RESEARCH FOR NDAAI WEBSITE

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Purpose: To inform members of the origins of each dance, to assist with the compilation of compere notes for displays and a tool to educate dancers of the meaning and beginnings of Highland Dancing culture.

SQRCHDI sqrchdi.com.au https://sqrchdi.com.au also has a section on the History of Highland Dance.

Apart from many references on the Web to the origins of Highland Dance, there are many books written on the subject. **George S. Emmerson "A Social History of Scottish Dance** is a marvellous read and reference for those of us who crave more knowledge.

WHAT IS HIGHLAND DANCE? by SAORSASTUDIO September 19, 2022

Some would say it's a sport, some would say it is an art, some would say it's a form of pure cultural expression – we like to think that Highland dance is all of the above.

From its beginnings in Scotland in the 11th or 12th century, to the dancers performing all over the world today, Highland has a long and winding history. Traditional dancing, modern interpretations, outside influences, and amazing athletic feats make up this historically rich and always-fascinating style of dance.

The History

Originating in Scotland in the 11th or 12th century, Highland dance is based in Scottish military culture. It is said that each of the Highland dances carries a piece of Scottish folklore. For instance, the Highland Fling, one of the most widely-known traditional Highland dances, is believed to either represent a stag as it bounds along the Scottish countryside, or be a dance of triumph to be performed following a successful battle.

Highland dance has always been valued as a highly athletic style of dance. Today, that athleticism often takes the shape of cross-training to develop stamina and strength. Historically, it was said to be used by clan chiefs and kings to select their strongest soldiers, develop discipline in their troops, and showcase endurance and agility.

David Cunliffe, 1853

Over the centuries, many of the original Highland dances have been lost. In 1746, the British government, in an attempt to force the often-rebellious clan system into compliance, passed an Act of Parliament which banned the Scots from wearing kilts and carrying weapons.

This Act was repealed in 1785, but by that time, many Highland dances and the stories behind them had been lost.

When Queen Victoria began to recognise beauty of Scotland during the mid-19th century, she triggered a resurgence in traditional Scottish culture. This included the beginnings of the first Highland Games, and the first Highland dance competitions.

Women in Highland Dance

Until the turn of the 20th century, only men were permitted to compete in Highland dance competitions. That was until 10-year-old Jenny Douglas entered a dance competition dressed as a man, and competed even when she was specifically forbidden.

Jenny Douglas created enough of a stir that more and more women began competing, particularly during the World Wars. Today, upwards of 95% of Highland dancers are women and girls!

Influences on Modern Highland Dance

Over time, Highland dance has spread throughout the world, becoming popular in countries including Canada, Australia, Great Britain, New Zealand, the US, South Africa, and others.

As it has become more widespread, Highland has been influenced by other cultures and styles of dance, especially ballet. The basic foot and arm positions of Highland are almost identical to those of ballet. While the styles of Highland have become varied across the world, they remain tethered to their traditional Scottish roots.

Highland Dance Today

Today, Highland dance technique and competitions are highly regulated by various governing bodies, including the Royal Scottish Official Board of Highland Dancing.

While Highland dance is no longer used as a test of Scottish soldier's strength and agility, it continues to evolve and push participants to better themselves. Highland dance requires a high level of athleticism, determination, and self-discipline.

Highland dancers are constantly pushing the boundaries of dance – jumping higher, leaping larger, and always seeking to raise the bar for their fellow competitors. What was developed to drive the human body and spirit so many centuries ago persists today, pushing dancers beyond what was ever previously believed to be possible.

The History of Highland Dancing

by Ben Johnson (Historic UK)

Perhaps nothing captures the spirit of Scottish culture better than the sight of Highland dancing being performed at some Highland gathering in some far flung corner of the world. This sophisticated form of national dancing has been spread by Scottish migrants across the world and competitions are now regularly organised in Australia, Canada, South Africa, New Zealand and the United States. Whilst the majority of dancers now entered into these

competitions are female, the roots of these ritualistic dances lay with warriors imitating epic deeds from Scottish folklore.

According to tradition, the old kings and clan chiefs used the Highland Games as a means to select their best men at arms, and the discipline required to perform the Highland dances allowed men to demonstrate their strength, stamina and agility.

Although likely to date back to a much earlier period, the first documented evidence of intricate war-dances being performed to “the wailing music of bagpipes” was at the second marriage of Alexander III to his French bride Yolande de Dreux at Jedburgh in 1285.

It is also said that Scottish mercenaries performed a sword dance before the Swedish King John III at a banquet held at Stockholm Castle in 1573. The dance was apparently part of a plot to assassinate the king, the weapons necessary to complete the dastardly deed ‘just happened’ to be a natural prop for the festivities. Luckily for the king the signal was never given to implement the plan.

A reception given in honour of Anne of Denmark at Edinburgh in 1589 included a “Sword dance and Hieland Danses”, and in 1617 a sword dance was performed before James VI. Still later in 1633, the Incorporation of Skinners and Glovers of Perth performed their version of the sword dance for Charles I whilst floating on a raft in the middle of the River Tay.

It was after the Battle of Culloden in 1746 that the government in London attempted to purge the Highlands of all unlawful elements by seeking to crush the rebellious clan system. An Act of Parliament was passed which made the carrying of weapons and the wearing of kilts a penal offence. The Act was rigorously enforced. So much so it seems that by the time the Act was repealed in 1785, Highlanders had lost all enthusiasm for their tartan garb and lacked the main prop required to perform their sword dances.

The revival of Highland culture was greatly boosted when Queen Victoria discovered the road north and recognised first-hand, the magnificence of Scotland for herself. This revival saw the beginnings of the modern Highland games, with of course, Highland dancing forming an integral part.

Primarily to make judging easier however, the selection of dances being performed were gradually narrowed down over the years and decades that followed. The result of this was that many traditional dances simply got lost, as they were no longer required for competition purposes. In addition, over the years Highland dancing has moved from being an exclusively male pursuit, to one that today includes more than 95% of female dancers.

As far as competitive Highland dancing is concerned, until 1986 only four standard dances remained – The Sword Dance (Gille Chaluim), The Seann Triubhas, The Highland Fling and The Reel of Tulloch. Like many other dance traditions Highland dancing has changed and evolved over the years, integrating elements that may have their roots set in centuries old tradition with elements that are much more modern.

A WEE BIT OF INFORMATION ON HIGHLAND DANCE

(Lake City Highland Dance)
Perhaps nothing captures the spirit of Scottish culture better than the sight of Highland dancing being performed at a Scottish gathering in some far flung corner of the world. This sophisticated form of dancing has been spread by Scottish migrants across the world and competitions are now regularly organized in Australia, Canada, South Africa, New Zealand and the United States.

Whilst the majority of dancers now entered into these competitions are female, the roots of these energetic dances lay with warriors imitating epic deeds from Scottish folklore. According to tradition, the old kings and clan chiefs used the Highland Games as a means to select their best men at arms, and the discipline required to perform the Highland dances allowed men to demonstrate their strength, stamina and agility.
Over the years, Highland dancing has been passed down to preserve the rich heritage of the Scottish people, though many of the traditional dances have now been lost. In addition, over time Highland dancing has moved from being an exclusively male pursuit, to one that today is more than 95% female dancers.

Dancers today typically dance to traditional Scottish music such as Strathspeys, Reels, Hornpipes and Jigs all played by an accompanying bagpiper. All dancers learn the same traditional dances to compete and perform; however, dance groups can make up solo and group choreographies for special events and scholarship competitions.
In Highland dancing, there are set dances a student must learn and perfect, rather than constantly learning new choreographies. Highland dance focuses on traditional dances that date back hundreds of years. Everyone from beginners to world champions spend time working each week on the same dances, with the emphasis being on perfecting technique, control, and movements, while constantly improving their stamina and endurance. In addition, students at our studio will have the opportunity to learn the occasional group or solo choreography to perform at shows.

Highland dance is competitive-focused, however competing is not required at our studios. There are four main competitive Highland dances, the Fling, Sword, Seann Triubhas, and Reel; and are the four required dances at a Highland dance championship competition. There are national dances that are commonly performed in appropriate Highland or national outfit, as well as character dances that use more expressive movements with a themed outfit. Dancers may also occasionally perform Highland choreographies made up by the teacher and dancer for performances or scholarship competitions, danced in any appropriate outfit.

What is the RSOBHD?

The world of Highland dance can be confusing with all of the different local, national, and international organisations that exist within it. To understand how Highland dance is organised, you may as well start at the top.

The Royal Scottish Official Board of Highland Dance (RSOBHD), is the world governing body of Highland dance. It creates the rules and guidelines which allow the world of Highland dance to keep turning.

"The Board is thus like a very large family, with the RSOBHD headquarters leading the family and the various organisations represented on the Board, operating the RSOBHD system within their own country or domain."

The History of the RSOBHD

Prior to the founding of the RSOBHD in 1950, Highland dance had few ways of ensuring consistency and order at competitions, in the establishment of judges, and in the accreditation of teachers.

Organisations had popped out throughout the world on local and regional levels to organise competitions, but there was little coherency between them. The major Examining Bodies wished for cooperation.

As competitions became more and more chaotic, with no official rules for organising or judging, the need for an umbrella institution became pressing.

