

Who was 'Mrs Milne of Kinneff?'

Doris Milne, born in the Kincardineshire village of Kinneff, came to Bridge of Allan with her family in 1960 to join relatives working there. She died peacefully, on 10th June 2004 aged 89, survived by her son, two daughters and several grandchildren.

Her musical enthusiasm made her immediately accepted and sought after as an accompanist for local ballet classes. She also made herself at home singing in the choir of Chalmers Church, Bridge of Allan in which she served faithfully for over 40 years. She accompanied singers and musicians with the musical group, 'The Inverallan Occasionals', at varied entertainments including ceilidhs for the local branch of 'An Comunn Gaidhealach' and many other organisations.

Doris Milne was a country dancer, and she joined the local class in Bridge of Allan before she moved over to the piano stool as the musician. She was soon persuaded to join the Stirling Branch of the Scottish Country Dance Society by the senior teacher at the time, Miss Bowie, and she played the piano for branch classes for over 30 years. Doris was also invited to be one of the pianists at Summer School in St Andrews.

Although 'retired' from playing for the Stirling Branch classes, Doris continued into her 88th year to play for some local country dance classes, and even travelling as musical accompanist for the Scottish Country Dancing which was part of the 'after hours entertainment' on some 'Holiday Fellowship' walking holidays.

Doris Milne was delighted to be elected Honorary President of the Stirling Branch of the RSCDS, and especially pleased when she was presented, in 1990, with the original copy of 'her dance', the strathspey, "Mrs Milne of Kinneff," written by Alan MacPherson, and ascribed 'In appreciation of her musical contribution to the Demonstration Team of RSCDS Stirling.' Doris herself chose the tune 'The Rose of Allandale' thus linking her origins in Kinneff with her long-term residence in Bridge of Allan.

This graceful strathspey quickly became popular locally, not only as a 'demonstration dance' but also on dance programmes. It was no surprise to learn soon thereafter that the dance was being featured on social programmes as far away as Australia.

The dance was published by the Society in 'Leaflet 32' which appeared in 1997. This dance is a fitting tribute to a wonderful ambassador for the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society, but also to a very warm, sociable lady whose uplifting music must have put extra life into many weary legs on class nights.

John Crawford