English Folk Dance & Song Society | Vaughan Williams Memorial Library

Traditional Tunes and Popular Airs Conference

8 – 9 November 2025

Cecil Sharp House

Presented by the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library in conjunction with Julia Bishop (University of Sheffield) and Alice Little.

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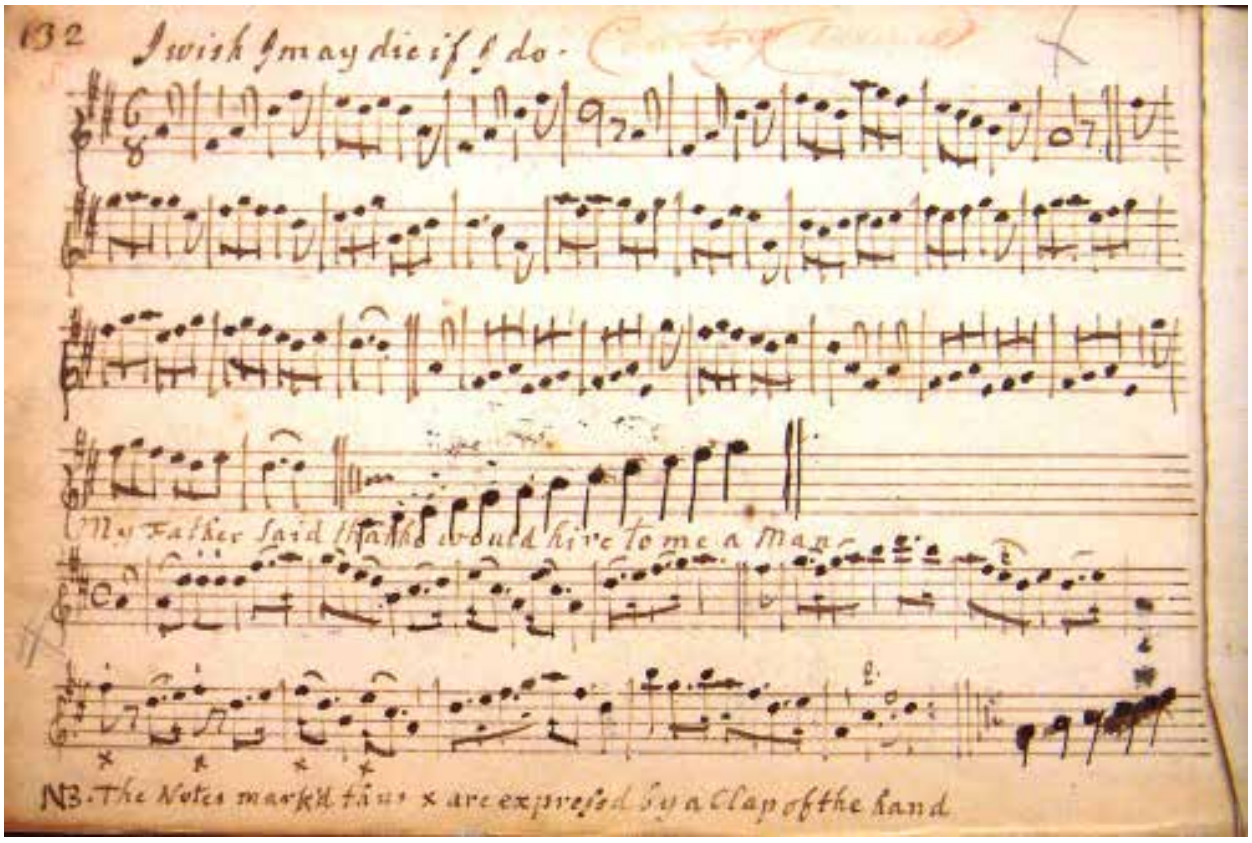


Image: Malchair Tune Book: VWML collections

MESSAGE FROM THE ORGANISERS

Welcome to the Traditional Tunes and Popular Airs conference, and to Cecil Sharp House, home of the English Folk Dance and Song Society and the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library. The first TTPA conference took place here in 2017, and we are delighted to be back for this, our fourth gathering.

The aim of the TTPA conferences is bring together researchers who may be working in different fields but have shared and complementary areas of interest relating to song and instrumental tunes. We are grateful to this year's speakers for offering what promises to be a fascinating and wide-ranging set of presentations, and we look forward to discussing and networking with all participants.

Conference information and the finalised programme appear below, but please do seek out one of us if you still have any questions or concerns.

Tiffany Hore (Vaughan Williams Memorial Library), **Julia Bishop** (University of Sheffield), and **Alice Little**

Supported by Alex Burton, Martin Nail, Josie Sommer and Nick Wall (Vaughan Williams Memorial Library)



GENERAL INFORMATION

All presentations will take place in Kennedy Hall on the ground floor.

Recording and photographs

The conference organisers may take photographs during the conference for publicity purposes. Please let us know if you do not wish to be photographed.

The conference will be videoed and the recording will be available to consult in the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library in perpetuity. It will also be retained on a private, passworded link and made available to all ticket bookers for a month after the conference. This will enable people to revisit presentations.

It is possible we may wish to make small sections of the day available on the library website or on VWML/EFDSS social media in the future, with the permission of speakers. If you do not wish to appear in such videos, please make yourself known to one of the library staff.

Refreshments

Tea and coffee will be available at the start of the day, and in the breaks, in Kennedy Hall. Lunch is provided downstairs in Trefusis. Catering is by Pink Food.

Social media

We encourage you to post about the conference on your social media accounts, using the hashtag #TTPA2025. If you are on Instagram, please tag us (and follow us if you are not already!): @thevwml.

Wi-Fi

There will be free Wi-Fi, with the password provided on the day.

