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# THE SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCER

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Volume 18, Issue 6

May/June 2002

## *Manager's Message*

Hello Everyone! Well, summer's almost here and we haven't set a date for the AGM ... so, we will schedule our Annual General Meeting for May 20<sup>th</sup>, starting at 9:15pm (right after class). All members are invited to attend!

Would everyone who is currently doing a "job" please refresh my memory? I mean things like Historian, Hospitality (cakes, cards, etc), Publicity, Newsletter, or something I've missed. Please be prepared to give or send a report for the AGM. I also need to know if you'd like to continue in that capacity or elect to move on, perhaps as Manager?

I feel I've been Manager for long enough and have a desire for someone else to fulfill that office. I don't have a list of duties per se, but it is basically following our by-laws to oversee the group as a whole. Many responsibilities are delegated to others as per above "jobs". Copies of the by-laws can be obtained and I'll answer any questions you may have. Meanwhile – keep dancing!

*John*



## **Japan Tour on the Horizon**

About eleven years ago, at the invitation of the Intercultural Society for the Arts, Marge Van Nus led a group of Scottish Country Dancers on a dancing and teaching tour of several cities in Japan.

Now, she has again been invited to do a teaching tour of Japan, and to help her demonstrate these dances, a small group of dancers from Washington, Oregon, and Nevada will be accompanying her this Fall. More details will be posted as they become known.

## *Do you have an item of Celtic interest you would like to see in print?*

You can contact me in any of the following ways:

By mail:

John Shaw - SCD  
PO Box 2438  
Battle Ground, WA 98604-2438

By email: bcjs@attbi.com

## **How to Know a Scottish Dancer –**

Pat's Party Pieces

If you ask a question  
How to know a Scottish dancer  
It's really very simple  
For there is only one answer.

The easy way to spot him  
Is his roving, rolling eye,  
And if you don't believe me –  
Well I will tell you why.

He has one eye on his partner  
And one eye on the set,  
He has to watch a lot more things  
I haven't mentioned yet.

He has to cover up and down  
And watch his teacher, too –  
How else is he supposed to learn  
The footwork he must do?

One eye swivels to his corner  
One eye squints along the line –  
When he is completely cross-eyed  
Then you know he is doing fine.

And often you will notice  
A fleeting, haunted glance  
That's when he copies someone else  
Who really knows the dance.

Well there's the explanation – but  
I'll tell you one thing more –  
There's one place he must not look –  
And that is the floor.

[from the Ottawa Branch Bulletin,  
April/May 2001, as seen in The  
Tartan Times Nov/Dec 2001]



## Scottish Immigrants Brought Their Fiddles

by John Parris

Scottish fiddling is the grandsire of our mountain fiddling.

When the Scottish, Irish, Welch and English immigrants settled in North Carolina in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, they brought a rich musical tradition with them.

The Irish brought their harps and their pipes. And the Scots brought their fiddles.

A few of the Scottish immigrants like Alexander MacRae, who once grazed sheep on the grassy meadows of Grandfather Mountain, managed to bring his bagpipes, whose playing had been treated as a treasonable offense in Scotland after Bonny Prince Charlie's defeat in 1745.

And it was MacRae and other Highland emigrants to America who kept the music of the pipes alive while bagpipe-playing in Scotland

languished from 1747 till 1881 when the Highland Society of London instituted in Scotland a number of competitions for bagpipe-playing.

But it was the Scottish settlers who introduced their fiddles, their fiddle-playing and their fiddle-tunes into America's Southern Highlands.

The fiddle has long held a place in the Scottish Highlands as an instrument for dancing-tunes but has never been a rival of the pipes.

Gaelic experts of Highland music point out that the fiddle, owing to its greater compass, is admirably adapted for playing reels, strathspeys, and light dance-music, while for some the bagpipes are not adapted.

Knockie's "Collection of Highland Music" of 1874 gives an interesting example of the respective degrees of popular estimation in which the pipe, the harp, and the fiddle were held in the Highlands.

