

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Barry Pipes' 100 Dance Tales

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Barry Pipes: Resident Contributor by Marie Anne Millar

Marie Anne Millar

As a boy in Britain, Barry Pipes was keenly interested in history and geography. He currently uses these interests when writing "WHAT'S IN A NAME?" for *Set & Link*.

His intent is simple — write a light, whimsical column explaining the names, places, and backgrounds of some Scottish country dances we know and love. "I start with a particular dance, often from the programme for a forthcoming SCD event, such as the monthly dance."

He generates the articles using his own resources on history and geography, assisted by Google. He has other sources, too. His friend, the late Roddy Nicoll, was one he could always rely on for interesting background knowledge.

Barry's first article was about the Mountain of Schiehallion, based on the Schiehallion reels that appear in several dances and that are named after the prominent mountain in Perth and Kinross. He writes an article each month for *Set & Link*; his *Inverneill House* began with a "For Sale" notice on the house, found during his research.

He says, "One piece I enjoyed writing was about *Cutty Sark*, and I even learned something new and a bit risqué from my research". He knew the *Cutty Sark* was a famous clipper ship. He knew it was a Scotch. But he didn't know it was an undergarment mentioned in the Robert Burns poem, *Tam O' Shanter*.

I asked Barry why he writes the column. He replied, "I do it for my own enjoyment and other people's pleasure." ■ [\[published in the December 2008 issue of *Set & Link*\]](#)



Barry Pipes

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The Dundee Wheeler 001- November, 2005 [crib](#)

Yes! We know that there is a dance called *The Dundee Whaler*. No! This is not a misprint.

The Dundee Wheeler celebrates the life of Rod Nicoll, a Dundonian who, as an accomplished Scottish country dancer, emigrated to Canada in 1966 with his young family, and quickly became a valuable part of the RSCDS Toronto scene, both as a member of the Scarborough Social Group and as a Demonstration Dancer of note.

In his younger days in Scotland, Rod could always be found on wheels of one kind or another....for example, cycling around the Highlands. He can regale you with stories about the joys of powering his way on two wheels, up the steep and never-ending climb from Tarbet to "Rest And Be Thankful", with other members of his cycling club on their way to "Inveraray"... and in later years, covering the same "Winding Road" on a motorcycle with wife Muriel on the back. Switching to four wheels before coming to Canada, Rod became an Inverness-based rep in the medical supply business, and successfully wheeled his way around the length and breadth of Scotland. Truth be known, at some point or another, it is likely that Rod has even tried Scottish Country Dancing on roller skates.

Regrettably, Rod is no longer physically able to dance, but he is still to be found on wheels, happily tooling his way around Scarborough managing the controls of a motorized wheelchair. His love of Scottish country dancing remains unabated however, and he can often be seen at a Monthly Dance or in one Social Group or another, or at the AGM, chatting with other veterans of RSCDS Toronto.



Rod Nicoll at the 1024-some demo, 1993, at SkyDome, Toronto

To celebrate Rod's 70th birthday, his daughter Carole Skinner devised a 32- bar Jig called *The Dundee Wheeler* in recognition of Rod's long and varied past. This dance has already been performed by both the Petronella (Thornhill) and Highlands of Durham Social Groups where Carole teaches.

Rod remains content in the thought that with wife Muriel, daughter Carole, and granddaughter Amanda, there are three generations of the Nicoll family still dancing as members of RSCDS Toronto.

Happy Birthday, Rod! ■

Derivation of Schiehallion Reels 002- November, 2006 [video](#)



Hugh Thurston

A really under-appreciated formation in SCD is the Schiehallion Reel. It was devised by an RSCDS Vancouver teacher, Hugh Thurston, as part of his dance, *Schiehallion*. This intriguing form of reel is danced in a square formation. Hugh Thurston, a UBC mathematician, named his dance and its specialty reel for the Scottish mountain Schiehallion, located in Loch Rannoch National Scenic Area in Perthshire, and well known for its symmetrical appearance. Surveyors believe Schiehallion is the geographical centre of Scotland.

Schiehallion is an anglicized version of the Gaelic *Sìdh Chailleann*, usually translated as "Fairy Hill of the Caledonians." It was the first mountain to be mapped using contour lines in the late 1700s. It is popular with hikers due to its accessibility, ease of ascent, and spectacular views.



Schiehallion in winter: The Fairy Hill of the Caledonians is a "Munro" — a Scottish mountain over 3000 ft.

Betty Grant's *Chrysanthemum* is the best known dance containing Schiehallion Reels and it is frequently performed in demonstrations. ■

The Bees of Maggie Knockater 003- December, 2006 [video](#)

Maggie who? Well, it is not a person! Maggie Knockater is a hamlet in the Scottish County of Morayshire. Its name is loosely translated from the Gaelic *Magh An Fhucadair*, which means Field of the Fuller. Close by the river Spey, it is located just north of the Glenfiddich Distillery, famous for its single malts. But Maggie Knockater was better known for its bees. Honey bees, that is!

In the past, as the story goes, beekeepers for miles around brought their stock to Maggie Knockater where the bees would flourish in their hives among the heather in the hills above. Up until the 1970s, a large apiary existed in the hamlet to serve the



beekeepers' needs. This story spurred Aberdonian dance deviser John Drewry to create that wonderful jig called *The Bees of Maggie Knockater*. It is a complex dance that includes what was once described with tongue in cheek as "a celebration of partner swapping". Now that should excite a little interest here and there!

So for Maggie's everywhere, please sit down! This jig is not about you! ■

Does this sign show the road to Maggie Knockater or, perhaps, diagram the half-reels of the dance?



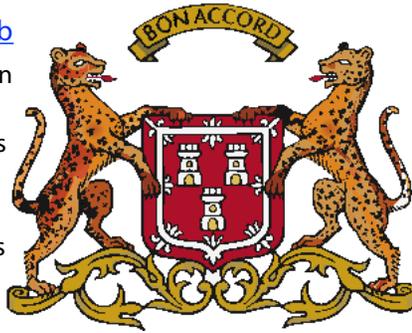
Bon Accord 004- January, 2007 [crib](#)

By now, there must indeed be a whole book of Bon Accord dances of one kind or another, each celebrating that fine city of Aberdeen, or one of its inhabitants. As many may know, Aberdeen's Coat of Arms, including a couple of rampant leopards and its original three castles, also depicts the city's proud motto: *Bon Accord*.

Legend has it that in the early 1300s, Bon Accord was the secret watchword for Robert the Bruce's forces to attack and massacre the local English military garrison, during the Wars of Independence at that time.

It is little wonder that some SCD dance devisers have entitled their efforts using this motto. Among them is *The Bonny Lass of... The Blooms of...*, *The Belle of...*, and more recently, *John of...*

John of Bon Accord is named for Leicestershire-born John Drewry, who has been a proud Aberdonian for 40 years or more. With John having created so many outstanding dances, it was fitting that another Dance Master, Roy Goldring, should honour him in this way. ■

**Neidpath Castle** 006- March, 2007 [video](#)

As you pass through the Royal Burgh of Peebles in the Scottish Borders Region, stop by Neidpath Castle. It is 2 km out of town, overlooking the River Tweed.

As a feature of British History, Neidpath Castle is known by English schoolboys as one of the places that "Cromwell knocked about a bit!" Its history dates to the mid-1200s. It was built by Sir Simon Fraser, centuries before the eponymous Vancouver University was created. Despite Oliver Cromwell's destructive cannon-fire, the castle was rebuilt shortly thereafter. It has long been a busy tourist attraction, although still owned by a Scottish aristocrat, the Earl of Wemyss.

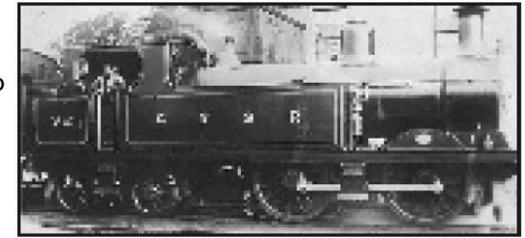


In 1963, a prominent Scottish country dance deviser, Derek Haynes, created *Neidpath Castle* as a lovely three-couple strathspey (Book 22). RSCDS mourned Derek's death from cancer in 2005. Other great dances he devised include *The Clansman* and *Miss Gibson's Strathspey*. ■

The Royal Deeside Railway 045- February, 2007 [video](#)

The magnificent "Silver Dee" is one of Scotland's most prolific salmon-fishing rivers. It flows 150 km from the Cairngorms until it reaches the North Sea at Aberdeen. Its scenic valley became a favourite of Queen Victoria, hence the expression "Royal Deeside".

Following the royal purchase of the Balmoral Estate in the 1840s and the erection of a new castle, a railway line was developed to run along the river valley from Aberdeen to Ballater. Its completion in 1866 provided Victoria with easy access to her estate, as Ballater was just a short coach ride from Balmoral. For the following hundred years, to take The Royal Deeside Railway was also a popular sight-seeing trip, until it was closed down unceremoniously by British Railways in 1966.



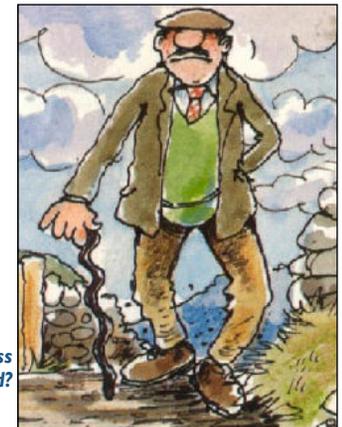
Steam-railway enthusiasts have since redeveloped some short sections of track and refurbished the old station at Ballater as a Visitor Centre. In 1999, RSCDS Book 40 included a lovely, flowing 32-bar reel called *The Royal Deeside Railway* to celebrate this piece of Victorian history. ■

Seann Triubhas Willichan 007- April, 2007 [video](#)

The year 1782 brought great joy to Scotland. A much-reviled Act of Parliament called the *Act of Proscription 1746* was repealed. Under this Act, Scots had been "prohibited from wearing the plaid, philibeg (kilt), trews, or any part of the highland garb" in an effort to break up the Clan system in every way possible following the 1745 Rebellion.

In the intervening years before repeal, many people romanticized stories about how Scots found ways to circumvent the prohibition against "highland garb". It has been said that *Seann Triubhas* (Gaelic for "old trousers") was one such story for which a Highland Dance had been created, originating in Perthshire, and was long a staple Highland Dance.

Seann Triubhas Willichan was introduced in RSCDS Book 27 (1975) as a new strathspey. Although our *Willie's Auld Troosers* in no way resembles its Highland Dance predecessor, it has become quite popular among RSCDS members. It appears on the West Toronto Ball programme in May. ■



Might this have been Scottish national dress had the Act of Proscription not been repealed?

Bratach Bàna 008- June, 2007 [video](#)



John Drewry

Usually, we think of a white flag as a symbol of surrender, so it might be a little confusing to know that *Bratach Bàna* is the Gaelic for "White Banner(s)".

The sea-faring Gaelic song by that name, more fully "The Son of the Earl of the White Banners", includes neither any apparent indications of "surrender" nor who exactly the Earl of the White Banners was. Lost in the mists of time perhaps!

Another *Bratach Bàna* legend makes a connection with the Isle of Skye's Dunvegan Castle, in which there is a tattered and torn banner referred to as the "Fairy Flag". Although certainly not white, the "Fairy Flag" has a mystique going back centuries. For those interested in Gaelic legend, it's worth doing a bit of Google research

on the topic, but my advisor on matters Gaelic believes that the "Fairy Flag" story has nothing to do with *Bratach Bàna*.

One might wonder what dance deviser John Drewry would think, for it was he who created that wonderful SCD reel. While it is an absolute joy to perform, new dancers who attempt *Bratach Bàna* with trepidation might feel like "surrendering" well before they reach its conclusion. ■



Dunvegan Castle, the ancestral home of Clan MacLeod for almost 800 years, was once surrounded by salt water.

Bedrule 009- September, 2007 [video](#)



Betty Grant

In 1984, RSCDS Book 33 was issued, including a fine Strathspey named *Bedrule*. This dance was the work of one of our long-time members, the late Betty Grant, a prolific deviser of dances. *Bedrule* celebrated Betty's place of birth in Scotland.

Bedrule is a hamlet alongside the River Rule in Roxburghshire, known also as Rule Water. Now part of the Scottish Borders Region, this area was the home of the Turnbells, a somewhat unruly clan owing to their continued resistance to control by the Royal House of Stuart.

Betty Grant, nee Dickson, also claimed Turnbull ancestry through her grandmother and was related to William Turnbull, a founder of Glasgow University in the fifteenth century. At one time, Bedrule Castle was a Turnbull stronghold, but now it is reduced to nothing but a grassy mound behind the church.

Good authority has it that the strathspey *Bedrule* came to Betty in a dream. She quickly transposed her dream dance to paper and sent it to Miss Milligan; it later appeared in Book 33. *Bedrule* can be enjoyed as part of our Fiftieth Anniversary Gala Day Dance Programme on September 15, 2007. ■

(Many thanks to David Grant for his important input to this article. ...BP)



The name Turnbull has a wonderful legend to explain its origins. A Borders man by the name of Rule, saved King Robert the Bruce by turning an angry bull which was set to gore him. The king promptly named him Turnbull, the man who turned the bull. He was rewarded with lands which were named Bedrule, after their fortunate new owner.

Rest And Be Thankful 010- October, 2007 [video](#)

*Doubling and doubling with laborious walk,
who, that has gained at length the wished-for height,
this brief, this simple wayside call can slight,
and rests not thankful?*

These words were written by the Cumbrian poet, William Wordsworth after reaching the head of Argyle's Vale of Glencroe on foot in 1803. No! Not a misprint! Glencoe of massacre fame is several miles to the north.

Glencroe? Just drive northwest out of Glasgow alongside Loch Lomond to Tarbet. Then hang a left and you're soon at the base of Glencroe, a glacial valley that climbs steadily until you arrive at its summit. You've reached Rest And Be Thankful!

It's quite the popular place for cyclists on hill-climb events. In fact, the late Roddy Nicoll, RSCDS Toronto's very own "Dundee Wheeler" and erstwhile cyclist, told me he'd made this trip many times and was well and truly thankful for a rest when he reached the top of the glen.

Carrying on from there, it's downhill all the way, around the end of the ever-windy Loch Fyne, until you reach Inveraray. Now doesn't all that make you think of Scottish country dancing? ■



The steep, winding road to Rest And Be Thankful

EH3 7AF 011- November, 2007 [video](#)

This is a name? Of a dance? What will they think of next? My first thought on noting the 1999 emergence of a jig called *EH3 7AF* in RSCDS Book 40 was one of derision.

There are so many intriguing place names in Scotland that I found it hard to believe that something as mundane as a Brit postcode (that's what they are called) would surface as the name of a Scottish country dance, to identify the street address of RSCDS Headquarters Edinburgh.

Then I realized that *EH3 7AF* was the creation of that talented Yorkshire dance deviser, Roy Goldring, the pride of RSCDS Leeds Branch. Now that placed a whole different dimension on what was clearly a tongue-in-cheek piece of whimsy. Along with Canada, Britain started to introduce alpha-numeric postal codes throughout the country in 1959, finally concluding the undertaking in 1974.

So, mundane by name or not, let's give Mr. Goldring credit for adding yet another winner to his lengthy stable of outstanding RSCDS dances. The "Postal Code Dance", *EH3 7AF*, will be on the program of



Roy Goldring

Toronto's November Monthly Dance for the enjoyment of all those in attendance.

There's a sad epilogue, reported in last month's *Set & Link*. Seventy-eight-year-old Roy Goldring died in September, 2007, after suffering a heart attack. He gave us much to remember him by. ■



RSCDS Headquarters, 12 Coates Crescent, Edinburgh EH3 7AF

Balquhiddier Strathspey 012- December, 2007 [video](#)

Pronounce it incorrectly as Bal-kw-idder, and you may have to be removed from the set and suffer a five-minute penalty by sitting out the next two dances. The correct pronunciation is Bal-wh-idder. From the Gaelic *Both Chuidir*, the Village of Balquhiddier is to be found at the head of Loch Voil in the rugged Trossachs area, just off the A84 as you travel north from Stirling via Callander. And while often spelled on dance programs without the "h", the Ordnance Survey folks seem to have it correct on their maps.

Originally, it was Clan MacLaren territory, until they were ousted by the MacGregors a few hundred years ago. Now! Whom do you know as the most infamous MacGregor in Scottish history? Why, it is Rob Roy, of course! A staunch supporter of the Jacobite cause, he was very much "front & centre" in the 1715 Rebellion. Unfortunate circumstances caused him and his clansmen to become cattle thieves throughout the Trossachs. For greater story detail, check out the movie *Rob Roy* in which Hollywood featured an Irishman (ouch!) named Liam Neeson.

Rob Roy MacGregor died in Balquhiddier in 1734 at around the age of 64. His grave, together with his wife's and children's, is located in the local kirkyard. The headstone is marked defiantly with the words "MacGregor Despite Them".

There are other dances celebrating beautiful Balquhiddier. (*The Braes of... and A Wedding in...*). However, the *Balquhiddier Strathspey* (RSCDS Book 24, issued 1968) remains one of my favourites and is a welcome addition to the December Monthly Dance. ■



The graves of Rob Roy and his family are found in the Balquhiddier Kirkyard. The name MacGregor was once banned in Scotland.

The Montgomerie's' Rant 013- January, 2008 [video](#)

As natives of Normandy in France, the Montgomery(ie) forebears were very much part of England's invasion by William the Conqueror around the time of 1066 (and all that!). The name likely derives from *mont*, the French word for hill upon which their castle sat, and either a Roman general named Gomericus or a 9th-century Viking named Gomeri, who must surely have been interrelated somehow. Whichever, La famille de Montgomerie, also referred to back then as "Mundegumerie", hailed from an area of Basse-Normandie that is now known as Calvados after the superb apple brandy which is distilled there.

Roger de Montgomerie was granted lands in Britain, probably shouldering a lot of Saxons out of the way to do so. He also invaded Wales, where still there exists the town of Montgomery in the Welsh Border country. Roger's descendants then went on to acquire further lands in Scotland, until by marriage, the family owned the Ayrshire lands of Eglinton and Ardrossan, creating the Earldom of Eglinton.

Clan Montgomery became notable for their ongoing support of Royalist causes, and for their bitter feud with the Cunninghams. In fact, through the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries the Montgomerie's always seemed to be in the forefront wherever a war or rebellion was going on. This might support the juxtaposition of their name with the bellicose word "Rant".

The Balgeddie Reel 014- February, 2008 [video](#)

Just north of Kirkcaldy in the Kingdom of Fife, one finds the community of Glenrothes. Currently the administrative headquarters of Fife, Glenrothes was built as "a new city" back in the 1950s to take advantage of the local coal mining industry. Not a clever move in retrospect, as the mines suffered from underground seepage and water damage, causing them to be abandoned in 1961.

Prior to this, however, the area was part of the Earldom of Rothes, the estates of which contained a number of grand old manors such as Leslie House (a home of Clan Leslie), Balgimie House, and Balgeddie House. Fortunately, the name "Balgeddie" still survives as The Balgeddie House Hotel, a well-established tourist hostelry on the outskirts of Glenrothes.

A local resident, who I understand was born at the aforementioned Leslie House, ultimately became a skilled Scottish country dance deviser. Her name is Mary Brandon, née Shoobraid. She put together a book of dances called *Memories of Fife* that included not only *The Balgeddie Reel*, but also another dance well-known to us called *Fife Ness*. For the past many years, Mary has been very significant to the



Mary Brandon

The Montgomerie's' Rant came to light in RSCDS Book 10 during the mid-30s. It is a most exuberant reel, well suited to be danced either at the end of a Ball or just before an intermission, as you will experience at the January 2008 Monthly Dance.

promotion of Scottish Country dancing, not only around Los Angeles and San Francisco, but also in Hawaii.

Word has it that Mary has never been particularly happy with the treatment meted out to *The Balgeddie Reel* over the years, due to the addition of cheeky hand and arm movements that she had not intended, and that she felt turned the dance into a "hoedown". Nonetheless, *The Balgeddie Reel* is a great five-couple dance.

...Barry Pipes – With much appreciation for the research assistance of Georgina Finlay. ■



Eglinton Castle, ancestral seat of the Montgomerie chiefs, and site of the 1839 "Eglinton Tournament", a romantic revival of the medieval sport of jousting.



The Balgeddie House Hotel, located on the outskirts of Glenrothes, is close to the golfing shrines of St Andrews, Gleneagles, and Carnoustie.

The Haddington Assembly 015- March, 2008 [crib](#)

Visiting Edinburgh any time soon? Why not take the opportunity to travel east for about 20 miles on the Great North Road (a.k.a. the A1) to Haddington, the county town of East Lothian. With a long and illustrious history extending back to the eleventh century, although less well known in modern times, Haddington is believed to be the birthplace of the founder of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, John Knox, in or around the year 1510.

The word "Assembly" can of course be construed to mean any gathering of people for a range of purposes. Time was, however, when its connotation also meant a particular location where dancing would be held. In other words, a Ballroom! In my English home town of Derby (with very significant Jacobite connections around 1745), the premier ballroom was called The Assembly Rooms — but that is another story.

In the fourteenth century, Haddington's growth and importance made it the fourth largest city in Scotland after Edinburgh, Dundee, and Aberdeen. It still proudly maintains the largest parish church in Scotland, St. Mary's, which is not Presbyterian by affiliation, as one might have thought, but Church of Scotland.

The Duke of Atholl's Reel 016- April, 2008 [video](#)

Is this a really old dance? Surely no contemporary SCD deviser would be creating a reel in jig tempo! Yet the dance does come from RSCDS Book 16, issued as recently as 1951. But here's the real question: which Duke of Atholl is at reference?

There have been eleven Dukes of Atholl since 1703, and several centuries' worth of Earls existed before them. In days of yore, Picts of the first century even had a King of Atholl. The incumbent 11th Duke, John Murray, is a seventy-nine-year-old South African, born in Johannesburg, who only infrequently visits the family seat at Blair Castle. Of significance is that these Atholl folks all seemed to be Murrays. In fact, Blair Castle, which is just a few minutes' drive up the road from Pitlochry, is the Murray clan headquarters.

Of particular interest, the Dukes of Atholl legally own a private army... the Atholl Highlanders. This hundred-man unit, complete with pipes and drums, is recruited from within the Atholl estates and is unconnected with the British Army. Its status appears to be unique throughout Britain and Europe. Originally formed as the 77th Regiment of Foot and later disbanded, this unit was reactivated by the 6th Duke of Atholl in the 1830s as his personal ceremonial bodyguard, with Queen Victoria's consent. They were also used as Victoria's regimental escort when she was in the area, or on her way to nearby Balmoral Castle.

A number of years ago, Jean Henderson, a deviser of Scottish country dances and resident of the East Lothian community of North Berwick, created what became a very popular leaflet dance called *The Haddington Assembly* and presented it to the East Lothian Branch of RSCDS. *The Haddington Assembly*, a 32-bar jig, leads off our March Monthly Dance program. I know we are sure to enjoy it. ■



The Fountain, Court Street, Haddington, East Lothian

The Duke of Atholl's Reel is featured in the April Monthly Dance, but don't try dancing it in reel time, especially if you are a Murray, or you will throw the whole jigging set off-balance. ■

Woe is me!

In my recent WHAT'S IN A NAME? article about *The Haddington Assembly*, I included the somewhat heretical comment that St. Mary's Church in Haddington was affiliated with the Church of Scotland and was therefore not a Presbyterian Church. Well of course it is! Apart from some break-away sects, the Church of Scotland is Presbyterian by polity. I was reminded of my error by Presbyterian friends. The shame of it! And me a mere Anglican! What would I know? ■



Blair Castle, seat of the Dukes of Atholl

The Minister on the Loch 017- May, 2008 [video](#)

The next time you are in Edinburgh, the National Gallery of Scotland is always worth a Visit. There, you will find a number of the works of Sir Henry Raeburn (1756-1823), a well-known Scottish artist. Sir Henry was accomplished in the field of portraiture and in this period of the Scottish Enlightenment painted a host of Edinburgh notables, including Sir Walter Scott.



Duddingston Loch is a bird sanctuary near Holyrood Park, Edinburgh. Besides being a popular skating place, it is also the cradle of curling.

Possibly his most famous oil painting (an attribution controversy exists!*) is said to be that of The Reverend Robert Walker, Skating Upon Duddingston Loch. The Rev'd. Walker ministered over Canongate Kirk (no cadger he!). Also a member of the Edinburgh Skating Society, he had learned to skate on Holland's frozen canals while his father was the minister of the Scots Kirk in Rotterdam.

It was King James VI of Scotland who boasted around the year 1603 that Nairn was a town in his kingdom whose only street was so long that people living at one end could not understand the language of the people at the other end. Gaelic to the east and the local Scots dialect to the west.

The Bridge of Nairn 018- June, 2008 [video](#)



Nairn High Street

As an ancient fishing port on the Moray Firth, just a short distance east of Inverness, Nairn also became a Victorian seaside resort in the 1860s. This was due supposedly to its relatively mild climate! Moreover, Nairn's proximity to both the Culloden battlefield and Cawdor Castle of Shakespeare's Macbeth fame, likely helps its standing as a tourist centre. One famous visitor was said to be the Duke of Cumberland (the "Butcher" of Culloden), who commanded the English troops in Scotland in 1746. He stayed at Nairn just prior to the unpleasantness at Culloden and was responsible for the brutal treatment of Jacobite survivors.

But the bridge? While there are one or two town bridges over the River Nairn, seemingly not of historical consequence, there is a well-known bridge in Nairnshire just south of the town that might well be significant enough to justify becoming the name of a dance. It is the picturesque Dulsie Bridge that carries an old 18th century military road over the River Findhorn. This is most likely the Bridge of Nairn that we know as an RSCDS strathspey, a dance that first surfaced in 1945 (Book 13 – *The Victory Book*).

I'm not sure whether SCD devisor Roy Goldring owned a print of this work, as many of us do. However, it seemed to give him the inspiration to craft a beautiful strathspey entitled *The Minister on the Loch*, a very lovely dance that will be on the programme of the West Toronto Ball on May 10. ■

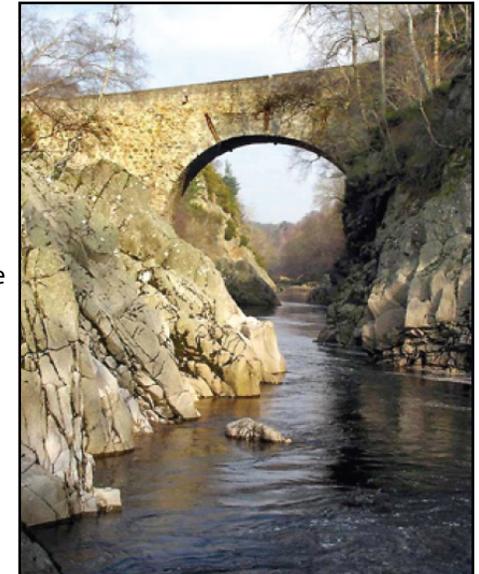
Last month, my outline about *The Duke of Atholl's Reel* suggested I did not know to which Duke the dance referred. I've since learned the 9th Duke was President of the Scottish Country Dance Society (not quite Royal at that time) from 1924 to 1957. He's probably the man! ...B.P.



The Rev'd. Robert Walker Skating . . .

* Recently, a controversy has arisen suggesting that this famous canvas was actually painted by a Frenchman, Henri-Pierre Danloux, who happened to be visiting Edinburgh in the 1790s. Perish the thought!

We enjoyed it at Dancing in the Park, June 3. ■



Dulsie Bridge, spans the Findhorn River near the seaside town of Nairn. It's 60 ft from the bridge wall to the water — and adventurous folk like to jump off (for fun!). If you're not queasy about heights, go to YouTube and search for "Dulsie Bridge".

The Duke of Perth 019- September, 2008 [video](#)



Duke of Perth, as we all know, is a popular SCD reel. It probably goes back aeons. Miss Milligan saw fit to ensure that it was included in the first book of dances produced in 1924 by her fledgling Scottish Country Dance Society. Music had long been in place to complement this old dance. Even a couple of alternative names existed for it – *Brown's Reel* and *Clean Pease Strae*.

But was there a real Duke, and if so, when did he come into the picture? It all seems to go back to Clan Drummond, whose forebears of Hungarian heritage landed in Scotland in 1068, two years after Norman Conqueror Bill arrived at Hastings (and all that!).

This family combination of Celt and Magyar quickly settled in as landowners. Within a mere 500 years or so, James, Lord Drummond, was created Earl of Perth in 1605. About 100 years later, the 4th Earl was entitled Duke by the exiled James Stuart, Pretender to the

British throne. Although listed as a member of the Jacobite Peerage, this entitlement was never recognized in Britain, likely due to his involvement in the 1715 uprising. It would seem that *The Duke of Perth* reel is named in recognition of this man.

