



Hector MacAndrew  
1903 - 1980

*With This Website*

[www.scottishfiddlemusicinstyle.co.uk](http://www.scottishfiddlemusicinstyle.co.uk)

I remember with deep affection my teacher in this field:  
Scots Fiddle Player Hector MacAndrew

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Whilst effort has been made to indicate sources, and to give credit to individuals and organisations - where possible, the texts (inclusive of historical data and my personal comments) are included to furnish ideas for anyone wishing to undertake more in-depth exploration.

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**No 30: 17<sup>th</sup> November, 2023**

*The Homepage picture is taken from the strand at Streedagh Beach, County Sligo, looking north-west to the open Atlantic horizon  
On September 6<sup>th</sup>, 1588, three ships of the Spanish Armada drove ashore in the adjacent area and were wrecked*

*A memorial stands nearby.*  
[Historical Link](#)

**Programme 30 includes tracks from former programmes with some new ones added**

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**N.B. Where Gaelic is quoted in a track title or text – this is taken directly from the source utilised**

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### **01) 2/4 March: The Atholl Highlanders March to Loch Katrine.**

There are four sources for this march on the [Ceol Sean](#) website, but no dates.

I believe it to be a composition of William Rose (1859). My version is a traditional one based on the style of Hector MacAndrew. We played pipe marches (among other things) together whenever I had the opportunity of seeing him. The phrases in this tune fall into place quite logically. If you are learning it – absorb them one at a time...

Ornamentation on the fiddle differs from that on the pipes of course, as does the ability to vary the dynamics. A good piper will use ornamentation to point/accent his/her phrasing, (within a continuous stream) which he/she will feel 'instinctively' (or at least after enlightenment - chanter tuition and/or singing).

### **02) Air: Ho Away She Goes! (Falbh orra, Ho!)**

Sourced from *Celtic Melodies, a Collection of Original Slow Highland Airs, Pipe Music and Cainte areachd [sic] Vol 1* by George Farquhar Graham and Finlay Dunn, Edinburgh c 1830. *Falbh orra Ho! (Ho Away She goes)* is described as a 'boat song' and is to be played/sung 'slowly and distinctly'. Unfortunately, there are no Gaelic (or English) words to indicate substance or phrasing, so we are caged in the bar lines. Nevertheless, I give it a meditative, salty tang, launching from the shore, wherever it may be...

Recording the sea was easy, but getting all the gull entries at the right time was a real nightmare - they would never watch... The tune is hexatonic (EF#ABC#D).

### **03) Strathspey & Reel: Tulloch Gorum; Johnny's Wife**

These sets are arranged from the William Gunn Collection (1848). We are fortunate to have a reprint of the original with a Foreword by Finlay J Macdonald, The National Piping Centre, Glasgow, 2003. Gunn hailed from Sutherland, born about 1788. The tunes have Gaelic titles, those presumably by which he originally knew them. Some subsequent collectors and performers altered some of these into English. '*Tullach Gorm*' Tulloch Gorum, - the blue/azure/green hill/knoll. This is one of many strathspey versions existing in the various collections (of both pipe and fiddle music). As I associate (quite strongly) the colour blue with key A (major or minor) I decided on this setting.

This is followed by the lively reel '*An Ceile a bh'aig Iain Mac Ioin*' / Johnny's Wife.

### **04) Neil MacLeod's Lament (Cumha Neill Mhic Leoid)**

To read *Cronan nan Tonn (The Croon of the Sea)* must be to touch the bardic culture of past centuries, where music and verse were so often wed. Donnachadh Mac Iain – Duncan Johnston (1881–1947) was born in Lagavulin, Islay, an island long ago hosting the Lords of the Isles (Finlaggan). His book of songs and poetry was first published in 1938, and thanks to his daughter in law the late Ceit NicIain (to whom I owe a debt of gratitude for allowing me to include this tune) was republished in 1997. It is well to reflect on the *Foreword* and *Preface* in this book. I leave that experience to the listener.

The song was composed in 1913 in memory of 'Neil Mac Leod, the celebrated Skye Bard'. The tune is pentatonic (first inversion) - true to the gapped scale structures of former centuries. Duncan marks it 'Mournful and slow'.

Duncan Johnston was invalided home from WW1 in 1916, and although he left the island in 1918 for employment in Glasgow, Actually, I think he really never left it at all... I conclude the arrangement with an E major chord, - a lament, but like Duncan Johnston, the subject remembered with affection.

### 05) Air: I Will See the Great Mountains

This is my arrangement of the song published (p. 288) in an anthology of *Songs of Gaelic Scotland (Birlinn, 2010)* by Anne Lorne Gillies. *This book is necessary for those seriously interested in this unique culture. The collected Gaelic words are printed with side-by-side English translation and the copious notes are at once erudite and accessible.*

The song, attributed to Ian Rob (John Cameron, 1821-1898) a native of Ballachulish, 'was composed about 1856'. The tune is better known in piping circles as *The Mist Covered Mountains of Home*.