SATURDAY, 8 NOVEMBER

9.30am	*Registration, tea and coffee*
9.50am	*Welcome*
10.00am	**Session 1:** Historical Approaches in Tunes Research: Musical Spheres and Discursive Framings (Chair: Vic Gammon) **Kirsten Gibson and Kathryn Roberts Parker** Challenging boundaries, changing perspectives: Ubiquitous tunes in early modern England **Amelia Le Plastrier** 'Mad Tom of Bedlam': The dance, the ballad, and the chaos of misinformation **Sandra Joyce** Carolan beyond the harp: Transmission and transformation in printed collections of music
11.30am	*Tea and coffee break*
12noon	**Session 2:** Tunes, Texts and Transformations (Chair: Tiffany Hore) **Laura Planagumà-Clarà** 'To the tune of Marizápalos': The presence of a Madrid melody in eighteenth-century Catalan contrafacta **Martin Nail** A pleasant Scotch tune, called, 'The Broom of Cowdenknowes'
1.00pm	*Lunch*
2.00pm	**Session 3:** Pedagogy, Styles and Evolving Identities (Chair: Sandra Joyce) **Alice Little** Eighteenth-century tunes, styles and national identity **Niall Keegan** Recipes for Jelly-babies: The use of scores in the pedagogy of Brendan Mulkere **Nicola Beazley and Rowan Piggott** Exploring the landscape of instrumental folk music from England: An examination of creative and contemporary style
3.30pm	*Tea and coffee break*

4.00pm	**Session 4:** Tunes, Tonalities and Transcriptions (Chair: Julia Bishop) **Jennifer Hesoun** In crooked cardinal directions: Mapping music and caves of the Cumberland Plateau **Stephen Rees** Praise the Lord! We are a diatonic nation. Or, here come the modes **Avril McLaughlin and Niall Keegan** Mixed modalities: Terminologies, perception and uses of modality in the performance practices of Irish traditional musicians
5.30pm	*Closing notices*
5.45pm	*End*
7.30pm	**Music and song session**, in Karpeles (downstairs at Cecil Sharp House), led by Nicola Beazley and Rowan Piggot. Everyone is welcome as performer or audience at this informal event. The bar will be open, and can take cash or cards.

SUNDAY, 9 NOVEMBER

9.00am	*Registration, tea and coffee*
9.25am	*Welcome*
9.30am	**Session 5:** Collecting, Publishing and Studying (Chair: Derek Schofield) As this session takes place on Remembrance Sunday, please note that it will finish by observing the 2 minutes' silence at 11am. **Stephen Miller** 'Three splendid old songs': Manx folk songs and the collections of Dr John Clague and the Gill brothers **Sean Goddard** Early recordings of English folk dance material: 1911-1925 **Vic Gammon** Hans Nathan: Homage and critique
11.00am	*Tea and coffee break*
11.30am	**Session 6:** Archival Sources and Communities (Chair: Alex Burton) **Celia Pendlebury** The extraordinary archive of Winster Morris Dancers: The benefits of maintaining archives in tunes research and the information that has been gained from Winster's National Heritage Lottery Funded project. **Mollie Carlyle** Shanties ashore: The transformation of maritime work songs in 20th-century folk revival movements
12.30pm	*Lunch*
1.30pm	**Session 7:** Transforming Traditions (Chair: Nick Wall) **Ilduara Vicente Franqueira** Connections between Juan Montes and the Celtic tradition: Musical discourses and practices **Maureen Kelly** Cor des Alpes: Creating and sustaining heritage through performance practice
2.30pm	*Tea and coffee break*

3.00pm	**Session 8:** Reinterpreting and Reimagining Traditional Tunes (Chair: Stephen Rees) **Mick Verrier** A famous flower of melody: Sweet William and the radio-ballad songs of Ewan MacColl **Inna Lisniak and Taive Särg** Contemporary transformations in the practice of Ukrainian and Estonian folk music performers **Em Burrows** Travelling circuits and temporal collisions: Examining the folk-pop nexus
4.30pm	*Closing notices*
4.45pm	*End*

ABSTRACTS AND BIOGRAPHIES

Nicola Beazley and Rowan Piggot

EXPLORING THE LANDSCAPE OF INSTRUMENTAL FOLK MUSIC FROM ENGLAND: AN EXAMINATION OF CREATIVE AND CONTEMPORARY STYLE

The idea of a cohesive sense of instrumental style that is identifiable as 'English' has long been debated. With little historical/archival evidence of how English folk tunes were played before the introduction of sound recording technology, the idea of style can mean something different on a personal, regional and national level.

Focussing particularly on the professional output of folk musicians active since 2000, we offer a snapshot of contemporary instrumental styles that can be defined as English. Using examples of musical analysis taken from recordings and interviews alongside our own playing, we'll analyse various musical elements across a range of tune types. These musical elements include the absence of standardised ornamentation, stylistic variation as genre markers, the importance of structure and function, and in particular the importance of groove and micro-timing as influenced by the gesture of folk dance. This paper will also explore the evolving landscape of English instrumental style, looking at the influences affecting current practices.

The aim of this paper is not to provide a categorical definition of what instrumental English folk music is, but instead to offer a more insightful, process-based understanding of the structures of creative practices that inform and nourish it, as an adaptive and evolving traditional artform.

Nicola Beazley *is a Sheffield-based musician, educator, ethnomusicologist and academic, and diversity and equality advocate. Nicola was awarded her doctorate in 2025, with the thesis title 'Performing Tradition and Creative Practice Through Instrumental Folk Music In Contemporary England', following her MA in Ethnomusicology from Sheffield University and her 2014 BMus(Hons) in Folk & Traditional Music from Newcastle University. Nicola is also a highly sought-after folk educator, professional fiddle player and musician, known for her research into composition in performance and collaborations between different musical cultures and traditions in England.*

Rowan Piggott *is a folk fiddler, singer, and tune collector who has recently completed a Masters in traditional music. He has published three popular tunebooks and is well-known for his performances and recordings with award-winning folk trio, The Wilderness Yet, and oldtime duo, Old Spot.*

Em Burrows

TRAVELLING CIRCUITS AND TEMPORAL COLLISIONS: EXAMINING THE FOLK-POP NEXUS

This talk will explore the intersections of British folk and pop music, examining how these forms engage with community, transmission, and temporality. What happens when folk music is mediated through technology and enters the contemporary pop context? Can the aesthetic codes of pop music engage with folk songs in meaningful ways? Using examples from her own creative practice, Em Burrows will explore how digital mediation can expand, sustain and commodify folk, offering a vital negotiation between past, present, and future in contemporary music culture.

Em Burrows *is an artist, music producer, and radio broadcaster from Western Australia, currently based in Berlin. Her new wave/electronic project, Web Rumors, draws on influences ranging from early underground dance styles such as proto-house and post-disco to 1980s pop and British folk music. Across her practice, Burrows has explored the layering and collision of musical eras and stylistic vocabularies, with a particular interest in how different periods of pop music—particularly from the 1960s through the 1980s—continue to resonate within contemporary sonic contexts. From her earliest work (The Lammas Tide) onward, her output has been shaped by a consistent engagement with the temporal, emotional, and aesthetic qualities of genre hybridity. Her most recent album,*

Travelling Circuits, inspired by her English ancestry, explores the reinterpretation of traditional British folk song through electronic music composition. This project marked the beginning of ongoing artistic research into the resonances between oral folk transmission and digital remix culture, investigating how sampling, reharmonisation, and electronic instrumentation mediate and transform inherited musical material. Alongside her music practice, Burrows is actively involved in broadcasting and community radio, using audio as a platform for cultural dialogue and creative dissemination.