The 18th Earl of Perth, John Eric Drummond, is the current Chief of Clan Drummond, and continues to lay claim to the old Jacobite title as 15th Duke of Perth. His Grace resides at Stobhall, a former hunting lodge on the River Tay near Perth, with Castle Drummond, the real headquarters of the Clan, being about 20 miles distant. ■



Castle Drummond, built by John, first Lord Drummond, was restored in 1890. The original keep still stands and the castle is noted for its gardens based on a 17th century Scottish Renaissance garden.

[Ed: Ann Edge emailed to add that Drummond Castle, mentioned in last month's WHAT'S IN A NAME? is located near Crieff and that the gardens were used in the filming of Rob Roy. She also said, "I am from Perthshire and grew up a few miles from Drummond Castle. *The Duke of Perth* was one of the first dances I learned."]

The Duke of Perth

Cutty Sark 020- October, 2008 [video](#)

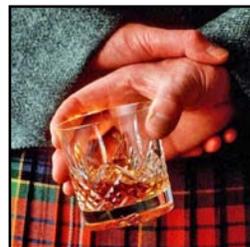


**Weel done. Cutty-sark!
And in an instant all was dark!**

Robbie Burns aficionados will recognize that couplet as an excerpt from *Tam O' Shanter*, one of his best (and longest) narrative poems, in which Tam with a surfeit of John Barleycorn under his belt, happens across a coven of dancing witches. They are shedding their clothes in wild abandon, and one of the witches, Nannie by name, is stripped down to a short chemise called a cutty-sark which happens to be too small for her comely figure. (Never thought I'd be able to get a bit of soft porn into this column!)

A few decades later, the aforementioned Nannie was carved into the figurehead of a newly constructed Tea Clipper, one of the famous three-masted sailing vessels which competed for the race to bring a cargo of tea from Shanghai to London. This Clipper was of course named the *Cutty Sark*. Launched in 1869 at Dumbarton on the Clyde, the *Cutty Sark* journeyed regularly to and from China and then

switched to the wool trade between London and Australia, until being sold in 1895 to the Portuguese, whose crew refund to her as *Pequena Camisola* ("little shirt" in Portuguese). Her home port moved from London to Lisbon, then to Falmouth in Cornwall before she was retired in 1954 to a dry dock at Greenwich on the River Thames, almost 100 years from her launching.



Meanwhile, not to forget Cutty Sark – that brand of blended *usquabae* from Speyside's Glenrothes Distillery.

And of course, there's that popular RSCDS jig from Book 40 which is on the November Monthly Dance programme. ■



The Cutty Sark was damaged by fire on May 21, 2007. Fortunately, she was undergoing restoration at the time so about 50% of her had been removed including the figurehead, masts, rigging and planking.

Inverneill House 021- November, 2008 [video](#)

For sale! Elegant 5-bedroom Victorian country house set in about 7 acres of private grounds located 2 miles or so just south of Ardrishaig on Loch Fyne.

For a mere 475,000 quid? Close to a million dollars Canadian give or take! This caught my eye when seeking real estate opportunities in Argyll. But isn't there a Scottish country dance by that name? Of course! It's a somewhat tricky reel out of RSCDS Book 35 that just happens to be on the November Monthly Dance program.

And why is it so important? Well, back in the late 1400s, the 1st Earl of Argyll, Colin Campbell, acquired the Inverneill estate. And in the hands of the Campbells it stayed until 1955, when it was sold, the last owners being Olive and Una Campbell. The Misses Campbell happened to have another sister, by name Ysobel, who had married and became Mrs. Ysobel Stewart. Now that rings a bell! Could Ysobel, née Campbell, be Mrs. Stewart of Fasnacloch? Bingo! No wonder there is a dance named *Inverneill House*, to commemorate her earlier homestead.



As many of us know, Mrs. Stewart of Fasnacloch and the iconic Jean Milligan were co-founders in 1923 of the Scottish Country Dance Society. At that time, Mrs. Stewart was also Chief Commissioner of the Girl Guides for Argyll. In 1955, she emigrated to South Africa to get respite from rheumatism she suffered due to the inclement climate of the North West Highlands of Scotland. In 1963, Ysobel died at age 81, over 10,000 kilometres from her Argyll family home, Inverneill House. ■



INVERNEILL HOUSE: The 7-acre grounds of Inverneill include an impressive walled garden with its turreted crowns which sweep out in front of the house. The garden immediately to the rear is laid to grass and has a natural pond with its resident heron. The rest of the grounds are planted out with mature trees and a fabulous collection of rhododendrons, azaleas and other exotic shrubs. . . .
Source: www.housespotters.com

The Rothesay Rant 022- September, 2008 [video](#)

Every summer as a little lad in the Midlands of England, I spent a week or so on holiday with my parents at the "seaside", a generic term for any number of holiday venues around the coast such as Torquay, Ramsgate, Rhyl, or Skegness.

Had my family been Glaswegian, it would have been a different story. We would more likely have been going "doon the watter". After taking a tram to the Broomielaw and boarding a paddle steamer, the *Waverley* perhaps, we would have steamed west between the banks of the Clyde until we reached Dunoon, Largs or, better still, Rothesay. The aforementioned "watter" was, of course, the Firth of Clyde.

Rothesay is a Scottish equivalent to those English seaside resorts I mentioned. It became a popular destination in Victorian times for all those Scots desperate to escape the grime and squalor of industrial Glasgow. Located on the Isle of Bute, Rothesay was a busy resort community with pleasant beaches, music hall entertainment at the Winter Gardens, and the requisite waterfront pavilion, causing boatloads of steamer traffic to arrive daily every summer.



Anna Holden

While he owns no Duchy around Bute, there has existed a Duke of Rothesay for centuries. The heir apparent to the British throne has held this additional Scottish title since King Robert III conferred it on his son David in 1398. The current Duke is, of course, HRH Charles, the Prince of Wales, a royal title which would have little cachet in Scotland.

A somewhat quirky square-set jig called *The Rothesay Rant*, devised by RSCDS Birmingham's Anna Holden, can be enjoyed by all at our December Monthly Dance. ■



The Waverley paddle steamer departs Rothesay. Rothesay is on the eastern shore of the Isle of Bute, overlooking the Firth of Clyde.

The Cuillins of Skye 023- February, 2009 [video](#)

Travelling in Scotland? Why not get your vehicle across the Kyle of Lochalsh (if you can afford what the locals complain is an extortionate bridge toll), and visit the beautiful Isle of Skye?

Take the usual A87 tourist route through Broadford on your way to Portree, and you will then be driving by a mountain range to your southwest which includes what Brit rock climbers believe to be the ultimate mountaineering experience in the UK – namely, The Cuillins of Skye. There are both Red and Black Cuillins (different types of geology), of which the latter are fearsome rocky crags composed of basalt and gabbro, a very rough type of rock beloved by mountaineers.



The Red Cuillins of Skye



Black Cuillin Traverse, a.k.a. The Ridge

Twelve of the Black Cuillins are Munros, i.e. Scottish mountains over 3000 feet (feet always give a better sense of height than metres). The highest Black Cuillin is Sgurr Alasdair at 3255 feet. Especially challenging for climbers is the seven-mile-long Black Cuillin Traverse from Sligachan to Glenbrittle.

By the way, Cuillin seems to really be a plural word (The Cuillin of Skye?) Legend has it that it is derived from the chieftain of a race of giants in days of yore. His name was Cuchullin. His stories were sung about by Ossian, a controversial poet, minstrel, and narrator of Scottish fables whose name would be quite well known to students of early Gaelic literature.

Plural or not, I urge that everyone in attendance at the Tartan Ball this year enjoy

dancing *The Cuillins of Skye*, a delightful Roy Goldring strathspey published in the booklet *Four Scottish Country Dances for 1978*. ■



Unrelenting effort, considerable exposure and technical scrambling plus abseiling and simple rock climbing are the order of the day when traversing The Ridge, Black Cuillins of Skye.

The Ferry Louper 024- March, 2009 [video](#)

Let's get straight to the point! A ferry louter is a non-native Orcadian visiting the mainland!

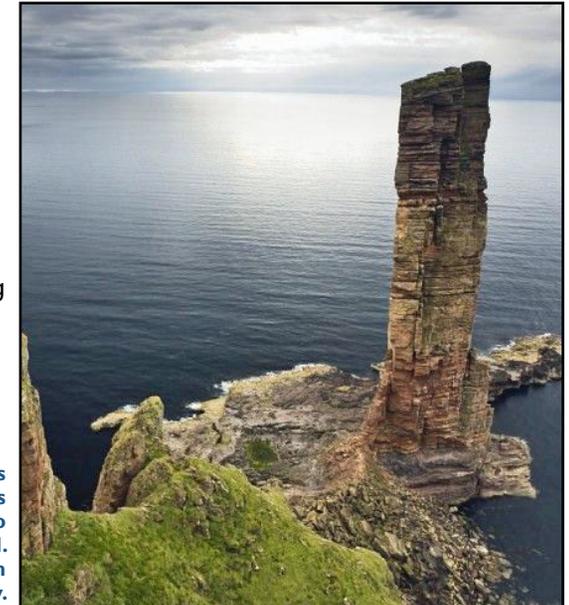
Now there's a conundrum for you! What are Orcadians? They are the inhabitants of the Orkney Islands. And Mainland, not to be confused with the area anywhere in Scotland due south from John O' Groats, is the largest island within the Orkney Archipelago. Ergo, a ferry louter is an off-islander, mainland Scotland any non-native Orcadian crossing the Pentland Firth by ferry to visit the Orkneys. In other words, an outsider!

The word Orcadian is derived from an ancient name for these islands given by a Roman geographer, Ptolemy, around the first century AD. He called them the Orcades, due to their old Gaelic name which was Insi Orc (Islands of the Orc). A few centuries later, the Vikings arrived from Norway, misinterpreted Orc, a young pig, as Orkn, an Old Norse word for a seal, the pinniped variety. Adding ey, Norse for island, the Vikings made their new island home the Orkneys.

But where does louter come from? Is it a derogatory word for an outsider? Look it up in a *Dictionary of Scots Dialect* and you find synonyms like vagrant, vagabond, or fugitive from the Law. I am given to understand that louter is pronounced like "ouch!" not like

"cool". Come what may, it is said that the inhabitants of the Orkney Islands consider themselves Orcadians first and Scots second.

Whatever one might glean from the foregoing, that ubiquitous SCD deviser, Roy Goldring, did create a neat little jig called *The Ferry Louper*, which one can enjoy at the upcoming March Monthly Dance. ■



The Old Man of Hoy towers 450 feet high off the sea cliffs of Hoy, part of the Orkney archipelago off the north coast of Scotland. The Orkney ferries pass here — an exciting view.

Reel of the Royal Scots 025- May, 2009 [video](#)

Those planning to be at the 40th West Toronto Ball on May 9 will have the opportunity to enliven themselves with this exhilarating reel. It is a frequent addition to many SCD events and celebrates the oldest Regiment in the British Army. What became the Royal Scots was raised initially as the First Regiment of Foot in 1633 by Royal Warrant of Charles I, great-grandfather of the “Bonnie Prince” himself.

Over the past three hundred and seventy five years, the Royal Scots has a rich history, including being nicknamed “Pontius Pilate’s Bodyguard”. Name a theatre of war or battle involving the British Army, and chances are a battalion of the Royal Scots was there to claim battle honours. . . Waterloo; the Crimean and Boer Wars; World War I (Somme, Ypres, Gallipoli); World War II (Normandy, Italy, Burma); and even the first Gulf War. Along the way, Royal Scots infantrymen also claimed seven Victoria Crosses, the ultimate British military honour.

But wait a minute! “Pontius Pilate’s Bodyguard”? What kind of a sobriquet is that? Did they claim to be Roman legionaries at one time? It is said that around the first millennium the Romans recruited both Hibernians (erstwhile Scots) and Gauls into their Legions. This historical possibility apparently caused tongue-in-cheek arguments

The White Cockade 026- June, 2009 [video](#)

My trusty *OED* defines the archaic word cockade as follows — “A ribbon, knot of ribbons, or rosette, worn on the hat or lapel as a badge of office, etc.”

At this point in time, the cockade *per se* is as passé as an 18th century tricorne hat. Although, let’s not forget that the crossover loop of ribbon commonly worn to indicate support for certain contemporary causes is still appropriate, either as lapel ornamentation or even as a car bumper sticker.

But the colour white? It certainly was not to indicate an imminent surrender like a white flag. In fact, the white cockade was a symbol of the Bourbon Kings of France. Further, it was worn by those who supported the idea of a Jacobite restoration to the British throne in the name of James II. Significantly, he also happened to be James VII of Scotland. We might well remember that James, with the family name Stuart, was obsessed with the notion of absolute monarchy, and had to nip smartly across the Channel to France to gain the protection of his cousin King Louis XIV in the face of some disagreements with the British Parliament. Ultimately, this delivered the British throne to the German Hanovers, the first few of whom all seemed to be named George.



between the Royal Scots and a French regiment, both of whose forebears may have seen duty at a significant religious event around Jerusalem. Who knows what reality may exist to these hypotheses. . .?

Just two years ago, the Royal Scots regiment was down to a single battalion and was merged with other surviving Scottish infantry regiments. As part of this merger, it has now become the 1st Battalion, Royal Scots Borderers of The Royal Regiment of Scotland. ■

So far, so good, except for the ambitions of James’ grandson, Charles Edward Stuart, the “Bonnie Prince” himself. He landed at Eriskay in 1745, replete with the white Jacobite cockade in his bonnet, and proceeded to stir up the clansmen to no end. The rest is history! As is the current RSCDS Toronto season. And we’ll be back in September, assuming that I’ll be rehired! ■



Charles Edward Stuart, The Young Pretender, wearing the Scottish blue bonnet with a Jacobite White Cockade.

Info: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cockade>

The New Rigged Ship 027- September, 2009 [video](#)

The September Monthly Dance includes this 48 bar jig which may be a little more of a challenge for those of us who have reached “a certain age”. Thank goodness it is not a reel! It comes from RSCDS Book 9 which goes back to 1934, when I was barely out of “nappies”. That said, the whole idea of sailing ships always appealed to me as a young lad; hence this outline.

As a tune, *The New Rigged Ship* has been performed through time immemorial, probably going back to sometime in the 18th or 19th century when the glory of sail was in its heyday. References to new rigged ships have usually been related to the days when sailing ship owners frequently changed a ship’s rigging for any number of reasons.

A full rigged ship, new or otherwise, referred to any sailing vessel with three masts, all of them square-rigged. I believe this is self-descriptive. Want to think about Spanish galleons or pirate ships? Then you will quickly understand what square-rigged means. The swashbuckling film actor Errol Flynn certainly would have known. Lesser sailing vessels had names like schooner, barque or brig, some of which had fore-and-aft rigging. Square? Fore-and-aft? Doesn’t sound like anything to do with Scottish country dancing. Nor would it! Back then, Scotland wasn’t really thought of as a maritime country.

Despite its name, there is probably no Scottish version of that well-known clipper ship *Cutty Sark*, with which we certainly can identify, as I wrote some months back. It was indeed a full rigged ship.

Back to the dance! Personally, as an aging dancer, my preference is for 32 bar sequences – except for square (rigged) dances. But try it, you might like it! Meanwhile, don’t hesitate to get in touch if you feel the need. Many do! ■



Wisp of Thistle 028- October, 2009 [video](#)

Wha daurs meddle wi me, roughly translated, is the motto of The Most Ancient and Most Noble Order of the Thistle. Actually, on the Order’s badge it says in Latin “*Nemo me impune lacessit*” (No one provokes me with impunity). Most Ancient and Most Noble notwithstanding, I think we would all agree that the rough Scots version has the most ominous tone.



A thistle in Princes Street Gardens, Edinburgh, frames the statue honouring the Royal Scots Greys.

It is said that the importance of the thistle to Scotland goes back to the Battle of Largs in 1263. A few longboats of Norsemen landed there in the dead of night, trying, to take advantage of sleeping clansmen in the vicinity. They crept ashore barefoot to hide their presence, but unfortunately, for them, tried to cross a field of thistles in the process. Now, the thistle is known for its vicious porcupine-like spines and as such doesn’t have any natural enemies amongst the fauna and flora of Scotland.

A Norseman yelled in pain as his bare foot stepped on one of the thistles. This awakened the locals and the battle was formed. Having been “meddled with,” so to speak, the Clansmen won the day, and the thistle became a symbol of Scotland’s (dare I say?) prickliness, from that day on... or so it is said!

How to segue from prickly spines to wisps? Well, thistles have them both, the wisps being the feathery puffs that can float in the air like, for example, dandelion seeds.

I am told that the late Queen Mother, herself a Scot, on once seeing a Strathspey being performed, referred to the dance as being like a “wisp of thistle”. This comment may not have escaped the attention of Nova Scotian RSCDS teacher, Patricia Kent, who devised the *Wisp of Thistle* strathspey that appeared

in Book 37 in 1992. Attendees at the Toronto Workshop in November will be delighted to find Pat’s lovely dance on the program. ■



Patricia Kent



The Insignia of a Knight of the Thistle

Flowers of Edinburgh 029- December, 2009 [video](#)

We're back, having missed last month. At the deadline, I was with family in Kingussie enjoying the surrounding Cairngorms. Now let's get on with this floral tribute... Ah! The Flowers of Edinburgh! Imagine strolling on a fine summer's day through an empty loch, now the beautiful park that runs parallel to Princes Street, overlooked by the castle. Is this a floral tribute that perhaps gives some strong competition to Aberdeen's Blooms of



A vintage porcelain chamber pot

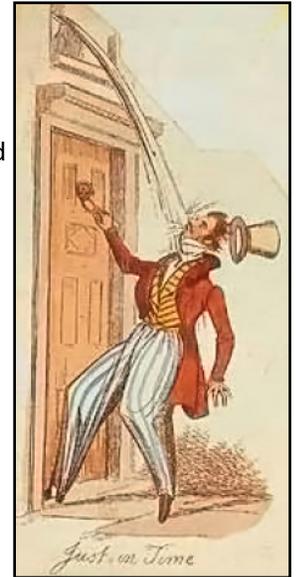
Bon Accord?... or a beautiful panorama that certainly deserves to have a dance devised in its honour?

Well, let's not be too hasty! If we transport ourselves back to Edinburgh two or three hundred years ago, "Athens of the North" it certainly was not. Carefully picking one's way through the sewage of Edinburgh's unpaved streets among the tenements could be a hazardous undertaking, especially when the St. Giles

Cathedral clock struck the evening hour of ten. That was the signal for the upper-floor tenement windows to be thrown open. Then, to shouts of "Gardy-loo", each home's liquid refuse in buckets, basins, and chamber pots was tipped out into the streets below. Suffice to say, in-house plumbing of any kind did not exist in those more primitive times. Edinburgh diarist James Boswell referred to this as the "evening effluvia", although the locals preferred the expression the "Flowers of Edinburgh".

Gardy-Loo? It was derived from the French *garde a' l'eau* (beware of the water), or perhaps, *gardez l'eau*. These days we would probably say "heads up". In 1750, dashing to the shelter of the nearest doorway, instead of trying to dance a poussette, would have been the most sensible course of action.

That said, whatever its history, let's enjoy the ever-popular reel *Flowers of Edinburgh*, which will be included in the December Family Christmas Program. ■

**The Wild Geese** 030- January, 2010 [video](#)

Many of us are familiar with that popular jig, *The Wild Geese*, from RSCDS Book 24. I just wish that I could determine the name of its devisor. We are of course very aware around Toronto of the ubiquitous Canada geese that are well known for fouling parks and recreation areas wherever they decide to congregate. Could these be the wild geese celebrated earlier in Book 24?

A more likely possibility has to do with Irish military history. For centuries, Irish mercenaries have been found fighting the wars of other countries. Even Hannibal's armies crossing the Alps to surprise the Romans from the rear included Celtic warriors from Hibernia. In time, the French learned the value of including Irishmen in their armies, and a ready supply of recruits always seemed to be available to become part of "The Irish Brigade"... dubbed in Irish Gaelic *Na Gianna Fiaine* — The Wild Geese.

Origin? Well, French smuggling vessels bringing wines and brandies to the Irish coast would illegally carry military recruits on their return journey. The customs paperwork described them routinely as wild geese. Foie Gras in the making perhaps?

When the Stuart monarchy was driven into exile in France in the mid-17th century, sure enough, many of the soldiers that "emigrated" with them were Catholic Irishmen, ready to die in support of their king. So it should be no surprise that Irish mercenaries, or "wild geese", were to be found among Bonnie Prince Charlie's army in 1745. At that time, however, they were more likely to be called Irish piquets. The French word *piquer* is well-known in military circles through its English version, picket, meaning "a small ad hoc unit of soldiers doing guard duty", for example.

So with *The Wild Geese*, we may have yet another Scottish country dance with an Irish background.

Irish Rover, anyone? ■

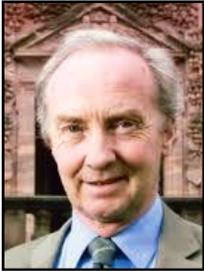


1. Officer, Gardes Irlandais, 1680
2. Private, Regiment Clare, 1692
3. Ensign, Regiment Roth, 1718

Dalkeith's Strathspey 031- February, 2010 [video](#)

Now doesn't the name Dalkeith have a good Scottish ring to it? Could it be a clan? A sept of the Clan Keith perhaps? But nothing I can find gives support to that premise. If not that, what else could it be?

Ah, yes! There is a medium-sized town by that name just a bit southeast of Edinburgh. Dalkeith is in fact the administrative centre for the Midlothian council area, with a population of around 12,000. In past years, it would have been called a county town. Even so, that sounds pretty humdrum to have such a nice strathspey named after it.



Hey, wait a minute! Just outside the town lies a 300-year-old palace. It was built on the site of a castle that dates back to the 13th century. The property has been in the hands of the Duke of Buccleuch's family (pron. BuckLoo) for the past 350 years or so. This is a rather important peerage. The current duke happens to be, so it is claimed, the largest private landowner in the United Kingdom. Of far greater importance to *Set & Link* readers, perhaps, the Duke of Buccleuch is the hereditary chief of Clan Scott. ■

His Grace, Richard Walter John Montagu Douglas Scott,
10th Duke of Buccleuch KT KBE FSA FRSE



Construction of the present Dalkeith Palace, modelled on William of Orange's Palace of Het Loo in the Netherlands, began in 1702 and was completed around 1711. This painting shows the palace as it was in 1880.

The Inch of Perth 032- March, 2010 [video](#)

Inch? Well, that's not much of a piece of Perth real estate, is it? Even with a metric conversion to 2.54 cm, one is certainly no better off. If you owned an Inch of Perth, you could hardly use it to play ball or walk the dog, could you? So why bother devising an SCD Strathspey called *Inch of Perth*?

Of course, if you lived in Perth, and you had access to an Inch of Perth, you would be very happy to be able to punt a rugger ball or to walk not only a wee Chihuahua but even a gargantuan Irish Wolfhound. How could that be? As a resident of Perth, you would know that there is indeed a well-grassed Inch of Perth where all kinds of recreational activities are able to take place, but not in miniature. In fact, there are two Inches of Perth, a North Inch and a South Inch.

To unmask this conundrum, one needs to know that "Inch" is an anglicized form of the Gaelic word "*Innis*" or "*Insch*," meaning a level area or piece of dry land in a swamp. Nowadays, it is used in Perth to mean a "park"... where one can indeed play ball or walk a dog.

Any historical significance? You bet! Within the area that is now the North Inch, history records that there was a pitched battle in 1396 between 30 Cameron clansmen and 30 assorted members of the Clan Chattan confederation, a potent brew of Mackintoshes,

Davidsons, McPhersons, and others. After the battle, arranged by King Robert III to settle a dispute, there remained standing only eleven members of the Chattan contingent and one Cameron. A blood bath indeed!

And how about the South Inch? Yes, it involved Oliver Cromwell in the Civil War, but that is another story. To learn more about North Inch and the "Battle of the Clans,"

You might want to read Sir Walter Scott's *The Fair Maid of Perth* for more gory detail.

So why not try the strathspey *Inch of Perth* at the March Monthly Dance? There'll be plenty of room for your set. ■



The Inch of Perth, by Perth Bridge over the Tay, c. 19th century.

The Royal Wedding 033- April, 2010 [video](#)



Attendees at our AGM on April 24 will have the opportunity to enjoy this strathspey. It was devised by Gene MacKinnon. Celebrating whose wedding is not too hard to determine. As far as we know, there was no likely connection with royalty for the well-known Mairi of wedding fame. Did the wedding perhaps take place in South Africa? ... Cape Town to be precise? No, neither of the above! But did you know that according to something I saw on the Strathspey Server website, there are close to 100 dances in the SCD repertoire that refer to some wedding or other?

Of course, there is no mystery here, once you know that this dance first surfaced in the RSCDS booklet *Five Scottish Country Dances 1982*. Who was married in London's St Paul's Cathedral, just prior to that year? Ah, yes! The ill-fated wedding of Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer took place on July 29, 1981.

One might wonder if the deviser of *The Royal Wedding* would have had second thoughts about the dance within a few years of its celebration.

So, let's focus less on the dance than on its deviser, Gene MacKinnon. Is that perhaps an American gentleman named Eugene? As we know, folks in the US do have quite the interest in Britain's Royal Family. Not so! The late Gene MacKinnon (née Lewis) was a resident of Guelph, Ontario. She was a long-time member of our sister branch, RSCDS Hamilton, and was the



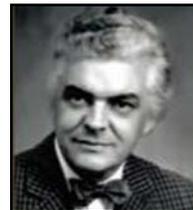
Gene MacKinnon was also a painter and a dedicated supporter of the Isle of Tiree genealogy research.



deviser of a number of SCD favourites, including that great reel, *Memory Lane*. I suspect that many of RSCDS Toronto's veteran teachers will have known Gene MacKinnon quite well. Gene MacKinnon passed away a little over two years ago on December 29, 2008, at the age of 79 — a significant loss to Scottish country dancing in southern Ontario. ■

Sauchie Haugh 034- May, 2010 [video](#)

Dancers ticketed for the West Toronto Ball on May 8 will have, or may have already had, the opportunity to dance *Sauchie Haugh*, a delightful strathspey with both a rondel and all-round poussette, devised by George Emmerson of London, Ontario. Sauchie Haugh? Now that rings a bell! Ah yes, any Glasgow visitors who work their way on foot up Buchanan Street (it's pedestrianized!) from the "Highlandman's Umbrella" on Argyle Street to the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall at the top need only look to their left and Sauchiehall Street stretches out before them, also usually crowded with pedestrians. Whoops! Different spelling! So, is Haugh the Gaelic word for "Hall"? Well, not really!



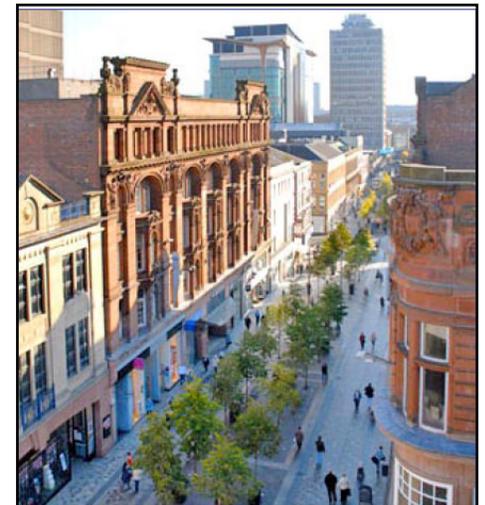
George Emmerson

It actually means (so I read) "land at the bottom of a river valley." A "dale" or "vale" in English? Elsewhere, I learn that the words Sauchie and Haugh, combined, translate roughly from the Gaelic as "Way of the Willows".

Maybe that is why you will find "The Willow Tearooms" on Sauchiehall, designed in 1904 by that famous Glaswegian architect and designer, Charles Rennie Mackintosh. It is very reminiscent of a bygone age, as Kathryn and I found while having lunch there just a few weeks ago.

Of course, there is a small community called Sauchie in the quaintly named county of Clackmannanshire. Hardly a mellifluous mouthful! The "Wee County," as it was once called (smallest in Britain), lies between the rivers Forth and its tributary the Devon, in an area so damp that it might well be suitable to the growth of willow trees.

Back to the SCD deviser, George Emmerson. While he was well known to RSCDS people in Ontario as a teacher of Scottish country dancing in London, George's primary vocation was as a Professor of Mechanical Engineering at the University of Western Ontario. The strathspey *Sauchie Haugh* was released as one of the RSCDS Leaflet Dances in 1967. ■



Sauchiehall Street is Glasgow's most famous thoroughfare, partly because of its Scottish-sounding music-hall name, partly because it is such a popular street for shopping. On a Saturday morning it's chock-a-block.

