maddy Maddison looks on.*



Take the Floor Ardrishaig and Pacific Quay



Archie McAllister & John Saich



The Inveraray and District Pipe Band



The Ryan McGlynn SDB



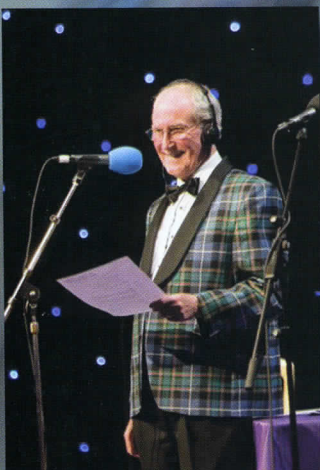
The Sound Crew, Kris McConachie, Doug Maskew & Peter Elliot



Mairi MacInnes & Catriona Mackay



The John Carmichael SDB



Robbie Shepherd



The Strathclyde Police Pipe Band



RSCDS Dancers

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