In 1950, the RSOBHD Board was formed with delegates from several sources. The dance Examining Bodies, such as the Scottish Dance Teacher's Alliance (SDTA), and Affiliate organisations from Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the United States, and South Africa have representation on the RSOBHD Board.

Additionally, there is representation from several UK dance organisations, some Competition Organisers, Independent Members, and Honorary Members.

These parties all vote together in establishing the guiding principles of the RSOBHD.

There are also Associate Members, who have no voting power, but sit on the Board as supporters of Highland dance on their local level.

What does the RSOBHD do?

Highland dance is complicated sometimes – the RSOBHD creates guidelines, rules, and structures to help Highland run smoothly and be cohesive across the regions of the world where it is present!

World Wide Judges Panel

Highland dance judges receive their accreditation through examination which is through the RSOBHD. Judge's exams are held regularly in Scotland, with occasional tests being held abroad. For example, the exam was offered in Canada in 2022 at the SDTA North American Conference.

The accreditation of judges through one respected Board ensures that judging will be fair and consistent.

World Wide Registration Scheme

Dancers who wish to compete in Highland dance competitions must register with the RSOBHD through their local Registration Agents. For example, us Canadian dancers register each year with ScotDance Canada, while dancers on the other side of the world register with ScotDance New Zealand.

Registered dancers receive RSOBHD Registration Cards which they must bring to each competition, and which allow them to register for any RSOBHD-sanctioned competitions throughout the world.

Additionally, this registration system defines the categories of Primary, Beginner, Novice, Intermediate, and Premier. Through these categories, the RSOBHD manages the progress of dancers.

"The Scheme (...) permits dancers to monitor their own progress through the different competition categories by a system of achievement stamps when prizes are won."

Competition Regulation

With the goal of ensuring that Highland dance competitions are fair, Organisers must register their competitions with their local Registration Agent (for example, ScotDance Canada).

The RSOBHD keeps a running list of the competitions and championships happening throughout the world.

Only RSOBHD-registered dancers can dance in RSOBHD-sanctioned competitions, and RSOBHD-registered dancers may not compete in non-sanctioned competitions.

Shaping Highland Dance

In addition to the large, structural aspects of the RSOBHD like the Registration Scheme, the RSOBHD shapes the face of Highland dance.

Championships and Premierships

Each year, the RSOBHD designates steps to be danced for the sanctioned Championships and Premierships in the year ahead. These are the steps danced at local championships, all the way up to the World Championships at Cowal Highland Gathering each summer.

Royal Status

In 2019, Queen Elizabeth II gave her approval, and the long-standing Scottish Official Board of Highland Dance officially became “Royal”! Hence, “RSOBHD”.

Creating Order

Having been established more than 70 years ago, the RSOBHD continues to have immense influence over the world of Highland dance.

The creation of rules and guidelines has allowed the worldwide Highland dance community to remain cohesive and consistent, making it possible for international competitions to take place.

The RSOBHD continues to facilitate the spread of Highland dance throughout the world!

HISTORY OF HIGHLAND DANCES from Saorsastudio Oct 11, 2022

Folklore and Flings Source: Historic UK

Highland dance has been a vehicle of Scottish history since its inception sometime in the 11th or 12th century. Beginning as a military tradition to built soldiers agile and disciplined, Highland has evolved over the centuries into a highly competitive and technical style of dance.

Even as Highland dance continues to grow more and more athletic and modernised, the traditional Highland dances carry Scottish folklore into the 21st century.

This post details the stories behind some of the dances still used at Highland dance competitions today. To read more about the history of Highland dance itself, check out our What is Highland Dance post!

Stories behind dances have been lost and found several times. As Highland dancers, we carry the stories through generations from their ritualistic origins into the future.

Many of the dances have several possible stories associated with them – these are some of the more commonly-known ones.

Historical Evolution Highland Dance has evolved immensely over the centuries, but the tradition of carrying stories through dance remains a core part of this culturally rich style of dance.

A. HIGHLAND DANCING.

Highland Dancing is widely recognised as among the most complex and sophisticated folk dancing in the world according to David Webster in his standard work "The Scottish Highland Games". The complexity arises from the wide variety of influences (Scots, Picts, Gaels, French, Norse and even English), and the sophistication from the competitive tradition in Scottish dancing centred on the Highland Games. Certainly, when one compares the English Morris Dance or Dutch Clog Dancing with the precise athleticism of the Ghillie Callum it is hard to see much similarity.

HIGHLAND FLING

The Highland Fling generally has two stories associated with it. The first links the dance to a deer hunt, as the arms and hands may mimic a stag as it jumps along the Scottish countryside.

The alternative origin story describes the Fling as a dance of triumph after a battle to be danced over a small shield known as a Targe.

The Highland Fling – One legend associates it as a warriors dance of triumph following a battle. It was supposedly danced over a small round shield, with a spike projecting from the centre, known as a Targe. Yet another legend links the dance to a young boy imitating the antics of a stag rearing and wheeling on a hillside; the curved arms and hands representing the stag's antlers.

The **Highland Fling** arms are said to imitate the antlers of a stag: One goal for the dancer is to stay on the same spot, in former times the Fling was known to be performed on a targe (a soldier's round shield).

The Highland Fling, the most famous of our Highland Dances, is said to originate in the 18th century and to be derived from the antics of a courting stag on a Scottish hillside.

According to legend an old shepherd was teaching his grandson to play the chanter (the first step towards learning the bagpipes) when he saw a stag up on the skyline. The old man asked the boy if he could imitate it. Raising his arms above his head to simulate the antlers the boy then proceeded to interpret the love dance of the stag while his grandfather provided the music.

They were so pleased with the effect that the shepherd and his grandson gave demonstrations at subsequent ceilidhs' and gradually over the years the simple shepherd's dance became the Highland Fling of today.

There are no travelling steps in the Fling, the whole dance being performed in one place. The stag does not like to run after his women. He expects them to come to him.

The **Sword Dance** (Ghillie Callum) is the quintessential dance that many who are vaguely familiar with Highland dance would recognise and associate with Highland.

The Sword Dance is danced over two swords crossed in a "+" formation. Like the Highland Fling, the Sword has two common possible origin stories. The first story relates to when King Malcolm III (Canmore) of Scotland killed another Scottish chieftain in battle, he celebrated by dancing with his bloody sword crossed over the sword of his fallen foe.

The other possible origin of the Sword dance lies in the tradition among Scottish soldiers to dance the Sword the night before battle. If the soldier dancing were to hit the sword, it would serve as an ill omen for the fight ahead of them. Some say that to tap the sword with the foot would predict an injury, while kicking the sword could predict their death.

The **Sword Dance** (Gille Chaluim – Gaelic for "the servant of Calum") **–** One story said to originate from the times of Shakespeare's Macbeth, recalls that when King Malcolm III (Canmore) of Scotland killed a fellow chieftain in battle, he celebrated by dancing over his own bloody claymore crossed with the sword of his enemy. Yet another story tells that a soldier would dance around and over crossed swords prior to battle; should his feet touch the blade during the dance however, then this was considered an ill omen for the following day. Another and more practical explanation is that the dance was simply an exercise used to develop and hone the nibble footwork required to stay alive in sword play.

Britannica:
Sword dance, folk dance performed with swords or swordlike objects, displaying themes such as human and animal sacrifice for fertility, battle mime, and defense against evil spirits. There are several types. In linked-sword, or hilt-and-point, dances, performers hold the hilt of their own sword and the point of the sword of the dancer behind them, the group forming intricate, usually circular, patterns. Combat dances for one or more performers emphasize battle mime and originally served as military training. Crossed-sword dances are performed over two swords or a sword and scabbard crossed on the ground.

Wikipedia
From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The Sword Dance by David Cunliffe, 1853, depicting men of the 42nd Regiment of Foot (Black Watch) and 93rd (Sutherland Highlanders)

The **Sword dance** is one of the best known of all Highland dances, an ancient dance of war. Performance of sword dances in the folklore of Scotland is recorded from as early as the 15th century.[1][2][3]

As a part of the traditional Scottish intangible heritage, the performance of the Sword Dance has been recorded as early as the 15th century. It is normally recognised as the war dance with some ceremonial sense in the Scottish Royal court during that period. The old kings and clan chiefs organised the Highland Games as a method to choose their best men at arms, and the discipline required to perform the Highland dances allowed men to demonstrate their strength, stamina, and agility. The earliest reference also mentioned that the dance is often accompanied with the music of bagpipes. The basic rule requires the dancer to cross two swords on the ground in an "X" or "+" shape and to dance around and within the 4 quarters of it.[6]

The earliest reference to these dances in Scotland is mentioned in the *Scotichronicon*, compiled in Scotland by Walter Bower in the 1440s. The passage regards Alexander III and his second marriage to the French lady Yolande de Dreux at Jedburgh in Roxburghshire on 14 October 1285.

BATD: *Sword Dance*
Originated in 1054 when Malcolm Canmore crossed his sword over the sword of his slain opponent, symbolizing the sign of the Cross, and danced over them in exultation. After that, the dance would be performed before a battle. If the sword was touched it was deemed to be a bad omen! Before 1850, the steps were danced clockwise round the sword, not anti-clockwise as nowadays.

