

The Missing MacNabberies by Stephen Webb



**Mrs Mary Isdale MacNab
1889-1966**

Can You Help? Update

On p14 Reel 306 we gave you a MacNabberies update and on that basis this list can now be concluded. We have listed 117 MacNab collected dances known to have existed, should any reader know of any others please do tell us. You can see by the aid of colours, which dance there is no description for, in formal leaflet or otherwise and which are now being sought.

We are grateful at this stage to John Wilkinson of Edinburgh for the original leaflet of *The Huntly Reel*, received on an earlier occasion and more recently Robert and Mamie Donald of Formby for providing descriptions, written in an informal form, of MacNab dances *Glengarry Waltz* and *Lewis Bridal Dance*, Rosemary Coupe of Vancouver for the original leaflets for *McKenzie of Seaforth*, *Perth Assembly* and *The Rose of Benbecula* and Joan Desborough of Tring for the original leaflet of *The Broad Swords of Lochiel* and informal description of *The Village Maid*.

In the foreword of *McKenzie of Seaforth* and *Perth Assembly* Mrs Elizabeth Sutorius (who passed away in November 2009), Mrs MacNab's niece, states she was bequeathed all rights and title of her Aunt's collection (and as confirmed in Mrs MacNab's Will) and that 'these were to be made available to teachers of highland dancing throughout the world'. It is not clear however of what the collection consisted or how this was to be achieved. It would therefore be appropriate for the RSCDS to, in due course as a project, publish a further volume of Scottish dances collected by Mary Isdal MacNab to go with those already published to ensure they are not lost to posterity and for the continued enjoyment of Scottish dancers and thus 'establish a living memorial to this wonderful lady' and be true to the Society's Objects and Activities as they relate to the preservation of Scottish dances.

Further to Reels 305 and 306 and *The Thistle* No.33 here is the complete current updated list of The Missing MacNabberies (see Reel 295 p8 & 296 p10) together with those already located:

Original nine sets 1948-1966 - reprinted by RSCDS (29)

Leaflet descriptions located (11) - see image of leaflets (right)

Typed descriptions from Tom Flett/ Elizabeth Sutorius/ Hugh Thurston and others (17) - originals still sought

Handwritten dances and notes, possibility of being interpreted (16) - originals sought
Dances mentioned in correspondence from 1950s & 60s or in lists as existing (44) - any information and originals sought

Solo step - dances for men - *The Dirk Dance*, *The Earl of Ross* (sword-dance), *The Laird of Dochart*, *McKenzie of Kintail* (*Earl of Kintail's Reel*), *The Royal Archers*, *A Salute to Mac Nab* (*MacNab's Salute*), *Scottish Lilt or Jig*.

Solo step - dances for women - *Aberdeen Lassies*, *An Cailin Cuairt* (*The girl visited*), *Bonnie Breist-Knot* (*My lady's breist-knot or The lovers' knot*), *Brachan Mhairi Visne* (*Mary Hughes' Tartan Dress*), *The Bride's Dance*, *The Caller Herrin* (*A Fishwife's Hornpipe*), *Flowers of Edinburgh*, *Hopping Dance*, *Indian Stick Dance*, *Island Herd Maid*, *Lady Betty's Favourite* (*The Highland Chief*), *Lady Louisa MacDonald of Sleat*, *Maid of Islay*, *Marie's Wedding*, *Morag's Dance*.

Duets & Trios - *Bronach*, *The Braes of Tulliemet*, *The Deeside Lilt*, *Double Sword Dance*, *Iona Courting-Dance*, *The Jacobite Sword Dance*, *Mari Ban's Bridal*, *The Shepherd's Crook*, *The Rose of Benbecula*.

Sword-dances (other than solo and duet) - *Argyle Sword Dance*, *The Broad Swords of Lochiel*, *The Clansmen*, *Clan Ronald Sword*, *Perth Assembly*, *The Sword Dance of Culloden* (*Culloden*), *The Three Swords*.