The Saint John River 035- October, 2010 [video](#)

O' Canada! As "our home and native land," you have blessed us with the tri-coastal bounty of many great rivers fanning out from the North American hinterland. They range from the Fraser on the west coast, to the Mackenzie flowing up to the Arctic Ocean, to the mighty St. Lawrence that empties into the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Then, lest we forget, we have New Brunswick's beautiful Saint John River.

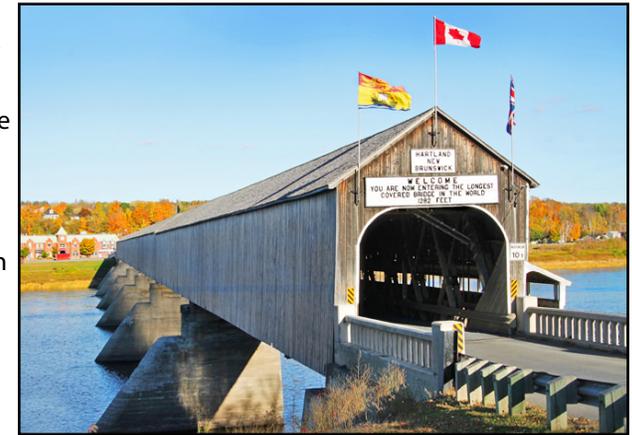
It is unabbreviated in both name and length. While Newfoundland may have its St. John's, the Saint John River richly deserves its full-length spelling when we view the expansive valley through which it flows. Its headwaters rise in Maine, USA, and it runs north, until curving around to reverse direction down through New Brunswick... it flirts with *la belle province*, but then heads south through Canada's other bilingual province, land of the Acadians.

Driving the Trans-Canada Highway down through the Saint John River valley is a delightful experience. It saunters along in a southerly direction from Edmundston. One passes by Florenceville, home of McCain Foods, one of Canada's best-known companies worldwide. Then, on to Fredericton, the capital city of New Brunswick. Just as the Saint John reaches its final destination on the Bay of Fundy, you will be able to make the acquaintance of the city of Saint John, the oldest incorporated city in Canada.

The mouth of the Saint John River was discovered in 1604 by Samuel de Champlain on St. John the Baptist's day, hence the river's name.

Back to the dance! The strathspey *Saint John River* was devised by Prudence Edwards in 1966, and included in the *The New Brunswick Collection of Scottish Country Dances*, just in time to be celebrated during Canada's 1967 Centennial.

RSCDS Toronto dancers can enjoy their own celebration of this strathspey during Dancing in the Park on June 15, 2010. ■



The famous longest covered bridge in the world at Hartland, NB, spans the Saint John River.

A Trip To Bavaria 036- October, 2010 [video](#)



Neuschwanstein castle in the Bavarian Alps

Those folks who took advantage of the first monthly dance of RSCDS Toronto's new season were able to enjoy what I will remember as quite the fun dance, James McGregor Brown's reel, *A Trip To Bavaria*.

Bavaria? Scottish country dancing exists in Bavaria? "You betcha", as Sarah Palin is wont to say! Bayern, as they call it if you live there, is the second most populous of the states that comprise the Federal Republic of Germany. The largest city is Munich. Its inhabitants, who number well over a million Bavarians, call it München (with an umlaut over the "u"). But Scottish dancing?

Well, back in 1973, a group of expatriate Scots and their friends decided to found the Munich Scottish Association (MSA) to further

Scottish culture in south-east Germany and they have been going strong ever since with a steady focus on the dancing that we all know and love.

The MSA is not a branch of RSCDS at present, but it is affiliated with same. That said, the first RSCDS Branch in Germany was founded six years ago under the name "Central Germany Branch", and is headquartered at the Kuckucksnest in a community about 80 km south of Frankfurt/Main. Run your finger down a list of the SCD "movers and shakers" either in Munich or in Central Germany, and the names you see are very Germanic. There is not a Mc or Mac to be seen.

Even so, go back to the second century AD, and it appears that the Bavarians of the day were called *Baiuvarii*, which means "Men of Baia", whose homeland, a.k.a. Bohemia, was occupied by a tribe of Celts called Boii. Celts, did you say? Aha! So it really is in the blood. Those Celtic folk are everywhere... Isle of Man, Brittany, Cornwall, and even Bavaria. Not to forget, on another level, both Boston and Glasgow. ■



Perhaps the footwear is not quite right, but are these Bavarians about to dance *Trip To Bavaria*?

The Corian Strathspey 037- November, 2010 [video](#)

There it is, towards the end of the November Monthly Dance programme — *The Corian Strathspey*? Hmm! Never heard of it! Corian must be a place in Scotland, but does not appear anywhere in my Caledonian road maps. Okay, let's Google it!

Aha! What have we here? Corian — a brand name owned by Dupont? Can this be it? A synthetic material made of acrylic polymer and alumina trihydrate? It's used for kitchen countertops, vanities, etc. Hard to visualize, say, "dancing on the countertops"! Nah! That can't be it! Not even for *The Dancing Bells*! So where did it come from?

The dance brief says it surfaced in RSCDS Book 43, which was issued in 2003. Obviously, that is where I should have looked first. This enables me to take tongue out of cheek and find out who devised *The Corian Strathspey*. And here is where I learn of a Montreal dancer named Maurice Whitby, who devised the dance in 1995 to celebrate the forthcoming marriage of Miss Corie Duque, a young Scottish country dancer, and her swain, Mr. Brian Prentice. CORie and BrlAN, get it?

I'll bet that all this probably happened under the aegis of RSCDS Montreal. After all, in that locale, Maurice Whitby was well known as a dancer and dance devisor. Who remembers another of Maurice's strathspeys by name of *My Trusty Fiere* (a small portion

of *Auld Lang Syne* no less)? Moreover, as the Strathspey Server website tells me, he was also blessed with a wicked sense of humour. There are anecdotes galore, often involved with Maurice's frequent visits over the years to RSCDS Boston's well-known events at Pinewoods, in the company of other Montreal dancers. As a memorial to the late Maurice Whitby, a dance was devised by Gary Thomas, a San Francisco SCDer, with music written by the ubiquitous Ron Wallace, another SCD Californian. The dance is called, simply, *Maurice*. ■



The Corian Strathspey was devised to mark the wedding of the lovely couple shown here: Corrie and Brian Prentice — who were encountered, serendipitously, at the Kingston Weekend.

Airie Bennan 038- December, 2010 [video](#)

Spotting the name of this dance in the December Family Night program, I was sufficiently intrigued to decide on a search. It turned out to be a bit of a challenge.

Apparently located in the old Stewartry of Kirkcudbrightshire, I first thought that *Airie Bennan* was a hill. But I find that it is two hills, *Airie* and *Bennan*. A stewartry is an archaic name for a Shire or Sherriffdom. Anyway, that area is now part of the region of Dumfries & Galloway in the southwest of Scotland. Come what may, one or both of the hills are significant enough to attract the attention of an august body named the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland. . . and that maybe is enough to justify someone devising a Scottish country dance accordingly.

"Someone?" In this case, the "someone" happened to be a gentleman by name of Hugh Foss, and he was indeed quite a "someone". A British cryptographer of great note, Hugh Foss achieved much success in World War II working for the British Government at its Bletchley Park Code and Cipher School. Very tall, red-bearded, and usually walking around in sandals, he was seconded to Washington, D.C., to work with Americans on breaking Japanese ciphers. The Americans called him "Lend-Lease Jesus"!

To date I have not been able to find any clarification of his Scottish credentials, but Hugh Foss did become known as a devisor of Scottish country dances. Among notable

dances he devised are the currently popular 5-couple reel *Polharrow Burn*, *John McAlpin*, and *The Wee Cooper of Fife*. Well, I thought all this was very intriguing, because it sometimes seems that one has to break the cipher to figure out the formations of the more complicated SCD dances.

Airie Bennan is a 5-couple jig that Hugh Foss devised in 1966. He died in 1971 at the age of 69. If you make it to the December Family Night, you'll probably enjoy dancing Mr. Foss' jig. ■



The summit ridge of *Bennan* is not jig-friendly!

Tribute To The Borders 039- January, 2011 [video](#)

This jig is just one of the many delightful dances devised by Yorkshireman Roy Goldring. Truly one of the icons of Scottish country dancing, Roy spent many of his adult years in and around the community of Ilkley, also known in song for its famous moor ("Wheear 'ast tha bin sin' ah saw thee?"). And yes, some Yorkshire folks still talk like that... so it is said. Ilkley is located in an area of West Yorkshire known as Wharfedale.

While dancing around that location, including numerous appearances at RSCDS Leeds, Roy Goldring devised favourite after favourite known to us all throughout the Scottish country dancing world. As I look over a list of the many dances about which I have written over the past few years in this column, I am astonished to be reminded how many of them were devised by this man.

But let me not get too far off track! Roy's tribute in this instance refers of course to the border country between England and Scotland. Time was, going back to medieval days, the Borders covered a much broader area encompassing not only Dumfriesshire and Kirkcudbrightshire to the west (now Dumfries & Galloway), but also the English counties of Northumberland, Cumberland, and Westmorland. In these contemporary days, the now more shrunken Scottish Borders country encompasses only the area between Solway Fifth and the mouth of the River Tweed at Berwick.

Argyll Strathspey 040- February, 2011 [video](#)

Seems like a great Tartan Ball program again this year, but what's this? The *Argyll Strathspey*? Oh no! Isn't that the one that includes that Tournée thingy?...the formation that many of us always manage to forget between its somewhat infrequent appearances?

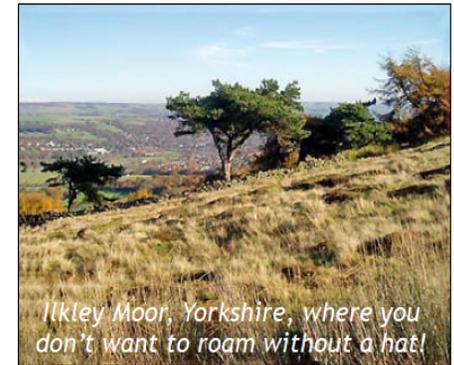
Who devised that dance? Ah! It's that Roy Goldring again; the guy from West Yorkshire! But let's forget about the tournée for the moment, and think about Argyll, that region of the west coast of Scotland that also seems to cover a fair chunk of the Inner Hebrides. And if we think about Argyll, we cannot help but also focus on the Clan Campbell.

Is it Argyll or Argyle? Well, the latter is apparently more archaic and may have more to do with hosiery, but whichever, either is easier to say or pronounce than the Gaelic version *Earra Ghaidheal*, which derives from "Coast of Gaels". Before leaving the Argyle hosiery mention, it needs saying that the Argyle pattern is supposed to reflect the tartan of Clan Campbell. See how all this is nicely coming together?

Up until 1975, Argyll was a County (Argyllshire?). Historically, its county town was Inveraray, at which you will arrive soon enough if you ever have the experience of careering downhill west-bound from Rest And Be Thankful and around the windy end of

But does this piece of British real estate deserve a tribute? Well, certainly there was no shortage of past strife in the border country, with armed incursions crossing the English/ Scots border in either direction to inflict harm against perceived enemies. I don't doubt that tribute was frequently paid by either side in the form of ransom money, or perhaps in payment of stolen livestock. Readers may have heard of the Border Reivers who were the 16th century equivalent of what were later called cattle rustlers in the United States' Wild West. So I will leave it to you to decide whether any form of *Tribute to the Borders* is merited from a more positive standpoint.

Why not try this jig at the January Monthly Dance, then decide whether, in current times, Roy Goldring's tribute is deserved by these border folk. ■



Ilkley Moor, Yorkshire, where you don't want to roam without a hat!



Border Reivers on the prowl.

Loch Fyne on the A83. Talk about SCD names galore! But, What about those Campbells?

Dominant in Argyll since the 13th century, and once one of the most powerful families in Scotland, the Campbell Clan could be said to have transformed Argyll into no less than a Duchy. As Clan Chief, the Duke of Argyll's family seat is located at Inveraray Castle. The Campbells have a long history over the centuries of battling in one cause or another and, of course, were considered by some to be a murderous bunch following the infamous massacre of a large number of MacDonalds at Glencoe due to a long running feud. But enough of this warlike stuff of which Scotland's history is replete.

Now, about that Tournée again! Do think carefully as you work your way through the *Argyll Strathspey*. It's worth it. ■



The Birks of Invermay 041- March, 2011 [video](#)

Drawn from RSCDS Book 16, which should age this strathspey a little more than somewhat, *The Birks of Invermay* can be enjoyed by participants at the March Monthly Dance, which is Beginners' Night.

So, what are birks and where is Invermay? As a young man, and during the time that I served at Her Majesty's pleasure (No! Not in jail! Conscripted into the British military for a while!), the English slang word "birk" was used with familiarity to denote someone who was... how shall we say... intellectually challenged. Only later did I learn that it was actually an abbreviated piece of Cockney rhyming slang... but we won't go there!

Further checking out the word in my reference materials, I find that it is a Scottish word simply related to a tree of the family *Betulaceae*, very common in Scotland, and known to us all as the birch.

Now, we also know that there is no shortage of Scottish locations that commence with the bi-syllabic "Inver..", e.g. Inverness, Inveraray, and Invergowrie. Even Fort William used to be known as Inverlochly. From the Gaelic *inbhir*, it has something to do with a "confluence of waters" or a "river mouth".

Sands of Morar 042- April, 2011 [video](#)

On the April Monthly Dance program there is an intriguingly named strathspey, *Sands of Morar*. I recall it surfaced in Book 45 just a few years ago. It was devised by Barry Priddey. Reference to him seems to be directed to an English RSCDS Branch in Sutton Coldfield, a community just north of Birmingham. While the list of dances devised by him is quite lengthy, I must admit that they did not include many names familiar to me.

But, geographically, is there really a place called Sands of Morar?

Well, should you ever happen to make your way to Fort William, once you've climbed up and down Ben Nevis a few times, give yourself a special treat and take the famous Road to the Isles a.k.a. the A830. Very scenic indeed! It goes to Mallaig, where you can take the Caledonian McBrayne ferry to Armadale in Skye, instead of using the bridge at the Kyle of Lochalsh. On your way there, don't forget to stop off at Glenfinnan where the history books say that the "Bonnie" Charles Edward Stuart first rallied his army of clansmen in 1745.

When you reach Arisaig, leave the A830 for a side road that takes you along the coast to Morar and, finally, there you are, at the Silver Sands of Morar — one of the most beautiful areas of the Scottish west coast region known as Lochaber. In the distance, over the water, you can see the islands of Muck, Eigg, and Rùm. (Sounds like quite the

Could it mean Water of May? Well there is, or was, such a place right by the village of Forteviot, just down the road a few clicks southwest of Perth. Was there a nearby stand of birch trees perhaps? Who knows?

But to round it all off and clinch the *bona fides* of *The Birks of Invermay* as appropriate for SCD purposes, there is also a traditional Scottish song by the same name dating back to at least the 1730s, which concludes... "let us be blithesome and gay, among the Birks o' Invermay". ■



Farm fields near Invermay

cocktail! Potable? Probably not!) Did you ever see the movie *Local Hero*, filmed in part on the Sands of Morar? If so, you may have a sense of *déjà vu*.

Before I leave this topic, I just remembered, you can even have yourself a little more excitement. Instead of driving the A830, take the train! The West Highland Line runs a regular scenic summer service from Fort William to Mallaig via Arisaig and Morar using a steam locomotive called *The Jacobite*. For a "train spotter" in the steam era, as I was in my early years, that can be a lot of fun.

Thank you, Mr. Priddey, for providing all those memories. ■



The Sands of Morar are very white, and full of tiny particles of mica. If you run your hands through the sand, they will shine silver in the sunlight.

Maxwell's Rant 043- May, 2011 [video](#)

Here's an old favourite! For many of us, *Maxwell's Rant* was probably one of the first ten dances with which we felt comfortable as beginners. Sixteen bars of cross-over reels (however you like to call them), twos out, threes in, smooth flowing and great music to match.

Maxwell's Rant surfaced in RSCDS Book 18 around 1955 when SCD in Canada was still in its infancy. I don't know about then, but it later became very popular. So, who devised this tasty reel? Well, his name was David Rutherford! Never heard of him? The same guy who also devised *Machine Without Horses*, *Balquidder Strathspey*, *Lassies of Dunse*, and many more dances you may be familiar with to a greater or lesser degree?

And how about Clan Maxwell? Banffshire too? No, the Maxwells are a lowland clan from the area now known as the Scottish Borders. The name is derived from the name Maccus, who was a Norman baron going back to 1066 (and all that!). He gave his name to a pool (Maccuswell) close to the town of Kelso on the river Tweed. This area used to be called Roxburghshire.

Now here's an etymological obscurity for you. Clan Maxwell is considered armigerous, which means that they currently do not have a chief recognized by Scotland's heraldic authority, the Court of the Lord Lyon. This is not to say that Clan Maxwell is in itself an obscurity. They have a large Society in Canada, formed in 1993 using the Latin motto *Reviresco*. It means "I flourish again" which, interestingly enough, is also used by the highland Clan McEwen.

Clan Maxwell has quite a number of septs, one of which is called Pollok. This could be of interest to some of our Glaswegian members, who may likely know about Pollok House. It has been owned by the Maxwells for a few centuries, and sits in Pollock Country Park (the "c" is apparently optional!). This park, which also contains the Burrell Collection, a wonderful art gallery, is adjacent to Pollokshaw Road, which circum-navigates it, just off the M77.

All that said, don't forget to go to our AGM at the end of April. You'll be able to hustle your way through *Maxwell's Rant*, which is on the dance program...and don't forget to watch your timing! ■



Designed by Wm. Adam in 1752, Pollok House, and the estate owned the Maxwell family for almost 700 years, was gifted to the City of Glasgow in 1966.

Maxwell's Rant ~ A Postscript [\[Published in the June, 2011, issue of Set&Link\]](#)



Barry Pipes

My column (WHAT'S IN A NAME?) in last month's *Set&Link* provided a little background about Clan Maxwell. I referred to a holding of the Maxwells in Glasgow called Pollok House, which was included in a lovely park.

This park was part of the Pollok Estate (Pollok being a sept of Clan Maxwell), and in 1966, it was donated to the City of Glasgow. The donation included Pollok House, an art collection, a library, and 361 acres of surrounding land. Acting for the Estate was Dame Anne Maxwell Macdonald, the 11th Baronetess of Pollok. The Maxwells of Pollok had owned this property for over seven centuries since the year 1270.

Why is this worth mentioning at this point? Because shortly after I had written the Maxwell article, Dame Anne Maxwell Macdonald died in her 105th year. Talk about lifetime achievements!

A small point of interest! I was not too familiar with the word "baronetess" and thought it was the same as "baroness" (like Maggie Thatcher!). Here's the difference for those interested in the British aristocracy. A baron(ess) is the lowest form of nobility among the "peers of the realm" (the highest being a duke), whereas a baronet(ess) is a commoner, albeit one of the higher ranks of the non-royals within the class system in Britain. Well, how about that! ■

...Barry Pipes



Dame Anne Maxwell Macdonald
Born 8 Sep 1906 in Glasgow, Lanarkshire, Scotland
Died 21 Apr 2011 in Tayinloan, Argyll, Scotland

The Royal Yacht Britannia 044- October, 2011 [video](#)

Early summer, 1959. . . along with many other Torontonians, I went down to the city's waterfront to take a look at the Royal Yacht *Britannia*. It was anchored down there, having just arrived with the 33-year-old Queen Elizabeth II and hubby, on their second visit to Canada. A sturdy and, to me, somewhat ordinary looking vessel, this 6000 ton boat hardly resembled the streamlined luxurious yachts frequently seen around the Mediterranean in this day and age. Over 50 years ago, however, I suppose that it comfortably met the needs of the Royal Family for a nice trip to the Dominion, as we were called then. And it gave them the privacy of not having to stay at the Royal York.

One reason for this visit was that, along with U.S. President Eisenhower, the royal couple had just formally celebrated the opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway, which then allowed all manner of ocean-going vessels to visit ports on the Great Lakes from Toronto to Duluth, Minnesota. As I contemplated the fact that this relatively small yacht had crossed the Atlantic, I compared its trip with my own emigration from the UK. That was in 1956, three years before, on the *Queen Mary* from Southampton to New York. Notwithstanding its 80,000 or so tons, the QM was not a good sailor in bad weather. I wondered how this 6000 ton so-called yacht had fared in rough seas. *

Importantly, let's recognize where the Royal Yacht *Britannia* was built. Where? By Scots, of course, at John Brown's Shipyard on the Clyde! Launched in 1953, *Britannia* served Queen and country for close to 44 years, even though the Royal Family's subsequent visits to Canada were by air.

So it is appropriate that the *Britannia* was not scrapped at the end of her sailing career, but permanently moored at Edinburgh's historic port of Leith.

She is maintained by The Royal Britannia Trust which funds the ongoing work required to sustain the *Britannia's* presence as one of Scotland's most significant visitor attractions.

Personally, I would hope that the *Queen Mary*, now a floating hotel at Long Beach, California, receives as much loving care and attention. . . but I doubt it!

So if you enjoyed dancing *The Royal Yacht Britannia*, at the October 1 Monthly Dance, a 40-bar reel by John Drewry out of RSCDS Book 43, think of its proud background. . . born in Scotland, and still resting in Scotland. ■

* For the answer to this puzzlement, see: [098-Cape Town Wedding](#)



The Royal Yacht Britannia



Tom Kerr



Britannia in Toronto, 1959

Portnacraig 045- December, 2011 [video](#)

Here's an intriguing name! Is it geographical or historical? *Portnacraig* is a 32-bar reel devised by Perthshire's Linda Gaul around 20 years ago and published in Book 36. As it happens, this reel was included in the November Monthly Dance program for all to enjoy.



Linda Gaul

The lady herself needs no introduction. Linda was Chair of the RSCDS organization at Edinburgh around the turn of the century, and would be very clearly identified in any "Who's Who" of celebrities at RSCDS' Coates Crescent, Edinburgh HQ. Currently, she manages the advertising in your *Scottish Country Dancer* magazine.

Back to Portnacraig! Should you ever have the opportunity of checking out the sights around the delightful town of Pitlochry, which is just off the A9 north of Perth, take a stroll down by the River Tummel and you may come upon the Port Na Craig Inn (Note: three words!) Established in 1650, it is at the site of an old ferry which goes way back to the 13th century when local monks operated the crossing service for the price of a coin dropped into a nearby wishing well. The ferry is long gone, having been replaced by a suspension bridge in 1913.

The Lochalsh Reel 046- January, 2012 [video](#)

It would probably not surprise readers to know that Scottish country dancing is alive and well on the Isle of Skye. Centred in the town of Portree, I guess, the Skye Branch was launched in 1988 and, based on some photographs on their website, seems to be doing rather well.

As many know, there are a couple of ways to get to Skye without flippers. One either takes the ferry from Mallaig, which is at the end of the Road to the Isles, or one drives over the relatively new bridge at the Kyle of Lochalsh. Kyle? It is derived from the Gaelic word *caol* which means "strait," and the Kyle of Lochalsh is a body of water separating the mainland from the Isle of Skye, which brings us to Lochalsh!

Either one word or two, Loch Alsh is geographically a sea inlet that runs eastward between the Kyle and the well-known castle Eilean Donan on Loch Duich. Ready for a bit more Gaelic? Lochalsh means "foaming lake" or *Loch Aillse* in the Gaelic. That said, from a tourist's perspective, Lochalsh also comprises the land area around the Kyle both on Skye and the mainland. A beautiful area to visit, Lochalsh has any number of sight-seeing locations to be investigated and is a source of Scottish country dances galore.

I already mentioned the "Road to the Isles". Head north from the Kyle and you are close to the *Cuillins of Skye* and just north of Portree is the *Old Man of Storr*. I've covered them all in past editions of WHAT'S IN A NAME?. Oh! And look across the harbour at Portree and the adjacent island is Raasay, erstwhile home of *Mrs. McLeod of Raasay*.

Does this mean that Linda Gaul may be quite familiar with Pitlochry and environs? Well, it so happens that around every late February/early March, RSCDS holds its Winter School at Pitlochry's Atholl Palace Hotel. What's the betting that Linda has long been a regular attendee?

As for me, I just missed the opportunity to see the Port Na Craig Inn. Kathryn and I actually stopped at Pitlochry in mid-October on the way back from having visited family just up the A9 in Kingussie. With regret, I did not know of the dance or the ferry location at that time, but did you notice how I started this piece a few lines back?... geographical or historical? The answer, as you can see, is both! ■



The Port Na Craig Inn beside the River Tummel was established nearly a hundred years before the battle of Culloden.

Other points of interest? On the mainland side of the Kyle, you are just a hop, skip, and a jump away from the village of Plockton. While this may sound most un-Gaelic, many may remember the TV series called *Hamish McBeth* about a Highland police constable in the mythical town of Loch Dubh. The series featured Maryhill-born (that's Glasgow, folks!) Robert Carlyle, "The Full Monty" himself. The last time I was in Plockton, I didn't see highland cattle wandering down the main street as shown in the series, but it did have palm trees indicating that the Gulf Stream runs nearby.

OK! Let's get back on track here! *The Lochalsh Reel* was devised by Pat Burnett (most likely a Skyclander) from her/his *Skye Collection*. So you can treat yourself to its formations at the January Monthly Dance. For a real treat though, head up to Skye when you are next in Scotland. There's lots more to see around Lochalsh! ■



The Kyle Bridge spanning the Kyle of Lochalsh

Polharrow Burn 047- February, 2012 [video](#)

When I embarked on this journey, quite a number of years ago, exploring the whys and wherefores of the naming of Scottish country dances for our wonderful newsletter, little did I know how my research would take me from one end of Scotland to the other, both longitudinally and laterally. As I look back over years of my past articles, I think, what are you doing here? Writing travelogues and mini-histories or what? Clearly, I am doing something that I enjoy, and I do hope that this is reflected in reader reaction to my chosen words. That said, enough of the doodling, Barry, let's get on with it!

As many will know, a burn in Scotland is a small waterway. In the Gaelic, it is an *allt*, although the English language sticks closer by using the word Bourne (mouth?). Polharrow Burn flows eastward from Loch Harrow to the Water of Ken in the northern part of the county that used to be called Kircudbrightshire (how so very mellifluous!), and has now been incorporated into the broader area of Dumfries and Galloway. This should give amateur geographers a rough idea of where to find it. The closest community of any size is called St. John's Town of Dalry. If you live there, Dalry will do just fine. The St. John's reference is to the mediaeval knights of same, although Dalry is quite a disconnect from the Hospitallers of Jerusalem.

This area of southwest Scotland must have really appealed to the dance devisor Hugh Foss, who spent his final years living close by in Castle Douglas before his death in 1971.

Lamb Skinnet 048- March, 2012 [video](#)

I am not a vegan, but the thought of skinning lambs for both the wool and the exposed meat gives me a little digestive problem. Kathryn and I have always had a soft spot for members of the ovine family. It might just come from that time many years ago when we were driving through the Scottish Borders country on our way to Gretna Green for the purpose of marriage. No, there was not a shotgun-wielding father in pursuit, it's just that marriage in a blacksmith's shop seemed to have a certain romance attached to it. It was worth it, but that's a story for another time, and a tradition with which I'm sure many of you are familiar.

What we stopped to enjoy on our way there was the sight of a shepherd and dog going through some herding training with a large group of Scottish Blackface sheep. It being springtime, a number of lambs were present. It was a very comforting experience which we have never forgotten, and that attracted me to do a little research on the dance *Lamb Skinnet*, which seems to have been devised about two hundred and fifty years ago.

Now, what's this I find? Lamb skinnet is the vulgar derivation of the German word *Lansquenet*? A card game at which it was apparently easy to cheat? And, in turn, a derivation of the German *Landsknecht*, a mercenary soldier of the 17th century? This is a Scottish country dance? I don't get it!

I have written about Hugh before in conjunction with other dances he devised, perhaps *J.B. Milne* or *John McAlpin* (or was it *Roaring Jelly*?). Be assured, he devised more than those; in fact, well over 130 dances. As a reminder to readers, Hugh Foss was a cryptographer in WWII — a.k.a. “a boffin”? Having been born in Japan of parents who were Anglican missionaries, Hugh had the very valuable expertise at the time of being fluent in Japanese.