Mollie Carlyle

SHANTIES ASHORE: THE TRANSFORMATION OF MARITIME WORK SONGS IN 20TH-CENTURY FOLK REVIVAL MOVEMENTS

This paper examines the migration of maritime work songs from their original shipboard contexts into the 20th-century Anglo-American folk revival, focussing on processes of melodic adaptation and audience reception. Shanties, once functional chants coordinating labour at sea, were transformed into stylised performance pieces with altered rhythms and melodies suited for concert and recording settings. Drawing on field recordings, revival collections, and interviews with key performers, the study explores how the shift from participatory work song to staged entertainment affected the preservation and transformation of tune identity and musical memory. It argues that these changes reflect broader tensions between authenticity, commercialisation and folk tradition, highlighting the dual role of revival movements in both conserving and reshaping maritime musical heritage. By situating shanties within evolving cultural and political landscapes, this research illuminates how traditional tunes persist, adapt and acquire new meanings across historical and social boundaries.

***Mollie Carlyle** is a maritime musicologist whose research spans historical musicology, ethnomusicology and critical heritage studies. She completed her PhD at the University of Aberdeen in 2024, where her dissertation examined the life and legacy of 'the last shantyman', Stan Hugill, and the cultural afterlives of maritime song traditions. Dr. Carlyle's work engages with global music history, the sonic legacies of slavery and colonialism, and the politics of authenticity in folk and vernacular musics. Her forthcoming monograph, From Ship to Screen: The Cultural Legacy of Sea Shanties (Palgrave Macmillan), traces the transformation of shanties from shipboard labour songs to global popular culture. Dr. Carlyle's research is informed by interdisciplinary, decolonial and historically grounded approaches, and contributes to broader debates on music, memory and representation across transnational and postcolonial contexts.*

Vic Gammon

HANS NATHAN: HOMAGE AND CRITIQUE

Hans Nathan (1910-1989) was a German-Jewish musicologist who escaped Fascism in 1936, went to the USA, and naturalized as a citizen there in 1944. The focus of this presentation are some aspects of two of his works: an article, 'Early Banjo Tunes and American Syncopation' (1956), and a book, Dan Emmett and the Rise of Early Negro Minstrelsy (1962).

Nathan stands out among the musicologists of his time as a genuine pioneer of the study of vernacular music, a talented historian and music analyst, seeing value where others saw only dross.

I will explore some of Nathan's ideas and insights, seeking to show where his work has real strengths and where it is possible that his assumptions and his lack of access to a range of sources now readily available led him into what are at least questionable directions.

The presentation will be illustrated by musical examples.

Vic Gammon *is a writer, researcher, podcaster and active musician. He served on the Editorial Board of the Folk Music Journal for 37 years and has written extensively on aspects of traditional and vernacular song and instrumental music. He has composed and provided music for stage and radio plays. He still performs regularly although tends to restrict this to his local area in recent times. He sings and plays the anglo-concertina, tenor banjo and melodeon. Archives of some of his various audio recordings (music and speech) and writings are freely available at https://archive.org/search?query=Vic+Gammon and https://newcastle.academia.edu/VicGammon.*

Kirsten Gibson and Kathryn Roberts Parker

CHALLENGING BOUNDARIES, CHANGING PERSPECTIVES: UBIQUITOUS TUNES IN EARLY MODERN ENGLAND

This paper begins with two early modern 'earworms': 'Fortune my Foe' and 'Lachrimae'. While 'Fortune' rose to prominence through cheap print and street song in the broadside ballad repertory, 'Lachrimae' began life in domestic courtly contexts composed by an elite professional musician. Yet, their tunes circulated widely beyond their points of origin, and they converged many times over in different spatial, material and social contexts. Such tunes were ubiquitous; woven into the fabric of everyday life, they percolated the popular consciousness crossing musical, social, and geographical boundaries.

These tunes challenged boundaries in early modern England, but they also challenge modern scholarly boundaries, disrupting 'hard divisions' (amateur/professional, creator/consumer, oral/written, print/manuscript, vernacular/art music) that 'were more set in modern scholarship than in historical practice' (Austern, Winkler, Bailey). Alternative frameworks are required to reframe our understanding of early modern musical culture – irrespective of genre or origin – and that avoid resurrecting a different set of hard divisions. This paper explores approaching such tunes as 'ubiquitous music', and as part of the everyday in which people of all ranks had a far more quotidian and shared relationship to music, not just as cultural experience but as adjunct to myriad aspects of public and private life

Kirsten Gibson *is Professor of Early Modern Music and Culture at Newcastle University, UK. Her research focuses on situating English music from the sixteenth to early nineteenth centuries in wider cultural, social and political contexts. Her work has appeared in Early Music History, Journal of the Royal Musical Association, Renaissance Studies, Early Music, The Library and Music & Letters. She is co-editor (with Ian Biddle) of Masculinity and Western Musical Practice (2009) and Cultural Histories of Noise, Sound and Listening in Europe, 1300–1918 (2017), and (with Stephanie Carter and Roz Southey) Music in North-East England, 1500–1800 (2020). She is currently a Co-Investigator on the Arts and Humanities Research Council-funded project 'Music, Heritage, Place: Unlocking the Musical Collections of England's County Record Offices', a collaboration between Royal Holloway, University of London and Newcastle University. This project is uncovering music manuscripts and printed music from c.1550 to c.1850 held in local archives across England and revealing previously untold stories about the men and women active in musical life of past centuries.*

Kathryn Roberts Parker *is a Lecturer at Sydney Conservatorium of Music. She is a unique, interdisciplinary academic with a creative practice in historical folk music and theatre. She has recently completed a Marie Sklodowska-Curie Fellowship at Newcastle University in the UK, researching 'A Performance History of Morris Dancing'. This research has followed on from a PhD at the University of Sydney, where she researched the musical culture of traditional festivals in the British Isles and their representation in Shakespeare's theatre.*

Kathryn composes and performs live music with Matriark Theatre, a company she co-founded in 2014. She is also the producer of The Bard Band, a historical folk ensemble based on Gadigal country in Sydney, Australia, and Talon, a folk dance group in the UK.