*see Fiddling, page 3*

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*When you tell a guitarist joke, everybody laughs...*

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## Calendar of Events

- May 4 **Corvallis 2<sup>nd</sup> Biannual Ball & Tea**  
 Hosted by the Corvallis Scottish and English class, sponsored by Corvallis Parks and Recreation.  
 Contact Jil Callaghan (541) 753-4427  
 Musicians: Linda Danielson – fiddle, Diane Dugaw – piano  
 Registration starts at Noon  
 The ball begins with a grand march at 7:45 pm  
 \$17 for the ball, \$3 for the tea  
 Location: Gaton Hall at the First Congregational Church at 4515 SW West Hills Road
- May 11 **Portland RSCDS Dance Party** Tigard Grange 13770 SW Pacific Hwy., Tigard, 7:30pm  
 \$8.00 Music provided by Scottish Rose  
**Info:** [PDXSCD@NWStuff.com](mailto:PDXSCD@NWStuff.com), Jen 360-887-8751, Debbie 503-620-3034  
**Program:** Angus MacLeod, Reel of the Royal Scots, The Fusilier's Dream, Simplicity, Machine Without Horses, The Phantom Piper, Argyll's Fancy, Gaelforce Wind, The Rose Garden, Mrs. Milne of Kinneff, Wagons West, The Banks of Clyde, + a "dancers' choice"
- May 18 **Seattle Scottish Country Dance May Ball**  
 Mercer Island Congregational Church, 4545 Island Crest Way, Mercer Island, WA  
 6:30 reception; 7:30 Grand March & Ball  
 \$40 for dancers before May 11th (\$25 for non-dancers)  
**Info:** Adeline Crinks 425-823-7845 [ajcrinks@earthlink.net](mailto:ajcrinks@earthlink.net); Susan Brady 425-823-9248  
[shufflestep@hotmail.com](mailto:shufflestep@hotmail.com)
- May 22 **Annual General Meeting**  
 At the Oak/Elm rooms at the Marshall Center, 9:15pm (right after class)
- June 8 **Portland RSCDS Dance Party** Tigard Grange 13770 SW Pacific Hwy., Tigard, 7:30pm  
 \$4.00 Music from tapes & CDs  
**Info:** [PDXSCD@NWStuff.com](mailto:PDXSCD@NWStuff.com), Jen 360-887-8751, Debbie 503-620-3034  
**Program:** Miss Allie Anderson, The Rose Garden, Simplicity, The Phantom Piper, Out Under the Stars, The Hamilton Rant, The Nurseryman, The Banks of Clyde, Pinewoods Reel, Argyll's Fancy, The Trysting Place, Rovin' Robin, + a "dancers' choice"

- July 20 **Portland Scottish Highland Games** Mt. Hood Community College, Gresham  
**Info:** [games@phga.org](mailto:games@phga.org) 503-241-1124 (Clans: 503-524-6364)  
**Web-site:** [www.phga.org](http://www.phga.org)
- Aug 31- **Kelowna Scottish Country Dancers Workshop, Banquet, and Ball --** Mount Boucherie  
 Sep 2 Complex, 2741 Cameron Rd. Kelowna, B.C.  
 Teachers: Bill Zobel, Scotland; Wendy Swaine, Vancouver B.C.  
 Music: Alex Jappy, Vancouver B.C.  
 Saturday, August 31<sup>st</sup>: registration 6:30pm; Ceilidh 7:30  
 Sunday, September 1<sup>st</sup>: classes 9am – 2:45pm, with morning muffins and a lunch  
 Sunday evening: cocktails 6:30pm, Banquet 7:00, Ball 8:00  
 Monday September 2<sup>nd</sup>: muffins and coffee at 9am, classes 10am – Noon.
- Registration deadline, August 15<sup>th</sup>. For more info, contact: Davina Crowe, 2321 Newman Rd. Kelowna BC, V1V 2C8; phone: (250) 762-9930. or email [davina\\_crowe@telus.net](mailto:davina_crowe@telus.net); or visit their website at <http://members.shaw.ca/rodmcrae>.
- Sept 13- **Fort Worden 2002 –** Workshop and Ball. Additional details will be available in the coming  
 15 months. Or check the Seattle website: [www.scn.org/arts/scottish](http://www.scn.org/arts/scottish). *Note: registration will begin May 1<sup>st</sup>!*

#### Teachers

Irene Townshend, Edmonton, AB, Canada  
 Fiona Turnbull, Bernard Castle, UK  
 Bruce Hamilton, Menlo Park, CA, USA  
 Oberdan Otto, Camarillo, CA, USA  
 Jo Hamilton, Menlo Park, CA, USA - Step dance.