Hugh Foss

I just read a piece in the Strathspey Server by RSCDS Vancouver's Rosemary Coupe suggesting that as Hugh Foss was a little concerned about his English heritage, he wore a grey shepherd's kilt for his dance activities rather than the tartan. But before I forget, the South Simcoe SCD at Alliston, ON, has *Polharrow Burn* on its February 14 Valentine Workshop and Tea Dance program. It is probably sold out by now, but if you want to really enjoy a great five-couple reel, *Polharrow Burn* is the one to try. ■

*Polharrow Burn, downstream from Forebush*

Although it also turns out that as a dance and a tune, *Lamb Skinnet* has been well known to fiddlers and other performers over the years throughout the Borders and Northumbria, I must admit disappointment with this German connection.

But further information surfaced! There was a mechanical engineering professor at the University of Western Ontario named George Emmerson who was a real maven for Scottish country dancing. George had an innate love of the dancing and had written several books on the subject. In one of his books called *Scotland Through Her Country Dances*, he surmised that lamb skinnet was the name of the practice by which sheep farmers could fool a ewe, one of whose lambs had died, by putting the dead lamb's skin over the back of a substitute who perhaps needed a mother. Apparently, this is an activity well known in the sheep-farming business.

As a Scottish country dancer, I find Professor Emmerson's suggestion much more satisfying. However, it seems to have been somewhat controversial and not necessarily accepted by other experts. Of the two choices, which would you as readers prefer? *Lamb Skinnet* is a 32-bar jig that is part of our March Monthly Dance program. Why not dance it first, then make up your mind! ■



The Immigrant Lass 049- April, 2012 [video](#): (spot the Toronto folk)

Where would Scottish country dancing in Canada be without the thousands of immigrant lasses who after WWII left Scotland by ship and latterly by plane, to seek a new life elsewhere in the Commonwealth? Surely the healthy growth of SCD throughout the world in the 50s, 60s and 70s can be attributed significantly to the post-war exodus of a host of British families determined to improve their well-being in the New World. How many times have I heard from these ladies that they cut their SCD teeth as children in Scottish schools, learning to dance, for example, *Petronella*?

I guess it's true to say that, excluding all the First Nations folk, everyone on the distaff side of the Canadian population is either an immigrant lass or a descendant of same. Which leads me to wonder, as a sidebar, about the likelihood of SCD being performed either in Aboriginal communities or up in, say, Inuvik or Iqaluit? Well, there's an interesting question! Any answers?

The question also arises about whether the use of the word "lass" automatically excludes all those female immigrants who are not of Scottish descent. Given that a majority of contemporary immigrants into Xanadu (sorry, I mean Canada!) do not even hail from Europe, never mind Scotland, is there an Asian equivalent to that beautiful word "lassie" that would apply in this context?

Let's also be sure we understand, and I believe that most of us do, the difference between an immigrant, a migrant who has entered her/his new home country, and an emigrant, who has departed from her/his country of origin. That is, one emigrates from Scotland and immigrates to Canada, being renamed somewhere in mid-Atlantic.

Lord Elgin's Reel 050- May, 2012 [video](#)

Always being on the look-out for oddities of one form or another in SCD, my attention was drawn to *Lord Elgin's Reel*, a dance that is on the program for the West Toronto Ball on May 12 (the details of which are elsewhere in this *Set & Link*).

Now there has been an Earl of Elgin in the Scottish Peerage since 1633, and it is quite likely that in the subsequent almost 380 years, any number of sons have been born, the eldest son usually being known as Lord Elgin. The incumbent, the 11th Earl, may still be with us at the age of around 92. His son, Charles Edward Bruce, was identified recently as the current Lord Elgin at a 2012 Burns Supper in New York City. The son's current age is about 50. Distinguished as they may be, I do not think that either father or son has merited having a Scottish country dance named in his honour.

There were indeed two previous Earls, the 7th and 8th, who became famous historically, or in one case infamous. The 7th Earl of Elgin secured his place in history by acquiring, under questionable circumstances, a number of ancient Greek antiquities from the Parthenon in Athens. They were called the Elgin Marbles. Currently, they are to be found at the British Museum in London, having been purchased from the Earl by the

[Ed: Ruth Beattie, RSCDS chair wrote: "I enjoyed reading the article on the Earl of Elgin in May's issue. The current Earl is a Vice President of the Society."]

All of which gives me an opportunity to pay obeisance to several immigrant lasses of my acquaintance who as teachers gave me, an Englishman, the encouragement to get my mind around SCD.

Top of my list for sure would be the now-retired Janette Todd from St. Andrews, followed closely by the "Bonnie" Carole Skinner from Dundee, and Jean Noble from Lossiemouth – the self-described when we last chatted "Lassie from Lossie". Never in my wildest dreams on first entering Canada a few decades ago did I think that I would find myself on a first-name basis with so many fine Scottish ladies, both teachers and dance partners. It has been a treat indeed!

By the way, after my having rattled on for a few paragraphs, how about that dance *The Immigrant Lass*? It is an appealing little jig from RSCDS Book 39, devised by Morton Jay in celebration of his wife June. They are residents of Seaforth, which is a suburb of Sydney, Australia. Well, you wouldn't expect all the Scots-Australians to be living in Perth, would you? ■



Janette Todd Carole Skinner Jean Noble



Scottish immigrant lasses and lads arriving at Quebec in 1911. Source: Library & Archives Canada

British Government early in the 1800s, for considerably less money than he had paid as a bribe to the Ottoman Government of the day.

All that said, his son, the 8th Earl, was far more historically important to us as Canadian citizens, and did not have the same "blot on his escutcheon" borne by his pater (as Old Etonians used to refer to their dads). In 1847, James Bruce, the 8th Earl of Elgin, was named Governor General of the Province of Canada and through that role, worked to set the stage for the establishment of Canada as a Confederation in 1867.

By the way, as you might have surmised, the Earls of Elgin are the hereditary chiefs of Clan Bruce. They have a family seat just a few miles from Dunfermline.

One final thought. . . In my opening line, I referred to *Lord Elgin's Reel* as an oddity. Be careful how you start this dance — it's actually a strathspey! ■



The Right Honourable, 8th Earl of Elgin, Governor General of the Province of Canada, 1847-1854

Monymusk 051- June, 2012 [video](#)

Did you know that just inland from the south coast of Jamaica lies the island's oldest sugar estate, with a distillery where rum is produced? The estate is called Monymusk. It has been in existence in that location since the mid-18th century using labour at that time provided by slaves from West Africa. The Monymusk Estate was owned by Sir Archibald Grant. Grant? Aha! Methinks I smell a Scottish connection.



A few months ago, the Estate launched a new brand called Monymusk White Overproof Rum, and by volume this product is indeed over-proof to the tune of 63% alcohol. The master blender confirmed that the Monymusk brand name was chosen because of the historical

significance of the area. This Monymusk rum is claimed to be a better libation by far than all its competitors. I guess we had better start looking for it in our LCBO stores as a refreshing change of pace from our usual single malt and blended whisky purchases.

And that's it? Indeed no! There's a community in Aberdeenshire called Monymusk. It lies about 15 km northwest of Aberdeen, and is just a bit off the beaten track. It is what is called a planned village within the Monymusk Estate, which is owned by the Grant family. Planned village suggests to me something that is purpose-built. For what purpose, I do not know because the village has been there since the 1100s.

The Old Spedling Castle's Ghost's Dance 052- October, 2012 [video](#)

This is about the ghost of "Dunty" Porteous. While other sources state that dunty is an Old English word meaning argument, my *Dictionary of Scots Dialect* defines dunty by the archaic word "doxy", as in a synonym for a courtesan, paramour, or prostitute. Puzzling as that is, it cannot be correct in this instance as the Dunty Porteous in this tale was yclept James. Yclept? Well, if we are sorting out Old/Middle English words, why not!

So, enough of the linguistics! Truth be known, Dunty was a quarrelsome man, a miller by trade who provided bread for the locals, including a baronet by name of Sir Alexander Jardine who resided at the nearby castle called Spedlins Tower.

It transpired that Dunty and Sir Alex became involved in a big argument. So to put Dunty in his place and confirm the futility of arguing with his "betters", Sir Alex consigned him to the Spedlins Tower dungeons under lock and key. There, Dunty stayed quite a deal longer than he had anticipated, because Sir Alex then decided to visit Edinburgh, which in the 17th century was a few days journey away. Forgetting about Dunty in the dungeons of the tower, Sir Alex took the keys with him. Many days later, Sir Alex remembered his prisoner and couriered the keys back to Spedlins.

Alas! The courier was too late — Dunty had died of starvation. From that point on, it is said that Spedlins Tower became home to Dunty's ghost, who wandered around its halls

Then there is the Monymusk Reliquary, which, as we all know, is a container for relics. This particular reliquary was made about 750 A.D. probably by monks from Iona and is said to contain holy relics of St. Columba. It became a sacred item used for saintly assistance by Scots in battle. It came into the possession of the Grant family and is now in the care of the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh as one of its most prized pieces.

Given that Aberdeenshire and Banffshire have no shortage of members of Clan Grant, I wonder how well the Monymusk Grants are related to those other Grants just up the road a few miles in Dufftown. It is there that Wm. Grant & Sons distill some great products under the name Glenfiddich and The Balvenie.

Anything else? Well yes, there is an old folk-tune called *Monymusk Lads* which starts... "As I cam' in by Monymusk, and doon by Alford dale, A sad misfortune happened to me, and I think nae shame to tell."

Can it be sung perhaps in support of that lovely smooth-flowing strathspey called *Monymusk*? Or could it be best danced to a Jamaican reggae beat?

Whatever... here is a plug for the Highlands of Durham SCD's White Heather Ball on June 23. The *Monymusk* strathspey is on the program! ■



The Monymusk Reliquary

wailing... "Let me oot – Am de'en o' hunger!" As one might imagine, this caused no end of distress to Sir Alex and the whole Jardine family.

Clearly, nothing but an exorcism was required, and the Clan Jardine Chaplain, with the aid of a big black Bible, drove Dunty's ghost back into the dungeons, and there it stayed. The Bible was deposited in a staircase wall niche within the Tower, until a while later, when it was sent to Edinburgh to be re-bound.

What happened? Dunty resurfaced in full voice, again scaring the daylights out of the Jardine family.

As attendees may remember, *The Old Spedlins* (or Spedling, take your pick) *Castle's Ghost's Dance* was part of the RSCDS Toronto September Monthly Dance program. Built around 1605 on the banks of the River Annan just up from Lockerbie, Spedlins fell into ruin. Although the Jardines are long gone, it was reconstructed in the 1970s and is now habitable again. ■



Spedlins Tower today

Cauld Kail 053- October, 2012 [video](#)

This is the title of a dance medley (16 bars strathspey / 16 bars reel) that will be featured in the program for the upcoming RSCDS Toronto November Monthly Dance. Have you not previously heard of it? Well it is hardly new; in fact *Cauld Kail* was first published in RSCDS Book Nine around 1934, in the very good company of other far more well-known dances such as *Dalkeith's Strathspey*, *Cadgers in the Canongate*, and *The New Rigged Ship*. I very much doubt that any of us, or our parents, even those of us who have long been enjoying the world of codgerdom, were giving much thought to SCD at that point in time. However, since this medley is also part of the 2013 Tartan Ball program, it is worth doing a little review of it.

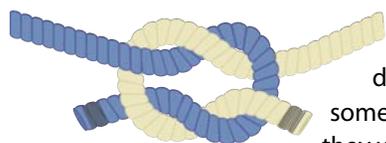
Cauld Kail! Those who derive the utmost pleasure of deciphering the songs and verse of Scotland's Bard will twig on to this name in a heartbeat. Well of course, it's from the Robbie Burns song "Cauld Kail in Aberdeen ... and castocks in Strabogie. But yet I fear they'll cook o'er soon, and never warm the coggie". Translation please?

Cauld (cold) is somewhat self-evident. Kail is a veggie from the Brassica family, a.k.a. cabbage. Spell it "kale" and you get the picture. Castocks are the stems of cabbage. Strabogie is the valley (strath) of Aberdeenshire's River Bogie, and coggie is a small wooden vessel for holding anything in semi-liquid form, like stew for example. Put it all together and you have a broth of cabbages and other greens. Sounds delicious, doesn't it! ... except for the cold part!

The Granny Knot 054- December, 2012 [video: Boehmer or Drewry](#)

As a tenderfoot (rookie) Boy Scout at the age of eleven, I successfully tied my first granny knot. Truth be known, this was hardly a success because when one did tie this useless and unreliable knot, it was always the result of having made a mistake while one was actually learning to tie a reef knot correctly. In this sense, the word "granny" had a nautical connotation and was probably a sarcastic reference to the less than nimble fingers of an aged person. Nautical? Well, going back to the days of sail, long before Boy Scouts came on the scene, sailors were required to create all kinds of different knots with competency.

When Lord Baden-Powell who was always fondly referred to as BP (as in BeePee), founded the Scouting movement in 1908, knotting became a useful part of his outdoors program. Shortly thereafter of course, BP's missus (Lady Olave St Clair BP) took the same action to create Girl Guides.



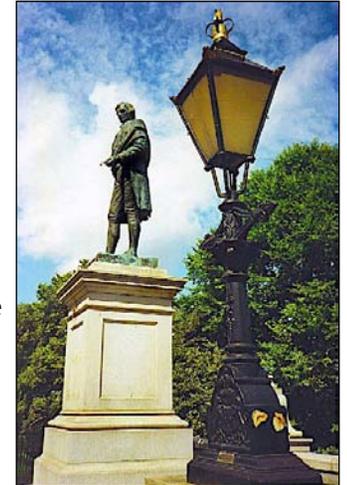
I don't doubt for a moment that many RSCDS members worldwide spent some time in their earlier days either Scouting or Guiding, and like me, sometimes found themselves stuck with a "granny" when they were trying to achieve a proper reef knot.

So, what would have encouraged Robbie Burns to write a song about cauld kail in Aberdeen? It was a considerable distance to travel from Ayrshire, especially in those days. It seems that he set out on a tour of the Highlands around 1787 and arrived in the city of Bon Accord in early September. The purpose of his visit was to meet with certain Aberdonians in the academic world, including other poets and like-minded folk. In his Journal, he described Aberdeen as a lazy town. Tsk! Tsk! He must have been forgiven for those words because in 1892 a statue was commissioned to commemorate his work and presumable past presence in the city. It is located just by



Scotch Kale: *Brassica oleracea*

the Union Terrace Gardens, perhaps known for the profusion of their "Blooms".



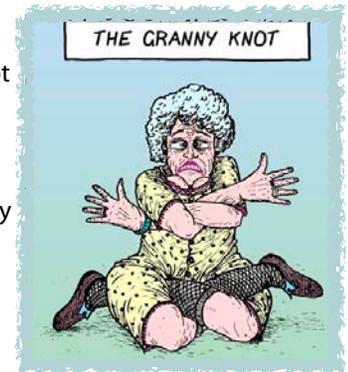
Robert Burns statue, Aberdeen

As a final thought, since Robbie travelled far afield to sample the culinary delights of Aberdeenshire, I wonder if kail, cauld or otherwise, was a dish known in or around Alloway, or indeed anywhere in Ayrshire. ■

As all you folks who were into Scouting and Guiding as pre-teens and later will know, it was not just the reef knot at issue. Who remembers the sheet bend, the bowline, the sheepshank? Who remembers how to do square and diagonal lashings? One thing that I do remember is that to make it as a First Class Scout one had to learn, among many other things, how to splice ropes. But enough about that; the complexity of splicing also reminds me of my first attempts at calculus. A knotty problem indeed!

Back to SCD. There is indeed a dance called *The Granny Knot*. Worth mentioning is that, in fact, there is not just one, but two completely different dances with that name, a reel devised by Marie Boehmer and a strathspey devised by John Drewry. I am not sure which came first, but isn't that unusual in SCD? I wonder whether these dances might include a built-in mistake to be consistent with the knotting world.

The Granny Knot as a reel has recently appeared at an event run in the Orillia area involving one of our own RSCDS Toronto teachers, Linda Ashe Argent. SCD certainly seems to be alive and well in those areas to the north of the GTA. As for devising dances that might share the characteristics of knots, I'd like to see one of our devisors take on something like The Möbius Strip... but that is hardly a knot, is it? ■



Linnea's Strathspey 055- January, 2013 [video](#)

Linnea? Doesn't really have that Gaelic touch, does it? So where does it come from? *Linnea's Strathspey* was devised by a certain Tim Wilson, apparently a member of the Dunsmuir Dancers. Ah! Now we have something to go on!

Dunsmuir, Scotland? Yes, there is/was a Dunsmuir family. Pictish, if one wants to go back far enough. But what do we have here? The Dunsmuir Dancers are seemingly connected not with a location in Scotland, but with a community in Northern California on Interstate 5, quite close to the Oregon border.

A very touristy spot is Dunsmuir, which should not be surprising once you realize that at 14,000 feet plus, Mt. Shasta looms over it. Shasta is the second most prominent peak among all the volcanoes in the Cascade Mountains although it has not erupted since 1786. Is it overdue? Do the Dunsmuir Dancers function at all in Dunsmuir? Have they danced anywhere close to Shasta's volcanic cone?

Well I wouldn't be too sure about those questions, because the Dunsmuir Dancers are actually listed as a Scottish country, Highland, and Step Dance Performance Group in the Greater San Francisco Bay



Mount Shasta as viewed from Dunsmuir, California.

Area which is not exactly round the corner from Dunsmuir itself. One will perhaps have a greater understanding of the importance of the Dunsmuir Dancers to SCD on the US West Coast when it is recognized that its main contact person is the ubiquitous Ron Wallace himself. This might explain why the Dunsmuir Dancers have a performance reputation that goes far beyond the borders of the United States.

All of which still raises the question ... who or what is Linnea? Well, I find there is no shortage of families and businesses named Linnea in California. Maybe Linnea's Hardware is on the Dunsmuir main street. Perhaps I'll hear more on this question from SCDers somewhere in California.

Meanwhile, you owe it to yourself to check out this intriguing strathspey. It is quite a tricky one with what is described in the Strathspey Server as a "chaperoned chain progression".

Linnea's Strathspey has surfaced on one or two RSCDS Toronto programs recently, latterly on the South Simcoe SCD Christmas Dance. I for one am hoping we will all have further opportunities in the near future to sample Tim Wilson's clever work as the deviser of *Linnea's Strathspey*. ■



Tim Wilson

Waverley (Fergus Mclver) 056- February, 2013 [video](#)

J. Pettie's illustration for the 1893 edition of Scott's *Waverley*.

Glaswegians may surmise that this will be the story of a vessel that sails regularly up and down the Firth of Clyde, perhaps from the Broomielaw, loaded with day-trippers. Called *Waverley*, it is said to be the last remaining passenger-carrying paddle wheel steamer in existence. No... I'm talking about a different Waverley! I did that story quite some time ago in connection with a piece about *The Rothesay Rant*.

Those of us familiar with the works of Sir Walter Scott will be well aware of his series of novels about Edward Waverley, an officer in the English army of the Hanoverian king, George II. Edward is posted to Perthshire but ultimately finds himself involved in the 1745 Jacobite unpleasanties. It transpires that Edward's family has Jacobite tendencies and in consequence is unsupportive of the king, who in any event was far from popular with English citizens at large.

In due course, Waverley finds himself drawn into the Jacobite cause. Needless to say, the charms of a young lady named Rose also come into play. The developing intrigue

takes Edward into the realm of Clan Mac-Ivor, whose Chief, Fergus, is active in fomenting the upcoming rebellion...hence the parenthetical inclusion of Fergus Mclver in the dance name. Incidentally, the correct clan name as far as I can tell is MacIver, not Mclver or even Mac-Ivor as is indicated in written outlines of the book.

There's much more to the story for you to check. It is likely available among the classics at your local book store...but what about the dance itself? It is one of those sometimes tiring 48 bar jigs...starts with a chase (meh!) but includes a foot-tangling move in which one transitions from a poussette into double triangles. It is on the upcoming Tartan Ball program so we hope that you will have found the determination and fortitude to try it first.

It is not clear who devised the thing. It appeared in RSCDS Book 15, which would take it back several decades or so. There is a reference to Messrs. Button and Whitaker, London music publishers in the early 19th century.

Finally, for those who wish they could avoid the poussette/double triangles entanglement, Hugh Foss did devise a dance called *Fugal Fergus* which is a variation on *Waverley* that might be considered less challenging. ■



Scott Memorial, Edinburgh

Saltire Society Reel 057- March, 2013 [video](#)

Hmm! A Saltire! I'll bet that many of you thought it was just a flag, and it's not a Gaelic word either. In fact, saltire is a heraldic word that means "an ordinary in the form of a St. Andrew's (or St. Patrick's) cross, formed by a bend and a bend sinister crossing each other". For those of you who might be into heraldry, there's nothing ordinary or sinister (leftwards) about that! But those white diagonal crosses on the blue background of the flag of St. Andrew don't seem bent to me.

When I was a lad in the Boy Scouts, I was taught all about the Union Jack of Great Britain, and how it was made up of three flags superimposed on each other, with the flag of St. George of England (red cross/white background) at the base, and the flag of St. Andrew of Scotland (white diagonal cross/blue background), and the flag of St. Patrick of Ireland (red diagonal cross/white background) one on top of the other. And a right colourful mixture it is too! I'm not sure I was ever conscious of the word saltire until I found myself surrounded by folks with Scottish ancestry after becoming married to a Glaswegian. What an awful admission to have to make! I mean the Saltire not the marriage!

After a few shots at the *Saltire Society Reel* on the dance floor, I became somewhat more alert to the word's significance. I learned that there is indeed a Saltire Society

The Diamond Jubilee 058- April, 2013 [video](#)

What a great idea, finally, to feature this excellent jig called *The Diamond Jubilee* at the April Monthly Dance, following all the celebrations surrounding last year's 60th anniversary of the reign of Queen Elizabeth II throughout the UK and Commonwealth. What with medals being awarded to dancers we know (see below), it would be hard not to be aware of the significance of the event. . . Royalist beliefs or not!

But what's this? I look again and see that *The Diamond Jubilee* dance first appeared in RSCDS Book 31, and that was published way back in 1984. Also appended to the dance name in some quarters was reference to the 60-year stretch from 1923 to 1983. So. . . to which royal personage could that time span refer? It certainly wasn't the Queen or her father King George VI. He came to the throne long after 1923 and died in 1952. While there's no shortage in Europe of royal families (in waiting!), we don't keep track of them with the same adulation with which some follow the activities of the Windsors.

Does 1923 perhaps ring some other form of bell as the start of something big? Well, of course, we knew all the time, didn't we? It was in 1923 that two forthright Scottish ladies, Jean Milligan and Ysobel Stewart of Fasnaclloch, decided to found the Scottish Country Dance Society, the reasons for which have been adequately documented in these pages in the past. The Royal addition to this Society's name came later in the fifties with the strong support of the aforementioned Queen Elizabeth II who, in her day, was quite an accomplished Scottish country dancer. Needless to say, we all continue to be the beneficiaries of that important day in 1923.



perhaps doing double duty with the more well-known St. Andrew's Society... but did you know this? These two august bodies have actually been in the process of merger deliberations, seemingly having common objectives, such as restoring Scotland to its proper place as a creative force in European civilization... and how do you like that positioning?



I would suspect that Mr. Alex Salmond, currently Scotland's First Minister and leader of the Scottish National Party, would be quite encouraged by the combined work of both the Saltire Society and the St. Andrew's Society, especially in his efforts toward an Independence Referendum in late 2014.

Now! Now! Enough of the politics! But just think tongue-in-cheek of how the Union Jack would look minus the blue background and white diagonal saltire... nothing but red and white. And what flag does that remind one of? ■

Back to the dance! *The Diamond Jubilee* was devised by one Robert Campbell of the Oakville Scottish Country Dancers. That's Ontario's Oakville, folks, just down the QEW from Toronto. Robert likely would have been quite well known to a number of RSCDS Toronto dancers, especially the veterans.

It is my opinion about *The Diamond Jubilee* that this jig has a lovely flow and is well recommended as a selection for the April Monthly Dance. ■

Linda Ashe Argent Awarded Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal



Linda (in red) is seen here with the Honourable Dave Levac, Speaker of the Ontario Legislative Assembly, Special Olympics athletes Matthew and Tatum, and Garfield Dunlop MPP, Simcoe North

Linda Ashe Argent of Hawkestone recently taught the Toronto Workshop. She's been awarded the prestigious Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal for her outstanding contributions to the Special Olympics Movement. As Linda is fond of saying: It's all about legacy folks!

The Gardeners' Fantasia 059- May, 2013 [video](#)



At the outset, let me admit that I had barely heard of this dance out of RSCDS Book 46 until I saw it included in the West Toronto Ball program for May 11, 2013. Throughout my adult life, I have masqueraded as a gardener of sorts, which over the years in southern Ontario has presented plenty of problems, usually weather-related. So when this three-couple strathspey known as *The Gardeners' Fantasia* surfaced as a program selection, I was hooked.

As I guess many of us may know, "fantasia" seems to have been a coined word used by the Walt Disney organization to celebrate a film by the same name launched in the 1940s. The film was an animated presentation (Mickey Mouse and all) of quite a number of well-known classical music works played by the Philadelphia Orchestra under the baton of Maestro Leopold Stokowski. I am given to understand it had a mesmerizing effect on its audiences, and although it was never awarded an Oscar, did receive a great deal of special accolades...a fantasia indeed.

But a gardeners' fantasy? And/or a connection to Scottish country dancing? Beats me! The dance was devised by a lady or gentleman named P. Cook, and I'd be grateful if someone somewhere could enlighten me as to the full identity of Mr., Mrs., Ms, or Dr. P. Cook. Just for the record, you know!

The Castle of Mey 060- June, 2013 [video](#)

Participants at last month's West Toronto Ball would have had the pleasure of dancing one of the six dances included in the *Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Book*. By name, *The Castle of Mey*, this 32-bar reel, was devised by John Walton of RSCDS Hamilton, Ontario. Commencing with Inveran reels, this is a neat little dance of which we are sure John is justifiably proud.

Of interest to me was that the castle of Mey itself, actually had more to do with Queen Elizabeth II's mother. In the several years that I have been subjecting *Set&Link* readers to geographical stories in *WHAT'S IN A NAME?*, spreading outwards from my early review of *Niedpath Castle* in the Border country, I have only once before ventured as far afield as Caithness. That was a couple of years ago when I covered *The Ferry Louper*, about mainland non-Viking visitors to the Orkneys.

The Castle of Mey is now the most northerly inhabited castle on the British mainland, located just west of John o' Groats. HM Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother, visited the castle while she was mourning the 1952 death of her husband King George VI, and later decided to purchase the estate which was at the point of being abandoned. Built in the 1500s, seemingly as a holding of Clan Sinclair, the castle's name was changed from Mey to Barrogill.



John Walton

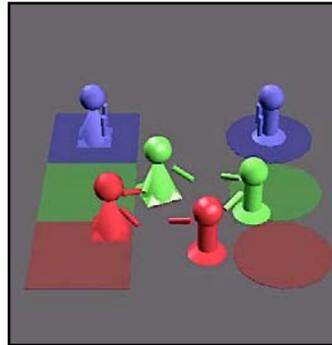
Under the Queen Mother's guidance, the castle and its gardens were vastly improved — to the point that the Scottish Tourist Board ranks it as one of the

most attractive locations for visitors. It enjoys a consistent Five Star Rating. The Queen Mother also changed the castle's name back to Mey. Perhaps she wished to be known as "Queen of the Mey" (groan!) There is a village of Mey close by, although I can find no information about its derivation. Maybe rather than Gaelic, Mey is Norse in origin like the inhabitants of the nearby Orkney Islands.



The gardens and castle of Mey

As we may well remember, The Queen Mother, who died a centenarian in 2002 at the age of 101, is more closely associated with Glamis Castle near Forfar in Angus, but she should always be recognized for bravery in the 1940s by publicly refusing to leave London with her children during the devastation of the wartime "blitz". As she said at the time... "The children won't go without me. I won't leave the King. And the King will never leave." Well, that's it, folks! I'll be back in September to share more *WHAT'S IN A NAME?* stories with everyone. ■



Wait! I do have a final thought. As I investigated this dance, I came upon an intriguing new method of demonstrating SCD on YouTube. It's called DancieMaetion. No, that is not a typo! DancieMaetion is a process to create animated characters that perform Scottish country dances along with a voiceover. There is an animation for *The Gardeners' Fantasia*. I recommend you check it out. You might well like it! ■

[DancieMaetion animations are created by Linda Mae Dennis of RSCDS Southwest Washington State. Visit: <http://dancieMaetion.imaginationprocessing.com/DM2.php>]



The Roselath Cross 061- October, 2013 [video](#)

Somewhat intrigued by the name of this dance, I whipped out my old copy of RSCDS Book 41 (The Millennium Edition) which was issued in 2000. You may well recall Y2K and all those dire warnings of computers crashing and such, which really never came to pass.