Additional information:
The patterned nature of the majority of the steps in the **sword dance** helps to reinforce muscle memory and the ability to 'reverse' things quickly, a very mathematical dance.
7. **The Sword Dance.**
The Ghillie Callum which is the Gaelic name for the Sword Dance is Scotland's oldest dance. It has its origin not in pastoral history like the Fling but in Scotland's martial tradition. It is said to have originated in 1054 when King Malcolm Canmore met one of Macbeth's Chiefs in a bloody dual. King Malcolm eventually overcame and killed his rival. He took the dead man's claymore and with his own sword made the sign of the cross on the ground. He then danced in triumph nimbly in and out between the blades.

Sword dances became part of a ritual in which clansmen would dance as close as possible to the blades. This was a sign of daring because touching the blades was a bad omen for the next day. If a sword were touched the dancer would stop immediately.

SEANN TRUIBHAS (pronounced “Shawn Troose”, and often shortened to “ST”) is often attributed to the 1745 Scottish rebellion against English rule.

The English rulers imposed a ban on traditional Scottish kilts, so the Scots were forced to wear trousers. In the first part of the dance, the movements are more flowing and graceful than the traditional Highland movements we are used to. This is supposed to represent the English influence over Scotland.

Seann Truibhas translates to “old trousers” in Gaelic, as the first part of the dance has movements mimicking the Scots trying to shed the pants. Then, toward the end of the dance, the dancers clap, the music speeds up, and the movements revert to a more traditionally Scottish style. This represents the Scottish escaping the kilt ban, as they did in 1782.

The Seann Triubhas – Gaelic for “old trousers” – Pronounced “shawn trewus”, the dance is romantically associated with the highlander’s disgust at having the wear the hated *Sassenach* trousers that they were forced to wear when the kilt was banned following the 1745 rebellion. The initial slow dance steps involve lots of leg shaking; symbolising attempts to shed the hated garments; the final faster steps demonstrating the joy of returning to the kilt when the ban ended in 1782.

Seann Triubhas is the Gaelic name for “old trousers”. This dance had its origins in the repression that followed the Jacobite Rebellion in 1745. The authorities believed that Catholicism and loyalty to the Bonnie Prince of the Stuarts was only part of the trouble. The root cause was the clan system itself an all of Scottish Highland culture. In order to fully integrate Scotland into the United Kingdom the clan culture had to be smashed.

The bagpipes and the kilt were banned. This meant that such dancing as there was had to be danced in trousers, the symbol of Sassenach domination. The Seann Triubhas is a dance of this era done in (trews). The Shaking movements of the leg are said to represent the shaking-off of the trews and of the oppressors’ yoke.

STRATHSPEY The dance originated around the early **1700's** in the valley (Scottish Strath) of the River Spey in Scotland. Strathspey was originally synonymous with a Reel, but since the 18th century, the Strathspey has referred to a slower dance than the Reel.

Compere notes: This dance is named after the Strathspey region of Scotland, in Moray and Badenoch and Strathspey. Strathspey refers both to the type of tune and to the type of dance.

HIGHLAND REEL The reel is indigenous to Scotland. The earliest reference was in a trial of 1590, where the accused was reported to have "daunced this reill or short dance."[2] However, the form may go back to the Middle Ages. The name may be cognate with or relate to an Old Norse form, with Suio-Gothic *rulla*, meaning "to whirl." This became Anglo-Saxon *hreol* and Gaelic *ruidhle* or *ruidhleadh*, which is the origin of the word now.

Also: the **Reel** is a Celtic dance form. The dancers perform traveling figures of eight alternated with “setting” steps.

REEL OF TULLOCH, (HULLACHAN) 1.
The origin of this Reel lies in Tulloch, a village in North-East Scotland, where supposedly on one cold morning before church, congregants began stomping their feet and clapping to keep warm. Eventually, someone began whistling a tune, and the people began to dance.

Today, the Tulloch and other Reels, the Strathspey and the Highland Reels, are danced by four dancers at a time.

The Reel of Tulloch (Ruidhle Thulaichean) – It was supposedly on one cold morning in the village of Tulloch in north-east Scotland, that many years ago the congregation were waiting for the minister to let them into the church. To keep warm the people began to stamp their feet and clap their hands, and when someone started to whistle a highland tune the whole developed into a lively dance. A set perhaps, later stolen by the cast of Fame! A more gruesome story however, links the dance to a game of football said to have been played by the men of Tulloch with the severed head of an enemy.

Additional information : The origins of the Reel of Tulloch were supposed to have originated in the churchyard of Tulloch, Aberdeenshire, where the congregation awaited the late minister. During the delay they whistled a highland tune and began to improvise a dance.
A more gruesome version of the story is that the dance derives from a rough game of football that the inhabitants of Tulloch played with the severed head of an enemy; the Gaelic words to the tune bear this out.

The Reel of Tulloch.
The "Hullachan" as the Reel of Tulloch is called in Gaelic, is a dance for four. It is said to have originated in the little Inverness-Shire village of Tulloch. One cold winters' Sunday when the minister was late, his congregation milled round stamping their feet and clapping their hands to keep themselves warm. Others had a dram with them to give inner heat. The mingling clapping and stamping eventually gave way to dancing which was formalised in time and called the Reel of Tulloch.
The basic step in reels' is the Pas de Basque which came to Scotland from France with Mary Queen of Scots. Although the dancers dance in fours, they are not judged as a team, but individually.

PAS DE BASQUE In Highland dance, a **Pas De Basque** is described as follows: prepare with an extension of the working foot to second aerial position low. Spring to that side, bringing the new working foot into third or fifth position on the half point. Beat, without exaggeration, the ball of the other foot in third or fifth rear, sharply extending the front foot if required to begin the next movement.

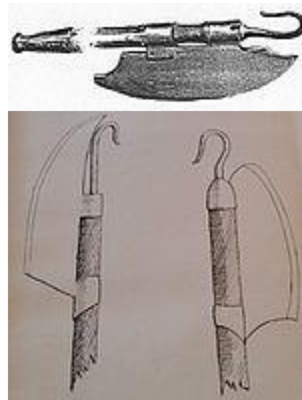
In the Primary level 6 years and under, 16 of these Pas de Basques are performed and it is considered a competitive dance, so this is one of the first movements a Highland dancer learns.

PAS DE BASQUES AND HIGH-CUTS are the foundation steps of the Sword Dance. Once the children turn 7 years old, they automatically move up into the Beginner level.

BROADSWORD Crossed-sword dances are common in Europe (e.g. Scotland, the Balkans) and also appear in India, Borneo, and other areas. Characteristically, one or more dancers execute precise, complicated steps over and between the swords. The famed Scottish solo dance Gillie Callum, which is danced to a folk melody of the same name, is first mentioned only in the early 19th century. In its close relative, the English solo Bacca pipes jig, crossed clay pipes replace the swords. There are evidences that such dances formerly included swordplay. In the Scottish Argyll broadsword dance, the

four performers flourish their swords before laying them on the ground, points touching, to form a cross. Possible ancient ritual meaning is suggested by the frequent belief that if a sword is touched, even lightly, the dance must be stopped

Wikipedia: **Tradition in Highland Regiments.**
Highland Regiments have preserved the traditional dance, albeit with some changes. To prepare for the Sword Dance, a soldier arranges two crossed swords. Then to the sound of bagpipes he dances a choreographed series of steps and movements between and around the swords, keeping his back straight, arms raised, and hands posed in a certain way. The dance can be performed by more than one individual, and there is a long tradition of exhibition and competitive dancing with additional crossed swords and dancers. Over time, this style of dance became an integral part of the performance of bagpipe bands.[14]



Lochaber Axe, traditional Scottish battle weapon

The crossed weapons in the traditional sword dance is not limited to basket-hilted broadswords. Dancing around crossed Lochaber axes is mentioned as an older version of the dance.[15] The Broadsword indicated the basket-hilted sword worn by officers of Highland Regiments and sometimes miscalled the claymore, which is a large two-handed weapon. The original version of the Broadswords Dance is described in MacLellan's book: the steps, four strathspey and one quick-time, and the drill for marching on and off a dancing stage are less elaborate than those seen in some present day forms of the dance. It is not an "Old Thyme"[*clarification needed*] dance and it is not regimental in origin.[16]

Compere notes: The Sword Dance is an **ancient dance of war of the Scottish Gael.** To prepare for the Sword Dance, a soldier arranges the swords, then to the sound of bagpipes he dances a series of traditional steps and movements between and around the swords, keeping his back straight, arms raised, and hands posed to represent the antlers of the deer. There are several versions of the sword dance and the Broadsword was, and still is, often danced in the Scottish Military.

Argyll Broadsword.
The Argyll Broadsword is a team version of the Sword Dance. This dance has been handed down from the Scottish Regiment - The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, and is often featured at the famous Edinburgh Tattoo.

