



## Highland Dress

### The Shoes

The hunter's helpers in the Highlands of Scotland, known as ghillies, used to prefer shoes that were laced like today's dancing ghillie brogues on the grounds that the water would flow out of them better when walking through the Scottish deer forest (read: peat bog). That type of shoe, called a ghillie brogue, is still popular with kilt outfits.

Apparently, the inventors of the dancing ghillie felt that the type of lacing was something typically Scottish and wanted to preserve this for Scottish dancing shoes.

In the olden times, people would dance in their Sunday shoes if they couldn't afford specialized patent leather dance shoes, and those shoes were, of course, not the soft ghillies that are worn today in Highland and Scottish country dancing.

The soft ghillies first appeared on the (modern) competition circuit at Highland Games some time during the second half of the 19th century. They were popular with professional Highland dancers around the turn of the twentieth century. In the Country Dance world, they didn't catch on until the establishment of the Scottish Country Dance Society in 1923.

Ghillie Brogues, or Ghillies, are a type of shoe with laces along the instep and no tongue, especially those used for Scottish country dancing. Although now worn for dancing and social events, ghillies originated as a shoe that would dry quickly due to the lack of a tongue, and not get stuck in the mud because of their laces above the ankle...