The Roselath Cross was devised circa 1998 as a 32-bar jig, by a dancer named Henrietta Vosper, who, at that time, I believe, lived in Saltash nearby the city of Plymouth in Devonshire, southwest England. That said, Book 41 does indicate that Henrietta was a member of RSCDS Cornwall, and that the Roselath Cross is an old preaching cross just outside the Cornish village of Lanlivery on The Saints Way, which is a centuries-old footpath traversing Cornwall between the fishing ports of Padstow on the Atlantic to the northwest and Fowey on the English Channel to the southeast.

Over the many years that I have been struggling with this monthly quasi-literate voyage of discovery in *Set&Link* under the appellation WHAT'S IN A NAME?, I cannot remember having ventured south below Hadrian's Wall in recent times, even though there must exist hundreds of Scottish country dances whose names reflect the life and times and geography of "Jolly Old England". In any event, Cornwall is a little bit special in that both its culture and background are every bit as Celtic as Wales, The Isle of Man, and Brittany — never mind Scotland and Ireland.

Keppoch's Rant 062- November, 2013 [video](#)

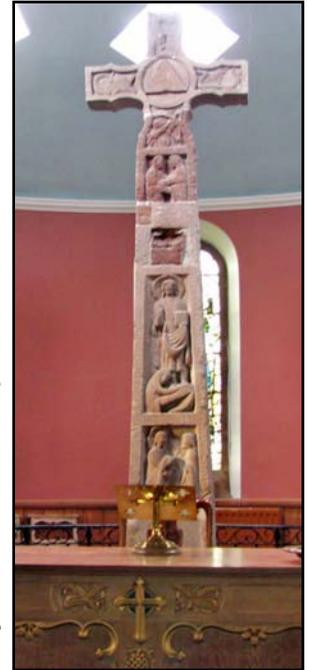
Keppoch? Now there's a word that I have not heard before. I am reminded that there still exists an abundance of Scottish history and culture with which I am still insufficiently acquainted. What do I find? Keppoch seems to be a derivation of the Gaelic word *Ceapaich*, which translates simply as "a plot of land". My further findings tie Keppoch to Clan Donald, in that the MacDonalds of Keppoch earned historic renown as a branch of that clan.

It all seems to go back to one Alasdair Carragh (in Gaelic: pillar of strength), although he was more frequently known by the less salubrious surname Carrach, which means "scruffy". Alasdair seems to be closely associated with the founding of the Keppoch MacDonalds, and was a grandson of King Robert II, the first of the Stewart kings, who brought about what I have seen described in historical references as "evil consequences" and "a heritage of woe on Scotland" because of his many conjugal relationships. They resulted in Robert siring 21 offspring who in turn were said to be responsible for numerous subsequent problems in maintaining a royal line of succession. Worth noting is that the current Chief of Keppoch challenges the accuracy of these past historic references and is in the process of having them rewritten.

Getting down to brass tacks (Cockney rhyming slang for "the facts", in case you didn't know!), The Saints Way is now a very popular and well-signposted 40 km coast-to-coast Cornish hiking trail. It was resurrected in 1986 after years of neglect but may well go back aeons to the Bronze Age as an aid to early traders. It was also the probable route of early Christian priests making their way from Ireland to the continent.

The name Roselath is more difficult to pin down. In the aforementioned village of Lanlivery there is also an abandoned 17th century farmhouse by that name, plus some holiday cottages. But not to worry! For those readers making it to Cornwall in the not-too-distant future, it is a charming part of the UK that, from experience, I guarantee you will love.

Meanwhile, why not come out to the RSCDS Toronto Monthly Dance on October 5 and enjoy dancing *The Roselath Cross*. Then you will be prepared for its additional appearance at next February's Tartan Ball. ■



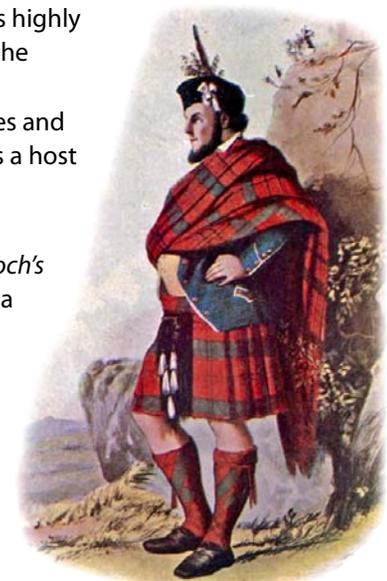
All of which is to say that a history of the Keppochs is highly complex but may well be somewhat fanciful. Despite the foregoing, the MacDonalds of Keppoch were staunch supporters of Scottish independence over the centuries and spilled much blood at Bannockburn and Culloden plus a host of battles in between.

Now let's get back to the dance...

Puzzling to me is that while one might expect *Keppoch's Rant* to be a lively dance, it is in fact a strathspey. I am a little bemused as to how that can be. My trusty *OED* defines a rant as a "high-flown, extravagant, or bombastic speech or utterance".

To rant is "to rave or talk foolishly". My *Dictionary of Scots Dialect* includes the word "ranty" to mean lively, cheerful, or gay. These are words to describe a strathspey? Could it be that the Keppoch MacDonalds, much like the Robertsons whose strathspey is also described as a rant, are in fact a far more sober, restrained group of Highlanders than we might expect?

Whatever, you can give it a shot at the RSCDS Toronto Monthly Afternoon Dance on November 9, 2013. But if you do, please try to inject some extra life into it! ■



MacDonald of Keppoch

Miss Johnstone of Ardrossan 063- December, 2013 [video](#)

Every organization seems to have its icons. . . and RSCDS is no exception! Sure, we have all heard of Miss Milligan, whose richly deserved reputation as the co-founder and key re-awakener of Scottish country dancing, not only in Scotland but eventually all around the world, enabled the development of a traditional but wonderful style of dancing. Scottish country dancing has provided millions of people, Scots and others, with such happiness and joie de vivre. Our debt to Miss Milligan is beyond question. Yet, numerous others over the past few decades have built on Miss Milligan's passion, and helped to further many aspects of the dancing that we all cherish.

Miss Johnstone of Ardrossan, Muriel by name, is such a person. This Ayrshire lassie made her connection with RSCDS as a child in Saltcoats, which is one of three towns along with Ardrossan and Stevenston that seems to form a mini metropolis overlooking the Firth of Clyde between Largs and Ayr. An accomplished pianist, Muriel Johnstone spent many years juggling her commitments between playing and dancing. She became an accredited SCD teacher, yet continued to develop her pianistic skill in working with other musicians for the enhancement and evolution of that special music that "showed us how" to better enjoy the steps and formations of Scottish country dancing.

Ailsa Craig 064- January, 2014 [video](#)

Though it's hardly breaking news, recently I noticed a news item, in the *New York Times* of all places, about the island of Ailsa Craig and the ongoing attempts of Archibald Kennedy, its owner, to sell it to anyone who cares to make an offer of more than a million and a half pounds sterling. It so happens that Archibald is not only a Scottish peer, the 8th Marquess of Ailsa, but he's also the hereditary Chief of Clan Kennedy.

As many will know, Ailsa Craig is a chunk of granite that juts forth from the waters of the Firth of Clyde to a height of over 1000 feet, about 10 miles west of the Ayrshire coast. Actually, it is the cone of a long-extinct volcano. My reason for selecting the now uninhabited Ailsa Craig for this article is that it is also the name of a strathspey devised over 40 years ago by one Eric Forbes for inclusion in the *Birmingham Book* 1973. Perhaps Mr. Forbes might be what Brits call colloquially a "brummie".

While I cannot recall ever having seen this dance on a program ... much less attempted to dance it ... maybe it merits fresh attention as a strathspey in celebration of the sport of curling. Why curling? Well, let's learn more about the island!

The geological formation of Ailsa Craig includes a very rare form of granite called riebeckite (aka "Ailsite") used to make curling stones. Enthusiastic curlers everywhere will likely recognize the name Kays of Scotland, a manufacturer of curling stones based in the town of



Muriel's bio states that among her pastimes, composition is a favourite, borne out by an estimate that there are now over 1000 Muriel Johnstone tunes. There is also a musical label under Muriel's direction called "Scotscores" that now owns as many as 25 CDs of her music and has published eight musical books. It gave me a chuckle to read a comment of Muriel's that in her travels, "I have met and wrestled with many strange and wondrous piano-shaped objects that resolutely refuse to help one sound like the musician you are supposed to be".

It would be great to encourage SCD teachers to give Muriel at least an honourable mention when playing her music. Her arrangements do sound quite different from our own well known Bobby Brown recordings, especially since our teachers often identify outstanding dance devisors like Roy Goldring, who by the way designed one of my preferred five couple dances called ... can't you guess? ... *Miss Johnstone of Ardrossan*. This is a lovely, smooth-flowing reel that is always a pleasure to dance, recognizing as it does an icon of SCD music as celebrated by another SCD icon in dance devising. ■

<https://scotscores.com>



Muriel Johnstone

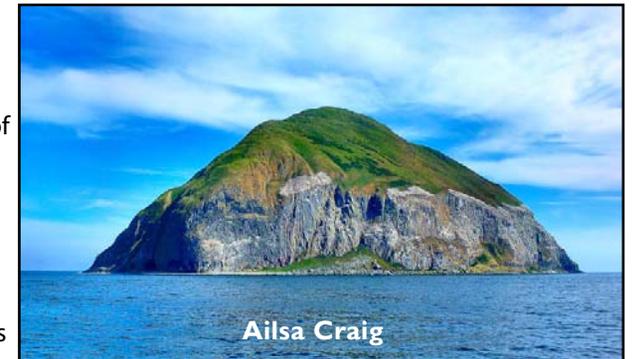
Mauchline which lies between Ayr and Kilmarnock.

For many years, Lord Ailsa, the Marquess himself, leased parts of Ailsa Craig to Kays for the purpose of extracting the granite, shipping it to the mainland, and then turning it into curling stones. A few decades ago quarry blasting was disallowed and the extraction

process became overly expensive. Within the same time frame, the island became a bird sanctuary and now its populated by thousands of gulls, gannets, kittiwakes, and other seabirds, under the aegis of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

Even so, Kays' website still talks optimistically about ongoing negotiations with Lord Ailsa for the continued extraction of granite for future curling stone production. Ailsa Craig stones have been used in the last five Olympic Winter Games and are expected to be evident in the forthcoming Sochi Games.

Little wonder that *Ailsa Craig* warrants its very own Scottish country dance. ■



Ailsa Craig

Clutha 065- February, 2014 [video](#)

Two or three years ago, when I was visiting Glasgow for the umpteenth time, I happened to be strolling along Clyde Street with one of my friends. The street runs along the north side of the river and is actually an extension “from the Broomielaw”. We had just visited St. Andrew’s Catholic Cathedral and decided that it might be timely for a wee dram. So where to go? And there, looking right at us at the end of the street, was an attractive hostelry, and what do you know... it was called “The Clutha”. So in we went!

As many will know, *Clutha* is no stranger to Scottish country dancing. It’s a 48-bar reel for 4 couples in a square set formation, and was published in RSCDS Book 31, just over 30 years ago. Unfortunately, its devisor seems to have remained anonymous. Even more unfortunately, I don’t think it gets programmed very often... so, many of our newer dancers may not yet have had the pleasure of working through *Clutha*.

Truth be known, I have a personal recollection of tackling *Clutha* for the first time quite a number of years ago. I was an afternoon guest at a SCD group in the community of Sechelt located on the Sunshine Coast of British Columbia. I’ve never had the chance to do it since!

Sechelt is quite some distance from the pub on Glasgow’s Clyde Street. But I doubt it will come as any surprise for many readers to learn that Clutha derives from *Abhainn Cluaidh*, which is Gaelic for the third longest river in Scotland... to wit, the Clyde.

Time was, the Clyde was the absolute key to Glasgow’s early commercial success because of the growth of both the tobacco and cotton trades as imports from the Americas. At the same time, there was a bit of a problem in that, within the city, the

Upper Clyde was too shallow and a lot of the aforementioned merchandise had to be unloaded at down-stream ports like Greenock, then moved by smaller vessels into Glasgow’s industrial area.

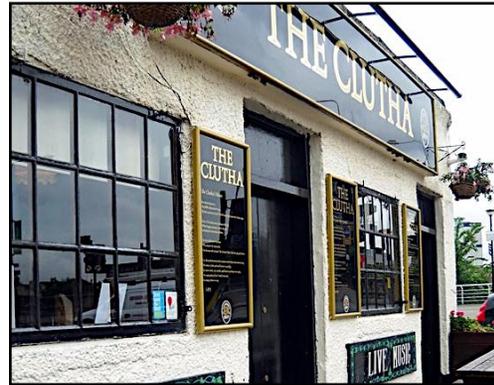
In due course, this problem was rectified by dredging, which had the additional benefit of helping the city to become a major shipbuilding location. Otherwise, the construction of vessels like the *Queen Mary*, the *QE2*, and the *Royal Yacht Britannia* might have had to be undertaken at other locations such as Belfast where *Titanic* was built... but hopefully with less disastrous consequences.

Because of economic factors, much of this activity is now gone, and just about all that remains from the shipbuilding era is a single lonely derrick as a memorial. However, the Clyde Waterfront Regeneration Project has been responsible for the construction of a

host of new recreational and cultural amenities in the old docklands.

Coming full circle, there is a recent piece of sad news about that Clyde Street neighbourhood. In late November, a helicopter belonging to the Glasgow City Police lost power due to an apparent fuel problem, and crashed through the roof of a local pub, resulting in the death of seven patrons as well as three crew members.

The local pub? Yes, it was The Clutha! ■



The River Cree 066- March, 2014 [crib](#)

Robbie Burns’ Day has come and gone; the 2014 Tartan Ball is a warm glow in the mists of time, and spring might well be just around the corner. So what’s next? Well, let’s consider the March Monthly Dance in which we can give recognition to all those newcomers in our Beginner classes and have them feel right at home as members of RSCDS Toronto.

As ever, it is a less complex program and features among other dances a very danceable 32-bar jig called *The River Cree*. I’ve never heard of it before, but it does seem to sound like a bit of Canadiana. After all, there are over 200,000 First Nations folk among the Cree tribe, mostly inhabiting the north and west areas of Canada. In fact, just to the west of Edmonton, there is a facility at Enoch, Alberta, right in the middle of an aboriginal Reservation. It is called the River Cree Resort & Casino, even if there does not seem to be a river around there. Scottish country dancing? It is to wonder!

But wait a minute! I notice that this jig, *The River Cree*, was published in RSCDS Book 8, in 1932. It’s nearly as old as I am! Maybe I’d better go back to the drawing board and restart this exercise.

Does another River Cree exist elsewhere? Ah! Now I see! There is indeed a River Cree in southwest Scotland in the Dumfries & Galloway Region. If you are on your way on the

A75 to Stranraer, intent on catching the ferry to Ireland, you’ll likely cross over the Cree at a small town called Newton Stewart. The river rises in Loch Moan in the Galloway National Forest, and lazily dipsy-doodles its way down to the sea, with its estuary emptying into the Solway Firth at Wigtown.

Immortalized by Robbie Burns in one of his poems, *The Flowery Banks of Cree*, the river is well known for its fishing, especially rarer species such as Sparling, a form of European Smelt.

Now, it is easier to realize why the Cree is memorialized in an old Scottish country dance. That said, I doubt whether one will find any Cree or other First Nations people there. The locals are all far more likely to be of Celtic ancestry. ■



Bridge Over the River Cree at Newton Stewart, Dumfries & Galloway, Scotland

Circassian Circle 067- April, 2014 videos: [Orkney style](#) [Book 1 style](#)

A while ago, I was asked by an RSCDS Toronto teacher what I knew about the name "Circassian". Beyond the fact, as many of us know, that *Circassian Circle* is a round-the-room reel that had originally surfaced in RSCDS Book 1 in the 1920s, I had to admit that I thought that Circassia was a country that had existed somewhere in the Middle East a few centuries back. To this admission, she suggested that I research the name . . . as it might be timely to do so!

Intrigued by her suggestion, I bore down on it. The first thing I remembered was a scene from the 1962 film *Lawrence of Arabia*, which I am sure many readers will also have seen, perhaps more than once, it having secured numerous Oscars. The scene that came to mind went as follows. Lawrence, played by Peter O'Toole, had been captured by the Turks in a WW1 scenario, and Lawrence, in Arab dress, was being interrogated by the local Turkish Bey, played by Jose Ferrer. Ferrer? Remember Toulouse-Lautrec in the movie, *Moulin Rouge*? The very one! The Bey had it in mind that Lawrence was a British spy, and questioned his pale



Peter O'Toole
in *Lawrence of Arabia*

The Queen City Salute 068- May, 2014 [video](#)

Participants in the April Monthly Dance will have had the enjoyment of sampling *The Queen City Salute*, a well-crafted 64-bar medley. It is a strathspey/reel combo that concludes with a lovely formation called the Serpentine.

But what is the provenance of this royal salute? In Canada, there are three queenly cities reaching from coast to coast with a third directionally in the middle . . . provincial capitals all. We have Victoria, BC, in the west, Charlottetown, PEI, in the east (Charlotte was the missus of King George II), and Regina, SK (Latin word for 'queen' as most of us know), kind of in the middle. Scottish country dancing seems to thrive in all three. Is this Salute for one of them?

Maybe not, because in Hyde Park, London, there is a reach of water called the Serpentine, and a short stroll down Constitution Hill from there brings one to Buckingham Palace, home of Her Majesty. HM Queen Elizabeth II is, of course, Patron of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society and in her day was an accomplished dancer. Is London the Queen City at issue?

Well, as the expression goes . . . none of the above! The Queen City of this dance happens to be Cincinnati, a mid-western US city on the banks of the Ohio River where Scottish country dancing is apparently alive and well. Let's see now. Did I spell that correctly? One N, then two Ns and one T. That's it! And why is Cincinnati referred to as the Queen City?



G. Dale Birdsall

complexion. How did Lawrence answer that question? "Because I am a Circassian!" he exclaimed. It is over 50 years ago that I first enjoyed that movie. Yet the scene sprang immediately to mind! Go figure!

If one is or was a Circassian, then where exactly is home? And why is this information likely to be timely, as my informant had suggested? Here's what I found. Circassia was located in what is now Russia on the north-east shore of the Black Sea due east of the Crimean Peninsula, which in itself is certainly topical as I write. But wait! There's more! Descendants of the old Circassians consider the capital of their aged state to be a city called Sochi, where, as everyone knows, the 2014 Winter Olympics have recently ended. Now! Is that timely enough for you?

This fact still leaves us with a loose end. From whence does a Scottish-Circassian connection materialize? Well, scholars specializing in Russian history can give you reams of chapter and verse about such connections going back to the 16th century. They are far more complex to recount than time and space permit here. Simply put, *Circassian Circle* is not just a Scottish country dance. More precisely, it is an international folk dance known in many other parts of the world.

Indeed, there does exist a folk dance troupe in that part of Russia called Circassian Circle. It might well be based in Sochi. ■

PS: The RSCDS Toronto teacher who gave me this lead? Thank you, Barbara Taylor.

It is said to originate with Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's poem *Catawba Wine* (memorializing the city's vineyards) in which he referred to Cincinnati as "... the Queen of the West, / In her garlands dressed. / On the banks of the Beautiful River."

As it happens, I have quite a personal familiarity with Cincinnati. It is the international headquarters of a multi-national marketing corporation of consumer products called Procter & Gamble (that's "er" not "or") for which I toiled throughout my Canadian business life. Prior to retirement, I spent many happy hours there . . . and some a little less so.

Way back, there was a Roman aristocrat named Cincinnatus who in his day (around the year 460 BC) was a paragon of civic virtue on whom this US city was modelled many centuries later. And the Serpentine? Guess what? Cincinnati has a tourist attraction along the Ohio River bank. It is called the Serpentine Wall.

Finally, who should be credited for this interesting medley? The dance was devised by one G. Dale Birdsall, a Montrealer originally, who I believe moved to the US and settled in Cincinnati. *The Queen City Salute* was published in Volume 2 of RSCDS Book 37 (*Frae A' The Airts*), which I guess would be some time in the early 1990s. ■



The Serpentine Wall, Yeatman's Park, Cincinnati

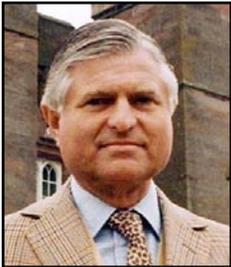
Niel Gow's Farewell to Whisky 069- June, 2014 [video](#)

This unusual 48-bar reel was on the April 2014 Annual General Meeting program. What an intriguing title! The dance appeared in RSCDS Book 34, published in 1986, although the tune actually dates back to 1799, attributed apparently to Niel Gow himself. At first blush, from the title, and the opening lyrics to the tune (picture caption, right) one might presume that Niel had found himself unfortunately having to "go on the wagon" from a surfeit of *usquebaugh*, so to speak, especially since a further stanza in the tune's lyrics says... "yet the doctors they do agree, that whisky's no the drink for me."

Before we jump to any conclusions, however, let's pay heed to a horrific event, at least to some. In 1799, the barley crop in Scotland failed, the harvest being so poor that no barley was permitted to be used for distilling. As confirmed in writing by Niel's son Nathaniel several years later, the tune does allude to prohibiting the making of whisky in 1799. It is expressive of a Highlander's sorrow on being deprived of his favourite beverage.

All that said, who was Niel Gow? Is the spelling of Niel a typo?

Born in 1727, the infant Gow was christened by his parents as indicated: Niel – not Neil or Neal! While his father was a plaid weaver by trade, Niel started fiddling, as in violin playing, at the age of nine and quickly became competent with the bow and ultimately, he came to enjoy the patronage of the Dukes of Atholl.

Earl of Mansfield 070- September, 2014 [video](#)

William David Mungo
James Murray,
Earl of Mansfield

About 5 or 6 years ago the current President of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society, Dr. Alastair MacFadyen, took office. He succeeded a Scottish nobleman named William David Mungo James Murray, the 8th Earl of Mansfield, who had served as President of the RSCDS with distinction for over 30 years.

As with many important persons involved with RSCDS over the years, ultimately having a dance devised in one's name is virtually standard procedure. It fell to Aberdonian John Drewry, a prolific dance devising icon within RSCDS, to put together a 4x48 reel to celebrate the Earl's presidential performance. That was back in 1980, when the Earl had been appointed Minister of State to the

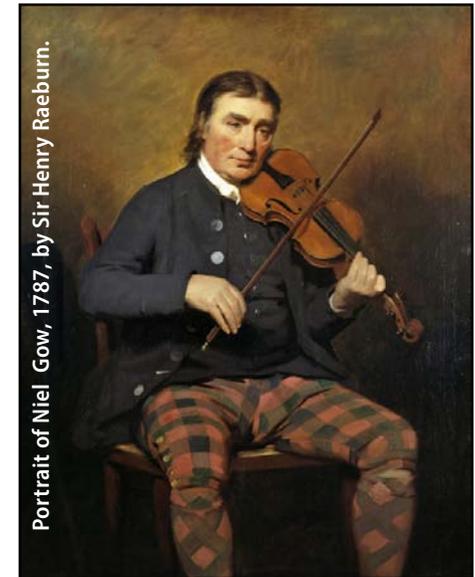
UK Parliament's Scottish Office. But why get into this now?

Well, it so happens, as film buffs will know, that a British film called *Belle* was released recently. The stimulus for this film was a beautiful painting commissioned in 1779 by a British aristocrat to hang at his home, Kenwood House, one of Britain's stately homes, which is situated close by Hampstead Heath in North London. The aristocrat? William Murray, the 1st Earl of Mansfield and, of course, an ancestor of the 8th Earl. This ancestor happened to be Lord Chief Justice of England at the time.

As well as playing the fiddle, Niel composed many beautiful Scottish airs. Even though he barely knew how to read music, he has been credited with dozens of compositions. Robbie Burns himself was present at a concert given by Niel. Robbie took such a fancy to one of Niel's tunes called *Loch Erroch Side* that he secured a copy and set his *Address to a Woodlark* to Niel's music.

Niel's life came to an end in 1807 at the age of 80. He is buried in the churchyard of Little Dunkeld Kirk. His epitaph:

TIME AND GOW ARE EVEN NOW
GOW BEAT TIME, NOW TIME'S BEAT GOW. ■



Portrait of Niel Gow, 1787, by Sir Henry Raeburn.

**You've surely heard o' famous Niel,
The man that played the fiddle weel,
I wat he was a canty chiel',
And dearly lo'ed the whiskey, O!**

The painting is a likeness of a young lady named Dido Belle. She was a member of the Kenwood household. Born in the West Indies of mixed race, Dido was the daughter of Mansfield's nephew. The film also involves legal issues concerning slavery, and Mansfield, the 1st Earl, was required to rule on a very significant slavery insurance case in England's Court of King's Bench. In the decision, Mansfield ruled against the litigant, a ruling that was seen to contribute to the abolition of slavery in Britain.

Some critics of the film have questioned its historical accuracy. The painting was traditionally attributed to Johann Zoffany, but the attribution has been refuted. However, the work does exist and apparently can be found at Scone Palace in Perthshire.

Interesting for us as Ontarians is that the film actually made its debut at the Toronto International Film Festival last September and features veteran English actor Tom Wilkinson as the 1st Earl of Mansfield and introduces Gugu Mbatha-Raw as Belle. ■



Dido Belle with her cousin Elizabeth Murray. Painting formerly attributed to Johann Zoffany. (Wikipedia)

Glastonbury Tor 071- October, 2014 [video](#)

Steeped in mystery and mythology, Glastonbury is well worth a visit, should one be spending any vacation time within reach of the English county of Somerset (if you lived there you'd call it Zummerzet!). One would find it interesting to go there, not just to see its Tor, but to savour the Arthurian mystique of that area — which was certainly my experience when I visited there about 20 years ago. Of course, I refer to the legendary King Arthur. Remember his sword Excalibur, the Knights of the Round Table, and the search for the Holy Grail? Easy to reach, Glastonbury is just a few clicks south of the Roman city of Bath. The M5 motorway is also close by, giving you a quick southerly connection to Devon and Cornwall, or north to Birmingham.

So, a tor? What's that? Generally speaking, tor is a Middle English word meaning a high rocky hill or crag. In my birth county of Derbyshire, in the Peak District, there are tors all over the place, and being somewhat archaic, the word appears frequently in British crossword puzzles.

But Glastonbury Tor is particularly noteworthy. First, it is conical in appearance and has terraced sides that have been traced in origin back to the Neolithic Era, which is very much BCE, indicating that in the days of early humans, it probably hosted a fort, continuing into the Iron Age. And those people may well have been Celtic in origin. But there's more! On the Tor's summit is a solitary 14th century tower. St Michael's Tower is thought to be all that remains of a medieval church.



Duncan Brown

What's the connection with the King Arthur myth? Glastonbury is also the site of a ruined abbey. Within the abbey walls have been found ancient oak coffins with markings indicating they held the bones of both King Arthur and his Queen Guinevere. Unsurprisingly, the nearby ruins of medieval Cadbury Castle have long been thought to be the location of King Arthur's Court of Camelot. Fortunately, for both the UK and visiting tourists, the whole area is managed by the National Trust, which takes exceedingly good care of all such national treasures.



St Michael's Tower / Glastonbury Tor

Back to the dance! *Glastonbury Tor* is a 32-bar reel introduced not long ago in RSCDS Book 47. It was devised by Duncan Brown, a dance teacher who was the first Chairman of RSCDS Exeter in Devonshire and was instrumental in the founding of that Branch in 1969. Who remembers *The Chequered Court* of a few years ago? Another of Duncan's efforts!

Participants in the RSCDS Toronto October Monthly Dance will have the opportunity to dance this reel. I am sure you will enjoy it. ■

Autumn in Appin 072- November, 2014 [video](#)

After reading Carole Bell's excellent front page piece in last month's *Set&Link* covering the death of John Drewry, one of RSCDS' most creative dance devisors, my mind was clear that the next dance I researched for this column would be a Drewry dance.

I must admit that I initially gravitated to the quite intriguing *Didgeridoos of Dunvegan*. What? Australian aboriginals on Skye? Not likely, but of course, there's a community called Dunvegan in New South Wales, Australia. I abandoned that idea and settled on John's well-crafted strathspey, *Autumn in Appin*.

For me, this dance has several factors going for it. Firstly, it is one of John's classics. Secondly, by the time you read this you will have probably experienced a good Ontario autumn (which to me is a lovelier word than "fall"), even though you may be anxiously awaiting the coming winter's first ice storm.

Thirdly, the region of Appin is of significant importance to The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society. Mrs Ysobel Stewart, co-founder of the organization with Miss Jean Milligan back in 1923 (it wasn't Royal until later), lived at Fasnacloch, an estate, located in Argyll, within a district that's generally known as Appin. For those who remember, RSCDS Toronto's veteran member Donald Holmes (Newtonbrook Social Group) wrote a fine account of Ysobel Stewart's life in the February 2008 issue of *Set&Link*.