Sean Goddard

EARLY RECORDINGS OF ENGLISH FOLK DANCE MATERIAL: 1911-1925

English Folk Dance tunes were initially recorded by Elizabeth Burchenal with the Victor Military Band for the Victor Record Company in 1911. In 1913, Emily O'Keefe supervised recordings for the Columbia Record Company using the Prince's Band. All recorded in the United States.

In 1916 Cecil Sharp recorded a set of Folk Dance tunes for the Victor Record Company in New Jersey which were then only issued in the United States. He recorded another selection in England for the Columbia Record Company using the Black Diamonds Band in 1922.

This presentation is the story of these early recordings of English folk dances. One hundred-and-three tunes in total were recorded, relating to only forty-six specific dances as fifty-nine tunes were duplicate recordings by different bands. Given that English dance tunes included Traditional, Playford, Morris and Sword dances, why was the recorded repertoire so narrow and duplicated? And why did the US take the initial lead?

I will discuss these questions as well as identify the tunes, dances and the location of the recordings. This under-researched area is important as it lays the foundations for the early folk-dance repertoires of the English Folk Dance Society.

Sean Goddard *is a PhD candidate at the University of Sussex where he is researching into how the dance repertoire of the English Folk Dance Society, and later the English Fok Dance and Song Societ, was supported by English folk-dance recordings, mainly 78 rpm records. His interest in this area stems from the 1970s and '80s, when watching and listening to callers and bands and trying to work out why they always played the same tunes for the same dances.*

Sean is a librarian by training, and in his spare time he is a sought-after Folk-Dance Club and Barn Dance caller, and leads the Brighton based Moves aFoot Barn Dance Band. Sean is the lead caller and Chair of the Keymer Folk Dance Club which has just celebrated its 75th anniversary. He is also involved in Morris dancing, and is currently the Captain of the Chanctonbury Ring Morris. Sean was awarded the EFDSS Gold Badge in 2023.

Jennifer Hesoun

IN CROOKED CARDINAL DIRECTIONS: MAPPING MUSIC AND CAVES OF THE CUMBERLAND PLATEAU

John Sharp (1894-1965) was a fiddler, logger, and father who lived on the Cumberland Plateau, a geographically complex landform in Tennessee and Kentucky full of caves and crooked roads and enclosed by thousands of fractal-like coves. In this presentation, I argue that place is evoked sonically through Sharp's old-time fiddle tune 'Redbird'. I use my own transcription and methodology of applying reflexive cave surveying methods to support this claim and advocate for transcribing processes that reflect the dynamic nature of musical traditions and musicians' and transcribers' evolving relationships to music and their surroundings.

I use my transcribing process as a methodology and draw comparisons between cave surveying and transcribing, two value-based processes that render multisensorial experiences into two-dimensional representations. After analyzing existing old-time fiddle tune transcription collections and methods, I highlight the differences of each and write my own transcription of 'Redbird' that emphasizes aspects of life on the Cumberland Plateau. I conclude that Sharp's 'Redbird' sonically represents the Cumberland Plateau by evoking familial ties, birdsong, and 'crookedness', a metric phenomenon in old-time music that proves difficult to notate due to varying interpretations of meter. Originating as a conversation about the similarities between cave surveying and fiddle tune transcribing, this research aims to facilitate further interdisciplinary conversations and research about how embodied, place-based experiences are represented in notational practices. This paper ultimately demonstrates how such transcriptions influence the transmission of traditions and the interpretative choices of future practitioners.

Jenny Hesoun *is a first-year PhD student studying ethnomusicology at Indiana University. A recent graduate of Florida State University's musicology program (MM), her thesis, 'Caves and Crooked Tunes: How the Geography of the Cumberland Plateau and the Cave Concert Venue, The Caverns, Impact Regional Old-Time Traditions', explores connections between old-time music and the geography of the Cumberland Plateau in Tennessee. Jenny also holds a BM in classical saxophone performance and a BME in instrumental music education. Her research interests include old-time music and dance and music and caves.*

Sandra Joyce

CAROLAN BEYOND THE HARP: TRANSMISSION AND TRANSFORMATION IN PRINTED COLLECTIONS OF MUSIC

Turlough Carolan (1670–1738) occupies a central yet often distinct position within Irish traditional music, particularly in relation to the old Irish harp tradition. His legacy is underscored by the fact that a significant portion of surviving Irish harp repertoire is attributed to him. This paper examines how Carolan's music circulated beyond the harp tradition, focusing on two of his compositions as they appear in 18th-century ballad and comic operas by composers Charles

Coffey and William Shield. By tracing these pieces through various printed collections—both earlier and later—the paper explores how Carolan's music was adapted to different cultural and musical contexts. It considers the relationships between versions, the nature of the publications in which they appeared, and the broader implications for understanding the transmission and transformation of Irish harp music. Ultimately, the study highlights how Carolan's compositions acquired new identities across time and genre, reflecting the dynamic interplay between tradition and adaptation.

Sandra Joyce *is Executive Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Limerick since July 2022. She is responsible for 7 academic units, including the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance, which she was Director of for over 9 years. Together with Helen Lawlor, she is editor of 'Harp Studies I and II', with the most recent volume, 'World Harp Traditions', published in 2024 by Four Courts Press, Dublin. A traditional singer and bodhrán player, she performs regularly, and her solo CD, entitled 'Since You and I have Been: Songs of Love and Loss from the Irish Tradition', was released in January 2023.*

Niall Keegan

RECIPES FOR JELLY-BABIES: THE USE OF SCORES IN THE PEDAGOGY OF BRENDAN MULKERE

Brendan Mulkere was one of the most important teachers of Irish traditional music in London from the 1970s until the second decade of the twenty-first century. Central to the style of pedagogy used by Brendan was his use of scores. This was rooted in the pedagogy used by his own father, who taught traditional music in Galway and Clare in the early and mid-twentieth century, but quite different from the oral-based teaching that still dominates the teaching of traditional Irish music to this day. Brendan used scores in a directional way that did not stray from the model of most scores used in the teaching of Irish music; however, he does utilise them in a way that shows the improvisatory nature of the tradition. Brendan would often give his students repertoire which strayed from the basic model of multiple eight-bar parts using repeat signs and implying the multiple repeat of the tunes. His scores would often be 32, 64, and 128 bars long, where variations of the tunes are written out. These scores would very rarely give other types of stylistic information but do give the student an insight into an improvisatory aesthetic for traditional Irish music. This paper will present some of these scores and account of the strategies used by Brendan for what Irish traditional musicians would describe as variation. It will also show how Brendan reveals this intrinsic and rarely formally communicated aspect of traditional Irish style in a context a long way from the heartlands of his tradition.