WIKIPEDIA ON HIGHLAND DANCES

Highland Fling One theory about the Highland fling is that it was a dance of triumph at the end of a battle. Another (no less romantic) theory is that it was performed before battles (like the sword dance), on top of the dancer's shield. The shield would have a spike in the middle, around which the dancer would do the dance that involves flicking of the

feet, jumping and careful stepping supposedly to drive evil spirits away. The dancer is confined to one spot and snaps his fingers (which was reduced in recent times to merely holding the hands with the thumb touching the second joint of the middle finger, and the other three fingers extended in the air). Leaving aside the obvious difficulty of dancing around a sharpened spike on a shield, a much more plausible theory is that the Highland Fling is none other than a Foursome Reel with the progressive bits left out - at social gatherings, dancers would 'compete' by showing off the fancy solo steps they could perform, long before formal competitions at highland games had been invented.

Another story surrounding the Fling claims that it is meant to imitate a stag; the story goes that a boy who saw a stag was asked to describe it by his father. He lacked the words, so danced instead; the position of the hands resembles the head and antlers of a stag. This urban legend hides the fact that Highlanders used to snap their fingers as they danced.[14]

The Highland Fling is a solo Highland dance that gained popularity in the early 19th century. The word 'Fling' means literally a movement in dancing.[1] In John Jamieson's 1808 *Etymological Dictionary of the Scottish Language*, the Highland Fling was defined as 'one species of movement' in dancing, not as one particular movement.[2] There is some speculation that the first solo Highland Fling dances simply showed off steps that individual dancers preferred in the Strathspey Reel, a social dance.[3]

This dance is now performed at dance competitions and events around the world. One goal of dancers today is to stay in the same spot throughout the dance. The Highland Fling is danced at almost all competition levels, from primary to premier. It is also performed for Highland and theory examinations. Dancers wear a kilt to perform the dance, which is in $\frac{4}{4}$ time.

A version of a Fling in a percussive dance style was remembered and danced by John Gillis in Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, and those steps were written down in 1957 by Frank Rhodes.[4] Each step was preceded by a travelling step in a circular pathway danced to the first part of the tune Sterling Castle, while the individual Fling steps were danced to the second part of the tune.

List of steps[edit]

The dance can be performed as a:

- Four-step dance: usually danced by primary, beginner, and novice dancers at competitions.
- Six-step dance: usually danced by intermediate and premier dancers at competitions.
- Eight-step dance: very rarely at Scottish Official Board of Highland Dancing (SOBHD) competitions, although it is still danced at some traditional Highland Games.

The first and last steps must always be placed in the same spot, but the other steps may be placed as the dancer chooses. For championships competitions the SOBHD specifies a different order of steps for each year. Dancers taking theory exams may also need to know all of these steps, as well as their order, depending on the level they reach.

Musical accompaniment is usually provide by the bagpipes), playing "Monymusk" or any other suitable Strathspey tune.

Example steps[edit]

These following steps are included in the SOBHD text book.[5] The required tempo is 114* beats per minute (bpm):

- First Step: Shedding
- Second Step: Back-stepping
- Third Step: Toe-and-heel
- Fourth Step: Rocking
- Fifth Step: Second back-stepping
- Sixth Step: Cross-over
- Seventh Step: Shake and turn
- Eighth Step: Last shedding

There are many more steps in existence, some of which have been recorded in publications, for example, *Traditional Step-Dancing in Scotland*[6] while some exist only in the memories of senior dancers.

In 2008 the SOBHD recommended a tempo of 112-124 bpm for the Highland Fling on 2008 is 112-124 bpm. This has slowed considerably over the years – from 192 bpm one hundred years ago, 152 bpm in the 1960s and then 134 bpm in the 1980s.

Sword Dances The Highlander developed "as a necessary preparation for the management of the broad-sword ... used in certain dances to exhibit their dexterity";[13] this included dancing over two naked swords which are laid across each other on the floor, some while a dancer moves nimbly around them. Dextrously placing the feet by a peculiar step in the intervals between crossed blades, as in the Ghillie Callum, has long been linked with dances before a decisive battle or as a victory dance. Legend has it that on the eve of battle the highland chief would call out the clan's best dancers, who would dance the sword dance. If the dancers successfully avoided touching either blade, then it was considered an omen that the next day's battle would be in the clan's favour. A more practical explanation behind the meaning of this dance can be found in the training halls of older styles of fencing, where students of the sword developed their footwork by following geometric patterns of crosses, squares and triangles marked out on the floor.

In another version of Scottish sword dancing, the Highlander danced on a targe shield; this has similarities with an ancient Roman exercise in which the man standing on a shield had to defend himself and stay upright while others tried to pull it out from under him. Many of the Highland dances now lost to us were once performed with traditional weapons that included the Lochaber axe, broadsword, targe, dirk, and flail; the old Skye dancing song, *Buailidh mi thu anns a' cheann* (Scottish Gaelic for 'I will strike your head') indicate some form of weapon play to music; "breaking the head" was the winning blow in cudgelling matches throughout Britain, "for the moment that blood runs an inch anywhere above the eyebrow, the old gamester to whom it belongs is beaten, and has to stop".

The Highland dirk dance, in which the dancer flourishes the weapon, is often linked to the sword dance or dances called *mac an fhorsair*, (literally, 'the son of the forester'), the "broadsword exercise" or the *bruicheath* ('battle-dance'). They are mentioned in a number of sources, usually military, and may have been performed in a variety of different forms, practiced by two performers in a duelling form, or as a solo routine.

The tune of *Gille Chaluim* (anglicised as "Gillie Callum" and meaning 'Servant of Calum') has been claimed to date back to Malcolm III of Scotland (1031–1093), but this claim is certain to have been fabricated to provide false credentials for the antiquity of the dance which is unlikely to have been invented before 1800. According to one tradition, the crossed swords were supposedly placed on the ground before a battle while a soldier danced around the blades. If his feet knocked against the swords, he would be wounded

in battle. This may derive from the folklore often surrounding warrior culture, but the style of the dance was changed by the Maclennan brothers of Fairburn.[14]

Seann Triubhas The *seann triubhas* means 'old trousers' in Gaelic and is romantically associated with the repeal of the proscription of the kilt by the government after the failed Jacobite Uprising of 1745.[16] However, the dance is considerably younger, with most of the steps performed today dating from the late 19th century.

2. From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The ***seann triubhas*** (pronounced [ʃãũn̪ˠ ˈt̪ɾu.əs̪], approximately *shown-TROOSS*) is a Highland dance. Its name is a Scottish Gaelic phrase which means 'old trousers'.

There has been a widely accepted story that the kicking or sweeping movements of the legs in the first step represented the attempt of the dancer to shake off the "despicable" trews, but D. G. MacLennan wrote in *Traditional Highland and Scottish Dances* that "this first step has nothing to do with the idea of kicking off the trews, but ... is new to the dance and was composed by myself".[1] The *seann triubhas*, then, is simply about a pair of old trews which may or may not have been a subject of distaste or fun to the wearer, and may or may not have something to do with the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745.[2] Martin Martin described trews as common men's wear throughout the Hebrides in his 1703 *Description of the Western Islands of Scotland*.[3] Tartan trews were part of the Highland wardrobe for chieftains and gentlemen whilst on horseback (the large Highland ponies) from the early 17th century onward. Some Seann Triubhas steps seem to have originated from hard shoe dancing, and the dance was taught to be performed in regular shoes with heels by dancing masters in the 19th century. In her *Memoirs of a Highland Lady*, Elizabeth Grant recounted that in 1805 she "danced my Shean Trews ... in a new pair of yellow (!) slippers bought at Perth".[4]

In the late 18th century, the dance was performed to a fiddle tune called "*Seann Triubhas Uilleachan*" (Scottish Gaelic for 'Willie's Old Trousers'), previously and more scurrilously called "The De'il Stick the Minister". When the dance began to be incorporated into Highland Dance competitions, which were usually played for by pipers, the tune was changed to "Whistle O'er the Lave o't", which could be played on the bagpipe and is the tune commonly used for the dance today.[5]

In contemporary competitive Highland dance, after dancing three to four steps, the dancer will clap, which signals the piper to speed up the music. The final, or 'Quick Time' steps look similar to the Highland Fling, and Quick Time steps currently described in the Scottish Official Board of Highland Dancing (SOBHD) textbook are steps that used to be danced in the Fling. Other steps have been published by G. Douglas Taylor,[6] William Cameron,[7] D. G. MacLennan,[8] and Joan & Tom Flett.[9]

A version of a *seann triubhas* in a percussive dance style was remembered and danced by Margaret Gillis in Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, and those steps were written down in 1957 by Frank Rhodes.[10] These steps were to be danced to the tune "Whistle O'er the Lave o't", though the same steps were said to be danced to the "Irish Washerwoman" jig on St. Patrick's Night. An anonymous manuscript dating to 1826 describes both Irish and Scottish *seann triubhas* (spelled *Shauntreuse* in the manuscript) steps, but tunes for these dances are not specified.[11]

The *seann triubhas* is now danced at most Highland dance competitions around the world. Dancers usually start dancing it in the Beginner category at competitions, and continue to dance it up to Premier. This dance is also common in most Highland and Theory exams. Dancers wear the standard kilt outfit to perform this dance, though it historically had been performed in tartan trews as well.[12]

List of steps[edit]

This dance is usually done with either:

- 4 steps (3 slow steps and 1 quick step) 3&1
- 6 steps (4 slow steps and 2 quick steps) 4&2

The first step must always be done to start the dance, but the rest of the steps are up to the dancer to choose. At the higher levels the SOBHD will release a different order of steps for each year to be danced in championship competitions. Dancers taking theory exams may also need to know all of these steps, as well as their order, depending on the level of their exam.