How to find Appin? Should you ever be in Oban and decide to drive north alongside Loch Linnhe to Fort William on the A828, you will pass through the village of Appin.

Although Ysobel died in 1963, I learned that there was a memorial event for her in the early '80s that John Drewry may have attended. The outstanding beauty of the surrounding region, known as the Lynn of Lorne Scenic Area, apparently had a significant impact on John. *Autumn in Appin* is the result.

Although John Drewry was virtually a life-long Aberdonian, being an academic at the University, he was actually born in the Leicestershire town of Melton Mowbray. I wonder if he enjoyed the taste of English pork pies, because that's what the town is famous for. That said, he went on to devise hundreds of dances, including *The Silver Tassie*. In that strathspey, he introduced a new formation that led to him being called "Mr. Rondel" by RSCDS' other co-founder, Jean Milligan. May he rest in peace. ■



Castle Stalker, in Appin, at the top of the Lynn of Lorne, was built by the Stewarts in the mid-15th century. It appeared as *The Castle of Aaaaarrrrrrggghhh* in the final scene of *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*.

The Fife Hunt 073- December, 2014 [video](#)

Here's a dance of which I had little previous knowledge. Nor did it even cross my mind that fox hunting, or "riding to hounds" as they call it, would have a following in Scotland. I had always associated this sometimes grisly "sport" with the English gentry, at least until it was more or less banned by *The Hunting Act 2004*.

But I live and learn! Not only is The Fife Hunt a 200-year-old organization with interests in fox hunting, breeding of hounds, teaching horsemanship to young people, and enjoying convivial events like The Fife Hunt Ball, but some age-old and apparently unknown SCD devisor came up with a 32-bar reel, which in time found its way into *Miss Milligan's Miscellany*.

Why select this dance now? Two reasons! One, *The Fife Hunt* was on the November Tea Dance that followed the Toronto Workshop, although it was just a spare.

Second reason? Last month, I wrote about a John Drewry dance, *Autumn in Appin*, and allowed as how John was actually born in the English pork pie town of Melton Mowbray. This led me to a 60-year-old personal memory of Melton Mowbray which I will share briefly with you, if you will allow me the indulgence.

In 1954, I was a retail sales rep in Britain for the Carnation Milk Company (evaporated and such). Having been asked to cover Melton Mowbray as a sub, I drove into town early one morning. I turned into the town square and found myself stuck right in the middle of

The Scots Bonnet 074- February, 2015 [crib](#)

Once upon a time, when I was a little lad in England, all I knew about bonnets is that they referred to an item of headgear worn most commonly by infants. Either that, or in a completely different context, a bonnet was the name given to the front end of an English car, as a cover beneath which the motor sat. In North America, the car bonnet was of course called a hood. And I almost forgot, playing "Cowboys and Indians" as a child, and watching movies about the Wild West, reminded me that those long multi-feathered headpieces worn by North American Native chiefs were called war bonnets.

In the case of English children, the bonnet fitted close to the head with a small brim and was usually secured with a ribbon under the chin. So decades later, after arriving in Canada, I was surprised to learn that the bonnet could be a head piece seemingly worn by Scottish adult males almost exclusively, especially those males in the military. Oh, yes! I believe there was an exception, in that the headpieces of females of the Mennonite and Amish persuasion are also called bonnets, and usually black.

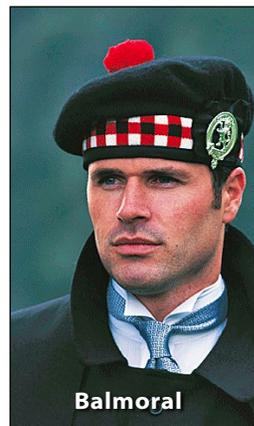
My Glaswegian father-in-law, James McCallum, whatever he placed on his head he called a bonnet. It didn't matter whether his headwear was a pom-pommed tam or a golf cap, or even the classic British workers' flat cap. For him it was a bonnet — which leads to the question: What is the background to this word? For a change, at least in these columns, it is in no way Gaelic. In fact, the Old French word *bonet*, stemming from the



the Quorn Hunt. Up to my door handles in foxhounds, I was. Every which way I turned, there was the cavalry. Horsemen and women dressed in black caps, red jackets, and white jodhpurs. As I sat marooned in my little two-door Ford Anglia, I faced angry gesticulations recommending my quick departure from the scene. Being a mere middle-class chappie, and knowing my place in Brit society as it were, I acted with dispatch. For the record, The Quorn is one of the UK's oldest and biggest fox-hunting clubs.

That memory flooded into my mind when I saw reference to *The Fife Hunt*. I don't think I have ever danced *The Fife Hunt*, but it does look like the kind of formula dance that would be appropriate after a workshop.

Final thought! I wonder if there is a Gaelic equivalent for "Tally-Ho"? And did you know that "tantivy" means... at full gallop? ■



15th century, referred to a distinctive form of headwear worn by women and children that framed the face with ribbons under the chin.

In the British military, the bonnet as worn by Scottish regiments is available in two forms. First, there is the Glengarry which can be worn fore and aft on the head with a divide in the centre, for quite the jaunty effect. Hairpins might be helpful at times. On the other hand, the Balmoral has a flat top that can be pulled down to one side rather like a beret. There is a long history with various Scottish regiments that is too detailed to cover here as to how and when these bonnets should be worn.

Why get into all this? Well, there is an old 32-bar jig called *The Scots Bonnet* that surfaced in Black Balmoral Hat with White/Red Dicing back in 1935. It is programmed as an extra on the 52nd Tartan Ball this month, so participants may (or may not) have the opportunity to dance *The Scots Bonnet*. In February, however, it is quite likely some of the male dancers will arrive at the Royal York with a Glengarry or a Balmoral on their heads ... worn jauntily, or otherwise. ■



The City of Stirling Reel 075- March, 2015 [video](#)

In my view, anyone travelling to Scotland should make a point of spending a little time in and around Stirling. Easy to reach, being more or less equidistant from Glasgow or Edinburgh, the Stirling area is jam-packed with indications of Scottish history. It is of no surprise to me, therefore, that the late SCD devisor Roy Goldring would have devised a reel to celebrate the city and its environs.

Stirling's strategic position between upper and lower Scotland has led to it being described as "the brooch which clasps the Highlands and the Lowlands together". There has long existed a wealth of information about Stirling available to explorers of Scotland. So, rather than write yet another Stirling area travelogue about the Wallace Monument, the Bannockburn Battlefield, or the Bridge of Allan, I felt I should focus specifically on something that I have found particularly significant in my personal experiences with Stirling.

From the standpoint of military history alone, I would encourage visitors to climb the hilly streets up to Stirling Castle. Visitors will be treading on some pretty well enshrined ground as most of the castle's buildings date back to the 15th and 16th centuries. Mary, Queen of Scots, was one of several monarchs crowned there ...in her case, in 1542, prior to losing her head of course. The castle was besieged on a number of occasions,

Dunkeld House 076- September, 2015 [video](#)

So a new SCD season is about to get under way, and here I sit, flailing around for a topic about which to write. Then I was struck by an idea. How about I use my home address to generate something. Let me explain.

For almost 25 years, I have lived in Thornhill, on Dunkeld Way. Until my SCD life began, I had hardly ever heard of Dunkeld, and certainly did not know, as I now do, of its Scottish heritage.

Aha! I say to myself, I wonder if there has been a dance devised using Dunkeld? Well, thank you John Drewry, prolific as you were, I knew you wouldn't let me down. *Dunkeld House* is a John Drewry jig that made its appearance in John's *Donside Book* in 1990. I don't believe I have ever danced it, nor seen it danced.

I learn that Dunkeld House was originally a summer residence built for the 6th Duke of Atholl, about 175 years ago. At present, it is a 4-star Hilton Hotel sitting on the banks of the River Tay a few miles north of Perth. I have written before about the Dukes of Atholl, chiefs, I believe, of Clan Murray. Motor up the A9 from the community of Dunkeld and you will pass by the clan headquarters at Blair Castle. It is quite visible from the highway. The same 6th Duke, George Murray, also inaugurated his own private army in 1839 called the Atholl Highlanders, about which I have written before. But if you are in the Dunkeld area, staying perhaps at the House with rooms at 95 quid a night (give or take), or so I am told, it is also worth visiting the nearby Dunkeld Cathedral.

including in 1745 when Bonnie Prince Charlie led one of the besieging armies. Like many others, the siege failed. The castle is also home base to one of Scotland's most famous regiments of yore, the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. Although now part of the Royal Regiment of Scotland, this storied unit has a memorable museum on the premises.

Who remembers that Brit film released in 1960 called *Tunes of Glory*? It featured Alec Guinness and John Mills and much of the movie was filmed at Stirling Castle. I vaguely recall that the film even included a scene in which the officers were discussing what type of Scots bonnet should be worn for the occasion. Remember my *Scots Bonnet* column last month about distinguishing between Glengarries and Balmorals?



A number of years ago, my wife Kathryn and I experienced a memorable moment. We were high up on the castle battlements. It was quite an unsettled day weatherwise, and what did we see across the valley but the William Wallace Monument. It was surrounded above by the arc of a magnificent rainbow. A glorious moment that we will always remember!

The next time you decide to visit Scotland, do yourself a favour and check out this most interesting city. You'll not regret it! ■

The cathedral dates from the 16th century, and although it's partly in ruins, Church of Scotland Sunday Services are still celebrated there in the summer.

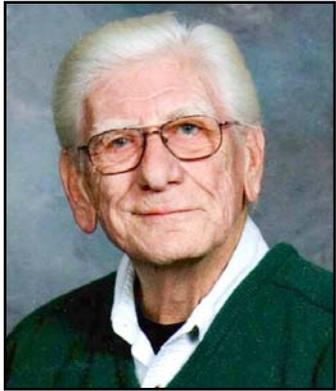
Before I close, here is another little gem about Dunkeld House.

**Dunkeld House**

Who, as a child, remembers the Victorian writer, Beatrix Potter and her animal stories? It seems that as a young lady, before moving to the Lake District, Beatrix often spent time holidaying at Dunkeld House. It is said that it was here she started to write *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*, with many more children's books to follow. I had always thought that Peter was a Cumbrian rabbit, but no — it seems his heritage is pure Perthshire. ■



CELEBRATING
75
 WHAT'S IN A NAME?
 BARRY PIPES REFLECTS ON A DIAMOND COLLECTION

From: *Set&Link* April, 2015

Barry Pipes

What, indeed! How about a slight change of pace in this issue of *Set&Link*? It's time for a mini-celebration for this monthly column, about which more will be said in a moment.

But first, since we don't all spend our evenings studying English Lit, let's identify the source of this well-known phrase. As many well know, it was penned, or should I say quilled, by the Bard quite some time ago. No, I don't mean Robbie, Scotland's very own Ayrshire Bard whose birthday we celebrated in January; this title refers to the Bard of Avon, Will Shakespeare by name. In his play

Romeo and Juliet he put these words into the mouth of Juliet... "What's in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet." Juliet was referring to Romeo of course, and her unease had to do with his surname, Montague, whereas she was a Capulet. Romeo and Juliet were the offspring of these feuding families. So, dear reader, if not before, now you know.

Celebration, did we say? Yes, indeed! It seems that we have now published 75 articles about the backgrounds of Scottish country dances. Dressed up with a bit of whimsy, and often with tongue in cheek, this labour of love has taken me about eight years. Labour of love? More Shakespeare? No, actually it's biblical, although Will did write a play called *Love's Labour's Lost*. At this point, God willing and with the blessings of the *Set&Link* committee, I am wondering whether I can stretch this out and, as cricketers might say, go for a century. This could take me at least another two and a half years or so, provided I do not "shuffle off this mortal coil" in the meanwhile. Aha! Shakespeare again, this time with just a little bit of *Hamlet*. And that's if I don't "lose my marbles" in the attempt. That phrase? Self explanatory perhaps. So, moving right along ...

With some trepidation, I submitted my first WHAT'S IN A NAME? back in November 2006. It covered the Perthshire mountain called Schiehallion, not forgetting those tricky reels with which we are all familiar. That was followed with that great partner-switching dance *The Bees of Maggieknockater*. Trepidation aside, I was now on a roll.

At the outset, I must humbly confirm that this concept was not initiated by me. In fact, it was the brainchild originally of the late Steve Coombs. But I believe he had to give up this *Set&Link* project when he was appointed Chair of RSCDS Toronto. As the names of Scottish country dances had always piqued my interest, I offered to take on the challenge of continuing Steve's work in the hope that I could sustain the project.

I am indebted to any number of RSCDS Toronto members who gave me both insights and encouragement. Not the least of them was veteran Scarborough dancer Roddy Nicoll, who, in his youth, raced mountain bicycles up and down the aforementioned Schiehallion mountain. In fact, in due course, I covered a dance named for Roddy, that self-same Dundonian cyclist. Devised by his daughter, RSCDS Toronto teacher Carole Skinner, it was called *The Dundee Wheeler*. (That is not a typo!)

More indebtedness? How about those many RSCDS members, not only in the Toronto area, but also wherever *Set&Link's* circulation reaches, who have communicated with me to talk about WHAT'S IN A NAME?

I am grateful for whatever feedback I can learn, and I thank you all for your interest and inspiration.

The *Set&Link* Committee has consistently supplied my column with great pictorial coverage, and my further gratitude goes wholeheartedly to Carole Bell and the members of her committee.

The question sometimes comes my way, "Did anyone ever devise a dance for you?" Well, truth be known! Yes! A few years ago, my previously mentioned friend Carole Skinner devised a dance called *Sir Barry Pipes*. This quirky name reflected, in jest, my supposed knighthood as a Petronella Social Group dancer and General Factotum. Going even further back, as a member of the Tartan Ball Committee in the 90s, I was treated to a dance called *The Poster Boy* by another prolific deviser, Ann Campbell. Although it is nowhere near as famous as Ann's *St Andrews of Brampton* or *The Dancing Bells*, I was thrilled nonetheless.

So, onwards and upwards! In striving to reach a target of 100 submissions, I've been contemplating a possible new name for this *Set&Link* column. Harking back to my opening words about Bards, maybe I should drop the Shakespeare and go with the Ayrshire Bard. Almost anagrammatically speaking, how about...

"A Name's a Name for A' That"? ■

Dumbarton Drums 077- October, 2015 [animation](#)

About three months ago, Kathryn and I were driving back to Glasgow after a visit to Largs. As some of you may know, if you take the scenic waterside route, the road runs alongside the River Clyde between Greenock and Glasgow.

Being a bit peckish, we pulled into a nice restaurant called The Wheelhouse and secured window seats overlooking the Clyde. Right there across the water before our very eyes was Dumbarton Rock, which is a plug of volcanic basalt that sticks out of the Clyde to a height of about 250 feet. On its summit, one can find the ruins of Dumbarton Castle, a medieval fortress which dates back to the Kingdom of the Britons sometime in the 6th century.

That reminds me of a Scottish country dance, I said to myself, and a while later, the penny dropped. Ah! Yes! *Dumbarton Drums*. I thought there might be a connection! I'd better research this!

My findings were that, as a dance, *Dumbarton Drums* is very close to the name of an old Scottish song. The song's lyrics start "they sound sae bonnie, and remind me o' my Johnnie ..." But there is a fine difference between the name of the dance and the traditional song. The latter has an apostrophe "s". The genitive case I think it is called. While it is not too clear, I believe that ownership of the drums in question refers to George Douglas, 1st Earl of Dumbarton, a 17th-century Scottish nobleman and soldier who led what would likely be called today a regiment of mercenaries. Dumbarton's Regiment fought primarily in France on behalf of King Louis XIV.

Best Set In The Hall 078- November, 2015 [video](#)

Helen Greenwood

Now here's a challenging jig to keep you on your toes, appropriately pointed of course. *Best Set in the Hall* was introduced to us just a few years ago in RSCDS Book 46.

It was devised by a New Zealand dancer named Helen Greenwood, a resident of Auckland, and while this jig is lovely to watch being well executed, it does present the need for very careful thought as one is actually working one's way through it.

I think quite a few of us tend to be conditioned to follow SCD expectations as we dance the various formula moves to which we have become accustomed as reasonably experienced dancers. For example, when back-to-back in the centre of the dance with your partner, and facing a corner, you most commonly

dance forward to either turn or change places with that corner. Not in this dance! When positioned as just stated, you pull back your right shoulder, and change places with the corner behind you. Easy to say, but if you are not focused, not as easy to execute!

As it happened, that regiment ultimately became part of the British army and was named The Royal Scots. Worth noting is the fact that the The Royal Scots became the oldest and most senior regiment of infantry in Britain. In recent years, however, most of these historical military units have been merged to form The Royal Regiment of Scotland.

Dumbarton's Drums was the official march of The Royal Scots, although, as a quick march, the music of the original song no longer seemed to apply.

So where does this leave us? If one visits the town of Dumbarton on the north bank of the Clyde, and walks around the Rock and its Castle, don't expect to hear any paradiddles or other form of musical banging about. If you really want to hear the original song *Dumbarton's Drums*, it was recorded by The Corries, a Scottish folk music group back in the 60s. It is still available to be heard on YouTube. [<https://youtu.be/sa-oSCenj2E>]

The Scottish country dance called *Dumbarton Drums*, with no apostrophe "s", is a 32-bar reel that originated in RSCDS Book 5, way back in 1928. It was devised by a Thomas Wilson. Not heard of him? He also devised *Seann Triubhas Willichan* and we've all danced that a time or two. ■

As said earlier, this is a lovely dance to watch, but if still unsure of yourself after one or two attempts, I recommend you google [Best Set in the Hall IT Black](#) and, via YouTube, take a look at how it is danced by what is clearly a demo team in Newcastle, England. To me, it was delightful to watch this team of Geordies execute the dance with elegance and panache.

Personally, I do have a minor hang-up with the name of this dance. Although I am sure many readers will disagree, doesn't the name "Best Set in the Hall" sound a tad too competitive in tone? Twenty years ago, I am sure I danced in sets whose members may have thought they were outperforming other sets in the room. But who's to say, unless we were being judged formally. As an octogenarian at this point, I'd have to pass if invited to join any set so-called. My limbs just don't work that way anymore, and I know that I am not alone with that concern. That said, I have indeed danced *Best Set in the Hall* several times recently. On a number of occasions, I made it through the 32 bars without error, although not quite up to the performance level of the dancing Geordies. 'Nuff said!

Name aside, I believe that the devising of this jig was quite a work of art. Thank you, Helen Greenwood! When the opportunity arises, everyone who enjoys SCD should take another shot at it. Complete it flawlessly, and one gets a very pleasant feeling of accomplishment. ■



Dumbarton Rock (and the Waverley)

Commentary on *Best Set In The Hall* Published in *Set&Link*, December, 2015



Dear Editor...

RE: Best Set In The Hall, from Helen Greenwood, deviser of the dance

Thanks, Barry, for the article. I really enjoyed reading it. *Best Set in the Hall* is dedicated to Campbell Mackay, a long-time Auckland dancer. It was his custom when counting sets to stand at the bottom of the hall with the requisite number of fingers in the air calling loudly for couples to join and selling it by saying that it was the best set in the hall. Since the dance was devised, he has stopped this practice, which was not the intention at all.

The movement in the middle was originally devised by Alec Hay, a prolific deviser here in Auckland, in his strathspey *Peter White*. In briefings here, it is often described as the 'Peter White movement'. Our Australian musician friends, Catherine Fraser and Duncan Smith, were playing for our dance when *Best Set in the Hall* was first put on a programme and they asked if they could include it on their CD, *Old Favourites and Odd Couples*, with the lead tune of *Danse de Chez Nous*. From there, it has gone on a most unexpected journey around the world and dancers from as far away as Toronto are interested in its story.

I am a New Zealander by way of Yorkshire and Canada. I was born in Yorkshire; we emigrated to Canada and lived in Montreal for 5 years then moved across the country to Chilliwack near Vancouver. My family still live there, but I came to New Zealand on holiday in 1981 and have been here ever since. This has led to a most confused accent: no matter where I go, people ask me where I am from. I started dancing in Auckland in the 1990s and have been a member of the Innes Club ever since.

... Helen Greenwood



Dear Editor...

RE: Best Set In The Hall, from Amanda Peart, The Sunday Class

I love reading *Set&Link* and haven't even finished this month's yet but feel the need to remark on the article *WHAT'S IN A NAME?* on *Best Set in the Hall*. The dance was called that as the MC (not sure if it was Helen herself or someone else) would exhort people to get up and "join the best set in the hall" when trying to get those last few couples needed to make up the last set, so it doesn't mean 'the best' necessarily in performance terms but certainly the best place in the room to be! :-)

Keep up the good work!

...Regards, Amanda Peart, www.thesundayclass.org.uk

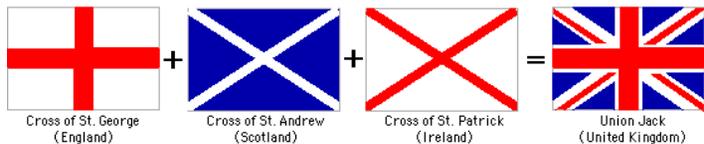
p.s. Friends of mine have grandchildren in New Zealand and were told by them (7-9 year olds) that their pronunciation was completely wrong.

It should be (phonetically): "Bist Sit in the Hole". So there you are!

...Regards, Amanda Peart,

The Saltire Society Reel 079- December, 2015 [crib](#)

As a young English lad, I was a Boy Scout, and one of the things I had to learn, to achieve the status of even a Second



Class Scout, was the make-up and history of Britain's Union Jack. While it may look somewhat complicated, this flag constitutes three banners superimposed one on each other, namely the St. George's Cross (of England), the St. Andrew's Cross (of Scotland), and the St. Patrick's Cross (of Ireland). The latter two are of course diagonal crosses.

It may have gone over my head, but I don't think I ever heard the word saltire as part of this boyhood instruction. Only after having married a Glaswegian and been swallowed up in the world of Scottish country dancing, at a later point in life, did I learn what is meant by the word saltire.

It is a heraldic word and is described in my old fashioned but trusty *OED* (not an app, it's a dictionary!) as follows: "An ordinary, formed by a bend and a bend sinister, crossing each other." There is nothing sinister about that to me, and how is it that a straight diagonal line can be seen to be bent? Such are the eccentricities of the language of heraldry.



While I think that a saltire can apply to any diagonal cross...even Jamaica's very colourful flag could be said to contain a saltire...the word seems to have been, dare I say, borrowed to aspire to things culturally Scottish. There does indeed exist a Saltire Society.



Headquartered in Edinburgh, the Society was founded in 1936 to promote and celebrate all things to do with Scottish culture and heritage. It is currently presided over by Magnus Linklater, an Orcadian by birth. (Magnus? What a name to live up to!) Although, come to think of it, the Christian cathedral for the Orkneys is called St. Magnus.

Now let's get back to the dance. *The Saltire Society Reel* was featured in the afternoon dance at the RSCDS Toronto Workshop last month. Devised as a Leaflet dance by the late Yorkshireman, Roy Goldring, it has all the earmarks of Roy's talent in devising a smooth-flowing reel guaranteed to keep you on your toes.



About that St. Andrew's cross again — what if the Scottish independentistas had been fully successful in the

September 2014 referendum? Imagine the colour and design of the British Union Jack minus the white saltire and blue background. Unless Westminster had been

allowed to retain it, the majesty and distinctiveness of this proud flag would surely have been severely diminished. ■

The Countess of Dunmore's Reel 080- January, 2016 [video](#)

It's quite a rare occasion when I get to write a piece about a dance devised by one of our very own. This is one of those infrequent events, the dance having been created by none other than Deirdre MacCuish Bark, well known to many of us, and the current Chair of the RSCDS Toronto Association.

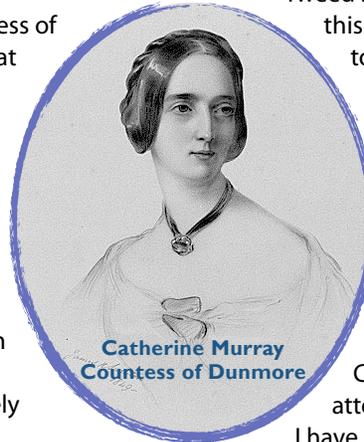


Deirdre
MacCuish Bark

Other than Deirdre, did anyone else know who the Countess of Dunmore was? And Deirdre's interest in her? What was that all about? Then, I remembered Deirdre telling *Set & Link* readers recently about her trip with hubby Keith to visit family on the Hebridean island of Harris (which is not to forget Lewis, the northern half). That's Deirdre's family of course, the MacCuishes. Keith himself hails from the English county of Lincolnshire, which is perhaps better known in some quarters for its poachers — but I digress, and that is a story for another time.

With a lead like that, however, it didn't take me long to find a connection with both the Countess of Dunmore and the internationally known key product of the isle of Harris, which is of course Harris Tweed, a rough, closely woven woollen fabric. Incidentally, Dunmore itself is quite a small Scottish community far from the Hebrides, located between Falkirk and Stirling.

Born to an English peer and his Russian wife in 1814, Lady Catherine Herbert was married at the age of 22 to Alexander Murray, who in turn ultimately inherited the title Earl of Dunmore. After 11 years of marriage, Alexander died. Among other holdings, Catherine Murray, now Countess of Dunmore, inherited 150,000 acres in Harris. And as those who are



Catherine Murray
Countess of Dunmore

familiar with the British aristocracy also may know, the wife of an Earl usually takes the courtesy title of Countess.

Catherine, the now widowed Countess, decided to take a strong interest in the Harris Tweed industry, which in the 1840s was somewhat in the doldrums. To overcome this situation, she recognized that some revolutionary changes were necessary to combat the competition that had sprung up between the spinning and weaving of Harris Tweed, which was all done by hand, and the rapid growth of machine-made cloth.

She was so successful in this endeavour that sales burgeoned and Harris Tweed was well on the way to international acclaim.

Enough about the Countess' history, what about the dance?

I must admit that the first time I saw it being performed I thought that I was looking at *Linnea's Strathspey* being danced in reel tempo. I have since learned that I was looking at a progression common to both dances, called, somewhat quaintly in my view, a chaperoned promenade chain.

Chaperoned? No, one does not need to have one's mother-in-law in attendance, but I hope that I got the name of that progression right. Whatever,

I have indeed danced it a time or two at this point, without embarrassment. It is a very satisfying progression to achieve competently when you have your wits about you.

Well done, Deirdre! RSCDS saw fit to include your *Countess of Dunmore's Reel* in its relatively new Book 49. We Toronto area dancers should be very proud of your accomplishment in devising this interesting dance. ■

Over The Hill 081- February, 2016 [crib](#)

At last! A dance that by its very name is right down my street!

Over the Hill is a 32-bar strathspey devised by the inimitable Derek Haynes as part of Volume 3 of his *Carnforth Collection*. To gain a cautious dancer's close attention, it starts with a Tournée and then leads into a Corner Chain. The Tournée? That's a progression that some of us who are indeed "over the hill", as the saying goes, have to more or less re-learn each and every time it surfaces in a program.

Derek Haynes was born a Lancastrian, whose ancestors may well have fought in the Wars of the Roses in the 15th century in which the House of Lancaster (Red Rose) defeated the House of York (White Rose) to gain the English throne. As a Scottish country dancer, he devised over 60 dances to attain the stature of those other iconic SCD devisors, John Drewry and Roy Goldring.

Check these examples of his devising skill. He was responsible for *Miss Gibson's Strathspey*, *The Clansman*, the fearsome (for some) five-couple *Black Mountain Reel*, the cute, partnerless and very simple *Domino Five*, and a jig called *The Famous Grouse*, which I don't think I have ever sampled, except in its liquid form as a premium blended Scotch whisky. With regret, nor have I ever experienced *Jennifer's Itchy Fingers*, which he devised as a reel.

I believe that all of Derek's dances are contained in his *Carnforth Collection*. Carnforth is another English town in Lancashire, just a few miles north of his Lancaster home. They are both just off the M6 motorway as one drives towards the Scottish border to reach Glasgow, perhaps after day-tripping to Blackpool, which is always full of Scottish grannies.

In 2005 at the age of 73, Derek shuffled off this mortal coil (as Shakespeare might have said), although he more likely left us by dancing down but...not back. As a tribute to Derek's life and commitment to RSCDS, Roy Goldring devised a reel called *The Inimitable Derek*, to which I alluded earlier in this piece.

We all know, of course, that "over the hill" is an idiomatic way of saying "past one's prime". That said, it may now be in conflict with a more contemporary turn of phrase which says that "eighty is the new sixty". One thing is certain. Those of us who are unequivocally past our prime are made aware of that certainty the minute we step on the dance floor, and we are always hopeful that those of you who are more youthful will cut us a little slack. Me? Over the hill, but not done yet! ■



Derek Haynes dancing
Come Ashore Jolly Tar
(don't miss it!)