Niall Keegan *is a traditional Irish flute player and an ethnomusicologist. His PhD, entitled 'The Art of Juncture – Transformations of Irish Traditional Music', is concerned with the language-based structures used by traditional musicians to account for and shape their performance practices. His research also engages the diasporic experience of traditional music, particularly in the UK as well as issues around the engagement of AI in traditional music performance. He has performed extensively throughout the world with musicians such as Sandra Joyce, Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin and Clive Carroll.*

Maureen Kelly

COR DES ALPES: CREATING AND SUSTAINING HERITAGE THROUGH PERFORMANCE PRACTICE

This paper investigates alphorn music by Francophone composers and the transnational aesthetic standards of aurally transmitted works from the traditional canon of Francophone Swiss cantons and communes. Francophone cantonal culture has historically been marginalized, which has resulted in a lack of representation in research, published musical works, and election results. The socio-cultural effects of this phenomenon can be traced back prior to the Napoleonic era and continue to shape and affect Swiss traditional culture.

Francophone alphorn players organize, perform, and transmit ideas in ways outside of the accepted Swiss establishment, and often in ways specific to their canton. These cantons have cultural histories, alpine herding traditions, and alphorn performance practices that hold distinct regional significance. This paper explores the intergenerational transmission of musical, linguistic, and cultural knowledge as it applies to aesthetic standards, which vary significantly between cantons

and communes. Work in these regions is primarily supported by the prior research of Hartley-Moore (2007), Gibson and Weinberg (1980, 1983), and Bendix (esp. 1989, 1992, 2017).

The alphorn community is inherently transnational, and this paper considers the ways in which Francophone composers interact with their North American colleagues. Shared performance aesthetics cultivate a strong sense of belonging and friendship between members of the transnational community, and the influence of Francophone composers has been especially beneficial to the development of mutual performance practices. Given their global reach, Francophone music and ideas will continue to influence community formation and transnational aesthetic standards.

Maureen Kelly *is a PhD candidate in the Interdisciplinary Research in Music program at the University of Ottawa. Her doctoral research focuses on community formation and aesthetic standards in the transnational alphorn community. She has presented her work at the Kunstuniversität Graz, Canadian University Music Society, CUNY Graduate Center, and others. Maureen holds an MA in ethnomusicology from Hunter College.*

Inna Lisniak and Taive Särg

CONTEMPORARY TRANSFORMATIONS IN THE PRACTICE OF UKRAINIAN AND ESTONIAN FOLK MUSIC PERFORMERS

This study examines the transformations of folk music performance in 21st-century Ukraine and Estonia. It focuses on, how the string-plucked instruments – the bandura in Ukraine and the kannel in Estonia – are used in contemporary vocal-instrumental arrangements that have become central to the reinterpretation of folk music.

Although Ukraine and Estonia belong to different cultural and linguistic families – Slavic and Finno-Ugric – their modern folk scenes share similar formative experiences. Both were shaped by the earlier creation of national art music and the mid-twentieth-century trends promoting authentic performance and popular-style reinterpretations. During the Soviet period, folklore was ideologically framed and staged, yet by the 1970s, artistic movements began to challenge these norms. After regaining independence, both countries entered more direct dialogue with global musical trends.

Estonian performers quickly integrated into the international folk music movement: redefining the concept of contemporary folk music, establishing educational and festival infrastructures, and collaborating with neighbouring countries. In Ukraine, the revival of folk styles – primarily the oral tradition of rural singing – also emerged in opposition to the Soviet concept of 'folk music' but remained more marginal within inert institutional frameworks. Nevertheless, Ukrainian musicians adopted performance styles characteristic of fusion and world music.

Through case studies and comparative analysis, this research reveals how, despite differences in historical and cultural background, performers in both countries share similar strategies: blending traditional and modern sounds, creating hybrid forms, and revitalizing the use of traditional instruments.

Inna Lisniak, *PhD, is a Senior Researcher at the Estonian Literary Museum (Estonia) and the M. Rylsky Institute of Art Studies, Folkloristics and Ethnology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine. Her research interests include Ukrainian traditional musical folklore of the vocal-instrumental genre, the transformation of musical folklore and its contemporary manifestations in performance practice, as well as the application of computational methods in ethnomusicology. She is the author of numerous articles for the Ukrainian Music Encyclopedia (vols. 2–6), the author of a monograph, and a co-author of several collective monographs devoted to Ukrainian musical culture.*

Taive Särg *is an ethnomusicologist and folklorist, who works as a senior researcher at the Estonian Folklore Archive of the Estonian Literature Museum. She also teaches and supervises students at Tartu University on a part-time basis. She graduated with a PhD in folkloristics from the University of Tartu in 2005. Her main research interests are folk music, especially folk songs with focus on runosong (regilaul), their melodies and singing styles both in historical and contemporary contexts. She has also written about the research history and concepts of folk/traditional music as well as the social processes and ideologies related to folk music and its study.*

Alice Little

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY TUNES, STYLES AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

Music labelled 'English' was conspicuous by its absence from manuscript and printed tune collections of the eighteenth century, yet there were many tune collections being made in England at this time, as well as musicians composing and playing tunes, and collectors noting them down. This paper will describe a new project cataloguing eighteenth-century tunes: by creating a database of tunes along with their associated locations, and where else these tunes cropped up later, it is possible to 'map' English music – that is, the tunes known in England – in this period.

The definition of 'English' music has shifted over time, and alongside this data-driven mapping project we can learn most about this music by seeing how people responded to tunes in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, for example, whether they defined the 'nationality' of tunes according to known geographical origins or the perceived style of a melody. Through this project, my intention is to be able to better describe 'English' repertoire in the eighteenth century, and how it might have been used to help collectors and musicians define national identity – of themselves and others.

To hear discussion and examples of the music under discussion, you can listen to the podcast, Folk Tunes and Englishness (Bird Lime Media), made in partnership with EFDSS in 2021.