Music - Whistle ower the Lave o't'

Slow steps tempo – 94–104 beats per minute
First step: brushing
First step alternative Second step: side travel
Third step: diagonal travel
Third alternative Fourth step: backward travel
Fourth alternative Fifth step: travelling balance
Alternative method of counting Sixth step: leap and highcut
Seventh step: entrechat and highcut Eighth step: leap and shedding Ninth step: leap and entrechat Tenth step: highcut in front and balance
Alternative tenth step Eleventh Step: side heel-and-toe
Twelfth Step: double highcutting

Quick steps tempo – 112–124 beats per minute
Thirteenth step: shedding with back-step
Fourteenth step: toe-and-heel and rock
Fifteenth step: pointing and back-stepping
Sixteenth step: heel-and-toe and shedding
Seventeenth step: heel-and-toe, shedding, and back-stepping
Eighteenth step: back-stepping
Finish method 1: one leap Finish method 2: two leaps Finish method 3: two Highland fling turns Entrechat endings: Method 1: one entrechat Method 2: two entrechats Method 3: leap then entrechat Method 4: entrechat then leap Method 5: leap, entrechat, leap Method 6: leap, entrechat, leap, entrechat

Reel of Tulloch *Ruidhle Thulaichean* (anglicised as 'reel of Tulloch') is supposed to have originated in the churchyard of Tullich, Aberdeenshire, where the congregation awaited the late minister. During the delay they whistled a highland tune and began to improvise a dance.[15][16] A more gruesome version of the story is that the dance derives from a rough game of football that the inhabitants of Tulloch played with the severed head of an enemy; the Gaelic words to the tune bear this out.

HISTORY OF SCOTTISH NATIONAL DANCES

The **Royal Scottish Official Board of Highland Dance (RSOBHD)** is the world governing body of Highland dance. It creates the rules and guidelines for Highland dance competitions and championships.

According to the RSOBHD website, there are **six** Scottish National dances that are performed in RSOBHD competitions and Scottish National Dance Premierships.

David Allan's "Highland Dance", 1870

Wikipedia: National dances

At Highland games, the national dances include the Scottish lilt, the Earl of Erroll, blue bonnets, Hielan' laddie, the Scotch measure, Flora MacDonald's fancy, village maid, and barracks Johnny, which illustrate the history of dancing and other aspects of Scottish culture and history. Some of the national dances were taught by dancing masters in the 19th century and show a balletic influence, while others derive from earlier traditions and were adapted to later tastes. The Earl of Erroll, for example, is based on an 18th-century percussive hard-shoe footwork, although today's Highland dancers perform it in soft Ghillies. Some of the national dances were preserved and taught by dance masters such as D. G. MacLennan and Flora Buchan, while some were interpreted and reconstructed in the mid-20th century from notes written in Frederick Hill's 1841 manuscript.[17]

Lesser-Known Dances.

During the 18th century in Edinburgh, dance masters composed Lesser-Known Dances to give individual pupils of ability, the opportunity to perform solos at exhibitions. These dances employed very intricate balletic steps so as to astonish the onlooker.

SCOTTISH LILT exemplifies National dances, as it is very graceful and heavily influenced by ballet. It is an unusual dance because it has only 6 bests per measure rather than the standard 8. National dances such as the Scottish Lilt were taught by dancing masters in the 19th century and show a balletic influence. The Scottish Lilt typifies the Scottish National Dances, and are performed in a shortened version of the traditional 17th century women's attire.
Flora MacDonald (Gaelic: *Fionnghal nic Dhòmhnaill*, 1722 - 5 March 1790) was a member of Clan Macdonald of Sleat, best known for helping Charles Edward Stuart evade government troops after the Battle of Culloden in April 1746. Her family generally backed the government during the 1745 Rising and MacDonald later claimed to have assisted Charles out of sympathy for his situation. Arrested and held in the Tower of London, she was released under a general amnesty in June 1747. She later married Allan MacDonald and the couple emigrated to North Carolina in 1773. Their support for the British government during the American War of

Independence meant the loss of their American estates and they returned to Scotland, where she died in 1790.

Research Another view of the history of this dance:
It would be easy to assume that the dance Flora MacDonald’s Fancy has some significant connection to the Highland heroine of the same name, but there is no evidence that the dance existed before the late nineteenth century. Flora Cruickshank of Peterhead (Aberdeenshire), the woman credited with remembering it and performing it for a modern choreographer, said that she learnt it from her grandfather, who had been a dancing master. She claims that it was originally danced to the tune “I Ha’e Laid a Herrin’ in Salt,” but this was replaced with tunes whose names play up the image of Jacobite’s and Prince Charles. This is indicative of the way in which “Highland Dance” has been modified to enhance the aura of romanticism around it and make it seem older than it actually is.

Flora MacDonald’s Fancy.
Except for the Reel, the Highland dances mentioned so far are dances for men. The kilt is, of course, a man’s garment. And yet there have for a very long time been more female dancers then men. This gave the old Highland societies like Lonach, Braemar and Glenisla a problem. Should the women be allowed to dance or not?

In 1953 the Aboyne Games provided an attractive answer for those who did not want to crumble before the tide of advancing feminism. They introduced a new form of dress for lady dancers based on peasant costume of the 17th century. This costume is short enough so that the judges (of both dancing and talent) can see that the leg movements are correct. But the Aboyne dress gives female dancers different problems from the men, so where the dress is worn, men and women are judged in different sections. The swing of the kilt is quite different from the rustle of the dress.

Flora’s Fancy is the most famous of the old ladies’ dances that were revived to be danced by ladies in Aboyne dress. It is a more feminine type of dance, stressing elegance rather than the athletic high steps of the men’s dances.

Blue Bonnets. The blue bonnet was a type of soft woollen hat that for several hundred years was the customary working wear of Scottish labourers and farmers.

Although a particularly broad and flat form was associated with the Scottish Lowlands, where it was sometimes called the "scone cap", the bonnet was also worn in parts of northern England and became widely adopted in the Highlands.

The characteristic blue bonnet was knitted in one piece from a thick wool, dyed with woad, and felted to produce a water resistant finish. Strings were often sewn around the inner edge, allowing a close fit around the brow, whilst the top was worn pulled into a broad circle. The typical Lowland man's bonnet was large and worn flat, overhanging at the front and back and sometimes ornamented with a small tuft or red worsted "cherry", while in the Highlands the fashion was for a smaller, plain bonnet, sometimes peaked at the front.

The bonnet's construction made it an extremely practical piece of clothing in Scotland's damp, cool climate. The flat shape formed an effective brim against the weather, could be pulled down ("scrugged") in various directions for additional cover, pulled over the ears for warmth, or folded and put in a pocket. It could also be removed and used as a pocket or bag in its own right. The felted wool helped protect the wearer against rain, and could be easily wrung dry.

It was the bonnet's blue colour, as well as, perhaps, its Lowland and peasant origins, that influenced its adoption as a badge of the Covenanters, who used blue to distinguish themselves from their Royalist opponents and their red cockades and ribbons. Despite its

earlier association with the Covenanters, adorned with a white cockade the blue bonnet was also adopted as an emblem of Jacobitism.

The association was reinforced by later nostalgic Jacobite songs, such as Blue Bonnets Over The Border - Song, set down (and possibly written) by Sir Walter Scott, who himself affected to wear a bonnet in later life.

March, march, Ettrick and Teviotdale,
Why, my lads, dinna ye march forward in order?
March, march, Eskdale and Liddesdale,
All the blue bonnets are over the border.

There is also a Scottish highland dance Blue Bonnets - Highland Dance Video sometimes danced today at Highland games around the world, as part of Scottish National dances repertoire.
The Blue Bonnets highland dance was collected from the Hill Manuscripts, Aberdeen, in 1841 and portrays a young women trying to catch the attention of a 'Blue Bonnet' and flirting with him.

VILLAGE MAID
The Village Maid is a very balletic dance and is one of 3 dances (the other 2 being the Sailor's Hornpipe and Irish Jig) where the dancer is on flat foot for some steps. In the rest of Highland and National dancing all the dancing is done on the ball of the foot

EARL OF ERROL From Wikipedia, is a Scottish highland dance sometimes danced today at Highland games around the world, as part of Scottish National dances repertoire. It is danced to two slow reels
Earl of Erroll and the 23rd Countess of Erroll.[1]

The dance takes its name from James Hay, 15th Earl of Erroll. It has been suggested that it was choreographed by Francis Peacock for the eponymous Earl because the Earl of Erroll was listed as one of the subscribers to Peacock's 1805 book *Sketches Relative to the History and Theory but More Especially to the Practice of Dancing*; however, no evidence linking a choreography of this name to Peacock's teaching legacy survives and no Earl of Erroll dance is described within that book. Peacock, also a musician, did dedicate a published collection of tunes, including one with the title The Earl of Erroll, to the Earl of Erroll. [2]

The dance was likely originally performed in hard-soled dress shoes. The dance came back to the repertoire of Scottish dancers after it was published in 1953 by Mrs Isobel (Tibbie) Cramb,[3] with reference to Frederick Hill's Manuscript (1841) and Miss Cruickshank of Aberdeen. It is still seen as a soft balletic Scottish step dance by RSCDS teachers[4] The Earl of Erroll is considered one of the hardest national dances to perform well.[5]

A Scottish country dance of a somewhat similar name, **Earl of Errol's Reel**, is performed in groups of 6 dancers (3-couple sets) as part of Scottish country dancing repertoire.[6] The Earl of Errol's Reel is a jig, collected in Quebec, Canada, by Mary Isdal MacNab, who noted that the dance originated in France. It is a $\frac{6}{8}$ jig, performed to a tune *Mrs McMillan's Quadrille*.[7]

SCOTCH MEASURE OR THE TWA SOME: When this is danced solo it is called the Scotch Measure. When it is danced with to people, one dancer taking the male role and one the female role, it is called the Twa Some. It is supposed to depict the Scottish dancing ritual.