Set-dances for men (other than sword-dances) - *Friockheim* (*The House on the Heather*), *The House of Fraser*, *The Huntly Reel*, *McKenzie of Seaforth*, *The Sailors' Knot*, *Star of Robbie Burns*, *Whirlygig*.

Miming or Acting Dances - *Death Dance*, *The Fiery Cross* (two men and a boy), *Flower of Benbecula* (one woman), *Reel of the Blackcocks*, *The Sailors of Harris*, *The Village Maid* (one woman).

Special Dances - *The Brooch of Lorne*, *Eight Men of Moidart*, *Hebridean Weaving-Lilt*, *MacNeil of Barra*, *The Men of Moussa*, *Moulin Dhu* (*The Black Mill*).



Country

Dances incl. Set

Because he was a Bonnie Lad, *Bonnie Anne* (*The Royal Child*), *Bonnie Prince Charlie*, *The Braes of Balquhider*, *Brig o' Doon*, *The Cameronian Rant* (*The Cameronians*), *Duke of Gordons Fairhaired Lassies*, *The Duke of Gordon's Welcome to Aberdeen*, *The Earl of Errol's Reel* (*The Hay Polka*), *Four Marys*, *Glengarry Waltz*, *Jeannie o' the Witchin' E'e*, *Kelvingrove*, *Laird o' Dochart's Reel*, *Lamont of Inveryne*, *The Lerwick Reel*, *Lewis Bridal Dance*, *Lochanside*, *The Lovat Star*, *MacDonald of Sleat*, *McLaine of Lochbuie* (*McLaine's Hogmanay*), *MacLeod of Dunvegan* (*Dunvegan Castle*), *MacLeod of Lewis*, *MacLeod of Harris*, *McNichol of the Black Isle*, *The Meeting of the Waters*, *Miss Fiona MacRea of Conchra*, *Over the Dee and Over the Don*, *Piper's Polka*, *Portree Lassies*, *Rothsay at the Fair*, *Rouken Glen*, *The Royal Salute*, *St Andrew's Cross*, *St Andrew's Nicht*, *Shandy Heather Waltzing Medley*, *Tir Nan Og* (*Land of the Eternal Young*), *Waltz Cotillion*, *A Weaving Lilt*, *Wee Waltz*.

Other Dances - no information on these - *The Bride of Iona*, *Elspeth Campbell*, *Fetlar Isle*, *Green Hills*, *Hebridean Jig*, *Highland Wedding*, *Lady Charlotte Murray's Reel*, *Lady Menzies*, *Miss Jessie MacLean of Ardour*, *Nellie Gray*, *Old Highland Waltz*, *Orcadian Wedding-Dance*, *The Queen Maries*, *St Magnus Bay*, *Scottish Medley*, *Sheena's Dance* (*Sheena McGillivray*), *To Jenny*, *The Village Flirt*, *The Village Maidens*, *The Wee Sailor*.

Please note that other country dances with a similar name by other devisers are not to be confused with those being sought. Readers are invited to make corrections to the above list and to identify where the 16+44=60 lost dances are to be found and/or to send in the original descriptions or any information to the Editorial Team at editor@rscdslondon.org.uk

Erratum: *Brig o' Doon* photo Reel 295 p8 second lady is Elizabeth Goodall not Elspeth Goodall.



Following on from Bob Harman's response to *The Nut* - a hard dance to crack (Reel 312 p12), two intrepid members of *The Reel* Editorial Team endeavoured to recreate the intricacies of dancing *The Gruppit Hold*, complete with Bounty bar instead of a coconut!

Two of a Kind: 'Which is Which?'



Could they be brothers? Certainly friends, Hugh Stephenson and Martin Roberts, both from London at Little Ship Club on Thursday 24 October 2019 held at St Columba's Church Lower Hall, Knightsbridge, to music from Calum Mitchell and MC Peter Knight at another popular club evening.

Until dancing resumes, remember that London Branch and RSCDS HQ are producing extra content to help keep Scottish dancers entertained. Our Facebook Page is also celebrating London Branch's 90th Anniversary with posts covering our nine decades.