



DALES TRADITIONAL MUSIC AND DANCE COLLECTIVE
www.dales-music-and-dance-collective.org.uk



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for

Yorkshire Dales Musicians, Callers, Singers, Dancers, Poets and Listeners

This issue is the continuing story of the Beresford family music tradition. It was promised at the end of the last newsletter, arises from Bob Ellis's account in pages 198 to 252 of 'THE BOOK', and was prompted by recent email correspondence with Brian Beresford in Skipton (not the Brian Beresford on page 251!)

THE BERESFORD FAMILIES' CONTINUING MUSICAL TRADITION

Langstrothdale, the extension of Upper Wharfedale from Hubberholme to Beckermonds and High Greenfield in one branch and Oughtershaw in the other, is not only supremely beautiful but has also been the home of the many Beresford families and their music. From the early 1800s musical prowess was passed down from generation to generation, all of them self-taught, with few if any of them able to read music. Not the least of Bob Ellis's achievements was his tracing and laying out the family trees of so many branches of the Beresfords and their music over five generations in pages 198 and 255 of his book.

I have recently been put in touch with Brian Beresford in Skipton. He confirms that the musical tradition is very much alive in following generations. Brian's father was Arthur Beresford (1920 to 2007) who farmed at New House in Langstrothdale (the picturesque old building seen on the track on the left side of the river after the road itself crosses the river at Deepdale Farm). He had left New House to farm in Ribblesdale before Brian and his brother Peter were born. You can see Brian's link to Dales families in the 'No Lazy Dancing' book in the box on the bottom right of page 203. Arthur inherited the family musical genes - he played concertinas, piano and accordion, all by ear, and was, of course, a lover of Old Tyme Dancing. His cousin, Harry Cockerill, was another well-known musician - his mother was a Beresford, and the Cockerill family are also featured in 'No Lazy Dancing'. For many years, both the Beresford Band and the Cockerill Band played for Dales dances and they also travelled to lead

dances in many other areas too. Brian points out that his Dad died in 2007, not 1998 as in the book. His parents are buried at Hubberholme, as are many generations of Beresfords.

Brian has had a life abundant in music, as expressed in his letter to me. I started learning to play piano at age 7. After attending Settle High School, where I played as accompanist to the school orchestra and also in a jazz band, I studied to be a teacher in Lancaster and achieved a degree in Music (specialising in composition) and Education. I started teaching at Carleton, near Skipton (8 years), then at St James' CE, Clitheroe (10 year). My first headship was at St Thomas' CE, Barrowford (5 years), then at Whalley CE (12 years) and finally three years as headteacher at three schools, Austwick, Clapham and Horton-in-Ribblesdale (the latter school being next door to the church where my parents were married). At all schools where I taught I ran choirs, orchestras, guitar and recorder groups. I feel that I am most competent as a composer rather than performer, and I wrote and arranged songs and instrumental pieces for those groups. I was organist at Hellifield Parish Church, and also played piano for many groups in the area as required.

Since retiring I have concentrated on writing and publishing music for schools (see www.onemoretime.biz) I have had thousands of customers and still run the business with my wife Claire. For 20 years I led the music at children's groups and at All-age Worship at Holy Trinity Church, Skipton. I have worked for the Scottish Government, writing music for their curriculum. My latest music project is, in liaison with Sir David Attenborough, to give a free climate change song to all schools in the world (so far we have reached 12 countries) – see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dZNPdG3MQsE> I have just finished writing an extended version of it for adult choirs. I love composing music!

It's worth battling through the adverts on that youtube clip as children from a school in Lancashire sing David Attenborough's words in Brian's setting.

It was Brian's brother Peter who wrote and recorded the music for the CD "Up Wharfedale" which was on sale five years ago to raise funds for Hubberholme Church. And Beresford music-making flows on to Brian's own very musical children.

For those of us musicians who play Beresford tunes from Bob Ellis's "No Lazy Dancing" book at the revived monthly pub sessions at the Buck (another Beresford tradition) or at the series of public Dales Music and Dance events in

Wharfedale, Littondale and Ripley, inspired by the book, it feels good to be honouring such a remarkable family tradition of music making.

Gratefully acknowledging the wealth of music and information in the late Bob Ellis's book *"There was None of this Lazy Dancing! Folk Tunes and Dances from the Yorkshire Dales"*

Richard
20th March 2024