



efdss
english folk dance
and song society

Gold Badge Citation: Maggie Fletcher

Maggie Fletcher joined the English Folk Dance and Song Society in September 1946 as an Associate Member while dancing with the Portsmouth Group for a year before going to University at Exeter. There she met Margaret Grant, the South West Area Organiser, who invited her to bring friends as partners to the weekly folk dance meetings at St. Luke's men's Teacher Training College. She later taught in Southampton and danced with the EFDSS group there, so she has always considered herself a "dancer who plays."

Maggie has been a leading exponent of playing for country dance for 50 years and played in one of the leading Country Dance Bands. She helped to run the Monday Musicians at Cecil Sharp House for more than 40 years and produced an unparalleled repertoire of dance music that has spread world-wide. She also organised many successful Christmas Carols and Customs concerts with Vic and Brenda Godrich. She has consistently encouraged and supported the development of young musicians through her various roles.

In 1964 Maggie helped Brian Heaton start the Curfew Club which became a meeting point for budding musicians, dancers and Callers. She also became an active member of the Sunday Club and was instrumental in launching the first Youth Folk Camps.

In 1966 Richard Smith (leader on fiddler) and Maggie (piano) founded Blue Mountain Band. Maggie also was booking secretary and music researcher/scribe. It became one of the top folk dance bands, performing and running workshops at all the major Festivals and playing for dances throughout England. The band played for free when the London Barndance Company started and continued as the resident band on most of their Friday night dances at Cecil Sharp House.

Maggie has researched and meticulously hand written and chorded more than 400 sheets of music drawn from a number of different sources. This music has gone into the repertoires of many bands and copies have been taken to locations as far afield as Shetland, the USA and Australia.

Maggie has always been keen to pass on her knowledge to others, and particularly to encourage young musicians. She has obviously done this through Monday Musicians, but has also run many music workshops with Blue Mountain Band and, more recently, on her own. She has also conducted and assisted in many workshops.

Maggie has played in a band put together for trips to France and the USA and been a regular dancer caller at her local dance clubs and on occasion, called bilingually for visiting French dance groups. She has always played a supportive role as a member of EFDSS and was a District Representative on the NEC from 1992 to 1998.

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