The *Oban Times* of published an appreciation of John in an obituary on 19<sup>th</sup> November, 1898.

I quote from the English translation of the song:

*Chorus:*

*Oh, I'll see, I'll see the great mountains.  
Oh, I'll see, I'll see the peaked mountains,  
Oh, I'll see, I'll see the great mountains,  
I'll see the mist-covered mountains.*

*Last Verse:*

*Welcome to the green rolling, knolly hills,  
Welcome to the great peaked hilly summits,  
Welcome to the woods and welcome to it all –  
Oh! What bliss to be staying in their midst.*

To me, none of these songs are mere Victorian romance or sentiment, but they connect us with a culture where all senses may be quite freely engaged, in awe, with nature - and with quiet reflection, departing or coming home.

### 06) Strathspey & Reel: The Fair Wedding; I Will Go Over the Mountain

Both tunes are in Keith Norman MacDonald's (1834-1913) *Puirt- à-Beul* published by Taigh na Teud, Skye, - see the new edition edited by William Lamb (2012) - which includes historical notes and translations into English from original Gaelic, all of which are helpful in putting flesh on the dots. In addition, the background 'Editor's Note', p.9, puts this whole genre into a clearer perspective.

[Link to Taigh na Teud Publishing](#)

William Lamb's biographical notes are at <http://www.academia.edu/2913654/>

[Dr Keith Norman MacDonald A Short Biography](#)



*The Fair Wedding*, ('A' Bhanais Bhàn no.23 styled as 'Strathspey or Reel' is given with words for a song. The literal translation of the chorus reads:

*How I love that company  
So easy going, not too heavy;  
My best wishes for that company,  
Who are lacking neither cattle nor grain.*

A very lively occasion! What does become clear from all this is the multipurpose functionality of a tune, given some subtle variation of tempo, pitch, modality and/or rhythm - or all of the above, and the number of publications where it resides. Compare the strathspey *The Craig of Barn's* (*Complete Repository of Original Scots Slow Strathspeys and Dances*, published by Gow & Shepherd early c 19).

I arranged the air into a simple pentatonic mode (GACDF).

The reel *I Will Go Over the Mountain* (*Thèid Mi Null air a'Bheinn*). Or *She Put Her Knee on the Old Man* (*Chuir I Glùn air a' Bhodach*) appears in both KNM's *Puirt--Beul* (no. 66) and his *Skye Collection* (p. 119) The tune settings differ slightly (as do the keys). The *Skye Collection* version is a pipe setting. There are words in *Puirt-à-Beul* (first set translated):

*I will go over by the mountain  
And I will come back by the glen;  
I will go over by the mountain,  
I will come back by the house of the chieftain,  
I will get cattle, I will get cattle,  
I will get cattle, it's my opinion;  
I will get cattle I believe,  
And the keeping of land.*

The same observation applies as to the functionality.

The reel is certainly lively - the wind fans through the heather enlivening the singer's pace...

### 07) Air: Roderick of the Glens

This air I arranged from no. 180 in the Simon Fraser manuscript (intended to have been Vol. 2 of his collection) which resides in the Edinburgh University library. The text notes for this manuscript are, tantalisingly, missing, so his own source is unknown **just who Roderick was therefore remaining conjecture. Was he a Chisholm a Morrison or a \*Mackenzie? Is this a lament for a man or reflection on an empty glen with no fires, left to its tumbling streams, or both, or neither?**

Whoever, I view this as a musical profile of a man Fraser felt worthy of attention.

### 08) 6/8 March: G F Rose of Auchernach

A march by P/M G.S. McLennan (1883-1929), one of the great pipers of his generation, composed for his friend thus named. Arranged from *The McLennan Collection*.

### 09) Air: Oh, But I Dearly Love Thee

Source - Angus Fraser (1802-1870) *Collection of Vocal Music* no. 39; *Highland Vocal Airs* no. 113.

In a note to the former he says 'This air has two or three popular songs in the highlands, but I have not

met with many of the same rhythm except in the lowlands.'

Angus Fraser was the only son of Captain Simon Fraser (1773-1852). His notes, where they come down to us, are more technically erudite rather than politically convoluted, as his fathers' - in his 1816 Collection for example.

During Angus's lifetime Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806-1861) wrote her [Sonnet 43](#).

I'm not suggesting a Celtic connection, rather human nature.