HIGHLAND LADDIE is also the name of a dance in Scottish Highland dancing, of the "national dance" subtype. This version of the dance was first published by D. G. MacLennan in 1952, who referred to it as a Hebridean dance, collected by MacLennan in 1925 from Archie MacPherson on the island of South Uist. MacLennan himself suggested "a more effective finishing" of the dance, with entrechat at the end.[2] Most national dances are usually danced by females in an Aboyne dress, but the Highland laddie is one of two national dances that are typically danced in the standard kilt-based outfit, the other being "Wilt thou go to the barracks, Johnny?".
"**WILT THOU GO TO THE BARRACKS, JOHNNY?**" is a traditional Scottish Highland dance. It was interpreted and reconstructed from Frederick Hill's *Book of Quadrilles and Country Dances*, a manuscript written in 1841.[1] It is usually performed wearing the Highland dance costume (kilt and waistcoat), sometimes in competitions as well as for medal testing and performance. It is can be danced to pipe marches such as "The Barren Rocks of Aden", "Braes of Mar", or "Scotland the Brave". Originally, the dance was probably danced to music with a similar name: "Go to Berwick Johnny", a song in 3/2 time. Unlike most national dances, which are usually danced in an Aboyne dress if the dancer is female, "wilt thou go to the barracks, Johnny?" is danced in the standard kilt-based outfit. It is the second dance of the "national dance" subtype to be danced in this particular outfit, the other being "Highland laddie" The dance recorded in the Hill Manuscript as "wilt thou go to the barricks Johnnie" is in 3/2 time. The dance performed today is a modern composition unrelated to the Hill version. Additional information: The dance **"Will you go to the barracks, Johnny?"** is a prime example of how Highland dances were used to recruit soldiers into the Scottish army. The military, making trips to various remote cities and settlements to gather new recruits, arranged small entertainments with a drink, musicians and specially hired dancers. Dance was used as a way to attract people to the recruiting station. **Wilt Thou Go To The Barracks Johnnie?** This dance is a character step dance originating in the early part of the 19th century in Aberdeenshire and portrays an army recruiting officer using nimble eye-catching dance steps to attract new recruits.

Conclusion: Each dance has a variety of possible steps to choose from, with each dance including around four to six steps. Generally, you will see dancers performing many different steps while together on the same stage. There are many other Highland dances such as the Cakewalk and The Dusty Miller, however they are only rarely performed at scholarship competitions or for performances.

B. IRISH JIG HISTORY

Prepared by the RSOBHD Technical Committee 19 April 2023

• This dance may seem to be out of place at Scottish Games, but the dance is not only an Irish Tradition. The Scottish version however is meant to be a parody of an Irish washerwoman in an agitated frame of mind.
• Dundee dancing master David Anderson may have started the choreographic process of the dance. written descriptions appear in his Ballroom Guide of 1897 called "D. Anderson's Irish Jig".
• In 1935, Dancie John Reid of Newtyle, Angus wrote "The Irish Jig a solo dance for either men or women has been a prominent item among the Step Dances at Highland Games etc. for many years. It was called Paddy Rafferty and was a shadow of the present Irish Jig.

• Before that three steps were noted in Frederick Hill's notebook in 1841. It has been a competitive dance from the mid-nineteenth century.
• George B Lowe wrote many families left Ireland to work at the potato dressing on Angus farms. They brought their jig steps to Dundee.
• The Scottish Jig is a version of the Irish Washerwoman and has the steps The Tipperary Trot, Paddy's Breeches and the Donnybrook.
• Dundee had it's own Jig and so had Aberdeen.
• While the steps may be traditional, the arm movements are not.
• Arm movements are an intrinsic part of the Scottish dance and so the Scots added them to the Irish Jig as a humorous salute to their Celtic brethren across the Irish Sea.
• Irish Jig is an energetic dance featuring lots of fist shaking and skirt flouncing among female competitions. It is a parody of Irish Dancing and the infamous Irish temper.
• Females dancing the Jig are acting out an angry fit of an Irish woman who's husband has not made it home from the pub until all hours.
• Males dancing the Jig act out the happy go lucky Irishman facing the wife's tirade.
• Another version may be that of an angry Irish washerwoman when she finds all of her clean wash knocked to the ground by unruly neighbourhood boys
• The Donnybrook is a slang term for brawl or riot possibly referring to disturbing behaviour at the Donnybrook Fair which was held in Dublin in the thirteenth century to about the 1850s.
• The dance has its own costume different from the standard Highland or National outfits.
• The male dancer dressed in 19th century Irish breeches, waistcoat, hat and tailcoat complete with shillelagh in hand.
• Females dress as a peasant Colleen with an apron.

Some explanations of the steps and their meaning:
• 1 st Step – cramp roll shows frustration
• 2 nd Step – scrubbing or wash board.
• Circular rolling springs – representing gathering potatoes. Bar 3 of 9th Step (Diagonal Roll) represents digging potatoes. In the retire skips back the males used to pull the potatoes back into place.
• Four Beat Side Run – known as Tipperary Trot. Driving horse and cart to the market or fair.
• Donnybrook – is a town in Ireland with no river or brook but with 2 elegant bridges. A fair was held on 26th August and ran for 15 days during the years 1204 to 1855. This was sometimes called the Humours of Donnybrook. It would seem to have ended in a huge brawl or riot. This would account for the twisting and turning side to side in this step.
• The Chase – also called De'il on the run.
• The Shillelagh is thought to have originated in the village of Shillelagh, county Wicklow, which was once said to be surrounded by vast oak forests.
• Shillelaghs are usually made from Blackthorn wood with a leather wrist strap joined to the handle.
• The Shillelagh was commonly used as a walking cane or walking stick, and can sometimes be described as a cudgel.
• It is typically made from a stout knobbly and knotty stick with a knotty head, which can be used for gripping or striking.
• There are some historical records and references that say the practice of stick fighting in ancient Ireland may have helped to train Irish Warriors in broadsword and sabre fencing.
• It seems that from the original Irish staff spear, axe, stick and sword fighting methods originated the later form of Irish stick fighting which came to be associated with the Shillelagh. GLOSSARY
• Colleen – an Irish girl
• Dancie – name for dance teachers who went round the local area to teach. Usually on their bikes with their fiddles strapped to their backs.
• Potato Dressing – a process that is used to sort the potatoes into different sizes and remove the bad potatoes. Some of the smaller sized potatoes were used for seeds for the following year's crops.

Irish Jig History Presented by Margaret Paterson O.A.M.
SQRCHDI Technical Meeting 23rd August 2020

There is little history of Irish Dancing, caused in all probability by the disturbed state of Ireland during and after the Tudor war together with the ordinances forbidding all things Irish, even the language.
The jig dance tradition is five centuries old and still counting. Jig is a folk dance that became popular in Scotland and northern England in the 16th century and in Ireland in the 18th century.

The Round Jig may seem somewhat out of place at a Scottish event. It is popular, even traditional, in Scotland and is danced as a parody of an Irishman/woman in an agitated state of mind.
While the steps are somewhat traditional, the arm movements are not; they are an intrinsic part of Scottish dance so the Scots added them to the Irish jig in a humorous salute to our Celtic brethren across the Irish Sea.
The [Highland] Round Jig is an energetic character dance featuring lots of fist shaking and skirt flouncing among female competitors. The angry gestures and stomping motions of the Irish Jig have lent themselves to many an interpretation of the origin of the dance.

An Irish Jig.

It is a parody of Irish dancing and the infamous Irish temper.
Some of the interpretations that have been passed from generation to
generation are:
1. Females dancing the Jig, are acting out an angry fit of an Irishwoman whose husband has been out drinking until all hours.
2. Males dancing the Jig, act out the happy-go-lucky Irishman facing his wife's tirade.
3. The Scottish version of the Irish Jig is a parody dance depicting an Irish washer woman who is yelling and shaking her fists at her husband who came home late from the pub after spending all his money.
4. Another version describes a woman who shakes her fists and flounces her skirt because she is furious with her husband who has been out drinking until the wee hours.
5. The Scottish version of the Irish Jig is meant to parody an angry Irish washerwoman when she finds out some neighbourhood boys have knocked all of her clean wash to the ground.
6. Another (used when there is a children's audience) is that the woman is angry because the neighbourhood boys have stolen the laundry she placed out on the line.
7. Other versions include the Irish washerwoman chasing away the kids or pigs that ran through her his pants.
8. The male version of the dance tells of the husband mad at the washerwoman for shrinking his pants.
9. The Scottish Version of the Irish Jig is another caricature dance depicting an Irish washerwoman who is unhappy with her lot in life.

