



## South East Region Teachers Association

### **Innovation with Simplicity (Derek Haynes dances) Maureen Haynes accompanied by Calum Mitchell March 2018**

**Reporter: Ian Stewart**

Few of us realised what a treat we had in store when Maureen Haynes came to lead the SERTA workshop on 18 March 2018 about the dances of Derek Haynes. I have great memories of Derek teaching pas-de-basque at Pitlochry Winter School for 40 minutes and being gripped the whole time as he very carefully built up the step. Those who say step practice is boring can't have been taught by Derek!



Dancing dances is one thing but being able to understand how they came about adds a whole new dimension. I was fascinated by Maureen's explanations of how Derek's dances were written and I really wanted to look at them in more detail and dance more of them.

So, what was it about Derek's dances that I hadn't appreciated before? Their key attribute is that they are basically simple but with innovative variations, creating exciting new formations. For example,



Derek's inspiration for the Targe came when he was watching a Ladies Chain being danced somewhat inelegantly. One also has to laugh at the story behind Neidpath Castle – Derek only had 3 men for his demonstration team, so he devised Neidpath Castle to overcome the problem. He never forgot you were dancing with your partner and gave ample opportunity in his dances to acknowledge this. Maureen demonstrated how Derek made his dances flow without challenging movements; he also gave a great deal of thought to the transition from second to third time through. Other dances came from something Derek was reading – weaving in Paisley hence Paisley Weavers. Sometimes the tune inspired the dance, but more often the dance came first.

We had an excellent day thanks to Maureen's teaching, Calum's sympathetic and uplifting playing and the superb organisation by Jane Rose and the SERTA committee. When the end of the workshop came, there was a certain degree of sadness that it was over all too soon and there was so much more we wanted to find out – when are you coming back Maureen?



(A full list of Derek's dances is available [HERE](#) and copies of his books, The Carnforth Collection, are available from Maureen.)

Ian Stewart