Alice Little *is a historical musicologist, working on the history of music, music collecting, and national music. Her most recent project seeks to 'map' English music of the eighteenth century. She was a Research Fellow in Music at Oxford University, a Junior Research Fellow in History at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, and held two Knowledge Exchange Fellowships at The Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities in partnership with EFDSS to work on the eighteenth-century manuscript and printed music collections in the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library.*

Avril McLoughlin and Niall Keegan

MIXED MODALITIES: TERMINOLOGIES, PERCEPTION AND USES OF MODALITY IN THE PERFORMANCES PRACTICES OF IRISH TRADITIONAL MUSICIANS

To date, the literature around the use of modes in the Irish traditional music context has purely engaged an analytical, musicological approach (see Breathnach (1971), Cowdery (1990), Hillhouse (2005), Tourish (2013), and Harvey (2018)). This literature, while focusing on the analysis of specific versions or settings of tunes, has not engaged practitioners, nor explored their understanding of modal structures in their day-to-day musical lives. Further gaps in literature exist in relation to the use of modal terminology and language by Irish traditional musicians, and the ways in which these aspects of modality inform practitioners' performance, teaching, compositional and / or other performance practices.

Stemming from analysis of a mixed-methods survey and ethnographic interviews, this paper will explore the use of terminologies for modality among Irish traditional musicians in their practice. This paper will examine practitioners' understanding of the underlying structures of these practices. Through discussion, this paper will present some terminologies for modality as used by Irish traditional musicians, as well as offering some ideas around the meaning and function of this language within the tradition across a number of operational, descriptive and representational contexts.

Avril McLoughlin *is an Irish traditional fiddle player and lecturer in Music Education at Mary Immaculate College, Limerick. Her interest in literacy, orality, notation and music theory in Irish traditional music led her to conduct PhD research entitled 'Bridging the Gap between Theory and Practice: Locating Music Theory and Its Pedagogies and Curricula for Irish Traditional Musicians'. This research examined Irish traditional musicians' conceptual structures of music theory and investigated how these frameworks inform pedagogical approaches when teaching Irish traditional music students.*

Avril has presented her research both nationally and internationally, including ISME 2018, ICTM 2019 and ICTM 2023. She has taken part in a number of Erasmus+ exchanges including visits to Birzeit University and The Edward Said Conservatory, Palestine, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia, Tbilisi State University, Georgia and University of Cape Coast, Ghana. As a performer, Avril has been featured numerous times on national and international radio and tv, as well as performing at festivals such as Festival Interceltique de Lorient (France) and Alpentöne Internationales Musikfestival (Switzerland).

Avril's key research interests include democratic and inclusive pedagogies and curriculum development in music education; Irish traditional music in higher education; literacy and orality in music education; action research for teacher empowerment; primary and post-primary music education.

***Niall Keegan** is a traditional Irish flute player and an ethnomusicologist. His PhD, entitled 'The Art of Juncture – Transformations of Irish Traditional Music', is concerned with the language-based structures used by traditional musicians to account for and shape their performance practices. His research also engages the diasporic experience of traditional music, particularly in the UK as well as issues around the engagement of AI in traditional music performance. He has performed extensively throughout the world with musicians such as Sandra Joyce, Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin and Clive Carroll.*

Stephen Miller

'THREE SPLENDID OLD SONGS': MANX FOLK SONGS AND THE COLLECTIONS OF DR JOHN CLAGUE AND THE GILL BROTHERS

Four folk song collectors were active in the Isle of Man in the 1890s, Dr John Clague (1842–1908), the Gill brothers, John Frederick (1842–99) and William Henry Gill (1839–1923), and A.W. Moore (1853–1909). Moore's collection is lost, the tunes that appeared in Manx Ballads and Music (1896) were ones harmonised by Mary Louisa Wood. Manx National Songs (1896), and Manx National Music (1898), under the editorial hand of W.H. Gill, took the same approach, drawing on the collecting of the Gill brothers and Clague. However, the Clague Collection, edited in part by A. G. Gilchrist in the Journal of the Folk-Song Society, has survived and was deposited in the then Manx Museum Library in 1935. A transcript of the collecting of the Gill brothers surfaced in 2000, when John Frederick Gill's personal papers were released by the Manx National Heritage Library. Both these collections are yet to be edited in full, and this talk will be a descriptive rather than an analytical one, introducing the material to a wider audience.

A.G Gilchrist, 'Songs from the Isle of Man (Part i)'. Journal of the Folk-Song Society, vii.28 (1924): v–xvi, 99–198.
———, 'Songs from the Isle of Man (Part ii)'. Journal of the Folk-Song Society, vii.29 (1925): v–xi, 203–76.
———, 'Songs from the Isle of Man (Part iii)'. Journal of the Folk-Song Society vii.30 (1926): v–viii, 281–342.

***Stephen Miller** formerly held posts at the Austrian Academy of Sciences and the University of Vienna. His research interests are the folklore, folk song, and folk dance of the Isle of Man, the Scottish folklorists the Rev. Walter Gregor (1825–97), and William George Black (1857–1932), and the institutional history of the Folk-Lore Society. His pPersonal www site is www.chiollaghbooks.com*

Martin Nail

A PLEASANT SCOTCH TUNE, CALLED, THE BROOM OF COWDENKNOWES

This presentation traces the history of the tune known as 'The Broom' or 'The Bonnie, Bonnie Broom' or 'The Broom of Cowdenknowes', from its origins in the seventeenth, or perhaps sixteenth, century up to the present day. It looks at early references to the tune and its first appearances in musical notation in both England and Scotland. It discusses characteristics of the tune and its variants following on from Bronson's categorisation in The Traditional Tunes of the Child Ballads. It discusses a number of the songs that have been sung to the tune and its popularity with broadside writers and printers. In particular, it looks at 'The lovely northern lass, Hard fate that I should banished be', the song called The Broom of Cowdenknows' in Allan Ramsay's Tea-table Miscellany, and Child ballad 217, for which Child chose the title 'The Broom of Cowdenknows'. His choice of this as his standard title is, however, unfortunate as the Cowdenknowes tune is used for many other songs and the ballad is only sometimes sung to this tune.

***Martin Nail** is a librarian who spent most of his working life with the British Library. Since retirement he has worked on various cataloguing and indexing projects for the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library. He continues to work on the development of the VWML Folk Song Subject Index, managing the thesaurus which is central to the index. As a result of this work, he has taken a renewed interest*

in the history of individual songs and has presented papers to Traditional Song Forum meetings and Broadside Days. Two of these, on Valentine O'Hara and No Irish need apply, have been published in Ballad Partners volumes. He has also contributed to some of Matt Quinn's In the Roud podcasts. He is also a keen amateur singer and Anglo concertina player.