For MM

## 10) Strathspey & Reel: Munlochy Bridge; The Highland road to Inverness

The strathspey is an elusive one to tie down (as far as one ever can with 'traditional' music). The tune, in one form or another, has been around since at least early c 18: there are song airs, sundry versions of dance adaptations and pipe versions widely printed. So, I have no conscience adding my own hexatonic (EF#GABD) setting. The reel on the other hand is another tune from Captain Fraser's Knockie Collection of which he explains:

**No. 163 is another of the pipe-reels so often referred to. The words describe two foot passengers, overtaken by a frosty wind of such extreme cold, that they could scarcely preserve life by trotting to the measure of this air.**

Motto: Always carry clothing appropriate to the terrain and conditions – and include tracks, such as this one, on your mobile device to encourage 'trotting'.

## 11) Air: Lady Lovat ('Ban Tighearna Mhic S'himi')

This is no. 176 in Captain Simon Fraser's (1773-1852) 1816 collection. He Notes:

**No. 176.—There have been events in the fate of every Lady Lovat, of whom the editor has either heard or read, suited to the plaintive and affecting strain of this melody. The present worthy dowager-lady having seen a fine family of sons entombed, after arriving at the age of manhood, and, on the death of her husband, the family estate devolve to a distant collateral heir of entail,—no small share of affliction for the only one mentioned.**

He's not specific, but given the Collection introduction dated 1815 and 'present', line four above, the air dates prior to this.

Here is the Lady, in the half light, eyes closed in her chair, with her many memories, until the sun Fades below the horizon.

## 12) 2/4 March: The Sprig of Ivy

This tuneful lively march is a composition of [Lt. Bruce Seaton](#) 2nd Black Watch, pre-1932 (a.k.a. Sir Bruce Seaton, 11<sup>th</sup> Baronet of Abercorn. Bruce enjoyed a colourful career from army to acting. Among his film and TV roles I remember him best as 'Sergeant Old' in the original *Whisky Galore* film made in 1949. Although the composer, fortunately for us, he had the march transcribed for him. He couldn't notate it.

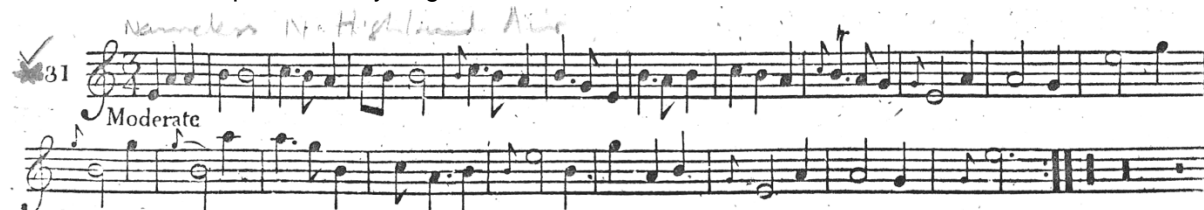
### 13) North Highland Air (Nameless)

No. 31 from the *Patrick MacDonald Collection, 1784*, in the *North Highland Airs* section. This collection now dog-eared and rather tatty, (like a favourite armchair) was one of the first I acquired circa 1970.

The tunes printed in this section are those collected by Patrick's brother Joseph, a gifted, sensitive musician, steeped in his native Gaelic culture – in piping, dancing, singing and poetry. There is much on-line material referencing the family.

See *The Patrick McDonald Collection* (reprint 2021) published by *Taigh na Teud, Skye* [LINK](#)

Here is the tune copied from my original collection:



We have the bare bones of this pentatonic air, very little ornamentation, advice (only 'Moderate'), or words. If you can, visit Strathnaver, the North Highlands, walk the hills and the north-facing shore, the unforgiving sea, apply the five senses and the history – the clearances – crofters to fishermen – giving way for sheep - a private place you always revisit – memory...

The fading open E over an E major chord into silence.

**14) 6/8 Jig: Center's Bonnet.** Here we allude to two legendary pipers from the past. Firstly, P/M Willie Ross (1878-1966) (whose composition this is) and secondly James Alexander Center (b. Edinburgh, 1875 - d. Melbourne, 1919). James was born to a pipe making family. He became a celebrated performer, taught firstly by his father, also James (b. Aberdeenshire, 1831) and then by John MacDoughall Gillies. He was exceptional in winning the gold Medal and Clasp (on the same day at Inverness in 1904. JA was not a regimental piper: he joined the family business emigrating to Australia with them in 1907 where his piping prospered still further. Sadly, he succumbed to Spanish flu in 1919. He was a neat, dapper man, like G.S. McLennan. However, he did have one distinguishing feature: an unorthodox tilt of his glengarry bonnet - which would quite clearly identify him in a group! P/M William Ross was a renowned teacher at the Army School of Piping, Edinburgh Castle. My mentioning his name whilst playing either in Scotland or Ireland often, prompted a response from someone who had a past relative taught by him. The jig is a lively (un-maligned) taunt at his friend, a tune I include as tribute to both of them.

