

Margaret's Waltz

Pat Shuldham-Shaw



"Margaret's Waltz" is an English waltz in A Major. The parts are played one part (most versions) or AAB (Martin).

It was composed in 1959 by English collector Pat Shuldham-Shaw (1917–1977) and dedicated to Margaret Grant, representative in Devon of the English Folk Dance and Song Society on the occasion of her retirement. It is also said to have been played in honor of Princess Margaret, then President of the English Folk Dance and Song Society, on the occasion of a visit by her to Cecil Sharp House, London, headquarters of the society. A picture was taken of her dancing to the melody and was published in **Dance and Song**, the organization's magazine.

New York fiddler Jay Ungar learned it from New York hammered dulcimer player Bill Spence and taught the melody, popular at New England contra dances for years, to Shetland fiddler Aly Bain, though at the time he was unaware of its origins. Bain took the tune back to Scotland and fancied it the kind of melody his friend Pat Shuldham-Shaw would enjoy hearing. After dinner one night in Bain's Sylvan Place, Edinburgh flat the instruments came out and Bain played his 'new' waltz, asking Shaw what he thought. Shaw, the story goes, dryly replied that yes, indeed, he did like the tune because as a matter of fact, he'd composed it. The story is confirmed by Hamish Henderson who overheard the exchange between the two "at a party". It was printed in Cranford's **Jerry Holland: The Second Collection** (2000), Fennessy's **Pat Shaw Collection, Book 2** (1986), Fennessy's **Pat Shaw: Collection of Dances** (2011), Kennedy & Hamilton's **Community Dances Manual 6** (1964), Martin's *Ceol na Fidhle*, vol. 3 (1988), Matthiesen's **The Waltz Book** (1992) and Page's **Northern Junket**, vol. 8 (1965).

It was recorded by Fennigs All-Stars on **Saturday Night in the Provinces**, Seamus Maguire & Jackie Daly on **The Celts Rise Again** (1990), Seamus Maguire & Jackie Daly on **Buttons and Bows** (1987), Aly Bain on **First Album** (1984), J.P. Fraley on **Maysville**, Boys of the Lough on **Live at Carnegie Hall** and Jerry Holland on **Lively Steps** (1988).