

## **NEW YEAR'S HONOURS 2017**

### **Order of the British Empire Medallist of the Order of the British Empire**

**We are delighted to report that ELMA MCCAUSLAND has been awarded MBE for services to Scottish Country Dancing –**

Lisburn Class which she faithfully teaches every week, held a surprise party in Elma's honour on Tuesday 14th February.

Many dancing friends, among them many whom she had taught, were there to share in the celebrations. A dance specially devised by Lucy Mulholland on behalf of the Branch "Elma McCausland MBE" was danced for Elma and her family by a set of 8 comprising teachers and demonstration team members whom she had trained and former class representatives of Lisburn class. The dance scroll and specially composed music by Marian Anderson to accompany the dance, also named "Elma McCausland MBE" was presented to Elma – and then everyone danced "Elma McCausland MBE" to the tune Cecil McCausland, composed for her much-loved late husband, Cecil, by Nan Main.

The dance and music recorded by Marian Anderson will soon be available for all dancers to enjoy. Elma cut the celebration cake then the Branch Chairman presented her with a Topaz and silver Celtic brooch as a token of our esteem. We all wish Elma a very memorable and happy day with Andrew, Fiona and Bethany when she visits "the Palace" – home of our RSCDS Royal Patron, on 24th March.



photo : copyright Spectator Newspapers, Bangor

Elma is a much respected and loved member of Belfast Branch who has given exemplary service in a very practical way to Scottish country dancing for over 60 years.

She started Scottish country dancing at the Aberdeen Branch of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society (RSCDS) children's class, competing at festivals in school and Girl Guide teams. In 1951 as a young adult as soon as eligible she joined the RSCDS and continued dancing in demonstration teams at displays, festivals, television performances and at international level.

After passing the rigorous training she became a fully certificated Society teacher in 1956 and since then has been teaching Scottish Country Dancing at all levels in the UK and across the world and is a highly respected teacher and teacher-trainer and examiner. Her expertise and knowledge which she has shared so freely in such a delightful manner has been highly valued by all who have had the good fortune to be taught by her or dance with her.

She has given a lifetime of service to others, giving freely of her time and talents to nurture the joy and benefits of dancing. Elma, like all teachers within the Society gives of her skills and expertise for little return other than the reward of seeing others benefit from her sharing her knowledge.

In addition to teaching regular Scottish country dance classes ever since she qualified in 1956, Elma has also taught ladies step dancing, trained demonstration and festival teams, tutored certificated classes locally in Northern Ireland, overseas and at the Society's annual summer school at St Andrews University.

It was there at summer school as a young teacher that she met her late husband, Cecil, an Ulsterman and also a talented dancer. Following their marriage, they settled in Northern Ireland and both were committed to the development of a range of dance especially folk and country dancing in Northern Ireland.

Having also qualified as a Primary School teacher Elma took up a teaching post in Bangor where she taught with great commitment to the children and their welfare until her retirement from school teaching.

Her selfless involvement in the development and advancement of Scottish country dancing in Northern Ireland has been evident since she came to live here over 50 years ago.

She has been a great ambassador for dancing and for this country as a most dedicated, talented professional, dancing at International Folk festivals and teaching at day and week-end schools at all levels from elementary to master class in Scotland, England, Ireland, Holland, Germany, France, Japan, Australia, South Africa, United States and Canada.

As a much-respected dance teacher-tutor and teacher-examiner she has been responsible for the expansion of country dance teaching not only locally but internationally, particularly in Japan where Scottish country dancing is a very popular pastime and where Elma is highly revered for her teaching skills and gentle manner in achieving high standards.

Her professionalism and skill in seeking and achieving the best from all with whom she engages have been consistently to the fore in both her career as a respected primary school teacher in Bangor for many years and in her much-loved pastime of dance. Elma taught classes for many years for primary schoolchildren in Belfast and an adult class in her home town of Bangor which she still teaches in addition to

Branch weekly classes for adults and children in Lisburn. Giving of her time unstintingly she started up the children's class in Lisburn running it prior to the adult class to provide opportunity for youngsters to learn and appreciate the joy of dancing as a popular out of school activity. This involves her spending several hours in preparation and travelling, all of which she does selflessly to put the needs of the classes often before her own.

Elma has been responsible for both organising and teaching the Branch's demonstration team since she started it forty years ago.

As well as being a wonderful mentor to all its officers and teachers, she has brought her vast experience and wise counsel to all who seek it.

Elma's input is always given in a measured and caring manner, with the maintenance of standards and respect for the individual being paramount.