Amelia Le Pastrier

MAD TOM OF BEDLAM: THE DANCE, THE BALLAD, AND THE CHAOS OF MISINFORMATION

Forth from the Dark and dismal cell' is one of the names recognized as the early seventeenth-century English broadside ballad, 'Mad Tom of Bedlam', also known as 'Gray's Inn Masque'. Originating as a dance, this anonymous tune is believed to have been commissioned to celebrate the Royal Palatinate wedding of 1613 between Princess Elizabeth and Fredrick V of the Palatinate. As a cultural figure, Tom of Bedlam still carries relevance and significance today. As to the musical representation of madness, not only does this namesake tune carry the same musical signifiers as an operatic mad scene, but it predates the first operatic mad scene composition by at least a decade. Despite the musical and cultural importance of 'Mad Tom of Bedlam', the academic literature on the history of this tune is rife with contradictions. Through untangling this misinformation, I have uncovered several new insights into the origins of 'Mad Tom of Bedlam'. This paper will draw on Musicological Topic Theory, musical analysis, and recounts of historical performance and events to explain how these new considerations were reached. The conclusion will determine whether support for these claims can be extended to the1659 broadside ballad setting of 'Mad Tom of Bedlam'.

Amelia Le Pastrier *is currently in the third year of her PhD in Musicology at the University of Melbourne, Australia. Her thesis examines the musical representation of madness. Le Plastrier's research applies a topic theory methodology with a Mad studies lens. She has an academic background in Music performance (BMus Hons classical voice), and music therapy (MMusT). Prior to her PhD pursuits, Le Plastrier practised as a registered music therapist in Melbourne, Australia, across a variety of health settings.*

Celia Pendlebury

THE EXTRAORDINARY ARCHIVE OF WINSTER MORRIS DANCERS: THE BENEFITS OF MAINTAINING ARCHIVES IN TUNES RESEARCH AND THE INFORMATION THAT HAS BEEN GAINED FROM WINSTER'S NATIONAL HERITAGE LOTTERY FUNDED PROJECT

First mentioned in the Derbyshire Times in 1863, the Morris dancers of the Peak District village of Winster are possibly the oldest continuous Morris team in England. Despite the team having had at least three subsequent periods of inactivity, this claim is made because after each hiatus, individuals were retained from one revival period to another. At their inception, Morris dancers, and their music, were integral contributors to Winter village's vibrant annual Wakes Week and Carnival, and this association remains just as relevant today.

Aside from the team's claimed persistence, Winster Morris Dancers are persuasive contenders for being the Morris side with the most comprehensive archives. Their collection was initiated in 1977 and has been augmented ever since. This paper presents some conclusions derived from the archive including insights into the origins, sources, purpose and evolution of the Morris tunes, their historical performance contexts, and the consequences of Cecil Sharp's visit in 1908 from the villagers' perspective. Observations are made about the reasons for melodic adjustments made over time, including the opposing forces of standardization (the contribution made by EFDSS publications) versus natural tendencies towards adaption and innovation. This repository of information about Winster's Morris dance-tunes is a narrative from which certain questions may be raised about tradition and authenticity with respect to this popular form of English community music-making. Along with describing some benefits of maintaining such archives, the experience of applying for, and managing, a grant awarded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund is shared in the hope that it is an inspiration to others.

***Celia Pendlebury** is a social musician and plays the Northumbrian smallpipes and melodeon in Sheffield and North Derbyshire. In 2015 she completed an MPhil research degree at the University of Sheffield on the topic of traditional tunes of the British Isles. She is interested in the history of social dance and its music, and its changing social contexts over time. Celia has been managing the application and delivery of the Winster Wakes Archive project with the National Lottery Heritage Fund. She an organiser of the Bakewell Internation Day of Dance, and the founder and chair of Tansley's Carnival Committee.*

Laura Planagumà-Clarà

'TO THE TUNE OF MARIZÁPALOS': THE PRESENCE OF A MADRID MELODY IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY CATALAN CONTRAFACTA

The tune of 'Marizápalos' is the melody of a well-known seventeenth-century Spanish popular dance-song (baile cantado). Set on the outskirts of Madrid, the song recounts an erotic liaison between Marizápalos and Pedro Martín, which is abruptly interrupted by her uncle, a priest. This song exists in multiple versions, and its melody and metrical scheme served as a model for numerous new works. Widely embraced in eighteenth-century Catalonia, this tune became the favoured musical framework for a broad spectrum of popular songs—romantic, satirical, and political—and eventually underwent a surprising shift from erotic origins to religious contexts. It is also significant that some of these songs are in Catalan while others are in Spanish, reflecting the characteristic diglossia of eighteenth-century Catalonia. These resignifications are largely mediated by the intrinsically intertextual nature of contrafacta –that is, newly written lyrics adapted to pre-existing melodies. By employing the theoretical concepts of borrowing and intertextuality as developed by J. Peter Burkholder, alongside insights into historical popular contrafacta from authors such Robert Darnton, Christopher Marsh, and Una McIlvenna, this study seeks to understand why (and how) such a wide thematic variety was applied to a single melody. In Catalonia, the lyrics of these songs 'to the tune of Marizápalos' are preserved primarily in handwritten songbooks. Although these sources have received limited attention from musicologists—partly because they lack musical notation—they offer valuable firsthand insights into the practices of collecting, disseminating, and performing popular songs during this period.

***Laura Planagumà-Clarà** obtained a Bachelor's degree in Musicology from the Escola Superior de Música de Catalunya (Higher School of Music of Catalonia) in 2019. Her undergraduate thesis was awarded the Vila de Olesa Research Prize in 2021. She subsequently completed a Master's degree in Spanish and Hispanic-American Music at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, graduating with the highest honours. She is currently pursuing doctoral studies in the Department of Musicology at the same university. Her research focuses on eighteenth-century popular contrafacta, further deepening her interest in historical popular music. She has worked as a research assistant at the Instituto Complutense de Ciencias Musicales (ICCMU), where she now serves as a music editor. She has participated in several national and international conferences and has published articles in journals such as SCRIPTA. Revista Internacional de Literatura y Cultura Medieval y Moderna, Cuadernos de Etnomusicología, and Cuadernos de Música Iberoamericana.*

Stephen Rees

PRAISE THE LORD! WE ARE A DIATONIC NATION. OR, HERE COME THE MODES

Since the 1970s, Wales has seen a significant resurgence in the performance of traditional instrumental music. Earlier revival musicians were largely content to render traditional melodies in their major and minor versions, more or less exactly as given in historical printed and manuscript sources. However, recordings from the 1990s onwards have increasingly featured modal (non-diatonic) melodies.