10. Many believe that this "Irish Washerwoman's Jig" was a way for the women to show their frustration with long hours and little pay without jeopardising their employment.
11. The Jig as danced today is the "Washerwoman," which commemorates the heart and determination of a working-class woman.
12. The Irish Jig is a parody of Irish dancing – borrowing many similar foot and leg movements, and even using hard shoes and 'temper'. The Arm movements reflect the history behind the dance—namely, an angry washwoman, flouncing her skirt, and shaking her fists, the hard shoes are for 'stomping' out the rhythm.

Other stories relate a woman being tormented by leprechauns, - the showing of the woman's fist symbolises her wanting to beat up the children, the leprechauns, or the husband.
If it is danced by a man or boy, it is the story of Paddy's leather breeches, in which a careless washerwoman has shrunk Paddy's fine leather breeches and he is waving his shillelagh at her in anger and showing his fist. In the New Zealand boys jig the Chase step is known as "chasing the pigs to market".
Prior to SOBHD other movements depicted the scrubbing of clothes and the corner step was referred to as the "fall over step".
In finishing may I say, the characterisation of the dance and the meaningful beating and sounding out of the beats is not being retained by many dancers in today's interpretation.

The Sailors' Hornpipe.

Although we look on the Games as an expression of Scottish cultural nationalism, we are not afraid of importing a tradition if it is good. Most of the credit for the hornpipe should go to the English, though many of its finest exponent's are at our games. The hornpipe, performed in a stylised Navy uniform, simulates the various jobs of pulling ropes, manning the yard arm, and splicing the mainbrace which a seaman had to perform in the days of sail.

HISTORY AND CHARACTISATION of HORNPIPE
SQRCHDI Technical Meeting 23rd August 2020
Presented by Margaret Paterson O.A.M.

The lively Hornpipe is really very characteristic of the English in nature and is a very old Celtic solo dance that is very much based on the sailor's abilities during the dancing with the sailors originally performing it with folded arms and often danced with clogs, especially in northern England. The steps are clearly ship wise such as hauling in the anchor, climbing or rigging ropes etc.

It may have been about 1485 – the late 15th and early 16th centuries – that the dance became associated with sailors and the sea. It is easy to understand that the small space required for the dance, and the fact that no partner was necessary, made it particularly suitable for shipboard dancing.

It is said that the English sailing ship and Royal Navy Captain James Cook (1728-1779) thought dancing was most useful to keep his men in good health during a voyage. When it was calm, and the sailors had consequently nothing to do, he made them dance –

Many English seamen could dance the hornpipe. Schoolboys destined for naval careers generally made a point of learning it, and it was included in nineteenth century naval training for recreational and entertainment purposes to prevent boredom, to calm the nerves before battle and to improve the general health of the sailors. It is interesting to note that it is still taught in one of the Naval schools in England today.

The Sailor's Hornpipe was most popular during the 16th to 18th Centuries but the original (Hornpipe) dates much farther back to Tudor times dates and was originally done by men only.

Each of the twenty-two steps takes one strain of the tune. The absence of nautical movements, particularly for the upper body and arms, suggests that the mime actions of the sailor's occupation, such as “Climbing the rigging” and “Land ahoy!” were introduced in varying degrees by different dancers throughout the nineteenth century.

Movements were those familiar to sailors of that time: "looking out to sea" with the right hand to the forehead, then the left, lurching as in heavy weather, and giving the occasional rhythmic tug to their breeches both fore and aft. - the whole performance should be presented in a nautical manner revealing some of the traits of the sailor at work - a

serious countenance, steps confined to a small space owing to the inadequacy of the deck space, the movements of the body, arms and feet showing vigour and precision.

The demeanour should be calm while the movements must show appreciation and animation. The dancer must visualize a sailor at work and be able to display vigour and strength in the heavy tasks and ease of movement in the lighter duties.

Beating and shuffles should be firm and distinct and must be performed in the correct ground positions with many of the arm positions depicting the use of the rope with hands opening and closing when pulling and releasing ropes. In certain movements the roll of the body should be combined with and evolve naturally from the movement of the feet. The roll must never be exaggerated.

Stepping shoes or light clogs were worn, and the favourite surface was the top of a large table, often soaped in Ireland. The tunes were identifiable from the audible pattern of the dancer's stepping—the mark of a good dancer— and nimble clatter was essential. It is also recalled that Jackie Tar’s as the sailors were called performed on tabletops in taverns in bare feet.

Early hornpipe instruments apparently consisted of wooden pipes with spaced holes and mouthpieces made of horn. It's been around since medieval times, and considered obsolete by approximately 1600.

A Scottish hornpipe could be called a rant. The tune “Sailor's Hornpipe” is a Scottish hornpipe and is called “College Hornpipe”, and apparently it was the Popeye cartoons which spread the new name.

ROYAL SCOTTISH OFFICIAL BOARD OF HIGHLAND DANCING
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE 13TH May 2020
SAILORS' HORNPIPE – HISTORY OF ACTIONS, MOVEMENTS & OUTFIT

ARM POSITIONS
1st Position – Akimbo The palms of the hands are not placed on the tunic as the sailor has tarry / dirty hands.
2nd Position – Folded As for 1st position, the palms of the hands are not placed on the tunic as the sailor has tarry / dirty hands. The thumbs should be underneath the upper arm. The arms can be horizontal or tilted in character with the movement.
3rd Position – Shading Ships were navigated by the sun. Sailors are shading their eyes from the sun. They are also looking for other ships and/or dangers.
4th Position – Interlaced Represents the interlacing/interweaving of the ropes and masts of a sailing ship.
ARM ACTIONS
1 – **Hauling**
Hauling rope with both hands. The rope is thick i.e. the rope used for tying up ships. The fingers should be open and then closed as they haul the rope.
2 – **Pulling Ropes**
a) Downward Pull Imitates the sailor climbing up the rope to get the crow's nest. The lower hand is holding the rope in the centre of the body. The top hand touches the bottom hand before the bottom hand reaches up to pull the rope down.
b) Inward Pull The sailor is pulling ropes from the quayside back onto the ship or pulling the anchor up.
3 – **Gathering In**
Thinner rope than downward / inward pulls. Pulling ropes in. The pulling action should be "hand over hand" and not a "roly poly" action.
4 – **Pumping**
Sailors are using a T-Pump and the elbows should be out to the side. The "up" action represents the pump sucking the water in; and the "down" action represents pushing the water out. 5 – **Casting** Sailors are throwing their heavy kit bag onto their shoulder.
6 – **Farewell**
Sailors waving goodbye to people on the shore using a handkerchief. Dancers used to have a handkerchief in a top pocket on their outfit and would use this during the step. This action also represents the sailors using flags to communicate from ship to ship (semaphore).
7 – **Look-Out**
This is linked to the Shading arm position (3rd). Sailors are looking out for ships – and not down for submarines.
8 – **Hitching**
The sailors are hitching up their trousers – keeping their dirty hands off their tunic.

BASIC MOVEMENTS
Shuffle Over the Buckle
Sailors wore black shoes with a silver buckle over the metatarsal. The shuffle goes over the buckle of the shoe.

Hoisting Slacks
This is linked to the Hitching arm action (8) Heel-Roll The ship is rolling and the sailors are pulling the ropes in.
Crab Walk
Imitating a crab. Forward Crab Walk Imitating a crab going forward.
Rocking
Drunken sailor or rolling of the ship.
Low Cutting
This movement represents a sailor being hung. This also represents a sailor tied to the mast of the ship and the side-to-side movement is when the ship is rolling.
Look-Out
This is linked to the Look-Out arm action (7)

OUTFIT
Bell Bottom Trousers

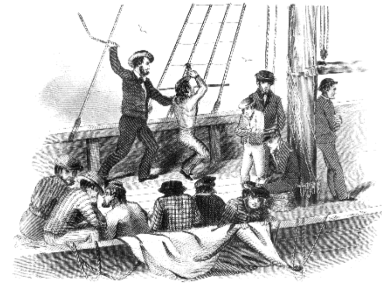
• Introduced in 1817 and known as “cracker jacks”.
• The bell bottom design made it easier for the sailors to roll-up their trousers when they were washing the ship’s deck and protect the material.
• Trousers could be kept under the sailors’ mattress. They were folded with either 5 or 7 folds depending on the height of the sailor. 5 folds represented the 5 oceans; 7 folds represented the 7 seas.
• The shape of the trousers made it easier for sailors to remove them in the event they had to abandon ship. The legs could then be knotted and the trousers used as a float.
White suits – these were worn when sailing in the tropics to keep the sailors cool.

