

Neglected Dances

Spring Workshop 2012

The day was led by Jean Martin, accompanied by Jennifer Wilson. In the morning session Jean chose dances which she felt were being neglected, always good to be reminded of gems from the past. The dances were *Willie wi' his Tartan Trews* (Book 14), *Red House* (Book 7), and the potentially daunting *Miss Janet Laing's Strathspey* (Book 22). It is always good for us as teachers to be taught and experience another teacher's perspective. For those of us who had never warmed up to *The Dundee Stomp*, I am sure it is now firmly in our repertoires - not to mention the disorientation of petronella-ing to our left as 1st man and 4th lady have to do in *Janet Laing*. Part of the value of being taught is in the private conversations the teacher is often unaware of (Oh, is that how you do that . . . I didn't realise that . . . mmm, I've never taught it like that before).

August 2015

Old Dances TAS August 2015

The review of old dances has been completed with a slowly reducing number of scores as time went on. The first few books had 28 people submit suggestions but by the time the MMM was reviewed only 10 people submitted suggestions which has resulted in no dances being put forward from MMM.

Margaret McCann looked at the scores and short-listed those with the highest scores. Margaret Ross and I then reviewed these and have suggested the following. They are not all those with the highest scores, but we selected them for being slightly different and perhaps more interesting. For instance, many of the dances on the long short list had similar 16 bars of 'set to and turn corners, reels with corners'.

There was no scientific methodology however it could be re-done just choosing the highest scoring dances as a percentage of the people who submitted for each book. So a score of 5 from 10 people actually is higher than a score of 10 from 28 which would then bring in dances from MMM. However, as the overall submissions are low we felt it needs to go back to the group.

What next?

Do we circulate this round for people to file away or use for classes and dance programmes?

Do we use these as a basis for the next TAS workshops?

Do we suggest that they are used for the next RSCDS AGM programme?

Strathspeys

Glasgow Highlanders

Bk 2 - 5 votes

Unusual progression, RL's, Reels, Highland steps

Delvine Side

Bk 2 - 9 votes

Allemande to corners, turn 2H. 3's only dance as corners

Peggy's Love

Bk 8 - 9 votes

Allemande, set to corners, Half Diamond Poussette

Reels

Triumph

Bk 1 - 10 votes

Dance up in "Triumph", unique Poussette to bottom

La Tempete
Bk 2 - 5 votes Basic formations, all steps required, mixer
Longwise Eightsome
Bk 18 - 6 votes Medley, Chain, Promenade, Poussette, reel, circle

Jigs

Scottish Reform
Bk 3 - 8 votes Balance in line across, Poussette, very hard work!
Golden Pheasant
Bk 16 - 6 votes 5 formations and transitions. GPO-CDT
Gentle Shepherd
Bk 17 - 5 votes Slow Jig, phrasing, 4's are admiring goal posts

Kate McArdle (on behalf of the Neglected Dances Group)

Autumn Workshop 2016

After a warm up we started with *Book 1* and *Fight about the Fireside*. Easy, basic figures and little memory work but 12 bars of pas de basque! The strathspey *Delvineside* followed from *Book 2* with Oluf emphasising the need to phrase the turn corner and the travel to 2nd corner. A change of partner and into the jig *Miss Mary Douglas* from *Book 10*. At 48 bars need we say more about it being neglected, and yet it has turned up in some west coast programmes recently. A rest from dancing as Oluf discussed the reel *Mr Wilson's Hornpipe* from *Book 16*. On with the dancing and the strathspey *Green Grow the Rashes* from *Book 12*. Oluf talked about using the setting on bars 9-10 to improve the flow of the turn to face down, and again looking at the phrasing of bars 17-20 and 21-24 for the 3 hands round. Time was moving on and we finished with a look at the jig *The Golden Pheasant* from *Book 16* which finishes with one couple setting for 16bars.

After lunch it was on with the dance and Angela Young looked at other neglected dances. We started with a jig, that old favourite in some areas *Prince of Orange* from *Book 6*, then into *Book 1*, No. 1 the Reel *Petronella*, a dance which we should be doing regularly as we have so many dances with petronella turns, petronella in tandem etc. Angela feels we should be using *Book 1* more with dances like *Circassian Circle*, *Strip the Willow* and *Duke of Perth*. Then we had *The Glasgow Highlanders* from *Book 2* with its own setting step, which a few members had difficulty with. On then to *Book 7* and the reel *Red House* with its unusual reel of three. Other dances Angela mentioned were *The River Cree* and *Campbell's Frolic*. Then to *Book 15* and the 48-bar jig *Waverley* or *Fergus McIver* with slightly awkward turns. We then turned to *Book 9* and the 32-bar strathspey *Jimp Waist* with its unusual first 8 bars. Angela then finished off with a 64-bar square dance from the *Border Book*, *La Russe*.

Spring Workshop 2019

Oluf Olufsen started us off, teaching some interesting Neglected Dances which we all enjoyed, accompanied on piano by Mo Rutherford. These dances would be suitable for any average class, including beginners. Oluf gave us some teaching tips along the way which will be very useful for teaching our own classes.

We started with *Lady Home's Jig* from MMM with music by Niel Gow. The dance starts with six hands round and back. Instead of joining hands we danced it with our palms touching. This ensured we had our hands at shoulder height. The next formation was a Grand Chain and we tried dancing it touching backs of hands. This ensured we were moving independently rather than relying on momentum from the person we were passing. Oluf also mentioned important points such as timing, thinking ahead, eye contact, smiling and the use of firm arms for turning corners and partner.

The second dance was the *White Cockade* from Book 5. Oluf spoke about the importance of remembering the Scottish historical and cultural connections to dances. In 1745, when Prince Charlie landed in Scotland, he picked a white rose to wear in his hat and thereafter his followers wore white cockades as their emblem. Robert Burns subsequently wrote a song, *The White Cockade*, set to the older traditional tune. In the dance itself Oluf brought out points such as the change of speed and the change of step from Pas de Basque to Skip Change to Slip Step.

Finally, we did the Strathspey *Miss Catherine Allan* from RSCDS Leaflet (17). Apparently, this lady was an elegant dancer and this is an elegant dance with an elegant tune, *Beauty of the North* by Captain Simon Fraser. We did our best to dance elegantly and focus on timing, covering and eye-contact.

If there had been time we would also have done *The Music Will Tell You* from Book 41. This reel includes a Pousette, a formation which was once very common but is dropping out of many programmes. It is important that we teach the Pousette and include it in programmes so that it is not lost from Scottish Dancing.

Oluf also mentioned *Open the Door to Three* from the 1749 Castle Menzies collection (RSCDS Book 34). This is a 48 bar reel. Although some people think this would be too long to dance, it has the same number of bars as a two-couple dance three times through.