Kilkenny Castle 082- March, 2016 [video](#)

Here is something new for me. As I close in on reaching 100 of these columns over the past nine years or so, being some kind of amateur historian cum geographer, I cannot remember ever before tackling a SCD with Irish background.

Well, with a name like Kilkenny, it was hardly going to be located somewhere in Scotland, was it? Kilkenny Castle is to be found a few clicks southwest of Dublin. Just up the road to the north is Kildare, and to the south, Waterford — which is, of course, internationally known for the quality of its excellent crystal.

I used to think that Kilkenny had an honourable mention in a song from the 1947 Broadway musical, *Finian's Rainbow*. A movie version came 20 years later. You'll remember the song for sure, "How are things in Glocca Morra?", and the line as I remembered it was:

"Is that little brook still leaping there?
Does it still run down to Donny's Cove?
Through Killybegs, Kilkenny and Kildare?"

Kilkenny? Whoops! The lyrics actually say Kilkerry. Double letter R! The song's lyricist must surely have meant Kilkenny, because as far as I can tell, no such place as Kilkerry exists in Ireland. It is a fictional name. But, of course so is Glocca Morra itself. On top of which, Killybegs is in County Donegal, up in Ulster, a completely different part of Ireland. OK! Enough of this geographical hocus pocus, let's get back to Kilkenny Castle itself.

Built by the Normans in 1195 to secure control over a number of Irish routeways, including a ford over the River Nore, the castle was designed to continue the establishment of Norman domination throughout much of the British Isles. This domination over Britain included Scotland where the kings of the day such as Malcolm, David, and William were trying hard to attract Norman barons into Scotland to help protect their birthright.

The dance, a strathspey, is the work of a devisor named Bill Forbes about whom I do not have much information although he did devise about 50 dances — most of which are unfamiliar to me. I am sure that a veteran dancer from somewhere will fill me in on this quite prolific devisor.



As a sidebar, I do have to humbly admit never having visited Ireland, even though my parents' English home did have an Irish name. You know how middle-class Brits like to have a name of significance for their home to supplement the usual street number. The Pipes' family home in Derbyshire was called "Kildare".

I believe this was on account of my father Fred, who was a gunner in the Royal Artillery in World War I. Fred's unit was transferred from the Western Front in France to Ireland as part of the effort to put down The Easter Rebellion in April of 1916.

As for Norman domination, the pre-existing natives, more or less, Anglo-Saxons in England, and Celts in Scotland, Ireland, and Wales seemed to quite easily absorb those past invaders from France through subsequent centuries. Most of those dominating castles became completely or partly ruined, including Kilkenny in Ireland, which as said earlier I have never seen, but among my favourite ruins for visitation are Bamburgh in Northumbria, together with a couple in Wales ... Conwy and Harlech.

As it happened, in the 1600s, Kilkenny became "one of the ruins that Cromwell knocked about a bit" (from an old English music hall song). After centuries of private ownership, it was sold to the people of Kilkenny in 1967 for £67, give or take at that time, around \$200 I believe.

To wrap up, the Irish Free State did finally achieve independence in 1922 and as we all know is now the republic of Eire. ■

Currie Mountain 083- April, 2016 [video](#)

If you were able to attend our March Monthly Dance, did you have the chance to sample that very nice and smooth flowing reel called *Currie Mountain*? It was devised quite a while ago by Mary Pugh, a Fredericton dancer, and was one of her submissions to *The New Brunswick Collection of Scottish Country Dances*.



Mary Pugh

This bicentennial collection of reels, jigs, and strathspeys was created to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the province's founding in 1784. While you may never have heard of such a place as Currie Mountain, it looms over the city of Fredericton, in a manner of speaking, and originated as a volcano eons ago. Any likelihood of an imminent eruption? Hardly! In fact, if they were to think about any form of local catastrophe, the citizens of Fredericton would be far more likely in the short term to be inundated by flooding from the Saint John River (Yes! *that* Saint John River!) which flows through the city and actually runs quite close to the base of this mountain.

Truth be known, even though the volcanic origin of Currie Mountain and its environs goes back around 100 million years, there still exists visible evidence of what were once flowing lava beds which in turn have been responsible for the growth of any number of quite rare plants, found nowhere else in the area.

Here is another anomaly! Currie Mountain has a height of about 87 metres, and for those of us metrically challenged folks who are several decades away from school learning, 87 metres tops out at say, a little under 300 feet. But there again, as I am sure that you will agree, to give this non-alpine eminence the appellation Currie Hill does not have quite the same cachet.



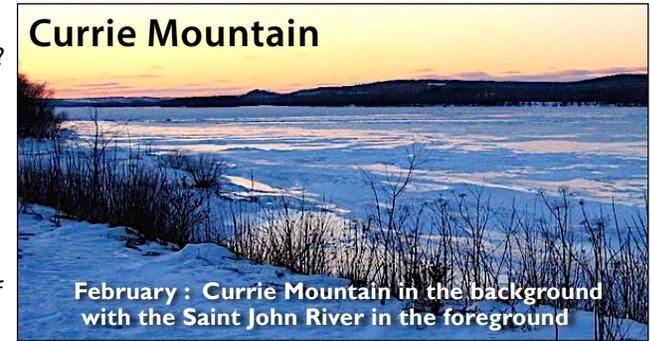
A red trillium on Currie Mountain

Mentioning rare plants, could that mean plants like cumin or coriander? Well no, as tropical plants, they refer to curry (the food dish). Currie (the mountain) is named for one of the original owners who bequeathed this piece

of property to the University of New Brunswick at least 50 years ago. But let's not forget that in itself, Currie is a well established Scots name, which stems from the Gaelic MacMhuirich, which perhaps gives this whole review a little extra panache.

I had the pleasure of chatting with Mary Pugh by phone recently in which she not only provided me with helpful information about Currie Mountain, but told me about her dancing opportunities in Boston, an SCD Branch that I believe has an equivalent annual event to our Tartan Ball, and attracts numerous Canadian dancers from the Maritime Provinces. It turns out that Mary had also had the opportunity to visit Toronto for a Tartan Ball some years ago.

In closing, I would like to thank not only Mary Pugh for her support of this submission, but also Connie Moore, who was my initial contact at RSCDS Fredericton and enabled me to reach Mary. ■



Currie Mountain

February : Currie Mountain in the background with the Saint John River in the foreground

Lady Susan Stewart's Reel 084- May, 2016 [video](#)

What's this? Yet another dance named for one of the Scottish aristocracy? For sure, there has been no shortage of blue-blooded Stewarts from which to choose, whichever way it is spelled. The Bonny Prince for example!

But let's start with Lady Susan's father, John Stewart. He was a Scottish peer, the 7th Earl of Galloway, and quite infamous in his day which was the mid to late 1700s. James Boswell, an eminent Scottish biographer of that era, once wrote of John Stewart that he had "a petulant forwardness that cannot fail to disgust people of sense and delicacy." Even Robbie Burns targeted Lady Susan's father with an epigram that started "What dost thou in that mansion fair? Flit, Galloway, and find some narrow, dirty dungeon cave, the picture of thy mind." Perhaps this had something to do with the fact that John Stewart was in the process of siring sixteen children, of whom Lady Susan was the third. Perhaps Burns was somewhat envious, being himself no slouch with the ladies.

So enough about John Stewart, the 7th Earl of Galloway, except to say that for the last 23 years of his life, he was appointed Lord of the Bedchamber to King George III, a position for which John seemed to be eminently suited.

At the age of 24, Lady Susan entered into wedlock with the Duke of Marlborough, the 5th in fact. By family name, he was George Spencer-Churchill. Whoa! Spencer? Churchill? Ah! Now we seem to have some added significance as to why someone devised an SCD reel celebrating Lady Susan Stewart. She went on to have four children, all boys, during which time the Duke, Spencer-Churchill himself, added a further 9 illegitimate offspring elsewhere.



Lady Susan Stewart (1767-1841)

Most of us will probably remember one of the most famous of Lady Susan's (now the Duchess of Marlborough) descendants. That would be Winston Churchill, Prime Minister of Great Britain during the Second World War. He was the great, great, grandson of Lady Susan and her husband George Spencer-Churchill, through their first child.

Now, some readers may perhaps need a little memory prompt about the Spencer half of Lady Susan's family tree. Well, it so happens that in 1981, a certain Lady Diana Spencer married Charles, the Prince of Wales. Remember her? Her father was the 8th Earl Spencer, and if we go back to where we started in Lady Susan Stewart's day, there was a family merger, through the complexities of inheritance. It involved a branch of the Spencer family merging with the Dukes of Marlborough a.k.a. the Churchills. Many of whom through the passage of time, seemed to have lived "happily ever after" (more or less) at either a monumental country estate called Blenheim Palace in Oxfordshire, or the Spencer family mansion in Northamptonshire called Althorp, where Lady Diana Spencer is buried.

All of which seems to indicate quite clearly a blood relationship between Winston Churchill, the late Princess of Wales, and the focus of our story, Lady Susan Stewart. Although I am by no means a Royalist, I am moved to believe that she deserves a celebratory reel in her name.

Lady Susan Stewart's Reel was included in the program of RSCDS Toronto's Volunteer Appreciation Night just two or three weeks back. The dance came to light back in 1928 when it was published in RSCDS Book 5, but may have been devised much earlier. The deviser remains anonymous. ■



The Duke & Duchess of Edinburgh 085- June, 2016 [video](#)

I would be most remiss if I neglected to submit an article on this particular dance during such a celebratory period of time for the Duchess of Edinburgh, or as she has been known for many years, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Celebratory in that she has just observed her 90th birthday.

In the world of Dancing Scottish, *The Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh* officially came to light 20 years ago as an inclusion to RSCDS Book 39. Yet the record seems to show that this 40-bar reel had actually been devised back in 1948 in recognition of the wedding of the Duchess on November 19, 1947 to Lieut. Philip Mountbatten of the Royal Navy. At that time of course, she was known as Princess Elizabeth, and Philip had just renounced his own Greek and Danish royal titles.

In honour of their wedding, her father, King George VI, re-created the Duchy of Edinburgh, naming the newlyweds HRH Princess Elizabeth, Duchess of Edinburgh and her husband HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. King George died five years later at the age of 57 and she became Queen. Perhaps an advantage of advancing years is that I well remember watching her coronation at an English pub in my home town of Derby. The coronation was on the "telly" as we called it, and I did not have one at home in those days.

The co-devisors of this dance were Allie Anderson and Florence Lesslie. They are believed now to be both deceased in New Zealand although it is unclear whether they were New Zealanders when the dance was devised.

At least among Royalists, it might be a burning question, albeit academic, as to whether HM Elizabeth II is still able to carry the secondary title as Duchess. After a little research, I learn that there are numerous points of view, both for and against the question. I also learn that Royal watchers are quite a sensitive lot who look upon such issues very seriously. Can one be a Queen and a Duchess at the same time? Or for that matter, be both a Prince and a Duke? The rankings of lesser members of the nobility can be even more complicated. In diminishing order of importance from Dukes, there are Marquesses and Earls, and Viscounts, and Barons, and Baronets. And that's only the males of nobility. Their spouses' titles are even more complex. Did you know that Mrs. Marquess is a Marchioness and that Mrs. Earl is a Countess? It is to boggle the mind! So I say ... enough already!

Here's something we should recirculate. I remember that on the 60th anniversary of Queen Elizabeth's Coronation four years ago, there was cause for some special celebration at the RSCDS Toronto Association. To wit, our very own Carole Skinner,

teacher of the Petronella social group, and an accomplished deviser of Scottish country dances, created a dance called *Lilibet's Strathspey*. The dance was submitted to Buckingham Palace to the delight of the Queen herself, who, as we all should know, has been the Patron of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society as an international entity since 1947. Lilibet was a term of endearment used by King George for his daughter Elizabeth. Well done, Carole!

To conclude, here is a reminder that Teresa Lockhart's St Clement's social group will host a special "Happy & Glorious" Tea Dance Saturday, June 11 to celebrate the 90th birthday of HM Queen Elizabeth II. In my view, *Lilibet's Strathspey* should be a component of that event, in addition to *The Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh*. ■



Carole Skinner received this letter from Buckingham Palace, thanking her for the dance *Lilibet's Strathspey*

The Flower of Glasgow 086- September, 2016 [video](#)

Hello everyone! It's a new season, so here we go again! I think I have been writing this column for nine or ten years at this point and I'm closing in on 90 submissions to *Set & Link*.

I opted for this dance, *The Flower of Glasgow*, because I wasn't familiar with it, and it's on an upcoming very popular event in eastern Ontario. My early expectation was that such a flower would be something selected officially long ago by the city of Glasgow, and likely depicted on the municipal Coat of Arms.

Yes, the Glasgow Coat of Arms has a lot of meaning but...there seems to be nothing floral about it whatsoever. What it does portray is a bird, a tree, a bell, and a fish. They are all described in a small quatrain related to the founder of Glasgow, St. Mungo. As far as I can see, the city doesn't even have any form of official flower.

So, what is The Flower of Glasgow? Note that it seems to be not just any old flower; it is "The" flower. Perhaps not likely to be found in the Botanical Gardens on Great Western Road, or Paisley Road's Bellahouston Park, never mind Pollok Country Park, all three of which have their very own claims to fame.



Ruth Taylor

An obvious solution occurred to me. Ask the devisor! So I checked, and what did I find? It was devised by Ruth Taylor, a veteran SCD teacher of my acquaintance from eastern Ontario. I have long known Ruth as one of the stalwart supporters of RSCDS Kingston. I called her so that she could set me straight. It's a lovely story!

Berwick Johnnie 087- October, 2016 [video](#)

Berwick-upon-Tweed is a town on the Northumbrian coast of England with a population of around 13,000. It is as far north as one can go without entering Scotland. In fact, it sits just a few steps south of the Scottish border. So far, one still does not need a Canadian passport to cross from one country to the other – Brexit notwithstanding. It was not always that easy.

Originally an Anglo-Saxon settlement, Berwick first became English in the 10th century. But during the following 400 years of border wars between England and Scotland, it changed hands with some frequency. Its location at the mouth of the River Tweed seemed to have such significant value to either kingdom.

One could imagine the constant grief brought down on the heads of Berwick's citizens throughout the centuries, not really knowing whether they were English or Scottish, and for how long, and when the next change of government might occur. This situation came to an end in the late 15th century when England was finally able not only to take but also to keep control over this part of what is still called Northumbria.

So, enough about Berwick! Who was Johnnie? Well, *Berwick Johnnie* is the name of a Scottish song, written, I believe, in the late 1700s. It leads off as follows ... "Go to Berwick, Johnnie / Bring her frae the border / Yon sweet bonnie lassie / Let her gae nae farther." The words that follow seem to suggest another attempted takeover of Berwick by the Scots as in ... "Drive them o'er the Tweed and show our Scottish banner."

As far as the dance is concerned, there is no record of its devisor. It is a 32-bar jig from the *First Book of Graded SCDs* which was published by RSCDS and devised for children and

She devised the dance about twelve years ago to celebrate both an achievement and a significant birthday of another RSCDS Kingston member. This person apparently is quite partial to that popular reel, *Flowers of Edinburgh*, with its chase and poussette. (Well aren't we all? Although florally, my favourite is *The Blooms of Bon Accord*.)

The beneficiary of this Ruth Taylor dance? None other than Kay Munn, a Glaswegian by birth I'm told, who at that time had just gained her preliminary Teaching Certificate at St. Andrews, and has now been for a number of years a fully fledged teacher at the Kingston Branch. We'll not ask about the significant birthday!

Worth mentioning is that *The Flower of Glasgow* was submitted to Edinburgh and became part of RSCDS Book 46. It is a 32-bar strathspey for three couples and includes a formation called a Circulating Allemande that is new to me.

And here is an important reminder. Those who travel every November to the annual RSCDS Kingston Workshop and Ball need to get their ticket requests in fast this year. The event is celebrating its 50th birthday, as noted elsewhere in this *Set & Link*, and is quite likely to sell out fast.

Well done, Ruth, and belated congratulations to Kay. ■



Kay Munn

beginners. *Berwick Johnnie* was included in our September Monthly Dance program as a no-brief dance. For those who attended, I hope you enjoyed this simple jig.

Let me close with an anecdote about when I happened to arrive in Berwick-upon-Tweed some years ago. Kathryn and I were driving down from Edinburgh on our way to Derby, my birthplace in England, and I was heading for the M1. We drove into the town late on a summer afternoon and a refreshing drink was called for before seeking a B & B for the night. Having entered a local hostelry, just a few hundred yards down from the Scottish border, I sauntered up to the bar as Kathryn took a seat. As is my wont, I was interested in a local ale and Kathryn had ordered a soft drink, the well-known carbonated Irn-Bru which is made at Cumbernauld, just outside Glasgow.

I gave the barman my order. He looked me up and down, backed off from his bar, smirked at his other patrons on either side of me, and said to me, "Irn Bru? We don't stock that stuff! Laddie, you are in England now!"

Berwick folks clearly have a very long memory. ■



Berwick-Upon-Tweed: The Royal Border Bridge



Ezekiel's Wheel 088- November, 2016 [video](#)

**Maureen
Richardson**

Thanks to two of the admirable teachers whose classes I attend (hello Maureen, you too, Jess), I have managed to get my mind around what to me is yet another previously unknown dance. *Ezekiel's Wheel* is an 88-bar reel in a square set formation. Those of you who may be biblically inclined will remember that the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel can be found in the Old Testament, between the Books of Lamentations and Daniel. The Hebrew name Ezekiel translates into "May

God Strengthen Him." It is written that he was born circa 622 BCE in Jerusalem and died in Babylon in 570 BCE. Although a Hebrew, his status as a prophet is well recognized within not only Christianity, but also Islam.

At this point in time, I think that the name Ezekiel is somewhat archaic. Go back a century or so, however, and one would have found no end of Ezekiels, especially within those geographic areas of what we tend to call Bible Belts to the south of us. More often than not, the abbreviated name Zeke was used. The only person named Ezekiel that comes to my mind right now is a Latino baseball player for the Toronto Blue Jays called Ezequiel (Spanish version) Carrera. That Zeke is a 29-year-old Venezuelan who is achieving some success in the current Major League Baseball play-offs. How's that for something coming out of left field — the position that Carrera plays!

But what's this about a "Wheel"? Well, it is recorded that Ezekiel, being a prophet, had a vision complicated enough that this is hardly the space in which to attempt explaining it in detail. As best as I can remember, there were actually two wheels at issue. That said, you can always look it up!

I do recall that there exists an old folk song on the subject, which starts along the lines of ... *Ezekiel saw a wheel a-turnin', way up in the air; a wheel within a wheel a-turnin', way up in the air.* For those interested in folk music, it was recorded by American singer/songwriter Woody Guthrie, who was even more well-known for a song that I believe we



Jess Houseley

all remember: *This Land Is Your Land*. For the record, *Ezekiel's Wheel* was also recorded by numerous other folk singers, plus both country singer Johnny Cash and jazz singer/trumpeter Louis Armstrong. From personal experience, moreover, it was listed among the many campfire songs covered by the Boy Scout organization. Likely, the Girl Guides too!

It is quite a long trek from a recorded biblical event more than 1500 years ago to a Scottish country dance, so how did that come to pass? The deviser of the dance is James Mungall, who hails from Louisiana. He is a member of The Caledonian Society of Baton Rouge, and, no surprise here, is an English teacher at the Baton Rouge Christian Life Academy. Personally, I am rather partial to square set dances, and find *Ezekiel's Wheel* quite enjoyable, especially with its Double Celtic Reels followed quickly by Schiehallion Reels. At the same time, a reading of the Strathspey Server on-line indicates that folks in some SCD groups are not happy with the slip-stepping across the set that follows, between the first and third couples, then the second and fourth, and instead add other formations in lieu of the slip-stepping. In response to which, Mr. Mungall said, in part, "I'm glad it worked for y'all".

Be that as it may, this dance certainly appeals to me. Maybe it might be worthwhile programming it a bit more often. ■



www.scottish-country-dancing-dictionary.com/video/ezekiels-wheel.html

The Reel Of The Gordon Highlanders 089- December, 2016 [video](#)

I happened to mention casually to a dancing colleague (hello Agnes) that I was thinking of writing a story on this dance from our November Workshop program. In response, she said her father Robert had served with that particular regiment early in the Second World War, but spent most of that time as a prisoner-of-war in Germany. That comment certainly perked my interest as a researcher, and here is what I found.

Gordon is one of those Scottish names that can be either a surname or what in less politically correct times was called a Christian name. There are others, like Douglas. I must admit I know quite a few gentlemen whom I call Gordon by first name but a fewer number whose name tells me they are members of Clan Gordon.

Generally located in Aberdeenshire, Clan Gordon originated in the 10th century. The current Clan Chief is the 13th Marquess of Huntly, headquartered at Aboyne Castle, which is just by the River Dee about halfway between Aberdeen and Braemar. If you go a few miles west from there, you will encounter the existing miles of the Royal Deeside Railway, once Queen Victoria's route for travelling in comfort to Balmoral Castle from Aberdeen. As most SCD folks know, it is also the name of what I think is a very well devised reel that will be featured at our Family Christmas Dance on December 10. But, I digress!

The Gordon Highlanders, a British Army infantry regiment, has a history going back well over 100 years. The regiment served in several wars and skirmishes throughout the Empire when maps of the world were heavily coloured pink to indicate British colonies. But my interest had to do with the Second World War.

A battalion of the Gordon Highlanders was shipped to France as part of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) in 1939. On arrival, the battalion became part of the 51st Highland Division, at the time that German Panzer units were thrusting their way into France, ultimately trapping the BEF on the wrong side of the English Channel. Some of us will remember the circumstances at Dunkirk in June 1940 in which the 51st Highland Division was charged with defending the evacuation of what was left of the BEF. A great many of its troops, certainly including members of the Gordon Highlanders, were captured and spent the rest of the war in German prisoner-of-war camp, as did the father of my dancing colleague.

Interestingly enough, *The Reel of the Gordon Highlanders* was devised by a Dutchman named Aad L M Boode. It appeared in the Delft Book of SCDs to celebrate the centennial of the Gordon Highlanders in 1994. Delft is a Dutch city close by The Hague and raises

the question in my mind about the activities of the 51st Highland Division as the Allies fought their way through the Netherlands in the winter of 1944-1945. Sure enough, they were in action there, likely including Gordon Highlanders. Perhaps Aad Boode devised this dance in recognition of their presence in the liberation of the Netherlands.

But wait a minute! We all know that the 51st Highland Division has a reel of its own, a reel that was devised by Scottish prisoners-of-war in one of the German Stalags. It is the only reel I have ever seen danced locally by an all-male team wearing army boots. I wondered if Agnes' father Robert was present when it was originated in Germany.

I later learned that Gordon Highlander Robert was not at Dunkirk, but actually captured at Tobruk in North Africa in 1942. He was not present at any subsequent campaigns but spent the remainder of WWII in Stalag XIA about 90 km south of Berlin.

The motto of both Clan Gordon and the Gordon Highlanders is Bydand, which, among other things, means Steadfast. At Dunkirk, and throughout the Normandy invasion that commenced on D-day four years later, steadfast they most certainly were. ■



The Dream Catcher 090- February, 2017 [video](#)

The dream catcher is a significant object in the culture of the Ojibwa people. Using willow wood and sinew, the mothers and grandmothers of infants would create a hoop on which would be woven a loose net of yarn, decorated with feathers and beads. The end result of this activity would be rather like a spider web. It would be hung over the infant's cradle. Its purpose was to filter out all bad dreams, allowing only good thoughts to enter the child's mind. Come daybreak, bad dreams would have disappeared. In the Ojibwa language a dream catcher is called *asabikeshiinh*, a form of the word for spider.

Now let's talk about *The Dream Catcher* as a Scottish country dance. As a 96-bar square set strathspey, it seems to have recently attracted quite a lot of attention and popularity. It first surfaced, I believe, in a Silver Anniversary Book of Dances published by an RSCDS Branch in the UK about 15 years ago, after which *The Dream Catcher* was recognized by the "powers that be" in Edinburgh as being worthy of world-wide publication in RSCDS Book 45. Given its background, and that the Ojibwa culture is centred mostly in that part of Ontario to the north of the Great Lakes, one would have



expected it to have been devised by a dancer from, say, RSCDS Ottawa, or Sudbury, or Thunder Bay. But surprise, surprise — it was devised by a teacher named Eileen Orr of RSCDS Tunbridge Wells.

Tunbridge Wells? The Royal Tunbridge Wells? About 40 miles south of London in the County of Kent? Yes! The very one!

The likelihood of encountering anything to do with Ojibwa culture in that part of "England's pleasant pastures seen" would be quite remote. So, I'm guessing that at some point in her life, Eileen Orr took a trip to Canada and may have seen or heard of a dream catcher.

I am sure that Tunbridge Wells is a lovely place to visit. I recall that it has an historic shopping centre called The Pantiles, built in the late 17th century. It received its Royal prefix in 1909 during the reign of King Edward VII, probably because as a spa it had been a favourite of his mother Queen Victoria and other "blue bloods" of the day.

Pantiles are a type of clay roof tile. However, to my knowledge, they have no dream-catching claim that they are capable of making one's good dreams come true.

Sláinte! ■



Dear Editor... [from the March, 2017, issue of *Set&Link*]

RE: *The Dream Catcher* — A letter from Pat Davoll of RSCDS Tunbridge Wells

Today I visited Eileen Orr [the deviser of *The Dream Catcher*, now in a retirement home]. She was pleased and intrigued that you were interested in the origins of the dance and its title.

I'm afraid that she wasn't able to recall the background to writing the dance (after all, it was 15 years ago). Eileen visited North America on several occasions, including a dance holiday to Canada in 1994 when we danced to Iain MacPhail and his Band in the Royal York Hotel, Toronto (13 and 14 September) before flying to Vancouver and then travelling on the Rocky Mountaineer train to Banff. Maybe some of your members even remember the event! I know this much detail as I was there too. We also took another holiday in 2000 around Colorado, Wyoming, and Utah. I think it was on that trip that we both bought dream catcher jewellery. This trip coincides with the time Eileen would probably have been devising the dance in time for the Royal Tunbridge Wells Silver Anniversary in 2001.

Although these holidays may have given her insight into dream catchers, she did say that it definitely hadn't been inspired by a particular holiday or event. She also doesn't remember which came first, the dance movements or the title, though I think you will agree the dance truly fits its title.

I would be pleased to receive a copy of the article in due course, which I will naturally share with Eileen.

With best wishes,

... Pat Davoll, Tunbridge Wells



Dear Editor... [from the May, 2017, issue of *Set&Link*]

RE: *The Dream Catcher* — Comments from Australia

Friends of ours in Toronto (Lourdes and Nigel) regularly send us copies of *Set & Link*. We particularly enjoy the "What's in a Name?" segment, but I was mildly amused that Barry Pipes, in Vol. 13, #6 (Feb 2017) was surprised that *The Dream Catcher* was devised by a teacher from England. It could just as easily have been written by somebody from Australia. The dream catcher is probably as well known here as the Australian boomerang is in North America. Plastic versions are readily available in many "cheap shops", which specialise in all sorts of interesting items imported from China or some other Asian countries.

While most of us would not be able to tell that dream catchers come from the culture of the Ojibwa people, we would associate them with the North American First Nation people. Their purpose would also be understood, although people usually buy them as decoration. I don't know if they have similar shops in England, so Barry's theory about a visit to Canada is probably correct.

...Don Chitts, Upwey, Victoria, Australia

The Jordanhill Strathspey 091- March, 2017 [video](#)

Those in attendance at last month's Tartan Ball had the pleasure of dancing this strathspey, and we do hope they enjoyed the opportunity.

The Jordanhill Strathspey is another of the many creations of that well-known SCD devisor Roy Goldring, and it was first published within his two-part 22 Social Dance Collections in the early 90s.

Jordanhill is all one word, so we can assume it is a place rather than a person's name. To that point, as any Glaswegian can confirm, Jordanhill is an up-market suburb in the west end of that city. One may well ask in what way is Jordanhill special enough to warrant having a Scottish country dance named after it? The answer has to do with an educational institute that existed in the community for 80 years between 1913 and 1993. It was called the Jordanhill Teacher Training College.

Included in its faculty for several decades was a person very well known to Scottish country dancing, namely, Miss Jean Milligan, who worked at Jordanhill College as lecturer in the field of Physical Education. It is said that it was in conjunction with the Jordanhill College in the '20s that Miss Milligan was introduced to Mrs Ysobel Stewart of Fasnacloch. Together, they took the initial steps in reactivating the joys of "dancing Scottish" into what became ultimately the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society.

In 1993, the College was acquired by Glasgow's University of Strathclyde and became the home of the university's Faculty of Education until 2012 when the University moved out, perhaps to centralize its activities in Glasgow's east side where most of Strathclyde's facilities are located.