With reference to recordings of traditional instrumental music from Wales released over the last three decades, this paper explores the specific ways in which contemporary folk musicians have
a) engaged in the creative recomposition of extant melodies, rendering major and minor tunes into new modal versions;
b) composed new 'traditional' melodies while eschewing major and minor diatonic scales;
c) tended to select modal tunes in specific instrumental contexts; and

d) interrogated selected sources in order to advance the argument for a previously unacknowledged prevalence of modal melodies in the historical record.

The paper will conclude by examining contrasting trends in Welsh instrumental and vocal repertoires and will suggest reasons for these developments within the context of the folk revival in Wales and the UK.

Stephen Rees *is a scholar and performer whose main area of research is the traditional music of Wales, in particular, the instrumental traditions. He has published on the instrumental revival in Wales and has more recently been working on organological aspects of the nineteenth-century harp tradition. Up to 2010, he toured internationally with several Welsh folk groups, and he was one of the founders of two organisations dedicated to promoting the traditional music of Wales: trac and Clera. Having recently retired from his post as a lecturer in musicology at Bangor University, he continues to research and perform traditional music.*

Mick Verrier

A FAMOUS FLOWER OF MELODY: SWEET WILLIAM AND THE RADIO-BALLAD SONGS OF EWAN MACCOLL

In a Critics Group recording from the 1960s, Ewan MacColl explains the method he evolved for composing 'new' folk melodies by varying old ones and claims that one particular melody gave rise to songs in each of the eight Radio Ballads. This presentation explores the method, focusing on one of MacColl's favourite 'jumping-off' tunes 'Sweet William, or The Famous Flower of Serving Men' (Child 106, Roud 199) and some of its most famous radio-ballad descendants. MacColl's method, it is suggested, mimics and structuralises the natural 'folk process', offering a model for composers and songwriters working in traditional idioms.

Mick Verrier *is a singer, songwriter, composer, teacher and multi-instrumentalist, and a three-time graduate of the University of Essex, with a BA in Literature & Music (1996), an MA in Creative Writing (2020) and a PhD, also in Creative Writing (2024). Following lengthy stints in the legal profession and in education, Mick is now actively pursuing his creative activities: writing, performing solo and as leader of various ensembles, and chairing the organising committee of the Harwich International Shanty Festival.*

Ilduara Vicente Franqueira

CONNECTIONS BETWEEN JUAN MONTES AND THE CELTIC TRADITION: MUSICAL DISCOURSES AND PRACTICES

The nineteenth century in Galicia was a period of construction and vindication of identity because of the rise of nationalist ideals in Europe. Alongside the birth of the regionalist movement, a new way of understanding academic music emerged (known as Rexurdimento (Renaissance)), which consisted of the incorporation of folklore as a differential element within an international language.

Juan Montes (1840-1899) was one of the most representative composers of this tendency for having condensed in his work several musical aspects that were directly influenced by the identitarian discourse. One of the reasons behind his success was because of his collection of alalás and his frequent use of them in his authorial works. This popular air was considered both in the historiography of the time and in folkloric studies as the most genuine of Galician musical culture, whose origins have been attributed to Celtism and Medievalism.

From an intertextual analysis of Negra Sombra – one of Juan Montes' ballads – we will discuss the adaptation of the folkloric element to salon music, as well as delve into the parallels created in the musical discourse concerning the Celtic influence on Galician traditional music.

Ilduara Vicente Franqueira *graduated in Art History from the University of Santiago de Compostela, in violin (Level 3 Certificate in Graded Examination in Music Performance — Grade 8) by the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music and Master in Artistic and Architectural Heritage, Museums and Art Market by the USC and ULPGC. She has also completed a postgraduate course in Aesthetics of Music Under the noise of History: Music, Thought and Body by the Philosophy and Anthropology Department of the Universidade de Santiago de Compostela.*

She is currently working on her doctoral dissertation about the mythification process of composer Juan Montes Capón under the direction of Carlos Villanueva and Montserrat Capelán. For this purpose, she has a predoctoral contract funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation. Recently, she has completed a research stay at the University of Edinburgh supervised by Professor Benedict Taylor.

She is part of the Organistrum Group (GI-2025) of the University of Santiago de Compostela and a member of the working team of the R&D Project 'Galicia-America: música civil, ideología e identidades culturales a través del Atlántico (1800–1950)'. As a performer, she collaborates with the renowned folk music group Milladoiro.

FUTURE EVENTS

The Vaughan Williams Memorial Library will present a series of four new online lectures in Spring 2026. Tickets are available now at £5 per lecture. Book tickets for all four Library Lectures for £15, a saving of £5.

Tuesday 13 January 2026, 7:30pm
Elizabeth Bennett *Dorothy Marshall and the Women of West Sussex*

Tuesday 10 February 2026, 7:30pm
Sue Allan *Merry neets, morris and more: social and display dancing in the Lake District and Cumbria*

Tuesday 10 March 2026, 7:30pm
Lucy Wright *Folk is a Feminist Issue! Uncovering the hidden women in British seasonal customs*

Tuesday 14 April 2026, 7:30pm
Vic Gammon with **Sheila Gammon** (Reader) and **Bridget Enever** (Fiddler)
'The Catterwauling Scrapes of Thrashing Fidlers': Explorations in the history of English Vernacular Fiddle Players, 1600-1900

Broadside Day 2026

Saturday 14 February 2026
University of Sheffield, Western Bank, Sheffield S10 2TN

CALL FOR PAPERS: BROADSIDE DAY

Organised by the **Traditional Song Forum** and the **Vaughan Williams Memorial Library**, in association with the **Contemporary Folklore Research Centre**, and hosted at the **University of Sheffield**, the Broadside Day is the annual one-day conference for people interested in street literature and all kinds of cheap printed material sold to ordinary people in the city streets - in all its fascinating aspects.

We are inviting speakers who may wish to present a 20-minute paper.
Deadline for submissions 1 December 2025
Submissions to Steve Roud via steveroud@gmail.com

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Maltby Phoenix Sword, Brian Slater, courtesy Youth Dance England

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