#### Musicians (Friday & Saturday evening dances)

*The Music of Spey*  
 Calum MacKinnon (Fiddle), Washington, USA  
 John Taylor, California, USA  
 Ralph Gordon (Bass & Cello)

at the Erickson Hall, Jefferson County Fairgrounds, Port Townsend, WA.

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*...but when you tell a bagpipe joke, everyone nods in solemn agreement.*

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### ***Fiddling (continued)***

"Grant of Sheugly, in Glenurquart, supposed composer only of the verses to this beautiful ancient air 'Mairi Nighean Deorsa' (Mary, George's Daughter)," the book said, "was himself a performer on the violin, pipe, and harp, and it would appear, a poet in like manner.

"In appreciating the qualities of each instrument, he supposes they had quarreled, and that he was called upon to decide the contest.

"In addressing a verse to his pipes, he observes, 'how it would delight him, on hearing the sound of war, to listen to her notes in striking up the 'Gathering', to rally round the chief, on a frosty spring morning, whilst the hard earth reverberated all her notes so as to be heard by the most distant person interested.'

"To the harp he says, 'The pleasure which thy tones afford are doubled whilst accompanying a sweet female voice, or round the festive board, inspired by love or wine, I reach beyond my ordinary capacity, and feel the pleasure of pleasing.'

"But to his violin, which he calls by the literal name of the air, 'Mary, George's Daughter,' and seems to have been his favorite,

though held cheap by the other combatants, he says, 'I love thee for the sake of those who do – the sprightly youth and bonnie lassies – all of whom declare that at a wedding, dance, or ball, thou with thy bass in attendance can have no competitor, thy music having the effect of electricity on those who listen to it;' and on thus receiving their due share of praise, their reconciliation is convivially celebrated."

John Turner of Chesterfield County, Virginia, a 32-year-old third generation fiddler, has been a major force in the revival of Scottish fiddling in the United States.

He has twice been the U.S. National Scottish Fiddling Champion and the Eastern U.S. Scottish Fiddling Champion. He has performed throughout the Eastern United States and in England and Scotland, in concert and on radio and television.

He has participated in the Ceilidhs at the Grandfather Mountain games for the past six years, and it has been

*see Fiddling, next page*

***Fiddling (continued)***

mainly his work that led the Grandfather Games to offer competition in Scottish fiddling in 1983.

He pointed out that the technique is somewhat different from the classical violin approach, due to the light, fast jigs and dances.

"Bowling is the main difference," Turner said. "In Scottish fiddling it's a strong right arm with an emphasis on the upbow."

He said that the art of Scottish fiddling is probably the least known Scottish art in this country.

"However, anyone interested in Scottish culture, and music in particular, should be aware of the importance of Scottish fiddling as an art for several reasons.

"Fiddling was primarily a social art. Most towns and villages in Scotland had a fiddler, who performed for dances, weddings and so forth."

He pointed out that often, like noblemen and royalty in Europe, individual lairds took fiddlers under their patronage.

"Scottish fiddling in America," Turner said, "evolved into the style known as blue grass. In fact, many of the tunes have survived – such as a 'bluegrass' tune called 'The Devil Among the Tailors'."

*Reprinted from The Asheville Citizen, Asheville, North Carolina*

**Some Dance Miscellanea****Why Dance?**

*From the Daily Mail and the NY Branch Newsletter (via the Tartan Times of Boston Branch)*

The eminent psychologist, Dr. Michael Argyle specifically advocates Scottish Country Dancing because it embodies all the attributes human beings need for physical well-being including exercise, rhythm, music, brainwork, team cooperation, and sheer enjoyment.

**George Washington Danced Here**

*from the Highlander*

Robert Liston, born in Scotland, and educated at University of Edinburgh, was the British Ambassador to the US in 1796. His wife, Henrietta, kept a journal of their American experience. She told of a birthday Ball for President Washington--"country dances and Cotillions were executed with 10 – 15 couples each (set?) radiating from the center, so that 300 or more persons were in motion at the same time".