Collars
• The three stripes represent Nelson and his 3 battles, namely Copenhagen, Nile and Trafalgar
• The black ribbon bow is a salute to the death of Horatio Nelson
Lanyard (no longer worn) – taken off and used for lighting fuses for cannons to fire.
Sailors’ hair - worn in pigtails and covered in tar. This kept the hair tidy and out of the sailor’s face and lice off the hair.
Sailor’s hat - is known as a “Pork Pie” hat as it is a similar shape to a pork pie.

7 BRUTAL WAYS THE SAILOIRS WERE PUNISHED
Bread and Water In 2019, the U.S. Navy finally stopped allowing officers to punish sailors by limiting their meals to bread and water.
The Navy adopted this punishment in its early days from the British Royal Navy and continued using it long after the Royal Navy stopped using it in 1891.
The modern version of this punishment might mean three days in the brig with nothing to eat with bread and water.
Mast-heading For minor infractions, a sailor might have to climb the mast and stay there for a set period of time in the cold wind.
Caning Worse than mast-heading was caning, a punishment in which you hit a sailor across his backside with a solid cane. Caning was once a less
serious consequence for misbehavior on the high seas. In fact, caning was mostly a punishment for minors in the 19th and early 20th centuries,

a time when boys as young as 12 could join the British Royal Navy. Offenders received six to 12 strokes with a thick three-and-a-half-foot cane;
sometimes in private, sometimes in front of the other boys on the ship.

Birching A boy might be caned for minor offenses, like skipping out on roll call. But if committed a more serious offense, his punishment could be a public birching. This usually meant 12 to 24 strokes with a bundle of birch sticks. “These instruments of correction were usually hung up in the steam of the ship’s galley to make them supple enough to have knots tied in them, though there are also reports of birches being soaked in vinegar or saltwater before being used.”



Flogging Still, neither caning nor birching compared to flogging, a common adult punishment that could kill a man. Until the mid -1800s, sailors who committed major offenses were often tied to the mast and whipped with a cat’ o nine tails. in front of the crew. The knots in the cat ‘o nine tails ripped flesh from sailors’ backs, causing wounds that could become infected. To prevent this, officers often rubbed salt into the cuts after the flogging was over—a practice that caused further pain.

Keelhauling Between the mid-1600s and the mid-1800s, one of the worst punishment a sailor could receive was keelhauling. “Keelhaul” comes from the Dutch *kielhalen*, which means "to haul under the keel of a ship,” As the name suggests, it involved throwing someone over one side of the ship and dragging him underneath the ship to the other side. This punishment was much, much rarer than flogging. But like flogging, it could endanger a man’s life.

Hanging For very serious infractions, the most common severe punishment was death by hanging. Sailors bound by his hands and feet and put a noose around his neck. The noose’s rope went up over the horizontal yard-arm that stretched across the mast, and the condemned man’s fellow sailors slowly pulled his body into the air until he died from strangulation.

Walking the Plank
Perhaps the most well-known pirate punishment on the high seas is blindfolding a sailor and making him “walk the plank.” But although the practice has been dramatized in books and movies, there is no evidence that anyone ever actually did it.

NDAAI SOLO DANCES HISTORICAL FACTS

Highland and Traditional Scottish Dances is a book by **D. G. MacLennan** that was published in **1952**. It describes various Scottish dances and their history, but it also differs from the current technique of the Royal Scottish Official Board of Highland Dancing[1]

Isobel Cramb (1953) has scripted in detail four of the Lessor Known Highland Dances – Flora MacDonald’s Fancy, The King of Sweden (both originally female dances, and now performed by both male and female dancers), the Earl of Errol, and Scotch Measure (originally danced as a solo or duet, but is now only permitted to be contested as a solo dance). Cramb’s descriptions, clearly demonstrate the influence of Ballet on Highland Dancing, both in terms of Dance composition, and language used to describe the

movements. (35) This book may be one of the earliest publications devoted exclusively to the Lessor Known Dances, and may be considered as the forerunner to later publications such as those scripted by the Scottish examining bodies.

Two books have been released in Australia in an attempt to preserve the knowledge of some of the little-known non-competitive dances. The first, written by the Brisbane Highland Dancing teachers and enthusiasts, in the early 1970's, and more recently a book produced by a group in New South Wales.

'Miss Forbes',
a traditional Scottish Step dance first published by D.G. MacLennan in 1950. While some dances in the Scottish tradition are named for outstanding dancers (such as Tribute to J.L.MacKenzie), this dance took its name from the music often played for it, a reel known as Miss Forbes's Farewell to Banff. In fact, a dance to this tune was devised for someone named Miss Robertson sometime before 1795, when the tune was published as "Miss Robertson's High Dance or Miss Forbes's Farewell (J.F. and T.M. Flett). The name has caused some confusion and dancers have been wondering who the dancer Miss Forbes was, though perhaps she was a musician!

According to Comhlan Dannsa nan Eileanach, the dance was originally popular in Aberdeenshire, but sometime at the end of the 19th century it travelled to the Hebrides, where it is still danced today. MacLennan lists it as a Herbridean "girls' dance", and as such does not include arm movements: the dancer is expected to hold her skirt in her hands, perhaps originally to reveal footwork that would otherwise be concealed by the long skirts of the period.

HDB uses a version of Miss Forbes that likely originates from the mainland of Scotland, without distinctive Hebridean accents like inverted foot positions. Moreover, following a more recent convention, we perform the dance to the tune "Wee Man at the Loom", which suits our version of the dance very well.

Tribute to J.L. McKenzie, is a dance celebrating Mr McKenzie's contribution to Highland Dancing.

Miss Elspeth Strathern, another well-known Highland dance teacher and examiner, who won the Cowal Juvenile World Championship in 1934, choreographed this dance, Tribute to J. L. McKenzie, for Mr. James McKenzie's contributions to Highland Dancing. Some of his impressive wins include the Braemar Highland Games Championship, which he won ten times, and the Cowal Highland Gathering trophy, which he won in three successive years.

This dance honours J. L McKenzie, one of the founders of the Scottish Official Board of Highland Dance. Known for his passion and dedication to the craft, McKenzie competed into his late 40s. Some of his impressive wins include the Braemar Highland Games Championship, which he won ten times, and the Cowal Highland Gathering trophy (Adult World Highland Dancing Championship) which he won in three successive years 1952,53 and 54.

In recognition of his dedication to the art of Highland dancing, Mr. McKenzie was later granted the distinction of Member of the British Empire (MBE), an honour bestowed upon him at Buckingham Palace by the Queen. JL McKenzie was the finest male dancer of his generation.

Over the Water to Charlie There are dances of Ewan MacLachlan who studied dancing while attending the Scotts College at Douai, France. The best known of these are Tullochgorm, Highland Laddie, O’er the Water to Charlie, and Blue Bonnets. They were composed after its creator returned to South Uist, where he spent the last thirty years of his life (from 1855 to 1885). They have been recorded by Jack MacConachie (24th May 1906 to 13th January 1966), who took them down in 1949 from the dancing of John MacLeod of Eochar. McLeod learned them from Archie MacPherson, one of MacLachlan’s pupils whom MacLennan had seen performing these dances in 1925
Dancer’s Delight Dancer's Delight is a Scottish soft-shoe step dance devised in 1964 to commemorate the first anniversary of the United States Highland Dancers' Association. The dance is performed to 2/4 marches, e.g., Scotland the Brave. Dance instructions were published by Ron Wallace in 1994. Unlike softer Scottish ladies' step dances, e.g., The Thistle, Dancer's Delight resembles a Scottish highland dance in terms of style and technique.
The Flowers of Edinburgh is a tune known to all Scottish traditional musicians, and is played all over the world, with distinctively different American and Irish versions. The tune dates from near 1740, may have been written by Oswald though he didn't claim it, and has been attached to several different sets of words. The song was written by Jean Elliot in the 18th century and is a reworking of an older song about the non-return of the large number of Scottish soldiers after the Battle of Flodden, when 10,000 are said to have perished along with their king and large numbers of the nobility. Extract from “Hebridean Solo Dances” collected by Jack McConachie, F.I.S.T.D. The “Flowers of Edinburgh” was also Hebridean and the description given is as it was written down and taught by Jack McConachie.
Bonnie Dundee Our source for Bonnie Dundee is the SDTA's Scottish National Dances. This dance was once popular on the competition boards but is no longer seen there today. Like the Sword Dance and the Seann Triubhas, the dance ends with a quick step, after the dancer claps to signal the musicians to speed up. Jack McConachie transcribed this dance from the teaching of Mr. Anderson, who called it "Hielan' Laddie". As there is another dance with that name and this dance was to be used at competitions, McConachie set it to another tune, a popular pipe jig and song, Bonnie Dundee. The Bonnie Dundee of the song was John Graham, Earl of Claverhouse, Viscount of Dundee, who died fighting with the Jacobite cause at the Battle of Killiekrankie. It's believed that Sir Walter Scott established Claverhouse's nickname with the following words, which go with the tune: *Come fill up my cup, come fill up my can, C* *ome saddle my horses and call up my men,* *Unhook the west port and let us gang free,* *For it's up wi' the bonnets of Bonnie Dundee!* --Scots Minstrelsie. However, the choreographer, Mr. Anderson, was "the well-known Dancing Master of Dundee," so the title also seems to be an appropriate homage to him.