Giving the imagination free reign (some morning about 3 a.m.) - this 6/8 could equally have applied to James Erskine, 23rd Earl of Mar (1675-1732), whose fluid political allegiances earned him the epithet 'Bobbing John'.

The syncopated flute part in the arrangement embraces this idea. The tune itself is tricky enough for pipers. Likewise, the bow string-crossing - at the same time maximising the use of 'open' A and E strings - adding brightness).

### 15) Song Air: Mill of Tifty's Annie

There are many versions of this song (believed c 17). The theme is historically familiar enough: poor miller's daughter falls hopelessly for a man 'of higher degree'. Father says 'NO!'... Girl turns face to the wall.

The tune is hexatonic - ABDF#G - and sourced from the 1820 William Christie (a native of Cumminestown) Collection. pp. 20/21. The fact that he uses terms 'Lento' and 'Con Affetto' suggests the audience he was aiming at with the print, - at the behest of his publisher?

For a set of words follow the [Link](#) to the Scottish Poetry Library

### 16) Strathspey & Reel: Brechin Castle; Lady Montgomerie

We are now drawing further east from western Gaelic roots. 'Tradition' metamorphoses into 'National' (see Collinson 1966). The flat keys moreover! I originally found these two tunes (late 60's) in William Honeyman's Strathspey Reel and Hornpipe Tutor. I do recall the bowings - over almost every note! He was obviously a serious well-intentioned musician whose books included *The Secrets of Violin Playing and The Violin and How to Master It - part of the fabric of the social history of fiddling now. They are still available: [www.abebooks.co.uk/book-search/author/william-c-honeyman/](http://www.abebooks.co.uk/book-search/author/william-c-honeyman/) Since then I met Hector MacAndrew, - and I did not need the books anymore. I do not have composers, but one suggestion I came across for the reel is 'possibly by the Earl of Eglinton' which would serve as a pointer to the ballroom venue and the performances and bands of Niel and Nathaniel Gow et al.*

### 17) Reel: Cecily Ross

This arrangement pays homage to P/M Willie Ross MBE (1878-1966), his daughter Cecily, pianist, who was a MOD prize-winner, and the composer who gave it to us – [Rod Campbell](#) (1873-1937). Here the piano plays the second part (for one hand). Angus MacPherson, whom I met in 1968, graciously thought highly of Rod, a humble but gifted man, when I mentioned his name. This is one of Rod's best tunes. Over the years I have never tired playing it, a refreshing uplift to come back to.

### 18) 6/8 March: Leaving Port Askaig

The march, a well-known classic, was composed by P/M William Ross (1878-1966) in 1926.

*In 1905 the Paddle Steamer Pioneer, 241 gross tons, entered service in the MacBrayne fleet on the Islay to West Loch Tarbert mail run. The principal feature of her design was the shallow draft to enable this during low water spring tides. Once east of MacArthur's Head the way forward is in open water exposed to a southerly fetch (the middle third of the voyage). On the day when Willie made this journey from Port Askaig, the weather turned ugly. But, undaunted, he got creative. The result was this imaginative march - evoking the movement of the Pioneer, pitching, and rolling.*

William brought his all-round skills to the Army School of Piping, Edinburgh Castle, and was well respected. Often if I mention his name at a gig, someone will produce a personal anecdote. Over the years the five pipe books of *The William Ross [pipe] Collection (Paterson's Publications)* have been (and remain) a constant source of reference and inspiration.

### 19) 2/4 Marches: The Hessians' March; The Highland Laddie

The [Hessians'](#) March (possibly of c 17German origin) more popularly known as *O Gin I Were Where Gaddie Rinns (I wish I Were Where the Gaddie Runs/ On the Back o'Bennachie)*.

Whilst the first run is rather 'stiff', second time round played concurrently with my version (on the flute) is *Highland Laddie*.

The William Christie Collection (1820) included the Hessians March on p.20 – the basis of my arrangement.



**Finally, No.20) Air: As Sad I Arise in the Morning Early**  
**(Moch sa mhadainn 's mi ag èiridh)**

The idea for my setting came from a tune I found, browsing the Angus Fraser manuscript *Collection of Vocal Airs* in the Edinburgh University music library. The English translation from Gaelic is the one given therein. No words, no text.

**I feel this especially for the children: those who are denied their right to find life fulfilling  
resulting from conflict, especially those survivors who will carry the scars  
of trauma, of loss, of violence, waking to dust and destruction, -  
all throughout their lives.**

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*Notes © Michael Welch: November, 2023*

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