Le Papillon 092- April, 2017 [video](#)

The Toronto Association Monthly Dance for March included a quite simple opening jig by this name. In keeping with the overall programme for this event, *Le Papillon* was a nice little dance for the beginner or the less experienced dancer. It is associated with the name Thomas Skillern, although he may not be the actual devisor of this jig. What I have learned about Thomas is that he was a well-known London publisher in the late 1700s. He produced a book in 1795 entitled *Skillern's Compleat (sic.) Collection of 204 Reels and Country Dances to be Performed at Court...* Maybe *Le Papillon* was included in this collection.

Interesting to me is that many people who may have just a passing knowledge of the French language seem to readily know that the French word papillon means "butterfly". How is that so? I mean, how many of us know the French word for "moth" for example? I certainly don't, and my French vocabulary is not too bad. Of course, there was a very popular film produced over 40 years ago in 1973 called *Papillon*, featuring actors Steve McQueen and Dustin Hoffman.

McQueen played the role of a convicted murderer named Henri Charrière, who in 1933 was sentenced to serve life imprisonment in the French penal system. He was shipped to Devil's Island, an infamous prison in French Guiana. With the help of Dustin Hoffman's character, Henri managed to escape back to France, where he later wrote a very successful autobiography about his experiences as a convict on Devil's Island. As it happens, Henri Charrière had a chest tattoo in the shape of a butterfly.

Enough about aging movies, let's talk butterflies.

A member of the order Lepidoptera, the butterfly can be evident in every well-tended garden in the summer months. Likewise the moth, in whatever language one chooses!

The 31 acres of the old Jordanhill Campus are now up for sale, and Strathclyde is working closely with Glasgow City Council to take advantage of the great position of the campus, located on a hill overlooking the city.

Newer buildings on the campus will likely be demolished to enable the construction of many new homes. I have not seen any price offered for the Jordanhill Campus, but its sale will be part of a major restructuring at Strathclyde which is expected to cost in excess of £350 million.

Needless to say, there are many nay-sayers among the local residents of the Jordanhill community, likely including a number of Glasgow's "movers and shakers." It may well, therefore, be quite some time before any significant activity takes place in the reconstruction of the campus' 31 acres. I suspect that any action to date will have been preceded by Roy Goldring's devising of this dance. Otherwise, he may well have been more inclined to name the dance *The Jordanhill Rant*.

Sláinte! ■



I doubt that many of us are entomologists, but the development of a butterfly from a larva into a chrysalis is clear to most, so I'll pass on a detailed description. However, to my aging eyes, there can be nothing more beautiful than the sight of les papillons, whether Monarchs or Red Admirals, floating from flower to flower in the course of their daily activities...even in French, feeling as I do that papillon is a more mellifluous word than butterfly. Does trouble lie ahead? We hear that Monarchs are facing endangerment due to the loss of suitable environment in Mexico where they winter, and we should perhaps be adding a herbaceous perennial called milkweed to our summer gardens to attract and nurture butterflies.

May I add a recommendation to conclude this piece? If one can be as transfixed about les papillons, a.k.a. butterflies, as I am, take a drive down to Niagara-on-the-Lake where the Niagara River flows into Lake Ontario, then enjoy the Niagara Parkway, which takes you through Niagara Falls all the way to Fort Erie. Just before you reach the main attraction, i.e. the Falls, you will encounter the Niagara Butterfly Conservatory, where there are over 2000 types of tropical butterfly, papillons en masse one might say. With UK guests, it is a wonderful visit.

World champion boxer Ali once said, "...float like a butterfly, sting like a bee". But no sting was evident at the March monthly dance as pros and beginners alike floated joyfully through *Le Papillon*. For ocular proof, [see this video from Beginners' Night](#)

Sláinte! ■

Granville Market 093- May, 2017 [video](#)

It may well be that there are quite a number of dancers in RSCDS Toronto who have never heard of Granville Market. Being located in Vancouver may account for that. The fact remains that Granville Island and the attractions it contains, including the Granville Public Market, are among Vancouver's tourist pleasures, much like Seattle's Pike Place Market a couple of hundred miles to the south in Washington State.



I mention that comparison, because the deviser of this dance, Elinor Vandegrift, is a very well-known member of RSCDS Seattle. As well as being a Scottish country dance teacher of long standing in the Seattle area, Elinor is an examiner of teacher candidates and, I rather suspect, travels extensively throughout North America in that role. I would also think that Elinor is very familiar with Interstate Highway 5 which runs north to the Canadian border, where it connects with B.C. Highway 99, taking her into Vancouver and crossing Granville Island in the process.

As well as the Public Market, Granville Island itself has amenities such as an extensive marina, a boutique hotel, and several performing arts theatres, fine art galleries, and a variety of shopping areas plus a craft brewer, The Granville Island Brewing Co. The Public Market features a big farmers' market and many retailers selling a variety of artisan foods and hand-made crafts.

Wells House 094- June, 2017 [animation](#)

"Wheear 'as ta bin sin ah saw thee?" / "On Ilkka Moor baht 'at"

I am sure that many readers will recognize the above couplet is the start of a quite well-known Yorkshire folk song. The Yorkshire county anthem perhaps? It refers to the moor that lies above the West Yorkshire community of Ilkley. Come to think of it, the song would be most boring as an anthem, having, as it does, innumerable verses delivered in the arcane Yorkshire dialect.

Ilkley? Now that rings a bell! Ilkley is indeed related to Scottish country dancing as I recall, being connected with one of SCD's most prolific dance devisors. Now, who would that be? Yes! Who remembers the iconic Roy Goldring? Deviser of such favourites as *Minister on the Loch*, *Argyll Strathspey*, *Reel of the Royal Scots*, *John of Bon Accord*, and countless other great dances. Not bad for a Yorkshireman. He probably enjoyed watching a good game of cricket as well. Or maybe not, as he was actually born in Devon, somewhat less known for its county cricket.

With all this preamble, one might assume there might also be an edifice in Ilkley by the name of Wells House. Right on ... as some might say! Wells House served as a private residence after being constructed in the early 1800s but was turned into a hotel and hydro in 1856 because of the recuperative powers of the local water. What we in Canada would call a spa is more likely to be known in Britain as a hydro. Roy Goldring was an Ilkley resident for over 30 years, and he actually taught Scottish country dancing at Wells House for a while, along with the assistance of his wife Doreen. This teaching gig clearly

My personal interest in the Island (actually a peninsula), is that my oldest son is an ocean-going tug pilot out of Vancouver harbour, and my second son owns a quite popular (if I may say so!) sports bar in the Seattle community of Greenwood, using a strong Canadiana setting. Over the years, I have visited both locations with some frequency and have even danced with Elinor's SCD Group.

Elinor's dance, *Granville Market*, is a 32-bar jig. I don't think I have ever danced it, but the opportunity will arise on June 24 when it will be performed at our celebratory Canada 150th birthday, Red & White dance programme at Grace Church-on-the-Hill. Let's have many of us in attendance at that event, all dressed up in red and white as has been requested.

Sláinte! ■

had enough significance for Roy that he wrote a strathspey by that name.

As you can see by the photograph of Wells House, it is a formidable looking building. In later years, however, Wells House has become home to a number of up-market apartments. Much as the developer may have hoped to raze the building and construct an estate of modern buildings in its stead, the Ilkley authorities did not allow this to happen, Wells House being a listed building that cannot be destroyed for heritage reasons.

As numerous SCD folk will be aware, Roy Goldring passed away in 2007. But what a legacy! I understand that his dance devising activities commenced in the early 70s when he became fully engaged with the Leeds Branch of RSCDS. Subsequently, he rose to the position of chair of Leeds Branch. He will certainly be remembered for the over 200 dances that he devised in a lifetime devoted to Scottish country dancing.

Dancers who attended the West Toronto Ball last May 13 will remember that Roy's *Wells House* strathspey was on the programme. We hope you enjoyed the opportunity to dance it. To close, here is a translation of the of the opening couplet:

"Where have you been since I saw you?" / "On Ilkley Moor without a hat!"

Sláinte! ■  [INDEX](#)



The Granville Market, Vancouver



Wells House, Ilkley, Yorkshire

The Craigellachie Reel 095- September, 2017 [video](#)

Here we are again, in my continuing efforts to stimulate interest in, and amuse readers with articles about the names of Scottish country dances. As you can see, the following story is my 95th which means that, all things being equal, I shall reach my 100th submission by February 2018, following over ten years of stumbling along.

Craigellachie? Seems like quite a mouthful! Where is it? Well, there are two answers to that query. The Canadian village of Craigellachie is in southeastern British Columbia. This is where in 1885, the celebratory "last spike" of the Canadian Pacific Railway was driven in by a CPR official. A significant event in Canadian history for sure, but not the Craigellachie at issue in this article. Scotland's Craigellachie is in Banffshire, and sits by the River Spey, squat in the heart of the Speyside single malt whisky industry. Up and down the Spey there are distilleries galore, including one in Craigellachie itself (The Macallan). They include Aberlour, Balvenie, Cardhu, Glenfiddich, The Glenlivet, and Strathisla, just to name some of the more popular ones.

The UK authority known as The Whisky Exchange has been quoted as saying that Speyside single malts seem to fall into two camps. There are the light, grassy, "lunchtime" whiskies like The Glenlivet, as opposed to the sweet, sherried qualities of The Macallan. Whatever the end result, there must be something magical in the waters drawn from the



River Spey and its tributary springs. The river rises in Loch Spey somewhere in the Cairngorm Mountains and wends its leisurely way in a northeasterly direction until it empties into the Moray Firth close by Lossiemouth. Should you want to visit Speyside, it's a great place to take a whisky tour, provided of course that you have lined up a "designated driver". Fine maybe for those of us who cherish a "Wee Dram" occasionally, or more frequently for others, but supposing you are in that locale simply to enjoy the scenery and make SCD connections? You might want to visit Maggie Knockater which is just up the road (A95), and see if there are any bees around for which it used to be well known. I covered John Drewry's jig *The Bees of Maggie Knockater* in my column of December 2006.

The Craigellachie Reel was devised by one George Will, about whom I can find little information, although he also devised a reel called *The Cooper's Wife*. This recollection leads me to think of another local tourist attraction. As I suspect, many of us know that a cooper is a tradesman with expertise in making and maintaining wooden barrels, casks, kegs, tuns, by whatever name. The Speyside Cooperage in Aberlour has a great Visitors Centre. It is well worth your attention if you wish to see how they refurbish American bourbon casks (which are not allowed to be reused in the USA). It is located hard by the Aberlour Distillery so you can also enhance your visit with the aforementioned "Wee Dram".

Those RSCDS Toronto dancers who attended Teresa Lockhart's CANADA 150 RED & WHITE occasion last June will have sampled the dance. [<https://youtu.be/5SpY-KMVobU>]. If the opportunity arises for you, I do encourage you to visit and share in my experiences in Speyside. Easy for me to say, because a branch of my family is resident in Kingussie (the G is pronounced as a Y) which is upriver on the Spey and a relatively short drive to Speyside.

Sláinte! ■

Postscript re: *The Craigellachie Reel*: In my WHAT'S IN A NAME? submission last month about *The Craigellachie Reel*, I mentioned I had been unable to secure much information about the dance's deviser, George Will. Thanks to an alert reader, I have now learned George was a Vancouver SCD teacher of long standing quite a number of years ago. I offer thanks to Bill Scott from Barrie, Ontario, who remembered meeting George at a Calgary SCD Workshop back in the 80s.

The Mason's Apron 096- October, 2017 [video](#)

Toronto's first Monthly Dance for the current season includes what seems to be a run-of-the-mill reel called *The Mason's Apron*. As has been the case over the many years I have written this column, I was again intrigued by the title of this dance and wanted to know more about it.

I mean no insult to the world of masonry when I say that, in very simple terms, a mason is akin to a bricklayer. Physically, what masons do is to build things that require such materials as bricks, stones, concrete, and cement. Of course, I am sure it's much more complicated than that. But, wearing an apron? Isn't that a kitchen process?

Setting aside for a moment the garb for either brick laying or preparing meals, what do we know of this particular dance? Drawing a bit of a blank in this respect, I can only find that it was included in an RSCDS publication called *Border Dance Book*. The deviser of *The Mason's Apron* seems to be anonymous, and I have not been able to track down either the contents of *Border Dance Book* or how it originated.

The dance itself, a reel, seems to be rather straightforward. The tune is quite a well known melody. Interestingly, it seems to have been adopted not only for SCD, but for traditional English Morris and Irish dancing. Certainly it is popular with fiddlers in a folk dancing context.

Truth be known, a mason's apron has served as an ancient badge of distinction for centuries, usually referenced to stone masons. Its purpose is recognized as indicating

innocence of conduct and purity of heart... hence its traditional use by those fraternal organizations known as Freemasons. Without getting too involved in the broad and quite complicated world of Freemasonry, I understand that a Master Mason is entitled to wear an apron that may be made of lambskin or white leather. This is again an emblem of innocence and possibly decorated with the Masonic symbol of a Square and Compasses.

Throughout my adult life, I have had an interest in British cathedrals and how they were constructed in mediaeval times. Those twelfth and thirteenth century stone masons were awesome in their knowledge of how to construct such massive edifices. With that in mind, I recommend the novel *Sarum*, a work of historic fiction written by Edward Rutherfurd in the 1980s. Fiction perhaps, but the book includes a very interesting section on the construction in England of what we know as Salisbury Cathedral.

To conclude on a light note, and with a nod to Freemasonry and masculinity, do you know the expression "Real men wear aprons"? This, perhaps, despite not eating quiche?

Sláinte! ■



A 3rd Degree Mason's Apron

Lady Peak's Strathspey 097- November, 2017 [video](#)

I am sure that many of us realize that numerous Scottish country dances exist that refer to Lady something or other. It has been my pleasure to cover a few of these British female aristocrats over the past decade or so. But Lady Peak? This is a new one for me. For a brief while I wondered if it might perhaps refer to a Lady of the Peak.

How so? Well, I hail from the English county of Derbyshire, a large portion of which lies within the Peak District. This is in reference to a range of small mountains called the Pennines. By far the most celebrated of British lady aristocrats within the Peak District has been the Duchess of Devonshire, née Deborah Mitford. Debo, as she was called not only by her family but also by the Queen, was one of the six infamous Mitford sisters. Infamous? I can only suggest you look them up. As a Duchess, Debo lived with the Duke at an imposing manor called Chatsworth House in the Peak District, and as a member of Britain's Youth Hostel Association in my youth, I spent many delightful weekends either cycling or hiking (nowadays known as rambling) throughout the Peak, including visits to Chatsworth where one was quite likely to meet the Duchess somewhere in the grounds.

Now, was Deborah Cavendish, née Mitford, Duchess of Devonshire, the Lady of the Peak? Or, Lady Peak as named in the dance? She died in 2014 at the age of 94, and I cannot confirm any hopes of tying her by name to the aforementioned strathspey. So, will you please excuse me for what has turned out to be rambling preamble. Back to the drawing board!

I checked on the devisor of *Lady Peak's Strathspey*, a lovely dance, and I should not have been surprised to find the devisor was the iconic John Drewry. Further research led me to British Columbia where, believe it or not, there exists in the Cheam Range of the



Duchess Debo



Lady Peak, in the Cheam Range of the Cascades near Chilliwack, BC.

Canadian Cascades, a 7000 ft mountain called Lady Peak. Locationwise, it's just a little east of Chilliwack and it's well known for its hiking trails. It would not surprise me therefore to learn that, at some point in the 90s, John Drewry made his way out to Vancouver, and being a known Rambler, found his way to Lady Peak. The dance was published in 1998 and featured in John's *Greenburn Book* series. Perhaps John's presence in B.C. at that time can be confirmed by someone at RSCDS Vancouver.

As has been written many times previously, John was born in the English town of Melton Mowbray in Leicestershire, better known for delectable pork pies than for any connection to SCD. Later in life, Drewry became an academic at Aberdeen University in the field of biochemistry and, after having devised over 800 Scottish country dances, he died

in 2014 at the age of 90. *Set & Link*, published a lead story on his life in its February 2009 edition [http://www.dancescottish.ca/archives-set&link_files/2009-Feb-Set%26Link.pdf]. It was written by veteran Thornhill dancer, Ross Floyd. Ross and his wife, Dorothy, who continue to dance with the Newtonbrook, Petronella, and Richmond Hill social groups.

I cannot recall having seen *Lady Peak's Strathspey* on any recent RSCDS Toronto dance programmes, but those dancers who travelled recently to RSCDS Kingston for its annual workshop and dance, will have enjoyed working their way through John's lovely formations in *Lady Peak's Strathspey*, celebrating his likely presence on the mountain in B.C. at some point in the past.

Sláinte! ■

See also ...

The follow-up on Barry's article about *Lady Peak's Strathspey* from SCD teacher, Rosemary Coupe of RSCDS Vancouver on next page...



Dear Editor...

Regarding: *Lady Peak's Strathspey* [December, 2017, issue of *Set&Link*]



Rosemary Coupe

Ruth Jappy kindly sent me a copy of *Set & Link* with the articles on George Will. I was very happy to see this recognition for George. In addition to everything else he did for dancing and music, I shall never forget him as a candidate tutor.

I also noticed your piece on *Lady Peak's Strathspey* in which Barry Pipes asks if anyone can confirm John Drewry's presence in Vancouver in the 90s. John was here twice, in 1996 and 1998, and both times he stayed with his friend Ken Crowe, also originally from England and also a hiker and a dancer. Ken lived in the Fraser Valley, below Mt Cheam (pronounced shay-am) behind which is Lady Peak. He had his own "Glenfraser" dance group which sponsored one, and sometimes two dances a year in the 90s. In 1996 his dance was a *Salute to John Drewry* and the entire programme consisted of Drewry

dances. The attached photo was taken outside the Yarrow Community Hall after the dance. (Sorry it isn't sharper.) It shows Drewry in the centre and Crowe in a red kilt a few people to the left. You may notice the motorbikes: the Harley Bikers' Club members were heading into the hall as the dancers headed out!

As you may know, two dances in *Greenburn II* were dedicated to Ken Crowe: *As the Crow Flies* and *Lady Peak's Strathspey*. Unlike the easier Mt Cheam, no trails run up Lady Peak – it's a scramble, though not too difficult. Lady Peak was named for Phyllis Munday, a legendary early mountaineer in BC. The only peak in the range which requires a rope is the sharp-pointed Baby Munday, named for the Munday's only child. It's nice to think that John Drewry enjoyed our local mountains.

... Rosemary Coupe



✦ Ken Crowe

◆ John Drewry

⚙ Harley Davidson

Cape Town Wedding 098- December, 2017 [video](#)

Before selecting this current offering for my column, I had never really given a thought to Scottish country dancing on the African continent. But why not?

We are very conscious of the fact that “Dancing Scottish” exists in such far away places as Australia and New Zealand. So why not Cape Town in South Africa?

Cape Town, on the south western tip of Africa, has a population of over three million inhabitants in its metropolitan area. Going forward from colonial days, it's quite likely the city was enhanced by any number of folk with Scottish heritage. Not only is there an RSCDS Cape Town Branch, but 800 miles north, in the region once known as Orange Free State and Transvaal, an RSCDS Branch also exists in Pretoria.

Pretoria? Wasn't that the Afrikaans capital city in the Boer War? The word *boer* is Dutch for farmer, but in today's enlightened times a Boer is more properly called an Afrikaner.



Tom Kerr

Just south of Pretoria, RSCDS Johannesburg Branch serves a population of over four million people — with more than a few Scots among them. Here's another interesting fact. RSCDS Cape Town celebrated its Diamond Jubilee (aka 60th Anniversary) in 2010. Which is to say, it's seven years older than our Toronto Association. There's no doubt Scottish Country Dancing is alive and well in South Africa.

But what is this 32-bar strathspey *Cape Town Wedding* all about? It was published in 1996 in RSCDS Book 39. It's a lovely, well constructed dance devised by Tom Kerr, an ex-pat Scottish engineer who until recently was a resident of South Africa. Until now, I had not been aware of Tom Kerr's rich history but thanks to the support of others (thank you, May, Halyna, Rob), I now know a little more than somewhat about Tom. From all accounts, he is a real “character” with many tales of his experiences in South Africa and elsewhere in the world, such as Brazil and Iran, where he worked in the oilfields. Tom actually learned to Dance Scottish in what is now known officially as The Islamic Republic of Iran.

He has an outstanding knowledge of the life of Robbie Burns, and he can rhyme off much of Robbie's poetry. A story Tom loves to tell is how he cured Queen Elizabeth of sea sickness. It seems that early in Tom's engineering career he designed stabilizers for ocean going vessels, including the *Royal Yacht Britannia*.



Cape Town and Table Mountain

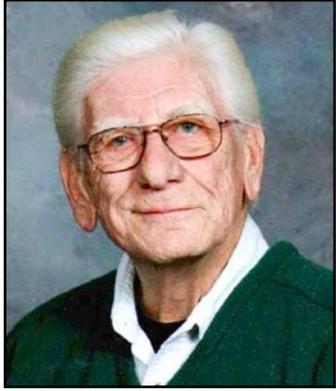
Cape Town Wedding is popular with dancers. Certainly a favourite of mine, this strathspey includes among other delights a tandem petronella — which reminds me that Tom Kerr has quite a story to tell about the dance. Tom, previously a widower, devised it to celebrate his second wedding. In the dance, symbolically, one is closely connected with one's partner more or less throughout the 32 bars. *Cape Town Wedding* also includes a tandem reel across the dance and concludes with, what else, the knot. I've danced plenty of knots but never considered them as tying things up in a marital sense.

Apparently, Tom's wedding did not survive the 'til-death-do-us-part principle. His marriage ended in divorce, though he and his ex remain friends. Not a bad outcome. In recognition of his divorce, Tom devised a dance sequel. He called it *Fare Thee Well*, and it has a new formation he invented: “untying the knot”. For the record, one can purchase from TAC a book called simply *Tom's Book of Dances*.

Although he represented Cape Town at the 2016 RSCDS AGM, Tom is now believed to be living in the UK.

For Toronto dancers, there is a nice bonus to this story. Toronto teacher May Divers will present a Sunday afternoon sampling of Tom Kerr dances (and a wee bit of Glasgow) at Broadlands, December 10, 2:00 - 4:00. Expect clever dances.

Sláinte! ■

The Haggis Tree 099- January, 2018 [crib](#)**Barry Pipes**

With tongue thrust firmly into cheek, I'd like to bring to your attention a Scottish legend that the haggis grows on trees. This being the month we celebrate Robbie Burns Day, and when that thing known as a haggis is addressed, we need to put to rest anyone's concerns about where a well-prepared haggis actually originates and what it contains.

It is said, and perhaps even believed by some, that haggis can be found growing on a rare type of Scottish tree. Should you be fortunate enough to come upon such a tree, and find a haggis or two that has ripened and fallen from said tree, then proceed as follows. Marinate the haggis with a generous supply of your favourite

single malt Scotch and cook to taste. The result will be as fresh and flavourful a delicacy as you will ever have experienced.

As we now return to reality, setting legends aside, those of us who delight in our annual opportunity to savour a very tasty haggis more than likely know what it contains. We may even know what constitutes sheep's pluck, which of course covers the primary ingredients, by name: lamb's heart, liver, and lungs. As most of us well realize, the pluck is ground up with oatmeal, onion, suet, and spices, all compressed into a bladder that used to be made from the animal's stomach but now is likely to be an artificial facsimile.

There was an interesting snippet of news recently about a Scottish butcher, Macsween of Edinburgh, wanting to import haggises directly from Scotland into Canada. But there's a snag! Canadian Food Regulations forbid the importation of animal lungs for reasons too complex to be discussed here. So Macsween plans to adjust its haggis recipe, eliminating the lung component. In the eyes of established Canadian haggis makers, this is too non-traditional and lacking in quality to be acceptable to Scottish-Canadians.



One Toronto critic, Allen's Scottish Butchers on Weston Road, has been making haggis for over 40 years using home-grown ingredients including those important lungs.

The owner, Steve Allen, who is a Liverpoolian by birth, believes that Canadian haggis eaters will recognize such a blatant shortcoming in the Macsween product. Stay tuned!

Back to the dance. John Drewry, perhaps also with tongue in cheek, devised *The Haggis Tree* as a strathspey, and published it in his *Autumn 83 Collection* some 30-odd years ago. It is especially interesting in that it contains a relatively uncommon formation called La Baratte (the churn), which adds to this strathspey quite distinctively. You have not heard of La Baratte? I recommend that you take a look at [The Haggis Tree on YouTube](#). It is seen as danced in 2016 by the Humbercrest and Erin Mills groups at our last Gala Day in 2016.

In conclusion, two brevities for us haggis eaters to recognize are.....

1. Don't forget the neeps and tatties.
2. Fair fa' your honest sonsie face.

Sláinte! ■

**VIDEO:** <https://youtu.be/Uej7 MssB14>

Conclusion: *Sir Barry Pipes* 100- March, 2018 [video](#)

Well, here I am offering my final submission in *Set&Link's* decade-plus series under the headline of *WHAT'S IN A NAME?*

Conclusion? Final submission? Yes indeed! After submitting this, my 100th column, I have reached the end of the line. I have been turning this matter over in my mind for quite a few months at this point. And every bit as importantly, so has the Newsletter Committee. Doesn't 100 submissions seem to be an appropriate point in time to wrap things up? If not, when? At my 90th birthday, which is not that far down the road? Have I run out of steam to a degree that further columns are beyond my weary mind to contemplate? Not really! Couldn't I have continued for a further three months until the end of the current dancing season in June? Of course!

Further, I had been advised that members of the Newsletter Committee themselves had a preference for a 100 submission close, and in my view the easiest course of action was to agree. I could easily understand and buy into the Committee's point of view. If permitted to continue indefinitely, what if, without warning, I had shuffled off this mortal coil prematurely, eh?

Getting back to reality, I have thoroughly enjoyed the monthly commitment that *WHAT'S IN A NAME?* has entailed. Moreover, I have been grateful for the steady flow of reader feedback derived by my columns. But notwithstanding anything else, I always found the Newsletter Committee to be helpful in every way.

And in conclusion, among the quite satisfying comments of approval received over the years, the one I will remember best (thank you, Carole Bell) was, more or less, as follows. "Reading your columns, Barry, is sort of like standing alongside you in normal conversation. You write in the way you speak."

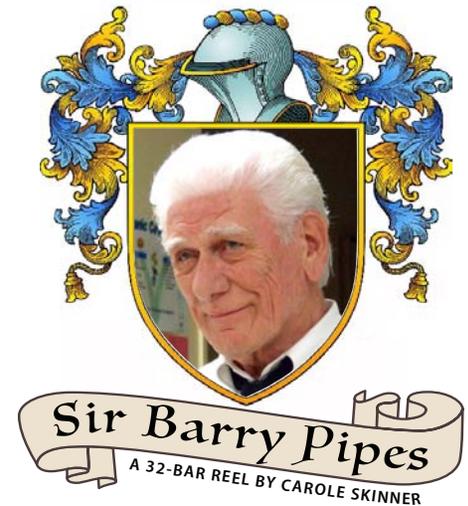
Here is a final message for all my past readers. As my personal physician has always encouragingly said at our frequent meetings, "Whatever else your future holds, Barry, just keep on dancing!"

That I will! *Sláinte* everyone! ■

...Barry Pipes



**Barry Pipes: compère of
RSCDS Toronto Gala Day 2016**



- 1 - 4: 1st couple, cross right hand and cast one place (2s step up bars 3-4).
- 5 - 8: 1st couple dance down the middle, nearer hands joined.
- 9 - 12: 1st couple dance up and finish in the middle of the set at 2nd place, facing up on opposite sides.
- 13 - 16: 1st woman: left hands across with 2nd and 3rd men, AS: 1st man: right hands across with 2nd and 3rd women; finish facing first corners.
- 17 - 20: 1st couple dance 1/2 diagonal reel of four with 1st corners; dance right shoulder round each other to face 2nd corners.
- 21 - 24: 1st couple dance 1/2 diagonal reel of four with 2nd corners, finish in 2nd place opposite sides.
- 25 - 32: 1st couple cross right hand, and cast to the right.
Meanwhile: Corners set and cross right hand.
1st couple change right hand up and down the dance and cast to the right.
Meanwhile: Corners set and change right hand up and down the dance. (corners loop into place where appropriate).

Repeat, having passed a couple.

Devised May 17, 2006. Carole's Dedication: *The title of Sir is not official, but as far as I am concerned it is well earned and well deserved. In Barry's job as Chairman of the Petronella group, he has often been my knight in shining armour. He has dedicated himself to the smooth running and the organization of the group. Barry is officially retiring his position as Chairman, but I have a feeling that Petronella will have the benefit of his expertise for a long time to come.*