

TED AND JOSIE HARNDEN

Many of us will have fond memories of Ted and Josie Harnden who both played a major part both participating in and promoting folk music and dance on Mersey and Deeside. Josie was a marvellous dancer who was just as happy in clogs as she was when wearing her country dancing shoes. After a distinguished career in the Royal Navy Ted developed an interest in folk dance and became an excellent dance caller with a wide and varied repertoire of dances, some of which were his own compositions.



Ted & Josie

A few months ago I received an email from Kathryn Maher, Ted and Josie's daughter, who asked if I knew the whereabouts of Ted's archive of dances as the family were keen that Ted's original compositions should not be lost and should be part of Ted's lasting legacy. After some detective work Kathryn now has copies of most of Ted's compositions and has passed on copies to a friend who has used some of them at her newly formed dance club in East Sussex. Some of Ted's dances also found their way to the Bebington group after the Upton group closed and regularly form part of their Tuesday evening club nights. Kathryn no longer lives locally, nor does her brother who lives in Australia or her sister who now lives in the Scottish Highlands. Sadly they had another brother who passed away about 18 months ago. The family have given MAD Folk permission for copies of Ted's dances to form part of a section on the MAD Folk web site which will include dances composed locally.

During a conversation with Mary, our Chairman, I learnt that lots of dances have been composed over the years by local people. Some for special occasions and some just to provide interest to the dancing community.

In order to preserve these dances for the benefit of the wider dancing community we are considering putting a section on our MAD Folk web site. I will ask clubs to donate dances and suggested music. We may also have links to other dance resources to help in particular new callers who wish to build up their repertoire.

I stress, donating dances is entirely voluntary and we will make strenuous efforts to avoid infringing copyright laws. If we look at the Full English Section of the EFDSS web site we see archive materials collected and preserved for future generations ie us. I would like to think that the modern day generation has a worthwhile legacy to pass on to future dancers. I hope so.

Chris Warrington.