

Teachers' Pet Dances: Georgina Finlay



Georgina Finlay

[The Montgomeries' Rant](#) (R8x32, *Book 10*) is a favourite as I have lots of happy memories dancing this reel at balls and monthly dances over the decades with so many good friends.

[Mairi's Wedding](#) (R8x40, *Thirty Popular Dances, Vol 2*) is also a fun dance as the formations are quite simple and the music is so joyful.

[The Saint John River](#) (S4x32, *New Brunswick Collection*) was a favourite strathspey for my demonstration teams. I love the clever way the dance mirrors the ebb and flow of the river where it meets the Bay of Fundy.

[Johnny Groat's House](#) (R8x32, *Book 18*) is a dance that my children's classes enjoyed as it's lively and relatively simple.

[Petronella](#) (R8x32, *Book 1*) is another children's favourite. Once again, it's lively and allows young dancers a chance to practise (and often show off) their pas de Basque.

[Saint Andrews Links](#) (S3x40, *St Andrews 75th Anniversary*) I've included this as it really is a favourite, not just because I devised it, but because it reminds me of where I was born and grew up, and where I first learned Scottish country dancing, a life-long passion.

...Georgina Finlay

ST ANDREWS LINKS

S 3x40 : 3C (3C set)

Georgina Finlay, *75 Years of Dancing in St Andrews*

- 1-8 1s Set Adv, Turn 2H to face up; 1s Cast 1 pl, Pet turn, End: 1L btn 2s, 1M btn 3s (2s up #5-6)
- 9-16 Set & Link for 3, twice
- 17-24 3s+1s+2s Circle 6H round & back (finish as at end #16)
- 25-32 ½ RSh Reels of 3 across (RSh:person on R); 1s Turn 2H, end 2nd pl own side, All Set
- 33-40 1s, followed by 2s, dance up btn 3s, Cast off to end: 3 2 1; 2s, followed by 3s dance dn btn 1s, Cast up to End: 2 3 1

Becoming Scottish Country Dancers

My husband and I were married in 1982 and moved to London, Ontario, to start our internships. We thought it would be fun for each of us to choose a non-credit course at the University of Western Ontario. Blake picked Mandarin; I picked Scottish country dancing. I had never tried it before, but having spent four years in residence at Trinity College, University of Toronto, I had heard about the Scottish country dancing there, led by Professor John Hurd, and I always thought it might be fun to try.



Blake Woodside & Anne Curtis

The classes in London were conducted by George Emmerson*, who was very serious about footwork. Half of every class was working on technique. My legs were sore for quite a while. I quickly realized that in addition to the classes, there were evening events in the community, and it would make sense if Blake was a Scottish country dancer as well. Soon after my course started, I came home and told him he had to sign up too — after all, he's the one who's Scottish on both sides! He did start the dancing, but then had to drop Mandarin after the first semester, so I am responsible for the fact that he can't speak Chinese.

We danced in London for four years, but then we moved back to Toronto and were busy raising our three sons, so there was a long hiatus before we picked it up again around 2010. We started going to Newtonbrook on Monday nights when Kathleen Kynoch was still teaching. We found it to be a friendly and welcoming group. Over the years, several other teachers took over, including Tony Szeto, Blair Gerrie, and Gordon Hayburn, but when the church we were based in decided to do a renovation, the group decided to disband rather than relocate. Most of the dancers also danced with other groups anyway.

In 2018 we started dancing with the group at Glenview Presbyterian, which was larger, and more ambitious in the number and variety of dances every week, but still friendly and welcoming.

We have never made it to a Tartan Ball, but we are looking forward to dancing again once the pandemic is over. We love the music and the exercise for both mind and body. It is a great way to spend time with people. The Tartan Ball is our goal. We just need to be confident that we know all the dances well enough that our set will stay on track. Practice makes perfect.

...Anne Curtis & Blake Woodside

Grace Notes



Wendy Hanton

d. 19 January 2021

Wendy died one month shy of her 85th birthday. Wendy was a warm and caring person in whose company you could not but smile and laugh. Wendy immigrated to Canada from England at age 12. Her most cherished activities were Scottish country dancing, and camping and canoeing in Algonquin Park. Wendy was also famous for her home-made shortbread and butter tarts. She danced at Hillcrest and Scarborough. Our condolences to her family.

Full obit: [Click here](#)

Scottish Country Dance Quiz

Carrie Rose and Scott Higgs, two DC/Philadelphia area dancers, came up with a great video quiz. They dance the first 8 bars of 11 popular dances – in 3.5 minutes!

Can you guess what they are?

For an extra challenge, mute the audio.

Answers at end of video.

<https://youtu.be/XfaU0Bu4QyQ>